



COURSE SYLLABUS

Development Analysis: “Fundamentals of Urban Planning”

Thursdays, 12-2, 113 Avery (Wood)

INSTRUCTORS:

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Real estate development is largely an urban phenomenon. Understanding the fundamental urban planning issues, opportunities and risks associated with a given project is critical to successful development. These include a range of government regulations, powers and incentives, including those associated with land use, zoning, sustainability, building safety, historic preservation and the environment. They also include broader issues associated with gentrification, public space and community participation. This half-semester introduction to urban planning will use New York as the canvas to introduce these topics to students through relevant readings and case studies.

I. Course Description

Real estate development almost never happens in a vacuum; indeed it normally only works where there is a demand for land and a specific type of building. In most cases, developers are most active in urbanized places or cities – where people want to live, where businesses want to locate, and where retailers want to ply their trade. These places by their nature are complex organisms, with a variety of actors wielding the ability to stop, promote or otherwise impact development projects. A successful developer understands the needs and concerns of these players, as well as the broader social and economic issues that transforming the built environment of a place involves.

This course will use New York City as the template or backdrop through which students will become familiar with the language of urban planning – with the issues, tools, regulations and conventions that act together to guide the physical way a city involves. Some of these, such as building codes, are well-known to developers in

much of the developed world. Others, such as zoning, are common in American cities but less applicable elsewhere. Notwithstanding this fact, the need to control or shape one's environment is universal as cities grow - and government intervention in some form is now an accepted part of civic life throughout the world.

The course begins with a look at the concept of urban planning, and how it has evolved since the mid-to-late 19th century, when the consequences of a laissez-faire attitude toward city planning first became apparent in the world's larger, industrializing cities. We will consider in specific urban planning as it has emerged in the US, and how the federal system of governance frames and impacts development. We will also consider the differing perspectives of real estate developer and city planner - and how this tension manifests itself in nearly all development decisions.

Our next session will consider the various forms of regulation municipal governments employ to control the built environment under their jurisdiction. These range from the power to condemn and take land for public purpose, to building code requirements, to less draconian forms of incentives that may be promulgated to encourage certain forms of development. Of particular interest is a city's ability to develop zoning codes, which specify the amount and type of development that can be undertaken on a given parcel of land. We will dig deeply into the NYC zoning code, identifying the way it has represented the changing goals of city planners and business interests over time - including the most recent zoning changes undertaken by the DeBlasio administration.

Session 3 will consider development not from the community's perspective, as well as from a transportation and access perspective. We will consider the role of the community in the land use review and approvals process, and the ways in which developers are increasingly engaging communities to further their business goals and simultaneously address community needs. This session will include concepts of mitigation and community benefits agreements, as well as issues of gentrification and environmental justice. We will also examine transportation issues relevant to this country and in particular to New York City.

Session 4 will look at historic preservation, and the way that planners have come to embrace and integrate preservation goals in their thinking. We will review the last 50 years of history, in which preservation regulations have acted to shape development on certain properties and in certain areas. Through case studies, we will be highlighting a series of issues, approaches and interventions that have come to define how both planners and governments handle development with historical fabric.

Finally, Session 5 will consider the public realm and the role it plays in framing development. We will examine the role of sidewalks and streets, public parks and plazas, and the waterfront in framing and enhancing development projects. We will

focus on changing attitudes toward public space over time, and identify new forms of 'public realm' emerging as a stimulus to private development.

Nearly all of our classes will rely on case studies to highlight key concepts and lessons. Most but not all of them will be local to New York, though we intend to draw comparisons with other cities where appropriate. Students will be expected to become familiar with certain areas of New York City highlighted in the case studies, and will be encouraged to visit these projects where possible between classes.

II. Course Requirements and Assignments

Students will be expected to attend every one of the six classes. They will be asked to complete assigned weekly readings and to prepare assignments and submit them to the instructors or teaching assistants at the beginning of each week in the format requested. These responses will be graded and will form part of student grades for the course. There will also be a final exam, most likely taken in class on June 29.th

III. Course Grading Criteria

Completion of readings and reading responses 30%
Attendance and in-class participation: 20%
Final exam or paper: 50%

IV. Readings

Each week, students will be expected to complete readings in advance of class. Some of these readings are from the required textbook; others will be posted one week in advance on Courseworks.

There is one required textbook for the course, which is available in bookstores or may be ordered on-line. You are expected to purchase this textbook well in advance of our first class. Please purchase:

Cullingworth, Barry and Roger W Caves, Planning in the USA: Policies, Issues, and Processes, 4th edition (Routledge, 2013)

V. Course Outline

Class 1 (June 1): Intro to Urban Planning and Development

- Who? Why? What?
- Urban planning vs real estate development – goals and tensions
- The evolution of cities and the social character of urbanism
- Origins and overview of NYC development and land use

Readings:

Cullingworth and Caves, Chapter 1, “The nature of planning”, Chapter 2, “Urbanization”, Chapter 3, “Governing and planning urban areas”, Chapter 5, “The evolution of planning and zoning”

Courseworks:

- **Friedman, John, “Varieties of Planning Experience: Toward a Globalized Planning Culture”**
- **Charney, Igal, “The Real Estate Development Industry”**
- **Hoch, Charles, “Making Plans”**

Class 2 (June 5, 3-5 pm): Roles of Government – regulation, incentives and partnerships

- Private vs. public property/ eminent domain
- Zoning
- Financial incentives and tools
- Building codes
- Environmental regulations

Readings:

Cullingworth and Caves: Chapter 6, “The institutional and legal framework of planning and zoning, Chapter 8 “The Techniques of Zoning” ,Chapter 9, “Financing and planning for development”, and Chapter 12, “Environmental policy and Planning.”

Optional on Courseworks:

- **Campanella, Thomas and David Godschalk, “Resilience”**
- **Corburn, Jason, “Reconnecting Urban Planning and Public Health”**

Class 3 (June 8): Community Issues and Transportation

- Neighborhood change, stability, gentrification
- Community economic development and planning
- Environmental justice
- Transportation and planning

Readings:

Cullingworth and Caves: Chapter 14 “Transportation,” and Chapter 16 “Community and Economic Development.”

Optional on Courseworks:

- *Thompson, J. Phillip, “The Politics of Planning”*
- *Marcuse, Peter “Justice”*
- *New York City Bar, “The Role of Community Benefit Agreements in New York City’s Land Use Process”, 1-22.*
- *Furman Center (NYU) Study on Gentrification, on line (Just published)*

Class 4 (June 15): Historic Preservation and Landmarks

- History of preservation in NYC, Penn Station, Grand Central, etc
- Institutions and roles
- Historic Districts
- Financial and other incentives
- New development paradigms combining preservation and development

Readings:

Cullingworth and Caves: Chapter 17, “Urban design and aesthetics”, Chapter 18, “Heritage and historic preservation”, Conclusion “Some final questions”

Courseworks:

Macdonald, Elizabeth, “Beauty”

Li, Na and Elizabeth Hamin, “Preservation”

Wood, Anthony “Preserving New York”, 2008, Epilogue pp 373-91. Optional “The Commission and the Station,” pp 277-314

Class 5 (June 22): Public and Open Space and the Public Realm

- Changing definitions of public spaces
- Public parks, streets, sidewalks
- Privately owned public spaces:
- New public spaces, e.g. The High Line, waterfront parks

Courseworks:

“Locating Public Space”, Zachary Neal; “Bonus Plazas and the Creation of Public Space”, Gregory Smithsion; “The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces”, William Whyte; *Death and Life of Great American Cities: Chapter 19 – Visual Order: Its Limitations and Possibilities*”, Jane Jacobs

Optional on Courseworks:

- *“Controlling the Commons: How Public is Public Space”, Jeremy Nemeth*

Class 6 (June 29): FINAL EXAM
