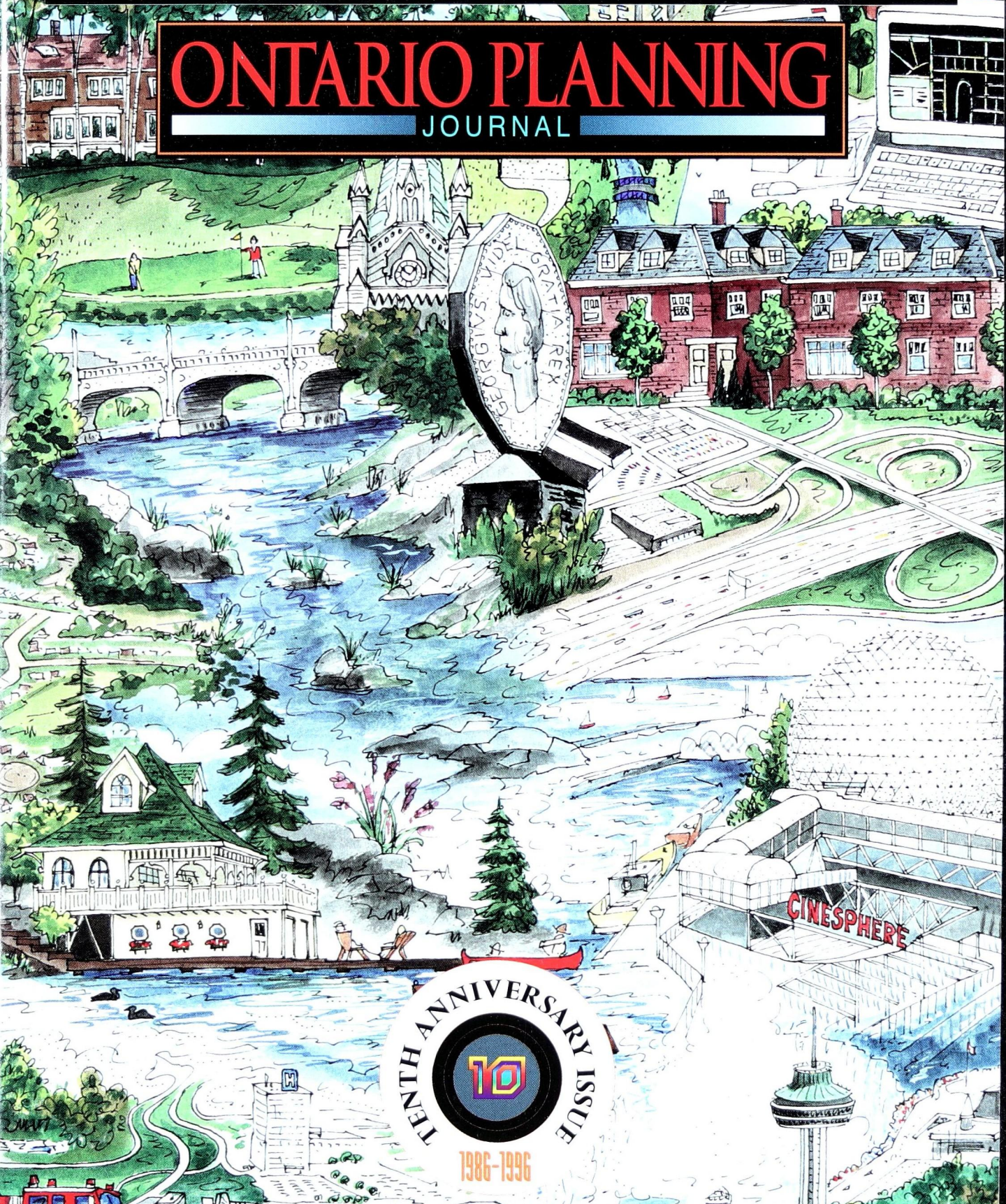


# ONTARIO PLANNING

## JOURNAL



TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE  
**10**  
1986-1996



## ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

Volume 11, Number 4, 1996

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**INSTITUT DES PLANIFICATEURS  
PROFESSIONNELS  
DE L'ONTARIO**  
L'Association affiliée ontarienne  
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## A special issue of the Journal to mark OPPI's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Notes from guest editor Rudayna Abdo

This issue of the Ontario Planning Journal, is dedicated to celebrating OPPI's tenth anniversary. For this issue, we have departed from the regular format to present a variety of feature articles. Some are from areas not often dealt with in mainstream planning, such as the planner's role in mental health, housing the aged, native issues and feminist concerns.

Others revisit themes that are quickly becoming mainstream, such as the growing recognition of the importance of urban design, New Urbanism and changing attitudes towards the environment. There has also been a deliberate attempt to solicit the views of planners regarding the future of our profession.

As befits an anniversary issue there is a retrospective element to a number of the articles, offering a glance back that may be helpful in informing future issues and trends. We also hear from OPPI's presidents, past, present and future. As well, a "timeposter" marks a number of key events and milestones over the past decade: some serious, some not.

As a newcomer to the profession and a fresh product of planning education who experienced firsthand the difficulties in securing employment, I felt the need to lend an ear to Ontario's academic institutions and to OPPI's Career Opportunities Resource Group (CORG, the organization created to address the needs of recent graduates).

Taking part in the production of this issue was both interesting and exciting and I would like to offer thanks to all of the individuals who contributed time, effort and ideas. I would also like to acknowledge the OPPI Council's willingness to invest in making this special issue possible. The Journal's advertisers have also graciously donated their space in this issue to allow us to present a different layout.

In reading the articles I detect a note of optimism, a consistent message: that as a planner, one should not be fatalistic but instead somehow attempt to assume the role of activist, advocate, mediator and facilitator. A planner should seek to effect change and ensure that our multifaceted profession becomes a crucial tool in development, conservation and human settlement.

Rudayna Abdo



The team for this special issue included Ron Sandrin-Litt, Deputy Editor Philippa Campsie, Jim Helik, Rudayna Abdo, Geoff Batzel, Diane McArthur-Rodgers and Glenn Miller.

### Retaining and Learning from an Organization's Corporate Memory a Worthwhile Exercise

A wasteful by-product of rapid fire corporate downsizing is the loss of what some observers have called "corporate memory," the collected wisdom and know-how of an organization assembled at great cost over many years. When senior employees disappear in large numbers, an important element of an organization's competitive edge vanishes at the same time. The skills necessary to identify and distill essential information, blended with insight and professional judgement, are sometimes only appreciated when they are no longer available.

That OPPI is growing when so many private and public organizations around us are shrinking is an irony not lost on OPPI's Council or the people responsible for producing the Journal. This special issue attempts in a modest way to "download" information gathered during our first decade. We think this is worthwhile because the major driving force behind the Institute will soon be professionals who graduated while some of the essential building blocks to OPPI were still being built. Understanding how an organization grew can help build for the future.

The Timeposter and retrospective offered by OPPI presidents in this issue captures some of the pieces of the bigger picture from OPPI's perspective. In reality, however, the momentum that resulted in OPPI being formed start-

ed long before 1986. Earlier this year, Tony Usher introduced a session about RPP status with insights into how the rapid progress between 1986 and 1996 relied on three quarters of a century of effort before "the pieces could fit together." The first planning institute, the Town Planning Institute of Canada, was founded in 1919. Membership was restricted to "architects, engineers, landscape architects, surveyors, sculptors, artists and sociologists." Although the TPIC folded in the Depression, the broader concept of planning as we know it actually emerged in the 1930s. The TPIC was reconstituted in 1952 with barely more than 100 members, four years after groundwork undertaken by an Ontario-based group had rekindled the desire to establish a professional organization. The first move to gain

statutory recognition for the planning profession was in Saskatchewan in 1963. Because such recognition is only possible at the provincial level, this was a key element in the motivation to disband four chapters in Ontario to form OPPI. Thus the elements of "Ontario," "Professional," "Planners" and "Institute" gradually came together.

More than 60 Journals published since the formation of OPPI are graphic testimony to the Institute's growing maturity and self-confidence. Just as important, pride in our accomplishments is blended with a capacity for self-evaluation and the ability to pursue goals over the long term. I hope you enjoy this slice of OPPI's "corporate memory."

Glenn Miller

*Rudayna Abdo is a planner with Markson Boroah Hodgson Architects Inc. in Toronto and joined the Institute earlier this year. She is a graduate of McGill's School of Planning.*

*Patrick G. Déoux is a senior planner with Delcan Corporation in Ottawa. He is chair of the Publications Committee and championed the Journal's cause at Council to win the budget to present this special issue.*

*Glenn Miller has been editor of the Ontario Planning Journal since its inception in 1986, and before that edited the COC Record. He is Director of Applied Research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto.*



When the Globe and Mail's John Barber called last September for the abolition of modern planning as one of his top ten solutions for the ills of the GTA, the response from the profession was virtually inaudible. Recent conversations with planners suggest that the silence that greeted Barber's rhetorical jab was a reasonable response to old news. What seems to be on many planners' minds is not the defence of modern planning, but a desire to understand what comes next, and where they fit in.

Observations on the future of planning practice by public- and private-sector planners reveal both pessimism and optimism. Some planners feel that a provincial agenda of deregulation and cutbacks will undermine the significant accomplishments of planning reform and stall progress towards more sustainable development. Those in the government's employ worry that planners will be marginalized as the public sector is downsized and restructured and that those who do keep their jobs will see their role diminished.

Others view deregulation, delaying and the devolution of responsibility as necessary means to the increased flexibility and responsiveness to market forces on which they believe the future of the profession depends. Where pessimists see current provincial initiatives as undermining significant gains in social and environmental policy, optimists see streamlining, opportunities for integration, more local control and a new role for planners as ground-up consensus builders.

Among optimists and pessimists alike there is a sense that public-sector planners are responding to change rather than leading it. Some see this as a consequence of passivity. However, at least one private-sector planner aptly observed that the role of gatekeeper for private initiatives is, within reason, a necessary and appropriate public-sector role, and one that more entrepreneurial planners who serve private clients cannot perform. Even Jane Jacobs, one of the most celebrated and accomplished critics of modern planning, has recognized the need for guardians as well as entrepreneurs.

It is difficult to predict what all this ferment means for the future of planning practice, and there is certainly no consensus on whether this future will be bright or bleak. Nevertheless, the following observations may prompt further thought and possibly shed some light on where we are headed.

First, the future of planning is caught up in a much larger debate over the appropriate

relationship between government and civil society. Where a workable balance will ultimately be struck is not clear. What is clear is that good governance can no longer be assumed to mean more government. Moreover, as we move into a future where government is increasingly seen as only one stakeholder among many, public-sector planners will almost certainly spend less time crafting generic rules to resolve specific conflicts, and more time seeking practical solutions through collaborative problem-solving.

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

### Some Thoughts on the Future of Planning Practice

By Eudora Pendergrast

Second, in a postmodern world, where the very notion of a unified public interest is open to challenge, evaluating proposals and positions by applying professional expertise may increasingly give way to the search for stable consensus among a multiplicity of interests. In this context, planners can provide a valuable service if they do nothing more than create accessible public "spaces" within which the full range of interests affected by a particular proposal or policy can be expressed, heard and debated. Clinging to their own positions while challenging those of others will not suffice, and will make it more difficult to find professional satisfaction and respect.

Third, in the public-sector especially, planners' future prestige will increasingly depend on their ability to articulate, test and integrate the advice of other professions—architects, engineers, ecologists and policy advisers—as well as the varied interests of property owners and other stakeholders. Planners will need both to appreciate and to challenge the expertise of others. Unless planners are willing to advocate change and listen actively to a diversity of interests, they will find themselves held accountable for the unreasonable demands and obsolete standards of others.

If planners still defined their profession the way the early reformers who "invented"

modern planning did—that is, as one composed of objective experts capable of the comprehensive management of the process of urbanization in harmony with social and economic needs—then these trends might be more disturbing than I, for one, find them to be. My sense is that planners understand very well that what flourished under the rubric of "modern planning" was not the comprehensive vision pursued by Thomas Adams and the other "fathers" of our profession, but only the components of that vision that were compatible with a market-driven democracy at a particular time: a regulatory system designed primarily to bring order to the property market and protect the interests of existing land owners and businesses.

However, before we rush to applaud the end of the illusion of comprehensive, apolitical and objective expertise, we should consider the context in which we are saying goodbye to modern planning. For example, it will be good news if the market accepts and respects urban design standards as a replacement for inflexible land use and density controls, and buys into the more urbane and livable communities advocated by New Urbanists. But let's not be lulled into believing that what the market accepts is all that's needed. Regardless of the fate of their vision, the modernists who ushered in the profession had social and environmental health, as well as physical civility, in mind. So should we.

In his article on the future of the profession in the 1994 anniversary issue of *Plan Canada*, John Sewell singled out two mistakes from the past to be avoided in the uncertain future he sees ahead: the "twin curses of process and detail." However, if, as these musings suggest, the valued planner of the near future is to serve as a consensus-builder rather than an objective expert, a facilitator open to change rather than a regulator, a mediator rather than an arbiter of interests, then process and detail will be front and centre. Perhaps the real, and larger, challenge will be to redesign processes so that they are worth championing and to separate the details that matter from those that don't.

*Eudora Pendergrast, MCIP, RPP is a planner and mediator in private practice. She was formerly a director with the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department and, more recently, with the Waterfront Regeneration Trust.*



# New Urbanism

By Dan Leeming

In four short years the term "New Urbanism" has come to define a body of principles and built examples that has entered the planning lexicon. The term has struck a nerve that people respond to in varying ways. Like any new influence that affects the form and direction of community development, it must be evaluated on the basis of its practical application by those who plan, build and live in these communities.

The term "New Urbanism" replaces the term "Neotraditional," which the press coined to describe the work of Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk Architects and Town Planners Inc. (DPZ), a firm that developed master plans and regulatory codes for projects such as Seaside, Florida. DPZ called these Traditional Neighbourhood Developments or TNDs. On the west coast of the United States, another founding member of this movement, Peter Calthorpe, developed a method of community design called Transit Oriented Developments or TODs.

Although the word "Neotraditional" took on a life of its own, it was never used by DPZ or Calthorpe because it conjures up an image of nostalgic pastiches of the past. "New Urbanism" was coined to encompass the broader principles of various practitioners of an approach to community design that, while drawing upon sound ideas of the past, is relevant to contemporary issues. New Urbanism is not just a revival; although it borrows from traditional city planning concepts—particularly those of the years 1900 to 1920, now regarded as a watershed era in the history of urban design—it acknowledges the complexity of society and seeks to address pressing issues.

## NEW URBANISM FORMALLY LAUNCHED IN 1993

In October 1993, at the first Congress for the New Urbanism, practitioners and academics from North America, Australia, England and Scandinavia debated the term "Urbanism." It was described as an approach to the development and redevelopment of urban areas in which the disciplines of urban planning, architecture, civil and traffic engineering, landscape architecture, environmental science and sociology contribute to a collective goal or a vision for a coherent community development plan.

New Urbanism promotes a built environment that is diverse in use and population; scaled for the pedestrian, yet capable of accommodating automobiles and mass transit; and characterized by a well-defined public

Photo: The Planning Partnership



Mashpea Commons, USA: An American example of New Urbanism

realm supported by architecture that reflects the ecology and culture of the region. These principles—diversity, human scale and a formative public realm—apply equally to physical design, economic policy and social form. New Urbanism is based on the premise that the fundamental organizing elements of a liveable community are interdependent and work together to define the "whole" of urban structure.

Although Canadian and American plans by various practitioners embodying the principles of New Urbanism have existed for some time, it was only four years ago that key people in this area met formally to exchange ideas and develop a coordinated set of principles. These discussions examined how the comprehensive community plans can improve the quality of the built environment and how New Urbanism can move from the margins into the mainstream.

While plans based on the principles of New Urbanism may not reflect the values of everyone, low-density urban sprawl imposes economic, environmental and social costs that society cannot continue to bear. New Urbanism provides a credible design alternative to contemporary development and is intended to create efficient, compact developments complemented by an accessible and visible public realm and distinctive high-

quality architecture.

It is the market place, not policy, that has driven the demand for smaller lots with average densities higher than those of the last decade. Many elements of New Urbanism have been adopted in whole or in part on a project-by-project basis. As one developer of conventional subdivisions in southern Ontario stated recently: "I have little doubt that these ideas are coming, but I want to offer a range of conventional as well as alternative house and garage layouts to cover this period of transition in home buyer's choice."

## DIFFERENCES IN CANADIAN AND AMERICAN EXPERIENCE BASED ON CULTURE

Our planning system reflects our cultural evolution. The Canadian axiom of "peace, order and good government" is evident in the stratification of government agencies and systems of planning controls designed to ensure that the broader needs of society are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. New

Urbanism in Ontario often struggles with changes to standards set by public works or parks departments, school boards or zoning bylaws. The planning system in Ontario, however cumbersome it may be, already has the goal of good-quality comprehensive planning. New Urbanism is a direct extension of many of these goals, such as promoting good pedestrian environments, supporting transit, and creating a diverse and compact built form.

On the other hand, the American axiom of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" implies a greater emphasis on the individual and less on the collective. Those who attempt to promote the principles of New Urbanism in the United States may have great success on individual sites where the local municipality has few design controls and obligations and where roads and utilities are maintained through resident associations. However, the less structured broader organization of land uses, transit and environmental systems may conflict with principles such as support for transit, integrated and permeable road systems and well-defined, linked open space systems.

Further differences between the planning framework in Ontario and in the United States are typified by the following examples:

- Dispute resolution in Ontario is dealt



with, for the most part, through mediation or the Ontario Municipal Board, whereas in the United States, similar matters are often dealt with in lengthy civil court trials.

- Ontario's needs for regional structures such as transit, environmental protection, or community services are prepared by regional government in urban areas, whereas in the United States, the only regional body structured in this manner to my knowledge is in Portland, Oregon.
- In Ontario, official plans determine the long-range need for urban land, as well as the location of appropriate land uses and support systems, whereas a great deal of development in the United States can proceed on an application for zoning, often on an ad hoc basis, without reference to a comprehensive municipal plan. Although New Urbanism in Ontario has been more evident in greenfield sites, brown-field and infill projects within urban areas have been highly successful in applying the principles of good design long before the term New Urbanism was first used. The redevelopment of urban areas in Canada tends to be incremental and a sign of healthy urban change. The American experience has been very different. Detroit, for example, has dropped from a population of 2 million people to 1 million, from fifteen auto manufacturing plants to three, and has an inner city area the size of Scarborough that is derelict and all but abandoned.

### NEW URBANISM PRINCIPLES TO KICK-START URBAN RENEWAL IN U.S.

The head of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Henry Cisneros, announced at the Fourth Congress of New Urbanism (CNU), held in Charleston in May 1996, a major initiative for urban renewal. Stating that "public housing has become for too many ... a personal hell," he said that for many cities it means starting over.

Admitting the mistakes of the past, Atlanta and Chicago are tearing down much of their high-rise public housing projects and replacing them with townhouses in neighbourhood-scale communities. Cisneros stated that he wanted HUD "to bring the principles of New Urbanism to revitalize urban centres to create neighbourhoods of diversity and pedestrian-scaled environments."

During a standing ovation by participants,

who have long understood the need to move into the inner cities, Cisneros signed the new CNU Charter, a document that defines the goals and objectives of New Urbanism. This commitment by HUD represents a significant step forward for CNU as it recognizes the relevance of the principles of New Urbanism in urban as well as suburban areas.

### AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The reaction to the homogenous sprawling subdivisions of the postwar boom years is not just a North American phenomenon. The Urban Villages Group was established in the United Kingdom by Business in the Community (BITC) in late 1989. Since 1981 BITC has been promoting action by business leaders to tackle economic, social and environmental issues affecting local communities. The task of promoting a higher quality and more sustainable urban environment is a role that the Urban Villages Group has undertaken with a clear mandate to work with private-sector investors, builders and developers.

In Australia both terms, New Urbanism and Urban Villages, are used. Major projects in New South Wales and Queensland have used the consensus-building charrette process to define the shape of new community areas. While similar to American New Urbanism, the Australian movement has a stronger environmental focus and builds on government planning policies similar to those in Canada.

A quote from the Australian magazine *The Bulletin* summarizes New Urbanism as "a return to residential life that replicates the village. Its emphasis is pro-pedestrian, promoting communities that are higher density, self contained, walkable mixtures of homes, shops, businesses, recreational and educational facilities. Jobs for the growing part time and 'out of hours' workforce should be close to homes. Zoning should permit home-based industry where practical..."

Both the U.K. and Australia had representatives at the CNU in Charleston and share many common interests and frustrations with their Canadian counterparts.

### LOOKING FORWARD

The first generation of projects in Ontario built on the principles of New Urbanism, such as Montgomery Village in Orangeville and Morrison Village in Oakville, are still under construction, but can impart a sense of community that has more in common with prewar

development than their surrounding suburbs.

The second generation of projects is still on paper but some are to be built very soon. The Villages of Angus Glen in Markham is a community of laneways, recently adopted alternative road standards, diverse housing stock (1,300 units), and high-quality streetscape and open space treatment. The Villages of Angus Glen will start construction this year with River Oaks and Merrick Homes (builders in Montgomery and Morrison) as principal builders.

Various hybrids are evolving as developers and builders look for market acceptance of these new projects before committing themselves. Developments may include lots with garages in the rear yard or recessed at the side of the house with a reduced front yard. Often these building forms are retrofits on previously approved plans that were not designed from the outset as New Urbanist communities. At any rate, they represent an alternative choice in the market place for home buyers.

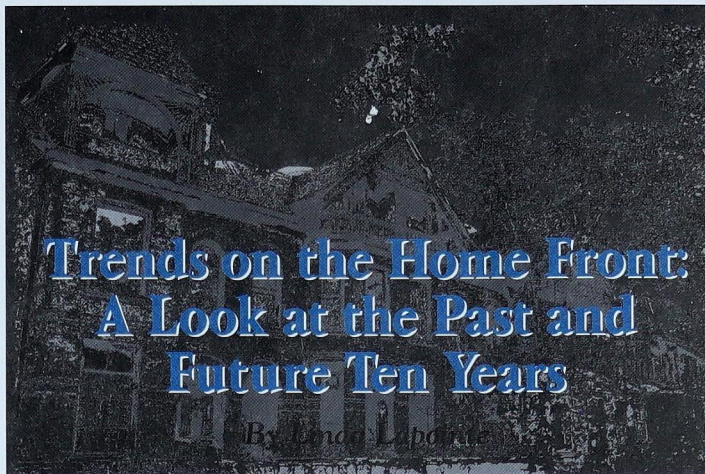
In the United States the number of New Urbanist projects has increased dramatically and would require another article to properly review. Kentlands, Maryland, one of the first major projects of its type, and one that suffered financially at its outset, is not only finishing its final phase (of a 400-acre site) but has as of May 1996 doubled its size with the addition of another 400 acres to be designed by DPZ.

After a successful bid by a delegation of Canadian planners, architects, engineers and builders, it was announced in May 1996 that the next Congress of New Urbanism will be in Toronto in May 1997. This forum will be international in scope and offer an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas about New Urbanism with other practitioners and to examine case studies of projects built and planned.

Further information will be posted in the Journal.

*Dan Leeming, MCIP, RPP is a principal in the Planning Partnership, a multi-disciplinary planning and design firm based in Barrie and Toronto. Dan has worked on secondary plans in Cornell and other Ontario locations, and has been involved with the Congress of New Urbanism from the outset.*





## Trends on the Home Front: A Look at the Past and Future Ten Years

By Linda Lapointe

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Ontario has seen dramatic changes in the housing market and in residential development over the past ten years. This article describes these past trends and explores those that will affect the future.

### THE RESIDENTIAL BOOM AND BUST

Ontario experienced a major housing boom during the mid to late 1980s as the pent-up demand of the baby boomers exploded after the recession of the early 1980s. House prices soared and residential development reached record levels. New residential growth spread out into the surrounding rural areas, catering primarily to the "move up" buyer looking for single detached dwellings on large lots. These trends affected most Ontario municipalities but were most pronounced in the Toronto area.

Ontario slipped into a recession in 1990 that was longer and deeper than most analysts had anticipated. Housing demand dropped, as did prices for new and resale housing. The decline was most dramatic in Toronto, where house prices fell 25 percent from their 1989 peak.

Despite the end of the recession in 1993, Ontario has continued to experience uneven economic and employment growth. Less housing is being developed than can be accounted for by demographic trends alone. This results from lower household formation rates among younger adults due to their high unemployment rates and to the lack of consumer confidence among tenants and existing homeowners. The latter two groups would rather stay put than take on a new or additional mortgage.

### UPS AND DOWNS IN AFFORDABILITY

Although many homeowners realized significant non-taxable capital gains during the late 1980s, many prospective homeowners were shut out of the housing market. Rental vacancy rates declined in most municipalities, making it more difficult for tenants, especially those with lower-incomes, to find affordable housing. Furthermore, despite the economic expansion, the problem of homelessness continued to plague Ontario's major urban centres.

As the economy slowed down, lower house prices and declining interest rates increased the affordability of home ownership. For example, in 1990 only 14 percent of tenants in the London CMA could afford to buy a home, but in 1993, about 40 percent of tenants could. Federal government incentives (such as CMHC mortgages with low down payments and the use of RRSPs for home purchasing) also helped tenants buy homes. Most new residential development since 1991 has been geared to first-time homebuyers.

### THE MANY FACES OF THE HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT

In 1989, in recognition of the importance of a sufficient supply of housing to Ontario's economic and social well-being, the Liberal government introduced a policy statement, Land Use Planning for Housing intended to promote the development of "affordable, accessible, adequate and appropriate" housing to address a full range of housing needs. In addition to designating a ten-year supply of residential land, municipalities had to establish official plan policies and zoning standards to enable at least 25 percent of new housing to be developed at an affordable level. The policy statement also encouraged residential intensification through conversion of non-residential buildings, infill, redevelopment and accessory apartments.

Changes were made to the housing policy statement by the NDP government, following submission of the Sewell Commission report. The Comprehensive Set of Policy Statements increased the proportion of affordable housing to 30 percent and required municipalities to concentrate development in "settlement" areas with full sewage and water services.

Although some correction in house prices would have inevitably taken place through the marketplace, without the supporting provincial policy, developers would probably have had more difficulty convincing local councils of the need to change the mix of lots and housing to



How will Bill 20 affect the supply and affordability of rental accommodation?

Photo: Mamett



the more affordable range being sought by first-time homebuyers. Certainly there would have been more opposition to the development of social housing without the Housing Policy Statement.

In spite of the housing policy statement's obvious success across Ontario, it has been considerably weakened in the recently enacted provincial policy statement. The target has been eliminated, although municipalities will still be required to "encourage housing forms and densities designed to be affordable to moderate and lower income households." It is not yet clear what this policy will mean in practice, nor how it will be enforced. What is clear is that in the future, private developers will have more scope to build housing that responds primarily to market forces rather than to social needs.

### APARTMENTS IN HOUSES

The NDP government, under Bill 120, allowed homeowners to create accessory apartments as-of-right in all residential zones. Many municipalities saw this as a further intrusion by the province into an area of

municipal interest and were also concerned about their inability to enforce standards and safety codes for accessory apartments. The Conservative government has responded to these concerns and under Bill 20, municipalities will once again have control over where accessory apartments are permitted. While some adjustment was probably in order, Bill 20 is, in my view, a regressive step that will limit the provision of needed additional rental housing in the absence of other housing supply programs. We will probably see an increase in the creation of illegal accessory apartments, as there will continue to be a demand for such units.

### THE RISE AND FALL OF SOCIAL HOUSING IN ONTARIO

Over the past decade the federal government has gradually withdrawn from subsidizing new social housing. In Ontario, the two previous provincial governments increased social housing funding, first with federal support, then unilaterally, and municipal and community-based non-profit and cooperative housing activity flourished.

During the recession, social housing was often the only game in town and government intervention helped the construction industry weather the downturn. However, the recession and lower rental demand, combined with the concentration of non-profit development on new construction rather than upgrading existing housing, resulted in high vacancies in a number of communities. One of the first things the Conservative government did when it came to power was to put a moratorium on future social housing developments. Vacancies are now declining in most municipalities and in some are close to critical levels.

### THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRATION

Starting in the late 1980s, Canada's immigration levels began to rise in response to federal targets that were set to maintain Canada's population growth. In 1990, a five-year target of 250,000 immigrants a year was established. This target was reduced in 1994 to between 190,000 and 215,000 immigrants annually. Although the level of immigration

Photo: Riverdale Growth



represents about one percent of the total population, it accounts for a significant share of new households.

The largest share of new immigrants settles in Ontario, primarily in the Toronto area, but also in other communities such as Ottawa. Although immigrants usually rent in their first five years after moving to Canada, their ownership levels gradually surpass those of Canadian-born individuals. Immigrants are

dren. Foot predicts "a lot of action in the move-up market" in the late 1990s as boomers make room for teenagers, but adds that many will stay and renovate their homes. We will also see more interest in a variety of housing types for the move-down market. For example, in the London and Windsor area, bungalows are attractive to both empty nesters and seniors, while in the Toronto area, many empty nesters are moving to low-rise condominiums and lofts in acces-

Photo: River Oaks Group



Montgomery Village

more likely to live in large extended families and they are more likely to rent out part of their home to a relative, friend or stranger as a way of achieving homeownership.

With the growing importance of immigrants in the housing market, builders and planners need to become more aware of and more sensitive to the immigrants' housing needs and preferences.

### LOOKING THROUGH THE DEMOGRAPHERS' CRYSTAL BALL

In Boom, Bust & Echo, David Foot states that although there may be a slight "mini-surge in house prices before the 1990s are over," houses will again become what they were before: "places to live in rather than investments." He also predicts that as the "baby busters" look for housing, supply will exceed demand during the first decade of the new century.

Over the next ten years, baby boomers in their forties and fifties will either be seeking move-up housing or move-down housing, depending upon when they had their chil-

sible urban locations.

After the year 2000, rental demand will pick up. By then the baby boom echo generation will be starting to move away from home possibly resulting in another rental housing shortage, unless there is a miraculous turnaround in private rental production.

### INCREASING ROLE OF THE THIRD SECTOR AND PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Public agencies are preoccupied with public debt reduction; therefore, those who want to develop affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households in the future are likely to team up with municipalities or private-sector funding sources. VLC Properties Ltd. in Vancouver is an example of such a partnership. It was established by union leaders and Vancouver municipal officials and uses union and management pension funds as capital financing for affordable rental housing. For some of its projects, VLC leases land from the City of Vancouver on a long-term arrangement.

Ontario has two strong non-profit and cooperative umbrella organizations. Although they are focused on survival at this time, we can look to these and other municipal and community organizations for creative solutions in the near future, with or without provincial assistance. As rental markets become tighter, there is likely to be renewed pressure for government intervention in the provision of rental housing for low and moderate income households.

### GROWING MARKET DIVERSIFICATION

Over the next decade smaller, "non-traditional" households will show the greatest increase—singles, single parents, individuals sharing housing, and childless couples. Offsetting this trend towards smaller households will be an increase in larger immigrant families. Housing and residential developments will need to respond to these different groups. Market research and niche marketing will become increasingly important.

Another way of responding to differing needs is to develop housing that can change over time. Although the idea of a "convertible" house is not new, it is not very common in current residential designs. To promote this concept, CMHC is holding a design competition, FlexHousing Design, to identify housing designs that can be adapted to households as their needs and lifestyles change over time.

### BLURRING OF ZONING CATEGORIES

Projecting housing needs and preferences is particularly difficult in a world that is interconnected and in which economic and social changes are often unpredictable. Residential markets often change more quickly than builders' and developers' ability to respond, which can have disastrous economic results. One way to ensure that developments can adjust to changing markets is to allow more flexibility in building uses.

The City of Toronto, which has had to confront the most serious problems of vacancies in industrial and office uses, has led the way by allowing excess office space to be converted to residential uses. This approach is designed to encourage more people to live downtown at the same time as lowering vacancy rates in the office market. Also, in the older industrial areas such as King-Spadina and King-Parliament, built form



*New development at the fringe meets demand for space and garages.*

Photo: Manett



controls have replaced density as the method of development control, and a broad mix of uses will be permitted as of right. Only "noxious" industrial uses will be prohibited.

Although there is a need to introduce greater flexibility into the municipal planning framework, a municipality's supply of industrial land could be completely wiped out if this approach were used on a broad scale without some countervailing control on land uses.

### HOUSING AND WORKING AT HOME

More than half a million Ontario households include a member who operates a business from home; telecommuting is also growing. Such trends will continue in the future because of downsizing in the public and private sectors and changes in business operations. Besides permitting the self-employed to keep overhead costs down, home-based businesses also provide flexibility for women who want to stay close their children while working.

Many municipalities in Ontario have recognized the trend to home businesses and have revised, or are revising, their zoning bylaws. Although residents' groups often resist a more permissive approach to home occupations, there will be ongoing pressure to relax zoning bylaws.

The easiest way to address this issue is to build home offices into new developments. One of the best-known Ontario communities to have done so is Montgomery Village in Orangeville, developed by Marvin Green of the River Oaks Group. Prospective owners were able to choose from optional home

offices as a separate basement office, an office nook on the second floor or a third-floor loft. The home offices in this development are wired for high-speed data transmission.

### MORE EMPHASIS ON ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

After the energy crisis of the 1970s, interest in energy-efficient residential design waned. Housing that is more environmentally compatible will, however, play a greater role in new residential development in future. The "green house" is characterized by energy-efficient design and by "green" building materials.

One prototypical design suitable to urban infill sites is the "Toronto Healthy House" designed by Martin Liefhebber and Associates and Creative Communities Toronto. This award-winning design plunks a self-sufficient house into the back of an elongated urban lot that is unconnected to urban services. With its rooftop solar panels, airtight wall construction, and thermally efficient windows, the house is energy self-sufficient. The house uses filtered and purified rainwater, low-volume toilets and low-flow shower heads, so it need not be connected to the water system. Wastewater from the dishwasher, washing machine and toilet is filtered and biologically treated before being discharged. The ground floor includes a home office and the top three floors provide the home.

We can expect more sustainable residential developments in the coming decade; however, more research and flexibility will be

required from building, environmental and public health departments who set standards for residential developments.

### THE QUEST FOR COMMUNITY

Residential developments that emphasize old-fashioned community attributes are popular and will continue to be so in the future. New technological innovations and changing economic relationships are increasing social alienation. As households become more and more self-sufficient (home theatres, home shopping and more home working), residents look to recreate a sense of connection with their neighbours.

The Village of Brooklin, developed by the Sorbara Group in Whitby, stresses the "old Ontario village" theme in the design of houses (front porches, garage at the back of the house) and an old-fashioned village lifestyle. According to Frank Clayton, the emphasis on "community" has been a major factor in the success of this and similar developments. A potential negative face of the search for community is the development of exclusive enclaves that seek to provide a safe, homogenous environment for their residents.

Many of these new "old" communities have the most up-to-date technology. For example, in Montgomery Village the community's residents, businesses, school and services will be linked through their own home page on the World Wide Web which acts as a high-speed bulletin board, thereby promoting local communications and interaction.

### FLEXIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY THE KEY

As someone who has had a keen interest in housing and residential development for more than 20 years, I believe that the key concepts for adapting housing and residential development to future challenges are flexibility and sustainability.

Flexibility is needed in the planning framework and in built forms that can respond to diverse and changing housing needs and preferences and to changing market conditions. Sustainable housing and residential developments must be environmentally responsible, economically viable—to builders, developers, consumers and taxpayers—and socially supportive—that is, safe, interactive, and affordable to a range of incomes.



# MUNICIPALITIES AND FIRST NATIONS

## CAN WE TALK?

*Susan Mojgani and Paul General*

With 132 aboriginal reserves in Ontario, many municipalities have a reserve as a neighbour. Unfortunately, at times these relations are less than neighbourly. Some conflicts are caused by the manner in which land-use planning is undertaken.

One crucial issue is the level of communication between municipalities and neighbouring reserves. Although some municipal councils and planning departments have strong communication links with the reserve administration, these tend to be the exception. Many municipal councils and planners are not aware of the impact of municipal planning decisions on the neighbouring reserve, nor of the concerns of native peoples.

Many native peoples and communities see themselves as having a special role in protecting the environment, which is a central element of their culture and is important to their sense of being. The relationship between land use planning and environmental protection means that aboriginal communities are increasingly interested in proposed developments. Even though the band council may not have legal title to the land in question, they may still feel a sense of responsibility towards protecting it from harm. This can create conflict if the affected municipality fails to consider the band council's interests or if it sees this concern as interference.

There is wide variance in the degree of familiarity with the municipal land use planning process among aboriginal communities in the province. Some are able to identify their concerns at the appropriate time, but others may be unaware of how, when, and where to voice objections. As a result, these residents are left out of the planning process and often feel frustrated with their inability to influence decisions that affect their lives. Meanwhile, municipal planners, unaware of the concerns of the aboriginal community, continue to carry the proposal through the planning process. This is when things become "interesting."

In the most extreme cases, frustration with the process leads to implicit or explicit threats of violence. The situation deteriorates as positions become polarized and each side accuses the other of acting in bad faith.

At this point, the issue is no longer the original proposal, but a much larger question related to differences in historical and cultur-

al roots. Delays and a reluctant agreement by a municipality to revisit a project can provide a partial solution but does not deal with the fundamental problem, since First Nations peoples tend to feel that their views are actively sought only when there is a crisis.

To reach the goal of improved relations between municipal council and band councils, both sides need to contribute. Band councils must work to improve their understanding of the planning process and the constraints that municipal councils face. Their efforts should include ensuring that their concerns are brought forward in a manner that municipalities can understand and deal with.

On the other hand, municipal councils must make a serious commitment to keeping their aboriginal neighbours informed of issues and proposed developments that concern them.

Although there are legal requirements for notice to be given to First Nations communities, abiding by the letter of the law may not always be sufficient. Bill 20 requires that a band council receive notice of any proposed project within one kilometre of a reserve boundary. The legislation also provides for the one kilometre zone to be modified by agreement between the band council and the

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*General is the wildlife coordinator at the Six*

*Nations Eco-Centre. The authors wish to thank*

*Dean Jacobs for his helpful comments.*

municipality. Although it is tempting to simply ensure that the municipality fulfils its minimum legal obligation, this is not a good long term strategy. Municipal councils and planners must decide whether they genuinely wish to improve relations with the aboriginal community or whether they wish only to fulfil their legal obligations.

A constructive way to improve communication between municipal and band councils is to designate a liaison person to guide questions and concerns through their respective bureaucracies. This approach goes a long way towards reducing frustration levels.

This is the approach taken by the Six Nations, the Walpole Island, and the Akwasasne reserves, which each have a specially designated office to deal with issues related to municipal land use planning and the reserve community.

The Eco-Centre on the Six Nations reserve of the Grand was set up by the band council as a liaison between neighbouring municipalities and other governmental bodies and the Six Nations community. The Eco-Centre helps identify concerns of the Six Nations related to planning in the surrounding municipalities. In spite of past negative experiences, both the band council and several municipal councils are actively working to improve their present and future relations.

The First Nations in Ontario are becoming increasingly involved in land-use planning. Municipal councils must recognize this and improve relations with their aboriginal neighbours, rather than engaging in acrimonious interaction.

Improving relations is a long process that requires much patience and dedication on both sides, but the first step requires improved communication. It's time for municipalities and band councils to start talking, and the sooner the better.

### Errata

\* In the May/June issue, credit for sponsoring Alicia Bulwik's project in Argentina should also have been given the Professional Council of Architecture and City Planning (CPAU).

\* The letter from Matt Lawson should have referred to his tenure as planning commissioner from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s.

\* Tracy Corbett is now working for the District of Central Okanagan, based in the City of Kelowna. Incorrect information appeared previously.

\* Due to technical difficulties, the Mediacom logo on the Mediacom Billboard did not appear. We apologise for this.



## Planning and the Arts

By Ron Sandrin-Litt

The cultural community in Ontario is being decimated, in the truest sense of that word. Grants from public-sector institutions are being cut, and even though private-sector donations are up, cultural organizations must compete with charitable associations, non-profit clubs, sport teams and educational institutions for a share of the corporate dollar. Culture runs the gamut from "high art" (symphonies and galleries) to "popular culture" (concerts and crafts). Larger, established organizations tend to be better positioned to attract financing than smaller groups, and small groups usually fare better than individuals. The larger the organization, the better its ability to deal with the dynamics of securing both public and private funding. Sophistication is its own reward. Every corporation today demands some return on its investment, hence the proliferation of name changes for public cultural venues. What can an individual offer—a name change to Ford or Hummingbird?

It has long been recognized that the cultural sector boosts local and regional economies. From Manchester, England, to San Diego, California, cultural funding agencies are being integrated with municipal economic development (or business improvement organizations) departments to take advantage of the "business" of culture. In Metro Toronto, the dollar value of funds spent on cultural activities exceeds the value of all sports events combined. Research in Europe and North America bears out the close relationship between economic viability of cities and their cultural assets. There is also a link between the availability of advanced technologies in an urban area and the depth and breadth of its cultural activity. A good example is Toronto's film and tv industry, which contributes more than a billion dollars to the region's economy annually. A key factor in the industry's recent growth is the strength of its software design sector. The industry is also well supported by the local community, the Festival of Festivals being a prime example of culture and industry working hand in hand. The line that supposedly separated the arts from technology becomes

blurred when experimentation in each is actively encouraged.

The secondary benefits of an active cultural sector are myriad. Senior executives, business leaders, and accomplished artisans increasingly seek urban environments where the level of artistic development provides a proven indicator of a secure environment for families and good access to educational opportunities. The cultural sector provides the largest pool of educators outside the public school system itself, and corresponds to greater volunteer activity in the community than any other sector.

But culture cannot be counted on as some kind of "ghost in the machine" that somehow materializes with the proper balance of zoning controls and economic initiatives. The invisible hand of commerce will nurture those elements of culture that suit its ends, until every city has a basketball franchise and every church choir sports the logo of the local brewery.

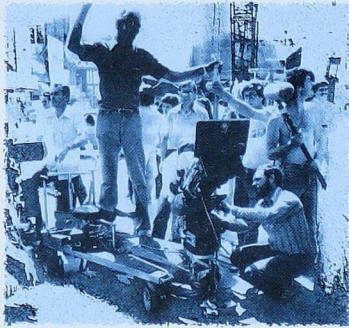
The recent recommendations of the Greater Toronto Area Task Force recognize the need to simplify and better integrate the planning process with economic development. Within these broader goals are particular designs to refurbish the Municipal Act and the Planning Act, not to mention reform of the property tax system and the introduction of user fees at the local level. The very basis of land planning, with its intricate hierarchy of uses, rests on an ecology more fluid than its ability to adapt. Land becomes a commodity whose use and re-use will become increasingly "non-conforming." The proceedings from the Metro Toronto Cultural Summit, held recently to focus attention on the plight of culture in the region, add another perspective to the problem by suggesting that "resource sharing" is now a necessity in everything from advertising to facility use to construction programs.

At this historic moment the profession of planning stands poised, more than any other profession, to assemble the tools to create a living environment appropriate to the businessperson, the town councillor and the community interest group. No other profession serves such a broad constituency. Unfortunately, the ability of planners in the development sector, both publicly and privately, to promote a shopping mall is more substantial than the support they can give (except through personal voluntarism) to the local amateur symphony orchestra. Why is that? Many of the techniques we have evolved as a profession operate only in an environment of sustained economic growth, continued appreciation of land values, and the unrelenting sprawl of urban suburbs. The planning cycle is inextricably intertwined with the cycle of growth, without which the quality of life cannot be considered.

The survival of cultural agencies will rely increasingly on the planning profession to build a cultural component into town planning. It is patently unfair that urban dwellers should subsidize the high arts that all Ontarians enjoy, just as it would be wrong to sully the rural craft show with a neon advertising campaign. The practices governing our use of land as a shared resource must truly be shared. Everything from zoning to urban planning must extract some measure of quality as well as substance. Taxes on appreciated land values should be redistributed in response to the needs of all resource bases: cultural, industrial, commercial or residential. Bonusing should be revisited as a tool to promote cultural growth, as it was in an earlier era to provide recreational space and parks. Bonusing has also been used to dramatically revitalize Times Square in Manhattan over a 25 year period.

Advocacy must return to the profession of planning. Planners are, by their very involvement in growth and development and their commitment to the quality of the environment, the stewards of our cultural heritage.

*Ron Sandrin-Litt is a consultant in private practice in Toronto. He was a member of the Metro Toronto Cultural Advisory Committee until its dissolution in June. Ron has been the Journal's contributing editor on urban design since 1989.*



*The business of culture: Ontario's economy is enriched by more than \$1 B as a result of film and tv production*



**W**omen's place in the city has been changing over the last 20 years, as has women's place in planning. Although significant improvements have occurred in the way communities are planned and in the professional presence of women in planning, women experience a particular urban perspective in living and working in the city that differs from men's. The following figures show some of the ways in which a woman's experience is different:

- Women still earn 72 cents to every dollar men earn.
- Although 52 percent of women 15-65 are in the labour force, they still carry the burden of 64 percent of unpaid domestic work.
- 62 percent of Canadians over 65 are women; almost half of them live below the poverty line and 15 percent below their male counterparts income.
- Most transit-dependent TTC riders are women.
- According to a 1993 survey by Statistics Canada, 51 percent women over 16 reported having been assaulted by men, and 29 percent of married women state they have been assaulted by their partners.

Making a community safer, more usable and affordable benefits the whole community. In particular, it makes the community more liveable for its most vulnerable groups: women, children, the elderly, the disabled and visible minorities. Despite changes in gender roles, the provision of adequate open space, day care, health care, shelter and transit services remains disproportionately important for women and their families.

These issues have received some attention from planners, mainly women.

The professional planning context for women has changed in the last 20 years. There are more women in the profession. Some planning schools recognize and include gender-related issues in the curriculum. There is more emphasis on consultation and community-based planning, which to a certain extent grew out of initiatives by women's groups. Planning objectives such as liveability, affordability, a mixture of uses,

transit-supportive design, and the inclusion of facilities for children, as well as initiatives such as Women Plan Toronto and municipal safe city committees are to a great degree the result of women's influence on planning and the profession.

A survey carried out in 1995 by Barbara Rahder for York University indicates that the

## PLANNING

# How Are Women Faring in the City?

By *Melanie M. Hare*

proportion of women graduating from the planning program at York has steadily increased in the last 20 years. In 1994 female graduates were in the majority. Of the women who responded to the study, more than two thirds thought gender should be a consideration in planning, at least sometimes. Only 44 percent of the respondents were currently members of a professional planning association. Many noted a difference in the ways women worked within the profession; they were more likely to be involved in consensus building, they were more willing to compromise, and they put a greater emphasis on process and participation. Finally, about half of the respondents said that there was differential treatment of

women within the profession.

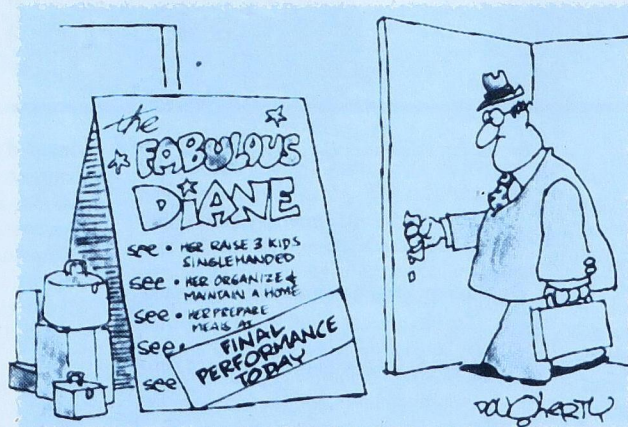
As a woman working in the profession, I find that it is not uncommon to be the only woman or one of a small minority of women in a planning meeting. On the other hand I note the increasing number of women in senior positions, including commissioners of planning and principals of planning firms. John Barber, in a recent *Globe and Mail* article, noted the predominance of female municipal political leaders in Ontario, intimating that the city mothers are looking after things now.

Although planning now recognizes that urban form and activity need to accommodate the heterogeneity of communities, there are a few trends to watch out for. In this age of fiscal reform in Ontario, cut-backs in "soft" services such as day care, health care, welfare, transit and affordable housing, as well as cuts in transfer payments to municipalities all add up to leaner and meaner cities and jeopardize the resources of safe, affordable communities.

Economic shifts caused by globalization and technological advances also raise questions about the way people live and work. For example, does telecommuting or home-based consulting give parents more flexibility to manage their lives by allowing them to look after their families as they work? Or does it create greater isolation than the suburban segregation of uses ever did? If so, the provision of adequate neighbourhood-based services and the development at transit-supportive densities are all-important. There are significant implications for land use planning, social services, economic development.

The planning profession has begun to recognize the diversity of needs, particularly in the urban population. However, many planners are still planning for the status quo. Why not make communities safer for everyone? Only by planning to address the needs of the most vulnerable can we make our communities safe, affordable and liveable for everyone, women included.

*Melanie M. Hare is a planner with Berridge Lewinberg Greenberg Dark Gabor.*





## Responsible Transportation: the work of a decade

By David Kriger

In the 10 years of OPPI's existence, some of Ontario's biggest transportation stories are related to different forms of privatization, such as Highway 407 and highway snow removal. But another type of privatization is more profound and I believe this will have the greatest long term impact. This is the increasing willingness of individuals to take responsibility for their choice of transportation, and the opportunities this provides for transportation policy.

About 15 years ago Ed Morlok, a professor at Penn U., predicted that businesses would take on a greater responsibility in getting their people to work. Commuter transportation was to become just another piece in the benefit package offered to employees — the cost of a monthly transit pass, for example.

The motivation for this shift in thinking was not to decrease congestion for the public benefit but to ensure that employees would consistently show up on time, thereby increasing productivity and reducing the costs of absenteeism.

If you think this is pie in the sky, consider: last year, Bell Northern Research, a major high-tech employer in Ottawa, tested the feasibility of telecommuting for its employees. This is the stuff that transport planners dream about. BNR was motivated by two considerations: a lack of office space and the desire to address the family needs of its young professionals (who were leaving in droves). Both issues relate to the bottom line. Societal benefits such as reduced road congestion were happy bonuses. The test was successful and has since been expanded. I heard about this just

as I was finishing an evaluation of effective travel demand management (TDM) measures for the City of Ottawa. BNR obviously had

the technological expertise and corporate culture to make it happen, but nowhere in the vast quantity of empirical results that I examined was there any mention of a TDM measure initiated entirely by business for business purposes.

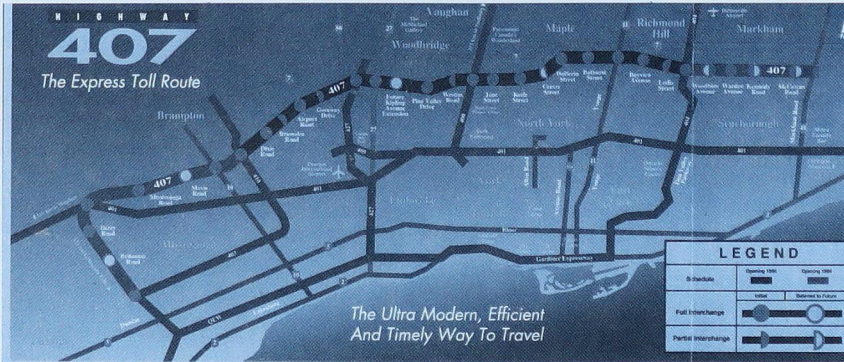
Consider also that virtually every transportation master plan now relies on TDM to meet some of its future capacity requirements — in effect, asking every traveller to supply capacity by taking responsibility for how he or she travels. This is entirely consistent with current thinking in sustainable development — namely, that we have to change the way we live.

What we lack, and where the opportunities lie, are the means of translating these responsibilities into

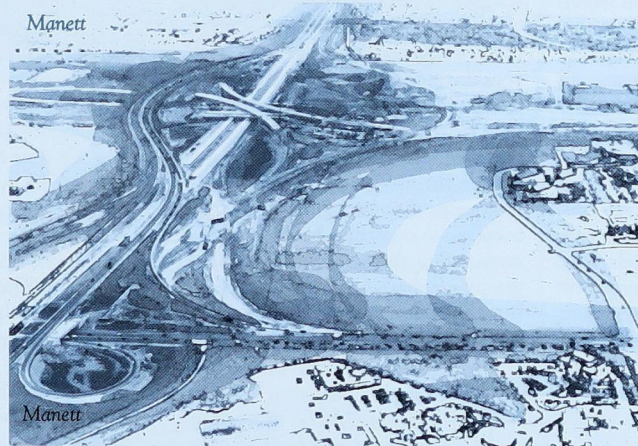
action. Our master plans have told us what needs doing — increase walking trips, telecommute, share rides — but the incentives for doing so are missing. Perhaps it comes down to providing the choices — always at a price — geared to the demand. This suggests that we have to make it worth the while of business and individuals in general if we are going to achieve the kind of results we hope for. User-pay is obviously the big incentive, but the evidence from business and from individuals is that they are open to taking responsibility in their own ways. Perhaps planners should let business and neighbour-

hood associations lead; our role then changes to expert adviser, idea broker and stick-handler of the resultant public policy from concept to fact.

The way for the next 10 years?



Ontario's first toll road to use transponders to collect charges



407 project on fast track

For the last eight years, David Kriger, MCIP, RPP

has been the Journal's transportation editor.

David is now a senior transportation consultant

with Delcan in Ottawa, where he has been devel-

oping an international practice.



## The Brave New Face of Planning

by Sue Cumming

The last ten years have seen enormous change in the environment within which planners do business, from the boom of the 1980s, with its bonusing, "cheque-book planning" and other approaches to securing public benefit through development, to the greening of the Planning Act with its environmental roundtables and the emphasis on sustainability, to the economic growth objectives of the mid 1990s with their emphasis on public/private partnerships, efficient decision making, and back-to-basics public-sector philosophy. Planners have had to continually and dramatically reinvent their approach to business.

The planning profession is at yet another crossroads. What kind of profession do planners envision for the future? What values will inspire us and how will we grapple with the difficult choices sure to be in our path?

The (tentative) answers to these questions in this article are based on personal observation and on views from many members who provided valuable insights through telephone and fax interviews.

### TOP TEN CHALLENGES FOR PLANNERS

Through my interviews, I came up with the top ten challenges for planners in the 1990s and into the 21st century. In no particular order, they are:

- 1 Surviving government restructuring and the revamping of the planning and development approvals process.
- 2 Coping with downsizing and the loosening of regulation without overlooking the need for strategic long-range planning.
- 3 Ensuring that good planning still occurs in the face of economic development pressures.
- 4 Maintaining the importance and relevance of indepth municipal finance analysis in the planning process.
- 5 Dealing with evolving directions in employment uses, retailing and community standards.
- 6 Placing greater emphasis on physical form in planning.
- 7 Coping with the impacts of telecommuting

8. Responding to customer-driven planning in the face of streamlining and pro-development attitudes.
9. Developing a more holistic approach to planning within overlapping intermunicipal jurisdictions rather than compartmentalizing issues in specific disciplines.
10. Integrating land use and infrastructure planning and developing resources to pay for infrastructure.

As one planner put it, "The role of land use planning to achieve strategic economic growth objectives of municipalities is the major issue of the day." This is evident in the focus on job creation, sustaining existing employment bases and creating a more balanced assessment ratio.

*Planners as others see us.*

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS EVERYTHING

"Housing, the environment, natural resources and community planning have

always been and will continue to be important planning objectives. The real issue over the next five to ten years is the process, method, and manner in which these objectives will be achieved and the public interest addressed. The critical component for planners is to ensure that planning doesn't become irrelevant in an era focused on economic growth, government cutbacks and a private-sector agenda," said another.

The economic climate of slow growth and resource shortages has increased the pressure

for planners to redefine their role. Several municipalities have recently advertised for directors of planning and business development, showing a fundamental sense of duality in the leadership of a planning department. Municipalities are competing for business and planners have to be part of this new reality.

### CHANGING ATTITUDES TO GROWTH

More significant for other planners is the change in the approach to urban growth. The mid 1980s were a time of unprecedented growth and population targets were exceeded in many areas. Even the most optimistic land absorption projections became obsolete in the first few years of the boom. Growing public concern over urban sprawl and the lack of attention to the social and natural environment were the overriding concerns of many planners.

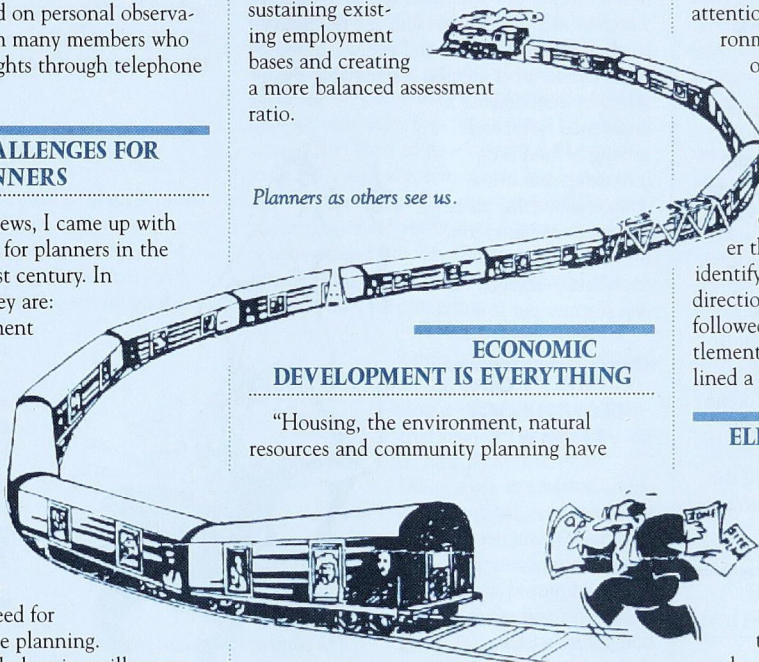
As this rosy period came to a screeching halt, the governments of the day were already questioning the approach to planning. The Sewell

Commission was created to uncover the ills in the regulatory process, identify important issues and set a new direction. Various provincial initiatives followed that set limits on growth and settlement, encouraged streamlining and outlined a new policy context.

### ELEVATED IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

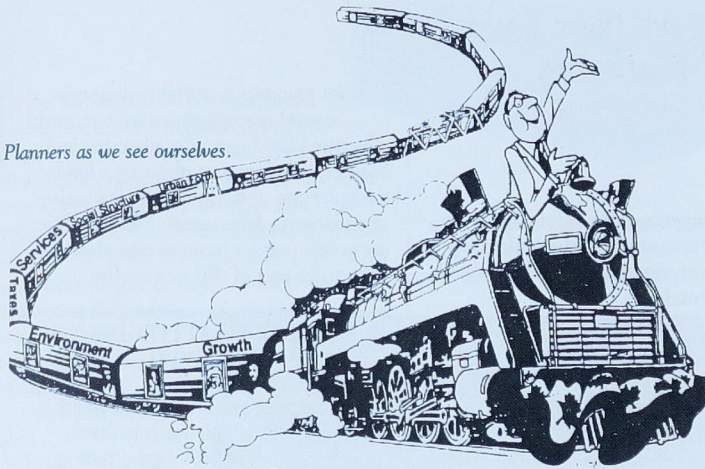
Environmental planning is now widely accepted as a fundamental part of the planning system. In some instances it has taken precedence over all other land-related issues. The birth of cumulative impact planning and comprehensive study reports led to multidisciplinary teams and megaprojects. Special interest groups also added to the challenges of the approvals process.

Today, some members are concerned about the perceived relaxing of environmental controls by Bill 20; others welcome the possibility of greater flexibility in interpreting rules that have been an impediment to achieving other local





Planners as we see ourselves.



objectives. The key issue is the restoration of a balance between protecting the environment and promoting economic development.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING ON FRONTLINE

On the community planning front, new pressures have grown as the emphasis on urban form and physical structure becomes more prevalent. The revolt against "the suburban street lined with garages," the "ever-so-attractive noise wall," and the "spaghetti-street, can't-get-there-from-here syndrome" is reshaping community planning.

The introduction of "new urbanism" or "Duanyism" or whatever you wish to call it has been enthusiastically embraced in some quarters. The role of the architect and urban designer in this arena has heightened. The development industry has pioneered various successful projects and critically assessed the added cost and other negative implications of embracing these trends.

### NEW SHAPE TO LAND USE FRAMEWORK

Changes in the land use framework are related to significant changes in retailing, the blurring of industrial and commercial land use categories, housing innovations and a stronger emphasis on built form and community design. One of the most direct changes is the review of traditional zoning and site plan requirements. The promotion of intensification, livework relationships, higher transit usage and mixing of uses have contributed to the overall review of the role and function of land use planning. The 1990s are seeking a

more diverse, open and flexible land use framework.

"Suburban areas are adapting to a more urban form of development, trying to achieve a greater mix of land uses and the flexibility to allow things to occur and evolve over time. Urban areas are also reinventing themselves by encouraging a broadened range and mixing of land uses, intensification initiatives, establishing more performance-based zoning and creating districts and precincts," as one planner put it.

### IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY PERSVASIVE

Technological advances have led to the use of computers for planning applications and in improved databases. GIS and other computer-assisted design systems have increased the level of detail and accuracy of information. Computer graphics and imaging have also advanced the visual aids used for public presentations.

Technology has also made it possible for planners (and scores of others) to work at home. The Internet and its vast potential is just now being explored by planners as an important link to professional work and development. While it is not clear what other significant effect telecommunications

will have on planning, we know that it will be an area where new options exist.

### GOVERNANCE: LESS IS MORE

Government restructuring, the revamping of the planning and development approvals process and the downsizing of the economy are also fundamentally altering the role of planners. The downloading of the plan review function and the delegation of approval authority is in some cases dramatically changing planners' operating environment. The shift in the balance of power in the planning system from the province to municipalities is enthusiastically endorsed by some, sceptically accepted by others.

Some planners believe that there is a crisis brewing on the local front as municipal planners must now assume the burden of protecting the public interest. Coupled with the reduced access of municipal governments to provincial technical expertise, this burden raises concerns about personal liability in the decisionmaking arena.

No review of the last ten years would be complete without a mention of the number of times the legislative framework has changed. No sooner had I received my "I survived planning reform in '95" T-shirt then it became irrelevant. I cannot begin to say how many members are grappling with the implications of working with so many varied "Planning Acts."



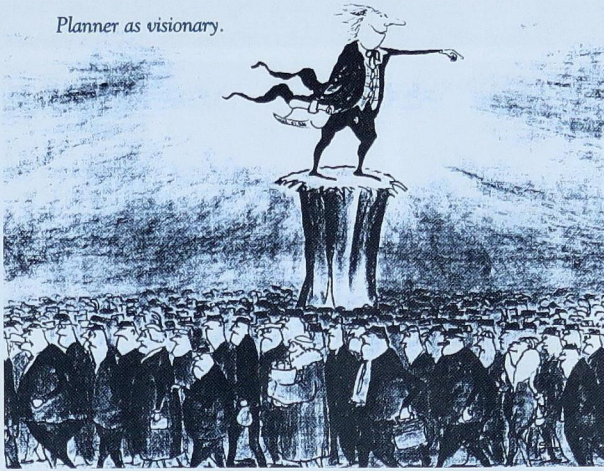
The planner as a doctor of cities

### PROFESSION IN EVOLUTION

Many members of the profession should be praised for their foresight and leadership in pioneering new ways of doing business outside the legislative realm. The master planning initiatives active in the Regions of Ottawa-Carleton, Kitchener-Waterloo, Halton and Hamilton-Wentworth were not simply reactions to "the law of the land" but progressive initiatives aimed at reinventing and perfecting business approaches. No doubt there are numerous



Planner as visionary.



other examples of this nature throughout the province.

One further influence which will be at the centre of any new planning agenda is the shift to customer service. Many companies and municipalities are seeking to redefine their core businesses and focus on efficiency. The concept of "doing more with less" will be stretched by governments who are faced with increased demand for public services with less dollars available.

### THE NEW PLANNER

As planners move forward to grapple with the challenges of the future, they must be visionary, promote creative approaches and focus on strategic planning. Basic skills will include the ability to make quick decisions, solve problems creatively, and negotiate and build consensus as part of project management.

In the public sector the shift to providing a service and helping produce tangible public benefits means that planners must be multidisciplinary in approach and thinking, and able to adapt and respond efficiently and expeditiously.

Communication skills will be fundamental for both verbal and written work. The days of the long-winded planning report are gone. New technological advances will orient the planner to faster communications with readily available information and techniques used in assessing and reporting on activities



Planner as pioneer.

and opportunities. The role of the planner as a resolver of disputes will intensify in many arenas, requiring the broad application of negotiation skills and experience.

The hallmark of the successful planner will also be the ability to be entrepreneurial and foster partnership approaches to planning. Those who succeed will be able to respond effectively to a variety of problems and situations.

### WHERE WILL PLANNERS BE FOUND?

Where will these planners work? The province has historically been the largest employer of planners, but the reduced involvement of the province in municipal planning will downsize the planning function and opportunities for employment for planners at this level of government will evaporate. Although the role of the "process planner" has diminished in the face of efforts to streamline the complicated process of approvals and simplify the layers of planning jurisdictions, other more strategic and evolutionary roles are emerging.

The private consulting world has also been reshaped in the last five years. A colleague recently pointed out that planners are developing a "new professionalism." Many work in small shops or as independent consultants, short-term contracts for special projects are common, and there is far more collaboration in teams on projects. Economists have become just as (if not more) important to planners as environmental experts.

With the retirement of many of our members over the next ten years and the shortage of replacement workers as new graduates have difficulty finding employment, the profession must secure a replacement pool. The key to the future is broad-thinking, talented graduate planners who can contribute to the evolving practice

of planning. The professional responsibility to bring forward this new talent rests on the shoulders of all members of OPPI.

The role of OPPI will also be tested and reexamined as planners turn to the organization for professional development, skills training and ways of exchanging experiences and ideas. Professional development must be broadened and new programs procured. A new, bolder "value-added" image is required to keep the organization and the profession in the forefront of dynamic change ahead.

### WHAT LIES AHEAD?

So, what wisdom can be surmised from the chaos, the woes and the challenges ahead? Planning has continued to be a battleground of competing wills and interests. While all agree that there is a need to reduce duplication and make the planning system more flexible, few have resolved the issue of how to adjust to this changing environment and maintain (or achieve) public-sector objectives.

For many the chains of the "roadblock mentality" have been replaced with a renewed optimism in a future that will place "the planner" more centrally in the new paradigm. The hallmark of the successful planner in the next century will be the ability to accept the challenges of the day and put a brave new face on the planning function.

A special note of thanks to those members who contributed their insights. Since I promised not to quote you by name, I will extend my thanks to you anonymously. Several of you provided important pieces of this written perspective.

*Sue Cumming, MCIP, RPP has*

*been engaged in a variety of*

*planning activities since 1983.*

*She formed Cumming &*

*Company in 1995 and provides*

*consulting services to the pri-*

*vate and public sectors.*



David Peterson forms Liberal Government in June

Discussion during AGM of Central Ontario Chapter of CIP in early June at Nottawasaga Inn sparks concept of OPPI

Later that month, gathering in Sudbury hotel room during CIP conference to discuss creation of a single Ontario affiliate results in agreement to disband three chapters and create OPPI.

Metro Council approves Sheppard subway line but province refuses to fund project.

"Time for OPPI to acknowledge other planning professionals" Ron Keeble wrote in Journal

Tony Usher writes about "heretics among us who believe a planners institute can include those who didn't go to planning school."

Marketing and mediation skills begin to be marketed by planning consultants.

January: OPPI officially launched, relying on CIP membership rules.

Inaugural meeting of OPPI held in March at York University.

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 1371**

October sees new by-law, introduction of common exam requirements for all entrants to Institute.

Autobiography of Hans Blumenfeld "Life Begins at 65"

New plan for Harbourfront unveiled in June.

Brampton initiates Urban Design awards.

First computerized version of Journal.

Eastern District votes to join OPPI in February

OPPI creates first strategic plan.

New exam for those without planning degrees introduced (exam C).

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 1631**



CIP conference "Other Voices" held in Toronto reaches out successfully to sister professions.

David Crombie heads Royal Commission on Future of Toronto Waterfront



Metro Toronto hosts G7 Economic Summit

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 1904**

Province expropriates lands for Ataritari

Bay/Adelaide project sparks debate over "Let's Make a Deal" planning

National Gallery opens in Ottawa

Hans Blumenfeld dies at 95.



Development Charges Act results in lengthy court challenges.

Land Use Planning for Housing, Provincial Policy Statement divides planning and development community.

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 1987**

Redevelopment plan for downtown Sudbury announced.

Journal begins transformation from newsletter to magazine with first cover (Du Toit scheme for Ottawa), follows with first colour cover (50th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth Way).



Tony Usher's "report card" on OPPI's progress sets off national skirmish over definition of planning and planners.

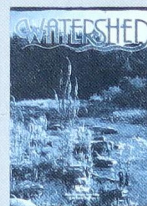
Resolution to study registration at AGM

Bob Rae forms first NDP government in Ontario.

Construction halted on Bay/Adelaide project, signalling end of boom years.

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2192**

Crombie's Watershed report places ecosystem planning into mainstream.



North Simcoe landfill rejected.

Trial balloon on planning process (Project X - "sustained (sic) development") sinks without trace.

First OMB decision to rely on 3-D visualization

First OPPI conference held in Ottawa



City of Toronto publishes Cityplan 91

Jane Pepino's article, "Wha'dya Mean It'll Take 4 Years" crystallizes opinions on problems with planning approvals process

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2276**

John Sewell appointed with George Penfold and Toby Vigod to head Royal Commission on Planning and Development Reform to review Planning Act



Oak Ridges Moraine Guidelines follow semi-annual report by EAAC

Metro Toronto publishes Reurbanization Guidelines, combines concepts of intensification, urban design and highly developed public realm

OPPI conference held in Muskokas

Province cancels Ataritari

Crombie publishes Regeneration, lays groundwork for Waterfront Regeneration Trust

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2484**

Office of Provincial Facilitator formed

Hamilton-Wentworth publishes Vision 2020 to identify sustainable future

Growth and Settlement Guidelines published

Transit Support Land Use Planning Guidelines published

OMB approves Palladium as home of Ottawa Senators following lengthy dispute over impact on agricultural land

Membership review begins in April, endorsed at AGM in fall

OPPI conference in London



London launches Vision 96 using Vision Circles

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2628**

Jane Jacob's article suggesting "official plan departments are brain dead" sparks debate that spreads across Canada



OMB resists reorganization moves that threaten ability to function

Scarborough holds 20th annual urban design awards

Administrative improvements to membership process throughout year

Revised by-law endorsed at fall AGM, entrance level requirements revert to pre-1986 levels, requirement for 2 years after Exam B dropped

Membership urged to lobby for RPP

OPPI conference in Niagara

Bay/Adelaide development results in park

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2627**

Metro Council approves Sheppard Subway again, starts construction

CIP celebrates 75th anniversary

New Urbanism arrives with Duany's involvement in Cornell

50th issue of Journal



Take Home Exam B introduced

Membership Course launched, leading to increase in success rate

Private Bill receives royal assent: RPP becomes official



OPPI conference in Kingston

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2791**

NDP government passes Bill 163 for new Planning Act, establishes Golden Commission to study governance in GTA

Globe & Mail calls for abolition of modern planning

Mike Harris forms Conservative government in June based on Commonsense Revolution

Big box retailing dominates municipal landscape, clutters OMB

City of Toronto sets out "three lenses" approach to planning, proposes radical land use deregulation in "Kings" neighbourhoods

Studies for GTA establish economic contribution of a region for first time

Joint conference with CIP and APA in Toronto

**OPPI MEMBERSHIP 2850**

Bill 26, Omnibus Bill opens door for municipalities to charge for services, permits municipal restructuring and much else

Bill 20, another new Planning Act

Comprehensive Policy Statements issued

Golden Task Force, mandate foreshortened, issues report

Municipal Affairs & Housing reorganized

Waterfront Trail opens



OPPI conference in Sudbury

## OPPI The First Ten Years 1986 - 1996

**BA Consulting Group Ltd.**

**Berridge Lewinberg Greenberg Dark Gabor Ltd.**

**Brisbin Brook Beynon Architects**

**The Butler Group (Consultants) Inc.**

**Coopers & Lybrand Consulting -Real Estate Group**

**J.L. Cox Planning Consultants Inc.**

**Delcan**

**Dillon Consulting Limited**

**Mark L. Dorfman, Planner Inc.**

**DS-Lea Associates**

**Ecoplans**

**Emrik H. Suichies and Associates**

**Hardy Stevenson and Associates Ltd.**

**Hausmann Consulting**

**Hemson Consulting Ltd.**

**HGC Engineering  
(Howe Gastmeier Chapnik Limited)**

**Hotson Bakker**

**Jonathan Kauffman Limited**

**Keir Consultants**

**Lakeshore Planning Group Inc. and  
Lakeshore International**

**Macaulay Shiomi Howson Limited**

**MacNaughton Hermesen Britton  
Clarkson Planning Limited**

**Malone Given Parsons**

**Marshall Macklin Monaghan Ltd.**

**Martindale Planning Services,**

**Miller O'Dell Planning Associates Inc.,  
Planning Initiatives**

**Proctor & Redfern Ltd.**

**Raymond Walton Hunter**

**Read Voorhees & Associates**

**RFA Planning Consultants**

**T.M. Robinson Associates, Planning  
Consultants**

**Syl•la•ble**

**Thomson, Rogers Barristers and  
Solicitors**

**Anthony Usher Planning Consultant**

**Michael Michalski Associates**

**Walker, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Ltd.**

**C.N. Watson and Associates Ltd.**



## Environmental Management: Overcoming the Oxymoron

### *The Challenges of Ecosystem-Based Planning*

By Nina-Marie Lister

What is the future of environmental management in this new era of information overflow and economic restraint? Our capacity to “know” in terms of generating and disseminating information is growing at an exponential rate, yet our ability to take advantage of this knowledge — to “know how” in a pragmatic sense — is diminishing. Furthermore, our ability to “manage” the environment in the traditional sense using prediction and control is being challenged by the realization that uncertainty, complexity and diversity — both economically and ecologically — are facts of life. “Environmental management” needs to be re-examined.

Although there has been an increase in environmental awareness and the proliferation of business dealing in matters of the environment, the approaches taken have been incremental and reactive. They have been focused on managing past ills through rehabilitation, clean up, and general remediation/restorative efforts using applied engineering and science technologies. More proactive and longer-term management measures emerged during the latter half of the 1980s such as ecosystem-based and watershed planning initiatives. However, the majority of such approaches to environmental management continue to be based on the notion that sufficient knowledge leads to predictable outcomes which can be efficiently and effectively managed, and in many cases, controlled. Even the growing appreciation of the need for public input still tends to be constrained within the traditional perspective of expert-led, prediction-based, and control-oriented management.

This conventional perspective of environmental management is being challenged as a new generation of professionals, activists, and scholars emerges. A growing inter-disciplinary ecological science — built on research in Complex Systems Theory, systems design, quantum physics, and ecosystem ecology—offers a useful characterization of a new perspective of environmentally-based management. Through recent advances in such research, ecosystems are now understood to be open, dynamic, and self-organizing Living systems, a part of the wider environment, undergo cyclic rather than linear paths of development which are regularly punctuated by sudden and often unpredictable episodes of

change. The environment at large is characterized by complexity, uncertainty and diversity.

Given this reality, the conventional notion of environmental management becomes little more than an out-dated oxymoron built on a flawed premise. “Adaptive ecosystem-based planning” more correctly places the burden of responsibility on us to manage our activities rather than the environment. This deceptively simple change in wording reflects a much deeper, fundamental shift in thinking in terms of philosophy and science. Accommodating this shift in thinking represents a key challenge for planners and is one which I have made the focus of my own research and practice.

Although I am encouraged to see a growing number of practitioners involved in environmentally-based planning, I am perturbed by the steadfast reliance on “environmental management” as a planning and policy objective. As a Doctoral Candidate at Waterloo’s School of Urban and Regional Planning, I work at the interface of ecological science and related applications in policy and planning. More specifically, my research is in biological diversity conservation — an emerging branch of environmental planning. My research goal is to develop an adaptive ecological planning framework for the effective conservation of biological diversity. Through this focus on adaptive rather than predictive planning, I hope to resolve an ongoing conundrum: although research clearly demonstrates that the environment does not lend itself to conventional predictive management, environmental managers continue to demand science that can predict and control living systems.

What are the challenges for ecosystem-based planning if we can no longer rely on the notion of environmental management? Aside from the visionaries and radicals who have been beating this drum for years, planners and environmental practitioners are only now beginning to realize the implications for environmental decision making. Put bluntly, we simply cannot manage the environment as we have attempted to do in the past but must instead adapt our behaviour.

This is where planning can play a key role.

There is a clear niche for planners with a broader ecosystem-based knowledge. As the ecosystem concept and the environment in general are understood to be complex systems characterized by regular and unpredictable episodes of change, the role for expert-led decision making quickly dissolves into a need for not merely participatory but collaborative decision making processes, with built-in mechanisms for ongoing conflict resolution. The role of the community becomes paramount, while scientists and other “experts” fulfil the role of information providers and facilitators in identifying options. The role of the planner becomes that of negotiator and navigator in the process of option selection by an informed community.

The bottom line is that environmental management must give way to a broader practice of ecosystem-based planning and decision-making if we are to achieve sustainability. This is not to say that a “new science” has replaced an “old” or “outdated” science, but rather that the newer perspective of the environment as complex, diverse, and uncertain by nature requires a broader set of tools.

This means we must look to more adaptive management approaches with less emphasis on prediction, control and efficiency, and more emphasis on building adaptive capacity for change, built-in flexibility, and an appreciation of historical change. In doing so, we must resist the urge to simplify the complex; stop trying to homogenize diversity; and above all, wean ourselves from the false comfort of prediction and control. In short, as a new breed of planners, we need to expect uncertainty, embrace complexity, and celebrate diversity.

*Nina-Marie Lister is a consulting*

*ecologist and planner, and a Ph.D.*

*Candidate in the Faculty of*

*Environmental Studies,*

*University of Waterloo. She can*

*be reached on the Internet at:*

*nm.lister@utoronto.ca*



From the late 19th century until the end of the Second World War, reluctant municipal governments funded Houses of Refuge to shelter the indigent and the destitute, many of whom were elderly. Houses of Refuge, the physical manifestation of society's attitudes to the disadvantaged, were designed with the barest of amenities, more to remind the inmates of the improvidence of their lives than to enrich their golden years. Many residents were required to work on the House of Refuge property to earn their keep.

*Planners were not typically involved in the development of these facilities.*

After the war, a recovering economy gave rise to a new spirit of concern about the poor, disadvantaged and the elderly. In the late 1940s, the Ontario government introduced the Homes for the Aged Act which required municipalities to develop and operate residential institutions for the aged. Elderly people did not need to be destitute to qualify for admission, nor did they have to work as inmates of the institution.

In the 1950s and 1960s, municipal and charitable organizations began replacing the aging Houses of Refuge with facilities that reflected a growing awareness of the unique needs of the elderly. These new homes were designed to provide residents (no longer known as "inmates") with basic shelter and basic personal care services which were felt to be adequate and deserved. Facilities were designed to the most contemporary standard for hospitals, with four-bed wards, communal washrooms, and communal dining rooms, even though the home was to be the residents' residence for the duration of their lives.

*It is unclear how involved planners were in the development of these new homes.*

The replacement of the Houses of Refuge across the province through the 1950s to 1970s was so thorough that until the mid-1980s, very few new Homes for the Aged buildings were developed.

In the early 1980s, a dramatic shift occurred. Caregivers, legislators and policy planners of the postwar generation challenged longstanding attitudes towards the elderly. The elderly became a recognizable sector of the society, endowed with unique needs for independence, individuality, privacy and

## HOUSING Housing for an Aging Population

By Richard Seligman

self-esteem, which were to be reflected in the design and development of new Homes for the Aged.

*In the mid to late 1980s, planners caught up with Homes for the Aged.*

Our work was fuelled by an unprecedented building boom directed towards redeveloping the "old" facilities which had, 20 years before, replaced the Houses of Refuge. A wave of redevelopment created a new type of building designed to satisfy the needs of the residents in ways the existing building stock did not.

At first, our work consisted of planning for the revitalization of the old buildings. It soon became clear that replacement was more cost effective and satisfactory all round than renovation.

Our planning focused more and more on the characteristics of the programs and services to be provided to residents and the functional requirements for the new facilities. We developed criteria for the most support-

ive environment possible. The wards and communal facilities were replaced largely with private or semiprivate rooms with en suite washrooms. The homes became more elaborate in design and configuration. Floor area per resident increased considerably as did the resulting costs of construction and operation.

The values espoused by the policy makers and care providers—to respect the independence and rights of the elderly—were embodied in the new homes. The new facilities were designed to enhance the comfort and safety of residents within the institution. These values, at the same time, inspired the expansion of a system of community-based care designed to keep people out of institutions as long as possible. According to the National Advisory Council on Aging, "the primary interest of seniors is to continue to live autonomously in the community and preferably in their own homes."

In the late 1980s, it became clear that the client characteristics of the elderly were considerably different from those of previous generations. People were living longer. A growing array of community-based services was keeping people more comfortably in their own homes for longer periods of time before they required an institutional placement. As a result, people were making application to homes when they were older and considerably more frail at the time of admission than their predecessors had been.

Their demands for care became an increasing burden on the care providers, who were accustomed to dealing with relatively independent seniors with minimal health care needs. As the demand for care increased, so did the cost of providing it. The policy makers and care providers came to the stark realization that, as the population grew and aged, the demands and costs of care would outstrip the limited economic resources available.

In 1993, the province enacted new legislation to rationalize the providers of public (Homes for the Aged) and private (nursing homes) institutional services to seniors into one longterm care industry. The Act changed the nature of these homes, which for generations had provided elderly people with comfortable residential amenities and personal care. In the future, longterm care facilities



Photo: CMHC

*Bethany Lodge in Unionville shows a more caring approach to long-term care.*



would provide more specialized care, similar to the care provided in chronic care hospitals, to frail and dependent elderly people.

The legislative and policy requirements governing longterm care operations are becoming more stringent, longterm care operator's control over aspects such as admissions is being curtailed, uncertainty over the future of capital and operating funding of longterm care itself is growing, and homes are having to make do with less.

Our work as planners in the field is now the resolution of the issues of role, survival, and viability of municipal and charitable longterm care operators in light of the reduced funding support for (and staffing within) these operations, the increasing needs of residents for intensive care, and the need to make buildings more affordable and operations more efficient.

In the current climate, when a high pro-

portion of institutional residents are so confused and frail, it may be seen by some to be reasonable and desirable (or, perhaps, expedient) to reintroduce four-bed wards to save on construction and longterm maintenance, at the expense of the residents' quality of life.

The fashion in the planning of longterm care facilities has undergone many changes in the last ten to 20 years. A lot of ground was gained during this period in liberalizing and humanizing the institutional environment for the elderly. The huge demands for services, the limits of financial resources to pay for these responsive environments and other factors may pressure municipal and charitable care providers to revisit the old models of institutional facilities.

As planners, we are bound to represent the interests of our clients. Hopefully however, we will be able to preserve the spirit of our accomplishments to assist overburdened

municipal and charitable longterm care providers to ensure that dependent elderly people can age in comfort and with dignity in their institutional home.

*For the last 20 years, R. Seligman*

*Associates Inc. has specialized in*

*planning for development or redevel-*

*opment of institutional facilities*

*including hospitals, longterm care*

*facilities, custody and detention cen-*

*tres, and community health centres.*

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Education and Employment Perspectives of Recent Graduates:

#### RESULTS OF A CORG SURVEY

*By Stewart Chisholm*

OPPI established the Career Opportunities Resource Group (CORG) in 1995. CORG helps members in their transition from education to employment and serves as a forum for discussion about career-related issues. CORG's initiatives include hosting seminars and workshops on small business development and organizing a skills database of recent graduates that will be made available to potential employers.

In order to identify the areas where future efforts should be focused, CORG recently undertook a survey of recent graduates. The questions included:

- Are planning schools providing students with relevant skills and knowledge?
- What types of skills are being demanded by employers?
- Can planning schools and OPPI do more to help recent graduates find planning-related employment?

Last February, 240 questionnaires were mailed to Ontario planning school alumni who had graduated within the last five years; only 61 questionnaires were returned. The survey results were therefore interpreted cautiously.

About half the respondents had master's degrees and half had bachelor's degrees. In both groups, about 80 percent had acquired planning-related work experience since graduation. About 45 percent are working (or

have worked) in the public sector, 27 percent in the private sector and 20 percent in the community/non-profit sector. Most are involved in land use planning, policy development, land development, environmental planning or urban design.

Respondents were asked if they felt that their education had adequately prepared them for employment in the planning field. About 67 percent felt adequately prepared, but many suggested that planning education didn't emphasize practical skills and knowledge enough. Several respondents commented that theoretical knowledge is important but suggested that it be taught in the context of day-to-day planning practice. Respondents recommended establishing links with local planning firms and agencies to allow for "hands-on" experience; developing or expanding cooperative and internship programs; and providing more opportunities for planners to teach courses, seminars and workshops.

Since traditional planning jobs are limited, several respondents indicated that planning education should expand the concept of planning beyond land use applications. This would help students identify non-traditional areas in which their skills and knowledge could be applied. It was also suggested that planning schools do more to teach career development skills. For example, respondents indicated that information on marketing oneself in the current economy or on establishing a planning practice would have been useful.

Respondents were asked if they felt that membership in OPPI was useful in terms of gaining employment. Of those who answered the question, only 36 percent felt that it was helpful. However, respondents stated that dinner meetings, workshops and other events organized by the OPPI provided useful opportunities to meet planners and stay in touch with the profession. Others credited the Journal for the exposure that it gives to current planning issues.

Most negative comments pertained to the cost of membership. A number of respondents stated that they could not afford to become provisional members once their student status expired. Others stated that OPPI did little to help them find work. The establishment of CORG may change these perceptions. Finally, a number of suggestions were provided on how OPPI could help recent graduates find jobs. They included developing



a mentoring program, working with CIP to establish a national Job Mart publication (similar to that of the American Planners Association), and encouraging potential employers to advertise and recruit through OPPI.

The survey results have identified a number of areas where CORG should focus its efforts. Clearly there is a strong demand for initiatives aimed at augmenting the practical

skills and knowledge taught in planning schools and providing information and advice on career development and self-marketing topics. This conclusion is verified by the large number of people who have attended career development seminars organized by CORG.

Surveys provide helpful information, but they are only one way of getting feedback. All members (recent and not-so-recent grad-

uates alike) who have comments or suggestions about CORG's activities are encouraged to contact the group through the OPPI office in Toronto.

*Stewart Chisholm is a founding member of CORG. For further information about the survey, call (416) 537-1631 or send an e-mail to [ch852@torfrc.net](mailto:ch852@torfrc.net).*

## Planning for Diversity, Equity and Sustainability at York

By Barbara Loevinger Rahder

**A**t its best, planning education tries to encourage students to imagine a more liveable, equitable, environmentally sustainable society, and help them acquire the tools they will need to get there from here. On some very fundamental level, we have failed. Homelessness, which was relatively rare in Canadian cities a decade ago, is rampant today. Suburban developments continue to sprawl into our natural surroundings. Students have studied these problems for many years. The question is: what are the tools that will allow them to make a difference?

The Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University has a special approach to planning education. Like students pursuing other interests, each planning student designs her own plan of study. (Two thirds of students are women.) This means that each student defines her own approach to the field of planning as well as her own specialization within the field. There are specified areas that every student is expected to cover, such as planning theory and law, but within this framework, each student defines her own understanding of what planning is, how her specialization fits into this field, and what she needs to learn, know, or be able to do to practise within her specialization.

Although this allows for a great deal of individual variation and flexibility, common themes or threads emerge and fade over time. What appears new is the number of students designing programs that weave together the formerly distinct threads of urban, environmental and social planning. Much of the impetus for this comes from the changing context in which we find ourselves—a con-

text characterized by global economic restructuring, changes in the role of the state, the privatization of public goods and services, and increasing diversity, inequity and environmental degradation. Planning that ignores these interconnections appears doomed to repeat earlier failures.

The tools needed within this context include a willingness to explore new ways of working with local communities and agencies to promote the myriad of public interests systematically devalued by the private market. It

### EDUCATION

## Meet the Directors of Ontario's Planning Schools

means explicitly addressing differences of ethnicity, class, gender, ability, and so on. It means integrating issues of social justice and environmental sustainability into our thinking about all types of planning, from housing and employment to social services, historic preservation and the detailed design of public spaces, streets and parks. As a university situated within one of the most multicultural cities in the world, and drinking from among the most polluted waters in North America, it seems incumbent upon us to foster more inclusive planning processes and perspectives.

Barbara Loevinger Rahder is Graduate Planning Programs Coordinator in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University.

## Evolution of Planning Education at Waterloo

By Ross T. Newkirk

**A**t Waterloo we have experienced a 25 percent reduction in financial resources in the last two years alone. Through careful refocusing of requirements and offerings the programs remain strong and some have even been enhanced.

All three programs have been reduced and stabilized with an annual intake of 68 undergraduates and 17 master's and Ph.D. students. The supply and quality of applicants continues to be high. The two graduate programs were recently assessed and found to be in the top category ("of good quality").

Turbulent times call for strong planners with broad skills. Our programs have been revised to provide a sound core of technical, professional, policy analysis and process courses while providing a variety of opportunities for studying important theme areas.

Co-op job placement rates remain surprisingly strong and graduates are finding that their planning degrees give them a good grounding for jobs and further education.

The School emphasizes computer applications in planning, in particular:

- **Analysis and Simulation:** students acquire skills in computing methodology, spreadsheet analysis, and advanced decision support modelling. They have access to networked computers and the Internet, and opportunities to develop Internet and computing applications for planning.
- **Visualization and graphics:** We have developed a computer laboratory for computer-assisted visual planning and presentation in design. Computer graphics and visualization are required in all design courses.
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS):** Together with the Faculty of Environmental



Studies, we have strong expertise in GIS. Undergraduates study the foundations of GIS and advanced GIS courses and projects are also available.

The School has made a recent faculty appointment and, with the assistance of alumni donations, established a Watershed Analysis and Planning Laboratory to introduce planners to the issues and science involved in planning at this important integrative scale.

The School is strengthening many important aspects of professional practice education. Professional ethics and practice are now part of the core through all program years. Moot court OMB case presentations and the School's Planner in Residence program provide much practical experience for students.

## The Evolution of Planning Education at the University of Toronto

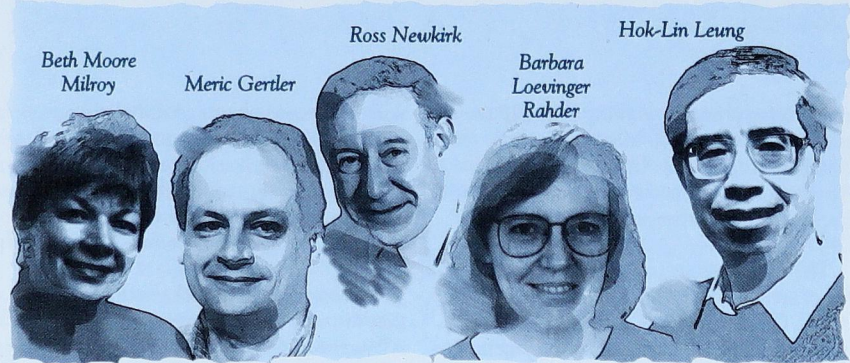
By Meric S. Gertler

**O**ur Masters in Planning has evolved gradually over the past decade, having undergone a major overhaul in the early 1980s. At that time, we redesigned the program to acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of the challenges facing large urban regions. Many "urban" problems arose from underlying economic, social or environmental processes, but these urban processes are addressed by policies originating at all levels of government.

Motivated by these insights, and propelled by the experiences of the 1981-82 recession, we tried to plan for the decline of job opportunities in municipal land-use planning and the opening up of possibilities in other areas. We also foresaw the movement of a considerable amount of planning expertise into the private sector, not only as planning consultants and consultants to property developers, but also in management consulting firms. We designed a core curriculum and specializations that provides our students with the kinds of skills they can use in a wide variety of organizations (public-or-private-sector), substantive settings (urban development, social, economic, and environmental planning), and spatial scales (from local to international).

Our core curriculum stresses general analytical skills, including analysis of policy options and process from various perspectives; forecasting economic and demographic change; and the skills required to assemble and convey an effective and credible argument.

Our alumni tell us loud and clear that these generic skills have helped them not



only get their first leg up in the job market, but also to succeed as they proceed to the next job and the one after that. Indeed, this advice has been so compelling that we now routinely counsel our students to pursue two specializations instead of one.

The composition of our graduates' "skill set" has also altered to include a knowledge of GIS and the use of computers in general. Widespread concerns about environmental quality and processes led us to introduce a substantial amount of "green" content into our core curriculum, including key theoretical concepts and the debate over sustainability.

Finally, we introduced a "current issues paper" instead of a thesis. It is written with a real or imaginary client in mind, and vetted by practising professionals. What began as an experiment has become a continuing feature of our program, proving its worth time and again, not only as a valuable training experience, but also as a means of ensuring that more than 95 percent of our students complete the program in 20 months. This feature has proved to be far more important than we had anticipated at its inception.

## The Evolution of Planning Education at Ryerson in 400 Words or Less:

By Beth Moore Milroy

**T**wo secure plus one fragile change. One newly recognized wave. A gnawing absence no better filled last decade than the one before and, of course, an altered context.

Secure change one: Ecology and natural environment, the critical edge of choice during the decade. Gradually tamed and becoming part of the furnishings of courses, colloquia and conversations. Ground gained expected to be maintained.

Secure change two: Computer technology

seeping in through all the cracks, sometimes driving, sometimes aiding a humanly designed planning education agenda. Still in need of an ethical harness, a call heard from others besides planning educators. Also wanting an analysis of how the technology is affecting the process of planning, especially contact with citizens. Brazen, self-assured change that doesn't wait to be invited.

Fragile change: Recognizing that people come in more than one sex and that sex and sexual orientation are factors affecting life chances, whether in planning education or practice. Just a toehold here. Not the critical edge of choice for most educators. A little too close to the bone and too far from the brain, which remains the place of familiarity and comfort for academics. Gendering of some courses, many colloquia, and most conversations.

Newly recognized wave: Identifying planning practices as culture-specific. Washing in from the edges and rising as surely as the tide. Planners do not yet have the measure of the problem being presented to us by the larger society. Few courses. Occasional discussions. Some graduate and faculty research. A central question: if striving to be conventional Euro-Canadians is less often the path our compatriots walk, then what kinds of cities do we need?

A gnawing absence: A sense of the future, normatively and interpretively. What will the physical shape and content of cities tend to be, given new information technologies and cultural norms? What should we be aiming for? As the shouts to make planning education "relevant" get louder, the future is discussed less. "Relevant" is reduced to meaning "today."

The altered context: Jittery, competitive students, many of whom are as devoted to McJob avoidance as to the intricacies of urban and regional life. Nervous faculty galloping through the halls of academe, torn



by schizophrenia-inducing demands both to star academically via rigorous independent study, and to be relevant to the issues of the day, in upheaved institutions being adapted to entirely new conditions. Because, of course, there is a revolution or two going on outside the door.

Planning education did change over the decade, but quite imperfectly and in a rush, like everything else. Which is why this comes to you in sentence-free, staccato words...400 of them.

## Planning Education over the Past Decade at SURP, Queen's University

By Hok-Lin Leung

**T**he School of Urban and Regional Planning at Queen's University has been steadily reviewing and revising its curriculum.

In 1993, in preparation for our Ontario Council on Graduate Studies review, we committed to four principles:

- to link knowledge with action through critical understanding of theories;
- to emphasize multidisciplinary approaches based predominantly on social sciences with some elements of design disciplines;
- to organize courses on functional bases such as land use, housing and human services, and environmental services;
- to focus on problem-solving from the point of view of community interests, emphasizing the promotion of equitable and economical use of natural and human resources to improve the quality of life in human settlements.

The curriculum emphasizes analytical skills and decision-making. A comprehensive view of methodologies and attention to quantitative as well as qualitative approaches of information gathering and analysis are distinguishing features of the program. Also, there is more emphasis on research and problem-solving.

The School's six core courses lay a strong theoretical and methodological foundation over which electives are organized around the fields of concentration, thus building the superstructure to probe more deeply students' interests and specializations. The School offers three areas of concentration:

- Land Use and Real Estate Development, which caters to conventional planning interests;
- Housing and Human Services, which brings together the social planning strands of the curriculum;
- Environmental Services, which defines the School's particular interest within the

broad field of environmental planning.

Many courses deal with real-life planning issues and frequently have a public agency or a citizen group as the client, as evidenced in our linkages with professional agencies. Particularly noteworthy are our links with the Department of Planning, Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, the Bureau of Real Property and Materiel, Treasury Board of Canada, and community agencies such as the District Health Council in Kingston.

The School continues to broaden its activities internationally. SURP has implemented the Letter of Intent signed between Queen's University and the China State Land Administration and the first training session for Chinese land administrators was successfully completed in April 1996. In addition, multidisciplinary curriculum options are being pursued with the proposed coordinated degree arrangements with Civil Engineering and Law.

## Education and Training for Professional Planning at Guelph

By John FitzGibbon

**T**he primary challenge for planning education in these times of rapid change is to provide an educational opportunity that equips the student to adapt to change while having a firm basis from which to develop that response. This requires effective integration of a firm grounding in planning theory with a wide range of practical tools and experience in solving planning problems. The University School of Rural Planning and Development has over the past 15 years attempted to provide this link between theory and practice. The importance of this in the future will only increase. Theory provides a basis for identifying and structuring problems, methods and experience provide a means of responding.

The restructured economy and reorganized municipal and provincial governments have created additional complications for practising planners and planning education. The planner needs to be both a generalist who can deal with a wide range of issues and problems and a specialist who can respond to the particular needs of the community. In particular, this has arisen out of the merger of departments as planning merges with parks, or development, or administration. This requires a balance between meeting the general needs of a municipal planning office (official plans and zoning bylaws, development application review and approvals) and the special needs of the community (local economic development, recreation development, social services devel-

opment, fiscal and organizational management). At Guelph we have responded to these issues by providing a strong planning core of methods, theory, and project-based practice while meeting the needs for specialization through option packages (land use planning, public administration, local economic development, recreation and tourism).

Globalization has generated the need for planners to understand and become involved in planning and development beyond the confines of municipality, province or nation. The Guelph program offers programs that address the international context as well as Canadian, with opportunities for cross-fertilization for each program.

Research plays an important role in providing the educational opportunities. Incorporation of research into course and project work provides students with exposure to rigorous in-depth analysis of a focused planning problem. Its function is to integrate information and methods from courses and projects with theory. Given the need in practice to see both the big picture as well as deal with the details, the research experience is increasingly necessary.

## The Past and Future of Planning Education at Windsor

Alan G. Phipps

**S**ince its accreditation in 1992, Windsor's Planning Program has graduated 28 four-year honours students, 25 percent of whom are women. Comparable social science disciplines have been more successful in attracting women students, however.

The University of Windsor's program is designed to meet the needs of the 1990s, with specializations in Design or Business in addition to core planning courses. There is an emphasis on numerical/computer courses. The use of CADD and the use of Internet-based data base techniques has the support of faculty, who include Morris Blenman, Malcom Matthew, Gerald Romsa, Veronika Mogygyrody, Anna Vakil and Alan Phipps. The challenge is to couple technology with enhanced communication skills.

Administratively, future stability cannot be guaranteed, as the university is undergoing extreme turbulence at the moment. Continued vigilance will be required to balance academic programs and employment opportunities. It is recognized that many students will find employment outside of traditional fields of planning. Our challenge is to support these graduates in whatever their chosen field happens to be.



## Planning and Mental Health:

### Let's Stop Trying to Find a Cure and Put Caring Back into Communities

By Patrick Burek

Community planning intersected mental health with the move towards deinstitutionalization and "housing" consumer/survivors in the community. The first generation of community housing programs formed a continuum that was intended to help develop life skills and promote the independence of residents. Once a resident mastered the skills and training at one housing environment, he or she was expected to "graduate" and relocate to other residences that were progressively less structured, moving through the continuum until he or she was able to live independently.

Research in this area focused on the spatial characteristics of the buildings in which consumer/survivors lived and the social and spatial characteristics of the neighbourhoods in which they were located. The belief was that there was a preexisting formula that, once found, could be administered like a medication leading inevitably to an improvement in the resident's condition. Planners and mental health professionals were concerned with finding and administering an environment that had the correct combination of these housing and community variables.

By concentrating on the social/physical aspects, these programs failed to consider the appropriateness of their organizational and administrative characteristics. The programs mirrored hospital settings on a smaller scale. Few consumer/survivors actually moved through the housing continuum to full independence and those who did had difficulty finding affordable housing and getting access to services. In the end, the first generation of community housing programs differed little from the institutional environments that they sought to replace.

The second generation of community housing programs, known as supportive housing, developed out of attempts to solve the problems of the first. This model tries to create permanence and normalcy with individualized, flexible and ongoing support services. The goal is to create a home rather than a residential treatment setting. Consumer/survivors get help in choosing their own housing arrangement without having to "graduate" to generic treatment centres. The housing itself resembles that of the surrounding community rather than standing out as a "group home," and services are designed to support the resident in where he/she wants to live.

With the emphasis on adapting housing and services to meet the individual needs of residents rather than expecting residents to

adapt themselves to pre-established housing and treatment settings, supportive housing may help consumer/survivors be more independent by allowing them to exert more control over their living environments.

Research on and evaluation of community housing programs, however, still regards these programs as curative treatment programs rather than broader support structures for housing and related needs. Debate continues as to the correct combination of built environment variables such as the proportion of common space to private space or whether consumer/survivors as a whole should live together or alone. This debate is grounded on

*Researchers, planners and service providers should do more to enable consumer/survivor to choose housing options and support services. A caring approach should be adopted that helps consumer/survivors achieve their own goals rather than aims to cure them. Such an approach would support the needs of individuals as they themselves define them.*

*Both professionals and consumer/survivors have expertise and gaps in their knowledge. Only through a shared dialogue as partners can the full potential of this combined expertise develop. Using such a strategy, both parties will gain from a beneficial exchange and have a voice in its evaluation*

the questionable assumption that there is little or no difference in the needs of individuals, whereas successful community planning increasingly recognizes that the needs of individuals are both paramount and unique.

By trying to discover the elusive ideal combination of housing and community variables, such research may do more to promote the status of researchers and those who administer and implement the results than to promote issues relevant to consumer/survivors. Those who follow this curative approach are in direct competition with consumer/survivors for the rights to be the acknowledged expert where housing needs are concerned. Planners and mental health workers should not try to dictate the best road to independent living for consumer/survivors by using research designed to prove themselves correct.

Instead, researchers, planners and service providers should do more to enable consumer/survivor to choose housing options and support services. A caring approach should be adopted that helps consumer/survivors achieve their own goals rather than aims to cure them. Such an approach would support the needs of individuals as they themselves define them.

Both professionals and consumer/survivors have expertise and gaps in their knowledge. Only through a shared dialogue as partners can the full potential of this combined expertise develop. Using such a strategy, both parties will gain from a beneficial exchange and have a voice in its evaluation.

*Note: "Consumer/survivors" or "psychiatric survivors" refers to people who have been diagnosed as having a longterm psychiatric disability; "community housing programs" refers to social service programs that provide housing and/or support services to consumer/survivors living in the community.*

*Patrick Burek has a Masters degree in Urban Planning from the University of Waterloo and will be enrolling in the Masters of Counselling Psychology at Ontario Institute Studies in Education, University of Toronto, in fall 1996.*



## The Re-emergence of Urban Design as a Methodology for City-Making

By Ken Greenberg

Within a relatively short time the language of urban design has re-entered the vocabulary of mainstream city planning in Ontario and elsewhere. It appears in official plans and planning reports. Urban design guidelines have begun to appear as a basic requirement in the planning process. Many municipalities now employ or retain urban designers. Although the new terminology is still ambiguous and uneven in its application, remaining in many cases a superficial after-the-fact gloss on unreformed practices and business as usual, this trend indicates a profoundly different conception of the contemporary city and the role of government, developers, design professionals and communities in shaping and directing urban growth.

At the end of the last century and the early part of this century, architects and landscape architects were urban designers. This attention to design at the city scale reached its apogee in the City Beautiful Movement, inspired by the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. In Toronto, the 1909 plan of the Guild of Civic Art, the 1912 Harbour Commission Plan Advisory Planning Commission with the participation of the Olmstead Brothers, and the 1929 plan of the Advisory City Planning Commission exemplified this tradition. Although the stock

market crash of 1929 and the Depression curtailed the scope of this activity, parts of these plans, particularly the great urban parks systems, were realized.

The mid-century and postwar era has been dominated by the Modern Movement, which proposed a radical critique and transformation of the city, which was henceforth to be notionally divided into spatially segregated functional zones—residential, employment, recreation, institutional, and so forth, linked by roads. Along with these physical divisions came occupational and educational divisions into discrete specializations. The emergence of land use planners, social planners, traffic engineers and so on resulted in the loss of a comprehensive overview of the city as a whole. The emphasis shifted to the quantifiable, the parts, individual building projects rather than the urban project.

This way of approaching the city was also reflected in other fields during this period. There was an ever-increasing tendency to apply scientific methods, to seek understanding in the analysis of phenomena—breaking them down into constituent parts that could be named and classified and postulating simple causal relationships among them. This mechanical way of thinking, expressed both as a diagram and in actual physical plans—buildings, neighbourhoods, city districts—has turned out to be a disastrous distortion and oversimplification of complex systems that must be understood synthetically in terms of their interactions and interdependence. The result, not surprisingly, was that as this model was applied, things began

to break down, as Jane Jacobs eloquently chronicled in her 1961 classic, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

The replacement of this model and method may be related to the parallel crisis in contemporary western medicine. The notion of having specialists treat particular organs or systems in relative isolation is also being challenged as more complex interrelationships are uncovered. Previously ignored or undervalued concepts from so-called alternative practices such as oriental medicine, which work holistically with mind and body, are now being recognized as valid.

The recent re-emergence of urban design in North America really has its origins in



Photo: Berridge Levinberg Greenberg Dark Gabor

...and continued through the 1990s with Toronto's official plan.

the 1960s. For example, in Philadelphia the combined presence of architect Louis Kahn and city planner Edmund Bacon, author of *Design of Cities*, inspired a generation of committed professional to reconsider the city scale. New York's mayor, John Lindsay, recruited his innovative Urban Design Group from this source.

Although there are now more than 30 graduate programs in urban design in the United States, the first will open its doors in Canada at the University of Toronto next year. Given what some believe to be a greater natural affinity for this kind of approach in our country, grounded as it is in a political and social context that generally values urban places, it is perhaps surprising that it has taken this long to establish a formal program in urban design. The creation of Toronto's urban design division in the



Toronto's tradition of urban design began with the Guild of Civic Art.





Use controls have been replaced with emphasis on built form in the "Kings" area of Toronto.

late 1970s was directly linked to the reform council, David Crombie's 45-foot height bylaw, the Central Area Plan, the movement to stop expressways, the defense of neighbourhoods, the emphasis on alternatives to the automobile, priority for pedestrians and living downtown and so on—core values and objectives that have resonated in many Ontario cities and towns.

Urban design continues to evolve as a mode of thinking and praxis. Renewing

the public realm of streets, parks, open spaces and public institutions as the deepest and longest-lasting infrastructure of the city. Ultimately a number of approaches have fused with related disciplines including planning and engineering under the more all-embracing heading of "new urbanism" or perhaps, more appropriately, just urbanism, since none of this is entirely new.

As distinct from the more limited for-

the interest in and intense observation of historically successful neighbourhoods and cities, while at the same time coping with a host of new challenges and opportunities, the focus of urban design has expanded and shifted from large-scale architectural ensembles to a public-sector emphasis on shaping and directing the private sector through typological templates, guidelines and a revived interest in

malism of the City Beautiful movement, this generation of urbanism, while physical and place-oriented, is also holistic and integrated in its community-based problem-solving approach that cuts across disciplinary lines at the full range of scales. It attempts to deal realistically with the fourth dimension, social issues and the fluctuations of the market economy, providing a strong and coherent framework, but reserving a margin of flexibility for desirable refinement and change. It draws heavily on new computer technology to visualize emerging contemporary neighbourhoods, cities and city-regions, and to layer all the elements in easily understandable imagery on the same map. Significant manifestations of this new approach can be seen in the City of Toronto's "Kings initiative," in innovative new communities in Oakville, Markham and Windsor, and in a host of other initiatives large and small throughout the province.

*Ken Greenberg is a principal*

*in Berridge Lewinberg*

*Greenberg Dark Gabor. He*

*was the founding director of*

*Toronto's urban design divi-*

*sion referred to in this article.*

## ENVIRONMENT

### Flurry of Paper from MOEE

Steven Rowe

After much delay, MOEE released new legislation and guidelines in June, advancing the government's agenda across a broad front.

Bill 57 - the Environmental Approvals Improvement Act allows for exemptions under the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Water Resources Act through the use of "standardized approvals." Proponents do not need approval for Certificates of Approval for certain activities if they comply with regulations. The full scope of these regulations is still not known.

The Environmental Assessment and Consultation Improvement Act makes extensive changes to the EA Act. The legislation adopts many recommendations of EA-PIP (1990) and allows the Minister to limit the scope of a hearing. EAs already under way

will continue to be subject to the old act. Many current proponents were hoping for relief in this area. However, "class" EAs for items such as roads and waste water projects have been put in a legislative context for the first time. A policy committee headed by Ann Joyner is looking at these changes.

The Proposed Regulatory Standards for New Landfilling Sites Accepting Non-Hazardous Waste were also released, as were the long awaited soil clean up guidelines. The Guideline for Use at Contaminated

Sites in Ontario sets out three approaches to restoration of land. The third of these, the "site specific risk assessment approach" allows remediation to be tailored to on-site conditions and proposed uses, based on a risk analysis. A potentially controversial aspect of this guideline is that the MOEE has begun to devolve a variety of responsibilities to municipalities, leaving some unanswered questions concerning the availability of expertise, liability and other thorny issues. More on this later.

*Steven Rowe is an associate with*

*Walker, Nott, Dragicvic Ltd.,*

*based in Toronto. He is a regular*

*contributor to the Journal.*



## Perspectives On a Remarkable Decade

We invited OPPI's presidents and members of its first executive committee to write short articles on OPPI's first 10 years. Here's what they had to say.

**O**n June 1, 1985, the day after a tornado ripped through Grand Valley and Barrie, the Central Ontario Chapter of CIP held its Annual General Meeting at the Nottawasaga Inn. AGMs are often lacklustre affairs, but that year it was turbulent. Faced with taking on the administration of membership and fees from the National office of CIP and worries about our effectiveness at the provincial level, the new COC Council was given a mandate to investigate a merger with the three other Ontario chapters. One month later, at the Sudbury CIP Conference, the Southwest and Northern Chapters expressed interest in the idea and agreed to take on the task of forming the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. All three chapters worked feverishly that fall to work out logistics and particular issues, and on January 1, 1986, OPPI was formed.

The tornado-like momentum of 1985 carried over into OPPI's first year. OPPI drafted its first strategic plan to focus our energies on key areas. A new set of bylaws was enacted. Negotiations with the Eastern Chapter led to their inclusion in OPPI on January 1, 1987. The first OPPI conference was held in Muskoka and preparations made for a hugely successful Other Voices 1987 CIP conference in Toronto. The Journal grew with OPPI and we presented a consistent voice from the profession to the Province, National Council, and other professions.

At the time of incorporation, we decided to include the word Professional in our name so that we could concentrate on the quality of services provided by members rather than being simply an association of people interested in planning issues. Although this change in direction was not smooth or easy, it placed an emphasis on continuing professional development and high standards for members. In doing so, it laid a solid foundation for the subsequent efforts of OPPI.

A second important objective of the first Council was to develop an inclusive definition of planning to reach beyond land use regulation to embrace the diversity of planning practice. Our charter, bylaws and admission practices were drafted to reflect this objective, but we could

still improve implementation. As the economy and society changes, we must redouble our efforts to be relevant to those who apply planning skills in new areas.

All in all, the whole has been greater than the sum of its four original parts. The membership has doubled (from 1,370 in 1986 to 2,750 in 1996). The Journal and professional development programs are flourishing. But like the turbulence of 1985-86, the storm clouds of 1996 are upon us once again. As Dorothy said, "I don't think we're in Kansas anymore, Toto." It's time to take stock, adjust to emerging issues and seize the opportunity to leap forward once again as a profession.

*John Livey, MCIP, RPP  
President 1986-87*

**I**n summer 1985, our economy was in high gear, and we seemed to have erased the memory of the 1981 recession. Commercial, residential and industrial real estate prices continued to spiral upwards, and Ontario was one of the fastest-growing areas in North America. We didn't know that the stock market would crash a year later, and that the real estate market would soon follow. The mood of the planning fraternity was upbeat and positive, and there was no lack of jobs for planners. Within this context, the four chapter executives embarked on the task of trying to create a single provincial association.

Although some members had concerns about the loss of local autonomy, we managed to hammer out our differences. In retrospect, these differences now seem petty and parochial. The establishment of OPPI was the dream of many dedicated planners across the province who had a vision and were not afraid of hard work. From that initial vision, came exciting elements such as the Journal and the RPP designation. Membership has substantially increased. I believe that we have turned the corner and that planners must now be a member of our organization to have credibility in the planning profession.

Although in 1996 planners feel a certain pervading gloom because of the economic climate and government cutbacks,

we must continue to take the lead in planning our communities.

Although our role may change from the management/regulation of growth to other areas such as economic development and computer technology, we must continue to promote ourselves as planners and support our professional organization. Let's embrace our challenges cooperatively, and celebrate our tenth anniversary with renewed hope and vigour.

*David A. Butler, MCIP, RPP  
Member of OPPI Executive Committee  
1986-87*

**I**t is with a great deal of pride and satisfaction that I look back on the accomplishments of the OPPI since its humble beginning in 1986. What a decade it has been!

We've created one voice for professional planners in Ontario through the merger of four separate chapters of CIP. We've developed our own logo and launched the Journal as the focus for information exchange, news and professional enrichment. We held a very successful National Conference in 1987 and repeated that success with last year's joint event with CIP and APA.

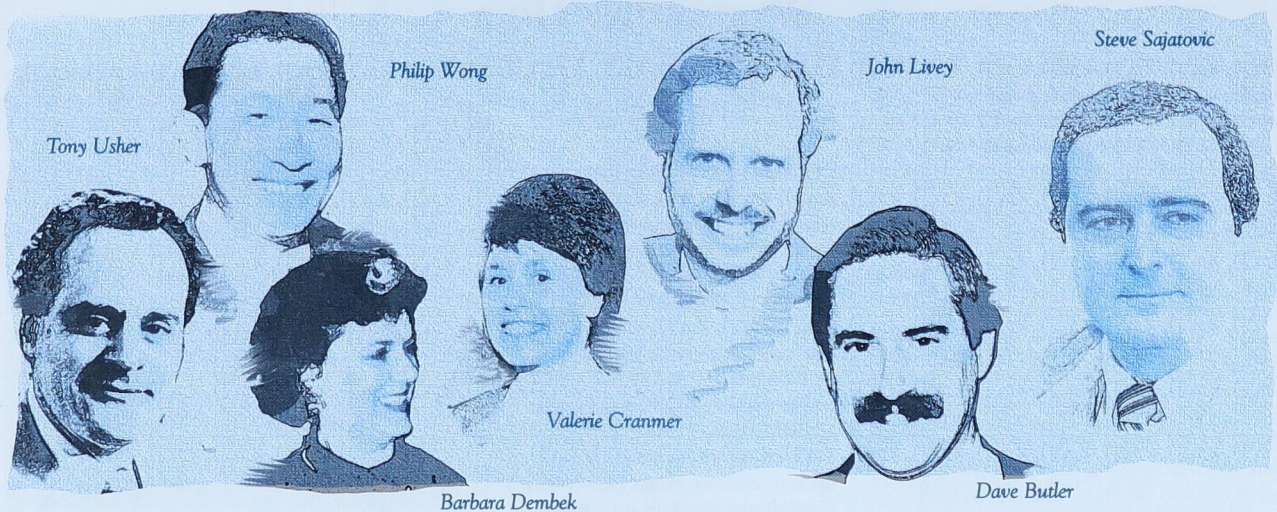
We undertook a time-consuming and sometimes heated, but very necessary, membership review process. We amended our bylaws and schedules. We've held professional development seminars and the Exam B course. We've established a larger and a more professional-looking head office presence. We supported the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act, 1994. We have a membership outreach program. We have an OPPI presence on the Internet as of 1996.

I look forward to the next 10 years with the anticipation and the expectation of even greater organizational achievements and improvements in member services and I will continue to devote my time and efforts to seeing that this is the case.

*Stephen M. Sajatovic, MCIP, RPP  
President 1987-88*

**I**t is very fitting that OPPI's tenth anniversary is being celebrated in Sudbury since OPPI was conceived in the Sudbury Holiday Inn in June 1985. It





was the time of the Sudbury CIP conference and a number of members from the Central, Southwest, Northern and Eastern affiliates took the opportunity to meet in one of the hotel rooms. Out of that meeting came a commitment to disband three of the Ontario affiliates and create one affiliate to represent Ontario. The Eastern affiliate initially decided to wait before disbanding itself but within a year it also joined OPPI.

Although in retrospect it seems that the decision to eliminate the four Ontario CIP affiliates and create one Ontario institute should have been made long before it was, it took much soul-searching and hand wringing or, in plannerese, a comprehensive identification process and evaluation of alternatives for us to make it. The need for a strong, unified provincial voice for planners had always existed. It is worth remembering that in those days, as four voices we did not always sing from the same hymn book in our dealings with the Province. In an attempt to resolve this problem, an umbrella organization of the four affiliates, the Ontario Association of Planners, was established but for various reasons, never worked effectively. Slowly, we realized that there was only one solution to the need for a single provincial voice: the elimination of the affiliate structure and the creation of one affiliate. The rest is a record of OPPI's growth and accomplishments.

*Barbara Dembek, MCIP, RPP  
President 1988-90*

I was president of OPPI from 1990 to 1992 and had the enjoyable chore of shepherding the organization through some happy and turbulent times. OPPI is moving forward at a steady pace. However, at the beginning, the organization moved forward hesitantly and haltingly. We were cautious and conservative financially and operationally. We had some difficulties moving from the volunteer-driven organization to a joint volunteer/professionally managed organization. Those difficulties were partially of our own making, but I believe we have learned from the experience.

The organization has learned to respond to the demands of the membership. The Private Bill and the reform of membership procedures are two examples of that.

The external evidence of maturity is there with new office space, a corporate display, and the professional look of the Journal.

What I do not want us to forget is our roots in the volunteer aspect of the organization. Without the efforts of volunteers and I will mention Gerry Carrothers who wrote our original bylaw, was our registrar and set up the procedures and policies of the original organization we would not be here in the same form. I believe that OPPI will continue to grow and mature. The speed at which this occurs will be in large part due to the efforts of the members. The time and energy that

members devote to the growth of a professional organization are its basic strengths. *Best wishes for the next ten years.*

*Joe Sniezek, MCIP, RPP  
President 1990-92*

OPPI's achievements since 1986 have been remarkable. I'm very proud to have had the opportunity to contribute to some of them, thanks to your confidence and support. But for each accomplishment, there remains a challenge. Here are a few:

- 1 We created an open, democratic, and responsive institute.  
Only a small minority of OPPI members are regularly active. Candidates for Council are acclaimed all too often, and since 1992, only two members have been willing to stand for president.
- 2 We have more than doubled our practising membership.  
We still haven't marketed ourselves aggressively to the 2,000 or more practising planners who don't yet belong to OPPI.
- 3 We achieved formal recognition through the OPPI Act.  
Our disciplinary code and process and the attention we pay to ethical issues haven't kept pace with our changed status as a legally recognized and accountable profession.
- 4 We have greatly expanded our professional development offerings.  
More and more, society expects profes



sionals to meet strict continuing education standards to maintain their status, but we're nowhere near expecting such standards of ourselves or being able to meet them.

- 5 We have done much to reorient ourselves to the needs of recent graduates.

The mismatch between available planning employment and the capabilities of our members continues to increase.

As our institute begins its second decade, we are better placed to face the challenges we know about and those we cannot yet imagine. Let's go!

*Tony Usher, MCIP, RPP  
President 1992-94*

**C**ompared to other established institutions with a long history, OPPI is still very young. It is important, however, to recognize how this young organization has matured.

My personal involvement with OPPI began when I was chair of the Ontario Northern Chapter and took part in discussions to have the four chapters amalgamated. The desire of the former Central, Southwest, Northern and Eastern Chapters of CIP to form one organization and speak with one voice for all Ontario planners was the basis of the creation of OPPI in 1986. After OPPI was formed, I was privileged to serve for two years as the Northern Ontario representative on the first Council. In fall 1993 I returned to serve

on Council. Having been absent for several years, it was easy for me to observe the maturing progress of OPPI from the standpoint of its administrative structure, staffing, strategic focus and community profile.

Without a doubt, the passage of the OPPI Act by the Ontario Legislature in December 1994 marked a significant milestone in the recognition of our planning profession in this province. The Act provided OPPI the mandate to govern its affairs and grants full and retired members of OPPI the right to use the designations "Registered Professional Planner" and "RPP."

Being a membership-driven association, OPPI relies heavily, not only on its capable staff, but on its member volunteers. On the occasion of OPPI's tenth anniversary, I would like to pay tribute to all past and present members who have devoted their time and energy to serve OPPI in many different capacities. OPPI's success depends on the continued commitment of those members who are willing to get involved.

Happy anniversary, OPPI and let's work toward another successful ten years!

*Philip Wong, MCIP, RPP  
President 1994-96*

**A**t the AGM in Toronto on October 17, 1996, Phil Wong will be handing me the baton to lead OPPI into its second decade. The first ten years was a time of progressive

growth and maturing for the Institute. The next ten will also be challenging, but in a much different way. The present mood in the profession is very different from the mood of 1986 as described by David Butler. A great deal of uncertainty has been generated by the downturn in the economy and the corresponding downsizing by the public sector.

OPPI must continue to build on the positive aspects on our profession. Planners, well-known to be flexible and adaptable, have many marketable skills and it is important to build on these talents. The recent CORG initiatives reflect some of the more innovative approaches to developing and using these skills. The traditional role of planners will continue to evolve and the Institute will have to develop further professional development programs in response to changing conditions.

The OPPI Act has had a significant and beneficial impact on the Institute. Many of the more "seasoned" professionals who are not members are beginning to view the Institute as credible and necessary. As Tony Usher indicated, we have to market ourselves aggressively to the non-member professionals.

An organization such as ours is only as good as its volunteers. Fortunately, the quality of our volunteers and their commitment to the Institute is excellent and this bodes well for the future. There is a lot of excitement among the membership about OPPI and it is up to Council to use this volunteer base most effectively.

*Valerie Cranmer, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
President-Elect, 1995-96*

## Congratulations and best wishes to OPPI on the occasion of its 10th anniversary

**W**e appreciate this opportunity to offer our perspective in your Journal. The issues facing us all represent new challenges and will require new efforts from all of us.

Bill 20 extensively revises the Planning Act and turns back major changes made under Bill 163. While it will take some time for lawyers and planners to become accustomed to the new legislation, the Municipal Law Section generally endorses the Bill 20 amendments. In our view they will prove beneficial to both municipalities and the development industry. Meeting the "have regard to" standard will reduce the work load for municipalities

processing applications while introducing more certainty for those seeking planning approvals.

Bill 26 is also beginning to have effect. Among other things, it mandates the large scale restructuring of municipalities, which may be required in order to deliver services more efficiently in the face of reduced transfer payments. Municipal restructurings represent perhaps the most serious challenge for municipal lawyers and members of OPPI. Considerable consolidation work can be expected to revise official plans and zoning documents.

A third challenge to all of us relates to the issue of service to our respective

client and stakeholder groups. There has been a not-so-subtle shift in attitudes within construction and development. The expectation is that planners and others involved in planning decisions will consider economic need as well as planning details in reaching their decisions. We need to address this reality in our day to day activities.

With modest additional effort we can all rise to these challenges.

*L.A. (Lex) Bullock  
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