

Wisconsin ASLA Board Meeting Minutes

*Wisconsin Chapter
American Society of Landscape Architects*

**WI ASLA Executive Board Minutes
January 5, 2006**

Call to Order

The January meeting of the WI ASLA Board was called to order at 6:34 p.m., on the 5th of January 2006, at Brocach Irish Pub in Madison, Wisconsin.

Present: Dan Williams – President; Pam Linn – Past-President; Bruce Woods – Past-Past-President; Shawn Kelly – Trustee; Jay Gehler – Treasurer; Rebecca Flood – Member-at-large; Christa Wollenzien – Member-at-large; and Jessie Fink – Secretary; Guest – Prof. Arnie Alanen

Approval of October Meeting Minutes: Shawn Kelly moved to approve the December Executive Board meeting minutes. Seconded by Jay Gehler. Approved by consensus.

President's Report: Dan Williams reported the following:

- The Chapter Presidents Quarterly Conference Call was attended by Jay Gehler. National ASLA requests that chapters send them a calendar of chapter events and appoint both a Public Relations and Marketing contact person for the Chapter. Dan feels that we should post our events calendar and National's Leaders Express mailing on our website, and that the Public Relations position could be filled by the future webmaster.
- There have not been any responses yet for the webmaster position, and only one response for the logo contest.
- FEMA sent out a mailer for Katrina assistance. This should be forwarded on to the membership.
- Dan now has the checkbook.
- Dan will ask Bill to check the mailbox and drop the mail off at JJR once a week.
- WI ASLA should request to have a free booth at the upcoming Home and Garden show to display 2005 award recipients.

Trustee's Report: Shawn Kelly reported the following:

- National's calls to lapsed members appear to be successfully sustaining membership numbers.
- There is still a push for chapter donations to the Green Roof at National headquarters. So far, we have supported the effort to install the Green Roof, the solicitation of material donations, and efforts to find alternative funding sources. We have not yet contributed financially.
- Upcoming issues to be aware of are CIP grant applications and LA month.

Treasurer's Report: Jay Gehler reported the following:

- A detailed Treasurer's report was presented. See attached handout for details. There are a lot of outstanding checks because the December statement from UW Credit Union has not arrived yet.
- The 2004 Tax Return has been completed. See attachment. Note: when we are incorporated, we will have a short tax period return to align our tax year with our budget year.
- For future expense reimbursement requests, label all travel expenses (hotels, meals, etc.) as "travel".

Committee Reports:

Licensure Committee: Shawn Kelly reported the following:

- Dan and Jess have put in a lot of effort notifying the membership of Practice Act issues and fielding questions.
- We have co-sponsorship, but no Senators signed on. Therefore, the fight will be a little longer. The bill has not been assigned to a particular committee yet.
- Shawn will email Board members when committee testimony is needed. Notice may be short.
- The Act does not ask for any more professional status than what Architects and Engineers in Wisconsin already have. Allows consumers to be aware of liability carried by LA's, and make an informed decision.

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Student Chapter: Nothing to report. Students are on winter break.

UW LA Dept.: Shawn Kelly reported the following:

- The faculty will have a retreat on Friday January 13 to discuss the undergraduate and graduate curricula. There is a move to have a more project focused graduate program.
- Shawn is teaching Advanced Stormwater on Tues/Thurs nights from 6:30-9:30 pm for the first half of the spring semester. Anyone interested is invited to sign up.
- The jobs fair is from 11:30-5 on the Friday of the Spring Conference (April 7). Firms will conduct interviews for both students and professionals seeking a job change.

Visibility Committee: Dan Williams reported the following:

- Jay got a great deal on a Dell laptop for the website. A free printer was also included with the computer, which will go to the WI ASLA secretary.
- Sheradyn currently has the webmaster laptop and is working on the website layout. We will be looking for sketches or graphics for the site from the Board. Next month, we'll present where we are at with the design.
- Rebecca Flood brought forward an idea to post on the website information on non-profit groups needing assistance with graphics or site issues, such as the Friends of Pheasant Branch property acquisition in Middleton. The Board agreed that the idea was interesting, and will require a carefully worded disclaimer to address the potential political ramifications.

Alumni Committee: Nothing to report.

Fellows Committee:

- Dan will email out the revised list of members eligible for Fellow status. The submission date is Feb 17.
- Pam suggested nominating Jim Kavemeier.
- Shawn's nomination will be resubmitted.
- Pam suggested that WI ASLA consider having a reception to honor new Fellows like the Potomac Chapter has. Invites could be sent to all Fellows and Past-presidents.

Scholarship Committee:

- Pam and Jess to work on getting a package together for the scholarship entry forms.
- Possible idea to announce the award recipient at the Longenecker Banquet, with the check given at the beginning of the fall semester. This will require quick turn around, as the banquet is April 7.

Old Business:

Incorporation – Pam handed out the incorporation application for review and comment (see handout), with the goal of completing it by the end of February.

Web Site Update – See Visibility Committee Report.

Spring Joint Conference with WAPA – There is a meeting tomorrow (Friday Jan. 6) to discuss the conference agenda. We need to have 6 sessions filled and defined by the end of January. Bruce requested ideas or topics for speakers to be sent to him by noon on Friday. Ideas discussed at the meeting were:

- JFNew to present on the establishment and maintenance of rain gardens and detention basins.
- Historic preservation.
- Sustainable communities - Russell Perry, AIA (SmithGroup).
- Speaker from ASLA National.
- Mayor Riley from Charleston, S.C.
- Stormwater panel featuring a landscape architect, civil engineering, and DNR representative
- Speaker on the future of landscape architecture or disaster relief
- UW-Madison professors, possibly of environmental science or philosophy
- Lawyer discussing contracts and business law

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For speakers, APA usually does not give them any financial assistance. The Board agreed that our speakers should be reimbursed for travel, lodging, and meals, and that an honorarium may also be furnished. By drawing larger names for last spring's conference, we increased attendance to 125 from only 50-75 attendees in the past.

There was discussion over charging vendors for display booths. APA charges \$500, we've charged \$350 in the past. Their booths are typically displays by consulting firms, ours are product oriented. Idea was presented to keep the discrepancy in fees, but raise our fee to \$400/booth. Jay will work on updating the vendor list.

Registration for the conference will include fees for both days or for only Thurs or Fri attendance. The professional awards will be presented on Thursday evening, but recipients will also be asked to attend the conference on Friday where they will again be recognized at noon when APA gives out their awards.

New Business:

Increasing Chapter Membership – Dan pursuing possible letter to business owners encouraging payment of membership dues or partial dues for their employees, especially for younger members.

HALS Update – Arnie Alanen reported back on previous support given by WI ASLA to the Wisconsin HALS effort, and gave an update as to what the current program needs are (See attached handout). Jessie Fink moved to provide \$1000 to the UW Department to support a work study student for the HALS effort for the spring semester and summer. Jay Gehler seconded. Approved by consensus. The possibility of securing a CIP grant to further the HALS program was also discussed, and Arnie stated that he would be willing to review the grant and provide details on in-kind grant match.

CIP Grants – Two CIP grants are planned – (1) Website/PR/Newsletter and (2) HALS initiative / book on historic landscape architecture in Wisconsin. Forms should be on the ASLA website. Bruce will also send Dan an old grant application to use as an example.

Professional Awards – Christa Wollenzien reported that no award submissions have been received yet. A reminder email will be sent on Friday to encourage submissions.

Next meeting: The February Executive Board meeting is scheduled for 6 pm on Monday, February 6 in Johnson's Creek, WI.

Adjournment: Pam Linn motioned to adjourn. Jay Gehler seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:35 p.m.

Notes taken and written by Chapter Secretary Jessie Fink.

HALS IN WISCONSIN: JENSEN AND WRIGHT, AND THE KICKAPOO TOO (forthcoming in ASLA Historic Preservation Interest Group Newsletter)

Prof. Arnold R. Alanen
Department of Landscape Architecture
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Wisconsin is a Midwestern state with a remarkable array of glaciated and non-glaciated natural landscapes. For close to 12,000 years the forces of human agency have molded, shaped, and transformed many of these physical features into distinctive cultural landscapes.

I have devoted considerable time to the study of these cultural landscapes during more than three decades as a faculty member in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Throughout this period I have always been impressed with the diversity and range of Wisconsin's cultural landscapes, which include designed, vernacular, and ethnographic examples. Thus, when HALS was formalized as a permanent NPS program in 2001, I immediately realized that several of the state's historic cultural landscapes should be considered for inclusion in this nation-wide effort.

Two Wisconsin sites with significant HALS potential are familiar to every knowledgeable landscape architect and landscape aficionado in the state and Midwest: The Clearing and Taliesin. The Clearing, developed as the Door County home and school of landscape architect Jens Jensen in the 1930s, continues today as an educational facility that maintains the traditions and landscapes developed by the Danish landscape architect. Taliesin, located by Spring Green, is associated with architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and also serves as one of the most important designed landscapes in the nation and world.

Other notable designed landscapes in Wisconsin include parks and park systems in Milwaukee (F.L. Olmsted, Sr., and Warren Manning), Madison (O.C. Simonds), and La Crosse (John Nolen), as well as designs for the State Capitol grounds in Madison (H.W.S. Cleveland and Nolen), and plans for the federal greenbelt town of Greendale (Elbert Peets), and the small company towns of Kohler (Peets and the Olmsted Brothers) and Montreal (Albert Taylor).

Among the vernacular landscapes that already have received some recognition are the Belgian-American Rural Historic District in Namur, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1990; and the Tipplesaukee Farm Rural Historic District in Richland County, owned by members of the same family for almost 170 years, and a landscape that still retains features dating to its period of significance, 1838-1905. When considering ethnographic landscapes, Wisconsin embraces some of the nation's most important Native American effigy mounds; the remnants of platform mounds and stockades at Aztalan, in Jefferson County, are strikingly similar to the World Heritage Site of Cahokia, Illinois, albeit at a smaller scale.

The landscapes mentioned above are generally well documented, but other less familiar sites also merit HALS consideration. But which ones are they? To help answer this question I conceived of a project that would include a state-wide inventory of historic landscapes in Wisconsin, and which is somewhat similar to the surveys that many state historic preservation agencies make of architectural resources. After securing a small grant from the Wisconsin Chapter of the ASLA, I was able to initiate a pilot survey of potential landscapes in a few counties. I then competed for and received a grant from the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which allowed me to work with a research assistant in pursuing the project during the 2004-05 academic year.

Our first step was to consider the state's more than 2,000 National Register of Historic Places nominations to locate those that include any recognition of landscapes. A much more expansive source was provided by the Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and History Index (AHI), an online database of more than 120,000 historic properties in the state. The AHI offers a relatively good source of data about some landscape types, but it does not always provide detailed or completely reliable information. And, as is true of such surveys, the AHI obviously focuses overwhelmingly on architecture, not landscapes. Nevertheless, the National Register and AHI databases, along with miscellaneous sources and publications, provided us with information about more than 1,000 sites that had a landscape component of some note.

Quite obviously, relatively few of these 1,000 sites are significant enough for HALS consideration. (The complete listing, however, could serve as the basis for publications about the state's cultural landscapes.) The obvious places revealed in the survey include parks and cemeteries in several of Wisconsin's small cities; community squares and commons; landscapes associated with state hospitals, asylums, hospitals, and veterans' homes; college and university campuses; and so forth. Even though they often cannot be documented in a conventional manner, vernacular landscapes are important to consider since they represent working environments that have both historical and contemporary features. In Wisconsin, these places include the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail, the nation's first rail to trails property; and certain segments of the state's Rustic Roads program, which represent some of America's earliest scenic byways. More difficult to document are vernacular landscapes that define an entire region. Should quintessential examples of the state's dairy farming landscape be considered? Can an entire river valley, such as the Kickapoo, represent the unique, non-glaciated landscape of southwestern Wisconsin? Should an entire county, Door, be included because it has its own landscape identity within the state and entire Midwest? These are questions that might best be addressed by interacting with other HALS participants throughout the United States.

Over the ensuing year Wisconsin's HALS program will be devoted to documentation. The Wisconsin Chapter of ASLA will play a key role in these efforts—especially those members who have a clear interest in the state's historic landscapes. Once the landscapes designed by Jensen, Wright, Simonds, Cleveland, Nolen, Peets, and others have been considered, we can devote our attention to the state's rich array of vernacular places, ranging from dairy farming regions to the Kickapoo.