



Reviving Investment in Transportation and Infrastructure in America

[watch?v=sUtS52lqL5w&feature=g-logo-xit](#)

The Northern Section was well represented at the annual [APA L'Enfant Lecture on City Planning and Design](#) held in San Francisco this year. In attendance were Board Director Hanson Hom, and Board members, Justin Meek, Naphtali Knox, and Scott Davidson, and Sustainability Committee co-chair, Scott Edmondson. (*text continues below the slides*).

APA Executive Director and CEO Paul Farmer, FAICP, introduced Marilyn Taylor, who became dean of [The School of Design](#) at the University of Pennsylvania in October 2008 after a long, distinguished, and creative career practicing as an architect and urban designer at Skidmore Owings & Merrill.

Marilyn Taylor delivered a rich, provocative tour-de-force on the future of an evolving world and an evolving profession at a moment of epochal historic change and challenge. Her lecture was entitled Planning, Policy, and Poetics: Reviving Investment in Transportation and Infrastructure in America.

A few key insights include transportation infrastructural investment (read Northeast High Speed Rail Corridor) as an economy-transformer! Add sustainability to the mix and you have infrastructure as a platform for prosperity, not simply the backroom, behind the scenes piping in which no one really wants to invest.

In the "Poetics" section of the lecture, she referenced the U. Penn Landscape ["Terrain of Water" Symposium](#) and made related points about the emerging design challenges and responses to blurring edges of practice and the fluidity of issues understood well. The resulting design challenge is for which moment(s) does one design: water as a drop, as a flow, as a solid, or all three. Do solutions shift from containing flood flow to accommodating flood plains with compatible multiple uses? These simple examples do not do the lecture justice, and she illustrated the increasing fluidity of design challenges and solutions in a range of other topical areas. I highly recommend checking out the U Penn Design School and the Water Symposium. The Design School seems to be a hot bed of educational and design creativity if Dean Taylor and her provocative lecture are any indication.