

**Capitalism's Affinity for Suburban Development:
Locating a new high school in Moncton, New Brunswick**

by

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ABSTRACT

Capitalism as a worldview is both a view of life and a way of life that is structurally embedded in our society. In Canada and the United States capitalism shapes the political economy, which in turn influences the thoughts and actions of players engaged in the system at various levels: governments, institutions and the marketplace. Actors in this political economy have, at times, partnered or conspired to influence a suburban way of life for the majority of citizens. A case in point is the site selection for a new school in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. The thesis makes the case that the Moncton high school project unfolded as it did due to factors that included certain actions by particular players, the sale of land, proposed increased residential development, land values, and demands placed on existing infrastructure to accommodate the school project. The capitalist-public authority-marketplace relationship revealed that the values of actors in the marketplace were not always in alignment and conflict occurred.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

In his opening address to Forum 2000, Vaclav Havel, former President of the Czech Republic, asks the question- “How is it possible...[that] humans can treat in such a senseless fashion not only the landscape that surrounds them but the very planet which they have been given to inhabit? We know that we are behaving in a suicidal manner and yet we go on doing it” (Havel, 2010, p.1). Havel is describing the aesthetically non-descript architecture and pattern of sprawling development that has taken place in his home city of Prague. After its wars, revolution and escape from communism, Prague post 1990’s found itself experiencing a similar exurban sprawl development pattern which has characterized Northern America since the 1950s. For the purpose of this thesis the term Northern America will refer to Canada and the United States only, to the exclusion of Mexico. In the decades immediately following WWII Northern America experienced a significant increase in single family home building which was a reaction to an underserved growing population (Hayden, 2003; Harris, 2004). The majority of this home building took place at the periphery of established cities on undeveloped Greenfield land sites. Havel could well have been a Canadian or American citizen of the 1940s transported to their home city in present day; remembering what their city was before the automobile and suburbia changed the distribution of human settlement and commercial development. Havel was witnessing the tremendous development change in Prague with the full knowledge of the eventual outcome, given the similarity in process to that of Canada and the United States. This

outcome, eloquently posed by Havel is how linear, abstract, environmentally unsustainable development can come to be the acceptable landscape of a modern society?

Defining this anthropogenic development pattern has not been simple or absolute. Kunstler (1993), in his book *The Geography of Nowhere*, argues that the physical sprawl of commerce and settlement has destroyed our understanding and “distinction between city life and country life” (p.15). At that time he suggested that we lacked the vocabulary to describe and identify what was happening. Havel struggled with the similar challenge of describing and defining the sprawling distribution of Prague’s built environment (2010).

It is indeed possible and understandable, as Havel posits that we have become a civilization that “prefers short-term profit to long term profit. What is important is whether an investment will provide a return in ten or fifteen years; how it will affect the lives of our descendants in a hundred years is less important” (p.2).

There is a body of literature within academia, urbanism, and popular media that explores the subject of suburbanization and the built environment. An emerging theme is that Northern America’s development and settlement pattern since the popularization of the automobile and single-family dwelling may not be entirely organic but rather a function of the relationship between capitalism and public policy. By the end of the 1920’s the automobile manufacturers had brought the price of an automobile within reach of the average person and the push to dedicate public roadways for the private automobile was widespread. At the same time the demand for the single family home would continue to grow until its peak demand post WWII (Jackson, 1985). Herbert Hoover’s 1928 presidential campaign slogan “a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage” was somewhat prophetic as to what the relationship government would have with the

automobile and road building industry in the decades to come (Hayden, 2003, p.123). Drawing from this body of work we can consider capitalism's influence on our built environment as more than an economic model, emerging as a dominant way of life since the early 20th Century, and deeply embedded in our political economy and human psyche.

This issue has typically been explored from a broader perspective. However if the overarching goal is to better align development patterns with sustainability needs, understanding how the relationship between capitalism and public policy manifests itself at a micro level would be helpful. We would be assisted in this first by understanding capitalism as a concept and as a worldview, and its relationship to consumerism and suburbia. Exploring this further might shed light on a values clash when differing public agencies reveal differing views of the relationship between capitalism and public policy.

1.2 Understanding Capitalism as an economic concept and worldview

“Capitalism” is perhaps most commonly understood by Northern Americans to describe our economic system, yet it may be more than this. Some argue it is representative of a way of life, a worldview of the majority that goes beyond the economic. A majority of citizens in Northern America have faith in and accept capitalism as the appropriate political/economic model and way of life, and for their pursuit of happiness (Saunders, 2007; Posner, 2009; Cox, 2016). Capitalism, as a construct, is designed to deliver the wants of consumers. Scott's concept of capitalism suggests it can be considered as a parallel to the three levels of organized sports: “the players, coaches and team personnel make up the first level; the boundary conditions for such contests are created and maintained by the administrative and regulatory officials who comprise the second level, these are the agents that organize and legitimate the competition and ensure that it is carried out on a level

playing field; a governing organization, the political authority that creates the institutional foundations, the officials and the rules they enforce represents the third level” (2009). In comparison “capitalism is a three level system of governance, where a political authority permits economic actors to mobilize and employ resources in competition with one another, subject to a set of laws and regulations as defined and enforced by one or more regulatory agencies. The political authority comprises the top (third) level in the system; the regulatory and other institutional foundations provided by that political authority comprise the second level; and the regulated competition among economic actors in markets comprises the bottom or first level” (p.38). For the purpose of this thesis, it is valuable to understand capitalism as a process, which involves multiple actors not always with congruent goals, yet find themselves interacting on a particular economic transaction.



| Organized Sports | Organized capitalism |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Political Authorities FIFA, MLB, NBA, NFL | Political Authority |
| Institutions, Regulations, and Referees | Institutions, Regulations and Regulators |
| Officially Sanctioned Games | Formal Markets |

Table 1. Scott’s Conception of capitalism

Consumption has become a Northern American passion (Kearl, nd). Where evidence and observation may show our treatment and use of the Earth’s resources as unfavourable, society accepts and believes that capitalism as a marketplace “ultimately knows best”, and will derive ways and means of correcting any problems (Cox, 2016).

Taken together this approach to economics, governance and life is the capitalist *worldview* of the majority. The last century has shown society to become reliant on government and public policy, through democratic capitalism, to alleviate economic depression and recession, create ways to build and finance housing, and provide public facilities such as schools and transportation infrastructure. In the process the public cost has most often been overlooked but the capitalist benefit is rarely denied (Hayden, 2003, p.167; Kunstler, 1993).

In the late 18th century, Adam Smith (1776) considered the utilitarian value of an economic transaction, even one based on the self-interest of the participants, as a key positive attribute of what would become known as capitalism. His tome from 1776, formally titled *An Inquiry into the Nature and Cause of the Wealth of Nations*, is considered by many to be the earliest and deepest endeavour to give meaning to the evolution of economics, including: free trade; division of labour; and the benefits of self interest in an economic transaction (Smith, 2000, p. vi). These attributes of an economic system reveal themselves in modern Northern America's democratic economic governance. While his consideration of self-interest is not necessarily in alignment with that of Smith, according to Hardin capitalism has evolved if not flourished, beyond any debate of legislating for public good over self-interest (Hardin, 1968).

There is another body of work that views capitalism in a different manner - as a deep faith and belief system, akin to that of religion. Loy, for example, sees capitalism as emerging from religion and as grounded in religious values (1997). If capitalism is a religion then the "Market" is its god according to Loy, for it has become "the most successful religion of all time" (p. 276). Our present system has come to fulfill what

traditional religions did in an earlier era; that is, to explain the world in which we live and our role in it (p. 275). Capitalism as an economic system is grounded in a society's adoption of consumerism as its value system. As Loy puts it, once we defined ourselves as consumers, "there is a collective reaction for a higher standard of living and as consumers we can never have too much" (p. 281). Loy traces this value system to the late Middle Ages when "prevailing religious interpretation" lost its place in society and was usurped by an "economic social system" that saw capital and profit as natural (p. 279). According to Loy, the science of economics acts as the apologist for a society which expects the market to fulfill individual happiness; a task that some might find impossible to complete. Capitalism and its servant, the marketplace, is a belief and value system with similar trademarks of any traditional religion where one's god and god's needs are above all. Cox (1999) highlights capitalism's similarity to religion in his comparison of the market to that of Christianity's God (p. 2). Cox places the market at the pinnacle of capitalism and affords it the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent qualities often attributed to the Christian God. The omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of the market is like that of a god; it works in mysterious ways, but followers must have faith that it (the market) knows best (p. 8).

This thesis examines through the macro lens of our political economy, and through the micro level of a case study, how suburbanism came to shape the dominant settlement landscape of Northern Americans. Where capitalism is subscribed to as the economic system of choice, the foundation of this preference by the individual and society generally, is much more complex than just a system of monetary checks and balances. In Canada and the United States, it is an engrained way of life, a worldview (Valk, 2009; Vidal, 2008;

Yip, 2010). From Olthuis' perspective, "while worldviews are personal in nature they are also communal and public in scope and structure when common visions bind adherents together...(1985, p.6). This thesis considers whether capitalism is a worldview under which Northern American society has collectively and often unwittingly accepted the suburban landscape as a way of life.

1.3 Capitalism as a relationship between the economy and politics

Capitalism is more than an instrument that provides a market place in which supply and demand meet. The market is in perpetual motion in search of demand to which it offers supply in consideration for profit, not necessarily human happiness. Scott (2009) argues that capitalism can be considered through the relationship between the market economy and democratic politics. The institutions of democracy are integral components at play in economic capitalism. From this perspective, capitalism "broadens the focus from market operation to include both the institutions that shape the market frameworks and the political authority that designs and governs the institutions in which the markets are embedded" (p. 4).

Canada and the United States are both democracies within a capitalist economic system. According to Scott's conception of capitalism, the government and its institutions, are not extraneous to capitalism, but in fact are functioning components of it. Scott's notion of capitalism suggests an indirect system of governance where the application of governance is not directly by the political authority but rather through the rules and institutions of its creation (p. 24).

According to Scott, capitalism can be viewed through its two primary components: *factor markets* that include land, labour and capital; and *product markets* that include

tradeable commodities and consumables such as food products or textiles (p. 23). Scott's conception ultimately sees factor markets as "deeply embedded in the political and social systems of a society and ultimately define how resources may and may not be used." (p. 23). Suburban development presents both Scott's components of capitalism through the manipulation of land, labour and capital, as well as all the consumer materialism that accompanies home ownership. This process reveals itself in the housing development of the late 1940's known as Levittown (Jackson, 1985). On a 1000 acre former potato field on Long Island the Levitt family fine-tuned the home building business into a precision factory process. Not only bringing the single family home to the middle class market at a pace and price point not previously seen, but also offering all the associated accoutrements such as home appliances to the consumers of this new suburban life. The Canadian government, according to Harris (2004) was also "eager to support suburban development" in part because of the consumer demand it created that played a key role in boosting the post-war WWII economy (p.132)

The marketplace is described as the equilibrium of supply and demand determined through a price mechanism (Scott. p. 2). However, for the "equilibrium to be a true reflection of effective societal governance, market prices must reflect true social costs" (Scott. p. 3). It is not the role of the market to determine real social costs, rather, in Scott's three levels of capitalism this is delegated to the "political authority". How "public authority" considers some costs as public goods to be borne by the state, and yet of great benefit to industry, is not always fully questioned in the public square.

1.4 The Capitalist worldview and the commodification of housing

With the increase of a capitalist worldview in Canada and the United States and its impact on societal values and lifestyles, housing came to be elevated from basic shelter to that of a commodity with status and class implications (Miron, 1993; Hayden, 2003). The “commodification” of housing manifested itself in continent-wide trends of suburbanization; the pursuit of happiness came to be associated with the single family home and the personal automobile.

Considering then how a population would settle where it does, and attributing the role of public authorities and the private sector in the decision making, is a fundamental question raised in the literature. Two continent wide phenomena, private housing and public roads, can be viewed as key indicators of how the different players within Scott’s concept of capitalism responded to demands for suburban development. Studies indicate how housing and the family home, with the support of public policy and directed by an emerging home building industry, guided a population to settle on the periphery (Hayden, 2003; Harris, 2004; Jackson, 1985). Studies also show the relationship between suburbia and the public commitment to transportation infrastructure (Gutfreund, 2004; Lacayo, 1998.). The role that the political authority played in the creation of roads and highways, which primarily serve the automobile industry, is illustrative of the private sector-public policy relationship. The suburban experience cannot be understood without acknowledging the influence of these two above-mentioned phenomena.

Suburbanization is witnessed as the common landscape form of Canada and the United States. There are basic constitutional and legislative differences in how each country governs itself, yet the resulting settlement pattern reveals mostly similarities.

Harris (2004) points out a fundamental difference between cities in Canada and the United States is their relationship to higher government. In Canada, municipalities are a creation of the provinces and have no status under the national constitution. According to Harris, in the United States the opposite is true, with cities having national constituted powers that cannot be usurped by the individual States. In both countries, a suburb may be a separate incorporated municipality giving it political status but this has not ultimately resulted in a significantly different evolution or landscape pattern. Regardless of the peculiarities of local government structure the suburb is populated by individuals considered to have free will. But studies have suggested that the most basic of consumer items - the private home, public infrastructure, and the location of public schools – are influenced by public policy persuasion (Gutfreund, 2004; Hayden, 2003). Barber (2007) further suggests that choices we make are made only from limited options - those capitalism presents to us.

The existence of professional lobbyists who bide their time in the legislative capitals, speak to the pressures placed upon the institutions of political authority. It is common place for the political system to be subjected to the persuasion of interest groups including the western industrial complex which has played no small part in swaying public policy. In the United States Congressional Housing Hearings of 1947-48 the National Association of Real Estate Boards, the National Association of Home Builders and Savings and Loan Associations teamed up with Senator Joseph McCarthy to argue against any form of public housing and any public form of financing for apartment buildings. In McCarthy's thinking, both were associated with the communist ideology (Hayden, 2003). Also called to testify on McCarthy's behalf was William Levitt, the home builder, who would add that there should be no form of FHA insurance for apartment buildings, no labour unions, nor

any building codes. All of which together would “solve the post war housing crisis” (Hayden, 2003, p. 131).

Automobile manufacturers considered their ability to sell more cars limited without an ongoing road-building program. These roads should also be primarily for the purpose of automobiles or other gas operated vehicles. In 1942 a group referred to as the “Road Gang” represented by “automobile manufacturers, automobile dealers, oil companies, truckers, Teamster Unions, Highway engineers and state administrators, would meet regularly to lobby for the Federal Highway Act of 1944 (Hayden, 2003, p. 165). During the same period “General Motors, Firestone Tires, Mack Truck and Standard Oil, amongst others, went about buying up more than one hundred electric trolley lines in order to replace them with buses” (p. 165). The template and relationship between public authority and capitalism was being cast and would influence how Northern Americans would live and commute for decades to follow.

How we have settled the landscape can be observed through an aesthetic, economic, political, cultural and environmental lens. Havel (2010) and Kunstler (1993) observe the bland, nondescript aesthetic nature of suburbia as its dominant feature. Kunstler (1993) along with Hayden (2003, p. 167) also raise the question of public cost versus capitalist benefits realized in the suburbanization process. Is suburbia a construct of our capitalist democratic political system? Academics such as Harris (2004), Hayden (2003) and Jackson (1985) have examined the influence of industrial capitalism on government policy and settlement patterns in Canada and the United States. Their work connects the suburbs to government policy which enabled the capitalist development industry to prosper through the introduction of publicly supported home mortgages and the construction of highways

as a conduit to feed and facilitate the continued outward expansion of our suburban landscape. Lacayo summed up suburbia succinctly; it “required cars, highways and government-guaranteed mortgages” (1998, p. 1).

There is some debate amongst planners as to the efficacy of containing suburban sprawl at all. Nelson (1999, 2004), Cox (2001), Abbot and Margheim (2008), Chapin (2012) and Stiko (2005) provide some insight into the planning community’s consideration of urban growth boundaries as a management policy. The majority of planners do advocate public policy that will restrict the process of suburban sprawl. The evidence shows, however, that their success in influencing public authority to this end is limited. Urban planner Duany (2001) is critical of the planning profession and its role in a democratic system that has failed to contain suburban development. Duany describes urban sprawl as “a form of disorderly and excessive urban expansion characterized by encroachment on agricultural land, very high dependence on cars, and the development of new neighbourhoods with low population density and low land-use diversity...” (as cited in Turcotte, 2008, p. 10).

In failing to impede the progress of urban sprawl the Northern American planning profession now finds itself preoccupied with the consequences of urban sprawl while the architects of the landscape we find ourselves in were the companies who pushed forward the capitalist development agenda.

After witnessing several generations of urban sprawl, some observers in Northern America have come to recognize that it has not come without deleterious effects. In addition to the aesthetic objections, there are negative personal health, lifestyle and environmental effects of suburbanism raised by professional health providers (Ontario

College of Family Physicians, 2005; Alberta Health Services, 2009; Frank et al, 2004). These sources suggest a link between suburban living and personal health issues such as obesity, diabetes and air pollution. One has to make a concerted effort to enhance one's personal well-being in order to compensate for the time spent commuting in cars, the anxiety of traffic congestion, the emissions from our cars exhaust, and the inherent necessity, given the suburban's isolation, to drive to all our destinations. Has the practice of walking to the corner store become a novelty and getting students to school, almost by design, a vehicular activity?

1.5 The urbanist response to suburbanization

Authors and urbanists such as Jacobs (1961), Lorinc (2006), Gleaser (2011), Montgomery (2013) and Owen (2009) raise the question as to what is a healthy urban condition and contrast this with the shortcomings of a suburban way of life. Jacobs argues from a pro-urban perspective, which espouses proximity of human habitation, an acceptance of sidewalks and streets as part of a safe, positive living experience and a dislike for high rise buildings as a means of achieving greater density within a liveable city. Jacobs's seminal book *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* argues for a mixed use, an ethnically and economically diverse city, where people interact at street level as key components to a healthy vibrant urban community. The traditional town or city with an identifiable urban core and a contiguous tightly knit residential area is the converse of the suburb.

An increasing number of studies suggest the merits of traditional cities and urban living. Gleaser (2011), Lorinc (2011), and Montgomery (2013) have all taken somewhat similar positions regarding the benefits of increased urban density and, the promotion of

public transit, and express disdain for the auto-centric suburban lifestyle. Owen (2009) argues that dense cities are the healthiest and most environmentally sustainable settlements. He suggests that dense cities such as New York, and Manhattan in particular, produce a less damaging environmental footprint than the typical suburban development. Suburbia, as the literature suggests, is contrarily a homogenous, class based settlement pattern, which by design, gives more importance to automobiles than pedestrians and restricts basic human interaction.

1.6 Suburbanization in North America: was there ever a choice?

Despite the opinions and evidence presented by the literature, it seems that the public square remains steadfastly under the influence of a capitalist worldview and hence the continued support for laissez faire public policy on suburban settlement and development patterns. There is also the view that our settlement choice is reflective of the free will of people to decide where to take up their residence. Something has attracted the majority to this way of life. In his book *Consumed; How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole*, Barber (2007) argues that perhaps there really was no choice. Capitalism, consumerism and materialism overwhelmed our senses and our consciousness into believing we can have it all. From this perspective there should be no limits on our pursuit of happiness, which would be found in suburbia and provided by a marketplace under the influence of capitalism. Is Northern American suburbanism a manifestation of a worldview, at a macro level, in which society accepts public goods used in partnership with corporate capitalists to create a suburban way of life?

1.7 A micro level understanding of a development decision

Over the course of the 20th Century, public policy and capitalism worked in a generally amenable relationship to enable Northern Americans to pursue happiness based on material acquisition. In terms of the built environment, the proponents of capitalism came to realize that the path of least resistance to profit was found in developing a suburban landscape (Grebler, 1953; Lacayo, 1998). This settlement pattern, with its public infrastructure investment, was also instrumental in the rise of consumer capitalism. Capitalism found in the life cycle of families, housing and public schools a demand it can influence, and profit from, through the process of land development. Barber (2007) suggests consumer choice is not entirely without influence; we may choose what we want but capitalism will provide us with that from which we can choose.

Responding to the challenges associated with suburban development requires gaining a better understanding of the mechanisms by which this development takes place. By exploring, at a project level, the roles of Scott's (2009) three players within the capitalism system - consumers and industry (who represent the market), institutions and regulators (who regulate the market) and political authority (represented by various levels of governments) by whom the rules of the marketplace are set - a picture emerges revealing how suburbia has become the settlement and development of choice.

The construction of a new high school in a Greenfield location some distance from the city center was the catalyst for conflict among Scott's three levels of organized capitalism. This high school project took place in Moncton, New Brunswick, a city of approximately 72,000 people inside a Census Area of 144,000 people (Stats Can, 2016).

The school was built to accommodate 1200 students being displaced from an existing heritage structure in the central core of the city.

While the school was built within the boundary of the City, the project was the responsibility of the Province of New Brunswick. The Province, most recently in the Finn report of 2008, has studied issues relating to low density, suburban and rural development (Finn, 2008). Did the government consider recommendations from this report or others when assessing projects such as the new high school? The development process surrounding the new high school provides an excellent opportunity to explore the interaction between capitalism, public authority and its institutions and regulatory agencies.

1.8 Thesis approach

This thesis examines the capitalist affinity for suburban development by examining the role of various public bodies and their relationship with private industry in the site location choice of the new high school in Moncton. This thesis argues that this project was the catalyst for conflict among Scott's three levels of organized capitalism, while providing an opportunity to review the role of various actors as participants in the system.

Using the high school project as a case study questions whether a societal worldview is manifested through capitalism's partnership with the public authority. Is this project a reflection of a political economy historically grounded in public policy that, after years of lobbying, became accommodated, along with society, to an unquestioned support of suburban development? The thesis makes the case that the Moncton High School project was influenced by the sale of land, proposed increased residential development, land values

in the area of the school, and demands placed on existing infrastructure to accommodate the school project.

This thesis assesses the relationship between the private sector and public authority as it relates to our development choices. There are several levels of government and sections within each government level that contribute to the process of locating and constructing public schools in New Brunswick. The student constituency and the tax paying public represent the consumers in the case of a public school. Private industry, such as land developers, building contractors and the road construction industry represent the capitalist interests through transactions including the sale of land, the building of schools or homes and the construction of public infrastructure such as roads and municipal services.

The levels of public authority and their institutions and regulatory agencies in this project include; the Anglophone East District Education Council, the Greater Moncton Town Planning Commission, which became a line department of the City of Moncton during the course of this project, Moncton City Council and the Province of New Brunswick represented primarily by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

At the macro level the thesis is grounded in a body of literature related to worldviews, public policy, planning and urbanism, as they apply to the suburban condition in Northern America. From this foundation the case study draws upon publicly available information, including minutes of meetings where they are available, reports presented to Moncton City Council, reports presented to the Town Planning Commission (later the Planning Advisory Committee), press releases and internal ministerial documents from the

Province of New Brunswick and general media coverage. It reviews the mandate of each organization and the role they play in new public school construction.

The role the private sector plays in the ultimate decision on where and how the new school would be built will also be examined. How did the private sector become involved? Was there a number of different companies and sites under consideration? Is the chosen location more than just a construction site or does it have additional transactional benefits to one party over the other? Reviewing the site selection and construction of a “new” Moncton High School serves as a case study highlighting capitalism’s affinity for suburban development. The unique contribution of this thesis is to further highlight that affinity by applying a worldview lens.

1.9 Thesis organization

Chapter two focuses on the site location specifically, by reviewing the process and timeline, relationships between the stakeholders and options considered in making the final decision for site selection. The chapter will show the relationship between local institutions and regulators and the developer, as well, as local and provincial public authorities. It will report on the mandate of each organization as it relates to school locations and on the urban planning process in general. It identifies what options were available to the public authority decision makers, and what offers were made by the private sector developers. Was the site selected as a matter of convenience? Mapping will be used to show the site selected for the new school and its spatial relationship to the city center and the existing Moncton High School. Mapping will be used to show the availability of vacant land throughout the city at the time of the search. Maps will also be used to indicate the location of other sites that came under consideration by the provincial authorities. The developer’s proposed project

will be illustrated through maps and conceptual drawings, which were used to give local public authority and regulators the full scope of the developer's proposed project and its relationship with new school site.

Chapter three considers the consequences resulting from the site location choice of the new High School. What might be the social and lifestyle implications, and unintended consequences resulting from development on the periphery? It questions accessibility to the school and transportation demands that result from such a location. Does the location effect society's interaction with the school as a community center or extra mural activities for the students or citizens? Does the schools location speak to society's relationship to the natural environment or our understanding of suburban isolation and exclusion? What other consequences to human health might be attributed to urban sprawl and the location choice of the new school?

The chapter uses a wide lens in order to place this project into a historical context of capitalism's relationship with public policy and suburban development. Is the affinity for suburban development linked to a history of public policy in the United States and Canada? Were the phenomena of the single family home and the personal automobile key influencers in our lifestyle choice and collective attitude in support of a suburban development policy?

The chapter will then focus on the case study in detail and ask what investment was required by the levels of public authority in order to provide the necessary municipal utilities and roadways to support this development. What participation was required from various levels of governments and how did these requirements fit within the existing plans of the City of Moncton? The thesis will identify and map, road and associated

infrastructure projects undertaken either by the province and/or by the municipality relating to the new school.

Chapter four provides a summation of the project and questions whether the relationship between public authority and actors in the marketplace, in this case, is representative of utility or convenience. Does this local school project resemble the peripheral development template adopted by capitalism historically through the accommodation of society and the partnership of public authority? Was there real debate in the public square and if so, to what effect? Is this project another acknowledgement of a society that had become accommodated to suburbanism as a way of life? Was the choice of location simply the result of government needing a problem solved and the private sector offering a solution; a negotiated transaction of supply and demand with a sensitive public timeline?

The thesis asks politicians and decision makers, in general, to question whether they have perhaps overlooked the lessons learned from the suburban development literature including studies of their own. It asks that this particular case study be seen as an example of how goals and objectives of different levels of political authority when not in alignment can result in a less than utilitarian outcome.

Chapter 2

2.1 Choosing a location for Moncton High School

Scott's (2009) conception of capitalism sees three levels of actors at play: public authority; regulators and institutions; and the marketplace. This chapter explores the interaction between these actors in the development of the new Moncton High School. Over the course of the 20th Century, Northern American capitalism sought partnership with public authority through transportation and transit policy, the provision of physical infrastructure and favourable land use policies to support its suburban projects (Gutfreund, 2004; Kunstler, 1993). Public schools, in particular, can play a very important role in determining the market value and success of residential developments. A government or public authority locating a school within the boundary of a residential development might seem like a benign allocation of public resources, but to a residential developer it can be an important, if not determining factor, for a successful project, as discussed in the media by the Moncton High School developer (CBC. April 21, 2011).

The expectation for public infrastructure to enable private development has the potential to manifest itself as an “uneven partnership” between capitalism's actors. The public authority, regulators and institutions, and the marketplace, reveals itself in the development of the new Moncton High School within a proposed private residential development site. This partnership is explored as each actor responds to a quickly unfolding situation requiring a timely solution: the existing Moncton High School, with 1200 students, was unexpectedly closed shortly into the 2010 school year due to health and environmental concerns.

2.2 Governments, Institutions, Regulators and capitalism

In the Province of New Brunswick, District Education Councils (DEC) are publicly elected bodies operating under the auspices of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The role of the DEC is to provide “local decision making in the operation of schools in their district” (Prov. NB. nd).

“Established under the Education Act, a District Education Council consists of 11 to 13 education councillors elected for four-year terms. Using the policies and standards of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as a framework, each DEC establishes objectives and policies aimed at addressing the particular priorities and needs of its district” (Prov. NB, nd).

Each district has a full time superintendent in implementing the policies of the DEC and Department of Education on a day-to-day basis. Moncton High School falls under the jurisdiction of the Anglophone East School District Education Council. A DEC has no taxing authority or fundraising capability and thus relies on the Province of New Brunswick in all matters financial. While it may submit priorities for projects and programs in its district, funding is at the discretion of the provincial government.

The Minutes of the DEC meetings of September and October 2009 report the discussions regarding the need to hire an external consultant to provide an analysis of the physical condition of the existing Moncton High School structure and present the findings for public opinion. The existing school building located in the center of the city is an iconic landmark with architectural significance. The decision to hire a consultant with the

financial support of the Department of Education was made at the DEC meeting January 19, 2010 (DEC Minutes, Jan 19, 2010, p.3).

The consultant's work was to take place through the spring of 2010, with a final report to be delivered in the Fall of 2010. The minutes of the DEC's meeting on September 21, 2010 reveal no discussion of any kind relating to Moncton High School or the consultant's progress.

Less than a month later, the existing Moncton High School would be closed for health and environmental reasons. The immediate remedy for the continued education of these displaced high school students was to disperse them throughout the City of Moncton to other education facilities that could provide classroom space. While the students would not all be together under one roof their education would continue uninterrupted but somewhat socially diminished. At the October 19, 2010 DEC meeting, two members submitted written statements to be included in the minutes and thus for the public record. Both expressed frustration with the Department of Education's limited support for the improvement needs of the facilities in their district and that their advocacy received little public or media support until the time when the school had to be closed.

The DEC received the consultant's report regarding the existing Moncton High School at its November 16, 2010 meeting. According to the minutes, the DEC mandated the consultant to undertake meetings with stakeholders in the community and deliver a "recommendation for the future of the school" (Minutes, Nov 2010). At this meeting "the consultant's recommendation to re-build a new Moncton High School on the existing site while retaining the most important heritage components of the existing building" was received and approved by the DEC. The DEC's then passed a motion "that the District

Education Council endorse the recommendation of our consultants CS&P and forward same to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for his timely consideration” (Minutes, Nov 2010).

The release of the consultant’s report took place during what must have been a tumultuous period for the students and staff of Moncton High School and the DEC. The district had to close a school, which had been operating for 70 years, find temporary learning locations for its 1200 students, and it had no independent financial means to solve the shortcomings of the existing building. The decision to vacate the school would place a sense of urgency on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Provincial politicians. The citizenry would look to the government for resolution as to where they would accommodate the students on a permanent basis in the future. That the existing school structure was a heritage landmark, part of the fabric of the urban core of the City of Moncton, would make their decision that much more difficult.

The decision making process to follow must be placed in context with the Fall of 2010 which was certainly a challenge for the Anglophone East District Education Council and the community at large. Moncton High School opened as usual in September 2010 and closed with little warning in October 2010 with the student population dispersed throughout the city to temporary classrooms. In November, the consultant’s report describing how the building could be saved with significant renovations and returned to use as a school was received by the DEC. The pressure to solve the problem of Moncton High School moved quickly up the ladder of political authority ending at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development but not without questions and input from local organizations and city government. The Provincial Department of Transportation and

Infrastructure would also be implicated in this process for it has the responsibility for building provincial buildings and oversight of all roadway and transportation matters.

Given that the existing high school structure was considered a municipal heritage building, the City of Moncton's Heritage Preservation Review Board had a distinct interest in the property. On December 20, 2010 Moncton City Council was presented with a recommendation from the Moncton Heritage Preservation Review Board which proposed " a new Moncton High School be built on the same site (as the existing school) and integrated with the remaining historic elements" (Minutes. Dec, 2010). City council passed this motion and forwarded a letter outlining their position to the Ministers of Education and, Supply and Services, of the Province of New Brunswick. This would indicate the initial position of City Council was to prefer the existing school site as the site of a new or renovated Moncton High School.

The CBC News reported on January 17, 2011 that a new school (for Moncton High) would be built, but would not be ready for the following school year and Education Minister Jody Carr "will ultimately decide what happens to the Moncton High Students next fall" (CBC. 2011). This announcement appeared to indicate a decision had been taken by the province that the existing Moncton High School structure would not be maintained as a public school. This instigated debate in the community as to where the new school would be located and deep concern as to what would become of the heritage high school structure.

At Moncton City Council's meeting in February 2011 a presentation was made by a citizen and alumni of Moncton High School urging Council to have the relevant Provincial Departments consult a local developer with experience revitalizing heritage

properties. The citizen's objective perhaps was to get out in front of any formal decision that might lead to abandoning the use of the building as a high school. Council took this under advisement and the Mayor offered his opinion that the property should remain a high school (Minutes, Feb 21, 2011). Later, during that portion of the meeting intended for statements by members of Council, one councillor questioning the potential relocation of the school suggested a letter be sent by the Mayor to the provincial government requesting the city be consulted in the location choice of the school. It would seem that there was concern that the school would not remain at the same location. Such concern soon proved justified.

As reported by CBC news in April 2011, a Toronto based land development company, Romspen, expressed their interest in the Moncton High School project (CBC. April 21, 2011). The company had recently taken ownership of the bankrupt Royal Oaks Estates, a golf course and housing community on the periphery of Moncton. In a presentation to the Moncton Heritage Review Board the company outlined how it would consider bringing the old Moncton High School back to life with condominiums and offices. Coincidentally, the development company Romspen had substantial undeveloped land adjacent to their recently acquired Royal Oaks property and offered to make land available for a new high school as a condition for taking on the redevelopment of the old school. A spokesperson for Romspen made it clear that the renovation of the old Moncton High school "would only be feasible (for them) if the Provincial government builds a new high school on their land next to the Royal Oaks development (CBC. April 21, 2011). In the same interview, the spokesperson further acknowledged their motivation was that "a

new school in the area would benefit his company by attracting more people to live in Royal Oaks Estates”.

The Minister’s announcement as to the site location for the new school would not have to wait until the Fall, as was previously thought. In a joint Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Department of Transportation and Infrastructure news release of July 05, 2011, it was announced that a new high school would be constructed at the “1800 block of Elmwood Drive” (Prov. NB. 2011). Describing the proposed site as a block of a street attributes it to an urban characteristic, yet the location was an undeveloped tree lot, with no external road intersections or streets within. The site was the vacant land proposed by the Romspen development company adjacent to its Royal Oaks golf and residential development.

The press release continued that there were 20 sites under consideration for the new high school, however this chosen site offers the additional benefit of a developer who has also “committed to restore the old Moncton High School” (Prov. NB. 2011). In a news article the developer, commenting on the announcement by the Province, said “We really like the fact there will be a high school on our property because it will obviously give families with kids in elementary or high school a place to send their kids to school, so it’s definitely a help to us” (ctvnews.ca. July 5, 2011). While the school might well complement the developer’s master plan for its property, there remained questions in the public square as to the logic of placing a school such a distance from the City’s core. With the announcement of the new school location made by the responsible Minister, two levels of public authority and institutions would be set into action. First, provincial government departments, along with the local DEC, could begin their internal planning and design

process required to get a new school building constructed. Second, and concurrent to the Provincial planning process, the developer would have to engage the City of Moncton and the Greater Moncton District Planning Commission (local public authority and regulator) to gain the necessary municipal approvals to prepare its property for future development.

The chosen site, identified in Figure 2.1 below, would move the school some nine kilometers away from the existing school location well into the periphery of the city.

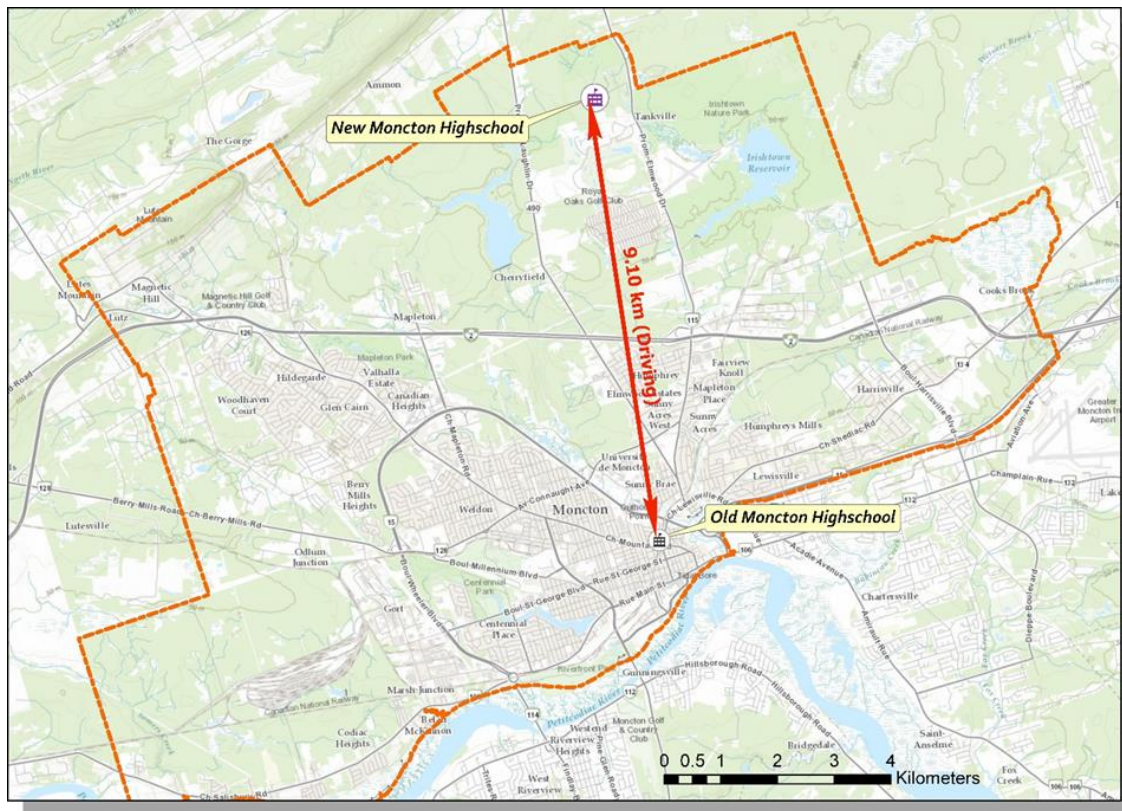


Figure 2.1. Map of Moncton and the proposed high school location

2.3 Alternative Locations for a New Moncton High School

An internal Provincial document provided to this study, in a redacted version, titled *Potential High School Sites; Advice to the Minister*, offered information on 10 of the 20 possible locations considered by the Province of New Brunswick (April, 2011). The report

provided a general geographic location, zoning and some measure of existing municipal services at each site. These sites are indicated in the Figure 2.2 below.

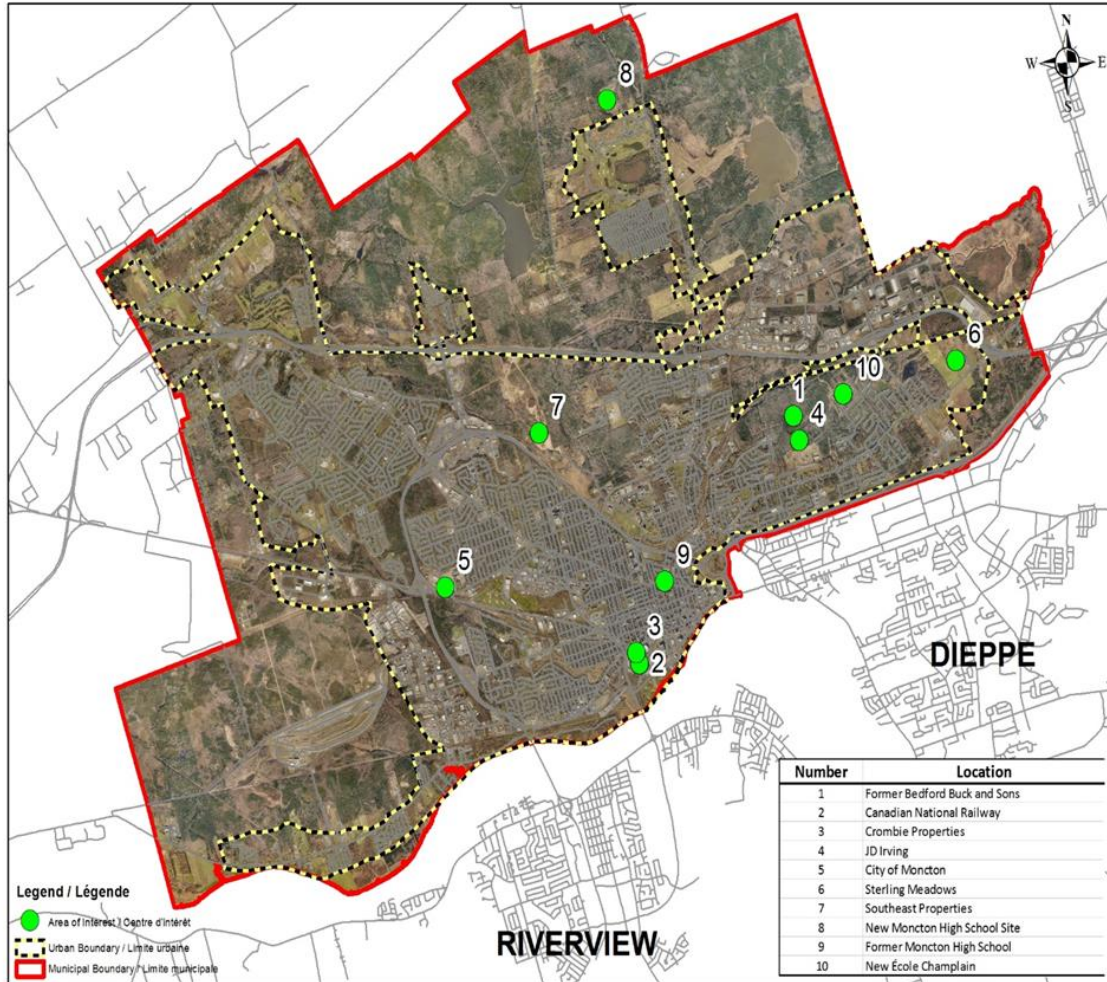


Figure 2.2. Map indicating Alternative Site Locations considered

According to a Moncton Newspaper article, seven of the sites were privately held properties, one owned by the City of Moncton and two sites owned by the Province of New Brunswick (Times, June 8, 2012). All of the sites, except the chosen Royal Oaks property, were located inside the City of Moncton Service Area Boundary. As documented in the *Advice to the Minister* report, seven of the sites were of similar size to the Royal Oaks location. Of those, only two had yet to join up to the municipal utility system but were

inside the service area. Most of the other sites were in locations serviced by existing transit and sidewalks; all were zoned appropriately and could access municipal water and sewer services. The chosen site represented by #8 in the map above does appear to be a geographic outlier compared to the other sites given its distance from the city center. According to the Province of New Brunswick information on the remaining properties that were under consideration was not provided due to privacy restrictions.

Figure 2.3 below is a zoning map from the Greater Moncton District Planning Commission which indicates, by color, all land within the City of Moncton’s Service Area Boundary that is recognized as being zoned vacant in 2010.

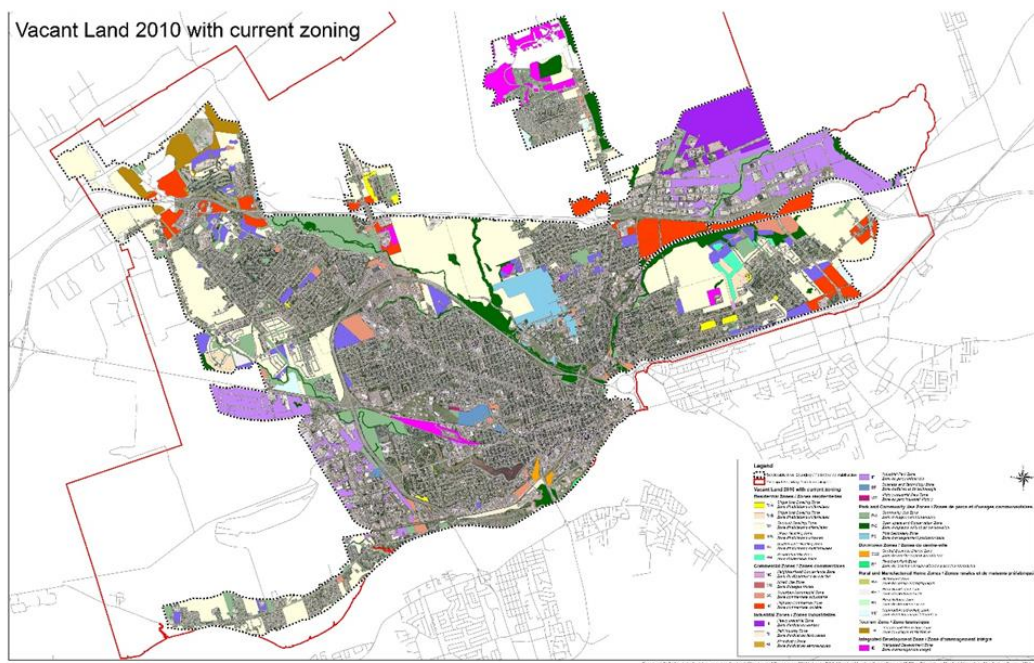


Figure 2.3. Map showing all vacant lands (in color) within Moncton City Boundary

2.4 The Development: Capitalism and Public Regulations

With the decision by the Province as to where the new school would be located now confirmed the process of property development could begin. Before reviewing the

regulatory steps of development, it would be informative to spatially locate the site. Figure 2.4 below shows the Greenfield development site, two conjoined properties, identified by (property identification numbers) PID 70488473 and 70552062.

This is the property referred to as the 1800 block of Elmwood Drive in the Minister's press release of July 05, 2011.

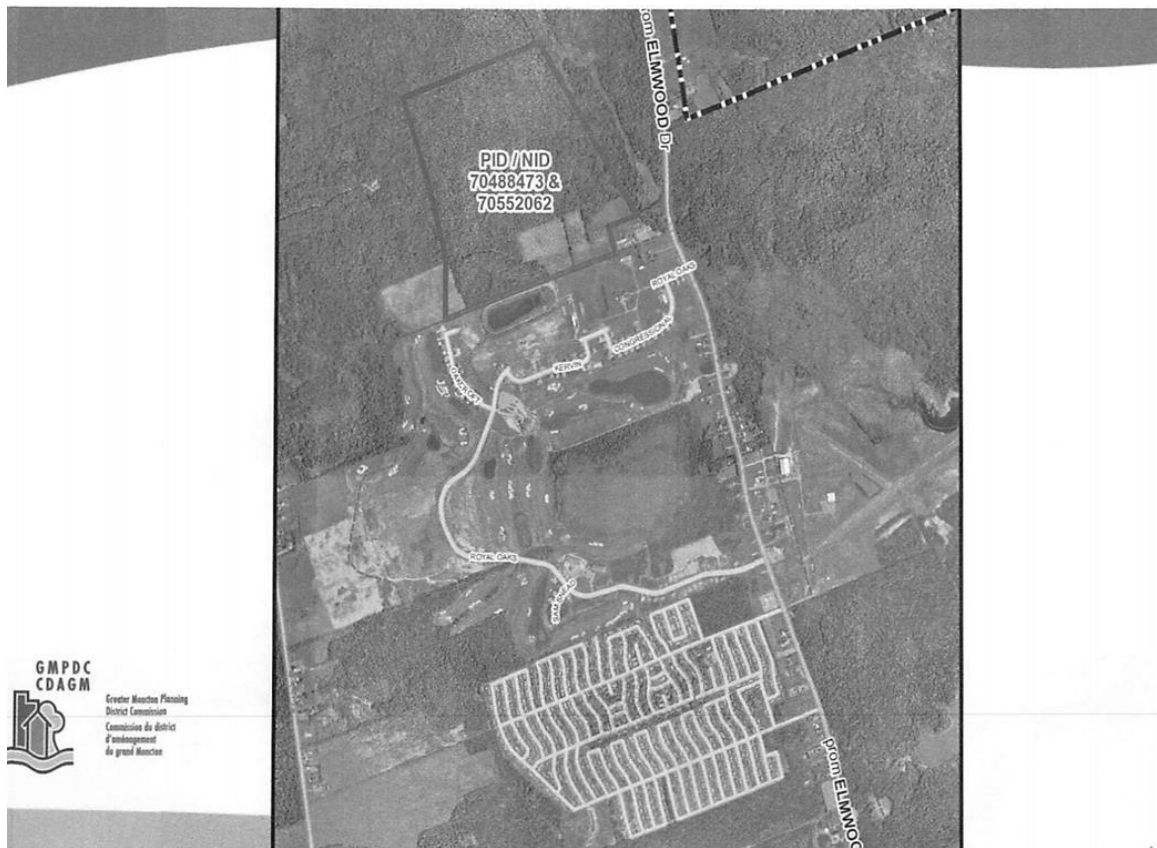


Figure 2.4. Map identifying proposed Greenfield development site

By late summer of 2011, the developer would initiate steps necessary to prepare the site for a large mixed used development project. This preparation would take place under the auspices of the local regulatory institutions which would identify the rules and regulations permitting such a development; public authority's rules of the game as it were. As part of the rationale for the Province of New Brunswick to support this location was

that the school would be an economic driver for a larger development project. The developer was proposing this site to be such a new project area. Figure 2.5 relates the project site to the City of Moncton municipal boundary limits and the Service Area Boundary.

In Fall of 2011 the developer submitted a rezoning application for its property to the Greater Moncton Planning District Commission. Once staff had reviewed the project and discussed it with the applicant the process moved forward with staff of the Planning Commission presenting the proposal before City Council for its consideration. The project is described in a Council Report Form as a “new master planned development... an expansion of the existing Royal Oaks community and includes a mixed-use residential development, as well as, the relocated Moncton High School” (Report, Jan 9, 2012). A Council Report Form is a document provided to City Councillors to inform them in advance of issues such as this re-zoning application, which will be brought forward for their consideration at a future public council meeting. At its regular public meeting, January 16, 2012, Moncton City Council was presented with the details of the developer’s concept plan and rezoning application. (Figure 2.6 below) The total development site was 341.79 acres which when fully realized could accommodate 1427 residential units. Residential types included single-family dwellings, semi-detached homes, townhouses, condominiums and apartments. In addition to residential development, the project included a commercial component of 10,000 square feet, 57 acres of parkland and stormwater management and 34 acres of School Lands (Report, Jan 9, 2012).

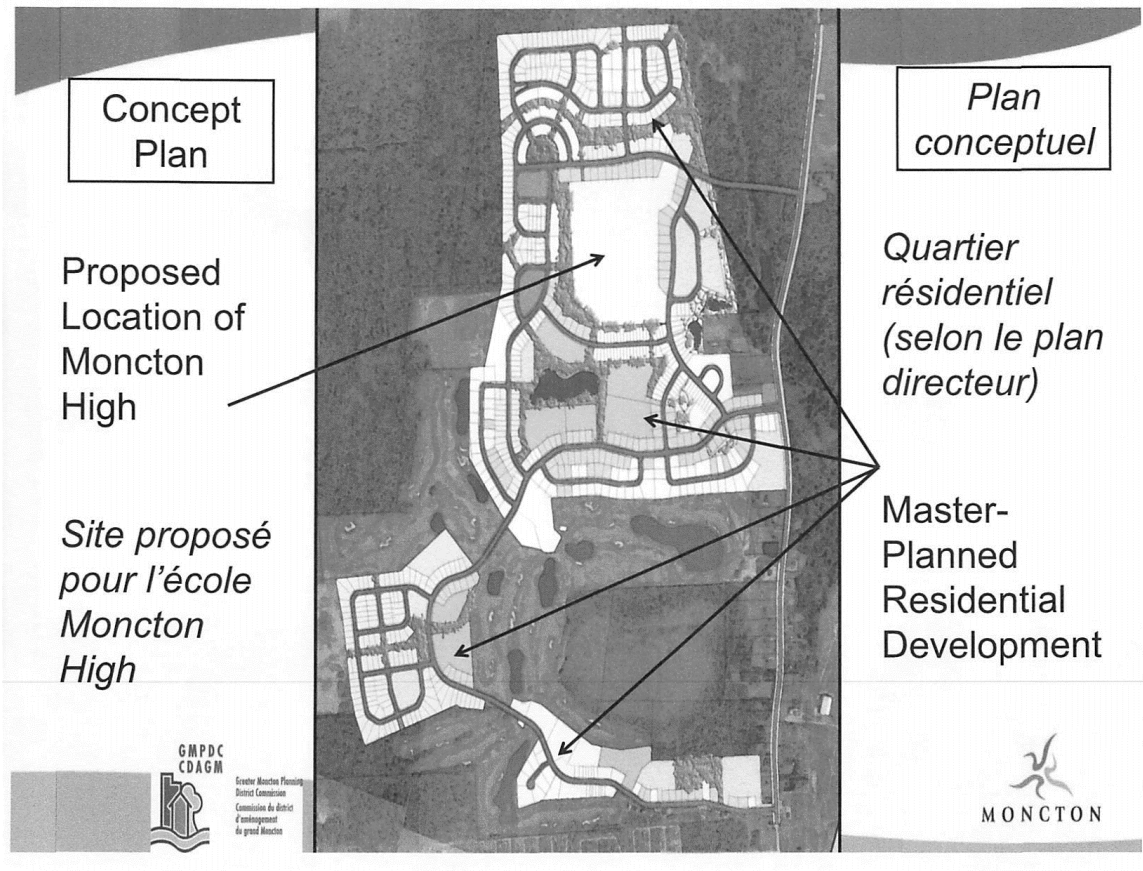


Figure 2.5. Map showing Developers Concept Site Plan

Council had three fundamental planning obstacles to amend or revise in order for the project to meet the regulatory conditions found in City’s municipal plan. The properties were restricted by an existing development agreement between the original developers and the City, the land was currently zoned as Rural Residential (RR) and the project site was outside of the City’s Service Area Boundary (SAB).

When this land was initially developed in 1997, the City of Moncton permitted the golf residential community using a conditional zoning agreement under which land uses, residential density and type of housing were predetermined. This agreement was revised in 1999 to permit an increased residential density (Report, Jan 9, 2012). All of the land that the current developer, Romspen, purchased from the bankruptcy owner would be

subject to the existing conditional zoning agreement. Therefore a new agreement would need to be drafted outlining the terms and conditions under which the City would permit any new development not included in the existing agreement.

The property's Rural Residential (RR) Zone only permits single and two unit dwellings on a minimum five acre lot with a minimum 100 foot road frontage. Schools, apartment buildings, condominiums were not permitted in an RR zone. Conditions of the RR Zone are meant to discourage development outside the Service Area Boundary (SAB). To allow the mixed-use development proposed by the developer the land would need to be re-zoned to an Integrated Development Zone (ID) (Report, Jan 9, 2012).

The third obstacle was that the SAB did not extend to this property. The SAB is that area of land within the City geographic limits to which the municipality will provide services such as water and sewer. The boundary is based on existing infrastructure capacity and growth management policies that direct growth in areas to maximize the use of existing services (Report, Jan 9, 2012). The Report to Council outlines how the SAB was established in the Municipal Plan in order to discourage expansion when development can take place on land where utility services currently exist. These planning tools are intended to discourage urban sprawl, promote a pedestrian and transit oriented city and not counter other municipal downtown revitalization efforts.

In their Report to Council, the Planning Commission staff presented no fewer than seven policies and one proposal within its municipal plan that indicate what the intention of Council should be when considering applications for development and re-zoning outside of the existing SAB. The municipal plan suggests Council should not approve such a development outside the SAB, especially without first determining the financial

implications of the development and attributing costs back to the developer. In a general statement on planning the Report indicates that this application is not in the same vein as others in which “design and compatibility are in question, but rather it is about growth management and whether this area of the city, including a large greenfield site, should be opened up for growth” (p.7). In its closing remarks to Council, the Report details the obvious challenge before the planners and now City Council: the Province of New Brunswick had already announced it plans to build a new school on this site owned by the private developer Romspen.

The Municipal Planning process for re-zoning involves staff receiving and processing an application and then presenting it with recommendations for City Council’s consideration. Staff suggested the application go through the standard planning process that would include the next step of public hearings and then back to Council for final readings. It should also be noted that the Province of New Brunswick was not the applicant but was rather a private landowner (the developer) who owns both properties in the re-zoning application.

With re-zoning application now before it, Moncton City Council would be asked to give direction as to how to proceed. The following motion was tabled at City Council’s January 2012 meeting; “That with regard to the new rezoning application....replacing the existing Royal Oaks Conditional Rezoning Agreement on multiple properties, expanding the service boundary, and rezoning a large portion of PID #70488473 from RR to ID, to permit a new master planned residential community, including a school, staff respectfully recommends as follows: At this time, should proceed with the planning process and....” (Minutes, Jan 16, 2012). The remainder of the motion outlined the three next planning

steps including, “a public presentation be scheduled for February 06, 2012 (City Councils next public meeting), a public hearing be scheduled for March 19, 2012 and the By-Laws be referred back to the Planning Commission for its written views at their regular scheduled meeting of February 22, 2012” (Minutes, Jan 16, 2012).

The motion also included the eight terms and conditions staff recommended be attached to the rezoning if Council chooses to approve it. The terms and conditions included requirements that the residential component of the project conform to existing residential planning layouts and zoning conditions or with amendments as approved by the Planning Commission. The terms and conditions also question the anticipated infrastructure costs that will result from this project. The motion advised Council to ensure that the developer either contribute to or be responsible in full for these costs. Additionally, the motion included a recommendation from staff that the City enter into “an agreement with the Province of New Brunswick to deal with engineering matters such as Traffic, Water Boosting Systems and Sanitary System requirements” (Minutes, Jan 16, 2012). The motion to proceed with the rezoning application passed with only one nay vote. The details of the infrastructure and transportation projects associated with this project are addressed more fully in Chapter 3.

The report to City Council and from the minutes of City Council suggest that planning staff had concerns this private sector project and the site of the new High School may come at substantial public cost. According to one City Councillor, the City of Moncton “already has enough serviceable land to sustain the City for the next 25 years” (Minutes, Jan 16, 2012). After its deliberation, City Council then sent the file back to the Greater Moncton District Planning Commission asking the regulator to give its written

views on the application. The Commission reviewed and debated the application at its February 22, 2012 meeting. Their minutes reiterate that the question with this project remains identifying as to who will be responsible for the significant utility and transportation infrastructure upgrades required. Staff recommended that prior to third and final reading of the rezoning application by City Council, that cost sharing agreements be reached between the City and the developer, and the Province of New Brunswick. All of the planning issues presented in the report to Council remained germane at the Commissions meeting with the addition of two important items.

First, in the staff report to the Planning Commission, in preparation for its meeting, Commissioners were made aware that “Since filing the application (for re-zoning by the developer) the Province of New Brunswick has purchased a large property within the development” (from the developer) (Report, February 16, 2012). Second, this is important because of the right held by the Province to absolve itself from any municipal plan regulation or zoning requirements on land owned by the Crown. This is the same property (PID #70488473) which is designated for the new Moncton High School. It would appear that the developer had markedly improved its negotiating position regarding cost contributions now that it has sold the school site parcel to the Province of New Brunswick.

Given the provincial government’s absolution power, a Commissioner suggested that this was essentially a “done deal and..... what is the best deal for the cost sharing agreement (on infrastructure expenses) to bring to the city” (Minutes, Feb 22, 2012, p.3). A member of the Planning staff responded by saying that “the Province is aware and not intending to exempt themselves under Section 96 (of the Community Planning Act)”

(Minutes, Feb 22, 2012, p. 3). The Commission voted and in a 10 ye a to 7-nay count passed the application.

The province's agreement to purchase the property that would become the site of the new Moncton High School, sometime between December 2011 and February 06, 2012, appeared to happen without much notice or disclosure. It was unclear if Moncton City Council was aware of this transaction, as there was no record of it being discussed at their meeting of January 16, 2012. Neither was there any mention of this land sale in the January 09, 2012 report to City Council prepared by the Planning Commission staff. At the next step in the planning process, the public hearing February 6, 2012, a representative of the developer Romspen Investments informed City Council that the land for the building the new high school had been sold to the Province of New Brunswick. This reduced the application to one of rezoning only and not re-location of the new school. The developer advised council that it had a "binding contract with the Province of New Brunswick." The inference therefore was that the location issue was now a moot point for this public presentation (Minutes, Feb 6, 2012, p. 2). The minutes reflected that the City Manager informed members of Council that "the City of Moncton was unaware of this purchase agreement" (of the land by the Province) (Minutes, p. 2).

2.5 The Market establishes a partnership with Public Authority

Knowledge of the sale of the land was provided to the Greater Moncton Planning District Commission in the staff report of February 16, 2012. At some time after the developer filed its re-zoning application in December of 2011, and before the first public re-zoning presentation of February 06, 2012, the Province of New Brunswick and the developer reached an agreement for the province to purchase one of the parcels of land

owned by the developer. This would be the parcel of land on which the new high school would be built. Subsequently, on March 14, 2012, the developer withdrew its application to rezone the remaining property adjacent to the school site to “Integrated Development”. As a result of the sale to the Province and withdrawal of its re-zoning application, the developer would be relieved of any studies, or future agreements with the City regarding financial contribution toward utility or infrastructure improvement costs. Plans for the new school could now proceed with the Province being exempted, if they so choose, from the City of Moncton Municipal Plan and Zoning By-Laws.

The scheduled public hearing on the rezoning of the Royal Oaks property, the only opportunity citizens have to give input on planning matters such as this, had been cancelled. However, a number of citizens did come to the City Council meeting of March 19, 2012 to register their disapproval of moving the high school to the Royal Oaks location (City of Moncton. Minutes, March 19, 2012). At least eleven presentations were made to Council with very strong objections, emotional, financial and otherwise, against the new location for the school. The presentations ended with a motion presented to Council for its consideration, requesting that “the Province of New Brunswick hold a public meeting before April 30, 2012 to explain its choice of location, including other sites evaluated and the selection criteria used to replace Moncton High School and its intentions regarding the existing Moncton High School (Minutes, March 19, 2012). Each City Councillor responded to the presenters and none expressed support for the decision taken by the province.

There was still a requirement to provide the basic municipal services to this site in order to have a functioning high school building. The determination of who would pay for

these new or upgraded services became a negotiation between the levels of government. The developer remained the owner of the second property on this site and could now choose to pursue re-zoning of that parcel at some future time when market conditions were most opportune. The developer also had the existing Royal Oaks residential property that would benefit from the proximity of a new High School as an attractive selling amenity.

According to Service New Brunswick Property Assessment branch, the property given the new civic address of 140 Longfellow Drive (Moncton High School address), which is the land purchased by the Province from Romspen Investments, was sold on February 08, 2012. The sale price was listed at \$1,475,000.00. The assessed value of the property (2013) was \$444,700.

In a letter dated June 21, 2012, the Province of New Brunswick's Department of Transportation and Infrastructure advised the City of Moncton that the province would be invoking its exemption (Sec. 96, Community Planning Act) from the City of Moncton Municipal Plan and Zoning By-Laws on this property. The school would be built there and the land use would change regardless of existing zoning.

2.6 Summary

How is it that one level of public authority found itself in a situation where a public school building would now be built within its municipal boundary on land acquired in a marketplace transaction between a private developer and a higher level of public authority, yet roadway and municipal services, for which it is responsible, to that site were non-existent or severely lacking? The separation of responsibility between the two levels of government are clear that the higher level is responsible for providing the education facility while the municipal authority is responsible for providing all properties with necessary

public services. That this property falls outside the existing Service Area Boundary of the City of Moncton and was not a priority development location for the City, presents a conflict, which would lead to a two level negotiation regarding costs of servicing the site.

The North American marketplace has become accommodated to a way of life that witnessed decades of such suburban expansion. The market sees growth and development as nothing but positive, and that public support in such endeavours is of benefit to all. This utilitarian belief and the invisible hand, however, gives little consideration to any unfavourable consequences attributed to urban sprawl and suburbanism. The next chapter examines such consequences.

CHRONOLOGY OF DECISION MAKING AND REGULATORY PROCESS

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Moncton High School Closed by DEC | October 2010 |
| | |
| Consultant's Report Received by DEC | November 2010 |
| | |
| Heritage Board Presents Opinion to City Council to Maintain Existing High School Location | December 2010 |
| | |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| City Council Motion to Maintain Existing High School location | December 2010 |
| | |
| Province announces new school would be built – location unknown | January 2011 |
| | |
| Developer Expresses Interest In Moncton High Project for Royal Oaks/Elmwood Dr. | April 2011 |
| | |
| Minister of Education Announces New Location for Moncton High at Royal Oaks/Elmwood Dr. property | July 2011 |
| | |
| Developer submits rezoning application for Royal Oaks/Elmwood Dr. property | December 2011 |
| | |
| Staff Report on rezoning application presented to Council | January 16, 2012 |
| | |
| Public Presentation of rezoning application before Council at which they learn Property has been sold to Province of New Brunswick | February 06, 2012 |
| | |
| Staff Report to Planning Commission revealing sale of High School property | February 22, 2012 |
| | |
| Developer withdraws re-zoning application on property | March 14, 2012 |
| | |
| Scheduled Public Hearing on rezoning application – (cancelled) City Council hears public presentations on the matter in any case. | March 19, 2012 |

Table 2. Chronology of Decision Making and Regulatory Process

Chapter 3

3.1 Unintended Consequences: Private Development, Public Goods and Social Exclusion

This chapter explores consequences resulting from the decision to locate Moncton High School on the periphery of the city. In order to bring some perspective to this decision this chapter gives a brief history of government policy in the mid part of the 20th century as it relates to capitalism and suburban development. This history reveals the evolution of the single family home and the automobile as influential phenomena in our peripheral migration and how suburbanism became an engrained way of life. The chapter exposes some qualitative consequences of peripheral development, such as the deleterious implications to public health, the environment and transportation access. Finally, the chapter outlines the specific infrastructure projects required to be undertaken to prepare the chosen development site as the new location for Moncton High School, as well as other proposed mixed uses. These infrastructure upgrades demanded by the development proposal are visible, immediate and financially quantifiable consequences of capitalism's affinity for suburbia.

Which level of government would pay for the infrastructure upgrades had not been finalized at the time the Province of New Brunswick announced it had selected the site for the new school. Regardless, before a shovel entered the ground at this new integrated development site, it seemed the public treasury at some level would be required to supply significant public goods, in the name of roads and utilities. How is it that public authority, and society in general, have come to accept if not expect public support for suburban development as normal?

3.2 A History of Suburban Subsidy

There is a history of public policy enabling actors in the marketplace in the creation of the suburban landscape. The practice of public support in the push of development to the periphery is witnessed through two key phenomena of the 20th Century: the rise of the personal automobile and the single family home. The eventual ubiquity of both in Canada and the United States gave rise to the demand for roads and municipal infrastructure to be provided as a public good.

At specific times in the 20th Century, (early 1930's and post WWII) housing became a public concern, generally due to lack of planning, supply or financing. During these times government developed policy incentives for private industry to use to satisfy the demand (Miron, 1993; Harris, 2004; Hayden, 2003). Both Canadian and American public policy was directly involved in the financing, and thereby enabling the suburban home explosion. This free market-public policy partnership in the creation of the single family home construction industry was a Northern American phenomenon. Montgomery (2013), Gleaser (2011), Gutfreund (2004), Hayden (2003), Jackson (1985), Miron (1993), Harris (2004) and Broadbent (2008) are but some of the authors who have linked public policy to the suburban housing boom. That the majority of Northern Americans now call suburbia home, often to the detriment of the traditional city, was perhaps not the intention but the consequence of public policy (Harris, 2004).

3.2.1 The House and Home Mortgage Phenomenon

In the first half of the 20th Century more than fifty percent of all residential mortgages in Canada were privately funded (Harris, p. 105). By the 1930's the Federal Governments in both Canada and the United States began to assume an active role in

residential mortgages through a number of legislative and program iterations. Public policies in the 1930's, in both countries, used financial assistance toward housing to combat the economic hangover from the stock market crash of 1929, put people back to work and to ease housing shortages (Begin, p.1, Kunstler, p. 102). Post WWII, the combination of returning soldiers, immigration, population growth and a rise in new households placed extra demand on the housing market.

The Government in Canada passed the Dominion Housing Act (DHA) in 1935 with a 20 million dollar (\$375 million 2019 dollars) loan pool that “helped finance 4900 housing units over a three year period” (Begin, p.1). Renamed the National Housing Act (NHA) in 1938 it served as the national legislation that would provide authority to the forthcoming crown corporations and government agencies in their delivery of housing programs. During WWII the government created the Wartime Housing Corporation which in support of the war effort built over 45,000 housing units over an eight year period. By the end of the war all the Wartime Housing Corporation assets would be turned over to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which would later become Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (Begin, 1999). The primary purpose of this Federal initiative was to improve existing home ownership and allow especially for the creation of new homeowners. By 1954 the federal government through (CMHC) would begin “insuring loans for mortgages made by private investors against borrower default” (Begin, 1999).

By 1958 the National Housing Act of Canada was involved in more than half of all the new homes built in urban areas (Harris, p.11). It was not until 1966 that purchasers of existing homes were made eligible for insured loans. According to Harris, “by the late 1950's half of all new homes were the result of a public act controlling mortgage lending”

(p.11). By the end of the 1950's suburban life was part of the national experience and a national phenomenon that mirrored the nation (p.11).

The bias against the traditional city was rooted in Canada's first housing public policy. Existing housing stock in inner city residential neighbourhoods was not included as part of the post war housing solution or eligible for public support. The main purpose of the DHA and its successor the NHA, according to Harris, "was to revive the housing industry" (p. 133.). Under the act only newly constructed homes qualified for financing and because limited vacant land existed in the inner city, suburbs were favoured for financing.

In the United States the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) created in 1934, under the National Housing Act, emerged as the national public housing policy organization. The FHA continues to operate to this day and set the foundation upon which American public influence in housing would grow. The American public policy housing debate provides a little more drama and flare, than one ascribes to the Canadian experience. The American government post WWII housing debate illustrates such drama. In the House Hearings of 1947-1948, the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Bill introduced support for public housing. The vocal outspoken opponent of such policy was the strident anti-communist Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy. McCarthy was opposed to multi family unit buildings and claimed public housing for veterans was a breeding ground for communists (Hayden, p.130-31). William Levitt, an emerging housing industrialist, testifying at the hearings, arguing along with McCarthy, suggesting government should restrict itself to "FHA financing insurance and an elimination of bureaucracy such as zoning, building codes and union labour, this would solve the housing shortage" (p.131). Later, in selling

the advantages and benefits of buying one of his homes, Levitt declared that, “No man who has a home and a lot could be a communist; he has too much to do” (p.135). Government supported mortgage financing and developer assistance, however, was certainly not discouraged from being part of the housing industry. With the help of the National Real Estate Lobby group and input from William Levitt, the Wagner Act was reduced substantially in its contribution to public housing (p. 131).

From 1946 to 1951 two and one-half million new homes in the United States were financed with mortgage loans insured by the Federal Housing Administration or guaranteed by the Veterans Administration (VA) (Grebler, p.16). This post war surge in demand, accounts for more than half of the entire 4 million home mortgages supported by these programs since they began in 1935 (p.16). Kunstler identifies programs like the ones under the auspices of the FHA, such as loan guarantees and low cost long term mortgages, as public assistance for construction industry (p.104). In addition to existing FHA assistance, the United States Veterans Administration launched a no down payment home purchase program for returning veterans. This was another boost to the fledgling home building industry and suburban home ownership. These policies, in concert with FHA regulations, discouraged the purchase of an existing inner city home in favour of new construction units away from the perceived pitfalls of the inner city (Kunstler, 102).

In assessing federal aid credits to the residential housing industry in 1953, Grebler saw the public housing policy as one that has served its purpose to widen the market for new residential building and this has had a direct bearing on the volume of housing construction in the long run (p. 26). Grebler identified two-thirds of FHA and VA financed homes from 1949-50 was in the \$6000 to \$10000 (\$63,000-\$105,000 in 2018 dollars) price

class, in the very middle of the pricing scale. This accounted for four-fifths of all government supported purchases (p. 24). Drawn from this data is the realization of a new phenomenon and population demographic: the suburban middle-class home owner.

3.2.2 The Automobile Phenomenon

If housing was the first phenomenon to influence the landscape then personal mobility through the ubiquity of the automobile is the second. As advances in automotive manufacturing, especially in the United States, brought the cost of the car within reach of the average person the movement to dedicate public roadways to the private automobile was widespread. The federal government in the United States launched their public commitment to the support of the automobile with the Federal Highways Act of 1921 which provided \$75 million of matching funds for state highway projects” (Gleaser, 2011, p. 173). In 1919, in comparison, the Canadian Highways Act channelled some \$20 million in the form of grants to provincial highway construction projects (Padova, p.2) As an unemployment relief measure between 1930 and 1940 the Canadian government through a series of legislative acts provided another \$50 million toward highway construction programs (Padova, p.2). The 1949 Trans-Canada Highway Act, which eventually led to the completion of the Trans-Canada Highway in 1971, began with a seven year federal commitment to share 50% of highway construction costs with the Provinces to a maximum of \$150 million (p.3).

As roads came to play a more influential role in the economic and transportation systems of the country, so did the role of advocacy in the road building process. A federal bureaucrat named Logan Page, who became the head of the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), encouraged the formation of the American Association of State Highway Officials

(AASHO) in 1914 (Gutfreund, p.19). It was the AASHO that presented draft legislation to Congress that eventually would become the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1916 that is the “legislation that first established a comprehensive system of highway-finance federalism” (Gutfreund, p.20). The Hoover campaign slogan from 1928 of “a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage” would serve to support a political will for the increase in roadbuilding that was to come (Hayden, p. 123).

The gas, oil, automobile and road building lobby were also among the actors, in the first half of the 20th Century, influential in the creation of our road networks (Gutfreund, 2004; Hayden, 2003.) Hayden referred to this lobby group as the “Road Gang” (p. 165). The relationship between industry and public goods grew closer with the popularity of the automobile and the mobility it brought. As land development became viable further out of the city, due to the growth of middle class automobile ownership, so did the demands on public authority to provide roads. According to a commission appointed by President Hoover the automobile became the “most potent influence on the rise of local taxes between 1913 and 1930” (Kunstler, p.90). Some \$340 million alone was spent in Chicago between 1910 and 1930 building new roads and paving over the original cobblestone streets. The cost of providing these new automobile suburbs with sewer and water lines was spread among the general taxpayer, including the non-car owning citizens who remained in the traditional city.

Industry actors pursued dominant control of the roads for the automobile and yet concurrently lobbied that they be considered public goods. While automobiles were being manufactured as fast as Ford and the others could get them off the production line transportation modes from another era were viewed as an impediment by proponents of the

automobile. Street car lines were once an important mode of transit in Northern American cities. However, the automobile manufacturers and oil industries considered the electric trolleys and streetcars as outdated and taking up space on “their” roads. General Motors began the push for dominance of the roadway with a series of steps in 1925, first to purchase the Yellow Bus Company, then acquiring streetcar lines only to “close them down and scrap the rails to make way for buses” (Kunstler, p.91). The company went on to become a “majority shareholder in Grey Hound bus lines in order benefit from intercity travel as well” (p. 91). In addition to being an automobile manufacturer this made General Motors a motor coach (bus) manufacturer, a bus line owner and the usurper of non-petroleum based transit systems.

According to Hayden, “General Motors, Firestone Tires, Mack Truck and Standard Oil, among others” acquired some one hundred operating trolley lines throughout the United States and replaced them with gas burning buses (p. 165). By 1942, Hayden’s “Road Gang” numbered some “240 automobile manufacturers, dealers, oil companies, truckers, highway engineers and state highway administrators” who met on a weekly basis in Washington to advocate public policy advantageous to their causes (p. 165).

The United States Congress passed the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act, which served to resurrect and fund the 1944 National System of Defense and Interstate Highways Act. As part of his domestic agenda, President Eisenhower gave life to this earlier act which proposed 42,000 miles of highway at a cost of \$26 billion (p.55). The Act provided for a Highway Trust Fund and a 9:1 Federal to State contribution ratio toward interstate highway construction (p. 55). Existing roads and increased traffic demand were limiting the ability to expand development further into suburbs and this Act would facilitate that

demand. As Kunstler describes it this program funded the “great enterprise of suburban expansion” and financed 90% by the Federal government (p.107).

There has been a lasting and pervasive effect of past public transportation policy in our acceptance of the subsidization of infrastructure to serve the suburban landscape (Duany, 2000; Hayden, 2003; Kunstler, 1993). To maintain the appeal of commuting and for developments in suburbia to be successful, hedged on government accommodating private automobile ownership through a publicly sponsored road network. This partnership, or some argue bias toward sprawl development and the automobile, is addressed by Gleaser (2011), Rubin (2009), and Kunstler (1993). With large federal programs such as the 1956 Federal Highways Act there was significant funding available for lower levels of government. A lower level of government has great difficulty refusing money from the higher level of public authority despite the long term effects or unintended consequences that it may bring. Duany refers to this as policy blindness caused by the influence of one level of government on another through the public purse (p.87). As Lacayo (1998) so succinctly put it, “suburbia required cars, highways and government-guaranteed mortgages,” all of which were accommodated through public policy.

While they may be taken for granted by those who have been raised in the suburbs, previous generations were witness to massive road and highway construction projects in the last half of the 20th Century. According to Richard Register, author of *Ecocities: Building Cities in Balance with Nature*, quoted from Fichman and Fowler (2005); “Most people were personally compromised, bought off. By the mid-1950’s tens of millions worked for the auto/sprawl/freeway/oil industrial complex, or were in debt to it or hooked on its products. This made them blind to the pitfalls and contradictions of the development

patterns enveloping them” (p. 112). Register was referring to, by what some considered, “infrastructure policies that were not decided on democratically. They were the product of heavy lobbying by the construction industries in both the US and Canada” (Fichman, p.112). Broadbent (2008) points out “Public budgets (in Canada) were providing huge amounts to build the road and utility connections to these new suburbs” yet the public square was quiet regarding the underlying social costs such as the loss of farm land and car pollution (p. 34- 35). Of course, the public underwriting of the transportation infrastructure was a necessary cog in an economic transaction that would lead to the sale of the suburban home. Governments in Canada and the United States provided encouragement and subsidization to the housing industry marketplace in order to allow the average citizen to own a home. It follows then that citizens would call for public support to build the roads that would give the automobile easy passage to those homes at the urban periphery. This embrace of suburbia as a solution for broader housing issues neglected existing housing and transportation issues including improvements to public transit. Barber suggests the American “automobile, cement, steel and rubber industries” held influence over Congress that supported a “highway based private transportation system rather a more egalitarian public transportation infrastructure” (p. 139).

One might argue, then, that Canadian and U.S. society has evolved into a primarily suburban, automobile dependent people as the result of a marketplace that embraced suburban design supported through public policy. This is the lifestyle that we have; however, there have been unintended consequences of this development pattern. The consequences of suburbanism can be examined through the qualitative challenges to our

well-being that can be difficult to measure, along with the quantifiable financial costs that are absorbed by governments in support of these developments.

3.3 Unintended Consequences of Suburbanism

There is an emerging body of literature that suggests the suburban phenomenon has been accompanied by deleterious public health effects. Studies have explored a number of well-being issues associated with urban sprawl such as obesity, mental health, air pollution, the environment, and traffic related risks (Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2005; Alberta Health Services, 2009; Frank et al, 2004; Lopez and Hynes, 2006; NB Economic and Social Inclusion Corp, 2017).

In their review of suburban health studies Lopez and Hynes “find increased levels of sprawl are associated with increased obesity, decreased physical activity and poorer health including the risk of motor vehicle and pedestrian fatalities” (p.2). These health consequences of sprawl are attributed to suburbs lacking in design elements such as “the presence of sidewalks, streetlights, interconnectivity of streets, population density and mixed use” (p.2).

A report conducted on behalf of the Ontario College of Family Physicians provides numerous matter of fact examples of health consequences associated with suburban development. The report states “Sprawling urban development leads to increased driving, which results in increased vehicle emissions that contribute to air pollution and its attendant negative impacts on human health” (Ontario, 2005). The Ontario Medical Association actually developed a model for calculating what they term “Illness Cost of Air Pollution” (ICAP) for the Toronto region. In their 2004 study the association attributes “2060 premature deaths, 48,690 emergency room visits, with an associated \$465.2 million in

direct health costs and another \$585.6 million in lost productivity costs” (Ontario, p.14). While there are other contributors to air pollution and the creation of smog, “automobiles contribute 20% of the fine particulate matter and are the most significant source of ultrafine particles in urban environments and 80% of particles in the urban environment are of the ultrafine size” (Ontario, p. 14). In terms of direct health effects from car emissions, the study links health effects through direct exposure to pollutants while being in cars, as well as living in proximity to heavily trafficked roadways.

The Ontario Medical Association report reviewed injuries and deaths from traffic accidents and the association between low-density suburbia and centers that are more compact. Someone living in a suburban area will likely find himself or herself driving farther than his or her counterpart living in a city center. The report cited a US study of traffic accident fatality rates in which the “10 most compact communities had a rate of 5.6 per 100,000 (population) while the 10 least dense cities had a rate of 26 per 100,000” (p.30). It would seem a logical conclusion that the more time spent driving the higher the chance of becoming involved in a traffic accident. In Canada while the fatality rates are lower than the US, the report draws a similar conclusion: “traffic death risks are greater for people living in the outlying suburbs...” (p. 29).

Furthermore, according to the report, a person’s mental health can also be subject to stressors resulting from the geographic isolation of suburbia. The time spent in your vehicle commuting to and from work, less access to public facilities and leisure activities, and the financial costs and responsibilities of car maintenance all combine to raise one’s level of stress. The report also notes the loss of social capital and sense of community due to the transitional, disconnected auto orientation nature of the suburbs. The relationship

between social inclusion and the lack of personal mobility, particularly with vulnerable populations, can have an effect on personal happiness and well-being, as well as have economic implications for government. This concept is discussed below at the micro level of the Province of New Brunswick.

Suburban development with its distributed spatial geography proves challenging for government to support transportation mobility for members of society who for reasons economic or otherwise do not own a personal automobile. Getting to the periphery from the urban core and vice-versa can prove difficult if you do not own a vehicle. The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) of the Province of New Brunswick mandated a committee to propose improved mobility options for New Brunswick (RUTAC, 2017, p.3). The committee's report explores the relationship between suburban development, rural living and exclusion. There is an unintended consequence of exclusion on parts of the population that do not have access to personal mobility choices.

According to the report:

“Over the years, private vehicles have made mobility convenient to many, but it has come at significant costs. Our dependence on private vehicles has created a heavy financial burden on middle income families, while posing even greater obstacles to vulnerable populations: people living in poverty, people with a disability, people living in rural, remote and aboriginal communities, youth, seniors and immigrants. They may lack the physical ability or financial means to drive a car to access jobs, services, healthcare, education, cultural and social activities. It diminishes the quality of life to families and communities. The lack of transportation options also burden government finances: fewer people work and pay taxes, while increasing public service delivery costs” (RUTAC, 2017. p.3).

Without full participation in society, social capital is diminished, the cumulative contribution citizens could provide to society but for the lack of mobility due to our pattern of development.

The committee acknowledges that isolation is at least due in part to public policy or lack thereof:

“There are also land-use planning decisions which influence choice of transportation mode, such as residential density and locations of essential services like health, shopping and education. Currently, there is no official mechanism to facilitate coordination of all those involved with transportation in New Brunswick.” (RUTAC, 2017, p.9).

The report is describing the design characteristics of the typical suburban residential development that is intended to have a buffer from the existing built environment, be populated by those in similar economic circumstances and provide limited options in home tenure, normally single-family homes.

In recommendation, 4.8 regarding Active Transportation (AT) the committee suggests:

“Provincial and municipal governments can play an important role in helping to build a culture of AT use by ensuring that built environment decisions (e.g., schools, public buildings, businesses) utilize an active transportation lens when developing the locations, spaces, routes and interactions..... Incorporating lessons and activities in the public education system, such as ensuring more opportunities to walk, bike or wheel to school, and fostering transit use, would assist in encouraging long-term changes to travel behaviour” RUTAC, 2017, p.24).

The location of the new Moncton High School does not satisfy what the committee would look for in its vision for social inclusion. The development site is not served by

municipal transit. As noted in the committee report this means that after-school activities, parent-teacher meetings, and school sports all become very difficult for families without an automobile. This isolation of the school was not a surprise. In a newspaper interview the school district's director of finance and administration reported that "Now we have basically 99 per cent of our students-or more- taking the bus to get to school" (Transcript, Feb, 03, 2015). The district also added two more buses to accommodate more passengers and deal with the logistical challenge of the new location. The isolation of the suburban school does exclude members of the population from full and easy access to this public facility. In order to get out in front of inadequate transportation service levels the committee recommends that Transportation Impact Assessments (TIA) be considered. Property development projects can be subject to various other required studies and assessments, such as Environmental Impact Assessments, Traffic Flow Studies or Noise studies. According to Recommendation 2.3 a Transportation Impact Assessment might help "assess the sum of development-related impacts" as well as "helping to ensure development decisions respect transportation master plans, specifying acceptable levels of transportation services...." (p.19).

3.4 How Public Authority Assumes the Consequences of Private Development.

How the various government departments handled the infrastructure requirement necessary for the new Moncton High School is typical of how suburban Northern America came to be. As Duany suggests, the idea of one level of government encouraging a lower level to proceed with a project that may not be in its best interest is often made more palatable with funding (Duany, 2000). This funding from above allows the lower level of public authority to declare a degree of victory to its local constituents. What the polity less

scrutinizes is the development industry's affinity for instigating projects directed to the periphery which knowingly come at high public cost. This willful blindness excused a way of life in the suburban landscape through the subsidy of the public purse.

Particularly since WWII our society has adopted the suburban landscape as the norm and a measure of familial success. That we may have been guided to the periphery by our economic system, with the approval of public authority, has not been fully acknowledged in the public square. However, it is in part the public contribution and governance of this building form that has placed the existing built environment and its occupants at a disadvantage. If you live in an apartment in the city center, do not own or cannot afford an automobile and are a user of public transit, through your contributions to the public purse you are subsidizing the costs of suburbanization without realizing any benefit.

This template of creating new residential development on peripheral virgin lands took off in a meaningful way after WWII and continued for decades without any real consideration as to the consequences of the resulting landscape form. Should the proposal of an integrated development site in which the new Moncton High School would be located be viewed as anything other than the continuation of the established relationship between the marketplace and public authority? History would suggest the general public has been conditioned to assume that government at some level would ensure the necessary infrastructure to support the project. Within the levels of public authority, staff would negotiate which party to this project would be financially responsible for what.

A staff report to City Council outlined how the existing road infrastructure and water utilities would need extensive improvements if this proposed development site were

to be granted rezoning (Report, Jan 9, 2012). In a letter dated June 7, 2012, to the Mayor of Moncton, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, requested “confirmation of the required infrastructure commitments” (by the City of Moncton) given the Province’s decision to build the new high school at the chosen site. In the meantime, the back and forth negotiating between these two dates, shows Scott’s (2009) conception of capitalism being similar to a sporting game holds water.

The selected property for the new school at the “1800 block of Elmwood Drive” was outside the Service Area Boundary (SAB) of the City of Moncton and therefore not serviced by municipal utilities. This created financial and regulatory obstacles for both the private developer and public authorities. Additionally, the developer sought a land use zone change from Rural Residential to Integrated Development that would permit specific residential development, as well as non-residential uses. This mixed use concept plan would elevate the demands on municipal infrastructure. The roadway leading to the development property, known as Elmwood Drive or Provincial Route 115, was a two lane road which would require upgrades in order provide safe vehicular passage including turning lane access points for school buses and other traffic in to the site. There were no pedestrian sidewalks on either side of this road. Urban planners and engineers examined the infrastructure capacity currently in place as to whether it could accommodate not only the school but the larger integrated development zone. With the report on the necessary infrastructure upgrades completed and submitted to Municipal staff in late fall of 2011, a regulatory process of hurdles and negotiations would be set in motion.

This development site has had a history of public support in the past. The subdivided parcel of land carved out for the integrated development zone and new school is a

northern portion of another project initiated some 20 years earlier. At that time the original development was marketed as a “high end” links golf course, with an equally class based residential community accompanying it. As was noted in the staff Report to the Planning Commissioners, this original development was as well outside the Service Area Boundary (Report, Feb 16, 2012). The developer at that time sought and was given permission for the development and the municipality bore the brunt of extending water and utility services to the project. The original company, which built the golf course and residential community eventually went bankrupt leaving a significant portion of the developable residential land vacant. This is a familiar result in many Northern American jurisdictions. Developers propose growth and development while public authority, blinded by the shine of the opening day ribbon or some other political reason, has difficulty seeing any unintended consequences.

3.5 Getting the Project Started

The Province made the announcement of the new school’s location in July 2011. The planning and budgeting for infrastructure and service improvements soon followed, if only behind the scenes by the local and provincial bureaucracy. Because the students of Moncton High School were in the precarious position of not having a permanent facility, the Province and the DEC were moved by a sense of urgency to get approvals and budgets in place in order to expedite the new school opening. The current school had been vacated for a year and while it was empty renovations were completed to permit the safe return of the students, but only as a temporary measure until the new school could be completed.

From the provincial perspective, there were two distinct but connected channels of action. The Department of Supply and Services (now Transportation and Infrastructure)

had responsibility in conjunction with the City of Moncton to upgrade the road and water utilities in preparation for the school's opening. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development initiated a departmental planning process for opening a new educational facility (Project Plan, March 12, 2011). This process would involve a committee including the local DEC, the Department of Education and the Department of Supply and Services which would oversee the educational specifications, site requirements, building design specifications and tendering for construction of the new building. The road and water utility upgrades would require the participation of the municipality which would result in a negotiation of financial contributions.

In anticipation of costs that were to come, staff in its report to City Council, recommended financial agreements be reached with the developer and the Provincial government in consideration for council's acceptance of the new location. This amounted to making the best of a situation that was taken out of the hands of the municipality. Between the announcement of the school's location in July 2011 and a special meeting of City Council in June of 2012, negotiations on cost sharing agreements were ongoing between the municipality and Province.

3.6 Project Descriptions and Financial Commitments: who pays for what?

In a letter addressed to the Mayor of Moncton dated June 07, 2012, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure proposed an amount of funding the province would provide for the road improvements leading to the new school. The letter outlines the same projects presented in the planning staff report to Council of February 16, 2012. With the exception of half of the cost of project 5 (approximately 6 million dollars), and the water and sanitary costs, to which the Minister believes the developer would contribute, the

Province will be providing the remainder of the funds for this roadway improvement. A two kilometer section of road noted as Project 4 which is not anticipated for completion until 2027 is excluded as it is deemed premature, for budgeting purposes, by the current Provincial government. The total budget of the Province is 12.8 million in contributions. The amount and timing of projects are intended so as not to interfere with the City of Moncton's existing five year capital plan. In consideration of this agreement, and for assistance to other unnamed municipal projects, the Province asks for confirmation that "the Municipal Services Boundary will be extended so that the proposed new access to the high school site off Elmwood Drive and the second proposed fully serviced street access of Greenbrier Drive extension will become vested in the City of Moncton as public streets" (Letter, June 7, 2012).

In his presentation to City Council on February 06, 2012, the private developer of the new site suggested that there would not be significant infrastructure required, that there was already a traffic problem in the area and an existing water problem which would have to be improved regardless of their housing development. However, the developer agreed to pay their share of the infrastructure costs. This is also the presentation at which the developer advised City Council that they no longer owned the land on which the school would be built as they had recently sold it to the Province of New Brunswick.

As part of its rezoning application, using a third party engineering firm, the developer was responsible to prepare a study detailing the long term impact their development would have on public infrastructure such as the existing roadway. A summary of these impacts (the future infrastructure projects) was included in staff's report

to the Planning Commission (Report, February 16, 2012). These infrastructure projects became the basis for cost sharing negotiations between the two levels of government.

A total of five separate roadway and intersection improvement projects were identified as necessary over a 20-year period at an estimated cost of \$25.83 million plus HST. They would begin at the intersection of the Trans-Canada Highway some five kilometers south of the new school location. Three water and sewer utility projects were required over the next 2-3 years at an estimated cost of \$2.43 million plus HST (Report, February 16, 2012).

The planners and engineers determined that the impacts of traffic resulting from the new school would need to be addressed starting at the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH).

Essentially, from the Trans-Canada Highway heading north the roadway was a secondary highway at best, used for commuter travel to and from rural communities. The intersection of the TCH and Elmwood Drive would need to be upgraded to meet future traffic demand. Below the list of projects are mapped and detailed.

Street Improvement, Project 1 was estimated at \$2.5 million. Project 2 was estimated at \$4.1 million dollars.



Figure 3.1. Roadway Projects 1 and 2

Projects 4 and 5 represent the upgrades required to bring the existing roadway up to a standard for the anticipated traffic flow and increased safety concerns including that of student busing. Combined these projects were estimated to cost just over \$11.9 million. Project 3 included three separate left turn lanes required to upgrade two entrances into the existing Royal Oaks development site as well as a left turn lane into the new entrance of the High School. In total these turn lanes were estimated at just over \$600 thousand.

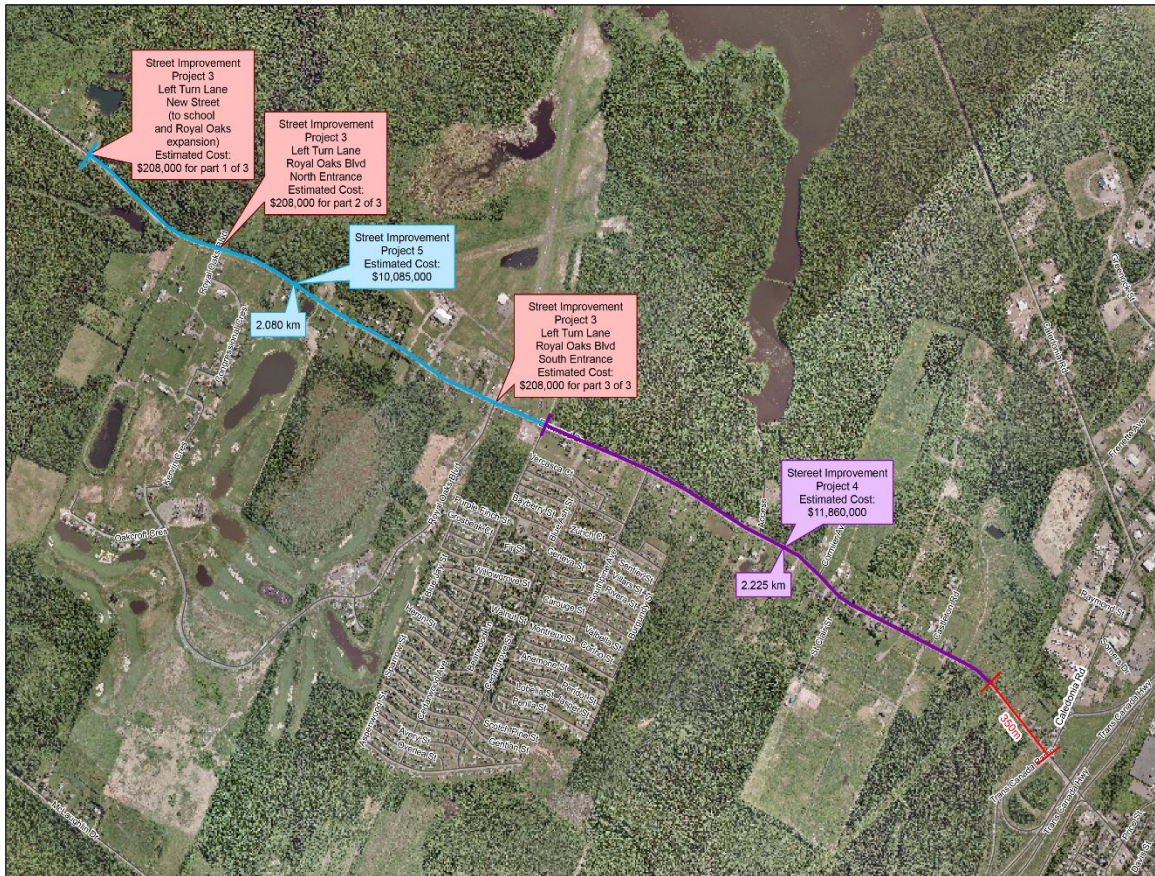


Figure 3.2. Roadway Projects 3, 4 and 5

In addition to the five transportation projects the City of Moncton’s Engineering Department noted three water and sewer utility improvements would be required to service the development. New sanitary sewer lift stations would be needed and the water system would require pressure boosting. These projects were estimated to cost \$2.4 million.

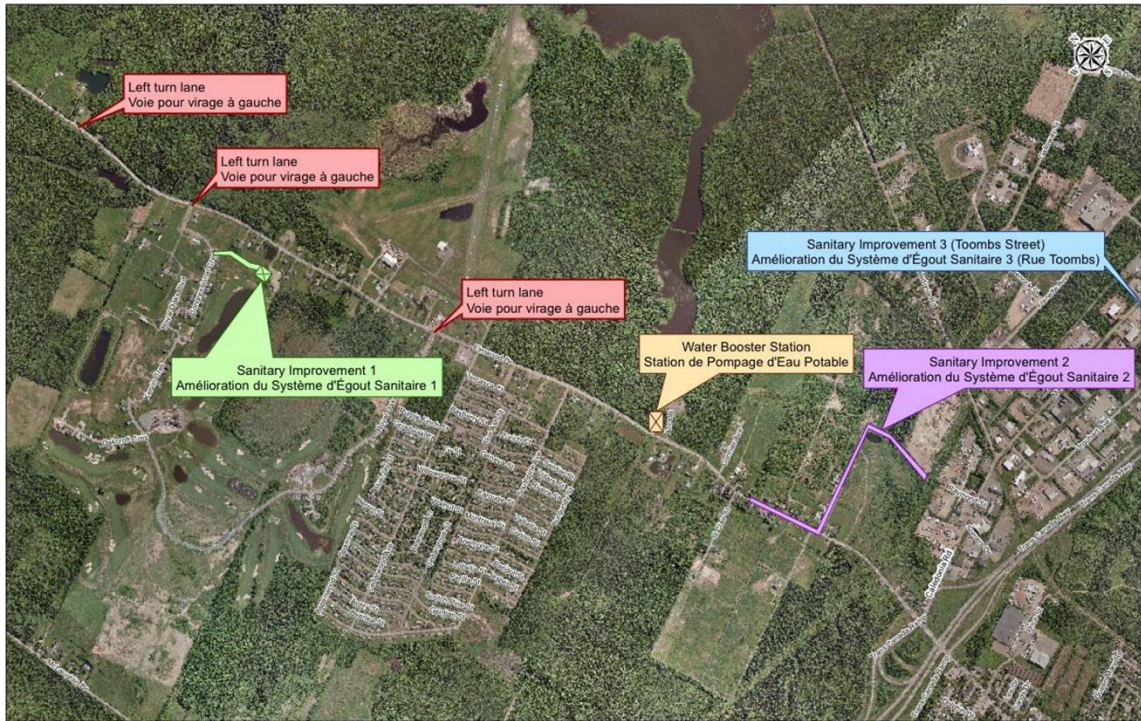


Figure 3.3. Sanitary Sewer and Water Booster Projects

The construction period would start almost immediately (2012) with the first projects and others starting sub-sequentially over the following 20 years. These projects are all upgrades required on Elmwood Drive starting from the intersection with the Trans-Canada highway and ending at the proposed entrance to the high school. The total estimated cost for all the infrastructure upgrades was approximately \$26 million.

The Province of New Brunswick developed a budget of approximate total expenditures for the Elmwood Drive improvements starting with a contribution in the year 2012. The budget extended through the year 2018 with anticipated total road improvement costs of just under \$14 million.

In a letter to the Greater Moncton Planning Commission dated March 14, 2012 a representative of the developer Romspen Investments withdrew the application for rezoning of its property at Royal Oaks from Rural Residential to Integrated Development.

At this point the decision had been made as to where the new school would be located and the property on which the school would be built had been purchased by the province. Not requiring any zoning changes to its remaining property allowed the developer to remove itself from any financial contribution to the infrastructure upgrades.

By the summer of 2015, the Federal Government came to the table with a \$6 million maximum contribution to the infrastructure required for Elmwood Drive (Time-Transcript, July 09, 2015). It would seem a road built with the help of another's money is better than not to have built the road at all. However, there is only one real taxpayer who at the end of the day bears the burden of these unintended infrastructure consequences. With the provinces share of \$14 million the total budgeted public dollars totalled approximately \$20 million, with another \$6 million to be committed sometime in the future.

In a press release February 20, 2013 the Province announced that a contract had been awarded for the new school. With land preparation and building construction, the total cost to complete the school structure was budgeted at approximately \$27.9 million. With the projected costs of the infrastructure improvements, the total estimated cost to get the school built and accessible is just over \$50 million.

The consequences of our actions may not always be intended but by some metrics, they can be quantified. Counting up the financial costs of the new school location is a math calculation, understanding and measuring the social, environmental and health implications of the location is a much more difficult and somewhat political exercise.

Chapter 4

4.1 Conclusion: Capitalism's affinity for Suburbanism as a way of life.

Capitalism as a worldview is both a view of life and a way of life and shapes and influences society. In Canada and the United States capitalism shapes the political economy, which in turn influences the thoughts and actions of players engaged in the system at various levels: governments, institutions and the marketplace. Actors in this political economy have, at times, collaborated or conspired to influence or support a suburban way of life for the majority of citizens. Capitalism as a vision of life and way of life is deeply rooted and structurally embedded in our society. The implications of this way of life have not been fully vetted in the public square and the processes and interactions of the participants is worthy of broader public discourse. Through a more robust public debate the unintended consequences of suburban development might be better understood. A case in point is the selection of the Greenfield location for a new school in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. The capitalist-public authority-marketplace relationship revealed that the values of the various actors in the marketplace were not always in alignment and conflict occurred.

According to Loy (1997) "religion is notoriously difficult to define" (p. 1). When belief systems and value systems are considered, the market-based economic system has all the characteristics of a widespread religion. Capitalism, as a worldview that influences the political economic system can also have different meanings to different people. In Canada and the United States capitalism influences our lives in ways similar to that of religion. Our society has adopted a market-based economic system and elevated it beyond marketplace transactions to that of a worldview (Loy, 1997; Valk, 2009; Vidal, 2008; Cox,

2016). It is that worldview that has influenced the movement towards suburbanism as a way of life. Public policy showed a preference toward a low-density suburban style of development in its response to solving a housing supply shortage and an increasing population. Consumer Capitalism was instrumental in creating the suburban home explosion. Suburbanism, therefore, is one result of our capitalist political economy.

The seeds of our collective accommodation to suburban development were planted decades ago. Actors in the marketplace of our capitalist political economy watered these seeds toward a self-serving purpose. The “Road Gang” lobby group, homebuilders industry and mortgages supported in public policy, were among the actors influential in the creation of our road, and by extension housing settlement, networks (Gutfreund, 2004; Hayden, 2003.)

In both Canada and the United States activity in the residential construction industry dropped exponentially during the depression era of the late 1920’s and early 1930’s, to the extent that the Federal governments created new bureaucracies and introduced public policy regarding housing and urban development. Government public policy influence in the housing market, through mortgage financing, began as a way to breathe life into a depressed economy, stimulate private industry into speculative home building and get people back to work (Jackson, p. 194; Begin, p. 1).

A decade later new iterations of these government institutions and public policy had evolved and adapted to the new economic climate. The new institutions of public policy converged with a burgeoning private housing industry to create an effective partnership in solving the market’s needs of the time. At this time -the mid 1940’s- policy issues related more too inadequate housing supply than that of a soft economy. After WWII

North America was dealing with returning veterans, immigration, and an increase in households. These economic and social conditions, combined with supportive public policy, took suburban development to a new level. The government backed mortgage financing for buyers created a market for developers and homebuilders who used new construction methods to quickly and efficiently build single-family homes (Jackson, 1985; Hayden, 2003). Both the Canadian National Housing Act and the American FHA provided financing programs which directed support to new home construction on the periphery, to the detriment of the existing urban core. A suburban bias was inherent in public policy (Harris, p.133). With the automobile now affordable by the middle class it brought the frontier just a short drive from the center city and the home building industry proved up to the challenge of filling this new landscape with middle-class homes. According to Harris, by the end of the 1950's the single family home at the city/town periphery, was now part of the Canadian vernacular (Harris, 2004). Furthermore, the single family home came to be considered more than just shelter, but rather a commodity and a measure of the family's success. This measure of financial success, and way of life, was rooted in public policy.

Unlike other endeavours in the market place, the suburban development movement has a business plan predicated upon the notion of infrastructure being provided by governments as a public good. By the start of the 1960's the concept of providing public goods as part of the "commons" on which private industry could continue suburban expansion was a structurally embedded worldview. In the body of work dealing with suburbanism and land development, Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier* (1985) is perhaps the most widely cited work. Jackson surmised, "suburbanization was not an historical inevitability created by geography, technology, and culture but rather the product of

government policies. In effect, the social costs of low-density living have been paid by the general taxpayer rather than only by suburban residents” (p. 293). Local studies suggest this analysis of public policy and the distribution of costs remains a valid argument. In his 2008 Report to the government of New Brunswick, Finn discusses the inefficiency of low density suburban and rural development, and how this creates conflict between suburban and urban tax payers (Finn, 2008). The latter according to Finn are subsidizing the former.

Suburban residents, however, have over the decades come to feel comfortably justified that their lifestyle contributes its fair share to society. Countering this collective accommodation to a way of life can be akin to pushing the boulder up a hill. The government of New Brunswick has been equally shy to make meaningful changes to counter suburban and low-density development.

Suburbanization continues to take place throughout Northern America at a rapid pace even though it becomes evident there are deleterious consequences. The majority capitalist worldview can accept such actions in the belief that the political economic system will always correct itself. Any consequences will be rectified by the marketplace. The suburban movement is a structural affinity embedded in our political economic marketplace.

4.2 How did this School get located here?

The Province of New Brunswick and its departmental institutions, and the City of Moncton and its regulators, and private developers were all actors in capitalism’s marketplace who played a part in the location choice of the new Moncton High School. Private development influenced one level of public authority through direct negotiation while engaging another level of authority in the rules of the development game. Once an

agreement was reached with the higher level of public authority to the satisfaction of the developer, it removed itself from the local regulatory process. The general public and even those with a direct connection to the school such as teachers, students or parents played little or no role in the decision where to locate the school.

In a review of the chronology of decision making on the future of Moncton High School, a conclusion can be drawn that capitalism, and the affinity for suburban development by actors in the market place, remains engrained in our way of life.

In October of 2010, just a month in to the new school year, Moncton High School was temporarily closed due to health concerns. This sent approximately 1200 students to alternative classroom facilities throughout the City. Unless you were directly involved, as a student, teacher, parent or part of the education system, you may not have been unaware the school was closed and its future uncertain. The decision making process that followed within public authority and its institutions and regulators, offered limited opportunity for public discourse.

One month after the school closure the District Education Council (DEC), in charge of administration for Moncton High School, received a report from an architectural consultant who had been asked earlier in the year to give an opinion on the condition of the school. The consultant's report, according to the minutes of the DEC, recommended keeping parts of the school building intact and maintaining the property as a high school (DEC, Nov 16, 2010). The "recommendation to re-build a new Moncton High School on the existing site while retaining the most important heritage components of the existing building" was motioned and was carried (DEC, Nov 16, 2010). At the December 20, 2010 public meeting of Moncton City Council, the Moncton Heritage Preservation Review

Board, made a presentation to Council which suggested Council follow the recommendations of the DEC consultant and maintain the existing High School as a viable heritage property and that “a new Moncton High School be built on the same site integrated with the remaining historic elements” (Moncton City Council, Dec, 20, 2010).

The City Councillors agreed with the recommendation and a motion to that extent was carried by Moncton City Council. The opinion of the DEC, the Moncton Heritage Review Board and the motion passed by Moncton City Council did not prevent the province from announcing in January of 2011, that a new high school would be built to replace the existing Moncton High School building (CBC, 2011).

With the decision made to build a new school, saving the existing Moncton High School building became an important community issue. Public Authorities were not sure what to do with the existing building, but they were sure that they needed a new high school to replace it. In April of 2011, an actor in the market place responded to this as an opportunity. As reported by CBC News, a Toronto-based real estate developer, who recently acquired the bankrupt Royal Oaks Golf and Residential community, on the outskirts of Moncton, proposed to take on the Moncton High project. The reporting quoted the developer as offering “to swap land at the Royal Oaks property for the new school in exchange for being given the opportunity to restore the current Moncton High School” (CBC, Apr 21, 2011). By the following July the province made the decision to take the developer up on its offer. In a joint provincial departmental news release the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Minister Transportation and Infrastructure announced that the Royal Oaks property would be the home of the new school. According to the Education Minister “its strategic location in relation to the

Moncton High catchment area, the amount of available green space and the additional benefit of having the Royal Oaks developer commit to the restoration of the existing Moncton High School were among the advantages taken into account” (Prov. NB, News Release, July 05, 2011). The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure added “We understand the historical significance of the Moncton High School to the community... That is why our goal has been to work with the community on solutions that would see this heritage building preserved” (News Release, July 05, 2011). Almost a year later the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure was addressing questions regarding the location choice for the school, his response was similar to the reasons given in the news release of July 2011, with addition of adding “the benefit of residential growth and future construction” (Times Transcript, June 8, 2012). His response no longer included any mention of the redevelopment of the old school. In between these two dates, Scott’s concept of capitalism as an intertwined three level system, analogous to organized sports, played out in the process of locating a site for the new Moncton High School.




| Organized Sports | Organized capitalism | Moncton High School |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| Political Authorities | Political Authority | Province of NB, City of Moncton |
| Institutions, Regulations, and Referees | Institutions, Regulations, and Regulators | Provincial Departments, District Education Councils, Planning Commission |
| Officially Sanctioned Games | Formal Markets | Locating and Building a School Land and Residential Development |

Table 3. Scott’s capitalism and Moncton High School

In addition to offering to redevelop the existing historic school building, the developer enticed public authority with a proposal concept for its site that would include a significant mixed use development component in addition to the new school. In the Fall of 2011 the developer engaged with the Greater Moncton Planning District Commission (the Regulator), submitting a concept plan for its property to include some 1400 residential units, other mixed uses and the new school. This would require rezoning the property from a Rural Residential Zone to one of an Integrated Development Zone. Further complicating the project was that the property was outside the City of Moncton's Service Area Boundary, therefore not a designated growth area. The property was not yet identified for development in the municipal plan because it was not serviced by municipal water and sewer, the road to the property was not built to the standard required to meet increased traffic, there were no sidewalks, and the location was not served by public transit. Furthermore, there was already a surplus of vacant and developable serviced land available in the City.

Overcoming these obstacles through the municipal planning process proved challenging for the regulator. Planning staff advised both Moncton City Council and the Planning Commission that approving development at this location was not aligned with the intentions of the City's municipal plan. However, by the time City Council began to discuss the matter at its public meetings any authority it might have had as a municipality was usurped due to the sale of the project property, from the developer to the Province of New Brunswick. The province is not required to follow zoning bylaws of a municipality if it does not wish to. By February 2012, with the province as owner of the proposed school site, there were no municipal barriers preventing the Royal Oaks location from being home

to the new school. In March 2012 the developer withdrew its application for rezoning essentially removing itself as a player in the regulatory game. The developer, however, remained in a position to benefit from any increase in value to lands it still owned at this location as the result of public investment in infrastructure and the proximity of a new public school.

In a little more than one year the Province of New Brunswick announced it would build a new school - as opposed to repairing the existing building which was the choice of the DEC, the Heritage Review Board and City of Moncton - selected the Royal Oaks site over 19 other alternatives, purchased the property from the company that owned the selected site and then removed the property from the normal planning and rezoning process of the Municipality. There were no community meetings, consultations or regulatory hearings other than those held inside the institutions themselves. The public square was far too quiet in this process.

Rather than looking forward and considering the long-term unintended consequences of this suburban location public authority, at the provincial level, appeared to scramble to find an immediate, but not necessarily best, solution to replace Moncton High School. Any acknowledgement of the relationship between the built environment and the public purse seemed overshadowed by society's accommodation to suburbanism. At the same time provincial and municipal governments were witnessing unprecedented deficits and debt and were challenged to provide traditional public services (Savoie, 2010; Saillant, 2014). Public health authorities and think tanks were also suggesting links between our suburban lifestyle and rising obesity rates, traffic congestion, commuting time and the overall health of the population (Ontario, 2005; Frank et al. 2004). Yet, the location

choice for a new high school in Moncton, New Brunswick was such that almost no students would be within walking distance, busing costs and time spent on the buses would rise (Roberts, Times Transcript, Feb. 2015). The isolation of the school and the lack of public transit left citizens who were not automobile owners excluded from full participation in their child's education or use of the school's public amenities.

What factors influenced the selection of this property as the site for the new school? In this case it was an uneven partnership and a clash in values between actors in the marketplace, two levels of public authority and their institutions. The uneven partnership was found in a deal where private industry would build the new school, sell the land upon which the school would be built and benefit from the public goods provided by public authority: a \$28 million new high school adjacent to their development and \$26 million in infrastructure upgrades leading to their property.

Suburban settlement can, be an inefficient, insular and solitary form of habitation. Such negative attributes are outweighed in the public square by the market place pronouncement that more of the same, in the name of growth and development, will improve our economy and make society better. The relationship between public authority and the marketplace, as it relates to property development, has over time favoured the periphery over the existing city. Should a development in the city center that does not require new infrastructure or public goods face the same tax burden as a development outside the built environment that demands public infrastructure support? The latter has become the norm with subsidy of the public purse: a practice that is not new but is deeply rooted in our political economy and way of life. This policy environment has pulled the

settlement landscape further and further away from the traditional city. Society came to accept that the costs of supporting suburbia was a public good.

The suburban experience has become a lifestyle expectation that is not necessarily organic but rather one guided by the invisible hand. Our existing built environment and continued method of development is a process which happens in plain sight yet is hidden in the opaque world of partnership between actors in the marketplace and public authority.

4.3 Summation – Recommendations

Suburban development can come with unintended deleterious consequences. Why has it continued as a form of investment by actors in the marketplace? The answer might be that the negative consequences of suburban development become the responsibility of public authority while the positive outcomes remain with the private developer. When the unintended costs are distributed among the entire polity the pain is less noticeable and the public square remains quiet. This does not suggest that the capitalist economic system under which the majority of citizens have generally prospered is wrong. It does, however, suggest that the partnership between the players should be re-evaluated. Capitalism's actors will normally play within the rules of the game, and these rules are developed by public authority and managed by its regulators and institutions. It is a recalibration of the partnership and rules of the game that is required by public authority.

The development of a new school at the edge of Moncton's built environment happened as the result of an actor in the marketplace offering a solution to public authority's problem. This type of transaction is not unexpected or outside the norms of a capitalist political economy. As Scott's conception of capitalism shows, there are multiple

levels of authority and players participating in the system. They will not necessarily have the same vision and values.

Conflict in this project occurred due to the fact that one level of public authority, the Province of New Brunswick, was responsible for building the school, while another level of public authority, the City of Moncton, was responsible for providing municipal services to the building immediately and for the length of its existence. A conflict further occurred when the higher level of public authority provided no real opportunity for public input on site selection for the school and in fact, eliminated the chance for questions and debate at the local regulatory level. Conflict and value clashes can also occur when a development location results in unintended consequences. These include the long term financial implications the project will have on the tax paying public. At times when the Province of New Brunswick finds itself in questionable financial status, a recommendation toward a more fulsome analysis of the public costs of development proposals should warrant thoughtful consideration.

There has been a history of development being pulled to the periphery of our existing built environment with incentives from public policy. Removing incentives, such as property tax rates that are lower for peripheral locations just outside municipal boundaries, is something governments should consider. A system which attributed a property tax rate based on the cost of providing services may, as well, be worthy of exploring. Public Authorities should consider implementing policies which would encourage development to take place on vacant or underutilized land inside existing municipal boundaries. This should be done in a collaborative manner between the provincial government and municipal governments. Utilizing available serviced land inside

a municipal boundary will reduce clear cutting tree lots or taking arable land out of production.

Where municipalities wish to increase the density of their built environment and encourage alternative modes of transit and mobility they should be supported by the province locating provincial buildings and public services in alignment with these wishes. This could be realized by conducting Transportation Impact Assessments on all government projects to ensure they align with local government plans and societal needs as suggested in the RUTAC report to the province. Increasing density in a planned way can help to address the isolation consequences of suburbia, reduce automobile traffic and time spent in automobiles and improve the viability of public transit.

Unless public authority adjusts the partnership with capitalism and actors in the marketplace and, its historic affinity for suburban expansion, we risk living in a system described by Havel as a political economic system ingratiated by prospects of short-term gain regardless of the landscape or the long-term public costs left behind. Considering the financial challenges facing the Province of New Brunswick a new perspective on suburban development appears warranted.

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