

PROGRESSIVE PLANNING

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Philadelphia and Camden



Photo by Domenic Vitello

Philadelphia skyline: vacant property in the foreground and downtown skyscrapers in the background.

Twenty-First Century Urban Renewal in Philadelphia: The Neighborhood Transformation Initiative and its Critics

By Domenic Vitiello

Philadelphia is home to one of the most ambitious urban renewal programs in the United States. Mayor John Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) began in 2001 with the goal of demolishing some 14,000 vacant buildings, cleaning many of the city's 40,000 vacant lots and revitalizing neighborhoods with an infusion of 16,000 new housing units. The mayor cast the \$300 million program as an effort to reverse fifty years of population loss. In a 2001 press release, NTT's director, Patricia Smith, hailed it as a new sort of urban renewal for the twenty-first century:

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KEEPING THE
COMMUNITY IN
COMMUNITY
GARDENING

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS
AND COMMUNITY
BUILDING

FROM CREATIVE
ECONOMY TO
CREATIVE SOCIETY

MORE...

The Seventh Generation

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

- From the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy

Planning the "Next Great American City:" Public Policy and Social Justice in Philadelphia and Camden

By Domenic Vitiello

While most urban planners work on "growth management," for decades planners in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Camden, New Jersey, have engaged in "decline management." Between 1950 and 2000, each city lost one-third of its population and virtually its entire manufacturing base. Philadelphia is the nation's poorest large city, with 24.5 percent of residents living in poverty. Camden is the poorest of all U.S. cities, with a poverty rate of 44 percent. The Pennsylvania legislature has taken over Philadelphia's School District, Convention Center and Parking Authority, while state government has taken over virtually all public sector functions in Camden.

Yet both cities are touted as planning and redevelopment success stories. In the fall of 2005, *National Geographic* dubbed Philly "the next great American city." Its Center City, with already the third largest downtown residential population in

the country, grew by 14 percent in the 1990s and is enjoying a boom in new restaurants and condo towers. On the Camden waterfront, a new minor league baseball park, outdoor concert venue, aquarium and upscale apartments invite comparisons to Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

How should we make sense of these divergent portraits of these two cities on the Delaware River? At the American Planning Association's 2007 conference in Philadelphia, boosters will celebrate their successes, even labeling them "best practices" from which other cities and regions can learn. This collection of articles by planners and activists in the Delaware Valley chapter of Planners Network evaluates Philadelphia and Camden's revitalization in critical detail. We explore questions of social, economic and environmental justice in housing and neighborhood development, immigration, community gardening and the creative economy. We hope that through these articles we help develop a broader understanding of the impacts of and issues at stake in building these and other twenty-first century cities.

Domenic Vitiello is an urban planner and historian who teaches in the Urban Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

PN Notes:

- The 2007 Planners Network Conference will be held in New Orleans May 30 to June 2 in association with the Association for Community Design / Architects, Planners and Designers for Social Responsibility joint conference taking place in Baton Rouge, June 3-5. Information on the ACD/ADPSR conference is on page 18 of this issue. Information on the PN conference can be found on pages 44-47.
- Planners Network would also like to gratefully recognize two members who have renewed at our new \$1,000 Life Membership level: Tom Angotti and Ken Reardon.

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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES: The Planners Network is an association of professionals, activists, academics, and students involved in physical, social, economic, and environmental planning in urban and rural areas, who promote fundamental change in our political and economic systems. We believe that planning should be a tool for allocating resources and developing the environment to eliminate the great inequalities of wealth and power in our society, rather than to maintain and justify the status quo. We are committed to opposing racial, economic, and environmental injustice, and discrimination by gender and sexual orientation. We believe that planning should be used to assure adequate food, clothing, housing, medical care, jobs, safe working conditions, and a healthful environment. We advocate public responsibility for meeting these needs, because the private market has proven incapable of doing so.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS: Progressive Planning seeks articles that describe and analyze progressive physical, social, economic and environmental planning in urban and rural areas. Articles may be up to 2,000 words. They should be addressed to PN's broad audience of professionals, activists, students and academics, and be straightforward and jargon-free. Following a journalistic style, the first paragraph should summarize the main ideas in the article. A few suggested readings may be mentioned in the text, but do not submit footnotes or a bibliography. The editors may make minor style changes, but any substantial rewriting or changes will be checked with the author. A photograph or illustration may be included. Submissions on disk or by email are greatly appreciated. Send to the Editor at tangotti@hunter.cuny.edu or Planners Network, c/o Hunter College Dept of Urban Planning, 695 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021. Fax: 212-772-5593. Deadlines are January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

Keeping the Community in Community Gardening: *Aqui Estamos y no nos Vamos*

By Michael Nairn

On June 14, 2006, the *New York Times* ran an article entitled “Antidevelopment Protesters Are Arrested at Farm Site in Los Angeles.” Featuring the arrest of actress, Daryl Hannah, the article describes the eviction of 350 families, “mostly Latino squatters” from the 14-acre South Central Farm, the largest community garden in the country. They had been cultivating corn, squash, tomatoes and cactus since the Rodney King riots in 1992 on formerly vacant land in a “blighted” area of the city. The farm, slated to become a warehouse, had a convoluted ownership history. Most recently the city of Los Angeles had sold it to the current developer in a transaction that many considered far under fair market value.

The author chose not to entitle his article, “Protesters Strive to Preserve Fourteen Years of Backbreaking Work in Reclaiming Vacant Land” or “Local Residents Strive to Preserve Social Capital: Fourteen Years of Community Building Gives Way to a Warehouse.” He does, however unintentionally, bring attention to the two biggest problems facing community gardens today: the lack of outright land ownership and the expense of acquiring land given rising urban real estate values and the lack of valuation methods for community gardens. Dealing with the problem of land ownership raises complex issues to do with changing community values and competing political priorities as a number of important examples from Philadelphia demonstrate.

The latest generation of community gardening was conceived as a strategy for community building in urban neighborhoods. In the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, as urban neighborhoods were perceived to be under siege—with drugs and crime running rampant and property values declining—vacant land was reclaimed by urban gardeners around the country and transformed from eyesores into mini-Edens through the backbreaking work of community members. Where once trash and weeds proliferated, community members cultivated flowers and fresh

produce, often in areas where access to such commodities were and still are either limited or entirely unavailable. The intangible product of community gardening was the construction of social capital, the joining together of community members and the formation of community networks.

As in Los Angeles and the South Central Farm, most community gardens in Philadelphia have been sited on derelict or vacant land, usually tax delinquent parcels. The Warrington Garden is located in the Cedar Park neighborhood of University City in West Philadelphia. Designated a Keystone Garden by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) because of its diverse membership ranging from long-time African-American blue-collar residents to recent Laotian immigrants to African-American and white professionals, it serves sixty-two households on three-quarters of an acre. The gardeners bought their land, located immediately adjacent to the neighborhood commercial corridor, in 1993, when rumor had it that developers were eying the property. At the time the rumor seemed far-fetched, given that crime, crack and declining property values were ravaging the neighborhood. Nonetheless, the gardeners raised \$15,000 immediately and borrowed \$20,000 more. To pay off their loan held by a local land trust, the Neighborhood Garden Association (NGA), the gardeners held their annual Saturday Porch Sale Extravaganza. The ribs were heavenly, the salads out of this world and the brownies divine—and they were all made by members. In 2001, three local community members invested over \$1,000,000 in a new Italian restaurant located next door to the garden. Today, a recent appraisal estimated the land to be worth \$500,000, an unthinkable amount for the gardeners to raise.

Las Parcelas is located in the Norris Square neighborhood of the Kensington section of Philadelphia. Once largely a blue-collar Irish community located in an industrial section north of Center City along one of two subway lines, the area became the

center of Puerto Rican immigration in the 1960s and 1970s. *Las Parcelas* was founded eighteen years ago following a sting by the Drug Enforcement Administration that resulted in the incarceration of over fifty men from the community. In partnership with the Philadelphia Green program of the PHS, *Grupo Motivos*, a group of neighborhood women, transformed three parcels of “vacant land,” the site of a former open-air drug market, into six award-winning gardens. The garden attracts busloads of visitors who come to see the beautiful murals and vibrant garden and eat food prepared in an outdoor kitchen by *Grupo Motivos* catering. The garden is full of native Puerto Rican herbs and indigenous plants that connect the gardeners to their culinary roots and cultural traditions. Each year the gardeners eagerly await the harvest of their pigeon pea and yucas, traditional delicacies difficult to get fresh in Philadelphia. The garden employs one youth during the season, which *Grupo Motivos* hopes to expand through construction of a greenhouse and thereby retain its employee year-round.

Las Parcelas has evolved into much more than its humble origins might suggest. It has become a powerful symbol of Puerto Rican and women’s empowerment as well as a cultural and environmental center. The garden has become didactic, teaching neighborhood residents about traditional Puerto Rican life. The murals and the *La Casita*, the “little house” built by neighborhood residents, depict scenes from rural Puerto Rico. Across the street, community residents are building the African Village, a series of huts connecting local Puerto Ricans to both their African roots and to their larger Philadelphia neighborhood. *Grupo Motivos* has expanded its activities beyond traditional community gardening. The women have founded a catering company as well as a women’s resource center where community women can be trained in job skills. They are converting an adjoining building to house their expanded activities. While by all standards *Las Parcelas* is a success, its future is nowhere near assured. The core group of women who founded *Grupo Motivos* is aging, making generational leadership a major issue.

Property ownership is also a major issue for *Las Parcelas*. Their gardens are cultivated on land under different ownership. The Norris Square Neighborhood Project, the local neighborhood

association of which *Grupo Motivos* is a part, owns one parcel. The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) owns another. The neighborhood is in flux as it is now one of Philadelphia’s urban frontiers, with new residential development creeping up from Center City. Neighborhood land values are increasing almost exponentially.

There are contradictions, uncertainties, confusion and risks surrounding the city’s policies on community gardens and how those policies are implemented. Broadly speaking, the mayor’s agenda is to attract and retain the middle class by strengthening neighborhoods, overhauling the school district, creating jobs, increasing recreational amenities and building affordable housing. Each city department and agency has its own strategy for attaining those goals. These strategies often align but sometimes do not, resulting in confusing, if not conflicting, policies. The Board of Revision of Taxes, which maintains an inventory of all properties, sees community gardens as merely vacant land, as do most other citywide land use inventories. The Redevelopment Authority (RDA), for example, one of three city departments empowered to own land and the only one empowered to use eminent domain, states on its website that its mission is “to facilitate the development of *underutilized* property in the special emphasis on affordable housing” (emphasis added). The Philadelphia City Planning Commission is sponsoring a community-based planning effort called the “GreenPlan Philadelphia” in which community gardens are an important element. The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) has been downright progressive in encouraging sustainable agriculture. In West Philadelphia, PWD has leased 1.5 acres to a non-profit to develop the Mill Creek Farm, a project that will combine stormwater management, local agricultural production and education. The land is adjacent a community garden and the entire parcel is protected through a long-term lease.

The recent growth in community gardening has been in more affluent neighborhoods where heirloom tomatoes are of more concern than basic nutrition, but vacant land is most often found in the poorest neighborhoods under the jurisdiction of the RDA and the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI). The RDA, acting on behalf of the NTI, has been using eminent domain to assemble large parcels of land to attract suburban developers to build affordable middle-class housing. ⇨

The PHA has also been working with NTI, actively developing large parcels in the context of a market-based model while deaccessioning some scattered housing sites. While NTI has offered more land to *Las Parcelas* for garden development, PHA's plans for its parcel are still undetermined.

The fate of an individual piece of land rests with the agency that has jurisdiction. Navigating the complex jurisdictional landscape is dizzying, confusing and downright frustrating. Some departments and agencies are more accountable to the public than others. PHA is a state authorized agency not directly accountable to the city government. NTI and RDA, the city agencies primarily dealing with site development, are notoriously opaque. The key is often the district councilperson who represents district residents. There is, however, a strong tradition of "pay to play" in Philadelphia, which favors developers' interests over those of community gardeners. Given the preceding conditions, it is easy to foresee a situation developing like that in Los Angeles at the South Central Farm. PHS and NGA have been working diligently to assist gardeners in navigating the system and acquiring land through outright purchase or long-term leases.

These conditions raise the issue of valuation, both qualitative and quantitative. The problem is how to turn a perceived liability into a perceived asset—vacant land into an economically productive use—in the minds of municipal bureaucrats. In Los Angeles, Mayor Villaraigosa praised the farm but when push came to shove, supported the developer and the proposed warehouse. He did offer another vacant land site that could accommodate 200 families but where they would have to start from scratch. Gone would be the fourteen years spent carrying out backbreaking work and building a social network. The developer could easily provide a cost-benefit analysis, including the number of jobs created and projected tax revenues. It is far more difficult to quantify the value of social networks and other benefits derived from a community garden, and there are many who would argue that such should not have to be the case.

Recent studies in New York and Philadelphia have focused on the impact that community gardens, street tree plantings and the greening of vacant lots have had on neighborhood property values.

Using real estate finance methods and sophisticated statistical analysis, these studies have proven that community actions are beneficial to the neighborhood, raising surrounding property values. In the New Kensington section of Philadelphia, property values rose an average of 30 percent when vacant land was improved through greening. The irony is, of course, that as neighborhood property values rise, the land on which these community gardens sit becomes more expensive, making it all the more attractive to developers. The increase also diminishes the ability of community members to purchase the land and ensure the longevity of the gardens. Neither study addressed the ownership or garden valuation issues.

The emerging field of ecological economics may point to solutions. Robert Costanza et al in *An Introduction to Ecological Economics* (1997) try to put a price on the services ecosystems provide. In the case of many community gardens such as the South Central Farm, their fate depends on proving they are not "vacant," but that they provide cash flows that benefit city residents. Basic finance also suggests there may be a method for the valuation of community gardens. Valuation can be generally determined by the present value of future cash flows, "investor" perceptions and the law of supply and demand. Community gardens produce two types of goods: tangible goods, such as produce and flowers, jobs and decreased stormwater management costs, and intangible goods, such as community building, social networking, soil building and biogenetic diversity. Tangible goods are more easily quantified. The amount of produce can be estimated on an annual basis and comparable selling prices assigned. The valuation of intangible benefits presents a more difficult problem.

Through the public relations efforts of people like Daryl Hannah, the gardeners at the South Central Farm were able to raise close to the \$16 million purchase price, which included a \$10 million grant from the Annenberg Foundation. Notwithstanding, on July 25, 2006, bulldozers hired by the developer razed the South Central Farm. Only time will tell the fate of many of Philadelphia's community gardens.

Michael Nairn is a landscape architect who teaches urban studies and planning at the University of Pennsylvania.

Vitiello cont'd from page 1

For the most part, the urban renewal programs of the '70s were defined by demolition, a massive gentrification of traditional neighborhoods and by the lack of meaningful involvement by neighborhood residents. Ironically those programs contributed significantly to the creation of vacant lots and other blighted conditions here in Philadelphia and in other cities across the country. We have learned from the failure of those programs and will absolutely not repeat their mistakes.

Six years later, as Mayor Street's term nears its end, boosters and critics have labeled NTI everything from a wild success to a disastrous failure. Did the initiative revitalize housing markets and communities, building a more prosperous and sustainable city? Or did it repeat earlier generations' mistakes, wasting public funds and devastating working-class neighborhoods? These divergent views (and others in between) offer an opportunity to consider just how and for whom Philadelphia is being "renewed"—and just what planners across North America can learn from NTI.

The planning behind NTI is a superior example of the market models of public policy that dominate the planning profession today. The City contracted with The Reinvestment Fund (www.trfund.com), a locally-based community development financial institution and one of the nation's leaders, to formulate plans based on deep analysis of neighborhood housing markets. According to the plans, blighted "reclamation" neighborhoods warranted large-scale demolition and redevelopment to "create conditions for market rebirth"; "transitional" neighborhoods needed stabilization through quick response to market downturns; and the most affluent neighborhoods should simply "promote and propel the market." In reclamation neighborhoods, where most of NTI's money has been spent, policymakers pointed to blocks where vacant lots interspersed with just a few remaining rowhomes represented inefficient land use—a key determinant of blight.

For neoliberal critics of urban policy, who believe in the power of the private market to drive renewal, NTI has seen mixed results. In its first four years,

the program completed 4,550 demolitions, almost 10,000 less than its goal, partly because city agencies underestimated the cost of demolition. While the city took on new debt, it failed to demolish more houses per year than it did before NTI. The 16,000 new market-rate and 5,000 affordable housing units built or planned in the city as of mid-2006, however, exceeded expectations. The NTI website boasts that since the year 2000, the average home in the city has appreciated 30 percent. Politicians give much of the credit to NTI. Clearly, the national real estate boom and the increasing popularity of American downtowns helped drive this growth, fueled by low interest rates and demographic trends among "empty nesters" and twenty- and thirty-somethings. Still, economists have shown that the city's 10-year property tax abatement for new housing construction and rehab as well as NTI-funded greening of vacant lots have indeed helped increase real estate sale prices.

The general consensus among policy wonks and the media is that NTI did not accomplish as much as it should have. Though the planning behind it was good, they claim, the program's implementation was corrupted by City Council members and other politicians who hold too much sway over development in their districts. Some point to the inability of public agencies to collaborate, effectively blocking the program's initial goal of restructuring the city's housing and redevelopment bureaucracies. In one of the greatest lost opportunities, NTI failed to coordinate with the School District of Philadelphia's \$1.8 billion capital campaign launched in 2002, leaving school development disconnected from broader neighborhood planning. Finally, many critics blame anti-*eminent domain* abuse activists for stalling NTI with protests and lawsuits. Of course, those activists have their own interpretation of what went wrong.

Philadelphia has become a center of the anti-*eminent domain* abuse movement that gained national attention with the *Kelo v. New London* case in 2005. Locally, the focal point was around opposition to NTI takings of occupied homes in the neighborhoods of West Kensington, Brewerytown in North Philadelphia and Mill Creek in West Philadelphia. In each case, the market logic of NTI butted heads with residents' competing visions of what was wrong with their community—and how to fix it. ➡

In 2002, the City condemned the 2200 block of Bodine Street in West Kensington, a narrow street amidst the junkyards and chemical plants of the American Street Empowerment Zone. NTI's planners counted just seven homes surrounded by vacant lots on a block where there was once more than fifty taxpaying households. Residents saw something different: a grove of trees and gardens they had planted over the

including upscale condominium development presently under way in the area. Bodine Street, however, remains undeveloped.

Rosemary Cubas spent the rest of her life—until she died of pancreatic cancer in March 2006—helping poor people in communities around the city targeted by NTI to navigate the system and fight displacement. In her view, the city's eloquent language about “community partners,” “transparency” and “accountability” was a smokescreen—what sociologist Eric Klinenberg calls “governing by public relations.” NTI's managers ignored even more established organizations, such as the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations and the local office of LISC, which argued for greater attention to community capacity from the outset. Even conservative critics agree that NTI has been a “black box” program lacking meaningful civic participation.

Perhaps the best outcome of NTI lies in the expansion of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's (PHS) Philadelphia Green program, the nation's leading community gardening institution. It has successfully cleaned, greened and fenced thousands of vacant lots throughout the city. Yet Cubas charged that PHS shifted its primary rationale for greening as it gained substantial NTI contracts. In the organization's publicity of its work, what was once presented first and foremost as an effort to organize neighbors and “build community” became cast more often as an “interim strategy” for stabilizing sites in preparation for development and market rebirth. In the absence of inclusive public policies, CLI launched a block-level organizing initiative in West Kensington to formalize local leadership networks and advance agendas for grassroots revitalization. These agendas included infill housing instead of large-scale demolition, preservation of affordable housing and community gardens and access to solar panels and other “green” technologies to promote “energy justice” for low-wealth communities.

Some of NTI's planners have admitted that the process of redevelopment in West Kensington was “problematic.” Brewerytown, however, is NTI's “poster child.” A mix of residential and former industrial buildings adjacent to Fairmount Park, just

Photo credit: Domenic Vitello



This block in West Kensington illustrates the “inefficient” land uses targeted by NTI. In the foreground is a lot—part of the 2200 block of Bodine Street—that has been cleaned, greened and fenced by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

years while their neighborhood was ravaged by environmental racism, disinvestment and open air drug markets. The Community Leadership Institute (CLI), a resident-controlled council created through the Empowerment Zone and led by longtime activist Rosemary Cubas, opposed the taking and lost the Institute's public funding in the process. Cubas and her colleagues pointed out that while city government ignored their neighborhood for decades, poor people had invested small amounts of money but huge amounts of time, energy and passion into improving it. While the City proved inept at fighting drugs and vacancy rates, neighbors took back their blocks from drug dealers and planted community gardens that fed a neighborhood lacking grocery stores with healthy produce. In the process, they—the people, not the city—created the conditions for gentrification,

up the road from Boathouse Row on the Schuylkill River and next to the thoroughly gentrified section of Fairmount, the logic of gentrification here is undeniable. But affordable housing is also part of the plan. Suburban homebuilder John Westrum is erecting 144 market-rate townhouses with a starting price of over \$250,000 for a one-bedroom unit and has acquired enough land to erect 500 more. On the next block, a former Acme warehouse is being converted to 116 market-rate and 68 affordable apartments, all with ground-floor retail. NTI has allocated \$210,000 for nearby homeowners to make repairs.

To hear city leaders tell it, Brewerytown is a national model of equitable development. Yet some residents, led by the African-American Business & Residents Association, accuse the city of destabilizing the community by driving out institutions that build social capital. In particular, residents point to the taking of horse stables used by black “urban cowboys”—stables that were used to expose young people in the ghetto to amenities typically only experienced by affluent Americans. NTI officials cite the deplorable conditions of the stables, while the cowboys claim they were promised new quarters that never materialized. Al Alston, the Association’s president, filed several lawsuits against the city and continues to rail against gentrification. Racial and class tensions persist in the area, particularly in the wake of Westrum’s advertising campaign, which included a billboard of a young white man and his cat sitting on a sofa with the slogan “It’s Your Turn.” Moreover, whether a private developer warranted such heavy public subsidies at a time when other private developers are investing in similar Philadelphia neighborhoods without NTI support remains an open question.

For advocates of affordable housing, NTI is fraught with irony. In fairness, NTI’s planners at The Reinvestment Fund never viewed the program as primarily an affordable housing campaign. Rather, they recognized that Philadelphia needed to rebuild its middle-class population and tax base in order to avoid further decline. Yet the city has branded NTI as a program with ambitious affordable housing goals. NTI has taken credit for several HOPE VI projects planned and funded principally by HUD before NTI was conceived. Activists claim that the aggregate loss of subsidized housing for low-income Philadelphians through HOPE VI and

the Philadelphia Housing Authority’s neglect of its scattered site units amounts to a crisis. One clear victory—claimed by activists, NTI and various politicians—is an Affordable Housing Trust Fund created in 2006, though the City Council has held up these funds as its members dispute their allocation.

On another positive note, NTI has invested close to \$50 million in land assembly for capable community development corporations like the People’s Emergency Center CDC in West Philadelphia, Universal Companies in South Philadelphia and Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha in West Kensington. NTI has shared power with relatively few private developers and CDCs, however, and



Photo credit: Domenic Vitello

Advertisements for Westrum’s Brewerytown Square development.

viewed in the context of recent City housing investment, it represents a retreat from previous administrations’ policies aimed at building broad-based planning and development capacity among community-based organizations. Furthermore, activists like Rosemary Cubas have criticized certain CDCs that have partnered with NTI for their willingness to displace their neighbors in return for city funding.

Ecologists advance yet another set of critiques, noting that NTI and the Housing Authority have built on sensitive sites without adequate stormwater management, especially in the Mill Creek section of West Philadelphia. They point out that the large tracts of land that appeared easiest to develop were vacant in the first place because the homes that once stood there were built over the city’s underground creeks and floodplains, which caused these neighborhoods to literally sink and collapse. And just as ⇒

Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in August 2005, the Mayor's Office even forced the Water Department to spend its emergency funds to boost NTI's budget. Fortunately, the Water Department was able to direct this money to stormwater management projects.

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING:

All for the Taking: 21st-Century Urban Renewal

This one-hour documentary, directed by George McCollough of the Media Mobilizing Project, tells the story of NTI from the perspective of the program's biggest losers—the people whose homes have been taken through eminent domain. It takes brief forays into other recent urban renewal controversies in Philadelphia and its suburbs. The residents and activists interviewed in the film, together with the vivid images of demolition and new construction, force viewers to confront the deep social costs of eminent domain abuse and gentrification in the twenty-first century city.

All for the Taking will be screened in Philadelphia in April. A discussion with activists from the Community Leadership Institute, Media Mobilizing Project and other local groups will follow the film.

The film can be purchased from Berkeley Media (www.berkeleymedia.com).

So what can planners and policymakers learn from the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative and its critics? Surely, no city in the United States can sustain a decent quality of life for its citizens without a substantial tax base. Reviving local real estate markets is critical to the fortunes of the many cities and towns that lost population in the second half of the twentieth century. Yet it is unreasonable—and, as Philadelphians have learned, often difficult—to advance effective public policies without involving the people most immediately affected, i.e., the residents of the “reclamation neighborhoods.”

The question of who pays for and who benefits from public policy matters. Rosemary Cubas and her colleagues claim that Philadelphia's gentrified neighborhoods are being built on the backs of the poor, who pay rising property taxes while the affluent buyers of new condos enjoy their 10-year tax abatements. Some public policies that are creating wealth and reviving the downtown are also perpetuating the poverty of inner city communities.

Market models are often good at grasping the economic conditions of cities, but just as often they miss social and ecological forces also vital to urban prosperity and livability. From their GIS maps and windshield surveys, NTI's planners failed to understand the dynamics of poor people's investment in their neighborhoods. Surely we do not wish to be a generation of “Sim City planners.” So how should market analysis inform planning and redevelopment? Can we effectively employ market models to address the growing inequality of America and its cities—for poverty alleviation as well as real estate market revival?

NTI's opponents point to the prospect of complementing market studies with deep local knowledge of the dynamics of communities and alternative measures of success, well beyond real estate values. This is by no means a new argument, as the Philadelphia Association of CDCs, the local office of LISC and others made this point at the program's outset. The Reinvestment Fund is presently working to refine its methods of urban redevelopment consulting, incorporating data on social capital. Translating this into equitable development will require including poor people and a broad spectrum of civic organizations in the process, building civic capacity to leverage their “informal” investments in the process of revitalization. In the words of Elizabeth Segarra of the Community Leadership Institute, “We're not opposed to progress; we just want to be part of progress.”

Domenic Vitiello has authored books and articles about Greater Philadelphia's economy, ecology and community development.

Author's note: This article was initiated in collaboration with Rosemary Cubas. It is dedicated to her memory.

Immigrant Rights and Community Building in a State of Xenophobia

By Peter Bloom

As of October 2006, forty-nine municipalities in the United States had introduced or passed “illegal immigration relief acts” that punished landlords and employers from doing business with undocumented immigrants. Twenty-seven of these local ordinances were in Pennsylvania, which has long been the nation’s capital of hate crimes. These measures, concentrated in the older mining and manufacturing towns of the Pocono Mountains, principally target the Mexican immigrants who dominate the nation’s undocumented population. Philadelphia, on the other hand, has passed laws that forbid police from even asking about immigration status and that ensure that all residents—documented or undocumented—have access to public services. While many civic leaders promote immigration as a way to regrow a city decimated by population loss, even in the most “immigrant-friendly” contexts, undocumented Mexicans and other immigrants confront great challenges to ensuring their own social and economic justice.

Philadelphia and Mexican Migration

Substantial Mexican immigration to Philadelphia began during the mid-1990s, when the city was recovering from deep recession and near economic disaster. In this context, the city’s revitalization discourse included immigrants insofar as they represented opportunities to support the knowledge-based mode of production and create small businesses critical to the city’s survival. Most conversations today about the budding Mexican population highlight new ethnic restaurants in South Philadelphia while downplaying the lack of language-appropriate services, labor exploitation and racial tension in the neighborhood. The underside of the discussion is that immigrants move into ailing neighborhoods and revive them while also filling holes in the fabric of the flexible economy by taking jobs “citizens don’t want to do.”

A look at Mexican immigration in Philadelphia reveals how easily exploitable labor dominates the least desirable sectors of the economy. Following recent trends in the United States, most Mexicans have come to Philadelphia without permission (as so-called illegal aliens) and must therefore live and work in ignominy. From the back alleys of Center City, a brief look into the kitchens of virtually every restaurant reveals the extent to which Mexican and other Latino immigrants are relied upon to grease the economic wheels of the city. Less visible are Mexicans working in non-union construction, landscaping and housekeeping fields at suburban office parks. Philadelphia is also experiencing an increase in the number of women immigrants, most of whom work in textile sweatshops or in light industry as food packers, usually at the whim of fly-by-night subcontractors.

Philadelphia’s Immigrant Rights Movement

On February 14, 2006, thousands of predominantly Latino immigrants from Philadelphia came together in a general labor boycott in what many consider the first direct action in the wave of mobilizations against legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives that would criminalize undocumented immigrants. These protests helped derail the legislation but have led to increased polarization and anti-immigrant sentiment, as demonstrated by the recent wave of local ordinances. The Pocono Mountain town of Hazleton passed the first such law in the nation. It was followed by other towns similarly in decline, most dominated by Italian- and Irish-American populations that were not even considered “white” 100 years ago but that nonetheless now reproduce the hate that was once aimed at them.

In South Philadelphia, the center of historic Italian and current Mexican settlement in the city, a fiery debate about “English Only” was sparked when ➔

local, national and international media came to focus on a sign in the window of Geno's, a famous Philadelphia cheesesteak stand. It read: "This Is America. When Ordering, Speak English." Geno's owner, Joey Vento, became an instant spokesman in national debates, comparing his Mexican neighbors to the Italian immigrants of his grandparents' generation. His version of history, however, did not include the fact that Italians at the beginning of the twentieth century learned English at slower rates than Mexican immigrants do at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The Pennsylvania House Republican Policy Committee called Vento

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as an expert witness in its summer hearings on possible state measures to address immigration. In November, the cheesesteak maker donated \$10,000 to Hazleton's legal fight against the ACLU and Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund's challenge to fair housing and employment violations in the town's "Illegal Immigration Relief Act."

What has been decidedly missing from the debate thus far is a discussion of the causes and pressures that lead people to come to the United States in the first place. For many of South Philadelphia's newest residents, many of whom are undocumented immigrants originally from rural Mexico, there are too few opportunities for advancement back home. If the dysfunction found in both immigrants' home countries and U.S. immigration policy are not seen as related or approached simultaneously, we can never hope for an equitable solution that respects people's rights to move freely or to stay.

JUNTOS

Two main pressures affect new and undocumented immigrants in Philadelphia. First, their mere existence in the United States is tied to eco-

nomically and ethnically motivated displacement strategies that operate on an international scale, notably do to the spread of "free trade" with little, if any, regard for fair or equitable trade. Second, as expropriated peoples they are faced with local barriers that exclude them from services and opportunities, leading to exploitation, dislocation, trauma and human rights abuses. These two issues create cross-border communities that have little voice in political or civic life either back home or in their adopted communities.

To combat these problems, JUNTOS, a community group based in South Philadelphia, has been working to build power for justice in the Latino immigrant community in the city. The long-term strategy of social justice for JUNTOS is based on building a political voice among people who are silenced, excluded and expelled throughout their lives—in the different places to which they migrate. Recognizing that migrant populations continue to be severely underrepresented in decision-making and policy processes the world over, JUNTOS takes an asset-based approach to its community work that promotes leadership development.

To address the problem of displacement, JUNTOS is committed to building transnational spaces in which community organizing and leadership development can take place in a reflexive manner between Philadelphia and members' home communities. Most communities with high levels of out-migration are riddled with structural problems reinforced by poverty, racism and corruption. Based in a global/local context, JUNTOS is working to ensure that questions of justice are also part of the migratory circuit; in other words, unfavorable conditions must be simultaneously combated in Philadelphia and back at home.

In South Philadelphia, JUNTOS members, most of whom are undocumented Mexicans, have formed organizing committees that address ongoing issues of language access and quality of service in the local public schools and health clinics. Another committee collaborated with the police department to create a safe corridor for workers—returning home late at night from downtown restaurants—who were being targeted by muggers who knew they carried cash. In addition to

running English and computer literacy classes, JUNTOS staff advocates for members' labor rights on an ad hoc basis.

On a transnational scale, JUNTOS has been strategizing with emigrants from the town of San Mateo Ozolco. Many Ozolcan migrants are concurrently at "the bottom of the barrel" of Philadelphia's workforce and yet are the most financially active and stable members of their town back in Mexico. Through collective remittance sending, loyalty and commitment to migrants' hometown can be effectively channeled into an alternative political force that creates opportunities for change. The first project, now complete, that migrants undertook was to raise funds to help build a high school for their town. Construction is set to begin in January 2007.

San Mateo is not the only town with a substantial presence in the Philadelphia area. Across the river in Camden, New Jersey, there is a population from San Lucas Atzala that rivals if not surpasses the Ozolcan community in size. Also present in Philadelphia are immigrants from Domingo Arenas, Huejotzingo, San Andres Calpan and Santa Maria Atexcal. Interestingly, all of these towns are located in the same valley, nestled between two volcanoes, Iztaccihuatl and Popocatepetl, in the central Mexican state of Puebla. Regional trans-plantation of this sort offers great potential for collective work.

Migrant remitters and their families back home, however, face significant challenges in light of continuing corruption and inefficiency at all levels of Mexican government. For example, illegal logging conducted by companies allied with local politicians has denuded large sections of the national forest that surrounds these neighboring towns. Today, the hometown association of San Mateo Ozolco, in collaboration with JUNTOS, has begun to raise money and mobilize for reforestation. This is critical to the region's agricultural base, as deforestation has already caused the area's rainfall to become more erratic, threatening the livelihood of nearly all residents.

Mexico, which has been making conscious efforts to depopulate rural areas and urbanize the nation for over twenty years, has helped spur emigration

to the United States. In this neoliberal environment, solidarity is tantamount for communities throughout Mexico. Water security issues, for example, transcend the challenge of reforestation. Much of the water available to the towns of this region in Puebla comes from underground springs emanating from beneath the volcanoes. The water is piped down to the towns, which have negotiated or been dictated the terms of their use rights by the federal government water bureau. Due to the region's proximity to Mexico City, and as water security becomes more of an issue due to global climate change, a major environmental justice battle looms on the horizon.

How Will These Communities Survive?

The billions of dollars sent back to Mexico every year cannot yield a more inclusive or equitable society unless they are used as leverage by migrants and their networks back home to ensure democratic participation in a way that leads to an emancipatory and equitable project of social reform. Via remittances and exceptional organizing on both sides of the border, migrant remitters can begin to shift the power dynamic and the terms of discourse inherent in a globalized situation in their favor. Success in these enterprises can lead to liberation and improved democracy.

How can these horizontal linkages across borders be strengthened? Some brief answers can be found by reworking traditional community organizing strategies. The Ozolcan hometown association in Philadelphia, for example, has allowed its members to decide how their migradollars are invested in Mexico. Through social remittances, organizing and education, Mexicans who have been exposed to new norms in the U.S. may find it no longer acceptable to have their money wasted on poorly planned or corrupt development projects and will exercise their veto power or search for better investments. Great obstacles remain at the local, national and global scale—on both sides of the border. But through regional collaboration and transnational mobilization, seemingly powerless people are building the capacity to determine their own future.

Peter Bloom is co-founder and executive director of JUNTOS.

From Creative Economy to Creative Society

By Mark J. Stern and Susan C. Seifert

Philadelphia policymakers have embraced the paradigm of “the creative economy” and “the creative class.” In June 2006, Innovation Philadelphia and the University of the Arts co-sponsored the Global Creative Economy Convergence Summit. Sessions showcased initiatives from places as diverse as Los Angeles and London; Lansing, Michigan and Charles City, Iowa; and Hultsfred, Sweden, and KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Topics ranged from “The Secret Life of Creative Capability” and “Interactive Infotainment Spaces” to “Creativity Is not a Commodity.” According to Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia President Karen Davis, the creative economy already produces \$44 billion annually and “there is no question that this is an untapped sector that can generate both revenue and jobs for the region.”

Across the U.S., cities and towns have hopped on the creative economy bandwagon, spurred by Richard Florida’s provocative argument that the creative class is key to their global competitive advantage, explained in *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (2002). Creative economy enthusiasm, in fact, succeeds economic impact of the arts case-making and cultural district planning as a third wave of interest in culture as a post-industrial urban revitalization strategy.

This excitement over the creative class, however, has overshadowed a growing body of work on the community benefits of the arts and culture. Like the creative economy perspective, the community-building perspective moves beyond looking at official cultural non-profits to the broader creative sector. But rather than focus on the competitive advantage of a region in the global economy, community arts developers point to the sector’s contribution to the resilience of neighborhoods competing for intra-regional investment. Ironically, for planners concerned with issues of social and economic justice, the social costs of creative economy expansion are documented but the economic returns are not. There is evidence, however, to suggest that a neigh-

borhood-based creative economy has the potential for the social—and economic—regeneration of urban communities.

The Social Costs of the Creative Economy

Neither creative economy nor community arts advocates have focused on the possible *negative* effects of culture-based revitalization. Gentrification remains the most commonly raised objection, although what evidence there is hardly justifies the concern. Indeed, the tendency of artists to trigger neighborhood immigration appears to be counterbalanced by their role in stabilizing ethnically diverse neighborhoods.

A less commonly discussed drawback, but one for which there is more evidence, is the expansion of inequality. Economic inequality—attributed to structural changes including globalization, the decline of unions and deindustrialization—has exploded over the past thirty years. As Saskia Sassen notes, the networked economy tends to “valorize” particular jobs and “devalorize” others that are equally important to the functioning of the economy. Creative economy enthusiasts similarly valorize truly creative workers—typically higher-income, higher-educated workers—which effectively devalorizes workers who make a less visible contribution. In a world of limited resources, making life better for the “gifted” implies making life worse for the “ordinary.”

In his latest book, *The Flight of the Creative Class: The New Global Competition for Talent* (2005), Florida bemoans that creative cities have high levels of social and economic inequality.

We can count on neither trickle-down economics nor conventional social welfare programs to help us here. Rising inequality is driven by the dynamics of the emerging creative system and does not promise to be self-healing. On the contrary, these dynamics perversely threaten to make the situation worse.

It is difficult to see how Florida's conceptualization of creativity, however, could have any other consequences other than what he bemoans. For the past five years, city officials from New York to Spokane have used *The Rise of the Creative Class* as a how-to manual for stimulating economic growth. That these strategies actually exacerbate divisions between rich and poor should give public officials pause.

The creative economy job mix holds promise as it also raises concern for its role in promoting economic revitalization. Overall, creative industries are dominated by jobs that have high educational requirements. Moreover, according to a study by the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania, between 1980 and 2000 artists in six U.S. cities were consistently among the occupations with the highest degree of income inequality.

The expansion of arts occupations specifically and the creative economy overall will create more opportunities for highly-skilled workers than for urban workers with modest educational qualifications. As culture becomes a greater component of the metropolitan economy, increasing inequality is sure to be a more significant downside than gentrification.

Regeneration Potential of Community Culture

While the creative economy pitch has caught boosters' ears, cultural policy studies point to the role of the arts and culture in building social capital and community capacity. A consistent set of positive neighborhood effects is associated with community culture. Local arts expand social networks within and between neighborhoods; bridge long-term barriers between social groups; create value in the form of social connections and physical amenities; and animate public spaces.

SIAP's research on Philadelphia has demonstrated strong links between cultural engagement, community capacity-building and neighborhood regeneration. Child welfare, for example, is connected to community culture: Low-income block groups with high cultural participation are more than twice as likely to have very low truancy and delinquency as other low-income block groups. (Cultural participants are defined as residents who enroll in, attend or are members of non-profit arts or cultural programs anywhere in the region.) This finding, however, ⇒

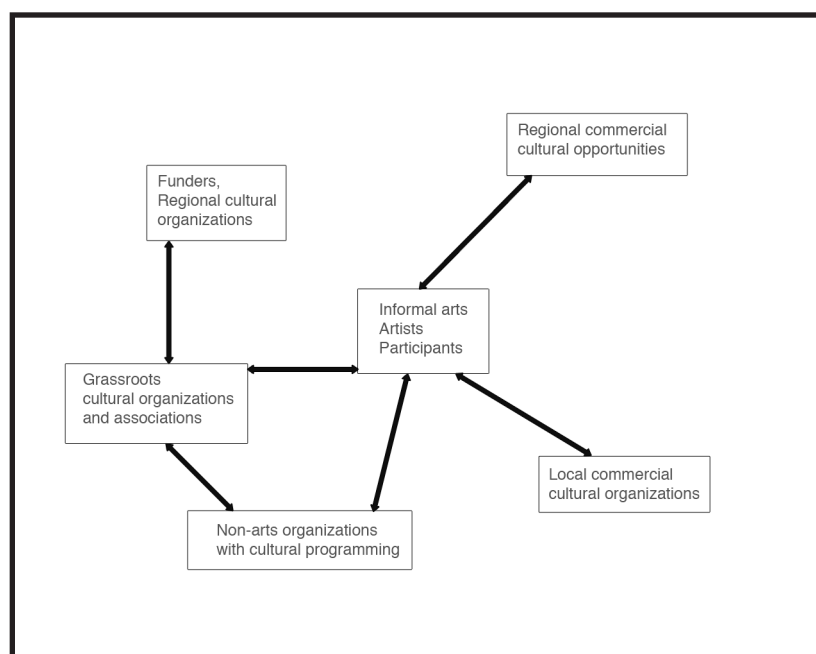


Grassroots community groups—like Grupo Motivos of the Norris Square Neighborhood Project in North Philadelphia who engage residents in gardening, mural-making, and multi-cultural education—are an often overlooked element of the community cultural ecosystem.

Photos courtesy of Mark J. Stern and Susan C. Seifert

reflects not the number of kids in after-school arts programs but rather the relationship of cultural engagement to “collective efficacy”—the willingness of residents to address their community’s problems and the belief that they can do so successfully.

Broader neighborhood revitalization is also associated with cultural engagement. In Philadelphia neighborhoods that were low-income in 1990, roughly 15 percent underwent revitalization—defined by above average poverty decline and population gain—over the next decade. Block groups with high regional cultural participation, however, were twice as likely to revitalize.



How do community arts help regenerate urban neighborhoods? Cultural participation bridges diversity within as well as across neighborhoods. Even among very small grassroots arts centers, nearly four-in-five participants come from outside the neighborhood where the center is located. Unlike other forms of community engagement, culture links people and places across divides of geography, ethnicity and social class—building community capacity through both bonding and bridging social capital. These bridges may be as simple as a patron’s “discovery” of a nearby ethnic restaurant or as substantial as a suburban church or synagogue’s commitment to a struggling grassroots organization. Moreover, cultural participation and production reinforce one another. Cultural providers (non-profit and for-profit), artists and participants tend to locate in the same communities, forming natural cultural districts. Thus, by

functioning as both producer clusters and participant destinations, neighborhoods rich in cultural resources connect with the rest of the city and region.

A New Model: The Neighborhood-Based Creative Economy

Can culture-based revitalization expand economic opportunity and social inclusion without generating the inequality and gentrification that its critics have suggested? The answer, we suggest, lies in linking the creative economy and social capital perspectives. Here we propose a community cultural ecosystem model as an approach to stimulate revitalization of low-wealth urban neighborhoods. As the diagram that follows shows, this model highlights the many people and groups involved in the community cultural sector: non-profit cultural organizations, informal and participatory groups, independent artists, non-arts CBOs, for-profit cultural enterprises, funders and other resource organizations. The model also highlights the connections and interdependencies—between non-profits and for-profits, participants and producers, neighborhoods and the region—that are integral to the ecosystem. Our particular focus here is the importance of integrating neighborhood residents with the regional economy and civil society.

The Community Cultural Ecosystem

The diagram at left describes the current form of the community cultural ecosystem, which contrasts with local government and philanthropists’ view of community arts as a set of isolated 501(c)(3) organizations. An ecological perspective provides a useful planning and investment model for culture-based neighborhood revitalization.

From Creative Economy to Economic Opportunity

The concept of the community cultural ecosystem fits uneasily with that of the creative economy which—at least in its American manifestations—is thoroughly market-oriented. The profit motive is the change agent and cultural and social arrangements are expected to respond accordingly. Most importantly, the current perspective gives special priority to members of the creative class in the economic fate of cities.

In his seminal work *Art Worlds* (1982), Howard Becker makes a compelling case that the image of the artist

as a genius *existing outside of any social organization* is fallacious. Individual creativity—even in its most idiosyncratic form—is tied to patterns of organization of social activity that allow the genius to play that role.

Works of art are not the products of individual makers, ‘artists’ who possess a rare and special gift... They are, rather, joint products of all the people who cooperate via an art world’s characteristic conventions to bring works like that into existence.

Thus, the stagehand, the printer and the guitar string maker are as critical to art as the supposedly isolated genius. Becker wanted to shatter the concept of creativity outside of social organization and revalorize the role of routine activity in creative production.

Recent work on the creative class turns Becker’s insight on its head. Where Becker sought to demystify creativity, creative economy writers seek to don the artists’ aura on stockbrokers, scientists and even professors. But what if we take Becker’s insight and turn the creative economy back on its feet? If the sector’s success is based on the social organization of people with different skills and aptitudes, then a new set of jobs—though not creative in the conventional sense—is critical to the creative industries. Someone has to lay the fiber optic cable for the web designer, sew the costumes for the dancers and print the drawings for the architect. In other words, the social construct of the creative economy provides the foundation for an urban workforce development strategy.

Indeed, valorization of the creative worker flies in the face of a profound reorganization of work life underway at the dawn of the twenty-first century—the reintegration of mental and manual labor. Several Philadelphia educational institutions reflect this trend. The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College combines academic studies with practical hands-on experience in the culinary arts at open-to-the-public restaurants. The Charter High School for Architecture and Design combines traditional academics and design skills with hands-on training in carpentry, plumbing and other structural systems. All in all, the integration of mental and manual work required for creative production provides a fertile ground for examining workforce opportunities that could connect residents of low-wealth urban neighborhoods with a growing regional economy.

From Economic Opportunity to Social Inclusion

Can a culture-based neighborhood revitalization strategy combine wealth creation and social justice? Can policy move a locale from a creative economy to a *creative society*? Yes, but not by avoiding the lessons of past experience.

Cultural and economic development policy has focused on large-scale projects and districts to revitalize downtowns and regions, like Philadelphia’s 2005 APA award-winning Avenue of the Arts. In projects like these, significant public investment in culture is directed at tourists, conventioners, high-income downtown residents and suburbanites. Only a thin thread—the trickle down of economic advantage to the region as service sector employment—connects cultural mega-projects to the well-being of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Policymakers deem such projects successful even though the economic impact evaluation is weak and problematic. Likewise, the benefits of the creative economy favor the global city over the urban neighborhood. By contrast, the community capacity-building benefits of the arts and culture are well-documented and connected to wider trends in neighborhood revitalization.

For the creative economy to become the *creative society*, we need to see people as consumers *and* citizens and develop an approach that acknowledges both. The greatest barrier to such a shift is the creative economy ideology. If economic prosperity and competitive advantage depend upon a city’s genius class, it’s hard to make a case for the welfare of ordinary citizens. Despite his recognition of the creative economy’s dark side, Richard Florida has become an industry.

Howard Becker’s art worlds, on the other hand, provide the foundation for a new approach to urban workforce development. If a successful creative economy is based on social organization—not individual genius—then its workforce plan would identify opportunities for mobility and wealth creation across the sector. A strategy for social inclusion could create a virtuous cycle of educating and orienting urban kids toward jobs that really exist and re-valuing those jobs within the creative economy.

Finally, the model proposed above suggests a new agenda for planners seeking to revitalize ⇨

and stabilize urban neighborhoods and integrate local and regional economies. Many low-wealth urban neighborhoods possess significant cultural assets. As an alternative to top-down creation of cultural districts or as a complement to community development investment, planners and developers could identify and strengthen natural cultural districts—that is, neighborhoods that already have a significant concentration of cultural firms and organizations, workers and participants, artists and other creative entrepreneurs. Indeed, culture-based revitalization—which integrates neighborhood residents with the regional

economy and civil society—has great potential for fostering equitable regional development and socially just communities. This is the promise of the creative society.

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Special Section: *Papers from the “Progressive Cities and Neighborhood Planning” Collection at Cornell*

Progressive Archives: A Collection and a Class

By Pierre Clavel

This collection of articles from Cornell students was stimulated by resources in the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections (RMC), Cornell University Library. In 2005, the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell offered a short (six weeks) course on “Progressive Cities and Neighborhood Planning” in the guise of a class on archival research. These papers reflect some of the work done in that course. The course itself was interesting, but more interesting is the story behind the collection and how it has increasingly related to progressive planners’ efforts to teach and promote neighborhood planning. In addition, the collection has helped to bolster the effort to define, and even develop, the idea of a city that supports community development.

The history begins with an archivist, Herbert Finch, who in the 1960s joined forces with faculty in the Department of City and Regional Planning to build a collection of the papers of planners. The faculty would point Finch toward “important” professionals and supporters of the field, and he courted them energetically, seeking bequests of papers and books. The university already had some papers at that point—from John Nolen, for example, and Charles Mulford Robinson. John Reys and Kermit C. Parsons, on the faculty, had the most obvious interest in this sort of collection, but the person I heard most from on this topic was Barclay Jones. Jones mainly taught quantitative methods and economic history, but he was an architect and city planner as well, a polymath. I was a graduate student under Jones starting in 1962, and later on the faculty, when Jones urged expeditions to interview and perhaps get oral histories from various personages. On one occasion he urged me to visit John Gaus, a famous progressive and New Deal-era administrator who had retired nearby. On other occasions I would encounter

Jones and Finch at lunch in the university’s faculty club, discussing the relative merits of collections of papers that Finch was considering acquiring. Once we were visited by Phillip Boardman, Patrick Geddes’ biographer, who was considering depositing papers to our archives. I never got involved in this. I was busy writing and teaching. I thought most of the old planners’ papers representative of an old approach to planning, and I was more interested in developing a new one. “Social planning” might have been the most common term used to define the sorts of new things I and some of my colleagues were interested in. This was in the 1960s and 1970s.

Later, in the 1980s, Finch had left Cornell but he had a number of successors, including Elaine Engst and Tom Hickerson, who put together a handsome catalogue of the planning collection. This was impressive. The entire collection had grown to a degree I had not imagined—some 150 or more sets of papers. It seemed that, once Finch got the planning collection started, it became increasingly easy to add more sets of papers by more people.

From a collection that initially reflected the early history of planning in the Progressive era—“city beautiful” and “city practical”—RMC had begun to attract papers from more modern variants in the field. There were the modernizers and quantifiers that Jones introduced us to, but also the “social planners” we had tried to emulate and build our work on in the 1960s and 1970s. Charles Abrams had left an extensive collection, but now there were the papers of Paul Davidoff and eventually Walter Thabit. Meanwhile, Parsons had been pursuing Aline McMahon, Clarence Stein’s widow, and eventually acquired Stein’s papers, along with a bequest that would fund continuing support for work on that part of the collection. ➡

The most recent effort to build the RMC holdings came after some false starts. I had been involved with Wim Wiewel at the University of Illinois-Chicago in 1989 in helping to create a collection at the Chicago Historical Society called the “Harold Washington Neighborhood Papers” and wanted something similar at Cornell. There was no point trying to compete with Chicago on this topic, but I thought it might be possible to create a central index on a computer, possibly one connected to other places with their own archives. I was inspired, really, by a passage written by Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* (1961, pp. 563-564):

Let me approach the more abstract relations of the invisible city by drawing a parallel to the new relation on a more visible plane: a small but accurate sample. Scattered over France, often in remote villages and monasteries, are many superb examples of early fresco painting. Under the earlier metropolitan regime, many of these paintings would have been removed, often not without damage, from their original site and housed in a museum in Paris. This would have left a gaping hole in the place of origin, and would have deprived the inhabitants of a possession that had both communal and economic value, without providing in Paris any true sense of their original setting. Today a better program has been achieved. In the Museum of Murals in the Palais de Chaillot, a large number of admirable replicas of these paintings have been brought together. In a single afternoon one may see more paintings than one could take in comfortably in a fortnight of traveling. For those who also wish a more intimate experience of the original on the site, the paintings have been identified and located: so that they have become more accessible, without their being wantonly dissociated from their original setting and purpose.

This is the first step toward a more general etherialization. With color slides now available, the process could be carried even further: any small town library or museum might borrow, and show in a projection

room, an even larger collection of murals. Gone is primitive local monopoly through isolation: gone is the metropolitan monopoly through seizure and exploitation. This example will hold for a score of other activities. The ideal mission of the city is to further this process of cultural circulation and diffusion; and this will restore to many now subordinate urban centers a variety of activities that were once drained away for the exclusive benefit of the great city.

The Chicago project had ties to research that I and others had been doing on “progressive cities”—places that, beginning in the 1970s, innovated in city government and administration by incorporating some of the social movement ideas of the time, inventing redistributive programs and opening up city halls to wide participation. In addition to Chicago, Berkeley and Santa Monica in California; Cleveland, Ohio; Hartford, Connecticut; Burlington, Vermont; and Boston, Massachusetts, are examples of cities we had studied and for which we had put papers in the RMC. By 2006, persons from other places had begun to contribute more, for other places. For these and like-minded efforts, there was the possibility of creating collections more thematically focused than how archives normally are able to be.

Soon after returning from Chicago in 1990, I pursued the idea of a collection at Cornell. In Mumford’s spirit, the idea was to have some material at RMC, but mainly to encourage collections in the places where the history had happened. Since these were “progressive” cities, mainstream media and scholarship tended to ignore or trivialize them, and I thought these histories were particularly at risk.

But the time for this was not right. RMC was cramped for space, and later when I proposed something like this again, the library was in the process of a building program and was moving into new quarters. The right time came in 2004, for both the RMC and for me. I was losing space for perhaps ten filing cabinets worth of records. Not wanting to lose them, I tried again: Would RMC want ten boxes of valuable records, my own research notes, transcripts of interviews, tapes and documents, some of them of histori-

cal importance? RMC now had impressive new quarters, staff to handle the material and acid-free boxes to put them in. I received instructions to just bring them to the library loading dock.

With the boxes in the collection in the library, I decided to index them. I hired one of our students, Janine Cuneo, as a half-time summer assistant who, with help from others at the end of the summer, finished an index in spreadsheet form, a line for each folder. Later, at the beginning of 2006, the RMC staff converted the spreadsheet to HTML for its own online catalogue.

As for the course, it was not a straight line from catalogue to archival research to finished posters—the only course requirement. That was the plan—though I was not hopeful that a group of students would immediately jump at the chance to spend hours in the basement of the library poring through boxes of folders. But the mass of material turned out to be a motivator. Here is how it worked:

- In the first session I made an hour-long presentation about the cities in the collection.
- For the second session we visited the RMC space in the library basement. There, Elaine Engst taught the ABCs of archival research. She brought out rare plans and the catalogue done in the 1980s. She laid out the details of the process of searching the records: it would be done in a reading room, boxes brought to tables; pencils were allowed, pens were not; digital cameras were the preferred method of copying documents as well as photos—they minimized contact with often fragile materials.
- Our collection was incomplete, most importantly in the area of “neighborhood planning,” for which we wanted to add material. As neighborhood planning is the province of Ken Reardon, my co-investigator on this project, he addressed the third session of the class, defining four rough categories of neighborhood planning projects that could be archived: organizing campaigns such as were the practice of ACORN, Citizen Action and a number of other organizations and approaches; resident-initiated neighborhood plans, the products of the classic advocacy planning made famous by Davidoff and others; city hall-initiated neighborhood planning such as we had experienced in places like Rochester, New York, and Savannah, Georgia; and community development institutions—hundreds of good examples, several of which we had researched at Cornell. We invited students to research some of these with an eye to eventual additions to the collection.
- Next, students picked locations or topics to investigate. Two chose Burlington; one Cleveland; and another was doing a dissertation on Madison. There were three neighborhood efforts: an undergraduate honors thesis on Rochester’s “Neighbors Building Neighborhoods” approach; another on Walter Thabit’s advocacy planning in Cooper Square in New York City; and an investigation of the Davidoff papers, already in the RMC spaces.
- The students were frustrated at the difficulty of capturing the story of these cases in the 250 words that were possible to put in a poster. Their work went through draft after draft. At one point we suggested that longer drafts might be possible—we’d submit them to *Progressive Planning*. This got some takers, as evidenced by the articles that follow. Each of these also turned into thesis projects.
- One of the assignments in our “Introduction to Planning” course was to do an oral history interview of a practicing planner. Crystal Lackey, whose topic was Burlington, chose John Davis, former director of housing and currently one of the citizen leaders of that city’s Progressive Coalition. Davis mentioned that the current mayor was stepping down and that there was concern that the record of his administration’s achievement could be lost—could we be helpful? Lackey, who had just moved to Ithaca from Burlington, organized a trip during the January intersession for students to collect documents and oral histories from current officials and activists and in the process learn how a progressive city operates.
- I also had a conversation with Davis. I mentioned that our goal was not mainly to collect documents to bring back to Cornell. Rather, ⇨

we wanted to motivate a collection process in Burlington so that the city could have its own history. I asked Davis whether he and others could form a committee, including someone from a local archive, to worry about collections there. Davis suggested economics professor Jane Knodell of the University of Vermont. Knodell, in turn, contacted the university librarian, who agreed to expand the university's role as a repository for city documents.

Perhaps this explains how the four articles presented in this special section of *Progressive Planning* came to be written. Only one, Dentel Post's on Cooper Square, was the direct result of archival research. The others, though stimulated by the existence of archives, were more of an effort to build on the collections.

Pierre Clavel is professor of city and regional planning at Cornell. Further elaboration of the project can be found at: www.crp.cornell.edu/resources/pcnp.

Progressive Innovation in the 1970s: Madison, Wisconsin, and the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies

By Jonathan Thompson

Progressive cities in the United States and elsewhere have been most commonly understood as dealing with neighborhood mobilization, citizen empowerment and other forms of grassroots political involvement. Using the language of “the grassroots” in the U.S. and “civil society” for overseas cases, commentators have focused on the movement bases of progressive administrations. A different direction in progressive administration, however, can be seen in two cases from the 1970s, where the key factors were administrative and bureaucratic transformations effected by theoretically informed activist officials.

In the first case, the first mayoral administration (1973-1979) of Paul Soglin in Madison, Wisconsin, there was a left-leaning administration moving to the center and “capturing” public sector bureaucracies in order to provide good governance for the entire city. In the second case, the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, which met for the first time in Madison in 1975, there was an attempt to showcase the progressive transformation of the bureaucratic institutions of local government happening across the U.S. In both these cases, progressive activists transformed themselves into officials and administrators who governed using pragmatic policies emphasizing good governance and the formation of cross-class coalitions for continued electoral support.

At one level these are deviant cases—“normal” cities never faced even the possibility of move-

ment activists taking control of government bureaucracies. Participatory and redistributive innovations and experiments were the exception, not the rule, in 1970s America. And, even in the cities where progressive activists came into power, many of their efforts were successfully resisted, and when implemented, changes were transitory.

At a deeper level, however, the exceptional cases of cities like Madison, and the national organizing of the conference, provide a window into a formative moment, both experimental and optimistic, in contemporary administrative practice. These 1970s innovators prefigured the “activist state” as seen in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Kerala, India, in the 1990s and 2000s. The past few years have seen the election of a set of high-profile, pragmatic and progressive mayors in a number of U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, Madison and Salt Lake City. Now as then, movement-based activists are being forced to develop theories and practices to inform their move into bureaucracies and electoral office.

Madison

In Madison, according to recent interviews and media coverage of the time, Paul Soglin pulled together a fragile coalition of students, organized labor and liberals to win election as mayor in 1973. Although the election of the young, mustachioed mayor with a radical past was presented at the time

as a startling development, Soglin's win was based on years of organizing, a history of successful electoral political involvement and the fortunate confluence of a number of other factors: the lowered voting age, the unpopularity of the incumbent mayor and the political organization left from the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. Without these factors, Soglin would likely not have been a serious mayoral candidate in 1972. Soglin's election marked a decisive shift in the political culture of the city, away from both the right-wing reactionism of the previous mayor and the violence and unrest of the protest years.

As a law student at the University of Wisconsin (UW), Soglin became prominent as an antiwar activist in the 1960s, although more radical activists criticized him as a political operator rather than a movement heavy. His public and continued conflicts with the Madison Police Department (MPD) began during this time—Soglin was beaten at protests, had his car tires slashed in circumstances that implicated police officers and was the subject of sustained and illegal investigations, along with other local activists, by the MPD “affinity squad.”

As frustration grew over the continued expansion of the war in Vietnam, antiwar protests in Madison and across the nation turned increasingly violent in the late 1960s. The police used teargas for the first time against white college students in Madison in 1967. An escalating series of fire bombings, “trashings” and police and vigilante reprisals culminated in the spring and summer of 1970. Final exams at the university were cancelled because of a police riot at the annual Miffland Street block party and the shootings at Kent State in Ohio. The turning point for many activists was the truck-bombing of the Army Math Research Center on the UW campus in August that killed an unaffiliated researcher. Although the antiwar protests continued, the bombing was a sobering event that caused a turning away from the path of revolutionary violence.

Mayor William Dyke took office in Madison in 1969 promising to impose control over the increasingly violent protests; he won reelection in 1971 on the same promise. He was a deliberately polarizing figure, lauding heavy-handed police tactics

and calling for vigilante justice. (Dyke later ran for vice president on segregationist Lester Maddox's presidential ticket.) This polarizing aspect, however, increasingly lost him support as the excesses of the police response became more public and support for the war dropped.

Soglin entered Madison electoral politics as well in 1969, winning election to the City Council from a student-heavy district, and was reelected in 1971. By 1973, there was a strong minority of progressives on the City Council who were often able to create working coalitions with moderate Democratic and Republican aldermen. As Dyke's political positions grew more extreme, Soglin and other progressives on the Council appeared increasingly mainstream by comparison. As an alderman, Soglin's reputation as a wild, long-haired radical became overlaid with that of a responsible, mainstream progressive who paid attention to the formalities of government, could work with others and knew how to compromise.

***exceptional cases of cities like
Madison... provide a window into a
formative moment***

The broad dislike of Dyke trumped the more normal Balkanization on the left, allowing Soglin to craft a broad electoral coalition with significant grassroots mobilization to win in 1972. The voting age had been dropped that year from twenty-one to eighteen, and students turned out to vote in large numbers, though particularly with the decline of the antiwar movement, they did not stay mobilized and were not a significant political force between elections.

Disappointing critics on the far left of the political spectrum, Soglin's administration stayed firmly “between the lines,” working with existing structures and mechanisms rather than tearing down and rebuilding Madison's government on a radical model. Reflecting the history of conflict between the antiwar left and the MPD, Soglin's administration made “regaining control” over the police force a central focus during his first years in office. The appointment of ➡

a more humane chief of police, and the subsequent opening of the MPD to gay, female and minority applicants, were key symbols of democratic openness and of changing city/community relations.

Soglin implemented a range of mildly redistributive and participatory mechanisms, such as providing public daycare, funding the tenants' union and opening the city budget to greater scrutiny and citizen participation. While Soglin successfully municipalized the bus system, his efforts to municipalize sectors such as cable television and electricity failed. Soglin's administration experimented with development corporations and other public-private blendings, with mixed results.

Soglin, like other left-leaning mayors of the decade, went so far as to create a foreign policy independent of the nation's. For example, Soglin was the first U.S. mayor to visit Fidel Castro, in 1975. These efforts were of great symbolic importance, particularly to the ideological left, but within Madison they were a side issue to the day-to-day politics of service delivery, budgets and political appointments.

Jim Rowen, Soglin's aide, ran for office in 1979 as Soglin's successor but was narrowly defeated, in part because of his alienation of the Madison economic and media elite by his support for organized labor. Soglin, however, was again elected mayor in 1989, stepping down early in 1997 for an unsuccessful run for the U.S. senate. He ran for mayor again in 2003 in an election where, ironically, he was widely labeled as the conservative candidate, losing to progressive candidate Dave Cieslewicz.

The Conference

The history of Soglin's administration is intertwined with that of the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies. Madison was not unique. Similar developments were happening in other cities across the U.S. The conference, which had its first meeting in Madison in 1975, served as a key national point of interconnection for what were otherwise disconnected and isolated local efforts. The conference is still active, although it has since changed its name twice and its leadership several

times. In 1985 the conference became the National Center for Policy Alternatives, and in 1990 it reorganized as the Center for Policy Alternatives.

In 1975, the national environment, particularly under Nixon's presidency, appeared to be as or more hostile to progressive activists than ever before. There were, nonetheless, a growing set of cities, such as Berkeley, Austin and Madison, and local elected officials, including judges, mayors and city and county legislators, proposing and implementing local progressive reforms. The period between the first meeting in 1975 in Madison and the disillusionment and retreat that followed the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan captures the conference at its most vibrant, productive and influential.

The conference was a loosely organized agglomeration of progressive activists from across North America. It was meant to serve as a clearinghouse of local innovations and successes, and as a platform for the promotion of a national agenda of progressive change rooted in local electoral and legislative politics. The innovations created by conference participants were unabashedly based in an expansive vision of the public sector and incremental progress towards economic justice and direct democracy.

According to interviews and conference publications, a major effort of the conference organizers (Lee Webb, Derek Shearer and Ann Beaudry in particular) involved the creation of a framework within which to fit the disparate efforts of the conference's participants, and then linking this framework to a realistic program of political change in the U.S. Organizers strongly advocated for structural change through public ownership and a range of what are now called "good government" initiatives. The overall model was that of the social democrats in Western Europe and Canada, with a rhetorical nod to previous American reform efforts such as the Populist Movement. Organizers were particularly conscious of the language of politics, eschewing words like "socialism" in favor of more palatable phrases like "economic democracy." But because the conference functioned as an agglomeration of local efforts, not as something with top-down authority, the organizers' vision was not applied equally to all of the local efforts within the con-

ference. Instead, local efforts spanned a spectrum, from highly theoretically informed to what appear to have been very naïve experiments.

Most contemporary discussions of progressive cities have concentrated on progressive administrations' policies towards participation, redistribution, land use and job creation. What is immediately apparent from looking at Madison, however, and many of the cases showcased at the conference, is the holistic and experimental approach that was taken. The approach was much broader than that taken by most reformist or radical municipal governments in the U.S. today, in part because they came into power with very shallow institutional experience and genuinely did not know what were the limits and possibilities. Their analyses of the nexuses of structural power in 1970s America led them to attempt to gain control over certain pieces of the systems of food production and distribution. (Community gardens and cooperative stores are the surviving remnants of this effort.) They integrated questions of energy production and public

ownership of utilities, banks and housing. And a tremendous effort was made to rein in aspects of what was seen as an out-of-control criminal justice system—in particular, many progressives had become radicalized by the indiscriminate use of police violence in attempts to suppress antiwar and civil rights organizing.

Obviously, the conference organizers' hope of a tide of local progressivism sweeping across the United States never came to pass. The conference meetings and publications, however, were important vehicles for discussing and disseminating innovative strategies and mechanisms for progressive reform. Local administrations, such as Soglin's in Madison, permanently changed local political cultures on a progressive model, and some of their innovations have today become mainstream administrative practice.

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Walter Thabit: A Planner for Cooper Square

By Colin Dentel-Post

What is successful advocacy planning, particularly successful planning that produces long-term relationships between advocate planners and the communities they serve? Advocate planners often suffer what Lily Hoffman termed a "crisis of professional legitimacy" as the very community members they are trying to serve begin to question the elitism of their professional status. Walter Thabit's long-term and very productive relationship with New York City's Cooper Square community provides an excellent example of successful advocacy planning. His Alternate Plan for Cooper Square, in addition to other planning and organizing activities, was critical in the community's victory over New York City's urban renewal plans. Thabit's work with the community, beginning in 1959, was also one of the earliest examples of advocacy planning, a term coined six years later by Paul Davidoff. Thabit's archives demonstrate the positive potential of such planning.

The success of Thabit's relationship with the Cooper Square Committee (the Committee) was largely a result of recognition on the part of the community of the value of Thabit's professional skills, knowledge and talent in coalescing and advancing community interests. The collaboration could not have prospered, however, without strong mutual trust between the two parties. Three factors permitted this trust to develop. First, in addition to his role as a consultant planner, Thabit had been involved in the organizational matters of the committee from its inception. Second, he never functioned as an exclusive liaison between the organization's members and either the public or the city bureaucracy; rather, his voice was always one among many. Finally, and most importantly, Thabit and the Committee maintained a strong, trusting relationship over time because of Thabit's close collaboration with the community in every aspect of its work. ⇨

Thabit worked closely with the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen's Association over a period of decades as both a committee member and its planning consultant. Although he was involved in organizational functions of the committee, his primary relationship with the neighborhood's planning effort was through his service delivery role. His most well-known contribution, the 1961 *Alternate Plan for Cooper Square*, became the central community rallying point in its struggles against the development plans of City Hall. Both Thabit's participation and his plan effectively challenged the claims of city officials to exclusive professional expertise. Most specific elements of the plan were never carried out, but the community successfully used it to stop development that would have displaced most neighborhood residents. Moreover, the plan helped keep the dream of plentiful, quality affordable housing alive in Cooper Square until the means to build it were finally available, beginning in 1984. Just as importantly, the plan's central principle, that urban renewal should benefit those it affects, has remained the motivating force behind all of the committee's activities to the present day. Although minor conflicts between Thabit and the community did arise, their long-term collaboration was overwhelmingly peaceful and cooperative and Thabit's professional status and knowledge appear to have created little tension over the years he worked with the community.

What Happened

In 1956, the New York City Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, headed by Robert Moses, began planning for the renewal of a twelve-block area to the southeast of Cooper Square, between Greenwich Village and the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The plans called for complete demolition of the area's aging building stock and the construction of new middle-income and co-op housing. Given that almost all of the neighborhood's residents were eligible for public housing on the basis of income, very few would be able to afford the new housing.

After discovering the city's plans, area residents met in 1959 to determine how they should respond. Walter Thabit, working as a community planning consultant, attended these early meetings. The

group soon formed the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen's Association to organize neighborhood opposition to the clearance plan. Rather than taking a purely reactionary stance by opposing the city's proposal, committee members agreed that they should adopt a more proactive position by also proposing an alternative. They determined that a professionally prepared plan would be the most likely way to get the attention of city administrators.

By July of 1960 the committee had raised enough money and hired Walter Thabit to begin preparing an alternate plan. Thabit thus assumed two roles for the committee: an active member and a paid consultant, although his income from the project was minimal. Over the following year, Thabit worked very closely with the committee. More than one hundred community meetings were held to discuss an alternate plan, as well as meetings with numerous city officials to garner support for the plan. The committee formed different subcommittees, each to focus on the needs of a particular group of Cooper Square residents, including artists, single people, business owners and tenants. Consensus was needed between these sometimes conflicting interests. Each section Thabit wrote was subject to thorough review by the committee. He recalled in a later interview that he often had differences of opinion with committee members: "I'm part of them; nevertheless, we fought over every word and every thing, every this and every that. It took a long time to get it adopted."

The sixty-nine page *Alternate Plan for Cooper Square* was published in July of 1961. The plan, copies of which were distributed to Mayor Wagner, city officials and the community, proposed that "a renewal effort has to be conceived as a process of building on the inherent social and economic values of a local community." Redevelopment would be focused on improving conditions for existing residents, rather than displacing them. This required a thorough analysis of conditions in Cooper Square and the needs of its occupants. Given that most residents desired to remain in the community, the plan called for providing them with new affordable housing. The nearly 1,500 units of proposed housing were to be a mixture of low-income public housing, moderate-income rentals and middle-income cooperative units. It also proposed units

with large studio workspaces for artists, while another special building would contain dormitory-style furnished rooms to serve current occupants of Bowery single-room occupancy hotels.

Along with the residential component, the development plan provided for community facilities, a new elementary school, a new building for an existing church and low-cost retail space. These elements would be scattered throughout the site. Rather than clear the entire area, the *Alternate Plan* proposed to clear only half of the twelve blocks, leaving intact those with the greatest structural integrity, social value or probable occupant relocation issues. Many of the remaining structures would be rehabilitated for additional affordable housing, with rehabilitation carried out in a series of phases, allowing nearly all occupants to remain on-site during development. It was acknowledged at the time that further study of community needs, practical constraints and changes over time might alter minor aspects of the *Alternate Plan*. As it turned out, the *Alternate Plan*'s fundamental premise and major components formed the basis of Cooper Square activism for years to come.

Despite its importance within the Cooper Square neighborhood, across the city the *Alternate Plan* received little attention. After several months, the chairman of the City Planning Commission expressed approval of the plan and recommended that its principles be included in a Community Renewal Study Program. Although the belated announcement was positive, the city's initial silence marked the beginning of its resistance to the plan over the following decade. In June of 1962, the Planning Commission named Cooper Square an Urban Renewal Study Area but enlarged it the following year to include the adjacent St. Mark's neighborhood. The committee charged that the enlargement was an attempt by the city to circumvent the *Alternate Plan*, and that it would negate the plan's re-housing provisions for Cooper Square residents. To defend the plan, the committee spent most of two years, from 1963 to 1965, fighting any renewal proposals for the combined area.

Finally, in 1966, after a committee sit-in in the office of the newly-elected mayor John Lindsay, he withdrew all renewal plans for the combined area. The city then promised prompt action on the

Alternate Plan, but the mayor later announced that all renewal funds for the foreseeable future would be concentrated in Harlem, the South Bronx and central Brooklyn. Not until October 1968 did the city lift the freeze on funds for Cooper Square. Walter Thabit then received a contract to prepare an *Early Action Plan* based on the *Alternate Plan* under the assumption that \$2 million would be available for redevelopment. The *Early Action Plan*, which detailed the intended first two phases of Cooper Square redevelopment, specified sites for new public housing, middle-income housing and an artists' residence, as well as new commercial and community space. It also included the phasing in and re-housing components, on site, of the original *Alternate Plan*. On February 13, 1970, the Board of Estimate finally approved this proposal as the official renewal plan for Cooper Square. In so doing, it ended nearly ten years of struggle by the Cooper Square Committee for the city's adoption of the *Alternate Plan*.

The city's adoption of the *Alternate Plan* by no means ensured its rapid implementation. Over more than thirteen years the committee engaged in a series of negotiations with various national, state and local agencies in an attempt to begin building the housing approved under the *Early Action Plan*. These efforts often appeared to be making progress, only to be derailed by a series of setbacks, from Nixon's moratorium on new low-income housing to fiscal crises at the city and state levels. Ultimately, the committee reached an agreement with the city and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on a scaled-back proposal for 146 affordable units. On May 18, 1984 the Thelma Burdick Apartments were dedicated, representing the first new affordable housing in Cooper Square. Soon thereafter, Walter Thabit resigned from his subcommittee chairmanship, ending his twenty-six years of official service to the Cooper Square Committee. He nevertheless maintained his involvement and continued to show up at meetings and events.

The committee continued working to provide new and improved affordable housing in the neighborhood as envisioned in the *Alternate Plan*. In 1988 it dedicated the Cube building, which it hailed as probably the first cooperative apartment building for homeless families in the country. Meanwhile, the committee was also working on an updated ⇨

housing plan that would involve the creation of a new organization to build, rehabilitate and manage low-income housing in Cooper Square. The new plan was deemed a necessary adaptation to privatization and decentralization of affordable housing funding. In 1991, the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association (MHA) was formed as an entity officially separate from, but closely connected to, the committee. Since the early 1980s, the committee and the MHA have sponsored the rehabilitation of 320 housing units, in addition to the 146 newly constructed units in the Thelma Burdick Apartments and the fifty-four units currently under construction. The MHA now manages a total of twenty-three buildings in the neighborhood.

In 2000, the city requested development proposals for several major parcels of mostly vacant land, initiating the most dramatic housing development in Cooper Square since the formation of the Committee. The proposal that was selected had received strong support from the community; it calls for 534 market-rate housing units and 178 affordable units, as well as retail space, a community center and the preservation of a community garden. By the committee's calculations, after the project is constructed about 65 percent of all units provided under the *Alternate Plan* and its successors

will be designated as affordable housing. In the committee's view, this development represents the fruition of Thabit's decades-old plan for mixed-income housing in the neighborhood.

The *Alternate Plan* was responsible not only for helping the committee defeat plans to displace Cooper Square's residents, but also for empowering its members to continue the fight for equitable redevelopment until the tools to achieve it finally became available. Thabit's mutual trust of and close cooperation with the committee allowed them to counter the city's claims to exclusive expertise, while providing a realistic alternative for the community. This partnership was an inspiration not only to Cooper Square residents, but also to a much wider audience. Thabit's Cooper Square work was cited in Paul Davidoff's seminal 1965 article, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," and helped spawn the wider advocacy planning movement. Even as one of the earliest advocacy planning efforts, Thabit's work with Cooper Square remains an exceptional example of how planners can help communities shape their futures through trusting and collaborative relationships.

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North Brooklyn: Industrial Jobs Zoned Out

By Daniel Pearlstein

In 2002, New York City's Department of City Planning proposed rezoning nearly 200 blocks in the waterfront Williamsburg and Greenpoint neighborhoods from heavy manufacturing to heavy (high-rise) residential use. The threat to hundreds of small, light industrial firms in the area, already subject to the rising property values and increased enforcement of noise and parking regulations that accompany gentrification, now intensified. A grandfather clause would protect existing firms' right to remain, but the change would also drive rents even higher and make conducting business still more difficult, jeopardizing thousands of jobs.

Despite organized community opposition and the development and advocacy of policy alternatives

based on successes in other U.S. cities, a 2005 vote of the New York City Council scrapped the old manufacturing zoning and put a new residential district in place. Still, hope remains for the future of neighborhood businesses. The city's first industrial policy, plus \$24 million set aside to help firms hurt by the rezoning, as well as a history of successful struggle may spare at least some of North Brooklyn's mixed-use urbanity and living wage employment.

Neighborhoods That Work

The industrial workforce of North Brooklyn's Greenpoint and Williamsburg neighborhoods reflects diverse local and citywide demographic

profiles. According to a survey I conducted during May and June of 2006 of 155 Williamsburg and Greenpoint firms, many are Polish, Latino, Jewish, East Asian, West Indian, Italian or Irish. Their employers are as varied. They include apparel manufactures, auto mechanics, cabinetmakers, confectioners, food wholesalers, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) installers and maintainers, metalworkers and truckers.

Local business owners appreciate being at the geographic center of New York City. High-end craftspeople are but a short delivery route and subway ride from their wealthy residential and commercial customers, many of whom seek significant involvement in the design and manufacture of their custom furniture and signage. Restaurateurs from New York's trendy and immigrant neighborhoods are likewise nearby to their specialty suppliers.

The HVAC firms highly concentrated in North Brooklyn serve the offices of the city's signature finance, insurance and real estate sectors in midtown and downtown Manhattan. Having skilled maintenance contractors located close to the commercial-vehicles-allowed Brooklyn-Queens Expressway means quick emergency repairs, keeping brokers warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Some owners also live locally. Many more of their employees do as well. If owners could acquire more space in the community, approximately one-half of the firms I surveyed would expand their operations and hire more workers. Some firms have been in the two neighborhoods for generations. Others are new businesses, often founded by members of the recent young, middle-class influx. Many more are companies that were already displaced by rising rents in the past, typically from now upscale parts of Manhattan.

The Recent Influx

Though North Brooklyn's industrial waterfront has sat vacant of port activity for decades, the area retained its manufacturing zoning until last year. That regulatory environment, combined with decent transportation, yielded an interesting mix of land uses attractive to college graduates.

Because residential rents exceed manufacturing rents, building owners spotted the population trend and applied for use variances from the City's Board of Standards and Appeals, which chose to believe landlords who argued that money could not be made without residential conversion. Many property owners and managers skipped even that step, creating thousands of residential units, known as illegal conversions, in industrial buildings.

Beginning in the 1990s, inspired in part by the problem of illegal conversions, local organizers and Brooklyn Community Board 1 drafted neighborhood plans for Greenpoint and the Williamsburg waterfront. The City Council adopted the two plans in early 2002 under City Charter section 197-A. The plans called for numerous improvements, including new parks, schools and mass transit service, as well as public waterfront access. Suggested new zoning would permit a mix of market-rate and affordable low-rise residential, high-performance (quiet, non-toxic) industrial and ancillary retail uses. While both neighborhood plans had broad public support, since section 197-A gives them only advisory status the City Council did not fund them.

Later in 2002, the Department of City Planning presented its own proposal to rezone for 40-story residential towers along the North Brooklyn waterfront and outsized medium-density residential redevelopment in the so-called upland areas. At build-out, 200 some blocks would house over 10,000 new residential units, all of them priced for what the market would bear.

Community Organizers Respond

Recognizing what such a dramatic change in land use regulation would do to the area's industrial sector, neighborhood leaders sought revisions to the proposed zoning to protect businesses and jobs. Representatives of the non-profit industrial developer Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center and the advocate New York Industrial Retention Network got appointed to Community Board 1's Rezoning Taskforce. The environmental justice group Neighbors against Garbage convened the North Brooklyn Alliance, a coalition of forty-two neighborhood organizations that pledged to support one another's primary concerns about the proposed rezoning, including ⇨

the threat of industrial displacement and corollary possibilities for retention.

Community representatives reached out to advocacy planners. Foundation money paid community planner Jocelyne Chait to help the Community Board compile an alternative plan, modeled after the earlier 197-A plans. Eva Hanhardt, then with the Planning Center of the century-old Municipal Art Society, formulated the idea of balanced mixed-use zoning, one of a number of zoning innovations proposed to retain industrial jobs in Williamsburg and Greenpoint.

National Precedents

Industrial retention itself had long been practiced elsewhere, based on the notion that since manufacturing jobs pay better than the service jobs that typically replace them, retaining manufacturing can reduce or decelerate income polarization. Portland created its first Industrial Sanctuary, part of a growth management plan aimed at keeping manufacturing in the urban core, in 1981. Seattle followed suit, establishing a Manufacturing/Industrial Center in 1994.

Chicago industry had suffered decades of corporate-centered economic development that neglected the city's historic role in U.S. industrialization. After years of effort, community organizers won the first three Planned Manufacturing Districts—which exclude non-industrial land uses except by special permit—late in the Harold Washington administration during the 1980s. And though he initially opposed the policy, Chicago's current mayor, Richard M. Daley, added many more of the districts, creating several as recently as late 2005.

Industrial Retention Options

In North Brooklyn, according to Pratt Professor Laura Wolf-Powers, planners from the New York Industrial Retention Network countered the Department of City Planning's proposed residential upzoning with an idea adapted from Chicago: in prospective Industrial Employment Districts, all non-industrial uses would require a special permit.

Balanced mixed-use zoning, alternatively, would maintain the custom of mixed-use buildings. In

a balanced mixed-use district, ground floors are reserved for high-performance industrial tenants. Industry is allowed on upper floors as well, but all residential units must be located above all workplaces in a structure.

When city officials proposed mixed-use zoning that would all but guarantee residential conversions, members of the Rezoning Taskforce proposed zoning for mixed-use with a threshold that would allow residential conversions as long as a certain percentage of the zoning district remains dedicated to industrial uses.

Making the Case

Meeting with city officials, community leaders emphasized the value of synergies within the neighborhood industrial sector. For example, several large art handling firms employ local artists part time. While the artists are able to supplement their incomes, museum pieces benefit from the proper care of respectful workers.

Community representatives brought entrepreneur Dawn Ladd to a City Hall meeting as another exemplar. Ladd owns Aurora Lampworks on Williamsburg's North Side. She guided her listeners' gazes out the window into City Hall Park, toward the reproduction fixtures she and a network of neighborhood subcontractors had designed, built and installed during a recent renovation.

For its role, the Community Board and its taskforce created an alternative plan in line with residents' opinions expressed during the development of the 197-A plans and rearticulated in response to more recent city actions. Alternative planners hoped that the city would be required by its own process to formally review the community's proposal. Instead, the Department of City Planning integrated bits and pieces of the community's proposal into its own. Ultimately, the Community Board rejected the city's proposal, adopting the alternative plan instead.

Neighborhood Workers Rebuffed

City Hall determines zoning, not the peripheral neighborhoods where most people live and many work. Thus while the city did adopt significant por-

tions of the community's proposal, affected neighborhoods could not compel it to adopt zoning that would protect industry.

Instead, following the flawed argument that (urban, U.S.) manufacturing is dead and globalization killed it, the city forewent research that would have proven the existence of thousands of industrial jobs in North Brooklyn. Officials found few jobs and property values so high they allegedly necessitated conversions so that owners could recoup enough income from their holdings. In the three years leading up to the rezoning, many landlords kept industrial space off the market, speculating on eventual enormous returns following as-of-right residential conversion. Many firms had already been displaced.

The city dismissed the industrial retention options suggested in the 197-A plans and those proposed by the community throughout the rezoning process. Officials denied that mixed-use buildings could work and insisted that residential is the highest, best and only acceptably profitable use of land in North Brooklyn.

But city planners did ask community groups to recommend blocks with high concentrations of industrial jobs that deserved to retain their manufacturing designation. Advocates named forty blocks for removal from the rezoned area, returning a carved out, "swiss cheese" map. The city returned with only twelve blocks removed. The City Council ultimately chose to rezone all but one block.

One year later, the city commissioned community groups to survey the North Brooklyn industrial base. I spoke with owners and managers at 155 firms, all of whom agreed that the rezoning was harmful to their businesses and bad for the neighborhood. Ninety-one of those firms rent their spaces, employing well over 1,000 people, and none expect to renew their leases.

Rising rents force firms out every month. The city's established relocation programs are unhelpful, designed to handle businesses employing at least several hundred people, though a majority of New Yorkers outside the public sector work in small businesses. Industrial property is extremely scarce within city limits. For the most part, say owners of

firms looking for new space, real estate is available in the least accessible locations. Approximately fifty firms on the list from which I conducted my portion of the survey were already gone. Many of those I was able to reach by phone had moved to suburban Long Island or New Jersey, areas difficult and expensive to reach for the majority of New York City's workforce.

Signs of Hope

Yet, among concessions made as part of the rezoning, the City Council agreed to spend \$24 million on industrial retention in North Brooklyn over five years. Four million is for local firms relocating within the city, while the remaining \$20 million will go toward creating non-profit industrial space. That space may be developed within the Bushwick Inlet Industrial Business Zone, a multi-block area between Greenpoint and Williamsburg zoned for light manufacturing. Bushwick Inlet is one of sixteen such new zones throughout the city. The Bloomberg administration promises not to allow as-of-right residential conversions in these areas.

The zones are but one component of the city's first ever industrial policy. Another is the Office of Industrial and Manufacturing Business, now surveying industrial businesses citywide and establishing ombudsmen areas, like the ones in Chicago, in which community organizations link businesses to city officials.

These developments might better have come before the rezoning but can be understood as a reaction to an increasingly aware and organized industrial retention community. The North Brooklyn-based Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center, one hub of the network, is partnering with other local groups to make sure that the \$24 million is allocated and used effectively.

North Brooklyn's history as a site of successful struggle also inspires hope. In the 1980s and 1990s, a coalition of working families, immigrants and artists won changes to city policy that ended the abuse of the neighborhood at the hands of noxious waste transfer stations. Throughout the effort, many facilities remained opened. At one point, one transfer station owner's thugs assaulted an organizer videotaping unsanitary operations before ⇨

an important public hearing. His tape was lost but his story carried the day.

Similarly, though cranes on the skyline now augur thousands of condominium apartments, not-for-profit housing developers were the only groups building anything in North Brooklyn for twenty-five years. Founded on a tradition of advocacy for affordable housing, economic development and environmental justice, the community's organizational network is strong.

Making Sense

There are many ways to interpret North Brooklyn's recent history. The city's decision to allow industrial displacement can be understood as another facet of exclusionary zoning; it is anti-poor, anti-minority and anti-immigrant. Industrial displacement may also be an environmental injustice; a neighborhood that was toxic twenty years ago is now being hyper-sanitized of an industrial base that has supported local families. The end of mixed-use also bodes ill for the area's attractive urbanity. In its place may grow a very high-density suburbanized monoculture.

Tom Angotti has argued in the online *Gotham Gazette* that the city chose to rezone but did not plan. In fact, city officials displayed a profoundly

anti-planning bias. Without good research on the study area, they disregarded the community's carefully crafted, participatory plans and upzoned North Brooklyn to accommodate much of the city's rapid population growth while downzoning many neighborhoods with infrastructure better equipped to handle new citizens.

One organizer I spoke to highlighted the lack of neighborhood empowerment in evidence throughout: "We don't have enough formal power or authority to make things happen. What is democracy if, at the end of the day, you can make a recommendation but you can't implement it?" Another commented that the 197-A planning process is a "fig leaf for whatever proposal comes out from the city. They could say, 'Well there's been this whole community process.'"

Neighborhood leaders suggest that if North Brooklyn and other New York communities want to retain and nurture industry that is vital both to their identity and their economic base, they must get the authority to plan in their own interest and implement what plans they make.

Daniel Pearlstein is a student in the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell who conducted a survey of Williamsburg and Greenpoint firms while working for Neighbors Against Garbage.

Expanding Public Space in Burlington, Vermont, 1981-2006

By Crystal Lackey

In 1981, independent candidate Bernie Sanders defeated the Democratic incumbent by ten votes to become the mayor of Burlington, Vermont. Sanders, organizing in the Old North End, King Street and other low-income neighborhoods, defined his and successive mayors' goals to the present day: permanently affordable housing and equitable community development. Focusing on these goals and implementing them is what made Burlington progressive.

On the surface, the redistribution of the wealth of the city explains twenty-five years of support for a progressive presence in Burlington's City Hall. A less obvious reason is that leaders in

Burlington were expanding public space. They accomplished this at the same time that broader American society was shirking public responsibility. The social, political and physical public spaces introduced into Burlington by progressives are both remarkable and key to sustained support for the progressive agenda.

Social Space

Burlington and the surrounding area have and continue to experience growth and change as people seek the high quality of life the area can provide. Typically, people with the most resources and mobility get to define a city. Social space, the

social world of a city's residents, can be diverse or homogenous, broad or limited. In the city of Burlington, interviews and documents show that non-profits and public institutions have both expanded and preserved the social space of residents who previously had limited opportunities or were at risk of being pushed out.

Community and Economic Development Office Housing. Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) was created during Sanders' second term in office, in part to address the city's housing needs. CEDO's housing mission was "protection of the vulnerable, production of affordable housing and preservation of affordable housing already in existence." Two objectives were identified: 1) alternative modes of housing tenure (community land trusts, cooperatives and cohousing, for example); and 2) city support for a network of non-profits dedicated to addressing affordable housing. Non-profits that the city worked with on housing issues were the Committee on Temporary Shelter (homelessness), Lake Champlain Housing Development Corporation (rental housing), Cathedral Square, Inc. (housing for the elderly) and most notably the Burlington Community Land Trust (see below). Today, more than two-thirds of the 2,130 guaranteed affordable rental units in Burlington exist because of these non-profit partners and the city's Public Housing Authority.

Burlington Community Land Trust (Champlain Housing Trust). The Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT) was the first city-sponsored community land trust in the nation. The BCLT was the critical agent for promoting the objective of "alternative modes of tenure." The BCLT not only created affordable housing by separating the value of the building and the land, but it also ensured that city investments in affordable housing were not going to be lost to conversion as affordability restrictions lapsed. The BCLT operates on a "housing ladder" model, where the housing ladder is a continuum of housing types—homeless shelters, transitional housing, rentals, cooperatives and owner-occupied units—that allow for upward housing tenure mobility. In Burlington today, around 150 homeowner households, 70 cooperative households and 270 renter households plus homeless shelters and treatment and transitional homes sit on

BCLT land. Over time, the BCLT recognized the need to work beyond city boundaries. In October 2006, the BCLT merged with Lake Champlain Housing Development Corporation to become the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), which provides over 2,000 affordable homes in four counties. The BCLT, or Champlain Housing Trust as it is now known, allows low- and moderate-income households to stay in their respective communities despite high housing costs that would have otherwise pushed them out.

Supports for the Mentally Ill on Church Street. In the late 1990s, a small but very vulnerable group of city residents—adults with persistent and severe mental illness—struggled on an individual basis to function in one of Burlington's most bustling public spaces, the Church Street Marketplace. Shopkeepers worried that bizarre behaviors, on exhibit at times, were driving customers away. On bad days, individuals, absent clinical support, would remain in mental health crises for unhealthy durations, and the only intervention was often a ride in a police squad car to the hospital. Rather than isolating these vulnerable citizens, members of the business community, Howard Mental Health Services and the city police department developed an innovative support program to ensure their continued access to Church Street. The Streetwork Program provides outreach clinicians to walk a beat and be available to shopkeepers or police, who are both familiar with these struggling adults, in cases where individuals shows signs of a mental health crisis. Early intervention benefits both the business community and these adults who might otherwise be isolated. Customers who shop on Church Street benefit as well, as exposure to mentally ill individuals informs their worlds, allowing them to consider a place in which mentally ill residents experience maximum independence and enrich the community.

Racism Study Circle. Vermont once topped the list of the whitest states in the nation. The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program has since relocated families from Vietnam, Bosnia, Sudan and Somalia in Burlington, and a steady trickle of African-American families is drawn to the Burlington area by the promise of a better quality of life and a better education for their children. Clashes amongst these groups and the historically white popula- ➔

tion of the city had residents on edge. Community leaders acted quickly, however, convening twenty racism study circles attended by 250 residents to discuss racism and white privilege, identify priorities and develop an action plan. By the following school year, the action items developed in the Racism Study Circle had been instituted across community settings, including in schools. Around the country, small cities are becoming more diverse. A proactive response like this is needed to foster dialogue that will allow newly arrived and traditional community members to enjoy the community together.

Political Space

Poor and vulnerable residents are often overlooked in the political process exactly because they lack power. In Burlington, a number of opportunities for participation by traditionally marginalized residents have been created.

Elections. Progressive candidates in Burlington mobilize poor and otherwise vulnerable residents through community organizing followed by extensive door-knocking leading up to elections.

Neighborhood Planning Assemblies. Before there were Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs) in Burlington, there was only a weak mayoralty and City Council. NPAs, first formed in the early 1980s, extend city government into the neighborhoods. Each NPA is allotted a pot of CDBG money to spend on neighborhood initiatives. NPAs not only bring politics closer to the people, they also bring the people closer to City Hall, which improves the ability of the mayor and City Council to understand their constituency and receive feedback.

Center for Community and Neighborhoods. The Center for Community and Neighborhoods (CCAN) is the newest branch of the Community and Economic Development Office, started in 2002. The largest directive of CCAN is to engage citizens in the betterment of the city on a neighborhood level. CCAN coordinates a number of community initiatives, including the Restorative Justice Panel and the Racism Study Circle. CCAN recruits the people power needed for neighborhood-level initiatives and outreach.

City of Burlington Website. The content of city websites varies greatly; all too many are underdeveloped and only serve as directories and job posting sites. Burlington's website (www.ci.burlington.vt.us) and CEDO's website (www.cedoburlington.org) extensively document city initiatives, resources and statistics and upcoming meetings. These content-rich websites perform two services that enhance public participation: 1) educate and inform citizens; 2) invite citizens into the political process by unveiling the products and processes of government.

The Non-Profit Sector. Sanders and successive administrations turned to the non-profit sector to expand the depth and longevity of redistributive efforts. In an interview, Brenda Torpy, the executive director of the Burlington Community Land Trust, listed the benefits of the partnership between City Hall and its non-profit network: 1) the efforts of City Hall were better informed by working with experts (i.e., Tenants, Inc. helped the city to pursue tenants' rights legislation); 2) the leadership within non-profits was cultivated, broadening the base of well-informed citizens; 3) non-profits could organize citizens to attend City Council meetings and push measures; 4) City Hall promoted the networking of non-profits that then gained resources and expertise from one another; and 5) non-profits, unaffected by the frequent local election cycle, could follow through on the progressive housing agenda in the event of an off-election year.

Physical Space

Public spaces are the backdrop for interaction between people from different backgrounds. As Iris Young argues, "the togetherness of strangers" moves people beyond discomfort and fear to acceptance.

"The People's Waterfront." Community members, most notably residents of the poor and working-class neighborhoods adjacent to the city's decommissioned industrial waterfront, voted down Sanders' plan for waterfront development because they wanted to enjoy the waterfront. Sanders' plan was to turn the waterfront into the cash cow that would support redistributive efforts. Sanders recognized the will of the people, embraced it and began referring to the waterfront as the "People's Waterfront"

to express his support for the public will. Today, all manner of public, from skateboarder to tourist and from generational residents to newly arrived refugees, enjoy the waterfront. The boardwalk, bike path, green space, dog park, skateboard park, fishing pier and other specialized spaces on the waterfront bring a diverse crowd together.

A Park System. Waterfront Park is one of about two dozen public parks located throughout the city. Pocket parks and neighborhood parks service neighborhoods throughout the city. The parks on the waterfront are linked by a bike path that begins at the southern extent of the city and follows the lakeshore to the northern boundary of the city and beyond. The *Cycle the City* loop further integrates the city for both athletes and people without cars. City Park, just off of Church Street, and Battery Park, adjacent to the Old North End neighborhood, are both noteworthy for the large and varied crowd of residents and visitors that enjoy these spaces and their offerings.

The Intervale. Jutting north of the Old North End, the Intervale is 700 acres of conservation and agricultural land. Community agriculture is often seen as an occupation of privilege, but the Intervale actively works to bring the benefits of the farm to all residents. One current initiative brings fresh produce and corresponding education into the cafeterias of the Burlington Public Schools, while another provides at-risk youth with experience working with nutritious, local food and the opportunity to earn a paycheck. A citywide composting program brings nutritional value back into the Intervale.

Public Buildings. A cold city like Burlington needs good indoor space in the winter. Once a week, African drumming rhythms produced by Artists-in-Residence from Senegal and their students spill forth from City Hall. Free sit-down meals at city events like the Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday celebration draw a diverse crowd into the building. The Burlington Public Schools serve their neighborhoods when school is not in session. For example, H.O. Wheeler School, where 100 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced cost meals, provides a free dental chair and a community center. The city's Memorial Auditorium provides space for recreation and the arts and

includes 242 *Main*, a teen center, which strives to offer "diversity in areas such as music, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and class."

Church Street. The Church Street Marketplace is a street that was closed off and redesigned by Kevin Lynch, who envisioned this pedestrian mall as a place for leisurely enjoyment by all. Large boulders and statues are scattered about, inviting passersby to linger, and the physical design of the space and the diversity of shops once again serve a variety of people.

Conclusion

In his inaugural speech during his first term in the White House, Ronald Reagan said that "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem." It is true that the New Deal and the Great Society were not perfect. In Burlington, Vermont, progressives found a way to improve on Reagan's formula. Rather than stick with old formulae of public provision, or alternatively to cede the public interest to private firms and citizens, they used City Hall to support various ways to bring the public together.

In Burlington, progressive leaders, driven by an equity agenda, have controlled City Hall for over twenty-five years through the expansion of public space. The political arena, which once had little draw for low-income residents, now includes candidates dedicated to the issues of those same residents and a number of entry points for civic involvement. Social space is preserved and expanded both by retaining vulnerable populations that might otherwise be pushed out and by allowing traditionally marginalized and newer, more diverse populations to live and function side-by-side with those already more empowered. Physical public spaces—parks and community-accessible buildings—set the backdrop for interaction between the diverse residents of the city. Social, political and physical public space enriches the lives of both vulnerable and more empowered residents, promotes awareness among residents of the variety of need in the city, creates avenues for participation in public life and sustains a will for continued equity within the community.

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Thinking Outside the Box: Creative Solutions for Caring for Poor Rural Elders

By K. Tyler Miller

A while back I was browsing through my somewhat dog-eared copy of *The Progressive Planning Reader* (2004) when I came upon Jean Garren's article, "Dots Crying in the Wilderness." Early in the article, Garren describes rural America as being a "... racially, ethnically and culturally diverse—and largely ignored—invisible minority under siege." The word "invisible" resonated with me. Progressive planners in rural areas who were educated in "urban" planning programs may need to unlearn "urban" planning solutions that will not necessarily work in rural areas.

Vermont's Rural Poor

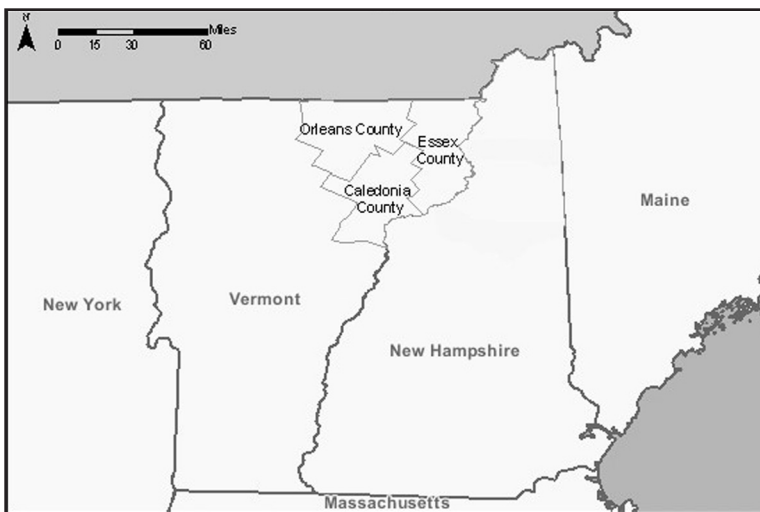
Like many other rural regions in the United States, the "Northeast Kingdom" of Essex, Caledonia and Orleans Counties in northeastern Vermont is isolated and sparsely populated. The land is inhospitable, poverty and unemployment rates are high and the percent of the population aged sixty-five and over is higher than the U.S. average. The weather is also a challenge and makes any kind of transportation difficult, especially during the long and harsh winter season and the spring mud season. Seniors needing in-home care face a statewide shortage of elder caregivers.

Many seniors, whether they live in urban, suburban or rural areas, are more vulnerable and in need of some form of assistance as their level of frailty increases. Increased frailty is often linked with chronic health conditions such as heart disease, circulatory disorders, arthritis and the like. Seniors who live in rural areas have the added burden of isolation. Because of the lower population density of rural areas, affordable home- or community-based services may be unavailable. Even if available, however, agencies supplying these affordable services may have waiting lists. Seniors who live with their families may be a little better off than those who live alone, but there is always the problem of caretaker burnout.

Creative Solutions for Rural Problems

Rural solutions are needed for rural problems. Creative solutions that enable poor, frail seniors in the Northeast Kingdom to continue to live in their homes could be adapted to work in other rural regions. Based on conversations with people who work with elderly people in the Northeast Kingdom, several ideas for improving the situation are emerging. They

Map courtesy of Roger Keren.



Map of Northeast Kingdom, Vermont.

Rural America is in a sad state of affairs. Data from the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicate that, compared to people living in metropolitan areas, residents of rural areas are older, have lower educational levels and lower weekly earnings, are more likely to live in poverty and less likely to have health insurance and have lower levels of self-reported health. Non-farm earnings and median family incomes are lower while unemployment is higher.

include home-based programs, partnerships and faith-based and informal networks.

Home-Based Care. For the last forty years or so, most Medicaid-eligible frail seniors who could no longer live independently had no choice but to enter a nursing home. Vermont is offering an innovative alternative, Choices for Care, where qualified seniors may have the option to remain at home instead of being institutionalized. Vermont is among the first group of states to offer Medicaid-eligible seniors alternatives to institutionalization in the form of home- or community-based care options. One of these alternatives is home care, where a family member is paid to provide services to her loved one for about twenty-four to thirty hours a week.

Choices for Care may not work for all frail elderly persons requiring assistance. For example, there are a limited number of available slots for qualified elderly persons. In addition, seniors living alone requiring twenty-four hour care, and seniors without family may not benefit from this option. Other creative solutions are needed.

Partnerships. A second solution is partnerships among organizations, governments, businesses and/or individuals to provide eldercare services. Not only can these partnerships help to fill a void left by a decrease in funding, they can tap the creative energies of rural communities. Partnerships can be on a large scale—for example, a for-profit hospital can partner with a non-profit home health agency. Partnerships on a smaller scale are envisioned for the Northeast Kingdom. Ken Gordon, the executive director of the Northeast Kingdom Area Agency on Aging, said such partnerships could be formed with towns in the area to provide subsidized buses and programs for youth helpers, and with local businesses that offer “in-home services such as banking and delivery of pharmaceuticals with an effort to include a mechanism for seniors at the lower end of the income scale.”

Faith-Based Work and Informal Networks. There are at least two advantages to faith-based initiatives. First, churches or communities of faith are a source of volunteers for elderly programs. Second, members of the church community can provide direct assistance to people in need, including the elderly.

One faith-based program is Faith in Action for Northeastern Vermont. Representative activities include a morning program (culture, crafts, etc.) once a month for seniors and volunteer recruitment to help seniors in their homes, matching specific skills with the needs of seniors.

Also important for home-based seniors is the informal support network of family, friends, neighbors and other community residents. Time and again, people in eldercare services tell me that survival in the Northeast Kingdom means that you help your neighbors and your

A homebound, frail elderly person can benefit from this informal network to fulfill a variety of needs, including grocery shopping, transportation, meal preparation, lawn care, and help with taxes

neighbors help you in time of need. It is a part of the culture, you don't have to ask, and they will be there. A homebound, frail elderly person can benefit from this informal network to fulfill a variety of needs, including grocery shopping, transportation, meal preparation, lawn care, and help with taxes. Many worry, however, that such networks are being lost. All of these solutions need to be funded and encouraged by health-care workers, municipal officials, elder service workers and progressive planners. Progressive planners in other states can push their state governments to follow Vermont's lead.

In closing, I offer a few guidelines based on my own experience.

Listen, learn and ask questions. This is the most important lesson that I have learned in my years spent in the Northeast Kingdom. Any planning in rural areas must start this way. The planner or policymaker must take the time to learn about the rural region she is working in, especially if she is not a native or a long-time resident.

Rural municipalities are not the same, one size does not fit all. Many rural communities [Cont. on page 43]

Bolivia: *Reclaiming Natural Resources and Popular Sovereignty*

By Emily Achtenberg

Arriving at El Alto International Airport, 13,500 feet above sea level, the visitor's view of La Paz is nothing short of spectacular. The world's highest capital city, at 12,000 feet, spreads out in the bowl-shaped canyon below along a central spine of gleaming modern high-rise buildings. On the rim, the teeming indigenous city of El Alto—one of the fastest-growing in Latin America, soon to surpass La Paz in population—sprawls across the Altiplano. The entire scene is ringed by towering, snow-capped mountains, including the majestic triple-peaked Illimani.

Connecting La Paz with El Alto (and much of the rest of Bolivia) are one major and two smaller roads snaking down the hillside. It was here between 2003 and 2005 that thousands of indigenous *campesinos* (peasant farmers), *cocaleros* (coca growers), workers and members of urban neighborhood organizations staged repeated and massive roadblocks, demonstrations and marches that effectively ended twenty years of neoliberal government. This culminated in December of 2005 with the election of Evo Morales as the nation's first indigenous president. In this creative use of geography to lay siege to La Paz from above, the modern social movements learned from a tactic used by their ancestors as far back as 1781, when Tupac Katari led a massive Indian rebellion, cutting off access to the capital for six months.

Once a poster country for neoliberal structural adjustment policies, Bolivia is now the icon of the anti-globalization movement. On a visit last summer with a Global Exchange human rights delegation, we had a sense of bearing witness to an important historical moment. In understanding what is happening in Bolivia today, of particular importance to progressive planners is the new MAS (Movement Towards Socialism) government's attempt to reassert popular sovereignty over previously privatized natural resources

and to recognize new forms of participatory decision-making that respect communitarian traditions. Of interest too are the roles played by urban neighborhood organizations and democratic participatory planning reforms in the development of Bolivia's new social movements, widely regarded as the most radical and powerful in the Americas today.

Brief History of Bolivia: From Structural Adjustment to Anti-Globalization

Since colonial times, Bolivia's wealth of natural resources (land, silver, tin and other minerals) has been plundered by national and international elites at the expense of the impoverished indigenous majority. Bolivia is the poorest country in South America and the most indigenous (62 percent, primarily Aymará and Quechua). The indigenous population has had a long history of civil resistance, led in modern times (1964-82) by a militant, miner-dominated trade union movement. Historically, Bolivia's trade union confederation has been unique in representing broad sectors of society (including professionals, women and, since 1979, *sindicato* peasant unions) and in extending its concerns and sphere of influence well beyond traditional economic issues.

In the 1980s and 1990s, at the behest of the international financial institutions, neoliberal Bolivian governments implemented a radical structural adjustment program that reversed forty years of state economic intervention and social welfare benefits. Profitable public enterprises (energy, transportation, telecommunications) were sold to multinational corporations at bargain prices, while unprofitable ones (such as the mines) were shut down, dismantling the state-dominated economy. Government spending was slashed, price and trade protections eliminated and markets opened up to foreign

goods and investment. Twenty-three thousand miners lost their jobs virtually overnight, followed by 35,000 teachers and other state workers. With the formal economy in collapse and cheap food and other imports flooding the market, impoverished indigenous peasants and miners migrated en masse from the Altiplano to El Alto, Cochabamba, the eastern lowlands, the Chapare jungles and abroad to Argentina. The trade union movement was decimated, while distrust of government and the traditional political parties was rampant.

In 2000, a popular uprising in Cochabamba succeeded in throwing out the Bechtel corporation and in returning the privatized water company to the social sector. In 2003, an even broader mobilization against the exploitation of gas and oil resources led to the forced resignation of two successive presidents. These events reflected a dynamic convergence of urban and rural territorially-based social movements—including *campesinos* from the Altiplano; neighborhood organizations; workers and students based in El Alto and Cochabamba; and *cocaleros* from the Chapare and the Yungas—fusing national popular and indigenous demands to create an increasingly radical agenda. Ultimately, this resurgent opposition brought about the historic election of Evo Morales, an indigenous *cocalero* leader, with 54 percent of the popular vote (a rarity in Bolivian history as no other presidential candidate in the past fifty years has received the majority necessary to avoid throwing the election back into the Congress).

The MAS party's agenda calls for dismantling the neoliberal economic model, reasserting state sovereignty over natural resources (such as water, hydrocarbons, land and coca), rewriting the constitution through a Constituent Assembly and empowering the indigenous majority through new forms of popular participation. Through our meetings with community leaders, government representatives, educators, journalists and social activists, we gained perspective on the many challenges facing the new MAS government and the social movements as they seek to bring these promises to fruition.

Water

In Serena Calicante, a community of 300 families on the southern fringe of Cochabamba settled by displaced ex-miners from the highlands (with basic housing provided through their pension fund), we met with veterans of the “water wars.” Transplanting their trade-union consciousness to new urban settings, former miners are an important constituency in Bolivia's new social movements.

When Bechtel took over Cochabamba's water operations, Serena Calicante residents saw the price of their poor quality, trucked-in water increase by up to 200 percent. Communities already hooked into the water system faced similar increases. Urban water cooperatives using wells they had dug themselves and peasant farmer irrigators who had regulated their own water use for generations were outraged to find their communitarian traditions shattered, as free water became an unaffordable commodity controlled by foreigners.

These groups and others united to form the Coalition in Defense of Water and Life (the *Coordinadora*), which organized massive civil resistance to payment of the rate increases, as well as civic strikes, demonstrations, building takeovers and road blockades. Interestingly, they were aided by a group of progressive planners in Cochabamba who explained the intricacies of water privatization. The *Coordinadora* developed new “horizontal” networks for community participation based on egalitarian traditions and consensus decision-making, convening massive open meetings in the town square. Eventually, the *Coordinadora* and its allies succeeded in returning the water company to municipal control.

Six years later, water rates have stabilized, but Serena Calicante (along with 50 percent of Cochabamba) is still not hooked up to the municipal water or sewer system. Major hydro projects launched by previous governments, plagued by corruption and cost overruns, remain incomplete. Due to illegal connections in the richer neighborhoods and seepage through ancient pipes, 55 percent of the water that enters the ⇒

system is lost, and the standards for international funding have not been achieved. While remaining strongly in support of MAS, the community is prepared for more struggles ahead. *"Que la lucha nos mantenga joven,"* they told us ("May the struggle keep us young").

Hydrocarbons

In El Alto, community radiojournalist Marco Quispe explained that the initial impetus for the 2003 "gas wars" was a proposed scheme by then-president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada ("Goni"), chief architect of Bolivia's structural adjustment program, for a pipeline to export gas to the U.S. through Chile. As every Bolivian schoolchild knows, Bolivia lost its seacoast to Chile in the War of the Pacific in 1879, making this choice of route extremely unpopular. The issue quickly escalated to control of Bolivia's oil and gas reserves, located mostly in the eastern lowlands departments. Thanks to Goni, these vast reserves—the second largest in South America—were ceded to the multinationals on extremely favorable terms in the 1990s. In communities like El Alto, the hydrocarbons issue evokes still bitter memories of the 1934 Chaco War, where 50,000 mostly indigenous soldiers died in defense (according to popular belief) of Bolivia's petroleum interests.

A key actor in the gas wars was El Alto's Federation of Neighborhood Juntas (FEJUVE), a coalition of 540 block groups representing each of El Alto's nine neighborhood districts. As in Cochabamba, the democratic organizational structure and political consciousness of FEJUVE is rooted in the mining and peasant union traditions of its membership, transplanted to an urban setting.

Formed in 1979, FEJUVE has a strong activist tradition built on its success in delivering water, streetlights, roads and other services to the neighborhoods. Somewhat paradoxically, FEJUVE was strengthened by the 1994 Law of Public Participation (LPP), a neoliberal decentralization reform instituted by Goni which devolved 20 percent of the national budget to municipalities and encouraged participatory planning and fiscal oversight by community-based organizations. In

some districts, FEJUVE's neighborhood councils effectively operated as micro-governments.

After Goni's resignation, FEJUVE led a successful civic strike in El Alto against a tax on building and home construction, as well as a massive mobilization against the privatization of El Alto's water system (now scheduled to return to public control in 2007). Since the election of Evo Morales, FEJUVE has been weakened by the loss of key leaders to MAS cabinet positions and its relations with the government have been strained. At the same time, significant steps have been taken to address FEJUVE's demand for nationalization of hydrocarbons.

In May 2006, Evo Morales proclaimed the nationalization of Bolivia's oil and gas reserves under the symbolically titled "Heroes of the Chaco" decree, which gave foreign firms 180 days to renegotiate their contracts or leave the country. The gambit appears to have paid off. The ten largest foreign companies—including Brazil's Petrobras, the biggest investor—have agreed to new terms for exploration and development under which the government's share of revenues will increase from 18 percent to up to 80 percent. In four years, these long-term contracts are expected to generate an anticipated \$4 billion annually for social and economic programs (up from \$500 million in 2004).

In time, the government hopes to regain majority ownership and control of five companies that were privatized under Goni, relegating them to the role of service providers for the reconstituted state energy company. Along with the details and costs of these arrangements, many other issues remain unresolved—including the gas price increases that Bolivia wants Brazil to accept, the fate of Petrobras' refineries, how much the private firms will be required to reinvest and whether the devastated state energy company can develop sufficient capacity and resources to exercise meaningful control (even with Venezuela as a minority partner). Some question whether the program, which relies on a combination of buybacks and forced negotiation, truly constitutes "nationalization." Nevertheless, the new contracts

appear to represent a meaningful step towards Bolivia's recovery of its gas and oil resources.

Land

In the eastern lowlands department of Santa Cruz, we met with *campesinos* affiliated with Bolivia's Landless Peasant Movement (MST), formed in 2000. According to Silvestre Saisari, a national MST leader, the organization represents primarily indigenous migrants from the highlands, who work on the large eastern *latifundios* (estates) under subsistence conditions. Although many of these ex-highlanders are now second-generation lowlands residents, they are unable to gain land titles and suffer from considerable ethnic/racial prejudice. The MST organizes land occupations and advocates for collective land use and ownership based on egalitarian, communitarian and environmentally sound principles. These demands generally go beyond the program of the much larger national Confederation of Peasants' Unions of Bolivia (CSUTCB), with which the MST is fraternally allied.

The prosperous agribusiness estates that dominate the eastern lowlands, producing soy, cattle and other export commodities, have been acquired primarily since the 1970s through patronage land grants made by former military dictators to their political cronies (with U.S. government backing), to promote diversification of the Bolivian economy. Much free land was also given to foreigners. Today there is significant absentee ownership and speculative investment, with land used as collateral for loans that have enriched the Santa Cruz-based agribusiness elite.

The new radical agrarian reform program announced by Evo Morales in May 2006, and subsequently adopted by the Bolivian Congress, promises to redistribute non-productive, underutilized *latifundio* land to existing residents (both highland and lowland indigenous), along with providing technical support and tools. To date, 9 million acres have been granted to sixty indigenous communities, and another 5.5 million acres have been recovered by the state in preparation for redistribution.

While peasant groups like the MST are strongly supportive of these measures, there are several concerns. The program will not benefit the millions of *campesinos* who remain in the western highlands; here, the original 1953 agrarian reform was successful in breaking up large estates, but repeated subdivisions by subsequent generations and lack of technical assistance have left an impoverished peasantry with small tracts of land (*minifundios*) that rarely produce beyond subsistence consumption. Moreover, since all of the land redistributed to date under the new MAS initiative has been publicly owned, the government's ability to carry out a large-scale private land redistribution program has not been tested. The eastern landholding elites have mounted an aggressive effort to resist and sabotage land reform (see below), resulting in delayed implementation and increasing impatience among the MST and allied peasant organizations.

Coca

The coca leaf, legal in Bolivia, is widely used in indigenous social, political and ritual life. It is a stimulant, a mild anesthetic and a hunger suppressant. Even soldiers chew coca while on drug patrol.

In the Yungas, Bolivia's traditional coca-growing region, we visited an Afro-Bolivian community whose slave ancestors cultivated coca for transport to the highland mines, enabling the Spanish to amass their fortunes on the backs of an exploited, conscripted indigenous labor force. We learned that the production of coca for export took off in the 1980s, with structural adjustment, mine closures and U.S. demand for cocaine fueling the migration of highland peasants and miners (including the family of Evo Morales) to the Chapare region of Cochabamba. Chapare was then an open frontier, with no operative government structure. *Cocalero* groups, again transplanting their political and organizational consciousness, formed new peasant unions, which assigned land, assessed taxes and developed public works projects.

Like FEJUVE in El Alto, the *cocalero* unions were greatly strengthened by the LPP, which enabled them to control decentralized bud- ➡

gets and resources and deliver jobs and benefits to their communities. In 1995 they won control of the Chapare's newly recognized municipal governments. Some 700 local unions representing 45,000 families were eventually organized into the Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba (of which Evo Morales remains president today).

From 1998 to 2004, the U.S.-funded War on Drugs and the forced eradication of coca in the Chapare led to militarization, widespread human rights violations and mobilization of the *cocaleros* into a powerful social movement and political party with links to national worker and *campesino* organizations. Today, the situation is characterized by a tense, uncertain equilibrium which the MAS government is struggling to maintain. Illegal drug exports, widely credited with saving the Bolivian economy during structural adjustment, have been substantially reduced, while a certain amount of negotiated legal growing is permitted for traditional domestic consumption (primarily chewing and tea). Evo Morales is pressing hard to expand the legal uses of coca—for industrialized products such as toothpaste, pharmaceuticals and diet pills—in recognition of the reality that few alternative crops in Bolivia's peasant economy can compete with coca in price, durability and marketability. The MAS government also insists on using social control and voluntary compliance to enforce legal growing limits.

Bolivia is under constant pressure, however, from the U.S. to cut back on coca production and step up its drug eradication efforts. At stake is the hoped-for extension of the Andean Trade Protection and Drug Elimination Act (ATPDEA), set to expire next June, which allows Bolivian exports (such as textiles, furniture and clothing) to enter the U.S. duty-free. The loss of these protections could eliminate up to 100,000 jobs, many of which are held by indigenous workers in El Alto. (At the United furniture factory we visited there, which sells to outlets like Target and Costco, 600 jobs could be lost.) This poses a substantial dilemma for the MAS government in its efforts to respond to the needs of diverse social movement constituencies.

Constituent Assembly

The popular election of the Constituent Assembly, two days before our arrival in July, fulfilled a major demand of the social movements and a central MAS campaign promise. For the first time in Bolivian history, the constitution will be rewritten by a body that reflects the nation's indigenous majority, with substantial (34 percent) female participation and an indigenous woman as president. In the delegate vote, MAS and its allies won close to 60 percent and a majority of those elected from seven of the nine departments—significantly increasing Evo Morales' mandate, but short of the two-thirds required to control the Assembly.

Since then, the Assembly has been stalemated by disputes over ground rules that reflect more fundamental geopolitical divisions. MAS has insisted that the Assembly be invested with "original" powers that will enable it to undertake a wholesale restructuring of the state without answering to the Congress or the courts. In order to keep the opposition in check, MAS also wants individual Assembly votes to be decided by a simple majority, with two-thirds approval required only for the final program (followed by a national referendum, as required by law). More fundamentally, MAS sees the Assembly as "refoundational, plenipotentary and plurinational," an opportunity to enshrine the rights of Bolivia's indigenous majority into law and alter the political landscape in far-reaching ways.

This view is strongly contested by the political opposition, representing primarily the affluent, Santa Cruz-based, European-descended elite in the four lowlands departments where the vast majority of Bolivia's current wealth (hydrocarbons and fertile land) is concentrated. This group is directly threatened by agrarian reform and to some extent by the nationalization of hydrocarbons, which they perceive as curtailing investment in the booming Santa Cruz economy.

Initial opposition efforts were focused on a referendum campaign for regional autonomy through which the Santa Cruz elites hoped to deprive the federal government of the resources needed to carry out MAS' redistributive programs. The referendum failed nationally but won a majority in each of the four eastern departments; the issues of regional *and* indigenous autonomy are among the many to be decided by the Constituent Assembly. More recently,

the Santa Cruz-based opposition has employed road blockages, civic and hunger strikes and vigilante tactics to protest MAS' efforts to control the Constituent Assembly, which have produced increasingly violent confrontations with indigenous groups.

Looking Ahead

Over the past year, the MAS government has made significant strides towards recovering Bolivia's natural resources and developing new forms of participatory decision-making that empower the indigenous majority. Major challenges have been posed by increasingly mobilized regional elites, limited internal capacity and resources and continued dependence on foreign investors and the U.S. government. The MAS government walks a continuous tightrope between these realities and the high expectations of Bolivia's organized social movements, which have succeeded in toppling two presidents in as many years.

At the end of the day, the MAS program is considerably more pragmatic than revolutionary. Alvaro García Linera, Bolivia's vice president (and a widely respected social movement theoretician), envisions a kind of "Andean capitalism," which combines community-based, family-based and modern industrial economies. The goal is to "transfer a part of

the surplus from the nationalized hydrocarbons in order to encourage...forms of self-organization, self-management and commercial development that are really Andean and Amazonian."

Whether Evo Morales and MAS will succeed in carrying out their historic mandate to re-found the Bolivian state and restructure the neoliberal economy remains to be seen. Some fear that MAS will resort to increasingly authoritarian, if not dictatorial, measures to implement its redistributive program, which could ultimately provoke a civil war. Others worry that the measures that are achievable within Bolivia's polarized democratic system—not to mention the global economy—will never go far enough to redress existing social inequities. In any case, Bolivia may test the limits of what is possible. This powerful example of a democratic revolution grounded in a social struggle over water, land and energy resources is one that progressive planners should be watching, and supporting.

Emily Achtenberg is a Boston-based urban planner and affordable housing consultant specializing in the preservation of federally-subsidized housing. She visited Bolivia in July 2006 on a human rights delegation with Global Exchange and worked on an urban archaeological project there in 2004. Thanks to George Ann Potter of Cochabamba for comments and inspiration.

Miller cont'd from page 37

share common needs, such as the need for public transportation and other alternatives to automobile transportation. Communities may share common cultures as well. But rural regions have different strengths and problems. Solutions for providing home- and community-based services to seniors in one town may not work in another.

Reach out to municipal agencies. Paid municipal workers, volunteers, residents and businesses in small rural towns and villages often know the people and are aware of their needs. For example, postal workers and newspaper delivery people will know when a homebound senior is not picking up her mail or newspaper. This knowledge needs to be tapped.

State government can be a player. Vermont's Choices for Care program proves that state government

can provide creative solutions for long-term care for the rural elderly. Rural regions in states with a shortage of eldercare workers could emulate Vermont. Progressive planners can learn about Choices for Care and advocate for similar programs.

Think outside the box. Rural Americans have always found innovative and creative ways to survive. In developing solutions for providing home- and community-based health care to poor rural seniors, planners and policymakers must also "think outside the box."

More information about Vermont's Choices for Care program can be found at: www.dad.state.vt.us/WhatsNew/CFC-1115_LTC_Medicaid_Waiver_Reg-Amended_Regulation-Draft.pdf

K. Tyler Miller is a writer, independent scholar and progressive planner in Flemington, New Jersey.

Planners Network 2007 Conference | May 30 - June 2 | University of New Orleans

Race, Class and Community Recovery:

From the Neighborhood to the Nation and Beyond



Hurricane Katrina exposed tremendous rifts over **class**, **race** and **community**, not just in **New Orleans** but throughout the United States and around the world. It also shook the very foundation of planning and governance, whose failures were broadcast in high definition to the global community. Yet the effort to dig out and rebuild has been marked by tremendous innovation and will on the part of local communities, despite continued abandonment at the federal level. The **2007 Planners Network Conference** will confront issues of race, class, injustice and the failures of planning, while seeking to learn from the work of community-based organizations, dedicated planners, and local residents.

VISIT WWW.PLANNERSNETWORK.ORG FOR COMPLETE DETAILS

REGISTER NOW! Space is limited, so register early. Either clip and mail in the attached registration form, or register online at **www.plannersnetwork.org**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS—Participatory and community-based workshops are the hallmark of any PN conference, and this year is no exception. Thursday, May 31st will be spent in **communities around New Orleans**, learning about planning and recovery first-hand from those who are doing it, and will culminate in an **all-star panel discussion** focused on our theme. Friday, June 1st and Saturday, June 2nd will include **workshops**, **paper presentations** and **panel discussions**. Evening events will bring participants out into the city, both to engage with the issues first-hand and to enjoy life in New Orleans.

CALL for PROPOSALS—See the following pages for details. Proposals are due in full **March 15th**.

HOST A LOCAL FUNDRAISER—Funding is available through the PN Chapters committee for local chapters to host a conference fundraiser. Funds will be applied to registration fees for chapter attendees.

BECOME A SPONSOR—Help make this conference a reality by sponsoring a community-based workshop, an evening event, or the conference as a whole.

ACCOMODATIONS—The conference website at **www.plannersnetwork.org** has information on accommodation options in New Orleans, including hotels and B&B's.

Due to Katrina, it is unclear whether dorms at UNO will be available—stay tuned to the website for continuous updates.



MUMFORD AWARDS —PN is proud to announce that we are coordinating this year's conference with **ACD** and **ADPSR's** conference to be held June 3-5 at LSU in Baton Rouge. We will be co-hosting ADPSR's annual **Louis Mumford Awards** in New Orleans on Saturday evening, June 2nd. **Discounts** are available for individuals who register for both conferences.

IMAGES OF GULF RECOVERY

Photos courtesy of Jake Wagner, Marla Nelson and Jason Neville



REGISTRATION

	Full Conference BEFORE APRIL 15	Full Conference AFTER APRIL 15	Single Day BEFORE APRIL 15	Single Day AFTER APRIL 15
Regular	US\$200	US\$250	US\$100	US\$125
Student/Low Income	US\$100	US\$125	US\$50	US\$75

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- May 30th Opening Reception and Welcome
- May 31st Community-based workshops, including lunch and transportation
- May 31st panel discussion & reception
- Breakfast and lunch on June 1 & 2, and all classroom-based workshops
- There may be a surcharge for cultural events on June 1st, and for the Louis Mumford Awards on June 2nd

DOUBLE CONFERENCE DISCOUNT!

Individuals registering for **both the PN conference and the ACD/ADPSR conference** are eligible for a 10% discount at both conferences. You must register for both conferences by May 1 to receive the discount. Information on the ACD conference is available at www.communitydesign.org

PLANNERS NETWORK MEMBER DISCOUNT!

Members receive a \$10 discount on fees. Non-members and renewing members can claim the discount by joining/renewing while registering.

PN Membership Annual Dues

- \$25 for those with incomes under \$25,000 or students
- \$35 for those earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000
- \$50 for those earning over \$50,000, organizations and libraries
- \$100 Sustaining Members—if you earn over \$50,000, won't you consider helping at this level?
- \$1000 Life Member

**REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.PLANNERSNETWORK.ORG
AND RESERVE YOUR PLACE IN NEW ORLEANS!**

Questions about registration? Want to register via mail?

Email questions@pn2007.org,
or call (504) 280-6680 or (800) 258-8830

Call for Proposals **Due March 15, 2007**

Notification: April 15, 2007

Registration Deadline for Selected Participants: May 1, 2007

A fundamental goal of the Planners Network conference is to ensure that the conference format facilitates the type of connections, conversations and communication that each participant desires.



Recognizing that one format does not necessarily meet the wishes of the diverse group of attendees, PN will offer four formats to choose from: **Caucuses, participatory workshops, panel discussions and paper/project presentations.** These are explained below. **A full explanation is available at www.plannersnetwork.org.** All proposals should use the same form (either online or via email).

General Guidelines

Individuals or groups are encouraged to submit proposals for this year's Planners Network conference. Priority will be given to proposals that directly address the core issues of the conference – race, class and community recovery. For participatory workshops and panel discussions, priority will be given to diverse groups of discussants/leaders, including groups that integrate participants from both practice and academe, and groups that draw on participants from varying geographies. All workshops will take place at the University of New Orleans on either Friday June 1st, or Saturday morning June 2nd. Please indicate on your proposal form if you cannot make certain times during those days.

Caucuses - The caucus format is intended to provide networking opportunities for conference attendees around general subject matters. For example, if the primary goal is to bring together conference participants interested in transportation and to facilitate connections between them, then this is the appropriate venue. If the primary goal is to have a more focused discussion about a particular transportation issue, proposals can be submitted as a participatory workshop or panel discussion (see below).

Participatory Workshops – The goal of a participatory workshop is the involvement of ALL workshop participants in a discussion or other exercise designed to learn, communicate, debate, etc. “Presenting” by the workshop leader/s should be limited. Proposals should indicate how leaders intend to involve others in the workshop.

Panel Discussions – Panel discussions rely prominently on the ideas of the panelists, facilitated by a discussant. Adequate time should be allotted for audience participation and Q&A, but it need not be the primary focus, as in a participatory workshop. Priority will be given to panels that reflect diversity of opinions, backgrounds and geography.

Paper/Project Presentations – In recognition of both the impressive body of work of Pners, and the academic focus of many of our members, these sessions are designed for people to present their research, projects, ideas, accomplishment and failures. Presentations are limited to 10 minutes. Qualifying presentations will be grouped together.

Submissions

Abstracts are due **March 15, 2007**. Late proposals will be considered only on a space-available basis. Notification about acceptance of proposals will be made by April 15, 2007. Selected participants are expected to register for the conference no later than May 1, 2007. Acceptance of a proposal does not include the registration fees – ALL panelists are expected to register for the conference.

Proposals can be submitted either using the online form at www.plannersnetwork.org, or by downloading the Word version and submitting it via email to workshops@pn2007.org. All abstracts should be 250 words or fewer. Abstracts should describe the session's content, type of session and include the name, affiliation, and address of the moderator, and a tentative roster of panelists or other participants.

If you have questions regarding the proposal process, don't hesitate to contact us at workshops@pn2007.org.

Looking for a way to get to know local PNers?

Hoping to help others attend the conference?

Need financial help with registration?

HOST A CONFERENCE FUNDRAISER!



Planners Network has funds available to help **local chapters** (and folks who want to start chapters) hold panel discussions, forums, walking tours, networking socials and other events designed to build and grow the network.

In the months leading up to the conference, this is the perfect opportunity to both grow the network, and help send **chapter members** to New Orleans, by turning a chapter event into a **fundraiser**.

Here's how it works:

Develop a simple proposal for an event. Proposal guidelines and a form are available online at:

www.plannersnetwork.org/chapters.

Please identify the fundraising mechanism (i.e. admission fee, raffle, donations for food/drink, etc.) in your proposal. Fundraising events must take place before **May 15, 2007**

2. Send a proposal for the event to PN. Contact **chapters@plannersnetwork.org**. PN can consider proposals for up to US\$500, but proposals in the US\$100-300 range are more likely to be funded.

3. Hold the event.

4. Take the proceeds from the event, and apply them to registrations at the conference. Your local group can apply the proceeds in a variety of ways:

- Fund full or partial registrations for your local chapter—you decide who gets the money
- Fund partial registrations for everyone who worked on the event
- Contribute to the general fund, which will be used to subsidize registration for students, gulf residents and other low income attendees

5. Attend the Planners Network Conference in New Orleans with other members of your local chapter!

Questions about holding an event?

Email **CHAPTERS@PLANNERSNETWORK.ORG**,

Or visit our website at **WWW.PLANNERSNETWORK.ORG**

RESOURCES

PN CHAPTER AND MEMBER UPDATES

PN—Montréal Chapter Update by Norma M. Rantisi

On December 5th, Planners Network – Montréal co-sponsored a two-hour Forum with the Urban Planning Association of Concordia University at the Department of Geography, Planning and Environment at Concordia University, entitled “Directions”. The forum included three presentations, allowing members of the local PN community to share their academic and practical experiences. The first presentation was by Desmond Blik, candidate of the Masters in Public Policy and Public Administration program at Concordia University and it was entitled “A Landscape in Progress: Industrial Urbanisation, Montréal, and the Modern City”. The second presentation, by Andres Baez, Federico Cartin-Arteaga, Veronique Dryden, Gemma Peralta of the graduate program in Urban Planning and McGill University was entitled “An Urban Renewal Strategy for San José, Costa Rica.” And the third presentation, “Fighting Tamar: Civic opportunities in Hong Kong planning,” was by Laura Manville (BA, Yale University, USA). Each presentation was followed by an answer-question period, which included lively discussions on how to research past urban development processes, how to propose new, sustainable development projects, and the challenges and opportunities for contesting market-driven projects. Over 20 people attended the Forum and there was interest in more such forums in the future, and in a greater mixing of the academic and practical sides of the discipline.

Update from Fernando Marti:

Asian Neighborhood Design (AND), a nationally recognized non-profit community design center, is on the move! Effective December 8th, AND will be combining our various programs under one roof: our architecture and community planning programs, our family and youth resources component, and our pre-apprenticeship employment training in the building trades. We will be relocating to 1021 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, in the heart of San Francisco’s South of Market district. AND’s new number will be (415) 575-0423, and our web-site will remain www.andnet.org.

Update from Marisa Cravens:

PNer Marisa Cravens has moved to Oakland, CA and is working as a Regional Planner in the San Francisco Bay Area. She would be interested in hearing from people who are working on gentrification and equitable development tools. Her e-mail address is MarisaC@abag.ca.gov.

ATTENTION NEW YORKERS: There is a new Planners Network listserv for the New York metro area. You are welcome to join at <http://groups.google.com/group/pn-nyc> or by sending an email to pn-nyc-subscribe@googlegroups.com. The PN-NYC listserv is a forum for event announcements, publication announcements, job postings, and other queries or news related to progressive planning in the New York area, as well as discussion about Planners Network activities in New York. ➡

PUBLICATIONS

'Barefootin': Life Lessons from the Road to Freedom,' by Anita Blackwell (272 pp., 2006, 23\$), has been published by Crown. Blackwell was the first Black female mayor of Mississippi (Mayersville), and this is a memoir of her civil rights activism.

'Crossover: How Artists Build Careers Across Commercial, Nonprofit and Community Sectors.' Available for free from <http://www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/prie/crossover.html>.

'Structural Inequality: Black Architects in the United States,' by Victoria Kaplan (244 pp., 2006, 24.95\$), has been published by Rowan and Littlefield, 800-462-6420.

'The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide,' eds. Meizhu Lui, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar Wright,

Rose Brewer and Rebecca Adamson (326 pp., 2006, 19.95\$), has been published by New Press.

EVENTS

March 1-2, 2007. "Imagining Communities- Plan, Design, Implement", the 2007 Planning Institute sponsored by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, to be held on the campus. For more information, visit: www.urban.uiuc.edu/ce. Check often as updates are added to the web site. Also check the archives for videotreamed featured institute talks and educational materials. Questions? Pattsy Petrie, pattsy@uiuc.edu

April 1-3, 2007. "Squaring Off: A New Paradigm for Urban Change," International Conference on Sustainable Urbanism. Hosted by Texas A&M University. For more information, visit: <http://sustainableurbanism.tamu.edu>.

The Progressive Planning Reader

Reminder: Bulk discounts are available on *The 2004 Progressive Planning Reader*, with over 100 pages of the best from *Planners Network Newsletter* and *Progressive Planning Magazine*, covering topics including:

Politics and Planning • Urban Design

Planning Education • Race, Gender and Diversity

Community Planning

Sustainability, Environment and Health

Globalization and International Issues

Transportation and Information

Regional Planning

See the Planners Network website for more information.

Join Planners Network

For three decades, Planners Network has been a voice for progressive professionals and activists concerned with urban planning, social and environmental justice. PN's 1,000 members receive the Progressive Planning magazine, communicate on-line with PN-NET and the E-Newsletter, and take part in the annual conference. PN also gives progressive ideas a voice in the mainstream planning profession by organizing sessions at annual conferences of the American Planning Association, the Canadian Institute of Planners, and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.

The PN Conference has been held annually almost every summer since 1994. These gatherings combine speakers and workshops with exchanges involving local communities. PN conferences engage in discussions that help inform political strategies at the local, national, and international levels. Recent conferences have been held in Holyoke, MA; Rochester, NY; Toronto, Ontario; Lowell, MA; East St. Louis, IL; Brooklyn, NY; and Pomona, CA.

Join Planners Network and make a difference while sharing your ideas and enthusiasm with others!

All members must pay annual dues. The minimum dues for Planners Network members are as follows:

- \$25** Students and income under \$25,000
- \$25** Subscription to Progressive Planning only
- \$35** Income between \$25,000 and \$50,000
- \$50** Income over \$50,000, organizations and libraries
- \$100** Sustaining Members -- if you earn over \$50,000, won't you consider helping at this level?
- \$1,000** Life Membership

Canadian members see column at right.

Dues are deductible to the extent permitted by law.

PN MEMBERS IN CANADA

Membership fees by Canadian members may be paid in Canadian funds:

- \$30 for students, unemployed, and those with incomes under \$30,000
- \$40 for those with incomes between \$30,000 and \$60,000
- \$60 for those with incomes over \$60,000
- \$120 for sustaining members

Make cheques in Canadian funds payable to: "Planners Network" and send w/ membership form to:
Amy Siciliano
Dept of Geography, Room 5047
100 St. George St, University of Toronto, M5S 3G3

Please use the form below and include your email address.

PURCHASING A SINGLE ISSUE

Progressive Planning is a benefit of membership. If non-members wish to purchase a single issue of the magazine, please mail a check for \$10 or credit card information to Planners Network at 1 Rapson Hall, 89 Church Street SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455-0109. Please specify the issue and provide your email address or a phone number for queries. Multiple back issues are \$8 each

Back issues of the former Planners Network newsletters are for sale at \$2 per copy. Contact the PN office at pnmail@umn.edu to check for availability and for pricing of bulk orders.

Copies of the PN Reader are also available. The single issue price for the Reader is \$12 but there are discounts available for bulk orders.

See ordering and content information at <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/html/pub/pn-reader/index.html>

PLANNERS NETWORK ON LINE

The PN WEB SITE is at: www.plannersnetwork.org

You can join PN or renew your membership, and pay dues via PayPal, from the website.

The PN LISTSERV: Planners Network maintains an on-line mailing list for members to post and respond to queries, list job postings, conference announcements, etc. To join, send an email message to majordomo@list.pratt.edu with "subscribe pn-net" (without the quotes) in the body of the message (not the subject line). You'll be sent instructions on how to use the list.

Progressive Planning ADVERTISING RATES:

Full page	\$250
Half page	\$175
1/4 page	\$75
1/8 page	\$40

Send file via email to pnmail@umn.edu, or mail camera-ready copy, by January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

☐

Yes! I want to join progressive planners and work towards fundamental change.

- ☐ I'm a renewing member — Keep the faith!
- ☐ Just send me a subscription to Progressive Planning.
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Minneapolis, MN 55455-0109

INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS: Please send U.S. funds.
We are unable to accept payment in other currencies. Thanks.

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If the date is **more than one year ago** this will
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