

TEXAS PLANNING REVIEW



American Planning Association
Texas Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Fall 2011



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Fall 2011 APA Texas Chapter Conference

By Lori Lee, Editor

One of the great American cities and right in our own backyard, Austin, will be the site of this year's APA Texas Chapter conference.

From the heart of Texas politics, Carole Keeton Strayhorn, will be speaking. Noted for several *firsts* in Texas politics, Strayhorn is the first woman elected to the Texas Railroad Commission, the first female State Comptroller, and the first woman elected Mayor of Austin. As mayor, Strayhorn helped guide the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan to adoption, and as former President of both the Austin School Board and the Community College Board, Strayhorn, is a well-polished example from Texas government from whom Texas planners will have much to learn.



W. Paul Farmer, Chief Executive Officer of APA and AICP, will also be speaking. Prior to his current position and responsibilities as CEO of APA and AICP, Farmer served as Director of Planning in Minneapolis and Deputy Director in Pittsburgh. In addition to academic appointments, he has consulted in Asia, Europe and North America and has written and lectured extensively. He holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from Cornell University and has been recognized for his contributions to the field of planning. He is a Fellow of The American Institute of Certified Planners.

Receptions for the fall conference will start Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Hilton sixth floor ballroom, with cocktails, conversation and colleagues. Afterward, a planning trivia game will challenge and strengthen your planning knowledge.

Thursday night at 6:30pm, learn Texas history at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, with three floors of interactive exhibits.

Finally, hold your horses for a chuck-wagon BBQ buffet, with western swing dancing and a little rock and roll from the House of Wills and a new project by Austin music veterans Will Taylor and Strings Attached.

A major Texas planning event, the conference is around the corner, as registration continues. So make your plans now to be in Austin October 5th to 7th at the Austin Hilton Hotel. You can go to www.txplanning.org for further information and registration.

Sources, photos: Localism.com, Sterling Custom Homes website, July 26, 2011, http://www.google.com/imgres?q=Austin+6th+street+photos&hl=en&client=gmail&sa=X&rls=gm&tbn=isch&prmd=ivns&tbnid=N-QkAa-v8xJOWM:&imgrefurl=http://www.sterlingcustomhomesblog.com/austin-is-the-best-boomer-town-in-texas/800px-sixth_street_austin&docid=aHrahCqv8BppSM&w=800&h=600&ei=GXgvTrLCi9L9sQKZrPp&zoom=1&iact=rc&dur=120&page=1&tbnh=136&tbnw=171&start=0&ndsp=27&ved=1t:429,r:2,s:0&tx=134&ty=74&biw=1280&bih=866

Austin plan succumbs to pedestrian traffic in East Sixth facelift

By Lori Lee, Editor

With monies approved by voters late last year, work has begun on a \$600,000 project to widen sidewalks and add sandstone pavers along East Sixth Street in Austin, requiring a reduction from four lanes to three throughout the entertainment district.

Local business owner and vice chairman of Sixth Street Austin, Fred Schmidt, said the street's traffic is appreciable only during morning rush hour and suggests three lanes should be plenty to handle the load.

Schmidt said current sidewalks at about 11 feet, are too narrow for the weekend crowds. Doubling the size of sidewalks to 23 feet *would make a huge difference in accommodating people*, said Schmidt. *It will enable us to do more with sidewalk cafes.*

It was hoped by some local merchants that the installation of the new pavers would reduce a dingy look, while Josh Allen, Executive Director of Sixth Street Austin, argued for restoration of the original brick.

Source: City planning East Sixth facelift, by Ben Wear, AMERICAN-STATESMAN, July 12, 2011

Galveston struggles to save historic buildings

By Lori Lee, Editor



Photo by Jennifer Reynolds

Conflicts have continued over Galveston's East End historic Robles House, as owner Al Fichera recently announced his intention to demolish the century-old Robles House.

A rejection by the city in 2007 stirred up litigation, as Judge Lonnie Cox of the 56th District Court ruled the 1885 two-story house

and two 1920 additions were not historic in themselves but just happened to be in a historic district.

The 2007 ruling went against the City's efforts to force Christopher Columbus Street Market LLC to demolish unsafe additions, while repairing the original house, which it argued were salvageable.

Cox, in considering the house and two additions as one building rather than three, ruled it dangerous as defined by city codes and unsafe as defined by International Building Codes and said only extensive remedial shoring could make even part of the structure safe.

Fichera said the property, which he and Eubanks had paid \$250,000 for, would be worth approximately \$140,000 after renovation. *The math just won't work*, Fichera said.

To read more, see:

Robles House Fight Finally Over, The Galveston County Daily News, Sep 3, 2011, www.galvestondailynews.com/story/255458

For further information, also read:

Judge: Forcing renovation 'unreasonable', by Michael A. Smith, The Daily News, June 11, 2011

Feature Article

Arlington rolls despite setbacks in transportation

By Scott Price

Arlington residents have voted down public transportation three times in the past 30 years, making Arlington the largest city in the country without public transportation. But after months of political debate and opposition from some residents, the Arlington City Council, by a vote of 5 to 3, on June 28, narrowly passed the City's Hike and Bike Master Plan.

With signs informing motorists to share the road with cyclists and trails running along miles of city streets, residents who want to join efforts to reduce traffic and pollution will finally have a chance to do so.

Arlington, with a long history of voting down efforts to promote alternative transit, in 1980, defeated the Lone Star Transit Authority in Dallas and Tarrant counties. And when Arlington tried in 1985 and again in 2002 with a proposed ¼-cent sales tax increase, voters again denied efforts.

Mayor Cluck said he has supported all such efforts to get public transportation in Arlington and does not like the distinction of Arlington, with a population of about 365,000, as being the largest city in the United States without public transportation.

I don't like that at all, he said. I am embarrassed by it.

Cluck said some of the reasons the public has rejected public transit is that they do not want increased taxes, do not want to encourage the poor and homeless to come to Arlington and just do not see the need for public transportation.

With a scaled down version of the original \$88 million plan that combined 281 miles of on and off-street paths, council decided to focus on off-street paths with a \$55 million plan to include 22 miles of on-street bike lanes, 50 miles of on-street bike routes, 64 miles of off-street trails, and 149 miles of sidewalk gaps.

Greg Collins, a UT Arlington graduate planning student and member of Bike Friendly Arlington, said he wanted to see more dedicated bike lanes in the master plan, rather than the current focus on bike routes without dedicated bike lanes. Collins said bike lanes are more effective than bike routes in encouraging people to ride bikes, citing studies that show that when traffic slows down on a street, it becomes more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, and also benefits businesses.

Arlington businessman Buddy Saunders, chairman of Save Our Streets, a group of Arlington residents opposed to the Hike and Bike Master Plan said the plan was forced on the residents.

Saunders said public meetings were held, but alternatives to the bike lanes were not considered.

If people want bike lanes in the city, that is fine, he said. But, we just want citizens to have a say . . . This whole thing was concocted to do what was best for the citizens of Arlington without asking what the citizens of Arlington wanted.

Richard Greene, who served as mayor of Arlington from 1987 to 1997 and as this region's Environmental Protection Agency administrator, said he supports the hike and bike plan because it increases mobility and improves air quality. Also an adjunct associate professor at the School of Urban and Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Arlington, Greene said the public needs to be educated about how public transportation benefits the community as a whole.

This is essential to our future, he said. If we do not join the public transportation of the region, we will be left out.

Some, including Greene, see this as a first step in developing alternatives to automobiles in Arlington, but the first real step will be determining how to pay for the plan. Says Mayor Cluck, the only way that the bike plan will be implemented is through the help of federal and state funding.

Log on to <http://www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/HikeandBike.html> to see the city of Arlington's website with information about the Arlington Hike and Bike Master Plan.

Chapter News

Officer Elections – Ooh! Breaking News!!

By Lori Lee, Editor

The new officer election results have just been tabulated. New officers for 2011-2013 are as follows:

President-Elect: Wendy Shabay

Treasurer: Lindsey Guindi

Secretary: Barbara Holly

TML Representative: John Letteleir

All these officers will preside under our new President Renae' Ollie

The APA Texas Nominating Committee recently recommended the following candidates for the ballot for officer elections for 2011-2013. Candidates for President-Elect were Juan Lopez, AICP (Southmost Section) and Wendy Shabay, AICP (Midwest Section). The candidates for Treasurer was Lindsey Guindi, AICP (Central Section). Candidates for Secretary were Barbara Holly, AICP (East Texas Section) and Lorna Balsler (North Central Section), and candidates for TML Representative were John Letteleir, AICP (North Central Section) and Kathy Rodriguez (San Antonio Section).

The term of office for all elected officers is two years, beginning at the conclusion of the annual fall meeting of APA Texas in odd-numbered years.

APA Texas Chapter Awards

By Lori Lee, Editor

The annual APA Texas Chapter will announce its winners at the conference in Austin this Fall. APA appreciates great planning in Texas, and each year awards to projects, plans, studies, individuals and organizations nominated by various Texas Chapter members.

The criteria used by the Awards Committee is based upon *innovation, transferability, quality, implementation, and comprehensiveness*. One representative from each of the nine sections, appointed by the Section Directors, attends a meeting, usually held August or September to vote on the submittals. The Chair only votes on the Chapter Presidents Award.

Any member can nominate what they consider a great project, plan, study, individual or organization. Please consider making a nomination for this year's awards.

Calendar

APA Texas Chapter Conference, Austin, October 5-7



For more information and registration, go to: www.txplanning.org and see story, page 1.

Source of photos: Zoom and Go, http://www.google.com/imgres?q=Austin+6th+Street&hl=en&client=gmail&sa=X&rls=gm&tbn=isch&prmd=ivns&tbnid=jq7MJJ6IjDZRNM:&imgrefurl=http://zoomandgo.com/destinations/image_viewer.asp%253Fdak%253D11020645&docid=5yrRC3PD0yuXyM&w=480&h=320&ei=oZQvTpSLMom1sQLx9OVI&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=177&vpy=489&dur=2503&hovh=183&hovw=275&tx=124&ty=72&page=1&tbnh=157&tbnw=188&start=0&ndsp=20&ved=1t:429,r:10,s:0&biw=1280&bih=866

CLE Conference on Land Use: City Planners as Witnesses: Jan 20, 2012

Presented by: Terry Morgan & Associates, P.C., Goins, Underkofler, Crawford & Langdon, L.L.P.

Faculty: Terry D. Morgan, Terry Morgan & Associates, P.C., James W. Morris, Jr., David L. Paschall, Goins, Underkofler, Crawford & Langdon, L.L.P., Dan G. Sefko, Freese & Nichols, Inc.

For more details, go to the following link: https://mail-attachment.googleusercontent.com/attachment?ui=2&ik=987f6656db&view=att&th=131427c99aad1f95&attid=0.1&disp=inline&safe=1&zw&saduie=AG9B_P-zl99ob7GhIx6Q9W-Zqd4T&sadet=1311619566201&sads=luy6gB13hDJo8nb5czQzmB2Hs5o&sadssc=1

Call for Entries—Association TRENDS all Media Contest

Show off your best branding efforts in nonprofit media and communications when you enter the 2011 Association TRENDS All Media Contest. This is your organization's chance to shine in the most watched and respected communications contest in the association and nonprofit world.

Judged by a panel of industry experts, this is the place to compete. Winners will be honored at the 33rd Annual Salute to Association Excellence in Washington, DC on February 10, 2012.

Winning entries will also be displayed in a special issue of Association TRENDS and in our online Winners Gallery. From websites to magazines to newsletters and media kits, our 22 categories cover everything in association communications!

Early Deadline: Oct. 15, 2011

Complete contest details at [Association TRENDS All Media Contest](http://www.AssociationTRENDS.com/allmedia)

Questions: 1-888-265-0600 ext. 112, www.AssociationTRENDS.com/allmedia

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APA Texas is a respected leader and partner, whose members make great communities happen by providing expertise and innovation to shape livable and sustainable Texas communities.

Texas Planning Review is published quarterly by the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association. Submissions should be typewritten and submitted in a Word format. Please do not submit docx versions. Send to via email to lorldlee@gmail.com, including the name, telephone number and short bio of the individual writing the piece. Material may be edited to conform to space and style needs. Please address floppy or CD submissions to Lori Lee at 5850 Belt Line Road, Dallas, Texas 75254.



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