

PUBLIC PLANNING BOARDS: ABOLITION OR SYSTEMATIC PROLIFERATION?

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I. INTRODUCTION

For many years most planners have evidenced a "Hamlet-like" attitude toward the continued usefulness and even existence of independent planning boards. The case made by both earlier and recent "abolitionists" has much merit in terms of achieving a more efficient planning process. However, success by the abolitionists could mean a stifling of effective citizen participation in the planning process and concomitant undesirable consequences. The time has arrived to seek alternatives embodying the legitimate reforms advocated by the abolitionists, while still preserving the benefits of effective citizen participation. One specific alternative is the creation of a flexible number of *temporary* citizens advisory boards or "task forces," including one for "long-range planning," to consult and advise with City Hall through the professional planners. With their assignments strictly limited in scope and time, these task forces, all of equal rank, would be appointed by the chief executive and approved by the legislative body, and interpose a formal layer of non-elected citizens between the professional planner and the legislature and electorate, and strengthen the manpower resources in the planning process. There are several precedents to support the validity of the task force concept. The transition of most independent planning boards into task force operations could be accomplished smoothly on an evolutionary basis.¹

II. NEED FOR RE-EVALUATION

The death and life of great American planning commissions recently has become a favorite issue for debate among planners. The most recent stimulus was initiated by David W. Craig, a prominent lawyer, who is the City Solicitor of Pittsburgh and president of the American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO), when he chose as his topic for the first Hugh Pomeroy Memorial Lecture, given at the National Planning Conference in Seattle in May 1963, "A Plea for the

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¹ The "task force" concept was developed jointly with Dennis Durden, Executive Secretary of Cincinnati's Downtown Development Committee and Visiting Lecturer, Department of City Planning, Yale University. Dr. Durden's effective collaboration is herewith gratefully acknowledged. See Nash & Durden, A Task-Force Approach to Replace the Planning Board, 30 J. of the American Institute of Planners 10 (Winter 1964).

Eventual Abolition of Planning Boards."² This was not the first time that the abolition of planning commissions had been suggested, but it was noteworthy that on that occasion the words came from the future president of ASPO. Even more revealing was the fact that Craig's suggestions raised no tempers and actually received very little comment. Could it be that the audience agreed with him in principle? Or did the "to be or not to be" question fail to stir the listeners, because it had been raised so often before with no apparent realistic solution? It is felt that a re-examination of the controversy is in order, especially in the light of the development of planning as both a science and an art during the past decade.

The first major attack on the independent citizens planning commission occurred in 1941. In that year, Robert Walker raised many eyebrows when he stated that "the independent, unpaid, citizen planning commission is not satisfactorily executing the planning function," and that "planning is one of the staff functions and should be attached to the executive office."³

However, Mr. Walker's book seemed to receive relatively little attention, especially among city officials and public administrators. When his expanded second edition appeared in 1950, embodying observations through the postwar planning phases, a number of professionals felt obligated to comment on the sharpened criticisms. Walker perceived the problem to be one of a tradition and a set of attitudes toward city planning that prevents the proper role of a planning agency from being either clearly recognized or acted upon. Among the obstructions he noted were: (1) improper use of semiautonomous citizen boards, many members of which are amateurs in both government and planning; (2) undue emphasis upon marshaling public opinion for particular proposals rather than working closely with elected and appointed public officials; and (3) lack of clear-cut responsibility to the chief executive, making for uncertain relationships and failure to use the planning agency in over-all policy planning. According to Walker, "the efforts of public planning agencies to operate as though they were private advocates of public policy has led them, haplessly, into the political arena. There they have suffered the fate of the early Christians among the lions."⁴

Following the republication of Walker's book, several articles appeared lamenting or praising Walker's conclusions. For example,

² Nevertheless, Mr. Craig was subsequently elected president of the American Society of Planning Officials. Although Craig was a member of the ASPO Board of Directors, he was invited as an individual who would not echo Pomeroy's sentiments, but rather use the spirit of his approach—a combination of uncompromising intellectual honesty, strong realism, and the imaginative and courageous advancement of new ideas.

³ Walker, *The Planning Function in Urban Government* 333-35 (2d ed. 1950).

⁴ *Id.* at 364.

Tugwell and Banfield stated that Walker had ignored "developmental planning," and that planning must get beyond the sphere of what the politician considers possible.⁵ Howard felt that Walker had implied that planning commissions should be abolished and came to their defense.⁶ Goodman deplored the necessity of subordinating the planning function to an executive, such as a city manager, because the planners' work areas would be pre-empted and they would be ignored in the decision-making process.⁷ Nash and Shurtleff agreed with Walker that the independent, unpaid citizen planning commission is not satisfactory in the execution of the planning function and stressed the advantages of making it a "staff function" in urban management through departmental status.⁸ Daland considered the planning commission a barrier to integration of activities and unresponsive to public opinion, and further indicated that in recent years the problem of the irresponsible planning commission has been dramatized in a number of places where the organization of local planning associations has provided channels for public expression which the official boards failed to fulfill.⁹ The chapter on "Organization and Administration of Local Planning Agencies" in *Local Planning Administration* contains an excellent summary by Cleaveland, in which a number of the basic issues are summarized, and in which he states that conflicting values of integrated administrative organization and freedom from partisan influence and executive control pose a troublesome dilemma in the analysis of local planning organization.¹⁰

In his 1963 Pomeroy Memorial Lecture, lawyer Craig attempted to solve this dilemma, by advocating the eventual abolition of planning boards.¹¹ There is much merit to the observations and concomitant solutions advocated by Craig. But, is it correct to conclude, as he does, that in the planning of our communities, as well as in other aspects

⁵ Tugwell & Banfield, The Planning Function Reappraised, 17 J. of the American Institute of Planners 46 (Winter 1951).

⁶ Howard, In Defense of Planning Commissions, 17 J. of the American Institute of Planners 89 (Spring 1951).

⁷ Goodman, The Planner's Relationship with the City Manager, 19 J. of the American Institute of Planners 147 (Summer 1953).

⁸ Nash & Shurtleff, Planning as a Staff Function in Urban Management, 20 J. of the American Institute of Planners 136 (Summer 1954).

⁹ Daland, Organization for Urban Planning: Some Barriers to Integration, 23 J. of the American Institute of Planners 200 (Fall 1957).

¹⁰ International City Managers' Association, *Local Planning Administration* 40 (McLean ed. 1959). Cleaveland points out that careful analysis of the federal independent regulatory commissions raises serious doubts about whether boards can be protected from political influence. Since these agencies are responsible for making public policy in areas of concern to important social and economic interests, the question can be raised whether it is appropriate for them to be shielded from political pressure, since policy making is the very heart of politics.

¹¹ Craig, A Plea for the Eventual Abolition of Planning Boards, *Planning* 1963, at 68.

of life, planning boards may well find that they must surrender their existence, in order truly to attain the purpose of their existence? In seeking an answer to this question there is value in examining the arguments of the abolitionists and determining what lessons we may learn from them. Through such analysis an alternative seems to be emerging, which would be less drastic and more beneficial than abolition, since it would insure that community planning will be strongly melded to the explicit and implicit desires, goals, and values of the various publics, and would receive the talents of truly knowledgeable citizens without clouding channels of ultimate responsibility.

III. ORIGINAL ENDORSEMENT ROLE OBSOLETE

The original role of the independent planning board was heavily weighted toward endorsement. While a number of duties for the board were specified, it was envisioned largely as a group of respected citizens who would lend their endorsement to the concept of planning itself.¹² As much as anything else, the independent planning board originally was a "promotional" group. Of course, the utilization of an endorsement group for new civic ventures was not unique, nor has it passed from the scene today.¹³

While the concept of planning was being endorsed, the benediction of the independent planning board extended also to the professional planner himself. The board became the planner's "civic godparent." Later, as the planner set out his specific program, the independent board became guardian of "the plans." The role of endorsement thus extended from the legitimacy of planning through the planner to the original physical plans. It is not difficult to understand why the board's endorsement functions assumed major importance, since such endorsement became the full expression of formal citizens' participation in planning. These functions were not only necessary, but also sufficient to achieve the modest planning goals of the times—though then these aims were not considered so modest. Viewed from the complexities and alternatives that confront us today, the intent and scope of these early plans are disarmingly simple, and the issues which the independent boards and the planners first addressed were essentially "motherhood" issues, with which no one of good will and integrity could quarrel.

The product of the early planning process was identified almost

¹² See Webster, *Urban Planning and Municipal Public Policy*, pt. I (1958).

¹³ The use of prominent citizens in an endorsement capacity today is most pronounced in municipal bond referendums, particularly those for schools where the criteria for membership are similar to those for appointment to the original planning boards. Representatives from various ethnic, religious, occupational, and political groups are selected on the assumption that each spokesman gives his entire group a sense of participation, and also predisposes them to vote favorably for the issues being endorsed.

exclusively as "The City Plan." In keeping with the evangelical overtones of the early planning movement, the City Plan was frequently viewed with reverence as an instrument of revelation rather than as a tool for municipal improvement. As guardians and endorsers of the early plans, boards had almost no responsible opposition. They sponsored and endorsed a path of growth which sought to achieve fairly general goals by extinguishing blatant abuses. Alternative plans of development were rarely expressed. The choice was between the City Plan (which implied "progress" and a better life) or an unplanned method of growth (which the board was convinced led to "civic damnation," abuses of resources, and lost opportunities). Both the boards and the planner tended to present issues in black-and-white terms, which leading citizens could easily endorse.

Strong pressures for the board's endorsement role came from the planning profession itself. As newcomers on the urban scene, the planners were eager to bask in the aura of respectability which surrounded their board members. Association with the "better" citizens seemed to be preferred to ties with municipal politicians. Planners looked upon the board as a vital ally, which was in a better position to deal with entrenched political forces. Today, with an enlightened level of municipal politics, this distrust or lack of desire to associate with politicians is difficult to appreciate. However, the era of urban history which gave birth to the independent planning board also brought forth the city manager concept.¹⁴ Both concepts had a common origin in general public disenchantment with the type of civic leadership and urban life which had been provided by elected public officials up to that time. Even if only a small portion of the reformers' memoirs were correct, it is clear why men of good will were not anxious to associate with elected public officials.¹⁵

It is difficult to understand, however, why so many planning boards did not move far beyond their original endorsement role. Three reasons suggest themselves: (1) the endorsement role was a familiar and comfortable one for the type of persons originally appointed to these boards; (2) the planners themselves found it expedient to think of their board almost strictly in terms of endorsement;¹⁶

¹⁴ For a full discussion of the parallel growth and development of city planning and municipal management, see Nash & Shurtleff, *The Case of the Case Study in City Planning and Municipal Management*, 22 *J. of the American Institute of Planners* 153 (Summer 1956).

¹⁵ In all probability, municipal affairs of that era were not as corrupt as they have been pictured. However, municipal histories generally are written by members of the various "reform" movements rather than by the politicians whom they supplanted.

¹⁶ Some of the strongest opponents of "Walkerizing" planning have persistently viewed the boards' role as being limited almost solely to endorsement. Howard, *supra* note 6, at 93. Examination of this article reveals that Howard perceived the board in

and (3) extremely wide responsibilities were entrusted to many independent planning boards.¹⁷ Early advocates of the planning board could not foresee the future workloads. In the face of an almost impossible assignment, it is not difficult to understand why the board felt more comfortable continuing their accustomed endorsement role, while the professional planning staff expanded to meet the increasing responsibilities which board members did not desire to take on directly.

The abolitionists ("Walkerizers") accepted the validity of the original endorsement role.¹⁸ They contend that the board, still frozen in this role today, has become a part of the planning "problem" in most communities, rather than a part of the planning "solution." They assert that the endorsement role is no longer sufficient, necessary, or even desirable. Many politicians and, unfortunately, board members overlook the possibility of the board making meaningful contributions *beyond* endorsement.

Some board members, many planners, and certainly most abolitionists, believe that the independent planning boards have fulfilled their mission: endorsement. In support of the abolitionists' arguments, there are obviously many boards which have remained in an arrested state of development and appear frozen in their original roles. Actually, however, many boards have moved far beyond that stage. As will be shown in the following section, there has been an evolution away from the strict endorsement role based on sincerity, good will, and reputation, toward a role that stresses expertise. Although this evolution toward expertise is decidedly uneven, the thrust away from endorsement toward expert involvement in planning decisions can be readily discerned.

IV. EVOLUTION OF FORMAL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The evolution of the function and scope of citizen participation in planning may be characterized by *E Pluribus Unum*. The issue, which this article attempts to pinpoint, is whether the next step is to be *Ex Uno Nihil*, the battle-cry of the abolitionists, or whether it may be *Ex Uno Plura*, a solution suggested by this author together with his

an endorsement capacity rather than a capacity in which the individual members would have specific talents to contribute to the planning process.

¹⁷ For example, the 1926 Charter of the City of Cincinnati devotes three of its nineteen page total length to defining in meticulous detail the voluminous duties and responsibilities assigned to the Planning Commission. Only the sections on taxation and finance, and the very detailed section on Councilmanic nominations and elections required more space in this Charter, which is still considered an outstanding example.

¹⁸ For example, Craig, *supra* note 11, speaks of the abolition of the board as being desirable when a city has achieved "public and political acceptance of planning." He also uses such terms as "planning maturity." The implication is that planners can do without the board once they have achieved "civic legitimacy" through board endorsement.

concomitant rationale. It is obvious that evolutionary changes will continue, and a formal organization functioning soundly in the Sixties may not be geared to cope with the problems of the Seventies. Upon review of the total trend, certain salient conclusions are inevitable, especially when the various stages through which planning administration has evolved are examined. As pointed out by Nash at the National Planning Conference in 1961, six fairly clear stages can be perceived.¹⁹ Some communities have passed through all these phases; others are still at the initial step. Most communities, however, are at various stages in between, depending upon community size, age, government, geography, and other factors.

Stage One: Informal Embryonic Stage. In this period of planning "genesis," citizens begin to think and act creatively about the deliberate shaping of their future physical environment. This is the beginning of organized forethought. Community leaders begin to meet formally, usually because a particular problem has to be solved which encompasses various facets of community development. This type of activity is evident throughout human history whenever people were concerned about their immediate environment, whether in the neolithic village, Imperial Rome, the medieval town, or an early Yankee settlement in the New World.

Stage Two: The Citizens Committee Stage. At this point, informal planning activities become more formalized, and citizens meet at regular intervals to discuss the common problems of the community. Deliberation is strictly project-oriented and focuses on one problem at a time. With increasing citizen participation and greater meeting frequency, this group becomes a cohesive unit, voicing the aspirations and fears of the people in the community. Professional planners are still absent, but the citizens' committee educates itself systematically in order to cope with problems more effectively.

Stage Three: The Planning Commission Stage. Here community planning is "formalized" for the first time, as the citizen group becomes a part of the local government. Commission members receive appointments from duly elected representatives of the people. With this formalization of activities, their scope is increasingly circumscribed and actions become more specified. Mounting attention is paid to zoning adjustment and subdivision control. Through state laws, legislative oversight is initiated and quasi-judicial and/or quasi-legislative activities gain importance. Problems of administration at this stage are still minimal.

Stage Four: Introduction of Technical Staff Stage. As problems

¹⁹ For a detailed description of these stages, see generally Nash, *Planning Administration: Past, Present, and Future*, Planning 1961, at 202.

become increasingly complex, and the citizen planning commission realizes it has neither the time nor the technical skill to cope with the multitude of demands made by the citizens and their government, technical personnel is engaged on a full-time basis. The citizen commission attempts to confine its activities to broad policy formulation, but pressure of specific short-range items frequently pre-empts its available time for planning guidance. The new professional planners on the scene are responsible strictly to the commission, which does the hiring, firing, and the establishing of job titles and salary scales. When the professional positions are under civil service, the commissioners get advice and assistance from personnel departments. In this stage of planning development, activities are still primarily outside the municipal stream of activities.

Stage Five: Departmental Status Stage. With the development of more centralized municipal governments, especially the "strong" mayor or city manager forms, the chief executive needs to have developmental programs more closely under his direction and supervision. At this point, professional planning generally becomes a "staff" function and is frequently given departmental status.²⁰ The citizen planning commission, although still an important voice in the development of policy, does not intervene to any extent in the work schedule of the municipal planning department. The commission may recommend, but administrative action is taken by the chief executive, generally with the concurrence of the city council. Here the commission generally finds itself less and less concerned with over-all community problems, leaving these to the City Hall professionals. Also, staff administration becomes the sole responsibility of the chief executive and the legislative body for the first time.²¹

Stage Six: Integration with Urban Development Stage. The advent of federal aid for urban redevelopment in 1949 and urban renewal in 1954 has created an unfortunate dichotomy with reference to planning and total urban development. Local public agencies, such as housing authorities, have frequently taken urban renewal under their wing, while broad general planning, which is often given more lip-

²⁰ See Nash & Shurtleff, *Planning as a Staff Function in Urban Management*, 20 J. of the American Institute of Planners 136 (Summer 1954).

²¹ According to data from *The Municipal Year Book* (1948 and 1959), as reported in *Local Planning Administration*, supra note 10, at 55, statistical evidence reveals this strong trend toward departmental integration. In 1948, 50.3% of the full-time planning directors were appointed by planning commissions, whereas in 1959 the percentage was only 26.2. The percentage of appointments by managers during this period increased from 20.2% to 44.0%. (However, with respect to mayoralty appointments the percentage decreased from 16.5% in 1948 to 10.3% in 1959. The percentage decline in mayoralty appointments can be explained by the fact that planning agencies strongly increased in number between 1948 and 1959, but the trend toward "integrated administration" occurred chiefly in council-manager cities.)

service than action, has remained in the planning department. The discernible trend here is for the development of a large Department of Urban Development, under which all the various projects concerning the future physical conditions of the community are centralized. Opposition is voiced to this trend, because professional planners will lose some of their hard-fought autonomy. However, from the point of view of needed integration, an "urban development" branch in the city government is inevitable.²²

From the vantage point of this evolution of planning administration, the suggestions of the abolitionists can be analyzed in terms of deficiencies and merits. After examination of the cases "for" and "against" *Ex Uno Nihil*, certain conclusions can be drawn which lend themselves to practical application, including the *Ex Uno Plura* proposal.

V. THE CASE FOR ABOLITION

A. Efficiency

A serious gap exists between what planning boards consider desirable from a planning point of view and what legislators think to be feasible and proper from their standpoint as elected officials. To a large extent this gap is the result of inefficiency; on the other hand, many existing conditions are unrealistic from a political vantage point. Case studies referred to later in this section indicate the ever-increasing gap between theory and practice in the fields of policy determination and decision-making. It has been assumed that administrative officials are responsible only for the execution of policy and not for its formulation. However, a distinction between politics (the making of policy) and administration (the execution of policy) is unrealistic.²³ Planning policy is being formed as it is being executed, and it is being executed as it is being formed. Therefore it appears virtually impossible for an independent board to be efficiently engaged in "polistratation" (equal emphasis on policy and administration).²⁴ The case made by abolitionists that the administrative as well as the quasi-judicial and/or quasi-legislative functions should be removed from planning boards is most persuasive when some of the operational facts are considered.

With the evolution of urban renewal and particularly of urban

²² This is not only true on the local level, but also at county, state, and federal levels. The recent creation of a Federal "Department of Urban Affairs and Housing" is a case in point.

²³ See Maass, *Muddy Waters: The Army Engineers and the Nation's Rivers* 3 (1951).

²⁴ A choice has to be made between "admipolistratation" and "poladminicy" depending on whether administration or policy will be "hemmed in." Cf., Leach, *Midway*, 7 *Public Policy* 399-400 (Yearbook of the Graduate School of Public Administration, Harvard University, 1956).

development (Stage 6), increasing emphasis is placed on the coordination of planning with other related areas of urban government. There is a strong need to relate planning activities meaningfully to many other city departments; coordination with the independent planning board merely adds another administrative function for the staff, rather than resulting in some improvements in planning.

On the basis of thorough and detailed case studies, undertaken by Nash in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Georgia, between 1956 and 1958, the usefulness of the conventional planning board can be seriously questioned. For example, one research project, focusing on analyses of planning operations of all Massachusetts cities operating under a council-manager form of government (Plan "E"), yielded conclusions that there existed a strong positive correlation between high calibre professional planning accomplishment and lack of significant involvement with the regularly constituted citizen planning board. The analysis was based on eighty specific weighted criteria for evaluation, by which the accomplishments of professional planning were measured, and the cities were then listed in rank order of "accomplishment." These same cities were then ranked by the "degree of involvement" of the independent planning board in the planning activities of their respective communities. It was most revealing that, when the rank order of the second list was *reversed*, there was *no difference* in the order of the cities on the two lists.²⁵

Similarly to Craig, Nash concluded at that time that it 'seems therefore logical that, *once planning is thoroughly established* in a community, the legally constituted Planning Board should be dissolved. The professional planning director would be competent to determine at what particular point in time this stage is reached.'²⁶

Arguments that the professional planner himself should be responsible to the legislature through the chief executive for the proper administration of zoning, subdivision control, and other quasi-judicial matters are most persuasive on the basis of the case narratives. From this point of view, the main role of the chief executive is to keep all the threads tight in the web of administration. It appears that this re-

²⁵ See Nash, *The Responsibilities and Limitations of the Planning Director in a Council-Manager Form of City Government: An Exploratory Analysis Based on Case Studies of the "Plan E" Cities in Massachusetts* 947-62 (Harvard University Archives, 1958). See also, *Urban Growth Dynamics in a Regional Cluster of Cities* 223 n.2 (Chapin & Weiss ed. 1962), especially the work of Daye, Sears, Stephens, Stuchell and Haupt.

²⁶ Nash, *supra* note 25, at 949. However, neither Nash nor Craig offer specific criteria to measure "maturity." This appears no longer necessary, as explained *infra*, pt. VI, § A.

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sponsibility should not be delegated. However, the chief executive needs personal aides and advisers to help him to wield the three main tools of coordination: control of expenditures, control of personnel practices, and planning.

A great many of the functions now carried out by planning boards are actually "executive" in character. It is hard to comprehend why the opening or closing of a street is not properly an executive decision and yet, by tradition, we demand a vote of the legislature, subsequent to an affirmative decision of the planning board, to make it legal. Many administrative tasks carried out by the planning board should be a part of the executive function, especially since they involve relatively minor administrative matters which are not deeply involved in the long-range future development of the community. The administration of minor adjustments in the zoning map and the passing on the curvature of streets in subdivision plots are cases in point. Such time consuming administrative tasks divert the attention of the board from those problems with which they should be primarily concerned.²⁷ Both Craig and Nash feel that professional planners must bend their efforts in the direction of serving as the confidential adviser and staff officer of the chief executive, and let such parts of his recommendations, as may appeal to the administrator, become part of the latter's own program. Even strong public support will pay little dividends if the planner has an inadequate budget. Also, inasmuch as many aspects of zoning and subdivision control are linked directly to other phases of administration, the chief executive generally welcomes having these functions more closely under his control. In fact, as evidenced by the case studies, mayors and managers are appointing members to planning boards who they know will be influenced by their suggestions, and are not re-appointing members whose thinking diverges from their own philosophy.

The administrative responsibilities of boards—the minutia and trivia of supervising the staff, as well as being briefed by the staff on administrative matters—are not the only roadblocks to efficiency. By allowing the board to exercise control over the staff, professional planners may be handicapped in becoming members of the city government "team." The spirit of the times is the spirit of the team, and it is most difficult for a staff to feel a part of this team under these conditions.

²⁷ Ascher refers to this process as a kind of Gresham's Law, where these chores drive out the higher forms of planning and come to engross the energies of the board's staff. He indicates that in Los Angeles, more than a decade ago, the municipal charter was revised "to relieve the plan commission of the whole business of manipulating the zoning ordinance and put it in the hands of a zoning administrator." See Ascher, *City Planning, Administration,—and Politics*, 30 *Land Economics* 324 (1954).

Craig is correct in pointing out the duality inherent in segregating planning study from legislative action. Without doubt, the legislature frequently gets its planning data "second-hand, dehydrated, and condensed."²⁸ There is no reason why professional planners cannot meet with legislators in special sessions to give them the same detailed data as was received by the planning board, but such duplication implies much wasted time and effort by the professional planning staff, which rarely has time to spare. The usual referral process also means time wasted for the governing body, the developer, the architect, the lawyer, and many others. In short, the system is inefficient, especially when a board does little more than rubber-stamp or rephrase professional planning proposals.

Finally, as aptly remarked by Craig, "no planning commission ever really adopted a plan."²⁹ In urban governments in the United States, not one cent has been borrowed, not one contract let, and not one bit of land condemned by the action of a planning board. Even though board members enjoy the limelight when affixing their flowery signatures in india ink on brightly colored maps, plans are not thus adopted: they are effectuated by official actions of elected officials executing the delegated powers handed to them at the polls.

B. *Political Realism*

According to the abolitionist, the independent planning board is not only inefficient, but also "politically unrealistic." He states that once the typical "endorsement" board has legitimized planning, it has little of value to offer to elected officials. It participates in decisions of considerable political import without having to be held politically accountable. To the politician, the board appears to be a parasite on the body politic. Through his daily contacts with the electorate, the politician is certain that he, not the board member, knows which planning proposals are best for the community and which are capable of achievement.

The elected official's indulgence of the board is severely tried when the board's judgment runs contrary to that of the legislature. At such confrontations, the legislator cannot help but question the validity, the usefulness, and the desirability of continuing this potential source of embarrassment to him.³⁰ Usually, the board members are not experts in the matters under question, and, in fact, both the board and the legislature receive their briefings from the same pro-

²⁸ Craig, *supra* note 11, at 72.

²⁹ *Id.* at 73.

³⁰ However, in many cases analyzed by Nash, *supra* note 25, legislatures have used planning boards as "scapegoats" or "whipping boys" by placing unpopular decisions, which had to be made, squarely in the boards' laps.

fessional staff via the same set of facts. Nevertheless, the board and the legislature frequently reach different judgments. This proves to the politician that the board members are ignorant of the people's wishes. To the board members it indicates the legislator's proclivity to take the politically expedient position, rather than assume a "statesman-like" posture which looks beyond expediency to "true" planning needs.³¹

To the elected official, the concept of "political neutrality," which is basic to an independent board, is one of its most unrealistic features. Thus, there is an understandably strong tendency for legislators to approve only membership appointments considered politically safe. In situations where board members are not deemed politically safe, the legislature feels justified—in fact, almost compelled—to disagree with the board members' judgment. In either case, a latent contempt for board members is germinated in the minds of legislators. If the board member is "safe" and politically attuned to the legislator, there is really little to be gained by listening to an echo of the legislator's own position. Likewise, if the board member belongs to a different political group, there is still less reason to provide a forum for someone whose success could lead to the legislator's loss of his own office.

The "political realism" basis for abolition today finds advocates among planners as well as politicians. In contrast to the early stages of planning, the more enlightened professional planners and the more astute politicians have developed a close and mutually advantageous liaison. Craig expresses this point of view succinctly when he states: "Where planning has been really made effective in a city it has been because the politicians—the elected officials—have taken hold of it and used it."³² In their search for avenues to concrete planning results, professional planners have frequently engaged in an adult version of an old children's game, which could be retitled "Power, power, who's

³¹ Both abolitionists, such as Craig, and supporters of the independent board frequently resort to percentage figures which express the extent of agreement or disagreement between the board and the legislature. These percentages are treated somewhat as a board "batting average." Since planning is not entirely a sport, a low batting average sometimes becomes a mark of achievement for the board. With a low average, they can assert that they stand for "good planning." To them the percentage of agreement is low because the board, unlike the legislature, is either more enlightened or more genuinely interested in "proper" planning. When the percentage of agreement or "batting average" is high, the abolitionists and the supporters of the board express surprise at the degree of enlightenment which the other possesses. It is conceivable that to avoid the unpleasantness, frustration, and potential embarrassment of being rebuked by the legislature, boards are inclined to take the pulse of the legislators in advance and vote a course of action which will be approved. Therefore, neither a high nor a low batting average seems to have much value in the assessing of planning board effectiveness. Instead it can be described best as an "index of mutual irritation." See Nash, *supra* note 25.

³² Craig, *supra* note 11, at 69.

got the power?" Initially, the independent planning board had the kind of power that the planner needed most, *i.e.*, the power to make him legitimate and his profession respectable. Now the power of the enlightened political official is a strong attraction. United with his political allies and equipped with such powerful new tools as urban renewal, the planner can become highly susceptible to the "Hausmann syndrome,"—a closely meshed planning and political action program dedicated to bold deeds and unencumbered by such extraneous forces as the independent planning board.

In the face of these political realities, what chance does the independent planning board have? Probably only a slight one, for the "endorsement" board operates solely on the spoon-fed expertise of the staff. This does not mean that such boards will necessarily be abolished. Most probably, they will be further gelded, over-ruled, and pushed further into the eddies of administrative minutia that seem to swirl aimlessly alongside the main streams of planning. Despite such political realities, what role could today's independent boards play? A vital one, as will be indicated *infra*, if the board members themselves were recognized experts giving advice in their fields of personal competence instead of being "representative citizens" prejudging decisions ultimately resting with elected officials.

VI. THE CASE AGAINST ABOLITION

A. *Inherent Obstacles and Practical Consequences*

The allure of the abolitionist cause is obviously a potent one, though its attraction is more apparent than real. Assuming abolition to be a desirable goal, a number of inherent obstacles hamper its potential achievement. Basic to all abolitionist thinking is the need for a community to achieve a certain level of planning "maturity," "acceptance," or "standing."³³ The abolitionist seems to compare the planning board to the drone bee or the spawning salmon, which, after having inseminated the community with the spirit of planning, has thereby fulfilled its basic function.

A key problem, therefore, is identification of the point at which "maturity" has been reached. Unfortunately, the abolitionists offer us few clues. Could maturity be measured by the community's acceptance of a master plan or perhaps a new zoning ordinance? Probably not. Could maturity be measured by the size of the planning staff, the planning budget, or the amount of newspaper editorial support? Again, probably not. Establishing criteria for this evaluation on a basis which might be popularly acceptable is probably impossible. Thus the

³³ See Nash, *supra* note 25, at 949; Craig, *supra* note 11, at 69. But see note 26 *supra*.

"proper" time for board abolition would rest on subjective judgments of elected officials or administrative officers, and it is doubtful whether any consensus could be obtained.

The "dissolve when mature" concept which, to some abolitionists, appears to be synonymous with senility, would be difficult for board members to accept in practice.³⁴ Unless boards have been grossly negligent in fulfilling their duties, it is hard to conceive of them admitting that they have outlived their usefulness. Moreover, attempts to convince them that *hara-kiri* is appropriate might lead to questioning the usefulness of all professional planning activities.³⁵

Attempted abolition of planning boards could easily become a partisan political issue. The political minority of a community could interpret abolition as a move to consolidate the prevailing political system rather than an attempt to promote sound planning. Thus any abolition attempts must be based on a high level of enlightenment.

The abolitionist can reply that any member of the board is free to earn by ballot the right to participate in planning decisions. This argument is correct if the planning process is considered nothing more than political. But, surely the planning process consists of more than this! *If nothing else, it should be a mechanism for drawing forth the best thinking concerning the problems faced by the community.* The test of the ballot is necessary to arrive at final planning decisions, but to exclude non-officeholders from the dialogues leading up to decision seems to deprive both the community and the decision-maker.

It appears that one of the basic functions of the non-elected citizen in the planning process is to bring issues and alternatives into the open, rather than allowing them to remain in the domain of the professional planner or the legislature, where a bright but politically less palatable idea can easily be squelched. Even if all of the abolitionists' arguments concerning inefficiencies of boards are true, and even if a high degree of political unreality surrounds them, it would appear that the salient issue is not their abolition, but rather the development of a series of reforms leading to more meaningful citizen participation. Craig is correct when he points out that if "the planning staff winds up talking to itself, then a great deal would indeed be lost."³⁶ But it must be pointed out to him, that the pressing need is not to restrict further the arena of planning discussion, but to encourage a truly community-wide practice of comprehensive planning.

³⁴ Anthropomorphic metaphors of this type are actually not only inappropriate, but also dangerous. See, e.g., Haushofer's concepts of "geopolitics," where "youthful" states need "Lebensraum," etc.

³⁵ Perhaps at some later level of "maturity" the elected officials themselves could assume full planning responsibility with only routine assistance. Under these circumstances, abolition of planning could logically be extended to some form of nihilism.

³⁶ Craig, *supra* note 11, at 76.

Unless alternate methods of citizen participation are developed, abolition could lead to controversies outweighing any of the asserted advantages. As inefficient and politically unrealistic as independent planning boards appear to be to the abolitionists, they do perform many essential tasks. If boards were abolished with no alternate means for informed citizen participation provided, many groups and individuals, who have contributed time and talent to the planning movement, would be alienated. It is difficult to share Craig's optimism that former board members will start running for public office.³⁷ It also appears unlikely that legislators will find "that the additional duties would provide justification for some increase in their usually inadequate compensation."³⁸ City councils will have much more work, but probably without higher salaries; the additional duties, although not shunted at first, would soon be an unwelcome burden.

Inherent obstacles and practical consequences, which make abolition inadvisable *without substitution*, may be summarized as follows: (1) difficulty of defining "maturity" objectively; (2) reluctance of board members to commit *hara-kiri*; (3) unfavorable community reaction to abolition; (4) choking off a channel of public participation; and (5) difficulties of re-distributing workloads. However, the least specific, though most salient shortcoming of the abolitionists' rationale is the assumption that community acceptance (or endorsement) of planning is permanent. We disagree: it is something like love, which must be constantly reaffirmed! For the planning program of today, which is seeking ways and means to fulfill its growing responsibilities, community acceptance can never be permanent: it must be sought again and again as a program progresses.

In one sense, however, we do agree with the abolitionists in the matter of acceptance. To us, endorsement by an independent board of representative non-elected citizens is not the only way to maintain community acceptance for the planning jobs to be done in most cities. The typical endorsement role per se is neither good nor bad for planning today, but simply irrelevant.

B. Professional Considerations

From a professional planning point of view, in our society the democratic process is the only proper means for resolving the conflicting value judgments of the community. In our cities, where experts are entrusted with a multitude of value judgments, sanctions must be available and applied, when necessary, to insure that experts will conform to the democratically formulated value judgments. It is felt

³⁷ Id. at 79.

³⁸ Id. at 77.

that only through citizen participation can the necessary sanctions be applied and value judgments crystallized effectively.

The value of the planning process is to facilitate the formulation of wiser decisions and to serve as a deliberate effort to provide better for the future. Its focus is decision-making in relation to the allocation of resources. Two specific working bases are involved with reference to this focus: (1) problems should be identified and alternatives should be demonstrated prior to the determination of objectives and initial goals; and (2) execution of plans also implicitly requires a large measure of planner responsibility for guiding their effectuation.

The planning process is thus valued as including specific actions through which the planner, within his sphere of authority, follows through on planning proposals subsequent to goal determination and programming. Here the planning process is viewed in the following sequence of steps: (1) Agreement on fundamentals and identification of problem(s); (2) Research, including data collection; (3) Analysis of problem, based on research; (4) Identification of alternatives; (5) Determination of objectives and initial goals; (6) Recommendation of alternative(s) for action; (7) Programming the steps for effectuation; and (8) Guiding the effectuation process. However, according to specific situations, the planning process may start or end within this series of steps.⁸⁹

It is clear that planning would not be a democratic process if citizens were excluded from participation in each of the eight steps indicated. Certainly, citizen desires, goals, and aspirations could not and should not be excluded from the process of agreeing on fundamentals or the problem identification step. Citizen experts in various fields can be most helpful in research and data collection, especially when they can provide entree to sources of information, which the planner ordinarily would not have at his disposal. Again, it will be helpful to have expert board members to look over the shoulders of professionals in the problem analysis period, as well as in the identification of alternatives stage. Certainly, it is not the role of the professional planner to determine objectives and initial goals without citizen counsel or advice, nor can the recommendation of alternatives for action be left to the professional; recommendations to the legislative body should be backed up by citizen expert opinion whenever possible. With reference to programming the steps for effectuation and guiding the effectuation process, an alert, interested, knowledgeable citizen board will be of utmost assistance to the professional planners in carrying out these frequently minimized steps in the planning process. Thus, from these theoretical considerations alone, which are

⁸⁹ See Nash, *supra* note 25, at 94-99.

concomitantly eminently professional, it appears very doubtful that the abolition of the independent planning commission would be a sound step in spite of the increased efficiencies and other advantages described.

In the absence of effective citizen participation, the ultimate product of so-called "political realism" could become simple political "expediency." With no effective citizens group, the tandem of the planner and the politician could deliberately or inadvertently overlook alternatives which might be workable and desirable, but politically less expedient. Whether we want it or not, political expediency will remain an important criterion, but there must be a mechanism to insure that planners and legislators give some consideration to the full range of alternate solutions for any planning problem. Expert citizen participation in planning can provide this vital insurance.

Our emphasis, therefore, is not on the "democratic process" per se,⁴⁰ but on the loss of potential resources suffered when there is no citizen involvement. Effective participation by citizens in planning gives fuller expression to the democratic process and provides the planner with an invaluable resource in every step of the planning process. In short, with meaningful citizen participation there is a better product! Each community contains a large reservoir of untapped professional talent. Some planners, of course, have long recognized these resources, and use such techniques as the "community leadership interview" to gain insight.

It thus appears unwise to abolish citizen participation, especially in a period of change, when government must strengthen those agencies which deal with administrative management: that is, with coordination, with planning, with personnel, with fiscal control, and with research. It is these services which need their development bolstered by imaginative and creative thinking of citizen experts, as we pass from a regime of habit to one demanding new thinking and new acting.⁴¹

VII. LESSONS FROM THE ABOLITIONISTS

On balance, the harmful consequences of abolition seem to largely cancel out the asserted benefits. While abolition of independent planning boards is probably not *the* answer to organizational shortcomings, the arguments of the abolitionists do highlight needed changes in the organizational framework of planning:

⁴⁰ Abolitionists may indicate with justification that their solution is as "democratic" (technically) as the one proposed here, because the democratic process finds expression through the elected public officials with whom the planner must work.

⁴¹ See Institute of Public Administration: Columbia University, Notes on a Theory of Organization, Papers on the Science of Administration 32 (Gulick & Urwick ed. 1937).

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- (1) *Emphasis on expertise rather than endorsement:* A higher level of enlightened citizen participation on planning boards will probably not be achieved by further grafting of staff experts. Board members themselves will have to be selected on the basis of their expert knowledge, rather than because they have a high endorsement value or represent a particular political or special interest group.
- (2) *Reduction of staff briefing and predigestive time:* The professional planning staff re-education and special education of the planning board entails an excessive amount of valuable staff time. The form of citizen participation chosen should provide a maximum of time in fruitful discussion of problems rather than a rehash of material for board members with which the professional planners and some board members are thoroughly familiar.
- (3) *Reduction of administrative and quasi-judicial minutiae:* A widened channel of fruitful citizen participation can be opened if board members are freed from the obligations of administration and reviewing the internal operations of planning staffs. Concomitantly, quasi-legislative and/or quasi-judicial functions should be transferred to the professional planning staff and the city council.
- (4) *Enlarged spectrum of expertise:* Knowledgeable citizen participation groups should be available to work in depth on a wide range of problems with the professional staff. The concept of citizen involvement in planning should be widened to encompass the entire horizon of planning today. Restrictions on citizen participation arising from inertia, lethargy, tradition, and jealousies among various city departments must be removed.
- (5) *Insulation against fossilization:* Abolitionists correctly criticize the tendency of "perpetual" independent planning boards to be concerned more and more with themselves and their role in the community, rather than with salient planning issues. Many planning boards have become one of the planning problems rather than a means to problem solutions. Similarly to the tightening of "scope" of participation of citizen groups in planning to allow sufficient depth in treatment, the "life span" of the citizen group must be strictly limited in tenure.
- (6) *"Long-Range" planning of equal rank with other planning foci:* Citizens groups must place the "long-range" or

"master plan" function in perspective as only one of a series of tasks. Long-range planning is only one member of a large hierarchy of planning foci which should be tackled by citizen groups.

- (7) *Encouragement of private groups*: In order to expose planning policy to reaction from specific community segments, private groups, such as chambers of commerce and civic associations, even though not officially a part of the planning process, should be encouraged to become thoroughly involved in the planning study process relating to matters which specially interest and affect them.

There are three items, which must be re-emphasized, that receive almost no attention from the abolitionists. First, there is significant potential for better planning when skilled citizens carry on development dialogues concerning the community's future.⁴² Second, the abolitionists overlook, or perhaps prefer to ignore, the reservoir of skills and talents that are available in almost any community, which can and must be tapped. Third, this enlightened public participation can permit committees to explore and discuss *alternate* planning solutions, which may not be politically expedient, and might otherwise go unrecognized or, at least, undiscussed. Here the somewhat naive original concepts of "political neutrality" on the part of advisory groups can be attempted today in the form of political parity.⁴³

VIII. ONE ALTERNATIVE TO ABOLITION: EX UNO PLURA

On the basis of the rationale developed, *Ex Uno Plura* is suggested as a constructive slogan, implying the desirability of a spectrum of citizen committees, advisory boards, or task forces. The formation of small citizen groups is advocated, each operating within a limited subject matter scope and for only a specific period of time. The single independent planning board or commission would then be replaced by a wide range of individual "task forces." The city would commit itself to a policy of *systematically proliferating* such task forces

⁴² The federal requirement for citizen participation in a "workable program" for urban renewal is perhaps the strongest official recognition of the value of these development dialogues and open discussions on the means and ends of planning.

⁴³ If there are political shades of opinion concerning planning alternatives, it would seem important to have these reflected in the composition of the citizen groups. This does not imply that their decisions would be made on a political basis. On the contrary, with this concept, the politically balanced advice of the citizens' group would give elected officials an opportunity to express succinctly their political philosophy. Political decisions would be left to politicians, but the community would be aware of the political implications of determined policies.

as planners and other professionals at City Hall address themselves to a variety of planning problems.

A citizen's appointment to a particular task force should be on the basis of his expert knowledge and experience in the problem under study. Each task force would work directly with the professional planning staff in a strictly advisory capacity. Appointments would be made by the chief executive with the advice and consent of the legislative body. Each separate task force would tackle one planning problem in a sequence determined by the planning director and/or the chief executive, and produce alternate workable solutions. Of course, final decisions as to the alternative to be implemented rest with the legislature.

One major advantage of the "task force" approach is the expanded range of available citizen talent. While most top professionals and key executives would be reluctant to undertake the type of omnibus assignment associated with the conventional planning board, they may not hesitate to accept a specific assignment, for a limited tenure, in which their particular knowledge would be directly applicable. The planning problems of the community generally exert little attraction for busy professionals and talented executives, especially if they live in the suburbs, unless they have a financial interest in the core area. The knowledgeable, enlightened civic leader must continually account for his time, either to himself, his company, or other civic leaders. Appointment to an "official," though short-lived, civic group would seem to have the highest level of civic accountability.

Involvement of knowledgeable citizens also generates an educational feedback: over a relatively short period of time, professional planners will have established direct contact with leading decision-makers in their community, contacts which even the director now finds difficult to achieve over many years.⁴⁴ This type of citizen-planner contact will also minimize certain misconceptions retained by civic leaders concerning the role of the planner.

Another major advantage of the limited tenure task force is its built-in safeguard against fossilization. There would be a periodic systematic re-evaluation and concomitant priority assignment of problems to be tackled by these task forces, and a number of them would be in operation at any given time. A healthy sense of competition may

⁴⁴ The leading talents are also frequently members of the top echelon of the power structure. Inasmuch as these persons generally do not desire to communicate with others not at the same level, professional planners frequently do not have contact with these citizens, who insist on communicating directly with city managers or mayors. Through this "task force" approach, such needed contacts will be initiated. Attempts by planning directors to initiate these contacts outside the framework of a formally constituted committee have had little success in cities studied. See Nash, *supra* note 25, chs. 24-25.

develop between task forces, but their areas of concern would be clearly defined: rivalries would not be in terms of scope or budget, but rather in connection with quality and speed of performance. Task forces would be created and disbanded as routine procedure when needs develop or their product is completed. Loss of membership would carry no stigma. On the basis of cases analyzed, it is recommended that these *ad hoc* committees generally be appointed for a period of six months to assure rapid performance.⁴⁵ There appears to be a relatively short initial period of maximum effectiveness and productivity for such groups. Their efforts generally decrease sharply after the first few months, with increasingly low returns for the citizen and planner efforts expended. (In fact, a period of negative returns can set in as the interest of participants wanes.) The limited tenure committee would deliberately attempt to capitalize on initial periods of maximum effectiveness and would be placed under explicit deadline pressures.

It is not implied here that successful advisory groups have operated primarily in Massachusetts. The cases have been cited because detailed documentary evidence is available. In many major cities throughout the United States, such as Baltimore, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, such citizen groups have played a significant role.⁴⁶ It is worthy of note that Craig, the most recent advocate of abolition, as City Solicitor of Pittsburgh, enjoys the support and encouragement of numerous, well-informed, active citizen groups, such as are advocated here.⁴⁷ Working for a better Pittsburgh under such favorable conditions, it is not difficult to see how Craig can contemplate abolition of the independent planning board without too much foreboding. However, as indicated here, there are other alterna-

⁴⁵ A number of instances of successful operation of temporary advisory boards are cited in detail in Nash, *supra* note 25. In Medford, Mass., the temporary "Advisory Committee on School Buildings and Finance," which evolved a sound program in a minimum period of time (pp. 262-76) and the "Friends of the Public Library," who were able to bring about prompt City Council action where the Board of Trustees of the Medford Public Library failed (pp. 290-93), are excellent examples. The many effective and outstanding temporary boards created in Worcester are further cases in point. Also, as a result of the activities of the "Steering Committee on Highway Plans," the West-side Artery was included in the "Lincoln Square" project and the East-side Artery was included as part of the "Salem Street" redevelopment project (pp. 622-27). Other instances of effective action on the part of temporary advisory boards were the "School Survey Committee" in Revere (pp. 846-51), the "Citizen Committee for Urban Renewal" in Quincy (pp. 811-21), the "Workable Program Committee" in Gloucester (pp. 579-93), the "Advisory Committee on the School Building Program" in Cambridge (pp. 747-58), and, above all, the "Corcoran Committee," which became the spark plug for the creation of the "Citizens Advisory Committee" (pp. 760-68). Many other examples of effective temporary citizen advisory boards are specifically mentioned in the case narratives.

⁴⁶ For a number of relevant examples, see Fiser, *Mastery of the Metropolis* (1962).

⁴⁷ Craig, *supra* note 11, at 78-79.

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tives that can satisfy the legitimate concerns of the abolitionists and still provide meaningful citizen participation. The suggested alternative is not the only solution to the dilemma described above, but on the basis of evidence collected, and after scrutiny of the advantages and disadvantages of abolition, it appears that the following procedures might be a workable solution.

IX. STEPS TOWARDS THE "TASK FORCE" APPROACH OF FORMAL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Two basic methods seem available to change from an independent planning board to the suggested "task force" alternative including *systematic proliferation*. The first involves revolutionary changes in state-enabling legislation and/or the city's charter. The practical and theoretical consequences of such a revolutionary change would be similar in scale, if not in type, to those described with reference to abolition. Even though the intent is drastic reform rather than abolition, the same shortcomings appear certain.

A second, far more desirable method is the encouragement of evolutionary trends, discussed above, which are already underway. With varying degrees of success, a number of planning boards have taken some steps toward the task force approach. In some cities the task force approach is being used through efforts of the manager or mayor, with only the tacit consent of the independent planning board.

In the evolutionary approach, the first step is the use of new criteria in appointing citizens to the existing board. Appointments are made on the basis of expertise and what the individual can accomplish to solve specific planning problems, rather than his role in community activities. Professional competence rather than personal identification with a particular group, area, or political party will be the chief criterion for selection. At the same time, the professional planner will have to convince his staff, the chief executive, elected officials and, most importantly, the board itself, to view citizen participation in terms of expertise and not endorsement.

As the composition and direction of the independent planning board is undergoing transition, professional planning activities and personnel must be made directly responsible to the chief executive, as a staff department, unless this has been previously accomplished. In cities where the staff is outside the regular departmental framework of city government, it can usually be brought into it with a minimum of new legislation. Frequently the legislative link between the independent planning board and its staff is a tenuous one.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ See, e.g., in Cincinnati, where the city's charter is quite explicit on the numerous duties and obligations of the Planning Commission, a planning "staff," as such, is nowhere mentioned directly, nor is there any specific statement or clear-cut inference

Once seated on the independent planning board, new members will serve as chairmen of *ad hoc* subcommittees, focusing on fields of their special competence. These subcommittees, or embryonic task forces, will report to the full board, and recommendations will then be transmitted to the legislature through established channels. Although appointment to these task forces of the planning board would not have the same appeal as direct appointments from the chief executive to a new board, they will provide an effective way to increase the range of talents. As time progresses, each city can develop appropriate mechanisms to increase the importance of task force participation. Appointments to task forces should be undertaken by the planning board only after consultation with the chief executive and political leaders. Also, board members serving as chairmen of each of the task forces will have to make certain that the professional planning staff actively participates.

Superficially, this evolutionary approach to the creation of task forces might appear unduly complicated. However, full appreciation of the complexity of problems to be faced and benefits gained from enlightened citizen participation, indicates that the method here proposed is one of the few possible approaches, and perhaps the only workable one, at this time. Other alternatives may be developed to remedy the deficiencies highlighted by the abolitionists, while preserving a maximum of democratic citizen participation in the planning process.

In summary, the following steps are recommended to effectuate the task force approach on a non-drastic (evolutionary) basis: (1) Determination of administrative and organizational changes needed, weighing advantages and benefits; (2) Agreement that expertise will be the chief criterion for selection to the board; (3) Appointments to the board; (4) Formation of special *ad hoc* task subcommittees responsible to the newly appointed expert board members;⁴⁹ (5) Placement of the professional staff directly under the control of the chief executive; (6) Enlargement of and/or an increase of *ad hoc* subcommittees as needed; (7) Increased participation of the professional planning staff in work with subcommittees; (8) Gradual de-emphasis of the advisory role of the old formal multi-purpose planning board; (9) Placement of quasi-judicial and/or quasi-legislative duties under the legislature by means of ordinance or charter change; and (10)

that the staff should be under the control of the Planning Commission, although this has always been the custom.

⁴⁹ A large variety of committees is possible, depending on local needs. Examples are: Central Business Districts; Industrial Development; Human Relations and Welfare; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Urban Renewal; Cultural and Historical Resources and Development; Municipal Finance; Education and Libraries; Health and Sanitation; Public Safety; Highways, Public Transportation, Parking, and Traffic; etc.

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Change from the old formal board to a long-range or other uni-purpose *ad hoc* board of equal rank with all other task forces.

Adherence to these steps will maintain some of the advantages of the existing framework, and the proposed systematic proliferation will enable an independent public planning board to meet today's planning needs through redirected citizen participation.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ In perspective, the basic theme expressed here also applies to redevelopment boards, commissions, or authorities. A very recent example of such concerns was reported in *Architectural Forum* 5 (Nov. 1963), in a discussion of the 29th conference of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Many NAHRO members, professionals in fields closely allied with planning, felt that the federal government's workable program requirements too often result in "figurehead" committees, and should be revised.