Review


Questions of interest:

1. Given that the article was written nearly 50 years ago, do you think the planning profession has followed Meyerson’s suggestions? Have you internalized this set of expanded functions in your academic or professional career?
2. Meyerson does not raise any potential drawbacks to the expanded role of the planner. Do you see any problems with his arguments?
3. Meyerson was speaking to a group of professional planners, with the assumption that they agree with the basis for an expanded role of the planner. What supporting evidence would he have needed in order to make an appeal to society at large, or to the politicians who hold the purse strings?
4. According to the Inflation Calculator (http://www.westegg.com/inflation/), based on the Consumer Price Index,

   “What cost $30000 in 1956 would cost $196969.42 in 2003. Also, if you were to buy exactly the same products in 2003 and 1956, they would cost you $30000 and $4569.24 respectively.”

According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos057.htm) entry for urban and regional planners:

   “Median annual earnings of urban and regional planners were $49,880 in 2002. The middle 50 percent earned between $39,210 and $62,710. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $31,830, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $76,700. Median annual earnings in local government, the industry employing the largest number of urban and regional planners, were $48,950.”

What’s the problem?!!

Issue/Problem/Research Question/ Hypothesis addressed: Meyerson addresses what he identifies as a limited role of the planner, and argues for a role that is more expanded in terms of responsibility, challenge, and pay.

Biography: Martin Meyerson was born in 1922, and holds a BA from Columbia University (1942) and a Master of City Planning from Harvard (1949). He has had an impressive career as both administrator and professor of urban planning at institutions including Penn (also President), Chicago, Harvard, UC-Berkeley, and SUNY-Buffalo (also President). He has been involved in a number of planning projects around the world and has been the recipient of numerous awards for his intellect and leadership. He has
authored, co-authored, and edited several important books, and has served on editorial boards both within and without in the planning field. See Appendix for a more complete CV.

**Theoretical context:** Meyerson takes a pragmatic approach to the subject of an expanded role of the professional planner.

**Summary of the content:** Meyerson argues for a further professionalization of the planning field: “...increasing our numbers, multiplying our budgets, strengthening our effectiveness, expanding our functions, and, of course, raising our salaries” (p. 128).

He begins by outlining the typical historical sequence of profession creation and development. In this light, planning can be seen as a profession which should continue to develop on parallel lines. The main goal for this professionalization is expanded functionality of the planner.

Previously, planners were used by society, and consequently identified, for making plans or advising on decisions of limited spatial, social, and temporal scale. The specific training planners obtain makes them well suited for issues related to larger scales of organization. In this regard, planners should more effectively be used for dealing what Meyerson refers to as “middle-range” issues: those issues somewhere between the detailed project and long-range ends, in the 5-10 year temporal range.

In order to achieve these mid-range goals, he argues for specifically expanded functions for the planner:

- **Central intelligence:** The planning agency should be responsible for ongoing data gathering and storage of market conditions (I would add a number of other data representative of urban conditions, such as health measures, commuting time, and environmental quality).
- **Pulse-taking:** The planning agency, through its intelligence function, can monitor urban change, especially signs of danger to the urban condition.
- **Policy clarification:** As a data steward and watchdog organization, the planning agency can use its data to help frame policies that will either help avoid threats or build a better future. As more objective participants, planners are perhaps better able to provide unbiased, or at least multiple alternative scenarios for political decision makers.
- **Detailed development plan:** The planning agency can provide guidance for mid-range planning that will effectively tie together short-range, site-specific plans with larger comprehensive planning goals.
- **Feedback:** In order to determine whether plans and policies are effective, the planning agency can provide adaptive management strategies to make sure the outcome of plans matches original goals. This function goes hand-in-hand with all the other functions.

In order to achieve this expanded functionality, planners will need to become increasingly specialized, to obtain expertise in both how to plan and in other areas, such as transportation, design, statistics (this sounds to me quite similar to the intention of the UDP PhD program). In order to attract these higher-level professionals, society will need to step up and provide more intellectually stimulating work, increased responsibilities, and increased compensation packages. Given the gravity and cost of the object of planning, it does not seem out of the question to provide these benefits to planners (society would be well advised not to be penny-wise and pound-foolish in this regard).
Data used: Meyerson does not directly use any specific data sources for his arguments. However, he refers anecdotally to his experiences in a few settings: (1) as a planning professional (a member of the ACTION [American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods] team), and (2) as a professor of city planning.

Methods used: The method used is logical argument.

Counter-arguments: There are no counter-arguments presented; as a champion of the planning profession, Meyerson either cannot see any drawbacks to his arguments, or if he does, he is not willing to give them voice.
Appendix: Meyerson Bio

Source 1: http://www.upenn.edu/president/history.html#meyerson

Born 1922 in New York, New York
Living in 2004

B.A., Columbia University, 1942
Master of City Planning, Harvard University, 1949

Hon. LL.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1970

- Staff, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, 1944-1945
- Assistant Professor in the College and Graduate School of Social Sciences, University of Chicago, 1948-1952
- Associate Professor, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, 1952-1956
- Professor of City and Regional Planning, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, 1956-1957
- Professor of City Planning and Urban Research, Harvard University, 1957-1963
- Acting Dean, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, 1963
- Professor of Urban Development and Dean, College of Environmental Design, University of California at Berkeley, 1963-1966
- Acting Chancellor, University of California at Berkeley, 1965
- President and Professor of Public Policy, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1966-1970
- Author (with E.C. Banfield), Politics, Planning and the Public Interest (1955)
- Author, Housing, People and Cities (1962)
- Author, Face of the Metropolis (1963)
- Author, Boston: The Job Ahead (1966)
- Director, MIT-Harvard Joint Center for Urban Studies, 1959-1963
- President Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania, 1981 to the present

University history during the Meyerson administration:

- 1972: Penn formally adopted an affirmative action program for women and minorities.
- 1972: John Robert Schrieffer, Professor of Physics, awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. He was Penn's first current faculty member to win a Nobel.
- 1974: The School of Arts and Sciences established by the merger of the College, the College of Liberal Arts, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the faculty of four social science departments – Economics, Political Science, Regional Science, and Sociology – formerly within the Wharton School.
Martin Meyerson, the President of the University of Pennsylvania from the summer of 1970 to early 1981, is now President Emeritus and University Professor Emeritus. He is a member of boards or councils of Penn's Institute for Research on Higher Education (chair), Friends of the Library (chair), the University Press (chair for a dozen years), Mahoney Institute of Neurosciences, and the Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies. He headed the program and the policy review group of the University's Fels Center of Government for over a decade, until 1996. With the former Penn Trustees' chairman, he was co-chair of the University's 250th Anniversary, which was celebrated throughout 1990 and included a national public television series on the changing globe after the cold war. His earlier professorial and research appointments at Penn were in the years 1952 to 1957.

When the building for the University's Graduate School of Fine Arts was named Meyerson Hall by the Trustees, their resolution, recognizing his aim of "one university", read in part: "The extraordinary intellectual and physical integration of the University in which we take such pride is in a large measure a tribute to the leadership of Martin Meyerson". The chairman of the Trustees commented: "No one in the history of our institution has done so much to internationalize the University." During his presidency, his achievements included the union of separate units into a faculty of arts and sciences, initiating a living-learning system of college houses, undergraduate emphases including the freshman seminar program, developing a responsibility center budgetary and planning pattern with the academic deans and the University hospitals, remaking the University's physical center and conducting one of the largest academic fund drives in the country up to that time. The University has established the Meyerson Professorship of Urbanism in honor of the President Emeritus and his wife, Margy Ellin Meyerson.

Starting in 1986 and until 1999, he was the part-time president of FISCITT, the Foundation for the International Exchange of Scientific and Cultural Information by Telecommunications, which was chartered in Switzerland and then in the United States as well. It was a consortium of research universities and its various international teleconferences joined scientists, scholars and public figures by video and computer.

Between 1981 and 1985, Martin Meyerson served as chairman of the board of the Institute of International Education, which administers Fulbright and many international exchanges through its 20 worldwide offices; he is a board member there of over 25 years' standing. Having acted in the early eighties as president of the board of the International Association of Universities, he has been an Honorary President since 1985.

He began an academic career in 1948 to 1952 as an assistant professor of the social sciences at the University of Chicago, in its undergraduate College and its graduate division. In 1957, at the age of 34, he became the first tenured Frank Backus Williams professor of city planning and urban research at Harvard University, and in 1963 was acting dean of that university's Graduate School of Design. From 1958 to 1963, he was the first director of the M.I.T -Harvard Joint Center for Urban Studies, a research group drawn from various disciplines working on theoretical and applied problems in the United States and elsewhere, including Venezuela. He was appointed professor and dean of the College of Environmental Design of the University of
California at Berkeley in 1963, and in 1965 was the interim chancellor of the Berkeley campus at a time of major student unrest.

Martin Meyerson became president of the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1966 and professor of public policy. Before leaving there to return to Pennsylvania, Time magazine featured him in a review of campuses as one of four university presidents who "have done uncommonly well". Referring to Berkeley, Time commented "he picked up the smoldering pieces with uncommon skill, winning the admiration of faculty and students"; and at Buffalo, it referred to his "major reforms". The New York Times, in its "Man in the News" coverage when he became president of Penn, called him an "educational innovator".

From 1969 to 1974, he chaired the Assembly on University Goals and Governance, a foundation-supported national effort to aid and improve higher education. He has been a member of advisory bodies at Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, the University of London, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hampshire College, Brandeis University, UCLA, the University of Oklahoma and Washington University, and was on the boards of the Niagara University, the Hebrew University, the American College, the Curtis Institute of Music and the United World College (New Mexico). He serves on the boards of the American Schools of Oriental Research (honorary), Tel Aviv University, and starting in 1993, a member of the board of overseers of Koc University in Istanbul, Turkey. An original member of the Business-Higher Education Forum, he was a director of the American Council on Aid to Education, the Educational Facilities Laboratory, the College Board and the Open University Foundation (U.S./U.K.). He held appointments with the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton (Director's Visitor) and as an Overseas Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge University.

Martin Meyerson has worked on problems of regional, national and cultural development for governments and institutions in various countries. He was a member for its duration of five years of the six-person United Nations Mission on Urbanization and Industrialization in Japan, and chaired until 1993 the advisory council for the international U.N. Centre for Regional Development based in Nagoya. He also served the United Nations as an advisor in Indonesia, helping to establish a program to aid in development there and in other South Asian countries, and in Yugoslavia (the U.S. member of the mission to rebuild urban Macedonia after its devastation by an earthquake). He was a consultant in West African countries, to the government of Spain and to the Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area and an advisor on programming for France's Institut National de la Communication Audiovisuelle. He was a founder and served for a score of years as the International Governor of the research Centre for Environmental Studies based in London, and is a board member of the Foreign Policy Research Institute and a Franklin Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Having been a founder in 1988 of the International Centre for the Study of East Asian Development, located in Kitakyushu, Japan, he has continued as its overseas board member. Since 1995, he has been a board member of the International Literacy Institute. At ACTION, the American Council To Improve Our Neighborhoods (a national movement of business, professional and civic leaders to enhance urban communities), he was executive director and earlier, research director. He has served on task forces for Presidents of the United States of both parties, on expert groups for Congress, and on councils of the National Aeronautics and Space Agency, the Census Bureau, the Electric Power Research Institute and other agencies. He collaborated on a national study of corporate education and
training, and was a member of the Senior Executives Council of the Conference Board.

Previously, he was head of planning and development for the Chicago Housing Authority, and served on the staffs of Chicago's Michael Reese Hospital (some of his work on that city's South Side was exhibited at New York's Museum of Modern Art) and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. In California, he was a Commissioner of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

In Philadelphia, among other assignments he has been on the boards of the University City Science Center, the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition and the Bicentennial Corporation. He is a board member of the Museum of Art and the International House Center, and since its founding in 1988 has chaired the International Selection Commission for the annual Philadelphia Liberty Medal. A few of the recipients of the cash award and Medal, on each July 4, were Justice Thurgood Marshal, Presidents de Klerk, Nelson Mandela and Dae Jung Kim and in 1998, Senator George Mitchell, for his chairmanship of the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland.

Martin Meyerson has been a long-standing board member of the Aspen Institute and the United States Committee on the Constitutional System and until recently, the Salzburg Seminar (U.S./Austria), where he is now a Senior Fellow. Since 1993, he has chaired the board of the Monell Chemical Senses Center -- the main institution for studies of taste and smell -- succeeding Lewis Thomas.

He was president of the Klein Foundation and an advisor to the Ford and other foundations. He serves on the board of the Panasonic Foundation established by the Matsushita Corporation (Japan/U.S.), and in 1996 succeeded Marconi's daughter as chair of the Guglielmo Marconi International Fellowship Foundation (communication and information sciences); it is located at Columbia University. Professor Meyerson is an American advisor for the Japan Foundation/Center for Global Partnership. He chaired the annual Lita Annenberg Hazen Trust Biomedical Workshops for a decade through 1991 (the three most recent of them were on the mind and the brain).

He has also been a director of the Afro-American Film Foundation, the Niagara Institute in Canada and the Annenberg Theater. He served on international juries to select architects and artists for projects in Skopje, San Francisco, Boston and elsewhere. He chaired the Western New York Nuclear Research Center and the Council of Presidents for the Universities Research Association, which operated the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, was a member of the Air Conservation Commission (initiated by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, of which he is a Fellow), and was on the boards of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health and of the Design Science Institute with Buckminster Fuller.

Martin Meyerson was a director of the Saint Gobain Corporation, with its U.S. companies CertainTeed and Norton; and the Fidelity and First Fidelity Bancorporations (now it is First Union). He was on the board of the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, and until 1998, Universal Health Services. He is a director of Avatar Holdings, Inc. (land development and utilities) and a past director of the Scott Paper Company (1971 to 1993), the Marine Midland
Bank, the Real Estate Research Corporation and UNI-COLL Corporation (computing). He was
senior advisor for ten years to Arthur D. Little, Inc., a technical and management research firm.

Martin Meyerson is principal author of the following books: Politics, Planning and the Public 
Interest (Free Press/Macmillan); Housing, People and Cities (McGraw Hill); Faces of the 
Metropolis (Random House); Boston: The Job Ahead (Harvard University Press); and Gladly 
Learn and Gladly Teach (University of Pennsylvania Press).

He was editor of Conscience of the City, a book sponsored by the journal of the American 
Academy of Arts and Sciences, Daedalus, on whose board of editors he served from the mid-
1970s until 1990. He has been on the board of editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (from 
1980 through 1998) and of scholarly and professional journals. He edited a book series on 
community development for McGraw-Hill, and various of his articles, books and reports have 
been translated and published in other countries. He organized and moderated a U.S. 
Bicentennial series on cultural and policy issues for Westinghouse Broadcasting.

Martin Meyerson received his B.A. from Columbia University's College, and his M.C.P. from 
Harvard (the Wheelwright Fellow). He holds 23 honorary ScD, PhD (h.c.), LLD, DFA, DHL, 
DHUM and D Litt degrees from universities and colleges in the United States, including Penn, 
and abroad from Shiraz University in Iran, Queen's University in Canada, the Hebrew University 
of Jerusalem and the University of Edinburgh in the U.K. He is an Honorary Professor at the 
National University of Asunción, and in China in 1996 became an Honorary Professor of 
Beijing's Peking University. For an honorary doctorate from Ohio State University in 1991, the 
citation read, "Scholar, author, educator, administrator. Diplomat, and public servant, he has 
brought to each discipline an exceptional intellect and an enlightened leadership." A 1994 
honorary degree citation emphasized his "lifelong commitment to teaching", and "to his 
students". The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning presented him the annual award of 
Distinguished Educator at its meeting in Toronto.

He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the American 
Philosophical Society (and its executive committee), the Council on Foreign Relations, the 
National Academy of Education and an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa. He is an 
Academician of the Académie Européene des Sciences des Arts et des Lettres. Martin Meyerson 
was the special award recipient, for his theoretical and practical contributions, at a 
commemorative meeting of the American Institute of City Planners, of which he is a past 
governor, The Philippine Women's University established the Martin and Margy Meyerson Chair 
for International Relations, citing the achievements of "that remarkable couple".

He received the Einstein Award of the American Technion Society and the John Jay Award from 
Columbia University. He was honored by the University of California, Berkeley. "For 
Distinguished Achievement". He has been decorated a Knight-Commander of the Republic of 
Italy, in 1988 a "Chevalier de l'Ordre National de Merite" of France, and in 1989, the Emperor of 
Japan honored him with the decoration, the "Order of the Rising Sun". ("For over 30 years", the 
award indicated, "he has contributed to the regional reconstruction of Japan and the education of 
Japanese academic researchers.") Another recent citation read: "Herman Melville suggested that 
Benjamin Franklin, founder of the University of Pennsylvania, was a Jack-of-all-trades and
mastered all of them; one can match Franklin, Martin Meyerson as a successor to him at Penn certainly has come close."