

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 22 No. 9

Middlebury, Vermont ♦ Monday, September 17, 2007 ♦ 32 Pages

Local projects receive 'smart growth' awards

By JOHN FLOWERS

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont's leading anti-sprawl organization last week picked three Addison County projects as prime examples of "smart growth."

Smart Growth Vermont, which also last week changed its name from the Vermont Forum on Sprawl, cited the recently completed Marble Works Residences in Middlebury, the new "Starksboro Town Center," and the Middlebury South Village development off Court Street as "projects that revitalize villages and downtowns, create economic opportunity and provide housing for all Vermonters."

Middlebury South Village (MSV) is a small community now under construction on 30 acres off Court Street. It will feature, among other things, 56 single-family homes, 30 townhouse apartments and a mix of office and retail space, including a bank and sit-down restaurant.

Starksboro's "town center project" involves a trio of adjoining municipal properties off Route 116 in the village: the town hall, the community meetinghouse and the former Shepard House, which residents agreed to buy and transform into new town offices.

The Marble Works Residences are 30 up-scale condominiums located in the Marble Works complex in downtown Middlebury. The project features underground parking.

Noelle MacKay, executive director of Smart Growth Vermont, said award nominees were received from throughout the state and were judged on eighth criteria, including:

- Proximity to town services and shopping.
- Density of the development, and the amount of surrounding space left open.
- Whether the project was located in a downtown "growth area."
- Availability of public transportation to serve the project.

A selection committee of planners, architects, developers, legislators, realtors and Smart Growth Vermont

board members reviewed the applications and picked the winners. The three Addison County projects were among the total of four "smart growth" winners.

MacKay said Addison County should be proud to have won so many awards.

"I think it shows there is a lot of leadership in the community," MacKay said. The projects provide evidence that Addison County leaders, planners and developers are demonstrating forethought in planning housing and other services in a way that keeps growth downtown while protecting open space.

Award recipients were happy with the recognition. They received their awards on Thursday, Sept. 13, at a reception in Burlington.

"Middlebury South Village was planned as a new neighborhood, providing businesses with a place to grow and a range of residential opportunities designed so that people who work in Middlebury can afford to live in Middlebury," said

Jeff Glassberg, managing member of MSV, LLC. "This award recognizes that the development of new, walkable, neighborhoods, well-integrated with their surrounding communities, is important to the long-term vitality of Vermont."

Starksboro residents are pleased with the outcome of their town center efforts.

"This revitalization project has been a true testament to the community spirit that is alive and well here in Starksboro," said Starksboro Town Clerk Cheryl Estey.

Smart Growth Vermont also gave out an award that bears the name of the late Arthur Gibb, a former Weybridge resident, state senator and major architect of Act 250, the Vermont's land use law.

The "Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership" was given to Robert Lloyd of Timmouth. He was lauded for his many years "working with local, regional and state organizations to plan for strong communities."

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— Starksboro
Town Clerk
Cheryl Estey