

## February 11, 2022 International Policy Meeting

### Attendees:

Lyndsey Deaton

Kate Holmquist

Michael Kolber

Antonella Salmeron

Bruce Stiftel

Michelle Tullo

Tim Van Epp

Jing Zhang

### WUF Submission:

This year, the World Urban Forum (WUF) will be a hybrid conference focusing on advancing the new urban agenda and SDG 11 with an emphasis on equity.

Bruce has been supporting a climate sustainability pitch with Planners for Climate Action on the topic “Planning on Resettlement due to Climate Change.” He wanted to know if:

1. APA International wants to work with this?
  - a. Note that APA is an institutional member of P4CA.
2. Do we want to do our own submission. If so, do we need to partner with APA National? In addition to that, there’s the option for IAD submitting its own proposal.

After some discussion, the group agreed that we can submit under APA IAD after giving APA National a courtesy heads up, and that if we submit we’d make sure we have people from the Division in attendance (although it will be a hybrid event.) Tim, Bruce, and Kate are likely to attend and we have members in Europe who may attend. We know that WUF prefers submissions that represent more than North America. Kate wants to engage our full membership in making a decision about whether or not we submit a proposal, and so the final decision was to put out a call seeking interest while noting the **March 7** deadline. If anyone shows interest we can meet and discuss putting together a proposal. Lyndsey said we could try to put something together from the Humanitarian Planning Meeting. She also has some speakers she could recommend with background in planning for resettlement and she will email those details to Bruce.

The discussion also included a sidebar about GPN:

- Kate asked if we had discussed GPN in this content since we are an institutional member. Bruce said he had attended a huddle on this. GPN is submitting on the topic, “A New Planner’s Agenda” to see where there might be room for improvement on the new

planners' agenda. The discussion was driven by RTPI, ISOCARP, and the European Town Council of Planners. It seems like ISOCARP will be the leader.

- Usually Michael represents us at GPN. Last time though, this meeting was very sudden and Harriet attended instead.

## APA International Policy

APA is bringing a group together to start looking at international policy again. Michael has been invited but wants to bring in more members who are representative of that.

Tim and Bruce had both been involved in that process previously and provided summaries of what had been accomplished:

- Bruce was on the National Conference Committee and had pushed to get the international track at NPC. They were there for two years until Covid trimmed everything back.
- Tim said that about 3-4 years ago when Carol Rhea was president or chair the group pushed knowledge-backed papers. We had gotten some international work through there but then it died. They weren't allowed to share drafts of the work outside the working group. Leo, Jeff Soul, Rynan, and Carol Rhea were involved.
- Tim shared ideas for what to do with International and APA. These ideas include: include "mainstreaming" international throughout the APA; providing more or better services to international members, international MOU partners, and professional planning organizations; maybe becoming an international planning consulting organization. Strategies include changing the name, broadening membership, perhaps merging or acquiring international partners, or creating regional legal APA entities. Tactics include offering coordinated package of already existing APA services, pursuing grant applications to build capacity. In the past, The Board got to the point of preliminarily endorsing the capacity building measures but not the more aggressive points. The new president and executive then came on, covid happened, and budgets were constrained and everything halted.

Members on the call provided their thoughts on what Tim presented:

- Bruce's comments are that there's three lumps of things we might push for: (a) service to U.S. planners working abroad- how can we expand APA's services to those working abroad; (b) partnerships with fellow organizations that represent planners in other regions of the world; (c) to offer or provide services to communities external to the U.S. on our own. Bruce said (a) seems like a no-brainer; (b) seems to have all kinds of benefits to us- GPN is the natural vehicle but not the only vehicle- for learning from others and cooperating on global issues; and (c) this one is a much more difficult issue. We have to worry about US hegemony and imperialism and how our actions could anger others. The ULI model does anger some others when being stepped on the toes of colleagues. Tim said ICMA frequently invited APA to be a contributing party to their work. Jeff Soule used to do more contracts abroad and this brought up lots of issues.
- Lyndsey doesn't think the business interest of "c" can be accomplished as a group that is also an integrator and educator. Kate agrees. Michael asked about volunteer projects and whether if they have the same issues. Lyndsey said she'd rather be part of an APA that does a few small things very well and would rather network or collaborate with groups that are already doing

things very well in this field. She feels concerned if APA is representing clients. Kate said she thinks that funnels to volunteer work as well.

- Tim said there's some gray areas here. APA National has done a lot of consulting in different areas and has planning assistance programs which is basically small-scale consulting, which were staffed by AICP Commission and national level staff. We've had some projects with Dept. of State and USAID.
- Kate said she thinks there's opportunities for supporting planners involve with education and partnership building. She'd like that we look at things that are two-way streets in knowledge-sharing and partnerships.
- Tim gave an example of ICMA staffing for USAID. Lyndsey said her group competes for USAID and would be concerned with competing. Tim said this is a reasonable thing to navigate.

A recurring theme in the conversation was how APA international work would service their staff versus our members, and where APA National's initiatives stop and ours start. Michael, Bruce, and Kate all voiced their support for APA supporting members more rather than staff.

To wrap up the conversation, Michael said that he doesn't know how big this group will be but that it's being led by Harriet and Joel. He will share the ideas we discussed, including their pros and cons.

## **Re-Engaging with Jason Jordan and Policy Agenda**

APA's Policy group has been less engaged and less interested in us in the past, but now seems like a good time to re-engage because of our new climate group and the new APA focus.

We can send Jason Jordan a letter on this, but Michael wants to understand who to bring with him for a meeting. His sense is that APA National prefers less people in the room.

After a discussion on should attend, it was decided that Michael, Ras, and Jannett made sense to attend.

The goal is to get the International Division to be part of their policy review process for policy papers (like climate) and to think of some of our policy areas as priorities (like humanitarian planning). Michael asked what issues he should be pushing for the and the following topics were brought up:

- Tim mentioned broadening the organizations that we lobby to.
- Lyndsey mentioned her interest in getting planners added to the big aid groups/banks adding planners into their core staff but she mentioned the tension between having clear "asks" and just building relationships.
- Bruce said he thought that we weren't part of adding our input into the State Dept and HUD into new urban action agenda and Kate supported this. Bruce said we need APA to support our work. He wants to emphasize the difference between having planners on key staffs versus having planners advise diplomats etc.
- Kate wants to push for our involvement and supports the membership involvement rather than staff. She'd like to see us push for more effectively leveraging the work our members already do.

## **Other**

Kate said too it would be good to check our membership and make sure we have everyone on our monthly call list. Michael will update our org chart for that.

We've had two applicants for the Planning and Health Initiative!