



## President's Notes

We have a new slate of officers for the next fiscal year. **Jan Ramseyer-Fees, AICP**, has agreed to vacate her board of director position and become the next Vice-President/Professional Development Officer. **Richard Rolison, AICP**, has agreed to continue in his current role as Secretary/Newsletter Editor. **Jim Coles** will assume one of the three Board of Director positions replacing **Nancy McNayr, AICP**. Nancy will continue to be active in the chapter as the webmaster. **Bob Wolfram, AICP**, decided not to continue serving the chapter as VP/PDO, but will fulfill Jan's term on the Board and will operate in the capacity of a Planning Official Development Officer. Oklahoma is one of a few states that does not have a PODO. The other two board members are **Steve Boettcher, AICP**, (treasurer) and **Donna Sorrells** (Board of Director).

The Board has two initiatives that we are currently

developing and pursuing funding. First, **Bob Wolfram** along with OU Faculty, **Richard Marshment, Ph.D., AICP**, and **Shawn Schaefer**, are developing a **Planning Commissioner training manual and CD**. The project would provide basic knowledge and understanding of the role and function of a planning official, as well as, provide capabilities to delve into planning laws and ethics issues. Case studies from Oklahoma communities will be used to showcase positive and negative issues facing planning commissioners. Second, the Chapter needs to become stronger legislative advocates at the State Capitol. In February, the OKAPA chapter will team with the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association to sponsor a **legislative luncheon at the Capitol**. In order to maximize our presence, a workshop has been scheduled for January 14<sup>th</sup> in Oklahoma City. Stephanie Vance of Advanced Consulting in

Washington, DC will provide pointers on how to approach legislators and become a better resource for your local legislator. Ms. Vance has a contract with APA nationally to attend state conferences, conduct workshops and provide insight into the legislative process.

A project that I am putting together would bring Ball State University students and faculty to Oklahoma. They would lead an effort to teach their community planning process to Oklahoma planners and OU students and faculty. Over a weekend, the team would work with a small Oklahoma community in the OKC metro area to develop a community vision through a community meeting and interviews with leaders. The vision would be used as the basis for the community's Comprehensive Plan. Certified Planners are encouraged to participate. In the AICP Code of Ethics, planners are encouraged to share

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### Upcoming Events:

- *Complete Management Course for Planning Directors December 2 and 3 in Dallas, TX*
- *Legislative Advocacy Workshop January 14 in OKC*
- *Legislative Luncheon and Planner's Day on the Hill in February*



President Sam Casella who chairs the ethics committee.

Many of you may be impatient with matters of governance for both AICP and APA. However, the commitment of the leaders at every level – state and national – is to providing value to every planner in the organization. This means that chapter presidents, division chairs, regional representatives, board and commission presidents, and association staff must come together to make decisions about how to allocate the resources and organize ourselves to provide that value.

AICP, a professional institute of APA, represents certified planners across the country. The focus of the institute is expressed in its mission: “AICP promotes excellence in the practice of planning by assuring that professional planners have a high level of competence and integrity and by advocating the interests of the professional planner.” This mission reflects the fact that AICP is concerned with matters of ethics, education, certification, and accreditation.

In recent meetings of the leadership in Providence, RI, the following matters were discussed and decided.

- \* Adopted the **budget**, reflecting increased expenditures on education and education materials
- \* Received updates on several ongoing initiatives:
  - ✓ A **new publication** of interest to the professional planner, tentatively entitled *Practicing Planner*.

- ✓ Expanded training opportunities through the **Planners Training Service**, with the first offerings through this program in 2004.
- ✓ Offering the **exam by computer**, beginning in 2004. This means more sites and instant information about passing the exam.
- ✓ The Planners Casebook will be delivered on the Planning Website, as one example of increased use of the web for educational offerings.

- \* A major effort is underway to evaluate the **Code of Ethics** and update both content and procedures. Each chapter president has received a copy of a report on a study by Dr. Patricia Salkin at the Albany Law School. Her study included interviews, review of ethics cases, and an analysis of both the principles and the procedures in the code. The report contains the results of this study and recommendations for modifications. An expanded ethics committee is now evaluating those recommendations. For those able to attend the national conference in Denver, there will be a forum on the code. Other ways to make your views known include chapter conferences, and direct contact to me as your regional representative and AICP

The code has served us well for two decades, but it is time to review it and update it. You have an opportunity to be heard on the fundamental ethical principles that guide each of us in the practice of planning. I strongly urge you to take the time to send your comments to me. I care about your opinions and will benefit from your thoughts and insights as the commission continues this important work over the coming months.

- \* In other business, the commission discussed recent results of the AICP exam, the pilot program on continuing education, and sent a request to the APA board asking that the matter of who may vote for the AICP president no longer be considered.

I look forward to hearing from you on the code update, issues of ethics and education, and any matter you want to discuss. Contact me by one of these means:

- ◆ Email: [easleyg@aol.com](mailto:easleyg@aol.com)
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And, as always, thank you for your support.

## President's Notes

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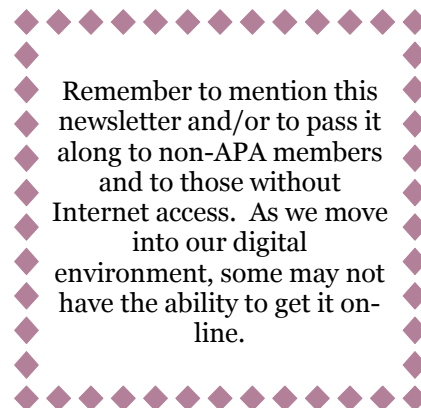
their expertise and knowledge with less fortunate communities. The AICP Commission is developing a program that would accomplish such a task.

Let me thank the OKAPA Board for their time and energy toward the profession. Especially, the work of Nancy McNayr and Bob Wolfram, who have provided great assistance toward building a stronger chapter and elevating the profes-

sion. Nancy donated a lot of time to developing the chapter website and continues to do so as the webmaster. Bob continuously sought new information to improve the chances in passing the AICP exam. Both have done an excellent job and should be commended for it.

Happy Holidays!

*Mike*



# The Whats, Hows, and Whys of Planning Licensure in New Jersey

by James M. Potter, AICP

In May, I took an exam to become a licensed planner in New Jersey. New Jersey is one of two states that require planners to pass a test before they may practice. While licensed engineers and architects can offer planning services, only those who pass the state-sponsored exam can call themselves “professional planners” in New Jersey. Working under the supervision of a licensed professional, as is typical in many other disciplines, is not enough. All planners working on New Jersey projects must be licensed.

The Division of Consumer Affairs of the NJ Department of Law and Public Safety administers New Jersey’s program through the State Board of Professional Planners. This licensure program is slightly different than the registration system employed by Michigan.

Here are some of the whats, hows, and whys of my experience.

## The Whats

New Jersey has a strong tradition of planning. Since the 1930s, the state of New Jersey has taken a more active role in planning than many other states by retaining some powers that most other states passed on to local jurisdictions. In addition to public health, safety, and welfare, the State Planning Act draws attention to revitalization of the state’s urban centers and the coordination of planning between state and local governments to ensure “economies, efficiencies, and savings.” Moreover, as a result of the famous Mount Laurel cases, the provision of affordable housing is a state planning priority.

All municipal and county plans must be consistent with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), the vehicle that communicates state-level planning policy. “Cross-acceptance” is a three-phase public participation process that coordinates state and local planning.

All jurisdictions compare their planning documents to the Preliminary SDRP. A negotiation phase then follows, during which the local planning entities reach

agreement with the state on goals and initiatives. These negotiations lead to revisions of the SDRP and the local plans to achieve a middle ground of consistency with all the planning bodies. This phase culminates in an Interim SDRP.

An assessment then is done on the Interim Plan for short and long-term impacts as well as “trend” impacts that envision what the landscape would look like without the SDRP. The State Planning Commission approves the final SDRP to guide the state through the next three-year cycle.

New Jersey has some unique institutions that carry regional planning responsibilities:

- The Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) was created to help local jurisdictions meet the state’s affordable housing goals. COAH guidelines are designed to provide low and moderate-income persons with accessibility to housing. Compliance with the guidelines provides jurisdictions with protection from Mt. Laurel-type litigation.
- The Pinelands Protection Act of 1979 created the 1.1 million-acre Pinelands National Reserve, the first such reserve in the country. The Act created a 936,000-acre planning area to control development and preserve this natural jewel in southern and central New Jersey. Approximately one third of the reserve is publicly owned. Fifty-three municipalities in seven counties are represented on a Pinelands Commission that has the power to review and veto any local development decision.
- The Hackensack Meadowlands Reclamation and Development Act of 1968 resulted in the creation of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (HMDC). The HMDC has powers similar to the Pinelands Commission and adminis-

ters a Transfer of Development Rights program in its 32-square mile sphere of influence.

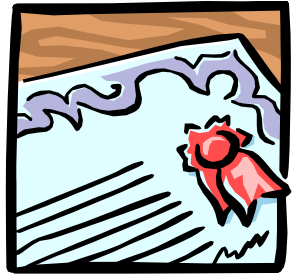
All of this and more make

New Jersey an interesting and unusual place to be a planner. It is so unusual, in fact, the state believes that anyone who practices planning in New Jersey must demonstrate a familiarity with these institutions and the complicated permit processes they require. Licensure is one way to ensure that anyone who plans in New Jersey can navigate the maze of organizations and regulations.

Another, unofficial reason for the licensure is geographic. New Jersey is sandwiched between the economic engines of Philadelphia and New York. Without a discriminator, local, consulting planners could not compete with the neighboring concentrations of firms. Without licensure, the jurisdictions and communities of New Jersey would always be working with “foreign” planners who do not share their commitment to the area. By protecting and encouraging the New Jersey planning community, the residents not only get facilitators, they get involved, informed stakeholders.

Licensure consists of two parts: AICP certification and the Professional Planner (PP) examination, a test on New Jersey law and process. The New Jersey State Board of Professional Planners also offers a planner-in-training certificate that has a lower experience requirement than the ‘PP’ designation.

Like the AICP, an applicant must demonstrate a combination of education and experience in order to take the New Jersey exam. Also like AICP, the state exam consists of multiple choice questions (100 versus AICP’s 150). It is a high-pressure, professionally proctored test of nerves and stamina as much as



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## Sense of Place by Ian Bryant

The most important issue facing economic development planners today is attempting to create a sense of place in a setting. Development and planning occur on a daily basis, but planning a setting with a sense of place is not always of grave concern for those involved in the process. Nevertheless, creating and fostering a sense of place is extremely important in order to avoid the monotonous and blasé form of so many suburban developments, and to compete for business in an increasingly competitive economic environment.

Many American cities are currently involved in a period of introspection regarding their central cities, including both the historic downtown cores and the surrounding neighborhoods. The current focus of redevelopment efforts on these areas is controversial. However, opponents and proponents alike should work together to insure that the redevelopment efforts do not destroy any existing sense of place, while simultaneously attempting to support new developments that understand the importance of and foster the creation of sense of place. As stated in *Good Neighborhoods*, by Sidney Bower, “The size, concentration, and diversity of the [urban] city create...possibilities for unexpected relationships and lively experiences and for a certain amount of disorder and chaos, which can be fascinating and liberating.” It is this disorder and chaos that is the subject of our focus.

### What is Sense of Place?

This article is based upon the overriding principle of sense of place. For the purpose of this article, John Jackson’s definition of sense of place is used due to the fact that it articulates a commonly held understanding of sense of place. According to John Jackson, the author of *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, sense of place is “the atmosphere to a place, the quality of its environment... [the] attraction which gives us a certain indefinable sense of well-being and which we want to return to, time and again.”

### Importance of Users

It is important to note that in many settings, people are as much a contributor to existence of sense of place as the setting itself. As Fritz Steele emphasizes in his book *The Sense of Place*, “Most places are only settings until there are users there to complete the picture. We can design settings (physical and social), and do it better or worse depending on how well we know the characteristics of likely users, and what values we use to make choices about the experiences that ‘should’ happen there.”

### The Sterilization of Settings

Existing settings with sense of place, at times, end up losing this characteristic after redevelopment is completed, due to the sterilization of both the setting and the environment. This is often caused by the adherence to a template that does not recognize, take into account, and/or allow for the continued existence of the particular setting’s character and sense of place. The aforementioned template is many times a proven economically viable plan that downplays the importance of sense of place and character, instead focusing on simply generating a large ROI (return on investment).

Additionally, new central city infill developments often adhere to these same suburban standards of development, ignoring the differences between the environments and their needs and wants, and instead focusing on the most economically profitable plan. A plan that, once again, is more than likely a template of a setting that has been endlessly replicated in the suburbs and supplies virtually no character to the development, but instead reproduces the monotonous, blasé form that is characteristic of so many suburban settings. This sterilization of setting removes virtually all history, variety, surprise, and meaning in the name of “efficiency.”

### Ways to Preserve Sense of Place

If ubiquitous sterilization of settings is

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## Vision Statements from Imagine NY

The Imagine NY Summary report, completed in June, provides an overview of the initiative’s public outreach process, which included 230 workshops that attracted more than 3,000 people and generated more than 19,000 ideas. The Imagine NY Steering Committee distilled those ideas into 49 distinct vision statements. Below are just a few examples. The full report is available at [www.imagineyny.org](http://www.imagineyny.org).

### People

- Slow down the planning process.
- Establish days of remembrance and commemorative events.

### Place

- Create a peaceful oasis.
- Incorporate a memorial museum.

### WTC Site

- Make the WTC site a model of sustainable development.
- Restore the street grid through the site.

### Lower Manhattan

- Promote vitality downtown.
- Create more green space and public gathering space in Lower Manhattan.

### City/Region

- Make neighborhoods more livable.
- Improve the public transit system.

### Social Equity and Public Involvement in Planning

- Make affordable housing a priority.
- Establish an ongoing, democratic decision-making process for Lower Manhattan.

### Policy

- Engage in comprehensive and regional planning.
- Develop an emergency management plan.

# Initial Response to the Six Conceptual Plans for WTC

by New York New Visions

The following are excerpts. For the full text, visit [www.nynv.org](http://www.nynv.org)

“What New York City does with the WTC site will define what kind of people we are and what kind of city we want to be. Before dealing with details of site plan or design, our elected and appointed leaders must define a compelling vision for the public site and for Lower Manhattan. This has not happened, and the widespread disappointment with the six schemes unveiled on July 16 reflects the absence of this fundamental step.”

“We acknowledge the enormous amount of work the Port Authority (PA), Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) and their consultants have gone to get to this point given very specific constraints. However, the six “Memorial Plans” that were issued on July 16 are not master plans that provide a range of choices to the public decision-makers...As design and planning professionals, New York New Visions strongly urges the PA and LMDC to use this opportunity to rethink its goals, priorities, and process and how best to serve the public interest...”

“The WTC site deserves a creative and innovative approach to its Lower Man-

hattan context...A sufficiently broad range of urban design and planning solutions should be tested for this site, and should be shared with the public decision-makers. The PA and LMDC should develop a vision, build a program, and then hold design competitions to explore innovative urban design and architectural solutions for the visionary program already endorsed through public process.”

“The planning process must be public. We strongly urge that the planning process be an open and iterative process where, in response to the thoughtful comments and concerns of the public and other interested parties, alternative plans are modified or rejected, new approaches explored, and new alternatives presented.”

“The plan should be flexible, phased, and provide for short and long term uses...Historically, large-scale development projects in NYC take over 20 years to achieve full build out. Frequently, their master plans are revised mid-course to reflect changes in economics and public policy...Therefore, the plans for the WTC site should be sufficiently flexible to permit modifications during the years it will take to complete the site...Interim uses that will appropriately knit the site into the recovering Lower Manhattan

context are needed...”

“The plans and their uses and densities must be based upon comprehensive economic and land use analysis...The program presented on July 16 is based upon the existing leases for the previous WTC buildings. No objective analysis has been released that leads the public to understand how this program was determined nor if it is still relevant...”

“The plan must be integrated within its neighborhood context. The original WTC stood in isolation from the rest of downtown. New plans for the site should not repeat this error. The plan should weave itself into the downtown neighborhoods south of Canal Street... Opportunities in the treatment of West Street, reopening the prior street grid, and the creation of a new open space network that recognizes the distinctly different character of memorial spaces as compared to other types of useable open space must all be part of the initial plan.”

“The plan should be integrated into city and regional transportation plans and needs...The events of September 11 have left us with the opportunity to improve the existing conditions between

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## Eric Damian Kelly, Ph.D., AICP 2002 J. Lee Rodgers Lectureship on Comprehensive Planning



On October 17<sup>th</sup>, approximately 50 planners crowded the third floor room of the OU Student Union room to listen to Eric Damian Kelly provide his insight into the comprehensive planning process and how outside influences can interject conflicting results or values. The event was the second annual event in what is anticipated to blossom into a showcase for the University of Oklahoma and College of Architecture. It provides students, faculty, practicing planners and concerned citizens with better knowledge of the planning process and how comprehensive planning can be used to solve many issues facing today's communities.

The PowerPoint slides from the presentation are available for download at the OKAPA website at [www.okplanning.org](http://www.okplanning.org) or Richard Marshment can email the file to you. He can be reached at [rmarshment@ou.edu](mailto:rmarshment@ou.edu).

# Whats, Hows and Whys

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knowledge of facts and figures.



## The Hows

There are also similarities to AICP in how you prepare for the PP. The New Jersey Chapter of APA ([www.njapa.org](http://www.njapa.org)) offers a study course. One of their members, Bret Barnes, has published a study guide that summarizes the applicable statutes and processes. This book, *The Complete Guide to Planning in New Jersey*, is for the professional planning exam what *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, the "Green Bible," is to AICP. The New Jersey Chapter packages the study guide with text of statutes, articles on development process, and a sample test.

Another similarity is the value of keeping a theme in mind. AICP is written from the perspective of a public sector planner. When in doubt, the study guide says to think as though you are in the city planning department. New Jersey's theme is: Development is a right of the property owner. In answering questions, it is helpful to consider all development good as long as it is done to a given set of standards and reviewed by all responsible for oversight.



## The Whys

So why should a planner from Bawlmer, say, care about being licensed in New Jersey? There are many reasons. First, it is often hard to

convince people that planners are valuable. We are not architecture school dropouts or engineers who can't do math. In 48 out of 50 states, there is no requirement to use our services. Architects, landscape architects, engineers, plumbers, electricians, and hairdressers have state laws that recognize their unique training and require that only those with proven abilities can perform services. We are unrecognized by state governments. In this light, planners may appear as the second-rate profession.

Certainly, AICP certification is a national recognition of professional accomplishment. It is a discriminator, something that sets one planner apart from another by showing a commitment to the field. It is evidence that a person has a level of planning experience and education that qualifies him or her as a planner. It says that other planners think this person is competent in the practice of professional planning.

But that, in my opinion, is not a glowing endorsement.

By passing the NJPP exam or the Michigan registration, planners can gain a measure of legitimacy. Having a planner's capabilities recognized by a state planning board adds credibility to her work in other states or countries. Finally, consultants cannot afford to have their ability to pursue

work hampered by local impediments.

As of this writing, I have not heard the results of the NJPP exam. Studying for the test, I learned a lot about how another region has approached its challenges. Every such exercise provides more tools to apply to the issues that cross my desk. It is part of my continuing education as a planner. Maybe it's just curiosity run amok, but any time you stretch beyond the familiar you are better able to cope with the challenges that arise. That's the reason I took it, and I would recommend it to others.

We as professionals continually need to add value and capabilities to our skill sets. Until planners are adequately recognized in [other states] for what we bring to development and regulatory teams, we will have to go elsewhere to help meet our goals.

*Jim Potter is a project planner with STV Incorporated in Baltimore. In mid-August, he learned that he passed the exam. This article was taken from the September 2002 issue of the Maryland PLANNER.*



## New OKAPA Officers

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# Initial Response

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Lower Manhattan and the region through rail, ferry, bus and subway. Enhanced pedestrian circulation and access throughout the downtown should be a goal of any plan. The role of the central station or transportation center must be a foundation for any development...

“The memorial planning process must

inform the overall planning process and vice versa...The memorial must be defined through a comprehensive and open process. The purpose, location, or design of a memorial cannot nor should it be quickly decided. The distinction between open space and memorial must be clarified in the minds of planners and public alike. When a theme has been selected by the memorial process participants, an

international design competition should be held to bring the highest level of creativity and talent to creating the memorial.”

Metro Planner, The New York City Metro Chapter of APA, September/October 2002.

# Sense of Place

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harmful to the urban fabric, and sterilization of existing settings with sense of place does occur, then it is important to find ways to preserve that sense of place before it has been destroyed completely. Several ways to preserve sense of place include the preservation of urban grit, the promotion of the history of the city, and the preservation of quirkiness.

- **Preserve Some Urban Grit.** Everyone that has been to a big city can define urban grit—albeit in slightly different terms. In general, urban grit is the harshness of the urbanized area. This includes the graffiti, construction zones, the constant flow of different people and occurrence of random activities, and the strong drastic horizontal and vertical lines and the grid-based design, among other things. Moreover, urban grit is not strictly a constant barrage of visual stimulation, but is generally a constant barrage upon all five senses—the sight of a homeless person, the sound of a fire engine, the smell of exhaust, the feel of the street on your feet, and the taste of the bagel you bought at the corner bakery. While urban grit can have negative connotations, in many instances, with the presence of a variety and steady stream of people, urban grit can provide character and overall sense of place. Therefore, through the preservation of some of this “urban grit,” sense of place can be preserved.

- **Promote the History.** All cities have a history. Some have long and

storied histories such as New York City and Chicago, while others have shorter, but equally important histories, such as cities like Dallas, Denver, and Salt Lake City. While many cities embrace and promote their roots, many of these same cities also tend to avoid discussing important influences that are somewhat controversial, such as the conditions of immigrant and minority areas of town. Moreover, many of these areas of town, including their urban grit and sense of place, no longer exist for that very reason.

By preserving historical setting in urban areas, usually areas rich in urban grit, sense of place is likewise preserved. One only has to look as far as New York City to see an example of a city that has preserved its historical settings, including Little Italy, Chinatown, and SoHo, and is all the more rich in sense of place because of it.

- **Preserve Quirkiness.** Nearly every city has at least one area that is known as the “different” or “quirky” area of town. Some cities are endowed with more of these areas or settings than others are and the degree of quirkiness varies as well. These settings are often areas of town with a strong sense of character and hence, more often than not, harbor a great sense of place. Embracing this quirk-

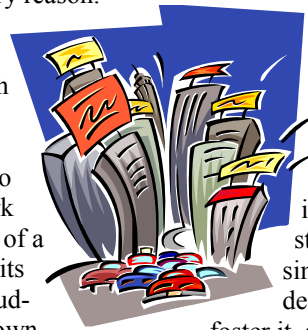
ness rather than attempting to destroy or shun it often works in the city’s favor, providing the city with greater overall sense of place.

## A Vital Revitalization Component

While these are only a few suggestions, the point is that developers and cities need to be aware of the importance of sense of place, especially as they continue down the road of central city revitalization. Developers and cities should not only be aware of sense of place, but should also attempt to create and foster it, while simultaneously protecting any existing instances of sense of place.

Sense of place is what differentiates many central cities from the multitude of competing suburbs. If central cities destroy existing sense of place and simultaneously fail to create new developments that promote and foster it, a vital component of central city revitalization and a unique competitive advantage is lost and the cities become nothing more than another blasé environment in which to hang your hat.

*Ian Bryant is currently a master student studying economic development and transportation planning at the University of Texas at Arlington in the School of Urban and Public Affairs. This article was published in APA News & Views Economic Development Division, Fall 2002.*





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## **OKAPA Legislative Advocacy Workshop**

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On **January 14th, 2003**, in Oklahoma City, the Oklahoma Chapter will hold a workshop on **Legislative Advocacy**. This workshop will develop needed skills when discussing issues with State Legislators or Senators. Stephanie Vance of AdVanced Consulting in Washington, DC will provide valuable insight into how the chapter members can maximize our impact at the Capitol.

Stephanie is on contract with the APA national office and has offered similar training in several other states. Topics will range from determining what factors best influence to developing long term relationships. A preliminary agenda is available on the OKAPA website located at [www.okplanning.org](http://www.okplanning.org). The location will be determined in November and more information will be mailed prior to the event. The cost will be minimal and grant funding is being pursued to cover

all costs.

A list of all Legislators and Senators will be prepared and made available.

**Preliminary Agenda:**

8:45 am - Continental Breakfast

9:15 am - Setting the Context: Why Advocacy Matters

10:00 am - Becoming a Reform Advocate for Planning

12:00 - 12:30 pm - Lunch

12:30 pm - Building Long Term Relationships

2:00 pm - Putting it All Together - Developing a Grassroots Advocacy Campaign

3:00 pm - Session Concludes

This workshop is designed as a precursor to the legislative luncheon event

that is co-sponsored by the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association. Every member is encouraged to participate in the workshop and luncheon.

Information on Stephanie Vance and her firm, AdVanced Consulting, is available at [www.advocacyguru.com](http://www.advocacyguru.com).

