



American Planning Association
New Jersey Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

MEETING MINUTES

American Planning Association-New Jersey Chapter (APANJ)
Executive Committee Meeting
Friday, February 15, 2008
Room 556, Bloustein School
2:00 PM

In Attendance: Courtenay Mercer, Michael Levine, Chuck Latini, Amy Sarrinikolaou, Vito Gallo, John Reiser, Eric Snyder, Katie White, Carrie McCarthy, Maura McManimon Fennessy

Attending via speakerphone: Linda Wills

Absent: Carlos Rodrigues, Deborah Lawlor, Jeff Perlman, Angela Clerico, Michael Powell, Rebecca Hersh, Robert Cotter, Tara Paxton

Approval of February 15, 2008 agenda

Motion to approve the agenda; all in favor.

Approval of January 18, 2008 minutes

Motion to approve the minutes; all in favor.

Issue Reports:

Appointment of New Southern Area Representative: Courtney Mercer reported that Louis Joyce and Stuart Wise both submitted position statements. Mr. Wise apologized for submitting a brief position statement. Courtenay asked the committee members for any feedback related to either candidate. Vito Gallo thought that they are both qualified. The Committee was in agreement that either candidate would contribute. Hearing no objections, Courtenay made the recommendation to appoint Mr. Joyce as the second southern area representative based on his position statement. The committee was in consensus.

2008 APANJ Conference Committee: Mike Levine discussed the scheduling for the 2008 APANJ Conference, and was able to reserve NOV 6 and 7 at the Hyatt. We would have access to the downstairs portion of the hotel on Thursday, and a hold will be placed on the larger room in the lobby for registration purposes, and the reception area from 4 to 7 PM. On Thursday, the reception would take place from 4 to 4:30 and then two classes would follow – most likely covering ethics and law to satisfy the CM requirements. These classes will probably end by 7. We will encourage members to have dinner on their own in New Brunswick, and possibly stay overnight to attend the main Conference the next day. The total cost for the hotel accommodations is \$5,000. Based on the number of registrants, it would be approximately \$50 per person for Thursday night, on top of the charge for Friday, totaling 3 hours worth of classes.

Vito Gallo stated that conceptually it sounds good. The members were in favor of the change in concept for the 2008 APANJ Conference.

As the members would like to get a head start on planning for the 2008 Conference, a conference committee must be formed. Linda Wills would like serve on the committee. Last year Rebecca Hersh chaired on the committee, and was in charge of the registration brochure and the final program.

Courtenay Mercer suggested to send out an Email blast looking for volunteers to chair the committee. Chuck Latini must get involved in calling for sessions. Vito volunteered to be a liason to Rutgers, and to work with Stuart Meck.

A request for reward nominations must be solicited. Mike Levine will set up a schedule, and make it a longer time period. Courtenay Mercer will help.

Chuck Latini can help figure out "CM credible" courses, and will help proposals getting out, set deadlines.

As Rebecca Hersh chaired last year, someone should ask her if she wants to chair again.

We must have the program finalized by June 1 as we don't know how much time APA needs to review the courses for CM eligibility.

"Year in Review" newsletter/ Annual Report for the League: Courtenay Mercer wanted to discuss the APANJ Annual Reports, and asked if the committee would still like to do a print newsletter and a print annual report. It is a nice way to show the accomplishments of the APANJ. It would be part of the conference package, emailed to the members, and presented at the Booth.

[There was a brief discussion of the scheduling of the 2008 APANJ conference in relation to the League of Municipalities. Vito Gallo determined that the League Conference will be held on November 17 (setup), 18, 19, 20 giving some time in between both conferences and allowing people to attend both.]

Courtenay Mercer volunteered Jeff Perlman to leading the initiative to complete the Annual Report. Each committee and the students should be responsible for their report. A discussion arose whether to do away with the print newsletter as the Annual Report will be color and a bit more costly. The annual report would go into the conference package and then emailed.

It was suggested to sell advertisements to be part of the annual report to cut down costs however Mike Levine stated it is difficult to sell advertising. Mike Levine is having a hard time finding firms to contribute to the conference. It makes it easier to seel when you say the Annual Report will be given out at the League. Courtenay suggests that we should ask for advertisers soon for the Annual Report and will talk to Jeff. Maura will help with editing.

NJ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE book: Courtenay Mercer was approached by the NJ Chamber of Commerce for the APANJ to purchase a chapter in its book. The first quarter of the book is a history of NJ, and then each chapter details a specific industry in NJ. – NJ Chamber of Commerce is adding a chapter to its book this year entitled "Real Estate, Planning Development and Construction." NJ Chamber of Commerce reached out to APANJ to determine whether the Chapter would want to buy a couple pages to promote the planning

profession. The last time APANJ contributed to a chapter was 10 years ago. We are due. At that time it was funded by the State. The book will be sold in Amazon for \$39.95. If APANJ does a chapter, the Chapter may buy a nice brochure. Courtenay detailed the pricing options:

Pricing Options:

1. Pass
2. Purchase a one pg. profile for \$6,000

Courtenay spoke with the Bloustein School to consider partnering to cut down the cost.

3. Purchase a two-pg. ad and partner with NJIT and AIA - totaling \$7,000 each
3. Purchase a chapter on our own

Vito Gallo and Courtenay Mercer see this as a coffee table book in corporate business world. The committee did recognize that this would be a good opportunity to get our name out here and “planning.” Mercer would like to have a hand to write the intro chapter (whether we participate or not). Mike Levine suggested that the one-page brochures will help “spiff” up our booth with more attractive materials.

Mercer didn’t really know that this publication existed. The NY book was given out at the Republican convention. The distribution of the NJ book is still questionable. The committee questioned the practicality of the book.

The committee is hesitant to spend the cash for this book. Chuck says it is important to get the economic development guys involved in the planning profession. It is good that they reached out to Mercer. Ten years ago, planning was not on the “map.”

We need to make a decision at this meeting. Members are not persuaded that there is not enough “bang for the buck.” We should invest more time and money in our website. John Reiser is going to look into the cost of the website. We may be able to switch providers, and then cancel Net Atlantic. John will do some research. And Mike will remove old events. John wants access to the website. John will work with modifying design.

The student representatives cannot go to Las Vegas. They would like to use the student’s budget to establish a summer internship for students in planning. The student reps wanted to give the students much flexibility to use their funds. The budget is \$1,000. John Reiser suggests that the students provide a write-up that shows what was done with the money. The student reps should devise a one-month project proposal.

Committee/Office Reports:

President’s Report

Nothing to report.

Courtenay Mercer

Past President

Absent.

Carlos Rodrigues

First Vice President

Absent.

Deborah Lawlor

Second Vice President

Absent.

Jeff Perlman

Secretary's Report

Nothing to report.

Amy Sarrinikolaou**Treasurer's Report****John Reiser**

John is planning on changing the website design. Mike Levine got a new PC. John plans to put Mike's old PC on eBay or recycled. Mike's new PC was \$1,200. Microsoft was the most expensive and the external hard drive. This should last him 6 years.

Mike Powell and John Reiser are still trying to organize the tax files. They are working with a CPA and would like to file for an extension. Mercer wants John to complete an income/expense report and provide to Michael. John did a year end report. John still does not have access to online banking. John wants to cancel the three checking cards – and just have one out there.

The Chapter's monies are invested and total \$113,000 as of mid-December.

Sustainable Design Committee**Angela Clerico**

Absent.

Legislative Committee Report**Michael Powell**

Nothing to report.

Housing Committee Report**Vito Gallo**

The COAH Forum was the second event. Vito plans to have another conference call with the panelists and courtmasters and COAH to follow-up. The comment period ends Mar 22 – COAH will “digest” the comments, and formally adopt rules June 2. This is a rapidly moving process, and COAH has been holding a lot of sessions. Additionally, different counties are having their own forums to discuss the proposed rule changes. The League is hoping to have these forums all over the State.

Vito is trying to figure out what the next role of the housing committee will be. Another informational session should be held once the rules are formally adopted and will be CM eligible.

Vito received good feedback from the COAH forum. Everyone was impressed. Vito wanted to make sure that it was a balanced event. The panel was very good, and offered different perspectives.

[Vito wants to know if we rebranded ourselves. To confirm, we have re-branded ourselves as APANJ.]

Professional Development Officer**Chuck Latini**

Chuck wanted to know if the Professional Development budget of \$7,000 included the regional events. No it did not. Walking tours are given a separate budget. The cost for exam preparation is outside of the total PD budget.

Chuck indicated that he is working on a NJ planning training seminar. Chuck and several PDOs would like to co-sponsor a free web event charging \$60 per Chapter. MI, NY, and other chapters are involved. This would replace the AICP classroom preparation course. This even will be promoted through the State and on the website, and would be interactive.

Chuck just finished with NJ FUTURE finalizing the Redevelopment Forum. There is going to be 21 sessions all of which are CM credit worthy. The PP training will be held late April. The tests are May 10-21.

Chuck is trying to write a clear policy on how we handle CM POLICY – how to interact with the providers, and how to better promote our own events.

Chuck would like to open a new position to assist the PDO to handle and keep the exam training information fresh, and the other person would help set up the conferences and seminars. The CM program has added a lot of work.

Eric Snyder added that NJCPA is looking to buy courses from NJAPA, and interested in expanding their roles in terms of educational sessions. NJSLA got two sessions approved to be CM eligible.

Redevelopment Committee Report

Robert Cotter

Absent.

Chapter Administrator Report

Michael Levine

Mike reported that in January there was 1,000 members, 1,100 in December, and 1,061 in February.

Bulletin Editor's Report

Rebecca Hersh

Absent.

Student Representatives

Katie White

Carrie McCarthy

Nothing to report.

Area Representatives

Linda Wills

Linda is working with Chuck to organize the Harrison walking tour to be held May 16.

It is easier to have the tour in the afternoon. The committee meeting will be held before the tour, sometime before noon. It is going to be a mobile workshop (bus tour). The tour should start early in the afternoon, and then discussion will be held after the tour. People will be involved who know brownfield redevelopment, history of Harrison, Susan Gruel will talk about visioning, Jim Mac from NJIT will talk about brownfields, and clean-up issues. A developer will talk about redevelopment.

Linda offers the idea that this could be a lunchbox learning opportunity, or meet at a restaurant to hear a speaker – for more potential CM credit. It would be a good idea to use a restaurant around a path station.

This will be offered for free. The cost is minimal. Having an event that is FREE like the COAH Forum, members feel like they are getting a real value of their membership.

The location of the committee meeting is TBD but the time of the meeting has to be at least 11 AM.

Mike Levine states that the committee may use the conference rooms in Newark, or as Linda states we can meet at the Town Hall in Harrison.

As for the Lunchtime learning opportunity, Linda suggested someone to speak from NJDEP Office of Planning or try and get a trainer but that would be costly. It is still a question as to who the presenter and topic would be for the lunchtime learning opportunity.

Eric Snyder

Eric would like to wait until at least May to conduct a walking/bus tour of the Highlands.

Maura McManimon Fennessy

Nothing to report.

As for her Regional Event, maybe something in Trenton. The train station is supposed to open in August, maybe a tour in Sept. Maybe talk about the RT 29 boulevard plan. There is a developer who wants to do a huge project around the train station.

Maura will aim for September.

Tara Paxton

Absent.

[OLD BUSINESS: No reaction to the Attorney General letter was received. Maura will get in contact with Marge Della Vecchio.]

Adjourn; all in favor.