I would like to congratulate the Program Committee for another great Fall Conference held Oct. 20-21 in Anderson, SC. There were approximately 20 sessions providing continuing education for both State planning officials requirements and AICP credits. In addition, there was ample opportunity for networking and social interaction between planning professionals from various backgrounds and specialties. Again, my sincere appreciation goes out to Committee members Robert Moody (Chair), Leah Youngblood (Co-Chair), Bill Huggins and Cliff Ellis, PhD. (Track Coordinators).

In September I attended the APA Leadership meetings in Washington, DC in conjunction with the Federal Policy and Program Briefing. A key portion of this event dealt with strategies and messages to beat the critics and build support for planning. The fierce debates and subsequent stalemates in Congress over the federal budget, debt reduction, and deficit spending are sending shock waves through more than federal programs. What we learned in our meetings in Washington is that it is highly evident that a growing number of states face significant new legislation and fiscal challenges to good planning.

If you attended the Fall Conference you perhaps heard my opening remarks on Oct. 20 regarding the serious threat to our profession, comprehensive planning, sustainable communities and the need for planners to change our message. If you did not attend the Conference we have reprinted my remarks in another section of this newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to let our members know that South Carolina is not immune to this national trend.

On May 7, 2011, the South Carolina Republican Party adopted a Resolution to Repeal the Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994. You may view this Resolution in its entirety by going online (http://www.conservativesoftheupstate.com/2011/05/repeal-of-comprehensive-planning.html). Even though this action was precipitated at the urging of a minority group, Conservatives of The Upstate, it is important to understand that they have a voice and the ear of a number of influential members of both state and local governing bodies. Planners, as professionals, must learn to devise new strategies and clear communication to counter these critics as they make extreme claims regarding comprehensive planning and call for deep budget cuts on a local and state level. We need to develop new tactics to energize the public constituency and incorporate their input into building political and popular support for good planning. We must redirect the opinion that good planning is counter intuitive to conservative ideals. Indeed, comprehensive planning is the basis for effective fiscal discipline and use of limited resources.

Our profession does not hold allegiance to any political ideology but rather our responsibility is to the public interest, both for today and for tomorrow. While the definition of the public interest is formulated through continuous debate, a planner owes allegiance to a conscientiously attained concept of public interest. As members of the planning profession and this organization we have a moral duty to strive for improving our constituents knowledge, increasing public understanding and making our work relevant to solutions of community problems.

Continued on page 2
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Cont. President’s Message

Lastly, the Executive Committee will conduct our annual Retreat in early December. At the Retreat we will review the Strategic Plan and evaluate how we shaped up compared to the measurable objectives for 2011. We will also prepare and approve a budget for 2012-2013 and establish our upcoming conference schedule. I would appreciate hearing from the membership should you have any particular input or wisdom to impart as we plan for 2012. I would also like to thank you all for your support and enthusiastic cooperation during my first year as your President. I look forward to even more good things for our organization in the coming year.

Susan Britt
Job Postings

If you would like to post a job to the SCAPA website, please send it to our website administrator. A 3-month posting is only $50.00

Planning Director
Richland County, SC
(updated October 25, 2011)

Transportation Planner
Richland County, SC
(updated October 4, 2011)

County Planner
Pickens County, SC
(updated August 18, 2011)

More information is available at scapa.org

Chapter Only Memberships

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Benefits of a chapter only membership include:

- Reduced rates to all SCAPA conference
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Fall Conference Opening Plenary

By Susan Britt, AICP, SCAPA President

“Changing The Message”

There seems to be a growing national trend of political activism rallying around three central issues; the national debt, an overreaching federal government and fear of diminished property rights, each of which is viewed under the lens of the changing demographics of America. Politics and politicians of all parties are viewed as a major part of the problem and by extension government at all levels is seen as the enemy. Planning appears to be serving as a lightning rod for these core issues.

However, planners need to recognize that in many ways, we are our own worst enemy. It is hard to find a profession with more jargon and acronyms—plain English communicates far more and far better to non-planners. Planners should learn to frame the discussion in terms that citizens understand and avoid using various words and terms that are either code for things people think they don’t want or are simply things that they do not care about today. Too often we are seen as simply “processors” more concerned with the step-by-step dogma of development than in searching for real solutions to serious problems. Moreover, planners can and should emphasize that a successful planning process finds common ground among citizens through choice, engagement and community involvement. Planning is generally an outcome-neutral tool for ensuring that all voices are heard in an open manner and does not advance particular agendas or ideologies. Indeed, planners themselves come from a variety of political ideologies, but are able to come together as a profession with the common goal of helping citizens help themselves in finding their shared values. However, planners do have a right and a responsibility as professionals to explain the long range ramifications of decisions and recommend a preferred outcome based on accurate, fact-based information, scientific analysis, historical experience, and yes, a moral foundation.

The planning community is often very trend driven, going for the purported brass ring of the latest planning fashion—TND, New Urbanism, Form-Based Codes—when what planners really do best is help citizens find, explore and document their shared values for the future through an open and collaborative process. Planners should NEVER pre-ordain outcomes; planners help develop processes to allow the citizens to get to the outcomes THEY want. Planning and planners must be seen as more than simply enforcers of codes. Recent polling data demonstrates that most Americans do not understand “sustainability”, “livability”, “walkability”, “smart growth” and similar terms. So, language is very important and planners need to clearly enunciate goals without reverting to planning jargon.

At the end of the day, however, as planners we need to tell our story. We must sell the value we add to public processes to an increasingly skeptical public. It is necessary to remind citizens and elected officials that good planning leads to a more efficient and effective use of scarce public resources. By ensuring that public investments are made effectively and efficiently, the planning profession contributes positively. Successful community and regional planning can lead to the job creation and economic development that our nation needs. We should focus our message on how effective planning is a part of fiscal discipline and responsibility at all levels of government and it is a lack of thorough and comprehensive planning that too often leads to poor performance and wasted resources.

It is absolutely true that planning can build great communities—we have done so in the past and we continue to do so; however, too often we do not shine a light brightly on our successes as a profession. By both nature and training, planners try to shun the spotlight, remaining both neutral and dispassionate. Perhaps some more passion about the good that planning does is the appropriate response we as professionals should be giving. The turmoil that has begun to dominate the American landscape for the past few years will continue to be a force to be reckoned with for some time to come. The planning community should be resolute and passionate in remaining committed to our profession. My challenge to you today is to turn a critical eye upon your actions and how you conduct daily business. Only by looking inside ourselves can we truly consider all the alternatives and devise ways to effect meaningful change.
Fall Conference Recap

The annual conference focused on three primary tracks – economic development, professional development and Clemson University related projects; many thanks to the track leaders – Cliff Ellis, Bill Huggins and Leah Youngblood. Our AICP members were also able to earn CM credits for legal and ethics training. Thanks also to Phil Lindler and his committee for planning a fun-filled Spirit Night reception Thursday evening.

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Spring Conference – North Augusta, March 16, 2012

We are still accepting session proposals for this one day conference. Please download the form from our website or contact Robby Moody, Programs Chair or Leah Youngblood, Programs Co-chair for more details.

Clemson MCRP Students Participate in Design Week

At the end of August the second-year students in Clemson’s Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning participated in Design Week, a five day long charrette involving a plan for the redevelopment of key sites on Hilton Head Island. Design Week is conducted by Design Workshop, an award-winning, international firm practicing landscape architecture, land planning, urban design, and tourism planning. The project was an interdisciplinary effort bringing together students from Clemson’s landscape architecture, planning, and real estate development programs. The result was a productive collaboration between the disciplines, generating a wide range of imaginative yet practical designs.

The students envisioned new possibilities for walkable, mixed-use centers and interconnected green spaces for the Island. Ten different teams took on the challenge of studying the various sites, assembling information, identifying the problems that needed to be solved, developing initial design solutions, refining and testing these designs through a process of “rapid cycling,” and then presenting the final results in a range of media, including a summary booklet. The MCRP students found the experience to be a rewarding one which exposed them to the fast-paced planning and design processes typical of the world of professional practice.

Cliff Ellis, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Clemson University
SPECIAL REPORT: THE FUTURE OF FREIGHT

In August 2014, exactly 100 years after it was first completed, the Panama Canal will celebrate another milestone when a nine-year $5.25 billion expansion project is complete. The widening and deepening of existing channels and a third set of locks will accommodate containerships that deliver two to three times the freight of current vessels.

Today, most of the $563 billion in goods the United States imports from China and Southeast Asia enters through West Coast ports, regardless of its final destination. But with the opening of the expanded canal, experts predict more of that freight will route into East Coast ports, causing a significant shift in freight movement and creating challenges and opportunities for shippers and carriers alike.

From a shipping-cost standpoint alone, doubling containership capacity from the current 4,000 20-foot equivalent unit (TEU) to 8,000 TEUs would make it possible for 17 percent more of the U.S. population to reap cost savings from using the Panama Canal rather than porting on the West Coast.

"Shippers get access to more of the population with bigger ships because of the economies of scale – costs per TEU go down, so you can go deeper into the interior United States through East Coast ports compared to West Coast ports," says Bob West, a principal strategist with WorleyParsons Group. The firm developed a model with Princeton Consultants to calculate the impacts of the expansion.

How much freight actually will be rerouted through the Panama Canal remains to be seen, but shippers and their customers are taking a closer look at the new alternatives to optimize supply chain networks.

"For those retailers and shippers who have a lot of volume and a heavy store base in eastern U.S. markets, the Panama Canal expansion has extra potential for them to cut costs from the supply chain," says Casey Chroust, executive vice president of the Retail Industry Leaders Association.

The biggest drawback to routing freight through the Panama Canal is time: It can take six to 10 days longer to reach the East Coast via containership from Asia compared to intermodal routes out of West Coast ports. Shipper decisions on which coast to route eastern U.S.-bound freight will depend largely on the types of goods being transported.

Heavy, less time-sensitive containers are ideal for East Coast ports, while time-sensitive and perishable goods containers likely will continue to be delivered to the West Coast.

"Products that allow for longer lead times, such as furniture, non-fashion items, appliances and equipment tend to play well into the [Panama Canal] scenario," says Chroust. "The Panama Canal will add cycle time, but if your cost-benefit analysis can save a lot of money to outweigh the delay and inventory-carrying costs, and your order lead time can accommodate the extra days, why not?"

Impact on trucking

A shift in container imports from one or two major West Coast ports to multiple ports along the Gulf Coast and East Coast likely would create more demand east of the Mississippi River for regional trucking routes.

"It adds an interesting opportunity of creating more truckload, maybe modestly taking some of the long haul out, but really augmenting that with a number of short-haul moves," says David Schrader, TransCore Freight Solutions’ senior vice president of operations.

Trucking operations serving East Coast ports with freight deficits also could stand to gain from the Panama Canal expansion. "Miami is one of the worst cities to get loaded out of throughout the year unless it’s high season for produce," says Mark Montague, industry pricing analyst for TransCore. "If you put additional freight from Asian traffic into the port, it provides more balance in that market and is beneficial for truckers that otherwise deliver a load to the South Florida market and then have to wait two or three days for a return load."

Demand in the transcontinental long-haul truck segment might slip as freight bound for eastern U.S. markets is reconfigured through the Panama Canal, but the biggest loser may be the intermodal market, specifically the “land bridge” rail system linking the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports to the East Coast – a direct competitor of the Panama Canal.
Some trucking companies already are preparing for increased container volumes on the East Coast. Old Dominion Freight Line recently expanded its East Coast operations with a new container drayage facility in Baltimore, the third such operation it has opened this year. The Thomasville, N.C.-based less-than-truckload carrier expects the facility will provide access to key manufacturing areas in the Midwest as well as allow overnight delivery to one-third of the U.S. population.

"We do anticipate a shift in the business to East Coast ports when the Panama Canal expansion comes to reality, if you believe what you read," says Wayne Bersch, Old Dominion's director of container operations. "It is a consideration when expanding markets, but not the sole determining factor. But we do always want to be prepared."

Marten Transport sees real opportunity with the Panama Canal expansion. It plans to add 200 53-foot dry containers and establish a network from Chicago down the East Coast to Miami and points west.

"We’re not intimidated by the wider canal," says Dave Meyer, Marten’s director of maintenance. "It’s going to force everyone to be more competitive. [The dry business] will be just another facet for us to go to our customers and say, ‘We can not only do refrigeration – now we can handle your dry business as well.’"

**Building for tomorrow**

The Port of Virginia-Norfolk presently is the only East Coast port with 50-foot channel depths capable of receiving post-Panamax vessels. Other U.S. East Coast and Gulf Coast ports looking to capitalize on the Panama Canal expansion have projects under way to deepen channels to 50 feet. The port authority also is spending more than $1 billion to raise the height of the Bayonne Bridge from 151 feet to 215 feet to allow larger containerships to access the port by 2016.

The Port of Baltimore has 50-foot-deep channels but no 50-foot-deep container berths. A $120 million project is under way that will deepen the berths to 50 feet by August 2012.

The Port of Miami also has authorized plans to deepen its channels from 42 feet to 50 feet but must acquire additional funding before construction can begin.

Infrastructure improvements on land also are vital to add capacity to load trucks and rail cars. "The biggest problem we see on the land side is the connection between the port and the main rail lines and the freeways – those connections are poor," says Aaron Ellis, communications director for the American Association of Port Authorities. "It is an unsustainable situation that needs to be improved if we as a country want to be a part of 21st century trade."

Ports with plans to accept post-Panamax containerships are making those infrastructure improvements a reality. The Port of Miami recently broke ground on a $49 million intermodal project to restore rail service to the Florida East Coast Rail Yard in Hialeah, a project aided by $22 million in Department of Transportation funding.
Canal expansion, says Ellis, “and East Coast ports – offers new freight-routing possibilities, then loaded onto smaller vessels bound for Gulf Coast and offloaded at Caribbean ports, shipping – a process where goods are routed through beneﬁt from the Panama Canal expansion. Trans-post-Panamax container ship requirements stand to provide additional economic opportunities for existing and

Regardless of how many post-Panamax containerships actually call on East Coast ports, the trend in trans-shipping in Panama and the Caribbean is sure to grow.

“If you look at the economics of large containerships, they only make money when they are sailing, not while they’re in port,” West says. “They will want to go between two major hubs – Shanghai and Freeport (Bahamas), for example – then offload to smaller ships. On the backhaul, Freeport would be a collection point for freight going back to China.”

**Eastern rail lines add capacity**

Like some East Coast and Gulf Coast ports, railroad companies also are expanding their networks ahead of the Panama Canal expansion to take advantage of the post-Panamax containerships arriving from Asia. The battleground for this multibillion-dollar buildout? America’s breadbasket: the Midwest.

Last September, Norfolk Southern Railway opened its Heartland Corridor, a double-stack container intermodal service that connects Virginia’s Tidewater port region with Chicago by way of Columbus, Ohio. In addition to increasing capacity, the $311 million project funded by a public-private partnership reduces the length of haul from the port to Chicago by 200 miles and shaves a day and a half off the transit time.

In May 2008, CSX began construction on its National Gateway, an $850 million public-private infrastructure initiative to link three Mid-Atlantic ports – Wilmington, N.C., Norfolk and Baltimore – to the Midwest with double-stack containers. Construction, which includes 63 clearance projects to achieve the necessary 20 feet and 2 inches of height, is slated to wrap up by 2015.

The full effect of the Panama Canal expansion on the trucking industry won’t be realized until years after the project is completed. But as players from all modes of transportation take steps to capitalize, it’s clear that the expanded canal will bring signiﬁcant shifts in how freight is moved across the country.

**What Does This Mean for South Carolina?**

The Panama Canal expansion has the potential to alter freight movements within our state. The Port of Charleston and the I-26 corridor to the Upstate, an economic spine for many communities, will be utilized even further to move goods to economic markets. Other areas of South Carolina are expected to see additional freight movements from ports in Georgia and North Carolina along the I-95 and I-85 corridors. This expansion will provide additional economic opportunities for existing and future businesses as well as place further pressure on our interstate highway system. Added volume to the current rail network will be an issue for both large and small communities with rail yards, intermodal facilities, spur lines and rail crossings. Local, state and regional planners should be mindful of these trends when evaluating future land use and transportation needs. The global economy is becoming more integrated and the canal expansion could be an East Coast game changer.
The Town of Hilton Head Island has responded to the public’s request to re-design the development and building permit process. This endeavor is the first step towards fulfilling a Town Council 2011 goal to ‘foster greater flexibility, simplicity and revitalization’ in the permitting process.

For the past 6 months, Staff has been working to simplify the process, beginning from the point where a person first has a conceptual idea for a new commercial project all the way through plan review, project approval, construction and receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy. Drs. Terry Ennis and Robert Gentzler have been instrumental in guiding staff through this effort. They have previously worked with several companies doing management consulting, including using best practices involving work simplification. This endeavor entailed:

- Mapping out the process by detailing the existing step-by-step procedure
- Seeking input from over 60 public stakeholders who have various experience in requesting or reviewing a new commercial permit
- Re-designing an idealized step-by-step approach based on comments and suggestions from the public stakeholders
- Changing the procedure and philosophy to provide flexibility, predictability, efficiency, and effectiveness. This also includes making the process as user-friendly and customer-oriented as possible.

Beginning October 1st, any customer applying for a permit to build a new commercial development will undergo our revised process. Major changes to the procedure include:

- **Dealing with a Single Point of Contact throughout the entire process - the Project Manager.**
  The role of this staff person is to ‘form a partnership’ with the applicant to ensure the permitting process goes as smoothly and as quickly as possible. The Project Manager will be the applicant’s ‘Advocate’ with accountability for setting priorities and resolving any issues to facilitate project approval.

- **Improving Predictability & Flexibility.**
  The applicant will receive consistent information from staff as early as possible with minimal subjectivity on code interpretation.

- **Streamlining the process.**
  The project will be a priority among all review staff, with elimination of unnecessary steps and time delays, resulting in cost savings to the applicant. Consolidation of paperwork and encouragement of electronic submissions will also be included.

Future additional changes to be taken to further improve the process in the upcoming year include:

- Code changes as recommended by the LMO Rewrite Committee.
- Coordinating with outside agencies such as OCRM to speed up their process during plans review.
- Providing interactive application forms that can easily be submitted from the Town’s web site.
- Providing access to a ‘status report’ on line to allow the applicant or the general public to see the progress of the Project through its plan review, approval and construction process.

The success of these changes will involve continual monitoring and solicitation of feedback from the applicants and the public throughout the next year. The Town welcomes suggestions from the applicants, business and property owners as they proceed through this new process in order to make continual improvements.

For more information please contact:
Teri Lewis, LMO Official, at 843-341-4698, or teril@hiltonheadislandsc.gov.

Got something to share with our members. Deadline for the next issue is February 10, 2012.

Send articles to Pat Collins at jpcol44@bellsouth.net.
Past webinars are available for free viewing on APA’s website (for folks that missed recent webinars). www.planning.org/policy/communicationsbootcamp
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