

PROJECT PROFILE

12-13

21-97

Project Name Project Row Houses Location Houston, TX
 Owner Project Row Houses, Inc.
 Project Use(s) Public Art and Cultural Education, Transitional Housing for Young, Single Mothers
 Project Size 1 1/2 Blocks/22 shotgun-style houses Total Development Cost \$350,000
 Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) \$350,000
 Date Initiated September 1, 1993 Percent Completed, December 1, 1996 95%

Projected Completion Date (if appropriate) March, 1997

(Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates)

Application submitted by:

Name Deborah Grotfeldt Title Executive Director
 Organization Project Row Houses
 Address P.O. Box 1011 Houston, TX 77251-1011
 Telephone (713) 526-7662 FAX (713) 526-1623
 E-mail # _____

Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

Organization	Key Person	Telephone
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Agencies _____ _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Developer <u>Project Row Houses</u>	<u>Rick Lowe/Deborah Grotfeldt</u>	<u>(713)526-7662</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional consultants: Architect <u>Sheryl Tucker</u>	_____	<u>(713)743-2367</u>
Landscape architect <u>Urban Harvest</u>	<u>Bob Randall</u>	<u>(713)529-1492</u>
Urban designer _____	_____	_____
Planner _____	_____	_____
Lawyer <u>Drayden, Wyche & Wood</u>	<u>Charles Drayden</u>	<u>(713)965-1020</u>
Other <u>Heimbinder Family Foundation</u>	<u>Isaac/Sheila Heimbinder</u>	<u>(713)465-3143</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Community group(s) <u>Sisters in Positive Progress</u>	<u>Pat Hunter</u>	<u>(713)526-7662</u>
<u>Trinity United Methodist Church</u>	<u>Rev. Robert McGee</u>	<u>(713)528-2356</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor _____	_____	_____

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award in Urban Excellence. (Check all that apply)

[] mailing [] media [] previous RBA entrant [**XX**] other

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Signature Deborah Grotfeldt

ABSTRACTProject Name Project Row HousesLocation Houston TX

1. Describe briefly the project's design and implementation.

Project Row Houses (PRH) was founded by artist/activist Rick Lowe, who discovered the abandoned, crime-infested 1 1/2 block site of 22 identical, adjacent shotgun-style houses in one of the poorest African American communities in Houston, Texas. These small (600 sq. ft.) historic shotguns are being demolished in Freedman's Towns across the South. Lowe conceived a public art project where African American artists would create site specific art works in one house each. He believes that art is capable of spiritually healing the lives of individuals and communities by helping people recognize the beauty and wisdom in their own culture. With seed funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, artists led community and a broad spectrum of volunteers in completely restoring the site/houses. Through demographic research and talking to neighborhood residents, the public art concept expanded to interdisciplinary art and education programs, historic preservation, and community services. This level of urban revitalization has not been achieved in Third Ward for fifteen years. In just three years, PRH renovated and programmed the site/houses as follows:

- * 8 Gallery Houses
- * 2 Administrative Houses
- * 1 House for After-School/Summer Programs
- * 1 Sisters in Progress House: empowerment programs for African American women
- * 7 Houses for Young Mothers Residential Program: housing, day care, and services promoting self-sufficiency for single mothers and their children
- * Community Garden where five houses had been torn down
- * 1 Spoken Word House
- * 1 Woodworking Shop
- * 1 Storage House

2. What local urban issues did this project address? What were its goals? Were there issues that, in your judgement, might have been addressed but were not?

In the shadow of downtown Houston's spectacular skyline, our demographic profile is typical of the nation's inner city quality of life: 40% land use vacancy rate; 98% of the population is African American; 40% of household income is under \$5,000; 59% of those under the age of 25 did not complete high school; and over half of the children are born to single, teenaged mothers and raised below the poverty level. Building upon the pristine quality of the rehabilitated houses and courtyard connecting the back porches, PRH is a gathering place for dialogue engaging the community in cultural, social, political, and educational issues. The art produced within this framework of cultural self-definition and collective identity is inherently bound up with the traditions, history and social values of the African-American community. PRH's mission is to cultivate a new vision of opportunity through the arts by introducing community residents to positive black role models and creative ideas literally in their own backyard. The celebration of African American history and culture raises the self-esteem of children and parents in the after school programs; resident mothers and babies; and informs city-wide audiences averaging 100 per week and 1,000 for art openings.

3. Describe the financing of the project. Do you think it could be replicated?

PRH has consistently tried to develop funding from the City of Houston with no result outside of program funds from the local arts council. Out of necessity, artists are accustomed to working with limited and alternative resources and to developing publicity for projects. In the first year of operation, the NEA award of \$25,000 leveraged an additional \$113,000 in contributions from corporations, foundations, and individuals and \$136,000 in-kind construction materials and services. Amoco Corporation and Home Depot provided employee/volunteers and material to restore the exterior of 12 houses. Chevron U.S.A. organized a workday with over 300 community and corporate volunteers and fully renovated one residence. Three Houston museums, a contemporary art center, two families, a neighboring church, and a black sorority restored one house each. U.S. Home, Masco Corporation and *Woman's Day Special Interest Publications* recruited interior designers and contributed furniture and fixtures to create beautiful individualized interiors for six YMRP houses and day care valued at \$120,000. The Meadows Foundation awarded \$100,000 for rehab and program start-up costs. Our experience with creative ways of developing broad-based support convinces us that this program can and will be replicated in other locations. PRH is currently developing projects in the Watts area of Los Angeles and East St. Louis.

4. Why does the project merit the Ruby Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

Recognition by the Rudy Bruner Award for PRH's innovative approach to urban revitalization would promote the concept on a national level so that community's across the country would look at their geography, architecture, cultural traditions, and creative use of existing resources to adapt the PRH model. Throughout the ages, artists have been recognized as the visionaries of society. Houston artist Jesse Lott says, "As an artist, I believe it is a personal responsibility to help people recognize the value in material very often discarded by society . . . An artist possesses the power to transform objects and add new value to them. This transformation creates a new range of materials, a new pool of expression, and new participants in the world of creation. It can create a revolution in the mind of an individual that is creative and expansive, not destructive."

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name **Pat Hunter (Akua Fayette)** Title **Community Artist Activist**


Organization **Project Row Houses (Sisters in Positive Progress)** Telephone **(713) 526 - 7662**

Address **P.O. Box 1011, Houston TX 777251-1011**

FAX **(713) 526 - 1623**

E-mail #

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1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

Out of a lifelong sense of social obligation, I chose Project Row Houses as a means to give to my community. My husband and I have been in the general contracting and interior design business for many years. We came up with the idea of starting an African American women's self-help group to bring about economic improvement and mental and social growth through a women's mentorship program. We offered to redesign and remodel one of PRH's houses completely with our own resources at an estimated value of \$10,000. Working nearly full-time from September 1995 through March 1996, the Sisters in Positive Progress House(SIPP)/program opened which features the House of Nefertiti Gift Shop. It is stocked with hand-made arts and crafts items for sale by members of the community. Numerous programs have been presented including: workshops teaching creation of arts and crafts; a month-long program working with teenaged girls expelled from high school which involved role-modelling, sewing, and education in African American cultural traditions; a Health Fair emphasizing specific cultural and gender issues; small business development workshops; and others. Our long-range goal is to conduct job training for women in interior design including small repairs, painting, wallpapering, etc. Experiential learning will occur working in community houses at no cost to the homeowner. Ultimately, create a small business with job opportunities for the women and sustain programs of SIPP.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

The major issues that prompted initiation of the SIPP program at Project Row Houses included creation of a place in the community based in such a way that everyone could participate in some form. They would receive help to bring about community pride that existed in Third Ward before drugs, crime, and unemployment became the trademarks of our community.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?

A tremendous amount of time, physical labor and money went into the development of the SIPP House. An early collaborator in SIPP assumed responsibility for programming which was too ambitious for a fledgling group to realize effectively. In reviewing the results, we looked at the idea of "biting off more than you can chew" and learned that it is important to start small and fully accomplish those things to develop a track record of success in your efforts.

4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? Why should it win this Award? Please be as specific as possible.

The Sister's House is a place where women can come and communicate their feelings and problems -- a place where dreams can take on the reality of life. In the arts and crafts workshops, we recycle objects (wooden dishes, bowls, plates, boxes, etc.) and put our African American culture into view by painting scenes and cultural icons onto these familiar articles. We emphasize that although we have no manufacturing companies, we can take what we have and make a great statement about our lives and our people, while improving our minds and economic development. These goals are simpatico with the Project Row Houses model and mission. Community initiated programs such as SIPP which are growing out of PRH are critical to the revitalization of inner-city neighborhoods like Third Ward. I believe that is the primary reason PRH should win the award.

5. If a community group came to you for advice in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?

- 1) Put all your ideas and thoughts on paper.
- 2) Contact the community and get their view on the needs that they need to have fulfilled.
- 3) Contact other organizations/community groups and get advice and information
- 4) Never put out all your plans as we will do this or that, but solicit the help of others to accomplish some goals to make the community feel needed and respected.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

- 1) If the name of the organization "rings a good bell"
- 2) Reference from satisfied community people
- 3) Growth and a list of people who have directedly benefitted and grown through the programs
- 4) Expansion to other parts of the city as a pilot program to help others

DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name Rick Lowe & Deborah Grotfeldt

Title Founding & Executive Directors

Organization Project Row Houses

Telephone (713) 526 - 7662

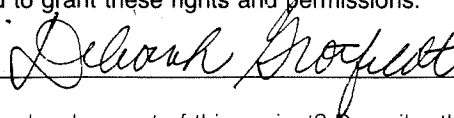
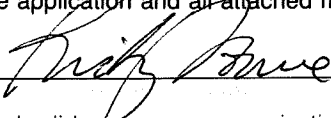
Address P.O. Box 1011, Houston TX 777251-1011

FAX (713) 526 - 1623

E-mail # _____

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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

Coordination of the broadbased, collaborative effort that realized Project Row Houses involved a unique combination of expertise: the creative vision of Founding Director, Rick Lowe, and administrative experience of Managing Director, Deborah Grotfeldt. Lowe has been deeply involved in Houston's art and African American communities since 1984 as an artist with an abiding commitment to public art and as a facilitator of community projects. Grotfeldt served seven years as Assistant Director of DiverseWorks Artspace, where she developed office and financial systems, assisted with fundraising, worked directly with artists coordinating programs in all disciplines, and managed renovation of raw warehouse space into an arts facility. Upon discovering the site, Lowe worked for a year tracking down the owner, negotiated lease/purchase effective September 1993, filed NEA and other grants under DiverseWorks umbrella, and recruited Grotfeldt. She set up the non-profit organization (legal, financial and administrative systems) and began ongoing fund raising efforts. Together, they devoted the first year on site to raising funds, developing relationships in the community, planning programs, and recruiting and managing volunteers and contractors who cleared the site of mountains of accumulated trash/weeds and rehabilitated the exterior of all 22 houses. A year later, they opened the first round of eight artist installations with associated cultural education programs. Lowe continued working with artists on the six-month rotation of installation projects, site, and community development. Grotfeldt coordinated Phase 2, development of the Young Mothers Residential Program whose 7 houses were showcased for the National Association of Home Builders Show in January 1996. Currently, they are working on stabilization, strategic planning and economic development.

2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

When Rick Lowe identified the site, his original plan was to lease only the ten adjacent houses fronting a busy thoroughfare for temporary public art projects but the owner insisted on all 22 or nothing. By that time there was so much interest that PRH was destined to become an ongoing project so we thought of rehabilitating the additional houses to provide facilities for other organizations to set up shop in the community to supplement the public art. We assembled a multidisciplinary team of community members, social workers, artists and architects to apply for a HUD grant that would provide funding for restoring the site. The application was unsuccessful, but the process led to the development of a master plan that would include all houses on the site, including seven as transitional housing with a day care center for young single mothers and their children, and five for community service and education programs. One house would become the Spoken Word House for writers residencies and literary readings. The consensus building required of community-based projects did not necessitate any trade-offs but rather expansion of the core concept. Acknowledging the healing power that comes from a connection with one's heritage, our project seeks a transformation of spirit of the community by encompassing not only the production of art, but also cultural education, historic preservation, neighborhood revitalization and community service interweaves art, life, religion and philosophy.

3. What, if any, innovative means of financing the project were used?

Only innovative means of financing Project Row Houses was available. As PRH is located in one of Houston's "Pockets of Poverty" as designated by our Department of Housing and Community Development, we anticipated CDBG funding for the rehabilitation. Numerous meetings were initiated by PRH and facilitated by political figures, but HCD staff never shared the funding process/formula. The Amoco Torch Classic (an annual corporate Olympic-style event) had requested the city's assistance in securing a project where up to 500 nation-wide employees could accomplish major improvement in one day. After repeated requests, a low-level HCD employee suggested PRH, and following a site visit they committed to providing labor and material to renovate the exterior of 12 houses. In the meantime, Lowe and Grotfeldt turned to familiar arts resources and secured grants which included some rehab expenses. One museum director proposed a challenge to another museum and the House Challenge was born which yielded sponsorship of eight houses by diverse community and arts groups. These and other initiatives as well as literally thousands of volunteers including artists, schools, church and community groups, sororities/fraternities, Boy Scouts, nonviolent offenders, and many others.

4. How did the financial benefits and economic impacts of this project differ from other projects? How does the project's quality relate to the financial goals?

A City of Houston Planning & Development Department July 1994 study of Third Ward notes that "the redevelopment of the shotgun houses along Holman into a cultural arts complex will add a significant anchor of community stability of this area." It is anticipated that commerce will return to the community as the circle of revitalization is broadened. Through our strategic planning process, PRH's Board of Directors is looking at economic development initiatives that will provide opportunities in our community which will be designed to sustain PRH operations and programs. Immediately, however, PRH provided financial benefits and economic impact to our community during the rehabilitation process by hiring community contractors. Through our education programs, role modelling and self-esteem building, PRH is contributing to a more skilled pool of workers in our community. As program and staff positions are developed and funded, community residents are hired to work in the office, day care, education programs, maintaining the site, and to provide security. Work by neighborhood artists and artisans is sold on site and more than doubled the annual income of two Social Security recipients. Equally important is the role modelling by artists, board members and other volunteers of the personal obligation to contribute to society wherever possible regardless of financial incentives.

5. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project? What was the least successful aspect? With hindsight, would you do anything differently?

The most difficult task in the development of the project was convincing people outside the art world that artists were capable of accomplishing such a major undertaking. In addition to expertise in developing programs and associated publicity, many artists work in the construction trades as it is consistent with time flexibility required to continue art-making where engineering and construction skills are critical to the creative process. Lowe worked in construction for ten years and Grotfeldt owns with her artist/husband a paint contracting business for 17 years. Both were involved with prior major rehabilitation projects. Grotfeldt managed a \$150,000 build-out project at DiverseWorks and Lowe was co-founder of an artists cooperative where he and a group of artists transformed an abandoned warehouse into a performance/exhibition space with live-in studios. So the least successful aspect of PRH's development was the ability to persuade the city to invest in the project, despite the track record of accomplishment. Now that PRH's innovative approach to urban revitalization has generated tremendous publicity from numerous articles in Texas and national press as diverse as *The New York Times*, *The Sacramento Bee*, *The Chicago Tribune*; *High Performance*, *Hope*, and *Woman's Day* magazines; and electronic media from CBS radio's Osgood Files to CBS Sunday Morning, we are uniquely situated to develop and endorse artists multidisciplinary contributions.

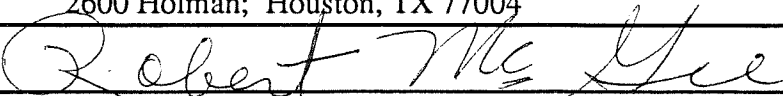
6. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

The open process and community consensus building in program development would be the most instructive component PRH has to offer as an adaptable model for replication by other developers. In hindsight, it was extremely fortuitous that the owner insisted on the 22-house package which created the opportunity to expand the public art and education initiative to include historic preservation, broad neighborhood revitalization, and community services. In the hands of committed, creative individuals who are dedicated to approaching any opportunity in a new way, the impossible becomes possible.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

In five years, PRH developers will consider modifiers of success to include: ownership by the community in that the site and programs will be controlled by community members; economic development initiatives will be in place providing opportunities for community residents as well as sustaining PRH operations and programs; the circle of revitalization will be broadened to include more decent, affordable housing and revitalized commercial district.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Name	Rev. Robert McGee	Title	Minister
Organization	Trinity United Methodist Church	Telephone	(713) 528 - 2356
Address	2600 Holman; Houston, TX 77004		
FAX			

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

Trinity United Methodist Church is located diagonally across the street from Project Row Houses. Our congregation regularly observed the work in progress on the abandoned site which was an eyesore in our community. We were very happy to see something being done to improve the immediate surroundings of the church. Rick Lowe began to visit the church to let us know what was going on. During the PRH planning process, Trinity was able to assist with construction permits and planning by contractually agreeing to the use of our parking lot. Various groups within the church became actively involved with Project Row Houses. There were numerous volunteer efforts on the part of our parishioners. Notably, the United Methodist Mens Group assumed responsibility for sponsorship of one of the houses which included raising \$3,000 designated for material and providing all the labor. Church historians Bernice MacBeth and Mr. Smith provided historic information to PRH about the Third Ward community and the site. At the grand opening of PRH in October 1994, United Methodist Women and Sanctuary Choir provided refreshments and served, while the United Methodist Men's Choir performed.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

The church was concerned that PRH be open and accessible to all members of the community. Particularly that everyone, regardless of ethnicity and socio-economic status, would be welcome there. We were concerned that PRH would not replace or oust neighborhood residents. The congregation was anxious to see improved conditions in the community through education, arts and social services. We are very pleased that the artists projects at PRH have been very sensitive to the church and families in our community. The celebration of African American history is most welcome here.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

Trinity had to recognize that some of the programs that the church had envisioned to serve the community, such as the day care, were not going to be implemented by the church itself. In our desire to better our community, we determined that the only way for those living here to truly benefit we would have to avoid being competitive and work collaboratively. We had to therefore forego our plan to do this in order for PRH to be truly successful. We have a long term plan to expand the boundaries of Trinity United Methodist Church and we do understand that vacant sites in this area are becoming a valuable commodity. But we must, however, work together so that PRH and Trinity can grow in a healthy business community relationship.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

I met with Rick Lowe on numerous occasions and he shared his vision with me. Together we discussed our roles in the community and how we could assist each other so that our vision could become a reality.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you have done differently?

The least successful aspect of the project was getting full participation on the part of the community as a whole. But, of course, it will take time for those living here to fully understand the full impact of what Project Row Houses is attempting to accomplish.

6. What can others learn from this project?

If I had to do this again, I would have perhaps met with business, community, and church leaders in the Third Ward area to inform them of our desire to become a viable part of this community. This would have enabled them to voice their concern, see how the project would benefit all involved, and allow them to share in the vision.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

Anyone who visits Project Row Houses will see that it enhances the quality of life in the Third Ward community. It has become an artistic refuge for our children and has increased the level of pride and self-awareness in them. It is a creative haven for black artists, not only in the Houston area, but around the country. It can be duplicated anywhere to meet the needs, culturally, socially, and economically of any group of individuals.

If I were to judge Project Row Houses five years from now, I would say without reservation that its efforts to share the black experience through art with not only the community, but Houston as well as the nation has been evidenced. The after school program has developed in the children a sense of communal pride and ownership in the work that not only they do, but others. The Young Mothers Program has provided young women the means of educating themselves, their children, and developing their skills so that they are able to become successful mothers and contributing members of society. PRH has given black artists around the country, regardless of any acclaim or lack thereof, a place to share ideas and experiment with their own creativity. The efforts to develop housing for senior citizens utilizing the creative talents of university architectural students is indicative of PRH's efforts to collaborate with others in order to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name Sheryl G. Tucker

Title Architect

Organization University of Houston, College of Architecture Telephone (713) 554-9209

Address 1611 Vermont Street, Houston, Texas

FAX (713) 743-2358

E-mail #

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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

I served as a consulting architect - participating in the development of the masterplan for the project and providing design and construction documents for the restoration of the houses. In 1995 I received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to redesign a two-story storefront adjacent to the project as a community/artist gathering space. Restoration on this two-story storefront is to begin in December 1996.

2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

This project transformed a site of twenty-two identical abandoned shotgun "hybrids" in an impoverished, predominately African-American inner city community for use as artists installation sites, housing units and community service spaces. The site of shotgun houses, long associated with the African-American community, provides a framework of cultural self-definition and collective identity within which community members may experience the work of contemporary African-American artists.

3. Describe the project's impact on its surroundings and on the people in the area. Do you have data that document these effects? Attach supplementary material as appropriate.

The project has led to a renewal of civic pride for many community members and local churches who have initiated the improvement of their own immediate surrounding spaces. The project has also helped many people understand that the shotgun house, the predominate housing type of the community, is not a symbol of shame associated with slavery, but a concrete visual link to African housing traditions as documented by architectural historians.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

The project was initiated with the idea of restoring only ten of the site's houses for artist installation sites, but it soon became clear that much more funding from foundation and government sources would be available for housing than for exhibition spaces. A low-income rental housing component in seven of the site's houses was added to the program to help generate income for the artists' projects. As the Young Mother's housing program evolved, the units were offered to single mothers in educational programs for a period of one year at no cost. Although the housing component began as a trade-off, it has not diluted the project's central mission of establishing a forum for dialogue between artists and the Third Ward community, but rather has enriched the experience of the site as an intersection of life and art.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

From a designer's perspective, the least successful part of the project campus is the community garden that was to be developed where five of the site's original thirty houses had been demolished. This garden would provide fresh vegetables to community members, provide urban children with an agricultural experience and visually unite the houses with the adjacent two-story storefront. Many issues surrounding the design of the garden and its maintenance have yet to be successfully resolved.

6. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

Encompassing historic preservation, this project is an excellent model of how culturally relevant architectural forms that give expression to specific values can be incorporated to make meaningful public spaces.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

If in five years the project is still a local hang-out for the neighborhood children as it is now the project will be a success.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Name	Isaac and Sheila Heimbinder	Title	Trustees
Organization	Heimbinder Family Foundation	Telephone	(713) 465-3143
Address	2 Glendenning, Houston, TX 77024		
FAX	(713) 465-3143	E-mail #	

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Signature Isaac Heimbinder Sheila Heimbinder

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

- Provided low interest mortgage to purchase property
- Brought U.S. Home Corporation, Womens Day Special Interest Publications and Masco Corporation together to rehabilitate and furnish seven row houses for the Young Mothers Program
- Board Members - Chairman of Finance Committee and Young Mothers Committee
- Director of Young Mothers Program

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

PRH is an arts and community organization developed to interweave with community interests, producing a self-sustaining, community-led organization using the arts to enhance individuals and the community.

3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.

Artists draw community into their projects and sustain that relationship through interactive programming; i.e., Tracy Hicks distributed cameras to members of the Third Ward community for the purpose of documenting Third Ward culture; resulting photos were displayed in canning jars, thereby 'preserving' culture; the community photographers and community members were invited to attend exhibit opening thus sustaining interest in community dialogue; and Mr. Hicks subsequently instructed Young Mothers Program participants in using the same canning jars to preserve tomatoes.

PRH's after-school program is actively involving dozens of children in a very effective learning program. We are very impressed, not only with the program, but with the consistency in attendance and the interest of children and parents in program.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

Because of financial constraints, the project was developed incrementally, often increasing the expenses that efficiency would have minimized.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you do differently?

Financing the project through fundraising has been disappointing.

Greater emphasis and time to structure a multi-faceted fundraising program targeting small events for the community, membership drives, and identifying local businesses and foundations which would be willing to provide assistance for specific PRH programs.

6. What can others learn from this project?

The development process is organic, relying on the leadership of the project to identify, develop and support members of the community as they become leaders of a self-sustaining arts-based organization meeting their community needs.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

- o Leadership of PRH from within Third Ward
- o Community participation in arts projects we haven't dreamed of
- o The young people in our program today mentoring new community participants.
- o The local community became more involved in finding financial support for the project.
- o With PRH help other communities in Houston and other parts of the country were influenced to begin projects adapted from the Project Row Houses model.