



Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2005

Cities get makeovers

Beth Winegarner, Daily News Staff Writer

More than a decade ago, Mountain View adopted a downtown revitalization plan that has paid off so handsomely that the city has outgrown and rewritten the plan.

Revitalization is now the word of the day in Redwood City, which is currently developing guidelines for downtown redevelopment—guidelines that include denser retail, an arts district and apartment buildings up to 12 stories.

One man links the two downtowns: Michael Freedman.

Freedman is a founding member of the San Francisco-based consulting firm Freedman, Tung and Bottomley. The firm's resume includes a number of Bay Area cities: Livermore, San Jose, San Bruno, Oakland,

Emeryville.

Redwood City Redevelopment Agency Director Susan Moeller met Freedman more than 15 years ago when she

was working for the city of San Leandro and he was drafting its revitalization plan. They teamed up again in Hayward on the city's Civic Center/BART master plan, and later during downtown redevelopment in Cathedral City, in Southern California.

"I was struck by how much he knew about downtowns, and by his ability to communicate with the community," Moeller said. "In every city, he's been able to make that connection—and what he says makes sense."

In the early 1980s, Freedman designed a new streetscape for Castro Street, Mountain View's retail corridor, proposing new lights, trees, and other improvements to make the street friendlier to visitors and shoppers. That

design was part of what made Castro Street so successful, according to Elaine Costello, the city's community development director.

"He was directly involved in the design of the revitalized Castro Street," said City Manager Kevin Duggan. "His designs have been well received and we're pleased with the results."

San Mateo is currently in the process of making Freedman, Tung and Bottomley's designs a reality along Third and Fourth Avenues, in an area near the CalTrain station. There, bulb-outs, new trees, better lighting, and fresh sidewalks will make for a more pedestrian-friendly experience, according to city engineer Otis Chan.

The city made similar changes along Main Street and Railroad Avenue, and so far public response has been positive, said San Mateo Planning Director Ron Munekawa.

Freedman dreamed big when he helped the city of East Palo Alto with a major urban design plan, aimed at helping the city shed its lackluster reputation.

Those designs were created about five years ago, and East Palo Alto is putting them into practice on a project-by-project basis, according to Carlos Martinez, the city's economic development and redevelopment manager. The City Council recently approved two 50-unit housing sites, one with dozens of townhomes, and has given the green light to development of 60,000 square feet of industrial space.

Developers were chomping at the bit to build in East Palo Alto following Freedman's design process, according to media reports.

"Personally, I think it's good work," Martinez said.

Just as Freedman is no stranger to the peninsula, he is no stranger to Redwood City. His

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Freedman dreamed big when he helped the city of East Palo Alto with a major urban design plan...

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE *by Hing Wong, AICP*

The disaster in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast revealed many flaws in government's response. From the federal government on down, the relief effort proved inadequate and excruciatingly slow. Naturally, certain aspects of the calamity are beyond human control or intervention, but many lives might have been saved if the response had come more quickly. There will be years of finger pointing and fault finding, but is Northern California any more prepared for a natural or human-made disaster?

Early in 2001, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) said the three most likely catastrophic disasters facing this country are a terrorist attack on New York City, an enormous hurricane striking New Orleans, and a massive earthquake in San Francisco. Now that two of the three have come true, is the third just around the corner? How prepared are we as a region to deal with catastrophe? Do we have disaster plans in place, and are there steps to follow up to make sure that the planned responses are accomplished? As planners, we should ensure not only that the public is conscious of the dangers that face our communities, but that we can respond quickly and effectively to those threats.

CPF's annual auction during the California Chapter APA Conference in Yosemite will raise money for next year's scholarships. For information on the auction or how to become a Friend of CPF, please contact me.

Northern Section Board has drafted revised Bylaws. A major revision is a change in the position of "Director Pro Tem" to "Director Elect" for a smoother transition into the Section Director position and improved continuity. The "Director Pro Tem" is an elected position, as will be the "Director Elect." After two years, the Director Elect will become the Section Director. This system has worked well in other sections and on the California Chapter Board.

The draft Bylaws can be viewed on our website, www.norcalapa.org. Bylaw changes require a two-thirds vote of the Section Board. The Board will meet on Thursday, November 10, at 6:30 pm, at ABAG, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland. APA members are always welcome. Written comments are invited, and should be sent no later than November 9, to all four members of the Bylaws Committee:

Juan Borrelli, juan.borrelli@sanjoseca.gov; Anthony Drummond, anthony.drummond@sanjoseca.gov; Jerry Haag, jphaag@pacbell.net; and me, Hing Wong, hingw@abag.ca.gov.

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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.

San José to host 2007 State APA Conference

Congratulations to three Northern Section students who received California Planning Foundation (CPF) scholarships this year.



Matthew Davis for CPF Outstanding Student (Runner-up Award);



Maureen Hickey for CPF Outstanding Student (Runner-up Award);



and Rosalyn Stewart for Northern Section Award. All three are in the planning program at UC Berkeley (DCRP).



Over a thousand professional planners, planning commissioners, and planning students from across the state will soon have San José as their destination. San José was recently selected by the California Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) to host its annual planning conference in 2007.

CCAPA's mission is to bring together Californians who work in or are interested in planning issues to forge a better future. Participants at the annual conference will discuss, debate, highlight, evaluate, and praise achievements within all areas of city, regional, and state planning.

San José is the largest city in Silicon Valley, the tenth largest city in the country, and a unique locus of innovation and entrepreneurial success. The conference will showcase the city's new city hall designed by architect Richard Meier and other unique, progressive, and award-winning approaches to planning and urban design in Northern California.

If you are interested in joining the Conference Planning Steering Committee to plan the 2007 CCAPA Conference, or if you are interested in volunteering to assist during the conference, please contact NSCCAPA Director Pro-Tem Juan Borrelli, AICP, at juan.borrelli@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-7709.



San Jose skyline
San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau

Our AICP Commissioner to run LA Planning

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa appointed Mark Winogron, FAICP, interim planning director on September 16. Winogron, who is the AICP Commissioner for California and Nevada, has his own planning consulting firm and expects to serve only a short time. His clients have exclusively been public agencies and academic institutions, including the UC system, Claremont Colleges, and the cities of Long Beach and Malibu.

Winogron previously served as community development director and chief

administrative officer for Culver City, and he worked in Lawndale, West Hollywood, and San Francisco. Since 1989, he has taught the Planning and Zoning Law Clinic for UC extension in Los Angeles and Berkeley.

According to *The Planning Report*, one of Winogron's "deepest concerns is the enforced abdication of the planning role to permit processor," and he has helped planning departments achieve a greater role in establishing a vision for the future of their cities.

Cities...

(continued from page 1)

first local design work resulted in the clock tower at Broadway and El Camino Real, one of the city's few guideposts marking the edge of its downtown.

Since then, he's created blueprints for the streetscape next to the new retail-cinema site now under construction, designed the new plaza at the 1910 County Courthouse, and is now tackling the city's downtown precise plan, which will guide future development in the region.

That plan closely matches the work he did in Cathedral City, where he recommended bringing in a catalyst to attract investors. In that city's case, an IMAX theater, followed by a multiplex, a new city hall and town square, and a spectacular fountain did the trick, Moeller said.

"Sometimes translating plans from paper to reality, you lose some things," Moeller said. "Freedman's consultants were the guardians to make sure the design got built as designed."

Attention like that is what it takes to make a revitalization plan a success, said Mountain View's Costello. Improving the look of Castro Street didn't bring about immediate results—it took a number of efforts, including bringing housing downtown, before the area began to thrive.

"Mountain View's success really has been the result of efforts over the last 10 years," Costello said. "There isn't going to be any precise plan that will transform (a place). It's got to be an ongoing effort to revise things to respond to changing conditions."



Clocktower, Redwood City
DAILY NEWS photo by Victor Maccharoli



It's your newsletter...

We'd like to hear what you like or dislike about *Northern News*. Is there something we should try to include regularly or occasionally?

We solicit your articles on planning and related subjects. Letters to the editors are always welcome.

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Serving the environmental, planning, engineering, building and safety, and other municipal needs of cities, counties, and special districts since 1995, Pacific Municipal Consultants (PMC), a growing municipal consulting firm, enters its second decade as a recognized leader in the field of contract municipal services. Enhanced by broad experience and over 180 professionals located throughout California and Arizona, our multi-disciplinary consulting firm brings a local perspective to important community issues. We are seeking professionals with all levels of experience to provide services in any of the following areas throughout California and Arizona:

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Advance planners to assist with the preparation of General Plans, Specific Plans, zoning code updates, design guidelines and habitat and

tree preservation ordinances. Familiarity with California planning and zoning laws as well as CEQA required.

Housing Analyst/planners to help prepare housing elements, consolidated plans and housing/community development programs (CDBG, HOME, Housing Trust Funds) as well as redevelopment planning and implementation activities.

Environmental Planners and Natural Resource Specialists to develop technical sections for and manage preparation of EIRs, ISs, MNDs and other environmental studies to meet the requirements of CEQA and/or NEPA for development, transportation, and natural resource projects.

We're also looking for people who have experience with field monitoring activities, data collection and conducting impact analyses associated with related environmental projects.

PMC offers its employees an extensive benefits package including but not limited to: Medical, Dental, Vision, Life, Long Term Disability insurance, Paid Time Off, Paid Holidays, Section 125 spending plans, 401(k) with employer match, 529 College Savings Plan, bonus programs, flexible work schedules & and endless opportunities in our growing company. EOE

Please submit resume and letter of interest to:

careers@pacificmunicipal.com

www.planning.org/katrina

Visit the APA website for information on how to assist with Hurricane Katrina relief, resettlement, and rebuilding efforts.

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- **Urban Designer**—San Jose, CA or Sacramento, CA

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Napa County general plan update

Napa County Planning Director Hillary Gitelman and Pacific Municipal Consultants (PMC) President Phil Carter announced September 12 that PMC has been selected to assist staff in updating the Napa County General Plan.

PMC will facilitate Steering Committee meetings, draft General Plan elements, finalize the General Plan, prepare the Environmental Impact Report, and facilitate public information and hearings.

The Napa County General Plan has not been comprehensively updated since 1983. The process is expected to take several years, with substantial opportunity for public input and participation along the way.

Save the Date: November 16, 2005

Placemaking on a Budget

The East Bay Regional Advisory Council invites all Northern Section planners and interested members of the public to "Placemaking on a Budget," a free professional development seminar on Wednesday evening, November 16, 2005. Authors Al Zelinka and Susan Jackson will present and discuss their new book, *Placemaking on a Budget: Improving Small Towns, Neighborhoods, and Downtowns Without Spending A Lot of Money*.

The seminar place and time will be announced by mid-October. Attendees will be credited for the AICP Continuing Professional Development Program.

Placemaking is the process of adding value and meaning to the public realm

GIS Day 2005

Have you applied GIS to recent projects and programs in an innovative way? Then please volunteer to give a presentation at GIS Day.

The Bay Area Automated Mapping Association (BAAMA) and the new Geospatial Imaging and Informatics Facility at UC Berkeley are hosting GIS Day 2005 at Mulford Hall, November 16. GIS users will showcase real-world applications to increase awareness and understanding of GIS among schools, businesses, and the general public. GIS Day is a day-long event, with the morning session dedicated to K-12, the early afternoon session to higher education, and the late afternoon session to the professional community.

Information: <http://www.baama.org/meetings/flyers/GISDay2005.pdf>

Contact: Karin Tuxen, karin@nature.berkeley.edu or (510) 642-8322

through community-based revitalization projects rooted in local values, history, culture, and natural environment.

The book has two premises: One, it is possible, through the public realm, to enhance community identity and increase connections among people and between people. Two, the adage "time is money" can work in reverse—time invested in identifying placemaking projects will bring ideas to life, bring money and other resources to the community, and make a difference.

The seminar and book aim to provide planners, designers, and citizens with a practical guide to the making of places.

For information and reservations, contact Darcy Kremin, dkremin@rbf.com, or (925) 906-1460 x132.

Waiting for email answers?

Ladd Miyasaki, Associate Planner, Chris Joseph & Associates, Petaluma

Not getting timely email responses inspired me to research the web on the “dos and don’ts” of emailing. One search produced 2,420,000 hits for email etiquette, 5,630,000 hits for manners, and 18,100,000 hits on formal writing. There must be some importance to these subjects, else why would so many people want to say something about them?

Emails facilitate the way we communicate. Email has become an important tool for business, education, and social and personal purposes. It’s delivered to a mailbox to be read and reply at one’s convenience. Emails are quick and easy, and usually are less intrusive than a phone call. While there is no common agreement or specific rule governing emails, they should follow the principles of courtesy, ethics and respect. Here are some recommendations:

Do:

- Have a descriptive subject line, so a glance can describe the message.
- Apply the rules of formal writing.
- Adhere to guidelines for business correspondence.
- Use proper spelling and grammar as you would in a letter.
- Use citations if cutting & pasting.
- Be brief—brevity makes for easier reading and sending.
- Forgive small mistakes from others, but don’t make any yourself.
- Avoid HTML; not everyone is at high-speed.

- Remember that emails are not confidential.
- Use bcc so as not to divulge—and lengthen the email with—a long list of others’ email addresses.
- Reply promptly.
- Use “auto reply” if away for a long period.
- Keep your website updated.

Don’t:

- Don’t use slang or foul language.
- Don’t expect instantaneous replies to your email.
- Don’t push—people are busy and receive a lot of email.
- Don’t use attachments unless you first contact the recipient.
- Don’t use lengthy signatures.
- Don’t ramble—but sometimes long emails are necessary.
- Don’t take emails verbatim; it’s too easy to assume the wrong tone.

Comparing greeting cards with emailing can demonstrate acceptable behavior. Some people sign only their names to a preprinted greeting card; others prefer to personalize. We have in email the ability to cut-and-paste, but it boils down to putting words together in a way they can easily be understood. We should all use and expect common sense, politeness, correct grammar and spelling, good manners, and respect in our email.



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NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

October

- 20** Health By Design, Sacramento Convention Center. For details visit www.healthbydesignconference.org
- 30-Nov. 2** CCAPA 2005 Conference at Yosemite. For information contact Lynne C. Bynder, CMP, lbynder@dc.rr.com, or visit www.calapa.org

November

- 7-19** AICP Exam Testing Days
- 10** Northern Section Board Meeting, 6:30 pm, at ABAG
- 16** East Bay RAC presents "Placemaking on a Budget," place and time TBA. Contact Darcy Kremin, dkremin@rbf.com, or (925) 906-1460 x132 for information and reservations.
- 16** GIS Day 2005, hosted by BAAMA and the new GIIF at UC Berkeley. For details see www.baama.org/meetings/flyers/GISDay2005.pdf

December

- 2** NSCCAPA Holiday Party (a joint party with AEP-SF) at FLUID Ultra Lounge in San Francisco. See insert for information and reservations.

OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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