

October 20, 2008

**MICHIGAN ASLA ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE &
AWARDS GALA**

THE ART OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | OCTOBER 23, 2008
FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK

There is still time to register for this year's conference if you haven't done so already!

Featuring Keynote Speaker Bill Thompson, FASLA, Editor of *landscape architecture*

Mr. Thompson draws upon his travels to landscapes worldwide and his reflections for his monthly "Land Matters" column to raise pointed questions about the role of the art of the landscape and its relation to fashionable trends and to landscape architects' role as stewards.

Are you a first time visitor to Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park or a returning guest? Come experience Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture with an Educational Guided Tour

This year's conference will also feature the following topics and speakers:

SketchUp: Redefining the Tools of the Trade | James Greene, ASLA, JJR

Michigan Licensure Initiative & Grassroots Lobbying – What's in it for you | Keith Cheli, ASLA, Michigan ASLA GAC Chair & Derek Dalling, Michigan ASLA Executive Directory & Lobbyist

Getting Published in LAM | Bill Thompson, FASLA

Complete agenda and registration is available on the Michigan ASLA website.

[Please click here for more details.](#)

ASLA NATIONAL UPDATE – PAM BLOUGH, ASLA, MICHIGAN ASLA TRUSTEE

This will be my last national email update to all of you.

At the annual conference last week I was sworn in as a new ASLA National Executive Committee Member as Vice President of Finance. This is a very exciting and wonderful opportunity for me to bring change and influence to our Society. Rest assured I will continue to bring our Michigan perspective to national issues. With this honor, I will be passing on the Michigan Trustee seat to Vanessa Warren. Vanessa was also at the annual meeting this year, so I expect that she will be forwarding her perspectives to you.

I want to give you an update on the national meeting, but first I want to encourage all of you to join me next week, October 23rd at Meijer Gardens for our state annual meeting. Bill Thompson, Editor and Chief of our national magazine, Landscape Architecture will be joining us. He is always an interesting speaker and has kept his topic as a surprise. I am sure that it will be provocative and thought provoking. Also we will have sessions on the design of the Children's Garden, tours of the Garden, a second session by Bill on getting your projects published, an update on our licensure efforts,(huge things are happening!) and a great session on graphics. See our web site www.michiganasla.org for a registration form. It is not too late to come!

Back to the annual conference and my week. On Wednesday I attended my first Executive Committee meeting where we develop the agenda for action, review the office administration, and set our sites for the upcoming year. We had the night off and I had a great evening walking through Philly and then a few of us ended up at a Cuban restaurant. The conversation wandered but included discussion on sustainable design throughout the country, and our lobby efforts in Washington.

Thursday and Friday were day long meetings of the Board of Trustees. A good synopsis of our business is included below so I will move on. On Friday night I attended the special reception for the Induction of Honorary Members. Each year ASLA awards significant national and international persons with honorary ASLA memberships to persons that support the ideals of landscape architecture. It is always so wonderful to see how deeply touched these people are by being considered a part of landscape architecture and their ability to carry our messages out into the world.

On Saturday, the conference opened with an address by Larry Selzer, the CEO of the Conservation Fund who provided in sites into the need of nature within our culture. The Expo Hall also opened and great sessions were offered. Saturday afternoon I took a break and walked down to the Museum of Art and caught a free outdoor concert of Bruce Springsteen at an Obama Rally. Saturday night I attended the Induction Ceremony for the Council of Fellows. Our own Michiganiaan Randy Metz, FASLA was inducted through a special presentation ceremony.

Sunday morning I attended the General Session which focused on Green Infrastructure: Lessons from Abroad with five key international landscape architects. Sunday continued with the Expo Hall and more sessions. Sunday night a group of MSU alumni got together for dinner to look at ways to support the LA programs at MSU.

Monday morning I was back at educational sessions including a very interesting session on the use of outdoor recreation to reduce drug use in ailing senior populations, a graphic workshop, and another on creative storm water control techniques. At the closing session we heard Charlie Cook of the New York Times provide us comments on the upcoming elections. Not to be outdone, Monday night was another exciting night as our Peter Pollack, FASLA received one of the highest awards given by ASLA. Yes, bigger than Fellow. Peter was awarded The Community Service Award for his lifetime of providing what else, community service. We all know how deserving he was of this wonderful award. Even better, Peter and Eleanor invited me to share this evening at their table with their family and friends. It was a terrific ending to the conference!

You may have found I rambled a bit, but I like for you all to know that I am out there representing Michigan to the best of my ability and seizing the opportunities that our great association has to offer. I encourage all of you to put next year's conference on your calendar. It will be in CHICAGO on September 18-22. Come for a day, come for several days, but don't miss this opportunity.

With that I will close. I hope to see you all at Meijer Garden on the 23rd!

Pam

October 15, 2008

Governance and Administration

- During the annual conference's closing ceremony, ASLA **welcomed Angela Dye, FASLA, as its new President** and **Gary Scott, ASLA, as the President-Elect.**
- As one of her first official duties, **President Dye** will be representing ASLA at the **Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction** awards ceremony in Montreal on Oct. 16-17.
- ASLA had another very successful annual meeting this year! **Philadelphia was the host city** with **Pennsylvania/Delaware as the host chapter.** In addition to the networking of members and the numerous continuing education credits earned, this was the **most sustainable conference to date.** ASLA plans to continue the goal of raising the bar with every conference to make each more sustainable than the last.
- At its meeting in Philadelphia, the **Board of Directors** approved revisions to the FY 09 and FY 10 operating budgets; amended the reserves policy; confirmed the ASLA strategic objectives; approved the FY 09 Annual Operating Plan; discussed legislative priorities for 2009/2010; and approved revisions to public policies on Urban Growth and Development, Memorials, and Transportation Facilities and Corridors.
- The green roof still remains popular although the third growing season is practically over. ASLA is **seeing more international visitors** as the green roof gains popularity. Prior to the conference, ASLA hosted the owners of a **firm from Israel** who are interested in doing more green roofs in their country. ASLA will also be **hosting students from Taiwan**; a tour coordinated by professors at the University of Maryland.

Government Affairs

- ASLA Government Affairs staff appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Chapter Presidents' Council during the ASLA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia to discuss the Society's advocacy efforts. Government Affairs look forward to working with the **Chapters** overall, **Chapter Presidents and Student Chapter Presidents** to prepare for **ASLA's In-District Advocacy Day on February 18, 2009.**
- The **Wisconsin chapter** met with landscape contractors on October 8 to hammer out compromise language on its practice act legislation. The chapter reports that the **negotiations were successful** and appears that the agreement will allow the contractors to *support* the legislation in 2009, including testifying on behalf of the bill. **The Michigan chapter has had companion legislation pass their respective houses.** The chapter is cautiously optimistic that the bills can cross over to be approved and sent to the governor when the legislature convenes for its "lame duck" session after the election.
- ASLA has signed onto a letter to the **House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee** urging the committee to develop transportation policies that will contribute

to healthy lifestyles and improve public health. Specifically, the letter recommends that the committee hold hearings on the relationship between transportation policies, land use, public health, air quality, and harmful automobile emissions. The letter is drafted by the **"Safe Routes To Schools" Coalition** and coalition members, including ASLA, are co-signors of the letter.

Member and Chapter Services

- The **Chapter President's Council** hosted their annual meeting on Thursday, October 2, plus a second half-day of Public Relations Training on Friday, October 3.
- **The Member Service Committee** met during the annual meeting on Saturday, October 4, where they discussed the 2009 committee goals. The committee then **hosted the New and Corporate Member Reception** immediately following their meeting with over **70 members in attendance**.
- **The Emerging Professionals Committee** met for dinner on Friday, October 3. The committee reviewed their charge and discussed goals for 2008-2009.
- The **Leadership Development Committee (LDC)** met for breakfast on Sunday, October 5, where they discussed the committee charge and had general conversation on leadership.
- All ASLA **Student Chapter Presidents** were invited to a **luncheon** hosted on Saturday, October 4. Twenty-five attendees came to **share activities and fundraiser ideas** and to **discuss what they would like to see on asla.org**.
- Staff updated the **Chapter Leadership and Student Chapter Leadership** email distribution groups; and **created a new Chapter Public Relations Chair** email distribution group.

Public Relations and Communications

- **The new asla.org went live October 1**, just prior to the 2008 annual meeting. A new design, search, navigation, and interactive features are key highlights. ASLA is also implementing Google Analytics to set new benchmarks to monitor traffic over time. *Please note:* These numbers are likely to be lower than you are used to seeing, as Google Analytics is more exacting in how it counts than our previous tracking system. The important thing to watch is movement over time.
- On the Web site, we continue to add/restore functionality linked to the **parallel implementation of a new membership database** and expect the site to be fully functional by the end of the month. We will be sending out a survey in early November to gauge reactions to our upgrade and to prioritize the next phases of development.
- More than 30 media registered for credentials at the ASLA Annual Meeting and EXPO, including ***Better Homes and Gardens, Cottage Living, Garden Design, Philadelphia Inquirer, Boston Globe, Miami Herald, Architect, Architectural Record, Landscape Architecture, Planning ULI, Green Source***, and many others.
- At the annual meeting, PR Staff held a successful press conference highlighting a [new Harris Interactive survey](#). The press conference also highlighted the upcoming release of the next report from the Sustainable Sites Initiative. Early coverage includes

Philadelphia's NPR station, Reuters, MarketWatch, Nation's Building News (reaches more than 250,000 builders, developers, and product manufacturers), Energy Efficiency News, SmartBrief, and others. Staff also distributed the latest Business Quarterly press release from the meeting.

- Staff hosted numerous members of the media at the annual meeting, as well as three media roundtables. Subjects for the **three were design critics, professional trade press, and consumer press**. Staff also worked with Sustainable Sites partners to host a **press briefing** previewing the imminent release of the Sites report, incorporating feedback from the first round of public comment. And during the Chapter Presidents Council meeting, staff debuted the **Career Discover Activities** guide, a series of nine PDFs offering step-by-step instructions for bring the profession into school and public gatherings. Staff are also **finalizing a media relations guidebook** to provide turnkey materials and instructions for generating media coverage for chapter events and announcements.
- During the annual meeting, **Web Manager Jared Green conducted exclusive interviews** for LAND Online and the ASLA website. These include discussions with Alexandros Washburn, Chief Urban Designer, NYC, on PlaNYC, and Daniel Tal, RNL Design, on technology for landscape architects. Additional interviews with KongJian Yu, and Jie Hu, two well-known landscape architects from China, will be posted over the next week.
- **Green Community**, a major exhibit at the National Building Museum that includes work of landscape architects, opens next Monday. ASLA is a sponsor and is working with the NBM to develop a lecture, panel discussions, and videos for the project, which will extend into the summer.
- **LAND Online** took a hiatus during the annual meeting. The next issue comes out October 21. The September 23 issue received an open rate of just over 36 percent, with the announcement of the latest Honorary ASLA members taking the top spot.

Publishing and Resource Development

- **A total of 5,317 attendees registered for the 2008 annual meeting, making it the second largest meeting in ASLA history by more than 1,000 attendees.**
When compared by registration category to the 2007 meeting (the largest meeting attendance to date), professional full registrations dropped by only 310, despite worries that the economy would have a harsher impact on attendance. The largest drop from 2007 was in the free EXPO-only category, which was down more than 50 percent, but was still 54 percent higher than the 2006 meeting (the third largest attendance). Once all invoices are processed, a comprehensive revenue/expense analysis will be prepared.
- After some last minute sales and several cancellations due to Hurricane Ike, **the 2008 EXPO featured a net of 406 exhibitors for \$2,142,900 in revenue**, 94 percent toward goal and a slight increase over 2007. The average booth size purchased per exhibitor increased by almost one-half booth over 2007.
- **Sponsorships for the 2008 annual meeting reached a record \$176,000**, a 17 percent increase over 2007.
- Other annual meeting highlights include:

- The **Professional and Student Awards Ceremony** drew more than 1,000 attendees and the **President's Dinner: Presentation of ASLA Honors** seated more than 230 guests. The 2008 awards video will be posted to the website within the next couple of weeks for free downloading and viewing.
- **Thirteen firms participated in the JobLink LIVE program**, conducting more than 150 interviews over the two days in Philadelphia.
- More than 300 guests attended the **Council of Fellows Investiture Dinner** honoring the 20 new Fellows. The video will be posted online soon for free downloading and viewing, and each new Fellow will receive a DVD of the video, a class photo, and a photo of themselves receiving their medal.
- More than 200 attendees participated in the free **ASMP Portrait Studio**.
- Several new initiatives in the **ASLA Commons proved to be extremely popular**. "Ask the Council of Fellows" provided one-on-one consultations for chapter leaders and prospective Fellows nominees. "Ask the Awards Jurors" allowed prospective entrants to discuss their projects and ask questions about the jury process with former jurors. And "Meet the Editors" permitted attendees to pitch stories to representatives of *Landscape Architecture*, *Garden Design*, *Cottage Living*, *Planning*, *Metropolis*, *Architect*, *Architectural Record*, and *GreenSource* magazines. More than 2,100 tote bags were distributed from the Commons as well.
- The **2009 Awards Call for Entries for the Professional and Student Awards** program was distributed at the annual meeting and is now available online. The print version of the Call for Entries will be mailed later this month to 50,000 members and allied professionals.
- **Advertising sales for the December issue of *Landscape Architecture (LAM)* are nearly 20 percent ahead of the same issue in 2007.** Year-to-date *LAM* sales are 11 percent higher than the same period in 2007. The 2009 media kit was released at the annual meeting and the direct mail campaign will launch in the next two weeks.
- **Florence Manufacturing** joined as a Corporate Member.

Information and Professional Practice

- The **Historic Preservation PPN** and the **Parks and Recreation PPN** are the first to publish newsletters using the new content management system associated with the ASLA website redesign launched in early October.

Landscape Architecture Magazine

- LAM Editor Bill Thompson reports that the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia was packed with information and activities. This year's **Bradford Williams Awards for superior writing in LAM** were presented to James Richards, ASLA, and Ethan Carr, FASLA. Among other events, Bill participated in a **Media Industry educational session** with the editors of *Architect*, *Architectural Record*, *Urban Land*, *Green Source*, and *Planning*.

The Michigan Chapter of ASLA
Annual Conference

October 23

The Art of Landscape Architecture

Thursday

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park
Grand Rapids, Michigan

2008