

DELAWARE PLANNER



American Planning Association
Delaware Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association

Volume 1, Issue 1
Fall, 2011

Inside this issue:

- A Message from the President..... 2
- Vetter Takes Helm at Dover/Kent MPO 3
- APA Del. Website 2.0 .. 3
- New Members & 3
- Certified Planners 3
- Upcoming Events 7
- AICP CM Update 8
- Legislative Update 8

Deadline

For the winter issue is
December 15, 2011



A Gift Before Parting... *Insights and Lessons from Three Remarkable Careers*

The Delaware planning community lost three veterans this summer. Michael McGrath, Edward

O'Donnell, and Juanita Wieczoreck each called it a career, but before they did, the trio agreed to dish

some hard-won wisdom over a casual lunch.

Long after the table was bused and the coffee gone cold, these venerable planners were still at it, doing their best to fit decades of insights into a single afternoon. The likely truth that they've 'forgotten more than I know' was quite humbling, as they don't seem to have forgotten much.

Since 1983, McGrath served as Chief Planner for

See 'Lessons,' p. 5



Juanita Wieczoreck, Edward O'Donnell, and Michael McGrath (left to right) told all at the Ches-Del Diner this July.

Urban Bike Project, Back in the Saddle!

What does a good cowboy do after a nasty fall? He gets back on his horse!

And so it was, on August 4th, the Urban Bike Project (UBP) did just that, reopening its shop for the organization's first open-shop day since an unfortunate burglary in mid-July.

"Talk about making lemonade out of lemons!" said Volunteer Coordinator

Laura Saperstein. "This community organization quadrupled the loss we recently experienced and the donations keep coming."

See 'Back in the Saddle,' p. 4



Following a break-in/robbery in July, UBP was able to open its doors again in early August after an outpouring of donations.



APA Delaware - Executive Committee

President

David L. Edgell, AICP

Vice President

Bill Swiatek, AICP

Treasurer

Kevin F. Coyle, AICP

Secretary

Dawn E. Melson-Williams, AICP

Past President

Patricia A. Maley, AICP

Prof. Dev. Officer

John M. Kennel, AICP

Executive Director

Peter G von Glahn, PhD

Committee Members

Bill Brockenbrough, AICP

Chris Oakes,

Edward O'Donnell, AICP,

Martin W. Wollaston

Derrick Lightfoot, AICP

Herb Inden

Communications Committee

Co-Chairs

Theodore Patterson

Randi Novakoff

Members

Patricia A. Maley, AICP

Martin Wollaston

Herb Inden, AICP

Peter Von Glahn, PhD

David Edgell, AICP

Newsletter Editor

B.J. DeCoursey, AICP



Healthy Foods for Thought...

Del. APA Co-sponsors Forum on Healthy Food Access

Top public health experts, planners, community activists, and food retailers gathered in Newark early this summer to discuss an issue of emerging importance, access to healthy foods.

The collaborative effort, co-sponsored by APA Delaware and the Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and

Active Living (HEAL), drew rave reviews. The keynote address was given by John Weidman of the Pennsylvania Food Trust, an organization dedicated to the proposition of universal, affordable access to nutritious foods. Mr. Weidman detailed his organization's efforts, such as food-desert mapping, working with corner grocery stores on food variety, and bolstering farm-

ers markets and community gardens.

ers markets and community gardens.

Nicole Minni and B.J. DeCoursey, researchers at the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware, presented their findings from a geospatial analysis on access to healthy food

See 'Access to Healthy Foods,' p. 4



John Weidman, Deputy Executive Director of the Food Trust, gave the keynote address, detailing his organization's efforts to improve health and nutrition in the Greater Philadelphia area.

A Message from the President...

By David L. Edgell, AICP



I am proud to re-introduce APA Delaware's newsletter, the "Delaware Planner," to our planning community. Those of you who have been Chapter members for some time might remember that this newsletter was last published in the late 1990s. I'm not sure why exactly the Chapter moved away from publishing it on a regular basis, but I can tell you why we started it up again. I chose to start my term as president by doing a lot of listening, and some planning – strategic planning to be exact. We began with a membership survey, and followed with a strategic planning workshop and a subsequent Chapter Strategic Plan. One of the common themes we heard throughout both the survey and the strategic planning exercise was the need for better communication about Chapter events and planning issues in Delaware.

This newsletter is part of a larger communications strategy that we hope will connect you with APA, the Chapter, and your colleagues in Delaware's planning community.

See 'Pres' Message,' p. 7

New APA Delaware Website

The Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association is set to unveil a new and improved website this fall.

The co-chairs of our chapter's communications committee, Ted Patterson and Randi Novakoff, have led the effort. Though you wouldn't know by looking at it, the template was actually developed with open-source applications on a blogging site, wordpress.com. "It just makes everything easier," said Patterson. "It offers so much more flexibility and it looks the same if not better than a traditional webpage."

According to Novakoff, the new site, which does not require web-design software or extensive programming, should prove more user-friendly. "It opens it up to the group," she explained. "Anyone who is given the password will be able to make minor changes. If one person is on vacation, someone else can fill in."

Dover/Kent MPO Gets New Director



"I'm looking forward to working with DelDOT, Kent County and the municipalities to identify the transportation needs of the County"
- Rich Vetter -

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization recently hired a new executive di-

rector, Rich Vetter. Vetter, 42, comes to the MPO from the engineering and consulting firm, Rumel, Klepper & Kahl (RK&K) in Dover where he was a project engineer. He began his duties at the MPO on July 7, the day after the MPO Council approved his hire. He is the MPO's second executive director. Juanita Wieczoreck, who held the job for 17 years, retired this past July.

A combination of factors put Vetter in the job, said Wieczoreck, mentioning his experience with management, his transporta-

tion planning and engineering expertise, his work in the public sector and as a consultant. "That experience is going to help the MPO improve its technical capabilities," Wieczoreck said. A Kent County native, Vetter is a graduate of Caesar Rodney High School and the University of Delaware with a degree in civil engineering. He is a certified planner through the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Vetter, his wife, Joy, and their three children live in Camden, Del.



APA Delaware's website has been redesigned. Thanks to Randi Novakoff and Ted Patterson for their hard work. One thing the site still needs is more Delaware pictures. Email Randy or Ted.

The site will still be hosted at Del. APA's longstanding URL, www.delawareapa.org. The online store will still be available.



Congratulations to Delaware's newest AICP, Bill Swiatek, Senior Planner at the Wilmington Area Planning Council. Delaware APA also welcomes its newest member, Michael Tholstrup.

Michael is a graduate student at the University of Delaware and a research assistant for the Institute for Public Administration pursuing an MPA.

Back in the Saddle, contd..

In fact, according to Saperstein, the surplus has lead to the organization considering an expansion of the services it offers, including its “Youth Earn-A-Bike,” and its Free Bike Programs.

According to staff, the picture wasn’t always so rosy. A number of the project’s open-houses and earn-a-bike programs had to be indefinitely suspended after a mid-July theft. Saperstein said thieves broke into the shop, emptying it of its more valuable bikes and many of its tools.

Happily, and thanks to an outpouring of community support, the UBP has more than recovered. “The recent theft seems not much more than a bump in the road after so many of you came to our rescue with your generosity, outreach and support,” read the UBP website. “Thanks to our wonderful community, we received not a simple patch, but a whole new collective sum of parts!”

The Urban Bike Project of Wilmington, Inc. is a small non-profit, 501(c)3, organization based in Wilmington, Delaware. It is located at 1908 North Market Street, in the basement, accessible around back.

UBP runs programs to allow neighborhood youth to “earn -a-bike,” typically by volunteering and demonstrating mastery of the skills necessary to maintain it. The organi-



Delaware APA pitched in with a truckload of bicycles, but organizers now say that what they really need is more volunteers.

zation also helps adults in need with free bike programs, repair/maintenance classes, and open-house events. UBP is also an excellent place to purchase a used bicycle, in fact, the organization depends on the revenue from these sales. All donations (donated bikes, purchased bikes, and cash) are tax-deductible with receipts provided. Name-brand bikes can often be purchased at very reasonable prices and the volunteer staff is eager to see that every customer is happy and confident with their new purchase.

To learn more about UBP, visit its webpage at urbanbikeproject.org or contact UBP Volunteer Coordinator Laura Saperstein at laura@urbanbikeproject.org

Access to Healthy Foods, contd..

his organization’s efforts – from encouraging healthy food cooperatives to offering cooking classes and challenging young people to strive for better nutrition.

Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director of the Delaware Division of Public Health, underscored the importance of the issue to Delaware. Her presentation outlined alarming obesity trends, the typically associated health consequences, and walked the group through a series of key indicators now in use by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). She also briefed the attendees

on national best practices relating to access to healthy foods.

APA Delaware President David Edgell, AICP opened the session and moderated the panel discussion. In fact it was Edgell, who also co-chaired the HEAL Built Environment group, who first envisioned a joint conference. “It just made a lot of sense,” said Edgell. “The HEAL Coalition was eager to engage a broad community of stakeholders and leaders, and those in the planning profession are natural partners. The intersection of planning and the public health movement dates back to the

founding of our profession, and many of the solutions to food access issues involve land use, transportation, economic development, and community planning issues that our members are engaged in personally and professionally.”

Shortly thereafter, APA Delaware agreed. The session was jointly publicized and qualified for CM credits for attending AICPs. The full powerpoint presentations, speaker bios, and a full audio/video podcast of the event are available at www.ipa.udel.edu. Click on IPA programs, health policy, access to healthy foods.

Lessons, contd...

the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA). He began his planning career at New Castle County in 1974 working in economic/community development and planning. O'Donnell's career began in 1965 as a planner for Montgomery County, Pa. He spent four years planning for and then managing WILMAPCO before spending 20+ years at New Castle County, ultimately as General Manager of the land-use department. Since 2002, he has worked at the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware (UD), retiring as a faculty member and policy scientist.

Wieczoreck's planning career started at the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) in 1987 before rising to lead the Dover/Kent MPO for 17 years.

Q - How did you come to be a planner?

Surprisingly, not one had planned on planning. Wieczoreck described, "backing into the career," as a recent geography graduate getting by on engineering/drafting work before transitioning. According to McGrath, he was quasi-conscripted into the profession. Happily farming, he had attended a contentious tax reassessment meeting in Southern New Castle County (SNCC). When another attendee gruffly reminded the room that a liason had been promised for SNCC, an empty box for nominations was placed at the head table. "The next day I found out there was one piece of paper in that box and it had my name on it," he chuckled.

O'Donnell mused that he had been interested in resource geography and had wanted to work for U.S. Steel. "That would have been a bad move, looking at how that turned out," he said. Eventually an advisor encouraged him to look into land use.

Q - How has the field evolved over your career?

Each had a unique perspective, with Wieczoreck citing transportation, McGrath focused on the funding and motivations for planning, and O'Donnell explaining his view that social concerns have come to the fore. "There's more awareness of things like housing, jobs/housing balance and the relationship between transportation and land use," said O'Donnell. "Even with things like the environment, it's not just clean air and water anymore, but how do you deal with a major employer, like a refinery, in that context." Wieczoreck, the transportation guru, smiled as she



Q - Best way to get people to attend a public meeting?

McGrath - "Tree removal!"

Wieczoreck - "Yeah, just tell them that something really bad is going to happen..."

O'Donnell - "You can't do that! They'd eat you alive!"

explained witnessing - in fits and starts - the eventual realization of the transportation/land-use connection. "The counties would say the roads were a problem because DelDOT didn't keep up with them," she said. "DelDOT would say the problem is that the county keeps developing! I saw New Jersey quickly go from the Garden State to the Housing State that way."

McGrath posited that the funding sources that drive planning have gravitated towards

transportation, thus changing the field's focus. "It wasn't because some politician woke up and said, 'oh, planning is good for our community,'" he said. "It [was because] it all had the capital budget tied to it. We were doing comprehensive planning on a district-level. Now, a lot of it is driven by transportation and school-funding decisions."

Gender and planning, then and now?

Wieczoreck admitted to banging into a glass ceiling in Philadelphia. In fact, it spurred her to pursue her career in Delaware. "I was one of only a dozen women directors nationwide," she said. McGrath said he felt a more open educational system has benefited the field. "Part of what you're seeing now is better performance in gender

Lessons, contd..

neutrality early on in the educational process,” he said. O’Donnell felt the increasing inclusivity of the field helps explain the ever-increasing numbers of female planners. “As planning has broadened as a field, so too has the diversity of practicing planners,” he said, “health, governance, transportation, housing. The entire field is really more inclusive.”

Q - Key developments (planned or otherwise) affecting Delaware?

The interviewees quickly hit upon three interrelated events in Delaware—the 1981 Financial Centers Incentive Act, NCC’s Unified Development Code (UDC) and the construction of SR 1. “It just shows that the things we do with state statutes can have a profound impact on land use, traffic, housing, and commuting,” said McGrath, referencing the Financial Centers Act. O’Donnell concurred. “That blew this state up,” he said. “We had people from Toll Brothers telling us we don’t have houses expensive enough to cover these peoples’ capital-gains taxes!”

The resultant explosion of growth saw the powers-that-be in NCC looking for a stricter, “gut busting,” land-use code, said O’Donnell.

“UDC spurs growth in Kent,” chimed in Wieczoreck. “That was really central to development in Kent County, and of course we had Route 1 come along at just about the same time.”

Q - Technological Innovations?

All three readily agreed that the onset of the information age (GIS, the Inter-

net, networks, and, most recently, the promise of social media in regards to public outreach) were most impactful. Even so, their earliest recollections/experiences were priceless.

“I can remember carrying a pc up the stairs for one of the secretaries,” recalled O’Donnell. “They almost cried, ‘How are we supposed to type on this!’ They really thought it was the end of their careers.”

McGrath recounted ordering an IBM so built-out (10mb hard drive!) that the system’s builder called long-distance from Florida to inquire as to its use. “I said, we’re going to try to draw maps on it,” McGrath explained, “and he said, ‘WHAT?’”

Wieczoreck’s struggles with significantly more advanced IBM 386s earned her little sympathy from her more mature counterparts. “You really are young then,” quipped McGrath.

Q - Advise for new planners in the era of sustainability and interdisciplinary planning?

The group agreed that the next generation of planners would have to get outside of the planning silo to be most effective. Still, they felt there was still a place and a role for both the professional and citizen planner.

“You can’t sell the citizen planner short,” said Wieczoreck. “No one understands what their community wants or needs better. Either way [citizen or professional] it comes down to constant education, all those seminars and workshops. New planners will have to be willing to listen to people and their ideas.” Channeling Dirty Harry,

O’Donnell concurred. “A man’s got to know his limitations,” he said. “You’ll almost need a cast of people. If you don’t know, find someone who does. You’ll have to be open to new ideas.”

Even so, McGrath felt strongly that planners must continue to take seriously their advisory role.

“Sustainability is producing the highest quality of life for the current generation without compromising the next,” he said. “Planners can do that sort of analysis and at the end of the day, you can’t be afraid to say, ‘That’s why you hired me.’”

Space doesn’t permit a full accounting of the many achievements contained in these special careers. Wieczoreck expanded a fledgling agency to a county-wide MPO. McGrath points to over 100-thousand acres of permanently-preserved farmland throughout the state. O’Donnell fondly recalled seeing his department at NCC expand from \$1-million to a \$6-million annual budget and quadrupling in staff. That, and massaging a 1954 zoning code and a 1967 subdivision ordinance into the UDC.

Impressive as these may be, one could easily say that their most important accomplishments aren’t in the documents they’ve written, the lands they’ve preserved, or in the budgets or institutions they’ve grown. It’s in the enduring examples they’ve set for us all—long-serving, patient, professionals and truly the embodiment of citizens of our planning community.

B.J. DeCoursey

Pres' Message, contd...

In each newsletter you will find an updated list of current and future APA Delaware events, including those that offer CM credits.

You will also find relevant planning news, a variety of articles about planning in Delaware, and profiles of Delaware planners. I hope you enjoy this newsletter, and find it an interesting and informative tool that helps you do your job and stay connected with APA Delaware.

You will find the names of our Communications Committee in the newsletter. When you see them, please take time to thank them for their work in putting this newsletter together. I would like to offer a special thanks to our new newsletter editor, BJ DeCoursey, AICP, for all of his efforts in doing much of the writing, layout and editing for the newsletter. Before his career as a planner, BJ worked as a journalist. His experience and knowledge from this past career have served us all very well, and I for one am very thankful to have him on board as editor.

Upcoming Events

Date / Time	Event
October 12 th , 2011 4:00 to 5:30pm	Planning for Solar Energy – APA Web Conference – (1.5 CM) Dual Sites: Kent County Administration Building and Wilmapco <i>Kent County site sponsored by Kent County Department of Planning Services</i>
October 20, 2011 1:00pm – 5:00pm	AIA Delaware Sustainability Seminar , Virdin Center in Lewes Limited seating available, register early. Check our website for details Opportunity for self reporting of CM credits
November 9 th , 2011 4:00 – 5:30pm Web Conf. 5:30 – 8:30pm Dinner Program	Social Media and Ethics – APA Web Conference (1.5CM, Ethics) – to be held immediately preceding annual meeting Location TBD APA Delaware Annual Meeting – Location TBD. Program to include networking hour, dinner, speaker, chapter business meeting and awards.
December 2011, date TBD	Delaware Law Review (1.5 CM Law). Location TBD
January 18 th 2012 4:00 – 5:30pm	Resilient Planning Agencies – APA Web Conference – (1.5CM) Dual Sites: Kent County Administration Building and Wilmapco <i>Kent County site sponsored by Kent County Department of Planning Services</i>
March 14 th 2012 4:00 – 6:30pm	Urban Agriculture and Food System Planning – APA Web Conference – (1.5 CM) + value added panel presentation on Food Transportation and Freight Issues in Delaware (1.0 CM requested) – Kent County Administration Building <i>Session sponsored by the Dover/Kent MPO.</i>
June 6, 2012 4:00 – 6:30pm	Adapting Cities to Climate Change – APA Web conference – (1.5 CM) + value added panel presentation on Climate Change Adaptation in Delaware (1.0 CM requested) – NCCo site TBD. <i>NCCo site and value added sponsored by Wilmapco</i>
June 27 th 2012 4:00 – 5:30pm	Planning Law Review – APA Web Conference – (1.5 CM) Dual Sites: Kent County Administration Building and Wilmapco <i>Kent County site sponsored by Kent County Department of Planning Services</i>
Fall 2012, Date TBD	APA Maryland / Delaware Regional Planning Conference – Location TBD in Maryland – Conference planning underway with Maryland Chapter, continue to check our website for updates and details.

*This list contains only APA Delaware produced or co-sponsored events. Please check our website www.delawareapa.org for listings of other CM events of interest from other organizations and near-by Chapters that should be accessible to APA Delaware members.

Strategic Plan Available Online for Member Review

A draft of the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association's 5-year strategic plan (2011-2016) is available online for member review.

Chapter leadership began developing the plan early this year, in an effort to better conform to APA National Standards. It can be found at www.delawareapa.org. APA Delaware members are encouraged to submit any comments concerning the plan to Bill Swiatek, AICP, (302) 737-6205, ext. 113, bswiatek@wilmapco.org, by October 10.

CM Credits Deadline Dec. 31

The reporting period for AICP certification maintenance expires Dec. 31, 2011 and according to the state chapter, roughly half of Delaware's certified planners still have some credits to earn.

Most, but not all, AICP members are required to meet the Certification Maintenance program's 32-credit obligation for the reporting period. Once again, members will be able to take advantage of an automatic four-month grace period to meet this obligation, which extends the reporting deadline to April 30, 2012.

Thankfully, the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association is offering a series of CM-eligible events throughout the fall (*see 'Upcoming Events,' p. 7*). Reach your CM obligations now and let April be just for taxes! Even if you have sufficient CM credits, 16 credits can be carried over to the next reporting period.

You can also check out additional CM credit opportunities at www.planning.org/cm/search, especially the free online training offered by AICP. Not sure when your reporting period ends? Check your Certification Maintenance log at www.planning.org/cm/log.

If you have questions about AICP certification or CM credits, contact Del. APA's Professional Development Officer, John Kennel (302) 739-9939 or john.kennel@state.de.us

Delaware Planning - Legislative Update

By Herb Inden, Principal Planner, Office of State Planning Coordination

Senate Bill 126 with Senate Amendment 1.

Title: An Act to amend Titles 9, 22, and 29 of the Delaware Code relating to the review and certification of comprehensive plans and the role of the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues and the Office of State Planning Coordination.

Passed by the 146th session of General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Markell on July 5, 2011

This bill clarifies the process by which the state shall review and certify county and municipal comprehensive plans. It also corrects several inconsistencies in the Code that have been created over the years as the state's land use laws have changed and evolved. The bill would eliminate the Governor's Advisory Council on Planning Coordination and transfer its responsibilities to the Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues and the Office of State Planning Coordination. In addition, the bill would (1) require counties and municipalities to provide annual reports to OSPC by July 1 of each year, so that information can be included in the Cabinet Committee's annual report prepared in October; (2) permit (but not require) the Cabinet Committee to develop guidelines for such annual reports; (3) authorize the Cabinet Committee to extend the deadline for counties and municipalities to submit comprehensive plans; and (4) explicitly authorizes OSPC to prepare the

State Strategies for Policies and Spending document and maps.

Senate Bill 138 with Senate Amendment 1.

Title: An Act to amend Title 9 Relating to Comprehensive Land Plans.

Passed by the 146th session of the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Markell on July 13, 2011.

This Bill would increase the maximum time between comprehensive plan updates from 5 to 10 years. Nothing prohibits a county from acting more often, but experience has shown that five years is too short an amount of time between updates, leaving little time to implement a plan before starting the whole cycle over.

Senate Bill 9 with Senate Amendment 1 and House Amendment 1.

Title: An Act to amend Title 17 of the Delaware Code relating to roads within communities restricted to residents who are 55 years of age or older.

Passed by the 146th session of the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Markell on May 19, 2011.

This Bill prohibits the Department of Transportation from accepting as dedicated a road that makes a connection to a dedicated road within a 55 or over community. It also directs the Department not to permit a connection to a dedicated road within a 55 or over community.