

WORKING WITH PLANNERS

A Mass in Motion Webinar

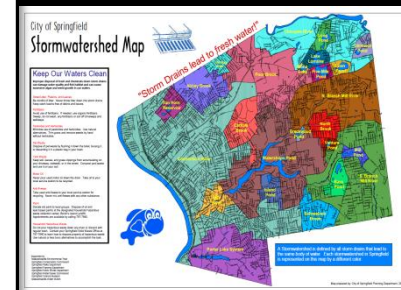
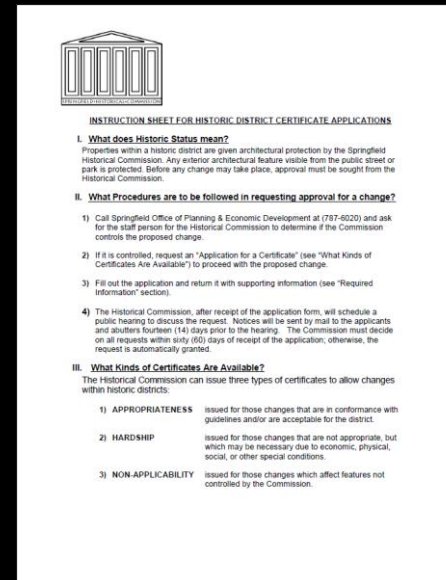
Presenter: Barry Keppard, AICP,
Regional Planner with the Metropolitan
Area Planning Council (MAPC)



Doing My Job

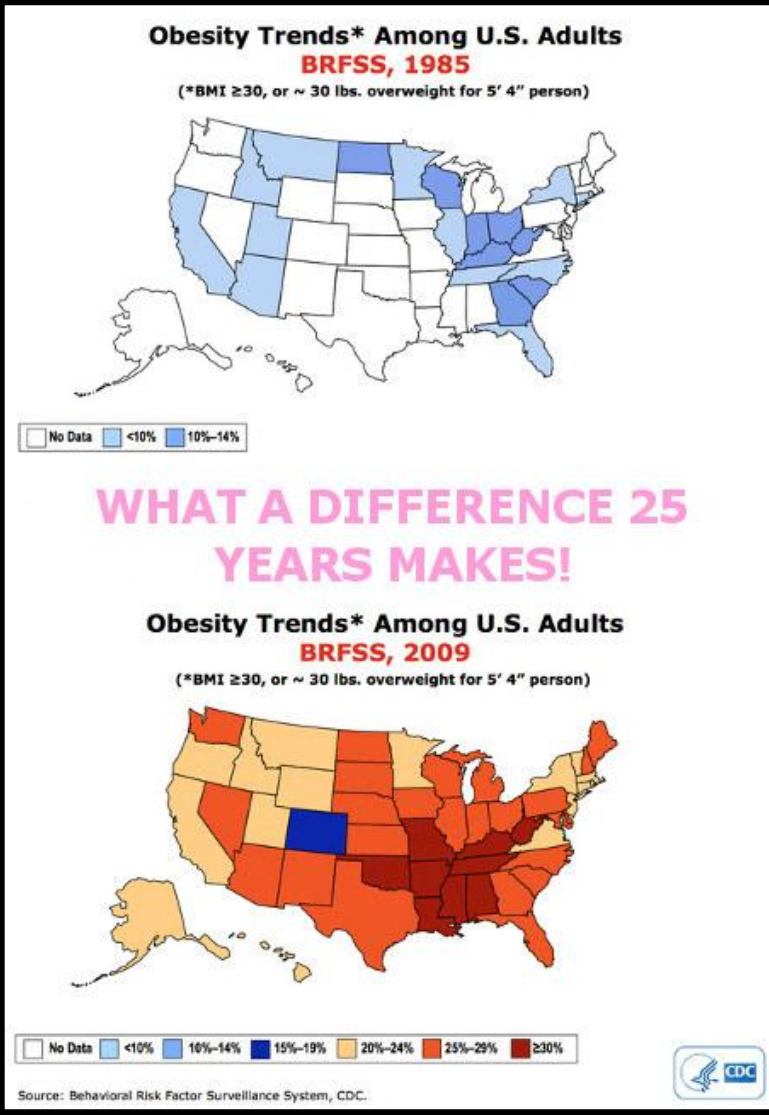
As I knew it to be...

- Planner in Springfield
- Working included
 - Zoning Reviews
 - Historic Design Review
 - Stormwater Management
 - Redevelopment of City-Owned Parcels
 - Other responsibilities



Eye Opening

How did I miss this?



- In Springfield in 2004
 - Exceeded state averages for heart disease, coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

10 YEARS ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY EATING THROUGH COMMUNITY DESIGN

communities in action | what we do | our approach | events & resources | media center | about albd | search ALBD

Active Living By Design creates community-led change by working with local and national partners to build a culture of active living and healthy eating. Established by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, ALBD is part of the North Carolina Institute for Public Health at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Our vision is healthy communities, where routine physical activity and healthy eating are accessible, easy and affordable to everyone.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities
Supporting Community Action to Prevent Childhood Obesity

ALBD is running the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities national program. Learn more

featured community

Where Do You Spend Most of Your Day?

"The reason to start a worksite wellness program is simple, according to Julie Jackson"

READ MORE →

resources | news | events

Creating healthy places to live, work and play across North Carolina

community

community action model

5P: Physical Projects

Physical projects are strategies to directly impact built environments, removing barriers to physical activity or healthy eating (e.g., trails, pedestrian improvements at intersections, healthy local markets, community gardens).

- Learn more about physical projects
- Read physical projects case studies

Making the Connection

- **Learned about**
 - MA Department of Public Health
 - Creation of a Statewide Health Plan
- **Partnered with**
 - Springfield Department of Public Health
 - American Heart Association
 - Mason Square Health Center
 - Springfield College
 - And others



Learned

Same goals,
traveling on
parallel paths

Where Will You Find Planners?

If you really want find one

- **Planners in a wide range of fields**
 - Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Environmental
 - Public, Private Non-Profit, Private For Profit
 - Municipal, Regional, State, Federal
- **For Today's Discussion**
 - Municipal Planner (City or Town)
 - Regional Planners (Regional Planning Agency)



Municipal Planner

Context

■ Position

- May be individual
- May be part of larger department or division
- May be contractor



Municipal Planner

Context

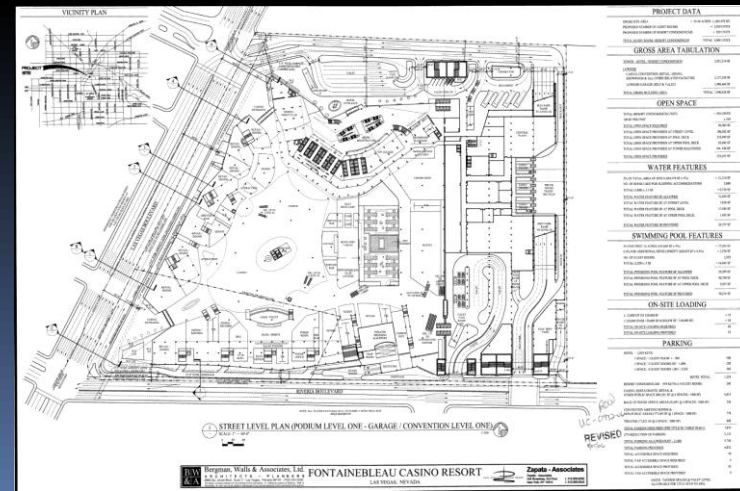
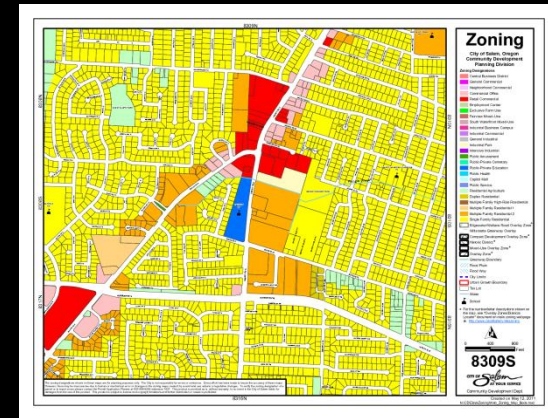
- **Staff to the Planning Board**
 - In Towns, Planning Board typically elected
- **Works with and Coordinates with other departments**
 - Public Works, Conservation Commission, Community Preservation Committee, etc.
- **Function sometimes served by other staff**
 - Community Development/Economic Development
 - Planning Board
 - Town Manager or Administrator



Municipal Planner

Roles

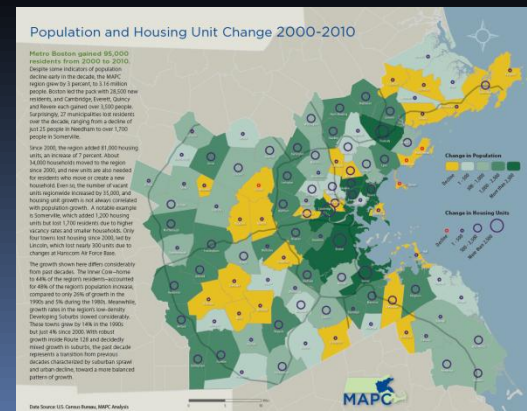
- **Current Planning**
 - Implementation of Comprehensive/Master Plan
 - Reviewing and processing various types of applications
 - Zoning
 - Subdivisions
 - Site Plan
 - Environmental reviews
 - Customer Service



Municipal Planner

Roles

- **Advance/Long Range Planning**
 - Creating and Maintaining Comprehensive/Master Plan
 - Creating and Maintaining Subarea/Neighborhood/Corridor Plan
 - Special Studies (e.g., Housing, etc.)
 - Zoning and Policy Research and Development
 - Demographic Updates





www.one man band.jp

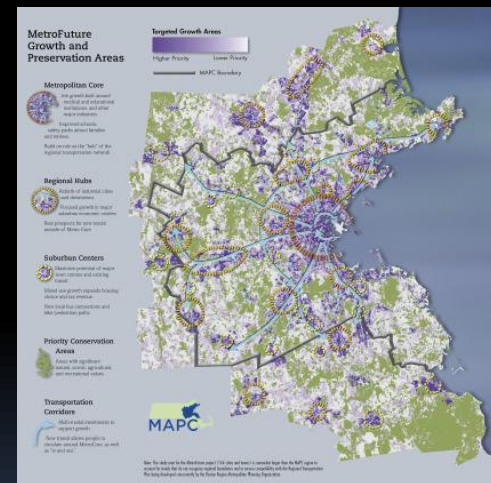
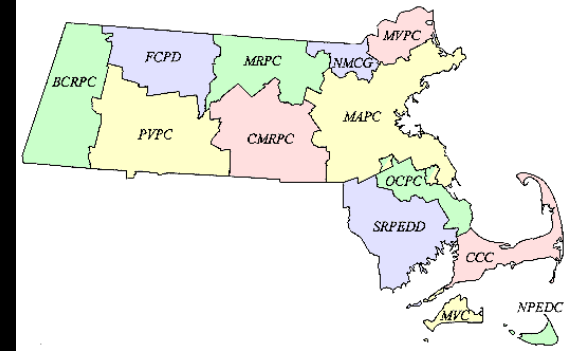
TIPS APPRECIATED

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Regional Planning

Context

- 13 Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs)
- Serve the local governments and citizens within their planning districts
 - Municipal Technical Assistance
 - Multi-Municipal Projects
 - Program and Policy Development
- Promote regional collaboration
- Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA)



Regional Planning

Roles

- **Transportation**

- Staff to Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- MPO develops a vision for region and then decides on allocation of transportation funds (mostly federal)

- **Additional Planning Functions**

- Land Use
- Environmental
- Hazard Mitigation
- Public Health

- **Look for Regional Approaches and Solutions**

Quick Word

Planning at the State Level

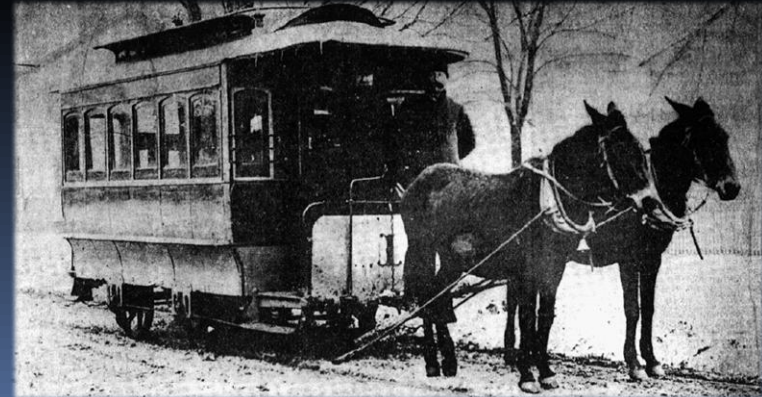
- **No Office of State Planning**
- **State Agencies with Planning Functions**
 - Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED)
 - Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA)
 - Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)



Comprehensive/Master Plan

Influence Your City or Town's Future Direction

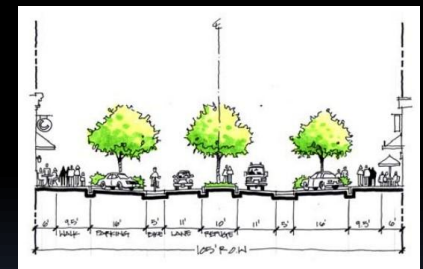
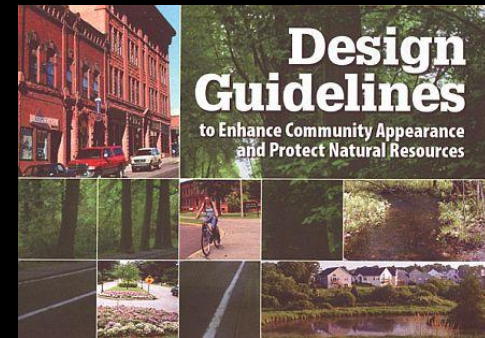
- **Official Statement of Goals, Policies and Guidelines to direct present and future of city/town**
- **State Legislation – Chapter 41, Sec. 81A-81GG**
 - 9 Elements Identified (including Goals, Land Use, Housing, Circulation, etc.)
- **Consistency Issue**
- **How Current?**
 - Typically 5-10 time horizon



Subarea/Neighborhood/Corridor Plan

Influence a Neighborhood's Future

- **Guided by Master Plan**
- **Targeted study that addresses specific needs/opportunities**
 - Building Design, Streetscape, Transit, Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities, Economic Development, etc.
- **More Specific/Focused Engagement of stakeholders**



Land Use Controls

Participate in the Details

- **Zoning**

- Regulation of Land Uses
(and related characteristics like height, setback, lot coverage)
- By Right vs. Special Permit

- **Related Elements**

- Overlays
- Design Guidelines

- **Subdivision Control**

- Division of Land and Creation of New Roadways
- Conformance with Zoning



Public Engagement

Be Part of the Discussions

- **Proactive**
 - Advance Planning Work (e.g., Master Plan, Corridor Plan)
 - Specific
- **Reactive**
 - Development Proposals
 - Changes in Zoning or other Regulations
 - New Policies
- **Role of Equity**



Equity

- *Communities where people of different ages, incomes, races and ethnicities have real options to live, work, learn and play side by side*
- Many of our regions struggle with health disparities by race/ethnicity, geography, and educational attainment
- **Engagement is Key**
- Planners have a role
 - Support and Encouragement

<http://www.regionalindicators.org/equity/>

Terminology

What did that planner just say?



■ Smart Growth

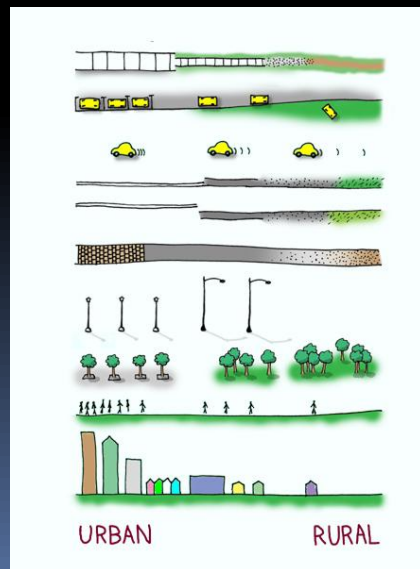
Promote development while protecting the environment, encouraging social and economic equity, and conserving energy and water resource

■ Built environment

Building, roads, homes, parks and other improvements that form the physical character of city or town

■ Quality of Life

Attributes or amenities that combine to make an area a good place to live, work , play



Terminology

What did that planner just say?

- **Transit Oriented Development**

Development of housing, commercial space, services, and job opportunities in close proximity to public transportation



- **Traffic Calming**

Physical changes to streets to reduce vehicle speeds and/or volumes



- **Complete Streets**

- Designed and operated to enable safe access and mobility for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities



Glossaries

- Glossary of Common Massachusetts Planning Acronyms and Terms (Berkshire Regional Planning Commission)

http://www.berkshireplanning.org/download/planning_board_handbook/planning_glossary.pdf

- Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit (Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs)

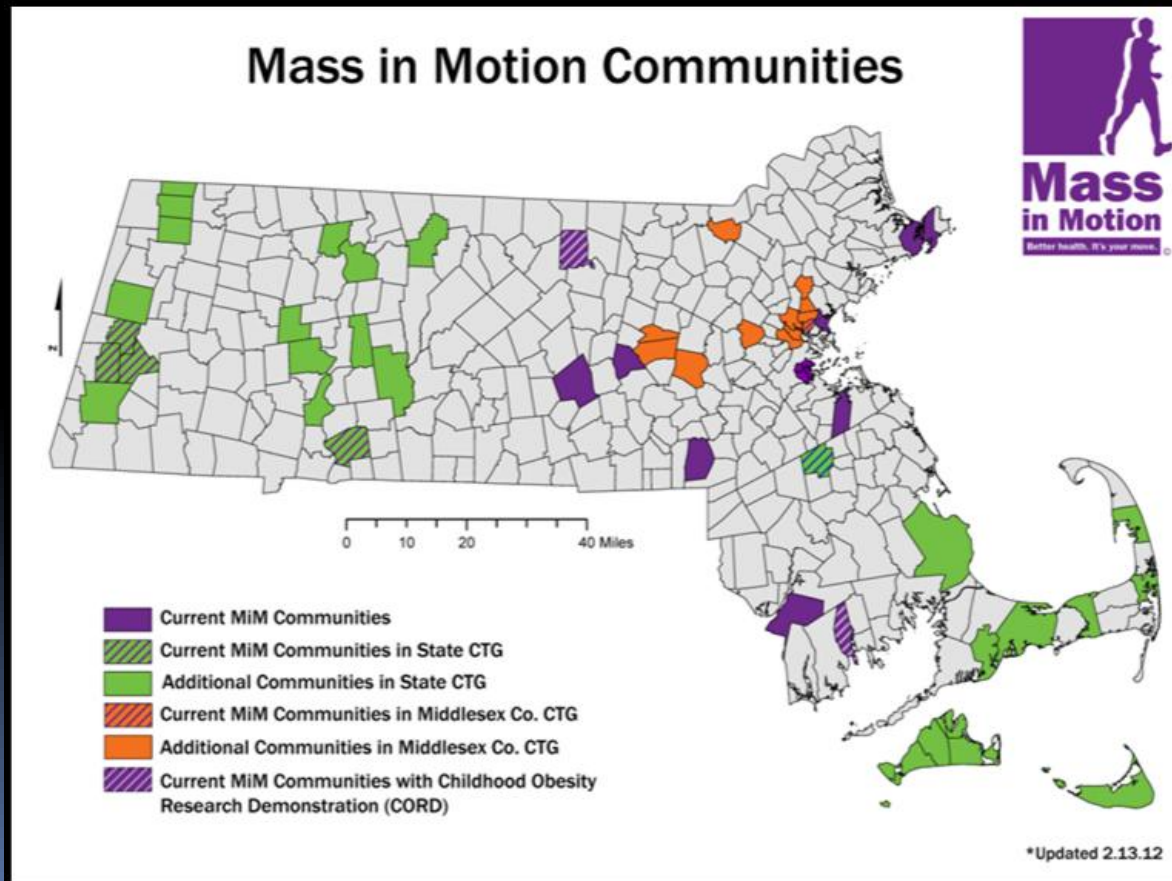
http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/glossary.html

- Planning and Public Health Terms (American Planning Association)

<https://www.planning.org/research/healthy/pdf/jargonfactsheet.pdf>

Additional Experiences

An overview of experiences from Mass in Motion Coordinators in their city or town



Takeaways

- Same goals, parallel paths
- Best Practices working with Planners
 - Master Plan
 - Quality of Life
 - Understanding Constraints
 - Constructive and Supportive
 - Provide Alternatives
 - Consistency
- Planning and Plans as Foundation