

AWARD USE

~~(Please separate this page from the rest of the application and submit in an unsealed envelope attached to the front of your submission.)~~

If this project were selected for the award, describe how the recipients would use the award money. Propose a rough budget and describe how this will further your goals. Include in your description, if you wish, how the presentation of the award will be incorporated into the event or project that you propose. While this information will not be a criterion in the selection process and will not be shared with the Selection Committee, it will help inform the Foundation about the continuing interest of the project team in promoting urban excellence.

The award money would be used in the following ways at Casa Rita - the site submitted for the Rudy Bruner award by Women In Need, Inc. (WIN):

Students from CCNY School of Landscape Architecture competed in designing the backyard. The winner selected by a panel of expert judges is willing to supervise construction this summer. The estimated costs are \$15,000 which includes construction and equipment. The award money would go to build the playground. We have an average of 38 children (1 mo. to 16 years of age) and 16 mothers. The playground was designed with this versatility in mind and would be easily used for family picnics, barbecues and baseball games. Included are gardening and flower spots where families or individuals can relax or read or chat.

The second use of the award money would be to build a partition in the counseling office. The staff who use the office have no privacy which makes it more difficult for counseling or private meetings or just simple relaxation during the working day.

Both of these uses of the award money would enhance and expand the use of the space at Casa Rita - both for the families and the staff. Both of these areas were designed into the space at the initial stages of planning, however, were not included when the costs became prohibitive and funds were needed elsewhere in the building.

I can imagine having a presentation ceremony in the playground with hopefully some flowers blooming and perhaps a barbecue in the planning. Families, friends, neighbors and supporters of WIN would be part of the presentation and the celebration.

Proposed Budget: (rough)

Playground: \$15,000 estimated Fall 1986 -

Includes digging up and replanting, or blacktopping an area approximately 200' x 45'. The plans call for multiple small play or rest areas for various age children or adults. It includes a barbecue area and gardening and flower spaces. The construction would be supervised by the CCNY Landscape student who won the design competition on the space.

Partition: \$4,000 to \$5,000 -

We would build 1 full (floor to ceiling) and 2 cubicle type partitions 5 or 6' high. Estimated \$4,000 to \$5,000. Includes some electrical work, plastering and painting.

Project Name	Casa Rita
Location	284 East 151st Street, Bronx, New York 10451
Applicant Name	Women In Need, Inc. (WIN)

PROJECT PROFILE

PROJECT PROFILE

(Please limit answers to the space available on these pages)

Project Name Casa Rita

Location E. 151st St., Bronx, New York

Owner Women In Need, Inc.

Project Use(s) Temporary residence for homeless women and children

Project Size 54 beds (15 mothers 39 children) Total Development Cost \$550,000.00

Application submitted by:

Name Rita Zimmer

Title Executive Director

Organization Women In Need, Inc. (W.I.N.)

Address 410 West 40th St., New York, NY 10018

Telephone (212) 695-7330

Signature *Rita Zimmer*

Organization	Key person*	Telephone
■ Public agencies <u>New York St. Div. of Social Services</u>	<u>Nancy Travers</u> Asst. Commissioner	<u>(212)488-2951</u>
■ Developer <u>Women In Need, Inc.</u>	<u>Rita Zimmer, Exec.</u> Dir.	<u>(212)695-7330</u>
■ Professional consultants		
Architect <u>Conrad Levenson, Architects and Planners</u>	<u>Conrad Levenson</u>	<u>(212)839-5100</u>
Landscape architect <u>City College School of Arch.</u>	<u>M. Paul Friedbury</u>	<u>(212)690-4113</u>
Urban designer <u>City College Arch. Center</u>	<u>Jonathan Ochshorn</u>	<u>(212)690-6751</u>
Planner <u>N.A.</u>		
Lawyer <u>Council of N.Y. Law Associates</u>	<u>Barbara Schatz</u>	<u>(212)219-1800</u>
Other <u>Interior Decorator</u>	<u>Virginia Frankel</u>	<u>(212)249-8474</u>
<u>Fund Raiser</u>	<u>Annabel Nichols</u>	<u>(212)695-7330</u>
■ Community group(s) <u>South Bronx Development Organiz.</u>	<u>Carolyn Gould</u>	<u>(212)402-1300</u>
■ Sponsor <u>Same as Developer</u>		

*Please attach an additional sheet, if necessary, to identify others who should be credited as having been instrumental in the development of this project.

1. Describe the characteristics of this project: the important aspects of the project's design, development, and public approval process. Indicate why these are exemplary.

Casa Rita is a transitional residence for homeless mothers and children who need shelter for an average of 6 to 8 months before securing permanent housing. Most of the over 4500 homeless families in New York City are female heads of household with an average of 3.7 children. Casa Rita was designed for the largest group of mothers between 18-25 years old with children under 6 years of age. Public and community leaders were valuable in identifying this need in the community and helpful in gaining a wider base of community and neighborhood support. When others who propose shelters meet local resistance it is almost always because the community leaders and constituents were not part of the process. Small family residences that meet a community need and fit into the scale of the neighborhood are welcomed and supported.

The design of the facility took into account the following: the young age of the mothers; the high number of infants and toddlers; the fact that many of the mothers had little experience living independently and were unaccustomed or unfamiliar with using community resources and referrals. Some of the ways we addressed these issues were: to develop as much common space as possible to facilitate networking, self-help, sharing similar tasks (i.e., laundry or cooking); cooperative child care; group problem solving and general communication during a day. The kitchen was designed to encourage learning or sharing cooking; swapping ideas of preparing food, etc.

The sleeping accommodations were designed to encourage the mothers to experiment with decorating, learning housekeeping skills, and identifying with their own space.

2. What were the significant dates of the project's development and when was it completed?

February 14, 1985 was one of the most significant dates in the project's development; it was the kick-off of a year long fund raising drive for Casa Rita. W.I.N. had no previous major fund raising experience and we were fortunate to have the support of a diversity of people from the theater industry to a Riverside Church Sunday school class that donated seeds for a garden patch.

We found the site in November 1984; were awarded a \$159,000 Homeless Housing Assistance Grant from New York State Department of Social Services in July 1985, which is also when construction began. On May 13, 1986 Matilda Cuomo presided over our open house festivities. On September 1, 1986 we received our Certificate of Occupancy and families started moving in. The most special day though was when the first baby was born December 24, 1986--to a previously homeless teenager who was welcomed home by 14 other moms and their kids.

3. What urban issues did this project address? Were there important associated issues that this project did not address?

The major urban issue this project addressed is the enormous lack of suitable emergency housing for homeless families. We've also shown that working with neighborhood groups, community boards and organizations to deal with the homelessness issue can produce successful results.

This project provides emergency shelter, not permanent housing. However we hope our visibility and activity in the community will lead to a wider discussion of the fact that affordable decent housing for poor people is not available.

4. Describe the financing for the project. Was there something particularly unique or innovative about it?

We believe the funding for Casa Rita was indeed unique. This was W.I.N.'s first major fund raising effort; it lasted over 2 years and involved all the members of the Board of Directors, theater industry and volunteers, staff, and homeless families. Money was raised from a wide variety of sources and events ranging from raffling Torneau watches; theater benefits; foundation grants, individual gifts; neighborhood bazaars; corporate contributions; and public grants to donated appliances, rugs, and floor tiling.

We believe the combination of public and private sectors pulling together to create a community family center is unique. It was especially helpful because the private funding made it possible to get construction underway despite the fact that the public money didn't arrive until construction was nearly complete.

5. What were the goals of this project? How well were they met?

The goals of this project were:

1. To demonstrate that a small grass-roots not-for-profit organization could plan, design, fund and operate a community based shelter.
2. To open a family center for 16 homeless families in a South Bronx neighborhood.
3. To develop a design model for a small shelter that could be financially supported and could be replicated reasonably.
4. To establish a program of supportive and referral services geared to empowering women and children, promoting emotional strength and economic independence.

W.I.N. believes the first 3 have been met already--many groups interested in operating shelters, visit Casa Rita to look at its design; talk and train with our staff; discuss our financing and operational plan. We hope the 4th goal is an ongoing one and is evidenced by the number of mothers back in school, children in enrolled day care and families located in permanent housing.

6. Why does this project merit The Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

It is a very exciting project. Inside it is bright, cheerfully painted and decorated, warm and convenient. Outside, the project has contributed to general improvement in the neighborhood. Casa Rita meets the desperate need of the more than 4500 homeless families in New York City for a safe, decent place to stay until they find a permanent apartment.

Casa Rita was designed with the community in mind, meets a neighborhood need and provides hope for the individual family. In two words--It Works.

PERSPECTIVE/Public Agency

This sheet is to be filled out by the staff of public agencies who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Nancy Travers

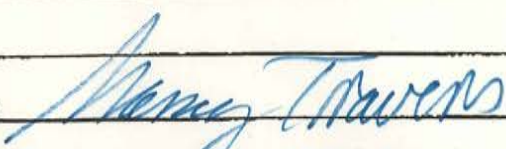
Telephone (212) 488-2951

Agency New York State DSS Office of Shelter & Supported Housing Development

Title Assistant Commissioner

Address Two World Trade Center, New York, New York 10047

Signature

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

The NYS Department of Social Services Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP) awarded Women In Need \$159,500.00 towards the development of Casa Rita. HHAP funds were used for rehabilitation costs and professional fees. The Facilities Development Corporation - a state agency-reviewed and approved the architectural design of this project and monitored all stages of construction in conjunction with the HHAP project manager.

2. Describe what requirements your agency made of this project? (Such as zoning, public participation, impact statements, etc.)

See Attached

3. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, the intentions changed over the course of the project? What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

In New York City, the number of homeless women with children is growing rapidly. Women In Need (WIN) is a city wide program dedicated to addressing this critical issue. WIN provides a strongly supportive atmosphere for women and children and a project emphasis incorporating job training and stipend programs to allow women the opportunity to move on to economic independence. A unique aspect of WIN's program is its ability to serve single women who are homeless as well as families. This allows women an opportunity to reunite with their children in foster care and for shelter services to pregnant women both during the pregnancy and after the birth of their child.

Casa Rita provides transitional housing for 54 women and children from the Bronx Community.

See Attached

2. Describe what requirements your agency made of this project? (Such as zoning, public participation, impact statements, etc.)

An application to the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program is required to submit substantial information regarding their proposed project. Once an award is granted, additional information is required. The following is an abbreviated list of the key elements required for completing the application.

Application Information
Project Brief and Description
Site Control
Summary and Breakdown of Project Costs
Scope of Work
Minority and Women-Owned Business Information
Agency Information
Statement of Agreement
Operating Budget & Debt Service Information
Revenue Stream & Cash Flow Information
Documentation of Need
Project Management and Operation
Development Information

Once an application is awarded an HHAP grant the following requirements are necessary for the development of the project:

In addition to the schematic drawings and preliminary cost estimates included in the application, the architects/engineers for projects selected for awards will, in most cases, be expected to provide the following services:

- 1) Phase Two - Design Development Phase
 - design development drawings
 - outline specifications
 - cost estimates
- 2) Phase Three - Construction Documents Phase
 - workings drawings
 - specifications
 - bidding requirements
 - cost estimates
 - construction schedule
- 3) Phase Four - Bidding or Negotiation Phase
- 4) Phase Five - General Administration of the Construction Contract

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Monthly progress reports will be required during the period of expenditure of project funds which will include the status of the rehabilitation or construction work, monies committed, and monies paid. Payments will be forwarded based on these reports. Quarterly financial reports will be required during the first year of occupancy documenting rents collected and expenditures made, as well as regular maintenance and operating costs, and an annual financial report and projected annual operating budget during each of the seven (7) years of the contract or a longer period if required by the Department. Additional reporting as may be determined by the Department may be requested.

3. Residents length of stay varies from 6 months to one year depending upon the needs of the families. After families have received counselling and entitlement services WIN then proceeds to secure permanent housing for residents. Follow up is provided to all residents to insure that they maintain their social and economic independence.

4. Describe any data you have that documents the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary material as appropriate. If no data is available, what is your impression of the project's impact and what have you observed that supports that?

WIN is considered a pioneer in the development of shelter and support programs for single women and women with children. WIN has also demonstrated the ability to address the needs of victims of domestic violence and women who are alcoholics. HHAP considers Women In Need a model project and has referred other community organizations interested in servicing homeless women with children to them. The attached newspaper articles will elaborate on WIN's achievements.

5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

Casa Rita is the product of government and the private sector working jointly to address a critical issue. WIN's excellent management team was able to form a unique financial partnership of city, state, foundations and private fund raising needed for the development of this project.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be still successful, what characteristics would you be looking at?

A key issue to the success of Casa Rita is WIN's ability to secure permanent housing for the residents and to work with the clients in developing independent living skills. HHAP would also review WIN's follow-up with clients to evaluate their adaption to independent living. HHAP would review WIN's ability to maintain their high standards for managing and operating their programs. Another area of interest for our program would be the extent to which the model developed by WIN is replicated by other agencies.

PERSPECTIVE/Developer

This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Rita Zimmer Telephone (212) 695-7330

Title Founder, Executive Director

Organization Women In Need, Inc.

Address 410 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018

Signature *Rita Zimmer*

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

The Founder & Executive Director of Women In Need was responsible for developing, planning & financing the project from the inception through to the opening & running of the program for homeless mothers & children. She was the guiding force, initiated the project & worked with it through to completion. This began in November 1984 with locating the site; negotiating a 10-year lease; working on the design aspects; overseeing the day-to-day development; financing & fund raising; start-up & operations; community relations; liason with government groups. The Board of Directors & Executive Director raised over \$200,000 for the Shelter beginning Feb. 14, 1984 with many events, including a benefit performance by the cast & production crew of "The Real Thing"; Foundation, corporate & personal gifts & donations of over \$60,000 from The Home Furnishing Industry. Landscape architectural students from CCNY designed a backyard space for which W.I.N. is currently trying to raise the \$15,000 to complete by the Spring of 1987. I guess it could be said the Shelter began as a seed planted in someone's head & we hope to plant many seeds this Summer in our backyard garden.

2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? How did they come about?

Shortly after the project began construction July 1985 we decided to add extra bathrooms on each floor & the sleeping rooms which were to be separated by moveable partitions were changed to permanent ones to make private bedrooms. These changes occurred as the result of receiving a \$145,000 grant from NYS D.S.S. Homeless Housing Assistance Program. These changes enhanced the program substantially because they gave families more privacy & storage space, two areas we were previously unhappy with. These changes caused a reduction in the size of families we could accommodate; therefore, we had to re-work both our program and financing pieces.

Further along in the project changes in the Bronx Fire Dept. regulations forced us to re-design the fire sprinkler system and go through the application process a second time for approvals of the changed plans. This raised the cost of the project substantially and delayed completion of the Shelter for several months.

3. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project?

The most difficult financial tasks were to coordinate funding & donation efforts over a 2-year period & to then coordinate the donations & payment schedule when promised funds or goods were delayed. The NYS grant arrived two months after the Project Open House in May 1986. This delay would have been much longer hadn't it been for the extraordinary efforts of the Regional Office of HHAP & the pressure of the Executive Director of Women In Need. Coordinating donated goods from ten separate Home Furnishing Industry corporations required incredible amounts of time on the phone with the vendors & with the public relations firms. This meant selecting products & goods which had to be coordinated with the design of the Shelter & then arranging for deliveries, storage & installations. The donated products & goods were worth over \$60,000.

4. What impact has this project actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area? Describe any data you have that supports your judgment.

1. Employment. The contractor was a South Bronx neighborhood organization, Banana Kelly, who employs minority workers & sub-contractors. Out of a permanent staff of 6 employees at the Shelter, 3 were previously unemployed & are neighborhood residents.
2. Aesthetically. The project has enhanced the neighborhood by filling up an empty building. The building facade was completely painted & fixed up, which led to some other neighborhood clean-ups.
3. Financial. The small neighborhood parish has a 10-year lease & source of income to keep the parish going. Women In Need purchased products & services from community & neighborhood vendors.
4. Resource. The Shelter has become an additional resource for the community homeless.
5. Educational. We believe we are part of a wider community education process on the problems of housing & the homeless.
6. Community Relations. The neighborhood acceptance & support of W.I.N.'s Shelter has led to a wider acceptance in the community of small, dignified shelters in other neighborhoods.

5. What can be learned about successful urban development from this project?

1. The value & importance of community involvement from the very beginning of a project when it's still an idea.
2. The combination of government & private sector dollars can be leveraged successfully if you are willing to stay with it.
3. A project can be replicated efficiently & economically by small community-based organizations.
4. Successful projects cannot underestimate the development time that is necessary to see a project through to completion.
5. Small family residences can fit into a community or neighborhood without disrupting neighborhood life.

6. If five years from now you were to judge this project to be still successful, what characteristics would be most relevant to you?

1. Does building still service the needs of residents, staff, community & the parish?
2. Can facility be maintained economically & easily?
3. Do people who live in shelter feel safe, comfortable & dignified?
4. Are we able to move families back into permanent housing from the shelter & do they maintain their new housing?

PERSPECTIVE/Community Representative

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

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Karolyn R. Gould Telephone (212) 402-1300

Organization and Title (if applicable) South Bronx Development Organization, Inc.
Director of Human Services

Address 529 Courtland Ave
Bronx, NY 10451

Signature Karolyn R. Gould

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project?

Rita Zimmer, Director of Women In Need, sought my assistance in identifying community-based health and social service agencies in the vicinity of Casa Rita as well as introductions to community leaders.

2. What were the major issues from the community's point of view?

From the community's point of view, the major issues were:

- a. meeting the needs of homeless families for transitional housing in a humane, caring manner.
- b. preventing the entry into the community of large, warehousing facilities to house homeless families.

3. What other community organizations or institutions, if any, were involved? What relationship did they have to the project?

Community Boards 1 and 6 which expressed support for new residential programs sponsored by Women In Need; and a range of community-based health and social service agencies in the vicinity of Casa Rita which provide a variety of direct services to families in residence.

PERSPECTIVE/Professional Consultant

This sheet is to be filled out by those professionals who worked as consultants on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other professional services.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Conrad Levenson Telephone (212) 889-5100

Title Principal

Organization Conrad Levenson, Architects & Planners

Address 41 E. 29th Street, New York, NY 10016

Signature



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

Women In Need, Inc. sought my services early in the process of developing their concept for a self-help oriented transitional residence for mothers and children. We reviewed several sites for the project, looking for buildings which could be quickly converted to this purpose and where the problems in producing a code-compliant congregate home would be neither insurmountable nor extraordinarily expensive. Having identified the site at E. 151st St., my office prepared several schematic plans, each one of which served to sharpen the concept of program and design required. Once a plan was settled, we assisted in providing materials for fund-raising; developed construction drawings; co-ordinated with others who were assisting the project (NYS Homeless Housing Program and design industry contributors); and oversaw the process of the construction and renovation.

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

Women in Need was one of the first organizations in New York City to realize that women (especially those with children) were not well-served by either agencies serving the homeless, or those providing assistance to substance abusers. Despite the fact that the needs of this population are less visible on the streets and park benches, their deprivation has a far greater impact on urban institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.) and future generations, than the population of needy males.

3. What is your impression of the project's impact on its surroundings and people in the project area? Do you have data that documents its effect? Attach supplementary material as appropriate.

The project is located in a transitional area of the Bronx which had received significant public investment in the 1970s (a new public hospital, a mixed-income housing development) in order to counter its decline into abandonment. The Women In Need project contributes much to this stabilizing effort. The building selected by Women In Need was a vacant parochial school (vacant by reason of population shift). As it is a substantial building for its side street location, its vacancy had a blighting influence on its neighbors. Adjoining homeowners expressed considerable relief at seeing the building renovated and occupied and expressed interest throughout the entire rehabilitation process.

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

From the beginning this project was conceived as a temporary residence for women in transition to permanent housing. Therefore, no effort was made to design traditional self-contained dwelling units. The dormitory model was well suited to the project's intent of mutual sharing and support.

The major compromise, based on space and budgetary constraints, was the location of the full 3-fixture bathrooms at the existing plumbing locations on the ground level. We attempted to mitigate the inconvenience of this arrangement by locating all communal functions (kitchen, dining, recreation, laundry) at that floor as well as by making the toilets (without baths) available on each upper floor.

Because of the desire to have a homelike atmosphere on the ground floor, and because kitchen fixtures were donated by manufacturers, we created an over-sized residential kitchen, suitable for multi-family use. This has presented some problems resulting from the intensive use which the kitchen has received. Changes are planned which will result in the replacement of some elements with more substantial, more easily maintained.

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

There are three lessons which other architects might learn from this project. First, traditional housing forms are not appropriate for--or even desired by--people who find themselves in non-traditional households. Second, the "program" for such spaces must be developed co-operatively by client and architect. Many of the most successful aspects of this design would not have been thought of without the informal free-flowing discussions which we enjoyed with the client. Third, professionals should be informed about the importance of work on projects of social utility and the special and unique professional and personal rewards that come from the realization of such efforts.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be still successful, what characteristics would you be looking at?

First, I would like to know that the client had not encountered major unanticipated maintenance costs. Second, I would look to see if the design of the project had influenced other providers of similar housing services. I would be concerned with whether the benefits are still accruing to those for whom they were intended (i.e., who currently occupy the building and on what basis); what has the impact been on the community (the immediately adjoining buildings, the block, and the neighborhood)? Have conditions continued to decline? Have they been stabilized? Have they improved measurably?

PERSPECTIVE/Other

Name Suzanne Davis Telephone (212) 661-8485
Title Executive Director Organization: The J. M. Kaplan Fund
Address 330 Madison Avenue - 33rd floor
New York, New York 10017
Signature Suzanne Davis

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

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

We contributed \$15,000 in August, 1985 toward the architectural plans and construction of Casa Rita.

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

(1) to help establish a much-needed shelter for homeless women and their children in the South Bronx; (2) to serve as a model for how such projects can be developed and operated at much smaller cost than the City currently spends to keep such families in welfare hotels; (3) to use innovative design to reuse a solid old building in a creative way.

3. Describe your impression of the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Describe any data that supports your conclusions.

The project has been a tremendous success. Visually it is bright, cheerful, imaginatively designed, homey, a real inspiration for the community - and particularly for the lucky few who will live there until permanent homes can be found. The architects were extremely creative; the dedicated volunteers who solicited donations of everything from toilets to carpeting to pictures on the wall showed what motivation and energy can accomplish to benefit the community.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

Don't know - we were not that intimately involved.

5. What can others learn from this project?

Others - hopefully the City - can learn (1) that the economics of ~~renovating such~~ properties versus outrageous payments to welfare hotels is much more favorable in the long run; (2) that creative design doesn't cost any more than a sterile atmosphere and contributes psychological rewards to this battered population.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be successful, what characteristics would you be looking at?

That it has been well maintained; that the population would ^{have} been provided with adequate support services to help them relocate in permanent housing and find jobs and/or schooling; that five years from now the entire population at Casa Rita would have turned over at least 10 times; and that the City would have replicated the lessons learned here, as well as additional private models having been completed.

PERSPECTIVE/Other

Name Jonathan Ochshorn

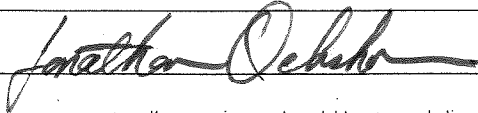
Telephone (212) 690-6751

Title Associate Director, City College Architectural Center

Address Convent Avenue at 138th Street

New York, NY 10031

Signature



If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

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

The City College Architectural Center [CCAC] offers technical assistance services to community-based organizations involved in the rehabilitation of housing and the revitalization of their communities. Having received a request for assistance from Women In Need, I spoke to Professor Paul Friedberg about having his Urban Landscape Architecture class at C.C.N.Y. design the urban playground space for "Casa Rita" as a studio problem.

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

The intention was to create space in which children can play. From my perspective, the "urban environment benefits" because activities can now occur in the urban space which benefit people. In other words, a vacant, unused backyard will be transformed into a needed space for active and passive play.

3. Describe your impression of the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Describe any data that supports your conclusions.

The playground component of this project has not yet been constructed, but the process through which it was conceived and designed has had an impact on many people. An entire design studio at City College became more aware of the problems of homelessness; by meeting with the Client and designing within the fixed constraints of site and budget, the students saw the limits, but also the possibilities, of doing "community design."

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

The site and budget presented the students with limits which required them to make compromises. Dealing with these compromises was an essential part of their experience; overcoming the limitations and turning them into opportunities was an important lesson.

5. What can others learn from this project?

Community Design Centers such as the City College Architectural Center operate from the premise that educational institutions have a responsibility to become involved in their communities. This project demonstrates one way in which that involvement can benefit both community residents as well as students.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be successful, what characteristics would you be looking at?

The project's success can be judged by observing how the playground space is used: how well it encourages and allows different kinds of activities. From our point of view, we would also like to see what the impact has been on the students who became involved with "Casa Rita" -- whether their professional attitudes and practice have been changed by the experience.