



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer Announces Smart Growth Agenda for New York State

SUZI OPPENHEIMER May 14, 2010

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Senator joins with fellow legislators and coalition groups in promoting environmentally sound planning

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck) held a press conference in Albany this week to announce the Smart Growth Agenda for New York State. Joining with colleagues

Senators Martin Dilan (D-Brooklyn) and Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn) and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt (D-Buffalo), along with numerous coalition groups, the Senator outlined her vision for more sustainable environmentally sound planning.

“There is growing concern that modern development practices have led to urban and suburban sprawl that is not serving the state’s long-term interests,” said Senator Oppenheimer. “Development without regard to the environment or to a particular community’s needs and desires makes no sense.”

“As a lifelong environmentalist, I believe strongly in smart growth principles. That’s why I am the lead sponsor of the smart growth policy bill, which establishes smart growth infrastructure criteria and obligates state agencies to fund public infrastructure projects in a manner consistent with those guidelines (S. 5560). It would also require the relevant agencies to consult with residents, environmental groups and other stakeholders before approving state infrastructure projects.”

Smart growth principles recognize the relationship between appropriate infrastructure development and improved quality of life. They address a community’s sense of how and where it wants to grow, helping to create vital places in which to live, work and play. Smart growth also takes into account the preservation of natural resources and the beauty of open spaces by incorporating compact building design with eco-friendly development.

“In my own Senate district,” noted the Senator, “the city of White Plains has become a model of a revitalized, smart growth community.”

The Smart Growth legislative agenda has widespread community support among health care advocates, senior citizen and consumer groups, disability groups, transportation

advocates, environmentalists and businesses. Participating in the press conference announcing this legislative initiative were representatives from AARP, the Empire State Future Coalition, the Tristate Transportation Campaign, Audubon NY, the NY State League of Conservation Voters and public health groups.

Just as our public structures should be environmentally and user friendly, so too must our public streets and roadways. “For this reason, I am also a co-sponsor of Senator Dilan’s bill, S. 5711-A, to incorporate complete street design principles into public transportation improvements. The Complete Streets bill will ensure safe access to our public roads for all users regardless of age or mobility,” said Senator Oppenheimer.

Said Peter Fleischer of the Empire State Future Coalition: “The Public Infrastructure Policy Act is a much-needed means to turn the State’s limited infrastructure dollars into investments that create future growth, stronger communities while protecting our natural resources. The Complete Streets bill is a good example of the kind of investment we can and must make for the public’s safety, the public health and for revitalized and more commercially successful downtowns and main streets in rural, suburban and urban places throughout New York State.”

“Senators Suzi Oppenheimer and Martin Dilan are excellent to work with and really know how to move bills in their house,” said Assemblyman Hoyt, who sponsors companion legislation in the Assembly. “I look forward to working with them on these important legislative initiatives.”