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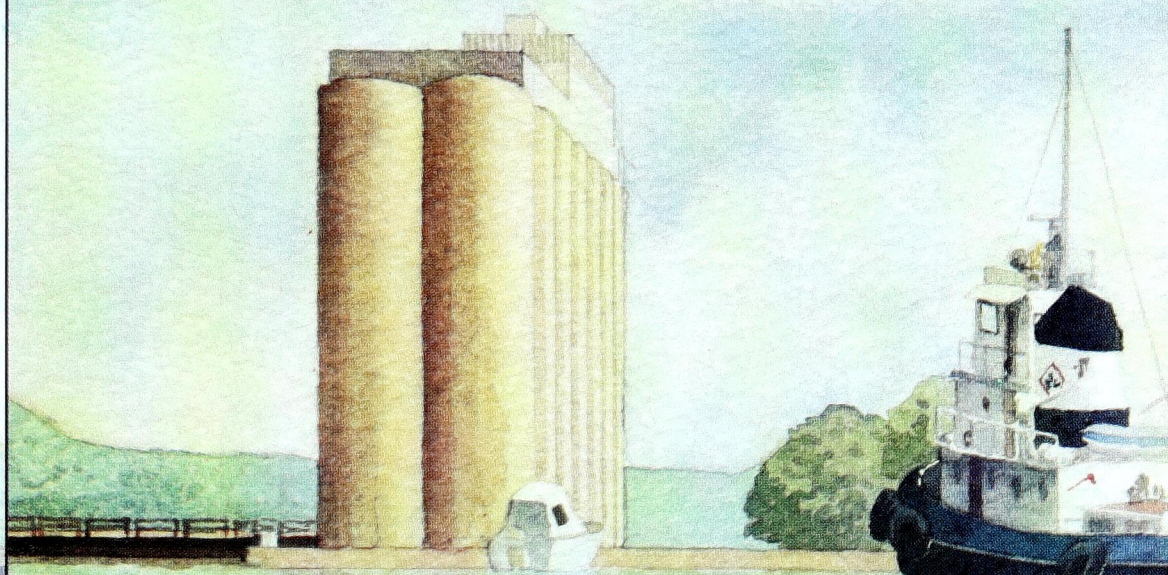
ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE

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Lack of public investment
may limit ability to attract
private capital

THE NEXT WAVE

Charting a New Course for Thunder Bay's Waterfront



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Thunder Bay
Superior by Nature

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by combining small mixed uses
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ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

Volume 14, Number 5, 1999

ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE

The Ontario Affiliate of the Canadian Institute of Planners

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L'Association affiliée ontarienne de l'Institut canadien des urbanistes

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The "Next Wave" Still Searching For Investors

By Donna Hinde

Two years ago The Planning Partnership, Moriyama Teshima Architects and Hemson Consulting began a waterfront project in Thunder Bay in response to the lure of funding from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund administered by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. Tourist "attractions" which have the potential for private sector partnerships and high levels of financial leverage were (and still are) one of the major categories for which funding is provided.

The Terms of Reference clearly stated an intent to create an "international tourist destination attraction" on the waterfront. Working with a very committed Steering Committee, we embarked on an ambitious program to plan 2200 hectares of land and 54 kilometers of water's edge along Lake Superior and connecting water courses.

The challenge of context

We quickly realized that unlike other waterfronts where industrial use has all but disappeared, Thunder Bay's development would have to coexist with an active industrial port with many viable industries. While the port is undergoing significant change, it is still the key point at which the Great Lakes shipping routes meet the rail corridor from Western Canada. There are five major grain elevators, as well as facilities to handle wood, coal, potash and other mineral and agricultural products.

Defining an appropriate "destination attraction"

The focus on the development strategy was therefore broadened to include projects with a wide appeal—first and foremost for the local market and then the tourism markets. A single, large scale project was not the intent. Rather the strategy was to develop a mix of smaller scale uses which, taken together against the backdrop of the waterfront, would form a significant destination attraction.

New diverse waterfront districts are "International tourist destination attractions"

Truly successful waterfront destinations are lively and diverse urban districts. Think about any of your favourite cities, towns and villages . . . Rowe's Wharf in Boston, the Halifax harbour, Montreal's Old Port, Vancouver's Granville Island and even the tiny Lunenburg Harbour (recently designated as a World Heritage site) . . . are all tourist destinations.

The Thunder Bay plan was founded on an ambition to create new waterfront districts as extensions of the City's existing urban cores—its streets and block structure, built form and land uses. The new districts would have appealing residential neighbourhoods with shopping and restaurants, intended to create new urban areas for residents as well as tourists to enjoy.

There were, of course, challenges with the transition to concentrations of industrial use and port activities. But, we were convinced that the broad range of uses could co-exist on 2200 hectares of land.

An engaging public process

The plan was developed through a very conscientious approach to collaborative design. Over 250 people gave up summer afternoons and evenings in standing room only workshops to help develop concepts for the entire waterfront. There was immense

local support for waterfront development. The Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal wrote on October 28, 1998:

"In one of the most spontaneous displays of resident participation in civic affairs in years, hundreds of folks came out to a series of meetings hosted by hired consultants to gauge public support for the vision of a dynamic waterfront."

At the end of the six month process, Council voted unanimously to approve the plan.

Now what?

Shortly after the study was completed, there was an active real estate market for a key parcel of waterfront land. Under public ownership, the municipality could control the use, character and form of development. However, the public sector is not structured to respond as quickly as the private sector and the parcel was purchased by a private land owner. This effectively put a knife through the heart of the north waterfront district plan.

To begin to realize the development of new urban districts on the waterfront requires an obvious commitment to significant infrastructure investment. There are rail lines to cross, new streets and blocks to be developed and services to be installed to prepare the new waterfront neighbourhoods for redevelopment. Unfortunately, when the intent of the funding agency is to cut the ribbon across a new "attraction", there is little appeal for a focus on investment in infrastructure.

The focus on the Northern Ontario Heritage fund is to assist with the implementation of "attractions" with a potential for private sector partnerships and high levels of financial leverage. To my knowledge, none of the "attractions" in the major Northern Ontario centres assessed in feasibility studies over the past two years have been funded. The redevelopment and renewal of northern Ontario centres is broader based than the implementation of a single facility or tourist attrac-



tion—a sports dome, water park, theme park. I'm not sure if the funding agency was convinced that a new urban district on Thunder Bay's waterfront would indeed be an "attraction."

The bleak level of investment in infrastructure, urban regeneration, civic design and city building has slipped to dangerously low levels. This has been verified in a recent research report completed for the Canadian Urban Institute entitled "Reinvesting in Toronto: What the Competition is Doing," written by Joe Berridge of Urban Strategies. Investment in Toronto's urban districts, housing projects, waterfront and cultural attractions is about one fifth the rate of competing American cities. While it focuses on Toronto, the message can be transferred to any one of our urban centres, including Thunder Bay. Both US federal and state governments have realized that their cities

had suffered from deferred maintenance and under-investment. They also realized that cities are the "machines for living and working, the largest concentrations of physical and social infrastructures and the greatest collective investment."

If we expect the private sector to invest in Thunder Bay's waterfront, the public sector must clearly take the lead in showing commitment to redevelopment and revitalization. The City and other partners have built new parkland, pedestrian bridges, road connections, trails, developed an extensive tourism marketing program. Now, the plan envisions that the City's urban structure grows towards the lake with new streets and serviced development parcels. Without that in place how can the private sector be enticed to participate? How can the private sector be invited to dinner when the table has not even been set!

The Thunder Bay waterfront initiatives are underfunded. It's not that anyone expects an overnight transformation. We know that redevelopment will take years. Just as it has taken a generation to build an industrial port, it will take another generation to fully realize a different urban form on the waterfront. The City is committed to a new vision for their waterfront and will use "The Next Wave" to ensure that development and redevelopment meets the principles and ambitions of the plan.

Donna Hinde is a partner with The Planning Partnership. She is also the president of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. "The Next Wave" received a district award for outstanding planning at the recent OPPI conference. Co-consultants were Moriyama Teshima Architects and Hemson Consulting.

4 / FEATURES

Motivated by crisis

Transport in Britain Set to Dramatically Change As the UK Government Delivers "A New Deal for Transport"

By Mario Bozzo and David Kamnitzer

With a population almost seven times larger than Ontario in an area about a fifth of the size, Britain's traffic problems are becoming progressively worse. Forecasts suggest that in 20 years time, traffic levels will be between 36 percent and 57 percent higher than now, unless policies and travel habits are altered.

In July 1998, British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott published an integrated transport White Paper, *New Deal For Transport: Better for Everyone*, which marks a significant step away from previous 'predict

and provide' road construction policies and unrestrained car usage, towards a more responsible and sustainable transport system.

The 170 page White paper, the first for over 20 years in Britain, gives more political backing and resources towards implementing a more balanced and integrated transport system that is not car oriented. It attempts to facilitate the integration between modes, land use planning, environment and other areas of policy such as health and education. Consistent with the Government's policy of devolving powers, Scotland, Wales and

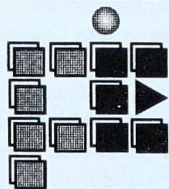
Northern Ireland are considering their own transport priorities in light of this White Paper.

Key aspects of the document include:

Road Pricing

The paper commits to give powers to local authorities to charge motorists for entering congested areas as well as charge levies for workplace parking. More importantly, local authorities have been assured that they will be able to keep revenues raised from such schemes to fund other local transport improvements.

Since July 98, road pricing has received much attention, particularly in London, where there are plans to establish a Mayor-led strategic authority, the GLA (Greater London Authority), allowing the Mayor's Assembly to have sweeping powers over transport in the Greater London area. This is a steep change from the current political decentralized structure, as 33 London boroughs have independent governance responsibilities with no single person in charge. It has believed that road pricing in London is inevitable, as the new Mayor will undoubtedly find road pricing to be an effective tool for curbing congestion and raising revenues



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to fund an ailing public transport system in the capital city.

The Government has recently published a consultation paper on road user and work-place parking charges, seeking views on topics such as the size of charges imposed, exemptions from charges and preferential rates, penalties for non-compliance and procedures for appeals. In parallel, the Government has also unveiled plans to fund road pricing pilot schemes in Edinburgh and Leeds. The demonstration project will test associated electronic technologies and operations on urban and inter-urban roads with multiple charge points. These pilot projects are part of the Government's commitment to help local authorities draw up charging schemes tailored to local transport objectives.

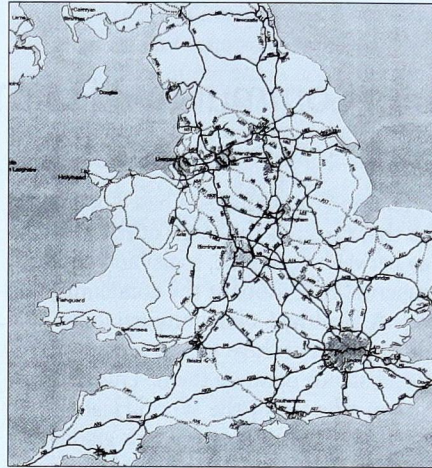
Public Transport

A new strategic rail authority will be set up to oversee the privatized rail system. This has received much political attention over the last two years, as reliability and customer satisfaction of the railway has steadily fallen. This strategic body will have more powers to penalize train companies for failings. Bus and rail passenger information and ticketing has also been given much support, with the establishment of a national public transport information system, and requiring private operators to participate in multi-operator ticketing. For buses, with a commitment of concessionary fares for the elderly and special funding for rural areas, the Government is encouraging the establishment of Quality Partnerships between Local Authorities and

bus operators to improve reliability and accessibility.

Management of Existing Roadspace

The English highway network makes up 1 percent of all roads, but carries about 15 percent of the traffic, and the Government has recognized that they cannot build their way through congestion. To this end, the focus has turned to better management of



Overloaded networks

existing road space through the use of Intelligent Transport Systems. Through the Government's PFI (Private Finance Initiative), a National Traffic Control Centre will be established in England where traffic will be monitored and a host of traveller information services will be

delivered by a number of mechanisms to customers at home and on-route. IBI Group is the technical advisor for this Traffic Control Centres project.

Local Transport Plans

Five year local transport plans will be the cornerstone for local authorities to implement the policies set out in the White Paper. Those authorities wishing to implement road pricing or parking levies will need to indicate how the revenues will be used. Strategies to promote walking and cycling, the promotion of green transport plans for school and work trips, and traffic calming and management schemes will be among the plans' contents. In fact, the Government has made a pledge to introduce Green Transport Plans within Government Agencies. They will also cover local targets for better air quality, road casualties and public transport use, as well as a need to address the integration of land use and transport planning policies.

The White Paper places Britain firmly within a more Continental European form of transport policy, and as such the needs of public agencies in Britain have changed. A once thriving road building industry has gone, with expenditure on new road construction cut by half since the mid-1990s. It has been replaced with the desire to investigate the broader social issues of transport while embracing the application of technology to curb congestion and increase efficiency. Some of this is being undertaken with the usual British twist of privatization of government services. With the railways and



Trafalgar Square to be pedestrianized

bus industry already privatized, most notably the Government is currently in the process of selling off most of London Underground and are encouraging local authorities to investigate the potential for additional private public partnerships within their jurisdiction.

The new Labour government is now just over two years into their term, and through this very progressive White Paper, there has been tremendous amount of strategic plan-

ning undertaken within the transport and environment sectors within this time. These initiatives have also dominated the national political spotlight, as the Deputy Prime Minister is directly responsible for transport. The public has not, however, seen much on the ground to date. As the Labour Government gears up to win a second term in two years time, it will be interesting to see how their aggressive drive to provide sustainable transport

unfolds. Britain is, nevertheless, a fascinating place to do business in the transport sector at the moment.

Mario Bozzo and David Kamnitzer are Associates of IBI Group, responsible for the day-to-day operations in the UK. They can be reached at +44 (207) 566-1410, fax: +44 (207) 566-1408. They contribute to the Ontario Planning Journal on a regular basis.

Moving beyond Motherhood

Is Your Community Healthy?

By Anna Jacobs

What is your picture of a healthy community? Everyone will have a slightly different response to this question but people's views are surprisingly similar. Our ideal community usually includes a clean, safe physical environment, residents that respect and support each other, easily accessible health services, a diverse economy, adequate and affordable housing, satisfying jobs that generate a decent income, and a sense of belonging.

The Healthy Communities movement embodies and aspires to these ideals. It is an international effort but it began right here in Ontario in 1984 and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute has been involved from its early stages. Lynne Simons, OPPI's former representative to the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, served for three years as the Coalition's President. Her successor, Robert Shipley, is presently the Vice President. OPPI's first rep, Nigel Richardson, was one of the movement's founders.

Healthy Communities is based on the idea that health is the result of the interplay between economic, social and environmental conditions at the community level. A Healthy Community strives to enhance each of these sectors and to provide a balance between them. This concept was adopted by the World Health Organization in 1984 and is now gradually becoming the dominant model of public health in Canada and elsewhere.

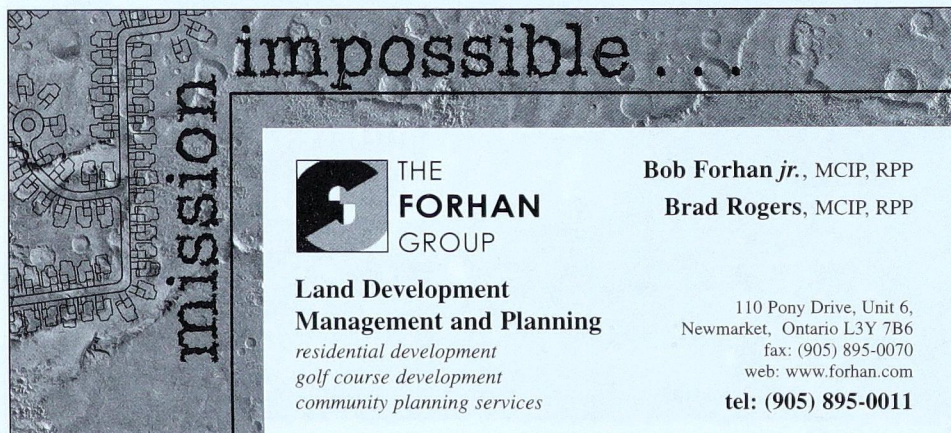
There are four guiding principles to building healthier communities: 1) having wide community participation in decision making, 2) multi-sectoral involvement, 3) local government commitment and 4) the creation of healthy public policies.

The overall concept of being healthy is meaningful to the individual in a personal way. Whether one is healthy or not is something that can be measured and goals can be set on how to improve one's health. The same can be done for communities. Just as there are healthy, effective and fulfilled individuals, there are healthy


effective and fulfilling communities. The Healthy Communities approach to development provides a method for measuring development and planning for the future.

Municipal governments have an important role to play in building healthy communities. This is realized through the planning and design of neighbourhoods, parks, roads, public transportation systems, recreation facilities, social services, public health and many other sectors. As Parfitt said, "the greatest contribution to the health of the nation over the past 150 years was not made by doctors or hospitals but by local governments." He was referring to the provision of such things as safe drinking water, efficient sewer systems, good housing and public education; all demonstrably linked to better health. Municipal government is the level of government that affects our lives most directly, and the one where an individual's actions may have the most immediate impact.

The Ontario Planning Act requires plans to consider the protection of the environ-



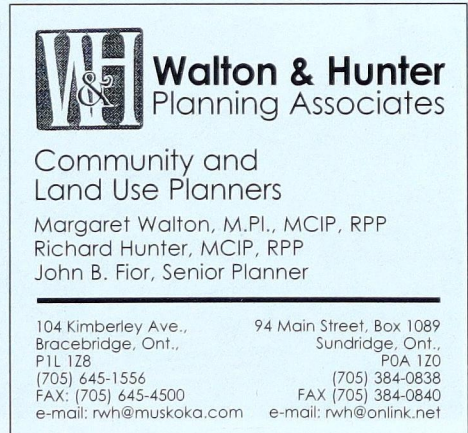
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ment, agriculture, natural resources, the health and safety of the population and equitable distribution of educational, health and other social facilities. Healthy Community policies cover environmental quality, human services, heritage resources, economic development, transportation, and energy and utilities. The Healthy Communities model is an excellent guide to assist in accomplishing the intent of the Act and many Ontario municipalities have embraced the concept. The framework of Halton Region's plan is land stewardship and healthy communities. Woolwich Township, in Waterloo Region, has recently completed a community report that is intended to serve as baseline to measure progress towards their healthy community goals. Initiatives are underway in Cornwall, London, Peterborough, Fort Francis and many other places across the province.

Community Animators live and work across the province providing support and

facilitation to communities that want to build healthier places to live, work and play. They provide facilitation in strategic planning, visioning and community participation. They also help link sectors in a community and provide resources. Among these aids is the recently published, *Pathways to a Healthy Community: an Indicators and Evaluation Tool Kit*.

Anna Jacobs is OHCC's Communications Facilitator.

If you would like to know more about the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, the program and resources available, or if you would be interested in accessing the assistance provided by our Community Animators, visit our web site at, <http://www.opc.on.ca/ohcc>, call our central office 1-800-766-3418, or contact the OPPI representative, Robert Shipley at (519) 888-4567, ext. 5615, or rshipley@fes.uwaterloo.ca.

The Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition (OHCC) is a non-profit organization that works with neighbourhoods, towns, villages and cities in Ontario, implementing the healthy communities approach into community planning. It has received recognition and funding from the Ministry of Health, Environment Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada as well as foundations and corporations. The base of the organization lies in community membership as well as the participation of provincial associations such as the Economic Development Council of Ontario, the Association of Ontario Health Centres, the Ontario Social Planning Council and, of course, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.



Everybody's view of a healthy community is different

Eastern

Eastern Cultural Landscape Workshop

By Barb McMullen

The City of Cumberland Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) and the OPPI Eastern District sponsored a full-day information session on cultural heritage landscapes on June 25, 1999. The event featured provincial, regional and municipal, and consultant guest speakers, as well as a hands-on evaluation of a cultural landscape heritage site in the City of Cumberland.

Winston Wong, heritage planner with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, discussed provincial policy statements and cultural landscape typologies using Ontario examples

and outlined the ministry's involvement with specific cultural landscape conservation issues. Marilyn Miller, also a heritage planner with the Ministry, described the Ministry's involvement in a recent Ontario Municipal Board hearing about a proposed subdivision and rezoning on the site of the Battle of Queenston Heights in the War of 1812. David Cuming of Archaeological Services Inc. reviewed generic methodologies of landscape assessment (reconnaissance and intensive surveys), and discussed the need for comprehensive inventories and master plans, using the examples of Muskoka and the Grand River in Ontario.

Participants also heard presentations from Sylvie Grenier, regional planner, Region of Ottawa-Carleton, on the regional planning perspective and official plan policies; Stuart Lazaar, senior heritage planner, on 25 years of City of Ottawa heritage zoning; and Carolyn Walsh, senior planner, on the City of Cumberland's development guidelines and site plan approval process for Historic

Cumberland Village.

Following a lunch break and Marilyn Miller's discussion of cultural landscape evaluation forms and technical guidelines, participants heard a presentation by student planner Tim Fisher on the historical context of a City of Cumberland cultural landscape heritage site, and then walked the site with evaluation forms and sketch maps.

Barb McMullen is principal of McM Planning and Eastern District representative for the Journal.

Southwest

Summer slowdown?

By John Fleming

Not in OPPI's Southwest District. The district has been extremely busy over the summer months. In three well-attended events, district planners were treated to presentations and discussions on the new Condominium Act; crime prevention through environmental design; and nature trail design and development.

In early June a professional panel assembled in London to discuss the many issues surrounding upcoming changes to the Condominium Act. The panel represented a broad range of expertise including staff from the Policy Planning Branch and Housing Branch of the MMAH and the Legal Services Division of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Attended by approximately 70 members of the Public and Private Sector, this session gave opportunity for questions and answers and provided provincial officials with valuable feedback.

Southwest District members were treated



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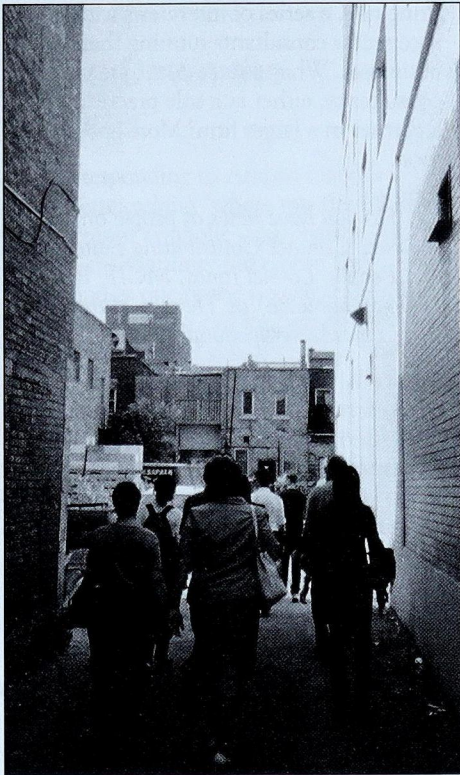
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Some spaces safer than others

to a free presentation and walking tour on the topic of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). Drawing on more than 20 years of experience in law enforcement and security, Greg Perkins of the Liahona Security Consortium Inc. in Victoria, B.C., provided an informative, multimedia presentation on the key principles of CPTED. This discussion was followed by a two-hour walking tour of downtown London. The tour, led by downtown beat officer Constable Rick Cjoha, allowed participants to apply CPTED principles to various "on-the-ground" examples.

The Benmiller Inn was the setting for the Southwest District's July outdoor dinner meeting. The event included a before-dinner hike along the Morris Trail to review current trail design practices in the Maitland River Valley of Huron County. The 60 participants who attended the dinner meeting were treated to discussions of "Trends to Trails" by Don Richards from the Bruce Trail Association and Don Gordon from Carolinian Canada. This meeting marks the end of another successful Program Committee year for the southwest District.

Upcoming Millennium Lecture and Workshop in Southwest District

The Southwest District is planning a Millennium Lecture and Workshop on

October 21, 1999. Noted rural planner and author Randall Arendt (author of "Rural by Design" and other excellent publications on countryside, village and hamlet planning) will be the evening keynote speaker. Mr. Arendt will join a larger panel of Ontario rural experts in an afternoon workshop to address rural planning issues in the new millennium. Watch the Southwest District Web Site or contact a member of the Southwest District Executive for more details.

People

People and Places

Don Herweyer, formerly a planner with the City of Nepean, moved to the Development Approval Division at the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton effective the end of August, 1999.

Robert Walters, formerly a planner with the City of Thunder Bay, took a position with the Property Development and Planning Division at the National Capital Commission in March 1999. **Bruce Hoppe** has joined the TDL Group Ltd in Oakville (better known as

Tim Horton's).

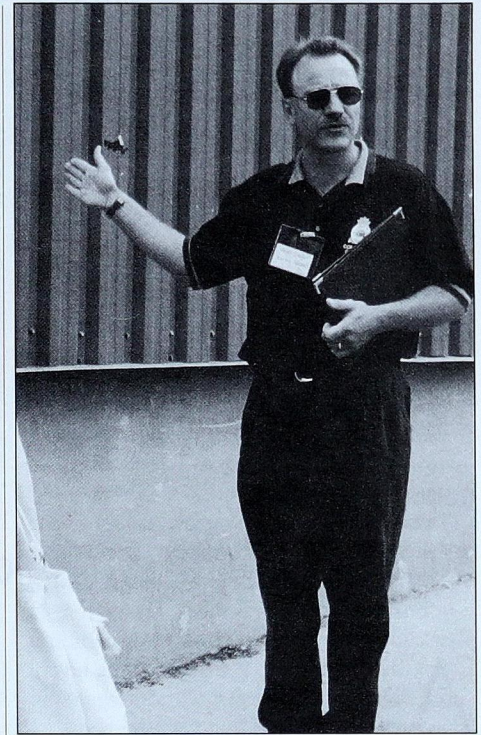
Bruce was formerly with the Town of Aurora.

News from the University of Toronto. **Elizabeth Macdonald** and **Kanishka Goonewardena**

are joining the department this fall and Lino Grima and Siegrid Schulte are retiring. Professor **Meric Gertler** has been named as



Peter Walker,
FCIP, RPP



The long arm of the law -
CPTED in action

the first holder of the newly endowed Goldring Chair in Canadian Studies at University College. **David Gurin**, formerly with Metro Toronto, recently returned from a teaching assignment in Japan and has been appointed as a visiting professor in the school of planning.

Brian Bridgeman is leaving Walker Nott Dragicevic to become a Manager in the Town of Ajax Planning Dept. and **Ornella Richichi** has left Walker Nott Dragicevic to join First Professional Management Inc. Other WND news is that **Peter Walker** was named as a Fellow of the Institute at the National Conference held in Montreal in June. His achievement was also recognized at the OPPI confer-

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ence in September.

Diana Jardine, a former OPPI Council member responsible for the Ontario Planning Journal, has been appointed Director of Toronto Transition with the Office for the Greater Toronto Area. Diana has been working full time dealing with the financial claims aftermath of the Ice Storm, and is looking forward to her new role "back in the GTA."

The City of Toronto has also gained a new recruit in **Jim Helik**, who has joined the City's research department after several

years as editor of Maclean Hunter's "Canadian Investment Review." Jim has been contributing editor for Consulting Practice for five years and in the New Year will launch a new column - Planning



Jim Helik. New job. New column.

Principals, a series of interviews with private sector consultants running their own businesses. What does it take to manage a consultancy, either as a sole practitioner or a partner in a larger firm? More about this soon.

Do you have news of people on the move? Contact Contributing Editors for People, Lorelei Jones, MCIP, RPP (lja@home.co) or Thomas Hardacre (thardacre@peinitatives.on.ca).

10 / COMMENTARY

Editorial

Moving Towards Regeneration

By Glenn Miller

As our communities mature, the level of planning effort spent on regeneration and rebuilding versus new growth becomes more significant. As planners, increasingly, we are faced with problems that require a better understanding of economics and the forces that spark demand

for investment. Planners in both the public and private sectors are preoccupied with how to capture the imagination of investors and enlist their help in replacing the tired carcasses of yesterday's development with a vibrant new urban fabric.

To do this successfully, we will need to address a wide variety of sociological, environmental and economic issues. To win the confidence of the investment community, in particular, planners are forming new alliances and learning new skills. As the profession strives for recognition and increased profile, the quality of our performance in these arenas must be first rate. The bottom line is that *understanding the bottom line* is key.

A number of opinions expressed in this issue of Ontario Planning Journal underscore

this fact. In a letter to the editor (see page 12), a planner writes that she is off to the UK to study urban regeneration, which is also a theme underlying both transportation articles in this issue. The urban design article from Windsor details that city's attempts to unite vision with the pursuit of investment. Our cover story from Thunder Bay outlines how even a joint vision for regeneration cannot take off without successfully selling senior levels of government willing to invest. For now, absent capital investment, the consultant team and the community that created the Thunder Bay plan must be satisfied that their efforts have at least won recognition from the planning profession.

Perhaps a new category of award that values successful implementation makes sense. Call it the Sisyphus award.

Glenn Miller, MCIP, RPP is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal. He is also director of applied research with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto.

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Letters

Taking Down the Gardiner

I am responding to Andrea Gabor's recent letter asking "where was the OPPI" in this recent symbolic urban battle. As chair of the Gardiner Lakeshore Task Force, and as one of the people responsible for sending out the call for help to the design community I can offer some insight.

The initial call for action came at a luncheon jointly organized by the Toronto Society of Architects and the Toronto Arts and Letters Club. Members of various organizations were present, and many took the call back to their respective organizations. The Ontario Association of Landscape Architects were very quick to see the issue as being important for their members. They put scarce resources into hiring a publicist to get the message out to the broader public. This action was key. Many other organizations, including The Toronto Board of Trade were also persuaded by interested members to take public positions.

I did not actively enlist the support of either the Ontario Association of Architects or the Ontario Professional Planners Institute simply because neither organization have a history of advocacy on issues. I am a member of the OAA and a Provisional Member of OPPI and regret this is the case.

Many architects and planners did get personally involved. I believe the strong interest from the design community was extremely important to winning this battle....Toronto councillors were impressed.

I am personally willing to put some time into setting up an advocacy wing of OPPI if there are others interested in serving on it. To succeed the body would have to be light on its feet and able to respond to issues quickly. Hats off to the OALA for being just that; able to serve the professional needs of its members and to demonstrate what their profession stands for.

Catherine Nasmith

*Catherine can be reached at
cnasmith@istar.ca*

Journal subscription keeps Alberta planner in touch

I can't tell you how great it is to receive another issue of the Journal. I have enjoyed it since 1991. After moving to

Alberta last year and transferring my membership, I really felt out of touch with planning issues in Ontario, the work of former classmates, co-workers, mentors.

I've decided to order a subscription - well worth the money! Thanks for all the hard work. A wonderful Journal.

Nancy Hackett.

Nancy is a graduate of Waterloo.

She is currently working with Parkland Community Planning in Red Deer, Alberta.

Reports in the first person speak to accountability

I hope that Philippa Campsie's article on first-person vs third person will generate a healthy discussion among planners. First or third person, I have always assumed that the person who signs a planning report accepts complete responsibility for the information and recommendations in the report whether the signer wrote it personally or had a staff person write it. I was brought up in a school where it was regarded as unprofessional for the report writer to interpose his or her personal opinions between the presentation of the information and its consideration by the committee or council; that reports should be untinged by the personal preferences or emotions of the writer (reports should be objective, rational and therefore bloodless)! Of course, notwithstanding the 'objectivity' of a report, when the writer recommends a par-

ticular course of action he or she is indicating a personal preference - but one based on a professional appreciation of the situation.

Special circumstances may call for different personal approaches. Or is it perhaps simply a matter of style? A style which may be effective under a particular set of circumstances but not another? One thinks of the very strong personal imprint of a Robert Moses in New York or an Edmund Bacon in Philadelphia.

In the end, the clients (that is, the politicians) will decide what kind of approach they favour and will employ planners who are identified with the approach. However, planning reports are only one aspect of a community planning program. Usually, there are many opportunities for the planner to reveal his passion and commitment in face to face discussions with peers and politicians, in public forums, addresses to citizen groups and the news media. And in Ontario, at the end of the day, the planner at the Ontario Municipal Board hearing will be required on oath to give a personal, professional opinion - which will be very much first person.

George Muirhead, MCIP, RPP

George is a planning consultant based in Kingston.

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Journal Editorial on Urban Futures inspires

As I am packing my belongings and heading off to London, England in pursuit of a masters degree in urban regeneration, I have come across the editorial (Vol 14 No 4) "Our urban future needs a champion." It has sparked my interest and given me food for thought that will propel me through the next 12 months of study.

When asked to define urban regeneration and the types of jobs that it holds for me in future, I usually am left referring to the UK and their present efforts to fund urban revitalization projects and the possible job prospect for me overseas. I often wonder if there will be a place for an urban regenerator within the Canadian planning profession upon the completion of my degree.

Your article has inspired and excited me about the possibilities of the future of this profession. I believe in improving the quality of life for inner city urban dwellers and dismissing the idea of the utopian suburban lifestyle that Canadians seem preoccupied by. As Canada enters the 21st century, my hope is that we as Canadians will recognize the importance of healthy, vibrant city centres for a strong economy and culture.

Working with what already exists in our city landscape and maximizing its potential through revitalization is imperative to the longevity of our cities.

I look forward to learning the successes as well as the failures of the British urban regeneration efforts and hope someday to influence the thoughts and perspectives of Canadian planners for a stronger, more vital urban Canada.

Robyn Woronka

Robyn is a "future urban regenerator" who will be studying at She can be reached by e-mail at sarahrobyn@hotmail.com

Advice for New Cornellians

Having participated in the Cornell tour described by Sean Hertel (July/August), I read his observations with interest.

As various critics have pointed out, Cornell (and New Urbanism in general) has its debatable aspects. It remains, for example, Suburbia, even if New and Improved Suburbia). Nevertheless, the Cornell plan clearly has important merits compared with the "can of worms" that have devoured the landscape for 50 years. We can't really know how the New Urbanism principles, as manifested in Cornell, will "work" until community life and institutions take shape and a

generation of Cornellians emerges, and I don't propose to enter that debate, save on one point.

While I agree with most of Hertel's comments, I do take issue with his reference to "pleasing streetscapes and attractive housing forms." Perhaps I am in a minority of one (not for the first time) because from remarks overheard it seems likely that most of those on the tour would agree with Hertel. In order to recapture the virtues, real or imputed, of the small towns of 19th century Ontario, is it really necessary to employ a washed-out version of their architecture, which, like all good architecture, sprang from its time and place? Competent architects, and we do have a number of them, would be perfectly capable of producing restrained but unabashedly contemporary building designs that would create diverse, harmonious streetscapes for Cornell, instead of the Potemkin village of flaccid pseudo-Victoriana we see.

The producers of the Truman Show, about a man living in a completely fake world, didn't have to build a set that looked artificial, they used that jewel of New Urbanism, Seaside. There's an important lesson in that for future New Urbanism designers.

*Nigel Richardson, FCIP, RPP
Nigel is a Toronto-based consultant.*

Opinion

Paper Parks—Creating protected areas with no money to manage them is a hollow initiative

By Paul Eagles

The March 1999 announcement of a massive addition to the Ontario Provincial Park system is very good news. Ontario has now retaken the lead from British Columbia as the Canadian provincial leader in park creation. It is important to recognize how big the Ontario Provincial Park system will be when the new additions are all mad

There will be 334 provincial parks plus an additional 305 conservation areas. The latter are a new form of protected area in the Ontario system. They appear to be provincial parks that allow hunting, and mining if so desired. The total system will cover 9.5 million hectares. This is equal to nearly 40 percent of the United Kingdom, or in Canadian terms 1.8 times the size of Nova Scotia.

This is a magnificent achievement – one that will go down in the history books as an important legacy. It is interesting to note that Conservative governments have created

this admirable provincial park system in Ontario over the last century.

A careful reading of the fine print shows some major weaknesses with the March 1999 announcement, however. The most important problem is the lack of financial commitment to the proper management of the sites. There is no new money for park management, making this somewhat of a hollow initiative.

Ontario Provincial Parks are managed by Ontario Parks, a government agency located within the Ministry of Natural Resources. Under the Conservative Government, this agency has been totally restructured, moved from a government agency to a parastatal, much like a corporation within government. This gives much more flexibility in finance, and allows the agency to function in a more client-oriented focus. This has been a welcome administrative evolution, and one being carefully looked at by many other

jurisdictions.

In total, the entire Ontario Parks agency has only 240 full time staff. This means that there is only one staff for every 40,000 hectares of land! And these people have to do everything, from long-range planning, to tourism management, from chasing poachers to designing campgrounds. And they hire and manage the thousands of students and local people who operate the tourism operations within the parks in the summer months. Ontario Provincial Parks now cater to 8.5 million recreational visits each year, making them a major part of the Ontario tourism industry.

How can these 240 people now be expected to manage another 2.5 million hectares of land?

Ontario has a highly professional and efficient parks management agency, but it cannot be expected to do miracles.

Research at the University of Waterloo

has documented the financial aspects of Ontario Provincial Park management over the last 20 years. These data show that from 1980 to 1995 the agency lost about 30 percent of its purchasing power. Then it lost 20 percent more with the recent government budget cuts. However, over the same time period from 1980 to 1995, and before the March 1999 announcement, the park system saw a doubling in the number of parks to manage, a 50 percent increase in the area of land to manage and a 50 percent increase in the park visitation. So as the budget halved, the responsibilities increased by 100 percent, depending upon the method of measurement. And now the system is growing in area once again.

The responsibilities have increased immensely in 1999, with no new funds for proper protection and management. Significantly, there also does not appear to be any new funds to capitalize on the significant tourism potential of these new sites.

Park scholars have a phrase for this type of park - a paper park. This is a site created for political reasons, but without the necessary financial and personnel resources to operate a functioning unit that fulfills its mandate. It is all too common in many areas

of the world. Unfortunately, without new funding, more staff and new equipment, most of these new Ontario Provincial Parks and Conservation Areas will be paper parks.

Another significant drawback is the very weak legislative basis to the system. These parks are created by regulation. Under the Ontario Provincial Parks Act, first passed in 1954 and never substantially updated, provincial parks are created by the Minister of Natural Resources with the approval of the cabinet. This can mean a rapid birth. However, the very same process is used for a park's death. These parks are only in place as long as the government of the day wants them. They can be deregulated by a simple signature of the Minister. The Act does not require public notice or any public consultation of park deregulation. Usually governments feel it is good politics to tell people before deregulating a provincial park, but are not required by law to do so and in the last decade at least one provincial park, Holiday Beach, was deregulated with no public consultation at all. The existing procedure for deregulation requires some public review under the parks' EA exemption provisions. However, a government could easily exempt themselves from this procedure.

It is important to compare the Ontario situation to the creation of national parks in Canada. Each national park in Canada is created, or removed, by the passage of legislation in Parliament. This gives much more long-term protection and security to the system. Ontario needs to consider adopting a similar approach.

The Ontario government action must be lauded. It is a magnificent milestone along the way to the protection of Ontario's most significant natural treasures. However, Ontario is at the end of the first century of parks, a century that concentrated on park creation. The new century to come must concentrate on park management and tourism. Without significant new financial resources the management will not be effective, and neither the protection nor the tourism mandates will be properly fulfilled.

Dr. Paul F. J. Eagles, MCIP, RPP is Professor, and Coordinator of the Option in Parks Planning and Management, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo. An earlier version was previously published in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record on Saturday April 3, 1999.

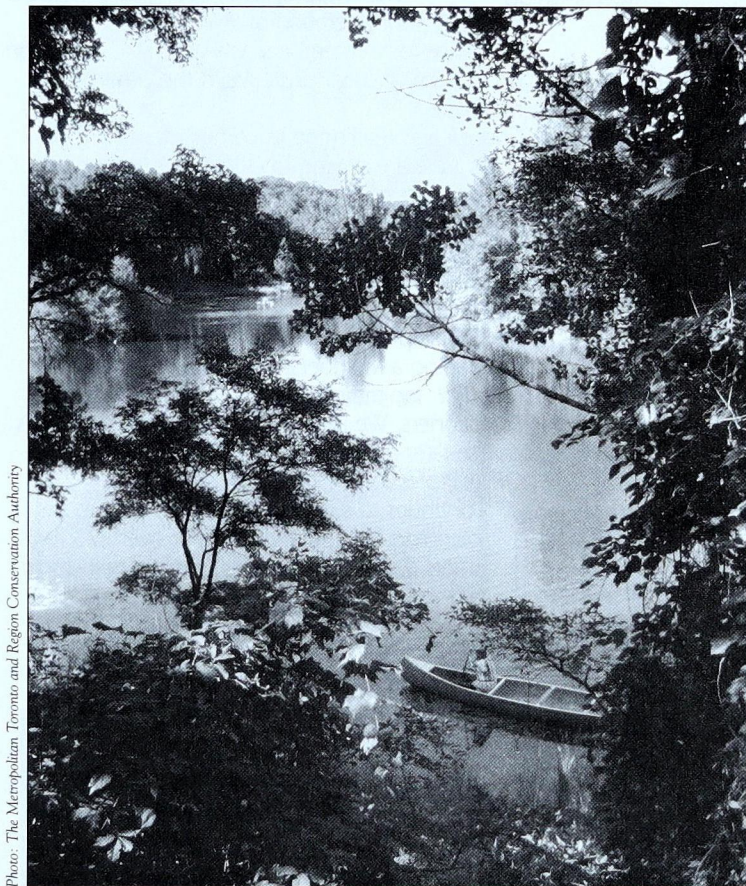


Photo: The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

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Annual Report

**Planning for Beyond the Horizon:
Blueprint for Change**

By Ron Shishido

This year's conference theme of "Beyond the Horizon" captures the essence of the opportunities and challenges that planners and the planning profession face as we prepare to enter the next Millennium. The concept of being at the threshold of new beginnings evokes a sense of whimsy in some and uncertainty in others. It compels us to look at our own way of doing things and the need to create new paradigms for success.

It is easy for us to see ourselves and our profession as we are today. We must look ahead to where we want to be in the future, truly Beyond the Horizon!

The OPPI of tomorrow is recognized as:

- a leader in public policy;
- a promoter of innovative planning solutions;
- a respected "protector" of the public interest;
- the professional voice representing all practicing planners in Ontario; and
- a profession that is relevant and effective in the hearts and minds of our members and the broader public.

OPPI Council is embracing that challenge. Over the past year Council has been putting the finishing touches to our Strategic Plan as well as developing Policy and Innovation, Recognition and Membership Services Action Plans. Those Action Plans serve as our roadmaps to achieving the OPPI of tomorrow. The Strategic Plan and Action Plans taken together constitute OPPI's Master Plan for taking our profession Beyond the Horizon.

They are our Blueprint for Change. I am pleased to announce that OPPI Council adopted the Strategic Plan on September 22, 1999. Implementation is already under way.

Over the past year Council has also spear-headed a number of key initiatives that directly speak to the maturing of our profession and the collateral heightened expectations of planners by the public. They include:

- an Ethics Course for Planners, as recommended by the Discipline Process Review Special Committee, which is in the final stages of development.
- adoption, on the recommendation of the Discipline Process Review Special Committee, of a Mediation Advisory which encourages the use of ADR, where appropriate, in discipline matters.
- consideration of Professional Liability



Ron Shishido

Insurance for all members. We will make a decision on this very strategic initiative in the coming months.

Council also reaffirmed its commitment to "inclusiveness". We are striving to create an environment that will attract more students and senior planning practitioners to join OPPI:

- Council is reviewing the student membership fee structure, with a view to creating a cost structure that will increase student membership.
- Membership Committee as directed by Council is developing a Membership Course specifically targeted at non-member Senior Planning Practitioners. We anticipate the first offering of this course later this year.

OPPI's Professional Development Program

continues to successfully offer courses to the planning community. This year over 275 registrants participated in our five courses (Planner at the OMB, Plain Language for Planners, Planner as a Facilitator and Membership Course). We also worked with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to deliver a

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The 1999 OPPI Conference at Blue Mountain set a new standard for participation at an OPPI Conference. This was clear recognition of our members' excitement and interest in the program, venue and the location. Congratulations to Kris Menzies - Conference Chair, the Conference Committee and the many other volunteers who worked so tirelessly to make this conference a success.

Next year will see the introduction of some key changes at OPPI as we begin to implement the Strategic Plan. We have a number very exciting initiatives under development:

- As part of the Recognition Action Plan we are retaining Howe and Company, Corporate Communications experts, to work with Council to prepare a Communications Plan for Building Public Awareness and Profile of Planners and the Planning Profession. In November the communications people will be facilitating a workshop with Council and selected members of the Recognition Strategy Task Force. The "brainstorming" will focus on communication priorities, targets, messages, approaches, strategies and tactics. Based on those directions, they will pre-

pare a draft Communications Plan for Council review in December/January. We are planning to formally endorse the plan at our February meeting. This Communications Plan will be our "roadmap to Recognition".


- The Policy and Innovation Action Plan calls for the deployment of in-house staff resources at OPPI to coordinate our "watching brief" on government initiatives and oversee our public policy activities. In the past this has been a strictly volunteer-based function. Making this a staff function will enable OPPI to be more pro-active in public policy.
- The Policy and Innovation Action Plan also calls for the establishment of a policy development program to encourage research into and the development of innovative planning solutions to issues of province-wide importance. It is envisaged that OPPI members selected through proposal calls will prepare research papers on various topics. Those papers will provide the basis for OPPI to promote planning innovation and profile the Institute and our members through a targeted profile building strategy.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan clearly

has resource implications for OPPI. The component Action Plans being advanced will necessitate a rationalization of the current Council, committee and staff structures as well as a comprehensive budget review. Council as part of the Year 2000 Budgeting exercise will be setting priorities to facilitate the phased implementation of the Policy and Innovation, Recognition and Membership Services Action Plans. As always, Council will be guided by the principles of cost-effectiveness, good governance and accountability to the membership.

In conclusion, we are planning for Beyond the Horizon. To achieve the OPPI of tomorrow, Council is taking the first steps today.

Ron Shishido, MCIP, RPP is President of OPPI and a partner with Dillon Consulting Ltd.



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GOALS

OPPI EFFECTIVELY REPRESENTS ALL REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS (RPP) IN ONTARIO

— holding membership in OPPI has obvious and practical benefits to planning professionals . . .

VISIONARY ORGANIZATION

Provide leadership in the development of planning policy in Ontario.

Advocate and advance innovative policy solutions to issues affecting registered professional planners (RPP).

Maintain a watching brief on government initiatives and work with CIP and other professional organizations to comment, critique and guide policy work affecting planning in Ontario.

INFLUENTIAL ORGANIZATION

Broaden public awareness of planning and the role of planners in Ontario, building positive recognition of the registered professional designation, RPP.

Maintain a strong government relations program.

Work closely with the media, building an understanding of planning issues and accomplishments and enhancing the public image of registered professional planners (RPP).

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION

Maintain a large and active membership of planners from all parts of Ontario whose participation in Institute affairs is encouraged and rewarded.

Manage the Institute in an effective and cost-efficient manner, continuously seeking improvements to its operations.

Provide services that are valued by OPPI members and will enhance their professional standing.

Maintain appropriate professional standards for the profession and ensure that the standards are met by registered professional planners (RPP) in Ontario.

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Public Awareness Campaign

Good planning, as practiced by RPPs, adds value to our communities.

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PRIORITIES

Initiate a new Policy Development Program

Make Improvements to the Membership Process

Maintain a Dynamic Package of Membership Services

Launch a Public Awareness Campaign

Planners

Holding the RPP designation has obvious and practical benefits; should feel good about contributions to Ontario's communities.

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Associations

Ethical Standards

RPP Certification

INNOVATION TASK FORCE

WATCHING BRIEF ON GOVERNMENT

Maintain and improve current OPPI work.

Emphasize District comments on regional issues.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that the OPPI response is timely and substantive.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

New initiative to provide leadership in development of innovative planning policy in Ontario.

Policy Development Cycle:

Year 1 Research & Development

Year 2 Launch Policy — Build Awareness

Year 3 Community Applications

COMMUNITY APPLICATIONS

New initiative supports policy development through District-led community applications.

MEMBERSHIP TASK FORCE

IMPROVE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

Increasing membership:

- ensure that all professional planning practice is recognized and accommodated within OPPI's definition of planning practice and is reflected in the membership process;
- maintain an aggressive outreach strategy with future planners/students;
- allow professionals in related fields to participate in the Institute through an appropriate class of membership.

Resolving membership issues with a focus on two groups of planners:

- long-standing Provisional members;
- non-member senior practitioners.

OPPI COUNCIL

ADOPTS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

OPPI Council believes that success will be achieved in all actions through a partnership of volunteer effort by its members supported by specialists employed by the Institute.

TIMING

Work is already underway on the Public Awareness Campaign. Implementation of all recommendations will be underway in 2000 with accomplishments seen in 2000 and 2001.

COSTS

OPPI Council believes that all actions must be sustained to achieve their full potential. Continuing commitment of resources, financial and human, is critical to this effort.

Costing has been done and Council is now incorporating costs into the 2000 budget.

Costs for work in 1999 can be accommodated within the current budget.

The Priorities for Action will be implemented to the greatest extent possible using existing financial resources by:

- reallocating funds to priority areas to meet ongoing costs;
- using some funds in reserves for one-time costs.

ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

Adjustments to the committee structure of Council, staffing and District activities have been determined and will be implemented in 2000. Any changes to our By-law to accommodate these changes will be brought forward to the 2000 AGM.

MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

OPPI Council believes that membership in the Institute is a two-way street:

- members expect and should receive quality services that enhance their professional standing;
- members must contribute to the success of the Institute through voluntarism in Institute activities and community work.

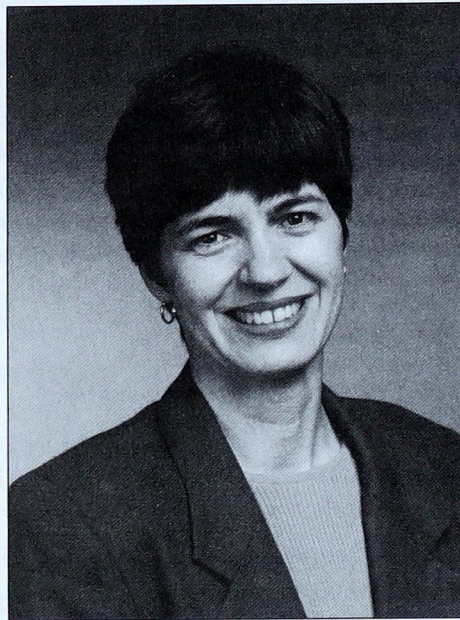
Introducing...

OPPI Council is pleased to introduce Mary Ann Rangam as our Interim Executive Director while Susan Sobot is on maternity leave.

Mary Ann has enjoyed a career in association management for over 10 years with both the Ontario Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada. Prior to joining the non-profit sector she practised as a Registered Dietitian and held a number of senior management positions with hospitals in Ontario.

Council was pleased to find a candidate with the expertise and experience and OPPI needs, particularly in the areas of strategic planning, public presence and national/affiliate relations.

After meeting several hundred of our members at the conference at Blue Mountain Resort, Mary Ann will be attending District events throughout the fall to meet as many of us as possible. Best wishes Mary Ann!




Mary Ann Rangam

And a note from Susan...

I want to thank all of our members who have been so supportive during the past year. While my adjustment to married life and motherhood seemed so natural, it was made even better by your interest in how I was doing and your kind wishes. In particular, OPPI Council has been the ideal employer in allowing me to make adjustments in order to accommodate the changes. As employers, they set a wonderful example of how to achieve a win-win for both the Institute and me as an employee.

Susan Sobot
Executive Director

(Ron Shishido was able to announce at the AGM that Susan had just given birth to Lauren Alison Sobot - impeccable timing as always, Susan.)



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 Douglas A. LychakCDCity of Hamilton
 Leeann J. McGovernEDFotenn Consultants Inc.
 Lindsay B. MillsCDTown of Richmond Hill
 Daniel A. NicholsonCDCity of Brampton
 Tracy J. ZanderEDTown of Carleton Place

Welcome to these new Provisional Members

Mohamed A. AhmedCD
 Scott E. AllenSDCounty of Lambton
 Renrick S. AshbyCDTown of Ajax
 Lisa A. BackusCDCentral Lake Ontario
 Conservation Authority
 Corey S. BennettCD
 Michael G. BissettCDReg. Mun. of York
 T. Paul ByrneCDCity of Toronto
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 Theodore (T.J.) CiecioraCDCity of Mississauga
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 Dan G. CurrieSDCity of Waterloo
 Gabriele FerrazziSD
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Avoid land mines...

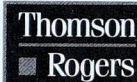


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Beyond the Horizon, Blue or Otherwise

By Philippa Campsie

At OPPI's Beyond the Horizon conference, a planner remarked to me, "Conferences are where you come to leave your own problems behind at the office and hear about someone else's problems."

Up to a point, she was right. At the Blue Mountain Resort, Toronto planners got to hear about the development pressures on the Town of the Blue Mountains, where recreational developments are competing with apple orchards for space, and where official plan hearings are being held up until one of the people who is opposing the plan gets out of jail. Planners from rural townships heard about the need for aggressive economic development in Sault Ste. Marie. Environmental planners learned about the pros and cons of lifestyle communities. Planners from Ottawa and other municipalities facing shotgun amalgamations could hear from a weary-looking Paul Bedford how Toronto has fared so far with

its own transition to the megacity.

Clearly, planners needed to get away and talk to each other. A record number of planners – more than 400 – attended this conference in one of the prettiest parts of Ontario. Some could snatch only a single day to attend the sessions. Others came to do some serious partying and golfing. Let's face it, we're all overworked, underappreciated, and stressed out. A day or two in the Blue Mountains was essential therapy, and anything we learned was a bonus.

David Baxter of the Urban Futures Institute in British Columbia was an inspired choice for an opening speaker. He neatly debunked the pronouncements of demographer David Foot and pop financial adviser Garth Turner. For those of you who missed his presentation, here are some highlights:

- whatever they may say, 35-year-olds are baby boomers, not Generation Xers, and there are more of them than of any other age group in Ontario;

- the market for single-family (a.k.a. "multi-bedroom") houses is not about to tank, so don't listen to anyone who tells you to sell your house, invest the equity, and rent;
- the aging population is a long way from skewing planning towards retirement housing and nursing homes – seniors are healthier, tougher, and more inclined to stay put these days;
- demography does not explain "two-thirds of everything"; it is a necessary, but not sufficient element in projections, which are equally affected by economic and social factors;

- future planning problems will be the problems of growth, not retrenchment. For more information, check out Baxter's website at www.urbanfutures.com. What Baxter seemed to be saying was that the problems we face now aren't going to go away; we have to keep facing them and finding solutions, because demography

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won't come to our rescue.

Planners wrestled with other knotty problems such as endangered spaces and suburban strip retail corridors (clarification: those were two separate sessions), before reconvening for lunch and the OPPI awards, described elsewhere in this issue.

After a morning spent in a crowded basement seminar room, I headed for the hills. The Town of the Blue Mountains has no shortage of hills. I thought it might be my last chance to see some of them before they are developed. The area that overlooks Georgian Bay is the only section of the Niagara Escarpment in which development is permitted. On the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the developable area is shaded in blue, and local planners call it the "blue zone," giving a whole new meaning to the name Blue Mountains.

On Thursday night, the rainy weather disappointed would-be horseback riders and astronomers, but I spent an interesting evening discussing, among other things, the names of municipalities new and old. A planner from South Bruce Peninsula (for-

Ryerson Association Redesigns Website

The Ryerson Association of Planning Students has redesigned their webpage for the 1999-2000 academic year. According to Christopher Dunn, Internet Commissioner, Ryerson Association of Planning Students, "We have added a lot of planning related content that is beneficial to both students and professionals to make the site useful to the planning community." The address is:

<http://www.ryerson.ca/~raps/>
Brian Smith can be reached at:
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Photo: Philippa Campsie

Mobile workshops were popular

merly Amabel) told me that her township narrowly missed being renamed Mars. I also met a planner whose first job had been with the delightfully named Township of Plummer Additional. As boundaries are redrawn and municipalities are amalgamated, I find myself hoping that distinctive local

names will be retained, and not replaced with inoffensive, committee-consensus names.

After a breakfast talk by the deputy minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, W. Michael Fenn, planners fanned out to discuss the OMB, the media, the global econo-

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my, and careers outside mainstream planning. I particularly enjoyed the media discussion where National Post city hall bureau chief Don Wanagas, Huronia Business Times editor Bruce Haines and NRU publisher Ian Graham joined Journal editor Glenn Miller to chew the fat. Some planners wanted to know how to get information into the media. Others wanted to know how to keep it out. If only some planners could just swap problems!

At lunch, Dan Needles, author of the Wingfield Farm chronicles, introduced us to some new jargon. To avoid offending city dwellers who owned rural properties in Simcoe County, the slaughterhouse was renamed the Sheep Outplacement Centre, where "exit interviews" are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays. More evidence that you can do what you want as long as you find a palatable name for it. He gave us a brief history of the local shale oil plant and left us with a sobering thought: "We are standing at a crossroads. Down one road we can see congestion, overpopulation and environmental pollution. Down the other lie economic stagnation and decay. Let us hope we have the wisdom to choose the right road." He may have intended it as a joke, but it sounds to

me like the job description of most planners these days.

I spent the afternoon on the Collingwood waterfront. After the shipyards closed in 1986, the town faced the challenge of finding a new focus and new uses

up in his municipality. It's true: there are things that you can do only in smaller towns. Public attention is too diffused in large cities.

Friday night was gala night, with Danny Diaz, the man who knows the first

two lines of every song ever written. Yes, at least one planner did dance on a table (names withheld at the dancer's request). The winners of the silent auction were also announced, a fundraiser that made a sizable contribution to the OPPI scholarship fund.

For some reason, breakfast the following morning was a little subdued. Perhaps it was all that fresh air they have up near Georgian Bay. Maybe it was the thought of going back and picking up where we left off, dealing with the problems that were waiting for us while we golfed and

partied. Or maybe it was the sobering thought that planners everywhere stand at a crossroads, trying to summon the wisdom to make the right choice...

Philippa Campsie is deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal. She can be reached at pcampsie@istar.ca

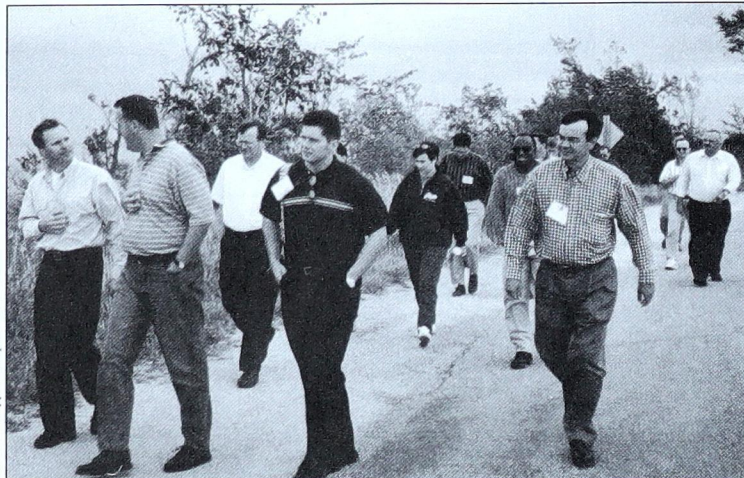


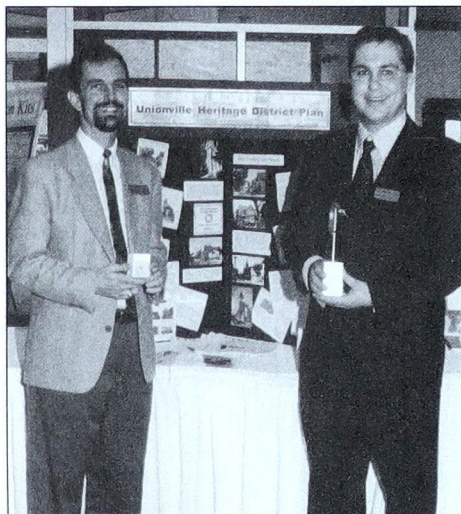
Photo: Philippa Campsie

Planners traded problem solving for exercise

for the docks, grain elevators, and harbour area. Portions of a waterfront trail have been built, and more are planned. Residents are supporting the plan by buying plaques that are set into the trail or adopting fish in the harbour. A planner from Burlington remarked that this level of local commitment would be difficult to summon

OPPI Awards

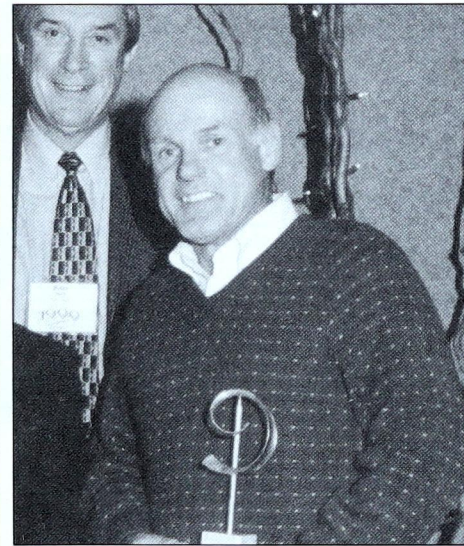
Outstanding Planning Awards



Regan Hutcheson and Michael Seaman, Town of Markham for Unionville Heritage Conservation District: The District Plan (Planning Studies category, Central District)



Steve Edwards, Town of Whitby for Whitby Shores: Homeowner's Environmental Guide (Communications category, Central District)



Terry Boutilier, City of Kitchener for Trees for Our Future (New Directions category, Southwest District)

Not pictured:

The Planning Partnership for The Next Wave: Charting a Course for Thunder Bay's Waterfront (Urban Design category, Northern District)

Professional Merit Awards



Andrea Gabor and Nicola Jancso, Urban Strategies Inc with Bruce Corban, Corban & Good Landscape Architects for the Canada Life Assurance Company Head Office Campus: A Master Plan Proposal (Urban Design category, Central District)



Ruth Knight and Wayne Caldwell, County of Huron for Huron County Official Plan Community Action Kit (Communications category, Southwestern District)



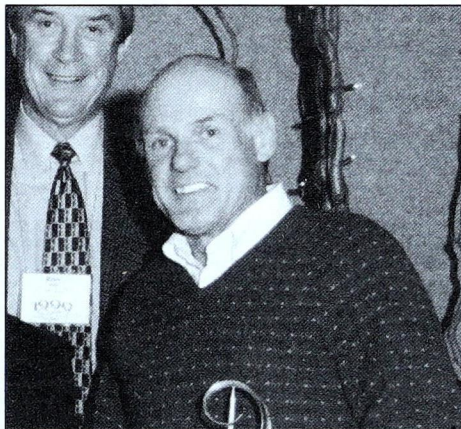
Ken Bedford, Ron Clark and Chuck Charlebois, City of Cornwall for Our Renaissance! Our Vision! (Communications category, Eastern District)



Meg West-Stevens, York Region for York Region Official Plan Report Card Initiative (Communications category, Central District)



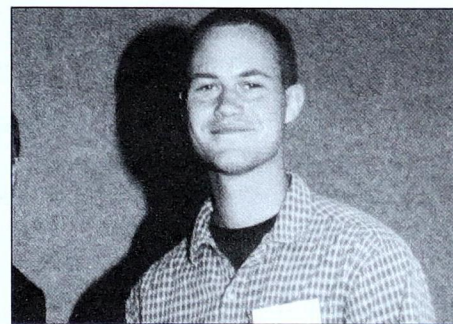
Marni Cappe, City of Ottawa and Ronald Fournier, Delcan Corporation, Region of Ottawa-Carleton/Nortel Networks Project 98 for Travel Demand Management (New Directions category, Eastern District)



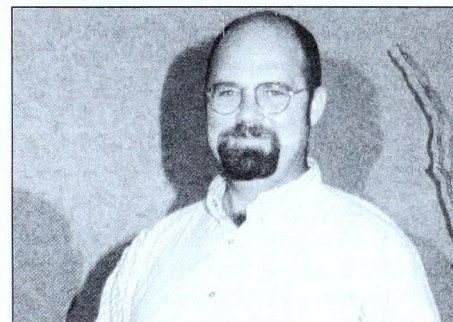
Terry Boutlier, City of Kitchener for the Bikeway Study (Planning Studies category, Southwestern District)

Not pictured:

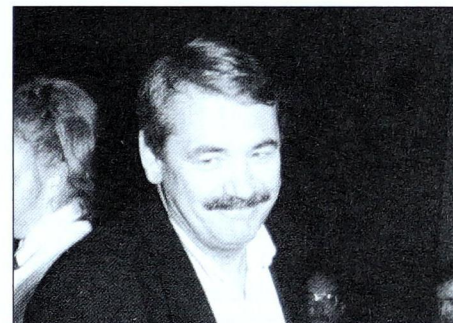
Delcan Corporation for Nortel Ottawa Expansion: Carling Campus Environmental Assessment Report (Planning Studies category, Eastern District)



Ryan Walker, Gerald Carrothers Graduate Scholarship



Christopher Laforest, Member Service Award



Paul Mason, Member Service Award



Laverne Kirkness, Member Service Award

To recognize the significance of these awards, the Ontario Planning Journal will feature summaries of these awards over the next few issues, beginning with the cover story in this issue.

Urban Design

Revitalizing Windsor's Downtown Waterfront: A Tale of Two Planning Philosophies

By Jim Yanchula

In one night, the revitalization of Windsor's downtown waterfront took a giant step forward. Through a series of interconnected business transactions, the community realized its long-held dream of a publicly-owned and accessible waterfront across the heart of the city, and in the process improved the downtown's "twin anchor" revitalization strategy. From a planning perspective, March 8, 1999 marked the death of one urban renewal concept and the affirmation of another.

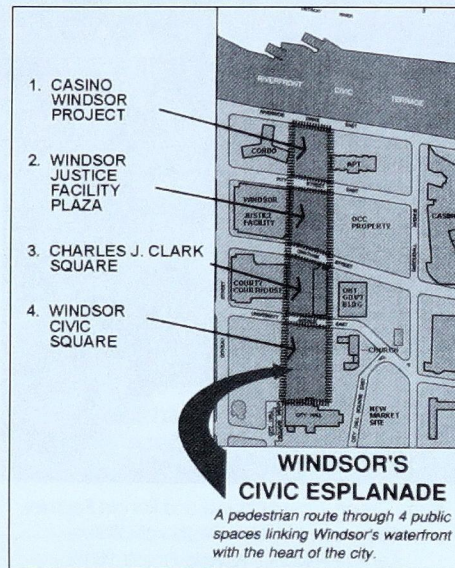
Since 1947, Windsor has had a policy to assemble all waterfront lands along an eight kilometre stretch of the Detroit River from the Ambassador Bridge to the Hiram Walker distillery for a shoreline park. At the time, these railway and derelict wharf and industrial lands cut the community off from the river.

The City was fortunate to acquire and clear land around Ouellette Avenue, the main street of downtown, for park purposes between 1948 and 1963. However, by the early 1960s the intentions for the downtown waterfront lands began to change.

Planning Philosophy #1— the 1960s

In 1963, Council accepted the concept of allowing commercial uses at limited locations along the waterfront to spur development elsewhere in the core. The plan was to construct a hotel complex on the shore of the Detroit River immediately west of the downtown's primary waterfront park, Dieppe

Gardens, to act as a focal point of activity and to define the edge of the city centre on the waterfront. The complex also held the promise of becoming a cornerstone for civic pride, offsetting the attractive Detroit skyline (which was often shown on postcards as supposedly representative of Windsor).



The process of approving and developing the hotel complex was controversial. The by-law to establish the redevelopment area for the hotel was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board by three parties, including two councillors. These councillors vehemently argued against the whole waterfront commercial program, but to no avail. The

OMB ruled in favour of the plan, and the redevelopment scheme for commercial uses on this downtown waterfront site was approved.

In 1965, Council approved a 9 storey hotel tower and 20 storey apartment/hotel tower, separated by a restaurant, to be built on the site. The terms of the agreement stipulated that the land would be leased to the developer for a 99 year period, at an annual rental of 5% of its market value. Only six months after this agreement was reached the deal began to unravel.

The developer announced that both the soil conditions on the site and its own financial capabilities, coupled with rising construction costs in Windsor, made the construction of the hotel, as approved, an impossibility.

In its place, the developer suggested a two phased development. Phase one involved a four storey hotel, offices, movie theatre and parking lot. Phase two would include a 20 storey apartment/hotel tower on the east side of the hotel.

The change in development plans was hotly debated by a disappointed Council and the public. In one corner, the councillors who originally opposed the waterfront commercial concept in the first place and some members of the public argued the proposal should be rejected outright and, at a minimum, a new proposal call should be issued. In the other corner, other members of Council and the development industry argued that an about face on the developer and the waterfront commercial planning concept in general would seriously harm future developer interest in the core. After two votes on the issue, Council ultimately agreed to forge ahead with the scaled back waterfront hotel complex.

In hindsight, Council's decision to proceed with the revised hotel complex on the downtown waterfront site would be viewed by the public and media as a mistake. However, at the time Windsor's downtown needed revitalization, and Council hoped that the waterfront hotel complex would advance the city's image both as a progressive municipality and to development interests.

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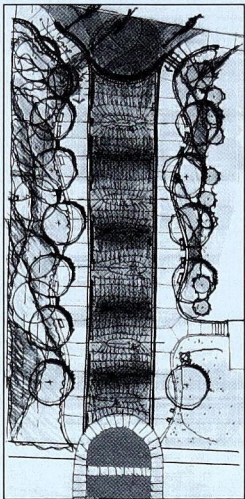
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The final built product, however, bore little resemblance to the original downtown waterfront revitalization concept. Only the four storey hotel, office, theatre and parking lot were built. Public access, which was to be provided on a narrow boardwalk extended out over the Detroit River, was closed shortly after the hotel opened.

The downtown revitalization spin-offs from the waterfront hotel complex never materialized. The cornerstone of civic pride was now commonly referred to as the "plywood palace".

Planning Philosophy #2—the 1990s



Concept Design for The Civic Green

The fall-out from the waterfront hotel complex dramatically changed the community's philosophy toward waterfront development and downtown revitalization. Over the succeeding thirty years, all the lands acquired by the City

along the Detroit River were put to recreational uses, including a sculpture garden and a planned recreational marina.

During the 1990s the community reiterated their long term desire to have the waterfront open and accessible for recreational purposes through a series of planning processes (e.g. City Centre

Revitalization Study, Community Strategic Plan and on-going Official Plan review). Over the same period, the revitalization of downtown became tied to the "twin anchor" concept of establishing two major attractions on either side of Ouellette Avenue; Casino Windsor (the eastern super anchor) and a proposed multi-use family entertainment complex (the western super anchor).

The "plywood palace" remained, however, as a monument to the city's failed downtown revitalization efforts.

Then beginning in 1997, a series of transactions provided the community with an opportunity to correct this waterfront mistake, and in the process strengthen the downtown's twin anchors.

The out-of-town developer of the now dilapidated hotel complex offered it to the city for \$5.25 million in 1997. Council turned down the offer, citing financial reasons, and the complex was sold to a local developer.

However, all was not lost. The City Centre Revitalization Task Force pressed Council to pursue a property swap or other transaction to return the waterfront hotel complex back to the control of the City for public purposes.

In 1999, a revised deal for the waterfront hotel lands emerged in conjunction with two other deals to enhance the twin anchors. The deals began with the City buying-out the remaining 66 year lease on the hotel property. Next, the City agreed to sell its interest in the former market property adjacent to Casino Windsor to the Ontario Casino Corporation for the expansion of the western super anchor. Finally, the City would purchase and, through an arrangement with the Ontario Casino Corporation, move the Art Gallery of Windsor to allow for the creation of a public esplanade from the waterfront to the western super anchor.

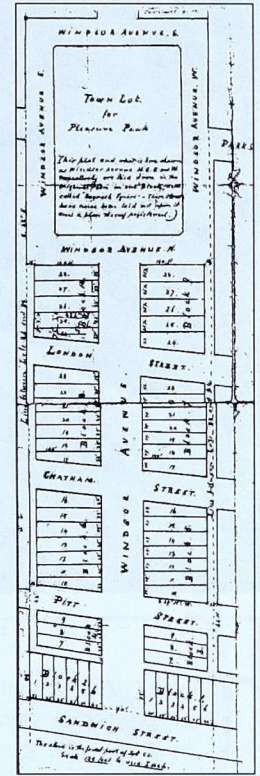
One of the former councillors who had

so vehemently argued against the hotel complex in the first place, in conjunction with the media and the public, urged Council to accept the deals. This time they did accept.

The City of Windsor now owns one of the longest stretches of prime waterfront land in North America. The City's Commissioner of Parks & Recreation Lloyd Burridge captured the community's feelings for the downtown waterfront park, calling it "the crown jewel of our 2,000 acre and over 180 park system on our greatest physical attribute, the Detroit River."

As if to underscore the years of fiery debate on the downtown waterfront commercial plan, the vacant and slated to be demolished "plywood palace" burned to the ground on April 8, 1999, one week before the City was to begin tearing it down.

Unfavourable planning concepts do go down in flames after all.



Esplanade View Corridor shown in the 1864 town plan

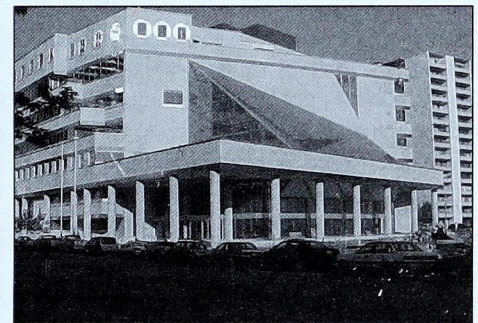
Jim Yanchula, MCIP, RPP is City Centre Revitalization Manager, City of Windsor and a member of the Urban Design Working Group. He can be reached at (519) 255-6966.



New cenotaph walkway in Windsor Civic Square



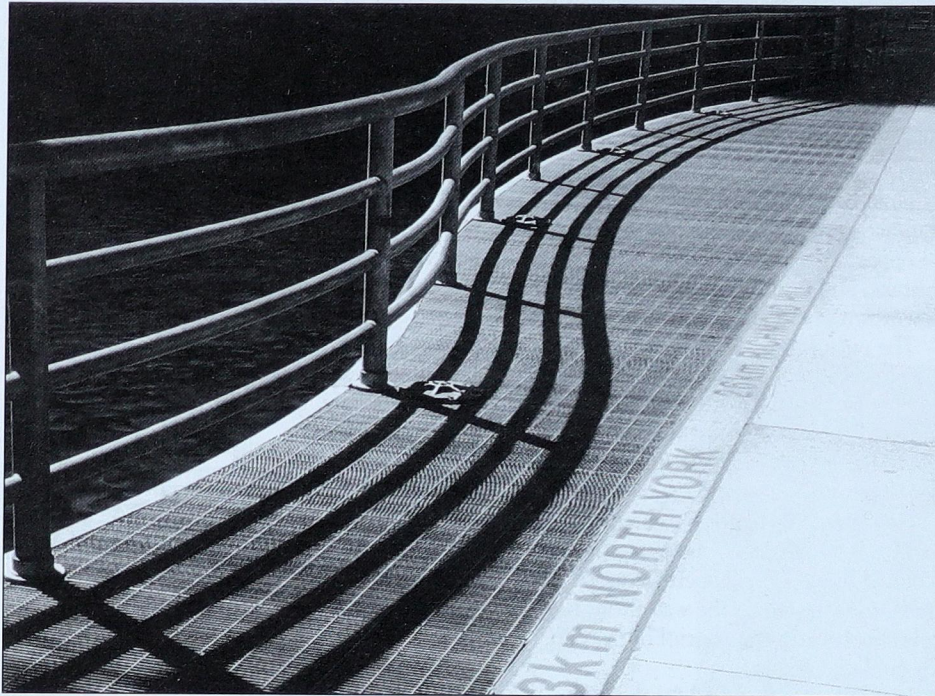
Civic Esplanade View Corridor looking north from City Hall, c. 1910



The Windsor Justice Facility respects design guidelines

How Should We Shape Communities?

By Steven Tubb



How should we approach urban design?

The July/August Ontario Planning Journal got me thinking again on a topic of planning and urban design, a topic which I seem to return to on a regular basis.

For many years I have been interested in the shape of community. Certainly I have preferences, but, what are they based upon? Why do I enjoy some places over others? What are the ingredients and how can the essence of these preferred places be re-created elsewhere?

The first two feature articles "Planning in the Home of the Skinny Latte" by Martin Rendl and "Cornell: Looking Forward or Backward" by Sean Hertel, along with your editorial, started me thinking about, dare I say it, the 'basics' of planning, design and development decisions. Where do these ideas come from? Why and how do they drive the process? Clearly in both cases the State Governor and Andres Duany were the driving forces, but, what drove them? In answering some of these questions and how-ever trite it may seem, I suggest it all points toward values and first principles.

Unfortunately in both articles there is only passing reference to the fundamentals

which form and drive the regulations, the designs and the detailing. We are told the State of Washington passed the Growth Management Act in "response to concerns about suburban sprawl, traffic congestion, water quality, threatened forests, agricultural lands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat." In Cornell we are told Duany "had an easy time selling his "return-to-the-main Street" mantra" typical of "new urbanism".

In the end or probably I should say in the beginning it all boils down to attitudes and preferences and they in turn are formed by values, principles and priorities. If ten thousand people are committed to a community where personal motorized transport (the car), large lots and specialized zoning (single land use areas) are paramount a type of community design and shape with consequential impact on function in all its many permutations will develop. On the other hand where design detailing and proximity of community elements based on human scale, mixed land uses and designing for efficiency and sustainability predominate a whole different type of community will form.

The editorial refers to Lord Rogers' report on urban Britain and seems to

lament the absence of a similar thrust in Ontario and Canada. I don't disagree about the need for more dialogue on Canadian urbanism, but, it is important to note U.K. cities and regions one way or another have been at this process for a long time. After spending 16 years in Scotland during the late 1970s to the 1990s, part of that time with direct involvement in urban design, it is clear to me the U.K. is coming from a very different set of circumstances. In short it has been necessary for them to pay more attention from an earlier time to urban problems and opportunities to ensure their communities are liveable. Clearly there have been varying degrees of success.

So, yes, I would like to see much more discussion about the fundamental aspects of planning and urban design as it is in those regards where community shape and quality derives impetus. It also happens to be important for educational reasons. The more people understand the cornerstones and consequences of planning, design, and development decisions the more they will be able to participate meaningfully. Maybe with more dialogue and real efforts to enable community input Canadian urbanism overall will move toward some of the isolated excellent examples we periodically read about. I hope and suggest the newly formed urban design group adds that aspect to their agenda.

Steven Tubb is a former member of the Institute.

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An Appreciation: Contributions to Fresh Thinking

By David Kriger

The transportation planning community lost two important figures this summer. On 17 August, Dr. Michel Van Aerde (formerly of Queen's University) died suddenly near his home in Blacksburg, Virginia. Two weeks later, on 31 August, John Hartman of the Transportation Association of Canada passed away in Ottawa. Both died well before their time: Michel Van Aerde was 39 and John Hartman was 55.

I was fortunate to have known both Mike and John. In that context, a short appreciation of their achievements follows.

Michel Van Aerde received his doctorate in Civil Engineering at the University of Waterloo, then took a professorship at Queen's. He was known internationally for his micro-simulation model, INTEGRATION, which he developed mainly during his time at Queen's. The model simulates the dynamics of vehicle movement on highways on a vehicle-by-vehicle (i.e., micro-simulation) basis. It takes into account operational details such as traffic signals and lane / intersection configurations, and even simulates vehicle movements during incidents (e.g., when a lane is blocked due to a stalled vehicles or an accident). INTEGRATION's applications range from evaluating alternate highway geometric configurations, to simulating congestion and queuing, to estimating vehicle fuel consumption and pollutant emissions – all key considerations in EAs, traffic management schemes, and other issues of importance to planners. A few years ago, Mike moved to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in southwest Virginia. By this time, INTEGRATION was gaining popularity in the United States, as well as Canada.

Dr. Van Aerde was known also a talented educator and researcher. His was a dynamic presence. He had gained an authoritative reputation at an early age. He attracted and mentored a large number of graduate students, many of whom I have had the pleasure of meeting – in fact, I don't recall ever seeing Mike alone!

Although his name will always be associated with INTEGRATION, I would suggest that Mike's most permanent legacy may well be the influence he had on the practice of transportation planning: primarily through his students and proteges, as they move forward in their careers, but also in making the

rest of us think differently about the way we look at transportation.

John Hartman was with TAC for about 10 years, where he had a number of senior roles. John may be best known to planners as the driving force behind such path-breaking documents as A New Vision for Urban Transportation which were multi-point statements of principles aimed at bringing Canadian transportation into the next century in a fiscally- and environmentally-responsible way. The Urban Vision subsequently was adapted into many urban transportation plans, thus influencing our cities in a very tangible way.

John was also on the Board of Directors of the Centre for Sustainable Transportation, and was widely acknowledged as an expert in the subject. His approach to sustainable transportation, as with everything else, was action-oriented; make-it-happen, move things forward. To do this, John recognized that he had to bring the key players together from all lev-

els of government, the carriers, the private sector and anyone else who could influence the decisions at hand. In this, he was very effective.

I had the privilege of working closely with John on several TAC initiatives, and I don't think I've ever met anyone who could boil down and explain the root of a complex issue so succinctly and clearly. I also don't know of anyone else who knew so many people in the Canadian transportation community and, as a result, understood well the big picture in transportation. He knew which issue fit where, and with what other topics it was linked – John clearly understood the relationship between land-use and transportation.

At his funeral, John was eulogized as being "passionate" about his work and as "wanting to make the world a better place." I think those words sum John's legacy to the Canadian transportation community very well indeed.

David Kriger, the Journal's Contributing Editor in Transportation, is a Principal with Delcan Corporation in Ottawa. He can be reached at d.kriger@delcan.com, and welcomes ideas and contributions to the Transportation Column.

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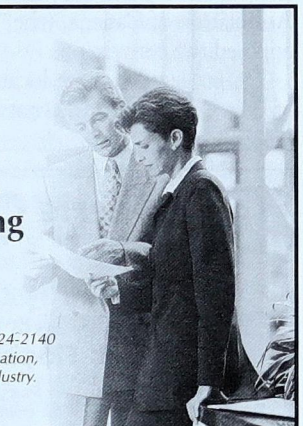
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The Board Establishes Land Use Compatibility Near Toronto's Airport

By Paul Chronis

The Ontario Municipal Board, following a very lengthy hearing respecting a major residential development in the City of Mississauga, refused the conversion of industrial lands for residential purposes by applying good planning principles and its finding of the need to retain employment lands. (See cover story, Ontario Planning Journal, vol 13 No.5.)

The proposal before the Board sought to convert and permit the development of multi-residential uses in an area where employment uses have previously been proposed. The proponents argued that the lands were no longer suitable for large scale prestige industrial/employment uses as originally contemplated. Further, based on the fact that the lands were now encompassed by adjacent built-out residential areas offering very limited buffering and separation distance, the conversion was proper.

The Greater Toronto Airport Authority (the "GTAA") and the Air Transport Association of Canada, (the "ATAC") opposed the conversion.

The subject lands are located to the west of Lester B. Pearson International Airport

along the flight path of one of the main east-west runways. As stated in the Board's decision, a significant part of the subject lands fell within the 30 NEF noise contour and all the lands fall within the Airport Operating Area, as established in the Peel Region Official Plan. The GTAA was concerned that permitting residential uses in this area would undoubtedly invite complaints and hinder its efficient operations and expansion capabilities. The GTAA was also interested in preserving an adequate supply of available industrially designated lands in close proximity to the airport for industries which are linked to the operation of the airport and whose proximity, efficiency and prosperity the airport depends for its own continued success.

With respect to the appropriateness of the residential use, the Board summarized its findings in three broad categories:

1. Compatibility of development;
2. Residential uses, airport noise in the airport operating area; and
3. The conversion of industrial lands.

With respect to the compatibility of development, the Board found that in itself,

the proposed residential development can adequately be buffered with appropriate separation distances to properly mitigate against the potential for incompatibilities. As such, the question of compatibility did not present itself as a determining factor in this matter.

Insofar as the airport noise and the Airport Operating Area are concerned, the Board discussed at some length the NEF/NEF noise contours as contained in the Peel Region Official Plan as well as the City of Mississauga's references to the latest provincial policy as it applies to lands in the vicinity of the airport (which in turn relies on the Federal Transport Canada Guidelines). Effectively, the applicable policies state that residential development in areas identified as being between 28 and 35 NEF should not be permitted. The subject lands fell within these noise contours. If development was approved within this area, then special measures must be taken to mitigate the potential adverse effects of noise, including air conditioning and special construction methods and materials. Since the City of Mississauga chose to approve the development, it was made subject to proper mitigation measures and warning clauses in order to achieve the standards prescribed by the various planning controls.

Nonetheless, the Board was concerned that these type of guarantees would not produce a development that is acceptable. What remained as a question in the Board's



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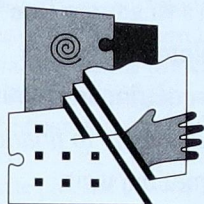
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mind was the reasonable quality of residential environment. The planners opposing the development argued that planning is meant to prevent problems of nuisance such as noise and land use conflicts in residential areas. Where it is unavoidable or where there are other compelling public interest reasons to allow housing in noisy environments, it may be appropriate to permit it and to apply measures to mitigate the nuisance. However, this should never be regarded as normal, ordinary or routine. As a matter of good and sound planning, the more appropriate and preferable approach is to avoid noise in a residential setting.

Further, the Board opined that warning clauses do not provide any real comfort or constitute an entirely satisfactory planning tool when faced with the question of potential nuisance noise in a residential environment. Since warning clauses merely satisfy the very minimum responsibility, people should be informed of the prospect of nuisance. The Board indicated that warning

clauses may be a fair business practice and good consumer advice, but it does not necessarily constitute good planning practice. It was also noted that despite warning clauses, complaints about airport noise from nearby residents will continue.

Although the Board accepted the proponents' contention that it may be possible to develop the lands in question for residential purposes, given the applicable policy and the requirements of various guidelines to meet the very minimum standards set for acceptability for residential uses, it could not simply regard this as normal or reasonable quality of residential development. To reserve to extraordinary measures of design, ventilation, construction and warning clauses when all this can be avoided does not represent good planning.

With respect to the conversion of industrial lands, the Board heard extensive evidence as to the amount and quality of the supply.

Although it was found that the City had a

healthy supply, it was not excessive and the Board accepted the evidence of the opponent's market expert that it would be prudent for the City to retain the "vast majority of its employment lands". Further, given the expansion of the airport and its requirement that its lands be used for airport purposes, the abutting employment lands were regarded as important by the GTAA for its long-term operation for relocation purposes by some of the industries that are currently located within the GTAA property.

For the above reasons, the Board declined to re-designate the employment lands for residential purposes.

Source: Decision of the Ontario Municipal Board

Case No. PL968578, PL967376, PL970870

File Nos.: O960192, O970092, O970093, S970043, S970044, S970045, Z960003, O980164, O970153, 359744.1, 359744.1-1-359744.1

OMB Continues To Clamp Down On Commercial Competition Cases

The Town of Leamington enacted Zoning By-law 4407-98 to rezone a property outside its central business district to permit a department store, in a shopping centre format, on a property abutting an existing commercial development which included a junior department store.

The existing junior department store was the sole objector. Its appeal was based on the following three principal grounds:

1. the adequacy of the market feasibility and impact analysis;
2. the impact on the existing junior department store and other commercial areas have been unstated; and,
3. on the basis that the impact on the CBD is understated and not analysed.

The proponents, to which the subject By-law applied, brought a motion before the Ontario Municipal Board pursuant to the provisions of subsection 34(25) of the



No new residential allowed under flight paths

Photo: M. Manett



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Planning Act to dismiss the appeal without holding a public hearing. Subsection 34(25) states the following:

- "34(25) Despite the Statutory Powers Procedures Act and subsections (11) and (24), the Municipal Board may dismiss all or part of an appeal without holding a hearing, on its own motion or on the motion of any party, if
- (a) It is of the opinion that,
 - (i) the reasons set out in the notice of appeal do not disclose any apparent land use planning ground upon which the Board could allow all or part of the appeal,
 - (ii) the appeal is not made in good faith or is frivolous or vexatious, or (Board emphasis),
 - (iii) the appeal is made only for the purpose of delay."

The panel of the Ontario Municipal Board accepted the motion indicating that it has consistently striven to expand the use of this subsection to avoid unnecessary hearings or to control their duration. The Board stated that the subject subsection clearly provides a basis for dismissal of an appeal

should the Board find that delay for competitive advantage is the real reason for the appeal notwithstanding how well clothed it may be in planning language.

The Respondent on the Motion urged the Board to consider its appeal on the basis that it was the defender of the central business district. As a corporate citizen of Leamington, the Respondent argued that it had the right to raise matters of public interest. The Board stated that in its view the first defender of the public interest of local matters should be the Municipal Council and upon appeal, the Ontario Municipal Board.

The economic health of the CBD is a matter of public interest. However, the Board was satisfied that the Town was well aware of its obligations to protect the CBD, as a public interest, and dealt appropriately with the matters in the public arena.

Accordingly, the Board was of the opinion that there was no apparent land use planning grounds to justify the appeal and that the appeal, in this instance, was made for the purpose of delay.

The appeal was allowed and the need for a full public hearing was avoided.

Note: Following the release of this decision, on April 7, 1999 the Board issued a decision with respect to a similar motion in the City of Owen Sound [Heritage Place Shopping Centre Ltd. v. Owen Sound (City): OMB Case No. PL981196/File Nos. R980263 & O980251).

Source: Decision of the Ontario Municipal Board

Case No.: PL980797

File Nos.: R980163, O980243

Paul Chronis, MCIP, RPP is a senior planner with Weir & Foulds in Toronto. He is the Journal's contributing editor for the OMB and can be reached at CHRONISP@weirfoulds.com

Erratum

In the "school sites funding" summary in the previous issue, the Board "concluded that it will *not* impose the disputed condition based on a lack of jurisdiction to do so under the Planning Act."



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Revelations

An Important Book for Anyone Responsible for the Future of Our Cities

The single review in this issue departs from our normal format of featuring two books. The scope and importance of the work in question certainly warrants special treatment. This book sees one of the leading contemporary commentators on architecture and planning, Witold Rybczynski, telling the life story of one of the most important historical figures in the field, Frederick Law Olmsted. It is also fitting that one of Canada's leading planning practitioners, Joe Berridge, should be the reviewer. What we have here, is a veritable pyramid of inspiration. We hope you enjoy it.

A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmsted and North America in the Nineteenth Century

Witold Rybczynski
Harper Flamingo Canada
480 pages, illustrations
\$35

Review by Joe Berridge

Witold Rybczynski opens his biography of the great 19th century landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted on Mount

Royal in Montreal. For years he had walked that great urban park without realizing that what he, and no doubt countless other Montrealers, took for granted as a "natural feature" was in fact man-made. Who that man was and how he came to make Mount Royal, Central Park in New York, Prospect Park in Brooklyn and numerous other urban parks in Boston, Chicago, Buffalo and across the United States is the primary theme of Rybczynski's latest book, "A Clearing in the Distance; Frederick Law Olmsted and North America in the Nineteenth Century." However, this is only the primary theme. What makes the book so interesting is the contextual backdrop reflected in the subtitle. Olmsted was not just the first and best known American landscape architect. Rybczynski describes a fuller life as one of the cultural figures of the 19th century, someone who both reflected and formed the American character at that seminal time in its history, immediately before, during and after the Civil War.

Central Park is Olmsted's finest achievement, perhaps the finest urban park in the



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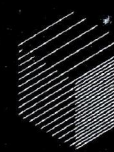
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world, immediately popular on its opening in 1859 and remaining a source of joy and solace to this day. Less well known is that this was his first venture into landscape architecture, indeed his first professional design project of any kind. When he won the design competition for the park with his lifetime collaborator Calvert Vaux, Olmsted was 36. After a fractured education that involved no formal training, consisting rather of deep conversations with a remarkable range of people, he had been successively a farmer, a nursery gardener, a journalist and an editor. Even after winning the competition, Olmsted did not settle into the career for which he is justly famous. For much of the next decade he was otherwise occupied; during the Civil War as a member of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, organizing medical relief in field and ship hospitals under the sound of gunfire of the bloody battles of Manassas, Antietam and Gettysburg. After that, in an attempt to meet financial obligations to family and creditors - he was dependent on a generous father for much of his life - he managed a gold mine in California. It didn't work out. Happily Calvert Vaux urged him to return to establish the practice which changed the form of the American city.

Witold Rybczynski, now a professor of urbanism at the University of Pennsylvania, formerly at McGill, skillfully pulls together these disparate strands to explain the richness of this influential life. He gives us, in this fine biography, the strongest sense of the formative role that can be played by an individual in the city, contrasting with his earlier books, notably "Home" and "City Life," which explore the broader cultural derivation of our physical environments.

Olmsted was that rarest of combinations, an insightful observer and a practical, engaged public man. In the first half of his

life he was a respected journalist, contributing 46 articles to the precursor of the New York Times on his years of travels in the pre-Confederacy South, later drawn together into one of his several books. The articles reveal a fresh mind and close powers of observation, characteristics that along with a hard working toughness were demonstrated through Olmsted's long, active life. Rather than take a hard line abolitionist stance that would immediately antagonize the slave owning class, Olmsted preferred to show them the evident inefficiencies of slavery. Slavery did not create secondary manufacturing or consumer markets, did not offer sanctions against poor productivity, and was responsible for the dismal lack of "civilization" in the South. This democratic and aesthetic pragmatism is manifest in his landscape works. It is impossible to place him on the great cultural fault lines as elitist or populist, classicist or romantic. He sought both order and chaos.

Once established, the landscape architecture practice proved successful, continuing in various forms through his sons until 1950. Olmsted was one of the first of that modern breed, the professional consultant. To those of us in the same business, his life has a familiar ring. Endless travel, long absences from a loved and loving family, the fierce passions of partnership, relentless cash flow pressures, Tammany Hall, clients who wouldn't pay and clients who always knew better. Rybczynski provides skillful portraits

of Olmsted's long, difficult relationship with Calvert Vaux, with his chivvying English disposition, as well as of the rich, powerful and appalling Leland Stanford, founder of the eponymous university, whose wife would insist on Olmsted designing to the latest photo she brought back from Europe. As Stanford put it, "a Landscape Architect might be disappointed but he was going to have the buildings the way he wanted them.

How his words echo down the ages. There were rewarding clients too; the magnificent George Washington Vanderbilt commissioned one of Olmsted's last and finest works, Biltmore - the vast estate in North Carolina - with the taste and commitment of a renaissance prince.

By the end of his life, Olmsted was acknowledged as the leading urban planner and landscaper of his day. Rybczynski includes a moving tribute by Daniel Burnham, the renowned Chicago architect and Olmsted's collaborator on the World Columbian Exposition, that honours him as the artist he truly was; "he paints with lakes

and wooded slopes; with lawns and banks and forest-covered hills; with mountainsides and ocean views."

A remarkable artist, gifted with what Rybczynski identifies as the critical attribute for a city planner, "long-headedness, the ability to conceive capably into the future," Olmsted provides his own best epitaph. "I have all my life been considering distant effects and always sacrificing immediate success and applause to that of the

future. In laying out Central Park we determined to think of no result to be realized in less than forty years."

What a legacy. What a life. Everyone responsible for the future of our cities should read this wonderfully realized, compelling biography to appreciate what one gifted man could do.

Joe Berridge, MCIP, RPP is an urban planner and partner in the planning, urban and landscape design firm, Urban Strategies Inc. (A version of this piece appeared in the Globe & Mail.)

