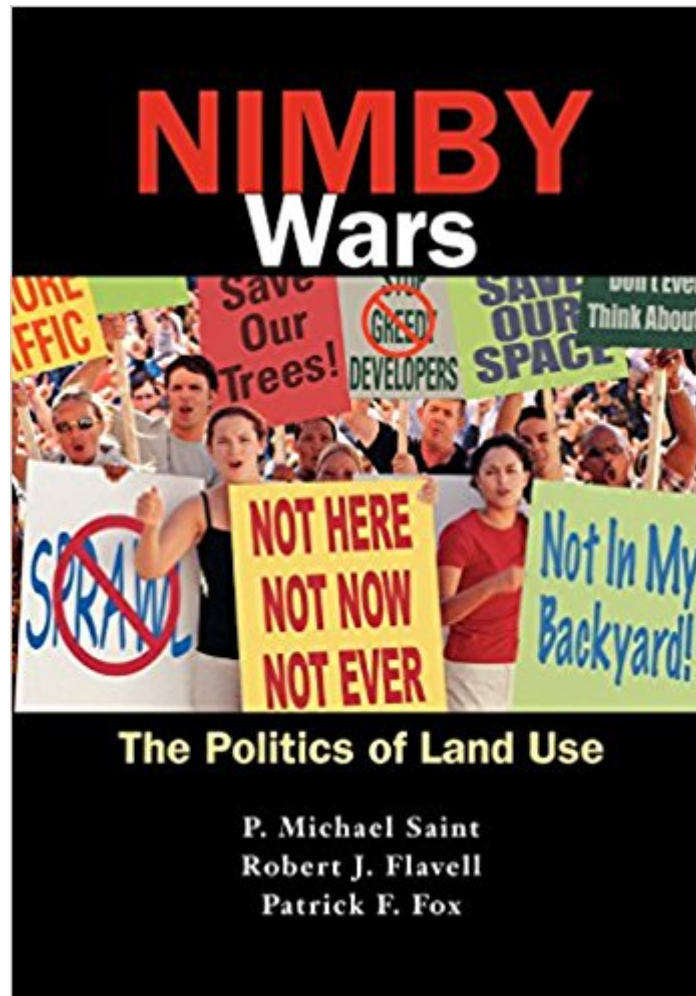




The book was found

NIMBY Wars. The Politics Of Land Use



Synopsis

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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Customer Reviews

The old ways may have been good enough before, but they don't work now. Set aside conventional wisdom and embrace land use politics the compelling approach these gifted consultants detail in this clearly written guidebook will give you the skill set you need to be a victor in land use battles.

--Attorney, Dwight Merriam, Author of the Complete Guide to Zoning
NIMBY wars and citizen engagement are here to stay. Politics, rational and irrational, often dramatically impact local land use decisions. This book outlines the strategies and details the tactics that are used by opponents and proponents of projects. Illustrated with examples and real life situations, the book offers the opportunity to plan ahead and gain support for good projects before they are overtaken by fear mongering and opponents. --Maureen McAvey, Executive Vice President, Urban Land Institute
In every community be it suburban, rural or urban citizens are rising up to oppose new development. Developers need to know how to work with residents and how to deal with local politics if they are going to succeed. NIMBY WARS is essential reading for anyone trying to develop real estate today. --Governor Brereton Jones, Former Kentucky Governor

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, the anti-sprawl and anti-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.Â Â 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

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There are many "ah-ha moments" in "Nimby Wars." Whether you are a developer trying to push a controversial project through the permitting and construction process, or neighbors trying to stop it, "Nimby Wars" provides invaluable insights and strategies. And for the regulators caught in the middle, the book is a "must read" that takes some of the mystery out of what seems to be the "surprise attacks." For more than three decades, I headed government planning agencies in California. I can recognize many of the controversies and scenarios the authors included in "Nimby Wars." It is a good, entertaining read. It also can serve as a "manual" for what is likely to occur as proponents and opponents bash each other with the environmental laws that "govern" most states', counties' and cities' land-use decisions. John Hardisty[...] Bakersfield

There is a lot of common sense stuff here that anybody who has ever done community outreach on a development project already knows (e.g., learn the political lay of the land first, build ostensibly legitimate citizens groups, etc.) but the real down and dirty tactics that these guys and other land use pros use will never see the light of day in print (nor should they). All land use is local and local developers have their go-to people already, so this book appears to be a marketing piece aimed at middle managers in large companies who are tasked with managing property development projects. By presenting them with a "resource" in some local market where they have none, this allows them to cross off one more thing on their to-do list. I'm not disparaging the author(s)-- the book is laid out well and is well-written, but they are not going to give away their real secrets for free (or for the cost of the book)-- you need to hire their firm for that!

I work for a large company in their active real estate division and I really enjoyed this book. We face nimby opposition frequently and I thought I had seen a lot. Reading Nimby Wars gave me a good view behind the curtain how real estate projects are fought and approved. I found the case studies to be the heart of the book. The case studies provide practical strategies and solutions to confront and defeat Nimby opposition. I'd highly recommend this book, a must have if you are in the

business of real estate development.

I was a little disappointed. I think they hold themselves in a little too high an esteem, and harbor a bit too much contempt for all other participants in the land use process. Their basic insight is that a professional campaign manager can manipulate enough people to get you what you want. They really act like they can waltz into a town and control the whole process. There is a great deal of talk about the campaign manager "selecting" participants for their grass-roots movement and how to pick a leader for your grass-roots movement. They even brag about moving a project toward completion and then, when their client asked, wheeling around, turning on the coalition they presumably built and killing the project. Maybe that's OK if you're leaving town, but don't count on that if you're going to work in town again. I bet they leave a lot of hard feelings in their wake on both sides. I found their explanations of how local governments work is overly simplistic. Their notion of "as of right" development is also simplistic. Nowhere was there any recognition that perhaps cracking the code and see what the existing zoning allows before you start design might make things easier. If you show up in town with a design finished and hope to bully your way to a permit, you will have a long frustrating fight through a purely legislative process as you try to rewrite the comp. plan to fit your project. If you crack the plan before you start land acquisition, you might get somewhere a lot faster. These guys don't seem to get that. It reads like a bragging, 200 page internet tirade. Somewhat longer than this one, but you just got this one for free.

The authors all work for the Saint Consulting Group, a company that helps developers obtain planning permission for their projects. Thus, the book is written from the standpoint of people who think that public opposition to a development is an obstacle to be overcome. The core of their strategy is to find locals who might be predisposed to support a project, and help them mobilize. Let me note at the start that I'm not a developer, and not particularly sympathetic to developers. That said, there's a case to be made for mobilizing an otherwise silent majority - - if it's a majority. Your reaction to this book will probably be shaped by its particular point of view. The book is meant as a primer on what the authors call the "discipline" of "land use politics." It's best thought of as the application of political consulting to local land use planning. As they present their views, the authors essentially give away some of the SCG's trade secrets. This makes sense only if this book is intended as a form of advertisement for the group. No matter how you feel about extensive development, however, this book provides a very interesting window into the political battles. There are both war stories and "case studies," and lots of advice about what does and doesn't work. The

authors also speak frankly about city and county politicians, developers, lawyers, planning professionals, and citizens. You'll know a lot more about the battle over zoning and land use planning after reading this book.

I thought this was a 150 page advertisement with no insight about how to handle issues. ok for a first look at how to deal with opposition but really shallow.

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