



Oklahoma Planner

President's Notes

Have you visited the chapter website lately (www.okplanning.org)? It continues to evolve into an effective resource for planning issues. As you browse through it, email your thoughts to the Webmaster, **Nancy McNayr, AICP**, and let us know what might be added to enhance its usefulness.

It is a new year with so many things to do. The chapter is co-sponsoring a **Legislative Reception on February 12th** at the State Capitol in Oklahoma City. We are teaming with the **Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association**. In order to become resources for elected officials, we must develop lasting relationships. This is an excellent opportunity to establish contact with your elected official.

As legislation is entered over the next three weeks, Nancy and I will continue to monitor the planning, zoning and de-

velopment bills. The last few years, the **Oklahoma Municipal League** assisted us with legislative monitoring and requests our opinion on legislation. The chapter website provides links to State Legislators and Senators, as well as, legislative search engines.

On a national perspective, the APA national office continues to monitor legislation. Planners in Oklahoma are in a unique position in that **Senator James Inhofe** is the new chair of the Public Works Committee that oversees the reauthorization of TEA-21. Senator Inhofe informed the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce that he intends for the reauthorization of "T-3" by August. I encourage you to contact the Senator's office to encourage his efforts and share your experience with his staff.

The municipal league plans to offer **planning commissioner training**

in May. The location and date have not been determined, but information will be provided as it becomes available. **Bob Wolfram, AICP** is working with OU College of Architecture faculty, **Richard Marshment, Ph.D., AICP** and **Shawn Schaefer**, to develop virtual training information. We hope to complete this project in the spring 2004. If you wish to assist Bob, please give him a call or drop an email message.

If you plan to attend the Denver Conference on March 29th, you will need to register quickly. The OU reunion continues to grow each year to where we are one of the largest contingencies. Drop by and visit if you have time. Chances are good that you run into an old classmate.

See you there.

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Upcoming Events:

- **Legislative Luncheon and Planner's Day on the Hill: February 12**
- **APA National Conference in Denver, CO: March 29—April 3**
- **OKC Development Summit: Spring 2003**
- **OML Planning Commissioner Training: May 2003**

Ethics in Practice By Richard Rolison, AICP

“Omnia mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis” — All things are changing, and we are changing with them.

The evolution of planning ethics is a process that is fundamental to all communities. While the general public may be unaware of the basic tenants of planning ethics, planners should be ever mindful of the presence of ethics in the decision-making process.

The American Planning Association has adopted a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the first of which is a planner’s responsibility to the public. An important ethical requirement is the public participation process that gives those who do not have a voice in the

development process an opportunity to be heard.

While public hearings in the development/zoning process are well established in state statute, the politics of development may be in-step with the spirit of the law. Furthermore, where should the planning profession draw the line in public participation? Should advertising and mailing be considered sufficient or is there a “next step” in ensuring interested community activists are also notified, even if they have no direct relationship to the proposed use or zoning request?

These are but a few of the ethical issues that arise in planning. It is important

that an on-going discussion and debate of ethical issues be conducted throughout the planning field. Resolution of ethical issues can be discussed and debated that will benefit all citizens and improve the quality of life for all.

This article is the first in a series of articles designed to promote a discussion on planning ethics and practice throughout Oklahoma communities. Comments are invited for review for future publications. We will endeavor to include as many issues as possible for open discussion.

Please e-mail your comments or issues to the OKAPA Secretary and Editor, Richard Rolison, AICP, rrolison@cityofsapulpa.net or richardrolison@yahoo.com.

SHPO Grants for National Register Nominations

The State Historic Preservation Office announced that applications will be available on February 1, 2003 for its annual National Register Nominations Grants Program. Two application rounds will be conducted and the deadline for Round One is April 1st and for Round Two is June 2nd.

The grant funds are from the SHPO’s FY 2003 Historic Preservation Fund allocation from the US Dept. of Interior and are for the purpose of retaining a profes-

sional qualified consultant to prepare individual property nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. The maximum grant amount is \$750.

Applicants must provide a cash match from a non-federal source. The required match for a \$750 grant is \$500. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, and local or state government agencies. To obtain an applica-

tion contact Shea Otley at (405) 521-6249 or sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us. The application is also available on the SHPO section of the Oklahoma Historic Society’s website located at www.ok-history.mus.ok.us.

In September, Oklahoma reached 1,000 properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

GEM All-Electric Vehicle from Daimler-Chrysler By Michael Southard, AICP

While researching air-quality issues and energy efficient alternatives to conventional transportation, I came across the Global Electric Mobile vehicle, called GEM. Could this be an affordable alternative to city fleet vehicles and be environmentally conscience as well? The answer is YES. A couple Okla-



homa communities have already purchased a GEM by Daimler-Chrysler and I believe this trend will take off over the next few years. They meet federal safety standards and have a top speed of 25 mph, which makes them legal to drive on roads with posted speed limits of 35 mph or less.

The vehicles are available at the Mercedes Benz dealership in Downtown Oklahoma City. I visited the dealership on Broadway and was surprised by the price range (\$7,000 to \$12,000). While sitting in the drivers

seat, I could envision many municipal applications from meter readers and parks crews to downtown patrols and event staff.



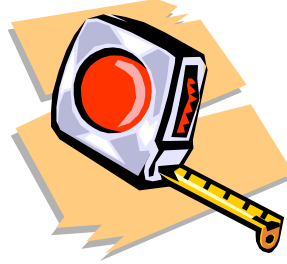
I encourage you to visit their website at www.gemcar.com and to visit the downtown dealership next time you are in Oklahoma City.

Measuring Sprawl in Metropolitan Areas Across the US

“Measuring Sprawl and Its Impact,” a new report from Smart Growth America, takes an in-depth look at cities across the US and measures sprawl through different aspects of development. Reid Ewing of Rutgers University, Rolf Pendall of Cornell University and Don Chen, Executive Director of Smart Growth America, spent three years analyzing the US Census and other national data sets in an effort to define, measure and evaluate sprawl and its effects on communities.

The researchers created a matrix that uses 22 variables to rate 83 metropolitan areas on four different aspects of their development: residential density;

neighborhood mixes of homes, jobs and services; strength of “activity centers” such as entertainment or shopping and downtown areas; and street network accessibility.



According to the report, the most sprawling city is Riverside-San

Bernardino, CA while the least sprawling is New York City. Although many people will be interested in the ranking of their city, the co-authors of the study

hope that the findings will help cities or regions focus on the areas that are hurting them the most.

With an average score of 100 on The Sprawl Index, Tulsa scored 99.1 (43rd out of 83 metropolitan communities) while Oklahoma City scored 85.6 (21st). A lower score indicates below average conditions among these 83 US metro areas: for example, less compact housing, a poorer mix of homes and jobs, poor street connectivity, or weaker than average town centers.

The full report, metropolitan area fact sheets, and a peer-reviewed research paper are all available at www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

Ten Steps to Urban Land Reform

Vacant and abandoned land and housing present significant problems (opportunities) in many of the nation’s cities. This brief from the Brookings Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy highlights ten action steps that urban leaders can take to turn empty and derelict properties into tax-generating assets. Compiling an inventory of vacant parcels, planning for the assembly and reuse of land, and working to eliminate the many legal and administrative barriers to

acquisition and development are some of the actions the authors recommend for creating a more transparent, efficient, and effective system for private-market land development. The brief also highlights examples of successful practices implemented in states and localities throughout the US.

The full report is available in PDF format at www.brookings.edu.

Most Endangered Historic Properties Presentation

On February 24th at the Ritz Theatre in Shawnee, Trent Margrif, Executive Director for Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., will present an updated list of the most endangered historic properties in Oklahoma. For information contact Downtown Shawnee, Inc. at (405) 273-1080.

Development Pressures on Nation’s Best Farmland

The American Farmland Trust released a study that shows that 86 percent of America’s fruits and vegetables and 63 percent of dairy products are grown on farmland that is increasingly at risk from sprawling development.

“Farming on the Edge: Sprawling Development Threatens America’s Best Farmland” finds that between 1992 and 1997, the US paved over more than 6 million acres of farmland, an area approximately equal to the size of Maryland.

The study also finds that Americans’

wasteful use of land rather than economic growth is causing the problem. From 1982-1997, the US population grew by 17 percent, while urbanized land grew by 47 percent. Over the past 20 years, the acreage per person for new housing almost doubled and since 1994, 10-plus acre housing lots have accounted for 55 percent of the land developed. The study includes national and state maps of farmland in the path of development as well as a ranking of the top 20 states by acreage of prime farmland lost to development. Texas is



losing the most high quality land, followed by Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia and Illinois.

The Farming on the Edge study, along with maps identifying threatened farmland in all states, is available at www.farmland.org.



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***Making Great Communities
Happen.***

WWW.OKPLANNING.ORG

Planners' Day on the Hill

OKAPA and the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association are sponsoring a legislative reception at the newly remodeled capitol building on February 12th.

This is a first of what we hope becomes an annual event. Planners need to become better resources at the Capitol and events such as this will assist us in developing lasting relationships.

There are already a few planning and annexation bills that have been introduced in 2003. None are friendly legislation for Okla-



homa communities. A shell bill has been introduced that will establish a statute of limitation for appealing a zoning decision and for appealing a public nuisance decision.

This event is not limited to professionals. Planning officials and elected officials are welcome to participate and provide a different perspective that needs to be conveyed.

Your participation is needed to make this a successful outing.

www.planetizen.com

PLANetizen, a national urban planning and development website, has named the top 50 most important websites for planners and developers from among 475 websites evaluated. Using this list as a starting point for Internet research can make planners and developers more efficient in finding relevant information. The list appears on their site listed above.