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The Garden to the New Grid
Planning’s Past and Present Notions of Environmentalism

Introduction

In searching for useful ideological frameworks to address the pressing need for more sustainable communities, it can be helpful to unpack planning ideas, comparing them to their historical influences and extracting notions of sustainability from both present and history. The contemporary rhetoric of New Urbanism has been proposed as a model for more sustainable, socially engaged, and publicly meaningful communities. This theory draws on a number of influential historical planning ideologies, including Ebenezer Howard’s late 19th-early 20th century concept of the Garden City. In examining these two planning concepts I will try to tease out different perspectives of environmentalism and sustainability, discussing how each relates to the broader environmental movement and how these concepts can contribute to more environmental communities. I hope to link the ideas of environmentalism within these two movements together, demonstrating how the ideas within these two movements, each presenting different contributions to more environmental communities, can complement each other and be brought together to inform a more comprehensive environmentally-oriented planning discourse. Though New Urbanism and Garden City arose in different contexts, notions of environmentalism within them can complement each other and inform new directions of thinking about environmentalism in planning and influencing more environmentally-oriented communities.

The Garden City:

The Concept:

The Garden City concept has proved to be one of the most potent ideas in the evolution of town and regional planning, and its inventor, Ebenezer Howard, is arguably the most important figure in the narrative of town planning history. Despite being repeatedly mistranslated, misrepresented and amended, the Garden City continues to influence ideas about town planning practice. Howard, a stenographer by profession, developed his ideas in the London of the 1880s and 90s; an industrial city suffering rapid,

unplanned urban growth, disease, intense overcrowding, and unsanitary slums. With a great migration occurring out of the country and into the cities in search of new industry and opportunity, rural life was declining as well, into a depressed depopulated countryside.

Howard saw a solution to this dual crisis. In his 1898 and 1902 works, To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform and Garden Cities of To-morrow, he introduced the “Garden City,” a new kind of settlement combining town and country into town-country, drawing

Figure 1: Howard’s Three Magnets

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3 Ibid., 28.
4 Ibid. 28-29.
out the benefits of both while eschewing the drawbacks of each.\textsuperscript{6} Howard wished to "restore people to the land," to provide an alternative that would inspire a "spontaneous movement of the people from our crowded cities to the bosom of our kindly mother earth, at once the source of life, of happiness, of wealth, and of power."\textsuperscript{7} Howard's iconic "Three Magnets" diagram shown in \textbf{Figure 1} illustrates his conception of Town; the active but crowded and unsanitary city, Country; the beautiful but economically depressed countryside, and Town-Country, his utopian Garden City concept that would override the attractions of the other two Town and Country magnets.\textsuperscript{8}

The Garden City concept is both a town planning and regional planning idea. Each Garden City was intended to be fairly small, with the population and area of each settlement firmly controlled.\textsuperscript{9} The city is conceived in a circular form with a clear zoning system - public buildings and services in the centre, with a belt of residential land around them, and then railways and factories on the perimeter.\textsuperscript{10} Six wide boulevards act as radials cutting through the city, dividing it into six equal, ideally self-sufficient, neighbourhood-like wards.\textsuperscript{11} Indeed the city was intended to provide a broad range of employment opportunities and economic activities, allowing people to live close to their work.\textsuperscript{12} Large public parks, open green space, and tree-lined avenues are all prominent features.\textsuperscript{13}

Regionally, these thoroughly-planned towns were to exist as a network, each encircled by an large agricultural belt of rural estate, and interconnected by rapid transit (See \textbf{Figure 2}).\textsuperscript{14} These towns, at populations of ideally 32,000, would be grouped around slightly larger Central Cities and would be connected to the Central City by high-speed transit.\textsuperscript{15} The cities would grow by leapfrogging; as one city reaches its population or area limits another would be established a short distance away, leaving space for the greenbelt.\textsuperscript{16}

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\textsuperscript{6} Ibid. 28.
\textsuperscript{7} Hall, "Cities of Tomorrow," 93.
\textsuperscript{8} Howard, Ebenezer. \textit{Garden Cities of To-morrow}. (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946) 44,46.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., 46-49.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 30.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 29
\textsuperscript{15} Howard. \textit{Garden Cities of To-morrow}. 142.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
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Equally important as the spatial dimensions of the Garden City concept is its social and administrative structure. Key to the plan was collective local landownership – citizens would pay their rent to a limited-dividend company that would also act as a trust to eventually raise enough funds to create a small-scale local welfare state directly responsible to local citizens.\(^\text{17}\) Howard was a Fabian social reformer and visionary as much as a planner, arguing this local management and self-government as a new socio-economic structure, different from both Victorian capitalism and centralized socialism and realized through co-operatives and small-scale enterprise.\(^\text{18}\)

Figure 2: Howard’s Group of Slumless, Smokeless Cities\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Hall. Cities of Tomorrow. 93
\(^{18}\) Ibid.
\(^{19}\) Howard. Tomorrow. 142
Environmentalism and the Garden City:

After considering this comprehensive utopian vision, what notions and principles of environmentalism can be teased out? This Garden City concept pre-dates the emergence of an environmental planning discipline and of modern environmental thinking, and his ideas do not speak explicitly to sustainability or environmental planning principles. However, the Garden City concept only presents a broad environmental ethic, describing a grand vision for a more environmentally-oriented society. This conceptual, broad-scale, theoretical perspective of environmentalism informs an ethical framework that can guide society’s value systems in more sustainable directions, thus informing more environmentally-conscious communities.

Though not an environmentalist by today’s standards, Howard understood the fundamental relationship between natural systems and human society. Though mainly a rural preservationist Howard understood how nature, or the “Country” was the underpinning of human society and he honored nature’s role:

All that we are and all that we have comes from it. Our bodies are formed of it: to it they return. We are fed by it, clothed by it, and by it we are warmed and sheltered. On its bosom we rest. Its beauty is the inspiration of art, of music, of poetry. Its force propels all the wheels of industry. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge.

Howard understood the relationship between nature and modern industrial society as one of subjugation and exploitation, and that this relationship would continue so long as the “unholy, unnatural separation of society and nature endures.” Howard saw a need for the joining of nature and society to create a more harmonious just community, and in an optimistic, romantic utopian zeal, he furthered this idea as a central theme of his vision for a new, higher civilization. Howard envisions a relationship of synergy and complementarity, and this ethic is mirrored in the sustainability movement of today which advocates for environmental quality and economic activity to be treated as complementary objectives. Howard declares that the country must be integrated into the town, and current environmentalism and environmental planning espouses this principle as well, advocating for green space in cities and the rehabilitation of parks and natural ecosystems within urban spaces.

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21 Ibid.

22 Howard. Garden Cities of To-Morrow. 48


24 Howard. Garden Cities of To-Morrow. 48

25 Ibid., 205

26 Ibid., 213
The dualism between the realms of Nature and Society that Howard urges to bridge has been decried by the pioneers of environmental planning. Ian McHarg, in his seminal work *Design with Nature*, states that the original plight of our environmental condition lies in our Western values – we have degraded and discounted our environment because our values have insisted that man must subdue the earth, that the earth is his to dominate and exploit.\(^{27}\) In this anthropocentric view, man is separate from nature, his civilization is above nature, and he seeks not unity with nature but conquest.\(^{28}\) Michael Hough, in his *Cities and Natural Process* speaks as well to this problematic value system, describing how the dichotomy of civilization and nature has had a profound influence on human behavior, subjectivity, and city-building.\(^{29}\) In his design principles, Hough seeks to remedy the anthropocentric isolation from nature, advocating for seeing nature comprehensively, understanding interrelationships and interconnections between society and nature beginning with where people live – their home community.\(^{30}\) Hough also argues for the visibility and restoration of natural processes, allowing them to visibly coexist with human processes to foster an awareness and relationship with these natural systems.\(^{31}\) This integration of nature within human society, to emphasize coexistence and unity in a more egalitarian conceptual framework, is a key part of Howard’s utopian Garden City vision.

Whether the implementation of Howard’s utopian Garden City would have led to more environmentally-oriented communities is difficult to say, as his complete utopian vision has not fully been realized.\(^{32}\) The Garden City idea has spread widely and has had a tremendous influence on planning theory and practice, but its implementation has been largely partial, incomplete, or one-dimensional.\(^{33}\) His ideas to decentralize cities have been attributed to assisting urban sprawl, and his garden cities have only really successfully been implemented as garden suburbs and satellite towns.\(^{34}\)

However, some implemented elements of the Garden City concept have been found to complement and contribute to modern environmental planning and sustainability agendas. The greenbelt, as a spatial component of Howard’s concept, was incorporated into Ottawa’s 1950 Plan for the National Capital. This greenbelt, approximately 4 km. wide, was planned to surround suburban areas and to control the outer limits of Ottawa’s urbanization.\(^{35}\) In a new 1996 Greenbelt Master Plan, Ottawa’s Greenbelt (See Figure 3)

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 24
\(^{30}\) Ibid., 26
\(^{31}\) Ibid., 29-30
\(^{33}\) Ibid., 24.
Figure 3: Ottawa's 1996 Greenbelt Master Plan Concept Plan\textsuperscript{16}
was repositioned from an urban containment feature to a part of a regional ecosystem, with a significant conservation focus, amended through environmental planning and ecosystem analysis. In Europe, hope for Garden Cities is high even today, with especially the Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden trying out small suburb-scale or project-scale Garden City experiments as part of their urban sustainability agendas.

The Garden City’s perspective of environmentalism and its contribution to informing more environmentally-oriented communities comes from its environmental ethic. This ethic, presenting a more egalitarian, unified view of nature and society has the potential to inform a more environmentally-oriented value system, and thus produce a greater environmental consciousness. Howard’s grand vision of a unified nature and society has the potential to inspire a different way of valuing and thinking about environment and society broadly, and this environmental consciousness, if endorsed, can help produce more environmentally-conscious communities.

New Urbanism:

The Concept:

New Urbanism emerged as a reaction to the sprawling, socially-isolating, unhealthy, unsustainable, gridlock-ridden conventional suburban development patterns prevailing out of post-WWII planning practice. The city in the post-war 20thC seemed to grow without limits, oozing onto the landscape in a formless suburban expansion that is monotonous, placeless, and meaningless to its residents. At the same time, many industrial cities were in decline, with the energy crisis and debt of the 1970s leading into fiscal conservatism and government funding cutbacks in the 1980s.

Thus in the 1980s and 90s, rejecting the continuation of this form of growth and urban development – this crisis of the urban condition, a new movement of planning concepts emerged. Drawing from Jane Jacobs, Léon Krier, and planning and design principles ignored since the domination of the automobile, New Urbanists propose diverse, defined, mixed-use pedestrian scale neighbourhoods, emphasizing public space and complementary civic and private spaces. Reviving classical principles and using traditional pre-automobile cities as inspiration, New Urbanism favours a dense, compact

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37 Ibid., 141.
40 Grant, Planning the Good Community, 5.
41 Ibid.
42 Grant, Planning the Good Community, 14
urban environment, a walkable environment with small blocks, well-defined streets and attractive squares. These public spaces and the preservation of historic buildings would help enable meaning and community spirit within urban developments, helping to create a sense of place and heal the social isolation of conventional developments. Each compact neighbourhood should have structure, with clear boundaries, a defined centre, and a balanced mix of dwellings, workplaces, shops, civic buildings, and parks.

The first New Urbanist experiment was Seaside, Florida, created in 1982 by New Urbanist pioneers Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, both heavily influenced by Krier’s urbanist concepts. They advocated Traditional Neighbourhood Design (TND), bringing back design principles from the local vernacular of the classic regional small town. At the same time, transportation patterns, walkability, sustainable development, and healthy community design principles were being considered by California architect Peter Calthorpe, informing his Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) concept. These movements rapidly gained ground, and in the early 1990s, to help their unification and institutionalization, collaboration between the main actors of TND and TOD approaches led to the formation of the Congress for the New Urbanism.

In 1993, The Congress for the New Urbanism adopted a “Charter of the New Urbanism”, consolidating and organizing the movement and setting out an agenda for research and action. Elaborating principles on the level of “ The metropolis, city and town,” “The neighbourhood, the district, and the corridor,” and “The block, the street, and the building,” the Charter describes New Urbanism practices as a comprehensive practical approach from the building to the regional scale. The Charter outlines both detailed prescriptions and larger-scale principles, standing for the restoration of sprawling developments, and advocating:

The restructuring of public policy and development practices to support the following principles: neighbourhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.

New Urbanism has disseminated quickly in North America; influencing planning policy, making its way into suburban development forms in may places, and even in some

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43 Grant, Planning the Good Community, 53.
44 Ibid., 53
46 Grant, Planning the Good Community. 53
47 Ibid., 57
48 Ibid., 53-54
49 Ibid., 61
50 Ibid., 61-62
52 Ibid., 1.
places supplanting conventional zoning. New Urbanism represents a series of practices that describe a new community form, drawing and appropriating ideas from various movements in planning theory history, including Howard’s Garden City. The Charter principles reflect an early interest in sustainability and environmental planning as well, and this interest has continued to grow within the movement, with tools and techniques promoting sustainability becoming a focus within the New Urbanism agenda by the late 2000s.

Environmentalism and New Urbanism:

New Urbanism, arising primarily in the 1980s and 90s, emerged in a context where sustainable development and ecological principles in planning were already coalescing. Postmodern environmental thought had developed, and literature on ecological footprint analysis, environmental impacts of land use, smart growth, and urban ecology were all unfolding along with New Urbanism’s development. Thus this maturing environmental movement had the opportunity to influence the development of New Urbanism from the outset. Indeed, New Urbanists have engaged in efforts to accept and integrate sustainability principles, and have endeavored to form allegiances with agendas, policies, and organizations representing sustainable development.

Even New Urbanism’s earliest 1993 Charter spoke to a budding interest in environmental sustainability. Its design principles prescribe compactness of settlements and the reduction of land consumption, the preservation of open space, and reductions in automobile-dependent settlement patterns. Charter principles 1-5 promote clear, defined boundaries around metropolitan regions derived from natural features such as “topography, watersheds, coastlines, farmlands, regional parks, and river basins.” As well, principles 24 and 26 advocate for local built form that responds to the local environment and landscape conditions. These principles fall in line with both McHarg and Hough’s environmental management techniques, which call for the consideration of natural processes and their interactions on both the small and large scale, describing how these natural processes have implications for development forms and should guide the development of the built landscape. Also, principles 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 22, and 23 all speak

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53 Grant, Jill. Planning the Good Community. 3
54 Duany, André, introduction to Talen, Emily, New Urbanism and American Planning: A Conflict of Cultures (New York: Routledge, 2005) vii
57 Ellis & Swearingen White. “Sustainability, The Environment, and New Urbanism.” 127
59 Trudeau, “New Urbanism as Sustainable Development?” 437
60 Congress for the New Urbanism, “Charter of the New Urbanism.” 2
61 Ibid.
62 Hough, Cities and Natural Process, 19-20
to encouraging walkability and pedestrian-friendly environments, reducing car use and thus energy use and CO₂ emissions. Principle 18 speaks to the provision of local accessible parks and green space within the urban environment, and as well ensuring the protection of conservation areas and open lands around neighbourhoods. Hough endorses this idea, his design principles advocating for local interaction with the natural environment and the exposure and visibility of natural systems in our daily lives.

Beyond the substance of the principles outlined in the Charter, New Urbanists are using techniques derived from ecological analysis to implement Charter principles. Notably, the concept of the transect has been appropriated into New Urbanist practice as a way to organize the elements of urbanism and the types of urban and rural environments. The concept of the transect emerged with Geddes’ “Valley Section” (see Figure 4) in the early 19th C, diagramming a geographic section with divisions corresponding to different types of human settlements and environments. The transect shows up later in ecological planning in McHarg’s Design With Nature, as a tool to help articulate how ecosystems change over spatial distances. New Urbanism has appropriated the transect (see Figure 5), describing a gradient from city through rural to natural areas to help designers concentrate development and density in appropriate areas, correlating specific forms of development to certain levels along the urban-rural progression. Thus the transect becomes an element of New Urbanist design, creating a new kind of zoning that maintains diversity but still designates certain forms of development to certain areas.

McHarg, Design with Nature, 86
63 Congress for the New Urbanism, “Charter of the New Urbanism.” 2
64 Ibid.
65 Hough, Cities and Natural Process, 24-25
66 Ibid., 30.
67 Ellis & Swearingen White. “Sustainability, the Environment, and New Urbanism.” 129.
68 Ibid.
70 McHarg, Design With Nature. 8
71 Ibid.
So, with concepts and principles of sustainability infused into New Urbanist practice, what are the results? Is New Urbanism successful at creating more sustainable communities and built form? Maybe. A development is not sustainable just because it contains New Urbanist design, but New Urbanist design can make a contribution.

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In a study evaluating the environmental impact of New Urbanist design techniques versus conventional suburbs on watersheds in the US, it was determined that New Urbanist developments were generally more successful at implementing practices and techniques to offer watershed protection.\textsuperscript{75} New Urbanist developments were better at protecting and restoring ecologically sensitive areas, more roadway impervious surface reduction techniques were used to reduce runoff, and New Urban developments were also more likely to use Best Management Practices to treat and manage stormwater runoff.\textsuperscript{76} More positive environmental data for New Urbanism comes from ecological footprint analysis, which proposes that the increased density of the built environment associated with New Urbanist developments can result in lower per capita ecological footprints.\textsuperscript{77} The built form with smaller, more compact dwellings, smaller lawn size, and less parking independently contributed to a lowered environmental impact.\textsuperscript{78}

In terms of promoting environmental behaviour such as walking and the reduction of auto-use, results are more complex. Many studies have shown that people living in New Urbanist developments do walk more, especially for utilitarian purposes, though some studies show this does not actually correlate with less car use.\textsuperscript{79} Also, walking is a human behaviour, influenced by a host of contextual and cultural factors – it is difficult to rule out a selection bias in these studies, with the possibility of people more enthusiastic towards walking moving to these communities in the first place.\textsuperscript{80} Also, there have been studies that conclude that New Urbanist developments do not necessarily correlate with more environmental behaviour or consciousness, such as spending time outdoors or developing an ecological knowledge and consciousness.\textsuperscript{81} Analyzing human behaviour is much more complex than studying the ecological impact of the built environment, with temperamental human behaviour influenced by a myriad of factors.

New Urbanism presents one form of environmentalism in practice – it has appropriated environmental tools, techniques and principles without presenting a broad environmental philosophy or ethic. This is a concrete, pragmatic, practice-driven perspective of environmentalism that has had some success in creating more environmentally-oriented communities through their built form.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 215.
\textsuperscript{79} Trudeau, "New Urbanism as Sustainable Development?" 441
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Hosteter, Mark & Youngetob, Kara. "Is a New Urban Development Model Building Greener Communities?" \textit{Environment & Behaviour} 37 no. 6 (2005):752-753
Links and Complementarity:

The Garden City concept and New Urbanism principles both in themselves contain elements and perspectives of environmentalism that can contribute to more environmentally-oriented communities, but each in different ways, and both of these perspectives contain deficits.

The Garden City concept speaks to environmentalism in broad, theoretical terms – it is not really that each of the elements and prescriptions of the concept contain principles of environmentalism (though some of its design elements have been found promising as inspiration for more sustainable urban forms). Instead, Howard's understanding of the fundamental relationship between society and nature, the implications of their conceptual division, and his idea of joining them in a more harmonious, egalitarian, and higher-order society conveys an ethical shift towards thinking about nature and society in a more environmental ontology. The reconciling of the demands of economic growth and environmental protection has remained one of the primary goals of sustainability. Howard presents a fully-formed, exciting regional planning vision, but beyond this vision the ecological implementation of the Garden City falls flat. The implementation of Howard's Garden City, incomplete as it was, did not realize the kind of environmentally-oriented communities that his ethic promises. Howard's environmentalism is conceptual, ethical, and not really rooted in practice or specific prescriptions. The Garden City environmentalism presents a powerful cohesive environmental vision and ethic, but the practice of this ethic was not realized through Garden City planning policy and practice.

Presenting an opposite problem, New Urbanism presents an array of environmentally-oriented policy prescriptions, but it has been criticized for not embracing fully the cause or ethic of environmentalism, focusing instead on urban livability. Indeed, New Urbanism's Charter reads more as a list of prescriptions to follow in designing good communities rather than a cohesive philosophy, with each principle connected to a grander vision. New Urbanism is decentralized and undogmatic, developed as a practice-oriented movement. New Urbanism does not emphasize theory in general, it was developed as a tangible, simple recipe for urban planning practice. New Urbanism builds on precedents and planning paradigms, but it has been described as anti-intellectual, uninterested in theory-building and instead more focused on marketing and practice. This focus on process is unsurprising, as during New Urbanism's development criticisms of the top-down, expert-driven visionary planning shifted the profession towards a micro-scale,

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82 Ward, "The Howard Legacy" 235-236.
83 Young "Green Cities and Urban Future," 205-206
84 Ibid.
86 Grant, "Planning the Good Community." 7,10
87 Ibid., 10.
88 Ibid., 17
procedural focus, away from the "big ideas."\textsuperscript{89} The environmentalism in New Urbanism is more focused on process, on tools and techniques and on specific goal-driven policy prescriptions, without formulating a larger, cohesive visionary idea integrating an environmental ethic. In contrast to the Garden City concept, New Urbanism presents environmental principles in its specific prescriptions and design practice, without grounding these principles in a broader environmental vision or philosophy.

Thus we can see how both of these theories have opposite deficiencies - the Garden City concept presents a regionally-oriented environmental vision without carrying it through to detailed implementation and practice, while New Urbanism presents practical techniques and prescriptions for the development of more sustainable communities without a grounding in a more fundamental environmental vision. Comparing these perspectives of environmentalism together, one can see a complementarity between them; one focused on philosophy and ethic, and one focused on practice. In synthesizing these concepts, we can imagine a way of thinking about planning that integrates environmentalism in philosophy, process, and practice.

And this synthesis of theory and practice - retaining threads of environmentalism from the "big idea" down to the physical practice of planning, can lead to a more comprehensively environmental planning and more environmentally-oriented communities. The shift away from large-scale physical planning, away from visionary ideas, has recently drawn criticism.\textsuperscript{90} The loss of vision and emphasis on process has been accused of being inadequate in the face of the widespread, massive-scale problems facing planning in the 21st C - energy crises, sprawl, and resource crises necessitate inspired, large-scale, visionary solutions.\textsuperscript{91} New Urbanism could present a way forward, and has been shown to contribute to more environmentally oriented-communities through its built form, but grounding these practices in a visionary theory or ethic can offer guidance on ethical behaviour\textsuperscript{92} and coalesce planning principles into a broader idea of a better future. This guidance of behaviour is what New Urbanism seems to lack - though some New Urbanist communities can have a more sustainable ecological footprint,\textsuperscript{93} they have been shown to fail in fostering an environmental consciousness and behaviour.\textsuperscript{94}

Where can this consciousness come from? Human behaviour is incredibly complex, influenced by context, culture and values. These values can come from ethical frameworks, from inspiring visions of a better world and a common good as a basis for urban life. Can we not look to Daniel Burnham's famous quote for encouragement and inspiration? "Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be

\textsuperscript{89} Berke, "Does Sustainable Development Offer a New Direction for Planning?" 21.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 21
\textsuperscript{92} Grant, Planning the Good Community, 13
\textsuperscript{93} Moos, Markus et al. "Does Design Matter," 213
\textsuperscript{94} Hostetter & Youngentob, "Is a New Urban Development Model Building Greener Communities?" 752-753.
realized. Planning needs powerful, large-scale environmental ethics and vision, like the environmental ethic presented in Howard’s Garden City concept, to inspire changes in norms and behaviour to more environmentally-oriented forms. Howard presented an ethical, theoretical environmentalism, while New Urbanism presents an environmentalism of practice. To more potently and comprehensively influence the development of more environmentally-oriented communities, these two perspectives should be linked and synergized. To address sustainable development and re-imagine the city to a more environmental form, planning requires vision, broad ethical frameworks, and imagination that inspire changes in human values and behaviour. The Garden City concept may not be the one to bring forward a new holistic vision for the future of environmental communities, but it represents the kind of "big idea" that can help move the planning profession in a more conceptually and ethically sustainable direction. The planning profession needs theory to inform practice, and practice to implement and realize theory. To inform more environmentally-oriented communities, planning needs the inspiration of environmental ethic and vision to influence values and behaviour, and the pragmatism and realism of practical principles.

Conclusion

Urban sustainability and the creation of more sustainable communities represents an urgent concern for 21st C urban planners. Sustainability is a multifaceted and complex issue, necessitating not only a change in the built form of cities, but the behaviour and values of those that inhabit it. This critical change in thought and behaviour comes not only from the environment that people live, but their cosmologies and ethical value systems. Planning must continue to search for utopian visions, these visions can change peoples minds as much as their built environments, and spark shifts in their values of a good life and a good society. Looking back at past planning movements, we can see how the grand utopian visions of the Garden City contained an environmental ethic and value system, a conceptual perspective of environmentalism. New Urbanism’s practical environmental policy prescriptions present another, contrasting perspective of environmentalism. Linking these together show how a more comprehensive environmental planning discourse and practice can be thought about – the inspirational, value-creating utopian visions synthesized with a pragmatic, practice-driven planning policy to influence more environmentally-oriented communities both in behaviour and built form.

95 Grant, Planning the Good Community. 13.
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