



Trust for Architectural Easements and Island Press Sustainability and Historic Preservation Thought Leader Discussion Series

In the next twenty years, the number of urban dwellers worldwide will swell to an estimated five-billion people. Redeveloping our existing built resources to accommodate this growth will determine the future of our cities and regions, the natural environment, and the health and human welfare of all of the earth's inhabitants. As we face the challenges of climate change and diminishing fossil fuel resources, how will urban areas accommodate a growing population while minimizing resource use?

A critical component of any sustainable growth strategy is the reuse and adaptation of existing resources in the built environment. Any environmental conservation plan should include recycling by capturing and reusing the embodied energy in existing buildings; preventing sprawl, and protecting as yet untouched open spaces; and using historic buildings that were constructed with passive climate control and lighting measures which, when restored and allowed to function as intended, can reduce the overall energy load of a building.

How can these goals be achieved in the existing financial, political, and regulatory climate?

Two panel discussions sponsored by the Trust for Architectural Easements and Island Press will bring together experts from the financial, real estate, architecture, preservation, planning, and policy worlds to provide theories, best practices, and examples of navigating the sometimes daunting waters to create a future that is environmentally, financially, and socially sound. The panels will cover "How Policy and Regulation Affect Sustainable Development" and "How We Finance Sustainable Development." Both panels will be informed by the underlying themes of environmental conservation, historic preservation, and social equity.

Panel 1: How Policy and Regulation Affect Sustainable Development

Wednesday, April 29, 2009 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm

General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen

20 West 44th Street

New York, NY

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Focusing on walkable urban centers and away from drivable suburban sprawl will require federal policy leadership and local action to change regulations. Many areas of the United States have zoning and building codes that discourage historic building rehabilitation and the creation of sustainable urban communities due to ambiguous terminology and the interpretive whims of the code officials.

Architects and developers seeking to rehabilitate properties located in historic districts often see the evaluative processes of the local historic preservation entities as roadblocks to modern development. With environmental conservation concerns encouraging compromise, there are opportunities for architects, developers, and preservationists to think creatively about current regulations and to formulate possibilities for policy change.

What changes will be required to current policy and regulations to encourage adaptive reuse in urban areas near transit and remove the incentives that promote suburban sprawl? How do we balance the need for high-density neighborhoods around transit centers with respect for the historic streetscapes and buildings often found in these areas? How do we resolve the tension between the goals of historic district regulations and the need to meet 21st-century demands in these neighborhoods?

Moderator:

Todd Baldwin, Vice President and Associate Publisher of Island Press

Panelists:

- **Michael Buckley**, Director of Columbia University's Real Estate Development Graduate Program; and President of Halcyon LTD, Real Estate Advisors and Development Consultants
- **Douglas Porter**, Consultant on Land Use Planning and Policy Issues for the Growth Management Institute; and Author of Managing Growth in America's Communities (Island Press, 2007)
- **Stephen Tilly**, Principal of Stephen Tilly, Architect; and a member of the Technical Committee on Sustainability of the Association for Preservation Technology International

A second panel – How We Finance Sustainable Development – will be held in New York on May 18th.

The Trust for Architectural Easements is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit organizations dedicated to voluntary preservation through easement donations. Island Press was established in 1984 to stimulate, shape and communicate the ideas that are essential for solving environmental problems.