



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

LEAD. INSPIRE.INNOVATE

Angela Vincent – Board Director Elected from Region 1

This year's APA Federal Policy and Program Briefing left me very inspired, ready to lead and excited to promote the innovate work that planners do to make great communities. Chock full of programs sessions on jobs and the economy, the future of policy for housing and community development, key economic development strategies, and the status of transportation reauthorization, I was reminded of the ever increasing importance of planning and the role of planners. Some important messages from federal agency representatives and local leaders were provided that I'd like to share in the hopes that we all remember that we are leaders in our communities and region in all aspects of planning:

1. Cultivate long-term relationships with forward thinking CEOs and business organizations. These business leaders are essential stakeholders in creating sustainable local and regional economies. Keep them in the loop: invite them to workshops and economic development meetings, send them relevant newsletter articles about successful projects. They are important partners in our community – find ways to incorporate them in a meaningful.
2. Develop a solid definition of sustainability. While there is support for sustainable communities in the U.S., there are many definitions floating around. If you have defined sustainable development in your community (congratulations!), promote that definition widely.
3. Frame sustainability in terms of creating jobs and boosting economic prosperity. As mentioned above, there is support in our communities for sustainability, creating jobs and enhancing our economy are the most important issues on the public's minds.
4. Leverage the power and energy of young planners and citizens. Their energy, commitment to their neighborhoods, and innovative ideas is a breath of fresh air and will inspire us to look outside the box. One way to do this is through the Community Planning Assistance Team projects, but there are lots of opportunities to engage these key players in every day planning and bring new life to our work.

We have an incredible opportunity to be leaders in these tough economic times and to show how planning creates jobs, improves the economy, maintains existing communities, incorporates all sectors of the community in planning for growth, and creates livable walkable places where we can all thrive. It's time to Lead, Inspire, and Innovate.

Sustaining Places Initiative Report

The Sustaining Places Initiative Report is out! Thanks to the incredible work of David Godschalk FAICP and Bill Anderson, FAICP who co-chaired the Sustaining Places Task Force, the 119 page report outlines the role of comprehensive plan as the leading policy document and tool to help communities of all sizes achieve sustainability. The final



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report outlines key strategies and recommendations for a Sustaining Places Agenda. It calls on the APA and AICP to lead this agenda through:

- Establishing a professional culture that recognizes and fosters the growth of sustaining places applications in planning practice and education;
- Conducting research and development aimed at building our repertoire of sustaining places knowledge, concepts and techniques; and
- Developing education and awareness activities aimed at widening public and professional understanding of the potential and importance of sustaining places planning.

This report outlines the core elements a comprehensive plan should have to develop sustaining places and how to measure our progress towards achieving more sustainable communities. It also outlined leading plans from across the U.S. that incorporated sustainability into their comprehensive planning process. Several of those leaders are right here in the Northeast: Burlington, VT; Keene, NH; Philadelphia, PA; and Albany, NY. We look forward to the next steps for activating the embracing the Call to Action that was made in this report and to taking this opportunity to make a critical difference in the places where people will live in the future through the future. If you would like a copy of this report, please visit: <http://www.planning.org/sustainingplaces>.

Five Great Places Designated in the Northeast

Congratulations to the neighborhoods, streets and places in the Northeast that were designated as Great Places in the United States this year. The following were selected as Great Places:

Great Neighborhood: College Hill – Providence, RI

Great Streets: U Street, N.W. – Washington D.C.

Main Street – Nantucket, MA

Market Square and Market Street – Portsmouth, NH

Downtown Woodstock Streetscape – Woodstock, VT



The Thomas H. Macy House and the homes known as the 'three bricks' reflect the Federal and Greek Revival styles, respectively, popular along Main Street. Photo courtesy: Angela Vincent



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APA leadership was invited to speak at the Nantucket Main Street event on October 8th. This Great Street has balanced the pressures of tourism with the everyday comings and goings of Main Street as the center of Nantucket life and commerce for two centuries. Through strong community leadership, planning and zoning, strategic private investment, and contributions of individuals, families and community groups, Main Street in Nantucket has succeeded at maintaining the quality and character that was recognized as being a true Great Street in the U.S.

Since the Great Places Program's start in 2007, APA has designated 140 Great Places located in all 50 states and D.C. Great Places are exceptional for many reasons, including creating a sense of place, the leadership of elected officials, the contributions of the businesses and community organizations and the hard work of engaged citizens and planners. Congratulations to Nantucket, Providence, Washington D.C., Portsmouth and Woodstock! For more information on the other Great Places or if you have a place that you'd like to nominate for 2012, please visit:

<http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/index.htm>



Community Planning Workshops.....

Your Chance to Get Involved

Debbie Alaimo Lawlor, AICP/PP – AICP Commissioner from Region 1 / APA staff
(dlawlor@live.com)

After the annual conference in Boston, I reported that one of the most rewarding activities that I had the privilege to take part in was the Community Planning Workshop which is a full day event where planners from around the country get together to work on a defined project for a local community in need of assistance in close proximity to where APA is hosting a conference.

During the 2011 APA Fall Leadership Meetings and the Federal Policy and Program Briefing, a Community Planning Workshop was held in the NoMa neighborhood of NE Washington, DC. This workshop was designed to give members of APA's Leadership, including the Board and Commission and elected members of Chapters and Divisions, a chance to experience a workshop firsthand and learn how to organize a similar one through their own Chapter or Division. APA participants assisted the NoMa neighborhood with strategies to preserve public open space and create parks in the rapidly growing business improvement district (BID).



On September 17, 2011, planners from around the country and local community members gathered in one of D.C.'s fastest developing neighborhoods — known as NoMa — to come up with strategies to preserve public open space and parks in the midst of remarkable growth. Workshop participants were tasked with presenting NoMa BID with:

1. A vision statement that supports the community's needs and wishes for future public spaces.
2. Park design guidelines and ideas for a breezeway outside the local Metro rail station.
3. A long-term public engagement strategy.

NoMa's name derives from its location "North of Massachusetts Avenue," which has seen a total transformation over the last decade. A once-blighted industrial area has transformed into a bustling transit-oriented, mixed-use community. Since the opening of the public-private partnership project of the New York Avenue Metro station in 2004, the headquarters of the U.S. General Services Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives have located within the neighborhood.



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The daytime population is roughly 40,000 people, and the full-time resident population continues to explode.

The pace of development, coupled with an industrial past, has left NoMa vulnerable to the loss of all significant open space and parkland. This is where the workshop participants stepped in to help the community recognize and capitalize on its open space and recreational potential.

Workshop participants used the offices of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) in NoMa as headquarters for the day's events. NoMa Transportation and Planning Manager Jamie Brätt and Ambassador Supervisor/Outreach Coordinator J. Otavio Thompson toured us around the NoMa district on foot for over an hour. This walking tour gave us the opportunity to casually talk to different stakeholders as we walked through their neighborhood to get a better understanding of NoMa from their perspective.

After returning to MWCOG, participants separated into five breakout groups, each consisting of APA members and community stakeholders. These groups met to discuss and produce answers to a set of issues and questions. After each breakout, the five groups reassembled and reported their findings.



During the last part of the day, the entire group assembled to create a prioritized list of recommendations for how the community should engage its growing resident base and other stakeholders in the neighborhood. The workshop ended as APA participants and NoMa participants met separately to discuss the day's activities.

The findings of the workshop will help the NoMa BID plan for a healthy proportion of open and park space as it continues to thrive as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood.

These APA-AICP sponsored workshops are intended to bring extensive planning resources in the form of knowledge and skills from planners from around the country volunteering their services to communities in need of assistance. In return, the planners are able to sharpen their public participation and problem solving skills. It's our hope that many more of you will consider taking part in the Community Planning Workshops and apply to become members of future Community Planning Assistance Teams.

For more information: <http://planning.org/communityassistance/index.htm>



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APA Leadership Around the Region

APA Directors, AICP Commissioners and Student Representatives are speaking at local chapter events in your area. If you would like to meet us to talk about any APA or AICP programs or initiatives, please feel free to stop by and introduce yourself.

October 20, 2011 SNEPA Chapter Conference

Anna Breinich, AICP President – AICP President’s Message

October 20, 2011 New York Metro Chapter Conference

Debbie Lawlor, AICP Commissioner and Chuck Latini, APA-NJ Chapter President– Ethics Session

November 3-4, 2011 New Jersey Chapter Conference

Mitch Silver – APA President – APA President’s Message

Debbie Lawlor, AICP Commissioner – Ethics Session



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How Can Your Chapter Have an Impact on More Students?

Lauren McKim, SRC Representative from Region I (lmckim@rutgers.edu)

Why did you become a member of APA? What do *you* believe are the benefits of membership? Where do you think students can contribute in your Chapter? Think about how you would answer to these questions.

Personally, I am already benefitting from my student membership by learning about new trends and best practices in urban planning. Talking to professionals who are currently working in the field is invaluable to me.

Some students may see membership in a professional organization primarily as a way to expand their professional network and help them land their first job out of school. Or, they view membership as a much needed “activity” on their resumes. APA can offer so much more to students.

Sometimes, increasing student involvement in your Chapter might be as simple as communicating the many benefits of membership and how to get involved. One way to spread the word about APA is through an information session or brief orientation coordinated with your Chapter’s Student Representative and/or PSOs.

Here are a few ideas of the types of information students might be interested in learning:

Chapter – Level:

- YPG Events open to students
- Chapter Committees interested in student volunteers
- Chapter events
- Chapter/Regional conferences
- What makes your Chapter stand out?

National – Level:

- Division Membership - \$10 for students: <http://www.planning.org/divisions/>
- Fellowships/Scholarships: <http://www.planning.org/scholarships/>
- Leadership Opportunities: <http://www.planning.org/leadership/students/>
- National Conference: <http://www.planning.org/conference/index.htm>

Communication with students, particularly through social media, was an important topic discussed by the Students Representatives Council (SRC) at the Fall Leadership Meeting. APA has a presence on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook; your chapter may as well.

Here are APA’s Details:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AmericanPlanningAssociation>

Twitter: http://twitter.com/#!/APA_Planning

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com



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Groups: American Planning Association
 American Planning Association – Students

So, why are you a member of APA? Share your reasons and enthusiasm with students. Start communicating with students and advertising your upcoming events or information session. Many more of students could benefit from APA membership!