

CCAPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – December 5, 2008
Shipman & Goodwin – 9:30 A.M

Summary Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Al Weiner, Chris Smith, Marcia Banach, Robert Phillips, Chris Wood, Dan Tuba, Donald Poland, Mark Pellegrini, Patrice Carson, Mary F. Savage

Chapter President Don Poland called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

I. Adoption of Minutes – August 3 and October 3, 2008. Mr. Smith made the motion to adopt the minutes and Miss Banach seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Mr. Weiner abstaining from the vote on the October 3, 2008 minutes.

II. New Business

- a. Annual Report: Mr. Poland stated that it was time to prepare the Chapter's Annual Report for the year starting October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008. The Annual Report from last year is on the website. Each Committee Chairperson should look at the previous annual report for your Committee, update their section and return it to Mr. Poland no later than January 31, 2009 for compilation.
- b. There has been a request for an amicus brief to be prepared by CCAPA on a case currently before the Connecticut Supreme Court – *Buttermilk Farms vs. PZC*. The request for the brief was received from the Planner in the Town of Plymouth. Very briefly, this case revolves around the installation of sidewalks in a subdivision and if the burden of installation of those sidewalks on a section of land subject to the subdivision but with frontage on an adjacent roadway should be paid for by the Town or the developer. Members of the EC felt that there was a great deal of existing case law on the matter of public improvements and subdivisions.

The Executive Committee (EC) had a brief discussion as to how the decision is made internally as to when the Chapter should prepare an amicus brief and when the Chapter should opt not to. Some members felt that if a particular lawsuit had an element to it or a substantive issue which, when ultimately ruled upon, might have a significant impact on other towns then the Chapter should prepare said brief or coordinate the preparation of said amicus brief. A suggestion was made that consideration should be given to having a legal subcommittee or ad hoc committee comprised of other members of CCAPA of the legal persuasion to bounce these requests off of, or, that there should be some kind of policy to refer to when fielding requests for amicus briefs. The EC

recalled that when preparing a brief on the Campion case that was due to the fact that the Campion case might have had far-reaching impact on planning statewide and thus there was a compelling reason for becoming involved. With regard to the current request Mr. Smith offered to review the material provided and offer a recommendation to the EC.

- c. New Haven Safe Streets Request – Mr. Poland reported that the New Haven Safe Streets group is collecting signatures on a petition in support of the concept that New Haven streets should be designed to accommodate all users and has asked CCAPA via the President to sign the petition. This local initiative seems to be an offshoot of the National Complete Streets movement.

The EC had a discussion about if or when CCAPA, as a statewide organization, should then endorse specific policies applicable to one town. One member asked if there are policies for CCAPA sponsorship. Mr. Poland answered that there were and deferred to Mr. Pagini as he was the member with the most involvement with sponsorship activities at this time. Miss Carson suggested and the group seemed to reach a consensus that while CCAPA as an organization was not lacking support for the concept of safe streets that signing the petition as an organization was not the best way to indicate CCAPA's position on safe streets. Miss Carson suggested that CCAPA should consider sending a response letter citing APA National's endorsement of the National Safe Streets Program and not necessarily directly decline support.

- d. EC Member-at-Large vacancy: Mr. Poland stated that there currently were still two vacancies pending. The EC discussed and prioritized 4 or 5 candidates identified by Mr. Poland. Miss Banach said she would contact the potential representative from CRCOG and Mr. Poland said he would contact the other potential members directly inviting them to begin attending at the next meeting.
- e. Smart Growth Discussion: Mr. Poland began the discussion by providing some brief background on Smart Growth as it pertains to CCAPA. Mr. Poland stated that several years ago a Smart Growth policy guide was developed and adopted by CCAPA and that this policy guide had a section in it pertaining to advocacy. During the 2003-2004 time frame the legislative committee tried repeatedly to do outreach to various agencies surrounding conversations on Smart Growth with very little support. Smart Growth legislation was promulgated with CCAPA's support after initial reservations were addressed with CCAPA assistance. The legislation was adopted.

The EC then entertained a discussion regarding some recent email communications questioning whether or not the chapter and in particular

the EC supported Smart Growth. It was passed on to members of the EC via email that the EC's position on Smart Growth was possibly misrepresented and critiqued by the leadership of another agency. The EC briefly discussed the possible motivation behind remarks of this type and also discussed the fact that unprofessional public attacks of this kind were not appreciated and that in fact perhaps representatives for CCAPA's EC should discuss that matter with members of the board of the other group if it was determined that the information was accurate.

The EC then had a rather extensive discussion regarding the difficulty of separating roles as representatives and leadership of CCAPA from our own individual professional endeavors. EC members noted that when testifying on a matter or speaking in public on a policy or planning related topic they make a point {as put in for purposes} to identify which hat they are wearing or which agency they are representing. That being said, it may be difficult for people when they see, for example, CCAPA's president to not necessarily attribute the content of his remarks to the organization as a whole. Mr. Smith noted and others agreed that the same might be said for any of the remainder of the EC at any given time. The EC also noted that this may be more problematic for those in the private sector. The EC continued to discuss this topic for awhile and then the discussion shifted back to the conversation regarding the perception that CCAPA may not be supportive of Smart Growth.

The EC had a discussion regarding the broadness of the material contained under the umbrella language of Smart Growth and Mr. Wood pointed out that Smart Growth means development and that planning is Smart Growth. Mr. Weiner pointed out that Smart Growth is such a broad term and although on its face it is very easy for persons to agree to perhaps support Smart Growth, when a person drills down to the nuts and bolts of very specific elements and policies contained within the umbrella of Smart Growth that there would very likely be differing opinions about implementation of those principles. The EC also discussed the reality that CCAPA had taken some very concrete actions in support of Smart Growth as Mr. Wood pointed out in his email response to some of the Smart Growth email conversations earlier in the month.

The EC began discussing the perception problem in that it is not clear to the EC if there is merely one or two persons expressing the idea that CCAPA was not supportive of Smart Growth or if it is a wider spread belief. In any event, can CCAPA be more straight forward in the agency's documents regarding support of Smart Growth? The EC agreed that there were opportunities to do just that. Mr. Wood offered to rework his email (previously mentioned) into a bullet point list or fact sheet type format which could be posted on the website.

The EC then began to discuss what possible concrete steps could be taken moving forward. Some of the ideas discussed were as follows:

- Set the record straight on CCAPA's position (post Mr. Wood's list)
- Look at CCAPA's Smart Growth Policy, read through it and as an EC make sure we do agree with it.
- Have other CCAPA EC representatives present, available and out there, meaning that if CCAPA's president or other representative involved in a particular matter is unavailable due to work or other obligations that there is another official person ready to be the spokesman to espouse CCAPA's position on matters and be on the record as an agency.
- Continue the work of the Communications Committee – this would include getting the draft position papers (housing, transportation, regionalism and smart growth) into a final draft format. These position papers could then be put onto the website for member comment and thus essentially vetted by the membership. Mr. Pellegrini suggested that Mr. Vincent would be able to enable the website to receive comments thus facilitating the process for the membership. Mr. Pellegrini also suggested that there would be a set window of time for comment to be received on the various documents.
- The EC briefly discussed having a liaison or PR person. The EC wasn't certain if individuals or reporters would actually seek out and contact such a person as opposed to simply making contact with the individual or person that they were familiar with on a particular item.
- Consider initiating a discussion or meeting with other agencies regarding working together. Mr. Weiner stated eloquently and the EC seemed to agree that it was important to first of all have one designated person initiate a conversation with the other agency to determine the accuracy of and motivation for the inflammatory remarks previously discussed. The EC identified the appropriate member to begin the process of working the matter through. The intent of the conversation would be to ascertain if that person actually did make those statements and what precipitated the statements.

The next step to be considered may be a meeting between a subset of the EC with a subset of the other agency or agencies to, as Mr.

Tuba stated, extend the olive branch and have a conversation regarding the fact that our organizations and our membership won't always agree on everything but as organizations we need to move forward representing our constituents and find common ground between our organizations as possible. Mr. Weiner accurately stated that CCAPA members are on the front line advising decision makers on actions and then implementing laws after they are passed so the membership and our agency has a very different perspective on some things. In essence, there is a big difference between debating ideals and the nuts and bolts of implementation of the legislation that comes out the other end of the machine.

- Mr. Tuba suggested that CCAPA should be take a leading role and sponsor a program on Smart Growth and invite other agencies and their membership to take part in the program. Members agreed, and the matter was delegated to the program committee for further discussion. Mr. Tuba offered his assistance with logistics, etc.

Mr. Poland closed out this topic by stating that he had made some notes during the open discussion of the matter regarding concrete steps moving forward on both the specific topics and the broader discussion and would be drafting some more specific materials and referring the matter back out to the EC shortly.

III. Reports

- A. The Treasurer's report included the distribution of a statement of activities for two months ending November 30, 2008. The balance is approximately \$39,000 and Mr. Tuba reported that the Chapter could expect 7 to 8 thousand in profit from the Rhode Island Regional Conference.

The President reported that the EC had previously authorized the former treasurer to establish a reserve fund in the form of a CD to protect the Chapter against financial difficulties in the future. The EC briefly discussed what the amount of the reserve should be and the ultimate decision was that the reserve fund should be in the amount of \$15,000 at this time. Mr. Tuba made and Mr. Weiner seconded a motion authorizing the Treasurer to seek out and secure an advantageous investment in the form of a CD in the amount of \$15,000 for a term of one year. The motion passed unanimously after a brief discussion with regard to whether or not the CD should be broken into 3 five year increments over a staggered time frame or merely in a lump sum. Ultimately the group determined that a lump sum was acceptable.

While the EC was having a discussion regarding the solvency of the chapter, Mr. Pellegrini suggested that more skill building events should be sponsored

by the Chapter to benefit both the younger members as well as the more seasoned veterans. Mr. Pellegrini specifically mentioned the National Charrette Program and there was a great deal of support and interest within the EC for that.

- B. Program Committee – Miss Carson reported that the Program Committee was meeting in January and was going to move forward with three lunches and an award program the following year. Miss Carson reported that there was a good response to the quarterly luncheon format and specifically that there was an opportunity to earn CM credits within a 1 ½ hour time period as opposed to ½ day or a full day seminar. Miss Carson reported that hot topics would be offered again this year. Miss Carson reported that the Program Committee included Don Poland, John Pagini, Michelle Lipe and Brian Palaia.

Miss Carson said based upon the previous discussion the National Charrette Program would be investigated. Mr. Poland stated that the National Charrette Program was rather intensive and would last perhaps for a three day offering and again a more advanced one day type of offering. That type of programming might require a committee of itself to coordinate all of the logistics. Miss Carson agreed. A discussion then ensued about a possible location for the National Charrette Program or another similar type of offering. The ITBD location in New Britain (CCSU) was mentioned as well as the University of Hartford Design Program. Miss Banach stated that she would provide contact information with regard to that facility.

The EC then had a discussion regarding the possibility of having regionally or nationally known speakers attend programs sponsored by CCAPA and/or the applicability of video conferencing. Miss Carson said she would discuss all of the above with the program committee. Miss Carson also noted that some of the video conferencing topics and/or subject matter was perhaps a little dry and/or a little basic. Mr. Pellegrini mentioned that some of the younger membership of CCAPA would benefit from some of the more basic skill building type of seminars and that there may be a need to provide programming that does not necessarily provide an opportunity to earn CM credits but would nonetheless draw a larger number of the membership meeting set programming.

- C. Chapter Communications Committee/Member Services Committee: Mr. Weiner stated that with regard to the above committees that the website contained outdated material and that CCAPA should consider taking a more assertive stance towards ensuring that the website was redesigned and/or updated responsively or that perhaps CCAPA should consider outsourcing the task. Mr. Poland said that he would contact the appropriate persons the following week. Mr. Weiner also stated a need to update the home software that he uses to continue his work maintaining the member services list and

commented that this software had a price associated with it of \$50 and he was hesitant to move forward with the purchase without being sure that it would be supported by the Committee. The EC authorized the purchase and subsequent reimbursement for same.

- D. Professional Development Officer and Government Relations Committee had no additional reports.

Mr. Poland stated the next meeting would be February 6, 2009 and wished those present a Happy Holiday. With that, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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