

# Ann L. Strong, City and Regional Planning

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Ann Strong

Ann Louise Strong, emeritus professor of city and regional planning, former department chair and former associate dean at the Graduate School of Fine Arts (now Weitzman School of Design) at the University of Pennsylvania, died peacefully in her home in Bryn Mawr on August 25. She was 89.

Ms. Strong graduated from Vassar College and Yale Law School, where she wrote her thesis on regional planning for New England. She came to Penn in 1960 at the recommendation of William Wheaton, a well-respected member of the city planning department's faculty, who suggested to the Fels Institute that she be hired to undertake a study of planning and zoning in the Philadelphia metro area. She began her career at Penn serving as a research associate and later associate director at Penn Law.

In 1963 she was appointed professor in the department of city and regional planning in the then Graduate School of Fine Arts (GSFA). Over her career of 30 years, her focus was principally in land use and environmental law policy. She taught several courses but was most well known for her course on environmental law, which was a requirement for Ian McHarg's Master of Regional Planning curriculum. She also held several administrative positions, chairing the planning department and serving as associate dean.

According to Weitzman School Dean Frederick Steiner, a former student of hers who had her as his thesis advisor, "She was a champion for using the law to advance decision making about environmental quality who devoted her career to teaching generations of planning students. She was an inspiring and rigorous teacher who employed the Socratic Method with the skill and wisdom of a conductor for a symphony orchestra... Term papers were reviewed with surgical precision."

Ms. Strong published six books, including *Private Property and the Public Interest*, *The Brandywine Experience* about her experience creating an innovative plan for the Brandywine Valley, and *Planned Urban Environments: Sweden, Finland, Israel, The Netherlands, France*, which influenced the new-community movement then popular in the US. Through *Land Banking: European Reality, American Prospect* and other works, she became an early pioneer of the purchase and transfer of development rights concept. Closer to home, she coedited *The Book of the School: 100 Years*, which serves as a sourcebook about GSFA and the people who defined it during its first century.

Ms. Strong published articles in planning journals and law reviews on topics such as open space preservation, growth management, eminent domain, national parks, conservation easements, wetlands conservation, and agricultural lands protection. She was active in both Europe and Asia and maintained strong relationships with planners internationally.

She served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Planning Literature* and as a reporter for *Land Use Law and Zoning* digest. She was active in numerous civic and professional organizations and a member of the boards of the Environmental Law Institute and the Environmental Defense Fund. She served on the Pennsylvania State Planning Commission and the Chester County Housing Authority (which she founded and chaired) in addition to other local and national boards.

In a 1993 article Dean Steiner wrote for the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, he noted that "Through her life's work, it is no overstatement to say she helped create the fields of environmental law and environmental planning."

She remained at Penn until her retirement in 1993, at which time she earned emeritus status. The Ann Louise Strong Leadership Award is given annually by the School to an MCP student for demonstrated leadership among their peers.

Ms. Strong is survived by her sons, Mark (Claire) and Christopher (Terri); grandchildren, Sam, Nick and Jessica; and three great-grandchildren. Donations in her memory may be made to the Weitzman School of Design Annual Fund at <https://tinyurl.com/y4xw82l2> (<https://tinyurl.com/y4xw82l2>) A Memorial will be held in the fall; information to come.