Place-Based Maine & Form-Based Codes

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Formational Relationships and the Development of Great Streets

FORM-BASED CODES
Who is advancing Form-Based Codes?

Where are Form-Based Codes being considered and used?

Why are Form-Based Codes being utilized?
Downtown Dover, NH
So, how does the street (feel) when you “put it on”?
Not how a street (looks);
it’s how a street (lives)
Form-Based Codes

Form-Based Codes foster predictable built results and a high-quality “Public Realm” by using relationships of physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the Code.
Form-Based Codes are founded upon the exercise of the “police power”; (Public Safety, Public Health & General Welfare of the Community.)

“I observed that the vitals of the village were the grocery, the barroom, the post-office, and the bank;...and the houses were so arranged as to make the most of mankind, in lanes and fronting one another, so that every traveler had to run the gauntlet, and every man, woman, and child might get a lick at him.”

Henry David Thoreau
Walden 1845, The Village
Form-Based Codes

Are drafted to achieve a *prescriptive* community-based vision built on time-tested forms of traditional New England town centers.
“Individual buildings are often conceived as solely private (isolated), self-referential objects incapable of generating the public realm”

“Conversely, our public regulation system of zoning that controls the growth of (our towns) has become overly verbal and complicated and incapable of accurately guiding physical form, especially because everything is negotiable.”

“Zoning conflates issues of use, density and form to such an extent that it has spawned the unpredictability and visual chaos (increasingly) typical of (our New England towns).”
“Simplify, Simplify, Simplify”

Henry David Thoreau
Walden, 1845
A functional disconnection often exists between our New England town Master Plan “visions” & our use-based Zoning Regulations and/or our conventional Site Plan Review process.

What is the predictable built outcome of traditional New England “Character”? 
The Regulating Plan is the regulatory foundation of the contextual form.

The Regulating Plan is, in a practical sense, a comprehensive site plan (flexibly designed) for the unified district and/or community.

De-escalation of unpredictability, contention, risk to investment, process costs, volatility of negotiations, and seemingly un-navigable complexity.
A Regulating Plan
“(Land development form) is to be delivered through a contextual assembly of streets, blocks and buildings”
The “Required Build-To-Line”
Highly illustrative, visual, graphic in its technical presentation.

Concise, user-friendly, perhaps no “land-use lawyers” necessary in order to make practical sense of the text-based litigious nuances of the conventional development project application & review process.

Clear the clutter; (overlays, guidelines, special districts, performance standards, interpretations, appropriateness, etc.)
The “Hand” of the Place
CONVENTIONAL USE-BASED ZONING

USE
ADMIN.
FORM

TRADITIONAL FORM-BASED CODES

FORM
ADMIN.
USE
Public Parking & Pedestrian Connectivity Amenities are Critical
On-Street Parking is Fundamental
The Methods of Deployment
Where Does the Code Live?

- **Mandatory Code**
  (freestanding form-based code).

- **Mandatory Code**
  (integrated into existing code).

- **Optional (Parallel) Code**

- **Floating Zone Code**
The Organizing Principles

- Street-Type Codes
- Frontage Type-Based Codes
- Building Type-Based Codes
- Transect-Based Codes
- Modified Transect-Based Codes
Code Elements (Standard):

- Illustrative Plan
- Regulating Plan
- Streetscape Standards
- Development Form Standards
- Administration
- Definitions

Additional Elements:

- Architectural Standards
- Signage Standards
Development Standards

▪ Building Height
▪ Building Siting or Placement
▪ Building Envelope Standards
▪ Location of Parking
▪ Uses
Structuring the Process-Pre-Drafting:
Selecting the District or Corridor
Defining the Planning & Coding Approach
Assembling the Team
Designing the Public Process

Drafting the Code:
Existing Conditions Inventory & Analysis
Public Visioning/ Charrette(s)
Illustrative Plan
Regulating Plan
Development Standards & Administration
Post Coding Tasks:
Completing the Document
Formal Review & Adoption
Rolling It Out
Day-to-Day Administration
Review & Refinement
Vision the Place, Design the Feel, and Code It!
Place-Based Maine & Form-Based Codes II
May 20\textsuperscript{th}, 12:00 Noon – 1:00PM

Technical Presentation