Course Syllabus

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

A6510 – Winter 2017

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION AND ZONING

Carol Clark, Adjunct Professor
cac35@columbia.edu 917-257-6448

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the ways in which neighborhood preservation goals are being achieved in several American cities. The use of neighborhood conservation district ordinances will be a principal focus. Other mechanisms that seek to protect neighborhood character or regulate community appearance will also be explored. The class will include an overview of the development of zoning in New York City to illustrate its role in local neighborhood preservation efforts. Contextual zoning, form-based codes and the preparation of preservation plans will also be discussed. Students will be asked to debate the effectiveness of a variety of approaches to sustaining the integrity of neighborhoods.

Course Requirements

Attending class and the field trip, completing the readings, and participating in class discussion is required. The assignment is a research project examining a city that has a neighborhood conservation ordinance, and assessing its performance. An illustrated class presentation and a paper are required.

January 17  Course Introduction

Review of syllabus and course requirements. An introduction to land use controls and aesthetics.
January 24  The Emergence of Neighborhood Conservation Districts

The origin of NCDs as a tool to protect community character. Planning and zoning in the first half of the 20th century and its relevance to neighborhood preservation.

January 31  The Proliferation of Neighborhood Conservation Districts

NCDs evolve as preservation, neighborhood planning and hybrid tools. In New York City, a focus on planning and community appearance in the 1950s was critical to the development of the criteria in the Landmarks Law.

February 7  Rachel Levy, Executive Director, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts

Current issues

February 14  Contextual Zoning and Form-based Codes

Contextual zoning and its importance as a neighborhood preservation mechanism. The growing use of form-based codes will also be examined.

February 17, 2-4 PM Site visit to the Gowanus Canal

February 21. Discussion about site visit. Presentation of planning and zoning for a mature New York City. Student presentations.

February 28  Prospects for Sustaining Neighborhood Character

Discussion of potential future scenarios for neighborhood preservation. Student presentations.

Required Readings

January 17

January 24


January 31


February 7


Website of The Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, www.friends-ues.org

February 14


February 17

“Gowanus Neighborhood Planning Study,” NYC Planning Places, Website of the NYC Department of City Planning, www.nyc.gov (Links to an external site.)

Website of Bridging Gowanus, BridgingGowanus.org

February 21


http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/about/pr102414.shtml (Links to an external site.)

February 28
