Various ramblings on innovating comprehensive plans to make them more implementable and to get results

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Planning is not just a tool for controlling land use and development.

Vision for the future

Reality check – problems, needs, opportunities

Best ideas to improve a community and get desired growth & development

Mobilize people and resources – start in action – Implement
Planning is about CHANGE.

Main event principle

Do people resist change?

Innovation
Enabling law

- Gives local governments powers and procedures for planning, zoning, subdivision & land development, etc.
- Enables local governments to create planning commissions, departments, staff
- Not a comprehensive plan template
Then and now

• Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Co., United States Supreme Court (1926)

• Smart growth
• Value of place (quality built and natural environment, place-based assets)
• Functional integration
Agree or disagree?

- Preparing a comprehensive plan is a worthy goal.
- Improving your community is a worthy goal. Preparing a comprehensive plan is a means to that goal.
Tradition, innovation

• Traditional approach – A comprehensive plan is a guide to decisions to be made and actions to be taken after the plan is completed.

• Innovation – A comprehensive plan is a record memorializing decisions made and actions committed to and initiated during a planning process.
Characteristics of a good plan
Handout – Berke & Godschalk – University of North Carolina
– “Searching for the Good Plan”

• Goals reflect unique public values and vision.
• Policies are sufficiently specific to be tied to definite actions.
• Includes commitments to action with timelines, responsible parties, and workable financing.
Questions to ensure a plan is implementable

Handout – Michael Chandler – *Planning Commissioner’s Journal*
– “Preparing an Implementable Comprehensive Plan”

• Is the plan realistic?
• Is the plan understandable?
• Is the plan citizen focused?
• Is the plan problem- and solution-specific?
Characteristics of APA/PA award winning plans

• Efficient in words, minimal jargon
• Use of accepted publication layout principles
• Ideas illustrated by drawings, photos & simulations

• Findings related to real issues, with detailed recommendations
• Inclusion of ready-to-use samples of tools & practices
5 keys for an implementable plan

1. Focus the plan on relevant, real community issues
5 keys for an implementable plan

2. Organize the plan the way local officials and citizens think
5 keys for an implementable plan

3. Devise practical and workable recommendations
5 keys for an implementable plan

4. Recruit partners and create capacity to implement the plan
5 keys for an implementable plan

5. Get local ownership of the plan and commitment to implement it