



The Potomac Valley Chapter of Maryland, AIA, Inc.  
A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects

AIA150 Blue Print for America  
Greener Greenbelt Initiative

### **Urgent Call for Volunteers – 2/22/07**

**Please Respond by March 5, 2007**

*Design matters! The buildings, neighborhoods, and communities we shape as architects shape the lives of those who live, work and play in them!*

#### **AIA 150 Blue Print for America**

2007 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the American Institute of Architects. Nationally, the AIA is committed to celebrating this amazing milestone in ways that will resonate well beyond 2007 through a program called the AIA150 Blue Print for America. Blue Print for America has been envisioned as a way to address the lack of recognition and understanding of the architect's role by providing opportunities for architects to engage directly and broadly with their communities.

#### **AIA•PV Greener Greenbelt Initiative**

AIA•PV has joined the Blue Print for America program by undertaking an "initiative" in the New Deal-era planned community of Greenbelt, Maryland. The goal of the initiative is to help Greenbelt define a pathway to become a sustainable community tomorrow while retaining those qualities that make it special today.

In partnership with Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI), the cooperative which represents the residents of most of "Old" Greenbelt's more than 1600 dwellings, AIA•PV has received a grant of \$15,000 from AIA150 for the "Greener Greenbelt Initiative". GHI is committed to matching the AIA150 grant dollar for dollar.

#### **Greener Greenbelt Community Design Charrette**

With these and other resources in place, AIA•PV is actively preparing a community "visioning" process for Old Greenbelt to be conducted during the summer and fall of 2007. The central piece of the visioning process will be a multi-day "charrette" where AIA•PV members will work side-by-side with professional partners from other fields and community stakeholders. The fundamental goal of this visioning is to help target GHI's capital and operations expenditures over the next 30 years, leading to Greenbelt's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2037.

The Greener Greenbelt Initiative will address community development issues across four broad topic areas: preservation, affordability, livability and sustainability. The scale of issues will range from individual dwelling units to multi-dwelling residential buildings, commercial buildings, multi-building blocks, neighborhoods, and even the entire town in its regional context.

### **Growing Your Career While Contributing**

As a member of AIA•PV, your contribution is needed for this important chapter activity for 2007. To achieve success in Greenbelt, we need to draw widely on the talent and energy of chapter members. Do you and your colleagues have experience with housing? preservation? community design? green building? AIA•PV needs access to your experience and expertise. We need your contribution.

Even more importantly, you should look at the Greener Greenbelt Initiative as an opportunity available to you through AIA•PV to expand your career horizons. It is an opportunity to reach beyond your day-in, day-out, challenges and learn more about the profound challenges facing our communities in the future. Further, it is an opportunity to play an expanded role in shaping the future of a special place. And finally, it is an opportunity to make an even greater professional contribution to your community.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Preparing for and conducting the Greener Greenbelt community visioning process, and especially the design charrette, will require the coordinated collaboration of dozens of people. The community in Greenbelt, particularly the GHI cooperative, is actively engaged in getting ready for the charrette. A “steering committee” comprised of both AIA•PV and GHI members has been organized and is proceeding rapidly with assembling the resources for the Greener Greenbelt Initiative. A strong bond between AIA•PV and the greenbelt community has already been forged. It is time for AIA•PV to draw upon the capabilities of our membership in partnership with the Greenbelt community. It is time to get involved. It is time to get busy.

### **Working Group Co-Chairs**

Four “working groups” have been organized:

- charrette planning
- outreach & stakeholders
- communications
- baseline & benchmark information

Each working group needs participants from both the Greenbelt community and AIA•PV. Most urgently, AIA•PV needs two volunteers to help co-chair each of the four working groups. As working group co-chair, volunteers need to attend monthly Steering Committee meetings (held on the first Tuesday of each month), participate in one monthly working group meeting / conference call (see details below for times), and provide leadership marshaling AIA•PV resources to accomplish ongoing tasks undertaken by the working groups.

Please contact Lloyd Unsell, Hon. AIA, Executive Director of AIA•PV, at [lloyd@aiapvc.org](mailto:lloyd@aiapvc.org), to volunteer or to find out more.

### **Working Group Contributors**

Following this section is a detailed description of the tasks each working group is charged with accomplishing. It should be obvious from these descriptions, that there is a significant opportunity to contribute your professional skills, leadership and energy. AIA•PV is looking for at least two volunteers to contribute for each working group. Have a special interest of talent. Let's find a way to tap it.

Again, please contact Lloyd Unsell, Hon. AIA, Executive Director of AIA•PV, at [lloyd@aiapvc.org](mailto:lloyd@aiapvc.org), to volunteer or to find out more.

### **Working Group Details**

#### **Charrette Planning:**

Conducting a community visioning process in Greenbelt is the focal activity of the Greener Greenbelt Initiative. AIA•PV will be primarily responsible for organizing the charrette process and identifying the expertise needed to conduct it. The charrette will draw on the AIA Sustainable Design Action Team (SDAT) and other visioning models. Partnerships with other planning and design disciplines, like landscape architects, will be developed by AIA•PV. Charrette planning also entails organizing an effective way to conduct the charrette in the Greenbelt community.

Work Plan tasks include:

- Prepare detailed work plan for all phase of Initiative
- Designate SDAT leadership and organizing committee
- Prepare detailed material and logistic request for GHI and others
- Conduct preparatory workshops with AIA•PV members, professional affiliates and educational institutions
- Designate charrette organizing and support committee

#### **Outreach & Stakeholders:**

The Greener Greenbelt Initiative is focused on helping to define a sustainable path for the New Deal-era planned community of Greenbelt. Therefore, GHI is the primary community stakeholder. However, building on discussions in the Green Ribbon Taskforce, the Greenbelt community includes other constituents as well. The Outreach & Stakeholders Working Group will identify stakeholders for the Initiative and develop a strategy and schedule for making contact with them.

Work Plan tasks include:

- Conduct kick-off meetings with stakeholder groups with task responsibilities
- Establish partnerships with community stakeholders
- Conduct preparatory workshops with AIA•PV members, professional affiliates and educational institutions

#### **Communications:**

To be effective, the Steering Committee needs to establish accessible and efficient communications within its membership. The working group structure itself requires a method to support broad participation. The possibility of establishing a conference call line was discussed. A cost-effective solution will be identified. In addition, communications within the Greenbelt community and among a broader stakeholder group will be established. Work Plan tasks include:

- Prepare content of introductory informational materials
- Establish Greener Greenbelt Initiative project website
- Prepare and distribute introductory informational materials
- Publicize and promote charrette in the community

#### **Baseline & Benchmark:**

For the charrette to be successful, good information about Greenbelt, both quantitative and qualitative needs to be available to the charrette team. Gathering this information is a multi-track task. The AIA•PV needs to contribute expertise to identify the kinds of technical information needed for the charrette. However, the Greenbelt community needs to find ways to define itself as a community on several levels. Work Plan tasks include:

- Prepare information requests for GHI, City of Greenbelt, Prince George's County, Maryland Historic Trust, Anacostia Watershed Initiative, others
- Organize working groups to fill background information requests
- Prepare base plans and consolidate background information

END OF CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS