

NW Universal Design Council April 16, 2009 Meeting Notes

Agenda

- I. Business Meeting
 - Introductions
 - Updates/Info Share
 - Listserve “Netiquette”
 - Voluntary UD Certification
 - Web site Updates
- II. Tour of Weber Thompson

Attending

- Dana Marek
- Maria Langlais, Aging & Disability Services (ADS)
- Jessica Chow, Seattle Office of Housing
- Reidun Crowley, WA State Housing Finance Commission
- Julie Sengbusch
- Wolf Saar, Weber Thompson
- Mary Curley, IDI
- Sandra Hartje, Seattle Pacific University (SPU)
- Tom Minty, John L Scott/Able Environments
- Don Willott, City of Bainbridge
- Art Mussman, ADS Advisory Council
- Rosemary Cunningham, ADS
- Joyce Joneschief, Topaz Interior Design
- Emory Baldwin, ZAI
- Joceylyn Freilinger
- Mary Beth Lum, Alliance of People with Disabilities
- Cheryl Kakalia, Turning Point Moves
- Amy Crawford
- SPU Students: Charity Bilyeu, Jordan Van Matre, Kate Dougherty, Larissa Anderson, April Peter, Michelle Rooney

Introductions

Sandra welcomed students from her Universal Design class who joined the meeting both as a learning experience and for extra credit.

Updates/Info Share

- **UD and Green Connections:** As Mike Vowels was unable to attend, Maria distributed the article he wrote for *CAPS Connection*. “Selling Universal and Green Remodels” summarizes the pitch Mike is making to the Built Green of Washington Program for including Universal Design in their points-based checklist for both new construction and remodeling. The article is also available on-line at: <http://www.nahbmonday.com/capsco/issues/2009-04-14/index.html>

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- **Presentation on Transit Oriented Neighborhoods:** Helle Sørholt of Gehl Architects in Copenhagen will be presenting at Seattle City Hall on Tuesday, April 28 @ 6pm. "Transit Oriented Neighborhoods: Livable, Walkable, Sustainable" will include a discussion of transitioning from a car-oriented to pedestrian friendly community and how to achieve a successful and vibrant mix of transportation options. NWUDC members who have heard her speak recommended attending this free presentation:
http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/docs/April2809_Flyer.pdf
- **Forum on Technology & Design for Aging:** Maria distributed flyers for the the 4th annual "gerontechnology" forum from the University of Washington's Institute on Aging. The all day event will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in SeaTac on May 28. Art Mussman has attended these forums in the past and strongly recommended the event to NWUDC members. Emory Baldwin is a member of the forum's planning committee, and mentioned that Charles Durrett, an architect who helped start the Elder Co-housing movement in the US, will be among the presenters. For registration and more information visit <http://depts.washington.edu/geron/conference2009.php>.
- **NWUDC Member Recognition:** Emory Baldwin will attend the AIA Convention in San Francisco next week to accept an AIA Small Project Award in the "Accessible Residential Designs" category. Wolf Saar shared that the building we were meeting in had just been selected as one of the 2009 COTE Top Ten Green Projects by AIA and its Committee on the Environment (COTE). The Terry Thomas Building, Weber Thompson's headquarters, has also received both a LEED Gold certification and a rare LEED Platinum certification for the interior.
- **Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) interested in learning more about UD:** The AAA Advisory Councils for King and Snohomish County will be holding a joint meeting this fall the focus of which will be Aging Readiness. The meeting will include a discussion on the importance of implementing Universal Design in preparation for the coming aging wave. Emory Baldwin will be giving a UD presentation to the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging Conference in Leavenworth this June.

Netiquette

Maria reminded the group that the listserv is set to "reply to all" making it easy to inadvertently send a message to the whole group when intending to send to one recipient. Even if a user selects "reply to sender" the "To" address will still include the NWUDC listserv address. Subscribers were reminded to manually delete the NWUDC email address before replying when they want to reply to a particular individual.

Voluntary UD Certification

ADS received a request from the Snohomish County AAA about setting up a voluntary UD certification process or checklist. The NWUDC agreed that we should connect with Master Builders Association (MBA) on this, and that Sandra Hartje's report for the Housing Task Force would be a good starting point.

Sandra shared copies of the most recent draft of the report, "Recommendations for Universal Design Features and Product Characteristics in New, Single-Family Housing." In the next month, she will convene one more meeting of the Housing Task Force in order to finalize the document. She will send an email to the NWUDC listserv to announce the date and time of the meeting.

The group discussed ways to make the document as usable as possible for several different audiences – primarily designers and homeowners – without getting into county building codes. Prioritization would be helpful (e.g., "essential" and "advanced") – similar to the LEED rating system. Randy suggested incorporating the MBA checklist approach, noting that there are many details and decisions that can affect UD, e.g., tile choices for a floor and their "slipability" rating.

Action Items:

- Sandra will schedule a workgroup meeting to finalize the Housing Task Force report.
- Amy Crawford will contact Bill Morrell (sp?) with MBA about doing a presentation at our next meeting (July 16).

Web Site Update

Mary Curley presented the work she has done thus far on redesigning the NWUDC web site. The group really appreciated being able to see a mock-up of what the site might look like. This also helped facilitate a great discussion on everything from the target audience to the strategic plan and long term vision for NWUDC.

The group agreed that revisiting the strategic plan and vision statements that were crafted last year with the help of Denise Klein would be a good starting point. Maria and Rosemary will look through Margaret's files to find these materials.

One of the initial goals of the NWUDC was to establish a UD center that would serve as a resource for people wanting to learn more about and implement UD. This will be the role of the web site. Prioritization and content are the key to creating a web site that can serve in this role. Ideally, the site would potentially target three different audiences: consumers, architects/designers, and NWUDC members. Someone gave the example of Benjamin Moore as a web site that meets the needs of both consumers and professionals (designers and commercial painters).

Rosemary suggested forming a workgroup that will work on tying this all together and to move the web site forward. Jess Chow circulated a sign-up sheet for volunteers to participate in this process. She will contact the volunteers to schedule a 2 hour meeting

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sometime in May – one hour to review the strategic plan and vision, and one hour to focus on web site content.

The group discussed the idea of becoming a 501-3c organization which would have a number of benefits, primarily the ability to obtain grant funding and access to other resources for nonprofits (e.g., google). Jeanette Franks has helped set this up for other organizations and felt it was not that difficult a process. Mary Curley suggested the group might partner with a larger organization to start out and suggested a New York based group, the Global Universal Design Council: <http://globaluniversaldesign.org/>

Action Items:

- Jess Chow will schedule workgroup meetings for May.
- Maria or Rosemary will circulate documents from previous strategic planning sessions with the workgroup.

Terry Thompson Building Tour

Thank you to Wolf and Scott Thompson for providing us with a tour of their beautiful office building.

- In designing the building, they had three primary goals:
 - sustainability
 - natural light
 - natural ventilation
- The LEED check list was used as a starting point.
- The building includes 250 operable windows, and the conference room windows open automatically based on temperature or CO2 levels.
- The combination of well circulated fresh air and sunshades that move based on light sensors help keep the interior of the building at a comfortable temperature even on the hottest summer days.
- In the summer, air is flushed out of the building every evening so the next morning the building air is fresh and cool.
- Although the building includes many automatic features to help keep it comfortable, it is considered a “user participation building” – if you are warm, open the window; if you are cold, put on a sweater.
- The designers made use of the UW’s “daylighting lab” to help determine how much daylight the building would have.
- Use of steel beams allows for greater air movement throughout the building and also serves as an easy conduit for electrical and other wiring.
- The building is heated with radiant heat using “old school” radiators.
- Conference rooms include fans to help facilitate air movement.
- The conference room walls do double duty serving as “pin-up” boards which can be used to post materials for meetings.
- For more info visit: <http://www.weberthompson.com/terry-thomas-commercial.html>

The next NWUDC Meeting is Thursday, July 16, 9:30-11:30 @ Weber Thompson.