

Missing Middle Housing

Why It Is Missing and Where to Find It

white + burke
VERMONT
DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE

Presenters



Colin Hilliard
Deputy Director
Burlington
Business
Association



Ryan Nick
Broker
J.L. Davis Realty

Opening Questions

- Where do you live?
 - Burlington?
 - Chittenden County?
 - Vermont?
 - Out-of-State?
- What kind of housing do you live in?

Missing Middle Housing

- Define Missing Middle Housing
- Define the Problem + How we got here
- Options for Progress
- What are we really talking about?
- Questions and Conversations

Where We've Lived



207 KING ST



33 NORTH AVE

Where We've Lived



What is Missing Middle Housing?



What is Missing Middle Housing?

“A range of **house-scale** buildings with multiple units—**compatible in scale and form** with detached single-family homes—located in a **walkable** neighborhood”¹



Montpelier, VT: Susan He

Incremental Code Reform Enabling Better Places in Vermont, ACCD

1. Daniel Parolek, <https://missingmiddlehousing.com>

Benefits of Missing Middle Housing

- For Developers
 - Opportunity for small and medium size developers
 - Cheaper to build
- For Municipalities
 - Grow the Grand List
 - Lower cost of infrastructure
- For Residents
 - Vibrant and Walkable
 - Better sense of community
 - Housing Choice
- For the Environment
 - Fewer cars = fewer emissions
 - Less sprawl

What Missing Middle Housing is NOT?

- Detached Single-Family House
- Car-dependent
- New or Novel Concept



The Problem

- We have a housing under-production problem
- There are 4 main barriers to housing production
 - Funding
 - Construction costs for new buildings are \$300/SF+
 - Workforce
 - Vermont Department of Labor estimates that the state requires 5,000 new carpenters to meet demand in the next 10 years
 - Need for Innovation in materials and design
 - Need for sustainable and affordable construction
 - **Regulation**
 - **Many housing types are illegal to build**
 - **Approval process is opaque and difficult to navigate**

Zoned Out



199 King Street, Burlington, VT

Built: 1930

Lot Size: 0.11 acre

Units: 6

Density: **54 Units/Acre**

Current Max Density: 40 Units/Acre

-> 4 Units of Housing

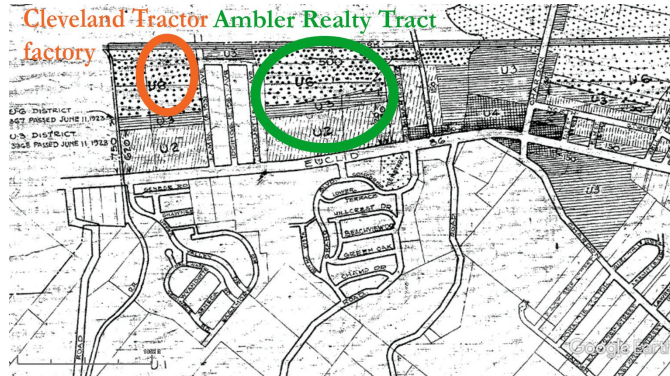
Zoned Out



Current Max Density: 40 Units/Acre
-> 4 Units of Housing

How did we get here?

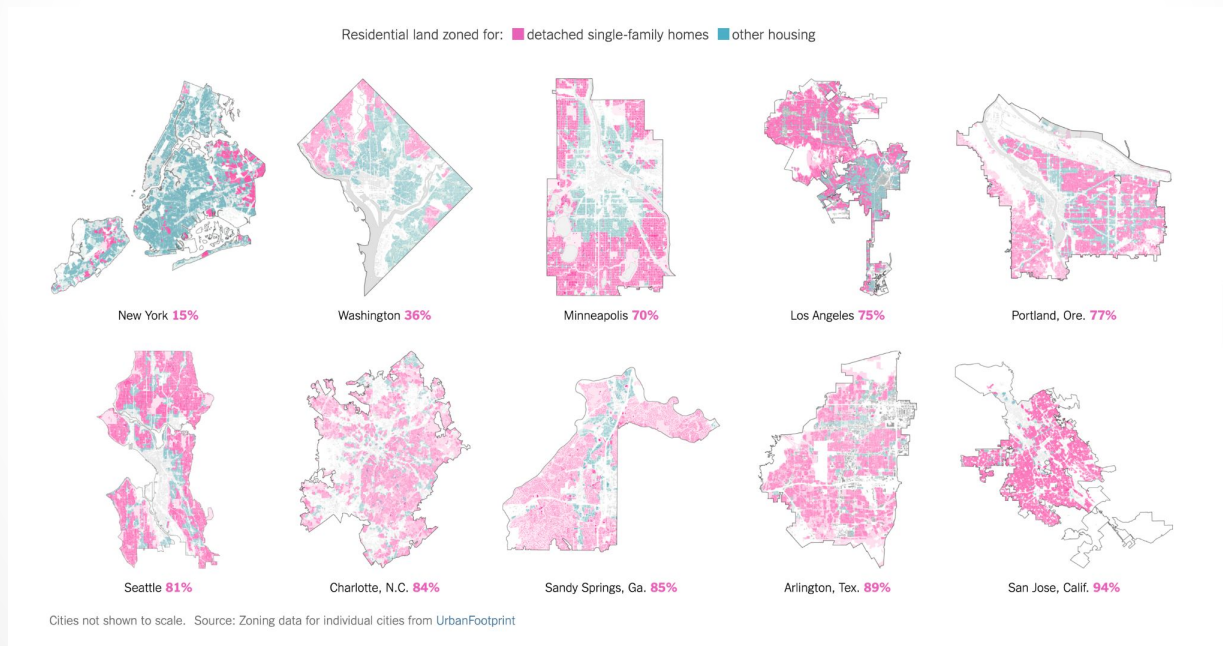
- It was **intentional** - the execution of a strategic plan
- “Apartments, the [Supreme Court] warned, block the sun and air. They bring **noise and traffic**. They act as a **parasite** on single-family neighborhoods — ‘until, finally, the residential character of the neighborhood and its desirability as a place of detached residences are **utterly destroyed**.’” (1926, Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.)¹



1. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/18/upshot/cities-across-america-question-single-family-zoning.html>
2. <http://propertykull.weebly.com/village-of-euclid-v-ambler-realty-co.html>

How did we get here?

- “It is illegal on 75% of the residential land in many American cities to build anything other than a detached single-family home¹” (NY Times, 2019)



1. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/18/upshot/cities-across-america-question-single-family-zoning.html>

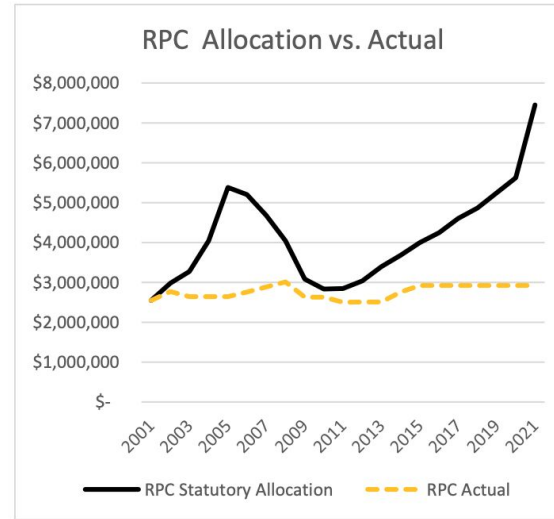
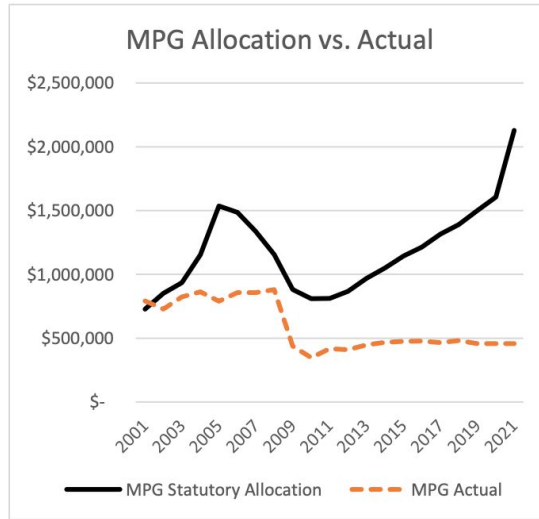
How did we get here?

- “Where Do We Go From Here?’ Vermont Bicentennial Commission in 1976
 - “I’m an out of stater myself but **I don’t want to see any more out of stater’s up here**”
 - “I think there should be more local control on the local things”
 - “If Vermont could somehow keep its character but also supply more jobs”



How did we get here?

- Vermont has historically underfunded planning



How did we get here?

- Where did all the small developers go?

Where are we going?

- Household size is changing
 - In VT size of households has declined to an average of 2.28₁
 - One quarter are single person₂
 - Nationally, 75-85% of households will be childless by 2025₂

Vermont League of Cities and Towns: <https://www.vlct.org/resource/vermonts-housing-crisis-2022-municipal-action-paper>

Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods:

https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/CD/CPR/Planning-Your-Towns-Future/CPR-Z4GN-Guide-Final-web.pdf

Where are we going?

Figure 7-13: Small households outnumber small homes

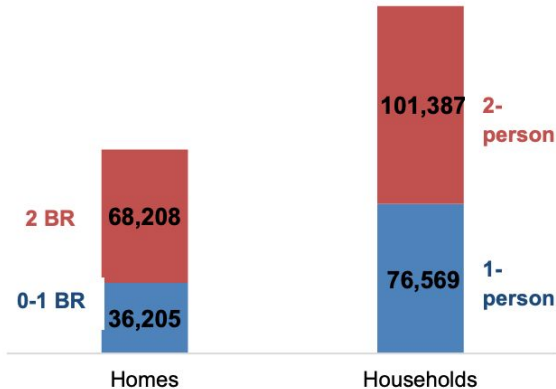
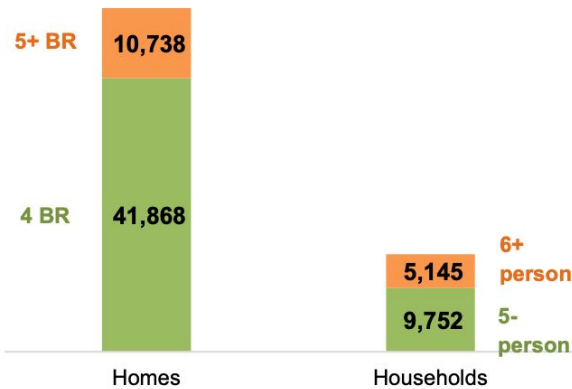


Figure 7-12: Large homes outnumber large households



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2013-2017 (Table B25041, B25042 from [housingdata.org](https://www.housingdata.org)), (Table B25009 from [housingdata.org](https://www.housingdata.org))

“Biggest Little Change” What’s Yours?



“Biggest Little Change”



“Biggest Little Change”

- Update Zoning Bylaws
 - Allowed Uses
 - Dimensional Requirements/Density
 - Development Review/Permitting Process
 - Parking Minimums
 - Form Based Code
 - Avoid Duplication

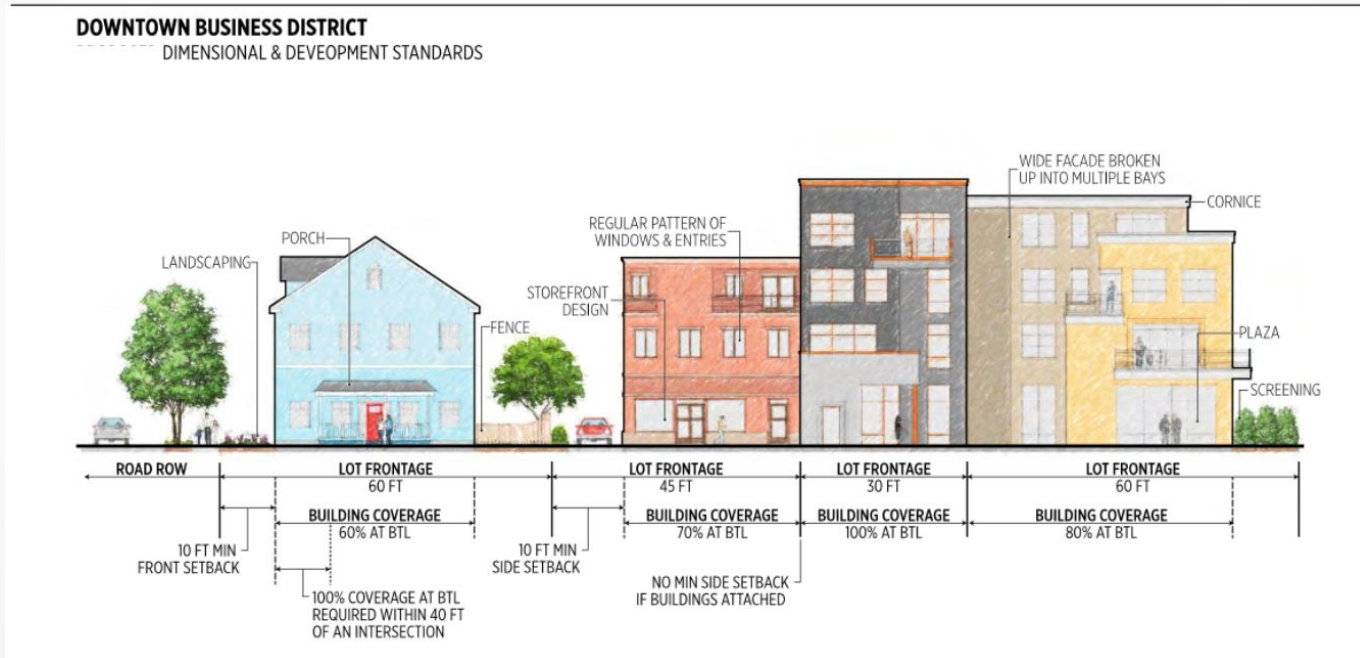
Gentle Density

7 NEW LOTS | >24 NEW UNITS | 1 NEW BUSINESS



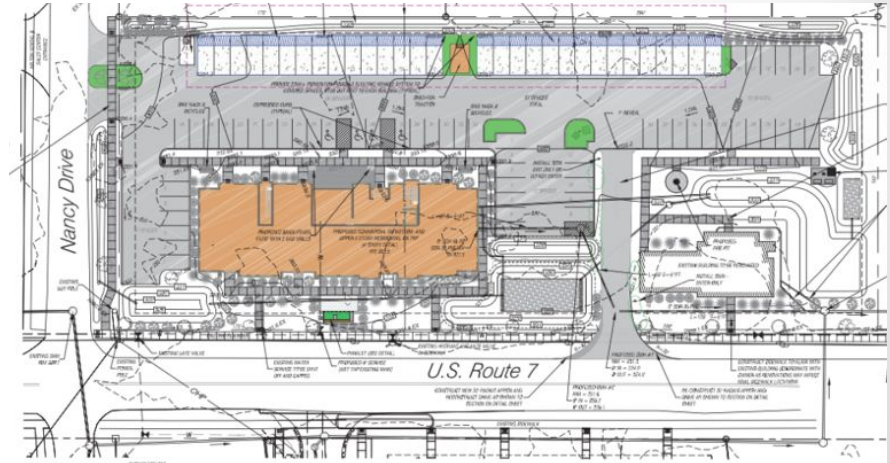
Where we are seeing success?

- Milton, VT



Where we are seeing success?

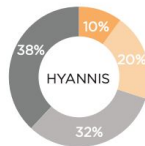
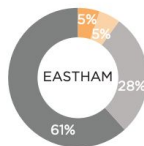
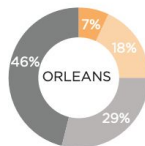
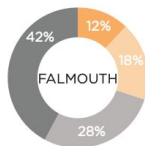
- Milton, VT
 - 441-447 U.S. Route 7 S.
 - Water + Sewer fees in eight installments.



Where we are seeing success?

Cape Cod: Visual Preference Study

- Upper Cape: 2.5 stories
- Lower Cape: 2 stories



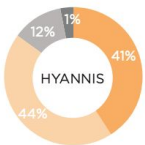
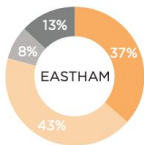
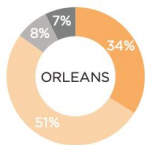
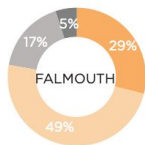
DEFINITELY A GOOD FIT

COULD BE A GOOD FIT



PROBABLY NOT A GOOD FIT

DEFINITELY NOT A GOOD FIT



Where we are seeing success?

South Bend, IN

- A “Sears Catalog” Approach for the 21st Century
- Small Developer Educational Series



Where we are seeing success?

Cookie Cutter

- "... if you want to produce a lot of really attractive cookies in a short amount of time, a cookie cutter is a fantastic tool." - Daniel Herriges, Strong Towns



Where we are seeing success?

Brattleboro, VT

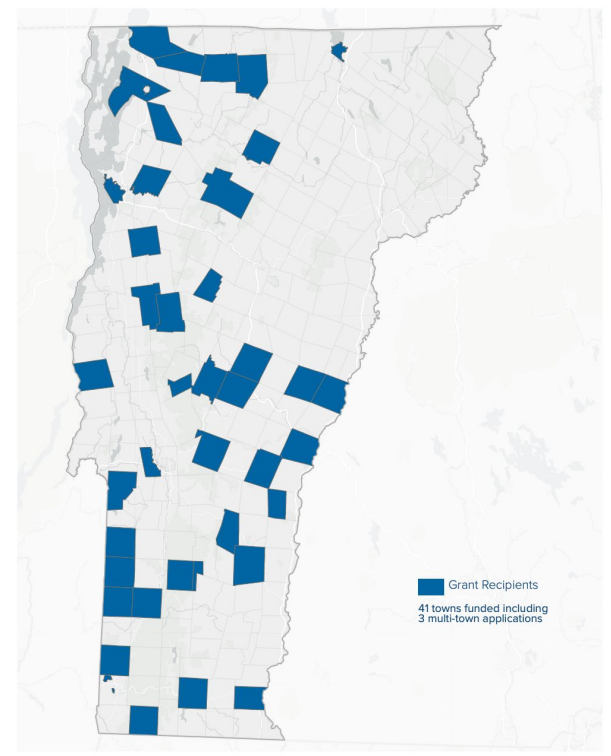
- Missing Middle Housing Walking Tour



"Vermont Towns are Considering Changes to their Zoning Regulations to Spur More Housing," Vermont Public
<https://www.vermontpublic.org/local-news/2022-09-30/vermont-towns-are-considering-changes-in-their-zoning-regulations-to-spur-more-housing>

How can we incentivize?

- State By-law modernization grants
 - 23 applicants Funded in FY22
 - 24 months to submit final projects
- Geared towards housing
- Clean up old zoning codes
- Multi-town applications



How can we incentivize?

- Federal incentives
 - Reward jurisdictions that have reformed zoning and land-use policies



MAY 16, 2022

President Biden Announces New Actions to Ease the Burden of Housing Costs



► [BRIEFING ROOM](#)

► [STATEMENTS AND RELEASES](#)

What are we actually talking about?

Do we want to grow as a state?

- “How important is it to you that Vermont prioritize attracting new arrivals to live and work in the state?”
 - Very/ Somewhat Important: 55.2%
 - Up from 52.1% in 2021



2022: UVM Vermonter Poll, Office of Engagement :

https://www.uvm.edu/content/shared/files/office-sustainability/office_of_engagement_poll_responses.pdf?t=rdmt3t

https://www.uvm.edu/images/usa_welcome_signs_vermont.jpg

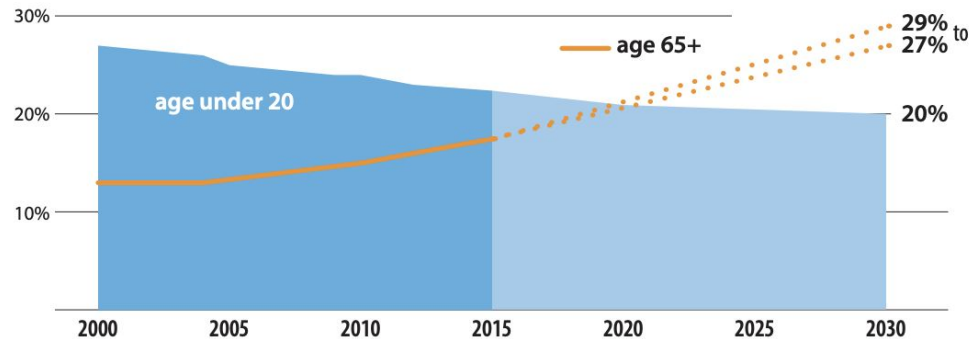
What are we actually talking about?

- Do we care about:
 - Keeping young people
 - Wellbeing and affordability for seniors

Projected Aging Trends

U.S. Census • 2016 / Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development • 2011–2015

projected decline of the younger age groups and growth of the older age groups in the Vermont population



What are we actually talking about?

- Do we care about inclusive communities?

In your opinion, how important is it that Vermont prioritizes policies and programs addressing racial inequality in Vermont?

	2021	2022
Very Important	33%	44.5%
Somewhat important	19.7	27.5
Neither important or unimportant	20.9	5.8
Somewhat unimportant	8.8	10.2
Very unimportant	17.6	12
Don't know/unsure	N/A	N/A

What are we actually talking about?

- Environmental Conservation

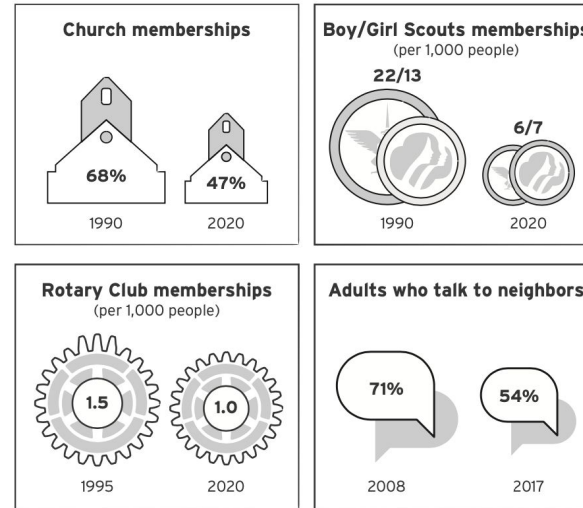


Emeryville, CA

What are we actually talking about?

- Do we care about the connective tissue of our community/country?

Decline in Community-Based Activities in the U.S.

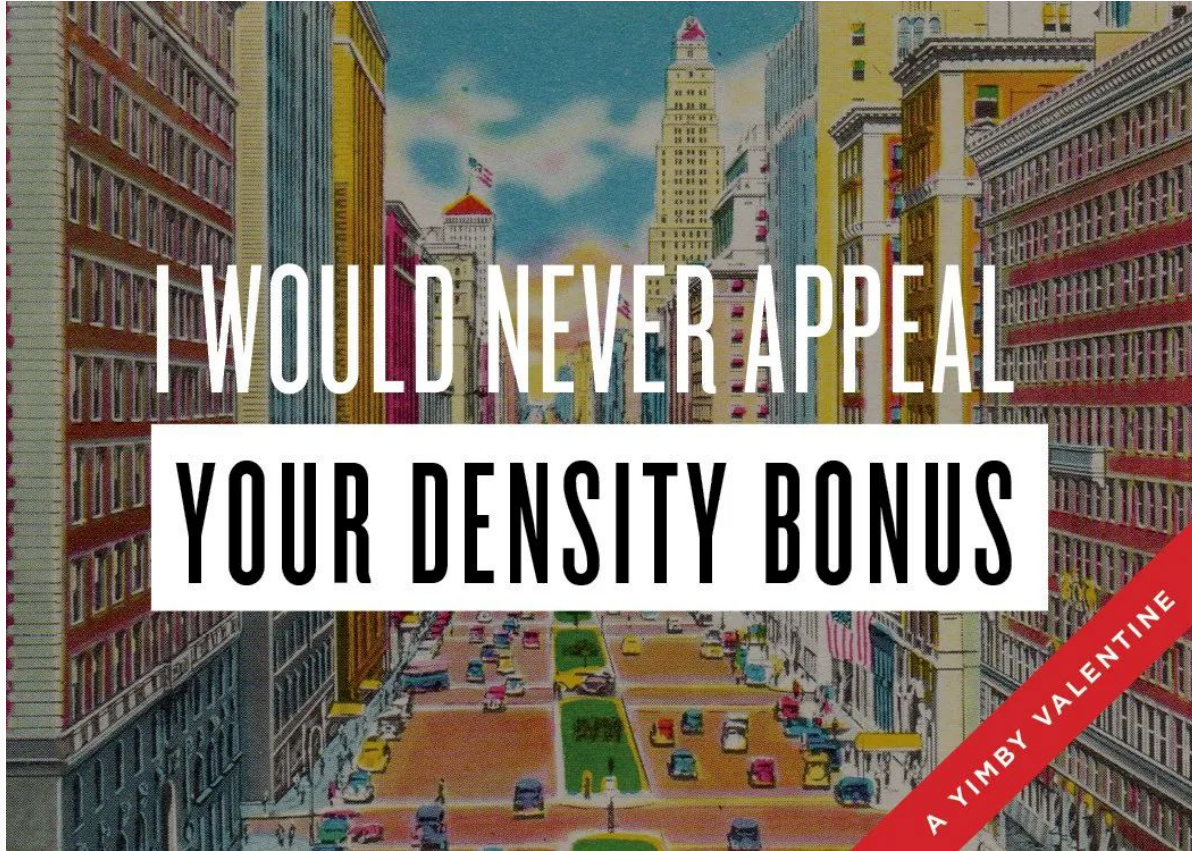


Sources: Analysis of data from Gallup, Senate.gov, U.S. Census via AllCountries, AP News, Baraboo News Republic, and Word on the Street.

What are we actually talking about?

- Character of a neighborhood
 - Is it more than just the buildings?





[Libby Lee-Egan](https://twitter.com/mmelibbington): <https://twitter.com/mmelibbington>

What are we actually talking about?

What is the cost of inaction?



[@mnolangray](https://twitter.com/mnolangray):

<https://twitter.com/mnolangray/status/1356521391508516864>

“Biggest Little Change”

- Bylaw Modernization Grants - ACCD
- What story do we tell Residents and Planning Commissions?
- Emphasize Municipality's Self Interest
- Encourage younger residents to get on Planning Commissions, DRBs, etc.

THE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD INTERIORS



Remember – Only you can
PREVENT SPRAWL!

HELP KEEP AMERICA GREEN

END SINGLE FAMILY ZONING

Neighbors for
More Neighbors

*Displayed in cooperation with the Nation-wide effort to
reduce sprawl and promote density.*

Talk to your friends
about zoning

Neighbors for More Neighbors:

<https://medium.com/neighbors-for-more-neighbors/see-yimby-art-at-yimby-town-74860a1ea247>

QUESTIONS?

SPEAKERS

Colin Hilliard

Burlington Business Association

Colin@bbavt.org

Ryan Nick

J.L. Davis Realty

Rnick@jldavisrealty.com