



American Planning Association
New Jersey Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 20, 2008
Room 556, Bloustein School
2:00 PM

In attendance: Vito Gallo, Debbie Lawlor, Michael Levine, Maura McManimon Fennessy, Jeff Perlman, John Reiser, Carlos Rodrigues, Amy Sarrinikolaou

Speakerphone: Eric Snyder

Absent: Angela Clerico, Bob Cotter, Rebecca Hersch, Louis Joyce, Chuck Latini, Carrie McCarthy, Courtenay Mercer, Tara Paxton, Ray Tomczak, Jeff Szabo, Katie White, Linda Wills

Approval of June 20, 2008 agenda

Jeff Perlman made a motion to approve the agenda; All in favor.

Approval of minutes of May 16, 2008

Vito made a motion to approve the minutes; All in favor. Carlos Rodrigues and Maura McManimon Fennessy abstained.

Issue reports:

- Election
- Proposed Bylaws Amendments

Mike Levine indicated to the Executive Committee members that any members that are seeking reelection must submit a position statement. The ballots will be mailed out by September 2nd, 2008. The positions up for election include all five area reps and the second vice president. The ballots are due October 1st, 2008, and the results will be announced at the APA-NJ Conference. The election this year will be done purely electronic, and there will be no hard copy mailings. In order to submit an electronic ballot, each member must log in their membership number so to control the votes to one per member.

On the same election ballot, bylaws amendments will be included. The bylaws amendments deal with changing the name of the Sustainable Design Committee (SDC), adding the fifth area representative and the second position of the Professional Development Officer (PDO), and changing the quorum for the Executive Committee from five to half the voting membership (10).

Vito Gallo wanted to know if we would also need to change the proper name of the chapter in the bylaws from NJAPA to APA-NJ. John confirmed that the Chapter's business certificate reads APA-NJ. Mike Levine will ask Linda Wills to add the Chapter name change in the bylaw amendments. Mike Levine will do an overall review for consistency of the bylaw amendments.

Carlos Rodrigues wanted to know if it is necessary to add the Chapter's name change as a ballot item as it is really an administrative change.



▪ Conference Workshops

Michael Levine indicated that another broadcast email was sent for a Call for Conference Sessions. The deadline for sessions has been extended from June 16 to the end of July. Carlos Rodrigues suggested that each Committee Chair should organize a session or two. John Reiser seems to think that there will be more sessions that will materialize closer to the conference date.

The conference will be two days in order to provide our members with more opportunities to attain CM credits. A tour will be held on Thursday during the day and then two sessions to cover the law and ethics CM requirements. Friday will be run similar to how our conferences run normally.

Debbie Lawlor wanted to know why our conference last year was only eligible for 3.75 credits versus the Plan Smart NJ conference which registered 7 credits. The structure of our conference could be presented in a way to get more credits. Jeff Perlman will discuss this issue with Chuck Latini to craft and structure our conference this year to qualify for additional credits.

Committee/Office reports:

Past President	Carlos Rodrigues
Nothing to report.	

First Vice President	Deborah Lawlor
Nothing to report.	

Second Vice President	Jeff Perlman
There is a bill going through the legislature that would add to the MLUL an optional sustainability element as part of the master plan. The SDC is going to put together an outline for as to how a sustainability element would be structured. Upon the finalization of a draft, the SDC would like to bring it to the Executive Committee for our review.	

Debbie Lawlor suggested that maybe it would be helpful to get a municipal planner on the SDC sub committee to work on the outline for the sustainability element. If there are no municipal planners on the SDC, an email blast could be sent out. Vito Gallo added that various groups (Governor, utilities, Mayor’s groups, etc.) are developing their own sustainability initiatives.

Jeff continued and indicated that Chuck Latini and himself would like to conduct a tour of Port Elizabeth-Port Newark. Chuck already reached out to a contact to start organizing a tour of the area. Carlos indicated that a tour of the Port area would have to go through the Seamen’s Institute who has a facility at the port and organizes tours on a regular basis. Maura suggested contacting Mike Collins at the EDA Portways Initiative for more information.

Jeff continued that the panel discussion could be about planning, projects, redevelopment related to the port. Jeff would like to have the tour have 2 pieces, the mechanics of the port and then the policy/planning discussions. Jeff and Chuck will follow up and continue to organize this activity.

Secretary	Amy Sarrinikolaou
Amy suggested that our Chapter’s website should be consistent when referring to “Certification Maintenance” credits. There are various versions of CM abbreviations floating around on the website and could confuse the issue.	



Treasurer	John Reiser
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John indicated that online payments for the conference have to get set up. He is still working on getting the taxes together. The Chapter is not up to date on prior years. APA wanted each Chapter's financial information by May 15, 2008. The Chapter still has yet to submit to APA. National will file the Chapter's 2007 990s. John will have to file the Chapter's prior years. John's goal is to have everything filed by Oct 2, 2008.

Mike Levine did some research whether to take advantage of the website hosting service provided by APA. Based on various restrictions that APA establishes in using their website (i.e. cannot post job ads), we will not use National's website hosting services.

The idea to provide a web log ("blog") and/or forum on the website came up for discussion. The blog would be a good idea in place of the listserve. The Chapter would not be liable for derogatory comments; however the chapter would have to monitor it. Jeff Perlman thought this was a good idea, because it brings issues to the surface. Mike Levine indicated that the listserve contains 259 people, and that the listserv does not require Chapter membership or a name. The members all agree that some form of venue / open line of communication should be available to our members whether it is a list serve, forum or blog. Maura prefers a more controlled discussion compared to a forum or blog. Eric Snyder suggested that our website, being that is a professional website, a blog could get out of hand. John Reiser recommended that it could be done as a blog with no comments allowed, and only Committee members or other privileged members could post to the page themselves. John will look further into this.

John Reiser added that plenty of people are ordering both the Guide to Planning in NJ, and the Redevelopment Handbook. John would like to start an online ordering system on the website for the books. John could set this up and coordinate with the webmaster.

Housing Committee	Vito Gallo
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Vito discussed the Smart Housing for Economic Prosperity (SHEP) Task Force Proposal. New Jersey Future, the sponsoring organization of the SHEP Task Force, has requested that APA-NJ endorse the proposal to establish "smart housing zones." The Housing Committee recently met with Chris Strum of New Jersey Future and Task Force Member and Past President Carlos Rodrigues to discuss the smart housing zone proposal. Based upon our review and discussion, the Housing Committee recommends favorable consideration of the request by New Jersey Future for the Chapter's endorsement of this proposal.

NJ Future is seeking endorsements from professional groups as they move toward an initiative for legislation to address general aversion of towns towards housing and density. Carlos is a member of the SHEP task force. NJ Future would like an expression of support from the Chapter. The proposal is a pilot program and seeks to replicate the Massachusetts experience (40R 40B). Communities that upzone for higher density workforce housing would be given financial incentive/funding from the State. Maura thinks it is a good concept, however the MA model hasn't really worked yet.

Vito explained that the concept would be to fund some planning / visioning / implementation of workforce housing. Debbie wanted to know how it would get funding – through an appropriation? It would be a pilot program that would provide X million a year. Eligible locations would be limited to smart growth areas PA 1 PA 2 etc. then funding would be provided for planning, zoning, and implementation. Maura added that this is another proposal - like the State Plan process - that relies on the State providing funding for priority areas, and the State doesn't have a great track record on that. Vito added that this would just be another strategy to get



affordable housing built. Vito thought that the Chapter should support this proposal, and then let the legislature decide.

There was a Motion from Vito to support NJ Future’s initiative, Jeff Perlman seconded; All were in favor.

Vito then discussed the bills in the State Legislature that propose sweeping affordable housing reforms and amendments to the Fair Housing Act. A-500, sponsored by Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts, Jr., was passed by the Assembly on June 16, 2008. Major components of A-500 include establishment of a statewide 2.5% non-residential development fee, and elimination of Regional Contribution Agreements. S1783 is a companion to A500, and would waive the 2.5% non-residential development fee in nine urban transit hub communities, and areas within ½ mile of light rail station, and designated transit villages. This does not recognize the State Plan structure. The companion bill was slipped in, and was announced on June 9 by Senator Lezniak. Vito does not know if it came out of committee. Debbie thinks it was approved. These bills are on a fast track. The League of Municipalities has been closed out of the negotiations, and there is a lot of frustration at the municipal level.

Vito also indicated that the same day that COAH adopted the revised rules on June 2, the Council proposed amendments to the rules. The amendments were published in the June 16, 2008 N.J. Register, and the public comment period ends August 15, 2008.

Vito discussed another bill that was discussed at a Senate meeting this week in Washington. It is a \$300B reform package that would “bail-out” the banking industry. The President is threatening to veto, but there could be overrides.

As for Foreclosure initiatives, out of Trenton, there is a bill that would levy a fee before banks foreclose, and funding would go to counseling, etc.

With all that said, Vito is working on conference sessions with the housing committee.

Chapter Administrator	Michael Levine
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Michael indicated that the Chapter membership is 1,049 strong of which 75 members are not being reached through the email broadcast system. Our webhits are down to 50-60 hits per year – This could be because our members are getting more information through our blast emails, and therefore bypassing the Chapter’s website.

868 copies of the Redevelopment Handbook have been sold, and 543 copies of the Complete Guide. A CD version of these books and any updates would be more cost-effective in the long-run. Maura confirmed that the update of the Guide to NJ Planning will be in CD form. It is expected to take a full year to complete the update/revision.

Area Representatives	Maura McManimon Fennessy
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Maura will reach out to Devco and the housing director regarding the tour of New Brunswick for the conference.

Adjourn; All in favor.

Respectfully submitted: Amy Sarrinikolaou