Welcome to the Flower City!

There's still time to register for this year's Chapter Conference, Practical Knowledge for Practical Planning, September 17-19 in Rochester!

Also Inside...

Editorial: Dumb Growth
PAGE 6

Best Planning Apps of 2014
PAGE 9

Letter to the Editor: Civil Service Frustrations
PAGE 10

A Planning Pioneer
PAGE 12

An Upstate Treasure

In advance of the conference, Tom Kicior explores the Rochester Public Market

From the Editor:

Apologies to our readers for a newsletter layout that may not be up to our usual high standards. Jason Babcock-Stiner has gone above and beyond service to the Chapter with work on conference materials and was unable to work on this issue of the Upstate Planner. Your editor was substitute for layout and design on this issue.

The Chapter is now on Twitter!

@NYUpstateAPA

Use #upstateapal4 to tweet conference observations, meet-ups, comments, etc.
By Tanya Zwahlen and Jason Haremza

The NY Upstate Chapter of APA conference will be held from Wednesday, September 17th through Friday, September 19th at the Memorial Art Gallery (MAG) in Rochester. Conference participants will have the opportunity to experience more than 5,000 years of art history at the museum’s 14-acre campus, which includes a sculpture park and expansive collection of art in a spectacular urban space. The MAG is located in Rochester’s Neighborhood of the Arts, about one mile east of downtown. The Neighborhood of the Arts is one of Upstate New York’s premier city neighborhoods with tree-lined, walkable streets, historic architecture, museums, galleries, shops, and restaurants.

The conference program is an exciting schedule of events including presentations, mobile workshops, a panel discussion, exhibitors, the annual APA awards luncheon, and two evening receptions: one at the MAG and one at the nearby Rochester Museum and Science Center. The mobile workshops highlights include:

- WallTherapy ([http://wall-therapy.com/](http://wall-therapy.com/)), a public community-level intervention using mural art as a vehicle to address our collective need for inspiration
- The Centennial Sculpture Park at the MAG ([http://mag.rochester.edu/centennial-sculpture-park/](http://mag.rochester.edu/centennial-sculpture-park/)), winner of a 2013 Rochester Regional Community Design Center Reshaping Rochester Award for “an effort that has contributed in a unique way to the community and earned praise for its unique solution to urban design and the built environment.”

Other mobile workshops, the ARTwalk Neighborhood Tour, and Reconnections: Inner Loop/Midtown Plaza Tour, as well as the awards luncheon, have already sold out!

A highlight of the conference will be a panel discussion on Friday morning entitled, “Stirring Blood: A Discussion on Planning, Communications, and the Media.” Daniel Burnham is famously quoted as saying, “Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will not themselves be realized.” This slogan has been taken to capture the essence of Burnham’s spirit. As a planner, one of Burnham’s biggest accomplishments was

{Continued on page 3}
not merely the 1909 Plan of Chicago, but the communication and promotion of that plan with the general public, which in turn created popular support to implement portions of the plan.

Communications is an oft-overlooked, but critical aspect of planning. Planning and development projects are often covered by the media. But do planners truly understand the role of the media and their goals? Do journalists and reporters truly understand the role of planners and planning in the development process? How can both groups better understand each other? The discussion promises to be an interesting dialogue about how both planners and the media can better understand one another.

On behalf of all planners in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Section, we urge you to join us for a few days of learning, camaraderie, and fun in the Flower City!

In between the official conference activities, attendees should have time to explore the Neighborhood of the Arts, the nearby shops and restaurants of Village Gate Square (http://www.villagegatesquare.com/), Park Avenue (http://www.park-avenue.org/), and the East End (http://rochesterseastend.com/) or the first couple days of the Rochester Fringe Festival (http://rochesterfringe.com/), which starts September 18.

After the conference winds down on Friday, stay a bit longer to reclaim the city and celebrate Park(ing) Day (http://parking-day.org/), with what promises to be one of Rochester’s most unique sporting events, the inaugural Smugtown Open. Visit http://www.innerloopcountryclub.com/ or follow @innerloopcc or @NYUpstateAPA on Twitter for more details.
An Upstate Treasure

Exploring the Rochester Public Market

By Tom Kicior

For over 100 years the Rochester Public Market has been a local and regional asset providing access to fresh food and supporting small businesses and farmers.

The Rochester Public Market (RPM) consists of a nine acre site within the Marketview Heights Neighborhood, northeast of downtown Rochester. RPM is open three days a week year round and has over 180 vendors, one third of which are farmers. Customers from throughout the City and Region are drawn to the market for its fresh/high quality foods, specialty foods, competitive prices and the unique market atmosphere. The market is an important anchor in the Marketview Heights neighborhood and has successfully leveraged millions of dollars of investment in and around the site.

Market vendors sell their products in two open air pavilions, also known as “sheds”, as well as one enclosed all season “winter shed”. In addition, there are a group of privately owned properties and structures that create the northern border of the market called Commission Row. Commission Row includes food retailers, coffee shops, restaurants, bakeries, artist studios, and produce wholesalers. Some of these businesses have

{Continued on page 5}

Save the Date!

APA Region 1 Conference

June 25-26, 2015

Historic Saratoga Springs, NY

PLAN TO COME TO SARATOGA!

THERE WILL BE NO UPSTATE CHAPTER CONFERENCE IN 2015

LEARN NETWORK EXPERIENCE

TECHNICAL SESSIONS ● NETWORKING EVENTS ● MOBILE WORKSHOPS ● TOURS
hours outside of the market schedule. Additional businesses are located within the larger market district including wholesalers, retailers, a brewery and a distillery.

The market is operated by the City of Rochester but additional promotion and education is done by the non-profit organization Friends of the Public Market. The volunteer organization provides tours, develops educational curriculums and works on marketing and fundraising for improvements.

Throughout the year, special promotional events are held on market days such as Flavors at the Market (food tastings) and Flower City Days (spring plant and garden sales). The market schedule also allows time for other events to utilize space when market vending is not occurring, including Food Truck Rodeos, Bands on the Bricks, Community Garage Sales and Artists Row.

One of the most important roles of the market is providing many lower income families access to high quality fresh foods. The Market Token Program, which allows people to purchase tokens with food stamps to be used the same as cash, has been increasingly successful over the past few years. Token sales have gone up from $59,000 in 2008 to over $500,000 in 2013.

**Rochester Public Market Master Plan**

In 2011, a consulting team made up of T.Y. Lin International, PLAN Architectural Studio and Market Ventures Inc. in coordination with the City of Rochester and market stakeholders were tasked with creating a Master Plan for the market to accomplish a number of goals. The plan in part focuses on building and design recommendations for upgrades and new construction that if implemented would increase the market’s weekly and year round activity. The plan also includes customer surveys, a market analysis, a financial analysis and an economic impact analysis.

One major issue the plan seeks to remedy is the capacity and condition of the winter shed, which is the only all-season space for vendors. The winter shed’s lack of adequate space for vendors and customers limits the full potential of the market during cold weather months.

Phase I improvements, set to begin this fall, include the enclosure of the existing Shed C to provide additional year round market space, and renovation and expansion of the winter shed to improve customer circulation and additional public restrooms.

Phase II includes the restoration of the Market House and development of a pedestrian oriented Market Plaza. Phase III includes the creation of a new building with storefronts on Union Street.

The Rochester Public Market Master Plan was awarded New York Upstate APA’s Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice as well as the 2013 Design Excellence Award from the American Institute of Architects, Rochester.

*Photos Credit: City of Rochester Communications Bureau*
EDITORIAL: DUMB GROWTH

Or How to Make a Mockery of the State Public Infrastructure Policy Act

Editorial by Jason Haremza

As I complete my tenure as editor of the Upstate Planner, I wanted to raise the issue of the Science, Technology, Advanced Manufacturing Park (STAMP), proposed for Alabama, NY. It is but one example, albeit recent and perhaps more egregious than most, of projects that violate simple commonly agreed-upon principles of good planning and are nothing close to being smart growth. It is distressing that the private market continues to build vehicle-oriented, far-flung, unsustainable developments. It is extremely unfortunate for this kind of development to be promoted and paid for, at least in part, with public resources. Regrettably, there has been little discussion in the mainstream media on this. Much more regrettably, there has not been, to my knowledge, very much discussion amongst the planners, engineers, architects, and other professionals without whom these projects could not happen.

The following article was written by Howard Decker as two posts on his blog: A Town Square: Conversations About Where We Live (https://heckeranddecker.wordpress.com/author/aldandhi/). It was adapted for use as an opinion piece in the Upstate Planner by Jason Haremza.

Part 1

Up here on the north coast, in Western New York, we are trying to figure out how to do the same thing that cities and regions around the world are simultaneously trying to figure out: how to create a more robust and sustainable economy, attract investment, sponsor innovation, and work to solve all of the problems that beset us. We’re all (and here I mean ALL) in a mad dash to find a better future.

The State has been subdivided into eight Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC), and these Councils compete for State dollars to fund projects that theoretically will build foundations for a useable future, help our cities, take best advantage of our assets, and help to map our best futures. The REDCs are made up of elected officials, institutional and educational leaders, and business executives – we hope our best and most far-thinking.

Recently our state elected officials, teaming with our local REDCs, announced a $33 million plan to begin to develop a 1,250 acre Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Park (STAMP), to be constructed in Alabama New York.

Alabama is almost exactly half-way between Rochester and Buffalo – almost an hour drive from either city – and is currently a rural town of 1,800 people that is an agricultural community and home to the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Rather than acting wisely, as King Solomon did, I guess our leaders just decided to split the baby on this one. Instead of locating the STAMP in one of the struggling upstate cities here, where there are resources, skilled workers, infrastructure, and plenty of available dirt, our leaders have decided to start all over in a farm field, where there is no infrastructure, where you MUST drive to arrive, where the development will fail any test examining smart growth or smart investment. Nuts.

And so I got a bit cranky about this, and penned a letter to our local newspaper. They did not print it. They did print a piece by one of their staff writers, Sean Lahman, and he, thankfully, whacked the idea.

But I am still cranky about this – this is a legacy mistake.

{Continued on page 7}
in the making, and is a crystal clear example of a failure of imagination, real leadership, or even logical thinking. So herewith, my letter:

To the editors:

This is a difficult time for our city and our region. We face budget gaps and dwindling public resources, high taxes, struggling schools, endemic poverty, and many other challenges that need insightful vision and creativity from our political and institutional leaders. We need to refashion our city into an engine of innovation, entrepreneurship, and cooperation, constructing a strong foundation for rapid urban transformation and future urban resilience. But with a recent announcement, it is clear our leaders have lost their way.

Our elected officials and economic luminaries tell us that a plan to construct a 1,200 acre Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Park (STAMP) in Alabama, Genesee County, at a cost of $33 million is a big win for our region. In fact, this plan is destructive, ill-conceived, and mistaken.

This park is not itself a bad idea. But it does not belong nearly an hour’s drive from Rochester, in a rural and agricultural setting, and adjacent to a National Wildlife Refuge. This park belongs in our city.

Harvard economist Edward Glaeser tells us that “all successful cities have something in common. To thrive, cities must attract smart people and enable them to work collaboratively. There is no such thing as a successful city without human capital.” Rochester has that human capital: Rochester is home to nearly two dozen colleges and universities, with nearly 90,000 students. Rochester has long had a robust workforce of skilled innovators. And the human capital of our city can only increase, and assure the vitality of our city, if a STAMP is placed in our urban midst: accessible, bustling, sustainable without environmental compromise, with ideas and achievements feeding and inspiring one another.

Rochester has the human and cultural infrastructure to populate and sustain a STAMP. And Rochester has the physical infrastructure as well. We do not need to build a brand new physical setting for innovation, with all its attendant costs and demands. The physical infrastructure for a STAMP is already here in our city. Eastman Business Park, now wanting for occupants, is just one example of an existing place ready to become a STAMP.

Leaders, hear this: the time to build more sprawling greenfield development, many miles from our existing human and physical capital, is over. We can no longer afford any economic, cultural or physical plan that is not firmly lodged in what is already our greatest asset: our people, our city.


Part 2

In the interest of trying to come to a better understanding of what we believe is a very misguided decision to locate a Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Park (STAMP) in Alabama, New York, out in Genesee County, we hopped in the car for the voyage west to the site. The STAMP here is aimed at generating 10,000 jobs, and will have a completed price tag north of $500 million. About an hour later (yes, we took the expressways, and it was mid-morning, not rush hour), we arrived.

Alabama is quite a small hamlet – a few dozen buildings surrounded by farmland. Less than a mile away is the 10,000 acre Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, with its swamps and meadows and woodlands.

The site is within the Genesee County AG-2 district, as designated by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. The stated purpose of designated agriculture districts is “to protect and promote the availability of land for farming purposes.” Genesee County names the site as containing “prime” farmland, and much of the site area is within a designated Smart Growth Zone. In New York State, our legislated Smart Growth Policy says this:

“Section 6-0105. State smart growth public
infrastructure policy.

It is the purpose of this article to augment the state’s environmental policy by declaring a fiscally prudent state policy of maximizing the social, economic and environmental benefits from public infrastructure development through minimizing unnecessary costs of sprawl development including environmental degradation, disinvestment in urban and suburban communities and loss of open space induced by sprawl facilitated by the funding or development of new or expanded transportation, sewer and waste water treatment, water, education, housing and other publicly supported infrastructure inconsistent with smart growth public infrastructure criteria.”

The site’s western boundary, literally, is a reservation for the Tonawanda Band of the Seneca Indians. Further north – about 6 miles – is the Village of Medina, population 6,000, and 14 mile to the southeast is Batavia, population 15,000.

So, what did we conclude during our sojourn? Several things.

Alabama has a lot going for it. Designated and protected prime farmland, a Smart Growth Zone, a nearby National Wildlife Refuge, substantial history for Native-Americans, designated and protected wetlands, great opportunities for activities outdoors.

Alabama is not near a major population center, has little existing infrastructure, few skilled workers, no transit, and no brownfield sites already prepared for redevelopment. To get to Alabama from Rochester or Buffalo, workers need to plan on a commute by car of about an hour.

To put a STAMP out in Alabama, with 10,000 workers, is complete madness. Not only would the STAMP violate nearly all of the assets of the place, and would certainly not represent anything approaching Smart Growth, but a STAMP here would mean missing the opportunity to employ new job creation where it is most logical, and will do the most good – a city, any city.

We thought it was a bad idea before we went to Alabama. After our visit, we are sure. This is a legacy mistake in the making. Perhaps better, another legacy mistake in the making.

In a recent newspaper article in Rochester, it was suggested that a model for STAMP is the Intel Campus in Hillsboro, Oregon. Just to be quite clear, Hillsboro is less than 15 miles from downtown Portland, and that site is served by the region’s light rail transit system, with trains every 15 minutes.

Howard Decker is an architect, urbanist and author. With partners he built a practice in Chicago, acted as Chief Curator of the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., and returned to practice with the New York-based firm of Ehrkenright Eckstut & Kuhns. He is a lifelong historic preservationist, and a specialist in transportation and urban infrastructure. His extensive experience in television and film was displayed most recently in a PBS special on Chicago architect Daniel Burnham. He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Since his arrival in Rochester, he has been a founding member of Reconnect Rochester, and is on the Boards of the Rochester Regional Community Design Center and Friends of the Garden-Aerial.

Editor’s Commentary

I became a planner to help create better places. I find myself frustrated and disheartened to be part of a profession that is often just a cog in a dysfunctional development machine. It would do us well as individual planners and as a professional organization to examine our role in poorly conceived, unsustainable, projects that will harm the place we call home and presumably love: Upstate New York.
Best Planning Apps of 2014
The article first appeared on Planetizen
www.planetizen.com

By Jennifer Evans-Cowley

Each year Brittany Kubinski and I provide an update on mobile application. A mobile app is an application software designed to run on smartphones, tablet computers and other mobile devices. Mobile applications (apps) have the possibility to enhance public participation in local governance and planning, as well as the ability to improve efficiency and data collection for planners. We annually survey a cross-section of planners to understand their app use habits, and in doing so developed a comprehensive list of the most effective mobile apps for planners. During December of 2013 we surveyed planners on their use of mobile apps in the planning profession. We asked planners what types of mobile apps they are currently using, what apps they would like to see developed in the future, and what mobile apps they themselves are working on developing.

Follow this link to the full article and best apps!
http://www.planetizen.com/node/66853
Editor’s Note: The correspondent wished to remain anonymous

We all know that the field of planning is a diverse one with planners undertaking different jobs/career options within the field. Transportation planning, environmental planning, urban design, land use planning, and community and economic development are just a few of the types of planning fields that planners occupy. The public, private and not-for-profit sector each hire planners in these areas of specialization. In other words, planning is a vast and broad field.

When state agencies that don’t understand this basic premise about planning make major policy decisions regarding qualifying credentials for civil service exams, they set up a disparate system that punishes planners unfairly. This was seen recently in a decision by the NYS Department of Civil Service when it issued an announcement for its upcoming (now past) civil service examination for “Environmental Analyst Trainee.” The exam notice specifically listed those college degrees that were acceptable as a prerequisite to take the exam. Degrees included: environmental studies, environmental science, geography, landscape architecture and environmental planning. The exam notification also specifically stated that a degree in urban planning would not be accepted as a qualifying degree. There are several things wrong with this list.

As planners we can discern that Civil Service was attempting to disqualify those with a Master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning, the common degree issued by planning schools, from taking this exam. But they made an error that no state agency should make. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, they failed to realize that many who have a degree in Urban and Regional Planning have a majority of classes in some of the qualifying “areas” that they listed. If one’s 60 credit master’s program consisted of 30 credits in environmental planning or environmental studies or land use planning, why disqualify the person from taking the exam? In many instances, those 30 credits are more than the person has taken who has a BA/BS in environmental studies or land use planning.

To add further insult, the State Civil Service Commission prohibits anyone from using their experience as qualifying to take the exam. Thus, if you have a master’s in urban and regional planning and you’ve practiced land use planning for 20 years, you don’t qualify to take the exam; but a person coming directly from college with the land use planning degree, which we all know is not much different in terms of course work from a degree in urban and regional planning, does qualify to take the exam.

This entire frustrating situation was conceived and carried out by bureaucrats at the state who have no clue about planning programs, planning degrees or even what degrees are offered by schools in this country. Apparently they didn’t even look at Paterson’s Guide to Colleges before they started naming qualifying and
non-qualifying degrees for the exam. That is unacceptable from a state level agency making human resource decisions.

Much of this might be more easily addressed to the bureaucrats if planners were licensed. Planners are not licensed in New York. If we had licensure, which should be our AICP certification, we could argue that as licensed planners, our specific degree is less important than what our licensure demonstrates—that we know our field of practice and have demonstrated an ability to carry out the practice of planning in a professional manner. Recently a bill to license geologists was proposed in New York, and it’s likely this new professional category of licensure will be added to the state. Planners however, are still unlicensed. A hair stylist, a massage therapist, and a nail technician are licensed, but those with master’s degrees in the planning field are not.

Unfortunately, the instance described above was not an isolated one. State Civil Service recently issued what it called the Professional Career Opportunities Exam, which consisted of almost 100 job titles that were covered by one single exam. Several planning related titles were covered by this exam including Coastal Resources Specialist I and Environmental Specialist. Two of the qualifying degrees listed for the Coast Resources Specialist title don’t exist. Once again State Civil Service cited the non-existent urban planning degree, and they added another non-exist degree, the regional planning degree. The Environmental Specialist title includes two degrees that don’t exist either—environmental planning and cultural resources. How can the “human resources” agency for the State make such blatant errors?

For those who took the exam, the chances of working for the state in any of these 100 titles will be very slim. First, by combing these job titles and testing for them via one exam a huge civil service qualifying list with thousands upon thousands of people on it will be created. To even be considered for state employment one will have to get over 100 on the exam. That only happens for those with veteran credits. Thus, it’s unlikely that anyone without the 10 points that veterans now get (it used to be five points, but last year the citizens of the NYS ap-proved a referendum giving veterans 10 points on civil service exams) will be called for an interview.

When the State has huge lists like this and the “top three candidates” all have a score of 100 or 105, Civil Service tells hiring agencies to randomly pick 10 or 15 candidates (depending on how many you think you’ll need to interview) from those that have the top score and interview them for a position. Thus, your chance of working for the State boils down to: Did you serve your country and were you lucky enough to get hit with the dart when the hiring agency randomly picked 15 people from those that scored 100. It has nothing to do with how good your resume looks or what experience you have. Unlike the private sector where your resume determines if you get an interview, at the state it’s the luck of the draw.

This was less common with the way the State used to conduct business, as the civil service lists were small and you could interview everyone who got 95 or 90 on an exam. But with thousands competing via one exam for 80 plus job titles, it creates lengthy lists that civil service has determined will be canvassed “at random”. It makes their life easier (they only have to issue one exam, not 80), but it makes the hiring process more arbitrary. Not many realize this is how these new “super lists” are canvassed, which is unfortunate, as without outside pressure Civil Service will be likely to increase, not decrease the number of positions it hires using this process.
A Planning Pioneer from Rochester

By Evan Lowenstein

Imagine my pleasant surprise—combined with some mortification for not knowing sooner—when I learned that one of the pioneers in urban planning and planning education was a Rochesterian! Charles Mulford Robinson (1869–1917) was not only a pioneering urban planner who took the lead on plans for several American cities, but was also a leading planning theorist, journalist, and writer. He also was one of the first teachers of planning and community design— a Professor of Civic Design at the University of Illinois, which was only one of two universities offering courses in Urban Planning at the time, the other being Harvard.

Certainly, some of Robinson’s ideas unfortunately reflect the prevailing discriminatory views of his time, but even though I would disagree with and discredit some of his planning ideas as a result, I think raising his name from obscurity can serve as a great conversation-starter about community planning, design, and development–topics that more people need to be talking about more often!

Robinson is remembered in Rochester’s Highland Park with a small monument at the corner of Mount Hope Avenue and Robinson Drive.