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APA Northern Section Newsletter
 american planning association
 california chapter

NOVEMBER MEETING

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American Planning Association (APA)
 California Chapter
 Northern Section

TOPIC: Legislative Coordination: how do we do it?
 Wednesday, November 18, 1981

Panelists:

- Sandy ^e George, Winner Wagner Associates
- Janet ^{Ruggiero} Ruggiero, City of Woodland, Community Development Department
- John Rowden, State of California Solid Waste Management Board

THE GOOD TABLE RESTAURANT
 2600 Bancroft Avenue
 Berkeley, California

No-host bar	6:00 - 7:00	Reserve Now
Dinner	7:00 - 8:00	
Discussion	8:00 - 10:00	➔ Send \$11 to:

Lamphier and Associates
 853 York Street
 Oakland, CA 94610

➔ RESERVATION DEADLINE: November 13, 1981

APA DINNER NOVEMBER 18, 1981

Name _____ Number in Party _____
 Amount Enclosed \$ _____
 Address _____
 City, State, other _____ Zip _____

UPCOMING: TIME MANAGEMENT SEMINAR

Bay Area Women Planners will sponsor a seminar on "time management", to be held January 23rd, 1981. The seminar leader will be Odette Pollard. Ms. Pollard notes that planners, by profession, develop public policies and goals in a logical, step-by-step manner. However, she observes, sometimes we forget our own personal goal-setting process. This upcoming workshop is designed to deal with the personal use of time, and will use group participation and problem-solving exercises. We will learn how to gain maximum return on our use of time. The January/February newsletter will contain additional details.

HOLIDAY PARTY SET

Ho Ho Ho, it's
 Music!
 Cash bar!
 Hors d'ouerves!

Mark your calenders for December 12th and break out the good cheer. The APA's annual Holiday Party will run from 6 to 9 pm at the Four Seasons Clift Hotel in San Francisco (located at 410 Geary and Taylor). Guests are more than welcome. The charge is \$6.00 per person and \$10.00 for couples in advance; \$7.50 per person after December 1st. Checks must be made payable to the American Planning Association, and sent to: Maria Markham, 700 Mason Street, Apt. 7, San Francisco, 94108. More details will be forthcoming.

WELLSPRINGS

Planning Information Resources
reviewed by Keith J. Anderson

PROLEGOMENON: The goal of this column is to provide information in an entertaining manner about our planning library resources so that through praise (and increased patronage) they may be preserved and their growth promoted. Like our groundwater, without our concerned attention they will not be available for our future use.

Some of the "guided tours" presented under this heading have previously been printed in my "Access Meccas" column in "Bay Echo", the newsletter of the AEP Bay Area Chapter. Nominations for future reviews will be warmly received, as will suggestions for reprinting these essays in other newsletters.

M.T.C.'s AUTOMATED DATA LIBRARY (ADLIB)

A shining example of the realization of the potential of coordinating information resources in a network is to be found in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's ADLIB data base. By working together and sharing document and information resources, the quality of research will grow while costs are kept down.

Begun a few years ago as a joint venture between ABAG and MTC, this off-line system for accessing documents related to Bay Area planning contains more than transportation-related information resources; ADLIB includes citations of ABAG's collection that is now under the management of MTC. The diversity of information media covered by the system includes books, reports, documents, computer tapes and tabulations and maps.

ADLIB is continually being expanded to list more new documents and holdings of other libraries. Currently, resources are being shared between the combined ABAG/MTC Library and the other member libraries at A.C. Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Muni and BART.

This bibliographic data base (adapted from Boeing's Inquire Program) can be assessed by author, title or subject to locate desired information. Each citation will disclose the various sites having each document, the classification number used by each library (as some member libraries maintain independent classification systems), date of publication, and a matrix of key word descriptors.

There are three major means for access to these resources: satellite computer terminals, a book catalog and a newsletter. The data base may be searched from terminals at member libraries; printing a list of references in response to your inquiry only takes a few minutes. Every two months the system generates an updated edition of their book catalog of combined resources; this catalog can be used to locate specific titles or as a guide to the organization of uncatalogued transportation and planning document collections.

MTC issues a newsletter every two months that is aptly titled "MTC Information Resource News." This regular update of the system's growth presents brief overviews of new additions that are of particular importance and of new services and programs being developed by these laudable information managers.

The bibliography of new acquisitions in the system (presented by subject) will give you very good examples of their bibliographic data citation format that with economy of space presents a wealth of information.

The site of this data base is the MTC Library, located in the Hotel Claremont in Berkeley. Access to their 7,000 volume collection is available on weekdays (closed holidays); study space is open to serious researchers (citizens, consultants and public transit planners) who are concerned with the quality of transportation planning. Dian Gilmar and the other members of the MTC Library team are most willing to assist you with your research; to contact for information or for a subscription to their newsletter, call 849-3223.

Praise (and our patronage) can direct the growth of our library resources. This system and these libraries are worthy of commendation for their work of maximizing access to information resources. Transit operators should be encouraged to continue to establish and maintain order in their libraries. And indeed acclaim is due the values and wisdom of our transit directors, commissioners and librarians alike; they have realized a system for controlling costs while improving the quality of planning research support.

Broader vistas are to be seen from this vantage point; imagine the value of an ABAG network of county and city planning library resources built on these principles. Imagine the impact such a network would have on the quality and ease of accessing documents and information resources in support of Bay Area environmental planning research.

ON THIS NOTE of praise for the availability of computerized bibliographic resources, it would be good to extend our discussion to include the pilot project recently begun by the San Francisco Public Library. This project will make available the vast resources of Lockheed's DIALOG search-and-cite data base of periodical and document bibliographic information. Presently, Friends of S.F.P.L. are underwriting the cost of literature searches. For more information, contact the Main branch Department that deals with the subject area of your search; they would value your input.

From "Bay Echo" December 1980, Association of Environmental Professionals.

THE PLANNER'S GUIDE TO URBAN GRAFFITI Lesson #1



This symbol, stylized by an encircled letter A, represents the concept "anarchy". Its usage is prevalent among punk rockers favoring the Marxist-anarchist ideology expounded by the British bands Crass, Poison Girls, and Zoundz. The symbol is sometimes employed with the words W^AR or P^AC^E to create a subtle double-meaning apparent only to the cognoscente.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

One of the fun things about being newsletter editor is that I can pound my shoe on the podium with relative impunity. This issue, for example, contains some observations regarding the 'image of the planner'; I had penned these thoughts (in a slightly revised form) last year for a Chapter committee chaired by Scott Lefauver. These opinions are more pertinent today given the reactionary, anti-government mood now sweeping the nation. Comments are welcome.

Also in this issue is the first installment of a new column detailing the Bay Area's planning-related libraries and information resources. The series is entitled "Wellsprings", and it's author, Keith Anderson (no relation), has had similar articles published in the AEP's Bay Echo (some of which will be reprinted here). Keith, by the way, is a consulting librarian and has recently published a pamphlet entitled "Organizing a Sanitary Engineer's Library". It's available for ten first-class postage stamps; write Keith at 668 B Fourth Avenue, San Francisco, 94118.

Before I volunteered for this position I was warned that obtaining articles would be very, very difficult. That was no joke! I need publishable material! Some of you folks are involved in very intriguing projects that might be of interest to the rest of us; how about reporting on it? For example, the City of Palo Alto has had an inclusionary zoning ordinance for several years. How many homes has it generated? What has been the reaction of the development community? What are the implications regarding economic equity and efficiency? Two years ago Alameda County attempted to protect its ridgelands using large-lot zoning, only to be met with the vociferous opposition of local ranchers. Was this opposition overcome? If so, how? Is large-lot zoning proving to be an effective rangeland preservation tool? Santa Clara County has drastically reduced the size of its planning staff. What caused this reduction? Given hindsight, could it have been prevented? What are the implications regarding implementation of county policies? Finally, ABAG is doing a number of interesting things, such as the CRISS fiscal impact model, special area plans, and mitigation of housing impacts caused by non-residential projects. How about a report from the hallowed halls of the Hotel Claremont?

One last request: I need some help in putting this newsletter together, especially with folding/stamping/labeling. Anyone interested in lending a hand? People with graphics ability will also be appreciated, as I have trouble drawing even a straight line. You supply the energy, I'll supply the beer. Perhaps even pizza!

Richard Anderson
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ARCHITECTS' AND PLANNERS' ETYMOLOGICAL MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE OPTIMIZER

Column 1

a. integrated
b. total
c. systematized
d. parallel
e. functional
f. responsive
g. optional
h. synchronized
i. compatible
j. balanced
k. innovative
l. illustrative
m. sophisticated
n. pluralistic
o. open-ended
p. mandatory
q. definitive
r. suboptimized
s. incommensurable
t. sequential
u. endogenous
v. dynamic
w. universal
x. schematic
y. analytical
z. action-oriented

Column 2

a. management
b. organizational
c. monitored
d. reciprocal
e. digital
f. logistical
g. transitional
h. incremental
i. third-generation
j. policy
k. interagency
l. design-generated
m. diagrammatical
n. output-oriented
o. methodical
p. professionally-delineated
q. fiscally-responsible
r. polynucleated
s. quasi-official
t. multi-dimensional
u. mixed-media
v. modulated
w. periodical
x. morphological
y. budgetary
z. spatial

Column 3

a. options
b. flexibility
c. mobility
d. programming
e. concept
f. time-phase
g. projection
h. hardware
i. contingency
j. adaptability
k. hierarchy
l. syndrome
m. configuration
n. priority
o. parameter
p. activity-system
q. hypothesis
r. node
s. linkage
t. process
u. evaluation
v. strategy
w. analysis
x. amenity
y. trade-off
z. synopsis

The procedure for use of the optimizer is simple: just think of any sequence of three letters and select the corresponding word from each column. For instance, sequence b-p-y produces "total professionally-delineated trade-off"—a phrase that can be dropped into virtually any report or discussion with that ring of decisive, knowledgeable authority.

No one will have the slightest idea of what you are talking about, and you will have achieved the distinction of being a pseudo-architect or pseudo-planner. Anyone who understands what has been said is not a true PA or PP. Anyone who does not understand—and admits it—does not have an architectural or planning degree. Anyone who does not understand and does not admit it—is a true friend. He is a fellow PA or PP or both.

NOTE: You can choose your pseudo-specialty by selecting the combination that corresponds to your three initials.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Thank you for the opportunity to take a more active role in the APA as Section Director. I am excited and challenged by this year's goals and hope to get interest and participation from you, the membership.

We are all currently faced with challenges that threaten our jobs, question our role as planners, and dare us to find solutions to problems using limited tools and financial resources. At a time like this, we need to examine our situations collectively; traditional answers will not do. And I ask you to share your concerns as well as your ideas. Let us know what you want to hear. We have a great program and excellent people coordinating the activities. Help yourself by letting us know specifically what you are interested in, and we will make every effort to respond directly or through one of our programs.

We have several committees that are developing workshops, seminars, dinner meetings and wine & cheese receptions, publishing a newsletter, tutoring AICP exam applicants, reviewing legislation, and generally creating an environment conducive to the exchange of information. We also have several social events planned. So, do get involved, even if it is only a letter telling us of your interests and what you would like APA to be doing for you. Attend a meeting. We hold our Board meetings the third Wednesday of every month, usually one hour before our seminar or reception. Call me or any of the Board members for details.

I encourage you to contact us and make sure that we are doing something productive for you, the membership. Let's plan on meeting at the APA Holiday Party...more on that later.

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SECTION NEWS

A big congrats to the Monterey Subsection! Ernie Franco reports they've received an Award for Excellence in Design and Construction, Advanced Sand Box Division, at the 20th annual Great Sand Castle Contest in Carmel. The theme was "The Sixties, A Time of True Grit". The Subsection's entry, entitled "A Summer of Love, 1967", entailed an almost full scale detailed replica of a 1967 VW bug - complete with a hippie's head poking from the sun roof. Ernie will have pictures when his photographer can find the roll of film.

The following Section members have passed the May, 1981 AICP exam:

Earl G. Bossard, San Jose
William F. Collins, Chico
Robert S. Cowan, Los Gatos
Thomas J. Priestley, Oakland
Gloria M. Root, San Francisco
Michael J. Rushman, San Francisco
Carola B. Sullam, San Francisco
Robert C. Sturdivant, San Jose
Daniel H. Vanderpriem, Pleasant Hill

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100 Larkin Street
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Legislation
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Chris Haw and Don Bules
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THE IMAGE OF THE PLANNER: A PERSONAL COMMENT

Do we, as planners, warrant such labels as "obstructionists" and "dreamers?" Generally, yes. Our society is dominated by the marketplace; attempts by government to impose a long-range public interest perspective will raise the ire of those thwarted from pursuing their own narrower concerns -- which is almost everyone. However, not all planning-created obstruction is good or useful; much of it results from two interrelated educational deficiencies: a failure to understand how the marketplace works, and a lack of technical skills. Removing these two inadequacies may not eliminate the negative image of planners held by the rest of society, but it will hopefully improve it.

Leaving aside any value judgment regarding our economic system, we all realize the enormous impact and pervasive influence it has upon our lives. However, many planners have little training in economics; although they may mean well, their attempts to improve social welfare through market intervention are often tragic. As Sumka observes:

Government intervention in any market must be carefully considered for both its direct effects and its unanticipated consequences. We, as a society have a long history of seeing the most well-intended social programs run awry, with the ultimate benefits having accrued to those who needed them least...If we do not adequately define the problem and clearly identify its sources, we cannot design the correct intervention. When the public sector dives headlong into the market with an ill-conceived program, we can with complete assurance predict disaster.¹

Although directed primarily to planners shaping federal policy, these comments apply equally well to planners at the local level. How many of us, for example, understand the impact our zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans have on land prices, the location and distribution of land uses, or the costs of and demand for public services? How many of us even care? It is not surprising, then, that when our actions affect people in the pocketbook, these actions are examined a little more closely. Often, I'm afraid, this inspection exposes a planning process that is neither rigorous nor complete in its attempts at analysis.

Oviously, planners with a thorough knowledge of economic theory will not cease being obstructionists to some.² However, this obstruction (or better yet, this market intervention) would, one hopes, no longer be based upon hyperbole and opinion backed with inadequate statistics.

Economic analysis necessarily involves data analyses, which brings up the second deficiency found among many planners: an inability to "crunch the numbers". As was implied by Sumka, inadequate analysis often leads to perverse programs. If one of our tasks is to inform our clients of the probable results of a particular course of action, then we must possess the tools needed to perform this assessment. Such a capability is very important to decision-makers, as it provides something they can relate to above the level of rhetoric.

To a certain extent, then, numbers -- and the ability to manipulate them -- brings power. This

also implies that planners, to improve their effectiveness, must know how to intervene in the political process. Before this activism can take place, however, planners must still be familiar with methods of quantitative and economic analysis. It seems too many planners are content to mouth such pop wisdoms as "sprawl is bad" or "mass transit is good" without determining if these platitudes apply in a given situation.

One last point, repeatedly belabored by others, concerns the ability of planners to communicate effectively. Clarity and conciseness are values that are frequently overlooked by members of our profession. Worse yet, some planners actually take pride in their ability to string together words of three or more syllables and "jargonize" otherwise unambiguous statements. Who would have thought, for example, that "site specific district structure funding mechanism" translates, simply, to "special assessment district"? Even the most well intentioned, thought-out plan will fail if it is not phrased in language the layman can understand.

What can the APA do about these problems? Two strategies are apparent. First, the APA, through its school recognition process, can provide planning programs with incentives to bolster their emphasis of economic and quantitative analytic skills. Many programs offer these courses on an elective basis only, allowing students so inclined the opportunity to escape exposure to and useful analytical methods. The APA should perhaps recognize only those programs requiring students to take these courses. Communications skills might be improved by requiring that classes have frequent written and oral assignments that must conform to a specified length and level of intelligibility. Keep it short and simple!

Second, the AICP testing procedure can be used to stress skills in such areas as cost-benefit analysis, statistical analysis, program evaluation, market analysis, and projection techniques. These subjects use objective rather than normative questions, and easily lend themselves to the standardized testing format currently in vogue. A problem, though, is that one rarely learns analytical techniques through on-the-job experience. An exam stressing these skills is biased towards those planners with a strong academic background. Reorienting the focus of the AICP exam in this manner will likely raise questions concerning both the role and the significance of professional certification.

In sum, I see the poor image of planners as resulting directly from a misunderstanding of the dynamic forces -- primarily economic -- that shape our society. Therefore, the foundation of a solution rests in education: provide planners with the theory and methods needed to analyze these forces with respect to planning and policy problems. A pragmatic approach to planning should improve our standing with decision-makers and allow us to take a more active role in the political process.

¹Howard J. Sumka, "The Ideology of Urban Analysis: A Response to Hartman," Journal of the American Planning Association, 45:4, 1979.

²For examples of when planning "obstruction" is justified on economic grounds, see Terry Moore, "Why Allow Planners to Do What They Do? A Justification from Economic Theory," Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 44:4, 1978.

In most cases, our theories prove deficient; social reality resists simplification. The major value of modern social science is thus to promote skepticism about bad social theories. Such achievements will not win social scientists much thanks from their fellow citizens, especially those who...have a bad theory of their own to peddle. Nonetheless, skepticism remains more honorable than shamanism.

--Christopher Jencks
The New York Review
October 8, 1981

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