

Progressive Planning

The Magazine of Planners Network

New York Neighborhoods Fight Land Grabs



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- Planners Network 2013 Conference
- HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative

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

New York City after Sandy

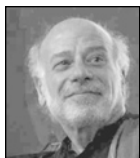


A house in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Basement and first floor were flooded. Three months after the storm it was still uninhabitable.

Who Benefits, Who Pays and Where's the Long-Term Planning?

By Tom Angotti

IN OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR tropical storm Sandy devastated the coastlines around New York City. Over 120 people lost their lives, thousands lost their homes and many were without power for weeks. Sandy triggered a public debate about how to protect the city and region in the future given the growing consensus that powerful storms and a rising sea level are inevitable and that climate change is for real. Local, state and federal officials are asking for over \$60 billion to repair the damage and prepare for the future.



Tom Angotti is director of the Hunter College Center for Community Planning & Development and author of *New York for Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate* (MIT Press, 2008). This is a revised version of an article that appeared in *The Independent* (<http://www.independent.org/>) in November 2012.

Photos by the author.

But who will be protected? And who will pay? These questions, for the most part, are not part of the conversation. And long-term planning is looking more and more like a nice sound bite that soothes widespread anxieties about the next storm without making most residents any safer.

Short-Term vs. Long-Term Planning

The local press is filled with praise for New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg for acknowledging the challenges posed by Sandy and proposing major new capital projects to deal with them. But behind their rhetoric calling for long-range planning is traditional short-term thinking dressed up in green. The favored measures under discussion are technological fixes such as sea

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www.plannersnetwork.org

PLANNERS NETWORK

106 West Sibley Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853, USA
Ph: 607.254.8890
Fx: 607-255-1971
Email: info@plannersnetwork.org
Website: www.plannersnetwork.org

MAGAZINE EDITORS

Tom Angotti, Jason Blackman, Pierre Clavel,
Ann Forsyth, Chester Hartman, Kara Heffernan,
Clara Irazábal, Marie Kennedy, Norma Rantisi,
Amy Siciliano

MAGAZINE LAYOUT

Paperwork

E-NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Jason Blackman, Mandana Nouri-Nekoei
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PLANNERS NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE

Tom Angotti: tangotti@hunter.cuny.edu
Eve Baron: eve_baron@mas.org
Pierre Clavel: pc29@cornell.edu
Ann Forsyth: aforsyth@gsd.harvard.edu
Aaron Golub: aaron.golub@asu.edu
Joe Grengs: grengs@umich.edu
Marilena Liguori: marilenal@gmail.com
Richard Milgrom:
richardmilgrom@gmail.com
Norma Rantisi: norma.rantisi@gmail.com
Alex Schafran: schafran@gmail.com
Young Planners Network Representative
Yolanda Chioma Richards:
chioma425@yahoo.com

Advisory Committee Representative
Chester Hartman: chartman@prrac.org

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ON THE COVER

December 2012: New York City Council
Member Julissa Ferreras and New York
State Senator Tony Avella join Monsignor
Thomas Healy (in hat) and hundreds of
Queens residents in a 2-mile march from
Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in
Corona, Queens, past the site of three
proposed Corona Park projects.

Photo by Donovan Finn

New York Neighborhoods Fight Land Grabs

Public Parks Going to Professional Teams

By Donovan Finn

THREE PROPOSED development projects would privatize public parkland in a section of Queens with a large population of low-income people and recent immigrants. The projects are supported by New York City's billionaire mayor, Michael Bloomberg, and other elected officials. But opposition to these megaprojects has brought together diverse sectors from the neighborhoods of Corona, East Elmhurst, Jackson Heights and Flushing, who have mounted a campaign to stop them in their tracks.

The proposals, which center on Flushing Meadows Corona Park, the largest park in the city's most diverse borough, would remove a huge chunk of green space in an area that has many unregulated apartment conversions, doubled-up households and little public or private open space. One proposal

envisions a 35,000-seat professional soccer stadium. A second includes a mall on parkland currently used as a parking lot for Citi Field, the home of the New York Mets. The third proposal calls for expanding the National Tennis Center, a venue for professional competitions including the U.S. Open. Together these proposals not only threaten to reduce public recreational space, but the cumulative impacts would potentially radically alter the physical, economic and social fabric of surrounding neighborhoods.

Opposition to these land grabs has heated up as Mayor Bloomberg enters the last of his twelve years at the city's helm, seeking to cement his legacy in new piles of bricks and mortar. Many residents and activists across the city have been burned by the administration's prior promises and believe that the mayor acts on his pro-development agenda without addressing the needs of local residents, which include high-quality affordable housing, good jobs, better schools, better transit and increased open space. To many Queens residents, these latest plans are more of the same, giving away city parkland to line the pockets of wealthy developers while ignoring local concerns.

Since these three proposals became public in mid-2012, local residents have developed a vigorous campaign to highlight these inequities, bring negotiations out from behind closed doors and make the developers accountable to the community.

Flushing Meadows Corona Park: Famous Target of Development Schemes

Flushing Meadows Corona Park is a remnant of the city's unbounded drive for economic development and global cultural significance. Originally the Corona Dumps of the Brooklyn Ash Removal Company, it was a World's Fair site in both 1939 and 1964 on leftover land situated between the Van Wyck Expressway and Grand Central Parkway, all giant projects engineered by Robert Moses. What is now the park's Queens Museum of Art was the original home of the United Nations (1946–1950), and the park also hosts the New York Mets baseball team and the U.S. Open tennis tournament (both facilities sit on parkland leased from the City).

Thus the park has long served the interests of New York's economic



Donovan Finn is a visiting assistant professor in the Sustainability Studies Program at Stony Brook University and an advisor to the Fairness Coalition of Queens.

Photos by the author.



Balloons originally made for the Jackson Heights Halloween Parade, cancelled due to superstorm Sandy, repurposed for the December march and rally.

and cultural elite, however, it also serves 2.2 million Queens residents, half of whom are foreign-born and have an annual median income \$10,000 lower than Manhattan residents. Compared with the city's other large parks, Flushing Meadows faces daunting challenges. It was planned more as a venue for commercial attractions than as a park and is woefully underfunded and unevenly maintained, including numerous decaying World's Fair structures. Though the park has long been a partly commercial venture, this has done little to benefit the public. After the departure of the Giants and Dodgers in the late 1950s, the City brought major league baseball back to New York by leasing ninety acres of officially

mapped city parkland to the New York Mets until 2060. The 42-acre United States Tennis Association (USTA) National Tennis Center, which opened in 1978, generates \$205 million in profits every year as site of the U.S. Open. Yet both tenants pay artificially low rental fees that don't even fund park operations, going instead into the City's general fund.

The park's neighbor to the northeast, the Willets Point "Iron Triangle," further complicates matters. This 62-acre collection of auto repair shops, scrap yards and other small businesses, accounting for some 2,000 jobs, has long been neglected by the City, which never bothered to pave streets or

install sewers in most of the area, even as the Mets' \$600 million Citi Field stadium looms in the background. Willets Point has been a redevelopment target for fifty years, but in 2007 the City began a concerted effort to transform it using the power of eminent domain, and it now owns or has options on 95 percent of the area.

Bloomberg's Green Giveaways

Under the Bloomberg administration, maintenance of New York's public spaces and remediation of City-engineered blight has increasingly fallen to the private sector. Simultaneously, large developable parcels near the built-out core of

Although Major League Soccer calls the plans to build a \$400 million stadium in Corona Park, requiring the use and offsite replacement of 13 acres of parkland “privately financed,” *Crain’s New York Business* reports that the backroom deal being worked out will include “a 35-year, \$1-a-year lease, with no sales taxes on construction materials, no property taxes and no revenue sharing with the City.”

the city have become increasingly scarce. In mid-2012, these dynamics converged on three development proposals for public land inside Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

First, the USTA hopes to expand its Billie Jean King National Tennis Center and U.S. Open campus with a \$500 million project to annex an additional three-quarters of an acre of public space, construct a third stadium and two parking structures and move a critical access road. Meanwhile, residents have been long frustrated by the detrimental impacts of U.S. Open visitors on the park every summer, and the USTA is not even offering to replace the parkland it needs to acquire, arguing that their facility is publicly accessible—despite court rental rates that begin at \$22 per hour.

Second, as part of a larger proposal to redevelop the industrial brownfields of Willets Point, Sterling Equities (the Mets development arm) and the Related Companies are proposing a 1.4-million-square-foot mall on the parking lot of Citi Field stadium, which is mapped city parkland used by the Mets under its 1961 lease. The Sterling/Related partnership was the successful respondent to the City’s 2011 Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop the first 23 acres of Willets Point. All twenty-nine respondents to a prior RFP in 2009 requested City subsidies for remediation, but leveraging its lease rights to public land, the Sterling/Related joint venture proposed the mall as a revenue stream fund remediation. Local residents fear potential impacts on traffic, transit and nearby small



Over 600 Queens residents turned out for the September town hall at Our Lady of Sorrows church in Corona, Queens, to learn about and protest development plans by the owners of the New York Mets, the United States Tennis Association and Major League Soccer.



Opponents of the City's plans for real estate developments in Flushing Meadows Corona Park march past the park's Unisphere in December of 2012. Major League Soccer claims that the front entrance to its proposed stadium, which is in alignment with a tree-lined boulevard that terminates in the iconic monument, is just a lucky coincidence.

businesses. The plan also postpones affordable housing promised by the City when the first version of the project was approved in 2008, angering many who fought hard for these guarantees and fostering a widespread sentiment in the community: if the Mets can build a mall under the terms of their lease, why not affordable housing instead?

Finally, Major League Soccer (MLS) is aggressively pursuing plans to build a \$400 million stadium in the park, requiring the use

and offsite replacement of 13 acres of parkland. Though MLS calls the project “privately financed,” *Crain’s New York Business* reports that the backroom deal being worked out will include “a 35-year, \$1-a-year lease, with no sales taxes on construction materials, no property taxes and no revenue sharing with the City.” While soccer is extremely popular in the borough, the proposal strikes many Queens residents as simply the wrong project in the wrong place, with inadequate benefits. MLS is not offering to assist

with ongoing park maintenance or game-related cleanup or policing, and only proposes replacement parkland that has been roundly criticized as wholly inadequate.

The combined effects of these proposals, many community members fear, would begin with untold headaches from three large construction projects in a relatively small, dense urban area and conclude with the loss of dozens of acres of public open space, increased traffic and pollution, more congestion



A graphic showing the anticipated impacts of the three proposals on Flushing Meadows Corona Park. All three developers and the City continue to treat the three proposals as discrete projects, arguing that they will not have cumulative negative impacts on the park or surrounding neighborhoods.

Graphic courtesy of the Fairness Coalition of Queens; base map by Google

on the already over-burdened #7 subway line and cement the notion that parkland in poor communities is for sale to the highest bidder.

Community Coalition Against the Land Grabs

As these plans came to light, residents quickly recognized that the plans ignored pressing local issues while giving away public land for

private gain, and that they were being fast-tracked by the very governmental agencies ostensibly tasked with assuring due diligence and transparency. Coalescing as the Fairness Coalition of Queens (FC Queens), concerned community members worked to alert and organize the public, beginning with a 600-person town hall meeting on September 17, 2012 at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in the Corona neighborhood. Community reaction

was decisive, and press coverage, from local Queens papers to the *New York Times*, was overwhelmingly critical of how the proposals were being managed. A second town hall in Jackson Heights days later attracted 250 residents whose reaction was similarly outraged. FC Queens has since met with all three developers to express community concerns and delivered a 4,000 signature petition to Mayor Bloomberg in early December, three days after 200

residents turned out in dismally cold rain for a two-mile march past all three proposed development sites.

Key grievances of the coalition include recognition that the three proposals are within a one-third-mile radius of one another and all on public land, and that they have enormous potential for detrimental cumulative impacts. Yet no City official, City agency or representative of the three developers will acknowledge this reality. MLS recently told Queens' *Times-Ledger* that they hoped to break ground soon so that "the other developers would have to account for the stadium in their plans, but the league would not have to consider those other projects in its environmental impact study."

The proposals also highlight the city's schizophrenic policy agenda. Painting himself as the country's greenest mayor through efforts like the *PlaNYC* sustainability plan, which promotes expanding park space and reducing flood risks as part of its agenda, Bloomberg continues to simultaneously prioritize real estate development and privatization of city services. As the *New York Post* reported in November, the Mayor's Office recently created "a special list of high-profile priority projects to fast-track before Bloomberg's third term ends," which the *Post* confirmed includes the MLS and USTA projects and almost certainly includes Willets Point as well. All three Flushing Meadows projects, though, are proposed not merely on public land, but also on marshland offering natural flood protection.

Particularly after superstorm Sandy, it strikes many as hypocritical that Bloomberg would openly ignore the climate-related risks of development merely to burnish his reputation as a mayor who gets things done.

The proposals also illuminate how the City has increasingly abdicated responsibility to provide basic services, instead creating blight until it can offer up corporate developers as saviors. What the City and developers appear not to have foreseen was a community that, after decades of neglect and scapegoating, would finally push back against such giveaways, demanding that community needs be prioritized. Bloomberg's own relentless drive to leave his mark on the city has almost certainly contributed to this backlash. Too commonly developers' trickle-down benefits have failed to emerge, creating a culture of skepticism citywide. Although MLS claims it carefully analyzed twenty New York City sites before choosing Flushing Meadows, many suspect that it assumed the largely immigrant community would embrace the plan without recognizing its risks.

Vulnerable neighborhoods face daunting challenges in such a pro-development climate. Related, the Willets Point co-developer, is one of the largest real estate firms in the world, and the U.S. Open is the most lucrative sporting event in the city. MLS will ultimately spend more than \$1.5 million in 2012 lobbying city officials. The city's Economic Development Corporation, the right arm of the mayor, has relentlessly promoted a

growth agenda, and recently admitted it used city funds to finance illegal lobbying of City Council members and other officials to promote projects, including Willets Point.

In 2013, the mayor's famous city hall countdown clock will start to inch towards zero. MLS will burn through cash holding more contrived pep rallies disguised as "town halls" like the one in early December, handing out free food and soccer paraphernalia. The environmental review processes for Willets Point and USTA projects will begin. But FC Queens hopes to keep local residents and park user needs at the forefront. One of the developers told the coalition recently, "We want to create a reason for people to come to this part of Queens." Local residents don't need a reason. They are already here. But clearly they will need to work hard to make sure no one forgets that they have a right to be there. **P²**

PLANNERS NETWORK

CONFERENCE

Beyond Resilience: Actions for a Just Metropolis

call for participants

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 15, 2013

JUNE 6-8, 2013

NEW YORK CITY

TENTATIVE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, June 6 Hunter College, Manhattan	Film festival, 4-9 pm
Friday, June 7 Pratt Institute, Brooklyn	Workshops in communities 9 am-5 pm Opening Session 7 pm
Saturday, June 8 Pratt Institute, Brooklyn	Morning & Afternoon concurrent Workshops 9 am-5pm Closing Session

Cataclysmic events are making urban neighborhoods vulnerable to displacement and exposing the inadequacies of traditional planning.

Hurricane Sandy laid bare the ongoing crises in low-income communities: unemployment, foreclosures, homelessness, and service cutbacks. Historic patterns of racial discrimination isolated the most vulnerable while wealthier, better-connected residents had the privilege of mobility. Traditional planning policies have facilitated segregated affordable housing and promoted carbon-intensive growth and waterfront development without regard to long-term consequences. Local and federal responses failed poor communities in the wake of the storm and many community-based organizations and activist networks mobilized to fill the gaps. This organizing continues and often strives to go beyond meeting immediate needs for relief towards planning and building a more just collective future.

The situations revealed in New York have corollaries in cities across the US and the world. Questions arise: how can activists, academics, and professionals promote alternative, more sustainable, and just ways of preserving and developing the metropolis? What lessons have been learned? What role can progressive planners play?

We invite your proposals for community-based workshops, discussions, speakers, and plenaries. Preferred topics include: socially just disaster preparedness and response; environmental justice; cross-sector alliances and organizing; meaningful and equitable employment; climate change; racial, class, and gender justice in planning and zoning policies; waterfront planning; housing justice including affordable housing and quality public housing; gentrification and displacement; redefining/reexamining urban security; transportation justice; water security; and food security.

Please be as specific as possible about who will participate in your proposed session, panel, or workshop and what you expect to accomplish. Limit your submission to 250 words and attach as a separate word document. Include "PN 2013 Conference" in the subject line of the e-mail and send to: PN2013@plannersnetwork.org

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Seventh Generation: New York City after Sandy

By Tom Angotti

continued from page 2

barriers, artificial wetlands, changes to building regulations, revisions to floodplain maps and protection of utilities and transportation infrastructure. These may protect the most valuable property in the city but will do little or nothing to prepare the city's eight million residents to deal with future storms. While the proposals would serve to fortify luxury waterfront enclaves, they would abandon those living at the margins, such as the tenants in the large public housing projects of the Rockaways, Coney Island and Red Hook, who likewise received little help in the days after the storm. What is missing are measures to ensure that those who are in the greatest need get help and those who benefit most from public subsidies contribute their fair share to the recovery.

This social justice blind spot could be seen in the responses to the storm's devastation in the days and weeks after it hit. Occupy Sandy, which includes many activists who took part last year in Occupy Wall Street, and many other voluntary groups led relief efforts in the most vulnerable neighborhoods, often filling the huge gaps left by government at all levels. Occupy Sandy also helped establish notions of resilience based on solidarity instead of charity, and mutual aid instead of militarized intervention. Clearly obvious in these neighborhoods was the lack of long-term engagement by government with residents and workers.

While those who most needed assistance were ignored in government relief efforts, those who are best able to provide for themselves will now be first in line to reap the benefits. If the chief beneficiaries of the dikes and other greening measures are downtown and waterfront property owners, shouldn't they foot their fair share of the bill? If the captains of the growth machine took the risk with their capital to build on the waterfront, why is government rushing to bail them out? Will the result of new planning regulations be that only the wealthy can have waterfront views? Will repairs to the thousands of units of public housing combine with budget shortfalls and the drive towards privatization to convert these projects to upscale

enclaves? In sum, will short-term disaster capitalism rule instead of long-term equity planning?

Answers to these questions become obvious when we consider that the same political leaders who neglected public housing, promoted gentrification of neighborhoods and oversaw a rise in homelessness were the most avid supporters of upscale development in floodplains all over the city. Ambitious measures to protect the less fortunate living in low-lying Zone A were never contemplated. City Hall's policy has been to make these areas more attractive for private developers on the assumption they will take care of the job of climate adaptation themselves. Budget cuts in Washington are bleeding



Red Hook Houses, one of the city's largest public housing projects. Tenants still complain about inadequate response to the storm by the NYC Housing Authority.



Seventh Generation: New York City after Sandy

public housing to death all over the country, so the long-term trend has been towards the privatization or demolition of the giant public housing projects in these areas. (An attempt was already made in the Rockaways under the federal government's HOPE VI program, but it failed in part due to tenant resistance.)

Public officials have not expressed any regret for these actions and inactions. If the city and state administrations had wanted to seriously help the city adapt to climate change, they might have limited all large-scale development in flood-prone areas instead of promoting it as they have over the last two decades. They could have put more money into preserving and retrofitting the city's housing stock, especially public housing and homes in vulnerable areas, instead of wasting public resources on the protection of lavish upscale enclaves.

Bloomberg has been skeptical of proposals to build hugely expensive barriers in the harbor in response to Sandy, which is not a sign of prudence but a symptom of short-term thinking. Many high-end real estate interests, after all, are already on high ground, and the newer projects are likely to be built to withstand the worst. In fact, Bloomberg continues to be a forceful advocate for building more, not less, on the city's waterfront, leaving it to the engineers and architects hired by big developers to deal with protections against storm surges.

Bloomberg's Waterfront Follies

Mayor Bloomberg's signature development projects during his eleven-year term have been located along the most vulnerable upscale waterfronts. Massive public expenditures were made to protect what the administration claims to be "the real estate capital of the world."

Bloomberg's "legacy" development projects have received millions of dollars in subsidies from the New York City Economic Development Corporation. The mayor has publicly touted the planned multi-billion-dollar Hudson Yards redevelopment on Manhattan's West Side as his trophy project. He got billions of dollars in city subsidies to build a one-mile subway extension there. He is using his last year in office to try to set in stone the more controversial developments in floodplains, such as Willets Point and Hunters Point in Queens. Other projects, including cruise terminals in Manhattan and Brooklyn and commercial recreation areas such as Brooklyn Bridge Park, are in place or under development.

The Bloomberg planning strategy goes beyond direct city subsidies for waterfront projects. In the last decade the administration passed more than 110 rezoning proposals around the city, including many in formerly industrial waterfront areas, which created windfall profits for private landowners and ushered in massive new construction.

Bloomberg's rezoning of Coney Island included new opportunities for condos and commercial development near the waterfront. He has been outspoken in his support for new condos in Gowanus and Newtown Creek, both located in the floodplains of Brooklyn and saturated with toxic waste. He ignored calls from community activists to clean up Gowanus before promoting new residential development, and the administration even opposed a federally funded Superfund cleanup. The mayor argues that the best hope for cleaning up the toxic land and water lies in private real estate development, which would improve each site as it develops. However, this would only shift the problem from one property to another and still expose new and older residents and workers to toxic waste.

In perhaps the most dramatic rezoning, the City overcame substantial opposition by neighborhood groups and in 2005 rezoned the waterfront in Brooklyn's Williamsburg and Greenpoint neighborhoods. This unleashed a frenzy of luxury condo development on the waterfront, resulted in the displacement of thousands of industrial jobs and virtually wiped out one of the last remaining city neighborhoods to combine industry and housing. The area's Latino population has since declined dramatically. A similar process evolved in Long Island City, Queens, over the last two decades. In thrall to big real estate money and waterfront

views, and facing significant community opposition, City Hall never questioned the wisdom of lining the waterfront with more towers.

The Growth Machine and the Waterfront

Let's not blame it all on Bloomberg. The frenzy to build in the flood zones began in earnest in the 1980s. The aging port facilities had closed and moved to New Jersey by the early 1970s, but the city's fiscal crisis froze any efforts to redevelop the waterfront. By the 1980s the real estate market began to boom again. In 1993, the City completed a comprehensive waterfront plan and new waterfront zoning regulations. These rezonings encouraged new development on the waterfront and, instead of developing public open space, left "public access" to the waterfront in the hands of the private developers whose required "waterfront promenades" have become their front yards.

The big investment trusts, equity funds and banks that put up the money for the new waterfront properties in Brooklyn and Queens, along with the towers in Lower Manhattan that got submerged by Sandy, are now facing threats to their lower floors and bottom lines. They will certainly not pay for the repairs to the city's streets, sewers and subway systems, but if the flooding continues they will have to pay to fix their buildings. Could



New condos and older low-rise housing in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. It was once a mixed use working class neighborhood, now heavily gentrified.

this mean that the selfish interests of the real estate growth machine could actually benefit all the rest of us, following traditional trickle-down philosophy? After all, some argue, it was real estate interests that made possible construction of the nation's largest subway system, and even though it was an unintended consequence, the subway has drastically reduced the need for burning carbon. Perhaps so, but imagine if the subway had been a truly public transit system from the start, as in many other big cities of the world. Then there might not have been a need for a public buyout of the first two private companies in the 1930s after they were milked dry by their investors. Imagine if instead of having three separate systems that all converged in Manhattan's overblown real estate market, and several separate suburban rail systems, there had been a region-wide system that served the vast majority of the population in the tri-state

area, which lives, after all, in the suburbs and not in New York City. Imagine if the powerful real estate interests had not nixed every serious attempt at regional planning and made New York the only major city in the nation that has never had an approved master plan.

The holistic, long-term thinking that the planning profession called for when it arose over a century ago has for the most part given way to short-term fixes to promote the growth machine. Now it is urgently needed as New Yorkers look to a future of rising seawaters and more storms like Sandy. Perhaps the only serious challenges to government's short-term thinking will arise from groups like Occupy Sandy, which have raised the most fundamental questions of who benefits and who pays. To answer these questions, long-term priorities have to be reassessed. Progressive planners should help raise these questions. **P²**

Revisiting Equity

The HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative

By Lisa K. Bates and Marisa Zapata

IN 1974, NORMAN KRUMHOLZ boldly called on planners to advocate for equity in public resource allocation and administrative practices. In 2010, the Obama administration's HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Initiative—specifically in the form of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant (SCRPG)—renewed this call for equity. But our review of the responses by thirteen grantees proved disappointing. The plans put forth by award winners recycle many of the activities from the Cleveland Policy Plan (CPP) without employing its overarching mission. Instead of boldness, we are left with a stark reminder about the lack of progress made since the City of Cleveland incited planners to aggressively attack societal inequity.

The Cleveland Policy Plan: Foundations for Equity Planning

The CPP set out a very clear agenda, one in which the application of equity goal would privilege planning activities that redistributed wealth.

Equity planning required that locally responsible government institutions give priority to the goal

of promoting a wider range of choices for those Cleveland residents who had few, if any, of them. The goal gave clarity and power to the staff's analyses. In evaluating proposals set before the Commission, and in developing the Commission's policy and program recommendations, the question of "Who pays?" and "Who benefits?" were key elements of the staff's analytic framework.

The CPP drew on a tradition of justice and fairness in western philosophy, religion and foundational documents of the United States. The justification for an equity-based plan was rooted in a moral code that said that dramatic inequity was not only undesirable, it was a threat to the community fabric.

The ideas in the CPP were prescient: identifying a regional scale for diagnosing and addressing inequality and tackling not only community development and workforce issues, but also transit connectivity and fair share housing. The plan used the term "opportunity," as in the opportunity for jobs or the opportunity for safe, affordable housing. And the CPP specifically addressed suburban jurisdictions' exclusionary practices, violations of fair housing law and refusal to support transit connections as causes of persistent poverty in the central city.



Lisa K. Bates is an assistant professor at Portland State University.



Marisa Zapata is an assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati.

HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Revisits Equity in Planning

The SCRPG funds planning activities intended to result in "economically competitive, healthy, environmentally sustainable and opportunity-rich communities." Managed by a HUD that was re-invigorated under the Obama administration, the SCRPG called on

regions to embed equity into traditional planning activities around land use, transportation and environmental/climate action. Regional planning bodies like MPOs were to develop and extend their regional planning frameworks to integrate affordable housing and community and economic development into their land use and transportation plans.

The SCRPG in many ways echoes the CPP in calling for “equitable land use planning” to address segregation, exclusion and access to jobs and educational opportunities. HUD provides a specific definition of social equity values—“fair and equal access to livelihood, education and resources; full participation in the political and cultural life of the community; and self-determination in meeting fundamental needs.” These are intended to be infused into proposed activities. HUD’s program places significant emphasis on participation by traditionally marginalized groups as part of the vision of a sustainable community.

The Cleveland model is very clear about who is to be served by an equity agenda: those with the fewest choices, i.e., the poor. As the nation’s main agency for fair housing activities, HUD also specifies that housing must address protected classes, discusses issues of “generational economic disadvantage” and specifies low-income and communities of color as key targets for activities. Given these similarities, we asked whether the SCRPG could give rise to a new generation of Cleveland Policy Plans in regions around the country.

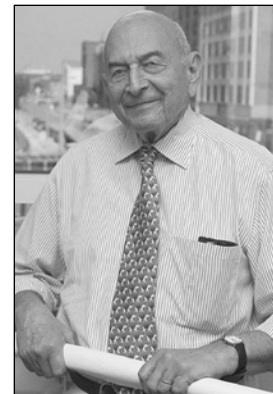
Justifications for Equity

While the SCRPG Notice of Funding Availability echoes the CPP in many areas, the actual grantees are far less specific about the populations of concern for an equity agenda. The plasticity of terms like vibrant, healthy and livable means they can be recognized by many groups, even though the groups may be talking about different visions when pressed to define specifics. Perhaps “equity” is not so amenable to broad agreement as a basic statement of a regional vision.

Equity for Whom?

In the proposals, choices are not only about those who currently have no or few choices, but also about

“maximum choosers” who might choose to live elsewhere altogether. The decision rules for planning become hazier as there is less focus on the appropriate groups of concern. A majority of the grantees did discuss the problems of limited income: five metro areas used the terms “poor” or “poverty,” while three additional areas discussed those with low income. But only five metro areas specified “minorities,” communities of color or racially segregated communities as having significant issues, and only three of these provided an acknowledgement of the history of racial segregation and how planning policies maintained it. Additionally, regions focused significant amounts of attention on problems and activities for those who already choose—for example, housing for a high-tech workforce, not for low-income families, or transit as an alternative to driving, rather than for those who cannot afford a personal vehicle.



Norman Krumholz

Equitable Action?

Perhaps most disappointing are the proposed actions. The language here is very similar to that of today’s equity advocates: choice, access and opportunity to make one’s own future, however, many of the activities were vague and required additional study. Many activities were only specified as far as collecting data, not as particular programs or regulations. The lack of specific activities is surprising for two reasons: 1) the regions studied are phase two sites and are further developed as regions with existing plans; and 2) where there are specific activities discussed they are activities that have been discussed for decades. For instance, increasing mobility and job access for people from marginalized backgrounds was something that the CPP advocated for and something Krumholz discussed as one of the major successes of the plan. Decades later these regions are still *talking* about implementing these ideas. They still need data. They are still looking for best practices.

The practice of suburban jurisdictions using exclusionary zoning and defying fair housing mandates was described in the CPP; numerous studies have de-

terminated that there are significant regulatory barriers to affordable housing. Segregation by race and class was apparent and remains so. Forty years later, these regions still need to confirm these findings before acting on housing problems. For instance, the regions will *collect and analyze data*, including a range of indicators about the existing housing stock and related economic and demographic profiles of communities. Regions will also *assess* the regulatory framework in which they operate, including an evaluation of existing plans and policies and what impediments they create to achieve housing goals. From this information, *plans and strategies will be developed* to further housing goals. Overall, the housing activities are vague, however, it's possible that many of the regions are starting with extensive data collection and analysis and may be limited in their ability to know their next steps at this time. Sacramento was unique as it indicated that further study was not needed; it needed to work to help localities update plans and policies to further fair housing goals.

Equitable Process and the Planners' Role

In Cleveland, the commission and planners were to promote the equity goal to decision-makers and to the public at the time of decisions. Planners would design alternative proposals when the original proposals did not properly address the goal. Planning staff would also reallocate resources and change laws and administrative practices that did not serve the main goal, propose programs and lobby for them and work to ensure that responsible agencies were implementing programs according to the overarching equity goal.

In the HUD program, planners may not be active advocates of a singular decision rule for programs. Instead, planners convene broad participatory processes for planning sustainable communities. Planners bring in a broad range of stakeholders and pay attention to marginalized and traditionally underrepresented groups to develop a long-range vision of a regional future that recognizes mutual interdependence and builds support for "equitable land use planning." Paying attention to participation, however, is not the same as building support for moving resources and employing practices in pursuit of equity. In the grants there is limited discussion about how issues will be addressed if equity is not being pursued. Participation is seen as

"The [regional] analysis [of impediments to fair housing choice] should assess impediments to fair housing choice and link transportation, employment and housing resources in order to promote fair housing and affordable housing in high opportunity areas, and adhere to and promote fair housing law as described in the General Section, including ensuring maximum choice in housing without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status and disability."

—Housing and Urban Redevelopment Notice
of Funding Availability for HUD's
Fiscal Year 2010 Sustainable Communities
Regional Planning Grant Program

"The Commission recommends eliminating the requirement in the Federal Housing Act for a cooperation agreement between the local housing authority and the municipality in which public housing is to be provided. This requirement has enabled Cleveland's suburbs to exclude public housing from their communities and effectively blocked the dispersal of low-income housing in the Cleveland area."

—Cleveland Policy Plan, 1974

"As a result of the decentralization of development and the decline in transit service, an increasing number of activities, especially employment opportunities, are totally inaccessible to the transit-dependent population. . . . Obviously such restraints upon mobility lead to, or support, the narrowing of choices in employment, housing, recreation and health care."

—Cleveland Policy Plan, 1974

"Plans shall identify existing locations of public, assisted, low- and moderate-income housing and the relationship between that housing and current and future employment and transportation."

—Housing and Urban Redevelopment Notice
of Funding Availability for HUD's
Fiscal Year 2010 Sustainable Communities
Regional Planning Grant Program

the primary way to ensure equitable interests are being considered, but outcomes cannot be predicted.

The grants devote considerable attention to their own governance structure but only talk about having broad-based support. The nitty-gritty of managing urban politics is not discussed. The CPP emphasized the importance of *political* allies and the willingness to take unpopular positions. This runs counter to the era of collaborative governance. Indeed, integration of multiple concerns across multiple activities may make it harder to argue forcefully for equity. No matter how explicitly collaborative and participatory activities are defined, there is no guarantee of equitable outcomes.

Conclusion

Equity planning is not the same as equity in planning. Today's arguments are more explicitly instrumental: equity brings prosperity, reduces costs for various social ills and is "a superior growth model." A key example of this argument is the Sacramento grant, which states as a rationale for addressing equity that it will "build a foundation for an economic rebound, through reduced housing and total living costs and diversified and increased employment opportunities."

What does it mean to use a "shared prosperity" argument for addressing inequality? Arguments today are crafted to reduce reactivity and promote the benefits for all of moving towards more equitable planning/policy. In the abstract, the ideas of regional coordination to achieve broad goals of health, prosperity, etc. are those that jurisdictions and agencies can sign onto. Goals around specific equity issues and particular marginal populations become hazier, but perhaps continue to have a place in the consensus.

But when the rubber meets the road—when resources must be allocated, projects prioritized and regulations revamped—a regional coordinated approach to equity does have to involve some advantaged groups giving things up. A very abstract conversation about "shared benefits and burdens" may be acceptable, but when it is time to actually redistribute, or lay out a mechanism for redistribution of attention, resources and people, will equity be at the forefront?

The grants present process as a way to address this. Regions will reach agreement through carefully orchestrated processes, and these processes will lead to more just outcomes. If planners are really to (re)take the equity planning challenge, can collaboration and consensus be the main frames of practice? Could the attention to continued engagement of equity advocates keep their feet to the fire for continuing to pursue equity when institutional and political inertia work against it?

The grants bring to the forefront another challenge that planners face today. What do planners do? Are planners meant to convene ideas? Are they leaders in thought or brokers of shared knowledge? They certainly have the technical knowledge to respond to the mechanisms of exclusion, yet the processes here do not place planners in the position that the CPP created. Planners are not given the power to act for equity, and neither are they seizing it.

Why this shift? Even at the time of Krumholz and compatriots, to make such an ideological plan from a city agency and to talk about justice and equality was radical—as the plan itself acknowledges. The plan makes explicit its ideology and the imperative to advocate, but it was borne of a time when people had been openly discussing justice, democracy and equality for its own sake. The CPP implicitly is about operationalizing civil rights. Today, however, talking about these concepts is incredibly difficult politically. HUD is an embattled federal agency constantly being attacked by the right for its (miniscule) re-distributive function in housing. Those convinced of "Agenda 21" or a government plot to force density, transit and public housing on an unwilling, freedom-loving American public are watching this program. On a local level, planning is no longer the locus of a justice movement. Planners are caught between a sustained critique from the left on grand-plan planning (from urban renewal to HOPE VI) and attacks from the right about individual property rights, including the right to "NIMBY." With a weak political position as well as continued erosion of planning departments by austerity regimes, planners are mostly defending the status quo and the existence of planning at all. In 1974, Krumholz laid out an audacious goal for planners and used his leadership, relationships and power in Cleveland to forward this goal. Today, such boldness is missing. **P²**

Planning in the Shadows

Unauthorized Immigrants in Postville

By Gerardo Francisco Sandoval

UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRATION, despite being a critical issue facing cities and towns, has gone largely unaddressed by most planners. There are currently 11 million unauthorized workers in the U.S. and it is a political issue increasing in attention and conflict. But where are progressive planners in this important civil rights debate? It wasn't until I had completed four years of fieldwork in Postville, Iowa, where I was studying from a community planning perspective the effects of a large immigration raid on a small rural meatpacking community, that I finally figured out why planners have been absent from this critical issue. Although our economic system relies heavily on this low-wage labor pool, the state criminalizes this population and planners have a very difficult time figuring out how to plan under these criminal circumstances. This dilemma opens up many ethical, practical and planning process-based questions that planners are not well-trained to even ask, let alone answer.



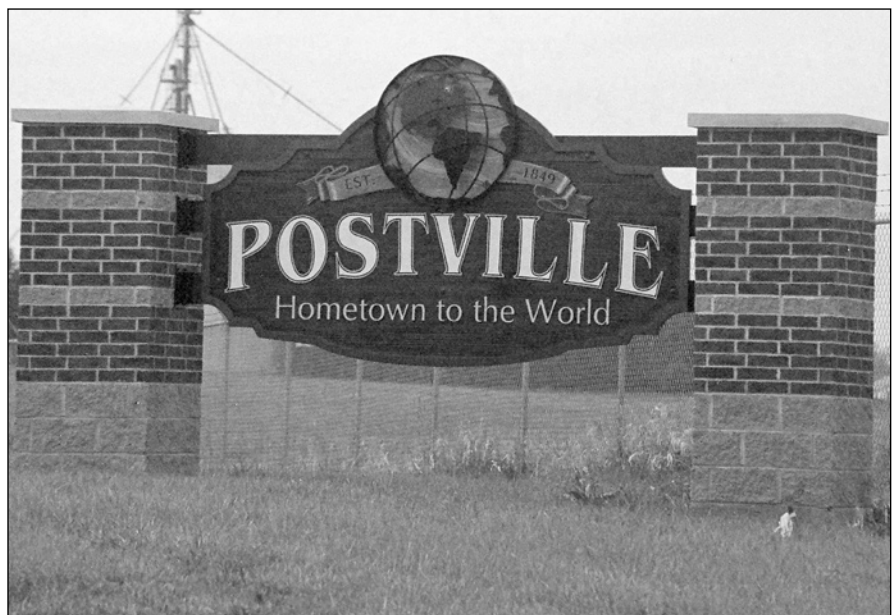
Gerardo Francisco Sandoval is an assistant professor in the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management at the University of Oregon.

Photos: Collection of Gerardo Sandoval and Edward M. Olivos

The popular view of immigration policy is that the system is broken and that comprehensive immigration reform will solve this crisis. My view is that the current immigration system works just fine for the purpose of creating an underclass of shadow workers—unauthorized immigrants who live in a state of invisibility and are systematically excluded from participating in our civic systems. The state directly benefits from an immigration system that creates a mobile, vulnerable, exploitable workforce that does not demand the social security mechanism of our welfare capitalist society. Planners play an important role in creating this system at the local level

and we need to better understand how to plan for shadow populations, even if (or especially if) they are criminalized, so that these communities can come out of the shadows. This unauthorized labor force is structurally a part of our economic system and the workers providing this labor are now a part of our communities, towns and cities.

Postville, Iowa, was a shadow town in the middle of the U.S., a meatpacking plant town with a population of 2,000 people and a high concentration of unauthorized workers. Two books have been written about the multicultural conflicts that emerged in the town,



as have many newspaper articles (including a recent *New York Times Magazine* article) and three films.

Postville has become a microcosm of the multicultural dynamics within the U.S. and the conflicts that arise from it. It also serves as a place to understand how labor, the state and immigrants form a system of exploitative labor linked to shadow transnational networks that ferment and sustain an underground labor force that is transforming U.S. cities and towns.

United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raided the Postville meatpacking plant in May 2008 and arrested and deported 389 workers. It was the largest immigration raid at the time and the militaristic style ICE used to conduct the raid garnered international attention. Most of the workers deported were Guatemalans who came from small rural towns in the highlands. The Guatemalan community had grown from three pioneer immigrants in 1995 to about 800 at the time of the raid, most of them unauthorized. The raid destroyed the Guatemalan community overnight and placed the town in an extremely difficult situation as the town's mayor tried to declare Postville a disaster. The town's main employer went bankrupt (the meatpacking plant that had hired the unauthorized workers), most of the Guatemalan small businesses along its main street went out of business, the housing market, which heavily relied on Guatemalan immigrants, collapsed and the remittances being sent to sustain the small rural villages in Guatemala dried up. The shadow system that had built up the town and was basically sustaining the meatpacking plant, the town and the Guatemalan villages collapsed.

Postville demonstrates the risks associated with being dependent on shadow systems that receive at least implicit support from planners, who, in their silence, don't advocate for vulnerable populations. The key lesson in Postville is that as planners we cannot ignore the fact that there is an entire population living in the shadows in our cities and towns, even if we think that by ignoring this population we are somehow helping them out by not focusing on their unauthorized status. Michelle Alexander has recently written an excellent book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2010), where she argues that an entire penal system has been developed to crimi-

nalise African Americans and maintain them as a caste.

In the age of colorblindness, it is no longer socially permissible to use race, explicitly, as a justification for discrimination, exclusion and social contempt. So we don't. Rather than rely on race, we use our criminal justice system to label people of color "criminals" and then engage in all the practices we supposedly left behind. She argues that once you are criminalized, "employment discrimination, housing discrimination, denial of the right to vote, denial of educational opportunity, denial of food stamps and other public benefits and exclusion from jury service are suddenly legal. As a criminal, you have scarcely more rights, and arguably less respect, than a black man living in Alabama at the height of Jim Crow.

Unauthorized immigrants are labeled criminals once they cross the border or overstay their visas. This criminality places them in vulnerable situations and creates the conditions for their invisibility.

How did this shadow social system of informality emerge in Postville? The informal sub-economy was supported by social capital that linked the Guatemalan immigrants to their home communities in Guatemala and to Postville. The meatpacking plant, which needed the low-wage labor, recruited immigrants informally via family kinship networks. The town was directly dependent on the meatpacking plant, which was its main employer, and planners turned a blind eye to these issues. My view of planners in this small town consists of town administrators and also regional planners who supported the town's planning activities. But planners, in my view, are also civic leaders that play a direct advising role and influence planning issues in the town. This informal sub-system worked productively with the town's power structure because everyone was in the same boat—dependent on the meatpacking plant to sustain the economic structure of the town.

The question of unauthorized immigrant populations is really one of civil rights because it is the state that creates the conditions of illegality in towns like Postville. The question for progressive planners is therefore how



to bring these populations out of the shadows without putting them at greater risk. Ignoring their documentation status just lets this shadow system maintain the exploitative relationships. We need more research and active progressive planners who tackle this issue head on and contribute to the national immigration debate in the coming years.

How to tackle this important issue is difficult, yet critical, to explore. Every time I ask a practitioner working with unauthorized populations if the people they are helping are unauthorized, they usually say, “I do not ask,” thinking they are doing them a service. This, however, is a misguided strategy.

Bringing this issue out of the shadows means that it will have to be acknowledged and discussed. The number of unauthorized immigrants in a community needs to be counted and this issue brought to the attention of civic and political leaders. This is not a recommendation I make lightly given that political backlash might be the result. However, this backlash could in fact lead to opportunities to address this issue. But the numbers are not enough. The human stories behind these immigrants’ struggles are just as, if not more, important. Unauthorized workers are members of our communities (some have lived in them for many years and have mixed-status families) and it’s important to understand their needs and the particular challenges they face. As progressive planners, we have a responsibility to include this community in our planning processes so that we can learn of



the particular needs and issues it faces and incorporate its ideas and perspective into the community's planning. In my research I experienced both success and much failure in trying to conduct public outreach in communities where there is a high concentration of unauthorized residents. If planners want to conduct outreach to these invisible communities, we have to be willing to do five things: 1) go to them; 2) conduct participatory workshops in spaces they feel safe; 3) work with community organizations that have already built trust with these communities and are offering them concrete social services; 4) make the workshops non-coercive and bottom up; and 5) incorporate the information gained from these participatory workshops into tangible and specific policy recommendations that planning leaders can do something about.

The role of community partners is critical since these communities are rightfully distrustful of planners, making it is extremely difficult for us to work in these communities on our own. We need to collaborate and work via community partners such as faith-based groups, immigrant advocacy organizations, immigrant small businesses which have a good pulse on these communities and service-based organizations that provide English as a Second Language courses and immigration legal assistance. Planners, however, also need to be able to interact with these populations without the help of these partners. Taking an ethnographic approach to community planning would go a long way in this regard. Immersing yourself (to

the best of your ability) into the community dynamics of these populations is important. For example, informally interacting with immigrant populations in their places of worship, play, and work would help planners better understand who the key leaders in these communities are and uncover the hidden dynamics that play a crucial role in these communities. In other words, planners need to be able to befriend key members of these communities and become their advocates.



While engaging with the unauthorized community, planners also have to engage with the political structure in their cities and towns around an immigrant rights agenda. This is where relationships with immigrant rights activists and organizations become critical. Campaigns such as immigrant inclusivity and creating a welcoming environment in the city and town can serve as a way to catalyze change around taking a positive stance on immigration.

Although immigration is in the jurisdiction of the federal government, cities and towns can still play a crucial role in advocating for unauthorized communities. Planners need to play a mediating role between unauthorized immigrants and the community power structure in cities

and towns, which has the ability to implement policies conducive to creating an immigrant-welcoming environment. This could be a positive and concrete step forward for an issue that is politically divisive. In my book, *Immigrants and the Revitalization of Los Angeles* (Cambria Press, 2010), I describe the co-evolution of a low-income Central American community in the MacArthur Park neighborhood and the City's redevelopment and planning institutions via the construction of a subway station that threatened the community's social fabric. In this ethnic metro-pole, the City's institutions had to pay attention to the needs of the immigrant community because the neighborhood sustained a high degree of immigrant financial and political capital. A recent example demonstrates how cities can directly play a role in the national immigration debate. Los Angeles Police Department Chief Charles Beck made national news when he announced that his officers were not going to take part in turning in unauthorized immigrants to ICE (a recent trend in law enforcement). Chief Beck also came out in favor of issuing drivers licenses to unauthorized immigrants. Interestingly, when Chief Beck served as Captain of the Rampart Division of the LAPD, he played an important positive role in the revitalization of MacArthur Park. Planners can learn from these types of examples and play a mediating role in communities with a high concentration of unauthorized residents, positioning themselves to be an advocate for communities that in many ways cannot advocate for themselves for fear of deportation. **P²**

Sustainability and Its Contradictions in Southeastern Massachusetts

By *Helene Fine*

IN SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS and neighboring Rhode Island, the local food industry is flourishing. There have been “buy local” campaigns and a rebirth of interest in small farms, many featuring organic produce, eggs and meat. The region is home to an organic dairy farm with an ice cream stand, many community-supported agriculture (CSA) farms and a very good local restaurant that was the first in Massachusetts to be certified “green” by the Green Restaurant Association. There are many more healthy facets to this industry as well as other related industries that also show signs of new life, including the arts, public transportation and, for something totally different, precision instruments.

The Bayside, A Green Restaurant

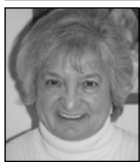
The Bayside Restaurant is located in Westport, Massachusetts, overlooking Allen’s Pond and Buzzard’s Bay, with a distant view of the Elizabeth Islands. Although small and unassuming, the restaurant’s location affords it spectacular views, and its food offerings are wonderful. In the summer, customers can sit on the outdoor patio or at the funky outdoor bar. At all times the menu includes fresh, locally caught fish, locally gathered clams and locally grown vegetables and fruit. The breakfast menu offers pancakes, homemade muffins and omelets made with local farm eggs. The

lunch and dinner menus feature an array of fish and seafood dishes including Westport clams and Rhode Island calamari. The alcohol offerings include locally brewed beer and wine from the Westport Rivers Winery. Desserts include homemade pies and New England puddings. Even the restaurant’s sodas are locally bottled and its milk comes from a Rhode Island dairy farm.

Bob and Nancy Carroll founded the restaurant over thirty years ago, having left city life behind to raise their family in the area. Today it is family-owned and -operated, now by a new generation of Carroll’s along with assorted relatives and friends. Bob and Nancy were then and continue to be now environmental and community activists.

The “green” label, assigned after an audit by the Green Restaurant Association, implies more than the serving of sustainable food. Energy conservation, improved waste management, concern for the global environment and health issues are part of the mix as well. The Carroll’s, for example, had to do research on biodegradable cups, containers, plates and utensils. These products had to stand up to heat as well as be earth-friendly. They had to switch to healthier cooking oil and eliminate soft drinks that came from multinational producers such as Coca Cola that were robbing African nations of their water. Their cleaning products and energy consumption had to pass muster as well.

The Carroll’s were environmentalists long before linking up with the Green Restaurant Association. Well before their audit they had switched to energy-efficient light bulbs and Energy Star appliances. They had a complete recycling center with bins and dumpsters set up for var-



Helene Fine is a professor emerita from the Management Department at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. While there she developed and taught courses in the creative economy, action research, critical systems thinking and technology management.

ious types of materials and even a composter for raw produce. Nancy Carroll, in fact, was already using the compost for landscaping around the restaurant, and Bob was giving his used cooking oil to a young man who has converted his produce-delivery vehicle to one that used cooking oil as fuel. They had made smoking off limits in their restaurant before it was required by either law or certification standards. In fact, the Bayside Restaurant had already met most of the standards for the green certification before the audit began.

The impact of this establishment goes well beyond its service, ambience, food and drink. As active members of the Chef's Collaborative, the Carrolls help promote sustainability in the food supply globally. In addition, their restaurant serves as a gathering place for both year-round and summer communities as well as a center for the dissemination of information on a range of environmental and social issues. Beyond these functions,

it helps small local farmers by purchasing their produce and helping them become more energy-efficient and earth-friendly.

Susan Mohl Powers, a Local Artist

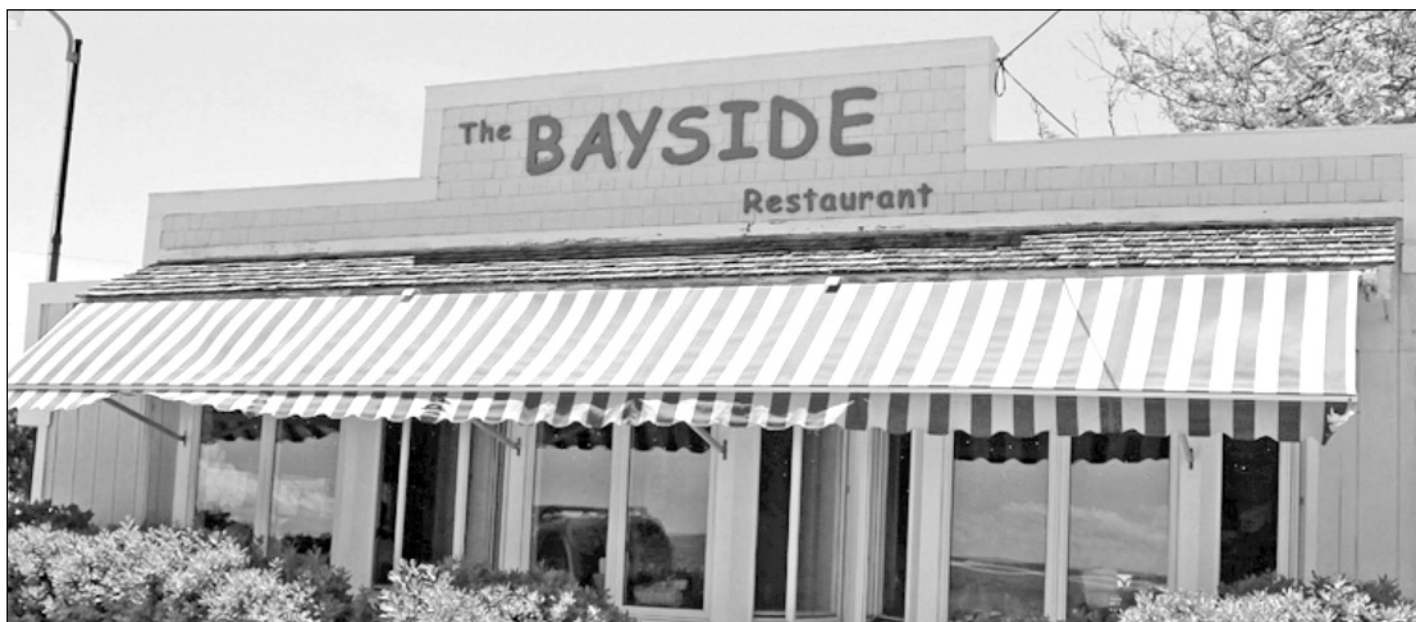
Susan Mohl Powers creates fabric sculptures and what she calls planar nets (a fabric bas relief), paintings and giclee prints. Giclee is a relatively new, improved digital photographic technology for making prints, enabling the artist to both copy and enlarge her works on paper and copy them onto stretched canvas. The color is excellent. The work looks more like original art than a print, yet the price is comparable to a reproduction. Powers' fabric sculptures and planar nets, which are made from recycled materials, are found primarily in large commercial buildings across the U.S. and in Europe.

The artist also has a company, Sailshades, Inc., where she designs

and produces insulating, energy-saving, window shades primarily for commercial buildings. An Italian company developed the fabric that Sailshades produces in designer colors and patterns.



This material not only helps to insulate an office, studio or apartment, but it is attractive and offers an exterior reflective surface that hides what is inside while enabling sunlight to pass through and those inside to see out. Architects can offer the shades as well as matching sculptures to their clients.



Powers rents space, which she has transformed, in an abandoned mill in Fall River, Massachusetts. Here she generates work for herself and others, both individuals and businesses. She currently subcontracts her shade-making, for example, to a small mattress production company in Fall River. She has also franchised some of her shade sales business to shops in Colorado. She has supported a local salesperson who runs her giclée business and a photographer who does her photocopies, each in exchange for the use of some loft space. Currently she is offering 10 percent of the proceeds from a sale to anyone who refers a customer who purchases her shades.

Supply Chains and Support Systems

On the surface, the Bayside Restaurant and Susan Powers' enterprises represent a kind of entrepreneurship, perhaps "citizenship," but it is the work of individuals building businesses that are institutions in their own right. And through their own good works and institutions like the Green Restaurant Association and the Chef's Collaborative, both impact the public as living examples of sustainable economics at points of consumption—where the concept of "sustainability" has its most immediate impact.

But their impacts also work backwards through the economy. The Bayside Restaurant and similar establishments can have an impact on the back end of the food supply chain, namely on the producers of the tools for the farmers, the fish processors and the vintners. And this issue goes beyond food. Clearly

Susan Powers has had an impact on the local economy. On the consumption side there is the educational aspect that promotes the idea that the shades she produces are a better option than other window coverings for conserving energy. But the shops and sales force that serve her work are also a part of this. Once again, it is the back end of suppliers that are also of interest.

Other Stories from the Field: More on Local Food Production

When it comes to local food, my own experience, observations and conversations have led me to find an untapped need (read market) for small-scale tools, technologies and systems appropriate for use by the small, local producers, distributors and suppliers of food that are themselves part of a more sustainable food supply chain. When I checked with the CSA that I belong to I found that they used a small tractor (that looked like a riding lawn mower) that was called the Buckeye Tractor. It has attachments that lay strips of plastic along beds, punch holes in them, plant seeds in the holes and also irrigate through these holes. The company, located in Columbus Grove, Ohio, has a website that features an amazing array of tools. Although their motto is "No grower too big or too small," most of what I looked at seemed to be geared toward small farms. Besides purchasing their tools from a company based in Ohio, the owners of my CSA farm and other small farms drive great distances to get parts.

Another part of the food industry to consider is the wine industry,

which is burgeoning in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. There is even an Urban Vineyard and Winery in downtown New Bedford.

More from the Field: Biomedical Instrumentation

Another industrial supply chain is that of biomedical instrumentation. Siemens USA, which is acquiring small, often family-owned precision tool manufacturing companies, is located in this region. In fact almost every new imaging device that I have seen recently has the Siemens label. The precision machine tool supplier component of this industry first came to my attention through graduate students who worked in these companies.

A Broader, Deeper View?

Ideally a sustainable and progressive food system would extend not simply to the activities at the point of consumption where they directly impact the public, but throughout the supply chain. Economic justice and environmental justice would prevail throughout, and the principles would apply most immediately at the local level. For example, local suppliers to the Bayside Restaurant, who search hundreds of miles for particular types of equipment, could, in some cases, find local equipment manufacturers; there are machinists in southeastern Massachusetts with little work and manufacturers that could make the machines well. Perhaps local inventors could create smaller, more serviceable, wind towers, solar panels

and wastewater treatment systems to generate power for individual users. Local, small manufacturers might even be able to create more serviceable, energy-efficient tractors for local small farm use.

There are other tools that ought to be available to small growers. Tools that could be used for the process of converting cooking oil and other wastes to biodiesel and/or ethanol could probably find a market here. I have had graduate students that have designed tools and systems for converting algae from bogs and even swimming pools to biodiesel. One team found a Canadian company that could convert the waste material from a cranberry farm that they were working with to logs for stoves and fireplaces.

Thus sustainable development at the front end, as in the Bayside Restaurant or the Susan Powers enterprises, creates opportunities to invent, adapt and produce new, appropriate technologies, as well as alternative systems for local uses and for markets that extend well beyond this particular one in southeastern Massachusetts. If we in the economic development field were to facilitate this process of invention, we could help all constituents (whether toolmakers and machinists or other suppliers of goods and services) understand and compete in this newly emerging market.

A Dilemma for Progressive Planners to Consider

These stories, and their ramifications as we look backward to their supply chains, suggest a view that

extends beyond one exemplary restaurant or arts production group to their respective supply chains and perhaps a larger, “sustainable,” progressive economy. But a series of dilemmas also appear, opportunities but also challenges to progressive planners.

Sustainable development at the front end creates opportunities to invent, adapt and produce new, appropriate technologies, as well as alternative systems for both local markets and for those extending well beyond.

The most immediate as it relates to the examples presented here stems from the importance, on the one hand, of working with the small supplier manufacturers that are at the “back end” of a number of industries and the difficulty, on the other hand, of doing this. If those of us who work in various capacities in the economic development field could focus our efforts on these suppliers, we would be in a better position to facilitate a process of invention that would help those that are more progressive—focused on redistributive justice, democratic inclusion—at the “front end” of

these industries. By providing assistance to all constituents, including the toolmakers and machinists or other suppliers of goods and services, to understand how to compete in this newly emerging market, we would be helping the local region become healthier.

The reality, however, is that as a group the machinists and toolmakers in southeastern Massachusetts are generally not progressive in this sense nor do they necessarily see opportunities for themselves. Beyond that, they tend not to like “ivory tower” academicians, “experts,” or consultants. While my graduate students have often had excellent technical experience and much to offer, the company owners and managers have acted as if they were doing us a favor by letting the students observe their operations. As their faculty advisor I have scarcely done better—I have gotten much of my entrée and material as a grandmotherly looking teacher, a fellow dog owner, a local resident, a customer, a client, a tennis player or a sports enthusiast!

Thus we have a dilemma. Although we can see seeds of change within sectors of the economy, we can also see resistance, both between sectors and at different points in the supply chains. We know we need to find the seeds of change that have the potential to flourish, nurturing them and creating a network for spreading the process. The question is how to do this. Are there structures of support that we can use to advance change? Alternatively, are there some that we can modify for this purpose? If the answer to both these questions is no, then we have to think about how to create totally

What is the Skills Problem in Manufacturing?

By Nichola Lowe

MANUFACTURING JOBS are coveted and for good reason. On average they provide significantly better wages and benefits compared to service-sector jobs that share a similar labor pool. This helps to explain the wide array of local and regional planning experiments aimed at stabilizing and sustaining manufacturing employment in the United States. Still, as numerous articles in the Winter 2012 issue of this magazine help to illustrate, much more is needed to support manufacturing job growth and in ways that ensure progressive outcomes in the form of quality jobs and good working conditions.

One frequently mentioned intervention involves increased federal and state support for worker training and education. But as we consider ways to extend this support, it is important to consider what else is needed to ensure that public investments in upskilling translate into quality job access. Coupling training and job quality concerns not only has implications for the status and bargaining power of manufacturing workers, but also for how and whether worker skill gets valued and rewarded.

Skill is clearly on the minds of manufacturing employers, and should also be a priority for progressive planners. It is impossible to pick up a newspaper these days and not read a story about looming skills shortages that could potentially limit the development of manufacturing in the United States. An oft-cited survey of U.S. manufacturers conducted by the Manufacturing

Institute and Deloitte Consulting estimates that close to 70 percent of firms will face a “moderate to severe shortage” of qualified labor. This has been used to explain why, despite the high unemployment rate, 600,000 manufacturing job openings remain unfilled in this country. The survey also notes that over 50 percent of U.S.-based manufacturing employers anticipate facing an intensifying skills shortage in coming years. An underlying assumption is that this skills deficit will curtail how much manufacturing activity there can be in this country, and affect future industrial competitiveness by stifling opportunities for innovation.

Narrow View of Skills: From Mismatch to Reinterpretation

But what this survey and others like it obscure is a more significant labor market challenge on the demand side of the skills equation. By this I mean that U.S. manufacturers, and policymakers for that matter, seem all too quick to narrow their definition of valued skill, shortening the list of who in our society is presumed to possess that skill and limiting the channels for skills development that they are willing to recognize, embrace and support.

This narrowed view of skill typically goes hand-in-hand with a growing educational bias that favors job seekers that have secured advanced degrees, often from four-year institutions. Community colleges are becoming a more influential voice by raising awareness of their role in opening up alternative employment pathways to job seekers who are not in a position to secure a four-year degree. Still, there is a tendency to over-emphasize the role of colleges as a *supplier* of skilled labor. As a result, insufficient attention is being



Nichola Lowe is an associate professor in city and regional planning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

given to efforts by community colleges and other labor market institutions to encourage U.S. manufacturers to *re-interpret* the skills they think they need and in the process, recognize greater degrees of freedom when it comes to accessing and developing workforce skill.

Recasting our labor market problem from skills mismatch to skills reinterpretation has implications for sustained job access in manufacturing. It also allows us to think more critically about the role that planners might play in expanding employer awareness of skills and sources of skills that are not encoded in advanced degrees. In essence, what is needed is a strategy of *skills reinterpretation* that starts by decoupling skills and college education and recognizes sources of worker competence that are participatory, ‘lived’ and context-dependent. As this implies, skill development should not depend solely on learning that takes place in a remote classroom setting, but rather should stem from the work experience itself and related work-based learning opportunities and exchanges. Formal education is likely to play an important role in supporting workforce development in manufacturing, but strategies of skills reinterpretation are fundamentally about getting employers to cast a wider net to recognize multiple channels for accessing and advancing skills. Reinterpretation then is about encouraging employers to also accept greater responsibility for upskilling through continued investments in their workforce and the development of internal pathways for career advancement.

A Tale of Two Manufacturers

To illustrate the potential impact of strategies designed to influence employer decision-making around skill, let’s consider the divergent employment practices of two advanced manufacturing firms—one based in Northern Kentucky and one in Chicago. Both firms are small, employing around fifty workers. Both focus on design and engineering knowledge for product development and customized design work, and both self-identify as advanced manufacturers. Both are seeking new employees and acknowledge experiencing some difficulty with hiring in their respective labor markets, but the strategies they use to address their skill needs could not be more different.

The Chicago-based firm is intentionally moving away from a strategy of “growing its own” talent pool. They are adopting technologies which greatly curtail advancement opportunities for shop floor workers, essentially converting those into what the company CEO describes as “button-pushing” positions. They now rely on external sources for engineering talent, hiring recent university graduates. They support continued professional development for new engineers, though not for employees they hire for lower level positions. Essentially, theirs is a bifurcated employment strategy that reinforces deskilling and job churning at lower occupational levels. In isolation, they lend support to the view that a four-year degree is essential for securing a quality manufacturing job.

In the Northern Kentucky case, however, we find a very different set of practices that allow us to think more creatively about planning and policy options. Since initiating manufacturing in 2004, two shop floor workers hired with high school degrees have advanced to production engineering positions. In addition to enrolling incumbent workers in a community college and continuing education programs, the company has established in-house apprenticeship and co-worker mentoring programs. Clearly external educational supports matter here, but rather than being treated as *the* primary source of skill and skilled labor, they remain subsidiary to a more encompassing human resource strategy. What also sets this company apart is their commitment to continuous *upskilling*, which they support through an intentional strategy of over-hiring. Hiring more workers than are needed creates organizational slack and in turn, helps reduce potential conflicts between on-going training efforts and fixed production deadlines.

So what can we conclude from this comparison? It should be noted that the Northern Kentucky firm is German-owned and their practices are influenced by German models of vocational training. But simply casting this as a national “varieties of capitalism” story ignores the fact that this company is based in the United States, not Germany, and their skill development practices are supported by established and emerging U.S. training and labor market institutions—a community college, a local high school and more

recently, a regional workforce intermediary that specializes in manufacturing workforce development. As such, their experience reflects a more nuanced and potentially replicable story.

A Sector Approach

One option for influencing employment practices around upskilling involves sector initiatives in manufacturing. Sector initiatives are defined by the National Network of Sector Partners as “regional, industry-focused approaches that improve access to good jobs and/or increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry’s workforce.” In the sector of manufacturing, these initiatives are estimated to number around 200 or so and reflect a diversity of organizational forms, including labor union-backed non-profits, federally-supported workforce investment boards and state-funded networks of community colleges.

The table below provides five examples of sector initiatives that

have adopted strategies in support of skill reinterpretation. All were initially created in response to perceived skill shortages on the part of manufacturing employers in their regional economy. But each has used their labor market position to engage manufacturers in a negotiated process over skill and in an effort to expand employment and advancement opportunities for individuals that lack college degrees.

The Recruitment Phase

So how do these five sector initiatives support strategies of skill reinterpretation? First and foremost, these initiatives work closely with employers to influence how skill plays out during the hiring process. Key here is their ability to help match job seekers with employers through pre-employment screening and assessment services. But in that role they do not simply act as agents of employers, as a private staffing agency might. Rather, they mediate the hiring process to support job seekers that might

otherwise be excluded from quality employment opportunities.

As part of this effort, most of these initiatives encourage employers to stop making hiring decisions on the basis of how an applicant looks “on paper.” Why? Because a resume tends to reinforce an educational bias and can obscure sources of tacit knowledge which may be hard to demonstrate and defend in writing. Sector initiatives instead work with companies to create evidence-based skill assessments, which they often develop in partnership with technical workers within the company. As subject area experts, these technical workers provide detailed information on skill requirements for specific tasks and at multiple occupational levels. This knowledge, which is not always in reach for human resource managers, is essential for clarifying skill requirements and is used to encourage employers to conceptualize bundles of attributes that reflect a variety of work experiences and backgrounds.

initiative	date started	location	type	manufacturing focus
Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership	1992	Milwaukee	jointly union- and industry-funded, grant funded	manufacturing, various
Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board	1999	Lancaster County, PA (west of Philadelphia)	WIB	food processing, metals
BioNetwork	2004	North Carolina, statewide	community college–driven non-profit	biomanufacturing, biofuels, food processing
ManufacturingWorks	2005	Chicago	WIA community affiliate, driven by mayor’s office	food processing, metals & machinery
Partners for a Competitive Workforce	2011	Greater Cincinnati, including Indiana and Kentucky	umbrella organization for regional workforce programs; non-profit with some grants, some WIB funding	auto suppliers, aviation, metal fabrication

But what happens when job seekers have gaps in skills that employers may be looking to fill? By specifying skills and bundling worker attributes, sector initiatives are in better a position to advocate for job seekers that might have most but not all of the preferred qualifications. This might involve getting employers to rank order attributes, thereby creating greater maneuvering room for applicants with some gaps farther down the list. Or it might involve sector initiatives providing new employee training that addresses more prevalent skills gaps within the applicant pool.

Existing Employee Support

Most sector initiatives also seek to influence how employers engage with and treat their existing workforce. Important here are interventions that encourage employers to better harness worker knowledge when introducing improved production practices and techniques—in other words, turning to workers when developing process innovations.

Sector initiatives first show evidence of underutilization of worker knowledge, including structural barriers that limit involvement of shop-floor workers in decision-making processes. They then intervene to remove these barriers, but also take steps to formalize processes for augmenting and defending shop-floor knowledge. In older firms, they have been known to create interim apprenticeships that act as skills equalizers for

incumbent workers helping to codify and augment skills learned earlier in their careers. But they also intervene to establish linkages to external institutions, including community colleges, that can support upskilling and related certifications. As this suggests, sector initiatives do find ways to incorporate formal educational programs and credentials, but in doing so they avoid blindly pushing a college or university degree. Rather, they use their labor market position to create a flexible training and credentialing resource that helps to prepare industry newcomers, but equally ensures that the hidden talents of the incumbent workforce become more visible and valued.

A Policy Crossroads

We are at a policy crossroads with respect to manufacturing. Federal and state industrial policy, while not quite set, poses a potential threat to manufacturing job access. President Barack Obama has been a strong advocate of manufacturing, but will this translate into deeper policy changes? Key agencies that influence manufacturing policy direction and discourse seem all too willing to take employer statements about their skills gaps at face value. As a result, these agencies are often focused on bolstering external educational supports and getting more individuals through these systems—the popular mantra being “college for all.”

If we start with the assumption that employers tend to overstate their skill requirements and in ways that

unnecessarily conflate skill with advanced degrees, we may find ourselves in a position to push for a more comprehensive institutional solution to standard “educational-fix” approaches. Efforts to shape and reshape employer perceptions of and practices around skill may result in more accurate strategies for skills identification. They could also prove more effective in stabilizing manufacturing employment and protecting established pathways into the middle class.

Sector initiatives provide a vehicle for progressive planners to influence employer thinking and decision-making, all the way down to the shop floor. Still, these initiatives are also in jeopardy and therefore in need of planning advocacy. As one example, funding sources for sector initiatives have been affected by budget cuts to the federal Workforce Investment Act. At stake is not just the future of manufacturing work, but the staying power of U.S. manufacturing. **P²**

Community Participation in Rural New Gateway Communities

By *Katia Balassiano*

THE DEBATE about national immigration policy has mostly ignored the trend of new immigration to rural areas. Immigrants arriving in what are called “rural new gateway communities” face great challenges as they encounter established residents and institutionalized systems of governance. Many of the strategies typically used to encourage participation of new immigrants and promote integrated communities are not easily adapted to these rural areas.

Many recognize the need to customize participatory processes, but little has been written specifically on participation in rural new gateway communities. These communities have the following characteristics:

- Limited telecommunications
- Limited budget flexibility
- Newly diverse populations
- Passive and active self-segregation
- Perceived exclusion from community affairs and government mistrust

The lessons from traditional gateways like New York, California and Texas are not always transferrable because new destination communities have had such limited interaction with immigrants. Conventional institutional spaces, like city hall, where people are encouraged to voice their interests, do not provide equal opportunities for participation. Besides

language barriers, the formal spaces and norms of communication dictated by America’s legal system can be foreign to newcomers. One possible solution is to move formal public discussions and decision-making out of city hall and to familiar and convenient places where people are already comfortable speaking with others. But where should these forums be held? And what processes can generate not only more inclusive participation, but also more integrated societies?

It is time to prioritize “rural” and develop participatory processes that take into account the administrative and financial capabilities, changing demographics and physical geographies of rural new gateways.

What is a Rural New Gateway?

Unlike large urban areas, rural governments have difficulty shifting resources from one line item to another. Administrative and financial resources should guide the types of participatory mechanisms selected for use in rural new gateways, however, the nationwide economic downturn has reduced tax revenues, and rural communities are especially hard hit. Amplifying this problem is the fact that rural populations are getting older as young people seeking economic opportunity relocate to more urban environments. Fewer taxpayers and lower property values negatively impact community budgets and staffing. The stereotypical administrator who “wears many hats” reflects the reality of public employees in small towns. Rural communities rarely have the funds or skilled employees to facilitate extensive public processes.



Katia Balassiano (katiab@iastate.edu), AICP, is an assistant professor at Iowa State University. Her research focuses on the components of a livable city.

Immigration can stabilize and sometimes increase the population (and thereby tax revenues) in small towns, but it presents other challenges and opportunities. In *Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America*, (Lexington Books, 2005) Micah Bump, Lindsay Lowell and Silje Pettersen define “new gateways” as those communities transformed in the 1990s by more than 100 percent net increases in their foreign-born populations coming from abroad, as opposed to traditional settlement destinations like California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York or Texas. Explanations for the demographic changes include: United States immigration laws and policies that legalized the status of nearly three million undocumented persons in 1986 and increased border-crossing enforcement; dispersed settlement patterns that reflect desires for better schools, lower crime, more affordable living and greater tranquility; and, changing labor markets and corporate recruitment strategies. Regardless of why migrants settle where they do, these newcomers face language, cultural and other more subtle barriers.

While moving can be arduous for anyone, immigrants headed to rural new gateways encounter more difficulties. Social integration is particularly tough because population changes are apparent within a short period of time and can be perceived (primarily by established residents) as disruptive. Friction between established residents and newcomers is

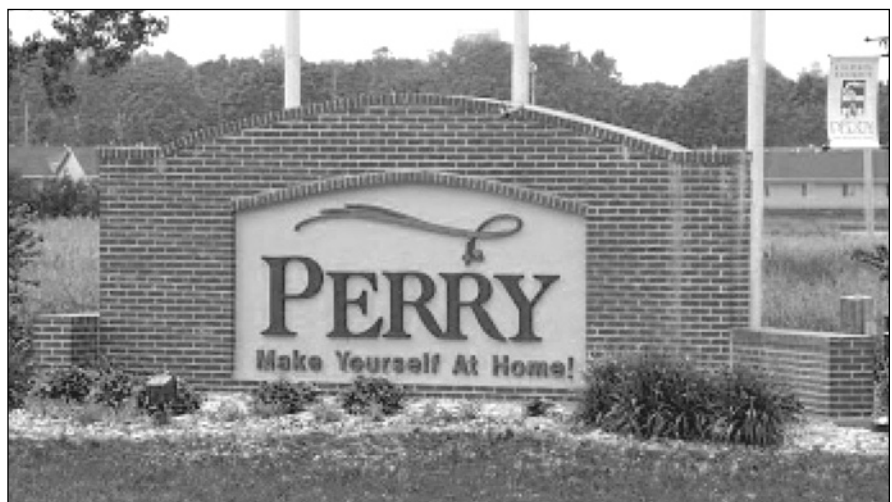
common, but so is the more passive choice of simply avoiding “the other.” Established residents and newcomers share a mistrust of government that reveals itself in poorly attended government-sponsored meetings. While small-town dwellers may have greater access to local officials, certain people take advantage of that access regularly, while others intentionally avoid government representatives. Rural areas suffer from having few social organizations and little locally-oriented action, apart from the action that arises from episodic crises.

Because rural communities are not always contiguous with urbanized areas, mobile telephone and Internet services are not dependable. The assumption that local residents can easily log on to the Internet to complete a survey or use a smartphone to contribute data to a mapping application may not be valid. Additionally, if these technologies are not readily or regularly accessible, then one cannot assume that the residents of these communities are comfortable using them. The digital divide re-

mains in place for the elderly, poor and disabled, and for residents of rural communities. Although we sit on the cusp of widespread connectivity, participatory approaches must account for these limitations. Participatory techniques that rely solely on cutting-edge technologies may also alienate people.

In response to these geographic challenges, few public sector employees, inflexible budgets and rapidly changing demographics, rural new gateways require a unique approach to engaging the public. In sum, rural new gateways require participatory processes that are:

- Not reliant on mobile telephone and Internet technologies;
- Not expensive or reliant upon professional facilitators;
- Respect and reflect the cultures of newcomers and established residents;
- Offer alternatives to passive segregation of the population; and
- Use particular means and spaces to circumvent feelings of government mistrust.



Participatory Mapping in Rural Areas

One method that can address these challenges is participatory mapping, customized for use in rural areas. Participatory mapping methodology involves the identification of public and quasi-public spaces where people meet to discuss community affairs. It can accelerate an immigrant's understanding of local resources, and serve as a first step toward integration and more inclusive governance.

In the spring of 2012, an interdisciplinary team from Iowa State University (including myself) pilot-tested a strategy that promotes individual empowerment and strengthens existing social networks by focusing on the spaces where people discuss community affairs. We treat community spaces as variables that can empower people to take action in furthering their individual participation in community-wide decision-making.

The workshops in Perry, Iowa, led eighty-two Latino and Anglo participants through a series of brainstorming and mapping tasks where knowledge was shared and received about local resources. Perry is a typical rural new gateway where the Latino population grew from forty-seven individuals in 1990 to 2,692 in 2010. The approach facilitated the collection of data for inclusive, participatory local decision-making and involved a process through which participants learned from each other about the community. It was designed to enhance civic participation by empowering new-

comers and existing civil society organizations that volunteered as workshop hosts. Thus, local organizations invited people to attend and provided the workshop venues.

Perry is a typical rural new gateway where the Latino population grew from forty-seven individuals in 1990 to 2,692 in 2010. With nearly 100 places where community affairs are discussed, Perry's Latino residents still do not have an overt political presence commensurate with their population size.

Knowing what places are used for community discussions, by whom and why can inform and help develop more effective and inclusive participatory practices and venue choices. The customized mapping workshops allow communities to answer such questions as:

- What spaces facilitate informal and formal sociopolitical interaction?
- How can public and quasi-public spaces be improved so that they nurture more immigrant participation in local decision-making?

The workshops demonstrated that Perry's residents use a great variety of spaces for discussing local matters. Yet, with nearly 100 places where community affairs are discussed, Perry's Latino residents still do not have an overt political presence commensurate with their population size. Latino workshop participants remain preoccupied with satisfying basic needs that empower the individual and household. Perry's Latino community has not yet appropriated the places where non-Latinos hold political office and participate in community-wide decision-making.

Places as Part of the Solution

Opportunities to help new immigrants feel at home and become self-sufficient, financially and otherwise, abound. And yet, institutionalized integration efforts continue to flounder. Much of the existing research uses primarily electoral participation as an indicator of overall civic engagement and focuses on socioeconomic status, psychological orientations, social context and resource mobilization to explain the behavior of mainly Anglos.

Rather than continue to focus on indicators of integration or, conversely, segregation, we need to focus on the process that leads to increased integration. As Nancy Denton writes in a 2010 book edited by Chester Hartman and Gregory Squires, *The Integration Debate: Competing Futures for American Cities*, "... to move from segregation to integration requires thinking

about process, rather than looking at how much or little segregation indices change.” Denton argues that integration policies must be for specific spatial contexts.

We also need to customize a practical and transferable participatory process for immigrants in rural new gateways. The primary means for generating public participation still falls under the aegis of open government, i.e., publicizing meetings, volunteer service on boards and committees and the election process. The locus of such activities is the community and the goal is expanded access to community services, goods and rights, which is achieved by influencing others and asserting ones’ opinion publicly. This open government approach usually fails to include individuals who are still striving to satisfy their basic daily needs.

Much has been written about how physical form can promote social interaction and livability, yet the literature linking physical spaces, immigrant empowerment and participation in governance is limited. Our research at Iowa State’s Community and Regional Planning Program extends the discussion of public space to rural new gateways and uses customized participatory mapping workshops to move integration practices forward. **P²**



Children Seen and Heard

Photovoice and Kids Making the Case for Public Health

By Kelly Main

WITH PLANNERS and public health officials increasingly identifying correlations between public health and the built environment, we are also, in turn, looking to local communities for an understanding of both impediments to and potential solutions for healthier living. Yet low-income communities of color, communities disproportionately affected by such health issues, are also communities that have been traditionally neglected by civic processes. Moreover, city planners have rarely focused on young people regardless of what community they live in. Thus, youth in communities of color are unlikely to participate in projects that may make a difference in their personal health. To address this issue, public health officials and activists are using photovoice, a participation technique that includes photography and storytelling, to give young people a voice in efforts

to improve physical aspects of their environment that affect health.

Planners and public health officials face several challenges when lobbying for healthy changes in low-income neighborhoods, particularly in times when local governments are facing serious fiscal issues. Community participation, then, offers the greatest hope for identifying, prioritizing and lobbying for improvements. As we look to communities for these answers, we run the risk of further marginalizing children by ignoring them. In communities with limited income and time—and sometimes also limited language skills, education levels and trust of local authorities—asserting the right to participate can prove especially challenging. Perhaps even more than their adult counterparts, youth in low-income communities and communities of color are frequently without a voice in the planning process.

Photovoice is one of the participation methods being used by public health officials and planners to give young people a voice in making healthy improvements to their communities. In effect, photovoice puts

into practice the old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words. Community members are given the opportunity to photograph problem areas in their communities, and then with the help of advocates, develop compelling narratives about the photographs they've taken. More specifically, photovoice has proven especially useful with young people, since many have yet to develop the skills to articulate their thoughts and feelings about their surroundings.

Planners and activists have used photography to solicit input from the public for more than forty years; participatory methods have included sponsoring “day-with-a-camera” or “week-with-a-camera” events where community members would take pictures of things in their environment that they wanted to preserve or change. Public health’s utilization of photography and storytelling for community involvement has been growing since 1992, when it was employed by C. C. Wang at the University of Michigan and M. A. Burris, a program director for public health at the Ford Foundation. Wang and Burris completed a “Photo Novella” project, later named “photovoice,”



Kelly Main is an assistant professor in the City & Regional Planning Department at California Polytechnic State University (kdmain@calpoly.edu).

The Photovoice Project: Santa Paula Students Speak

with rural women in the Yunnan province in China to enable the women to affect government actions and policies affecting them. Since then, photovoice projects have been completed on a variety of health issues such as women's health, maternal and child health and HIV, and most recently, as a tool for youth advocacy on health issues.

A relatively recent example of photovoice with the specific intent of engaging young people on health-related issues occurred in early 2005. The California Endowment recruited six California communities to participate in the Healthy Eating, Active Communities (HEAC) program. One community was the city of Baldwin Park, where 65 percent of the population at that time was under the age of thirty-five. The intent of the program was to change eating and activity environments to be healthier. Advocates there realized that the best way to get their youth to lead healthier lives was to involve them in the program using photovoice.

First, participants were trained in basic photography techniques, including how to take photographs for



"The tagging on the stop sign is . . . the type of graffiti that makes it seem like a neighborhood is a certain gang's territory or turf and gives that area a bad reputation . . . So, maybe what we should do is, band together as a city, do what the sign states, and help stop the graffiti."
—Elmer

The Photovoice Project: Santa Paula Students Speak



"Keeping the parks in Santa Paula sanitary and safe must be among the higher priorities for city officials. Improvements have been made, but there is much more work to do. Parks located around the main attractions of Santa Paula have been kept in good shape; however, parks that are not frequently viewed by anyone else than the people who happen to live in the neighborhood have been neglected, and are in need of drastic changes."

—Brittany

"The low-income homes located on Santa Barbara Street were a healthy idea. It gives an advantage not only to the people paid minimum wage, but also gives jobs to those who need it by constructing them. These homes give low-income families somewhere to live according to the amount of money they bring in their home. Children are supported with special assistance such as tutoring and day care for those parents that both have to work to support the family. Kids get help in homework and other special assistance. More houses like these would be great here."

—Erica

maximum impact. Next they were taught photovoice-specific skills for telling a story using photographs, including how to show that an issue is influenced by community infrastructure, how to show a clear policy implication and how to show the injustice in the current situation. After they were trained, the young participants went out into the community to take pictures on their own and in groups, which tend to generate creativity and dialogue between participants in real time. On their return, the participants discussed with adult activists what problems they thought the pictures portrayed and how the problems might best be addressed. Activists stress the importance of allowing the young participants to generate their own ideas, instead of guiding them toward foregone conclusions. In other words, the participants need to feel ownership of the process.

Photovoice has been used in a number of cases across the U.S. to empower young people to improve their health. Ultimately the young participants in the Baldwin Park program presented their findings and policy recommendations to the director of Recreation and Community Services, among other community leaders. In the end the participants' recommendations were incorporated into the Parks Master Plan, a document that guides city planning for park design and programming. In the Colorado communities of Baker, Sun Valley and Lincoln Park, photos were used to advocate for and expand two

youth markets where fresh produce from the community has become available. Young people in Aurora, Colorado, presented their photos to the Parks and Open Space Department, which, as a result, made park improvements, including new playground equipment and a cleanup crew. In Shasta County, young activists convinced the local Walmart to remove unhealthy snacks from several checkout stands. And in Los Angeles, young people persuaded several store owners to boost the amount of healthy foods they offered for sale and to more prominently display them.

In September of 2011, as part of an undergraduate community planning laboratory I teach at California Polytechnic State University's (Cal Poly) City and Regional Planning (CRP) program, our lab was engaged by the City of Santa Paula to update its Downtown Improvement Plan. With approximately 30,000 residents, 80 percent of whom are Latino, Santa Paula's economy is largely agricultural. With a growing interest in the relationship between public health and the built environment, our studio decided to address health issues in the plan. One of the goals for our studio was maximizing public participation. In order to find out what high schools students in Santa Paula might want in the downtown, we decided to use photovoice. The Santa Paula Photovoice Project was sponsored by STRIDE, (Science through Translational Research in Diet



"People just see an ordinary pothole on the side of the road, but there might just be more to it. If you look closely you can see how dangerous this may be. This is not a dent in the road; it threatens the safety of citizens of Santa Paula, and this should be taken into serious consideration."
—Joselyne



"Having a butterfly farm [on this lot] would be a community activity with 'Santa Paula Beautiful' and the agricultural program at the high school. It would bring the community together with volunteer work and love for one's neighborhood and each other."
—Sandra and Camille

and Exercise), an interdisciplinary research center at Cal Poly that promotes healthier living. Nicola Lamb, English Department Chair at Santa Paula High School, took on the project with forty-two students in two senior-level English classes.

Under Ms. Lamb's supervision, students were asked to use photos and narratives to address two questions about Santa Paula: How does the city (built environment) support health? How could the city be healthier? For almost three months, with guidance from Ms. Lamb and Keith Woodcock, my co-instructor, the students photographed and discussed Santa Paula, and each student wrote a narrative about a few photographs chosen from a number they had taken.

Through photographs and stories, Santa Paula High School students raised a number of issues about the health and safety of their community—gang graffiti and how it prevented them from feeling safe in public spaces, the poor condition of streets and parks and how many of them who had two working parents needed something safe and constructive to do in the afternoon. Students also expanded the discussion on health to include less traditional issues such as affordable housing and the development of vacant lots to help build community and address a sense that their neighborhood was neglected.

Once Ms. Lamb's students completed the project, they presented their photos and ideas to Cal Poly undergraduate students, who were then tasked with addressing the

high school students' needs in the Downtown Improvement Plan. As a result, the plan incorporated the photos and narratives of the students and called for policies and programs for gang prevention, park and street improvements and a farmers market. More importantly, our plan recommended that Santa Paula create a Youth Commission to lay the foundation for continued participation by Santa Paula's students.

The community's development of solutions increases the likelihood that changes can be both just and effective. In this regard, our photovoice project had several limitations. First, because of the prescribed time frame of the university class (two quarters), Cal Poly students rather than the Santa Paula High School students were tasked with developing the solutions to the problems raised by the participants. In addition, at this moment there are no advocates in the community to help the students ensure the implementation of programs addressing their concerns. We have moved on to our next studio class, and Ms. Lamb has also moved on to teaching her next classes. Currently, we are working, from a distance, with community members to find a venue for the photographs and to find other ways for students to bring the photovoice project back to the attention of the City Council members and others who can affect implementation.

Still, there is evidence that photovoice has had some of its intended consequences, chief among them that a voice has been found by those who usually don't have one, along

with a resulting sense of empowerment. When Santa Paula High School students made their presentation to our class, we spent some time asking both sets of students what they thought of the photovoice project. This is what we heard . . .

"Our town just usually doesn't get the recognition it should and that's what this project [photovoice] did for us."

—Gabriel, Santa Paula HS

"I'd recommend this project [photovoice] to other schools 'cause they can go out and see their city the way it is . . . what's wrong and what's good about the city, and then learn from it and show others the city, and the city can be improved."

—Rosalino, Santa Paula HS

"I think it made them [the high school students] better citizens. . . . It gave them confidence in themselves that they are, in fact, citizens of this town and they have a voice."

—Nicola Lamb, English Dept.
Chair, Santa Paula HS.

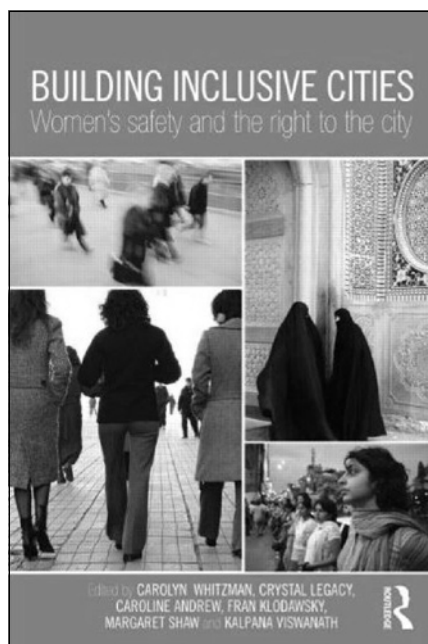
Resources

Healthy Eating, Active Communities, Partnership for the Public's Health (2009). *Photovoice as a Tool for Youth Policy Advocacy*. Public Health Institute: Oakland, California. http://www.partnershipph.org/sites/default/files/PPH250_Photovoice6%20FINAL%20PROOF.pdf

The Santa Paula Photovoice Project: Creating a Vision, Empowering a Community <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWnKl6bakFM&feature=youtu.be>

Building Inclusive Cities: Women's Safety and the Right to the City

Reviewed by Regula Modlich



Building Inclusive Cities **Women's Safety and the Right to the City**

Edited by

Carolyn Whitzman, Crystal Legacy,
Caroline Andrew, Fran Klodawsky,
Margaret Shaw and Kalpana Viswanath,

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211 pp., \$65.00



Reggie Modlich (rmodlich@evdemon.ca) is a retired feminist urban planner and activist.

THE SAFETY AND RIGHTS of half of humankind should be of relevance to all who are planning, servicing, agitating in and making decisions about cities. *Building Inclusive Cities* presents a fascinating collection of thoughts, experiences and theories—some quite unexpected, yet relevant to women's safety and their Right to the City. The book was inspired by the 2010 Third International Conference on Women's Safety held in Delhi, India, a proof of the value of such conferences, even in the age of electronic communication.

Building Inclusive Cities is divided into three sections: Challenges and Opportunities, Interventions and Tools. In the first chapter, the editors introduce the evolution of women's safety concepts from a concern with gender-based violence against women—mostly in the home—to one that makes the community responsible for ensuring that women have the right to access their cities without fear of, or actual violence in, the public and private realm. From this broader perspective, factors of marginalization such as race, poverty, ability and access to sanitation all relate to women's safety. Fran Klodawsky then outlines how neoliberalism—capitalism,

globalization and privatization—erodes women's progress and threatens their livelihoods, especially women living in cities in the Global South. Increasingly, women work in the economically precarious informal sector. They often get evicted from the squatter settlements of central city areas where they had been able to eke out a precarious living. Klodawsky describes how gender-sensitive land use planning in Warwick Junction, South Africa, legalized and supported the predominantly female street vendors by recognizing their economic contribution.

Whitzman focuses on the importance of safe mobility. Women especially, with their fragmented time schedules, need to be able to safely navigate cities—on foot, bike or transit. She describes women-only taxis and transit carriages in several cities, as well as the impressive transportation improvements in Bogota, Columbia. There, planning policies, regularization of formerly illegal settlements, provision of water, electricity and paved roads and construction of low-income housing have greatly improved women's lives, generated a more robust economy and reduced murder rates by 70 percent. Ortiz and Sweet tell the conflicted stories of migrant women

Urban design has addressed safety concerns of women and marginalized groups for some time.

Building Inclusive Cities widens this traditional concept to include urban economics, infrastructure and transportation as contributing factors.

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who have left their home countries both voluntarily and involuntarily. Many women migrate abroad, leaving their own families to care for those of others. The authors also include a discussion of trafficked women, mostly in the sex trade.

Part two, Interventions, presents several amazing action research programs. Viswanath's Gender Inclusive Cities Programme tested and adapted a safety audit approach in four cities on four continents, revealing fascinating similarities and differences. A visioning exercise carried out at the 2010 Third International Conference on Women's Safety, adapted from on a model tested in Southern Africa, establishes components of both a Cycle of Violence and a Safe Community of Opportunity. A rather theoretical, but nonetheless critical, chapter by Andrew and Legacy tackles the question of partnerships and the need for and risks of cooperating with local governments, international agencies and funders. Khosla and Dhar analyze the opportunity costs of different water supply methods in two relocation areas in suburbs of Delhi, India, assigning value to the time required to fetch water in terms of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled wages. In the process the researchers also point out how women's and girls' safety is directly and significantly compromised by poor access to infrastructure such as water, sewage and toilets.

In part three, Tools, Lacey, Miller, Reeves and Tankel juxtapose some limitations of the concept of gender-mainstreaming to a more fluid and comprehensive concept of intersec-

tionality, particularly when framing demands for gender-sensitivity or analyzing and evaluating urban realities, policies and programs. Lambrick focuses on public art as a means of drawing attention to pervasive patriarchal values, heritage and symbols of power in the public realm. She also gives samples where public art, including street theater and displays, can become a potentially liberating feminist tool, or an expression of women's concerns about safety. Shaw then explores ways of evaluating women's safety.

Urban design has addressed safety concerns of women and marginalized groups for some time. *Building Inclusive Cities* widens this traditional concept to include urban economics, infrastructure and transportation as contributing factors. Urban planning decisions bear on all these components. Planners' recommendations can either increase or decrease safety for marginalized groups and reduce or alleviate poverty, homelessness and disempowerment. Planning inclusive cities has to meet the needs of all groups within the community, rich and poor, old and young. Effective housing policies have to eliminate homelessness and land use planning has to enable all citizens to make a legal living. Providing public spaces for street vending, such as in Warwick Junction, and allowing the use of homes for incubator enterprises and urban agriculture can support individuals' ability to earn a living. Transportation planning has to ensure that places of employment are accessible to those employed there; this includes the pricing, routing, scheduling and designing of transit, pedestrian,

cycling and vehicular circulation systems. Progressive planners are committed to strive for social and environmental equity in their planning recommendations; building inclusive cities is part of this effort.

The editors jointly conclude with an overview of achievements, gaps and next steps. In terms of gaps, I would like to suggest three:

Organized religions. Practically all are misogynist, patriarchal and homophobic belief systems. They are highly divisive; internal cohesiveness is anchored in the blind faith that their particular belief is superior and correct. Each group strives for hegemony within the wider community and once achieved, power and privilege are kept within their group, often violently. Outsiders, sometimes a majority of the population, get increasingly excluded, marginalized and disempowered. City councils and planners tend to get manipulated and blinded to the needs for employment, housing and mobility of out-groups.

Gendered role of caregiving. So excellently brought into focus by Jarvis, Kantor and Cloke in *Cities and Gender*, (2009, Routledge), the effects of the inequitable distribution and undervaluation of

caregiving should not be subsumed. Caregiving responsibilities contribute greatly to stress and the economic disadvantages of women, which in turn increase the risk and incidence of violence against women and the denial of women's right to the city.

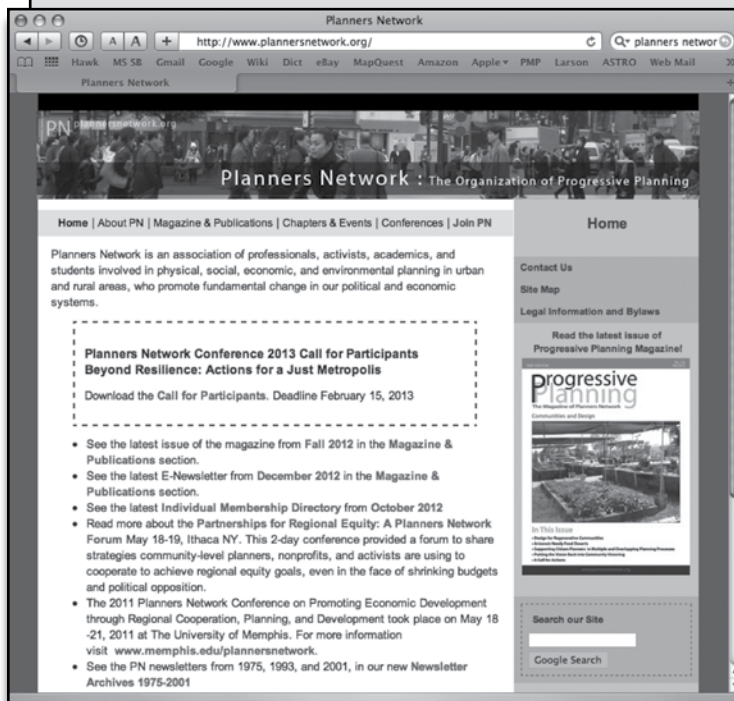
Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-sexual issues. Queer persons are often doubly marginalized—within their specific religious/ethnic communities, as well as within the global binary sex mindset. Again, Jarvis, Kantor and Cloke frame this issue as an urban issue. Far more attention and research are needed to ensure queer people their right to the city.

As an urban activist for forty years and a retired urban planner, the book fascinated me and stimulated critical thought in each chapter. While some chapters are rather academic, they are extremely well annotated and referenced and provide important building blocks for our understanding of women's safety as an increasingly complex and intersectional phenomenon. At a time when the helix of human socio-economic evolution seems to be going through a regressive phase, every contribution to greater awareness is valuable and as such, so is *Building Inclusive Cities*.

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