



The Engineering Voice

American Engineering Alliance

Spring-Summer 2006

Chairperson's Report

By Salvatore Galletta, P.E.

Along with other Engineering Societies, AEA has been pushing for the implementation of our Infrastructure Proposal. After overcoming a major hurdle last August, we have recently succeeded in having the Infrastructure Proposal introduced as a Resolution in the New York City Council. Council Member Hiram Monserrate introduced it on March 22, 2006. The Resolution calls on the Mayor to create the position of Deputy Mayor for Infrastructure. We expect that the City Council will hold hearings, which will give us an opportunity to educate our elected officials and the Mayor on the need for such a position. We must now mobilize the various stakeholders, especially our colleagues in the Engineering and Architectural Community, to petition the City Council and the Mayor to adopt the Infrastructure Resolution. In the coming weeks we will be meeting with key members of other stakeholder organizations to plan our course of action. We are prepared for the long and arduous political battle to get the Infrastructure Resolution implemented. You too can help in this effort by contacting the Mayor and the Council Members and urging them to adopt the Resolution. The phone numbers and contact information of the Mayor and City Council Members can easily be gotten from the Internet by visiting the New York City website (www.nyc.gov). To get contact information on City Council Members you can go to the following webpage:

www.nycouncil.info/constituent/member_list.cfm

Before contacting the Mayor or City Council Members you need to refer to the Resolution 0195-2006 (Inserted in this newsletter)

As you are probably aware, AEA has spent and continues to spend, considerable energy and resources in advancing our Infrastructure Proposal. Although this issue has consumed a disproportionate amount of the Board's time and attention, there are other issues that the Board has been pursuing. In previous Newsletters we have discussed the challenges that "outsourcing" and "off-shoring" pose to the Engineering Profession. AEA has advocated immigration reform, and we have supported those organizations that are actively engaged in bringing about a more rational immigration policy. Although we

do not have the resources to take the lead on this issue, we do provide support by disseminating information to our colleagues and by encouraging our sister societies to become more actively engaged in immigration reform. This is where the internet has become a powerful tool in getting the message out to our members of our Engineering Community. You too can help shape U.S. immigration policy by utilizing the resources available on the Internet. (See the article "**A Call to Action**" in this Newsletter).

To carry out the various AEA initiatives, the Board needs additional resources. As you know the low dues and small membership do not give us much money to work with. Our original assumption that our colleagues, once they became aware of AEA's mission, would join us en masse did not come true. We relied on word of mouth to get our message out. Since this did not work, your Board has been evaluating various ways of increasing membership. We are currently working on a membership drive that targets, initially, Engineering firms and government agencies, in the New York Metropolitan Area. Based on the response we get from this effort, we will then target employers of Engineers in other parts of the country. We need your help in making this drive a success. If you can provide us with a list of Engineers in your firm or agency, we will then send them a targeted recruitment letter. You can either contact our membership chair, Verghese Menachery, P.E. at:

Tel: 718-388-1913

Email: vmenachery@hotmail.com

Or myself, at:

Salvatore Galletta, P.E.

Tel: 212-788-8199

Email: NSPE@aol.com

I look forward to hearing from you all.

Salvatore Galletta, P.E.

Adjutant's Call

You Are Somebody!

I have spoken with many Engineers over the years and have found that too many do not realize that they are "somebody". Nothing in this world ever gets done by "nobody".

The AEA has been accurately communicating to outsiders the idea that Engineers have the training, intelligence, and dedication to the public interest to provide substantial leadership to Society. It is easy for us to say this because it is true - as far as it goes. Our dirty little secret is that while we have the brains, some of us (too many) do not have the heart to provide such leadership. How many times have you heard one of us say "Somebody should do something"? How many of us are actually willing to take a tiny step of faith, and tangibly help our cause? There is only one person who can answer this question, **YOU**.

In this issue you have been briefed on the existence of New York City Council Resolution number 0195-2006 urging the organization of the City's Infrastructure Management under a Licensed Professional Engineer or Architect. The resolution was introduced by Council Member Sponsors (Letita James, Miguel Martinez, Hiram Monserrate, Annabel Palma, and James Sanders) on March 22, 2006 and was referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations the same day.

The Committee on Government Operations has the following members:

Simcha Felder - Chairperson

Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.

Inez E. Dickens

Erik Martin Dilan

Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.

Larry B. Seabrook

Peter F. Vallone

After review and hopefully minor or no adjustments, the Committee will decide on whether or not to recommend a vote by the full City Council.

It is necessary for as many of us to as possible to communicate to the City Council Members the merits

of this step. Those who live in New York City are represented by one of the Council Members. See www.nyccouncil.info for your representative. Each of you represents a voice with a potential for good or ill to your Council Member. A greater number of us who communicate will result in a louder voice.

Those who live outside of New York City represent another voice. NYC likes to think of itself as a leader to the rest of the country, and our politicians are no exception. Communications from other areas no matter how far away, do have the effect of calling attention to the fact that whatever happens in NYC is a precedent for the rest of the country. I therefore urge that communications be sent from anywhere to the Speaker of the City Council and the Chair of the Governmental Operations Committee urging adoption of the Resolution.

Those of you who want to be "nobody" will ignore this call. Those of you that want to be "somebody", who will take that "little step of faith", will not regret it. A great collective voice will resound with the message that Engineers and Architects have the heart as well as the brains, to assume societal leadership and will have to be heeded.

- *Lou Comunelli, P.E*

WRITERS

We can improve the quality of our newsletter with either regular or ad hoc articles from our members. News items, essays, opinions, etc. are welcome.

Anyone interested should call Lou Comunelli at 718-636-9237 or 718-782-0268 or e-mail a message to comunellil@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

AEA has 143 members, of which 117 are active members including 37 Life Members. Active members are those who paid their dues up to 2006.

Reminder letters are being sent to the members requesting to update their membership. Cooperation in the matter will be highly appreciated.

- *Vergheese Menachery*

A Call To Action

Today, more than ever, the Engineering Profession faces many serious challenges. As Engineers, we need to have, not only an awareness of, but also an understanding of these challenges so that we may take appropriate actions. One issue in particular that threatens to undermine the long-term viability of our Profession is the immigration policies of our government. Without going into a detailed background of this issue, I strongly recommend that you check out the following web site:

www.NumbersUsa.com.

This web site provides information on various immigration topics and keeps the reader updated as to pending immigration legislation in the U.S. Congress. It also provides a means for you to send a fax to your Congressman or senator on various immigration issues such as the HIB Visa program. You can send any of their pre-written letters in a matter of seconds. So, here's an opportunity to have your voice heard without having to spend much time.

It's amazing how the Internet has allowed individuals the ability to influence their elected officials. The immigration issue is a case in point. Only recent has Congress been listening to the average citizen on this important issue, thanks largely to web sites mentioned in this article. Prior to the rise of the

Internet, Congress listened mainly to the well-paid lobbyists of big business. The Internet has leveled the playing field.

I urge you to visit this and other related web sites (e.g. www.ZaZona.com, www.WashTech.org), become knowledgeable on the issues and the take action!

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of February 4, 2006, our account balances are as follows:

General Account	\$3,634.59
TELAF	\$750.00
CD	<u>\$5,625.00</u>
Total	\$8,165.28

- *Brian Gill, P.E.*

LAPEL PINS / CLOTHING

Order your AEA Lapel Pins - \$8.00 ppd. Also available is a variety of clothing bearing the AEA Logo. Please use the Multi-Purpose Form to order merchandise.

AEA Contacts

Mail: American Engineering Alliance
Bowling Green Station
PO Box 1446
New York, New York 10274-1446, Phone 212-606-4053 (Voice Mail)

Persons :

Sal Galletta, P.E. Chairperson email srgalletta@aol.com

Lou Comunelli, P.E. Secretary, 718-636-9237 or 718-782-0268, email comunelli@aol.com

Brian Gill, P.E. Treasurer, 212-967-9833

David Berke, P.E., Editor-In-Chief, email dberke4407@aol.com

Edgar Rafol, Member Services Director, 718-388-1913

Res. No. 195

Resolution urging the Mayor to issue an executive order creating an office to oversee all development, operation, and maintenance of the public and private infrastructure of the City of New York.

By Council Member Monserrate

Whereas, New York City has a vast and complex public and private infrastructure that includes bridges, tunnels, roads, buildings, structures and systems that, despite their age, are the envy of the world; and

Whereas, Public infrastructure affects the safety and security of businesses, workplaces, schools, places of worship, hospitals, cultural institutions, property, homes, and the daily quality of life of all New Yorkers; and

Whereas, Public infrastructure also affects millions of visitors to the city annually; and

Whereas, A substantial portion of the city's annual budget is dedicated to the upkeep of existing and the development of new public and private infrastructure; and

Whereas, There is currently no requirement that the Mayor appoint a single, expert individual to oversee and be accountable for the centralized and integrated development, operation, and maintenance of the city's infrastructure; and

Whereas, The lack of comprehensive, centralized expert asset management results in an infrastructure system that is not as efficient and as cost-effective as it can be; and

Whereas, The Mayor can substantially improve asset management of the public and private infrastructure by issuing an executive order that creates a permanent office to be filled by either a Licensed Professional Engineer or a Registered Architect who will be appointed by the Mayor and charged with oversight of all public and private infrastructure; and

Whereas, Such an office shall be empowered and required to: (1) advise the Mayor and the Council in formulating the capital program for the city; (2) set overall policies for the maintenance, rehabilitation and construction of the city infrastructure; (3) oversee and control all infrastructure operations; establish and enforce rules for the construction, maintenance and restoration of public areas used by private utilities; (4) represent the Mayor in dealings with federal and state agencies, other regional governments, and private entities on all infrastructure-related matters; (5) interact with government and private regional planning agencies; (6) establish uniform standards for procuring engineering and architectural services on the basis of qualifications; (7) ensure the use of such standards by all city agencies; and (8) coordinate with state and federal agencies in procuring funds for city infrastructure projects; and

Whereas, The creation of this office will increase accountability and improve the development, operation, and maintenance of the public and private infrastructure; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the Mayor to issue an executive order creating an office to oversee all development, operation, and maintenance of the public and private infrastructure of the City of New York.

DJ
LS # 499