



Town of Fishkill

Gas Stations



Auto Repair Shops



Town of Pleasant Valley

Choices



Parking Lot Landscaping



Town of LaGrange



Franchise Signs



Town of LaGrange



Building Facades



City of Poughkeepsie

Strength in Local Decision Making

Choices have consequences that can last a lifetime.

The Greenway Compact Program will help translate widely shared community values into coordinated action with visible results. The method is making good planning choices.

Every municipality makes choices that change neighborhoods and landscapes; each choice can add to or detract from the character of a village, town, or city. Many decisions reverberate beyond borders. True choices involve deciding what is most desirable for the community as a whole, not merely approving each proposal as it comes along, perhaps with a few concessions.

Developers cannot be blamed for projects if they have followed the rules. We should not criticize a developer for reluctance to go back to the drawing board again and again while a local Planning Board struggles with site-specific design policy. Clearly presented plans and guidelines that indicate what the community wants – and does not want – save developers and public decision makers time, money, aggravation, and potential lawsuits.

If we want new buildings to be compatible with existing neighborhoods, we must say so up front. If we want better landscaping and pedestrian connections, instead of parking lots in front of buildings, we must say so.

Will our future look more like the residential sprawl and commercial congestion in sections of nearby Long Island, or will it resemble Dutchess County's traditional landscape pattern of distinct centers, surrounded by farmlands and countryside? It is unfortunately getting easier to imagine a continuous commercial strip from Hyde Park to Fishkill, from Poughkeepsie to Pleasant Valley, from Rhinebeck to Red Hook, and along Route 22. Town and Village Boards, City Councils, and Planning Boards have useful tools – comprehensive plans, zoning laws, and subdivision regulations – and all the authority needed to ensure that change is for the better.



Random subdivisions on former farmland or more compact residential groupings that save farms and natural areas.



Overly wide and empty residential streets or narrower, tree-lined streets to help slow traffic.

