

**Minutes of the Board of Directors of the  
Virginia Chapter of the  
American Society of Landscape Architects**

A planning meeting of the Board of the VA-ASLA was held on Saturday, October 1, 2011, at Chroma Works in Charlottesville.

The following members and staff participated in the meeting:

|                |                    |                |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Julie Basic    | Barry Frankenfield | Nancy Rodrique |
| Terry Clements | Mary Kidd          | Jimmy Shepherd |
| Lynn Crump     | Rob McLeod         |                |
| Frank Fentress | Vaughn Rinner      |                |

President-elect Rob McLeod called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

The group briefly introduced themselves and Rob welcomed everyone to Charlottesville.

**2011 Goals and Objectives**

The group reviewed the goals that were set during last year's retreat with the intent of determining what level of completion there has been for each item, whether any of the goals and objectives should be changed, and whether there are new goals and objectives to be added. The individual designated as in charge of each area is noted in parentheses. The current status, when known, is noted in italics.

**Effective leadership** (Lynn)

1. Write out leadership responsibilities/workbook – *partially done*
2. Update website with clear ExCom & committee responsibilities – *needs to be done once job descriptions are updated*
3. Create chapter services committee – *not sure what this means*
4. Clarify past president responsibilities – *past president is in charge of standing committees - done*
5. Recruit for more participation on ExCom. – *done/ongoing, we need to add depth so we have plenty of people in the pipeline for future leadership roles*

**Increase member participation** (Nancy)

1. Recruit members – *we need to recruit members to be more active in the Chapter, actual member recruitment is mostly at the National level, though the Chapter has a role in promoting membership*
2. Promote regional events - *there haven't been many regional events, but we are cross-promoting events we know of on our web site – Richmond has started holding socials/happy hours and hope to do them monthly. There were about 12 participants at the first one.*
3. Consider establishing regional representatives – *not addressed*
4. Update website - *ongoing*
5. Increase attendance at education events – *rethink timing of events to get more participation from students*
6. Increase contact info and reach out to regional groups/affiliates, possibly through the Events Committee – *not addressed*

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7. Create a blog on the website – *Myers has been doing a blog*

#### **Increase knowledge base (Myers)**

1. Provide 8hrs of CEUs at the Spring conference - *done*
2. Create 1 or 2 regional education events that offer CEUs – *not done, but we have promoted other groups' events that qualify, such as JRGC*
3. Join with VT & UVA for at least one event per year at each school – *not done*
4. Promote our expertise - *ongoing*
5. Sidetrack to CEUs, LACES, spring conference, links page, ASLA resources

#### **Increase visibility (Rob)**

1. Electronic newsletter – *done on a monthly basis*
2. Make website more current - *ongoing*
3. Further develop social media – *ongoing, Myers has been working on*
4. Improve links to allied professionals (create list of allied professions)
5. Create networking, event & programming partnerships - *ongoing*
6. Have regular events - invite others from outside profession

#### **Promote profession as leaders (Andrea)**

1. Leadership skill training; leadership seminar maybe with universities, sponsor members in leadership programs possibly advocacy related
2. Marketing training for professionals, maybe at spring conference
3. Awards program – off year event acknowledging someone not in the profession
4. Spring conference – design awards, fall event do chapter awards to separate those awards.

#### **General Discussion**

As the goals and objectives were reviewed, a wide-ranging discussion was held covering all aspects of the Chapter. Ideas that were discussed include:

1. Collecting all of our policies and procedures into a manual where they can be easily accessed. Lynn Crump had collected some information five or six years ago, but the effort was never formalized.
2. Mary Kidd suggested potentially partnering with the Charlottesville area affiliate of the JRGC for some local events. The Hampton Roads Green Building Council is also getting more active, so perhaps we could partner there as well.
3. Increasing Student Involvement.
  - A. We lost student participation at the annual conference when we moved it to April, as the second semester, especially the end of April, is very busy for students.
  - B. If we offered an event in the Fall (late September or early October) in conjunction with one of the schools we could get more student involvement again. This would help to engage students and encourage them to join the association before they graduate, and could integrate their research presentations into the program.
  - C. We would need to avoid the ASLA Annual Meeting (which next year is scheduled for September 28- October 1 in Phoenix).
  - D. For planning purposes, we would need to start working with the faculty in January or early February in order to line something up for the following Fall. Terry Clements noted that Tech does not know the football schedule until early April, but we definitely need to consider that in our planning.

- E. The tentative idea was to hold a one day program on the Friday before Columbus Day as there are no classes that day and we could use classroom space for the event.
- F. We should focus on connecting with existing programs at the schools, not creating new ones. Terry also recommends that we talk directly with the faculty involved, not the department chairs.
- 4. A question came up as to what happened with the logo competition. Mary reported that Andrea Almond told her National wants all of the chapters clearly branded as affiliates and prefers that they stay with the logos that have already been developed rather than designing their own. Those present questioned whether this was really necessary, as several other Chapters have distinct logos that incorporate some of the elements from the current chapter logos, which keeps them branded as part of the group but with their own distinct identity. In any event, Andrea should notify the individuals who have submitted an entry in the competition.
- 5. The group asked Mary Kidd to look into the click-through statistics for the e-newsletter to see if there has been an increase in views and clicks since we started the distribution.
- 6. A discussion was held about accepting position announcements for the web site. The group agreed that it would be best to let the posting of resumes continue through National, since they are already set up for that, but saw no reason that we should not post openings/position announcements for jobs in this state/region. Mary Kidd noted that we do currently accept them, but not much use is made of it. Another group that she works with uses this as a consistent revenue stream and receives 5 or more postings per month.
  - A. The group agreed that we should promote this. Until we have statistics to justify charging more, it should be free for members and \$25 for nonmembers. ("At this time, there is no charge for members to post an opening.") Mary will include something in the next e-news to promote this.
  - B. We should also include a link to Virginia jobs posted on the National site in the e-news.
- 7. Increase visibility/presence of the Chapter.
  - A. Mary wondered whether or not Myers has been making use of Google News alerts for relevant information to include in blog posts/tweets. If not, she will suggest it to him.
  - B. Julie Basic indicated she can help with writing articles for the e-news and/or for Facebook.
  - C. We need to promote our Facebook and Twitter feeds in the e-news. Perhaps we can include a teaser from Myers' most recent blog posting with a link for people to follow.
  - D. We should include profiles of award winners and Fellows in the e-news, on the web site and in our social media.
  - E. The idea has come up in the past to give an award to someone prominent in order to raise our visibility. Dave Matthews has a sustainable farm, John Grisham builds baseball fields, Barbara Kingsolver (author of *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*) is in the Abingdon area.
- 8. Leadership. We need our members to get more involved on the local level so they can become recognized as local experts that can then be developed into local leaders (for city council or the planning commission perhaps). How can we do this?
  - A. Virginia Natural Resource Leadership Program
  - B. Grant funding available for leadership training?
- 9. We need to understand and promote the value of the organization to our members and prospective members.

At the end of this free-flowing discussion, the group took a brief step back to make sure we all agree on what it is the Chapter should be doing. It was agreed that VA-ASLA should be promoting the profession to the

public, providing education and information to our members and to the public at large. These ideas were boiled down to: **Educate. Network. Inform.** These are the three “drivers” of VA-ASLA.

### **Priorities for 2011-2012**

Following a break for lunch, the group reconvened and started discussing what we should focus on for the coming year. Each person was asked to list the top three things they would like to see done by VA-ASLA in the coming year. Several items got multiple votes and seemed to rise above the others as far as level of priority.

1. Monitor and inform on legislative and regulatory issues (2 votes)
2. **Provide education/opportunity to get CEU (Big New Topic) (7 votes)**
3. **Interact with students and new professionals (3 votes)**
4. **Keep our web site up to date/make use of social media (4 votes)**
5. Participate in the public awareness campaign with National (1 vote)
6. Connect with allied professionals (AIA, APA, JRGBC) (2 votes)
7. Use awards to increase visibility/inform the public about LAs (1 vote)
8. Promote LA projects in Virginia (2 votes)
9. **Publically advocate on critical issues**, such as water quality, mining, mountaintop removal, using the policies developed by National (**3 votes**) [note, Terry Clements is on national’s policy committee and can help us access all of this information]
10. Reconnect with/reengage lapsed members (1 vote)
11. Get LAs into the RFP process (most of the time LA is not listed) (1 vote)

The discussion moved on steps we need to take to move towards achieving these goals.

#### **Social Media/web site**

- We need to promote local information and projects. Promote the Virginia state awards (are the awards covering the full range of the profession?)
- Provide a legislative update following the General Assembly (include in remarks at spring conference, allow 5-10 minutes, include what we’re doing)
- How can we use this to help engage new professionals? Put profiles/information on what members and students are doing “on the boards”, promote it as “see what’s happening in Virginia Landscape Architecture.” Solicit contributions in the e-news, post on the web site as a side bar or new page – show the range of the profession (see posters by area of practice that were put together for the General Assembly). Call it “Off the Boards”? For the student/faculty piece, call it “At the Universities” and cover research and projects being done.
  - o Rob McLeod will follow up with the Executive Committee to get some initial projects to post.
  - o Carol and Myers will be asked to develop guidelines for submissions: what content areas will we include? File formats needed, size limits (4 megabytes?), etc.
  - o Vaughn Rinner indicated she had some guidelines that might be helpful in developing this.
  - o Suggestion to start with our new Fellows

#### **Education**

- 2 day program in the spring. Tentatively plan for April 27-28, offer CEUs split fairly evenly over both days (as Julie Basic pointed out, some people have to take leave and pay for themselves to attend – if we have substantive programming on Saturday it would benefit those individuals). Promote one-

day registrations as an option for those with limited time. Andrea Almond, Rob McLeod and Barry Frankenfield will take the lead on this event.

- 1 day program in the fall with one of the universities (alternating), need to get details set by July so it gets on the university calendar, begin working on development in late January or early February. For Fall of 2012 we will work with Tech. We should involve Christina Hill at UVA early in the process so she is aware we want to do the same thing with her in the fall of 2013. Lynn Crump and Terry Clements will take charge of this.
- Promote other group's events that do not conflict with our own scheduled events.

#### **Publically advocate** on critical issues/monitor and inform on legislative/regulatory issues

- Rob McGinnis should draft a job description for individuals to join the committee and help with the monitoring process. ("Seeking an individual who...")
- Link to ASLA for Federal issues
- Link to other groups monitoring legislative issues (APA, Piedmont Environmental)
- Explore usefulness of RichmondSunlight.com for tracking General Assembly actions/issues.
- How to best inform members of APELSCIDLA developments? Is there an informational site we could link to?
- There are too many localities to monitor the local level. Are there tools out there that would do it for us (even something as simple as a google news alert)?
- The State labels LAs as gardeners. How can we work to change that, now that there are stricter licensing requirements?

#### **Sponsorship**

- Our sponsorship opportunities need to be developed for the spring conference prior to the national meeting, so that those in attendance can share the information with vendors at the National event and possibly get a few more interested.
- We should consider adding webinars as a benefit of certain levels of sponsorship to allow vendors to provide webinars to our members. There has been at least one request received about holding a webinar, which would basically be a demonstration of a particular product.
- We would also like to get an organization signed on to sponsor student attendance/scholarships for meetings.
- Rob will ask Myers to help with this effort. Vaughn Rinner also indicated that she could help.

The following job descriptions need to be developed in order to help with recruiting members:

Education/Conference Committee, Communications/Social Media Committee, Awards Committee, Visibility Committee, Membership Committee, Governance/Legislative Committee, Sponsorship Committee. Since Mary works with multiple groups, she already has a lot of committee job descriptions around. She will utilize those to create draft descriptions for our committees.

The next regular Board conference call is scheduled for Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting stood adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Kidd, CMP, Catapult, Inc.

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