

# Proceedings Summary

from the

## Complete Communities

DELAWARE  
SUMMIT  
2012

developing inclusive,  
efficient, healthy &  
sustainable destinations

**November 13, 2012**  
**Dover Downs Hotel & Casino**

event co-sponsored by

Delaware Department of Transportation  
*www.deldot.gov*

Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination  
*stateplanning.delaware.gov*

National Association of REALTORS®  
*www.realtor.org*



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## **Complete Communities Delaware Summit 2012 Proceedings Summary**

### **Welcome**

**Connie Holland**, *Director, Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC)*

**Jerome Lewis**, *Director, Institute for Public Administration, University of Delaware (IPA)*

**Ed O'Donnell**, *Policy Scientist, IPA*

**Connie Holland** made opening remarks, welcomed the attendees, thanked all those involved in the Complete Communities project and the November 13th Summit, and introduced Dr. Lewis.

**Jerome Lewis** emphasized that the summit was intended to provoke discussions of how to collectively shape planning for Complete Communities in Delaware that focuses on engaging citizens; providing housing and transportation options; building resilient local economies; designing attractive, accessible, vibrant communities; and maintaining a good quality of life. He thanked staff members from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), OSPC, and IPA who helped to coordinate the Summit and work on the Complete Communities project. Lewis acknowledged support for the event from the National Association of REALTORS® and its Delaware affiliate. He also recognized the diverse group of attendees—particularly those from the private sector and Delaware local governments.

**Ed O'Donnell** then welcomed and thanked attendees, speakers, staff, and the co-sponsors of Complete Communities. He stated that the purpose of the day's Summit was to bring together the public and private sectors, hear from community leaders and pilot communities, and engage in an ongoing conversation that would hopefully include an annual reconvening of this Summit. O'Donnell then introduced keynote speaker Ed McMahon, a nationally renowned authority on historic preservation, land conservation, and sustainable development and growth.

### **Keynote Address**

**Ed McMahon**, *Charles Fraser Chair for Sustainable Development, Urban Land Institute*  
([www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org))

**Ed McMahon** focused his remarks on the adaptability of American communities to changes and challenges. He defined community sustainability as the capacity to meet current needs while leaving a legacy that will serve the needs of future generations. To McMahon, this involves seeking win-win solutions whenever possible for both local economies *and* conservation efforts, balancing people and the environment so as to endure and prosper in the long term.

He explored coming trends and challenges, including the rapid transmission of ideas, global competition, and the clustering of educated populations. Rapid demographic changes will add over 100 million people to the United States by 2050 and make childless households the new norm. Meanwhile, swift technological change is already here, as e-commerce reduces “bricks and mortar” retail outlets in

size and number while trends indicate an ongoing “green shift” in consumer attitudes and continued strong growth in the technology, health, and education sectors.

Embracing these new realities will involve the leveraging of public-private partnerships, high-value positioning, and education and health care both as key assets and core industries. The future also brings substantial challenges—an increasing number of extreme weather events; damage to tourism revenue and community pride through ugly, cookie-cutter growth; and ongoing sprawl that promulgates obesity, social isolation, and loss of community identity. Choosing where and how *not* to develop will be as important as where and how *to* develop.

There is growing recognition that placemaking in American communities can address some of these challenges. The positive, visual actualization of a community’s image and brand is an integral part of economic vitality and quality of life. For example, the environment surrounding a home is the single greatest contributor to its value. Communities can preserve the charm of landscape and architectural features just as they do landmarks, thereby improving first impressions, enhancing property values, and preserving unique traits that help the tourism industry thrive.

In the midst of a trend toward relocation of residents and businesses back to downtown cores, another key approach to embracing the future is the promotion of smart growth. Rather than building high-rises, communities can achieve density with high-quality, compact (i.e., four- to five-story height) design that includes residential, retail and office space, green space, and compensating amenities. This type of mixed-use infill or redevelopment can be undertaken in downtown empty retail strips, and their parking lots, and can help to address the current overstock of big-box buildings, strip-mall retail space, and single-family housing, as well as relieving traffic congestion and managing population growth without encroaching upon agricultural or natural land use. Walkability, the most sought-after community feature, is also part of this approach and can be enhanced both in urban centers and car-centered “edge cities” such as Tyson’s Corner, Va., which is developing master plans for a street grid, sidewalks and rail transit stops .

Finally, although vision counts, implementation is crucial and can only happen if strong leaders and committed citizens inventory local assets and develop a shared vision based on enhancing those assets, educating and incentivizing before regulating and prioritizing purpose over cost. Action plans need to incorporate collaboration (e.g., between the public and private sectors), investments in infrastructure, and being selective among development proposals.

## **Opportunities and Challenges: Lessons Learned from the Development Community**

*Moderator: **Connie Holland**, Director, OSPC*

***Greg Moore**, Principal, Becker Morgan Group, Inc.; Acting President, Downtown Dover Partnership ([www.downtowndoverpartnership.com](http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com))*

***Preston Schell**, Co-Founder and President, The Ocean Atlantic Companies ([oacompanies.com](http://oacompanies.com))*

***Jeff Lang**, President/Owner, Lang Development Group ([www.langdevelopmentgroup.com](http://www.langdevelopmentgroup.com))*

After an introduction by **Connie Holland**, **Greg Moore** presented projects being undertaken by the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP). DDP was founded in 2009 to revitalize downtown Dover and is implementing a vision of downtown Dover as a vibrant, populated central district with a unique character. Visitor destinations, multi-modal connectivity, and mixed-use redevelopment will all enhance downtown Dover as a visitor destination, a workplace, and a place to call home.

Activities currently underway include brownfield conversion; beautification of city gateways; enhancement and expansion of green space, the street grid, and public safety measures; and the demolition or rehabilitation of aging buildings. In addition, the new, relocated Dover Transit Center, built in partnership with DelDOT, now houses bus and taxi service and will provide railway access and ticket sales in the future. Downtown social-service projects are also well underway, including Interfaith Housing, a faith-based initiative to provide meals and housing to homeless individuals.

Furthermore, plans have been drawn up for city-owned properties that are intended to attract developers and/or builders, expedite approvals, and implement DDP goals. These walkable, mixed-use, stop-and-shop models feature hidden parking, green space, and public space connected to the downtown grid. A parking lot–consolidation project that will improve traffic patterns and create new parking for visitor destinations is also ready for implementation.

The longer-term goals of the DDP include connecting nearby educational, and healthcare institutions—and the students and knowledge workers within them—to the downtown core, as has been done in Newark, Del. The Wesley College campus has already been transformed and unified by a new central pedestrian thoroughfare featuring public green space. The next phase will create a corridor from Wesley to downtown that will be anchored by city and college institutional buildings. Similarly, connections are planned from downtown to Legislative Hall and Bayhealth’s Kent General Hospital. As part of this, the transportation network, to be created by biking and walking paths along the St. Jones River, will feature recreation opportunities, brick paving, park-style lighting, and seating to echo downtown design elements while giving travel paths a park feel.

With each new development, **Preston Schell’s** experience with residential and commercial development in Sussex County has led him to ask whether he would personally enjoy living there. Posing this question highlights the high value of certain amenities and the community’s overall character, as well as potential flaws in the development.

Schell also feels that mixed-use developments are more easily built in better economic times and that barriers created by existing zoning, parking, and fire codes make viable mixed-use development much more difficult to achieve. Fortunately, recent progress has been made on working with governments on modifying existing regulations. More events like the Summit are necessary to direct public- and private-sector activities around such issues and implement actions planned. Finally, finding retailers open to compact development is another challenge. In his experience, without regulatory or design guidelines, developers of large retail stores will chose conventional “big-box” design on suburban sites with extensive parking over multi-story, compact lots in more built-up areas.

**Connie Holland** commented that municipalities are now starting to consider issues such as more flexible, form-based codes—a land-development regulatory tool that places primary emphasis on the physical form of the built environment with the end goal of producing a specific type of place. She added that it will be vital to include retailer developers in future discussions so as to better coordinate such issues between the private and public sectors.

**Jeff Lang** highlighted the need for developers to understand the nuances of their local markets that diverge from typical market traits. In Newark, for example, rental housing is lacking for older adults and students who wish to remain in the community after graduation. Similar to Schell, he related experience with fire/building code restrictions, building height limits, and other development mandates that may create roadblocks to good and/or innovative design that meets market demand.

Lang also stated that due to investor and financing timelines, developers’ projects are often too time-sensitive to allow the pursuit of variances or ordinance revisions with local governments. Planned design innovations may be compromised in order to meet regulatory guidelines while trying to meet commercial-loan timelines.

As a result, Lang recommended that municipalities be proactive in reducing these types of regulatory barriers so as to assist developers and encourage the types of elements involved in complete communities—design variety, quality, compactness, street connectivity, and the expression of community character. He felt that planning/zoning officials and the banking community need to work together with developers in order to strike a balance among political, financial, logistical, and planning issues. There is some collaboration and discussion happening, but more is needed.

**Questions were posed to the panel** about financing the ongoing maintenance of walking and biking paths, providing parking waivers for compact development, and the rationale for mixed-use development. The consensus was that although developers initially maintain paths and trails, maintenance fees will become a public issue in the long term if not the short term and that cooperation between developers and municipalities is essential. Meanwhile, the tax base will eventually grow to compensate for such fees due to the positive impact that such a desirable amenity has on property values.

As for parking requirements, panelists felt that they can hurt development if they are too restrictive and advised municipal officials to strive to achieve a balance among parking availability, green space, and

aesthetic appeal. Finally, although residents living in the upper stories of mixed-use development do provide a customer base for the retail occupants, access to parking and public transit for non-resident consumers is just as important. Furthermore, the presence of residents populates the area streetscape, which improves both the image of the area as a desirable, attractive shopping destination and enhances the perception of good public safety.

## **Complete Communities: Form, Placemaking, and MIplace**

**James Tischler**, *Director, Community Development, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (miplace.org)*

**James Tischler** presented an exploration of the impact of placemaking on economic development. There is growing recognition that a community's aesthetic appeal, connectivity, and cohesion are factors in its successful economic development. First, physical form matters. Form, the arrangement of mass and space, "sets the stage" on which the "play" (our social and economic activity) takes place. Good form naturally sustains vibrant social and economic activities and does not require large amounts of capital. What is required however, are approaches integral to good form, such as attention to regional place location, inclusion of diverse physical elements, and natural features. The end result—psychologically healthy, positive emotional responses to a distinct sense of place.

***physical form + social & economic activity = emotional sense of place***

If a sense of place originates in the form that underlies social and economic activity, then placemaking involves actions used to achieve transformative physical form outcomes. Placemaking can be one activity or a multi-part project. It may be programmed or spontaneous, generate investment, or may result from other development activities. Whatever its causes, the result is good form that naturally attracts social and economic activity.

Common placemaking approaches include building up and out; increasing density; focusing on the appearance of sidewalks, parking, and buildings; and shaping spaces at the point where form is most visible—namely, at the boundary between the private and public spheres. Other common components include complete streets projects, transit improvements, transfer of development rights (TOD) to pursue infill, form-based regulation to encourage placemaking development proposals, and charrette processes to build consensus and accelerate approvals.

The placemaking trend is gaining momentum because livable neighborhoods and social downtowns attract human talent. Furthermore, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials are increasingly demanding a sense of place (e.g., 80% of Millennials hope to live in/near an urban core). They want to have it all—recreation options, cultural and social amenities, and green space; a variety of transportation modes and housing types, prices, and densities; and proximity to creative, innovative, well-paying employment. Urban centers, edge cities, and key regional corridors are going to become primary locations for redevelopment that aims for those goals.

This is why MIplace aims to shift the mainstream development paradigm in Michigan to one of place-based livability. It is not intended to be just another government program and will not dictate to

invested parties, focusing instead on being market and data driven. Because MIplace intends to increase employment and earnings, it is collaborating significantly with economic development agencies in targeting investments that will better attract employment and talent.

MIplace also employs a top-down/bottom-up approach that values broad-based local and regional participation by stakeholder groups in promoting and developing the initiative. Educating stakeholders is a critical part of achieving understanding and participation. MIplace is compiling existing knowledge and practices across disciplines to create a basis for training, policy and program development, best practices, and outcome-based measurement rubrics.

## **Delaware's Complete Communities Project and Innovative Ideas and Tools for Participatory and Multi-Sector Engagement**

### **Overview of the Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware Project**

*Marcia Scott, Associate Policy Scientist, IPA*

*Ted Patterson, Planner, IPA*

*Ed O'Donnell, Policy Scientist, IPA*

*Richard Carmean, City Manager, City of Milford ([www.cityofmilford.com](http://www.cityofmilford.com))*

**Marcia Scott** provided an overview of the Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware project. She explained why local governments must do more than just plan for future land use and prepare comprehensive plans. First, we're finding out that neglecting community-design principles is making us unhealthy and contributing to a rise in obesity-related chronic diseases. Second, sociability has been overlooked; people want to live, work, and play in communities that have a sense of place and unique character. Third, transportation equity is needed for the one-third of Americans who do not drive. Fourth, studies show a clear connection between walkable environments and the economic viability of a town. Finally, we can't discount the importance of protecting and preserving our natural resources and other historic assets.

Scott stated that the project was conducted in collaboration with DelDOT and OSP. The purpose is to develop a framework to plan for complete communities in Delaware and determine what planning principles, design strategies, and/or public policies support complete communities. She explained that two pilot communities were selected in Delaware—the City of Milford, which is a growing community that straddles Kent and Sussex Counties, and the Town of Elsmere, which is a small, built-out community in New Castle County. A comprehensive outreach strategy was developed to engage stakeholders in each community, including the development of a ***Planning for Complete Communities*** website. A series of three facilitated workshops were held in each community to obtain input from diverse stakeholders on what constitutes complete community, how a community can evolve to achieve a vision for complete communities, and what barriers (regulatory or other) need to be overcome to achieve this vision. Best practices and lessons learned in those workshops will be incorporated into the complete-communities process going forward, as will feedback from today's summit. Stakeholder engagement and enthusiasm from officials will propel this project forward in

Delaware. Scott asked Summit attendees to provide input on a form that will be used to develop future complete-communities planning tools.

**Ted Patterson** then elaborated on the series of three workshops in both Elsmere and Milford. Workshop #1 addressed how participants define a complete community. IPA staff presented major elements of complete communities to participants seeking their input on which elements were most important to their town. IPA staff also asked participants what was missing; if different elements were more pertinent to their town's circumstances participants were asked to identify them.

Workshop #2 engaged participants in a Visual Preference Survey (VPS). The purpose of the VPS was to further define, through participant preferences, what design and land use characteristics were optimal for each town. While an online version was also available to citizens, the in-person version of the VPS proved to be ineffective, in the context of this project, because it was too generic and not relevant to each specific town's interests. Further, participants felt the VPS was unrealistic for their town. The VPS is more conducive for specific community design and architectural preference exercises.

Workshop #3 was the most successful of the three workshops held. During Workshop #3 participants moved from station to station, each focused on different town/city-specific issues. Participants at each station were provided with maps, graphics, and data to inform discussion.

Consensus building was a positive outcome of the process. For example, visual renderings of a Main Street-type transformation of Route 2 in Elsmere generated positive discussions around topics such as lifting prohibitive regulations like height restrictions and hurdles to allowing on-street dining.

One important take away from the workshop process was that often it is the case that the loosening of regulations can lead to more innovative development and design. Often density, zoning, parking, setback, and height restriction regulations impede private developers from producing building products that would support complete communities concepts

**Ed O'Donnell** discussed how to identify what a town needs in order to be considered complete. Because the needs of each community are different, public involvement and consensus building is essential. Stakeholders can be engaged to provide input on priorities for their community, such as methods of enhancing mobility and transportation options to promote connectivity, community design, placemaking principles, patterns of land use, opportunities for recreation and well-being, housing choice, and economic development. Some communities that are mostly built-out may need to grow up rather than out. In such cases, completing the community involves flexibility and responsiveness in seeking opportunities as they arise. Whatever the case, engaging all sectors of the community in this work is crucial but can be difficult to do on a continual, meaningful basis for long-range planning projects. O'Donnell concluded by stating that some public-engagement tools will be highlighted later in the session.

**Richard Carmean** described the Milford experience with the Complete Communities project. As City Manager, he was pleased that Milford was asked to be a pilot community, has found the process enjoyable, and is looking forward to following through on input and outcomes. He also provided some

background context for issues in Milford, explaining that during its period of sudden growth, when construction in Milford shifted from twelve- to 350-units per year, the city achieved good results with only a small increase in city staffing. Also, Milford has invested time and energy to think through consequences of annexation approvals. Milford has not allowed annexing to leapfrog and continues to prioritize the preservation of open space and agricultural heritage of the community.

Carmean thanked Scott and the Complete Communities Milford team for coordinating workshops that engaged stakeholders and generated valuable input. He came away with priorities for Milford's development—the Main Street revitalization, for example, which he hopes will become a joint city/volunteer effort, and retaining the character of Milford even as the City continues to evolve.

### **Community Engagement Tools: The Charrette, a Unique Planning Technique for Delaware**

*David Edgell, Kent County Circuit-Rider Planner, OSPC (stateplanning.delaware.gov)*

**David Edgell** presented some of the advantages to charrette-style planning. He explained that in the year-long traditional planning process, continuity can be affected by the turnover in public participation in the time-span from initial public outreach to the adoption of a plan. To offer an alternative, Edgell and other staff at OSPC have completed a five-day training with the National Charrette Institute (NCI) in how to lead the charrette process.

In contrast to the long process described above, a charrette process involves a vastly compressed timeframe and tight feedback loops. Charrettes can be initiated by government, an agency, a private developer or as a collaborative effort, can address both details and the whole, and can achieve general consensus among decision-makers on a feasible plan. Charrettes can contribute to any planning project, but Edgell feels that they are better suited to projects more limited in scope, rather than comprehensive-planning processes.

Ideally held near or on the site of the project, the charrette begins with a public-vision meeting, input from which fuels the development of conceptual options by planning staff. Further public-meeting review then generates feedback on those options. Planners choose the preferred plan and hold an open house review, finalize the plan, and then confirm it at one last public meeting. All of this takes place in just one week. The intensive nature of a charrette is what makes it unique and is also why it requires at least four consecutive days for completion.

The Town of Smyrna decided to hold a charrette focused on, a three-mile corridor along U.S. Route 13. This commercial strip needed attention because it had developed an identity crisis once State Route 1 was completed in 1992, effectively bypassing the town. Edgell facilitated the charrette in Smyrna as part of a team of nine that handled the detailed schedule and complex logistics in a well-choreographed effort.

Coordinators went above and beyond to involve stakeholders as well as decision-makers through newspaper publicity, PR on both the town website and a dedicated website, and flyers in the mailbox of every property along the corridor. Stakeholder meetings provided opportunities to hear about priorities for and opinions about development of the corridor. Smyrna citizens, business-owners, and other stakeholders talked about the evolution of the corridor into an unhappy space with no clear sense of place or purpose. Meanwhile, planners worked on a market study and strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-and-threats (SWOT) analysis that explored local trends for strip, convenience, and big-box retail, as well as options for new housing and then used the data to inform the charrette process.

At a kick-off meeting, attendees discussed, mapped and designed alternatives for the corridor. The intentionally accessible, low-tech, interactive approach used printed-out maps, tracing paper, markers, dots, and flip-charts. Two themes emerged from the meeting—an improved commerce corridor, and a complete-streets approach that incorporates mixed-use redevelopment to enhance an environment in which to live, work, shop, and play. Planners then fleshed out and presented these themes to the public through a weeklong open house at City Hall. Townspeople were curious about the project, awareness grew around town, and many people stopped by to visit and comment.

A follow-up workshop showcased groundbreaking presentations and models by DelDOT that visualized the impacts of traffic, pedestrian routes, travel patterns, and build-outs in the two scenarios. The models sparked much discussion and highlighted the efficiencies of denser, mixed-use, more connective development. The planners used input from the public and stakeholders to develop a final plan that contained the best elements of both alternatives, and validated the public's acceptance of the plan at the final meeting. As a next step, planners are now working on form-based codes for Smyrna to reduce red tape and increase flexibility for developers. Overall, the Smyrna charrette process accomplished a great deal in a very short time period. Its conversations, visualizations, and public input yielded valuable results—a draft plan and an implementation timeline in just four months.

### **Community Engagement Tools: Use of the weTable Model to Engage the Public in Land-Use Planning**

*Bill McGowan, Extension Agent—Community Development, University of Delaware Carvel Research and Education Center*

*Ed Lewandowski, Coastal Communities Development Specialist –Delaware Sea Grant Marine Advisory Service, UD ([www.scc.udel.edu](http://www.scc.udel.edu))*

**Bill McGowan** began by discussing his conviction that planners can engage decision-makers and the general public in a meaningful, lasting way. To do so, planners must believe that the public can successfully address such issues if given the chance to process information and voice options and opinions. That being said, thought must be given to how to create the catalyst for that process. One way to do so is to tell a story using visuals and then let the public respond to and brainstorm about that story.

Some programs, like CommunityViz and SimCity 2000, yield engaging visuals but can be challenging to operate. Another option, the weTable, is a very effective tool that provides a visually stimulating, user-friendly alternative. It allows participants to start making decisions about the benefits, costs, and consequences of real-life zoning and is affordable and manageable to set up. The equipment needed for a weTable consists of a laptop, a projector, Bluetooth technology, SmoothBoard software (cost \$30.00), and a Nintendo Wii-mote. An infrared-light pen serving as a mouse controls the laptop's functions as it projects images onto the table.

**Ed Lewandowski** explained the practical application of the weTable in Delaware land-use planning, such as development of the Bridgeville-Greenwood master plan. Starting with the base scenario – what exists there today—two working groups each used a weTable to find efficiencies and options, then merged to create a composite scenario from the two sets of results they had generated. In just a few months, the weTable work completed a public process, the results of which satisfied both regional and state comprehensive-planning requirements.

In weTable workshops, citizens, elected officials and stakeholders are taken through “what-if” scenarios based on local knowledge, employing user-friendly maps and colored tiles representing 100-acre blocks. Used to represent varieties of land use and population density, the 100-acre block is not only a useful and manageable concept but is also the size of the average development. As the landscape is painted with these colored blocks, the group can talk about density and use of form-based codes, visualize growth and change, and determine impacts, costs, and benefits based on the model. Additional advantages to the weTable include instant feedback; GIS-sourced, locally based data layers; and real-time decision-making. In addition, weTable models can showcase the local, county, or state level of scale and are customizable to reflect local dynamics, meaning that this type of process can work in Delaware communities of different size.

## **Building a Toolkit for Housing Choice: “Missing Middle” Housing Typologies and a Case Study of “Cottage” Housing in the Pacific Northwest**

**Linda Pruitt**, *Co-Founder and President, The Cottage Company*, ([www.cottagecompany.com](http://www.cottagecompany.com))

**Linda Pruitt**, a real estate professional and developer, founded The Cottage Company in the Seattle-metropolitan area in 1996. The Cottage Company has been nationally recognized as a leader in providing new models for sustainable living and smart-housing choices. Energy-efficient, single-family homes are developed as in-fill within existing single-family neighborhoods that are close to jobs and transportation. Homes are crafted with character, charm, and a compact design.

Ms. Pruitt showed a promotional video that showcased interior features, lot advantages, and the high resale values of homes in one of the eight cottage-community developments. The Cottage Community concept is aimed at the “missing middle” in the housing market. It provides alternatives to the single-family detached home through several medium-density housing types (cottages, row homes, courtyard housing) that are suitable for both infill and new housing and are very appropriate for retirees, empty-

nesters, and young single professionals. Essential features of cottage communities include opportunities for community engagement in a central “commons,” as well as a “cozy” community footprint very different from traditional subdivisions (e.g., some cottages are separated only by lawn and sidewalks).

Locations for cottage-community developments must be targeted; they are not appropriate everywhere, as they must be built in a walkable community where parking does not drive the site plan and where residents have immediate access to amenities. Pruitt outlined plans for fitting this type of housing into a prospective town, as well as providing an actual site plan for a cottage community in Shoreline, Wash.

In addition, many local governments have zoning codes that prohibit the development of cottage communities. In many states, of these housing types are prohibited by existing zoning codes. (The existing-type housing stock of this size was built prior to the Second World War and the existence of zoning.) As a result, demonstration codes or form-based codes are required in order to allow for this type of construction. Pruitt showed examples of such codes in a number of cities across the country, and credited *formbasedcodes.org* for its helpfulness when working with local governments.

In Washington state, several jurisdictions in the Puget Sound area have adopted cottage housing ordinances to allow an alternative use of land with an existing underlying zoning. Ordinances must be tailored to the needs of each individual jurisdiction. Ordinance consideration may address needs to redefine density; allow infill development; and provide clustering of units, height limits, reductions of floor area, and common open space. As for return on investment (ROI), Great views and high-quality, LEED-certified design guarantee high sale prices for these cottages. In fact, by the numbers, this type of housing shows a greater ROI than does traditional large-lot suburban housing. The cost of between \$110 and \$140 per square foot is very favorable, and the target markets of single women aged 30-80 and empty-nesters offer an affluent clientele who prefer to invest less time, money, and effort in property maintenance.

### **Questions following the presentation yielded additional information**

At present, there are no universal cottage designs, but some could well be developed. Cottage indoor amenities include bathrooms and upstairs bedrooms; designs include porches not just for décor but also to support community-building. As for cottages’ site orientations, whether the rear of the house faces the street or sidewalk depends on the site plan. Some do, but others have wrap-around porches; others feature cottages back-to-back. Meanwhile, row homes developed similarly to cottages feature a rear porch facing the street and sidewalk.

Cooperative efforts with fire marshals have varied, depending on the jurisdiction. Some are up for innovation, while others have been resistant. However, the addition of sprinklers to building plans, which increases the cost per unit by \$3,000, can greatly mitigate fire marshals’ concerns. Finally, cottages are not considered condominiums; homeowners own their lots.