

MEETING MINUTES
New Jersey Chapter – American Planning Association
Executive Committee Meeting
Friday, January 19, 2007
Bloustein School, New Brunswick NJ
Room 168, 1:30 PM

In Attendance: Deborah Lawlor, Vito Gallo, Michael E. Levine, Jeffrey Perlman, Michael Powell, Carrie McCarthy, Linda Wills, Courtenay Mercer, Rebecca Hersh, Tara Paxton,

Attending via speakerphone: Carlos Rodrigues, Jenn Senick, Maura McManimon Fennessy

Absent: Robert Cotter, Maura McManimon Fennessy, Charles Latini, Kelly Sander, Scott Bauman, Thomas Thatcher,

Approval of January 2007 Meeting Agenda

- Motion was made to approve the agenda with as amended; all in favor

Approval of December 2006 Minutes

- Mr. Powell made a motion to approve December 2006 minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Paxton; all in favor

Issue Reports:

Redevelopment: Mr. Rodrigues stated that the Redevelopment Committee met earlier today, and have taken a new tack in changing parts of the State Senate Bill 1975. The Redevelopment Committee has decided to stop attempting to influence the State Senate to change some provisions in the bill that would be detrimental to Redevelopment. The committee is drafting it's own bill and is looking for a new sponsor to introduce it into the State Legislature. The bill being drafted by the Redevelopment Committee mostly deals with the Redevelopment Process itself. Mr. Rodrigues commented that the committee will have a draft to circulate to the executive committee this weekend. One item in the draft includes a requirement that municipalities using Eminent Domain must have a Redevelopment Plan Element in their Comprehensive Master Plans, and that this will be a pre-requisite for using the tools in the Redevelopment Statute. The Redevelopment Committee is also working on the criteria to clarify the intent of the criteria, including decisions from case law. Ms. Lawlor asked why would municipalities need to have a Redevelopment Plan element in their Master Plan before using eminent domain. Mr. Rodrigues replied that this element would not be mandatory, but would permit municipalities to have a redevelopment element if they want to do certain things under the Redevelopment Statutes. Mr. Rodrigues stated that the requirement would be a good idea, as it will narrow the gap between Redevelopment Plans & Master Plans. It will encourage municipalities to think about Redevelopment when drafting Master Plans. It will also raise public awareness & foster discussion earlier in the process. Ms. Lawlor thought this provision might slow down Redevelopment unnecessarily. Ms. Lawlor thought Redevelopment issues could be addressed in the Land Use element of the Master Plan. Mr. Rodrigues added that the State Assembly version of the bill eliminated criteria altogether. Mr. Gallo commented that the Public Advocate's office has questioned the use. Mr. Mercer asked what would be included in the Redevelopment Element? Mr. Rodrigues offered to mail the specifics to the executive committee. Mr. Powell agreed that the group should get the draft and it can be discussed via email. Mr. Latini said that Ronald Rice's State Senate committee will meet again on January 25th and could act on the bill at that time. Mr. Gallo agreed that attempting to tinker with the existing bill is not the best way to proceed. He said the intent of trying to introduce a competing bill is in an effort to kill the Senate bill, which is too far-reaching and burdensome. The proposed bill is detrimental to municipalities attempting to redevelop.

Mr. Rodrigues, who joined the executive committee via speakerphone, signed off. Ms. McManimon Fennessy joined via speakerphone.

Mr. Gallo mentioned that the decision on whether to even continue working on the existing bill was made at last Friday's Redevelopment Committee meeting. Ms. Lawlor expressed a concern about the implications of requiring a redevelopment element in the Master plan. The topic of redevelopment could be addressed in the Land Use Plan of the Master Plan. Mr. Gallo remarked that the proposed Redevelopment Bill creates a two-tier system for remuneration of displaced home owners when eminent domain is used.

APA Conference/host reception: Ms. Paxton announced that the reception will be held at the Camden Aquarium in a room with a rotunda that overlooks the Philadelphia Skyline as opposed to the shark tunnel room. Ms. Paxton stated that the band will cost \$3000 and the facility will cost \$4200, while the shuttle bus from the Convention Center to the Aquarium will be \$680 per bus. TrollyWorks, the company who will provide the shuttle buses recommended 3 to 4 buses in order to provide effective transportation. The total cost for 4 buses would be \$2800. The executive committee discussed how many people are expected on attending. Mr. Gallo responded by saying many might drive to the reception and then go to their homes afterwards, and therefore, not use the shuttle service. Mr. Gallo recommended that only 3 shuttles would be needed. The executive committee agreed. Ms. McManimon Fennessy asked why the Ferry system is not available. Ms. Paxton answered that ferry service does not run until later in the spring. The weather is unpredictable and it might be an unpleasant ride across the river. Moreover, the ferry service would only be provided if the reception were held on the ferry. The executive committee agreed that it wouldn't be a good idea to hold the reception on the ferry.

Ms. Paxton distributed the estimate costs for food and beverages at the reception, as quoted by ARAMARK. Ms. Paxton cited from Aramark that the total cost of the reception would be approximately \$37,593.38. Mr. Gallo asked how to control the number of attendees as this an open reception. No RSVP or tickets are required. Mr. Gallo added that in 2000, the number of people attending the host reception was between 200 and 300. Ms. Paxton commented that the Open Bar portion of the bill comes to \$4,500. This was calculated based upon an attendance of 300. The costs for food/catering are also based on 300 attendees. Mr. Gallo requested that Ms. Paxton inquire with Aramark what the cost would be for 2 free drinks /person plus cash bar. Ms Paxton replied that Aramark is going to charge us just to have the bar staffed. The difference between the cash bar and the open is not that great. Mr. Powell added that no one will come from Philadelphia to Camden for 2 free drinks. The Executive Committee agreed. Ms. Paxton described that food/catering list provided by Aramark. After some discussion over food choices and costs, Ms. Mercer recommended that the executive committee set an overall cost, then work into the food choices. Ms. Paxton summarized the other fixed costs, including the band, aquarium, and bus. These items totaled approximately \$10,000. The Executive Committee agreed to cap the total cost of the event to \$18,000. Ms. Mercer asked if the Chapter needed to reserve the open bar and catering costs up front. Mr. Powell asked if the Chapter could reserve just the facility and transport, and bar, and then figure out how much food to purchase. Ms. Paxton agreed to speak with Aramark. Mr. Levine replied that it is likely that a deposit can be made for the food now, subject to the executive committee agreement. Mr. Levine reported that the Bloustein School cannot contribute the \$7,000 requested by the chapter, as it is too much for a State Institution and not a part of their academic mission. However, the Bloustein School will be able to contribute \$1,250 as be considered as a contributing member of the reception. Ms. Mercer recommended that law firms who specialized in redevelopment be targeted for solicitation. Ms. Mercer also discussed the limitations on government employees regarding fundraising. Ms. Mercer stated that only those members who do not work for government might be able to directly fundraise. Mr. Levine added that letters to potential sponsors will be sent next week. Mr. Latini asked what the deadline is for signing the Aramark contract and inquired as to what the minimum food requirements are for the reception. Mr. Gallo added that the Chapter should calculate the food/catering costs for 200 people rather than for 300. Ms. Wills reported that 4 sponsors have committed thus far to the reception.

Mr. Latini inquired whether executive members employed by government could do any fundraising? Mr. Levine and Ms. Mercer both said that employees can get leads, but then must pass those leads on to the fundraising subcommittee. Ms. Mercer asked if the solicitation letter could include a date when people should make a commitment.

NJAPA Conflict of Interest Policies: Ms. McManimon Fennessy stated that the motivation for drafting a conflict of interest policy grew out of the election policy written by Mr. Barnes, who included a section of ethical standards. However, when Ms. McManimon Fennessy reviewed the existing bylaws, it only mentions the violations of the APA Ethics as a justification for removal of officers. She recommended and the executive committee members sign a pledge to adhere to the AICP and PP ethics standards, whether they are members of AICP or PP or not. Ms. McManimon Fennessy stated that she liked the ideas of illustrating examples of ethical violations, but the ones provided in the elections policy are not entirely applicable to New Jersey. She offered to draft a statement that any member of the executive committee will have to recuse him or herself from conversation or voting on any issue that may benefit themselves or their employer. Mr. Levine recommended that the new guidelines be adopted as a policy rather than a bylaw amendment. Adopting a policy requires only the executive committee whereas a bylaw requires a vote the entire membership.

Highlands Draft Plan: Mr. Perlman announced that solicitations for comments on the draft plan are listed on the chapter website and included in a blast email. Mr. Levine added that he has received only two comments thus far. He will forward them to Mr. Perlman.

NJAPA Bulletin: Ms. Hersh reported that she is currently putting together the next newsletter and is soliciting contributions to the newsletter. Mr. Levine reminded the executive committee that this is the last paper-based newsletter. This newsletter will both mail and email the newsletter to aid in the transition to a paperless newsletter.

Treasurer Report: Michael Powell

Mr. Powell distributed the 2006 report, which includes the \$2,500 to Jenn Senick and the Green Building Center. Money was donated to a charity on behalf of Dr. Kuckenbergl. Mr. Powell stated that all checks have been deposited from the NJAPA conference, which amounted to approximately \$26,000. Mr. Levine added that the Chapter has not yet received the bill for the Hotel, and with that added in, the total cost of the conference would be between \$29,000 and \$32,000. Thus the income collected for the conference will not cover its cost. Therefore, Mr. Levine recommended that the chapter should consider raising the registration fee for November's conference from the current \$165 to \$175. Mr. Levine stated that he will raise this issue again in future meetings.

Legislative Committee Report: Vito Gallo:

Mr. Gallo announced that there several other bill spending in the State Legislature. Mr. Gallo stated that he sees his role as Legislative Chair as an informational one, and is not sure what position to take on pending legislation. Mr. Gallo commented that he will narrow the search on pending bills and bring them to the executive committee for discussion. In particular, Mr. Gallo announced that a joint legislative committee of the State Legislature would be meeting next month to review and examine the Affordable Housing Act. Mr. Powell commented that there is no existing housing committee in the chapter, and suggested that one be established. Mr. Gallo agreed, but added that the executive committee will need to establish it and have the President appoint a chair.

Professional Development Committee Report: Charles Latini

Mr. Latini informed the executive committee that he is currently organizing training sessions for the spring. There will be one PP and one AICP training session

Chapter Administrator's Report: Mike Levine

Mr. Levine announced that the number of members is now under 1,000, but is not surprising given that National dumps all members who have not renewed. Often, these members renew in lead up to the National Conference, and Mr. Levine expects membership to climb back up. Mr. Levine reported 846 members are receiving blast emails, which constitutes that vast majority of the chapter membership. There are only a hundred or so members who do not receive blast emails. Ms. Mercer asked if we know how many are members of only the National Chapter. Mr. Levine replied that he did know, but he would call National to find out. Mr. Perlman recommended that if we knew the names of those who belong only to National, then the chapter could target these members.

Student Representative Report: Carrie McCarthy

Ms. McCarthy announced that a new RAPPS board was elected, but have not yet met. Ms. McCarthy announced that on behalf of RAPPS, they appreciate the donation of the books to aid in RAPPS fundraising.

President Elect Report: Courtenay Mercer

Ms. Mercer is in the process of raffing a letter in an attempt to get National to permit a day rate for the upcoming conference. Once drafted, she will reach out to the Delaware and Pennsylvania chapters.

Motion to adjourn; all in favor.

Minutes submitted by Jeffrey Perlman