

Lahti master plan

Steps towards more strategic statutory planning

Johanna Tuomisaari

University of Tampere, Politics of Nature and the Environment Research Group

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Doctoral student at UTA School of Management in Environmental Policy: Lahti is one three case studies

Master's thesis was about resolution of planning conflicts

SCENSLECO project (Academy of Finland 2015–2019)

Strategic spatial planning with momentum gaining scenario storytelling: legitimacy contested?

Outline of the presentation

A few words about the interviews

Strategic statutory planning

Continuous planning

Points rising from the interviews

How is the continuous master plan process perceived in Lahti city administration?

Interview data

Seventeen thematic interviews with working group and steering group members ie planners and people from other departments as well

Interviews were made at plan proposal stage late 2014

Statutory strategic planning

Experimenting with master plan – how can it be used?

What does 'strategic' mean? How is it understood in particular contexts?

Connections with other fields of city administration

Continuous master planning

From the planners' point of view, the master plan is always on their desks – a big change to old planning practice

Balancing comprehensiveness and selectivity– *”not everything must be solved at once”*, accepting incompleteness but at the same time keeping the big picture in mind

Calls for a tight connection between master and detailed planning and careful programming

Institutional support

Renewing city strategy process: new mayor in 2007, new strategy manager in 2009 (Kari Jalonen's PhD thesis)

New planning architect in 2009 continued the work and ideas of her predecessor

Right people coming together at a right time doing the right things

All city departments need to be committed to the process

Coupling city strategy and urban planning

Strategic=link between city strategy and master plan

Both in terms of content and process

Planning goals and objectives are based on city strategy, "*translating strategy into land use*"

Works both ways: possibility of teasing out and making contradictory goals visible – eg Renkomäki area (groundwater >< economic benefits of gravel pit)

Strategic forum

Master plan process serves as a platform for joint discussions within city administration, one of the few possibilities to come together and share information and ideas

All actors need to have something to gain from participating

Cannot be taken for granted, requires maintenance and nurturing

”This is the way it needs to be done”

Learning

Developing "*spatial mindset*", thinking and speaking in land use terms

Role of planner also changes, collaboration with professionals from other fields requires specific skills (facilitation, mediation etc.)

Changes in personnel might pose a problem

Process over end result

Several interviewees highlighted the importance of a good process

Communication, learning about what is happening in the city, building relationships and networks, finding common ground

Strategy-making is about negotiating and interpreting the strategy on the go (strategy-as-practice literature)

Plan proposal and maps

Breaking the conventions of how planning documents are written: the plan proposal is written as a story about future Lahti

Separating plan proposal text from the plan map and their provisions – text describes the overall purpose and idea behind provisions

Text can be changed more easily than maps – one way to balance change and continuity

Maps and text serve different purposes

Implementation

Connection to detailed planning is crucial – same people are involved on both planning levels

Need for more active and long term land policy than before

Working groups and steering groups members are messengers in their units

Monitoring and evaluation, keeping track of progress

Political support

Involving city council members in the planning work more closely has been one of the main issues and goals in the planning process

Has not always been easy: follow-up and evaluating successes and failures becomes essential

Public participation

A persistent problem: how to communicate about planning to the public, how to engage people and how to utilize their input in a meaningful way

People take part because they are interested in particular issues: how to connect planning to citizens' lives?

Different methods: online surveys, workshops with citizens + interviewing kids – different methods produce different kinds of information

Continuous planning for everyone?

Transferability is not straightforward

Not just a technicality: local political, governance, planning and participation practices and cultures matter

Tampere is following in Lahti's footsteps but the end result looks very different

	Tampere	Lahti
Planning issue	Managing growth	Inducing growth
Relation to the city strategy	Executing the city strategy	Image of the city strategy
Representations of the city	City of development zones and principles	Shared story of the city in the future
Most important actors	City officials and decision-makers, project managers	City officials and decision-makers, citizens, children and the young
Purpose of the master plan	Steering and fitting together urban development projects	Discussing the future

Reforming of Land Use and Building Act

What happens to municipal planning and planning hierarchy, how many levels of municipal planning we will have in the future?

The role of city regions?