

Anne Lusk, Ph.D.

Anne Lusk is currently a Visiting Scientist at the Harvard School of Public Health and in September will be a Research Fellow at HSPH. As an NIH grant recipient, over the next three years she will compare ten highly frequented greenways with ten not highly frequented greenways to study the hypothesis that highly frequented greenways have destinations that serve human needs.

Dr. Lusk grew up overseas and in the United States as the daughter of a chemical engineer. She has twenty-five years experience as a writer, researcher, and lecturer on a variety of topics related to historic preservation and greenways/ multi-use paths.

In Stowe, Vermont, she was appointed by the Stowe Selectmen to be Chair of the restoration of the old Stowe High School, now the Stowe Library and Art Center. She also helped put 124 houses in Stowe on the National Register of Historic Places. She was the creator of the award-winning Stowe Recreation Path. Other projects in Stowe included the restoration of the Wade Meadow Barn on the events field and working for the Stowe Land Trust and the Stowe Conservation Commission on the acquisition of the 235 acre Mayo Farm that borders the village of Stowe. For three years, she tried to create a teaching farm on the Mayo Farm in what would have been the restored barns and farm house. In Stowe, she also ran a recycled computer program out of her house in which old computers were rebuilt and given to individuals without computers.

In Vermont, she helped found the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council and the Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition and served on a variety of state, county, and community transportation committees. She was a member of the Vermont Board of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, Vermont Recreation and Park Association, and Vermont Urban and Community Forestry program. In Vermont, she also created the organization Single Volunteers that, after being featured in TIME magazine, fostered Single Volunteer organizations worldwide.

Nationally, she was a Trustee with the National Recreation and Park Association, Chair of the NRPA Citizen Board Member Branch, and Vice Chair of American Trails. In 1989, she developed the concept of Safewalks, or inner city greenways; a Safewalk was built in Nashville, Tennessee, and multiple articles were written on the concept. For the Federal Highway Administration, she wrote Case Study #6 “Analysis of Successful Grassroots Movements Relating to Pedestrians and Bicycles and A Guide On How to Initiate A Successful Program.” She also bicycled 1000 miles from Boston to Washington, D.C. to explore the route for the East Coast Greenway.

Dr. Lusk earned a Ph.D. in Architecture at the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning with a major in Environment and Behavior and a minor in Urban Planning. Due to the lack of available tuition and stipend funding in architecture or urban planning, she approached the University of Michigan Center for Truck and Transit Research (UMTRI) and asked if funding could be provided for her to study bus and bus stops related to perceptions of crime. She obtained additional funding from the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority to conduct the research that involved surveys on four bus lines in Detroit and Ann Arbor and then 70 slides of bus features shown to 15 focus groups in four different cities. She presented the results to individuals with the Federal Transit Administration and they contracted with her to write the findings in a booklet. This research was useful to New Flyer in the redesign of their buses. She also proposed to FTA the hosting of a “Bus Design Competition” that was carried out by WestStart in California and The Cecil Group, Inc. in Boston.

Her dissertation research, that studied the six most preferred multi-use paths in the nation, demonstrated that people identify 3 to 4 destinations in a typical trip and these destinations have an average of 46 features, 8 activities, and 14 meanings. There are two types of destinations and these include “social-stop” destinations, where people rest or socialize, and “positive-identity pass-by” destinations, that serve as pleasurable goals in the landscape. “Social bridges,” or specific design elements in the built environment, also facilitate the building of social capital. “Prowess Plazas” are

“two-fers” or destinations that showcase healthy athleticism while also encouraging people to exercise to see the attraction; one example is the Rockefeller Plaza skating rink in New York City. Dr. Lusk has furthered her work on corridors and destinations through the concept of "Health Enterprise Zones" or dense collections of stores that serve needs and attract non-vehicular users and “Physical Activity Design” (PAD) which is an overlay to transit oriented development. She also helped oversee the Active Place Design Competition with the Environmental Design Research Association that resulted in new urban forms for physical activity. Through a grant from an anonymous foundation in the Boston area, she tested pilot products that enable physical activity in Arlington including stencils and signs for Safe Routes to School. For that grant, she also wrote a document with The Cecil Group, Inc. titled “Pushing the Design Boundaries.”

Dr. Lusk additionally holds a Masters in fashion design from Les Ecoles de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne from Paris, France, a Masters of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in Historic Preservation from the University of Vermont, and a Masters of Science in Architecture from the University of Michigan.