

Graduate Planning Studios (34:970:510) Fall 2022

- Transportation
- Coastal Resiliency
- Blue Sky Planning – Towards 2050:
Comprehensive Planning Along the
West Trenton Line
- Prepare a Development Prospectus
for Mixed Use
- Urban Redevelopment Analysis of
the Urban Redevelopment Framework:
National and New Jersey
Perspectives
- Paterson Habitat for Humanity and
Bloustein School of Planning and
Policy

Section 01 – Transportation

Professor Charles Brown,

Tuesday 6:00PM-9:00PM, CSB 472

Studio Description:

TBD

Section 02 – Coastal Resiliency

Professor Freudeberg,

Wednesday 6:00PM-9:00PM, CSB 472

Studio Description:

General Summary: Students work closely with a public client (municipality or state agency) to understand climate risks at a community level, gain a deep sense of the intersectional issues affecting resilience, such as equity, race, and governance, and work to develop recommendations for improved planning and policy practices that promote resilience and address underlying conditions.

Background: The impacts of climate change are here and are getting worse. Rising seas and more frequent and intense flood-inducing storms in particular pose an existential threat to an increasing number of communities along the shore and in the floodplains of riverfront towns in New Jersey. These impacts tend to affect more those populations who have been historically marginalized, under-invested in, and living with the impacts of environmental injustice. While the state aims to advance new policies and approaches through its Resilience Plan and through rule making, action must be taken at the local level, where limitations in capacity, funding, and planning prevent comprehensive steps to resilient communities.

Studio Structure & Output: Class lectures will invite a range of speakers, including academic scholars, policy and planning practitioners, and former elected officials to deepen understanding around climate impacts and planning and policy approaches. Students will divide into teams to more deeply research a chosen set of themes throughout the course and will develop a set of recommendations to improve resilience planning and policy practices in a final presentation and report for the client.

Broader impact: The fall 2022 coastal resilience studio will be informed by and contribute to efforts underway by the Megalopolitan Coastal Transformation Hub (MACH), an initiative of the National Science Foundation's Coasts and People program. Led by Rutgers University with 10 other academic partners, MACH is working with communities, decision-makers, and stakeholders across the New York City-New Jersey-Philadelphia region to:

Advance understanding of how coastal climate hazards, landforms, and human decisions interact to shape climate risk,

Facilitate flexible, equitable, and robust long-term planning to manage climate risk, and

Build an academic/stakeholder partnership model that provides insights for just, equitable, and inclusive climate action in diverse coastal, urban megaregions around the world. Studio outcomes will inform part of MACH's efforts in New Jersey and students will have opportunities to engage with MACH researchers and staff.

GRADING CRITERIA

Students will be graded through an evaluation of class attendance and participation, individual and team assignments, final product/report and peer reviews of group presentations and individual contributions to the group. Your final grade for the semester will be calculated according to the following percentages:

Final class presentation and client product/report	40%
Class Assignments	25%
Interim class presentation	15%
Class participation & attendance	10%
Peer evaluation	10%

This studio is suited for students who have an interest in climate change and climate adaptation, environmental planning, urban systems, displacement, governance and land use policy.

About the Instructor:



Robert Freudenberg is vice president of RPA's energy and environmental programs, leading the organization's initiatives in areas including climate mitigation and adaptation, open space conservation and park development, and water resource management. He oversees a comprehensive program of projects and policies to improve public health, quality of life, sustainable development and climate resilience in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan area. Prior to joining RPA in 2006, Rob served as a coastal management fellow at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, where he focused on policies for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Rob holds a master's of public administration in environmental science and policy from the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and a bachelor's in environmental biology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Section 03 – Blue Sky Planning – Towards 2050: Comprehensive Planning Along the West Trenton Line

Professor Tom Dallessio,

Wednesday 1:00PM-4:00PM, CBS 472

Studio Description:

“In this business, if you don’t have vision, transportation will be what transportation always was.” NJ Transit Chair and NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti

This studio will challenge you to think beyond the box and plan for current and future generations, using a decommissioned passenger rail line as an organizing framework for 21st century comprehensive planning. Anticipating that economic, environmental, social and technological changes may fundamentally transform the way we live and work over the next 30 years, planners must present new visions for communities that will address both the mundane and existential challenges of our lifetime.

Central to our lives is the ability to move. Americans have long embraced our love affair with the automobile and designed, planned and built communities that have exacerbated single occupancy vehicle travel and its associated negative externalities. During this time, private passenger rail lines went bankrupt and mass transit consistently faced budget shortfalls that forced transit agencies to cut service and create transit deserts. It is time to interrogate the sustainability of this paradigm. Questions regarding equity, climate change, economic prosperity, and public health and safety can motivate communities to seek transportation alternatives, and plan, zone and approve development that will meet current and future generational needs and enable higher forms of transportation to flourish.

This studio will explore opportunities for blue sky planning for communities along the West Trenton Line, a formerly active passenger rail service in Central New Jersey between Ewing and Bridgewater Townships. Using NJ Transit’s new report [“Transit Friendly Planning: A Guide for New Jersey Communities”](#) and APA’s [“The Comprehensive Plan: Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Communities for the 21st Century”](#) as central guides for instruction, students will research the history and existing conditions in West Trenton, Hopewell Township, Hopewell Borough, Montgomery Township, Hillsborough Township, Manville Borough and Bridgewater Township, and innovate land use planning solutions that consider alternative future scenarios and propose prosperous visions for the future.

Students will use NJT’s “Transit Friendly Checklist” and “Place Types” to explore the areas surrounding former or potential transit facilities in communities along the West Trenton Line, and develop planning solutions that will make reactivation of passenger rail service or provision of a new transit service feasible and desirable. They will consider natural and built environment systems, as well as social and economic systems, community health and regional connections to formulate a comprehensive plan.

Through this studio, students will work professionally in a team, think outside the box and practice hands-on learning in actual communities. The anticipated products from this studio include enhanced knowledge within these communities and NJT, and a report detailing short-, medium-, and long-term planning goals, objectives and strategies for local communities and NJ Transit, as well as graphics that will detail visions for these communities. The ultimate goal is to create a vision for diverse, equitable, just, inclusive, healthy, prosperous, resilient, safe and sustainable communities, and ensure that “transportation will not be what transportation always was.”

Section 04 – PREPARE A DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTUS FOR MIXED USE THE HEIGHTS, JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

Professor Barbara Faga, bfaga@ejb.rutgers.edu

Thursday 1:00PM-4:00PM, CSB- 472

Studio Description:

Fall Design Studio offers you the opportunity to work on the project that challenges thousands of communities and local governments each year. Due to decades of urban renewal and the myriad of other demolition programs our cities managed to turn thriving urban districts into vast acres of urban on-grade parking lots. Since mid-last century we’ve relegated asphalt paved parking as a main tenant of our downtowns primarily due to low parking fees, transportation mistakes, and cheap gas – all vacant areas waiting for redevelopment opportunities.



Jersey City, along with other enlightened communities, requested our help to redevelop these areas into mixed use development that blends into the existing city fabric. Our design studio will engage with the local residential and business community, the Central Avenue Special Improvement District (SID), the Jersey City Planning Department and City Council on a three-acre centrally located parcel to create a redevelopment plan and Development Prospectus.¹ This prospectus will be the guideline for interested developers to apply to redevelop the property.

¹ <https://jerseydigs.com/jersey-city-adopts-plan-to-bring-mixed-use-parking-facility-to-central-avenue/>

Our goal is to spend Fall 2022 studio determining the best use for the three-acre site. We will collaborate with our client to create a scope of work for the project. Our scope will include elements of city planning including engaging stakeholders through community meetings, determining land use appropriate for the site and surrounding area, reviewing opportunities and constraints, and interviewing residents, business owners, developers, city, and elected officials to facilitate and prepare a Development Prospectus for proposed development.

Esri Smart City Solutions will instruct studio on ArcGIS Urban, Esri's web-based 3D platform created to improve urban planning, decision making, and community engagement. Bob Nardi, vice president with WSP, will advise studio on local planning and implementation. Bob has a MCRP from Rutgers and serves as president and executive director of the Berger Charitable Foundation, Inc. since its founding in 2016.

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In this studio you will learn to

- Interact with clients including the local community, business leaders, elected officials, and developers.
- Work with clients on a project work plan and write the scope of work.
- Conduct a community survey, organize, and conduct community meeting/s.
- Propose short- and long-term designs for the proposed site and surrounding area.
- Recommend economic development actions to attract new businesses to the SID.
- Learn to use ArcGIS Urban.
- Produce concept design drawings and preliminary cost estimates.

Our direct client for this important project is The Central Avenue Special Improvement District Management Corporation (CASID), established to improve and preserve the traditional main street community in the “heart” of the Jersey City Heights.²

Please contact me if you would like additional information, bfaga@ejb.rutgers.edu

² <https://jcheights.com/about-us/district-management-corporation/>

Section 05 – Urban Redevelopment Analysis of the Urban Redevelopment Framework: National and New Jersey Perspectives
Professor David Listokin, listokin@rutgers.edu
Thursday 1:00PM-4:00PM, CBS 472

Studio Description:

The fall 2022 Urban Redevelopment Studio topic is Analysis of the Urban Redevelopment Framework: National and New Jersey Perspectives and will study the following two major topics:

TOPIC ONE—URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS—Identify/analyze the area designations (e. g., “area in need of rehabilitation”) associated with Urban Redevelopment (UR) in different states (New Jersey and six others) in the U. S. Consider changes in the UR criteria over time, impetus for such changes ,important court cases concerning the process and outcome of the UR designations, spatial data on the designated areas (e. g., physical scale and socioeconomic-housing characteristics), and recommend optimal practice UR area designations.

TOPIC TWO—UR FINANCIAL INCENTIVES—Identify/analyze the financial incentives available for UR in different states. Consider changes in the financial incentives over time, impetus for such changes, important court cases involving the UR financial aids, data on the dollar volume and spatial location of the UR financial incentives and recommend optimal incentive practice.

Section 06 – Paterson Habitat for Humanity and Bloustein School of Planning and Policy

Professor Defilippis

Tuesday 1:00PM-4:00PM, CBS 476

Studio Description

Summary:

There are a set of conditions in Paterson, NJ, where Paterson Habitat for Humanity (Habitat) has the vast majority of its portfolio, that are leading Habitat to think about ways to move towards long term affordability and shared equity. The first is the very rapid expansion in speculative investment and development by a few real estate developers. This is driving rapid price appreciation, disrupting the communities in Paterson, and making future site acquisitions by Habitat more challenging. The second is that the municipal government of Paterson is very supportive of this speculative development and has embraced a framework of gentrifying central Paterson – in particular the area between the train station and the historic Paterson Great Falls.

Habitat is responding to these developments by discussing the potential for a community land trust (CLT) and other forms of shared equity housing (SEH). This would be for Habitat's existing portfolio (of almost 300 properties in Paterson), other local resident property owners who would benefit from selling the land under their homes to a CLT, and the future developments on Habitat's existing undeveloped lots (which are about 30 or so). Those undeveloped lots include some contiguous properties, that could be merged for greater density with a zoning variance or spot rezoning. Much of that undeveloped inventory, however, is scattered and would likely be single or two-family homes.

Habitat wants the students of the Bloustein Fall 2022 Community Development Studio to do a feasibility analysis of these ideas. This would include both shared equity in the new developments – both the single-family homes, and the multifamily developments on the larger (newly merged) sites. It would also involve a structured conversion of the older Habitat and other owner-occupied properties to shared equity – either by the current homeowners or during a sale process of the home where Habitat retakes ownership of the property. This will need to keep in mind the balance between household wealth accumulation and long-term affordability (and working with Habitat to discover their goals in balancing those two), and the local political context which includes a mayor and planning department that are both unsympathetic to the goals of shared equity and the limiting of property value appreciation.

Deliverables:

The students will produce a report which will include both potential governance models for the new shared equity housing, a set of scenarios for resale formulas, and potential ways in which the pre-existing housing stock could be converted to shared equity. The resale scenarios would allow Habitat to find their “sweet spot” balancing goals that are in tension. The governance models would allow Habitat to work through how to integrate the Habitat community into shared equity in ways that fit with its goals of community engagement.

The students will also present this work to Habitat's staff and board, and, if it is productive for Habitat, other members of, and stakeholders in the Paterson community.

Logistics:

Habitat will work with students in the Bloustein Fall 2022 Community Development Studio to provide data and relevant organizational documents as well as arrange 1-2 in-person visits with key staff and board members on-site in Paterson, NJ. Habitat will make key staff and board members available to respond to inquiries on an as-needed basis.

Key Contacts:

Scott Millard – Paterson Habitat for Humanity CEO

Giancarlo Di Lonardo – Paterson Habitat for Humanity Board Chair

Ashley Biggs – Paterson Habitat for Humanity Chief of Staff

Lydia Ramos – Paterson Habitat for Humanity Director of Homeowner Services

Steve Kehayes – Paterson Habitat for Humanity Director of Community Development