THE WAGNER PLANNER

Newsletter of the NYU Urban Planning Student Association

November 2007

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EVALUATING ONLINE CARBON CALCULATORS

by Daniel A. Doyle (MUP '08)

Our planet's resources float some mighty privileged lifestyles. Regrettably, policies of unchecked plunder for short-term gain make for a bleak future. Arming citizens with a tool for self-examination is a virtuous effort since we can't manage what we don't measure. It's no small task to measure environmental impacts such as carbon dioxide emissions, but numerous carbon calculators are emerging on the internet as an easily accessible resource to make this feasible.

"Online carbon calculator sites often generate more questions than answers."

The hope is that our choices and their effects on the planet become more transparent. One is anointed with a "carbon footprint" by answering just a few questions about driving habits, energy bills and frequent flyer miles. Yet it should not be confused with an "ecological footprint." They differ in that an ecological scorecard tracks an individual's natural resource use against the earth's ability to regenerate these materials.

Carbon scores estimate the amount of CO_2 emissions released from our material lives. Conventional methods of generating electricity would generally lead these footprints to shrink and swell in tandem. However, there are exceptions. Should we use cleaner fuels to raze a forest, our ecological footprint could conceivably balloon while its carbon counterpart remains largely unchanged. These analyses have some notable overlap, yet we would be remiss to use them interchangeably.

When I tried three carbon calculators online to tally my own carbon yield, I was hoping for a hard and fast baseline. Instead, I found my pounds of CO_2 emitted annually varied widely. The EPA's (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) calculator estimated that my actions accounted for upwards of 33,000 pounds of CO_2 annually, while Nature Conservancy had my actions producing under 22,000 pounds.

A third calculator, found on climatecrisis.net, generated a number that was less than half of the EPA's figure. The wide range of results can be attributed partially to different information requested by each calculator. Nature Conservancy, for instance, did not ask for heating/electricity costs.

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Urban Planning Program
Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service
New York University
295 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012

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CHIEF EDITORS
Michael Kodransky
Theresa B. Do

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Yvonne Martinez

COPY EDITORS
Denali Dasgupta
Melanie Ochser
Courtney Wolf

PHOTOGRAPHY
Emre Edev
Sherilyn Tran
Danise Malqui

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Daniel A. Doyle
Michael Freedman-Schnapp
Ben Winter
Sarah Wu

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All currently enrolled MUP students, alumni and faculty are encouraged to submit material to *The Wagner Planner*. Please email letters to the editors and any other contributions to: wagnerplanner@gmail.com

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Two development paradigms discussed in many planning conversations is about which approach works better: top-down or bottom-up. Grassroots organizations rallying communities to understand the stakes at hand have one perception, while governments that unveil their ambitious vision for change have another. Ultimately, the needs of constituents should be at the core of any discourse. Buildings, roads and other infrastructure exist for people and not the other way around.

The NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan developed under Mayor David Dinkins in 1992 aimed to guide and stimulate different uses along the city's edge. Mostly, it was a top-down plan to get derelict lots on the waterfront redeveloped. Portions of the 578 miles of NYC waterfront have already been transformed into new neighborhoods like Battery Park City. Others, like the cluster of towers envisioned for Greenpoint-Williamsburg in Brooklyn, have yet to be fully completed.

Unlike Battery Park City, which was developed on landfill from the World Trade Center site, the plans in Brooklyn are in an existing community with many diverse stakeholders. Other neighborhoods in Brooklyn, such as Sunset Park, are already organizing before any plans have even been conceived. SPAN, a grassroots organization, tries to engage the numerous groups that call the neighborhood home to understand how potential changes might affect them.

These particular scenarios are not unique to NYC. In other municipalities and countries around the world, communities are dealing with government visions for revitalization and growth. In Vietnam, enhancement of infrastructure to accommodate an increasing population is being done by decentralizing some of dense development in core cities through improvements in the transportation network.

The introductory urban design course taught by Professor John Fontillas and Steve Stainbrook is one place where students at Wagner are challenged to think about top-down and bottom-up. Physical plans can be imposed on a community from blueprints put together by a professional design team or through interaction with community members at charrettes.

We hope you enjoy the articles in this issue of *The Wagner Planner* that deal with some of these themes and many more.

Michael Kodransky and Theresa B. Do

REVIEW OF DOCUMENTARY FILM ON WATERFRONT ISSUES IN NYC

by Michael Freedman-Schnapp (MUP '09)

There is a renaissance of sorts happening on New York harbor's waterfront. Since the early 20th century, when trains and automobiles replaced passenger ferries, commercial use has dominated New York City's waterfront. Now, in the wake of massive investments in New Jersey's container terminals shifting the vitality of the commercial port to the west, a motley of recreation-seekers, environmentalists, developers and politicians have turned their eyes towards the waterfront as a key resource for the area's growth.

The most visible part of this rediscovery of the water's edge is the private residential developments rising all along the harbor—from modernist towers going up in Williamsburg, Brooklyn to faux-Swiss chalet style condos sprouting in Jersey City. Yet in the shadows of these buildings are new parks, waterside bicycle trails, intrepid recreational boaters and a still-essential working waterfront of tugs, barges and fuel depots. Between these forces that meet at the high tide line lies a complex and rapidly-changing debate.

City of Water, a 30-minute film directed by Loren Talbot of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance and Jasper Goldman of the Municipal Arts Society, explores the fissures of this debate and lands squarely in the camp of promoting recreational opportunities and preserving commercial uses on the waterfront. The film raises important questions about the wisdom of allowing large, primarily market-rate residential towers along the waterfront complemented by small, semi-accessible strips of parkland for the public.

In the film, Philip Lopate, author of the 2004 book *Waterfront: A Journey Around Manhattan*, calls this new paradigm for the city's edge a "weird tradeoff" that brings no "real interaction between the waterfront and the streets that abut it… taking out all the street life."

New York City Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, Daniel L. Doctoroff, appears in *City of Water* as the voice of the city planners, politicians, developers, real estate interests and construction trades that are responsible for bland riverside developments like Queens West in Long Island City and Newport, a master-planned "mixed-use" community in Jersey City. Saying that the working waterfront should be kept in areas only "where it makes financial and spatial sense," Doctoroff creates an aura of inevitability for this type of development.

Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez (D-Brooklyn/Queens) and Captain Andrew McGovern (who runs the Sandy Hook Pilots, a group that steers all container ships within New York harbor) counter Doctoroff point by point. They eloquently state that the well-paying jobs at the ports, fuel depots, ship repair facilities and waterfront factories support tens of thousands of blue-collar families throughout New York City. Although these facilities continue to undergird the region's economy, they face imminent displacement from residential, big-box retail and hotel developments.

Doctoroff's vision for a gleaming "harbor district" contrasts with that of another member of the Bloomberg administration in the film, New York City's Director of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, Rohit Aggarwala. Emphasizing the need to keep sewage out of the harbor, create green roofs, and adopt sustainable waterborne transit, Aggarwala seems to be singing from a different hymnal. *City of Water* shows the contradiction of Bloomberg's development and sustainability plans by the juxtaposition of these two administration officials—though the administration would insist they are one and the same.

Prominent in the film are numerous local advocates who steadily bring more people onto the water in rowboats, sailboats, water taxis and even for competitive swims in the Hudson River. *City of Water* makes a convincing case for linking water access, recreation and improvement of the harbor water quality. Erik Baard, founder of the Long Island City Community Boathouse, memorably compares the current experience at the water's edge to a gorilla in a zoo that must not be touched, but rather

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AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR INGRID ELLEN

by Sarah Wu (MUP '08)

Ingrid Gould Ellen is an Associate Professor of Public Policy and Urban Planning . She teaches courses in microeconomics, urban economics, and urban policy. Her current research is on how the development of supportive housing influences development in surrounding neighborhoods using longitudinal data from New York City. She is also co-director of the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy.

SW: As the new chair of the urban planning program, do you have any new goals or visions for the program?

IGE: We are working to expand the faculty by hiring new people, possibly as many as two and a half full time equivalent faculty members who would be centrally involved in the planning program. We're specifically looking for people who study physical aspects of cities. On the curriculum side, we are continuing work to insure that classes challenge students and strike a balance between theoretical depth and practical relevance. Where necessary, we are also making an effort to reduce class sizes.

SW: What is an MUP program doing at a school of public service, and what do you think we get from our unique location within the Wagner school?

IGE: Most planning programs have small faculties, but our program's location within Wagner gives our students access to both planning faculty and a larger set of professors who are highly interested in urban policy. Also, the broader focus of our program teaches students skills to deal with the fiscal, organizational, and political struggles they will face when trying to implement their plans and designs in the real world.

SW: I know you are publishing quite a bit these days. Will you tell me about your current research projects?

IGE: I'm focusing my research on three topics. First, I'm studying residential choices that households make and how those decisions drive urban growth and neighborhood change. I'm particularly interested in understanding the residential decisions that underlie gentrification, how crime influences residential choice, and how families with children make decisions about where to live. Second, I'm continuing research on the impacts of subsidized housing on communities and individuals. And last, I'm looking at racial segregation and racial disparities in housing and schools.

SW: Despite being so busy with research, you still find time to teach Introduction to Economics. What do you like so much about teaching that class?

IGE: Often students really think they're going to hate it. They have such low expectations that it's easy to make the class better than they think it will be! Also, it's fun to give people a new way to see the issues and organizations they care about. And I like meeting the students when they first get here. Teaching an introductory course gives me a sense of the new student body.

SW: You grew up in New York City. What were the best and worst aspects of being a kid here?

IGE: The worst parts at the time were the crime and the filth. The City was much dirtier and smellier. The best parts included the independence living in the city afforded me. I didn't need someone to drive me everywhere, which allowed me to do a lot on my own. Also, I got exposed to great culture. My mom was a film critic and professor at NYU, and she took me to shows and movies and exhibits that I wouldn't have been able to see in most other places. I also value the exposure to diversity that growing up in New York gave me.

SW: What's one issue or topic that you don't currently work on, but find fascinating and would like to explore?

IGE: Amy Schwartz and I have talked for a long time about editing a book or writing a series of papers on what research can tell us constructively about the economic development strategies that can benefit a city. So much of the literature focuses on what doesn't work. We'd like to give advice about what economic development tactics are likely to be successful.

SW: Is there anything exciting happening at the Furman Center that planning students should know about?

IGE: We host many events, and students are always welcome. Also, we have two websites that students may find useful. PlanNYC (http://plannyc.org) focuses on current plans and developments in neighborhoods around New York City, and NYCHANIS (http://www.nychanis.com) provides quantitative data about New York City neighborhoods. And, of course, our research is critically dependent on student assistance. If students are interested, they should get in touch.

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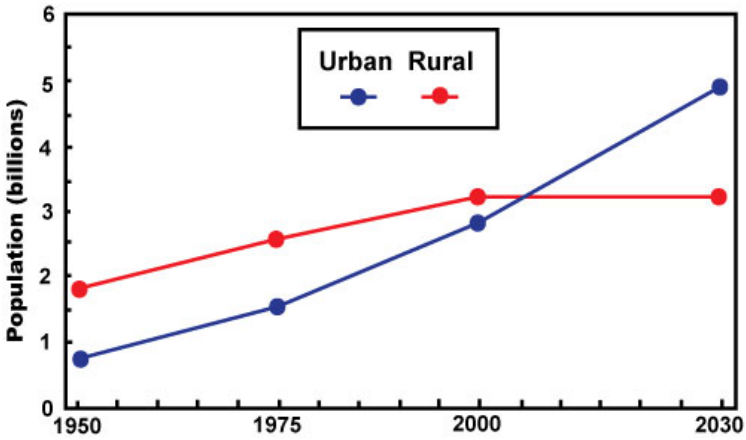
WORLD URBAN POPULATION GROWTH EXPECTED TO CONTINUE

by Michael Kodransky (MUP '08)

For decades, archeologists have searched for the earliest evidence of urban civilization. Until recently the prevailing belief was that Uruk in southern Mesopotamia was the world's first urban society. With approximately 50,000 – 80,000 residents living on 3.7 square miles, Uruk was roughly as dense as modern day San Francisco.

A new study conducted by researchers at Harvard University earlier this year, challenged the notion of Uruk as the first urbanized society. Excavations from parts of northern Mesopotamia, which is present-day northern Iraq and part of Syria, reveal that the city of Tell Brak may have developed circa 4200 BCE—concurrently or earlier than Uruk—through an organic clustering of many groups. In contrast, Uruk's founding is attributed to an edict of King Gilgamesh. According to an epic of the same name, Gilgamesh established the city more than 6,000 years ago when he ordered that a wall be built around the area, heralding the first urban growth boundary millennia before Portland, Oregon. The findings from Tell Brak suggest that the utility of shared space, rather than the will of a king, is what ultimately broke down the social mechanisms that kept groups of strangers living apart.

That realization continues today, as the world experiences a major demographic shift toward urbanization. According to scientists at the University of Georgia and North Carolina State University, May 23, 2007 was the day when the global urban population of 3,303,992,253 surpassed the 3,303,866,404 rural inhabitants. The split is even more pronounced in the United States and other industrialized nations. The 2000 U.S. Census shows that 21% of the United States is rural, while 79% is urban.



Estimated and Projected World Urban and Rural Population, 1950-2030.
Source: peopleandplanet.net

In the year 1990, thirteen cities around the world had populations that exceeded 1 million. Today there are over 300 metropolitan areas with over 1 million people—a 25-fold increase from only a century ago. London was the only city with more than 5 million people in 1900, but now there are 16 cities with more than 10 million residents, and at least 10 more cities are predicted to join that cohort in the next 10 years. The United Nations estimates that urban dwellers will constitute 51% of the world population by 2010. By 2025, the number of cities above the 1 million threshold will double to 600. This growth may partially be explained by the merger of core cities with suburbs and outer towns into metropolitan areas.

The morphology and spatial distribution of urban areas is changing to accommodate new residents, often in the form of urban sprawl. Sunbelt cities like Phoenix and Houston epitomize where and how some of the largest urban population settlement is taking place in the United States.

Dhaka, Bangladesh and Lagos, Nigeria are examples in the developing world where there is massive in-migration to the city, mostly of the rural poor. There are over one billion people living in slums today. While the drop in population density in the industrialized world is linked to suburbanization, shantytowns on the peripheries of cities are reshaping urban form in the developing world.

Regardless of industrialization, people are moving to urban areas for the same reasons they have done so since the days of Uruk and Tell Brak—in search of food, jobs, educational opportunities and housing. At the same time, the urban majority will remain dependent on rural resources such as agriculture.

As the urban population of the world swells, taking up nearly one million square miles by 2030, planners should start thinking about possible solutions now. Professor Shlomo Angel, who

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Ingrid Ellen

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SW: Last but not least, will you share some of your favorite, hidden gem destinations around campus?

IGE: The new New York Public Library at 10 Jersey Street is beautiful. Also, the Jefferson Market Garden at 10th St and 6th Ave is a great space. One of my favorite places in the area is Pier 40. It's such a creative reuse of urban space. The Hudson River Park Trust took an old pier that a few years ago was filled with delivery trucks and covered the space in astroturf to create playing fields that both kids and adults use all the time. The open space is a great community resource for families and downtown Manhattan as a whole. ■

Carbon Calculators

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Online carbon calculator sites often generate more questions than answers. If a traveler takes ownership of the CO_2 produced from a flight, does that absolve the airline industry from sharing responsibility? Who is accountable for the tailpipe output of a school bus, the bus company or the school district?

Behind most harmful actions there is another complicit party. The plane must be assembled, the coal mined, and the oil refined before reaching the consumer orbit. Indeed, the effects of our actions are not, exclusively, our own. If these sites cloud rather than clarify our analysis, is there a silver lining? In the case of shoddy calculations, it's an issue of mind over matter – a time to convert the public to a new canon.

Carbon calculators can be springboards for trumpeting policy ideals. While it would be beneficial to have a universal protocol to calculate carbon outputs, a rough score still has its upshot. Those making behavioral changes have dared themselves and even proven this change is within reason. They have modeled changed practice for others, thereby increasing the odds for increased awareness and influence on the neighborhood, if not community, level.

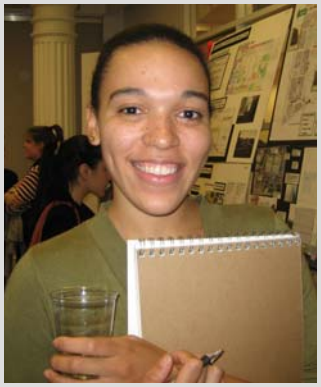
This past May, *The Seattle Times* charged its readers with reducing their carbon footprint by 15% over an entire month. It offered EPA's method to determine annual emissions and then a spate of practical ways to shave CO_2 poundage. Cultivate solidarity for a cause and the message turns infectious. Herein lies the actual value of carbon calculators. They can ramp up the average person's confidence that actions to reduce CO_2 emissions amount to documented change. Scaling back the first 15% of a pollutant may be easier than successive increments, yet individual action can spur political accountability. We are more likely to demand of others what we demand from ourselves.

A uniform carbon metric is critical when governments are pledging climate action. It can be used to enable public official doing greenhouse gas inventories and hold them accountable for carbon footprint reductions. Carbon calculators leaning toward the high side and overestimating the magnitude of output are better than to have no idea of carbon footprint size at all. ■

Planner Poll:

Has Al Gore's environmental advocacy influenced your behavior patterns?

Compiled by Sherilyn Tran (MUP '08) and Theresa B. Do (MUP '09)



"My environmental awareness has been strengthened by numerous influences ranging from my friends (who could be influenced by Al) to the growing cost of energy and the need to cut cost."

Andrea Perkins (MUP '09)

"I have always tried to be mindful of the environment. I recognize the importance of protecting our natural resources and promoting a greener lifestyle."

John Thomas Saunders (MUP '08)

"I've found that local programs and policies more so directly influence my behavior, such as the required and accessible NYC recycling program."

Kathryn Matheny (MUP '09)

ECONOMIC REFORM FOSTERS URBANIZATION IN VIETNAM

by Theresa B. Do (MUP '09)

Doi Moi means renovation in Vietnamese. It is also the term the Socialist Republic of Vietnam used in the early 1980's as their designation for economic reform. Since the institution of *Doi Moi,* Vietnam has adopted the Chinese model of socialism that opens its doors to trade, capitalism and a market for foreign investors.

Today, almost three decades later, *Doi Moi* has introduced a new type of renovation related to its open fiscal policy—the use of public and private resources to reconstruct and interconnect Vietnam's major cities. Most of the funds will go to transportation development. *Doi Moi* is potentially Vietnam's greatest vision for improving the quality of life for all Vietnamese. At the same time, sentiments for the policy are not shared by the ethnic minorities and rural poor in the country, whose land will be taken for the expansion of roads.

A rural village in the central highlands that will be cleared away for new buildings and paved roads.

With an expected 300% growth in the urban population by 2020, urbanization in Vietnam is intensifying. One of Vietnam's major goals is to turn around the failing transportation systems and decongest the overcrowded major cities, mainly Hanoi and Saigon, through a radical expansion in transportation infrastructure. Vietnam is hoping to redistribute one fifth of its total population (approximately 17,400,000 people) by the end of the century to less dense areas of the country in an effort to reduce negative impacts in overcrowded areas.

Motorbikes weave through unregulated traffic in Hanoi alongside newly purchased commuter buses made possible by *Doi Moi*.

In 2005, Vietnam was named the world's second fastest growing economy by *Fortune Magazine*. A transportation consulting firm was contracted for approximately $9 million USD to help develop a huge span of intricate roads, bridges, connectors and railways. Vietnam is hoping to complete its ambitious agenda while entering the world market as a powerful economic force by strengthening its GDP and national savings.

Through urbanization, Vietnam can continue its plans to foster growth of its GDP, national savings, transportation networks and economic power. Yet, while GDP and national savings for Vietnam increase, the percentage of people living in poverty and gentrification of areas settled by ethnic minorities is rapidly increasing.

While living in Vietnam from 2004 -2005, I witnessed firsthand some

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A GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION TAKES SHAPE IN SUNSET PARK

by Ben Winter (MUP '09)

Affordable housing, displacement of residents, architecture and historic character and overcrowding are a few issues that Brooklyn's second most racially diverse neighborhood is currently addressing with help from a community group called Sunset Park Alliance of Neighbors (SPAN). Only months after forming, this coalition of volunteer neighbors is preparing to tackle some of urban planning's most complex problems by negotiating with developers, educating community members about zoning laws and organizing neighborhood meetings. SPAN is in the process of facilitating a collective rezoning vision that advocates for Sunset Park residents. In addition, they are confronted by the challenge of working within a multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural environment with limited resources.

SPAN took shape in the beginning of 2007 when residents learned of a proposal to develop a 12-story condo building on 42nd Street and 4th Avenue. Concerns about the obstruction of magnificent views of Manhattan and St. Michael's cathedral quickly grew into anxiety over neighborhood gentrification and the loss of affordable housing.

At first the pulpits of St. Michael's Catholic Church and the meeting rooms of Trinity Lutheran Church served as gathering places for concerned neighbors to mobilize support. By the time they negotiated a scale-back to a contextual 6-story building, SPAN had already become a force of its own. It is now looking to take on a larger fight—rezoning the entire neighborhood to preserve the traditional, diverse and affordable character of Sunset Park.

Proposed building on 42nd Street and 4th Avenue in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Source: www.brownstoner.com

SPAN has shown there is power in civic organizations engaging entire neighborhoods such as Sunset Park. As with any neighborhood group, however, SPAN is discovering some of the difficulties of community organizing because of the political complexities, socio-cultural challenges and economic development issues. One of the difficulties SPAN faces is engaging every group in the planning process while understanding that each one has a different concept of community, communication, function and organizing.

SPAN first developed in "el Barrio" section of Sunset Park, where many of its members are of Latin American descent. SPAN's Neighborhood Summit on rezoning Sunset Park, which took place in August 2007, incorporated Spanish-speaking breakout groups and a Spanish translator for plenary sessions. A Chinese translator was also available, but very few from the Chinese community attended the meeting. SPAN did, however, reach out to "Brooklyn's Chinatown" on 8th Avenue by working with the Chinese Staff Workers Association (CSWA) and visiting local businesses.

As the group prepares its second neighborhood summit for creating a unified rezoning vision, it will develop new outreach techniques aimed at community members who have been absent from the discussions. Rebecca Giordano of SPAN says they'll work more closely with CSWA and send SPAN delegates to different groups and institutions that are usually not involved in the planning process.

Technical capability is another difficulty SPAN faces. If the group could influence how their own neighborhood is rezoned, they might introduce a special zoning district with mandatory affordable housing or simply contextualize the broad R6 zoning category. Unfortunately, the

(Continued on pg. 9)

Grassroots Work

Continued from p. 8

process of changing New York City's zoning code is complex and costly. First, SPAN must find a sponsor to file the time consuming and expensive 197-c Application for Zoning Map Amendment on their behalf. Eligible sponsors for the 197-c application in their district are the Department of City Planning, the City Planning Commission, Brooklyn Community Board 7, the Brooklyn Borough Board, the Brooklyn Borough President, or the Mayor. After raising enough money to pay the $28,350 application fee, the group and its sponsor will most likely need a consultant and a lawyer to draft a detailed request and to negotiate with the City Planning Commission. Even after that process is complete, the proposal will have to be evaluated through the processes set forth by the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and ultimately passed to the City Council for approval.

SPAN also grapples with more abstract problems such as defining gentrification. When SPAN first started its efforts, gentrification was easy to spot: a 12-story condo building amongst row homes of working class people and a new Papa John's restaurant opening *adjacent* to Johnny's Pizzeria. These are manageable symbols of outside influence to rally against. But what happens when you start talking about BID Districts, big box stores and other commercial areas replacing manufacturing districts, young do-good college students living in spacious apartments and ethnic gentrification?

Amongst all these challenges, SPAN continues its effort to rally a multicultural neighborhood and create a unified vision for the future of the community. Whether or not the myriad of New York City departments, councils and commissions pay any attention is a different story. ■

Reforms in Vietnam

Continued from p. 7

of the urban changes occurring in Hanoi and Saigon. I rode on Hanoi's newly purchased buses from the western hemisphere that was only attainable through *Doi Moi*, since Vietnam was no longer closed off from the world market. There was a tremendous amount of traffic clogging the streets, 75% of which was made-up of motorbikes—Vietnam's main mode of transportation. Nearly 34% of the population owns a motorcycle as compared to 0.02% of the total population accounting for car ownership.

I also learned that taxation on privately owned cars was almost 300% of the actual car's price. A Rolls Royce recently purchased for an estimated $1.5 million USD, actually cost $540,000 USD before taxes. Imposing a high tax is one of the ways in which Vietnam attempts to manage urban growth from multiplying faster than it can handle. The taxation, however, has little benefit for the urban poor or ethnic minorities.

Poverty in the central highlands and outskirts of the major cities is intense. Addressing congestion on highways and local streets in the city center does not appropriately deal with the growing poor population.

Investment in urbanization is creating a higher percentage of poverty within the city and rural areas, since ethnic minorities are being displaced for the construction of roads. They were originally pushed out to live in the uninhabitable highlands. Now when they've cultivated the land and use it productively, the ethnic minorities are being pushed out again.

Vietnam's increasing population, decreasing quality of life and high rates of gentrification make me question whether *Doi Moi* focuses on investment in transportation infrastructure and economic policies without real concern for the majority of people. Vietnam has a long way to go before it can meet its economic goals for the century if it is looking to sustain financial and urban growth without sacrificing quality of life. ■

The central highland region cultivated by ethnic minorities in Vietnam will soon be destroyed to accommodate new roads.

City of Water

Continued from p. 3

observed. He then postulates, "When people get into the water, they care about the water and they become the best constituency for the health of the water systems."

Long-time watchers of New York City development politics and waterfront policy (litmus test: what does the acronym C.S.O. stand for?) may not find a wealth of new information in the film, nor will their perspectives be challenged. However, they might find inspiration in the carefully-crafted cinematography or new language used by the wide range of interviewees. Those beginning to wade into the deep end of local waterfront politics will discover an excellent and engaging, if brief, primer on a range of salient issues.

City of Water favors the approach to community-based planning championed by Jane Jacobs that has driven the Municipal Arts Society and Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance's recent work in the city. The two successful community-oriented waterfront projects discussed in the film—Hunts Point Riverside Park in the Bronx and Stuyvesant Cove Park on Manhattan's east side—are gentle interventions on the existing built environment that simultaneously transform green spaces in lieu of radically shifting current uses.

The question remains as to whether a united community can ask for anything more in the face of a massive political will to build anything and build it now. Gone unmentioned in the film is the seminal battle over the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront, perhaps for fear of discouraging would-be activists. In that fight, the local community pushed for a more compatible type of development whose scale would better integrate into the existing neighborhood. Yet the erection of a vertical glass box by the Toll Brothers shows the score of that fight. If anything, *City of Water* highlights the need to get involved and get involved now. As Rep. Veláquez notes, once the waterfront is redeveloped, "That will be it. The waterfront will be gone." ■

Next Showing:
Friday, November 30th, 6:00 p.m.
at Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Place

The screening will be followed by a panel discussion about the future of New York City's waterfront.

Moderator: *Daniel Wiley*, Community Coordinator for Congresswoman Velazquez
Panelists: *Majora Carter*, Executive Director of Sustainable South Bronx; *Carter Craft*, Director, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance; *Greg O'Connell*, Pier 41 Associates; *Professor William Kornblum*, CUNY

www.mas.org/cityofwater

INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN CLASS POSTER SESSION AT PUCK

Compiled by Michael Kodransky (MUP '08) and Theresa B. Do (MUP '09)

Urban Design Professors Steve Stainbrook (left) and John Fontillas (right).

"In a short period, students produced incredible concepts that were elegant and thoughtful. What makes Wagner students so great is that they can combine design and policy matters, resulting in efficient real-world changes."
- John Fontillas

Students critique each others concept boards on the redevelopment of Seward Park.

"Students showed why New York City is such an invaluable urban lab to work and learn in, but it was astonishing the extent to which they demonstrated a rather robust physical planning and urban design toolkit for approaching the challenges posed by (re)developing Seward Park."
-Steve Stainbrook

Urban World

Continued from p. 5

teaches History and Theory of Planning at Wagner, predicts that the urban population in developing countries will reach 4 billion by 2030. New York City is expected to attract 1 million new residents by 2030, and this will likely influence how the metropolitan area will look. In order to accommodate the world population increase, Angel suggests doubling the space currently allocated to urban growth. Such an expansion could be similar to the design of the 1811 Manhattan street grid, developed to accommodate a projected 10-fold population boom.

Increasing population pressure is already causing social mechanisms, such as household formation, to be re-evaluated as unrelated adults cram into apartments and traditional family structures are redefined. Limiting factors such as natural resource availability, energy needs, economic inequality and environmental protection will frame how cities, especially in the developing world, will tend to morph in the future.

"We need to make room for the coming global urban expansion," writes Angel in his essay "Making Room for a Planet of Cities." The policies and practices of industrialized nations may not have the same relevance in the developing world, where urban poverty is compounded by poor sanitation and a lack of clean drinking water. Nonetheless, all cities whether in Asia, Africa or North America will need to adapt their physical infrastructure to address both the pace and scale of the demographic changes. ■

UPSA AWARDS FIRST SCHOLARSHIP WITH DYSORIENTATION FUNDS

by Yvonne Martinez (MUP '09)

Dysorientation, as it is affectionately named, is the urban planning program's end-of-the-year event. Students and alumni come together to decompress and send excited graduating planners into the professional world.

Last May was no different, yet instead of simply tallying door tickets to cover costs and break-even, the Urban Planning Student Association (UPSA) celebrated with a purpose. For the first time, a portion of the sales from every ticket went to a newly established scholarship fund to benefit an underrepresented college-bound high school student. The event helped raise a $250 scholarship for a graduating senior from the Academy of Urban Planning (AUP).

Located in the Bushwick area of Brooklyn, AUP opened in 2003 with an urban planning theme as part of the New Century High School Initiative that aims to transform low-performing large traditional schools by offering more focused small learning environments. At AUP, students learn about their community through self-discovery, civic engagement and self-expression while being provided with academic and social tools necessary to attain higher education. Seniors submitted scholarship applications in May and Johan Mejia was selected to receive the UPSA scholarship at AUP's first graduation ceremony in June 2007.

Some of Johan's favorite activities at AUP were writing letters to the MTA on designing better train stations and a discussion on urban justice with NY Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly. He credits his teachers for encouraging him to dedicate his time to help children at homeless shelters. Johan said his volunteer work and civic engagement were an effort to reciprocate the support his teachers had extended to him and to others in need within his community.

As the first recipient of the UPSA Scholarship, Johan is also aspiring to be the first member of his family to graduate from college. Johan's Dominican parents run a bodega in Bushwick and as Spanish speakers, were limited in offering support with his schoolwork.

He says, "I was on my own. I felt like an outsider many times. I kept trying because I wanted to do well in school. My English is not perfect yet, but I keep trying. I'm an example of what the American dream is about." Johan's strive for higher education is his attempt to create a legacy of his own and pave the way for his family and siblings.

When asked how he would use the scholarship, he said, "I can use it for things that I'm really going to need like books or others things that would benefit me a lot in my classes." Johan has already commenced collegiate life as a student at SUNY Delhi in upstate New York. He is studying Tourism, Hotel and Restaurant Management, saying, "Granting me the scholarship will show the community and my peers that if I make a change they can do it too. I have a dream that I'll work hard to get and I do not permit anybody to get in my way. Someday my dream will come true and I will dream a bigger dream and work towards it." ■