

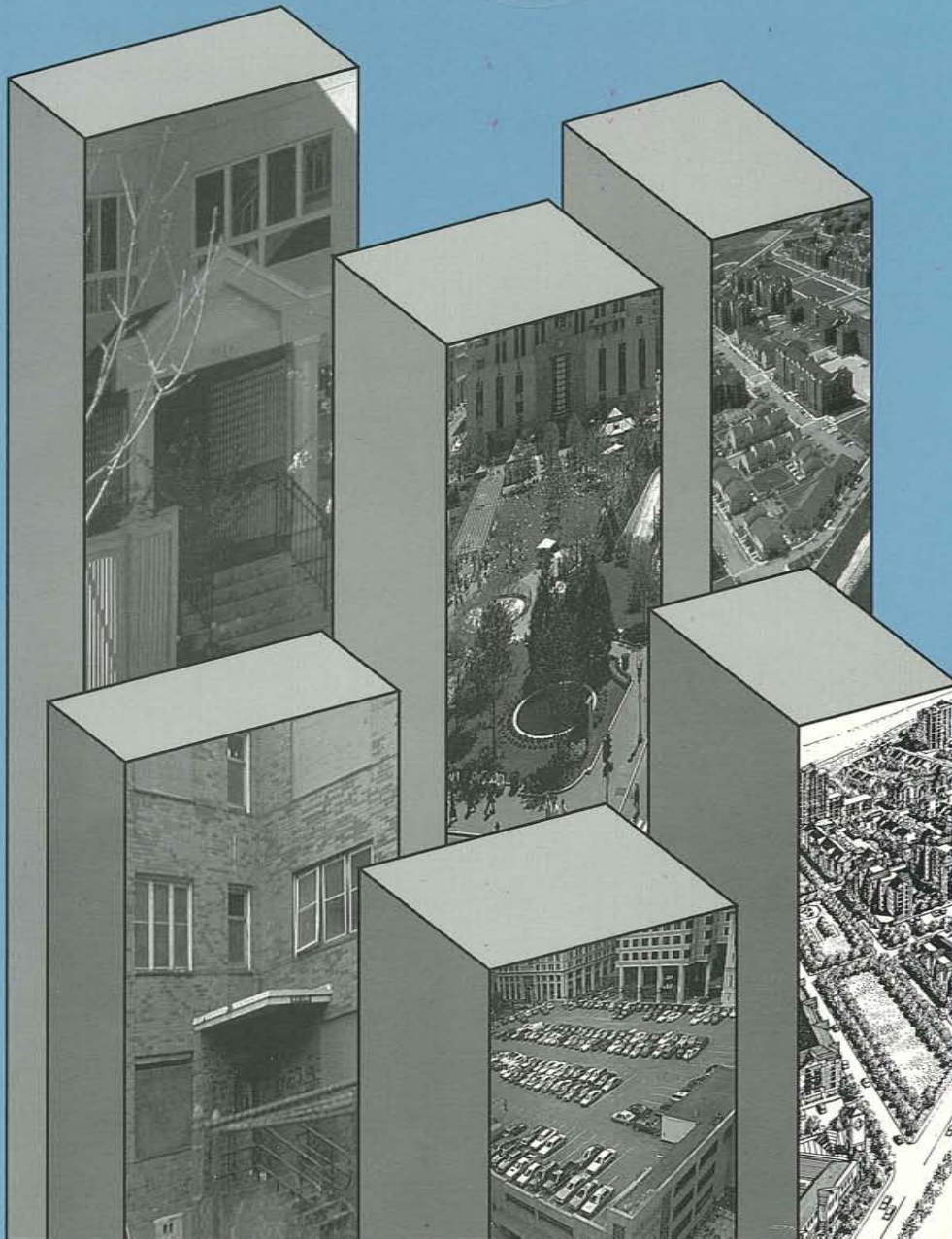
"This publication
should be
mandatory in all
planning and
design schools."
Henry Cisneros

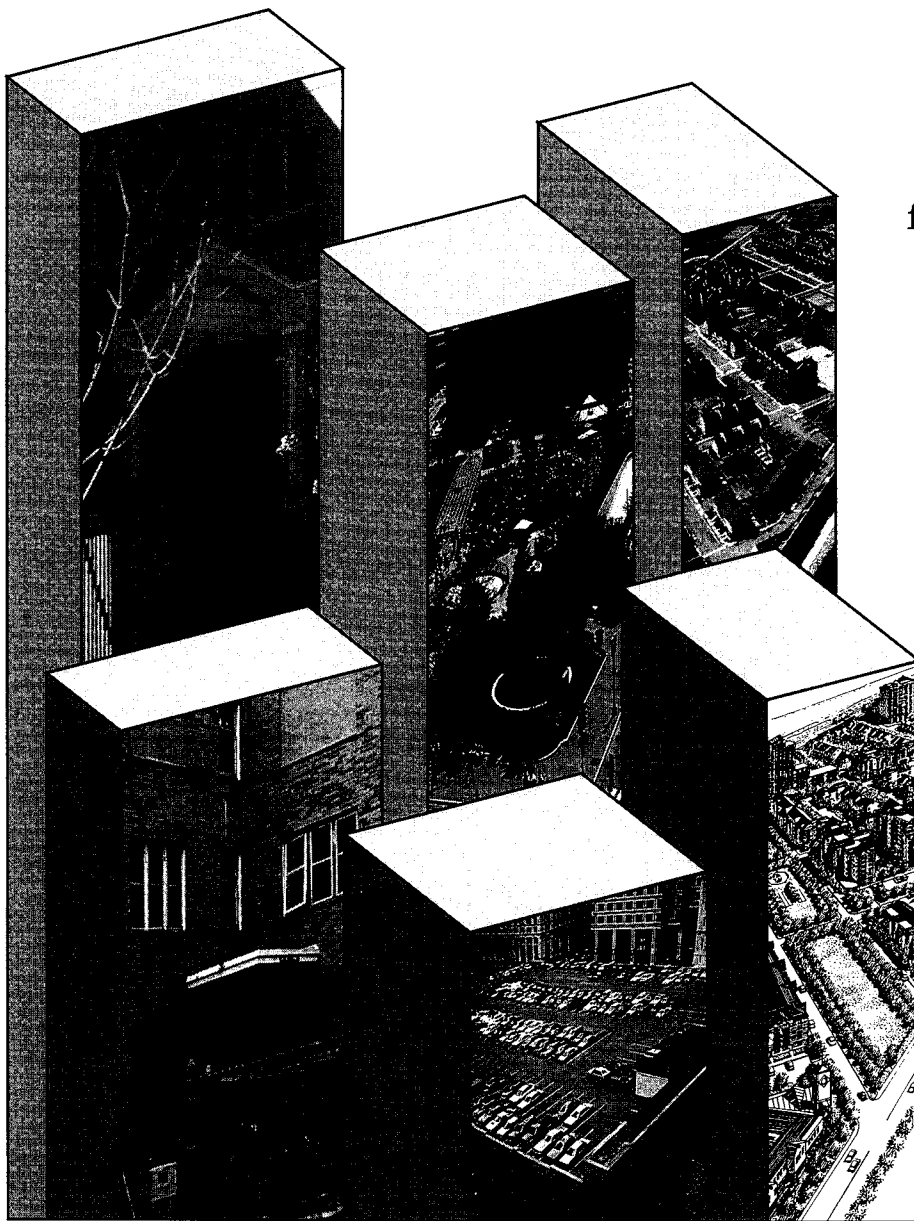
The Bruner Foundation

1993
Rudy Bruner Award
for Excellence in the Urban Environment

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES: RE-CREATING URBAN EXCELLENCE

Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener





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CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	v
1. Introduction	1
2. Harbor Point, Boston, Massachusetts 1993 Co-Winner	5
3. New Community Corporation, Newark, New Jersey 1993 Co-Winner	23
4. Betts-Longworth Historic District, Cincinnati, Ohio 1993 Finalist	41
5. Beyond Homelessness, San Francisco, California 1993 Finalist	55
6. The Park at Post Office Square, Boston, Massachusetts 1993 Finalist	71
7. What Did We Learn About Urban Excellence?	87

PREFACE

In these pages you will find descriptions of five projects: the winners and finalists of the 1993 Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment. These projects have transformed their communities so well, and on such a significant scale, that their accomplishments are nothing less than astounding — especially in contrast to the continual stream of pessimistic reports we all hear about cities.

The Winners

From the ashes of the 1967 riots, one of the winners, New Community Corporation (NCC), has constructed an alternative city within Newark, New Jersey. NCC houses and employs thousands, providing facilities for children, seniors, the sick, and the homeless. NCC delivers necessities that many other communities take for granted, such as a supermarket offering fresh food at reasonable prices.

In Boston, a community / developer partnership created Harbor Point — a mixed income, mixed race community — from a dangerous 1950s public housing project. The partnership, a joint venture between public housing tenants and a developer, is a microcosm of the community that works together to make Harbor Point home.

About the Process

At the Bruner Foundation, we believe that the evolution of cities is a highly complex process — one that involves tradeoffs between diverse perspectives and goals. Developers and architects pursue economic and aesthetic objectives. Governments promote planning and growth policies. Community groups try to preserve or improve specific aspects of neighborhood life. None of these is sufficient in itself to create an excellent urban place. The Award competition seeks to reward and publicize those processes that reconcile these often competing objectives and result in excellent urban places — where the economic, visual, and social perspectives complement one another.

We hope that the process by which the Bruner Foundation evaluates urban places operates on several levels. The application, while complex, requires the collaboration of varied participants. We hope it can be a learning experience. We ask a number of the actors to speak from their own perspective about the economic viability, community values, and physical contribution demonstrated by their project.

The Selection Committee members are chosen for their expertise in particular areas — such as architecture and community development, as well as their involvement in issues outside their own specific field.

Over the years Selection Committees have avoided defining urban excellence narrowly. A narrow, simplistic perspective is one reason that too many urban projects — even ones that win design awards — can bring disappointing results in human and economic terms.

Although the limits on eligibility for the Award are quite broad, the project must be a real place, not just a plan. It will, hopefully, demonstrate its excellence in action. The values should be explicit and worthwhile. Conflicts must be discussed and resolved. Current issues include social responsibility, economic viability, aesthetic sensitivity, and ecological balance.

With this broad mandate as a backdrop, each Rudy Bruner Award Selection Committee walks onto the stage without a script. The debate about that what constitutes urban excellence begins afresh with each round of competition. It is inspired and framed by the responses to our call for submissions. Once the Selection Committee has narrowed the field to five finalists, our professional staff spends two to three days visiting and evaluating each one, seeking to answer specific questions raised by the Selection Committee and discover the behind-the-scene stories. Quite naturally, we fall in love with each and every project.

The resulting report, which forms the basis for this book is a working document for the Selection Committee. It is this report that sets the stage for the final debate to select the winner(s).

Much as we might wish for a blueprint for the success, a project cannot simply be cloned and transplanted. Each project is worth studying on its own to discover dead ends to be avoided, general strategies that can be exported, and values that might inspire. It is thinking about the ways to transport these ideas that becomes so exciting and productive.

Excellence in Action

We hope that the Bruner Award is far more than an abstract or theoretical exercise. Through the Award process, the Foundation has sought to become a catalyst for change. Four rounds of entries and winners have produced a database of success stories and a network of colleagues who collaborate on urban change. They are documented in four books and an accessible archive.

The Bruner Foundation has taken an evolving course toward activism. In early 1992, in the wake of the Los Angeles riots, the Foundation sought a way to share the expertise of our winners. Working with the Executive Office of the President, the Foundation sponsored a forum in Washington, DC where community and government representatives could exchange ideas with Bruner Award winners and finalists.

The result was an alternative conference, "Los Angeles: Working Together Through the Crisis to Quality Urban Living." Seeking to share power through sharing stories, the conference fostered communication across lines of specialization and hierarchy. Bruner Award finalists who had struggled with acute crises shared their experiences with Los Angeles residents, special urban interest groups, housing managers, tenured government professionals, and HUD staff. In the course of a day and one-half in the Old Executive Office Building, stories were told and compared, questions asked, and answers shared.

One participant described the experience as "the assumption of human competence....It was a relief." HUD has now expressed interest in using these techniques and this kind of forum as a new type of "technical" assistance.

We were pleased that Henry Cisneros, Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and a former Selection Committee member, agreed to present the 1993 RBA Award at HUD Headquarters in Washington, DC. In his remarks, the Secretary praised the Award and the Bruner books, which describe in detail how the values of good design, sound economics, and broad human cooperation can help remake urban America.

Currently, the Foundation is working with HUD, helping to bring our experience in real world success to bear on some of HUD's major initiatives, such as the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program. With limited resources and expanding need, it is critical to make the most out of each available opportunity.

Given the poverty and violence that pervades so many of our neighborhoods, it may be difficult to comprehend just how much one single project can accomplish. The stories from this year's Rudy Bruner Award prove once again that in human, economic and aesthetic terms, cities can be remade. It does not happen easily. It requires vision, diligence and compromise — but the result is more than worth the effort.

This book is intended as a guide to help understand the strengths (and weaknesses) of five very special projects: the two winners and three other finalists. We hope that you find this book a useful tool in making change happen for you. So, as you read these studies in urban excellence, prepare yourself for some unaccustomed good news.

Simeon Bruner
Bruner Foundation



INTRODUCTION

The Rudy Bruner Award

As mentioned in the Preface, the Rudy Bruner Award is a search for urban excellence. It seeks to identify and reward excellent urban places, while serving as a forum for debating urban issues and the nature of urban excellence. Some features that distinguish the Bruner Award from other awards programs are its broadly representative selection committee (which meets twice and is composed of community representatives, elected officials, design professionals and developers), the application process (which requires statements from a range of affected parties, not just the owner or designer), and the in-depth site visits to each finalist to learn about the context, answer questions raised in the initial review, and verify claims.

The Rudy Bruner Award is granted every two years; it was given for the fourth time in 1993. Each cycle of the award has culminated in publication of a book. The first three books are:

- *Urban Excellence* by Philip Langdon with Robert Shibley and Polly Welch, published by Van Nostrand Reinhold in 1990. Describes the first round of the award.
- *Breakthroughs: Re-creating the American City* by Neal Peirce and Robert Guskind, published by the Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University in 1993. Describes the second round of the award.
- *Connections: Creating Urban Excellence* by Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, published by the Bruner Foundation in 1992. Describes the third round of the award.

A copy of any past Rudy Bruner Award submission is available from the Interlibrary Loan Department of the Lockwood Memorial Library at the State University of New York at Buffalo, Amherst, NY 14260.

Criteria For Submission

The Bruner Foundation creates a framework for the debate about urban excellence and the submissions furnish real life examples to be discussed. The Foundation intentionally does not pre-define urban excellence; rather the debate is framed by the call for submissions, the nature of the projects, and the interactions of the Selection Committee members in the review process. Here are the broad limits which the Foundation provides to define eligible submissions:

- The project has to be a real place, not just a plan. Excellent planning is likely to contribute to creation of an excellent place — but a plan alone is not enough. The place must exist and be able to demonstrate its excellence in action (not just in theory or in anticipation).
- The planning and implementation processes may be innovative — involving new participants and constituencies — or they may be modifications of traditional processes. But the people affected by the project must be appropriately involved and must see benefit from it. Conflicts should be made explicit and resolved, perhaps in new ways.

- The places or projects must address important social, physical, economic, and ecological factors. The call for entries invites projects which show social responsibility, are economically viable, demonstrate aesthetic sensitivity, and are ecologically benign.
- The values exemplified by the project should be worthwhile and consonant with local community values; perhaps of equal importance, they should be made explicit.

The 1993 Selection Committee

The committee consisted of a group of distinguished — and intentionally diverse — actors in the urban development drama:

Sara Bode, President of the Honey Tree Learning Center, Chicago and former mayor of Oak Park, Illinois.

Denise Fairchild, Director of the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), Los Angeles, California.

Harvey Gantt, FAIA, architect and urban designer, Gantt Hubermann Architects, and former mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Ed McNamara, Director of the Neighborhood Partnership Fund, Portland, Oregon.

Frank Sanchis, Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC.

Robert Sommer, PhD, environmental psychologist, professor of psychology and head of the Center for Consumer Research, University of California at Davis.

The Selection Process

In the context of the broad mandate from the Bruner Foundation, the Selection Committee had two fascinating discussions about the submissions and about urban excellence. At the first meeting, they winnowed 93 submissions to five finalists (see list below). At the second, they examined the five finalists in light of the on-site investigations and reported findings in order to pick a winner.

Site Visits

To learn how the places really worked, the authors visited each finalist between the two Selection Committee meetings. These were not quick walk-throughs, but lasted about three days, generally including part of a weekend. We served as the Selection Committee's eyes and ears, touring all parts of the project, interviewing 15 to 25 participants, taking photographs, and observing patterns of use. In addition to activities planned by the project organizers, we carried out our own agendas. Thus, we were able to answer the Selection Committee's questions and investigate their concerns.

The Winner and Finalists

The site visit findings were presented at the second Selection Committee meeting. At the culmination of a vigorous debate, the Committee selected two outstanding projects as joint winners (each of which received a \$25,000 award while the three finalists received \$1,000 each).

Winner: Harbor Point Apartment Community, Boston, Massachusetts. Tenants team with a private developer to rebuild a distressed public housing project into an attractive mixed income community with a waterfront park and many services.



SIMEON BRUNER

Winner: New Community Corporation, Newark, New Jersey. Represents twenty-five years of rebuilding the devastated central ward of Newark with housing, jobs, daycare, education, senior care, and a supermarket.

Finalist: Betts-Longworth Historic District, Cincinnati, Ohio. Preservation and rebuilding of an historic district near downtown.

Finalist: Beyond Homelessness, San Francisco, California. A comprehensive plan and eight projects which provide shelter and services to the homeless.

Finalist: The Park at Post Office Square, Boston, Massachusetts. A newly created urban park over an underground parking garage in Boston's dense financial district.

The Award Presentation

The award presentation was held at the offices of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Secretary of HUD, Henry Cisneros, made the presentation and was joined by Senators Bill Bradley and Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey and Senator John Kerry and Representative Martin Meehan of Massachusetts, as well as many senior HUD officials. The formalities were followed by an hour long forum — hosted by Marty Goldensohn, correspondent from American Public Radio — on the social, economic, political and design processes that contribute to urban excellence. The forum focussed on a typical problem in a hypothetical city and invited participants to play the roles of key actors in the urban scene, from tenants, to the housing authority, mayor, funding agency, planner and architect.

About This Book

This book is based on the report we developed for the Selection Committee's second meeting. We have edited the text and added a section about the Selection Committee's comments on each project as they considered whether it might get the award. The chapters on each finalist were organized for ease of use by the Selection Committee. Thus, they are rather "telegraphic," using an abbreviated outline format with many bullet points to get the main ideas across quickly. Each project is described under the same headings and evaluated both in terms of its own goals and the issues the Selection Committee sent us out to investigate. We have added a section to these chapters summarizing the Selection Committee's response to it.

In a final chapter, we draw out the themes and variations raised at the Selection Committee's two meetings and the award presentation. While the Committee did not always reach complete consensus, they did identify very important themes and issues. The final chapter attempts to synthesize those themes, which fall into two broad categories: common characteristics of the finalists and more general issues around the nature of urban excellence. Themes include the following:

- Rebuilding communities
- A comprehensive approach: providing services, not just buildings
- Addressing critical urban problems



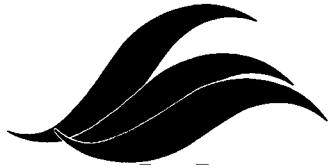
- Doing the impossible: persistence in the face of overwhelming odds
- Balancing leadership and participation
- Effective, ongoing management
- The role of technical expertise.
- Achieving quality in urban places.

About the Authors

The authors of this book are professional advisors to the Rudy Bruner Award. In addition to assisting with its administration, they facilitate the two meetings of the Selection Committee and conduct the site visits to the finalists.

Jay Farbstein, PhD, AIA is an architect by training. He leads a consulting practice in San Luis Obispo, California which specializes in helping public clients develop and document their requirements for building projects as well as in evaluating the degree to which their completed buildings meet those requirements.

Richard Wener, PhD, an environmental psychologist, is a professor in the Social Sciences department at the Polytechnic Institute of New York, where he heads the Environmental Psychology program. He has done extensive research on the effects of built environments on individuals and communities.



HARBOR POINT Boston, Massachusetts

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Initial Reasons For Including the Project as a Finalist

- Concern for public housing: "correcting the mistakes of the '50s and '60s".
- This could be a model of how to go about reclaiming a desolate area.
- Mixed income housing as a valuable ideal.
- Strong evidence of tenant participation in planning and management.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

- Who started the project and made it happen?
- This was a very expensive project. What was the true unit cost? Where did the money go?
- What happened to original tenants?
- Is it really an economically mixed development?
- Is there any assurance of continued affordability?
- What is the residents' role in management?
- How (and how much) are the parks and open spaces used?
- How safe do people feel?

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

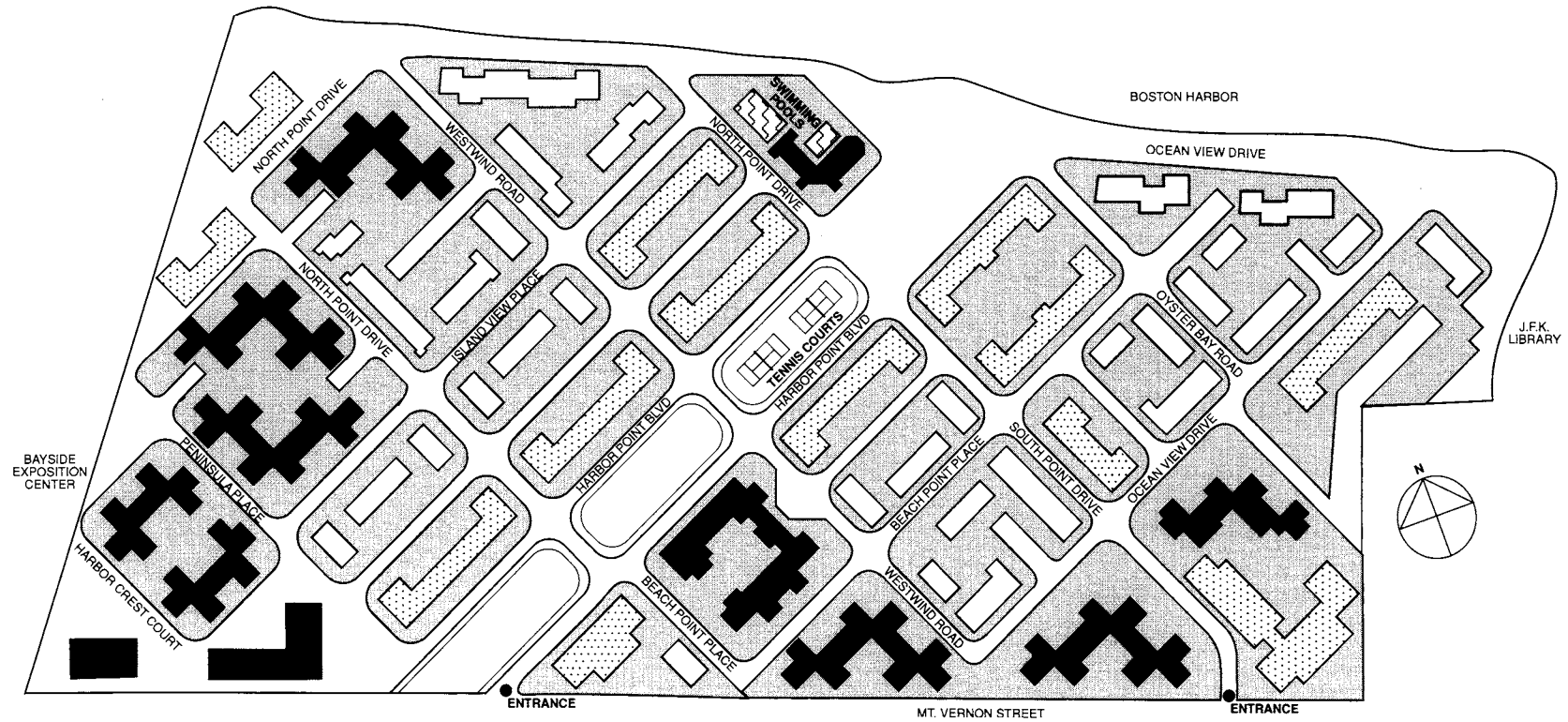
- The renovation and rehabilitation of Columbia Point, a 1,504 unit dilapidated and dangerous 1950s public housing project into a 1,283 unit mixed race, mixed income community with integrated social services (health center, child care, youth center, and other programs) and a bay-front park.

Who Made Submission

- Corcoran Jennison Companies — one of the private developers of the project.

Major Goals

- Transform a public housing project into a mixed income community (70% market rate, 30% subsidized low income).
- Market the apartments to middle income groups (including higher income minorities).
- Rehouse all remaining Columbia Point residents in subsidized, but otherwise indistinguishable, units.
- Create an economically and racially mixed rental apartment community for 3,500.



Accomplishments

- A low income, almost entirely black public housing project has been transformed into a mixed income (lower to middle income), mixed race, safe, and attractive urban community.
- The community offers a variety of social support services: child care, health care, youth services, and programs to identify "at risk" tenants for aid and counseling.
- Tenants had a real voice in planning and design, and maintain involvement in management through 50% control of the governing board of the Harbor Point Apartments Company.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

- It is a significant achievement to have transformed a dangerous, largely abandoned and stigmatized public housing project into a safe, attractive and vibrant mixed income community. Contact between market rate and subsidized tenants occurs at the management level and, to some degree at least, socially.
- There is an unusually high level of tenant participation in this project, including a significant say in management decisions and a share of operating profit (if and when that occurs).
- This is a very expensive project due to the large proportion of new and expanded units, difficult site conditions, and problems dealing with so many different controlling agencies. Is the social value added for restoring this stigmatized public housing project worth the level of public investment? Is this project replicable?
- Management costs are high here, because of the level of social services and security provided, increasing the current yearly operating deficit.

PROCESS

Planning/Implementation Process

- For a chronology, see the initial sections of the Project Description, below.

Key Participants

- Harbor Point Apartment Company, formed of two equal partners: Peninsula Partners and the Harbor Point Community Task Force.
- Peninsula Partners: a limited partnership formed for the development of Harbor Point, including Corcoran Mullins Jennison, Keen Development (Robert Kuehn*), and Cruz Construction (John Cruz*).
- Corcoran Mullins Jennison (now Corcoran Jennison): developers of Harbor Point. Joe Corcoran*, President, was responsible for bringing the mixed income, tenant partnership concept to Columbia Point tenants. Gary Jennison* headed construction and property management. Marty Jones*, partner, coordinated much of CMJ's efforts.
- Harbor Point Task Force. Elected tenant representative organization. Members include Mattie Burton, Hildred Cyr, Dave Hallenbaugh*, Douglas Housman, Ruby Jaundoo*, Etta Johnson*, Nancy Lagoa, Martha Little, Betty Quarles*, and Ester Santos*.
- Housing Opportunities Unlimited (HOU). Dave Connelly*, President; a private for-profit firm that contracts to provide resident social services at Harbor Point.
- Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency. Eleanor White*, Assistant Director, chief lender and coordinator of the public agency process for Harbor Point once a development team was selected.
- Boston Housing Authority. In receivership at the time of Harbor Point's creation, was owner of the site, with specific concerns for tenant relocation guarantees. Harry Spence, Receiver; Rod Solomon, General Counsel.



- Boston Redevelopment Authority. City redevelopment agency, responsible for design review, with specific concerns for materials and plans. Steve Coyle, Director; Richard Garver, coordinator for Harbor Point.
- Geiger-Gibson Community Health Center. On-site health center with contract for Harbor Point resident health services. Bob Taub*, Administrator; Muriel Rue* and Queenette Santos*, residents employed at the center.
- Design team for the project: Joan Goody*, Goody-Clancy, architect for new housing and site planner. Carol Johnson*, Carol Johnson Associates, landscape architect. Sy Mintz*, architect for rehabilitated housing.
- Antonio DiMambro*, Communitas, architect representing tenants on the design team.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Office of the Mayor. John Connolly*, formerly assistant to the Mayor, responsible for coordinating the city's efforts in Harbor Point.
- Harbor Point neighbors. We met representatives of the Bayside Expo Center (Frank Farrell*); State Representative Jim Brett*; and University of Massachusetts (Vice Chancellor Dr. Charles Desmond*).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Historical Context: the Birth and Decline of Columbia Point

This project's site was originally a landfill then a prisoner of war camp during World War II. In 1954, Columbia Point was built. It consisted of 30 buildings containing 1,504 units of public housing. Joan Goody notes that the plan humanistically tried to increase natural light and cross ventilation in every apartment. The result, however, was that buildings had to be farther apart, hence taller, to achieve economical densities. In typical public housing fashion, many families shared one entrance and elevator, and were too far above the ground to supervise children outside at play. This led, Goody notes, to the loss of a sense of community and other prob-

blems, such as lack of security, endemic to high rise public housing.

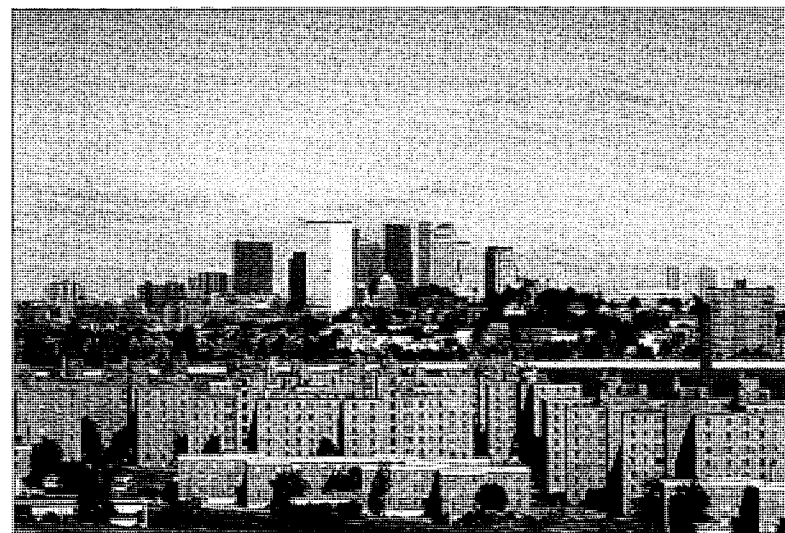
Original Columbia Point residents say that the decline began in the mid-1960s. They attribute the problems to the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) which was lax in tenant screening and maintenance and did not enforce its own rules (such as those against owning pets). Crime and drug use increased and police protection, they say, declined. It was during this period that an active Columbia Point Community Task Force (CPCTF) developed to represent the tenants in their struggles with the BHA and other agencies.

In the mid-1970s the peninsula became home to some major public institutions: the Boston campus of the University of Massachusetts and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library. Architecturally, both facilities turned their back on the Columbia Point housing project. Through the 1970s the decline became severe:

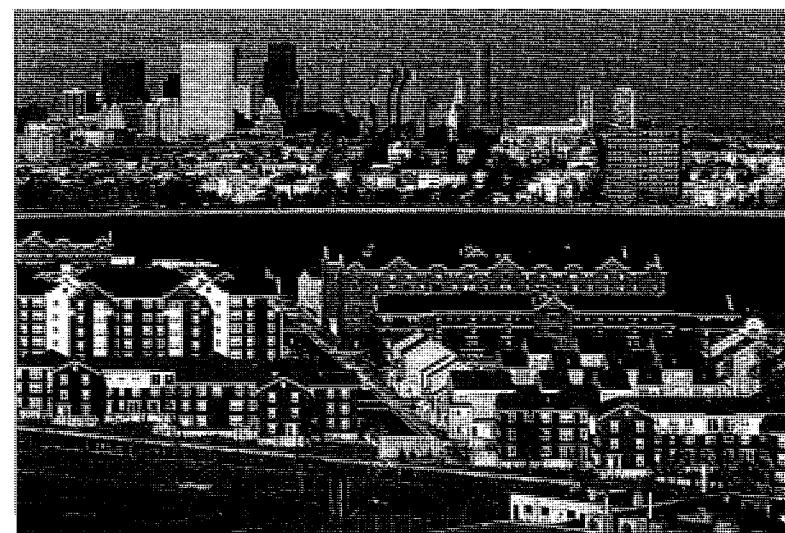
- drug use and dealing increased.
- many apartments, and some whole buildings, were abandoned and boarded up.
- Columbia Point became a common drop site for abandoned dogs.

In many ways Columbia Point was an archetypical public housing project gone sour. It developed notoriety as a very dangerous place to live or visit ("my children were house children, I wouldn't let them go outside," said a resident). It is reported that even ambulances and fire trucks would not enter the area without a police escort, and that it was impossible to get taxicabs to come there. One resident claimed that "the only way to get the police to come was to call and say that a white man was being beaten up." Gradually people moved out and units were left vacant. By 1979, only 350 units were still occupied.

Residents were also aware of what the broader Boston community thought of them — "we were a big disease," said one. For the planning community of Boston it was an eyesore and represented what was wrong with cities and with public housing. Newspapers regularly cited it as the source of yet another murder or drug bust. The boarded up, decaying buildings were easily seen from busy highways.

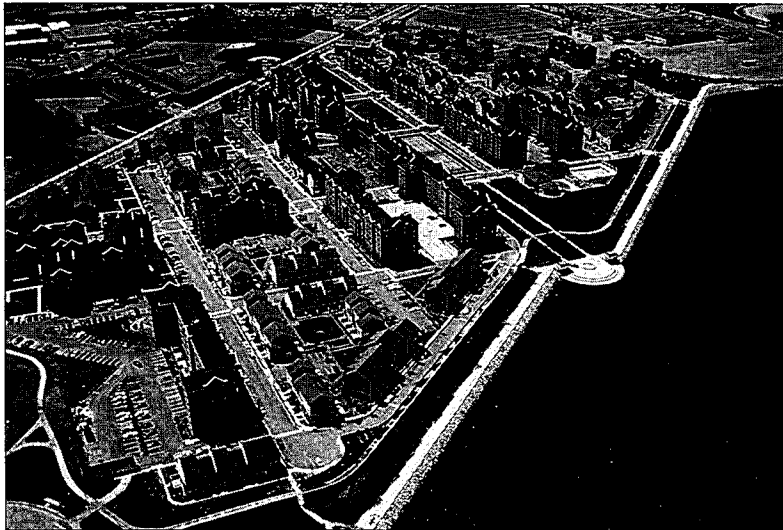


GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Columbia Point – before

GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Harbor Point – after



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Some residents, however, remembered life there before the physical and social deterioration. One noted that “when they screened people, it was nice here...there were a lot more positive people here than negative people.” It was also a community they were trying to save and rebuild.

The Transformation of Columbia Point into Harbor Point

The creation of Harbor Point was a long and arduous process, involving many players and multiple levels of review. The following chronology sketches the main events in the transformation.

1979. The Department of Housing and Urban Development offered \$10 million for rehabilitation of Columbia point. After \$2 million was spent, tenants realized that this sum would be insufficient to complete more than a “patch up job”. The tenant task force moved to stop the renovation process. They began to lobby for a more extensive rehabilitation project and had the remaining \$8 million put in escrow to be used as part of that process (those funds eventually supported the demolition of several Columbia Point buildings). This was the beginning of the tenant association taking control of the redevelopment process.

The task force contacted Dave Connelly for help in organizing the redevelopment effort. Connelly had been an anti-poverty worker and was then managing resident services at a mixed income development in Lynn, Massachusetts owned by CMJ. Connelly arranged for Joe Corcoran to meet with the tenant task force and described his vision of mixed income housing with tenant participation in design and management. The tenants visited the Kings Lynne development and came away impressed though skeptical about Corcoran’s ability to create the same kind of community at Columbia Point.

1983. The Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Boston Housing Authority and the Task Force supported a multi-agency project for redevelopment of Columbia Point and issued a request for proposals from developers. Only two serious proposals were received. At the request of the Mayor, the two teams were merged, with CMJ as the lead developer. At the same time, a re-housing agreement was negotiated which promised apartments in Harbor Point for all remaining Columbia Point residents.

1986. The Harbor Point Apartments Company was formed as an equal partnership between the Columbia Point Community Task Force and the developers to manage the design process and, eventually, the development. Each party had two voting representatives on the four person governing board. Architect Antonio DiMambro was hired by this group to serve as tenant advocate working with project architects. Construction began in 1986. In the final plan, about two-thirds of the old buildings were torn down and replaced by new, low- and mid-rise construction. The remaining buildings were extensively rehabilitated.

1987. The first buildings were completed. 335 of the 350 remaining tenants of Columbia Point moved into new units in phases, to maintain an income mix in all buildings. Some initial problems with crime and lack of response by Boston police lead to the creation of a private security force and placement of a guard station at the entrance.

1991. Harbor park opened, completing the construction.

1993. Harbor Point is operating at 92% occupancy.

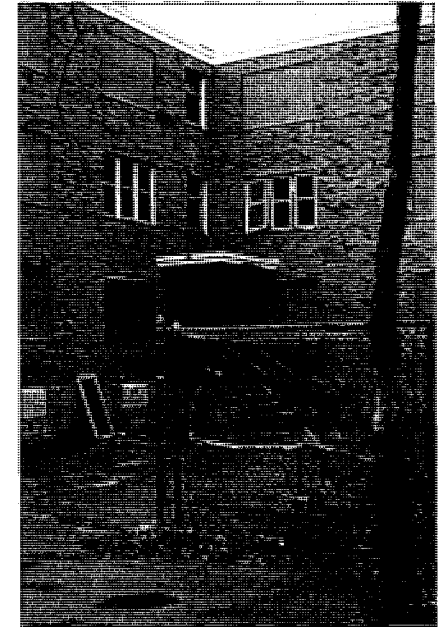
Tenants and Developers Work Together

An important element of the Harbor Point story is the degree to which the Columbia Point tenants — mostly African-American women — took charge of the process. It was the tenant group that rejected as inadequate the HUD plan to spend \$10 million. They sought out Connelly and Corcoran, and eventually pushed the various city and state agencies towards an acceptable development plan. One tenant said, 'since the BHA (Boston Housing Authority) won't do it, we will.' Many of these same tenants still live at Harbor Point and some are active on the tenants organization. To them, the process is still very much alive — the organizing and planning was a major part of their lives and the management remains a significant part of their daily routine.

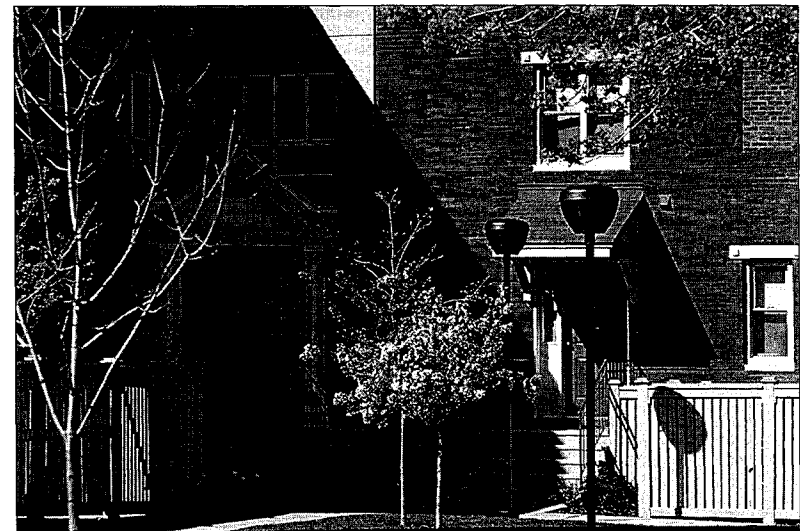
Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison (CMJ) entered this process as an atypical development company. Joe Corcoran had left his brothers' development company to start his own because he wanted to experiment with mixed income housing and tenant partnerships. He successfully developed several new housing projects, typically with 25% low income, 25% moderate income, and 50% market rate units. Kings Lynne, the project which brought him to the attention of the Columbia Point tenants, was his first attempt at rehabilitating a public housing site working with existing tenants.

Columbia Point represented a significantly greater challenge because of its size, its advanced state of deterioration, and the stigma associated with the site. Bringing market rate tenants to Columbia Point was perceived as a difficult, if not impossible, task. However, CMJ did not see Harbor Point as a philanthropic opportunity. Their goal was to work with the tenants (because they saw this as a necessary ingredient of a successful project), create an operating mixed income neighborhood, and make a reasonable profit.

Part of making the mixed income model work at Harbor Point was seen as the inclusion of social services for low income tenants, with the long term goal being to reduce these tenants' dependence on government programs and subsidies. The development agreement included provision of health care, education, child care, drug treatment and youth programs.



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Pre-existing three story building

GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Renovated three story building

Considerable complexity was added to the Harbor Point development by the large number of agencies involved in the plan. MHFA provided financing and interagency coordination. BHA was the nominal manager and owner of the site. HUD was involved as a funder and regulator. BRA was the city design and urban renewal agency and UDAG provider.

The unifying motivation for local planners was the belief that Columbia Point could not be abandoned. This was the biggest, worst, and best known public housing project in New England. Dynamiting Columbia Point, they felt, would reinforce images of Pruitt-Igoe coming down and justify those who declaimed the failure of public housing policy. While one may doubt the apocalyptic nature of their vision, they feared that, in the emerging "hands-off" Reagan era this would signal the end to meaningful government involvement in low-income housing. So they supported Harbor Point, sometimes (as in the case of MHFA) with the possibility of considerable risk to their agency.

The Plan for Harbor Point

The plan for Harbor Point had several essential components.

- Use of a private developer, bringing considerable expertise as well as some private investment funds, to plan, design, construct and participate in managing the facility.
- A partnership between the developer and tenants. An initial condition for both parties was the co-equal partnership. The governing board (final arbiter of all decisions) is equally split between tenant and developer representatives. Operating and development profits will also be split, with a portion going to the tenant group.
- Mixed income housing. The complex was built to maintain 70% of the units as market rate apartments and 30% as subsidized units. A formal agreement mandates that no building can have subsidized tenants in more than 50% of its units. The goal was to keep an even spread of subsidized units throughout the complex, so that there would be no physical differences between market rate and subsidized buildings. This also meant making all units of sufficiently high quality to be able to attract market rate tenants. Larger

units, however, tend to be occupied by families with subsidies.

- The plan included a detailed social service program. Significant funds and time were expended to create a social service system which would support resident needs (especially youth) and help subsidized tenants move towards greater independence.
- Taking advantage of the water-front location. The new plan included a waterfront park and reorientation of buildings and streets so that most apartments would have a water or downtown skyline view.

Design

The design process had a strong element of tenant involvement. Tenants regularly met with architects, and had their own architectural consultant (Antonio DiMambro) who helped them decide on their design requirements and review the proposed designs. In addition, tenant representatives on the Harbor Point Apartment Company had a say in final approval of plans.



Typical townhouse street

GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

The goal for the Harbor Point design was to “deinstitutionalize” the Columbia Point site, and create a pleasant, urban neighborhood. Input from the tenant Task Force led them away from highly styled design to the creation of a “normal looking” neighborhood. Architects commented that tenants originally wanted something reminiscent of the suburbs, although their designs leaned heavily on scales and elements (e.g., cornices and lintels) from successful urban Boston neighborhoods (such as Dorchester, the South End, and the Back Bay).

The designers reoriented the orthogonal street grid at a 45 degree angle so that all streets could view the bay. The older buildings which were salvaged were drastically remodeled. Private entries were created to family apartments on the lower floors. The top floor was reserved for smaller units, presumably for tenants without children. The appearance was radically altered by the use of a red stain on the old yellow brick facade, and the addition of bay windows and shingle roofs.

New two and three-story townhouses, clad in wood siding and with shingle roofs, were sited among older buildings. The designers tried to create views which would have a variety of shapes, colors and textures. Two seven story buildings were saved, linked by a pavilion and converted through a “gut rehab” into an apartment building for the elderly, with well lit corridors (where tenants now grow their own indoor plants). Parking for the lower buildings was placed in front along the curb. Additional small lots are tucked between a row of houses. One hundred underground spaces and 100 additional spaces in a parking structure were added at the behest of the BRA. Parking lots between larger new buildings are not entirely successful, with views upon entry of unenclosed trash dumpsters and all plantings placed along the building edges (rather than having some in the middle).

The central focus of the development is a long broad green mall, leading directly into the bay-front park. Most communal facilities are located along this mall. The mall was proportioned to model Boston’s Commonwealth Avenue. (The appropriateness of this notion must be questioned, however, since Commonwealth Avenue runs for miles, while the mall is three blocks long. The site team felt it was visually too wide for the scale of the project, though the open space it provides is reported very well used.) Block-long five to

seven story apartment buildings line the mall. The projecting bays and dormers attempt to recall the scale and proportion of old townhouses. Parking is at the rear and there is an entry from both directions to a central elevator lobby. Ground floor apartments are larger (3 bedrooms) to accommodate families needing direct entrances from the street.

Generally, materials are appropriate and reasonably attractive. Wood siding, however, does not appear to be holding up well. We were informed that the specified grade was replaced with a cheaper one, though we have conflicting reports about whether it was painted or stained.

The waterfront park was sensitively designed. Tenants were very concerned about safety, so that the park is mostly edged by a road (to keep eyes on it at all times). There are plaques which give interesting information on historical, astronomical, and natural history features of the harbor. Attention was also paid to how the park meets the water (with overhanging decks and steps that lead down). A linear walkway along the water is used by walkers, bikers and joggers.

Financial Analysis

The total project costs of about \$201 million are broken down in the following table. Extraordinary costs of about \$17 million are subtracted to make the costs more comparable to other projects.

Development Costs

ITEM	TOTAL	PER UNIT
Hard Costs		
Construction	\$141,740,331	\$110,476
Less extraordinary site costs	(13,540,000)	(10,553)
Less extraordinary non-residential costs	(3,600,000)	(2,806)
Total Hard Costs	124,600,331	97,116
Soft Costs		
Architecture and engineering	5,303,532	4,134
Construction period interest	26,078,346	20,326
Taxes	471,133	367
Insurance and construction bond	1,653,415	1,289
Financing	13,441,250	10,476
Relocation and social services	3,496,308	2,725

Miscellaneous fees/permits	3,749,542	2,920
Other fees	6,639,022	5,171
Total Soft Costs	60,822,548	47,407
Total Hard + Soft Costs	\$185,422,879	\$144,523

The unusual site costs were largely due to the poor soil conditions. The site had been a sanitary land fill and deep pilings were required for building construction. The non-residential costs included building the adjacent community health center.

An analysis prepared for Harbor Point (Loustau, 1992) indicates that the total cost per unit compares favorably with two other major Boston housing projects of that era — West Broadway (\$145,263/unit) and Tent City (\$154,673/unit).

The same study shows the total annual government costs for the low income units at Harbor Point to be \$4,618,653 per year (1992) in Section 8 and Sharp payments, about the same as the other projects. These subsidies do not include the deferral of debt service on the non-MHFA loans — which is not required to be paid until operating revenues exceed costs. MHFA loans must be paid currently.

Financing for Harbor Point came from several sources:

SOURCE	AMOUNT
MHFA mortgage	\$151,000,000
UDAG loan	12,000,000
Urban Initiatives Loan	9,000,000
Chapter 884 Grant (Mass.)	3,000,000
Subtotal	175,000,000
Private Tax Shelter Syndications	75,000,000
Total	\$250,000,000

Private funds were raised in two syndications involving sale of tax credits. The first syndication raised \$50 million. When the Boston economy declined, several limited partners of that syndication were unable to make payments. The second syndication with Chevron Oil raised \$34 million (some of which covered the default on shares of the first syndication) for a total of \$75 million. Approximately \$49 million were raised beyond construction costs. These funds, after paying for cost overruns and the costs of the syndication, were

placed in escrow for to cover operating deficits and developer profit. The later was capped at \$14 million by the UDAG agreement, although Corcoran predicts that a maximum of \$4 million will be available when the funds can be withdrawn in the year 2000. Funds remaining in the escrow account after profits and repayment of the UDAG and urban initiatives loans will be placed in a public benefits fund to assure subsidies for the low income units through the 99 year term of the BHA land lease.

The current operating deficit seems to be a function of market timing. The project was built at the most expensive time (when construction in Boston was booming) and began renting when the Boston economy went into recession. Market rate rents, at Harbor Point and elsewhere, are 10% to 20% below what had been expected in the mid-1980s. If Harbor Point had been built with only private capital it would probably be in receivership, along with many other Boston properties, though the developers disagree, feeling that their capitalization was adequate to carry them through the recession. The recession has, however, greatly cut into their potential profit.

Other Economic Benefits. As a result of an agreement to provide on-the-job construction training to residents, fifty housing authority tenants got jobs and were added to construction labor union membership roles.

Harbor Point Today

In many respects Harbor Point is a very successful project. The neighborhood which was (arguably) Boston's most dangerous has become (also arguably) its safest. It transformed itself from a dilapidated, 20% occupied, homogeneously poor and minority housing project to one which is more than 90% occupied and is economically and racially heterogeneous. Where Columbia Point was a drag on the development of the peninsula, Harbor Point may be a spur to its future growth. Among residents, especially original Columbia Point tenants, there is a sense of satisfaction and competence. A positive effect is already apparent in the schools. The local middle school is very highly rated — and the fact that Harbor Point is now integrated allows its children to go there (which Columbia Point kids couldn't because of busing). Drug problems among tenants have also decreased. Several tenants who had subsidized rents are now paying full market rates because they are earning more money.

Residents take pride in their environment and its upkeep. Volunteer patrols and casual pedestrians keep watch for problems. A sign of the unusual level of community care is the survival of slender young trees, without broken limbs in spite of the presence of many children and teens. One boy we met commented that “whenever I swing on a tree, they come by and ask me to stop.”

Several tenants indicated that Harbor Point is “not for everyone”. It is not always tranquil, with many children playing outdoors. It is most successful for people seeking and willing to invest in community spirit — and a number of middle class white professionals told us that they chose to live there for that very reason.

The development includes an attractive waterfront park which will form one link of a waterway park system wrapping the bay. Even on the winter day we visited the park, we encountered a group of lunchtime walkers from U. Mass.

Harbor Point has also implemented a model social service program to support the tenants who need assistance. Youth programs, health care, day care, and other programs are operating and are

evaluated regularly against the needs identified in the original program. A formal needs assessment was ongoing during our visit.

Dave Connelly suggests that there is another important outcome of Harbor Point. He says that young black children are beginning to find new role models among their friends and neighbors. “They’re beginning to look up to good kids, instead of the kids who sell drugs.”

Tenant Demographics

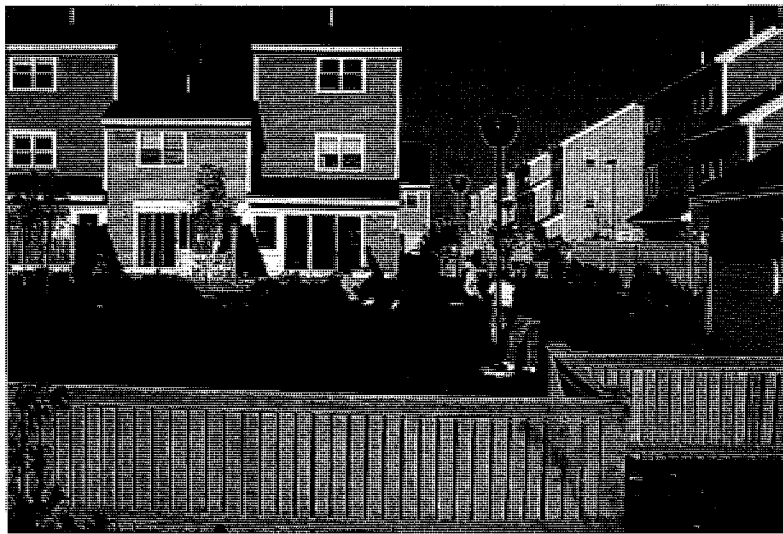
The following table compares market rate and subsidized tenants on a number of features.

ITEM	MARKET	SUBSIDIZED
Percentage of households	70%	30%
Number of residents	1,355	1,234
Percentage of residents	52%	48%
Average household size	2.1	3.4
Average household income	\$42,919	\$11,106
Average individual income	\$26,000	\$7,000

Fine Tuning Operations

Harbor Point has had to address a number of management and operational issues.

- Leasing agents are working to increase occupancy and market unit rents to achieve a positive cash flow. Agents are optimistic about occupancy, but rental rates are unlikely to rise significantly until the Boston economy recovers.
- Tenants and management are addressing crime concerns. While everyone agrees this is a safe community, property crimes and drug use and sales still occur (some residents say drug use is on the rise). The tenant walkers’ patrols are one response to the problem.
- A common point of conflict between subsidized tenants (mostly families) and market rate tenants (mostly singles) is noise, mostly from groups of children outside in the summer. One response has been to promote a voluntary guideline of times for children to be inside (7:30 p.m. for 13 years and younger; 10:30 p.m. for older children).



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Townhouse rear shared green space

- Tenants on the Task Force say that education and youth services are their most important priority. They are, for example, setting up a scholarship fund for residents.
- There is a shortage of day care space (a sign that more parents in subsidized units are working). There are plans to increase space and the number of available day care slots.
- Harbor Point has representatives on the Columbia Point Neighborhood Coalition which is working on plans for the redevelopment of the considerable open space on the peninsula. The success of Harbor Point has spurred this process.

THEMES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Tenants Take Control

The Columbia Point tenants took control of their own project, refusing to spend HUD's \$10 million on quick fixes, insisting instead on a more thorough redevelopment effort. Several strong Alinsky-type activists in the '60s and '70s created the task force. To its credit, resident involvement has survived changes in leadership as well as the natural skepticism which arises from years of unfulfilled promises. Many doubted anything would really be done for them or that, if change were to come, a private developer would be the one to do it. A current Task Force member said "I didn't believe it would really happen until I saw the buildings going down." Another tenant commented that she had felt "it won't ever happen here. If it does, it won't happen for us." Many were convinced that evictions of the original tenants would follow completion of new housing.

Tenants really helped shape this project, with a role in making significant design decisions. For example, at the urging of tenants, the final plan included several five and six bedroom units for large families. The tenant role in management is also important. Tenant involvement in the most sensitive management decisions lends a level of credibility not possible otherwise. Evictions, for example, must be approved by the governing board before they are executed.

Degeneration to the Point of Crisis

Some argue that things couldn't have gotten so good if they hadn't been so bad. Columbia Point had deteriorated so badly that it became clear that "ordinary" solutions would not work. Conditions provided "an opportunity for creative people" to develop a creative solution.

Multiple Agencies Working Together

Agencies of the city, state, and federal government, with different funding sources, missions, agendas, and codified rules were brought together in regular meetings by the MHFA. The resolution of these different agendas created a fair amount of heat and added considerable time and cost to the project. At least four agencies had to review and approve plans and changes.

Socially Conscious Private Developer

Corcoran Mullins Jennison brought a history of success in similar smaller projects and a belief in tenant involvement and mixed-income housing. In the midst of the regulatory jungle of agency rules and turf, they helped carve out a level of private control so that Harbor Point was eventually able to manage most of its own services (including security, maintenance, and utilities) assuring better, more responsive, and more reliable service to tenants.

It is important to note the level of risk involved in creating Harbor Point. Though it seems on solid (if highly leveraged) ground now, this was a project which could have failed at many points in its long history, dragging down important players as it sank. The MHFA had many millions of dollars at risk which it had guaranteed itself. We are informed that, if Harbor Point had failed, MHFA's survival would have been uncertain. The private developers had invested \$12 million dollars to move the process along, all of which would have been lost if the various approvals, loans and grants had not been forthcoming. Usually, investors take significant risks only when the potential return is great. In this case the risks were high, but the potential profit, in the best case, was modest.

The solidarity the developers and tenants feel with one another becomes apparent when they talk about difficulties the project faced. Together, for example, they show visceral anger at the Boston Globe, which they feel has provided unfairly critical coverage of

Harbor Point. And it was the tenants who provided the needed support and credibility for strict interpretation of building rules (such as no pets), even when they led to several evictions.

A Role for For-Profit Developers in Low-Income Housing

Both CMJ and HOU (the social service contractor) are for-profit enterprises. Corcoran and Connelly argue that it is important to have such groups involved in the low-income arena, since they bring into the process talented people with different ideas and perspectives who would not otherwise be involved.

Shotgun Marriages

Harbor Point created a number of “shotgun marriages”. Two teams, representing three development companies, two architectural firms and three contractors were merged for the project at the request of the government sponsors. These designers carved out their own areas of responsibility, worked cooperatively when necessary, and produced a successful, unified design.

Active Management

A critical but too often ignored element is that of management after occupancy. Management at Harbor Point plays a crucial role in its success, working hard in marketing and leasing to maintain the viability of the mixed income ideal, working with tenants (including the Task Force, building captains, and volunteer patrols) to keep the buildings in good repair and avoid vandalism, and working with security and residents to maintain a security.

Private Services

Private services (security, trash pickup, maintenance of private streets, utilities) have added to costs but keep quality high. The presence of a security gatehouse at the entry driveway is an important and reassuring symbol for tenants and visitors of the change in their community.

Mixed Income Community

A goal is to have social mixing among all tenants. The Task Force itself is an important point of contact. While it still has a majority of members who are from subsidized units and lived in Columbia

Point, representation from the market rate tenants is increasing. “Walkers”, who casually patrol the neighborhood at night, include tenants from all strata. The Task Force also organizes festivals and “munch and mingle” parties to increase contact among tenants. The social mixing is far from perfect — there seem to be points where culture or lifestyle conflict — but most seem to feel that, on the whole, it is working.

Integrating Social Services with Housing

CMJ brought in social service planners to help develop the resident service program. According to one planner, “the process was extensive and tedious”. The planning group consisted of consultants, tenants and social agency staff. They created a matrix of services (including education, youth, day care, and health) by age group (0-6 years, 6-12 years, etc.). For each box in the matrix, they tried to identify the services tenants ought to have. The list was wide ranging. For example, they concluded that every child should get a complete set of vaccinations, and that every child ought to have 10 age-appropriate books in their home. These needs were presented to the developers who identified spaces required to accommodate



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Renovated buildings – senior center

the service (for example, a building for the health clinic). In RFPs for services, providers were asked to show how they would deliver these “entitlements”. HOU was selected to manage resident services at Harbor Point. Dave Connelly of HOU says that the matrix is still used in evaluating the efficacy of services.

POINTS OF CONTROVERSY

The story of Harbor Point is complicated by the presence of many players, institutions, themes, and motivations. It has been a focal point for controversy since planning began. In part this is due to the large sums of money involved. It is also because Harbor Point’s plan touches on several hotly debated issues in urban public housing, including what to do with troubled projects, the net loss of low income housing units, and the viability of economically and racially mixed housing.

Four major points of controversy arose about Harbor Point. They concern its costs, its management, the loss of public housing units, and the mixed income model. The following sections outline the issues and arguments (with the criticism indicated with a “-” and the defense indicated with a “+”).

Costs

- Harbor Point is said to have been too expensive. It used too much public money, drying up funding for other projects. Developers are said to have taken unfair advantage of changes in laws concerning syndication of tax credits. Because of reliance on massive government funding this is not a replicable project.
- + Marty Jones of CMJ argues that the numbers look high in part because of the scale of the project (“anything times 1,283 becomes a very large number”). The costs are comparable to other low income housing of the period. Several policy makers agree with Joan Goody when she noted that “quality costs” — that there are no short cuts to building good housing. We did not find credible evidence that other subsidized housing was held up for Harbor Point; several other projects were brought on line in the same period.

Harbor Point is, in total, an expensive project. An assessment of the project’s worth has to consider not only the social value placed on the extra costs for social services and relocation but, more importantly, the value of restoring a stigmatized district to usable condition, and the value of pursuing the mixed income model.

Corcoran argues that no unfair advantages were taken of tax law; though pending changes in the law would have canceled the planned syndication — and “would have killed the deal.” Massachusetts representatives worked to have Harbor Point “grandfathered” under the previous rules so that the syndication could be completed.

Corcoran argues that this project is replicable in terms of its mixed income nature and tenant/developer partnership. While the exact funding sources might not be duplicated, he notes that “I’ve done many projects and never used the exact same funding sources twice. If you want to do it, you can find the funds to do it.”

Management

- Management, even with tenant control, hasn’t worked well for all previous Columbia Point tenants. Many were evicted or left under threat of eviction. Families have been broken up because of rigid enforcement of rules.
- + As best we could tell, most Columbia Point tenants relocated to Harbor Point and still live there. Most tenants we spoke with felt comfortable with management and happy with their new circumstances. While this is most clear for the committed members of the Task Force, it seems also true among others. We did speak, however, to one 19 year old woman who complained that the security staff discriminated against the subsidized tenants.

Rather than apologizing for strict enforcement of the rules, the Task Force is especially proud of it. They feel that lax enforcement was an important factor in the demise of Columbia Point. They suggest that the rules are fair, made with tenant input, and need to be enforced to maintain a good living environment.

Management and tenants argue that no one is evicted without multiple opportunities for support and appeal. HOU and the Task Force operate an “at risk” committee to identify and offer services to tenants who, for example, have substance abuse problems.

Loss of Public Housing

- Elimination of so many units of public housing — and their replacement with market rate units — has deprived low income residents of places to live.
- + There is no question but that approximately 1,100 units of public housing were lost in comparing Columbia Point to Harbor Point. However, these were units that were so severely dilapidated that they were vacant and in need of very major renovation. If they had been renovated with no loss of units (rather than replaced), many of the negative features of the original plan would have remained. Thus, it is likely that there would have been some (probably significant) loss of units even if they had remained in the public housing stock.

In terms of the issue of retaining large public housing projects — versus conversion to mixed income developments — see the next item.

The Mixed Income Model

- It is argued that the two groups don’t really mix. Subsidized tenants are almost all poor African-American families, while market rate tenants are single individuals or couples who are students or young professionals. They have little in common, with cultural differences separating them. Market rate tenants are very unhappy with noise from the kids, which is why the turnover rate is so high.
- + The turnover rate for the market units is 45%-50%. Staff say this is normal in Boston for this demographic group. Exit surveys do show that noise is the most commonly cited problem, but that accounts for only 15% of all departures. Most leave because they are getting married, leaving town, buying a house or having a baby. The leasing office notes



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

The Mall

GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

Festival Day

that 40% of all new market rate tenants have been referred by other tenants, up from 15% several years ago. They say that some tenants come because of the unique social structure of the development, while others move there for its easy commute to downtown.

Task Force members and developers argue strongly that real integration is taking place, that tenants of all kinds work together on management, exercise at the health club, and mix socially. They argue that the level of contact must be judged in the context of other communities where people frequently don't know any of their neighbors. There are many people who use Harbor Point just as a place to sleep, they say, but a surprising number who socialize.

In our walk around the grounds we found some market rate residents who complained about loud kids using foul language late at night, especially during the summer. Some admitted being uncomfortable walking past groups of black teenagers at night. None, however, reported incidents beyond noise. Several people we spoke to were in the process of leaving Harbor Point, but all were doing so because of life changes, and not because of complaints. On balance, the residents we met did not see Harbor Point as a social Nirvana, but they did find it to be a pleasant community.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

Transform a public housing project into a mixed income, mixed race community

Harbor Point can claim considerable success in its effort to create a viable mixed income, mixed race community — where people live together in relative harmony and interact socially to some degree.

Market to middle income groups (including minorities)

Success here depends on how one defines middle income. While median income per apartment is \$40,000, most are singles. Median, per capita income of the market rate units is only in the \$20,000

range, largely because of the number of students. Market rate tenants are racially mixed. Occupancy is high (over 90%) and rising.

Provide subsidized housing for original residents

Most of the former residents of Columbia Point are currently living at Harbor Point. Most remained through construction and were the first to enter the new housing.

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

Is it really an economically mixed development?

Yes. There is no reason to think that the tenant mix will not remain stable in the future.

This was a very expensive project. Where did the money go?

What was the true unit cost?

Cost was approximately \$140,000/unit, when all hard and soft costs are included. Much of the extra money went to pay for difficult site conditions related to the landfill, increased soft costs related to the need to negotiate with and satisfy many regulatory agencies, relocation and social service costs, and higher than normal management costs (largely security).

How (and how much) are parks and open spaces used?

On winter days we saw a fair amount of street foot traffic. Resident reports suggest open areas are well used. The waterfront park is used by others in the community (e.g., U. Mass. students and faculty) as well as Harbor Point residents.

How safe do people feel?

People seem to feel very safe. All women with whom we spoke indicated that they comfortably walked around the development alone at night.

Who initiated the project?

The project has several parents:

- Columbia Point Community Task Force members played a critical role in driving the process and spurring agencies to act.

- Corcoran Mullins Jennison contributed significantly to the mixed income and tenant partnership philosophy.
- Several committed public servants in city government and relevant agencies were, if not parents, at least midwives to the process.

What happened to the original tenants?

Most still live in Harbor Point. Care was taken to limit the number of times these residents were forced to move during construction and relocation.

Is there control on continued affordability?

Continued subsidies for the original Columbia Point tenants are built into project agreements. Provisions for maintaining a minimum of 30% of the units with subsidies are in the contract and land lease.

What is the residents' role in management?

The residents have 50% governing voice in management decisions. They (the Task Force) control two of four seats on the Harbor Point Apartments Company Governing Board. All aspects of Harbor Point (management, architects, accounting, etc.) report to the board.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee was greatly impressed by the ability of the Harbor Point Apartment Company to create an attractive community for both subsidized and market rate tenants. They praised the provision of construction jobs for people from the original Columbia Point and social services for current tenants. Most impressive, however, was the partnership between the developer and the tenants' group. Harbor Point would not have been created had it not been for the efforts of Columbia Point tenants. "They did a marvelous job and showed great tenacity" — and they continue to have a real voice in decisions and to share ownership in the project.

The Selection Committee appreciated the fact that there are no physical differences between the units rented by subsidized and non-subsidized tenants, minimizing distinctions between them.



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS

The Selection Committee also noted that this project demonstrates that public housing can be remade effectively — at a time when some aging public housing projects are in danger of being abandoned. But they felt that the most important — and potentially most replicable — part of this project was the impressive partnership between the developers and the tenants.

The Selection Committee also found the project's design to be a considerable strength. The committee appreciated that a great deal of attention had been paid to design, from overall project layout, to the park, to the details selected for the various building types. Housing was not only attractive, but responsive to tenant needs.

The Selection Committee did have certain concerns. One was that this is a costly project and this level of expenditure will probably not be available for many projects. They were also concerned that other cities might emulate Harbor Point in form only, perhaps missing more important elements of the partnership that played — and is still playing — a crucial role in its success.

For More Information...

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References

Several articles on Harbor Point were made use of by the team (or have been published subsequently) and may be of interest to the reader:

Joan Goody, "From Project to Community: the Redesign of Columbia Point." *Places*, Volume 8 Number 4, Summer 1993; pages 20-33.

Jeffrey J. Loustau, "How Expensive is Affordable Housing? A Comparative Analysis of Three Affordable Housing Developments in Boston." 1992. Prepared for Harbor Point Apartment Company.

Marie Kennedy, "Mixed Messages: a Brief Story of Columbia Point and U.S. Public Housing." An essay to accompany "Columbia Point," a video slide transfer by Linda Swartz. University of Massachusetts at Boston, 1989.

Ellen-J. Pader and Myrna Margulies Breitbart, "Transforming Public Housing: Conflicting Visions for Harbor Point." *Places*, Volume 8 Number 4, Summer 1993; pages 34-45.



NEW COMMUNITY CORPORATION

Newark, New Jersey

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Initial Reasons For Including the Project as a Finalist

- Range and comprehensiveness of services offered.
- Ability to create jobs.
- Their choice of projects appears to be driven by community needs.
- They have built institutions that allow the community to solve its own problems.
- Sensitivity to historic sites.
- Patience and longevity; survival for over 25 years as a community developer.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

- Does the project still depend on its founder (Msgr. Linder) or has succession taken place?
- Is this a bureaucratic or a community based organization?
- How is it perceived by the various communities in Newark?
- What is their design process? Is it participatory? Why aren't buildings more interesting architecturally?

- Is there a focus on adaptive reuse? Why have the uses of historic buildings (e.g., the church) been changed?
- What is their relationship with local government?
- How do their for-profit businesses affect other NCC operations? Are local people employed by these businesses?
- How is security handled? Is there a proactive response to crime?
- What are NCC's future plans?

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

- One of the oldest and largest community development corporations in the country, having developed projects worth over \$200 million with annual operating budgets of nearly \$100 million.
- The most significant provider of affordable housing in Newark's Central Ward (over 2,500 units with over 6,000 residents), including facilities for families, senior citizens, extended care, and homeless families.



NCC has redeveloped 45 acres of the inner city.

NCC

- A provider of many essential social services (GED, drug prevention, job training, etc.) to residents of Newark's Central Ward; almost a "shadow city".
- Developer and operator of 7 child care centers, several of which are aimed at groups with special needs (for example, one created the first Head Start program for HIV positive children, another serves formerly homeless parents and children who reside in Harmony House's transitional housing program).
- A major force in training, employing and finding jobs for Newark residents. Currently employs over 1,200 people, most of whom are minority residents of Newark.
- Operator of a number of health related services (including a Wellness Center and a Community Health Service).
- Owner of several for-profit businesses, including a shopping center (with a Pathmark supermarket, food court, printer and some franchise operations), and a restaurant and sandwich shop in the renovated St. Joseph's Church building.
- Operator of a kindergarten through eight grade alternative school for almost 300 children.
- Publisher of a monthly community newspaper with circulation of 42,000.

Who Made Submission

- The New Community Corporation, a private, non-profit organization.

Major Goals

- To respond to the urban decay and destruction of the 1967 riots in Newark.
- To improve the quality of life of the people in Newark to reflect individual dignity and personal achievement.
- To be responsive to community needs.
- To provide a complete range of human services (including housing, health care, employment, child care, etc.)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(Note: this is a partial listing, containing only major projects in the Newark area.)

Housing

- NC Homes - 120 units. Total development cost \$4,448,300; rent subsidized (HUD Section 236 with 101 rent subsidy). New construction, opened 1975.
- NC Associates - 224 units in a 15 story building. Total development cost \$8,750,000; HUD Section 8 rent subsidy. New construction, opened 1978.
- NC Commons - 372 units consisting of an 18-story senior building, two-story family units, and a one-story community pavilion. Total development cost \$20,650,000; Section 8 rent subsidy. New construction, opened 1980.
- Douglas Homes - 135 senior units in a 15-story building. Total development cost \$6,175,000; Section 8 rent subsidy. Rehabilitation of former hotel, opened 1980.
- NC Gardens - 161 senior/handicapped units in an 11-story building; 75 family units in five 3-story buildings. Total development cost \$13,500,000; Section 8 rent subsidy. New construction, opened 1981.
- NC Manor - 154 senior units in a 10-story building; 173 family units in ten 2- and 5-story buildings. Total

development cost \$23,425,000; Section 8 rent subsidy. New construction, opened 1983.

- Harmony House - for homeless families. See case study below.
- Extended Care Facility - 180 nursing home beds; 60 adult medical day care slots. Construction cost \$11,000,000; 100% Medicare eligible. New construction, opened 1986.
- Other - several other projects including NC Roseville, Douglass-Harrison, NC Sussex, for a total of 2,579 units accommodating over 6,500 low income persons.

Child Care

- Babyland I - 99 Head Start & Title XX children, infant to preschool.
- Babyland II - 35 Protective Services children, 74 Good Start Program children, 3 months to 4 years.
- Babyland III - 192 Title XX & non-Title XX children and REACH program, infant to preschool.
- Babyland IV - 30 HIV-infected children, Head Start, 3 months to 3 years.
- Babyland V - 77 homeless children of Harmony House, infant to preschool.
- Babyland VI - 95 children in a protective services program, from infants to 4-1/2 years.
- Babyland VII - 79 children of Blue Cross/Blue Shield employees (in downtown office building), infant to preschool.
- Babyland also runs a Family Violence Protective Shelter for 20 families (women and children); and a summer program for 50 children in the 5th through 12th grades.

Employment Training

- NCC runs an employment center with three locations (one of which is in Harmony House to serve homeless parents). The

center places people in major New Jersey companies and in NCC enterprises. In 1991, 965 applicants were placed in jobs.

Commercial Enterprises

- Neighborhood Shopping Center: Pathmark Supermarket/ Pharmacy, NCC Grocery Delivery Service, Dunkin' Donuts, Mailboxes, Etc., NCC Print and Copy Shop.
- St. Joseph's Plaza: The Priory (restaurant), Sandwich Shop, Wellness Center and Spa, Walk-in Health Center (in partnership with United Hospital Medical Center).

Other Programs

- NCC is involved in many social service programs, working in partnership with many different agencies, including but not limited to: Meals-On-Wheels, the Ryan White Foundation, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse, Medical Transportation, and the Community Food Bank.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

- NCC has accomplished a great deal in one of the most devastated urban areas in the country, and has survived and prospered in lean times.
- NCC has a comprehensive approach to community development, touching almost every aspect of the problems people face in urban communities, in most cases with a large scale, thorough, and thoughtful response.
- NCC has shown itself to be responsive to changing community needs, moving quickly and strongly into niches as needs arise (such as its leap into the health care business, and current development of the "Children Together" program).
- NCC has shown the ability to undertake internal self-examination and organizational restructuring to maintain its flexibility and deal with its own growth.
- NCC's approach focuses on providing quality services for its clientele and helping people to become independent.

- In the past, NCC has shown a lack of (possibly even a disdain for) strategic planning, in favor of a flexible, ad hoc response to problems as they arise. The new restructuring has involved a greater emphasis on strategic planning for growth in critical areas (see Current Projects and Future Plans, below).
- The organization clearly centers on the creative and moral force of Msgr. Linder, and would suffer greatly from his loss. It is far from a one-man operation, however. There are many talented people at all levels — some come from the community and have been promoted from within, others as hired outside professionals. A major goal of the recent reorganization is to put in place a structure which can assure survival and growth in the future.
- In spite of the stated emphasis on "quality" the design and aesthetic nature of much of the housing is less than exciting. NCC officials suggest that code restrictions severely hindered creativity in those areas, and point to the very attractive rehabilitation of the St. Joseph's Church as an example of what they can do when they have free rein.

PROCESS

Chronology

- 1967. Newark riots. A group meets in Queen of Angels church to aid the community during and after the riots. A housing committee is formed to explore low cost housing solutions. On a parallel track, Mary Smith begins to explore child care options.
- 1969. With a seed loan from the N.J. Department of Community Affairs, the New Community Foundation is established. Babyland Nursery opens in the basement of Scudder Homes.
- 1973. Construction of NCC Homes begins; occupied in 1975.
- 1977. Construction of NCC Associates senior high rise and rehabilitation of Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Roseville Senior Building are begun.



- 1978. NCC Associates is occupied. Construction of NCC Commons begins.
- 1979. Douglas Hotel rehabilitation (as Douglas Homes) begins.
- 1980. NCC Commons and Douglas Homes are occupied. Construction of NCC Gardens begins; occupied in 1981.
- 1982. NCC Manor begins construction; occupied in 1983.

- 1984. Extended Care Facility begins construction. NCC Employment Center opens.
- 1985. St. Joseph Plaza renovation complete. NCC Federal Credit Union opens.
- 1986. Extended Care Facility is occupied. Rehabilitation of Douglass Harrison Apartments begins.
- 1988. NCC acquires Sussex Apartments.
- 1989. Bayview Court Phase I begins. Construction and occupancy of Harmony House.
- 1990. Neighborhood Shopping Center opens.
- 1991. Bayview Court is occupied. NCC assumes management of Englewood Gardens.
- 1992. Construction begins on Phase II of Bayview Court. Bergen St. building purchased for conversion to Employment Training Center.

Key Participants

In an organization this large there are many key participants. These are but a few of them.

New Community Corporation (NCC)

- Msgr. William Linder*, founder and head (though he is not chief executive).
- Raymond Codey*, Director of Development.
- Mary Smith*, Executive Director of Babyland.
- Florence Williams*, Director of Human Services.
- Jeanette Page Hawkins*, Director of Harmony House.
- Sister Daniele Brought, Director of Nurses, Extended Care Facility (no longer at NCC).
- Tonya Smith*, In-house Counsel.
- William Delaney*, Finance Director.

Other Participants

- Frank Passini*, architect, responsible for design of several of the housing projects and the World of Foods.
- Sharpe James*, Mayor of Newark.
- Jack Mullen*, Executive V.P. of Johnson & Johnson, President of the Board of Trustees, New Community Foundation.
- Catherine McFarland*, Victoria Foundation, a very early supporter of NCC.
- John Marques*, Fiscal Manager of Supermarkets General (owner of the Pathmark chain).

NCC's Decision Process

The decision making process at NCC is keyed on being able to make fast decisions in order to respond to opportunities and needs. In the past there has been a short chain of command - NCC staff discusses an idea, goes to Msgr. Linder and a decision is made. As we note in more detail elsewhere, decisions involving considerable commitments of time and resources have been made in a few hours. Spontaneity seems to be an important ethic at NCC.

Once a decision is made to begin a new project, the community is typically involved in the planning process. This may be through a survey of needs or by creating a planning group which includes community and potential user groups to help in the planning and design process.

The recent reorganization (described below) is aimed, in part, at allowing the organization to maintain personal contact over the growing range of operations. Each of the six divisions will be headed by an NCC staff member, and will have a corporate member of the Foundation as its personal advisor or consultant. It seems likely, however, that for the foreseeable future important decisions will still be made in discussions with Msgr. Linder.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION**Historical Context**

Newark in early 1967 was a city which had gone through major social and economic upheavals in the post-war period. Where African-Americans had been a small minority in 1944, by 1967 they were the majority population. A once prosperous industrial city had lost manufacturing and jobs to the suburbs. It had the highest concentration of public housing in the U.S. — 13,000 units owned and run (poorly, by most accounts) by the Newark Housing Authority. Much of the private housing stock was substandard. The city ranked at the bottom of lists of U.S. cities as measured by most indicators (crime, poverty, disease, etc.).

The State of New Jersey evoked considerable bitterness by siting the new College of Medicine and Dentistry in Newark's Central Ward. "Much of the housing on the site was substandard, but residents had few other options in Newark's tight housing market. The state gave neighborhood residents no input into the medical school plan, leaving the community outraged and desperate." (Koechlin p. 12)

The beating of a cab driver set off several days of riots and looting which were aimed at white store owners and the College site. The official post-riot analysis blamed the worst violence on the police response. Most of the 26 dead were shot by police. Father Linder was among the people to report seeing Newark police join in the looting of stores.

Founding of NCC

Before the riots were over, Father Linder and others began meeting at the Queen of Angels church to discuss a response. With all local sources of food closed or burned out, they began delivering food to people in their homes. The group that met eventually formed the core of NCC Board and established a housing committee to create a response to the poor housing conditions in the Central Ward.

The committee visited low income housing sites around the country and concluded that high rise buildings were unsuitable for poor families. They recruited architect Oscar Newman (of "defensible space" fame) to help plan their first housing project, NCC Homes. It is a low rise structure in which each apartment has its own out-

*New Community Gardens*

NCC

side entrance. All units face the internal courtyard, to facilitate parents watching their children at play.

Babyland began as a response to the difficulties black women had in finding stable employment. Mary Smith, a resident of Newark public housing, organized Babyland I to care for 25 infants in the Scudder Housing project. For years it operated on church fund raisers, until federal and state funding became available. Father Linder speaks of the connection between NCC and Babyland as a mutually supportive network.

Today, as NCC seeks to expand its scope of operations, the College of Medicine and Dentistry remains its prime competitor for land in the Central Ward.

Description of Selected Projects

NCC is too large and diversified to present all or even most of its projects in detail. What follows is a description of two projects:

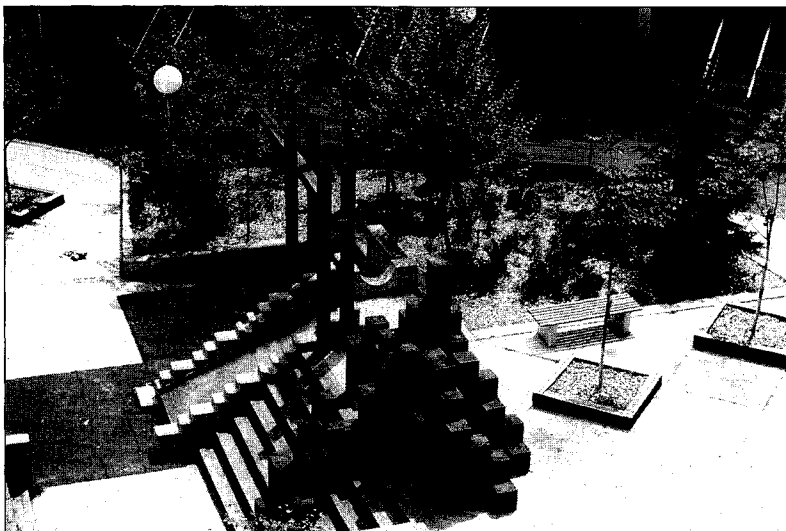
*NCC Commons*

NCC

Harmony House

Harmony House was developed as a response to the lack of transitional housing for homeless families. Most such families are placed in one of several motels in downtown Newark where living space is tight, cooking facilities and other amenities are non-existent, and security is poor.

The new facility was planned with a design team which included staff from local agencies and potential residents. The goal was to build safe housing which was adequate for a brief transitional period of around 8 months. Most units are small 1 bedroom apartments with a living/dining room, small kitchen and bathroom. This can be tight quarters for a family of four, even if spacious by comparison to a motel room. Walls are painted concrete block, floors are vinyl tile. NCC staff said that the space was intentionally kept small and sparse to spur motivation for finding permanent housing outside the facility. All units are entered from a covered (but not enclosed) outside walkway so that windows and doors face the interior courtyard and play area.



NCC

New Community Homes: courtyard

A most important aspect of the facility is the social service program. The minimal screening process focuses on obtaining resident commitment to the building's rules (for example, no visitors are allowed in the apartments) and program (school for all children; education, counseling and/or job training for parents). The average stay is eight months.

We met one woman who had left because the strict rules made the facility "feel like a prison." Several others said that many adults in Harmony House only "pay lip service" to the program. Still, a significant number seem to benefit from the facility and its programs, including the children. An important part of the philosophy of Harmony House is to use the program to "get to the kids". While it may difficult or impossible to turn around the lives of many adults, a program may make a major difference in the life of a child. Staff pay careful attention to school attendance, and report only a 1% truancy rate. After school and summer enrichment programs are also offered.

Parents are offered GED programs, job training, parenting courses, and other counseling aimed at helping them to develop and main-

tain independent living. We met several women who had been trained at Harmony House and placed in jobs through NCC Employment Center. One resident we met was trained as a home health care worker and placed at the Extended Care Facility, which is next door to Harmony House. Harmony House claims to have better than an 80% success rate in placing residents in viable housing.

The program includes follow-up with residents after they have left the facility to see how they are doing and to offer further aid if needed. In 1993, Harmony House won the National Alliance to End Homelessness' award for homeless programs.

Community Shopping Center/Pathmark Supermarket

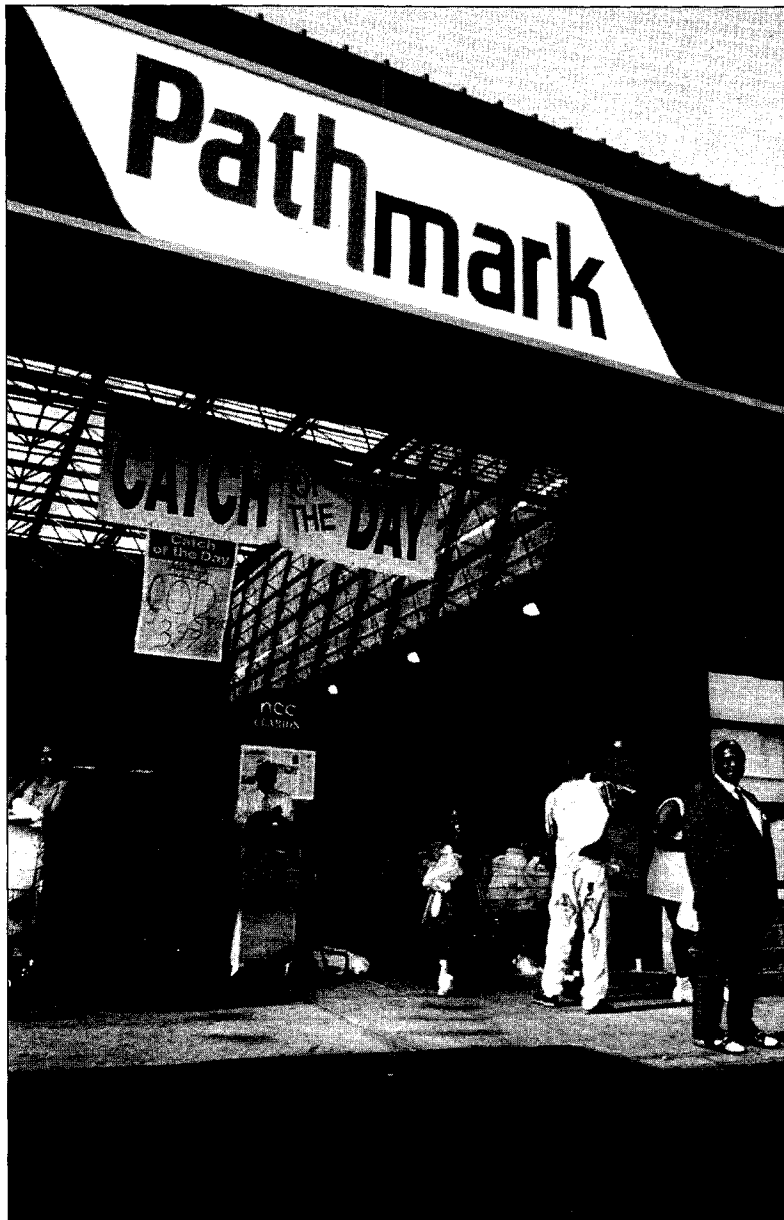
The Central Ward of Newark, like many other inner city areas, had been without a major supermarket for years. Residents were forced to travel long distances for food shopping (which for many poor women meant riding on one or two buses), or to shop at neighborhood bodegas or convenience stores with less selection and higher prices (as much as 30% more)

In the early 1980s, NCC began to assemble parcels of land with an eye toward developing a shopping center with a supermarket. They conducted a survey of the community and determined that most favored two local chains, Pathmark and Shoprite. At the same time they became aware of a Pathmark store in another inner city area (the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York) which was owned in partnership with a community organization. NCC eventually negotiated an agreement with Pathmark in which NCC is owner and developer of the shopping center and two-thirds owner of the supermarket.

The agreement required that prices in the NCC store be set at levels no higher than in similar suburban markets. Pathmark originally planned to have a minimal fresh produce section and only sell frozen fish. Community input led to expanding both these sections. Today there is an extensive and impressive produce area and large, well designed fresh fish department, both of which are profitable.

The shopping centers contains other businesses owned by NCC: Dunkin Donuts, Mail Boxes Etc., Print and Copy Store, and the World of Foods food court. All these businesses provide jobs and





NCC

job training for local residents, through the NCC Employment Center. World of Foods is working on developing a training in culinary arts.

NCC uses these stores to support other programs wherever possible. The Pathmark Pharmacy, for example, is used for health screening programs. The supermarket offers weekly specials supporting nutrition classes. In addition, vans are provided to deliver food and provide door-to-door rides for customers.

Sales have far exceeded expectations. The shopping center is making money for all partners. NCC uses its profits to support money losing for-profit and non-profit enterprises, and to finance new ventures. The Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) has cited the Community Shopping Center as a model for returning supermarkets to other inner city areas.

NCC Organization and Leadership

It is tempting, but misleading, to begin and end the story of NCC with Msgr. Linder. His ability, however, should not be understated. Over two and a half decades he has shown courage, creativity, persistence, and political and organizational understanding. "I don't know about the other MacArthur winners, but Father Linder is truly a genius," said New Community Foundation Board President Jack Mullen. People regularly speak of him as providing creative approaches to problems and, more importantly, a moral compass for the organization.

Some of that genius is obvious in the early strategies and decisions taken when NCC was just beginning. Msgr. Linder asked each member of the board to commit to a twenty year membership — to provide a long term perspective and continuity — and none dropped out. He also made an early effort to expand support for NCC beyond the inner city. Extensive networks were created with people and organizations in white, middle class suburbs. These provided money, political support, and expertise.

He is, associates say, impatient with "no" when "yes" is possible, and a master at making it easy for someone to say "yes". He won't hesitate to wear his priest's collar and full clerical garb if that helps to impress a potential donor. He has been known to have a troop of children from a day care center "accidentally" walk in on an impor-

*Babyland 3*

tant conference and position themselves in the laps of various businessmen or politicians.

Msgr. Linder also lends a critical element of credibility to NCC operations. Newark is no stranger to political power plays and kickbacks. In other hands many might look at these ventures in which considerable sums of money are exchanged and wonder who is getting rich. With NCC, that does not seem to be an issue in anyone's mind.

It is clear, however, that NCC is much more than any one person. First, there are many dedicated and creative people within the organization, such as Mary Smith who created and manages the largest day care operation in New Jersey. It is also an organization with considerable grassroots support and involvement in all of its endeavors.

NCC has grown so large and complex that it is hard to adequately describe it as a CDC. In some respects it is like a corporate conglomerate, a loose organization of six sub-corporations. In other ways it is a shadow city, filling voids left by Newark's legal government in housing, health care, education, job production and train-

ing, transportation, child care, and even mail service. As Msgr. Linder himself has said, "in the Central Ward, we are it." Peter Goldberg, president of the Prudential Foundation says "I've seen more non-profit CDCs than most. There is no question that on many scores it is clearly the best in the country — in terms of its impact on a large area, and in developing a broad base of support."

NCC is experiencing considerable organizational change as it enters its 25th year. The newly constituted New Community Foundation board of trustees, largely drawn from major New Jersey corporations (such as Johnson & Johnson, AT&T, Prudential), has played a major role in this restructuring. The new NCC organization consists of six inter-linked groups: Finance and Commercial Development; Education; Public Relations; Health Services; Training; and Housing. Each group has an NCC head and a trustee from a related industry serving as an advisor and consultant. These groups are beginning to go through a more formal strategic planning process to identify needs and plans over the next five years (see Current Projects and Future Plans, below).

Design

The design process in all of NCC's many projects is reported to involve user participation. NCC designs seem appropriate and supportive of their functions, although the esthetic quality of the designs vary considerably.

The early housing projects, planned with the assistance of Oscar Newman, made good use of defensible space concepts, and appear to be quite successful in providing safe and comfortable housing. However, it seems that security became the overriding concern, at the expense of esthetics. The early projects are utilitarian in appearance with little effort expended to make them more attractive. NCC maintains that constraints of cost as well as code and agency restrictions have led to this result. They suggest that the "state did not want attractive design for low income housing." However, there are other examples in the immediate area of projects built at the same time and under the same constraints that have succeeded in achieving a more pleasant appearance.

More recent projects also vary in their treatment of visual quality. Harmony House is plain on the street facade but even stark on the

interior courtyard and inside the apartments. The brick Extended Care Facility next door had more attention paid to its design and is more attractive.

On some of the projects, NCC has realized the potential for design image to support the facility's mission. Some of the Babylands are bright, colorful, cheerful, dynamic spaces — highly appropriate to the children's activities they contain. The food court at the World of Foods is a tall, sky-lit space with indoor trees and rather crisp, high tech detailing — making a pleasant and inviting place to eat lunch.

St. Joseph Plaza is a well conceived and executed adaptive reuse of an abandoned church. The exterior has been restored and retained in close to original condition, while the interior has effectively made use of the tall, arched spaces to create attractive and pleasant dining areas, and comfortable office space. Stained glass windows have been retained throughout.

Financing

NCC has developed over \$200 million worth of properties. It has many diversified sources of income, with an annual operating budget in 1991 of about \$100 million. Any "profit" or surplus is invested in projects that require capital or used for scholarships and other contributions. NCC has tried over the years to avoid funding which came with unwanted strings or restrictions. For that reason, very early on they requested that a \$50,000 grant from a large corporation be changed to a loan. The corporation, impressed, agreed and increased the loan to \$200,000. Two examples of project financing are described here.

Harmony House was financed as follows:

- \$3 million mortgage from Mutual Benefit Insurance
- \$1 million grant from the N.J. Dept. of Community Affairs
- \$200,000 grant from the Leonard Stern Foundation
- \$300,000 working capital from NCC

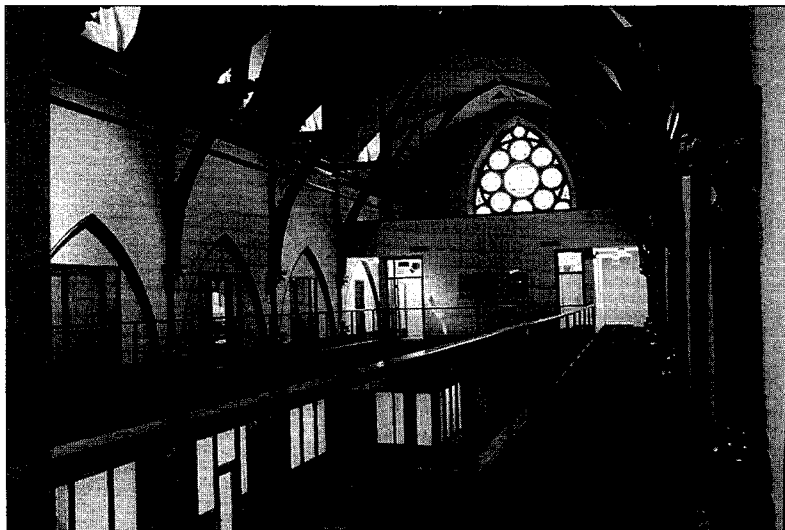
Harmony House receives payments for each resident family of \$76 per day from federal Emergency Assistance funds. These payments (which are less than the fees paid to welfare hotels) are sufficient to cover the mortgage and support Babyland V and other programs.



Extended Care Facility

The Community Shopping Center was financed as follows:

- \$2.8 million equity investment from NCC of funds derived from syndication of tax credits from low income housing projects.
- \$1.53 million Urban Development Action Grant
- \$300,000 Community Development Block Grant
- \$50,000 Neighborhood Development Demonstration Grant
- \$717,000 equipment loan from the Economic Development Authority (for satellite stores)
- \$8.58 million construction loan from First Fidelity Bank
- \$1.38 million mortgage (at 4% for 25 years) from N.J. Local Development Finance fund
- \$7.2 million mortgage from Prudential Insurance



A church converted into offices, a restaurant and health club

NCC contributed land, managerial resources, and equity. Since the center is part of an Urban Enterprise Zone, NCC also receives a \$1,500 tax credit for each worker it employs who has been out of work for at least 3 months.

The shopping center has proved to be very profitable; only the World of Foods is currently losing money. Net profits for the supermarket in 1992 were \$1.2 million, of which two-thirds went to NCC.

Current Projects and Future Plans

NCC sees economic development as the critical area for its future. It has organized a broad economic development plan aimed at linking its other activities to project development the generation of job. The plan has eight components or tracks.

- Track 1: Career Development for NCC Staff. NCC is the ninth largest non-government employer in Newark and this track is aimed at increasing the skills and employment opportunities for its employees. To support this goal, NCC

plans to build a leadership training institute on a rural retreat site.

- Track 2: Vocational Skills Training. To provide "comprehensive employment and training tailored to employment opportunities in the community." Construction will begin soon on Bergen Street Vocation Skills Center with 20,000 square feet of classroom space and a day care center. Programs to be used have been developed by the Center for Employment Training in San Jose, California.
- Track 3: Advanced Technology Training. NCC will work with local corporations and universities to develop training programs in areas including precision machinery, manufacturing technology, industrial equipment maintenance, and telecommunications and electronics maintenance.
- Track 4: Small Business Development in the Community. NCC plans to create its own small business development office to advise local residents through the various steps in creating and operating their own businesses.
- Track 5: Small Business Development in the NCC Network. To improve and expand the operations of current NCC businesses and create new ventures. Current ideas include an auto repair shop, an apparel design and production firm, a housing materials manufacturing company, and a data input business. NCC is working with the New Jersey Institute of Technology to create an environmental clean-up company to restore abandoned, hazardous sites.
- Track 6: Housing Development. NCC intends to continue building low-income housing, but also to expand into moderate-income rental and owner-occupied housing. It will reactivate its Chelsea Construction Company as a rehabilitation construction firm.
- Track 7: Development of New Financial Institutions. NCC plans a drive to increase deposits in the NCC Federal Credit Union and make use of it according to the Chicago South Shore Bank model to provide community development loans.

- **Track 8: New Construction.** NCC plans to rehabilitation or build a number of projects. Current plans include: St. Joseph's Annex (for NCC offices); a garage for its 90 vehicle fleet; a facility to house home health care and related training projects; the Orange Street Education Center (a facility for adult and child education programs and a Babyland day care center); the Hayes Street Recreation Center (24 hour youth recreation center and green space); New Community estates (56-unit low income rental); and Hayes Homes (rehabilitation of two buildings for 206 units of low-income, owned housing — this project was funded by HUD after the Bruner Award visit).

There are also plans for an internal TV network for communications and training; a system of vans to transport workers to suburban locations, an urban park created jointly with the Trust for Public Lands; and Children Together — housing to help keep siblings together who are orphaned or who have been removed from their homes (also recently funded). NCC is working with a manufacturer of modular homes to build several models, which will be offered at subsidized rents to foster families willing to take in the siblings.

Impact

NCC has positively affected the city and people of Newark, especially its Central Ward. Indeed, it is easy to imagine that, but for NCC, the Central Ward today might be a university and little else.

The various projects developed and supported by NCC have filled a gap in a part of the city where government was ineffective or even dysfunctional. For example, NCC's security staff has helped make all of these projects tenable in a city overwhelmed with crime. People feel that they can live, work and shop within NCC projects in relative safety.

NCC seeks to fight more than a holding action, however. The various programs, offered through many channels, are aimed at decreasing dependency and giving people the resources and tools to improve their lives. In that sense, there are many individual success stories coming from Harmony House, the Employment Center, Babyland and other projects. We met many people who said that they were able to go to school, get jobs, and reorganize their lives because of NCC programs. One mother we met in Babyland III said

"I wouldn't be where I am today — working toward a master's degree— without this place." Some people we met at random didn't know the name NCC per se, but all knew about and appreciated its projects. NCC's efforts seem almost always to be timely, well conceived, efficient, and of high quality.

There are also indications of "ripple effects" in nearby areas. A major developer has recently built several large subdivisions of attractive market rate townhouses on the edge of NCC's operating area. It is likely that this development never would have occurred without NCC to shore up the Central Ward and serve as a buffer between the new development and the masses of high-rise public housing projects on the other side. Similarly, a new multiplex theater has just opened in nearby.

Mayor Sharpe James, not always a political ally to Msgr. Linder, suggested that NCC has been a good model for CDCs in other communities. "They come to me and complain that NCC gets the funding," he said, "and I tell them to go out and compete for it." He sees NCC as a significant model which spurs development throughout the city. He also notes that the city just can't move as fast as NCC can. "They have learned to use local and state government, and are knowledgeable about finance; they are dogged in determination, and they are credible."

THEMES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The "Moral Compass" — a Focus on Needs and Goals

Though most staff are from secular backgrounds, people in NCC like to say that its success is strongly bound up in its religious roots. The religious orientation provides them with a sense of purpose and strength which is sustaining in the face of adversity. Theirs is a form of "liberation theology", pushing them to challenge existing "anti-black, anti-poor, anti-urban" power structures where necessary (including in the church) in order to obtain change and empowerment. They also cite the Catholic tradition of staying in and supporting a community, even when founding populations have moved out.

A Comprehensive Approach

NCC is comprehensive in the scope of its projects and in its approach to each one of them. In each case, they take maximum advantage of opportunities provided by the situation and existing NCC skills and services. Thus, Harmony House is not just housing but a complete social service program. It has a day care center to allow parents to work or study and to enrich children's experiences. It makes use of NCC employment operations to train and place residents, and makes job placements in other NCC operations. Even the supermarket is not just a food store, but an opportunity for health screening and nutritional education.

Opportunism and Responsiveness to Community Needs

NCC is characterized by being "light on its feet". It is proud of its ability to seize an opportunity or see a need and respond quickly with important services. For example:

- When a local convent became available and the state sought proposals for a family violence prevention center, NCC was able to respond and have the center open and operating in three weeks.
- When NCC heard that a local community health center was going out of business on a Friday it made an almost instant decision to take it over and, by Monday, were operating the business, continuing services and assuring pay checks for the more than 100 employees.
- Local residents complained that post boxes were not available at the closest post office. NCC responded by adding Mail Boxes Etc. to the shopping center.

When we asked if they were concerned about taking risks of such ventures, Msgr. Linder responded that their board was more likely to be angry if they chose not to take a risk when there was a need to fill.

Persistence, Patience and Toughness

While they move quickly and can be frustrated by city government, NCC takes a longer view. For example, it took 10 years and considerable effort to assemble the land necessary for the shopping center. And when asked how they would handle a troubled enterprise,

Msgr. Linder simply said "We wouldn't let it fail" but would apply whatever expertise and resources it took to make it work. Their track record lends credibility to this statement.

Financial and Political Resourcefulness

NCC has displayed considerable financial resourcefulness in leveraging their assets to support programs and project development. They are effective not only at getting grants, but also at syndicating tax credits from their developments and using the income from profit making enterprises to fund new projects. They also have a great deal of political acumen, assiduously avoiding becoming too closely associated with any one politician. They have no qualms about going around or above a local agency if they have to in order to get results. They have friends at the local, state and national levels — both New Jersey senators count themselves as NCC fans and regularly cite them in the Congressional Record — including the White House. When speaking about a current conflict with city hall, Msgr. Linder said in an aside, "We may have to use a little muscle." When needed, their muscle appears often to be strong enough to get the job done.

Community Participation

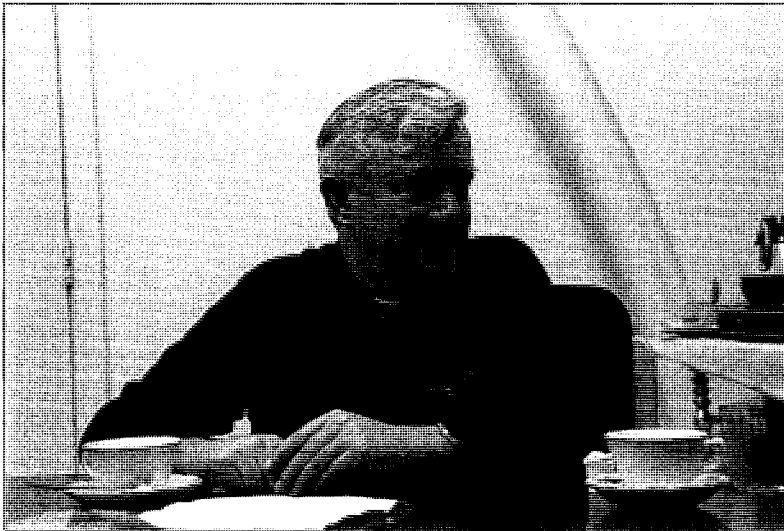
The ethic of empowerment, independence and competence is important at NCC. An integral part of their operating style is to include community members and potential service users in their planning process.

Quality

An important part of NCC's guiding philosophy is the belief that poor people deserve quality services. This approach guided choices in the development of the shopping center and supermarket.

Creative Conflict

Msgr. Linder notes that "conflict is not a bad word" at NCC. He cites Frederick Douglass in saying that those who seek change without conflict are like people "who want crops without plowing up the ground." He is struggling against the sense of hopelessness and resignation among the poor, and suggests that non-violent conflict may be necessary to get to the point where negotiation and real movement toward change is possible.



SIMEON BRUNER

Organizational Continuity and Long Term View

NCC began by asking its board members to make a twenty year commitment to the organization. This demonstrates their early understanding of the need to take a long-term perspective on the solution to urban decay and the level of effort required to address these problems.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

To respond to the urban decay and destruction of the Newark riots.

While this is too big a job for any organization to do alone, in NCC has responded effectively to the destruction, creating a zone of hope and progress in an area of neglect.

To improve the quality of life of the people in Newark; to reflect individual dignity and personal achievement.

NCC offers programs that help "shore up lives" and provides opportunities for people to make substantive changes in their circumstances.

To be responsive to community needs.

NCC is extraordinarily responsive to community needs. Through their network of services and participatory tenant and community boards, they are closely in touch with people's needs. They will respond very quickly when opportunities arise to fill a need, sometimes taking risks in order to proceed immediately.

To provide a complete range of human services.

As outlined above, NCC goes well beyond the typical community development corporation in delivering comprehensive social and human services, from child care centers to a nursing home.

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

Does the project depend on its founder (Msgr. Linder)? Is there a process for succession?

It depends on Linder for creative energy and moral leadership, but it has many competent people with significant responsibilities. The new Foundation Board has initiated a reorganization of NCC designed to build a stronger and more resilient institution.

Is this a bureaucratic or community-based organization?

Any institution of this size tends to be somewhat bureaucratic, but NCC seems to be successful in listening to the community and remaining responsive to its needs. The new organizational plan breaks NCC into 6 sub-units, and is designed to keep it from getting too large and bureaucratic. At this point, the community appears to be involved in most important decisions.

How is it perceived by the various communities in Newark?

Within the Central Ward it is too major a force to go unseen by anyone and is viewed almost universally in a positive light. At all political levels in New Jersey, NCC is viewed as a positive and important entity, though it sometimes competes or conflicts with city government and the neighboring university.

What is their design process? Is it participatory? Why aren't buildings more interesting architecturally?

The design process is participatory. In all the projects we heard about the designers worked at least to some extent with groups including current or potential users.

Some recent projects are attractive (e.g., St Joseph's Plaza and the World of Foods) while others are plain or even stark. Though NCC blames project constraints for the plain appearance of some projects, they could probably have achieved more within those constraints.

Is there a focus on adaptive reuse? Why have the uses of historic buildings been changed?

Preservation is not a driving force in their mission, but is an issue of opportunity in several projects. St. Joseph's Church had been abandoned and was in danger of demolition as was the Douglas Hotel (which became Douglas Homes). For these projects, additional money was spent on preservation and restoration.

What are future plans?

Future plans, detailed above, show that NCC has laid a solid base for its direction in the next few years. Economic development, to create job opportunities for local residents, is a prime force. There is also a focus on special needs housing (SROs, AIDS) and a variety of projects aimed at helping the next generation of Newark youth escape poverty. They also intend to remain responsive to unanticipated opportunities, making it difficult to predict all the areas they will move into.

What is their relationship with local government?

NCC works cooperatively with local government when that serves its perceived interests, but does not hesitate to engage in conflict and go to other sources and levels of government when necessary. While some in Newark seem angry that NCC does not always "play ball" and criticizes others in public, all seem to respect NCC for its goals and achievements.

How do for-profit businesses affect other NCC operations? Are local people employed by these businesses?

The for-profit businesses serve several roles for NCC: they allow NCC to provide important services for local residents (food shopping, restaurants, postal services, etc.); they provide job training and employment opportunities which are mostly taken up by local people; and they raise funds which are used to support other projects.

How is security handled? Is there a proactive response to crime?

NCC has its own 120 person security force, which works closely with the Newark police. The force patrols all NCC projects, including the shopping center and housing projects. NCC also works with the police to identify and bust drug traffickers, has an anti-gang program, and is planning a 24 hour youth center to give kids who might be on the street a place to hang out.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee saw New Community Corporation as a mature and proven community developer — highly innovative in its approach and providing much more than just housing. It was crucial to them that NCC projects respond to the full range of community needs, such as job training, health services, child care, and retail shopping. NCC has clearly made the Central Ward of Newark a better place to live. "It is exactly what we want other CDCs to aspire to; New Community Corporation is not building housing, it is building a community" — and it is doing so through self-reliance and without overwhelming government support. The committee knew of no other organization that goes as far as NCC in simultaneously advancing all elements of community development.

The Selection Committee was also impressed with NCC's political and organizational savvy. From the start NCC took a long term view of community building, extracting twenty year commitments from board members. The committee was extremely impressed that NCC has evolved over this period, transforming itself to meet changing community needs — and that a current focus is on community "wealth building" through jobs and the creation of locally owned small businesses.

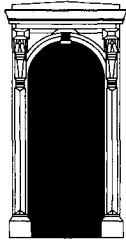
While the Selection Committee found NCC's commitment to excellence in community service praiseworthy, it was troubled that this level of excellence did not extend more consistently to project design. Concern was voiced about the "pedestrian" nature of much of NCC's architecture, particularly the low income housing projects, where missed opportunities included lack of covered entries and other aesthetic and functional concerns. It recognized that these projects were constrained by budget and government regulations, but noted that others had overcome such limitations. The Selection Committee felt strongly that excellence in community development needs to include the aesthetic dimension, and expressed the hope that NCC would focus greater energy in this direction.

For More Information...

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New Community Corporation
233 W. Market Street
Newark, NJ 07103
(201) 623-6506

Reference

Much of the history of NCC is taken from the masters thesis of Carl Koechlin, "Integrating Compassion and Pragmatism in a Successful Community Development Strategy: A Case Study of the New Community Corp., Newark, NJ", University of Massachusetts, 1989.



BETTS-LONGWORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT Cincinnati, Ohio

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Initial Reasons For Including Betts-Longworth as a Finalist

- Preservation of a considerable number of historic buildings.
- Restoration of a unique neighborhood, enriching the whole city.
- Showed persistence in the face of repeated failures.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

- What was the process used to create Betts-Longworth?
- Were there prior plans that failed?
- Was it solving problems created earlier by the same agencies?
- What is the cultural/ethnic/income mix, among tenants and developer/contractors?
- Did gentrification occur? Are the residents who had been driven out being served by the renovations?
- Was there a "land rush" atmosphere? Did this cause costs and rents to escalate?
- How was the project financed? Did it use the investment tax credit?
- Have the restored properties made money? If so, for whom?

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

- Betts-Longworth is a preservation-based redevelopment plan for a downtown "mini-neighborhood" containing some of the oldest homes in Cincinnati.
- The Betts-Longworth plan:

Encouraged small scale private development and participation of minority developers and contractors.

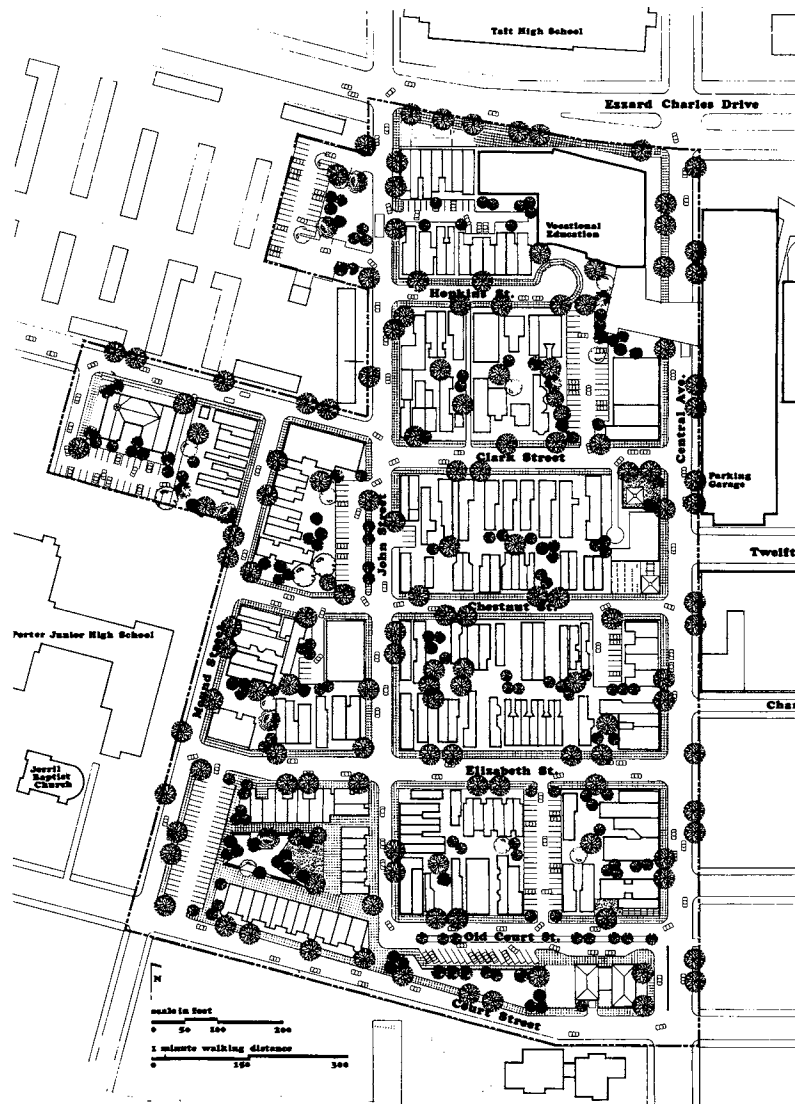
Developed a marketing and public relations strategy which increased demand by presenting the area as a scarce resource.

Reduced risk by creating a five-bank consortium for loans, contributing city infrastructure improvements, and providing subsidies to developers.

- The plan has resulted in the substantial revival of this small neighborhood, including rehabilitation of 200 apartments and homes and building 60 units of new townhouses.

Who Made Submission

- The City of Cincinnati, Department of Neighborhood Housing and Conservation.



1984 Design Plan

Major Goals

- Historic preservation of important buildings.
- Slum and blight removal.
- Revitalization of the Betts-Longworth neighborhood.
- Provide affordable housing with economic and social integration.
- Encourage minority involvement in development and construction.

Accomplishments

- Betts-Longworth is now a viable middle to lower-middle income neighborhood.
- By the end of 1993 they will have created:
 - 240 rehabilitated apartment units.
 - 77 single family homes (mostly new construction).
 - 20,000 square feet of rehabilitated office space.
 - 4,000 square feet of rehabilitated retail space.
 - 370 parking spaces.
 - a park (next to the middle school, co-designed, constructed, and maintained by kids).
- The neighborhood is becoming more economically and racially diverse.
- New restoration and rehabilitation is continuing, even though the city has withdrawn substantial parts of the subsidies. Betts-Longworth has become a “hot address”.
- The city considers the Betts-Longworth plan a success and is using it as a model in another neighborhood.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

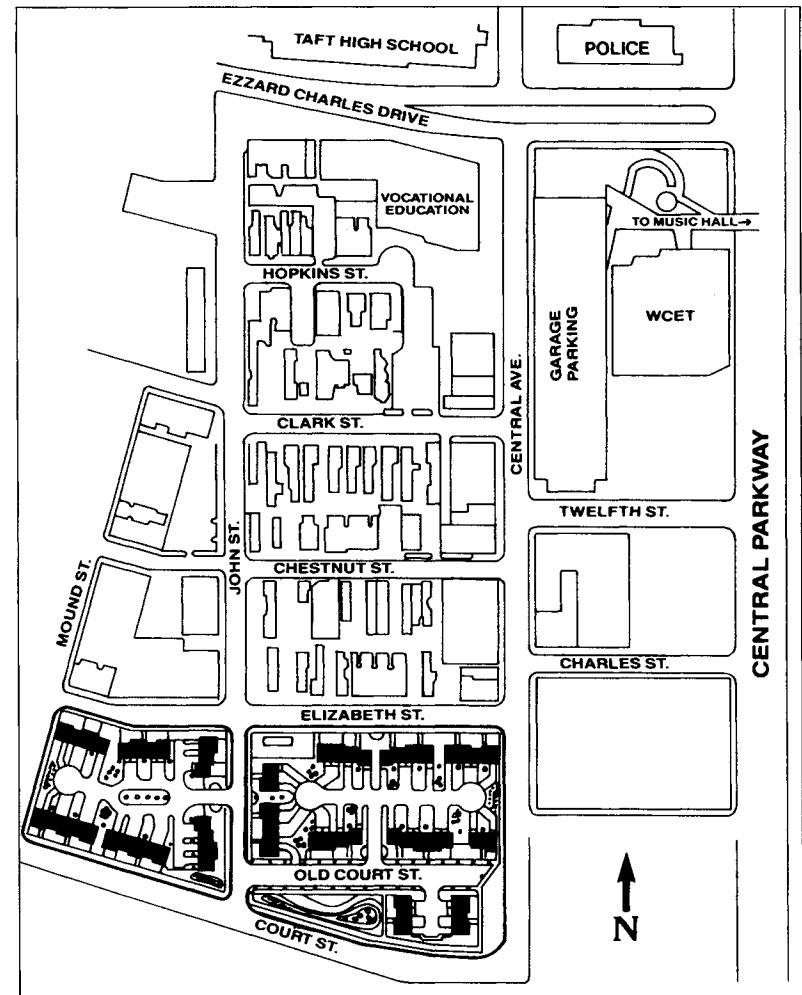
- Betts-Longworth has created a viable neighborhood of affordable housing close to downtown.

- There has been an increase in economic and racial integration of the area.
- A significant number of historic buildings has been saved from destruction and restored to active use.
- Betts-Longworth demonstrated a successful model in which the city supported development in order to “jump start” growth in an area, and then was able to step back in favor of somewhat greater reliance on the market.
- There was an ad hoc quality, both to planning and to the community involvement process. The project was able to proceed because of a truce in the adversarial relations with surrounding community organizations. There was significant involvement of community members in planning and implementation because of the personal commitment and relationships between city planners and area “pioneers”.
- There was no formal “community building” aspect of the plan with respect to the development or enhancement of local community groups. It is not clear whether the local organizations are stronger than the involvement of one or two committed members.
- While Betts-Longworth is not finished (there are still significant gaps in the physical fabric — empty lots and severely deteriorated buildings) all the remaining buildings and lots are either under contract or under negotiation for rehabilitation or development.

PROCESS

Chronology

- 1950s. Construction of I-75 cuts through the West End, demolishing many buildings and splitting the neighborhood.
- 1960s and 1970s. City acquires land in the West End and demolishes more buildings in the name of urban renewal.
- 1970. The Town Center Plan leads to more demolition and construction of several high rise, low income housing towers, a



Longworth Square in context of the neighborhood

large garage, and public radio/TV building all on the edges of Betts-Longworth.

- Early 1980s. A city plan is developed to attract former residents to restore buildings, largely unsuccessfully. City contributes infrastructure improvements to area.



Longworth Square (from promotional brochure)

- 1985. City proposes single developer plan for Betts-Longworth but needed UDAG funds are rejected in Washington. More deteriorating historic buildings are demolished.
- 1987. Policy review initiated, considering options including demolition of the entire district.
- 1989. "Land Rush/Wagon Train" plan initiated.
- 1991-1992. Construction begins on Longworth Square Phase I. By January 1992, all 60 units are sold.
- 1993. Phase I of Longworth Square is complete. Phase II expected to be complete by the end of the year. Contracts are negotiated or let for all historic buildings to be renovated and empty lots to be built out.

Key Participants

(people we interviewed are indicated with an asterisk *)

- City of Cincinnati, Department of Neighborhood Housing and Conservation. Wayne Chapman*, Director; Mark Jones*, project coordinator. Developed the Betts-Longworth plan and coordinated all city activities in the area.
- Community Development Properties-Betts-Longworth. Non-profit developer of Longworth Square; a division of the National Development Council. Kathy Gibbons*, Assistant Director.
- City of Cincinnati, City Planning Department, Office of Historic Conservation. Chris Cain*, Urban Conservator.
- Mark Gunther*, Wichman-Gunther Architects. City-hired design consultant whose services were made available to small scale developers of historic properties.
- Betts-Longworth Loan Consortium (group of 5 banks who pooled resources to share risks for the "wagon train" effort). Bob Alexander*, Provident Bank; Mike Rizer*, PNC Bank.
- Betts-Longworth Historic Group. Several "pioneer" members include Louie Smith*, president (early resident and organizer; worked closely with the city to develop and implement the plan); Dorothy Lewis* and Howard Bond* (developers of the Ezzard Charles Row Houses); Marva Wilson*.
- The Drees Company (builders). Greg Judge*, site superintendent for Longworth Square.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Historical Context

The West End of Cincinnati was one of the earliest parts of the city to be settled. It was always an economically mixed community, with elaborate homes of the captains of industry juxtaposed with workers' houses. Its primary positive feature has always been location and the virtue of living within walking distance of work. Once the West End was a very dense area because of the influx of immi-

grants; in the 1870s it had over 30,000 residents. Now only about 8,000 people live there.

The West End is also the home of some of the earliest public housing in America. Laurel Homes, built in the 1930s, borders on Betts-Longworth. While this large low-rise development is viewed locally as a "project", it seems well managed in comparison to some public housing projects.

"The Victim of Good Intentions"

The West End neighborhood (of which Betts-Longworth is a part) suffered greatly from many of the urban planning initiatives of the past three decades. Councilperson Bobbi Stern says "the area was the victim of the good intentions of every housing program and every poverty program ever conceived." While it is questionable whether the intentions of these programs were all good, here is a brief history:

- In the 1950s, Interstate Highway 75 was cut through this area, demolishing buildings and fracturing the community.
- In the 1960s and '70s, the city began acquiring land in the area and demolishing older buildings as part of an ambitious urban renewal plan. This was classical "urban removal" as land was cleared for the development of light industry.
- In 1970, the Town Center Plan called for the demolition of many historic buildings. New construction included high-rise subsidized low income housing towers and a large garage with an overpass connecting it to a new building for the public TV and radio station. Parts were built, but the plan died when funding dried up and the neighbors began to express concern for the loss of historic buildings — and the community they housed.
- In the early 1980s, the city tried to attract former residents back to the district. It offered buyers a financial package made up of FNMA bank loans, savings and loan and city loans, with preference given to buyers who had previously lived in the area. The city made infrastructure improvements including gas and electric hook-ups, parking, sidewalks, and lighting.

The program failed in its execution, according to city planning staff. Too many buyers lacked sufficient real estate and rehabilitation

experience, and city support was insufficient to help them through the process. FNMA backed out and several city officials connected to the program were involved in local scandals. Those pioneers who invested time and money in homes felt they were left "high and dry". In a gesture of good faith, the city compensated some who had lost their investments.

While the plan resulted in the development of some HUD Section 8 subsidized housing and some infrastructure improvements, overall the residents were left with a sense of frustration. At one point vandalism became so bad a that cyclone fence was built around the entire district to restrict looting of building materials.

In 1985 the city tried again, this time with a single developer and a massive public funding plan. By now Betts-Longworth was listed locally and nationally as a historic district. The city applied for \$21 million in federal UDAG funds, but after considerable time and much lobbying, the funds were denied and the plan died. Skepticism and anger grew and still more buildings deteriorated and were demolished. The area contained 120 buildings in 1970, but only 88 in 1987.

By 1987 Betts-Longworth was on the verge of complete demolition. "The area came fairly close to being obliterated," says former city manager Scott Johnson. The city, which owned virtually the whole area (90% of the land and buildings), conducted an analysis of a plan to walk-away from the area and level homes for light industrial use. Officials say that they very well might have invoked the plan except for the effort, prodding and commitment of local residents who claimed that the city had a commitment to try again.

The Last Chance

Pushed by the "pioneer" residents, the city decided to try one last time to create movement toward renovation of the area. By this time, many buildings were in an extreme state of deterioration, making rehabilitation more expensive and keeping the possibility of demolition alive as a serious option.

Planning officials reviewed past mistakes and found that problems arose because many owner/developers in previous plans had been chosen more for historic connection to the community than for their ability to complete the job. The city determined that it needed to



Betts House

SIMEON BRUNER

provide more support in the form of technical assistance concerning financing, design, construction, and code compliance. It also had to assure that construction financing would be available as needed.

The city concluded that it was crucial to directly attack the problems of creating a demand for land and reducing the risk of investing in what have become a stigmatized community. The plan addressed these issues by:

- Assuring potential developers of the safety of their investment by starting an entire group of projects at the same time. This was the "Wagon Train" strategy, aimed at helping developers feel that they were not working in isolation, and that others would be there "out on the prairie" with them.
- For qualified buyers, buildings were to be made available essentially free (for \$1) with a package of private loans, city grants and tax abatements. The offer was made available only during a one week period, encouraging people to sign up all at one time and, thus, create a critical mass. Frequent tours were made through the homes of "pioneers" in the neighborhood (such as Louie Smith, Dorothy Lewis, and the Wilsons) to show

what could be done through careful rehabilitation and remodeling.

- Providing city support for developers in dealing with regulations and technical problems. The city hired an architect (Mark Gunther) to consult with developers on design, construction and preservation issues. Officials from the Planning Department and the Historic Conservation Board were available to ease the process and help avoid delays. One developer said "I called (the urban conservator) and he came out the next day and had an answer for me that afternoon." The city created a smooth, predictable regulatory environment in which to work.
- Assuring financing by reducing the risk to any one bank. A loan consortium was arranged among five banks, providing a pool of funds totaling \$3.5 million. Risk to the banks was further reduced through an agreement that any bank could pull out of the pool if 90% of the sites were not sold to qualified developers by an agreed upon deadline.
- Making rehabilitation financially feasible through city subsidies of tax abatements, minimal charges for land and buildings, and providing grants to support construction costs.
- Convincing the public, especially renters, that the community was viable and stable enough to be worth moving into.
- Attempting to create a demand for these buildings through a public relations and marketing campaign called the "Land Rush". This was aimed at convincing potential investors that a valuable commodity - historic buildings close to downtown - would only be available for a short time. It was a "get 'em while they last" campaign focusing on the unique character of the district ("find your place in history"), its prime location, and the scarcity of these resources.

The Betts-Longworth Plan

Together, this approach is called the Wagon Train/Land Rush plan. The plan was created by a few people in the Department of Neighborhood Housing and Conservation, but under the prodding and with the support of neighborhood pioneers. Louie Smith told them "if you live up to your commitment, we will help you."

Other community groups in the neighboring West End were not directly involved in the Betts-Longworth planning. City planners felt the Betts-Longworth project could not succeed if it carried on its back the weight of compensation for past destruction. They were convinced that this extra burden was the downfall of several previous rehabilitation attempts. Local community leaders disagreed. "Betts-Longworth became the vehicle or occasion for expression of this disillusionment or frustration by West End leaders," said Mark Jones.

Past efforts had convinced city officials that these groups "had a serious lack of capacity" in their ability to bring off community development. The West End Development Company (WEDCO) had left several projects in default. "The city poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into WEDCO...and the organization failed in every project. Indeed, some of the properties ended up in the hands of community leaders for their personal gain," said Mark Jones. Rancor was strong. At one point there was a fist fight between a community activist and a council member over these issues.

Resolution came in 1987 with a deal in which the city committed redevelopment funds (over a million dollars with promises of more to come in the future) to other areas of the West End, plus the promise of aiding minority developers/owners/contractors in Betts-Longworth, in exchange for cooperation or at least acquiescence. "The bitterness and anger with the City did not go away, but this deal permitted Betts-Longworth and the West End to move forward" remarked Mark Jones.

A unique element of the Betts-Longworth plan was the degree to which it focused on the need to deal with psychological barriers to redevelopment in a stigmatized community. Rarely had conservative Cincinnati spent taxpayers' money on public relations and marketing. They felt, however, that there was an important and available resource here, in terms of housing stock and prime location, walking distance from downtown offices. The campaign tried (successfully) to attract owners by creating a sense that this was a scarce commodity, through the limited time offer of the Land Rush, and then to assure them through strength in numbers (the Wagon Train). Developer Bob Weatherbie said "I liked the Wagon Train concept...I knew the whole neighborhood would go. Without that I



Ezard Charles Row Houses

SIMEON BRUNER

wouldn't be here. I was convinced the city had its plan together and would put its money where its mouth was."

Similarly, they felt the need to be sure that the new development, Longworth Square, would be successful and attract residents of varying incomes and backgrounds. Sensitive to the stigma of the area, they tried to reduce the risk felt by buyers through several strategies. They brought in the Drees Company, the most respected housing builder in the area, to design and construct the townhomes. Drees felt this project was risky, and was only willing to build on contract. Their presence, however, succeeded in lending credibility to the project for buyers and lenders. It also created a presumption of high quality and (because of the low, subsidized prices) extraordinary value. Buyers at Longworth Square were offered a below cost purchase price as well as the option of leasing to purchase for lower income people who lacked the down payment.

The first phase of Longworth Square (38 townhomes) sold out before construction was complete, as has Phase 2 (22 more townhomes). Many fewer owners chose the lease option than ex-



Rehabed buildings (public housing at far right)

pected. While in retrospect the success suggests that the city subsidy did not need to be so high (units costing \$90,000 to build sold for \$65,000 to \$79,000), the risk at the start seemed significant.

Financing

Total expenses include city infrastructure construction and some private investment prior to inception of the Betts-Longworth plan. Since 1950, the following funds have been expended:

- City investment of \$20 million for infrastructure, demolition, subsidies and project administration.
- Private investment of \$10 million.

Directly related to the recent "Land Rush/Wagon Train" plan:

- \$1.5 million in City expenditures (Community Development Block Grants).
- \$3.5 million in loans from the Bank Consortium.

A typical rehab contained 10% or more equity from the developer, 30% city grant, and 60% mortgage. Most were rehabbed into rental units. Typical one bedroom apartments rent for \$400, 2 bedrooms for \$500 to \$650.

Units in this area fell within the city program which allowed 12 year tax abatements on rehabilitation and 15 year abatements on new construction. The city also sold land and buildings to developers for \$1.

For Longworth Square, the financing included:

- \$3.8 million city tax free bonds (at 7%) backed by the Ohio Housing Finance Administration and Provident Bank.
- \$1.2 million in city capital improvement funds.
- \$0.5 million in Community Development Block Grant funds for soft costs and to build three model homes.
- \$2.25 million in private mortgages (with \$2.25 million more expected on completion of Phase 2).

While the exact funding programs may not be replicable, the amount of city funding per unit was not massive. The key elements of this plan could probably be replicated in many localities.

Design

The Betts-Longworth area consists of mostly three story Italianate and Queen Anne style town houses, constructed in the late 19th century. Some of Cincinnati's oldest and most historic homes are in this neighborhood. Many have been successfully rehabilitated, although there are still large pockets of open land (where demolitions occurred) and deteriorated buildings where rehabilitation has not yet begun. Most of the latter are in an extreme state of disrepair.

411 Clark Street is typical. It is an Italianate style townhouse with broad, ornate cornices at the roof and on the projecting bay. The ashlar limestone facade is highlighted by fluted pilasters which flank the door and window openings and support shallow pediments at the third story windows.

The handsome rowhouses of Ezzard Charles Homes feature a brick facade above a raised limestone basement. Stone trim emphasizes

the round arched window and door openings, which are highlighted by embellished keystones, while continuous band courses unify the facades. Exceptional care was taken in restoring the facade, including removing, repairing and replacing the limestone steps and stoops.

Most of the rehabs are not museum quality, but they show a careful attention to detail and, in general, they are of good quality. They vary in the degree to which they changed structures - most were careful to keep the external façades the same as or at least consistent with the original. Some make radical changes in interior floor plan, others very little.

Longworth Square is a suburban scale townhouse development, with 60 units on a 5 acre site. The homes are three bays wide and two and one-half stories high. They use red-brown brick on the street facades, with light stone trim, raised stoops, cornices and a gable roof. All these elements are suggestive of and harmonious with the character of the historic neighborhood. To save money, the backs of the townhouses are finished in clapboard instead of brick. They look at a broad courtyard which mainly serves as vehicular access to garages and back doors.

Outcomes

Many buildings have been rehabilitated, most quite thoughtfully. At the time the Selection Committee considered the project, thirty-eight new townhouse units had been completed and twenty-two more were pre-sold and under construction (they have subsequently been completed). Other buildings had not been finished, but most vacant land or deteriorated buildings were either under contract or in negotiation for rehabilitation.

While the project required substantial city subsidies, the area is now considered so successful that grants have generally been removed and most new projects proceed with market rate loans from individual banks. Grants are still given where deterioration is so severe that rehabilitation would not otherwise be feasible.

Housing values are increasing and the area is becoming economically and racially mixed (where it had once been almost entirely African-American). There is no plan to avoid gentrification; to a degree, gentrification in the sense of adding middle income resi-



Open space where historic buildings were lost

dents was what the city wanted. This was essentially an empty neighborhood, surrounded by public housing and industry. The goal was to bring in people to live in the neighborhood who would be likely to work in the downtown area.

Improvements may occur in other areas of the West End, as part of the community agreement. Officials say that the renovation of the nearby Union Central Terminal as a home for several museums was helped along by the Betts-Longworth success.

Residents of Laurel Homes public housing to whom we spoke appreciate the changes Betts-Longworth has brought to the area. However, they do not view the new housing as a direct benefit to themselves since rents are too high for them to afford. They may or may not be aware that there is some subsidized public housing within historic buildings in Betts-Longworth.

Several developers were proud of the fact that work in the area was done, to a significant extent, by minority developers and contractors. One said that he took on the project in part to "prove that minority developers and contractors could do a quality job."



Preservation of historic facade with new building

CITY OF CINCINNATI

Mark Jones said "When I was given this job I thought my career was over. Betts-Longworth succeeded beyond my fondest dream." The Department of Neighborhood Housing and Conservation is now moving into another older, deteriorated neighborhood, Mt. Auburn, and is looking to adapt and replicate the Betts-Longworth model there.

Future Plans

The city is negotiating with developers for the renovation of major unfinished pieces of the area, including several large historic properties and empty parcels of land. The largest project is a Queen Anne building (known as the "turret" building). This structure is being renovated into 29 apartments and may be the last to get a city grant to help defray construction costs. In another project, seven narrow row houses are being rehabbed for sale as single family homes. The city is constructing an alley behind this project in a location where it will also provide access to other parcels.

THEMES AND LESSONS

Persistence

Persistence was critical on the part of the pioneers in Betts-Longworth in maintaining their homes and in pressuring the city for support in redevelopment. It was also apparent in the efforts of city planners who at one time were faced with walking away from Betts-Longworth as an easier and more politically saleable choice than continuing to try to rehabilitate it.

Learn From Past Mistakes

An important element in success was the recognition by city planners that mistakes on the part of the city had a major role in past failures. The Betts-Longworth plan resulted from an attempt to understand and remedy those errors.

Reduce the Risk

A major theme in Betts-Longworth was reducing the risk of investment to all parties involved in order to attract developers, renters and bankers. This was done by use of the Wagon Train, the Bank Consortium, the "90% sold or out" option for banks, and the lease-to-buy options.

User Friendly City Government

The commitment, accessibility and cooperation of city officials and agencies was essential to success. Agencies which are often perceived as roadblocks to development, here became part of the team to help developers arrange financing and meet codes (such as historic conservation) without excessive delays and escalating costs.

Focus on Market Psychology

Focusing on the market psychology of development lead to offering several low-cost options which aided the plan. Public relations helped change the perception of the area to one of desirability. The public relations campaign could only succeed, however, with the city commitment to action behind it.

Use of City Resources

The city used its resources to assure success, especially in the early stages. Grants of 30% of cost, along with other subsidies to historic rehabs, the conservative approach to Longworth Square as shown in the low subsidized prices and suburban scale density, led to an early sell out which added to the sense of Betts-Longworth as a "hot" area.

Preservation

Preservation served as an important element of urban regeneration and an attraction for market growth. Along with location, the historic quality of the buildings was an important selling point for many renters and buyers.

Public-Private Partnerships

Close working relationships between city agencies, banks, the non-profit developer and the neighborhood group helped make Betts-Longworth work.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

Historic preservation

This project succeeded in part by taking a "triage" approach. While some historic buildings were lost, it was successful in saving most of them and in preserving the historic character of the area. New townhomes fit the character well.

Slum and blight removal

The area has been converted from one characterized by empty lots and crumbling buildings with a few occasional pockets of livable structures, to an active and growing historic community.

Revitalized neighborhood

The neighborhood is attracting people who would never have lived in the West End, as well as others who have moved back to it. It is

becoming a working and middle class neighborhood with Anglo, African-American and other residents.

Create affordable housing with economic and social integration

The new and rehabilitated housing in Betts-Longworth is, by Cincinnati standards, well within the affordable range. Rehabilitated apartments rent between \$350 and \$400 for 1 bedroom to \$650 for 2 or 3 bedrooms. New units in Longworth Square sold between \$65,000 and \$79,000. Units in other market rate developments now in planning will sell between \$90,000 and \$110,000. Arguably, Longworth Square may have been sold too cheaply.

Minority involvement in development and construction

Many buildings were purchased and rehabilitated by minority developers (some of whom had little or no experience, but gained it on these projects), using minority contractors for the work. The quality of work in the projects we saw seemed very good.

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

What was the process used to create Betts-Longworth?

The plan was created by small group of city planners, who worked in partnership with a few local residents and the banks. There was no formal process (such as a series of open community meetings) to develop the plan, in part because the group of residents in the area who were directly affected was very small. Meetings with the larger community resulted in the agreement between the city and West End organizations, described above.

Was it solving problems created earlier by the same agencies?

Yes. Years of local and federal plans lead to the partial destruction of this area. That is the state in which it was inherited by this group of public servants, bankers, and residents.

Were there prior plans which failed?

There were many failed plans, from the 1950s to the mid-1980s (see the project history, above).



New homes with existing in background

CITY OF CINCINNATI

Did gentrification occur? Are the residents who had been driven out being served?

Gentrification was, in fact, a goal of this plan. The city had tried to bring in former residents as a part of previous plans, and many had failed in their redevelopment attempts. Some past residents were compensated for their losses, but many of those driven out in the past could not be located. Some developers and residents who came in during the current plan had ties with community, but the focus of this plan was to create successful redevelopment. Officials did not feel the plan could succeed if it carried the weight of compensating the community for previous errors.

What is the cultural/ethnic/income mix among tenants, developers and contractors?

The larger West End neighborhood is 99% African-American. Early tenants in Betts-Longworth were largely African-American, but more recent applicants are culturally and racially diverse. New residents range from clerical and blue collar workers to young professionals.

Was there a "land rush" atmosphere? Did this cause costs and rents to escalate?

"Land Rush" was the slogan used to create sufficient interest in the area to achieve a critical mass of rehabilitation. In itself it did not cause prices to increase, though as the area has become more attractive, prices to buy and rent have risen. Rents remain in the affordable range, although there are no programs to assure that they won't rise significantly.

How was this financed? Did it use the investment tax credit?

Only a few projects used the investment tax credit, because of the expense involved in meeting its strict preservation standards. Buildings in the Land Rush were financed at market rates through the bank consortium. More recent projects have used single banks as lenders. Construction of Longworth Square was financed by city bonds.

Have the restored properties made money? If so, for whom?

Most landlords seem satisfied that they are now, or soon will be, profitable. Most could not have done so without the various forms of city financial subsidies.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee was impressed with the process through which Betts-Longworth was finally turned around into a successful rehabilitation and rebuilding effort. Key ingredients were seen as the persistence of the small remaining core of "pioneers" and the campaigns for helping residents and small developers arrange financing and navigate through the permit process. Getting a consortium of banks to share the initial risk and make capital more readily available at first (so the "wagon train" could go forward) was seen as very helpful. Participation by minority contractors was encouraged, building their capacity for larger projects. A Selection Committee member from Los Angeles felt that several of these elements might be applicable to the rebuilding effort there.

The committee appreciated the design of the newly constructed housing, which fits in well with the area, while not trying to look as if it were historical. The issue of who was to live in this housing (and the renovated historic buildings) was more controversial. Betts-Longworth is in a pivotal position between downtown and massive public housing projects. Some Selection Committee members felt that such a district be a more gradual transition, with more low income and subsidized housing, since its attraction to middle class buyers would inevitably lead to gentrification. Given the massive subsidies from the city (including its purchase and resale of the entire area as well as grants and tax abatements), it was felt by some that more should have been done to retain diversity of income levels and recapture the social investment, perhaps controlling future gains on resale of properties.

While some committee members felt that the city bears responsibility for the considerable deterioration of the district through failed prior policies, others felt that the city's recent approach was justified as part of the price to be paid for reestablishing a neighborhood and saving at least part of its historical heritage — in an area at risk of being completely flattened.

The final concern expressed by the committee was that a comprehensive planning and urban design document was lacking. No design standards were established for rehabilitation or infill projects, which are negotiated on a case-by-case basis (this has countervailing advantages, if it can be controlled). Many "holes" in the physical fabric of the district will be allowed to remain and be used for parking and other functions.

For More Information...

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BEYOND HOMELESSNESS San Francisco, California

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Initial Reasons For Including Beyond Homelessness as a Finalist

- Homelessness is a focal issue for cities. As affordable housing stocks have shrunk, the economy worsened, and mental health services been reduced, homelessness has gotten increasingly worse.
- The Beyond Homelessness project appears to offer a comprehensive approach to dealing with homelessness. It starts with outreach and then provides drop-in shelters, transitional and permanent housing opportunities.
- The projects provide services for the homeless, not just shelter.
- Several projects appear to be very well designed.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

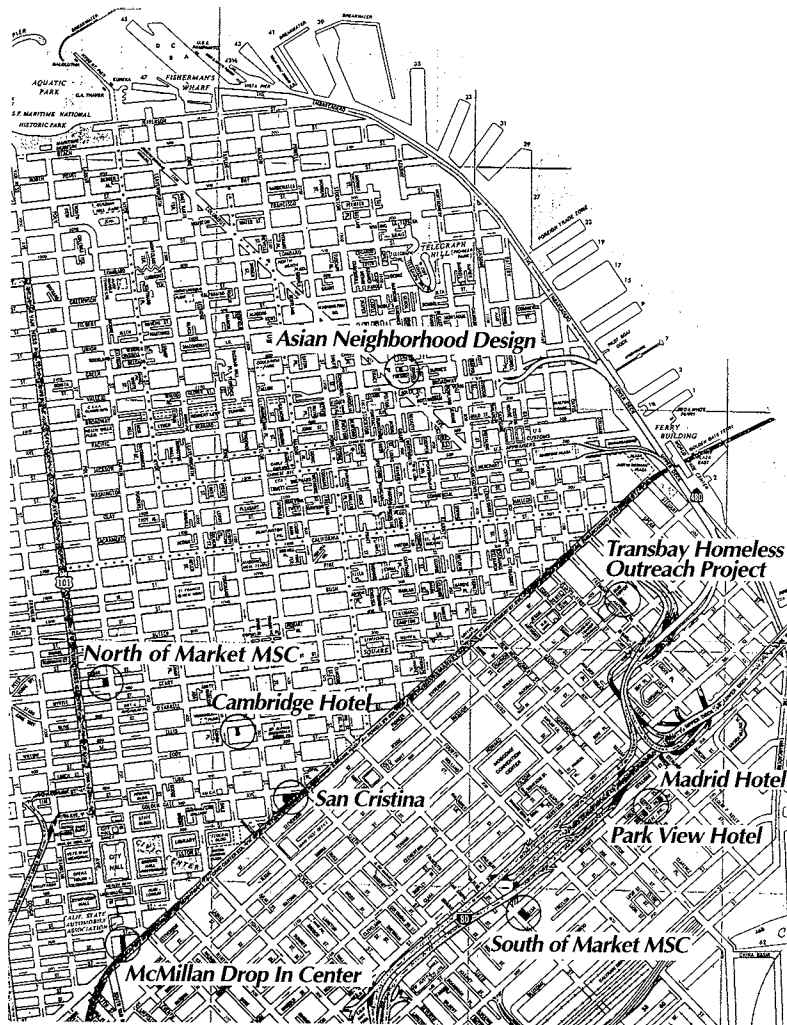
- Is there a system in place for dealing with homelessness? Does the system work; that is, do participants move on to participate in programs, get jobs and live in more stable housing?
- How is the project perceived? By residents (e.g., do they feel safe; do they feel it is "theirs"?). What about by other homeless people on the street? By neighbors (residents and businesses)? By policy makers?

- Who was involved in the planning and design process (homeless persons, residents, service providers, policy boards)?
- What is the status of employment programs? Since they are so important to breaking the cycle of homelessness, are they in place yet? What do or will they consist of?
- Several historic buildings have been renovated for specific projects. Why is there a focus on reuse of historical buildings? Why were they selected (intention, circumstance, or cost)? Some have been adaptively reused (why, versus new construction)? Were buildings listed as landmarks on local, state or national registers?
- Who provides services at the projects? Are they offered by the project sponsors or contracted out?
- What is the source of referrals for residents (walk in; agencies)? Are there qualifications or requirements, expectations, or behavioral contracts with clients?

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

- A set of projects that deal with many aspects of homelessness and the transition to affordable housing.



Who Made Submission

- Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.) — a community design center and community development corporation which served as the architect (not developer) on these projects.

Major Goals

- To provide a comprehensive system of shelter, food, services and housing for homeless people.
- To provide opportunities for those homeless who wish to progress through stages of assistance (from drop-in, to shelter, to structured programs) to achieve stability and structure in their lives, culminating in jobs and permanent housing.
- To reduce the numbers of homeless persons dying on the streets (this goal applies especially to the outreach, drop-in and multi-service centers).

Accomplishments

The following projects have been completed and are operational (projects are in San Francisco unless noted):

- Transbay Homeless Outreach Project. A storefront at the bus terminal which serves as a base for outreach and place for homeless people to drop in for assistance.
- McMillan Drop-in Center. A center where homeless people can drop in for temporary respite (rest, sleep, shower).
- North of Market and South of Market Multi-Service Centers. Rather large centers with a wide variety of services including drop-in day lounge, meals, showers, laundry, several types of beds (drop-in, lottery, long term, health recovery), case workers, classes, counseling, and health clinics.
- Cambridge Hotel. Transitional housing with on-site social services.
- Madrid Hotel. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.
- Park View Hotel. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.
- U.A. Homes (Berkeley). Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.

Two projects are under construction or planned:

- San Christina. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless. Completion expected 1993.
- Stark Hotel (Berkeley). Permanent housing for the formerly homeless. Completion date is uncertain as funding is stalled.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

- Do these projects represent a comprehensive and coordinated approach to homelessness — or are they a collection of unrelated projects?
- Are they really contributing to dealing with homelessness?
- The overall approach was started by the previous mayoral administration. Is it being continued by the current one?
- Is this submission diminished by the fact that San Francisco's homeless problem is so large and systemic that no project or set of projects could claim success in dealing with it?

PROCESS**Chronology**

- 1973. Asian Neighborhood Design formed as a community design center; 1981: became known as a community development corporation; 1984: opened their cabinet shop; 1987: began their furniture business.
- 1986. Park View and Madrid Hotels renovated as permanent low cost housing.
- 1989. Mayor Art Agnos makes homelessness a major policy emphasis. The "Beyond Shelter" plan is published and many projects (including most of those that are submitted for the RBA) are initiated.
- July 1990. Mayor Agnos orders the homeless out of their encampment at the Civic Center.
- 1991. South of Market Multi-Service Center is completed.
- 1992. North of Market Multi-Service Center, Transbay Homeless Outreach Project, and U.A. Homes are completed.
- 1993. McMillan Drop-In Center is completed. San Christina transitional housing is scheduled to be completed.

Key Participants

(people we interviewed are indicated with an asterisk*. Other people we met at the facilities are listed with the descriptions of each project.)

- Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.). Maurice Lim Miller*, Executive Director; Harry Ja Wong*, Principal Architect. A.N.D. is a community design center and community development corporation, but served as the architect on these projects which were sponsored by the city and other community developers and social service agencies. In addition to the submitted projects, we visited their cabinet shop which manufactures furniture for special housing projects (e.g., shelters and SROs), and offers quality jobs and training for mostly at-risk youth (over 700 so far), as well as a ten unit residential/business "incubator" for families moving out of subsidized housing. Overall, A.N.D. has renovated more than 2,000 low income housing units and 400 community service centers.
- Mayor's Office of Community Development. Jon Pon*, Program Manager.
- S.F. Homeless Task Force. Bryan Boyd*, Director; Harry "Hooks" Swets*, staff. Homeless advocacy and service provider led by formerly and currently homeless persons.
- Chemical Awareness and Treatment Services (CATS). Cynthia Belon*, Executive Director. Client for and operator of McMillan Drop-in Center. Barry Malton*, director of the drop-in center. Jerry McIver*, director of the Mobil Assistance Patrol.
- Chinese Community Housing Corporation. Gordon Chin, Executive Director; Susan Wong*, Project Manager. Client for and operator of Cambridge Hotel.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background: Homelessness in San Francisco

San Francisco has experienced many of the factors which have contributed to homelessness in other cities: shrinking stock of low cost housing (partially a result of city-sponsored redevelopment south of Market Street and on the other edges of the financial district and the conversion of residential hotels and SROs to tourist hotels and other uses), shrinking resources for mental health and drug and alcohol abuse services, and growing unemployment. In addition, with its benign climate and generally free and easy lifestyle, San Francisco is a magnet for homeless people in northern California and from other states. While such estimates are notoriously unreliable, 6,000 homeless people were counted in San Francisco in the 1990 census. It has been suggested that as many as 12,000 may be homeless at any given time with up to 24,000 per year experiencing homelessness at some time. As a result, there are many people hanging out and sleeping on the streets in and around the downtown area.

The Politics of Homelessness

San Francisco's commitment to addressing the homeless issue was galvanized around publicity concerning the number of deaths of homeless people:

"S.F. Homeless Deaths Put at 138" - San Francisco Chronicle (for 1992). In 1990, there were 113

deaths and in 1991, there were 109.

This level of death was politically unacceptable and, combined with other social and humanitarian concerns, helped create the political will to develop a more comprehensive approach. The former mayor, Art Agnos, was highly committed to dealing with the homeless problem and made it a priority of his administration. They developed the "Beyond Shelter" program described in the next section. Agnos' actions are in contrast with the previous mayor, whose policies were reported to have been in conflict with community housing organization interests and may have contributed to the loss of affordable housing.

Certainly, some of the politics around developing shelters and housing have to do with getting the homeless off the streets and out of the faces of tourists, shoppers, and office workers. The homeless had been encamped on the plaza at Civic Center (in effect, right under the mayor's nose) for about two years before the new shelters described below were opened — allowing the mayor to clear the area and still maintain a good conscience.

However, Agnos may have made fighting homelessness too much of a personal crusade, perhaps to the exclusion of building an adequately broad and institutionalized base of support. While the current mayor, Frank Jordan, has continued the program, it appears to lack the prior level of support or commitment.

The "Beyond Shelter" Plan and Program

This section outlines key parts of the Beyond Shelter plan (from "Beyond Shelter: A Homeless Plan for San Francisco; Implementation Plan for 1989-1990 Fiscal Year," August 1989). Each of the points below is expanded in the plan with a range of specific action items. Taken together, the plan is an integrated, comprehensive and systematic approach to dealing with homelessness. Many of its components do appear to have been implemented. Elements that relate directly to the projects in this submission are italicized and the projects mentioned in parentheses.

- Prevent additional people from becoming homeless
- assist people in maintaining current housing
- preserve existing low-cost housing.
- Create new permanent affordable housing opportunities
- Assist people to locate and maintain housing
- Acquire and rehabilitate low-cost housing (transitional and permanent housing projects).
- Stabilize income through job training and links to entitlement programs
- Assist homeless people in gaining access to entitlement programs (job finding services offered at outreach and multi-service centers)

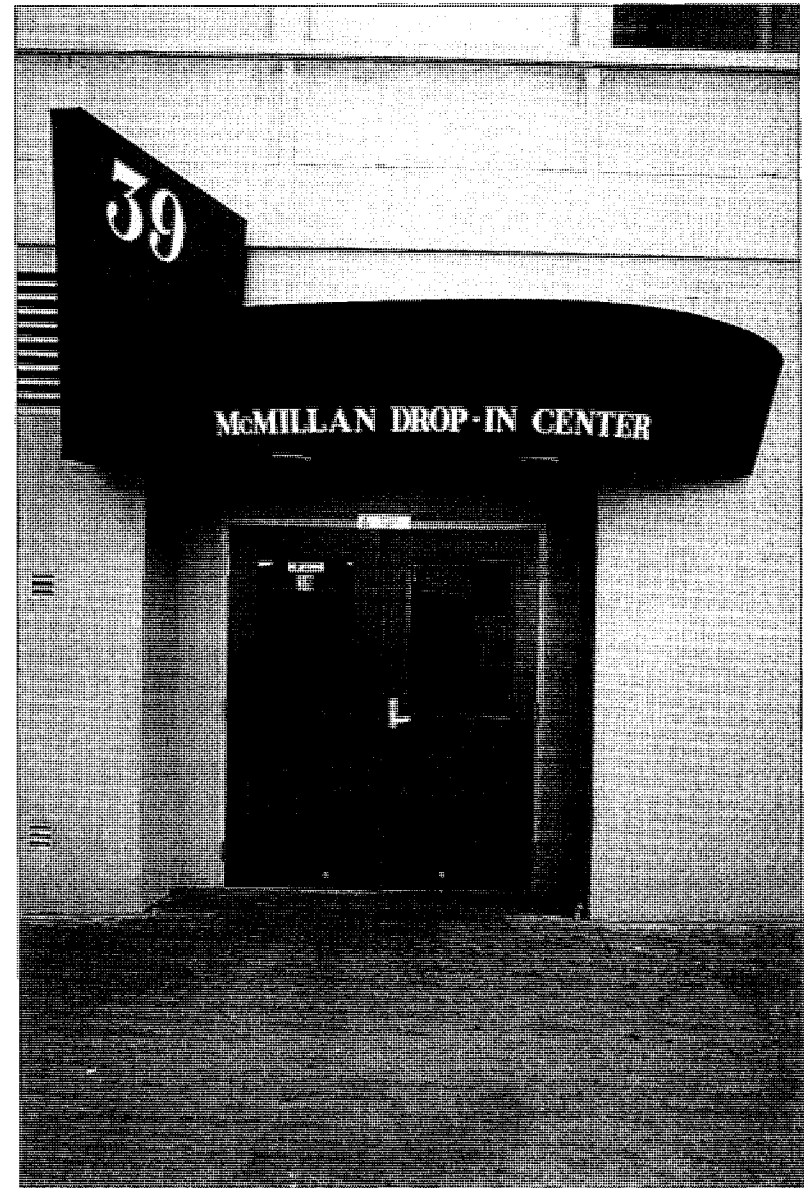
- Assist homeless people to stabilize income by securing employment (job finding services offered at multi-service centers).
- Provide health and social support services
- Provide supported residences to help people acquire the capacity to live more independently (shelters at multi-service centers and transitional housing)
- Provide a continuum of mental health and substance abuse services (services offered at drop-in and multi-service centers)
- Support health care outreach to homeless people (services offered at multi-service centers)
- Support efforts to provide childcare and education to homeless people (services offered at multi-service centers).
- Maintain an integrated temporary emergency system
- Provide emergency shelter and points of entry into the social service support system (drop-in center).

SUBMITTED PROJECTS

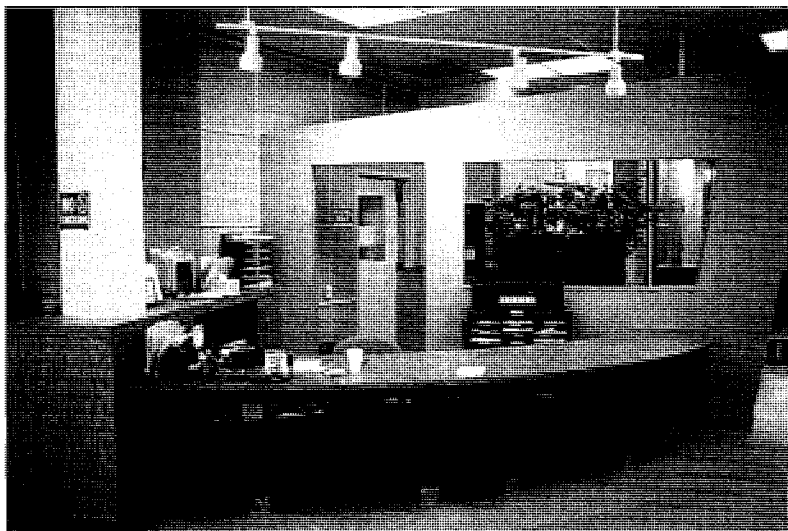
Transbay Homeless Outreach Project

We spoke with Mary Kate Conner, the project director and Buck, a formerly homeless person who is now an outreach worker. Located under an overpass at the Greyhound bus terminal where many homeless people used to hang out and sleep, this 1,100 square foot storefront serves as a base for outreach and a place for homeless people to drop in for assistance. One reason that many homeless are near here is that they are allowed access to waiting areas in the bus terminal (though they are periodically moved along). According to the project director, most of the homeless in the bus terminal are African-American men with cocaine addictions. Many are so emotionally disturbed that they cannot stand to wait in line to get into a shelter (or act too bizarrely to be admitted). The project seeks to treat them with respect and try to respond to their needs.

Services include primarily counseling, benefits assistance, and referral with an emphasis on serving the mentally disabled and those



McMillan Drop in Center ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN



ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

McMillan Drop in Center

with dual diagnoses (mental plus substance abuse) as well as distribution of clothing and hygiene items. The project saw 2,142 clients (not an unduplicated count) in their first 12 months of operation. Facilities include a reception area, a few offices for outreach counselors, storage rooms for clothing and other items given to the homeless, and a room from which they are dispensed.

The project is funded as a three year demonstration (until September 1994) with a U.S. Department of Transportation grant related to traveler's aid services. Ms. Conner felt that A.N.D. had worked with them very thoroughly to understand and provide for their needs, especially for private counseling and storage. While the center is architecturally utilitarian, it does appear to meet its defined needs.

They reported that many homeless persons feel that the terminal is safer (in terms both of protection from bodily harm and of belongings) than the shelters which are often crowded (they specifically included the ones that are reported on here). Another factor that keeps many homeless out of the shelters is said to be the fact that some of them cannot abide the rules and requirements of the shel-

ters and prefer the freedom of the streets or the terminal. However, having to remain protective of one's belongings and being moved along periodically prevents them from getting undisturbed sleep, so that extreme tiredness is a common condition.

A success story for the outreach project was reported to be "Dorothy," 69 years old, on the streets for 20 years, diagnosed as schizophrenic with multiple personalities. She had no identification (and thus no official identity), didn't sleep, used to be found screaming and wailing, and could barely be talked to. The program worked with her gradually over two years, got her identification, social security entitlements and permanent housing. While she still refuses mental health treatment, she is more lucid, her physical health has improved, and she has her freedom.

The director had an interesting perspective on the center's level of effectiveness. While she felt that the center is providing much needed services which are somewhat effective for its clients, it has not been able to effect an overall reduction in the number of mentally ill homeless. She feels that this is because the poor economy has increased the number of clientele while the reduction in housing, substance abuse, and mental health services (she maintained that California had gone from fourth to fiftieth in spending on mental health) has greatly limited their referral options. And, as other informants told us, further cuts were expected later in the year.

McMillan Drop-in Center

We spoke with Cynthia Belon, Executive Director of CATS (Chemical Awareness and Treatment Services which also operates other services in the same building) and Barry Malton, director of the center. This center has a capacity of fifty, with 28 beds and 22 chairs. Here, homeless people who are mostly substance abusers can drop in for temporary respite, including rest or sleep and use of a shower. There are almost no screening limitations for sobriety, cleanliness, or "normal" behavior; however, it is not allowed to threaten, fight, scream or use illegal substances while in the facility. Even if they are asked to leave for these reasons, they are allowed to return, unlike some shelters which may ban clients for extended periods of time. The center is open and can be accessed 24 hours per day, so people come in at all times (this is also unlike the other centers and shelters which limit hours of access). Staff reported that they had been full for sleeping when the weather was colder, but

now were seeing fewer clients. (We, however, observed a sign saying "closed/full" on the door during one of our visits.)

During two daytime visits, we saw a few people sleeping and observed the staff deal very effectively with a badly bruised, intoxicated woman of middle age who was initially afraid to rest in bed until paramedics came to care for her. Most users are said to be regulars and are known to the staff. Referrals are only made at the request of clients, they are not a focus of the program, which is mainly a safety net when people need to get off the street for a short period.

The center is located off of Market Street in an area frequented by homeless people. When we visited, the largest part of the center had just opened and the balance was still under construction — a month or two from completion — but far enough along for us to get a very good sense of how it would work. It was being phased intentionally, so that it could remain in operation during construction.

The center's layout provides careful zoning of functions, with separate sleeping areas for males, females and transsexuals (responding to a need that some cities might not have). There are quiet sitting areas that allow men and women to be separate. This ability to separate by gender is a theme we observed at other centers, where the issue is the ability of a woman to feel safe from being approached or bothered by a man who may have abused or exploited her on the streets. Lighting is soft and indirect to allow for sleeping while still providing enough visibility for security. Beds were designed by A.N.D. and provide some storage and a degree of privacy. The center also provides showers which are heavily used by people who (judging from the frequency of cleaning) needed them badly.

The project was designed collaboratively with city hall, homeless groups, and substance abuse professionals. A.N.D. was felt to have worked well with this complex group and to have come up with a good and sensitive design. The design is very atypical of public or institutional facilities, featuring very strong, modern (or post-modern) colors and shapes, especially in the lounge areas (see photos). Staff and clients are mainly very positive about the design, saying that it "looks great" and meets the goal of being non-institutional. By our observation, however, detailing raises some concerns for this

clientele who may stumble or be disoriented. Some corners expose the points of very sharp metal decorative grids which could injure a client who bumped into them, and columns are shaped so that they get wider at the top, possibly intruding a bit into circulation ways.

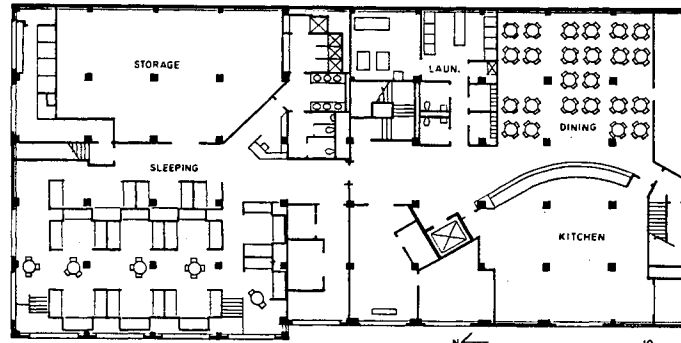
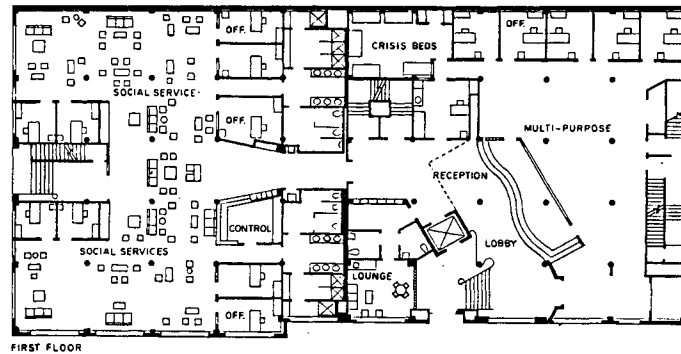
CATS leases this building and renovated the center using \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant money from the city. Its yearly operating budget of \$400,000 pays for 2 administrative staff, plus a supervisor and 3 staff per shift. It sees about 5,000 clients per month (not an unduplicated count).

There was significant neighborhood resistance to this project, but it was overcome by a program of participation. A neighborhood advisory committee was formed with the resistant businesses on it. Some neighbors feared that the center would attract large numbers of homeless who would mill about on the street. It was pointed out that this was not a shelter where people stand in line to get in at opening time. Also, it was agreed that if people were transported here from elsewhere, when they left they would also be offered the option of being transported back to where they came from. Exterior lighting was increased so that it would be less comfortable to hang around on the street at night. The participation strategy was effective and the neighborhood advisory group continues to meet and address more general issues such as overall neighborhood safety. They are also trying to put pressure on the local delis not to sell liquor on credit to intoxicated people.

North of Market Multi-Service Center

Located in the Tenderloin district, the center is operated by Episcopal Community Services. This center offers a wide variety of services including:

- drop-in day lounge (95 capacity; at night some clients are allowed to sleep on the floor in this area)
- toilets and showers
- laundries for commercial and client use
- mail boxes
- shelter beds (total of 225), with separate areas for:
 - lottery (up to 100 beds)



South of Market Multi-Service Center

- longer term case management (partly a "clean and sober" program) (up to 100 beds)
- health recovery for homeless who have been released from the hospital (25 beds)
- meals (2 per day for general shelter population; 3 for health recovery; snacks for drop-ins)
- case workers
- classes
- counseling
- health clinic (which operates four medical clinics and five mental health and substance abuse clinics per week).

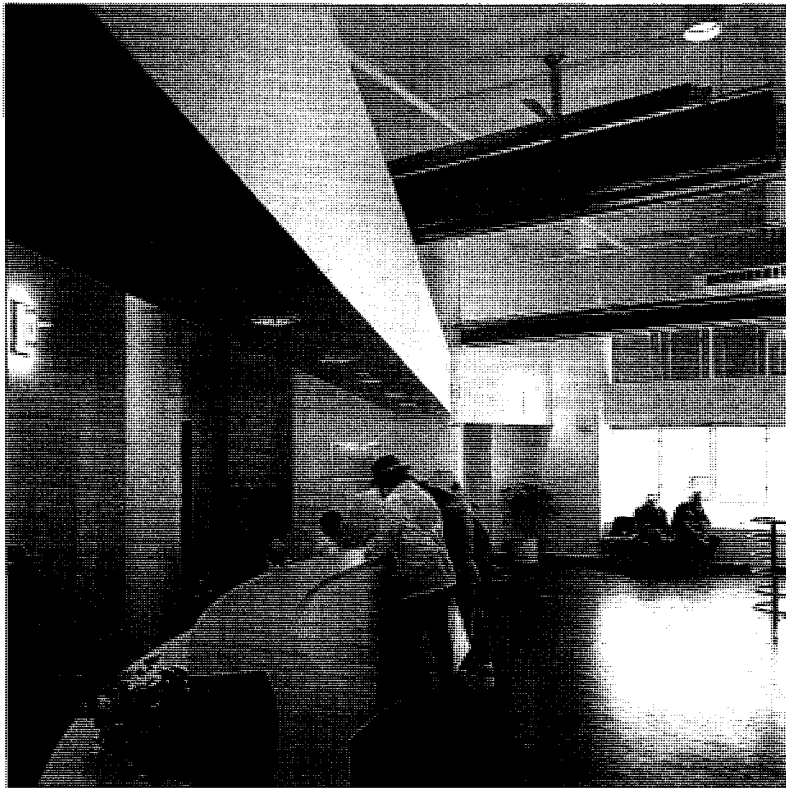


MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center

We visited North of Market on the fifteenth of the month and found the day area to be rather empty. It turns out that, on the first and fifteenth, some clients get their benefit checks, cash them and buy drugs or alcohol (this observation was confirmed at several locations and by several service providers). One man we interviewed said that he was a recovering addict in a treatment program and purposely stayed inside those days to avoid the temptation of seeing his ex-friends getting high. While we were glad he had a place to avoid temptation, we found the notion of welfare benefits being used this way by clients of the facilities to be distressing.

The shelter operates by a set of explicit rules, some of which are obviously necessary to maintain order and safety while others seem rather arbitrary (e.g., a ban on "public display of affection — kissing or fondling"). To qualify for a long term (up to six months) assigned bed, a client must agree to participate in case management and make a degree of progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals such as regular attendance at a substance abuse or education program. Generally, residents (other than those in the health recovery area or a few others on bed rest) have to vacate the shelter area by 8 a.m. each morning. They may leave their belongings (either locked



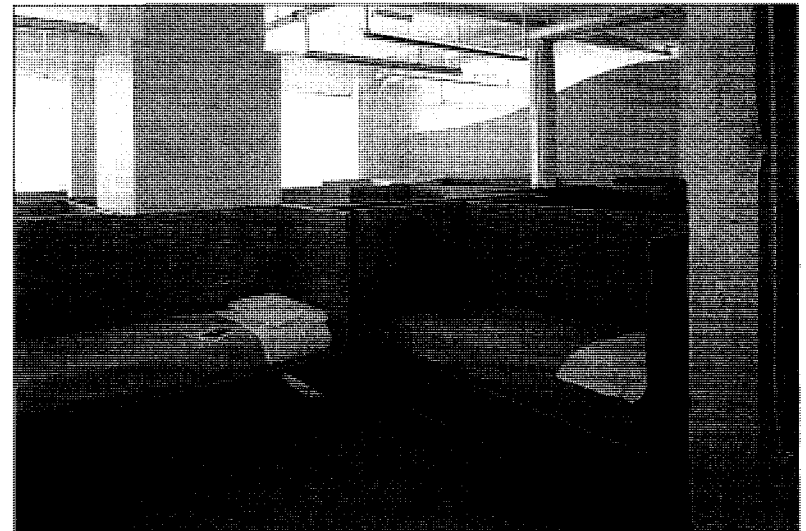
MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center

in the drawer beneath the bed or piled on top). Clients may go down to the day lounge, though most go out.

A room with a tile floor and drain, intended to be a kennel, was provided but has never been used as such due to operational problems. The idea was that some homeless people will not come to a shelter because it requires them to leave their pets behind. However, it was pointed out that having one's pet two or three floors away from where one is sleeping would also be unacceptable to most homeless pet owners. It is unclear who's idea the kennel was.

The building is of some historical significance. It was a Pierce-Arrow showroom built in 1913. The architect was John Galen



MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center: bed enclosures with locked storage

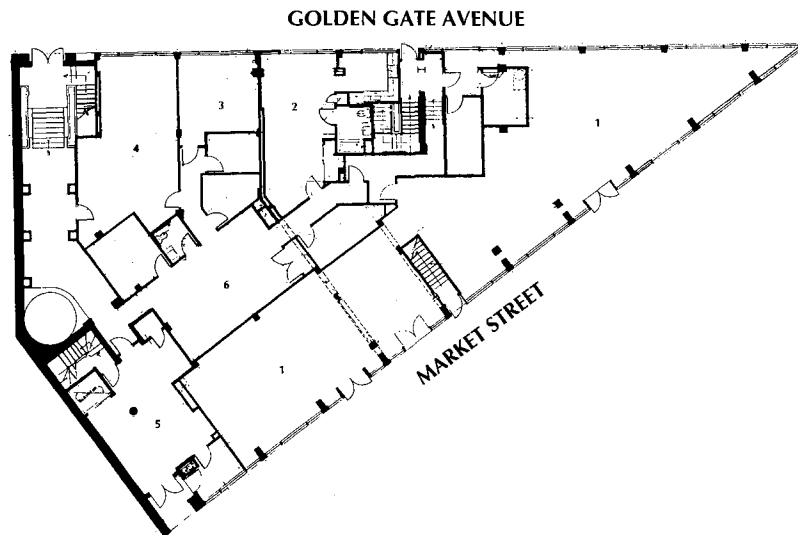
Howard. It has been given a "B" rating on the city Landmarks Board's scale as being of historic merit, but is not registered. Minor changes to the exterior of the building still had to be approved by the Board.

Clients in the day lounge area reported appreciation for the services, safety, cleanliness, and quality of the food. As one said, "we are homeless; what can we expect?"

South of Market Multi-Service Center

The center is operated by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. We met Bill Shoman, the building and food service manager and Richard Bright, the director. It is very similar in program to the North of Market Center, but has fewer beds (158, none of which are for medical recovery) and a larger day lounge. Its building has no historic architectural significance.

When we visited South of Market, it was raining. The weather apparently made a great deal of difference in the level of use, as the day area (with room for about 150) was crowded with people. It was noisy and filled with smoke. Perhaps it is used more inten-

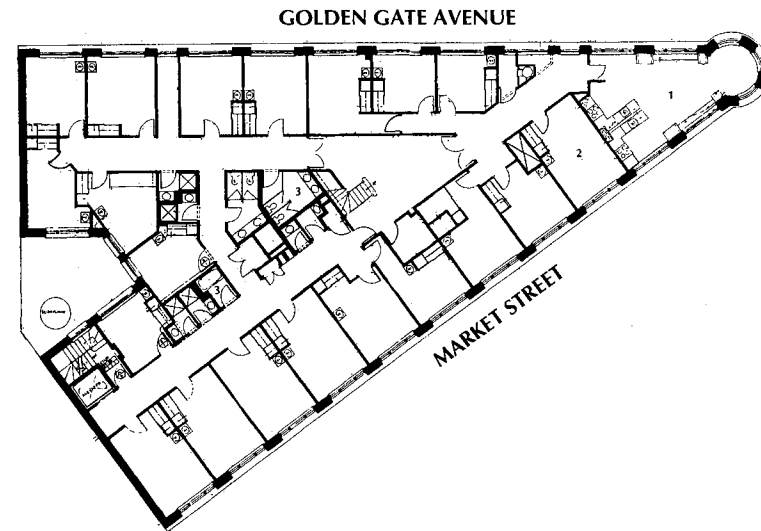


The San Christina: 1st floor plan

sively or managed differently, but it was in much worse condition than North of Market. The director stated that they had turned away 63 people in December (this averages two per day, but may have been more concentrated on cold nights) and felt that they could utilize double their current capacity.

This program is being evaluated by Jim Buick, who is finding that clients do feel safe there. (We made an effort to contact Mr. Buick but were not able to connect.)

The director complained about the choice of some materials. The linoleum, for example, even though it is very heavy duty, is staining from intensive use. The flat wall paint, which is used in some areas, should have been semi-gloss. He was also concerned about the sleeping cubicles — which were said to be expensive and falling apart (the later is an exaggeration, though they were certainly showing signs of wear and abuse) — and complained about blind spots where clients smoked crack. Otherwise, he found the facility “beautiful and spacious.” He tended not to blame A.N.D. for some of the problems, as he thought that the Department of Social Services had been a poor initial client. He did work effectively with A.N.D. to



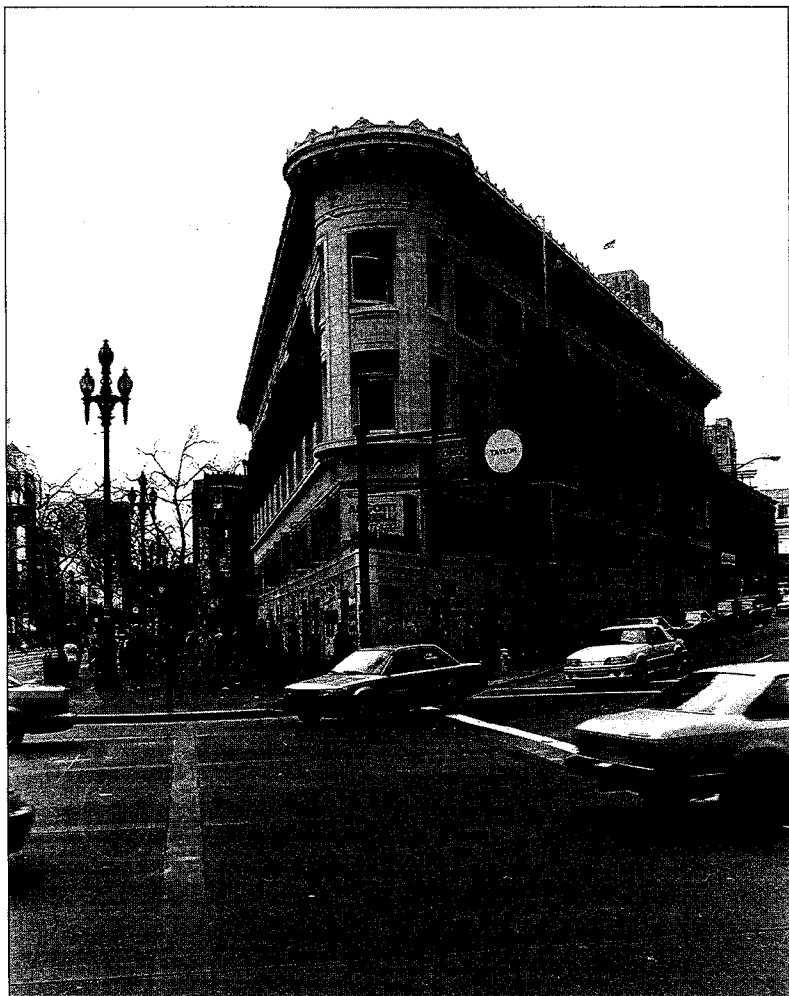
The San Christina: 3rd - 4th floor plans

make many modifications to the design after his agency was contracted to operate the facility.

Cambridge Hotel

Located in the Tenderloin district, the 60 room hotel is operated by the Chinese Community Housing Corporation (though it serves mostly non-Asian clients). It provides transitional housing for the homeless with on-site social services operated by Hospitality House. The accommodations consist of a furnished private bedroom/sitting room and bathroom with a shared kitchen on every other floor. Residents can stay for two to three years, with a typical time of about 18 months.

Participation in programs such as job development, education, and case management is a requirement for residents. It is also required that residents remain “clean and sober,” but this is reported to be a problem for some. About 70% of residents receive general assistance while about 30 to 50% are working. One staff felt that it was too easy to stay here and do nothing; that there was a lack of motivation for self improvement; that not enough of the residents move on. Fernando Robinson, a case manager, however, felt that the suc-



SIMEON BRUNER

The San Christina

cess rate was reasonably good. He thought that as many as 50% were working at least part time and that as many as 15 residents (or 25%) per year make progress on their case plans and move on to permanent housing.

The renovation consisted of general refurbishment and creation of shared spaces such as kitchens and lounges. Susan Wong, the project manager from Chinese Community Housing Corporation, found A.N.D. to have been client-focussed, great to work with, and have done a great job for them. "They really listen," she said.

Permanent Housing Projects

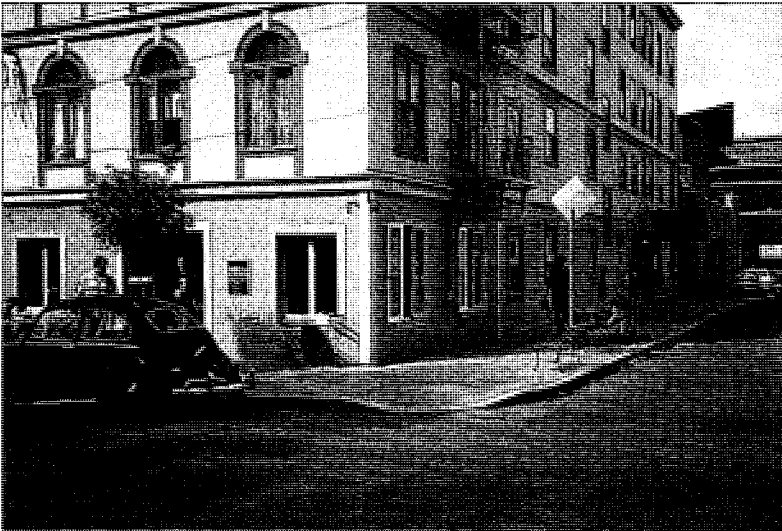
Several of the projects provide permanent housing for the formerly homeless.

Madrid Hotel and Park View Hotel. These are both completed projects located very close to one another and facing a park in the South of Market area. One has 43 units, the other 41. Each has a communal kitchen and commercial space on the ground floor, occupied in both cases by a restaurant and other functions. These projects were single room occupancy (SRO) hotels that have been converted to permanent housing.

San Christina. This project is located on Market Street and is undergoing major renovation, with completion expected late in 1993. The building is a historic Classical Revival flatiron structure dating from the post-1906 earthquake reconstruction period (built in 1913; architect unknown). Like the North of Market Multi-service Center, it has been given a "B" rating on the city Landmarks Board's scale as being of historic merit, but is not registered. However, A.N.D. is using the historic building code to allow them to retain features (such as an interior wrought iron staircase) which otherwise probably would have had to have been removed. Similarly the building department did not require a full seismic upgrading, but allowed equivalent protection.

The building was used as offices and is being converted into 58 single occupancy rooms with communal kitchens at the "prow" of the flatiron. Educational programs and commercial space will be located on the ground floor.

U.A. Homes (Berkeley). A member of our team attempted to visit this project, but was not successful in gaining admittance due to a scheduling mixup (we later visited the lobby, but did not see the units). The building had been a residence hotel and was closed after the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. It has been seismically strengthened with exterior steel braces and retrofitted as 75 low



Park View Hotel. Note commercial use on ground floor.

income single room occupancy units. On-site counseling services, employment, literacy, and substance abuse programs are offered. The executive director is involved in the arts and brings volunteers in to offer programs to residents in dance, poetry, drawing and creative writing.

Stark Hotel (Berkeley). We did not visit this project which has been designed but whose uncertain funding has stalled construction.

In-Depth Evaluations are Needed

Many of these projects are prototypical, that is, they lack established models or guidelines for their design. To date, other than what research may have been done at the South of Market Multi-Service Center, no post occupancy evaluations have been prepared on these projects. Such evaluations would be very beneficial in terms of identifying aspects of design and operations which are working well (and could be replicated in other projects) and those that should be changed.

Homeless Projects Not Designed by A.N.D.

There are many other services and facilities for the homeless in San Francisco which are not part of the submission, though they were part of the mayor's Beyond Shelter plan. For example, there are (or were plans for) the following non-A.N.D. transitional housing projects (some of which are on hold):

- For homeless families to be run by the Salvation Army.
- For homeless women and children to be run by St. Vincent de Paul.
- For homeless youth to be run by the Catholic Charities and Hospitality House.
- For homeless mentally disabled people to be run by a consortium of public agencies.

Needs Not Addressed by the Plan

There are about 6,000 homeless people in San Francisco. Clearly, the 400+ shelter beds and 500 units of special housing which are being created through the Beyond Shelter plan will not suffice to meet the need.

The Role of Asian Neighborhood Design

A.N.D. provided architectural services for these projects. They worked with a wide variety of clients, including often diverse bodies representing many interests. In all cases where we interviewed people who had worked directly with A.N.D, they were praised as being attentive and responsive to client needs. A.N.D. was seen as having a long term commitment to designing supportive settings for disadvantaged and special needs users. In some of the projects, design was very important to successful operation. This is especially true of the drop-in and multi-service centers, which have high volumes of users and many — often conflicting — operational and design objectives (for example to provide privacy as well as surveillance or be non-institutional yet very durable).

Construction Costs

Hard construction costs for the projects are as follow:

PROJECT	COST
Transbay Homeless Outreach	\$ 20,000
McMillan Drop-in Center	376,000
North of Market Multi-Service Center	2,300,000
South of Market Multi-Service Center	3,900,000
Cambridge Hotel	722,000
Madrid Hotel	820,000
Park View Hotel	690,000
U.A. Homes	2,100,000
San Christina (bid)	2,100,000
Stark Hotel (bid)	950,000
Total Cost:	\$ 13,978,000

Financing

The financing for these projects came from many sources. Approximately \$12 million for transitional and permanent housing came from a state housing grant. About \$6 million in city tax abatement funds were added to this. Some projects were renovated using FEMA funds for seismic strengthening following the 1989 earthquake. Others used Red Cross emergency assistance for people made homeless by the earthquake.

The Cambridge Hotel serves as a case study. The total (hard and soft) cost was slightly over \$4 million or \$67,000 per unit, broken down approximately as follows:

PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Construction and fees:	\$ 978,000
Building acquisition:	2,300,000
Financing charges (points):	21,000
Interim financing and syndication costs:	336,000
General development costs:	380,000
Total Cost:	\$ 4,015,000

The sources of financing and what they paid for are complex. A State of California CHRP loan paid part of construction, fees, carrying charges, development and syndication costs. A city grant partially using CDBG money contributed toward acquisition. A foundation donated part of the construction money. Equitable Life Insurance put up a ten year permanent loan for a small part of the cost, which coincided with the project's 10 year HUD Section 8 commitment to rent subsidies. And FEMA paid a small amount toward construction.

THEMES AND LESSONS**Approach Homelessness In a Systematic Way**

Homelessness is the outcome of a system which involves conditions embracing poverty, unemployment, poor physical and/or mental health, substance abuse, the need for social services, the housing supply, and many other factors. Each homeless person needs to be given opportunities to address the set of conditions that have lead him or her to be without a home. The person may enter the system of services at one of many points and may be ready to make use of services at a given time which he or she was not ready to use before. Thus, the Beyond Shelter program seeks to offer a comprehensive and coordinated set of services from outreach, to transportation, to drop-in centers, to shelters, to structured shelter programs with social services, to transitional housing, to jobs, to permanent housing. This systematic approach may have a higher likelihood of success than a fragmented or partial set of solutions.

Get All the Agencies Which Serve the Homeless Working Together; Involve Private as Well as Public Providers

These projects are better than many others because they have been developed as partnerships between city development agencies and the public and private non-profit service providers who operate them. There has been a high degree of cooperation and collaboration in defining need and evolving the programs that are offered. The natural skepticism and competition among agencies has been overcome to a significant extent, probably through the leadership provided by the ex-mayor.

Good Design Can Contribute to Effective Services

Design is certainly not the most important issue in dealing with homelessness. But, as these projects show, many aspects of design can contribute to a facility's effectiveness in carrying out its mission to combat some aspect of homelessness. In the drop-in and multi-service centers, where functions are very demanding, design is crucial to security, safety, cleanliness, privacy, functional support, and providing an uplifting image. These projects are rather consistent in providing models of how design can be effective in supporting complex missions.

Don't Expect to Solve a Problem This Complex and Pervasive

Homelessness is so pervasive and intractable a problem that it is not reasonable to expect it to be eliminated by a set of projects, however well thought out and integrated. They may not provide enough to meet demand, but these projects make support available that was not before and provide new opportunities for homeless people who are prepared to make changes for themselves.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

To go beyond traditional shelters in providing an integrated system of options and services for the homeless.

The Beyond Shelter program does go beyond traditional shelters in providing a wide variety of outreach, drop-in and shelter settings with many services available if the homeless wish to use them. It also provides some avenues out of homelessness and into permanent jobs and housing.

To reduce the number of homeless people dying on the streets.

While facilities and services are now becoming available that were not before (including drop-in centers and a mobile patrol), it is too early to tell whether they will actually reduce the numbers of homeless dying on the streets (which has increased each year from 1990 to 1992). Factors beyond the control of the system (such as an increase in the number of homeless due to a deteriorating economy

and the possibility of very cold weather) make this a difficult evaluative test, however laudable the goal.

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

What contribution does this submission make to solving the homeless problem? Do participants graduate and move on to participate in programs, get jobs and live in more stable housing?

The projects in this submission make significant contributions to dealing with homelessness, offering services and opportunities at many levels — from survival and respite to recovery and reintegration. Some participants do take advantage of these opportunities to deal with substance abuse problems, gain employment, and move into permanent housing. It is also clear that there is greater demand than these projects can meet.

What is the nature and status of employment programs?

Some employment training and jobs programs are operational. Most of the projects that were submitted employ the homeless or formerly homeless as their staff in a variety of positions including outreach, food preparation, clerical, janitorial, and even management. All programs can refer clients to job training through GAIN (federal workfare program). The multi-service centers train case management residents in their kitchens. Some of the transitional housing projects have commercial space or restaurants which provide employment to residents. A.N.D. operates a cabinet and furniture business which employs 50 and has trained over 700 mostly at-risk youth (not necessarily homeless).

How is the project perceived (by residents, homeless people on the street, neighbors, policy makers)?

Homeless people who make use of the facilities are generally quite satisfied with them and pleased to have the services available. Some homeless people on the streets find the shelters too rigid — and avoid them. "You're in prison from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.," said one homeless advocate who criticized the system for providing the least for those who need the most. Neighbors of the centers and shelters have generally been satisfied that, by design and operations, homeless people are not milling around on the sidewalks and that the

problems they feared have not materialized. Policy makers recognize and regret that there are not and will not be enough resources in the next few years to make much of a further dent in the problem.

Why were historical buildings selected for several projects? Were they listed as landmarks? Have they been renovated sympathetically?

It appears that it has generally been circumstantial that historic buildings were selected. Often, they were available and affordable, perhaps being too deteriorated to restore privately. The most interesting historically are the North of Market Multi-Service Center (the Pierce Arrow showroom) and the San Christina. While recognized locally as of some historic merit, none of the buildings are listed on historic registers. However, given low budgets, they have been renovated with care and attention to their historic character.

Who was involved in the planning and design process (homeless persons, residents, service providers, policy board)?

The Beyond Shelter program was developed by Mayor Agnos' administration and involved all city development, planning, housing, health and social service agencies as well as social welfare and homeless advocates and private service providers. The submitted projects varied greatly in who was involved. Generally, A.N.D. worked for either the city or a community development corporation. On city projects, there would have been a client board which included various agencies and the service provider who would contract to operate the facility. At least one project, the McMillan Drop-In Center, involved both a homeless advocate (Bryan Boyd) and a neighborhood advisory group.

...BY OTHER CONCERNS

How Does This Program Compare to What Other Cities Are Doing?

We have not researched homeless programs in other cities or states. However, we have seen that New York and New Jersey, for instance, have "right to shelter" laws and programs which guarantee the homeless a bed. While these may be more humane in reducing the numbers of homeless dying on the streets (in these state's more

extreme climates), they do not necessarily provide more comprehensive overall services. One of the other finalists, New Community Corporation, operates a highly serviced transitional living facility (see that chapter).

How Key a Player Is Asian Neighborhood Design?

A.N.D. has been the favored designer for the majority of San Francisco's projects addressing homelessness. They earned this role by their reputation for designs sensitive to the needs of special user groups. However, they were not instrumental in developing the "Beyond Shelter" plan and were not the developers or operators of the facilities.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

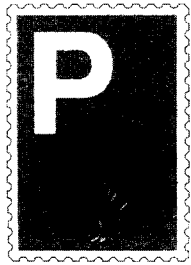
The Selection Committee was impressed by the attempts of the various agencies associated with this project to address one of the most critical and pervasive urban issues in a broad and comprehensive manner. They saw this project as displaying "an intelligent philosophy and an intelligent use of the city infrastructure". They praised the goal of the project which was not just to care for the homeless but to decrease homelessness. The effort demonstrated that quality housing could be created "even for the homeless", rather than the too common approach of providing the least for those who need the most. The Selection Committee appreciated the way the design group acted as a catalyst for change, and they admired the integration of social services with housing as well as the inclusion of job opportunities.

The Selection Committee also recognized that homelessness is an intractable problem, in size, scope, and difficulty. Homelessness reflects problems with the housing stock, economy, provision of mental health services, and so forth. These problems are not just local, but regional, statewide and even national — and no local program can be expected to be completely effective in dealing with them on its own. In San Francisco, the number of homeless has actually increased, in spite of the efforts of this program, which has improved conditions and provided routes to permanent housing for many formerly homeless. However, at the end of the discussion, the Selection Committee was unsure how much this program had

succeeded in making San Francisco a better place (the authors, however, believe it has provided options for many homeless persons which were not available before).

For More Information...

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THE PARK AT POST OFFICE SQUARE Boston, Massachusetts

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

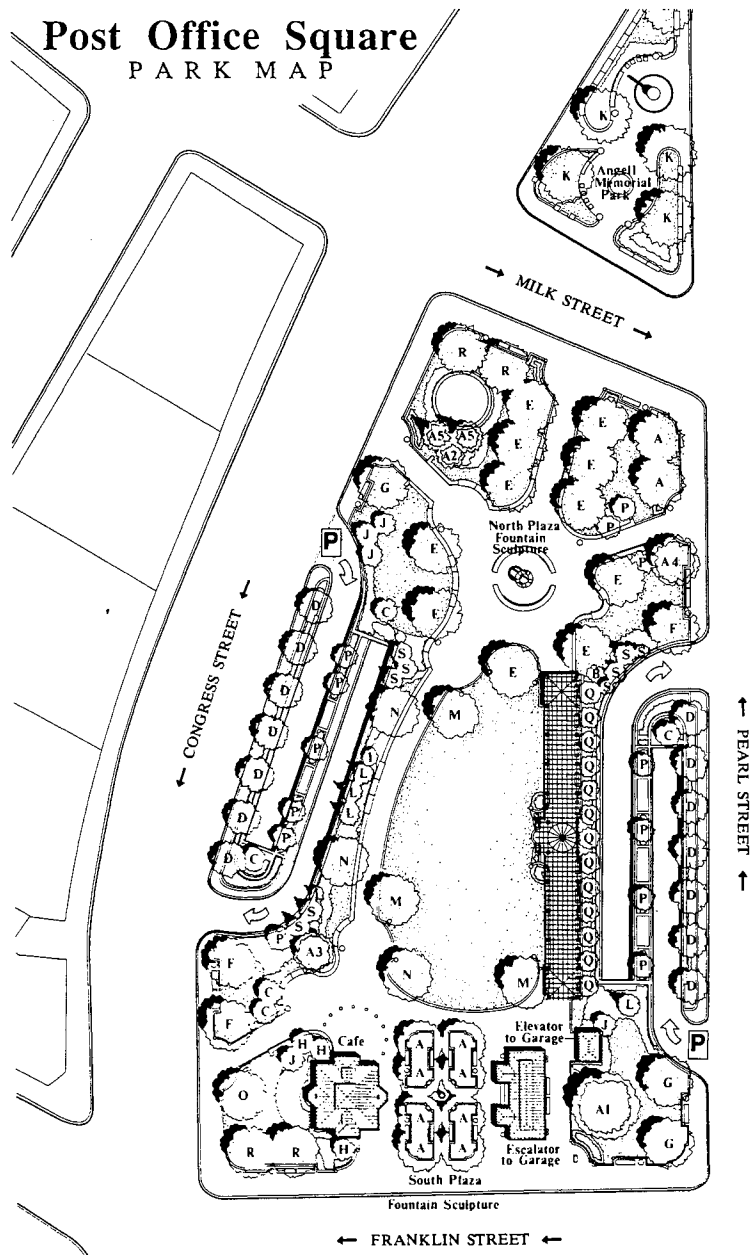
Initial Reasons For Including The Park at Post Office Square as a Finalist

- An existing “monstrosity” (the old parking garage) was turned into an urban park in a dense section of downtown.
- While other downtowns are deteriorating, this park helps to draw people there.
- A downtown park serves everyone who is there, including shoppers, office workers and executives.
- It is unusual to find a park developed by a public-private partnership. This could be a model for creating needed downtown open space.
- Its revenue will contribute to supporting neighborhood parks.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

- What is the history of the site and the area? Are or were there historic uses or buildings? Is the history reflected in the park’s design?
- Was there a participatory component in the park design? Whose idea was it?

- What alternative plans or projects were there for this site? Was an office building with parking under it planned? If so, why wasn’t it built and why was the park built?
- Was the project mainly done by businesses to enhance the value of surrounding properties?
- What are the economics of the project? How much income does the parking generate and how is it used? When will the financing be paid off and how will the income be used then? Who controls the money and its uses? How does the cost of parking in this garage compare to other garages in the area?
- What is the project’s impact on traffic — to improve it or make it worse?
- What is the impact of the park on the surrounding neighborhood?
- Who manages the park?
- Who uses the park — just yuppies, or a broader segment of the population?
- How are people responding to the project?



THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

- A 1.7 acre urban park over a 1,400 space parking garage.
- The park is intended mainly for passive activities (walking through it, sitting, eating lunch).

Who Made Submission

- Friends of Post Office Square (FOPOS), the developers and owners of the project.

Major Goals

- To remove a blighted garage which filled the square.
- To create a high quality urban park as an amenity for the downtown and its users.
- To replace parking that would have been lost with removal of the garage, add parking for underserved surrounding buildings, and use the parking revenue to support this park and other neighborhood parks.
- To enhance the value of surrounding properties and the attractiveness of the area for office workers.

Accomplishments

- The entire project is complete.
- It was built privately — without public money.
- It already contributes financially to the city which was paid for purchase of the site and gets ongoing property tax revenues; when it passes the breakeven point, all surplus funds will go to the city.
- It is reported to be intensively used (depending on weather), very well liked, and important symbolically and visually.
- The creation of a prized and pleasant open space in the core of the city is an achievement which some feel brings a sense of hope and positive energy to what is often despair about urban problems.

- It improved traffic in the area — despite adding 450 parking spaces.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

- This project was very well conceived, planned, designed and executed — and is very well managed.
- The distress of the Boston economy and real estate market have kept the project from making money. While it is financially stable, it does not yet contribute to the support of other city parks.
- The question of relative social benefit in comparing the importance of this project to other finalists can only be addressed by the Selection Committee.

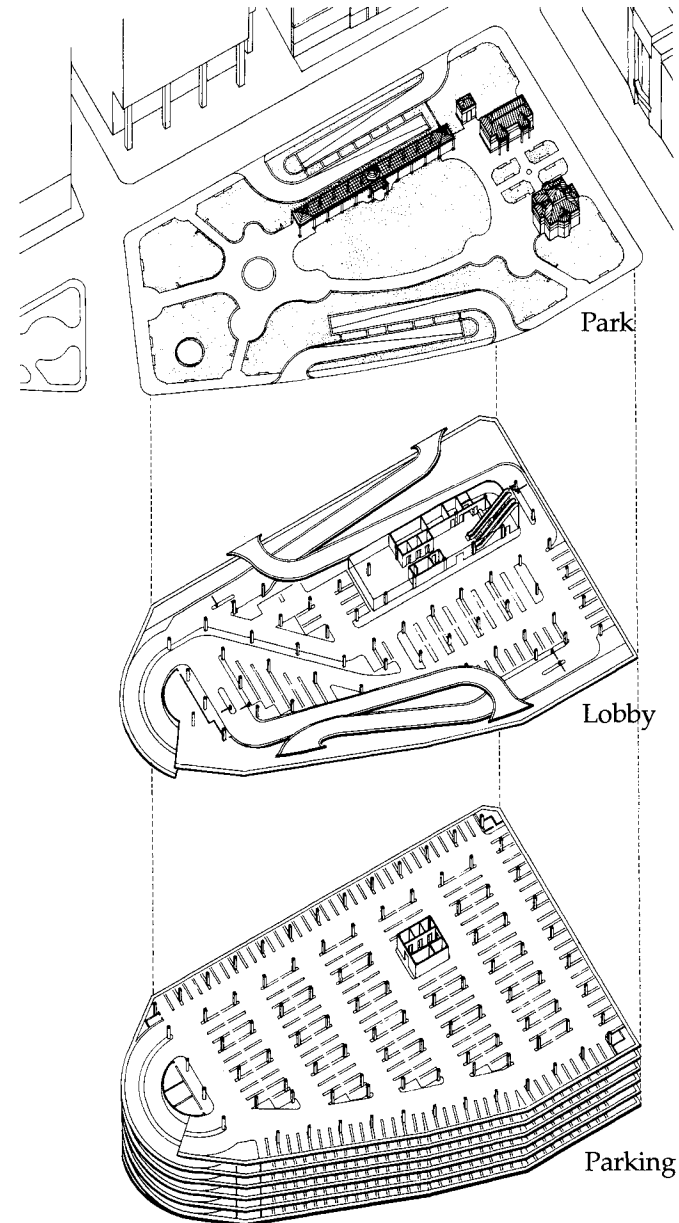
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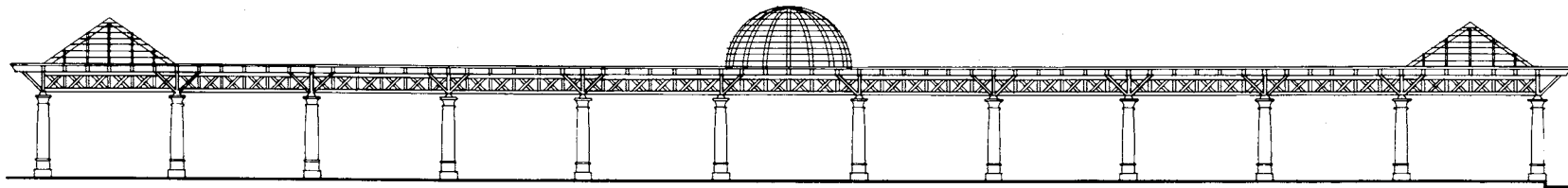
Key Participants

(people we interviewed are indicated with an asterisk *)

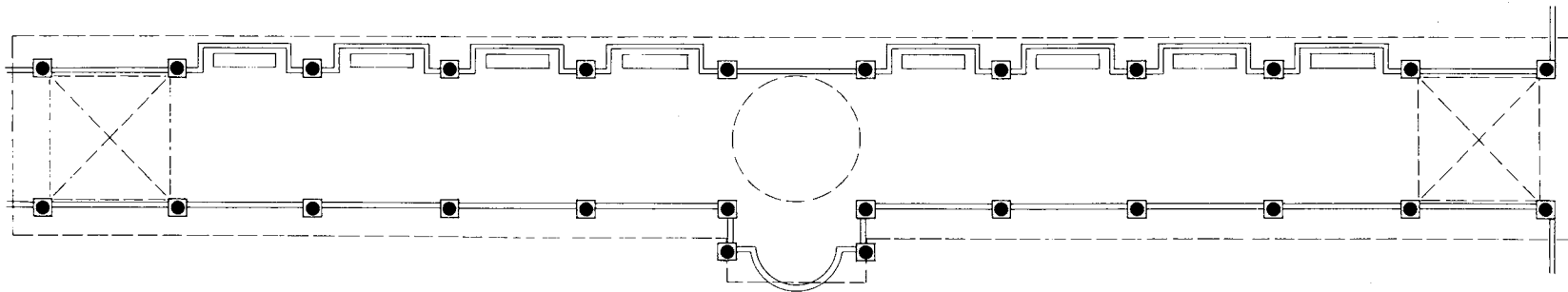
Friends of Post Office Square is a private civic corporation, incorporated under a state law granting it eminent domain power but limiting its profit making potential. It bought the site, developed the project, and now owns and operates the park and garage. FOPOS had many committees and consultants who played important roles, a selection of which are named here:

- Board of Directors. Eleven members of which we met with: Norman Leventhal*, Chair; William McCall, Jr.*; Gerhard Freche*, ex-chief executive of New England Telephone. Leventhal, Chairman of the Beacon Companies (a major development and real estate holding firm) provided the leadership for this project, galvanizing the support of area businesses.
- Park Program (and Design) Committee. John Connolly*, Mayor's Office; Yu Sing Jung*, architect; Charlotte Kahn*, Boston Urban Gardeners; Justine Liff*, Boston Parks and Recreation; Shirley Muirhead*, Boston Redevelopment Authority Landscape Architect.





Trellis elevation



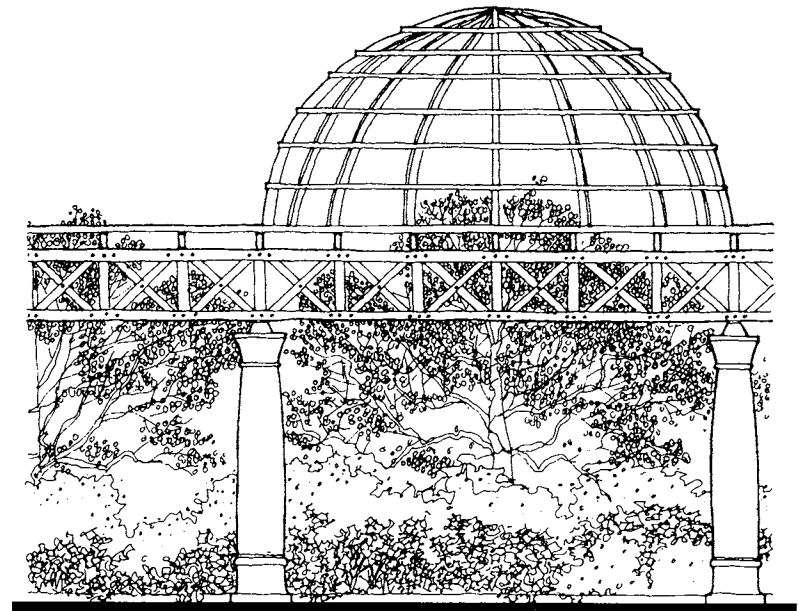
Trellis plan

- Technical Advisory Committee; Operations Committee; Marketing Committee.
- Staff. Robert Weinberg*, President; Paul McGinn*, Vice President. Staff contributed greatly to implementing the project, guiding the process, and working with all the committees and consultants.
- Stockholders. 19 major corporations with offices within two blocks of the square, including the Bank of Boston, Beacon Companies, Cabot, Cabot & Forbes, Fidelity Investments, Harvard Community Health Plan, New England Telephone, Olympia & York, Shawmut Bank, and State Street Bank. See the section on Financing for what they put in and what they got.
- Consultants
 - Master planning and programming: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. (principal-in-charge: Karen Alshuler; Ali Rizvi*, architect and planner).
 - Garage design team: Parsons, Brinkerhoff (engineers); Ellenzweig Associates (architects for garage and park structures; Harry Ellenzweig*); LeMessurier (engineers).
 - Park designers: The Halvorson Company (Craig Halvorson*, landscape architect).
 - Artists: Ross Miller* (lighting); Howard Ben Tre (fountains); Richard Duca (ornamental metal).
- City Agencies
 - Mayors (Kevin White; Raymond Flynn; John Connolly*, aide to Mayor Flynn). Connolly was actively involved throughout and negotiated the very difficult deal with the prior garage owner who controlled the site via his lease with the city. The mayor appointed members of the program and design committee.
 - Boston Redevelopment Authority (Shirley Muirhead*, Landscape Architect). Had approval rights over the park design.

- Boston Parks and Recreation (Justine Liff*).
- Boston Transportation Department (Richard Loring*).
- Others
- Richard Heath*; ex-director of the Franklin Park Coalition, a neighborhood park group that supported Post Office Square and got support from it.
- Mark Primack*, ex-director of the Boston Greenspace Alliance.
- Robert Campbell*, architecture critic for the Boston Globe.
- Marc Epstein*, operator of the park food service concession.
- Jane Pritzker*, director of marketing for the Hotel Meridien (borders Post Office Square).

Chronology

- 1981: When Norman Leventhal held the opening ceremony for his Meridien Hotel, he commented to Mayor Kevin White that "the parking garage has to go." The mayor agreed.
- 1982: Neighbors (predecessor of Friends) of Post Office Square organized. \$120,000 in seed money raised. Initial design studies by MIT architecture professor Bill Porter.
- 1983: Friends of Post Office Square is organized and staff (Bob Weinberg) hired. Application filed for 121A Corporation status (with eminent domain power). Said Weinberg "at this point the project seemed impossible; we had no money, no site and a powerful adversary."
- 1984: 121A Corporation approved by the city.
- 1985: Deal with garage owner negotiated by John Connolly; deal closed in March 1987.
- 1986: Hired project manager; design process started in 1987.
- 1987: Park design program completed.
- 1988: Garage construction started. Park design competition completed.
- 1990: Garage construction finished in October.



- 1991: Park open to public.
- 1992: Fountains completed; dedication ceremony in June.

Planning/Implementation Process

This project's process was extremely well conceived and executed. Strong leadership was provided by Norman Leventhal, who, however, ensured broad participation and excellent professional support. Quality and attention to detail were important goals throughout and it was recognized that, in order to achieve them, careful planning and input from many parties were needed. Leventhal assembled a powerful board of corporate supporters, worked closely with government agencies and elected officials, created broadly representative advisory groups, and hired highly competent staff and consultants.

The process of acquiring the site was complex and difficult (see section below). Once the arrangements for getting the site were finalized, the design phase began. Consultants supported the efforts for both the garage and park. Working with the advisory

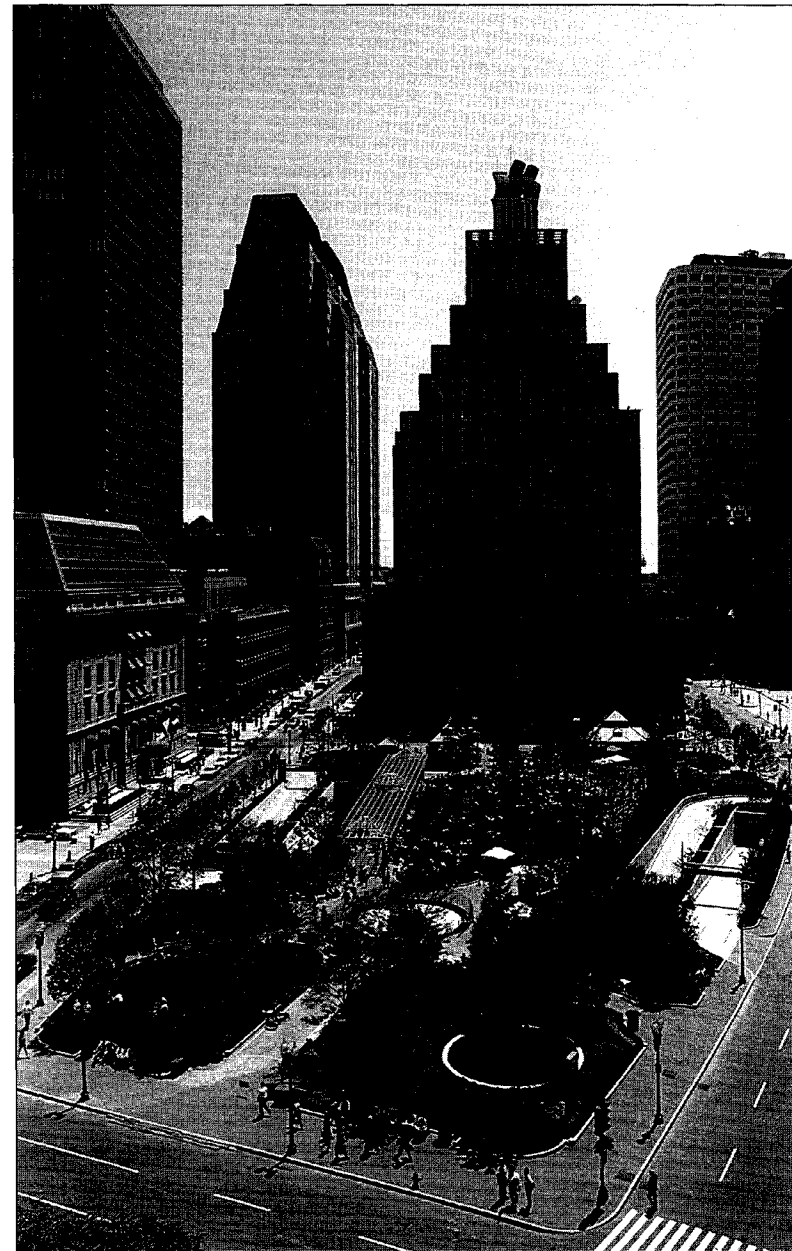


Old Garage

FOPOS

groups, they carefully articulated issues, objectives, options, and requirements. This was done with particular care for the park. The consultants visited approximately 100 parks around the country and prepared a briefing book which compared the parks with plans at a consistent scale. They showed slides to the advisory committee as a so called "armchair tour". Then, about two-thirds of the committee participated in a tour of four cities with urban parks felt to be most relevant to this project: San Francisco, Portland, Oregon, New York and Toronto. On the tour they examined design, operations, use and maintenance. Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland was felt to be a particularly good example. The team learned a great deal on these tours; for example, they learned that water features had to be designed to look good even when the water was turned off (e.g., winter).

The committee debated every aspect of the park, partially because they realized that, as a high visibility public project, it would be thoroughly scrutinized by many factions. The intention was to explore and resolve as many issues as possible in order to make the project more defensible and less controversial. An example of this is the question of providing children's play areas which were consid-



FOPOS

ered but found to be inconsistent with the central objective of the park as a place for passive activities. This question was raised during public review and the committee referred back to the design program to resolve it. Interestingly, the program document itself is quite brief and relies almost exclusively on words to express objectives and requirements. However, it was very successful in capturing and communicating the key requirements.

The use of a competition to select the park designer is another special feature of the process. This approach can be fraught with risk, especially if the competition is structured in a way that eliminates dialogue between the client and the designers. Those involved felt that the process succeeded because the competition was used to “select a designer rather than a design” and because the winning submission followed the program very closely.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Context

Post Office Square is in the heart of Boston’s financial district. Sixty-six thousand people work in the buildings which face the park and many thousands more work within a few blocks. The square itself consists of about 1.7 acres, but including the streets, sidewalks and a small preexisting triangular park (Angell Park), the perceived space is about 4 acres. This space has been called an “urban room” because it is surrounded by mostly highrise buildings which define its edges. Some are significant historically and architecturally (e.g., the Telephone Company building which is Art Deco). Buildings cast shadows which are an important issue for park design, especially on its southern edge.

Four streets (none parallel) bound the project site which is somewhat truncated. The streets carry significant traffic, but are not very busy or loud. Angell Park, a small triangle surrounded by streets, is to the north. Other open space in the general area includes the plaza at Government Center (several blocks away, it is an entirely paved space), the Boston Common and Garden, and Waterfront Park. There was a lack of high quality, pleasant open space in the area, especially in the financial district.

Prior Conditions

The old garage had a number of problems. Three stories above grade and built in 1954, it was an eyesore at best. It was in very poor condition, including structural deterioration. The old garage was laid out and managed in a way that exacerbated traffic and congestion problems. As a result of pricing that favored commuters over shoppers, a large percentage of patrons arrived in the early morning. However, the price structure changed at 8 am and required that a ticket be taken very close to the street, with no space for off-street queuing. These factors resulted in early morning traffic backups that blocked intersections and made it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street. Given the unpleasantness of the view, buildings turned their backs on the square, entering from side streets or parallel streets a block away.

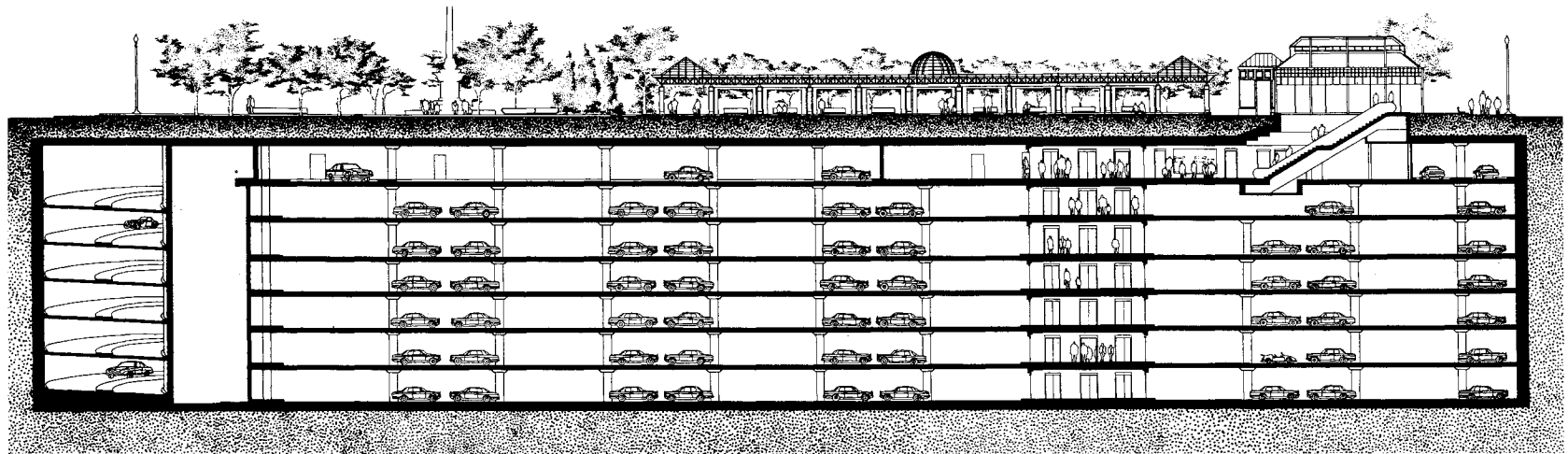
Garage Design

FOPOS recognized that a successful park design would require much input and take a relatively long time. Therefore, design of the garage proceeded before the park in order to shorten the time before revenues would be generated. This created a challenge since FOPOS did not want to constrain the park design any more than necessary by fixed elements of the garage (including ramps, pedestrian entrance, air intakes and exhausts). These were placed where they would least constrain park design. Two sets of long vehicular ramps were included in order to reduce or eliminate cars queuing on the street. The pedestrian entrance was located where it would generate pedestrian movement through the park. The structure was planned to allow for an average four foot depth of soil over the entire garage (though this was more costly), allowing trees and other plantings to be placed anywhere on the site. Where they were sure that large trees would be located, the soil depth was increased.

The garage itself was designed to allow the user to feel safe and comfortable, as well as remain oriented underground. All circulation is routed through a single lobby so that all people coming and going are observed. A flat floor structure with a separate ramp was chosen so that users could see all the way across it — even though the more typical ramped floors would have provided 10% more parking spaces. Lighting is relatively bright and the perimeter walls are illuminated so that the garage feels bright. Graphics are easy to



BILL HORSMAN WITH PERMISSION OF FOPOS



FOPOS

remember and identify. Redundant visual and auditory cues help users find the exit elevators, and names of the streets that bound each side of the site are indicated in the garage to aid in orientation. The overall effect of these design features is that the garage, though entirely underground, is one of the most pleasant and comfortable that any of the site visit team had experienced.

Park Design

The park designer took the program very seriously. At the final selection interview, he showed slides from his submission boards while reading from the program document, illustrating how he had responded to its requirements. This impressed the committee.

The designer used many design features to make the park inviting and attractive. Green is brought all the way to each corner and walkways offset a little so that the park looks as big as possible. For safety, plantings are arranged so that all areas of the park are visible from a street. Planting beds and lawns are tilted up away from the walks so that green areas appear more extensive. A wide variety of plant materials is used so that the park constantly changes and plants are showing colors during as much of the year as possible (when we were there in late winter with snow on the ground, with

hazel was already in bloom). This was important because many users visit the park frequently and can enjoy the changes from week to week. Harvard's Arnold Arboretum donated (technically, loaned) several mature and unusual specimen trees which are planted in special locations.

Detailing in the park is handled with great care and sensitivity. An attempt is made to echo materials and themes from surrounding buildings and the neighboring park. For example, a similar granite is used. The wrought iron fence, which incorporates images of foliage, is whimsical, yet historically appropriate. Lighting and benches are traditional, in keeping with downtown Boston. The low walls containing planting beds are the right height and depth for seating. Stone bollards and corner blocks incorporate an incised decorative pattern picked up from a neighboring building. Care is paid to how brick walkway paving meets the granite walls, with a band of granite softening the transition. Even the drain grates and supports for the vines which will climb the trellises are carefully detailed.



FOPOS

Architectural elements in the park consist of the garage entrance, a glass pavilion housing the cafe, and a 140 foot long trellis that helps define the main pedestrian walkway. The architect's intention was to "dematerialize" the buildings, keeping them light and unobtrusive.

Artworks are also incorporated into the park. A competition was held to select the artists, and three were chosen from 300 entries. All art projects are so integrated into the park design as to seem part of it. Ross Miller designed a subtle, computer controlled lighting scheme which edges the trellis and is programmed with changing patterns which can respond to passing pedestrians. Howard Ben Tre designed two fountains of bronze and green glass, planned to look good even when the water is turned off, as it was when we saw them. The larger one makes a "water dome" above a circle of columns and was described by art critic Lynda Morgenroth of the Boston Globe as "arguably Boston's most compelling contemporary fountain, a sculpture with water as one of its elements, public art utterly at home where it is." Richard Duca designed the iron fences and grates.

Park Users

We visited the site in early March when weather was sunny but quite cold and the snow was deep. Uses of the site consisted mostly of people walking rather briskly through it (rather than using the sidewalks along the streets). Even then we saw some people sitting on the wooden and metal benches and granite walls.

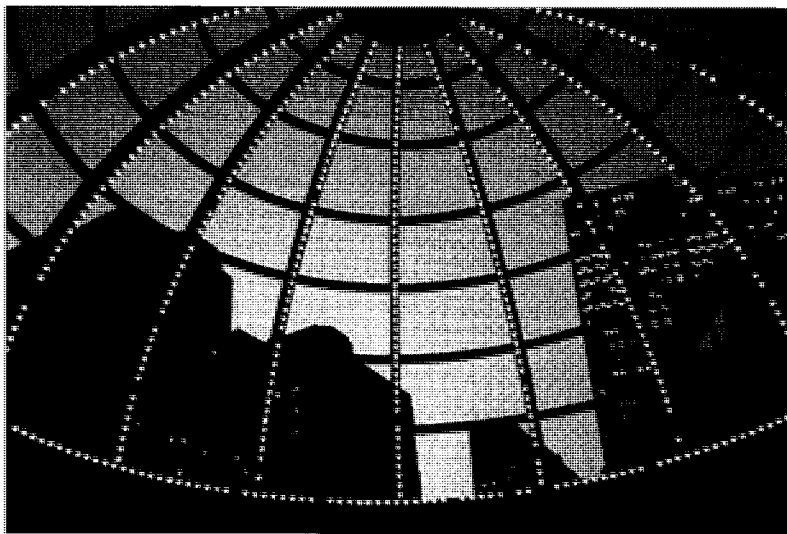
We understand from photos, formal interviews and talking with people in the area, that the park is intensely used in fine weather. Apparently it is often filled to its perceived capacity at lunch on warm days when upwards of 1,500 people may be there.

Users include all types of people who work in the surrounding buildings: maintenance workers, clerical staff, professionals and executives. There is occasional use by families and children. Female users of the park and the garage uniformly expressed that they feel safe there at all hours. This is a clear result of design and management practices.

Impact on Surrounding Buildings and the Neighborhood

The park has had an important impact on the neighborhood and surrounding buildings, some of which have made special improvements to the facades which face the park. The Art Deco Telephone Company building has been extensively renovated since the park opened, including its façade, building sculpture, banners, lighting and paving. Several buildings have opened or improved their entrances which face the park. For example, 50 Federal Street whose address is on a parallel street has installed a banner with its address on its park side entrance. Other buildings are reported to have changed their nominal addresses to the streets on the square or even use the name of the square as their address. The Meridien Hotel has refurbished its park facade, added signage and planters, and operates a seasonal cafe facing the park. Its management reported that weekend occupancy has increased since the park made the neighborhood attractive. It also uses photos from the park and references to the park in its brochures (see Themes section below for quotes).

The park improves the view from office windows and provides an important and appreciated amenity for area workers. Arguably, the park and added parking have increased the value of the buildings



that surround it and will contribute to increasing tax revenues. This, however, is impossible to establish since the real estate market dropped severely during the time the project was being completed. Perhaps the project has slowed the decline in values for surrounding properties or will contribute to their more rapid rebound when the market turns around.

Financing

Financial arrangements for this project are complex and rather unusual. Financing was entirely private. Seed money totaling about \$1 million for plans and studies was solicited by Norman Leventhal from an informal group called Neighbors (forerunner of Friends) of Post Office Square. When the site was to be acquired, the group arranged a \$7 million mortgage on the property and used the money to pay the city, buy out the garage owner's lease and cover the balance of predevelopment costs. For construction and startup expenses, a \$60 million line of credit was obtained privately (it is non-amortizing, interest only). To date, \$45 million of this line has been drawn for construction, to pay back the initial \$7 million loan, and to cover operating deficits (which are projected to continue for

some time). Additional capital consists of \$29 million in equity contributed by stockholders — surrounding businesses who paid \$65,000 per share for 450 shares, each of which carried the right to lease one parking space at market rates. The total cost of the project to date is approximately \$75 million (with an eventual total of about \$80 million required as future operating deficits are capitalized).

Parking fees are set slightly below market to keep utilization high (it is about 80% overall and essentially full at mid-day during the week). However, costs for operations and debt service currently exceed revenues by about \$900,000 per year. This is attributed to the poor economy which has prevented raising parking fees due to somewhat soft demand (there is a 20% office vacancy rate in downtown Boston). Since utilization of the garage is high, rates will be able to be raised as the market improves. Management believes that parking demand will improve before office space demand, since employers who let staff go will rehire and fill already leased space before new space is leased. If the project were not so heavily capitalized, it would be facing difficulties as a result of these significant operating deficits — and park maintenance might suffer. Management, however, is of the opinion that it will be able to continue operations and the current high level of maintenance until the market allows them to reach profitability.

According to terms of the land lease, the city can take over the site after 40 years. However, FOPOS believes that it will not be in its interest to do so if the garage continues to be well managed, since the city will already be receiving all of the net profits, and the take-over would require it to pay \$29 million to the garage stockholders, who will not yet have been paid back their principal.

Management

FOPOS oversees a contractor who operates the garage, which appears to be professionally run and is kept very clean. FOPOS itself manages the park, which is unusual for a space that appears and functions as if it were entirely public. The FOPOS board sets policies, which refer back to the original design program in terms of goals for maintenance and allowable activities (events, such as concerts and weddings were not anticipated and are not allowed). Park maintenance is at a very high level in terms of pruning, lawn care, planting of annuals, trash pick up, snow removal, and so forth.

FOPOS manages the food concession contract. Milk Street Cafe was chosen to provide food service because of their ability to deliver quality food (from a kitchen nearby) and willingness to work with FOPOS on menu, prices and hours. For example, they are required to be open Saturday, though they get little business, in order to keep the park attractive to users. They were selected despite the fact that a franchise operation would have generated more revenue — illustrating the public service values that FOPOS pursues.

Acquiring the Site

Key participants described this as an “impossible project that nevertheless happened.” It was impossible because the owner of the lease on the garage refused to sell out his rights. While the city owned the land, it did not control it. The lease ran until 1994 and the owner was reportedly making a very significant profit on operations. Beyond this, the owner was self made, very wealthy, very well connected politically, had powerful lawyers, and had a reputation for never selling anything.

Before FOPOS began work, the Federal Reserve Bank and the Bank of Boston, institutions with enormous resources, had tried unsuccessfully to buy out the lease so that they could build an office building on the site. Therefore, it was critical that FOPOS obtain eminent domain powers in order to have sufficient leverage to be able to pressure the leaseholder into negotiations. Although he fought the granting of such status, the city did confer it on FOPOS and assisted in negotiating the buyout. In the end, a deal was struck where FOPOS would pay \$3 million for the lease and the garage owner would be allowed to raise his parking fees for an interim period prior to demolition (which may have generated an additional \$3 million). This creative solution allowed part of the cost of the buyout to be paid by parking users rather than FOPOS.

Would the City Forego Revenues from a Major Development?

This site could, eventually, have been used for a major office building. Even while FOPOS was trying to acquire it, a major developer had a design prepared for the property and took it informally to the city. The theoretical value of the site upon taking or expiration of the lease is difficult to determine, especially since the market has since collapsed. However, with the ability to build a large office building on it, the site could have been worth as much as \$35 mil-

lion to the city. Property tax revenues would have generated perhaps \$1.5 million per year. By the time the developer's project was proposed, however, the mayor was committed to the park and did not encourage the developer to proceed.

THEMES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Building a Network of Support

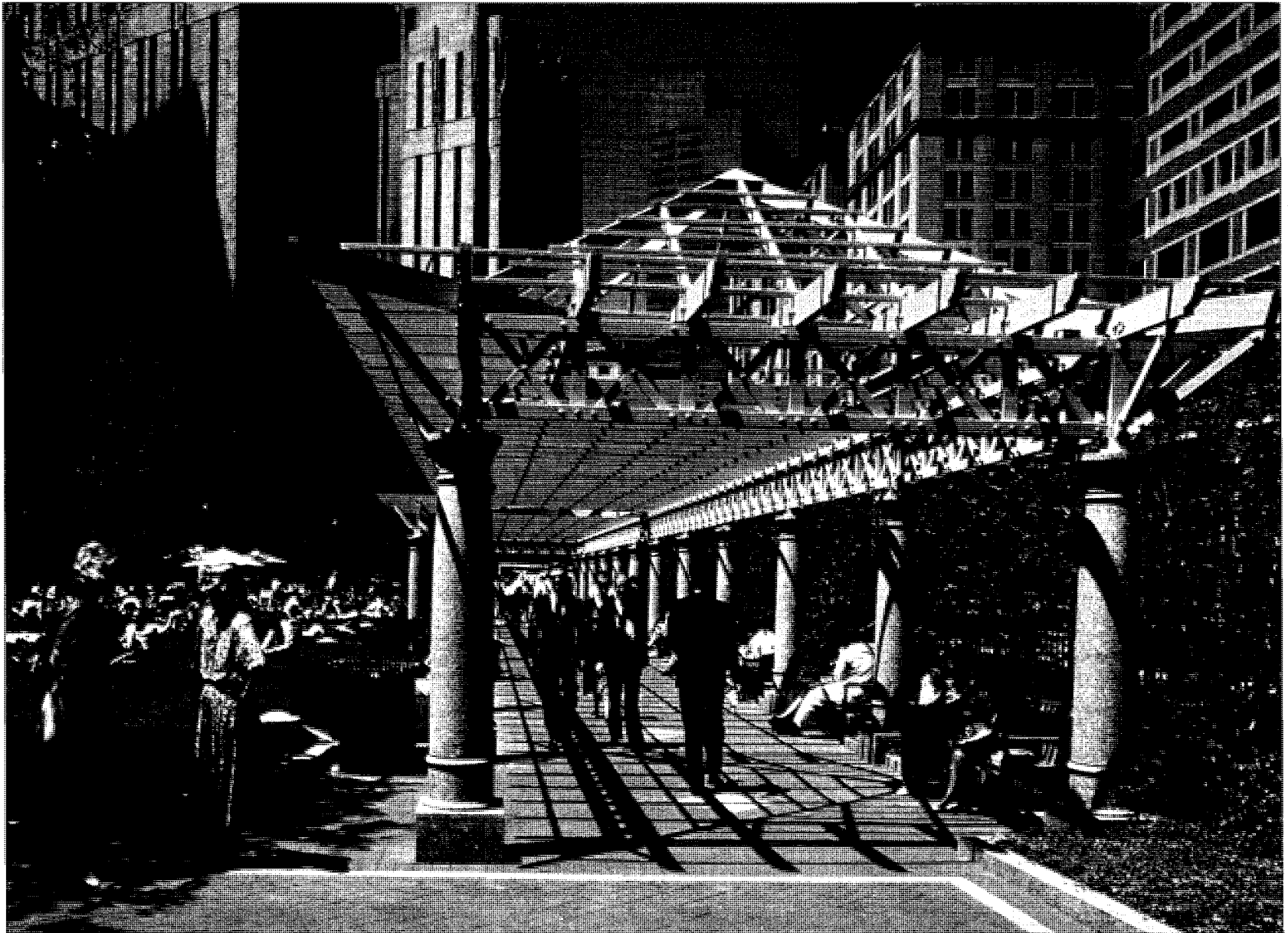
This project “broke down the wall of mystique around corporate Boston” said Richard Heath of the Franklin Park Coalition. Very early on, Norman Leventhal and Bob Weinberg made a special effort to get to know Heath and visit Franklin Park, where Leventhal had grown up. They asked Heath to support the park at Post Office Square. Heath was skeptical at first, but his board agreed to support the downtown project, recognizing that many people who lived in the neighborhood worked downtown and would benefit from the park. His skepticism was overcome when the downtown business community reciprocated with support for Franklin Park. Both groups learned that they could help each other. Connections such as these not only helped build support for their project, it also contributed to the creation of the Boston Greenspace Alliance which united the previously fragmented and competing world of Boston park advocates.

Quality in Design and Maintenance

Quality is the hallmark of every aspect of this project, from design to construction to operations. “They wanted the best park that money could buy,” said Richard Heath. “There is so much that is interesting, it is a park of incredible beauty,” said Mark Primack of the Boston Greenspace Alliance.

An Excellent Program is Critical to a Successful Design

“The park program made this project a success,” said Norman Leventhal, Chairman of FOPOS, who felt that the program constrained the problem but left the solution free. And Craig Halvorson, the landscape architect who won the competition, said “the program was the reason we decided to enter the design competition. It wasn't slick. It was serious and well thought out. It is uncommon to find a clear, well developed program.” The design



FOPOS



FOPOS

committee referred back to the program when controversies arose since it represented their fundamental agreement about what was needed.

Study Similar Projects and Learn as Much as You Can

The visits to and comparative analysis of other parks allowed the design team to learn about what works, what doesn't work and what is possible in an urban park. This contributed greatly to the quality of their discussions and to their understanding of what they wanted.

Open Space as Orientation Device

In Boston's dense financial district, where the streets do not follow a grid, an open space provides a landmark for orientation and allows the surrounding buildings to be seen.

Build It and They Will Come

Within one week of completion, the public had "taken over" the park. Many people are said to be habitual users and these "regulars" are observed to pick up trash as needed. "I almost cried the first time I saw people on the grass" said Charlotte Kahn, of Boston Urban Gardeners. With tongue in cheek, Mark Primack of the Boston Greenspace Alliance said "the park is so crowded they should charge admission."

Marketing a Hotel Because it is Next to a Park

"This beautiful park has made a great difference to our hotel" said Jane Pritzker, Marketing Manager of Le Meridien. In its marketing brochure, the upscale hotel features a view of its building from across the park. The brochure's text features the park twice: "Overlooking the beautiful Park at Post Office Square..." and "The Cafe Fleuri, with its view of the Park at Post Office Square..." The hotel attributes an increase in its weekend business to the opening of the park, since the economy has remained poor during that period. They market to horticultural groups to hold meetings there, so that they can see interesting species of plants in the park. And, when they market to weddings, they point out that the park provides a special setting for taking pictures.

Why a New Urban Park is So Important

It is very difficult to establish a new open space in a dense urban area. But creating a new urban park "fights despair" that cities can't do anything really good for their citizens, said Charlotte Kahn of Boston Urban Gardeners, who "come(s) here for my mental health." Mark Primack agrees, saying that "the park is a symbol of civic culture; it shows that the city is viable; it shows what business can do for the people."

The Garage Subsidizes the Park

As John Connolly from the mayor's office pointed out, putting a parking garage under a park can be a strategy for gaining and paying for new urban open spaces. The revenue from the garage pays for the construction and maintenance of the park.

Enlightened Self Interest as the Basis for Creating a Public Benefit

"No one got hurt; everybody won." said Richard Heath, who felt that there was a good balance of self interest and the public good. While the leaders of this project probably do or will derive some economic benefit from it, their efforts (and probably their motivation) was principally to create a public amenity. "This park is the greatest gift to the city since Faneuil Hall" said Mark Primack.

Making an Impossible Project Happen

"This project was impossible," said Bob Weinberg, president of FOPOS. Gerhard Freche, member of FOPOS board and former CEO of New England Telephone, added that "it looked so hopeless 12 years ago. I can't count the number of meetings we had. You find out that you can do something if you hang in long enough. There were a lot of different obstacles."

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

To remove a blighted garage and create a high quality urban park.

The replacement of the old garage with the Park at Post Office Square represents a significant achievement. It provides a place of beauty in a crowded part of Boston.

To replace and add parking, and use parking revenues to support the park.

The garage added about 450 spaces beyond replacing those lost. While revenue is not yet sufficient to support operations, it should be within a few years. Then, revenue will support this park and contribute to maintaining neighborhood parks.

To improve traffic and circulation.

Traffic problems in the square which were caused by the old garage have been eliminated, despite the 50% increase in parking spaces. Garage ramp design allows space to queue and requiring payment prior to reclaiming the car reduces waiting and queuing time. Most pedestrians choose to cross the park as they pass through the square.

To enhance the value of surrounding properties and the attractiveness of the area.

The parking provision apparently makes space easier to lease in this area (particularly for older, underparked buildings). The park is a great amenity which has generated improvement of the surrounding buildings. This is said to enhance property values (but in a way that cannot be measured).

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

Who uses the park — yuppies, or a broader segment of the population?

The park is reported to be used by a broad spectrum of users, mostly drawn from the surrounding buildings. These include all levels of office workers from maintenance staff to clerks and runners to secretaries to analysts, stock brokers and lawyers. Use by executives is reported to be less common. There is limited use by families with children (no specific facilities are provided for them), though this group is not thought to be heavily represented in the area.

What is the impact of the park on the surrounding neighborhood?

Many improvements to surrounding buildings are attributable to the park. Buildings have opened entrances on the park and the hotel has a cafe on a previously unused terrace facing the park.

Was the project mainly done by businesses to enhance the value of surrounding properties?

While the park has enhanced the surrounding properties, the motivation for most business leaders appears to have been more civic pride and a desire to contribute to the city than personal gain. Enlightened self interest may describe the attitudes of some contributors, while for others it was probably entirely a civic contribution.

Was there participation in the park design?

Yes. Most participation was by the design committee which represented a wide variety of interests and expertise. Designs were displayed and comments invited from the public.

Replicability

The project's circumstances and financing are unique. However, there are features of the project which should be replicable. If land can be obtained in a downtown area with high parking demand, the parking revenue could be used to finance a park above the garage. Raising capital by selling the rights to parking spaces might also be replicable.

The process used for this project was exemplary and has several aspects which can be profitably emulated by a variety of other kinds of projects. Some of these include strong leadership, building coalitions between downtown and neighborhood interests, inclusion of representatives of a broad spectrum of interests in the planning process, use of volunteer advisory boards for technical as well as design issues, visiting and learning from other similar projects, careful programming and articulation of design requirements, structuring a competition to select a design team rather than a design, careful attention to detail, and excellent management of the project after completion.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee felt that this project was truly excellent in all respects, from conception, to planning, through execution and management, stating that they did excellent planning at a level you rarely see — at every stage it was remarkable...They did an excellent job of programming and then accomplished all the goals they established....they put it all together." Financing was innovative and even ingenious, making no use of public funds. It impressed the committee that the project will eventually return significant sums to the city, including funds to aid other parks. Post Office Square was seen as a needed, safe and attractive parking garage crowned by a beautiful and well used public park. The Selection Committee saw this as a solution which might find application in other cities.

The Selection Committee found no faults with this project. It was ranked below the winners only because the committee felt that, while it dealt with the important problem of creating needed open space in the dense urban core, this was perhaps a less pressing problem than the winners faced (even if they were not wholly successful in solving them).

For More Information...

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WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT URBAN EXCELLENCE?

The Rudy Bruner Award is a search for urban excellence. It seeks to identify and reward excellent urban places, and to serve as a forum for debating urban issues and the nature of urban excellence. So, what did we learn about urban excellence in this round of the Award through reviewing ninety-three submissions, visiting five finalists, and selecting two winners?

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES

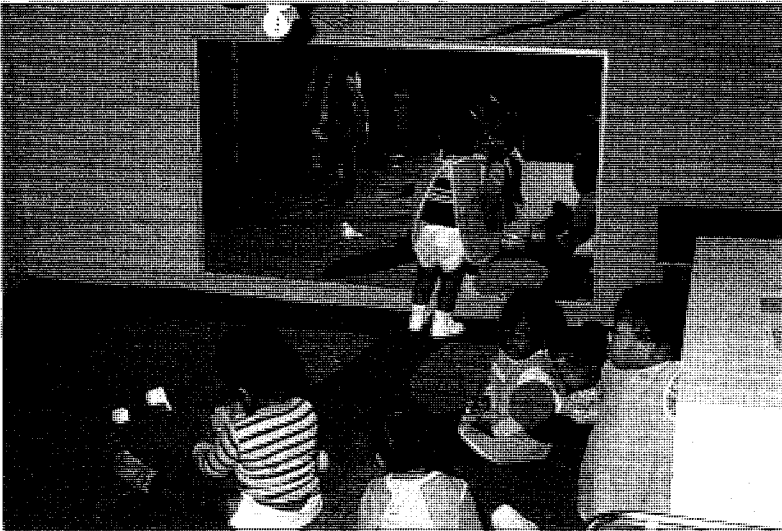
The theme that emerged from this year's award, **rebuilding communities**, is demonstrated in varying ways by all of the finalists and certainly the two winners. The often recited litany of urban ills — human distress, poverty, crime, oppression, homelessness, physical deterioration — too often lead to a wringing of hands and abandonment of the locus of these problems by flight to the suburbs. How refreshing, then, are the stories from the finalists and winners about how these ills are being overcome.

Community is not defined by nostalgia for a small town way of life or colorful immigrant neighborhoods. Community is about people working together to make positive things happen where they live — things they could not do on their own. The two winners exemplify situations where local residents and leaders have come together to turn around neighborhoods devastated by neglect, disinvestment, mismanagement and, in the case of Newark, physical destruction from the 1967 riot.

In both these areas, the level of deterioration was extreme, pessimism was rampant, and the obstacles to be overcome were daunting. Newark's Central Ward looked as though it had been bombed. At the old Columbia Point housing project, only about 350 of 1,500 units were occupied by public housing tenants and many of the empty units were boarded up; some occupied as drug dens.

In Newark, **New Community Corporation** took a long term perspective on community development. Msgr. Linder asked community leaders for a twenty year commitment to rebuilding. NCC started small and always included the residents as key decision makers to ensure responsiveness to their needs. What brought back a sense of community in this area is the way New Community has rewoven the urban fabric through physical rebuilding, housing, jobs, a supermarket, safety and security, day care, health care, and educational programs. Poor people who lived there before now have hope and opportunity.

At **Harbor Point**, the residents organized themselves and, as they became experienced, took charge. They refused to allow a patch-up job, finding a private developer with whom they could work as equal partners and together built a complete new community where the devastated housing project had stood. Whatever tensions may arise from people of different incomes and backgrounds living together are more than compensated for by the joys of living in a safe neighborhood, sharing amenities and solving problems together peacefully and effectively.



At **Betts-Longworth**, the community had been devastated by years of successive misguided government programs — from highway construction to urban renewal to historic preservation efforts. But, what was left of the community refused to give up and helped to demonstrate the quality of community that could be achieved through effective preservation. In this case, enlightened planners and city officials finally put together a program that worked for the residents and in the interests of rebuilding. A mixed income community is re-emerging from an area that came close to being leveled.

In San Francisco, the number of homeless people had been growing and the newspapers were reporting stories about people dying in the streets on cold nights. The homeless are a symbol of a society in distress and unable to provide for its poorest members. While the **Beyond Homelessness** program has not solved the problem, it has addressed it comprehensively and provided many services that were absent or sorely inadequate.

The **Park at Post Office Square**, in an otherwise vibrant downtown commercial district, replaced an ugly and dangerous parking structure with a beautiful park that attracts office workers and contrib-

utes a focus to the area. Downtown areas are too often unattractive, unpleasant, crime ridden places. Here, a real contribution is made toward reversing these trends.

A Comprehensive Approach: Providing Services, Not Just Buildings

Fragmentation of analysis and piecemeal provision of services has been a tremendous impediment to solving urban problems. Programs tend to address a single issue or problem rather than taking a holistic approach. This is partly an artifact of our specialized, bureaucratic and technocratic society which has an agency and a program for each ill. Thus, a department of housing is concerned with shelter, transportation with getting from home to work or school. Health, education, welfare, labor and commerce all are separate. But an individual or a community that has a problem in one of these areas is likely to face problems in several of them — and they are, in fact, closely interrelated. A person who doesn't have education and skills probably can't get a job, can't afford decent housing, is likely to be on public assistance, doesn't eat correctly, is more likely to be physically ill or suffer mental problems, is less likely to be able to care adequately for his or her children, and so forth in an ever lowering spiral.

While this specialization of government programs is understandable to some extent in a society of experts, it greatly hampers addressing these multi-faceted and multi-dimensional problems. The notion of dealing in a more holistic way with the plethora of problems an individual faces, perhaps overlapping many of these disciplines, has not generally been taken very seriously (though it is interesting to note that the Clinton administration proposes such an approach through its program of creating 110 Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities).

One powerful idea that contributes to seeing problems and solutions holistically, is that of focusing on the individual, community or place — rather than on the single issue. With significant community input, a local organization can stay close to the needs of its people. New Community Corporation, Harbor Point, and Beyond Homelessness are particularly good examples of this kind of approach.

New Community Corporation started as a community development corporation (CDC), which it still is — though now it is also much more. The initial focus was on rebuilding on burned out sites and providing shelter for families and senior citizens. Soon after its formation, however, NCC began to blossom into a service provider — always responding to needs of its community. Among its first ventures was daycare, essential to poor people so they can go to work or to school. In response to the level of need in the area and the lack of other providers, NCC's Babyland has become the largest network of daycare facilities in New Jersey. Similarly, security was a major need that was not being responded to by civic authorities. Rather than pay a private security company, NCC formed its own, providing jobs for residents at the same time. NCC has also responded to needs for job placement and training, education, postal services, and retail shopping. While it is still building housing, leaders see its most important challenge and contribution to be in job and wealth creation — because employed people can take care of many of their own needs.

Harbor Point also had a focus on people, not just buildings. The tenants' association was very clear that it would not be workable simply to mix income levels — services were needed, especially by those in subsidized units. The initial contacts between the tenants and the developer were through Dave Connelly, a private, for-profit social service provider whose organization continues to provide important services. There is a community health center, a daycare facility, and a youth center for use of all residents. The ability to refer a resident to services provided on site has been important to the success of the mixed income model. The implementation of this continuum of services grew out of an impressive process. Connelly and his group, working with the tenants' association, developed a planning matrix of social service, health and educational needs by age group. Most importantly, they made a commitment to providing services to address all of the needs rated as important.

Beyond Homelessness is based on the Beyond Shelter plan. The plan is a comprehensive approach to the problem of homelessness, looking at its many manifestations and providing services as well as facilities for people in many situations and with many kinds of needs — from drop in assistance to transitional housing.

In reviewing the initial set of ninety-three submissions for the award,



we were struck by the number of projects that combined services with facilities. These included several housing projects, another homeless project and a sheltered living facility for people with AIDS.

ADDRESSING CRITICAL URBAN PROBLEMS

Each of the finalists is excellent in many ways. This made the Selection Committee's task of picking a winner extremely challenging. In its winnowing process, two features stood out as "tests" for considering a project as winner:

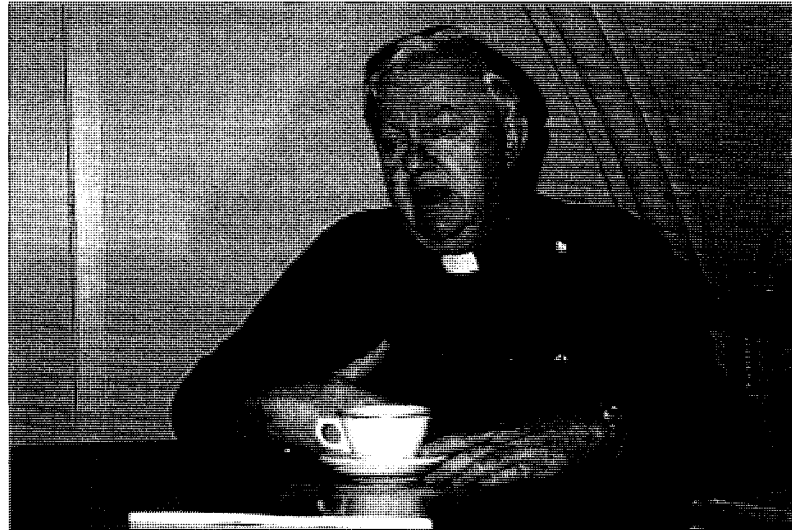
- Did the project address critical urban and social issues?
- Had the city, the project, or its participants helped to create the problems that it addressed?

Betts-Longworth. The Selection Committee recognized that historic preservation and neighborhood rebuilding are key urban issues. Their concern with this project was that, no matter how good a job the current city administration was doing, they still bore at least

some responsibility for turning this district into the huge problem that it had become. Deterioration of the West End was exacerbated by ramming an interstate highway through it, but in Betts-Longworth, earlier city programs for renewal and preservation had failed and contributed to the loss of historic buildings and the failure of some small, minority contractors (in a show of good faith, the city did reimburse some of their claims). Some participants, however, felt that the city's efforts to make good on a string of past failures made it even more, not less, deserving of recognition.

Beyond Homelessness addresses an issue that is indisputably crucial to today's cities and presents an approach to it that is clearly meritorious. However, while the city has more recently passed an ordinance that prohibits conversion of residence hotels to tourist use, San Francisco, like many other cities, greatly contributed to the growth of its homeless population by allowing many single room occupancy hotels and other lower cost housing to be converted to other uses or to be torn down to make way for office and commercial development. Some areas of low cost housing were wiped out wholesale in urban renewal projects (e.g., South of Market and the convention center). On balance, the Selection Committee referred to its experience of San Francisco, with the sense of homeless people on every street corner, and felt that the problem is too intractable, that the current administration had not carried the plan forward, and that the projects represented too small an impact to merit the award.

The Selection Committee recognized that the **Park at Post Office Square** was excellent in every way: from process, to design, to management. The creation of a beautiful and valued urban open space, the improvement of traffic and orientation, and all this using private capital certainly represented a major contribution to the public good. It was not named as a winner because of the extreme importance the Selection Committee placed on the theme of rebuilding devastated communities. Though the committee felt that Post Office Square was both important and without flaw, it was not seen as being as socially essential as the winners. The winners, by contrast, though not flawless, both addressed critical issues in an outstanding way and with large scale impact.



SIMEON BRUNER

DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE: PERSISTENCE IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING ODDS

Each of the projects dealt with problems whose solutions appeared "impossible" in some way: politically, socially, or financially. They required vision and persistence well beyond what can normally be expected.

Harbor Point was more than two-thirds abandoned, had a terrible image and reputation, a tenants group with no money, no development experience or political clout, an isolated location, and a problem site with poor soils. How could it be rebuilt into a viable, mixed race, mixed income neighborhood? To do so took tremendous vision and persistence on the part of the tenant group. Offered \$10 million by HUD to fix the place up, they decided that this would be a band-aid approach. They demanded — and got — to team up with a private, for-profit developer who worked with them for years to get approval of the project the team wanted. The developer-tenant partnership still works together on solving day-to-day problems and managing the community.

New Community Corporation. Newark — rated by some quality of life surveys to be “the worst city in the U.S.” — was in ashes; what could be done? Would major actors make a 20 year commitment to rebuilding — and follow through? With strong leadership, intense community participation, and an initial strategy of tackling one project at a time, the group succeeded in building experience, a reputation, and a critical mass of successes — and has turned this neighborhood around. One measure of this success is the growth in private investment in surrounding areas, which have recently sprouted owner-occupied townhomes where none would have dared build them before.

To some extent, New Community Corporation stepped in to fill a void left by what could be described as a dysfunctional city government. NCC provided services that would normally be offered by a city but were largely lacking in the Central Ward, including social services, planning, housing, security, and trash removal. NCC became almost a “surrogate city” for this piece of the urban fabric.

The Park at Post Office Square did not own its future site and the garage operator who had it tied up under lease had refused to sell it to several major prospects (including the Federal Reserve Bank), while the city was not anxious to take it by eminent domain. No one knew of a precedent for a public park developed with private resources and supported by revenue from a garage. But the leaders made a commitment and persisted until they prevailed. The turning points were gaining approval of their public corporation with eminent domain powers and using those powers as a “stick” while they “talked softly” and concluded the deal to buy out the garage operator.

Who at **Betts-Longworth** would believe that the city — whose failure in past efforts had actually contributed to devastating the neighborhood — could finally bring off a quality development in the area and save most of what was left of the historic building stock? But, acting in good faith, the city came up with the “Land Rush/Wagon Train” strategy, got the banks to go along, convinced the small developers that the program would work — and it did. Now Betts-Longworth is a sought after neighborhood close to downtown.

Beyond Homelessness addresses what may be the most intractable problem in urban America, contributed to by a shrinking stock of

low cost housing, lack of community mental health services, and an economy in recession. While Beyond Homelessness hasn’t solved the problem — there are still many (perhaps more) homeless people on the streets — it has addressed it comprehensively, with projects for each step in the process of moving off the streets. This required getting a wide range of public and private social service providers, community developers, city agencies, and homeless advocates all pulling in the same direction — a notable achievement in a field that takes Herculean efforts just to keep it from deteriorating further.

BALANCING LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Several of the finalists had strong leaders: people with vision and charisma who could set a direction and bring people and institutions along to make things happen. Strong leadership also carries a degree of risk, however. If a charismatic leader is too strong, he or she may not be inclined to build a capable organization or involve constituents to the degree necessary to achieve buy in and support. Often, if the leader stumbles or moves on, a crisis is generated and sometimes the project collapses. Thus, balancing leadership and participation is critical for long term success.

For **New Community Corporation**, Msgr. Linder provided vision and encouragement for 25 years and Mary Smith led the foundation and growth of the Babyland child care services. Linder, Smith and others have grown an organization with many capable staff and managers. As important, they have always nurtured strong community involvement and participation (e.g., from tenants) in designing and managing their projects. Their strategic plan employs executive mentors drawn from the new board of directors and assigned to each upper manager at NCC as well as a major emphasis on management staff development in order to ensure continuity. This plan will be especially important when, eventually, Msgr. Linder is no longer available.

While Joe Corcoran, head of the developer team at **Harbor Point**, brought a vision of mixed race, mixed income communities, equally impressive leadership developed within the tenants association, from members such as Ruby Jaundoo and Eta Johnson. Corcoran clearly believed in partnership with the tenants as the only way to make such a project work; this is evidenced by the arrangements his

firm made with them. The tenants, on their side, were already highly organized and effective, having fought for everything they had achieved up to that time. They became even more capable as they faced and met the challenges of planning, building and managing their project.

The **Park at Post Office Square** benefited from the strong leadership of Norman Leventhal (chairman) and Bob Weinberg (president). Leventhal brought the vision to conceive of the project and the connections to muster support at high levels in the city and business communities. Weinberg brought the ability to get things done. For a private project with strong leaders, there was also a major commitment to participation of community groups. While this was partly done out of political savvy, it was also based on a belief in meaningful participation as a path to excellence.

Beyond Homelessness grew from the commitment of then-mayor Art Agnos to address this problem. He activated a multi-dimensional task force of city agencies, homeless advocates, social service providers and others and gained input from many sides. He was prepared to direct considerable resources toward eradicating homelessness and took major steps in that direction. Some say he made too great a commitment to this problem, treating it as his "crusade" and failing to adequately broaden its base of support. It was perceived as being "his plan" and, hence of less immediacy to the next mayor (Frank Jordan), though he has continued the projects that were already underway, he has not increased resources in proportion to the growth of the problem. However, in considering the individual projects, there was considerable participation in their planning and design.

Leadership at **Betts-Longworth** has come from residents' groups and preservationists as well as the city, though, in recent developments, the city appears to have assumed the key role. In part, this is due to the level of devastation which eliminated all but the most stalwart residents. City-conceived plans for the Land Rush and Wagon Train, as well as the influx of city funds, ultimately turned the district around. Now it will be up to resident groups to keep it viable. The city, in the meantime, wants to move on to preserve and rehab other neighborhoods, although the initiative appears to come from the city more than the communities.

EFFECTIVE, ON-GOING MANAGEMENT

However excellent a place may be as developed, it requires an ongoing process of management to keep it that way — or to reinvent it in relation to evolving challenges. In projects that evolved with strong leadership or with broad based participation (or both) the issue revolves around how to translate those forces into day to day monitoring and decision making. Good planners (who need vision and perhaps charisma) may or may not be good managers. New people and perhaps new or modified organizational structures may be needed.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of ongoing management is the **Park at Post Office Square**. Run by the Friends of Post Office Square and with a substantial budget, great attention is paid to every detail of operations, from clearing sidewalks to ensuring an attractive menu and pricing at the food concession. While some services are provided directly (such as gardening maintenance at the park) others are contracted, but with clear performance requirements and careful monitoring (such as food service and garage operations). Not only are management policies very well conceived, they are very effectively carried out, as confirmed by the levels of cleanliness and maintenance evident throughout the park and garage.

At **Harbor Point**, which grew out of a partnership between the developer and the tenants, the challenge has been for the tenants to stay involved. Since the tenants' association started and grew by facing management problems at the former public housing project, they were well equipped to address similar issues in the new development. The organization of the Harbor Point Apartment Company as an equal partnership between the developers and the community task force (tenants) ensures tenant involvement in and responsibility for management. The company has continued involvement in all aspects of running the facilities, though they choose to contract out certain specific services.

New Community Corporation, with twenty-five years of experience of developing and running projects, has assumed a major role in management. Seeing operations and services as a source of both tenant satisfaction and jobs, NCC has become a major management company. For example, it runs its own security service, providing hundreds of jobs.

For **Beyond Homelessness**, ongoing management and services are provided by the entities which run each of the projects. These range from CDCs (such as Chinese Community Housing) to church affiliated groups (St. Vincent de Paul) to private non-profit social service agencies (Chemical Awareness and Treatment Services).

Every community developer must be able to understand and maneuver through the highly technical worlds of finance, design and development (as well as the more traditional realms of community organizing and social services). The winners and finalists showed the ability to take on these disciplines, learn their language, and work with experts to make projects successful.

THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

To do a project well, a great deal of knowledge and expertise is needed. This may include knowing how to maneuver through the political process, how to develop financial support or satisfy funding agencies, and how to master planning, design and construction. Sometimes a community group develops this expertise itself, though it may take them quite a while and a lot of mistakes and hard knocks along the way. Each of the finalists and winners took a different approach to developing and using technical expertise.

The **Park at Post Office Square** availed itself of top experts for every part of its undertaking. This was made possible by the substantial corporate resources they had available and grew out of the leaders' commitment to quality and doing the best possible job. Not only did they hire outstanding design firms such as Skidmore Owings and Merrill, but they also selected the best talent for landscape design and public art through competitions. In addition, they had several oversight committees which made local expertise available for free on an advisory basis. These included committees on the park, the garage, and technical aspects of construction.

Harbor Point also used teams of outstanding professionals including Goody Clancy architects and Carol Johnson landscape architect. Perhaps to balance the power of the developer's experts, the tenants' group also had an architectural advisor, Communitas (Antonio di Mambro). While the developer's designers were committed to being sensitive to user needs, having their own expert architec-

tural advisor allowed the tenants to feel fully represented. And, of course, by virtue of teaming up with a professional developer (Corcoran Mullin Jennison), the team gained invaluable expertise in finance, construction, and marketing.

Starting out humbly, **New Community Corporation** has grown through experience on dozens of projects to have tremendous expertise as a community developer. It has tremendous capabilities in community organization, political processes, planning, developing funding sources, construction, management, and business operations. Recognizing the need to address key design problems, NCC was among the first clients to employ Oscar Newman, an architect who developed the concept of defensible space. NCC continues to find ways to make expertise available in creative ways. The new NCC Foundation has a program where executives on the board mentor NCC managers and share their experience.

At **Betts-Longworth**, planners realized that new, small scale developers could easily fail without technical and financial support. The city had the sound idea of making expertise and advice about historic renovation, building codes and financing available to small, sometimes inexperienced developers, thus contributing to the success and growth in capability of this group. They made available city personnel and consultants, and arranged contacts with bankers, to provide the needed assistance.

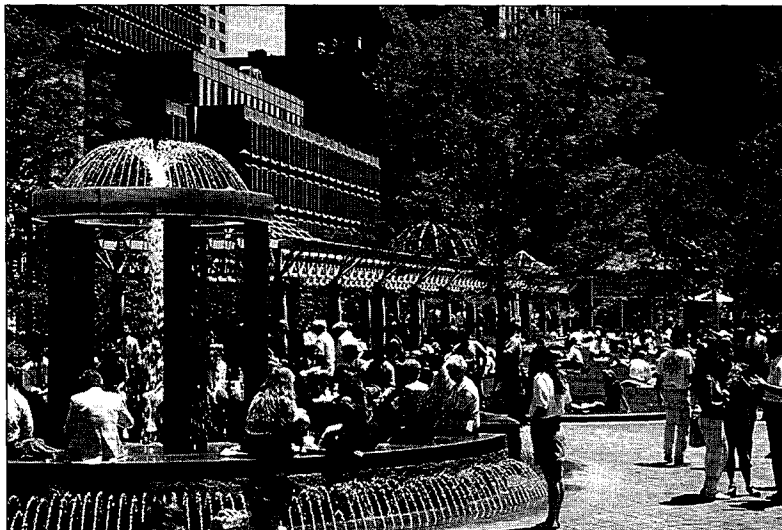
LEVERAGING SCARCE RESOURCES THROUGH IMAGINATIVE USE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROGRAMS

Several of this round's projects take unconventional and imaginative approaches to urban development. While it is not unusual for a non-profit developer to cobble together many sources of funding, and we hear more and more about public-private partnerships, there are several examples here of for-profit entities making unusual contributions and playing unusual roles.

While the **Park at Post Office Square** is a big ticket project with major corporate sponsorship, many aspects of its financing scheme show the clever leveraging of resources. When the deal was struck to buy out the leaseholder of the old garage, part of the compensation was achieved through allowing him to raise parking fees for a period, in effect charging garage users for site acquisition. This was



GOODY-CLANCY ARCHITECTS



FOPOS

the first step in a process that will eventually lead to the new garage subsidizing not only its park, but neighborhood parks as well. Another aspect of this model which might be replicated in dense urban cores is having the surrounding office building owners and tenants buy the rights to parking spaces in the garage. Most of the equity for the project was raised in this way. The whole notion of private development of an effectively public urban park is unprecedented — and particularly welcome in an era when government is having more difficulty finding resources for this type of project.

New Community Corporation has made use of many public and private funding arrangements, but prefers to be as independent as it can. In recent years, it has entered into profit making businesses, using the profits as seed money for projects that do not fit into traditionally funded categories. It opened a Pathmark supermarket of which it is co-owner, as well as several wholly-owned ventures. Every venture retains important social goals in terms, for example, of offering better quality and value food or creating jobs for local residents.

At **Harbor Point**, a for-profit developer teamed up with the tenants in an equal partnership. Why? Because he thought that this was the only way to make the project work. This unconventional arrangement appears to be working for management and operating profits, when they are achieved, will be split — with the tenants group using its share to improve already intensive services. The project also benefited from a large inflow of public funding, a large slice of which was arranged by the state housing finance authority which was willing to take on some of the risk because of the importance it attributed to the project. Syndication of tax writeoffs also played a major role.

Betts-Longworth faced the challenge of getting small entrepreneurs together with conservative banks in a district where failure had become chronic. In order to minimize the risk to all parties, the city asked several banks to form a consortium, creating a pool of funds sufficient to get a critical mass of buildings rehabilitated. The city gave grants and helped arrange tax preferences for small developers — whom they also supported with technical expertise. The “Wagon Train” public relations campaign painted an appropriate image of banding together in the face of adverse conditions and all moving forward together.

ACHIEVING QUALITY IN URBAN PLACES

Quality may seem like an obvious attribute of excellence, but it is often elusive — even when it is pursued. With projects that must leverage scarce resources, as all these have had to do, quality may be even harder to achieve. What stands out in the finalists and winners is the importance of the commitment to the pursuit of quality, how difficult it can be to achieve, how rewarding when achieved, and how its lack is felt if it is not attained.

Quality is the hallmark of every aspect of the **Park at Post Office Square**, in design, construction and operations. They wanted the best project that could be achieved — and they got it — by hiring the best consultants, by getting community people involved who recognized quality, and by visiting similar projects and learning about what really mattered and what really worked. The park and public art projects are beautiful and highly appreciated. Attention to detail permeates every aspect of the park and the garage, from plant selection and placement to lighting design, from security to maintenance.

Harbor Point replaced a project conceived around outmoded planning concepts and constructed to bare minimum standards with one of considerable quality, where it is impossible to distinguish a unit occupied by subsidized tenants from those at market rate. The commitment to quality was based on a philosophy which holds that quality is deserved by public housing tenants and needed to attract and retain market rate tenants. However, the level of quality achieved at Harbor Point was won in continuous battles with regulatory agencies, who put many impediments in the way. Many of the materials at Harbor Point are considered to be serious compromises by the designers, who argued for more durable selections (for example, the use of painted siding rather than something that would require less maintenance).

New Community Corporation holds to a similar philosophy, that “the poor deserve quality services”. This can be seen at their Pathmark Supermarket where high quality food and service are paramount. Similarly, Babyland provides excellent child care in well designed facilities. However, the quality of design of NCC projects varies significantly. Some are well designed and constructed, while others suffer in terms of delivering quality to the



tenants. While the quality of services is quite high, the same level of attention has not always been paid to physical design. Though the Selection Committee was effusive in praising NCC's work in most areas, it took care to note that the poor also deserved beauty and good design — but found it distinctly lacking in some of the NCC housing projects.

At **Betts-Longworth**, one objective was to retain a high level of quality in the historical rehabilitations. However, this was compromised to a significant degree by the overriding aim of getting a critical mass of projects completed. In order to assist small developers with marginally viable projects, the city refrained from enforcing strict rehabilitation standards, some of which would have cost added money (e.g., insisting on the use of historical materials and details) and the quality of some of the projects suffers for it. A higher level is achieved in new construction at Longworth Square, where the city brought in a well qualified builder from the suburbs.

Some of the projects comprising **Beyond Homelessness** were very well designed, providing a high level of quality of space, design and finishes to a group that is not usually accorded it. The McMillan



Drop In Center is a good example, where space is arranged with great sensitivity to a variety of often conflicting requirements and the colors, shapes and materials are cheerful, stimulating and clearly non-institutional.

Thus, the provision of quality design and services is a hallmark of excellent urban places — and, where it is lacking, even generally excellent places are less than they would otherwise have been.

CONCLUSION

The 1993 Rudy Bruner Award sought and found projects that contribute powerfully to bettering life for city dwellers, focusing on exemplary solutions to the problems of deteriorating communities.

These problems are widespread; hardly any metropolitan area has been able to overcome them entirely or without enormous struggle. On the other hand, the texture and character of the problems are unique in each location — people, places, history and geography vary greatly. What communities share is the need to begin the process of rebuilding. They must find local leadership, carefully define their problems and goals, use the local and national resources they find available, and fashion unique and innovative solutions that respond to their special conditions and needs.

While partisan politics are found everywhere, the winning projects succeeded in gaining broad ownership and support, well beyond traditional party allegiances. Solutions made use of government programs and funding, but did not rely on them entirely. All the projects incorporated private and independent initiatives in design and financing. Though the featured projects are not blueprints to be copied in other communities, they provide models in which other communities may find elements of value.

While it may still take great vision, herculean effort, and tremendous persistence to rebuild a community, we hope that leaders at all levels will contribute toward creating an environment where excellence in community reconstruction can be nurtured, where barriers to success can be removed or diminished. Only in this way will the examples of excellence proliferate to the extent that we can feel that, as a nation, we are coming to grips with rebuilding our cities and the lives of our city dwellers.

Founded in 1986, the *Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment* searches for and celebrates excellent urban places. This book presents the lessons we learned from the five 1993 finalists — all promising examples of urban excellence. These projects have transformed their communities so well, and on such a significant scale, that their accomplishments are nothing less than astounding — especially in contrast to the continual stream of pessimistic reports we all hear about cities. They are:

Harbor Point

Boston, Massachusetts

New Community Corporation

Newark, New Jersey

Betts-Longworth Historic District

Cincinnati, Ohio

Beyond Homelessness

San Francisco, California

The Park at Post Office Square

Boston, Massachusetts

The 1993 *Rudy Bruner Award*, and its \$50,000 prize, went to two projects. New Community Corporation (NCC) was honored for constructing an alternative city within Newark, New Jersey. Having risen from the ashes of the 1967 riots, NCC houses and employs thousands, providing facilities for children, seniors, the sick, and the homeless. NCC delivers necessities that many other communities take for granted, such as a supermarket offering fresh food at reasonable prices.

The other winning project is in Boston, where Harbor Point — a mixed income, mixed race community — has been created from a dangerous 1950s public housing project. The partnership that built and runs it, a joint venture between public housing tenants and a developer, is a microcosm of the community that works together to make Harbor Point home.

This book was published by and is available from:

The Bruner Foundation
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New York, New York 10012
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