



GEORGIA PLANNER

Newsletter of the Georgia Planning Association, A Chapter of the American Planning Association

JUNE 2001

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New American Planning Association Executive Director

Chicago, Ill. W. Paul Farmer, AICP, executive director of the Eugene, Oregon, Department of Planning and Development, has been named the new executive director of the American Planning Association (APA). Former APA Executive Director Frank So, FAICP, retired March 30, ending a 33-year career with the organization and its forerunner, the American Society of Planning Officials.

"Paul has a strong background in both city planning and management," said APA President Bruce McClendon, FAICP. "His experience in the planning profession and leadership skills will serve APA well as our members help find solutions to the breadth of land-use issues facing the country, from using smart growth planning concepts for preventing urban sprawl and reducing traffic congestion to revitalizing downtowns and other areas in economic decline."

Before being hired to lead Eugene's planning and development department in February 1999, Farmer was director of the Minneapolis Department of City Planning from 1994 to 1998. During his tenure, he worked with the Minneapolis planning commission to rebuild the city's planning department and make innovative changes. Many of those changes became sources of presentations Farmer has made at various national conferences.

Prior to working in Minneapolis, Farmer was Pittsburgh's deputy planning director from 1980 to 1994. During this time he worked on a broad spectrum of planning topics, including affordable housing, transportation issues, historic preservation, economic development, downtown revitalization, and zoning codes. He also has taught planning at several universities.

"I am not only greatly honored to be chosen as Frank So's successor," Farmer said, "but I also feel very lucky because I

think this will be a very enjoyable job to have. I am excited about the opportunities APA and AICP have to grow and to help our members influence, guide, and shape America's communities at a time when public awareness about growth and development issues has never been higher," he said.

Farmer grew up in Shreveport, La., during the 1950s. He was in high school when he met Arch Winter, now a fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners, who had developed a master plan for metropolitan Shreveport. Winter encouraged Farmer to study architecture or engineering and then urban planning at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. He did just that, earning a bachelor's degree in architecture from Rice University in 1967 and a master's degree in city and regional planning from Cornell in 1971.

Among his many honors and awards, Farmer received a Design Excellence Award from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1980 and a research award from Progressive Architecture in 1983. He also was a Hayden Fellow in Architecture and a Baker Distinguished Student Fellow at Rice University and a Richard King Mellon Fellow at Cornell.

A long-time member of APA, Farmer has been involved in the organization and its predecessor groups, the American Society of Planning Officials and the American Institute of Planners, more than 30 years. In the late 1960s, he co-founded and served as the first president of the National Association of Student Planners.

Since then, he has served on various committees and in several leadership roles, including president of the Wisconsin Chapter of APA from 1978-80 and chair of the APA Chapter Presidents' Council from 1979-81. He also served on the APA Board of Directors between 1979 and 1981, and in 2000 was named chair of the City Planning and Management Division.

The 30,000-member American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art and science of urban, rural and regional planning. APA encourages planning that contributes to public well being by developing communities and environments that more effectively meet the needs of all people. APA has offices in Washington, D.C. and Chicago, Ill.

From the President...

Newsletters, Bylaws, and Elections

Many thanks to Lucy Jenkins, our Vice President for Chapter Services. She's worked very hard to give the newsletter a whole new look. And thanks to each of you who has (or is planning to) submit articles. To simplify the process of getting your article printed, here are some things to remember when submitting newsletter articles: First, articles that are three pages or less are easier to read and pose less technical difficulty for newsletter production. Also, our life is easier if you e-mail articles to us in Word. We just don't have time to re-type articles when softwares are incompatible and create formatting errors. Second, we may have to cut your article depending on the space available. Please use an inverted pyramid format to make this job easier. Put the most important information at the top of the article, so we can cut from the bottom and not lose critical details. Third, we try to run time-sensitive articles as a top priority, which means that some articles have to be saved for subsequent issues if space is running short. Please don't be offended if you submitted an article and we had to hold it until the next edition. Fourth, if you have a picture to go with your article, please send it as a .jpg file and we'll do our best to include it. In some cases, we will choose to not use a picture if it means we can use the space to run another article of interest to the membership. Finally, if you have ideas for how to improve the newsletter, or would like to be a part of the newsletter committee, please let Lucy know your ideas and your willingness to participate.

Bylaws—ours are under proposed revisions by our Bylaws committee. We are looking to streamline our operations, redistribute the responsibilities, and to create the job of President-Elect to provide some continuity between boards and keep us active within the Chapter Presidents' Council. Jerry Weitz and his committee will be presenting a draft to the board this summer for consideration, with plans for the general membership to vote on these changes at the annual business meeting in Jekyll Island. If you have any ideas for bylaws revisions, please share them with Jerry.

And elections—GPA members will choose a new board of directors by mail-in ballot early this fall, with the new board to be introduced at the conference. Bill Ross, Stuart Dorfman, and Joseph Mosley are working to develop a slate of nominees. If you'd be interested in serving as a board member, or you know someone who you'd like to see on the board, let one of these committee members know your thoughts.

Just to briefly update you about national APA news: look for APA's new Organizational Development Plan on the website (). AICP President Sam Casella has appointed a committee to investigate the mechanics of implementing professional continuing education. I'll be serving on that committee over the next year, so please, if you have specific thoughts on that issue, feel free to share them with me. Another committee I'll be serving on this summer is the APA Nominating Committee, which meets in Jackson, Wyoming to select a slate of candidates for vacancies on the APA Board of Directors. I'm also serving on the committee to rewrite APA's policy guides on environmental issues.

In closing, please let me remind you that our chapter awards program is now underway for 2001. We give awards in several different categories to recognize planning excellence in Georgia. Please help us make this program successful by submitting your awards nominations this summer.

Respectfully,

Lisa Hollingsworth



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Community Character Act Introduced in the House

On April 4, 2001, the Community Character Act of 2001 (H.R. 1433) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD). The bill would authorize a \$50 million grant program to states, multi-state regional programs, and tribal governments for federal assistance to states for reform of outdated state planning statutes and improved state and regional planning. H.R. 1433 was referred to the House Resources Committee and House Financial Services Committee.

Johnny Isakson (R-GA) joined as a co-sponsor. APA is requesting help in contacting Representatives asking for support of this proposed legislation. APA finds that passage of H.R. 1433 is one of the most important and beneficial things Congress could do to help promote local solutions to such pressing issues as downtown revitalization, traffic congestion, urban sprawl and open space protection.

Call For Nominations

Been wanting to get more involved in GPA? Interested in advancing Planning in Georgia?

LOOK NO FURTHER!!

This is an election year for GPA, and your chance to get on board.

ALL GPA Officer and Board positions are up for election, any one of which may appeal to you:

- President
- Vice President for Programs
- Vice President for Professional Development
- Vice President for Chapter Services
- Vice President for Legislative Affairs
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- District Director (there are 10 Districts)
- At-Large Director, AICP (2 positions)
- At-Large Director, Non-AICP (3 positions)

Whether you have a particular position in mind, want to explore alternatives, or just want to be more involved, contact Bill Ross at your convenience in June. Bill can be reached at:

E-mail: rossatcr@cs.com
 Tel: 404-355-4505
 Fax: 404-352-6926
 COOPER-ROSS sv
 2161 Peachtree Road, NE Suite 806
 Atlanta, GA 30309

AND DON'T BE SHY!!

GPA relies entirely on volunteer help, so WE need YOU!

Nominations Committee Hard at Work

Bill Ross, Stuart Dorfman and Joe Mosely have been appointed to this year's Nominations Committee, and have been busily working on a slate of candidates. All new officers and Board members will take office at the GPA Conference in October. Terms are for two years.

"We need candidates from across the State," says Bill Ross, the committee chair, "and especially for President and the four Vice President positions, which must have two nominations each under the by-laws." District and At-Large Board positions are also open, but do not have to be contested races.

This year's Election Schedule is:

Nominations completed.....July 24
 Petition candidates received by.....August 24
 All candidates certified by.....August 31
 Ballots go outmid-September
 All votes received byOctober 9

The results will be announced at the Annual Meeting during the GPA conference in Jekyll Island in October.

COURT UPHOLDS IMPACT FEES

(At Least Some Of Them)

By Bill Ross and Frank E. Jenkins, III

In Greater Atlanta Home Builder's Association v. Cherokee County the Cherokee Superior Court for the first time in Georgia dealt with a challenge to impact fees. Cherokee County imposes impact fees on new residential and commercial developments under an ordinance and accompanying capital improvements element adopted in April 2000. The county collects fees for roads, parks, libraries, fire protection, sheriff's patrol, and the jail. All fees collected by Cherokee County are apportioned under a detailed cost and future growth analysis relating to each of the six elements. The Greater Atlanta Home Builder's Association (GAHBA) challenged collection of fees for all elements. It based its challenge on the county's use of single-service areas, failure to give credit for taxes collected in the past, and the level of service standards used for fee calculations. Additionally, GAHBA challenged all of the capital elements on equal protection grounds, since the county collected fees only for new developments in the unincorporated area of the county, but not in the cities. The county countered that the impact fee calculations assigned only a proportionate share of capital improvement costs to the unincorporated area, such that those residents of the unincorporated area pay no more than their fair share.

In its decision, the trial court upheld the Cherokee's impact fee ordinance to the extent that fees are collected for fire protection, sheriff's patrol, and the jail. However, it struck down collection of fees for roads, parks and libraries because these capital elements provide system-wide services without distinction to the cities and the unincorporated areas of the county. But since the county cannot collect impact fees for development in the cities, equal protection guaranteed under the constitution was violated.

Cherokee County appealed that part of the court's judgment which struck down fees for roads, parks and libraries. By order of the Supreme Court the county is allowed to continue collection of all fees for all six elements during the appeal.

Oral arguments to the Supreme Court are expected this fall. It is likely that a decision will not be handed down until the end of this year or perhaps during the first quarter of next year.

Update on GPA's Proposed Legislation

By: Jerry Weitz, Ph.D., AICP
Vice President for Legislative
Affairs

In August 2000, the legislative committee of GPA drafted proposed legislation titled the "Zoning and Growth Management Enabling Act of 2001." In October 2000, at the annual conference of GPA and upon advice of the legislative committee and the organizations representing cities and counties in Georgia, we backed off on our initial goal of having the proposal introduced in the 2001 General Assembly.

GPA was asked to work with a legislative subcommittee of the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership in communicating features of the proposal. We have done that, and meetings are continuing. GPA was also asked to work with a joint task force on smart growth formed by the city and county associations (GMA and ACCG). We worked with staff and the facilitator of the GMA/ACCG task force to make them knowledgeable about the contents of GPA's bill, and a copy of the draft bill was submitted to one of the co-chairs of the joint task force, Mayor Jere Wood of Roswell (the other co-chair is Bill Byrne, Chairman, Cobb County Board of Commissioners). We stand ready to meet with the task force if we can secure that opportunity. We have also

distributed the draft bill widely to anyone interested.

There are two major parts to the proposed bill. One part would add a new zoning and growth management enabling act, to give explicit authority to cities and counties to adopt growth management and other land use regulations. Of course, some would believe that the state constitutional authority for cities and counties to zone is sufficient, but let's just say there's some nervousness out there about that.

The second major part of the bill is to amend the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to implement the specific recommendations of the Growth Strategies Reassessment Task Force (1998). When that Task Force met, it provided major recommendations that, at that time, received consensus of the city and county associations and many other groups. The Task Force stopped short of saying how their recommendations could be implemented and did not offer a legislative proposal. GPA's legislative proposal, as written, would implement most of the task force's recommendations that require change of legislation.

Some highlights of the "planning act reform" portion of the bill are summarized here:

- State Plan (or Vision).** Adds definition of state comprehensive plan; requires that the Governor's Development Council develop a state

comprehensive plan; specifies certain contents of the plan; requires state plan to be updated at four-year intervals.

- State Agency Coordination.**

Requires rules by the Governor's Development Council to require state agencies to prepare state agency coordination plans for review by Council according to schedule; specifies certain content of the rules; requires Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to adopt rules for preparing growth management elements of comprehensive plans.

- Local Requirements.**

Requires preparation of local growth management elements of comprehensive plans as a condition of adopting certain growth management tools. Requires local governments to prepare plan implementation consistency reports; permits DCA to withhold "qualified local government" status if a local government fails to implement its plan and state plan.

- Regional Consistency.**

Allows Regional Development Centers (RDCs) to send to DCA a statement that a local plan is inconsistent with regional policy. RDCs can make a finding that a local comprehensive plan is inconsistent with a regional plan or policy; the outcome and disposition is deferred to DCA.

●Environmental Protection.

Requires the promulgation of new rules by Georgia Department of Natural Resources for protection of air quality, historic resources, and coastal resources.

It is time to begin fine-tuning our proposal and seek consensus on legislative changes to Georgia's Planning Act, as well as get growth management enabling authority in place. To that end, we need help from the membership in bringing visibility to the effort. The proposed bill is really just a starting point for discussion. There is so much more we need to do with the prospect that Congress will approve federal smart growth funds for states to modernize statutes, and with all of the work of APA's Growing Smart project, prospects for further attention to the legislative framework for planning in Georgia look very good.

In a related matter. . .

The Georgia Conservancy was instrumental in lobbying for state grant funds for localities to conduct smart growth studies. I have not seen any official announcement on this matter, but "word on the streets" is that the funds survived the budget but were reduced from \$500,000 to a \$250,000 appropriation. DCA was standing by to implement the new grant program but now, it seems that due to the Governor's proposed budget cuts (in light of poor news about declining revenue projections) the grant funds will not survive and the grant program will not be implemented this year.

GPA Historic Preservation Committee to Meet

Did you know that the Georgia Planning Association has a Historic Preservation Committee? Many people don't, but it does exist. It is made up of individuals who are interested in history, historic preservation and museum preservation in the state. Our goals are to: Promote ourselves as preservation and museum professionals who are integral to the overall planning processes of government; Promote the cause of historic and museum preservation; and Educate the public and other planners about the benefits of historic and museum preservation through information and public service type projects. In the past we have completed various community projects and delivered presentations at various conferences. We are now looking for new members and actively seeking those who have not participated on the committee in some time. We will be meeting at the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center in Macon, Georgia on July 18, 2001 at 10:30 a.m. in the conference room. At that time we will have a presentation by a representative from a state agency (to be announced) on a preservation topic and then move on to the business of making our committee a national model. As far as we know from our research, this is the only Historic Preservation Committee in any state planning association to date. There has been major interest in this committee in the past, but attendance has been declining steadily since its formation. If you are interested in historic preservation, please plan to attend so that we may bring our profession the attention that it deserves in the planning community. Please contact me at (912) 285-6097 or at for information concerning this meeting, or suggestions concerning this or future meetings. Michael V. Jacobs, Chair



***Blueprints:* Finding Better Ways for Communities to Grow**

by Susan Rutherford

Communities across Georgia have recognized the need to address issues tied to growth. The Georgia Conservancy has responded by creating the *Blueprints for Successful Communities* program. Since 1995, more than 3,000 Georgians have participated in *Blueprints* community design workshops, symposia and conferences to improve the places where they live. Partnering organizations (Table 1) have been critical to the development and implementation of the program.

The Georgia Conservancy launched *Blueprints* to provide information on growth alternatives and technical assistance to communities facing growth challenges. At the center of *Blueprints* are three areas of focus: access to information on land development practices that address environmental concerns, citizen

participation, and partnerships with all development interests. "Unless residents know the options for growth and the ways to manage it," says Jim Frederick of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, "they will never be players in the decision-making process. *Blueprints* has made many more people players."

The focus on providing information began in 1995 with a series of symposia and conferences that continue today. Topics have ranged from transportation alternatives to statewide planning for water.

The focus on citizen participation and partnership building began in 1997 with the first *Blueprints* community design workshop in Newton County. Since then, The Georgia Conservancy has led ten community design workshops, helping communities chart their future in ways that protect their local character (Table 2). The workshop process highlights *Blueprints'* overarching goals:

- Identify ways to sustain a high quality of life for all community members.
- Create regional strategies for transportation, land use and economic growth.
- Consider the built environment's effect on natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Integrate land uses in compact, well-designed developments.

Community design workshops follow a standard process: First, local steering committees assemble a cross-section of community leaders to identify the community's challenges and opportunities. Graduate students from Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia, managed by the Georgia Tech Urban Design

Workshop, combine this community input with projected growth data to create various development options. A weekend workshop, open to all residents, develops consensus about community goals. The final report serves as a strategic guide for the community.

"I think this program has changed the way Atlanta looks at growth issues," says Susan Kidd, the Conservancy's vice president for education and advocacy. "By showing people they have choices in how they grow and how they can manage growth in their communities, *Blueprints* has helped shift the way people think."

These are bold statements about a relatively new program, but as John Sibley, the Conservancy's president, has said, "Nobody was talking about this stuff before. *Blueprints* can rightfully claim to have opened the dialogue in our region about better ways to grow."

Elements of Success

A successful *Blueprints* process has a dedicated sponsoring organization or agency, extensive community participation and understanding, and the development of consensus on key issues.

"More citizens will participate in the process when a well-respected local leader or organization asks them to," says Dorothy McDaniel, Conservancy policy analyst for community development. "Strong community leadership increases the chance of success. We spend less time before the workshop gaining the community's trust. After the process is over, the community has a strong leader who knows how to get things done."

The Home Park Workshop offers one example of success. This midtown Atlanta neighborhood had considered raising a wall to protect itself from perceived impacts of proposed development on the former Atlantic Steel site. By the end of the *Blueprints* process, the neighborhood had decided to link its street grid with that of the new development. Moreover, *Blueprints* has given Home Park the basis to do long-range planning.

Professor Randal Roark, who heads Georgia Tech's Urban Design Workshop, has led all ten *Blueprints* community design workshops along with The Georgia Conservancy. He emphasizes that most *Blueprints* workshops do not end with a finished plan. Rather, the process helps citizens develop the framework to decide on a future direction, giving them the chance to influence planning activities.

The Emerging Face of *Blueprints*

Going forward, it is clear that *Blueprints* will be regional in scale and more rural in scope. The University Parkway study, which spanned six counties, was the first regional *Blueprints* initiative. "Participants quickly realized that transportation improvements and economic factors all along the University Parkway (Highway 316) corridor would shape development in their own hometowns and neighborhoods," said Roark.

In January, local organizations in Columbus kicked off a yearlong *Blueprints* effort that will address the link between land use and water quality in 11 counties in the middle Chattahoochee watershed.

The Conservancy has also responded to several rural communities' requests for help in organizing their citizens to focus on environmental conservation and

preserving community character. These projects have focused on education, coalition building and leadership development. The Conservancy is working with the Habersham County Smart Growth Coalition, and with similar community groups in Bartow, Newton and Morgan Counties.

A High Degree of Consensus

Across all ten *Blueprints* communities, participants have reached a surprising degree of consensus on several fronts:

- Developments that incorporate growth management principles can be more attractive to incoming residents.
- A wide range of land use patterns and density is acceptable.
- People want to encourage alternative forms of transportation and see transit-oriented development around rail stations.
- Wherever people live, they wish to preserve what natural areas they have. They want more parks, city squares, sidewalks, and walking trails.
- Water protection is critical to a high quality of life.

Whether the community is in inner-city Atlanta or a growing rural county, people are concerned with similar issues.

current patterns of growth, The Georgia Conservancy and the *Blueprints* Partners will continue helping Georgians learn how to build successful communities.

This article was first published in The Georgia Conservancy's bi-monthly newsletter, Panorama, March/April 2001. Following a year with The Georgia Conservancy as a project coordinator, Susan Rutherford is now a planner with the City of Atlanta's greenspace program. Georgia Conservancy vice president Susan Kidd and trustee Randal Roark contributed to this article.

Table 1. *Blueprints* Partners

American Institute of Architects, Atlanta Chapter
 American Society of Landscape Architects
 Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership
 Consulting Engineers' Council
 Georgia Planning Association
 Georgia Tech Urban Design Workshop
 The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation
 Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association
 Institute of Transportation Engineers
 National Association of Industrial and Office Properties
 Urban Land Institute

Table 2. *Blueprints* Workshops

Covington/Newton County	Fall 1997
Lakewood Heights (Atlanta)	Spring 1998
Senoia/Coweta County	Fall 1998
Home Park (Atlanta)	Spring 1999
Athens-Clarke County	Spring 1999
University Parkway: Barrow and Oconee Counties	Fall 1999
University Parkway: Gwinnett County	Spring 2000
Columbus/Middle Chattahoochee Watershed	Spring-Fall 2001

By presenting alternatives to

Annual Conference

The annual conference has been set for **Wednesday, October 24th through Friday, October 26th at the Jekyll Island Club.**

We promise to give you a jam-packed program full of fascinating and informative sessions and titillating special events. Anticipating a turn out like last year, I **strongly advise you to make your reservations early, rooms are booking fast.** Please note that we have revised the conference schedule to begin at 9 AM on Wednesday, and that Jekyll is approximately 5 hours from Atlanta. We have rooms blocked from Tuesday through Saturday. To make reservations call the Jekyll Island Club directly (800) 535-9547 and let them know that you are with GPA. Room rates are the same as last year and range from \$89 to \$199 per night.

Quarterly Luncheons

Please join us for our next luncheon on **Wednesday, June 27th.** The luncheon will be held at the **Buckhead Sheraton Hotel, 3405 Lenox Road** (½ a block from the MARTA station near the intersection of Lenox and Paces Ferry). Registration form is located within the newsletter. Please reserve your place as soon as possible. Space is limited. Doors will open at 11:30, and lunch will run from 12:00 to 1:30. The cost for the luncheon is **\$27.00.** Please make checks payable to "GPA."

New Trends in Public Participation
Liz Sandford, Sycamore Consulting
Wednesday, June 27th, 12:00 to 1:30
Buckhead Sheraton Hotel
3405 Lenox Road
(404) 261-9250

Come hear the latest trends in public participation in the planning process. This luncheon will be of interest to both planners in private practice and to government planners in learning the latest techniques and tools to really get people involved!!!

If you are interested in speaking at a luncheon, please contact Michele Wright in Douglas County at (770) 920-3000.

Sponsorship Opportunities

In July you will be receiving your registration information for the upcoming fall conference to be held at the Jekyll Island Club in October. If you are interested in either be a sponsor or setting up an exhibit, please contact me directly. Remember we had over 150 people attend last year's conference. This is a great opportunity to get your company name out to the right people.

As always, feel free to email me (dbabboud@aol.com) or phone (404) 874-5459 with your comments, suggestions and questions.



J ♦ O ♦ B ANNOUNCEMENTS

City of Columbus

An excellent career opportunity exists for a Zoning Administrator in the Department of Community & Economic Development for the City of Columbus. This position organizes and monitors planning activities that involve the proper determination of land use and zoning in accordance with Federal, State and Local regulations, codes and ordinances.

Please apply @ www.columbusga.org or send resume' to Columbus Consolidated Government, ATTN: Ramona Roberson, Human Resources Department, Post Office Box 1340, Columbus, GA 31902. Phone (706) 653-4060 and Fax (706) 653-4066

EXPONENTIAL GROWTH!

Henry County, the fourth fastest growing county in the nation, is looking for organized, detailed, innovative individuals experienced in database development and plan review to fill Intern, Planner I and Planner II positions. Interested applicants please contact Dale A. Hall, Director of Planning & Development at (770) 954-2457.

Georgia Planning Association Quarterly Luncheon June 27, 2001

Sheraton Buckhead Hotel
3405 Lenox Road
(404) 261-9250

"New Trends in Public Participation"

Liz Sandford
Sycamore Consulting
Doors open at 11:30
Luncheon - 12:00 to 1:30

- \$27 -

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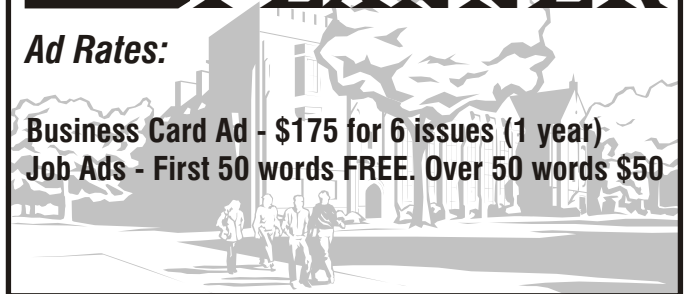
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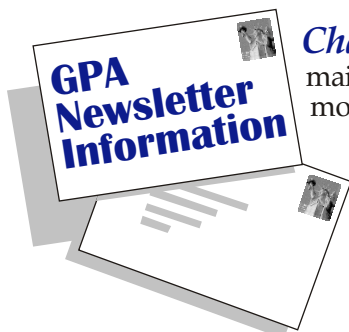
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WORKING TO BETTER OUR COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT



Change of Address: The Georgia Chapter does not maintain address lists. All lists are maintained at the national office and are mailed to the local chapters each month. If you have moved, e-mail: addresschange@planning.org or write to:

Membership Department
APA National Headquarters
122 South Michigan, Suite 1600
Chicago, Illinois 60603-6107

Membership Information: If you are in joining the American Planning Association, contact the national headquarters at the address above or call (312) 431-9100.

Submission: The Georgia Planning Association welcomes articles, letters to the editor, photos of planning events or state happenings, calendar listings, job notices, planners on the move, etc. We are always interested in publishing anything you think may be of interest to others throughout the state. Articles may be edited for space. Articles printed in any issue of The Georgia Planner are not the expressed opinion of the Chapter.

Graphics: Graphics are especially welcome - pictures, photos, graphs, charts, etc. We would be happy to return them to you upon request.

Deadline: The deadline for the next issue is July 31, 2001
Send Items for the newsletter to:

Lucy Jenkins
323 East Church Street, Suite 106
Cartersville, Georgia 30120
lucyjenkins@mindspring.com



**Please Note: Due to space limitations, we can no longer accept articles exceeding 1,000 words.
Thank You*



GEORGIA PLANNER

Newsletter of the Georgia Planning Association, A Chapter of the American Planning Association
323 EAST CHURCH STREET • SUITE 106 CARTERSVILLE, GEORGIA 30120

APA... Making Great Communities Happen

●Environmental Protection.

Requires the promulgation of new rules by Georgia Department of Natural Resources for protection of air quality, historic resources, and coastal resources.

It is time to begin fine-tuning our proposal and seek consensus on legislative changes to Georgia's Planning Act, as well as get growth management enabling authority in place. To that end, we need help from the membership in bringing visibility to the effort. The proposed bill is really just a starting point for discussion. There is so much more we need to do with the prospect that Congress will approve federal smart growth funds for states to modernize statutes, and with all of the work of APA's Growing Smart project, prospects for further attention to the legislative framework for planning in Georgia look very good.

In a related matter...

The Georgia Conservancy was instrumental in lobbying for state grant funds for localities to conduct smart growth studies. I have not seen any official announcement on this matter, but "word on the streets" is that the funds survived the budget but were reduced from \$500,000 to a \$250,000 appropriation. DCA was standing by to implement the new grant program but now, it seems that due to the Governor's proposed budget cuts (in light of poor news about declining revenue projections) the grant funds will not survive and the grant program will not be implemented this year.

GPA Historic Preservation Committee to Meet

Did you know that the Georgia Planning Association has a Historic Preservation Committee? Many people don't, but it does exist. It is made up of individuals who are interested in history, historic preservation and museum preservation in the state. Our goals are to: Promote ourselves as preservation and museum professionals who are integral to the overall planning processes of government; Promote the cause of historic and museum preservation; and Educate the public and other planners about the benefits of historic and museum preservation through information and public service type projects. In the past we have completed various community projects and delivered presentations at various conferences. We are now looking for new members and actively seeking those who have not participated on the committee in some time. We will be meeting at the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center in Macon, Georgia on July 18, 2001 at 10:30 a.m. in the conference room. At that time we will have a presentation by a representative from a state agency (to be announced) on a preservation topic and then move on to the business of making our committee a national model. As far as we know from our research, this is the only Historic Preservation Committee in any state planning association to date. There has been major interest in this committee in the past, but attendance has been declining steadily since its formation. If you are interested in historic preservation, please plan to attend so that we may bring our profession the attention that it deserves in the planning community. Please contact me at (912) 285-6097 or at for information concerning this meeting, or suggestions concerning this or future meetings. Michael V. Jacobs, Chair



Blueprints: Finding Better Ways for Communities to Grow

by Susan Rutherford

Communities across Georgia have recognized the need to address issues tied to growth. The Georgia Conservancy has responded by creating the *Blueprints for Successful Communities* program. Since 1995, more than 3,000 Georgians have participated in *Blueprints* community design workshops, symposia and conferences to improve the places where they live. Partnering organizations (Table 1) have been critical to the development and implementation of the program.

The Georgia Conservancy launched *Blueprints* to provide information on growth alternatives and technical assistance to communities facing growth challenges. At the center of *Blueprints* are three areas of focus: access to information on land development practices that address environmental concerns, citizen

participation, and partnerships with all development interests. "Unless residents know the options for growth and the ways to manage it," says Jim Frederick of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, "they will never be players in the decision-making process. *Blueprints* has made many more people players."

The focus on providing information began in 1995 with a series of symposia and conferences that continue today. Topics have ranged from transportation alternatives to statewide planning for water.

The focus on citizen participation and partnership building began in 1997 with the first *Blueprints* community design workshop in Newton County. Since then, The Georgia Conservancy has led ten community design workshops, helping communities chart their future in ways that protect their local character (Table 2). The workshop process highlights *Blueprints'* overarching goals:

- Identify ways to sustain a high quality of life for all community members.
- Create regional strategies for transportation, land use and economic growth.
- Consider the built environment's effect on natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Integrate land uses in compact, well-designed developments.

Community design workshops follow a standard process: First, local steering committees assemble a cross-section of community leaders to identify the community's challenges and opportunities. Graduate students from Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia, managed by the Georgia Tech Urban Design

Workshop, combine this community input with projected growth data to create various development options. A weekend workshop, open to all residents, develops consensus about community goals. The final report serves as a strategic guide for the community.

"I think this program has changed the way Atlanta looks at growth issues," says Susan Kidd, the Conservancy's vice president for education and advocacy. "By showing people they have choices in how they grow and how they can manage growth in their communities, *Blueprints* has helped shift the way people think."

These are bold statements about a relatively new program, but as John Sibley, the Conservancy's president, has said, "Nobody was talking about this stuff before. *Blueprints* can rightfully claim to have opened the dialogue in our region about better ways to grow."

Elements of Success

A successful *Blueprints* process has a dedicated sponsoring organization or agency, extensive community participation and understanding, and the development of consensus on key issues.

"More citizens will participate in the process when a well-respected local leader or organization asks them to," says Dorothy McDaniel, Conservancy policy analyst for community development. "Strong community leadership increases the chance of success. We spend less time before the workshop gaining the community's trust. After the process is over, the community has a strong leader who knows how to get things done."