Planning Awards

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Happy New Year to you! I hope you enjoyed the holidays and are staying well. Wow, what a year 2020 was! While there were challenges, we are trying to find the silver linings: the surge in use of virtual meetings has reduced our commuting times, and increased access to and participation in public meetings. Quarantines have given us more time with our families and created a slew of new outside environments for dining, working and playing. And planners and our communities have shown that they can adapt quickly to pandemics and all the curve balls it throws.

APA-MA shifted how we did business completely in 2020. We held our Annual Awards Ceremony and Annual Meeting via Zoom…and it was awesome! Working with our Awards Committee, we completely changed the format and now our Awards live on YouTube for people to celebrate for years to come. In addition, APA-MA decided to adopt a one-year strategic plan, instead of a three-year plan, to be nimbler and prepared for the additional changes that are to come from COVID-19. We call it the Bridge Strategic Plan. It contains 14 strategies that will help us prioritize our resources to respond to the needs of our members in 2021, while also recognizing we have a strong strategic plan that brought us from 2017 to 2020. This Bridge Strategy will connect us to our next three-year plan, so we won’t lose sight of the great ideas that are helping us serve you better. Check it out!

The APA-MA Chapter continues to adapt and be responsive to our members during this time. Here is what you can look forward to from APA-MA in the first half of 2021:

• APA National Planning Conference 2021—May 5-7, 2021. If you are interested in helping with the conference organizing, please reach out to Scott Turner at sdt@envpartners.com.
• Monthly Planner’s Therapy sessions, which are getting a facelift! Find more on our website at www.apa-ma.org.
• APA-MA Board Elections are this year! If you would like to run for one of the twelve elected Board positions and serve your fellow peers, stay tuned in February for the call for position statements!

Lastly, here’s a fun challenge: we are almost at 1,000 LinkedIn Followers! If you haven’t already done so, follow us on LinkedIn and be one our 1,000th follower. Please visit our website (www.apa-ma.org), and follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter for regular updates on other Chapter activities. I hope to “see” you soon!

Be well,

Angela J. Cleveland, AICP
aclevelandaicp@gmail.com
APA-MA/ MAPD Annual Planning Awards

The APA-MA awards program, co-sponsored by MAPD, recognizes outstanding planning projects, individuals, and organizations across Massachusetts for significant contributions to the field of planning.

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY AWARD

Boston Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines

According to the 2016 Climate Ready Boston report, 12,100 buildings, or over 10% of Boston’s total building stock, would be exposed to coastal flooding by the year 2070. Utile led the development of Boston’s precedent-setting Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines. These design guidelines, executed in collaboration with the Boston Planning and Development Agency, are a critical step in the City of Boston’s Climate Ready Boston Initiative. They apply to existing and future developments, ensuring that buildings are constructed or adapted to withstand the flooding risks posed by sea level rise and storm surge. The guidelines are associated with a flood resilience zoning overlay which covers areas with a 1% chance of coastal flooding in 2070.

The project integrates extensive research into best practices, analyses of existing regulations and local built form, and input from community, municipal, and professional stakeholders. The Guidelines work with several initiatives from Climate Ready Boston, including neighborhood plans, public right-of-way guidance, and future zoning. The document is referenced by building owners and developers, and it will be used to administer the Coastal Flood Resilience Zoning Overlay District which is being developed by the City. By serving as a widely-accessible resource, the guidelines raise awareness of future flood risks and resilient best practices so that current and future generations of Bostonians can live and work in a resilient city. “Climate Ready Boston lays out strategies that think holistically about building a more resilient City—from protecting residents and homes to jobs and infrastructure,” said Boston Mayor Marty Walsh of this project. “The Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines are an important piece of this plan. They provide a tangible resource to ensure current and future developments coincide with our vision for a more resilient Boston.”

Judi Barrett
Principal

P. 781-934-0073 | C. 781-206-6045
judi@barrettplanningllc.com | www.barrettplanningllc.com
COMMUNICATIONS & JOURNALISM AWARD

Stoneham Counts

After a significant drop in 2010 census participation, the Town of Stoneham recognized the importance of a robust educational campaign to help community members understand why it is so important to complete the census. Over the past ten years, the Town has faced numerous challenges as a result of being undercounted and needed to do something different to get the public engaged in this process. “Stoneham Counts” was an intentional, multimedia, journalistic approach to encouraging participation in the decennial census. The Stoneham Complete Count Committee created a branded strategy and thorough communication plan that crossed all forms of media and used storytelling to connect with the local community. “Stoneham Counts,” was created to make the effort accessible and approachable, and minimize barriers in its use. The communication plan incorporated all multimedia types: broadcast, print, and online as well as creating opportunities for collaboration. For example, fifth grade students held a Census Poster Contest to advertise the census which downtown businesses later posted in store windows. The Town also capitalized on its high school rivalry with Wakefield to issue a challenge between leadership. Furthermore, the Complete Count Committee also hosted trainings to educate the public and answer questions.

The Town was able to see the results immediately – every census block responded at a higher percentage by May 1, 2020. This method was informative, exciting and most of all fun. Further, the Town was much more equipped to work with the public during COVID-19 as it gained experience and insight into why multimedia cross-engagement is critical. Stoneham Counts created a roadmap for future plans and programs that will be use to engaged the public for years to come.
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AWARD

Winchester Master Plan

The Town of Winchester has a mid-sized population of 22,677 people. The 2020 Master Plan was the Town’s first master plan since 1953!

The Winchester 2020 Master Plan, in addition to the seven statutorily required elements, included an eighth element — sustainability — to recognize Winchester’s recent commitment to climate resiliency through its Climate Action Plan. The integrated plan design highlights the synergies and connections between elements. Over 18 months, over 2,500 people shaped the plan including through the coUrbanize project website.

Four core themes emerged:

1. **Balancing Development with Preservation**: The Plan addresses balancing preservation and development, including appropriately-scaled development; affordable housing options; and commercial and mixed-use redevelopment opportunities.

2. **Ensuring Sustainability**: The Plan addresses how the Town can best maintain its resources and be best equipped to meet future challenges, including climate resiliency and adequate funding and planning for capital improvements.

3. **Building Community**: The Plan addresses how to better engage residents and the services, events, and programs that bring Winchester together.

4. **Connecting People to Places**: The Plan addresses creating a safe circulation network that relies less on vehicles and provides safe and pleasant alternative transportation options to key destinations.

The plan format is unique. The document is laid out with compelling graphics based on a project “branding” and color theme. It’s a planning document that is meant to be read and digested by non-planners.

The Winchester Master Plan has a ten-year planning horizon, with a revolving fund and follow up measures designed and dependent upon Town Meeting action.
PLANNING PROJECT AWARD

Easthampton Downtown Strategic Plan

The City of Easthampton has supported the revitalization of its historic downtown for many years through progressive planning, community engagement and implementation efforts. In 2018, the City voted in favor of consolidating its three downtown Elementary Schools into one new state-of-the-art school, opening up a three parcels of City-owned property downtown. Recognizing the immense opportunities at hand and the potential challenges that could arise, the City proactively kicked off a Downtown Strategic Plan to gather and synthesize a wide range of community input into a cohesive and innovative plan for the downtown area’s economic growth, sustainability, and future needs.

The Downtown Strategic Plan succeeds in developing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in Easthampton’s Downtown and establishing strategies to leverage opportunities for enhanced economic development and quality of life.

This study was funded by an Executive Office of Environmental Affairs Planning Assistance Grant with matching funds from the City’s Zoning Incentive Fund. It was supported by a “Sounding Board” appointed by Mayor LaChapelle—a group of business owners, residents, and elected officials that oversaw this planning project and will guide the implementation of a community-driven vision for the future of the downtown area.

STUDENT PROJECT AWARD

UMass Amherst, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, for their Boxborough EDC Project

In the summer of 2019, the Town of Boxborough’s Economic Development Committee contracted with the University of Massachusetts Amherst to produce an economic development study. The study was conducted by a team of 19 graduate students from the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning. The Town is challenged with redefining its economic future. Urban growth trends moved industries and business to metropolitan centers, causing commercial vacancies and shifting the town’s tax burden to residents.

The project was described by the Town of Boxborough as “simply impressive” and a project that “helped bring the community and all of its diverse views together around a need to make changes in a way that respects the heritage of our town.”

Exemplary aspects of the plan include: the use of cutting edge methods to create a factual basis for making their assessment; presenting their analysis in a clear, transparent form that could be understood; using scenario based techniques focused on linkages; and bringing their findings to the public through formal and informal ways. They created a well written, clearly understood document. Their outstanding civic engagement effort included a “Trash Talk” session at the Transfer Station, two Economic Development Surveys, a business breakfast, participation in the town’s Christmas Fair and two community-wide meetings. They even had a television show!

The project was overseen by the Boxborough’s Economic Development Committee. The student team supported the committee in securing Special Town Meeting approval and funding necessary to complete the second phase of the study and moved the community forward to a place where they can begin to take action.
DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP—PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development, City of Brockton

Since 2014 as Director of Planning and Economic Development Rob May has brought excitement, vigor, and life to the City of Brockton. During his six year tenure, Rob has been working to bring the planning practice alive in his City. Under his direction, and in partnership with many local organizations and individuals, Brockton has become a planning success story. From Prova! (meaning “Proof” in Haitian Creole) where Rob helped to bring a popup beer garden and entertainment venue in a vacant lot in Downtown Brockton to new development and a Farmer’s Market, Rob and his team have put Downtown Brockton back on the map.

The City completed a comprehensive master plan, A Blueprint for Brockton/A City-Wide Comprehensive Plan and multiple other planning studies, urban revitalization plans, and other studies. These plans don’t sit on the shelf — the City, under Rob’s guidance and direction — is making moves. The Downtown Urban Revitalization Strategy (written in 2016) has spurred the development of hundreds of new units of market rate and affordable housing in Downtown Brockton and more projects are in the pipeline, even as the world is faced with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Rob works with community members, board/committee members, other departments, and developers to make the projects happen. Through Rob’s leadership Brockton’s plans help show that the things that Brockton residents wanted and saw for themselves were possible. He’s able to turn a “no” into “yes” by showing people what they can achieve.

Rob May actively works to make the City’s zoning support the kinds of live-work-play environments that are desirable, creating a welcoming, inclusive community that is reflective of its past, but also forward-thinking.
**Distinguished Leadership—Citizen Planner Award**

John Souza, City of Leominster Planning Board

John Souza has 30 years of experience serving on the Leominster Planning Board with approximately 20 years as the Planning Board Chair. During his tenure with the Board there was significant residential, commercial and Industrial growth in the City of Leominster.

John worked diligently on the two revisions of Leominster’s Zoning Regulations that were adopted during his tenure and oversight of Leominster’s Planning Board. He has worked on numerous committees to further enhance the Subdivision Regulations, the City of Leominster land acquisitions, Cluster Development and Watershed Protection.

John is actively involved in the local community by heading and belonging to many civic organization’s including: Rotary Club, Habitat for Humanity, Boy Scouts of America, Our Lady of the Lake Church, Sholan Farm Orchards and many others. He is at far right in this photo.

John is a community based, dedicated city official who has worked tirelessly to make his community of Leominster better. He has been involved in a 30+ year building and economic boom for Leominster which resulted in over 100 hundred new subdivisions representing thousands of new housing units, scores of new commercial and Industrial subdivisions and infra-structure enhancements.

Major projects include: New England Development’s proposal and build out of a major commercial and retail project comprising 50+ acres anchored by a Walmart Supercenter, and Reliant Medical Center. During his tenor as Chair of the Planning Board he oversaw the construction of Water Tower Plaza, and the expansion of the Leominster Campus of UMass Memorial Health Alliance Hospital as well as many other projects.

John’s formal education is in Engineering where he had a very successful 45-year career acting in a capacity ranging from Consulting Engineer to Project Management.

**Distinguished Service Award**

Darlene Wynne

This year’s Distinguished Service Award goes to Darlene Wynne for her tremendous work as the Professional Development Officer for the APA-MA Chapter. The PDO position sometimes goes unrecognized, but is critical to the professional development of Planners. As PDO for two terms, Darlene brought fresh energy and organization to the role. During her time on the Board, she:

- Developed and implemented the process for awarding certification maintenance credits for our events and numerous partner organizations (which is no small task)
- Rebooted the AICP prep course for exam takers
- Revamped and actively recruited people to apply for the AICP scholarship
- Led several AICP Prep courses at half a dozen SNEAPA Conferences
- Organized and presented workshops about AICP and the Chapter at all of the planning accredited universities
- Assisted with re-accreditation for our four planning schools

In addition to her role as PDO, Darlene was always volunteering to help with other things...From stuffing packets at SNEAPA, to staffing registration, to helping with Judi Barrett’s inclusionary housing sessions. She was always willing to raise her hand.

Darlene Wynne is the Planning Director for the City of Beverly and lives in Wenham with her husband and two adorable kids. In addition to her service to the Chapter, she has 18 years of professional experience in land use planning and zoning; land use economic and real estate analysis; and environmental permitting and has been AICP certified since 2007. In Beverly, Darlene is responsible for supporting other service-oriented boards like the Planning Board, the Open Space and Recreation Committee, and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Thank you, Darlene, for your commitment to the Chapter and our communities!
Culverts and small bridges play an integral role in the Commonwealth’s transportation network, ecological health, and climate resiliency. Massachusetts has more than 25,000 culverts and small bridges in its transportation network. When functioning properly, most people are unaware of these important structures when they travel over them several times each day. Many of these structures have reached the end of their designed service life; are undersized or deficient relative to current stream flows; or have not been assessed for habitat connectivity, resilience, and/or structural integrity.

MassDOT convened the Culverts and Small Bridges Working Group in consultation with Stantec to identify and evaluate the costs and benefits of existing environmental rules and regulations, engineering standards, and permitting processes for their impact on the replacement or repair of deteriorated or substandard culverts and small bridges. The Working Group developed a series of recommendations to address these challenges. The report, “Recommendations for the Improving the Efficiency of Culverts and Small Bridge Replacement Projects” trains its focus on state-level actions that will increase the sustainability and resiliency of the Commonwealth’s transportation system while also improving ecological and environmental conditions. This report gives MassDOT, municipal leaders, and planners the tools they need to replace and improve culverts and small bridges before people are made aware of these important structures due to their failure.
A critical social determinant of health, our transportation system has an enormous impact on the quality of our environment, on our personal decisions, and our sense of well-being. Inequities in transportation policies and systems contribute to the health disparities between those who have options and those who do not. People with limited access to private vehicles, people with disabilities, older adults, and those who experience systemic racial and language barriers face far greater difficulties traveling between their homes and desired destinations.

The Blue Hills Regional Coordinating Council was established in early 2019 to find collaboration and cooperation that is meant to be across sectors to address transportation inequities. The BHRCC, made of a wide range of stakeholders, exists to built a healthier region by addressing transportation and accessibility barriers in Braintree, Hingham, Hull, Milton, Quincy, Randolph and Weymouth.

The purpose of the BHRCC Assessment and Action Plan is to spotlight root causes of inequities in the regional transportation network and present actions that can lead to a more inclusive system and support well-being across the lifespan of each resident, relying on coalition partners for needs assessment outreach and action plan strategy identification. This backbone support likewise will continue to drive implementation, ensuring that the specific identified in the plan are designed and piloted in a way to address transportation inequities and accessibility for residents, particularly those facing mobility, economic, and health challenges in their lives.

Utilizing and building upon the AARP age-friendly communities framework, community healthy needs assessment and community health improvement plan, this Action plan aligns with a variety of local, state, and national transportation and health-related initiatives. Some of these include but are not limited to Quincy 400, the Randolph Community Wellness Plan, the Governor’s Council to Address Aging in Massachusetts, the WHO/AARP Age-Friendly Network, hospital community health assessments, and the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) coordinating plans.
Patrick McKenna, City of Chicopee

Patrick McKenna was nominated by the City of Chicopee’s Planning Director, Lee Pouliot, AICP, ASLA. Pat was hired as the City’s Assistant Planner, a position that opened up as Pat was serving as a Planning Intern after graduating from the Master’s program at UMass-Boston.

According to Lee, Pat approaches his work with an endless amount of energy and passion for the key tenets of our profession, with a particular emphasis on equitable planning approaches and the role planning plays in equity. He also has the desire and willingness to adapt to situations and take on projects that were necessary to advance the Department’s goals and priorities—including the Chicopee Downtown GetDown, developing the Department’s social media platforms and leading the Steering Committee for the City’s first Comprehensive Plan.

As planners, we all strive to be better at building and sustaining relationships to accomplish our goals, both personal and work-related. Pat realizes in the need to develop communication pathways between otherwise unrelated disciplines, stakeholder groups, and government entities. He strives daily to develop this foundation for his work, evident in the breadth of accomplishments realized in Chicopee the past two years. He also has played a key role in convening the first Planners’ Therapy in Western Mass as a way to engage the area’s planners and students to network and discuss some of the challenges and opportunities facing the region. Pat’s talents and abilities are hard to find; to have him part of the Chicopee team, and the Pioneer Valley region at large, he will continue bring to the table the many thoughtful discussions regarding planning and its policy impacts to our professional planning family here in Massachusetts.

Kassandra Gove, Mayor of the City of Amesbury

Mayor Kassandra Gove started office as the City of Amesbury’s first woman mayor in January 2020. As a native of Amesbury, she committed to helping the City by focusing on three big issues: student-centered education, thoughtful economic development, and investment in infrastructure. And then COVID-19 struck, and Mayor Gove struck back by continuing to help her community address these issues.

Throughout the pandemic, she has continued to be the Chair of the School Board, appointed members of the business community to the Business Economic Adjustment Team to assist in business recovery efforts, and found ways to invest in our physical and virtual infrastructure to keep the City functioning and moving forward. As the former Executive Director of the Amesbury Chamber of Commerce, she developed a strong understanding of the needs of Amesbury’s businesses, and that it involves a strong education system, maintained sidewalks and roads, supportive and knowledgeable City staff, affordable housing, 21st Century technology, and protected natural resources.

These are all essential to businesses and creating a sustainable community, which Mayor Gove is determined to create. Throughout the pandemic Mayor Gove has been visible (through weekly Facebook Live hours), transparent (through monthly newsletters about City-wide happenings), and flexible and understanding with municipal staff (by allow Department heads leeway to plan for re-opening).
Advancing Racial Justice

by Kathleen “Kathy” McCabe, FAICP and Anne McKinnon, AICP

With the first issue of the Planning Magazine of 2021, it is a time for reflection and making resolutions. Equity and tackling the issues of racial justice need to be part of our resolutions for 2021 and the third decade of the 21st century. We offer seven actions for planners to address racial justice.

Mass-ACP sponsored one of eight screenings of Raoul Peck’s I Am Not Your Negro in the U.S. and was one of hundreds across the globe celebrating Human Rights Day on December 10, the day the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. The Declaration asserts that all human beings are born free and equal and advances many of the principles embodied in the Bill of Rights, the U.S. Constitution and the AICP Code of Ethics.

I Am Not Your Negro is a film by Haitian-born film-maker Raoul Peck about the life of James Baldwin. The film, inspired by Baldwin’s unfinished manuscript, Remember this House, is about Baldwin’s friendship with three civil rights leaders—Medgar Evers (1925-1963), Malcolm X (1925-1965), and Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)—who were all murdered in the 1960s. The film examines the civil rights movement and America’s resistance to it.

The murders of Black Americans in 2020—George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breona Taylor, and many others—make viewing this award-winning documentary especially poignant. Over 50 years after the height of the civil rights movement, the Black Lives Matter movement has put a spotlight on what has not changed for Black America.

The distinguished panel discussion with Ted Landsmark, Boston Planning & Development Agency Commissioner; David Lee of Stull & Lee, a pioneering and award-winning Black-owned architectural and planning practice; and Quintin Miller, Baldwin scholar and Chair of Suffolk University’s English Department, helped identify specific actions for planners and others to take to begin to address racial injustice.

The film highlights some of the core issues regarding race. For too long the U.S. and whites have refused to acknowledge the maltreatment and disenfranchisement of Blacks. Whites are often unaware of the history of race in America. We think of the atrocities in Birmingham (perhaps the worst of which was the bombing of a Black church killing four young girls) as if it happened on Mars. Yet the arson of Black churches is occurring here—the day Barack Obama was elected president in 2008 in Springfield and again in December 2020. The Boston Globe reported that Black Lives Matter signs were removed or defaced at churches and homes in Arlington, Lynnfield, Mendon, and Wellfleet last year. The racist graffiti, “N—— LEAVE” was found on the African Meeting House in Nantucket with no one held responsible. Unfortunately, we need to face and grapple that racism is here.

Sometimes, people don’t want to know what’s on the “other side.” We don’t look at disparate impacts as to systems, programs or policies, or even ask the question. We might shrug and say we’re nearly an all-white community or we are already diverse, thus we don’t have to look at the issue of race and equity. But, we must.

Power and inclusion are key to addressing racial injustice.

Seven things planners can do to advance racial justice and equity are:

1. Acknowledge Planning and Most Planners Have Not Addressed Racial Inequities. Although planning is an aspirational profession, the history of planning is fraught with racial inequity. Urban renewal is sometimes called “Negro removal” since early urban renewal targeted Black neighborhoods for demolition and redevelopment, displacing thousands. Similarly, transportation policy often sited freeways through Black neighborhoods, creating barriers in neighborhoods and disparate air quality impacts. Prioritizing rail and transit expansion to white suburbs and fostering racial change and gentrification of neighborhoods also occurred. Zoning and housing policies were often used to preclude Black families, be it large minimum

From I’m Not Your Negro:

An erudite TV host asks James Baldwin in 1968,
“What are the Negroes...Why aren’t they optimistic?...
There are Negro Mayors. There are Negroes in all sports.
There are some Negroes in politics...Is it at once getting better and still hopeless?”

Baldwin replied:
“Well I don’t think there is much hope for it, you know,
to tell you the truth as long as people are using this peculiar language. It’s not a question of what happens to the Negro here or to the Black man here — that’s a very vivid question for me, you know — but the real question is what is going to happen to this country. I have to repeat that.”
lot sizes to make housing more expensive in the suburbs, precluding multi-family and/or affordable housing options, or limiting bedroom unit counts to one and two-bedroom units, to name a few examples.

Sometimes, it is omissions that contribute to racial inequities. Planning initiatives aimed at livability have focused on making communities more walkable and streets safer. But have we been connecting all neighborhoods? Has the focus on livability included safety for all? Persons walking, running, or bicycling should not fear for their lives (as was the case of Ahmaud Arbery) or experience needless micro-aggressions.

2. Confront the History of Violence and Discrimination against Blacks, Indigenous People, and People Of Color (BIPOC) in the U.S. Violence had been used to keep status quo. Violence includes physical violence and psychological intimidation. Violence is not isolated. Violence and discrimination are everywhere.

3. Focus on Truth and Bust Myths that have Guided Policy. There are myths and assumptions that effect planning and perpetuate racial injustice. These can include thinking racial inequity is a southern problem or an issue for planners in urban communities. There are also the housing segregation “justification” theories—residential segregation is really economic segregation or “we/they like to live with our own kind.” Then there is the comforting myth that slow, gradual change is okay, or that power has been redistributed and shared with Blacks over the last 50 years. The reality is that as planners we need to strive for racial justice today.

4. Get Out of Our Siloes. As planners we need to recognize the interconnectedness of our society. We need to broaden our circle of colleagues and include people who represent varied backgrounds. We need to support, mentor and listen to new planners in the profession and citizen planners. Outreach and public engagement are integral to good planning. Outreach needs to be purposeful, timely and inclusive.

5. Experience Discomfort. Change is difficult and often uncomfortable. As planners and consultants, we need experience our own discomfort and be a catalyst for others’ discomfort, so we can begin to change the power dynamics. Planners must speak up for equity and actively promote policies and plans that address inequity.

6. Address Equity in All Plans and Initiatives. As planners, we need to be intentional regarding addressing racial justice and equity in a meaningful way. We need to analyze and assess existing disparities, identify how to advance equity, and measure progress.

7. Support and Advance Inclusion. Representation matters. Planners as a profession need to be more reflective of the communities we serve. There are too few BIPOC planners. We must actively encourage planning schools to diversify.

Mass-ACP, along with other planning and design professionals, is examining our role as planners in perpetuating racial injustice, reflecting on the work still needed to advance human rights and race equity in communities in which we work, and re-confirming our ethical responsibilities. We invite the entire planning community to commit to the advancement of human rights and equity for all. We welcome the new requirement for Equity CM units. As James Baldwin wrote, “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

Racial Justice and Planning Ethics

“…The planning process must continuously pursue and faithfully serve the public interest…”

Planning Process Participants should:
“2. Strive to give citizens (including those who lack formal organization or influence) full, clear and accurate information on planning issues and the opportunity to have a meaningful role in the development of plans and programs.

“3. Strive to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of disadvantaged groups and persons. ”

“APA Members who are practicing planners:
“11. Strive to increase the opportunities for women and members of recognized minorities to become professional planners.”

Excerpts from the AICP Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct
A. Principles to Which We Aspire

1.f. We shall seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs.

3.g. We shall increase the opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to become professional planners and help them advance in the profession.
Greetings Planning Friends and Colleagues,

It has been a while since our last newsletter update. But we have been busy throughout summer and fall of 2020, especially on the legislative front. MAPD along with our partners at APA-MA have strived to keep the Massachusetts planning community apprised of all the emergency declarations related to zoning, permitting, and changes in the open meeting law. As the emergency declarations relative to permitting deadlines have begun to sunset, it should be noted that our legislative partners at the Massachusetts Municipal Association reached out to MAPD and APA-MA for the planners’ perspective on how best to resume state permitting deadlines.

Exciting news: Governor Baker has signed H5240 An Act Enabling Partnerships for Growth, aka the Economic Development Bond Bill, which includes the Housing Choice provisions. As MAPD worked collaboratively with APA-MA and many other planning partners and allied organizations to advocate for the advancement of this language in the Economic Development Bond Bill. A very important change in the State Zoning Act has now been enacted as a result. The required voting threshold from a two-thirds supermajority to a simple majority for passing for the following zoning ordinances or bylaws that would allow by-right: multifamily housing or mixed-use development in an eligible location; accessory dwelling units, whether within the principal dwelling or a detached structure on the same lot; or open-space residential development. Commonwealth municipalities now have new incentives and tools to plan for more housing production.

Lunch N Learn workshops have gone virtual, and we are in the midst of planning for workshops during the Spring. In need of acquiring your CM credits for Ethics? MAPD has you covered with a virtual Ethics workshop planned for March. Lunch-n-Learn workshops always cover a multi-faceted array of topics of interest to planning professionals. We are always looking for ideas for the monthly Lunch N Learn workshop series, so give us a shout if you have any topic and/or venue ideas. Email Bill Nemser at bnemser@Townof-Maynard.net with your ideas.

MAPD will be joining forces with the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative to host a virtual joint conference. Stay tuned for more information and the call for conference sessions. If you are interested in helping to plan this conference, or have ideas for workshops, please contact me at kjohnson99@gmail.com.

Amid the professional challenges we faced in 2020, there are so many reasons to be optimistic as we head into 2021. Many of our planning practices have been altered forever, and probably for the better, and we will now never take for granted the time we spend together in-person at conferences and workshops networking, brainstorming, and learning. Here’s to a brighter 2021! Stay safe. Stay healthy. And stay positive.

Kristina Johnson, AICP
MAPD President

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Happy New Year and congratulations to the many APA-MA members who passed the November AICP Exam! Hope that everyone has been staying safe and well during these past few months. There are many updates to share in the APA professional development world.

APA-MA will once again be offering the AICP Exam Prep Course. This year’s training will be offered virtually. The class is an intensive multi-day training that is offered four Monday evenings (6-9 PM) in March and April and has proven to be a valuable resource for AICP test takers in the past. Stay tuned for the announcement and registration details the week of January 25th. Reminder that registration for the May 2021 exam is currently open and runs through April 30th.

AICP Diversity Scholarships are available for those who are planning to take the November 2021 AICP exam with applications due on May 28, 2021. These scholarships help make the planning profession more diverse and accessible to those with financial need. Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but not is not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, educational attainment, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status. The application will be posted on our website in the coming weeks.

APA recently sent out a Job Analysis survey to all members. This survey was sent out as part of the usual exam development process to keep the AICP certification exam up to date and relevant by reviewing the content outline of the exam which occurs every 5-7 years. Please fill out the survey if you have a moment as your feedback is critically important in shaping the future of the exam.

If you have logged into your Certification Maintenance log recently, you may have noticed that it has been updated to reflect the new mandatory credits. These are the Equity and the Sustainability and Resilience credits that will be required as of January 1, 2022.

Stay well and feel free to reach out to me at pdo@apa-ma.org with any questions.

— Amanda Chisholm can be reached at amanda.chisholm.nd@gmail.com