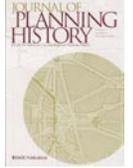


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20 May 2015

Dear colleagues,

SACRPH has achieved one of those milestones by which professional associations mark their history. I speak of the transition in editorial leadership of the *Journal of Planning History*. As founding editor Chris Silver steps down, the new editorial team of Nicholas Dagen Bloom and Sonia Hirt are taking the helm. Professors Bloom and Hirt published their first issue of *JPH* this spring. With this letter, I would like to take the opportunity to offer profound gratitude to Prof. Silver and to introduce the new editors to SACRPH membership.

The *Journal of Planning History* (JPH) was launched in 2002 as a peer-reviewed quarterly publication dedicated to the history of city and regional planning, with a particular focus on the Americas. As Prof. Silver noted in his introduction to the first issue, "*JPH* is committed to nurturing and expanding an interdisciplinary dialogue that illuminates the full range of values, approaches, and impacts of planning." To date, 54 issues have been published, resulting in hundreds of articles, book reviews and review essays, thematic commentaries, and editorial notes covering a broad range of topics. In the very first article in the very first issue, Mervyn Miller offered a much-needed transatlantic account of "Garden Cities and Suburbs: At Home and Abroad." The very last article in the most recent issue is Damon Scott's excellent study "Before the Creative Class: Blight, Gay Movies, and Family Values in the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood, 1964."

Our field has traveled far and wide under Chris Silver's editorial leadership. We owe him a deep debt of gratitude for his hard work in building the journal and stewarding the intellectual trajectory of planning history. His dedication, commitment, and sacrifice have most certainly shaped the field for the better. He managed to do this while maintaining an incredibly demanding professional life. For nearly ten years, Prof. Silver has served as Dean of the University of Florida's College of Design, Construction and Planning. A member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners, his research has been funded by a wide variety of organizations, including the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. Fulbright. Prof. Silver's groundbreaking work in Indonesia resulted in the books *Planning the Megacity: Jakarta in the Twentieth Century* (Routledge 2008) and *Planning and Decentralization: Contested Spaces for Action in the Global South* (Taylor and Francis, 2008). And of course, with Mary Sies he co-edited the indispensable volume *Planning the Twentieth Century City* (Johns Hopkins 1996).

Replacing Chris Silver was a daunting task, and it took two presidents and two editors to make it happen! When Prof. Silver first made rumblings about stepping down, SACRPH did what any small volunteer organization would do--begged him to stay on for another year, which he did. In 2013, President Larry Vale and I (then President-Elect) launched an international search for a new editor. As we made clear in the job description, we were looking for someone to build on Prof. Silver's legacy while articulating a vision for the future of the journal and the field. Names circulated, ideas bubbled, prospects came and went, but nothing definite emerged. Until we received a letter from Nicholas Bloom and Sonia Hirt.

Profs. Bloom and Hirt proposed to co-edit the journal, and they offered a remarkably clear and compelling vision for moving forward. First, they argued for the expansion of *JPH*'s interdisciplinary scope and the strengthening of the link between planning history and planning practice. Second, they proposed to revisit the "R" in SACRPH, encouraging more work on regional planning. Third, they proposed to expand the journal's intellectual frontiers through increased engagement with critical social theory (feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, among others). Fourth, and more practically, they plan to streamline the submission process, working with SAGE to switch to online submission. And fifth, they argued that the journal must become more international in scope, not only in terms of its subject matter--how 'American' planning connects to the world--but also in terms of who contributes to the journal, and from where.

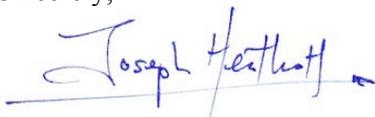
These convincing proposals were backed by the accomplishments of two of SACRPH's most capable and productive members. As one eminent planning historian said in his letter of support, "they comprise your editorial dream team." Nicholas Dagen Bloom grew up in Baltimore, and attended the University of Wisconsin as an undergraduate. He received his Ph.D. in American History from Brandeis University in 1999. He taught for three years at Tulane University before coming to the New York Institute of Technology, where he is Associate Professor of Social Science and Chair of a new program in Urban Administration. Prof. Bloom is the author numerous books, including most recently *The Metropolitan Airport: JFK International and Modern New York* (Penn, 2015); *Public Housing That Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century* (Penn, 2008); *Merchant of Illusion: James Rouse, America's Salesman of the Businessman's Utopia* (Ohio State, 2004); *Affordable Housing in New York: The People, Places, and Policies that Transformed a City* (Princeton, 2015), co-edited with Mathew Gordon Lasner; and *Public Housing Myths: Perception, Reality, and Social Policy* (Cornell, 2015), co-edited with Lawrence Vale and Fritz Umbach. He has consulted and advised a wide range of entities, including the New York City Housing Authority, the NYC Deputy Mayor for Education and Community Affairs, and the Manhattan Borough President.

Sonia Hirt is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech, where she has also served as Chair of Urban Affairs and Planning. She received her B.Arch from the University of Architecture and Civil Engineering in Sofia, Bulgaria, and her master's and doctoral degrees in urban planning from the University of Michigan. Prior to entering academia, Hirt worked as a professional planner in Toledo, OH and Grand Rapids, MI. In addition to two dozen journal articles, she has published three edited collections and three monographs, including: *Twenty Years of Transition: The Evolution of Urban Planning in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 1989-2009* (UN-HABITAT, 2009); *Iron Curtains: Gates, Suburbs, and Privatization of Space in the Post-Socialist City* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); and *Zoned in the USA: American Land-use Control in Comparative Perspective* (Cornell, 2014). Prof. Hirt has received numerous fellowships from organizations such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Association of University Women, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Graham Foundation. She has served on the *JPH* Editorial Board as well as the boards of the *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies*, *Planning Practice & Research*, *Urban Design International*, and *Urban Studies Research*.

It was clear to the SACRPH Board of Directors that Prof. Bloom and Prof. Hirt have the chops for the job, and unanimous approval was given in March 2014. Approval from SAGE Press followed in the fall of 2014. Next, we entered a period of transition, working with SAGE Press to wind down Prof. Silver's editorship and to bring Bloom and Hirt aboard, with a crucial period of overlap. As of spring 2015, they have officially assumed full editorial duties for the *JPH*.

Nicholas Dagen Bloom and Sonia Hirt bring mix of scholarly engagement, practical experience, and professional service to the endeavor. Their accomplishments, commitment, and vision are just what the *JPH* needs in order to build on the superb legacy created by Chris Silver. SACRPH is very lucky to have two such talented people at the helm of its journal, and I trust all of you will join me in welcoming them to the editorship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph Heathcott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Joseph Heathcott
President