Introduction

- Dutchess County Planning Federation sponsored Short Course
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  - Masters Degree in Regional Planning
  - Professional focus for over 20 years on Infrastructure and Economic Development
Why are Site Plans Important?

► Site plans play a central role in:

- Look and Feel of a Community
- Zoning Code Variances, Comprehensive Plans
- Planned Development Districts (PDD)
- Demands for Services Such As:
  - Utilities – water, sewer, power, communications
  - Emergency and fire protection services
  - Recreation
- Environmental Review, Permits and Approvals
Who Uses Site Plans?

Site plans are read by:

- Municipal Planning and ZBA Board Members
- Town/Village/City Board Members
- County Planning Boards
- Regulatory Agencies:
  - NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
  - Departments of Health (State and County)
  - US Army Corps of Engineers
- The Public
Format for this Short Course

► Example site plans from a current project:
  ▪ Suburban Albany Location on State Highway
  ▪ Planned Development District (PDD) Proposed
  ▪ Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care
  ▪ Approximately 216 beds with related services
  ▪ Initiated Planning Board Review in 2014
    ► Sporadic progress based on applicant submissions

► Highlighters/Markers - make notes on the plans

► Ask questions along the way
Site Plan Topics

- Grading and Drainage
- Stormwater
- Setbacks and Buffers
- Utilities
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Things to Consider
What to look for on a Site Plan

- North Arrow
- Scale/Scale Bar
- Legend/Tables
- Property Lines
- Contours
  - Existing and Proposed
- Utilities
  - Existing and Proposed
- Streams & Wetlands
- Landscaping & Lighting
- Special Districts
- Water Lines/hydrants
- Sewer Lines/pump stations
- Borings (water/rock)
- Grading/stormwater
- Roads with labels
- Parking Areas
- Sidewalks
- Structures
  - Existing and Proposed
Grading and Drainage

► Topographic lines
► Grading
  - How will runoff move on the site?
  - Catch Basin Invert & Outlet Elevations
► Slope – Note Retaining Walls, Cut & Fill
► Soil Conditions – Test Pits/Local Knowledge
► Consider requesting additional “zoomed in” drawings for hard to interpret areas
Stormwater

► Topography and Soil Conditions
  ▪ Grades – steep or flat presents challenges
  ▪ Soils – drainage characteristics

► Treatment
  ▪ Treat runoff as close to the source as possible
    ► Permeable/porous pavement
    ► Bioretention (bioswales, raingardens, etc.)
    ► Street trees, landscaped islands, etc.
  ▪ Green infrastructure relies on infiltration – soil type
  ▪ Incorporate maintenance requirements

► Redevelopment Sites – Best Fit
Setbacks and Buffers

► Setbacks
  ▪ Per zoning or local land use code
  ▪ Relative to property lines

► Buffers
  ▪ Wetlands – NYS or Local
  ▪ Watercourses
  ▪ Sensitive Areas (e.g. habitat or cultural resources)
  ▪ Relative to protection element
Utilities

► Gas, Electric, Communications
   ° Applicant coordination with service providers

► Water and Sewer
   ° Private on-site – wells and septic systems
     ▶ Coordinate with DOH
   ° Public – connect to municipal system
     ▶ Dedicated or privately operated (PSC and/or Trans. Corp.)
   ° Private community system
     ▶ Water – Public Service Commission (PSC)
     ▶ Sewer – Transportation Corporation (Trans. Corp.)
Parking

- Single Family – per code

- Commercial, Mixed Use, PDD
  - How much is enough? Consider land use
  - Avoid expanses of un-used asphalt
  - Sharing for compatible uses
  - “Bank” parking
  - Set aside as grassed or landscaped on site plan
  - Calculate as though impervious for stormwater
  - Trigger in future – complaints, parking tickets, etc.
Landscaping

► Aesthetics and Energy Conservation

- Avoid root conflicts – bulk versus height
- Heating/cooling benefits – mix deciduous & evergreen
- Stagger grouped plantings to obtain best visual presence
- Screening – landscaping including berms & vegetation are more effective when located closer to viewer than screened feature
Lighting

▶ Aesthetics and Safety

- Purpose and intent based on site land use, adjacent land uses, etc.
- Down lighting
- Lower pole heights
- Light density/spacing
- Light spillage/escape
- Controls – timed, light sensors, motion detectors
Things to consider...

► Do your homework
  ▪ Know your code, SEQR basics, state and regional regs
  ▪ Review application materials before meetings

► Ask Questions and Request Information
  ▪ An applicant may have a lot more information that is easily accessible and can be provided upon request

► Coordinate with other agencies when possible
  ▪ Encourage contact between agencies and applicants during project planning
  ▪ Engage agencies at the conclusion of SEQR before issuing site plan approval to avoid future amendments