PLANNING DISRUPTED!

WEBINAR #2

“Planning with People”

19 August 2020

Report
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# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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<td>ISOCARP</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Based on the overwhelmingly positive response to the first webinar, the next offering in the “Planning Disrupted” series focussed on ‘Planning with People’. This time participants took a deep dive into what planning with people means. The webinar engaged with approaches and Covid19-induced opportunities within the local and international planning context.

The event was hosted in collaboration between eThekwini Municipality, International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP), ISOCARP Institute Centre of Urban Excellence, South African Cities Network (SACN), South African Planning Institute (SAPI), South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE).

Facilitated by SACN, the Webinar created an accessible, interactive platform for conversations on cities, inner cities – spaces of opportunity and inclusion. It brought together about 232 planning and built environment professionals and interested organisations and people, worldwide to discuss critical thematic areas pertinent to planning and prevalent during this crucial time of the Covid-19 pandemic which has disrupted planning … as we know it!

WELCOME REMARKS

The session commenced with the facilitator urging participants to reflect thought-provoking question: “If you had to introduce planning as a profession to a 10-year-old child - what would you say in one sentence?”

Some of responses were as follows:

- Playing Minecraft in real life
- Order of space and guide to use it
- Making visions come to reality
- Enabling the change, you want to see
- Arranging space to have better life for all
- Designing a better future
- Decide where to place houses, streets, shops, parks, schools and hospitals
- Look upon previous mistakes on how we live and tell you not to make those mistakes again
- Explain the kindest and judicious use of resources
- We need to prepare space so it’s comfortable for you and your kids
- Inspire more people to participate to make our communities safe and healthy
PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

PLANNING BEYOND LIMITS

Milena Ivković, Director Urban Planning Advisory Teams and Member of the Board of Directors at ISOCARP

Milena provided a short introduction to the Young Planning Professionals (YPP) Programme. It is a programme that connects YPP with practice by keeping them informed on what planning practice entails and how it can be applied within their context. The 55th ISOCARP World Planning Congress took place in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2019. Here two workshops for young planners were organised in Jakarta and Bogor, both topics were on planning with people and how to transform the communities together with people.

Video Presentation by Siddharth Khakhar on Planning Beyond Limits.

The publication summarizes the various projects proposals, ideas and experiences during the YPP workshops. Access the video here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqzQJYxGZKI&t=2s
Link to publication:
https://issuu.com/zeynepgunay/docs/2020_06_16_buzz_ypp_report_low_res

CITOPOLY

Mrs Rehanna Moosajee, SACN and | Siwe Ntombela, SACN

The South African Cities engages in research and knowledge sharing with the intention of improving practice across cities. Citipoly is a tool to democratise knowledge used in cities. It is based on a report that was transformed into a board game. It is a game that practitioners can play while learning crucial elements from the report and negotiating city making.

It highlights the tension between meeting institutional objectives and working with society i.e. administration, interface challenges; setting
up opportunities; leadership challenges in achieving spatial transformation. The game essentially is about teams trying to build towers of institutional practice vs societal value. Find out more on Citopoly here: https://www.sacities.net/citipoly/

LAUNCHING OF THE PRACTITIONER PROFILE MAGAZINE | SACN

The Built Environment Integration Task Team (BEITT) which is a group of city practitioners within the SACN network who are working in the built environment. The magazine is about profiling the individuals behind advancing spatial transformation in cities. It brings together individual stories, showcasing their contribution to the planning profession and highlights their journey as a planner.

Video Presentation:

A short video clip was played showcasing two planners from eThekwini Municipality. In summary, the video focusses on the life stories of planners and how it has shaped their work in planning. This demonstrated the other side of the theme explored... the people, behind the plans and planning.


Q&A

Q: What is the link between politics and planning?
A: There is always a link between politics and planning. We need to acknowledge that we will deal with politics in planning so including political education in planning education is vital. There was a general participant view to have another session with a focus on politics and planning.

Q: Is there work on informal settlements and informality featured in the SACN publication?
A: SACN work with SERI highlights the difficulties that disabled women living in informal settlements face. Drawing closer connections between those challenges and the work in the built environment.
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

After the presentation by SACN and the brief plenary discussion on the project, participants were led to the virtual breakout rooms which focused on the following thematic areas:

- Voices in Planning: The Bright Side of Planning Disruption
- Community-oriented Plans: Methods and Approaches for Successful Implementation
- Establishing Community Partnerships: A Challenge for Planning Practitioners
- Building Municipal Identity using Municipal Assets: A KZN Perspective

VOICES IN PLANNING: THE BRIGHT SIDE OF PLANNING DISRUPTION

Dr. Soobs Moonsammy, eThekwini Municipality | Siwe Ntobemlo, Moderated by: Mrs. Rehanna Moosajee, SACN

The Study

The call for planning is demanding new approaches to urban planning theory and practice. Especially in the context where current forms of planning remain resilient and yet failing, it is not being replaced by a relevant consciousness and methods in planning. Covid-19 and Climate Change has created the space for more urgent planning and change, notwithstanding the many evidences of unsuccessful planning approaches that prevails in many countries and cities. The challenge to and dominance of North on the South, Planning Theory and Practice and giving recognition to the South in the form of African Urbanism. Planning must come from within are paradigms defining planning for the South and planning for Africa. There is an opportunity for multiplicity of voices, expanding epistemic authority on planning and beginning to embrace co-generation in planning with and for people. Diverse and multiple voices in planning is not only a challenge and extension of professional knowledge within planning, but one informed through practicalities, lived experiences and where context matters. It recognises that the core of planning is for society and thus society must be able to influence and expand planning. Knowledge generation such as spatial plans, town planning schemes, environmental plans etc used in daily and in a legal way for planning, remains out of touch with society and context. Herein, resides an opportunity - to expand knowledge actors for planning and to connect planning to society and to PEOPLE.

The research was about understanding the planning knowledges within the City of eThekwini Municipality (Durban, South Africa), an African city.
Research Method

Informant Interviews and Focus Group. Nonprobability sampling was used, with interviews with 168 individuals. Participants were drawn from KwaMashu, Phoenix, Chatsworth, Umlazi, Pinetown and Umhlanga. A review of documentation was also undertaken.

Findings

- Planning knowledge that emerged as all important. This knowledge directs planning
- The role of legislation in giving expert planning knowledge legal authority is an important consideration for policy development within government. It all resides in expert knowledge
- Planning practitioners write and rewrite the planning knowledge that is utilised in practice, it is not the lawyers or political or the community that does this

Opportunities

- Planners need more flexibility in planning, and they have the power and space to this as they guard the knowledge generation process for planning
- Planners need super-codes, simple legislation, tacit and practical knowledge
- Develop a culture of how the knowledge grown, recognise multiple knowledge actors and points of coordination
- The spilt between Political, Expert and Society in policy making is unnatural and un-helpful

eThekwini Pilot Visualization Studio

The visualization studio project is about getting diverse actors and stakeholders to come together to define visually what the transformed future city looks like in South Africa. These virtual studios have been posted across six studios’ in SA, the first project was in eThekwini Municipality. The purpose of the project is to engage in a different way and speak about the city from the experiences of people. It also looks at how cities can be transformed in the future. The methodology utilizes an artistic approach.

Key Discussion Points

- Planning has evolved in the SA context. Planning and its deliverables have changed, and planners need to align with development principles. Planners were looking at equality, spatial justice and transformation. Planners have not unpacked this to the extent we have. We need to shape norms and standards to be more conscious to change or methods going forward
- African urbanism involve cultures and traditions and we need to accept it. If we use euro-centric models, we will lose our traditions and cultures that we cherish
• Barcelona- Planning as legally binding. Planning is about priorities (budget and capacity won’t allow us to do all that is needed). Priorities are taken by council. How is community voice really empowered to influence council?
• There is a lot of mandate in municipal planning
• There is a problem of the planning profession and the scholarship of urban and regional planning identity
• Town planners understand the principles of integration but don't want to work with the practical things. e.g. eThekwini planners created the public sector housing zone, in the land use scheme to allow new affordable housing developments. Identifying land for housing, this is not used effectively, as it will come with challenges which planner shy away from
• Breaking the silos means meeting your counterparts engaging regularly and respectfully, often this means working with and identifying what their values, principles and aspirations are. Working below the radar is important to break silos
• The challenge is to interpret all ideas on the map (and non-spatially), how to modify current zoning to be more “local” and embracing diversity on the ground, as well as contributions from different stakeholders
• If planning is that weak in an established space, what more of peri-urban areas? This takes us to emerging debates that we need to focus on. That is the reason of most city planning problems - denying and disregarding the existence of peri-urban zones

COMMUNITY-ORIENTED PLANS: METHODS AND APPROACHES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION
Moderated by Milena Ivković, Director Urban Planning Advisory Teams and Member of the Board of Directors at ISOCARP

COMMUNITY-ORIENTED PLANS IN A POST COVID-19 ERA
Presented by: Prof Ali Alraouf | Prof. of Architecture, Urbanism and Planning, Head Development, Research-Urban Planning Sector, Board Member, ISOCARP

Observations during this time of Covi-19 indicate that exceptional times need exceptional decisions. The beauty of human power to address challenges and derive positive solutions. We need to reconsider our relationship with the environment. Are we destructive or constructive? Pollution is vast within cities. The concept of isolation and the fear from others;
this has pushed the city to become deserted as appose to a vibrant place. Examples of this include Wuhan in China and the Colosseum in Rome. Most communication is via the internet and human nature cannot sustain this lifestyle. Huge gaps in society in terms of resources.

Individualism is not going to work anymore. The new paradigm should be based on solidarity and community. Covid-19 offers a space for new planning and approaches. There is a need to move from planning, to building communities. During a crisis the notion of the compact city has its own inherent opportunities and tensions. Stopping independent land-use and move towards overlapping uses are important. The rhythm of cities has changed. Planners should move beyond participation and collaboration, viewing the community as a partner rather than a target group.

Key Discussion Points

- Indeed COVID 19 has rapidly increased inequalities at different planning levels and sectors. How can we practically mitigate such rising challenges at the neighbourhood/city level?
- The importance of listening to people is key
- We tend to talk more to developers, city managers, politicians; talking to communities takes time and this hinders the process - how to create and recognise balance is important
- You need to understand the local culture and mechanisms of how people voice their opinions; people need to have a space to talk freely for participation to work
- Planners need to verify their findings and go back to communities to see if their ideas are reflected for implementation
- We need to move away from community engagement to community partnership
- Planning is a two-way process - community has the local knowledge and planners have professional knowledge
- We stopped designing spaces and moved to designing experiences
- We should not be afraid to speak about the political engagement challenges so that politicians understand the planning directive rather than work in isolation
- You must listen to people so that they can go through the experiences that they are looking for
- We must advocate for the planning ‘with’ and not ‘for’
- Fundamental to community-based planning is also having institutional reforms to allow for the mobilization of communities through partnerships with both politicians, communities and planning
- Resonates with us back here in SA, really driving home the need to promote the live, work and play concept but with bringing the community back into decision making and collaboration
- The experience of going beyond theory to actualise local impact on the ground through tools that are specific have been invaluable to build communities that now continue to thrive and create citizen-led initiatives after the projects
CO-CREATING A SHARED VISION WITH COMMUNITIES THROUGH CREATIVE METHODS

Mark Ojal | Global Public Space Programme Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

There is a need to reach out to people who are facing inequalities. i.e. the hard to reach groups. They are usually left out of the planning process.

Reaching out to these communities through digital story-telling is a method to co-create and share ideas and encourages citizens to collaborate with government. Planners need to go out to the communities.

Striking a balance is pertinent and cities need to be redesigned to include integrated planning. Community-led competitions have worked in Nairobi. Un-Habitat uses Minecraft as a tool for children, youth, women and elderly to visualise their own ideas through play. Gaming outcomes inform designs and inspires children to want to be planners.

Placemaking is a collaborative process by which we can shape the public realm in order to maximise value. It brings everyone together and it involves turning a space from one that one can’t wait to get through to a place that one doesn’t want to leave.

Bottom Up Approach and City-Level Policy

- Developed a Bill that provides a framework for community engagement
- Placemaking approach being recognised and integrated into the draft urban design and development control guidelines
- Implementation of ideas from the community and bottom-up approach
- Community mobilization through public space challenge
Key Discussion Points

- Addressing inequalities and targeting hard to reach groups that are not considered in the planning process
- The shift or focus towards building communities is an imperative step towards addressing the inequalities faced in South Africa
- Build trust on both sides; have transparent processes
- We need to revisit project timelines; allow the process to expand so that you can get a wider voice and go back to communities
- Encourage every citizen to engage and know their rights
- Community vision can be implemented in co-creation. The idea is to build ownership and create place attachment. The period varies depending on the scale of the project.
- Partnership is better approach than participation for community development
- You need to understand the local culture and mechanisms of how people voice their opinions; people need to have a space to talk freely for participation
- There is budget for participation; gatekeeping is an issue that hinders proper participation; political will and interference
- We need to consider scale of engagement; as the scale gets bigger, things become more political
- We need to identify roadblocks on participation; what are the new skills required from us?

Transformative change

Kampala, Uganda
ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: A CHALLENGE FOR PLANNING PRACTITIONERS
Moderated by: Mrs. Zinle Mnikathi and Mr Pravin Omar Singh | SAPI

Community Partnership is a collaborative relationship between willing entities formed to address shared objectives. Effective partnerships leverage the strengths of each partner and apply it strategically to the issue at hand.

Community Participation: a process by which a community mobilizes its resources, initiates and takes responsibility for its own development activities and share in decision making and implementation of a programmes/project.

Stakeholder Engagement: involves interactions between identified groups of people and provides stakeholders with an opportunity to raise their concerns and opinions (e.g. by way of meetings, surveys, interviews and/or focus groups), and ensures that this information is taken into consideration when making project decisions.

So where does ‘Community Partnership’ fit in??

Problem Statement

Key Questions

- Are partnerships being built in a meaningful way that benefit people who these policies are intended for?
- Should we engage with communities when we are planning - i.e. we are the professionals who studied, toiled and pay professional indemnity insurance?
• Are partnerships necessary in planning?
• Why should we partner with communities? - is it for mere tokenism, legal compliance or meaningful partnerships
• Can we really do so or are we caught in the populism of it all?
• How should we optimally partner with communities, if we want to and where are the real opportunities?
• What is the real situation in South Africa when it comes to partnerships?

Key Discussion Points

• Partnerships are meaningful when you have the right audience. Covid-19 has exposed us to the fact that a lot of marginalization challenges persist. Now people are having a voice given that Covid-19 affects everyone. We need to give a voice to the marginalised community
• Important for ‘the community’ to participate. they need to be informed therefore the first stage is vital for partnership and collaboration with the public
• What do we want to achieve from the partnerships and who is the beneficiary of the result?
• Approach communities for projects, which are informed by other underlying issues
• Learning Curve for young planners: all these experiences and challenges should be taken as building our capacity as professionals so that we are better prepared in future
• Reluctance of the public because they believe that participation has become a formality rather than insight to inform decisions - Ensure civic awareness and ensure that communities know their rights; bring planners to communities to build trust; role of planners as mediators
• Build trust on both sides; have transparent processes planners are not a homogeneous group. we need to develop a culture of freedom, openness. Confidence in government is needed
• It’s about meaningful partnerships
• We should not be afraid to speak about the political engagement challenges so that politicians understand the planning directive rather than work in isolation for the purposes of collaboration
• Confidence in government is needed
• Activate the correct voices
• Inform, Consult, Collaborate and Empower
BUILDING MUNICIPAL IDENTITY USING MUNICIPAL ASSETS – A KZN PERSPECTIVE

Presented by Prashina Mohangi: SALGA - KZN

During this time of the corona virus pandemic municipalities and local government need to find out what their identity and capabilities are, to ensure that their spaces remain relevant. That they can build an economy, develop municipal spaces and become self-sustainable, open to business and develop the socio-economic sector of municipalities using what current resources. In pursuit of municipal identity and to make municipal spaces more marketable and investor friendly, self-reflection is required. Municipalities need to take a closer look at what their assets are, understand them and how to use them for their benefit.

Three critical questions

- What do we have?
- Have you looked at your municipal space and started unpacking what are some of the things that your space has that can be enhanced or developed?
- Thirdly, have we asked the question, what can we develop?, surely there are items, products and services that we can be known for in our municipalities, if you at new York, its famous for its bagel, Paris for the croissant, London for chicken tikka masala and of course Durban is the home of the best bunny chow in the world.

Once municipalities conclude the exercise of identifying their asset base and finding areas of potential and development, in KZN we have adopted an approach whereby municipalities are encouraged to develop a Municipal Investment Directory. The aim of the Municipal Investment Directory is to bridge the gap between available municipal development opportunities and the marketing thereof.

The spatial development framework and land use scheme of the municipality become important tools that give direction to the growth and development of a municipality and form the structuring tools for the investment directory. The investment directory seeks to elevate no only the land parcels that are serviced and has an identified economic sector that is preferred but to also highlight the catalytic projects that the municipality is currently working on. The idea here is to make municipal spaces legible and transparent, ensuring that the spaces are easy marketable, and that the municipality grows and develops based on its strengths and capabilities.
Presentation: Sihle Phungula- Maphumulo Local Municipality

The major economic sector in Maphumulo Municipality is the agriculture sector that includes sugarcane production, animal farming and vegetable production. Another sector is the tourism sector with the main sites for attracting tourist being Itshe lika Ntunjambili, The KwaShushu Hot spring and KwaNodunga. The other economic sector is the mining sector, which involves mainly sand mining and a potential titanium mining. Maphumulo Municipality further has forestry, construction and the informal economy, as important economic sectors.

Untapped opportunities for tourism which include many natural assets such as the main rivers; UThukela which meanders along KwaShushu, UMvoti River and the Die Kop Mountain.

Other prospects include the cultural resources namely; the nine Iron Age sites, historical sites of Cetshwayo’s grave and a world battle site of the Bambatha Rebellion where Zwide of the Ndwedwe clan was defeated by Shaka and itshe lika Ntunjambili.

Key Issues

- The is a strong focus of social programme without economic value or returns
- We continue to make strides towards addressing infrastructure demand but neglect investment in natural assets which could potentially result in job creation
- Need for a common and shared municipal vision; branding
- Packaging of assets for local and global market - Put Maphumulo and its people on the map

Key Discussion Points

- What elements go into investing in employees as part of investing in the skills to unlock the potential or build identity of a municipality?
- Employee development is important but is separate to identity asset investment and focuses mostly on the built environment specifically
- Are these assets and missed opportunities to unlock the potential of the municipality not in the IDP/ SDBIPs?
- The IDP highlights various potentials to economic development, but there is limited implementation. The budgeting to unlock economic potentials is not an IDP informed process
- It is more challenging for metros to develop an identity. They are often identified by their predominant economic functions e.g. industry in Ekurhuleni, or its airport but a specific area, particularly if its underdeveloped can be used to rebrand, and create a new identity
- It is interesting that this speaks to the full inventory of assets, not just say, a public hall, which is different from the approach in New Zealand. But to address national/international market, you need to simplify and focus on one iconic and distinct asset/not the full inventory and recognise the fast paced, media context we function in
CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Milena Ivković, Director Urban Planning Advisory Teams and Member of the Board of Directors at ISOCARP

The webinar has evolved since the first session. There is much interest to have follow-up sessions and politics and planning have emerged as possible topic/s. There is richness from people's experiences to build in future webinars.

The topic that connects everything is ‘planners as bridge builders’ between politics, design and people. Planners need to try to build skills as bridge builders and moderators between the different parties, that is their role for the future.

Observations from Sara Hoeflich, UCLG, Barcelona
The webinar approach was insightful. It is important to keep planning feasible, planning is measured to what can be done and how the city would look like. Planning is becoming more consultative and fosters the importance of participation; less technocratic and a more social approach is necessary. This is the decade for big change, in terms of the various global agenda’s i.e. NUA. In terms of planning in Africa, the role of councillors is pertinent, and they should be invited for future engagements.

The webinar provided a platform to ask difficult questions and have provocative and honest conversations amongst participants. It is envisioned that through the partnership between ISOCARP, eThekwini Municipality SACN, SAPI, SALGA and MILE (and new partners) more webinars under the ‘planning disrupted flagship will be hosted soon.

Prepared by the Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE)

Website: www.mile.org.za
Email: mile@durban.gov.za
Facebook and Twitter: @eThekwiniMILE