PLANNING THEORY AND PROCESS

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OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Evolution of Planning Theory
- Systems versus Rational Approach
- Land-Use Control
- Growth Pole Theory and Planning
INTRODUCTION

- Like planning theory, models of planning have evolved over the years.

- Considerable changes in the intellectual underpinnings of planning and wider socio-economic framework which planning takes place.

- Three distinct stages:
  - a) mid 1800s – mid 1960s (Master Plans);
  - b) mid 1960s – early 1970s (Systems Planning) and;
  - c) 1970s onwards (Participatory Planning).
THE EVOLUTION OF PLANNING THEORY

Master Planning

- Traditional town planning
- Planning as concerned with the production of plans/blueprints
- Detailed description of some desired future end state
- Survey-analysis-plan
THE EVOLUTION OF PLANNING THEORY

Systems Planning versus Master Planning

Systems Planning emerged in the 1960s
- Concerned with managing and controlling a particular system
- Planning viewed as a continuous process, atomistic
- ‘Rational’ and ‘comprehensive’

- Devise ways of controlling the system concerned and then monitoring the effects to see how far the controls have been effective or far they need to be further modifications.
Fundamental differences in the approaches

- 1940s: Detail specifications of land use patterns
- Fixed

- 1960s: concentrated instead on the objectives of the plan and on alternative ways of reaching them
- Set out in writing rather than in detailed maps
- Scientific (cf. cybernetics)
- Criticism: human mass behaviour is too complex and unpredictable to be reduced to cybernetic laws.
THE PLANNING PROCESS

• The Systematic Planning Process
  • Constant interaction b/w the planning system and the system(s) it seeks to control

• Its application in mixed economies
  • Two levers: (i) the power to control public investment e.g. roads, airports, schools, hospitals, public housing schemes and (ii) the power to encourage or discourage private sector initiatives
  • The latter achieved via (dis)incentives to industrial development, controls on landuse and environmental regulations
REASONS FOR THE SHIFT

- **First:** Direct response to the criticisms of the master planning
- **Second:** increasing reliance on computers (cybernetics), and technology
- **Third:** opening up of the town planning profession to other disciplines
- **Fourth:** the quantitative revolution in the 1960s
The Planning Process cont'd

- Schematic summaries of the planning process
  1. Brian McLoughlin (simplest)
  2. George Chadwick
  3. Alan Wilson
Decision to adopt planning

Goal formulation: Identification of objectives

Study possible courses of action

Evaluation of alternatives

Implementation

Review
GOAL FORMULATION

- Planning as a general activity may have one objectives are many

- First step in the planning process is to identify these purposes which the planner seeks to achieve, to order them in terms of their importance, and to consider how far they reconcilable each with the other.

- This first phase is divided into three sections or stages: (i) goal formulation (ii) identification of objectives and (iii) the setting of targets
FORECASTING, MODELING AND DESIGN

- Planner seeks to synthesize disparate elements into a coherent plan.

- Design consists of two elements:
  - The first entails the choice of system models
  - The second is the process of evaluation of the alternatives to give a preferred or optimum solution.
EVALUATION

- Evaluation” consists of any process which seeks to order preferences.
  - The use of Cost-benefit analysis
  - Public Consultation
IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

- By systematic evaluation of alternatives, the planner can select a preferred course of action for implementation.
- Capital investment is key

Possible challenges:
  - Changing external environments and technological change
  - Complexities with the interrelationships between different levels of the planning system
  - Changing value systems
REVIEWING AND UPDATING

- Development will not unfold precisely as plan.
- For the plan to be effective over the long-term, periodic review is essential.

- Rarely are objectives perfectly met, and even if they do, other objectives and problems invariably arise.
- Updating should be done at regular intervals.

- Maintaining public interest is vital.
NEW PARADIGMS

- By the late 1970s, Systems Planning also came under heavy criticism
- Main tenets were criticized: (i) the notion that it was scientific (ii) the notion that planning could be value-free (iii) the motion that society was homogeneous
- There was a demand for greater public participation in planning.

- Criticized for its lack of detail on the implementation phase of the planning process
- Other approaches proposed e.g. Linblom’s ‘Disjointed Incrementalism’
TOOLS OF LAND-USE PLANNING

There are two broad categories:
- Public Capital Investments
- Land-Use Controls
PUBLIC CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

- The more powerful shaper of the two
- More fixed

Financing Capital Expenditures
  - Bonds (General Obligation Bonds vs. Revenue Bonds)
  - Public-Private Sector Partnerships
  - Multilateral loans

- Implications of the neo-liberal agenda
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LAND-USE CONTROLS

Subdivision Controls
- Date back to the 19th C
- Control the manner in which blocks of land over a certain size may be converted into building lots.
- Before building plots can be sold or improved the municipality must approve the blueprint
LAND-USE CONTROLS

Subdivision Controls cont’d

- May compel the developer of the property to provide sewer, water and drainage facilities that meet community standards
- Usually require the subdivision to be compatible with the municipal master plan and zoning ordinance
- Give community councils substantial power; can be used to screen out less affluent people
Zoning Ordinances
- Most Popular form of land use control
- Seeks to control land-use through legal regulations

Common Features:
- Site layout regulations e.g. minimum lot area, parking requirements, distance from main road etc.
- Requirements for Structure Characteristics e.g. maximum height of building, number of stories etc.
- Property uses e.g. residential versus commercial
KEY READINGS