



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 14th, 2006

5th Annual Smart Growth Awards

“Transforming the Landscape, One Place at a Time”

June 16th, 2006 from 11:30am – 2:00pm at the Crest Hollow Country Club

UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS COME TOGETHER FOR 5TH ANNUAL SMART GROWTH AWARDS, CELEBRATING QUALITY GROWTH AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS ISLAND-WIDE.



On June 16th Vision Long Island hosted over 375 leaders, experts and advocates at the 5th Annual Smart Growth Awards. The event put a spotlight on the cutting edge people, projects and policies that are shaping the future of Long Island’s landscape. Categories were based on “Principles of Smart Growth,” and included awards for green development and regional leadership.

The Master of Ceremonies for what many have come to call the “Oscars” of land-use was **Lea Tyrrell**, well-known anchor of **News 12 Long Island**.

In his keynote presentation, **Scott Rechler of Reckson Associates** delivered an informative review of the market trends regional commercial developers are responding to. These include skyrocketing costs and post-9/11 realities that are driving major corporations to decentralize operations. Rechler noted that as these interests divide their holdings into several geographic ‘baskets’, they and their employees continue to demand the convenience and services they had in major metropolitan centers. As the developer of the Nassau Coliseum site, Reckson has a key opportunity to create a model for how Long Island developers can meet this growing demand.

Reflecting on these trends, **Eric Alexander, Executive Director of Vision Long Island** noted that corporations are not the only ones seeking smart, convenient developments, “Long Islanders value choice. Smart Growth provides the alternatives people are looking for by creating real places that will improve quality of life and retain our workforce.”

Above image, clockwise from top left: Alex Latham, ADLIII Architecture; Brookhaven Councilwoman Connie Kepert; Brookhaven Supervisor Brian Foley; VISION Executive Director Eric Alexander; Master of Ceremonies Lea Tyrrell of News 12 Long Island; VISION President Ron Stein; Reckson President/CEO Scott Rechler; John Cameron of Cameron Engineering and Associates; Richard Bivone, Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce; Islip Councilman Steve Flotteron; Michael Kelly of Pulte Homes; Edward Thompson, Molloy College; Mineola Mayor Jack Martins; Michael Posillico of the Posillico Group; Benjamin Weinstock, Ruskin Moucou Faltischek and Oyster Bay Councilman Anthony Macagnone



Brookhaven Supervisor Brian Foley, News 12 Anchor Lea Tyrrell and Eric Alexander



Master of Ceremonies, Lea Tyrrell of News 12 Long Island and keynote speaker Scott Rechler of Reckson Associates present to the crowded luncheon



More than 375 guests gathered to help celebrate the Smart Growth honorees



Conceptual Rendering for Riverside Hamlet



Middle Country Road Land Use Plan



Copper Beech Villages, Village of Patchogue



Plan for Nobman's Hardware in Oyster Bay



Coalition for a Safer Manhasset



Bay Walk Park, Port Washington North

VLI President Ron Stein agrees, “Young people are desperate for two things: jobs, and vibrant, affordable places to live. Scott Rechler is right -- if Long Island doesn't break out of its large-lot subdivision mentality and build desirable mixed use centers, we won't attract the employers we need or the labor force they require. As long as we're stuck in the dark ages, Westchester, New Jersey, and Connecticut will pull ahead.

This year's honorees represent the steps Long Island is taking to try and address these and other pressing needs, and to plan for the future that Rechler and others foresee. It is Vision Long Island's hope that these examples will serve to set higher standards for growth and preservation across the board:

- **Supervisor Brian Foley** and **Councilwoman Connie Kepert** accepted an award to the **Town of Brookhaven** for the **Middle Country Road Land Use Plan**. This plan seeks to curb suburban sprawl by focusing development on the creation of new downtown centers. It is a long-awaited major step toward the implementation of a community vision created in 2002.

- **Executive VP of the Long Island Builders Institute, Bob Weiboldt** accepted an award on behalf of **Landing Avenue LLC** for **Country View Estates in Smithtown**, a senior residence with a 20% affordable component that is convenient to the downtown area. In his acceptance speech, Weiboldt commended Landing Avenue's persistence over the 12 years it took to get approval for the first affordable housing development in the Town of Smithtown.

- **Pulte Homes** for **Copper Beech Villages** was honored for a remarkable 50% affordable housing development that incorporates high-quality design in a down-town setting.

- The **Town of Oyster Bay** and the **Oyster Bay Main Street Association** were honored for numerous cooperative efforts to ensure the historic character and economic viability of the downtown area. This includes efforts to advance the rebuilding of Nobman's Hardware, efforts to bring a carousel to the waterfront park, and the redevelopment of Townsend Square.

In his acceptance speech, Oyster Bay **Councilman Anthony Macagnone** thanked Vision Long Island for its continued assistance to the Town, including efforts to help the municipality navigate its most difficult and controversial land use issues.

- The community organization, **Coalition for a Safer Manhasset**, for its comprehensive efforts to improve the safety of Plandome Rd. and surrounding streets.

- The **Village of Port Washington North**, the **Town of North Hempstead** and **Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington** for the **Bay Walk Waterfront Park**, a rare piece of new public space within a developed area that includes traffic calming and beautification measures for the adjacent Shore Rd.

- The **Village of Mineola** was honored for its dynamic, transit-oriented, mixed use **Comprehensive Plan** to increase the long-term economic viability of downtown Mineola.

- The **Tri-State Transportation Campaign** for its hard-hitting, intelligent efforts to advance transportation alternatives and to address pedestrian and bicycle safety issues on Long Island.

- The **Town of Southampton** for its community-initiated **Riverside Hamlet Center**, which incorporates design standards and clear implementation guidelines.



VISION's Eric Alexander, Honoree Rich Bivone of the Nassau Council of Chambers and Ron Stein, President of Vision Long Island



Eric Alexander and Ron Stein displaying the dumb growth "Sprawl Sucker"



Katie Miller and Elise LaRocca of the Coalition for a Safer Manhasset with Nassau County Legislator Lisanne Altmann and the Coalition's Susan Auriemma



Scott Rechler speaking with Village of Greenport Mayor Dave Kapell

- The **Albanese Organization** for it's Long Island's first environmentally engineered office building 1001 Franklin Ave, Garden City that is guided by LEED ND Smart Growth green building standards.

- **Richard Bivone, Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce** was honored for his tireless efforts to bring the Nassau County business community to work in cooperation with government, environmental and community interests to ensure that future development has a positive impact on the local economy.

The **2nd Annual "Dumb Growth" Award** was awarded to the **Town of Smithtown**. The award was primarily given as an attention-getting device. "It is our hope that Smithtown will use this opportunity to take a second look at its planning." said Alexander, "Across Long Island, Towns are striving to identify and implement the best solutions to the problems of land use. By drawing attention to their lack of participation, we hope we can finally move Smithtown to join the collective discussion."

The value of Smart Growth is that it offers solutions to the problems caused and complicated by Long Island's suburban sprawl and accompanying traffic congestion. Principles focus on preserving community character, protecting open space and the environment, and strengthening local economies. Smart Growth embraces communities in which citizens can walk, work, shop, and enjoy their downtown areas.

The prime objective of the Smart Growth Awards is to positively reinforce steps toward better land use policy and to effectively raise the bar for preservation and development standards throughout the region. Toward this end, over the past five years VISION has given out 55 awards. The honorees have catalyzed others, served as a guide to future Smart Growth projects, and transformed the communities of which they are part.

In a nutshell over the last five years VISION has honored:

- Eight community organizations and four business and community leaders
- Ten elected officials and eleven government sponsored plans, policies or regulations
- Six projects that are in planning, four in construction, and twelve that have been built

The results of their efforts are as follows:

- 26 communities (13 in each County) underwent **downtown revitalization** efforts
- 20 communities have **new Master or Hamlet Plans**. Seven of these involved visionings.
- **17 legislative initiatives** on State, County, Town and Village levels have been honored (16 have passed successfully)
- 18 projects have created a total of **2,538 housing units**. Of these, **604 are affordable**.
- Eight projects have yielded 475,000 square feet of **retail and office space**.
- Eight projects with open space components totaled **883 acres of preserved land**
- Nine projects with **transportation** components secured **over \$58 million in investment**.
- Two projects incorporated **green building design and clean energy** principles.
- Four projects **transformed NIMBY sentiment into support for an alternative**



Brookhaven Councilwoman Connie Keper, Supervisor Brian Foley, Mother Erma Saunders of Feed My Sheep Baptist Church, Tawaun Whitty of the Gordon Heights Visioning Steering Committee, Rev. Shirley Saunders of Feed My Sheep, and Nicole Christian of the Town of Brookhaven Department of Economic Development



Michael Puntillo of the Jobco Org, Richard Guardino, Hofstra University and VISION President Ron Stein



Networking



Jim McAsey of Jobs with Justice and Edward Thompson, Molloy College

plan. These projects collectively involved three road widenings and one big box store transforming into three pedestrian friendly corridor plans and a mixed use development

All told, the Smart Growth honorees have brought in over \$150 million of public investment, leveraging over \$650 million in private investment. What cannot be so easily delineated is the positive social and human impacts these projects have had at virtually every level.

Information about the event, as well as annual journals profiling all Smart Growth Awards Honorees can be found on Vision Long Island's web-site www.visionlongisland.org. For more information about the Smart Growth Awards, including print-worthy images and video transcripts of the event, **please call Vision Long Island at 631-261-0242.**



Councilman Ed Ambrosino, Town of Hempstead Richard Bivone, Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce and Bruce Migatz of the Albanese Org.



Joy Squires of the Huntington Conservation Board with Suffolk Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher



Village of Mineola Mayor Jack Martins and John Spellman of Spellman, Rice Schure, Gibbons, McDonough & Polizzi LLP



The Rauch Foundation's John McNally with Neal Lewis of the Neighborhood Network



Jamie Winkler of Winkler Real Estate, Eric Alexander, Rich Bivone of Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce and Kate Slevin of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign



Susan Hayes and Janet Jones of Verizon with VISION's Eric Alexander