

# Kansas City Section of the American Planning Association Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

March, 2010

## In This Issue

Feature Article

Annual Party!

FBC Workshop

Form Based Codes

Legendary Places

Member Spotlight

Dear KCAPA Member,

Welcome to the March issue of the KC APA Newsletter. We have lots of exciting events coming up this month not the least of which is our Annual Event at Boulevard Brewery. That's one you don't want to miss! Stay informed and connected with all the latest news. Happy reading!

## Featured Article



Do you want to know more about Form Based Codes? Check out Kevin Klinkenberg's article in this issue. You can also register for the upcoming Form Based Codes Seminar.

## KCAPA Annual Event (Party!)-March 25th

## Quick Links...

[KC APA](#)

[APA National](#)

[KCAPA - Facebook](#)

Forward to a Friend

Facebook Fan



Become a fan of KCAPA on Facebook! Click the link above under quick links to join.

# A Celebration in Planning

## Second Annual Event

of the Kansas City Section of the American Planning Association

**Thursday, March 25**  
**5pm- 8pm**

**Muehlebach Suite**  
Boulevard Brewing Company  
2501 Southwest Boulevard

**Save the Date!**

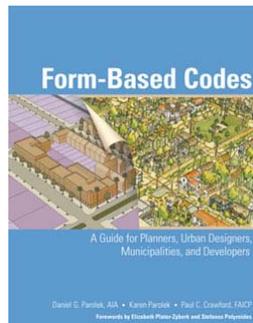


Join us for a great time of food, beer, and great networking at our 2nd Annual KCAPA Annual Event at the top floor of Boulevard Brewery, 2501 Southwest Boulevard, Kansas City, MO from 5 PM to 8 PM.

There's still time to become a sponsor for this event and maybe even have your name on the beer glass or have a feature article in this newsletter! Contact any of your KCAPA Board members below for sponsor opportunities. See you at the party!

### Form Based Codes Workshop

Wednesday, March 24, 2010 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM (Central Time)



There's still time to register for this timely workshop. Form Based Codes are becoming more prevalent in planning codes throughout the nation. Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to learn from the authors of some of the seminal work in this field.

Increasingly, Americans are choosing to live and work in walkable, diverse communities with transit options - when such communities are available. Policy makers are beginning to realize the best way to reduce carbon emissions is to develop in a more compact urban pattern. Nevertheless, poor urban design persists. Why? Unless the right implementation tools are used, better design is difficult to mandate.

Join us to learn about Form-Based Coding, the widely accepted solution. The Form-Based Codes Institute is offering an abbreviated version of its acclaimed Introduction to Form-Based Coding at a greatly reduced registration fee.

**9.0 AIA CES and AICP credits are available for this course.**

For more information contact MARC or go to:

<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=817337>

## Form-based codes - What's the big deal?

by Kevin Klinkenberg



In planning circles today, form-based codes are all the rage. One can hardly attend a conference or read a newsletter without several references to this approach to regulating our cities. But there still remains much confusion as to what exactly a form-based code (FBC) is, how it differs from other approaches to zoning, and where it can be best applied.

Form-based codes are a departure from more conventional approaches in a few key ways. Most importantly are these characteristics:

- They code for a specific result (a plan)
- They re-orient thinking on use/density, form and management
- They emphasize getting the code right upfront and creating an easy review/approval process.

The first characteristic is the most important - a FBC must implement a specific plan for a neighborhood or area, or it will not be effective. These codes are detailed often to the lot and block, and need the background of a quality master plan first and foremost in order to have public support and have a reasonable chance of successful implementation. More specifically, FBC's are almost always done with the intention of creating walkable neighborhoods. Why is this, and why not use them anywhere? Very simply, the

big hole in most communities zoning toolbox is in the regulation of mixed use, walkable neighborhoods. Quality techniques and regulations already exist for much of the rest of the built environment, but the complex, intricate nature that lends itself to urbanity is what cities lack.

Second, FBC's reverse our typical thinking on what to regulate for first. FBC's are essentially "design first" codes, meaning that they emphasize design and character rules as the primary means of regulation, with use and density taking lesser roles. This does not mean they are design guidelines, however. FBC's are based in tangible rules, not in discretionary review processes. As a result, expect to see documents that are highly graphic in nature (with some new jargon), but well defined.

Finally, an expedited review process is a key component of any FBC. These codes are essentially meant to carry a heavy burden on the front end in terms of planning and quality, but in exchange for a simple and quick review/approval process. Many codes (though not all) set up separate review bodies outside of Planning Commission solely to expedite the processing of these applications. This becomes especially critical in working with the development community and their understanding/expectation for using this new zoning approach.

There's obviously more to FBC's than just those three characteristics, but this is a start for a basic understanding. For more in-depth study, please attend one of the many classes run by the Form-Based Codes Institute, which happen around the country. We are fortunate to have a 101 session in Kansas City this month - please register and attend if you can, and encourage your elected officials and planning commissioners to attend as well.

Kevin Klinkenberg can be reached at [kklinkenberg@180deg.com](mailto:kklinkenberg@180deg.com)

### May Special Event! Legendary Places



Celebrate with us on May 6th, 2010 for Ochsner Hare & Hare's 100th Anniversary! Join us at the Liberty Memorial (an historic OHH project) for "Legendary Places: A Regional Symposium about Placemaking". Speakers will include Fred Kent (Project for Public Spaces President), Bruce Knight (APA President), and Gary Scott (ASLA President).

The cost will be \$25 per person, including reception for reservations made through April 9. Beginning April 10 the cost will be \$30. For registration go to : <http://www.ohhkc.com>

2.0 AICP CM credits are pending approval by Missouri APA.

## KCAPA Member Spotlight



**Name:** Brian Pitts

**Place of Employment:** Development Initiatives

**Describe your job and how it relates to planning:**

Brian was formerly employed as a Senior City Planner with Kansas City, MO and worked in the Development Management Division of the Planning and Development Department. In this role, Brian was responsible for maintaining the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations and applying the Code requirements to development plan approvals through recommendations to the Board of Zoning Adjustment, City Plan Commission, and City Council. Seeking to have a greater effect on the development in Kansas City, he left his position with the City and joined the firm of Development Initiatives.

Development Initiatives is an urban planning, real estate consulting and economic development firm based in the River Market neighborhood of Downtown Kansas City. Since joining Development Initiatives in 2007 as a Principal Partner, Brian has led the firm's urban planning, real estate development and entitlement divisions for the company. In that role, Brian represents the firm's clients in design charrettes, neighborhood meetings, and public presentations to the elected officials.

In addition to focusing on a career as a City Planner, Brian has been active in various organizations around the Metro. Brian was instrumental and is the Founder/Director of the Downtown Neighborhood Association. In establishing the non-profit organization, Brian met with downtown residents and businesses to advocate the growth and development of Downtown Kansas City. Along those same lines, Brian has been involved with the Downtown Council for the past 8 years, again focusing his efforts on the redevelopment of our downtown. In 2006, he was awarded the Urban Hero Award by the Downtown Council for his work in re-energizing Downtown Kansas City.

Brian has a true calling to public service and this is made evident by his focus on making Downtown Kansas City a more livable environment both to our residents and visitors. Brian is currently the President of the Kansas City Section of the American Planning Association, which works to promote positive urban planning and design in the 11 County Kansas City Metropolitan Area. Brian is very astute and realizes growth for growth's sake is not the goal of a successful community. To ensure that development progresses in

accordance with sound planning practices, Brian works tirelessly to maximize the assets of Kansas City.

Brian Pitts can be reached at [bpitts@di-kc.com](mailto:bpitts@di-kc.com)

---

### **KC APA Boardmembers**

[Brian Pitts-President](#)

[Shannon Jaax-Vice President](#)

[Joe Rexwinkle-Treasurer](#)

[Kathy Kem-Secretary](#)

[Doug Hermes-MO Section Representative](#)

[Diane Binckley-Member at Large](#)

[Sean Ackerson-Past President](#)

[Greg Czaplewski-KS Section Representative](#)

[Amanda DeBrot-UMKC Student Rep](#)

[Samantha Sink-KU Student Representative](#)

### **Committee Chairs:**

[Jim Hubbell-Professional Development Committee Co-Chair](#)

[Jim Potter-Professional Development Committee Co-Chair](#)

Sincerely,

Brian Pitts, President  
Kansas City Section of the American Planning Association