

# Utah Planner

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## President's Message

By: Chuck Klingenstein, AICP  
Utah APA Chapter President

In about two weeks, I will be in San Francisco at the leadership meetings. As your Chapter President, I have observed these meetings having a variety of results, some good and some disappointing. The main observation that I have and that I have been a part of is that our profession is going through a form of identity crisis. On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Chapter President's list serve received an article, **Guess Who the City Is Hiring to Do Some Planning**, by Christina Rogers (URL: <http://www.nysun.com/article/9992>). I hope that you can still get to it by the time you read this message (e-mail me and I will get you a copy). The gist of the article was that New York has long lagged behind such cities as Paris, London, and Tokyo in its reputation for cutting edge architecture. Recently, though, it has had its internationally recognized triumphs, such as Yashio Taniguchi's expansion of the Museum of Modern Art and Richard Meier's shiny new condominiums in Chelsea. While private developers and wealthy cultural institutions are busy molding the city's skyline, the Department of City Planning has begun helping to bring some of that high design to the streets below.

As part of an initiative to step up the quality of urban design, the city agency is hiring high-profile, trend-savvy architects who are in effect acting as urban planners, in the first widespread planning effort since the 1960s that includes a comprehensive rezoning effort, several large-scale building projects, and architectural competitions.

*"We are not just rezoning but trying to think comprehensively about how to preserve affordability, street vitality, and open public spaces,"* the Director of the department, Amanda Burden, said. The idea, she said, is to be proactive and think intelligently about urban growth. By offering well-articulated master plans, the city hopes to give developers blueprints to build upon.

While I found the article very compelling, the ensuing discourse by some of my fellow Presidents was much more fascinating. I think it points out the continuing frustrations that we are having as a profession, organization and practice. What many others and I have been arguing for since I became a President has been more resources and leadership by our organization for the continuing education of our professional planners. The reason I have been preaching this topic is that in many ways, our profession has fallen victim to mediocrity. We rarely see:

*"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die, but long*



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*after we are gone be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistence." -Daniel Burnham, 1910.*

Instead we have become a profession too focused on zoning, processing, reacting and stuck in the practice that has resulted in the homogenized landscape (remember **Geography Of Nowhere: The Rise And Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape** by James Howard Kunstler of the post WWII era). I think our educational institutions are reacting to this need and they are producing planners with better skill sets in urban design, but it will be many years before those new planners are elevated to positions of influence. Meanwhile, it is the old war horses such as you and me that are in these positions of influence. So I hope that the old dictum that the pen is mightier than the sword is true here as I and others continue to pontificate. However, I know that we are not the only ones and let me share some of the dialogue that ensued after this article was shared on the list serve.

Professions go in cycles and the planning that is referred to in this article refers primarily to site plans and urban design. I think our profession has relinquished any creativity and leadership it may have had to the architects and urban design professions. It was a cliché in my planning program at Harvard that planners can't draw and architects can't write. Yet our roots go back to landscape architecture and there is no reason planners can't draw. Designers have to draw.

Also, the second important implication out of this article is that architects are defining the vision. Planners are often seen as regulators or permit processing consultants and not visionary. Yet, the Olmsteads, Daniel Burnhams, Robert Mosess and Ed Bacons were all visionaries. We have relinquished leadership in these areas to other professions.

*"The implications are very important to the future of our profession and our role in society". (Hawaii President)*

*"There are planners who can draw and architects who can write. Witness (with respect to the latter) Le Corbusier, or two more contemporary versions in Rem Koolhaas and Peter Eisenman. I don't agree with much of what they have to say but it is published and boy is it read."*

*"I do agree that planners have by and large relinquished leadership in the "vision" field and that is a shortcoming the profession needs to come to terms with, the sooner the better."*

*"I work for a firm of architects which is remarkably accepting of planners and their world, but that is an exception. The sooner the planning profession comes to grips with this the better we will all be." (New Jersey President).*

*"Well put by you both...The decline of leadership and vision in the profession is telling. It is certainly present in our foundations, but planning's leadership role has been summarily challenged, and, it appears successfully. How can our profession lead, provide vision, or be credible in the market place of ideas without any accountability in professional practice?"*

*"Why do we not demand a higher standard from our peers in the form of mandatory continuing education or, if you wish, mandatory professional development? Why don't we regard the practice of planning as so important and so extremely vital to America's communities that peer accountability is required? We've all witnessed severe community degradation at the hands of "professional planning" without accountability, yet any initiative to practice at a higher standard has been blocked and stonewalled at every turn. Even our GIS colleagues must now engage in continuing professional development to maintain certification. It remains to be seen if we will muster the leadership and*

*courage necessary to keep pace in the face of such change. (Former Alabama President)*

These last comments are worthwhile and important.

*"I will not weigh in here on the specifics and nuances of the discussion of planning in NY as written in The Sun. I have quite a lot to say on the efforts (sometimes more successful, often not) of NY Metro to have influence on the advocacy and planning efforts of the civic and professional community in regard to Lower Manhattan and other areas and issues. And NY Metro weighs in and advocates for responsible planning in many areas and in many arenas in NY, and we often collaborate with the architects!"*

*"Several of you have said forcefully that planners have left the field to the architects and to others. That is accurate and as Floyd Lapp wrote recently; you can hardly find a planning book that has had any influence on anything in the public arena in the last years."*

*"But where is the national APA in all of this? Do we ever grapple with these fundamental issues in a substantive way at the leadership meetings, for example? Is the national organization spending money and other resources on changing "the image" in a substantive, courageous and effective way? I hear about media campaigns and read about such matters in minutes and I filled out a questionnaire about it (oh, those surveys!), but is there an effective voice against the abuses that were described in the discussion about Loudon, for example? Is there a real effort to talk about any of these issues at any time?"*

*"Oh sure, mandatory education may be ok, but it hardly begins to get at the major questions of leadership and vision and thought."*

*"Will we struggle with any of this in San Francisco?" (New York Metro President)*

I think the discussion I have shared with you clearly illustrates the debate that has been occurring with the Presidents of the many Chapters of the American Planning Association. It is a debate that I have been proud to be a part of and that I hope will continue within our national organization. My concern is making sure that the debate occurs in other areas of our national organization. I am not sure what the level of that debate might be because often, it is done out of view and not shared with the membership. I have told you that change has been occurring over the past many years beginning with the appointment of a new executive director. What I am unable to confirm is the amount of change that has happened. I have likened our organization to a supertanker. The helm may have changed, but it takes a long time to see the turn. I do know that it continues to be imperative that all of us as members of this organization advocate for continuous change. As planners, we know that our communities are dynamic and

therefore our profession must be dynamic. I sincerely hope that our professional organization is up to this continuing challenge!

## **All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go!**

*Dr. Jim Segedy, AICP*

*Re-printed with permission from Star Winter 2005*

I was at a conference not that long ago and walking around the downtown near the hotel as I often do. Very pleasant. The person I was walking with and I were talking about how the people of this fair town had done such a great job of making the downtown very pedestrian friendly. All the ingredients were there: Nice wide sidewalks with brick pavers, street trees, festive banners promoting the downtown, decorative, human-scale lampposts, restored buildings with nice displays, even appropriate traffic-calming devices. I was taking pictures like crazy. But something was missing. It was pedestrian-friendly, but there were no pedestrians. Curious, I mused to my friend. Then we looked closer. It was after 5:00. Nothing was open. OK, its downtown, office workers want to get home to have dinner and take a nap watching "Wheel of Fortune." We went out the next morning. A bright day, the sun was shining, a crisp fall morning. Curious, I mused to my friend - yet again; still no pedestrians. "What could the matter be," we asked each other. Ah hah. It looks great but there's nothing there. There are no pedestrian destinations; nothing to bring out the pedestrians. Sorry, I can't get excited about heading out to pay a visit to the insurance agent or the something or other office of this and that. What have we done to ourselves? We spend all the time and effort to fix up our downtown, making them attractive to visit, but there's nothing there to visit. Downtown revitalization is not just about putting on a pretty face. There has to be a reason to be there. The best design in the world doesn't mean anything if there's no one around to appreciate it and there will be NO one if there's nothing to do.

I thought we had learned the same lessons from trying to turn "Main Street" into "The Mall." Same situation; even "The Mall" and the big boxes at the edge of town have recognized this. Look at the new trend in retail - the "Lifestyle Center." They look like little downtowns. So far so good. They even violate all the rules - you have to walk outside in all the weather (just like downtown and the old Victor Gruen malls)- but people do it. Why - because there's something to do when you get there. I was talking with one of the designers of one of the earliest "lifestyle Centers:" Easton Town Center, northeast of Columbus, Ohio. They have all of these public amenities - fountains, reflecting pools, etc. To the attorneys - an attractive nuisance, and a lawsuit waiting to happen. "Don't let people go near them," they said. The people said, "what cool places to play and just lollygag." The people won. You go there now and kids playing in the fountain encourages model boats and general frolicking. People

come. People enjoy each other. People spend money. This new version of downtown works.

As we look at your downtowns and wonder why there's no life in them, maybe we need to look a little deeper. Are we all dressed up with no place to go?

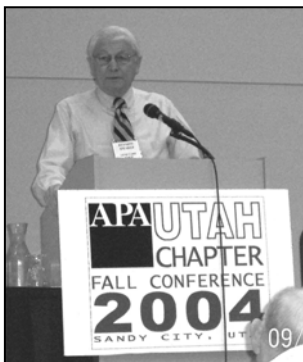
News time: Keepin' 'em down on the farm AND bringin' 'em downtown - all at the same time. SCA's - here we come.

## The 2004 Utah APA Conference Experience

by George Shaw, AICP

This past year the Sandy City Community Development Department had the opportunity of planning the annual Utah APA Conference. We were actually contacted by the Exec. Committee before the 2003 conference, but we didn't feel we had the time to do the conference justice so we 'volunteered' for the 2004 conference. This time line gave our planning staff the opportunity of really putting some thought into organizing a conference that we would be proud to have our names associated with. As 'old warhorse planners,' Mike Coulam and I have attended a lot of conferences over the years, both locally and nationally. We felt that those experiences would be helpful in planning our chapter conference and also give us the opportunity of including all the things we felt would make for a great conference. For example, we included three mobile workshop tours with our conference program covering mixed use, open space, and town centers.

We also wanted the opportunity to showcase Sandy to the rest of the state, which was also a big factor. To be honest, we realized that we had not been very active in chapter affairs over the past few years and needed to 'step up to the plate.' Guilt can be a powerful motivator! A big thanks to Chuck Klingenstein who not only 'prepped' us on important conference planning issues before and during the planning process---but also continually expressed faith and confidence in our ability to 'pull it off.' Chuck's budget insights were very helpful.



We decided that Mike would coordinate the logistics of the conference and that I would do the program. The first hurdle we faced was the date. Conflicts seemed to abound. We settled on a date that seemed OK (however, not knowing what other organizations were still planning we did end up with a couple of conflicts). With the

South Towne Expo Center just up the street, the location for the conference was a simple decision. Preliminary arrangements were made with the Expo Center with the details to be worked out later. Our relationship with them was helpful in getting a sizable discount on the rental of the

facility and the food catering. The Expo location also provided us the opportunity to showcase Larry H. Miller's very successful Jordan Commons entertainment/office/mixed use project with our opening reception.

We next started a list of potential topics for the conference. It was fun paring down a pretty wild list of planning issues—ones that we came up with and others that were suggested to us by many of you. We pored over the number of sessions and tracks, and potential speakers. Once we decided on the program content and format we had a staff meeting to make it happen. A staff planner was assigned to coordinate each track, as well as the room for the exhibits. They contacted potential speakers, prepared bios, and coordinated the set-ups in each of the rooms, and worked with the exhibitors. It was a little frustrating when the program needed to be changed within 24 hours of the preliminary program being mailed out. Somehow we worked around that and it actually made the final program better with some conference 'closure' during the concluding session.

Our overall goal was to plan a great conference with superb food at a reasonable cost to attendees, and still make money for the chapter. We did this by getting discounts on the rentals and food, choosing volunteers to help with the field trips, the economic workshop, the planning sessions, and by using city facilities, equipment and supplies. Our biggest 'mistake' was hoping for a bigger turnout and thus planning for more food than was needed. But certainly no one went home hungry from the conference!

It felt good to be involved with the Chapter. We were able to put our professional planning skills to work as we planned and prepared for the event. Our experience included renewing old friendships and making new friends. We met the Chapter's goal of using the conference to raise money and learned some new budgeting techniques. We also learned more about the tremendous planning efforts taking place in communities all over Utah. It was rewarding to hear many of you express your appreciation for a very successful conference.

All in all it was a great experience. We couldn't have done it without the help of the Exec. Committee, volunteers, and all the equipment & supplies that were donated. We would be willing to lend a helping hand and provide insights with future chapter conferences should your organization be so lucky to receive the assignment!

### ***Planners on the Move***

Jeff Gilbert is now working as the Transportation Planner for Cache Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO)

# Utah Planning Student Organization

www.arch.utah.edu/upso --> for UPSO info, events, activities, and the Internship Resource

## How to be a Pedestrian: A Walkable Guide to Walkability

<-----The Walk Though Edition----->

What is Walkability? It's not even a word. Some say it can't be done. Others say people are married to their cars (well, not legally in this state). Walkability is the concept that we urban planners are constantly trying to define but often seems so intangible. For such a worthy cause, a walkable instruction manual has been developed for urban planners or anyone with functioning limbs.

By Aaron Nelson

### Step 2: Things to Remember

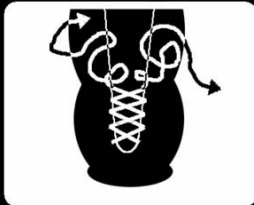


- Consult your local subdivision map

- Use the pedestrian tools provided for your safety
- When out with the family, consider a leash system!

### 58 ways to be a Pedestrian

#### Step 1: Getting Started



- Tie your shoes

- Perhaps you need more walkable shoes

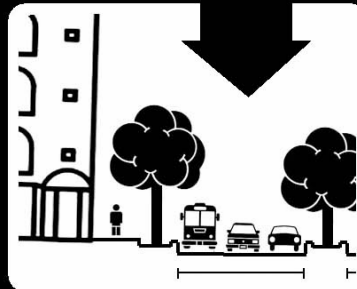


- Make sure to pack your protection from the elements

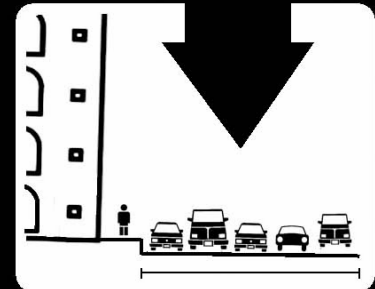


#### Step 3: Take Caution

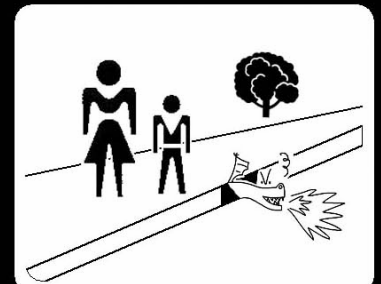
- Don't be afraid of those big streets...
- ...But do be afraid of these



- Watch out for distracted automobile drivers



- and storm water monsters



To be continued next time

**The 2005  
Spring Conference  
in Torrey, Utah at  
The Wonderland Inn  
Jct. Highways 12 & 24, East of Town  
Planning in Utah's Rural Communities:**

**Enhancing the Rural Quality of Life through Planning  
May 5 & 6, 2005**

**Please include a check or money order with your registration.**

Name of attendee	Timeslot attending	Cost
John Doe (example)	APA Package – Standard	\$120
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		

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**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_



Conference Registration Form

**Mail in payment due April 15, 2005 to avoid late fee (\$20). \***

Thursday Evening and Friday	\$60.00
Dinner Only for Spouse or Significant Other	\$25.00
Package APA Member	\$120.00
Package Non-APA Member	\$130.00
Late Fee after April 15	\$20.00

\*Prices include breakfast, lunch and dinner Thursday; Breakfast and lunch on Friday.

Please send this form (**to arrive before April 15<sup>th</sup>, otherwise, please pay at the door w/late fee**) along with your payment to:

**UAPA Conference Registration  
Edwin Benson  
P.O. Box 820, 250 N Main  
Richfield, UT 84701**

If you have questions about conference registration or other logistics, please call Edwin Benson at 435-896-9222 ext. 18.

## Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>

**8:30-9:00: Conference Registration and Continental Breakfast** at the Wonderland Inn.

**9:00-9:15: Welcome from the Mayor of Torrey, J. Fred Hansen.**

**9:15-10:05: Utah Legislative Update 2005.**

- Wilf Sommerkorn, Director of Community Development, Davis County and Utah Chapter APA Legislative Committee Chair.

**10:05-10:55: The Geology of Utah and how it Affects our Lifestyle. Sponsored by the Utah League of Cities and Towns**

- Genevieve Atwood, Chief Education Officer of Earth Science Education and Associate Professor, Geology Department, University of Utah.

**10:55-11:10: Break**

**11:10-12:00: County Resource Management Planning (CRMP), Critical Lands Planning Toolkit (CLPT), and Quality Growth Communities (QGC), Part I**

- Mike Hansen, Director of Planning, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB)

**12:00-1:30: Lunch Presentation, Multi-Disciplinary Design & Community Affairs Forum.**

- Søren Simonsen, AIA, AICP, LEED™, Principal Architect and Urban Planner with Cooper Roberts Simonsen Architecture; and panel.

**1:30-2:30: How the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Process Played after Recent Flooding in Southwest Utah.**

- Curt Hutchings, Senior Planner, Five County AOG; Bob Nicholson, St. George Community Development Director; Ryan Pietramali, Hazard Mitigation Planner, Utah Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security (DESHS); and Steve Rundquist, Community Support Specialist for SW Utah, DESHS.

**2:30-2:45: Break**

**2:45-3:45: Preserving & Protecting your Rural Transportation System.**

- Mark Teuscher, AICP, Cache Countywide Planner

6:00 Dinner Feature Presentation – Spring Conference Planning Awards Presentation

## Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>

**8:30-9:00: Continental Breakfast**

**9:00-10:00: The Wildlife and Planning Interface.**

- Dana Dolsen, Wildlife Planning Manager, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; and panel.

**10:00-10:15: Break**

**10:00-12:30: CRMP, CLPT, and QGC, Part II**

- Mike Hansen, Director of Planning, GOPB

**12:30-2:00 Lunch**

## Lodging Information

Because the conference will be held at Wonderland Inn, that is the best place to stay. They have blocked off a number of rooms for May 4 & 5 until April 13 exclusively for the Spring APA Conference. Their rates are \$54/single and \$62/double. Please call 435-425-3775 or 877-854-0184 to reserve your room. Because this is the beginning of the busy season in South Central Utah, however, rooms may still be available after the guaranteed date.

Please call and reserve a room with a credit card, and be sure to specify that you are with the Utah APA conference.

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\*Conference Site

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