

THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF HARTFORD, INC.

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MEMORANDUM

TO: CCAPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FROM: DONALD POLAND, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2006

RE: CCAPA FOCUS GROUP – PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Donald Poland, Executive Director/CEO - The Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc – Phone (860) 524-1759 Fax (860) 524-1752

Bruce Hoben and I held a CCAPA Focus Group on October 12, 2006 with private sector planners. Including Bruce and I, there were seven people in attendance. We had a general conversation that touched on all of the questions we wanted to ask. The follow is a summary of the key issues comments provided by the participants.

Planners Support Group: There is no support group for planners dealing with ethical issues. CCAPA should provide a confidential network to provide peer support and advice.

APA National: Focus group did not view APA positively. Perception is that National lacks real planning leadership and is providing less service for more money.

Leadership/Information: Disconnect between national APA and members. CCAPA should fill the void and better disseminate information from national APA to the CCAPA members. Recent Policy Issues & Legislative Issues at the Federal level are a key example of this.

Service to Members: CCAPA needs to elevate the level of planners and public awareness of planning. CCAPA program have a bias toward municipal planners. CCAPA needs to provide more programs to support the work of all planners, not just municipal planners. This should include consultants, regional, state, and non-profit planners.

- **List Serve Policies:** CCAPA should better administer policies for discussions on the list serve. Members feel that comments on the list may undermine planners credibility.
- **Regional Location:** CCAPA should rotate the location of Board meetings and CCAPA programs to better serve the geography of the state and chapter members.
- **Communicate with Member:** CCAPA Executive Board should better communicate with the membership about upcoming Executive Committee meetings, post agendas to the list serve (e-news), and minutes so that members know what is going on with the chapter.
- **FCCAPA:** CCAPA should have a Fellowship program for CCAPA members, separate from APA, to recognize CCAPA members.

Education & Training: CCAPA should provide more meaning training. In addition, CCAPA should implement incentives to get more speakers involved. Dual credit for continuing education credit for speakers, waive registration fee, and so on. Additionally, CCAPA should foster more training opportunities by taking advantage of expertise of members – idea of consulting firms having “Free Fridays” on a rotating basis.

Focus Groups: CCAPA should bring the results of the focus groups back to the membership in the form of chapter meetings where further discussion and input from members can be provided.