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NORTHERN NEWS

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BAYOU BEAT—A REVIEW OF THE 1991 APA CONFERENCE

by Barry Miller

Sitting at the French Market dowsing sugar-coated beignets in a Cafe Au Lait, listening for the occasional toot of a Mississippi steamer, I was glad I decided to attend this year's APA conference in New Orleans. True, it was a challenge remaining in the windowless rooms of the Hilton viewing overhead projections of flood plain ordinances when the temptations of the French Quarter lay just footsteps away. But there were plenty of mobile workshops, after-hours events, and free time to enjoy the city's rich architectural, cultural, and culinary (!) heritage.

Conference attendance was roughly 3,400, including 420 from California and 92 from Northern Section. The smorgasbord of activities was impressive: 61 mobile workshops, 17 special events, and no fewer than 125 informational/educational sessions packed into five days. Highlights were the opening reception at the city's new aquarium, and a luncheon featuring a rousing address by Cokie Roberts of National Public Radio.

The reception at the aquarium was exceptional. In addition to the fascinating setting, there was great food, free beer, live jazz, and even a mini-Mardi Gras parade, as if 3,000 planners under one roof wasn't entertainment enough. This was the opportunity to seek out that old friend from grad school ("that's him by the alligators, isn't it?"), that boss who gave us our first planning job ("I just saw her outside the Amazon Rainforest"), and that former planning professor now practicing law ("he's over there, by the shark tank").

At Tuesday's Plenary Luncheon, Cokie Roberts gave the crowd "The View From Capitol Hill." She shared her insights on the impacts of the Persian Gulf War on domestic policy, and the resulting implications for federal housing, transportation, and educational programs. Cokie discussed the impacts of partisan politics in Washington on planning-related programs. She described the impacts that women and minorities have had on shaping federal policies towards the cities and social programs. Her provocative address (and great jabs at Louisiana politicians) prompted a standing ovation from the crowd.

Between the parties and luncheons, the concurrent sessions in the Hilton provided something for everyone. The sessions were generally interesting, although much

of the material was not readily transferable to Bay Area jurisdictions. I found the "Nuts and Bolts" sessions to be more useful than the more philosophical sessions, and generally found the environmental/land use sessions to be less stimulating than those dealing with education and urban design. My favorite was Anton Nelessen's analogy of suburbia to a dysfunctional family (no doubt composed of codependent subdivisions). The format and style of the presentations was often as educational as the content. Judging from audience response, it appears that overhead projections are "out" and computer-generated color slides are "in."

There were plenty of lessons to be learned about the do's and don'ts of public speaking as well. Perhaps most disappointing was the lack of interaction between the speakers and the audience. Only a few of the sessions left adequate time for questions, and the groups were often too large to accommodate interactive discussions. Perhaps future conferences can offer more "roundtable" sessions where small groups of planners can share their views and ideas on specific topics like regional planning.

I didn't attend any mobile workshops, the one's I wanted were full by the time I registered. Undaunted, I chose to invent my own, starting with "Fifteen Creative Ways to Find the Interstate 10 On-ramp in a Rental Car", followed by the "My-hotel-can't-possibly-be-in-this-neighborhood" tour. I did speak with a few planners about mobile workshops they'd attended. Reviews were mixed. One planner spoke of a "Mobile Workshop from Hell", on which the tour leader got lost and couldn't find their destination (Canal Street). On the other hand, swamp tours and orientation tours got high marks.

One Conference session asked the question "Has Success Spoiled the Vieux Carre?" Although the arguments for a "yes" are compelling, the planners I spoke with concurred that success has changed, but not spoiled, the Quarter. True, Bourbon Street can boast more Bart Simpson/Ninja Turtle T-shirts per linear mile than any other street in North America. But its buildings remain intact, and the street is lively and pedestrian-friendly. Despite its commercialism, the area epitomizes many of the qualities we've been striving to create in our own communities. Come to think of it, a French Market by the Bay with paddlewheel steamers to San Francisco doesn't sound half-bad. See you in D.C. in 1992.

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

by Ann B. Millican

Student Planners Now Have Board Representative

Ginette Geer of UC Berkeley's Department of City and Regional Planning is the new Student representative to the Northern Section Board. Thanks to the recruiting efforts of Education Coordinator Frank Osgood and UCB planning student "mom" Kay Bock, plus the votes of her colleagues at DCRP, Ginette is the Student Liaison. Her first undertaking was to organize the Spring Forum at UCB on March 16. Thanks, Ginette, for a successful event!

Therese Armlin Appointed as North Bay Liaison

Our search for a North Bay liaison has ended! Therese Armlin has recently been appointed to represent North Bay planners. Therese is a planner with the Napa County Conservation, Planning, and Development Department. She was previously a planner for Humboldt County and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. In addition to organizing a North Bay meeting, she will also work with Lia Sullivan (our "unofficial" liaison for the Far North Bay) in Arcata to coordinate an event. Welcome Therese!

Growth Management Program Review

Surrounded by red-flocked wallpaper, sipping Italian red wine, and nibbling on North Beach antipasto and sourdough bread, 35 planners gathered in January to hear about growth management in other states and regions.

Alison Massa, Director of Planning for Wallace Roberts & Todd, addressed the New Jersey State Plan, which identifies eight land use types in urban and non-urban "tiers," with land use density and intensity standards for each. Paul Sedway of Sedway Cooke Associates, described the Florida approach to growth management, which is based on a State Comprehensive Plan and on the "three Cs": Consistency (internally and with state growth policies), Coordination (among multiple levels of government), and Concurrency (where infrastructure is in place before development occurs).

SEX, SADDAM, AND APA

What do these things have in common? Absolutely nothing! April Fools! But now that we have your attention, we want you to watch for the long-awaited membership survey in next month's newsletter. The survey is only twelve easy questions so it will be quick and simple for you to help your local APA section better meet your needs. We want to know who you are and what you think about APA professional development activities. The organization can only be as strong as the membership is active. So watch for the May Northern News.

WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Desalination Conference Scheduled by ABAG

On April 29, 1991, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) will sponsor a conference entitled "Desalination: Putting the Technology into Practice." This working seminar will bring together a wide range of experts and local water managers to discuss current projects in Marin County, the Monterey Peninsula, Morro Bay, and overseas. It will take place at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero, San Francisco. Preregistration is advisable.

Topics presented include: site selection criteria, environmental and permitting considerations, the economics of water supply options, desalination technology, financing options, and building/operating desalination facilities. Registration fees are \$110 for ABAG members and \$125 for non-members. For more information, please contact Debbie Nichols, Training Center for Excellence, Association of Bay Area Governments, PO Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050, or call (415)-464-7964.

Spring Forum and Jobs Fair Draws Together Bay Area Planners and Students

by Ginette Geer, Student Representative

Saturday, March 16 marked a unique event for the Bay Area planning community. Close to 250 professional planners, academics, and students of city planning and urban studies met at the first annual Spring Forum and Job Fair hosted by the Department of City and Regional Planning, UC Berkeley.

Morning seminars were presented by representatives of some of the Bay Area's most vibrant groups, including organizations within public, private, and non-profit sectors. Speakers led lively discussions on issues of regionalism, housing, and planning by and for women and people of color.

The afternoon Jobs Fair was attended by representatives of a wide variety of planning organizations who discussed their firms' or agencies' work with students and conducted interviews. Students from several of the Bay Area's planning and urban studies schools participated, including San Francisco State, Stanford, Sonoma State, San Jose State, as well as UC Berkeley. CCAPA Northern Section sponsored an afternoon tea, giving participants in the day's events further occasion to meet and mix, and to discuss the APA's role in planning education.

Plans for the 1992 Spring Forum are already underway; information will be available through the Northern News. Plan to Attend!

Jobs in Planning

CITY PLANNER — City of El Cerrito (\$3,699 - \$4,496/mo., plus benefits) Division-head mgmt. position reporting to Community Dev. Mgr., resp. for organizing and managing planning activities, supervising prof. and clerical staff of 2 full-time positions and outside consultants. Req's. knowl. of urban planning/zoning practices, laws, & literature; 5 yrs. prof. exp. (some supervisory); B.A. in planning or rel. field (M.A. + 4 yrs. will sub.) Must be able to work skillfully w/ pub. officials, staff, community. Computer appl. & exp. desirable. Forward resume, salary, and 3 references to: Joanne Sidwell, Employee Services Mgr. City of El Cerrito, 10890 San Pablo Av, El Cerrito, CA 94530. More info, call: (415)215-4300. File by 4-19-91.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER — City of San Bruno (\$42,888 - \$52,644/yr, plus benefits) Current and advance planning for City of 39,000. Assists in admin. and enforcing planning, zoning, and development regs; prep. and pres. rept's. to Planning Comm., Arch. Rev. Comm., and City Council. Req's. Bachelor's degree in planning or rel. field and 3 yrs. prof. exp. in urban planning. Apply on City of San Bruno application form at 567 El Camino Real, San Bruno, CA 94066. More info, call: (415) 877-8855. File by 4-19-91.

PLANNING DIRECTOR — City of Sebastopol (\$3,871 - \$4,701/mo., plus benefits) Appt. can be made above entry step dep. on quals. City shifting from part-time consultant to full-time planner. Will work under direction of City Mgr. Req's. 3 yrs. prior planning exp. in CA, B.A. supplemented by M.A. or work towards an M.A. in planning-rel. field. Direct resume to: City Mgr.'s Office, PO Box 1776, Sebastopol, CA 95473. More info, call: (707) 823-7863. File by 5-10-91.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER — City of San Mateo (\$3,357 - \$4,002/mo., plus benefits) Seek planner to prep. complex planning reports, review/process dev't. appl's, and prep. Gen. Plan. Amndm'ts and long-range planning studies. Req's. 2 yrs. exp. in planning, pref. w/ pub. agency, B.A. in Planning or similar. Exp. in transp. planning desirable. Submit official city appl. and supp. questionnaire to: Personnel Dept., City of San Mateo, 330 W 20th St., San Mateo, CA 94403. More info, call: (415) 337-3359.

more jobs on page 5

MAY 4 IS THE DATE...

The Symposium and VideoFest promises to be a most interesting day: A one-of-a-kind dialogue about a subject of heightened importance to the profession: how to best use the modern electronic media to increase planners' effectiveness in the Bay region.

The media panel features well-known media experts, among them, KQED's president Anthony Tiano, KPIX transportation reporter Jefferey Schaub, cable/community access TV counsel Martha Schmidt, and UC Berkeley simulator lab director Peter Bosselman.

On the other side of the aisle, Bay Area Council Vice President Tom Cook will discuss the housing crisis, Robert Odermatt will probe visual media solutions to promoting higher density housing, and CalTrans' Gary Adams will discuss how the media can promote transit and ridesharing. A third panel will begin with Alameda County Supervisor Mary King's position on growth and open space, followed by media queries from Jim Sayer, Greenbelt Alliance's Director of Communication. Sedway Cooke Associates' Robert Odland will bridge all three sections, making sure the interrelatedness of all subjects remains clear.

Michael McGill, Executive Director of the Bay Area Economic Forum, will address the audience, and will moderate what promises to be a lively and informative dialogue.

For more information and a reservation form, please see the flyer enclosed with this issue. There are still seats left near "ringside!"

1991 STATE CONFERENCE "ON THE EDGE"

The Sacramento Valley Section APA will be hosting the 1991 State Conference on October 20-23, 1991, at the Sacramento Convention Center.

On the Edge is the theme for this year's conference and defines many of the planning issues pertinent to Northern California and the Sacramento region. Pushed by growth emanating in part from the coastal areas, Sacramento Valley planning is considered to be on the cutting edge, and the conference committee intends to show you why.

The 1991 conference tracks will take a look at natural resources, social planning issues, land use, and transportation and infrastructure. Some of the topics to be examined include:

- Land use, transportation, and air quality planning integration
- Effective citizen participation programs
- The public counter and the art of dealing with people
- Updating general plans and community plans
- Using the 90 Census for trend analysis and advance planning
- Proposed regional planning for California
- Effective transit center design
- Downtown revitalization
- Siting social service facilities
- The power of voters and community liability for voter's decisions
- Jobs/housing balance
- Siting university campuses
- Growth management: can travel behavior be changed?
- Recycling and reduction: Meeting the requirements of AB 939
- Planning for seismic activity
- Socks, ties, and videotape

Experience what the Sacramento region has to offer. Located in the heart of downtown Sacramento, the Convention Center is convenient to a variety of Sacramento's attractions including the State Capitol, Crocker Art Museum, Sutter's Fort and historic Old Sacramento.

Mobile workshops will provide an overall view of the region from downtown Sacramento to the foothill areas. Conferees will have the opportunity to visit the nationally known Laguna West "pedestrian pocket" development, as well as cruise around beautiful Lake Tahoe on the Tahoe Queen.

Come and see why Northern California is *On the Edge* and learn what we can do to stay there. For more information, contact Kathryn Tobias at Downey, Brand, Seymour, and Rowher at (916) 441-0131.

Watch for the Survey!

The Northern Section Board wants to know how APA at the local level can serve you better. A Member Survey will be included in the next Northern News to find out what kind of planner you are, what type of APA activities you would like to see, and if you would like to get involved. If you return the survey, you have a chance to get a free pass to the Awards banquet in June.

FROM THE FAR NORTH

by Lia Sullivan

As one planner put it, "One well aimed SCUD missile would set Humboldt County's developers free." The quote attested to the high attendance at the first get-together of planners of far north Humboldt County in many years.

Twenty or so planners met on Friday, March 15, in Eureka at a "Brown Bag Lunch for Planners" to discuss if and why local planners should meet on a regular basis. Planners included those from four of Humboldt County's seven incorporated cities (two of the seven currently lack a planner), the County Planning Department, Caltrans District I, the private sector, and academia (Humboldt State University).

The meeting was a brainstorming session on four items:

1. What would be the purpose of a regularly scheduled planner's get-together?
2. How often should such a gathering occur?
3. Topics of interest to local planners.
4. If the CCAPA Northern Section were to sponsor an event for us, in our area, **WHAT** or **WHO** would be the focus/speaker?

On the first item, the following reasons to get together featured prominently: interagency cooperation, opportunity to discuss current issues, information-sharing, destressing, and "fun stuff."

Item two was easy: planners should meet at least every other month (possibly monthly for special events and "hot" topics); in Eureka, at lunch, and on Fridays.

Item three borrowed some ideas from

the first item and represented a very long list of current planning concerns. These generally broke down into: issues we need to learn more about; methods for getting our work done; sharing resources; philosophical planning issues; and legislation, litigation, and mitigation. Topping the list...you guessed it...regionalism (particularly in the form of coordinating local planning efforts). A complete list can be obtained as noted below.

In regard to item four, interest in a Northern-section sponsored event revolved around wanting to find out what the APA has to offer. There is strong interest in having someone from the Northern Section Board of Directors come talk about that topic, perhaps in May or June. Planners expressed interest in such speakers as Ron Bass and Dan Curtin. Planners also expressed interest in a panel discussion of planning as taught by Universities and planning as practiced in the field.

Planners decided to spend the next meeting prioritizing topics of interest; perhaps a statement of purpose will emerge. However, it should be noted that informality does seem an important factor for this group. The next meeting is scheduled for April 12.

Information on future meetings, as well as a written summary of brainstorming on the items above, can be obtained from Lia Sullivan, Associate Planner; City of Arcata; 736 F Street; Arcata, CA 95221; (707) 822-5955. A self-addressed, stamped envelope will ensure a quick response.

More Jobs...

PRINCIPAL PLANNER — City of San Jose (\$4,265 - \$5,184/mo.) Planning and managing a major section/function of the Planning Dept. - advanced/general/area planning, zoning, or urban design. Req's. training/exp. equiv. to completion of 2 yrs. grad. course work in planning or closely rel. field and at least 2 yrs. prof. exp. in city/reg. planning, zoning, admin, at level equiv. to Sr. Planner, supervising planning personnel. Final filing date is 4-10-91. Application/resume req'd. Application avail. from Human Resources Dept., City of San Jose, 801 N. 1st St., San Jose, CA 95110-1779; (408) 277-4205.

SENIOR PLANNER (TRANSPORTATION) — Solano County (\$35,938 - \$43,683/yr.) Resp. for developing and coord. planning and funding of major transp. proj's. in Solano County. 3 yrs. prof. planning exp. including transp. planning duties at the local or reg. level. Contact Solano County Dept. of Human Resources, 580 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533 (707) 421-6170. Open until Filled.

ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PLANNER — City of Dixon (Assistant: \$2,156-\$2,621/mo.; Associate: \$2,472-\$3,005/mo.) B.A. plus 1 yr. (Assistant Planner) or 2 yrs (Associate Planner). Primary resp. for current planning, assist director of Dept. w/adv. planning. More info: call (916) 678-7000. File by 4-19-91.

ENVIRONMENTAL/ URBAN PLANNER — Baseline Environmental Consulting. Seeking a planner w/ 3-5 yrs of pvt. sector exp. in EIR/EIS prep. Some exp. w/ specific plans and Master's degree in Env. Planning or City/Reg. Planning pref'd. Exc. writing skills essential. Proj. mgmt., client contact, and proposal writing exp. highly desirable. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Submit resume, salary history, and writing sample to Baseline Environmental Consulting, 5900 Hollis St., Suite D, Emeryville, CA 94608. Attn: A. Skewes-Cox.

Planlines

by Chuck Myer

Close Encounters of the Planning Kind

I mentioned in my October column how the plot twist of "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" paralleled real-life transportation planning in the L.A. basin in the 1940s. At first glance, planning issues would hardly seem likely to be a top draw in the entertainment industry. But some of the nation's top television and film producers seem to think otherwise.

Urban planning can insidiously crop up in feature films and television. In "The Towering Inferno," for example, the lack of communication between the architect and the fire chief could probably be blamed on the planning department. In particular, the films of Steven Spielberg often have planning issues at their foundation. Spielberg, of course, has an impressive resume which includes half of the top 10 feature films of all time.

In "E.T.," the plot may be extraterrestrial but the setting is suburban. Spielberg's panoramic shots of kids on bicycles riding through the streets is important in establishing that framework. In "Poltergeist," the "villain" is a real estate developer who put a residential subdivision over a cemetery. The unscrupulous developer moved only the headstones, not the coffins. The officers of the company were later haunted for their misdeeds.

Screenwriters Michael Grais and Mark Victor, with Spielberg, painted a picture of suburban bliss by detailing life away from the bustle of the city. Spielberg was less successful at the box office when he moved to issues of the inner city. In "...Batteries not included," Spielberg attacks urban problems like blight, historic preservation and senior housing. Here the villainous developer plans a highrise which will wipe out the elderly hotel where the protagonists live and work. No social organization, protest, or public hearing can save the hotel, it seems, unless otherworldly robot babies can rebuild it from scratch.

Spielberg also enjoys using aerial photography in his cinematography. Many camera angles focus on cul-de-sacs. Spielberg is aware that the cul-de-sac gained popularity as a city planning tool in the 1960s. But, he has also learned, the cul-de-sac is a social planning tool, as its residents feel more closely tied to their neighbors than do residents on opposite sides of a through-traffic street. Ironically, Skywalker Ranch, where many of Spielberg's special effects are filmed, is itself in the midst of several planning debates in Marin County. Evidently, NIMBY neighbors oppose the expansion of the ranch's production facilities. Who knows what extraterrestrial beings might fly into their yards!

Images of the city have always been foremost in futuristic films. Images of the City of the Future, such as those painted in "Blade Runner" and "Soylent Green," are certainly not as optimistic as Spielberg's vision of the City of Today. But by portraying our hopes, dreams, and fears about urban life in our motion pictures, we are able to visualize and verbalize the values we cherish about that lifestyle. (Next month: Planners on the tube.)

AUSTRALIAN PLANNERS TO VISIT BAY AREA

By Steve Wanat, International Liaison

About 20 members of the Royal Australian Planning Institute will be visiting the Bay Area as part of their study tour of the USA and Canada. They would like to meet with California planners while here, and I have tentatively scheduled a get-together on Friday evening, May 17 at 5:30 PM for drinks and an informal discussion. A no-host bar is planned but the venue is not yet set. Look for details in the May Northern News and plan to join us for an evening of "fair dinkum" planning chat.

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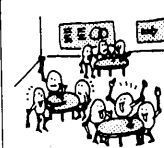
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Spring Calendar of Events

- April 19 Deadline for submittals, Northern Section APA Awards.
- April 19 UCLA Extension Public Policy Program, "Evaluating State and Local Growth Management Programs" at the Oakland Airport Hilton. Call Karen Stillman at (213) 825-7885 for details.
- April 29 ABAG Desalination Workshop. See page 3 for details.
- April 20 AICP Exam Workshop at Stanford
Call Don Bradley at (415) 592-0915.
- May 4 AICP Exam Workshop at CH2MHill in Emeryville.
- May 4 "Visual Media Symposium and VideoFest" at UC Berkeley.
- May 17 Tentative happy-hour to welcome Royal Australian Planners. 5:30 p.m. details in next month's Northern News. Call Steve Wanat at (415) 435-1651 for more details.
- May 18 AICP Exam Date.
- June 17 "Nuts and Bolts '91: Improving your Findings and Conditions" at the Oakland Convention Center. Sponsored by CCAPA. Call Skye Fleming at (805) 255-4447 for details.

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