How to Prevent Communicative Planners from Unwittingly Serving Neo-liberalism?

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Abstract. Communicative planning theory has recently been reproached for facilitating neo-liberal market practices to the disadvantage of broader social interests. The paper comments on this critique and clarifies what neo-liberalism demands from urban planning. Moreover, the paper surveys planning theorists' attempts to describe the connection between communicative planning theory and neo-liberalism. The critique of being at the service of neo-liberalism should be addressed in communicative planning theory by bringing procedural and substantive recommendations closer together. It must be made evident that what is required from the plan (the outcome) is grounded in substantive values that are closely associated with the values behind the process design. This is what the value approach sketched in the present paper is meant to do, and by insisting on consistency between the values of process and outcome it offers a way to address the charge that CPT facilitates the progress of neo-liberalist urban development.

Introduction: Recent critique of communicative planning theory (CPT)

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the relationship between neo-liberalism and CPT. The important task is to find a way for planning theorists to deal with criticism that applications of their theories end up benefitting ideologies and urban policies at odds with the core values inherent in the theory itself.

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The critique of CPT which prompted the writing of this paper claims that CPT belongs to the set of rules, norms, and bureaucratic procedures (that is, institutions) supporting the neo-liberal state. This critique sees communicative planning as advancing developers' interests and the free flow of investment. The core argument is that a planning regime with a minimum of predefined restrictions and guidelines, and with ample possibilities of striking deals at the local level, is in conformity with neo-liberal ideals (Bengs 2005:6). Such a regime is, allegedly, introduced by communicative planning, with detrimental effects for urban development in the interest of the great majority. Mainstream planning theory supports a liberalized land regime by stressing communication with stakeholders in contrast to politically mandated public control. Stakeholders thus increase their influence in planning systems relative to democratically elected representatives. This development is encouraged by CPT, and may be seen as an adaptation to the less controlled and more efficient real estate market that follows from neo-liberalism and globalization.

If one opens for the possibility that neo-liberalism may have influenced the theory of public planning, the next question is how this effect came about, given that neo-liberal tenets and new public management are probably not taught in most planning programmes. There are aspects of neo-liberalism that weaken the position of public planning and shift its focus from regulation to facilitation of urban development. Interurban competition curtails the set of regulative policies that can be used by planners in each single city. Rolling back the state and leaving more of urban renewal to private initiatives give less room for comprehensive and coordinated plans (Gleeson 2000, Mäntysalo 1999). Neo-liberalization means more market and less bureaucracy, outsourcing segments of the residual sphere of regulation, and contracts rather than control via hierarchies. All this gives more narrow scope for public planning and lowers its status (Gleeson and Low 2000, Imrie 1999, Prior 2005).

Neo-liberalism gave rise to a new economic doctrine on how to organize the public sector, which is called new public management (NPM). In a number of countries around the world, NPM has led to dramatic restructuring of agencies and departments where many planners are working. Any reorganization is followed by a new agenda, in this case directing attention to problems considered important from the neo-liberal outlook, and to policies thought to work without threatening neo-liberal values. This line of reasoning is strengthened by Hammond and Thomas's (1989) theoretical result stating that a neutral hierarchy is impossible. Any particular organizational structure will affect what organizational decision-makers are able to learn and will bias policy-making toward some outcomes and away from others. Since the structure

influences which options are to be compared, in what sequence, and by whom, a particular organizational structure is, in effect, the organization's agenda (Hammond 1986:382).

What does neo-liberalism demand from public planning?

Neo-liberalists have worked to curtail public planning because it intervenes in markets and, in their opinion, is a threat to efficient allocation of resources (McDermott 1998:643). They find that local citizen participation can have the same effect, especially when concerned with local action to solve global problems. The ideological position is that the public planning function gives local and national government too much of a say in urban and regional development. The strong government involvement was seen as a source of inefficiency, as approvals took too long because multiple consents had to be obtained from various government departments. Planning authorities were criticized for taking a negative stand towards market-led development (Prior 2005:475-76). Consequences of the complicated planning procedures were delays, extra costs, wasted capital, and reduced employment. Neo-liberalists also criticize public planning for being inflexible. This is a problematic point though, as flexibility reduces predictability which is a priority of both developers and the community (Allmendinger and Thomas 1998:250). 'Regulatory flexibility…may actually increase both the size of the administrative apparatus of planning and transaction costs' (Gleeson and Grundy 1997:310), as case-by-case assessment of land-use consents requires much administrative effort.

Tensions between new public management and communicative planning can be read from Imrie's (1999) critique of the regime shift from bureau-professionalism to steering principles dominated by managerialism, a shift paving the way for business or corporate values and technical-economic procedures and discourses. For planning, the efficiency goal of NPM entails speeding up the turnaround of planning applications, faster completion of local plan preparation, facilitation of development objectives, and the streamlining of procedures. Important procedures in the present context are those arranging for public consultation. Chances are that the pressure on local planning authorities to simplify procedures and reduce delays in plan preparation and development control diminishes the time devoted to public participation and dialogue in planning processes. This is contrary to the stated aim of communicative planning theorists and would make it a risky business for them to run the errand of neo-liberals.

The above critique also suggests what neo-liberalists are apt to find appealing about planning. In line with the devolution of governance to local scales, they could accept a contracted and more focused planning system that is more proactive and positive to development initiatives (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2000:1396). The system should assist and not hinder the work of market mechanisms, and planners should to a greater extent become deal-makers instead of regulators. Neo-liberalism can be well served by a planning system that is more flexible with regard to the outcome of planning, and thus relatively more concerned with how to plan. Collaborative planning is found useful to neo-liberalism because of its dismantling of old divisions between state and market in order to accommodate new synergistic partnerships (Brand and Gaffikin 2007:283).

The neo-liberal attitude to citizen involvement in planning is a compromise between this felt need for discipline and predictability on the one hand, and the need for client and consumer information about public goods and services on the other. The compromise can be pursued by disciplining citizens through manageable forms of citizen participation, and by both mobilizing and co-opting community organizations (Elwood 2002:123).

Neo-liberalism demands public planning with an ambit restricted to land use and efficient spatial allocation, leaving equity concerns to the politicians. Planning authorities should not interfere in markets unless transaction costs are demonstrably higher there than in public bureaucracies. Moreover, planning procedures of neo-liberal casting should be simple and flexible yet efficient, and planning initiatives should promote local competitiveness. The next section surveys theorists' interpretations of how mainstream planning theory (CPT) responded to these challenges.

CPT as an offspring of neo-liberal ideology?

This section provides an overview and a systematization of attempts to understand how CPT relates to the ideas and practice of neo-liberalism. Much of the critique of CPT's ostensible association with neo-liberalism is based on the idea that both bodies of theory have taken an interest in certain aspects of urban planning efforts and therefore must be related somehow and be working for the same cause. The common features mentioned in the planning literature are:

- Masking conflicts
- Weaker role for public planners as professionals and experts
- Focus on process

- Solutions generated by local and civil society, thus reducing the influence of central government
- Flexibility as opposed to state regulations

The three features first on the list are process characteristics and are dealt with in the next sub-section. The last two features relate to the limitation of national state influence and are discussed in the sub-section following thereafter.

Critique based on alleged process similarities of CPT and neo-liberalism

Recently, Mark Purcell advanced a critique of CPT, arguing that Habermasian communicative and collaborative planning modes 'provide an extremely attractive way for neoliberals to maintain hegemony while ensuring political stability' (Purcell 2009:140). He assumes that the consensus-oriented deals made by the parties to communicative planning will always mask conflict and thus always serve those who benefit from the prevailing system of power relations:

> (E)ven if deliberative processes include more marginalized participants than had been included previously, they tend to reinscribe existing social hierarchies, since all groups must gain from each decision. Moreover, they tend to legitimate those existing hierarchies with a stamp of democratic process. Therefore, deliberative democracy, managed thoughtfully, can be a particularly powerful tool for advancing the neoliberal agenda. (Purcell 2007:201)

What makes communicative planning such a convenient vehicle for neo-liberals in Purcell's opinion, is that it offers decision-making practices that are widely accepted as democratic and are therefore legitimizing, while they cannot fundamentally challenge existing relations of power. The question of whether the parties to the presumably dialogical process are happy with the solution does not affect his critique; what matters is whether or not the market system for urban land and floor space (which urban planners might hope to affect)

is left intact. Purcell (2008) is sceptical to communicative planning because he thinks that local and civil society participants can be carefully selected and effectively disciplined by the competitiveness imperative.

Recent managerial restructuring of government (NPM) has aimed at depoliticizing decisions by making them a matter of operational management. The dispersal of state functions to a range of extra-governmental organizations makes this evident. Moreover, according to Imrie (1999:110), the pursuit of process qualities over substance attractiveness implies the reduction of social and political issues to technical and procedural matters; they are translated into problems to be managed. Imrie makes use of this to build a case against communicative planning, contending that it 'is a powerful conception in legitimising a managerialist approach to the problems confronting the planner' (ibid.119). Although Imrie has a point, he ignores the contrasting reasons for the interest in process. The proponents of NPM want to make issues less political and opt for a streamlined managerial process. Communicative planning theorists regard the process as important because issues are acknowledged as political, and the groups and interests affected should therefore have a say.

Referring to communicative planning, Mees (2003) is worried about the alleged lack of a planner role that links planners' expertise with the substance of the plan. Based on his negative experience with long term planning in Melbourne, Mees holds that the participatory and communicative part of the planning process can often be easily manipulated or contracted to a minimum level even if the planners' engagement with the public was originally advertised as a central characteristic of the process. The problem according to Mees is that when this happens, there is nothing left in the ruins of the communicative planning effort that can defend broader social interests. In alternative modes of planning – even in the despised rationalistic or synoptic mode – one would at least have professional recommendations about the substance of the plan to fall back on if there was no outcome from a dialogical process to provide legitimacy to action. In a manipulated and curtailed communicative process, Mees fears that there will be nothing to counteract opportunistic political proposals and market-determined solutions.

Anti-professionalism is an element also in Allmendinger's (2001:134) reasoning about the link between communicative planning and neo-liberalism. He holds the denial of a central coordinating role for the planner to be a main theme of collaborative planning. Planners need to engage with local stakeholders in an unbarred search for local consensus. Allmendinger interprets collaborative planning theorists as wanting a levelling down of the planner's role to that of any other stakeholder.

Critique based on alleged common interest in limiting state influence

Bengs's (2005:6) main concern is that '(a) new planning regime with a minimum of predefined restrictions and guidelines and ample possibilities for striking deals on the local level is in conformity with the neo-liberal ideals'. This description fits CPT, which Bengs consequently sees as a tool for building social institutions consistent with the neo-liberal society; that is, advancing commercialized development and the free flow of investment. As Bengs believes that developers and other strong stakeholders will gain the upper hand in local deal-making, relegating other actors to the role of pure 'extras', he regards CPT as establishing institutions for serving the few rather than the many.

One of the clearest cases of linking CPT to a policy for diminishing central government influence comes from Elwood's (2002) analysis of neighbourhood revitalization through collaborative planning in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She indicates that the conclusions on the relations between neo-liberal interests and the collaborative efforts might be generalized to other revitalization programmes throughout the US. Elwood's view is that the collaborative programmes fit the neo-liberal agenda because:

(1) Devolution and collaborative public-private partnerships are means for downsizing the state, giving citizens and civic organizations growing responsibility for local urban planning and service delivery.
(2) Grassroots organizations may be co-opted into reproducing neo-liberal priorities and policies at a highly localized level, such as entrepreneurialism, market-driven competition, and diminished state involvement within neighbourhood level revitalization.

This critique of communicative planning assumes that state intervention can serve the weak groups in urban development processes, and that it is therefore unfortunate that the state withdraws and transfers responsibility to municipal planning initiatives and local civil society.

It is a main point in much critique of communicative planning, that it opens for local negotiations which tend to give powerful developers the upper hand, and weakens the legitimacy of general regulations protecting what he (without further explanation) calls the 'public interest'. Already in the 1980s some planning theorists

worried that planners had become deal-makers rather than regulators (Fainstein 1988), which would be very much in the spirit of disjointed incrementalism. One aspect of the new flexibility is seen in policies to abolish zoning in favour of looser regulations which seek only to ensure that urban development meets certain environmental standards. Business interests might get the opportunity to co-locate previously isolated activities such as light industry and residential uses.

A value approach to examining the charges against CPT for serving neo-liberalism

Only a few of the theorists giving attention both to planning and neo-liberalism (or the New Right) have explicitly dealt with CPT. Among those who have, even fewer have provided a critical and thorough analysis of the connection between communicative planning theory and neo-liberal economic and political currents. Nevertheless, as reviewed in the previous section, some planning theorists comment on that relationship, and the potential advantage to neo-liberalism from communicative planning is sufficiently clear to suggest that the conception of CPT as the unsuspecting handmaiden of neo-liberalism warrants further analysis.

It should be clear from preceding sections that neo-liberals have demanded changes to urban planning that have been deeply regretted by communicative planning theorists. They are therefore likely to find allegations of any positive relation between CPT and neo-liberalism paradoxical and hard to believe. The present section discusses a commended development of CPT that will hamper applications breaking with the values of discourse ethics, and impede exploitation of this planning theory for neo-liberal purposes.

CPT is often criticized for single-minded preoccupation with the qualities of the planning process at the expense of the planning outcome. As long as the process is open, striving for dialogue in the Habermasian sense, and aiming for local consensus – so the critique goes – there is little in CPT to prevent the plan itself from serving neo-liberal purposes.

One can endorse democratic procedures (or the ideal process of CPT) either because they are believed to be intrinsically valuable, or because they are instrumentally valuable and thus tend to produce good outcomes. The prevailing view in CPT is that communicative planning has the potential to deliver on process and outcome qualities alike. It is nevertheless conceded by many communicative planning theorists that there is a

need to bring process qualities and outcome qualities closer together. This means it must be made evident that what is required from the plan (the outcome) is grounded in substantive values that are closely associated with the values behind the process design. This is what the value approach sketched in the present section is meant to do, and by insisting on consistency between the values of process and outcome it offers a way to address the charge that CPT facilitates the progress of neo-liberalist urban development.

The idea of the value approach is to identify a set of criteria for what constitutes a good plan in the spirit of CPT. This set of substantive criteria or values should explicitly point back to – and be closely associated with – the procedural values that are the basis of planning process design and desirable planner conduct according to CPT, such as:

- *Empathy*, broadmindedness, being a good listener, aiming to understand others' point of view.
- *Equality of moral worth*, equal opportunities for communicative action across race, sex, and religion.
- *Fairness*, serving people according to criteria of need and communicative difficulties rather than power, money, and social status.
- *Honesty*, sincerity and trustworthiness, abstaining from deception and manipulation.
- *Inclusiveness*, hospitality in the sense of welcoming people with differing sets of values and attitudes into planning processes and other arenas of social and political life.
- *Responsiveness* to other parties in the planning process and to the general public, willingness to engage in dialogue, and to give reasons why one holds a view.
- *Self-government*, defending every citizen's right to influence collective decisions in matters that concern them.

The neo-liberal model for organizing the public sector – new public management (NPM) – offers an economic model of governance claiming that market and business rationality can be made to operate as effectively in the public interest as it does in securing private interests. Similarities between the public and private sectors are accentuated, and NPM encourages organizational forms that increase the autonomy and freedom of choice of managers in order to enhance agency efficiency, for example, through performance contracts. Administrative bodies at all levels should be competitive, should have management orientation and customer-focused quality improvement systems, and should pay attention to results (benchmarking). The public sector is expected to give lower priority to rules, processes, and various internal considerations, such

as expert jurisdictions and job security (Hood 2002, Lane 2000). The following values are identified for NPM:

- *Accountability* as support for the rule of law and accepted standards of conduct, for example, budget discipline.
- *Freedom of choice* resulting from competitiveness, authority, and social recognition.
- *Prosperity* through minimization of waste, that is, efficient use of labour, capital, and natural resources.
- *Reward for individual effort* through impersonal market mechanisms rather than bureaucratic regulations.

The differences between the values of communicative planning theory and new public management (neo-liberalism) are also demonstrated by Sager (2009). Moreover, Braithwaite (2009) shows that the values of CPT and NPM by and large belong to different value dimensions, the harmony and the security dimensions, respectively. The two dimensions are described as follows:

> (T)he harmony value system brings together societal and personal values that aim to further peaceful coexistence through a social order that shares resources, communicates mutual respect, and cooperates to allow individuals to develop their potential to the full. Harmony values orient us toward establishing connections to others...
>
> The security value system brings together guiding principles that ensure that one is well positioned to protect one's interests and further them within the existing social order. Security values guide us in deciding how we divide up limited resources, what kinds of competition between groups and individuals are legitimate, and how we define winners and losers. (Braithwaite 2009:89)

Given the contrast between harmony values and security values – and thus the contrast between the values of CPT and NPM – it is unlikely that a plan complying with a set of substantive criteria that mirror the process values of CPT, will also serve the purposes of neo-liberalism.

The discussion between adherents of procedural and substantive theories is an old one in planning, as is clear from the overview chapter in Faludi (1987:68-87). For most theorists dealing with the issue, it was a question of relative emphasis rather than either/or. The dichotomy has later been discussed from a radical perspective by Feldman (1995) and from a post-positivist standpoint by Allmendinger (2002), who suggests to do away with the distinction. Alexander (2002a) nevertheless separates substantive and procedural concepts of the public interest; the first mentioned being concerned with the content of actions and their consequences, and the second focusing on the quality of the planning and decision-making process. Planning rights are also divided into substantive and procedural concepts, which is of interest here because rights are closely related to values. Alexander (2002b:198) sees human dignity, equal treatment, and free enjoyment of property as underlying substantive planning rights. The relationship between participatory process and planning outcome was recently analyzed by MacCallum (2008). She notes that the values and norms guiding the process 'are not the values that shape the structure and content of the conventional "good" plan...A participatory process and a conventional product, then, are underwritten by different ideal-type logics' (ibid.326).

A number of empirical studies analyze the effects of participatory processes on the quality of planning outcome. Positive effects on quality are found by Brody (2003), Burby (2003), Dengler (2007), Innes and Booher (2010:41-88), Loring (2007), and Susskind et al. (1999), while Tang and Brody (2009) did not obtain statistically significant results. Warnings about potentially negative effects of participatory and communicative planning processes are put forward by Abram (2000), Pelletier et al. (1999), and Voogd and Woltjer (1999). The range of differing results is evidence that the debate about procedures' relation to substance is still ongoing.

The main idea in this section is to underline the difference between neo-liberalist planning and CPT by requiring that the planning outcomes of the latter mirror its procedural values. CPT must change its balance of process- and product-orientation towards the outcome. A classification scheme for planning theories that contains both product-oriented procedural theory and process-oriented substantive theory was presented in Sager (1990:119-130). I recommended then – as I do now – that the plan should be designed to promote the realization of the intrinsic values of the planning process. This would imply that participants feel they have been listened to, and that their involvement has been meaningful. It was explained how redundancy techniques (an aspect of flexible planning) can be used in order to design plans that underpin these procedural values (Sager 1994:232). Giving general recommendations about plan design is problematic in CPT, as free dialogue is at the heart of the communicative mode of planning. Pre-given values or criteria pertaining to planning outcomes must therefore be on a form restricting the open discussion as little as possible.

The idea of linking outcome evaluation to process values is developed further here by drawing on Sen's (2009) concept 'comprehensive outcome' and Brettschneider's (2005, 2006, 2007) value theory of democracy. Sen argues against a narrow consequentialism where a state of affairs is evaluated by considering 'culmination outcome' only. The culmination outcome includes the ultimate results of an action that are detached from process, agencies and relations. In contrast, comprehensive outcome evaluation takes the dynamic context of the choice of action into account; for example, the properties of the planning process leading up to the recommendation of a certain planning alternative (Sen 2009:215). Sandbu (2007) extends and deepens the analysis of comprehensive outcomes. It is of significance to CPT that he studies the evaluation of voice and participation. Communicative planning processes draw their value partly from their instrumental effect on culmination outcomes; '(y)et in their symbolic and evidential role, they represent something much broader: they represent our autonomy as subjects who can shape our reality, rather than objects whose lives merely happen to them' (ibid.226). Participants in democratic processes value their *causal* role in producing culmination outcomes. The local public can value the substantive outcome of a planning effort differently depending on whether it was imposed on them by fiat or emanated from a consensus building process with extensive public participation.

Consider an example. The local evaluation of a windfarm on nearby mountain ridges is likely to differ in the following two alternative situations. Situation 1: A business-oriented economic analysis is the basis of the decision. The process is expert-driven, and windmills are the only technology for electricity production taken into account by the planners. Situation 2: In a co-operative process with local politicians, the planners have compared all feasible technologies for producing the electricity required. The impact assessment of the alternative solutions has a local community perspective in addition to displaying financial effects for the energy company.

The windmill plan is likely to be less negatively or more positively received by the affected municipality if local people agree that the alternatives to a windfarm have been properly assessed. A participatory process creating a feeling among local people that their concerns have been clearly conveyed to the decision-makers, is also likely to influence locals' view of the plan, although not necessarily in positive direction. Disappointment over an undesirable decision despite having thoroughly explained the disadvantages accruing to the local community, can make the local constituency judge the plan very unfavourably. The different evaluations imply that people's judgement is founded on comprehensive outcome and thus affected by the quality of the planning process.

Brettschneider's (2006) value theory of democracy offers an alternative to the traditional divide between procedural theories of democracy and substantive theories of justice. She argues that the democratic ideal is fundamentally about a core set of values with both procedural and substantive implications. I adopt the idea of linking both process and outcome to the same set of core values, and propose a value approach to the problem of bringing process and outcome closer together in CPT. In the present value approach as in the value theory of democracy, '(i)t is the ambition...to reconcile the ideal of self-government with the protection of substantive individual rights by appealing to a set of core values' (ibid.261). The CPT values that have been identified are empathy, equality, fairness, honesty, inclusion, responsiveness, and self-government. Brettschneider's core set of democratic values – equality of interest, political autonomy, and reciprocity – is included among the values of CPT.

The purpose of the present value approach is to combine the ideal of dialogically agreed plans with the effective safeguarding of quality outcomes by appealing to the set of values characterizing ideal processes of communicative planning. The set of core values of CPT has, for instance, fairness implications for planning outcomes as well as for the dialogical planning process. Affected individuals should be given a fair hearing, but also a fair compensation if some of their property is expropriated for the production of public goods. The value approach here applied to communicative planning rests on respect for all citizens as lay planners. Citizens authorize legitimate plans through their participation in communicative and democratic planning processes. Respecting a citizen's status as a lay planner requires that planning outcomes resulting from CPT procedures do not undermine this status. Communicative planning must be by and for the people. The criteria that safeguard the virtues of outcomes ensure that plans will not undermine citizens' fundamental interest in being treated as competent lay planners who know what is for their own best and in the best interest of the community (Brettschneider 2006:268-70). For example, professional communicative planners cannot first invite local citizens into the planning process in the name of empowerment, self-government, honesty and empathy, and then come up with planning outcomes that disregard their arguments and recommendations.

In the planning literature, substantive values are usually not dealt with directly, but instead transformed into goals and displayed as such (Keeney et al. 1996). Gormley (1987:156), however, mentions the values social equity, equality, liberty, privacy, community integration, self-actualization, ecological balance, and family stability. Some of these values are process-dependent; community integration, for example, is more readily achieved with the support of participatory and communicative planning processes. The substantive planning

goal may be a neighbourhood plan which most residents feel a strong commitment to implement. Such commitment must, however, be built through the planning process, thus making certain demands on the design of this process.

Before a set of substantive values or criteria is listed below, a couple of issues concerning CPT values for planning outcomes have to be clarified. One to one correspondence between the values characterizing the planning outcome and the procedural CPT values is not necessary in the value approach. Every procedural value might not have an equivalent in the virtues of a particular planning outcome, but this outcome can still be deemed satisfactory from a CPT perspective. There may also be substantive values (characterizing a particular planning outcome) that are not process-dependent and thus do not refer back to the set of CPT values listed above. When the primary goal (as here) is to acquire the ability to distinguish the effects of communicative planning from neo-liberalism, the occurrence of process-independent values inherent in the outcome is not a problem as long as they do not serve the purposes of neo-liberal policies. However, for the value approach to lead to the conclusion that the plan under scrutiny does not primarily serve neo-liberal sectional interests, the overlap between the procedural and substantive CPT value sets for this particular planning effort must be broad enough to preclude all reasonable doubt that the plan is in the spirit of deliberative democracy and CPT, and does not bolster contrasting ideologies. When the overlap between substantive values and CPT process values is quite limited, and several outcome values underline the worth of efficiency, market, and management, the chances are much higher that the planning effort in question serves neo-liberal urban development.

How concretely should the substantive values be articulated in CPT? If evaluation criteria and values for the planning outcome are made overly concrete and without explicit reference to the general set of process values, they will have to be reformulated for each new planning task. The chief purpose of the substantive criteria is to advance consistency between process and planning outcome, and the level of concreteness should be adapted to this need. Some quite general substantive principles or values are listed below. Taken together, the principles on the list are associated with all the procedural CPT values identified in this section.

- Consensus solutions negotiated in the communication process should be incorporated in the final plan, possibly with modifications expressing the interests of people who are not part of the local consensus; for example, tax payers in general, asylum seekers and refugees, and future generations. (Self-government)

- The plan should respect what is culturally essential to affected groups, such as their heritage and their conception of the sacred. (Fairness)
- The plan should accommodate diverse lifestyles and not hinder any group from living in accordance with its self-chosen identity. For example, cultural minorities should find places in the city which are fit for their rituals and ways of socializing. (Empathy)
- The plan should hold something for each affected group, if not in its main physical manifestation of purpose, then as compensation. Especially, the situation of underprivileged groups should not be aggravated. (Equality)
- The plan, even when designed contrary to the wishes of a particular group, should include elements signalling to this group that it has been listened to. At least, details of the plan should be fashioned to meet the group halfway. (Responsiveness)
- The content of the recommended plan should correspond to the information and the planner intentions conveyed to the participating parties throughout the planning process. The plan should not give reason to suspect previously hidden agendas. (Honesty)
- The plan should not make it difficult for certain groups to take part in public life, to work, or to access basic public and private services. (Inclusion)

The city, as well as city planning, should be inclusive. In many planning cases this would lead to substantive criteria such as keeping urban space public and open to a wide range of activities, or promoting urban housing in all price classes. Furthermore, if it is not okay that systematic power differentials bias city planning, why should it be acceptable that exertion of power bias use of the city itself? A substantive criterion could call for safe urban environment for all groups, day and night.

The substantive principles listed above are quite abstract, and they need to be supplemented by more concrete planning outcome values in order to assess whether a particular plan serves neo-liberal interests or deliberative democracy.

Final remarks

It is easier to assess the effects of communicative planning on the neo-liberalization of cities when some other aspects of the relationship between planning and neo-liberalism have been clarified. The neo-liberal view on public planning was therefore outlined, and planning scholars' critique of CPT's alleged links to

neo-liberalism was surveyed, before a strategy was proposed for enquiring into the charges against CPT for running the errands of neo-liberalists. It is the main purpose of this paper to develop such a strategy for dealing with accusations that CPT is unwittingly supporting ideologies and policies which have a value-content that is quite different from CPT's own.

The proposed strategy does not aim to show that communicative planning is unlikely to bolster ideologies deviating from its own theoretical core. Instead it employs a value approach to investigate whether this might be the case for particular planning efforts. Whether the critique of CPT turns out to be valid or misconceived, planners should be warned not to approve of solutions without first taking a critical look at the role played by developers and other powerful actors in the communicative process. In his early books, Forester (1989, 1993) tried to make it clear that a capitalist economy always provides a structurally unequal context for planning. The critique of CPT for serving neo-liberalism is a reminder that appeals to dialogue which ignore structural inequality are disingenuous and cannot be expected to be part of a democratic bulwark against the hegemony of particular interests.

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