

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Planner as Mayor

an interview with Ed Blakely by Joanne Manson

RECEIVED

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DUNCAN P. JONES

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Planners are generally in the position of providing guidance to elected officials as they make and implement decisions. It has been debated in the planning profession whether or not planners should engage in politics. It seems clearer today that the answer is yes. More and more planners have decided to 'get political' at least to advocate on behalf of providing planning to ensure equitable and endurable development.

Some planners have taken it a step further and decide to become elected, decision-making representatives of the public they would otherwise represent through plans and their

implementation. In the upcoming Oakland mayoral primary election in June, there is a candidate that fits this genre—Ed

Blakely, a nationally recognized planner, educator, advisor, and now, candidate for Mayor of Oakland. The following passages of our exchange offer some perspective on the planner versus politician debate.

J.M.: Can a planner be an effective mayor?

Blakely: Some of the most effective mayors have been planners. Henry Cisneros had a planning background and as Mayor of San Antonio revitalized the downtown at a time when the city really needed it. Kevin White as Mayor of Boston made huge differences and resuscitated the city through various corridor improvements, also at a time when it was critical for the city. Some elected officials have a vision. These elected officials with planning backgrounds, not only had a vision, they had a vision of how to implement their vision. Planners are generally

behind the scenes trying to implement workable solutions and make people look good—the trick is to be political and transfer this skill to the political scenes. I have done both—been an educator of elected officials, as well as served as an elected official as a Ward (Council member) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

J.M.: Why do you want to be mayor? How do you think you can be more effective as an elected official versus the effectiveness you have experienced as an advisor?

Blakely: The time is right. This is Oakland's best time to have a mayor with the skills of how to get things done. Oakland has good plans. This is the best time to implement those plans. We have the right infrastructure in the right locations. We have the Port and an educated work force in Oakland and we should utilize both to the best advantage of Oakland. Industrial lands in east and west Oakland, the biomedical field, tele-communications with PacBell headquarters, a diverse labor force—14% have masters' degree or more—are all indicators to me that the time is right for a person like me that brings this combination of skills, knowledge, and integrity to mobilize these forces and place Oakland in a more favorable setting.

J.M.: What do you see as the key issues for Oakland to address?

Blakely: Jobs—the creation of jobs that fit our people, not just any jobs. I would continue to work with existing employers and employers that want to locate in Oakland to get the job base that fits the labor force that is already housed here in Oakland—light assembly, transportation and food. We also

“Planners are generally behind the scenes trying to implement workable solutions...”

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DIRECTORS CORNER *by Wendy Cosin, AICP*

During the opening session of the national APA conference in Boston, syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman articulated the central tension of the role of planners as visionaries versus facilitators of a community's immediate desire. She began by encouraging planners to acknowledge public values openly. She pointed out that Americans talk about yearning for more community and shared values, and yet people are not often willing to think past their individual needs. She recognized that the role of planners is to bridge the public and private world and that thinking about the big picture is key.

During a session on walkable cities, Mike Dobbins pointed out that an important part of what planners do is to promote connectivity—to link people with each other. Similarly, Goodman emphasized the value of care-taking—which has been traditionally the role of women. She noted that women have had more success getting into the male world than we have had in transforming it into one where there would be more emphasis on neighborhoods, affordable housing, child care, and schools.

The final session of all national conferences, called "The State of Planning", provides the opportunity for several planners to wrap things up. Linda Cox noted that this year's conference did not offer much in the way of societal trends, big picture topics, or what is needed to create a better society. It can be difficult to remember that, as corny as it may seem, many of us became planners because we wanted to make a difference. When we are in the trenches, often dealing with specific issues between neighbors, it sometimes doesn't feel like we are making a difference at the local level, let alone making the world a better place. It would be worthwhile for conferences to provide us with more opportunities to explore the bigger picture issues such as social and racial segregation, central cities, and sprawl.

June Catalano compared the subject matter of the 1982 and 1998 conferences. The focus of discussion varied widely. Although there were more than twice as many sessions offered in 1998, there were only 4 programs on comprehensive planning, compared to 19 in 1982. An opposite example—there were 14 economic development sessions in 1982, compared to 48 in 1998. This clearly illustrates our movement from long range planning toward pragmatic implementation.

June Thomas noted that while conferences provide a valuable educational function and provide information on how to do our jobs better, we are not systematic in how we share knowledge. This year, a written version of many of the proceedings was published and, as always, tapes for all the sessions can be purchased. It would be interesting if a summary were prepared for many of the sessions, organized by categories such as transportation, environmental issues, land use regulations, etc. This kind of document could be a good resource for tracking trends and easily identifying speakers and agencies that could offer further information.

A closing session speaker ended by stating that APA is not an effective force for change because we act more often as facilitators than we do as agents for change. It was stated that 20 years ago the planning field was still developing and that while our role was taking shape, there was more focus on societal issues such as equity planning. What do you think? Send us a letter to the (new!) editor.



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The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the **Northern News** is the 16th day of the month prior to publication.



Northern Section Awards Banquet

THE BEST WORK of your fellow Northern Section planners will be honored at the annual **Northern Section Awards Banquet** on Friday, June 19th, at the lovely Fort Mason Officers' Club overlooking the San Francisco waterfront. **Northern Section Award** winners will go on to compete in the state and, hopefully, the national levels. The Northern Section has been very successful in recent years; last year's honoree Urban Ecology received national recognition this year for its *Blueprint for a Sustainable Bay Area*.

A social hour and no-host bar will begin at 6:15 p.m. with dinner and presentations to follow at 7:15 p.m. Because attendance at previous banquets has been rather full, secure your seat by reserving now, or no later than June 12th. For more information, contact Wayne Goldberg at (707) 543-3220; or send him \$32 per person to P.O. Box 1678, Santa Rosa, 95402-1678. Please make checks payable to NSCCAPA and include a daytime telephone number.



Environmental Justice Workshop

The California Chapter of APA and the Environmental Law Section of the State Bar of California is co-sponsoring a workshop entitled "Environmental Justice: What Planners Need to Know." As people of color and the poor have begun to forcefully challenge land use decisions that have left their communities subject to disproportionate risk and noxious land use practices. Accordingly, government officials face new legal obligations and increasing community pressures to incorporate environmental justice concerns in a variety of land use planning decisions. In these joint workshops, you will hear from a variety of experts about 1) the environmental justice challenge and how it impacts the planning process; 2) national and local studies that indicate a disturbing trend toward disparate environmental protection for people of color and the poor, and 3) state and federal initiatives and recent court cases which raise new legal obligations and affect the planning process. These sessions are designed to give planners critical, hands-on information to address environmental justice concerns, including using a "brownfield" redevelopment case study to illustrate the issues. The session will be held twice, once on Thursday, June 11th at ABAG Headquarters in Oakland and next on Friday, June 19th at the Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles. The cost of each session is \$50. For more information or to reserve a space, contact Cliff Rechtschaffen at (415) 442-6674 or Philip Hinshaw at (619) 280-2264.

Tour of CoHousing and Cooperative Community Living

The Shared Living Resource center is sponsoring an all-day tour of cohousing and cooperative living centers in Davis, Sacramento, and Berkeley on Saturday, May 16th. Participants will visit five recent examples of co-owned and self-managed "community" based housing and see the way private living space and common areas create the opportunity to live more ecologically and sustainably. Ken Norwood, architect, planner, and SLRC Executive Director, will lead the tour. This is a unique opportunity to see for yourself the benefits of these communities. The cost is \$50 per person. To reserve a space, call Ken at (510)-548-6608.

Housing Forum

As discussed in the March issue, the Northern Section is working to assemble a forum on affordable housing, a perpetually difficult issue facing Bay Area jurisdictions and the region as a whole. Contact Patricia Jeffery, Professional Development Director of the Northern Section, at (510) 524-7980 or via email at Pjeff85233@aol.com if you would like to be a part of the committee organizing the forum, scheduled for fall 1998.

(more Bulletin Board on page 5)

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 (408) 868-1231.



Planner as Mayor *(continued from page 1)*

need incentives for transition from renter to owner—Oakland has some 7–8,000 units of housing that are underutilized.

Also, schools—to fill housing downtown there is a need for schools, good quality schools.

As mayor, I would take an active role with the school system and provide them with resources to do a good job. Recently, mayors that have become involved and are outspoken on behalf of schools [have seen the results] in improved schools.

For our neighborhoods, we need quality housing and conditions need improvement. I would decentralize the city bureaucracy so that it is present in the neighborhoods. I plan five or six neighborhood centers to provide central government services and to be used for teen centers perhaps in conjunction with other services. For example, a center could contain a combination of recreation, community policing, and information services. Others would have planning, permitting and information services. Each may be slightly different based on needs of the neighborhoods and each would use existing underutilized buildings where possible.

I would also propose that the city government be managed to produce results in the above areas to ensure that they stay a priority until they are adequately addressed.

J.M.: Any ideas for the future of the downtown—the Broadway area, the Montgomery Ward building/site, Eastmont Mall, and the former Sears building/site at 27th and Telegraph?

Blakely: The Downtown area needs to be based on arts & entertainment, not just retailing for retailing's sake. I understand that some major investor is potentially interested in the Montgomery Ward building/site as an industrial incubator. If that doesn't pan out, I would propose a school—adult education, preferably, sharing space with retail tenants. The Eastmont Mall would work as one of the combination neighborhood service centers I mentioned earlier. I always thought the international bazaar concept—multi-tenant local small merchants marketing imported goods—would be a good use of the former Sears building/site. There's plenty of parking in the rear and the concept seems to be working in some warehouse space near Jack London Square.

J.M.: You currently serve in a Presidential appointed post as a member of the Presidio Trust due in large part to you being nationally recognized as an urban problem-solver. Will this interfere with you taking office as Mayor of Oakland should you be elected?

Blakely: The appointment will end when I am elected mayor.

Joanne Manson is the University Liaison with the Northern Section APA, a planner with the Alameda County Waste Management Authority – a joint powers agency, and was a student of Mr. Blakely's many moons ago in the MCRP Program at UC Berkeley. If you would like more information you may contact the campaign headquarters at: 3215 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610. phone: 510-839-9898, fax: 510-839-4594 e-mail: info@edblakely.com website: www.edblakely.com

Senior Planner

City of Belmont
Salary: \$4,304 - \$6,016/month

Working in the Community Development Department, you will plan and execute major planning projects; process development permits; prepare reports on planning projects; provide assistance on planning, environmental review, and zoning matters; and assist in the administration of contracts. Requires a BA in urban planning or a related field and 5 years of professional experience, or an MA and 4 years experience and knowledge of urban planning, state laws related to planning, zoning, environmental protection, housing, and subdivision. General familiarity with redevelopment law, computer graphics, and database skills desirable. The City of Belmont offers a comprehensive benefits program including full insurance, pre-tax benefits account, and retirement. Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on May 29, 1998 at Human Resources, City of Belmont, 1070 Sixth Avenue, Suite 303, Belmont, CA, 94002. Phone (650) 595-7452; TTY (650) 637-2999; JOBLINE (650) 595-7438. EOE.

Principal Planner

Lake County
Salary: \$3,213-\$3,905/month plus benefits

Come live, work, and play in beautiful Northern California! Lake County boasts the cleanest air in California, affordable housing, and excellent recreational opportunities. This position plans, directs, and coordinates the activities of the Planning Division. Provides technical expertise, supervises the work of others, and performs the most difficult professional planning work in both current and advance planning. Requires completion of 4 year college degree with major work in planning or related field and 5 years of progressively responsible experience in current or advance planning. A master's degree and/or AICP certification are highly desirable and may substitute for 1 year of experience. For information, contact Lake County Personnel, 255 North Forbes Street, Lakeport, CA 95453, (707) 263-2213. Closes May 15, 1998. EOE.



1998 CCAPA CONFERENCE: SPECIAL EVENTS UPDATE

Hopefully you are already busy making plans to attend the 1998 CCAPA Conference, *"Mirrors and Reflections"* which will be hosted by the Orange Section in Costa Mesa September 16-19, 1998. A number of Special Events are planned that are sure to be memorable for those attending. First, of course, is the gala **Opening Reception**. This event will be held at one of Orange County's premier locations. We will provide great food and great entertainment. Look for more details in upcoming issues. In addition, your paid registration will include attendance at the **CCAPA 50th Birthday Party at the Beach**. This event will be held at one of Orange County's most beautiful beaches, Salt Creek State Beach. This area is home to the world famous Ritz Carlton Laguna Niguel. The event will feature a barbecue, entertainment, and much more.

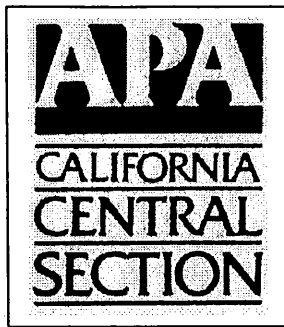
Mobile Workshops are always a highlight of the Annual Conference and this year will be no different. Over 12 mobile workshops are planned to examine and showcase the planning issues throughout the area, including the Irvine Entertainment Center, Historic Downtown Orange, the expansion of Disneyland, and much more.

Other special events are designed to take advantage of Orange County's beautiful weather and amenities. One such event will be the **Back Bay Kayak Excursion**. This excursion will take you for a close look at the Wildlife Preserve of Upper Newport Bay, one of Orange County's most beautiful and unique coastal attractions. If paddling is not your style, then a **5K Off-Road Walk/Run** around the Upper Newport Bay may be the special event for you. This event will also showcase the beauty of the Back Bay. If golf is your game, then the conference has just the event for you. A **Golf Tournament** event is scheduled at Irvine's San Joaquin Golf Course. Sign up early to reserve your space. Look for early registration forms in the April/May issue of *Cal Planner Magazine*.

Each of these special events will include **round-trip bus transportation** from the Doubletree Conference Facility in Costa Mesa. More information will be coming soon, so stay tuned and we'll see you at the Conference!

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1998 SIERRA RETREAT

Hosted by CCAPA, Central Section
August 21 – 23, 1998

Announcing the 7th annual Sierra Retreat, sponsored by the Central California Section of the American Planning Association. The Retreat provides an excellent combination of camaraderie with fellow planners (and their families) with some professional development thrown in. Activities will be provided for all members of the family.

PROGRAM: "Keeping A Proper Perspective"

Whether you are in the public or private sector, doesn't planning seem to always involve politics? The issues of growth and land development, as well as their economic implications, almost guarantee that planners must deal with conflicting agendas, and personal egos. This year, we have a panel of dynamic speakers who will provide professional insight into these issues, as well as personal advice to planners on ways to maintain a healthy perspective in dealing with these pressures. Even planner's spouses and family members will benefit from these perspectives.

Featured Speakers

(Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon)

- Carol Whiteside – Former Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for Governor Pete Wilson
Former Mayor, City of Modesto
- Daniel Whitehurst – Former Mayor, City of Fresno
- Ed Tewes- City Manager, City of Modesto
Former City Manager, City of Clovis

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES – (throughout the Weekend)

Special Saturday Evening Campfire Speaker: "John Muir" – founder, Sierra Club

Bingo, Campfire Music, Crafts, Swimming, Day and Night Hikes, Boating, Fishing, or Watching the Sunset across the Lake, Relaxing, and Doing Nothing!

PLACE: YMCA CAMP SEQUOIA – LAKE SEQUOIA
Sequoia National Forest (1 hour east of Fresno – Hwy. 180)

TIME: August 21 – 23, 1998
6:00 p.m. Friday evening through 10:30 a.m. Sunday

COST: Adults/children over 12 - \$85.00
Children under 12 - \$50.00
Costs includes two nights lodging, meals (housekeeping cabins, bring your own towels and bedding) and all special activities!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call Brian Smith (209) 577-5276 or Sheri Provost (209) 439-4881 for additional information.

**Educational Facility Planner**

University of California, San Francisco

Salary: \$43,300-\$66,400

UCSF's Campus Planning Department seeks qualified applicants for position to assist in implementing UCSF's Long Range Development Plan. Responsibilities include: develop and prepare reports and studies related to campus landscaping, recreation, open space, and other campus site issues; produce feasibility analyses of proposed site improvements; work with UCSF academic, administrative, and Medical Center personnel to gather information; make presentations to campus and community groups. Ability to balance campuswide plans and priorities against needs of specific programs, units, and sites. Sound judgment, superior analytical and technical skills. Ability to communicate technical concepts to lay audiences. Background in life/health sciences, university, medical center, or biotechnology a plus. BA in planning, landscape architecture, architecture, or related field, with four years related experiences or equivalent combination of education and experience. Prefer graduate degree. Require facility with statistical and visual analyses, experience with Excel, Word, and graphics programs. Open until filled. Please send resume and salary history to UCSF Human Resources Department, Staffing and Compensation, Job #9550, 1350 7th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94143-0832. AA/EOE/MFDV.

NSCCAPA Hosts Chinese Planners

As part of an initiative for National APA to foster a long-term association with planners in China, CCAPA's International Liaison, Steve Wanat, with the assistance of other APA members interested in international affairs, hosted a series of presentations to the President of the China Land Society and the Director and Deputy Director Chief of the State Land Administration of the People's Republic of China. On Thursday, April 16th, the delegation met with the planning director of ABAG and the deputy director of MTC; they later also visited the Environmental Simulation Lab and met with the chair of DCRP at UC Berkeley. The next day, they attended a presentation by representatives of the San Francisco Planning Department and the Port of San Francisco. After lunch, they traveled by ferry to Tiburon where they were taken to the Marin County Civic Center for a presentation on open space preservation. After a brief tour of a shopping mall, APA hosted a small Chinese-style farewell banquet during which many a "gambay" (bottoms up) was toasted. Sino-APA relations were very warm by evening's end.

UC Davis Extension

UC Davis Extension continues to offer several interesting one-day classes for planning professionals. Offerings for the summer include seminars in design review, GIS implementation, negotiating development agreements, and wetlands regulation. For more information about these and other programs (held at UC Davis and in Sacramento), contact UC Davis Extension at (800) 752-0881.

East Bay RAC Social Exchange a Success

The East Bay RAC held its first gathering on April 9 at the Black Diamond Brewery in Walnut Creek. Twenty planners attended this casual event. In addition to the micro-brewed beer, wine, and delicious appetizers, attendees enjoyed socializing and the presence of two special guests. Val Alexeeff of Contra Costa County gave a brief overview of planning in Russia, before turning over the program to Gary Cross of Earth Island Institute. This organization has been instrumental in bringing international planning expertise to Russian planning agencies. Gary noted that there is a lack of local planning policies, zoning, and implementation, as well as the basic understanding of due process and environmental issues. The Planning in Russia topic will be brought back to East Bay planners later this year for more in-depth coverage. For further information on East Bay RAC events or if you would like to suggest a topic or venue for a future meeting, please contact Greg B Mattson, RAC chair, at (925) 988-9188.

UC Berkeley Extension Courses

The UC Berkeley Extension Program in Environmental Management almost always features classes of interest to planning professionals. In June, they are offering classes in "Unlocking Gridlock" and water regulations. If you do not already have one of their catalogs detailing course offerings, call (510) 643-7143 for more information.



by John Cook

It has been a fun, fulfilling two years working on the Northern News. This shall be my last issue—at least for now (who knows what might happen in the future?) I hope that you have found the newsletter informative, insightful, and in your mailbox reasonably on time each month—although this issue in particular is running a little late. I have greatly enjoyed working with others in this organization in disseminating information and occasionally stimulating debate.

Are there issues of interest to planners that you would like to see covered in a future edition of the Northern News? Give me a call at (408) 868-1231 or a fax at (408) 868-1281 with your ideas and I shall forward them to the next editor when he or she is named (which will be sometime after press time this month). What do you like most about the newsletter? Least? What have we spent too much time on? Not enough time on? Your feedback is the lifeblood of this publication; without it, we are just a graphically appealing stream of words.

The two years I have spent working on the newsletter have greatly contributed to my professional and personal

growth. I started my work on the newsletter as a somewhat idealistic graduate student, ready to turn the world over starting with the suburbs. After about a year split between transportation finance research and front-line current planning (in a suburb, I might add), my idealism is somewhat bloodied and battered, but it endures. Some days it doesn't quite make it to work with me, but it is still there.

As Wendy mentioned in her column this month, there is a reason why we chose this profession—that each of us has in him or her the hope that things can change for the better, the knowledge to bring about that change, and — this is the toughest part—the belief in ourselves that we can be the agents of positive change. If we think otherwise, we are cynically wasting our time.

With spring upon us, I recommend that each of us take a moment to step out of our trenches and remind ourselves of the longer view provided by our hopes and and by our beliefs. Not one of us alone is going to change the world overnight or even in a year, but that doesn't mean we should give in to enshrining the status quo.

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NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

May

- 15 Central Bay RAC Get-Together, San Francisco (415) 753-1777
 16 CoHousing and Cooperative Living Tour (510) 548-6608

June

- 11 Environmental Justice Workshop, San Francisco (415) 442-6674
 19 NSCCAPA Awards Banquet, San Francisco (707) 543-3220
 19 Environmental Justice Workshop, Los Angeles (619) 280-2264

July

- 9 NSCCAPA Board Meeting, Oakland

MAY

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
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31						

JUNE

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Board Meeting Location

NSCCAPA Board meetings are held at ABAG Headquarters, located within the Bort MetroCenter at the intersection of 8th and Oak Streets in Oakland, adjacent to the Lake Merritt BART Station. Other 1998 meeting dates are: July 9, September 3, and November 5. All interested are welcome at these meetings!



Northern News

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