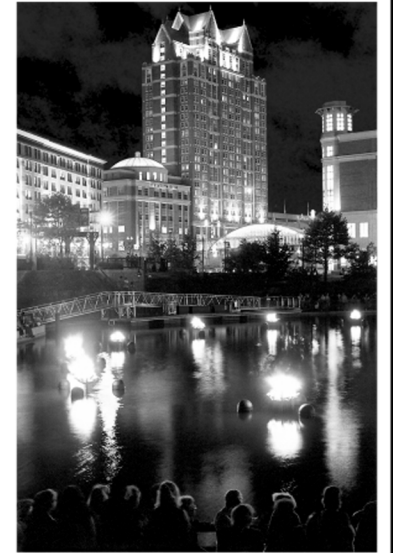
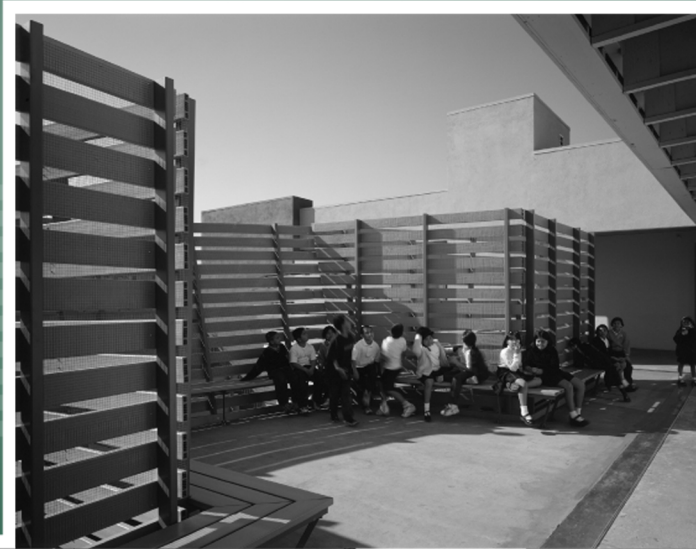


CREATIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING:

*2003 Rudy Bruner Award
for Urban Excellence*



Creative Community Building:

2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence

Bruner Foundation, Inc.

Jay Farbstein FAIA, PhD

with

Emily Axelrod, MCP; Robert Shibley, AIA, AICP; and Richard Wener, PhD

2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence

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PREFACE

We at the Bruner Foundation play a silent role in the award selection. Not that we're not interested; to the contrary. As professionals in the field, we have chosen to remove our own voices from the selection process. Our concern is that the selection would become all too predictable. Bringing together a changing group of urban experts for each Award cycle, we expand the breadth of our perspective.

How lucky we are to witness the Selection Committee meetings at each award cycle! We always learn about excellence we ourselves might not have seen. We have given up trying to predict the winners — and we are (hopefully) the wiser for it! So, aside from the obvious issues, what led the Selection Committee to this particular group of winners? What were the issues that were premiated in the selection process, and what do these winners have in common?

We all know that effective placemaking is not just about building design, or about program, or about urban context, or about timing. It is a creative synthesis of all of these factors brought to bear at the moment in time that can achieve maximum physical and social results. So, the search for communality in the 2003 Rudy Bruner Award winners led me to think about the *Critical Point of Impact*; those elusive tipping points where timely and strategic intervention can have maximum impact. The 2003 RBA winners have fascinating insights into the urban social fabric, and have found new points of intervention, all at the *Critical Point of Impact*!

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy and **Red Hook Community Justice Center**, radically different in their approaches, have found new ways to involve their constituents, creating opportunity for those traditionally denied accesses to opportunity. At Camino Nuevo immigrant families are learning to achieve economic independence through education and economic development in a framework set around their children's school. At Red Hook, a timely intervention within the repetitive cycle of petty crime offers the opportunity to break that cycle. Offenders — at their most vulnerable hour — are offered an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves through a variety of supportive social programs, to break the cycle of recidivism.

Providence River Relocation found that moment in time where the will and funding were available to uncover a unique natural resource, setting the stage for the reawakening of a beleaguered city. The River Relocation has transformed the city—reawakening a pride in the historic downtown, re-connecting parts of the city, and making Providence's rivers accessible once again. WaterFire is the star player on this urban stage, radically changing the perception of Providence. New pride and investment abound.

At **Colorado Court**, working under a court mandate, a creative community development agency and a determined architect worked together to demonstrate that well- designed affordable housing can be a good neighbor; can benefit the entire community; can be

effectively combined with sustainable energy systems to positively impact the natural environment; and can develop a strong aesthetic identity — mitigating the ubiquitous NIMBY response to affordable housing in a wealthy community.

At **BridgeMarket**, derelict space beneath the Queensboro Bridge has been transformed into a mix of uses that glorifies the historic Catalan vaults. The transformation required the right moment in time — and an adventurous developer to rebuild a derelict space into a critical link between two distinct neighborhoods and the nearby East River.

None of these projects were easy to achieve. Both Providence and BridgeMarket have histories going back 30 years. At Colorado Court there was substantial community skepticism about combining affordability, good design, and energy. At Red Hook, it took persistent patterns of crime and a failed judicial history to suggest that new thinking was needed. And in Los Angeles, immigrant parents have tolerated years of failing education for their children.

So how then can we recognize that *Critical Point of Impact*? That, of course, is the question. These placemakers found that time and place. We salute the insight, determination, and creativity of our winners — as we wonder how to follow their examples in our own endeavor.

Simeon Bruner, *Founder*
The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence
August 17, 2004



Simeon Bruner presents Red Hook Community Justice Center with award.

INTRODUCTION

THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence (RBA) is unique among national awards for the urban built environment. The RBA is dedicated to discovering and celebrating places that are distinguished not only by the quality of their design but also by their social, economic, and contextual contributions to our cities. Understanding that every urban place grows out of complex layers of social, economic, aesthetic, and personal interactions, the RBA asks some important questions. What kinds of places make our cities better places to live and work? How do these places enliven and enrich the urban landscape? Do they contribute to or revitalize the local economy? Do they contribute to community pride? Do they build bridges among diverse populations or create beauty where none existed before? And perhaps most important, what can we learn from the creative thinking inherent in RBA winners, and how can the lessons be applied in cities across the country?

The criteria for submitting an application for the RBA are intentionally broad, encouraging applications from a wide variety of projects; in the last two award cycles over 40 states have been represented. It is no surprise, therefore, that RBA winners have made very different kinds of contributions to our nation's cities. Many represent new models of urban placemaking that have successfully challenged conventional wisdom about what is possible. Most are products of hard-won collaborations among

diverse groups of people, often with differing agendas. And all RBA winners have contributed to the vitality of the cities and neighborhoods in which they are located. By celebrating their success, the RBA highlights the intricate and challenging process of urban placemaking, emphasizing the complexity of the processes and values that produce significant urban places. Studying the varied stories of RBA winners, their histories, and their processes of development, we can discover creative ways to respond to some of our cities' most intractable problems.

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

To ensure lively and informed discussion, inclusive of multiple perspectives, each selection committee is made up of urban experts representing diverse disciplines. Selection committees always include the mayor of a major city as well architects, developers, community organizers, philanthropists, and financiers. As the selection committee members discuss the applications, they consider a wide variety of questions:

- What kinds of places make neighborhoods and cities better places in which to live, work, and play?
- How did these places come into being?
- What visions powered their creation?
- How did these visions become a reality?
- What obstacles had to be overcome?
- What makes these places important in their urban context?

In this way, the selection committee explores the dynamic nature of urban excellence and contributes to a broader understanding of the issues that are currently critical to the urban built environment.

THE 2003 SELECTION COMMITTEE

Alicia Mazur Berg

Commissioner of Planning and Development, Chicago, Illinois

Kofi S. Bonner

Executive Vice President for Business Operations,
Chief Administrative Officer, Cleveland Browns

Gary Hack

Dean, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania

Maurice Lim Miller

The Family Independence Initiative, Oakland, California.

Thomas M. Menino

Mayor of Boston, Massachusetts

Gail Thompson

Project Director, Performing Arts Center of Greater Miami, FL

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Since the RBA seeks excellence in places where it may not be expected, eligibility criteria are intentionally few. First, the project must be a real place, not a plan. It must be sufficiently complete to demonstrate its excellence to a team of site visitors from the Bruner Foundation. And the project must be located in the continental United States - site visits are integral to the award process, and it is not feasible to conduct visits to international locations.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

A new selection committee is appointed for each award cycle. The committee meets twice: first to select the five finalists from a field of about 100 applicants, and then to select the gold medal winner. Between these two meetings, Bruner Foundation staff research the finalists and visit each site for two or three days, exploring the projects and pursuing questions raised by the Selection Committee. The team



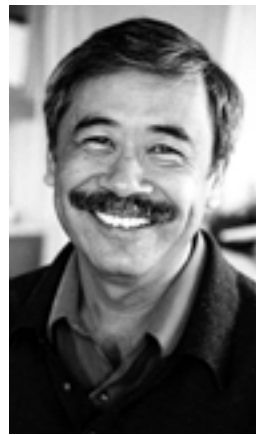
Alicia Mazur Berg



Kofi S. Bonner



Gary Hack



Maurice Lim Miller



Thomas M. Menino



Gail Thompson

members tour the projects, interview 15 to 25 or more project participants (including community participants), take photographs, and observe patterns of use. This year's site visit team was led by Jay Farbstein, Ph.D., FAIA, president of Jay Farbstein & Associates. The teams included Emily Axelrod, director of the Rudy Bruner Award; Robert Shibley, professor of urban design at the State University of New York at Buffalo; and Richard E. Wener, Ph.D.; associate professor of environmental psychology at Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, NY.

After the site visits, the team prepares a written report and a PowerPoint presentation that is presented to the selection committee at its second meeting in April or May. With the site visit team on hand to answer questions, the committee debates the merits of each project to decide upon a winner. In this discussion process the committee explores the issues facing urban areas, comes to a deeper agreement about the kinds of processes and places that embody urban excellence, and identifies seminal and innovative ideas in urban placemaking.

2003 WINNERS

The 2003 Rudy Bruner Award winners were selected from a field of 136 entries from over 30 states. The applicants included a rich diversity of projects that are contributing to their respective communities in a variety of ways. The excellence of the applicant pool resulted in the selection of five winners and, for the first time in award history, the addition of seven projects designated to receive honorable mention. The winners include:

GOLD MEDAL:

CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY

Los Angeles, California

Camino Nuevo is a new elementary school located in a formerly vacant mini-mall in inner-city Los Angeles. Camino Nuevo was built by a community development corporation working with the Los Angeles Unified School District to create a new model for a community-based school. It exemplifies reuse of a commonplace urban resource, a new model of public-private partnership, and an innovative approach to building community, through public education.

SILVER MEDALS:

BRIDGEMARKET

New York, New York

Exemplifying imaginative adaptive reuse of landmark space beneath the Queensboro Bridge in Manhattan, BridgeMarket is a contemporary urban marketplace with a combination of retail and public space, serving as a vital community resource and as a bridge between adjacent neighborhoods.

COLORADO COURT

Santa Monica, California

A 44-unit SRO affordable housing facility, Colorado Court combines "green building" technology with affordable housing to create an environmentally, socially and economically responsible housing development in the heart of downtown Santa Monica.

PROVIDENCE RIVER RELOCATION

Providence, Rhode Island

Through the reclamation and re-directing of an urban river system, Providence River Relocation has created a new urban amenity and has transformed a formerly blighted downtown. The river relocation has been a key factor in the revitalization of Providence, has re-knit adjacent neighborhoods, and has created a setting for arts programming (WaterFire) and water access that attracts workers, students, residents and visitors to this historic waterfront.

RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

Brooklyn, New York

A multi-jurisdictional community court, Red Hook brings together the community justice system with an unconventional and comprehensive group of social service and educational programs. The Red Hook model is designed to engage offenders in remedial programs aimed at reducing recidivism and stabilizing the community.



Simeon Bruner presents Rudy Bruner Award at Red Hook Community Justice Center. L-to-R: Hon. Alex Calabrese, Hon. Juanita Bing Newton, Ann Swern, Robert Feldstein, Alta Indelman, Jerry Amer

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

The City Repair Project

Portland, OR

The intersection repair project involves a prototype for transforming neighborhood street intersections into public squares that become focal points for community interaction. The prototype involves installations at key corners which may include public art, information kiosks, benches, memorials, fountains, and other amenities. Each intersection repair is developed through a series of community led design charrettes and meetings.

Crissy Field

San Francisco, CA

Crissy Field entails the conversion of a 100 acre asphalt-laden industrial storage yard and air strip, formerly in military use, into a vibrant waterfront park and wetland ecosystem. The project includes a tidal marsh, beach, a 1.3 mile public promenade, picnic areas, and two rehabilitated historic buildings at the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Job Link, Bay Area Video Coalition

San Francisco, CA

Job Link provides an advanced technology training and media access center, combining the potential of cutting-edge technology and media arts to serve low-income communities and nonprofit organizations. It focuses on training, access, and development of technical expertise in video technologies for people whose access to those technologies would otherwise be limited.

Mill Creek Housing and Park Development Cleveland, OH

Located in the Slavic Village neighborhood on the southeast side of Cleveland, Mill Creek involves the redevelopment of a formerly vacant 100 acre state mental institution. The project has transformed the site into a 35 acre park, and a new racially- and culturally-diverse single family housing community that is attracting middle income families back to the neighborhood while bridging the racial divide between two formerly segregated inner-city neighborhoods.

National Hispanic Cultural Center Albuquerque, NM

A division of the Office of Cultural Affairs of the State of New Mexico, NHCC promotes and preserves Hispanic culture in New Mexico by showcasing, promoting and preserving art, history and cultural achievement.

University Park at MIT Cambridge, MA

University Park is a mixed-use development, adjacent to the MIT campus, containing office, research and development space for the biotechnology industry. The mix of uses also includes hotel, retail, and residential space, as well as a supermarket. Developed in close collaboration with MIT and the City of Cambridge, University Park was recognized for a creative mix of uses serving both the university and the residential community.

2003 AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Because the Rudy Bruner Award is intended to stimulate a national discussion on the nature of urban excellence, award presentations offer an important opportunity to raise awareness of the issues addressed by each winning project. Past awards have been presented at the US Conference of Mayors, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and in many of the cities in which winning projects are located. At the presentations, planners, community organizers, architects, and developers speak about their projects, and mayors are often present to recognize the contributions these projects have made to their respective communities.

This year's gold medal award of \$50,000 was presented to Camino Nuevo Charter Academy in Los Angeles. The presentation was made at Camino Nuevo, and was attended by Los Angeles City Council members, neighborhood residents and many of the individuals who have been involved in the project over its history. Silver medal winners were each awarded \$10,000 at events in their respective cities, with local press and elected officials present to recognize their achievement.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

As part of an ongoing effort to facilitate a national dialogue on the meaning and nature of urban excellence and to promote important new ideas about urban placemaking, at the conclusion of each award cycle the Bruner Foundation publishes a book containing case studies of the winners. Each book recounts the story of the

winning projects, and the dialogue and debate among selection committee members. Each project case study is prefaced by a “project at a glance” section that briefly summarizes the project and the selection committee discussion. This overview is followed by detailed accounts of the history, character, financing, and operation of each winning project. In addition to describing the five winners, a concluding chapter identifies the most important themes recognized by the selection committee.

BRUNER FOUNDATION PUBLICATIONS

Bruner Foundation books are currently in use in graduate and undergraduate programs in universities across the country. The work of the Rudy Bruner Award and its winners has been recognized by the US Conference of Mayors, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Design Research Association. Recent articles on the RBA have appeared in *Foundation News*, *New Village Journal*, *Architectural Record*, *Design Book Review*, and *Architecture* magazine. See also the chapter on the RBA in Schneekloth and Shibley’s *Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Community* (John Wiley and Sons, 1995).

Case studies contained in Bruner Foundation books are now also available on the Foundation’s web site, www.brunerfoundation.org, and will soon be available, together with images of each winner, in a CD format.

Bruner Foundation books, some of which are available from the Foundation, include:

- Philip Langdon with Robert Shibley and Polly Welch, *Urban Excellence* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1990).
- Neal Peirce and Robert Guskind, *Breakthroughs: Re-creating the American City* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, State University of NJ, 1993).
- Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *Connections: Creating Urban Excellence; 1991 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1992).
- Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *Rebuilding Communities: Re-creating Urban Excellence; 1993 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1993).
- Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *Building Coalitions for Urban Excellence; 1995 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1996).
- Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *Visions of Urban Excellence; 1997 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* (Bruner Foundation, Inc. 1998)
- Robert Shibley with Emily Axelrod, Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *Commitment to Place: Urban Excellence and Community* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1999)
- Richard Wener, PhD with Emily Axelrod, MCP; Jay Farbstein FAIA, PhD; Robert Shibley, AIA, AICP; and Polly Welch,

Placemaking for Change: 2001 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence (Bruner Foundation, 2002)

An earlier Bruner Foundation endeavor revisited the winners and finalists from the first four cycles of the RBA to learn how the projects have fared over time. The book asks which places have continued to thrive and which have struggled, and why? Partially funded by a grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, teams of Foundation staff and consultants, HUD regional staff, and past Selection Committee members revisited 21 projects. The conclusions these observers reached can be found in:

- Jay Farbstein, Robert Shibley, Polly Welch and Richard Wener, *Sustaining Urban Excellence: Learning from the Rudy Bruner Award, 1987-1993* (Bruner Foundation, Inc., 1998). This book is available through the Bruner Foundation or through the HUD User web site.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Emily Axelrod, MCP, is the director of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. She holds a masters degree in city planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and has worked in urban planning in both the public and private sectors in San Francisco and Boston.

Jay Farbstein, PhD, FAIA, is an architect by training. He leads a consulting practice in Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo, CA, specializing in helping public sector and private clients develop and document their requirements for building projects as well as in

evaluating the degree to which their completed buildings meet those requirements.

Robert Shibley, AIA, AICP, is a professor at the School of Architecture and Planning at the State University of New York, Buffalo. He is also the founding partner of Caucus Partnership, a consulting practice on environmental and organizational change. At the University at Buffalo, he is a former chairman of the Department of Architecture and now serves as the director of the Urban Design Project, a center in the school devoted to the study and practice of urban design.

Richard Wener, PhD is associate professor of environmental psychology in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, New York. He has done extensive research on the effects of built environments on individuals and communities.

ACCESS TO RUDY BRUNER AWARD MATERIALS

All RBA applications through 1999 have been recorded on microfiche and are accessible through:

Interlibrary Loan Department
Lockwood Memorial Library
State University of New York at Buffalo
Amherst, NY 14260
Phone: 716-636-2816
Fax: 716-636-3721



An abstract and keyword identification has been prepared for each application and can be accessed through two major databases: RLIN/Research Library Information Network and OCLC/First Search.

In addition, the State University of New York at Buffalo maintains a Web site with complete winner applications for all Rudy Bruner Award winners. The Web site address is:

<http://wings.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/digital/bruner>

The Bruner Foundation also maintains a Web site on the RBA. The site contains an overview of the RBA, visual images and summary information on all past winners, recent case studies, a list of past Selection Committee members, publications, information on how to apply for the RBA, and brief profiles of each of the 1999 winners. The Web site address is:

<http://www.brunerfoundation.org>

For more information, please contact:

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Fax: 617-876-4002
Email: **info@brunerfoundation.org**

CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

GOLD
medal winner



2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



CAMINO NUEVO AT-A-GLANCE

WHAT IS CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY?

- A K-5 public charter elementary school located in the MacArthur Park neighborhood of Los Angeles;
- A community school that involves parents in the process of their children's education and also offers a wide variety of opportunities to community residents;
- One of four schools founded by Pueblo Nuevo Development Corporation in cooperation with a distinguished team of educators and the local community;
- Part of a community revitalization strategy for the MacArthur Park neighborhood that also includes a nearby middle school, an employee-owned janitorial business, thrift shop, and church.

GOALS

- To create an elementary school that would provide neighborhood children an excellent education (including English language proficiency) in a safe and nurturing school environment;
- To ensure that the elementary school, through community programming and parent involvement, becomes a stabilizing and energizing force in the MacArthur Park neighborhood;
- To eliminate blight caused by a derelict mini-mall and design a school that would serve as a catalyst for reinvestment by other neighborhood property owners;
- To create a new model for elementary education in disadvantaged communities in Los Angeles.

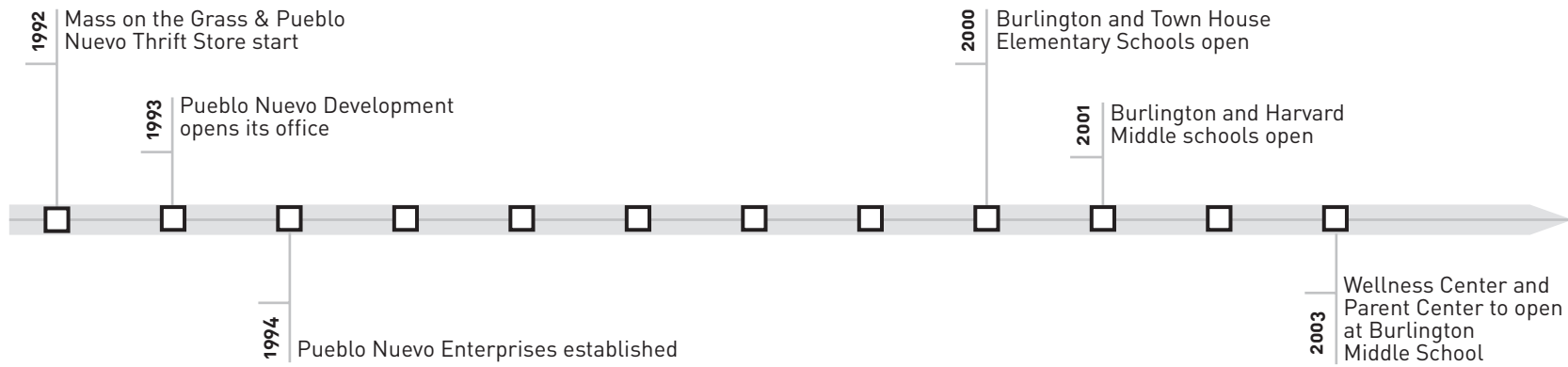
PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

- 1992
Mass on the Grass & Pueblo Nuevo Thrift Store start
- 1993
Pueblo Nuevo Development opens its office
- 1994
Pueblo Nuevo Enterprises established
- 2000
CNCA, Burlington and Town House Elementary Schools open
- 2001
Middle schools (Burlington and Harvard) open
- 2003
Wellness Center and Parent Center to open at Burlington Middle School

KEY PARTICIPANTS

(those interviewed indicated with an asterisk)*

- Rev. Philip Lance*
Executive Director, Pueblo Nuevo Development
- Catherine Griffin*
Pueblo Nuevo Development
- Ana Ponce*, Principal, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy
- Anita Landecker*
Executive Director, Excellent Education Development (ExED))
- Dr. Paul Cummins*, New Visions
- Louise Manuel*, Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)
- Kevin Daly*, Architect, Daly Genik
- Dana Cuff*
Programmer and planner, Community Design Associates
- Grace Arnold*
Charter Schools Division, LA Unified School District
- Parents, staff and students* from Camino Nuevo Charter Academy



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

URBAN CONTEXT

Note: Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) consists of four campuses in Los Angeles: two elementary schools, and two middle schools. The school that received the 2003 Rudy Bruner Award is the Burlington Street elementary campus, located in the MacArthur Park neighborhood. CNCA, therefore, refers to the Burlington elementary site, unless otherwise noted.

The MacArthur Park area is one of the poorest and most densely populated neighborhoods in Los Angeles, with population density estimated at 145 persons per acre, compared with a citywide average of 14 persons per acre. (*Architecture Review*, Nov. 2002) Most residents are recent immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and other Central American countries. According to the Pueblo Nuevo staff, it is not unusual for four families to live together in a two-bedroom apartment. Despite the fact that the Los Angeles Redevelopment Authority is building some new housing in the area, there is an ongoing crisis in affordable housing in the MacArthur Park neighborhood, as well as in Los Angeles in general.

Annual income within the census district is the lowest in Los Angeles; the average median income is \$11,475. The poverty rate in the area is 35% compared with a citywide rate of 18%. Recent immigrants often stay in the neighborhood only until they have the



MacArthur Park area commercial street



Neighborhood retail

opportunity to move to an improved living situation. Turnover is therefore high; many people live in the neighborhood less than two years. This trend, together with high unemployment, low paying jobs, and pervasive poverty undermines neighborhood stability and contributes to the prevalence of gangs, drug trade, and violent crime.



Camino Nuevo Charter Academy founder, Philip Lance

PROJECT HISTORY

In the early 1990s, Philip Lance was serving as an Episcopal minister in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, where he had started a Spanish language ministry and developed his own congregation. When his church made the decision to tear down its building to make way for a new one, Lance lost his position. He was then recruited by All Saints Church, a wealthy Beverly Hills congregation interested in reaching out to inner-city residents. Lance was by then deeply committed to working with the urban poor and All Saints provided him with a modest stipend to continue that work.

During his tenure in Echo Park, Lance had been an active supporter of the “Justice for Janitors” movement that had fought hard for a living wage for those serving in janitorial positions throughout the city. When Lance began his work with All Saints, he re-connected with some of the people he had worked with in the janitorial strike. In 1992, around the time of the Rodney King riots, Lance began a gospel-based discussion group that met on Sunday afternoons in MacArthur Park and came to be known as the “Mass on the Grass.” These meetings slowly grew to include some homeless individuals and others from the area who were, for the most part, unemployed.

In addition to being a minister, Lance had been trained by the Industrial Areas Foundation (Saul Alinsky’s group). In combining his ministry with community organizing, Lance focused on forging one-to-one connections with people, and on developing a self-sustaining economic base for the community. His goal was to empower community members to gain the skills and economic

wherewithal to improve their lives. As a first step, Lance and community members settled on the idea of opening a thrift store, with a \$5,000 grant from the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles. The store responded to the constant turnover among households, providing a market for used household goods and clothing and at the same time making them available at low cost to those moving in. The shop employed neighborhood residents, filled a local need, and was a source of revenue. In April 1993, Pueblo Nuevo Church rented the storefront next door and opened its chapel, a home for Mass on the Grass. In the same year, Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND) was established as a non-profit corporation.

As director of PND, Lance continued to seek opportunities for community economic development. After considering the

employment options available to residents, such as domestic service and gardening, he concluded they were not sufficiently lucrative or stable to make a difference in the community. In late 1993, Lance established Pueblo Nuevo Enterprises (PNE), a for-profit, cooperatively-owned janitorial services company, capitalizing it in part through a personal donation of \$20,000. PNE has grown steadily and the company now employs over 50 people and has \$1 million in revenue. After six months employment, PNE offers employees the opportunity to buy a share of the company for \$500. Each application for membership must be accepted by the cooperative's general assembly. At the time of the site visit, 17 were full members, and another 30 were eligible to join. Clients include mini-warehouses, common areas in affordable housing projects, a state college campus, and small businesses in the Los Angeles area.



PND Thrift Shop



PND Enterprises

PNE profits are distributed according to hours worked. Employee/owners have 50% of their medical insurance paid through the company and receive paid vacations and holidays. Louise Manuel of LISC, which loaned CNCA the funds to purchase the school site, reported attending a meeting of the PNE board. At that meeting, where the review of company finances took place in English and Spanish, everyone understood company financials and its balance sheet. According to Manuel, that is virtually unique in the world of community development, and attests to the skill-development and economic empowerment of employees.

Meanwhile, community residents were growing increasingly concerned about the poor quality of their children's education. At that time, and still today, many children from the neighborhood were failing to learn English and were being bused to schools in

remote locations. In Los Angeles, that could be as far as the San Fernando Valley – sometimes up to an hour each way. This was unsettling and sometimes frightening to newly arrived immigrants unfamiliar with the city and the school system and made it difficult for parents to be involved in the school due to constraints of transportation time and cost.

Also, in response to overcrowding, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) implemented a year-round calendar with three sessions per year, reducing classroom days from 180 to 163. Families, especially if they had children at multiple schools, found the schedule fragmented and inconsistent. And children who were spending too much time at home or on the street, were not acquiring needed skills and language development. At Esperanza, the local public elementary school, overcrowding has resulted in the



Esperanza elementary school

addition of temporary classrooms in trailers, and a year-round calendar that assigns students to shifts, to accommodate overcrowding. Esperanza is close to the bottom of LA schools in performance and is said to have an annual transition rate of 60%, reflecting the fact that families move and kids frequently change schools.

LAUSD operates 959 schools of which 689 are K-5. It serves a population of 906,000 students. Despite a \$9 billion budget, LAUSD is severely constrained by outdated building requirements and codes that make it virtually impossible to acquire adequate tracts of land to build new schools without significant housing displacement or unmanageable land acquisition costs. By one estimate LAUSD needs to build as many as 100 new schools immediately, yet they have not built a new high school in 30 years. It was clear to Lance that the school crisis in Los Angeles would not resolve quickly and that if his constituents wanted better education, PND would have to get directly involved.

BUILDING A TEAM

In response to the concerns of the neighborhood, Lance decided to learn more about educational options available to community residents. In 1998, he met the director of the award-winning Accelerated Charter School and became aware of charter schools' potential for creating educational opportunity and for stabilizing and re-energizing a neighborhood. Only ten charter schools were then operating in Los Angeles, but they had established themselves as venues of experimentation and reform, outside the constraints of conventional school building and development requirements.

Lance reached out to Dr. Paul Cummins, one of the major forces on the Los Angeles educational scene. Cummins had founded the private Crossroads and New Roads independent schools with pioneering curricula focused on art and social/cultural diversity. Retired from the schools, Cummins had established P.S. Arts and New Visions foundations. P.S. Arts provides arts programming in a wide variety of public school settings, while New Visions' mission is to "launch inclusive independent schools which would provide more equitable access to educational excellence for diverse primary and secondary school aged children." (At New Roads School, 50% of the students are non-white and 60% receive scholarship aid.)

Cummins immediately became interested in the challenges of the MacArthur Park neighborhood. He brought in Anita Landecker of Excellence Education Development (ExED), an organization that provides consulting assistance and financial management services to alternative schools. ExED's mission is "to dramatically improve the quality of public education by creating access to K-12 schools with high student achievement in low-income neighborhoods through the vehicle of community-based charter schools." ExED was instrumental in assembling budgets and preparing the charter school application, as well as assisting with finding financing. Lance, with no experience as in an educator, had assembled an exceptionally strong team combining vision and practical management with a commitment to helping underserved neighborhoods.

Both Cummins and Landecker believe strongly that a good school can become a central force in stabilizing and improving



Anita Landecker, ExED



Paul Cummins, New Visions Fdn.



Former mini-mall

communities. Landecker, in fact, had left a high leadership position in LISC's Los Angeles office to focus on education, believing that schools can make a greater difference in community development than can affordable housing or other more traditional bricks-and-mortar projects. Cummins and Landecker believe that effective schools impart skills and passion for learning that enable students to create opportunity in their own lives. They are committed to the notion that the school should serve broader community needs, offering parents opportunities in health care, parenting, language training and other important skills. They believe strongly that if the programs are effective the school will ultimately stabilize the community by strengthening families and encouraging them to stay.

As PND's focus on education was developing, it was negotiating to acquire a derelict mini-mall near its other facilities. The initial intention was to use the mall for PND offices and related programs, but when the idea of a charter school was born, the possibility of converting the mini-mall into a school was tested. LISC provided funding for the feasibility studies which showed that it could be done. LISC then assisted with a portion of the funding for property acquisition, though Lance still had to raise substantial funds. A charter would make the school eligible for operational funding from the state. Lance took his idea back to the community, which was enthusiastic, and the project began in earnest.

Louise Manuel of LISC stated that Lance's proposal, his track record in the neighborhood, and the team he had assembled convinced them to provide funding. In addition to education experts, Lance had a significant level of real estate expertise on the PND board. Dan Ardell had had a long career in commercial real estate and Eric Heggen is a practicing architect. Despite the fact that PND had less than \$10,000 in the bank at the time, LISC had confidence in the project and its leadership (see Finances). LISC also believed CNCA would become a major catalyst for further investment in the area, a pre-requisite for their lending. With the acquisition of the mini-mall, Camino Nuevo became the first Los Angeles charter school to own its own building.

THE SCHOOL

Four Campuses

CNCA houses 280 students at the Burlington Street elementary campus (the subject of the Rudy Bruner Award application). During the site visit, we learned that it also operates the Town House campus with another 132 K-5 students and, on the opposite end of the Burlington block, a new middle school is in operation, serving 108 students in grades 6-8, with an ultimate enrollment goal of 288. The Harvard Street site, the largest of the campuses, houses 544 middle school students. Demographics vary somewhat among the schools. At all sites, the majority are Spanish speakers, but at Harvard Street, 20% are of Korean and 3.5% of Filipino background. At all four campuses, a significant number, (80%-95%) of students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch and the average daily attendance rate on all four campuses is 95%.



Burlington Street elevation

Creating a Community School

Camino Nuevo is based on the belief that it is “possible for a committed neighborhood to ... help themselves” and give direction to their schools. Since the community's priorities were language learning and personal safety, CNCA's Burlington elementary curriculum emphasizes language immersion as well as the arts. The school's architecture and staffing as well as its operations, are also a response to community concerns about safety, and have emphasized design features which help to keep the school secure.

Among the first challenges faced by any new school is who will attend. At Camino Nuevo, students are enrolled on a first come, first served basis. The initial classes included children who came to



CNCA Students

CNCA from Esperanza. Many of them had significant academic challenges and were struggling in the larger Esperanza setting. Lance notes that in the first year they had many special needs kids who required support from multiple specialists working with them one-on-one. PND views the enrollment profile as a trade-off in other ways as well. In their words, “we had to choose between giving priority to neighborhood children who have the fewest choices about education and who are almost 100% Hispanic, and recruiting from outside the neighborhood to gain racial and ethnic diversity. We chose to remain with our vision of building a community-based school for neighborhood children.”

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy has now completed its third academic year. As reported to the Bruner Foundation team, the first year of operation was challenging. The first principal left in the middle of the year, which was highly disruptive. More recently, the school has a new principal, Ana Ponce, who leads all four campuses. Past dean of the Accelerated School and a former neighborhood resident, Ponce is credited with establishing strong policy and direction for the school, attracting high quality faculty and bringing CNCA a new measure of stability. The consensus shared with us was that the school has worked through its earlier problems and is “hitting its stride.”

In response to parental concerns, as well as the values and philosophy of the founders, CNCA also established its own school calendar. Parents were disheartened by the shortened, fragmented calendar that characterizes LAUSD, feeling that their children were being shortchanged. In response, CNCA instituted a 200-day academic calendar with an additional 30 minutes in each school day. This not only provided more instructional time but has reduced what often would have been unsupervised time at home or on the street. According to Lance, in this way the school becomes an extension of the family structure and offers kids an alternative to the prevalent gang activity and drug culture that surrounds them.

The size and structure of the classes are geared to achieving language proficiency and attaining other basic skills, with personal attention to the students. In kindergarten through 3rd grade, classrooms are limited to 20 students, consistent with California



Principals Ana Ponce and Sue Park

standards. In the classrooms visited by the site team, there were four round tables each with five children and, often, an adult. As the grades progress, students are expected to require less individual attention, and class size increases, to 25 for 4TH and 5TH grade, and 27 for 6TH and 7TH. The class size in these grades is smaller than in other LAUSD schools.

Curriculum

English language development is central to the CNCA model. The vast majority of incoming students are Spanish speakers, most of whom have little or no English spoken at home. The basic learning model is that beginning in kindergarten a small percentage of the school day is conducted in English, while many more hours are dedicated to teaching English. As children move up in grades, the



CNCA classroom

percentage of time in which class is conducted in English increases until proficiency is reached. By 5TH grade, all CNCA students are expected to be bi-lingual.

Parent involvement is also central. Parents of entering students are required to sign a parent pledge, committing to 15 hours of participation per year. Ana Ponce reports that they have little trouble in getting parents to fulfill this obligation and that, through their presence and involvement; they play an important role in supporting the curriculum. The involvement of parents is taken so seriously that CNCA actually issues twice-yearly “parent report cards” that assign a numerical score based upon completion and

timeliness of student homework; parents responsiveness to teacher contacts; students reading at least 25 books; student tardiness; unexcused absences; school uniform; student conduct; responsiveness to school recommendations; completion of service hours; and parent night and school event attendance.

CNCA also emphasizes the arts — at least in part due to the influence of Paul Cummins — and much of the art curriculum is delivered under the auspices of P.S. Arts which teaches music and visual arts to all students (with help from the Crossroads Community Foundation). A dance and movement program is provided through the Gabriella Axelrad Education Foundation; all



CNCA parent volunteers



CNCA tap class in storefront church

CNCA students have classes twice a week and dance is offered after school. This is accomplished despite the challenges of a small campus where space is restricted and there are no dedicated art rooms.

Community Programs

CNCA functions as a center of community activity, with opportunities offered to parents and families after school. The variety of programs is diverse. Vision testing is offered and Lens Crafters provides free glasses to students, 60% of whom were found to need them. In partnering with a local hospital, CNCA offers free health and dental screenings as well as immunizations. An annual Health Fair brings 20 to 30 health agencies to CNCA to showcase free or low-cost services available to the community.

Zulma Suro, Director of Health and Family Programs, described some of the other offerings. A collaboration of local funders sponsors classes in early childhood development. This program uses classrooms after school for a 300-hour, 18-month course that leads to certification for pre-school teacher aides. Twenty-five parents are currently enrolled and for most it is their first time taking college level courses. There is a waiting list, despite the rigorous curriculum. Suro also organizes “monthly institutes” for parents on subjects such as how to help children with homework. These sessions have been attended by up to 120 parents.

For Halloween, Camino Nuevo parents organized a carnival with a high degree of parent involvement. It included a costume event, food

and games, and was well attended. Afterwards the school hosted a thank-you breakfast for parents. While these kinds of events are taken for granted in a middle-class school, they are more unusual for a low-income immigrant community.

The community appears to feel a great deal of ownership of the school. Parents, students and volunteers all express pride in CNCA and appreciation for the colorful, creative new spaces in which to learn. According to the local pastor, the expanded educational opportunity offered there “fills our hearts with increased hope for the future.”



Zulma Suro, Director of Health and Family Programs

Teachers and Administration

Teachers are central to the success of any school. Because CNCA offers the opportunity for creativity in teaching and curriculum development, as well as an unusual degree of parental involvement, CNCA has attracted good teachers. Some come from the LAUSD system, because of the opportunity to teach more creative curricula in an environment where parents and students have selected the school and have a demonstrated commitment to it. All teachers must meet California credential standards. Teacher salaries tend to be higher at Camino Nuevo than at other schools because of the increased number of teaching days and hours. Again, this contributes to a self-selection of teachers willing to work a longer school year. Grace Arnold of LAUSD expressed no concerns about CNCA attracting good teachers away from other schools, and is supportive of the kind of opportunity CNCA offers young teachers.

In visiting the school one gets a strong sense of positive energy and productivity. The children are all in uniform, clean and well groomed (a portion of the cost of uniforms, \$18,000 per year, is donated by a retired physician). The classrooms are well designed and colorful, and are set up with a rich variety of materials and activities. The children seem eager to answer the teacher's questions and the classrooms are orderly and lively. In interviewing a 5th grade student, she was especially enthusiastic about her "AVID" classes which teach study skills and longer-term goals. This student loved CNCA and compared it very favorably to her experience in other LAUSD schools. She welcomed both the longer year and the extended day.



CNCA parents and staff



CNCA classroom



CNCA classroom

DESIGN

PRE-DESIGN AND COMMUNITY PROCESS

The PND board selected Daly Genik from a field of 10 architects who responded to their Request for Proposals. Zola Manzaneres, pastor of Camino Nuevo Church, says community members were involved with every step of the planning process “...meeting with architects, interviewing potential principals, and participating in curriculum design.”

The process was led by the architects who worked closely with Dana Cuff of Community Design Associates (CDA) in developing consensus about the kind of school they wanted. Cuff, who is nationally known for her work in this field, acknowledged that getting significant community input was a challenge in this neighborhood—residents were not accustomed to having direct input into the design process. In addition, language barriers were considerable despite the fact that CDA had a Spanish-speaking partner. So Cuff developed tools to help participants visualize options for spaces and design features. This took the form of a graphic planning workbook that included a variety of images of school environments, which she showed to groups and asked for comments and reactions. According to Cuff, the workbooks were fairly successful and served as a tool to get a sense of community priorities. Among the main conclusions was the importance of security in and around the school. Cuff distributed the results of the workshops through local schools and churches.

Daly Genik then prepared a master plan for the Burlington Street block, with the elementary school as the cornerstone. Acquisition of an adjacent lot for play space was identified as a second phase (now complete) with opening of the middle school at the far corner of Wilshire as third phase (now also complete). (The Wilshire middle school building will also include a family center and a health clinic offering a variety of support and medical services.) The long-range plan calls for acquisition of additional properties in the middle of the block for a performing arts center and pre-school.

PROGRAM AND DESIGN

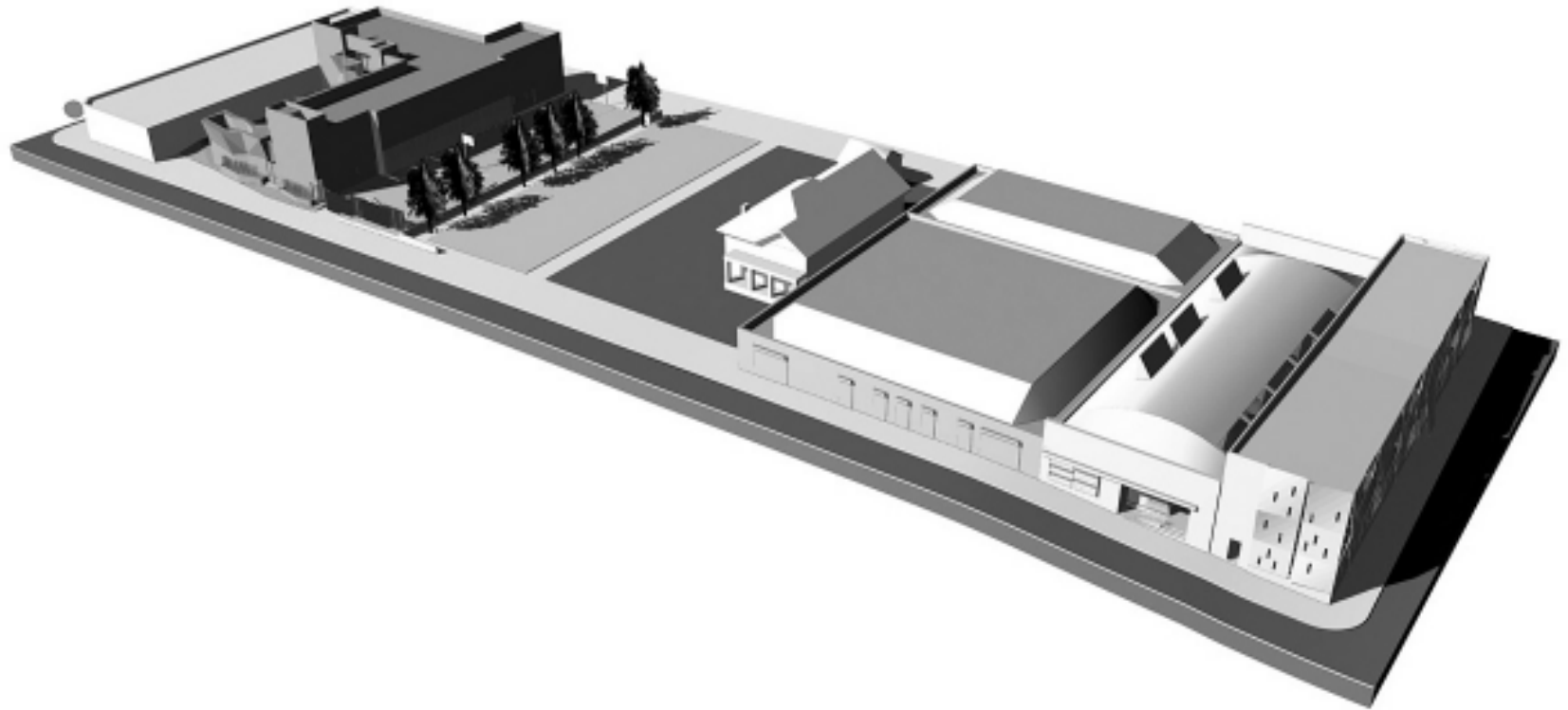
Daly Genik faced a considerable challenge: to create a new and exciting school environment that would house an innovative educational program, foster community participation, and become a highly visible community landmark “inviting and invigorating to the local community,” all within the severe space constraints of the defunct mini-mall as well as a tight budget. This led to a decision to maximize classroom space (creating 12 classrooms) rather than provide separate rooms for all activities in the curriculum. A desired gym, music and art rooms, and an assembly hall were all sacrificed. Because of the tight spaces, the design emphasized flexibility — each space had to serve a variety of purposes.

Kevin Daly based the design on what he called the “four Rs”. First, to *remove* all mini-mall features and create an entirely new environment; second, to *recover* lost and under-utilized space; third, to *reconfigure* the space so it enhanced the educational program of the school; and fourth, to *replace* unsightly or inappropriate design features to create a new design identity for the building.



Architect Kevin Daly

To achieve these design goals within a tight budget of \$1.1 million, Daly had to be creative. To provide visual separation from the street he created the only entirely new element of the school, an 11,000 square foot bathroom and storage structure that faces on to the courtyard (formerly the entrance to underground parking), providing an edge to the street. Attractive fencing and a gate further separate the school from the street and control access to the school grounds. They are accented by street tree planting and planting beds. As described in *Architectural Record*, “the school’s street façade is a play of planes that push in and out and work with



Burlington block model

planted areas to activate the sidewalk. The architects designed the rest room unit as a faceted, sculptural element that engages the public realm.” The bright coloration and sculptural walls that characterize the design are also culturally appropriate — strikingly contemporary, and reminiscent of Mexican and Central American architecture.

To further enhance the courtyard, the entrance to underground parking was relocated to create an outdoor space that serves as playground, assembly area, and space for small group tutorials or parent workshops. Stairs to the upper level were widened to double as seats for school meetings and performances. A signature element of the design, in addition to the brilliant colors, is the curved lattice

that forms an edge to second floor walkways, and extends to the ground level in the courtyard. The lattice is visually dramatic, and protects the upper level classrooms from balls and the intense late afternoon sun. In widening the walkways, and edging them with the lattice structure, Daly also created gathering spots and mini outdoor classrooms which, in the moderate Los Angeles climate, can be used for small group meetings or informal gatherings for most of the year. Surrounded by the curving lattice and brightly painted stucco walls, the courtyard space is colorful and lively. Visible from classrooms and administrative offices, the courtyard brings light into the rooms and forms the functional heart of the school.



Upper level outdoor space

Together, these elements make the school a visible and recognizable oasis in the middle of a depressed neighborhood. It stands in striking contrast to its neighbor school, Esperanza, with its drab institutional architecture. Grace Arnold of LAUSD told us that the building has become their model for what can be accomplished in a charter school. And the renovation from mini-mall to elementary school was accomplished very quickly – two years from original concept to opening.

The architectural world has recognized the design in a number of major publications including *Architectural Record*, and *Architecture Review*. National publications such as the *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek* and the *New York Times* have also had high praise for the design. The *Los Angeles Times* called Camino Nuevo “one of the most inspiring projects built in Los Angeles in years.” It was also featured by the LAUSD in a conference held in Los Angeles on charter schools, and is considered an important model within the education world. Perhaps even more significantly, its young pupils, according to Kevin Daly, call it “chide,” Spanish for “cool.”

In a similar vein, Daly Genik’s Burlington Middle School was recently reviewed in the *Los Angeles Times* which described it as follows:

“The new (middle school at) Camino Nuevo Charter Academy is the kind of project Los Angeles could use more of: a thoughtful, low-cost work of architecture that embodies the kind of civic purpose and progressive ideals that so many public institutions give lip service to but rarely fulfill.”



CNCA stair and courtyard

FINANCES

PRE-DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Early on, LISC agreed to support PND in its efforts to acquire the mini-mall property, first assisting them in determining that the \$650,000 asking price was appropriate. According to Louise Manuel of LISC, it was “a very good deal,” especially with 28 basement parking spaces.

LISC teamed with the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF) to provide four initial grants and loans: (1) \$10,000 grant to pay for an appraisal, a Phase I study, and a cost estimate for the remodel; (2) a \$50,000 recoverable grant, at 0% interest, for architectural and engineering costs related to renovation; and (3) a \$400,000 below market rate mini-perm loan, and (4) a \$500,000 loan from LIIF. These loans were eventually consolidated and refinanced by LISC, who got City National bank to take over the two larger loans at a rate of 7% over 20 years.

In a major effort, PND raised an additional \$650,000 from a variety of private sources including the Ahmanson Foundation, the California Community Foundation, the Weingart Foundation, the Parsons Foundation, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and other individual and corporate donors.



Burlington Street elevation



School yard with new building

BUILDING COSTS

As with many construction projects, especially those on tight budgets, costs increased during construction – from the estimated \$900,000 to an actual completed cost of \$1.1 million. Despite this, the overall building cost was only \$100/square foot, or under \$8,000 per student. This represents less than 25% of the \$33,000 per student it costs LAUSD to build an elementary school (The charter process enabled CNCA to build a much smaller school than the LAUSD would be permitted to build, providing only 40 square feet per student compared to the LAUSD standard of 75 square feet, which would account for some of the savings).

OPERATING COSTS

For a community development organization the size of PND to acquire funding to build CNCA was a significant accomplishment. Another challenge was to be certain that operating funds from the California Department of Education would cover the expenses of the school as well as debt service on the property. ExED contributed to securing these funds. Their knowledge of state and federal funding for charter schools, as well as per student costs, enabled them to both construct an operating budget and assist with obtaining funding which set CNCA on a sound financial course.

The role of fiscal agent played by ExED has proven essential, and frees CNCA from the complex and cumbersome paper work associated with applying for and accounting for funds. In addition, ExED has dealt with some of the complexities associated with CNCA's unique program. The state, for example, will pay for only

180 school days per year, and summer school funds had to be accessed to pay for the additional 20 days. The fees to ExED are only \$160 per student per year, allowing the bulk of the funds to go directly into the educational program. This has proven to be a manageable and successful arrangement.

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy Revenues and Expenditures for Burlington Sites

Source: EXED

Revenue 2002-2003*	Total	Per ADA**
State of California	\$1,158,975.00	\$3,004.90
Federal Revenue	\$249,359.00	\$646.50
Other State Revenue***	\$613,054.00	\$1,589.50
Other Local Revenue****	\$875,521.00	\$2,270.00
Total	\$2,896,909.00	\$7,510.90
Expenditures 2002-2003		
Certified Salaries	\$1,035,075.00	\$2,683.60
Classified Salaries	\$431,488.00	\$1,118.70
Employee Benefits	\$301,874.00	\$782.70
Books and Supplies	\$195,925.00	\$508.00
Services, Operating Expenses	\$716,750.00	\$1,858.30
Capital Outlay	\$77,500.00	\$200.90
Direct Support/Indirect Costs	\$85,102.00	\$220.60
Total	\$2,843,714.00	\$7,372.80

* Includes both Burlington sites

** Average Daily Attendance

*** Mainly related to economic aid

**** In lieu of property tax, fundraising, etc.

As a charter school operating under the auspices of LAUSD, CNCA receives a per capita sum based upon average days of attendance. The standard allocation is \$7,000 per student per year; ExED secured slightly more (\$7,372) for CNCA, which has been able to commit \$578 per student to repayment of the property financing.

IMPACTS

Recent standardized tests of middle school students at CNCA show 20% improvement from the previous year, and are 10% higher than the neighboring schools. In a recent letter sent to friends of Camino Nuevo, Philip Lance cites with pride the figures which rank Camino Nuevo Middle School at level 3 out of 10 as compared to the performance of students statewide, and 9 out of 10, close to the top, when measured against schools with similar demographics. This is an impressive achievement considering that neighboring schools ranked at the bottom – 1 out of 10 overall, and 3 and 4 out of 10 in the same category. At the time of testing, elementary scores, however, had not yet improved significantly. CNCA attributed this to the rocky first year and expressed confidence that, with the new leadership and stabilization, those scores would go up as well.

It should also be noted that standardized test scores are a problematic measure of impact for a school like CNCA that has accepted new students at all grade levels, many of whom were significantly under-achieving in their previous schools. If one focuses on those portions of their elementary population, 2ND grade students, who have been at CNCA continuously for 3 years, one finds strong achievement scores relative to other schools in the area.

Despite the improvement in some subject areas and grade levels, others fell short of California's recently instituted "Adequate Yearly Progress" measure. CNCA students scored well in math, but not as well in language arts. Conversely, some of the CNCA middle school students met goals in English, but lagged in math. "The test results show that we are making progress," says Ana Ponce, "but we began so far behind it is going to take at least another year to show significant gains."

CNCA continues to find creative ways to address the issues of students who need special help. PND recently raised the funds to initiate a summer program that featured intensive intervention



Burlington Street planting

and small group settings for CNCA students who require additional skill development.

Another measure, parent satisfaction with CNCA, is quite high. 241 parents recently completed a survey which showed that 88% were satisfied or very satisfied with overall education and 90% were satisfied with safety.

For a small elementary school, CNCA has received a great deal of publicity and has been widely showcased in Southern California and beyond. It has been written up in *Newsweek*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Times* as well as numerous architectural magazines and has been featured on *CBS News*. In these stories, CNCA has been recognized for its innovative curriculum, for the boldness of the concept, and for exciting and appropriate architecture.

Although only in its third year of operation, CNCA can claim a wide range of impacts in the education world. LAUSD is impressed with many aspects of CNCA. Grace Arnold emphasized the importance of the bold architecture and color in creating a playful yet functional educational environment, attractive to young children, and recognizable as a landmark in the community. Arnold also commended CNCA on the degree of parent involvement that she acknowledges is difficult to achieve in low income communities.

In fact, LAUSD now considers CNCA to be a model for charter schools. It was featured at a 2000 symposium "New Schools, Better

Neighborhoods” in Los Angeles. The purpose of the meeting was to find new ways of addressing Los Angeles’ school crisis. At the conference, LAUSD showcased CNCA before hundreds of elected officials, school board members, civic leaders, architects, and urban planners. In the words of LAUSD, CNCA is considered “The Camino Miracle” because it was built so quickly and inexpensively, and has had such far-ranging impacts. LAUSD, in fact, recently interviewed Daly Genik and other creative architects for their own building programs. LAUSD also wishes to include more art in their curriculum and is trying to extend its school calendar to 180 days for all students.

At least partly as a result of CNCA’s success, there is now bond money available for charter schools to buy or build facilities. According to Anita Landecker, there are at least six other charter school developers hoping to rehab existing buildings in the area, all using CNCA as a model.

The physical and visual impacts of the school in the neighborhood are striking. The school is an oasis of color and greenery in an otherwise drab area. Before CNCA established the elementary school, the mini-mall was a blighted site, and the alley behind the school was littered with drug paraphernalia. Burlington Street, the front door of the school, was littered with trash and mattresses. Today both the alley and the street are clean and feel safe. The street trees and other plantings soften the streetscape and mark a place where there is life and caring. Although there is gang activity in the area, they have left the school alone and it has experienced little or no vandalism.

Consistent with LISC’s goals, the elimination of the mini-mall as a source of blight, and the introduction of the school appear to have sparked re-investment in nearby properties. An adjacent store has re-opened, and a prominent Victorian house across Burlington Street has been cleaned up and painted. There is evidence of people taking better care of their street and neighborhood.



Burlington Street gate

As a result of CNCA and other similar efforts, schools are increasingly a part of national community development agendas. This stands in contrast to more traditional revitalization approaches that have focused on providing affordable housing or other “bricks and mortar” solutions to the ills of poverty. There is increased interest in looking toward under-utilized and abandoned properties for re-use, thereby upgrading a neighborhood through infill on critical sites instead of razing entire blocks and causing large scale dislocation.

FUTURE PLANS

At the Burlington campus, PND’s goals are to acquire the remaining properties on their side of the block and complete the campus master plan. In the Spring of 2003 PND was negotiating to buy a vacant house in the middle of the block for use as a pre-school and the new middle school at the Wilshire Boulevard end of the campus was completing construction, and is now in full operation. The new middle school houses a family center and health clinic, strengthening services to area families. The health clinic will have counselors available to assist with issues of domestic violence which is a significant factor in the community. The family center will also offer counseling and programs for non-violent parenting and partnering to help reduce the incidence of family violence.

With four campuses now in operation, pressure is increasing for PND to open a high school so that students who have completed middle school would have an alternative to attending a standard school, where expectations will drop below what they have

achieved at CNCA. With over 1,100 students now enrolled at CNCA campuses, PND is appropriately concerned about diverting funds and energy from the existing schools, and is proceeding cautiously.

PND’s goals for all campuses are:

- CNCA students will meet or exceed state performance targets.
- More than 50% of CNCA students will make a 1.5 grade level improvement in reading.
- At least 50% of English language learners will become proficient.
- At least 30% of students taking LAUSD writing performance assessment will score 3 or above.
- School will hold three parent summits per year with at least 75% of parents in attendance at each.
- Schools will increase attendance rate from 95% to 96.5%.



New Burlington Street middle school

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To create an elementary school that would provide neighborhood children with an excellent education and English language proficiency, in a safe and nurturing school environment.*

There is evidence that CNCA is providing neighborhood children with a quality education, as seen in improved scores (at the middle school and to some extent the elementary school), the observed classroom environment, and testimony from parents and community members.

- *To eliminate blight caused by a derelict mini-mall and serve as a catalyst for reinvestment by other property owners in the neighborhood.*

CNCA has made an observable impact in the neighborhood. Aside from adding visual interest and excitement, it has contributed to cleaner and safer streets, and new neighborhood investment. This impact will likely continue as the Burlington campus gets built out and children progress through the CNCA system.

- *To ensure that the elementary school, through community programming and parent involvement, becomes a stabilizing and energizing force in the MacArthur Park neighborhood.*

In its third year of operation, it is difficult to assess the extent to which CNCA will become a stabilizing force in the neighborhood. It has become a center where children and families can go for education from grades K-8 and a variety of services that will contribute to opportunity and social stabilization. On the other hand, the forces of poverty, a flagging economy, and reduced opportunity cannot be understated.

- *To create a new model for elementary education in disadvantaged communities in Los Angeles.*

This goal has been achieved. Both the LAUSD and those involved in educational innovation in the Los Angeles attest to CNCA's importance as a model for charter schools and perhaps for the school district's own facilities. The extent to which CNCA has been "showcased" in both the education and architectural world indicate its continuing impact on elementary education. CNCA represents innovative thinking in both education and community revitalization.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

In selecting it as the gold medal winner, the selection committee was clearly impressed with many aspects of Camino Nuevo. Perhaps most importantly, they recognized Pueblo Nuevo Development's commitment to intervening in a challenged community at the level where the greatest impact might be felt – principally through education and jobs. Thus, the school is seen as an agent for social and economic development as well as a means to improve the urban design environment.

The committee praised Camino Nuevo for its grassroots beginnings and its continuing commitment to the involvement of the community in planning and management. They were very impressed with the quality of the team that was assembled to plan and run the school and found the architectural design to be very powerful and appropriate to the function and cultural backgrounds of the families served. Given the importance placed by the committee on the potential for a project to affect transformation, the committee felt that Camino Nuevo greatly changed its block and neighborhood and, more importantly, that it “changes lives ... that’s urban excellence.”

Consistent with the committee’s priorities, they valued the fact that Camino Nuevo can easily become a model for other communities. They felt that Camino successfully modeled people taking ownership of change in their community, and that implementing community development through education was an exciting new means of achieving urban excellence. Further, they felt the Camino model was particularly important because of the population bulge coming up through the schools and the need for models which deal with that population in disenfranchised and particularly immigrant communities. Finally, Camino Nuevo was selected not only because of its charter school, but because of PND’s full program of job creation, health care, and social service provision – the many avenues its pursues to help people create better lives. The fact that all this was done without reliance on large amounts of outside money only made the project more impressive, and certainly more sustainable.

The selection committee had only a few reservations about Camino Nuevo and these centered on the need for a better understanding of why elementary student test scores have not improved more substantially. Since the time of the selection committee meeting, those scores have improved somewhat, particularly among current second grade students who are the only group that has had three full years at the school. The staff expects that scores will continue to go up as more children with continuity at the school are tested, and they reminded the site visit team that the initial student body included many children with learning issues and behavioral problems which would be reflected in lower test scores.

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BRIDGEMARKET NEW YORK, NEW YORK

SILVER
medal winner



2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



BRIDGEMARKET AT-A-GLANCE

WHAT IS BRIDGEMARKET?

BridgeMarket is a commercial development located under the Manhattan end of the Queensboro Bridge. The project includes:

- An adaptive reuse and restoration of a grand and important historic space beneath the landmarked Queensboro Bridge;
- A restaurant seating 900 people (Guastavinis);
- A high-end housewares and furniture store (Conrans);
- A supermarket (Food Emporium);
- A public plaza and garden.

MAJOR GOALS OF BRIDGEMARKET

- To return an important space to the public realm;
- To stimulate economic growth in the area surrounding the Queensboro Bridge;
- To repair what had been an urban gap between the neighborhoods of Sutton Place to the south and the Upper East Side to the north;
- To continue the public pathway along 59TH St. to the East River and along First Avenue between 59TH St. and 61ST St.

PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

1908

Queensboro Bridge opens to traffic. The area under the bridge created by the Guastavino arches is used as a market for farmers bringing goods in horse-drawn carriages over the bridge from Long Island.

1930s

Market closes as the bridge is taken over by the New York City Department of Transportation. The area under the bridge becomes a site for DOT sign shops and parking.

1972

Office of Midtown Planning and Development undertakes the Queensboro Bridge Area Study to formulate policies and design proposals for the use of land and public facilities in the area bounded by 52ND Street, 66TH Street, Park Avenue and the waterfront.

1973

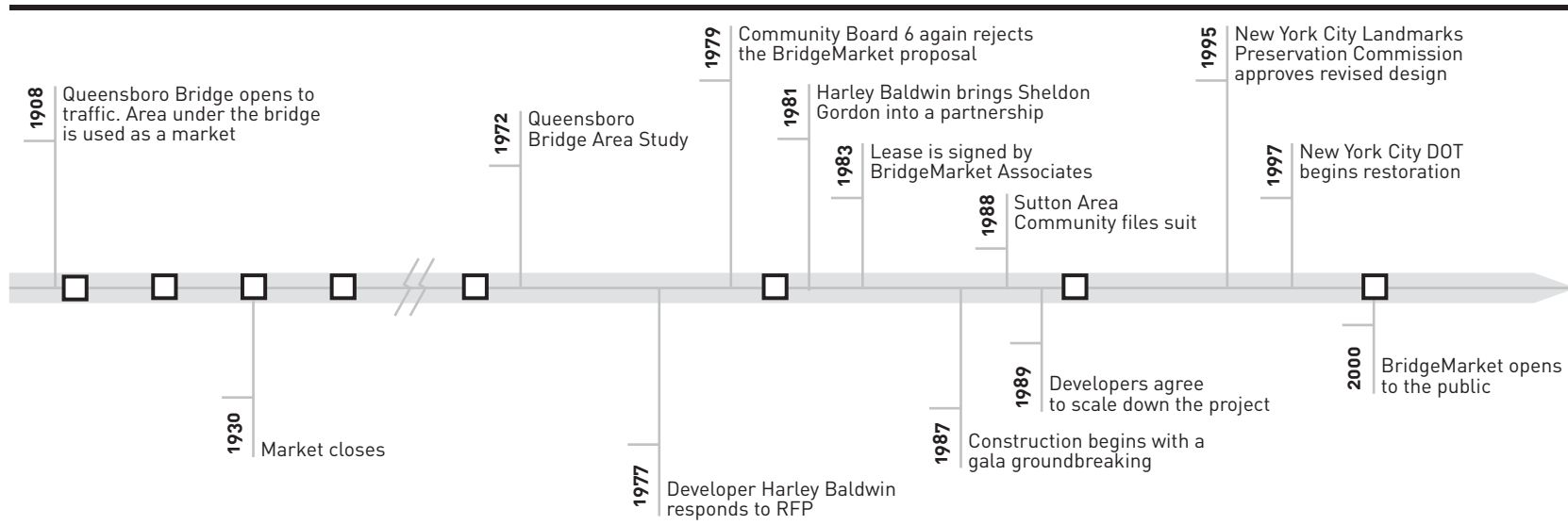
The City approves a resolution to lease the area under the bridge to American Cinematheque for a \$6.5 million film museum and exhibition center – but the proposal could not find financing.

1975

Another proposal is unveiled, this time for a \$2 million, two-story international fair of food stores, movies, restaurants and boutiques, which foundered after community opposition.

1977

Developer Harley Baldwin responds to a Public Development Corporation (PDC) request for proposals and wins with his plan to create a European-style marketplace. Baldwin hires Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates (HHPA) to create a plan modeled after world marketplaces. The Sutton Area Community Association (SAC) opposes the plan.



1978

The project is approved by all relevant city government bodies and the city's General Services Department enters into a lease with the PDC and a sublease to Harley Baldwin. SAC and local area politicians fight the proposal that is "killed" by the New York State Assembly's Committee on Cities, claiming the city would collect too little revenue from Baldwin. Later in the year the City Council again approves the BridgeMarket plan.

1979

Community Board 6, which includes Sutton Place, again rejects the BridgeMarket proposal. In response to New York State Assembly concerns, the lease is changed to increase the rent the city would collect to \$80,000 for the first year, increasing to \$340,000. The project is opposed by local state senator Roy Goodman and continues to be stalled in the State Assembly.

1981

Harley Baldwin brings Sheldon Gordon into a partnership as BridgeMarket Associates. Together they renegotiate the lease with the PDC.

1982

City legal counsel determines that state approval is not needed. A new 50 year lease is approved by the Board of Estimate and passed by the City Planning Commission, the City Art Commission, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), the Manhattan Borough Board, Community Boards 6 and 8, among others - a total of 19 city agencies, plus the New York State Legislature. The plan is endorsed by interested non-profits including the New York Landmarks Conservancy and the Municipal Arts Society.

1983

Lease is signed by BridgeMarket Associates, which receives a \$23 million construction loan from Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association.

1985

The Department of Transportation begins repairs on the upper level of the bridge, preventing the project's excavation work from proceeding.

1986

The Landmarks Preservation Commission holds a public hearing for review of a modified plan that is larger and more ambitious than the original. Concerns are expressed by preservationists that the changes are too elaborate and would obscure too large a portion of the bridge. Following modifications that reduced the size of construction, the plan is approved.

1987

Construction on what is now a \$35 million plan begins with a gala groundbreaking ceremony. Completion scheduled for late 1988.

1988

Demolition, excavation, and much of the cleaning has been completed when The Sutton Area Community files suit against BridgeMarket Associates, alleging that the excavated space is greater than that reviewed in public hearings. Because of the suit, developers are unable to obtain needed title insurance, causing lenders to suspend financing and construction to stop.

1989

Through negotiations with the Public Development Corporation and the neighborhood association, the developers agree to scale down the project by providing less commercial space and more public space. After delays and cost overruns Baldwin steps aside and gives the managing role to Gordon, who successfully renegotiates the \$28-million construction loan and finds a lender who will provide permanent financing.

1990

City threatens to cancel lease due to non-payment of rent by developers.

1991

BridgeMarket is stalled due to a dramatic downturn in the real-estate market, which leads to a restructuring of the project to involve three commercial tenants.

1992

To eliminate dangerous conditions, Economic Development Corporation (successor agency to PDC) uses some the \$500,000 completion bond put up by developer to fill in the excavation with several hundred thousand cubic feet of material.

1994

New York State Court of Appeals rules against SAC, saying that Board of Estimate approval is not needed for the change in the plan.

1995

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission unanimously approves revised designs calling for a 90,000 square-foot complex with commercial space at ground level, and a steel-and-glass building on a public plaza. SAC continues its opposition, saying plans cover view of bridge.

1997

The New York City Department of Transportation begins restoration of the stonework and tile vaults.

1998

Conran Holdings files suit saying developers violated agreement by bringing in A&P-owned Food Emporium, a group they felt did not have a strong enough reputation for quality.

1998

Construction and permanent financing are arranged and a groundbreaking ceremony is held for the start of new construction.

2000

BridgeMarket opens to the public.

KEY PARTICIPANTS

(those interviewed indicated with an asterisk)*

Public Agencies

New York City Economic Development Corporation:

Janel Patterson*, Vice President

Robert Balder*, Executive Vice President

Mel Glickman*, Vice President

Landmarks Preservation Commission:

Jennifer Raab*, past Chair

Brian Hogg*, Chair of Preservation Department

NYC Dept of Transportation:

Tom Cocola*, public relations

New York State Senate:

Former Senator Roy Goodman

Architect/Designer

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates:

Hugh Hardy*, Principal; Pamela Loeffelman*

(with Perkins Eastman Architects at the time of the interview)

Conran and Partners:

Sir Terence Conran.

Construction Manager:

Sciame Construction, Inc. Frank Sciame*, President

Stanley Goldstein, PC:

Stanley Goldstein*, Structural Engineer

Fisher Marantz Stone, Inc.:
Paul Marantz*, Lighting Designer

Landscape Designer:
Lyndon Miller*, Public Garden Design

Walter B. Melvin,
designer in charge of terra cotta work

Graciano Corporation:
terra cotta restoration specialist

Boston Valley Terra Cotta

Developer

BridgeMarket Associates, LLP:
Sheldon Gordon*
Harley Baldwin*
Richard Rich
Henry Catto

Community Groups

New York Landmarks Conservancy:
Roger Lang*, Director, Community Programs and Services

Municipal Arts Society:
Frank Sanchis III*, Senior Vice President

Community Board 8:
M. Barry Schneider*, Former Chair

Community Board 6:
Toni Carlina, Chair*

Sutton Area Community Association, Inc.:
Richard Eyen, Past Chair *
Mary Claire Bergin, Current Chair*

East 60s Neighborhood Association: Judy Schneider*

On-Site Retail

Guastavino's Inc.:
Richard Romano*, General Manager

Food Emporium (A&P):
Harry Rubinstein*, Director, Regional Real Estate
Sam Burman*, Vice President, Design & Planning
Dennis Schess*, Store Manager

The Terence Conran Shop:
Lori Jenkins*, Manager

Neighborhood Businesses and Residents

Daniel Brodsky*, Developer, 401 First Avenue

Seth Geldzahler*, VP Real Estate, Bed, Bath and Beyond

Residents on-the-street*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

LOCAL CONTEXT

The neighborhood that surrounds Bridgemarket is one of the wealthiest in New York City. To the south is Sutton Place which is among the “toniest” and most exclusive addresses in the city. To the north is the Upper East Side – also known politically as the Silk Stocking District. The Upper East Side includes some of the most important museums in the world, art galleries, and multi-million dollar townhouses. However, at the time this project was launched, the few blocks immediately to the north of the Queensboro Bridge were less elegant, accommodated several factories, and had few residential or daytime shopping facilities. The block where the Queensboro Bridge touches down in Manhattan, was long considered a kind of “no-man’s land” separating these two districts.

At the same time, New York City government represented a veritable thicket of agencies, political bodies and interest groups for developers to negotiate. One writer noted that at various times 19 city or state agencies made rulings on the Bridgemarket development. These included Planning, Preservation, the Board of Estimate – a unique (and now defunct New York City entity) that served as its chief administrative body – and local Community Boards. Community boards were created in the 1960s to be the first level of government and their role can be especially strong in dealing with local planning issues. The area under the bridge was of concern to two community boards – CB8 which included the site



Aerial with BridgeMarket in foreground



Vaults during restoration

itself and the Upper East Side, and CB6 which begins at 59TH street (at the border of the site) and includes Sutton Place.

Since the site is part of a bridge over a waterway, the New York State Assembly also claimed the right to approve plans for development.

HISTORY

Bridgemarket has a long history that has been interrupted and restarted so many times over so many decades that it that has taken on almost mythic proportions – even within the context of notoriously difficult New York City private development efforts. There is no single individual we could find currently involved in a public agency or private corporation who had been active in this project for the entire length of the saga.

The site is clearly one that affects people deeply. Since the 1930s, few outside the neighborhood had viewed the high vaulted ceilings under the bridge, even in its “ramshackle” state in the early 1980s when it was being used as a parking lot and sign shop. The developers (first Baldwin then Gordon and later Conran) fell in love with the space and its potential, as did the various designers and engineers who were to work on the project over the years.

The space which Bridgemarket occupies was created as part of the Queensboro Bridge, completed in 1908 and designed by engineer Gustav Lindenthal and architect Henry Hornbostel. This 7,000 foot “through-type” cantilever bridge structure linked the Harlem Railroad with the Long Island Railroad and played a major role in

opening the Borough of Queens to development. The bridge was declared a New York City Landmark in 1973. The large spaces below the bridge's Manhattan landing are most notable for their tile vaults created by the Guastavino Fireproof Construction Company. Founder Raphael Guastavino adapted a technique from his native Barcelona called the Catalan vault, a fireproofing system that sets layers of flat terra cotta tiles at perpendicular angles in a basket-weave pattern "mortared together with a special mixture of Portland cement and Cow Bay sand." ("New York Bridgemarket Opens After Decades in Restoration", *Architecture Week*, N.3.1) This space, which later became known as "the cathedral," was made up of 36 of these vaults, self-supporting under compression. The vaults create 30 by 34 foot bays that range from 24 to 44 feet in height. Other similar Guastavino vaults are in Grand Central Station (over the Oyster Bar restaurant) and in Ellis Island on the ceiling of the Main Hall.

New York City created a public farmers market in this space in 1916 ("New York's own open air Les Halles"; newyorkmetro.com; Nov. 29, 1999) as part of a campaign to get pushcarts off city streets. The market ceased operation during the Depression and was taken over by the New York City Department of Transportation which for four decades used it as a garage, sign shop and storage room.

The first attempts to develop a plan to restore and reuse this space appeared about the time the New York State Dormitory Authority began construction of a residential complex on Welfare Island (renamed Roosevelt Island). In 1972 the Office of Midtown Planning

and Development initiated a study of the land use options for the Queensboro Bridge area to look for ways to make the area more economically productive. The first plan to emerge for the space called for a movie theater and exhibition center designed by architect I. M. Pei, but there was local opposition and the developers were not able to obtain construction funding.

In 1977 the New York City Public Development Corporation issued a request for proposals soliciting development plans for the site. The RFP was restrictive; it asked proposals to justify a design with estimates of revenues and jobs to be produced. Harley Baldwin won with a plan to create a European-style marketplace. Baldwin had achieved success with adaptive reuse projects in Aspen, Colorado,



Queensboror Bridge detail

and this represented a step up to “the big leagues” of development. He says that the site “desperately wants to be a farmer’s market,” and likened its potential to the great markets of the world, such as those in Lyon, Stockholm and Tokyo. He imagined ground-floor food stalls for independent dealers, including butchers, greengrocers, and pasta-makers; a new mezzanine level with six ethnic-food restaurants; and an open-air plaza containing two farmer’s market sheds, a greenhouse, a planting area, and parking. The proposal offered to restore “one of New York’s great architectural secrets” that is “hidden away behind grimy industrial glass,” with a development that will “combine the pride and quality of the small shopkeeper with the convenience of the supermarket.” Development cost was estimated at \$2 million, plus \$2 million of improvements by tenants.

Initially Baldwin seemed to hit all the right buttons for dealing with New York’s often opaque political and bureaucratic review and approval system. He selected the architectural firm of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer & Associates to design the market. HHPA had recently won acclaim as preservation architects with the restoration of Andrew Carnegie’s mansion for the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. Hardy, said one informant, was “the pied piper of the project and was viewed as being on the cutting edge of adaptive reuse in the 1970s in New York.” Baldwin also hired several politically connected attorneys and lobbyists to help him navigate the thicket of New York agencies for planning and approvals. Baldwin rented an apartment in the city and went to endless official and neighborhood meetings to sell his idea.

Early response was largely positive. The plan was endorsed by the Municipal Arts Society which called it “a sensitive proposal” and received approval from a panoply of city agencies. The one cloud on the horizon was opposition by the Sutton Area Community Association (SAC). SAC argued that development would increase traffic to the area. They feared that the trucks and cars brought by Baldwin’s market would worsen the air quality of the neighborhood (already below EPA standard on every day it was measured in 1977) and bring tourists and “undesirables” to an otherwise quiet residential area. One informant said that they worried that the area would become a busy Faneuil Hall type market.



Conran's and Food Emporium

When the Board of Estimate approved the project in late 1977, the opposition turned to the New York State Assembly for help (state approval was necessary because the bridge crossed a state waterway). SAC argued that the rent the city had agreed to charge (\$40,000 in the first year, increasing to \$100,000) was far less than the site was worth. The issue gained traction following closely after recent deals for the renovation of Yankee Stadium and Hunt's Point Market, both of which had raised eyebrows as city "give-aways." Roy Goodman, State Senator from the so-called "silk-stocking" district that included the bridge, came out against the proposal, as did other local politicians. In July 1978 the Assembly rejected the proposal citing inadequate compensation to the city. In November local politicians were elected on a platform of opposition to Bridgemarket.

In 1981, after three years of rejections by the Assembly (even though rental payments in the lease had been significantly increased), the city's legal counsel ruled that the market site was, after all, "not integral" to the bridge and therefore state approval was not needed. A 50-year lease was signed between the city and Bridgemarket Associates in the fall of 1983, and \$23 million of private financing was obtained from the Teachers Insurance & Annuity Association.

SAC continued to lobby against the plan. One member is quoted in *The New York Times* saying "our residential areas must be protected ... I don't think it is elitist to say that just because we live on Sutton Place." Richard Eyen, an SAC officer at the time, says that the community wanted to be treated as partners. He clearly resents characterization of opponents to the plan as elitists who were against

any change to the neighborhood. Rather, he says, they had the long-term maintenance of the landmark in mind throughout the fight. They opposed, for instance, any new building on the plaza as an unnecessary obstruction of views of the bridge and a loss of public open space. He felt they were fighting for the quality of life of the neighborhood. "We fought to make it better, not just to keep it out." Baldwin, and his new partner Sheldon Gordon (a developer of malls in Los Angeles and Las Vegas) met with SAC to negotiate an agreement and "cease fire." In 1984 an understanding was signed by which SAC would cease opposition and the developers would include a community meeting space in the market and provide funding for community beautification projects.

Construction was finally scheduled to begin in 1985 but had to be delayed while the Department of Transportation completed repairs that were badly needed after years of deferred maintenance. Plans were modified during another review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in order to assure that the view of the bridge structure was not obscured by the new facilities. Public hearings were held that were, according to then Chair Jennifer Raab, "long and not altogether pleasant," as residents used that forum to voice their objections to the project. Construction finally began in 1987, 10 years after Baldwin's successful response to the RFP, with demolition of DOT facilities and excavation of the site.

In April 1988 an environmental lawyer hired by SAC noticed that the area being excavated was larger than had been discussed in the public review sessions. The Community Board had reviewed



Vaults during construction

excavation for three underground levels, while other city agencies had approved a deeper, five level development. SAC filed suit to stop the construction. SAC members suggest it was hubris on the part of developers to increase the size of the project without consultation. Gordon, on the other hand, notes that the language of the original lease was “loose” and that he was allowed (even encouraged) by the city to make the project larger. He says he was assured by his lawyer that no further permits were needed, which was also the position the city administration took in court. The state court, however, agreed with SAC and work at the site was stopped while the suit worked its way through the appellate system.

Gordon notes that while the project was stopped he tried to remove himself from it. The legal fees and carrying costs were clearly more than he had anticipated, not to mention the frustration of working with the community and city agencies. He had, however, signed a completion guarantee with the city which insisted he live up to it.

The excavated site was a public hazard and the PDC tapped into the \$500,000 letter of credit put up by the developers to fill the hole with several hundred thousand cubic feet of earth. For the next few years the abandoned site was a sleeping space for homeless people, who were not deterred by frequent attempts to fence them out. The space was then, more than ever, an unpleasant and unsafe void. Residents reported that, rather than continuing up 1ST Avenue, they would walk a long block out of their way – to 2ND Avenue – to avoid passing 59TH Street, especially at night.

In the spring of 1994, to the surprise of many, the New York State Court of Appeals ruled for the city, saying that the inclusion of “an additional 50,000 square feet of below grade commercial space” did not change “the essence of what had been previously approved.” The city did not need to ask for Board of Estimate re-approval for an expanded site plan. Gordon said that he was disappointed – he had been hoping for a ruling against the city so that he could finally drop out of the project.

As the project started up again, however, it underwent a major change. Though developers still preferred the idea of a Lyon-type market, in a slow economy bank financing was only possible for larger and better-known tenants. Pamela Loeffelman, HHPA’s project manager, says “Harley (Baldwin) was revolutionary at the time,” but bankers thought of the market as similar to food courts that were once common and had become passé. The multi-level galleria with 50 small vendors was scrapped in favor of one large space housing three major tenants – a supermarket, a restaurant, and a high end housewares and furniture store. Sir Terence Conran came in to create the restaurant and store, and the natural food chain Bread and Circus was solicited for the market.

In 1995, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (for the third time) approved plans for a reduced program that provided 90,000 square feet of commercial space plus a small building on the public plaza, that later became the entrance to Conran’s. The homeless were removed from the site so that construction could begin again, though Glickman says that the Economic Development

Commission (EDC, successor to PDC) worked with the police to offer those who were willing a place in city shelters.

Still, development was not a smooth road. Bread and Circus was bought by Whole Foods, Inc., which decided that the site was too expensive and dropped out. Conran was negotiating with Dean and Deluca (a high-end specialty food store) for the spot when he found out that Food Emporium had been signed. Both Conran and the



Food Emporium entrance

neighborhood were concerned that the quality of the store would not be what had been promised. Conran went so far as to file a suit in 1998 again Bridgemarket Associates saying that he had been promised a “more upscale” neighbor. The suit was dropped when the Food Emporium agreed “to heed Conran’s very particular design stipulations” in their design. Food Emporium officials successfully wooed the neighborhood with catered parties and promises that this would be their flagship store. Apparently, most SAC members were tired of the fight by now and were unwilling to spend more in legal fees.

Restoration of the tile vaults was begun by the New York City Department of Transportation in 1997. Many of the vaults were in dangerous condition from the passage of time and soot that came from the oil drum fires of the homeless. Over 24,000 Guastavino tiles were repaired or replaced and groundbreaking for the new construction took place in 1998. Bridgemarket opened to the public in 2000, 23 years after the initial RFP.

CHANGING VISIONS

The story of Bridgemarket is one of multiple, changing visions, occasionally complementary, but at times in serious conflict. It began with an idea of the city, posed in the form of the RFP from the PDC/EDC to develop an empty and unused space into a commercial venture that would create jobs and tax revenues. The proposal that emerged represented a vision of developer Harley Baldwin, later taken up and supported by Sheldon Gordon, to provide the kind of exciting public marketplace of small, high quality vendors that had

been lacking in New York City. For the preservation community the proposal represented an opportunity to see private funds used to bring an exciting historical space from neglect and obscurity into public view. The community was fractured, with groups north of the bridge generally pleased by any plan that would enliven the space and enhance the area, while the more staid community to the south was concerned that change would deteriorate the quality of their neighborhood. In the end, the commercial product bore little similarity to the original plan and it was the preservationists’ vision that emerged as dominant.

DESIGN

Bridgemarket entails the adaptive reuse of a landmark structure. While there is new construction within and adjacent to the historic structure, the historic elements dominate. Legally and aesthetically, the landmark set the context and drove the development and the design.

The overwhelming feature of this site is the Queensboro Bridge. The area under the bridge, with its 36 Catalanian tile vaults, is enclosed by small pane, steel-framed windows and has been divided into two retail spaces. The larger of these spaces (38,000 square feet) is home to a Food Emporium supermarket. On the other side of a dividing wall is Guastavino’s Restaurant, named for the creator of the great vaults, which can seat up to 400 patrons. On the plaza is a new 3,800 square foot pavilion that serves as a retail space and entry to the mostly below-ground 35,000 square foot Terence Conran Shop.



Food Emporium windows

Design responsibilities evolved over the period of development. Originally, Hardy, Holzman, Pfeiffer Associates (HHPA), designed virtually the entire site for Harley Baldwin's market plan. In the final design, they were responsible for the site plan, the superstructure, overseeing restoration of historic elements, coordinating the various designers and engineers, and creating the raw space for the major retail sites. They also worked with and consulted to the designers for the interior areas. In the final plan, however, the primary responsibility for design of the interior spaces reverted to the tenants – the Food Emporium and Conran and Partners. Conran, working with HHPA, created the pavilion building and the store interior plan, developed the design for Guastavino's Restaurant and, by virtue of the 1998 lawsuit, was able to review and influence the Food Emporium design.



Food Emporium interior



Conran's interior

This adaptive reuse had to respond to a set of challenges posed by the unique nature of the space. The Landmarks Preservation Commission required that all new construction be structurally independent of the landmark, adding no additional load or stress to the bridge foundations and capable of being removed at some future date without harming the original structure. The new elements had to be visually distinctive to assure there would be no confusion about which was the original, landmarked structure. For that reason, preservationists applauded the redesign for the pavilion. The original entrance to Conran's "looked like a 19th century train shed," said Frank Sanchis of the Municipal Arts Society. The revised design, a steel and glass building with a curved roof, sharply contrasts with the historic features and provides "a modernist foil to the massive bridge."



Conran's interior

Preservationists wanted to be sure that visitors would get a sense of the size and volume of the original space created by the vaults. Baldwin and Gordon's original plans would have accomplished this by keeping the interior space whole, although some felt the various levels they planned for stalls and restaurants would have restricted the structure's visibility. The plan that was eventually realized intruded less on the height of the space but divided it into two separate retail areas. To mitigate this somewhat, glass was placed atop the dividing wall to allow visitors the ability to see through to the other side and to get a sense of the full volume of the space. "Still," said Brian Hogg, head of the Preservation Department at LPC, it is "an amazing use for the space." Hardy's design was "respectful of the historic structure and inaccessible portions of the

tile were made accessible," said Roger Lang of the New York Landmark Conservancy. He noted that it took advantage of the design and showed it off. "This use of space may be better than the original, which didn't foresee this space for use by the public. The Guastavino tiles were seen as utilitarian back then," said Frank Sanchis of the Municipal Art Society.

Restoring the terra cotta tiles on the fluted columns and vaults was a delicate process. Because they are held in place by compression, removing one could cause an entire vault to collapse. Removal and replacement involved extensive use of scaffolding and in some cases full wooden ceiling supports. Original tiles were chemically analyzed and new tiles were fabricated to match the color and the



Repaired vaults



Detail of vaults in Food Emporium

current weathered appearance of the existing tiles. In all, over 28,000 tiles were refurbished and replaced and the rest were chemically cleaned. In addition, for each of the nine 22- by 24-foot window openings, the glass and steel industrial sash was replaced with historically accurate copies that had significantly better thermal performance.

Designing the interior of the Food Emporium was particularly challenging. The plan had to fit around the columns and meet the requirements of the Landmarks Preservation Commission as well as those imposed by Conran. In some cases this meant avoiding design features that are traditionally used for marketing in this high volume, low profit margin business. The result is a one-of-a-kind



Food Emporium interior

supermarket space. Store designers did extensive testing of designs and colors for shelving and signs, to be sure they would fit the space. The art deco register lamps are intended to reflect the historic character. In place of overhead signs directing shoppers there are more discrete signs on the side of shelves as well as directories at the entrances. Along the southern window wall (facing 59TH Street) the store displays potted plants and trees as well as cookware on stainless steel wire racks. The broad expanse of glass floods the store with natural light during the day, although the heat gain requires sunshades to be kept down much of the year. Glass walls were provided around and over the southern entry to allow shoppers entering the store visual access to the full expanse of the vaulted ceilings.

All the environmental services expected for a modern structure had to be included without damaging or visually interfering with the historic structure. Pipes were embedded in the concrete floor slab for heating, ventilation ducts were cut through the north wall instead of ceiling (which was directly under the roadway); and intake air was drawn from a duct sixty feet above the roadway. “It was very challenging,” said Food Emporium designer Sam Burman. “We had to conceal the duct work and electrical wiring so they would not detract from the architectural integrity of the arches that were incorporated into the design.” (Haeberle). Machinery and services are hidden from view behind walls, especially along the north side of the space. Shelving and refrigeration units had to incorporate air-handling ducts, wiring and lighting, since these could not be located in the ceiling. Spotlights on the pillars show off



Guastavino's

the ceiling vaults and provide additional reflected ambient light. Fire sprinklers are the only modern element protruding from the historic ceiling.

Guastavinos Restaurant, at 26,000 square feet, can seat up to 400 patrons. Upon entering the restaurant one encounters a very long bar that is dwarfed by the scale of the vaults – up to 45 feet above the floor. Dining tables are arrayed on the first floor, behind the bar, as well as on the floating mezzanine level. On the east wall is a large scale ribbon-like sculpture that adds to the drama of the space. The two-story kitchen is completely glassed in and accessible from both levels. The gentle up lighting from sconces mounted on the columns helps the room feel more intimate. Preservation requirements limited structures or signs that might interfere with the view of the bridge. A proposed canopy entrance, for example, was disallowed.



Bridgemarket park with bridge

The landscaped garden was created as an amenity for the neighborhood and includes an historic fountain, originally built into the wall beneath the east end of the structure under the vaults. The fountain was lost for decades and recovered with much of its pastoral mosaic damaged. It was restored and relocated to the public garden.

FINANCES

The numbers below are broad estimates from various participants. Hard data on sources and uses was not available and in some cases was withheld as proprietary.

Bridgemarket

New York City

Exterior restoration, tile vaults, industrial sash \$7,000,000.00

Bridgemarket Associates

Original excavation (1988)	\$10 -12,000,000.00
Construction (1999)	\$12,000,000.00

Tenant Improvements (approximate)

Food Emporium	\$10,000,000.00
Terence Conran Shop/Guastavinos Restaurant	\$20,000,000.00

Total Project Cost (approximate)	\$60,000,000.00
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Construction/Permanent Loan – First Union Bank	\$19,500,000.00
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Bridgemarket park with restored fountain

IMPACT ON THE CITY

Bridgemarket has had a positive impact on the neighborhood in several ways. First, it has eliminated significant blight. An area some people were afraid to walk past has become an attraction, frequently mentioned in tourist guidebooks. Second, it provides major amenities to the neighborhood in the form of quality food shopping, and high end retail and restaurant, as well as a landscaped outdoor plaza. A local resident commented “It works. I’m sorry I was against it – this is great.”

Its effects on tax revenues, local business and development are harder to demonstrate, since the city has not yet conducted an economic impact study, although a recent mayor’s report suggested that 300 permanent and 350 construction jobs were created. There is, however, a good deal of opinion and anecdotal evidence. For instance, an article in *Home Textiles Today* (1/3/00) said that this was “not a traditionally high traffic area for retail stores” but with the coming of Conran’s “the neighborhood may be redefining itself.” The builder of a new high-rise condominium across the street, David Brodsky, indicated that Bridgemarket had influenced his development, although not decisively so. He said prospective condo buyers and tenants saw Bridgemarket as a positive feature for the neighborhood. Though, his development had started before Bridgemarket was completed, he said it “makes it easier to market quality of life for residential units.” Similar comments came from the real estate executives at Bed, Bath and Beyond. *Crane’s New York Business* noted a spurt of business activity in the area and attributed it, at least in part, to Bridgemarket. Conran agreed to

pay \$25 per square foot for his retail space, while current rates in the area have doubled. Other evidence can be seen in a recent RFP issued by the city which said “Guastavino’s at Bridgemarket is an excellent example of a successful redevelopment project. EDC selected Bridgemarket LP to develop the 61,000-square-foot-parcel of land below the Queensboro Bridge. The resulting 100,000-square-foot Food Emporium-Guastavino’s-Conran’s Design Store complex, known as Bridgemarket, is serving as a catalyst for the revitalization of the area around the Queensboro Bridge.”

From the perspective of the preservation community this project has been a great benefit to the city and one that improved through its various iterations. The prime benefit was saving the tile vaults and restoring them to their original state, making them accessible to the



Bridgemarket park fountain

population, even attracting more people by virtue of the reuse of the space beneath them. “It’s mind boggling that this is publicly accessible for the first time in 70 years,” said Brian Hogg. This is seen as a clever use of “found space” and something to be emulated in other parts of the city. For example, in a discussion of development in lower Manhattan a Community Board member suggested that “the arches under the Brooklyn Bridge could become artists, retail or commercial space, along the lines of the Bridgemarket development under the Queensboro Bridge.” (“Rebuilding New York: Not so Quiet on the Eastern Waterfront,” *Grid*; 2002)

FUTURE PLANS

The EDC has no future plans in the immediate area, except for work on local piers – it only works with city-owned properties and there are few left in the area. Community Board 8 member Schneider says that they are reviewing plans for a waterfront park which would be tied to renovations along FDR Drive. Development of that park, he says, is connected to the success of Bridgemarket.

Local developers are likely to continue building and opening retail stores in the area, depending on the state of the New York City economy. Bridgemarket itself has little room to grow or change; its main thrust will be to extend its customer base. Conran’s in particular needs to overcome relatively poor visibility and limited access to public transportation if it is to become a destination site and bring shoppers from Bloomingdales or other nearby home stores further east.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To return an important space to the public realm;*

The restoration of the Guastavino vaults is seen by the preservation community as a great success and benefit for the city. The vaults themselves have been carefully and sensitively restored and made a star attraction by the design of the development below and are regularly viewed by a great many people. The project also demonstrated that private capital could support sensitive development in a for-profit setting.

- *To stimulate economic growth in the area surrounding the Queensboro Bridge.;*

This project is viewed as a redevelopment success by the EDC although, from a purely financial perspective, its success must be tempered by recognition of the loss of a quarter of century of potential revenues during the long period of its development. It is likely that business growth in the neighborhoods near Bridgemarket has been considerably helped by its presence.

While Bridgemarket is a stunning setting that was sensitively designed, none of the retail uses is in itself unique, as, by contrast, the market of Baldwin’s original plans might have been. For the original partners, the development process was a frustrating odyssey that ended with a development of uncertain profitability.

- *To repair what had been an urban gap between the neighborhoods of Sutton Place to the south and the Upper East Side to the north;*

The physical gap between the two neighborhoods has certainly been eliminated by Bridgemarket, as has the danger inherent in the formerly derelict conditions of the site. It is unclear, however, the extent to which Bridgemarket has knit the neighborhoods to its north and south more closely to each other than they had previously been.

- *To continue the public pathway along 59th Street to the East River and along First Avenue between 59th St. and 61st St.*

Bridgemarket has contributed to the restoration of both of these pathways. If further park development occurs along the river, the route to the East River is likely to be more heavily used.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The selection committee was impressed with a number of aspects of Bridgemarket, particularly the important and unique contribution of its historic restoration of the arches. In its initial discussion, the committee remarked that this use of “found space” may be replicable in other cities where unused space under bridges creates derelict and even dangerous gathering places that foster crime. It was noted, however, that the restoration of historic Catalan vaults at a landmark bridge was undoubtedly unique to New York, and that under-bridge space in other cities might not offer the urban design opportunities of Bridgemarket.

The committee also noted the urban design contribution represented by Bridgemarket in the restoration, addition of new public open space, and continuation of public access along 59TH Street to the East River. The restoration and relocation of the historic fountain as part of a new urban park contributed a significant amenity to the cityscape, particularly in Manhattan where urban open space is scarce.

Although the committee felt the goal of re-knitting two neighborhoods was laudable, it was unclear to what degree this had actually been accomplished, and also to what degree Bridgemarket had contributed to this goal. The committee also found it unclear how much of the recent introduction of new home furnishing stores and other signs of economic development were due to the impact of Bridgemarket. They noted that BridgeMarket was a very unusual project with unique circumstances, one that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere.

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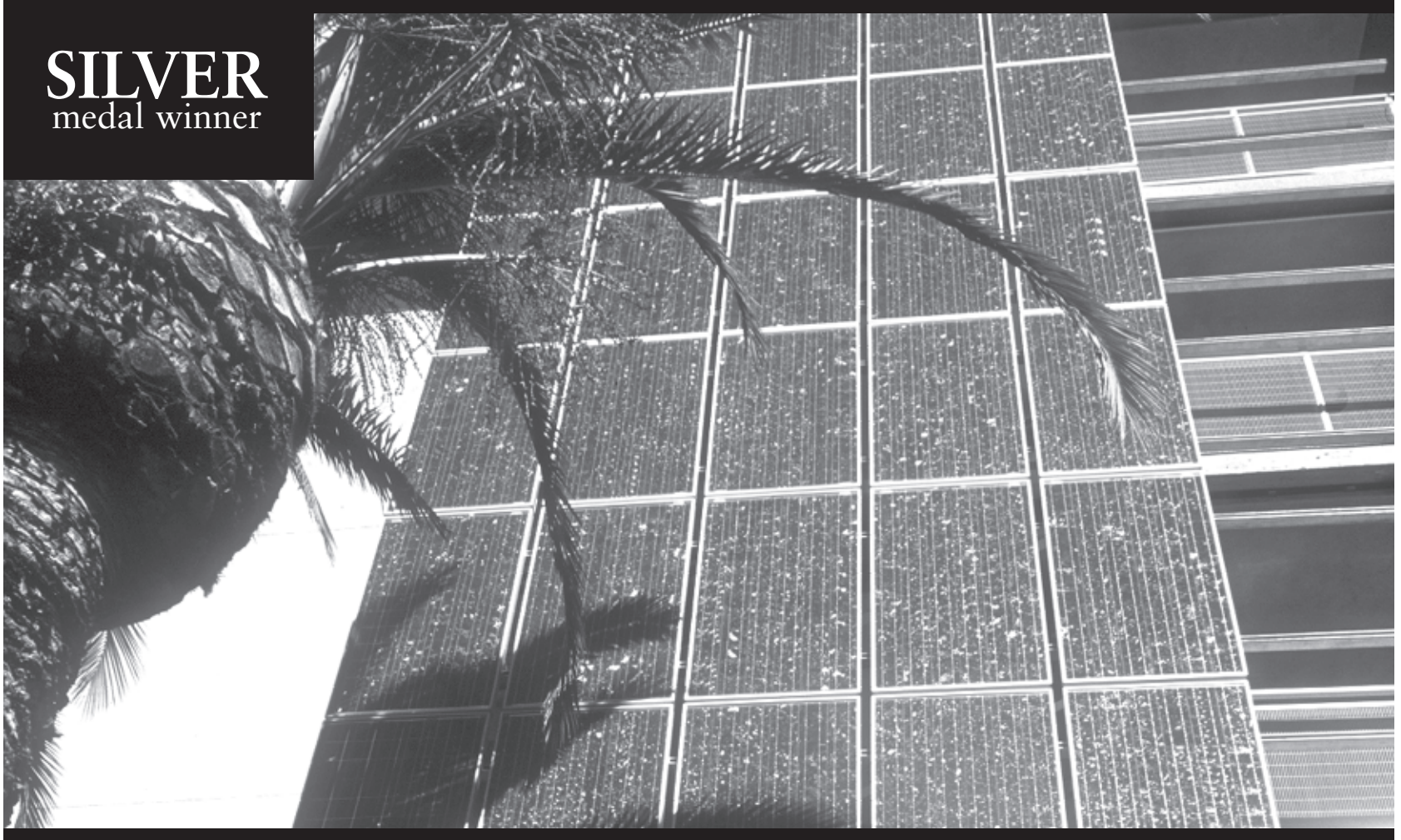
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SILVER MEDAL WINNER

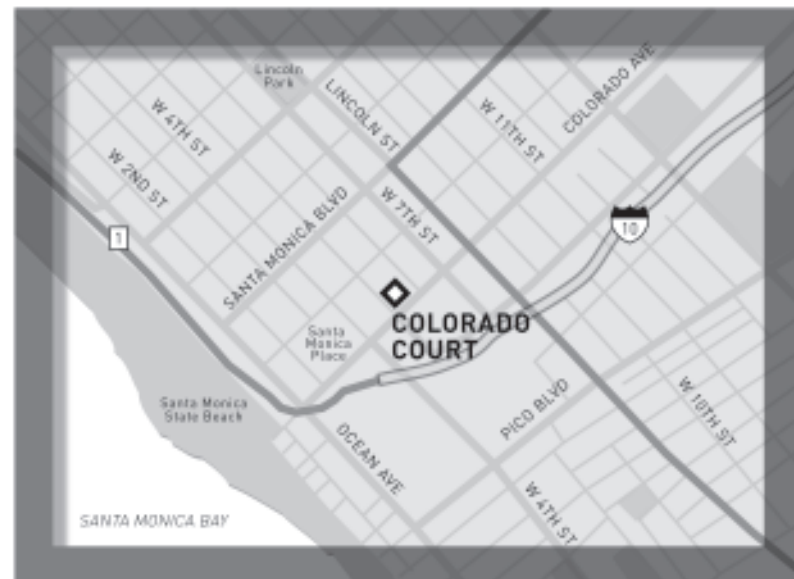
Bridgemarket

COLORADO COURT SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA

SILVER
medal winner



2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



COLORADO COURT AT-A-GLANCE

WHAT IS COLORADO COURT?

- 44 units of affordable, single-room occupancy (SRO) housing, located in downtown Santa Monica adjacent to transit and services;
- An innovative project that demonstrates the effectiveness of sustainable energy systems in combination with excellent design and housing affordability.

PROJECT GOALS

- To provide high quality, downtown housing to those who are most in need;
- To exceed current sustainability standards for this type of housing;
- To effectively utilize land by providing dense housing on an urban infill site;
- To showcase the integration of quality design and sustainable development;
- To achieve an exemplary level of collaboration between architect, city, and developer.

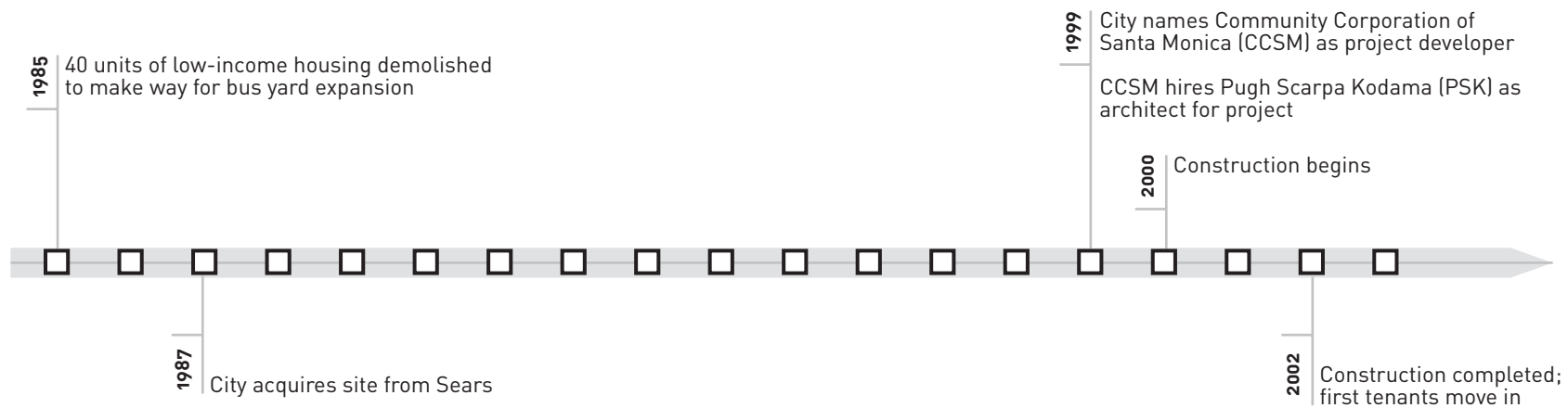
PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

- 1985
40 units of low-income housing demolished to make way for bus yard expansion.
- 1987
City acquires site from Sears.
- 1999
City names Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM) as project developer.
- 1999
CCSM hires Pugh Scarpa Kodama (PSK) as architect for project.
- 2000
Construction begins.
- 2002
Construction completed; first tenants move in.

KEY PARTICIPANTS

(Those interviewed indicated with an asterisk)

Lawrence Scarpa*, Architect
 Joan Ling*, Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM)
 Jim Kemper*, Santa Monica Redevelopment Authority
 Bob Moncrief*,
 Santa Monica Housing and Redevelopment Manager
 Craig Perkins*,
 Santa Monica Department of Environment and Public Works
 Michael Feinstein*, Santa Monica City Council (and former mayor)
 Angie Brooks*, Pugh Scarpa Kodama
 Walker Wells*, Global Green
 John Ingersoll*, energy consultant, Helios International, Inc.
 Pamela O'Connor*, Santa Monica City Council
 Tenants from Colorado Court*
 Jim Mount, AIA, Santa Monica



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

URBAN CONTEXT

Santa Monica, by most standards, is one of the most desirable living environments in the United States. Situated directly west of downtown Los Angeles on the Pacific Ocean, the city has a moderate climate and miles of wide sand beaches. Until recently Santa Monica has also maintained a relatively low density of development. It is, however, becoming increasingly attractive to moderate and upper income individuals who work in town or in neighboring Los Angeles. While the average income for a family of four in Los Angeles County is about \$55,000, in Santa Monica it is \$75,000. Similarly, the median income in Santa Monica is \$49,000, as compared to \$40,000 in California, and \$39,000 in the United States. In recent years Santa Monica has become one of the more densely populated coastal cities in Southern California and, at the same time, less and less affordable to low and moderate income households.

From 1999 (when the state mandated changes to the rent control laws to allow vacancy de-control), to 2003, the average rent for a two bedroom apartment increased from \$818 to \$1,528, and the median home value rose over \$500,000. Despite gentrification of the residential market, Santa Monica is rich in entry level service jobs, with a 20% increase in those jobs over the past five years. Many of those jobs are in the hospitality and food service industries

related to Santa Monica's popularity as a tourist attraction. Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM) estimates that there are approximately 75,000 such jobs (with as many as 20% more in the "underground economy") in a town whose overall residential population is only 85,000. The result is that service workers and other low income individuals can no longer afford to live in Santa Monica.

Income levels notwithstanding, Santa Monica has long been known as a progressive city. Its seven member city council boasts four Democrats, and three Green Party members, one of whom was recently mayor. Despite its traditionally progressive philosophy, however, the escalating costs of housing in Santa Monica have made it difficult to maintain any socio-economic diversity. Santa Monica is only 4% African American and 13% Latino, compared to 46% Latino in Los Angeles County. There are fewer families living in Santa Monica than in the past, with about half the number of children per household as the rest of Los Angeles. Twenty percent of the school population is bused from other districts. There is also a perception that, as a higher income population moves into Santa Monica, there is a decreasing level of concern for social justice and the plight of the poor, and an increasing concern about quality of life for higher income residents.

With the loss of rent control, the inventory of affordable units has been eroded by luxury condominiums and by large houses built on relatively small lots. CCSM, a major developer of affordable

housing in the city, estimates that 5,000 affordable units have been lost in the past several years due to the continuing movement of the very affluent into Santa Monica. There are currently 3,000 units of affordable housing remaining, of which CCSM owns 1,200 (or about 40%). While the city has continued to build affordable housing, both through city agencies and through arrangements with non-profit organizations, the shortage remains acute. CCSM receives 3,000 applications for affordable housing each year, competing for 100 to 150 vacancies.

The City Council views affordable housing as a priority and has addressed the shortage in a number of ways. Proposition R, approved in 1990, requires that 30% of all new housing units built be affordable, amounting to about 230 units per year. Also, in 1998, CCSM joined other housing advocates statewide in a campaign to overturn Article 34 of the state constitution which had required a referendum on all housing projects that were 100% affordable units. The new regulation only requires voter approval if the project exceeds 0.5% of the total housing stock. Even with this more favorable regulatory climate, there is a shortage of affordable units coming on line. In fulfilling their obligations, developers are allowed to choose between building the required affordable units or “buying their way out” of the requirement by paying into a city housing fund at a rate of \$6.00/square foot for apartments, and \$11/square foot for condominiums. Although these are relatively low rates, state courts have not supported higher fees.

Santa Monica has also had a long-standing commitment to sustainable development, articulated in its *Green Building Design and Construction Guidelines*, adopted in 2001, and the recently updated *Sustainable City Program*. Together, these policies and guidelines require and provide incentives for the inclusion of energy-efficient systems in new construction. Santa Monica is proud of the fact that they are the only city whose requirements exceed those of the State of California. Even so, some of those interviewed maintained that even more could be done to provide better incentives and more rigorous requirements.



Big Blue bus yard

PROJECT HISTORY

In 1987, the city-owned bus yard, at the corner of Colorado and 5TH Street expanded, resulting in the removal of 40 units of low income housing, most of which were in trailers. An outcry about



Colorado Court corridor

the loss of these units resulted in the city being required by the Rent Control Board to replace them as soon as possible. In 1989, under pressure to meet its commitment, the city acquired the Colorado Court site from Sears (whose store is still across the street) for \$1 million, (considered by those involved to be a bargain price), and shortly thereafter entered into an agreement with CCSM to develop and operate 44 low-income units at that site.

CCSM is currently the largest landlord in Santa Monica, owning and operating approximately 1,200 units of affordable housing, in 80 properties, with an average of 15 units each. They also oversee 1,000 Section 8 certificates. CCSM's mission is to serve residents who are in need, including those displaced by the development of luxury condominiums as well as those adversely affected by the loss of rent control.

As one might expect, CCSM often encounters resistance to building affordable housing in this area. Joan Ling of CCSM noted that they could deal relatively easily with arguments about parking or design, but that the hardest barrier to break down is prejudice against the poor. In response to NIMBY attitudes, CCSM holds community workshops and provides a high level of design quality in order to make the project more acceptable to affluent communities; design has essentially become a political strategy. In addition, many of their projects are in mixed-use or commercial neighborhoods in order to avoid the organized resistance of affluent neighborhoods. Similarly, introducing "green building" strategies helps gain support of an environmentally-minded community.



Colorado Court south elevation

CCSM originally hired another architect to develop a scheme for Colorado Court, but the relationship with that architect did not work, and in 1999 they brought on Pugh Scarpa Kodama (PSK). PSK, for their part, had long been interested both in affordable housing and in sustainable building systems and saw Colorado Court as an opportunity to “push the green agenda,” as well as to showcase the effective combination of green energy systems with affordable housing and good architectural design.

DESIGN

POLITICAL CLIMATE

When PSK first came on board, they inherited a design that did not maximize sustainable systems, but had already achieved at least one of two critical approvals at the city. In early consultations with CCSM and the city, however, Larry Scarpa found that Craig Perkins, Director of Environment and Public Works Management, had a deep commitment to sustainable design and was eager to assist with expediting the energy measures Scarpa wished to explore. The City Planning Department, another key reviewing agency, also had a mandate to encourage green building. Scarpa was thus able to convince CCSM that re-design would help win city approval and would result in a better and more efficient building.

According to city representatives, hiring Scarpa gave Santa Monica an opportunity to take sustainable design to a new level. In their view, if Colorado Court could become a model project, it would give the city leadership a basis for pushing the agenda forward in future projects.

SITE

Colorado Court is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Colorado and 5TH Streets, two major commercial thoroughfares in downtown Santa Monica. The site is within easy walking distance to a wide mix of uses — including a shopping mall, the Third Street Promenade (a pedestrian shopping street with a number of theater

complexes), Palisades Park (overlooking the ocean), the Santa Monica Pier, and the beach. To the south is the bus yard with the Santa Monica freeway immediately adjacent. Colorado Court is thus visually prominent as one enters and exits the freeway, standing out as a prominent landmark.



Colorado Court entry

Fifth Street is the entry point for Colorado Court, and has the most highly designed elevation. The community room and terrace, surrounded by a low wall and planting, are located along Colorado Avenue. Because of its prime location, Colorado Court presented an opportunity for PSK to create a building with a strong, recognizable design identity; one that could become a showcase for sustainable building systems.

ARCHITECTURE

Scarpa developed a simple, cost-effective scheme. His first decision was to re-orient the building to face mostly south and take advantage of sun for solar power and prevailing winds for ventilation. By stacking units vertically in three five-story towers, he was able to maximize the efficiency of plumbing and heating systems. Each tower has exterior single-loaded corridors or decks that provide access to light and air for the units.

The project utilizes wood framing over a concrete base structure, with a stucco exterior. The architect was careful to stay within the established height limit, thus avoiding the need for variances, since they were sensitive to the potential for NIMBY reactions.

The 5th Street elevation, on the southwest face of the building, is the most highly articulated. The separate residential towers result in varying setbacks from the sidewalk, creating an interplay of light and shadow that is further emphasized by the planted entry and mature palm trees. The staggered tower elevations also allow maximum sun exposure for south-facing entries, and dramatize the polycrystalline solar panels on the west elevations. The panels,



Detail of south elevation

which extend in a vertical formation from the top to the bottom of the building, absorb light through their deep purple multi-faceted crystalline surface.

The deep purple color, contrasted against a grey-green neutral stucco, forms an interesting and attractive element in the design. Somewhat unusually, the majority of panels are mounted vertically rather than at a more energy efficient angle, adding to their visual impact (see discussion below on energy systems). A low concrete

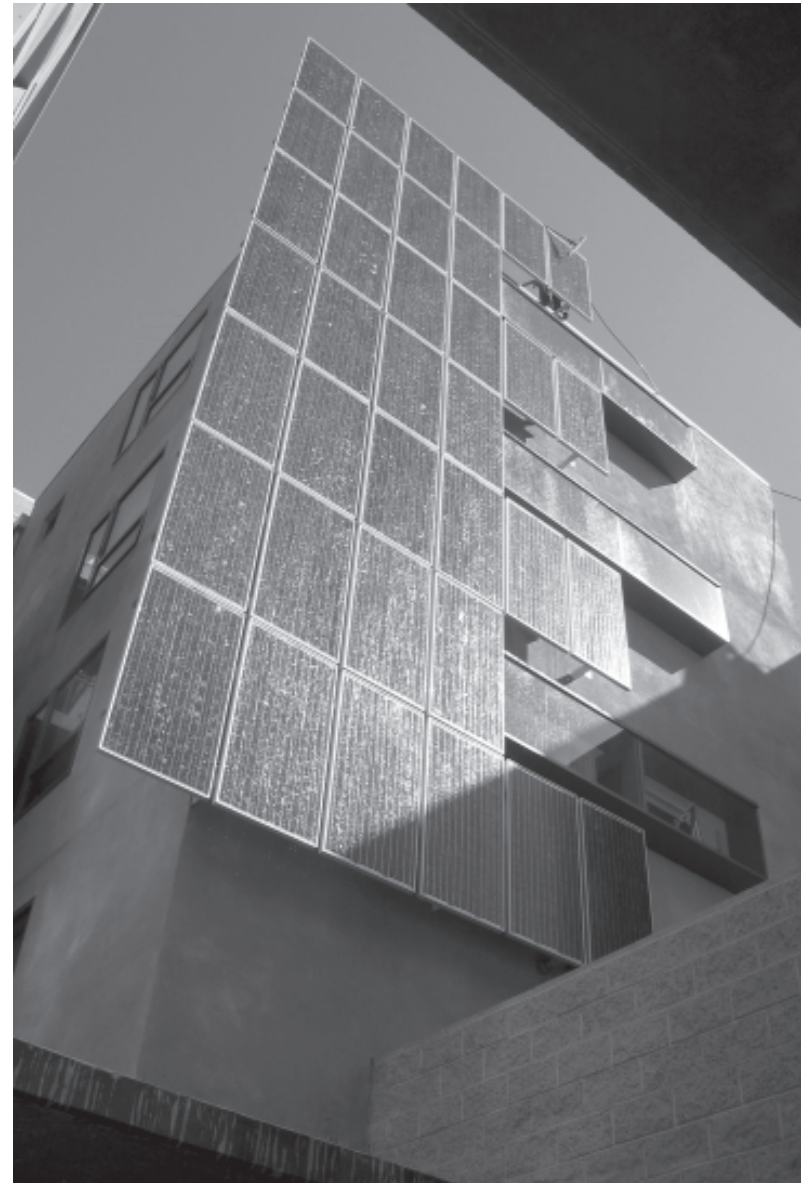


Fifth Street elevations

wall surrounds the entrance and low planting further defines the entrance. On the southeast side of the building, the side most visible from the freeway, an irregular galvanized sheet metal lattice adds a playful, reflective element to the design and again, gives the building a strong and recognizable design identity. The northwest elevation is punctuated by a highly structured pattern of small windows which is not as bold architecturally but which fits well within the overall design vocabulary, and captures the prevailing breezes for interior ventilation.



North elevation



Solar panels

The community space, a managers unit, and laundry are located on the first floor around a planted courtyard. Major exterior steel stairs provide vertical access at two corners of the project, together with an elevator located at its center. Funding for the project prohibited any mix of uses (such as retail), so the community space, which is raised above street level and is framed by a courtyard along Colorado Street, is intended to be used by tenants and as meeting space for other community groups. It has single-glazed windows on the Colorado Street side, a polished concrete floor, and a small serving kitchen. Since the time of the site visit the space has been fully furnished, and now offers computer/printer stations for use by tenants and other community groups.



Community room kitchen

All 44 units are single-room occupancy (SRO) or “efficiency” units, ranging from 300 to 375 square feet, with varied configurations between corner and interior units. All units include a living space (combination living room and bedroom) with adjacent galley kitchen, and separate bathroom. While small, there is room in the living space for a single bed as well as a small dining table, and seating area. The living space is carpeted, and all units have multiple windows to maximize light and natural ventilation.

The central entry features a tall wrought-iron gate and is well planted with indigenous plant materials. Two large palms, preserved during construction, provide shade and visual accents to the architecture. Twenty parking spaces are located below grade. Construction cost was \$156 per square foot.

ENERGY SYSTEMS

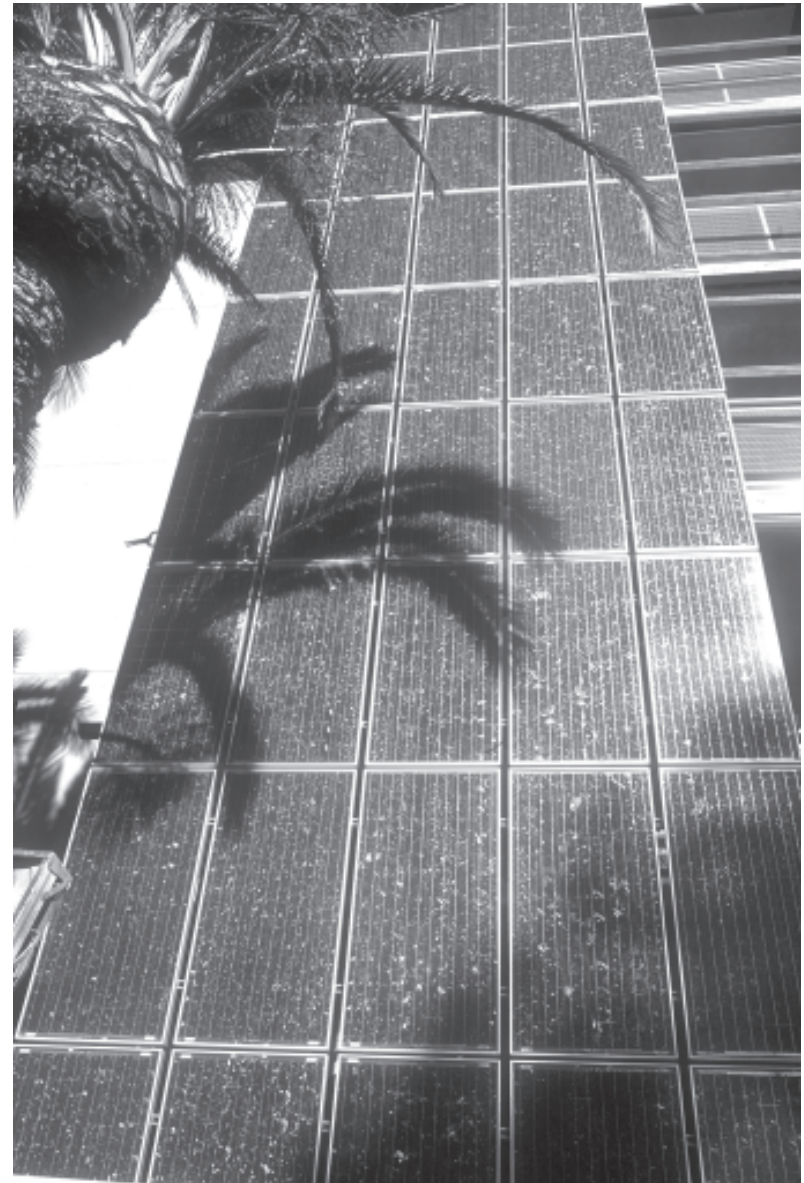
As project architects, PSK made every effort to “push the envelope” for green building systems. The 196 solar voltaic panels are the most visible of the green elements. Each panel measures 2’ by 6’ and most are aligned in vertical arrays on the 5TH Street elevation (a 10% less efficient arrangement than the relatively few panels in horizontal arrays above the roof and presumably still less efficient than if the panels were tilted toward the low winter sun). The polycrystalline panels have a higher theoretical energy output than “amorphous” panels; they are more sensitive, however, to shade and an entire array of 12 panels is sometimes taken off-line by the shade of the nearby palm trees. These particular polycrystalline

panels were specified by the architect partly for their efficiency and partly because they provide a recognizable design element, creating a signature identity for the building.

Energy Concept

The panels were designed to supply about 30% of the electrical needs of the building. The intent was that solar energy would be generated during daytime hours, when the sun is out, and excess energy beyond what is required during the daylight hours would be fed back into the power grid (with the meter running in reverse). The remainder of the required electricity, and all hot water and space heating, was to be supplied by a 28 kilowatt micro-turbine engine located on the roof of the building. A power meter was originally intended to automatically modulate the output of the turbine, based on the energy output of the solar panels. The turbine was designed to run during the two peak periods in the morning and evening for a total of 6 to 7 hours a day. A zero net draw of electricity from the grid was projected.

The turbine is fitted with a heat recovery system so that the waste heat can be captured for space heating and domestic hot water. Heat is stored as hot water at 175°F in an insulated 500 gallon storage tank. The heating system circulates through a heat exchanger while the hot water is circulated directly via a mixing valve (reducing the temperature to 115°F). A conventional boiler provides back-up hot water heating. Attractive, flat panel Runtal brand radiators are provided in each unit.



Solar panel detail

Installed Energy Systems

Although the interrelationships of energy systems are working generally as planned, the actual output of solar panels is less than expected. Because of the shading of one of the solar arrays by the palm trees, efficiency of the solar panel output has not reached the 30% mark, and is actually closer to 15% at the time of this writing. The project's energy consultant, John Ingersoll, states that this is also attributable to the fact that the solar system was downsized somewhat in the design phase, and that energy consumption has been slightly higher than what was anticipated. Maximum output as installed is about 15 kw.

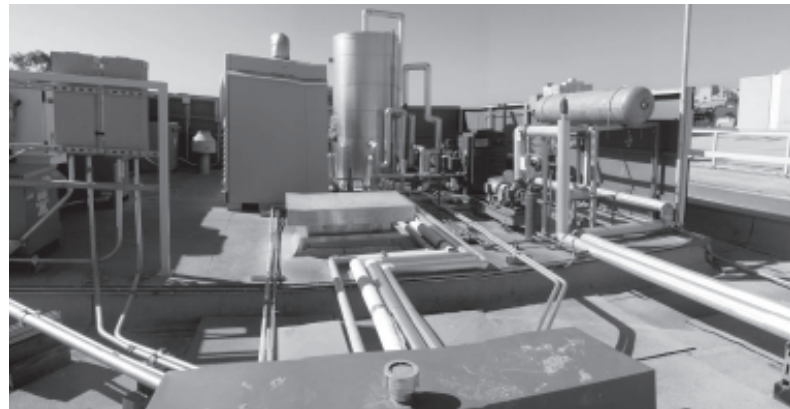
In addition, the complete control system for the micro-turbine was not installed as designed, so that the back-up boiler is heating the building during the day. This is being remedied by additional temperature controls. The Runtal radiators have built-in valves, but the tenants tend either to close them or open them all the way. This results in overheating and windows are often left open to compensate. Individual thermostats were traded off in the design stage for superior cellulose insulation in lieu of fiberglass. In his upcoming energy audit, Ingersoll will recommend training tenants in the operation of the units to avoid the overheating problem and the attendant waste of energy.

Other Green Measures

In addition to the solar panels, PSK used a variety of other energy-efficient systems in the building. For cost reasons they were not able

to use certified renewable resource wood for the framing, but the concrete slabs are fortified with fly ash, a post-industrial by-product of steel manufacturing which is effectively re-cycled through this use. Cabinets in the units are made of formaldehyde-free particle board, and non-CFC refrigerators were selected. Lighting is supplied by compact fluorescent, low-mercury bulbs. These bulbs use only 25% of the electricity of a standard bulb and do not contain hazardous chemicals. They can, therefore, be disposed of in a conventional landfill and are not considered toxic waste as is a conventional fluorescent lamp. Exterior lighting, including the garage and stairways, is controlled by photo cells and motion sensors so that energy is not wasted when no movement is detected. Ingersoll estimates that the exterior lights are on only about half the hours they would be with conventional controls.

Flooring is linoleum, and the insulation is recycled cellulose (newspaper), blown into the walls at R-21, and roof at R-30 (now



Energy equipment on roof

the required R-value for roofs as per the California Energy Commission; R-13 is the California requirement for walls.) The cellulose insulation is mixed with an adhesive to ensure that all corners and areas around pipes are filled and that the material does not settle over time, creating unprotected gaps common with fiberglass insulation. In addition, all penetrations by pipes and the like were caulked to reduce heat loss.

The windows in the project are the result of consultation between Ingersoll and the manufacturer. Double-paned aluminum windows were specified by the architect. Aluminum frames conduct cold and are thus not typically very energy efficient. A local manufacturer was the preferred supplier and Ingersoll worked to modify their conventional window to a more energy-efficient design. The spacers

between the glass panels were changed from aluminum to stainless steel, and krypton instead of argon gas was used between the panes (it is heavier and less convective). The result is an aluminum window with a U-value of 0.4 (a very good number by California standards, but a good-practice standard in the Northeast) as opposed to the supplier's standard of 0.57. The planting around the building is consistent with "xeriscape" design, utilizing native plant materials that require very little water. Permanent irrigation systems are installed for the plantings. Most building materials were purchased from local manufacturers, another PSK commitment.

Because of the insulation, window specifications, and other passive solar features of the building, interior hot water heating units were able to be downsized from the original design. Although the project



Typical unit



Xeriscape design

has not achieved the goal of zero space heating demand, the demand has remained relatively low, particularly for south facing units, and interior units that have only two exterior walls.

As a pilot project, the city supported design of an adjacent alley to capture storm water runoff from the project and from a portion of the adjacent bus yard. It uses a permeable paving material that “captures” water from the site and roof runoff and collects it in on-site retention tanks. From there it percolates back into the ground, minimizing flows off-site into the storm drains and Santa Monica Bay. The system does not have any special filtering for grease or other vehicle residues, as contamination amounts are deemed to be relatively small. Instead, the soil and the microbes are intended to serve as a natural filter for any hydrocarbon contaminants.

At the time of writing, an application was pending for a LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) gold rating for Colorado Court.

Other Energy Issues

In planning the energy systems, PSK met early on with Southern California Edison about the possibility of “net metering”; i.e., selling back excess energy (generated by the solar panels during the daytime) to the public grid at retail price while charging the project only for units beyond what was credited. The intent was to create a “zero cost” electrical system. According to PSK, Edison was initially

agreeable and aware from the beginning that the micro-turbine was part of the design. However, Edison subsequently refused to admit Colorado Court to this program because of its total size and its co-generation system (the micro-turbine). The issue was resolved, however, with new legislation that allows projects up to 100kw to be “net metered.” At the time of this writing, Colorado Court was still paying retail prices for power used, while receiving lower wholesale rates for power returned to the grid. This situation has been a bone of contention between Edison and the city, CCSM, and the architect. All are continuing to pursue a remedy with the California Public Utilities Commission.

Bringing all of the development partners along in the “green” process was not easy. CCSM was skeptical at first about many of the PSK-proposed systems but, over the length of the project, came to support them and is now using PSK to design other projects. All the parties had to invest extra time and money in the project because it was being done differently. For many of the energy systems, however, special funding was available, minimizing additional costs (see Finances). By the time construction began, most were firmly committed to the project’s green direction.

Construction of Energy Systems

Project participants experienced a learning curve on Colorado Court. Building trades and the Santa Monica Building Department, who had not been involved in the design process, had little experience with these new materials and systems. Construction of

Colorado Court involved three major challenges: with Southern California Edison, which was discussed above; with the Building Department which was unwilling to accept certain proposed practices; and with the solar panel manufacturer which was sold to another company during the course of construction. The manufacturer discontinued the unit the architect had specified but in the end agreed to a custom run to fill the order for Colorado Court. The panels received on the job were sized differently than they had been originally, thus requiring redesign of the framing system which resulted in a \$14,000 cost increase.

A more systemic problem was the interface with the Building Department. For example, the Department required a “modification” in order to allow the solar panels to be attached to the exterior stair, even though a permit had been issued with that design feature. They also requested initially that the steel stairs have one-hour fire protection because of the proximity of the solar panels. However, because this was not a code requirement, or on the permitted plans, this request was ultimately withdrawn.

There were several additional changes required by the Building Department that also cost the project time and money. In one instance, the building department disallowed threaded pipe connections for the gas supply to the micro-turbine after they had approved it and it had been installed. This decision required the project to remove finished stucco walls and replace threaded connections with welded joints. The building department reasoned

that the gas pressure in that system was higher than elsewhere and required the extra precaution, despite the fact that PSK had tested far higher pressures with no problem. In another instance, mesh panels behind every solar panel were required because the panels were reachable from the stair and they were concerned that if someone attacked a panel on the upper levels with a metal blade they would be subject to electrical shock (a questionable notion since the voltage is low). Although the costs associated with these changes only totaled about \$20,000, the most serious consequence was a six month delay in occupancy.

Operation of Energy Systems

The energy systems appear to be working well following some initial bumps. In the first couple of weeks there were difficulties regulating hot water temperatures due to a malfunctioning heat exchanger on the turbine engine. Temperature regulation has since been achieved, although it is controlled for the system overall rather than by individual units (which the developer would have preferred but which was too expensive). One tenant we met with, who occupied a south-facing unit, had never turned on her heat and said the breezes that circulated through her apartment also provided adequate cooling.

An audit of the energy systems was being conducted at the time of writing. Panel performance is being closely monitored by John Ingersoll who has been contracted by the city for a year-long assessment. There is already an indication that some adjustments

will need to be made. One of the large palm trees shades several of the panels. If one panel is not functioning properly it knocks out a 12-panel array, much like a string of Christmas tree lights. There is talk of removing some of the palm fronds to reduce shading. The non-galvanized steel stairs and the screens that back the solar panels are showing signs of rust from the salt air environment. The metal will eventually have to be treated.

TENANTS

Colorado Court is CCSM's lowest income project. CCSM's average rent for family housing is \$500 per month, while Colorado Court

units, which are considerably smaller, rent for between \$300 and \$380 per month. CCSM selects tenants from their database of questionnaires that have been filled out by those seeking affordable housing. These people are identified through a wide variety of outreach methods employed by CCSM including social service agencies, churches, and word of mouth.

Many of the Colorado Court tenants are formerly homeless and/or in need of special services. 37% are low-income workers with jobs such as playground staff, retail clerk, nanny, carpenter, security guard, and food service workers; 63% are on fixed incomes and have special needs. The ethnicity of the tenant group is mixed. 65% is white, 19% black, and 7% Latino, quite different from the Los Angeles region in general, whose population is predominantly Latino. Putting these populations together is not the norm, but was advocated by some of the social service agencies working with CCSM. They felt such an ethnic mix lessens the isolation of homeless populations and assists in their re-integration into society.

CCSM acts as landlord and maintains a close relationship with their tenants. They have a tenant manager and can refer to a wide network of social service agencies (services are not provided on site). CCSM has a long track record in this area and has learned how to reduce "behavioral problems" through quick intervention. At Colorado Court, where one-third of the tenants are coming out of shelters, there is a learning curve concerning how to live in homes of their own and in close proximity to neighbors. CCSM is also learning; their usual tenants are families rather than SRO



Typical unit kitchen

occupants, and in managing the tenant population at Colorado Court they are encountering situations that are new to them as well.

The first tenants moved in during June 2002 and at the time of the site visit some units had been occupied for several months and others for only a few weeks. In meeting with a group of tenants, who were mainly women, they seemed to be quite pleased with the project. They reported that they felt secure and appreciated being able to walk into town, to the beach, or to services. They also liked the “entertainment” offered by street activity, especially the nearby Third Street Promenade. Others commented on the fact that tenants were friendly and that they were getting to know each other.



Tenant entry

FINANCES

The financing of Colorado Court was straightforward. The land was purchased by the city and leased for 87 years to the developer; the city retains ownership of the land and CCSM owns the improvements. The city provided \$4 million to the developer which covered the bulk of development costs. Other sources of credits and funds were identified by the architect and developer who obtained a number of rebates and cost savings totaling close to \$400,000. For example, \$250,000 was provided by the Regional Energy Efficiency Initiative, a state funding source whose income derives from utility bills.

The sustainable energy systems together cost about \$500,000, and the overall construction cost was \$4,674,000, or \$156/square foot. Additional soft costs of \$1,176,000 bring the total development cost to \$5.8 million. The tables detail the sources and uses of funding for Colorado Court.

The costs of operating Colorado Court are not yet fully understood. As mentioned above, the city has commissioned a detailed energy audit, but the results will not be available until the year-long study is completed. Early indications are that the systems are functioning efficiently and will show operational cost savings. It should be noted that Colorado Court has the advantage of extremely low debt service because of the degree of funding by the city, and because of the city's interest in the green energy measures.

Financial Summary for Green Measures Source: Community Corp. of Santa Monica

Energy Efficient Measures

Passive Energy Efficient Strategies	\$20,000
Upgrade building Wall Insulation System	\$30,000
Upgrade Building Roof System	\$5,000
Upgrade Windows	\$40,000
Utilization of EE Lighting Devices	\$22,000
Distributed Power Gen. and Co-Gen System	\$66,000
Solar PV Power Generation Panels	\$164,000
Solar PV Power Generation Inverters	\$30,000
Solar PV Power Gen-Unistrut and Electrical Hardware and Installation	\$110,000

Total EE and Distributed Power Gen. \$487,000

Consulting on EE Systems	\$49,500
Storm water Collection System	\$30,000
Construction Waste Recycling	\$11,515

Green Materials Upgrade

Linoleum and Recycled Carpeting Upgrade	\$6,000
Credit for OSB instead of Plywood	\$(2,000)
MDF cabinets	\$11,000

Total Green Materials \$15,000

Total \$597,515

Income and Operating Expenses Source: Community Corp. of Santa Monica

Income

Tenant Payments	\$190,872
Other Income (Laundry)	\$1,200

Total Gross Income \$192,072

Less Vacancy Rate \$(9,604)

Effective gross Income \$182,468

Expenses

Administration	\$14,200
Management Fee	\$21,680
Utilities	\$24,816
Payroll/Payroll Taxes	\$16,320
Insurance	\$8,800
Maintenance	\$39,764
Water/Sewer	\$18,480

Subtotal Operating Expenses \$144,060

Property Tax	\$9,320
Replacement Reserve	\$18,000

Total Operating Expenses \$171,380

Net Operating Income \$11,088

Less Debt Service/MHP	\$6,841
Available Cash Flow	\$4,247

Funding Sources

Source: Pugh Scarpa Kodama

Sources	
City of Santa Monica	\$4,009,000
Multi-Family Housing Program (California State Dept. of Housing and Comm. Dev.)	\$1,629,000
Affordable Housing Program (Federal Home Loan Bank - administered by Bank of America)	\$207,000
Bank of America (grant)	\$5,000
Total	\$5,850,000
Rebates	
California Energy Coalition - Regional Energy Efficiency Initiative (REEI)	\$(258,000)
Southern California Gas Company - Co-generation Rebate	\$(18,000)
California Energy Commission Emerging Renewables Buydown Program	\$(123,000)
Total	\$(399,000)
Costs	
Total Construction Costs - \$156/square foot	\$4,674,000
Total Soft Costs	\$1,176,000
Total Construction Costs	\$5,850,000

IMPACTS

Councilwoman Pamela O'Connor stressed the degree of concern at the City Council about sustainable energy systems. In her view, Colorado Court is important because it combines two major city goals: developing sustainable projects and adding to the inventory of affordable housing. She feels the southwest façade with the solar panels has become recognizable around town and has increased interest in energy efficient design because it is seen by so many people.

Walker Wells, who works with the international organization Global Green, is a strong advocate of Colorado Court. Global Green is concerned with sustainable design and feels that building sustainable projects in urban areas is the key to long term protection of the natural environment. Global Green did a study for Santa Monica's housing department using Colorado Court as a model for how to expand lending criteria to include sustainability measures. They also developed a case study on Colorado Court (posted on their web site) and use it as an example of one of only about 10 such projects in the country. Wells regularly features Colorado Court in speaking about sustainability around the world as part of their campaign to encourage combining advanced energy systems with excellence in architectural design.

Craig Perkins of the Santa Monica Environment and Public Works Management Department was an advocate for the project. In his view, Colorado Court was intended as a demonstration project to showcase the feasibility of sustainable design for all new projects, but particularly for affordable housing. He feels that the finishes

and systems used at Colorado Court positively impact the health of the occupants and of the community. Perkins feels that, as a result of Colorado Court, affordable housing developers in Santa Monica as well as the broader region have begun to design their new projects with energy efficiency and sustainability as core principles.

Colorado Court has attracted considerable attention from the development and design communities. According to the applicant, in the last 12 months Colorado Court has been visited by over 3,000 people and has been the subject of numerous workshops and case studies. The application itself included at least eight articles and publications on the project from local, state and national publications. It is featured on the city's, CCSM's and Global Green's websites.

The project has been the recipient of many awards in addition to the Rudy Bruner Award. It received the 2003 national American Institute of Architects Honor Award for Architecture; the 2003 National American Institute of Architects Professional Interest Area (PIA) Housing Award in multifamily housing; and the 2003 American Institute of Architects Committee on the Environment—Top 10 Green Projects award. Other organizations including the Los Angeles Business Council, the World Habitat Organization, and the Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing have recognized Colorado Court for its design excellence and innovative energy systems.

Colorado Court claims impacts on state lending policies as well. Both Global Green and CCSM have lobbied successfully for the

state tax credit allocation system to provide points for energy efficiency, a factor now included in the Multi-Family Loan Fund. Also, as mentioned above, Scarpa, CCSM and the city have lobbied the California Public Utilities Commission to increase the limit for net metering for renewable energy systems, to credit energy at the same retail rate customers pay, and to change the language and criteria for how an eligible customer is defined. If successful, this will help encourage more widespread use of multiple alternative energy generation sources.



Solar panels

Larry Scarpa, his partners, Joan Ling and others prominent in the field of affordable housing and sustainable systems have joined together to form a new organization called Livable Places, Inc. who's goal is to "promote a sustainable Los Angeles region," and they have begun several pilot projects in the area. They plan to develop more model projects that demonstrate new visions of sustainable design, including green space, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, new housing types, more efficient land use, and a balance between cars and public transit. All of their projects target the urban core, with the goal of sparking further revitalization efforts by the private sector and non-profit developers. Livable Places is already attracting attention, and in our conversations with representatives of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, (LISC), it was clear that they felt Livable Places was an "up-and-coming" initiative and one in which LISC was keenly interested.

FUTURE PLANS

With Colorado Court complete, CCSM is continuing to build affordable housing around Santa Monica and has hired PSK for a new housing project on another prominent downtown site. When questioned by the site visit team about the extent to which CCSM will replicate the kind of systems used at Colorado Court, they were somewhat non-committal. PSK is currently working on four other projects in the Los Angeles area where they will employ these or similar technologies.

In the next year, Colorado Court will complete a comprehensive energy audit which will give more detailed information about energy use and patterns and will allow them to learn which of the

systems has proved most effective. The likely granting of a LEEDS gold certificate will place them more formally in the national energy rating system.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To provide socially and financially responsible affordable housing in the downtown.*

Colorado Court provides 44 units of very affordable housing in the heart of downtown Santa Monica. Its mix of tenants includes some formerly homeless individuals, some in need of social service support, and some who are considered working poor. Colorado Court is well designed, and fits well into the physical fabric of the city. The city provided large subsidies for construction and for the energy systems (which, while environmentally responsible, may or may not achieve financial payback).

- *To provide high quality living conditions to those who are most needy.*

There is little doubt that the tenants of Colorado Court are very much in need of the housing and services the project provides. CCSM selects applicants from their own system that assesses need on the basis of multiple factors, and is able to connect tenants with the social services needed to assist them in independent living.

While the units are small, they are well designed and appointed and the location is highly desirable.

- *To provide a new model for sustainable housing that exceeds current standards.*

Colorado Court is apparently one of the few projects in the country to combine high quality architecture and sustainable energy systems in affordable housing. It is considered by Global Green, the City of Santa Monica, and the architectural press to be a strong and successful model for this housing type.

- *To effectively utilize land by providing dense housing on an urban infill site.*

Colorado Court is located on a prominent corner in downtown Santa Monica, surrounded by buildings from two to five stories tall. Its scale is appropriate to the surroundings and it has achieved an overall high design quality for a dense infill project. The fact that the units are quite small contributes to making this possible.

- *To showcase the integration of quality design and sustainable development.*

Colorado Court is well designed and the combination of orientation and location on a prominent corner do showcase the colorful solar panels that have become a hallmark of the project. Other sustainable products used throughout the project contribute to the quality of the building, and demonstrate that there is no inherent conflict between good design and sustainable systems and products.

- *To model a new level of collaboration between the architect, the city, and the developer.*

Through its focus on sustainable energy systems, Colorado Court has forged a new alliance between the public, private and non-profit sectors. Those within city government who are advocates for more efficient energy systems view Colorado Court as a model and a basis for moving further in this direction in terms of policy and regulation. CCSM now feels that these systems combined with affordable housing have political value and give them another “hook” for persuading people of the importance of their projects. For the architect and others concerned with long-term environmental issues, such as Global Green, the project shows that sustainable systems are feasible for both energy generation and finishes. The fact that the architect, developer, and the city representatives are lobbying together for changes in Public Utility Commission regulations attests to their mutual commitment to the ideas contained in Colorado Court.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The selection committee was impressed with a number of aspects of Colorado Court. They felt that it is very important to continue to provide affordable housing within wealthy communities, despite ongoing resistance, and to reduce the operating cost for its residents. In this, Colorado Court could be considered a model and the selection committee was pleased that the designers and

developers were engaged in influencing public policy to make this kind of project more feasible in the future. They also appreciated the ways in which tenants had personalized their units, and thought it showed a degree of comfort and ownership of the units.

The combination of quality architectural design with energy efficient systems was also considered significant by the committee. They felt it was important to overcome the institutional image of affordable housing, and that Colorado Court was a well-designed addition to the cityscape. The fact that the solar panels made it instantly recognizable, and added to the design quality, was seen as a plus.

The committee also had some reservations about Colorado Court. It was clear that a great deal of money had been invested to achieve energy efficiency. (Even though much of the funding came from grants and rebates it still represents the investment of resources). But it was not yet clear that there would be an economic payback or even that the energy systems themselves would be able to meet their performance goals. This was due in part to the misunderstanding with Southern California Edison about net metering, and was in the process of being negotiated, though the outcome was not certain.

The financing for the project was also very unusual, in that the city provided most of it as a grant, without requiring debt service. This makes the project itself viable, but does not necessarily create a replicable model. Also, there seemed to be missed opportunities for

tenant involvement both in the planning phase (perhaps with tenants who had been displaced or surrogates) and also in the operational aspects of a green building; there was no visible tenant empowerment and the project's two main issues – tenants and energy systems – did not appear to have been treated as a single, integrated whole. Again, this may develop as the project becomes fully occupied, and tenants have the opportunity to gather in the common space, and develop more programming and community activities there.

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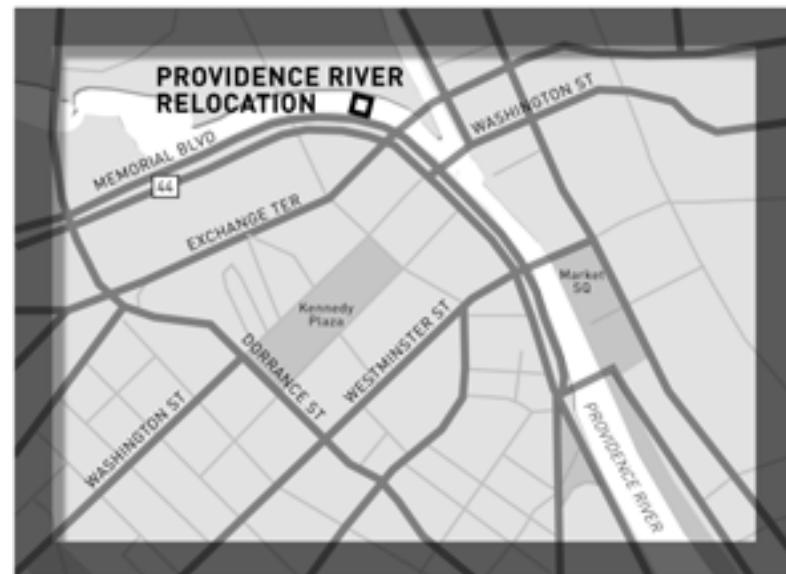
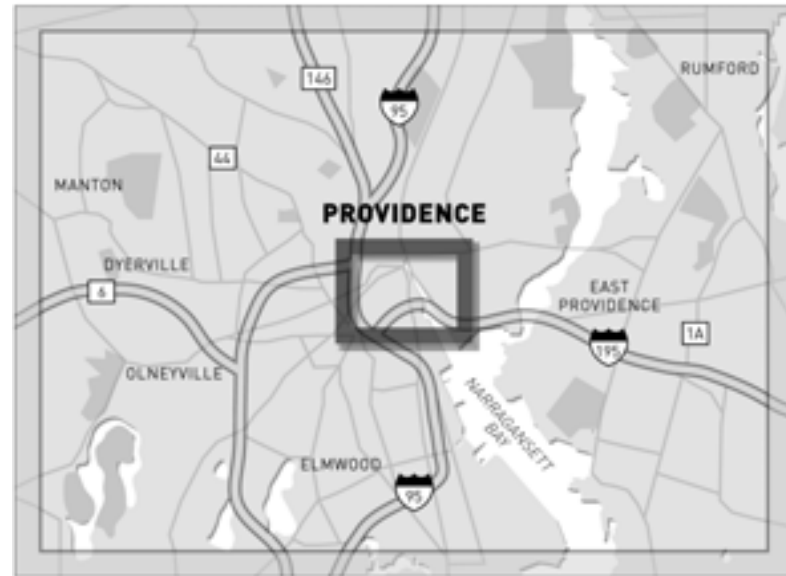
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Issue 25.

PROVIDENCE RIVER RELOCATION PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND



2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



PROVIDENCE RIVER RELOCATION AT-A-GLANCE

WHAT IS THE PROVIDENCE RIVER RELOCATION?

Providence River Relocation is a transportation- and open space-based project that grew out of a 30-year history of bold planning efforts undertaken by a series of public and private entities. Known formally as the Memorial Boulevard Extension Project, river relocation was intended to improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows in and through downtown and to reclaim Providence's historic rivers, while setting the stage for an impressive public arts program (including the WaterFire events) and the dramatic revitalization of downtown. Part of the River Relocation Project overlaps the river corridor portion of an earlier (1979) *Capital Center Project Development Plan* and still earlier (1978) *Railroad Maintenance and Improvement Project*.

Part of the challenge in assessing this project is its complex history. As Ron Marcella, former director of the Providence Foundation, points out (in a letter to the Bruner Foundation), all of the pieces are inextricably linked. "WaterFire, as we know it, would not have been created had not the rivers been relocated. The rivers would not have been relocated had not the Providence Waterfront study been initiated and the railroad tracks been relocated. The railroad tracks would not have been relocated but for the opportunity to create the Capital Center project. The foregoing initiatives are inextricably connected, each succeeding initiative building on the success of the

preceding project.” The application submitted for Rudy Bruner Award describes a project referred to as the Providence River Relocation and that is the focus of this chapter – which, however, will also address the context within which the project unfolded.

The sequence of projects (both preceding and directly related to the river relocation) resulted in the following changes to downtown:

1. River-related infrastructure

- Relocation of the human-made confluence of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers where they join to form the Providence River, including uncovering two-thirds of a mile of the rivers;
- Development of three docking sites for boat traffic (accommodated by new arched bridges and by river dredging).

2. Highway, rail, road and pedestrian systems

- Rail relocation to a new below-grade alignment with construction of a new train station above;
- Development of miles of auto-free riverwalks linking small parks and plazas, and twelve new bridges restoring historical pedestrian links among historical College Hill, downtown historical districts, and Capital Center;
- Construction of an interstate highway interchange between a previously dead-ended belt highway and new boulevard;
- Realignment of a major downtown arterial connected to a new boulevard, and construction of local roads that serve the Capital Center district.

3. Parks and open space

- Relocation of a World War I monument from a traffic roundabout known as “Suicide Circle” to Memorial Park;
- A new urban park (WaterPlace Park) with restaurant, amphitheatre, fountain, boat landing and multiple pedestrian connections (a total of 11 acres of new open space consisting of rivers, riverwalk and parks).

4. Management and economic development

- Public art programming in the new open spaces including “WaterFire” and “Convergence;”
- Creation of the 77-acre Capital Center Special Development District;
- Over \$1 billion of new investment in the Capital Center District with an additional \$182 million outside of it.

PROJECT GOALS

The Capital Center Special District (*Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, Providence, Rhode Island Railroad and Highway Improvements*, EIS, 1980)

- Address adverse impacts on historical resources through the creation of the Capital Center Commission as the enforcer of design guidelines that protect and enhance historical resources.
- Create new, marketable commercial land without demolishing existing buildings in the downtown national register district. Attract major new users who might not otherwise locate in Providence.
- Enhance vehicular access to the project area, the historic State House, and downtown.

- Create an ordered sense of public spaces in a high-density urban district where large, contiguous structures would define the space.
- Create a visual and physical linkage between downtown and the State House, emphasizing views of its massive Beaux Arts dome and the Independent Man statue on its peak.

River Relocation Project (*Memorial Boulevard Extension Environmental Assessment*, 1984), had the following goals and the 1983 *Providence Waterfront Study* adopted by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the City of Providence stated the following goals:

- Re-connect the College Hill and downtown historical districts by building twelve pedestrian and vehicular bridges over uncovered, relocated rivers.
- Create a linear park along the rivers anchored by WaterPlace and Memorial Parks, for use as community gathering places and for celebrating the arts.
- Create a multi-modal transportation corridor accommodating rail and bus mass transit, private vehicles, pedestrians, and boats.
- Celebrate the city's founding and its maritime heritage with graphic panels.

PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

1974

Publication of *Interface: Providence*, a multi-modal transit-oriented plan that proposed re-creating the former salt water cove while retaining train tracks, bridges and passenger station in place and expanding the use of the Union Station complex.

1978-1979

The Providence Foundation, under the leadership of Ron Marsella, re-examines the railroad relocation component of the Providence City Plan Commission's 1970 downtown master plan. The *Northeast Corridor Rail Improvement Plan's* proposal to rehabilitate existing tracks, bridges and Union Station head-house are shown to be comparable to relocating the train tracks and station. Relocation is also shown to permit RIDOT to carry out construction of long-delayed I-95 civic center interchange. Major political figures support this direction and convince the Federal Rail Administration to re-direct its funding and RIDOT and FHWA to fund the interchange and local road network. Mitigation of impacts on historical resources requires the plan to include the Capital Center land use master plan for the former freight yards and re-use of the Union Station complex for office and retail.

1980

Capital Center Commission formed as joint city, state and Providence Foundation body charged with enforcing design guidelines called for in land use master plan; approves design criteria for Capital Center Special Development District.

1980

Capital Center construction management team formed to administer jointly-funded and singly designed and contracted rail, road and other public improvements.

1982-1983

Capital Center Master Property Conveyance Agreement signed. Groundbreaking for Capital Center, February 16, 1983.

Providence Waterfront Study is conceived under the leadership of DEM director Bob Bendick and architect William Warner. Providence Foundation agrees to be sponsor. Planning grant received from NEA to be matched locally.

1984

Providence Waterfront Study completed. Its River Relocation and Memorial Blvd. extension component adopted by RIDOT director Ed Wood who then conducted an environmental assessment. The River Relocation alternative is selected and funding (federal, state and local) is committed.

1984-1986

The elevated 12 track station platform and railroad bridges behind Union Station separating the Capital Center from Downtown ("the Chinese Wall") are demolished.

1985

Bob Bendick (DEM) secures funding for Waterfront Park.

1987

World War I monument dismantled and stored.

1988-1989:

Groundbreaking for Citizen's Plaza and Gateway Center buildings in Capital Center. Start of work on relocation of the confluence of the rivers and construction of bridges.

1991

Construction begins on Memorial Boulevard Extension, relocation of the Woonasquatucket River and Waterplace Park.

1993

Memorial Boulevard opens to traffic.

1994

RI Convention Center/Westin Hotel and Waterplace Park open. First WaterFire.

1996

Dedication of Memorial Park and Providence River Waterfront.

1999

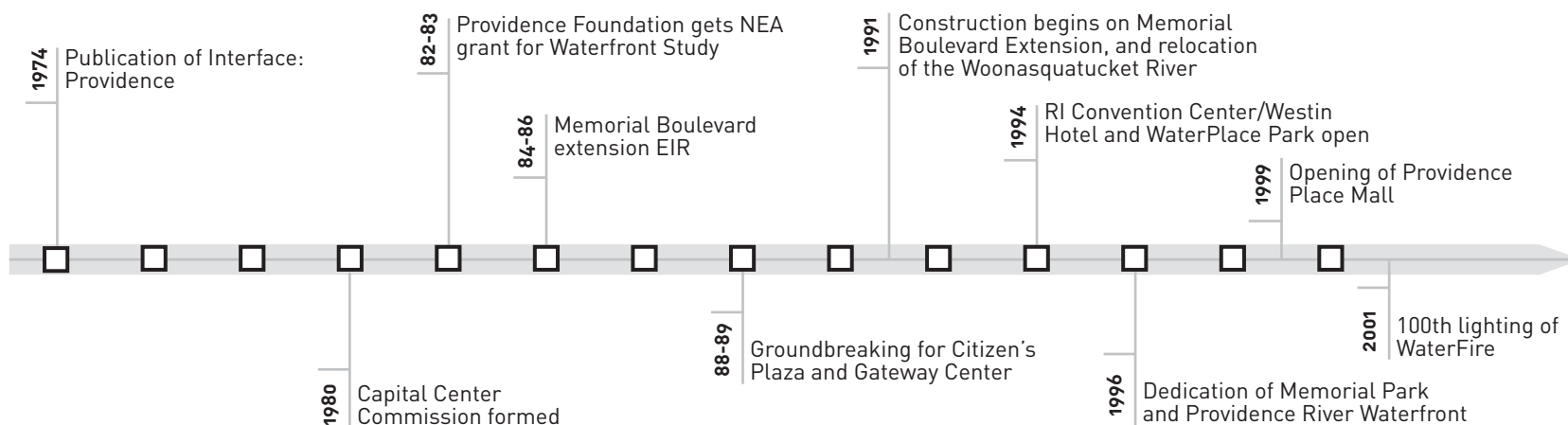
Opening of Providence Place Mall.

2001

100th lighting of WaterFire.

2002

Opening of the Providence River east bank riverwalk extension to the Old Harbor District.



KEY PARTICIPANTS

Persons interviewed indicated by an asterisk (*).

Public Agencies

Federal

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Daniel Berman, Assistant Division Administrator
Gordon Hoxie*, former Division Administrator

State

Governors

Hon. Lincoln Almond (1996-2001)
Hon. Bruce G. Sundlun (1991-95)
Hon. James DiPrete (1985-1991)
Hon. Joseph Garrahy (1977-1984)

Governors Office

James Gaffney*,
Capital Center Construction Management Office (CCCM)

Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT)

W. Edward (Ed) Wood*,
former Director, prior to DOT he was Director of the Rhode
Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)
Joseph Arruda*, Planner
Janis Louisselle*
Wendall (Wendy) Flanders*, Senior Project Director
Robert Brown*
Frederick Vincent*, Assistant Director (later of RIDEM)

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)

Robert Bendick, former Director
Judith Benedict*, Chief of the Division of Planning
and Development

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

Mrs. George F. (Antoinette) Downing, Chair (1968-95)
Frederick Williamson,
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) (1969-present) and
Chair (1995-present)
Eric Hertfelder, Executive Director (1972-84)
Edward F. (Ted) Sanderson*, Executive Director (1984-)

City of Providence

Mayors

Walter H. Reynolds, January 1951 to January 1965
Joseph A. Doorley, January 1965 to January 1975
Vincent A. “Buddy” Cianci, January 1975 to April 1984
The Hon. Joseph R. Paolino, Jr., April 1984 to Jan. 1991
Vincent A. “Buddy” Cianci, January 1991 to Sept. 2002
John J. Lombardi, September 2002 to January 2003
David N. Cicilline, January 2003-

Providence Department of Planning and Development

Tom Deller*, Current Executive Director
Bonnie Lloyd*, Senior Planner
Stanley Bernstein, Director 1974-1984
Martha Bailey, Senior Planner 1975-1982
Bill Collins, Leader of the City’s support of the
River Relocation Project 1982 -
Sam Shamoon*, former senior planner and Director

Providence Parks Department

Robert McMahon*, Deputy Director
Bob Rizzo, Director of the Office of Cultural Affairs and
Executive Director Capitol Arts Providence (an
independent non-profit wing of Parks Department)
Lynne McCormack*, Executive Director of Capitol
Arts Providence

Planning and Design

Architecture and Urban Design

Capital Center Plan

Marilyn Taylor, managing partner Skidmore, Owings &
Merrill LLP (SOM) – Project director Capital Center Plan
David Dixon,
Goody Clancy, Architects – Revised guidelines for Capital Center

River Relocation and Waterplace Plan

William D. Warner Architects and Planners
William D. Warner*, Project Director
Glenn Fontecchio*, Project Architect
William H.(Holly) Whyte, Project for Public Spaces – Consulting
N.J. “Pete” Pointer, Corporate Services Inc. – EAS preparation

Engineering

Wilbur Smith,
Wilbur Smith Associates – Memorial Square traffic alternatives
Bob Greig, Structural Engineer,
C. E. McGuire Associates – River Relocation
David Freeman*, Transportation Engineer,
C. E. Maguire Associates

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Arts Based Organizations

Barnaby Evans*, Exec. Director and Designer,
WaterFire Providence

Preservation/ History Organizations

Barbara Barnes*, Rhode Island Historical Society, Tour Director
Wendy Nichols*, Providence Preservation Society
(past Executive Director)
Catherine Horsey*, Executive Director, Providence Preservation Society
Albert Klyberg, Rhode Island Historical Society,
Executive Director (1969-1999)

Environmental Organizations

Juan Mariscal*, Director of the Division of
Planning, Narragansett Bay Commission
Jenny Perriera*, Executive Director,
Woonasquatucket Watershed Council
Jane Sherman*, Executive Director,
Woonasquatucket Greenway Project

Business Organizations

The Providence Foundation
Ormolu (Ron) Marsella*, Executive Director (1975-1979)
Kenneth Orenstein, AIA*, Executive Director (1980-1987)
Robert P Freeman, Executive Director (1989 -1992)
Dan Baudouin, Executive Director (1993-present)

Capital Center Commission

Leslie Gardner, Board Chair (1992-)
Hon. Alfred Joslin, Chair (1980-1991)
Deborah Molino-Wender*, Executive Director (1994-)
Stanley Bernstein Executive Director (1986-1994)
Charlene B. Hall, Executive Director (1980-1985)
Wilfred L. Gates ASLA*, Design Review Committee Chair

Other Business NGOs

Kip Bergstrom*, Rhode Island Economic Policy Council
Peter Armato*, former Executive Director, Downcity Partnership
James Hagan*, Executive Director, Greater Providence
Chamber of Commerce

Business Owners

John Charters*, Manager, Providence Place Mall
Dmitri Kritikos*, Café Nuovo
Robert Burke*, Pot au Feu & Federal Reserve
Bruce Tillinghast*, New Rivers
Michael Metcalf, former Publisher of the Providence Journal

Colleges and Universities

Rhode Island School of Design

Gerald Howes, Department of Architecture –
Interface Study Director

William Harsh*, MIT/ Urban Systems Lab –
Interface Study collaborator

Colgate Searle*, Department of Landscape Architecture –
Project / public review

Friedrich St. Florian*, professor, Department of Architecture

Brown University

Pat Malone*, Archeology, History of Industry – survey
work with William Warner

Dietrich Neumann*, History of Art and Architecture

Rhode Island College

Mark Motte*, Prof. Political Science and Urban Geography at
Rhode Island College (co-author of: “Of railroads and regime
shifts: Downtown renewal in Providence, Rhode Island” and
upcoming book on Providence Renaissance with chapter on
river relocation).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

URBAN CONTEXT AND HISTORY

Providence, capital of Rhode Island, is one of the oldest cities in America, dating from 1636 when Roger Williams left Massachusetts in his search of religious freedom. It is the only major city that has placed its entire downtown on the National Register of Historic Places. With a population of 253,504 in 1940, dropping to 156,804 in 1980, it reached 176,168 in 2000 (source: US Census), and now advertises itself as a “Renaissance City.”



Aerial with railroad and roads before relocation



Completed Providence River relocation



River before



River after

Roger Williams located Providence at the head of Narragansett Bay, the second largest estuary on the East Coast, in 1636. Throughout its early history, Providence was a port city, with an inner harbor in the “Old Salt Cove” separated by Weybosset Neck from an outer harbor on the Providence River. In 1828, the opening of the Blackstone Canal between Providence and Worcester, Massachusetts allowed the trans-shipment of raw materials and manufactured products from steamship to barge or canal boat, beginning a rapid process of industrialization along its banks.

In 1835, a competing rail line was built, leading to the canal’s demise. By 1849, the several regional rail lines that terminated in Providence jointly built the Union Terminal complex for passengers and freight along the southern shore of the salt cove. By the 1870s, increased passenger and freight traffic led to the construction of the Union Station Complex along elevated tracks and platforms just northwest of the terminal.

Construction of Union Station led to further filling in of the salt cove to create a circular rail turnaround, ending its use as an inner harbor. Industrial discharges from up-river mills and raw sewage turned the cove into a fetid pool and it was soon filled in, containing the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers which had emptied into it within stone wall channels as they flowed downstream to a human made confluence with the Providence River. By the 1930s bigger ships made the old outer harbor obsolete for all ship traffic except shallow draft coal barges and passenger steamships and the new down-river bayfront Port of Providence was created.

Between World Wars I and II, rail-to-truck trans-shipment became dominant and ever-increasing vehicular traffic led to more and more of the Providence River being built over until this bridgework gained the dubious distinction of being the “widest bridge in the world” (not the longest span), further obscuring the heavily polluted river below.

Just upstream, the river confluence was decked over by a new central post office and federal building annex in 1938. Hurricanes in 1938 and 1954 led to extensive flooding from tidal surges in the bay and overflowing rivers. The obsolete waterfront warehouses and shorelines further deteriorated so that by the 1960s an urban renewal plan called for many of these warehouses to be demolished and ramps serving I-195 to be placed along both banks of the Providence River. To prevent future flooding, a hurricane barrier was built across the mouth of the Providence River and portions of the Interstate were made a part of the barrier. The construction of the barrier, the highway, and its ramps completed a more than century long process of making the rivers, the very reason for Providence’s location, inaccessible, out of sight and out of mind.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Providence was the most industrialized city in the US and was known as the “armpit of New England.” From the decline of the textile industry in the 1920s and accelerating with the machine tool industry in the 1950s and the jewelry industry in the late 1970s, Providence experienced almost continual economic deterioration. Once again, by virtue of its decline through the 1980s, it had regained that dubious reputation.



River covered with tracks



River uncovered and planted

By the early 1970s, the 1891 State House (designed by McKim, Mead and White), originally overlooking a circular cove and promenade, was separated from the downtown by massive parking lots. The lots replaced the freight yards that had, in turn, replaced the cove, and elevated railroad tracks (four tracks wide at the narrowest, 12 at Union Station) came to be known as “the Chinese Wall.” In the downtown area, fifty to seventy percent of the rivers was covered with roadways and parking lots, leaving them to function, at best, as storm sewers. Travel between the east side and downtown involved navigating a traffic rotary near the confluence that the maps called Memorial Square but residents had named “Suicide Circle.”

Downtown was effectively “dead”. No major office building had been built since 1928. The last hotel had closed, followed by the last movie palace in 1976. There were very few restaurants and, with the closing of the last department store in 1982, retail was reduced to a few specialty stores. Residents, who had no reason to come downtown except to conduct business or go to a government office, elected to spend their leisure time elsewhere.

PLANNING PROCESS

The River Relocation Project is a blending of three separate and sequential capital construction programs and reflects a process of starting major initiatives then changing them in mid-stream. As one would imagine with large-scale, multi-agency, public-private projects, the changes were not comfortable or easy, yet conflicts were resolved and superior outcomes were achieved (see the section below on “Making Adjustments and Raising the Bar”).

The first program, in the late 1970s, was the federally-funded Northeast Corridor Project to upgrade the railroad tracks and twelve stations serving Amtrak between Washington, DC and Boston. In Providence, the Federal Rail Administration’s (FRA) plans called for the rehabilitation of the head-house of Union Station and the elevated tracks and platforms behind it. That project was interrupted to pursue the second, more ambitious, *Capital Center Plan* (prepared by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)) that called for the relocation of the railroad tracks some 600 to 850 feet to the north and for burying them, creating large green areas gently rising to the Capitol in a bowl-like form. A new passenger station was placed over the tracks at the foot of the Capitol’s grounds and the old Union Station complex was proposed for commercial re-use. The Union Station parcel was one of eleven development parcels, Interstate ramps, local roadways, parks and open space in the 60-acre project area. This project was redesigned, even as early stages of construction had already begun, by the third program, the *River Relocation/Memorial Boulevard Extension Plan* (prepared by William D. Warner Architects and Planners) that uncovered and moved the rivers, reweave the street circulation pattern, added a dozen bridges, and created eleven acres of largely auto-free walkways and parks.

Early Plans

All of this work can be better understood in the context of three earlier planning efforts:



River basin site before relocation



Providence Mall and river basin after relocation

The College Hill Plan, a demonstration study of historical area renewal, conducted by the Providence City Plan Commission in cooperation with the Providence Preservation Society and the federal Urban Renewal Administration (1959; second edition, 1967). The plan established a historical district zoning ordinance and College Hill (later Providence) Historic District Commission, protecting historical resources in the area, including Benefit Street's "Mile of History" and portions of the Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) campuses. This area is immediately across the river from downtown.

Downtown Providence 1970 (published in 1961 but named for its ten-year planning horizon) was an old-school urban renewal plan produced by the Providence City Plan Commission, calling for clearance of much of downtown's historical fabric and the creation of several suburban-style residential and office campuses on downtown's perimeter. It also, recommended relocating the railroad tracks to the foot of the Capitol's grounds and constructing a new station and heliport, demolishing Union Station and replacing it with a new government center, and converting the former freight yards into a sea of parking lots. Several of this plan's elements, including the proposed track alignment, I-195 interchange, and boulevard would resurface in the Capital Center Plan.

Interface: Providence (1974). This plan was produced by RISD undergraduate architecture students under the direction of the late Gerald Howes. Howes and his team worked with the Urban Systems Laboratory at MIT to promote an inter-modal

transportation approach to downtown and recommended retaining the existing railroad station and tracks. Union Station was to become the intermodal facility. This plan also called for recapturing the city's historical connection to its waterfront by removing pavement and rail yards, adding new green space and creating a water feature recalling the historical salt cove, concepts that would resurface in the River Relocation project. Creation of this plan led to the formation of the Providence Foundation (the charitable tax-exempt successor to the Downtown Council of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce), an entity that was needed to obtain (and provide matching funds for) a National Endowment for the Arts funded follow-up study.

Integrated Plans

Some features from the prior plans were refined by the concepts implemented in the 1980s and 1990s.

Capital Center Project Development Plan (1979). Modifying the Downtown 1970 Master Plan, this award-winning SOM plan relocated the tracks and rail station, providing about 60 acres of land between the old Union Station and the State House. While this plan employs the Downtown 1970's track alignment and highway interchange, it proposed a dense urban mixed-use development on a road network that provided view corridors to the Capitol dome instead of the earlier plan's sea of parking lots.

Design and planning guidelines required the massive development projects to have active and transparent street frontage, with heavily

screened structured parking behind. Later modifications (based on the River Relocation plan) encouraged a greater mix of uses, higher densities, and building frontages facing the parks and riverwalks. The Commission's approval process includes extensive public presentations and workshops and, thus far, has overseen more than \$1 billion in public and private investments.

Providence Waterfront 1636-2000 (1985). Even as SOM was celebrated for the Capital Center Plan with a 1981 *Progressive Architecture* award, William Warner and others were critical of decisions that left the rivers covered and failed to provide pedestrian amenities. Ron Marsella attributes these design decisions the facts that the FRA and RIDOT/FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) were SOM's clients and that FRA's conditions for redirecting funds from rehabilitating existing bridges and re-using Union Station were not to cost more than the original plan. They were also not allowed to delay the Providence section of the Northeast Corridor Project. In addition, RIDOT/FHWA's funding was already stretched beyond the Civic Center Interchange to include local roadways in Capital Center. So the plan, though it called for a difficult-to-reach water park, did not have any funds to build it, nor did it address traffic problems at Suicide Circle and beyond created by what Ron Marsella described as "a mishmash of five streets converging on the circle." The circle and roadways beyond lay outside the project's boundaries. W. Edward Wood was director of RIDOT when the River Relocation Project was proposed and Marsella believes his leadership in advancing the proposal was essential in enabling it to proceed.

Much has been written about the sequence of collaborations created to address concerns about waterfront access and usage extending beyond Capital Center. While there are conflicts between written texts and oral interviews about who approached whom, most agree that there was concern about the more than five and one-half miles of Providence's tidal river and bay frontage. As a result of these concerns, Bob Bendick of DEM, worked with architect William Warner to produce a proposal for a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant for a waterfront study. The Providence Foundation agreed to act as sponsor and raise matching funds, acting as a buffer between the mayor and governor, and functioning as convener of an intergovernmental and interested-party Waterfront Design Committee. On May 19, 1983, NEA awarded the grant (with matching funds coming from the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities, member organizations of the Providence Foundation, other local foundations, the State of Rhode Island, and the City of Providence – for a total of around \$137,500). William Warner served as the Project Planning Director to the Waterfront Committee and Orenstein its chairperson. By prior agreement, the study was not to include Capital Center and the traffic problems of Suicide Circle and beyond as the City of Providence had retained a traffic consultant to address those issues.

In February 1983 just before planning was to begin a separate Traffic Committee under pressure from a developer seeking to start construction on a new building located on an affected roadway, appeared ready to recommend that the existing pair of one-way roads on opposite sides of the river be widened to handle increased traffic. This move would require covering over the narrow gap



River with roadway covering water



River after roadway with new bridges and relocated World War I Memorial

between the roads, effectively paving over the Providence River for more than 1,350 feet.

Orenstein reports that he was very concerned about the committee stance and asked Warner to work outside the boundary of the original waterfront study area to address alternatives to “paving the river.” Warner and Orenstein both acknowledge the precedent of Boston’s Storrow Drive, which suggested to them eliminating the pair of one-way roads and creating a two-way extension of Memorial Boulevard on the downtown side of the river. That required a series of bridges connecting downtown to the east side that would wrap around two sides of the financial district and connect it to a two-way road further south.

Warner’s work on the above plan is said to have been done over a weekend, working with his wife, but did not include moving the rivers. In the spring of 1983 planning with the Waterfront Committee began. By November 1983, with vision well beyond the original brief, a boulevard extension plan was developed which eventually cost nearly \$35 million. Key elements of that plan included:

- Relocation and uncovering of sections of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers as they pass through Capital Center, moving their confluence out from under the post office;
- Uncovering the Providence River between Exchange and Crawford Streets;

- Continuation of Memorial Boulevard south of Suicide Circle;
- Detailed development of Waterplace;
- Increase in pedestrian circulation capacity with a riverwalk system and pedestrian and vehicular bridges.

In the spring of 1984 environmental assessment planning began with RIDOT. *The Providence River Relocation Project (1986-1996)* was selected as the preferred alternate in August 1984. It showed, in detail, the relocation of the rivers (creating a new development parcel out of former river bottom in Capital Center); the elimination of Suicide Circle and the relocation of the World War I memorial; the removal of the “world’s widest bridge” over the Providence River and its replacement with a number of much smaller bridges; the extension of Memorial Boulevard (which is again being further extended as originally envisioned as a result of the relocation of Interstate I-195); and the creation of WaterPlace park and the establishment of connecting riverwalks along the banks of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers and the east bank of the Providence River.

Making Adjustments and Raising the Bar

A remarkable feature of the River Relocation and Capital Center Projects and is that their planners and designers engaged in a continuous, long-term process of exploring options to improve the result. As one planning effort moved into the next, new opportunities became apparent and decision-makers faced tough choices in order to take advantage of them. In many cases this

meant making significant adjustments to plans that were already advanced in their development and, in one instance, even implementation. None of these changes happened easily or without substantial resistance; there were long and complex negotiations associated with each advance. Still, planners, designers, and others held true to their vision against the temptations of expedience. Here is a summary of two of the key transition points.

Transition One (1978). A private freight railroad company with a half interest in Union Station had assembled a great majority of the land in what later became Capital Center. At the same time, the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) had committed substantial funds to railroad bridge maintenance and the rehabilitation of the Union Station head-house (jointly owned by FRA and the private railroad). With construction already underway, business leaders, the mayor and the governor all requested a delay while they reviewed the more radical option of relocating and burying the rail lines and building a new station above, taking down the “Chinese Wall.” They persuaded the FRA to wait while the *Capital Center Plan* was produced. This plan proposed relocating the tracks, freeing up 49 acres of developable land primarily owned by the railroad company, and improved both rail and road access. The move brought the resources of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to bear on the project through the Interstate Highway Transportation Transfer Act, which would fund construction of the civic center interchange, a boulevard to the interchange, and local roads within Capital Center.

Transition Two (1985). With the *Capital Center Plan* under construction, original and new members of the team came back with the River Relocation Plan, asserting that moving the rivers would make it easier to build needed roadways to handle civic center interchange traffic. It demonstrated that access to the highway system, as previously planned, was not efficient because the proposed boulevard dead-ended at Memorial Square. While the park and open space benefits were considered desirable, it was even more convincing because the project was fundable by FHWA, in spite of its dramatically greater costs, since it solved significant traffic issues better than the proposals that did not include river relocation. In addition, it was attractive to FHWA because it included a largely grade-separated pedestrian circulation system.



Walkway to basin with tiles by local school children

There is even a story about a late-night meeting in March 1981 in a restaurant with William Warner his wife, Peggy, Freidrich St. Florian and Irving Haynes (a RISD architecture professor with an active preservation-oriented practice) where sketches illustrated what the rivers, roads, and parks of Capital Center might look like. In his view, the actual concepts for river relocation were developed two years later and had little to do with the napkin. For him, the value of the meeting was as a discussion among colleagues about the limitations of the *Capital Center Plan* and the necessity to advance a stronger vision.

To make the Memorial Boulevard extension plan work, Warner and others saw that it was critical to remove Memorial Square altogether. They came up with the proposal to relocate the memorial to a park (which became Memorial Park) on the east side of the river in front of the 1933 Georgian Revival Providence County Courthouse. But this raised red flags to certain veterans' groups which were uncertain about how the move would physically be accomplished, what the result would be and whether to trust government to put it back up once taken down. Their resistance was overcome as it was demonstrated that the memorial would no longer be isolated by traffic but would be accessible in a landscaped plaza. However, the spot selected for the 75-foot tall obelisk was already occupied by a monument to Giovanni da Verrazzano an early explorer of Narragansett Bay. This resulted in extensive negotiations with the local Italo-American Association, which led to the sculpture's relocation.

These proposals also raised serious concerns and protests from those with development interests in Capital Center. Anticipating completion of Memorial Boulevard, the Providence and Worcester Railroad development group had entered into a long-term ground lease and had completed schematic design for the Citizens Bank Building. However, the parcel would be dramatically reconfigured as a result of river relocation, necessitating changes in the design and a significant delay. Understandably, the development group and the railroad feared that the changes and delay would possibly jeopardize the project. However, the owner was convinced to drop its opposition as a result of benefits including a land swap with the city and state that gained it an additional parcel and (court ordered) financial compensation.

Thus, while railroad relocation and construction of the civic center interchange continued, plans for the revised roadway and river relocation were put in place, giving the city back its waterfront and eliminating Suicide Circle. The project that had been in jeopardy became the highly visible Citizen's Bank building, with a plaza and restaurant seating facing the river.

Involving the Community

Community involvement was a thread weaving throughout the project. The Waterfront Study's extensive public participation process was expanded to include the River Relocation Project. A professionally-produced slide show with voice-over was prepared on the history of the city's waterfront, its current conditions, what other cities had done, and the benefits of reclaiming Providence's

riverfront. The slide show was presented to many community groups and on a local TV station. The *East Side Monthly*, a free periodical, devoted a back page to the Waterfront Study that included a mail-in questionnaire soliciting ideas and goals (several hundred were reviewed by the coordinating committee). In addition, a nearly ten-foot-long model of the city's reclaimed waterfront showing river relocation and other improvements was unveiled at CityFest '83 and viewed by nearly 1,000 people.

William Warner repeatedly refined his work based on feedback from these efforts and meetings with key stakeholders, without compromising the integrity of key ideas. He describes the above activities as a series of informational briefings held early in the river relocation planning process, followed by open workshops and still more public forums. There was, of course, the full regimen of environmental impact reviews and hearings, which received extensive television and local newspaper coverage. The *Journal*, the dominant newspaper in the state, devoted an issue of its Sunday *Gravure Magazine* to the waterfront and River Relocation Project.

With funds from a Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities grant, Albert Klyberg, executive director of the Rhode Island Historical Society, was retained as the project humanist. The history of the waterfront was researched. Warner's staff combined this research with maps and plans they unearthed, to create the annotated historical maps and markers now found throughout the project.

Ken Orenstein and colleagues at the Providence Foundation believe that, taken together, the community outreaches and supportive media coverage helped the politicians and funding agencies agree to the substantial added costs for relocating the rivers and constructing the parks and pedestrian circulation systems. He also suggests that the widespread public participation in planning presaged the high level of involvement in activities and programming in the completed project (see below). For example, well over 150 volunteers (and there is a waiting list), mount WaterFire which is viewed by thousands nearly every other week from late spring to early fall. Hundreds more support Shakespeare in the Park, Convergence, and other special events.



Section of finished walkway

DESIGN

SMALL URBAN SPACES

This project reads like textbook William H. Whyte, with small rather than large urban spaces and subtly themed areas related to aspects of railroad and waterfront history. The reference to

Whyte is not accidental; he was invited by the Downtown Improvement Association (a public space and streetscape maintenance affiliate of the Providence Foundation; since disbanded) to address its annual meeting and give his opinion about plans in the historical core, then returned in the mid-1980s at the invitation of William Warner and participated in a public review and a design workshop. He argued for even more porous design,



Paving at walkway



Granite benches with WaterFire braziers

linking the water to the city across several blocks, and for smaller spaces. Warner acknowledges taking much of his advice and feels that the project is better for it. After River Relocation was approved, Capital Center's Design Guidelines for buildings along the riverfront and riverwalks were amended to call for retail uses and a transparent face to the riverwalk (blank walls are not allowed). Water-related uses are encouraged, especially indoor and outdoor dining.



Looking toward RISD gazebo

MATERIAL SELECTION AND DETAILING

The project uses high quality materials throughout. The design of lighting, landscaping, street furniture, tree grates, signage and historical interpretation panels offers enough variety to remain interesting along with enough consistency to communicate that this is a special and unique place. The bridges are well designed and detailed with ceramic tiles depicting historical maps, photos and text in a theme consistent with each one's historical location. Cobblestone riverwalks are recycled from a street repair project and reference historical conditions, but they also make walking difficult in some areas and may not meet full accessibility requirements. Landscaping, even in early spring, is well-maintained and attractive. The careful detailing at all of these levels of public space communicate a feeling of a special and cared for space.

DESIGN CULTURE

Several people we interviewed spoke of the passion and long tenure of the participants in the planning process. During the interviews we heard transportation engineers, architects, structural engineers, public policy specialists, and business professionals at every level identify fourteen- and even twenty-plus-year-long histories with the project. They spoke with pride about the creativity of design work that led the planners to move the river, not destroy buildings. There was reference to a “design culture” and the passion of designers like William Warner and artists like Barnaby Evans, creator of WaterFire. Some also mentioned the depth of talent and interest as a function of decades of preservation work dating back to the College Hill Plan and the presence of Brown, RISD and other academic institutions.



Historic information at bridge

PRESERVATION ETHIC

Providence has a rich constructed heritage, in part because the marginal economy in the middle of the 20th Century left much of it intact. While a strong preservation ethic drove much of the River Relocation Project, it did not call for replication. There was a clear belief that they should “save what we can,” but Warner and his staff chose to incorporate historical references rather than copying historical models. Historical themes are part of the details along the riverwalk, suggesting the eras of the railroad and steamboat, but there is no attempt at literal emulation in their form or design. It is not uncommon to be looking at an historical panel and find the “you are here” star is in the middle of what used to be a river or the old salt cove. The history is carefully told and well illustrated, and historical references are effective, never conveying the sense of artificiality that tends to accompany a new building or element made with modern means while trying to look as if it were created in a different era.

PROGRAMS

An important part of bringing Providence to the water (and the region to Providence) has been the innovative programming along the river. The principal programming components are WaterFire and Convergence.

WaterFire

The major draw to the area has been the regular and very popular performances of Barnaby Evans’ WaterFire. This event is now offered from sundown to midnight and involves a haunting blend



WaterFire with gondola

PHOTO: B. Evans

of music, fire, water, and street theater, that *Providence Journal* columnist Bob Kerr refers to as “the only tribal rite performed by an entire state”. A sound system with speakers hidden strategically along the river and dozens of special braziers provide the infrastructure. Evans selects eclectic but often powerful music (from chants, to jazz, to opera) to set the mood. The braziers are stocked with a specially chosen mix of fire wood that smells wonderful, exudes intense heat, flares and sparks. The braziers are lit in a dramatic ceremony by trained volunteers dressed all in black from in boats that are totally black, making them almost invisible.



WaterFire

PHOTO: B. Evans

Thousands of people attend WaterFire each night that it is staged. People of all ages and backgrounds, from Providence and well beyond, walk along the entire riverwalk and in WaterPlace Park. Local restaurants are booked weeks in advance on WaterFire nights, often for double or triple seatings. Other art and cultural happenings are scattered along the river and at major gathering points in the downtown, creating opportunity for street theater, swing dance, mime, human sculpture, and other artistic activities. Attendance has been so great that WaterFire continues to encourage and add other art performances, including in small spaces throughout the downtown, in part to reduce crowding along the riverwalk. People may spend some time at WaterFire then go to a restaurant or the theater, visit one of the other outdoor performances, and perhaps return to WaterFire.

Comments by visitors are striking in the range and depth of their response. Patrons of the foundation supporting WaterFire see the program as essential to the vitality of downtown. WaterFire started with a single performance for First Night on December 31, 1994 and was intended as a one-time event. Instead, it ran its first season in 1996, and has just completed its ninth season. Although fund raising continues to be a priority, WaterFire is generally well supported with a large group of volunteers and contributors, and has staged performances in other cities in the US and abroad.

Convergence Arts Festival

A second important draw to the downtown also involves art. The Convergence Art Festival is a product of Capitol Arts Providence, an independent not-for-profit arm of the City Parks Department that the executive director, Bob Rizzo, curates. A program of art acquisition and placement throughout downtown, Convergence installs about one hundred pieces each year then returns them to the artists or owners to make way for the next exhibition. Rizzo also organizes a number of free concerts each summer which take place in one of the two parks that anchor the riverwalk that, depending upon the performers, attracts an ethnically- and racially-diverse crowd.

Other Programming

Other more conventional programming adds to the mix, like Trinity Repertory Company's conservatory-produced Shakespeare in the Park (using the WaterPlace amphitheater) and special events, such as music and ethnic festivals. Together with WaterFire and the Convergence Arts Festival, they show the wisdom of providing multiple spaces of varying sizes and quality design. The city has also aggressively promoted the development of locally-owned restaurants in the downtown, offering low interest loans in an effort to animate the area and avoid the banality of chain restaurants. The presence of Johnson and Wales, the internationally known cooking school, infuses Providence with young chefs, eager to apply their skills. This ready talent pool, together with supportive city policy, is a strategy that appears to be working, since it is popular wisdom that "the best restaurants in Boston are in Providence".

FINANCES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Following four years of construction on the Capital Center Project, work began on the Memorial Boulevard Extension in 1987 and on the River Relocation Project in the 1990s. The basic breakdown of sources and uses for the overall effort (as presented by the project nominators) is as follows:

To the core funding above, a number of other sources can be added including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts grant to the Providence Foundation for the “Waterfront Study” in 1983 (with matching funds and in-kind support from the City of Providence and the Governor’s office, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and

Heritage Commission), the RI Department of Transportation matching funds at 20% of the FHWA amounts, and numerous design, transportation and environmental assessment studies over the years by the City of Providence and the RI Department of Transportation.

The vast majority of resources for public improvements in the project came as a result of changes in the Federal Highway Act that allowed Rhode Island to develop a \$600 million-plus Highway Trust Fund. Even so, it took creative and flexible interpretations of federal and state programs in this pre-Transportation Equity Act environment to make this project possible. From a funding

Source	Amount	Use
Federal Railway Admin.	\$33,000,000	Rail relocation and new Amtrak station
Federal Highway Admin.	\$130,000,000	River relocation, highways and highway interchanges, WaterPlace Park, and river walk
City of Providence	\$6,000,000	The parts of the program not supportable by FHA related to historical interpretation, special landscape and streetscape
Total	\$169,000,000	



View toward river confluence

perspective, the River Relocation Project was done to facilitate transportation by improving the order and efficiency of the system. The wide pedestrian passage under Memorial Boulevard and the extensive riverwalk system that connect to it were 100% federally fundable because this grade-separated pedestrian system originated at the US Urban Mass Transit Administration-funded Kennedy Plaza Transit Mall (in turn funded by the state Public Transit Authority). Separate cross-river pedestrian bridges were fundable because they serve as “utility crossings” (supporting water and gas pipes and electrical and telephone conduits). These are examples of how planners worked to make pieces of the project fit the rules of the funding sources.



Walkway with bridge

Cooperation and Leadership

Wendall Flanders, of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, describes the Master Property Conveyance Contract involving 73 land swaps as, “a major accomplishment.” The complex land conveyance agreement was needed to make the *Capital Center Plan* work. It allowed roadways and other public improvements to be built on what had been privately owned land without reverting to a time consuming and expensive condemnation process. Orenstein believes such a condemnation process would not have been possible given the lack of local financial resources and the time available. The land swaps also created singly-owned development parcels and public open space. The swaps occurred among city, state and federal government units and agencies and private owners, most notably the railroad.

Another key aspect of project implementation was the governor’s decision to create a Capital Center construction program management team that coordinated all aspects of interagency involvement including funding. On the team, which reported directly to the governor, were staff from the state departments of transportation and environmental management, as well as contracted engineers, lawyers, public relations specialists, and a full time auditor. This arrangement assured a smooth flow of resources to the project, clear accountability, and coordination among diverse agencies. Many that we interviewed attributed the project’s success to the high level of inter-governmental and private sector cooperation that was achieved. And it may be inferred that in Providence, with its history of governmental graft and corruption,

this was also a means of keeping the project's finances clean. (Note that Buddy Cianci, who served as mayor during the planning for Capital Center, was forced to resign in the middle of River Relocation due to his conviction for assaulting a man he accused of being his ex-wife's lover. He was voted back into office just as construction was completed but was in federal prison for a conviction under the RICO statute for running the city as a criminal enterprise at the time of the site visit).

It is also important to observe that the process by which a routine rail maintenance and station rehabilitation project became the *Capital Center Plan* was advanced through a powerful consortium of local private sector leaders working closely with their political counterparts, in particular, Sen. Claiborne Pell, who co-authored the legislation creating the Northeast Corridor project and Amtrak. The presidents of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, the Providence Journal, and Citizen's Bank worked together promoting the project and advocated for the major adjustments it experienced when already underway. Starting with Senators Pell and John Chafee, whose importance grew when Republicans were in the White House, a succession of members of Rhode Island's congressional delegation, Providence mayors and state governors all provided continuous support for the project, a kind of continuity that does not always occur.

The story of the River Relocation project would not be complete without further mention of Mayor Buddy Cianci. Mike Stanton refers to Cianci as the "Prince of Providence" in a book of the same

title. Stanton reminds readers that the former mayor, and twice-convicted felon, used to make frequent presentations on the Providence revival where he attributed the turnaround to the power of the mayor's office and his ability to exercise real leadership. Ron Marcella feels that "there would be no WaterFire, River Relocation or Capital Center projects without his leadership and support. At his best, he was an imaginative risk taker who understood that great things could be achieved if one was willing to take great risks." On the other hand, commentators such as David Brussat at the *Providence Journal*, assert that the mostly federally funded revival of Providence would have been an even broader



Walkway with benches

entrepreneurial success without the pattern of corruption and the “coarse, petty, brutal, vindictive” style of Mayor Cianci. In short, according to Brussat, “it was Cianci’s vision of how a city should be run that really kept it down.”

It is also important to note the farsighted neighborhood and architectural preservation leadership of Antoinette Downing, the long-term chair of both the College Hill Historic District and RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commissions. Downing’s public career spanned 40 years and helped place preservation interests on the public agenda for Providence. For example, when the Providence Foundation unveiled plans to abandon Union Station, Downing used her agency’s statutory powers to enforce the requirement for federally funded transportation projects to mitigate the negative impacts on historical resources. In so doing she was able to support the project in exchange for the development of the *Capital Center Plan* to be enforced by the Capital Center Commission of which she was the first co-chair. She also extracted a promise from the Providence Foundation to support the expansion of a small downtown historical district to cover the rest of downtown and to take a lead in finding new uses for Union Station. This ultimately led to the restoration of the long-vacant West Building into the headquarters of the Greater Providence Chamber and its affiliates including the Providence Foundation.

And lastly, consider William Warner, who accrued influence by maintaining an interest and involvement in the fate of Providence’s waterfront from the time he arrived in Providence to work on the *College Hill Study*. With great perseverance, charm and skill, Warner created a legion of supporters for his vision. His continuous constituency-building proved crucial in overcoming various obstacles that arose during planning.

Operating Costs

The riverwalk and public areas are well supported by the city Parks Department, some contributions from the state, and through arts programming and maintenance. Neighboring financial, cultural and educational institutions also participate. Several abutting entities take care of the public property directly in front of them, WaterFire cleans up after itself with an army of volunteers, and the city Parks Department takes care of the rest while coordinating the other partners.

One concern raised about the high design standards is that hardware, while it will have a relatively long life, will be expensive to replace when the time comes. Robert McMahon, Deputy Director of the Parks Department, indicates that his office is considering developing an endowment in anticipation of these expenses. Meanwhile the Providence Foundation reports that building owners are discussing a business improvement district that would also be able to contribute to the management, marketing, and maintenance of the riverwalk and parks.

IMPACTS

QUALITY OF LIFE

Virtually all respondents to our interviews reported a sea change in environment and attitudes toward Providence, with ripple effects starting downtown and expanding outward to the city, Rhode Island, and southeastern Massachusetts. One indicator is its much-improved public realm. Another is the colleges, which are reinvesting in or creating a new presence in the downtown. Older buildings that long ago locked their waterfront-facing front doors

and turned their backs to the water have re-opened these doors. New buildings are being built with their main entrances facing the water. New residents are moving into student dorms, lofts and condominiums in new residential buildings and recycled historical buildings. Use of the park programs is much higher than expected, leaving some to wish they hadn't listened so carefully to William Whyte's design advice, while others agree with Whyte and see the crowded events as signs of success and reason to expand the riverwalk. As thousands of people now stream into downtown for WaterFire and other public events, a city that once appeared to be dying and was seen as an embarrassment, is now an attraction and source of pride throughout the region.



WaterFire with World War I Memorial

PHOTO: B. Evans

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Vacancy rates in all classes of office buildings downtown increased steadily in Providence from 1988 through 1995, then declined from a high of over 25% to a healthy 10.75% by 2001, with Class A office vacancies below 5%.

The market analysis for a proposed new hotel in downtown showed full service hotels growing from 514,285 available room-nights in 1998 to 593,490 in 2001, faster than demand, and attributed the imbalance to the events of September 11, the recession and the decline in conventions. Even so, the room rates charged have increased significantly since 1998, growing at a compound annual rate of 9.2% while most other markets in New England have been experiencing significant decline.

Restaurant owners report that, while there is more competition, they are all doing more business. One owner identified the summer as a traditionally slow season with one seating per table. Now, especially on WaterFire nights, he claims three seatings.

Employment statistics from the Chamber of Commerce show that eating and drinking establishments have increased the number of jobs and total wages from 1995 to 2000. Wages, for example, are 100 percent higher than the preceding five-years, while outside Providence the increase was 35%.

Another significant indication of success is the amount of construction activity and private investment. While there are now tax abatement incentives for job creation, the Planning Department

reports that these will become harder to get as municipal tax increases are needed to make up for previous fiscal mismanagement, a continuing increase in school population, a leveling of state education support, and decreasing federal support. The tables below speak to the range and types of investments made and planned for the phased implementation of the riverwalk (other than at Capital Center, which is reported separately).

DOWNTOWN AREA REAL ESTATE PROJECTS-IN PLANNING

Name	Notes	Cost
Grace Park Hotel – Re-Use of Lederer and Bell Hall Buildings	75-80 room hotel plus commercial	\$8-10,000,000
Peerless Building/ Westminster Street – Housing Conversion	80 housing units plus 20,000 sq. ft. commercial	\$20,000,000
Union Street/Clemence Street/Weybosset Street & Westminster Street Block – New Construction	Parking/retail complex	NA
Trinity Rep.'s Citizens Bank Theater/Empire Street Black Repertory Theater/Westminster Street	450 seat theater Developing plans	\$4,800,000 NA
Total		\$32-34,800,000

Downtown Area Real Estate Projects – Completed 1994-2002

Name	Notes	Cost
Smith Building Conversion	42,000 sq. ft. l – 36 housing units plus commercia	\$4,500,000
Empire Restaurant Rehab	5,000 sq. ft.	\$500,000
RI Housing Mortgage & Finance Company/Slade & Garr Building Rehab	48,000 sq. ft.	\$4,500,000
University of RI Downtown Facility/Shepard Building Rehab	220,000 sq. ft.	\$35,000,000
Johnson & Wales Investment		
Snowden Hall Dormitory – New Construction	270 dormitory units	\$9,000,000
McNaulty Hall Dormitory – New Construction	509 dormitory units	\$10,000,000
Library Administration Office Rehab		\$12,000,000
Burrill Building Rehab, Classrooms		\$1,000,000
Waite/Thresher Rehab, Classrooms		\$3,500,000
Gaebe Common		\$1,000,000
RISD: Union Fletcher Rehab/Graduate Student, Art Studio	37,000 sq. ft.	\$1,000,000
Grace Park Liner Building	5,000 sq. ft.	\$500,000
AS220 Arts Center Rehab – Empire Street	22,600 sq. ft.	\$800,000
Providence Performing Arts Center – Stage Enlargement, Sign and Improvements		\$8,000,000
Roger Williams University: Downtown Providence Campus	60,000 sq. ft.	\$5,000,000
Cherry & Webb Building – 275 Westminster Street – Office Rehab	37,000 sq. ft.	NA
Harkness Building – Office Rehab	33,000 sq. ft.	\$500,000
Biltmore Hotel – Modernization & Creation of Concierge Level		\$9,000,000
Alice Building Conversion	37 housing units plus 5,000 sq. ft. commercial	\$8,000,000
Earle Building – Office Rehab	12,100 sq. ft.	\$ 1,500,000
Trinity Repertory Theater Renovation – Washington Street		+/- \$4,000,000
AS220 Building Improvements/Empire Street		\$1,000,000
Total		\$ 120,300,000

parcels in the Capital Center Special Development District from 1997 to 2002. During this time the Courtyard Hotel opened with 216 rooms and 372 parking spaces at a total investment of \$29 million and the Providence Place Mall opened 1.2 million square feet of retail with 4,000 structured spaces at a cost of \$450 million. So far, the managers of both establishments report good business and are very positive about the future. The Winter Garden central atrium of the Friedrich St. Florian-designed mall looks down upon and terminates the vista of WaterPlace Park and, through the riverwalk, has access to all of downtown. They see this as a great advantage in that they have all the “rubber tire access” of a conventional regional mall along with the amenities of a city – the best of both suburban and urban worlds.

By late 1999, Capital Center project fact sheets were reporting that private investments in their projects (including \$450 million for the mall) were over \$700 million and that public investment was \$741 million, which breaks out as follows:

Infrastructure and River Relocation:	\$115 million
Railroad Station and Tracks	\$33 million
WaterPlace Park/ River walks	\$21 million
Convention Center	\$572 million

The Convention Center includes 137,000 sf of exhibit space, 23 meeting rooms, 20,000 square feet of ballroom, a 2,400 car park and a Westin Hotel. They also projected impacts from the full build-out of the Capital Center plan of 10,000 jobs, two million square feet of office space, 500 residential units, 1,000 hotel rooms,

one million square feet of retail and 10,000 structured parking spaces. However, by December, 2002 with a weaker economy, they reduced their retail projection by 500,000 square feet and now project a total public/private investment of \$1.12 billion.

Most recently, Starwood Wasserman announced a new 265,000 square foot corporate headquarters for G-Tech, on a parcel fronting on WaterPlace Park and across the street from the mall. When corporate growth caused G-Tech, the World’s largest manufacturer and servicer of lottery machinery, to move from its current suburban highway-oriented headquarters, they selected this site over suburban locations in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. In addition to the \$65 million facility, the project will also support a



Basin with WaterFire lighting



Along the River

new hotel and a garage on nearby Capital Center parcels. Construction is scheduled to start Summer 2004. David Wasserman, a principal of Starwood Wasserman, suggests that one advantage of this kind of development is that it brings international capital to the local economy.

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

While there is no claim for direct impact on water quality, agencies report that uncovering the rivers has had a dramatic effect on public

awareness of water quality issues. The Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC), for example, believes some of their advocacy work on remediating combined sewer overflows was helped by the increased awareness spawned by river relocation. The NBC did participate as a member of the Waterfront Study co-coordinating committee and currently is overseeing the implementation of a \$350 million, 1.5 mile-long combined sewer overflow diversion tunnel planned to run below grade, directly under WaterPlace Park. On the other hand, several people reported that the rivers are silting up faster than expected; after only four years, they need to be dredged again. The problem is under study with no easy resolution in sight.

The recently finished riverwalk is among the first completed elements benefiting from the relocation of Interstate 195. The \$450 million dollar project had its genesis during the Waterfront Study when plans to rehabilitate and expand the I-195's Providence River bridges were called into question. The initial plans would not have solved the current alignment's traffic problems, since the bridge ramps would have continued to block access and use of both banks of the river for more than a quarter mile downstream from the ends of River Relocation's riverwalks.

In the ensuing years, many of the same people and organizations that worked on Railroad Relocation and River Relocation collaborated on the I-195 merger with I-95. Once again, a higher cost and better quality project is underway, solving traffic problems, removing ramps from riverbanks and allowing their public re-use. The new I-195 relocation will re-knit city neighborhoods that were



Walkway with stair from street

severed by the current right-of-way and create new economic development in the abandoned ones. Moving the second-busiest vehicular intersection in New England to correct problems created by its current alignment made sense to a community that had already moved railroads and rivers for similar ends.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

This project represents a very substantial accomplishment in its scale and its impact on the city and its residents. As a success, the project has “many parents” – a long list of people who feel they authored or contributed significantly to some important part of it. The following reviews the degree to which the project met stated goals.

MEETING PROJECT GOALS

From the *Capital Center Plan* and River Relocation Project:

- *Create new and marketable commercial land without demolishing existing historical downtown structures in order to attract major new users who might not otherwise locate in the Capital City.*

The project has exceeded this goal. Well over a billion dollars have been invested, with plans for further businesses, jobs and investment. Historical resources throughout the project site have been interpreted, many have been restored, and still others are planned for further reuse.

- *Enhance vehicular access to the project area, the State House, and downtown.*

Suicide Circle is gone, a new highway interchange and local road network have been constructed and are working well, and access to the project area and the State House has gone from a dreary encounter with the “Chinese Wall” and acres of parking to a much improved approach.



Walkway detail

- *Create an ordered sense of public spaces. (The district was intentionally created as a high-density urban district where large, contiguous structures would define diverse spaces.)*

The mall is turned toward the street and the riverwalk, with an active façade overlooking WaterPlace Park and defines that edge of the project. However, Capital Center still needs to complete development on several parcels that should improve the continuity of structures and the quality of the spaces they will contain.

- *Create a visual and physical linkage between downtown and the State House.*

The project has succeeded in reconnecting downtown and the State House. It is one continuous experience with good legibility.

From the *Providence Waterfront Study*:

- *Connect College Hill with downtown by uncovering and moving the river and building twelve pedestrian and vehicular bridges.*

The scale of the connection is much more intimate and fine-grained than in Capital Center, offering an appropriate variety of experience. Orenstein, of the Providence Foundation, reports that over 12% of downtown workers walk to work, making walking second (ahead of bus transit) to single occupancy private vehicles in commuting modes.

- *Create a linear park along the river anchored by WaterPlace Park and Memorial Park for use as community gathering places and for celebrating the arts.*

Both parks, and smaller ones in between, are extensively programmed and well used.

- *Create a multi-modal transportation corridor accommodating vehicles, pedestrians, and boats.*

The Memorial Boulevard extension appears to have resolved circulation and safety problems; pedestrians are very well accommodated; and boats have acceptable, if minimal, clearances.RIPTA has just completed a major re-design and expansion of the Kennedy Plaza transit mall. The expansion enabled regional and national bus lines to relocate their downtown bus stops and ticketing

functions to Kennedy Plaza thus creating the single bus transit terminus called for as part of the Interface: Providence plan some 30 years ago.

- *Celebrate the city's founding and its maritime heritage with historical site graphic panels along the riverwalk.*

The quality of historical interpretation is, according to Ed Sanderson, Director of the Rhode Island Historical Commission, “among the very best I have ever seen.” They are ubiquitous (without being obtrusive), elegantly designed, and informative.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The selection committee was impressed with a number of aspects of the River Relocation Project. They found it to be “a heroic project with epic proportions” providing a complete turnaround for Providence from its previously unfortunate reputation. The committee felt that many cities need to think on a more grand scale to achieve these kinds of impacts. In this way, Providence serves as a model and inspiration. It also shows what it takes to create a project of this magnitude – vision, persistence, and cooperation among all levels of government and many private parties. Despite the large amount of federal money that was tapped, the committee considered it to be modest for the results achieved. Finally, the committee found the area's programming to be excellent, and felt that WaterFire was unique and exceptional, bringing people from many walks of life into downtown Providence.



WaterFire

PHOTO: B. Evans



Tile with historic information at bridge

The selection committee also had some reservations about the River Relocation Project. The question of its replicability (due to unique financing and political circumstances, as well as scale) was raised. The committee wondered if the ability to accomplish the level of cooperation achieved might be unique to a setting like Providence, capital city of a small state with a powerful, well placed U.S. senator). Although it was noted that many cities have done creative work with river restoration, there was a concern that in times when financial resources are harder to find, the model might not be easily adapted to other cities. Finally, while the achievement is truly impressive, in selecting the Gold Medal winner, the committee wanted to emphasize newer, more innovative models of urban intervention.

NOTE

Special thanks are due to Ron Marsella and Ken Orenstein for their detailed comments on the manuscript for this project.

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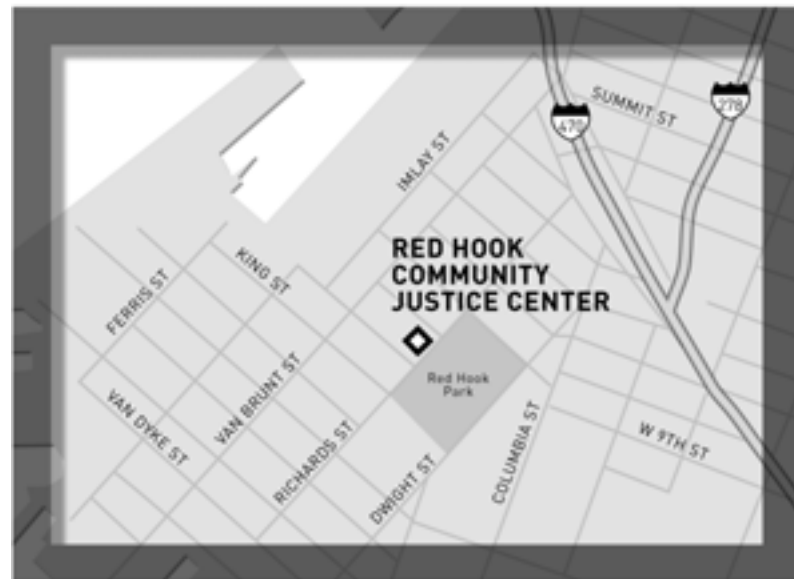
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RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

SILVER
medal winner



2003 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER AT-A-GLANCE

WHAT IS THE RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER?

- A community court with many other services in an isolated, low-income area of Brooklyn.
- A set of community outreach programs including a neighborhood “safety corps” (AmeriCorps), youth court, school, and others.
- Adaptive re-use of an abandoned parochial school building with historical significance and character.

PROJECT GOALS

- To improve an isolated, troubled neighborhood using the court system as the means of intervention.
- To make the community a safer and better place to live – thereby improving participants’ and community members’ perceptions of safety and of the justice system.
- To bring the court and the community together to solve local problems including drug use, juvenile delinquency, family dysfunction, landlord-tenant disputes, and quality-of-life crimes.
- To address fundamental questions about the fairness and accountability of the justice system.
- To redefine the relationship among justice agencies, and between those agencies and society.
- To allow the court to address the issues that bring people before it (on mostly relatively minor offences) through rehabilitation and a resulting reduction of recidivism;

- To improve the administration and effectiveness of the justice system.
- To replicate and extend the Midtown Community Court model.
- To be a laboratory for new ideas and to apply those that work to the New York court system and beyond.

PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

1992

Patrick Daly, beloved principal at the local Red Hook elementary school, is murdered by rival drug gangs.

1993

Center for Court Innovation (CCI) opens Manhattan Community Court in Times Square.

1994

District Attorney Hynes commits to intervening in Red Hook; CCI initiates planning.

1995

Community outreach starts with Public Safety Corps.

1998

Youth Court begins.

1999

Groundbreaking; construction begins.

2000

Construction complete; Criminal Court opens.

2001

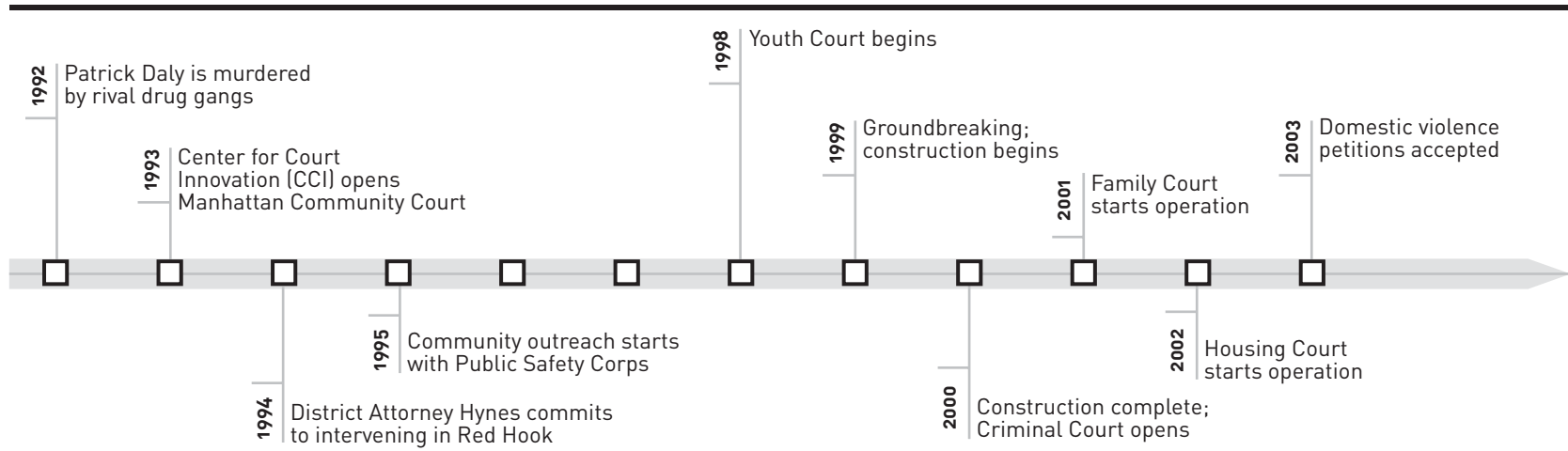
Family Court starts operation.

2002

Housing Court starts operation.

2003

Domestic violence petitions accepted.



KEY PARTICIPANTS

(all were interviewed)

The Center for Court Innovation (CCI):

Greg Berman,
Director
Robert Feldstein, Project Director,
Red Hook Community Justice Center
Adam Mansky,
Director of Operations

City and State Government:

Jonathan Lippman,
Chief Administrative Judge,
New York State Unified Courts
Charles J. Hynes,
Kings County District Attorney and
his counsel, Anne J. Swern
John Feinblatt,
New York City Criminal Justice Coordinator
(former director of CCI)
Amanda Burden,
City Planning Commissioner
(former planner at CCI)
Brett Taylor,
Legal Aid Attorney
Gerianne Abriano,
Assistant District Attorney
Captain Tom Harris,
Commanding Officer, 76th Police Precinct
Leroy Davis,
Court Officer

Community Organizations:

Craig Hammerman,
Community Board 6 Manager
Pauline Blake,
Community Board 6 Member
Jerry Armer,
Committee Chair, Community Board 6 Member
Barbara Ross,
South Brooklyn Health Center
Brad Lander,
Fifth Avenue Committee
Millie Henriquez-McCardle,
Good Shepherd Services
Elsie Felder, Red Hook resident
Bette Stoltz,
South Brooklyn Local Development Corporation
Roberto Julbe,
Community Organizer
James Brodick,
Coordinator of Operations
Emma Broughton, Red Hook resident

Justice Center Staff and Volunteers: (some are CCI staff)

Judge Alex Calabrese
Alice Tapia, Community Outreach Coordinator
Kelli Moore, Research Associate
Shona Bowers, Director of the Safety Corps
Kechea Brown, Safety Corps Team Leader
Patronia Russell, current Safety Corps member
DeCosta Johnson, second year Safety Corps member
Leticia Reyes-Velazquez, Director of Youth Programs
Adeja Kirk, Senior Youth Court member
Sabrina Carter, Senior Youth Court member
Alta Indelman, Architect

Various anonymous residents, defendants, and Justice Center users

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

THE COMMUNITY COURT AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER CONCEPTS

The Red Hook Community Justice Center (RHCJC) is a project of the Center for Court Innovation (CCI). CCI is a unique organization; in part it operates as the research and development arm of the New York state courts, but is also funded by foundations and grants, including some from the federal government. Although CCI receives partial funding from the state courts, it is independent, allowing it to function as a laboratory to test ideas that are not yet ready for uniform application across the court system. The prior work of CCI includes the Midtown Community Court which sought new ways to approach community justice, principally through dealing with quality-of-life crimes such as drug use and prostitution. Other goals entailed bringing justice closer to the people, demonstrating more immediate and effective consequences of minor crimes, and linking offenders to social services rather than just locking them up.

A community court differs from a traditional court in a number of ways. The community court focuses on two targets at the same time and seeks to find a balance between them. One, understandably, is protecting the rights of all parties while administering justice. The other is to address the root causes of an individual's offense and offer the opportunity for change (e.g., by getting the person into an education or drug treatment program). In a traditional court, for

the types of offenses most commonly seen in a community court, the more likely outcome is a plea bargain for the short time already served between arrest and appearance. The community court, in seeking to address the causes of criminal behavior, tries to stop the "revolving door" cycle that may lead to an individual doing "life in prison, 30 days at a time." Jonathan Lippman, Chief Administrative Judge of the New York state courts remarked that this is a "whole different approach to justice," compared to a tradition-bound court. The community court cares about the community and justice, not just about "processing a deluge of cases."

Paradoxically, the community court is actually likely to set a more difficult sentence and to keep the offender under its jurisdiction longer to ensure that the sentence is followed. The community court utilizes a wider variety of dispositions and services. It also carries out much more intensive monitoring of the defendant who may be required to appear in court as often as monthly, where he or she may be praised for doing well or, alternatively, may be sanctioned for failure to complete the prescribed program.

The community court integrates the operations of independent agencies (including courts, police, district attorney, public defender Legal Aid Society, and social service agencies) which are not always known for cooperating well with each other. And, in New York, it also cuts horizontally across the state's strong boundaries of specialization in court jurisdictions to be able to hear a wide variety of cases in front of the same judge (an important fact for Red Hook, but not so significant in other states).

The community justice center concept goes a step beyond a community court by locating the various agencies and services within the court building, by fine-tuning and broadening the mix of cases heard to respond to the needs of the local area, and by offering programs and services responsive to those needs. Thus, many programs under its auspices are located outside of the justice center within the community and, reciprocally, a number of community programs are given space within the justice center.

The Red Hook approach provides a new vision of the relationship between crime and society, and between the courts and the justice system. The new model is restorative, community-based, and sees crime as both an individual responsibility and the result of social conditions, seeking remedies on both levels. It is interesting to note that other elements of the justice system have had longer traditions of reform and more widely recognized recent initiatives than have the courts. The police, for example, have pursued community policing. Prisons have a long history of reform including emphases on rehabilitation, punishment, reflection, incapacitation (through incarceration) and more recently “new generation” designs. Prosecution has placed an emphasis on victims’ rights and protections as well as restorative justice. As CCI realized, the time had arrived for these concepts to be applied to the courts and for an integrative approach across institutions and agencies to be established.

There are four “big ideas” underlying the justice center concept.

- One is the “**broken windows**” theory of crime prevention which suggests that if the small but sometimes pervasive indicators of urban disorder – such as broken windows are taken care of and



Public Safety Corps at work

if relatively minor crimes receive an appropriate response, then more serious crimes are deterred. It also implies that any crime should have a proportional response (unlike the more prevalent current condition where, due to pressures of volume, minor crimes are ignored and innocent people are encouraged to plea bargain – “cop a plea” to a minor crime – in exchange for release with time served).

- A second is “**problem-solving justice**” which shifts the focus of criminal justice from process – *e.g.*, how quickly defendants can be churned through the system – to outcomes – attempting to break the cycle of crime by addressing the offender’s underlying problems (mental illness, drugs, homelessness, lack of education and skills, unemployment). Since many of a community’s most troubled individuals – those most in need of services – pass through the court, it is seen as a logical point of intervention. By contract, the “standard” court is more limited in its dispositions, which tend to focus on release without service or jail time. Red Hook’s problem-solving approach also seeks to improve the effectiveness of outcomes. The Justice Center’s rigorous compliance monitoring protocols help ensure that offenders complete the sentence that they have received.
- The third concept is to **engage local residents** and social institutions in their community on the theory that when they are involved and feel connected, rather than alienated, they are more likely to voluntarily obey laws and social norms.
- The fourth deals with the **perception and reality of community justice**. It strives to make justice more visible locally and to counteract the perception of the justice system as something

remote and played out downtown. If justice is perceived as being part of the neighborhood, then the reality of safety and security are more likely to be achieved. And if people feel that their neighborhood is safe (or getting safer), this will contribute to a climate of optimism and contribute part of the basis for neighborhood revitalization.

URBAN CONTEXT

There were a number of factors — strengths as well as needs and weaknesses — that led to the selection of the Red Hook neighborhood as the location for the justice center. It seems that both the Brooklyn (Kings County) District Attorney and CCI



Red Hook waterfront

contributed to the choice. In 1994, they agreed that Red Hook would make an ideal location for a community court. District Attorney Hynes had advocated for the community justice center because he saw that the Red Hook community needed help and CCI supported it because Red Hook fit their model of a community where a new concept could appropriately be tried (see Planning Process).

The features that characterize Red Hook can best be understood by briefly reviewing its geography, history, and demographics. Red Hook is physically isolated and thus clearly delineated in a way that many urban neighborhoods are not. It is surrounded by water on three sides and the elevated Gowanus Parkway separates it from the balance of Brooklyn. As Greg Berman states (in *Red Hook Diary*, page 2), “In a well-defined community like Red Hook, it is easier for a demonstration project like a community court to have a concentrated impact. It is also simpler for researchers to measure that impact.”

Access to the water and the protruding “hook” of land which provides its name made Red Hook a natural port, and it thrived for many years until the 1960s when containerization took over and the ports moved to New Jersey, abandoning Red Hook. During the years when the port thrived, it attracted many Italian- and Irish-American dockworkers. The physical fabric was very mixed, and it is not uncommon to see industrial and housing uses on the same block, although there are also many blocks of modest red brick row houses facing onto cobbled streets.

Red Hook was colorful, even picturesque, which made it an appropriate setting for the film *On the Waterfront*. Today, with many of the docks in ruin, those portions of the area are still picturesque in their way – but it is largely a picture of decay and disinvestment, with many abandoned buildings. On the other hand, in the last few years, artists, high tech firms, and production company back lots (e.g., for Blue Man Group) have been converting warehouses into studio and office space. They are attracted by the low rents, flexible space, and proximity to Lower Manhattan. There are plans for a major supermarket (Fairway) and possibly an Ikea. The area is reported to have been without restaurants when CCI



Red Hook Houses

began its work, and now there are several. We visited Sunny's Tavern, run by Sunny Bolzano, a local artist who returned to the neighborhood to reopen his parents' bar which is now a haven for artists and writers who come from Manhattan and even farther away for occasional readings.

The demographics of Red Hook have also changed over the years, largely as a result of the construction of one of the largest public housing projects in New York (and in the nation). The Red Hook Houses are home to about 8,000 of Red Hook's 11,000 residents, mostly poor minority group members (largely African-American and Latino). Red Hook Homes became a locus for drug dealing and



Red Hook Houses

one of its blocks was referred to as "The Pharmacy." Not surprisingly, an ongoing issue in the community is social polarization between the earlier residents ("old" immigrants, many of whom owned their homes, and who occupy the "back" of the neighborhood toward the docks) and the "new" public housing tenants (who outnumber the originals more than two-to-one and who live in the "front" of the neighborhood).

This community is reported to polarize around planning issues (such as the supermarket and the Ikea), though not always on a "front" versus "back" neighborhood basis. Apparently this was not the case with the Justice Center. This is an interesting and even surprising situation, given that poorer communities often view cops and courts with great suspicion and mistrust, seeing them as the enemy, arbitrary in their treatment, and not available or responsive when needed.

By the early 1990s, the neighborhood was suffering from very serious problems including deterioration of its physical fabric, abandoned buildings, illegal dumping of trash, disinvestment, poverty, and rampant drug sales – with its attendant violence. *Life* magazine is said to have featured Red Hook as one of the nation's ten worst neighborhoods and called it "the crack capital of America". Into this challenge marched the Center for Court Innovation, with its eyes wide open and a well conceived strategy for intervention.

DESIGN AND PLANNING

PLANNING PROCESS

Planning for the center began with the notion that a community court might be appropriate for this area of Brooklyn. This was part of Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes' response to the 1992 shooting of a well-loved local elementary school principal, Patrick Daly, who was killed in the crossfire between rival drug gangs in 1992. In our interview with District Attorney Hynes, it was clear that he feels a responsibility "to enforce public safety, not just to prosecute cases brought by the police." Thus his approach to prosecution stresses the consequences of crime and reduction in recidivism – with treatment and community service for minor, repetitive criminals but prison for the more serious ones. It followed naturally for Hynes' office to partner with CCI to explore the possibility of locating a community court in Red Hook.

In 1994, funded by a small planning grant from the New York Public Housing Authority, Greg Berman began meeting with neighborhood representatives. Among other efforts, he organized a number of focus groups to discuss neighborhood issues and to begin to define what a community court might do. Over 50 community leaders, social service providers, youth, and single mothers met in these groups. People were skeptical about the courts and justice system. One said "The court system has failed us [Offenders] go through revolving doors." (*Red Hook Diary*, page 3). Berman was, however, surprised by the general acceptance of the idea of a community court and by the strong ideas the community

held. They felt that the justice center's emphasis should be on social services – not only for defendants after the fact, but proactively for other community members as well, to address the problems that lead to crime in the first place and that affect victims and the community as a whole. In this notion – that services would be broadened to include the larger community – the community court was transcended and the concept of the community justice center was born.

As the planning process proceeded, the community began to get the idea that its members would be listened to, a perception reinforced by subsequent events. CCI worked to develop relationships, spending much "face time" with community representatives. It also found an institutionalized vehicle for local input in the form of Community Board 6 which established a special task force for the justice center that functioned as an ongoing advisory board (we met with three members who made it clear that they had played a substantive role). Strong community participation undoubtedly helped the project pass through the review process without objection by the Community Board, the Brooklyn Borough President and the City Planning Commission. And community involvement did not cease when planning was completed. CCI made the community advisory board permanent, with membership expanded to about 40 people including residents and leaders of community and service organizations (tenants associations, churches, medical clinic, community and economic developers, and the like). This group continues to assist in setting direction for the Center and identifies needs and priorities for programs.

An important early initiative (1995) was the establishment of the Public Safety Corps. This AmeriCorps program (partially funded through the Corporation for National and Community Service) is a joint project of the Justice Center, Safe Horizon (a victim assistance program), and the Brooklyn District Attorney. Each year 50 local residents enroll. Most are young but a wide range of ages is represented. In return for their year of service, they receive training, experience, a small stipend, and a grant at the end that can be used for education or further training (see the discussion of impacts below for examples of how participants' lives have been affected).



Red Hook Public Safety Corps members

There are three kinds of activities carried out by the Safety Corps. One is to work with the housing authority to make improvements at the Red Hook Houses. Members conduct safety inspections, make minor repairs, remove graffiti, and assist with safety patrols. Another team works with the police on domestic violence prevention, a strategy that includes offering programs to school children. A third team works on conflict resolution. Additional activities include running a baseball league, putting on community events and celebrations, and carrying out neighborhood cleanups. Some volunteers work at the Justice Center. Having this type of resource allows the Center to address substantive problems of disorder and safety in ways that the courts cannot.

Starting this program five years before the Justice Center facility opened gave CCI and the Center a base in the community. Long before the doors were opened, the red and white RHCJC logo was seen throughout the community on tee-shirts worn by volunteers, and became associated with their positive accomplishments. This helped establish its credibility and contributed to its acceptance. It also kept awareness of the center alive during the years when little about the planning process would have been visible to the community.

SITE SELECTION

The team evaluated a substantial number of alternative sites within Red Hook. Because of the depressed economy and flight of population and business, many vacant and abandoned properties were available. Following a bus tour of the eight most viable



Red Hook neighborhood door

options with the Community Board task force, abandoned Visitation School emerged as the task force's clear favorite. It was strategically located near the center of the community, in a neutral zone that was not identified as the turf of either the Front or the Back. In addition, it had real character, with its castellated parapets typical of the collegiate gothic schools built around the turn of the 20th Century, and a great deal of significance to the neighborhood. In the course of our visit, we met many current residents who had attended the school. While this site was not the planners' first choice (due to anticipated costs of renovation and limited size), they bowed to strong community sentiment in its favor.

FACILITY PLANNING AND DESIGN

Despite its historic qualities, the building posed a number of challenges. While the structure was in generally good condition, the interior was seriously deteriorated. Water had penetrated the roof, the windows were beyond repair, and there were accumulated bird droppings, asbestos, and deteriorated and inadequate systems. All of these were capable of remediation, given adequate funding. But the limited size of the building – just barely adequate for the planned functions – posed a continuing design and operational challenge. There were simply more functions than could fit comfortably into the available area. The result is that many spaces are multi-functional with alternating uses over the day or week and many workstations are smaller than might be desired. There are very few private offices, and cubicles are rather small (though some argue that this leads to more interaction and communication).

The historic character of the building (recognized as a valuable asset, though not a city landmark or listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places) was treated with respect during restoration. The stone was cleaned and repointed and replacement

windows in the façade were sympathetic with the period (wood-framed double hung windows, with true divided lights and muntins, “the best we could afford”).



Red Hook Community Justice Center entrance



Justice Center construction

Given the key objectives of making the facility user-friendly and accessible – a place that people would want to go to rather than shun – decisions about space planning and location of elements were crucial. A major and costly one was to lower the entry lobby to street level for ease of access. Originally, there had been separate entrances for boys and girls, each leading directly into a stairway to the upper levels, without a real lobby. To create a lobby at street level required that the floor in the front portion of the building be removed and reconstructed, leaving an area in the basement with a low ceiling, even though the floor was excavated several feet (it is used for storage). Now, one enters into a space that is one-and-one-half stories tall, with abundant windows and an open, airy feeling.

Prime space at the front of the building on the main floor is given over to two important public functions. On one side is the youth court/community meeting room and on the other is the child care area. The courtroom and related justice offices take up the balance of the floor. On the upper floor are administrative offices, the judge's chambers, social service offices, and group rooms (used for the school and other treatment programs). The client waiting area features a crock pot with soup for those who may have just been released from custody or are otherwise hungry, a detail that speaks volumes about the thoughtful, service-oriented approach.

Care and attention were paid to material choices and detailing in service of the facility's objectives. Generally, materials are light in color and strike a balance between moderately high quality and a feeling of comfort or accessibility. For example, wood trim and



Reception at the Justice Center



Red Hook Youth Court

judges, here the judge uses the same corridors as everyone else. This was not only to save space, but an intentional gesture toward accessibility – and appropriate for a judge who plays basketball with neighborhood kids and eats in the local restaurants.

On the lower level, a partial basement with high windows, there are two completely separate functions. On one side are community service offices serving the Public Safety Corps, youth court and other functions. On the other, separated by a solid masonry wall, are holding cells for in-custody defendants who are brought from jail for their appearance in court. In an explicit attempt to consider

the needs and concerns of the defendants, these follow current “new generation” correctional design precepts, using glazed cell fronts (with natural light from the corridor), privacy panels screening the toilets, individual seats rather than hard benches, pay phones for defendant use, and the like. There are also interview booths and law enforcement security areas. Circulation for prisoners, however, is entirely separate from other lower level functions. Prisoners have their own secure entrance at the rear of the building as well as a separate staircase connecting to a back door to the courtroom. It was not felt to be desirable to the community, or conducive to their own dignity, to see handcuffed inmates being paraded in and out of the Center or even through its hallways.

The Center’s logo and other graphic design elements were provided pro bono by Pentagram, an internationally known New York firm. Done early on, they appear on signs, banners, stationary and tee-shirts, and provide a very strong identity and image for the Center.

For architectural design, CCI selected Alta Indelman, with whom they had worked before (on the Midtown Community Court) and who knew their values and concerns. While the Center may not be as innovative architecturally as it is operationally, the design does reinforce intentions, function effectively, and convey the desired message to its users.



Red Hook courtroom

A DAY IN COURT

The Red Hook court hears as many as 80% of the cases filed within its jurisdiction (which covers not only the 11,000 residents of Red Hook, but a total of 200,000 residents within three police precincts). In essence, it processes all cases except major felonies and civil trials (and those arrested on Friday or Saturday nights – for this reason it does not hear many prostitution cases). It handles arraignments for misdemeanors and minor felonies, juvenile and family cases (including domestic violence), and housing matters. It is a high volume “people’s court,” with a lot of cases heard but only a relatively few minutes spent on each one. Each year about 5,000 are arraigned (first appearance following arrest) and there are another 10,000 to 12,000 appearances for a total of about 16,000 cases heard (or about 80 per day). Cases still under the court’s jurisdiction are reviewed by staff weekly.

During the site visit, we were afforded the opportunity to observe courtroom proceedings, even spending a little time sitting next to the judge listening in as he conferred with the parties and their counsel. In some ways, of course, this court is not unlike any other. There are uniformed bailiffs, a flag, and the judge wears a black robe. But there are many ways in which Red Hook is different from a regular court.

One is in its technology. While computers are finding their way into many courtrooms, CCI designed a special case management system for this court that differs from the norm in two ways. First, it is accessible (with appropriate limitations on the information

accessed) by all the justice system agencies. Thus, the court, probation, prosecutor, and defense can all track a defendant’s case and progress. Second, for defendants who have received a disposition, it tracks his or her performance in meeting the requirements set by the court. Thus, the judge, social services, and the other parties all can see at a glance whether or not he or she is attending classes, going to drug treatment, or showing up for community service.

The availability of this information is linked to another major difference in this court. There is an intense, even intimate, relationship between the court and the defendant. This judge often knows the people who appear before him – or, if they are there for their first appearance, takes the time to talk to them, understand them, and consult with a social services staff member who has reviewed their history and is familiar with available and



Judge Calabrese at work

appropriate treatment options. The Bruner Foundation team observed how the court handled the case of a seventeen year old arrested for possession of a small amount of marijuana. The judge learned that his mother was in court and called her to the bench where he could tell immediately that she was involved and concerned. They discussed her son and his issues, one of which was a lack of things to do during the day. He had dropped out of school and did not have a job. They agreed (as did his defense attorney, with only a mild plea for a lighter sentence) that he would attend GED classes and the Phoenix House drug treatment program. She was very surprised to learn that both programs were offered right there in the building. The young man was told to report upstairs immediately to sign up and would start the programs that day or the next.

This is in marked contrast to what usually happens in a case like this. If heard downtown, as a first offense, he would have been sentenced to time served between arrest and appearance (one day) and released. Even if he had been sentenced to a program, he would have been told to appear several weeks later at a place distant from the court and likely also from his home (he happened to live across the street from the Justice Center). The probability of his showing up would be far less than it is here. And the likelihood that the court would find out – or that there would be further consequences – if he didn't, would be much lower. A report of his failure to appear might not come back to the sentencing judge until several months had passed.

Here, instead, the judge required that he report back to the court at a specific time each month and, when he does, the records of his compliance and progress will be available. Thus, there were immediate, proportional, and effective consequences for his actions (this is often taken to be a key underpinning of effective justice). While the outcome for this particular case will not be known for some time, other evidence suggests that it is more likely to be positive. And, if he does succeed, the conviction will be removed from his record (see Outcomes section).

On the other hand, these markedly different results raise some challenging questions, and all of the players we spoke to were very aware of them. Principal among them are fairness, impartiality, and potential for conflicts of interest. While this case's disposition may indeed be in the best interest both of the defendant and society, in effect he will be under the jurisdiction of the court for much longer than he would be in a conventional court setting and will be engaged in a much more challenging program. If he fails, he may be subject to a sentence of jail time. A related issue concerns the generally cooperative relationship between what are traditionally adversarial parties, and the constant concern that they not abrogate their designated responsibilities. In a meeting with police, district attorney, and defense counsel we observed a demonstration of the fine line they tread in attempting to arrive at what all believe to be the best and most appropriate result, though this is not always involvement in a program. If the individual is a repeat offender and has failed to avail himself of remedial programs, jail will likely be recommended. Still, you will see the police and prosecutor agreeing to treatment and, in another case, defense counsel agreeing that it is

appropriate for his client to spend some time in jail. In this court, the defendant's mother may ask the judge to order additional services and the defendant may thank the court officer or bring in a friend who is in need of assistance.

Because of this cooperative and effective setting, where the participants can see the often positive results of their actions, the Justice Center is described as a very desirable place to work, despite the large caseload and long hours. Each staff member we spoke with expressed a strong preference for working here rather than in downtown Manhattan or Brooklyn.

SERVICES OFFERED AT THE CENTER

The following services are offered on site (the text, with brief explanations, is abstracted from a RHCJC handout):



Red Hook softball team

Free Child Care For everyone who comes to appear in court or to use services, the Justice Center offers child care services in a secure, dedicated area.

Mediation Available to all community residents, mediation can be used to settle youth, family, housing and neighborhood disputes.

Drug Treatment In partnership with others, Phoenix House provides a short-term treatment readiness program and referrals to long term treatment for youth and adults.

Housing Court Resource Center Free legal information and referrals are available to landlords and tenants with housing issues, including court cases, code compliance and rental assistance.

Domestic Violence Counseling Safe Horizon provides an on-site domestic violence counselor to assist in the procurement of orders of protection, make referrals to community-based services and address other issues related to domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Support Group Park Slope Safe Homes runs weekly domestic violence support groups and provides individual counseling for victims of domestic violence.

Mental Health Clinic staff can link clients to counseling and other mental health services for adults and juveniles, family members and all local residents.

Youth and Family Services A Good Shepherd Services social worker is on-site to provide crisis intervention, clinical mental health

assessments, and referrals to neighborhood-based services for youth and families.

Adult Education The Justice Center hosts GED classes run by the Board of Education available to all who are 17 and older.

Job Placement Resume writing and job development services are available to both litigants and walk-ins through a job developer employed by the Fifth Avenue Committee.

Red Hook Youth Court Trains youth to serve as judge, jury and attorney, hearing real cases of other youth (ages 10-17) who admit responsibility for low-level offenses such as truancy, turnstile jumping and disorderly conduct. In the process, the Youth Court works to develop youth into leaders of their community and engage them in positive activities.

Mentoring and Internships The Red Hook Youth Court sponsors internships with agencies in Red Hook and other parts of New York City and coordinates a mentoring program that matches local youth with caring, responsible adults.

Red Hook Public Safety Corps Every year, 50 residents commit to a year of community service in Red Hook, fixing locks, aiding victims, tutoring children. In return, Corps members receive job training, a living stipend, free child care and an educational grant of \$4,725.

In addition, there is space for a **health clinic**, which we were told would soon resume operations after closing temporarily.

FINANCES

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

Funding for this project came from a number of sources. Seed money for the initial community outreach and feasibility assessment was provided by the New York City Housing Authority. CCI then obtained a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance to cover Red Hook's "soft" costs (planning, design and construction management). This played an important role in helping to raise local support, which came from the Chief Judge of New York Unified Courts, Judith Kaye, and Mayor Giuliani. By agreement between the court system and the city, the city paid for construction, which was fully funded. The site and building are leased from Catholic Charities for 30 years at a nominal rate. Project costs are shown in the following table.



GED class

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SOURCES AND COSTS

Development Sources and Costs

Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance	
Architectural Fees & Expenses	\$488,484
Construction Management Fee	\$95,000
City of New York, Department of Design and Construction	
Construction Management Expenses	\$550,000
Construction Costs	\$4,355,466

TOTAL: **\$ 5,488,950**

OPERATIONS

The table below shows where operating funds come from and how they are spent. Some money is also (or has been) received from foundations, including the Schubert Foundation, the Fund for the City of New York, and the Scherman Foundation. It is important to note that the operations costs for the most part reflect a reallocation of resources from the downtown centralized court and would be incurred in the cost of running any courtroom – *e.g.*, the cost of judge, court officers, court administrators and clerks; police, probation and public defenders.

TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET; FISCAL YEAR 2003 - SOURCES AND USES (October 1, 2002 to September 30, 2003)

Personnel

NYS Unified Court System	\$1,700,000
<i>(Judge, Court Attorney Clerks, Court Officers, Interpreter, Reporters)</i>	
City of New York	650,000
<i>(Police, Probation, Public Defenders)</i>	
Kings County District Attorneys Office	430,000
<i>(4 Assistant District Attorneys and support staff)</i>	
Center for Court Innovation	1,000,800
<i>(Administration, Clinic, Alternative Sanctions, Community Programs, Research)</i>	

Subtotal, Personnel **\$3,780,800**

Other Than Personnel (OTPS)

NYS Unified Court System	200,000
<i>(Supplies, Technology)</i>	
City of New York	150,000
<i>(Utilities)</i>	
Center for Court Innovation OTPS (with indirect costs)	497,000
<i>(Program and operation supplies)</i>	

Subtotal, OTPS **\$847,000**

TOTAL: **\$ 4,627,800**

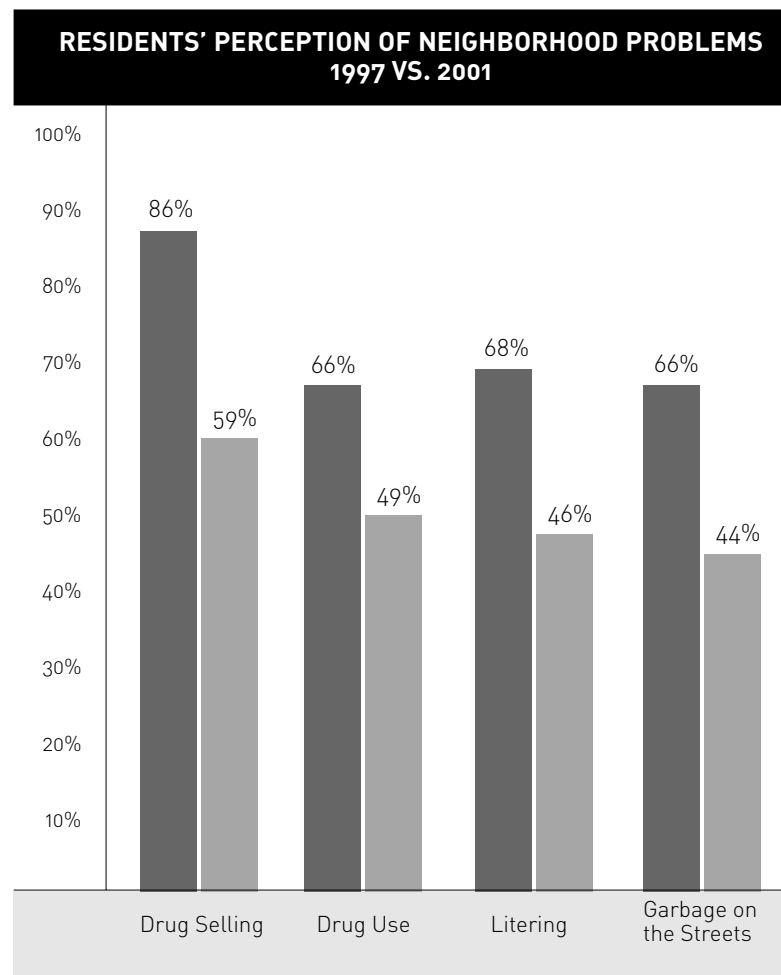
IMPACTS

CCI has made serious efforts to measure outcomes of its projects, including the RHCJC. CCI (and other partners) conducted a formal evaluation of the Midtown Community Court, and the results were generally very positive, concluding that process improvement goals were being met and that attitudes about justice and neighborhood impacts were much improved (see References). There is also an outcome evaluation of Red Hook underway, sponsored by National Institute of Justice and being carried out by Columbia University.

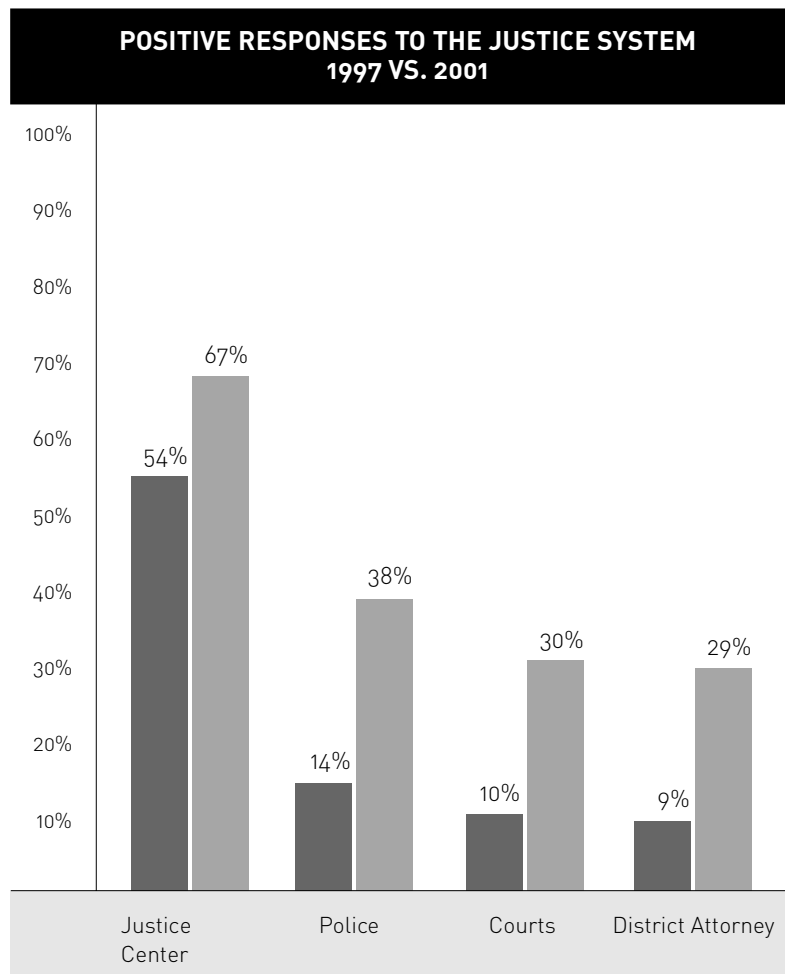
CCI has shown its commitment to monitoring and evaluation through inclusion of a research director on the Center's staff and by conducting an annual survey. About 1,000 surveys are completed each year. These are distributed by the Public Safety Corps, with some effort expended toward training Corps members about selecting subjects and asking questions in a non-leading manner – though they are encouraged to get as many respondents as they can. Questions are asked about residents' perceptions of safety and quality of life issues in the neighborhood as well as about the various components of the justice system. While the number of surveys is quite large, the "convenience sampling" raises doubts about the representative nature of the data, since surveyors may well select a set of respondents which does not reflect the overall makeup of the community. Nevertheless, the results are quite positive and some of them are illustrated below (charts provided by CCI).

The following chart shows a decrease of one-quarter to one-third in the number of residents identifying Red Hook as having certain

problems. (It could be argued, of course, that about half the residents still perceive these as problems and that not enough has yet been done. Likely, CCI and the Center would agree that much is still to be done in addressing these issues. Still, perceptions in the area have clearly improved.)



The next table shows how residents' positive perception of various elements of the justice system have improved, with dramatic increases for those elements that were previously granted little positive response (and yet, again, with much room for



improvement). Interestingly, the Justice Center started with more than half the people positive about it and that has increased to two-thirds. Anecdotally, Alicia Tapia, a resident who works at the Center said, “now the cops show up” when they are called. She also indicated that at first the court was viewed as just another way to “put our kids in jail,” whereas now it is seen as an integral part of the community that is also contributing to its improvement.

There are also a number of important justice system indicators such as reduction in crime and recidivism. However, these are very difficult to measure and to attribute to a specific cause (such as the Justice Center). Crime, for example, has been dramatically reduced all over New York and nationally (until recently). In addition, it is very hard to measure recidivism; the standard outcome is whether the person re-offends and is arrested again within three years, but it is impossible to know how many criminals are not caught or if they have moved out of the area and been rearrested in another jurisdiction. Despite these difficulties, there is some evidence concerning the Justice Center’s impact.

In terms of crime reduction, the Bruner Foundation was provided with some recent statistics by the Brooklyn District Attorney’s office covering the three local precincts that comprise Red Hook’s catchment area and comparing them to all of South Brooklyn (of which Red Hook is a part) The results are somewhat mixed, but they generally show greater or much greater decreases in the Red Hook precincts in arrests for such crimes as burglary (which decreased from 30% to 50% compared to 38% overall) and

weapons possession (which decreased from 22% to 65% in two Red Hook precincts and increased in one compared to an overall increase in South Brooklyn).

There is also reported to be less recidivism at Red Hook as measured against other, related courts (for example, at the experimental drug courts, the recidivism rate is approximately one-third compared to over two-thirds without it). In addition, defendants are reported to be more accountable. At Red Hook, 75% comply with sanctions versus 50% at the downtown court. A study of New York's drug court system, done by the Center for Court Innovation, found that "in six sample jurisdictions, including three in New York City, the re-arrest rate among drug offenders who had completed a court-monitored treatment plan was 29 percent lower over three years than the rate for the same type of drug offenders who opt for prison time without treatment." (see References: Zielbauer)

Red Hook is reported to be more efficient in that it handles cases faster than downtown and makes less use of expensive jail and prison capacity. There is also more community restitution (these are potential savings or cost offsets, but difficult to measure). Even defendants report feeling that they were treated fairly and prefer to have their cases heard here.

Another impact is on the justice system agencies themselves. At Red Hook they exhibit more cooperative attitudes and practices with much more trust of each other than they report to have elsewhere.

While they are still appropriately adversarial and advocacy-based, their focus is both on protecting society and on rehabilitating the individual. Even the police captain we spoke to described "falling in love with the program – because it works."

The Center affects people who work there. A young person said that court officers act differently there than they do downtown – where mass justice and an "us-versus-them" attitude prevail. By contrast, at the Center even criminals are viewed as part of the community – which they are, since they will be returning there after release.

Many people told us that it is inspiring to work in the Center where they feel part of something positive, and that they are having an impact and making a difference. This is in marked contrast to how they had felt when working in a more typical court. Individuals ask



Judge Alex Calabrese signing autographs

to be assigned to the Center, even though work hours may be longer there. Clearly, the Center has succeeded in creating a culture of change. There is a great contrast between the Center and the downtown courts which were viewed with “dread” and described as a “hellhole.”

The impacts on people participating in programs such as Youth Court and the Public Safety Corps are also striking. The Bruner Foundation team met with a number of them and heard their stories. They come from the community and are taking advantage of opportunities that would not have been available to them without the Center. A single mother of four has better housing. A young man will be going on to a better job and college. The table below shows what Safety Corps graduates do after they finish the program, and 85% are either employed or in school.

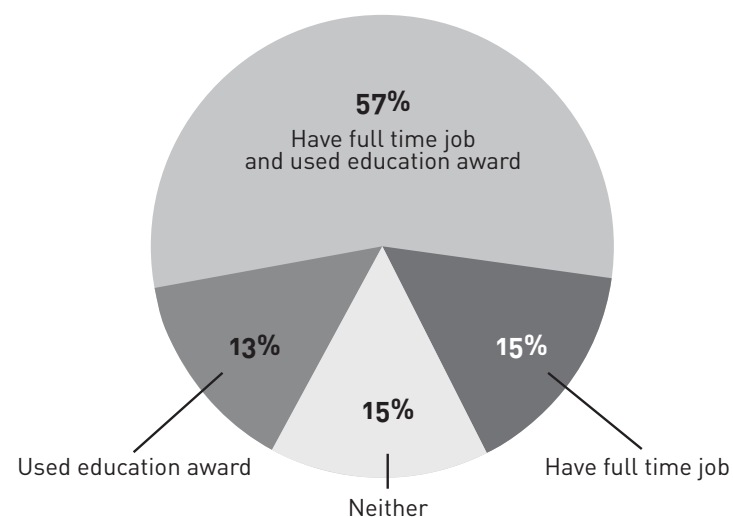
Youth Court participants, too, have achieved considerable benefits. Two hundred so far have been trained to play a variety of roles (judge, prosecutor, defender). The participants we met are thinking about how the experience will help with their college applications and some of them talked about becoming lawyers.

It is harder to measure impacts of the Center (and related improvements in public safety) on economic development, but people who would be in a position to know (e.g., the head of the local economic development agency) feel these impacts are significant. In addition, there are actual jobs provided at and by the Justice Center (at least a dozen) and the Safety Corps (two hundred so far, plus many employed graduates).

There are also many intangibles. As Community Board members said in expressing pride about the Center, “what was promised has been delivered”, with impacts “far beyond expectations.” They stated that Red Hook is a “legacy” felt and used by a community which is now more engaged and feels an enhanced sense of pride and ownership. The community is also said to feel, and in fact to be, more interconnected, because the Center has provided a forum for formerly disconnected people and service agencies to come together.

This project has gained support and had impacts at the highest levels of the city and in the state courts, as represented by the state’s chief administrative judge, the mayor’s criminal justice advisor, and

**208 INDIVIDUALS HAVE GRADUATED FROM THE
RED HOOK SAFETY CORPS SINCE 1995**



the head of the city's planning commission. The sense of ownership of Red Hook is very broad, and includes the public officials just mentioned as well as the district attorney.

Finally, this project has been characterized by remarkable growth and advancement of its planners. Greg Berman served as project planner of the RHCJC and became the director of CCI. Robert Feldstein was assistant project planner and became the director of RHCJC. Adam Mansky was the first director of RHCJC and became the director of operations of CCI. John Feinblatt was the director of CCI and became the mayor's criminal justice director. Amanda Burden was a project planner for CCI and became the chair of the City Planning Commission. This suggests both that the success of the project has led to growth for these individuals and also that this project was able to attract highly qualified and motivated staff.

IS IT A MODEL?

Is the Red Hook Community Justice Center a model for cities and states across the country? Should there be one in every community in New York City, the state or the nation? CCI and the New York state courts view Red Hook more as a laboratory than a prototype to be rolled out in a large number of locations. This is not to say that Red Hook will not be emulated. The community court and drug court concepts have already been applied in other communities, especially where the kinds of problems RHCJC addresses are prevalent. These types of courts will be developed rather broadly in New York state. There are said to be over 20

operational community courts and another 10 in planning across the country (in about 15 states) and the British intend to replicate the Red Hook model. Just after the site visit, a press release from the British Home Office stated, in part:

“The Home Secretary David Blunkett and the Lord Chancellor Derry Irvine today announced plans to support the development of pioneering US-style community courts in Britain. The New York-based Center for Court Innovation will help to develop plans for pilot community justice centres in England and Wales. These will ultimately aim to shift the focus of the criminal justice system to engaging more in crime prevention and problem-solving in the community in addition to bringing perpetrators to justice.”

A later press release (and related stories carried by BBC online) identified Liverpool as the site and indicated that funding had been committed to initiate the project. (See References.)

Through the laboratory provided by CCI, the New York state court system has the opportunity to test concepts that may be applied more broadly, including in its general jurisdiction courts. For New York, one of the main issues is its rather extreme specialization – with 11 different case-type jurisdictions – each of which hears only a single type of case. Red Hook is unique for New York in that it is multi-jurisdictional, hearing at least four types of cases. The state system will move toward this type of integration, but only gradually, as resistance is structural and strong.

Red Hook is also more costly (about a million dollars more per year compared to a similar court), at a time when resources are not plentiful. It provides and pays for facilitators, mediators, and case managers (social services are not included in its budget, but are provided by partner agencies). However, to render a fair judgment about its cost-effectiveness, it would be necessary to accurately measure its benefits including costs that are avoided or saved as well as positive human and social impacts. Some of the economic benefits that could conceivably be measured are: more expeditious case processing with far less lag time between arrest and sentencing, increased compliance with sanctions and an attendant reduction in recidivism which would result in many broad savings to society such as lessened costs of crime (to victims), reduced demands on law enforcement and the courts, and increased productivity of individuals when they leave the justice system.

It is also important to recognize that the community justice center is not an easy approach to implement. It requires a major commitment of effort and resources and entails the application of skills, such as community organizing and outreach, which are not usually associated with the courts.

FUTURE PLANS

In Red Hook, CCI will continue to respond to community needs, as voiced through surveys and input from its advisory committee. As the director indicated, if a legitimate need is identified, they will attempt to develop a program to meet it.

In the New York court system, changes tried at Red Hook will be rolled out, if slowly. More courts will probably become multi-jurisdictional and more drug courts, community courts and a few community justice centers will be developed.

Nationally, and even internationally (with the work initiated in Britain), it appears that the models of community court and community justice center will be emulated and applied, with appropriate modifications for local conditions.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

MEETING PROJECT GOALS

This project has achieved remarkable success in meeting its goals.

- *To demonstrate innovation, both in the justice system and for community development.*

The justice center has demonstrated innovation. Within the court and justice systems it is on the leading edge of integration and accountability. Using the justice system as a strategy for community development and improvement represents a unique and innovative approach.

- *To attempt to solve important problems of crime and society.*

The justice center shows vision in boldly trying to solve very important problems of crime and society, many of which have

largely been given up on by the agencies whose primary mission is to deal with them.

- *To emphasize community involvement.*

There was during the planning phase, and continues to be during implementation, very considerable community involvement. CCI adopted a smart strategy of coming in early with the Safety Corps and outreach has pervaded its approach.

- *To improve the perception and reality of safety and the quality of the community.*

The level of improvement in the community, and the perception and reality of safety, are tangible, if difficult to quantify. The Red Hook neighborhood, as someone said, may be “about to be poised” to take off.

- *To have a significant impact on people's lives.*

The justice center appears to be having a significant impact on people's lives – the participants, the agencies, the community, and even its own planners.

- *To be a laboratory and model for innovative ideas in the courts, justice system and community planning.*

The justice center is having an impact as a laboratory for N.Y. State courts, nationally and even internationally, generating wide interest in its model.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The selection committee was impressed with many aspects of the Justice Center. Like Camino Nuevo, the Center is effecting social change, and transforming lives and the urban environment through an extraordinarily innovative model program. The center's approach to using the justice system for social change and urban revitalization and its willingness to tackle a truly distressed neighborhood were regarded with great appreciation. The committee valued the thoroughness with which the model was implemented, being particularly impressed with the mediation element and the use of computers to track participants and to achieve accountability. While perhaps more “top-down” than Camino in its origin, it was also exemplary in involving the community in planning and management. The committee praised the center for providing a catalyst and opportunity for its management and staff to grow within organization and to find new opportunities beyond it.

The selection committee also had some reservations about the Justice Center. While some evidence was presented about the impacts of the center on its community, they would have preferred more definitive information than is currently available (though they also appreciated that a formal evaluation is under way). While the graffiti clean up and the reductions in crime are likely attributable to the center's work, it is more difficult to credit it with other changes like restaurants opening or artists moving in – and the overall change in the local economy was neither clear nor clearly due to the center. The committee also felt that the center's architectural design was modest, but realized that the design was intentionally understated in order not to intimidate participants.



Red Hook Safety Corp painting fence

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SILVER MEDAL WINNER

Red Hook Community Justice Center



LEARNING ABOUT URBAN EXCELLENCE

THE SELECTION PROCESS

The choice of the 2001 winners by the Selection Committee is the result of the unique collaborative process that characterizes the Rudy Bruner Award. The Committee discussion highlights its assessment of the most significant issues facing our cities today. The Bruner Foundation does not provide explicit criteria for determining excellence. Rather, definitions and descriptions of urban excellence emerge from the RBA submissions themselves. In evaluating the applications, Committee members are asked to make determinations about the importance of a project to its urban setting and to broader urban issues, to articulate the reasons why it was important, and to assess the impact it has had within its urban context. The Committee's collective vision of what constitutes urban excellence evolves from its selection of finalists, its findings from the on-site case studies, and ultimately, its determination of the gold and silver medal winners. For the Selection Committee, this is not an easy process, but it is invariably one that leads to rich and thought-provoking discussions. Faced with an abundance of successful projects and a limited amount of time, the Selection Committee set about making choices and creating a framework of significant issues and themes from which to judge these projects. The themes that emerged relate to the 2001 winners and also recall themes from previous RBA cycles.

THE WINNERS

The 2001 RBA recognized five projects that have made their cities better places to live and work and represent important models of urban placemaking. These winners have improved the lives of the

residents of their communities and have changed the way people think and feel about their cities. As our Selection Committee noted, "the best urban projects always do."

The Village of Arts and Humanities, Philadelphia, PA - *Gold Medal Winner* - a private, non-profit, community based organization dedicated to revitalizing its host neighborhood through the arts. What began in 1986 as a summer project to engage neighborhood children in building a community park has grown into a major provider of arts-inspired programs in education, land transformation, construction, and economic development. The Selection Committee found The Village "bold...absolutely spectacular" in the way it "involved people doing things with their own hands in their own community...local people creating their neighborhood and developing a new sense of pride in a formerly neglected inner-city neighborhood."

The Selection Committee chose The Village as the 2001 Gold Medal Winner because of the boldness of its vision; its adaptability to other urban settings; the way in which it showed that one person can make a difference; its being part of and growing out of the neighborhood; and its tackling of difficult (some said impossible) problems without relying on large-scale public programs or funding. Equally important was the way in which The Village addressed the spiritual as well as physical needs of its community.

Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, NY - *Silver Medal Winner* - a unique museum in a landmark tenement building that

was home to an estimated 7,000 people from over 20 nations between 1863 and 1935. The museum's mission is to promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a gateway to America. LESTM set out to change our understanding of the way cities evolve by illuminating the universal nature of the American immigrant experience. The Selection Committee recognized the importance of honoring the untold story of immigrants to America and found immigration to be a compelling and socially unifying theme.

New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark, NJ - *Silver Medal Winner* - opened on October 18, 1997, with the dream of being a world-class performing arts center with a significant social agenda. NJPAC serves as a cultural complex for the world's greatest performing artists, as well as a setting for multicultural performances that attract New Jersey's diverse audiences. NJPAC also strives to be an educational and cultural resource for New Jersey children and families as well as an economic engine to spur the revival of Newark. The Committee was impressed by the breadth of vision and quality of NJPAC as a model for other cities undertaking mega-projects, demonstrating the feasibility of major development that maintains a commitment to serving local residents.

South Platte River Greenway, Denver, CO - *Silver Medal Winner* - encompasses 10.5 miles of the South Platte River, running through the birthplace of the City of Denver. Prior to the establishment of

the Platte River Development Committee in 1974, the river was seriously polluted and unfit for recreational use. Since 1974, the river has been fully reclaimed, opening the waterway and its banks for a mix of public recreational uses. The Selection Committee viewed this project as "Olmsteadian" in scale and an important "opportunity to bring disparate parts of the community together" through new public facilities located along the river's edge. The Committee applauded the creation of a major new natural resource in the heart of the city, one that gives Denver residents "a renewed sense of place, and a new sense of pride in the natural resources of the urban core."

Swan's Marketplace, Oakland, CA - *Silver Medal Winner* - an adaptive reuse of an historic downtown public market, incorporating mixed-income residential units and 24 separate commercial and arts-related uses organized around a shared courtyard. The project houses the 93-year-old Housewives Fresh Food Market, Old Oakland Co-Housing, and 18 units of affordable housing in a combination of new and restored architecture in downtown Oakland. It is an excellent example of mixed use and socially and historically sensitive development, and it is important as a model for a city that is trying to create 10,000 new housing units in a downtown that had been depopulated by the impact of suburbanization and urban renewal programs.

CREATING MEANINGFUL URBAN PLACES

The process used in selecting RBA winners typically results varied in group of finalists, and 2001 was no exception. These five finalists

cover a broad spectrum of geography, scale, setting, purpose, and approach. No two were in the same city or addressed precisely the same urban issue. What they had in common was a foundation of core values as they addressed basic human needs in their own original ways.

This year's finalists all had social agendas that permeated their primary missions. The Village built gardens and filled them with art, but at a more basic level, it was about re-building a community and providing opportunities for residents to create personal meaning in their lives. LESTM created a showcase of tenement housing and immigrant lives, but its underlying purpose was to use the lessons of the past to reveal important commonalities among diverse immigrant groups. NJPAC was built to bring world-class performing arts to New Jersey, but it spends equal time and effort bringing children to the arts and art to classrooms throughout the state. The South Platte River Greenway cleaned up a river and opened some parks, and in the process it connected long-separated neighborhoods and brought a city back to its natural and historic beginnings. Swan's Marketplace saved a well-known and beloved shopping site while it worked to create a much-needed presence and vitality, as well as mixed-income housing in Oakland's neglected downtown.

A number of issues emerged in the process of researching and writing the site reports and the ensuing Selection Committee discussions. These issues relate to the nature of creating meaningful and important urban places. They are reflective of issues that have

been noted in past RBA cycles but are still in many ways unique to the people, projects and contexts of these five winning sites.

ART AS AN ENGINE FOR URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

Efforts at rebuilding urban areas have traditionally focused on providing shelter and jobs. While no one would argue with the need for economic development and affordable housing, Strom (1994) cites a growing list of cities that have used culture and creativity as a focal point for revival. Art and culture, in museums, theatre, and public settings, have historically been an important part of what makes urban centers vital. What is new, as illustrated by several recent RBA winners, is the number of projects that make art the central focus and driving force in urban redevelopment. For example, Circle in the Square (RBA 1997) in Roanoke, Virginia, took a variety of museums and theatres, each too small to have an impact on its own, and brought them together in a cooperative facility. Together they provided a critical mass of cultural opportunities sufficient to significantly boost visitorship, while also helping to support the revival of downtown Roanoke. Project Row Houses (RBA 1997), in Houston's low-income Third Ward, saved a series of historic row houses by converting them into exhibit spaces and, in the process, provided critical support services and a sense of identity and cohesion to an underserved neighborhood. In ARTScorpsLA (RBA 1999), young people promoted community building and pride by transforming blighted parcels of abandoned land into public art. Museums and cultural sites are also a key part of Yerba Buena Gardens (RBA 1999), a revitalization that is drawing people back to the South of Market area in San Francisco to live, shop and play.

This theme is even more explicit in the 2001 RBA, particularly as demonstrated by The Village and NJPAC. While these two projects could not be more different in scale and style, they are both impressive and successful in how they have used art to directly address creative needs and to initiate broad urban development. For The Village, the use of the arts for social programs is a clear, explicit, and founding philosophy. Lily Yeh came to a neighborhood in which social and physical systems were disintegrating. She felt that the human spirit of residents had to be nurtured and strengthened before “bricks and mortar” could have a lasting effect or value. The Village engages in many different kinds of community-building activities -- housing, landscaping, job-creation — but making art and using art to change the environment is central to it all. The process of creating art serves multiple purposes for The Village. It provides a way to engage children — to get them off the street and into supervised programs and give them an experience of success. Adults have also discovered their own creative interests and abilities and from there have developed self-esteem and leadership potential. Sculptures, mosaics, and parks beautify the neighborhood as they reclaim spaces and personalize them to fit the character of the community. The arts serve to help people discover and address personal and spiritual issues that then become a basis for personal growth and community building.

NJPAC appeared as a bright spot in what was an otherwise bleak and lifeless part of downtown Newark. It has effectively married excellent design with top-notch artistic programming to overcome significant psychological barriers in bringing arts patrons to this

beleaguered city. NJPAC is unique in its fusion of the traditional functions of a performing arts center with an attention to the social needs of its community. NJPAC has made arts education its social banner and has channeled significant fund-raising efforts, personnel, and resources into its educational programs. NJPAC’s art education programs were in full swing years before the Center itself opened, sending artists to school systems around the state to support local curricula and teachers and providing lessons and resources to young artists. Currently, NJPAC offers hundreds of learning-based concerts each year for children and their families. The new Lucent Technology Center for Arts Education provides enhanced opportunities for lessons, classes, training, and practice space. NJPAC found a way to have a significant impact on Newark’s (and New Jersey’s) school children and, in particular, its low-income and under-served population, thus managing to avoid being an institution solely of and for the cultural elite.

The Museum of Children’s Art (MoCHA) in Swan’s Marketplace has played a similar though more limited role supporting art education in Oakland. MoCHA offers free art classes in a number of Oakland public schools. The Oakland public school system has been largely without an arts program since California’s Proposition 13, which led to years of reduced state funding for education. These classes are the only opportunity for a regular, structured, creative experience in the arts for many students.

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF PLACES AND VALUES

Preservation of places with great personal meaning for individuals and communities is another theme in this year's RBA, as it has been in past award cycles. This is no surprise or accident – historic preservation as a meaningful movement in American communities has its basis in saving and restoring those sites that have the most symbolic importance to communities. Local preservation movements have frequently been founded on coalitions formed when landmarks are threatened. Preservation movements support the community by helping maintain places that are beautiful, familiar, and/or historically important (Goldstone and Dalrymple, 1974).

LESTM is in some ways unique as a site for building preservation. The building at 97 Orchard Street has been meticulously studied and restored with extraordinary care, and the resultant spaces have been viewed by many people. It is unusual in that it was not, by typical preservation standards, “special.” The building is not a work of architectural significance or opulence and did not house figures of historical note. It was typical of a building type, and at many points in the twentieth century, its demolition would have been seen as a sign of civic improvement, not as a great community loss.

LESTM was preserved and restored precisely *because* it is ordinary and represents a critical part in the lives of thousands of immigrants makes a statement that, contrary to traditional preservation sites, ordinary lives are also worthy of rigorous research and interpretation. It has helped foster a new attitude among preservationists towards addressing the artifacts of the lives of common people. By saving and

preserving this building and telling the stories of immigrant families who lived there throughout its history, LESTM has made those lives significant and has created a place with broad appeal. The idea behind LESTM — to honor the immigrant experience and use immigrant history as a social tool — has impact because of the visual and symbolic importance of the building. It is similar in some respects to Houston's Project Row Houses, which preserved and adaptively used the “shotgun houses” of freed slaves to provide resources and a sense of identity for a neglected community.

The development of Swan's Marketplace in downtown Oakland also took strength from preserving a place of importance to ordinary people. There is symbolic value in having maintained the visible elements of the facade and the superstructure of a building which generations of Oakland residents had come to know. The restoration of Swan's Marketplace provided continuity to the neighborhood whose downtown landscape had been visibly assaulted by the construction of an intrusive concrete convention center. The market has helped preserve the practical functions and services of the nearby Housewives Market, which provides everyday goods for the area's underserved residents.

The Greenway is an example of environmental conservation that, by restoring water quality and returning the river to public use, has evoked a sense of Denver's history. Denver was founded on the river, it was critical to the development of a city in an arid environment. The city is now finding a way to grow back to instead of out from its roots, and this success is being shared by communities along Denver's economic and racial spectrum.

The Village supports preservation of another kind — neighborhood preservation. The threat to this area of North Philadelphia was not so much to individual buildings as to the fabric of the community itself. Many of the small houses and apartment buildings there had been abandoned and destroyed at such a rate that the neighborhood was fast becoming depopulated. Vacant lots in turn became dangerous eyesores filled with debris and weeds that provided a safe haven for drug dealing and crime. By transforming these abandoned spaces, in some cases taking historical symbols from other contexts (such as statues of African “angels”), The Village has succeeded in preserving the scale, the ambience, and possibly even the very existence of this community.

Historic preservation has been a regular theme running through RBA cycles. Past winners with strong preservation components have included The Times Square (New York City, 1997), Parkside Preservation (Philadelphia, 1999), Tenant Interim Lease Program (New York City, 1989), Project Row Houses, Campus Circle (Milwaukee, 1995), and the Maya Angelou Community Initiative (Portland, 1995), all of which used restoration and adaptive reuse to honor, save, and support housing for low-income people. Other winners, like Pike Place Market (Seattle, 1987), Lowertown (St. Paul, 1995), Circle in the Square, and the Cleveland Historic Warehouse District (Cleveland, 1997) have shown how community-based preservation, often combined with innovative development strategies, can revive a neighborhood and provide important symbolic landmarks for residents.

The built environment in general, and preservation in particular, can play an important role in establishing what has been called the “psychological sense of community” (Sarason, 1975).

Preservation, in typical as well as non-traditional ways exemplified in these winners, help provide the familiarity of landscape, consistency of scale, and meaningful symbols that can enable people to establish and maintain their sense of attachment to an area. The Village has helped support the development of a renewed pride in and connection to the community, and there is some evidence that people have begun moving back to the neighborhood, slowing or ending the long trend of abandonment. There are shoppers who come for miles to buy goods at Swan’s Marketplace, not because they find items that cannot be purchased anywhere else, but because of tradition, comfort, and familiarity. Newness has its place, as the striking success of NJPAC in Newark has shown. But even there, part of NJPAC’s goal and benefit has been not to create a new Newark but to help support, revive, and bring people back to the old city.

PLACE AS A VEHICLE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Sometimes buildings themselves are artifacts of a broader social agenda and are the physical manifestation of a philosophy or goal for social change. This has been true of many past RBA winners. For example, the beautiful restoration and reuse of The Times Square was undertaken to provide shelter for homeless individuals, low-income adults, and persons in need of social service. The massive Tenant Interim Lease Program was designed to assist low-income tenants in becoming homeowners.

The idea behind LESTM expresses itself in the physical facility of the museum, but it also goes well beyond that site. Ruth Abram began with the concept of the “usable past,” a notion that historical lessons can be practically instructive for confronting current social problems. Without historical context for their situations, she reasoned, communities were likely to repeat past mistakes or ignore more effective strategies for change. Abram’s challenge was to find a way to make history salient and prominent – to deliver the lessons in a way that was visible and easily accessible. Once she identified the critical social problem she wanted to address – the plight of immigrant populations – she conceived of LESTM as a solution. By saving and restoring this tenement building, she hoped to tell the stories of a variety of immigrant families in a way that would unite different racial and ethnic communities, helping them to understand their common situation. In many ways, the museum has been successful beyond anyone’s imagination, and thousands of school groups and other visitors have learned from the building’s history and message. Frank Sanchis, formerly with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, notes that it was the first such museum to engage in social programming. The educational, social, and community development programs supported by LESTM show the power of an idea to affect change, working out of and through the physical presence of the museum.

While NJPAC’s primary mission was and is to present great performances, the presence of the building, organization, and staff provided an opportunity and a base from which to create one of the largest arts education programs in the country. The performances

and educational programs have a symbiotic relationship. NJPAC’s facilities, personnel, and fundraising make possible a variety of outreach programs and on-site support. Many of these programs do not explicitly require the presence of the NJPAC buildings (and operated effectively before the structures were built). However, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to support arts education programs at their current level without the synergy they have with the facility. The prestige and prominence of NJPAC enhances the education program. These programs, in turn, help NJPAC raise operational and endowment funds; the social benefits attract individual and institutional donors who might otherwise overlook a purely artistic enterprise.

In The Village, the visual arts draw young people off the streets and into a safe haven, where they can become engaged in education, training, and service programs that may affect their lives in profound ways. Through direct exposure to artistic production, many discover modes of creativity and self-expression that provide the basis for a renewed sense of self and connection to the community. In addition, art in The Village Heart defines the neighborhood. It is the physical incarnation of Yeh’s ideas. You know where you are and when you have arrived at The Village by the distinct visual cues that help it stand apart from the rest of the community.

NATURE AND THE URBAN EXPERIENCE

Cities are the epitome of the built environment – places where growing, organic forms take a distant second place in focus and

quantity to streets and buildings. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that access to the natural environment, to growing and living things, is critical to human comfort and development and to creating livable urban places (Whiston Spirn, 1984; Wilson and Kellert, 1993; Appleton, 1996). Natural landscapes in cities provide visual relief, comfort, protection from wind and sun, and benefits to air and water quality. There is increasing evidence that access to natural settings for active or passive recreation can play important roles in relieving stress and alleviating mental fatigue (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1998; Ulrich, 1993). Nowhere is this more relevant than in the poor inner-city core where one often finds neighborhoods with restricted access to city parks and the most daunting environmental degradation from dumping and industrial spillover. In these neighborhoods, residents lack the resources to escape to more natural, restorative settings. The restoration of Harlem Meer (RBA 1995) provided a connection with nature for lower-income residents in the midst of New York, the most urbanized city in the United States. ArtsCorpLA had a similar impact when it transformed blighted land into an arts space with lush vegetation and, in one instance, a pond for inner-city Los Angeles residents.

Among the 2001 winners, The Village and the Greenway engage significantly with the urban natural environment. The Village provides important connections to nature for North Philadelphia residents, especially children, through its small parks, organic gardens, and tree farm, as well as the opportunity for residents to design, plant, and grow things in these spaces.

The Greenway provides access to a living river at a scale that may be unprecedented as an addition to an established urban core. This previously polluted industrial zone, ignored for years by most of Denver's citizens, has become 10.5 miles (much more if one considers the full length of the improvements beyond the municipal borders) of grass and trees, bike and jogging paths, water recreation, commerce, and sports and cultural centers. The revitalized South Platte River and Cherry Creek have played an important role in connecting and "re-knitting" the disparate parts of the city. Denver has a reputation for having citizens with a passion for outdoor activities; and the Greenway provides a way to connect that passion to the urban core. It is similar in some respect to the Lincoln, Nebraska Radial Reuse Plan (RBA 1989), the Brooklyn-Queens Greenway (RBA 1991) and the Stowe Recreation Path (RBA 1989), all of which were opportunistic in finding ways to create access to nature in urban contexts and important links among local communities.

With respect to its river, Newark may be where Denver was 15 years ago. With NJPAC as its entry point and anchor, Newark is looking to create access to the Passaic River. The development of a pedestrian promenade along the river right at NJPAC's back door will provide the first major public recreational water access in centuries. Such a reclamation could significantly change the image and feel of this gritty industrial city.

THE BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS OF SCALE IN ADDRESSING URBAN PROBLEMS

The Selection Committee was well aware of the disparities of project scale among the five finalists. The Village, LESTM, and Swan's Marketplace are relatively small in terms of physical size and budget, whereas NJPAC and the Greenway are mega-projects involving hundreds of millions of dollars of building and development. Smaller organizations can be more nimble in responding to changes or new opportunities. Such agility was demonstrated by LESTM in its dealings with the National Park Service and various neighborhood organizations. The Village has shown the ability to respond rapidly when neighborhood sites become available, implementing clean-up, planting or other more ambitious activities.

The size of these smaller projects makes them accessible as models for other communities. Because the time and fundraising horizons are comparatively modest, citizens in other neighborhoods or other cities can more readily imagine how to replicate aspects of such projects, and by imagining them, can be spurred to develop plans of their own. Given scarce resources and the inconsistent levels of public support common in many urban areas, these projects do great service by showing how even a few committed people operating independently with minimal funding can improve a community.

Their small scale, however, also carries with it limitations and added burdens. It is hard for an effort of modest scope to leave a significant imprint on the broader landscape of urban needs. Swan's

Marketplace covers a square block of downtown real estate with a program intended for (and needing) a larger swath of land that it was eventually denied. The Village is changing a neighborhood in important ways, but the problems of North Philadelphia are vast. LESTM is a single building in the midst of one of America's most densely populated communities. Some will be impatient with the ability of smaller projects to address the huge and seemingly intractable problems of our cities. However, others, like Lily Yeh, founder of The Village, note that efforts benefiting even a single life or neighborhood are valuable, and that locally developed and small-scale projects could be an antidote to grandiose and often misdirected attempts at urban renewal.

By way of contrast, NJPAC and the Greenway (and the 1999 Gold Medal winner, Yerba Buena Gardens, in San Francisco) have broad political and geographic reach and multi-million dollar budgets that allow them to leave a significant mark on their cities. NJPAC has had much to do with a change in the way Newark is perceived and is the anchor in the restructuring of a significant portion of its downtown area. Only a very large lever could move so heavy a weight in a short period of time. The Greenway is changing the manner in which one of America's most successful and fastest growing cities orients itself and is attracting a significant share of Denver's new development. As it expands and matures, the Greenway promises to be an even more powerful force affecting the way Denver's population plays and lives and its awareness of its historical roots.

The funding, time frame, and political connections needed to make such large-scale projects happen are daunting. Even NJPAC was over ten years in the making. This makes the success of NJPAC and the Greenway all the more impressive, and there is no denying that they have become significant forces in shaping their metropolitan areas. It is hard, though, for the average involved citizen, or even an active community organizer or public official, to imagine pulling together the energy and resources required to create something similar. Who can undertake such efforts without the complicity and active support of significant government bodies and without major funding in the coffers?

The RBA has from its inception recognized places of widely varying scope, expense, and ambition, from an urban park (Harlem Meer; Park at Post Office Square), art galleries (Project Row Houses) or a farmer's market (Greenmarket; Pike's Place) to initiatives that changed the shape of major urban centers (Portland Downtown Plan; Yerba Buena Gardens). Together these winners demonstrate that excellence is independent of scale. The 2001 Selection Committee wanted to recognize both kinds of endeavors. Committee members thought the stories of a few people "making a difference" by dint of their own efforts offer stirring and important models. They were also impressed that NJPAC and the Greenway showed how a massive urban development project could maintain a focus on and sensitivity to the social needs of the entire community.

LEADERSHIP, VISION, AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN CHANGE

An important theme in the 2001 RBA is the ability of one committed person to have an impact. Each of the 2001 winners had leaders who were deeply committed to creating urban places that would not only change the urban landscape, but would also change lives. As each project evolved, it was the vision of this key person that governed crucial policy decisions in the service of explicit values and clear priorities. This clarity of vision is invariably an important element in the creation of significant urban projects and has been notable in many RBA winners.

The 2001 winners show that an individual can affect change, even when facing challenges of daunting magnitude with few material resources at hand. Yeh's vision has led to an effort that has dramatically transformed places and lives. Similarly, Ruth Abram set out to address significant social issues with no initial funding or organizational backing. While the Greenway is now a large and well-funded effort, the polluted river languished until Joe Shoemaker took it upon himself to find a way to clean it and reintegrate it into Denver's urban fabric. These leaders had a vision and deep commitment to what was possible and important in their city.

There is an inherent contradiction, however, in focusing on visionary leaders as the crucial link in creating urban excellence. Although a charismatic leader may be essential to project development, sustainability often depends upon the development of broad-based collaborations. Too much emphasis on one strong leader may limit

the ability of others to feel a connection to the processes and successes of the project. Each of these winners has sought ways to broaden the base of leadership within the community. While all of these projects needed and had strong leadership to get them off the ground, they succeeded because they were able to develop deeply collaborative processes and organizations. Yeh was always aware that she was an outsider to North Philadelphia. The work of The Village – including sculptures, gardens, and murals – is maintained and sustained because of the level of participation and ownership of the community. The Village's future depends upon the community's continued participation in shaping its vision, decisions, and operations.

While a focus on community involvement is intrinsic in a project like The Village, it is more surprising to find a deep community commitment in NJPAC. The nature and scale of a new performing arts center could have easily resulted in a top-down, management-by-fiat organization. Instead, through Goldman's vision and leadership, NJPAC has developed a decentralized management style and has included community leaders in the decision-making process. NJPAC's ability to work collaboratively with community leaders and with staff at all levels of the organization will help sustain the high level of its community and arts education programs in the future.

The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) is unique in having twice been an RBA winner – in 2001 for Swan's Marketplace and in 1997 for another community development effort in Oakland, Hismen Hin-nu. EBALDC's continuing success is in no small measure related to the organization's proven ability to tap into

community resources and work collaboratively with a wide variety of groups. EBALDC showed great skill and professionalism in the way it managed the myriad of organizations, agencies, community groups, and lenders to make Swan's Marketplace a reality, just as for Hismen Hin-nu it created partnerships with neighborhood organizations to make its first foray out of the Asian community a success.

In Denver, Shoemaker's approach to cleaning up the South Platte River provides another example of leadership using collaborative models to create a sustainable base of support. Shoemaker made sure that representatives of Denver's marginalized communities were on the Platte River Development Committee from the start. He also invited activists from groups he thought might oppose his efforts. When project costs limited the initial clean up to two sites, Shoemaker's committee made sure that one was in a low-income, minority community, helping to build support for the effort and avoiding the label of a project for the elite.

In addition, an over-dependence on the founder inevitably leads to concerns about transition, succession and long-term viability. The more success is seen as the product of a single dedicated genius, the more dubious others (community members, politicians, and funders) are of a project's ability to thrive after the leader leaves. A truly excellent project has to be able to survive the eventual loss of the first generation of founders. How well the organization recognizes and plans for transition is a critical process that affects institutional longevity. All of the 2001 RBA winners have confronted that

problem directly and have begun planning for new leadership. The Village, for example, has recently gone through such a process. For many years the organization was small and planning could be done on an informal, ad hoc basis by Yeh or one of her compatriots. But The Village now has an impressive portfolio of properties and programs and a large, competent staff that was feeling insufficiently involved in the planning and goal-setting processes. Following a series of introspective retreats, The Village transformed its organizational structure into one that involves more of its staff in planning and management and one that, it hopes, is capable of carrying on when its founder chooses to leave. Yeh has made no secret of her desire to reduce her direct involvement in day-to-day decision-making, which has in turn spurred the organization to focus on the upcoming transition.

PUBLIC, NON-PROFIT, AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Excellent urban projects are rarely the creation of one organization or even one sector of the economy, but rather the result of collaborations between non-profit, private/for-profit, and public (government) entities. The kinds of projects that emerge as RBA winners almost always involve close cooperation among organizations from two or all three of these sectors, even though many are created and driven by non-profit organizations. The resources and income stream that are available for most of these efforts simply do not make them attractive for private, for profit enterprises. Governments often have their resources and attention focused elsewhere, on basic responsibilities or longer-range planning. Similarly, innovative models of urban placemaking (like The

Village) may not fit established categories of government funding. Non-profits are more likely to have both the public-spirited mission and the motivation to focus on ‘niche’ issues with the single-minded dedication needed to bring them to fruition.

On the other hand, non-profits usually don’t have the resources to bring about broad social change and need to partner with others to achieve longer-term goals and sometimes to gain an added degree of legitimacy. LESTM, for example, succeeded admirably in creating its organization and museum facility and in working with various neighborhood groups. It stands ready, however, to make a quantum leap in the impact it can have in the Lower East Side by virtue of its new partnership with the National Park Service (NPS). That partnership will provide an infusion of resources, in terms of funds and skills, as well as access to a much broader audience. Conversely, the NPS would not have created LESTM by itself. It had never focused on that kind of site (housing for poor immigrants) and had neither the mandate nor the creativity to develop the museum as it now stands. This new liaison will not only change the reach of LESTM, but also the way NPS sees its own goals and mission.

NJPAC is the result of a significant effort by the state government and funding and support from non-profit and private sources. It took the strong lobbying of significant business figures and others to maintain state support through three successive administrations. Funds from the state were clearly critical for this project with its nine-figure development tab. It could never have emerged as the

force it is, however, without the assistance of other groups. It shares with LESTM an attention to detail and quality in design and planning that would have been unlikely to result under a government agency. It took the single-minded focus of Lawrence Goldman, as head of a special non-profit agency, to develop a mission for NJPAC. It went well beyond the initial concepts and included the meaningful social and educational agenda that has been so critical to NJPAC's success.

The Greenway's history is similar to NJPAC in several respects. City government and a non-profit organization worked hand in hand from the start, with public funding as the underpinning, to clean the river and create the Greenway. For the Greenway, private sector investment played an important role in bringing some "there," creating the housing, shopping and event sites that make the Greenway a path to somewhere important. The non-profit Greenway Foundation has provided the day-to-day dedication, management and coordination; the city government has invested in parks and critical infrastructure; and businesses have done what they do best and have taken advantage of an increasingly attractive site to provide necessities and amenities for the public. It is reminiscent, in some respects, of the Greenmarket in New York City, which operates as a non-profit affiliated with a city agency, and providing a highly desirable amenity that has helped stimulate development and improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods it inhabits.

The Village for many years accomplished a great deal and operated largely on its own with little private investment, minimal public

funding, and, at best, benign neglect from the city. As it has grown and expanded, however, its connections to and support from other entities has become more significant. The Village now has an annual budget of over \$1 million and gets funding from an array of public as well as non-profit sources. The new affordable housing in The Village Heart, for example, is funded by the Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development. The Village has supported local businesses and has also started its own for-profit operation to create an income stream that can fund other village activities.

CONCLUSION

Each round of the Rudy Bruner Award is separate and distinct; for each cycle, a new Selection Committee works with the raw material of a unique set of submissions. Yet together the Award represents a growing body of knowledge of people, places, issues, and approaches to creating excellent urban places. Each group of winners contributes to this body of knowledge by providing new ideas and supporting earlier hypotheses. Some issues, like the role of preservation, have appeared in RBA-winning projects regularly through the award cycles. They serve to remind us of the failures of the "urban removal" strategies of the mid-twentieth century and of the importance of continuity, history and shared memory in creating urban excellence.

Other issues, such as the use of art as an urban redevelopment strategy and the importance of natural environments in urban areas, are clearly growing in importance in the RBA winning projects. One NJPAC interviewee argued that the redevelopment of Newark should

not be a “jobs versus arts” competition. Jobs are critical, he said, to give people the chance to make a decent living. The arts, he added, help us understand what we are living for. The same might be said about natural settings.

As a group the RBA winners add to our common knowledge about the elements and processes of successful placemaking. The RBA has always believed that every city and every neighborhood must create its own approach toward finding excellence. None of our winning projects can provide a blueprint for change. Each place has a unique historical, social, political and organizational context that requires individualized solutions. What the winning projects presented here can offer, however, are ideas, approaches, and inspiration for community leaders dealing with the daunting challenges faced by American cities. It was this belief that led the Bruner Foundation to sponsor and organize a conference following the 1992 Los Angeles disturbances (“An alternative conference seeking power in stories drawn from the Rudy Bruner Award”) in which community leaders and residents from South Central Los Angeles met representatives of RBA winners to exchange stories and ideas. We hope the stories presented in this book can start conversations in other communities about ways people can work together to find solutions to our cities’ problems and in so doing promote urban excellence.

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2003 RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

The *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence* is dedicated to discovering and celebrating urban places that integrate effective process and meaningful values into good design. These special places are also distinguished by their social, economic, and contextual contributions to the urban environment. *Rudy Bruner Award* winners transcend the boundaries between architecture, urban design and planning, are often developed with such vision and imagination that they transform urban problems into creative solutions which can be adapted to cities across the country.

This book presents five outstanding projects which comprise the 2003 *Rudy Bruner Award* winners. They reflect creative approaches to urban placemaking in a variety of settings. Each of the places reflects a deep commitment by groups of citizens, public agencies, and individuals who dedicated themselves to visions of what could be, and worked to make those places become a reality.

The winners include:

Gold Medal Winner: CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY
Los Angeles, California
Silver Medal Winners: BRIDGEMARKET
New York, New York
COLORADO COURT
Santa Monica, California
PROVIDENCE RIVER RELOCATION
Providence, Rhode Island
RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER
Brooklyn, New York

The *Rudy Bruner Award* is biennial. The Gold Medal Winner receives \$50,000, and each Silver Medal Winner receives \$10,000. This book and publications on past winners are available from:

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