Teach-In Explores Indigenous Planning, Past and Future

by Jason Youmans

With newfound enthusiasm among Canada’s first nations communities for the positive paths that comprehensive community planning can help forge, fresh thinking about how to practice “Indigenous planning” is in order.

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To meet this challenge, UBC’s School of Community and Regional Planning recently announced a new Indigenous Community Planning specialization set to commence in September, 2012. As part of the program’s development, SCARP, together with the Musqueam First Nation, recently opened the doors to exploring ideas of “Indigenous planning” through the inaugural Indigenous Community Planning Teach-In, which brought together native and non-native academics, planning practitioners and interested community members for a day of discussion and debate about the Indigenous planning paradigm.

Keynote speaker Dr. Ted Jojola of the University of New Mexico’s School of Architecture and Planning used his morning address in the Great Hall of UBC’s First Nations House of Learning to remind those assembled that Indigenous communities have planning traditions that long pre-date the rise of “planning” in the conventional western sense of the term.

“We are not just talking about simple things here,” Jojola said. “We are talking about planning sophisticated cities, sophisticated technologies.”

Noting that colonization in North America cut Indigenous communities off from their own planning histories, Jojola proposed three tenets that must underpin the revival of Indigenous planning. First, he said, first nations are “not minorities” on their traditional territory. Second, he argued that Indigenous communities must overcome colonization’s legacy of “cultural amnesia” that tried to sever them from their pasts.

“Our students need to know who they are,” Jojola said.

Finally, he argued that Indigenous communities must build up their own internal capacities to plan, to dispense with the “translators” that Jojola says have too often misinterpreted what those communities have told them.

The teach-in also heard from representatives involved in the development and implementation of the Musqueam First Nation’s community planning initiatives, which are currently being promoted as exemplars of progressive and participatory planning among Canada’s Aboriginal communities.

Other speakers throughout the day included the Tsawwassen First Nation’s Andrew Bak describing the planning processes his community undertook as part of its treaty settlement process. Non-native planners who work within Indigenous communities used the panel discussions to describe how they approach their professional obligations in a cultural context where the “planning” that had previously been foisted on those communities had yielded disastrous results.

UBC law professor Darlene Johnston reminded teach-in participants of the labyrinthine legal context in which
SCARP is undergoing a period of loss and renewal. Two of our senior faculty, Bill Rees and Tony Dorcey, who, through their over 40 year contributions to our school have shaped and guided our mission and vision of sustainability and social justice, are retiring in December 2011. I want to extend my gratitude to Bill and Tony for their enormous contributions to SCARP and wish them well in their future endeavours.

Additionally, I will be stepping down as Director on June 30, 2012. An external Director search is underway and we hope to have a new Director in place by July 1, 2012. We are also in the process of negotiating for much needed replacements in the Ecological and Natural Resources focus area that Bill and Tony’s retirements will create.

Besides the faculty renewal that is underway, the College for Interdisciplinary Studies (CFIS) that has been our institutional home for the last four years is significantly restructuring. As such, all of the teaching and research units within it have been asked to seek new institutional affiliations with other UBC faculties. SCARP is in the process of doing this with a final decision still pending.

At a faculty retreat on October 21, 2011 a number of decisions were made to help guide the strategic planning for our faculty renewal and the negotiations that must be had in finding a new faculty home.

We anticipate growing our school by both an increased intake of students into our existing Masters and PhD programs and through new initiatives that will provide new resources. One of these initiatives, the Indigenous Community Planning specialization in the SCARP Masters program that will begin in September 2012, has just received a five-year grant from the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. to hire a Practice Professor to lead field studios in First Nations communities. This exciting and important new initiative will help to position SCARP as a leader in this emerging planning focus.

As always, SCARP students are amazing. Planning is already underway for the fourth annual student-organized symposium on February 10, 2012. These symposia have become a much anticipated highlight of the academic year and are attended by a wide variety of public, private and non-profit planners, as well as students and faculty from a number of universities within B.C. and beyond.

As the Director, I have the privilege to see SCARP in all of its facets. What I see is a vibrant, active school that is working towards affecting positive change in the larger community and UBC, and a school that has a committed, talented group of students, faculty and staff. As we move through a significant transition period of faculty renewal, it is the community networks and linkages that we have created at SCARP and with our stakeholders that will, I believe, help us navigate this transition.
SCARP Alum Host "Anti-Reception" at ACSP Conference

by Silvia Vilches and Ren Thomas

On Friday, October 14—and thanks to the organizing efforts of some SCARPies past and present—about two dozen Canadian planning researchers and thinkers could be found sipping drinks and talking shop in the lounge of the Marriott Hotel in Salt Lake City. The story of how this came to pass goes something like this:

Every year at the annual Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) conference, major planning schools host evening receptions, a great way for faculty members, students and alumni of the schools to meet up and mingle with guests. At last year’s conference, however, several SCARP Ph.D. students decided they wanted more interaction with their fellow Canadian scholars during ACSP.

As we have written before, Canadian governance structures, legislation, and demographic patterns, not to mention recent events like the U.S. mortgage crisis, have contributed to a very different planning context from the U.S. We felt there was a collective desire among Canadian scholars, and those interested in Canadian studies, to discuss planning issues “North of the 49th parallel.”

So, at the first annual Association of Canadian University Programs of Planning (ACUPP) conference in Calgary this June, SCARP alumnus Ren Thomas suggested that the Canadian planning schools might want to collectively host a reception at the ACSP conference.

Ren and Janice Barry, another SCARP alumnus currently pursuing post-doctoral research in Glasgow, organized what they called an “Anti-Reception” (since guests would meet for informal drinks at the hotel lounge, rather than toasting each other with wine and nibbling tantalizing appetizers). With support from SCARP Director Penny Gurstein and ACUPP President Wayne Caldwell, news of the upcoming event was distributed through several Canadian planning networks.

Ultimately, the 1st Annual Canadian Planning Schools “Anti-Reception” drew current students and alumni of our Ph.D. program, including Leonard Machler, Sarah Church, James White, Ugo Lachapelle (UQAM), Matti Siemiatycki (U of T) and Maged Senbel (UBC). The event was well attended by planning faculty including professors Mark Stevens (UBC), Laura Taylor (York U), Andre Sorensen (U of T), Paul Hess (U of T), Steven Webber (Ryerson), Chris de Sousa (new director of Ryerson’s School of Urban and Regional Planning), Ajay Agarwal (Queens U), and Richard Milgrom (U of Manitoba). Ph.D. students from the various planning schools also contributed to the evening’s success.

Ren and Janice are looking forward to hosting a bigger and better event at next year’s ACSP conference in Cincinnati!

PhD Student Leonard Machler Wins at ACSP Conference

by Debra Rolfe

Congratulations go out to SCARP PhD student, Leonard Machler, who won the “Best Poster” award at the 52nd annual Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) conference in Salt Lake City in October. His poster, entitled “Using a ‘Sustainable Solution Space’ Approach to Develop a Vision of Sustainable Accessibility in a Low-Income Community in Phoenix, Arizona,” explored how he collaborated with a group of residents in the Sky Harbor neighbourhood of Phoenix to envision what elements of design, transportation service and governance would need to be incorporated into the community to achieve a sustainable level of non car-based transportation access.

The findings of this project have been accepted for publication in the International Journal of Sustainable Transportation. Here’s the article link: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15568318.2011.605210

SCARP Ph.D. student James White and a guest critic ponder the merits of a pink intervention on SCARP’s Revelstoke design model.
staff members. SFU Community Trust kindly sponsored the event.

PIBC President Joan Chess opened the evening by welcoming new students and highlighting how increasingly important planning is to helping us shape our communities and meet pressing challenges such as sustainability. SCARP’s Tony Dorsey, who has been heavily involved in PIBC and has been a member of its education committee since 1999, reminded us that it is important that the Institute is only as strong as its members and encouraged the students in attendance to get involved. Mark Roseland from SFU finished the evening’s remarks by encouraging students from both planning schools to work together more often. Altogether, it was a well-attended and fun event and we will likely do a joint social next year to facilitate stronger relationships between SCARP and REM.

If you have any questions about PIBC or would like to know how you can get involved, feel free to be in touch with Polly Ng, your PIBC Student Representative and she would be happy to answer your questions.

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**Planning Students Association Kicks Off Another Year**

by Lauren Klose and Devon Miller

The Planning Students Association was delighted to welcome the new cohort into SCARP with several great orientation week activities like a potluck lunch and an extended trip to Whistler.

Building on the momentum and enthusiasm the new students brought, the PSA re-launched its popular student-led tutorials, which are designed for students to learn and expand on skills otherwise not directly taught at SCARP. The tutorial series kicked off with a demonstration on Adobe InDesign led by second-year student Kevin Zhang. Next up is a Google Sketch-up tutorial by recent SCARP graduate, Pat Chan. As well, the PSA’s bi-weekly “social” has started up once again, giving students a chance to unwind after a long week.

With SCARP in the midst of some significant institutional changes by way of faculty retirement, a primary focus for the semester has been forming a visioning committee to formulate a statement reflecting where the students see SCARP headed into the future. To assist in gaining feedback from first-year students for the vision, the PSA designated a new position; first-year student representative. Maureen Mendoza volunteered to take on this position and assist in making a smooth transition to the new cohort in January. Welcome aboard, Maureen! To further encourage student collaboration we hosted our first ever student report back session on October 19. The session gave second-year students a chance to catch up on each other’s research and work done over the summer. Each student was given a 60-second chance to wow their peers with fun prizes on the line, and first-years were encouraged to attend and ask questions.

The PSA is looking forward to another productive year!
Many Scarpies have been abroad in the “non-western world”, some as tourists, others as NGO workers, some by dint of circumstance, and still others, because the non-western world is where they are from. In the age of globalization, the descriptive term “non-western” may strike you as a bit vague, however, and you would be right. But this non-western world has emerged from colonialism into independent nationhood and sovereignty since the end of World War II, and has been known to the West as “underdeveloped, Third World, developing, the Global South” and by similar terms, all unsatisfactory, often demeaning, and scarcely more enlightening than “non-western.” Yet it is this world that is now urbanizing at great speed, and will soon have, if not does not already have, the largest proportion of the global population that we call “urban.”

For planners this fact alone is a call for attention. Over the next generation, many of you will be called on to work in the non-western world, and to contribute your bit to the multiple problems rapidly urbanizing societies present. And even if you are not, you will have to understand what’s going on in India, China, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, even if you are working as a planner somewhere in deep Canada. Because in an interdependent world, “their” problems become “our” problems as well, whether the question is one of resources, water supply, climate change, immigration, trade relations, armed conflict, deforestation, public health, or whatever. As the world’s population edges toward 9 billion—some estimates claim that we will reach this figures within 40 years—we cannot solve “our” problems without at least being aware that life in the non-western world is nothing like what we know intimately from our everyday experiences and observations at home. It therefore behooves us to at least make a preliminary acquaintance with that world and, more specifically, its urban component, though the latter cannot really be separated from the rural in which it is embedded.

It is these thoughts which have led me to devise a new course offered for the first time this coming January, and which is designated as “PLAN 548S Introduction to Non-Western Cities: History, Becoming Urban, Policy/Planning.” I intend to run it as a seminar for graduate students. There will be relatively few lectures, and the focus of our discussions will be on a carefully selected bibliography covering the topics mentioned in the title (for the bibliography and other relevant information, please see the SCARP web site). Among the cities cited in the readings are Mexico City, Lagos, Mumbai, Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Hanoi, Istanbul, Dar-es-Salaam, Saigon, Beijing, Ningbo, Taipei, Porto Alegre, Harare, among others. You will note that these cities are not grouped by country. Rather, each case illustrates one or another topic in the syllabus. The overall intent is to reach an understanding of the sort of problems which non-western urbanization generates and how to work towards solutions.

The course is limited to 20 students, and is open to all UBC graduate students.

**PLAN 548C: Local Assessment for Project Planning**

Louise Morris and Theresa Poppelwell

Have you ever had to design a community-based program, local governance project or assess a situation and identify priorities to plan for a project? How does one start the process? What tools and methods does a planner use to begin to understand the needs of a community or local authority? How do you develop a project proposal or concept paper to identify needs and project priorities? This 1-unit course will give students practical tools and techniques commonly used in planning to conduct rapid assessments, municipal assessment and community mapping to determine local needs and priorities leading to the submission of a concept paper.

The focus of 548C, Local Assessment for Project Planning, will be on international development projects; however, students working locally will also learn valuable practical skills in planning. Real project scenarios and practical experiences will be shared by the instructors to build the skills of students.
SCARP Congratulates its Fall 2011 Graduates

Fall 2011 Masters Graduates

Maggie Baynham, MScP
Project Title: Are We Planning Effectively for Climate Change? An Evaluation of Official Community Plans in British Columbia
Ryan Beaudry, MAP
Project Title: Exploring the Development Cost Charge Framework for Active Transportation Infrastructure in British Columbia
Metha Brown, MAP
Project Title: (Trans) - Formations: Building a Safe, Strong & Inclusive Vancouver
Foong (Pat) Chan, MAP
Project Title: False Creek Flats: An Urban Design Framework for a Connected Complete Neighbourhood
Lauren Dawson, MAP
Project Title: Bill 27: The British Columbia Local Government Experience
Jose Fernandez, MScP
Project Title: Neighbourhoods in Action: Exploring Challenges and Opportunities for Managing Vancouver’s Neighbourhood Greenways
Tanya Fink, MAP
Project Title: Participatory Social Impact Assessment: Involving Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood
Chloe Fox, MAP
Thesis Title: The Evolution of Heritage Conservation Planning in Theory and Practice: A Case Study of Victoria, British Columbia
Yu (Zoe) Wang, MAP
Project Title: Information and Settlement: Developing an Information and Resources Directory for the South Asian Immigrant Community in Vancouver
Tate White, MAP
Project Title: Searching for Ecological Democracy: A Case Study of the Marpole Safeway Rezoning Process
Kasel Yamashita, MAP
Project Title: Modular Affordable Housing: A Case Study of BC Housing’s Use of Modular Housing for the Seniors Rental Housing Initiative

Fall 2011 Ph.D. Graduates

Ren Thomas
Thesis Title: Resiliency in Housing and Transportation Choices: The Experiences of Filipino Immigrants in Toronto
Joshua vanLoon
Thesis Title: An Examination of Neighbourhood Built and Social Environment Influences on Child Physical Activity Patterns
Danielle Labbe
Thesis Title: On the Edge: A History of Livelihood and Land Politics on the Margins of Ha Ni

SCARP Lecture Series
The SCARP Lecture Series continues to showcase the ideas of leading thinkers and practitioners in the field of planning. Since September, lecture attendees have had the privilege of hearing from University of Utah’s City and Metropolitan Planning chair Nan Ellin, SCARP Honourary Professor John Friedmann, SCARP grad and international development researcher Elizabeth Cooper, SCARP grad and former Polygon Group vice-president John Northey, University of New Mexico distinguished professor Ted Jojola, and Dr. Nancy Knight, UBC’s Associate Vic President, Campus and Community Planning (and another SCARP graduate!). Next up on November 23 is Zarina Mulla, SCARP Graduate and Drug Policy Planner at the City of Vancouver.
Contact John Chapman at johnchappy@gmail.com or Erica Lay at erica.mk.lay@gmail.com to find out more about the SCARP Lecture Series.
New Gear For New Media in Cosmopolis Lab Overhaul

by Jason Youmans

Change comes quickly in the digital world, and the risk of irrelevance always lurks just around the corner. Fortunately, UBC’s College for Interdisciplinary Studies understood this fact of modern life and recently allocated the necessary funds to upgrade SCARP’s Cosmopolis computer lab to keep pace with the evolution of digital media.

By the time you read this, the Cosmopolis Lab will be on its way toward the installation of three new high-end Mac Pro digital editing computers, five new iMac computers for multi-media use and a range of communication technology software.

“It is great to have this support from CFIS and to see a renewed interest in the Cosmopolis Lab,” says SCARP adjunct professor Jonathan Frantz, whose use of film as a planning tool during his years as a SCARP student helped demonstrate how digital media could serve planning’s objectives. “The new technology will greatly enhance the opportunity to learn about multi-media and apply this knowledge to our local communities.”

The Cosmopolis Lab began operations in 2005, following a successful funding application to the Canada Foundation for Innovation. Since then, the lab has been used to create an award-winning documentary by Giovanni Attili and Leonie Sandercock, as well as other video productions, professional projects, theses and classes. SCARP professors Jonathan Frantz and Maged Senbel are currently using the lab’s capabilities as part of a two-year research project funded by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions to examine how digital media can be effectively used to mobilize young people toward climate friendly behavioral change. Meanwhile, the video class continues to evolve, and now collaborates with the Urban Design and the Social Learning Studio courses to produce videos with and for community members (Marpole, Chinatown, and this year the Grandview Woodlands and Kensington Renfrew neighbourhoods).

The Lab has diverse research purposes, but the primary one is to explore and evaluate the applicability of information and communication technologies to participatory planning processes in Vancouver and to urban research about Vancouver.

“With the proliferation of digital media it is important for planners to understand how to utilize modern storytelling tools, and effectively engage online communities,” adds Frantz.

SCARP Prof McLaren Wins Mosaic Human Rights Award

SCARP adjunct professor Norma-Jean McLaren was honoured on September 22 with the annual Human Rights Award from MOSAIC, a Vancouver-based non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society.

The award, given to an individual whose activities make a “significant contribution in the field of human rights and ethnic relations,” puts McLaren’s name on a list of previous winners that include such notable social justice advocates as Justice Thomas Berger and Harriet Nahanee.

In nominating McLaren for the award, former City of Vancouver senior social planner Jeff Brooks wrote, “Human rights are violated when the individuals or groups of people are deemed to be less than human and made silent and invisible. Thus human rights are based on the ability of people to speak their truth and to feel that they are genuinely heard and made “visible.” This is at the core of the ways in which Norma-jean McLaren has carried out her work in a wide variety of contexts.

As a facilitator, teacher, public speaker and film maker she has been able to engage in what are complex and often very personal issues and to help professionals, students, community leaders and “ordinary folks” come to better understandings of themselves and of others with whom they may be in conflict or be living in “parallel worlds” without real connection.”

“And because these interactions are based on the strong connections of the heart and mind,” Brooks continued, “they often lead to change in the ways in which people act toward others.”
SCARP and Friends See Tony Dorcey Off in Style

To a packed ballroom at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel on November 5, students, colleagues and family swapped stories about longtime SCARP professor Tony Dorcey and the impact he had on their lives and their work. Before devising his most recent plans to sail off into the Mediterranean sunset, Dorcey was involved in planning of a more professional variety that, over a 40 career at UBC, saw him as a faculty member in the School of Community and Regional Planning, the Westwater Research Centre and the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability. Outside of UBC Dorcey was the founding Chair of the Fraser Basin Management Board (1992-94) and a member of the BC Round Table on Environment and Economy (1990-94). His contributions have been recognized with a Killam Faculty Research Fellowship (1988), the University Teaching Prize (1995), the 2000 Professional Award of the Canadian Water Resources Association of BC, and election as a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners (2007).

Tony, with characteristic honesty and good humour, used his evening address to remind the crowd that his personal accomplishments would have been impossible without the support of his students, colleagues and family, not to mention the mentors that he found along the way. To read a full-length interview with Tony reflecting on his time at SCARP and future plans, visit www.scarp.ubc.ca/newsbytes/2011/jun/27/anthony-dorcey-announces-his-retirement-after-40-years-scarp.

Get Involved in the SCARP Symposium 2012

Organizing is well underway for the fourth annual student-organized SCARP symposium. Mark your calendars for February 10, 2012 for what is sure to be a stimulating day of innovative planning ideas. The symposium organizers say the current working title for the event is “Practicing Sustainability,” and it is being pitched as a networking event in the “energy and environment” sectors, honouring retiring SCARP faculty Bill Rees and Tony Dorcey.

Panel discussion proposals so far include the following topics:
• Bridging the connection between water governance and sustainability planning
• Ecological and Energy Planning practice, challenges and opportunities
• Workshop on writing effective by-laws
• Dialogue circle on Indigenous planning models & sustainability
• A debate on the de-materializing of the economy
• Eco-localization
• Revelstoke model

Symposium organizers are on the hunt for one more panel presentation, with possible topics including facilitation/mediation, youth engagement strategies, community economic development and PPPs in B.C., housing, and transportation. Keep your eyes peeled when the scarpsymposium.ca website goes live, and if you want to organize a panel, have any thoughts or want to contribute your time to helping get the event off the ground, contact Juliet Van Vliet at julietvanvliet@gmail.com or Yazmin Banuelas at yazminh@gmx.com.
The first edition of the Megapolitan consortium took place in August 2011 at Université Laval in Quebec. Students and faculty from four different universities: Universitat de Barcelona, University College of Dublin, University of British Columbia and Université Laval came together to reflect on global economic flows, regional competitiveness, and the relevance of nation states in the governance of an emerging spatial form: the megaregion.

As part of this program we conducted research projects about our respective regions and presented the results at this four-day conference at Université Laval. The seminar was a great learning opportunity, not only to deepen our knowledge of foreign regions, but also to further unpack, reflect, and challenge the theoretical framework surrounding the concept of Megaregions. Of course, as has become tradition, SCARP students had a special role subverting mainstream economic concepts, and putting forward social justice and sustainability concerns.

Université Laval is a welcoming university with a beautiful campus outside and in the centre of la Ville du Quebec. Our host, professor Mario Carrier, took us around this emblematic city to explore its history and some important planning interventions. He also coordinated an excursion to the Charlevoix region with its magic landscapes and ancient towns. We learned about the relevance of this region to Quebec and how it is being developed as an international tourist destination. After the Megapolitan symposium each participating student then departed to a foreign university to cross-pollinate their academic experiences with that of their fellow students. Telling those stories, however, will have to wait until another day . . .

SCARP at Walk21

The first weekend of October saw Vancouver play host to the Walk 21 Conference, the International Conference on Walking and Livable Communities. In addition to the heavy presence of SCARP students who took part in the event, SCARP professor Dr. Larry Frank was featured among the plenary speakers exploring the topic, “Shape Making and Shape-shifting: A Walking Map to Transforming Cities” from page 2

Canada’s first nation’s find themselves resulting from government attempts to manage their status. SCARP professor Dr. Leonie Sandercock told Newsbytes that in undertaking an Indigenous Community Planning specialization, the school will be at the forefront of training Indigenous and non-Indigenous planners to work within and across native and non-native communities, a skill that will prove valuable as the power and autonomy of Canada’s first nations grows.

“The existing political and cultural geography of B.C., which has had first nations and settler communities living side-by-side for over 150 years, but living in two solitudes for those 150 years, that is going to change,” says Sandercock. “In many of these communities nobody is trying to build bridges. And yet, if they could see into the future, even in terms of economic development prospects and in terms of both groups of people being able to stay in the places they are now, their futures are interdependent. The next generation of planners to address this problem are going to have to be bridge-builders and be able to work across both sides of the conversation. And those are special skills that we intend to teach.”