

SPECIAL EDITION APA WNY NEWSLETTER

A NEW LOOK AT CATTARAUGUS COUNTY

SPECIAL EDITION NO. 1

SPRING/SUMMER 2001

DID YOU KNOW?

Cattaraugus County has 84,234 people, and 47 municipalities (32 towns, 13 villages, 2 cities), scattered over 1,336 square miles.

The Seneca Nation has three reservations here - Allegany, Oil Spring, and Cattaraugus.

Onoville Marina has berths for 395 boats up to 40 feet in length, and related services.

Holiday Valley in Ellicottville is the largest volume ski resort in New York State, attracting as many as 600,000 visitors year round.

The Allegany State Park has 65,000 acres of forest land and attracts an average of 1.5 million visitors per year. It has lakes, beaches, campgrounds, and trails for year round use.

Studies estimate that 9000+ new jobs would be created in western New York by the year 2025, if the Route 219 freeway between Springville and Salamanca is built by the year 2005.

Three village downtowns are on the National Register for "Historic Districts" (Ellicottville, Franklinville and Gowanda).

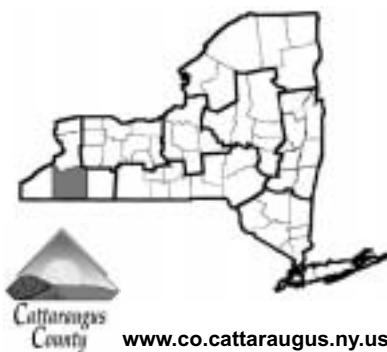
Ellicottville is named after George Ellicot, who, working for the Holland Land Company in the 1800's, subdivided land in western New York that was obtained by treaty from Native Americans, and sold it to newly arriving immigrants.

The first crude oil in the United States was found on the Seneca Nation's Oil Spring Reservation in 1627, and the first oil well was drilled in 1865 near Limestone, in now Allegany State Park.

10,000 years ago the glaciers of the last ice age ended halfway through Cattaraugus County, leaving the Allegany State Park untouched.

(For more information on Cattaraugus County, go to our web site at www.co.cattaraugus.ny.us)

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY LOCATION MAP



www.co.cattaraugus.ny.us

GROWING GREENER

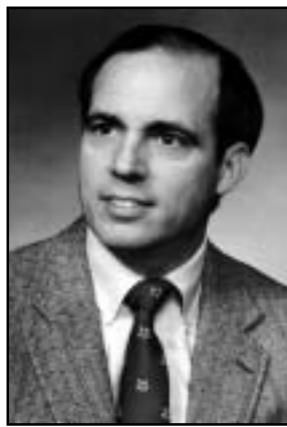
By Terry H. Martin

We believed that Cattaraugus County was green, but then we met Randall Arendt. We just got greener. Cattaraugus County has hired Randall Arendt to conduct an eighteen month program called Leadership Training and Visioning.

The idea for this special program came from the grass-roots of Cattaraugus County. In response to a survey and numerous community meetings over a period of several years, the overwhelming sentiment expressed by participants was to protect what we already have in Cattaraugus County. Allow development, but protect our natural resources and rural atmosphere. They also said they needed better training opportunities and more direct technical assistance.

The basic challenge is to promote creative new developments throughout Cattaraugus County. In the process, we want to protect property values, discourage sprawl and strip development, prevent environmental problems, and promote open space. The result would be a "quality community" writ large.

The political leadership for this approach came from Gerard "Jess" Fitzpatrick (County Chairman), Patrick McCrea (Chairman of our department), and a majority of County Legislators. This initiative was proposed by the County Planning Board, under the leadership of its former Chairman, Donald Patterson, and current Chairman Paul Bishop. It was developed and is being conducted by the Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism.



Randall Arendt, M.R.T.P.I.
Rural Design Consultant

Randall Arendt specializes in planning and conservation design for rural communities. He has published internationally, and his books are promoted by the American Planning Association.

Randall Arendt is a site designer, author, lecturer, and conservation advocate. He has degrees from Wesleyan University and the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and an extensive professional practice all across North America.

Randall Arendt advocates preserving open space and rural community character as an integral part of designing residential, commercial and mixed-use developments. He also promotes trail systems and greenways. His "Rural by Design", "Twice Green", and "Growing Greener" techniques also allow property owners and developers to make money through better design solutions. He gives people a "win-win" strategy for rural development and environmental protection (go to www.greenerprospects.com).

Our program in Cattaraugus County consists of five elements.

First, a Visual Preference Survey (VPS) laid the groundwork for a consensus specific to Cattaraugus County.

Second, more than 60 local officials and community leaders are being trained by Randall Arendt in residential and commercial conservation design concepts.

Third, a series of six focus groups is being conducted by The Saratoga Associates under a subcontract to identify basic ingredients for an up-dated county "vision".

GROWING GREENER

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Fourth, Randall Arendt is designing a Development Guidebook for Cattaraugus County for local leaders to use in their planning and development efforts.

Fifth, he is designing two demonstration projects for Cattaraugus County, a residential subdivision in Franklinville, and a commercial main street revitalization design for Little Valley.

Our program will give participants skills and design solutions for land use planning in Cattaraugus County. This service is intended to guide, not mandate, solutions to land use problems at county and local levels in the coming decades.

This leadership initiative is just one of many steps we are taking to implement the following goal from the County Planning Board's 1992 report, "Pathway to the Future - Planning for the 21st Century":

"The overriding effort to achieve economic development, if done without a comprehensive concept of development and without disciplined land use planning, can destroy the quality of life and character of a Rural Community.

"On the other hand, without economic development, a community may suffer the ill effects of unemployment, decline and blight.



**Terry H. Martin, Ph.D.
Policy Planning and Analysis**

"A balance is therefore needed. Cattaraugus County is not looking for decline, nor is it seeking unbridled development that destroys an established way of life along with the environment. It is seeking instead a planned and well-balanced growth throughout the County."

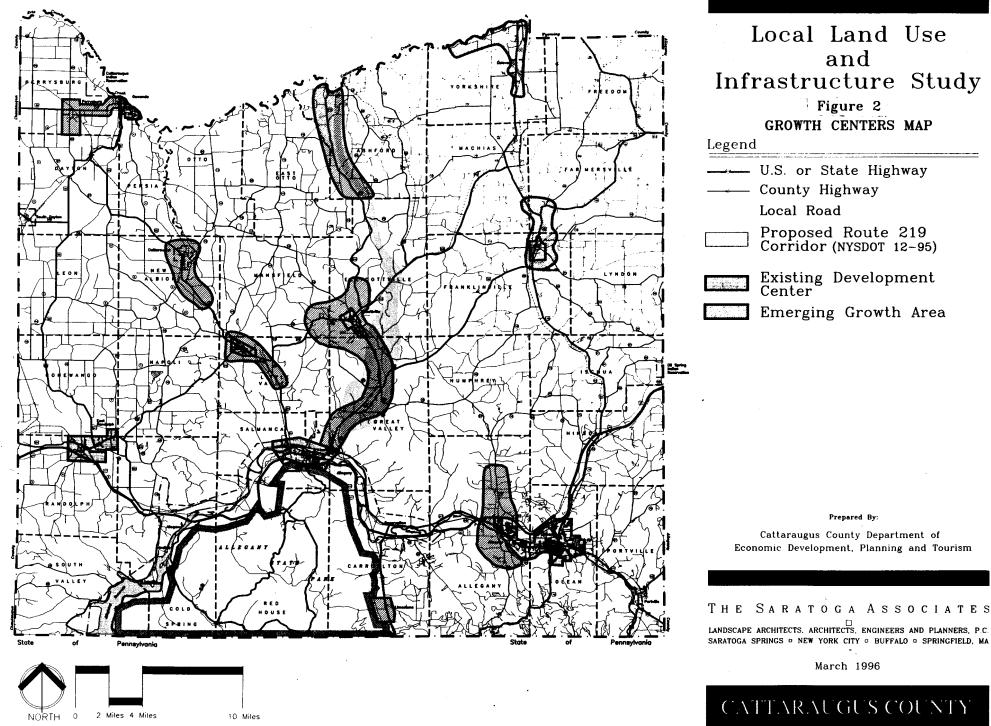
Randall Arendt's work takes us a step closer to achieving this goal. It also takes

us a step closer to becoming a "quality community", as we attempt to encourage growth and curb urban sprawl around the major growth areas shown in the map below (from Local Land Use and Infrastructure Study prepared by the The Saratoga Associates in 1996). We are confident that participants in Randall's program will gain leadership skills as they apply knowledge successfully in their own communities. We have seen this work in practice and it is gratifying.

In summary, Cattaraugus County could still protect the environment and offer a desirable quality of life even if its population doubles in the decades of the 21st Century. This assumes, of course, that we use greener design solutions and follow a policy for balanced growth and economic diversity.

(Terry H. Martin received his Ph.D. from the SUNY/Buffalo School of Management, worked in Washington, D.C. for three years and western New York 24 years, including 14 years as Chief Planner for Cattaraugus County. He has served on two statewide advisory committees for Quality Communities and Cumulative Impacts, and is a former Section Director for the WNY APA).

MAP OF COUNTY GROWTH AREAS



Appendix Two

Vision for Cattaraugus County

Cattaraugus County has one overarching goal and vision. It is to achieve a balance between rural and urban development trends. This balance is needed in order to protect Cattaraugus County for future generations:

- As a place where people want to live, work, raise their children, retire and invest their earnings and futures.
- As a community of diverse interests and attractions during the four seasons of the year, with a clean environment, creating a sense of excitement and a sense of place and identity.
- As an attractive business setting, drawing people and commerce from a multi-state area and from the global economy, thereby bringing new income into Cattaraugus County and creating jobs, business opportunities, and hope for the future.
- As an attractive community of mixed land uses, rural and urban, productively deployed and working cooperatively (rather than in constant conflict) for the benefit of residents, property owners, business interests, visitors, and the local tax base.

This vision is wholesome, healthy, and robust with opportunities. It portrays a rural community that is blessed not only with great natural endowments, but also by wise decision making and planning. It satisfies diverse interests within Cattaraugus County. It is not easy to give one interest special treatment without affecting or even hurting other interests. A balance is needed.

This vision would encourage new development, but in controlled directions and densities. Growth would continue, but with principles and guidelines. Locations would be selected based on density limits established in carefully designed plans, negotiations, and zoning ordinances.

Of particular interest to a balanced growth policy are techniques that cluster land uses together, preserve open space, exert controls over highway frontage development, separate incompatible uses from each other, pre-

vent environmental problems, coordinate locations, design better subdivisions, create trail systems, and spread costs over time as well as over a broader base of taxpayers.

Low density residential, commercial, agricultural and recreational uses would be encouraged among the valleys, farms, woodlands, and hillsides. Higher density developments would be encouraged to locate closer to existing villages and urban services, and in the vicinity of major intersections. This would reduce the cost of improvements to roads and for extending water and sewer systems. It would protect the rural areas and open spaces of Cattaraugus County, including its farmland, scenic mountains, valleys, woodlands, and its land, air and water for future generations.

This framework is the basis for implementing the following goal from the Cattaraugus County Planning Board's report, *Pathway to the Future – Planning for the 21st Century* (February 26, 1992):

"The overriding effort to achieve economic development, if done without a comprehensive concept of development and without disciplined land use planning, can destroy the quality of life and character of a rural community.

"On the other hand, without economic development, a community may suffer the ill effects of unemployment, decline and blight.

"A balance is therefore needed, Cattaraugus County is not looking for decline, nor is it seeking unbridled development that destroys an established way of life along with the environment. It is seeking instead a planned and well-balanced growth throughout the County".

This vision is for the 21st Century.

Approved on April 26, 2001 by the Cattaraugus County Planning Board. This vision is based on "The 1990s – A Time for New Directions," by Terry H. Martin, Ph.D., Cattaraugus County Local Land Use and Infrastructure Study, Appendix E, pages 14–19 (The Saratoga Associates, March 1996).

Appendix Three

Main Points Gleaned from Visual Preference Survey Results

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Rated Highest

Houses fronting or backing directly onto neighborhood open space
Neighborhood trails
Neighborhood greens and commons
Shade trees lining streets
Front porches, picket fences
Houses with modest to moderate front setbacks
Streets of modest to moderate width
Streets that curve or which have bends "closing the view"
Cul-de-sac islands with tree plantings
Streets with boulevard medians planted with trees

Rated Lowest

Absence of neighborhood open space, greens, or commons
Streetscapes with few or no trees
Streets that are long and straight
Houses with visually prominent garage doors
Houses built extremely far from the street, diluting the "neighborhood feel"
Wide streets
Treeless lots

TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Rated Highest

Units separated by garages (no common wall between living spaces)
Buildings with one front door and one side door as principal entrances
Buildings with front doors recessed (visually subordinate)
Buildings with continuous front porch unifying both "halves"
Buildings with traditional regional styling

Rated Lowest

Buildings with prominently paired front doors
Non-traditional building styles (e.g., raised ranch)

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Rated Highest

Units facing open space
Units with varied rooflines and with facades having recessed and projecting elements
Units designed according to historic architectural traditions
Units facing streets directly with no front parking (except parallel curbside)
Streetscapes with shade trees

Rated Lowest

Units fronting onto parking lots
Neighborhoods with few or no trees
Units with front-facing garages projecting forward of the main building

COMMERCIAL

Rated Highest

Parking visually minimized from the road:

- depressed in the landscape
- screened by stone walls, berms, low hedges, or thick vegetation
- screened by buildings located relatively close to the road

Non-generic buildings reflecting local historical building traditions

Parking lots with many trees
Shops arranged around "village green" types of open spaces
Two-story "Main Street" design
Sidewalks and shade trees
People-friendly places
Signs made of wood rather than plastic
Low signs ("monument" style)

Rated Lowest

Roadside view dominated by large expanses of asphalt in front parking lots
Sparse landscaping, few or no shade trees
Boxy, flat-roofed, non-descript buildings
Cluttered signage
Tall, visually dominant pole signs

Appendix Four

Features Associated with Well-Designed Roadside Commercial and Light Industrial Development

CIRCULATION

- A circular traffic flow should be created around central areas making use of streets and alleys.
- Parking lots on adjacent premises should be linked together so customers may drive from one shop to another along the corridor without having to re-enter and exit the main road.

BUILDING DESIGN

- Building massing, as perceived by the eye, can be reduced by designing sections with projecting or recessed facades and with different roof heights.
- Second-story construction is very strongly encouraged even if not required. Second-floor uses may include ski-condos, apartments for students, etc., over first floor commercial uses.
- Second-story accessibility can be enhanced by designing buildings on sloping ground with at-grade access on both first and second-floor levels. On flatter sites, the land can be graded to create lower and higher building areas so ADA-required ramps could be installed within the gradient limits for such ramps.
- Parapet walls give extra height to single-story structures and help to conceal roof equipment.

SIGNAGE

- Signs made of wood or metal are always preferred over plastic signs.
- Internally-lit plastic signs could be allowed only with opaque backgrounds so that only the lettering is visible (in translucent characters) at night.
- Sign height should not exceed five feet.
- “Monument” signs are strongly preferred over tall “pole” signs.

PARKING, OFF-STREET LOADING, AND OUTDOOR STORAGE

- These unsightly but necessary uses should be located behind buildings. The buildings can then be built closer to the street, observing a maximum setback (instead of a minimum setback). This puts the more unsightly aspects of a commercial or industrial use in the back, out of sight from the road, and enables buildings, signs, and display windows to be closer to the passing public and therefore to be more visible and to be located in a more attractive setting.
- Parking, loading, and storage areas should be screened behind a variety and density of shrubs that are trimmed at car-hood height, bolstered by a row of deciduous shade trees planted 30-40 feet apart along the street right-of-way.

DRAINAGE

- Drainage areas can become “greenways” for walkers and cyclists, while improving water quality.
- Planting beds can double as bio-retention areas for stormwater, also reducing the need to irrigate them.

LANDSCAPING

- The best designs around buildings and property edges use native species of trees, shrubs, and perennial flowers for low maintenance and to reinforce “the spirit of the place.” Oaks, maples, and hickories are great trees, and daylilies, brown-eyed susans, daisies, and Queen Anne’s lace are excellent perennials.
- Fences and berms are less attractive than plants, shrubs, and trees, but are useful for screening purposes.

Credits

- ¹ Yaro, Robert, Randall Arendt, Harry Dodson, and Elizabeth Brabec. 1988. *Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
- ² Arendt, Randall, et al. 1994. *Rural by Design: A Handbook for Maintaining Small Town Character*. Chicago: American Planning Association.
- ³ Arendt, Randall. 1999. *Crossroad, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods, Old and New*. Chicago: American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Report.
- ⁴ Arendt, Randall. 1999. *Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances*. Island Press.
- ⁵ Arendt, Randall. 1996. *Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks*. Island Press.

Cattaraugus County

A Place to Grow

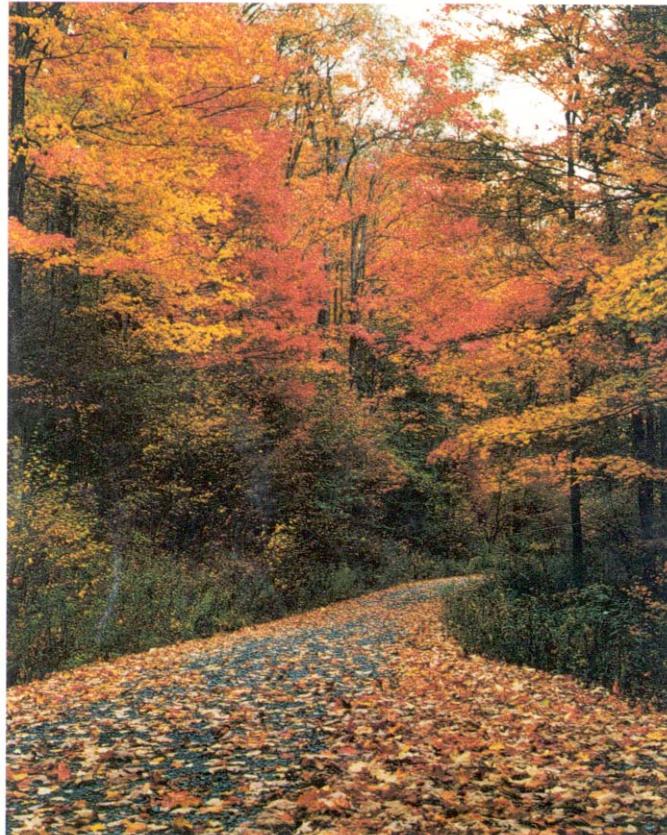


Photo credit: Alice Ferguson

Welcome to New York!