



Welcome to Smart Growth Vermont's February E-newsletter! This month, we continue our series "Smart Growth: Fundamental Principles" with a look at compact, mixed use development. We highlight Middlebury in our Community Spotlight, welcome a new Board member, announce a call for nominations for this year's Art Gibb Award celebration, and much more!

Like what you read in our e-newsletter? [Let us know](#). Better yet, support this publication and our work in Vermont communities by becoming a sustaining member. **Find out more.**

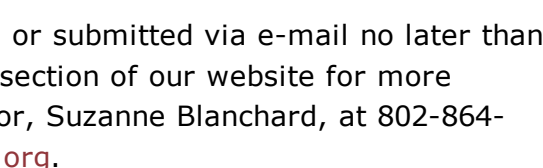
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Call for Art Gibb Award Nominations

Nomination forms are now available for the 2010 Arthur Gibb Award. This annual award is presented to a Vermont resident who embodies Arthur Gibb's leadership skills and ability to balance competing interests in crafting innovative solutions, and who has made a lasting contribution to moving smart growth policies forward in their community, region or across the state.

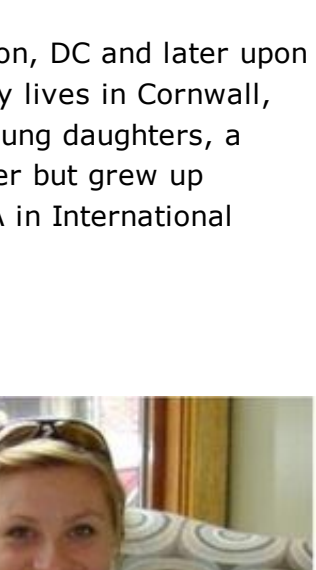


While the Gibb Award remains an annual event, our Smart Growth Awards for outstanding projects and plans are now given in odd-numbered years.

Nomination packages must be postmarked or submitted via e-mail no later than March 15, 2010. Visit the Art Gibb Award section of our website for more information or contact our Program Director, Suzanne Blanchard, at 802-864-6310 or at [suzanne@smartgrowthvermont.org](mailto:suzanne@smartgrowthvermont.org).

Smart Growth Vermont Welcomes New Board Member

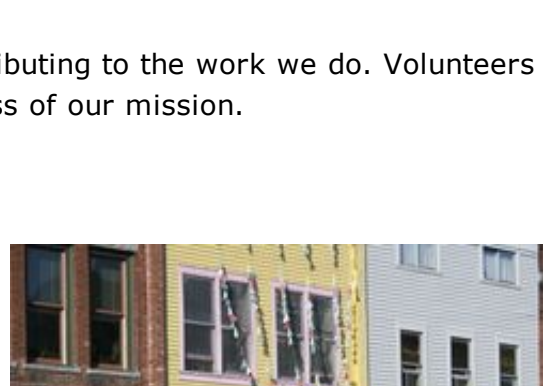
Smart Growth Vermont is pleased to introduce our newest Board member, Tracy Himmel Isham. Tracy joins the board with great enthusiasm and a background that will compliment the organization.



Tracy currently serves as co-chair of the Cornwall Planning Commission in Addison County. She has worked professionally at Middlebury College for the last five years as a career counselor, an international student advisor and director of DigitalBridges2.0, which works with VT-based entrepreneurial start-ups. Tracy brings broad experience from both non-profit and for-profit business management, strategic planning, marketing, budgeting, and evaluation. She worked for fourteen years in the forest products industry in Washington, DC and later upon arriving to Vermont for environmental organizations. Tracy lives in Cornwall, VT with her husband Jon Isham, their three very active young daughters, a dozen chickens and 2 cats. Tracy is a native New Englander but grew up overseas. She graduated from Emory University with a BA in International Studies.

Volunteer Spotlight: Toni Marie Pignatelli

Toni Marie began volunteering with us in November, writing articles for the monthly e-newsletter and facilitating connections between the organization and area colleges. She is currently contributing to the Principles of Smart Growth Series.



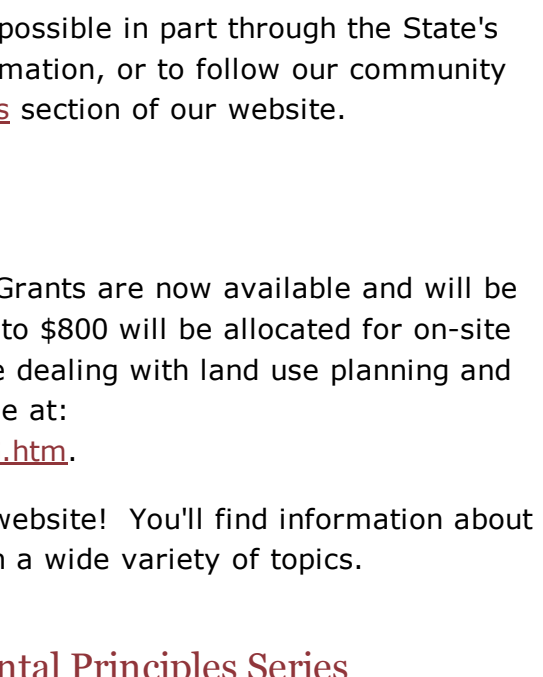
Toni Marie volunteers for Smart Growth Vermont because she believes the organization plays an instrumental role in empowering communities to make informed decisions regarding future development patterns. She believes that embracing smart growth is one of the most effective ways communities can begin to dismantle poverty and homelessness.

We are delighted to have Toni Marie contributing to the work we do. Volunteers continue to play a major role in the success of our mission.

Communities Update

Danville

After passing new village zoning regulations in December, Danville is now considering how best to maintain its rural character. The Planning Commission will begin by inviting public comment on what rural character means to them and how best to maintain this character and support appropriate development. This continues the conversation that kicked off at the town's annual Autumn-on-the-Green. Danville residents will talk about the importance of keeping strong local farms, open lands for recreation, affordable housing opportunities, and beautiful views at Monday Public Meetings on February 15, March 8 and April 5, 2010.



Downtown Bristol

Burke

After a short break, Burke has resumed its long-term overhaul of land use regulation by taking up the question of commercial and industrial development standards and districts. Other priorities to be reviewed are rural development and protection, and updating the Burke town plan.

Our ability to assist communities is made possible in part through the State's Municipal Planning Grants. For more information, or to follow our community projects, visit the Partnership Communities section of our website.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Applications for 2010 Municipal Education Grants are now available and will be accepted until May 15, 2010. Grants up to \$800 will be allocated for on-site training of local volunteer officials that are dealing with land use planning and regulation. Applications are available online at: <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/MFG.htm>.

Also, check out Upcoming Events on our website! You'll find information about conferences, lectures and presentations on a wide variety of topics.

Smart Growth in Action: Fundamental Principles Series

Principle 2: Promote the health and vitality of Vermont communities through economic and residential growth that is targeted to compact, mixed use centers, including resort centers, at a scale convenient and accessible for pedestrians and appropriate for the community.



An important principle in smart growth planning and development is to include a mix of uses (residential, services, businesses and civic institutions) in close proximity. When implemented on-the-ground, this allows residents to work, play and access services all within walking, or biking distance of their homes or jobs. Walkable neighborhoods promote a healthy lifestyle and are a simple way for all citizens to contribute to the reduction in carbon emissions by driving less and increasing their community involvement.

Social interaction is at the heart of a healthy, vibrant community and building compact, mixed-use centers fosters the relationship between people and their environment. As you walk your child to school or bike or walk to work, you interact with both people and the built environment creating a heightened awareness of your surroundings that can have a positive impact on your neighborhood.

A mixed-use project could be in one building with a business or restaurant on the ground level with offices on the second floor and apartments on the third or fourth floor. Mixed use can also be planned for a city where commercial space, offices, services and different style homes (single and multi-family) are within easy walking distance (general rule of thumb 1/2 mile) of one another.

The creation of compact, mixed-use centers requires citizen participation in the planning process. Attending planning meetings, encouraging the revision of zoning to support infill development, and backing incentives for mixed-use projects are just a few of the ways you can get involved!

To learn more about compact, mixed-use centers and other principles of smart growth visit [www.smartgrowthvermont.org](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org).

Community Spotlight: Middlebury

Middlebury, in the heart of Addison County, is located on the Otter Creek and originated as a mill town to serve area grain farmers. Industry grew with the addition of other factories and a marble quarry. Today, many of these historic buildings have been converted to shops, businesses and homes, making the town an attractive place to live, work or visit.

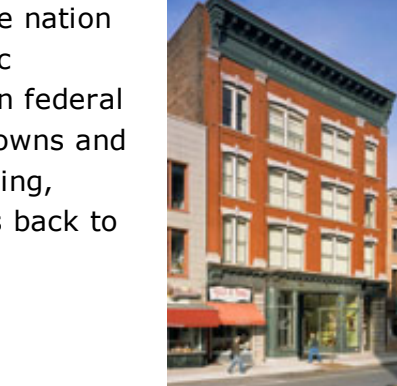


Photo courtesy of Vermont Downtown Program

Community residents and The Better Middlebury Partnership have worked tirelessly to create redevelopment projects in the downtown district for at least the last thirty years, and this initiative led to downtown designation through the Vermont Downtown Program in October 1999. Many projects have been successfully completed, including the renovation of the Town Hall Theatre, which won the 2009 Green Mountain Award for Best Building Renovation, which won the 2009 Green Mountain Award for Best Building Renovation. Almost \$10 million in state and federal historic tax credits have helped fund these projects. Streetscape projects, renovations to three downtown parks and signage have also contributed to the ease of access and identity of the downtown district.

Re-development of the bridge in Middlebury has been the community's greatest undertaking. Upon completion, the bridge will create better traffic flow, increase visibility to downtown, and encourage growth to remain in and around the city center.

In addition to the many community activities that take place, other draws to the town include Middlebury College and the incredible recreational opportunities that are available in the surrounding area. There is so much to take advantage of, just see for yourself!

VERMONT NEWS

Hinesburg Organization Fills Transportation Access Needs

Hinesburg Rides, a program of the Hinesburg Community Resource Center, is all about connecting neighbors and addressing the transportation needs for the community. Launched in 2007, the program has three components that all focus on volunteers providing easily accessible and low cost transportation options for Hinesburg residents. For more information, visit their website, [www.hinesburgrides.org](http://www.hinesburgrides.org).

Putney School Invests in Green Gym

The Putney School, long recognized for their commitment to environmental sustainability, has gone ultra green with the addition of an energy efficient, net zero field house. The facility includes an open court, yoga studio, bike repair and ski tuning shop and a climbing wall. Powered by a field of solar panels and heated by an air source heat pump, the building is expected to receive a LEED Platinum certification, the highest possible in energy efficiency ratings. Read more.



Photo courtesy of The Putney School.

Vermont Continues Investments into Downtowns, Village Centers

A recent federal report ranks Vermont as tenth in the nation for utilizing historic tax credits to rehabilitate historic buildings. The program has raised over \$38 million in federal funds for numerous restorations in Vermont's downtowns and village centers. These projects leverage private funding, create jobs and return underused or vacant buildings back to the tax roll. Read more.



NATIONAL NEWS

Obama Announces Funding for Rail Improvements

Vermont is one of several states that will receive funding to improve rail lines in an effort to create jobs through Obama's Recovery Act. The Vermonter line is expected to get \$50 million to upgrade track from St. Albans to Massachusetts. Another proposal to build rail from Burlington to New York City was rejected. Instead, the State will receive \$500,000 to boost train service from Rutland to Albany, NY.



Thirty one states will benefit from the funding, which will lay the groundwork for high speed rail across the country.