



Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Dutch and United States Growth Management Strategies: is a planning convergence on the horizon?

By Maarten Georgius & Leonie Janssen-Jansen

JANUARY 2005

Introduction

Can American planners learn from European-style planning that is highly regulated at all levels of government and often has an important focus on governmental steering? Or should Dutch planners follow the United States' trends towards Smart Growth? Even though the American planning system and the Dutch planning system have quite different natures, they address a similar goal: guiding development in such a way that quality of life is enhanced. Recently the Dutch moved from a top-down growth control system, that

included strict rules governing where growth could and could not go, to a growth management approach.

Despite skepticism

about the more liberal United States' model of Smart Growth among Dutch advocates of growth control, some elements of the United States' approach might be of interest to European planners. However, American planners also can—and some find they should—learn from their European counterparts, who have a long and successful growth management history. This article elaborates these lessons on both sides.

The Dutch Growth Control model moves on to Growth Management

The Netherlands is one of the world's most densely populated countries. The population numbers approximately 16 million and is continuing to increase steadily. Growth is controlled by regulations and policies at the national, province and city level. Economic and population growth keep the Netherlands in a constant state of reconstruction. Careful

spatial planning policy is needed to meet the increasing demand for land for houses, offices, factories, and infrastructure. Additional land is needed to support recreation, nature conservation, extensive agriculture, livestock farming and horticulture. It is becoming increasingly difficult to meet all these needs without damaging spatial quality.

Recently, the highly ambitious and somewhat famous Dutch growth control policy—consisting of a comprehensive and extended planning policy with a conservative character—seems to have been abandoned. Highlights of the newly adopted National Spatial Strategy include fewer rules and regulations dictated by the national government; more scope for local and regional consideration, and more development planning coupled with less development control.

The emphasis on financial and operational agreements within U.S. planning has drawn a lot of attention in the Netherlands. Opponents and critics fear unfettered developments and do not believe that the provinces and municipalities are sufficiently alert to stop the project developers from covering the entire Dutch countryside with buildings. Advocates believe that a market-based planning approach will improve spatial quality, and that it is possible to guide developments such that they evolve in the most optimal place. The innovative concepts behind the U.S. Smart Growth movement and the way it deals with market parties in the planning system is of special interest to Dutch planners. Tools such as concurrency (pay as you grow), conversion (transferable development rights), containment (urban growth boundaries) and carrots (incentives and disincentives) are seen as opportunities for Dutch developmental planning. As cities within the Netherlands reach capacity, opportunities

The emphasis on financial and operational agreements within U.S. planning has drawn a lot of attention in the Netherlands.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

by Hing Wong

Our Holiday Party at the Majestic Hotel was completely packed with fun-filled planners. The Hotel Majestic, built in 1902, was the private residence of Milton Schmidt, railroad magnate and member of the California State Legislature. It survived the fires caused by the Great Earthquake of 1906. Many dressed the part of the Barbary Coast Ball for this year's theme. Thanks to the Holiday Party Committee lead by Juan Borrelli, for organizing the festive event as well as our sponsors: RBF Consulting and Pacific Municipal Consultants.

In your postal mailbox, you should have received a copy of the 2005 APA National Conference official program. We are offering many exciting conference sessions and mobile workshops, so please take a look and sign up! For our special evening events, we have a night at the beach (Beach Blanket Babylon), a wine tasting extravaganza, and an evening at the Empress (Chinese) Restaurant. Go to www.planning.org/2005conference and www.apa2005sf.com for more information.

We finally have a full Board with all positions filled with capable planners here to serve you! Please welcome **Hanson Hom** as our Ethics Review Director and **Pat Collins** as our Awards Program Director. Hanson is currently the Community Development Director for the City of San Leandro. Pat is a Senior Project Manager with Winzler & Kelly Consulting Engineers in Santa Rosa. We welcome **Ladd Miyasaki** as our North Bay RAC Director. Ladd is a "third-generation farmer, turned planner" in Sonoma County.

Our Board retreat met on Saturday, January 22 in San Francisco. We're excited about the many things that we already have planned for 2005 and we know it'll be an eventful year. Have a happy new year!



Holiday Party guests enjoy the Hotel Majestic's ambience.



Beautiful silent auction items organized by Jennifer Andersen, Northern Section International Director and 2004 Holiday Party Impresario.

Please turn to page 6 to see more Holiday Party photos.

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The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the **Northern News** is the 16th day of the month prior to publication.



Web Picks

Check out APA's
Special Division
Websites & Publications



APA has many special divisions covering a wide range of interesting subtopics and specialties in the wide world of planning. Listed below are a few you might try, some of them quite new. The full list of APA Divisions is posted on the APA website at <http://www.planning.org/divisions/>

Many of these groups have their own websites and publications. Have you checked them out lately?

Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy:

<http://www.planning.org/divisions/intro/environment.htm>

Indigenous Planning Division:

<http://www.planning.org/divisions/intro/indigenous/>

Planning and the Black Community:

<http://www.planning.org/divisions/intro/planningblack.htm>

Transportation Planning:

www.apa-tpd.org

Small Town and Rural Planning:

www.starplanning.org

New Urbanism:

<http://www.planning.org/newurbanism/>

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The call for nominations in the November issue of the newsletter generated the following responses.

For the position of Northern Section Director

Hing Wong, AICP

Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments

Director, Northern Section of the California Chapter of the American Planning Association

P.O. Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050

Position Statement

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your Section Director for the past two years. Since taking office, we have continued our commitment by offering professional development and social networking events for all of our members, and yet we have the opportunity to do even more. With the APA National Conference in San Francisco coming up, we have the chance to showcase our region for all planners attending from throughout the country. I look forward to the opportunity to serve one additional term as the Northern Section Director and I plan to continue the progress we've made as a professional organization.

Please mail ballots by February 28 to:

Juan Borrelli, AICP

City of San Jose Department of Planning

801 North First Street, Room 400

San José, CA 95110

For the Position of Administrative Director

Kevin Harper, AICP, Associate

Wallace, Roberts & Todd

1328 Mission Street, 4th Floor

San Francisco, CA 94103

Position Statement

As a member of the Northern Section for six years now, I along with other members have benefited from the strong and active leadership of the Section Board. Such benefits include the Northern News; a comprehensive annual awards program; a variety of professional development opportunities; a range of social events that celebrate our profession and build camaraderie; and strong representation of our region within California and beyond. I feel that I can contribute to the continued high level of service provided to Section members and to the exploration of further opportunities to support and enhance our profession in the region. My 12 years of experience in both the private and public sectors in the U.S and Canada will serve me well as a member of the Section Board. In addition, my contacts with planning professionals in the Bay Area will allow me to assist the Section in continuing to reach out to practicing planners. I look forward to the opportunity to serve the Northern Section and our profession as a member of the Board.

BALLOT

Northern Section
California Chapter
American Planning
Association

Elected Positions

Northern Section Director

Hing Wong, AICP

Administrative Director

Kevin Harper, AICP

Dutch ... *(continued from page 1)*

exist for Dutch planners to employ some or all of these tools on a more regional basis. For example, TDR's could be employed between two cities, where one city no longer has developable land but has a need for additional housing.

Inspiration from the Dutch?

The United States has huge internal variation in its land use policy. Unlike many other countries, the United States does not have a national land-use planning law or any other national law that would be construed as its functional equivalent. Furthermore, there is no commonly accepted national land-use policy emanating from the executive or legislative branches that guides national executive or legislative actions. Additionally, the states are seldom involved in local land use and development decisions; these have been delegated to the city councils and boards of supervisors of the individual cities and counties.

Although land continues to be viewed as a plentiful resource, that may be freely exploited by private landowners, communities across the country increasingly see the need for sustainable urban and rural development. After 50 years of sprawl, community residents and governing bodies are now seeking development alternatives that offer mixed-use, pedestrian-scale, and environmentally sensitive development—the type of development that is reflected in the Smart Growth initiatives. A striking difference between the Dutch and American systems is the way development is directed. In the United States, the initiative for urban and rural development lies primarily with the private sector, while the government acts more as a facilitator and regulator.

The Dutch planning system can be an important source of inspiration for American planners. In the Netherlands the top down spatial steering tradition is very dominant and has resulted in limited sprawl, compared to the sprawl in the U.S. Localized planning, as opposed to market planning, has contributed a lot to the country's spatial quality. American planners might benefit from taking a closer look at this kind of planning.

Other interesting lessons from Dutch planning policies include the much larger spatial dimension. In the Netherlands land is scarce and every square meter of the country serves some purpose. 'Unused' areas have a function—either as a natural area, or as a reserve for future development. This containment is about 'green boundaries'. Instead of urban growth boundaries (within which developments should take place), these are natural protection zones (national and regional landscapes) or non-growth boundaries. This might be a valuable addition to the growth boundaries in the US.

Maps and spatial metaphors are crucial elements in the Dutch spatial policy-making process. Working with more elaborate maps and concepts might increase the regional support for Smart Growth. An additional learning point is the many initiatives to work together, across professions and jurisdictions. This Dutch Polder Model, implying continuous deliberation between many actors, has proven to have value in negotiation or compromising processes in the Netherlands.

Planning convergence?

It is interesting to note that both countries are moving towards each other concerning

(continued on next page)

JOBS

Thomas Reid Associates

Environmental Consultant

Established environmental consulting firm located in Menlo Park, California, is offering a mid-level position for a person with several years experience in preparing CEQA documents. Duties include researching, writing, and helping to coordinate the preparation of EIRs and Initial Studies on a variety of project types, as well as providing support to senior staff. Experience with client contact, public representation, and marketing a plus. Pay based on experience. Benefits. Equal Opportunity Employer. Send resume and cover letter by e-mail to Serena Salomon, Thomas Reid Associates, Salomon@traenviro.com. <http://www.traenviro.com/>

Cycling San Francisco

By Kristin Drumm, Planner, Marin County Community Development Agency

What innovative strategies are urban communities employing to make bicycling a key component of a sustainable transportation system? A number of Bay Area cities are looking beyond traditional methods to incorporate bicycling into everyday life. For instance, in an effort to address the needs of bicyclists and achieve the goal of making bicycling an integral part of daily life to improve the quality of life for its residents, the City and County of San Francisco has implemented a number of infrastructure improvements that support bicycling as a viable transportation alternative. What exciting new improvements has San Francisco made? One innovation is the use of the “sharrow” pavement marking, or bike-and-chevron symbol, to indicate shared lane use by bicyclists and motor vehicles, modeled after similar efforts in Paris, France and Oakland, California.

Other improvements include numbered bicycle route signs, a street converted to bicycle-only use, a 500-foot long bicycle inspired mural along the Duboce Bikeway, a groundbreaking road diet/lane removal bike lane project, a traffic signal redesigned to give cyclists a protected turn, a rebuilt intersection/roadway with atypical bicycle accommodation, a “beyond-the-manual” design for accommodating cyclists through a difficult double run lane situation, and on-street bicycle parking.



“Sharrow” lane marking

As part of the 2005 National American Planning Association Conference in San Francisco, participants will be able to rent bicycles and attend a Mobile Workshop called “San Francisco Urban Bikeways” to tour firsthand the bicycle facilities that helped rank San Francisco as one of the best cities (for its size) in North America for bicycling. This easy to moderate bicycle tour will be 8 to 10 miles long.

Participants will learn how these facilities affected road users in each project area. In addition, background on the challenges, successes, and failures involved with implementing controversial bicycle facilities in a dense urban environment will be discussed.

Dutch ...

(continued from page 4)

planning matters. In the Netherlands the national government recognizes that it should operate more in the background and leave local planning matters up to local agencies. While in America recent experiences indicate greater interest in and acceptance of state-level planning and regulation, especially in regions of the country facing high growth rates and threats to environmentally sensitive lands.

The recent shift in the Netherlands from a highly regulated planning system to a more development oriented planning system and the awareness on the other side of the Atlantic that private lands cannot be developed without increased governmental controls brings us to a common ground; the need for constructive and effective public-private partnerships. In the Netherlands a growing number of plans are never or only partially implemented, especially those for large-scale or complex developments. Planning processes stagnate because of insufficient cooperation between the public sector, private partners, and social organizations; and because local and regional authorities lack the knowledge and experience to implement complex plans and projects properly.

A more tolerant and open attitude towards private developers, as exists in the more market-driven United States, could benefit the implementation of development in the Netherlands and help make the work of local governments more effective. On the other side of the Atlantic, U.S. governments could learn from their counterparts in the Netherlands, and take the initiative to work together, across professions, statues, and boundaries more effectively to recognize the problems they are facing in managing their land and share their ideas to make the planning process a more embracing, collaborative effort.

Thus, despite large differences between the planning systems, some convergence might be distinguished. However, an overall planning convergence of the Dutch and the United States planning systems, is still far away. Nevertheless, while acknowledging the difficulties in making cross-cultural comparisons, the Smart Growth planning experiences might provide valuable lessons for planners of both countries. Spatial planning in both countries will be helped with more mature public-private partnerships: The Dutch should embrace increasingly the private side of these partnerships, the American planners the public side.

1 Maarten Georgius is a planner from the Netherlands and works as a consultant for PMC in Oakland. Leonie Janssen-Jansen is a researcher of AMIDST (Amsterdam Institute of Metropolitan and International Development Studies) of the University of Amsterdam. L.b.Janssen-Jansen@uva.nl.

Holiday Party at the Majestic Hotel



Michael Olin of WRT, Rudy Calderon of Lamphier-Gregory, and 2005 National Conference Co-Chair Hing Wong, who is also the Northern Section Director.



Andrea Ouse, Peninsula RAC Chair and 2005 National Conference Tour Bus Maven.



Wendy Tinsley of ARG, San Francisco RAC Chair.



Lorie Garcia, California Chapter Planning Commission Representative.

Shannon Allen and Judy Malamut, of LSA.



Darcy Kremin, 2005 National Conference Hospitality Chair, and Terry Kremin.



Holiday Party Chair Juan Borrelli, who is also the 2005 National Conference Merchandise Chair and Northern Section Director Pro-Tem, and Christina Ratcliffe, Northern Section Professional Development Director.



Marti Brown of the City of Berkeley, and Charles Bryant of the City of Emeryville.



Christina Ratcliffe of PMC, Northern News Editor Ann Welsh, and Alec Bash.



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January 22, 2005 Northern Section Retreat

February

5 Eco-Landscape 2005: Eco-Effective Landscapes Equal New Business Opportunities, Samuel Pannell Community Center, 2450 Meadowview Road, Sacramento, CA. For information visit: <http://www.ecolandscape.org/>

16-18 The 2005 Affordable Housing and Community Redevelopment Summit, Sheraton Suites San Diego, California. Register by calling Nick Grasso at 703-894-0481 or by emailing: grasso@performanceweb.org.

March

11 NEPA Conference, The Fairmount, San Francisco. For information: contact Robert Thornton, 949-833-7800 or visit <http://www.cle.com/dev/>

15 Deadline for applying for May AICP Exam

19-23 2005 APA National Planning Conference, Moscone West, San Francisco, For information visit www.apa2005sf.com

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