

Summary of State/Regional Focus Group

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Why people belong to CCAPA

- Joined after school—stay members to keep up with professional development as planner
- Networking—learn from others in field, connect with planners throughout state

What Chapter activities are particularly useful

- Jobs postings on website
- Newsletter (give people option of going electronic or paper)
- Planners listserv
- Directory (on-line OK)
- Legislative activities

Ideas for additional chapter activities/improvements to existing activities

- **Workshops:** How to Deal with the Media; How to Understand Traffic Reports; session on what planning is, and how it differs from other disciplines like zoning enforcement and landscape architecture; land use training, and opportunities for land use commissioners to participate in this training and other workshops; work out CCAPA discounts for registration at conferences of partner agencies
- **Website:** what's happening in other states;
- **Meetings:** conduct membership meetings on a more regular schedule, such as CAZEO which has regular membership meetings at a fixed time and place. Meetings are as much about networking as training. Maybe organize membership meetings around subgroups by interest or functional area, such as real estate group of Connecticut Bar Association—mini-network within larger network. Could also organize meetings on a geographic basis—ask RPO's to host. Consider late afternoon/evening meetings as well as daytime meetings.
- **Public Exposure for Planning Profession and CCAPA:** get more CCAPA members to contribute articles to "Place" section of Hartford Courant
- **Legislative—general:** encourage more grass-roots advocacy on legislative issues, and coordination with other partner agencies; provide guidance on how to use CGA website; be a stronger voice on growth planning issues
- **Legislative—policy positions:** questions raised regarding how CCAPA establishes policy position, and how to get membership more involved in the development of policy positions. Ideas: draft policy papers offered for comment by membership prior to being finalized; hold a general meeting on positions at start of session with opportunity for membership input.

Major issues affecting the planning profession

- Housing—cost and availability
- Transportation
- Role of volunteer commissioners in planning
- Growth management/smart growth
- Public safety as it relates to development

General discussion of planning issues

- CCAPA should take strong interest in state level planning. “Think Tank” approach. Transportation is important, but should not drive planning process. Placement of TSB responsibilities in OPM opens opportunity for better coordination between transportation planning and the State Plan of C & D.
- Other groups are filling the void in analyzing the big issues, and suggesting strategic responses. One example is the HOMEConnecticut affordable housing campaign.
- Maybe need to get DEP’s land use stewardship initiative out on road, to begin reaching out to public at large on these issues, then work up to Governor’s office (note: this meeting was held before the Governor’s EO 15 on Responsible Growth was issued)
- Not sure that state executive offices are aware of CCAPA.
- If CCAPA requests meetings with commissioner’s or governor’s offices, needs to have a specific “ask”, as well as discussion of what value CCAPA can bring to the executive level policy discussion. Keep message simple.