

Planning to Achieve/Planning to Avoid

Helge Fiskaa:

The high ambitions of Norwegian Planning

Abstract

Traditionally the Nordic countries have many similarities in their administrative and planning systems, more or less different from other European countries due to common historical and cultural heritage and long lasting cooperation. They have all revised or replaced their planning (and building) acts during the last few years (Finland in 2000, Denmark in 2007, Norway in 2009, and Sweden and Iceland in 2011). This paper questions if the Norwegian planning system has become more unlike the other Nordic countries' systems, and if the ambitions have escalated beyond the limits for what planning can or should overcome.

Over years, Norway has extended the ambitions for planning, last by the implementation of the new Planning and Building Act. This relates to the act's requirements to the comprehensiveness and content of plans, and the plans coordinating and controlling function. Based on studies of some countries' planning and administrative systems the paper examines some features of the prevailing planning system in Norway compared with to the Danish, Finnish and Swedish systems (Iceland is not included due to practical reasons), and demonstrates that Norwegian ambitions for planning is far beyond the other countries'. The concluding discussion questions if the ambitions are realistic and what way Norwegian planning may take in the years coming.

Firstly, the Norwegian act's requirements to objectives, tasks, and considerations imply a nearby all-embracing social planning, including physical, environmental, economic, social and cultural development in regions and municipalities, which is far beyond the physical planning stated in the other countries' acts. For example, the municipal master plan shall include a social part dealing with all municipal activities and development in total. The ambitions bring Wildawsky's (1973) question "if planning is everything, maybe it's nothing" in mind.

Secondly, dealing with such comprehensive planning the act requires thorough coordination and collaboration among public sector authorities at different administrative/political levels, which is a complicated task. As municipalities perform most planning and Norway has strong traditions for local self-government, the challenge is how to coordinate sector bodies at state and regional level with municipal interests. On one side, municipalities can not instruct state or county agencies, and on the other side, use of the act's rather strong means for central control of local planning will often meets political resistance.

Thirdly, a question is about the ambitions of public control when private actors exert strong influence in community development. As in most western countries, public-private cooperation has emerged as the ordinary means for plan preparation and implementation in Norway. The Planning and Building Act underlines public bodies' responsibility for securing common interest. However, a special Norwegian right for private actors to promote plans may squeeze the public control. As in addition, negotiations on development agreements can take place parallel to the plan preparation the content of plans may be more or less determined in forehand of public participation and political treatment, and thus short-circuit the democratic planning process. The other Nordic countries have kept their hands on the steering wheel by maintaining the public planning monopoly.

Key words

Planning systems, Planning ambitions, Nordic countries.

Contact details of author

Helge Fiskaa, Department of Urban Design and Planning, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), NO-7491 Trondheim helge.fiskaa@ntnu.no

Introduction

A country's planning system is rooted in its particular historical, legal, physical conditions (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006, p. 10), geography and settlement structure (Böhme, 2002, pp. 43ff), and cultural traditions (Knieling and Othengrafen, 2009, p. 39). Countries with long-lasting close political, economical and cultural relationship have influenced each other and thus probably having similarities in their systems, though specific national features may cause more or less differences.

Supported by among others Zweigert and Kötz' (1987) investigation and classification of five legal/administrative "families" in Europa, and based on EU's surveys of planning systems (EC, 1994; EC, 1997), Newman and Thornley (1996) have pointed out five "planning families" in Europe. That means groups of countries having more or less similar planning systems and styles in the perspective of legal and administrative principles. They define a British, a Napoleonic, a Germanic, a Scandinavian or Nordic, and an Eastern-European "family".

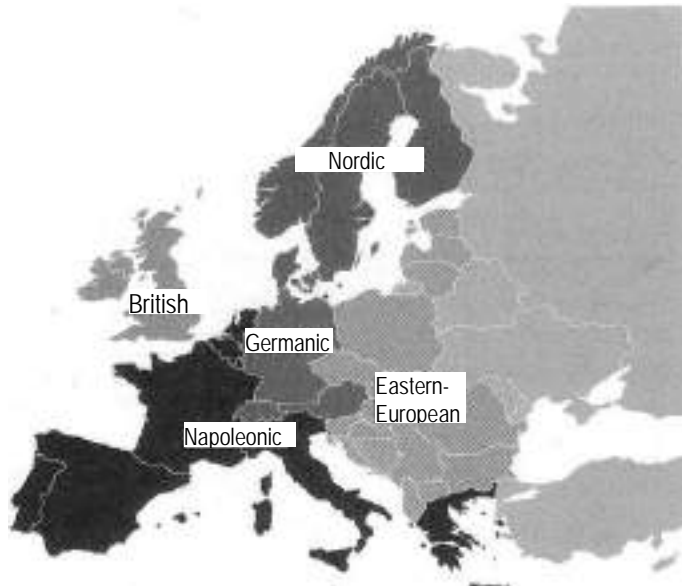


Figure 1. The five planning families in Europe (After Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 29).

Previous surveys of planning in the Nordic countries indicate traditionally many similarities in their planning systems and praxis (Lemberg, 1981; Hall, 1991; Jerkø, 2004) which is highly understandable due to historical and present close political, cultural and economic interaction. They have a common cultural heritage, and there is a strong Nordic identity and cooperation, which traces its roots back to earlier centuries (Böhme, 2002). The languages of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden retain a close resemblance. An indication of this is that most Icelanders can understand these three languages while many Finns are able to grasp at least Swedish. There are well-established forums for cooperation between the Nordic countries, such as e.g. the Nordic Council and Nordic Councils of Ministers.

Although several differences exist, the investigations confirm the interpretation of Scandinavia as a planning family. The differences to other European countries are most evident with respect to the British system which, for example do not include legally binding plans, but are less distinct from the rest of Western Europe (Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 34).

Over the last few years, all Nordic countries have revised or renewed their planning and building acts; Finland's planning and building act date back to 2000, Denmark revised their act in 2007, Norway decided upon their new act in 2008 (the building part in 2009), and so did Sweden and Iceland in 2010. A question is whether these revisions have led to evolved differences between the systems or not and what important differences may be. Based on recent studies of planning and administrative systems in several European countries (Fiskaa, 2011) this paper concentrate on what ambitions for planning are embedded in the planning acts in four of the Nordic countries and discusses in what degree the Norwegian ambitions are realistic or not.

This paper gives at first an overview over the development of Norwegian planning act and system focusing on the widening of the planning ambitions over time, with some comparisons to the other Nordic countries investigated. Then a discussion set a critical eye on the present act's ambitions, illustrated with some examples of planning cases and planning processes studied. The conclusion is that the ambitions seem very difficult to fulfil.

From town planning to comprehensive planning

Building acts in the first half of the nineteenth century embedded the early regulations for Norwegian planning in for the cities in the form of pure physical planning, first of all regulating streets and buildings. The motives for planning were first of all the need for communication lines, fire protection, and establishing of healthy living conditions. Only one type of plan, town plan (byplan), which was a rather detailed plan for the whole town's area, existed according to the act. Later on, the act gave legal basis for voluntary planning also in villages and built up areas in rural municipalities, stated in The Building Act of 1924.

The renewed Building Act of 1965 introduced a more ambitious planning (Fiskaa, 2009), but still concentrating on physical planning. First of all mandatory planning also in rural areas was implemented. All municipalities had to prepare and decide upon plans. For the second a hierarchical system of plan types should contribute to coherence in the development at regional, municipal and very local level, in line with the state's policy. Thus the act introduced *regional planning* in the form of plans for two or more municipalities. The region plan should be a plan for “*coordination of land use and for joint solutions of questions concerning projects and arrangements for meeting common requirements*” in the region. (Translated by the author). The region plan should give guidance to the municipalities' planning, but not in the form of binding regulations. After some years one experienced poor results of this planning which, in 1973 led to replacement of region plans with *county plans* (fylkesplan) for “*coordination of the state's, the county's and the municipalities' planning when it comes to utilization of natural resources in a county and for other issues of common interest for promoting economic growth and well-being...*” (Translated by the author). The plan should include main features in utilization of natural resources, goals for population development and settlement pattern, assessment of labour situation and economic life, public projects and other arrangements, and economic assessment and priority of public projects.

In the municipalities, a system of *general plan* (master plan) embracing the whole municipality's area and *detailed plans* (zoning plan/reguleringsplan) for designated areas should make public control over land use and building possible, both in coarse features and more detailed. The master plan should be a plan for “*land use in a municipality and for solving questions concerning projects and arrangements for meeting common requirements in the municipality.*” (Translated by the author). Emphasis should be on building areas, agriculture and forestry, natural areas, roads and other communication projects, and water and sewage installations. Also the need for different kinds of public service etc. was natural elements of common requirements. Based on recommendations from the ministry many municipalities implemented in their general planning a system of defining *common plan premises*, based on among other things prognosis for population and business life, for giving a dimensioning basis for the physical plans. Several general plans included some kind of economic plan for investments and public operations. By this the requirements to and ambitions for planning was increased but still within the frame of physical planning. The main purpose of plans was still preparation for future development on one hand and control over land use and building on the other hand. However, especial social scientists criticized planning for not solving the urgent problems, and argued for the introduction of other kinds of planning. Thus they challenged the physical planning approach (Skjeggedal, 2005, p. 739).

Planning practice and discussions about the purpose of planning, the content of plans, and planning process led to adoption of the Planning and Building Act in 1985. By this the ambitions for planning increased further. Firstly, the act introduced an objects clause stressing coordination of national, county and municipal activities, balancing considerations to use and protection of resources. Planning should contribute to land

use and building benefiting individuals and the society. By this, the act strengthened the requirements to coordination and collaboration between public administrative levels and sectors and private actors. Secondly, the act introduced rules for the state's possibilities to give instructions to county and municipal planning, and even to prepare and decide upon land use plans. Thirdly, the requirements to content of county and municipal plans expanded, and should include *physical, economic, social, and cultural issues*, and later on also *aesthetic regards*. Particularly planning should safeguard good growing up conditions for children. Fourthly, *municipal master plan* replaced the former term general plan, which indicated requirements for a more comprehensive planning than the previous physical planning.

The municipal master plan should include a *long-term part*, dealing with goals for development and guidelines for the sector authorities' planning, and a land use plan. The *short-term part* should contain an integrated action program for the sector's activities in the nearest years coming. This system was in line with Etzioni's (1967) model for a mixed-scanning approach. By this the municipal master plan should idealistic include most local development and municipal activities. The act introduced further a new type of detailed plan, *building development plan* (bebyggelsesplan) in addition to the former zoning plan (reguleringsplan). This comprehensive escalation of the planning ambitions occurred at a time when neo-liberalism and demand for deregulation influenced politics strongly, which seems paradoxical.

All-embracing planning?

After several revisions of and amendments to the act through the 1990s and many years of preparation work the planning part of the recent Planning and Building Act came into effect in 2009. The act has mainly kept the belief in strong public planning and synoptic ideals (Jensen, 2011), and extended the planning ambitions further (Kleven, 2011). In the following, the ambitions are discussed in comparison with the other Nordic countries' acts and illustrated by the results of some surveys. The discussion concentrates on the comprehensive ambitions expressed in the act, the plan system and relationship between plan types, the ambitions of coordination and collaboration between public sector interests, and the dilemmas concerning governing public-private cooperation and need for public control.

The fundamental purposes of planning are land use control, land use plans and central control (Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 42). Planning systems consists of three elements: the plan-making function, the developmental function involving such issues as land assembly and servicing, and the regulatory or control function (Healey & Williams, 1993, p. 702). In line with this, planning traditionally is about physical planning, for the most performed by municipalities within more or less fixed frames given by the state and/or regional authorities. As described, gradually the requirements to content of planning and planning process in Norway have extended beyond the traditional.

The prevailing Norwegian Planning and Building Act's requirements to objectives, tasks, and considerations in planning imply a nearby all-embracing planning. Promot-

ing “*sustainable development in the best interests of individuals, society, and future generations*”, is the paramount objective. There shall be emphasis on *long-term solutions, and environmental and social impacts*. The principle of *universal design* shall be taken into account. Planning shall facilitate the *coordination of central government, regional and municipal functions* and provide a basis for administrative decisions regarding both *use and conservation of resources*. Planning shall ensure *transparency, predictability and public participation* for all affected interests and authorities.

This leads to numerous tasks and considerations planning shall take into account according to the act. In addition to *physical, economic, social, and cultural development*, the planning shall deal with *environment protection, public health and safety, natural resources, cultural and landscape values, and Sami interests*. Planning shall take the *climate* into consideration, *counteract social and health-related inequalities, promote societal safety and prevent crime, facilitate good surroundings, good housing and childhood environments and good living standards in all parts of the country*. At the same time planning shall *facilitate value creation and industrial and commercial development, and promote coherence between sectors, functions and interests*. By these requirements, planning has moved beyond the origin of regulating land use and building and undertakes the complex and contradictory task to influence people’s life style and socioeconomic behaviour in sustainable direction (Kleven, 2012, p. 49), which may be goes beyond what planning can do very much about.

However, according to the act planning shall be based on financial and other resource-related prerequisites for implementation and shall not be more exhaustive than necessary. This statement may indicate that the legislative authority is doubtful to the realism in thus comprehensive approach to planning. As planning is about future control and consequences of actions the question is how to obtain sufficient causal knowledge to control all implications and effects of contemporary proposals and decisions (Wildavsky, 1973). The comprehensive requirements will in many cases lead to disagreements and call for thorough balancing and coordination of divergent views and interests and conflict solving, which is discussed in a subsequent section of the paper.

Nor has Denmark, Finland, or Sweden near to corresponding statements in their acts. The *Danish* act’s objects clause is concentrated on *physical planning* with respect to *sustainability and coordination of social interests in land use* with respect for *peoples living conditions* and keeping *fauna and flora*, production and protection of *valuable settlements and landscapes* and prevention from *pollution*. Similar the main purpose of *Finish* planning is to regulate *land use and building* for creating conditions for *good living environments* and promote *ecological, economic, social, and cultural sustainable development*. The act’s name, *Markanvändnings- och bygglag* (Land Use and Building Act) indicates clearly that the ambitions for planning beyond physical planning are limited to taking societal considerations into account. According to the *Swedish* act’s introductory clause planning is about *land, water and building*. Under consideration of *individuals freedom* planning shall promote societal development with

equal and good social living conditions and sustainable living environment to day and in the future.

Sustainable development is the superior objective for planning in all countries, leading to long term considerations. However, the Danish, Finnish, or Swedish acts don't require a comprehensive social planning like in Norway. However the planning must of course be accordant to superior goals and prognosis for several needs and coordinated with plans for various tasks, but not in the Norwegian way of ambitions of an all-embracing planning. This seems to be in line with the former Norwegian set of common planning premises.

A wide-ranging system of plan types

A wide-ranging and complicated system of plan types defined in the Norwegian act also indicates expanding planning ambitions. Figure 2 gives an overview over the plan types at state, regional (county) and municipal level stated in the four discussed countries' acts. It shows up that Norway has the most comprehensive and ambitious system, especially at the municipal level.

Level	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on national planning - Overview of the state interests in municipal planning - Rules for governing and the content of planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National land use objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National expectations regarding regional and municipal planning - Planning guidelines - Planning provisions - Central government land-use plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National environmental objectives (+ Provisions in the environmental code)
Region/ county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional spatial development plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional scheme - Regional plan - Regional development programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional planning strategies - Regional master plan - Regional plan provisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional plan - (Regional development program)
Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy for municipal planning - Municipal plan - Plan for special topics or areas - Local plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning review - Local master plan - Partial local master plan - Local detailed plan - Separate plot division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal planning strategy - Municipal master plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social element - long term - implementation - land use plan - Municipal sub-plan - Area zoning plan - Detailed zoning plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master plan - Detailed development plan - Area regulations

Figure 2. The plan types at state, regional (county) and municipal level.

In all countries, the State shall give some kind of superior guidelines *for local planning*. In Norway, the ministry in addition can intervene in local planning and even prepare and decide upon land use plans in order to secure national or regional interests, and give rather concrete instructions for planning. State's sector bodies, as for example the road authorities, have a right to prepare and promote zoning plans and having them treated in the municipal council. State and regional bodies have a right to object on local plans and thus bring the final decision over to the ministry. At regional level, the counties shall have a *regional planning strategy* and a *regional master plan*, and can give *regional plan provisions* concerning land use.

The most complicated and may be confusing system of plan types is to be found at the municipal level. First of all, there shall be a *planning strategy* as a superior document, comprising "*the strategic choices related to social development, including long-term land use, environmental challenges, sector activities and, an assessment of the planning needs.*" This is more or less in line with the other countries requirements except for Sweden where a strategy plan is not mandatory.

Further, the *municipal master plan* is more wide-ranging than the other countries' equivalent plans comprising a long-term *social element*, an *implementation element*, and a *land use plan*. The plan shall "*cover all important goals and functions in the municipality*" and "*determine long-term challenges, goals, and strategies for the municipal community as a whole and the municipality as an organization. It should comprise a description and an assessment of alternative strategies for development in the municipality.*"

The social element of the municipal master plan shall "*serve as a basis for sector plans and activities in the municipality. It shall provide guidelines for how to implement the municipality's own goals and strategies in municipal activities with participation from other public bodies and private bodies.*" A municipal sub-plan may be prepared for specific areas, topics or areas of activity. The implementation part "*shall form the basis for the municipality's prioritization of resources and planning and cooperation functions, and clarify measures within the municipality's financial framework.*" The *economy plan*, which has its legal basis in the Local Government Act, may be included in the implementation part, but not necessarily.

The land use plan shall cover the municipality's entire area and point out the main objectives and areas requiring special consideration in relation to the use and conservation of land. The municipality may also prepare land use plans for designated parts of the area in order to specify land use in more detail.

The act describes two types of detailed plans, *area zoning plan* and *detailed zoning plan*. The area zoning plan is meant for large areas while the detailed plan is intended for small areas, often single properties and tied to concrete projects. The requirements to content and planning process are the same for this plan types. The act define a system of specific land use objectives, commonly for all plan types.

Several questions concerning municipal plan system can be asked. One is about the difference between the master plan's requirement for *alternative strategies for development in the municipality* and the planning strategy's *strategic choices*. Another is about the relationship between the master plan's land use part and the strategy's *long-term land use*.

Secondly, questions are about the social part of the municipal master plan, which is a quite different requirement than the other Nordic countries' master plans' concentration on land use and physical issues. The Norwegian act's description of what the social part should embrace is limited to the general statements mentioned above, and so far no precise guidance for this type of planning exists. Contrary, the act gives exhaustive instructions about the land use plan, and so do the ministry's guidance. The municipalities are doubtful how to handle the requirement to a social element of the plan, but are familiar with the land use planning. The importance of different municipal planning efforts according to the act of 1985 has been examined by asking mayors and chief executives in several municipalities (Falleth and Stokke, 2001). Shortly summarized the survey demonstrates that the economy plan and the land use plan are regarded as far more important documents for the municipal's future development than the municipal master plan's objective part, which is much the same as the present act's social element.

Thirdly, the wide-ranging system of land use plans may be confusing to operate. In worst case, one has to work out four plans for an area – the municipal master plan, a sub-municipal plan, an area zoning plan, which may be fairly similar to a sub-municipal plan, and a detailed zoning plan. In the city of Trondheim only two out of total 84 zoning plans decided upon according to the new act are area zoning plans. 77 are detailed zoning plans, and five are not specified. This indicates that the specific area zoning plan type is not very relevant. The act's intension is to establish a flexible system useful for different planning situations. However, the other Nordic countries' systems are not less flexible as the different plan types can be more or less detailed and cover larger or smaller areas, equivalent to the Norwegian system before 1985.

The ambitions of coordination

For dealing with thus comprehensive requirements to planning thorough coordination and collaboration among several state, regional and municipal bodies, private organizations and institutions, developers and the public at large is requisite. One must ask if and how the act's ambitions for coordination are possible to achieve. Questions to rise are about the system, planning process and political will for coordination between public bodies, collaboration with private sector, and public participation.

Practice demonstrates that planning often implies dealing with conflicts between sector interests and/or administrative levels, which can be challenging to overcome. One can differentiate between, relationship conflicts, conflicts about facts, interest conflicts, and value conflicts. Relationship and value conflicts may be difficult to solve as they are about personal feelings, perceptions and attitudes. Data and interest con-

licts may be easier to overcome by bringing supplementary information and reasons for differing interests on the table for discussion and negotiation, which is the customary way to handle disagreements and conflict in Norwegian planning.

Coordinating public sector interests

First of all, decentralization is a superior objective in Norwegian as in most European countries' planning (Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 40 ff.). This implies that the municipalities perform most planning and public bodies at state and regional (county) level are participants in the planning process by presenting their views and interests. Long traditions for local feeling and self government in Norway, make it political difficult for the state or county to instruct municipalities and overrule local decisions. Decentralisation implies fragmentation of responsibilities (op. cit. p. 67), which may counteract planning's intentions of and requires instruments for coordination.

One aspect of coordination is the effect of approved plans. As the social element of the municipality master plan is not binding correspondently to the land use plan and the zoning plans, it can only function as a guideline for further planning and decisions, usually legally based on other acts than the Planning and Building Act. When sector acts and state provisions regulate most public actions and activity, the degree of importance of the social element of the plan depends on the involved actors willingness and ability to coordination.

According to Mintzberg (1979) one can distinguish mechanisms for coordination in five categories: 1) mutual adjustment, 2) direct supervision, 3) standardization of the working process, 4) standardization of outputs, and 5) standardization of skills. Mutual adjustment means that autonomous sector bodies and actors discuss and adjust their stands. Even if actors may have more or less corresponding rationality they cannot achieve consensus in all cases, and instruments for conflict solving are needed, for example mediations or state's approval of plans. Instruments for supervision might be right for public agencies to object on plans or instruct local planning. Standardization of working process may exist in the form of planning procedures, and standardized requirements for outcome may be in the form of norms or recommendations for content of plans. Standardization of skills means participants in the planning process having equal competence.

The main legal means in Norwegian planning is traditionally a combination of mutual adjustment and direct supervision (Holsen et al., 1998), more or less like arrangements in the other Nordic countries. The Planning and Building Act expresses a strong belief in consultation, participation, coherence, and consensus building in planning processes (Kleven 2012, p. 49). Public agencies at state and regional level have both a right and a duty to participate in local planning work and thus contribute to mutual adjustment. However, the formal means for governmental supervision in the form of instructions, preparing land use plans themselves, setting aside local plan decisions etc. seem

stronger in Norway than in the other Nordic countries. The state has the last word if conflicts arise in plan matters (MD, 2001, p. 33), but traditionally instructions from a higher level are most often politically acceptable only in questions of major national or regional importance. Some standardization of working process exists in the form of general planning procedure rules, and to some degree standardization of outputs like standards and recommendations, partly settled in other acts, and professional traditions etc. exists. As several public agencies are involved in planning, probably having different experience and competence in planning, one can hardly assume high degree of standardized skills.

Although the duty to contribute in local planning, lack of coordination between different state agencies seems to be the most problematic which, is underlined in the preparation work for the new act (MD, 2001, p. 24), and have motivated the strengthened requirements for coordination and collaboration. Even if the new act has delimited the legal right for public bodies to object on plan proposals, conflicting interests and opinions, and different professional skills among participants in the planning process often causes problematic and time consuming planning processes. Even more problematic may the situations be if central sector agencies give instructions which, do not fit with other sector authorities interests and/or the local policy and plans. Over the last years, the number of public sectors' objections to plan proposal has raised (Falleth and Hansen, 2011, p. 8), which cause more plans to be scrutinized and finally decided upon by the ministry.

Municipal bodies seem to have better routines and ability for internal coordination (Holsen et al., 1998), but have of course no means for coordinating or instruct state or county agencies. An essential question then is how to force state agencies to cooperate with each other and with the municipalities and counties. The means for coordinating and forcing state sector bodies are rather weak. A solution to the coordination problem might be clearer statutory basis for departmental instructions to state sector agencies, which is controversial according to traditions of strong public sectors, often supported by politicians.

Public private cooperation and public participation

The second question concerning coordination and collaboration is about the relationship between public bodies, private interests and people in general. The shift from governing to governance during the neo-liberal period implies emerging of public-private cooperation, which is going on in most parts of the advanced capitalist world (Geddes, 2006, p. 76). This implies a number of dilemmas about the purpose of planning and the public's and the inhabitants' role in community development. As a fundamental purpose of planning is about safeguarding those matters and public interests that market forces do not take care of, the motives are to provide for what is desirable and to hinder unfortunate side effects of individual and private actions (Vigar et al., 2000 p. 7 ff; Røsnes, 2005, p. 34). Those two aspects of planning are often contradictory, and cause conflicts.

On one hand, planning must be sensitive to changes and flexible (Thornley and Rydin, 2002, p. 10). On the other hand, there are reasons for a removal beyond a project-based approach and restoration of the formal importance of plans (Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 248). Developers request flexibility, in order to respond rapidly to changing circumstances (EC, 1997, p. 45), but at the same time a strategic framework in order to reduce uncertainty (Newman and Thornley, 1996, p. 249). Neighbours and other affected people look to protect their own interests and demand certainty (Alfasi, 2006, p. 558). And of course, developers' paramount motive is a most profitable development.

In Norway, private actors have a general legal right to provide detailed zoning plan proposals and having them political treated, in contrast to the other Nordic countries which have retained the public planning monopoly. The municipality may transfer the responsibility for preparing also area zoning plans to private actors. Most of the detailed plans are provided by property developers, and also many area zoning plans. Private developers first of all influence detailed plans, but have by their planning initiatives a considerable influence on master planning as well (Røsnes, 2008). Although public bodies decide finally upon plans, the public-private cooperation raises questions if close ties between developers and planning authorities hand power over to private developers in a way and a degree that may threaten public interests and the civil society's influence (Fiskaa, 2005).

When private developers prepare plans, the planning authorities' role is limited to negotiations over plans and control according to formal rules. Planning authorities have the primary contact with developers who only to some degree communicate with, and become influenced by affected persons and organisations. A start-up meeting between the developer and the planning authority for clarifying frames for a possible plan is the only statutory arena for direct communication in a planning process stated in the act. Inhabitants have a right to advance their views as response to announcement of start of a planning work and during the public inspection of a plan proposal, most often to late in the process to have decisive influence.

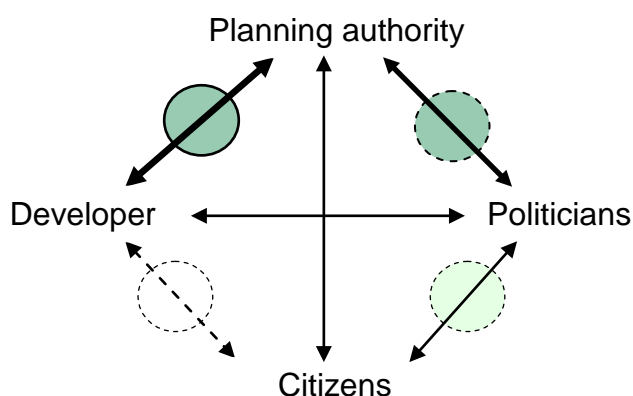


Figure 3. Actors in the planning process for a private promoted zoning plan. Full circle indicates formal statutory meeting and dotted circles eventual meetings. The thickness of arrows indicates the strength of contacts between actors.

Similarly, negotiations on development agreements between municipality and developers, which have substituted the traditional public responsibility for preparing project implementation, may threaten public interests. Crucial questions are about the transparency in the process and if negotiations can take place parallel to the planning work. Parallel and closed negotiations, and may be lobbying as well, may lead to early informal decisions on plans and thus short-circuit the planning process (Garnåsjordet, 2000, p. 31). Thus, negotiations upon plans and agreements for plan implementation may lead to pre-binding and exclusion of lay citizens and third parties from information and influence in an early and decisive stage of a planning process until the final hearing of the proposal (Røsnes, 2005; Falleth and Hansen, 2011). It seems clear that the performance of governance has given private developers a stronger position in planning and development than in the other Nordic countries at the sacrifice of public control and third parties influence. Falleth and Hansen's (2011) investigation concerning planning processes for detailed plans in several Norwegian municipalities supports such a suspicion showing generally a shortage in third party's influence.

As zoning plans are legally binding for land use and projects, and prepared through a comprehensive planning process, one should expect the plans to be followed. That is not necessarily the case. A study from 1987, when public planning monopoly still was in force, documented that only three out of 61 detailed plans in Trondheim was implemented completely according to the plan. In many cases, the responsible part was not able to fulfil all elements of the plan, and in other cases, revised solutions were worked out (Fiskaa and Røsnes, 1987).



Figure 4. The approved zoning plan to the left and actual implemented project to the right. Positioning of a buildings, the design of outdoor areas etc. are altered. Example from the survey 1987.

Especially one should assume privately prepared plans to be more in line with the developer's wishes and capability. A recent study demonstrates that it is not necessarily

so (Kristiansdottir, 2009). In all six cases investigated, the implementation was more or less different from approved plan. Both surveys demonstrates that in many cases “soft elements” like play grounds, foot-paths etc. were not constructed, which may be a sign of lack of attention to common interests and needs.



Figure 5. Overview of deviations in the planning area Hårstadmarka. Example from the survey 2009.

Conclusions

One must conclude that Norway over the years, not least by the Planning and Building Act of 2008, expanded the ambitions for planning beyond what is the case in the other Nordic countries. The ambitions drawn planning in well-meant wishes and contradictory requirements (Sunde, 2000).

First of all the increased requirements for what planning in Norway shall embrace is in contrast to the other ones, which have on the whole held on the traditions of physical planning. The comprehensive and complicated system of plan types, especially the social part of the municipal master plan, is a part of this picture. In practice, most planning concentrates on land use and physical issues, and will probably do so also in the future.

Secondly, the ambitions for coordination and collaboration among public agencies at different levels seem out of range practically and politically. Especially a sectorial state is a problem as municipalities cannot force state bodies.

Thirdly, the special Norwegian right for private actors to prepare zoning plans, and thus having their hands on the steering wheel, may have weakened public authority and affected inhabitants' influence in planning, which is opposite to the ambitions of broad coordination, cooperation and participation in order to secure common interests.

References

- Alfasi, N., 2006. Planning policy? Between long-term planning and zoning amendments in the Israeli planning system. *Environment and Planning A* Vol. 38, pp. 553 – 568.
- Böhme, K., 2002. *Nordic Echoes of European Spatial Planning*. Nordregio R2002:8. Stockholm: Nordregio.
- Cullingworth, J. B. and Nadin, V., 2006. *Town and Country Planning in the UK*. 14th edition. London: Routledge.
- EC, 1994. *Europe 2000+. Cooperation for European Territorial Development*. Luxembourg: Office for the Official Publications of the European Communities.
- EC, 1997. *The EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies*. Luxembourg: Office for the Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Etzioni, A., 1967. Mixed-scanning: A “third” approach to decision-making. In: A. Faludi, ed. 1973. *A Reader in Planning Theory*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, pp. 217-229.
- Falleth, E. I. and Hansen, G. S., 2011. Participation in planning – a study of urban development in Norway. *The European Journal of Spatial Development*. Refereed article No. 42.
- Falleth, E. I. and Stokke K. B., 2001. *Kommune- og økonomiplanlegging. Hva gjør kommunene?* NIBR prosjektrapport 2001:20. Oslo: NIBR.
- Fiskaa, H., 2005. Past and Future for Public Participation in Norwegian Physical Planning. *European Planning Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 157 – 174.
- Fiskaa, H., 2009. What can we learn from previous attempts at Master Planning in Norwegian Rural Municipalities? *European Journal of Spatial Development*. Refereed article No. 33.
- Fiskaa, H., 2011. *Planleggings- og forvaltningssystem i seks land - Danmark, England, Finland, Nederland, Norge, Sverige*. Arbeidsrapport. Skrift nr. 2011:1. Trondheim: Institutt for byforming og planlegging, NTNU.
- Fiskaa, H. and Røsnes, A., 1987. *Plan og resultat. Om endring og gjennomføring av reguleringsplaner*, NIBR-rapport 1987:5. Oslo: NIBR.
- Garnåsjordet, P. A., 2000. Forhandlinger – en trussel eller en mulighet. In: T. Medalen, ed. *Forhandlinger i fysisk planlegging*. Trondheim: Tapir akademisk forlag, pp 31-46.
- Geddes, M., 2006. Partnership and the Limits to Local Governance in England: Institutional Analysis and Neoliberalism. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 30 (1), pp. 76 – 97.
- Hall, T., ed., 1991. *Planning and Urban Growth in the Nordic Countries*. London: E and FN Spon.
- Healey, P. and Williams, R. H., 1993. European urban planning systems: diversity and convergence. *Urban Studies* 30, 4/5, pp. 701-720.
- Holsen, T., Pløger, J., Skjeggedal, T., 1998. *Den vanskelige samordningen. Om regionale myndigheter og kommunale plan- og byggesaker*. NIBR prosjektrapport 1998:5. Oslo: NIBR.
- Jensen, R. H., 2011. Hvor går norsk planlegging? Refleksjoner om fysisk planlegging i lys av den nye plan- og bygningsloven, samfunnsutviklingene og tendenser i noen andre land. *Plan* nr. 3-4/2011, pp. 84-89.
- Jerkø, S., 2004. *Bygningslov for bedre bygg? Sammenligning av bygningslovgivningen i Norden*. København: Nordisk Ministerråd.

- Kleven, T., 2011. Fra gjenreisning til samfunnsplanlegging. Norsk kommuneplanlegging 1965-2005. Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag.
- Kleven, T., 2012. "If planning is everything ..." Wildavsky revisited. Plan nr. 2/2012, pp. 48-53.
- Knieling, J. and Othengrafen, F., eds., 2009. En Route to a Model for Comparative Research on Planning Cultures. Planning cultures in Europe. Decoding cultural phenomena in urban and regional planning. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Kristiansdottir, K. H., 2009. Implementation and physical outcome of privately initiated Regulatory plans. Case study in Trondheim. Master thesis in Physical planning. Trondheim: Institutt for byforming og planlegging, NTNU.
- Lemberg, K., 1981. Planlægning i Norden. København: Dansk Byplanlaboratorium.
- MD (Miljøverndepartementet), 2001, Bedre kommunal og regional planlegging etter plan- og bygningsloven. Planlovutvalgets første delutredning. NOU 2001:7. Oslo.
- Mintzberg, H., 1979. The Structuring of Organizations. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall inc., Englewood Cliffs.
- Newman, P. and Thornley, A., 1996. Urban Planning in Europe. International competition, national systems and planning projects. London: Routledge.
- Røsnes, A., 2005. Regulatory Power, Network Tools and Market Behavior: Transforming Practices in Norwegian Urban Planning. Planning Theory & Practice, Vol 6, No. 1, 35-51.
- Skjeggedal, T., 2005. Ambitions and realities in Norwegian regional planning. European Planning Studies Volume 13, Issue 5: pp. 731 – 748.
- Sunde, H., 2000. Er kommuneplanen død – og hva så? Plan nr 3/2000, pp. 10-15.
- Thornley, A. and Rydin, Y., eds. 2002. Planning in a global era. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Vigar, G., Healey, P., Hull, A., Davoudi, S., 2000. Planning, Governance and Spatial Strategy in Britain. An Institutional Analysis. London: MacMillan Press.
- Zweigert, K. and Kötz, H., 1987. Introduction to Comparative Law. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Wildavsky, A., 1973. If Planning is Everything, Maybe it's Nothing. Policy Sciences 4 (1973), pp. 127-153.

rev. 26.04.12