Promoting a Culture of Planning

THE VANTAGE POINT

American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter
Making Great Communities Happen

Highlighted! 2011 Annual Conference

The conference kicks off with workshops Sunday afternoon, followed by the Welcome Reception at the Historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel. After the reception, grab a bite to eat at one of Scranton's many restaurants, including those within walking distance of the hotel.

My One City

Philadelphia, PA

Discovering new cities and places is something planners' embrace. The APA Urban Design & Preservation Division recently published selected entries from their 2011 'My One City' competition. The competition challenges Division members to write about their favorite city and what makes it special in less than 300 words. Jillian Penrod-Krause's entry for Philadelphia was among those selected for publication and we'd like to share it with you.

IN 1683, WILLIAM PENN found himself designing a city of firsts. Philadelphia is the first city in America to have been designed in a gridiron pattern; the first city to plot public gardens in each neighborhood; and the first city to have been designed to spatially feature the primacy of its City Hall.

In 2009, Mayor Nutter declared Philadelphia's next mission: to become the Greenest City in America. From retrofitting its classic row homes for energy conservation, to planting 100,000 trees for air quality, to successful and innovative bike- and car-sharing programs, this urban area is making another mark in history as an urban area saturated in sustainable living. A pending design incorporates an homage to Penn in which neighborhoods will have access to green space through an archipelago of parks dotting the Delaware River.

Philadelphia has taken advantage of the luxury of historical development and adaptability, and the result is not only diversity among the neighborhoods, but the temporal generation of spatial boundaries. Old City, Queen's Village, Fish-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
What Makes It the “One”:
- “A city of firsts”—from the first planned city in America with a gridiron pattern, to the first city to feature the importance of its City Hall in its design
- Current mission to become the Greenest City in America
- Incorporation of historical development resulting in diversity among neighborhoods and “the temporal generation of spatial boundaries”
- Friendly people in the City of Brotherly Love!

Quick Facts:
Population: 1,547,297 (2009)

town, Rittenhouse, New Kensington, University City, Passyunk Square, Northern Liberties are in constant revival and knowing neighborhood longevity, at least in Philadelphia, is not determined by the character of its architecture but by the character of its people.

Every time I show guests around Philadelphia, they seem amazed at how personable everyone is. Servers ask your name, people at the park ask you to watch their dog for a second as they grab a quick coffee from the cart. After witnessing a jay-walker almost get caught by the wrong side of a taxi, my brother and I had a two-block conversation with a complete stranger about how much better Philadelphia is than New York. The seasoned Philadelphia pedestrian said, “In New York, they’d hit you and keep going.” Welcome to the City of Brotherly Love.

Public Policy & Economic Development will speak with attendees on this important topic that continues to impact much of Pennsylvania on many levels. The Institute is a think tank that has been established to provide essential research, analysis, and consultation to entities looking for revitalization and long-term sustainability. The principal purpose of The Institute is to increase the capacity of organizations to solve their own problems and become thriving entities.

Workshops and Mobile Tours
In addition to these outstanding main sessions the conference committee has carefully selected a program that features 46 workshops and up to seven mobile workshops. The topic range is broad and the full program will be announced in late July.

Support the Conference!
Sponsorship by companies and organizations help to make the conference possible and contribute to the advancement of planning in Pennsylvania. Openings are still available to sponsor, advertise and exhibit at this important annual state-wide planning event. For more details, visit www.planningpa.org and click on Annual Conference.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!
PA Chapter of APA Annual Conference
October 16-18, 2011

The 2011 PA Chapter of APA Annual Conference will be held October 16 to 18 at the Hilton Scranton & Conference Center in Scranton, PA. The Conference Announcement, including descriptions of all workshops, registration and hotel details, will be available in late July 2011. For additional information, visit the Chapter website, www.planningpa.org and click on “Annual Conference.”

Support the Conference!
Sponsorship by companies and organizations help to make the conference possible and contribute to the advancement of planning in Pennsylvania. Openings are still available to sponsor, advertise and exhibit at this important annual state-wide planning event. For more details, visit www.planningpa.org and click on Annual Conference.

Conference Rates
- Full Conference Schedule including Workshop Descriptions
- Conference Rates
- Hotel Accommodations and Group Rates
- Details for How to Register
- Deadlines

WE LOOK FORWARD to seeing many of you at this year’s annual conference. The conference announcement, containing full program details, will be released in mid to late July. Please check the website at www.planningpa.org for ongoing updates.

Micah Gratz, award-winning journalist and urban critic, lecturer and author of “The Living City: Thinking Small in a Big Way,” and “Cities Back from the Edge: New Life for Downtown.” She is an international lecturer on urban development issues and former award-winning reporter for the New York Post. Her newest book, “The Battle For Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs” was published in 2010. Ms. Gratz was appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2003 and recently left that position for an appointment to the Mayor’s Sustainability Advisory Committee. In 2005, in collaboration with Jane Jacobs, Ms. Gratz and a small group of accomplished urbanists founded The Center For the Living City to advance Jacobs’ work.

Monday concludes with a reception at the Electric City Trolley Museum. Following the reception, attendees are encouraged to enjoy dinner at one of the many Scranton restaurants within walking distance of the hotel.

Tuesday we gather for a Plenary Session that will focus on an issue that is key to most Pennsylvania communities – Marcellus Shale. Teri Ooms, Executive Director of The Institute for...
As a young community assistance planner, I must admit I feel rather fortunate to be in my position at my age. I currently work with the municipalities of Delaware County to develop comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, redevelopment plans and strategic municipal initiatives.

Since finishing my undergraduate degree and beginning my career with the Community Assistance Section, I’ve always sought to better myself in the field of planning. I’ve learned strategic ways to incorporate new ideas into my work and increase outreach to municipalities countywide. However, after a few years in the working world, I decided to seek a Masters degree to further improve my planning skills. I researched the best program suited for my goals, applied for, and was subsequently accepted into the MPA program at West Chester University, with a concentration in Urban and Regional Planning.

To support the pursuit of this degree, I applied for the Irving Hand Excellence in Planning and Professional Development Award. The award has helped me in ways I could never have imagined before. It paid for my course in Urban and Regional Planning and aided with the purchase of the books and supplies I needed to accomplish the course. This course in turn has given me a broader knowledge in planning. The class taught the history of planning in great detail. I found it useful to know the background of planning practices to understand the principles I utilize in the field today. In addition to the history lesson, our professor expanded our knowledge of regional planning initiatives by taking us on multiple site visits and engaging our intellect in all facets of regional planning and government involvement. We examined the State’s Municipalities Planning Code, visited planning commissions, and wrote several reports regarding the commissions’ roles and their impact on our everyday lives. We listened to accomplished planners in the field, which instilled in me a higher level of pride and understanding for the valuable purpose planners serve in our communities. I find myself more confident and knowledgeable in my work for the County since the completion of the course. I believe the coursework reinforced my background in planning and I hope to continue my coursework and earn my MPA in Urban and Regional Planning in 2012.

I’d like to sincerely thank all those affiliated with the Irving Hand Award. Receiving the award filled me with a stronger purpose and reminded me that what I am doing doesn’t just affect me but everyone I hope to help in the future as it relates to planning. In a sense, it reminds me that an award like the Irving Hand can affect all of us, just like the spirit of planning. The people behind the Irving Hand Award help keep it strong and allow planners, like myself, to continue to enhance our quality of life.

The PA Chapter of APA is currently accepting applications for the 2012 award. The deadline to apply is August 26, 2011. For application details, please visit www.planningpa.org. See “Professional Development Scholarships” under the Education heading.
“Pressing the Flesh”

“Alex you need to go to Harrisburg from time to time and ‘press the flesh’,” said Tom Graney, as he firmly shook my hand.

ThOSE WERE THE WORDS of advice my original boss and mentor imparted in my early days in the field on the necessity of making the trek to our capitol. Long before our current crises, he understood the value and importance of meeting with members of the Legislature, Governor’s staff and state agencies to educate them on the value of planning, and, equally important – to learn about their legislative priorities and interests.

Over time, I have become more convinced of the veracity of his statement. You can no longer have a meaningful planning career in Pennsylvania without going to Harrisburg to, “press the flesh”.

Planning has taken a back seat in Commonwealth-wide decision making. Some planners in our midst remember the day when planners like Francis Pitkin and Irv Hand played critical roles in statewide policy.

In the last several years, we have witnessed the over 90% cuts to local government planning grants and the slashing of professional technical support from the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services.

Moreover, shortly after taking office Governor Corbett created the Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission and the Transportation Funding Advisory Commission and did not (in as far as I could tell reading the list of commission appointees), appoint any community planners. With all of the knowledgeable county planners, planners who work for our regional planning organizations and many other talented and experienced professional planners in government and the private sector; we should have at least one or two who could serve. According to the Governor’s press releases:

In that one day some of us were able to have up to twelve meetings. However, when we made visits to key members of the House and Senate and their staffs often we were at a disadvantage when not one of our group could say that they were from their district. With 253 members of the PA House and Senate we need to have more than seven members take the day to visit our state capitol.

With pending legislation in Harrisburg looking to enact statewide model zoning code language to handle Marcellus Shale time is of the essence to reverse the trajectory of ignoring the voice of planning.

The top priority of our recently adopted Chapter Development Plan (2011-2014), “Promoting a Culture of Planning,” is that we will, “Promote good planning practice and the ‘Culture of Planning’ throughout the Commonwealth.” One of the best ways we can do this as individuals is to take time to meet with our legislators to educate them on the value of planning for economic prosperity and the quality of life in our communities.

Always Thanks for taking the time to read this article and if you ever have an issue that you feel needs my attention please email me at alex@smartgrowthpa.org.

Here are two direct ways you can make a difference starting today.

1. Make appointments to meet with your state senator(s) and representative(s).

2. Invite your state senator(s) and representative(s) to participate in a local planning project and actively seek their advice and input into the plan.
by Shannon Debes, Chair, Legislative Committee

ON MAY 23, 2011 seven members of the PA Chapter of APA gathered in Harrisburg to both introduce and reacquaint members of the Legislature with our organization and its role in the essential function of planning. Lawmakers and their staff were debriefed on issues we consider to be critical both legislatively and programmatically. The mutually beneficial discussions yielded opportunities for our organization to serve as an information resource to several legislators and their staff.

The day was organized by Legislative Chair Shannon Debes and Legislative Services provider Stacy Gromlich, President Alex Graziani was in attendance along with Richard Stahl of Huntingdon County, Professor George Pomeroy of Shippensburg University and recent Temple University Graduates Kyle Guie, Matthew Popek, and Matthew Wice.

Due to the small size of the group, the entire cohort was admitted to nearly every high-level appointment of the day, including meetings with:

• Representative Tom Creighton (R), Lancaster County, Chair of the House Local Government Committee
• Matthew Maciorski, Executive Director, House and Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, Representative Camille “Bud” George (D-Clearfield), Chair
• Colleen DeFrank, Legislative Director, Senator Jay Costa (D - Allegheny), Senate Minority Leader
• Richard Fox, Executive Director of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, Senator John Yudichak (D - Luzerne), Minority Chair
• Luc Mirion, Chief of Staff, Senator John Blake (D - Lackawanna), Chair of the Senate Local Government Committee and Senate Inter-Governmental Operations Committee
• Adam Pankake, Executive Director of the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, Senator Mary Jo White (R – Venango), Chair
• Peggy Montgomery, Economic Development Specialist, Representative Frank Dermody (D – Allegheny), House Minority Leader
• Representative Bob Freeman (D – Northampton), Chair of the House Local Government Committee

AS A RESULT of the highly productive conversations that constituted these meetings, several legislators and staff requested that we submit our expert and balanced opinions on pending legislation on a continuing basis. One such item that members have been requested to comment on is SB 1100. A collaborative meeting is being held between our Legislative Committee and the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) on June 8 to form a joint position on this legislation, which withholds the disbursement of any natural gas impact fees to municipalities who do not adhere to a statewide model zoning ordinance. We will apprise you of the developments of this collective effort.

OUR PRESIDENT Alex Graziani would like to ensure that we maintain a steady presence in Harrisburg, especially in consideration of the fact that we are new to the advocacy circuit and it will take some time for us to become familiar faces at the Capitol. As such, we do plan to hold another Planners Day on the Hill this year, most likely in September. At that time we will work to further the message that planning our communities’ futures requires greater support from the legislature and the technical assistance required to execute that essential work cannot be ignored.

WEBCAST series

2011 Webcasts Offer Convenient, Free Option to Earn CM Credits!

About the Planning Monthly Webcast Series:
The PA Chapter of APA sponsors the Planning Monthly Webcast Series together with other APA chapters. All webcasts take place from 1:00pm to 2:30pm Eastern Time.

Schedule of Webcasts:
The most current schedule is hosted by the Utah Chapter of APA at their website, www.utah-apa.org/webcasts. New webcasts are added regularly – check the schedule often. You can also view the next few months of webcasts at the PA Chapter of APA events calendar online – www.planningpa.org/events.shtml.

How to Register:
Attendees are strongly encouraged to register early. Schedule subject to change. Where to register? At www.utah-apa.org/webcasts. You can also link to the Utah APA website from www.planningpa.org/events.shtml.

Webcasts are...
• FREE.
• Approved for CM Credits
• Convenient to attend from your desk and phone
• Short, just 1.5 hours

Upcoming Webcasts:
August 5, 2011
Zoning Statutes for Sustainable Development in Rural and Suburban Communities – Advanced, LAW credits
Presented by Upstate New York Chapter

August 12
Fights over Flight: Addressing General Aviation Airports – Introductory
Presented by Indiana Chapter

September 8
What Economic Development Planners Should Know about Eco-Industrial Development – Introductory
Presented by the Economic Development Division

September 23
Natural Gas Extraction: Planning Implications – Introductory
Presented by the Pennsylvania Chapter

Submit Your News & articles for The Vantage Point

We are always seeking articles on current planning topics and planning news!

The Vantage Point is published bimonthly and contributions that are timely, newsworthy, and of statewide interest are welcome. Dated material should be submitted well in advance according to our deadlines below. Submitted articles of 500 words or less in length should be sent by email to. Please include artwork, illustrations or photographs if possible. Images must be scanned at 300 dpi with a print size of at least 2.5 inches wide. The author’s name, position, and employer’s name and city must also be included to ensure proper credit. Shorter articles and announcements of 100-150 words are welcome.

DEADLINES FOR UPCOMING 2011 ISSUES:
Aug 2011 Issue: Jul 20, 2011
Oct 2011 Issue: Sep 16, 2011
Dec 2011 Issue: Nov 16, 2011

Submit to: sgalbraith@shermer-assoc.com
I RECENTLY had the pleasure of attending the American Planning Association (APA) National Conference in Boston. As the Professional Development Officer (PDO) for the PA Chapter, this conference enables me to meet with many of my colleagues from other chapters, a rare event indeed. While APA provides general direction on the responsibilities of a PDO—promote professional development and continuing education—it is up to the individual chapter and PDO to carry out specific tasks, which results in quite a range of how chapters handle professional development.

The range is astonishing, even given the understanding that PDOS are volunteers. Some chapters have no staff or committee support for the PDO, who is then solely responsible for logging all of their chapter’s CM training into the APA system for approval. Without staff or committee support, these PDOS are able to do little other than this task. Some chapters have two PDOS, one responsible for AICP exam prepa and one responsible for CM and professional development training. Some chapters have staff support; some have a PDO for each of their sections in regards to CM events.

In Pennsylvania, the PDO is supported by the Chapter’s staff, who handle many logistics for training events and for APA approval of CM events, as well as by a very active volunteer committee (Professional Development Committee—PDC), which helps with logistics for training, presents at AICP exam preparation sessions, and provides feedback. With this strong support of professional development, the PA Chapter is able to offer its members many services and events that other chapters are unable to do—including a full-day AICP exam prep session each spring, an AICP exam prep session at the conference, participation in the free CM webinar series, in-person training around the state (such as the transportation and zoning series), nomination of members to the AICP Fellows, and support to members with CM issues or AICP exam questions.

PA Chapter members also benefit from the many volunteers within each section, who conduct training and connect members to professional development opportunities. It is also critical to remember that current volunteers are building on the work of previous volunteers. The PDC and the PDO position have certainly benefited from a history of active volunteers.

The APA conference reinforced for me that the PA Chapter, its staff, and many volunteers are working hard to advance professional development across the state. As a volunteer driven organization, there are absolutely going to be times when things fall through the cracks and things don’t go quite right. However, from a view across APA, and the many different chapters that make up APA, I am happy to report that thanks to the efforts of many individuals the PA Chapter is providing quality professional development services to its members. If you are now, or have been, a PA Chapter volunteer or staff member—thanks for your efforts. If you have not volunteered yet—more help is always welcome. The PA Chapter has many activities, and certainly there’s one you would be interested in helping out. For more information please contact me or the main office. Contact information is available at www.planningpa.org.

Now Accepting FAICP Nominations

APA will be accepting nominations for the Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICP) in the fall of 2011. Election to the College of Fellows is one of the highest honors that the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), the professional institute of the American Planning Association (APA), bestows upon a member. The PA Chapter is currently considering potential nominees, who must be AICP members in good standing with 15 years of membership as a minimum. Planners can be nominated under one of four categories: Professional Practice, Teaching and Mentoring, Research, and Community Service and Leadership. A nomination must document the following for the applicant: exceptional and sustained leadership; innovation and excellence; a legacy for his/her profession; community and society; and exceptional accomplishments in planning over an extended period of time. In 2009, the PA Chapter was pleased to nominate Richard Bickel, who was inducted into FAICP in 2010 at APAs annual conference. If you would like the Chapter to consider someone for nomination, please contact the Susan Elks, PDO, or the Chapter office.

AICP Exam Updates

November AICP Exam Testing Window – The next AICP Exam testing window will be in November 2011. The application deadline is July 13, 2011. Please see the AICP Exam webpage of the PA Chapter’s website for additional information and study resources.
training opportunities

9th Annual Design on the Delaware Conference
November 7-9, 2011
Philadelphia, PA
* Multiple CM credit sessions
www.designonthedelaware.com

National Community Planning Month
October 2011
Presented by the American Planning Association
More info at www.planning.org/ncpm

2011 PA Chapter of APA Annual Conference
October 16-18, 2011
Scranton, PA
* Multiple CM credit sessions
www.planningpa.org

APA Federal Policy & Program Briefing
September 18-20, 2011
Washington, DC

For a complete listing of events visit www.planningpa.org. Click on “Events Calendar” under the Events & Training heading. New events added frequently.