



APRIL/MAY 2006

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Dean Macris on SF Planning Department

Planning agencies go through cycles: some good years, some not so good, depending on leadership, competence of personnel, political support or just plain luck. A year ago San Francisco's Planning Department, proving no exception to the cyclical rule, reached bottom in a not-so-good cycle. The symptoms were of the ordinary nature: permit backlogs, stalled planning projects, diminishing staff esteem, loss of staff and professional credibility and—not to be overlooked—a rash of colorful criticism from various public officials.

Now that a year has passed since Mayor Newsom asked me to return for a period of time to help restore the Department's status, we are able to report a good deal of progress. A program is well underway to fill 22 staff vacancies and 11 new positions approved in the last budget cycle. By spring, hiring should be complete, raising our staff level to nearly 150 people. We are revamping our computer system and integrating it with the system used by the Department of Building Inspection. A consultant firm has been hired to reorganize our fee schedule. We are about to authorize a contract aimed at re-evaluating all Department and Planning Commission procedures, recognizing that, while this city is devoted to public process like none other, we need not forego certain practices that might improve our efficiency and effectiveness. One other significant administrative step is planned to strengthen management: the Department is scheduled to move its offices this spring to a new location. The move eliminates the current inefficiency of having staff in two offices several minutes apart.

Equally satisfying, our planning program has been resuscitated. A major accomplishment in recent weeks is a brand new plan for Rincon Hill, an area just south of downtown near the Giants ballpark. Its impact has been immediate. The first 400-foot residential

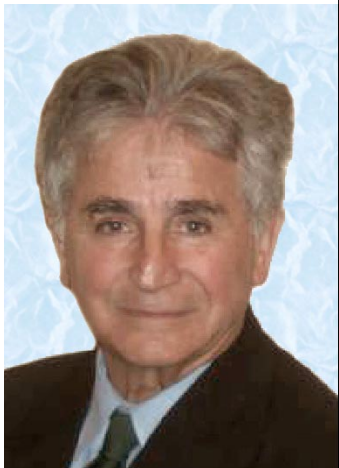
tower is under construction and more are nearing entitlement. The plan requires builders to transform local streets from their current commercial feel to a landscaped residential character. Other neighborhood plans are complete but await certification of a legally required environmental impact report. Renewed confidence in the Department is enabling new neighborhood planning projects to start in the coming year. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors have also made money available to begin selected updates to the General Plan.

There is plenty more to do in the coming months.

The City depends on the Department and Commission to sort out land use conflicts and to advance an optimum balance of development and preservation policies in order to maintain a vital and healthy City. In a nearly built out City, the Department must find ways to build more housing, to carry out policies that make new units more affordable, to protect buildings that should be preserved, to make way for emerging businesses and to do these things without threatening the loss of urban functions still essential to the city's prosperity. We of course maintain the General Plan, and undertake a continuous program to draft neighborhood plans. We review some 8,000 building permits annually for their conformance to zoning and to planning policies. We are continuously called upon to complete special assignments, modify the zoning code or to regulate—as the Board of Supervisors (our city council) sees fit—a surprising number of uses, such as the growing number of medical marijuana outlets in the City.

The San Francisco Planning Department has a legendary past. In 1971, with Allan Jacobs as Director, staff produced a still worthy

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Dean Macris, FAICP, served as San Francisco planning director from 1974 to 1976 and from 1980 to 1992 under three different San Francisco mayors: Joseph Alioto, Diane Feinstein, and Art Agnos. He retired from the planning department in 1992 and had been happily consulting for diverse clients. In 2004, Mayor Gavin Newsom called him back to San Francisco to serve as interim planning director. Recognizing the value the sage planner was again bringing to The City, Mayor Newsom made the appointment permanent. Mr. Macris wrote this article in January (reprinted by permission) for *Strategies*, APA's City Planning and Management Division's quarterly newsletter.

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Legislative Director

Kit Faubion, AICP (510) 808-2000 kfaubion@meyersnave.com

Membership Director

Christopher Wolf, MPA (415) 412-2672 membership@norcalapa.org

Newsletter Editors

Naphthali Knox, AICP (415) 699-7333 knoxnaph@gmail.com

Ryoko Furuichi (707) 795-4764 ryokof@csww2.com

Professional Development Director

Darcy Kremin, AICP (925) 906-1460 dkremin@rbf.com

Student Representatives

Adam Binstock (619) 757-4677 adamkbinstock@msn.com

Maureen Hickey (415) 205-1339 mchickey@berkeley.edu

University Liaison

Connie Galambos (510) 444-3041 cgalambos@rprogress.org

Website Coordinator

Pierce Macdonald (510) 459-6092 piercemac@hotmail.com

Regional Advisory Committees (RACs)

East Bay

position open

Monterey Bay

Michael Bethke, AICP (831) 425-5425 michael@slattcon.com

North Bay

Ladd Miyasaki (707) 935-3145 schellcreekfuyu@comcast.net

Peninsula

Andrea Ouse, AICP (650) 985-2590 aouse@mcaplanners.com

Redwood Coast

George Williamson, AICP (707) 825-8260 georgew@planwestpartners.com

San Francisco

Kenya Wheeler, AICP (415) 243-4736 wheelerk@pbworld.com

South Bay

Anthony Drummond (408) 535-4923 anthony.drummond@sanjoseca.gov

Newsletter Designer

Juliana Pennington (415) 824-4375 design@famsf.org
specializing in visuals for the planning and design professions



Juliana Pennington

Graphic Design
Technical Illustration
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE *by Hing Wong, AICP*

As we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1906 Earthquake, it's important to be prepared for another possible disaster that could take place at any time—"an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Following the 1906 earthquake, 225,000 people were homeless—more than half of San Francisco's population at the time. If the same number of people were left homeless in San Francisco today, more than one-third of the population would not have a place to live! Many events are planned for the remembrance of that historic occurrence including a weeklong conference at Moscone Center, April 18–22. <www.1906eqconf.org>

Northern Section is pleased to announce our sponsorship of three \$1,000 scholarships to be awarded to students attending planning programs in our region. One scholarship each will go to students in the UC Berkeley and San José State University planning programs. Apply by getting a California Planning Foundation (CPF) application through the university's planning department office. A third scholarship will go to a student at Humboldt State, San Francisco State, Sonoma State, or Stanford Universities. Planning program faculties at those schools will nominate students for the available scholarship. In addition, CPF awards a number of other scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

Wendy Tinsley, our East Bay RAC, and Ryoko Furuichi, Co-Newsletter Editor have moved out of the Bay Area. We'll miss them both. Wendy helped coordinate many RAC events including the Bruce Babbitt speaking engagement last fall. Ryoko coordinated the newsletter's job ads, calendar, and provided occasional artwork and design assistance. This means there are openings on our Board. If you are interested in organizing workshops and social events in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, and in soliciting and preparing items for Northern News, please contact me.

Nominations for this year's Awards Program have been received, and our jury is busy looking them over to see which ones deserve recognition. The Awards Program recognizes quality in planning (projects as well as people) and increases public awareness of the planning profession. Please mark Friday, June 9, on your calendar as the evening on which we'll celebrate good planning in the Northern Section at the Awards Reception.

California planners can attend APA conferences twice annually: the national conference in the spring and the state conference in the fall. Once every eight years, Northern Section has the opportunity to host the state conference as it rotates among the eight California Sections. The CCAPA Conference will come to San José in 2007. We're starting to plan for it, and the next organizational meeting will be April 29. If you are interested in being part of the steering committee, please contact Juan Borrelli at (408) 535-7709 or juan.borrelli@sanjoseca.gov

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

EDITORIAL

Naphthali H. Knox, AICP
TEL: (415) 699-7333

Ryoko Furuichi
TEL: (707) 795-4764
FAX: (707) 795-0516

ADVERTISING/JOBS

Marta Self, AICP
TEL: (925) 988-9188

e-mail:
mself@williamself.com

ADDRESS CHANGES

Membership Department
APA National Hqtrs.
122 South Michigan Ave.
Ste. 1600
Chicago, IL 60603-6107
312/431-9100

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

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CCAPA Board nominations due

Nominations for the State APA board are being accepted through April 30 for three positions:

- **Vice President for Policy and Legislation**
- **Vice President for Professional Development**

Those elected will serve two-year terms beginning January 1, 2007. CCAPA is seeking qualified candidates who represent the diversity of planners practicing in California. If you would like more information or would like to submit a nomination, please call or write Vince Bertoni, AICP, Nominations Committee Chair, (310) 285-1123 or vbortoni@beverlyhills.org.

Excerpts of duties:

Vice President for Policy and Legislation

- develop positions on legislation relating to APA's mission;
- seek input from members on State policy and legislation;
- determine planning issues that require State legislation;

- organize actions to support CCAPA positions;
- serve as liaison between CCAPA legislative program and national APA's government affairs program;
- conduct an annual legislative workshop;
- assist the Chapter legislative advocate in conducting four legislative review program meetings per year.

Vice President for Professional Development

- promote professional development and continuing education;
- serve as a Director of the California Planning Foundation;
- coordinate activities of the Section Professional Development Officers, including preparations for the AICP exam;
- liaison with university and college planning departments and professional organizations;
- conduct an AICP exam session at the State conference;
- conduct annual meetings with Section Professional Development Officers;
- coordinate the Continuing Professional Development Program for California AICP members;

- coordinate implementation of the CCAPA Voluntary Continuing Education Program;
- liaison with AICP Commission and National Planning Accreditation Board.

Planning Commission Representative

- reflect planning officials' perspectives on planning issues, at the Board and at the annual CCAPA conference;
- increase planning commissioner participation in APA and CCAPA and develop a more complete set of tasks centered around planning commissioner involvement;
- implement the goals of CCAPA's mission statement regarding fundamental tenets and strategies for membership development and diversity.

Where in the world? *By Chandler Lee, AICP*



Answer on page 6

What APA is doing about diversity

By Michele Rodriguez, AICP, Planning Diversity Ambassador Program Director, Northern Section

Principal planner Michele Rodriguez managed the Marin County community planning division. She was instrumental in the Latinos and Planning workshops held throughout the country and in creating APA's Latinos and Planning Division. The NSCCAPA board appointed Michele its Planning Ambassador.



The American Planning Association recognizes the need for its members to better represent the ethnicity of the US population and is aligning its recruiting and outreach techniques accordingly.

In 2004, APA president Mary Kay Peck appointed a 15-member task force and charged it with convening a 2005 Diversity Summit to develop concrete ways for APA to attract, retain, and better serve minority members. (While only 69.1 percent of the US population is White non-Hispanic, 79.4 percent of APA and AICP members are White non-Hispanic. Hispanics are only 2.1 percent of the APA/AICP membership, but 12.5 percent of the country's population. The trend in the next 30 years is a significant increase in minority populations, particularly Latinos.)

The 2004 Diversity Task Force recommendation fell into five categories: outreach, education, inclusiveness/accountability, recognition, and planning topics. One of the task force recommendations now underway falls in the outreach category: Create an Ambassador's program to recruit minority members.

The various efforts were reviewed at the 2005 Diversity Summit held as part of the APA National Conference in San Francisco. Concerns were expressed about the slow progress being made. However, the recently completed APA biennial Development Plan (2006-2007) outlines new initiatives and priorities and offers some hope for diversity. Of seven goals for the biennial period, three relate to minority membership.

Based on the three biennial goals, David Salazar, Jeanette Dinwiddie-Moore and I wrote a Minority Inclusion Proposal to lay out for California Chapter APA the importance of recruiting, supporting, and retaining

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Onward and upward

Moore Iacofano Goltsman (MIG), Berkeley, has joined forces with Fullerton-based landscape architecture, park and recreation planning firm **Purkiss Rose-RSI**. This gives MIG capabilities in landscape architecture and an expanded Southern California base. MIG is a multi-disciplinary planning, design, management and communications firm founded in 1981. Purkiss Rose-RSI, founded over 40 years ago, specializes in the design of sports and skate parks.

Northern News Co-editor **Ryoko Furuichi** returned to Japan near the end of March. She had worked for CSW/Stuber-Stroeh

Engineering Group, Inc., of Novato, Petaluma, and Sacramento, for three-and-a-half years. Ryoko was neither educated nor worked in city planning in Japan before coming here. She graduated from a junior college in Japan, majoring in English, and transferred to Sonoma State University. There she majored in environmental studies and planning. Ryoko wants to pursue a career in planning, and hopes to find a job in Japan in a field similar to urban planning, although the system there is quite different. She plans to continue her APA membership, and hopes to take the AICP exam next year. We wish you good fortune, Ryoko!



Diversity

(continued from page 4)

people of color in the planning profession. We outlined three specific programs to address these issues, one of which is the Planning Ambassador Program.

The Ambassador Program would be established in each of the chapter's eight sections and be shepherded by a 12 to 13-person steering committee made up of planners of color, planning directors, student representatives and others. The committee would meet regularly to:

- Develop a pool of mentors in senior level planning positions who are sensitive to diversity issues and committed to mentoring an up-and-coming planner of color for two years.
- Sponsor Planning Ambassador events at the annual CCAPA State Conference.
- Hold a statewide meeting of all eight sections' steering committees to share accomplishments, ideas, and best practices.

- Host social gatherings and activities to recruit new participants.
- Coordinate each section's annual CCAPA Diversity Award nominations.

The CCAPA Board decided at its February 2006 meeting that diversity in its membership was important. The board created a new Planning Diversity Ambassador Program Director position to coordinate and implement the Ambassador Program proposal. I'm seeking planners within the Northern Section who would like to refine and implement the Ambassador Program at the chapter level.

The group will form in the spring. If you are interested in participating in this important effort, please contact me, Michele Rodriguez, at 415-269-6399 or Michele@boggis.com



In memorium

Richard Ives, AICP, died March 20 in Portola Valley, succumbing to Parkinson's Disease at age 95. From 1955-61, Dick was the federal government's planner in San Francisco as HUD Regional Director for Urban Renewal for the 11 western states, Alaska, and Hawaii.

A 1935 graduate of the University of Michigan, Dick received his master of landscape design in 1936. His first job (for the US Suburban Resettlement Administration) took him to Greenhills, Ohio, north of Cincinnati, where he was town planner for one of three "greenbelt communities" built by the federal government in the 1930s. The original government-

built area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mr. Ives worked for Harland Bartholomew in St. Louis, 1938-39. From 1939-41, he was director of regional planning for the Tennessee State Planning Commission, and the first professional planner in the state. He worked for HHFA (later HUD) from 1950-71, moving in 1961 to Washington, DC, as Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Urban Planning, and concluding his career at age 59 as Director of the Neighborhood Program Division.

Richard is survived by Lillian Ives, his wife of 64 years.

Answer to "Where in the world": Ferry Building, San Francisco



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of the American Planning Association
is pleased to present:

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES IN PLANNING 2006 SPEAKER SERIES



Friday, April 7th

**Planning an International Career? A Conversation
with a Practitioner on Options and Opportunities**

Myles Ellridge, RTI International

San Jose State University, King Library, Room 229A

150 E. San Fernando, San Jose

12-1:30 PM



Friday, April 14th

Towards a Communitarian Municipality:

A Method of Participatory Planning in Soacha, Colombia

Maria Elena, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia

San Jose State University, King Library, Room 229A

150 E. San Fernando, San Jose

12-1:30 PM



Thursday, April 20th

Discourse on Urban Planning in China:

Private & Public Perspectives

Stephen Engblom, EDAW

Liya Hu, Former Chief Planner, Jiangsu City, China

San Jose City Hall, Community Rooms 118 & 119

200 E. Santa Clara Street, San Jose

6-7:30 PM

Refreshments & light meals provided at all events. The events are free, but \$5 donations are encouraged.

For more information regarding this speaker series, please contact Rob Eastwood at (408)299-5792 or rob.eastwood@pln.sccgov.org or Katja Irvin at katja.irvin@sbcglobal.net

Further information is available on the Northern Section website at www.norcalapa.org

NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

April

7, 14 & 20 International Perspectives in Planning, 2006 Speaker Series, co-sponsored by Northern Section and UPC, San Jose State University. See insert for more information.

22–26 APA 2006 National Planning Conference, San Antonio, Texas. Visit www.planning.org/2006conference for information.

23–26 CALED's 26th Annual Conference & Spring Training, "California—A Great Place to be in Business!?" in Palm Springs. Visit www.caled.org/02_conference.shtml for information.

May

4 Northern Section Board meeting, 6:30 PM; location to be announced.

8–22 AICP Exam testing days.

June

9 Northern Section Awards Banquet at Scott's Seafood, Jack London Square.

24–28 Society for Conservation Biology 20th Annual Meeting, "Conservation Without Borders" in San Jose. Visit www.conbio.org/2006/Index.cfm for details.

APRIL

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