

In an effort to better inform the APA membership, the Chapter President Council (CPC) has developed a series of questions for national candidates for the American Planning Association (APA). Mike Southard and Sumner Sharpe compiled this survey for distribution by the CPC Executive Committee. The CPC encourages chapters to endorse candidates who represent their views and positions.

- 1) *The CPC has formally taken the position in favor of mandatory continuing education for certified planners. The next few questions pertain to your position as a candidate for national office on continuing education.*
  - a) *What role do you believe continuing education plays in the advancement of a professional planner's career?*
  - b) *Do you favor mandatory continuing education for certified planners?*
  - c) *What role should APA (nationally) and the chapter (locally) have in educating planners?*

**DK:** **1A:** Continuing education plays a critical role in a planner's career. Those who avoid it, in my observation, fail to advance, and that seems appropriate. The field, as we all know, goes through sea transformations as well as changes in the details. And personal growth may be something quite independent of both of these arenas. So continuing education is a complex task for all of us.

**1B:** No, I do not. I am open to further discussion, but I find the current proposal to be seriously flawed in three important ways. First, the current proposal bases AICP's authority for policing this activity on its interpretation of the Code of Ethics, wherein "A planner must strive to continue professional education" as one of several obligations of "Self-responsibility." Other areas of the code cover responsibilities "to the public," "to clients and employers," and "to the profession and colleagues." AICP's proposed role is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics designation of this obligation as a *self*-responsibility.

Second, if I could be persuaded that AICP resources should be further devoted to supporting the Code of Ethics, this may be the least important ethical issue on which I would focus. Perhaps we could be more creative and look at some issue of greater moral impact, such as guidance in conflicts of interest, sexual harassment, or educational opportunities for minorities, to name a few.

Third, as several colleagues have suggested, the devil is in the details. The current proposal requires 45 hours of continuing educational activity over three years, 30 hours of which can be self-directed study, upon approval of a proposal to the staff, which may be extended to the full 45 hours by special request. Among the activities approved are reading books and writing reviews of the those books (for no apparent audience); visiting historic sites and writing a site visit report (sounds like "what I did on my vacation"); and hosting a discussion group and writing a report on it. These are all potential learning activities to be sure, but they are also invitations to duplicity and fraud and we should not be doing this in the name of ethics. If we cannot figure out a way to make sure one is learning something and that that something is important (it is hard enough to do in the

AICP exam), we should focus our energies elsewhere, lest we undermine further our confidence in each other.

**IC:** Nationally and locally there is a great deal APA could do to enable planners to enhance their continuing professional education. We should have a national clearinghouse for continuing education opportunities and programs, much of which could be on a website, listing workshops, events, conferences, interest groups, publications, etc. by geographic area and by topics ranging from office management to globalization. APA should maintain such a resource center, with reviews of the experiences shared by participants, with information on costs and deadlines and links to university and city and field sites and how to get plugged in. Planning Magazine and the Journal to not lend themselves to this sort of information collection, posting, and distribution. This is something staff could do well and get some satisfaction from, as opposed to reading and approving my three year self-study program or explaining to me why they are not approving it. This kind of national center, linked to local educational resource centers, would truly enable self-responsibility for continuing education.

**RM:** Continuing education is a hallmark of a progressive, respected profession and of the professionals who are part of that profession. It is essential for advancing the visibility, stature and advancement of both. As the old saying goes – ‘an educated person never graduates’.

Only through continuing education can planners expect to maintain and expand their knowledge of an ever-changing planning environment and to enhance their professional and technical proficiencies. Further enrichment and improvement of the profession will come, in part, from mandatory continuing education. Moving toward such a system, one that is affordable and accessible while maintaining quality standards, is necessary for the planning profession.

AICP/APA and the Chapters have important roles to play. However, they alone cannot provide all of the necessary educational opportunities, nor should we expect members to earn CE credits solely through national and chapter events.

AICP can provide overall administrative services for any CE program while expanding deliverable educational programs, whether they are packaged training programs, CD-ROMs, audio conferences, web casting etc. Continued financial support to both chapters and planning schools for educational and training activities is another appropriate role of AICP. Finally, AICP can serve as a clearinghouse of information regarding CE activities by all of the chapters and by other organizations, such as the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Chapters can be both a delivery mechanism as well as a generator of educational activities.

2) *The APA Board of Directors has adopted the 2002/2003 Organizational Development Plan (ODP). The following questions pertain to your views of the plan and its role toward advancing the profession, as well as the organization.*

- a) *Of the six major goals, please prioritize them in the order of highest to least importance.*
- b) *Are there any other elements or goals that you would include in the ODP and why?*
- c) *How can the Chapters be utilized to better implement the ODP?*

**DK:** Of the six major goals, please prioritize them in the order of highest to least importance.

- (1) (Highest importance) Pursue social, economic, and racial equity in America's communities.
- (2) Aggressively advocate and implement policies and legislative agendas that support and sustain good planning at the local, state, and national levels.
- (3) Create a culture of continuing education and provide more education opportunities for practicing planners.
- (4) Foster organizational change and maintain financial sustainability.
- (5) Develop new membership and product marketing strategies.
- (6) Develop and promote a brand definition that reflects the visual, emotional, and cultural identity of APA.

**2B:** I think that with the proper priorities that is a pretty full plate.

**2C:** I think the first two priorities above should somehow be built from the ground up and require lots of local leadership and innovation and implementation. The last four priorities will require more national leadership, innovation and implementation.

**RM:** All of the goals of this document have some degree of importance. A listing of them in some order should not suggest that one should be done before the next and so on. Nevertheless, I believe that an emphasis on four of the goals will in fact address the other two in many ways.

From the perspective of AICP, I would say that expanding a culture of continuing education is a most important goal. From the larger APA/AICP organizational perspective, the goal of fostering organizational change is most important. In fact, in the short time the new APA Executive Director has been on board, there has already been a dramatic change in attitude about organizational change and receptiveness to new ways of thinking and carrying out tasks. This alone will vastly increase the successful implementation of the ODP.

In addition to these two goals, there should be an emphasis on advocating at the national, state and local level for improved policies, strategies and legislation for good planning. Both as part of this effort, and as an effort to itself, advocating for equity in planning processes and outcomes is fundamental to which we are as a profession. These goals are what "Making great Communities Happen" is about.

Development of new member strategies and promoting APA should be logical aspects of the first four goals and should be natural outcomes of advancing those four goals.

- 3) *The following questions pertain to the make-up of the APA Board of Directors and American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Commission. Please provide your opinion with an explanation as to your reasoning.*
- a) *Should the voting for AICP President be only by AICP members instead of by all APA members?*
  - b) *Should the APA President serve as a voting member on the AICP Commission?*
  - c) *Should the CPC, DC, SRC, AICP, and/or College of Fellows (COF) be voting members on the APA Board?*
  - d) *The AICP Commission has an even number of voting members. Should the AICP President vote only when breaking a tie vote?*

**DK:** **3A:** No, as I understand the reasons for the current system, they are sound and it works.

**3B:** No.

**3C:** Hey, what about the PAB? No. This idea just gets us into all kinds of special interests and multiple counting of some people's interests, but not others.

**3D:** Robert's Rules of order solved this one quite a long time ago. Presiding officers are supposed to maintain a neutral position on issues yet have the same right to vote as any other member of the assembly. "...[T]he chair protects his impartiality by exercising his voting right only when his vote would affect the outcome, in which case he can either vote and thereby change the result, or he can abstain." This does not hold in a secret ballot where the chair must vote at the same time as everyone else. Having chaired a number of assemblies, I find these rules tend to be fair.

**RM:** These questions raise a number of interesting and challenging questions. Quite frankly, I have not yet determined a position on each of these questions. I await the report of the AICP/APA Committee that is looking at these issues, as well as further conversations with Board, Commission, CPC, Division, Student and regular members.

In general, however, I offer the following in responses to the specific questions:

- a) AICP members should elect the AICP President. (Currently, it is at least theoretically possible for the AICP President to be elected without receiving a single vote from an AICP member. That is wrong).
- b) At the present time, I do not believe that having the APA President be a voting member on the AICP Commission is a solution to the situation. I am willing to listen to additional arguments pro and con on this issue.
- c) The make-up of the APA Board and who is a voting member and who is a non-voting member is an issue that I believe needs much further discussion. However, the question of the AICP president voting on the APA Board is not necessarily the same

question as to the status of CPC, Divisions etc. There are some fundamental differences.

There should be a tie-breaking mechanism on the AICP Commission. There are alternatives to limiting the current President from voting unless there is a tie. Those alternatives (a tie = approval, a tie = denial, the past president only votes in a tie-breaking situation, etc.) should be explored. Someone elected to president of a national office, whether APA or AICP, should not then immediately be limited from fully participating, including voting.

- 4) *The American Institute of Certified Planners has inducted three classes into the College of Fellows. The Chapters play an integral role in selecting nominees, financing, and preparing nomination packets. The following questions pertain to the relationship between the Chapters, AICP and FAICP.*
- a) *Should the FAICP selection committee provide the Chapter President with evaluation information pertaining to non-selected candidates?*
  - b) *Should the COF classes be limited to a specific number or should all worthy nominees be honored?*
  - c) *Should a Chapter's endorsement be given more consideration than an individual endorsement?*

**DK:** **4A:** No. If I fail to get promoted, it is I who am owed an explanation, not my references. It should be up to me to decide who else needs to know my business.

**4B:** I believe all worthy nominees should be honored.

**4C:** No.

**RM:** Having been the author and organizer of four successful nominations to the College of Fellows, I have a certain amount of knowledge and experience on this topic. Here are my thoughts:

**4A:** While this is a delicate situation that must be handled with great sensitivity, respect and confidentiality I do believe that the Chapter President should receive some useful information pertaining to non-selected candidates. (For example, was the problem with the candidate or the quality of the nomination material?)

**4B:** There should not be a yearly limit on candidates to the COF. We have only recently initiated this program. While planning is a relatively young profession, many of the leaders who advanced the profession did so in the 1930's through the 1970's. Those planners are retiring and many have already passed on to the great land use in the sky. It is important that those who remain with us and are deserving of this honor be able to receive the honor without being wait-listed because of a quota system.

**4C:** The weight of an endorsement should be based on who best knows the candidate, whether Chapter, Division or individual members. There are situations where a current Chapter Board is made up of younger planners who are not knowledgeable about, or familiar with, the names and careers of some of the more long time or retired planners in their chapters. However, Chapters should have the same opportunity to know, and perhaps comment on, about candidates who are individually nominated.