

Planning for Choice: Adding an Urban Option

Feb 13, 2010



The full transect of Fitchburg development, from the most rural to the most urban.

Fitchburg has the unique advantage of lying between the time-tested urbanity of Madison and the inspiring landscape of the rural countryside. Citizens have access to either in a matter of minutes.

“But here is what’s missing,” said PlaceMakers project manager Susan Henderson to an audience of local residents and community leaders on Friday night. Behind her on the screen were images created during an intensive week of discussion and idea testing. They depicted a Fitchburg that not only enjoyed its current array of single-family suburban housing and commercial areas but also added to the mix the appeal and practical performance of more compact, walkable neighborhoods.

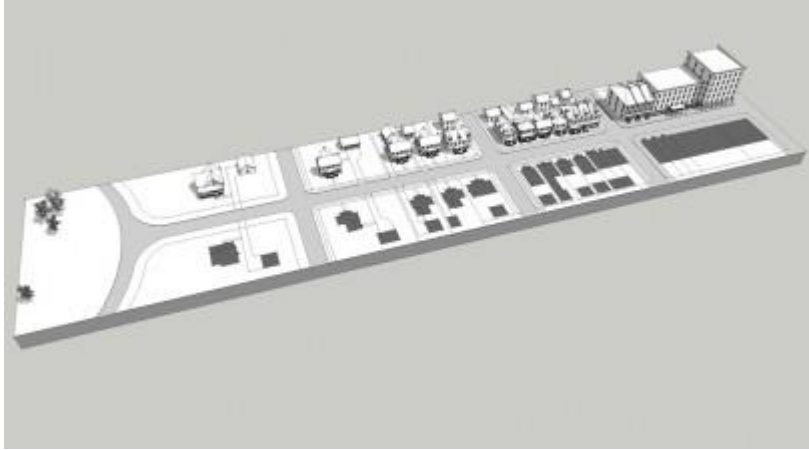
Making Fitchburg a more complete community with the full range of living, working, and playing environments “won’t happen overnight,” said Fitchburg Mayor Jay Allen. “This will build out over the next 15, 20, or 30 years.” But the drawings and plans the PlaceMakers team presented gave the audience a glimpse of how that build-out might look.

Directly below this story are selected images illustrating approaches the project team proposed after studying the area and listening to citizens over the course of the last week.

What’s next? The PlaceMakers team will prepare a “comment draft” of their report for City staff review by the end of April. Then, the team’s proposals will be submitted for comment and action through the City’s standard processes for public review. In the meantime, comments and questions are welcome here, in the space provided at the end of each of these posts.

While the Friday night presentation concluded one phase of planning for Fitchburg’s future, it signaled the beginning of others. Creating and maintaining a livable community “is not something you just do and then forget about it,” said the mayor. “You can’t just put it on auto pilot and expect it to keep going on.”

In fact, Henderson told the Friday night audience, planning and implementing plans are part of “an obligation a city has to its citizens. Cities have a moral obligation to plan for the future.”



ABOVE: Choosing the way we want to live shouldn't isolate us from the full richness of life. A complete environment, ranging from more rural to more urban in a single neighborhood, provides all scales of density to suit all tastes and gives each access to the natural beauty or urban conveniences of the other. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: An aerial rendering of clustered, rural T2 hamlet development on a small portion of otherwise agricultural land. Ranges from 6 to 18 lots. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: An example of rural clustering utilizing a shared septic system. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: An example of rural clustering with individual septic fields. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A typical street scene reflecting the SmartCode's T3, Sub-Urban, transect zone—customized to reflect Fitchburg's regional history and resident input. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A typical street scene reflecting the SmartCode's T4, General Urban, transect zone—customized to reflect Fitchburg's regional history and resident input. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A typical street scene reflecting the SmartCode's T5, Urban Center, transect zone—customized to reflect Fitchburg's regional history and resident input. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A SmartCode-compliant land plan option for an existing northeast Fitchburg parcel, based on a current neighborhood proposal. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A second SmartCode-compliant land plan alternative, produced by PlaceMakers for the same parcel. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: An illustrative rendering of the PlaceMakers-produced northeast neighborhood option.
[Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A SmartCode-compliant variation of the current GreenTech development proposal. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: An illustrative rendering of the GreenTech development option. [Click for larger view.](#)



ABOVE: A proposed land use plan for the current Fairways and Pines / Fitchburg Ridge property. Click for larger view.



ABOVE: An illustrative rendering of a proposed plan for the current Fairways and Pines / Fitchburg Ridge property. Click for larger view.