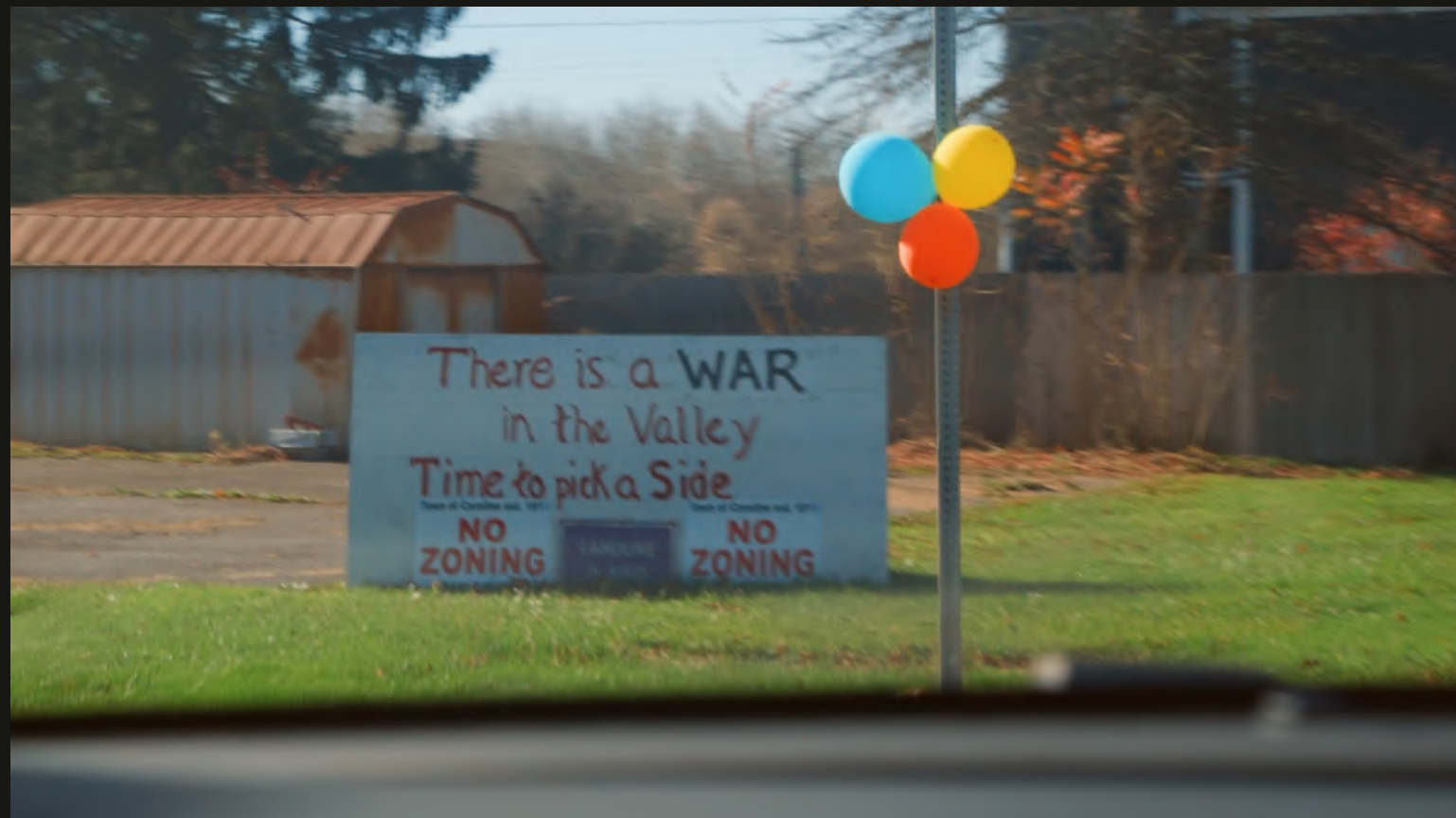




ARBITRARY LINES

THE FREE SPIRIT OF CAROLINE



Author of "Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It" Nolan Gray is invited to the small town of Caroline, New York, but ends up stepping into a local battle over zoning that is reaching a fever pitch. This half-hour documentary explores the legacy and contemporary form of zoning and how it affects towns, even small ones.

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" is a captivating documentary that paints a vivid portrait of Caroline, a small town nestled in the rural landscapes of Upstate New York. It presents an intriguing narrative about the tension between traditional zoning laws and the town's unique, free-spirited ethos.

The documentary begins by introducing viewers to the charming town of Caroline, rich in history and deeply connected to its pastoral roots. However, the idyllic tranquility is stirred up when the town faces the introduction of new zoning laws, sparking a riveting debate on preserving the town's character versus promoting modern development.

From there, Nolan visits with people across the community, from farmers to developers, business owners and single mothers. Through these conversations, he learns not just the legal and economic concepts of zoning, but the deeper, personal, and human impact that zoning can have.



The climax of the story occurs at a massive rally outside the Town Hall, revealing the deep schisms that have formed within the community over the zoning issue. This display of public sentiment underscores the critical nature of the ongoing debate.

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" is a compelling exploration of the delicate balance between the preservation of community character and the need for sustainable growth and development. It is a story about the power of community spirit in the face of bureaucratic constraints. The documentary challenges viewers to consider the impact of zoning laws on the fabric of small-town life and to rethink the arbitrary lines that define our built environments. The film ultimately raises a thought-provoking question: can the free spirit of a town like Caroline be preserved in the face of growing regulatory pressures?





JOHN & LAURIE MORSE

John and Laurie Morse are the energetic owners of Celebrations, a wedding and event venue in Caroline. They embody the entrepreneurial spirit of the town, having left their corporate jobs to follow their dreams. Their business, affected by both the COVID pandemic and the proposed zoning changes, highlights the struggles faced by local enterprises. Together, they've become vocal opponents of the zoning law, advocating for the freedom to shape their business without added restrictions.



HANNAH WYLIE

Hannah Wylie, a seventh-generation farmer in Caroline, represents the deep agricultural roots and the adaptive spirit of the community. Faced with the challenges of proposed zoning laws, she stands strong, championing the need for flexibility in local farming operations.



BRUNO SCHICKEL

Bruno Schickel is a forward-thinking builder who plays a central role in the narrative. Bruno is not just a constructor of buildings, but also of ideas. His unique perspective and willingness to challenge the status quo have led to the creation of Boiceville, an innovative housing development in Caroline that presents a compelling alternative to traditional neighborhood design.



CORINNA FARBMAN

Corinna Farbman is a single mother whose personal journey reflects the frustrations and aspirations of many in Caroline. Corinna's dreams of building a home and pottery studio on gifted land are stymied by restrictive zoning laws, casting her as a poignant representation of individuals whose personal dreams can be curtailed by regulatory boundaries.



TONYA VANCAMP

Tonya VanCamp is another single mother and long-time resident of Caroline. She is a symbol of resilience and adaptability, having navigated personal trials and the complexities of local regulations. Her property, marked by a small year-round stream, puts her at the center of the water resource overlay debate, making her story a crucial part of the zoning law discourse in Caroline.



SHARI CONOVER

Shari Conover is the owner of Sweet Caroline, a local gift store that represents the entrepreneurial spirit of the town. Through her store and her personal story, she provides a platform for local crafts and wares while shedding light on how small businesses can be impacted by zoning laws.







TRAN HOANG CALVIN - DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Trần Hoàng Calvin (Director, Executive Producer) is an independent director and producer from Grand Rapids, Michigan. He graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts with a BFA in film and television production and has over a decade of experience in the film industry with credits from ABC News, VICE Media, DECON-Mass Appeal, the Moving Picture Institute and Anonymous Content. Since graduating, his focus has been in the developing field of new media including social media strategy, memetics, and virtual reality which led him to founding NODEHAUS Media, an animation studio and production company driven by Gen-Z artists and entrepreneurs.

A bona fide documentary filmmaker, Tran's directorial credits include CoinDesk's "Rizqi Presents: BLOCKCHAIN," the Moving Picture Institute's "A Clean Slate" (Official Selection BronzeLens Film Festival), LearnLiberty's "Refuge: The Story of Viet Tran" and "Dead Malls: Explained," and NODEHAUS's originals "Long Ride Home," "Forever Art," and "An American Portrait." Tran is also a long-time creative partner with Nolan Gray, together producing the YouTube series "Pop Culture Urbanism."

JEREMY MAX - PRODUCER

Jeremy Max is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of The Arts . He is an award-winning Director, Producer, and Writer originating from New York. He specializes in narrative, music videos, commercials, and social media content. Jeremy's films have screened in a myriad of festivals.

For his upcoming film 'Dream Girl' he has won numerous awards including best film at various festivals. He has directed, produced, and developed commercial content with clients such as: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, The Motley Fool, Morning Recovery, Profits Run, Canine Companions and many more.





NOLAN GRAY - HOST AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

M. Nolan Gray is the research director for California YIMBY and an expert in urban land-use regulation. He is the author of *Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How To Fix It*. Gray previously worked as a planner in New York City, where he worked on the front lines of zoning.

He is a widely published author, with work appearing in outlets such as *The Atlantic*, *Bloomberg Citylab*, and *The Guardian*. Gray is the host of the popular YouTube series *Pop Culture Urbanism*, and the host of the *Abundance Podcast*. He lives in Los Angeles, California and is originally from Lexington, Kentucky.



WHAT MADE YOUR PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE UNIQUE FROM OTHER FILMS?

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" wasn't just a film, it was a wild adventure - a compelling journey deep into the heart of small-town America that took us from West Michigan to upstate New York with detours into American history. With no budget, a crew of just three, and an indomitable spirit, we set out to capture an underrepresented narrative - the clash of zoning laws, community spirit, and the universal human desire for freedom and self-determination.



Nolan Gray, my long-time creative partner, and I along with our crewmate Tim Frederick, packed our gear into a rental car and made the long trek to Caroline. Our budget was whatever we could pull from our own pockets and our accommodation was an AirBnB arranged by Nolan's friend, Christian Britschgi from Reason Magazine. This was guerrilla filmmaking at its best, relying not on the deep pockets of a production studio, but on our shared commitment to tell a vital story.

WHAT DID YOU FIND UNIQUE ABOUT THE TOWN OF CAROLINE IN THIS DOCUMENTARY?

As we descended upon Caroline, we were surprised and moved by the reaction from the townsfolk. To them, we were not just a film crew, we were allies in their struggle, amplifying their voices. The community rallied around us, treating us as heroes, while we sought only to tell their story. This experience showed us the depth of emotion and significance zoning debates held for this small town, embedding in us a profound respect for their resilience.

What added a poetic layer to our journey was that on our way to Caroline, we took a detour through Euclid, Ohio, the birthplace of American zoning. The infamous "Euclid v Ambler" case was a stark reminder of the regulatory challenges communities face across the nation. This allowed us to reflect on the historical and national relevance of Caroline's struggle.



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE THIS DOCUMENTARY?

The film's creation was fueled by a sense of camaraderie, adventure, and a fierce dedication to uncovering the layers of American society often overlooked. Our ragtag team didn't just make a documentary - we lived an experience that revealed to us the undeniable power of community spirit and resilience.

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" emerged from this whirlwind experience as a compelling narrative that invites press, film festivals, distributors, screeners, and strategic partners to dive into an engaging exploration of small-town America's struggle for self-determination against stifling bureaucracy. Our hope is that our story inspires not only the film industry but anyone who believes in the enduring spirit of community and the power of the individual voice.



TRAN HOANG CALVIN'S DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Creating "Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" has been a journey into the heart of America's towns and the transformative power of human resilience. This film is not just a story about a small town in upstate New York. It's a universal tale of individual dreams, community solidarity, and the fight against stifling bureaucracy, themes that resonate deeply across our contemporary society.

In the era of social media and 24/7 news cycles, the unique struggles of small-town America often fly under the radar. My career in film has always focused on bringing overlooked narratives into the spotlight. Through my collaboration with urban planner Nolan Gray, we have humanized the typically abstract concept of zoning.

Our goal with "Arbitrary Lines" was to build an engaging narrative that transcends geographical boundaries, to showcase how seemingly mundane zoning debates are actually universal struggles over self-determination and community identity. This documentary demonstrates that even within bureaucratic complexities, human spirit triumphs. The citizens of Caroline are not just inhabitants of a small town; they are the embodiment of the entrepreneurial spirit, of the enduring American dream.

This film is more than a documentary; it's an opportunity to start a conversation about how we, Americans, approach the future. Do we continue the legacy of segregation and stagnation that zoning mandates, or do we rediscover the value of the innumerable personal choices of our own communities?

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" represents an exciting opportunity for those interested in thought-provoking, socially relevant content on the issues at hand today.

In solidarity with the resilient community of Caroline, let us share their inspiring narrative with the world.

- Tran Hoang Calvin



NOLAN GRAY'S HOST STATEMENT

The battle over zoning in Caroline is a remarkable window into a larger fight that's happening in every city, town, and hamlet in America: who gets to plan our communities? And toward what end? Zoning can often seem so abstract—getting to see how it touches the lives of folks in a small town like Caroline captures the stakes, and why reform on this issue is so necessary.

Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline is a portrait of a place, blending timely policy analysis, Twin Peaks-style small town quirkiness, and a level of drama rarely afforded to a dry topic like zoning.

Aspect Ratio	16:9
Color / B&W	Color
Digital or Film	Digital
Total Runtime	0:25:53
Audio Format	Stereo
Link to Trailer	https://vimeo.com/844786136
IMDb Link	https://www.imdb.com/title/tt27620250/
Website Link	https://www.nodehaus.co/documentaries/arbitrary-lines-the-free-spirit-of-caroline
Link to Production Stills Folder	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JTg_OMrZ22N2OGG980KkpRNVBSIGyWoe?usp=sharing

"Arbitrary Lines: The Free Spirit of Caroline" was produced by NODEHAUS media.

NODEHAUS Media is an animation studio, production company, and video agency on a mission to elevate and empower Gen Z with the stories that matter and the ideas that can change the world. Through documentaries, digital media and animation, we're breaking the mold for reaching the next generation.

Past NODEHAUS works include CoinDesk's "Rizqi Presents: BLOCKCHAIN," LearnLiberty's "Refuge: The Story of Viet Tran" and "Dead Malls: Explained," and NODEHAUS's originals "Long Ride Home," "Forever Art," and "An American Portrait" as well as the YouTube series "Pop Culture Urbanism."

Learn more at nodehaus.co

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