



P2 / MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Tom Vilella, CPT, MCIP, RPP



P3 / STUDENT ARTICLE

"The Fanshawe Student Urban Design Charrette" by Carrie O'Brien



P6 / TECHTALK ARTICLE

"CACPT Edmonton Workshop - Infill Development" by Daniel Boric

TechTALK



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF
CERTIFIED PLANNING TECHNICIANS

PROVIDING A VOICE FOR PLANNING
TECHNICIANS ACROSS CANADA

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EDITION



Director's Message: George T. Zajac



Welcome to the Canadian Association of Certified Planning Technicians, the CACPT. Our Association, now in its 38th year of operation, is dedicated to maintaining high standards for Planning

Technicians and other related planning professionals throughout the country.

Full members have the right to vote, hold office and to use the title "Certified Planning Technician" or "CPT" after their names on correspondence, etc. Full and Associate members receive a certificate bearing their name and the Association seal. Upon approval and payment of dues all members receive a copy of the Association By-law. Members of the Association also receive job circulations and are connected to our wide network of employers and fellow members across the country.

Our 2015 Conference in Guelph was a huge success and I would like to thank all the volunteers, those who attended, the speakers, as well as all my colleagues, including Kris Orsan. Kris was not only the

Conference Co-chair this past year, but has stepped up to become President for the first time in the 2015-2016 Council year.

Thank you to all that contributed to this edition of the Newsletter, as well as a special thank you to our IT extraordinaire, Chris Kadet, for providing us with a fresh new look for the New Year!

We continue to grow and become more connected with our counterparts in each province. I hope we carry this on in the upcoming years and continue to learn from one another, as well as "stay connected".

George T. Zajac, CPT, MCIP, RPP
Executive Director, CACPT

Member Spotlight:
Tom Villella, CPT,
MCIP, RPP



At our Annual General Meeting in Guelph, Ontario, we presented an Honorary Life Membership to Tom Villella, in recognition of his support of CACPT for the past 27 years. Tom has not only been a CACPT member, but has served in a number of positions on the CACPT Board of Directors in the past, including President, Vice-President, and Treasurer.

Tom was born and raised in Welland, Ontario, the oldest of three siblings. His parents noticed his interest in architecture and city planning at a fairly early age, and to support this interest Tom's father built him a homemade drafting table out of spare wood. From there his interest in city planning took off.

Tom attended Fanshawe College in London, Ontario and graduated from the Urban Design and Planning Program in 1985. While at Fanshawe, he had the opportunity to intern with the City of Welland for three summers, and upon graduation landed a full time position there as a Planning Technician. While employed at Welland, Tom furthered his planning education through part time evening studies at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario and distance learning through the University of North

"I gained invaluable experience during my time on the CACPT Council, which helped me in other areas of my life, especially my urban planning career."

Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 1988 Tom was promoted to the position of Planning Clerk, which involved the administration of the City's Committee of Adjustment.

In 1990, Tom left Welland but remained in the Niagara Region, taking on the position of Planning Officer with the Town of Fort Erie, where he would spend the next 21 years of his career. During his time in Fort Erie, Tom was responsible for graphics and mapping for the Planning Department, and witnessed firsthand the vast technological improvements in CAD and GIS that took place in the 1990s. Tom was responsible for creating Fort Erie's first digital parcel and zoning maps, eventually tying both to the early GIS programs as the technology developed.

In 2011 Tom made a self-described "leap of faith" by leaving his family and friends, and accepting the position of Manager of Zoning and Special Projects with the City of Markham. "This was the chance of a lifetime, a position that any urban planner would be thrilled to have", says Tom when asked about his motivation for the big move. "This was an opportunity to round out my planning career by working in a fast-paced, high-growth city where the action literally never stops. It also provided me with an opportunity to expand my managerial skills by leading a full team of planners and planning technicians".

In Tom's current role, he manages eight employees in three essential work groups within Markham's Planning and Urban Design Department. The Geomatics Section, the Special Projects Section and the Committee of Adjustment staff are all currently under his direction. Tom considers this to be his "dream" position, since it requires him to use all of the experience he gained in his previous positions, and the communication and leadership skills gained through his involvement with CACPT. "Being involved with CACPT provided me with the opportunity to work with others in a team environment, and to become more comfortable in a leadership and public speaking role. I gained invaluable experience during my time on the CACPT Council, which helped me in other areas of my life, especially my urban planning career".

The Fanshawe Student Urban Design Charrette

Each year the students of the GIS & Urban Planning program at Fanshawe College collaborate with the Landscape Design program for a weeklong competition known as the Urban Design Charrette. Although this week may very well have been the busiest and most intense week of my school career, it was the experience of a lifetime.

What is a Design Charrette? Each year, faculty decides upon a subject site and students are given the task of proposing a redesign for the location. They are given a week to create a high quality design proposal which is then presented to a panel of adjudicators – made up of school faculty and professionals familiar with the subject.

Last year, we were given the opportunity to plan a complete community in the SOHO neighbourhood of London, Ontario, incorporating Patrick Condon's Seven Rules of a Sustainable Community. Site visits and research projects provide participants with basic background knowledge but most of the work is done in the short span of a week, and the results are amazing. Initial concepts are developed, and re-worked with the input of faculty and the help of supporting documents. Renders, 3D models, elevations, walkability studies, demographic analysis, and land use studies are done and eventually incorporated into three presentation boards which help tell the story of how final concepts were conceived.

At the end of the week – in a state of total

...continued from P2

Currently, Tom's group is working on one of the most significant planning projects in Markham's history, the consolidation of its nearly fifty (50) existing zoning by-laws into one new City-wide zoning by-law that will implement Markham's New Official Plan. "This is a monumental task, but we have a great team of city staff and consultants who are up for the challenge. Not only do we need to consolidate the old by-laws, we need to modernize the zoning standards to bring them into the 21st century. In the end, we want to have a new, modern zoning by-law that is easier for city staff to administer, but more importantly easier for our customers to access and to understand".

When Tom has some down time away from the hustle and bustle of Markham, he loves to travel, and one of his greatest pleasures is travelling by rail. Tom has taken a number of cross-country train trips in the USA, and hopes to do a cross-Canada trip in the near future. He also does an annual summer trip to New York City. "I tend to treat New York City as a second home when I'm there. I like to find unusual things to see and do. Another hobby of mine is photography, and so I seek out interesting things to shoot; places and scenes that are out of the ordinary".

Tom says he is extremely pleased to have been able to witness the growth of CACPT over the last couple of decades. He remembers a time when it was difficult to find people interested in serving on Council, and when membership numbers were stagnant. "There was a time in the past when CACPT was in danger of folding due to a lack of interest. Back then the association was held together by a small group of extremely dedicated

volunteers on a shoestring budget. People like Diane LeBreton and Donna Madden were instrumental in keeping things running smoothly during a financially rough time, and they should be remembered always for that. When I see the size of the membership and the calibre and dedication of the Council today, it really fills me with pride and satisfaction. CACPT is on solid ground now, and is in good hands".

A big thank you to Tom for all his hard work and dedication to the Association over the years. As mentioned by Diane LeBreton, our Registrar and former Executive Director, at last year's AGM & Conference, Tom has been a pleasure to work with and always a consummate professional.

George T. Zajac, CPT, MCIP, RPP
Executive Director, CACPT

...continued from P3

exhaustion – the results are presented to students, faculty, and members of the City staff. Participants walk the audience through their design process and propose their design, trying to convince the panel that their design is the best choice. And regardless of the winner, it is absolutely astonishing to see what students have been able to accomplish in a week.

This year the Charrette is focused around a redesign of the Western Fair District in London. With endless opportunities for this site, I look forward to the designs that will be created.

Carrie O'Brien

CACPT Fanshawe Student Representative

Thank you to Carrie O'Brien for her article as well as volunteering her time on Council this year. Also, a big thank you to Sara Rogers for her excellent reporting on the AGM & Conference, as well as her contribution and dedication to Council last year and this year.

George T. Zajac, CPT, MCIP, RPP
Executive Director, CACPT



TechTALK Article: AGM & PDC Conference



The Association's Annual General Meeting and Professional Development Conference were held on October 23rd, 2015, at the Delta Hotel and Conference Centre in Guelph, Ontario.

This year's urban design theme, aptly titled "Guelph By Design", was explored in what is considered one of the first planned towns in Canada. Guelph was based on a unique radial design by John Galt that incorporated public space and broad main streets that help to give it the character it retains today.

Attendees were welcomed by Todd Salter, the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Building Services for the City of Guelph. Todd Salter laid out Guelph's current planning policy framework as well as its policy goals in the pursuit of design excellence.

Following Mr. Salter were David DeGroot and Tim Donegani, City of Guelph, who

spoke about Guelph's unique urban design challenges and how to use brownfield development incentives to create new high density areas outside of the downtown. David and Tim led the downtown walking tour in the afternoon where attendees saw the "big and small" urban design concepts and streetscape standards discussed come to life.

The morning panel discussion showcased Pamela Kraft, The Metal Works Development (Fusion Homes); Melissa Walker, Kilmer Brownfield Equity Fund LP; and Maria Pessano, The Ward Residents' Association (TWRA). The focus was a brownfield redevelopment in downtown Guelph and all participants conveyed their visions and interests, although at times competing, professionally.

There were two afternoon workshops as well as a walking tour. Heritage Planning Practices, conducted by



...continued from P4

Stephen Robinson and Douglas McGlynn (both City of Guelph employees), discussed the importance of a team approach in preserving heritage while integrating new development. People, Places & Design – A Healthy Community, was an interactive charrette based workshop conducted by Rob Voigt (Professional Planner) and James Horan (City of Guelph). The Downtown Tour was led by David DeGroot and Tim Donegani, City of Guelph. Participants saw Guelph's examples of innovative approaches to brownfield development, the integration of old and new, and the functional public space of City Hall, to name but a few of the sites visited.



Of course, the opportunity to learn from each other and stay connected would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the CACPT Council, and the generosity of our sponsors. George T. Zajac, Executive Director, and Kris Orsan, 2015 Councillor at Large and now our 2016 Council President, were the 2015 Professional Development Conference Co-Chairs who made the necessary arrangements to make the day such a success.

The CACPT Council thanks all members for their continued support. Attendance at the AGM and PDC shows your dedication to the Association and ensures its continued growth and success.



Highlights of the day included:

- CACPT Annual General Meeting and General Business
- CACPT Vice President Address
- Welcome address by Todd Salter, General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Building Services for the City of Guelph
- Presentation by David DeGroot and Tim Donegani, City of Guelph on Urban Design and Brownfield Redevelopment in Guelph
- Panel Discussion with Pamela Kraft, The Metal Works Development (Fusion Homes); Melissa Walker, Kilmer Brownfield Equity Fund LP; and Maria Pessano, The Ward Residents' Association (TWRA); on The Metalworks development in downtown Guelph
- CACPT Executive Director's Address
- CACPT Awards Presentation
- Workshop on Heritage Planning Practices by Stephen Robinson and Douglas McGlynn, City of Guelph
- Charrette-based Workshop: People, Places & Design – A Healthy Community, by Rob Voigt (Professional Planner) and James Horan (City of Guelph)
- Downtown Guelph Walking Tour, led by David DeGroot and Tim Donegani, City of Guelph



Sara Rogers, CPT
Councillor, CACPT

TechTALK Article: "CACPT Edmonton Workshop - Infill Development" - October 16, 2015



In October of 2015, the CACPT Western Chapter hosted an afternoon professional development workshop to discuss the theme of Infill Development. The event was hosted at the World Trade Centre in the City of Edmonton with guest speakers Nancy MacDonald from Stantec Consulting Ltd, Trevor Illingworth and Christopher Wilcott from the City of Edmonton. The workshop concluded with a networking social hosted by the CACPT at the Craft Beer Market in the heart of the downtown.

The guest speakers from the City of Edmonton gave an excellent background into the issues the City is facing in terms of redevelopment (or gentrification) of established neighbourhoods. Residential infill development is not new in the City of Edmonton. Although the City had sought to maintain the character of existing mature neighbourhoods through the "Mature Neighbourhood Overlay" of the Edmonton Zoning Bylaw, such regulations were not enough protecting these neighbourhoods from the negative

effects of redevelopment. The speakers noted that in late 2015, the City had implemented the "Infill Action Plan" to help give a clear policy direction to accommodating infill development. This document also provides clear "action items" the City wishes to achieve in facilitating infill development, including the creation of the City Infill team, the Infill Conversation Toolkit, revised notification letters to the public as well as changes to the regulations of the Zoning Bylaw to allow better-accommodate and streamline infill development.

Trevor and Chris remain integral in the completion of the action items for the Infill Action Plan. We look forward to working with the both of them in the future and hearing more about the innovative steps taken by the City of Edmonton in accommodating redevelopment in aging communities.

Our last speaker, Nancy MacDonald, from Stantec Consulting Ltd., gave a very insightful analysis of the land development market in the City of Edmonton and how the private sector is helping to facilitate resilient, innovative infill development projects in the city. Nancy described three key projects in the city, being the highly regarded and award-winning Blatchford redevelopment, the Windsor Terrace redevelopment and the Muttart redevelopment. These three projects will be instrumental in reshaping the City of Edmonton in terms of providing innovative, dense and pedestrian-oriented developments in existing neighbourhoods in the city.

Nancy and the staff at Stantec Consulting Ltd. will continue to be major contributors in reshaping the City of Edmonton. We look forward to seeing more exciting and innovative projects from Stantec Consulting Ltd. in the future.

Student Perspective: A Glimpse of the 2015 Development Conference



When we began the Urban and Regional Planning Technician program at Mohawk College in 2014, we were introduced to the idea of the Canadian Association of Certified Planning Technicians. The thought of being connected to the professional world of Urban Planning sounded great. The thought of a career was still a distant endeavor, considering most of us knew basically nothing about what a planning technician really did or how valuable of a network and resource the CACPT was.

Now we fast forward to October 2015 and we begin to have the realization that our professional debut is quickly approaching now that we are half done our program. Being a student representative on council during my first year of studies, I was lucky enough to have insight on what the 2015 Development Conference was to encompass. However, it wasn't until October 23, the day of the conference, that I realized how valuable this opportunity really is for the students of the accredited programs.

...continued from P6

The workshop was capped off with a social at the Craft Beer Market in the downtown of Edmonton. This social was well-attended by planning professionals in both the public and private sector, providing for an enjoyable opportunity to meet some new faces and network, keeping up with the "staying connected" theme of the CACPT.

The CACPT looks forward to hosting more professional workshops in association with the Western Chapter members in the future. Stay posted for upcoming events in Western Canada on the CACPT website.

Daniel Boric, CPT
CACPT Council Member

The CACPT is very much appreciative to all those who took part in the Edmonton Workshop, including the speakers, sponsors and delegates. A special thank you to Kevin Cianciolo, Daniel Boric, Ben Misener and Justin Young for all their hard work with the workshop, as well as their continuing dedication and support of the Association. I look forward to future events hosted by them and our Western Chapter.

George T. Zajac, CPT, MCIP, RPP
Executive Director, CACPT



...continued from P7



This year's conference in Guelph, Ontario had a focus around Urban Design. It was a truly enlightening event that got us out of the classroom, mingling with industry professionals and hearing from and conversing with people who have years of experience. The afternoon workshops engaged us in activities that provided useful knowledge and experience to apply to our own projects at school.

This year's conference was extremely beneficial because it was continuously interactive. It was a beautiful day for a downtown tour to visit some landmarks in Guelph for us to learn about the city itself as well as the opportunities and challenges they face. The "People, Places & Design – A Healthy Community" session held a mini design charette which allowed us to hear professionals' perceptions on what's important to a community, the necessary design steps, and how to improve communities from the micro

to the macro elements. From what I heard from my peers (because the one downfall is not being able to attend every session due to the amount of hours in the day), the "Heritage Planning Practices" session was also very engaging and relevant to the issues that we come across in our studies and also in our day to day lives.

Overall, the CACPT provided us with a priceless experience that gave us a glimpse into the field of Planning and Urban Design. It is great to know as an emerging planning technician that the CACPT is here to keep us all connected and growing together. On behalf of the Mohawk students, I would also like to show our appreciation to the Association, the speakers and the presenters for your hard work and dedication to the Development Conference and within the industry. We can only hope to one day work along side you as colleagues.

Jillian Richards

CACPT Mohawk Student Representative

Thank you to Jillian Richards for her contribution to the Newsletter, as well as to Council the past two years as a Mohawk Representative. Thank you also to all the students and professors that attended at the AGM & Conference last year. Your enthusiasm and willingness to learn do not go unnoticed.

George T. Zajac, CPT, MCIP, RPP

Executive Director, CACPT

Studying in Scotland

In August 2014 I embarked on a new adventure – to pursue a Master of Science, Planning and Regeneration at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, UK. The decision to go back to school wasn't easy, I enjoyed my job and (at the time) living in Edmonton; but the chance to live abroad and expand my planning knowledge internationally was too appealing. The program was a 12-month intensive study, which is typical for Scotland, and attracts a very diverse and international group of students and professors.

As a city, Glasgow was a fascinating place to be and I enjoyed it very much. I had the benefit of living near the University in the city's west end, which is scenic, walkable and 'happening'. I also happened to be there during the Scottish Referendum and watched the country debate the merits of independence. Scotland itself is a beautiful country, both Edinburgh and Glasgow are picturesque and exciting cities, and the highlands offer a truly breathtaking landscape.

The planning system in Scotland is also quite interesting. It stems from the English discretionary planning system but, following devolution of powers from England in 1999, it has evolved into its own unique form of planning. For those of us from a regulatory planning system which includes land use districts, clear policies, and regulations, a discretionary system can be hard to grasp. It is essentially 'merit based' planning wherein there are more general policies but every application is reviewed individually and irrespective of previous ones. I was amazed that this system could produce high quality development and discovered that Scotland's planning challenges are



Meghan handing in her final dissertation

in many ways the opposite of the Canadian ones. For example, the Canadian system may be too restrictive at times and in some cases actually deters new and upcoming development. The Scottish system, however, has the flexibility to allow this without costly and time consuming amendments. In contrast, the Scottish system lacks certainty and enforceability in relation to their policies, whereas in Canada we are more capable of maintaining a 'minimum standard'.

During my time in Scotland I was fortunate enough to travel and see a great deal of Europe. Throughout the school year I was able to spend a few weekends in Copenhagen, Malmo, London, Istanbul, Dublin and the Scottish Highlands. A class trip toured a group of us around new developments in London, including Oxford Properties' (a Canadian company) Leadenhall Building which wasn't fully complete, but is now open to the public. The program allowed a great deal of flexibility for studying international examples of planning, real estate and regeneration – so overall the experience was fascinating.

To tie things back to home, I chose to complete my final dissertation on Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which are the Scottish version of Canada's Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs). For me, I thought it would be both useful and interesting to

The Benefits of Membership in the CACPT

...continued from P9

see how a Canadian example of a successful local improvement initiative was being implemented in Europe.

Following the submission of my dissertation I embarked on a 3-month journey around Europe and managed to visit 17 different countries. Some of the highlights were eating Portuguese tarts in Lisbon (Portugal), touring castles in Transylvania (Romania), finding underground cafes in Lviv (Ukraine), exploring a ruined fortress in Split (Croatia), and joining in the Oktoberfest celebration (Munich, Germany). It would take me a great deal of time to share all of the wonderful experiences I had during this trip, but the most important thing I can share is that I gained significant insight on how different countries and regions have developed, their unique and fascinating cultures, and I developed a new appreciation for Canada. We are truly lucky to live in such a wonderful country. In spite of all our challenges, we are in a much better position than most to address them. Now that I am back in Canada I hope to carry these experiences with me through my practice, as well as encourage others to take advantage of opportunities to learn and share their planning practice internationally.

Meghan Wong, MSc., CPT
CACPT Member

Meghan Wong is a Project Planner employed with WSP / MMM Group responsible for preparing a wide variety of land use applications, developing and reviewing planning policy, conducting public consultation, and consulting on infill and revitalization strategies.

Job Circulations

Our members receive job circulations by some of the best employers across Canada and these employers come to us first, as they know we have the largest contact list for Planning Technicians across this country.

Representation

CACPT has been the recognized voice for Planning Technicians since 1978 or for the past 38 years! We are **THE** advocate for Planning Technicians across Canada and are part of school advisory Committees and interact with governmental representatives for our members.

Code of Ethics and By-law

We have an established Professional Code of Ethics and By-law, which the Association maintains and adheres to in a professional manner.

Designation

Our designation is now one of the compulsory criteria by employers when hiring Planning Technicians. Job circulations now ask for Planning Technicians to have this designation when applying for positions across the country.

Networking

Our Professional Development Conference and Annual General Meeting, as well as workshops, socials, forums and social media provide opportunities for members to interact with one another and learn from each other.

Continued Learning and Development

Our conferences, workshops, newsletters, surveys and website provide our members continuing education and knowledge that pertains to our profession and fellow members across the country.

Awards & Recognition

Our awards of excellence, tenure and merit awards, as well as bursaries recognize employers and members for their outstanding work and dedication within our profession and Association.

CACPT Announcements

Membership Survey

Please watch for our Membership Survey in the upcoming months. The more members that take part, the better we can all stay connected and learn more about our colleagues in other parts of the country.

2016 AGM & Conference – Save the Date

Save the date of **Friday, October 21st, 2016** for our **AGM & Conference**, which will be held in Hamilton, Ontario this year. Watch for more details to follow on our social media and website.

Retiring?

If you are a member retiring in the near future or have retired, perhaps you would like to volunteer on Council or dedicate some time to our workshops or Conference? We would love to hear from you. E-mail us at **director@cacpt.org** or **admin@cacpt.org**.

Council Update

Our new Council met back in November, 2015 and our next Council meeting is scheduled for **February 25th, 2016**. Thank you to all those who attended our November meeting and those who volunteered their time and expertise this year.

Job Circulations

For all employers, do not forget that CACPT offers free Job Circulations for summer employment! We also offer reasonable rates for year round circulations to over 500 members! E-mail **admin@cacpt.org** to take advantage of this benefit.

2016 Membership Invoices

A gentle reminder that our 2016 Membership Invoices will be sent out shortly, so please watch for them and we are proud to say that we were able to balance the 2016 budget without raising our membership fees. Thanks to everyone on the Budget Committee, including our Treasurer, Sean O'Raw.

Successful Lobbying

In addition to Registered Professional Planners, the City of Hamilton has now added that Certified Planning Technicians can also prepare and submit Planning Justification Reports per their new guidelines, due to our successful lobbying on behalf of our members.

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Alexandra Colesberry, County of Middlesex, ON

Chris Downey, ON

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Roger Zaugg, ON

Thomas Deming, Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency, AB

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