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**Save the Date!**  
**2007 Southern New England Planning Conference, "People, Planning & Places,"** October 11 & 12, Four Points Sheraton at Hyannis Resort  
**(508) 775-7775**  
**Book your room early!**  
**Session Proposals due April 30**

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# New England PLANNING

Massachusetts Chapter & Rhode Island Chapter

## AICP Commission Responds to Comments on Program

On behalf of the AICP Commission, we extend our thanks and appreciation to everyone who took the time to submit remarks concerning the proposed Certification Maintenance program. About 1,400 comments were received in response to the first draft of the program proposal, which was issued to AICP members in December 2006.

Those comments were analyzed and thoroughly considered when the second draft of the program proposal was created. Members generally expressed strong support for some type of certification maintenance requirement for certified professional planners. However, many members are concerned about some of the details of the proposed program. This second draft of the program responds to many of those concerns.

We have heard strong concerns about affordability and access to continuing education opportunities. We took this concern seriously in our program development and made changes for this second round principally because of these sorts of concerns. This has been a concern of the Commission for several years and led to the development of products such as audio conferences, CD-ROM packages, etc., to try and address those needs. There are several dozen offerings now, and we will continue with these and the development of online courses. From initial discussions with chapters, divisions, and sections, as well as the academic community, we anticipate offerings in these media to grow.

Many of the proposed requirements of the Certification Maintenance program are based on the existing voluntary Continuing Professional Development program. Examples include the requirement that 40 credits be obtained over two years and the requirement that at least half of the credits be provided by APA or sources sponsored or endorsed by APA, or sources accredited through the PAB program. The existing voluntary program has been easy to use, and the users have not had difficulty reaching their requirements.

Although we did receive significant input, we don't feel we are yet quite done. We want additional input on the latest proposal. To make that easier for all AICP members, so participation would not be limited by geography or the ability to attend the national conference, we have created a virtual town hall meeting. Visit [ecomunities.planning.org](http://ecomunities.planning.org) to comment on this important program. Please note that you will need your APA log-in information to access this link. You may also submit comments via e-mail to [AICP-CM@planning.org](mailto:AICP-CM@planning.org).

We will again consider your comments before we take action on Certification Maintenance in April prior to the conference. Please read this program description in full, and let us know your thoughts.

Sincerely,  
 Sue Schwartz, FAICP  
 AICP President  
 Graham Billingsley, AICP  
 AICP President-Elect

***Deadline for comments is March 21. AICP is expecting to vote on starting the Certification Maintenance Program at the Annual Conference in Philadelphia in April.***

## Massachusetts Chapter

Massachusetts Chapter President  
Peter Lowitt, AICP



I want to thank our newsletter editors for such a thoughtful piece on Certification of Maintenance for AICP. Since its publication the AICP Commission has responded to the comments and issues generated by their initial proposal by revising it (see Page 1). Statistically AICP members make up less than 50% of APA's membership nationwide. Of course the program isn't intended to assail anyone's professional-

ism. AICP is a voluntary program. CM is intended to protect our profession from a number of attacks being launched on it. I dread reading the APA advocacy report these days because of the news of new eminent domain legislation and takings legislation being filed across the nation. Our profession is under assault and CM, from my perspective, is one mechanism to enhance the credibility and professionalism of our members. Other professions are increasingly requiring CM, in fact, ITE, CNU, and a number of other organizations have recently required continuing professional development as part of their certification programs. As a profession we need to get with the program. The AICP commissioners are attempting to do that. And as I said, this isn't an easy path because of the very depth and breadth of our profession which we will need to maintain with any program.

This October 11-12 the Massachusetts Chapter will be hosting the Southern New England Regional Planning Conference in Hyannis. Felipe Schwarz has put together a great team to manage the conference, but he tells me he can always use more help. Please consider lending him and your chapter a hand with the conference. By the way, APA-MA will be celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and we intend to hold the party as part of the regional conference. So save the date and break out the kazoo's and noisemakers, we're going to violate the noise ordinance!

Peter Lowitt, AICP



### Peter C. Lowitt, AICP

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Governor Deval Patrick  
Statehouse  
Office of the Governor  
Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133  
RE: Dismantling the Commonwealth's Smart Growth Programs

Honorable Governor Patrick:

I am writing you on behalf of the over 1000 members of the American Planning Association's Massachusetts Chapter. APA-MA represents municipal, private sector, and citizen planners across the Commonwealth who are concerned with the dismantling of the state's award winning Smart Growth programs. The Office for Commonwealth Development which housed these programs was a visible center for smart growth efforts in the Commonwealth. With it gone, we hope you will put systems in place through the Development Cabinet to maintain the effort and momentum created by its successful programs. Your transition team heard repeatedly that the state's smart growth programs should be retained in some form or another. The planning community anticipated that you would retain the programs and coordinating function OCD provided and put your own stamp on it through a successor agency. A great deal of momentum has been created through these programs and planners in Massachusetts would hate to see it squandered.

The Commonwealth's planning community is willing and able to meet with you to discuss how we can assist your administration in creating smart growth programs that accomplish the following tasks:

The administration should recommit to the sustainable development principles and ask all agencies to develop affirmative plans on how each agency will promote the principles.

State infrastructure funding should promote growth in good locations. All programs, like PWED, CDAG, SBA, etc., should be distributed to help the state grow smart. We are okay with Commonwealth Capital no longer being the

mechanism through which grants are distributed, but believe we need another system of incentives that will help municipalities forge forward with the commitments they have made through the ComCap program.

The bond cap should be raised; additional funding should partly go to housing, transit, open space/ parks; other funding should be distributed to grow smart

The agencies should coordinate, but coordination isn't enough. The agencies should be coordinating to achieve outcomes that support growing smart. The Development Cabinet should adopt a set of goals related to growth and development.

With the elimination of the Commonwealth Development Coordinating Council, we'd like to see another mechanism developed to engage leaders outside of government in the work of the Development Cabinet.

Sincerely,

Peter C. Lowitt, AICP

MA- APA Chapter President

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## Calling all email addresses!!

As New England Planning, the Newsletter of the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Chapters' begins to go electronic for two issues a year and our chapters move toward more electronic communications with our membership; we need you to make sure your information is correct. Please check yours on the APA website:

Go to APA home page at [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org) and scroll down to the My APA section

Access your APA profile with your APA I.D. (6 digit number on Planning magazine label) and password

Review and edit each section as necessary, click Submit Details and any changes entered correctly will appear right away.

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## Planning after Katrina: What have We Learned so Far?

a panel discussion moderated by Susan Fainstein and sponsored by the MA APA Chapter, is now available for viewing on the web at <http://mitworld.mit.edu/video/405>.

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## Join the Small Town and Rural Planning Division of APA - Be a STaR!!

**By Dale Powers, AICP, STaR Division Chair, and Paul Bednar, AICP, STaR Membership Coordinator**

Every year when you get your invoice for renewing your APA membership, you are also renewing your dues for membership in your State Chapter. Down on the bottom of the invoice, you are also given the option of joining one or

more of the Divisions of APA. Unlike Chapters that are geographically based, Divisions are based on some aspect of planning and are nationwide in scope.

By far the most dynamic of APA's Divisions is the Small Town and Rural (STaR) Division. STaR is dedicated to planners in small town and rural areas of the USA and Canada. While many of you could not imagine working as the only planner in your agency, many of STaR's members are solo practitioners and are called upon by their agency's Planning Commission and City Council to provide professional guidance on planning issues. Further, these planners typically have less experience than metropolitan-area planners. Consequently, these planners look to STaR for answers to general planning and zoning matters that come before them.

Another set of planners that look to STaR for guidance are county planners. STaR is nationally known for its work in agricultural land preservation and has recognized experts in conservation subdivision among its members.

Finally, many private practitioners located in metropolitan areas are STaR members due to their client base in rural areas. Planning outside a major metropolitan area is quite different than what metropolitan planners experience, and the STaR connection has proved invaluable to these planners when working with small town elected officials and staff.

What are the benefits of joining STaR? The following list is just a sampling:

- Access to our quarterly newsletter that is an eclectic mix of planning information, planner profiles, columns on planning management and technical planning, as well as the most fascinating photography of small town and rural America of any Division newsletter.

- Access to the STaR message board where questions to your planning questions can be posted and responses received from throughout the country.

- 24-hour "rapid response" to any questions posed directly to the Division Chair, Dale Powers of Pine County, Minnesota.

- Qualification for the STaR Awards programs for best small town plan, small town planner, and student awards.

STaR is also working on an initiative to subsidize a portion of the cost of AICP certification maintenance for those STaR AICP members whose income falls below the state median.

STaR is excited about the menu of services offered to it's over 750 members nationwide (including 19 here in Massachusetts), and we would like you to consider joining our Division. We believe the \$25.00 annual dues are returned to you and your agency several times over in service.

For more information about joining STaR, contact Division Chair Dale Powers at [drpowers@co.pine.mn.us](mailto:drpowers@co.pine.mn.us) or Membership Coordinator Paul Bednar at [Paul@paulbednar.com](mailto:Paul@paulbednar.com)

