



Planning and pragmatism: an introductory outline particularly involving the elimination of goal-achievement in the planning process

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Introduction

In recent years there has been increasing interest in, and focussing on, the possibility of the use of pragmatism and the pragmatic method in planning theory and practice. Harper and Stein (2006), for example, review the literature on the issue and set out their arguments and proposals for the application of pragmatism to planning.

As shown by Hoch (1984), a relationship between pragmatism and planning can be found to exist, even though there is little or no evidence in the literature to confirm that that is the case. Use of the pragmatic method may be unwitting or subconscious.

It would be interesting to consider, at a practical level, how it might be possible to overtly, consciously, and systematically use the pragmatic method in planning. It would be useful to develop an outline regime which might result from applying the pragmatic method to land use planning.¹ Both substance, that is the content of plans, and process, would need to be considered. However, it is not proposed to go that far here, but within the space available, just to introduce the idea with a view to creating some interest in it that hopefully will be followed up in some way. What follows, therefore, is an introductory theoretical outline. At this stage, there is no systematic

examination of the relevant literature, nor is there a full practical development of the idea.

The proposal has two main facets. One is the general use of the pragmatic method in planning decision making. The other is the elimination of goal-achievement as part of the planning process. This arguably is desirable in any event, but pragmatism *requires*, and provides an alternative, namely, determining *the goodness* of any proposed action or of any action taken. *Extensive* changing of plans may not be necessary.

In the next subsection pragmatism will be explained. Because the manner in which the concept of 'goals' is used is a central issue, that concept will be revisited in section 2. Two other concepts of basic importance in the use of the pragmatic method are '*values*' and '*interests*,' and there will be reference to these in section 3. Section 4 is a brief conclusion.

An Introduction to Pragmatism

In 1975 William J Meyer published a book entitled *Public Good and Political Authority: A Pragmatic Proposal* (Meyer, 1975). ("Public Good" is a synonym for 'particular public interest.')

The main thrust of Meyer's work is to show the relationship between 'public interest' and the formation and operation of the state, and to argue that using the pragmatic method is the only satisfactory

¹ Notice that *land use* planning is particularly in mind.

way of ascertaining and dealing with public interest. Although not written specifically for land use planning, several examples he gives indicate that to some extent he has that in mind as an area where his ideas could be put into practice. It would be interesting to consider how Meyer might be directly applied in planning theory, for example by making public interest a central concept. However, whilst Meyer's intentions as to public interest should be borne in mind for possible future reference, it is proposed here to just use his description of pragmatism as a way of introducing that element into the present discussion. Although intended by him for use in his context, it is as clear and concise a statement as is likely to be found anywhere and will therefore be ideal for the present purposes.²

Meyer's Account of Pragmatism

From Meyer, the following points and issues can be identified:

1. Pragmatists seek to establish beliefs about the real world. This may cover facts and values; the present, the likely future; courses of action to influence and modify the future; and the consequences of taking such action.
2. As an important preliminary point concerning pragmatism, and relevant to planning, Meyer says that in attempting to get at truth, and to make judgments about it, two sides of us are at work, one logical and intellectual, and the other "passional." "The former can be 'coerced' by brute facts to the point where our passions can add little to, and certainly not resist, the intellect's firm grasp of things" (p 18). If you cannot make a decision intellectually, you must use your "passional" nature.

² If a fuller consideration of the method central to this discussion is desired, Harper and Stein are mentioned above as a principal reference for planners. The principal exponents of the philosophy are John Dewey, William James, and Charles Sanders Peirce.

3. A proposal for a belief is a *hypothesis*; and a hypothesis selected from alternatives is an option. An option may be *live or dead, forced or avoidable*, and *momentous or trivial*. A *genuine option* is live, forced, and momentous. Whether related to facts, values, or action, unless the option is live, it is unrealistic; if it is avoidable it is unlikely to be pursued; and if it is trivial it is not likely to be worth pursuing.

4. Possible alternative motivations are to seek the truth, or avoid error (in effect, to do nothing). The latter is often undesirable because opportunities for improvement are missed, and you have less control over your destiny (akin to being fatalistic).

5. The *pragmatic situation* is where there are genuine options available, and the *pragmatic spirit* is to seek the truth.

6. Meyer invokes pragmatism for his method of ascertaining and dealing with the public interest, but this illustrates the use of the method generally and most points apply regardless of whether or not you are considering public interest. In his explanation, Meyer adds to 'public' and 'interest' the quality of the public interest involving genuine options, and brings in other concepts of pragmatism as well as hypotheses and options: belief and truth, doubts, logical/intellectual and passional decisions, the *pragmatic situation*, the *pragmatic spirit*, 'risk-taking,' experimenting, the avoidance of "vicious intellectualism" and "vicious abstractionism," ideas-in-use, ends-in-view, knowing and acting; testing beliefs - and verification, or revision and correction of mistakes; the idea that you "set out" from your starting point with all of your existing knowledge and a state of mind. This item 6 partly corresponds to what is covered in the foregoing items 1-5, but also introduces some additional concepts:

- (a) Doubts
- (b) 'Risk-taking'
- (c) Experimenting
- (d) The avoidance of 'vicious intellectualism' and 'vicious abstractionism.'

- (e) Ideas-in-use
 - (f) Ends-in-view
 - (g) Knowing and acting
 - (h) Testing beliefs – and verification, or revision and correction of mistakes
 - (i) ‘Setting out’ from a starting point with all your existing knowledge and a state of mind.
7. Fact and value are dealt with in a pragmatic way.

Relevance to Planning

These (above) ‘beliefs’ comprehensively cover what planning sets out to establish. The one difference from present practice is the *emphasis* on ‘values.’ This is an important concept in the use of the pragmatic method and will be discussed in section 3.

This acknowledges that there will be gaps in knowledge and understanding, but is saying, firstly, that the logical and intellectual side must be taken as far as it possibly can; then use of your passional nature is necessary, one point seeming to be that you should be open about it, and not try to imply you are reaching a logical decision or conclusion when you are not. These are principles that could be applied more rigorously in planning than they are at present, and could be useful guides to follow.

Notice what may be covered by ‘beliefs’ as set out in item 1, which may be the subject of a hypothesis. Selecting options from alternative hypotheses is in accord with the planning method, and providing tests for ensuring that the option is ‘genuine’ (live, forced, and momentous) is useful. Again, pragmatism could provide useful guidance to how planning can go about an aspect of its business.

Seeking the truth would normally be the most desirable. The temptation to ‘avoid error’ may often need to be resisted, but sometimes that alternative may have to be

adopted. Again, pragmatism covers one of the issues planning has to deal with.

It will always be useful to know that you are dealing with a ‘pragmatic situation’ or that the ‘pragmatic spirit’ is being applied (or if not, that you should be doing that). These, then, are ideas to help in using the pragmatic method.

In most cases, the meaning of these and their relevance and worth to planning is clear enough, or will be further clarified later if necessary, but it is interesting to note what pragmatism specifically makes an issue of. Item (d) does require comment now, however. This corresponds to pragmatism’s requirement for inductive rather than deductive thinking (something which Meyer regularly emphasises, particularly for determining public interest) and in particular necessitates abandoning the goal-oriented approach in drawing up plan proposals and evaluating the effects of the plan. This is a central issue of this paper. “Ideas-in-use” and “ends-in-view” are concepts that are relevant to, and could be incorporated in, the planning process. “Ends-in-view” in particular is a concept that will be referred to again.

This reiterates what is said in item 1, but usefully emphasises the basic importance of these two issues in the pragmatic method (but without detracting from the significance of the rest of item 1).

Altogether, most of these points are interesting and potentially useful for planning, and do not seem to be far removed from present practice. Items 6(e) and (f) are two to particularly bear in mind for the discussion that follows. Subject to what is discussed below, there should not be much difficulty incorporating them into planning practice.³ The land use planning situation

³ Conceptually, that is. Becoming expert in the use of the pragmatic method may require a substantial effort, and it is not intended to minimize that. Partly, it is a matter of

presents the need for options for establishing beliefs about facts, values, action and the consequences of action. In land use planning, decisions about facts and values should, as far as possible, be logical but those about future action will have to be largely passional. The idea that you "set out" from your starting point with all of your existing knowledge and a state of mind means that you do not have to abandon previous experience with land use planning. Realistically, the alternatives available will not be completely indeterminate, and in the adoption of pragmatism it is believed the exercise can be one of converting an existing planning system to the use of the pragmatic method and that there would be little point in starting afresh. This includes having a planning process available for sorting out issues. Meyer's explanation of the interrelationship of knowing and acting is particularly relevant to land use planning. The pragmatic approach is epitomised in his references to knowing, believing, creating, corroborating, testing, hoping, and being guided by fittings, workings, successes, and not a *priori* commitment.⁴

Referring to this last point, see item 6(d) as to the avoidance of 'vicious intellectualism' and 'vicious abstractionism.' This corresponds to pragmatism's requirement for inductive rather than deductive thinking (something which Meyer regularly emphasises) and rules out the use of goals as in the goal-achievement approach, which must be abandoned in drawing up plan proposals and evaluating them (and similarly, in later reviewing the effects of proposals; an important aspect of using the pragmatic method). That in turn requires revisiting the

adopting new terminology for existing, recognizable concepts, but it is mainly the practice of testing outcomes for goodness, not goal-achievement. Altogether, it is largely a matter of how you determine the content of plans, although it is necessary to have in mind a framework identifying the sort of provisions the plan desirably should include.

⁴ Page 73

concept of 'goals.' The further concepts and ideas which appear to be the most important for planning from an innovative point of view, are value and interest. Those concepts will be discussed in a later section.

These are the principal theoretical issues involved in the possible adoption of pragmatism in planning, but the whole of this subsection "Relevance to Planning" can be read as a broad statement of aspects of the theory of applying the pragmatic method to planning.

Goal-achievement and Evaluation

With regard to goal-achievement, there have been arguments for and against it in the literature. Etzioni (1967), Faludi (1987) and the evaluation literature discuss alternatives to it (e.g., Lichfield *et al* (1975), McAllister (1980)). Perraton (1972:2) says:

"...evaluation as a formal procedure in planning, usually refers to the testing of alternative plans or policies to aid the choice between them. As such, it depends upon the explicit formulation of alternatives, and of criteria for choosing between them."

Then, although not anti goal-achievement, she admits (p 5) that problems with user oriented goals and objectives have "prompted the search for more limited, pragmatic alternatives" (Stuart 1969).

Later, in relation to conflicts and political choice, she says (pp 6-7) that "because of the difficulty of defining and weighting *a priori* goals, several writers have argued that more emphasis needs to be given to the likely impact of policies on different sections of the population."

On pages 16-18, she refers to some "pragmatic modifications" to goal-directed approaches, and concludes:

Logically, a goal-directed view of planning requires evaluation in terms of goals achievements account. But, in view of the difficulties of defining and weighing *a priori* goals, of assessing their importance to different sections of the community, and of taking into account the interaction and conflicts between them, a goal achievement account may be impracticable, or at least inadequate on its own. An assessment of the impacts, the disadvantages for different sections of the population may be more useful...⁵

This seems to open the door for use of the pragmatic method, which evaluates for goodness, not goal-achievement.

Similarly Lichfield and McAllister do not reject or ignore goals-achievement evaluation, but see it only as a possibility. Hence, it is not radical to advocate the abandonment of it, if it is presently used. Arguing conclusively one way or the other is another matter, and it is not proposed to do that here, but just to show what doing so might involve.

2. Goals

When engaging in a wide-ranging exercise such as land use planning, it is necessary to proceed in some systematic way of thinking and acting if it is to be successful. In the previous section it was shown how, in land use planning there are differences of opinion

⁵ She does not address the question of a conflict between the goal-directed approach and pragmatism, nor raise the possibility of the goal-directed approach not involving goal-achievement at all. So her statement should not be interpreted to imply more than she is strictly saying. This present paper is advocating the use of the pragmatic method in planning. It does not get into the detailed consideration necessary to decide how far that should go, including whether some partial introduction may, initially at least, be more practicable. But it is hard to see how there could be a departure from the view that the goal-directed approach is anathema to and inconsistent with pragmatism.

as to what the method should be, but it was concluded that the goal-achievement approach is not appropriate for pragmatic planning because deductive thinking, which involves "vicious abstractionism," is anathema to pragmatism. The planning process and the content of plans using the pragmatic method need to be re-considered. Plans need a framework *inter alia* using the idea of "goals," but not for testing outcomes against "goals" as presently conceived and used in the goal-directed method. Outcomes will be analysed in a different way - for goodness.

Many discussions of "goals" can be found in the literature, but the preferred one for the present purposes is Fischer (1980: 67): Together, values and norms are the sources of the ends that are pursued. Based on their level of generality, ends can be differentiated as ideals, goals or objectives. According to Kaplan, these three levels of generality constitute the "directions, regions and points in the value space." [Abraham Kaplan, "On the Strategy of Social Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4 (March 1973):57] Ideals are like horizons, permitting a continuous progression in their direction, but are always receding. Goals refer to attainable ends - "ends-in-view" to use Dewey's term - but lack the full specificity of concrete objectives. Objectives, the most concrete of the three levels, are blueprints or programs for carrying out an end. They specify exactly how the project is to be carried out - how much is to be spent, who gets it, what they're supposed to do with it, and so on. For example, ideals - such as maximum economic welfare - are never wholly attainable. Full employment, however, is an attainable goal toward that end, while the Humphrey-Hawkins Senate bill specifies concrete objectives for pursuing full employment. Such objectives must be based on measurable intermediate goals. In turn, these goals, anchored to the interests that individuals and groups regard as beneficial in

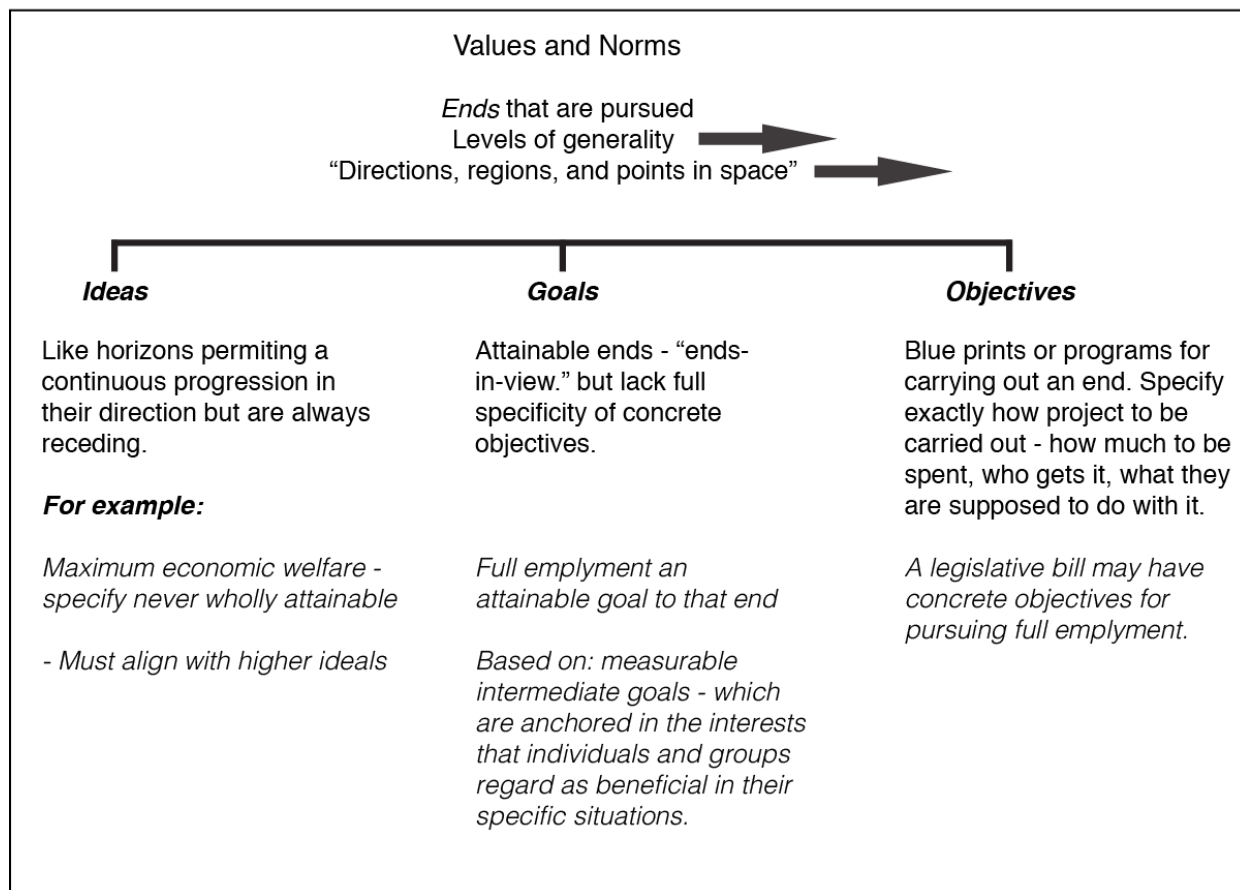
their specific situations, must be aligned with higher ideals.

Notice a connection to pragmatism in the mention of Dewey's "ends-in-view," (one of the concepts mentioned in section 1 on pragmatism); and the references to values and interests.

reiteration along the way. "Goals" will be synonymous with "ends-in-view," and determined inductively according to the pragmatic method, not deductively. They will *not* represent end states to be used for goal-achievement tests.

"Ends" is Fischer's generic term for ideals, goals, and objectives. They will all be used as

FIGURE 1



Analysing Fischer's paragraph into diagrammatic form can result in the chart shown in Figure 1.

Other writers give differing accounts. Young (1966: 78), for example, is interesting and illustrates how views can differ, but Fischer's treatment is the preferable one that will be adopted for our present purpose of illustrating a possible planning process. This diagram may seem to suggest that thinking will proceed in a rational way, from the general to the particular, ending with practical proposals. But this will depend on the requirements of the pragmatic process, and at least there is likely to be much

suggested by Fischer ("objectives" corresponding well enough with present practice), subject to any fine-tuning found necessary as the exercise proceeds. But in particular, "goals" will be used differently from the way that is implied in the expression "goal-achievement."

Fischer says (above): "Together, values and norms are the sources of the ends that are pursued". Also, those goals are "anchored to the interests that individuals and groups regard as beneficial to their specific situations." Values and interests are important concepts in the use of the

pragmatic method.⁶ Conscious and explicit use of them is a significant aspect of adopting the pragmatic method along with the abandonment of goal-achievement. Accordingly, some space will be devoted to discussing them - not extensively, but as necessary in the context of the present discussion. The two concepts are closely related so it is appropriate to deal with them together.⁷

“Norms,” or recognised standards, are also mentioned. They are well enough understood. Their application will be done rationally, and therefore may be part of and not in conflict with the pragmatic method.

As an interesting aside, McAllister’s (1980) chapter 2 is entitled “Human Values” and comprises a very useful discussion of them. Referring to a school of thought on the source of values, a paragraph on page 18 concludes: “Finally, it emphasises that the values governing behaviour are not focussed on ideals but on “ends-in-view,” which are constantly being modified in the changing field of action”. There is then a reference in footnote 4 that reads: “The leading proponent of this school, and the originator of the notion of ‘ends-in-view,’ was John Dewey. See John Dewey, ‘The Theory of Valuation,’ in *International Encyclopaedia of Unified Science* (Chicago University Press, 1939)”. A close link to pragmatism, and also to Fischer’s view of goals has been established, although a slightly different slant is given. Also, he maintains that evaluations

⁶ Notice how Fischer relates interests rather to “specific situations,” a point mentioned later.

⁷ In the next section 3. As an advocate of the use of the concept of interest in land use planning, I am pleased to notice increasing reference to it in the literature in recent years. References to values in planning are not unknown. See the excellent discussion in the Preface to Tribe (1976) - “When Values Conflict,” and, more recently, see Berke & Ors. (2006) ch 1.

based on values are for goodness, not goal-achievement.

To sum up (and outlining the main ingredients of the ‘new’ planning process), in planning, values, norms, and interests will be applied by planners and politicians using the pragmatic method to determine cases of the requisite classes of ends (ideals, goals, and objectives). With experience, certain often-found values and interests (“land use values” and “land use interests” perhaps) will become familiar, and knowledge of them will provide useful guides - but no more; that is, *not* as categories from which proposals are systematically deduced, as in the goal-achievement method. The same approach would be used in a slightly different way when outcomes of the planning process are being reviewed.

There is nothing new about Fischer’s and others’ discussions of goals in this way. The point is that in abandoning the use of ‘goals’ as in the goal-achievement method, this literature can be revisited, as a basis of rethinking the method through. They will be a very important part of developing planning proposals, which should, however, be determined using the pragmatic method, with a view to introducing that wherever possible into all aspects of the planning process. “Goals” may never have stopped being used, in the way that Fischer explains, in goal-directed planning (that is, other than in the goal-achievement sense, in a different part of the process), but returning to such references specifically (and exclusively, perhaps) will be a way of unambiguously ridding the planning process of the influence of the goal-achievement method, outcomes now being tested for goodness, with goals no longer being used in the goal-achievement way.⁸

⁸ Although I am emphasizing the abandonment of goal-directed planning, it would be beneficial to generally avoid vicious-

3. Values and Interests

Interests

As previously mentioned, values and interests are two concepts of particular concern in the adoption of the pragmatic method, and which warrant at least a brief specific reference (nothing more being possible at the moment). It is proposed to start by explaining the concept of interest.

“Interest” has several meanings and uses, so the usage here should be clarified. The Shorter OED (1973) relevant definition reads:

The relation of being concerned or affected in respect of advantage or detriment; especially an advantageous relation of this kind...

A thing in which one has an interest or concern.

The OED, 1933 edition, included an item 2c:

In the interest (interests) of: on the side of what is advantageous or beneficial to.⁹

All interests are basically individual interests,¹⁰ but as general discussion normally considers interests held by more than one person, the concept of “group interests” needs to be recognised. A special case is “public interest.” This term is sometimes used vaguely in general discussion, or sometimes in an emotive or

abstractionism and vicious-intellectualism in planning thinking. They introduce fuzzy ideas, ‘war cries’ such as “urban sprawl,” and the like, whose use, a pragmatist would say, is not desirable in arriving at best solutions.

⁹ For a short discussion of “interest” see Wall (1975) pp 489-90 : “ ‘Interest’ - Some Senses.”

¹⁰ Perry (1954) p 80 states that “all interests are *personal*, in the sense that they are the interests of *some person*.”

hortatory sense. What is relevant here is the analytical meaning. From Benditt (1973: 298):

Something is a public interest then if (and only if) it is an interest of everyone [footnote omitted] the satisfaction of which is out of most individuals’ hands, such that an interest is not likely to be protected or advanced unless it is furthered by the state.

The omitted footnote refers to the fact that “the public interest cannot be simply a majority interest, for in some sense it is the same for all” (Benn, 1960). It is a *collective* interest, but does not have to be held by *all* the members of the state. Perry (1954, p 211) states:

The interest which is served by the state is sometimes called “the public interest.” The state is not owned by, nor is it designed to serve, any particular interest. No person can properly call it his, nor can any group of persons call it theirs. It belongs to everybody and is designed to profit everybody. The public interest is composed and compounded of private interests. If government is dedicated to public service, no private individual can ask it to serve him, but only him *together with the rest*.

General and particular use of it is recognised, the latter sometimes being called “the public good.” The relationship between public interest and pragmatism is one of the main themes of Meyer (1975), and seems to have been fairly convincingly established by him. In fact, he concludes that public interest can *only* be determined pragmatically. Therefore, logically, because public interest is an inescapable aspect of land use planning, at least *some* use of the pragmatic method will be necessary.

Values

As for values, pragmatism proposes establishing beliefs about values as well as other facts. Fact primarily concerns what is, and as far as can be ascertained, what will be. Value concerns what ought to be (p 25).¹¹ Ordinary people and the planning authority are aware of facts; ordinary people have values, and the planning authority has to be aware of them, but it also as to make determinations of value (p 37). This includes making determinations of public values, and goals, related to a “need to act” (p 47).

As to the problem of the indeterminate character of facts and values, Meyer says this at pages 28-29:

Essentially, [James’s] argument is that certain facts cannot be tested without the intervening commitment to a value that stirs one to take an action that provides the only possible context for the test... Knowing the truth and actually “having all the evidence in”, may be dependent upon human action based on value judgments... the important point for the moment is that the indeterminate character of facts and values may be interdependent and that there is no qualitative difference between the two, is critical to James’s case.

Viewed in a pragmatic way, values develop, and are not petrified. Meanings are found, so that they allow one to deal successfully with actual human experience (p 77). Experimentation involves activity, which involves purpose, which involves a goal or end (p 96). Purposes, goals, and values are secured as forms of belief (p 86). They are therefore, of course, different from goals and values determined using *a priori* reasoning.

¹¹ Meyer (1975) p 25. Meyer is the major source of what follows and the stand-alone page references are to pages in Meyer. As well as the detailed arguments, the language gives an insight into the working of the pragmatic method.

Value identifies something that ought to be. If intelligible, it directs attention to possible consequences. An established end takes you to things potentially experienced as values. To the pragmatist, values are facts; that is, facts about what is valued. Pragmatists move from facts and values to the *true* and the *good*. Knowing, and the good, are expedients for action. Values are the subject of hypotheses that serve to regulate behaviour and direct one to successful outcomes. Primarily, at the individual level, values are guides to acts of self-regulation and self-creation. You know the good and you know the true on the basis of its pragmatic success (pp 89-90).

The public has no given ends, but it does start with a state of mind. Although there are doubts about values, there are also accepted values (p 90).

You need certain values for the experimental method. You want an option to work *better*. (‘Evaluation’ is now involved). Experience reveals *de facto* concrete connections between beliefs about what is good and what is true. Knowledge of consequences helps us distinguish between what is desirable and what is desired. Value judgments do act as a guide to get at the fullest knowledge of the world. The ethical situation, and the ethical structure, can be built up from the analysis of consequences (pp 96-7). Ethics can be explained as facts (p 97).

Meyer summarises the relevance of all of this, in his context, with an important statement on page 99, at the end of Chapter 8:

Explaining the world and deciding how to change it are problems that are not in completely separate orbits, but are jointly grounded in human experience. Knowledge of the true and the good are intermixed in human action. When we appreciate this pragmatic perspective on values, we begin to understand what kind of problem we are

talking about when we speak of determining the public good.¹² We are talking about public problem-solving and action in pursuit of a viable end-in-view, and the testing of the satisfactoriness of such an end through the consequences it generates. The essential problem of public agreement on public ends brings the general problem of values into the realm of political action, and the problem of the public good must now be pursued in that context.

Values and Interests

On the relationship between values and interests, Neal (1965) says that some people think in terms of interests, and others in terms of values. Another perspective is that values are useful in some situations, interests in others. Particularly, as you get into the 'detail of real life' area of objectives, interests may be more useful - they more specifically relate persons to situations. Meyer says (p 37) (referring to individuals) "interest also indicates particular goals, values, and points of view in relation to the general area of concern."

Interest is primarily an individual's concern or affect in respect of advantage or detriment, in relation to a thing. The point Meyer is making must be that such a concern or affect *indicates* (the operative word), by implication, the possession by the individual of certain goals, values, and points of view (in relation to the general area of concern). In other words, interests, on the one hand, and goals, values, and points of view on the other, go together and are related. Goals, values, and points of view affect individuals'

¹² Again, this is what Meyer was primarily concerned with in his book, and *partly* what we are concerned with, but the comments are, by analogy, of broader interest and application too. Land use planning in its broadest sense *is* a matter of public interest. Notice how the concepts we are talking about are *intertwined*, not points located consecutively along a nice tidy *line* of action.

views of their interests. On reflection, this is fairly obvious, but it is useful for the connection to be made, in the present context, especially regarding values.

A more difficult question is cause and effect. There must be a continual two-way relationship. The two concepts are partly in the same area of thinking, but interest establishes the relationship between individuals and things. This makes interests closer to problem identification, and other practical issues, than values. 'Advantage or detriment' implies good or bad concerns or affects. 'Values' may imply something good (to be sought), or something bad (to be avoided).

Explaining individual interests a little more, firstly, they are rather different from public interest. They do not *need* the attention of the state as public interest does, but that might be desirable, and in land use planning that is inevitable to some extent. When individual interests *are* the subject of public policy making, the public authority may use the subjective or objective methods of determination, or both. In objective determinations, the public authority could use the pragmatic method, and if consistency is desired, it should. In subjective determinations, it is over to individuals to become aware of their interests in their own way. They *could* use the pragmatic method, but it would be contrary to the spirit of subjective determination of interests to insist on that.

After ascertaining the relevant individual interests, they can be dealt with pragmatically. Genuine options for improving the condition of certain individuals may be decided upon, but in doing so any relevant public interests will have been taken into account also.

Incidentally, introducing the idea of public interest emphasises that the group interests

dealt with as an aspect of individual interest must be something other than collective public interest, for the definitions to be meaningful. An issue can, of course, involve both group interests and public interest.

If the interests are objectively defined by a public authority (and not just ascertained from studying what relevant interests individuals have), the public authority's goals, values, and points of view will come into play. This will include the planners', but at least the shadow of the over-influential planner or other official is softened firstly by the pragmatic emphasis on the ascertaining of the values actually existing in the community at large, and secondly by interest-based planning emphasising the distinction between the objective and subjective determinations of interest (meaning, in short, by the public planning authority or by the individual), so that wanton, surreptitious, or inadvertent objective determination will be less likely.

The foregoing does not say anything about the method of ascertaining, an issue which has several facets. What has been said will help to understand what has to be ascertained, and this is part of the very important question of generally becoming familiar with the pragmatic *method* - a broad issue which must be borne in mind but which is not dealt with specifically, at length, here. There will be renewed emphasis on continuous, combined general research, review of planning outcomes, and plan making. But *deliberately* including the study of values in factual research is, it is believed, a new element already seen to be coming into land use planning and similarly, the *extensive* consideration of interests.

4. Conclusion

A summary of the main features of a proposed planning regime is set out in the second-to-last paragraph of section 2, above,

and various aspects have been discussed. The approach could be used for settling plan content, and also for reviewing, *ex post facto*, the desirability or otherwise of it, that being an important part of the pragmatic method. More could be said about the development and use of the method, but this outline has shown how pragmatism *could* be applied to planning, providing an interesting and probably viable alternative to goal-directed planning, for those who would like to see an abandonment of it, as well as generally providing a desirable *modus operandi*.

Becoming proficient in the deliberate use of the pragmatic method might be a big step to take - especially assessing proposals and action for goodness, not goal achievement - although as Hoch (1984) suggests, this may be found to be closer to how planners and other decision makers already think and act, than expected.

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