

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL

WWS 535: PLANNING METHODS

Thomas K. Wright, Executive Vice President, Regional Plan Association

Phone/E-Mail: 212.253.2727 ext 306 / twright@rpa.org

Spring 2008

OVERVIEW:

Planning in America is at a crossroads. Founded out of progressive ideals about maintaining order and shaping complex market forces for the common good, the profession sits at the intersection of our democratic political ideals and adherence to economic liberalism. It encompasses land use, public and private investment, regulatory structures, and community design. This leads to confusion about the profession. Is planning an empirical exercise in optimizing resources and allocation of land and capital, or a social contract to regulate cultural preferences reflecting identity and aesthetic? In response, the field of urban planning seems to be constantly undergoing rapid change – both as a profession and academic field. Meanwhile, development trends are rapidly changing in American communities. After a half century of suburbanization and urban decline, many city centers across the country are experiencing population and economic growth, even as “lifestyle centers” create a new wave of suburban development on the outer highways of mature metropolitan regions. Across real estate cycles of boom and bust, metropolitan development expands into ever-larger geographic areas, so that the Boston-New York-Washington Megalopolis has finally emerged as a single entity, even as Atlanta reaches towards Charlotte, Southern California extends into Mexico, and Cascadia connects Seattle to Vancouver and Portland.

What are the tools and methods that planners use to analyze and address these issues?

This course provides a primer in the methods used by planners to guide public policy and capital investments. In particular, through case studies and homework assignments, students will familiarize themselves with the specific analytical tools that planners use to shape and channel growth and development, including zoning, environmental analyses, fiscal impacts, evaluation of transportation alternatives, and other techniques. These methods will be examined from several perspectives – local government, private consultants, public agencies, civic advocates and formal design. To explore and apply different planning processes, the semester will be split into three major sections: Impact Analyses, Community Design, and Growth Management. Each section will look at specific tools and techniques used by planners to evaluate, promote and shape different policies and projects. Each section will also have several assignments associated with that particular topic.

We will look first at local planning, as that is where the majority of land use decisions are made in America communities. The first several weeks will feature guest lecturers who are experts in the application of zoning, environmental analysis, financial analysis and transportation planning. They will describe the techniques used to prepare and examine plans, including zoning codes, development proposals, and infrastructure investments. Weekly homework assignments will ask students to apply the methods that have been discussed to real life case studies.

During the middle portion of the semester, the class will focus more specifically on community design and public participation. This portion of the semester will include a site visit to Radburn, a famous planned town in northern New Jersey, and participation in a community design workshop, or charrette, in a town in the New Jersey Highlands. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of design in planning and how public participation techniques are evolving. (Please note: these site visits will most likely occur on Fridays, and will be scheduled and confirmed with students during the semester.)

Towards the end of the semester, these tools will be brought up to the regional and metropolitan range, where planning and policy interact on a larger scale. Students will attend a hearing of a regional governing body and analyze a local plan for consistency with regional or state plans.

A parallel theme of the course is how different perspectives and scales interact to produce the contemporary American built environment. Underlying the course is a critique of the performance of planning methods in the

United States over the past century, its multiple failures to create positive outcomes, and an exploration of how to improve these practices.

ORGANIZATION:

This class will be conducted as a seminar, with class participation counting toward the final grade. Discussions each week will focus on the reading assignments. Several guest lecturers will join us during the semester for portions of the classes (usually about an hour). These are leading planners with expertise in the particular areas (zoning, affordable housing, etc.) that we are studying that week.

In addition to the reading materials, there is one required text for the course:

Planning and Urban Design Standards; American Planning Association; Emina Sendich, Graphics Editor; John Wiley & Sons, Inc.; 2006.

The first half of the semester focuses on specific concepts and techniques that need to be understood by students. Accordingly, there are a series of homework assignments and quizzes, all based on the material presented in class. During the second half of the semester, there will be a longer independent work assignment, to be presented during the final class session. This final paper will assess a planning process against the techniques we have discussed over the course of the semester.

SYLLABUS:

Class 1: February 5 Introduction to Contemporary Planning Issues

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 68-96
Deborah Sontag, Broken Ground: The Hole in the City's Heart, The New York Times, 9/11/06

Key Concepts: Euclid v. Ambler, Frederick Law Olmsted, Garden Cities, Jane Jacobs, New Urbanism

Class 2: February 12 Land Use Analysis

Guest Lecturer: Carlos Rodrigues, Chair, Princeton Township Zoning Board of Adjustment

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 1-45, 503-513, 593-603

Stuart Meck, Paul Wack and Michelle Zimet, "Zoning and Subdivision Regulations," The Practice of Local Government Planning, ICMA, 2000, pp. 343-374

The Princeton Township Zoning Ordinance:

http://70.168.205.112/princeton_nj/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=site_main-j.htm&2.0

(Go to: Princeton, NJ; General Ordinances; Part1 – Township Committee; Chapter 10B. Land Use; Article XI. Zoning; Division 2. Zoning Districts.)

Key Concepts: Municipal Land Use Law, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Density, Intensity, Floor Area Ratio, Lot Coverage, Plat, As-of-Right, "C" Variance, "D" Variance, Spot Zoning, Easements, Overlay Zones, Zoning types: Cumulative, Exclusive, Conditional, Exclusionary, Inclusionary, Fiscal, Mixed-Use and Agricultural

Assignment #1: Analyze an application for a zoning variance. Assignment is due on February 26th.

Class 3: February 19 Environmental Analysis

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 514-517, 566-578.

Margot Garcia, Robert Olshansky and Raymond Burby, "Environmental Analysis," The Practice of Local Government Planning, ICMA, 2000, pp. 87-118.

Michael Gerrard, Daniel Ruzo, Philip Weinberg, "Environmental Impact Review in New York," Volume 1, LexisNexis Group, 2006, pp. 2-100 – 2-110.

Key Concepts: Environmental Impact Statement, Scoping, Alternatives Analysis, Mitigation, Environmental Justice, National Environmental Policy Act (1969), Clean Air Act (1970), Clean Water Act (1977)

Class 4: February 26 Economic Analysis

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 518-520 (Part 5, Analysis Techniques: Fiscal Impact Assessment), 659-670 (Part 6, Implementation Techniques: Real Estate Development)

John Blair and Richard Bingham, "Economic Analysis," The Practice of Local Government Planning, ICMA, 2000, pp. 119-137.

Key Concepts: Input/Output Analysis, Cost/Benefit Analysis, Economies of Scale, Multiplier Process, Location Quotients, Net Present Value, Depreciation, Business Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing, Value Recapture

Quiz #1: Short quiz on Land Use and Environmental Analyses.

Class 5: March 4 Real Estate Analysis

Guest Lecturer: Merylyn Rovira, Fannie Mae

Reading: "Real Estate Financial Analysis Workbook," Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler
"Residential and Commercial Development Opportunity: Cooper Square Request for Proposals," New York City, 2000

Key Concepts: Pro Forma, Mixed Use, Internal Rate of Return, Highest and Best Use, RFP/RFQ, Capitalization Rate, PILOT

Assignment #2: Propose a redevelopment plan for a downtown Princeton site. Assignment due on March 28th.

Class 6: March 11 Introduction to Urban Design

Guest Lecturer: Robert Lane, Design Programs Director, RPA

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 399-460 (Part 4, Places and Placemaking: Theories of City Form, Places and Districts, Development Types)

Jonathan Barnett and Gary Hack, "Urban Design," The Practice of Local Government Planning, ICMA, 307-340.

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe, Public Spaces - Public Life, Copenhagen 1996, The Danish Architectural Press and the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, 1999 (skim)

Key Concepts: Edge City, Districts, Design Guidelines, Design Review, New Urbanism, Transit-Oriented Development, Public Space, Placemaking, Civic Space, Pedestrian Networks, Usage Patterns, Place Audit

Quiz #2: Short quiz on Economic and Real Estate Analysis

March 18 – SPRING BREAK – No Class

Class 7: March 28 Town Planning – Radburn Site Visit

The bus will pick us up at 8:30 AM on Friday, March 28th, on Prospect Street outside the Woodrow Wilson School

Reading: Carlos Rodrigues, "Designing New Jersey," New Jersey State Planning Commission, 2001
Andres Duany and Emily Talen, "Making the Good Easy: The Smart Code Alternative," *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, 2002

Robert Lane, "Somerville: Station Area & Landfill Vision Plan," RPA, 2007

Thomas Wright, "Newark Draft Vision Plan," RPA, 2006

Key Concepts: Charrette, New Urbanism, Traditional Neighborhood Design, Participation Techniques

Term Paper: Term paper topics due

Class 8: April 1 Infrastructure Design

Guest Lecturer: Darius Sollohub, Professor, NJIT School of Architecture

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 219-299 (Part 3, Structures: Transportation), 521-526 (Part 5, Analysis Techniques: Traffic Study Impacts and Transit Study Impacts)

Sandra Rosenbloom and Alan Black, "Transportation Planning," The Practice of Local Government Planning, ICMA, 2000, pp. 201-226.

Key Concepts: Parking, Street Networks, Transit Planning, Density and Transit Ridership, Light Rail, Commuter Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, Induced Demand, Congestion Pricing

Class 9: April 8 State Growth Management Systems

Reading: Planning and Urban Design Standards, APA, Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006, pp. 604-615

Robert Fishman, "The Death and Life of American Regional Planning," from Reflections on Regionalism, Bruce Katz, editor, Brookings Institution Press, 2000, pp. 107-123.

Stuart Meck, editor, Planning Communities for the 21st Century, American Planning Association, 1999, pp. 25-58.

New Jersey State Planning Commission, "Executive Summary of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan," 2001.

Key Concepts: Growth Management, Regional Commissions, Consistency, Urban Growth Boundaries, Plan Endorsement, Smart Growth

Quiz #3: Short quiz on Infrastructure Design.

Class 10: April 15 Regional Commissions and Open Space Preservation

Reading: Richard Babcock and Charles Siemon, "The Pinelands: A Radical Experiment Works," The Zoning Game Revisited, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2000, 135-157.

Robert Pirani, Amy Decker, Chris Sturm, "Regional Planning Comparative Matrix," RPA and New Jersey Future, 2003

Thomas Dallessio, "The Economics of Transferring Development in the New Jersey Highlands," RPA, 2006

Albert Appleton, "A History of the New York City Water System, 1967-2004," (unpublished)

Key Concepts: Transfer of Development Rights, Purchase of Development Rights, Regional Commissions, Build Out Analysis, Carrying Capacity, Special Resource Area

Term Paper: Draft Papers Due

Class 11: April 22 Fiscal Zoning and the Race for Ratables

Reading: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, "Chasing Ratables: The Impact of Property Taxes on Local Planning," DVRPC, 2005

Robert Burchell et al, TCRP Report 74 - The Costs of Sprawl – 2000, Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, 2002, pp. 1-24

Chris Jones and Alexis Perrotta, "Fundamental Property Tax Reform II," RPA and Lincoln Institute of Land Use Policy, 2006

Chris Jones and Alexis Perrotta, "Comprehensive Property Tax Reform for New Jersey," RPA and Lincoln Institute of Land Use Policy, 2006

Key Concepts: Fiscal Zoning, Split Rate Taxation, Tax Abatements, Sprawl, Impact Fees, Timed Growth, Tax Base Sharing

Class 12: April 29 **Class Summary: Planning Methods**

Presentation of Term Papers