

Ellen McCarthy

VP for Membership

Ellen McCarthy serves on the faculty of the Master's Program in Urban & Regional Planning at Georgetown University and is a principal at the Urban Partnership, LLC.

With over 35 years of professional experience focused on the practice of land use zoning, neighborhood planning, and historic preservation, McCarthy is widely recognized for her expertise in reconciling public and private value in urban revitalization. From 1999-2007, she served in the District of Columbia Office of Planning, first as deputy director for Land Use Review and subsequently as director. Under her leadership, the District of Columbia approved its first newly drafted Comprehensive Plan since the District of Columbia was granted Home Rule by Congress in 1973; the Plan later received an award from the local chapter of the American Planning Association. She served as Interim Planning Director as well in a subsequent mayoral administration.

A strong advocate for affordable housing, McCarthy has served on the boards of several nonprofits engaged in creating and preserving low- and moderate-income housing in DC and she directed the creation of the zoning provision that requires developers of new housing projects to reserve a percentage of the units as permanently affordable.

Ms. McCarthy co-chairs the Placemaking Council of the DC chapter of the Urban Land Institute and serves on the Steering Committee of Ward 3 Vision, a local organization which advocates for smart growth, livable streets and affordable housing in upper Northwest DC.

She holds a Master of City Planning from Harvard University and a B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Maryland.