



Planning Experts and Local Reformers: The 1915 Town Planning Act in Nova Scotia

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In 1912 the province of Nova Scotia was among the first regions of Canada to adopt a town planning act. Just three years later the province substantially revised its act under the guidance of Thomas Adams, town planning advisor for the Commission of Conservation. The paper will examine the context within which Nova Scotia first adopted town planning legislation and then determined to overhaul the legislation. What circumstances and events led to the development of the initial act and its quick replacement with Thomas Adams' version? How did local political and business leaders in Nova Scotia respond to ideas of town planning in this early period? To what extent were Nova Scotia leaders looking to other parts of Canada and to Britain for inspiration for their legislative frameworks? What role did Thomas Adams play in convincing political leaders that their initial efforts were not sufficient? What challenges did local officials see town planning as addressing?

The paper will examine a part of Canadian regional planning history that has not received much attention in past. It will employ archival sources as well as secondary resources (books and journal articles) to understand this period that ultimately transformed decision making about development in Canadian cities.

KEY WORDS: Planning legislation, Nova Scotia, Thomas Adams.