

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Attendees:

Victor Dover, John Norquist, Katharine Kelley, Scott Bernstein, Laura Heery, Marcy McInelly, Dhiru Thadani, Jennifer Hurley, Norman Garrick, Doug Kelbaugh, Dan Sloan, Ellen Dunham Jones, Sarah Lewis, Steve Maun, Russ Preston, Scott Polikov, and Mike Krusee

Staff:

Heather Smith, Jeannette Mihalek, Sandrine Milanello and Abby Bouzan-Kaloustian

Guests:

Al Hoffman, Auden Engh, Russ Sykes, Monte Anderson, Laura French and Will Pinkerton

Board Chair Welcome

After introducing Al Hoffman, from the EU Board of Council and welcoming the Dallas group, Victor expressed gratitude to the board and to Ellen. He asked everyone to pause and thank fellow exiting Board members – Connie Moran, Katharine Kelley, and Sam Sherman.

The Board agreed to postpone approval of the Winter 2012 minutes until the Fall meeting.

President's Report

A brief version of the President's report would be included in the opening plenary of CNU 20. John encouraged Board members to engage with Emily Talen if interested in the Charter Book re-write and reported that as of Friday the 11th attendance was around 950 and is expected to reach 1100 (according to Sandrine).

Membership is growing again and should continue to rise if the recession improves. CNU was not hit as hard as others in the built environment industry. Hopefully we'll get to a new all-time high sometime next year.

John thanked Heather and others for their help on the "fantastic and well-organized" program. He complimented Sandrine on her great job organizing the meeting and looks forward to a great conference. Next year will be in Salt Lake City; the Local Host Committee started early and is moving along. He is looking forward to the pitch from Dallas and will "save most inspiration for tonight".

Treasurer's Report

Jennifer pointed to the Board packet for the detailed reports. In summary she explained that the financial condition has slightly improved from the last meeting (cash flow is better), however, CNU has not reached the \$400k mark set as a goal to avoid further cuts. CNU has not gotten back to a point where staff can be reinstated full-time. The Finance Committee will look at CNU 20 finances on the next call and consider next steps. [The Executive Committee will consider the fundraising shortfall for CNU 20 on their next call.]

Jennifer encouraged board members to pay attention to who sponsored CNU 20 and thank them in the hallway. People like to be appreciated. She also prompted Board members to start identifying potential CNU 21 sponsors among your colleagues.

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Ellen suggested using the Initiatives as a way to engage new potential sponsors and funders. Currently sponsors are recognized in a variety of ways: online (CNU.org and CNU20.org, initiative pages, etc) and in print (initiative products, Congress program, etc).

In an effort to reach those that don't know about us, including potential sponsors and partners, Scott B believes we should use the Summit, and other events to engage them.

With regards to the fact that CNU 20 fundraising fell short of the goal, Victor commented that the Florida Chapter is not done yet. Victor recognized that each Local Host Committee experience is different and no magic formula exists, but some changes are needed. With Ellen's blessing, Victor will participate in the Fundraising (Development) Committee as a non-Board member. Significant progress has been made on the Initiatives and we can now view the organization through this lens, but the work continues.

Nominations & Governance

Steve M directed attention to page 63 of the board packet, which includes a proposed amendment to the Bylaws. While going through the first member elections process, we realized that not all candidates would (necessarily) receive the majority of votes and the Bylaws language needed to change.

As written in the Board packet, the proposed amendment reads:

“The candidates equal to the number of seats being filled at any election who receive the highest number of votes cast shall be deemed to be elected to fill such seats on the Board. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be determined by drawing lots among the tied candidates.”

*Motion: Dan S motioned to accept the language as drafted.
Scott B seconded.*

Approval: All approved. None opposed.

Victor reminded everyone that voting closes at noon on Friday and necessary quorum was met (and tripled), however, more participation would be preferred. Wednesday evening, John will say “this marks the official opening of the meeting of the membership” and on Friday afternoon, Russ will cast the proxy votes. Members who do not know how to log in and cast their vote can visit the CNU booth for assistance.

The second item for approval is the nomination of a new Chair and Vice Chair. The Nominations Committee recommends approval of the new chair, Ellen Dunham Jones, and new Vice Chair Doug Farr.

*Motion: Dan S motioned to accept the recommended nominations (Ellen Dunham-Jones as Chair and Doug Farr as Vice Chair).
Katharine K seconded.*

Discussion:

Ellen expressed her excitement about Doug joining the Executive Committee as Vice Chair and believes his interests and ability to outreach to different groups is in line with our Strategic Plan.

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Victor commented, “you could not possibly identify a better candidate. Being the chair of CNU is like being the mayor of a small town. We’re a small population with a huge geography. Ellen is the perfect person to take on the chairship.”

Approval: All in favor. None opposed

Finally, Steve pointed to a vacancy available to fill by the normal Board process. The Nominations Committee would like to fill this seat in the fall and is looking for recommendations. Suggestions can be sent to any of the Committee members (Steve, Sarah and Lizz) or the staff support (Abby). As reference, the prior list of recommendations is on page 74 of the Board packet.

Mike K pointed out that in years prior the Board had made a concerted effort to add developers to the Board. In 2012, the Board is losing 2 and should consider replacing them.

CNU 23 – Dallas/Ft Worth

Scott P began the conversation by saying that a Congress in an area with multiple metropolitan regions is a challenge and an opportunity. Hosting CNU 23 in Dallas/Ft Worth is a chance to challenge CNU’s regionalism.

Russ Sykes gave some background information on the North Texas Chapter: founded in 2005, the Board currently has 12-15 members and the general membership is around 100. The Chapter is Dallas-centric, but all counties are represented.

Proposed themes:

1. “Right here, right now”. The DFW area is slated to grow 50-100% in the next 100 years. Another megalopolis. CNU has the chance to affect that growth and shape it into a more walkable area.
2. “The good, the bad, and the ugly”. The area consists of both great new urbanist infill projects (suburbs, town) and an ocean of sprawl (not unique). The group could focus on the good and make it better.

Dallas/Ft Worth:

DFW is the 4th largest metro region (6.5 million) and projected to grow to 9-12 million by 2050. It could provide an interesting contrast to Buffalo as an ever outward expansion that needs to grow in and up. *DFW = America in microcosm*; it includes growth and decay; stressed inner tier suburbs; inner city rebirth; and outward expansion. The money put into projects is vast; more than a billion committed to 1 TOD.

The area is served by 2 airports, and several public transit options (Dart, Denton County/ Ft Worth, Trinity Railway Express, etc). There are tremendous opportunities to re-nucleate on a pedestrian scale.

Beyond DFW

6 of top 12 largest cities in Texas are in the DFW region (ex. 300k in Arlington, 250k in Plano, etc). This is a vast region that needs connection. The two anchor downtowns (Dallas & Ft Worth) are very different but both undergoing change. Dallas’ West End, Sundance Square and trolley; Ft Worth’s Uptown, etc. In 3 years all of these anchors will be different. In a twin cities environment, it’s important that to structure the meeting in a good urban environment but include lots of trips. Trip/tour location options: Oak Cliff, Ft Worth’s West 7th, Plano TODs, Victory Dallas, Southwest

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Medical Complex, Greenfield Projects, Midtowne, etc. Between Dallas and Ft Worth a commuter line runs Monday – Saturday. The trip is about an hour and the trains run on a predictable schedule.

The questions the committee face right now include where to base the Congress and what projects to reach. The area has a lot of development money that Scott P thinks the CNU would be foolish not to tap into.

Discussion

Issues of zoning and coding, prior visioning projects (Vision North Texas), long-term planning, “better block” projects can all be addressed at CNU 23.

Potential allies include local universities, transit organizations, the Greater Dallas Council, etc. Scott B would also like to see CNU engage the North Texas Council of Governments.

Scott B sees an opportunity to discuss gas and housing affordability at CNU 23 and connect to the national conversation.

Dan S supports the idea of going to DFW, as it’s a good opportunity to see different types of urbanism. In his experience, developers were willing to talk about economics. If some of that experience could be delivered and layered with things like sprawl retrofit, we could provide a unique view.

Jennifer clarified that, “for those not familiar with the metroplex, it is not Minneapolis / St Paul”. The Congress will be in Ft Worth or Dallas. Individual people aren’t going to spend time going back and forth between both cities. Sandrine echoed Jennifer’s warning saying that we need 30 minutes for 2,000 people to cross the street, so programming will have to be modified. Victor felt the CNU in DC successfully handled the split location and recommended the North Texas LHC talk to Dhiru and others from DC for tips. (Free rail passes were given out in DC)

Logistics aside, Russ P believes this is a great city/place for the Congress and believes the movement can learn a lot from the area.

Ellen supported the theme, “the good, the bad, and the ugly”. She felt the other theme was too DFW – centric and wants to make sure we connect the Congress to the new Strategic Plan. The use of a the term “climate change” might be difficult in Texas and wondered what we could learn from North Texas about ways to talk about green, climate, etc that are more acceptable.

Scott suggested using “green” instead of “climate change”. Big national developers won’t support a Congress focused on Climate Change. Use economics to engage.

Will pointed to water as a huge issue and commented that the state is broke from the transportation highways perspective (lack the money to fix what was built).

Marcy is interested in regional governance issue and personally believes the answers to the future are at a regional scale and proposed working with Scott to focus CNU’s agenda.

Norman thinks “the good, bad and ugly” theme sounds sports-related and challenged the group to come up with a theme that was more regionalism focused.

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Steve M saw the good, bad, and ugly as a tag line, not a theme. He supports regionalism as theme.

Victor asked how the LHC felt about the fundraising goal (\$300k+). Laura confirmed that the group had discussed the amount and felt comfortable with the expectation. They are ready to fundraise immediately upon approval by the Board.

After considering a postponed approval, the Board voted on DFW as the host of CNU 23.

*Motion: Ellen motioned to endorse the DFW proposal and that the committee work with Sandrine to further flush out the process.
Scott B seconded the motion.*

[The Executive Committee will be included in the decision of Dallas or Ft. Worth]

John confirmed “with this vote, we are choosing Dallas/Ft Worth as the 2015 location, with the 300k fundraising goal”. Subject to them working with the committee, per Dan S.

*Motion: Jennifer seconds the motion.
Approval: All approved. None opposed.*

Transportation Group- Next Steps

Marcy explained that the Sustainable Transit Network Principles draft has started. Staff, volunteers, Gary Tooth, and members (approximately 25 from CNU) volunteered to participate. Laura and Marcy are in talks with the World Resource Institute EMBARQ program (www.embarq.org). They are very impressed with our products and interested in a relationship (possibly money or resource share). Marcy is taking up on Scott B’s March offer to tie into CNT’s transit work. The group is heading to Long Beach for the Transportation Summit in September 2012. (More information to come).

General Announcements

Katharine thanked Victor for his leadership, wisdom, etc.

Dhiru reminded the Board about the dinner for Athena award winners. Dinner for the winners and plenary speakers was paid for by Robert Davis and Kimley Horn.

Mike K encouraged Board members to engage with his son Sam, attending his first Congress after completing his third year in architecture.

Initiatives Discussion

Laura reviewed the updated Initiatives Summary prepared by the staff, with input from the board and initiative leaders. The summary will be used when talking to new/potential partners and members, and for general outreach. She notes that initiatives are often fundable by foundations, where conferences and meetings are not. Laura encouraged the Board to recognize the value of strategic "allies", such as the CDC for the Health Initiative, and the value of Initiative products, such as the Sustainable Street Network Principles book. Partner-sponsor relationships can be developed on a content-driven approach. She suggested a structural change to Congress web-registration to

Congress for the New Urbanism – Spring Board Meeting Notes
CNU 20 in West Palm Beach, FL
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

link partner donations options to attendance registration. She also emphasized the need for the annual Congress Partner brochure to integrate Initiative information.

Victor supported the idea of layering funding and sponsorship requests- keep doing what we're doing (general meeting support requests) and add new layers. Keep writing letters but fold in content when possible.

Jennifer commented that every initiative doesn't need outside funding; if there's a group doing work with little/no staff time, it can still be an initiative. Laura believes those initiatives that have funding possibility should be placed ahead of those that don't. John doesn't want to see groups discouraged if they're not bringing in money, especially if they're acting on their own. Victor pointed to the need for a Board champion for each initiative to avoid the situation John described.

Dan S also spoke out in support of volunteers. "Often you don't know how it will monetize (ex. Sprawl retrofit), and I would hate for it to stop." He would like to see CNU leverage assets. Suggested CNU become the conduit for information back into the United States regarding LEED ND and lessons learned from other countries. Compile the information needed by a group looking to evoke change.

Russ sees potential in the Boston report on climate and progress. It comes down to energy, adaptive planning and the heat island effect. "What as Board members should we do other than connect with an initiative?"

**Scott B requested a breakdown of initiative funding at the next Board meeting.

Laura questioned whether CNU should become a data pool for federal health programs.

Post-Congress the initiatives sheet and the website will be updated. This document, along with the Performs Better brochure can be used to engage new people.

As initiatives become more prominent, we need a clear and transparent process for moving initiatives forward, backward, etc. The annual initiative reports will be used in the fall to help distinguish the categories.

Al and Auden thanked the Board for allowing them to sit in on the meeting. They invited everyone to visit CEUNET.org and let them know if we're traveling abroad. Interested in participating in the LEED ND project, if it moves forward as Dan s suggested.

Jennifer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.