RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS:
The link between planning and public health

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Photo: Kyle Johnson
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Chair's Corner: Putting Public Health Back in Planning

In the latest state rankings on health by the American Public Health Association, Indiana ranked 41st overall in the health of its citizens. The state placed 48th in air pollution, 47th in public health funding, 42nd in cancer deaths, and 41st in preventable hospitalizations. Indiana’s best rating was in immunization of adults, where the state placed 7th.

What does that have to do with urban planning, you may ask? Well, while urban planners should not take the blame for the state’s poor performance, we certainly can be part of the efforts to improve the state’s built environment, which can go a long way toward decreasing the environmental causes of ill health. The public realm is after all the domain of planning.

It is perhaps useful to revisit the beginnings of our profession to see the link between urban planning and public health. This was all too clear in the industrial era. The industrial city brought with it congestion, poor sanitation and poor working conditions, squalor and the spread of contagion. Thus, city planning began as a response to these deplorable conditions. Indeed the first conference on city planning in the U.S. was organized by the Committee on Congestion of Population in New York in 1909 because as the group put it, “every city needs a city plan … A plan for the development of Greater New York, and other American cities, along economic, hygienic and aesthetic lines.”

Across the pond, the garden city model of Ebenezer Howard was aimed at decongesting the industrial city by providing a breather for urban residents and furnishing ample green space to buffer them from polluting industry. Euclidean zoning ordinances provided a strict separation of polluting industry from residential neighborhoods. In the landmark case of Euclid v. Ambler Realty that legalized the use of zoning by municipalities in 1926, the U. S. Supreme Court cited public health as one of the justifications for its decision.

As these examples show, public health has been an important concern of the planning profession since its inception. By the mid-20th century however, urban planning and public health parted ways partly because of the success in decreasing contagion and communicable diseases but also because of new conceptions about the cause of disease in what became known in medical epidemiology as “germ theory.” No longer was the physical environment the main cause of illness, but rather the prevalence of germ microbes. The cause and prevention of disease then could be more appropriately found not in the manipulation of the physical environment but through laboratory experiments. Hence, the symbiotic relation between urban planning and public health diverged.

Lately, the realization that the environment has a contributory role in such diseases as obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, asthma, and even depression is starting to reconnect the two professions. A 2010 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Creating a Healthy Environment: The Impact of the Built Environment on Public Health*, noted the relationship between land use planning and public health. Also, in 2006 the *Journal of the American Planning Association* devoted a special issue to a discussion of the link between urban planning and public health. It’s time to put public health back into urban planning. We need healthy plans, no pun intended! The need for this couldn’t be more urgent today.
We need to aggregate land uses that encourage pedestrian activity to help decrease obesity rates, and we need to ensure that neighborhoods are designed for different modes of transportation to cater to the physical activity needs of diverse residents. We need to be mindful of environmental racism by ensuring that polluting industry and land uses are not concentrated in minority neighborhoods, where the most vulnerable of populations may reside. We need to advocate for better quality housing for all households, so poor households are not stacked in housing that is damaging to their health. Moreover, we need an overarching new theoretical paradigm that compels a reunification of the two professions of public health and urban planning.

“In we need an overarching new theoretical paradigm that compels a reunification of the two professions of public health and urban planning.”
- Michael Burayidi

In this newsletter, we see embryonic vignettes of the projects, plans, and strategies that individuals, community groups, and civil society are taking to move us in this direction. It is a good starting point, and we as a profession ought to hop on board before we are dragged along by the current of change that is in the air.

Health by Design: Creating Communities that Promote Healthy, Active Living

*Kim Irwin, Executive Director, Health by Design*

Over the past decade, in Indiana and throughout the nation, planning and public health professionals have more often than not found themselves working together to achieve common goals. By increasing multimodal transportation options, encouraging responsible land use, improving connectivity and access and reducing auto dependency, both disciplines are working to create communities that encourage healthy people and support vibrant economies.

Such collaboration is not new. At one time, the two professions were intertwined, and connections between the built environment and public health were honored well into the 20th century. By mid-century, though, our paths diverged. Perhaps distracted by the automobile, superhighways and suburban development, we collectively seemed to forget that the places where we live, learn, work, worship and play have a direct impact on our physical and mental well-being. And we minimized the role of the “health” of a community - as indicated by factors such as jobs, housing, education, green space, social capital and crime – in shaping the health of its residents.

As a result, we’ve seen escalating rates of chronic diseases, environmental degradation, social isolation of older adults, and limited access for people with disabilities. At the same time, our communities have seen urban disinvestment and blight, unmitigated sprawl and unmet demand for transportation options. The good news is we’re returning to our roots. We’re finding our way back to each other.

Health by Design, a coalition working to ensure that communities throughout Indiana have
neighborhoods, public spaces and transportation infrastructure that promote physical activity and healthy living, is helping to lead the way. A team of planning and public health professionals founded the group in 2006, and representatives of both fields continue to provide leadership today.

Partnerships with institutions like the Ball State University, College of Architecture and Planning, professional associations like the Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association, state and local non-profit advocacy groups and local healthy community coalitions have led to a growing recognition of and respect for the policy, systems and environmental changes needed to support healthy people in healthy places. By convening diverse partners, educating on best-practices, facilitating dialogue, promoting smart design, providing technical assistance and advocating for policy change, we are helping to create active, thriving communities.

We invite you to learn more about our efforts and to get involved, whether as a professional or citizen advocate. Encourage your city or town to adopt a Complete Streets policy. Walk or bike with your children to and from school. Conduct a walkability assessment around a popular community destination. Ask your elected officials to invest more funding in transit. Do so knowing you are contributing to the health and prosperity of Hoosiers.

Together, we'll forge a new future that honors our shared history.

See: healthbydesignonline.org

Indianapolis Adopts a Complete Streets Ordinance

PHILIP D. ROTH, AICP, PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

“Active transportation” has recently become a popular topic in municipal circles. Public health concerns associated with increasingly sedentary lifestyles, including obesity and diabetes, have prompted reevaluations of many areas of public policy, including transportation. Such discussions frequently result in increased interest in bicycling and walking, which offer significant health and fitness benefits in addition to being relatively low-cost and easily accessible transportation modes.

Unfortunately, accommodating alternative transportation frequently runs into an obstacle in many communities, in that the existing roadway network is primarily automobile-oriented, and may not provide a safe and inviting environment for bicyclists and pedestrians. The “complete streets” movement is (in part) a reaction to this trend. The complete streets movement calls for roadway networks that encourage bicycling, walking, and transit use, in addition to automobiles. Some municipalities have adopted “complete streets ordinances” that serve as statements of commitment to these principles.

The City of Indianapolis adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance in August, 2012. The intent of the ordinance was to develop a “safe, reliable, efficient, integrated and connected multimodal transportation system” that accommodates all users. The ordinance jointly directed the City’s Departments of Public Works (DPW) and Metropolitan Development (DMD) to develop methods for implementing the new policy. To this end, the departments set out on updating the City’s
Thoroughfare Plan, the planning element that directly identifies and specifies standards for the highway, arterial, collector, and local street networks that collectively make up the thoroughfare system. The last Thoroughfare Plan had been developed in 2002, and did not include many provisions for alternative transportation. The update of the Plan began in January, 2014, with a project team headed by Parsons Brinckerhoff, and supported by Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group, Ball State University, and representatives from DPW and DMD.

Due to budgetary constraints, the plan update would need to minimize the amount of right-of-way acquisition needed to accommodate expanding roadway facilities, reserving scarce resources only for those areas where such acquisition would be absolutely necessary. This marks a major departure from the prior Thoroughfare Plan, which implied a very aggressive acquisition program, and indirectly poses challenges to the retrofitting of alternative transportation on existing roadways. In addition, while the prior Thoroughfare Plan addressed only highway and arterial networks, the update would need to also address collector and local streets, in order to ensure that appropriate facilities were being planned for at all levels of the roadway hierarchy.

A key component to the update was the identification and prioritization of potential roadway users at various levels of the thoroughfare hierarchy. For example, bicycling and walking would need to be discouraged on highways, as the implementation of the facilities needed to ensure user safety would be prohibitively expensive. Arterial streets would receive the most extensive dedicated bicycle-pedestrian facilities, due to the need to separate high volumes of relatively fast motor vehicle traffic from alternative transportation users. Local streets would require relatively little in the way of dedicated alternative transportation improvements, since lower motor vehicle traffic volumes and speeds pose a significantly lower risk for alternative transportation improvements. Based on these recommendations, preliminary assignments of the designs to the roadway network were made.

With the structure complete, the Thoroughfare Plan is awaiting land use recommendations currently being developed as part of the City’s “Plan 2020” initiative, following which the network assignments will be reconsidered. After its approval, the Thoroughfare Plan will serve as a basis for project identification and prioritization by DPW, and for discussions with developers by DMD.

See: http://cms.indygov.org/proposals/2012/PROP12-208.PDF
After waiting forty years, I am thrilled to see state and local municipal officials, planners, architects, even aging service professionals wake up to the notion that aging is not merely a physical process located in the individual body, but, rather, deeply embedded in a community. Accepting this paradigm shift takes courage in the face of the constant bombardment of anti-aging promotions that suggest “successful aging” is the mere result of personal (consumer) choices.

Certainly, adopting healthy behaviors and developing services for individuals is important. Yet, if we haven’t (or don’t) design communities in which these options are readily available, accessible, affordable and culturally acceptable, individual action can be quickly extinguished.

In the past, our approach to the challenge of demographic aging has been piecemeal and fractured. We build wonderful senior housing projects and plant them in cornfields. We use valuable community foundation funds to purchase senior and youth program vans, enabling individuals to access basic services that used to be available by virtue of one’s personal labor – walking to the library, to church, to the grocery and, heaven forbid, to school.

The community institutions we have created - school systems, health care systems, transportation and housing systems, in their isolation, reflect the basic fractured, silo-building nature of our land use and planning systems. It’s as if it were a girded skyscraper, where the cross-ties were built to keep the columns apart, not attached together. We have communities composed of isolated constituencies, each with its own specialists, representatives, advocates, and funding streams.

Unfortunately, it’s a principle of nature that “things fall apart.” If we reimagined those girders as joiners, as communicators, as linkages, with the forces moving inward, not outward, we might look to a more sustainable future. We would realize that where we place senior housing solves a transportation problem; that children and elders need one another; that sustaining the memory of a place keeps it alive over time.

The seventy-five million baby-boomers entering old age over the next twenty years have finally drawn our attention. This demographic will define the character of our communities just as strongly as it did when the cohort was entering school, we couldn’t build suburbs fast enough, and the family car was the American dream. Now with more older adults living in suburbs than in towns and cities combined, we are discovering that these places are not very livable as people grow old. Moreover, in traditional small towns throughout Indiana, the outward migration of younger individuals and families has left older populations high and dry in “naturally occurring retirement communities” poorly served by commerce, health care, transportation, and housing providers.

Linking the growing quality of place discourse with the subject of aging makes perfect sense. We are coming to realize that older adults seeking to age in place value many of the same community traits sought by millennials – and that Indiana cities and towns have wonderful opportunities to position themselves to support these common values. True, suburbs themselves will require what might be
expensive retrofitting. Cities and towns, on the other hand, already possess truly significant assets that, while benignly neglected, can be revitalized and reanimated with proper investment. They have town centers, sidewalks, historic fabric, mature tree cover, core institutions in downtown environs, available commercial space, and local leadership to exploit these assets. Unlike “anyplace USA” they have current and future citizens who are attached to place and personally invested in helping sustain the heart and soul of their communities.

The new Indiana Lifelong Coalition, composed of multiple statewide agencies, organizations and individuals, seeks to advance this notion of community for all ages and abilities. For more information about this effort, one of several funded throughout the U.S., see the Community AGEnda webpages at www.giaging.org.

About the Author: Phil is the Director of the Center on Aging and Community at Indiana Institute on Disability and Community and Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Anthropology, Indiana University, Bloomington. He is the 2014 recipient of the Walter S. Blackburn award, Indiana Chapter, American Institute of Architects.

The City of Fishers Plans for Healthy and Active Living

RACHEL JOHNSON, AICP, ASLA, CITY OF FISHERS DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, LONG-RANGE PLANNING

The public health of our nation as well as of our Hoosier state continues to be a topic of prime importance. Many of my own family members and friends are healthcare professionals, and public health policy is often a topic of conversation. As a city planner and landscape architect, I find my work also falls within the field of public health. By planning and designing natural and built environments that promote active and healthy lifestyles, planners often take an integral role in public health initiatives.

More than ever before, health care professionals and planners are coordinating their efforts to better understand the effects that our natural and built environments have on public health and find ways to create better public health through environmental design. The National Center for Environmental Health at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a wealth of resources for planners to make their communities healthier places. In the “State Indicator Report on Physical Activity, 2014” the CDC states that “people who are physically active generally live longer and have a lower risk for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, some cancers, and obesity. Environmental and policy strategies such as access to safe places for physical activity…and street-scale and community-scale design policy can help increase physical activity behavior among all Americans.”

The CDC advocates that one of the key ways to increase physical activity is to get more Americans walking. In order to do this, the CDC is partnering with planners to support “healthy community design,” defined simply as planning and community design that makes it easier for people to live healthy lives. By partnering with professionals in the field of public health, planners gain access to years of research and evidence that can be used to develop more effective strategies for transportation and parks planning.
Fishers is using the expertise provided by the CDC to help inform our transportation and parks planning, and with the help of CAP students, has made great strides toward providing an even healthier community through better planning and design. One important initiative of the CDC is to support efforts for communities to collect and analyze data on bicycling and walking as a tool to better understand the changes to our population’s activity levels over time.

Last summer, two of our CAP student interns, Ty Adley and Taylor Firestine, helped organize and implement Fishers’ first trail count initiative. Through an interdepartmental effort and the help of community volunteers, the interns were able to gather data on the number of residents using the paths and sidewalks in areas across the city. We plan to conduct another round of counts each year, and over time, as we continue to plan, design, and build more paths and sidewalks, we will be able to see how much the use of our trails is also increasing. With strategic planning and infrastructure improvements each year, coupled with data collection, we hope to make a positive impact on the ability of our citizens to lead active lifestyles and, as a result, improve public health.

The interns also assisted Fishers with an inventory of the parks system, which was an important first phase of the update to the Master Parks Plan. Accessible space for active and passive recreation is another key way that Fishers is engaging in healthy community design. The interns helped to document the accessibility and overall walkability of Fishers’ parks, and also conducted a GIS analysis to better understand how accessible Fishers’ parks are to the residents.

I have enjoyed working with CAP students and feel privileged to provide an avenue for each intern to make a positive impact on the lives of Hoosiers. The students bring a fresh perspective to our work each year and offer creative solutions, which helps the city to continue to be innovative in our planning. I look forward to continuing to partner with CAP in our important work to provide natural and built environments that foster healthy lifestyles.
Urban Planners are Key Partners in Promoting Public Health

PETE FRITZ, AICP, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PLANNER AT ISDH

As a planner have you ever been frustrated at how difficult it is to influence individual behavior enough to make a difference in how people move around and use our communities? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has noticed this too as they try to move the needle on large public health problems such as chronic disease, obesity and diabetes throughout the United States. Individual interventions have largely failed in decreasing the prevalence of these types of public health problems. Public health professionals are now looking at community level solutions as the best means to reduce the overwhelming cost to society of chronic disease by promoting physical activity and better nutrition as valid public health interventions. Policy makers throughout the United States at all levels of government and business are starting to realize that public health is closely tied to the way that we plan and build our communities. They increasingly see urban planners as a key partner in creating and implementing policies and changes to the built environment that supports good public health.

This trend is starting to become apparent in Indiana as the state agency responsible for public health has embraced an urban planning mentality for promoting policy, systems and environmental (PSE) changes at the community level to create better public health outcomes. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, is using solid urban planning practices to guide the implementation of PSE strategies aimed at promoting more physical activity and better nutrition in communities throughout the state. The funding for these efforts is supported by the CDC in their mandate to reduce the prevalence of chronic disease, obesity and diabetes across the nation.

My job as the Healthy Communities Planner at ISDH is to work at the community level with a broad range of stakeholders to get people outside and moving to facilitate better health outcomes. I have been given the opportunity to create a number of public health interventions that utilize urban planning practices to nudge communities in the direction for change. I do this mostly by providing technical assistance workshops and managing funding programs. There are only a handful of urban planners working in state health departments in the U.S. It is more common to see urban planners working for metropolitan planning organizations or public health departments in larger cities who are doing this kind of work. Some hospitals also employ planners to help implement their community benefit requirement as part of maintaining their non-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service. This practice is not a large part of the employment scene for planners yet, but it is growing. Here are a few programs that I have been involved in while at the ISDH:

• Healthy Community Workshops. ISDH is working with Health by Design (a statewide active living coalition) to facilitate 25 active living workshops throughout Indiana over a five year period. These workshops engage community leaders, officials
and advocates in identifying opportunities to enact policies and changes to the built environment to promote physical activity and better nutrition.

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning. ISDH worked with Bicycle Indiana (a statewide bicycle advocacy group) to conduct 18 workshops focused on how to plan for bicycle friendly communities. Following these workshops, ISDH is providing funding to 12 communities in 5 years to prepare and adopt pedestrian and bicycle plans as a means to enact policy change to promote physical activity and active transportation. ISDH is also partnering with INDOT to promote safe routes to school programs with $200,000 in funding.

- Complete Streets Policies. ISDH is working with a number of statewide partners, including Health by Design and AARP Indiana to promote the adoption of complete street policies. Complete streets workshops have been conducted throughout the state to provide technical assistance to communities interested in learning more about complete streets. These policies create a process to provide routine accommodation of all roadway users (including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users) in road planning, design, construction and maintenance. Indiana has progressed from no complete streets policies in early 2009 to almost 50% of the population currently covered by some form of adopted complete streets policy.

Urban planners in Indiana are increasingly helping to create policies and programs that encourage healthier behavior such as walking, bicycling and transit use; along with managing projects that create changes to the built environment such as multi-use paths, bikeways and farmers markets. It is encouraging that planners are advocating for these types of programs and projects, helping to build a world where physical activity and better nutrition happen as part of daily life, making the healthy choice the easy choice.

The City of Noblesville Adopts an Innovative Approach to Building Parks

CHRISTY LANGLEY, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, CITY OF NOBLESVILLE, IN

Noblesville, along with several other Hamilton County communities in Indiana, continues to rapidly grow both in population and in rooftops for those new residents to live in. Whenever your population grows at such an expedited rate, it is often difficult to ensure that you are keeping up with the amenities for these new residents outside of their individual subdivisions. Maybe they can walk from house to house but how do they circulate without a car outside of the neighborhood? Where do they go to play and recreate?

The typical national standard for a minimum Level of Service (LOS) for local park provisions is 10 acres/1000 people. Noblesville easily meets that requirement (thanks, in part, to our 100 year old Forest Park immediately adjacent to downtown Noblesville). However that LOS does not take into consideration access to those park spaces. About 44% of our single family permit growth over the past decade has been in the southeast quadrant of our city where there is not a park to be found. There are also very few alternative transportation options for those wishing to get to existing park land (most notably crossing State Road 37 safely).
So, let’s build a park. We own over 200 acres on the east side of the city as the future home of Eastside Park, but the next logical question is, in the local funding environment that is Indiana’s new reality, how do we pay to develop this land? State Legislature allows for Park Impact Fees to be assessed on new residential development, but that is chump change compared to the cost of construction for park facilities that many in our expanding demographic expect, let alone enjoy (and quite frankly, the fees come with a lot of statutory ineligibilities). Because of the extreme restrictions local governments are operating under, property tax through general collection is not an option for new park construction. Sometimes Tax Increment Finance (TIF) can be used but such expenditures usually only make return-on-investment-sense whenever it is a strategic redevelopment effort versus simply providing a public service.

This presents a conundrum. After analyzing what some cities and states do to fund their recreation spaces, we came up with an idea. Studies from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) show that residents who live within close proximity to a park are 2-3 times more likely to take a walk in a 2-day period. They also show that there is a direct correlation with how many times a week adults exercise and their geographic proximity to local parks (up to a ½ mile). This led us to believe that we should actually be incentivizing residential development in the immediate proximity of the Eastside Park area.

Over 90% of our residential development in the past 10 years has been through a Planned Development (PD) process. In exchange for density bonuses and other incentives, one of the provisions that the development must include is a minimum 28% open space. Much of this reserved open space is passive (as required by our standards) and acts more in an aesthetic capacity not to promote active recreation. The state of Pennsylvania allows communities to waive a portion of their open space requirement in exchange for developers paying into a fund for park construction. That was our lightbulb!

In 2013 we drafted a Payment in Lieu of Open Space (PILOS) ordinance that allowed residential developers within ¼ mile (Zone A) and ½ mile (Zone B) of an existing or future park boundary to pay a percentage of the appraised value of their unimproved, reclaimed land in exchange for reducing their open space from 28% to 13% and 19% respectively. This money is then deposited into a fund for park improvements and construction within the park that the development borders. Because payments are not due until secondary platting, we are embarking upon our first PILOS agreement with a 500+ housing development adjacent to Eastside Park. Based on current market values we intend to collect a little over $400,000 by the time the entire subdivision is completely platted and constructed.

The more restrictive the state legislature becomes on our abilities to tax, the more creative planners and other city leaders have to become in order to make sure we are planning and implementing a whole-life community. The old adage rings true—you get what you pay for—we just have to make sure we can diversify funding sources so that we can still afford to supply an acceptable quality of life standard for current and future residents to come. This is one way we have tried to do so in Noblesville.
Bicycle Initiatives in Muncie

KYLE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR, DELAWARE COUNTY GIS DEPARTMENT, AND LOHREN DEEG, ASAI, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF URBAN PLANNING

In the last 6 months, the City of Muncie under the guidance and support of Mayor Dennis Tyler, a cycling enthusiast, has worked to create the Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee and fill it with 25 volunteers and community leaders. This group has developed a framework plan for increasing bicycle advocacy within the community and drafted a much-needed update to the Muncie bicycle ordinance, which was last updated in 1968.

Department of Urban Planning faculty member Lohren Deeg serves on this advisory committee. Two students, including BUPD student Adam Beauchot and MURP student Derek Walker have assisted these initiatives and staff through their internship and assistantship with the Delaware County GIS Department and Planning Commission, respectively.

Muncie has two outstanding greenways/multi-use trails. One, the Cardinal Greenway, is a rails-to-trails conversion spanning 62 miles from the northwest to the southeast. This trail intersects in the heart of the city with the smaller White River greenway, which runs 5.5 miles east to west within the city limits. Connecting Muncie’s neighborhood residents to these trails and other amenities in our city is a high priority. Within the last 2 years, the city has moved from zero bike lane coverage to over 4 miles of dedicated laneway and has a strong commitment from the administration to expand laneway mileage in the future. Muncie has also worked to develop the city’s first mountain bike trails at the city owned Prairie Creek Reservoir Park, connecting those trails to the existing Cardinal Greenway. The Muncie Arts Council has created an Arts and Culture Trail that connects important locations and landmarks throughout the community. This on-road trail already has signage, and plans are in place to install dedicated bike laneways along this corridor.

Educating all generations, especially our youth, on the importance of safe cycling as well as the health benefits of an active lifestyle should be a priority across city and county agencies. Unfortunately, Delaware County was ranked 83 out of 92 counties in Indiana in 2014 for health, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation project, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/). A number of articles and reports from the last two years support the health benefits from regular cycling and commuting, from weight loss to chronic disease prevention and maintenance.

The Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee’s application for designation as a “Bicycle Friendly Community” (League of American Bicyclists) has allowed the committee to guide future plans, which include developing education and outreach programs and events, training police officers, updating our bicycle ordinance, and working with our local school system on developing bicycle safety programs. Most recently, a two-way bike lane has been striped through the central city, into the East Washington historic district, with the installation of a bike-friendly signal across a busy four-lane street. This two-way bike lane configuration represents the most convenient connection from the central city to the Cardinal Greenway, and showcases one of Muncie’s most historically significant residential neighborhoods.
Muncie Bike Map
http://bit.ly/MuncieBikeMap
An interactive map that provides users with the locations of greenways, trails, bike lanes and cyclist amenities, as well as locations hazardous to cyclists.

Muncie Bike Map location submittal form
http://bit.ly/MuncieBikeMapForm

This is a “GeoForm,” a simple website that can be accessed through any web browser. The site is set up to collect public input on smartphones using their GPS location. Users can submit locations that need bike parking; existing bike parking that is not on the map, bicycle amenities, and bicycle hazard locations.

Professor Deeg and Mr. Johnson led a bike tour of Muncie for APA-Indiana Conference attendees in October 2013.
Photo: Lohren Deeg

Prairie Creek Trails
www.prairiecreektrails.org

Information on the Prairie Creek Trails area, including maps of the biking, hiking and multi-use trail system.

Cardinal Greenways
http://cardinalgreenways.org/

The Cardinal Greenway is the longest rail-trail in Indiana and spans 62 miles from Marion through Muncie to Richmond in East Central Indiana.
Field Trip to Indy

Week 2 of Spring Semester found the sophomore class of planning students in Indianapolis with Kenneth Hughes, Graduate Assistant, and Vera Adams, Assistant Professor of Planning at BSU. The field trip included 1) a site visit to the 70+/- acre industrial site between 54th and 52nd Streets just east of College Avenue, 2) informal tours of Developer Town, the Speakeasy and the Bent Rail Micro-Brew Pub, and 3) a meeting with Robert Uhlenhake, Current Planning and Zoning and Brad Beaubien, Planning Administrator with the Department of Metropolitan Development at The Hall in downtown Indianapolis.

The students are working on a semester-long project structured in three planning phases: analysis, alternatives and final plan. The overall concept for the site planning effort is Bike Town, a bicycle oriented urban infill development. The site is bisected by The Monon Trail, one of Indy's most traveled bike trails and a prominent part of the Indianapolis Greenway and Trail System Plan, which was on display in the CAP Gallery earlier this semester.

Planning challenges are many in this year's project. First, students address questions of connectivity because the site is located at the border between two Indy neighborhoods: Meridian-Kessler and Monon-Keystone. Preliminary analysis of demographics, figure/ground and Sanborn Maps of historical development suggest that these are very different places. Second, students address density, “parcelization” and development suitability. Density in the surrounding 1-mile square needs to be 15DU/acre or more on average to support feasibility of the proposed Bus Rapid Transit Red Line along College Avenue located 2 blocks to the west. Third, students address questions of infill in existing, highly organized neighborhoods where citizens have the Mayor’s Office on “speed dial” (Footnote: an archaic term for readily accessible). And finally, students will propose a bike oriented urban village that straddles one of the main bike trails in the city. To do this, students are preparing precedent studies of similar award winning developments across the country and in Europe.

Finally, the sophomores are being treated to a series of guest lectures, “Fridays@4,” from professionals working with similar issues as planners, developers, transportation interns, architects and housing policy wonks who travel to Muncie at the end of a long work week to spend time with our students. We cannot thank them enough for taking time out of their busy professional and personal lives to be with us – the future generation of planning in Indiana. Thank you.

Fridays @ 4 on Common Ground: A Lecture Series for Sophomore CAP/Planning Students around the 5th Floor Studio Conference Table:

JAN 23 - Harry Eggink, MARCH, Bicycling Environments in Holland

JAN 30 - Bruce Race, PhD, Building Typologies

FEB 6 - Jon Hunsberger, MUD, Indianapolis Industrial Reuse

FEB 13 - Austin Gibble, BLA, Internship at Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA)

FEB 20 - Kevin Martin, BUPD, PLAN2020

FEB 23 - Carol Galante, Professor, UCBerkeley, HUD/FHA Housing Policy
MARCH 13 - Lohren Deeg, ASAI, Presentation Graphics

MARCH 20 - Jake Dietrich, BUPD, Urban Infill Housing

MARCH 27 - Julie Collier, MSHP, MURP, Residential Development

APRIL 3 - Rachel Johnson, Assistant Director, City of Fishers, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

People for Public Spaces/BSU Lafayette Community Workshop: Field trip week, Fall 2014

Twenty graduate and undergraduate students joined MURP program alumni for a three-day public planning workshop in Lafayette.

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**Burris Reaches Future City Regional Competition**

*BRYANT NIEHOFF, SPA PRESIDENT, AND CHARLIE RYMER, SPA VICE-PRESIDENT*

As you may have heard, the Student Planning Association worked with the Burris Laboratory School from October through January on the Future City Program. On Saturday, January 24th, students and SPA mentors traveled to Fort Wayne for the regional competition held at IPFW’s campus. The students arrived at 8 O’clock to set up their booths alongside more than 30 other teams representing various schools throughout the region.

After students set up their Future City model and presentation materials, independent judges representing sponsors for the event walked around the display room and interacted with the student teams. These judges interviewed the students, testing their knowledge of key aspects of their cities relating to the judges’ respective expertise, such as electrical engineering, surveying, and material recycling. This compelled the students to think critically about their project and relate their design concepts to real-world practices. The students were also given the opportunity to view and compare the many other projects on display, giving them a wide frame of reference for improving their work in subsequent years of involvement in the program.

The next step in the competition was to give a formal presentation in front of a panel of judges. The students were required to formulate a narrative
of their city in no more than five minutes in order to explain the key concepts behind their design. The most notable feature of the model was the city’s use of sustainable urban agriculture in the form of a Subterranean Accelerated Lettuce Agricultural Domain (or S.A.L.A.D. for short) directly below the city’s surface. Students were able to argue this concept's feasibility by referring to extensive research they conducted in the previous months of preparation.

Following the presentation, the panel of judges asked questions about how the students accommodated for the interaction of the different systems and forces influencing their city. The students responded to the judges’ questions promptly and confidently, demonstrating a thorough understanding of their city and model. Then the judges announced the top five teams to advance to the finals. Although the Burris team was not amongst these finalists, they received an award for the “Most Innovative Use of Agriculture.”

The Future City program was helpful in introducing middle school students to the world of planning and design. Students learned to think critically about the development process and gained insight on the many systems that make up a city and its infrastructure. As mentors, we were proud to be involved in this program and encourage future SPA members to participate in upcoming years.

See: futurecity.org
Ben Thomas, BUPD '09, is the distinguished alumnus of the year in the Department of Urban Planning!

Thomas manages the Better Buildings Partnership, a strategic program for delivering the comprehensive plan of Sydney, Australia, in the city’s private sector. The partnership has won awards on the national and international stage for its competitive collaboration style of community engagement and market transformation toward sustainable building practices.

Ben's urban planning degree from CAP took him to Sydney shortly after graduation, where he has worked in the property industry to rate buildings, create frameworks for defining sustainable precincts, and organized the Better Buildings Partnership, motivating competing commercial property companies to work together to champion sustainability on a city-wide scale. Through the Better Buildings Partnership program with the city of Sydney, he has established new industry standards for benchmarking building performance, enabling green leasing frameworks, diverting office and construction waste from landfill, and connecting commercial buildings to decentralized energy and water systems.

The partnership has evidenced broad market transformation in Australia's approach to green leasing and tenancy construction waste and is delivering the Sydney 2030 comprehensive plan targets for emissions, water and waste targets in its members' portfolios as well as across the city's larger commercial property sector.

See: www.betterbuildingspartnership.com.au

Upcoming Events and Conferences, 2015

Indiana APA (Spring) Conference  
Ball State University  
March 27

Urban Affairs Association Conference  
Miami, FL  
April 8-11

CAP 50th Anniversary Celebration  
Muncie  
April 9 – 11

National APA Conference  
Seattle, WA  
April 18-21

Indiana APA (Fall) Conference  
South Bend, IN  
October 7-9

ACSP Conference  
Houston, TX  
October 22-25