

UD Direct

NEWSLETTER

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Universal Design News and Information Roundup

Highlighting What You May Have Missed...

So much information comes across our desks and computers on a daily basis, it's easy to miss something you might otherwise be interested in. UDN Direct has pulled together highlights of recent stories and information of interest for you.

Is UD Green?

Editor's Note: *While attending the Universal Design Summit in St. Louis last month, I heard a lot of dialogue around the need for consumers to understand that they don't need to sacrifice sustainability in order to have Universal Design. In fact, Louis Tenenbaum presented a session during the Summit in which he discussed a single-family housing development in Howard County, MD, for which the Howard County Housing Commission established a "three-legged stool" of sustainable, Universally Designed and affordable. To emphasize this issue, we've chosen to re-run "Is UD Green," John Salmen's October 2009 editorial from **Universal Design Newsletter**.*

Is UD Green? Inevitably, this question must be raised. As public awareness of green design swells to a tidal wave, many Students of UD think we see the next wave approaching – and its name is Universal Design. But how do these waves relate to each other? Are they random swells? Or caused by undersea movement of the earth's crust?



Valerie Fletcher, executive director, and Elaine Ostroff, founding director, of the Institute for Human Centered Design, along with Eric Mikiten, AIA, of the Bay Area COTE, believe that they are both connected to the earth shaking movement of Sustainability. Eric presented his overview in detail at the AIA 2009 convention. The trefoil logo, developed by the Department of Public Works of

Queensland, Australia for its Smart House program, communicated how these three Universal Design leaders visualize the "three-legged stool of sustainable design." The graphic above illustrates how Universal Design is a basic element of sustainable design, as it relates to resource efficiency and economic empowerment under the umbrella of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Environmental sustainability relates to the green movement and natural resource conservation and efficiency. Economic sustainability relates to concepts of life cycle costing, equity and fair trade value of products and services.

When compared to financial and natural resources, human ability is arguably the most precious resource of all. Human ability is enabled, supported and encouraged by a Universally Designed environment that gives everyone the opportunity to participate with a minimum of outside support. Just as we must conserve our natural resources, we must also conserve our human resources. It is a waste of human potential to create environments that demand dependence when a simple change in the design of the path, space or element could allow unassisted use. The relationship between two people who are locked in the caregiver/receiver dance, while frequently a loving and enriching experience, is difficult, uncomfortable and too often destructive of human dignity. Independence is best and can be extended with Universal Design. The obvious example is aging in place, which is facilitated by Universally Designed homes and communities.

Like “green design,” Universal Design must be an integral part of design programming and the imaginative design process. It cannot be left as an add-on in a minimal compliance mode.

As we struggle to make the most of limited resources, the value of Universal Design as a tool to conserve human resources will become increasingly apparent, and its relationship to the broader goal of sustainability will become clear.

Notice of Public Hearings on ANPRMs

This summer the US Department of Justice (DOJ) issued four Advance Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRMs) which sought public comment on the possibility of revising the ADA regulations to address: accessible web information and services, movie captioning and video description, accessibility of Next Generation 9-1-1, and accessible equipment and furniture. The ANPRMs were published in the July 26, 2010 Federal Register, and the comment period for them closes January 24, 2011.

The DOJ has scheduled three public hearings on the ANPRMs:

- **November 18, 2010:** Access Living, 115 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL, from 9:30 am-4:00 pm CST;
- **December 16, 2010:** US Access Board, 1331 F Street NW, Washington, DC, from 9:30 am-4:00 pm EST; and
- **January 2011:** San Francisco, CA, at a date and location TBA on the ADA web site at <http://www.ada.gov>.

For further information, contact Linda Garrett, Civil Rights Program Specialist, Disability Rights Section, Civil Rights Division, at 202.353.0423 (v/tty).

Bienvenu Joins NEA as New Director of Accessibility Programs

In late September, Beth Bienvenu, former policy advisor with the US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, joined the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) as the new Director of the Office of Accessibility. In this role, she will manage the NEA's technical assistance and advocacy work devoted to making the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults including veterans, and people living in institutions. This includes initiatives related to universal design, arts and aging, arts in healthcare, and careers in the arts for people with disabilities. She replaces Paula Terry, who served the NEA for many years, and retired in September.

At the Department of Labor, Bienvenu analyzed federal laws and regulations, as well as public and private sector policies and practices, related to all elements of employment for persons with disabilities. She created and delivered training sessions on recruiting, hiring, accommodating and retaining individuals with disabilities, and developed partnerships with other federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and businesses on behalf of those constituents. In addition, since August 2005, she taught arts policy as an adjunct professor in the Master of Arts Management program at George Mason University.

Access Board to Hold Public Hearing on Updated Vehicle Guidelines

The US Access Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, November 8**, from 9:30 am-12:00 pm on proposed updates to its ADA guidelines for buses and vans. This meeting, which will be held at the Board's meeting space at 1331 F Street NW, Washington, DC, will allow public comment on the Advance Notice of Public Rulemaking (ANPRM) the Board issued in July.

The Board's proposal includes updates to address new types of vehicle systems, such as bus rapid transit and low floor buses, and advances in technology, including automation of announcements. Revisions to specifications for vehicle ramps, circulation routes, wheelchair spaces and securement systems are also being proposed. To pre-register to testify, contact Kathy Johnson at 202.272.0041 or johnson@access-board.gov.

Newly Published: *Universal Design Handbook, Second Edition*

Nearly 10 years after its groundbreaking first edition, the second edition of the *Universal Design Handbook* was released this month. Edited by Wolfgang F.E. Preiser and Korydon H. Smith, the second edition is a one-stop professional reference to designing products and facilities for older adults, people with disabilities and children.

In addition to completely updated chapters and illustrations, the second edition features:

- Global coverage of policies, requirements and case studies, including coverage of the latest Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) design requirements;
- Examples of standards and guidelines that architects and designers can use to create more universally accessible and usable environments;

- Presentation of the full scope of universal design, from urban scale to multimedia; and
- Coverage of accommodation issues in case studies on residential, commercial, transportation and educational facilities.

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Events on the Horizon

- **November 3-5, 2010:** [Architectural Exchange East](#), Richmond, VA. UDN Publisher John Salmen will lead “New ADA Requirements: What You Need to Know,” from 4:30-6:00 pm on November 4.
- **November 8-10, 2010:** [US Access Board Meeting](#), Washington, DC.
- **November 16, 2010:** ["We're Not Done Yet: DOJ Proposed Rulemaking and Update."](#) ADA Audio Conference, 1:00-2:30 pm CT.
- **November 17-19, 2010:** [Build Boston's Annual Symposium and Trade Show](#), Boston, MA. Daylong Symposium on Socially Sustainable Design on November 18 with national and international experts, plus the first US Design Challenge with the Helen Hamlyn Centre of London. (The Helen Hamlyn Centre of London’s Royal College of Art has a special research focus on inclusive design, patient safety and workplace design.)