

# NORTHERN NEWS

A Publication of the Northern Section, California Chapter, American Planning Association

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APR 13 1992

## TUNE IN TO CITY HALL TV!

**A Northern Section CCAPA professional and social event, co-sponsored by the San Francisco Chapter of the AIA.**

**Time:** Thursday, May 7, 1992

5:30 Social hour, wine and cheese

6:30 Presentations and discussion

**Place:** AIA offices in downtown San Francisco  
130 Sutter Street, at Montgomery (one block from Montgomery St. BART, two blocks from Sutter / Stockton Garage.)

**Cost:** \$4.00 by mail reservation, \$5.00 at the door.

**Reservations:** Make checks out to: NSCCAPA, mail no later than 5/4/92 to: Hartmut Gerdes, Square One Film+Video, 725 Filbert Street, SF, CA 94133.

For more Info: Call (415) 398-7044

More than a dozen Bay Area communities are "hooked up", including cities as varied in size and demographics as Oakland, Los Altos, Richmond, and Pacifica. We will hear first hand from planning and design professionals who have used the rapidly expanding media of cable TV and video in reaching out and involving the community in issues and projects. Using videotape excerpts, they will discuss how video affects us as professionals — and constituents. Does it

empower us as planners and designers, or just make our life harder? What are the successes...and pitfalls? What are the possibilities for your community? What does it cost?

In 1991, the city of Vacaville and their consultants Blayney, Dyett, Greenberg won State and Northern Section CCAPA Media Awards for their cable TV and video-based General Plan Update outreach program. **Maureen Traut**, senior planner for Vacaville, will describe how it was put together, what worked, and what didn't. We will also get a peek at the city's new weekly program called "Talk-O-the-Town" which was in part triggered by the success of the above outreach program. **Michael Dyett**, AICP, San Francisco planning consultant, will focus on his experience as a panelist on live call-in shows during the course of the General Plan Update Outreach Program.

**George Foscardo**, AICP, and **Wendy Cosin**, AICP, planning directors of San Bruno and Pacifica respectively, will report about their experience with cable TV in their commission chambers, how it helped some projects and perhaps hurt others, about the public response, and if approvals are expedited and the quality of community planning and design enhanced. We will see excerpts from Pacifica's bi-monthly "Warming Up to Planning" show, in which Wendy introduces the current planning and design agenda. (She calls it her "pre-game" show.)

On May 7, you will have a chance to see how the communications age may affect you.



## Youth: An Untapped Community Resource

by Al Zelinka

One of the underlying goals in planning is to improve the quality of life, both for current residents and for generations to come. In many communities, planners provide opportunities for residents to assist in this process. As a result, adults are increasingly participating in local planning. In the course of debates over community development, these participants, some of whom are parents, often invoke the health, safety, or happiness of their children. Ironically, children are seldom involved directly in the planning process, either in information gathering or in defining local issues.

Recently, a young El Dorado County resident was given the opportunity to voice her ideas. As part of the county's General Plan update, the County Planning Department and

consultant Sedway Cooke Associates have hosted several workshops to receive public comments and to educate the public about the General Plan process. The most recent workshops had more than 750 participants, including Leah, the 10-year old daughter of a couple attending. After explaining to Leah the importance of her comments, she was asked to draw her idea of a perfect neighborhood and explain what she most liked and disliked about the county.

To begin with, Leah said that what she liked most about the county was its warm temperature, its clear air, and its many types of nature. Her dislikes include the need for more flat places to ride her bicycle and the need for shopping closer to home.

(continued on page 5)

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## NEXT MONTH

## 1992 NSCCAPA Board Elections

see page **3** for update

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

by Don Steiger

### We're looking for a few good people!

1. The nominating committee is in search of qualified candidates for three board positions, Treasurer, Administration Director and Director Pro-Tem. If you or someone you know would be interested, please contact Mark Caughey at 510/215-4330.

2. "Wayne's World" is looking for a few great planners! The NSCCAPA 1992 Planning Awards Program is underway under the capable leadership of Wayne Goldberg. Consider nominating that very special someone for the award they so richly deserve.

3. We need people to assist and develop events and other activities which are so vital to the success of Northern Section. One of the hot topics identified in the Membership Survey is the Specific Plan.

Don Bradley invited me to attend one of his renowned AICP exam review sessions. I was delighted with June Catalano's splendid presentation and with the high quality exam candidate turnout. Don has been dedicated to his mission and was recently in Southern California to assist others in the State.

The San Jose State Job Fair was a very well planned event. It was a real pleasure to participate in the inaugural edition of what will surely become an annual tradition. Scott Lefavre, Therese Schmidt, Michael Dean Bethke, and many more contributed to its resounding success. UC Berkeley will be hosting their Annual Spring Job Fair on April 4. Plan to be there!

On behalf of Northern Section, I attended the spring meeting of the Professional Advisory Committee for Sonoma State's planning program. Steve Orlick is recruiting for a full-time faculty member. Enrollment is up and things look good for the program's future.

The Northern California Legislative review team met on Friday, March 13. The regional governance issue has not been resolved and the Governor's plan has not been announced. Stay tuned for more news.



## Northern Newsmakers

Michael Murphy has been promoted to Senior Planner at the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Frank Fuller has been named Principal of ELS, an architecture and urban design firm in Berkeley.

*Rebuilding After Earthquakes, Lessons from Planners*, is now available through its authors, William Spangle and Associates of Portola Valley. The report presents the findings of a recent symposium specifically aimed at helping planners in seismically-vulnerable parts of the United States. For information on how you can purchase a copy of this insightful report, contact George Mader at 415/854-6001.

# From the Far North

by Lia Sullivan

The Far North's most recent Brown Bag lunch was scheduled to coincide with the *Humboldt Visions* planning seminar so that its guest speakers could meet with local planners. One of the seminar's two speakers, Victor Dover, (architect and partner in Dover-Kohl, a firm with a reputation for neighborhood-oriented master plans) was able to attend.


The turnout was excellent: 24 local professional and citizen planners! The discussion revolved around **growth** – how to manage it, what to manage it with, how to make developers partners in its management – and **communities** – how to make them developable as well as livable, workable, and responsive.

Victor Dover provoked discussion by reading a letter from the Director of the Treasure Coast (Florida) Regional Planning Agency that described a number of criteria which must be met to make growth management work. The subsequent discussion raised issues of, among others, social equality in designing neighborhoods; the limitations of buyer profiles used to design development; physical barriers to creating neighborhood lifestyles; and how planners can facilitate institutional needs.

Dover discussed how to bring about reform through the use of media, design and process – getting people involved. He suggested that the test of a "community" is to respond affirmatively to the questions of: *Can someone be born here, grow up here, come back after college, "move up" here, and spend the rest of their life here? Is this the kind of place people can put down roots?*

Creating such communities is a combination of design and breaking old habits. Dover suggested that developers usually go for "cookie cutter" or status quo development because they are familiar with it and know it is approvable. Developers are more likely to invest in good design if they can be shown how spending money on design will "improve their bottom line."

A community wishing to foster change needs to make such change approvable, that is, take the risk out of change for people who are willing to be creative. Communities can do this by getting clear on what they want and showing developers how to do it. Discussion went on in this vein for nearly an hour after this writer had to leave (so I'm told.) All in all, a stimulating planners' lunch.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 1, Noon to 1:00 in Conference Room B, Humboldt County Planning Department, 3015 H Street, Eureka. The topic will be a presentation on Arcata's Draft Housing Element. 

## CANDIDATES SOUGHT FOR 1992-1994 BOARD OFFICES

by Mark Caughey

If you have been thinking about ways you can influence the direction of APA at the local and state level, or if you would like the opportunity to demonstrate leadership to your Northern California Planning colleagues, consider running for office in the 1992 NSCCAPA Election.

The Director Pro-Tem, Administration Director, and Treasurer are elected for two year terms which will begin in June, 1992. Elected officers are expected to attend monthly Board of Directors meetings (a great time to meet, socialize, and network with outstanding planners from all over Northern California!) and to manage the tasks assigned to each office in the Section's By-Laws (described below). There are also plenty of opportunities to work on events, special projects, or advocacy issues while serving as a Section officer. The next two years promise to be an exciting time for Northern Section, as the Board seeks new ways to implement the Membership Survey results reported in the January '92 issue of Northern News. Won't you consider joining this effort as an elected officer?

Declaring your candidacy for any office is simple, and you need only be an APA member in good standing to qualify. Please call me, Mark Caughey, Director Pro-tem, at 510-215-4330 or FAX me a message at 510/233-5401 prior to April 16, 1992. We'll ask you to provide a position statement and a photograph (optional) for printing in the May newsletter along with the official ballot. Newly elected officers will be recognized at the annual Section Awards Banquet in June.

To help you decide which office best suits your interests and experience, here is a summary of the major duties of each:

### Director Pro-tem:


- Preside at Board meetings when the Director is absent
- Manage the yearly election process
- Facilitate the annual Board retreat in September

### Administration Director:

- Prepare and distribute monthly Board meeting packets
- Prepare and maintain records on Board meetings and correspondence

### Treasurer:

- Prepare annual budget for Board approval
- Maintain financial records; receive and disburse funds as authorized

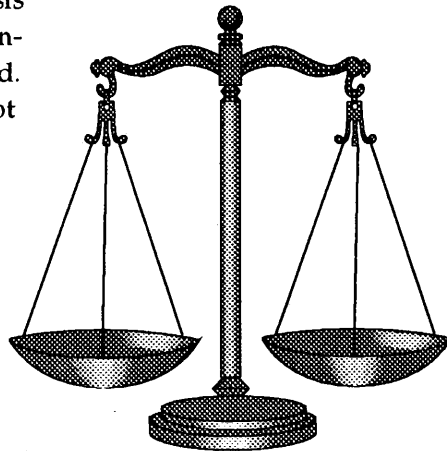
Still not sure? Call me with questions about the election process or service on the Board of Directors. 

# Importance of General Plan Adequacy Diminished?

by Daniel J. Curtin, Jr., and M. Thomas Jacobson

Land use decisions are frequently challenged because of legal flaws in the underlying general plan. However, a recent Court of Appeal decision may limit challenges to development approvals, growth management measures, and other land use regulations where the challenge is based on general plan adequacy.

In *Garat v City of Riverside*, 92 Daily Journal D.A.R. 173 (January 7, 1992), the Court of Appeal rejected challenges to two growth control initiatives. *Garat* challenged Measures C and R on the basis that the City's General Plan was legally inadequate when the Measures were adopted. Thus, *Garat* argued, the initiatives were not consistent with a legally adequate general plan and should be invalidated. The trial court agreed and invalidated the Measures. In a wide ranging opinion, the appellate court set tough standards for finding a plan inadequate. It also tightened the rules for challenging a land use decision because of a flawed general plan. The *Garat* opinion:



- Reaffirmed that zoning need not be consistent with the general plan in a charter city (but did hold that a charter city's general plan must be internally consistent);
- Rejected being "out-of-date" as a basis for finding the City's General Plan legally inadequate;
- Rejected "inaccessibility" as a basis for finding the City's General Plan inadequate, even though the Plan's organization and physical unavailability made it difficult for the public and decision makers to access it (the various elements of the plan were scattered throughout the City's files and certain amendments could only be traced through a series of cryptic computer printouts); and
- Held that, if a land use enactment is being challenged because the underlying general plan is inadequate, there must be a "nexus" between the plan's flaws and the "policies and geographic area" implicated by the challenged enactment.

A petition for review of the *Garat* case by the California Supreme Court has been filed. In addition, decertification of the Court of Appeals decision has been requested. If decertified, the opinion could not be cited as legal precedent.

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## Youth

(continued from page 1)

The drawing at left illustrates Leah's ideas of what should be in a neighborhood, including her choice of buildings and land uses. She believes that houses should blend in with nature and that shopping centers should not be "all cement and pavement." In addition, she wants nature trails to connect neighborhoods with schools and shopping areas; and these trails should be separate from regular sidewalks. She also thinks that neighborhood pools would be nice, and that streams and rivers should be part of neighborhoods and "should not be covered up like the one that runs through Placerville."

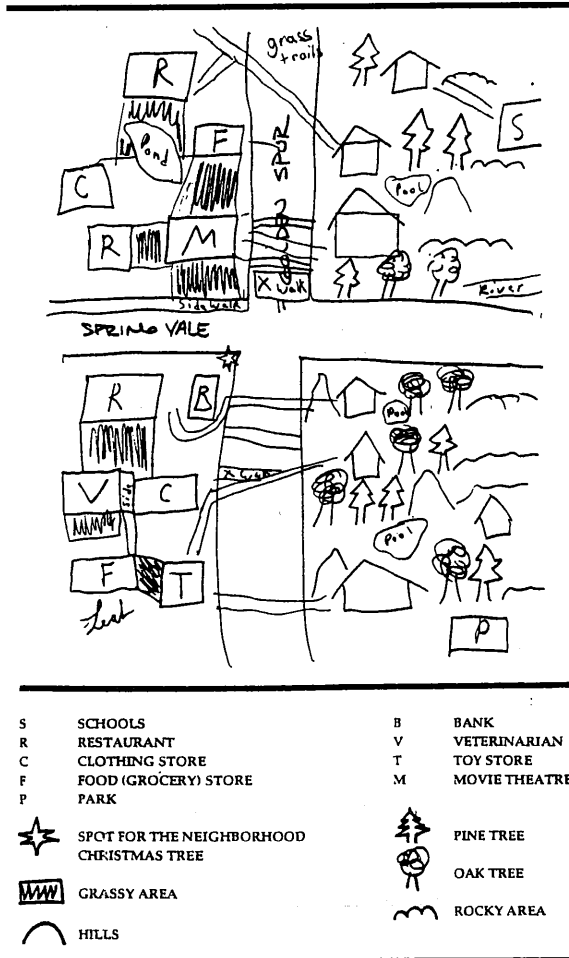
Though her ideas may be similar to those held by her parents or others attending the workshop, the amount and substance of information Leah provided is still beneficial to the county. Leah is very observant and aware of the environment around her. Her perspective is fresh and full of color and reminds us that sometimes the more simple things in life are the most important. Leah provides just one ex-

ample. There are many other children, both older and younger than she, who are full of bright ideas and perceptive observations and waiting for the chance to become involved.

After Leah finished drawing, her mother noted children of all ages should be educated about planning and should be provided with opportunities to get involved. It is often easier to assume that we, as adults, know what is best for our children and to plan for their future accordingly. But in some cases, children know their true needs best and recognize the basic needs of their community more clearly than do their elders.

It is often said that children are the future. Civic leaders, including planners, need to recognize this valuable resource and team up with schools and youth organizations to educate and provide children with the opportunities to experience what "community" can mean. Children may not be as realistic as adults, but they have also not yet been conditioned to think in certain ways. Bringing children into the planning process can be worthwhile and refreshing. And after all, the plans we prepare today will create the communities where our children live in the future.

*Al Zelinka is a planner with Sedway Cooke Associates in San Francisco*



**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER I/II** - Bay Area Air Quality Management District (\$3338-\$3681/mo.). Regional env. reg. agency in San Francisco seeks qualified professionals for two positions. Responsibilities for one position would include env. impact review (CEQA), liaison with cities and counties regarding air quality issues, and prep. of guidance documents. Other position would assist in dev't and impl. of a program to fund projects that reduce air pollution emissions from motor vehicles. Req's. equiv. of Master's degree in Planning or rel. field and exper. in air quality, transp. and city/county planning. More info, call (415) 749-4725.



# Planlines

by Chuck Myer, AICP

## PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

Silence blanketed the audience as the speaker described what it was like to approach old friends downtown only to hear them sneer, "So...now you're a prostitute!" What they meant was that their old friend, once a planning director, was now a planning consultant.

Such was the fate of John Wilbanks of the San Luis Obispo-based consulting firm RRM. He was one of several public-to-private "crossover" veterans who moderated a recent panel discussion subtitled, "Life on the Dark Side." The seminar was aimed at informing both public and private planners what life was like for their "counterparts" (literally on the other side of the counter.)

Since Wilbanks' experience a few years ago, the profession has matured sufficiently to allow young planners to cross over to the private sector without any image-tarnishing. But even though public and private planners are practicing the same profession, there is still a gulf between the two that can lead to communication breakdowns and animosity if not properly bridged.

Private planners see their public counterparts as bureaucratic roadblocks to their projects. They see their work as being pure planning, with their cousins serving only as red tape dispensers. As consultant Glen Worthington says, being a planner in the private sector means you don't get to stay home from work just because it's Arbor Day.

Of course, public planners think THEIR work is the only pure planning, because they are beholden only to the public interest, not to a commercial interest. That's why public planners often describe consulting planners as having "sold out" to serve as "mouthpieces" for developers. (Developers, in this scenario, are the perceived "enemy;" clearing that misconception will have to wait until another column).

Public planners define consultants as someone who borrows your watch, tells you what time it is, and bills you for it. (Or as that preeminent consultant's consultant Ted Kreines says, the consultant actually takes your watch and asks, "What time would you like it to be?")

I have previously commented at the State level on a trend which has become evident at recent state APA conferences: large consultant firms have emerged as powerful forces in the structure of the conference. Recent years have seen the introduction of:

- (1) high-profile "platinum", "gold", and "bronze" sponsors
- (2) official "consultant's reception" (with hosted bar)
- (3) unofficial receptions hosted by individual firms in luxurious concierge suites
- (4) high-quality, high-tech consultant display booths
- (5) gift items for conferees bearing firm logos.

The underlying reason for this trend is becoming clear, and it's not too complimentary for either side. While many public planners are at the conference to escape the rigors of City Hall and kick back for a day or two, the private planners are there to work, and work hard. They are on-call 24 hours a day to do what they must do to survive—network, press the flesh, and keep the antennae up in search of future contracts. Here is the quintessential difference: the consultants crave increased workloads while their cousins on the public side are trying to decrease workloads.

The successful private firms know how crucial conference networking can be. As a result, more effort is pumped into the "other" events at the conference: the meals, receptions, cruises, and social events. They pour megabucks into the hors d'oeuvres trays while the panels and seminars get a lot less of the budget and the attention.

That's not necessarily bad, as long as we remember that professional development is the main goal, and that the marketing and networking are a byproduct. Maybe at the next reception we can drop our public and private role-playing for a moment and honestly share what it's like to be on the other side of the counter. (As a life-long red tape dispenser, I'm sure curious!)

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## SPRING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- April 16 UC Berkeley CED reunion at the Offices of the Steinberg Group in San Jose (6 - 8 PM). Call 510/642-7722 for details.
- April 16 Submit your nomination for the NSCCAPA Board!
- April 19 Deadline for submitting APA award applications. Call Wayne Goldberg at 707/524-5236 for details.
- May 1 Far North Brown Bag Lunch on the Arcata Housing Element. Contact Lia Sullivan at 707/822-5955 for details.
- May 7 Planners and the Electronic Media, a NSCCAPA event. Details on page 1.
- May 9 - 13 National APA Conference in Washington, D.C.

## NORTHERN NEWS

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