



NIMBY Wars. The Politics of Land Use

P. Michael Saint, Robert J. Flavell, Patrick F. Fox

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Not long ago, few places ever said no to new real estate development. Growth meant jobs, tax revenue and progress. Smoke a cigar with the building inspector, pick up your permit, and invite the mayor to the groundbreaking photo. Then came smart growth, anti sprawl, environmental movements, historic preservationists and NIMBYs (those who said not in my backyard) At the same time, savvy business operators realized that using land use regulations to keep competitors out could protect profits far better than cutting prices after a rival's new store opened. NIMBY Wars shows how the arena of local land use regulation has been politicized and describes in explicit detail what developers - and their opponents - must do to win. Land use politics is a completely new and different discipline from the old-fashioned 'local fixer' method or the press release approach to project approval. Its practitioners make no effort to peddle influence, or to waste time trying to educate; people who resolutely oppose a project. They do not treat the public as a market; to whom they sell; the project, and they do not harp on the developer's vision of the benefits that the project will bring the community. Instead, practitioners of land use politics practice politics - the process by which citizens decide who gets what. Land use politics is based on citizen advocacy, not professional lobbying or presentation. The difference is considerable, and the benefits of this approach are many. NIMBY Wars distills more than 25 years of experience in the trenches of land use battles, both for and against projects as varied as a hospital and an oil refinery. Readers will learn exactly what works and what doesn't work when it comes to influencing local decision-makers faced with a controversial development proposal. Even veterans of real estate development permitting will be surprised by the sophistication, cutting-edge tactics and effectiveness of the strategies described in NIMBY Wars.

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