Planning History
The Roots of Today’s Decisions

Written and Presented By
Graham Billingsley, AICP
Boulder County
Overview

• History of Planning
  – What are the origins of planning
  – Why we plan
  – The context in which we plan
Overview

• Brief history of urban form
• Description of the issues leading to the planning movement
• Early results of the planning movements
• Recent planning achievements
Urban Form

From *The Urban Pattern* Gallion, Eisner
EARLY CITY BUILDING

Kahun

From The Urban Pattern Gallion, Eisner
EARLY CITY BUILDING

City Form

• Religious
• Political/Defense
• Social/Economic
• Physical constraints
EARLY CITY BUILDING
Political/Social City Form
Miletus 600 BC

From *The Urban Pattern* Gallion, Eisner
EARLY CITY BUILDING
Political/Social City Form
Pompeii
EARLY CITY BUILDING

Religious

Brueges
EARLY CITY BUILDING

Religious
Amsterdam 1625

From *The Making Of Urban American*, John Reps
Suburbs

- Significant number of suburbs were developed in response to the plague in the 13th century.
- The English, and the French, in particular built “country estates” to get out in the open.
- By the 18th century, commoners were able to consider moving out of the cities but staying close by.
Suburbs

Original City within defensive walls
Suburb

Woodcut by Johannes Caper and Michael Petrle, 1562 from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Early American Cities
Physical Constraints
New Amsterdam 1660

From *The Making Of Urban American*, John Reps
Early American Cities
Physical Constraints
St. Louis 1796

From The Making Of Urban American, John Reps
Early City Planning
Gridiron Layout

• Gridiron layout was universal
• It helped speculators, made everyone comfortable they knew what to expect.
• It symbolized the city – curved roads symbolized the country.
Early City Planning
Gridiron Layout

From *The Birth of City Planning* (Harvard Business School)
Early City Planning
Philadelphia 1682

From The Making Of Urban American, John Reps
Early City Planning
St. Augustine 1770

From The Making Of Urban American, John Reps
Early City Planning

Bath – The Royal Crescent 1728
Early City Planning
L’Enfant’s Plan for Washington DC 1791

From *The Making Of Urban American*, John Reps
Early City Planning
Savannah 1800

From *The Making Of Urban American*, John Reps
Western American City
Santa Fe 1766

From The Making Of Urban American, John Reps
Western American City
Colorado Springs 1882

From *The Making Of Urban American*, John Reps
Western Planning Antecedents

- Ordinance of 1785 provided for the rectangular land survey of the old northwest.
Western Planning Antecedents

- Homestead act opened the lands of the public domain to settlers for a nominal fee and five years residence.
Antecedents of Planning

• Population changes
• Overcrowding, congestion
• Sanitation
• Transportation
• Civic art, architecture
Population Change

• Cities were insignificant holding only 5% of the population of the US in 1820.
• This grew over the next 80 years to about 33% as manufacturing and construction attracted emigrants.
Public Health and Safety

• Government involvement in public health and safety of workers
  • 1. Work hours
  • 2. Housing standards
  • 3. Provision of light and air
  • 4. Recreation spaces
Public Health and Safety

• Central water supplies developed 1840s and 1850s
• No waste, or waste water systems being developed until after the Civil War
Public Health – Open Space

Central Park in New York (1866)

From The Birth of City Planning (New York Historical Society)
Public Health – Open Space
Sierra Club founded to promote the protection and preservation of the natural environment. John Muir, Scottish-American naturalist, and a major figure in the history of American environmentalism, was the leading founder.
Public Health – Open Space
National Park Service
1916

- The National Park Service established with sole responsibility for conserving and preserving resources of special value.
Public Health and Safety

- In 1901 New York required building permits
  - 1. permits for construction, alterations, and conversions
  - 2. inspection upon completion
  - 3. penalties for noncompliance
Public Health and Safety

- 4. permanent department to administer
- 5. under light and air courts between structures, or internal to structures
- 6. toilet and running water in each apartment
- 7. no more than 70% lot coverage
Public Health and Safety

• Prohibition of slaughterhouses in residential areas in San Francisco (1867)
Public Health and Safety

New York Tenement House Law

From *The Urban Pattern* Gallion, Eisner
Social - Economic
The Garden City Movement - Ebenezer Howard

From: *Tomorrow: A peaceful Path to Real Reform*
Social - Economic
The Garden City Movement - Ebenezer Howard
Letchworth
Social - Economic
The Garden City Movement - Welwyn Garden City
Civic Improvement
The Problem
Downtown

Macy’s, New York, 1908
Manufacturing

Bridgeport, Connecticut
The City Beautiful Movement
Columbia Exposition

From The Birth of City Planning (Art Institute of Chicago)
Chicago Plan
1909
Cleveland Plan
1899

From The Birth of City Planning (Harvard College Library)
Washington, D.C.
McMillan Plan

From *The Birth of City Planning* (Harvard Design School)
Washington, D.C.
McMillan Plan

From *The Birth of City Planning* (Harvard Design School)
20\textsuperscript{th} Century Issues

- Planning becomes accepted
- Population shifts continue
- Economic changes drive change
Modern American Planning
Riverside, Illinois 1868
Modern American Planning
Pullman, Illinois
Modern American Planning
Pullman, Illinois
Modern American Planning

From The Birth of City Planning (Harvard Design School)
American City Planning Institute
1917

• Technical body made of up individuals knowledgeable in planning
• Offered their services to the war department, designed 20+ U.S. Army base camps built almost overnight.
World War I

• Emergency fleet corporation (federal agency) appointed a town planner to build worker housing for the ship building industry

• The U.S. Housing corporation (under the labor department) similarly appointed a town planner and contributed to the effort of the EFC
Modern American Planning
The Comprehensive Plan

• The first comprehensive plan was passed by the planning commission in Cincinnati in 1926 authored by Alfred Bettman and Ladislas Segoe
  – A long term plan
  – Capital improvements plan
  – Transportation plan
  – Basis for the zoning plan
City Planning Movement

• In the 1920’s planning continued to take root.
  – Zoning became accepted and commonplace
  – Planning commissions increased from 100 in 1915 to 650 by 1929
Legal History

- **Case Citation:** Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Company 272 U.S. 365 (1926).
- **Parties:** Plaintiff - Village of Euclid; Defendant - Ambler Realty Company
- **Court:** Supreme Court of the United States
- **Decision:** Zoning is a proper use of the police powers
Historic Preservation

1921

- New Orleans designates the Vieux Carre commission, the first historic preservation commission in the U.S.
Legal History

• U.S. Department of commerce under secretary Herbert Hoover issues the Standard City Planning Enabling Act in 1928.

• Adopted by most states over the next decade.
Modern American Planning
Radburn
Modern American Planning
Radburn
The Great Depression

• The federal government steps in.

• 28 states passes moratoria on mortgage foreclosures leading to the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in 1932.

• In 1932 the Home Owners Loan Corporation was created. By 1936 they had loaned $3 billion.
The Great Depression
1933

- Tennessee Valley Authority created to provide for unified and multipurpose rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Tennessee Valley, America’s most famous experiment in river-basin planning. Senator George Norris of Idaho fathered the idea and David Lilienthal was its most effective implementer.
The Great Depression

• 1934 National Housing Act created the Federal Housing Administration. By 1941, the FHA had insured over $3 billion in loans.
The Great Depression
The Great Depression

- In 1935 the Resettlement Administration was created to rehabilitate the agricultural economy.
- Resettlement Administration established under Rexford Tugwell, Roosevelt “braintrust,” to carry out experiments in land reform and population resettlement. This agency built the three Greenbelt towns.
The Great Depression
Greenbelt Towns
Greenbelt, Maryland
The Great Depression

Greenbelt Towns
Greenbelt, Maryland
The Great Depression
Greenbelt Towns
Greenhills, Ohio
The Great Depression

Greenbelt Towns

Greenhills, Ohio
The Great Depression
Urban Renewal

• The Reconstruction Finance Corporation was created in 1932. This led to slum clearance programs.
The Great Depression

Urban Renewal

Williamsburg Houses
The Great Depression

Subsidized Housing

Baldwin Hills
The Great Depression
Urban Renewal

• The United States Housing Act (Wagner-Steagall) was passed in 1937 to be the funding agency for local housing authorities. It appropriated $500 million for loans.
City Planning Movement

- City planning movement faltered
- Government infusion kept planning alive
- The change in development patterns with significant inner city flight changed America’s interest in planning
Suburbs

Levittown
Housing Acts
1949

• Housing Act (Wagner-Ellender-Taft Bill). First U.S. comprehensive housing legislation.
• First U.S. comprehensive housing legislation.
• Aimed to construct about 800,000 units.
• Inaugurated urban redevelopment program.
Housing Acts
1954

- Housing Act of 1954 stressed slum prevention and urban renewal rather than clearance and urban redevelopment, as in the 1949 act. Also stimulated general planning for cities under 25,000 population by providing funds under Section 701 of the act. “701 funding” later extended by legislative amendments to foster statewide, interstate, and sub state regional planning.
Highway Act

• Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 proposed 41,000 miles of interstate highways for the entire country.
Discrimination

• The effect of racial discrimination on cities was profound.
  – Redlining by banks.
  – Public housing segregation.
  – Exclusionary zoning.
Discrimination
Recent Activity

- After the decline of the federal programs most planning became process. The era of the grand idea was gone, but the issues remained.
Recent Planning Achievements

• Hawaii passed the first state-wide planning legislation in 1980
Recent Planning Achievements

Columbia, Maryland New Town
Recent Planning Achievements

- Civil rights legislation outlaws discrimination based on race, creed, and national origin in places of public accommodation
Recent Planning Achievements

- In 1968 A-95 review was created requiring state and sub-state regional clearinghouses to review and comment on federally assisted projects to facilitate coordination among the three levels of government
Recent Planning Achievements

• In 1969, Environmental Impact Statements are required or every federal or federally aided state or local major action that might significantly harm the environment
Recent Planning Achievements

• In 1970, the Clean Water Act is passed and the EPA is set up to administer it.
Recent Planning Achievements

- In 1973, the Endangered Species act passed
Recent Planning Achievements

New Urbanism
Recent Planning Achievements

- Passage of Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)
Summary

• Why do we plan and what is planning?
• Health and safety – water, sewer, transportation.
  – Public health became a major cause affecting cities in the mid 19th century.
  – Air, light, open space, separation of noxious uses from others started reshaping our cities.
Summary

• Social – development of community, recreation.
  – Planning started because people require organization to function well.
  – Cities were organized around religious, political, defense, social, economic structures, and practices, and/or physical constraints.
  – Aesthetics added to this sense of community.
Summary

• Economic – jobs, taxes, wealth
  – Cities developed around trade
  – Cities changed and developed centers that served regions
  – Public investment to help with jobs and housing was made to improve social and economic life

• Environmental – open space, clean water, clean air