Social Planning In Halifax-Dartmouth: Fact or Fiction?

Timothy T. Daley
I. Introduction

Social planning is a by-product of the recent trend toward comprehensive community development planning. It is still in its formative stages and is therefore experiencing the growing pains characteristic of most new planning processes, including poor coordination, distrust and misunderstanding. Added to these difficulties is a second deterrent to proper social planning, namely, an increasing demand to react quickly to problems and make decisions without waiting for input from planners. Alvin Toffler notes in *Future Shock*\(^1\) that society must often make final decisions before the relevant preliminary planning research is even initiated.

The demands from an increasingly apprehensive public to resolve issues quickly merely accentuates the process Toffler describes so well. While it is impossible to eliminate this factor from community planning, it is possible to reduce its effect by legislative enactments that require local planning systems to engage in ongoing planning.

This paper focuses on a Canadian community, Halifax-Dartmouth, that attempted to solve some of its regional social planning problems in a novel way. Like most large Canadian communities, the development and financing of social services in Halifax and Dartmouth could only be described as "ad hoc" and ineffective. In 1971 a tripartite regional social planning council founded primarily on good intentions, was established to provide the coordinated social planning necessary to overcome these problems. Notwithstanding the unique interjurisdictional structure of the Planning Council and its broad mandate to provide effective planning for the social services, the Council has not functioned well.\(^2\) The reasons for this failure are complex and sometimes

\(^*\)Timothy T. Daley, Co-ordinator of Legal Services, Nova Scotia Family Court.

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obscure; however, they do suggest that effective planning cannot take place without the proper legislative mandate and a financial and political commitment to plan that is commensurate with the planning problems encountered. This paper focuses on the Planning Council, the major competing social planning agencies and considers a possible solution for establishment of an effective social planning structure. Before looking at the Halifax-Dartmouth experience however, it is important to define social planning in the Canadian context.

II. The Social Planning Process

Prior to the violent social upheavals of the 1960’s community planning was primarily concerned with the physical structuring of urban areas. The major tools of planning were the zoning by-laws and regulations. It was generally assumed that a well planned physical environment would regulate, at least indirectly, the development of the people-oriented services of a community. It was standard planning procedure to assume that economic development lured people to the surrounding areas which in turn generated demand for secondary economic support services, educational institutions, transportation, sanitary systems, law enforcement and so forth. The planners of that period believed that they needed only to make provisions on a master plan for the physical location of the various standard community facilities and those facilities would be provided automatically as the community grew. Little, if any, thought was given to the real needs of the people who lived in the communities. The Horatio Alger syndrome permeated the planning

voted to close the Council in mid-April 1976. The President stated “the Council was being disbanded because . . . it had gone as far as it could in its efforts and it was no longer an effective contribution in the Community.”

3. The psycho-social needs of people, primarily as an off shoot of decaying urban centres and sprawling high cost suburban development, promoted some experimentation, both on a grand national design and at the local level. There existed in the United States, The Housing Act of 1949 and the Urban Renewal Agency which expended more than three billion dollars during the 1950’s to increase the supply of low cost housing, and, in Canada, the Winnipeg Audit, 1968, which attempted to design and rationalize a broadly defined comprehensive social service delivery system.

While these projects made reference to the needs of people it is apparent that major motivation factors were deteriorating economics interest, ineffective governmental administrations, and poor community images. The Halifax area has two outstanding examples of this. Africville has been described by civic leaders as a “blight” on the City and required elimination to make way for a new bridge to
process. The communities needed only to plan for the rudimentary needs of people and from there the individual could and would look after himself.

Post World War II America, with its industrial explosion, urban growth, and expanding welfare state brought about a steady migration of people to the cities. The cities were unprepared both physically and psychologically for this mass immigration. For many, city living became synonymous with social alienation, poor housing, isolation and unemployment. By failing to take into account the significance of psychological and sociological effects on people living in urban environments the community planning system had failed.

In Canada, several issues served to divert attention from the problems of the city and accentuate the need for planned urban social services. First, urbanization was neither as rapid nor as disruptive as it was in the United States. Poor ghettos in Canadian cities were isolated and relatively small compared to the vast, substandard communities and high poverty levels found in American cities. Secondly, preoccupation with the "French fact" and related constitutional issues, the promises of a Just Society and resource development, obscured the needs of the native people, immigrants, the low income and poverty groups and the demands of a rapidly expanding uncoordinated citizen action movement.

By 1970 social agencies began to coordinate their response to these problems. Professional self-interest groups saw the value of cooperating and planning with similar groups. This in turn led to cooperation among other groups until "planning" became a standard requirement for any proposal which might be subject to public scrutiny. Social planning with its apparent people-oriented philosophy and specialized training in urban communication, became recognized as the generic planning system which could aid immeasurably in "dealing with" the needs of the people.

reduce traffic congestion during peak business hours; and the downtown Halifax redevelopment which rationalized the destruction of slum housing to remove the "blight" from the area and replace it with a multi-million dollar commercial complex to "bolster and rejuvenate the sagging Barrington Street business community." In both situations, the only people-oriented program was one of relocation for displaced residents and for those who required such help, low cost housing supplemented in part by welfare assistance. For a critical appraisal of the elimination of Africville, see: D. Clairmont and D. Magill, Africville: The Life and Death of a Canadian Black Community (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974).
In spite of this growing importance and acceptance, there is neither agreement on a definition of social planning nor agreement on the type of structure needed for effective social planning. The term social planning may refer to the comprehensive planning of social services, or planning to take care of the social consequences of other types of planning. It may also be understood to mean a comprehensive attempt to undertake social planning that includes the fiscal, monetary, employment, physical environment, and social services sectors and the linkage between them. The Greater Niagara Social Planning Council defines it as the

...ability to grasp the society in which we now live and the needs of the people in it, project this into the future and begin to design steps to achieve a purposeful goal which is agreed upon by a wide sector of the community. It means that we must first think about what we have. It means a thorough analysis of where we are. It means we must be acutely sensitive to where we are going and come to grips with it through meaningful and useful services.

In practice, most Canadian social planning, including social planning in Nova Scotia, has been primarily concerned with planning for the direct provision of the traditional social services programs.

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8. *Supra*, note 4. The Regional Social Planning Council defines its service as "one which would research, plan, and recommend priorities to social service agencies, and the governmental and private funding organizations..." [The Council should address itself... to the provincial and municipal governments, private and voluntary social agencies...", Hardie Report on Social Planning, 1971. The Nova Scotia Social Services Council, established by the Welfare Councils Act, S.N.S. 1970-71, c.22, s.4(1) states "It shall be the function... to advise and assist the Minister on any matter relating to public welfare, including planning for welfare services, facilities, and resources...", The Research and Planning Division of the provincial Department of Social Services directs its efforts toward internal departmental programs and service delivery planning. The Social Planning Department of the City of Halifax advises the City Planning Department when
Significantly, social planning in Nova Scotia is viewed by the legislators and planners concerned with comprehensive community planning as encompassing a broader range of activities than traditionally considered. For example, the Planning Act recognizes that the municipality in its Municipal Development Plan may provide for health and social service facilities and "any other matter related to the physical, social, or economic development of the municipality." At the inception of the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee (MAPC), the Committee recognized the need to consider the social implications of housing, recreation, health, welfare, education and law enforcement. By recognizing the importance of comprehensive social planning, MAPC realized that this "... would require some major changes in the delivery programs." Only a restructured approach to social planning would, according to MAPC, overcome the problems of "... the lack of accessibility, difficult coordination between services, and the lack of consumer participation in the decision-making process." The comprehensive community social planning concept first propounded by MAPC has been isolated and is now a function of the Regional Social Planning Council.

III. Social Planning in Halifax-Dartmouth

We saw evidence that we are all busy "mopping up" after the problems have assumed mammoth proportions, with each undertaking a small share of the task as we view it from our own particular professional vantage point, that we have no time for coordinated effort and no time for considering what might be done to prevent the difficulty in the first place.

9. Planning Act, S.N.S. 1969, c.16, s.13(3).
12. In April 1973, MAPC became a separate corporate entity and changed from a Committee to a Commission. Some months prior to the change in status, MAPC was advised of the organization of the Regional Social Planning Council and subsequently withdrew from the social planning field in order to prevent overlapping of planning efforts. None of the MAPC Committees have social planning personnel listed as committee members nor is there a social planning committee listed by MAPC, "MAPC Tri-Level Committee Structure", January 1975.
Social planning in metropolitan Halifax-Dartmouth is, like the services it provides, plagued with fragmentation, duplication and confusion both for those persons and agencies who might utilize the planning structures, and for the planning agencies themselves. The following hypothetical illustrates some of the social planning problems in the metropolitan area. A private agency, the A.B.C. Society funded by the local United Appeal, and two levels of government provides a social service for children and their families. It is apparent from increased referrals that a need exists for specialized counselling. The Society knows of other counselling services in the community but none focusing on the needs of the Society’s clients. The Society decides to pursue the problem and since it is service oriented it searches for planning assistance. Major questions require study. What is the precise nature of the counselling required? Is there a need for such counselling? Is there a significant volume of cases and might the counselling be provided through some other existing service? What kind of specialized personnel and support services are required? What have been the experiences of other agencies in the specialized field? Is such a service productive for the clients, the community and the agency? What type of delivery system is most efficient? How much will it cost and where might the financing come from? What preparation is required for service and financial approval? What should be the promotional and public relations activities? Obviously, the Society must take an active role in answering these questions. However, the Society must also consider existing planning systems and the ability of each to successfully reach the Society’s goal. For example, with what organizations are the planning agencies aligned, what is the quality of their planning activities, do they have the personnel to carry out the planning needs of this type of project, how will the planning report be received by the financing structure and so forth? What social planning systems in the metropolitan Halifax-Dartmouth area are available to help resolve this hypothetical problem? What are their functions and who do they represent?

Prior to 1971, and the formation of the Regional Social Planning Council, social planning in the metropolitan area was the

responsibility of the Halifax-Dartmouth Welfare Council,\textsuperscript{15} the Research and Planning Division of the Department of Social Services,\textsuperscript{16} individual private agencies,\textsuperscript{17} and the Social Planning Department of the City of Halifax.\textsuperscript{18} Since 1971, social planning has been complemented by the Nova Scotia Social Services Council\textsuperscript{19} and in 1974 by the formal designation of the Regional Social Planning Council as the regional arm of the provincial Social Services Council, by the establishment of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Children's Services,\textsuperscript{20} and by the Coordinator of Social Services for the metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{21} In discussing these agencies, and their potential role in relation to the hypothetical set out above, it is useful to consider them in an historical as well as in a functional context.

1. The Regional Social Planning Council

Local welfare councils\textsuperscript{22} were in a dilemma during the 1960's. On the one hand, they were charged with responsibility for planning

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\item \textsuperscript{15} The Welfare Council was established during the 1930's and continued to carry out social planning, community development and service coordination efforts until 1971 when it was dissolved and replaced by the Regional Social Planning Council.
\item \textsuperscript{16} This division was established in 1968 as the result of the reorganization of the Department of Social Services.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Most private social service agencies, in addition to delivering a service, maintain an internal planning responsibility for the expansion of functioning services or development of new programs. For example, the Halifax Children's Aid Society researched, promoted, and implemented major programs of Group Homes and Homemaker Services during 1967-69 encouraged by but independent of any local planning agency. The Regional Social Planning Council's directory lists more than 80 non-governmental social service agencies. This article will not comment on these as planning agencies since their planning systems are secondary to their service function and while each agency has a history of success in devising and implementing new services, they only emphasize the \textit{ad hoc} and uncoordinated social planning in the metropolitan area.
\item \textsuperscript{18} After many delays at the City Council level a Social Planner was employed in July 1968 under the Halifax Planning and Development Department. Shortly after, City Council established a new Department of Social Planning.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Welfare Councils Act, S.N.S. 1970-71, c.22.
\item \textsuperscript{20} In June 1972, the Premier announced the establishment of the Committee to review existing provincial services for children. The Committee consists of the Deputy Ministers of Education, Health, Social Services and Attorney General's departments and has become known as the Health, Education and Social Services (HESS) Committee.
\item \textsuperscript{21} In August 1974, the Social Planner for Halifax City was appointed on a part-time basis to plan the coordination of a variety of provincial social service programs in the Halifax — Dartmouth and Halifax County areas.
\item \textsuperscript{22} \textit{Supra}, note 15.
\end{itemize}
and coordinating the social services, yet, on the other hand, they had little authority and limited financial resources to perform the assigned task.\(^{23}\) And although many councils carried out functions which would have been satisfactory for an earlier era, their potential to develop into planning bodies which would meet the contemporary needs of a community was limited. The Halifax-Dartmouth Welfare Council was characteristic. As a result, and in keeping with similar concerns in other Canadian centres, public officials, agency administrators and concerned social workers began to question the effectiveness of the only local community-based, nongovernmental social planning body and to direct their attention to alternate planning mechanisms.\(^{24}\) Frustration and concern about the lack of an effective, comprehensive planning system led to the formation in July 1970 of an \textit{ad hoc} committee "to consider social planning and how it should be structured in the metropolitan area."\(^{25}\) The end result of the activities of this committee was the demise of the Welfare Council in August 1971, and the formation of the Regional Social Planning Council.

The Halifax experience in bringing about structural reform through the existing Welfare Council was unique among Canadian Councils.\(^{26}\) It was also the first time in Canada where a combined

\(^{23}\) Historically, the councils depended on the United Appeal for their funding, and for whom a major concern had been planning and resource allocation for their member agencies. Traditionally, councils were concerned with bringing coherence and efficiency into the operation of social welfare organizations.

\(^{24}\) For a discussion of the growing disenchantment with welfare councils, see: W. Head and G. Drover, "Social Development Study of Northwest Scarborough", Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, March 1970; and R. Warren, "Social Planning Councils and Social Change in Canada", Geneva Park, December 1967. In Halifax-Dartmouth, longstanding difficulties between the United Appeal and the Welfare Council stemmed from the basic disagreement over the function of the Council. The Council was committed to planning and coordination of its 73 member agencies, only 32 of which belonged to the United Appeal. Council funding from other sources was minimal. Acquisition of sufficient, competent, well-trained staff to meet the increased demands on the Council for planning and coordination was prevented by the lack of adequate funds.

\(^{25}\) Statement on Social Planning and Financing, November 23, 1970 by the \textit{Ad Hoc} Committee. The committee consisted of 11 persons, the Executive Directors of the Children's Aid Society, the Family Service Bureau, Canadian Mental Health Association, YWCA, Home of the Guardian Angel, St. Joseph's Day Care Centre, the Welfare Council, the President of the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers, Director of the Maritime School of Social Work and two community professional social workers.

\(^{26}\) For a comment on Toronto's experience, see H. Buchbinder, "Social Planning on Social Control: An Account of a Confrontation with the Social Welfare
government and voluntary agency planning council was established, and one of the first metropolitan councils in an area without metropolitan government.

The new Social Planning Council was unique in other ways. The Hardie Report on Social Planning, based on the prior recommendations of the ad hoc committee, was approved unanimously by those agencies and officials who had become involved with the new concept.27 Each of the metropolitan municipal governments, the provincial Department of Social Services, the United Appeal, the Welfare Council, and persons representing the major private social service agencies agreed in principle to a new Regional Social Planning Council. A 19 member Board of Directors was approved.28 By appointing such a broadly representative Board of Directors it was anticipated that Council decisions would be supported by a majority of the agencies represented. It was also expected that the Directors would have sufficient organizational manpower to ensure that they were informed and had the resources to implement the decisions of the Council. For the first time, the Halifax-Dartmouth area would have a Social Planning Council Board of Directors making decisions on issues over which they had direct control within their individual organizations. Whether this has proved effective is questionable.29


27. As the result of a report demanding responsible and coordinated social planning, see supra, note 25, presented to the Welfare Council and the United Appeal by the Ad Hoc Committee, a Delegate Committee was formed consisting of provincial and municipal representation, the Welfare Council, United Appeal and the Ad Hoc Committee and was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Social Services. Their task was to recommend a model for the establishment of a social planning structure. Dr. J.B. Hardie, Pine Hill Divinity College, chaired the working committee to prepare a report on planning a model for consideration by the Delegate Committee.

28. Representation consisted of two appointments from each of the municipalities, the province, the United Appeal, the private agencies, recipients of service, and persons at large. The chairman was to be an independent selection not from any of the government or fund raising agencies. The municipal representation was to be the mayors or a senior elected official and the senior official of their social service departments. The provincial representatives were to be the Deputy Minister of Social Services and a senior departmental official. The United Appeal was to be represented by the Chairman of the Board and either the chairman of the finance committee or the Executive Director. The private agencies’ representatives were to be chosen by a vote at a meeting called for that purpose from among the private agencies.

29. This article was written in March 1975. Since its writing the effectiveness,
The Council was expected to consider all aspects of the social service delivery systems in the area and, when necessary, other related services. Its role was to ensure effective use of welfare funds, act as a clearing house for information and funding requests, provide a forum for discussion by the interested and affected community, authorize and organize specific research studies, make priority recommendations to the community and specific responsible agencies and funding bodies, and conduct itself at all times, as a research, coordinating and recommending body, and not to deliver services.  

The Regional Social Planning Council is experiencing the same fate as its predecessor. It has not received the financial help needed to undertake the tasks its terms of reference require. In addition, a review of the Board's minutes shows that the Council has not adopted a formal constitution or by-laws, and has not become incorporated. Minimal use has been made of the Council by its member organizations in spite of the commitment inherent in the unanimous approval of the Council in 1971.

The Executive-Director sums up the Council's effectiveness in this way:

... the greatest weakness of the Council has been its inability to bring to its discussions the total power of its membership. Notably the chief magistrates have mostly been absent from its deliberations and other members have sometimes failed to get away from their roles as appointees of a particular organization and become a cohesive group with their own inner strength...

While the R.S.P.C. remains a purely advisory and research oriented body I believe that it cannot play a very effective role.

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30. This represents a summary of the recommendations of the Hardie Report.
31. The Annual Reports of the new Council show incomes of $45,442 (1973), $51,160 (1974) and $57,000 (1975). The former Welfare Council had a budget of $30,557 (1970) and $34,380 (1971). In both instances, the income permitted employment of an Executive Director, two stenographers, office rental and several administrative expenses. Specialized research personnel could only occasionally be employed. In essence, the new Council was unchanged from the old Council at the research and planning level. The infusion of funds and personnel blithely promoted by the founding organizations did not materialize in a meaningful way.
32. For example, the Regional Social Planning Council has only conducted tasks for the Department of Social Services including in 1973, a report on the Halifax Neighbourhood Centre; a survey of Sheltered Workshops, and Functional Budgeting Project, and undertaken some funding reviews for the United Appeal.
Several of its reports were well received and yet have not been implemented.\textsuperscript{33}

The A.B.C. Society in its hypothetical quest for a new service would, at first glance, turn to the Planning Council for planning direction. A close look, however, raises many questions. For example, how acceptable would a Planning Council study be when its Directors, who represent the main potential funding services, neglect to provide resources to ensure quality work of the Council, or even to give the Council formal status? How valid would a study of an understaffed Council be? How committed is the social service community to coordinated planning of new services? Can the A.B.C. Society assume from the Planning Council’s experience that planning is not encouraged and it should undertake any new development it wishes regardless of service needs as seen by the community if it can find the resources?

2. \textit{The Social Planning Department of the City of Halifax}

In 1968, social planning, as a distinct function at both levels of government, had its formal beginnings in Nova Scotia with the establishment of the Social Planning Department of the City of Halifax and the Research and Planning division of the provincial Department of Social Services.

Halifax and Vancouver were the only two Canadian cities during the late 1960’s to form a department at the municipal government level to cope with a range of social problems. Unlike other communities with similar social issues, these two cities chose to create a new planning structure, one of whose major goals would be to effect better coordination of public and private agencies.\textsuperscript{34}

In 1966, the citizens of Halifax elected a new Mayor. Faced with the complicated issues and problems associated with the lack of an

\textsuperscript{33} Staff Memorandum from the Executive-Director, Regional Social Planning Council, December 1974.

\textsuperscript{34} For a historical and specific discussion on the Halifax Social Planning Department, see Canadian Council on Social Planning, \textit{Case Studies in Social Planning: Public Social Planning in Halifax}, supra, note 5. It is significant that the Social Planning Department preceded by three years the demand by the community social service agencies for and establishment of the Regional Social Planning Council. Various reasons for the dissatisfaction with the Social Planning Department by the agencies have been put forth. Some of these are: the City was not interested in helping private agencies unless they could control them; the Department was ineffective and could not solicit the cooperation of private agencies; suspicion and fear of government takeover; the continuing lack of planning and rapid uncontrolled proliferation of service programs.
effective planning mechanism within both the private and municipal government social service agencies, the dissatisfaction with the City Welfare Department, and the conditions and hostility of the black people — primarily those just removed or in the process of being removed from the area known as Africville\(^{35}\) — the Mayor convened an Advisory Committee on Housing and Social Planning composed of citizens and professional persons. The Committee recommended the establishment of a social planning structure.\(^{36}\) No action was taken on the recommendation until the summer of 1968 when the City Council adopted the proposal and a social planner was hired by the City.

The planner's role was defined by the City as:

He shall be responsible for the formulation of policies to provide all those social services that are necessary for the well-being of the community as a whole, paying particular attention to, but not necessarily restricted by, the following:

1. To assist the Development Department, the Social Planning and Housing Committees in formulating housing policies, especially as they apply to elderly and disadvantaged families.

2. To maintain liaison with the various welfare agencies in the city whether private or governmental, and to encourage them to develop programs and policies that will ensure the maximum use of staff and funds.

3. To review the organization and administration of the Social Assistance Department and to determine whether changes have to be made. To develop an in-service training and staff development program for the personnel of the department and Basinview Home.

4. To ensure that the Social Assistance Department formulates and carries out policies that are designed to encourage the effective rehabilitation of people requiring financial assistance.

\(^{35}\) Id. and supra, note 3.

\(^{36}\) Nova Scotia Advisory Committee on Housing and Social Planning, *The Report of the Sub-Committee on Social Planning* (Halifax, 1967) at 1 recommended four alternative methods for carrying out their recommendation: 1. A social planner might be hired by the City and attached to the Mayor's office pending a decision to establish a Social Planning department or, alternatively, to attach the planner to an existing city department. 2. A social planner might be hired by the Planning and Development Department of the City. 3. A social planner might be hired by the regional authority. Here the emphasis would be on regional planning on a metropolitan basis. 4. The Welfare Council (Halifax-Dartmouth Area) might be legitimated by the three municipalities of Halifax, Dartmouth and the County of Halifax to do social planning for the area, with the addition of staff resources to the Welfare Council to carry out the increased duties.
5. Follow up the Africville Relocation Program; interview individuals who are affected by the move and prepare a report on the change in their circumstances.

6. Recommend to the City Manager programs concerning the development of day care, homemaker, sheltered workshops, training programs, housekeeping courses and other related programs.

7. Investigate the needs of the elderly. This includes responsibility for a share in the planning of Basinview Home (for the elderly).

Although the City Council delineated certain specific areas to be considered by the social planner, including the preparation and implementation of a manual of policy for the welfare department, it neither defined the content nor the direction of the departmental program. Thus, the social planner was theoretically given a mandate to implement his own policies once they were approved by Council; however, Council effectively controlled social planning by making all decisions with respect to new departmental programs, policy recommendations and budget requests.

The effectiveness of the Social Planning Department may be assessed from two points of view: the community agencies, and the City government.

In 1971, the major community agencies, disenchanted with and unable to promote or carry out coordinated planning at the local level either through the Welfare Council or the new City of Halifax Social Planning Department were instrumental in forming the Regional Social Planning Council. The Canadian Council on Social Development Case Study conducted in 1971 provides further evidence of the Social Planning Department’s ineffectiveness vis-à-vis local service agencies. Of the fifty agencies that responded to questionnaires used to assess the effectiveness of the Halifax Social Planning Department, 57% ascribed some influence by the Planning Department on their agency structure and functioning. A detailed commentary, however, indicated that “the department has not exerted a decisive influence on the total operation of the agencies” studied, and

37. Supra, note 5 at 22 and 23.
38. For a critical comment on the function and effectiveness of the Social Planning Department and personnel relationships with City Council, see supra, note 5 at 80-82.
39. Supra, notes 25, 34, 38.
40. Supra, note 5 at 65-73.
few agencies considered themselves affected by the Social Planning department. The agencies attributing influence to the Department were three public agencies (e.g. its own City Welfare Department) with which the Department was directly involved and those private agencies with whom close contact had been maintained by the Special Projects Unit of the Planning Department. The Department's influence has not been widespread.41

The insignificant impact on the social service community by the Social Planning Department emphasizes the inability of the Halifax agencies, private and municipal, to work cooperatively toward a coordinated service delivery system.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Social Planning Department on the City government. The activities of the Department are subject to the direction and decision of the City Manager, the head of the Planning Department and the City Council. Three examples illustrate both the standing accorded the Department and the status the Department feels it has within the system.

In 1973, the Canadian government announced a Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) under the National Housing Act,42 in an attempt to upgrade deteriorating inner city residential areas. A report was prepared for the City Planning Committee and submitted in December 1973.43 Although the Social Planning Department helped supervise the preparation of the report, the report dealt exclusively with such physical issues as the location of housing and trees. The report was silent on both narrow and broad social planning issues. Surely the City Planning Committee and Council would have a responsibility for and interest in more than a physical layout. The question arises: why was the psychological and sociological impact of neighbourhood redevelopment on the citizen and the community not expressed in the report?

A second report was prepared for the Mayor and City Council in January 1973 concerning the controversial Quinpool Road Project.44 This report contained specific observations on the

41. Id. at 67 and 69.
43. A report entitled "Neighbourhood Improvement Program" was prepared for the Mayor by the Halifax City Planning Committee and presented December 3, 1973.
44. A report entitled "Proposed Quinpool Road Development. Long-Term View of the Social Aspects of a Development of this Density" was presented by the Halifax City Manager to Mayor and Council, January 24, 1973.
neighbourhood, land use, traffic, space, density, effect on the tenants, children, high rise apartment buildings, fire, and social costs. The report was not presented to Council and later became a public issue.\(^{45}\) When it was finally released to the public, it indicated that, even though many questions were raised, such as the effects of high rise living on family life and increased incidence of mental illness, its conclusions were purely speculative, made no reference to local experience, and generalized from what the report itself described as "inconclusive" research done in other cities. Given the availability of research facilities and the concern expressed by all segments of society as to the psycho-social effects of high density living, why has the Department not undertaken meaningful local studies into the social effect of high rise developments on residents and the community?

The final report involves the Northwood Centre Proposal and was prepared on January 9, 1975.\(^{46}\) The Social Planning Department objected to the proposal on the basis that there was insufficient data on the effects of a high concentration of elderly people in one area. Council, however, was asked to consider only the project in the context of lot consolidation, tax exemption, and capital assistance and not the needs of the elderly. The Council approved the proposal.

What can be said about the Social Planning Department which would be helpful to the A.B.C. Society in its search for a planning system? The Social Planning Department has a mandate to undertake research and planning subject to the approval of the Council. Obviously it exercised its mandate to prepare a report and recommendation on the three proposals. Each proposal was major in size and had significant community impact. In each instance the contribution failed to have an effect on either the City Manager or the Council. On this basis, it would not be unrealistic for A.B.C. Society to conclude that the Social Planning Department really has no special planning contribution to make to the Society.

3. Provincial Social Planning Bodies

The provincial Department of Social Services is the primary government department responsible for the planning and implementation of social services within the province and is directly involved

46. A report entitled "Northwood Centre Proposal" was presented by the Halifax
with three major planning systems. In addition, the Department has recently appointed the head of the Halifax Social Planning Department to undertake certain planning activities for the province in the Metropolitan area. For the A.B.C. Society this multitude of provincial planning bodies creates significant strategic problems, not the least of which is: which of these inner departmental bodies will be most effective in reaching their goal? The potential impact of provincial bodies on metropolitan social planning is obviously substantial. They include the following and are described below in some detail.

(a). Department of Social Services Research and Planning Division

This division was established in 1968 following a major restructuring of the then provincial Department of Public Welfare which was subsequently renamed in 1972 the Department of Social Services. It has functioned with a small staff and directed its efforts toward data collection, report preparation for the Department, and internal projects related to the service of the Department.

In relation to the Metropolitan area, this division of the Department of Social Services has a potentially strong position. Approximately 30% of the provincial population live in the area while an estimated 60% of the departmental expenditures are made there. Although the Research and Planning Division has focused on provincial issues, the requirement of a Departmental review before funding is granted, and the considerable Department of Social Services financing of metropolitan social services, suggests that this division should have a significant social planning input at the local level. In fact, this departmental division does not

City Manager to the Mayor and Members of the City Planning Committee, January 9, 1975.

47. The Nova Scotia Social Services Council, the departmental Research and Planning division, and the Health, Education and Social Services Committee.

48. Supra, note 21.

49. Some examples of these are: (1) study of the department Foster Home Care program and the development of a training program for foster parents; (2) a study of the provincial Day Care program; (3) a review of the Public Assistance program; and (4) a survey of Homes for Special Care. Nova Scotia Department of Social Services, Social Services in Nova Scotia 1974 (Halifax: Queen's Printer, 1974) at 148-151.

50. Id. at 34. During the fiscal year 1973-74 the gross departmental expenditures amounted to $59,197,797.00.

51. Supra, note 49.
undertake research and planning exclusively for the Halifax-Dartmouth area but it does require serious consideration as a planning system and quite apart from the issue of research and planning competence, the existence of this division within a potential funding source, raises questions of "gentle persuasion" and enforced usage. For example, given the characteristic funding pattern, it is essential that the A.B.C. Society consult from the beginning with the Department of Social Services and obtain their approval of whatever planning system is used. Failure to consult raises the possibility of delays and even rejection because the original research and planning was inadequate from the Departmental point of view or did not comply with their budgeting or service delivery plans. The other inner Departmental planning organizations raise similar issues for the agency searching for a viable planning system.

(b). The Nova Scotia Social Services Council

The basic objectives of the Council were described by the Minister of Social Services in a press release dated July 25, 1973, announcing the appointment of the Council:

The Council has been established in direct response to the demands of citizens for an opportunity to participate in the social planning process and in the development of social policies. The government is anxious to provide opportunities for citizens to participate and it is hoped the Council will serve this purpose.

It is the function of the Council to advise the Minister on financial policy, to review and consider any problems that arise in the field of social services; to promote interest in improving social service facilities; to assist agencies engaged in social service activities and to coordinate the activities of approved regional councils and existing social service organizations.

52. Supra, notes 32 and 49. The Department of Social Services tends to contract with other planning agencies for research and planning at the local urban level.
52a. The funding of most child welfare agencies (the A.B.C. Society) is characteristically largely provincial government either directly or indirectly through the provincial Department of Social Services with occasional direct aid by the United Appeal and federal government demonstration funds.
54. Supra, note 49 at 1. The Regional Social Planning Council of Halifax-Dartmouth and County was officially approved by the Minister as a regional council on August 21, 1974.
The Council has endeavoured to meet these objectives with regular public regional meetings to hear briefs and recommendations concerning social services. Some activities formally undertaken to date include a two-day workshop on social planning held in Truro in 1974 and a study and assessment of the need for homemaker services.  

Advisory boards have been utilized by the Department of Social Services for a number of years. The Social Services Council is established to coordinate planning activities and provide for citizen participation in Department of Social Services decisions as they relate to the provision of social services. In view of the Council’s function, direct relationship with the Minister and consequently the Department of Social Services, the Society seeking planning assistance must consider in addition to the earlier issues, the relationship between the Council and other Departmental planning systems, and between the Council and its Regional Social Planning Council. Finally, there arise issues related to “lobbying”. What advantage is there in appearing before the Social Service Council? Does it provide a direct lobby to the Minister regardless of other considerations, and if it does, what is the most effective approach?

(c). Inter-Departmental Committee on Children’s Services

The Inter-Departmental Committee on Children’s Services, known as the HESS Committee was formed in 1972 by the Premier of Nova Scotia to review current provincial government programs for children with emotional and physical disorders.

The Committee was established in response to a growing concern, primarily in the Metropolitan area, on the part of

55. Id. at 6.
56. As early as 1930, the Minister was able to establish an advisory review board under the Mother’s Allowance Act, S.N.S. 1930, c. 4, s. 4. Currently there is a Public Assistance Review Board; the Advisory Boards for Nova Scotia Youth Training Centre, and the Nova Scotia School for Boys and School for Girls; and the Advisory Committee for the Family Rights Development Project.
58. Id. at 17.
59. Supra, note 20.
60. Report and Summary of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Children’s Services, prepared by J. Maclsaac, Secretary, 1974. The original representation was from the Departments of Education, Health, Social Services and Attorney General. However, at the first Committee meeting on June 30, 1972, the Deputy Attorney General agreed that his participation would be limited to matters directly related to legal questions.
professional personnel working with children that children's problems required more governmental attention. It was anticipated by the Premier and his colleagues, that a committee reporting directly to the Premier and consisting of the Deputy Ministers of the four departments would bring about substantial change in children's services and those sociological and environmental factors which directly influence and affect young people.  

There has been considerable work undertaken by the HESS Committee and while there seems to be no doubt that its establishment and mandate has led to increased activity within the departments concerned, there is a question of its direct effect on basic community concerns related to children. For example, it has undertaken to establish broad-based departmental task forces to examine what is being done for children with special needs; task forces to examine all matters related to mental retardation; a working committee on the establishment of residential treatment centres; a committee for developing common teaching methods of pre-school children; and a committee on school health.

It is significant, in the context of Metropolitan social planning that the HESS Committee has not undertaken any activity specifically related to the Halifax-Dartmouth area between June 1972 and August 1973. Many Metropolitan area organizations and individuals have appeared before the Committee with requests and recommendations but the Committee has done little more than refer the matters on to Ministers, to committees for reports or to some other program.

The mandate of the HESS Committee and its record to date suggests that appearance before this organization enables consultation with a high level decision-making group but would lead to a referral to the appropriate provincial government department. In the

63. Supra, note 60 at 16-20.
64. Id. at 10-12.
case of the A.B.C. Society, this referral would be to the Department of Social Services.

(d). Coordinator of Social Services for Halifax County

On August 19, 1974, the Minister of Social Services and the Acting Mayor for the City of Halifax, jointly announced that the Halifax City Social Planner would undertake on a part-time basis, employment with the provincial Department of Social Services, as a Coordinator of Social Services for Halifax County. This appointment added a new dimension and structure to the social planning system of metropolitan Halifax-Dartmouth.

Following the recommendations of the Graham Report that the Provincial Government assume direct responsibility for welfare services the Department of Social Services responded by appointing a person to coordinate activities leading to the implementation of the recommendations. The first task of the new Coordinator was to explore immediately with his own Halifax City Social Services Department, the City of Dartmouth and the County of Halifax, the effect of the Graham Report recommendations and the manner in which the change over to provincial responsibility may be made having regard to provincial and municipal resources. In addition the Coordinator was to be responsible for the efficient use of the staff during the change over phase and give leadership in the Metropolitan area in respect to the coordination of the services listed: day care, homemakers' services, services for the retarded, activity centres, sheltered workshops, and similar rehabilitative programs.

This new coordination function requires an extensive planning process. Whether this function is to be carried out through the Halifax City Social Planning Department, through the provincial Department of Social Services, or through and with the cooperation of the municipal social service departments in Dartmouth and the County of Halifax, is yet to be determined.

The proliferation of governmental social planning organizations and their overlapping mandates force the hypothetical A.B.C.

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66. Inter-departmental Memorandum, August 19, 1974. At the present time, both the local municipalities and the provincial Department of Social Assistance provide financial assistance directly to those eligible for public assistance.
67. *Id.*
Society in its quest for planning aid in developing a specialized
counselling service, to approach one major government department,
the Department of Social Services and a number of minor bodies all
directly or indirectly accountable to or influenced by the
Department of Social Services.

The foregoing raises two pertinent questions: first, why has there
been such a proliferation of social planning bodies and secondly,
why has there been no coordination among them? These lead to a
number of specific questions. Why did the three municipal
governments and the provincial government agree to establish and
sit on the Board of Directors of the Regional Social Planning
Council, and to recognize the Council as the planning agency for the
Metropolitan area, then not provide adequate financing, not attend
meetings, and continue the mandate of their individual planning
agencies or establish new bodies to duplicate the Council’s work?
Why did the provincial Department of Social Services designate the
Regional Social Planning Council as the official local Council and
then appoint, with the agreement of Halifax City Council, a
Coordinator within the Department to oversee the planning,
coordination, and implementation functions of a wide variety of
private and public social service programs all of which were
encompassed in the Regional Social Planning Council’s mandate?
Why have the Directors of the Social Planning Council virtually
ignored its problems — lack of financing to undertake its mandate
and lack of requests for significant social planning activities? Why
was it agreed and with whom that the Metropolitan Area Planning
Commission would stay out of the social planning field thus
mitigating against comprehensive community planning as originally
promoted by MAPC? And if the answer to the latter question is
really that the Regional Social Planning Council would do the social
planning, should not the Social Planning Council be an integral part
of the MAPC organization? Why has the provincial Department of
Social Services chosen to delegate its planning function for the City
of Dartmouth and the County of Halifax to the Social Planning
Department of the City of Halifax? Does this mean Halifax City is
in fact, if not officially, taking over the social planning functions of
those other two municipal governments and, if so, why and what
effect will this have on gaining cooperation when this is realized by
those other municipalities? Is it possible that the recent development
of the social planning structures has been haphazard and without
forethought? If there has been deliberate development in this
manner, why? Is it a process of balance and counter balance, check and double check, or trust? Are the existing structures incapable of meeting their mandates and, if so, why? Is it possible the development of the new bodies are only responses to community pressures?

These and many more problems arise as the social planning system in the metropolitan area or, indeed, in any community is surveyed.

IV. A Possible Solution

Social planning, in the sense of coordinated planning activities in the Metropolitan area, has not undergone significant change since the formation of the Regional Social Planning Council in 1971. There is no doubt that the Graham Royal Commission on Provincial-Municipal Relations has prevented or delayed normal developments in the delivery of traditional social service pending the release of the Report and governmental action on the recommendations, but there has been a frenzy of activity in setting up or expanding social service planning systems. The social service agencies continue to be uncoordinated in their planning functions, and the development of new and expanded service delivery systems spurred on by government and community funding, continues unabated and without control.

What is to be learned from the Regional Social Planning Council experience which may be useful in future planning organization development? First, organizational development based on good will and intention is not a solid foundation on which to build a strong agency. Second, the establishment of a planning council in the absence of other controls, will not necessarily prevent the proliferation of competing or overlapping planning agencies even on the part of major council members. Third, lack of referrals for research and planning from outside the organization will lead to the ultimate demise of a planning agency. Fourth, representations at the

68. Supra, note 65.
69. The federal government through the Opportunities for Youth, Local Initiative Programs, and special grants for family planning, for example, has encouraged local social service agency development without consultation with any of the provincial, municipal or voluntary planning agencies, and provides a method whereby the established or proposed agency can circumvent the local system. At the provincial level, special grants are occasionally given by Order in Council to agencies which can demonstrate a financial need and have the ability to convince Cabinet that such assistance is necessary.
Director level by senior officials of the major community policy makers, service agencies, and funding bodies will not guarantee success of the agency.

Community experience with voluntary social planning councils in today’s society has not been good. The Halifax-Dartmouth experiment based on a variation of the traditional voluntary agency model is characteristic. It is submitted, that the Halifax-Dartmouth model composing Directors from the two local levels of government, with private agency and citizen representation making decisions over which they have direct policy and fiscal control, and with certain status alterations, is a viable social planning system, and, indeed, may very well serve the broader planning community. It is further submitted that the social work delivery system requires coordinated planning leading to maximum efficiency of resources and utilization by the community. This can only be accomplished by formally establishing a planning body to which all planning needs and requirements of a community must be directed. To do this requires legislative action.

In Nova Scotia this does not require a major legislative program. Suitable amendments to two existing planning Acts will accomplish this purpose. The Planning Act\(^70\) provides for planning at the regional and municipal level. The Regional Development Plan is prepared at the order of the Minister and shall contain among other requirements

A statement of policies for the orderly economic and physical development of the region including policy with respect to . . . (v) regional educational, health and recreational facilities.\(^71\)

The emphasis in this Part, as it is throughout the Act, is on the economic and physical development of a region. Only a “statement of policy” is required on education, health and recreation physical facilities. The Act makes no reference as to what these policy statements shall contain, the importance to be attached to them or what effect the noninclusion in the Plan will have.

The Municipal Development Plan is dependent on the Regional Development Plan requiring such a plan, or on the order of the Minister. Its preparation is the responsibility of the municipality.\(^72\) Section 13 of the Act requires that a municipality before preparing a

\(^{70}\) Planning Act, S.N.S. 1969, c. 16, s. 13(3).  
\(^{71}\) Id., ss. 3 and 4.  
\(^{72}\) Id., s. 12.
Plan, conduct "studies of the economy, finances, resources, population, land use, transportation facilities and municipal facilities and services of the municipality and any other matter related to the present or future physical, social, or economic conditions of the municipality", and that the Plan "shall include statements of policy with respect to some or all of the following . . . (e) (v) facilities for provision of health and social services . . . (g) urban renewal and housing; (h) the coordination of public programmes of the Council relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality." It should be emphasized that regardless of the Plan submitted by the municipality the Minister may disregard the Plan altogether.

An amendment to the Act making regional and municipal planning a prerequisite for provincial financing programs and services, and specifying in this situation the local social planning agencies it would recognize would ensure that both provincial and municipal governments had an obligation to consider social planning in the total planning activity. The second amendment would be made to the Welfare Councils Act. This legislation permits the Minister to approve a local planning council. An amendment to the Act which required the community to establish local communities and that all submissions to the Department of Social Services, the municipal governments and private funding agencies requesting financial aid for or development of new or expanded services be referred to the Council for assessment and recommendation, and that no new or expanded social service would be granted recognition or a permit to function without passing through the local planning council would result in specific legislative direction that all current and proposed social services in the region would be channelled through a central system which would have the authority and financial contacts to bring about positive coordinated service delivery accountable for the planning decisions. It is submitted that this could in fact force a bringing together of the fragmented and uncoordinated government, private and quasi-government services, prevent the proliferation of competing planning agencies and give a planning council the mandate and authority it requires to carry out the tasks before it.

73. Id., s. 13.
74. Id.
75. Id., s. 16.
76. Supra, note 19.
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