



ANNUAL REPORT 2007 – 2008

President's Message

This is one of the last opportunities that I will have to greet you as President of the NY Metro Chapter. It has been a privilege and a lot of fun to serve the Chapter and all of you in these six years. I have tried to make all the hard work look effortless (ha!) but as you know, it takes persistent effort on the part of all of us to make the Chapter serve you well and to promote excellent planning in the New York region. After three terms, let me review some of the accomplishments of the last years and outline the challenges that lie ahead.

The Chapter has doubled its membership, bringing us up to around 1,450 enrolled professionals and students in the region. In national terms, we are still considered a middle- sized chapter, but our recent membership spurt resulted in more representation at the National Delegate Assembly. We were recognized nationally a couple of years ago with the Best Chapter Award, and we continue to be singled out for our programs and for our collaborations and conferences with civic and professional groups. We have weighed in and played a constructive and critical leadership role on key issues and projects, ranging from the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan to the development of Hudson Yards, to the rather tortured development of Moynihan Station, to the implementation of PlaNYC, to lobbying, with others, for congestion pricing, to promoting revisions in the 125th Street rezoning and other zoning plans around the city. Our Long Island, Lower Hudson East and West Sections have all continued to sponsor educational, advocacy and social events for their particular geographic membership while working within the Chapter to promote effective regional planning in the metropolitan area.

We have been laboring to make the new AICP Certification Maintenance Program work for all our members by sponsoring our own programs that qualify for such credit and by soliciting sponsors and partners for training and educational events for which AICPs can receive CM credit. Our March letter to APA/AICP summarized a number of your comments and concerns about the growing pains, operations and equity of the new program and that letter received support from other Chapters and close attention and response from National. The program is working better and faster now but there are continuing questions about costs to the Chapters and providers, about quality and diversity of programs, and about the need for flexibility to permit

members to attend the variety of worthwhile and high quality events in New York, and to encourage self- study and distance/on-line training and education while gaining approved credit. Most of us are very much in favor of continuing education, and we want to make the program work for all NY Metro Chapter members as we collaborate with National APA to make the program a success.

As we look ahead, it seems to me that there are a number of practical and visionary goals that should guide the Chapter. Here is a beginning list of those goals and tasks:

- Engage in targeted fundraising to increase scholarships for students in all the planning schools in the New York metropolitan area.
- Develop a strategic plan and evaluation mechanism for the Chapter that won't just be put on a shelf, but will reflect the practical needs of members by means of a menu of programs and strategies.
- Expand the membership of committees to make them more diverse, to enable them to do research on leading planning issues and projects and to be sure that all committees (all staffed by volunteers) have a year-long agenda of meetings and targets.
- Develop an educational and advocacy structure for the public and for the media so that NY Metro becomes the place to go for an understanding of planning issues.
- Expand NY Metro's efforts to train community boards and planning officials in new planning techniques and outreach.
- Recruit sponsors who can provide financial support for training workshops for members and for communities and planning officials.
- Improve and expand the connections with the region's planning schools to enhance the natural and sometimes neglected connections between academics and the professional planner.

In a recent piece in *The New York Times*, the film critic A.O. Scott wrote about planners (and architects) in contrast to the great 20th century film makers who depicted the city and the future. He described the moviemaker's view of the urban life as nightmarish, intimate, efficient and often dehumanizing. The architect and the planner are "both practical-minded and utopian. Their job is to solve problems, to ground their projects in collective hopes for a grander, cleaner, more rational organization of human space. The long-term results of their efforts, however, are typically ambiguous, yielding new problems on top of solutions." It is up to us to create an exciting vision of the future metropolis and to work together to make sure that it is realized.

All the best,

Ethel Sheffer
President
June 16, 2008

Executive Committee Reports

Legislative Activities

Once again, Michael A. Levine, AICP, represented the Chapter at the annual Legislative and Policy conference in Washington D.C, where he met with congressional leaders on issues such as affordable housing, energy policy and transportation funding. As one of APA's fifty "Legislative Liaisons," Mr. Levine assists the Legislative & Policy committee in reviewing draft policy guides and position papers. Closer to home, he has worked with members of the State Legislature on the passage of several bills regarding housing, green building and smart growth. He has also written several articles for the MetroPlanner.

Executive Committee

Jennifer Posner served the Executive Committee well in keeping the database of electronic interest documents, maintaining the leadership contact lists, and recording Executive Committee meeting minutes.

Finances

The Metro Chapter's financial condition continued to be healthy in this 2007 to 2008 fiscal year. With a full docket of programs, special events and new requirements coming from national APA, we have held our own.

We have moved the Chapter office twice and managed to keep costs down, saving on printing the newsletter by going electronic, keeping expenses to a minimum and saving on rent.

There is a required consolidation of financial systems with national that has been a challenge, but promises to be a big boon going forward.

The new requirements for AICP certification maintenance have financial implications on both the revenue and expense sides, and we are just starting to understand and manage this change.

Along with the sustaining income from a solid and growing membership base, our biannual conference was the principal financial success that kept us on course.

The following page summarizes our current financial performance and forecast for the fiscal year. Please review it and direct any questions to treasurer@nyplanning.com.

NY Metro Chapter Annual Report 2007 - 2008

New York Metro Chapter of APA Fiscal Year 2007-08 Budget and Results as of May 31, 2008 unless otherwise noted (fiscal year starts October 1st, 2007)			
	Budget	8 Mos	Year End
	<u>FY 07-08</u>	<u>Oct-May</u>	<u>Forecast</u>
REVENUE			
Chapter Dues APA Rebate	48,000	21,558	48,000
Listings - Consultants/Jobs/Web	11,000	6,370	11,000
Program Income (grants, event sponsors & admin fees)	3,500	1,612	3,500
Conference	30,960	31,975	31,975
AICP Professional Development--Fees/Charges	4,000	2,295	3,000
Bank Interest	500	381	500
TOTAL REVENUE	97,960	64,191	97,975
EXPENSE			
Newsletter	1,000	-	-
Chapter Conference	13,769	12,080	12,080
Annual Meeting	3,500	2,000	5,500
Office--Administration	33,000	21,558	33,000
Office--Supplies & Services	7,500	6,133	7,500
Office--Computer Hardware & Software	2,000	-	2,500
Office--Rent	8,500	7,702	8,670
Web	1,000	710	1,000
Travel & Conference Registration	2,500	4,253	4,253
Program Expenses	2,500	2,670	3,000
Holiday Party	3,500	4,993	4,993
AICP Professional Development	1,200	354	354
Insurance	1,466	1,466	1,466
Other Expenses	800	344	844
Charges to Scholarship Fund	800	-	800
TOTAL EXPENSES	83,035	64,263	85,959
Net Operating Excess (Deficit)	14,925	(72)	12,016
Transfers to Reserve Funds (Projected)	14,925	(72)	12,016
TOTAL EXPENSES & TRANSFERS TO RESERVES	97,960	64,191	97,975

New York Metro Chapter of APA Fiscal Year 2007-08 Budget (continued)			
Excess (Deficit) After Transfer to Reserves		-	-
Weinberg Student Awards Fund		25,210	25,500
Amount Owed Chapter Account	(800)		(800)
Checking Account Balance	6/11/2008	18,959	
Reserve Fund		<u>15,632</u>	
		34,591	

Professional Development (PDO)

In her second year as PDO, Sarah K. Yackel, AICP continued to work closely with the Metro Chapter Executive Committee, Chapter AICP members, and National APA to implement the AICP Commission’s Certification Maintenance Program (CM), adopted in April 2007, effective January 2008. In response to the new CM requirements, the Chapter has to date registered seven programs offering over 30 CM credits. These programs have included the New York Metro Chapter Conference; PLANYC, One Year Later: Implementation, Impacts and Evaluation; and Transit Oriented Development in Australia. In offering programs for CM credits, New York Metro has collaborated with NYU Wagner Rudin Center, NYMTC, and New York Metro Transportation Committee. In the next year, the Chapter intends to continue to provide a variety of high quality programs for CM credits and will seek to expand partnership opportunities.

In addition to implementing the CM program, the Chapter also played a key role in the debate at the National level surrounding the format of the approved CM program. The New York Metro Chapter Executive Committee raised numerous concerns about the adopted CM program, including, but not limited to, the CM program fee structure, accessibility and quality of programming, and the financial burden to AICP members. These concerns were expressed in a unanimous resolution passed by the Executive Committee on March 17, 2008 and in a letter to the AICP Commission on March 27, 2008. A copy of this letter as well as previous letters sent to the AICP Commission expressing the Chapter’s concerns about the CM program can be found on the Chapter’s website at www.nyplanning.org.

Finally, the Metro Chapter had an AICP Exam pass rate of 69% in 2007 as compared to the National pass rate of 65%. Efforts to improve the review materials and course structure and content to better respond to the needs of Chapter members and to address changes made to the AICP Exam content at the national level and structure are ongoing.

Programs

Our Co-Vice Presidents for Programs Brodie Hefner and Nicolette Wagoner were responsible for many events in 2007, including the Chapter's biennial conference in October. Earlier in the year, they assisted in the organization of an ethics workshop facilitated by Carol Barrett, author of "Everyday Ethics for Practicing Planners." Attendees discussed the APA Code of Ethics as well as several potential scenarios in which ethics could be called into play.

The Metro Chapter biennial conference, which was co-sponsored with the NYU Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management, featured keynote presentations by MTA Chief Executive Elliot G. Sander, NYC Deputy Commissioner for Planning and Sustainability Bruce Schaller, and Rutherford H. Platt, most recently editor of "The Humane Metropolis: People and Nature in the 21st Century." The presentations and a half-dozen breakout sessions illuminated key challenges related to growth management and sustainability in the region. The event achieved the fundraising and educational goals that had been established by the Program VPs and their conference committee.

The Programs VP's organized the Chapter's holiday party at the New York City Transit Museum in Downtown Brooklyn, which was attended by over 150 Chapter members. They also coordinated co-sponsorship of several other events that gave AICP members the opportunity to earn Certification Maintenance (CM) credits toward this new requirement, including an April, 2008 event on "PlaNYC 2030 One Year Later: Implementation, Impacts, Evaluation," co-sponsored by NYU Wagner and the Urban Planning Students Association/NYU Wagner

Other CM-eligible events organized by the Program VPs in 2008 included the presentation of three audio/web conferences for AICP credits, in March, May and June.

Strategic Plan

Under the direction of President Ethel Sheffer, Michael Marrella and Jennifer Posner are heading the effort to update the Chapter's Strategic Plan for the first time in nearly a decade. The strategic plan is intended to provide a vision for the Chapter's future, defining problems and outlining solutions so that the Chapter may best serve its members and the New York metropolitan region.

The Strategic Plan will focus on the following areas:

- Professional Development, including AICP Continuing Maintenance requirements
- Public Relations, including press relations and partnerships with other non-profit organizations
- Government Relations, including policy and legislative items in the New York metro area
- Chapter Administration, including fundraising, committees, bylaws, and linkages to the regional sections

An email blast was distributed to the Chapter's members to solicit ideas and feedback on the topics that should be included in the strategic plan. That feedback will be incorporated into the first draft of the strategic plan.

A detailed outline is now being prepared and will be shared with the Executive Committee this summer. A first draft of the plan will be circulated in early fall with the intention of completing the Strategic Plan by the end of 2008.

MetroPlanner

The Chapter's bi-monthly newsletter completed its first year in all digital format. The conversion has resulted in a significant cost savings by eliminated printing and mailing charges. Delivering the newsletter via email has also expedited delivery. In terms of content, the primary objectives have been to bring reports of Chapter events to the membership, to report on position papers prepared by the Chapter's committees and to highlight planning projects and programs across Long Island, New York City and the lower Hudson Valley. Soliciting contributors for news and features remains a constant challenge.

Area Representation

We are very proud that New York Metro Chapter has active geographic sections whose representatives accomplished much during this past year.

Long Island Section: Accomplishments of the Long Island Section for 2007-2008 are:

- The Section continued to work with the Nassau and Suffolk Planning Federations and held numerous seminars and conferences on various land use and planning topics.
- Adopted Operating Guidelines for the Section including administration of the established Arthur H. Kunz Memorial Fund with the Long Island Community Foundation.
- Offered audio/web and CD-based training programs from the APA available to members for professional training and AICP certification maintenance.
- Hosted "East End Planning Workshops" at Southampton College.

The following are goals for the Long Island Section for 2008-2009:

- Amend Chapter bylaws to include the Section Operating Guidelines.
- Work with the Suffolk County Executive's office/Legislature toward the creation of legislation to formalize (codify) the Suffolk County Planning Federation as an information, education and training arm of the Suffolk County Planning Commission.
- Assist with the planning, organizing and execution of the annual Suffolk and Nassau County Planning Federation conferences.
- Continue to offer audio/web and CD-based training programs from the APA available to members for professional training and AICP certification maintenance.
- Offer East End Planning Workshop in the spring and other East End training programs throughout the year.

- Host social events for planners.
- Begin discussions with selected Long Island colleges on a planning degree program.
- Make the Section visible and available to provide considered opinion on planning issues in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Hudson Valley East Section: Tracey Corbitt, the Hudson Valley East Director organized several Planners' gatherings in Westchester County:

- Peak Organic Beer. Joe Robinson of Peak Organic Beer explained all about creating organic beer at Tomantillo's, an organic restaurant in Hastings-on-Hudson.
- Captain Lawrence Brewing Company. The group gathered at Westchester first local microbrewery that is located in Pleasantville.
- Trails in Westchester County. The Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct gave a brief chat about trails in Westchester, and the founder of a local company, Raw Revolution, chatted about raw foods. The event was held at the The Crossings (Valhalla train station).
- Ossining Public Library Tour. Joyce Lannert, AICP, gave a tour of the new 47,000 sq.ft. "green" building, powered by geothermal energy and landscaped with drought and pest-resistant native plants. The library construction followed the U.S. Green Buildings Council's procedures for accreditation as a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building and is the second LEED building in Westchester.
- Happy Hour. Southbound BBQ in Valhalla.
- The Hudson Valley Flying Pig Restaurant. Mingle and conversation with Maryanne Hedrick, founder of My Personal Farmer (www.MyPersonalFarmers.com), the virtual Hudson Valley Farmers Market. The chef from The Hudson Valley Flying Pig Restaurant also discussed how they use food from local farmers and organic or chemical-free products from small independent farmers.

Hudson Valley West Section: Alan J. Sorensen, AICP, the Hudson Valley West Director, spoke at several regional planning conferences and has continued to network with the Planning Commissioners in Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster Counties to focus on regional issues including affordable housing and transportation planning. Mr. Sorensen spoke at the following regional conferences:

- Sullivan Renaissance Winter Planning Forum, Ferndale, NY. Spoke about successful Downtown Revitalization Strategies that can be used to revitalize communities while strengthening their economic base. Presentation also focused on façade renovations in the context of historic preservation.
- Main Street Institute, Liberty, New York. Conducted workshop that included case studies of successful Main Street revitalization efforts in the Hudson Valley Region. Also discussed the types of programs that are now available to assist communities with their

Main Street Revitalization efforts such as the New York Main Street program, which Mr. Sorensen helped to create in his former role as Assistant Commissioner of Public Policy at NYSDHCR.

- Land Use Leadership Alliance Training Program, Pace University. Mr. Sorensen participated in a four-day Land Use Leadership Alliance Training Program concerning affordable housing with representatives from Orange, Ulster and Dutchess Counties.
- Planning and Zoning Board Training Sessions: Mr. Sorensen conducted Planning Board and Zoning Board Training Sessions in the Towns of Fallsburg (Sullivan County) and Mount Hope (Orange County).

Goals for 2008-2009 are:

- To coordinate with Orange, Sullivan, Rockland and Ulster Counties to conduct regional planning forums with a focus on transportation planning.
- To invite the Port Authority of New York to discuss their plans for Stewart International Airport – including, but not limited to, the possibility of a regional rail connection to the airport.

COMMITTEES

Aviation Committee

Though the Aviation Committee has been largely inactive this past year, the committee should take off (no pun intended!) this fall. The committee intends to discuss local aviation issues, both landside and airside and their planning implications for the New York City metropolitan area. Such topics for discussion include economic competitiveness by routes/fares to economic impact of congestion on the Van Wyck Expressway and the 'Plane to the Train' issue connecting JFK and Lower Manhattan. The committee intends to develop white papers on relevant issues that APA-NY Metro Chapter can sign off on, presenting the sound urban planning perspective to aviation issues confronting NYC.

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee solicited nominees for the six categories of awards for which it is responsible. These are the Lawrence Orton, the Paul Davidoff, the Meritorious Achievement, the William H. Whyte, the Journalism and the Andrew Haswell Green Award (*formerly known as the Distinguished Service Award*). In addition, the committee solicits the Robert C. Weinberg Student Awards from each of the Chapter's four Graduate Urban Planning Programs: Pratt Institute, Hunter College, Columbia and New York University. It considers a wide variety of nominees for the six categories and seeks to recognize the best projects, initiatives, organizations and individuals in the planning field.

This year's awards, bestowed at the Chapter's June 16th Annual Meeting, are as follows:

Lawrence M. Orton Award: **Vision Long Island**

Andrew Haswell Green Award: **Robert Olmsted**

Meritorious Achievement Award: **West Harlem Piers**

Paul Davidoff Award: **Nancy Biberman**, Women's Housing and Economic Development Corp.

Journalism Award: **Charles V. Bagli**, *The New York Times*

William H. Whyte Award: Two Exhibitions: **Robert Moses and the Modern City** and

Jane Jacobs and the Future of New York

Robert C. Weinberg Award

Ann Foss, Columbia University

Scott Giering, Hunter College

Katherine Rose Spaulding, Pratt Institute

Sarah Wu, NYU Wagner School of Public Administration

Economic Development Committee

The APA Economic Development Committee put together four informative panel discussions during the year from July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2008. The mission of the APA Economic Development Committee is to develop and host panel discussion on issues having both an economic development and planning focus to help understand the relationship between these forces that shape development projects. We have been looking to partner with multiple groups in the City to gain greater knowledge of the development community, to expand overall interactions between APA and other area organizations and to share in the presentation of projects and issues that cross over multiple APA areas of interest.

Meeting #1—Renaissance City, Newark, NJ: Our first meeting of the fall 2007 session featured the Planning efforts taking shape in Newark that are hoping to fuel an economic renaissance in the City. Tom Curley, a veteran of numerous planning projects in Newark hosted a panel that included Toni Griffin, the recently appointed Director of Community Development for Newark; Tom Wright, the Executive Director of the Regional Plan Association and Ron Beit, a developer undertaking work in Newark. In front of a crowd of more than 30 individuals, including a contingent from the NJ Chapter of the APA, the panel gave a wide-ranging presentation of some of the steps being taken in Newark to catalyze new growth and investment.

Meeting #2—NYC 2030 Comparative Practices (Co-hosted with the AIA PUD): The committee broke its long-standing tradition of evening meetings with a morning presentation by Peter Head, leader of Planning Plus for Arup, who presented an overview of some of the critical issues facing society in the coming century and provided insight into potential solutions from projects being undertaken in Europe and Asia.

Meeting #3—Can NYC build affordably?: Our third meeting, a panel discussion held in front of a crowd of more than 50 people, including Holly Leight of HPD and two developers involved in affordable housing development in NYC, focused on the sophistication of developing affordable housing project and gave examples of successful public - private partnerships that have been undertaken recently that can be examples of future opportunities to build affordable housing in NYC.

Meeting #4—Urban Agriculture: In partnership with the AIA COTE and the AIA International Committee, the Economic Development Committee organized a panel that included visionaries and local practitioners who presented their thoughts on the topic of providing agricultural opportunities in an urban environment. A crowd of 100 people were treated to a lively discussion that ranged from vertical agricultural façades to empowering local people to use farming as a means to create community.

In the upcoming months, the APA Economic Development Committee plans to continue its pursuit of offering access to panels providing insight on interesting topics. In addition, it will support APA initiatives, including presenting New York economic development activities to a delegation from China in the upcoming months.

Environmental Committee

The core group of the APA Environmental Committee met several times this year to discuss issues, plans and programs for 2008. A forthcoming panel discussion will address the issue of protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the urban setting. In addition, a summer field trip to Fresh Kills Park is being planned. The committee continues to reach out to new members who can contact Bob_white@akrf.com if they are interested in becoming part of the committee.

Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee

During the 2007/2008 year, the Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee (HNRC) of the New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association has studied housing and neighborhood issues in waterfront areas. Specifically, we have targeted the Queens West expansion ("Hunters Point South"), Roosevelt Island, Randall's/Ward's Island, Governors Island, and Arverne. Randall's/Ward's Island and Governors Island are primarily neighborhood revitalization issues. The others have both housing and neighborhood revitalization aspects. Our method has been for individual committee members to share their research on proposed plans for the specific areas. We plan to follow up in fall 2008 with walking tours of each of the stated areas.

Additionally, in March 2008 we had a presentation by Brendan J. Cheney, budget and policy analyst at the NYC Independent Budget. His topic was the Independent Budget Office Report on the Mayor's New Housing Marketplace Plan. This report describes progress that has been made in the last four years towards affordable housing (including preservation and new construction) and the challenges ahead. Our objective was to compare the mayor's plan to actual accomplishment.

Planners for Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee

The Planners for Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee activities have essentially been on hold for the last year. New leadership needs to be identified, and activities for 2008/2009 will be focused on developing a renewed strategy. The Committee has regularly been represented at the APA Metro Chapter Executive Committee meetings over the last year. The interim chair has served for the past year on the National APA's Diversity Taskforce, and potential future activities for the Chapter's committee could tie in to the National APA's Diversity Taskforce initiatives,

particularly the newly launched APA Ambassador's program (<http://www.planning.org/diversity/ambassadors.htm>). APA Ambassadors will promote the growth and diversity of the planning profession by talking to students at high schools, colleges, and universities about careers in planning. Through this program, APA particularly hopes to reach students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee and New York City Sections have collaborated to produce a very active year focused on promoting professional dialogue, providing technical guidance in the form of policy statements, and offering lectures on topics of interest to our members. Key events this year included hosting three Australian planners who specialize in Transit Oriented Development; a panel discussion of pedestrian and bicycle projects and best practices in New York City, the region, and the world;; and our annual collaborative dinner with the New York City Chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers with a presentation on Port Authority Traffic Safety Improvement Program (all three events were CM-certified). Technical presentations by agency or advocacy representatives included New York City's BRT project and the proposed Fare Free New York initiative. The Committee has also prepared policy statements and editorials on the NYC Congestion Mitigation proposal, Moynihan Station, the Manhattanville and Downtown Jamaica EISs, and a proposed 25-year plan for transit improvements. And because all work and no play makes planners pretty dull, the NYC Section organized the first and second annual Planners' Scavenger Hunts, challenging our members to show how much they know about New York City.

Anyone interested in joining the Transportation Committee or would like to present an interesting project should contact the committee chairs: David Fields (planman72@yahoo.com) and Janet Jenkins (jjenkins@eng-wongtaub.com).

Urban Design Committee

Good news and bad news often arrives instantaneously. The good news is Rob Lane will be leaving his post at the Regional Planning Association to become a Loeb Fellow. Rob was among the first to "step up" when Mark Strauss and Ethel Sheffer launched the idea of initiating an Urban Design Committee. The bad news is he has resigned as Co-chair of the Urban Design Committee.

Rob Lane has tentatively agreed to work with Rex Curry in the final draft of the *Public Place Public Process* working paper. The current draft and presentation materials are available for review through the sites listed below. The UD committee will be monitoring the progress of the affordable housing site developed in the *New Housing New York* competition in which Rex Curry served as a member.

The Urban Design Committee website has a "new look." This and accompanying "group sites" have been developed to identify *themes* on all things urban under two major headings: "landscapes" and "rolling process." The trend in recent thinking has been to document "urban solutions to the global challenge," and therefore question a national infrastructure strategy

without provisions for improved regional governance. These and related subjects are made “concrete” in reviewing a series of New York region development sites. These resources seek review and comment in several *inter* and *intranet* locations to gather the opinions of a broad range of participants. The individual URLs are as follows:

Calendar (public)

http://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=reidcurry%40gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York
(public address)

Subcommittee Formation and Content Development ([access to applications](#))

<http://groups.google.com/group/urban-design-committee>

Committee Presentations

<http://communitydesign.net/urbandesigncommittee> (wordpress)

Individual Member Blogs and Websites ([In development](#))

<http://www.communitydesignnet.blogspot.com> (google-curry)

The technology remains “(re)newable” to meet individual participation needs. All are welcome and encouraged to enter this particular fray with a thought or two.

Waterfront Committee

With New York experiencing enormous changes along its waterfronts, the APA Waterfront Committee has had an exciting year filled with committee presentations and discussions, a pre-screening of the MWA’s film “City of Water,” and a special tour of the H2O=Life exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History.

The Waterfront Committee has held lively committee discussions on major waterfront proposals such as the proposed parks along the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront, and the Louis Kahn-designed Four Freedom Park & FDR memorial for the southern tip of Roosevelt Island. Outside the City, we had presentations on upstate riverfront park proposals from Scenic Hudson and the post-Big Dig status of Boston’s waterfront.

MWA requested our pre-release input on their documentary “City of Water” and incorporated several of our suggestions into the film, which is now being widely viewed throughout the City. As a special field trip, we were treated to a complimentary, inside tour of the exhibit on H2O=Life, which covered the role of water in our lives from multiple perspectives ranging from ecological and geographical to cultural and social.

The committee’s co-chair, Bonnie Harken, represents APA on the Governors Island Alliance (GIA), a coalition of civic and professional groups led by RPA committed to public access, memorable parks and public spaces, and appropriate reuse of the Island and its historic structures. Contributing to the public dialogue and commenting on the upcoming input process into the design of Governors Island’s park and promenade will be one of our first tasks this coming year.

The committee plans to continue to address these kinds of issues in the coming year and would welcome your input. In addition, we will be planning a waterfront outing over the summer and invite you to join us. Please contact co-chairs Bonnie Harken (harken@nautilus-international.com) or Bob Balder (Robert_Balder@Gensler.com) for more information.

Zoning Committee

Zoning Committee meetings have continued to be a forum for discussion of issues related to land use controls in New York City and beyond. Our membership includes a wide range of expertise and experience, with architects, lawyers and planners from government, the private sector and non-profit organizations. Recent outreach for new membership has had a very positive response. In addition to general discussion of current zoning issues, the Committee has studied and given testimony this year on two major developments in upper Manhattan – Columbia University’s Manhattanville rezoning plan and the Department of City Planning’s rezoning of 125th Street. These were both highly controversial proposals with complex planning issues. We urged interagency coordination and outreach to the local community to deal with the plans’ socioeconomic impacts and urged restraint in the use of eminent domain. In particular, many of our suggestions with respect to the new arts bonus along 125th Street were implemented in the final version of the zoning text.

The Zoning Committee recently hosted a presentation by Vicki Weiner, Director of Planning and Preservation, for the Pratt Institute. Vicki presented the Pratt Institute’s study on the preservation of local retail, which is a recurring concern as New York City grows and changes. Future initiatives of the Zoning Committee may include collaboration with the New York City Bar Association’s Land Use Planning and Zoning Committee with respect to a study on Community Benefits Agreements. The Zoning Committee also is looking to conduct training sessions for local community boards with respect to zoning issues.

GOALS AND PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

The Metro Chapter Executive Committee has established many goals for next year to continue our work as the "best" APA chapter. Some of these are to:

- Create a strategic plan.
- Continue to review committee structure and activities and expand membership.
- Provide a diverse number of events and educational activities that offer CM credits.
- Focus on increasing the diversity of our membership and of our activities.
- Increase membership participation in APA activities.
- Conduct our bi-annual conference.
- Expand our communication with members by creating an online Metro Chapter calendar and wider use of our website and of broadcast email.
- Continue and improve our collaborations with civic, educational and community groups around the city and the region.