

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lara Guldenpfennig, President, PLA, ASLA

Welcome to World Landscape Architecture Month! By now you may have heard that National decided to take a different route with WLAM this year. In an effort to bolster knowledge of the profession, National is asking all of us to promote what landscape architecture is on our personal social media accounts using Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. “What is landscape architecture? What does landscape architecture mean to you?” While going about your everyday tasks and activities, we are encouraging our members to post their answers to these questions along with a photo of a favorite landscape, being sure to include the hashtag #WLAM2022. Between April 23-25, 2022 National will select the top 5 #WLAM2022 Instagram posts based on the combined number of likes and comments throughout the month. In celebration of Fredrick Law Olmsted’s 200th birthday on April 26th, the #1 post will be shared to the National ASLA Instagram account. Rounding out the month, during April 27-30, the remaining top 4 posts will be shared.

Our Spring Conference on March 1st was a success and it was wonderful seeing everyone in person again. A special thank you to our sponsors that attended. I’m thankful for our collaboration with the Des Moines Garden Club and the Greater Outdoor Foundation for allowing us to display the Olmsted 200 story boards during the conference. If you missed the opportunity to check the boards out, you can now see them on display at Water Works Park in Des Moines. Our conference kicked off with an insightful presentation by Lance Foster and Dan Williams about Blood Run and the importance of including the voices of all community members and understanding the cultural and historical significance to a project’s location. Hans Klein-Hewitt

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continued our morning discussing The Rural Park Classification System, his study regarding the needs for outdoor spaces in rural communities. Over lunch, Chris Stevens presented on the Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) and using documentation as a tool to preserve historical sites throughout the country. Kimball Erdman began our afternoon session with his presentation on utilizing digital technologies to further the documentation process. Our afternoon ended with a panel discussion including presentations by Ann Komara, Dede Petri, and Heidi Hohmann. Ann discussed her work in documenting CCC locations in Pennsylvania with her college students. Dede spoke about Fredrick Law Olmsted, the Olmsted 200 celebration, and the minor roles he played in the history of landscape architecture in Iowa. Heidi Hohmann closed the session with a mission for our collective body of landscape architects in Iowa. There is a wide breath of historic landscapes as well as landscape architects that have played significant roles in Iowa landscape architecture. Heidi continues her conference discussion further on in our newsletter. I implore you to read her article and make a commitment to furthering the preservation of historic landscapes in Iowa.



As we move into spring, elections for the next team of Excom members will be here before we know it. In the coming weeks, the chapter will issue our Call for Nominations for the following positions: President-Elect, Vice President, Treasurer, Public Relations Chair, Member-at-Large, and Associate Member-at-Large. Over the last few years, the executive committee has had numerous discussions about various positions on Excom and how to get new blood involved. Historically, the At-Large positions were intended for members outside of the Des Moines metro to be actively involved in the chapter. Due to increased interest, especially by our young professionals within the metro, and not wanting to turn members away, going forward our slate will include an additional Member-at-Large position and Associate Member-at-Large position with an increased term of two years. Our current At-Large's, John Aceto and Dani Hodgson, have agreed to extend their term through 2023 so the newly elected members will end their term in 2024. By adding these roles, the executive committee hopes to further the chapter's advocacy efforts including partnering with fellow design professionals and creating a community for our emerging professionals to connect, prep for the LARE, and stay involved with the chapter. Our goal is to have as much of the state represented by our at-large positions with the notion that anyone not in the Des Moines metro/Central Iowa would hold similar events (emerging professional happy hours, prep sessions, etc.) in their area. We will also be electing a new Public Relations Chair this year as Nate Byro has extended his stay in this role. The PR Chair is a voting member of the executive board and will be responsible for keeping our social media accounts active and up-to-date, as well as assisting our Association Manager with website updates. One last update will be responsibilities of the Vice President. To be better aligned with National's efforts regarding membership, the Vice President will

assist the Association Manager with contacting lapsed members about renewing their memberships as well as working together with the At-Large positions and the student chapter to promote membership upon graduation. Start brainstorming potential nominees and be on the look out for our email in a few weeks.

As always, please contact me with any questions or feedback at lguldenpfennig@jlbruce.com



2022 Iowa ASLA Executive Board





TRUSTEE UPDATE

Michael Gaunt, PLA, ASLA

Spring is here, April has come, and that means World Landscape Architecture Month! The year is kicking off to a quick start and there has been plenty of work at National leading up to the Annual Meeting later in April.

Government Affairs

ASLA National and local State Chapters are currently tracking around 180 professional licensure related bills. At the moment there are none in the State of Iowa that will negatively impact our licensure. You can review all the bills in the [2022 Occupational Licensure Report](#).

A licensure related article was published on Governing.com by the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing discussing this trend of watering down all professional licenses. That article can be seen here: [ARPL Professional Licensing](#).

Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

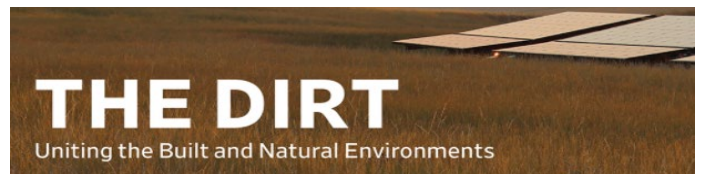
At the end of April the Board of Trustees will convene for the Annual Spring Meeting. This is the meeting that has traditionally included direct visits to our Senators and Representatives in Washington DC. This year we will again be meeting virtually with a focus on elections to National positions. Trustees will be focusing on

presentations and questions for candidates in the following positions:

- President Elect
- Vice President of Communications
- Vice President of Finance

Trustees will also be reviewing and voting on a slate of ASLA Honors Nominees. While the nominations are confidential until winners are announced there are a number of categories for which local Iowa nominations can be made. If you have questions about the categories please contact me and I can help answer them. These awards are given annually and a full list of winners will be announced shortly after the Spring Meeting Categories include:

- The ASLA Medal
- The ASLA Design Medal
- The Community Service Award
- The Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal
- The LaGasse Medals
- The Landscape Architecture Firm Award
- The Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence
- The ASLA Emerging Professionals Medal
- Honorary Membership in ASLA



With the focus in April around Frederick Law Olmsted's 200th Birthday, there are plenty of articles and information available. ASLA has provided numerous links and writings on the history and legacy of Olmsted's work.

Check out the latest from [The Dirt](#) or at the [Olmsted 200](#) website.



NEWS FROM THE IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Carl Rogers, PLA, ASLA

Hello IA ASLA Chapter members. It is hard to believe that it is the middle of April and we are on the home stretch for the spring semester at Iowa State University. It has been quite a busy semester with continuing to teach the next generation of landscape architects. The department is finalizing a search for two new faculty to join our team in August for the start of the fall semester. We have narrowed it down to the final candidates and the department will make an announcement in the very near future. There were 35 applicants for two new positions, and the search committee narrowed this list down to 10 candidates to interview virtually. Once this first round of interviews was complete, the committee identified five candidates to interview on campus, and yes, in – person. The on campus interviews wrapped up at the beginning of April. Look for news about the new faculty in the coming months. A huge shout out to the committee members; Julie Stevens (chair), Julia Badenhope, Michael Martin, Caroline Westort, and Grant Thompson from the Department of Horticulture.

Students in both undergraduate and graduate programs are busily heading towards final studio reviews which will take place May 2 – 6 in the College of Design. The details of the reviews are being ironed out over the next week and I will work with the chapter to get the news out about specific dates, times, and locations. Faculty may reach out individually to invite chapter members, and in my correspondence through the chapter, I will invite members if they are interested and available to review the student work. Studios are working on some exciting projects and engaged with communities as well as partners around Ames, Central Iowa, and in other locations across the state. Stay tuned for more details.



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Another successful IA-ASLA Spring Conference is in the books, and with that, another captivating P.H. Elwood lecture. Charles Birnbaum, President of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, was this year’s speaker and the theme of his lecture was “The Olmsted in All of Us.” Charles spoke about Frederick Law Olmsted’s life, not so much from the projects he designed and built, but from his role as an advocate for landscape architecture. It was great to learn how Olmsted was more than just a landscape architect, taking on the role of a reformer, activist, bureaucrat, inventor, innovator, mentor, and a true legend. Charles really spoke to how Olmsted inspires landscape architects today to love places not for just their physical beauty, but also for the experiences that we have by being in them. The growth of landscape architecture is both personal and collective, and understanding the cultural history of the landscape around us means that we need to educate ourselves about history and culture in order to be stronger advocates for it in the future. Charles shared so much with the audience, and inspirational messages throughout his lecture. The one that stuck with me was “Don’t take blind jumps – take chances.” I wish everyone a happy spring and I will be in touch soon about our new hires and final spring semester reviews. Go Cyclones!



TO HALS OR NOT TO HALS?

Heidi Hohmann, PLA, ASLA

If you access the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) website, LIST, it's pretty clear that Iowa is not going to win any awards for HALS documentation. There are 4—count 'em—4 landscapes listed. There are probably a couple of reasons for Iowa's less than stellar showing. First, HALS is much younger, less compelling—and less well funded—than its siblings—the Historic American Building Survey and Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER). Second, no one thinks of Iowa as having lots of important historic landscapes. Third, we—the landscape architecture community who might be inclined to do this work—is actually rather small. And fourth, filling a government database that not very many people actually view might have questionable utility for our small community.

However, it might behoove us to take a more considered approach to Iowa's historic landscapes. I might posit that as a group, we know quite little about our collective landscape history and heritage. For example, who among us can cite the date of the founding of the Iowa chapter of the ASLA or name our first president? (1919/Frank Culley) How many of you believe that the Olmsted Brothers designed the ISU campus? (They didn't)? How many of you know there is a Thomas Church landscape in Des Moines? (The Des Moines Art Center courtyard). And if you believe, like Walter Hood, that Black landscapes matter, how many of us can name a significant Black landscape in Iowa? (Fort Des Moines on the city's south side was the site of the country's first African American Army Officers' Training Camp in 1917 is one to start with).

Your answers to these questions might (or might not!) indicate that we need to know more about our Iowa



landscape history than that O.C. Simonds designed Brucemore in Cedar Rapids, Alfred Caldwell designed Eagle Point Park in Dubuque, and that ISU extension LAs designed much of Iowa's state park system. Iowa's embodied landscape history includes myriad urban squares, parks, housing developments, cemeteries, and city plans by professionals both nationally and locally significant. Although we know some of these sites already (e.g., John Nolen's 1930s plan for Dubuque or H.W.S. Cleveland's design for Oak Hill Cemetery in Cedar Rapids), there are likely hundreds more designs we know little about. In fact, I periodically get queries from communities about sites and designers about specific landscapes I'm unfamiliar with. Unfortunately, this usually happens when an engineer is proposing a road, sewer, or park re-design—and the community wants to use its history as a means of blocking this project. What if, instead, such information was better known and more available both to communities and to designers—before the project even started?

Many other chapters and organizations have begun to collect and organize their state's landscape history—check out MN-ASLA's publication Valued Places, The Cultural Landscape's "What's Out There" program (<https://www.tclf.org/places/whats-out-there>), or even





Iowa AIA’s Best Buildings of the 20th century program (<https://www.iowaarchitecture.org/discover/century%20of%20iowa%20architecture/>). Isn’t it time for us to follow suit? I for one would like to see an online venue where information on Iowa’s landscape history is made readily available, and associated with the state’s premier landscape-based organization—which is IA-ASLA. Such a site might help drive clients to our members and might also help produce better design in threatened landscapes. In my opinion, a lack of understanding of what landscape architects did historically and can do today has fueled poor design decisions, such as the current methods of preventing erosion on trails in Ledges State Park through the use of concrete floor slabs used in hog confinement systems (See image/photo by author, summer 2019).

Here’s a list of Iowa landscape architects you may or may not have heard of, whose work in the state is largely undocumented. Even if these individuals did only 10 projects, that’s more than 100 projects we could document across the state.

- F.E. Pease (Des Moines)
- Pearse, Robinson & Sprague (Des Moines)

- Ray Floyd Weirick (sometimes Wyrick) (Des Moines)
- A.W. Wilkinson (Cedar Rapids)
- Marlin Wragg (Des Moines)
- William Sears
- Lawrence Fogelsong
- Charles Page (Sioux City)
- F.R. Hutchinson (Waterloo)
- Harry Staves (Des Moines)
- Reeves & Ramsey (Davenport)

There are many ways to create a public landscape database, and HALS is just one answer—and perhaps not the best one to address the issues I’ve briefly presented here. There are other platforms and partners IA-ASLA could work with to accomplish a set of these goals. The question at this point is whether others in the chapter are interested in working on this project, which is not small. Although I’m very interested in moving this effort forward, I can’t do it alone, even with the support of ISU and ISU’s students. It’s going to take time, money, and volunteers, but it might be worth doing. If you’re interested and want to help, please contact me at hhohmann@iastate.edu.



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Olmsted 200



Eric Holt, Treasurer, PLA, ASLA

April 26, 2022 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, founder of American landscape architecture, and passionate advocate for the civic value of planned green space.

Olmsted’s vast legacy continues to influence how we practice today. He believed in the restorative value of landscape and that parks promote a greater sense of community and improve public health, especially in urban environments. He practiced a commitment to create visually compelling and accessible green space to restore and nurture the body and spirit of all people, regardless of their economic circumstances. The built works of the design firm owned by Olmsted and his children underpin the form of many American cities and public spaces, and have influenced countless others.

Beside his substantial design legacy, Olmsted led a varied and fascinating life that intersected with many important social movements and historical events of the nineteenth century. These include his time traveling as an abolitionist journalist in the antebellum South, overseeing the medical system for the Union Army which later evolved into the American Red Cross, managing a vast gold mining operation in California, and his visionary collaboration



with John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt which resulted in a framework to protect the Yosemite Valley as our first National Park.

As part of the Olmsted200 Week in Des Moines last month, the Iowa Chapter of ASLA partnered with the Des Moines Founders Garden Club, Water Works Park Foundation, Great Outdoors Foundation, and Shive-Hattery to bring the Olmsted200 exhibit ‘Frederick Law Olmsted: Landscapes for the Public Good’ to Water Works park in Des Moines. The installation features interpretive panels exploring the many facets of Olmsted’s life and legacy on our profession and the modern urban landscape. Located near the Lauridsen Amphitheater, the exhibit will remain open to the public through the end of the year. Please visit <https://olmsted200.org/> to learn more about local and national events celebrating 200 years of FLO!

