

WATERVLIET SHAKER SITE

Master Plan - Phase II

Albany, New York

Shaker Heritage Society

Project Data

Date: 2008

Size: 42± acres within a 770±- acre National Historic District

Context: Rural oasis surrounded by urban sprawl

Project Description:

The Watervliet Shaker Site is America's first Shaker settlement and the resting-place of its founder, Ann Lee. Phase II continued the efforts of Phase I with the preparation of a Site Master Plan that puts into motion a clear outline of recommendations to turn this site into a thriving mixed-use facility with commercial, recreational, and educational opportunities. Phase II is a road map for the Shaker Heritage Society (SHS) to create a historic site that is economically viable, educational, interpretive, and a destination that also conserves and improves the site's heritage.



Aerial photo of the Church Family Site



Conservation & Development Areas



Use Areas



Activity Zones

Presently, the Shaker buildings and landscape, known as the Church Family Site (CFS), are owned by Albany County, are underutilized, and are not fulfilling their potential. The goal of Phase II was to articulate a vision that would turn the site around. This vision established five intertwined and attainable tenets including establish economic vitality and sustainability and increase visibility and visitation. A Draft Conservation Policy was developed to conserve historic resources and to establish an internally consistent framework of principles for evaluating proposed plans and actions that will effect the historic resources and their context. The CFS was divided into a 34.5-acre Conservation Area to be utilized by the SHS and all adjacent properties into an Economic Development Zone to be developed by Albany County. The Conservation Area was divided further into different Use Areas and Activity Zones that directly relate to the existing layout and use of the site by SHS and by the Shakers during their residency. These uses and activities were refined into a 15-year Comprehensive Site Master Plan that is divided into three 5-year increments. A series of maps and construction cost estimates were developed to support the recommendations and to illustrate the topics of discussion. As a result, the aesthetics of the site will come to life and its sense of place will be re-established. The site will once again be a living entity where people fill the spaces and their noises fill the air.

This project was recognized with a 2009 Merit Award from the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.



Comprehensive Site Master Plan