

APA-MA CHAPTER MEETING Minutes
Friday, September 29 , 2006

New Haven, CT

8:00 a.m.

Approved 11/3/06

Board Members Present: Sean Bender, Tom Bott, Tom Broadrick, Joseph Cosgrove, Lynn Duncan, Chris Eaton, Kathy Joubert, Peter Lowitt (President), Robert Mitchell, Joyce Moss, Jennifer Raitt, Sabine Prather, Heidi Samokar, and Felipe Schwarz.

Guests Present: Chapter members and students.

Welcome and Introduction of Board and Attendees

Mr. Lowitt welcomed attendees and introduced the Board members. Attendees then introduced themselves.

Annual Report

Attendees received a copy of the 2006/2007 Annual Report (which will also be posted on the web page). Mr. Lowitt noted that it has been a busy year for the Chapter and highlighted key accomplishments from the annual report including:

- The Chapter initiated a program to attract citizen planners by promoting chapter-only memberships. As a result, 84 have joined APA-MA as chapter-only members.
- To recognize membership, the Chapter would like to purchase 300 pins commemorating those that have been members for 25 years.
 - ✓ The Chapter moved and seconded (T. Bott / Glenn Garber) to authorize the purchase. So voted.
- The Board needs volunteers to serve on an election committee. Mr. Broadrick will chair the committee. Board terms end in 2007.
- The Chapter needs a alumnus to serve as a liaison to UMass.
 - ✓ Mr. Garber volunteered.
- The Chapter needs a chair for the Economic Development Subcommittee and a Citizen Planning Official. [After the meeting, Jef Fasser of BSC/TerraSphere volunteered to chair the Economic Development Subcommittee].

The Chapter moved and seconded (Ralph Willmer / Joanne Haracz) to accept the Annual Report. So voted.

Discussion of *Middleborough v. Housing Appeals Committee (HAC)*

Mr. Lowitt provided an overview of this case, where the town of Middleborough is contesting that funds provided by the New England Fund do not constitute a subsidy per Chapter 40B. The Chapter's Amicus Committee recommended that the Chapter file a brief on behalf of the Housing Appeals Committee.

At the last Board meeting the Board took a straw vote and was divided. The Board instead voted to remain neutral but promote discussion about the issues raised by the case.

The floor was opened for input from meeting attendees. The following points were raised:

- If the New England Fund is not considered a subsidy it may greatly reduce sources for affordable housing subsidies. Joining on behalf of the HAC is an opportunity for the Chapter to pro-actively support the creation of more affordable housing. The Board should review the brief when it is available and re-consider its vote.
- It is important to sign on with the HAC – chance to weigh in on how planners feel about affordable housing.
- Fear of how a decision could impact the Local Initiative Program (LIP).
- Board members need more discussion, input and information.
- The briefs will be filed in November.
- Need a time frame for making a decision and a process of Chapter members to weigh in.
- The issues is not about being for or against affordable housing, but rather whether the New England Fund qualifies as a subsidy.
- We need to keep in mind the APA Housing Policy. The Amicus Committee took this into consideration when it made its recommendation.
- Need a list of pro's and con's.
 - ✓ Mr. Lowitt offered to post the brief on the web site once it is ready and solicit feedback. The following next steps were decided upon: Mr. Broadrick, Mr. Willmer and Ms. Raitt will develop a list of pro's and con's that will be posted on the web site. The Board will take another look at whether it should file a brief.

Comments from APA President David M. Siegel

Mr. Siegel gave an overview of APA initiatives including: membership goals; a communications strategy to better explain what is planning and what planners do; global outreach including requests for assistance from developing countries; and that October is Community Planning Month.

Ideas for Web Site Improvements

The Chapter has a new web master, thanks to the Wentworth Institute of Technology. The Board is soliciting ideas for improving the web site. The new web site will include an archive of planners list serve messages and will include password protected access to membership contact information. Pages will be adjusted so that less scrolling is needed. Also, the web master will offer suggestions based on their expertise. The Board also welcomes the submission of pictures to have on the website.

Additional ideas from attendees included:

- Post model Requests for Proposals and other commonly-sought documents.
- Provide planning news feeds.
- Post award information.
- Provide legislative alerts.
- Link to CPTC's model bylaws.
- Provide an image library.

Attendees were reminded that volunteers would be needed to implement some of these suggested improvements.

Other Announcements

The 2007 regional conference will be held in Massachusetts on Cape Cod. Mr. Schwarz will be chairing the conference. Please contact him with ideas for the conference or if you would like to volunteer to help with conference planning.

Mr. Mitchell announced that the Sustainable Development Committee would like to hold an event in the fall. Please contact him with ideas.

Mr. Mitchell also reminded attendees that the State Smart Growth Awards will be announced at the December 1 Smart Growth Conference. Nominations are due by November 1.

Finally, nominations for APA-MA awards are due on October 6.