

ONTARIO Planning JOURNAL

JULY/AUGUST 2010, VOL. 25, NO. 4

ONTARIO PLANNERS: VISION • LEADERSHIP • GREAT COMMUNITIES

The Outlook for Food

How do you imagine
the future of food
in Ontario?

OPPI Symposium October 28 & 29

Healthy Communities and
Planning for Food:
A Harvest of Ideas

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OPPI SYMPOSIUM 2010

Healthy
Communities
AND PLANNING FOR
Food
Guelph
OCT 28 & 29, 2010
The Delta Guelph Hotel & Conference Centre
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ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

Volume 25, Issue No.4, 2010

ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE
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Canadian Institute of Planners

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The Journal is published six times a year by the Ontario
Professional Planners Institute.
ISSN 0840-786X

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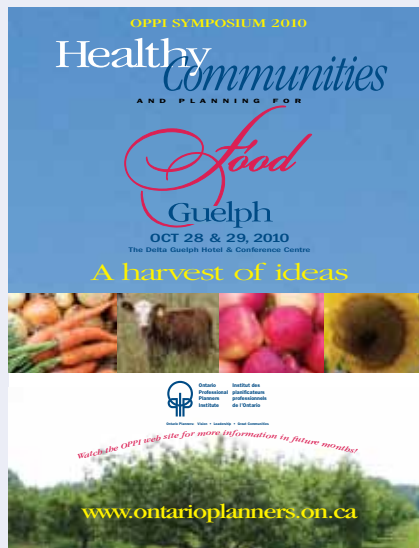
OCTOBER 28 & 29, 2010

OPPI 2010 SYMPOSIUM: HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND PLANNING FOR FOOD—A HARVEST OF IDEAS

Guelph.

The preliminary program is now available.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/content/symposium/index.aspx>



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OPPI Symposium

October 28 & 29 in Guelph

Healthy Communities and Planning for Food: A Harvest of Ideas

Message from the Symposium Chair, Wayne Caldwell

SOME TIME AGO, we challenged you with 10 reasons why the 2010 symposium will be of interest to you (see box). We now have the definitive justification for your attendance—a program packed with information, networking and skills development opportunities.

On Thursday, October 28, the symposium will engage you with a leading thinker on planning for food, food systems and food policy. Dr. Samina Raja helped develop the American Planning Association's *Guide to Community and Regional Food Planning* and her keynote address promises to be thought-provoking and inspirational. Throughout this first day you will be treated to a number of Canadian and American speakers who are on the cusp of this evolving movement within society and within the profession to plan for issues related to food. You will hear about many planners who are applying their skills and making a difference in this evolving field.

The first panel will explore how we preserve farmland in rural areas and make space for food production in urban areas and offer insights on protecting agricultural land and keeping it in production. The second panel will discuss food systems, and the role for planners in both urban and rural areas in strengthening Ontario's food systems.

On Friday, October 29, you can select from a number of workshops that will build your skills or introduce you to new topics and evolving areas of practice. You can learn from our Ministry partners who will share their evolving programs, visit a farm, or go on a walking tour and see some of the leading research that occurs at the University of Guelph.

Luncheon speakers include Laura Berman and Gord Hume. Laura Berman is a Canadian photographer who focuses on local, family and organic farms, urban gardens, farmers' markets and chefs who are passionate about using local food. Gord Hume is the author of *The Local Food Revolution*, which explores the relationship between food and building strong communities, how food systems are changing neighbourhoods and local economies, and how "eating local" is starting to affect our society and the role of planning at all levels.

The preliminary program is now available at www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/content/symposium/index.aspx

OPPI would like to thank the sponsors to date. At the Platinum level, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. At the Gold level, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, and Municipal World magazine. At the Silver level, the Canadian Association of Certified Planning Technicians (CACPT) and GSP Group. At the Bronze level, Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd. At the level of Friends of OPPI, York University.

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10 reasons why the symposium will be of interest to you

1. *Urban agriculture*: Across the continent there is an explosion of activity connected to urban agriculture. Cleveland, for example, is in the process of changing its zoning by-laws to accommodate urban farming. Learn from colleagues from across the province as they share their experience with this new-old land use.
2. *Planning for agriculture*: Ontario's agricultural industry is the most productive in Canada. Learn about challenges and evolving approaches to planning for agriculture.
3. *Planning students*: The planners of tomorrow are ready to step into a leadership role with this issue. Come and share your experiences and learn from them.
4. *Evolving agri-food issues*: Learn about evolving agri-food issues such as farmers' markets, food deserts and farmland preservation.
5. *Provincial legislation*: The Greenbelt and Growth Plan impact agriculture and rural communities. The symposium will provide you with an opportunity to understand and discuss related issues.
6. *Agriculture and food as a global issue*: Every year the planet loses an area the size of Scotland to erosion and urban sprawl, while at the same time 70 million people are added to the planet's population. What are the implications for planning?
7. *The role of planners*: How are Ontario planners considering this issue relative to our colleagues in the United States?
8. *Urban design and food systems*: How can we integrate urban design and food production?
9. *New experiences*: Visit a farm and tour the hub for agriculture, food and rural research in Ontario.
10. *Networking*: Meet old friends and new colleagues from the related disciplines of health care and agriculture.

Wayne Caldwell, MCIP, RPP, is chair of the OPPI fall symposium and past president of OPPI.



Cover

Back to the future of food

Philippa Campsie

HOW DO YOU IMAGINE the future of food in Ontario?

If you are like most people, your ideal for the future of food looks a lot like the past. Farmers' markets in every town. Farms on which chemicals are not used. Artisanal production. Small-scale operations. Food grown in urban backyards. All things that were commonplace in the 19th century.

This is the allure of local food and agriculture. It is also part of the problem. Much of what needs to happen in this sector involves rebuilding things that have gone out of existence, not just launching new ventures. Just as it is more enticing to embark on a new relationship than to patch up an old relationship, it is easier to generate enthusiasm about innovations in food than about re-establishing older methods of production and processing.

So we hear about young farmers who have, say, invented a new kind of goat cheese, or who are successfully growing non-native vegetables for the ethnic market. But who is going to re-open a canning factory for soft fruits or re-establish a defunct slaughterhouse to handle the grass-fed, hormone-free animals now being raised?

OPPI's upcoming symposium on Health Communities and Food (October 28 and 29 in Guelph) will focus on planners' role in ensuring appropriate spaces for growing food or raising animals, space for selling the products of local agriculture, and efforts to ensure a healthy diet for

Ontarians, wherever they live and whatever their income level. These are crucial questions, and planners who seek to embody OPPI's mission of "Vision. Leadership. Great Communities" need to take them seriously.

The symposium could not be better timed. Concern about local food, nutritional deficiencies, and the effects of obesity is growing. Books have been written and movies have been made about the problems of industrial food production and the need to reconsider what we eat and how we eat it.

But we keep bumping up against the fact that the infrastructure that supported the alternatives to the current system is now mostly lost, like the railway rights-of-way that were sold off when it seemed that highways were the way of the future.

Knowledge and skills have been lost, too, not only within the farming community, but among consumers, who do not know how to make meals from scratch or grow food in their backyards, and among schoolchildren, many of whom have no idea where their food comes from.

It even seems that we have been physiologically rewired. For example, food processors claim that consumers would strenuously object to any attempt to remove salt (or sugar, or fat) from packaged foods, because we are now so accustomed to certain flavours that depend on salt (or sugar, or fat). Anything else would be considered unpalatable, even though

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it might have seemed normal 50 or 100 years ago.

These are difficult problems to solve, and those who are concerned about food risk being written off as nostalgic for the past, rather than concerned about the future. Planners who attempt to intervene in the food system need to be courageous and strong-minded. Food is personal, and political, and emotional. It is also the most important issue that planners could possibly tackle.

Where to start?

We can expect to get some ideas from the symposium's keynote speaker, Dr. Samina Raja, the lead author of *A Planner's Guide to Community and Regional Food Planning: Transforming Food Environments, Building Healthy Communities*, published by the American Planning Association. Panels on "Planning and Food Production" and "Planning and Food Systems" will allow participants a chance to put forward their own ideas. Workshops on Local Food Production, on Agri-Food Innovation, on Growing Food in Cities, and on the *Green Energy Act* will also help planners develop their own knowledge and skills.

In the meantime, I urge you to consider where food fits into your work, starting now. For example, making space available for food production, in rural or urban areas, is a job for land use planners. When a new development is proposed, has food been considered? Does the development prevent existing food production spaces from operating or expanding? Is there room for a community garden or a food retailer?

Environmental planners can also get involved. For example, we can go beyond green roofs to demand roofs that support green, edible plants. We can embed food production in environmental certification programs like LEED. We can develop mechanisms that allow farmers to benefit from the environmental stewardship services they provide.

Economic planners need to consider ways to help new farmers get established in agriculture in a province in which most arable land close to urban markets is unaffordable and agricultural profits are meagre.

Policy planners can help ensure that healthy food is available for sale in all communities. Under current planning policies, we have allowed the expansion of food deserts—large areas in which fresh food is unobtainable. What needs to change to prevent future food deserts and to open up markets in existing ones?

Social planners can look for ways to ensure a healthy diet for all Ontarians, particularly children. They can lobby for school food programs and work with public health authorities and others to expand programs that ensure good nutrition for lower-income households.

There are many other things that planners can do—this is just a handful of suggestions. But we need to start somewhere.

It's a big task ahead of us. We have missed some opportunities and squandered others. But there is no time to lose in rebuilding food infrastructure. I urge you to attend the symposium and to use all the tools at your disposal to make planning for food a priority in Ontario.

Philippa Campsie is co-author, with Lauren Baker and Katie Rabinowicz, of Menu 2020: Ten Good Food Ideas for Ontario, published in June 2010 by the Metcalf Foundation, one of five "Food Solutions" reports (www.metcalffoundation.com). She is also deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal.



Philippa Campsie



How can we assist people like Jessie and Benn Sosnicki, organic farmers in Waterford, Ontario? (Thanks to Laura Berman for use of her photos. She will be speaking at the conference.)

Getting Ready for Aging

OPPI's Call To Action on Aging

Heather Britten, Laura Costa, Paul Erlichman, Josh Hilburt and Sharan Kaur



Oshawa's downtown core consists of a dense built form and a grid-system of streets, which allow for a greater concentration of services and street fronts, and provide an array of amenities within walking distance

DEMOGRAPHIC FORECASTS tell us we will soon see a substantial increase in the proportion of seniors in our population. Statistics Canada projects that between 2005 and 2026 there will be an increase of 7.1% in people aged 65 and over in the country.

Aging citizens' needs often go unrecognized. Planners and municipal officials must anticipate these needs and determine effective strategies to better accommodate them. But the issue of age-friendliness is complex and requires action on many levels. In *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, the World

Health Organization defines an age-friendly community as one that "encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age." This is the challenge for Ontario's communities in the coming decades.

As part of the Master of Planning in Urban Development program at Ryerson University, students embarked on a studio project that spanned the fall 2009 and winter 2010 semesters. Prompted by OPPI's Planning for Age-Friendly Communities—A Call to Action, the aim of this project was to create an

instrument for municipalities to help them understand the components of an age-friendly community, evaluate their success in these areas, and recognize where improvements are necessary. We developed a toolkit broken down into six core checklists for assessing the "age-friendliness" of a neighbourhood. These were Built Form and Open Space; Seniors' Housing; Local Community Hubs; Transportation; Programs and Services; and Health Care.

To test the toolkit, we selected the City of Oshawa and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, because each place has high percentage of people over the age of 45. The evaluation included site visits, reviewing community documents and services, and discussions with local planners. This process also helped inform broader findings about the nature of age-friendly communities as well as how to improve the checklists for future implementation in other municipalities.

Built Form and Open Space

Many physical components contribute to neighbourhoods that are well-designed and accessible to an aging population. From a macro level, greater densities and a concentrated variety of uses provide for more locally available and easily accessible areas and amenities, which can reduce the need to travel.

On a micro level, municipalities can improve a community's built form by providing safe sidewalks and curbs with materials that provide a continuous flat surface that can be easily maintained in the Canadian climate. Ample lighting for streets and public

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spaces is another element of municipal maintenance that can have an impact on seniors. These attributes combine to create safer environments for seniors. This will, in turn, encourage their increased use.

Seniors' Housing

Municipalities that provide a variety of housing alternatives help seniors remain in their communities as they age. The location of housing plays a significant role as this determines how easily residents can access local amenities and necessary health care services without the need to travel long distances. While the location of new seniors' housing complexes is often strongly determined by market forces, planning departments should encourage their location closer to central and accessible services with more effective links to transit.

Community Hubs

Community hubs are public places and focal points that provide a central gathering place. When they are well designed and properly programmed, community hubs help integrate seniors socially and spatially by stimulating relationships between residential, recreational, commercial and transportation uses.

Transportation and Public Transit

Poor transportation systems can isolate residents physically and mentally from necessary services and amenities. This is especially important for seniors as they are less likely to drive, or have the ability to walk long distances. Making transit more accessible and convenient for seniors includes locating transit stops directly in front of seniors' housing and providing stops at nearby health care and service clusters. Creating such direct linkages can increase transit use by seniors and reduce their reliance on other forms of transportation.

Programs and Services

It is vital for municipalities and regions to offer forums for civic dialogue where individuals can voice their opinions and concerns, while offering suggestions as to how they would like to see their neighbourhood or community develop and improve. Seniors should participate in the decision-making process, as they have specific needs as well as valuable insights. As the population ages, it is necessary to adapt service delivery and programs to reflect the particular needs of seniors.

Health Care

The inclusion of health care facilities in communities is a vital aspect of planning for age-friendly municipalities. As people age, their use of health care services tends to increase. Yet the availability of many health care facilities

lies beyond the jurisdiction and powers of municipal planning authorities and not all communities have local access to major hos-



Whitchurch-Stouffville consists of buildings and amenities located on a continuous landscape with no gaps, making the walkability of the downtown area its prominent and most convenient feature

pitals. To compensate, clustering of smaller-scale health care services close to where senior citizens are living can improve both convenience and access.

Creating a Foundation

The checklist/toolkit developed for this

project is meant to act as a foundation from which to launch broader discussions surrounding this increasingly relevant topic. In our view, it has the potential to evolve into a more robust tool to affect change and improve communities for our aging populations.

Heather Britten, Laura Costa, Paul Erlichman, Josh Hilburt and Sharan Kaur are students in the Master of Planning in Urban Development program at Ryerson University. This project response took place with advice from George McKibbin, MCIP, RPP, who represented OPPI's policy committee; Melanie Hare, MCIP, RPP, a partner with Urban Strategies Inc., who acted as a mentor to both student teams; and Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, with the Canadian Urban Institute, who commented on the draft reports. Mitchell Kosny, MCIP, RPP, Director of the School, supervised the course. The initial background research and composition of the toolkit was completed by: Irfan Ansari, Mark Carafa, Christopher Dickinson, Marcanthony Franco, Jennifer Renaud, and Evan Weinberg.



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Pickering Greyfield Redevelopment: A Fresh Approach to Investment

Intensification in progress

Ali Ikram and Stephen Fagyas



Understanding greyfields can be a challenge

A NUMBER OF ARTICLES on greyfield redevelopment in recent editions of this magazine have focused on the factors that contribute to the demise of once-prosperous malls and the redevelopment options available to the owners. Our firm, Commercial Focus Advisory Services, has worked on a number of such redevelopment projects, where underused greyfield sites have been successfully redeveloped. This article looks at the example of an ailing commercial plaza in Pickering.

Bay Ridges Plaza was built in the 1960s,

consisting of two strip plazas connected by an overhead canopy. The Plaza occupied 10.6 acres and had a total of 27 commercial units. Although in its heyday it had functioned as a rather successful local shopping centre, changing neighbourhood demographics and a static tenant mix saw the Plaza slowly lose business over time. The opening of the Pickering Town Centre a short distance to the north sealed the Plaza's fate and it fell into a permanent state of neglect and disrepair.

Choose a development model

An earlier article identified five different models that are generally available to owners who are considering redeveloping a plaza. While these models undoubtedly have their merits, and experience with each is a valuable part of any planner's arsenal, in Pickering, none was feasible. The original owners of the site had unsuccessfully attempted to renovate the property in the early 1990s. This made it harder to reposition for alternative uses such as say a conference hall or as residential units.

Preliminary market feasibility studies showed that new condo high-rise and townhouse developments had sold quite well. The province had also designated the area as a growth centre. It was clear from the outset that the only feasible redevelopment approach was to demolish existing buildings.

Rather than approach a developer, we gathered suitable investors through our brokerage arm and set up an investment fund to underwrite the project. This syndication approach allowed us to develop the site to its full potential without having any of the strictures which developers might normally place on a planning team.

Build a comprehensive vision for a site

Successful redevelopment requires a well-thought-out vision. Our technical team took the initiative in formulating just such a vision, which in this case settled on proceeding with a high-density, mixed-use Transit-Oriented Development.

Location: Bay Ridges Plaza had the double advantage of being situated just south of Highway 401 and less than 400 metres from the Pickering GO Station. Moreover, proximity to Highway 401 would allow commuters from other parts of Pickering and the GTA to easily access office and commercial facilities that could be located at this site.

Provincial and Municipal Policy: The subject site is in a designated provincial Growth Centre and the neighbourhood had been designated by Pickering as a zone for high-density development.

Public Demand: Before developing a master plan, our team organized an urban design workshop that engaged the community. A

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key outcome was agreement that the development should promote an urban rather than suburban feel, and that space should be allocated for commercial use.

Feasibility and Planning Act Changes: Our feasibility study showed that a mixed-use development, consisting of both residential and commercial units, would in fact provide a higher return to investors than a single-use development. This required only a rezoning application.

Spend time on your master plan

While a vision helps direct development towards a certain goal, the master plan should evaluate development potential, document market feasibility under various market conditions, identify any environmental issues and assess infrastructure needs. Our due diligence identified the need for sewer upgrades. Linking phasing with investment requirements was therefore key. Taking the time up front to organize a design charrette was also helpful to the Pickering planning staff.

For this site, development was organized into three phases. Phase I would consist of medium-density townhouses, including work-live units, and would be designed to reflect an urban landscape. Phase II would consist of an 18-storey residential tower. Phase III would consist of a 16-storey residential condo with approximately 20,000 sq feet of mixed-use space on the first floor. The two towers would also be linked by a two-storey central amenity space.

The planner's role as facilitator

A successful redevelopment is only possible through cooperation between the various parties involved: the owners/investors, the municipality, and the community. The planner must therefore be able to not only educate the parties on the multiple constraints and interests involved in an extensive redevelopment project, but also be able to find middle ground in order to bring the different parties together.

In our case, we encouraged active engagement with the community very early on in the development process through the design charrette. This event not only allowed us to communicate our vision to the community and to address any concerns they might have, but also enabled the community to contribute their ideas and their hopes for the development.

While a well-thought-out and thorough master plan helps mitigate most problems, a planner must still be wary of such occurrences and attempt to deal with them at the earliest instance.

At the same time, planners and developers must be able to recognize and be willing to capitalize on opportunities that present themselves. An adjacent property to our subject site contained an additional strip plaza, which, though not part of our development, had been included in the urban design study for the site at the insistence of



High quality public realm and surface parking not always possible

the municipality. During the construction of Phase I, this adjacent site was listed on the market by its owners. As the design guidelines for the site had already been deter-

mined, it was incorporated into our master plan, and will be eventually developed as another mixed-use tower, constituting Phase IV of the development.

Conclusion

The underused malls and strip plazas that litter our cities represent an opportunity for urban planners to develop high-quality, high-density alternatives to the low-density paradigm of development that currently plagues our suburbs. The syndication of opportunities approach used in Pickering is simply one approach to tackling this problem. What is important to consider is that by positioning these projects as worthwhile investments for developers, urban planners can help spur economic vitality.

Ali Ikram, an ex-investment banker, is currently interning as an urban planner with Stephan Fagyas at Commercial Focus Advisory Services and hopes to return to school in September for his master's degree (alikhram@gmail.com). Stephan Fagyas, MCIP, RPP, has worked on numerous greyfield redevelopment projects across Ontario. He can be reached at sfagyas@cfrealty.ca



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Revealing the history of Ontario's historic one-room schoolhouses

Michael Seaman

DON'T JUDGE A BOOK by its cover" is probably the most common expression used in English to convey the idea of not determining the worth of something based on its appearance. It's also a philosophy shared by three Ontario communities. Oakville, Markham and Aurora have recently taken steps to rediscover three historic one-room schoolhouses, whose character had been hidden for years under layers of modern siding.

It is always a challenge for heritage planners to see through visible layers to what lies beneath to determine the integrity and value of a heritage resource.

The Snider's Corners Schoolhouse in Oakville, the Hartman Schoolhouse in Aurora and the Victoria Square Schoolhouse in Markham are all examples of buildings whose perceived heritage value was dramatically changed by peeling back the layers of siding and peering into the past.

Historical records indicated that they may have been schoolhouses at one time, but their outward appearance had been so radically altered that the historical resources were believed for all intents and purposes to have been lost. Their true value after extensive investigation triggered by applications for major changes or demolition. In each case it led to a better understanding of the role of these former public buildings in local history.

Aurora's big find

In 2005, the Hartman Schoolhouse in Aurora was proposed for demolition to

make way for an art studio. The heritage inventory form indicated that it was a schoolhouse, but with the grey aluminum siding on the outside, and warren of partitions on the inside, tangible evidence of the old school was not very obvious. The foundation itself was also concrete, an indication of 20th century, not 19th century, origin.



Historic photo

A breakthrough came when a door was opened in a small upstairs closet which revealed a long cavity running the length of the building. Peering through the opening with a flashlight, the remnants of the former school were revealed—lath and plaster walls, parts of support beams where the former ceiling had been, and most interesting of all, it was apparent that the wall itself was constructed of huge vertical planks approximately 3 inches thick and approximately 11 inches in width. Vertical plank construction was a relatively short-lived method used up to the early 1840s.



Photograph with white siding during siding removal

Fortunately, the history of schools is often well recorded and the existing archival information, along with the architectural evidence discovered, pointed to a construction date of 1838. The school had evidently been built in another location in the community and when the time came to build a new brick school in the 1880s, the original Hartman School was moved to a lot in town and converted to a residence.



Photograph with red siding with original siding revealed

A survey of other municipalities in Ontario revealed that the Hartman School was, in fact, a rare survivor; possibly the third oldest in the province and a unique part of the story of education in Ontario. The ensuing

coverage that the schoolhouse generated in the local media inspired one local citizen to submit a previously unknown historical photo of the school from the early 1900s. The photo showed the building's historical facade with substantial cornice and returns. It had obviously been inspired by the architecture of ancient Greece and was Aurora's only example of Greek Revival architecture.

With the wealth of new information available, the Hartman School was designated by Aurora Council under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, shortly after the Act was amended to provide permanent protection of heritage resources from demolition. Staff worked with the owners to explore options for achieving the studio by reusing the historic schoolhouse, which would be ideal with the natural light available from the large schoolhouse windows.

The building was eventually sold and the new owner restored it to its historic appearance to convert it to a new use. During the course of the restoration, the outer layer of aluminum siding and insulation was removed, and to everyone's amazement, the historical features were intact and the little Greek temple of learning on Wellington Street was revealed for all to see. The non-descript building that some called an eyesore is now an attractive historic landmark and the history of Aurora has been considerably enriched.

Oakville still searching for a solution

A similar story of historical discovery was the former Snider's Corners Schoolhouse in Oakville. Historical accounts indicated that this small white building was at one time a school, but extensive renovations over the years had left it with an appearance more closely associated with a postwar victory house than a school. By the time I encountered the building, it was threatened with demolition to make way for the proposed expansion of Burnhamthorpe Road and had long been vacant.

Oakville received a great deal of cooperation from the building's owner, the Region of Halton, patiently working to peel back four layers of siding. Although all options for on-site preservation have now been

exhausted in this case, the building has advertised for relocation. It is hoped that its rare status as a school might inspire interest. In the event that the building is to be demolished, the local Trafalgar Township Historical Society is working to document the structure and has identified significant architectural features which are to be salvaged for posterity.

Markham goes full circle

A third recent example of recovery is the Victoria Square Schoolhouse in Markham. The schoolhouse had actually been little changed at the time of compilation of the original Markham heritage inventory in the 1970s, but soon after was remodeled to the extreme with a mock Tudor stucco and timber siding applied to the entire exterior. Although its shape and remnants of stone foundation pointed to the possibility that it had once been a school, it had been thought that its architectural detailing had been lost.

When the building's future was in ques-

tion in recent years, the opportunity to peel back the exterior siding to see what was beneath came up. To everyone's surprise, although the modern Tudor siding had few redeeming aesthetic qualities, a key positive attribute is that the additions were completely cosmetic. Once it had been stripped away, the historic exterior—last seen in 1977—was revealed. The Victoria Square Schoolhouse is about to be fully restored to its historic appearance and adapted to a use that is close to its original function—a daycare centre.



Photograph with tudor siding after alteration

Lessons learned

There are numerous lessons to be learned from these three schoolhouses. First is the need to look beyond the surface when evaluating a heritage

resource. It is vitally important to carefully consider the permanence of any alterations and their impact on the significance of a potential heritage resource. If a heritage building is covered in aluminum siding or stucco, it may be unsightly, but depending on how it was applied, it may very well be

that historic architectural features, or at least evidence of them, is preserved intact beneath the modern exterior.

If the architectural features are still there and can be recovered, then they still have value, and the potential to yield historical information should be considered in determining the value of the resource. For all the negative aspects of aluminum siding, where historic siding has been hidden for 50 years beneath this outer covering, evidence suggests that it can often be found to be surprisingly intact when revealed once again.

The second lesson is to ensure that even if a resource is to be unavoidably lost, to do all that is possible to fully document the resource and peel back those layers of history. Even if the heritage resource cannot be conserved, the discovery of new knowledge is a positive outcome and can lead to a greater understanding of a community's history and heritage.

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Eastern

Defining the Creative Economy: A Focus on Prince Edward County and Rural Ontario

Sana Razvi, Gregory Kuenzig, and Man Ho Johnson Kwan

Agriculture is dying.” This cynical assessment echoes throughout Southern Ontario’s development community as the Province reviews its 2005 Provincial Policy Statement for

Creative Rural Economy,” staking its claim as one of the top-ten employers of artists in the province. The municipality promotes growth by advertising its quality of place, lifestyle attributes and bucolic setting to encourage tourism and immigration of creative and innovative entrepreneurs. That is, the originators of this growth strategy have been adopting Richard Florida’s ideas, which is not necessarily a bad thing.

Richard Florida’s best-selling books *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) and *Who’s Your City?* (2008) are popular among planning practitioners and economic

artistically inclined since the 1960s. Artists and craftspeople are drawn to the bucolic setting, and are happy to purchase a chunk of it relatively inexpensively. The County’s “Creative Rural Economy Strategy” has capitalized on the area’s traditional, rural quality of life and its reputation for art and creativity, and has succeeded in attracting professionals from the creative class to the region. However, as these people flock to the County, housing prices are rising. Demand for houses, businesses and amenities that appeal to “creatives” conflict with the agricultural uses that dominate the land-

concentrate on local distribution and organic produce have demonstrated renewed vitality as consumers have become more conscious of their food systems. According to OMAFRA, in Prince Edward County alone, the number of self-identified organic farms rose from three to 51 between 2001 and 2006. Over the same period, small and medium-sized farms of 10 to 69 acres have been increasing in the County, following an alternative farming trend known as “the creative-food economy.”

Betsy Donald, MCIP, RPP, of Queen’s University, first identified the “creative food economy” in Prince Edward County. The County has seen an explosion of niche markets in agriculture targeted to affluent consumers, ethnic and immigrant consumers with unique food needs, and a burgeoning population seeking healthy, local food options. The County supplies high-quality produce to upscale restaurants, and has seen rapid growth in viticulture, artisanal cheeses, and organic farms. Whereas the creative class theory looks outside the region to draw in professionals and their spending power, the “creative-food economy” is a genuine grassroots effort that has emerged from within the County’s own diverse mix of talent and resources. A subset of highly creative, eco-conscious knowledge workers were among the first to adopt the local food trend, both in terms of consumption and food production.

The creative economy in Prince Edward County possesses two components: the creative knowledge sector as identified by Florida, and the creative-food sector. The challenge is balancing the interests of both sectors, specifically, in the provision of land for their activities. Creativity is particularly hard to control, given its dynamic and diverse nature. Classic Euclidian land use practices that produce narrow and prohibitive zoning definitions and by-laws can stifle creative innovation. Alternatives are needed.



Fresh local produce can stimulate the creativity of producers and distributors

2010. The doomsayers want to see the new Provincial Policy statement relax its provisions for the protection and conservation of prime agricultural land.

As those who favour economic growth through development lobby aggressively for conversion of “underperforming” agricultural land to more “profitable” uses, the authors of this article are compelled to ask: Is there a planning alternative that can stimulate economic prosperity in Ontario’s agricultural communities without losing our agricultural lands and heritage?

A potential solution may be emerging in Prince Edward County. “The County,” as it is affectionately called by its residents, is a rural single-tier municipality rich with prime agricultural land. Over the past few years, the municipality has marketed itself as “Canada’s First

developers. Cities all over North America have been implementing Florida’s strategy of attracting clusters of creative class professionals in order to promote innovation and economic growth. There’s only one problem: thus far, studies of the creative class theory have not been able to prove a conclusive relationship between creative class clusters and economic growth.

On the other hand, studies have shown that the strategy has helped improve social and cultural conditions in cities, which demonstrates benefits beyond the economic realm. But most studies have focused on dense urban settings with naturally high concentrations of creative class professionals. It is not clear how the creative class strategy can be incorporated into low-density rural settings.

Prince Edward County has been a destination for the creative and

scape. What has emerged is a contest for land between the creative and agricultural sectors.

This leads to a Catch-22: if the County transforms itself into a destination for creative professionals, does it threaten the rural character and quality of place that drew the creatives to the County in the first place? Attracting the creative class has the potential to stimulate a small-town economy, but can agriculture be protected in the process?

Traditional agriculture in Southern Ontario has suffered as global competition has driven down produce prices. Traditional farms have responded by increasing their size while simultaneously reducing their output to a few cash crops. As a result, many family farms have given way to corporate farming.

Meanwhile, small farms that

Prince Edward County provides lessons for policy-makers who wish to explore creative economic development in their municipality. Policy-makers should start by recognizing both the internal strengths and external opportunities of their communities. Doing so will help define the community's full creative potential and optimal land uses so that creativity can flourish without negatively impacting important natural resources.

Based on our findings in Prince Edward County, we suggest policy-makers consider the following recommendations:

- Create land use policies that encourage the development of new housing for migrant professionals, as well as affordable housing for people within the community, while mitigating impact on agricultural land.
- Revise definitions of agriculture and agriculturally related activities to allow more diverse forms of agricultural activities and crops.
- Allow the creation of smaller parcels to produce commercial crops, and reduce or review the minimum distance separations that prevent farmers on small farms from raising animals.
- Consider Transferable Development Rights programs to allow farmers to maximize their land values without sacrificing the inherent value of protected agricultural lands.
- Identify and allow secondary uses that have minimal impact on agricultural land and allow

farmers to earn supplementary income without tax penalties.

Farmers have weathered hard times before, and they have done so through constant innovation. Agriculture is the original creative industry, and like crops, creativity needs to be cultivated. Policy-makers can help cultivate the creative-food economy and stimulate rural creativity by promoting food education and by marketing their community as a valuable brand. If agriculture is indeed dying, it is because it is being killed by policies that constrict farmers' natural instinct to innovate.

The authors are recent graduates of Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning. This article is based on a research report completed as a course requirement for the Advanced Planning Studio (PLG720) at Ryerson, written by Angela Bepple, Ellise Goarley, Katherine Glowacz, Gregory Kuenzig, Johnson Man Ho Kwan, Peter Moskalyk, Sana Razvi and Garrett Von Aderkas. The research was supervised by Professor Nina-Marie Lister, MCIP, RPP in collaboration with the Municipality of Prince Edward County. The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of the Janet Rosenberg Studio Award in Landscape and Urbanism which funded the research for this project. The full report is available at: http://www.pecounty.on.ca/government/planning_services/pdf/RyersonReport-2009_001.pdf

Oak Ridges

Where Is Our City Care? The Municipal Urban Designers' Roundtable

Steven Bell and Ryan Mounsey

Launched by the City of Mississauga nearly three years ago, the Municipal Urban Designer's Roundtable (MUDR) continues to thrive, with participation by municipal staff across the province. Roundtable meetings bring urban designers, landscape architects and planners in the public sector together for a one-day interactive session to raise awareness and promote understanding of urban design opportunities and challenges facing jurisdictions across the province.

In early May, the Roundtable attracted representatives from 22 municipalities, as well as from the Ontario Growth Secretariat and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to the historic Victoria Park Pavilion in downtown Kitchener. The session was jointly hosted and organized by the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo and the Region of Waterloo. The focus was on new tools and strategies to promote intensification with high standards of design excellence, building on partnership opportunities,

and making good use of existing buildings that contribute to a city's built form and sense of place.

The session was introduced by Rob Horne, Commissioner of Planning, Housing & Community Services with the Region; Janet Babcock, Commissioner of Planning Services at the City of Cambridge; Jeff Willmer, Interim General Manager of Development & Technical Services Department at the City of Kitchener; and Cameron Rapp, General Manager of Development Services at the City of Waterloo.

Participants heard updates from Windsor, London, Oxford County, Brantford, Woolwich Township, Guelph, Burlington, Oakville, Brampton, Mississauga, Caledon, Richmond Hill, Markham, Whitby, Ottawa, the host municipalities, and the University of Waterloo School of Architecture.

The focus was on "Re-urbanization and Designing for Intensification" in the Waterloo region—a place that is promoting design excellence and a new era of city-building. The group also watched a promotional video commissioned by Canada's Technology Triangle that showcases a range of distinctive local architectural design accomplishments and innovation.

A common thread running through each presentation was that urban design transcends all strategic planning work, growth management and development strategies. Everyone agreed that municipal government has an important role to play in promoting creativity, culture and innovation in areas as

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diverse as heritage resource management, environmental stewardship, place making and city building as a whole. Kitchener and Waterloo are successfully implementing urban design policies and guidelines, while Cambridge is just beginning this process.

The group also agreed that a strong policy framework is essential to creating effective partnerships to implement projects, guide investment in public art, the public realm and overall municipal infrastructure. Examples of “creative city building” included the Centre for International Governance Innovation Master Plan, and evolution of the Health Sciences Campus and Warehouse District.

Over the lunch break, the group toured the area by bus to examine streetscape initiatives incorporating environmental design solutions, open space projects, intensification opportunities

along planned rapid transit routes, civic and institutional buildings, recently completed mixed-use projects, residential and commercial developments and master-planned development sites.

Following two presentations in



Representatives from 22 municipalities and the Province attended the Municipal Urban Designers' Roundtable in Kitchener, Ontario, on May 6, 2010

the afternoon on Urban Form Case Studies and 3D Visualizing Planning Tools by provincial staff, participants debated how to transform and bring the discipline of

transportation planning and the use of conventional transportation modelling techniques into the fold of urbanism and downtown intensification initiatives. Participants discussed the design of tall buildings (examining built-form controls for the design of podiums, adequate separation distances between towers and public realm performance-based controls) and raised the subject of how to plan and design for compact development and expansion in village areas. There was also discussion on streetscape design and upper-tier design standards. The group also noted the need to become familiar with engineering terminology; the use of cross-disciplinary project teams; and the value of pilot

or demonstration projects in promoting bold moves. Rob Horne challenged the group with a quote from the late architect, John C. Parkin: “We have medicare, legal care, but where is our city care?” This meeting and previous ones suggest that a growing number of municipalities in Ontario are ensuring greater care in their cities by placing a significant emphasis on sustainable development, place making and the physical design quality of the city.

The next meeting will take place this fall, most likely in Windsor, with a tour of the City of Birmingham, Michigan. For more information on the Municipal Urban Designers' Roundtable, contact Steven Bell at steven.bell@mississauga.ca or Sean Galloway sgallowa@london.ca

Steven Bell, MUDS, MCIP, RPP, CAHP, is an Urban Designer with the City of Mississauga's Development and Design Division, Planning and Building Department, and Chair and Coordinator of the Municipal Urban Designers' Roundtable. Ryan Mounsey, BES, MUDS, MCIP, RPP, is a Development Planner and Urban Designer with the City of Waterloo, a

member of the OPPI Urban Design Working Group, and an instructor of the UEdNet Group for the OPPI Urban Design Continuous Professional Learning.

Toronto

What's missing from the creation of suburban downtowns?

David Welwood

The City of Toronto's Official Plan designates four key “centres” outside the downtown core that are supposed to accommodate an increasing density of jobs and residents served by higher-order public transportation networks. The Official Plan envisions a



Pedestrian void in North York Centre

“high quality public realm” to be created in the centres that “features public squares, parks, community gardens, public art, and a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists.” This is seen as essential in order “to attract businesses, workers, residents and shoppers.”

The underlying philosophy is that if people can live near where they work in areas well-served by public transportation, their communities will embody more vibrant and walkable downtown characteristics. This idea is consistent with the provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Essentially, both plans aim to create downtowns in certain suburban neighbourhoods,

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www.nsac.ca/conferences/urbanagriculture

where it is hoped people can live, work and play without dependence on the car for transportation.

While intensification of residential and commercial development is occurring in these growth centres, a key ingredient in creating truly vibrant and pleasant neighbourhoods seems to have been forgotten in the process: scaling streets so that people actually feel safe and comfortable walking around their neighbourhoods. The experience of urbanizing the Yonge Street corridor shows how difficult this can be.

The density of North York Centre is expected to rival that of the Yonge/Eglinton strip by 2030 (400 combined jobs and residents per hectare). The centre is well on its way to achieving that type of high-density development, with a spine of high-rise towers stretching along Yonge Street in either direction. While the pedestrian environment is arguably poor throughout the stretch, the most telling failure is visible directly north of North York Centre subway station, where a six-lane stretch of Yonge Street runs for half a kilometre without a single crosswalk or traffic light. Traffic here often moves at about 60-70km/hr, and to cross the road, pedestrians either risk their lives or undertake a 15-minute round trip in either direction.

The area has the potential to be a true urban centre, with a healthy mix of residents and employment, proximity to transportation routes and cultural

diversity. However, a walk along Yonge Street is at best unpleasant, and at worst, downright scary.

Toronto's inner suburban growth centres could learn a thing or two about urbanism from small-town Ontario. In a recent trip that took me to several small Ontario towns, I noticed that typical features of local main streets include lowered speed limits (typically 40km/hr) and crosswalks for pedestrians at every small block within the downtown. In North Bay there are even crosswalks at mid-block, so that pedestrians do not need to walk all the way to an intersection in order to cross.

While the underlying philosophy of increasing density near transit corridors is laudable, failure to accompany it with human-scaled streetscapes that are comfortable for pedestrians will result in neighbourhoods that are neither lovable nor safe, and will fail to attract the liveliness often associated with the City's older main street-oriented neighbourhoods. As far as North York Centre is concerned, a few crosswalks along Yonge Street would be an immense step in the right direction (no pun intended) towards pedestrian friendliness. A lowered speed limit and a north-south bike lane would do even more to enhance this area.

David Welwood is a planner with Tunnock Consulting Ltd, in Perth. He is also studying for his Masters in Environmental Studies from York University.

People

Andrea Gabor Celebrating 20th Anniversary of Partnership

Andrea Gabor is celebrating 20 years as a partner with Urban Strategies, during which time she has established herself as one of the profession's leading thinkers on sustainability, building a successful practice internationally as well as in communities across Canada. Elected as a Fellow of the Institute in 2008,



Andrea Gabor

Andrea has also played a key role in mentoring young planners and contributing to policy discussions on behalf of OPPI, the Toronto Board of Trade and the Canadian Urban Institute. Recently, Andrea was responsible for the Growth Management component of Sustainable Halton, and the award-winning Downtown Master Plan for the City of Brantford. She is currently working with Toronto Community Housing Corporation on a comprehensive reworking of Alexandra Park in the heart of Toronto. Look for articles on this ambitious undertaking as the project moves from

planning to implementation. Andrea can be reached at agabor@urbanstrategies.com.

Former *Ontario Planning Journal*

contributing editor **Carla Guerrero** is leaving her position as project manager with



Carla Guerrero

Waterfront Toronto's West Don Lands project to join Vancouver developer Wesgroup. She will be working on a former distillery and a 126 acre brownfield parcel on a riverbank called the East Fraser Lands. Carla previously worked with CMHC. She will be accessible via Facebook and at carlaplansgreen@yahoo.com.

Current *Ontario Planning Journal* contributing editor **Dave Aston** has been made a partner at MHBC Planning, which now has five offices in Southern Ontario.

Correction from the previous issue: **Bob**

Lehman is President of Lehman & Associates. The President of Meridian is **Jim**

Dyment. Bob can be reached at bob@lehmanplan.ca. The *Journal* apologizes for the error.



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President's Message

It's time to stand up for the planning profession!

Sue Cumming

There are times when you have to stand up for what you think is fundamentally important about your profession. That time is now! One of our top priorities is to ensure that professional planners have the strong foundation they need to practise in a range of areas. In recent weeks, I have been contacted by members asking the following:

- Why are individuals who are not RPPs able to purport to be planners and take on planning work?
- Why are planners not licensed like engineers, architects, or foresters?
- Why must we advocate for paralegal licensing exemptions for OPPI members in submissions to the Law Society of Upper Canada? Why is the legal profession determining what planners can do?
- How is it the engineering profession can seek a broader definition of engineering, including design and planning, under their licensing of what an engineer can do?
- How can we secure stronger legislation for the planning profession that recognizes our unique skills, competencies and ethical standards and the broad scope of our practice?
- When will the recommendations from the Planning for the Future project be implemented?

These are important and timely questions. OPPI is participating in a Canada-wide re-examination of what it means to be a planner in the Planning for the Future Project (PFF). This exercise focuses on how planners are trained and how we become members; how planning education is structured; and what are appropriate standards of practice and ethics for planners in a diverse and globalized society. New national standards demonstrate the planning profession's commitment to excellence, provide planning students with a foundation for success, and will benefit professionals at all stages of their careers.

A vote on these by-law changes is expected go out to members over the next six to nine

months. OPPI Council will ask you to vote YES (twice) to by-law changes at the National and Affiliate level to implement the PFF recommendations. Through these changes, the profession will be able to set nationally consistent and high ethical standards to maintain respect for our profession and address the questions members are raising. Look for an Alert or Postcard telling you more about these important votes.

More information is available at <http://www.planningincanada.ca> and on the OPPI website (<http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca>).

We are now in the development and implementation phase of this important work. The National Affiliate Membership Committee (NAMC) endorsed the PFF Draft implementation reports relating to accreditation of planning schools, certification, and Fellows in February 2010. These reports, which include the establishment of a national Professional Standards Board, were endorsed in principle by CIP Council in March 2010 and by OPPI Council



Sue Cumming

on April 30, 2010. With the release of these reports, additional comments are being received.

OPPI values its strong partnership with the six Ontario planning schools. Planners are best educated in planning schools, which provide the theory and practical experience that train planners in critical, ethically based thinking and the formulation of independent professional advice. We are receiving comments on the draft implementation reports from the planning schools and Fellows on areas for further consideration. We expect the NAMC to provide recommendations on revisions this summer to strengthen this important work and move PFF towards implementation.

The commitment to raising the bar for planners is extraordinary! Students will benefit from clarity on standards and processes; practising planners will be held to a consistent set of national standards and a commitment to ongoing learning. As a profession, we will be more credible with the public, adjudicators, decision makers, professional colleagues in other disciplines, and within our own profession when we

set higher standards and hold ourselves to those standards. This is what PFF is meant to achieve.

On other fronts, this year promises to be filled with many opportunities and challenges and we are fortunate to have at OPPI a hard-working and inspiring volunteer team.

The positive feedback we have received on Planning by Design: a Healthy Communities Handbook has led to new opportunities for our members to present and discuss these ideas with other professional organizations, municipal staff, elected representatives and community groups. This important work bodes well for the profession. OPPI's Policy Committee is contributing to the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 Five-Year Review, which will build on our healthy communities work. Planning is near complete on OPPI's

2010 Symposium in Guelph. Healthy Communities and "Planning for Food—A Harvest of Ideas" will take place October 28 and 29.

At OPPI we would not be able to achieve what we do without the leadership and commitment of an experienced and dedicated staff. Please join me in congratulating Loretta Ryan, Manager of Policy and Communications, who marks a 10-year milestone with OPPI this year. Loretta manages an extensive government and public affairs portfolio that has been created under her insight and leadership. We owe Loretta much gratitude for her significant achievements on healthy communities and partnership development.

It is my pleasure to work with you as OPPI President. OPPI Council is committed to listening and appreciates the feedback we have

received through the membership survey this past spring. The survey feedback plus input from the District Focus Groups is being used to determine how to best communicate the key issues facing OPPI over the next three years. Our aim is to ensure that communication initiatives have value for you as members and will resonate with our stakeholders and the broader Ontario public.

Please contact me any time at 866-611-3715 or at cummingl@total.net

Sue Cumming, MCIP, RPP, is President of OPPI. She is also Facilitator and Principal of Cumming+Company, and an Adjunct Lecturer in the School of Urban and Regional Planning Masters Planning Program at Queen's University.

A New Feature Coming Soon!

The Professional Practice and Development Committee is currently developing a new regular feature for the "E" Newsletter. Each month a new professional dilemma will be explored with answers based on our Professional Code of Practice and our Standards of Practice. Please read our first article below which deals with the Standard of Practice on Conflict of Interest. If you have any comments regarding the article or questions you would like answered in this manner in the future, please send them to: Info@ontarioplanners.on.ca

Dear Dilemma,

I have been approached by the Chapter president of my local service club, who knows that I'm a planner, to help prepare a severance application. I am a member of this club and my services would be on a volunteer basis. I am also employed as the Senior Planner in the municipality in which this application will be reviewed and normally, I would oversee the work of all applications to be heard by the Committee of Adjustment. I know I have to be careful here because I have a conflict, but I'm not sure of the approach I should take. What should I do?

—Concerned RPP

Dear RPP:

While your ability to help may be a benefit to your club, before you commit to this decision, please consider the terms of your employment, which may restrict you from this work. In addition, should the matter be appealed to the OMB you may find yourself in an awkward position of being at the Board on the opposite

side from your employer.

If you decide to assist your club you will need to notify your Manager in writing before the application is received that you have a conflict of interest in this application. You cannot oversee the work on the file and you cannot participate in any discussion about the application in the office or at the Committee of Adjustment Meeting. If you are in attendance at the Meeting, you must declare your conflict at the commencement of the meeting and you should excuse yourself from the room during the hearing of that application.

If you decide *not* to assist your club and they proceed with the application, you will still have a conflict because you have "an interest" by way of your membership in the club. Your actions should follow the same course.

For further information on conflicts of interest, you should review the related Standard of Practice www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/pdf/Code_and_Standards.pdf

—Dilemma

Note: These examples of ethical dilemmas are given only for the purpose of stimulating and guiding thought and discussion about the professional code of practice. They should not be used directly as legal or professional advice on any real-life circumstances. Every situation is slightly different and very fact-specific, and only the Discipline Committee of OPPI is authorized to make findings as to whether or not the professional code of practice has been breached in any given case.

The following members have resigned or been removed from the register

The following Full Members resigned in good standing from OPPI for the 2010 membership year:

Lorne Berg
Dennis Berry
Lorena Byers
Carol Christensen
Conroy Dowson
Kelly Dynes
Kristin Geater
Naomi Hirshberg
Henry Joseph
John Kingma
Vivien Lo
Raymond Moriyama
Lesley Paterson
David Sherwood
Marilyn Stuart
Larry Taylor
Lynda Taylor
Leslie Will

The following Full Members have been removed from the register for non-payment of membership fees for 2010:

Whitney Birch
Angus Cranston
Robert Crews
Paul Goodridge
Stephen Lindley
Robert Mitchell
Stephen Plaice
Peter Reed
Donald Reid
Wendy Ren
Robert Riley
Zaka Uddin
Vince Varga
R. John Waldie
Franklin Wu
Sally Yan

The notice is accurate at the time of going to press.

For questions regarding membership, please contact Denis Duquet, Membership Coordinator, at 416-483-1873 Ext. 222, 1-800-668-1448, Ext. 222, or membership@ontarioplanners.on.ca

Northern Growth Plan Needs Teeth for Implementation

Don McConnell

The Proposed Growth Plan for Northern Ontario released last fall establishes a strategic policy framework for how the Ontario Government will engage, support and work with Northern communities, businesses, Aboriginal communities and public-sector partners over the next 25 years.

The framework is structured in five theme areas: Building Toward a New Economy, Investing in People and Progress, Forging a New Relationship with Aboriginal Peoples, Connecting and Strengthening Northern Communities, and Promoting Environmental Stewardship.

There are many positive aspects to the draft Northern Growth Plan (NGP) including:

- The Plan brings a focus to the problems and challenges of economic development in Northern Ontario.
- The Plan creates a forum to better coordi-

nate the actions of the Provincial Ministries and public agencies with regard to their various responsibilities and initiatives in Northern Ontario.

- The Plan will be approved under the *Places to Grow Act*, 2005, which has mandatory review and reporting structures in place. This should assist with creating a long-term and consistent strategy for development in Northern Ontario despite changes in government.
- Unlike the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the NGP contains no land use planning policies. However, for some time, Northern municipalities have requested that the Provincial Policy Statement and other Provincial policies be reviewed to allow for the economic and environmental differences between northern and southern Ontario. The NGP proposes to consider these circumstances as

part of the current five-year review of the Provincial Policy Statement.

OPPI's Policy Development Committee provided extensive comments on the draft plan during the consultation process. In addition, the five large urban municipalities in Northern Ontario—North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins and Thunder Bay—which taken together represent more than half the population of Northern Ontario, met and prepared a joint response which echoed many of the OPPI comments. Both OPPI and the municipalities noted that the Plan's major weakness is the absence of a detailed implementation strategy.

Finalization of the Northern Growth Plan and implementation strategy are expected to be completed later this year. In the interim, the Province has already proceeded with several of the recommended actions including:

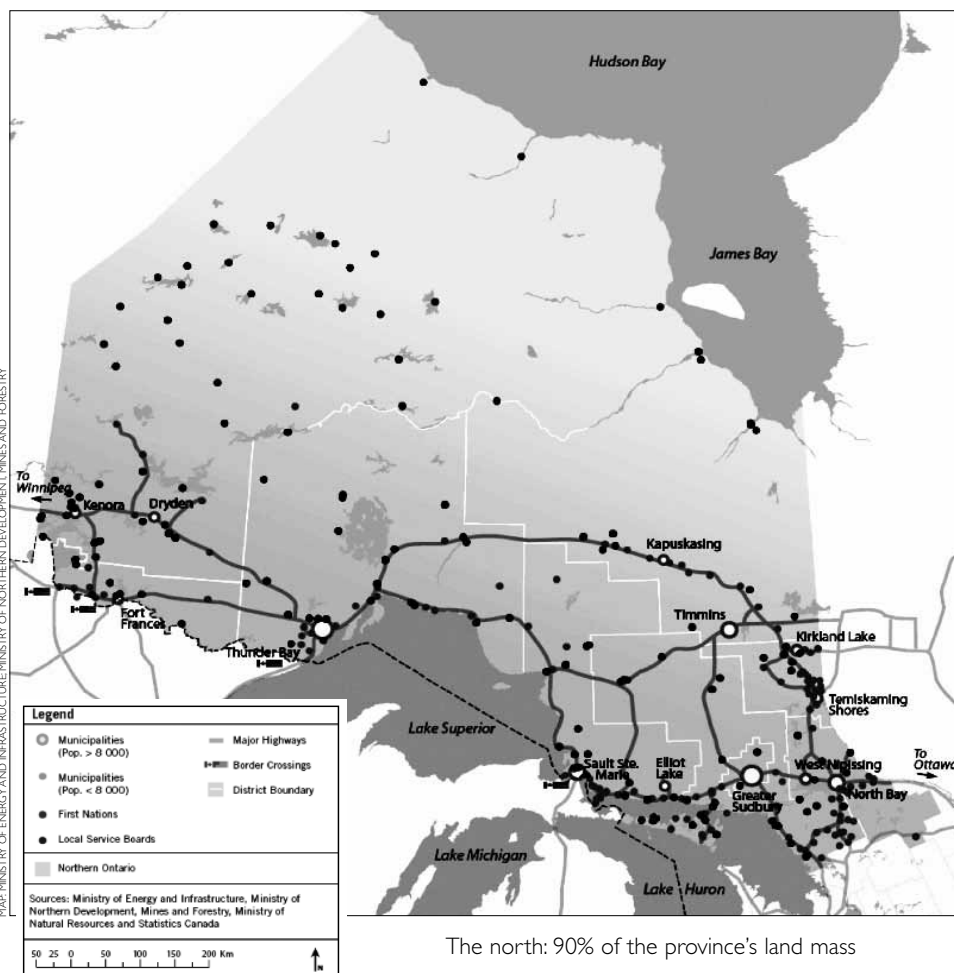
- Partnering with the Moose Cree First Nation to construct the \$2.6 billion Lower Mattagami 440-megawatt generating facility.
- Creating the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program for large industrial users that will reduce electricity costs by approximately 25% for the next three years.
- Providing \$45 million over the next three years for a new skills training program to help Aboriginal Peoples and northern Ontarians benefit from emerging economic development opportunities.
- Partnering with Sudbury and Thunder Bay to establish pilot economic development planning areas.

Most importantly, the draft Northern Growth Plan recognizes the distinctive cultural, economic, environmental and social conditions of this region which encompasses 90% of province's land area.

Don McConnell, MCIP, RPP, is a member of Council for Northern District and the Planning Director for the City of Sault Ste. Marie. He can be reached at d.mcconnell@cityssm.on.ca



Don McConnell



Congratulations Loretta!

Mary Ann Rangam

Loretta Ryan, MCIP, RPP, CAE, is celebrating her 10th anniversary as OPPI's Manager, Policy & Communications. She took the reins of this newly created position in June 2000 and has blazed an impressive trail for OPPI on planning policy. Working with the Policy Development Committee, she has facilitated numerous Calls to Action and Policy Positions on the Oak Ridges Moraine, Affordable Housing Needs, Growth Management, Healthy & Sustainable Communities—The 21st Century Challenge, and Aging Communities & Planning.

She has shaped OPPI's communications, delivering timely and relevant information to our Members through OPPI's website and Members' e-newsletter. With our key stakeholders and partners she tirelessly promotes Ontario Planners: Vision. Leadership. Great Communities. Her efforts to promote excellence in planning to the media has connected the planning profession with key media figures at CBC radio and television as well as newspaper and magazine reporters province-wide: Matt Galloway, Suhana Meharchand, Anna Maria Tremonti, Christopher Hume and Jennifer Lewington, to name just a few.



Loretta Ryan

Working with OPPI's Recognition Committee, she has forged key partnerships with provincial government ministries, Ontario public health groups, and the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario to advance and support OPPI's Healthy Communities initiative. The most recent release of "Planning by Design: A Healthy Communities Handbook" attracted over 800 planning and

public health professionals to participate in an educational workshop through a webinar.

And last but not least, we know her for her ability to work energetically alongside committee and district volunteers, helping to establish OPPI as the voice of the planning profession. Over the years, hundreds of volunteers have worked with Loretta to accomplish OPPI's strategic goals and initiatives.

Leadership can be thought of in many ways. In Loretta's case she leads by her commitment to serve. She embodies stewardship in every project she takes on, always striving to leave behind institutional heirs, assets and a legacy. In this short article, I cannot do justice to the legacy she has worked so hard to give to OPPI over these past 10 years.

Please join us at the OPPI Symposium and Annual Meeting on October 28 & 29th Healthy Communities and Planning for Food: A Harvest of Ideas to acknowledge and celebrate her 10th anniversary and her accomplishments.

Mary Ann Rangam is Executive Director of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.

Western Lake Ontario News

Rosalind Minaji

In 2010, the WLO District will continue to offer opportunities for networking, professional development and collaboration.

We kicked off the year with a Lunch and Learn event held in late April to highlight planning issues surrounding the fostering of arts and culture. The "Tale of Three Cities" event featured stories from:

- Hamilton – where planning for creative industries began as a reaction to the large number of filming projects in the city. This discussion focused on lessons learned by municipal staff and areas where there is still work to be done to help the creative sector navigate the planning process.
- St. Catharines – where the "Inspire Niagara" facility will create, discover and celebrate dance, film, music and theatre.

This joint project between the City of St. Catharines and Brock University will house the Niagara Centre for the Arts and the School of Fine and Performing Arts and serve as a significant cultural attractor for their downtown.

- Niagara Falls – where public and private investment and a number of planning and marketing tools have been used to bring an influx of new arts and cultural attractions including a theatre, several galleries, bistros, media studios and boutique shops into the historic downtown.

The lunch and learn was held at the historic Imperial Cotton Centre for the Arts. Built in 1900, as one of the first textile mills

in Hamilton, the Centre has been converted into artists' studios with a combined floor area of 500m². A studio tour showcased the potential of Hamilton's early industrial heritage for creative re-use.

In late May, we held a breakfast session called "Planning to Walk?" This event featured a discussion of the Central West Ontario Heart Health Partnership's "WalkON" initiative. WalkON is a community partnership that offers a menu of program activities to engage the community in the creation of

environments to support and encourage walking. Activities focus on improving the built environment and increasing the proportion of residents who choose walking as



Rosalind Minaji

a way to be active. OPPI's "Planning by Design" Handbook was also presented, and it was clear that important relationships can be developed between planning and public health professionals.

Looking ahead to the Fall, we are planning a Green Building Tour on October 7 to provide planners with a behind-the-scenes look at LEED certified developments in West Hamilton. This will be a breakfast event limited to 25 participants. Architects and designers will lead tours of two new developments: the McMaster Innovation Park Canmet office building, and the West Village Residences apartment building. The architects will discuss

their experiences with the planning process.

We are also planning to hold another Provisional Member Information Session this Fall in conjunction with an evening social event. We expect a new crop of members will be interested in learning about the benefits of full membership, the Planning for the Future process, District events and OPPI volunteer opportunities. The session will be free and is intended to encourage local provisional members toward full membership and to recruit future volunteers for District events.

Student bus tours will be held during the week of World Town Planning Day. Urban

Geography students from McMaster and Brock Universities, and Planning Technician students from Mohawk College will have the opportunity to take a bus tour with planners from the area to learn about interesting projects and implementation issues on the ground.

We hope to see you at a future event. Many thanks to our hard-working District executive and volunteers for all their efforts on our behalf.

Rosalind Minaji, MCIP, RPP, is Director for Western Lake Ontario. She is also Coordinator of Development Review with the Burlington Planning & Building Department.



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Editorial

The Growth Plan Effect— Connecting With Ordinary People About Important Issues

Glenn Miller

The widespread interest shown in the government's review of the PPS could well signal a sea-change

To what extent is the general public engaged with or even interested in planning policy? We all know that there is never a shortage of reaction or complaint when new developments or infrastructure projects are proposed, but the degree to which the public is prepared to do some homework and study potentially arcane policy documents is less obvious—but this may be changing. Although overhearing earnest discussions at cocktail parties about sections of the Provincial Policy Statement may not yet be commonplace, the widespread interest shown in the government's review of the PPS could well signal a sea-change.

An example of a group making a concerted effort to become familiar with our lexicon and educate their members about planning issues is People Plan Toronto (PPT). Born out of bewilderment and frustration over the process but determined to make a positive contribution, PPT is now a registered entity working constructively to educate and facilitate debate with stakeholders across Toronto (and beyond), helped along with support from OPPI members (and links to helpful documents available from the province through the Institute's website).

Another indication is the enthusiastic response from public health specialists at a recent meeting, who

exhibited genuine interest in a presentation on OPPI's Healthy Communities Handbook. And reports from World Town Planning Day events last fall suggest a widening interest in the issues, from school children to service clubs. A further marker of burgeoning interest in the big picture is the decision by the Conservation Council of Ontario to build their commentary on the PPS to replace the words "build strong communities" with "build complete communities"—cleverly borrowing a key concept established in both growth plans.

As argued frequently in this space, planners have an important role to play in ensuring that "complete communities" become a reality, not just a term of art. This is where commitment can translate to common cause. The process of developing both growth plans and the public's subsequent exposure to the notion of complete communities has served to expand the debate. OPPI is actively soliciting input from the membership on the PPS, and the membership has a unique opportunity to contribute.

Glenn Miller, FCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and vice president, education and research, with the Canadian Urban Institute. He can be reached at editor@ontarioplanning.com

Opinion

Planning arguments must cover good and bad

Robert Brown

I was somewhat confused by the article (The Case Against Surplus Dwelling Severances—March/April, 2010), as I was not aware that the severance of a surplus dwelling removed actively farmed land from production. I was also further confounded by the interpretation of the MDS regulations. If the livestock operation wishes to expand, it must meet a setback calculated from the dwelling, not the new lot line. Guideline 41 says "dwelling/lot line/road allowance/or area zoned or designated"—and there are setback requirements from each of these items. "Lot line" refers to the lot lines of the lot on which the livestock facility is located, not the proposed

new lot lines of the surplus dwelling.

Another issue is the impact of the change in ownership of this proposed surplus dwelling lot. If the existing owner remains in the severed house, then there is likely to be no impact as the family are used to the neighbouring livestock. If someone from the city purchases the lot, the smell of manure and the sound of livestock may come as an unwelcome surprise. With that said, the likelihood of complaints and confrontation increases. Or do they? Research undertaken in our office during the development of a nutrient management by-law found that, according

(Cont. on page 23)



Planning Futures



What Is Planning in 2010?

Paul J. Bedford

THE MOTIVATION for writing this article came from what seems to be a lifelong debate about the definition of planning that many have attempted to resolve. Being an optimist by nature, I will put forward some thoughts that I hope will help better define our profession and stimulate discussion about a number of important questions especially among the young generation of city and regional planners who are anxious to make their mark.



Students are the future

What is planning? What is the common glue that all planners share? What does it mean to be a successful planner in 2010 and beyond?

The Great Debate

Perhaps the best way to open up the dialogue is to share what has become a familiar discussion with my students each year. I ask them how their parents reacted when they first told them that they had decided to pursue a degree in urban planning. The vast majority of parents usually said "what is that?" Not exactly the answer that most students hope for, but it nevertheless speaks volumes about the difficult task of describing and defining planning.

To start, I think the word "planning" is just too general! What type of planning are we talking about? Financial planning, economic planning, social planning? Dropping

the reference to city, urban or regional creates confusion and leaves our profession all too vulnerable to many others claiming expertise in planning. City planning is a profession on its own and is not simply an add on. Unfortunately, many universities in North America have chosen to perpetuate this practice by housing city planning in schools of architecture, environmental studies, urban design, urban studies or geography. It is rare to find a distinct school of urban and regional planning on its own.

Since planning is embedded in every aspect of life it leaves the concept open to interpretation

Many articles have been written over the years about this dilemma. Given that the urban and regional planning field is characterized by numerous specialties, some have suggested that because planning encompasses so many physical, social, economic, environmental, architectural, urban design, engineering and other areas of expertise that planning is not a true profession. Some have even put forward the view that if planning is about everything, then it can also be about nothing! This is utter nonsense, but it underscores the need to get our collective act together and come to grips with a clear and workable definition of how we spend our working lives.

How important is the urban and regional planning function to development decision making? What is the role of a municipal planning department in most cities today? Is the department a leading and positive force in guiding change and influencing city building? How does the concept of sustainability get translated into hard reality? Is the best professional advice of the department presented to council without interference? Generally speaking, it appears that many municipal planning departments are becoming less important in shaping key decisions within their communities and regions. Thankfully, there are also exceptions and I often come across many talented, energetic young people who are eager to make a difference, but their voices and ideas tend to get silenced by tradition or organizational paralysis.

The Core Role

The dictionary says planning means "to form a scheme or method for doing, achieving," "to have as an intention or purpose." The focus on getting results from an intended course of action is what stands out. In short, a practical emphasis on relevance is paramount.

To me, the core role of a good urban and regional planner is to resolve solutions to current problems and to constantly develop and advance ideas for the future. To do this requires a host of complicated skill sets. I think good planners are by nature change agents. They must be willing to lead, to communicate and to take risks in order to advance

the overall sustainability of our communities. They must possess passion, vision, curiosity, energy and be willing to experiment with new approaches. They should have a public presence that connects with citizens and the media and be capable of inspiring politicians to make courageous decisions that at times will challenge conventional thinking.

What makes our profession unique is that we are, above all, special generalists who have the ability to see and integrate all aspects of the urban and regional context into one perspective that connects the daily life cycle of people to big picture choices for the future. We have a special obligation to clarify the choices available but also must spell out the consequences of those choices to the public and the politicians clearly so they understand the implications of critical decisions. We recognize that everything is connected to everything. We recognize that people want to see their city or region move forward, that they want problems resolved and that they want to maintain or improve their quality of life. Above all, we recognize that it is our job to guide and influence this process and translate dreams into reality.

These are the reasons that I decided to become a city planner over 40 years ago and they continue to be the reasons why I am

proud to be a city planner today. I suspect that many other members of the Institute share these views. We need great urban and regional planners now more than ever but we don't need people who want to simply replicate mind-numbing, car-dependent subdivisions and big box stores. Enough already! There are many competing voices out there claiming to speak for urban and regional



Planning is also about generating a high quality of life for people in cities

planners. Economists, architects, urban designers, engineers, environmentalists and lawyers all have laid claim to urban and regional planning expertise. Our profession needs to create a much stronger identity and voice if we are serious about shaping a better future. Our profession needs to practise what

it preaches in a much more convincing manner.

What we do best is make connections among competing interests, public agencies, professions and disciplines. We harness the energy of the private sector to help achieve public sector planning goals. Change is our only fixed point of stability. Given the rapidly changing nature of our society, we need to have an ongoing dialogue with people to future-proof our country, cities and regions so they understand the need to embrace positive change and achieve a sustainable future. Not only must our communities be sustainable, but our profession has to be sustainable in every aspect of our practice. Let's be leaders and champions instead of managers and followers. There is no better time than now to take command.

Paul Bedford, FCIP, RPP, is contributing editor for Planning Futures. He teaches at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University, is a frequent speaker and writer in addition to serving on the Board of Metrolinx, the National Capital Commission Planning Advisory Committee and Toronto's Waterfront Design Review Panel. He is also a Senior Associate with the Canadian Urban Institute.

Opinion (cont. from page 21)

to an OMAFRA engineer who deals with normal farm practice complaints, farmers are actually as likely, or more likely to file a complaint than non-farmers. I would attribute this to the fact that farmers are more likely to know what is or is not a normal farm practice.

The article also failed to highlight the entire picture regarding land prices in jurisdictions that permit surplus dwellings. I agree that the appraised value is higher if the dwelling and outbuildings can be severed as surplus; unfortunately, this is not the whole picture. Many farmers actually count on being able to sever the dwelling and will pay more for the land, knowing that it will be offset by the return on the sale of the surplus dwelling and lot. This is also a factor often taken into account by lenders, as they are more likely to extend financing knowing that the actually final cost per acre will be less. Permitting the purchaser to sever the dwelling and transfer back to the vendor makes both parties happier at the end of the day. All too often the economics of planning policies are overlooked. I strongly disagree with any policy

that tips the economic balance too heavily in favour of one party.

Lastly, I believe that maintaining the assessment base in agricultural areas is as important as it is in urban areas. Not permitting the severance of surplus dwellings contributes to the loss of assessment if dwellings are removed. Agricultural areas require roads, schools, churches, corner stores, gas stations, etc. Even with the provision of these services in small hamlets and villages, with a reduction in the actual population living in agricultural areas, these services become more difficult to support, and this is evident across Ontario with the ongoing closure of rural schools, clustering of churches and the closure of small businesses in rural towns and villages. The population that once supported these services is no longer there. I understand that reducing the number of houses in agricultural areas is not the only contributing factor, but it is an important one. Loss of assessment may not be a planning argument for or against permitting surplus dwelling severances, but it is food for thought. Ultimately the decision to permit

or prohibit surplus dwelling severances will always be open to debate. The severance of a surplus dwelling is not an expansion of an urban boundary, nor should it be considered under the same policies of Section 1.1.3.9. I caution all land use planners and rural planning authorities in Ontario to consider this issue thoroughly. Provincial Policy has established the benchmark and it is up to individual Municipalities to determine if the severance of surplus dwellings will be permitted.

Robert Brown, MCIP, RPP, is a Senior Planner with Storey Samways Planning Ltd in Chatham.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Members are encouraged to send letters about content in the *Ontario Planning Journal* to the Editor (editor@ontarioplanning.com). Please direct comments or questions about Institute activities to the OPPI President at the OPPI office or by e-mail to executivedirector@ontarioplanners.on.ca

Urban Design Working Group: 10 Years of Activism for Urban Design in Ontario

Alex Taranu, Anne McIlroy and Dan Leeming

Ten years have passed since the Urban Design Working Group started its activities and outreach efforts for the cause of urban design in Ontario. This is a good occasion to look back at the years of relentless work, our achievements, where urban design is now in the province, what still needs to be done and where we would like to go.

In 1999, *Ontario Planning Journal* Editor Glenn Miller launched an appeal for an urban design editor for the Journal. Five people responded: Anne McIlroy, Robert Glover, Moiz Behar, Sonny Tomich and Alex Taranu. We started to meet and discuss our common interest in urban design. It soon became obvious that urban design was too often neglected

or ignored in the planning process, including in planning education. At the same time, it was obvious that there was a lot of potential across the province and that it was a field of practice with an increasingly important future.

We decided to form a professional group and soon other colleagues—planners, architects, landscape architects—joined us, including Dan Leeming, Karen Hammond, Gabe Charles, Rick Merrill, Ryan Mounsey, Eric Turcotte, and many others, from all backgrounds and aspects of professional life—municipal, consulting and academic fields.

Very quickly the group's activities evolved from meetings and discussions to articles in the Journal promoting urban design to events

attracting professionals from all around the province. Discussions, tours, and presentations became popular events, many of them organized with OPPI or other professional groups—the Canadian Urban Institute, the Toronto Society of Architects, ICOMOS, or CanU. Highlights include the Kitchener-Waterloo Tour in 2003, the lecture and presentation of prominent Cuban architect and urbanist Mario Coyula, and forum discussions on Canadian New Urbanism or LEED-ND.

Some of the most memorable and popular events were the Urban Design workshops and mini-charrettes organized in conjunction with the OPPI and CIP Conferences. From a modest beginning at the Niagara Falls Conference in 1999, we continued in Ottawa (2001), London (2003), Toronto (2004), Calgary and Huntsville (2005), Hamilton (2006), North Bay (2007), Collingwood/Wasaga Beach (2008), and Niagara Falls (2009). These intense one-day events have become opportunities not only to spread the gospel of urban design or to demonstrate the versatility and potential of participatory design events, but also often to assist local municipalities with design ideas.

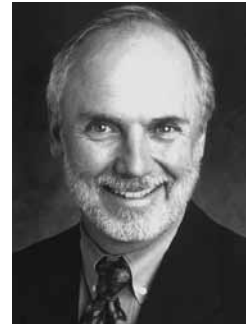
In 2002, the Urban Design Working Group (UDWG) become formally associated with OPPI when it became a sub-committee of the Policy Committee. UDWG provided OPPI and Council with advice on urban design matters and had an important role in key initiatives including Bill 51 (the 2007 Planning Act), the Healthy



Alex Taranu



Anne McIlroy



Dan Leeming

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Communities, Sustainable Communities initiative, the MAH Healthy Communities Handbook, and many others. The group also provided OPPI representation in the City of Toronto and Waterfront Design Review Panels.

The group has initiated other interest groups, including one focused on Urban Design education and one on municipal urban design practice, which flourishes today as the Municipal Urban Design Roundtable. Members of UDWG were instrumental in organizing urban designers at the national level—first as the National Urban Design Interest Group (NUDIG) and more recently through the Council for Canadian Urbanism (CanU). UDWG is also at the core of Urban Design Education Network, delivering the popular OPPI Urban Design Course for Planners.

Although the group never finalized its Vision statement, focusing more on practice, certain key ideas were promoted constantly:

- Urban design is a key element of good planning for our cities, towns and villages.
- Urban design is a key tool for achieving sustainable, healthy, livable and beautiful communities.



Some members of the Urban Design Working Group

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- Urban design is a key factor in placemaking, achieving places with strong character and identity in today's competitive global village.

The practice the group promoted was a multi-disciplinary, collaborative, participatory approach in which urban designers work with many other city-building professions—planners, architects, landscape architects, engineers, economists.

Looking back, we could conclude that UDWG had in the last 10 years a significant impact on the way urban design is being approached and integrated in the planning

process in Ontario. In the context of increased focus at provincial level on smart growth, sustainability, complete communities, and healthy development, urban design practice has expanded tremendously both in municipal and private practice. Urban design method and tools are being widely used throughout the province, and not only in large cities.

The *Planning Act* update in 2007 brought urban design within the statutory planning tools. The current focus on infill and intensification and on complete communities with more urban forms have increased its importance in planning. Urban design has evolved into an important new area of practice for

planners and design professionals in Ontario. We hope to have the opportunity to describe in more detail the progress of this practice and discipline in future editions of the Journal.

UDWG has been instrumental in creating and developing a body of knowledge and work, working hard for the cause of design in planning, and integrating our work with other professions to raise its profile higher in professional and public discourse. We have a long way to go towards the elusive goals of sustainable, healthy, liveable and beautiful communities, but we believe we have made significant progress.

After more than 10 years of outreach and activism for urban design, we have surpassed our initial modest goals and today we can say



The Urban Design Working Group in action

that urban design is a thriving area of practice and an increasingly significant factor in planning for the cities, towns and villages of Ontario.

Alex Taranu, MCIP, RPP, is Manager of Urban Design and Public Buildings with the City of Brampton (alex.taranu@brampton.ca). Anne McLroy, MCIP, RPP, is a principal of Brook McLroy Planning + Urban Design. Dan Leeming, FCIP, RPP, is a partner with the Planning Partnership. Further information on the Policy Development Committee and the Urban Design Working Group can be found at: <http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca/content/PlanningProfession/AboutOPPI/policydevelopmentcommittee.aspx>



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