Planning, Administrative Organization of

APU, the director is personally under a lot of external pressure, and, like a beleaguered military commander, may feel the need for internal secrecy and control, especially if the situational scenario shifts from stability to complexity or conflict.

In large APU's, especially within a complexity scenario, there are benefits to adopting the decentralized form and using the stakeholder approach, but they depend on developing an internal cooperation culture. By setting up different units to plan for subsections of the society, the scale of the planning product becomes more manageable. With responsibility for product delegated, the director is under less immediate political pressure. The weakness of this approach only surfaces when there are insufficient resources to supply all the divisions with adequate technical knowledge, and/or the need arises to make the divisional plans consistent with each other from a larger perspective.

Conflict scenarios present the most difficult situations to deal with, especially if the technical or consistency component of the plans is important. It is dangerous to use the constituency approach, because the APU may lose apex support if the elected officials feel threatened by this outreach into their electorate. However, if the director can build an internal culture of cooperation sufficient to support a matrix form, it is possible to blend a set of procedures and products adequate to the challenge, but, it is no sure thing. In the final analysis, urban planning is an art, not a science—in administrative organization as well as urban form.

See also: Administration in Organizations; Decision Making, Psychology of; Leadership in Organizations, Psychology of; Leadership in Organizations, Sociology of; Management: General; Organizational Climate; Organizational Culture; Anthropology of; Organizational Decision Making, Organizations, Sociology of; Planning Theory: Interaction with Institutional Contexts; Urban Places, Planning for the Use of: Design Guide

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Planning Ethics

Planning ethics refers to the integration of ideas from the fields of planning and moral philosophy, or ethics. As such, it covers a vast terrain of issues in planning theory and practice. Contrary to terms such as 'ethics in planning' or 'ethics of planning,' planning ethics does not privilege either planning or ethics; nor does it connote only a descriptive representation of values in planning. Instead, it is intended to depict the fact that planners and planning can benefit from incorporating ideas from moral philosophy into planning thought and professional endeavors. Further, ethics can also benefit by gaining insight as to how concepts in moral philosophy actually work in practice. Both disciplines may then be more effective in prescribing courses of action in human settlements (planning) and developing theoretical approaches of how persons ought to behave (ethics).

1. Ethical Content in Planning

Planning ethics may be divided according to several different analytic schemes. Wachs (1985) developed a particularly comprehensive and useful typology in this regard. As supplemented by Hendler (1995), it represents a way of discussing planning ethics with reference to five aspects of planning theory and practice. These attributes are: everyday behavior, plan making, administrative discretion, planning techniques, and normative planning theory. In each category are examples of descriptive analyses in which researchers describe and discuss the values planners actually have (e.g., Howe 1995, Gowdy and Hendler 1999) as well as normative analyses where planners advocate particular approaches to planning ethics (e.g., Beatley 1994, Harper and Stein 1993).

1.1 Everyday Behavior

Everyday behavior pertains to the fact that planners are, as persons or moral agents, subject to the same ethical guidelines as everyone else, although their professional status may give rise to particular rights.
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and responsibilities. Thus, planners may be judged according to the consequences of their actions (consequentialist ethics) or with reference to the inherent characteristics of the actions themselves (nonconsequentialist or deontological ethics). Consequentialist approaches to planning ethics include most prominently utilitarianism with its focus on creating the greatest amount of utility from either individual actions (act-utilitarianism) or actions arising from the application of ethical rules (rule-utilitarianism). Nonconsequentialist approaches, on the other hand, include Kantian ethics with its interest in the ethical treatment of persons as ends and not (only) means. While Kantian and utilitarian perspectives continue to attract much attention in philosophical and planning circles (e.g., Howe 1990, 1995), other consequential and nonconsequential ethical approaches have also proven attractive to planners and philosophers alike; these include, but are not limited to, communitarianism (e.g., Bienen 1995) which emphasizes community practices and virtues, environmental ethics (e.g., Beatley 1994, Jacobs 1995) which focuses on the relationships between and among humans and nonhuman components of our environments, and feminist ethics (e.g., Hendler 1994, Ritzdorf 1995) which attempts to incorporate into our considerations of moral issues the notions of care, trust, nurturing, and eradicating all forms of oppression. Communicative or discourse ethics (e.g., Benhabib 1992), too, has become an important part of contemporary ethical thinking and refers to procedural accounts of how one should make ethical decisions, with the presumption that, if one adheres to the rules guiding such a procedure, the outcome should, by definition, be good or right. This approach may be seen as underlying models of planning processes that emphasize consensus building and/or communicative rationality (e.g., Forester 1989).

Considerations of planners’ everyday actions that are based on these sorts of ethical ideas include evaluations of behaviors corresponding to planners as professionals and nonprofessionals. Professionals are often seen as having added moral obligations in contrast to nonprofessionals, given their status in society. Doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, and planners, among others, are trusted with going beyond motivations of profit and self-interest and focusing instead on the public interest. This status is accompanied by particular responsibilities for specialized knowledge not easily accessible to nonprofessionals, and self-regulation in the face of this specialization (Bickenbach and Hendler 1994). Specific behaviors addressed in this first category of planning ethics include, among others: avoiding conflict of interest; maintaining appropriate relationships with clients, employees, and colleagues; advertising one’s services in certain manners; practicing within one’s area and scope of competence; providing independent professional advice; and treating information appropriately whether in terms of confidentiality or disclosure in reference to considerations of the public interest. Providing ethical guidance for planners facing decisions in these and related areas is central to this first aspect of planning ethics that focuses on everyday behavior.

1.2 Plan Making

Plan making is that part of planning having to do with the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of plans, programs, and policies. Together, these sorts of normative statements have ethical implications in that certain amenities or disamenities are distributed or redistributed among citizens (and nonhuman components of our environments) in ways that benefit certain individuals or groups and impose costs on others. Assessing the implications of such decisions and actions pertains directly to the ethical theories and approaches listed above. Kantian-based ethics, for example, may be applied via a Rawlsian perspective in which resources are said to be distributed equally or, if inequity exists, so as to improve the situation of disadvantaged segments of the population in question. Examining the consequences of a planning document using a utilitarian calculus of costs and benefits is also common (see Sect. 1.4). Whichever ethical theory is used, however, is immaterial to the central idea that almost every decision made by planners potentially provides benefits and harms to individuals, groups, neighborhoods, or jurisdictions, and that this result has ethical implications associated with it. The importance of examining the (usually implicit) underlying assumptions and resulting implications of the ethical directions of plans, programs, and policies is the focus of this area of planning ethics.

1.3 Administrative Discretion

Administrative discretion refers to the ambiguity in planners’ roles in their working environments. A number of roles have been proposed, ranging from advocate to technician to mediator to social learner (e.g., Gunton 1984). The fact that a planner’s role is not discretely and concretely prescribed via the planner’s professional organization and/or work environment means that considerable latitude may exist in the planner’s determination of an appropriate or desirable way-of-being in professional planning work. Planners thus may exercise discretion in selecting for themselves a role (or roles) but this decision must be subject to ethical scrutiny. Whether, for instance, a planner may in fact explicitly advocate for a particular point of view is a controversial issue in this area of planning ethics. While, as suggested in the discussion of plan making above, any plan or program or policy does necessarily advocate for one course of action as opposed to
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others, what and how such directions are advocated is sometimes seen as problematic within planning organizations.

In addition to choices among roles is the fact that administrative discretion highlights the issue of accountability in that planners are not elected officials and yet they may represent the interests of one group over another at any one point in time and in any given plan-making exercise. While such an affiliation may be couched in terms of the public interest, any value-laden connection between planning and developers on the one hand and environmentalists or social justice advocates on the other, for example, may be regarded as an improper exercise of the planner’s discretion regarding that planner’s role. Despite the fact that this representation of planning work is rooted in the largely outmoded conception of planning as value-free technical work, planners must acknowledge and address the fact that their discretion may be perceived as potentially troublesome.

1.4 Planning Techniques

Planning techniques are those methods or processes followed by planners in preparing or evaluating their plans, programs, and policies. Planners have a considerable array of analytic techniques at their disposal. Cost–benefit analysis, risk assessment, environmental assessment, program evaluation, participatory methods, and many others may be included in this regard. These techniques may aid a planner in deciding a course of action to follow or in assessing the effects of particular actions on different publics. Most of these techniques, and perhaps especially cost–benefit analysis, is based on a connected conceptually and methodologically to utilitarianism, as follows. First, utilitarianism relies upon the quantification of ‘goods’ and ‘harm’ so that both can be summed and compared. This is a starting point, too, for cost–benefit analysis in which costs and benefits are identified, measured, added, and contrasted in order to determine whether a course of action would result in more benefits than costs. Second, this sort of conclusion is clearly based on utilitarian thinking in which a maximum amount of good is sought.

The fact that planning techniques are linked to ethical theories is not particularly troubling. This kind of observation attests to the post-positivist world in which we find ourselves where the planner is not regarded as a value-free technician but as an individual who necessarily brings certain biases, values, and conceptual lenses to their work. Similar, then, to contemporary views of science, defining one’s perspective and unearthing one’s assumptions is an essential first step in doing research and in doing planning. While this approach to science and to planning continues to be debated, an issue arising from the mere association of certain ethical approaches to certain planning techniques remains. This is the fact that techniques based on consequential or utilitarian thinking can be seen as over-represented in planning ethics in that methods based more on nonconsequential thinking do not have the prominence of their philosophical cousins. One branch of moral philosophy thus gets short shrift in helping planners to develop and evaluate plans—a branch that is generally regarded as just as viable and important as consequential approaches. Lake (1993) discusses one aspect of this phenomenon in the context of feminist ethics and techniques based on geographical information systems (GIS). He argues that the data-aggregation focus on GIS is incompatible with the focus on the ‘concrete other’ (Benhabib 1992) in feminism. The same could be said of other ethical theories that attempt to highlight individual experiences and inherent value (the ‘right’) as opposed to formulaic assessments of consequences (the ‘good’). Uncovering assumptions and seeking a broader distribution of ethical underpinnings for planning techniques is of central importance to this area of planning ethics.

1.5 Normative Planning Theory

With its focus on the nature and intent of planning as a profession, as well as its scope or mandate, normative planning theory falls clearly within the realm of ethical analysis. What the planning profession should profess (Haworth 1984) is a question that demands this sort of scrutiny.

There have been many disparate suggestions regarding the ethical mandate of planning. Udy (1980) proposed that the four eternal values of goodness, beauty, truth, and love lay at the heart of planning and should be recognized as the normative direction for planning initiatives. Blanco (1995) developed an alternative list that included reason, community, environment, and democracy. Krumholz and others (e.g., Krumholz and Forester 1990) have written and practiced extensively in the area of equity planning, and Davidoff (1978, pp. 69–70) forcefully asserted that,

if a planner is not working directly for the objective of eradicating poverty and racial and sexual discrimination, then she or he is counterproductive. If the work is not specific in its redistributive aims, then it is at best inefficient. If the work is not aimed at redistribution, then a presumption stands that it is amoral. These must be. So long as poverty and racism exist in our society, there is an ethical imperative for a single direction in planning.

In the face of these conflicting sets of values, the field and profession of planning continue to have a normative nature that can only be called ambiguous. Each professional planning organization defines for itself its
central ethical values and then applies them in creating a regulatory structure for its practitioners. In contrast, then, to the fundamental pursuit of health in medicine and the quest for justice in law, planning cannot express its basic ethical norms as succinctly nor with as much certainty. Developing such a rubric or becoming more accepting of a diverse set of principles of moral guidance is a key part of this last aspect of planning ethics.

2. Regulating Planning Ethics

All of these ethical aspects of professional behavior are addressed in the codes of professions such as planning (see, e.g., Hendler 1990). Codes of conduct, especially, provide ethical guidance in the form of rules, sanctions, and encouragement towards, or away from, particular behaviors. Codes of ethics are more general and are usually seen as articulating a normative basis for the profession in the form of values that are thought to be central to the professional community in question. In planning, these values often include environmental integrity, public participation, holistic decision making in terms of temporal, geographic, and disciplinary scope, and a respect for social justice and a multitude of diversities. While not easily enforceable, codes of ethics provide for a unified voice of the moral intent of a profession and contribute to community building and identity formation within a profession such as planning.

Codes of conduct are used in assessing the behavior of individual professionals and, if necessary, imposing sanctions if the rules under scrutiny are found to have been violated. Suspension, financial penalty, expulsion, and education/counselling are examples of the kinds of sanctions levied by professional organizations. In that planners rarely have to be certified to practice their work, considerable debate is directed towards the licensing of planners and attendant issues regarding their discipline. While some planning institutions are content to regulate only their own members and show little concern for the behaviors of non-members, others have endeavored to expand their membership and refine the notion of planning so that only their members may refer to themselves as professional planners.

Together, codes of ethics and conduct may be seen as a bridge linking abstract moral theories and practical work such as planning in that the sorts of ethical issues discussed here are articulated precisely and resulting discussions may shed light on the implications of different ethical ideas ‘on the ground.’ As such, codes are growing and developing documents that have evolved significantly during the past two decades of planning ethics discussions. They themselves have also stimulated much in the way of discussion regarding the efficacy of the values they present as being good or right (e.g., Lucy 1988).

Through the processes employed in formulating a code and in subsequent discussions and revisions, planning ethics has enjoyed much in the way of constructive critique (e.g., Kaufman 1990). Some planning organizations go beyond codes per se in educating their members about ethics and contributing to the interpretation of their codes by publishing ethical advisories that apply given sections of a code to a particular planning issue (e.g., AICP 1996). As the sophistication of planning ethics discourse increases, codes and planning practice can only be expected to benefit from an enhanced understanding of, and perhaps consensus about, the fundamental values that underlie planning activities.

3. Planning Ethics in Theory, Practice, and Education

Discussions of planning ethics have been most pervasive in planning theory where philosophical analyses of planning and planners are commonplace. It is here that arguments regarding the central tenets and values of planning have arisen, and varying normative models of planning have been developed. Planning practice, however, has only recently begun to emphasize planning ethics in the form of increasingly comprehensive and thoughtful professional codes, as well as enhanced disciplinary proceedings. Empirical analyses of planners’ values and accompanying ethical approaches have assisted in our constructing snapshots of the moral terrain in which planners have placed themselves. While consensus is not apparent, certain loci of values around environmental integrity, social justice, and democratic decision making often emerge. In addition to such descriptive studies are normative assessments of planning activities that include both subfields of planning such as transportation, environment, education planning, waste management, etc. (e.g., Hendler 1995, Beatley 1994), as well as specific planning behaviors (e.g., Howe 1995).

Planning education, which usually has the intent of both training future professionals as well as being part of universities, where intellectual growth and development is a priority, has begun to ‘mainstream’ discussions of planning ethics in its curricula. Far from inculcating particular values, teaching about ethics in planning programs usually has the goal of helping students engage in rigorous ethical analysis as well as preparing them to practice in a profession which espouses certain principles. Thus, values are presented along with the means to examine them critically. This performs the dual function of satisfying planning institute expectations regarding the education of future professionals as well as the more academic intent of teaching students how to think clearly and coherently. Having the skill of developing and critiquing logical arguments helps students and professionals work through ethical dilemmas they will certainly.
4. Challenges in Planning Ethics

While the value-laden nature of planning endeavors is generally accepted, certain challenges and questions remain. Examples of these include the following. The similarities and differences between public and private planners continue to be analyzed in terms of their moral obligations. The fast-encroaching world of computer technologies and associated planning applications remains examined in terms of the fit of these technologies and the moral intentions of the planners and the planning profession they serve. As planning becomes broader substantively with focuses on land use planning but also on social planning, health planning, environmental planning, etc., it remains to be seen whether a single professional organization may be appropriate to govern planners' activities. Further, addressing planning issues in ways that not only accommodate but also celebrate racial, ethnic, sexual, and other forms of diversity continues to occupy the interests of many people who write about and practice planning. Current emphases on planning processes and public participation contribute to resolving such issues but do not address questions regarding such processes as issues of identity, representation, method, and practical considerations regarding the efficient use of planning resources. Empowerment, while often discussed in the context of planning theory, is seldom found in planning codes. Economic development, though central to the 1990s climate of planning, is not well represented in the ethical guidance supplied to planners. And so on. Clearly, planning will continue to have much to consider in the way of discussions regarding its ethical mandate and the methods to be employed in addressing the issues that arise within the context of its thought and practice.

As ethics has highlighted for planners the values in their work, and the need to address critically the values that lie at the base of their theories and their practices, so, too, has planning underscored the importance of discussing ethical issues with an eye to the application of any theoretical stance based in moral philosophy. Thus, planning ethics, as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry and one which does not rest on the laurels of either 'parent' discipline (i.e., planning or ethics), planning ethics promises to contribute to an especially critical and grounded approach to posing, and answering, the sorts of questions and challenges listed here.

See also: Environmental Conservation; Ethical Concerns; Environmental Justice; Ethical Practices, Institutional Oversight, and Enforcement: United States Perspectives; Ethics and Values; Neighborhood Re-vitalization and Community Development; Planning Issues and Sustainable Development; Planning, Politics of

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Planning Issues and Sustainable Development

'Sustainable development' or 'sustainability' for short simply means that in a global context any economic or social development should improve and not harm the environment. This concept has developed from a global political process over the last three decades of the twentieth century into one that now touches every part of society. Sustainability has cut across all disciplines and professions, and has developed many complexities in relation to how people plan for their futures (Pezzoli 1997). Its application to planning is full of interest and controversy.

Town and regional planning has its origins firmly in a desire to improve the environment and create a better future. The visions of Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Geddes, and Lewis Mumford, for example, were all rooted in the need to make a greener city. Today there are many planners who use sustainability to rationalize why they are planning the way they do. This article will try to clarify the ways that sustainability is shaping how planning is done, as well as the differences in the ways that planners relate to sustainable development.

The issues relating to sustainability that appear to be uniting planners are:

(a) How necessary it is to use holistic planning frameworks; and

(b) How planning processes must start with community/civil society perspectives.

The issues which appear to divide planners are:

(a) How planners view the size of cities; and

(b) How planners view density and car dependence.

Some resolution will be attempted on these issues.

1. The Concept of Sustainability

Sustainable development was defined by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 after they were given the task of resolving the apparent global conflict between development and the environment (WCED 1987). They concluded that it is possible to develop the world in a way that improves the environment if:

(a) High income nations see their responsibility to reduce their resource consumption with every new step in the development process;

(b) Low income nations direct development to those who need it most as only then will population growth stabilize and misuse of natural resources begin to ease;

(c) All nations need to see development as meeting community goals, thus development must be inherently a 'bottom up' process; and,

(d) All professions and disciplines need to adjust to a more holistic, integrated approach if sustainability is to be converted into real change.

The thrust of this article is that, within the sustainable development framework of thinking, there are clear differences in what planners are suggesting sustainability means for cities. However, the overall situation cannot be seen as just a series of raging controversies, and indeed there are substantial areas of agreement.

2. The Agreements: Holistic Frameworks and New Planning Processes in the Age of Sustainability

Dyck (1998) suggests that sustainability is a concept which challenges prevailing planning theory because planning has emerged primarily from a modernist social context. In this perspective, modernism has associated growth or development with increased resource use, trickle-down economics, and 'expert-oriented' planning. Very few planners are, however, espousing a modernist view in the new millennium, and even the World Bank seems to agree with the basic conceptions of how sustainable development should now be viewed (Leitmann 1999). In particular, the areas of emerging agreement are the need for new, more holistic planning frameworks and community-sensitive planning processes.

2.1 Holistic Frameworks

The principles of sustainability outlined above can be applied to cities, though the guidance on how this can be done was not very clear in Agenda 21 and other UN documents. It is probably true to say that the major environmental battles of the past were fought outside cities, but that awareness of the need to come back to cities is now recognized universally by environmentalists, government, and industry (United Nations Center for Human Settlements 1996).

Anders (1991), in a global review of the sustainable cities movement, pointed out that 'The sustainable cities movement seems united in its perception that the state of the environment demands action and that cities are an appropriate forum in which to act' (p. 17).

One of the strongest themes running through the literature on urban sustainability is that, to solve problems, planners need to view the city as an ecosystem. As Tjallingii (1993, p. 7) puts it: 'The city is