

## Trustee Report

I just sent in my check updating my ASLA membership! As you know, most of the money goes to our national organization and a smaller portion, \$63 in Minnesota, is returned for local chapter activities. So what does ASLA do with our money? Fair question. I thought it might be helpful to highlight just a few of the actions and discussions that took place during our most recent Trustees meeting held here in Minneapolis last October.

In her program and operations report, EVP Nancy Somerville reviewed current special focuses of ASLA. The headquarters green roof project has been a popular tour destination for various firms, student groups, and civic organizations and has garnered tremendous press coverage (a 22% increase!). In terms of economic indicators, membership in ASLA has grown 6% in the last year and 26.6% in the last four years. In addition, the Society's revenues are strong and our reserves are on track. ASLA partnered with *Garden Design* magazine on a joint issue of *Landscape Architecture* and *Garden Design* featuring the 2006 ASLA residential awards winners. In professional practice, a standard contract document is under development and recent LATIS reports have been released on therapeutic gardens and security design.

The Vice Presidents of Communication, Education and Membership also provided updates to their specific areas, which included the new *DIRT* functionality and other upgrades to ASLA Online; the growth of the LA profession and the need to graduate more students, which is being looked at by the COE; and the appointment of the Chapter Initiatives Program Review Task Force to evaluate the CIP and its guidelines.

There was a long and thoughtful debate as to where to place ASLA invested monies. During the past few years a portion of our reserves has been invested in "green" or "socially responsible" funds. Our current advisors are recommending we reconsider this policy as it is very difficult to actually identify what a "green" fund is- and the ones that are return a lower yield to the investor. So what's best for ASLA and our members? Our Finance Committee recommended that ASLA pursue a 100 percent diversified index strategy to maximize the return on investments, and, ultimately the funding available to advance the Society's mission.

We also had breakout discussion sessions on our legislative agenda and reports on the following projects:

1. Introduction for ASLA Advocacy Network
2. LAF report
3. Finance and budget
4. Disaster Response Task Force
5. Sustainable Sites Initiative report – ASLA version of LEED
6. Honorary Member nominations

7. Public Perception Study overview
8. National Student Representative report
9. CELA report
10. Open forum topics included the Environmental Code of Ethics, maintenance standards, PPN email traffic, Leadership Development, CEU's, and ideas for the CIP Review Task Force.

I hope this quick review of our national scope of work and influence makes you feel good about your support and involvement with ASLA. If you would like more information, or have concerns about any of these issues there is LOTS available on line! Otherwise, contact our staff in Washington D.C., or email, or call me at 651-770- 6910!

Sincerely,

Jim Hagstrom, ASLA  
Minnesota Chapter Trustee