Getting to Good Planning

How SMART are Indiana’s Communities?

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Introduction

• We will use some 2-way communication tonight

• This is a live shot from one of our southern Indiana plan commissions
History of Traditional Planning and Regulation

- Separation of Uses: Industrial revolution and need to separate residential areas from heavy industry
- Suburban Sprawl: Creation of the suburbs to hold the American Dream – a “new” single-family home (supported by federal $)
- Automobile Focus: Very little attention or $ given to other modes
- Etc.....
The Shocking Truth -- Hoosiers have Supported Sprawl

Dilutes congestion & accommodates unlimited use of automobile
Continued -- The Shocking Truth -- Hoosiers have Supported Sprawl

- Distances new development from fiscal and social problems of older core areas
- Provides heterogeneous economic mix
- Fosters neighborhoods where housing values go up
- Fosters neighborhoods in which schools provide both education and comfortable socialization of youth
Defining Good Planning

- Smart Growth
- Sensible Growth
  ◆ began in 1980s
Defining Good Planning

- Smart Growth
  - Supporters include such diverse groups as Sierra Club and National Association of Homebuilders -- national coalitions
  - Each group may have slightly different spin on Smart Growth
  - Not rocket science -- common sense
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- Smart growth means using comprehensive planning to guide, design, develop, revitalize and build communities for all that:
  - have a unique sense of community and place;
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- preserve and enhance valuable natural and cultural resources;
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- equitably distribute costs and benefits of development;
- expand range of transportation, employment and housing choices in a fiscally responsible manner;
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- values long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over short term incremental geographically isolated actions
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- promotes public health and healthy communities.
What is Smart Growth?

Source: APA

- Smart Growth refocuses a larger share of regional growth to areas already served by infrastructure.
- Smart Growth reduces new growth occurring on existing farmlands and in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Development in “greenfield” areas should be planned and developed according to Smart Growth principles.
Indiana’s Issues with Smart Growth

- Term implies we’ve been practicing “dumb growth”
  - Term carries a lot of baggage
  - Say “sustainable development” instead
- No one knows what it really means
- Must come from the grass roots level, since state and local officials don’t champion
- Change doesn’t happen fast here
KK’s Concerns About Development in Indiana

- Eroding of small town character
KK’s Concerns About Development in Indiana

- Congestion not managed
KK’s Concerns About Development in Indiana

- Disappearing agricultural land (and other natural resources)
  - Center for Urban Policy & the Environment study showed Central Indiana developing land at twice the rate of population growth
KK’s Concerns About Development in Indiana

- Infrastructure not keeping up with development
- Burdens fiscal health of communities
- Auto-based
KK’s Concerns About Development in Indiana

- Little housing variety, not walkable
- No regional (or state) focus
What is Smart Growth?
Source: the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

- Survey of different groups reveals this term involves 14 basic elements.
- No group advocates all 14, but each is advocated by someone and worth noting.

There’s nothing basic about being 14!
What is Smart Growth?
Source: the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

- Agreement on 4 of 14:
  - Urban design innovation
What is Smart Growth?
Source: *the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.*

- Agreement on 4 of 14:
  - Sense of community and recognition of regional interdependence and solidarity
What is Smart Growth?
Source: *the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.*

- Agreement on 4 of 14:
  - Preserving open space and protecting the environment
What is Smart Growth?
Source: *the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.*

- Agreement on 4 of 14:
  - Infill and redevelopment of core areas
What is Smart Growth?
Source: *the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.*

- Partial Agreement on 7 of 14:
  - Promoting compact, mixed-used development
  - State encouraging localities to grow smart
  - Localities share fiscal resources
  - Regional land use coordination
  - Improving development approval process
  - More affordable housing in outlying areas
  - Public-private consensus on what Smart Growth means
What is Smart Growth?

Source: the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

- Disagreement on 3 of 14:
  - Setting physical boundaries for further growth
  - Funding new infrastructure while maintaining existing systems
  - Reducing dependency on cars
How Smart is Indiana?

urban design innovation - “D”

- Indiana’s older comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances actually discourage new urbanism (mixed-use and high-density development, pedestrian friendly communities)

- Newer comprehensive plans give modest attention, but we’re slow in adopting ordinances
How Smart is Indiana?

- Creating greater sense of community and recognition of regional interdependence -- “D”
  - Sense of community disappearing
  - Admit to economic, physical and social linkages, but don’t do much unless forced
  - Parochialism makes working on problems regionally difficult
How Smart is Indiana?

- Preserving large amounts of open space and protecting the environment -- “C-”
  - Few people publicly oppose preserving open space, but communities not doing much ($)
  - State program on erosion control meant to protect environment during development
How Smart is Indiana?

- Redeveloping inner-core areas & developing infill sites -- “C-”
  
  - Many communities cleaning up brownfields, showing more interest in downtown housing, more support for preserving historic structures and areas
How Smart is Indiana?

- Promoting compact, mixed-use development -- “F”
  
  - Higher residential density considered a NIMBY
  
  - Actual mixing of uses still difficult if not impossible because of zoning regulations
How Smart is Indiana?

- State encouragement for local governments to adopt "smart growth" planning (financial incentives, etc.) - “F”
  - No State Planning Office
  - Little $ for Planning
  - Outdated and Minimal State Laws
  - Property rights rule
How Smart is Indiana?

- Adopting fiscal resource sharing among localities -- "F"
  - Only been done by Twin Cities
  - Indianapolis’ Center Township situation
  - Unigov doesn’t address revenue sharing
How Smart is Indiana?

**Regional coordination of land-use decisions -- “D”**

- Happens in Florida and Atlanta
- Indiana home rule (and Legislature likes to “solve” local land-use problems)
- Regional transportation, not land use
- Area plan commissions haven’t met challenge
How Smart is Indiana?

- Improving development approval process -- “D”
  - Predictability and speed mean a lot to developers (they may make trade-offs)
  - We could do much better -- most communities still don’t use Hearing Officers
How Smart is Indiana?

- Creating more affordable housing -- “F”
  - Suburbs, small towns and rural areas don’t support higher densities, including multi-family
  - Zoning ordinances don’t allow “mother-in-law” apartments
How Smart is Indiana?

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How Smart is Indiana?

- Developing a public-private consensus on what “Smart Growth” means -- “D”
  - Isn’t being led by State
  - Local communities don’t know how to do this
  - Industrial/agricultural heritage of development/property rights
How Smart is Indiana?

Set physical boundaries to limit growth -- “D-”

- True urban growth boundaries are rules, not guides (Portland, Oregon)
- Our comp plans don’t direct where growth occurs
How Smart is Indiana?

- Financing new infrastructure and maintaining existing systems -- “D”
  - State’s impact fee ordinance a failure
  - Communities defer maintenance until crisis situation due to funding
How Smart is Indiana?

- Reducing dependency on cars -- “C-
  - Don’t have densities needed for transit
  - Raising gas tax politically unpopular
  - We love our cars
  - Pedestrian friendly communities are exception, instead of rule
Indiana’s Grade

- What grade would you give? -- “D”

Now rate your community...
Use APA’s Core Smart Growth Principles:

- INCREASED CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
- BALANCED, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PLANS FOR INCREASED CHOICE
- REGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS
- EFFICIENT USE OF LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE (high-density development, infill, redevelopment, adaptive re-use)
- CENTRAL CITY VITALITY
- GREATER MIX OF USES AND HOUSING CHOICES FOCUSED AROUND HUMAN-SCALE, MIXED-USE CENTERS ACCESSIBLE BY MULTIPLE TRANSPORTATION MODES
- CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
- CREATION OR PRESERVATION OF A "SENSE OF PLACE"
How Smart is your Community?

- INCREASED MEANINGFUL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
How Smart is your Community?

- BALANCED, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PLANS FOR INCREASED CHOICE
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- REGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS
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How Smart is your Community?

CREATION OR PRESERVATION OF A "SENSE OF PLACE"
BREAK
Are you Discouraged? Why Smart isn’t Easy

- Short-term benefits go to households; long-term costs go to society
Why Smart isn’t Easy

- “Prairie” philosophy: land is unlimited and meant to be developed
Why Smart isn’t Easy

- Costs of development are not made explicit (build now, pay later)
Why Smart isn’t Easy

- Plan commissions, builders, and consumers reinforce historic patterns
What APA is Doing

Smart Growth Codes, 2003

- U.S. EPA funded development of guidebook on smart land-development regulations.
- PAS Report 556, *Smart Codes: Model Land-Development Regulations*, which includes 21 model codes on a variety of topics promoting the U.S. EPA Smart Growth Principles.
- http://www.planning.org/research/smartgrowth/
What You Can Do

http://www.epa.gov/piedpage/scorecards/index.htm

- Be an advocate for good planning in your community
- Educate your peers, officials, developers and citizens
- Do a more detailed “Smart Growth” audit of your community
How do we Get Good Planning?

- Be proactive -- no one will do it for you
- Where should you start?
Good Planning -- The Comprehensive Plan

- Central core document for planning in your community
- If your plan isn’t smart, then nothing else you do will truly be smart...
Good Planning -- The Comprehensive Plan

- Vision, Goals, Objectives & Policies must reflect the policies we discussed
- But there is no “one size fits all”
Good Traits in your Comp Plan

- Future land use element includes all types of residential, including multi-family, in same area
- Includes both minimum and maximum residential density
- Transportation element of plan promotes street connections and several modes of transportation (including bikes and peds)
- Prioritizes growth areas
- Includes neighborhood commercial and mixed use near residential
Good Traits in your Comp Plan

- Environmental analysis of opportunities & constraints
- Policies to preserve resources community wants protected
- Policies for water and sewer line expansion
- Policy that capital investments support future land use plan, transportation plan, etc.
- Includes regional coordination policy
- Contains implementation/action plan
Do you need a new Comprehensive Plan?

- How old is your plan?
Do annual check-up of comprehensive plan:

- Is there still support for plan?
- Are you following it?
- Is it doing what it is supposed to?
- Have conditions changed since plan was done?
- Have plans in adjacent jurisdictions changed?
- Have other plans changed (INDOT, utilities, etc.)
- Are there new uses to address?
Do you need a new Comprehensive Plan?

- Sensible Growth Check-up from *Sensible Tools Handbook for Indiana*, NIRPC, 2007
Implement your Plan

- Zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance are biggest implementation tools
- Need to be in sync with comp plan
- Always do update after new plan
Update your Subdivision Ordinance

- Typically less controversial than zoning
- Less subjective -- technical focus
- Faster and easier to do this first?
Update your Subdivision Ordinance

- Indiana law allows local government to set standards
- Need technical expertise & innovation
- Review best practices
Best Practices/ Innovation Example

- Low Impact Development -- works with nature to manage stormwater close to source.
- Treats stormwater as resource rather than waste.
- Resources:
  - Local Soil & Water Conservation District
  - Low Impact Development Center, [www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/](http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/)
  - Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials, [http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools.htm](http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools.htm)
Update your Zoning Ordinance

- Indiana law allows local government to set standards
- Need expertise & innovation

Give some examples....
Update your Zoning Ordinance


See EPA's new "Essential Smart Growth Fixes For Urban And Suburban Zoning Codes"
EPA’s Smart Growth Fixes for Zoning Codes:

- 1. Allow or Require Mixed-Use Zones
- 2. Use Urban Dimensions in Urban Places
- 3. Rein In and Reform the Use of PUDs
- 4. Fix Parking Requirements
- 5. Increase Density and Intensity in Centers
- 6. Modernize Street Standards
- 7. Enact Standards to Foster Walkable Places
- 8. Designate and Support Preferred Growth Areas
- 9. Use Green Infrastructure to Manage Stormwater
- 10. Adopt Smart Annexation Policies
- 11. Encourage Appropriate Development Densities on The Edge
Smart Growth Fix Example -- PUDs

- PUDs intended to allow flexibility in design, take advantage of unique situation and be higher quality
- PUDs were over-used; quicker and easier than fixing outdated zoning code
- We created a monster!
Smart Growth Fix Example -- PUDs

- Remove or substantially reduce the need to use PUDs by fixing outdated districts -- just adopt preferred standards
- Create basic standards for PUDs as starting point (e.g., open space, TND design standards)
- Establish PUD locations (by policy or future land use map)
- Establish minimum size parcel to use PUD
- Establish a list of community benefits (like trails) that can be traded for flexibility in use, density, etc.
You Can Do This!

Questions & Comments?

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