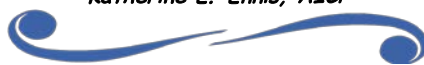




NEWS
FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT
Katherine E. Ennis, AICP



Greetings Fellow ALAPA Chapter Members,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope this finds you all looking forward to an exciting and productive 2014. I have a great deal of news to tell you both of our accomplishments during the past few months and of all the activities being planning for the coming year. Buckle Your Seatbelts – this is a long communication with a great deal of important information for the Chapter!

Chapter Conference:

First let me start with what I know you have all been waiting for **Chapter Conference** details. Many of you may have already heard that we are planning a joint conference with the Mississippi Chapter. This is an exciting opportunity for us to share experiences with our neighbors to the west as well as to develop new professional contacts and form new friendships. What you may not know is that this will mark the beginning of a new era for our conference schedule – beginning this year our conference will be **held in the fall** of each year. In 2014 the Mississippi Chapter will be hosting the conference. As of this writing, a location and date have not been selected, however we expect that information to be determined in the next few weeks. The timing is likely to be in late October or early November so keep an eye out for the upcoming details.

As part of our agreement with the Mississippi Chapter for a joint conference, in 2015 the Alabama Chapter will be hosting the conference. We have already begun making plans for this event and anticipate that it will be held at our beautiful Alabama Gulf Coast.

We are very excited about this opportunity to join with our fellow APA members to share knowledge, experiences and camaraderie. I will keep you posted on the plans as they develop.

Professional Development Workshop:

Another exciting new venture for our Chapter is the scheduling of a **Professional Development Workshop** during the first half of the year. This workshop will serve two purposes, first to provide an additional opportunity for professional development and to earn CM credits and second to showcase our **Annual Awards Program**. At our recent Executive Committee meeting a date (**May 16, 2014**) and location (**the Montgomery area**) were selected for this event. At this time a venue is still being negotiated, but we expect to have those details worked out in the next couple of weeks.

As noted above the *Annual Awards Program and Luncheon* will be held at this spring event. *Nomination forms and deadlines* for the Awards Program have been posted on the Chapter website for your use. Please begin work on your nominations as soon as possible and get them in to the Awards Committee so that they can begin their review and selections.

Chapter Development Plan & Bi-Annual Work Program:

The Chapter's Leadership Retreat was held in Dothan on October 18, 2013. At this event current and future Chapter Leadership met to discuss the future of the Chapter and to review the draft of the recently updated Chapter Development Plan and Bi-Annual Work Program. Much like a comprehensive plan or strategic plan for a local government, these two documents provide long range goals for our Chapter's future and map out a course of action for accomplishing those goals.

Some changes that you might want to take note of regarding these documents are:

- The *Chapter Development Plan* has been cleaned up and simplified, it has been brought in line with many of the goals of APA National and as they establish more details regarding the *One APA* initiative we will continue to update our Plan.
- The *Chapter Work Program* has undergone the biggest change.
 - It has become a Bi-Annual document intended to coincide with the Executive Committee's two year terms. For the most part the Executive Committee has always treated this document as if it were a two year program document therefore this format made the most sense for the way we operate.
 - Activities have been broken down into three categories: Active, Maintenance, and Planned to better show how we are progressing with their accomplishment.
 - Each activity has been tied back to the goal(s) of the Chapter Development Plan via a notation shown in red next to each one. This help Chapter Leadership ensure that our Work Program is functioning as it should to carry out the goals of the Chapter

Please keep in mind that while there will be obvious groups or persons who will take the lead on accomplishing our goals, we feel that it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee, our Committees and *all Chapter members* to do their part to build and improve the Chapter. If you have suggestions for Chapter activities, goals or other means of providing member services please contact your Chapter President or Section Representative to discuss how we might include those in our Chapter Development Plan or Work Program.

Immediately following the Retreat, the Executive Committee met briefly to vote on the approval of these plans subject to any recommendations made during the Retreat. *The plans have now been completed and will be posted on the website in the next few days.*

Other News:

During the past year we have had a few changes to the make-up of our Executive Committee.

Fred Peterson recently resigned as North Section Representative due to health and family related issues. We wish Fred all the best in the coming year and look forward to his continued

support of the Chapter particularly with regard to his work with the students and faculty at Alabama A&M University.

The Executive Committee has appointed **Mac Martin of Athens, Alabama at the new North Section Representative** to serve out the remainder of the Executive Committee's term. Mac is already off to a great start working along with the other section representatives to put together the program for the upcoming Professional Development Workshop.

I hope you will all join me in welcoming Mac to his new position and, if you are a North Section member please be sure to get in touch with Mac with your ideas for Section activities, you can reach him at north@alabamaplanning.org.

Cathy Cooper, Chapter Secretary, has also recently left the Executive Committee to pursue new opportunities outside the field of planning. We all wish Cathy great success in her new adventures and hope that she will continue to stay in touch as a friend and colleague of the Alabama APA.

The Executive Committee has appointed **Nicole Taylor with SARPC in Mobile, as the new Chapter Secretary**. We are looking forward to getting to know Nicole and to her increasing activities with the Chapter.

Another **new face in Chapter Leadership is Nicole Jones** of Nicole Jones Development & Commercial Real Estate in Huntsville. Nicole has graciously agreed to **Chair the Marketing and Media Committee**. This Committee has been revived after several years of inactivity, and is tasked with promoting the Chapter throughout the State and recruiting sponsorships for the Chapter and Chapter activities.

As a Chapter member who is not employed in a traditional planning role, Nicole will bring a new outlook and a different skill set to her approach to her duties and will have many new ideas to discuss with other Chapter Leaders. I hope you will all make an effort to get to know Nicole and to welcome her to our Chapter.

Watch For Upcoming Activities!

A New Policy & Procedures Manual is being developed to help future Chapter Leaders to carry out their duties. Elements of this manual are being developed by each committee chair, section representative and executive committee member. Many of the sections have already been submitted and we will begin formatting them into manual format very soon. The Executive Committee will begin drafting sections for those elements that are still undeveloped and we anticipate that the Manual will be ready in the next few months.

New Chapter Bylaws will also be drafted soon. Our Bylaws have long needed updating, and the move by APA National toward the *One APA* initiative, the rescheduling of the Chapter Conference to a Fall timeframe and the many other changes that have been taking place within the Chapter have all come together to create a "perfect storm" in terms of the need for new Bylaws. The Executive Committee will be undertaking the huge task in the coming weeks and will be presenting them to the Chapter membership for consideration and approval during the next election cycle. Keep an eye on the Chapter Website for updates on this activity and opportunities to provide feedback as the Bylaws are developed.

News from the President – In an effort to improve communication with the membership and while we determine the future of the Chapter Newsletter, I will be sending out communications such as this one (hopefully shorter) periodically to keep you informed about our progress on the activities discussed here and any others that arise.

I want to thank you all in advance for your continued support of the Chapter and the Executive Committee and ask that you be patient with us as we move through all the exciting and needed changes to keep our Chapter up to date and growing.

Until next time, have a Great Beginning to 2014!

Warm Regards,

Katherine

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