



APRIL/MAY 2005

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

The Grand Finale: Reflecting on “Reflections on New Urbanism.”

By Hartmut Gerdes

San Francisco’s second National Conference of the American Planning Association in little over a decade ended with a Bang: A Plenary Session entitled **New Urbanism Comes of Age/Reflections on New Urbanism**. You may remember that at the 1994 conference the emerging movement just managed to fill a room. In 2005, New Urbanism entered the inner sanctum of the planning profession.

While three space modules of the Moscone West Conference Center had been reserved for the event, the room’s long wall literally had to be moved out to accommodate another few hundred people beyond the 1,000 or so already seated. That caused the metaphor of

“taking down the walls” to be invoked by Daniel Solomon, one of the panelists, who, together with co-panelists Peter Calthorpe and Stefanos Polyzoides,

among others, was a co-founder of the Congress for New Urbanism.

What accounted for the overflow audience of mostly city planners? I might add that in the program’s Topic Index there were an additional 19 panels listed under New Urbanism, as were a series of topical Mobile Workshops.

While heading toward Sunday night’s opening party, a planner friend mused that, beyond everything the APA offers, it very much needed a physical manifestation of its members’ essence, a theme of sorts. Might the Plenary Session have borne out her point? Were conference visitors embracing a movement long on creativity, encompassing physical concepts and persuasive imagery as a counterpoint to several days of presentations

ranging from the weighty and process-oriented to the mundane and esoteric?

You may remember that in 1994 many folks not particularly familiar with urban design and architecture considered New Urbanism old hat at worst, and nothing more than good planning at best. That changed with the advent of Peter Katz’s landmark book, *The New Urbanism/Toward Architecture of Community*, published that same year. Fast forward to 2005: Had planners now come to honor, warts and all, what has been for the most part a real success story, still unfolding? Or does the holistic nature of the powerful movement simply fascinate professionals spending much of their lives in the trenches of political, zoning and other arcane regulatory battles, often without seeing their ideas and ideals taking shape?

One might argue that the seemingly renewed interest in the virtues of urban design—and of matching architectural design—among city planners is entirely plausible. New Urbanism may remind planners what they, too, set out to do, both in the second, third and fourth dimensions: To help shape well-functioning and attractive cities, towns and neighborhoods, and affect positive environmental and social change. In short, a desire to create livable communities that have the look and feel of places worth calling home.

Upon reflection, there may be a lesson here for the APA...

Hartmut Gerdes, AICP, is a San Francisco urban designer and founding principal of SQUARE ONE PRODUCTIONS. His firm uses still and video cameras and computers to create visual simulations, architectural renderings, walk-throughs and videos for the design, planning and engineering professions.

New Urbanism may remind planners what they, too, set out to do, both in the second, third and fourth dimensions . . .

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

by Hing Wong, AICP

would like to personally thank the hundreds of planners from throughout the Northern Section and the California Chapter that made the APA National Conference one of the best ever! Over 6,000 planners were present at the weeklong conference in March making it one of the best-attended National Planning Conference. Although the weather wasn't as cooperative, we can all be proud on how smooth the conference ran and for the hospitality we showed to our visitors and friends alike.

The **Local Host Party** at The City Club of San Francisco on Friday evening was a terrific venue to start the celebration and to open the conference. An original Diego Rivera mural graced the grand staircase between the two floors where hundreds of APA Leadership and local volunteers mingled. Rivera created his first U.S. fresco on the wall and ceiling in which the large figure represents "Califia", for whom the state is named.

The **Opening Reception** at the Fort Mason piers provided a nice location to view the downtown San Francisco skyline, Alcatraz Island, and Golden Gate Bridge. There was plenty of great food and drink to satisfy every planner in attendance. One pier enabled the party attendees to have more conducive conversations while the other pier contained the entertainment band and flowing margarita bars.

The three special evening events (**Beach Blanket Babylon**, **Wine Tasting Extravaganza**, and **Evening at the Empress**) proved to be favorites to all who attended. People were literally rolling on the floor at the antics of Beach Blanket Babylon and the players who wore those zany hats. Over one dozen wineries served at the elegant wine tasting event at Pier One, overlooking the Bay Bridge. Last but not least, a lion dance and a flag dance entertained the folks during the scrumptious Chinese dinner.

Each planner was given a Planner's Guide which highlighted things to do, places to see, restaurants to eat at in all parts of the Bay Area. The two orientation tour routes shuttled planners to various sections of the City or in other parts of the region showing them important planning issues. The 85 mobile workshops included a little of everything throughout the Bay Area.

The **Welcome Center** was well used with lots of info on the Bay Area plus general information on how to get around. The merchandise booth had some very unique items including the Civitas silk ties that sold out during the first day. But the entire conference wouldn't have been possible without the help of so many who dedicated hundreds of personal hours including those on the Steering Committee. We are also grateful

(continued on next page)

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

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The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the Northern News is the 16th day of the month prior to publication.

printed on recycled paper



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

(continued)

for the many sponsors who helped our Local Host Committee meet our financial goals.

The **Awards Banquet** is coming up next month. If you didn't have a chance to visit The City Club of San Francisco, this is your chance to see what is considered the best interior in the Art Deco style in San Francisco.

We are currently seeking to fill two positions on the Northern Section Board. Ann Welsh will be stepping down from the Newsletter Editor position in a few months and Jennifer Andersen has already left the International Director position. Thanks Jennifer and Ann for your many years of service to the Northern Section! If you are interested in either of these two positions, please contact me.



Regional Advisory Council

Attention Northern Section members:

The Northern Section's Regional Advisory Council (RAC) wants to hear from you! The RAC is comprised of seven members representing specific geographic areas within the Northern Section's boundaries whose goals include increasing member communications, providing more professional development activities, creating opportunities for advocacy, and expanding relationships with allied professional organizations. If you would like

to present a project you are working on, are interested in hosting an event, or would like to offer any suggestions regarding future APA activities, please contact the RAC representative in your area. RAC contact information is located on page 2 of this newsletter and is available on the Northern Section's website.

*-Wendy L. Tinsley, San Francisco Chair,
Regional Advisory Council*

Planners on the Move

David D. (Dave) Davis, AICP, has joined Winzler & Kelly's Santa Rosa office as Senior Planner in its CEQA Group. He can be reached at davedavis@w-and-k.com or (707) 523-1010.

Geof Goodfellow Is Retiring

Geof Goodfellow is retiring April 29th after 34 years of service as Director of Planning and Inspection for the City of Santa Clara. Geof has been a key member of the City's staff since 1971 and has been Director since 1984.

Since 1971, Geof has participated in the maturation of the City, with a population increase from 86,000 residents to 107,000 residents and an increase in local employment from 37,000 jobs to more than 110,000.

Geof was a key staff member in the development of the staff reports and the recommendations for the City's Bayshore North Redevelopment Plan in the early 1970's at a time when the California Environmental Quality Act was quite new and untested. He has provided leadership

in all the major City land use initiatives from Santa Clara's early General Plans, to the development of the Santa Clara Convention Center Complex and Great America Theme Park in the 1980's, to the recent Sun Microsystems campus and Rivermark mixed use housing and commercial development.

Geof has served as liaison, either directly or indirectly, to the City Planning Commission, Historical and Landmarks Commission, and Architectural Review Committee. He also spent many hours as a volunteer contributing as one of the authors of the City's history book, *A Place of Promise*, created to help celebrate the City's Sesquicentennial in 2002.

Geof has an undergraduate degree from Dartmouth and a graduate degree in Urban Planning from the University of California-Berkeley. The Northern Section wishes him well in his retirement.



Landscape Architect

The Planning Collaborative, Inc

The Planning Collaborative, Inc. is a professional planning, urban design and landscape architectural firm providing multi-disciplinary services to the public and private sectors since 1974. Our major areas of practice include: Land Planning and Development Services; Urban Design and Community Development; Waterfront, Environmental & Open Space Planning; Parks, Recreation, and Golf Course Facilities; and Landscape Architecture.

We are currently looking to add a talented Landscape Architect who will work with project director/manager in the design/production of conceptual, schematic and construction documents for land planning, urban design, parks and other projects.

Skill Requirements

Advanced CAD, computer graphics, writing and graphic skills essential.

Experience Requirements

Minimum 5-10 years experience in a broad range of construction documents, parks, plazas, streetscapes and various development projects in both the public and private sectors.

Education

BS in Landscape Architecture/Urban Design Required, MS Preferred. Must be licensed in the State of California.

Contact: Please email resume/work samples/salary requirements to jobs@tpcdesign.com or mail to 331 Jefferson St, Oakland, CA 94607. Attn: Alexandria Phillips, Business Manager

Senior Project Manager

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We are currently looking to add a new Senior Project Manager who will be responsible for management and marketing of public sector, urban design, land planning park and landscape architecture projects. Responsibilities include lead and proposal generation, client interface and project team management, budgetary and deliverables responsibility and public facilitation.

Skill Requirements

Project management, marketing, urban design/planning and site design. Exceptional writing and verbal skills are essential. Public speaking/meeting facilitation. Must be computer savvy with CAD experience desirable.

Experience Requirements

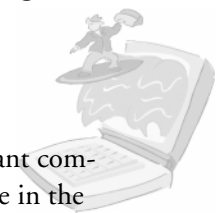
15-20 years minimum experience required, 10+ years as a senior project planner and urban designer with experience in downtown and waterfront urban design, parks and recreational facilities, land planning, master planned community development, Specific Plans, and CEQA. Demonstrated success in business development, managing project teams, deliverables, and budgets in both the private and public sectors and a record of effective working relationships with clients and regulatory agencies. Must have experience in the State of California.

Education

MS & BS in City and Regional Planning and Landscape Architecture or Architecture. Must be licensed in the State of California.

Contact: Please email resume/work samples/salary requirements to jobs@tpcdesign.com or mail to 331 Jefferson St, Oakland, CA 94607. Attn: Alexandria Phillips, Business Manager

Web Pick of the Month



Claritas.com

This web site provides an instant community profile for any zip code in the country. Claritas, which provides market and demographic data, can help cities' economic development officials to target markets. Their researchers are pinpointing who lives where; what they're most likely to read, drive and eat; how many kids they have; and where they shop. And they are doing it with unprecedented precision. They are going far beyond the characteristics of people in certain ZIP codes to details about people in specific neighborhoods—even individual households. Using the latest Census data and consumer research such companies are documenting the dynamic shifts in where and how Americans live.

Visit - <http://www.clusterbigip1.claritas.com>

Good News is No News

By Steve Matarazzo

"WE MUST NOT IN THE PUBLIC LIFE EXPECT IMMEDIATE APPROBATION AND IMMEDIATE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OUR SERVICE.... TIME WILL DO US JUSTICE IN THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE, EVEN THE MOST PREJUDICED AGAINST US."

—Benjamin Franklin

So many of us do a good job every day, and work for a legislative body that has its act together, that it seldom, if ever, gets noticed. It seems that bad news makes people feel fortunate they aren't in a similar situation and good news make us jealous—or at least, good news doesn't sell. Just a theory. Someday I'll take a journalism course to find out the real reason why good news gets very little press.

Some examples of this journalistic principle are evident within the local area in which I work. Several years ago I was part of a planning team that completed a comprehensive general plan update. The jurisdiction which was updating the general plan is well-known for land use controversy and a citizenry that is addicted to quality-of-

life issues. We had approximately 20 community meetings as part of the planning process. Our team completed the general plan update with a minimum of delay and within a very reasonable budget. It was unanimously supported by the legislative body with little community opposition and much support. And, as a result, the effort received very little press coverage. In contrast, there are numerous general plan efforts in process throughout the state that are over-budget, result in name-calling, and seem to be interminable. These processes, because of their sometime circus atmospheres, command mega-coverage.

You can be sure that when Mike Wallace and his camera crew come knocking on your door, it's not because you just created the best accessory housing ordinance and guidelines in the nation. (Way to go, Santa Cruz!) It's probably because people complained that it took too long to develop it.



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NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

May

- 1** Build It Green Home Tour, 11–5 pm, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, www.buildgreennow.org.
- 5** Northern Section Board Meeting, 1328 Mission St., 4th Fl., San Francisco at 6:30pm
- 6** San Jose State University, Perspectives in Planning, 12–1 pm, “Coyote Valley”, Associated Students House, San Jose State University
- 9–21** AICP Exam Testing Days
- 11–13** 2005 Legislative & Policy Conference, Washington, D.C.: <http://www.planning.org/legislation/2005policyconf.htm>
- 13** Bay Area Open Space Council, 7th Annual Conference, Golden Gate Club, Presidio of San Francisco. <http://www.openspacecouncil.org/>
- 20** Northern Section Awards Banquet at the City Club, San Francisco
- 20** CPF Workshop: Linking Water and Land Use, Sacramento <http://www.californiaplanningfoundation.org/>
- 21–22** Healthy Cities and Smart Growth Conference, Berkley <http://www.civicpartnerships.org/>
- 21–23** Annual AEP Conference, Sacramento. <http://www.califaep.org/>
- 23–24** California Forest Futures 2005, Sacramento Convention Center <http://nature.berkeley.edu/forestry/forestfuture/>

MAY

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