



The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search

<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>

aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

No endorsement of AgEcon Search or its fundraising activities by the author(s) of the following work or their employer(s) is intended or implied.

RESOURCE USE ISSUES
AND
THE PLANNING PROCESS

U.S.D.A., NAL
Cataloging Prep

Proceedings of
The Joint Meeting of Northeast Regional Committees
and
The Extension Public Policy Committee

Second Northeast Extension Seminar
on
Public Issues Involving Land Use
Boston, Massachusetts
October 11 - 13, 1966

Northeast Regional Committees
on
Farm Management Extension
Farm Management Research
Extension Public Policy
Resource Economics

Published by
Institute for Research on Land and Water Resources
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania
and
The Farm Foundation
Chicago, Illinois
1967

FOREWORD

This publication represents a collection of papers which were presented before the Second Northeast Extension Seminar of The Northeast Regional Committees. The conference, which was held in Boston, October 11-13, 1966, explored the topic of "Resource Use Issues and the Planning Process."

The seminar was attended by professionals in rural and urban planning, economics, and sociology; landscape architects; educators, agricultural agents; and extension specialists in forestry and wildlife, area development, and public affairs.

Included in this publication are all papers which were presented before the four committees and those presented before the Northeast Regional Extension Public Policy Committee. They represent current thinking in the field of resource use and planning.

Much guidance and support was given by Henry M. Hansen of the University of Connecticut, and Joseph Ackerman and R. J. Hildreth of the Farm Foundation to the Boston Conference and the publication of the papers presented there. Financial costs were underwritten by the Farm Foundation and the Institute for Research on Land and Water Resources of The Pennsylvania State University.

Finally, we salute Jack Brown and Carroll D. Price, II who devoted many hours to the editing of this compilation of papers.

John C. Frey, Chairman
Northeast Regional
Extension Public
Policy Committee

VIEWS OF AN EXTENSION ADMINISTRATOR

by C. R. Harrington¹

CONCERN OF THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

The College of Agriculture has been associated for more than 50 years with community planning and development processes, if these processes are viewed broadly. During the years that the art and science of planning were growing and being applied by professional planners to city and urban situations, colleges of agriculture were concerned with problems of change in the rural communities.

To illustrate this concern, here are a few sentences quoted from an address by Dean Liberty Hyde Bailey of the New York State College of Agriculture on January 19, 1911, over a half century ago:

"There is much discussion as to the nature and the future of the hill lands in the State of New York. The situation is now to the front because it is commonly assumed that the probable lessening population of the hill country is related in some way to the cost of living question. The situation therefore is not alone the solution of a technical agricultural problem but of a very real economic and social issue.....

"The hill land however does not represent a place or a geography but a problem. It represents a type of rural condition brought about not alone because the lands may be elevated above the sea, but also because of soil conditions, of climate due to altitude and exposure, of remoteness from market, of poor highway facilities, of great distances between neighbors, of poor and distant schools and churches and other institutions.....

"We must reconceive the situation and endeavor to reshape it. We must think of an organized farm life arising out of these remoter localities. The human problem is, after all, the fundamental problem in the situation.....

"My contention is that the hill lands constitute a real problem in which all the people must be concerned. The problem cannot be overlooked. It is now time that a regular state program or policy be outlined and set in motion. We especially need: (1) good agricultural surveys of the regions; (2) several demonstration farms; (3) careful attention to highway approaches; (4) regular program or system of forest management."²

¹ Mr. Harrington is Associate Director of Extension, New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University.

² Bailey, L. H., "The Hill Lands of New York", Proceedings of the Seventy-First Annual Meeting of the New York State Agricultural Society, Bulletin 23, Department of Agriculture, State of New York.

A NEW RURAL SOCIETY

Note Dean Bailey's concern with the social as well as with the physical problem. He probably was influenced by his chairmanship of the Commission on Country Life appointed in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt. Two short paragraphs quoted from the report of this Commission suggest some of its interests:

"The time has come when we must give as much attention to the constructive development of the open country as we have given to other affairs. This is necessary not only in the interest of the open country itself, but for the safety and progress of the nation.....

"We have now discussed some of the forces and agencies that will aid in bringing about a new rural society. The development of the best country life in the United States is seen therefore to be largely a question of guidance. The exercise of a wise advice, stimulus, and direction from some central national agency, extending over a series of years, could accomplish untold good, not only for the open country but for all the people and for our institutions."*

This report of the Commission on Country Life had great influence on colleges of agriculture. In keeping with its basic role of research and education, the College has encouraged during the past 50 years the study and resolution of major significant problems especially in the rural community. Groups of leaders have been organized under a variety of names and have been assisted and guided in studying and recommending activities. Forty years ago in New York State these groups were called County Conference Boards. Later, Land Use Planning committees were organized to be followed by Rural Policy Councils and most recently by Rural Areas Development or Resource Development committees. The orientation was largely to farm and rural areas, but in all of the studies and activities of such groups, concerns for both the physical and social problems and developments have been intertwined. Several of these committees have demonstrated their effectiveness in guiding change.

* Report of the Commission on Country Life, p. 112, 149; The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, May 1944.

RURAL AND URBAN INTERDEPENDENCE

Despite this history, the question of relationships between the College of Agriculture and official planning processes today takes on new relevance because of the growing recognition of the interdependence of rural and urban areas, because of the need to plan on more than a limited geographical basis and because the distinctions between rural and urban are becoming very blurred. As consequences, more of the planning process in its formal attire is moving to the total community; the College of Agriculture is finding it essential to move beyond an exclusive preoccupation with rural and farm interests. Thus, the definition of relationships between the two is evolving and developing.

During the past three years in New York State, the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics have been engaged in a variety of conversations with several agencies, groups and individuals concerned with the planning process. Included have been conferences with the State Water Resources Commission, with the State Office of Planning and Coordination, and before its formation with its two predecessor organizations, the Office of Regional Development and the Bureau of Planning of the State Department of Commerce, with individual professional planners and local government planning agencies and with the professional staff of the Department of City and Regional Planning, College of Agriculture, Cornell University. Most recently an informal conference was held with two members of the staff of a recently appointed New York State Hudson River Valley Commission. This conference resulted from the interest on the part of the commission in learning more about working relationships with the College of Agriculture and especially with the research and extension functions of that college.

THE COLLEGE AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

Out of these several conversations is growing an identification of three areas of relationship that do and can exist between the College of Agriculture and the planning process:

1. The college can make available to planners and planning groups factual information and research results and assist them in its interpretation and application.
2. The college and a planning agency can enter into agreements to conduct new research.

3. The college, through its extension competence, can design and implement educational programs relating to resources management and the planning process.

Let me deal with each of these three areas in some detail:

First, the Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics have several areas of knowledge competence of interest to the planning process and to the people engaged in it. A mere listing of these areas may suffice:

1. LAND -- the technology of soils, the economics of land use, the conservation of land resources, not only for farm and rural situations, but for urban purposes as well.
2. WATER -- the availability of supplies, use requirements, the treatment of water resources, economics of project evaluation, and planning.
3. TREES, FISH, WILDLIFE, AND NATIVE VEGETATION -- a growing body of knowledge about these resources and their management.
4. HOUSING -- especially some of the socio-economic aspects of housing and relationships between housing and the other aspects of environment.
5. PEOPLE -- a significant body of knowledge concerning the characteristics of people, especially of the more rural areas but also of those districts in transition between rural and urban.
6. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION -- much is known about the structure, functions and linkages between organizations, again, especially in the rural areas, but much of this knowledge is applicable to broader settings.
7. EDUCATION -- the interest of the College of Agriculture in the rural school system for more than 50 years has led it to a wealth of knowledge and insight relating to education.
8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC FINANCE --- the identification of the College of Agriculture with the well-being of farm and rural people has for years supported some research in this complex public policy area.
9. ROADS -- especially some competence in the technology of road construction and maintenance.

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT -- a body of knowledge, interdisciplinary in nature, relating to the economic development of farming, forest production and utilization, and food processing and distribution.
11. RECREATION -- national emphasis on outdoor recreation within recent years is promoting a body of knowledge within the college in this area of economic activity, concentrating greatly on the private sector.
12. THE PROCESS OF MANAGEMENT -- years of experience in working with farm families, operators of other kinds of businesses and small communities have resulted in knowledge relating to the process of management and the principles are applicable in many other areas of human concern.
13. ECOLOGY -- an expanding competence in the environmental sciences and in ecology.
14. LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION AND MAINTENANCE -- the competence of the college in biology and the application of this knowledge requires little adjustment to contribute to contemporary interests in this area.

NEW RESEARCH

The second area of relationships deals with new research. The list of content areas where the College of Agriculture has competence suggests also the areas of interest within the college for the conduct of new research. It is appropriate for a college and a planning agency to enter into agreements for the conduct of specific new research, but a college will need to define its own research interests. Will it be involved only in basic research, the results of which will be applicable in many situations or will it assist in some of the situational surveys needed by the planning process? Surely it would appear axiomatic that a college with a foundation of knowledge in an area with a continuing interest will need to bolster its knowledge competence with new research. Some of it can be in harmony with the knowledge needs of the planning process.

All of the research needs of the planning process will not be provided by a College of Agriculture. The professional planners and private consultants, as well as other colleges, will be involved. This situation presents problems of coordination of research efforts suggesting the importance of continuing communications and of developing mutual respect and confidence. Still another question is the availability of all research results for the educational programs relating to resources management and the planning process, the third area of relationships.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The College of Agriculture, through its extension competence, function, and organization, can design and implement such educational programs that are informal and action-oriented and that employ a variety of methods and relationships. The need for such an educational effort is based upon these assumptions:

1. Significant changes continue to take place within America, affecting the lives of individuals.
2. A basic consequence of change is that someone must guide the new developments to avoid confusion.
3. Four major tasks are associated with this guidance:
 - a. Determination of broad general goals or direction for development; this is a task of informed key leadership.
 - b. Specific planning aimed at accomplishing or moving toward the directions established; this is a task of persons skilled in planning.
 - c. Informing people so that they as individuals and groups may understand the basis of proposed directions, the reasons for recommendations and the ways they can respond.
 - d. Adjustment of technical and financial assistance programs, both public and private, so that they will be in harmony with the accepted directions and plans.

All of these tasks, if performed effectively, require continuing education and involvement of the concerned individuals. Emphasis is on the planning process relating to public decisions. The challenge is to provide quality educational and informational efforts that will upgrade public decision-making. It can be argued that citizen management or participation in public decisions must be encouraged and expanded if we are to preserve our system of governing ourselves.

PRODUCTIVE DECISIONS AND ACTION

The broad general objective of such an educational effort is to assist people through education to manage a community so that the well-being of the people will be best served. We want and need better informed, wiser, more productive decisions combined with the ability to take action.

Within American society we depend upon leadership in our political democracy to perform critical and diverse roles in local, state, and national affairs. We expect them to initiate, propose, inspire, challenge, influence, sanction or block action of other members of society. We expect leadership to provide the focus, the program or the agenda to which citizens can respond. We want leadership to lend to democratic action a sense of direction and clear purpose. Thus, community decision leaders constitute the primary audience for this informal educational work relating to the planning process.

Since many of us are opposed philosophically to manipulating people, such an informal educational program involves greater depth and comprehensiveness than the mere reporting on the planning process and its results. Suggested then is the importance of helping leaders have a deeper understanding of some basic principles and of some content areas in depth. In addition to the areas of College of Agriculture competence, the educational program needs to involve knowledge relating to the dynamics of change, the social action process, the politics of community management and economic growth. Community leaders need to be skilled communicators. The basic knowledge can then be complemented with specific information on some individual areas of concern and program.

PROVIDE AN INFORMATION FLOW

The most significant challenge is to find the most appropriate ways of providing information and knowledge to community leaders and helping them to use it. This means learning enough about the situation of individual leaders, their problems, their opportunities, and their major information needs so that knowledge and educational activities can be brought to them in such a way that their minds and imaginations will be stretched and they can be assisted to be most effective. It means the design of the appropriate methods to present some instruction in basic principles and basic content, to provide a continuing flow of relevant information to keep them up to date and to arrange for effective counseling assistance.

Surely one of the questions relates to the relevance of this ongoing educational effort to an existing planning process. There needs to be harmony between the two, but at the same time the educational effort must avoid becoming the propaganda arm for the planning process; else it loses its value: the ability to serve the needs of people with knowledge. Part of the content of the educational effort may be furnished through the planning process. An effective educational effort can provide a depth of understanding and intelligent support or criticism of the planning process. Within the audience of community leaders will be the professional planners and the members of boards and groups sponsoring the planning process.

Part of the educational task is the informing of people generally so that they can respond to proposals of leadership. This general educational program needs to be consistent with the educational program for community leaders. If it is too far out in front of the leaders, then it threatens the position of leadership itself. At the same time a well designed public education program can assist in keeping local leadership "on its toes."

These then, are two major audiences for the College of Agriculture through its extension competence: community leaders including planners, and the general public; yet each is itself diverse. Still a third audience includes the administrators of technical and financial assistance programs, both public and private. The goal is the adjustment of these programs so that they will be in harmony with the accepted directions and plans with a community.

INVOLVE INDIVIDUALS

Cooperative Extension has learned in the past that one way to influence this audience with seemingly diverse views is to involve the individuals skillfully in the design and implementation of the total educational program, to give them a responsibility, and to utilize their knowledge and skills. The effective involvement of these several audiences can result in clearer identification of goals and more coordination of efforts of individuals and groups.

This philosophy and experience of involving people is a major contribution of the external function to the total planning process. Local extension agents especially can be helpful to a sponsoring agency in the initial involvement of appropriate leadership. They can counsel with local leaders on specific program purposes and the relationship of a new program to existing programs. They can cooperate in the capacity of an advisor or ex-officio member on specific boards or committees. All of this is consistent with an established College of Agriculture policy to assist people through its extension competence to organize themselves for worthwhile purposes. It is not the intent to assume the responsibility of managing a variety of enterprises and activities, but to assist in the organizational phases and to turn over to others as rapidly as possible the management responsibilities.

Throughout this discussion, the assumption exists that the planning process is not being conducted merely as an academic exercise. The people involved are interested in decisions, action and responses to their planning. They appear to agree with an objective of an action-oriented, informal educational program; namely, better informed, wiser, more productive decisions combined with the ability to take action.

Yet, individuals closely related to the planning effort may be handicapped in the conduct of a significant educational effort for others; they are seen as protagonists of the planning and the plans. Developing the most productive relationships between two parallel efforts -- planning and education -- is possible and workable, and the College of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension Service are preparing themselves to assume more effective leadership in this educational task.

EXTENSION'S POTENTIAL

To fulfill their responsibilities in such a team effort, the College of Agriculture and Extension must learn and grow. They need to become more aware of the problems and opportunities of an urbanizing society; their narrow identification with the well-being of the farm family and the traditional rural community needs to be modified. They require more understanding of the art and science of public planning, and they will want to continue to improve the breadth and depth of their knowledge competence.

In the design and implementation of extension educational programs relating to the planning process, full recognition must be given to the political nature of public decisions. Yet, effective education can be conducted if the College maintains objectivity and relates its education to the needs and interests of people, involving them in the design and implementation of the educational activities.

In summary, the College of Agriculture has a body of knowledge relating to physical and human resources and the planning process. It also has much experience in informal, action-oriented education of people. It is true that much of this educational experience in the past has been aimed at helping individuals change their practices. Today, the world and the community are so complex that the well-being of the individuals is more and more dependent upon community and public decisions.

It is expected that colleges of agriculture will continue to complement their work aimed at helping individuals to change their practices of resources management with even more work aimed at helping the community to improve its resource management practices. With the planning process becoming more significant within contemporary society, the potential relationships between the colleges of agriculture and the planning process need even further dialogue, experience, and evolution.