

## **Building Sustainable Links between Planning & Health – Future Directions**

Speaker: Stephanie Knox

Stephanie Knox is a planning consultant and board member of the Royal Australian Planning Institute (RAPI), Victorian Division. Her particular interests are social and community planning, including community safety and social justice. Stephanie who was Senior Lecturer in Planning at Southern Cross University Northern NSW, is now based in Melbourne. She has also lived and worked in the Regional cities of Wodonga, Broken Hill, Orange and the Solomon Islands. Juggling the various commitments of family, home and work that arise from such a wide range of professional, community and personal interests, is something she finds particularly challenging.

Presentation notes

Stephanie reflected on shared common goals of the Planning and Health sectors – the focus on creating healthy local communities and triple bottom line approach. Stephanie referred to the framework for the National Liveable Communities Policies, the review of local communities and the need to continue to facilitate joint planning activities and create the partnerships between sectors in order to achieve healthy communities.

Examples

- Reducing dependency on cars
- Safe, quality, affordable and accessible community facilities

The social discipline is often the neglected partner and planners acknowledge that more work across disciplines needs to occur if planning goals are to be achieved successfully.

Participants demonstrated that the word “sustainability” has different meanings. Among the Planning field it more commonly refers to economic development. Economic Sustainable Development ESD is thought of as a state. The Health Professional uses the word when referring to health actions/outcomes, eg. “A sustained effort”, “a sustained outcome”.

Throughout the discussion on the day all plans were mentioned except the Municipal Plans (Strategic, Local Plans) an appropriate location for the Health agenda. These plans should relate to the health priorities in municipal areas and if they don't there is some work needed on behalf of the Health Professionals to develop strategies to approach social and urban planners more effectively to document whole of organization approach and shared agenda for Health.

There is a lot to be gained from joint seminars such as this Planning & Health Seminar. Where are the Planners today? The Royal Australian Planning Institute expressed their support for similar activities across the state to encourage integrated planning. They actively support improved involvement with local communities through Planning Awards for example. If agencies would like assistance circulating information about local projects and community planning, they can contact RAPI. The Institute can assist by circulating information to members via the member's data base. Agencies could also submit articles in “Planning News” the Institute's

newsletter that is circulated statewide. Submit July for August circulation. The Institute can also provide valuable input on timing of events such as “Planners Week” in November.

