

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

The New Regionalism: CNU III

by Shelley R. Poticha, AICP

APRIL 1995

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APR 7 1995

DUNCAN & JONES

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Northern Section Voicemail

415/281-0195

Newsletter Editor

Mark Rhoades 510/227-3214

Advertising Coordinator

Chuck Lerable 408/758-7206

Newsletter Designer

Juliana Pennington 415/824-4375



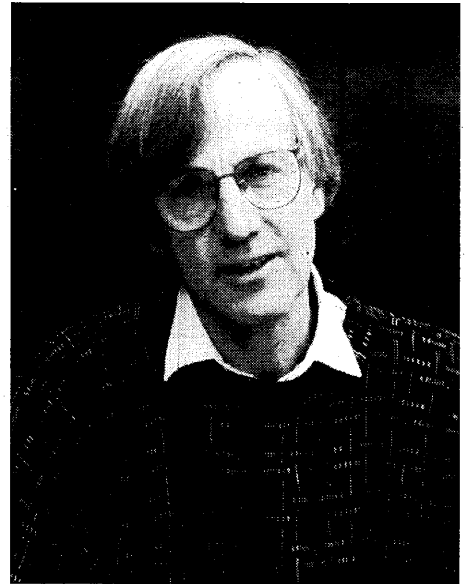
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NEWSLETTER INFO

Mark Rhoades, *Editor*
1152 Portland Avenue
Albany, CA 94706
Phone: 510/227-3214
Fax: 510/227-3280

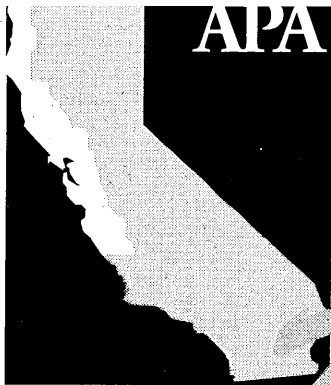
Chuck Lerable, *Advertising
Coordinator*: 408/758-7206

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Chicago, IL 60637
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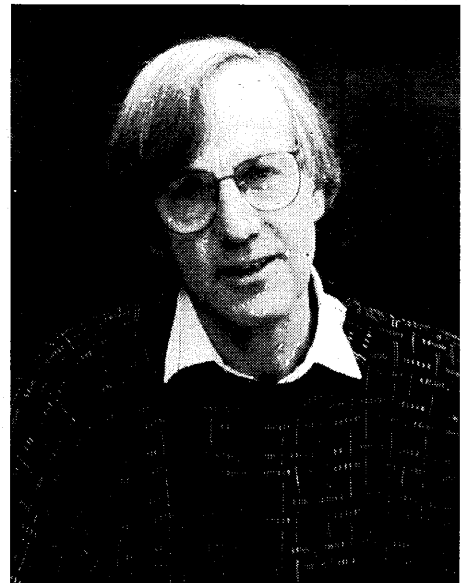
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AWARDS

Just a reminder... the deadline for submitting application materials for the Northern Section Awards Program is **April 14**. For more information, contact Wayne Goldberg at (707) 543-3220.



NEIGHBORHOODS, REGIONS & SUSTAINABILITY

by Paul Okamoto, copyright March 1995

Today, there is a lot of optimism that "sustainable design" can help solve our environmental and social problems. This groundswell of interest in sustainability challenges planners and architects to bridge the current gaps between planning and architecture, environment and economy, inner cities and outer suburbs, and between local neighborhoods and the metropolitan region.

For planners, sustainability evokes the image of pedestrian-oriented development, neotraditional suburbs, regional public transportation, and urban mixed-use redevelopments. For architects, sustainability means "green architecture" — designing with non-toxic, recycle-content and natural building materials, energy-efficient lighting and mechanical systems, passive solar, permaculture and recycled waste water, among other

design techniques. Yet if planners and architects are to truly achieve sustainability, we must make the connections between our design work at both the neighborhood and regional levels.

Currently, there seems to be a divide between those working at the neighborhood and regional levels. Work done in neighborhoods is largely undertaken by community groups, social justice organizations, community development corporations, and architects. Work that affects the regional design tends to involve city, county, and state officials, conservation and environmental groups, and planners. It's as if there are two different cultures of urban planning and design.

These two different cultures of urban planning and design also have different focuses. Neighborhood designs focus on projects concerning infill development, building rehabilitation, affordable housing, community services and traffic calming. Regional designs focus on

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Association of Environmental Professionals '95 Statewide Conference

This year's conference theme is **Restoration*Renewal*Reuse**, and the keynote speaker will be Lee Grissom, Director of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The Conference will be held in the South Bay, and includes several technical training sessions and mobile workshops. Look for more complete information in next month's **Northern News**. Early Registration ends April 25, for more information call Kevin Riley or Judith Silva at (408) 984-3111.

BULLETIN BOARD

Symposium and Tour of Infill Development

URBAN ECOLOGY is presenting this one day event to increase awareness of the economic and human costs of ever more far flung development while our urban areas suffer from neglect. Participants will see compact, gracious and affordable community-oriented alternatives to suburban sprawl and be able to engage in discussions with local speakers from all areas of development including planning, finance and design. Examples from North Berkeley to the San Antonio area of Oakland will include artist's lofts, co-housing, second units, courtyard housing, recycled buildings, and mixed use sites.

When: Sunday, April 23.

Where: North Berkeley and Oakland

Info: Contact Joyce Roy at (510) 655-7508, or (510) 844-4918

The Bulletin Board section of the Northern News is intended to provide a forum for individuals to provide the membership with information about events or current topics. If you would like to submit an item for the Bulletin Board section, contact the Newsletter Editor at 510/ 227-3214.

Annual Spring Forum and Job Fair at UC Berkeley

Planning in the New Political Order

This year's UC Berkeley Department of City and Regional Planning Spring Forum and Job Fair will be held on April 22, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The topic will be the role of city and regional planning in the new political order attending the ascendancy of the Republican Party and its "Contract with America". A keynote address and six panel discussions comprise this year's pre-lunch session. The afternoon Job Fair will provide graduate students from planning schools in Northern California an opportunity to be interviewed by firms and agencies offering internships, full time employment, as well as for firms to introduce themselves through information sessions.

A \$5 fee covers all the day's events, including lunch. For further information contact Kaye Bock on voicemail (510) 643-9440, or fax (510) 642-1641 as soon as possible. Interested students should call the number above, or e-mail Sourav Sen at ssen@ced.berkeley.edu.



The New Regionalism ...

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Representative from St. Paul/Minneapolis, Minnesota. Responding to declining conditions in inner-cities and first-ring suburbs, as well as rapid growth in outer suburbs, Orfield embarked on an impressive effort to document the need for regional tax base sharing (the State already has tax base sharing for industrial/commercial development, Orfield's proposal would expand that authority to cover housing, schools, and infrastructure). His study mapped conditions throughout the region for: child poverty, crime, school attendance, freeway capacity and cost, sewer subsidies, new jobs, tax capacity per household, and change in property values. His new legislation is currently proceeding through the Minnesota State Legislature.

Other speakers represented a wide variety of organizations, including the National Civic League, National Growth Management Leadership Project, Trust for Public Land, Earth Island Institute, Energy Foundation, International Downtown Association, Surface Transportation Policy Project, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Local Government Commission – to name just a few. In addition, case studies were presented from progressive efforts in regions throughout the country, such as Portland, Chicago, San Diego, New York, Philadelphia, and Seattle.

The most challenging session of the conference was, interestingly, led by the apparent core constituency of the CNU: architects and designers. Titled "Regionalism in Architecture," the presentations by a number of local and national architects failed to gel into a clear picture of the role of architects in this emerging regional debate. Instead, their talks focused on the specific details

of buildings, the challenges of "code design," or the need for contextualism in site planning. Unlike many of the other sessions, one was left without a succinct message. Perhaps this is an indication of the need for reintegration of the design profession with other professions, from a collection of star individuals to a community of facilitators and collaborators.

Despite the apparent disconnection between architects and regional visionaries, the message of the civic and environmental groups was "we need you!" These organizations, many of which have been in existence for the good part of this century and will continue well beyond our lifetimes, are clearly devoted to community participation – i.e. grass roots decision-making – and yet, they see a crying need for a strong relationship with planners and designers. Too many of their past mistakes, be they failed federal programs or local organizing, can be traced back to an inability of these organizations to address the physical dimensions of how the built world affects peoples lives. While these groups will continue on their various paths, they approached the CNU with an open invitation for collaboration.

I came away from CNU III feeling re-energized. Encouraged that despite the fact that we are in the midst of very trying political times, there is an emerging coalition of diverse perspectives that advocate new approaches to community planning and understand the benefits of "thinking regionally."

Shelley Poticha, AICP, is a Senior Associate with Calthorpe Associates, San Francisco. Her work ranges from regional planning efforts to community-based neighborhood plans. Membership in the CNU is by invitation.

Neighborhoods ...

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larger scale projects — HOV lanes, mass transit, retail centers and single-family subdivisions. One distinct difference between these types of projects is their locations — the neighborhood projects are generally located in older urban cores inhabited by predominantly older, multi-cultural and poorer people. Regional projects generally are located in the newer outer suburbs and "edge cities". Alas, the older neighborhoods continue to decline as middle class families, retailers and office workers migrate outward to newer and distant suburbs.

Since Proposition 13, there has been a growing funding gap between cities that have a growing sales tax base and those that do not. Many cities simply do not have the funds to plan the future of their communities. This leaves a major gap of planning work in older, mature neighborhoods where the types of projects are considered smaller and less profitable.

As planners and architects, we cannot afford to continue ignoring our valuable economic investments in the urban cores and associated infrastructure of our major cities. Nor can we continue to ignore the environmental, social and economic decline caused by the inadequate designs and inequitable planning policies of our cities, towns and countysides. Together, planners and architects should be taking a leading role in working at both the neighborhood and regional levels.

Paul Okamoto of Okamoto Saijo Architecture, is a practicing architect, a Board member of Greenbelt Alliance and Urban Ecology, and an appointed member of the BAAQMD Advisory Council and the Commission of S.F.'s Environment. He is currently working to develop a nonprofit community-based design consulting program with Urban Ecology.



South Bay RAC-Mixer!!

The South Bay Regional Advisory Committee is sponsoring a mixer at Stoddard's Brewery that will include a walking tour of historic Murphy Avenue. This will be a great opportunity to meet fellow South Bay planners, and to learn about Murphy Avenue. Please plan to join us in this informal setting as the South Bay RAC kicks off a new effort at providing planners with an opportunity to network and socialize.

When: Thursday, April 27, 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Where: Stoddard's Brewery, Murphy Avenue, Sunnyvale

Info: Contact Gerri Langtry at (408) 730-7591

Outlook for a Bay Area Science and Technology Center: Will it Stimulate Real Estate Opportunities?

Sponsored by The Urban Land Institute, San Francisco District Council

This afternoon conference will provide insights into the planned development of a science and technology center in the Bay Area. In addition to introductory remarks by Lynn Sedway, of the Sedway, Kotin, Mouchly, Group, the keynote speaker will be Dr. Ted Hullar, Director of the University of California Alameda Science City Planning Study. In addition, a panel of distinguished experts will comment on the viability of this undertaking.

Date: Thursday, April 13, 2:30-5:00 p.m., Carnelian Room Reception following the conference.

Where: A.P. Giannini Auditorium, Bank of America, 555 California Street, San Francisco.

Cost: ULI Members \$45, non-members \$55

Info: Register by April 7 @ (800) 321-5011

Plodders or Planners-What Will Make City Planning Relevant Again?

Syndicated columnist Bradley Inman will discuss how and why the credibility of urban planning is being restored. From a shared vision of environmental limits and urban growth boundaries, planners need to focus on redirecting resources to sustain the quality of life of existing communities. Good and bad examples of the "liveability" of Bay Area communities will be described. It is expected that Mr. Inman will live up to his controversial and outspoken reputation - name tags will not be necessary!

When: Wednesday, May 17
5:30 network/refreshments
6:15 presentation

Where: AIA Offices @ 130 Sutter St., San Francisco
BART/Muni-Montgomery Station

Cost: \$5 at the door

RSVP: Please, and if possible, help plan food and wine, (415) 281-0195

UC Davis Extension— Upcoming Courses

Endangered Species Conference.
April 11-13, Sacramento \$325

Land Use and Environmental Conflict Mediation Conference. May 19, Davis campus. \$195

NEPA Process and Practice: A Step-By-Step Approach. May 10 and 11, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Davis campus. \$450

California Government for Environmental Professionals. June 13-15, Sacramento. \$350

Info: UC Davis Extension, (800) 752-0881



Return this continuing education survey and get the chance to win a free class!

March, 1995

Dear Readers of the APA Northern News,

UC Berkeley Extension's Environmental Management department, in collaboration with UC Davis Extension, will soon be expanding the land-use and environmental planning curriculum for Bay Area planning professionals. Please help us by filling out the following questionnaire, tearing it out, and mailing it to us at UC Berkeley Extension, 2223 Fulton St., Berkeley, CA 94720 by **April 20th**. Or, fax it to us at **(510) 643-8290**.

About you:

1. What is your highest degree? _____ in what field? _____
2. What is your job title? _____
3. Who is your employer? _____
 public agency consulting firm not-for-profit business developer
4. What city do you work in? _____
5. Does your employer have funds for training? yes no Comments _____
6. Do you feel the need for professional development courses? yes no

About your continuing education needs:

7. Please mark the type of professional development curricula of most use to you:
 - a. a certificate program (usually 7 or 8 courses [240 hours] chosen from a group of largely academic courses)
 yes no Comments _____
 - b. 1-3 day specific topic or update courses
 yes no Comments _____
8. What scheduling format works best for you?
 - a. evening courses
 - b. weekday courses
 - c. weekend courses
 - d. Friday-Saturday courses
9. What Bay Area location works best for you?
 Menlo Park downtown San Francisco UC Berkeley San Ramon
10. Mark the courses of particular interest to you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-modal Transportation Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic CEQA
<input type="checkbox"/> The General Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plans
<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision Map Act Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced CEQA
<input type="checkbox"/> AICP exam preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> Code Compliance and Enforcement
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Considerations in Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Approach to Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS--Intro. course for planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation & Arbitration

Others of interest to you: _____

Thank you for your help; if you have any questions or comments, call us at (510) 643-7143.

**Associate Planner
City of Milpitas**

\$54,000-\$66,730/yr

Milpitas seeks a professional planner to perform a variety of tasks predominantly involved in the development review process. There is also potential for assignments in special zoning and design studies. Position requires three years experience in urban planning or urban design and equivalent of a BA in urban planning, environmental studies, architecture, or landscape architecture. City of Milpitas application and supplemental questionnaire required. For information call (408) 262-5146 or inquire at the City of Milpitas, 455 East Calaveras Blvd., Milpitas, CA. 95035. Application deadline is Friday, April 28, @ 5:00 p.m. EOE.

The Commentary section of the newsletter is intended to provide a forum for members to express their views relative to planning related topics, or to express an opinion relative to articles printed in this newsletter. If you would like to submit an article, contact the Newsletter Editor at 510/ 227-3214.

Beyond the Priesthood

by Peter Katz

We found it impossible to do good buildings in the suburbs; No matter how hard we tried, we were constantly defeated by the uncoordinated surroundings of parking lots and arterials. Ultimately we came to realize it wasn't an architectural problem we could address within our site, but rather a planning problem that had to be resolved at the scale of the entire community. — That's how Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk described the realization that led her and husband Andres Duany to the practice of planning in the late 1970s. Since then, together with architects Peter Calthorpe, Victor Dover, Joseph Kohl, Liz Moule, Stefanos Polyzoides, Mark Schimmenti, Daniel Solomon and others, they've forged a new approach to the making of communities. First called neo-traditional planning, that approach has since come to be known as the New Urbanism.

Importantly, the fifteen contributors to the book which I completed in 1994 (*The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community*) are all architects. At the time, I didn't find that odd. It seemed logical that designers of the human habitat should be equally comfortable at the scale of a kitchen sink or an entire metropolitan watershed. Since then I've come to realize how heretical the notion of physical planning by architects is to those who've come up through the complex world of professional planning—a world of policy, statistics, law and social programs. The New Urbanists refer to themselves as “planners who draw;” They call the others “planners who talk.” The difference in both product and process is stunning.

The bigger question which fascinates me is this: How did we get so far from the physical planning concepts that served professionals so well in the early part of this century? What let us think that we could shape our communities primarily through words and numbers and let their physical form be determined by developers? If we look at the places we've planned in the past 40 years, the answers become self evident.

My sense is that since about 1938 planners really haven't been in the business of plan-

ning—they've been reacting. They've been processing permits, holding meetings and trying as best they can to mediate between the proposals of developers on the one hand and the protests of citizens on the other. In such an adversarial environment, it's not surprising that planners would hesitate to be proactive. When bullets are flying, conventional wisdom would suggest that one lay low. But I'm not so sure that's a viable strategy these days, because the conflicts aren't going away. If anything, they're getting worse with each passing year.

In his book *Community and the Politics of Place*, Missoula, Montana Mayor Dan Kemmis writes about “the procedural republic,” a method of government that has replaced the kind of face-to-face citizen interaction we associate with that earlier model of American democracy—the New England town meeting. In my view, most conventional planners seem to be both the product of, and servant to, the procedural republic. Carefully mediating between the conflicting rights of various individuals and groups, they persevere through an endless hell of public hearings—a forum where Mayor Kemmis notes there is precious little real “hearing” going on.

The alternative, and the source of my optimism for the future, is the current trend toward true participatory planning using physical models. When neighbors see and discuss what's being proposed in visual rather than statistical terms, they're able to transcend their usual NIMBY concerns. Planning efforts from Palo Alto to Providence are achieving success because they are engaging citizens in this way. One caveat: while the term “participatory” is frequently uttered by planners, I find it often consists only of meetings and requests for “input,” with little credence given to the suggestions of citizens.

My sense is that much of the planning profession still regards itself as a kind of “priesthood”—its processes and documents closed to all but the select few in an inner circle, shielded by layers of complex data that grows thicker with each new wetlands ruling. The New Urbanists question this approach, and are trying another way.

*Peter Katz, neither an architect nor a planner, is the author of *The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community*, McGraw-Hill, 1994. He writes and lectures frequently on urban issues.*

Alive and Well—The Northcoast

by Lindsey McWilliams

Millie Greenberg, Mayor of Danville, former planning commissioner and Danville activist since its inception almost 15 years ago, led the half day workshop with memories and observations about life in Danville. This Contra Costa city began life as a rural crossroads in the '70s and came to grips with its onrushing future as a Bay Area commuter locale, with all of the rabid development and growth pressures you would never want to see. Following Sacramento attorney Bill Abbott's walk through on the theory and practice of findings in planning commis-

sion decisions, the moderator noted that "Just about the time I come to view lawyers as a separate species worthy of extinction, along comes one like Bill who teaches me things I need to know and helps me do my job better, and I have to rethink my original premise." Abbott traversed both sides of the applicant/local government hill to show why it is more important to make decisions that are well grounded in fact, and to fully explain the reasons for rejecting or supporting a proposal.

The morning closed with the Ghost of Planning Decisions Future. T. Keith Gurnee, RRM Design Group senior vice president, tantalized the assembly with a slideshow of textbook examples and real life projects both complete and in the works. Gurnee's presentation covered both the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts and showed what can be done when developers are able to stretch their imaginations, and local governments are able to encourage creativity and accommodate the future with vision and courage.

The workshop was put together with the effort and efficiency that government seldom gets credit for, by APA representative Lia Sullivan and City/County Roundtable Manager Earl Wilson.

Lindsey McWilliams is Humboldt County Clerk and former ten year Arcata Planning Commissioner. He also contributed to the Planning Commissioner's Workshop by moderating the event with his customary directness and wit.

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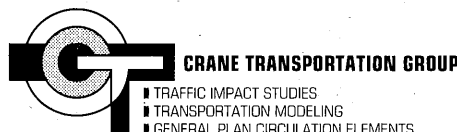


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- 5 Greenbelt Alliance Series
- 11-13 UC Davis, Endangered Species
- 13 ULI Conference
- 22 UC Berkeley, Job Fair
- 23 Urban Ecology, Infill Development
- 27 South Bay RAC Mixer

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May

- 10 Greenbelt Alliance Series
- 10 - 11 UC Davis, NEPA
- 17 Bradley Inman, Plodders or Planners?
- 19 UC Davis, Land Use/Environmental Conflict

MAY						
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June

- 13-15 UC Davis, California Government for Environmental Planners

JUNE						
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