



Practical Approaches to Promoting Equity, Inclusion and Diversity in local planning— An Overview

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I. Introduction

The unmet challenges of inclusion & equity

- Differences, inequalities and inequities have been with us from the beginning. They won't disappear by themselves
- Societies have often created or perpetuated inequities—slavery, colonialism, segregation, discrimination, oppression, bigotry, bias, stereotyping
- Planning seeks to be part of the solution:
 - It is committed to making better communities for all
 - Recognize entrenched societal, institutional and structural forces that stretch far beyond planning effect quality of life
- For past 60 years, planning talked about expanding choices for all, especially those with limited options.
- Yet we have *failed to benefit everyone*, as actions have followed paths of power, influence and advantage
- *Planning has often been a handmaiden to elected officials maintaining the status quo, coloring within the lines, making improvements more at the margins than core—*

we have been part of the problem, not the solution

Pogo said it
well:

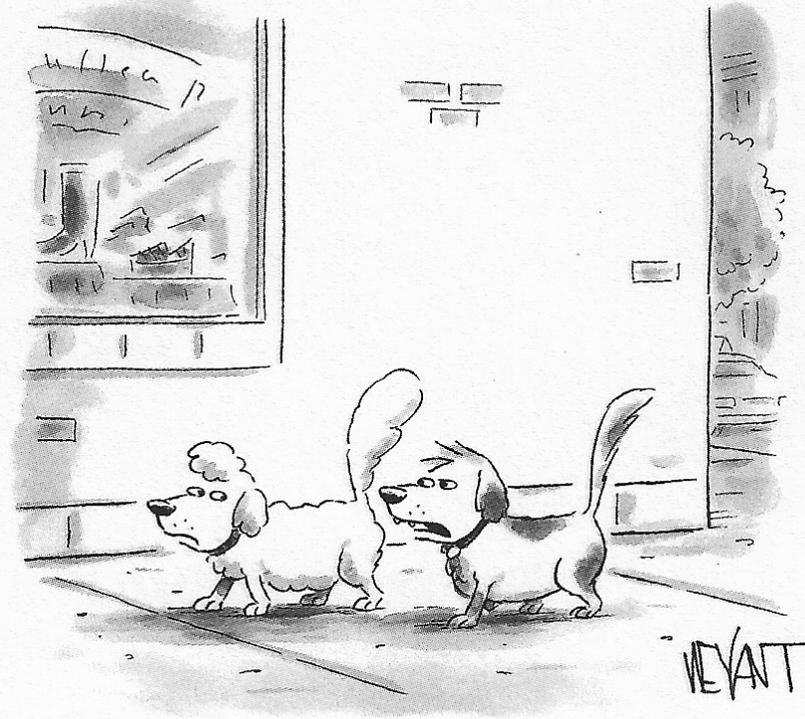


This is a
longstanding
issue—if
only



We need to
do more
than make
noise

THE NEW YORKER



"I bark and I bark but I never feel like I effect real change."

Presentation Proposition

- Societal actions have not been fair or equitable for all population groups for many reasons
 - Personal and political biases & societal actions
 - Governmental actions from oppression (slavery) to discrimination that support those in power
 - Challenges to change
 - Difficulties in overcoming longstanding behaviors
- Planning has been part of the problem as staff in implementing biased policies as adopted by government authorities, making changes at the margins
- APA and planners generally are (or should be) actively *promoting* policies that encourage diversity, inclusiveness and equity
- How do we move from promotion & exhortation toward more effective action and change?
- **Change how we act & invest in that effort:**
 - Personal understanding and commitment
 - Ongoing outreach & engagement processes that truly include marginalized groups
 - Build personal relationships over time with marginalized groups
 - Identify & address outcome differences: metrics, goal setting, actions
 - Reframe: Apply strategies from negotiation practice to approach issues collaboratively

Session Outline

1. Introduction: Failure of society and planning profession to create great communities for ALL; we must make some progress—it starts with us
2. Defining terms: Diversity, Inclusion & Equity
3. APA Priorities regarding diversity
4. Review some practical ways forward
 - Expanding Choice for all
 - Create & maintain more open processes
 - Pragmatic meeting strategies
 - *Reach out & build relationships with marginalized groups*
 - Understand, measure and document (lack of) equity in practice
 - Increase diversity in planning activities—entering planning students, board members, public awareness of planning overall.
 - *Recognize and learn from past mistakes*
 - *Negotiation-based practices to connect effectively with others*
5. Summary

Our challenge: moving towards our ideals

- 400 years of inequities in dealing with specific populations in America—*some have been more equal than others*
- Actual progress to equity, inclusion and diversity requires *motivation* and *commitment* of individuals and institutions *over time*; not just talk
- Personal attitudes must change for different behaviors to occur—humble & accepting others
 - Individual attitudes and beliefs reflect how we really feel and act
 - Organizational and structural attitudes derive from those
- Most ethical, moral and religious teaching supports diversity, equity and inclusion
 - *Universal*: Golden Rule
 - *Religious*: Kindness to strangers, teachings of Moses, Jesus & Mohammed
 - *US ideal*: "Unalienable right" to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Not working with a clean slate

- Significant lack of trust, resentment, anger & suspicion exist. (generally, besides planning)
- Perspectives shaped by experiences
- Every group is multifaceted, not monolithic
- *Process starts with recognition, then listening, building trust and respecting views*
 - Mutual process of engaging, talking, listening, learning, building trust, acting
 - No one group is totally correct—it is more complex & collaborative
 - There are a variety of options, many of which are feasible in some combination
- *Change and trust-building take time*
 - Significant hurt, anger and feelings are involved
 - As more issues are honestly addressed, more change will occur

*Planning in the
US:
failing to
“create great
communities
for all”*

- Racial, gender & ethnic inequalities exist in:
 - Health outcomes/life expectancy
 - Education
 - Policing
 - voting
 - Participation in public processes
 - Environmental justice
 - Criminal justice
 - Jobs/income/wealth
 - Access to public services
 - Locational disparities/access
- Stark contrast with our assumption of equal opportunity and fairness

Tree Cover by Income

“Since when have trees only existed for rich Americans.”

Ian Leahy & Yaryna Serkez
NY Times 6/30/2021
online; 7/30/21 print

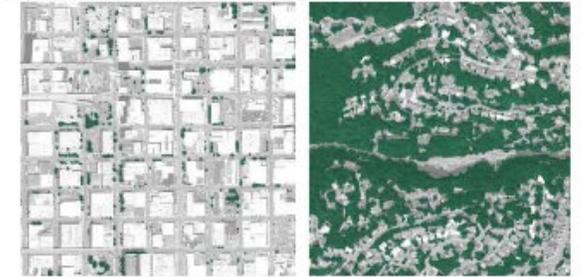
Baltimore

Median income: \$31K Median income: \$154K



Portland, Ore.

Median income: \$39K Median income: \$161K



Columbus, Ohio

Median income: \$38K Median income: \$150K



Austin, Texas

Median income: \$59K Median income: \$185K



Boston

Median income: \$50K Median income: \$190K



Denver

Median income: \$47K Median income: \$198K



Rich Americans enjoy more greenery in their environment compared with people in lower-income communities. This trend is present in cities across the country.

Results of past policies— *planners as part of the problem*

- Discriminatory policies (redlining, exclusionary zoning, restrictive covenants, Urban Renewal, highway location, etc.)
- Segregation and lack of services in poor and marginalized neighborhoods:
 - parks, roads, tree cover, schools, food deserts, amenities. Gentrification, climate change, education access, health, housing, mobility and transportation, public spaces
- Lost accumulations of equity in land and housing
- Errors of omission and commission
- Failures in **fully** including marginalized groups, women, etc. in public input; not recognizing their needs (handicapped travel, food deserts, park distribution, tree cover, etc.)
- Note: *NYC APA chapter has an annual conference called “Hindsight” in which past policies & plans that were not equitable are discussed.*

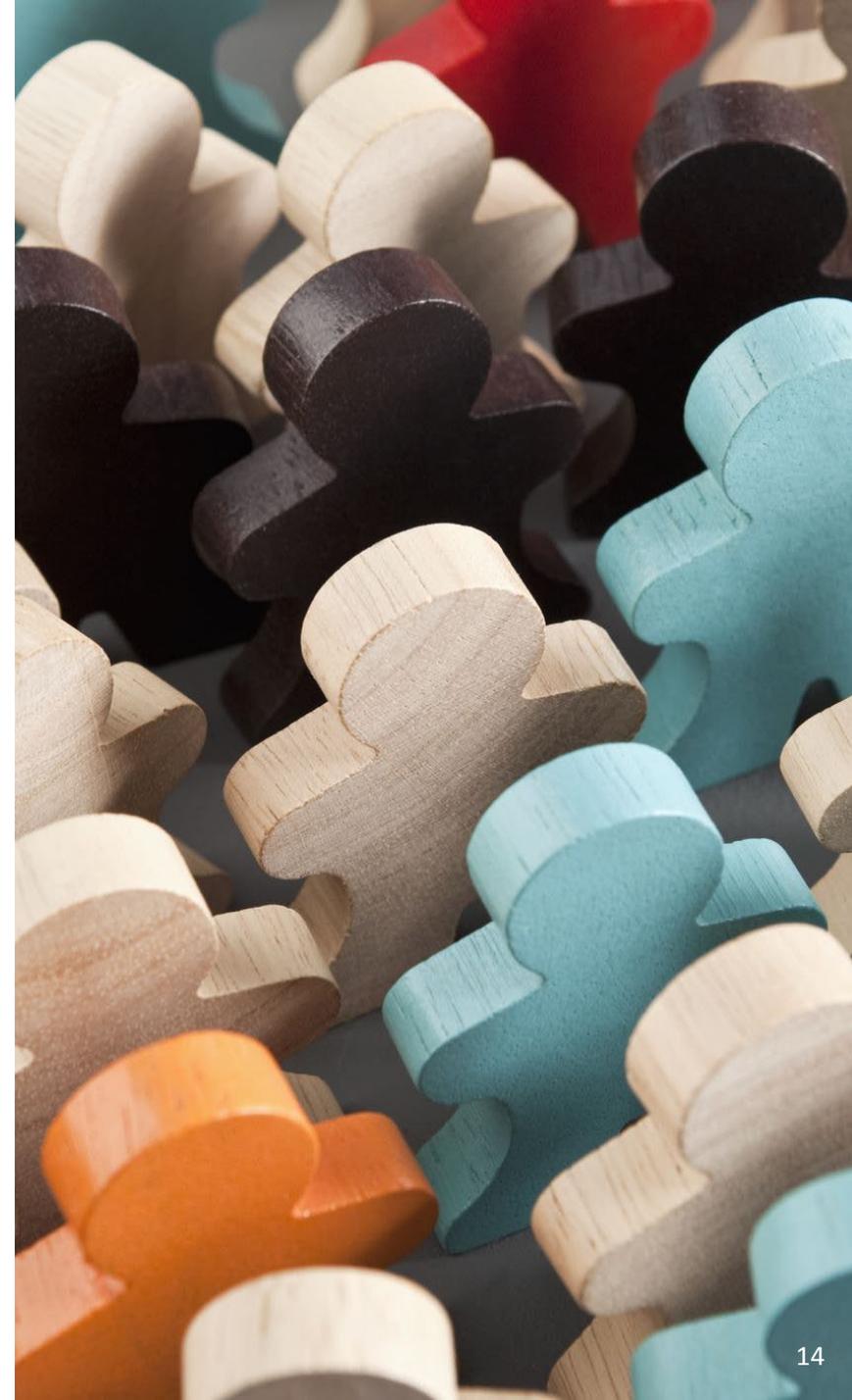
Past and present policies in SC

- Long standing tradition of “segregation” in SC and southern states (slavery, Jim Crow, etc.)
- Segregated zoning codes (formally ended in 1950s), patterns continue
- Continued traditions of segregated housing with poor infrastructure
- Separate downtowns
- Distinct differences in neighborhood investments, levels of services & engagement

II. Definitions

Diversity

- presence of difference within a given setting—gender, race, education, ethnicity, age, etc.
- Differences leads to new perspectives, better discussions and more effective actions;
- Better communication & engagement with others;
- empowering all individuals & building community

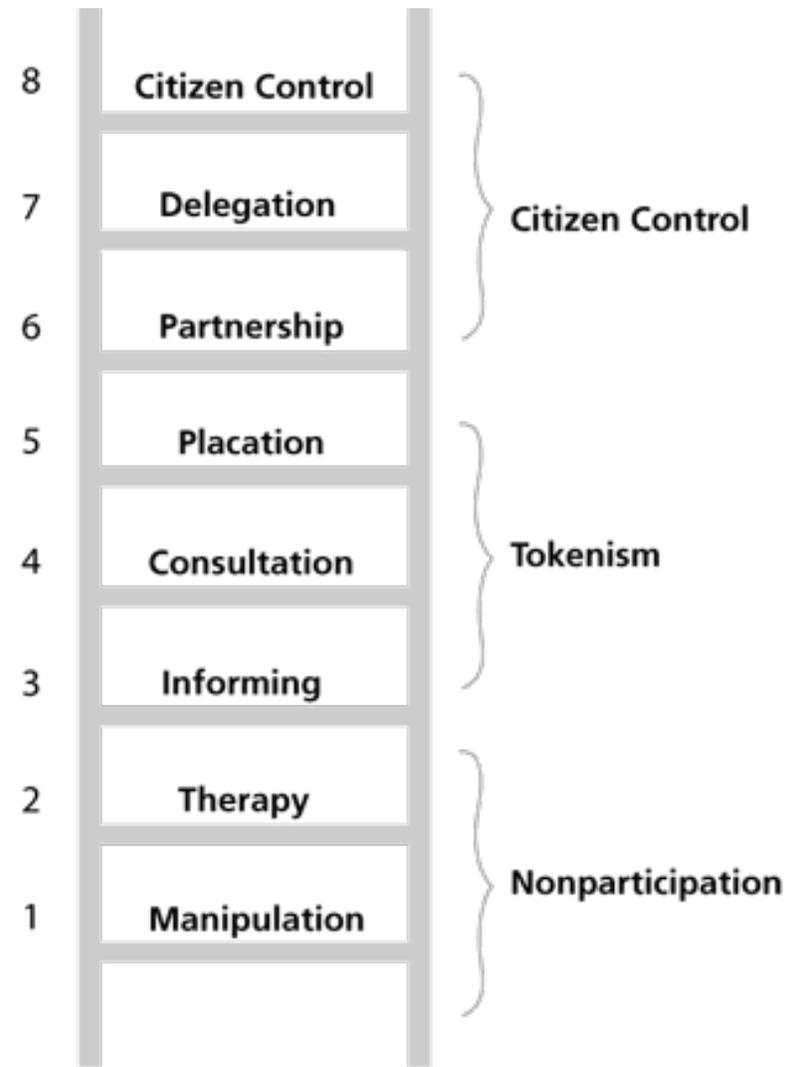


Every now and then, I find myself in a meeting with people who are wrong



Inclusion in
planning terms:

Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



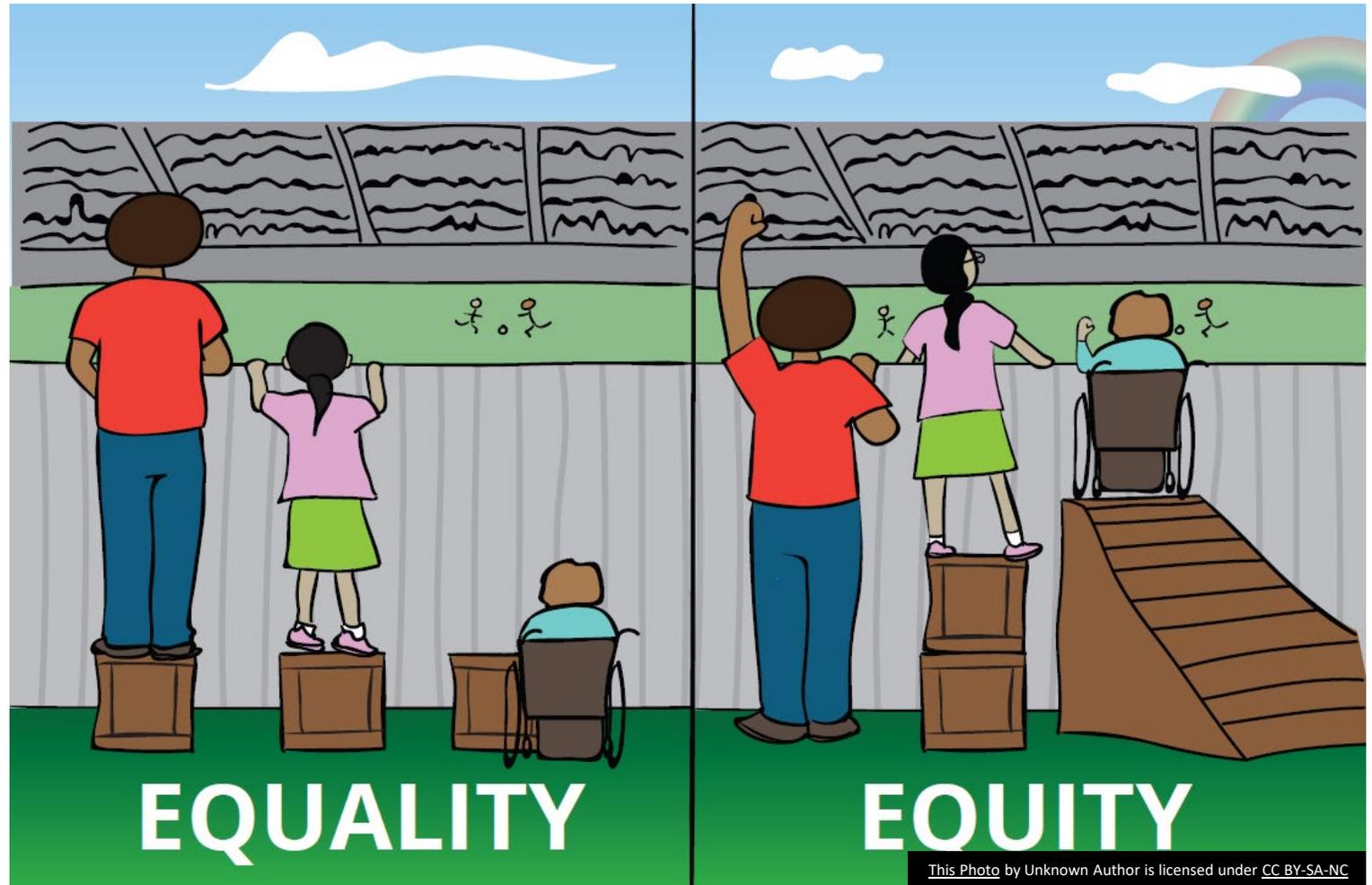
Arnstein's Ladder (1969)
Degrees of Citizen Participation

Typical inclusion



"We want to include you in this decision without letting you affect it."

Equality & Equity



Defining Equity: Providing equal opportunity to all individuals and groups equally recognizing their situation

- Giving attention to advantages and disadvantages among groups—*root system for individual & community development*
- Give priority to promoting a wider range of choices for everyone, especially those who currently don't have such choices (Krumholtz)
- Equity is values driven, not numbers driven



Many Motivations for emphasizing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

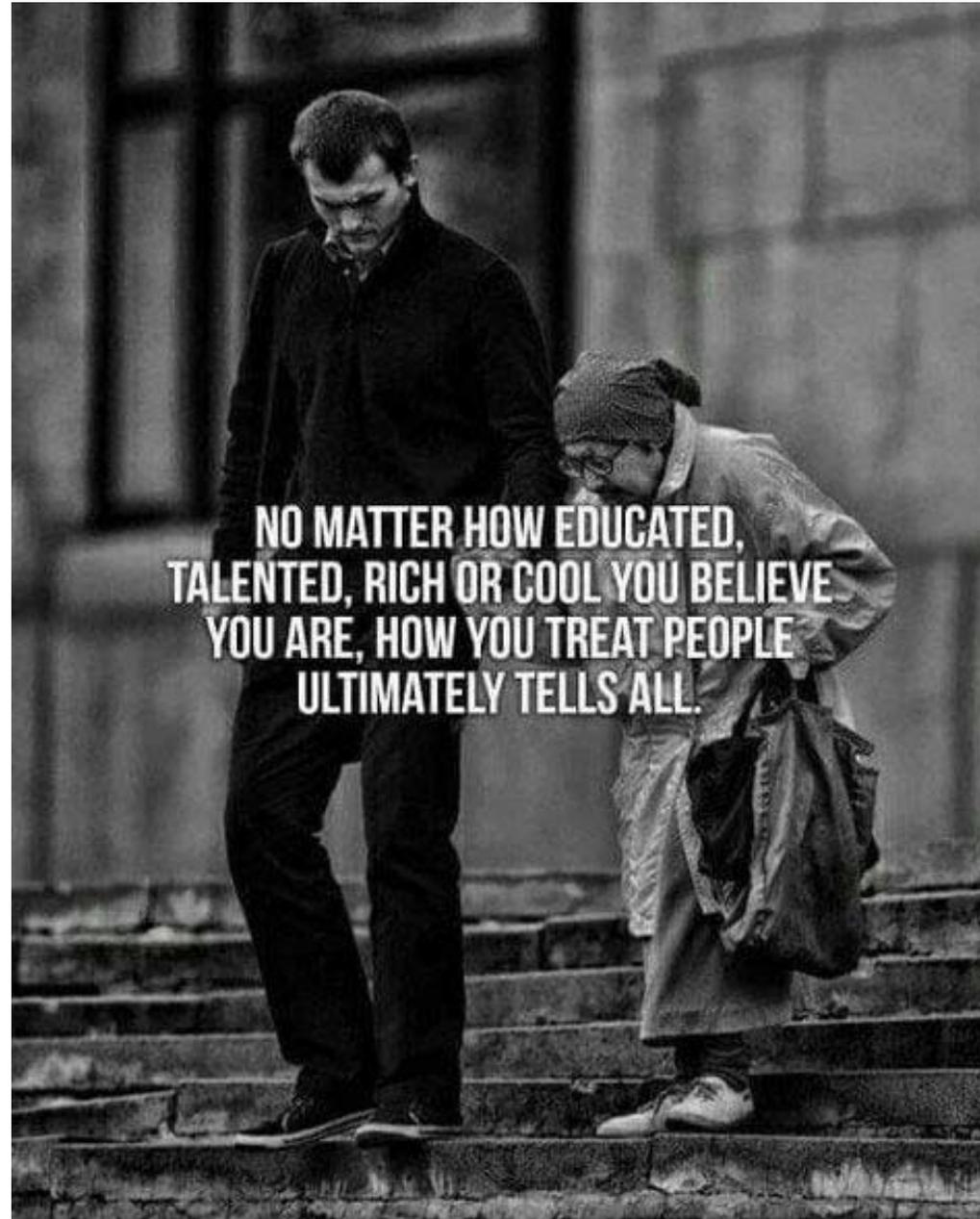
- Right thing to do, fairness, justice
- Reflects on ideals of US, democracy
- Overcome past wrongs by society & planning regulations
- Legally necessary
- Morally right—
 - Personal ties to fundamental issues of humanity and religion-- the golden rule
 - Professional ethics demands
- **Need for each of us to act out of our own personal sincerity and courage**

We must
overcome our
own
prejudices

- This requires a certain transcendence over our **own** biases & (in some cases) hatreds—racism, sexism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-‘other’ mentalities, sexual identities, political party, etc. [*vax; masks today*]
- Inclusiveness and equity require **humility**
 - We are no better than others, particularly those that are different
 - All are equally valued
 - All deserve to be treated decently
 - Apply Sunday School lessons in our professional lives

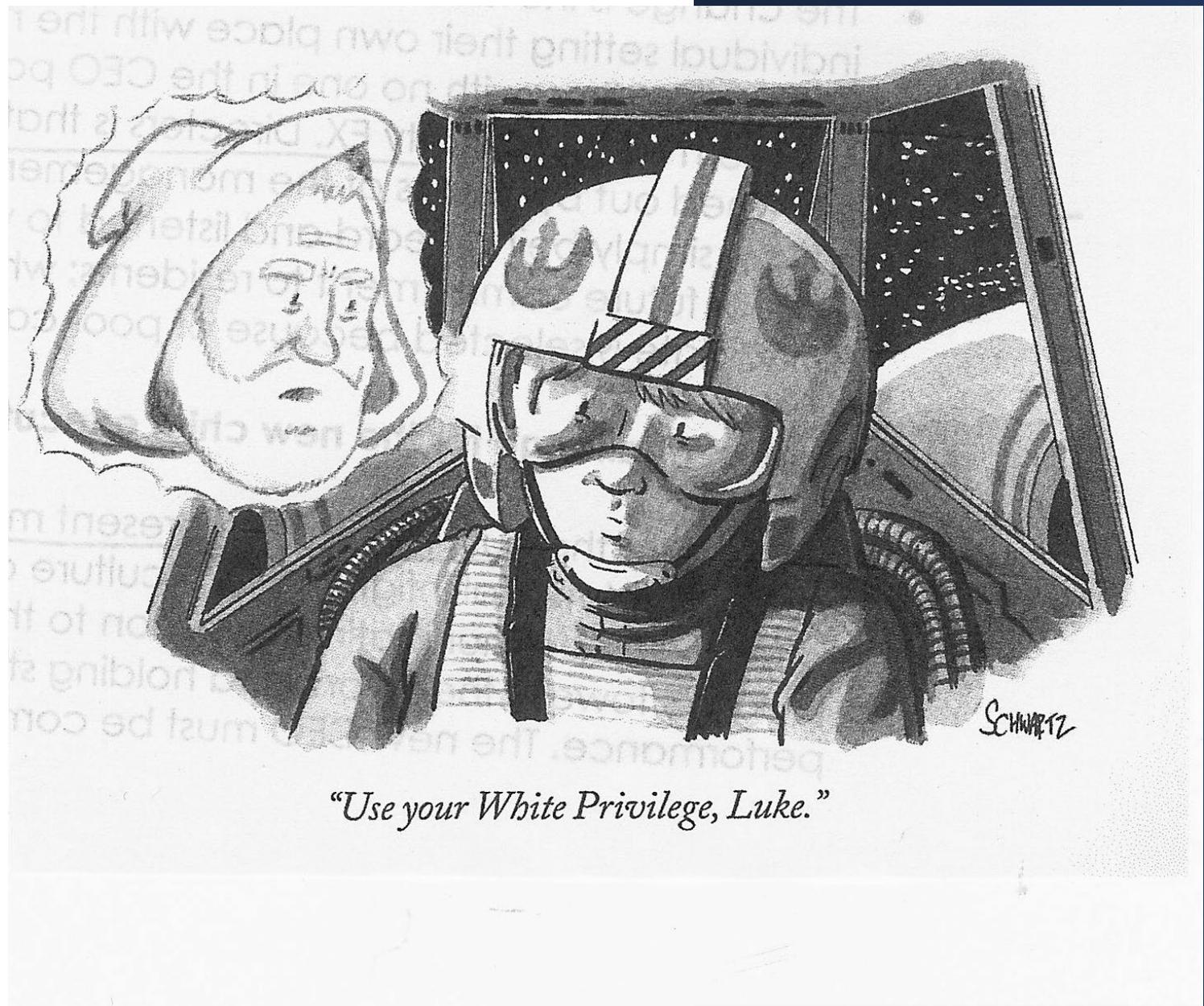
An aspiration

Source: www.truthfollower.com



More often, people assume that some groups (*especially theirs*) are privileged over others to succeed

From The New Yorker



"Use your White Privilege, Luke."

Equity
is a truly
“Wicked”
problem

- Multiple *Dimensions*:
 - Moral—at organizational and societal levels (+ personal & professional)
 - Economic
 - Physical
 - Social
 - Legal
 - Political
- The *structure* of government decisions & legal frameworks
- Challenges of polarized *politics* & interpersonal conflicts/distrust/credibility
- *Conflicting local interests*—property owners, development, social differences, specific opportunities
- *Past* actions, different starting points, past grievances, expectations and stereotypes/beliefs about others
- Very powerful *emotions* and feelings involved

III. APA/AICP Priorities Proposed revisions in Ethics Code

Current Principles
(section A) focus on our
responsibilities to:

- the public,
- our clients/employers and
- profession/colleagues

Proposed Principles
focus on outcomes:

- Public interest
- Process integrity
- **Working to achieve social justice and racial equity**
- Safeguarding the public trust
- Improving public planning knowledge & understanding

Draft Ethical
Principle 3:
Working to
Promote social
justice & equity

Eliminate historic patterns of inequity tied to planning

Create plans that ensure equity access to resources and opportunities

Expand choice and opportunity for all persons, particularly those marginalized in the past

Work to **mitigate past effects of plans** related to discrimination, displacement or environmental injustice.

Work to **increase supply of affordable housing** and investment in underserved communities

Promote inherent **rights of indigenous people**

From the May 2021 draft Code distributed by APA/AICP

Equity concepts in the other 4 draft ethical principles

Understand	Understand biases and privilege. [1a]
Improve	Improve planning efforts for all communities (including LGBTQ+, indigenous, and those of color) [1b]
Incorporate	Incorporate equity principles and metrics in preparing and evaluating plans. [1e]
Include	Include diversity in participation, especially for those that have been marginalized historically. [2b]
Respect	Respect the rights of all and do not discriminate [2h]
Increase	Increase opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to become professional planners . [5e]

Ethics Code Update – Timeline

Source: Karen Wolf,
AICP Commission
President-elect



APA diversity resources

- **Planning for equity policy guide**—overall statement that defines terms, outlines issues and recommends policy actions:

“All planners must ensure that proposed policies and regulations will serve and benefit all residents of a community in ways that reduce or eliminate inequity.”

<https://Planning/Policy and advocacy/policy issues/APA policy guides>

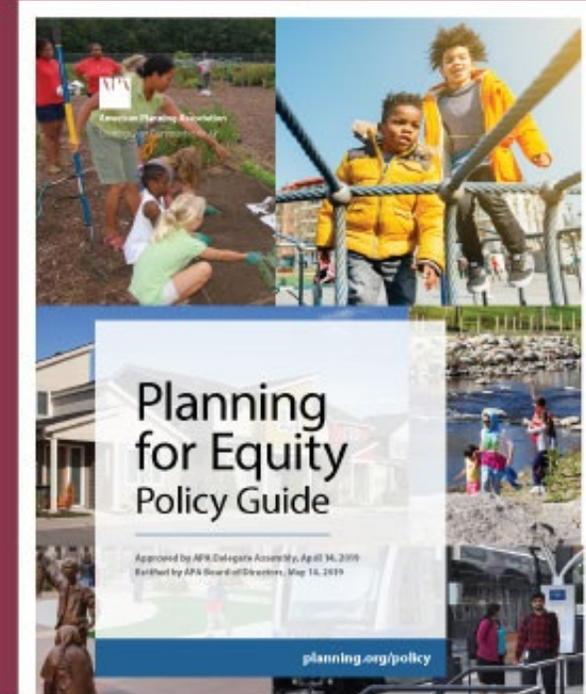
- **The APA Diversity & Inclusion Strategy** was adopted by the APA Board in April, 2018:

<https://planning.org/media/document/9149453/>

- **PAS Memo “More and Better: Increasing Diversity, Equity, and inclusion in planning”** by Kendra Smith—May/June 2019

- **Other resources:** Connect with APA link on APA web page:

<https://Planning.org/diversity>



Planning for Equity Policy Guide

IV. Practical Ways Forward

- *Understand and believe in diversity, equity and inclusion elements professionally and personally*
- *Implement new ethics code elements generally*
- Incorporate APA diversity strategies
 - Self knowledge and awareness
 - Open processes
 - Outreach & education
 - Increase diversity in planning participants
 - Identify & address substantive disparities in local activities
- Apply Negotiation-based strategies
 - Find common interests through honest engagement
 - Build relationships and trust
 - Communicate openly & deal with differences



Substantive approaches to diversity— from *Planning for Equity Guide* of APA

Addressing/eliminating historic patterns of inequity—

- Learn about & understand *distributional effects*
 - *In general, and specific to each program*
- *Inform policy makers and others, recognizing political realities*
- *act to change approaches & policies*

Inequities exist at several levels

- Cross-cutting issues—gentrification/development, community engagement, environmental policy
- In specific issues:
climate change and resilience, education, energy and resource consumption, health care access, heritage preservation, housing, mobility & transportation, public spaces and places.

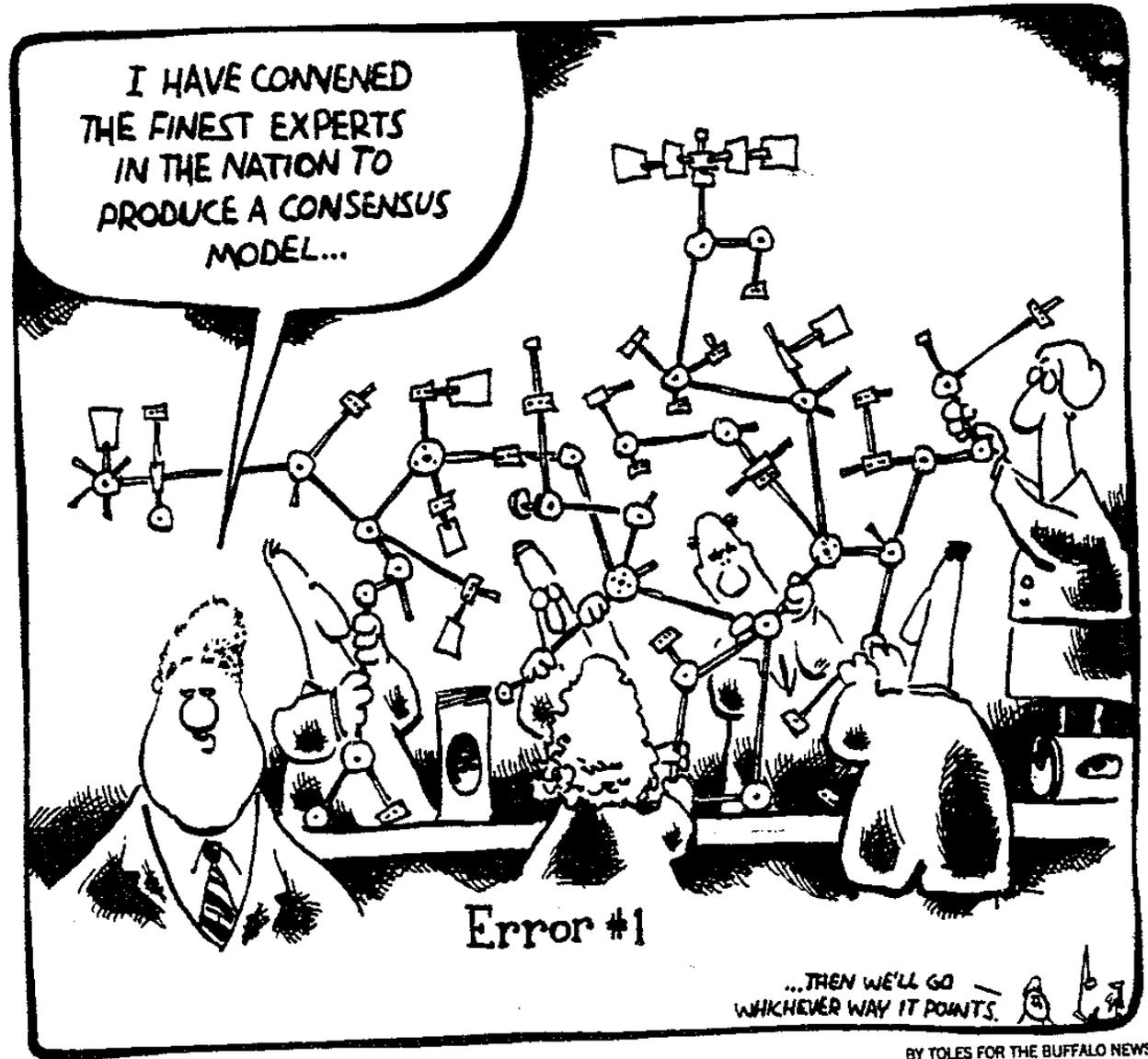
[Note that specific strategies are suggested for each of these issues in the Equity Guide]

Transparent & more open/inclusive procedural approaches & engagement

- **More accessible meetings:**
 - Clear processes for notification, information, meeting organization, public input,
 - Lucid, predictable meeting formats—conversational rather than confrontational
 - Obvious & relevant purpose for residents
 - Ongoing conversations outside of specific reviews
 - Use less jargon & local language(s)
 - Ongoing conversations, informational meetings, open planning & visioning meetings
- **Reduce barriers to participation—**
 - location, time, openness/formality, childcare
 - On-line access issues
- **Focus on diversity in engagement** and participation—reach out to specific groups over time—build relationships



Expert-driven approach to participation



Inclusive Outreach & education

- Outreach by elected officials and staff to neighborhood residents, organizations—**to build relationships and trust**—*continuous over time; at several levels*
- Political will to help and improve problem areas
- Show residents that planning can work in their favor
- Public education and specific programs to make identifiable/visible impacts—bring more diverse people into planning
- Work at neighborhood level
 - Develop PERSONAL relationships with local residents
 - Engage neighborhood liaisons and engagement for planning
 - Provide adequate resources for neighborhood education and outreach
 - Use neighborhood offices/community centers



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Inclusive processes:

- Use representative steering committees
- Engage with charrettes and other community planning activities
- Engage local community leaders, such as elected officials, neighborhood organization leaders, religious leaders, others in the community
- Continuously do local/neighborhood (planning)
- Recognize and reduce barriers to full participation by residents
- The bottom line is to invest in:
 - **long term** and **personal** interaction,
 - folks **actively listening** to each other and using the information in plans and actions
 - **respectful relationships**, both personal and substantive.
 - **actions that reflect that everyone's' views have been heard**

Provide metrics regarding disparities

- Present local information on disparities by race/gender, etc. for:
 - Population change (neighborhood, city, county. Etc.)
 - Gender and age
 - Income
 - Employment
 - Housing conditions (rent/own, condition, sf/mf)
 - Health conditions
- Let the data speak to everyone!
 - Provide data in graphic, easily understood ways
 - Use examples and illustrations
- Provide a reason to act!
- Engage public officials to see clear differences
- Learn from your mistakes (NYC APA Hindsight meetings)

Applying understanding and metrics of equitable outcomes and actions Planning in Cleveland—1969-79

- Core value: **expand choice for all city residents**—analyze issues through that criterion
- Assess proposals with specific data and political lobbying/power—how were low-income populations effected
- Strong City leadership for equity: Planning Director Norm Krumholtz & supportive Mayors Stokes, Perk & Kucinich over a decade

"It is not enough for cities to be beautiful and efficient. They could, and should, be just and fair as well, and planners should work toward human betterment." Norm Krumholz

"in a context of limited resources and pervasive inequalities, priority attention must be given to the task of promoting a wider range of choices for those who have few, if any, choices" Cleveland "Policy Planning Report" 1975



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There are
limits to
government
power



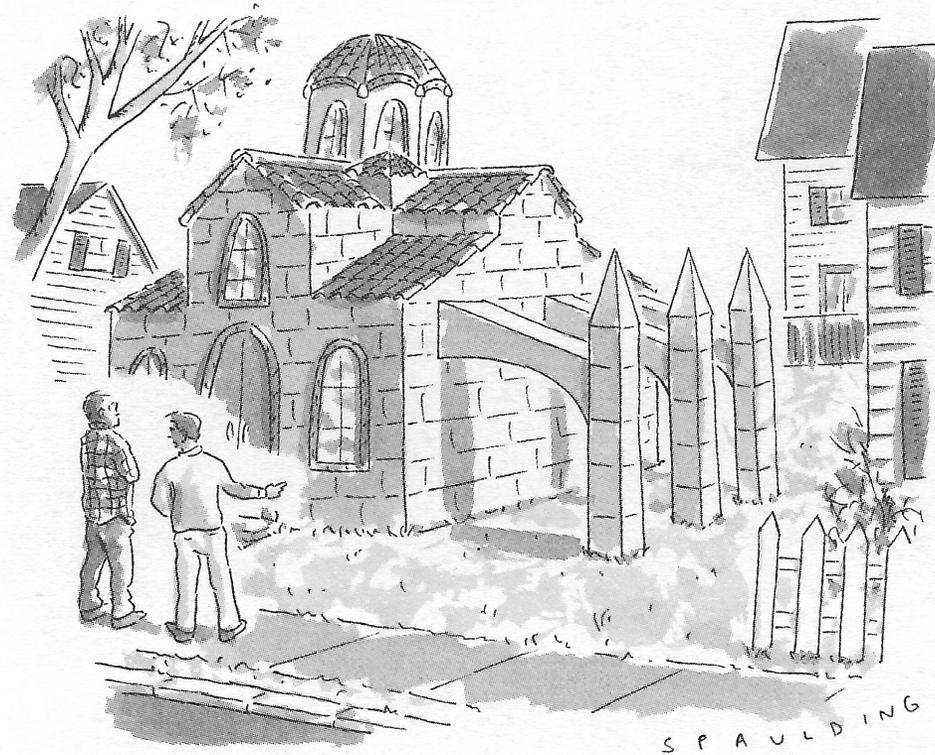
State
governments
have a
reputation



"I try not to judge people by the actions of their state government."

Changes in a neighborhood lead to more contention, especially over the details

THE NEW YORKER



“Talk about Byzantine—try pulling a permit for a flying buttress in this neighborhood.”

V. Negotiation based strategies— *a practical lens for planning with others*

Negotiation: A dynamic, interactive problem-solving process where two or more parties agree on some actions to:

Share a limited resource

Set a course of action

Resolve a problem or dispute

It is applied planning—rather than “doing a plan,” let’s “solve a problem together”

Negotiation is a process that involves:

- **Interests of each party**
 - Individual, mutual, substantive and emotional
- **Relationships**
- **Communication**
- Proposals/options
- Workable agreement
- **Dealing with conflict**
 - w/o courts, politics, violence

Lasting agreements are equitable



Two basic approaches to negotiation

Competitive/bargaining

- Getting to a deal
- Argue/haggle to a conclusion
- Relationship not an issue
- equal power splits the difference
- If not equal in information/power:
 - Potential winner & loser
 - Future mistrust

Mutual Gains—integrative

- Acknowledge the concerns of the other side, **build on common interests**
- Encourage **joint fact finding**
- Offer contingent commitments to minimize impacts if they occur
- Accept responsibility, admit mistakes, **share power**
- Act in a trustworthy fashion
- **Focus on building long-term relationships**
- **Collective problem solving**

Interests

- Definition: *underlying concerns, needs, desires or fears that lead to specific positions*
- Dimensions
 - Substantive—funding, division of resources, specifics of a development
 - Process—how is the dispute settled; having a voice; being valued as individuals/community
 - Relationship—desire to build and maintain connections for current issue and/or intrinsically
 - Principle—fairness, rights, inclusion, equity, diversity
- *Different interests are at stake for each party that can be traded off*
- *Negotiation is built on a sense of hope*

Local example: neighborhood plan process

- Low-income neighborhood
 - **Being heard; voice respected now and in future;**
 - **Being valued; treated as respected participant in city**
 - Protection from perceived threats & change (gentrification)
 - Improved infrastructure/services
 - **perceived fair process**
- City interests
 - Predictable growth in population & tax revenue
 - Safe and desired infrastructure patterns (water, sewer, trans. Etc.)
 - Increasing quality of life
 - Follow accepted political processes

Relationships

- Relationships are basic to human interaction
- Effective planning requires working relationships
- **Trust is the building block**
- Building trust requires mutual understanding
 - **Sharing, listening, engaging**
 - Occurs over time—ongoing process
 - Being open to different views
 - Leads to interdependence and cooperation over shared interests
 - Part of ongoing “shadow” process
- Working with neighborhoods
 - **Engage honestly** over issues relevant to neighborhood
 - Disagreements likely
 - Seek input and actually listen
 - **Show results of listening**
 - Build neighborhood capacity
 - **Build personal relationships** among staff, elected officials and local residents
 - Recognize that **relationships are an end in themselves**
 - Develop local champions

Communication

- Negotiation is a process of **communicating**:
 - **Interests**
 - **Concerns**
 - **Emotions & information**
- Communicate information re.
 - Offers, counteroffers, issues, concerns, alternatives, desired outcomes, process, emotions, substance
- **Various modes**
 - Use language, nonverbal acts, etc.
 - Use formal/informal channels
 - Emotion critical—intensity, engagement, anger

Improving communication

- **Ask questions to get information**
 - about Other's positions, concerns, needs, interests
 - Make questions manageable—open, positive, basis for more info exchange
 - Avoid unmanageable questions—threatening, demeaning, put-downs
- **Listen actively, acknowledge what you heard, give feedback, expand on information**
- **Build relationships through interaction**—be honest about what is possible
- Make information seeking mutual and joint rather than competitive
- Role reversal—put yourself in their shoes—what would you do?



Conflict: Dealing with an angry public

Why are people angry? ***Respect that anger***

- Strong feeling of displeasure, generally logical to protester
- Past hurt, not recognizing their value as humans,
- Fear powerful emotion
- Not dealing with risk/coverups,
- Responses conflict with beliefs,
- Neighborhood operating out of weakness,
- Neighbors perceive they are dealing with lies,
- Neighborhood anger as show or only feasible response
- Typical 'PR' covers up issues and hides reality & reignites past distrusting patterns

Dealing with an angry public by Lawrence Susskind and Patrick Field 1996

Breaking through in difficult situations

- Don't react, "go to the balcony"—look down objectively at the situation
- Disarm them by stepping to their side—pursue **their** interests; work together on issue
- Change the game: don't reject **-reframe**
- Make it easy to say yes—look for ways to let the other get their way while you get yours as well
- Make it hard to say no
- ***Dealing with an angry public*** by Lawrence Susskind and Patrick Field 1996



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Reframing

- How people make sense of a situation—
 - tied to perception:
 - information processing,
 - message patterns,
 - linguistic cues and
 - socially constructed meanings
 - tied to who we are:
 - personality, (introvert & extrovert at a party)
 - experience and
 - situational factors
- Types of frames:
 - **Interests,**
 - **rights,**
 - **power**
 - Process
 - Identity
 - characterization (how parties define each other)
 - Loss-gain
 - Substantive
 - Outcome
 - Aspiration
- Different frames lead to different conversations
- Different cultures have different frames
- Frames can shift over the course of the negotiation

Framing for different perspectives

- Likely marginal group expectations:
 - **Marginalized (we) have always been at a disadvantage**
 - Power
 - Process
 - Resources
 - We are “others” to them
 - **Others gain at “our” expense**
 - Exercise is about “their” getting what “they” want
 - **Power, respect, recognition as underlying themes**
 - Marginalized are drawing the line here for what we want
- Possible reframing
 - Find common interests
 - Focus on their **interests** [substance, respect, acceptable change]
 - Make process open and transparent to all
 - Focus on respecting and valuing others at table
 - Emphasize rights of various parties
 - Identify trade-offs for mutual gain—what is realistic
 - Show by example that interests of marginalized groups are met
 - Show that marginalized interests and groups are respected
 - **Build the process based on relationships**

VI. Summary

A. Overall Suggestions

Know & be aware of substantive aspects of differential outcomes for disadvantaged neighborhoods in practice—generally & locally

Develop and build relationships with diverse groups and individuals in your community—recognize that it is a long-term process

Develop a personal understanding and awareness of your own biases; work to reach out to all individuals with respect

Believe in, learn about, understand & Implement diversity elements in the Ethics code (existing and revised)

Apply *inclusive, transparent and engaging* approaches—always be reducing barriers to participation; engage diversity over the long term

Develop broad public awareness of planning, particularly for underserved populations—grow planning participants

Step back and consider challenging situations as *mutual problem-solving* (negotiation) processes. Engage all parties with respect.

Recognize local political realities—don't promise what can't happen with current Council or public sentiment

Use APA resources: <https://planning.org/diversity>

When we reach “Plan Z” what do we do?



THE NEW YORKER



“Of course, if this one flops we’re done.”

B. Negotiation strategies for diversity, equity & inclusion:

Focus	Focus on understanding parties' interests—in common & different
Build	Build relationships (including their “back table”) to develop buy-in
Bring	Bring open-minded people to the table
Respect	Respect and fair treatment may be a significant concern-procedure & substance
Open communication	Develop & maintain open communication processes to explore interests & options
Relationships	Be attentive to building relationships throughout process – make it a priority
Anger issues	Deal with differences & anger through understanding causes, including past wrongs .
Expect differences	Expect cross-cultural & other differences & work through them
Commonalities	Recognize & build on commonalities & interdependence

C. Personal Actions for Progress—the “enemy” is us

Understand *your* values (biases) and those operating in the community

Align your values with diversity, equity & inclusion

Engage and listen to others who are different

Build overall community awareness of community issues, including equity

Develop outreach & relationships ***over time***

Continue to learn about and understand substantive inequities

Step back and put yourself in the other party's position—what do they want and need? What are they not getting?

Use negotiation principles—interests, relationship building, communication-- for *mutual problem solving*

Seek ways to build trust in the long term—this is an ongoing process, not simply fixed or changed

We must act with urgency!

- It's difficult
- takes time
- we are busy
- can be frustrating
- requires vulnerability

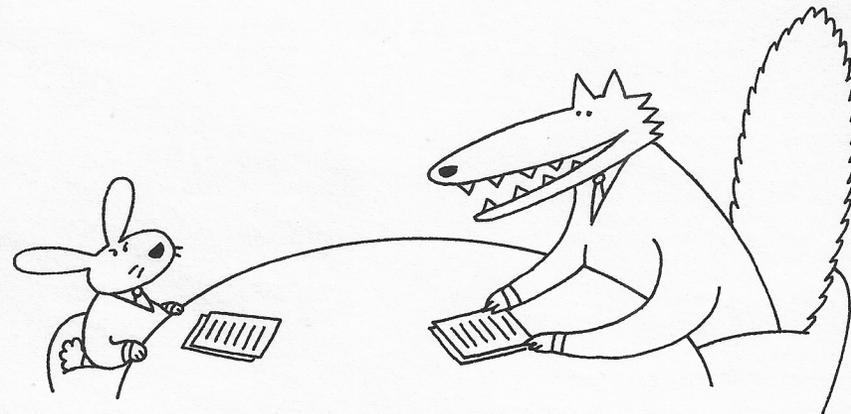
yet **it is absolutely necessary**



“Thank goodness you’re here—I can’t accomplish anything unless I have a deadline.”

Questions & Comments?

THE NEW YORKER



"I've never understood—what is the difference between morals and ethics?"



"It's disappointing that even the secret shadow government can't get anything done."

Core elements in the process

Preparation [aka planning] is a vital step in the process--what is your (and their) objective and how do you measure success?

- Interests (mine/theirs)
- Substantive Options
- Standards for a good solution
- BATNA (Mine/theirs)
- Likely Proposals to consider

From **Getting past no** by William Ury (1991)

