

# Poughkeepsie Journal

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## **Cozean goes to seminar on urban design** *STAFF*

*Michael Valkys*

City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Nancy Cozean is heading to the Boston area today for a conference on how to improve urban municipalities. Cozean was one of a select group of mayors picked to attend the Northeast Mayors' Institute on City Design, set to run through Saturday at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge.

The conference allows mayors to share their experiences in urban design and how that can help revitalize communities. Poughkeepsie is working to improve its Main Street corridor with new shops and apartments, while also bringing development to the Hudson River waterfront — part of its effort to rebound from years of economic decline.

"I think it will be an important opportunity for the city," Cozean told the Common Council this week about her trip. "It's going to afford us some excellent advice."

The conference is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the United States Conference of Mayors, the American Architectural Foundation and collaborating universities.

Professor Mark Schuster, director of the institute, said a resource team will work with participating mayors.

"The majority of the time is spent in roundtable discussions, which offer the mayors and a team of well-known urban designers the opportunity to discuss issues facing America's cities, and to determine how urban design can contribute to the quality of life in each of the participating municipalities," Schuster said in a statement.

He said mayors can use information from their discussions as they promote projects back home.

"Our hope is that mayors will return to their communities with ... substantially increased confidence in their ability to tackle these complex issues and a repertoire of ideas that might be deployed," Schuster said.

Cozean said she hopes that will be the case when she returns.

"Poughkeepsie has gained much ground in our revitalization efforts, but I look forward to gaining more insights for future planning," Cozean said in a release announcing her trip.

Other communities whose mayors are set to attend the conference include Cooperstown, Burlington, Vt., Free-port, Mass., Portsmouth, N.H., and Waterville, Maine.

Tourism will be focus

Organizers said tourism plays an important part in all those communities. That will be a major focus of the conference as well.

Mayor Joseph Riley of Charleston, S.C., an institute founder, said the conference provides valuable information.

"I have come to realize that as mayor of Charleston, I am also its principal urban designer and cultural steward," Riley said in a statement. "I learn as much as I can about the design process so I can understand how to direct my city's physical development, and at the same time enhance its historic, economic and aesthetic assets."

The Mayors' Institute on City Design was established in 1986 and sessions are held throughout the country each year. According to its Web site, more than 700 mayors have graduated from the program.

Michael Valkys can be reached at [mvalkys@poughkeepsiejournal.com](mailto:mvalkys@poughkeepsiejournal.com)

Resources

For information on the Mayors' Institute on City Design, visit [www.micd.org](http://www.micd.org) or call 1-202-463-1390.