Above: The 2nd year planning class stands in front of City Hall on the PAC funded field trip to Portland. Read all about the trip in the featured article on Page 7

Also reviewed: The Planning Class of ’93 Reunion, The 2013 PAC Spring Social, and PAC Workshops

And Upcoming: The 18th PAC Spring Social with Featured Speaker Pamela Blais (Info on Next Page)
Thank you to PaC’s 2012-2013 Members

Carly Bowman, Chair
Melissa McEnroe, Vice-Chair
Michael Noble, Vice-Chair
Aderonke Akande
Dema Ali
Matt Armstrong
Heather Inglis Baron
Craig Cal
Lauren English (student rep)
Lori Flowers
Inger Jenset
Lee Koutsaris
Joyce Kwong
Yi Luo
Graham Macdonald
Leigh McGrath
Geoffrey McGrath
David McKay
Adam Molson
Evan Roberts (student rep)
Kirsten Stein
Auvinet Tehara
Michael Thorpe

PaC Members Recognized for Outstanding Service at the UTAGA 2013 Awards Night

Three PAC members were recognized in 2013 for their outstanding contributions. Joyce Kwong (MScPl ’09), Geoff McGrath (MScPl ’08), and Auvinet Tehara (MScPl ’09) received 2013 UTAGA Outstanding Service Awards, for their work on promoting and organizing the Friends of Planning Spring Social as well as Planning Skills Modules. Thank you for your hard work Joyce, Geoff, and Auvinet.

PaC Thanks the Student Representatives

Thank you to Lauren English and Evan Roberts, the first and second-year student representatives, for their commitment to PAC in the 2012-2013 school year. We really appreciated their direct feedback from current graduate students, and their hard work promoting PAC initiatives. The first- and second-year student representatives for the 2013-2014 year are Anna Wynveen and Joseph Milos. Thank you for volunteering with PAC!

PaC Thanks the Friends of Planning

In 2009-2010, with the help of the Division of University Advancement, PAC launched an online donation form to recognize individual donors to the Program in Planning as “Friends of Planning”. PAC sincerely thanks the 2012-2013 “Friends of Planning”. If you would like to become a Friend of Planning Donor in 2014, please click here to donate: www.donate.utoronto.ca/geography. Further details on the program are found on page 10-11.

Tickets for the PAC Spring Social can be purchased online at: alumni.utoronto.ca/spring-social

Featured Speaker at 6:15 p.m. with reception to follow.

Pamela Blais
Author of “Perverse Cities: Hidden Subsidies, Wonky Policy, and Urban Sprawl” and Principal at Metropole Consultants Ltd

Economic Drivers Versus The Cities We Want

Cities are shaped both by global economic trends and regional and municipal policies such as development charges and tax incentives. The impact of these economic drivers of urban change can be at odds with the objectives of city planners and principles of good city building. How can planners and the development industry respond?

Join Pamela Blais as she discusses these economic issues, the planning challenges that they present and how to meet these challenges.

The Friends of Planning Spring Social is presented by the Planning Alumni Committee of the University of Toronto Association of Geography Alumni, in conjunction with the Department of Geography and Program in Planning. Proceeds from your ticket go toward the Friends of Planning Fund dedicated to enriching the educational experiences of graduate planning students.

Jenny Lass (BSc ’97) presents the Outstanding Service Award to Joyce Kwong (top) and Auvinet Tehara (bottom)
The University of Toronto Planning Program boasts some of the most active and involved alumni in the province, who contribute their money, time, knowledge and creativity towards a rich calendar of events throughout the year. This commitment is a testament to the strength of the program and the enjoyment that we all receive from spending time with each other and contributing to the student experience.

On April 10, 2014, the Planning Alumni Committee will welcome over 300 alumni and other industry professionals to the 18th Annual Friends of Planning Spring Social. With the funds raised through the social, and the time and effort of alumni volunteers, PAC is able to enrich the learning experience of graduate students in the Planning Program by organizing and subsidizing many events and initiatives. The sidebar on this page outlines PAC’s work from 2013, and in the pages ahead you can learn more about these great programs and other initiatives that PAC coordinated.

PAC would not be where it is today if not for the leadership of our former Chair, Carly Bowman (MScPl ’07), who was instrumental in the expansion of PAC activities. Carly has been an active member of PAC since 2007, serving as Vice-Chair from 2009-2011, and Chair from 2011-2013. Carly handed over the reins in the fall, but she continues to be active on PAC and we benefit from her guidance. Thank you, Carly!

We also want to welcome David McKay (MScPl ’07) as PAC’s new Vice-Chair. David is a partner at MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited, and has been an active member of PAC for many years, bringing exceptional leadership skills and experience to PAC’s executive.

We encourage you to join us in the activities like those discussed in the “2013 At a Glance” sidebar. Join PAC, become a mentor, lead a module – there are many ways to get involved. Email us at: planning.alumni.committee@gmail.com.

See you at the Social!

Sincerely,

Melissa McEnroe and Michael Noble

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**2013 AT A GLANCE**

**Mentorship, Networking and Career Development**

- PAC held the Mentoring Meet and Greet in the fall, which kicked off another year of our annual Mentorship program, pairing students with alumni volunteers
- PAC hosted events, such as the Fall Planning Mixer at the beginning of the school year, providing the opportunity to strengthen the bonds between current and former students.
- At the annual Matthew Hanson Planning Opportunities Workshop, a panel of five alumni shared their internship experiences, career paths, and gave insight on finding exciting opportunities in planning.

**Skills Development and Planning Workshop**

- PAC hosted four skills modules in 2013, which provided students an opportunity to interact with practising planners and narrow the perceived gap between theory and practice. This year’s modules were: ‘Retail Planning and Development’ in January, ‘Pan Am Games and West Don Lands’ in March, ‘Planning 101’ in October and ‘Planning and Transportation’ in November.
- With the support of PAC and the Program in Planning, the second-year Workshop in Planning presentations have become public events, with the six student groups bringing a standing room only crowd to Committee Room 3 at City Hall in December.

**Scholarships**

- Through the Friends of Planning Fund, PAC raises money for scholarships. We have established five over the years: Two Matthew Hanson Scholarships in Planning, The Planning Alumni Graduate Scholarship, University of Toronto Planning Alumni OGS Award, and most recently The Friends of Planning Graduate Scholarship for Innovation.
- In September, second-year students travelled to Portland, Oregon to learn from this famously progressive city, utilizing PAC’s financial contribution to subsidize the trip and lower costs for students.
- With PAC support, students were able to attend conferences like OPPI, CIP and others to present their work, attend presentations and learn from a broad range of students and professionals.
The debate about transportation infrastructure raged in Toronto in 2013. What kind of infrastructure is best? Where should this infrastructure go? How do planners deal with changes, new demands, and the political complexities of the issue? And most pertinent to planners: how do we plan our cities with new transportation infrastructure?

On November 5, 2013, the Planning Alumni Committee amassed practitioners to discuss planning and transportation. Former PAC Chair Carly Bowman discussed the history and politics of transit infrastructure in Scarborough, and the complex issues planners face when Council directions change. Hans Riekko of the City of Toronto’s Eglinton Connects Planning Study team provided an overview of their plan to create a...
complete street along Eglinton - a future opportunity resulting from the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Line. Emily Wall of Brook McIlroy, hired by the City to assist in the Eglinton Connects project, explained the general planning directions emerging from the Study. In addition to creating a complete street, Emily explained how planners are working to create conditions to beautify and sensitively intensify Eglinton. Habon Ali of Urban Strategies provided background on a similar project from the Region of Waterloo, called the Central Transit Corridor Community Building Strategy. A video shown by Habon demonstrated some of the measures being taken to leverage investment in rapid transit for the benefit of the many communities along the coming Waterloo Light Rail and Adapted Bus Rapid Transit Line. Matt Armstrong, who works with Hans Riekko on Eglinton Connects, introduced the planning framework and moderated the session.

Over 20 students attended this PAC module, and engaged from the beginning. Interest ranged from decision making concerning infrastructure options, to street layout and bike lanes, to land use designation changes, to the community consultation process. Students offered thoughtful, insightful, original questions, and pondered through bites of pizza provided by PAC.

MHPOW
Auvniet Tehara (MScPl '09)

This school year’s Matthew Hanson Planning Opportunities Workshop (MHPOW) was a success bringing together a great panel of diverse speakers. Panellists included Laurie Payne, a Director from the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. She emphasised the importance of networking as an important way to make connections and further one’s career and open doors. Heather Inglis Baron, a planner at the City of Toronto, surprised the students revealing her prior career as a baker. She shared with the students that becoming a municipal planner for the City of Toronto was her dream job.

One of the goals of the MHPOW is to address the struggles and also real life challenges in finding employment. Edward Birnbaum, a current Executive Assistant to Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon, described some of the struggles he faced as a new graduate, ultimately ending up in a role that he enjoys very much but did not anticipate. Edward encouraged students to examine the political realm as a possible career option.

Craig Cal, presently a writer for Spacing Magazine, spoke of his experiences with Urban Strategies and his passion for urban planning. He shared how being involved in the planning community has been instrumental to his career. His passion for the field of planning resonated with students.

Andie Garcia spoke of her experience working for the Toronto Cyclist Union as a student and how some of the classes she took had an impact on her.

Overall the students were very engaged and eager to hear about the experiences of past alumni. One of the greatest struggles that students face is dealing with the unknown. Finding that summer internship and first job can be challenging, and it helps to hear from people who have gone through the experiences before.

MAKING WORKSHOPS WORK
By Leigh McGrath (MScPl '07)

The Workshop In Planning Practice is a second-year course required of all Masters in Planning students. Focused on addressing a planning issue for a real-life client, students work in teams to develop a work plan, execute tasks and craft deliverables as negotiated with their clients. The workshop course forges important connections to the world of planning practice, and has benefited considerably from PAC’s efforts to enhance the course’s curricular role in providing professional exposure.

Taught this year by two academic faculty, Professors Katharine Rankin and Lindsay Stephens, and professional course instructor, Leigh McGrath, Senior Associate at Urban Strategies, the class provides a balance between academic and professional instruction. Students apply learning from earlier courses in their degree, such as selecting appropriate research methods, designing questionnaires or sketching out land use concepts. In so doing they have to act quickly to respond to comments from instructors and clients, in order to ensure the outcomes of their efforts balance the theoretical with the practical and culminate in a useful product for their client group.

Workshop has benefited from PAC’s support in identifying projects and potential clients, generously donating time to attend student presentations, serving as outside advisors to student groups and in some years, and in years past providing a healthy spread of sandwiches and coffee during the end-of-course project presentations.

The fall of 2013 Workshop included six projects on topics of affordable home ownership and development charges, waterfront redevelopment; impacts of gentrification and community service provision, inclusion in community economic development strategies, the ambiguities of the Private Tree By law, and improving communication with the public about planning processes.

We welcome suggestions for future projects from our Planning alumni as the best projects tend to come from former students! The best time to provide this input is in the Spring before planning for Fall gets underway. We thank PAC for their ongoing support and look forward to sharing news of our student project with you again next year.
The 17th Annual Friends of Planning Spring Social was held on April 17, 2013 and was well attended by over 300 planning students, alumni, faculty, and professionals. The event was held at the Great Hall in Hart House, and featured great food and live jazz from talented University of Toronto students. As usual, it was an excellent opportunity to reconnect with old friends and network with many prominent industry representatives.

The featured speaker was Jeanhy Shim. Ms. Shim is the Founder and President of Housing Lab Toronto, and a 20 year veteran of Real Estate Market Analyst, through such organizations as Urbanation Inc., and Mat- tamy Homes.

Ms. Shim's presentation was the Condo-fication of Toronto: The good, the bad, and the ugly. The speech was set against the background of unprecedented vertical growth in Toronto and much discussion about the impact of these changes on the city. Ms. Shim looked at current and historical trends in the market, the role of developers in city building, the likelihood of families embracing the condo lifestyle, and the opportunities and constraints of future condo development.

The University of Toronto’s Planning Alumni Committee (PAC), and the Department of Geography and Program in Planning, would like to thank the many individual Friends of Planning Fund Donors whose donations directly support student success in graduate planning programs at U of T. PAC also wishes to recognize the substantial long-term contribution of the event promotional sponsor, NRU Publishing Inc., as well as the ongoing support from the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. Finally, the generosity of the Social’s many corporate sponsors is deeply appreciated.

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In March 2013, the first year planning class voted to hold our second year field trip in Portland, Oregon, over the other candidates, Philadelphia and Mexico City. Portland is known as a pioneer in progressive city planning and we wanted to see what lessons we and Toronto could learn from it. So, in early September we journeyed to Portland to see firsthand how planning is practiced in the city of food carts, bicycles and Voodoo Doughnuts.

Arriving from the airport, most students boarded the convenient LRT line for a transfer-less trip to our hostel in northwest Portland. Being a close-knit group, all fifteen students had decided to share a dorm room in a hostel for the four night stay. Some early arrivers were treated to a lunch with Mark Lakeman, an urban place-maker who leads the City Repair Project. Once everyone had arrived, including our faculty supervisor, department chair Virginia Maclaren, we set off on foot for a group welcome dinner downtown.

We began our first full day in Portland by renting bicycles for the duration of the trip. As Portland is known for being bike-friendly, we had voted to make cycling our main form of transportation. So, together we biked to the famous post-modern Portland Building to meet with Sarah Huggins from the city’s Parks and Recreation department. Portland has one of the largest municipal parks in the United States—Forest Park, a 5,000 acre nature reserve. The city has also developed great programmed parks in the downtown, such as Director Park and Jamison Square. Ms. Huggins showed us how Portland is focusing their investment on underserved areas of the city through a GIS-based proximity analysis.

Next, we biked to the headquarters of TriMet, the tri-county transportation authority to hear from Eric Hesse, a strategic planning analyst. Eric was a dedicated presenter, continuing his presentation in the photocopy room after our meeting room booking expired. He told us how TriMet has payroll taxing powers, so its funding is more predictable than what we’re used to in Toronto. TriMet is also constructing a new bridge over the Willamette River which will be free of private automobiles. Only transit, cyclists and pedestrians will have access to the bridge which will complete an LRT loop on both sides of the Willamette River.

The next day we embarked on our custom, guided, study tour with First Stop Portland, an initiative run out of Portland State University. Our first stop was City Hall (recognizable from the TV comedy Portlandia). We met with Amalia Alarcon de Morris, the Director of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and Dante James, the Director of the new Office of Equity and Human Rights to learn how planning and politics come together in Portland. We were intrigued to learn that Portland has formal neighbourhood associations that get citizens engaged in city issues and projects. They are similar to Toronto’s neighbourhood associations except that every part of the city is represented by one and there is a city department dedicated to their support.
This is especially interesting since Portland has no local councillors. The city council is made up of the mayor and four commissioners elected at large, all of whom manage their own bureaus. We heard from Mr. James how this distributed governance model makes it difficult to advance equity goals across the entire city service. Nevertheless, the Office is pushing ahead with a current focus on people of colour and people with disabilities.

We felt rather important when the Mayor himself showed up and joined our planning discussion, although, the feeling subsided somewhat once we learned that our tour leader was also the Mayor's wife. Nevertheless, we were encouraged to hear the mayor speak highly of the planning profession and the steps Portland is undertaking to plan the city. Before leaving City Hall, we were given a quick tour of the council chamber.

Next, we rode the Portland Streetcar, a recent transit improvement owned by the City but operated by TriMet, to the South Waterfront District. There, the Oregon Health Sciences University has built a new campus to anchor a new mixed-use community. The University wanted to expand, but it had no more room at its hilltop location. So, it chose the waterfront location and built an aerial tram in partnership with the city to connect the two campuses. Though it was multiple times over budget, the tram affords a speedy connection between campuses, avoiding the hillside terrain and the I5 freeway. Privacy concerns from a residential neighbourhood beneath its path were partially offset by the construction of a pedestrian bridge over the freeway. We had the pleasure to ride the tram up to the top and appreciate the views of downtown, the river and Mount Hood in the distance.

After returning to the riverfront, we rode the streetcar up to another of Portland's redeveloping areas, the Pearl District. Similar to the Distillery District in Toronto or Yaletown in Vancouver, this is a formerly industrial and warehousing district which has been converted for residential use. Here, we found Jamison Park with its playful, cascading water fountain. Our tour guide demonstrated to us how social housing and private housing in the area were designed to be indistinguishable from one another on the outside.
Our tour concluded at the offices of Williams & Dane, where we had a discussion with local developer Homer Williams and Charles Brucker, a placemaking consultant from PLACE Studio both of whom had done work in the Pearl District.

We ended our day with a Greek, family-style dinner with Jan and Tuck Shaeffer. Jan consults for the Energy Trust of Oregon on green energy retrofits and Tuck was an attorney for TriMet before retiring. They shared their insights on planning in Portland over the years including how Portland was one of the first cities to enforce an urban growth boundary, back in the 1970s.

Our final day began at the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. The city planners there spoke to us first about their climate change and food strategies. Then, we enjoyed a well-animated presentation on land use planning in Portland from Mark Raggett and Karl Lisle who is an alumnus of U of T’s planning program. We were surprised to hear that rezoning for development is rare in Portland; most developers build within the allowed zoning.

Our final event was one of the most enjoyable—we crossed to the east side of the Willamette River for a bike tour of cycling infrastructure led by Nick Falbo, a consultant at Alta Planning & Design. Alta is an active transportation consultancy known for building cycling infrastructure. After a demonstration of bike parking stall technologies, we hopped on our rented bikes for a guided tour of Portland’s cycling infrastructure.

Portland’s cycling network is more than just bike lanes. On our tour of the east side of the river, we rode on recreational trails, cycle tracks and traffic-calmed bicycle boulevards. Some of us encountered our first cyclist-activated bicycle signal which connected the riverside recreational trail to a cycle track diagonally across an intersection. On the bridge back to downtown, we found an automated cyclist counter. By late afternoon it had reached over 2600 cyclists. Downtown Portland has some bike lanes positioned between the parking lane and the sidewalk which removes the danger from parked cars re-entering traffic. There are bike lanes criss-crossing the downtown and, in general, motorists respect the right of cyclists to share the road.

The last stop on our bike tour was Tom McCall Waterfront Park. This strip of trails and green space on the downtown riverfront replaced the freeway which ran through there until the mid-1970s. In a pioneering move, the city and state tore down the freeway and built the park in its stead. It was a fitting place for us planning students from Toronto to conclude our Portland tour.

All the second-year planners would like to thank the Planning Alumni Committee for their financial support of the student field trip and Professor Maclaren for accompanying us. Thanks are also due to the student Organizing Committee: Basma Gaber, Helen Huang, Jacob Nigro, and Seth Wright. The trip was a great opportunity to learn about professional planning as practiced in Portland and a wonderful shared experience for us as we enter our second year of the program. PAC’s continued support of our academic and professional education is very much appreciated.

Below: At the top of the aerial tram (courtesy of First Stop Portland)
Dear Friends of U of T Planning,

Every year the Planning and Alumni Committee (PAC) at the University of Toronto provides financial support and career development opportunities to dozens of planning students. Through the Friends of Planning Fund, we fund scholarships, field trips, workshops and other activities which offer students a rewarding opportunity to enhance their education as well as a competitive advantage after they graduate. Please consider making a contribution to the Friends of Planning Fund to help us sustain these important initiatives throughout 2014.

The Friends of Planning Fund allows PAC to offer programming to the approximately 60 students enrolled in the Masters program each year. This includes our Fall Planning Mixer, Mentoring program, professional development workshops, and planning skills modules. The events have become so popular that we have had to expand our offerings every year, providing additional planning skills modules on relevant topics that engage and energize the students. In addition, programs such as the Fall Mixer and Mentoring program are supported through the direct involvement of over 70 alumni, who are eager to meet and interact with current students. The fund has also contributed to turning the second-year Workshop in Planning presentations into public events, with the six student groups bringing standing room only crowds to their City Hall Committee Room.

The Friends of Planning Fund also helped to support a field trip to Portland, Oregon that was attended by 15 students in the Class of 2013. Like earlier field trips to Las Vegas, New York, Detroit, Indonesia, and Mexico City, this trip allowed students to engage directly with practicing planners, tour development sites, and observe planning in an environment very different to what they are familiar with in Toronto. The Fund also supports several annually awarded PAC-sponsored scholarships and subsidizes students’ attendance at OPPI and CIP conferences.

We need to replenish the Friends of Planning Fund so that we can maintain and even expand our support of these essential activities. With your help, we can create more scholarships, and increase funding for conferences and workshops. Every M.Sc.Pl. student has access to the Fund and is encouraged to take full advantage of all of the opportunities that PAC offers.

Please consider making a donation to the Friends of Planning Fund. For any donation of $50 or more received before March 31, 2014, you will receive complimentary admission to the 2014 Friends of Planning Spring Social as a “Friend of Planning” as well as a tax receipt.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Michael Noble and Melissa McEnroe
Co-Chairs, Planning Alumni Committee

You can now give online at: www.donate.utoronto.ca/geography.
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