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reading for
you!*

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What's New

In land use planning

RFM Land Use Consulting

Public Participation in the Technological World pt. 2

As we began in the last issue, public participation in the technological world has raised at least a couple issues on how the public can participate in the decision making process.

Aside from businesses limiting non-work related activities on corporate computers, what about those who do not have access to computers much less the internet? Hard to believe in this day and age, but technology may not be in every household.

While yes there are places like libraries and community centers that might provide free or low-cost access, they may be limited in number or amount of time to access.

Most, if not all, meetings are recorded and made

accessible for future viewing. But that does not address the need, or desire, to participate in the here and now on a particular topic or project. Yes, one can submit comments via writing, but that assumes that notices have been sent out in sufficient time for people to look at the materials and submit written comments in order for the decision makers to get the comments. This also assumes that the decision makers actually GET the written comments. Not saying they don't, but one never knows for sure.

Join me over the course of several issues as we explore this issue. If you have input on the subject, please share!

Join me on...

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Focus on a Service – Community Organization Rep.

Community Organizations can come in many forms...Homeowners Associations (HOA's), Neighborhood Associations, "Friends of..." Associations, and many more that could be named. They all have a singular purpose: to look after their particular piece of the community.

These groups could be concerned about how their neighborhood is growing, the state of the roads or infrastructure, whether or not there are parks or other recreational facilities, or how they can improve their neighborhoods. A community I am familiar with even started an Area Plan for their

community. An Area Plan is like a Mini General Plan, meant for a specific neighborhood – not entire City or County. They worked with the jurisdiction, but did not have a neutral party looking after what the jurisdiction was doing to ensure their interests were being looked after.

A lot of times, if not all the time, these community organizations are made up of volunteers drawn from that community. It is great to see that outpouring of concern for their neighborhood, and they certainly know that area well. But sometimes knowing what to do or what

Focus on a Service (cont.)



to say to get the attention of the local jurisdiction may be difficult or time consuming. Not to mention that a lot, if not all, of the residents are employed with "day jobs" and might not be able to do things as they'd like. Yes, some people may be retired and put more time in, but who wouldn't rather spend time with family, right?

That's where I can come in. Knowing the lingo, the processes, and in most cases the needs of the community, I can be hired either

on a case-by-case or retainer basis to help address issues with the jurisdiction. I can meet with jurisdictional leadership on behalf of the community, or with them at the same time; attend meetings on behalf of the community; or just be a resource at the other end of the phone.

To Laugh, or Not to Laugh, that is the Joke...

A truckload of Vicks Vaporub overturned on the freeway the other day.... oddly there was no congestion for eight hours!

It's said that cowboys used to put lanterns on their saddles at night to see...guess this is the start of Saddle Light Navigation!

Two guys walked in to a bar...the third guy ducked....

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Yes, Planners do have a sense of humor!!



Social Media in Marketing as a Consultant

I can't believe that I am old enough to be able to say "back in the day..." with a straight face. But I can. And do.

Back in the day, "marketing" something (whether it be having a lemonade stand, or an upcoming party down the street) was simply word of mouth, or posting a flyer on a telephone poll, or telling the schoolyard gossip. Word spread like wildfire. And in most cases it was free. For businesses, it was ads in the newspaper (remember that?) or in the yellow pages (yes, I'm old enough to know what a telephone book/yellow pages is).

Nowadays, with technology as it is, one must have a website, Facebook Page, LinkedIn Page, Instagram page, and...well, the list goes on. All this to get the word out one is in business.

But does it really work? Some say yes, some say no, some say wait and see.

As you can see on the first page of this newsletter, I do have some social media links to go and see. I also have a Google Business Profile. Is it working? Well, it's hit and miss. People are looking at them, but for the most part are not really reaching out.

One of my sources of advertising has resulted in one potentially "money laundering" type request of services (long story), and another potentially serious request that went silent on me almost immediately. Disappointing? Well, yeah, of course. Unexpected? Well, no, not really.

Is it worth it? Even after nearly a year and a half of business, can't really answer that one.



Ethics on this side of the counter

This may be a controversial topic for most people...are Planners ethical? Should they be? On which side of the counter (those serving the jurisdiction, or those serving as consultants) are the most ethical planners?

Answers: Sometimes, yes, and it's hard to tell.

Per the American Institute of Certified Planners (which I am proud to be a part of), the Code of Ethics requires we: (1) serve the public interest, (2) perform work competently and independently, (3) contribute to the development of the profession, and (4) strive for high standards of integrity, proficiency and knowledge.

The bulk of my career has been on the public sector (governmental) side of the

counter as we say in the business. It has only been recently I embarked on the private sector side of the counter (consulting). Why give up a "guaranteed" job one may ask? Ethics is the short answer. I won't go in to the lurid details, but let's say I've seen things that much like sausage and law making, no one should really see.

Being in the private sector now, in my humble opinion, I have a better chance of fulfilling those ethical requirements of my certification.

Will this cause me to lose business? Maybe. But it is my humble stance that my clients need an ethical voice on their side so that they can make an informed decision on their projects.





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***Where The
Customer Comes
First***

Publications

I hope you have enjoyed this publication of RFM Land Use Consulting's newsletter! While short in nature, I hope you have found the information useful.

It is my hope to periodically publish a newsletter to keep my clients up to date with articles relating to the planning field, as well as highlight projects I feel are of note for the community.

If there are subjects of interest in the

planning field you would like to see here, please feel free to contact me with those ideas, and I will include them in future publications.

Go to www.rfmlanduseconsulting.com to subscribe to this newsletter, or click on the QR code below, it's free!

Thank you for reading!

Topics In future editions of the newsletter...

- Legal issues
- Planning theories
- Trends in planning
- Highlight of a service(s)
- Project highlights (both mine, and those in the Community)
- Public Participation in the technological world (ongoing)
- Cycles in the Planning Field
- What *IS* the planning field anyway?
- Website

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