Cultivating Connections:
The Role of Planning in Chittenden County's Local Food Movement

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Synopsis

The primary objective of this paper is to define the current relationship between planning and local food movements and to understand how each could benefit from further integration. In recent decades, social movement theory has undergone minor restructuring, while planning theory has largely transformed, abandoning the traditional rational approach in favor of theories which demand a wider knowledge base. It is argued that the incorporation of this new knowledge, highlighted through the development of new planning roles, has created a new space in which planning and social movements have found common ground. Theory that supports this idea forms the basis for the analysis which is structured around four potential forms for interaction between planning and social movements.

To test this theory, a case study was conducted in Chittenden County, Vermont where there is an established planning system and a developing local food movement. What is discovered is that while there are signs of interaction among planners and the local food movement actors, interaction on the whole is limited. However there are indicators that suggest potential for the relationship between planning and the local food movement to develop further, benefiting both entities. The paper concludes by considering ways in which interaction could be further cultivated.

Foreword

This paper was written for the 10th semester in the Masters of Science program in Urban Planning and Management at Aalborg University. It is the final paper and as such, can be considered a culmination of the concepts and ideas introduced and developed throughout the last two years. Without any constraints as to the topic, I took the opportunity to add a layer to this educational foundation and write about a planning issue that was not fully addressed in the previous semesters and which I find fascinating, that is the urban/rural interface.

I have often felt that the term 'urban planning' does not fully appreciate the cohesive ideology of planning. In using the term urban planning one tends to forget about the rural aspects of society which are inextricably linked to urban life. This paper thus began as an investigation into how rural and urban space could be better integrated. While it has since morphed into a report about food systems planning this idea is still addressed. Nowhere is the relationship between urban and rural more apparent than in food systems planning. This paper can therefore be seen not just as an attempt to integrate planning and the local food system, but as an attempt to highlight the importance of incorporating rural into 'urban planning'.

The Harvard referencing method was used in this project. References in the text are indicated by the author's surname, followed by the year of publication. When referring to a direct quote, the page number is listed after the year.

A special thanks to the eight interviewees who enthusiastically gave their time and perspectives to this project. It was through their stories that this project was brought to life. Thanks also to Andrew Jamison, for agreeing to supervise this project from across the Atlantic Ocean.

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1 Introduction

"The way we shop and eat is inextricably linked to the kind of agriculture and food system we have, and we won't change the one before we change the other." (Pollan 2006)

A restructuring of the food system is not a simple task. The food system is intertwined with all sectors of society, influencing and influenced by local and global economies, food prices, agricultural practices, environmental and human health, and the development of new technologies. Society and culture revolves around food to an extent few can even fathom. Undeniably, changing the food system means changing more than just food production and consumption.

The Need for Change

The question is, why does change need to happen? Why is anyone even trying to change the food system? A recent issue of the Economist magazine offers this reason:

"Because food markets are in turmoil, civil strife is growing; and because trade and openness itself could be undermined, the food crisis of 2008 may become a challenge to globalization" (Economist 2008: 13)

Contrary to being the model project of globalization as it was once considered to be with the green revolution and the promise to feed the world, the dominant global food system today is being blamed by many for the food crisis arising in many parts of the world. This has raised consciousness about the real implications of running a global food system based on multinational corporations. Privatization may be efficient, but efficient at what? Producing higher yields at the cost of using pesticides? Shipping fruit thousands of miles away to be sold at market? Are these accomplishments more important than the overall health and well being of communities? These are some of the questions that people around the world have begun to ask. Like Pollan (2006), many have actively begun to challenge the global food system, initiating a local food movement to bring the focus back to community needs. For example, Shiva (2007), a well known activist and leader of the local food movement states,

"the industrialization and globalization of our food system is dividing us: North-South, producer-consumer, rich-poor. The most significant source of our separation is…the myth that industrial food systems produce more food and hence are necessary to end poverty...small biodiverse organic farms have higher output than large industrial monocultures."(Shiva 2007:4-5)

Bill McKibben, author of Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age, joins the movement from a different angle. His main concern is that food systems technology is not used thoughtfully, causing undue problems. He states, *"Genetically modified agriculture…so nicely illustrates the folly of trying to wave away all sadness with a high-tech wand."(*McKibben 2003:137). While technology is advantageous, he asserts that it is important to realize that technology does not always bring the best solution, citing Bangledeshi farmers who opted to return to their old techniques after pesticides poisoned their fish supply and vitamin deficiencies associated with the green revolution spread throughout the population (McKibben 2003:143).

The Ways of Change

Local food movements have formed to alter the direction in which the global food system is headed. Thousands of organizations have formed and countless individuals have taken part in this movement across the world. Change is visible and has occurred rapidly and successfully by way of protests, education, outreach, and legislative lobbying. However, there is still a lot of work to be

done. Local food movements will continue to grow stronger as these issues become more and more pertinent to the daily lives of individuals around the world. As growing pains arise, local food movements may find an ally in the field of planning.

To change the food system is to change the intricate web of society with which it is intertwined. To do this effectively requires an intimate understanding of the ways in which each change will affect the system as a whole. Professional planners are educated to be able to grasp interrelationships, to understand how one change might affect another and plan ways to best deal with those changes in the future. Planners are devoted to addressing issues of need around human population whether in urban or rural areas. Yet curiously, food, one of the three basic needs of human life, has frequently been left out of the conversation (Pothukuchi & Kaufmann 2000). That said, in recent years the American Planning Association has begun to recognize the need to incorporate food systems into the wider field of planning:

"We all know that food is a basic need. The planning profession, however, has been slow to become a player in food system issues that affect the lives of citizens who live in the communities we work for. Yet we are encouraged by recent signs indicating that interest in becoming more active on this front is increasing among some planners. We are convinced that planners have an important role to play in strengthening local and regional food systems. The time is ripe for the food system to become less of a stranger to the planning field." (APA 2008)

This sparked my curiosity. In what way is planning currently involved in local food movements and to what degree? Could planning help to strengthen and support local food movements which have developed in previous years? How could this be accomplished? These questions form the basis of this project.

1.1 The Larger Context: Planning and Food Systems in the United States

"What we see happening to professional planning is a reflection of what is happening to government in the United States: a loss of public confidence; a paralysis of purpose; an inability to forge a consensus on significant issues; and an ever-stronger belief that progress lies more in short-term, personal fulfillment than in long-term, national goals. Thus the problems of the planning profession serve as a metaphor for the current crisis in government." (Schaffer 1988:3-4)

While planning has rarely had widespread support in the United States, the planning profession has maintained a presence, sometimes strong, more often weak for over a century. As a concept, planning started in Europe, primarily as a reaction to the grim realities of new industrialized cities. One of the first to suggest a broader look at the layout of cities was Ebenezer Howard in Britain. His Garden City concept, introduced in the late nineteenth century during the heart of the industrial revolution, suggested that thoughtful and well planned city development might relieve some of the problems associated with urbanization of the population. A principle component to this plan was improving city dwellers accessibility to areas of food production by capping the size of cities and reserving tracts of land within the city for agricultural purposes. (Howard 1965)

In France around the same time, regionalism as a concept was being introduced in the field of sociology. Fredric Le Play's concept of '*folk, work, and place'* began to link place and geography to the well being of society (Weaver 1984:48). Patrick Geddes expanded on this idea stressing that living conditions would be influenced by the relationship of citizens to the natural environment and the city. These concepts were the main inspiration for Lewis Mumford and the transfer of regionalism to the United States in the early 1900's. (Weaver 1984: 50)

Mumford was one of the first to embrace the idea of planning in the United States and like Howard and Geddes, he was concerned with the mass migration of people to cities and the decline in quality of life. One of Mumford's (1938:374) main concerns was the divide being created between rural and urban life. Mumford's vision was to reverse mass migration resulting in the creation of cities of a grander size than ever before seen, and instead create smaller cities as islands spread throughout a sea of undeveloped land. This would accomplish two things; it would distribute more evenly the wealth of cities and it would

forge stronger connections between urban and rural areas.

Mumford developed a following and his regionalist concepts eventually developed into a regionalist movement (Weaver 1984). The formal representation of the movement was encompassed within the Regional Planning Association of America, established in 1923 by Mumford and other concerned professionals from a wide range of fields including architecture, economics, and forestry. Under this regionalist objective, it could be said that urban planning was closely tied to a social movement. In fact the movement's main objective was to demonstrate the need and benefits of planning in America to counteract the urban/rural disconnect resulting from urbanization and industrialization. Planning *was* the social movement. This connection is significant, as it shows earlier collaboration between two entities which are largely considered to be unrelated today. Even more telling, is the fact that this regionalist movement underlined the importance of people maintaining ties to their food sources.

"Regional planning…must be zealous to keep the countryside as an active, dynamic element in city life, growing food close to the urban market, because fresh foods offer the most nourishment, drawing on the urban population for extra hands at harvest… making the land economically productive…" (Mumford 1945:195)

As much as Mumford's regionalist concept lay in the ideas of social equity and quality of life, this was not destined to become the main role of regionalism. As Schaffer (1988:6) portends, *"American planning has always possessed a bifocal quality. At one level, it is concerned with economic growth- setting the stage for private development and individual prosperity. On another level, it focuses on issues of reform and equity..."*

Since the 1930's it could be argued that regionalism and planning has not been characterized by the social aspects so much as by its potential to be used as an economic stimulus. The Regionalist movement gained enough power to significantly influence federal policy during the Great Depression. Under the New Deal developed by President Roosevelt, planning was used to help reduce the effect of the Great Depression and reverse the problems associated with urbanization. Regional infrastructure networks were built in the spirit of regionalism, if with the more prominent motive of creating jobs and boosting the economy (Fishman 2000:113). Leading regional development through infrastructural networks, however, had an unexpected outcome. As the forties became the fifties, it became clear that this strategy was producing suburban sprawl.

Out of the 1960's, came new theories suggesting that planning could be used to spur growth, as it had in the 30's and 40's, but could do this by supporting or directing the development that was occurring through the free market. Essentially, *"[P]lanning doctrine became an extension of the ideology of multinational capitalism."* (Weaver, 1984:4-5). This short period of support for planning would end abruptly with the economic crisis in the 1970's. A short time after, during the Reagan administration in the 1980's, the United States largely abandoned its faith in government and public planning in favor of privatization (Weaver 1984:104). This remains true today and as is apparent in the weak role of federal planning in the United States. While federal government is often a source of funding, planning structure and law is largely determined on a state by state basis. It is therefore appropriate to further this discussion specifically in terms of how planning is approached in the state of Vermont. This will be addressed in Chapter Four.

Paralleling the American planning experience was the progression of agriculture in the United States. Up until industrialization, food systems were almost exclusively local, and in many cases based on subsistence. Farmers grew enough to eat and perhaps a bit more to sell, a story recognizable around the world. With the onset of industrialization that began to change. People began to move away from rural life and into cities, creating a growing gap between food production and consumers. Agricultural production increased with mechanized equipment supporting this societal change. While there were individuals and groups who worried about the implications of these changes as epitomized by Mumford, a majority embraced these changes, citing them as progress. Thus began a gradual shift from what Lyson (2007:20) terms *civic* agriculture, a traditional community based form of agriculture, to *conventional* large scale agriculture. The bulk of

this change occurred *before* globalization in the 1970's. This is attributable to the fact that it was science and technology, not economics that was the original driving force for agricultural change.

From the 1940's to the 1970's, America stepped firmly into a modernist period where *"Big Science"* reigned and an influential class of *"technocratic modernist[s]… believed in the powers of technology and science to transform human capacities"* (Hård & Jamison 2005:252). Industry, with its clear advancements through the use of technology and science, acted as a working model. This gave Americans reason to believe that the agricultural system could be vastly improved with the same science-based approach. As Lyson writes, the basis of *"conventional/commodity agriculture is experimental biology…the logic of biology dictates that increasing output is the primary goal of scientific agriculture."* (Lyson 2007:20) Many believed whole heartedly in the ability of innovation and technology to cure the world of hunger. This attitude or intention became the basis for the green revolution in the 1960's.

Indeed, scientific advancements such as commercial fertilizers, made it possible to create hybridized high-yielding crops. The ability to grow on a larger-scale and use mono cropping techniques to increase efficiency became a viable option with the development of pesticides and herbicides and their capacity manage pest control on a wide scale. (Scott 1998:270) This decreased the amount of labor needed and also decreased the number of crops grown each year, both of which increased efficiency. With these changes, the success of conventional farming has gradually become reliant on scientific advancement. (Scott 1998:287)

During this same period "*science and technology were directly integrated into economic life.*" (Hård & Jamison 2005:101). However, the government remained intimately involved in the process, acting as a sort of checks and balances component, to ensure that technology did not extend beyond reasonable means and equally to ensure that it was supported enough to effect needed advancements, (Hård & Jamison 2005:253).

Just as planning began to lose government support in the 1960's and 1970's so too did agriculture, however to a different result. Science and technology continued to drive advancements in agriculture from behind laboratory doors. However, the government's role in the process slowly disintegrated. With governmental restructuring under the Reagan administration, private corporations and transnational organizations were given free reign over the structure and direction of the agricultural industry. In recent years food systems decision making power has consolidated into a handful of multinational corporations.

This has resulted in a situation where, "[*f]armers, once the centerpiece of the rural economy, [were] reduced to producers of basic commodities for large agribusiness corporations. (Lyson, 2007:19)* The fact that agriculture is now commonly referred to as an industry, is telling of the strong link that has developed between agriculture and the economy. This is significant in that it further separates agriculture from its traditional community based identity and places emphasis on farming's ability to trade products both nationally and internationally and produce a profit (Scott 1998). To link this back to planning, the traditional farmer could be seen in a similar light to the traditional planner; both abandoned by government and left to interact or compete with private organizations.

The shift in farming from being a largely locally based enterprise, to being an international business is directly in line with the processes of globalization. With new 'place independent' technology being applied to farming, and privatization of the industry, it has been relatively easy to export these new larger centralized farming practices around the world. (Scott, 1998:271) Globalization of the markets has altered the types of crops that are grown to allow for long distance travel. It has changed the methods of seed collection for farmers with the development of seed patents and hybrids. Perhaps most significant, globalization as changed the role of farming in communities and society as a whole. Civic agriculture has been replaced by conventional agriculture as defining production and food systems enterprise.

However, as problems and side effects of a technology and economy driven food system have surfaced, so too has a

movement to rethink the food system. A series of global crises' related to food systems in the 1990's and 2000's has provoked an increase in interest of local food systems in the United States and across the globe leading people to question the once widely accepted and acclaimed agricultural and food systems practices associated with globalization.

Reports of harmful effects of pesticides and excess fertilizer in the environment as well as stories of improperly handled food leading to illness has spurred many citizens to question the safety of their sustenance - provoking increased interest in knowing where their food comes from (Stevenson et al 2007). These concerns date as far back as 1960 with Rachel Carson's book 'Silent Spring' and the beginning of the environmental movement. In it she asks, "*why should we tolerate a diet of weak poisons"* referring to the health risks of pesticide and herbicide use on produce (Carson 1960:12). For McKibben (2003), it is about the implications of genetic modification and knowing when to stop. For others, fears of a limited oil supply starting in 1970's and environmental concerns about global warming in more recent years have given people a greater awareness of the amount of fuel needed to transport foods thousands of miles and leading many to question the sustainability of such a system (Lionette 2007:128). Documented inequalities in accessibility to healthy food and the obesity problem in America have also evoked anger in citizens and a commitment to rethink the system (Mittal, 2000). For Prince Charles (2007:28), a well known advocate of organic food production, a main concern is that *"we are in the process of creating a nutritionally impoverished underclass—a generation which has grown up on highly processed food from intensive agriculture" (*Prince Charles 2007*).* The loss of small farms in communities across the country is yet another occurrence leading people to question the current food system (Kneen 1989:79). Similarly, the consolidation of food systems control into the hands of a few multinational firms has led people to question the level of democracy in the global food system (Shiva 2000).

In these ways and others, local food movements challenge the globalization of food systems and call for a move towards civic-based agriculture. Proponents of local food movements do not argue necessarily for a reversal of the direction of the food system but for a reorientation of the food system to balance economic and social priorities and to find better democratic balance. (Hamm 2007:216) Local food movements can be defined as a network of concerned citizens and organizations joining forces to challenge the current methods of conventional agriculture and global food systems and redirect current policies and development in these sectors toward more local and community based methods that prioritize social welfare and democratic principles.

	Planning	Local Food Movement
1920-1930	Mumford's Regionalism marks start of planning U.S.	Civic Agriculture and Regionalist movement
1940-1970	Rational planning theory defines profession	Technological advancements in food production lead to conventional agriculture
1970-1980	Government based planning loses power with privatization	Economic driven food systems go global
1980-present	New value based planning theories begin to emerge	Local food movements begin to take root as global food system is questioned

Figure 1a. A Timeline of Food Systems and Planning in the United States 1920-present

From this discussion it is important to recognize that the United States has been impacted in many ways by globalization, not least in terms of the structure of food systems and the structure of planning (See Figure 1a. for brief summary). Planning has started to move out from under government structures and its policies which support globalization. As planning and food systems react to globalization, their objectives seem to be aligning once again. The question is in what ways do they align and to what extent do they interact?

1.2 Introducing the Case Study

In order to study this topic, a case study has been chosen in which government planning has a presence and a local food movement is making headway. Chittenden County, in the northwestern corner of the State of Vermont, was chosen for several reasons. (See Figure 1b.) Chittenden County is the most populated

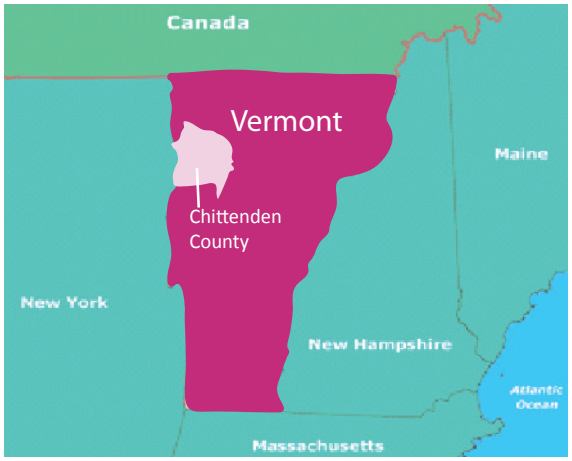


Figure 1b. Vermont and Chittenden County in the Northeastern U.S.

county in the state with circa 150,000 residents (Vital Statistics, 2003:17). It contains the largest city in the state yet maintains a strong connection with a rural tradition that runs deep. The area is widely recognized as having progressive policies in terms of social welfare, the environment and not least, local food. Chittenden County also has an established regional planning commission as well as municipal planning commissions for each of the nineteen municipalities contained within the county's borders. A more in-depth historic and contemporary assessment of Chittenden County and Vermont will be given in Chapter Four, Contextual Foundation.

1.3 Problem Formulation

The aim of this paper is to look more closely at the tensions or connections between planning and local food movements. The ways and extent to which the two entities currently interact will be identified and evaluated based on contemporary planning and social movement theory. Mapping out existing interaction will provide insight into the nature of the relationship. It is a further objective of this paper to investigate methods which could be used to strengthen relations and, by doing so, create a more cohesive food system.

In order to accomplish this, four questions will be considered. The main question to be addressed is:

In what capacity is planning involved in the local food movement in Chittenden County and what would improve the nature of this relationship?

This question will be addressed through response to the following three sub-questions:

To what extent has space been created to allow for interaction between planners and local food movement actors in Chittenden County?

This question attempts to investigate how changes to planning and the local food movement in recent decades may have led to new possibilities for interaction. This relates to the change in types of knowledge used on the part of planning and to the change in planning roles.

In what capacity does the planner interact with the local food movement in Chittenden County?

This question will be answered where practice and theory meet. Mapping out the various ways in which interaction does occur will provide a good indication of the extent of interaction as well as give a clear view of the status quo, or jumping off point, for further improvements

What improvements could be made to enable more effective collaboration between planning and the local food movement in Chittenden County?

This final sub-question attempts to provide a next step as to how the relationship between planning and local food movements could be improved and made more effective. This question will be answered by reflecting on the empirical findings, considering suggestions for improvements on the part of the interviewees, and bringing in outside examples where planning and local food movements have been linked.

2 Methods

2.1 A Case Study Approach

This project was formed around a desire to better understand how planning and local food movements could benefit from conscious integration. As a contemporary problem with a social nature, this project was carried out as a case study as defined by Yin (1994). In his words, *"a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context."* (Yin 1994:13)

Chittenden County in Vermont was chosen as the focus of the case study for several reasons. Local food systems require both a population and a land base large enough to support agricultural production. This combination is frequently common in areas where a large urban population is located in proximity to rural areas. As the largest population in Vermont in an otherwise rural state, the city of Burlington seemed to be a logical place to study local food systems and planning. However, because both urban and rural aspects must be considered equally to fully understand the nature of local food systems, and because Burlington in itself lacks a substantial agricultural land base, it was more appropriate to study Chittenden County, the county within which Burlington is situated, as a whole. Furthermore, Chittenden County has well established municipal and regional planning bodies which could be evaluated in terms of their involvement with local food issues and a developing local food movement.

This case study is a single, exploratory case study, with its unit of analysis being the relationship between local food movement actors and planners in Chittenden County. Two sub-studies of the analysis include the role of planners and the role of local food movement actors in Chittenden County and the forms of knowledge used in those roles. This can be considered an exploratory case because of its focus on trying to understand how two entities relate in a relatively new and undeveloped context.

Due to its case study structure, the conclusions derived from this report are unique to Chittenden County. Clearly, any other case will have its own unique traits and characteristics to consider. Local food movements and planning structure will be shaped by these traits and for that reason the conclusions found here are not directly transferable to other cases. That said, these findings are not entirely exclusive to this case. If nothing else they bring up issues which are likely to be similar in other areas. This case is therefore an example to take from and to learn from in general terms.

2.2 Course of Action

After choosing the topic, initial research on the subject and on several possible case studies was done in order to narrow down the focus of the report. At the same time a theoretical literature review was conducted pulling together the work of various prominent theorists in both the planning and social movement fields. Theory was then used as the measuring stick for the empirical analysis. The analysis pulled together several sources of evidence and compared it with the theory resulting in the final conclusions of the report. The sources used are discussed below.

2.3 Sources

Several sources of data were used to answer the problem formulation. This is common and vital for case studies, because as Yin (1994: 92) states *"multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon".* In accordance with this notion, this case study has attempted to use several different sources. Theories, documents and interviews

are all used to write this report. Interviews were particularly important for this project due to the focus on interaction between planning and social movement actors.

Figure 2a. Multiple Sources Used

Literature Review

Once the case study was chosen, a literature review was conducted to develop a clearer understanding of the topic at hand on both a theoretical and a practical level. On a more practical level the literature review was used to place the case study in its broader context, both historically and currently. Historically speaking, research was conducted to better understand how planning has slowly developed and evolved in the United States and Vermont thus influencing the nature of planning today. Similarly, the history of Vermont was looked at in light of its food and agricultural history in an attempt to unveil historical perspective on the current situation. With a historical context in place, Vermont Planning Laws, Surveys, and Census data were then reviewed and combined to paint a picture of the current planning situation, as well as an idea of the status of the local food movement in Chittenden County.

A literature review was also the primary method used for gaining a theoretical understanding of both social movements and planning. Theories of Sandercock (1998), Friedmann (1973) and Forester (1989), among others were used to grasp the changing notions of planning and the roles of planners in recent decades. A theoretical literature review also helped to grasp the changing definition of knowledge in planning which has largely influenced the development of new planning roles. Likewise, theories of Eyerman & Jamison (1991), Jamison (2004), Melucci (1990) and Stevenson et al. (2007), and others were used to understand the nature of social movements and the role of social movement actors in contemporary society.

Plans

Planning law together with municipal and regional plans were used in this project primarily to gain an understanding for the basic legal structure within which planners are obliged to work, as well as uncover the broader intentions of planning, that is to say, how planners see their positions or roles in contemporary society. The two main plans considered and used throughout the project are as follows:

- **Act 200, Vermont municipal and regional planning and Development Act**. (Act 200 1988; 2007) This Act forms the foundation for both municipal and regional planning in Vermont.
- **Chittenden County Strategic Plan**. (Strategic Plan 2007) This plan gives insight into the values or strategies that the CCRPC holds which shape and influence regional plans.

Interviews

The interviews conducted for this report were semi-structured and open-ended, giving interviewees some guidance but allowing for flexibility in the topics covered. Each of the eight interviews lasted between half an hour to two hours. All were willing and accommodating subjects. Each interviewee was picked for the unique perspective they could give on the relationship between local food movements and planning. They attempt to cover the wide spectrum of both planning and local food systems. For this reason, professional planners from both local, and regional levels were chosen, as well as a commissioner with experience on a state and national level as well. Within local food movements, a farmer on the production side, experts from non profits with varying focuses from agricultural land use to school food were chosen, along with a government/community hybrid office working specifically to connect food systems organizations. These interviews were an invaluable way to gain insight into the relationships between planners and local food actors in Chittenden County. As the aim of this project is about understanding social relationships, interviews of actors involved give a practical and targeted perspective on the chosen topic of

study. This also has helped to give this project relevance beyond academia.

2.4 Delimitations

This project only begins to cover the activity of the local food movement in Chittenden County. Due to time and resource constraints, countless organizations working to promote the local food system were unable to be included in this report. To offset the limits of a small sample of actors, interviewees were selected across a broad spectrum to represent the wide ranging field of food systems. Interviewees represented production, distribution, as well as policy angles.

Likewise, planning was represented by both municipal and regional planners and by a regional planning commissioner. This project focused to a greater extent on the regional planning level including municipal planning to the extent that it related to the work of the regional planning level or to the movement itself. This is was intentional in that regional planning, by virtue of its role in connecting rural and urban landscapes, is in a better position both historically and currently, to encompass the needs of local food systems. That said local planning could have a great impact on local food, as local food movements have often started at the municipal level. The role of municipal planning in local food movements therefore merits further investigation.

It is important to note that with a relatively new concept like local food movements, and even more so in considering the relationship between local food movements and planning, more emphasis than might be expected with a more established concept has been placed on the what might be called popular literature. Popular literature, for example bestselling author Michael Pollan's New York Times Blog (2006) and McKibben's (2003) book, Enough, have proved useful in understanding the terms of local food movements today. However, it is duly noted that these books are themselves a method for mobilizing local food movements and may be biased. The use of information gathered from these sources was therefore limited primarily to defining the context.

2.5 Structure of the Report

1	Introduction Identifies the need for this project and gives an overview of the aims, strategies, and problem formulation
2	Methods Describes the course of action, data sources and delimitations of the project
3	Theory The main concepts of the project are established through a literary review. Planning theory and Social Movement theory are considered in terms of their approaches to knowledge and how knowledge shapes planning and social movement roles.
4	Contextual Foundation Introduces the case study and places it within its historical and geographical context. Describes Vermont and Chittenden County today
5	Perspectives Introduces the Interviewees and their organization by providing a space for them to tell about their own experiences with planning and the local food movement in their own words.
6	Analysis Analyzes the current interaction of planning and local food movements in Chittenden County using theory as a measuring stick.
7	Findings and Implications Summarizes the findings of the Analysis by answering sub-questions one and two. Brings to the surface the wider issues and discusses the greater implications.
8	Enabling Integration Answers the third sub-question and considers the steps for further strengthening the relationship between planning and the local food movement in Chittenden County.
9	Conclusion Concludes the report as a whole by answering the main question of the problem formulation

Figure 2b. Overall Structure of the Report

3 Theory

3.1 Understanding Social Movements

*"When society assumes responsibility for its own issues, demands and conflicts, it subjects them openly to negotiation and to decisions, and transforms them into possibilities of change. It thereby makes possible a democracy of everyday life, without either annulling the specificity and the independence of the movements or concealing the use of power behind allegedly neutral decision-making procedures."(*Melucci 1990:4)

Social movements come out of a discontentment with the direction in which society is being taken and by the concentration of power and decision-making which determines that direction. Social movements provide citizens with a way to take matters into their own hands and *"affirm themselves and to be recognized for what they are or wish to be"* when government or other political powers prove to be ineffective or contrary in their actions (Melucci 1990:1). Jamison (2001:40) uses the term *"redirection"* to describe the role of social movements in society. This connects action with an understanding of the status quo by implying a current dominant trend in society and an attempt to proactively reorient it. For a working definition of social movements, Eyerman & Jamison (1991:4) offer this: *"social movements are temporary public spaces, as moments of collective creation that provide societies with ideas, identities and even ideals"*.

Yet society is not made up of two opposing sides, every individual comes with a unique perspective and opinion concerning the best direction for society. How, then, is it that citizens come to stand under one movement, unified with regards to taking a new direction in society? How does one cause gain enough strength to transform collective action into a social movement?

To fully explore these questions, it is important to explore the nature of social movements. Della Porta & Diani (2006:73) contend that social movements can be viewed as the *"unceasing production and reproduction of cultural codes*." This suggests that rather than considering social movement as a new direction for society, it is more aptly considered a process through which citizens can debate the best direction for society. This idea of social movements as space for debate or for process fits well with Eyerman & Jamison's (1991:3) view of social movements as a *"breeding ground for innovations in thought as well as in the social organization of thought."* According to them, social movements are key to the formation and development of new ideas or knowledge-making. Eyerman & Jamison (1991: 55) think of *"social movements as producers of knowledge*" and contend that *"it is precisely in the creation, articulation, formulation of new thoughts and ideas – new knowledge – that a social movement defines itself in society.*" Making a similar observation, Friedmann (1973:26), inspired by German sociologist Karl Mannheim, points to the making of knowledge as the key to understanding social movements. He states, *"[C]onnections between perspectives and social positions-the study of which forms the subject matter of the sociology of knowledge-were part of a fundamental explanation of how social changes come about and history is made* (Friedmann 1973:26). If this is true, it is only through understanding types of knowledge used, that social movements and their capacity to provoke collective action can really be understood.

3.2 Knowledge in Social Movements

Social movements are often created as a space for introducing new forms of knowledge into established systems and challenging existing forms of knowledge. Critical to the success of social movements is the ability to create open and accessible debate. Social movements cannot happen without a critical mass of

individuals, institutions and organizations which are invested in the cause. This, according to Eyerman & Jamison (1991:57) is because, *"Looking at social movements as cognitive praxis means seeing knowledge creation as a collective process."* In order to attain that level of support, everyone must relate to and have the option of being included in the debate, because as Eyerman & Jamison (1991) see it, *"Knowledge is…the product of a series of social encounters, within movements, between movements and even more importantly perhaps, between movements and their established opponents."* (Eyerman & Jamison 1991:57)

This idea is related to the concept of discourse. Discourse as defined by Hajer (2005:175) is *"an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices".* Discourse, to be clear, can be considered as both a process and as more specific lineages of thought.

As a process of communication and assimilation, discourse brings people together casually. It is within this process space that people are given an opportunity to develop new knowledge, combine it and rework it. It is important to point out the subjective nature of discourse. While facts may support any line of argument, the direction a discourse may take or the power it gains has as much to do with people's interpretations of the situation and how they can relate to it in their daily lives.

Hård & Jamison (2005:76) suggest that discourse is a precursor to mobilization and movements. These informal meetings can lead to dominant ideas becoming part of a more organized or institutionalized process. However, as Hajer (2005) points out, there is also a risk that competing discourses will lead to fragmentation of society, weakening the potential of mobilizing or carrying a movement that stands behind that cause.

Within this process of discourse, a wide range of participants bring an equally wide range of knowledges. These different forms of knowledge are bounced around to create new forms of knowledge, forming the basis for a social movement. It is therefore important to consider more specifically these types of knowledge and understand how they combine to mobilize movement. Eyerman & Jamison (1991), in particular, have developed three dimensions of cognitive praxis which describe the types of knowledge used to mobilize social movements. These include cosmological, technological and organizational dimensions.

The cosmological dimension includes "*common worldview assumptions*" that are generally accepted and create a foundation of knowledge in society. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991:68) These 'attitudes' can limit or frame a discussion, much like a dominant discourse. Unlike a dominant discourse, it is more deeply grounded in history and has lasting power which few discourses can claim. The translation of rising ideas into a common language enables concepts to develop from ideas into actions.

The technological dimension substantiates a movement in both fact and practical application showing the limits to existing systems in society and providing alternatives. This dimension gives citizens the opportunity to use their own personal or technical knowledge to find innovative and practical applications of more ephemeral movement ideas. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991) This, in some ways is relatable to Stevenson et al.'s (2007:35) observation that a movement must have 'empirical credibility' before it can mobilize. In other words, the larger concepts which drive the movement must be grounded in reality by factual evidence and practical applications.

The third dimension, organizational, relates to the structural organization of movements, or more specifically, their communicative nature. This has less to do with the type of knowledge than with the beneficiaries of that knowledge. Movements create space for knowledge to flow between people and are therefore used as a way to reach citizens. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991) Chesters & Welsh (2005) concur that personal connection is critical to gain enough support to mobilize a movement. They believe that this might be accomplished by *"maximiz[ing] the degree of fit between daily personal acts…and desired social, political and cultural change"* (Chesters & Welsh 2005: 198). Stevenson et al. (2007: 36), considers "*experiential resonance*" as a requirement for ideas to translate into action.

People must be able to relate to movement concepts in the course of their day to day lives in order to be compelled to support the movement. Jamison (2001:168) terms this *'personal environmentalism'* as he talks about personal connection to the environmental movement. Applying the same concept more generally to all movements is Melucci (1990) who believes in the importance of *"connecting daily action with the larger movement" (Melucci 1990:3)*

More than just reaching citizens and gaining critical support, social movements can be seen as an outlet for individuals in society to express their own opinions. In that respect, civil society also contributes to the creation of knowledge. Social movements value this personal or experiential knowledge which might derive from within Eyerman & Jamison's (1991) organizational dimension.

3.3 Network Based Activism

"in the contemporary world social movements are perhaps best seen not as organizations but as networks, which are not as firmly or coherently coordinated as social movement organizations tend to be". (Jamison 2001:12)

This network structure is characteristic of 'complex systems', a term Melucci (1990:2) uses to describe social movements. A key characteristic of these networks is their tendency to be horizontally structured. Vertical hierarchies are no doubt present and still carry influence but are generally seen as having less importance than they may once have had. According to Chesters and Welsh (2005:196), the groups which form these networks tend to be made up of *"…large numbers of interacting individuals, groups and movements, constituting an open system that adapts to its environment..."* Within this informal system, actors *"lack large-scale institutions, permanent buildings, workers or pension funds*." (Chesters & Welsh 2005:198)

In contrast to this informal description of social movements, is what Jamison (2001) refers to as professional activism. One of four forms of activism with which he describes the environmental movement, professional activism highlights a wide range of organizations dedicated social change. These organizations tend to have permanent staff members and use professional expertise to make their cases. This more organized and stable form of activism is a departure from movements in the 1960's and 1970's precisely *because* of its greater stability. (Jamison 2001:161). Professional activists include a wide range of non-governmental organizations, *"think tanks…universities, intergovernmental agencies [and] research and consulting firms"* (Jamison 2001:161). Jamison's (2001) three other categories of activism include community, militant, and personal. Community activism grows out of strong democratic principles and uses empirical knowledge to promote change at a community level. Militant activism, like personal, is based on morals and ethics but tends to occur outside of mainstream culture, while personal activism happens on a more individual level, incorporating the movement into daily life.

3.4 Contemporary Roles of Social Movement Actors

The complexity and range of social movements today requires flexibility and a wide range of actors with an even wider range of talents. The social movement actor cannot be classified in one category but has many diverse roles to fulfill to ensure the success of the movement. While some roles correspond to specific points in the life cycle of a movement, others are required throughout. One actor might therefore take on several roles, or overlap with another actor. This flexibility could be considered a strength because the complexity of movements require different forms of action at different stages. However, it could also be considered a weakness due to the blurred boundaries of roles and the lack of organization.

Initiators

According to Melucci (1990:2), "*Collective mobilization and protest opens the discussion of ends revealing non-negotiable needs and creating an area of debate in which the presumed neutrality of means is thrown into question"*. Here, Melucci (1990) alludes to the need to understand how conditions are affecting society currently and will affect society in the future. He argues that mobilization must happen in order for the movement

to be initiated. This requires actors who are willing to question openly, even in the face of controversy, the prevailing system. Stevenson *et al.* (2007) see a similar need for actors who are willing to react to current societal trends and conditions. This can occur by way of protests or through legislative work. It is through this work that citizens or political groups may first be introduced to a movement and see cause for joining the effort. Indeed, this actor's most vital role is to attract followers to the cause. (Stevenson *et al.* 2007).

Translators/interpretors

Going further than just reacting, social movements must also have a proactive component in order to succeed. This proactive side necessitates what Jamison (2001:12) calls, *"…the articulation of new scenarios for the future…"* There is a need for actors within the movement to begin to suggest alternatives for the future, giving direction and goals to the movement. Translators or interpreters give movements strength by *"combin[ing] ideas from different academic disciplines or fields of knowledge" (Jamison 2004:31),* and shaping them into new and useable hybrids. In addition to contributing new forms of knowledge these actors act as translators of complex ideas into more common language which can reach greater numbers and inspire action.

Brokers

In a more commercial vein brokers, as termed by Jamison (2004), attempt to creatively bring movements into the established market, in effect changing the system from within. These actors are, in essence, entrepreneurs. Their most valuable skills "are in the arts of simplifying and operationalizing complex ideas. This works to effectively bring the movement to a wider public, allowing them to indirectly support the movement through the market. This idea is also clearly expressed in Stevenson's et al.'s (2007:44) role of the builder, which in their terms "*most fully express[es] the reconstruction orientation to change.*" through predominantly entrepreneurial methods. The builder proactively tries to find more favorable solutions to the problem addressed as well as realistic ways to implement those solutions. This actor can work at multiple levels, from efforts to change policy at the national level, to local initiatives. (Stevenson *et al.* 2007) Brokers can be related to technical dimension of knowledge making. (Jamison 2001)

Mediators/Facilitators

The mediator's primary objective is that of building consensus. This is can be accomplished through the organization of forums where different actors can meet and transfer ideas. This role is similar to the role of networkers in that they bring people together to exchange ideas. The mediator however, attempts to increase participation in discussion by providing open and welcoming spaces in which to debate with the added goal of establishing consensus and mutual understanding. The facilitator by comparison is also in the business of "*bridging social capital*" but focuses primarily on a more organizational and institutional level (Jamison 2004). Existing organizations and institutions currently working on similar projects are brought together by the facilitator to promote synergy and collaboration thereby avoiding overlap and work done at cross purposes. Such facilitation could be done across both horizontal and vertical networks. This role requires *"organizational skills and social competence along with a wide range of experiences from working in different settings"* (Jamison 2004:32)

Horizontal and Vertical Networkers

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges for social movements today is to connect the *"increasingly disparate movements, networks, campaigns and alliances"* (Jamison 2001:164). To accomplish this there is a need for actors which can make connections between the groups that compose movements. With a large number of entities comprising movement work it can be difficult to grasp these complicated networks of organizations and individuals.

In horizontally structured networks which lack clear leaders, a high level of collaboration is required in order to realize a cohesive movement. Actors which can effectively connect organizations and encourage collaboration are needed. These actors can help to unify and thereby strengthen movements. They can also facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences (Jamison 2004).

Another term for this is weaver, as developed by Stevenson et al. (2007). In their view, the horizontal weaver's main focus is to create networks and promote collaboration between diverse organizations and entities involved in the movement. Outreach and organizing are key components of a weaver's role. Weavers can be organizations within the system which reach out to work and collaborate with other similar organizations or they can be outside entities which focus on bringing a collection of organizations together.

Weavers can also work on a vertical plane to make *"strategic connections between structural, geographic or analytical levels. They strategically enlarge the spatial or institutional scope in which contested issues are negotiated."* (Stevenson et al. 2007:47). Vertical networkers are less frequent, unsurprisingly considering the dominant network structure of movements today. Nonetheless they can play a vital role by expanding ideas into new territories. This is particularly important for introducing ideas in policy and moving from mobilization to institutionalization (Jamison 2004).

These roles and the knowledge which forms the basis for these roles, indicate the degree to which social movements embrace and support a wide and diverse population. Indeed it is the very nature of social movements to welcome many forms of knowledge and utilize the many talents of participants. More than just welcoming it is important to note that this inclusion is necessary if social movements are to be successful in the long run.

3.5 Knowledge in Rational Planning

Unlike social movements, planning has not embraced this wide range of knowledge nor has it ventured far from its professional role, until recently. Since its inception and up through the 1970's, urban planning was defined by comprehensive ideals (Pacione 2005). Comprehensive and rational planning carried the ideals of enlightenment, science and rationality at their core. Sandercock (1998) states that modernist planning believed "*that politics…was essentially irrational, and needed to be guided by the detached reason of planners"* (1998:26). Sandercock developed 'five pillars' of rational planning wisdom, which together, clearly illustrate the dominant paradigm of post-war planning education.

The first pillar of rational planning asserts that planning was "*concerned with making public/political decisions more rational*" (Sandercock 1998:27). Rationality was a conception of science and theory, grounded in logic, and uninfluenced by emotion. In rational planning "*means are separated from end" (*Schön (1982:352). In other words, no planning was situationally dependent, the best solution, would remain the best solution irrespective of the problem to which it was applied. The second pillar suggests that "*Planning is most effective when it is comprehensive."* (Sandercock 1998:27) Third, planning is science and art, but emphasis is placed on science. Planning knowledge came out of the school of positivist science, where knowledge was based on objective research. This idea is corroborated by Lindblom (1959) who declared that values had no place in planning under this rational logic. Technical expertise and the use of models and data, it was believed, would determine the best solution. The fourth pillar describes planning as part of state-directed futures, where there exists a separation between "*progressive, reformist tendencies"* of the state and the economy. (Sandercock 1998:27) This is perhaps the most telling of all the pillars, considering the subsequent fall of rational planning in part due to a newfound relationship between state and economy in the form of privatization. Lastly, the fifth pillar of rational planning describes planning as being in the public interest and therefore a "planners' education privileges them in being able to identify what that interest is. *"Faith in [objectivity] enabled planners to claim that their expertise transcended specific interests and gave them privileged information about what was, or was not, in the 'the public interest'. (Sandercock 1998:26)* Hence, professional planners could objectively determine what was best for society without the need to consult with society.

In this era, rational planning, based on these five pillars, depended almost exclusively on expert or professional knowledge, an objective form of knowledge attainable only through professional planning education and development. Logical, rational thought alone, from the point of view of this generation of planners,

could result in the best formulated solutions possible.

3.6 Connecting Rational Planning and Social Movements

If knowledge is a reasonable indicator of ideology, it becomes evident that rational planning and social movements had little in common and may have been at odds. Interaction between planning and social movements during this era was at best non-existent and at worst defined by tensions. This can be attributed to two circumstances; clashing ideologies, and divergent or opposing objectives.

The differences in ideology between rational planning and social movements become clear from comparing the types of knowledge each considered to be valid. Planning on the one hand, grounded in scientific rationalism did little to look beyond the confines of mathematical equations and logic. With this frame of mind, there was no need to consult the general public for which plans were conceived. Planners made little attempt to reach out, thereby limiting the possibility for cooperation. By comparison, social movements grew out of the idea that the public should not only be heard, but be active in shaping a societal movement, *precisely because* it was the public which would be affected. This is not to say that social movements have not used scientific knowledge. They have and, as is suggested by Eyerman & Jamison's (1991) 'technological dimension', it is key to mobilizing a social movement. The difference is that scientific knowledge for social movements was one of several types of knowledge accepted and applied. Knowledge based on experience is equally if not more important than factual knowledge to a social movement (Eyerman & Jamison (1991); Stevenson et al. (2007); Chesters & Welsh (1995)). Social movements, in emphasizing the role of experiential knowledge place trust in the knowledge of the public, a concept that is foreign to the rational comprehensive planner. These clashing presumptions concerning knowledge left little room for cooperation, likely because there was no common ground on which to build.

Planners in this era believed in the rational approach to planning as being in the best possible interest of the public, and used that approach with the best intentions for civil society. Yet, while they may have been working for the whole of society, society has tended to see planners as working for politicians and government. This perception, perhaps more than the actual work being done by the planner may have been the main cause for lack of cooperation between planners and social movements.

Indeed, the main opponent to social movements throughout history has frequently been the government, or more specifically the policies created and sustained by the government. The perception of politicians as "*power-hungry",* led to the idea that citizens should keep them in check by controlling or influencing decision-making processes directly (Sehested 2006:11). Planners, situated within government, deserving or not, were regarded as being on the side of the government. A classic tension was created.

This tension seems to linger. As Chesters & Welsh (2005:198) concede, many organizations taking part in such movements continue to *"regard…the existing political system as part of the problem not part of the solution."* This has created a barrier between planning and movement work, automatically limiting the possibilities for collaboration. In order for any cooperation to occur, it is likely this barrier will first have to be addressed, and cooperation between government and social movements is necessary if the ideas born by social movements are to have any chance of being institutionalized. The first step to increased cooperation is removing the root of the tension and in recent years planning has largely accomplished this goal by reinventing itself.

3.7 The Tide Turns: New Knowledge in Planning

"…rationality is no longer linear and stable, emanating from a central and all-knowing intelligence. And the planning of the future must adapt its style to this reality." (Friedmann 1973:98).

Newer planning theory recognizes governance as both a challenge for the planning profession, and as a possible opportunity to regain influence. As Sanyal (2000:325) says, *"the criticism of rational comprehensive planning was beneficial in that it helped*

the profession outgrow its naïve technocratic self-image." This regrouping has produced a wide variety of new planning theories. Sandercock (1998) contends that before planning theory can grow and adapt to the needs of the surrounding world, new forms of knowledge must first be accepted and embraced. To do so, she suggests starting by reconsidering what types of knowledge are valid and determining who possesses such knowledge.

Friedmann (1973:21) attempts to answer similar questions about knowledge in planning with his theory of transactive planning. He considers planning to be the "*use of knowledge in action*" as it relates to society and therefore asserts that planning must *"possess relevant knowledge of society"* (Friedmann 1973:98). He suggests that there are two kinds of knowledge, processed and personal. Processed knowledge accurately describes the forms of knowledge accepted under rational planning. Based on technical rationality and facts, this knowledge was useful, but not in and of itself. By the same token, he felt that personal knowledge which comes from experience is useful in that it connects knowledge to reality but by itself holds biases that are difficult to break down. His solution was therefore finding space in which to connect the two through communication. (Friedmann 1973:111) In his own words, "*The transactive relationship between planner and client… crucial to establishing effective links between knowledge and organized action [is] a process of mutual learning.* (Friedmann 1973:21) In adding personal knowledge, Friedmann (1973) added value to the planning process, a clear departure from the rational view. Likewise, 'means and ends' which were previously disconnected become linked making a stronger connection between models and reality as well as planning and implementation.

Forester (1998) like Friedmann (1973) came up with three new forms of knowledge that would help to enrich the field of planning. These include self-reflection, to uncover personal biases affecting the way a situation is seen; emancipatory knowledge through discourse; and experiential knowledge that comes through praxis. Experiential knowledge closely relates to Friedmann's personal knowledge. (Sandercock 1998)

More recently, Sandercock (1998), criticizing the continued resistance to entirely break free from rational planning has attempted to open up planning to all potential forms of knowledge.

"*The social sciences have been dominated by a positivist epistemology which privileges scientific and technical knowledge over an array of equally important alternatives-experiential, intuitive, local knowledges, knowledges based on practices of talking, listening, seeing, contemplating, sharing…rather than in quantitative or analytical modes based on technical jargons that by definition exclude those without professional training. We need to acknowledge many ways of knowing that exist in culturally diverse populations, and to discern which are the most useful and in what circumstances"* (Sandercock 1998:5)

All three of these theorists, Friedmann (1973), Forester and Sandercock (1998), recognize that effective planning cannot be conducted in isolation from society and citizens for which plans are made. More importantly, they recognize that non-professionals or citizens have valuable knowledge and experience to contribute. It becomes evident that there are myriad types of knowledge which are now seen as valid for use and could prove useful in planning.

3.8 Contemporary Roles in Planning

With this dramatically widened perspective of what constitutes valid knowledge it becomes necessary to understand what planners can do to incorporate this knowledge into the planning process. What is the new role of the planner? Several theorists, all of which subscribe to this expanded view of knowledge, offer their visions of the contemporary planner's role.

Communicator

The main component of Friedmann's (1973) transactive planning is dialogue, and it is the planner's role to facilitate 'mutual learning'. This must happen through conscious and increased levels of communication. This requires the parties involved to have confidence in one another and the ability to listen. It also requires an understanding of processes that can maintain

or change the system, in order to be able to incorporate new information. The very nature of planning with its *"community oriented and interdisciplinary perspectives"* puts the field in an ideal position to be able to decipher, organize and link related fields and people within those fields. (Pothukuchi & Kaufmann 2000:7)

Facilitator

For Sandercock (1998) the primary role of planners within the context of new planning theory is to ensure a high degree of community involvement. Sandercock leaves out no one in her definition of community, stressing the need for the inclusion of chronically under represented communities and minorities. In order for them to be heard and become part of decision-making processes planners must make a conscious effort at outreach, and create spaces where participation is open and welcomed. As facilitators of these events, planners can be part of the solution in minimizing the degrees of polarization between minority and elite populations.

Healey (1992), a planning theorist closely tied to Habermas, acknowledges the importance of opening planning to new forms of knowledge. *"Systematized, rationally grounded knowledge is now understood to be only one among several knowledge forms." (Healey 1992:9).* She contributes to this transformation with her theory of communicative planning. The basis of communicative planning is for planners to take on a facilitative role, encouraging the involvement of different stakeholders, from both public and private sectors, in the planning process. By means of facilitation and consensus building, planners work to enable and empower citizens to work out their own conflicts (Christensen 1985). By involving all stakeholders and community members planners can ensure the creation of better plans and optimize the implementation stage (Campbell & Fainstein 2003:10).

Technician

While stressing the importance of dialogue and personal knowledge, Friedmann (1973) is careful to point out that there is still value to be gained from planners retaining their roles as technicians. Contributing processed knowledge and more scientific or model based information, a remnant of rational planning remains in Friedmann's (1973) eyes, a valid and useful source of knowledge. Healey (1992), too, is careful to acknowledge the continued importance of this rationally based planning role. She identifies planners as information gatherers and strategy developers in addition to facilitators. It is through this medium that planners have the potentially powerful role of influencing and in some cases even setting agendas. One of these ways is through research and compilation of data that would identify needs in the community. Pothukuchi & Kaufmann (2000) theorize that this work could help convince social actors and politicians alike to act to improve the situation.

Collaborator

Sehested (2006), another key theorist in the development of new planning roles points to interactive planning, emphasizing and promoting citizen participation through *"collaboration and dialogue"* among actors, and *"coordination and communication between many projects and networks"* (Sehested 2006:6). Additionally she sees future planners as also aiding in the management of networks and the development of goals *(Sehested 2006:2).*

Advocate

In its original form, Davidoff's advocacy planning was meant to represent disadvantaged populations and *"was generally seen as being in opposition to the organized and institutionalized forces of government and planning, and therefore requiring separate community based institutions for its legitimacy."* (Tietz, 2000:293) In a more updated form of advocacy planning, the intent remains true, while the methods may be less radical. Sehested (2006) looks at planning through the lens of democracy. If what she asserts is true, namely that it is no longer effective to approach planning from a rational perspective, and a role as a market driven planner is warned against, the alternative for the planner is to provide a *"democratizing role"*(Sehested 2006:2). One developing role in planning seems to be ensuring fair decision-making processes. In other words, planners now frequently represent community

groups and underrepresented organizations, often the same groups pushing for social change through movements. This should come as no surprise considering that the planner's main objective, according to Klosterman (1985:93), is to "*represent the shared interests of the community, coordinate the actions of individuals and groups, and consider the long term effects of current actions.*"

Mediator

The responsibility of planners to represent the wider interests of the public in decision-making processes may be even greater under governance as the private sector gains more power. That said, it is important to remember that planners and the planning process, even under the new system of governance remain inextricably linked to the political process and government direction. Planners must recognize that they can only accomplish objectives with the support of political power. While this could be seen as a detriment to ensuring more democratic and transparent decision making processes, it is also possible that it could be the key to installing a "network democracy". (Sehested 2006:12) Planners are situated in a central and potentially mediating role and therefore *"could contribute to creating opportunity so that the relationship between the represented and the representative becomes as close as possible, thereby providing broader democratic basis for opinions and interests."(Sehested 2006:13).* Pothukuchi & Kaufmann (2000:8) support this recognizing the ability of planners to affect change indirectly through policy influence and more directly with zoning and development regulations.

3.9 New Possibilities for Synthesis of Planning and Social Movements

While the task has often fallen to social movements to create new spaces for interaction and idea exchange, this time it may

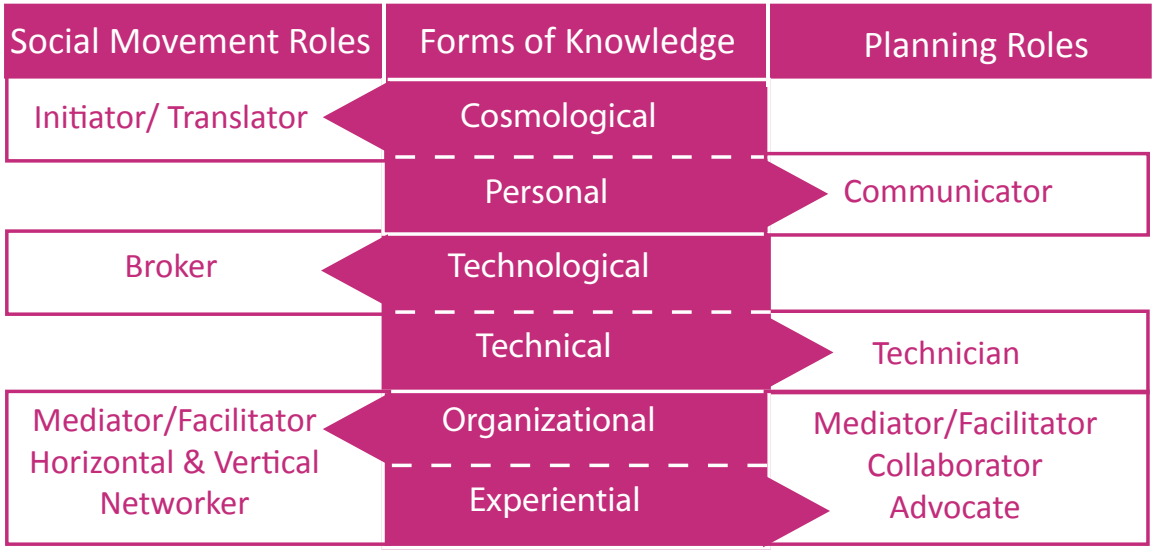


Figure 3a. Forms of knowledge and corresponding planning and social movement roles

be planning which has created a new space. Recognition of the worth of various types of knowledge, previously discarded as invalid, and a conscious application of these forms of knowledge to problem solving has opened up a space in which a common language and understanding between social movements and planning could develop. (Friedmann (1973); Sandercock (1998). This new cooperative space can be actively identified through a closer look at the emergence of new and diverse roles played by planners. These roles, when compared with those of movement actors (see figure 3a.) seem to suggest room for cooperation or integration. Planning and social movements also are moving closer together in terms of objectives. As planning searches for a new identity, it seems to be moving away from government and towards civil society in the interest of promoting more balanced decision making. This new purpose for planning seems to align with the objectives of social movements, namely bringing the focus of policy closer to the visions of civil society. (Sehested 2006.)

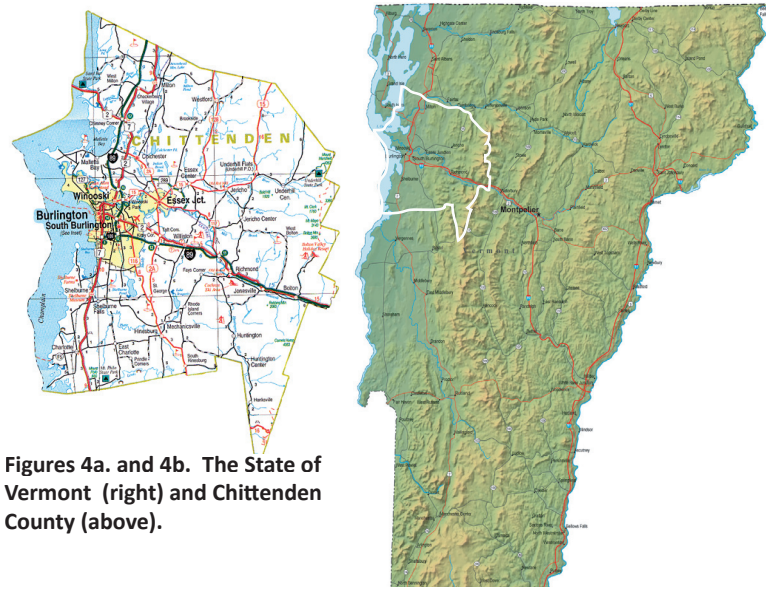
4 Contextual Foundation

"If we want to understand where Vermont has been in the past few decades and where we want it to go in the future, the place to start is still in the rock ribbed fields where generations of men and women have put their hands on the land."(Albers 2000:274)

4.1 A Brief History of Vermont and Chittenden County

The identity of Vermont, a small state in the northeast region of the United States, is based in agriculture (see Figure 4a.) In the 1700's Vermont began to see an influx of real estate speculators. Quickly following speculators into Vermont, subsistence farmers began to transform wilderness into agricultural land. (Albers 2000). By 1900 almost 80% of the land in Vermont was in agricultural production (CRS 2005:4). Forests were cut and the dominant population of sheep kept the fields open and expansive. There were few land use restrictions and few political limitations. Settlement was scattered and rural while the towns that did arise tended to lack cohesive community. This could be attributed to the speculative spirits who first tread a path to Vermont. As Albers (2000:184) puts it, *"Vermont had been founded in an atmosphere of disrespect for institutions"*. Whether for these reasons or others, a rural mindset and a 'fend for yourself' attitude came to characterize early Vermont. The low population density and a rural landscape maintained a society in which individual rights were valued over community building. (Albers 2000)

Even as late at the 1870's Vermont remained one of the most rural and isolated states in New England. While Vermont saw change, the extent to which it was affected by technology was limited. In this regard Vermont greatly differed from the rest of New England. In the late 1800's Vermont got a whiff of the industrial revolution's promise. However rather than turning to



Figures 4a. and 4b. The State of Vermont (right) and Chittenden County (above).

heavy industrial activity, Vermont industry was based primarily on craftsmanship, farming and natural resource extraction. (Meeks 1986) It seemed that even with change to industry, the land and agriculture were never far removed. In comparison to the rest of the USA, industrial activity in Vermont was minimal. *"To some natives, this meant they were the biggest failures—almost no other place had seen the Industrial Revolution pass it by so decisively."* (Albers 2000:239) Yet many today may appreciate what this has meant in the longer term. Minimal industry has meant minimal urbanization. An unbroken connection to the land and the absence of intense urbanization which characterized the industrial revolution in so many other places has allowed Vermont to retain much of its rural, agricultural character. Vermont now benefits from being recognized for its rural, 'unspoiled' identity with tourism.

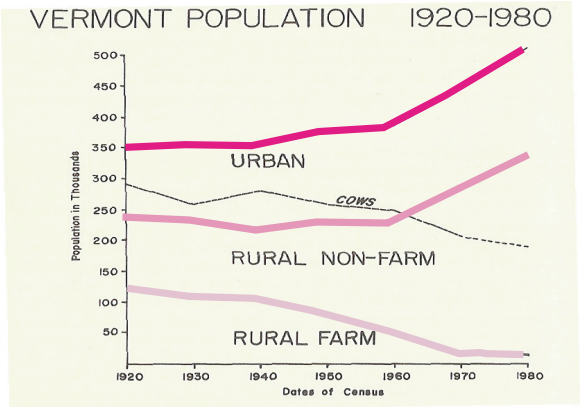


Figure 4c. Even while the percentage of the farming population decreased, the rural population continued to increase.

Even in the last half century Vermont has managed, albeit with a bit of a struggle to retain its rural identity. Vermont has been subject to development pressures like the rest of the United States which in the 1970's and 1980's contributed to a severe downturn in which many small farms were forced to fold. (Meeks 1986) Farmers began to find work elsewhere. The majority of farms that remained were run on a part time basis or were larger industrial farms with better economies of scale (Meeks 1986). Despite this agricultural depression, the historically strong connection to agriculture and the land persisted keeping Vermonters tied to the rural landscape. Even as people began to switch from farming to other more mainstream jobs, people continued to live in rural areas. (See Figure 4c.) As Albers says, "*Vermont's sense of itself remained tied to the hard-won nature of its farming…"(Albers 2000:274)* The state's national reputation as the epitome of small-town America has likely helped to carry and feed this rural sense of identity into the present. (Albers 2000). Though Vermont is subjected to the same development pressures as the rest of the United States, the state seems to cling, more so than many others, to its agricultural past and strongly supports agricultural activities of the present.

4.2 Vermont and Chittenden County Today: Planning and Food systems

Today Vermont remains a small state with a total population of just under 700,000. According to the Statistical Abstract of the United States in 2007, approximately 60 percent of the population is considered rural, where rural is measured as being an area with fewer than 2500 people and a density of fewer than 1000 people per square mile. (Statistical Abstract 2007) Though the agricultural land base has decreased from 80% to a mere 21% today (CRS 2005:4), 60% of Vermonters continue to live in rural settings (Statistical Abstract 2007). The exception to that is Chittenden County in the northwest corner of Vermont along Lake Champlain. (See Figure 4b.) Chittenden County has a population of circa 150,000. Situated in the center of Chittenden County on the shores of Lake Champlain is Burlington, Vermont's biggest city, with a population of 40,000. Surrounding Burlington are several suburban municipalities which eventually unfold into more rural areas in the periphery of the county (Vital Statistics, 2003:17). Despite its relatively small size, Chittenden County is heavily feeling the pressures of growth. It is expected to grow at an average rate of 1.5%, which signifies an addition of 100,000 people to the area between 2000 and 2035. (EDF, 2000:1).

Local food movements occurring sporadically throughout the United States apply in general terms to the movement happening today in Vermont. However, certain circumstances make the situation in Vermont and more specifically Chittenden County, somewhat unique. The historically rural character of Vermont and its reliance on farming and dairy practices for much of its

Figure 4d. A Buy Local Bumper Sticker on a car in Burlington, Vermont

	Number of Farms			Farm Size		
	1992	2002	% Change	1992	2002	% Change
Chittenden	405	473	16.80%	205	162	-21%
Vermont	5,436	6571	20.90%	235	189	-19.60%
USA	1911859	2128982	11.30%	487	441	-9.40%

Figure 4e. The number of farms in has gone up in recent years while the average size of farms have decreased in acreage, suggesting a trend toward local agricultural production.

livelihood together with a high percentage of residents living in close proximity to agricultural production seems to have contributed to an unusually strong local food movement. (See Figure 4d. and 4g.)

Looking at recent data, it becomes clear that small farms and cultivation for local demand is witnessing a comeback in Vermont. This is comparable to the U.S. trend, though nationally, the trend is less pronounced. Data from the United States Census of Agriculture (2002) shows that nationally, the total number of farms between 1992 and 2002 increased by 11.3 % while the size of farms decreased on average by 9.4%. In Vermont, farm numbers rose by 20.9% while farm size decreased by 19.6%. (See Figure 4e.) Supporting evidence implies that more than just a shift in dynamic, this relates to an increase in local food consumption. The number of acres in vegetable production, for example, rose by 14% between 1992 and 2002. There has also been a substantial increase in the market value of vegetable, greenhouse and nursery crops. (CRS 2005:21) Increases in the number of small farms as well as an increase in vegetable production are both characteristic of more locally based food production. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), where community owned farm businesses which local people subscribe to a specific farm seasonally, and farmers markets are two examples of food production which are characterized by smaller farms and high vegetable production. Both are gaining tremendous support and popularity in Vermont. In the mid 1980's for example, there were no reported CSA's in Vermont. Today, according to the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA), there are 65 CSA's and the number continues to grow. (NOFA 2008)

Chittenden County is no exception. From 1992 to 2002 the county witnessed a 16.8% increase in the number of farms and a 21% decrease in the size of farms. This suggests a greater

Figure 4f. Chittenden County is host to 13 farmers markets

interest in farming at smaller scales. In terms of market value of agricultural products, Chittenden County experienced the greatest change, with an increase of 31%. Such an increase in market value could only come with an increasing demand for local food. This is evident in the fact that the local population supports at least thirteen CSA's in Chittenden County in addition to thirteen independent farmer's markets. See Figure 4f. (Agency of Agriculture 2008)

This demand for local food is a result of deliberate work on the part of many more than just farmers and consumers. Behind the transactions and production of local food are supporting organizations which promote and support the general move towards civic agriculture. In Vermont in 2006, 182 Non-profit organizations were listed as being related to labor, agricultural, or horticultural issues (NCCS 2008). Planning law recognizes, if briefly, the need to promote the conservation of the supply of food and the production of food (Act 200, 2007). The local trend, is also given specific reference in the 2006 Chittenden County Regional plan which states, *"the quality of agricultural commodities (such as freshness or variety) can be enhanced by local production". (CCRP 2006)*

Figure 4g. Local food is heavily advertised in Chittenden County.

Before moving on, it is important to briefly consider the definition of local food. There is much attention paid to the 100-mile diet, referring to a hundred mile radius in which food is considered local, popularized by a book written in 2005 (100 Mile Diet 2008). In Vermont, the definition is slightly different. According to a survey of Vermonters conducted by the Center for rural studies, 50% of Vermonters considered anything produced within the State of Vermont as local while 41% of those surveyed considered anything within a 30 mile radius local. (CRS 2006:3) Disagreement as to the definition of local, may lead to confusion in the long run but that is another discussion. For the purposes of this paper, local produce will be considered as produce deriving from Chittenden County and neighboring counties and being bought and consumed within the same region.

4.3 Planning Law and Structure in Vermont

While Vermont planning largely parallels planning in the United States, Vermont has more actively than most states attempted, with varying degrees of success, to reform planning laws to address concerns of rampant development. In the 1960's then Governor Davis started looking for ways to tighten development policy to avoid unplanned development. Act 250 which requires that larger development projects be put to hearing and approved based on their adherence to ten criteria ranging from protection of natural resources to traffic to aesthetics was proposed (Dean, 1996). This was originally intended to be part of a plan that would more strictly regulate land uses. In the late 1970's Vermont successfully passed Act 250 which helped quell development to some extent but did little to reform existing zoning laws or planning structure. (Dean, 1996:145)

In the 1980's, Vermont was one of only seven states in the United States to reform planning laws, with the objective of linking *"state goals and local plans."* (Richmond 2000:14). The Act also aimed to provide more stable funding to regional and local planning by allocating a percentage of the state transfer tax to a planning fund. The funding source has since been repeatedly divided and distributed to areas outside the planning realm leaving state, regional and municipal planning bodies with financial insecurity.

Without funding, planning retains little clout or authority, not to mention a reduced ability to effectively achieve goals. (Richmond 2000:14)

Despite that rather large caveat, Act 200 is the foundation of planning in Vermont today. Act 200 maintains that *"a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework shall guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and state agencies* (Act 200 1988:2). It encourages collaboration among municipalities in order to widen the scope of focus. The linking of different levels of planning is meant to allow local municipalities to retain authority while encouraging a higher level of cooperation in achieving regional and statewide goals but emphasizes citizen participation in decision-making at all levels of planning. In addition, emphasis is put on consideration for *"resources and consequences of growth and development for the region and the state, as well as the community in which it takes place"* which addresses the very reasons for which Act 200 was originally brought to the table. (Act 200 1988:2)

Beyond planning process, and of particular relevance to food systems, is a section describing agricultural land use policy. The goals of this policy state that *"Important and economically viable agricultural and forest lands shall be protected by limiting alternative uses on those lands to low density uses designed to preserve the long term viability of farm or forest use." (Act 200 1988:2)* In order to ensure that this policy is upheld, it encourages the development of strategies to ensure agricultural viability as well as the support of manufacturing and marketing of value-added agricultural products. (Act 200 1988) In the 2007 edition of Act 200, these goals are repeated with an important addition: "*The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged."* (Act 200 2007:333) While there is little clarification as to what 'encouraged' should entail, and likely even less potential for enforcement, the very fact of its presence, shows the changing priorities of planning in Vermont.

Municipal Planning Duties

Local government continues to retain a substantial portion of political control over community affairs. This encourages citizen participation and democratic process, especially through town meeting style decision-making which remains dominant in many parts of the state. Yet, local control can also result in citizens having an isolated view of their affairs or in their being fiercely protective of their rights to determine what will happen in their areas, making it more difficult to collaborate with neighboring towns (Dean 1996:148).

The local planning commission is responsible for preparing *"a plan and amendments for consideration by the legislative body"* (Act 200 1988:10). This direct connection and influence over the legislative body gives the local planning commission substantial power over community affairs, much more so than regional planning commissions. With these capabilities, local planning has substantial authority. That said, the local planning commission is also required as part of its duties, to hold public meetings and participate in the regional planning program to ensure planning is a result of a democratic and comprehensive system and does not act in isolation. (Act 200 1988:10) It is required to *"undertake studies and make recommendations"* on several sectors including, land development, social development and historic and scenic preservation. (Act 200 2007: 356) In addition, zoning regulations are within the jurisdiction of municipalities, effectively giving them power to *"adopt zoning regulations to permit, prohibit, restrict, regulate, and determine land development…" (Act 200 1988:31)* Local plans must be approved by regional commissions in order to be recognized by the state. With state recognition come benefits such as veto power over state planning mandates as well as easier access to state funding.

Regional Planning Duties

Regional planning in Vermont has a starkly different role to that of local planning. It has less direct power and acts as a kind of support to local planning more than as an entity in and of itself. Regional planning as outline by Act 200 is meant to:

- Promote cooperation among municipalities
- Provide technical assistance with regards to plans
- Work with neighboring planning bodies
- Prepare a regional plan

- Review and approve municipal plans (though no authority to disapprove, only make recommendations for changes)
- Research, inventory and make recommendations on land use and other matters.

Vermont regional councils are also encouraged to develop inventories of public services and facilities, undertake studies and make recommendations on all sectors of community life including land development, transportation, energy, and conservation, carrying out programs for improvement where there is a need. Regional planning can require municipal cooperation, but cannot mandate any action on the part of the local planning office. (Act 200: 2007)

Regional planning bodies are directed by commissions. Commissioners are made up of at least one representative from each municipality contained within that region and are appointed by their respective select boards. Representatives who represent certain interests, such as economic development or land conservation, also sit on council. The regional planning body is in part funded by the state, and in part funded by the municipalities served. However, regional planning bodies can accept or apply for funding from any source, and in that way they act much like a Non-profit. (Act 200:2007)

Chittenden County Regional Planning

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) was established in 1966 and represents 19 diverse municipalities in the Northwest corner of Vermont, including the only federally classified 'urban area' in the state, the city of Burlington, as well as Buell's Gore, one of the smallest municipalities in the state, with a total population of 24. (CCRP 2006) Like other regional planning bodies in Vermont, CCRPC is directed by the regional planning laws outlined in Act 200. However, because regional planning has a less well-defined role in planning law, there are differences within each region. It is therefore of interest to look at CCRPC individually.

The CCRPC's overall mission is telling in that it touches on almost every role described in Chapter Three: "*To serve Chittenden County and its communities through an effective regional planning process characterized by communication, facilitation, education, collaboration and technical assistance" (CCRPCVT 2008).* However, to really understand the role of CCRPC or perhaps more adequately the desired role of CCRPC as an entity, it is useful to look at the strategic plan. The strategic plan delineates the desired direction of the organization as defined by the organization itself. This introspective viewpoint gives a clear idea of the organization's work ethic, methods and objectives. It could be considered a description of values as much as a list of priorities. CCRPC defines success as *"embodying effectiveness and leadership"* as they serve the region by being a *"forum for collaborative decision-making"*, and in the process, "*earning the public's respect"*. (Strategic plan 2007:2) This strategy encompasses the duties outlined in Act 200, yet implies a greater importance placed on its relationship with the public.

To achieve success, CCRPC has outlined 18 work strategies which together outline the identity of CCRPC. These are further broken down into four categories. The first refers to CCRPC's *core identity*. Within this category, importance is placed on employing decision-making processes which are well grounded in facts and values and which enable members of the community and other interested non-planners to participate. This implies a strong commitment to public participation, and an interest in empowering citizens. Another strategy is that of acting as a *"forum for building consensus*" (Strategic Plan 2007:4) among member municipalities with which CCRPC strives to collaborate.

This emphasis on collaboration flows into the second category, succeeding through partnerships. Here, CCRPC stresses the value of partnering across both horizontal and vertical planes, reaching out to other regions, organizations and the private sector and promoting *"collaborative efforts that incorporate local, regional, and state policies simultaneously [which] are more likely to result in long-term, sustainable success."* (Strategic Plan 2007:4).

The third category is concerned with leadership. CCRPC emphasizes the need to *"share power"* through collaboration and consensus with *"member municipalities, regional organizations,*

and the public" (Strategic Plan 2007:4). It is emphasized here that work does not stop after decisions are made, but must include advocacy for implementation. Finally, CCRPC promotes effectiveness and fiscal responsibility in all work accomplished.

4.4 Introducing the Actors

While this historical and legal context may define a framework for the role of planning and local food systems in Chittenden County, it is the actors that truly determine the shape and direction that these issues will take. Eight actors representing a wide spectrum of work being done in terms of the local food movement and planning were interviewed in order to fully grasp the present relationship between planning and local food movements. They are introduced here as a prelude to the chapter to follow in which they are given the floor to convey their own stories and perspectives.

Christa Alexander is co-owner of Jericho Settlers Farm in Jericho, Vermont together with her huband Mark Fasching and her mother Emilie. They started the farm in 2002 and a few years later began a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) business. The farm is located on two of the oldest farms in Jericho, dating back to the 1700's. (Interviewed February 4, 2008)

Bill Aswad has served as a commissioner on the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) for over 30 years and was at one point president of the New England Association of Regional Councils. He is currently a Representative for Chittenden County in the Vermont State Legislature and has presided in that role since 1995. (Interviewed February 8, 2008)

Stephanie Clark is the Outreach Coordinator for Burlington City Legacy Project. As part of her job she helps to network people working on local food systems projects. One project she has worked extensively on is the Burlington School Food Project which is working to incorporate more local foods into the school lunch program. She has held this position for two years. The City Legacy project started in 1999 as a special project of the Community and Economic Development organization (CEDO), a department of the city of Burlington, to help maintain the qualities that help make Burlington a desirable place to live. (Interviewed February 22, 2008)

Chris Gordon is the Associate Director of the South Hero Land Trust. He graduated from the University of Vermont with a degree in Natural Resources Management. The South Hero Land Trust, located in a neighboring county to Chittenden County, works primarily to preserve agricultural land and natural areas in the region through conservation easements. Their work has recently expanded to include projects which address farm viability. Past projects have included setting up a farmers market, and educational days showcasing farm related activities. Chris also sits on the board of the Northeast Organic Farmers Association of Vermont (NOFA), a group dedicated to promoting and supporting organic produce and farming practices. (Interviewed February 19, 2008)

Noelle MacKay is Executive Director of Smart Growth Vermont. She has held this position since 2005. She holds a masters degree in Environmental studies. Smart Growth Vermont is a non profit organization dedicated to promoting land use policies which protect Vermont's rural landscape through compact development. Smart Growth Vermont achieves this goal by working with communities, developers and other interested parties in the development of alternative land use plans. (Interviewed February 14, 2008)

Jenn McGowan is the director of Healthy City at the Intervale Center. She began the program in 2002 and has run it for six years. She works in partnership with many local food organizations. Healthy City is a CSA which provides low income youth with entrepreneurial farm experience in addition to running food distribution programs in low-income areas of Burlington. The program is one of several under the Intervale Center whose mission is *"To develop farm-and land-based enterprises that generate economic and social opportunity while protecting natural resources."* (Intervale 2008) (Interviewed February 22, 2008)

Julie Potter is a Senior planner for Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. She has worked at CCRPC since 2004 on a wide variety of projects including agriculture and open space,

brownfield development, and the circ (a ring road planned to circle Burlington). She holds masters degrees in both urban and regional planning and water resources management from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. (Interviewed February 12, 2008)

David White is the Director of the City of Burlington Department of Planning and Zoning. He has held this position since 1995 and previously worked at the Lamoille County planning Commission situated to the northeast of Chittenden County in Vermont. He holds a degree in Resource economics and policy from Duke University. The Burlington City Department of Planning and zoning is responsible for the creation of the municipal plan, and zoning and development in the city limits. The department is run by its own commission and sends delegates to once monthly meetings of the regional planning commission.

5 Perspectives

This chapter attempts to convey the different perspectives of individuals involved in planning and the local food movement in Chittenden County in their own words. Through their own descriptions of their roles and roles of the organizations which they represent, the current situation and the near future start to be envisioned. (*All quotes in each section below are those of the interviewees highlighted in that section unless otherwise stated)*

5.1 Christa Alexander, Farmer, Jericho Settlers Farm, Jericho, Vermont.

Figure 5a. Jericho Settlers Farm Logo

Driving a half an hour southeast on Interstate 89 will bring you from the center of Burlington, through the suburbs and into an agricultural and forested landscape. This rural landscape defines the town of Jericho. About two and half miles from the center of Jericho over winding roads, through valleys and over ridges, lay the Jericho Settler's Farm. This property had been a farm since the late 1700's. In the 1950's that changed when a dairy farmer gave up his operation and sold the house to Christa Alexander's parents, non-farmers. This was the beginning of a bigger change. As Alexander describes it, *"the face of agriculture shifted...We continued to lease the farm to the dairy farmer down the road for haying but later that farm sold out and after that we were able to find some people to lease the land, but it became more and more difficult to find farmers interested in using the fields. And no one was taking care of the land, just haying and mowing."*

In 2002 this long period of neglect reversed when Alexander and her husband, Mark Fasching decided that they wanted to try farming. *"We started small, we were working other full time jobs…it was just a table by the road, basically a bigger home garden."* In six years, this once part time job has become a full time job for both of them. They run the farm as a CSA, cultivating a wide variety of vegetables and raising chickens, pigs, cattle and the occasional lamb for meat.

"We thought it made sense to do a CSA. We always wanted that direct connection to customers..." Most of their customers are local and come directly to the farm to pick up their produce. Over 75% of their customers come from Jericho and bordering towns which speaks to the high demand for local produce in the region. Alexander attributes this to two things *"we have all these great products, but also because the public in Vermont is well educated and wants to be involved...I think [local] is the way to go... at this point we can sell everything available and we're never going to saturate the market..."*

She is hard pressed to come up with any disadvantages to their chosen system, but admits education of the consumer and advertising can be difficult and time consuming. One problem she identifies is the high level of "*confusion for the consumer in the bigger marketplace about what's organic and local."*

Alexander can only be described as satisfied with their operation to date. She attributes some of that success to the extensive support system in Vermont for small farmers. She doesn't hesitate to say, "*I think the support in Vermont is phenomenal…*" citing both programs and professionals available to answer questions as well as support from the community.
When asked specifically about the professional support, Alexander spouted off the names of a number of non profits that she had either been in contact with or which she knew of as resources for farmers. *"Our experience with non profits has been more than it has been with planning..."* Rural Vermont, a lobbying group for small farms, works to help small farmers in the larger market.

They lobby for change that will better address the needs of small farmers such as labeling and inspection laws, which often favor bigger operations. The Vermont Land Trust, an organization involved with preservation of small farms, was mentioned by Alexander as being integral to preserving farmland in the state. While they themselves had not been affected Alexander was aware of neighboring farms which had benefited from farm easements. NOFA, the Northeast Organic Farmers Association, was also high on her list of supportive organizations. *"They've been instrumental with us not with land but with technical assistance to farmers, especially new farmers..."* Alexander didn't feel there were gaps in the systems or any pressing need for better organization of the local food related non-profits out there. *"I feel like they've all found appropriate niches…maybe overlap, but then they partner."*

When asked about town and regional support, she had less to say. She considered the Regional planning Commission *"as sort of a guide [trying] to coordinate the regions and to get some of the bigger projects that go beyond borders... They are kind of like a non-profit in a way...."* With regards to the town she only said "*I haven't interacted with the town government much…*" She did give Jericho credit for being *"fairly active at least in planning and zoning [in] writing in conservation minded developments… Jericho really wants to support agriculture…"* She attributed any departure from this supportive nature to regulation. *"Where conflicts do arise its because the written regulations maybe don't say exactly what they need to or the plan doesn't capture all it needs to, to reach the desired result.. I think the philosophy is there."*

Is the philosophy coming to the wider population? Expanding the scope of the conversation, Alexander identified the *"luxury of a fossil fuel economy"* as being the reason local food systems haven't caught on. *"Jericho doesn't have to have X number of acres to supply the people of Jericho, we're shipping it in."* This suggests that it may take the issue of food security to make local food production an accepted and widespread occurrence.

5.2 Noelle MacKay, Executive Director of Smart Growth Vermont.

Figure 5b. Smart Growth Vermont Logo

"We deal with land use issues towards the goal of enhancing and promoting our traditional landscape which is the compact village settlement... surrounded by a working landscape, forest, farms, [and] the natural environment."

It is clear this is a practiced response on the part of Noelle MacKay, one used constantly to describe Smart Growth Vermont to communities, developers, bankers, and planning organizations. She talks to these entities on a daily basis. Her organization's chosen mission, broad as it is, could not be accomplished without involving all of these actors.

The organization, originally established as the Vermont Forum on Sprawl, was formed by a group of people who were increasingly concerned with patterns of growth in Vermont. It began as a discussion bringing people together to discuss the real implications of sprawl-like development. Discussions were based on information and research gathered by the organization. On a statewide level, the forum found itself advocating for smart growth and working to implement policies supporting these ideas.

In recent years the focus of the organization along with the name has shifted. MacKay, in an effort to get a handle on the work of the various organizations working towards similar needs, to avoid unnecessary overlap, and identify needs which remained unmet, set up a 'community planning partnership'. Under this program, she reached out to related organizations asking questions about their programs, their mission, and the different ways in which they interacted with communities. *"I wanted to make sure that if there was a group of organizations doing really strong visioning with communities, then we [would not] get into that business..".* This, she found was the reality, leading her to focus the work of Smart Growth Vermont on the implementation process. *"I see us really more as the implementers because communities get*

excited doing that vision work and then a lot of those groups, their grant ends, and no one is there to implement all those ideas… we knew we had to get involved in a more targeted way than we had in the past because land use decisions here in Vermont are made at a local level by volunteers that don't necessarily have a lot of support."

It is clear that MacKay sees communication and collaboration among organizations as being key to realizing shared objectives. She focuses much of her attention on creating partnerships because, as she says, "*I think in some ways it is a dialogue issue. I find in Vermont we're all very much in our little silos and no one has looked up to see that all the silos really connect, but we need to find a common language that we can talk about…*" Common language and unified direction, as she sees its, will help the average person *"concerned about their family and making sure they have good education and have healthcare and a roof over their heads…"* understand how such basic needs relate to the larger issues, like land use, food production, and global warming. She points to the fact that Vermont has *"one of the highest per capita buy local [programs] in the country"*, but stresses that without agricultural land demand cannot be met. *"I just don't think we talk enough to say what are the underlying threads are that link organizations together."*

In order to address this, her next strategic plan is to sit down and talk *"with different business leaders and organizational leaders to [determine] the leaders in the state, the real movers that can start to work on this together."* She includes regional planning commissions in this group but considers them to be "*in a tough position"* with diverse municipalities, and the state all attempting to shape and direct regional planning leaving planning with *"no teeth*".

MacKay practices what she preaches. *"When we design those model projects, we always [bring] in the full range of folks and just by inviting them ...We also make a conscious effort to touch base with the regional planning commissions on a regular basis."* They depend on regional planning for GIS capabilities among other things. Partnerships like this with similar organizations and with the communities they are working in seem to nurture a healthy relationship and avoid any hard feelings.

Despite this focus on collaboration, MacKay emphasizes that it can't be forced. Communities have to invite Smart Growth America to present ideas and options and the region and the town have to *"feel comfortable with us working there".* Communities as she says, have to be ready and committed to the complex process that entails implementation of smart growth concepts. *"I don't want to compete with them or to feel like we are stepping on any toes."*

5.3 Stephanie Clark, Outreach Coordinator for Burlington City Legacy Project

Figure 5c. City Legacy Logo

In 1999, with the term sustainability on everyone's tongue, the City Economic Development Organization (CEDO), a department within the City of Burlington, established City Legacy. Set up as a special project, Legacy was created to help maintain some of the unique qualities of Burlington that in the past have helped Burlington to win *"national awards for being a livable city..."* A community based steering committee was "*charged with coordinating a public involvement campaign and preparing the action plan" (CEDO 2008)* The action plan that resulted is, in effect, a common vision highlighting five main points, including maintaining Burlington as a regional center, improving the quality of life, increasing participation in decision-making, providing youth with opportunities, and preserving environmental health. (CEDO 2008)

Stephanie Clark, Legacy's only full time staff member works toward achieving these goals. In her view, the program looks to encourage more sustainable practices in city development. They focus on the "*four E's*", which stand for education, social equity, environmental protection and economic development. *"…when City Legacy was created it was really looking at a more holistic approach to sustainability."*

With such a small staff and a limited supply of funding, City Legacy has little authority in terms of decision making, and has little power to implement projects. What the staff therefore focuses on is facilitating projects and directing energy. As Clark says, *"what we do best is create networks and keep aware of what's going on so we can connect people to relevant resources or other people."* Since its inception, Legacy has forged strong partnerships with non profits, businesses, government departments and community organizations. Clark sees collaboration and participation among these entities as imperative to the success any project. *"There are a lot of things we're a little bit involved in but since we're not the experts we really try to collaborate and use the wisdom of our partners"*.

The creators of the City Legacy Project, CEDO, have strong connections among groups at a regional level including the regional planning office and the Metropolitan Transportation Organization. Yet Clark asserts that it is non profits which have an ability to reach out to residents and communities in a way that the city is unable to do. "*The non profits can have relationships that we could never touch as a city and that's hugely important. I can't emphasize enough the importance of non profits in this town".* Even within Burlington, which Clark considers to be more accessible than a lot of other cities, she can see barriers, both perceived and real, limiting the interaction between residents and government. Clark, herself a city employee, is acutely aware of the limits to what the city can do to implement these projects and must work around these problems. *"If the city runs around and decides we want to be in charge of everything, it is never going to work..."* She attributes this to a common negative perception of city government that exists and accepts this as a reality. It doesn't, however, sway her sense of conviction. *"the residents…that's the orientation towards this work and the official orientation of the city…all the work that we are…doing as a city is coming from the needs and wants of the people in the city. I hope we're staying in line with what the community wants to see.*" The city, she says, works hard to be open and transparent.

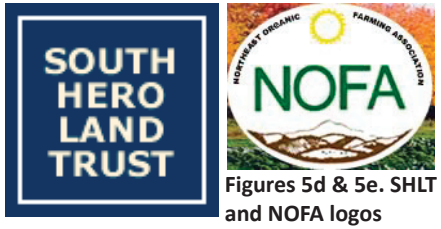
One of the many projects City Legacy is involved with is creating a more sustainable food system. A Burlington Food Council was started under city legacy after a resident voiced concern about the health of school lunches at an annual meeting. Perhaps because of this school focused beginning, the Food Council began to focus primarily on starting the Burlington School Food Project (BSFP). *"Legacy started [BSFP] because we were a good incubator. We had the staff, we were able to administratively support, and leverage some financial support."* In other words, Legacy has become the point of contact for the project, a sort of information hub for pointing organizations and individuals in the right direction. Clark considers Legacy as being an overarching entity, keeping track of all the actors and related events taking place, without any direct leadership.

Legacy has witnessed substantial growth in the program since it started. In fact, BSFP has so much energy behind it the group is considering dividing into two sectors, one to continue the school food project, and another to think about food systems on a community wide level. This success may mean the end of Legacy's involvement, at least to the degree that it is now. "*With the new leadership and the growth and expansion of what's going on around food systems, legacy will probably be handing off coordinator. We'll support it as long as necessary, but giving over the ownership and saying great, we helped develop this project, it's working really, really well, now it's time to go and flourish as an independent entity."*

What will Legacy work on next? The topic will likely come from the community. Legacy relies heavily on its partners to identify and hear the *"rumblings...in the community"* requesting change or asking for attention to be paid to a certain matter. Clark believes "*this is the only way it would ever be sensible."* Ideas and push for change has to come from the bottom up.

As for improving the system, Legacy will have to expand if it is to influence major change, and receive more funding. Beyond these simple logistics, she points to a need to align philosophies, and create a shared value system among the many groups involved. The reality is, as Clark reflects, *"there are going to be people that hate you and people who love you. There is a big chunk in the middle you can talk to say this is what I am interested in doing".* It is this group that should be focused on. It is this group that will make change happen.

5.4 Chris Gordon, Associate Director of the South Hero Land Trust and Board Member for NOFA.



Figures 5d & 5e. SHLT and NOFA logos

To the northwest of the city of Burlington, in the middle of northern Lake Champlain, is a chain of islands which make up Grand Isle County, a neighbor to Chittenden County. South Hero, the southernmost town in the islands, with a year round population of 1700, and a substantially higher population in the summer, is less than half an hour's drive from Burlington. Contrary to what one's eyes might lead one to believe, this picturesque town feels increasing development pressure. In recent years, Grand Isle County has been one of the fastest growing counties per capita with a reasonable commute to Burlington and a small town feel.

For most of its ten years, the South Hero Land Trust has focused on conserving agricultural land to both maintain the rural tradition of the town and protect the future of farming. As Chris Gordon of the South Hero Land Trust says, *"I think land conservation has facilitated security for land base"* on which farmers, both owners of agricultural lands and those leasing lands, depend. This, however, only solves one problem. As Gordon says *"a conserved land base is great, but if you don't have the farmers…"* the objective still hasn't been met. With increasing energy costs, marketing and distribution competition, and the uncertainty of a new farming generation to take over there are more threats to the future of farming than just the loss of land.

In order to approach the problem from a holistic sense, three or four years ago the South Hero Land Trust began to focus on the problem of increasing the viability of farming. *"We're always thinking about projects like that we can be working on with farmers and yet still have it be farmer driven initiative, so that's one of the main focuses for us…we want to make sure that it's what the farmers want and need..."* After 30 or more interviews with local farmers, Gordon had a clear sense of their needs. One need which continually came up was the need for a local market. South Hero Land Trust facilitated the work to start a farmers market in the area. *"It wasn't our idea and we didn't do everything but we definitely helped at the local level to get that up and running…so now there's one in South Hero and one in Grand Isle on Saturdays.*

Early on in the process, Gordon made the effort to meet with other organizations to gain perspective, and to make sure that their work was filling a niche and not competing with work being done by others. He also took it as an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and smooth the process.

This collaboration seems to come naturally to him, and perhaps that is because of his voluntary involvement in other organizations. Gordon is a board member of one of the more influential and, according to him, overarching farming organizations in the state, the Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA). NOFA, he explains, works to influence farming policy at the state level and is the organic certifier in the state. They extend into food security issues, working to get individuals access to local food and promote school to farm programs as well. He considers the work that NOFA does, as well as the work of other organizations as layered. While some organizations fill needs at the local level, others work at the state or regional level. He uses his experience in land conservation to convey this thought. *"The great thing about land conservation in Vermont, is that it's small enough that everybody seems to be filling a niche…we're working at the local level, but because we don't hold easements, we're always partnering with Lake Champlain Land Trust or Vermont Land Trust, so you've got local land trusts, regional land trusts, and statewide and they all know what everybody's doing and it's a really congenial atmosphere that I think we are pretty lucky to have."* He attributes this healthy cooperative environment to meetings and conferences where the various organization have a chance to come together, share ideas, talk about what they are working on, and have a chance to discuss how the groups might work together more. There's no overarching organization that takes responsibility for this, rather organizations informally take turns sponsoring meetings when a need for it is identified.

In the realm of food systems, he has witnessed a similar pattern,

and points to several Localvore groups in the area as an example, although, from his description the connections seem to be less defined. Yet, he adds, connections seem to be happening more and more, especially now with more federal financial support being directed towards food policy.

He admits such an informal network can be hard to navigate, *"there are so many organizations involved, I'm sure there are times when you can't keep tabs on all of it…",* but when asked if he thinks a more formal connection between organizations is a realistic idea, he responds, *"I don't know if it needs to happen.. The one area where I feel it would be nice to have more collaboration is with fundraising efforts. I write a lot of grants for our farm initiative and, fortunately, we've been pretty successful getting the grants but I also know that there are all these other local food groups applying to the same entities for the same funding for similar work. So does it make sense that we are all competing for the same dollars or would it make more sense to join forces and collectively apply for some big dollar grants?"* He stresses that limited staff at smaller organizations and reliance on volunteers to apply for grants makes it difficult to succeed. Yet he is quick to question the benefits of merging into larger organizations. *"We are working with farmers we know, that's been really powerful and effective I think. When you merge too much and get too regionalized you miss out on that direct connection and when you are trying to create local systems I think that's a pretty integral piece of it.*

Gordon acknowledges existing links between different levels of government, links between non profits and the town, and is an integral part in linking non profits with related organizations and individuals. He believes that strengthening these existing connections will go a long way in strengthening the overall system. Beyond that, what may be beneficial is someone to smooth the process, to facilitate funding flows and help to make the funding process more user friendly. Here, the regional planning commission, is brought up again as a possible facilitating entity. *"I think it could work, partly because they are an existing organization that has a purview over a region versus a specific locality. I feel like people are sometimes more apt to give money to regional type projects… it's all about how that money trickles down…so a regional planning commission, if they worked as a facilitator... having intermediaries getting money that smaller towns and regions could apply to, seems like it might be more effective."*

5.5 Jenn McGowan, Healthy City Director at the Intervale Center.

Figure 5f. Intervale Center Logo

The floodplains of the Winooski River situated along the northern edge of Burlington, and just one mile from downtown, have in recent years become the hub of the local food system in Burlington. The Intervale Center, a non profit organization whose mission is *"to generate land and farm based enterprises to generate economic and social well being for the community",* owns and manages 350 acres of this prime farmland. This complex organization runs several food systems related programs and manages 15 independent farms, which *"come together to try to create a healthy local food system."*

One of these programs is Healthy City. It focuses on improving the availability of fresh, local produce to people of all income levels and backgrounds through accessibility and education. Healthy city targets youth, because, as McGowan puts it, *"I think youth are really poised to be the ambassadors for fresh produce. It's the middle generation that doesn't know what to do with [a beet or a turnip]. There's this big disconnect. The middle generation sold the farm so their kids could go to college."* McGowan's job is to reestablish a connection between consumers and farms. Her vision of the program is this, *"I would like every student in the city school district to come down here on a field trip, for every student to know a local farmer, for every student to be involved in processing of food that goes into their café…"*

For this vision to become a reality, a network of partners has been formed. Healthy city has upwards of 40 partners. While it doesn't

seem hard to find partners, it is hard to define the nature of the relationships that do exist. McGowan cites the lack of shared language as a major challenge. *"… when I go to conferences and talk about [a shared project] I am like hmm… how to do other people talk about this partnership? I think we really need to clear that up. That's an area that's gray and hard to understand even for the people who are involved in the partnership and it's one of the things we're trying to make clearer with the Memorandum of Understanding…so that we both have shared language that we use when we talk about that collaboration. I*n *a perfect world I think it would be clear from the start, but it's all been developing [and] things have changed so much. If I've learned anything it's [that it is] helpful to start from that place."*

Setting up the community connections project is one of the ways Healthy City has facilitated stronger communication among actors. This project, through twice yearly meetings, brings together key actors in food systems work, and provides a space for people to compare and combine work plans and projects to ensure effective action. These partnerships vary in intensity and in their roles. On one end, McGowan gives the example of Vermont Food Education Everyday (FEED). FEED's interaction with the Intervale is limited but as an organization working towards similar goals at the state level, it is worthwhile to stay connected. The food bank, on the other hand, promises to be a close partnership if things go as planned. *"We were talking about…how our gleaning projects can work together; how we can collaboratively fundraise…The food bank would be the central organizing hub at a state level. Healthy city and our gleaning project would be one partner."*

As McGowan reiterates, *"it's about connecting the dots"* and bringing the strengths of every organization to the table. The creation of over 40 partnerships in six years is a major accomplishment, but she acknowledges that there is a lot more work to do. This network focuses on non profits. Interaction with the city and state is limited to funding and even then McGowan says she receives no money directly from the state or city, but must apply through them to receive a limited amount of federal funding. The exception is collaboration with City Legacy on the school food project.

To compensate for the lack of government-based funding, Healthy City and the Intervale Center rely on grants. In addition, they run many of their programs as small businesses, gaining income through vegetable and compost sales or by way of program support with the long-term goal of making their programs more financially sustainable. *"Basically we want the farm to pay for itself and kick back a bit."* For some programs this method has already proved successful, but for others, like Healthy city, grant writing will always be a reality.

This system, while in many ways effective, has the ugly side effect of turning non profits with similar goals into competitors. *"I think it's so threatening to folks…we all need to fund our projects and figuring that out is tricky. Sometimes folks are reluctant to bring folks to the table"* because that means more groups between which a limited supply of funds will be distributed. *"We really need to get more transparent about who we are going to for funding and do collaborative fundraising on this because this isn't good."*

Sure enough, funding is the first challenge McGowan mentions when asked about her work. Another less expected response is that of mission spread, or *"staying true to what we need to do, not trying to do everything."* If this makes McGowan reliant on other non profits to fill in the gaps, all the better. *"I love it... Not repeating. We don't want an education staff here necessarily, Shelburne Farms [another non profit, focused on environmental education] has one, it works well, we have a strong partnership, we're the classroom, great.*" By sharing the workload, she feels, she can better fulfill the particular mission of her own program.

McGowan is clearly a strong advocate for partnerships, but when asked whether an overarching entity to facilitate the food systems network might help, she's stumped. *"It's an interesting question. I have no idea. It's hard to picture that."* Her first reaction is caution, pointing out that most partnerships work because of community involvement and support. Mandated or centralized food systems, she argues, would fall flat because direct connections are what, in her opinion, make the system work. She does however see benefits to having an organization

or individual with experience facilitating connections because as she herself says "*The key is how to link [organizations]"* while still maintaining a balance between top down and bottom up organizing.

5.6 Julie Potter, Senior Planner for Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Figure 5g. CCRPC Logo

Julie Potter, a senior planner at the Chittenden County Regional Planning commission (CCRPC), seems to have a grasp on the complex systems that shape life in the region. Understanding the system is a big enough task, and working to improve the systems is daunting, but that, in a very simplified nutshell, is what regional planning is all about.

Regional planning has a unique role in Vermont. It is a mixed breed. *"We aren't classic government. Legally we are a non profit for tax purposes…what we do are government kinds of functions, but without any kind of regulatory function."* The CCRPC "*can't really tell municipalities what they have to do.*" In fact, municipalities have the option of joining the regional commission or opting out. In more rural regions of Vermont where towns are small and have limited staff, the regional planning commission may play a larger role in terms of providing assistance. The dynamic is different in Chittenden County, where about half of the towns have professional planners. While all 18 municipalities have joined, meaning that they all pay dues, the level of interaction varies tremendously from municipality to municipality. Burlington and Williston for example, rarely make use of regional planning assistance. Hinesburg relies on the CCRPC to *"bring some sort of technological expertise to the table*" in the form of GIS and modeling capabilities. Smaller towns tend to use the CCRPC's resources to a greater extent to make up for their own lack of in-house resources. *"Some towns have used our staff to help them write pieces of their plans and there are some towns that for whatever reason don't want to ask for help, but they could and it might help if they did."* Cases like this sometimes require that the CCRPC does the outreach. In connection with a brownfield development plan, it was Potter who extended her hand. *"I went to them and said we don't want to be working at cross purposes... we want to be a help… in that case we are trying to be a partnership because it's beneficial."*

The CCRPC is required by statute to create a regional plan. Because the regional plan has little authority over implementation, it tends to act more as an advisor. *"[W]e are more likely to be talking about consensus policies, strategies, that are applicable that other people can draw on to use…Some of our commissioners would love for us to say you can build certain places, [but] we have no authority to do that."* The municipal plan outlines specific points for implementation. The CCRPC has the 'authority' to 'bless' municipal plans. While there is no legal obligation for a municipality to have their plans approved, there are incentives, such as eligibility for state funding as well as benefits stemming from newer state programs such as the growth centers program. "*The idea is that if you've done good planning, development isn't going to be rampant and out of control, you want to have access to funding that maybe other people don't get access too, potentially some regulatory breaks…there are some incentives... whether they really work? In some cases towns will say, 'that's nice we think we can do what we want without going through all that'."*

The primary role of the CCRPC "*is to be the convener for regional issues*", bringing municipalities together to *"see if we can build a consensus…"* An example of this work was a housing study which was done to bring municipalities together and get them to think about and agree on how the issue of housing should be approached to best serve the region as a whole. In this situation the CCRPC brought people together, *"did legwork, got facts together and helped analyze, facilitate the meeting, but staff didn't set the policies for that, the task group ultimately laid it out".*

Potter admits these meetings can get a little controversial. *"The towns are kind of protective about their turf…they want the dollars to come from the state but they don't want any strings…there is a certain tension there".* Comparing the Vermont system which

has no history of county planning with her previous experience as a planner in New York, she says, *"In New York, things that are too difficult for a town to do are frequently done by the county…Here it is up to the municipality unless the municipalities decide to be in it together to do it."* In Vermont, that teamwork mentality is not part of tradition. Instead towns are used to doing things on their own. *"There are people who think that this is a regional issue and needs a regional solution. But until you get enough people wanting to work together to try and do this…"*

The CCRPC could be considered a way to test out potential for wider cooperation as well as a place to put issues on the table and weigh the response. Comprised of representatives from each municipality as well as representatives of major sectors, such as environment and conservation, industry, economics, housing and so on, the commission's board determines the focus of the CCRPC. Like any other board, CCRPC staff supports the board and helps them to make informed decisions by providing background information, data or research on alternatives on any given topic. Issues are weighed against the material that staff brings to the table and the strategic and long term plans. Ultimately however, commissioners must make decisions which affect the region as a whole. The right answer isn't always obvious. *"It's a challenge. We want to preserve agricultural soils. We also want to preserve historic resources. In some cases, you don't get a consistent answer because life is confusing and messy, but they are both valid values. So people wanted it to be cut and dry or wanted everything to favor some opinion they formed years ago."* Every decision on a regional level is a struggle, with a lot of political baggage involved. While the process can be difficult, it is this common process that forces people to really look for common ground among municipalities.

It is important to note that the planning process does not end with commission decisions, because as Potter points out, *"[a project or study] is going to sit on shelf and collect dust unless you do the outreach , the education, drum up the support, show how it can be useful. You try to find maybe a couple of cases where you can work with somebody as sort of a demonstration to show that it works. If you want it to be effective and have value that has to be part of the overall program."*

While most interaction occurs between the CCRPC and municipalities, there is also room for collaboration with other regional and local organizations. A key point in the CCRPC's strategic plan and one that Potter takes to heart is the emphasis on working with regional partners. Based on Potter's description, the initiative to set up these partnerships seems to stem mainly from CCRPC or perhaps more appropriately stated, Potter's desire to learn more.

"When I started on the agricultural project…I went to Vermont Land Trust, Shelburne Farms, NOFA, the Intervale…the CCRPC hadn't thought about agriculture in 20 years and I'm new to Vermont, what do I know? I [need to] learn. Go out and talk to people. I did look to regional organizations and in that case it was a bunch of non profits plus the university." That said, it works both ways, *"Sometimes initiatives are driven because we see that the need is there, we think that the time is right, something needs to be done. Sometimes it's so controversial we have to convene it but there are other times where people come to us…certainly a regional issue…silly for each town to do it on their own. So we have some staff who help coordinate…"*

In further pondering the possibilities for collaboration Potter offered that, *"if several municipalities were interested in doing something to help support a farmer's market…they might come to us…We might not be able to set it up for them, but we could do the homework and find out the best practices and get the connections and lessons learned from other folks."* She adds, *"It's the kind of thing we could do but we don't."* Why not? *"Well, something like that is so frequently grassroots…you get enough support and it happens locally. And if they are looking for some additional networking kind of thing, it's more likely to be with the state."* She does hope to be invited to the table in instances *"where there is some tie into their mission and they can bring their expertise to the table that we could use to make this a better program."* She attributes limited use of this approach partially to the fact that non profits generally have a small staff and face funding challenges.

To really understand the mentality of the CCRPC, it is imperative

to look at the funding structure. Unsurprisingly, it is about as complicated as the role of the CCRPC itself. Regional planning commissions get a limited amount income from the state. The CCRPC's other main source of funding is dues from the municipalities. As Potter says, *"Municipalities may get taken a little more seriously because they are members and they help pay our bills."* That does not entirely exclude working for other organizations, but it does mean funding has to be found from other sources. "*If we do work with non profits or other sorts of entities, we may be looking for some funding assistance*." Some projects, for instance those related to transportation, can be funded by money from the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the sister organization to the CCRPC which deals specifically with transportation and receives money from the Federal government. Others can be funded through homeland security money. As these cases show, sometimes finding other funding sources is viable.

However, in cases where it's tough to find funding, priorities without financial support can get bumped. This has been the case with agricultural projects. A few years ago the Vermont planners association asked the CCRPC to do a project on agriculture in the county. Potter took on the project and was "*going full steam on it*" until a major transportation project came up. A decision had to be made. *"You base it on funding… and priorities… and how many people are affected. And it may be something that goes to the board you are going to have to choose which one you want."* Agriculture, as a result was wait listed.

This doesn't show much promise for regional planning having a role in organizing local food systems. Agriculture has limited support and she admits food systems as a topic is not currently addressed in planning. Yet, Potter clearly sees a great deal of interest in the topic. "*I think Burlington thinks about it a lot because of the degree to which it values the Intervale and because it's such a resource and it is really valued…particularly with this Localvore movement. there is a lot of interest in trying to find things locally and even people like me who aren't going to sign up and say I'm going to eat 100% local, I've changed my eating habits, I shop in a way to try and have it be more local or at least support local businesses,… things being equal, I will go a little bit, not a lot, but a little bit out of the way to find local, and I'll certainly pay a little more to do it."*

Perhaps it is these observations and her own attitude which gives Potter a decidedly positive outlook. She mentions that there has been talk of food systems policy within the CCRPC, specifically related to food security. *"In one case, somebody wanted info and our executive director was figuring out, could Chittenden County, tweaking what it grows…grow enough carbohydrates, protein and calories to feed the county?...they were looking to CCRPC to at least do the napkin calculation to see if it could be done…it was coming out of the legislature."* She notes that some of the commissioners have shown interest in the topic and believes that the regional level would be an ideal place to spearhead such a movement as municipalities deal with too small an area to be effective, and the state is likely too big an area for the Agency of Agriculture to deal with effectively.

Despite her positive outlook, it is hard for her to picture how food policy might realistically fit into planning. *"Food policy is something that regional planning commissions have only begun to start really thinking about…"* From her perspective, food systems currently seems to be addressed only from *"the economic development side of things where agriculture is [considered] part of the economy."* But that will change, maybe not in the next year but in the near future. *"Everything starts pointing to this. How are we going to deal with the growth? What are we going to do? It starts factoring into how are you going to deal with these issues and food has to be one of them. Between that and the localvore movement, it is coming."* It will also take groups being vocal and approaching CCRPC, asking them to address food issues before any real attention is paid.

5.7 Bill Aswad, Commissioner on the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.

Figure 5h. CCRPC Logo

At 86, Bill Aswad leads a more active life than most 25 year olds. His life has been rich. Aswad

spent 45 years working as an engineer, during which time he became involved with the Burlington City Planning commission. This eventually led to his involvement in the regional planning commisision as a Burlington representative. Today, thirty years later, after serving on the board of the Vermont Association of Planning and Development, acting as president of the New England Association of Regional Councils, and presiding on the board of directors for the National Regional Council of Government, Aswad continues to serve on the CCRPC board. This is in addition to serving as a representative in the state legislature and hosting a once monthly TV program focused on current legislative issues. Aswad undisputedly has experience in the planning field few professional planners can match, and an awareness for planning processes at all levels of government.

Aswad was president of the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies at the time Act 200 was passed. As he described the political process that took place in order for it to pass, it became clear how dependent the future of planning in Vermont was on the political atmosphere. *"I made a presentation to [the governor] and she kept interrupting me. When we finished the meetings others in the room said wow she wasn't very receptive, the room was like an icebox. So we went to the natural resources committee and we went to other committees of the house and we got them to pass act 200."* It was only then that "*she finally caught on to what we were doing. She was a good governor but she kept focusing on municipalities not on regional planning. And what regional planning commissions are really all about is making sure that planning commissions of the municipalities work in concert with each other".* While the act may have passed, this story seems to really get to the heart of planning in Vermont. Municipalities he points out, hold the power. Regional planning can only work with municipalities through a review process and make recommendations for how to improve plans. Regional planning is also tied to the state by way of a work program that must be approved by the state.

When asked about the effectiveness of regional planning Aswad responded with a somewhat hesitant, *"It is to a degree"* and pointed to leadership as largely determining the effectiveness of the CCRPC. *"A lot of it depends on the executive director…we don't participate as much as we should. We need a director who's interested enough to make sure that the committee is represented…"* Aswad is also concerned at the lack of *"any real tangible things coming out of the planning commission these days".* Whereas under previous administrations the planning commission actively created special projects to address regional needs, the regional water district, for example, few comparable projects seem to come from the CCRPC anymore. This, he contends, has resulted in the CCRPC disappearing off the public's radar. *"Since Hogan (a previous director of CCRPC) left, people come up to me and say whatever happened to the Regional Planning Commission*? *We don't hear about it..."* Aswad is clearly frustrated by this notion and even offers solutions to increasing public awareness. *"People from public access TV are willing to come in and tape our meetings. The director doesn't want that. I said people don't even know we're there. They don't know what we're doing…"*

Beyond TV programming, Aswad believes the CCRPC should work harder at *"Identifying projects that improve the way of life in this area".* He recognizes a need to collaborate and benefit from cooperation among the many groups out there, in order to ensure a more regionally cohesive system. He gives examples of non profits and volunteers, as well as institutions such as schools, as places where the CCRPC ought to be involved. His number one concern, however, is the fact that transportation planning remains a separate entity from that of the rest of regional planning. "*I'm a strong believer that you can't separate transportation and land use. You know, if you are going to build a highway you want to know what's going to happen on either side of the highway as far as development is concerned which is land use."* Such a holistic approach to planning extends to all aspects of planning. When asked about the CCRPC's role in local food systems, he does not consider there to be a direct relationship. That said, regional planning is meant to facilitate healthy relationships across all sectors and political boundaries and in that respect he recognizes the impact that other decisions concerning say, mixed use development, parks, or industrial areas, could have on local food systems.

A limiting factor in accomplishing this goal beyond lack of authority, is limited funding.
"There was a time when the federal government used to subsidize regional planning commissions…that died [and now] no federal money comes." The state, with the passing of Act 200 was obligated to send income from the .75% increase in property transfer tax to support regional planning. But as seems to happen with state funding, that commitment lacked staying power. *That lasted for 2 or 3 years and then the state appropriation committee started giving the money to somebody else…from the state [we receive] a meager amount of money and the rest comes from the municipalities.*" As a result the regional planning commission is *"always hurting for money."*

For all of the fallbacks and limits to the CCRPC described, Aswad maintains a relatively positive view of regional planning. This may be attributable to his extensive interactions with others across the country working in regional planning. In his own words, *"I think we have a pretty good system…I think in general planning in Vermont is pretty well respected across the country. When I sat on the national board people took a look at what we were doing and told me point blank you're doing a good job in Vermont."* So while there may be significant improvements to be made, relatively speaking Vermont is in pretty good shape.

5.8 David White, Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning for the City of Burlington.

Figure 5i. City of Burlington Logo

"Around food systems, this issue is one that first popped up on my radar screen about 12 years ago, with a small group of people within the region, not just the city, who were talking about the issues of food security and having places to grow food locally and to reduce transport costs and support local economies, things like that."

David White, the Burlington City Planner, attributes most of the work that has been done with regards to food systems to the non-profit sector and small advocacy groups. *"Non profits are the real driving force…Our role in this is to do what we can to support them…make sure that the land is available, that we're not encouraging other types of impeding land uses in that part of the city to keep that and open for agricultural use and cultivation."* This positive support for local food systems wasn't always certain. Take the Intervale center which White refers to as the *"epicenter of local food issues in Burlington".* In the 1960's, a highway was planned to cut across what is now the only agricultural land in the city limits.

Today, the city is working to expand the number of acres of agricultural land by facilitating a transfer of unused property, owned by a utility company, to the Intervale center in order to allow them to expand their production. While there is still room to substantially increase production in the Intervale, the possibilities for expansion of agricultural land are limited in Burlington. There is, however, one other type of zoning that allows the city to support local food systems off the fields. With agricultural enterprise zones the *"intention is that product is grown here and some form of processing capability or value added capability is available right next door, whether it's packaging or jams, value added kinds of things, to have it in close proximity to where products are grown."* Zoning changes are the planning department's primary way to show support for agriculture. Yet even then, as White points out, their support is limited. *"We have zoning to keep out other things, but we can't direct the regulation…under state statute agricultural…activities are exempt from local zoning so we have no regulatory authority over farming."* It falls to the agency of agriculture to further regulate agricultural activities.

Beyond the Intervale, the City, through the Parks and Recreation Department, runs a community gardens program. Smaller sites are scattered throughout the city which can be rented on a yearly basis. The popularity of this program has the City looking to increase the program in acreage. This program combined with the Intervale gives Burlington a strong lead in the development of local food systems. That said White is quick to point out the work

which is happening beyond the city limits. *"There's a lot going on [in Burlington], that's for sure, and there are some cool things that have happened here just because of the proximity to the city and population base that are able to make those connections …but there is an awful lot of local agriculture, CSA's and things like that, which are springing up all over the countryside."*

Again he gives credit to non profits as the main sector helping to stimulate local food systems. While municipal governments may *"have a general appreciation for agriculture in their local economy and in the regional economy…they may not have a clearly articulated policy around preserving family farms and agricultural land."* The regional planning commission like city planning is considered by White as having a supporting role as well, and as a former employee of a regional planning commission, he has a pretty clear idea of the mentality there. He identified two areas for improvement within local food planning where greater collaboration among entities will have to happen in order to really be effective: processing capabilities, and agricultural land preservation. Processing refers back to the development of agricultural enterprise zones which is being currently in the works in Burlington. In terms of land preservation, *"[groups] need to come together on preserving lands to be available for agricultural in the future and pushing that agenda at the local level around land use policy."* He mentions that the CCRPC has worked on identifying productive agricultural lands using a Land Evaluation Site Assessment (LESA), in order to identify high priority lands for conservation but identifies a disconnect between the region's work and the local level. This is telling of White's perception of the overall relationship between regional and local levels.

White takes advantage of the CCRPC for its "*larger region wide studies and initiatives that look at overall growth and development patterns in the region*" but admits the contact between Burlington planning and the CCRPC is limited. He considers the CCRPC's main job as providing *"technical assistance to the local communities that have a small local staff."* Regionally based work tends to happen more directly; *"we have fairly ongoing conversations with surrounding towns if we have particular things we need to collaborate on."*

Does this system work? To this question White answers an emphatic "*No! Ultimately if you need to deal with complex and challenging and controversial regional growth and development issues you need to have some authority to actually do something about it and just talking about it falls short in addressing some of these pretty big issues around the regional growth and development."* He has clearly thought about this issue a great deal. *"Certainly in a place like Chittenden County where most of the issues that we struggle with have an increasingly large regional component to it…you have to kick it up to the next level… We often look to other places that have some regional form of government, Councils of Government (COG), something like that as more effective mechanisms to actually accomplish some of those goals."* He gives the obvious example of Portland, Oregon but says there are examples from around the country in which closer and more formal relationships have been formed between regional and local planning. He is clearly an advocate of the COG system, but recognizes that it would take legislative authority to make it happen. *"…[s]tate legislature would have to authorize it, enable it, in statute and give it the powers of duties."*

Even before that, however, there would have to be extensive community support. White sees the *"inherent distrust across New England of anything beyond local government, beyond local control"* as being the barrier to any improvements to the planning system. He doesn't think that most of the municipalities in Chittenden County are ready for such a bold move. Before that is even a possibility, *"…[w]e need a much better understanding and appreciation of how much we need each other. We are not islands in and of ourselves. Burlington can't be successful without the help of surrounding communities and those communities can't be successful without Burlington. If Burlington tanks, we're taking everybody with us…"* Special districts, where municipalities work together on one specific task, come up as a possible compromise, but as White sees it, there are already too many of these quasi regional entities and there won't be real cooperation until they are all working under one roof. *"Part of it is politics and part of it is history as to why they are still [separate]. So when they come together maybe that is a sign that there's an opportunity to really do something different."* But, as a final note he adds,

"It will never come from the state and if it did come from the state it would probably be soundly rejected and set us back decades. It has to come from the local municipalities that then make up those regional entities. They are all creatures of the local municipalities and when it comes up from the bottom, only then will it happen."

6 Analysis

In chapter three, planning and social movements were considered both in terms of their respective knowledge bases and with regards to their common roles. It is theorized that in recent decades planning has begun to reconsider forms of knowledge used, widening its scope to include experiential, personal and other value based knowledge. In order to incorporate this new knowledge, planning has been compelled to develop new roles. A comparison of the contemporary roles in planning and social movements suggests that a new space has been created in which planning and social movements might interact. In this chapter, this new space is explored and evidence of interaction between planning and local food movements in Chittenden County is sought after.

The analysis is structured around four categories developed to identify and define interaction between planning and local food movements. These include: Planners as linking local food movements to government; Planners as linking local food movement actors; Planners in a supporting role; and Planners as movement actors. As the primary instigators of this new basis for interaction, and also for the sake of simplicity, planners become the focus. The eight interviews introduced in the previous chapter, in combination with plans and surveys introduced in Chapter Four, are used as primary evidence in determining the modes of interaction.

6.1 Planners as Linking Local Food Movement and Government.

According to Sehested (2006), the planner has been placed in a strategic position between two traditionally opposing sides, government and social movements. Planners, she asserts, can help bridge these two sides under governance with such skills as mediation and collaboration. (Sehested 2006) The extent to which planners place themselves in the role as collaborator or mediator will first indicate whether planners in Chittenden County have in fact incorporated new types of knowledge into their practice. Secondly, it will investigate whether planners in Chittenden County act as a link between movements and government and what extent this role is adopted.

Planner as Mediator

While the idea that planners should work to balance power is never explicitly stated in Act 200 as a duty of regional or municipal planning commissions, it is, through a combination of duties addressed. Municipal planning in Vermont is required to hold public meetings, presenting the opportunity for community input and feedback. It is also required to be active in the regional planning commission which is tied to the state. These measures attempt to ensure fair process and balance of interests. (Act 200 1988:10) These concepts are more directly reflected in CCRPC's strategic plan, where the need to *"share power"* is prioritized. Their strategy for doing this entails promoting consensus building and collaboration across government levels as well as between government, non governmental organizations and civil society. (Strategic Plan 2007:4). These documents suggest that planning has moved beyond purely rational forms of knowledge. The concept of sharing power suggests that planning in Vermont has expanded its definition of knowledge to go beyond the confines of 'professional' or 'expert' knowledge, embracing what Friedmann (1973) refers to as personal knowledge. The use of the term consensus building is strongly indicative of the value Vermont planning bodies place on, at least on paper, experiential knowledge and organizational knowledge (Eyerman & Jamison 1991). This opens up space for knowledge to flow between and among citizens providing a medium in which to find common ground.

Whether planners have taken advantage of this new space as it pertains to the relationship between government and local food movement actors is another question. Sehested (2006) theorizes that planning has been placed in a strategic position between civil society and government. In Vermont municipal planning is in fact obligated by law to communicate with both the public and the regional and state governments making it ideally situated to adopt a mediating role. In Burlington this is the case, although in a rather limited sense. White (2008) considers the role of municipal planning as supporting the work of non profits, and specifically the Intervale, which he considers the *"driving force*" behind the local food movement in Chittenden County. This directly ties in to the goal in the 2007 version of Act 200 to support local food. Just as Pothukuchi & Kaufmann (2000) suggest in theory, the work done by the city to acquire and rezone an adjacent piece of property in order to allow expansion of the Intervale Center is a clear example of planning's ability to affect policy directly with zoning regulations. In this process, White sits between the Intervale Center and City Council which ultimately has the power to approve or reject plans. The Burlington City Planning Department has acted as a negotiator- where negotiator signifies a potentially influential form of mediation- in this process, ensuring balance is reached between the needs and wants of government and civil society in terms of zoning regulation. (White 2008) In this example, it seems that Sehested's (2006) theory of planner as mediator may prove to be legitimate.

On the other hand, Christa Alexander of Jericho Settlers Farm suggested that the planning department in some cases can end up limiting cooperation between government and local food movements. In her experience, existing zoning laws and regulation have often hindered an otherwise supported agricultural project from being realized. She states, *"Jericho really wants to support agriculture…where conflicts arise it is because the written regulations maybe don't say exactly what they need to."* (Alexander 2008) This suggests that planning, mired in traditional regulation, can just as easily inhibit the development of new relationships between government and local food movements. In this case, planning in Jericho is an example of where planning, neglecting to respond to the needs of both sides, has not acted as a reliable mediator between government and local food movements. This goes against both Sehested's (2006) and Jamison's (2004) beliefs that planning has opened up a new space, suggesting instead that planning may remain too embedded in traditional regulatory roles which favor outdated planning laws.

The CCRPC, surprisingly, considering the strong emphasis paid to balancing interests in the strategic plan, shows few signs of acting as a mediator within the local food movement in Chittenden County (Strategic Plan 2007). That said, the way in which the CCRPC is set up automatically links representatives from municipal government with non governmental interests. This happens every month around the board table where representatives of every background come together to decide on issues. As Potter (2008) asserts, regional planning can help to "*find that common ground".* This can happen in two ways. Firstly, the CCRPC by virtue of its providing a neutral arena, or level playing field where open discussion can take place acts as a convener. Here the provision of space and opportunity is arguably more important than the planner's involvement. This is characteristic of the mediating roles within both planning and social movement theory in that interests, both governmental and non-governmental, are brought together to work out differences themselves and agree on what will best suit the region as a whole (Sehested (2006) and Jamison (2004)). In more controversial cases, Potter (2008) suggested that planners may take on stronger roles as moderators, becoming more involved in the case to help find a solution between conflicted parties.

In either case, the CCRPC also provides informational resources and data for parties present to help smooth the process. In this setting it could be said that the CCRPC has embraced Friedmann's (1973) concept of transactive planning by working to connect personal knowledge and experiential knowledge brought to the table by the diverse commission members, with processed or technical knowledge. While this role seems to be limited with regards to local food movements, it does suggest potential for the CCRPC to act as mediator in the future.

Finally, where planning is not restricted to planning professionals, City Legacy could also be considered a mediator. This government based, community driven project has clearly been initiated in part to bring closer together the *"represented with the representative"* (Sehested 2006). City Legacy, from Clark's description, is a space where government meets community. This allows government to be closer to its constituents without provoking what Clark describes as a commonly negative reaction to city government. Through direct communication with residents at public meetings and interaction with non profits which have stronger ties to the community, City Legacy acts as a set of ears focused on getting the pulse of the community at the most basic level. This helps the city to identify and act on the *"rumblings…in the community" (Clark 2008).* Here, government is trying to *learn* from its 'client' and planners are the catalysts or conveners. This mutual learning process is a stark departure from the rational mindset (Friedmann 1973). In terms of food systems, City Legacy has acted as convener between non profits and the city, specifically in relation to the Burlington school food project. While it effectively has no power, City Legacy, in working to ensure that all voices are heard, seems to be taking a first step towards Sehested's (2006) "network democracy".

Planner as Collaborator

The government, through the creation of City Legacy, has provided a new space to inspire cooperation between non profits, citizens and the government. Speaking to Eyerman & Jamison's *(1991)*, definition of movements as *"…temporary public spaces, as moments of collective creation…"* it seems that City Legacy, through opening up a new 'organizational dimension' and allowing for increased collaboration among parties has itself created a small movement *(Eyerman & Jamison 1991:4).*

Indeed, promoting this interaction and encouraging dialogue is the primary job for Clark, the Outreach Coordinator for City Legacy. As both a loyal city employee and a servant to the public, Clark is ideally situated to promote cooperation despite lacking a planning degree. This is directly in line with Sehested's (2006) notion of collaboration in which the planner assumes the responsibility of creating connections and encouraging increased dialogue among stakeholders. (Sehested 2006) It also accomplishes many of the objectives of Jamison's (2004) vertical networker by transferring ideas across levels. This may in the long run help to institutionalize the local food movement in Burlington because linking government and local food movements even at this one intersection "*strategically enlarge[es] the spatial or institutional scope*" of the local food discussion. (Stevenson et al 2007:47) This link could be key to realizing the potential for partnerships to form around the development of hybrid ideas.

As a self-described *"forum for collaborative decision making",* the CCRPC stands to be a good candidate for being a collaborator as defined in planning theory. Beyond the CCRPC's own ambitions, planning law stands to ensure that collaboration is prioritized. Act 200 clearly states, *"A coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework shall guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and state agencies*" (Act 200 1988:2). The emphasis paid to collaboration among various government planning levels suggests that planning strives to be vertically integrated. Indeed, the CCRPC is strategically placed to act as vertical networker making *"strategic connections between structural, geographic or analytical levels"*. (Stevenson et al. 2007:47) More than internal government interaction, this collaboration, according to the CCRPC's strategic plan, ideally should extend beyond government to include the public as is implied by the emphasis on "*earning the public's respect".* (Strategic plan 2007:2)

Yet, the CCRPC, at least in the case of food policy issues, is only minimally involved in connecting the government with the community. This can to a large extent be contributed to the overall lack of work being done in relation to food systems. One exception is work being done in connection to agricultural land use and even that has been put on the back burner in recent years as higher priorities have taken precedence. The position on the commission meant to represent agriculture has been vacant for over a year now. This lack of concern for agriculture actually goes against Vermont Planning Law which explicitly encourages the development of strategies to ensure agricultural viability (Act 200 1988:4). Aswad (2008) stated that the CCRPC did not work directly with food systems issues, nor did he see

much connection between the Commission and non profit work. *"We don't interface too much with [non profits]." (Aswad 2008).*

The actions of Potter, a senior planner at the CCRPC, suggest otherwise. When still working on the agricultural project, she recognized various non profits and farmers of the region as being the experts in agricultural matters and looked to them to get a better idea of what was happening in the region and how the CCRPC could fit in (Potter 2008). While this could be considered a first step towards cooperation, it was in fact little more than an inquiry. Had the project not abruptly ended, the process may have developed, promoting active cooperation and formation of partnerships. In either case, it shows future potential for the CCRPC to promote collaboration.

What more clearly stands out from Potter's story is the extent to which planning in Vermont has embraced experiential knowledge in planning process. Communication based on the experience of actors directly involved may help to strengthen the connection between *"planner and client"* which Friedmann (1973) suggests is so important if, in the future, the CCRPC wishes to strengthen and develop its role as collaborator within the food systems arena. It also opens wide the possibilities for blending ideas from a wide range of fields and developing hybrid ideas and solutions. (Jamison 2008)

With the agricultural project disbanded, the CCRPC does still act as a collaborator in one food systems area where it counts, that is financial support. McGowan (2008) from the Intervale, and Potter from the CCRPC both assert that the regional planning commission acts as a vital link to state funding for non profits and communities. McGowan maintains that funding is her only connection to regional planning, albeit an important one. Even so, CCRPC's role might best be described as sustaining a weak form for cooperation between government and non profits. This cooperation, rather than voluntary, seems to be forced, based on need and protocol, rather than on a true inclination to work together. This does not have to be the case. Gordon (2008) of the South Hero Land Trust and representative of NOFA, believes the expansion of the CCRPC's role in securing financial support for non profit work would be extremely beneficial for local food movements. The CCRPC, it seems, has both the ability and the support of non profits to more actively facilitate collaborative funding efforts by encouraging the formation of partnerships across levels and accurately conveying the demand for local food systems support from the state. This could impact policy formation at the state level, ultimately giving more support to the local level. Such vertical networking could help to mobilize local food movements bringing the concepts of local food closer to institutionalization and potentially place the CCRPC in a more powerful position (Jamison 2004).

As it functions now, McGowan (2008) identifies fundraising as a serious hindrance to cooperation among non profits. *"…[f]olks are reluctant to bring folks to the table"* because of the implications of spreading already limited funding sources even thinner. She suggests more transparency across organizations about funding sources and ultimately partnering with other organizations in fundraising efforts as possible solutions.

Summary

In Vermont Planning law and the CCRPC's strategic plan, emphasis is placed on sharing power, consensus building and vertical integration, strongly conveying a message that new forms of planning knowledge are being embraced and that regional planning is taking on a role as mediator and collaborator on a vertical spectrum. Yet when it comes to local food movements, this planning role appears to be rather weak, suggesting that planning theory may not be accurate in assessing the current role of the planner. Limited to connecting people along vertical funding lines, the relationship may best be described as cooperation more than true collaboration.

However, there are some exceptions and past examples which show potential for stronger collaboration in the future. Meetings set up by the CCRPC illustrate regional planning's role as convener for governmental and non-governmental organizations across all levels. The City of Burlington seems to be taking on a negotiating role albeit only as it pertains to zoning and regulation. It is hard to say whether this is the case with other municipal planning commissions but it does corroborate

Sehested's theory of planner as mediator between government and non profits. The strongest instance where planning facilitates the link between local food movements and government seems to be happening outside of traditional planning boundaries with City Legacy, a government/non profit hybrid. It is strong because it acts as a catalyst, enabling groups to work together directly and creatively on food systems issues and ultimately encouraging partnerships and the development of collaborative solutions. This corroborates Eyerman and Jamison's (2004) social movement theory as new space has been developed to facilitate collaboration between and among non profits and government institutions. In doing so, it has also provided an example of how planning fulfills a requirement of social movements, suggesting that cooperation between planning and the local food system is not an impossibility.

6.2 Planners as Linking Food Movement Actors

In this section, the level of interaction between planners and local food movement actors in Chittenden County will be evaluated, in addition to the level of interaction planners initiate between various food movement actors. Investigation of the latter will help to determine the degree to which planners facilitate connections among local food movement actors. Investigation of the former will present an idea of the level of communication and learning that passes between the two entities, and uncover potential for increased knowledge exchange.

Planner as Facilitators

For almost every actor interviewed for this project, planners and activists alike, developing partnerships among local food movement actors was considered a high priority. More than local or regional planning, it is non profits that seem to be filling the facilitative role, or what in the absence of planning may more appropriately be referred to as the role of the horizontal networker. Alexander (2008) perceived non profits as collaborating primarily in instances of overlap. *"I feel like they have all found their appropriate niches…[non profits] maybe overlap, but then they partner."* (Alexander 2008) This perception is in part verified by the actions of Gordon, MacKay, and McGowan. All three, to a greater or lesser extent have personally contacted other non profits working on food systems issues in order to place their organizations within the greater context, thereby avoiding overlap and filling in gaps. This outreach and organization of groups is considered characteristic of both Sehested's (2006) identified need for coordination among projects and Jamison's (2004) concept of horizontal networking.

McGowan (2008) boasted of over 40 existing partnerships with people in food systems but felt there was still much work to be done to really form a unified movement. This suggests that the majority of these partnerships might more accurately be described as little more than acknowledged cooperation. Similarly, Gordon (2008) connected with several organizations to learn about best practices and methods that were already being tested in other areas or by other organizations, but gave little indication that true cooperative working relationships existed. Finally, in an attempt to increase collaboration, MacKay set up the "*community planning partnership*" with the similar goals of avoiding unnecessary overlap, and identifying needs which remained unmet (MacKay 2008). As a more permanent and formal entity, this shows signs of eventually being more effective at creating lasting, meaningful partnerships. In every case, it is clear that each individual organization takes on the role of facilitator or horizontal networker, reaching out to organizations which they feel carry similar objectives or can in some way help to accomplish the particular objectives of that organization (Sehested 2006; Jamison 2004).

Whether they feel this system is effective as is, or whether they have not yet come up with a more holistic way to connect, these non profits remain independent of others for coordination. It may be that there is no involvement on the part of planners, not because there is no need for planners to become involved in movement work, but simply because local food movements have been successful on their own accord. According to Potter (2008), the CCRPC could become involved, providing resources, staff time and funding. However, it is rare that they do because work like that is *"so frequently grassroots…you get enough support and it happens locally."* (Potter 2008) This is evident in the success of non profit organizations such as Healthy City,

Smart Growth Vermont, and South Hero Land Trust. This system may be adequate in the small state of Vermont due to what Gordon (2008) refers to as the '*congenial atmosphere'* in which 'everybody knows everybody' and what each organization is working on. Yet these unstructured and sporadic instances of cooperation seem to lack both stability and depth. With groups conducting their own outreach, the focus continues to be limited to the bounds of their own specialized missions. This system works well enough to promote cooperation among many groups and possibly even the formation of stronger partnerships among a few. However, creating partnership through facilitation with the intent of forming of an integrated movement remains, at least currently, out of reach.

More than just a link between government and civil society, City Legacy also works to facilitate cooperation between actors within the local food movement itself. As Clark says, *"what we do best is create networks and keep aware of what's going on so we can connect people to relevant resources or other people."* This is a perfect example of what Sehested (2006) means by planners managing networks. As a non profit/government hybrid, City Legacy may not have any authority, but it does have the unique ability to focus more time and energy on integrating groups without threatening its own mission, a task that specialized non profits would be hard pressed to accomplish. In essence City Legacy's mission is just that, helping other organizations and groups fulfill the mission of the city. It is perhaps because of this freedom and their broad mission that City Legacy has been so successful at nurturing the Burlington school food project.

While the CCRPC may have more structured obligations, it, like City Legacy, maintains little authority. Though a government organization, the CCRPC in many ways behaves like a non profit whose principal mission is *"trying to coordinate the region*s". (Potter 2008) This combination allows the CCRPC to focus on integrating groups within the region. Aswad (2008) states one of the main roles of the CCRPC as being to *"facilitate healthy relationships across sectors and political boundaries." (Aswad 2008)* This alludes to the CCRPC's role in promoting integration among entities. Likewise, Potter (2008) sees her job as a regional planner to bring people together to try to build consensus. This description is directly in line with the CCRPC's strategic plan which emphasizes its role as being a "*forum for building consensus*" and additionally, places importance on creating partnerships across a horizontal plane, among regions, organizations and the private sector. (Strategic Plan 2007:4) According to Potter (2008), the CCRPC works to bring people together and facilitate meetings within sectors. One pertinent example is the CCRPC's natural resource council. Representatives from several specialized non profits and institutions were invited to convene to discuss ways in which to best integrate the diverse interpretations of natural resources work into one cohesive natural resources management plan for Chittenden County. This round table setting is an attempt to find common ground and minimize work done at cross purposes by encouraging the development of partnerships, supporting Sehested's (2006) assertion that one of the planners main roles is to ensure *"coordination and communication between many projects and networks"* (Sehested 2006:6). Yet in the case of food systems, no equivalent work is being done at the regional level.

One identifiable barrier to progressing along this front is the perception of the CCRPC on the part of non profit organizations as yet another partnership rather than as an entity with the potential to facilitate the creation of a more integrated food system. White (2008) blamed this on the CCRPC's lack of authority. Similarly, MacKay (2008) attributed the CCRPC's limited role to *"having no teeth"* to really effect change (MacKay 2008). For Gordon (2008), the CCRPC had valuable knowledge to share, but beyond that exchange interaction was limited while McGowan (2008) had no contact with the CCRPC.

Potter (2008) attributes this to the young age of the local food movement in the area and the initiative of *'grassroots'* organizations which get enough support locally that they do not need to recruit more regional support. While she admits there is little work being done on the part of the CCRPC now, she does seem confident that it will come, *"not in the next year, but maybe a little further out".* Furthermore, she believes that the regional planning commission would be an ideal candidate to spearhead local food systems work, because geographically they deal with an area appropriate to local food systems (municipalities being

too small, and the state being too big) and because they have the ability to bring people together as shown in the case of the natural resources council. This relates to the reasoning behind Pothukuchi and Kaufmann's (2000) theory, which was based on the observation that planners, as part of daily practice, are looking to integrate different sectors of society to provide a comprehensive plan. With an already strong understanding of how things relate, working to integrate actors in food systems would be building on an already established role. (Pothukuchi & Kaufmann 2000) However, as White (2008) asserts, this will not happen before there is a *"better understanding and appreciation of how much we need each other."*

Cultivating such an appreciation might first require outreach and education as to how planning could be utilized. Clearly telling of this is Aswad's (2008) frustration over the fact that people tend not to be aware of the CCRPC's existence much less its potential role as a resource. He blames the wider community's ignorance on the CCRPC itself and its current management. *"People don't even know we're there, they don't know what we are doing".* (Aswad 2008) McGowan's limited connection to the city and general impression of the CCRPC seemed to corroborate this frustration. (McGowan 2008) Alexander (2008), as well, had little perception of what the CCRPC was doing beyond working to "*coordinate the regions*". Potter (2008) implies that this may be a chicken and egg case, when she states that the CCRPC will likely not start to seriously work on food systems issues until an organization or coalition comes to the CCRPC and states a need for increased focus on food policy. This may not be without good reason, because as White (2008) points out, the initiative needs to come from the bottom up to be realized. *"It has to come from the local municipalities that that then make up those regional entities.*" So while the CCRPC waits for the go ahead, the community waits to be informed of the benefits of working with the CCRPC.

Planner as Communicator

Closely related to facilitation and necessary for the creation of truly effective partnerships is communication. Loosely defined, the terms are interchangeable and according to Sehested (2006), the term communication is used to describe collaboration. Yet between Sehested's (2006) use of the word and Friedmann's (1973) understanding of communication there are distinct, if subtle, differences. Friedmann's (1973) communication happens on a deeper level where dialogue is seen as a way to 'facilitate mutual learning' and share and create ideas. It seems that partnerships build on communication and where a foundation for communication is lacking, facilitation may be underutilized.

A case in point: McGowan (2008) and MacKay (2008) from the non profit sector, as well as Clark (2008) from the city have all encouraged greater cooperation on local food systems issues. Yet McGowan (2008) continues to point to a lack of shared language among partners as being one of major challenges in her job. Her answer is developing Memorandums of Understanding between partners. MacKay (2008), even more so, stresses the lack of communication among groups as slowing progress and points to a need to agree on a unified direction. *"I just don't think we talk enough to say what the underlying threads are that link organizations together."* She emphasizes this saying *"I think in some ways it is a dialogue issue… we need to find a common language that we can talk about."* Clark (2008) too, believes that one of the most vital improvements would be developing a shared language. What is happening here seems to be an example of the cosmological dimension in formation. While each organization has a specialized discourse based in scientific or factual data, the persistent need for a common language suggests that these discourses have not managed to translate more complex and specialized ideas into a larger integrated and universally recognized understanding of the movement. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991)

In other words, local food systems organizations may cooperate. However, cooperation is likely to occur at a superficial level until underlying communication issues can be resolved. Positioned outside the network of non profits, a translator would be able to recognize the bigger picture and identify common issues that link organizations (Jamison 2004). In doing so, distinct ideas may come together to form a common language that will reach a greater audience, helping to mobilize the movement and encouraging integration in new innovative ways. (Jamison 2004)

With a regional perspective, the CCRPC has the ability to step back from the day to day agenda of non profit organizations and place the work in a greater context. This perspective could open up new possibilities that an actor embedded in the system might miss. This fits perfectly into the overall mission of the CCRPC, as it attempts to create a more cohesive regional system through communication and collaboration (CCRPCVT 2008). The CCRPC, precisely because of its lack of authority, focuses on developing *"consensus policies and strategies"* rather than implementation policies (Potter 2008). This focus aligns with the needs identified by McGowan (2008), MacKay (2008) and Gordon (2008). To again use the natural resources committee as an example, this committee focuses on building shared understanding for how to approach natural resources management in Chittenden County. Were a shift in priorities to occur at the CCRPC, there is potential to do the same in terms of local food systems. Through such work the CCRPC is taking on a social movement role as translator, while also addressing the planning based role of communicator. Just as Friedmann (1973) suggests with his theory on mutual learning, the CCRPC has the ability to listen and learn combining knowledge and perspectives into functional ideas. In a situation where every party involved has its own ideas but is in need of mutual understanding, such third party facilitation may prove useful.

Summary

There may be a future role for planners as facilitators of the local food system, as there are hints that it may be headed that way. Currently however, it seems that the majority of interaction among non profits in food systems is a result of their own initiative. Government based planners are utilized not for their facilitative capabilities, but rather for their experiential knowledge. That said, this system seems to have flaws, where collaboration taking place between local food organizations is in most cases limited to a weak form for cooperation. This limits the development of more innovative collaboration. An exception may be City Legacy, which as a non traditional, government based planning entity, has opened up an arena for stronger partnership formation between food systems and planning. It should be noted however, that City Legacy's work is limited in both scope and geographically. While the CCRPC, the more formal planning body, has taken on a facilitative role in other areas, it has not yet done so with regards to local food movements. Where the CCRPC does show great potential is in facilitating the development of a deeper understanding among local food actors through communication. One issue local food movement actors in Chittenden County seem to be struggling with is the lack of shared language. In this case, a planning body with a wider perspective and a mission which stresses that perspective may be the ideal candidate to facilitate sessions in which such issues can be openly discussed. This is especially true if the planning body has experience in facilitation as the CCRPC does. In this way, the CCRPC could help to mobilize local food movements by promoting better and deeper communication.

6.3 Planner in a Supporting Role

Planner as Technician

To recall from theory, the planner has long had the responsibility of researching and compiling data and information on which political decisions and plans could be based. While much of planning has changed, these aspects remain a part of their duties. Under new planning theory the role of technician is considered by Healey (1992) to be an information gatherer, while Pothukuchi and Kaufmann (2000) use the term 'technical' when referring to data collection and analysis. This is directly in line with Act 200 (2007) which requires both regional and municipal planning commissions to do research and gather data on land use, preservation, and other relevant topics.

While municipal planning may perform these duties, in Burlington this does not appear to be the primary reason for interaction with the local food movement. Instead, interaction, according to White (2008), tends to surround regulation and zoning. This form for interaction can be considered technical from a legal standpoint, but is a departure from the definitions offered by Healey (1992) and Pothukuchi & Kaufmann (2000). That said, other municipalities do provide these services for food systems related issues. MacKay, for example, has utilized the GIS

capabilities of several municipalities in which she has worked to compensate for resources which Smart Growth Vermont lacks.

At the regional level, there is quite a bit more interaction surrounding research and information. This is partially due to the obligation of all regional planning commissions in the state to *"provide technical assistance… to municipalities in the preparation and maintenance of plans, capacity studies and bylaws and in related implementation activities"* and to research and inventory all countywide assets (Act 200, 2007: 358). Regional planning commissions are not consumed by legal responsibilities such as zoning or enforcement issues on a daily basis, and can therefore focus more energy on providing technical assistance. Local municipalities and non profits regularly take advantage of the CCRPC in this capacity. While bigger towns like Burlington may rely on their own fully staffed planning department to conduct research, smaller municipalities in the region do rely on the CCRPC for technical assistance in tasks such as writing municipal plans or creating GIS based maps or models (Potter 2008). The Town of Hinesburg, as an example, has used the CCRPC for GIS capabilities and for more sophisticated modeling techniques. The CCRPC's technical resources are also utilized by the non profit sector. Gordon (2008) for example, has used the CCRPC as a resource for information about best practices and as a sort of database of past projects, to learn of successes and failures. In addition to using the CCRPC as a resource itself, City Legacy has on several occasions referred non profits and other groups from the local food movement to the regional planning commission. (Clark 2008) The CCRPC however, is not used universally as a resource. Neither McGowan (2008) nor Alexander (2008) had much interaction with the commission, nor could either easily envision how planning might assist them in fulfilling their respective objectives.

This analysis suggests that there is more than one way in which planners provide technical expertise to local food movement actors. Interaction between planners and local food movement actors surrounding technical need or capability happens very much on a case by case basis, with municipalities and organizations coming to the CCRPC as needed. Planners expect and are clearly prepared to provide technical advice both in terms of data, information, and mapping. It may therefore be correct, as Pothukuchi & Kaufmann (2000) theorize, to assume that planner's research can help to identify needs and, in doing so, support local food movements. However, it would appear that some organizations remain unaware of the assistance that regional planning can offer in this respect and planners are not actively working to advertise this service. The resulting dependency on the part of planning for non profits to initiate interaction is likely limiting the formation of a strong relationship between planners and local food movement actors. This is not solely a technical matter, rather it applies to every role discussed in this chapter and may be one reason for planning having such a weak presence in Chittenden County.

Summary

The role of technician, a remnant from earlier planning, still retains a substantial role in planning today. Both municipal and regional planning bodies have a responsibility to provide technical advice. In terms of local food movements, the city of Burlington acts primarily as a legal technician, giving advice on zoning and land use issues, while other municipalities have offered themselves as a resource for GIS and other more technical capabilities. Similarly, GIS, informational and best practices assistance has been provided to local food movement actors who have proactively approached the CCRPC or the municipal planning bodies. Whether acting as technician is their primary responsibility can only be determined when compared to the other roles described in this chapter. It does however seem unlikely, based on this evaluation, that planners are only concerned with technical aspects, especially when considering the fact that the requirement to provide technical assistance in Act 200 is one of many other obligations of regional planners.

6.4 Planners as Social Movement Actors

Theory suggested that with the alignment of knowledge, there was potential that, more than just complimenting social movements by taking on certain roles, planning could actually become part of a movement. In other words, planners act not just on behalf of social movement actors, but as social movement actors

themselves. Following the theory of Davidoff (Tietz 2000), the intent of the planner and the activist is the same. Planners step out of their traditional bounds to right an imbalance in power, ensure equal representation, and generally uphold democratic principles. In this section, it is investigated whether there have been instances of this in the case of the Chittenden County local food movement.

Planner as Advocate

In Chittenden County, one case in particular seemed to stand out as a clear example of advocacy planning: Smart Growth Vermont. Smart Growth Vermont formed around concerns that development was rampant and unchecked. According to the founders of the organization, planning in its traditional government based form was inadequately addressing the issue. Moreover, through zoning and regulation, it was promoting a system which was enabling sprawl. Rather than relying on local or regional planning to change, the founders of Smart Growth Vermont took matters into their own hands by establishing a non profit organization. This action aligns with one of Davidoff's outlined characteristics of advocacy planning in that it occurs within *"separate community based institutions* (Tietz 2000:293). The organization today advocates for 'smarter' community oriented planning which can be argued is under represented in government based planning. In essence, Smart Growth Vermont is a non-traditional, non profit based planning body which advocates for one specific type of planning. Yet, the situation is more complex due to the fact that they cannot be successful without interacting and cooperating with established government-based planning. As MacKay (2008) says, *"they need to invite us in, the Select board and planning board need to get approval, the regional planning commissions need to feel comfortable with us working there…we don't want to compete with them or feel like we are stepping on any toes."* There is a fine balance that Smart Growth Vermont must tread, working with them and simultaneously urging change. As a non-traditional planning organization, they must nurture relationships with more traditional municipal planners. There is no direct animosity between conflicting sides as Davidoff's notion of advocacy planning may have implied, instead it seems it occurs through carefully arranged partnerships. (Tietz 2000) This arrangement does, however, suggest that social movement actors are urging planners to work with them as opposed to the other way around.

As separate entities, it would seem natural that non profits could more easily suggest alternatives to the status quo than government based planning entities which tend to remain embedded in the 'traditionally accepted' ways of doing things. This may be true for municipal planners such as White who is constrained in his role by legal obligations such as zoning enforcement. However, the CCRPC, with fewer strict obligations in terms of planning law, and the fact that it acts "*kind of like a non-profit*", has more freedom to determine it's own agenda. (Alexander 2008) The CCRPC retains a higher degree of freedom to research and implement projects which they identify as priorities. As an example, in the 2006 Chittenden County Regional plan it states that *"the quality of agricultural commodities (such as freshness or variety) can be enhanced by local production."(CCRP 2006)* While there is currently little sign of movement on the part of the CCRPC to actively support this statement, Potter (2008) implies that it may just not be the right time. She asserts that the CCRPC could in fact advocate for local food movements under the right circumstances and attributes the CCRPC's lack of involvement in the local food movement to a lack of expressed need on the part of local food movement actors. That said, Potter (2008) suggests that this may not always be the case. *"Sometimes initiatives are driven because we see that the need is there, we think that the time is right, something needs to be done...Sometimes it's so controversial we have to convene it."* This implies that government based planning could in fact take on a role as advocate, even if controversial, in an effort to relieve tensions through democratic process. Such action replaces the use of rationally based methods with value based methods. It also requires the utilization of organizational and personal knowledge in regional planning. In such an event, Sehested (2006) would be accurate in her view of planning as an entity working to uphold democratic principles through advocacy.

To recall from the case study intro, Act 200 (2007) requires all

planning bodies in Vermont to hold public meetings. While this law ensures that the public is informed, it does not necessarily ensure that the public is included in the process. The CCRPC's strategic plan partially addresses this difference by placing additional importance on *"earning the public's respect"* (Strategic plan 2007:2). This strategy is in part fulfilled by giving the public the opportunity to be directly involved in decision making. This shows respect for personal and experiential knowledge on the part of the planner, who as facilitator delegates power to the stakeholders involved. As facilitators of region-wide meetings the main role of CCRPC is to bring people together. One example of this is the work done on the part of the CCRPC regarding a circumferential highway to be developed through the city. Once the meeting was arranged, the staff left it to those present to shape the discussion. *"Staff didn't set the policies for [the meetings], the task group ultimately laid it out."(Potter 2008)* Planners are ideal for this role because of their *"organizational skills and social competence along with a wide range of experiences from working in different settings". (Jamison 2004:32*) This illustrates the similarities between the work of the planner in Chittenden County and social movement theory.

City Legacy too, organizes public meetings and encourages dialogue among residents and community members in relation to the Burlington School Food Project. As Clark (2008) says, "*all the work that we are doing as a city is coming from the needs and wants of the people of the city. I hope we're staying in line with what the community wants to see."* As one of the five common visions developed by City Legacy, public involvement is closely in line with their overall mission and fulfills what Healey (1992) considers to be a vital role for planners.

In working to fulfill their mission, the staff at Smart Growth Vermont act as advocates, bringing communities together around the issue of development and planning. This is an example of Sandercock's (1998) community involvement which she deems so important to planning today. Smart Growth America is aware that goals cannot be met without community support. To bolster support, one of their tactics is to empower communities by giving them the ability to implement Smart Growth ideas if they so choose to. One prime example of this is the 'community toolbox' developed by Smart Growth Vermont. Once aware of the issues, communities, through workshops and meetings can begin to formulate their own customized plans using this toolbox. This is directly in line with Christensen's (1985) notion that conflicts will best be resolved when groups are empowered to find their own solutions.

Summary

In Chittenden County, advocacy planning is a role largely taken on by non profit organizations. Rather than planning becoming a local food movement actor, it seems that local food movement actors have become planners. This broadens the definition of planner, questioning the need for professional planners. This is unsurprising in terms of advocacy, because, as Davidoff describes, it can often be too controversial to advocate within institutional settings. However, the traditional planner is not entirely separated from this work for two reasons; one, the advocacy planner must cooperate with traditional planners to make advancements, and two, on the regional level, there is openness to work towards similar goals if the opportunity presents itself. It was also shown that Smart Growth Vermont, City Legacy, and the CCRPC all work to a certain extent to bring individuals and groups together and open the discussion to a wider range of people.

7 Findings and Implications

In the previous chapter, an investigation based on the theoretical framework produced a number of empirical findings. In this chapter, the results of the five sections of the empirical analysis will be combined and evaluated in an attempt to answer the first two sub-questions of the problem formulation which form the basis of this investigation. In answering the sub-questions, the main question, **How is planning involved in the local food movement in Chittenden County and what would improve the nature of this relationship?,** will be addressed. The third sub-question will be considered in the chapter to follow.

7.1 Findings

To what extent has space been created to allow for interaction between planners and local food movement actors in Chittenden County?

It is difficult to identify the point at which planning bodies in Vermont shifted from following a strictly rational approach to more inclusive, wider perspective of planning without evaluating planning in Vermont before the shift to governance. However the primary purpose of this project is not to establish *when* that change occurred, but rather to establish *whether* that change has occurred. Evidence from the empirical analysis suggests that the CCRPC subscribes to the ideas of new planning theory on paper, in both planning law and in its strategic plan. These documents emphasize collaboration, consensus building, the involvement of the public and participation. These are all characteristics that relate to experiential, cosmological and personal knowledge, a sign that planners in Chittenden County subscribe to new planning theory. Interviews also suggested that planning bodies in Vermont see value in incorporating types of knowledge beyond just technical, a clear sign that new planning theories have precedence over purely rational thinking. Looking strictly at the alignment of planning and local food movements against this evidence, space for interaction between the two entities has clearly been created. However, when it comes to the CCRPC *acting* on these principles in connection with local food movements the result is patchy at best. This may suggest to some that planning and local food movement roles do not align. However, this apparent lack of interaction is more likely due to the fact that this relationship has not yet been pursued. Substantiating this observation is the fact that the CCRPC has taken on the associated roles of collaborator and facilitator in similar circumstances, such as with natural resources. This suggests that even though the space is not currently being utilized, a new space for potential interaction between planners and local food movements exists.

In what capacity does the planner interact with the local food movement in Chittenden County?

In the previous chapter, the exploration of the case study was framed around four scenarios as to how planning and local food movements might interact. While the methods of interaction are complex and difficult to break down into four simplified categories, there are some clear patterns which stand out as a result of this process.

Most apparent from this investigation is that there is very little interaction between planning and local food movements to date. This may be attributed in part to the fact that several of these relationships are in the early stages of development. Most of the interaction that has occurred has been in a technical capacity. The municipal planning level has been used primarily as a technical resource in terms of zoning. The CCRPC has been approached for its GIS and modeling capabilities, plan writing expertise and as an information library.

In terms of facilitating cooperation between local food movement actors, planning has shown to have a limited role. Interaction between planners and local food movement actors appears to be more an act of informing and being informed about the work in which each are engaged than as an invitation to deeper collaboration or the development of common projects. Signs of stronger collaboration in the form of partnerships tend to be among non profits in the absence of planning. One exception is the CCRPC's role as a link between government and local food movement actors to help secure funding for non profits working on local food projects. In this fashion, the CCRPC and local food systems-related non profits can be considered cooperating entities, showing a weak form of collaboration. Generally speaking, there is little evidence of partnerships, collective development of ideas or shared output which would suggest a higher level of collaboration.

However, arguably the most important finding to emerge from the analysis is the demonstrated potential for increased integration in the future. This potential is based on instances in which the CCRPC has taken on collaborative and communicative roles in situations unrelated to local food movements. For example the CCRPC acts as an intermediary between regional, municipal and non governmental partners and is experienced in bringing together stakeholders and mediating commission meetings. This was illustrated by its role in the natural resources sector as well as in the development of the since abandoned agricultural plan. All of this work shows potential for planning to help create a more integrated food system. In addition, with a broader perspective and experience in participatory facilitation and communication, planning could assist in the development of a common language which seems to be holding the movement back from further integration. However, there seems to be a general skepticism among local food movement actors of how useful the regional planning commission could be in local food movements. They cite lack of authority and funding problems as disadvantages that limit the CCRPC's capacity to effectively assist local food movements.

It should also be mentioned that in more than one instance , local food movement actors seemed to be taking on the role of the planner as opposed to the other way around. This is supported by advocacy theory but presents the development of an interesting new dynamic between government based planning and non-governmental planning. Whether this is effective in the long run could begin to influence the future of planning. Likewise, the government/community based hybrid of City Legacy seemed to effectively take on the roles of mediator, collaborator, and facilitator, from a more neutral, non-traditional position. This too, may be an important indication of the direction in which planning could move to more effectively interact with movement work.

7.2 Further Implications

These findings have raised a number of questions that merit further discussion. Therefore, before moving on to address the third and final sub-question, the following section will attempt to answer the greater implications of the findings that were not fully addressed by answering the sub-questions.

Is there a need for increased interaction?

The results of the empirical analysis found that there was clear potential for planning to increase its level of interaction with local food movements. This supports Pothukuchi & Kaufmann's (2000) assertion that planning and food systems are a natural fit. What is less clear is whether there is an identified need for increased interaction. The CCRPC and the municipal planning commissions seem busy enough without incorporating food systems into their agendas. In fact, having too much to do in too little time was the original reason for the agricultural project being pushed aside. Likewise, non profits seem to work effectively without incorporating planning.

It could be argued however, that in order for planning to effectively create a comprehensive plan, it is imperative that the food system be incorporated. Food systems affect every sector of society and neglecting to consider food systems threatens the very viability of regional and town plans. Likewise, non profit organizations may feel that they are effectively collaborating

directly because they are satisfying their own organization's goals, but they may not effectively be addressing the goals of the larger movement if other pertinent organizations are neglected or forgotten in that collaboration.

In Chittenden County, non profits have shown their ability to be effective at mobilizing the local food movement and have come a long way in producing a comprehensive local food system. Despite this progress, non profits cannot alone ensure that food systems are fully integrated across all sectors of society. By increasing integration with planning, which is set up to address the broader spectrum, the system as a whole will be better addressed.

In a similar vein, the question was raised as to whether a more centralized system for non profit work might improve the system. The majority of the interviewees, while longing for simplification, balked at the idea, believing centralization entirely missed the point of having a locally based system (McGowan (2008), Gordon (2008), Clark (2008). Local food movements work because of the direct local connections and personal relationships that develop between actors and individuals. A centralized system would lose this capability. Hence, promoting the merger of non profits would be losing sight of the primary objective of local food systems.

Since the number of organizations working for local food movements is not likely to decrease in the near future and centralization is unrealistic, the need for collaboration may be even more vital to realizing an integrated movement. Planning, with the ability to stand back from the movement and view it as a whole, might bring a perspective to local food movements that actors from within the movement might not be able to observe, identifying ways to integrate without losing that vital local connection.

Integration may not be viewed as necessary because of a false sense of food security in the United States. As it stands now, the local food system in Burlington is viewed more as a luxury than as a need. This may be the reason that planning has not prioritized local food systems. Alexander (2008) points to the fact that people take the availability of food for granted in this country. She pointed to the ability to depend on a fossil fuel economy as the reason for there not being more widespread support of local food movements. As Potter (2008) reflected, it may take a recognized or more immediate need such as an issue of food security to put local food on the CCRPC's agenda.

Local food systems may become of increasing importance as food systems are increasingly unable to rely on the existing global economy. As current events suggest and as Alexander (2008) and Potter (2008) both corroborate, bigger concerns about the globalized system, for example, its dependency on fossil fuel and harmful chemicals, may eventually render attention to local food movements critical. Until then, the idea that there is a 'need' for integration of local food into planning may be substituted by 'want' giving it a lower priority. This will hinder any move on the part of government-based planning to incorporate food systems due to the fact that government money is allocated based on priority and may help to explain why planning activities are increasingly found to be taking place outside of government entities.

Redefining Planner

The analysis has highlighted the fact that planning in the contemporary sense may no longer be exclusive to planners with a professional degree in a government based setting. Expanding the variety of knowledge to include experiential and personal, both which have been deemed as important to effective planning in contemporary planning theory, may be responsible for the expansion of planning activities outside the confines of a professional degree.

The sentiment that planning in such a confined setting is no longer adequate to address planning related concerns has provoked some organizations like Smart Growth Vermont, to take on a role traditionally held by planners. This realization that other groups are beginning to address these concerns without consultation of planners may be seen as a cause for recent changes in planning. Additionally, it highlighted the public's lack of confidence in planning compelling planning to rethink its position. This is supported by Sehested (2006) who ascertains that planning, in

order to retain any relevance, must reconsider its role.

Whatever the case, it seems that the definition of planner is shifting and beyond just changing the role of the professional planner, it may also be opening up the planning field to non professionals. This has several implications. It may relieve some of the pressures of government based planners, enabling them to focus on roles such as zoning and other regulatory planning which remain necessarily tied to government, while other roles, such as advocacy planning can in effect be outsourced to non profit organizations. It may be that the number of new roles professional planners are compelled to fill under governance is unrealistic. In this case, the non profit work done to compliment professional planners may be a welcome change. That said, the influx of new 'planners' to the cause implies a certain level of competition for the professional planner, making their role even more uncertain. With such a great number of organizations working as collaborators, facilitators and mediators, there is a real chance that planning as a profession may be lost in the crowd. Not least, this outsourcing could have severe implications, because while non professionals may be addressing similar issues, most such organizations have no accountability to the greater community.

It is granted that most non profits have the best of intentions on this front, yet it is important to remember that it is their specific mission, and the decisions of their board that direct all work. Smart Growth Vermont for example works to address inadequate planning, but inadequate is relative and focusing specifically on one area, may preclude work on other related concerns. As Potter from the CCRPC indicated, a network of non profits may be able to create a comprehensive plan in one area, i.e. local food, but they tend to fall short in terms of linking that plan with what is occurring in other sectors of society.

This is where professional planning may be vital. This is where planning, aside from connecting actors within local food movements, may make the important connections between those actors and other sectors of society. More than municipal planning, which seems to be mired in its own regulatory obligations, at least in Vermont, regional planning seems ideal for this role. It is not only positioned to see all activity taking place in the county, it is its duty and mission. The focus on creating a cohesive regional plan positions the regional planning commission to best take on new collaborative planning efforts and link organizations across sectors.

The exception to this, which surfaced in the analysis, may be hybrid entities like City Legacy. City Legacy, like regional planning, seems to both adequately address the concerns of accountability often raised with non profits and at the same time, link sectors of society. Straddled between government and community, these hybrid entities can work to address needs identified by the community, perhaps even better than regional planning, which, distanced from the local level, lacks such direct contact. This is an important detail, if several of the interviewees (White (2008), Potter (2008), Clark (2008)) correctly assess Vermont as being a place where decisions must come from the bottom up to be realized. City Legacy's direct tie to government makes it responsible for addressing concerns of the wider public through facilitation and collaboration. The downside to City Legacy may be in its strict focus on the City of Burlington, only touching on region wide concerns. That said, hybrid entities like City Legacy merit further investigation as a potentially powerful actors in planning, both at the local and regional levels.

Dissecting Authority

Several interviewees, from both the planning and local food movement sides, blamed lack of authority as being the cause for regional planning's limited involvement and ineffectiveness in local food movements. In terms of implementation this is indisputable. The regional planning commission cannot enforce any of their policies. Yet to blame ineffectiveness on lack of authority seems to miss the point.

Consider for a moment the descriptions of the roles developed under new planning theory. Collaborator, facilitator, mediator, communicator, and even the established role of technician, do not point to a certain level of authority as being necessary to achieve these goals. In fact looking at the CCRPC's strategic plan, sharing power is even emphasized as being an objective. The

presence or absence of authority does not directly influence the ability of planners to take on any of the new roles of planning.

There is an important distinction between authority and effectiveness that should be considered. An organization does not have to have authority to be effective. However, the analysis suggests that people only see power holding organizations as effective. This apparent lack of power has led people to write off the CCRPC as being ineffective. The CCRPC may in fact be ineffective, but it is not necessarily the result of lacking authority.

It could also be argued that the lack of authority gives the CCRPC more flexibility in its work plan. Because the CCRPC is free from the responsibilities of regulation and enforcement of zoning and legal obligations, it can focus more of its attention on new roles in planning. Comparing the work done by the municipal level with the regional level, it seems that municipalities do not have the freedom to concern themselves with facilitating collaboration beyond the immediate need for cooperating with neighboring municipalities. A higher percentage of their time is concerned with smaller issues within the town itself. The regional level, on the other hand, is focused on creating a cohesive plan among towns and ensuring plans are in concert with one another. This suggests that the ability to be effective at collaboration is not entirely linked with a higher level of authority.

This is not to say that lack of authority does not hinder the ability of Regional Planning to be effective, indeed, it has its own drawbacks. Ineffective leadership, lack of government support, both financially and administratively, and inability to implement plans are all negative symptoms which may be attributed to lack of authority. It is important however, to recognize the fact that the perception that a lack of authority equals ineffectiveness may be just as detrimental to effectiveness as the lack of authority itself.

Looking at it in that light, if greater authority increases the level of confidence in the work of the regional planning commission on the part of the public by increasing its perceived effectiveness, it may very well be worthwhile to increase the level of actual authority held by the regional planning commission.

Stuck in a Supporting Role?

Evidence in the analysis suggests that planning in Vermont has embraced new planning theory. If this is in fact the case, it is curious that such a high proportion of interaction between planning and local food movements continues to happen in a technical capacity. This limited interaction with planning may just be a remnant of the past when the primary role of planning was to provide technical assistance, suggesting that any internal attempts to revamp planning according to contemporary theory have yet to be observed by the outside world. Alternatively, it may be another symptom of perceived ineffectiveness that prevents organizations from looking at regional planning in any other light.

This implies that planning may in fact be ineffective at reaching out to the public and potential partners. The limited ability on the part of the regional planning commission to re-project their image in a more positive light leads to questions concerning a related ability to effectively connect to other organizations. This suggests a need for regional planning to obtain a fresh image.

8 Enabling Integration

This chapter is dedicated to considering how interaction could be improved for the benefit of both planners and local food movement actors. Rather than directly answering the third sub-question; **what improvements could be made to induce more effective collaboration between planning and local food movements**, a more appropriate focus of this chapter is considering, one, how the existing relationship among planners and local food movement actors could be strengthened and two, investigating methods by which the potential for collaboration illustrated in the analysis could be realized.

Developing a Shared Language and Stronger Partnerships

In the analysis there surfaced a number of suggestions for improvements to the system that would help to increase effectiveness of collaborative efforts both among and between non governmental organizations and planning. These included developing memorandums of understanding to give collaborating organizations a common foundation from which to work and partnership programs bringing several related groups together around specific issues. One topic that did not surface was the possibility of creating a food policy committee or a more formal food council which would connect planning and local food movements in a more direct manner. This would help to ensure that the entire system, as broad as it is, is being addressed. It might even be shaped after Chittenden County's own City Legacy Project. The Burlington Food council has been effective in addressing some of the major food policy issues, however, its decision to focus on farm to school projects has neglected (due to time constraints and staffing, not for lack of want) other areas of food systems policy that effect communities as a whole. Farmland preservation, making local food more affordable to the average citizen, and food security issues are all examples of food related issues that have largely remained off the agenda. If the local food system is to be comprehensive, these other areas must be represented. The creation of the regional food council would also invite collective discussion that would likely help to develop a common language among entities and in doing so transform existing cooperation into stronger partnerships. Unification through shared goals will strengthen the overall message of local food movements.

Securing Funding and Legitimacy

The creation of a food policy council at the regional level where it may be tied to government might demonstrate to the public its viability. As research on food policy councils by Clancy et al. (2007) showed, government recognition was *"critical to establishing the legitimacy of [food policy] councils."* While the CCRPC is only a weak link to higher government, it may provide the necessary in for food policy councils to influence government policy. At the same time, a food policy council under the CCRPC would provide a link to government funding opportunities. While the CCRPC has similar challenges to non profits, it has greater access to state and federal funding. Were food policy prioritized, the CCRPC would have the ability to direct funding towards food related issues. As it is now, with virtually no involvement, funding is directed to other sources. There is of course no guarantee that funding will be directed towards food policy considering the tight budgetary strings in Vermont and the United States currently. On the other hand, increasing concerns about the sources and security of food make it more probable that the issue will be taken up sooner rather than later. Placing the issue under a government department such as health or homeland security which regularly receive federal funding may help efforts to integrate planning and local food. Furthermore, Clancy et al. (2007) argue that this placement will increase (though not guarantee) the likelihood of longevity of the council. This is clearly a strength of the existing

Burlington Food Council which is, through City Legacy, connected to CEDO, the City's Department of Economic Development.

Education

Local food movements consider public awareness and education as key to the success of the movement. This is how planning and the CCRPC should approach their work as well. In order to become an effective participant, and potential leader in local food movements, the CCRPC needs to gain more prominent and recognized footing in its own region. This may be true for planning in general. The public and in this case local food movement actors need to be aware of the CCRPC and moreover, have confidence in its work. Running an education campaign may be an untraditional tactic for a government based entity, but without public acknowledgement or recognition the CCRPC will likely remain ineffective. Taking advantage of the enthusiasm surrounding local food projects in Chittenden County would at once, help to quell Aswad's well grounded concern that the CCRPC is not producing any tangible results, and reach out to a responsive population looking for ways to help the local food system develop and thrive. Both the CCRPC and local food movements would benefit from the increased exposure.

Effective Leadership

Improvement in terms of leadership is both tricky and necessary. In a study of food policy councils conducted by Clancy et al (2007) it was noted that one of the two most influential variables determining success or failure was leadership. In fact, *"most [food councils] revolve around a key leader or core group*" and often food policy councils quickly fizzled with the loss of the leaders who had initiated them (Clancy et al. 2007:125). The problem is that strong leadership is not easily created, and must be sought after. To address this need in Chittenden County, MacKay (2008) already has plans to bring together people working on similar issues to collectively identify organizational and business leaders who are well positioned and motivated to take this issue to the next level, leaders who are *"open minded and willing to lay down their organizational mantel and maybe personal mantel and say how do we change this in Vermont"* (MacKay 2008).

This paper illustrates that the power of leadership should not be underestimated, even in the present horizontally based network society where there are so many equal partners. It is a misconception that a horizontal network would omit the need for effective leaders. This project has shown a greater need for leaders which can effectively manage and direct such complex systems. While there is no simple solution to ensuring strong leadership, it should be recognized as being key to the CCRPC gaining a more substantial presence.

Increasing level of Authority

Both planners and local food movement actors alike suggested that giving regional planning a higher level of authority might make interaction between planning and local food movements a more viable and effective option. Several regions around the country have developed strategies for increasing the level of authority for this reason. One idea given by White (2008) and largely inspired by Portland Oregon's regional planning system is to create a COG or Council of Government, which would result in an elected regional planning council with greater responsibility. This would no doubt increase the level of authority which regional planning holds. However, with such a strong tradition in local level decision-making, Chittenden County may not be ready to impart such power to the CCRPC in which case there are more moderate ways to increase the CCRPC's level of authority. One possibility is the development of a system along the lines of Metro Vancouver's (Canada) Regional Context Statements. Just as municipalities must currently have their plan approved by the regional planning commission in Vermont, municipalities within Metro Vancouver must be approved by the regional council. Regional Context Statements, however, provide a more formal connection between local municipalities and regional planning bodies by requiring each municipality to outline in detail how it plans to comply with the regional strategy. Besides tying the two together more closely, it places greater importance on the regional plan, and forces municipalities to consider their regional impact in writing (Metro Vancouver 2008). This would give CCRPC additional muscle while allowing it to retain the flexibility to work on non traditional issues such as local food planning.

9 Conclusion

To conclude this report, the main question of the problem formulation is considered and answered. To recall, the main question is as follows:

In what capacity is planning involved in the local food movement in Chittenden County and what would improve the nature of this relationship?

The aim of this report was to investigate the relationship between planning and local food movements. As has been discovered, planning has undergone rather drastic changes in recent years, and through this change, planning is working to find a new identity. Theory and empirical evidence suggest that this new identity has characteristics that closely identify with work being done by social movements as well as local food movements. New planning theory and social movement theory both embrace the use of a wide array of knowledge, including, but not limited to experiential, personal, technical and cosmological. This new commonality between planning and social movements has opened up a space in which the two entities have increased potential to interact and work together. Although this space has been created between planning and social movements in Chittenden County, the space remains underutilized due to perceived and real barriers. These include the lack of authority on the part of planning, the fact that non profits tend to work directly with one another, and the as yet unrecognized potential of planning to take an active part in local food movements.

Just as planning and social movements share knowledge, both embrace ideals of democracy, ensuring balanced interests, fair decision making and citizen participation. This work is accomplished in a variety of ways and is illustrated by the various roles defined in theory. The roles of the planner align with many of the identified roles of the social movement actor. This report contended that similarities in roles enable planners to interact in four distinct ways. First, the planner could act as a link between social movements and government. In the case of Chittenden County this proved to be mildly true, with non professional planners such as City Legacy taking the lead while government based planning was limited primarily to cooperation for the purposes of securing funding. Second, it was hypothesized that planning could link social movement actors with each other. This proved again to be limited, due to the fact that local food movement actors tend to collaborate directly amongst themselves, viewing planners as secondary to the cause. Third, theory suggested that the planner, holding on to its traditional role, could act as technical support to local food movements. This proved to be the case in terms of both city and regional planners who assisted the movement by providing informational and analytical resources as well as mapping capabilities to both municipal planners and non profits. Fourth, it was suggested that planners could join local food movements as social movement actors. This in many respects turned out to be the opposite, with a greater number of movement actors taking on planning roles. That said, government based planning showed signs that planning might join the movement provided there was demonstrated interest in their involvement.

Looking at these findings through a wider lens, several points stood out as having implications reaching beyond the immediate case. An examination of these points gives insight into the direction in which the relationship between planning and social movements may be headed. The first was a discussion as to whether there is really an identified need for interaction between planning and local food movements. It seems that the need for local food systems planning is distorted by the efficiency of the global food system. This is changing as increasing pressure is placed on the global food system. With imminent change coming to the food system, it is even more important that there are plans for how to adequately supply food to regions. While non profits

could potentially create a cohesive food system, it is planners who will be able to connect the food system to all sectors of society. A second point to surface was the changing definition of planner. Contrary to theory which suggested planning could join social movements, social movements seem to be taking on planning roles. In one light, this poses yet another threat to the prospects of creating cohesive plans and in that respect may be the greatest argument for why there remains a need for professional planners. In a more positive light, it could be an indication that planning is adjusting to the times and expanding its reach into society through non-traditional methods. Third, authority was examined in terms of its true value. While lack of authority is considered a hindrance, it also allows greater flexibility, suggesting that the problem of ineffectiveness may lie deeper than simply lacking power. Finally, while planning has widened its horizons to new knowledge and new roles, it is with traditional technical knowledge that planning continues to earn its keep in the eyes of local food movement actors. This could suggest that technical knowledge is the only way planning can be of use local food movements. However, more likely, it suggests that planning continues to be viewed in its former role as technician, implying that education may be necessary before planning can really begin to embody other roles.

Finally the report looked at how interaction between planning and local food movements might be improved. Several areas that might benefit from increased interaction were identified, as well as ways in which improvements could be made. These include identifying strong leaders who could help to unify the movement, increasing authority and communication to enable more effective planning and the formation of stronger partnerships, and finally, educating the public about the capabilities of planning and the benefits to an integrated planning and food system.

As local food movements develop and grow and planning works to define its role in the coming years, there is great potential and an identified need for the two entities to produce an integrated system. In order for integration to occur, both local food movements and planners will not only have to recognize this potential but act on it.

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