

Long Island Planning

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Question of the Semester

What will Long Island look like in the future?

Can we plan on it?

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Need for Planning

• **Most frequent laments of LI residents:**

- Lack of affordable housing
- High cost of living
- Loss of open space
- Sprawling development
- Lack sewer systems (sanitary and storm)
- Inadequate transit infrastructure
- General quality-of-life issues

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AND the Need for Contingency Planning

As population density increases, we need to plan for possible changes to Long Island's geography by natural processes:

1. Climate change
2. Sea level rise
3. Direct hit from a hurricane
4. Breach of a barrier island
5. Decrease in available fresh water

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Planning: The Geography of the Future

- **Site selection and use of land is a human trait that goes back to the beginning of time.**
- The earliest inhabitants of LI made decisions as to where to live based on the availability of food, water and shelter.
- European colonists also made decisions about how to interact with the new land based in part by their traditions.

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Planning: The Geography of the Future

- Colonists made choices where to build forts, ports and settlements.
- Land was surveyed for settlement, farming and pasturage.
- Village streets were laid out in a (familiar) pattern and land was divided by fences.
- People decided to which areas to link and then how to do so: road, water, rail.

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Planning: The Geography of the Future

- **Transportation** became the key element as populations moved away from self-sufficiency and towards a money economy.
- **Transportation** became the key to moving people and goods quickly from one area to another.
- As the **time-distance ratio** shrank, people were able to interact with more distant areas in the same or less amount of time.

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Community Planning

- **Vision: How does our island grow?** by Eric Alexander, Executive Director, Smart Growth Planning Group, Vision Long Island, Opinion, *Newsday*, July 13, 2008.
- ...many LI residents have been taking the reins of planning...and mapping the future of their own communities...realizing that LI's present land use system is...broken.
- No one said (transformation) would be easy.
- The transformation of LI's suburban communities to meet the needs of our changing population is going to take time and...effort.

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Robert Moses (1888-1981): The Master Planner and Power Broker

- One of the most debated figures in urban planning.
- His vision and leadership changed the face of downstate NY, especially NYC and LI.
- At one point he held 12 different titles in state and city government.
- Responsible for housing, parks and recreation, transportation and power projects around NYS.

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Question of the Day

The Legacy of Robert Moses on Long Island

Did he do good for LI?

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Robert Moses' Legacy

- Had more projects in the wings than money to carry them out. But when money was available, he was ready to use it!
- Developed the NYS park system including all the state beach parks of Long Island.
- Focused on getting people to natural features.
- Saw the auto as the people mover of the future.
- Favored parkways over highways or expressways and mass transit.

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Robert Moses' Legacy

- He set aside parkland for people's use and enjoyment. He designed parkways (landscaped, slow speed, curved roads with low-hanging overpasses) to connect the parks. Usually blocked mass-transit projects.
- The **Belt Parkway system** in Brooklyn and Queens created a strip of shorefront parks but cut off neighborhoods from the shoreline.
- The **Northern State, Southern State, and Wantagh State** parkways linked LI parks.

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Robert Moses' Legacy

- Developed the **“housing tower in a park”** method of urban development but destroyed neighborhoods to build them.
- He built highways to connect parts of the city without regard for neighborhood cohesiveness.
- When Federal money shifted to expressways, he built the **Long Island Expressway** and other high speed highways in the region.

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Regional Plan Association

- RPA is America's oldest (1922) and most distinguished independent urban research and advocacy group. (www.rpa.org)
- **RPA prepares long range plans and policies to guide the growth and development of the New York- New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region.**
- It has a separate Long Island office.
- RPA enjoys broad support from the region's and nation's business, philanthropic, civic, and planning communities.

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Regional Plan Association

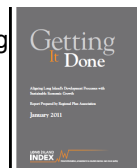


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Regional Plan Association

Planning process impediments:

1. Downtowns have been built for cars not people.
2. Zoning codes need to be updated.
3. LI needs more rentals.
4. Maximums set without setting minimums.
5. Planning narrowly focused without the big picture in mind.



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LI Regional Planning Council

- **The LIRPC was formed in 2008 from the original Long Island Regional Planning Board for the purpose of promoting the physical, economic and social health and well-being of the Long Island region** (Nassau and Suffolk counties) and its residents.
- **The main goal of the LIRPC is to educate** Long Island's officials, stakeholders and residents **on key issues affecting the quality of life on Long Island, and to serve as a catalyst for action** by proposing immediate and long-term incremental solutions for these issues of regional concern.

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LI Regional Planning Council



Sustainable Strategies for Long Island 2035
December, 2010

Scenarios for 2035

- A. Distributing growth throughout Long Island.
- B. Concentrating growth around existing transit network.
- C. Developing new centers of population and jobs.

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2007 Nassau County Strategic Plan for Economic Development

High-Tech/High-Skilled Industry – Attracting new business, creating new jobs
Downtowns – Working to revitalize traditional downtowns
Minority/Under-Served Communities -- Integrating resources for sustainable growth
Brownfields – Redeveloping abandoned and contaminated sites
Workforce and Senior Housing – Finding housing solutions for groups in-need
Open Space – Protecting the beauty and integrity of suburban life
Transportation – Identifying new transit options for the Nassau Hub
Education – Bringing attention to the need for improved public schools

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Question of the Semester

Soooo...
What will Long Island look like in the future?

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