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## DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

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### **Bill No. 67 – The Community Planning Profession Act, 2012**

**Mr. Forbes:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 67, *An Act respecting Professional Community Planning in Saskatchewan* which is a very, very important piece of legislation and one that will meet the needs I understand of community planners in Saskatchewan and some of the updates. And I'd like to review that in a minute.

But I do think that it's important for us to take a minute and think about the good work that community planning does and community planners do in Saskatchewan. You know, in fact I just . . . It's interesting how important this really is, you know. I was at a meeting last week at the Bessborough in the city of Saskatoon. They were talking about infill housing and the impacts that all could have while we try to have the very best communities that we could possibly have throughout the province, in our cities, in our towns. But it's important that we have people who are properly trained, understand the challenges, understand the complexity of good community planning. And these are professionals; this isn't something hit or miss or something we do on the back of a notebook or a napkin. You really take some time to figure this out. And so it's really important that we have a community that has the respect for planners who build our towns and our cities and our province, you know.

And so this talks about that, and it meets their needs as a profession with integrity, that's self-regulating and has those challenges, but yet has both a national and a regional perspective so that they can practise their trade in other provinces, but also speaks to national membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners. So this is no small thing.

In fact, actually it's interesting, Mr. Speaker. This bill is quite lengthy. It's some 22 pages and has quite a lot of details as it's played out. But as I was saying, you know, it was funny. Last Thursday night after we had spent quite a week here in debate, I went back to Saskatoon. We had a public meeting about infill housing and the challenges of that, and whether garage suites or garden suites, granny suites . . . And I was amazed actually at

the turnout, the number of people who came out to have this discussion. There was probably 100, 150 people out at the Bessborough to hear what the city of Saskatoon had come out with. And of course, you know, it's a challenge when trying to develop new housing and new ideas in our communities. And there were lots of really good questions.

So planning isn't something that we should take for granted or always assume that whatever somebody comes up with will be accepted. It was interesting too. The planners were very welcoming in terms of ideas or things they hadn't thought of. But that's what makes planning the kind of profession it is. They are embracing ideas but applying their professional knowledge, and making sure that they don't become remote because in many ways it's a bit of an architectural type of design where you're dealing with a lot of numbers and a lot of guidelines, a lot of bylaws, and applying those in circumstances that you may not be familiar with. But it's something that we really need to appreciate. And when it goes wrong, it can go horribly wrong.

And we know of communities that have that barren, dull, stagnant feel because there hasn't been good planning in it. But we also know of communities that feel like they're vibrant and alive and that good work has gone into that. You know, again if you travel throughout the province, you see signs of that. I see signs of that in Saskatoon when I think about Riversdale and the kind of work that's gone into that in terms of planning and how to revive a community. And you can really see that while it's a slow growth, it's a definite growth. People are moving back there. Businesses are moving back there, and there's real hope in the community.

I can see it in Caswell where we hope the bus barns will be moved out to the suburbs and not in the inner city. They come with all sorts of problems where there's idling diesel or congestion around that two or three blocks. Come 7 o'clock, it's hard to even drive by because they're waiting to park the buses, or especially on cold winter mornings where they're warming the buses up. People are looking forward to seeing that those go. But what takes their place? And of course there's been a lot of community talk, a lot of community planning about what kind of developments do we want to see at the bottom of Caswell Hill. And of course it looks like it'll be a nice park, and of course there are challenges with that though because, you know, we have some real issues around making sure that it's a safe, healthy environment to build or to do new things. And so this is where the kind of work of a good community planner can come and do their stuff and work their trade.

And so we're very happy to see this kind of bill come forward because we think it's important in terms of developing the kind of professionalism we need in this province as it goes forward.

I'm going to take a minute and just review what the minister had to say. Of course it was introduced back in mid-November. He talks about repealing and replacing the old professional Act to update it with standards consistent with other self-regulated professions legislation in Saskatchewan. So that's important that we have these standards are consistent right across the board. And this is very important, especially when it talks about consequential amendments to *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, *The*

*Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act, Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors Act.* So that's important.

So what they're really doing is replacing the term professional community planner with registered professional planner. So they're taking out the word community and adding the word registered.

So other ones that the Association of Professional Community Planners called for include changing the name of the association to the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute. Again the word community is being lost, which is too bad, but also putting in the word registered, and creating a new image in terms of being an institute. So that's very, very good.

And it talks about — and apparently this is consistent with other associations across Canada — clarifies the composition and role of the association professional conduct and discipline committees. And I know that's critical when you're talking about a professional, self-regulating organization. There must be a way of having some way to maintain professional conduct. And if there's things when they do go wrong, that they will have a way of correcting them, and that's hugely important, and as well a way to discipline. So that's very, very important.

And it also talks about a requirement that the majority of members of the professional conduct and discipline committees are licensed members and enhance the disciplinary authority by allowing the committee to inform the employer found guilty of the professional misconduct or incompetence. I guess that makes a lot of sense and I think hopefully that's been well thought out, and maybe we'd ask about the circumstance of that in committee. If they hadn't told the employer before about the misconduct, that would be a huge oversight, I would assume, because clearly if you could think of some of the scenarios that might evolve if the employer didn't know of the misconduct . . . Then this is the work that they do and their work is very public. It's not an internal type of thing. So that's a huge thing.

So and again the Act fully complies with the labour mobility obligations under the Internal Trade and New West Partnership Agreement. Apparently, though, it had already done that.

And then a bit of a change with the members' association through the national association, CIP [Canadian Institute of Planners], instead of the University of Saskatchewan. And apparently the University of Saskatchewan agrees with that and feels that it's quite good. So that's good.

Now it does not establish the scope of practice of planners or restricting persons from calling themselves planners or requires that only members can do planning. It recognizes association or institute once the new Act is proclaimed. So that's an interesting part, the scope of practice of planners or people calling themselves planners or requiring that only members can do planning. So perhaps not quite as strong as some of the other professional organizations. I think that social workers are one that have that scope of

practice. Teachers I believe also have scope of practice. So I think that's hugely important. So I think that's critical. So we'll be asking more about that, if that's something that they see that we will at some point go back to.

So as they say, we'll continue to “. . . the government's practice to consult with . . . professions to refine and update legislation, ensuring it meets the needs of the profession, the association, and the public.” So that's good.

So as I go through the bill, I do have some questions about this because it does talk about, for example, that there will be two members of the public, so there's a public interest being served. And I think that's important. Of course you have to live in the . . . To belong to the council, you have to be a member who resides in Saskatchewan.

So public appointees: “The Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint two persons who reside in Saskatchewan as members of the council.” That's very important. And these people cannot be members. Their term is not longer than three years. And I think that makes some sense. And at least one of the members who are from the public will be part of the discipline committee. That's important because there's always this idea that it's a closed shop. And so I think that's important, maybe not so much in terms of the professionals conduct, but in terms of discipline, that's very significant.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that in many ways it's a good piece of legislation that we can support in general right now. I think we have questions for committee, and we would like to see it go to committee where we can actually do more questions and find out more details. I know members have spoke at length on this. And I think at this point I would move that we would move Bill No. 67, *An Act respecting Professional Community Planning in Saskatchewan* to committee. Thank you.