



## Minutes

### CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD Landscape Architects Technical Committee Meeting

November 17, 2023  
WebEx Teleconference

#### Landscape Architects Technical Committee (LATC/Committee) Members Present

Jon S. Wreschinsky, Chair  
Pamela S. Brief, Vice Chair  
Andrew C. N. Bowden  
Susan M. Landry  
Patricia M. Trauth

#### Staff Present

Laura Zuniga, Executive Officer  
Jesse Laxton, Assistant Executive Officer  
Kimberly McDaniel, LATC Program Manager  
Nicholas Barnhart, Examination Coordinator  
Kourtney Fontes, Special Projects Analyst  
Coleen Galvan, Communications Analyst  
Drew Liston, Board Liaison  
Marccus Reinhardt, Examinations & Licensing Manager  
Timothy Rodda, Regulations Manager

#### Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Staff Present

Elizabeth Coronel, SOLID Moderator  
Harmony DeFilippo, Budget Manager  
Yvonne Dorantes, Assistant Deputy Director of Board and Bureau Relations  
Veronica Hernandez, Budget Analyst  
Tara Welch, LATC Counsel

#### Guests Present

Angela Benson  
Joan Bolton, Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD)  
Cheryl Buckwalter, APLD  
Martin Carrion van Rijn  
Francesca Corra  
Sarah Gronquist  
Steve Harbour  
Karen Hunt

Stephanie Landregan, Program Director, University of California, Los Angeles  
(UCLA) Extension  
Tracy Morgan Hollingworth, California Council of American Society of Landscape  
Architects (CCASLA)  
Marcia Scott  
Debbie Seracini  
Soleil Tranquilli

**A. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of a Quorum**

LATC Chair, Jon Wreschinsky called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and Vice Chair, Pamela Brief called roll. Five members of LATC were present, thus a quorum was established.

**B. Chair's Procedural Remarks and Committee Member Introductory Comments**

Mr. Wreschinsky explained the meeting was held via WebEx pursuant to Government Code section 11133, and there was no physical meeting location. He stated that all motions and seconds will be repeated for the record and votes on all motions will be taken by roll call.

**C. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

Mr. Wreschinsky invited members of the public to address the LATC. There were no comments from the public.

**D. Update on the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)**

Yvonne Dorantes provided updates on DCA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Steering Committee efforts, including new DEI trainings for staff and board members. She added that DCA continues to support boards and bureaus in expanding culturally competent communications and promote the importance of meeting the needs of California consumers, licensees and applicants.

Ms. Dorantes reminded the LATC of the changes to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act that will become effective on January 1, 2024, including the new advisory body teleconference meeting option in which all members of an advisory body can participate remotely from private non-public meeting sites. She also reminded the committee members of the required trainings for 2023, including the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Information and Security Awareness trainings.

Mr. Wreschinsky asked if the Information and Security Awareness training is mandatory. Ms. Dorantes confirmed the training is required for members that have a DCA email address, and it is recommended for those who do not.

**E. Budget Update from DCA Budget Office**

Veronica Hernandez provided an overview of the LATC's expenditure projections and fund condition statement included in the meeting materials.

Mr. Wreschinsky asked what types of revenue are included in the line items labeled “Other regulatory fees” and “Other regulatory licenses and permits”. Harmony DeFilippo explained those items include fees associated with citations, duplicate certificates, examinations, applications, and initial licenses. Mr. Wreschinsky asked for clarification on supplemental pension payments. Ms. DeFilippo explained that it is a statewide payment that will be phasing out. Mr. Wreschinsky asked if the State is assuming that labor costs will increase by three percent each year. Ms. DeFilippo confirmed that expenditure growth is projected at three percent to accommodate salary increases, employee compensation, and retirement rate adjustments. Mr. Wreschinsky asked if any DCA programs have seen a decrease in license renewals after implementing fee increases. Ms. Zuniga responded that staff could check with a few similar sized DCA programs that have recently increased fees.

#### **F. Review and Possible Action on August 11, 2023, LATC Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Wreschinsky asked if a statement on page 2 of the meeting minutes related to applicants for temporary license was accurate. Ms. Zuniga confirmed that temporary license applicants are not required to take the California Supplemental Examination (CSE).

- **Susan M. Landry moved to approve the August 11, 2023, LATC Meeting Minutes as presented.**

**Patricia M. Trauth seconded the motion.**

There were no comments from the public.

**Members Bowden, Brief, Landry, Trauth, and Chair Wreschinsky voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed 5-0.**

#### **G. Legislation Update – Laura Zuniga, Executive Officer**

- 1. AB 342 (Valencia) Architects and Real Estate Appraisers: Applicants and Licensees: Demographic Information**

This bill authorizes the Board to request certain demographic data from applicants and licensees.

- 2. SB 372 (Menjivar) Department of Consumer Affairs: Licensee and Registrant Records: Name and Gender Changes**

This bill requires all DCA boards to have a process to allow a licensee to submit a request to update the licensee’s records when the person’s legal name or gender has changed. Ms. Landry asked if a licensee’s prior married name could be removed from the website. Ms. Zuniga confirmed that licensees will be able to update to their current name. Ms. Landry asked if LATC will notify licensees of the process to update their record. Ms. Zuniga confirmed that information on the process will be posted on the LATC website and sent to licenses.

- 3. SB 544 (Laird) Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: Teleconferencing**

This bill makes changes to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

#### **4. SB 816 (Roth) Professions and Vocations**

This bill contains the LATC fee increases that take effect January 1, 2024.

Mr. Wreschinsky asked if the new CSE fee aligns with the LATC's cost to administer the examination. Ms. Zuniga confirmed that the new fee is based on LATC's fee study conducted in 2022.

#### **H. Executive Officer's Report – Update on Board's Administration / Management, Examination, Licensing, and Enforcement Programs**

Ms. Zuniga provided an overview of the quarterly report in the meeting materials, which included updates on LATC's business modernization project, personnel changes, examination statistics, and enforcement activity.

Ms. Landry asked if landscape architects review complaints filed with LATC. Ms. Zuniga explained that LATC has a pool of licensed subject matter experts that review cases. Ms. Landry asked if LATC reviews complaints against licensees that have gone through private arbitration. Ms. Zuniga confirmed that courts are required to report settlements to LATC and LATC can pursue an enforcement action based on a settlement report.

Mr. Wreschinsky asked for an update on the proposed legislation regarding approval of plans. Ms. Zuniga reminded the members that the proposal was included in the Sunset Review Report as one of the issues LATC is asking the legislature to address. Mr. Wreschinsky reminded the members that the UCLA Extension Program had raised concerns regarding the requirements to take the Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE) outlined in California Code of Regulations section 2615. Ms. Zuniga shared that staff have communicated with the UCLA Extension Program and identified the number of candidates that might be impacted by the recent regulatory change. Kimberly McDaniel explained that ten applicants were identified and notified of the regulatory change. Nicholas Barnhart explained that the ten applicants were advised they would need to submit additional education or training experience documentation to qualify for the new LARE format taking effect December 2023. Mr. Wreschinsky asked when LATC will be able to assess examination data by candidate background or compare pass rates of first attempts to repeat attempts. Mr. Barnhart confirmed LATC can track pass rates of first and repeat attempts for the CSE. Mr. Bowden asked if LATC had discussed the discrepancies between California and national LARE pass rates with California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona). Ms. Zuniga confirmed that LATC staff notified the school of the issue and asked the Committee members if they would like staff to follow up. Mr. Bowden suggested that Cal Poly Pomona could possibly improve LARE pass rates of California candidates by modifying its landscape architecture program. Ms. Landry asked if LATC tracks examination pass rates based on each pathway to licensure. Ms. Zuniga stated that staff can review pass rate data and provide additional information after the meeting. Pamela Brief agreed that LATC should follow up with Cal Poly Pomona regarding the LARE

pass rate issue. Mr. Wreschinsky recommended for the Committee to address California LARE pass rates at the next strategic planning session.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Stephanie Landregan stated that landscape architecture students enrolled in the UCLA Extension Program complete three years of landscape architecture curriculum. She stated that the program accepts landscape contractors who do not have a formal education and recommended that LATC meet with the California universities to address requirements to take the LARE.

Mr. Wreschinsky stated that LATC would consider the issues raised by Ms. Landregan. Ms. Brief agreed that conversations with California universities could be useful.

**I. Discuss and Possible Action on 2022-2024 Strategic Plan Objectives to:**

**1. Work with the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and Other License Advocates to Address Concerns Regarding Licensed Versus Unlicensed Professionals to Educate and Protect Consumers**

Ms. McDaniel shared that staff have expanded LATC's social media messaging plan to educate consumers about landscape architect licensure and the regulatory scope of practice as well as the differences between regulated and unregulated professions. She asked if the Committee members would like to see any additional work related to this strategic plan objective. Ms. Landry explained that the national APLD website does not clarify for the user of the website that a landscape architect license may be required to perform specific services in some states. She asked how LATC could address this issue since APLD is not a licensing agency. Ms. McDaniel stated that staff could review the website and reach out to APLD. Ms. Brief agreed that staff could review to determine if the information on the website is misleading to consumers. She added that landscape designers can create conceptual planting plans, however, a landscape architect license is required to prepare construction documents for any hardscape materials. Mr. Bowden suggested that LATC could recommend that APLD inform their members that there are licensing requirements to perform certain services in each state. Mr. Wreschinsky suggested that LATC continue working with California chapters to distribute information to educate consumers on this issue. He asked if LATC had received any questions or comments from any municipalities in California regarding LATC's guidance on what kinds of plans landscape architects can stamp. Ms. Zuniga agreed that LATC should provide information to the California chapters about what landscape architects and designers can do. She stated that staff could follow up after the meeting regarding the Building Official Information Guide. Ms. Trauth stated that ASLA is a great resource for information on this issue.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Tracy Morgan Hollingworth commented that the CCASLA provides clarification to consumers regarding what homeowners, designers, landscape contractors, and landscape architects can do. She added that the San Diego and Southern California ASLA Chapters have prepared additional resources helpful to consumers. Deborah, a member of APLD, stated that APLD has done a great job to make sure that APLD members understand that designers may prepare planting plans and make suggestions for hardscape but

may not prepare plans for construction. She added that many landscape designers focus on residential projects to help the public revise their landscapes to save water, improve soil, and plant the right plants in the right place. She stated that landscape designers, landscape architects, and landscape contractors can work together to help the public to implement more sustainable landscape strategies. Cheryl Buckwalter, a member of the APLD California Chapter, stated that the national APLD website specifies that individuals should refer to the licensure requirements of their specific state. She added that the APLD California Chapter goes to great lengths to educate its members about California laws and licensure requirements and provides information on its website defining the work of landscape designers and landscape architects.

Ms. Brief explained that this strategic plan objective is focused on educating consumers and addressing concerns regarding licensed versus unlicensed professionals and not necessarily related to APLD. Mr. Bowden thanked Ms. Buckwalter for her comments and noted that not every landscape designer is a member of APLD. He suggested that LATC continue to educate consumers and provide outreach to unlicensed professionals who do not belong to APLD or ASLA to educate them on what they are allowed to do.

**2. Research the Economic and Consumer Protection Impact of Re-Establishing the Landscape Architects Board or Establishing a Merged Board with the California Architects Board to Provide Better Representation, Strengthen the Distinction Between the Two Entities, and Increase Efficiency**

Ms. Zuniga explained that the California Architects Board (Board) encouraged LATC to come forward with a recommendation if any changes need to be made on this item. Mr. Wreschinsky stated that based on discussions with a few former Committee members he would like to appoint a subcommittee to review the legislative and historical aspects of the current arrangement between the LATC and the Board, determine how current operations are aligned, and make any recommendations that might help going forward with this idea of either a merged board or recommendations on how LATC can operate more efficiently. He added that he is willing to lead the subcommittee and work with staff to organize the effort and reach out to former Committee members and others that may be valuable in this discussion. Ms. Trauth asked what the process would be to move forward. Ms. Zuniga explained that under the LATC Member Administrative Manual the LATC Chair can appoint a subcommittee of no more than two LATC members who can meet and make a recommendation to the LATC for the full Committee to take action on. She explained that if the LATC moves forward with a recommendation that would require any statutory or regulatory changes, LATC would present the recommendation to the Board for approval and then proceed from there on how to implement it. Mr. Bowden reminded the Committee members that LATC does not have the budget to re-establish a separate board for landscape architects and that pursuing a merged board would require a benefit to the public health, safety, and welfare. He stated that the current structure works well and that the LATC as it exists does a very good job of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. He added that pursuing a merged board would require LATC to discuss how many board

positions would be designated for landscape architects and could limit the amount of time available for landscape architecture issues. He stated that one benefit to a merged board could be a decrease in fees due to reduced operational costs. He added that he is in support of appointing a subcommittee. Mr. Wreschinsky stated that the subcommittee should address the questions Mr. Bowden outlined and make any recommendations to LATC by the Spring of 2024. Ms. Landry recommended appointing Mr. Wreschinsky and Mr. Bowden to the subcommittee to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of establishing a merged board. Ms. Trauth noted similarities between the LATC and Board meeting agendas and suggested that LATC move forward with a recommendation based on efficiency that would be a benefit to the State. Mr. Wreschinsky agreed that LATC should focus on efficiency and reducing costs. Ms. Brief asked if LATC would wait until after the sunset review to make any structural changes. Mr. Wreschinsky suggested addressing any changes after the sunset review. Tara Welch recommended that the Chair assign a title the subcommittee. Mr. Wreschinsky appointed himself and Mr. Bowden to the Structure and Operations Subcommittee.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Ms. Landregan asked if a member of the Board would participate in the Structure and Operations Subcommittee and recommended that LATC look at the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists as a model of a merged board in California.

#### **K. Review and Discuss LATC’s Draft Sunset Review Report**

Ms. Zuniga directed the committee members to the draft Sunset Review Report in the meeting materials. She explained that staff made changes to the report to address comments made by Committee members during the August 11, 2023 LATC meeting and subsequent non-substantive changes suggested by Ms. Welch. She explained that staff would submit the report in January.

Mr. Wreschinsky recommended changes to the report, including rephrasing the words “disaster” and “catastrophe” on page 2, including the 2023 CLARB Annual Meeting information, expanding the response to question 61, and other non-substantive changes. Ms. Trauth stated that referencing the CLARB Model Law could confuse readers since it is not the law in place in California. She also noted that her title on page 6 could be updated to Principal. Mr. Wreschinsky asked when the sunset review hearing would be held. Ms. Zuniga responded that the hearing is typically held in March and the exact date should be provided in January.

#### **J. Election of 2024 Committee Officers**

- **Susan M. Landry moved to elect Pamela S. Brief as 2024 LATC Chair.**

**Andrew C. N. Bowden seconded the motion.**

There were no comments from the public.

**Members Bowden, Brief, Landry, Trauth, and Chair Wreschinsky voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed 5-0.**

- **Andrew C. N. Bowden moved to elect Patricia M. Trauth as 2024 LATC Vice Chair.**

**Susan M. Landry seconded the motion.**

There were no comments from the public.

**Members Bowden, Brief, Landry, Trauth, and Chair Wreschinsky voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed 5-0.**

#### **L. Review of Future Committee Meeting Dates**

Mr. Wreschinsky reminded the Committee members that Ms. Zuniga will provide dates for the next LATC meeting. Ms. Brief stated that she could attend the December 1, 2023 Board meeting. Ms. Landry provided an update on a recent student outreach presentation she gave at Cal Poly Pomona.

#### **M. Closing Comments**

Ms. Brief welcomed Ms. McDaniel and thanked staff for the efforts on the meeting packet and Sunset Review Report.

#### **N. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.