

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

The Struggle For Streetspace

by Martha Olson

RECEIVED

APR 9 1996

APRIL 1996

As pedestrians, we have given so much ground to automobiles in our cities that we have forgotten what it is like to hold the street. This loss has profound implications for the shape and experience of our cities.

My education about how completely we gave over the street to automobiles began with an amazing clip of motion picture film, taken from a moving streetcar on Market street about 1910. A rich mix of streetcars, autos, trucks and even horse drawn carts plied the street at a stately pace. The entire procession was like a ballet, but it was the pedestrians that were the principals. They traversed the street from all angles, timing their walk to glide through the slowly moving traffic. Occasionally a head would turn to judge the speed of an oncoming vehicle, but the pedestrian would not give way. People occupied streetcar stops in the center of the street, boarding and alighting into the mix of traffic. The pace held the whole procession together, everything moved at pedestrian speed:

Today, two intersections on Market Street are the city's most dangerous for pedestrians. San Francisco trails only New York and Boston in pedestrian accidents per capita. How did we get here? Was it merely the increase in the number of autos? The battle for streetspace reached a peak in the 1920s, in the downtown business districts of major cities where transit lines converged, where pedestrian peaks at rush hour could easily overflow sidewalks and take to the streets. Traffic policemen, often on horseback, were unable to cite the many transgressors. In the 1920s, autos entered this mix in increasing proportion and several cities, Los Angeles among them, tried banning downtown

parking to control traffic congestion. In addition, as automobile traffic increased the center street trolley stops were raised, even fenced, at the expense of the private streetcar companies because motorists tended to simply drive right through them.

Los Angeles soon gave up on the idea of downtown traffic control, as did many cities. Although regulating auto traffic was first championed by downtown business interests because their employees and customers largely traveled by transit, it was ultimately resisted by the auto industry through auto clubs. Pedestrians never had this powerful lobby.

The 1920s were also the beginning of the campaign to convert streetcar lines to bus routes. A heavily advertised feature of the new buses was their ability to move to the curb to pick up passengers. The first large scale urban streetcar abandonments were orchestrated by General Motors in 1936 when it bankrolled National City Lines which began buying up and dismantling streetcar companies. National City Lines in conjunction with Standard Oil of California (Chevron), Phillips Petroleum, Firestone Tire and Mack Truck abandoned systems in eighty-five American cities. In 1949, when General Motors and its co-conspirators were convicted for anti trust violations in a Chicago federal court, these streetcar conversions were proceeding apace. Bus conversions were the beginning of the post World War II decline in transit use all over the country.

The effect of curb loading busses was to remove pedestrians from their last stand in the center of the street. Once the safety islands were gone, there were fewer pedestri-

Editor's Note:

This month's NSCCAPA event is a preview of a film by Martha Olson and Jim Klein entitled "Red Car Mysteries," which will be released later this year. The video is about the auto industry's takeover and systematic dismantling of streetcar systems as a transit option, in order to create demand for automobiles and to make way for the imposition of the urban freeway system. The following article by Martha Olson is a supplement to that video, and provides insight relevant to the loss of pedestrian functionality as it relates to the urban street setting.

(continued on page 4)

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DIRECTORS COLUMN

by Wendy Cosin, AICP

One of the Board's goals is to take steps to improve perceptions of planning. To work in this direction, we want to increase our visibility and our contact with other professionals, politicians, and the media.

Our first annual golf tournament, scheduled for June 9 at Lake Chabot Golf Course in Oakland, is a new opportunity to network and increase contacts. We are inviting public and private planners, Council members, Planning Commissioners, and other government representatives. We need the event to be well-attended to make the section financially self-sustaining and thereby allow us to continue to provide services and programs for members. Please promote the event by talking with people you work with and giving them copies of the flyer included in this newsletter.

NSCCAPA does not have the luxury of an office, but over the last couple of years our revamped newsletter and voice-mail have served us well for both internal and external communication. Now we are gearing up for NSCCAPA presence on the Internet. It will help members and the Board to better communicate, exchange information with other professions and organizations, promote good planning, and recruit new members. If you can volunteer to build a NSCCAPA Web Site, or if you want to join a committee to draft web site contents and links, please call or e-mail Hartmut Gerdes at (415)398-7044 or SquarOne@aol.com, respectively.

CCAPA already has a Home Page as does the 1996 Palm Springs conference. The Sacramento and Los Angeles Sections are also in process of going on-line. The State Web site is gearing up to include a consultant directory and resource information, such as the Awhahnee Principles. If you have ideas about other subjects for inclusion on the Chapter Web site, please call or e-mail me (see directory for information).

The Board wishes a fond adieu to Hartmut Gerdes' regular presence as Northern Section's Communications Director. As one of the longest standing Board members, Hartmut has worked closely with the newsletter editor and promoted other communication options, including film, computer technologies, voice-mail and use of the Web. Hartmut has also supported professional development activities by initiating challenging dialogues and events. Although not officially a Board member, we look forward to continuing to call on and work with Hartmut in areas of mutual interest.

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Taxes and Awards

The middle of April should bring two things to mind: the final filing date for your taxes and the submittal deadline for 1996 NSCCAPA awards nominations. Information and application materials can be obtained by contacting Wayne G. Goldberg at (707) 543-3220.

APA Awards Banquet SF Bound

The historic Fort Mason Officers' Club will play host to the 1996 APA Awards Banquet on Friday evening, June 28. The Officers' Club dining rooms echo the warmth and Victorian formality of old San Francisco. This year you will practically be able to reach out and touch the bay and admire the Golden Gate Bridge while enjoying a delicious meal and the awards presentation. There is abundant adjacent free parking, and a Muni/GG transit stop at the corner. A fine variety of overnight accommodations are located nearby. Perhaps you might want to consider making the awards banquet part of a great weekend in the City! Further details will appear in the next issue of *Northern News*. For more information call Dan Pava at (510) 455-9306.

APA Elections

Don't forget, your APA election ballots are due back to National by April 12th. This year there are two NSCCAPA members on the ballot: Marjorie W. Macris, AICP, is running for President-Elect; and, Alvin D. James is running for Director at Large. Voting isn't difficult, you don't even have to go to a polling place-just be sure to drop your ballot in the mail!

Annual Federal Planners Workshop

The first annual Federal Planner's Workshop will convene from April 17-19, following this year's national APA conference in Orlando, Florida. 135 planners have already signed up for this event which features speakers and panels about military base closures, GIS applications, contract administration, sustainable development, and more. One of our own NSCCAPA members, Paul Corrado AICP, will participate on a panel about risk communication basics. The cost of the workshop is \$10 for Federal Planners Division members; \$35 for non-members. For further information on the Federal Planner's Conference call Radonna Parrish at (910) 482-3131, or Paul Corrado at (510) 423-2152.

ABAG On-line!

ABAG has established an on-line web site/discussion group. Its purpose is to use the WWW to converse about techniques, innovative approaches, common problems, and planning issues. To subscribe to the planning listserv, send e-mail addressed: "listserv@abag.ca.gov". In the body of the message type: "subscribe planning" followed by your name (leave one space between each word in the body).

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/ 227-4362.





... Streetspace *(continued from page 1)*

ans and fewer impediments. Streets became the sole preserve of motor vehicles. Without the streetcars, traffic engineers were free to experiment with one way streets. Street widening was another congestion solution. Even in central business districts, sidewalks were narrowed to increase traffic lanes.

Today, the front lines of this battle for streetspace are held by some unlikely forces. Bicyclists are pedestrian's allies when they vie for streetspace but they also share in the peril. In San Francisco, the Critical Mass monthly bike ride draws hundreds, maybe thousands, and takes over entire boulevards. Motorists have learned to detour on the evenings when Critical Mass rides. Traffic engineers tell us that the people most often injured in pedestrian accidents are the very old and the very young - people who cannot move across the street quickly enough in the space of a green "walk" signal. Despite this, the Yellow Book (the federal bible of traffic regulation) allows only a second and a half of green light for every four feet of crosswalk. The traffic engineers, who indirectly

create the risk, answer to a department primarily concerned with traffic flow.

In some places the tide may be turning back toward pedestrians. A few US cities are experimenting with traffic calming, a concept that has been developing in Europe and Australia for several years. These simple devices, speed bumps, narrower streets, and selective through streets have contributed to a 50% reduction in pedestrian-vehicle accidents in Europe. Some citizens in Canada have imported a Danish program, Safe Routes to Schools, identifying streets used by children, installing traffic calming to slow speeds on those streets and reducing accidents by 85%.

Historic uses of streetspace can lend perspective to contemporary efforts for mediating the various uses of modern city streets. The role of transit, particularly surface streetcars, in holding the street for pedestrians and the impact of bicycles on automobile traffic are important examples in the struggle for streetspace.



Assistant Planner

City of Livermore

Salary: \$3792 to \$4610/mo.

The City of Livermore, located 45 miles east of San Francisco, is recruiting for two assistant planners to support the City's permit and planning programs. The City's program requires planners with the ability to reconcile community growth and quality of life issues in a fast paced environment. Candidates should have a minimum of a BA/BS degree in planning or related field and one year of paid work experience. A Master's Degree may substitute for six months of the required experience. If you are looking for an opportunity to work with major planning issues in a fast growing community, these positions may be for you. Applications and supplement questionnaires can be obtained at the City of Livermore, 1052 South Livermore Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550, or call (510) 373-5100. Application Deadline is 5:00 p.m., May 10, 1996. Faxes not accepted.

NSCCAPA Invites you to a preview showing of ... *Red Car Mysteries*

The Northern Section is pleased to present a preview showing of *Red Car Mysteries*, a documentary film produced by Jim Klein and Martha Olson. This provocative and revealing film tells the fascinating and detailed story of the auto industry's lead involvement in tearing out America's streetcar systems, and their role as a powerful highway lobby that eventually led to the creation of the interstate highway system. The film is scheduled for release this summer so join us for a "sneak preview" - a real Northern Section scoop! You have an opportunity to preview this informative and thought provoking film which explores the environmental, equity, and social implications of

public transit versus private automobiles. The film provides the historical context leading up to the land use and transportation challenges that today's planners must address. After the film, producer Martha Olson and several public transit experts will share their thoughts on public transit, and lead a discussion on where we go from here.

- Date: April 24, 1996
- Time: 6 p.m. wine and cheese, 6:30-8 p.m program
- Location: SPUR, 312 Sutter Street, SF
- Cost: \$7
- BART: Montgomery Station
- RSVP: NSCCAPA voicemail at (415) 281-0195, space is limited
- CDPD Credit: 1.5 hours



JURASSIC PARK

Meets

PLANNING

The NSCCAPA presents an evening with Silicon Graphics

- Take a tour of the new SGI technology campus - without leaving your chair!
- Hear the thrilling tale of a successful private/public partnership!
- Sign up early, seating is limited.

Come and see how Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI) used their cutting edge graphics technology, as seen in *Jurassic Park* and other movies, in the planning of their new developments in Mountain View. You'll need to fasten your seatbelts as SGI's computer magic takes you on a walk around their new campus - without leaving your seat! The evening also includes a tour of the award-winning SGI building, recognized by the AIA and the recipient of the Pacific Coast Builders Conference's Golden Nugget Award.

And that's not all ... Don Young, of SGI and Randy Tsuda, Zoning Administrator for the City of Mountain View will discuss the successful public/private partnership between SGI and the City of Mountain View. While it has become commonplace for companies to leave the Bay Area due to government bureaucracy, SGI and the City of Mountain View have bucked the trend, forging a successful public/private partnership which benefits both. Mr. Young and Mr. Tsuda will discuss the innovative processes used during the design phase of SGI's recently completed building and their new technology campus, which is currently under construction.

Don't miss out on this interesting and entertaining evening! Seating is limited, so to ensure that there is room for everybody, you must make your reservations by May 10. Seating will be allocated on an as-available basis after that date, so RSVP early. To reserve your seat, contact Deborah Ungo-McCormick, of Pacific Municipal Consultants, at 408/920-0900; Curtis Banks, of the Menlo Park Planning Department, at 415/858-3410; or leave a message at the NSCCAPA voicemail at 415/281-0195.

Date:	May 16, 1996	
Time:	5:30 - 6:00 PM registration/refreshments	
	6:00 - 7:00 PM presentation/tour	
Location:	Silicon Graphics - 1401 N. Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View (Shoreline Boulevard and Highway 101)	
Cost:	Early Registration (CCAPA members only - checks received by mail prior to May 10, 1996)	\$7 ⁵⁰
	At the Door/Non-CCAPA members	\$10 ⁰⁰
	Students	\$5 ⁰⁰

Registration

I would like to attend the NSCCAPA presentation at Silicon Graphics

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Registration payment of \$ _____

Please send check, payable to NSCCAPA, to:
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WHEN: June 9th, 1996

SHOTGUN: 1:00 p.m.

FORMAT: Scramble

PRIZES: Hole in One and Closest to the Pin on holes #7, #9, #12 and #17 - First, Second and Third place prizes
Must be an amateur to compete for individual prizes.

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HOLE SPONSORSHIP ONLY: \$250.00

CHECK IN STARTS: 11:30 a. m.

For more information, please contact: Linda Rawls (510) 632-8871 Or Curtis Banks (415) 917-1680

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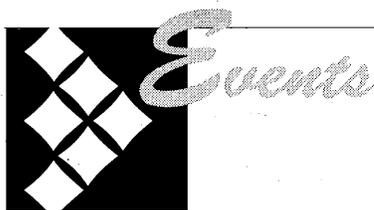
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Salary: DOQ

McGill Martin Self, Inc. (MMS) is seeking qualified individuals to join an expanding Bay Area firm. MMS is a multi-disciplinary civil engineering, planning, and surveying firm with broad experience in both public and private sector planning work. MMS is interested in individuals with a minimum of 2 to 3 years experience in all types of graphic preparation and presentations, i.e. report exhibits, presentation renderings, full scale color presentations and application of reprographic media. In addition, the position requires excellent working knowledge of AutoCad applications in the preparation of other general planning exhibits such as Tentative Maps, Master Plans, conceptual land use layouts, and other planning exhibits, as required. For consideration please forward a resume and references to Greg B. Mattson, Director of Planning, McGill Martin Self, Inc., 4 Orinda Way, Suite 200A, Orinda, CA 94563. No phone calls please. EOE.



UC Berkeley Annual Spring Forum and Job Fair

"Planning in the New Millenium"

Keynote Speaker: Roberta Achtenberg

Last year's event drew over 300 practicing planners and students. Once again, this event is a great way to network and meet other planners. NSCCAPA has graciously agreed to help fund this event. Come hear panel discussions by Bay Area planners on economic development, computer technology, affordable housing, new urbanism, sustainable development, transportation, and the status of the planning profession. There will also be presentations by local agencies and firms about their work and pre-arranged interviews with those who are hiring. For more regularly updated information, visit the world wide web page:

http://www.ced.berkeley.edu/city_planning/

or leave a message for Sherman Luk at (510) 642-1633. If your firm or agency would like to make a presentation and/or hold interviews, e-mail Sherman at sluk@ced.berkeley.edu.

Date: **Saturday, April 20, 1996**

Time: 8:30 am - 6 pm

Location: Wurster Hall, UC Berkeley campus

Cost: Registration is \$5, to help defray costs and provide the buffet lunch

NSCCAPA's East Bay RAC presents...

Thinking About Community from an Industrial Ecology Perspective

with Dr. Braden Allenby

Braden Allenby is the Director for Energy and Environmental Systems at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. He has written and spoken extensively about industrial ecology and design for the environment. Allenby was formerly the research vice president for technology and the environment with AT&T. He has also worked as a regulatory and environmental attorney. Dr. Allenby will share his thoughts and ideas about whether communities can achieve sustainability and what this means beyond the realm of urban planning. Join us to hear this engaging speaker...food for thought and more!

Date: **May 2, 1996**

Time: 12 - 1:30 p.m.

Location: The Brass Door Restaurant, San Ramon

Cost: \$16, includes choice of 3 entrees, salad, dessert, coffee/tea, tax/tip

RSVP: by April 16, Dan Pava at (510) 423-4401, or e-mail at Pava1@llnl.gov

AIA SF presents...

A Brown Bag Lunch with Alexander Garvin

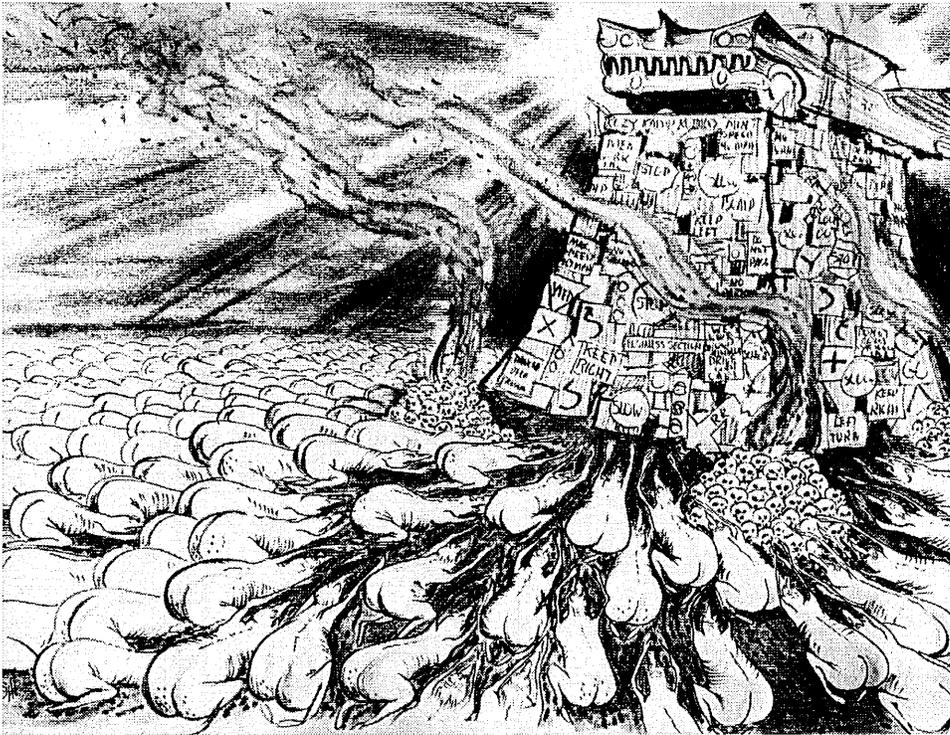
A distinguished Yale professor and member of the City Planning Commission for the City of New York, Alex Garvin has recently completed *The American City: What Works and What Doesn't*. This city planning book is one of the most provocative, thoughtful and encyclopedic planning books written in recent times.

Date: **April 30, 1996**

Time: 12 noon

Location: AIA Offices, SF

RSVP: Fergus Hill at AIA, (415) 362-7397



The Big Problem

Richard Hedman, "And On The Eighth Day," by Hedman and Bair, APA Press, Chicago

MEMBERS

On the Move...

Joseph Karnes has rejoined the Monterey office of EMC Planning Group, Inc. As Planning Associate/Project Manager, Joseph will be responsible for the preparation of planning and environmental documents, and for advising clients relevant to those issues.

Bob Vasquez, AICP, has joined the City of San Jose Redevelopment Agency as Program Coordinator. Bob will be responsible for programs that include downtown permitting, historical preservation, facade improvement grants, public art, and unreinforced masonry buildings.

Michael Foley has been selected to be the Director of Planning and Building for the Town of Woodside. Michael has served as Director for a number of cities including Sausalito, Belvedere, Napa, Yountville, San Juan Bautista, and Davis.

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MARSHALL DESIGN

NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

April

- 20 UC Berkeley Spring Forum/Job Fair
- 24 NSCCAPA Presents *"Red Car Mysteries"*
- 30 AIA Brown Bag

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May

- 2 East Bay RAC Event
- 16 South Bay RAC Event - SGI

MAY

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26	27	28	29	30	31	

June

- 9 NSCCAPA Golf Tournament

JUNE

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30						



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