



OCTOBER 2006

Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Can the collaborative process achieve equity?

Planners continue to invent new processes. On July 28, members of the California Planning Roundtable delved into “using the collaborative process to achieve equity.” David Booher, FAICP, Center for Collaborative Policy, and one of the founders of the Roundtable in 1981, moderated a panel of five in Oakland. (The Center is a program of California State University, Sacramento.)

In summary: building trust

While it is important to bring together different stakeholders and perspectives to identify issues, decisions won't be reached until there is a level of trust among the participants and the responsible agencies. People of color won't participate unless the environment is safe and the outcome promises to be mean-

ingful in addressing their concerns. Groups will continue to have a natural tendency to block

Sara Polgar, Water Trail Project Manager, Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), also participated in the Collaborative Planning Academy. Sara has been leading a two-year process for a Bay Area water trail (as opposed to the land trail around the bay). “While that experience showed how important it was to bring together different stakeholders and perspectives, and while the stakeholders were able to identify the issues, the group is not ready to make decisions because the stakeholders distrust the agency [BCDC].”

Victor Rubin is director of research for PolicyLink, headquartered in Oakland with offices in New York City. PolicyLink's work has evolved over seven years from a social movement to a template for action. “Planning is what planners do,” said Rubin. “The core ideas of the regional equity movement are familiar to most planners. Two publications, *Opportunities for Smarter Growth* (1999) (<http://www.policylink.org/pdfs/OpportunitiesForSmarterGrowth.pdf>) and *Regional Equity and Smart Growth* (2004-5), (<http://www.policylink.org/Research/TranslationPaper/>) presented ways of looking at metropolitan issues and getting involved in regional planning efforts. Both called for a bigger and more diverse table, i.e., reinvesting in surrounding communities and not pitting suburbs against cities.”

Linda Jackson, AICP, principal planner, San Rafael, felt “it is critical to make it safe and meaningful for people of color to participate. Doing a general plan is 50 percent product and 50 percent process. Face time leads to building trust. Creative things flow when people trust.” She suggested taking the time to reach out to groups (for example, the youth) in their environment rather than asking them to come to workshops. She promoted the use of simultaneous translation

In a truly collaborative process, people understand the need to change, adapt, and modify original concepts.

the collaborative process. In a true collaboration, participants understand the need to change, adapt, and modify original concepts. Collaboration won't fix everything, and it only works where there is interconnection, interdependence, and dialogue.

Remarks by the panelists

Lisa Peterson, one of two student representatives on Northern Section's Board, led off. She participated in the Collaborative Planning Academy and interned on the Emeryville General Plan update. “Planners are not necessarily empowered,” she said. “We have to be creative to survive. Yet we can be powerful because we work on all aspects of planning in a way that breaks down the barriers between segregated parts of the profession.” Our goal is “collaboration to achieve equity.” We need to “look at process versus results.”

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE *by Hing Wong, AICP*

November is election time! We have qualified candidates running for two elected Northern Section positions: Director Elect and Administrative Director. Please cast your votes. Ballots will be in the November issue of *Northern News*. I also urge you to vote for candidates and ballot measures that support good planning in the California General Election on November 7th.

Northern Section Bylaws are being revised to include a new Board position: Planning Diversity Director. There are also minor changes in the Bylaws. Please go online [www.norcalapa.org] to view the revisions. Any comments should be sent to Hing Wong at hingw@abag.ca.gov no later than November 1, 2006. The draft Bylaws are scheduled to be adopted at the November 8th Board meeting.

The California Chapter APA Conference in Orange County is just a few weeks away. It's hard to believe—so soon after the successful national conference in San Francisco—that our Section will be hosting another conference, but we're all geared up and getting ready for the 2007 state conference in San José. There are still many ways for you to get involved. For example, we need one or two people to assist in the layout and design of the Planner's Guide. Please contact Juan Borrelli at juan.borrelli@sanjoseca.gov.

Board positions are also open. We are looking for qualified individuals to serve as the Advertising Director and the Legislative Director. Duties are listed in the Bylaws, and I will be able to answer any questions. If interested, please contact me.

A number of events are planned for the last quarter of 2006. They include a Transbay Terminal panel discussion, crime prevention through environmental design seminar, and a few social mixers. Check the calendar on the back page for dates. Save the date—December 1—for our annual Holiday Party. The Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP) will again be joining us for the festivities.

October 4

APA, SPUR, and the Transbay Terminal JPA host a panel discussion on the Terminal project and area redevelopment, 7 to 9 PM, Metreon Action Theater, Metreon Level 2, 101 - 4th Street, SF. Presenters include Dean Macris, Amit Ghosh, Maria Ayerdi, Dennis Gillespie, and Mike Grisso, Transbay Terminal project manager. RSVP (required) to FWheele@bart.gov

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Letters

Editor:

I read your provocative article on sustainability (“Live sustainable or die,” *Northern News*, July 2006). Having worked with these concepts for many years, and with a love of using precise language, I share your sentiments to some extent. Personally, I have gravitated to the 3 E’s of Environment, Equity, and Economics as a way to communicate the idea of sustainability, a nice framework acknowledging the breadth of the concept and where it needs to go. The 3 E’s also fit with the notion of a triple bottom-line, something which speaks to a lot of project-oriented people trying to remake the private sector with more social responsibility. Finally, the 3 E’s convey the idea of convergence: how to integrate separate goals of environmental, social, and economic sustainability into a single, seamless, more livable world.

Janet Smith-Heimer
Managing Principal, BAE
Emeryville • New York •
Sacramento • Washington
DC

[The writer also provided this useful link: <http://www.sustainabilitydictionary.com> -Ed.]



Review: *Planning and Urban Design Standards*

By Peggy Woodring AIA, AICP

This is an important book. An enormous amount of energy, talent, and time has gone into providing a useful reference for urban planning, development, and urban design today. The author is listed as the American Planning Association under whose auspices the content, graphics, and structure were brought together.

Planning and Urban Design Standards is a working tool. Like another Wiley gem, *Architectural Graphic Standards* now in its tenth edition, *Planning and Urban Design Standards* is a reference book and a compendium of working models, and is intended partly as an inspirational guide. From the abstractions of goals and policy formation to the nitty-gritty reality of wastewater treatment, civil airport safety, and playground surface materials, *Planning and Urban Design Standards* uses existing expertise from practitioner-specialists. The information is clear, direct, and fundamental.

The content is encyclopedic; therefore the organization of the content is critical. The User Guide is essential, but leads to the first complication announcing “a book organized into the four following groups of information:”

“...broader purposes of planning...”

“...building block’ components...”
“...various ways these components interact in our communities...”
“...tools and techniques used to achieve planning and design outcomes...”

However, when we look at the six chapters or what are called “parts” in the Table of Contents, it is difficult to identify the relationship of the announced four groups of information to the list of articles under each “part.”

In order to assess the organization, I decided to test the organizational format in two areas of my own experience: transportation planning at the regional level, and working with real estate developers on residential development.

Transportation Plans (p.27) was listed under Part 1 “Plans and Plan Making,” a good start. However, the complexity of transportation planning showed up immediately with some internal redundancy in the text, made more telling by seven references listed in the “See Also” section at end of the article. Graphics in the section contributed by Diana C. Mendes, AICP, of DMJM + Harris Planning, Fairfax VA (pp. 29-30), illustrate both the complexity in planning

(continued on page 6)

Where in the world? By Chandler Lee, AICP



Answer on page 6

Collaborative Process ... (continued from page 1)



CPR panel: Lisa Peterson, Sara Polgar, Linda Jackson, AICP, David Booher, FAICP, Judith Innes, Victor Rubin

systems, and stressed the need to include whole families in “face time.”

Judith E. Innes, Professor of City and Regional Planning, UC Berkeley, saw informality (which she defined as “working outside the set of mandated structures”) as a strategy for planning. “Business-driven volunteer organizations can operate outside rules and procedures.” She gave CALFED as an example of a complex problem-solving organization, unrestricted by formalized regional governance.

David Booher said, “Planners have always been inventing new processes. They are not traditional linear planning models with lines of authority. In fact, traditional accountability is foreign to today’s models.”

Additional comments from Roundtable



Please join APA and SPUR for a joint session presentation by
Paul Farmer, FAICP,
Executive Director and CEO of
the American Planning Association

**What Would U.S.
Domestic Planning Policy
Look Like If We Had One?**

Tuesday, November 14, 2006

Wine & cheese reception at 5:30 p.m.
Paul Farmer will speak beginning at 6:00 p.m.

SPUR Office

312 Sutter Street, 2nd Floor
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Parking located at the Sutter-Stockton garage

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Non-members contribute \$5

RSVP to 415-781-8726 x120
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members included:

- An equitable collaboration gives participants feelings of safety, inclusion, and trust.
- A good process begins with a free-for-all that is then reigned in.
- The public hearing process is dysfunctional, unfriendly, and uncivil. Build an informal system around it.
- Data needs to be democratized; it needs to come through unfiltered.
- What is the price of failure in an informal forum? It loses legitimacy and just goes away.
- In a truly collaborative process, people understand the need to change, adapt, and modify original concepts.
- City councils and county boards are uncomfortable with the decisions that come out of collaborations.
- There needs to be constant feedback between the collaborations and the decision-making bodies.
- There’s always a struggle between process and content and between process and outcome.
- The public wants an informal inclusive process. The agencies want formalized review, discussion, and determined outcomes.
- This is a paradigm shift, and the language we use is difficult; a tower of Babel. How do you build capacity in something so chaotic?
- Informality is transparency, not chaos. The already incredible increase in informality is going to escalate.

Booher closed the session, commenting that “Collaboration won’t fix everything. It only works where there is interconnection, interdependence, and dialogue. We’ve built collaborative capacity among ourselves. We’re not alone. The next step is to define and articulate the informality model.”

EMPLOYMENT

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Meet our new editor



Erin Dando, AICP, was appointed Associate Editor of *Northern News* in July. Erin, who is an Associate Planner with the City of Berkeley, was editor for the September issue and will be editing the November issue.

Onward and upward

Gail Odom, AICP, formerly a project consultant with Seifel Consulting Inc., is now Planner III in the Alameda County Planning Department, assigned to current planning. Gail received a bachelor's degree in 1973 from UC Santa Cruz, and a master's in 1979 from Cal Poly, Pomona. She has extensive background in county land use planning, environmental consulting, and coastal zone management.



Profile: Emy Mendoza, San José State University

RECIPIENT, CALIFORNIA PLANNING FOUNDATION—NORTHERN SECTION AWARD, 2006

Student Representative, NSCCAPA Board

Interviewed by Connie Galambos

Emy Mendoza fielded countless queries about the Fruitvale Transit Village during her three semesters at San José State University. She is only halfway through the master of urban planning program, but her credentials as a former staff member at the Unity Council—a community development corporation serving the Fruitvale district of Oakland, the impetus behind the Fruitvale Transit Village—have made Emy something of a minor celebrity in planning student circles.

In reality, Emy's experience at the Unity Council was much broader. She began as an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer, and quickly moved into a staff position with the Main Street Revitalization Program on International Boulevard's commercial corridor. There she facilitated the economic restructuring committee, made up of merchants, community members, bankers, government representatives, and a host of others working to strengthen the area's economic base.

While planning school might seem a natural fit from this alone, Emy's journey to SJSU was much richer than those three years of employment. From an early age, her life was defined by urban planning issues—access to education, housing, and economic resources. In the late seventies, Emy's El Salvadorian family moved from the Mission District of San Francisco to Belmont, in pursuit of a public education for her. At that time, integration was just beginning. Emy remembers busloads of students arriving at the Belmont High School from East Palo Alto, and feeling a sense of solidarity with them amidst the chaos of the early 1970s race riots at the school. "We looked more like the people on the bus than like the people in Belmont," she noted.

Although Emy did not initially plan to go to college, she crossed paths during her first year out of high school with a friend attending Stanford. "I could do that," she thought. In time, Emy completed undergraduate studies

in mathematics at the College of Notre Dame. She decided she would always contribute to her community through a profession that incorporated social welfare—most likely through teaching. Fortunately for the planning world, a stint teaching English in China during the time of Tiananmen Square revealed that teaching high school might not be Emy's dream job after all.

After returning to the US, Emy and a partner opened a restaurant in the Financial District, handling everything from building the kitchen to cooking. The venture lasted three years before an opportunity to travel whisked her away. At that time, Emy joined Backroads on a bicycle tour of Italian countryside wineries. Her first exposure to city planning came in Venice where she learned about the city's pollution, historic preservation, and immigration. At the same time she considered those issues abroad, she was confronted with news of the dot.com boom's impact on housing and real estate in the Bay Area. She was startled to realize that the vagaries of the California economy and real estate market might leave her homeless.

Ultimately, Emy reestablished herself in the Bay Area, in Oakland, deeply intrigued by planning's impact on her life. An introductory urban planning course taught by Mark Wolf through UC Berkeley Extension confirmed her interest, and led her to enroll in SJSU's master of urban planning program.

During this past summer, Emy interned at the Association of Bay Area Governments. There she was able to use her policy and GIS mapping skills to map general plan land use designations across the nine counties. Over the coming year, Emy will be working with Shishir Mathur, assistant professor at SJSU, looking at the impact of transit oriented developments on real estate prices in surrounding areas. At the same time Emy is building her analytical skills, she will begin exploring her next urban planning move. She is open to going anywhere, so long as it "allows for creativity."

Planning and Urban Design Standards (continued from page 3)

the actual transportation process and the chronic shortfall in transportation funding, a shortfall that is projected to become even greater in the next decades. A contribution from the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan (p. 30), demonstrates how transportation planners identify street elements to be used in the Grand Rapids Transportation Plan. However, there is no information about the time horizon of the Grand Rapids plan, existing versus planned streets, and if the city has planned any implementation strategies. The graphic does contribute names of the road system in map form.

Residential development is mentioned in several places in *Planning and Urban Design Standards*, but when I looked up the term "entitlement," I found no entry in the index. Entitlements are the rights integral to a parcel of land. Since developers start with land and its infrastructure, entitlements are key to making investment decisions. Zoning has traditionally been used to regulate development, primarily by assigning land parcels a single land use designation and identifying what entitlement comes with each parcel. This is changing, but that is the tradition.

New ways of planning are discussed. To its credit, *Planning and Urban Design Standards* has a section on "Innovations in Local Regulations" (p. 601) that identifies techniques used to encourage flexibility such as a "Unified Development Code," or specific development outcomes such as "Inclusionary Zoning" for affordable housing.

But my technique of testing *Planning and Urban Design Standards* may be quite the wrong way of judging. When I read *Scientific American*, I love almost every article except those in my own

field. The articles on planning or architecture seem watered down, and not specific, critical, or thorough enough. I feel the same way about *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. I love all the information on wetlands, water treatment, and remote sensing about which I know very little. But when I read the transportation sections, I wonder how the authors, the specialists, and the editors could possibly leave out the Build-Operate-Transfer system used globally to fund transportation, including in our neighbor Canada. And how should we critically understand the section on New Urbanism (which is neither new nor urban)? The movement has spawned white middle class suburbs. Has anyone counted the number of folks walking to their rail line, where there actually are rail lines?

So, what do I really think about *Planning and Urban Design Standards*? I say again, this is an important book. This is the first edition. It will change. *Architectural Graphic Standards*, the mother of all design standards, came out in 1932, beloved immediately by professionals and students alike. However, the second edition (1938) had 25 percent more content to address all the changes, additions, and clarifications received from its readers. I bought this reference book and look forward to the next editions.

PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS (Wiley Graphic Standards, 2006) American Planning Association. \$199.00 hardcover; \$85.00 paperback. 720 pages. ISBN 13:978-0-471-47581-1

Answer to "Where in the world": English Bay, Vancouver BC.



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2007 CCAPA Conference, San Jose

Call for Presentations

Proposal Submittal Deadline: January 19, 2007

Suggested Topics

Transforming the Planning Fabric

Sessions on cooperation, regional and local interests, partnerships, strong neighborhoods, and cross professional collaboration. We invite different points of view.

Finding the Balance: Business, Jobs and Housing

Topics include economic development, redevelopment, financing, smart growth, historic preservation, transit-oriented development, jobs/housing balance, and public and private partnerships.

Diversity in Planning: Inside and Out

Diversity within the planning profession, representing diverse populations, and California demographic trends relating to any specific subgroup such as Latinos, African-Americans, Asians, women, gays/lesbians, disabled, elderly or homeless populations.

Planning 101: Planner Survival Skills

Covering latest technology, ethics, management, private practice, legislation and court rulings, and sharing recent experiences.

Healthy, Green, Safe and Clean

Sustainability, green practices, public health, alternative transportation, natural hazards, emergency preparedness, safe growth, water quality and resources, brownfields, CEQA issues, and open space preservation.

You are invited to participate in the 2007 California Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) Conference in San Jose by organizing a conference session. The conference typically draws over 1,200 attendees. This conference is suitable for planners, architects, landscape architects, scientists, housing advocates and many other professionals.

**This year's theme is
Transforming the Urban Fabric**

Session Formats

Formats other than traditional presentations are welcome such as: Point/Counterpoint debate; workshops with audience participation; round table; and "talkshow" style. Sessions will be 75 minutes in length. The sessions will be held **September 30 - October 3, 2007.**

Submission of Proposals

Proposals must be submitted online at ccapa2007@comcast.net

Confirmation, Acceptance and Questions

Proposal Submittal Deadline: January 19, 2007

Notification of Session Acceptance: March, 2007

Questions? Please contact Hanson Hom, AICP

Phone: 510-577-3421, e-mail: ccapa2007@comcast.net

Proposal Contents

Proposals must provide the following information:

- Session or workshop title: A short and catchy title that accurately reflects the focus of the session.
- Summary of Session: A short description of the session to be used in the conference program, not exceeding 50 words.
- Abstract: A short description of the session and relevance to conference topic, not exceeding 200 words.
- Each presenter's contact information and short biography.

Conference information online at www.calapa.org

NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

October

- 4** Panel discussion on the Terminal project and area redevelopment, 7 to 9 PM, Metreon Action Theater, Metreon Level 2, 101 - 4th Street, SF. See p. 2 for details. RSVP (required) to FWheele@bart.gov
- 5** CPTED Seminar, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, 6 to 8 PM, RBF, 500 Ygnacio Valley Road, Suite 270, Walnut Creek. Sponsored by East Bay RAC. Refreshments. Contact DRalston@oaklandnet.com
- 12** Peninsula RAC Social Mixer, Hola Mexican Restaurant, 1448 Burlingame Avenue, Burlingame. RSVP by October 10, andrea.ouse@lsa-assoc.com
- 15** AICP exam prep workshop. Contact dr.donbradley@comcast.net
- 18** APA to China planning meeting, 7 PM, House of Siam, 151 South Second Street, San José. For details: Rob Eastwood (408) 299-5792 or Rob.Eastwood@pln.sccgov.org
- 22-25** 2006 CCAPA Annual Conference, Hyatt Regency Orange County, Garden Grove

November

- 4** 2007 CCAPA Conference Steering Committee meeting, 10 AM to Noon, San José City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara Street, San José
- 7** Election Day (VOTE!)
- 8** NSCCAPA Board meeting, 6:30 PM, MetroCenter Room 171, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland.
- 14** Paul Farmer, FAICP. 5:30 PM reception. 6 PM talk. 312 Sutter Street (Stockton/Grant) See ad on p. 4. Free to members.
- 30** Last day for mailing NSCCAPA ballots for Director Elect and Administrative Director.

OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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SAVE THE DATE. December 1

Annual APA/AEP Holiday party! Caffé Verbena, 1111 Broadway, steps from 12th Street BART station, Oakland. Details and reservation form in November issue and on the web, or contact dcrplanningconsultants@yahoo.com

This newsletter and past issues, job postings, and membership news and information are online at www.norcalapa.org