

From Angela Vincent, APA Director Elected from Region 1

It was great to be in Boston this year for the National Conference. Thank you to the host committee and numerous volunteers who worked diligently to make this a very successful conference. The Board of Directors had a great a meeting in Boston. Board of Director business included addressing important policies, adopting a new Development Plan for 2012 and 2013, and setting legislative priorities for the 112th Congress. Please see below for a recap of these decisions and some other important updates. We look forward to seeing everyone in Los Angeles in 2012!



APA Legislative Priorities for the 112th Congress – Each year APA adopts a slate of legislative priorities and a platform for policies to advance planning. These priorities guide APA's advocacy work and outline the actions Congress should take to improve planning and the nation's communities. APA has chosen the following them for the 112th Congress is: *Rebuilding the Economy, Strengthening our Communities*. These priorities include:

- Improve government efficiency by expand place-based strategies and eliminating barriers to integrated, comprehensive planning and investment
- Support regional and community sustainability planning
- Reform tax policy to create communities of lasting value
- Respect local planning authority
- Promote planning that meets the nation's new energy needs and advances the growth of a green economy
- Enact farm and food legislation that supports planning for sustainable food systems and economic development in small towns and rural regions
- Meet the nation's growing infrastructure investment needs
- Ensure that communities can adequately plan for future needs by providing high-quality data
- Assist communities working to stabilize and revitalize neighborhoods
- Advance the development of healthy, safe and active communities

An APA/AICP national survey found that 78 percent of voters believe it is important for Congress to help communities solve urban growth and land use problems. We hope these priorities will provide the leverage we need to advocate for strong planning policies and support for to Make Great Communities Happen. Please continue to follow the progress of the 112th Congress priorities and other legislative issues at: <http://www.planning.org/policy/issues>

Climate Change Policy Guide Updated and Adopted! Climate change is one of the most important planning challenges of the 21st century. Planners are uniquely positioned to address climate change due to our role in addressing common planning elements: long-range planning, natural disasters, land use planning issues, affects on our infrastructure, etc. Thanks to the hard work of dedicated Board members, Commissioners and other volunteers, the original Climate Change Policy Guide adopted in 2008 is up-to-date and ready for you! The APA Climate Change Policy Guide Update provides state-of-the-art climate science and provides a robust and comprehensive list of actions for planners to take in communicating, mitigating and adapting to current and future climate conditions, changes and

consequent impacts. We encourage Chapters and Divisions to use this as the basis for their work in addressing climate change locally, regionally and state-wide. Please visit <http://www.planning.org/policy/guides/pdf/climatechange.pdf> for the updated Policy Guide.



The Sustaining Places Initiative and the Sustainability Policy Guide Update – Board members received a comprehensive update on the progress of the Sustaining Places report. As one of the priorities of Past President Bruce Knight, a Sustaining Places Task Force was developed to address the role of the comprehensive plan as the leading policy document and tool to help communities of all sizes achieve sustainability. The Task Force, led by David Godschalk, FAICP and Bill Anderson, FAICP, will survey current best practices, evolving needs and practices, and how to change practices so the comprehensive plan will better achieve its role as the leading policy document for communities. The Board was pleased at the progress that has been made to date and is looking forward to the full report at the Leadership meetings in September. If anyone has any information they would like to share with the Task Force to include this report, please feel free to send it along to Angela Vincent: avincent@nmcog.org.

Also, regarding sustainability, a team of five people are working with Board member Irayda Ruiz to update the Sustainability Policy Guide. Originally developed in 2001 under the leadership of Sarah James, this important document is being retooled to keep up with the progress made over the last 10 years regarding sustainable development. A draft will be presented to the Legislative Policy Committee in July 2011 and presented to the Board of Directors at the Leadership Meetings in Washington D.C. in September. As with all policy guides, this will be sent out for public review before final adoption in Los Angeles. We look forward to your comments!

For the most up-to-date information about the Sustaining Places Initiative and the Policy Guide, please visit: <http://www.planning.org/sustainingplaces/>

From Debbie Alaimo Lawlor, AICP/PP - AICP Commissioner Elected from Region 1

I want to extend my personal thanks to the host committee for the wonderful job that they did on the 2011 APA National Conference in Boston. As the saying goes, “A fine time was had by all.” The warm welcome that I received as a first year Commissioner from planners all around our region was amazing. It was great meeting so many of you and I look forward to seeing more of our members at the state conferences.

Advanced Specialty Exams Update

Much as you might expect, a lot has been taking place to make the first round of the Advanced Specialty Certification exams a success. The inaugural set of examinations for the AICP Certified Transportation Planner (CTP) and AICP Certified Environmental Planner (CEP) credentials were offered in May. A targeted number of AICP members took part in the cut score process in June. The cut score is the last stage in the development process, during which eligible applicants rate each question to determine their relative level of difficulty. As a result, examinees will be notified of their

status in late summer. In the future, examinees will see their unofficial score immediately after finishing the exam. We wish all who took the exams good luck.

Community Planning Assistance Team Initiative



Many people asked what my favorite part of the national conference was and my immediate response was the AICP Community Planning Workshop which was held this year in the Mattapan section of Boston. The purpose of the community planning workshop is to address local planning issues that would benefit from a focused one-day effort involving community members, local planning staff, and APA “volunteers” from all over the country. The community planning workshops are designed to assist a community that does not have all of the necessary resources to engage in the community planning process.

We spent an entire day walking the subject site, talking to the residents, facilitating a visioning session, letting the community members deliver their findings, and offering some of our own views of what we saw from their interaction. It was extremely fulfilling at the end of the day when one of the matriarchs of the community came up to me and gave me a hug to thank me for helping to bring the numerous parties together to work as one. They appreciated seeing that planners from all over the United States cared enough about their little part of the world to give of their time to help them work on a vision for their future.

For those of you who enjoy volunteering time to the community, the Community Planning Assistance Team (CPAT) initiative is an AICP component of a broader APA Community Assistance Program that you should consider. This program seeks team members to help on larger projects at various times throughout the year. Site visits are 3-5 days in length with follow up required for final reports afterwards.

By pairing a multidisciplinary team of expert planning professionals from around the country with community members, key stakeholders, and relevant decision makers, the place-based initiative seeks to foster community education, engagement, and empowerment.

Each team is selected for the specific expertise needed on the project to offer pro bono assistance in developing a framework or vision plan that promotes a sustainable, livable, economically vibrant, and healthy community.

Communities facing a range of challenges including, but not limited to, social equity and affordability, economic development, sustainability, consensus building, and urban design are well-suited for assistance through the program. Projects focus on localities with a demonstrated need for assistance, where planning resources and expertise may not otherwise be available.

For more information, see <http://www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams>

From Lauren Kim, Student Representative Elected from Region

Don't Take a Vacation this Summer... Plan Now To Include Students this Fall

As a student, I can attest to the anticipation of starting a career in the “real world” and acknowledge my uncertainty of what to expect in my first job after I graduate. My fellow graduate students often communicate the same sentiment.

One of the best ways to engage enthusiastic and committed novice planners is by providing them opportunities to get involved in your APA Chapter. This is not only a chance to help shape the planners of the future, but an opportunity to familiarize students with the day-to-day business of the profession from the perspective of experienced planners. APA professionals can provide an inside view of the “real world” that is invaluable to students.

There are many ways to engage students. A first step is to contact the head of the Planning Student Organization (PSO) at the colleges and universities in your region. The APA website has many of these organizations listed by state: <http://www.planning.org/students/psolist.htm>. If your Chapter is not represented on this list, please do not hesitate to reach out to area schools with planning, geography and environmental science programs, among others.

If you already have a strong base of student members in your Chapter, the summer is a great time to begin planning activities which will include them when they return in the fall. Here are a few ideas:

- Partner with the Young Planners Group (YPG) to include students in networking events and educational programming
- Develop a mentorship program with students and experienced planners within the Chapter's membership
- Coordinate with PSOs to participate in career-related events on topics from interviewing to other “must-have skills” for future planners

As an active student member of my state Chapter, I recently participated in a city walking tour organized by my Chapter's YPG. I learned about the history of a community I had never visited before and was able to explore it with fellow students and professionals. From my positive event experience, I left with this impression: should there be an opportunity to participate in a similar event in the future, I will attend.

So, do make plans this summer to engage student planners this fall. Host one great event, and you may find an untapped pool of new and energetic members.



Lauren McKim – Incoming SRC Representative from Region I

Lauren is a second year planning student at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. She is focusing her graduate studies in real estate and housing. In addition to her role as the Region I representative for the Student Representatives Council of APA, Lauren is also the Student Representative to the New Jersey Chapter. In that role, she is a voice for planning students in New Jersey and helps coordinate student involvement in Chapter events.

Prior to beginning her graduate degree, Lauren spent three years working in commercial property management in Washington, DC. While in DC, she was an active member of the Washington District Council of the Urban Land Institute and was a Vice Chair of the Education Committee within its Young Leaders Group. Lauren holds a B.A. from the University of Kansas in history and psychology. If you would like to contact Lauren, please email her at lmckim@rutgers.edu.

Photo by Joe Szurszewski courtesy of the American Planning Association