“Connecting Past and Present:  
A Vision for Preservation, Sustainability and Growth  
in Andover, New York”

Alfred State College  
Dr. Irby Sullivan, President  
10 Upper College Drive  
Alfred, New York 14802  
607-587-4211

January 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

April 30, 2018

Dr. Craig R. Clark, PE  
Vice President of Economic Development  
Alfred State College  
10 Upper College Drive  
Alfred, New York 14802  
607-587-3102  
cClark@alfredstate.edu
PROJECT FOCUS:

Alfred State College will complete a community visualization study of the Allegany County village of Andover, New York, in order to help the residents and municipal officials envision potential strategies for preserving and revitalizing their existing business district into a walkable village focused on promoting heritage tourism.

PROJECT DETAILS:

Course Number, Name, and Instructor:
ARCH 7306 – Design Studio 5 (6 credit hours)
Instructor: Professor William Dean, RA, AIA

Community Partner(s):
Village of Andover, New York
David Truax, Mayor
mayortruax@wny.twcbc.com

Andover Central School District, Andover, New York
Lawrence Spangenburg, Superintendent
lspangenburg@andovercsd.org

Andover Historical Society, Andover, New York
Evelyn Smith, President
smithje917@roadrunner.com

Note: Peripheral community partners will also include the Town of Andover, Allegany County Department of Planning, and Allegany County Historical Society.

Need:

Alfred State College – State University of New York is located in Allegany County, New York, along the Pennsylvania border in the northern Appalachian sub region. With a population just below 47,000 residents, it is the poorest county in New York’s Appalachian Region, and the third poorest county in the state ranked by per capita income. Communities in the county are typically small with part-time governments and limited resources. These towns and villages need assistance in many ways that include developing master plans to create a vision for preservation and future sustainability. Without this support, communities have a difficult time with long-term planning and have no documentation to assist in obtaining grant funding for projects such as façade improvements and small-scale infrastructure repair and replacement.

The Village of Andover, located in the town of the same name, is 1 square mile in area with a population of approximately 1,000 residents. As of the 2000 census, the per capita income for the village was $17,766, with 7.3% of families and 12.0% of the population living below the poverty line. The community is rich in history and natural beauty with a strong cultural connection to both agriculture and the arts.
Despite its small-town appeal and community pride, the village’s business district shows signs of deteriorating infrastructure and commercial vacancies, and the village is not currently leveraging its natural and cultural resources to improve the quality of life for its current residents, attract new residents and visitors to the area, or facilitate future development.

**Overview of the project, including its central focus:**

In Fall 2018, Professor William Dean will lead one section of the Architecture and Design Department’s fourth-year Urban Design Studio in partnering with the Village of Andover, as the subject for the semester’s Appalachian Teaching Project. Working individually and in small groups, students will be expected to research and document the subject area and complete a Neighborhood Development Analysis, including a visual survey of the defined neighborhood pattern and design of the existing community.

With a newfound understanding of Andover, students will return to the village, using a charrette process to generate conceptual ideas for future development. This *Community Design Workshop* will be a one-day event to provide an opportunity for village officials, residents, business owners, design professionals and Alfred State College faculty and students to elaborate and expand on previously defined goals and objectives. Working in teams, the participants will attend a short orientation session, walk the project area and brainstorm ideas for revitalizing downtown Andover. The students and design professionals will assist the community members in visualizing their ideas, and at the end of the day each team will make a brief presentation to the entire group.

The information generated during this initial research will be used as a point of departure to illustrate a positive vision for preservation, sustainability and growth of the Village of Andover through community engagement. The overall goal through student engagement of the community is to develop an inclusive Community Visualization Study that demonstrates a series of phased design interventions. The study will include thematic before and after images intended to help stakeholders envision possibilities for future development. Implementation will be possible through grant funding that will require the community to have a clearly defined vision going forward.

**Number and description of planned meetings with the community partner:**

In addition to municipal officials, business owners and town residents, the students will have the opportunity to meet with architects and planners from local firms and non-profit organizations who are experienced in authoring comprehensive plans for rural communities. The expertise of these design professionals will supplement the faculty instruction in this integrated studio that seeks to align architectural design with the realities of contemporary practice. Initial meetings, both in Andover and via teleconference, will occur every two weeks or as necessary leading up to the start of the project. Once the project begins, meetings for data gathering will occur in Andover. Both interim and final design presentations will take place on the Alfred State campus and the students will publicly present their work to local stakeholders in Andover at the end of the project.
Goals/Objectives:
During the course of the project, students will do the following:

- Attend an initial public meeting in the Village of Andover organized by the faculty and community partners. This meeting is intended to discuss existing challenges being faced by the village and identify sites within the community which are underutilized, have future development potential, or are being promoted for future development. Building/business development opportunities address ARC Strategic Plan Goal 1.

- Work in small teams to investigate Andover and collect economic, social, and environmental information, and document the natural and cultural heritage and physical characteristics of the project area. Following the site visit, the studio will work together to refine and coordinate the collected information into a seamless Neighborhood Development Analysis of the village. Documenting natural and cultural heritage will address ARC Strategic Plan Goal 4.

- Engage with the Andover Central School District community to educate them on the Alfred State College Appalachian Teaching Project, and solicit feedback from stakeholders of all ages.

- Organize and participate in a Community Design Workshop in Andover. Working in teams, the participants will attend a short orientation session, walk the project area and brainstorm ideas for revitalizing downtown Andover. The students, faculty and design professionals will assist community members in facilitating a discussion, visualizing ideas, and sharing those ideas with each other. Providing leadership opportunities addresses ARC Strategic Plan Goal 5.

- Work in a large group to complete a Community Visualization Study illustrating appropriate development within the village for the short, intermediate, and long term. The study will focus on strategies to leverage Andover’s history and natural beauty, along with its strong cultural connection to agriculture and the arts, in order to create a more economically and socially vibrant, walkable, and connected community. The study will also include action items for implementation, and will be made available to community partners for future planning and seeking potential grant funding. A more walkable and connected community promotes resident health and addresses ARC Strategic Plan Goal 2.

- Present the Community Visualization Study research to community partners both on the Alfred State College campus and at a public meeting in Andover in late October or early November 2018, exhibit the work at the Community Design Center Rochester in early December 2018; and present the project in Washington, DC, at the December 2018 ATP Conference. The intention is to present the research once more at the SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference or another regional meeting in Spring 2019 pending proposal acceptance. Providing leadership opportunities and reporting on student activities related to the project addresses ARC Strategic Plan Goal 5.
Project Impact:

It is expected that this project will have the following impact:

- Create an open and public dialogue among stakeholders in the Village of Andover, and serve as a model for studying communities in the region by clearly identifying both existing assets and strategic needs, and creating a visual “report card” for the use of residents and municipal officials in measuring future preservation, sustainability and growth.

- Identify and/or expand on a range of short-, medium-, and long-term solutions to the issues facing the Village of Andover. This program planning document will be similar in format to the “implementation” section of a typical comprehensive plan, and will include goals and objectives along with strategies for implementation and potential funding sources that can be made available for review by all community stakeholders. Aside from the Allegany County Strategic Plan, there has been no significant planning done by the Town or Village of Andover along the lines of this project proposal.

- Raise the profile of issues facing the Village of Andover and surrounding town by identifying specific areas for intervention, developing prospective solutions, and suggesting methods of implementation. There is currently the perception that Andover’s future development may not be seen as a priority given its distant location from the county seat, and engagement with county agencies during the course of the project may begin to address this concern.

- Enhance student and community awareness of the work of the ARC at the local, regional and state level by providing multiple opportunities for students to disseminate their findings. There is currently a limited understanding of Andover’s connection to the Appalachian region as a whole. The project will also continue the research partnership between local communities and Alfred State College in serving the economic development interests of Allegany County in New York State’s Appalachian region.

- Develop leadership and civic engagement capacity among participating students by providing them the opportunity to be active learners and partners in defining and addressing community challenges.

- Demonstrate through examples how Alfred State College’s past Community Visualization Study projects in Savona (2014), Southport (2015), Wellsville (2016), and Canaseraga (2017) have benefited those communities. This will be included in the presentation at the 2018 Appalachian Teaching Project Conference.