

# THE JERSEY PLANNER



American Planning Association  
New Jersey Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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## Paving the Way for the Second Industrial Revolution: The Silk City Makes a Comeback

By Michael Powell

Director of Policy & Planning, New Jersey Community Development Corporation

### Paterson: A Short and Glorious History

Paterson, New Jersey, originally founded by Alexander Hamilton as the first step in implementing his plans for a hub of industry, has become one of the most economically distressed cities in the United States, despite its premier location just 15 miles west of Manhattan. For Hamilton, the nation's first Treasury Secretary, the City of Paterson would become the spark igniting a new form of industrial productivity — adding wealth, independence, and economic security to a fledgling democratic nation. Not unlike other industrial models to follow, the roaring waterfall called the Great Falls and the potential power it could generate made Paterson an ideal location for what Hamilton envisioned as his "national manufactory." Hamilton's vision to create an urban center that channeled the power of the Great Falls into an industrial powerhouse is what

turned Paterson into the nation's first planned industrial city.

Over the years, Paterson became a major center for industrial firsts:

the first water-powered cotton spinning mill (1793), the first continuous roll paper (1812), the Colt Revolver (1836), the Rogers Locomotive Works which helped fuel western expansion through the transcontinental railroad (1837), and the Holland Submarine — making underwater navigation possible (1878).



[www.britishmuseumshoponline.org](http://www.britishmuseumshoponline.org)

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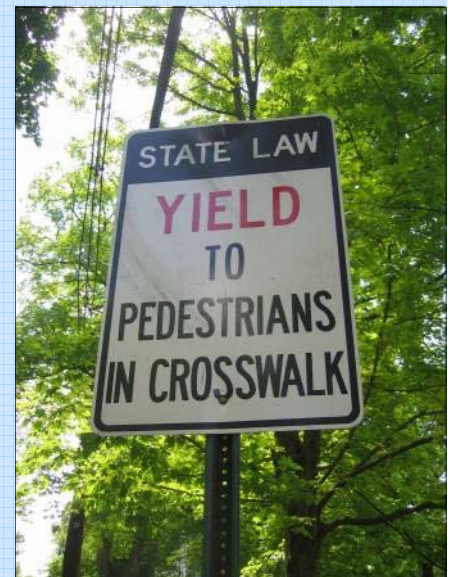
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## New APA-NJ Transportation Committee

At its April meeting, Raymond Tomczak, AICP (Senior Transportation Planner at HNTB) addressed the APA-NJ Executive Committee to discuss the need to establish a forum within the APA-NJ for transportation professionals to gather and discuss the merits of all things related to transportation in New Jersey. Given the historic role transportation has played in the development of this state, and the current daily debate about how best to improve the operation, infrastructure, and financing, it is important the APA-NJ provide a venue to inform and advocate for transportation issues. Accordingly, the Executive Committee approved the formation of an ad hoc Transportation Committee.

A successful Transportation Committee depends on dedicated volunteers to help sustain its ongoing activities. Should there be enough interest and action by APA-NJ members over the course of the next year, the Executive Committee will propose a bylaw amendment to make it a standing Committee in 2009. If interested in joining the ad hoc Transportation Committee, please contact Raymond at [rtomczak@hntb.com](mailto:rtomczak@hntb.com).



## THE JERSEY PLANNER

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 Planning for the Future  
 Making Good on Our Promises

*The Jersey Planner* is a bi-monthly publication of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association. This publication is available only to members of the New Jersey Chapter.

The APA-NJ Bulletin committee welcomes submission of original articles, editorial letters, photographs, news items, and classified advertisements. The committee reserves the right to only publish submissions that are deemed appropriate for this publication. The views published in the bulletin are not necessarily those of the APA-NJ.

Rebecca M. Hersh, AICP/PP  
 Bulletin Editor  
[rebeccamhersh@aol.com](mailto:rebeccamhersh@aol.com)

Michael L. Powell  
[mpowell@njcdc.org](mailto:mpowell@njcdc.org)

Jeffrey Perlman  
[jeffperlman@gmail.com](mailto:jeffperlman@gmail.com)

**To find out more information on joining the New Jersey Chapter or if you would like to place an advertisement in future bulletins please contact:**

Michael E. Levine, AICP  
 APA-NJ Chapter Administrator  
 P. O. Box 200402  
 One Riverfront Plaza  
 Newark, NJ 07102-9715  
 Phone (973) 286-4708  
 Fax: (973) 504-7097  
[mlevine@njapa.org](mailto:mlevine@njapa.org)

**Submit all address changes to:**  
 American Planning Association  
 122 S. Michigan Avenue  
 Chicago, IL 60603-6107  
 (312) 431-9100  
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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER: NO MORE GARDEN STATE?

*By Courtenay Mercer, APA-NJ Chapter President*

The recent proposal to eliminate the Department of Agriculture (NJDA) both saddens and scares me. In the spirit of full disclosure, I am a former employee of the Department, so it does hold a special place in my heart. As a planner though, I am deeply concerned about the social, economic and environmental repercussions of this decision.

The elimination of the NJDA may very well be the last nail in the coffin of the agricultural industry in NJ. Not to sound melodramatic or alarmist, but this is an emotional issue to farmers. Farming and the number of farmers is on the decline in NJ. We have seen an increase in the average age of farmers. This is indicative of a younger generation that is either not entering their parents' chosen trade, or starting their businesses out of state because they cannot afford land in NJ. Moreover, sprawling development has caused some farmers to flee NJ for areas where neighbors do not complain about the smells, noises and slow moving tractors associated with agriculture. The NJDA helps maintain the industry through marketing, research, promotion and advocacy.

The devolution of the NJDA's functions to various other Departments will disintegrate the State's ability to assist the agricultural community. That is not to say that the other Departments do not do their jobs well, but through its various functions, the NJDA fulfills a mission to promote and preserve the agricultural industry. None of the other Departments are focused on this specific mission; therefore, the NJDA's functions will have less weight (and may even be lost) among the subsuming Departments' other tasks. The NJDA provides a voice to farmers. Without that voice, farmers and their industry will get lost in the bureaucracy of the state.

Some might argue that no other single industry has a whole Department dedi-

cated to its promotion and preservation. No other single industry, however, is so intrinsically linked to the land. The loss of any other industry leaves vacant buildings that can be reused or redeveloped. The loss of the agricultural industry leaves vacant land that, without a proper steward, will likely become more build-ings. There is still over 1 million acres of farmland in New Jersey, which constitutes 50% of the remaining undeveloped lands and 20% of the state's total land base. While approximately 164,000 of that has been preserved through the sale of development rights, and some may not be developable due to environmental constraints, a significant amount of agricultural land still remains fodder for development.

There are also fiscal impacts associated with the loss of agricultural lands and the associated industry. Unlike other land uses, agriculture uses less in services than it pays in taxes, making it a positive ratable. Accordingly, there would be a reverberating fiscal impact of this potential land conversion. Moreover, agriculture generates millions of dollars in payroll taxes from the \$200 million worth of hired labor industry-wide. Cash receipts from farm commodities were \$924 million in 2006, which ultimately generates a multi-billion dollar impact on the state's economy.

In addition to supporting a critical NJ industry, the NJDA plays an important role in advancing sustainable practices. As planners, we often call upon the NJDA to advocate for smart growth principals in rural areas. The staff of the NJDA is respected and trusted by farmers and local government officials. Despite best intentions, other state agencies often get a chilly reception in rural communities. In losing the NJDA, we are losing an important ally in the pursuit of smart growth. Moreover, the NJDA does more than just assist rural communities. It promotes the regional sale of

farm commodities through the Jersey Fresh program, coordinates farmers markets, and connects local produce to schools and prisons. Enhancing local markets reduces transportation needs, and thus, reduces energy consumption. Moreover, local markets encourage social interaction. They also bring fresh produce to urban areas and at-risk populations, thus advancing public health goals.

The NJDA provides many benefits to the agricultural industry and rural communities, as well as NJ citizens and consumers. Its initiatives promote public health and enhance quality of life. The cost savings of eliminating the NJDA has recently been estimated at about \$250,000.

While predictions of the industry's demise may not come true, the quality of the services the NJDA currently provides will certainly decline when decentralized among several Departments. In my opinion, keeping the "garden" in the Garden State far outweighs a \$250,000 budgetary savings.

**The President's Corner reflects the President's opinion and not necessarily that of the APA-NJ Executive Committee or APA-NJ membership.**

**The President can be contacted at [pres@njapa.org](mailto:pres@njapa.org).**

## Write for the APA-NJ Newsletter!

The APA-NJ Bulletin welcomes planning-related articles, editorials, event announcements, and photos. E-mail submissions and questions to APA-NJ Bulletin Editor Rebecca Hersh at: [rebeccamhersh@aol.com](mailto:rebeccamhersh@aol.com)

### Upcoming Deadlines:

- Friday, **June 27** or the July/August 2008 issue
- Friday, **August 29** for the September/October 2008 issue
- Friday **October 24** for the November/December 2008 issue

## Green Community Planning in NJ

By Angela S. Clerico, LEED-AP

Sustainability is no longer just a buzz word, at least not in New Jersey. In the Garden State, a number of communities are engaging in visioning processes to become more sustainable. They are developing ordinances, policies, and regulations to allow for green features such as windmills and alternative septic systems, and they are developing community-wide campaigns for residents to become more aware of how they can green their lifestyles. New Jersey towns are greening — not because it is trendy, but because it is the right thing to do.

Last year, the APA-NJ created a new Sustainable Design Committee (SDC) whose goal is to help planners take a leadership role in forming and implementing strategies to help communities achieve more efficient use of resources. As studies have shown, sustainable planning protects and enhances quality of life, creates new businesses, supports infrastructure, and enhances biodiversity. Sustainable land use practices must become an integral part of planning our communities along with more sustainable building practices, land management and a green economic base. Planning for sustainability is not anti-development; instead, it promotes responsible development, which is good for the community and in keeping with the community's own goals and visions. It requires a democratic planning process to achieve the greatest common good, protects the environment, and ensures that future generations can enjoy a good standard of living. Optimally, planning for sustainability includes making planning decisions in a holistic manner that involves all segments of the community and the public and private sectors.

One aspect of sustainability is green design, which includes the man-made structures and natural resources of a community. The US Green Building Council (USGBC) is one organization that NJ planners should become familiar with as they start to consider green design in their projects. The USGBC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community of leaders working to make green buildings accessible to

everyone. Through the USGBC, buildings can become certified using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. A building and site that uses recycled materials, conserves water and energy, increases indoor air quality, and reduces the amount of materials entering the waste stream can be certified as a LEED Silver, Gold or Platinum. For information, visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) and [www.usgbcnj.org](http://www.usgbcnj.org).

According to the USGBC-NJ Chapter there are just over 30 buildings in NJ with a LEED certification. The majority of these are PNC Bank branches. There are also about 1,000 NJ professionals with the LEED accreditation (LEED-AP). Any project that strives for sustainability must first look at the site itself before determining how else to "green" the project. A LEED-AP planner, with the knowledge of the LEED rating system and the goals of sustainability, can guide any size project to planning sustainably and obtaining certification.

I encourage all NJ planners to consider becoming LEED-AP. For information visit the Green Building Certification Institute: [www.gbci.org](http://www.gbci.org). There are also many other programs and services that assist with the greening process. The Green Globes initiative, [www.greenglobes.com](http://www.greenglobes.com), is a program administered by the Green Building Initiative and focuses on the built environment. The Sustainable Site Initiative, [www.sustainablesites.org](http://www.sustainablesites.org), an effort of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and the US Botanical Garden, aims to produce definitive sustainability tools.

The SDC was formed to promote planning that creates sustainable, green, energy efficient communities. During the next year look for educational materials on a variety of sustainable design topics in each issue of this newsletter. If you have a specific topic that you would like to see covered, please let us know. You can email Angela Clerico at [asclerico@hotmail.com](mailto:asclerico@hotmail.com).



# Neighborhood Revitalization in New Brunswick: Building Community in Unity Square

By Afton Enger

*Afton Enger, a second-year MCRP student at the Bloustein School at Rutgers, is also the project coordinator for Catholic Charities and has been working on the Unity Square project in that capacity since June 2007.*

Not all of New Brunswick's neighborhoods have benefited from the city's recent downtown revitalization; many still struggle with unemployment, substandard housing conditions, crime, lack of social services, and lack of open space. A recent effort in a neighborhood called Unity Square, a vibrant low-income 37-block area close to the city's downtown, represents a model for resident-led community revitalization initiatives.

The Unity Square Partnership, formed in 2004, is the organizing entity that has spearheaded this resident-led revitalization initiative that seeks to develop affordable housing, create opportunities for economic development and enhance social services, parks and recreation.

The Partnership, a collaboration between the Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen and Sacred Heart Church, has spend the past four years working with residents, stakeholders, and planning students from Princeton University to formulate a plan for the neighborhood. The Partnership has also reached out to local government and other community organizations to work on the plan, including the City of New Brunswick, New Labor, ACCION New Jersey, Emmanuel Lutheran CDC, Anshe Emeth CDC, Mt. Zion AME Church, Rutgers University and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Agency, and the New Jersey Housing and Community Development Network.

## The Early Planning Process

Through on-the-ground surveying and a series of community meetings, this grassroots, resident-driven process included neighborhood organizations, stakeholders, and hundreds of residents. For example, residents received disposable cameras to document conditions within the neighborhood; this photographic documentation provided a valuable base for the community's visioning process and resulted in the formation of six issue action teams: economic development, housing, safety and security, parks and recreation, community facilities, and youth activities. Survey data and resident feedback were synthesized with the assistance of the Princeton students into the first draft of the plan which was then reviewed and edited with additional resident input over a three-month period.

## Unity Square Neighborhood

A lively 37 block neighborhood, the name Unity Square was chosen by residents at the beginning of the planning process. Unity Square's population is officially about 6,000, though it is estimated to be over 11,000 with the undocumented immigrant population. Residents work in a variety of industries including construction, food services, landscaping, and factory assembly lines; many work informally as day laborers. The neighborhood also includes an African American community made up of older homeowners and a large proportion of Latino renters.

The major issues facing immigrant residents in Unity Square include jobs, housing, and access to social services. Many residents experience overcrowding and substandard housing conditions, pay inflated rents (above city rent control guidelines), suffer from unsatisfactory labor conditions with insufficient wages, and live in poverty. Due to language barriers, immigrants are sometimes taken



Earth Day 2008

advantage of by negligent landlords, employers, and individuals who fraudulently claim to be able to obtain citizenship for these immigrants. Often, such crimes go unreported because residents fear retaliation or deportation.

Housing conditions include overcrowded and non code-compliant housing with inflated rents. The Partnership uncovered more than 25 cases of noncompliance with the City's rent control ordinance; one landlord overcharged a tenant more than \$13,000 above rent control guidelines in a single year.

Unscrupulous employers also pay employees with bad checks, effectively forcing workers to work without pay. Many residents pay a large fee for employment agency van service to transport employees to and from work, taking up much of their already low incomes.

## Plan Implementation

In 2007, with funding from Wachovia, the Partnership began implementing the plan, continued holding resident meetings, and hired staff. The Partnership also started working with the six issue action teams to address the neighborhood's problems in a targeted way.

## Housing

The Partnership completed negotiations for the purchase of five vacant lots from the City to develop affordable housing. The Partnership's housing plans include the construction of single family units and the purchase and rehabilitation of multi family units, all of which will be rental. A housing resource center has



Halloween 2007

been established to provide home ownership and renter's rights information to the community and will be producing a housing resource guide. The Partnership is also working to establish a landlord/tenant mediation board which will provide a non-threatening environment for the resolution of landlord/tenant disputes. As previously mentioned, the Partnership is continuing to review the City's rent control files.

### **Economic Development**

Catholic Charities provides child care training which increases the income of providers and allows working mothers to access childcare services. ESL classes are provided free of charge to neighborhood residents; through the planning process, learning the language was determined to be a priority, as this is seen as the first step to economic development. Scholarships are also provided for residents to attend Elijah's Promise Culinary School. The Partnership has applied for a grant from the Office of Smart Growth to hire a planner to develop a revitalization plan for the neighborhood commercial corridor. Financial education and microfinancing are being provided by a coordinated effort with the Central Jersey Asset Building Coalition and ACCION. The Partnership is also exploring the potential for an open market to provide fresh produce in the neighborhood.

### **Safety and Security**

The Partnership worked closely with the New Brunswick Police Department to form the Latino Crime Watch. This allows Spanish speaking residents to communicate directly with bilingual police officers, encouraging them to report crime within the neighborhood. Through regular communication with the community policing office of the New Brunswick police department, the Partnership has developed a list of methods for crime prevention and in coming weeks will be surveying the neighborhood to identify areas in need of additional street lighting. Discussions have also focused on the re-opening of a police substation within the neighborhood.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The Unity Square neighborhood is home to two parks, Feaster and Pittman. Efforts are underway for the revitalization



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of both parks. A larger overhaul of Feaster Park is scheduled to take place within the next few years. Residents will take part in the visioning process for this renovation. Additionally, there is an active community garden located within Feaster Park which provided a backdrop for the recent Earth Day Clean-Up.

### **Community Facilities/Services**

Throughout the planning process, residents expressed a desire for the creation of a community center, including the creation of a "one stop shop" for residents to access various social services. The Partnership is collaborating with Mt. Zion AME Church in this effort. The Church recently purchased a site for the future center and renovations are underway. Plans for the community center include a food pantry, housing resource center, after-school programming, and a computer lab.

### **Youth Services**

The large number of young people in the neighborhood brought to light the need of additional youth services. In conjunction with the 4-H Program of Rutgers University Cooperative Extension, local youth surveyed area residents to determine the need youth programs. As a result, New Brunswick's first 4-H Program has been established in the neighborhood. In addition, Wachovia funding has provided money for recreational activities, i.e. trips to the local water park.

### **Obstacles**

The Partnership has experienced several barriers to organizing the immigrant community, including language barriers, the transient nature of the population, resident's fear of community engage-

ment due to illegal immigration status, and the need for individuals to work multiple jobs, which leaves little time for community participation.

### **Community Impact**

In spite of the obstacles, the Partnership engaged more than 250 residents in the planning process through meetings and surveys, identified and trained 11 block captains, and hundreds of residents have participated in neighborhood events including National Night Out, Earth Day Clean-Up, and Halloween Trunk-or-Treat. Both the Partnership and the Unity Square neighborhood have gained the recognition of the city government and local media. Recently the Partnership received its first funding commitment to the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program, received the Francis J. Crupi Humanitarian Award from the New Brunswick Chapter of the Knights of Columbus, was honored by Catholic Relief Services, and has been nominated for the 2008 Family Strengthening Award from Catholic Charities USA. The Partnership is also seeking funding from the Office of Smart Growth, which it hopes to use for the revitalization of the neighborhood commercial corridor.

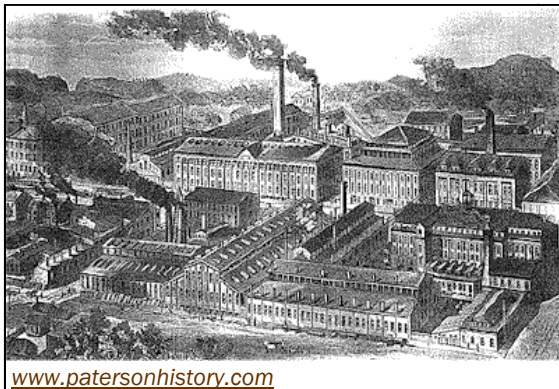
The process is still underway. In the next few years, the Partnership will be working to secure more funding through the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credits program, provide affordable housing for neighborhood residents, revitalize the neighborhood's commercial corridor, and increase safety. The residents are more engaged than ever and take great pride in the fact that they are helping secure the future of their community and their lives in Unity Square.



## ...the Silk City Makes a Comeback

(Continued from page 1)

Paterson is still known today as the “Silk City” because prominent industrialist



[www.patersonhistory.com](http://www.patersonhistory.com)

John Ryle successfully proved that weaving silk could be a profitable business and set out to build international recognition for his products. In Ryle's day, Paterson hummed with the silk industry and was an international melting pot thanks to a constant influx of workers and immigrants from around the globe. As was often the case, however, this steady hum of productivity didn't necessarily fare very well for factory workers and their families. In fact, by 1913, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) helped stage the “Paterson Silk Strikes”—fighting for an eight-hour work day and other concessions from factory owners and prominent industrialists. While unsuccessful at the time, these strikes helped forge the beginnings of what would become the modern labor movement, culminating in the end of child labor practices, decent working conditions for all workers, and ultimately the 40-hour work week.

Paterson remained an important industrial center through the 1900s. During this time period, one of Paterson's major success stories was the Wright Aeronautical Corporation whose aircraft engines helped Charles Lindbergh make the first Trans-Atlantic flight successful. In fact, many Paterson factories contributed to the production of aircraft engines up through World War II, helping the U.S. to secure victory.

### The Urban Struggle of the Post-War Era

The decline of American central cities during the mass suburbanization of the post-World War II era is well documented, and Paterson's history is just as linked to this phenomenon as most. Urban historians, planners, political scientists, and sociologists alike have researched and documented the impacts of deindustrialization, depopulation, and disinvestment—all of which led to expanding areas of concentrated poverty in many of our nation's older central cities. Equally well documented are the destructive impacts that many well-intentioned policies of the federal government, such as Urban Renewal, had on central cities from the 1950s to the present day. Considerable research has focused on how these and other structural changes such as industrial restructuring—where the U.S. economy shifted from a primarily industrial to service-based economy—undermined the quality of life in many of the older residential areas of our major cities. In fact, many of the inequalities and persistent divisions among race, class, and gender we see in cities across America today have their roots in these policies and this shared history.

In Paterson, as in many urban areas across the U.S., the struggle to revitalize pockets of deep and persistent poverty into vibrant places where even the poorest residents have an opportunity for rewarding and productive lives has been difficult. While Paterson remains New Jersey's third largest city, for years it has lived in the shadow of other larger cities throughout the region—struggling to find a balance between new rateables and delivering core services to the most needy. This reality proved challenging as cities such as New York, Newark, Jersey City, and others grappled with a changing economic system and a growing inability to smoothly make the transition from a primarily

industrial economy to one based on services and intellectual capital.

What is less documented are the strategic ways in which Paterson has begun to lift itself up over the last several years by taking hold of its important historic legacy, its existing core assets, and strong partnerships with the public, private, and non-profit sectors—all of which are increasingly committed to the City's future success.

### Creating the Second Industrial Revolution

In 2006, New Jersey officially pledged no less than \$10 million towards the development of the Great Falls State Park—creating an unprecedented opportunity for the nearby historic district, and the City of Paterson as a whole. Even more recently, Senators Lautenberg and Menendez, in concert with former Mayor and Congressman Bill Pascrell, have united the entire New Jersey Congressional delegation to spearhead a broad bi-partisan majority to help make the case for a new portion of the National Park Service: the Great Falls National Park. This important turn of events creates a chance to improve the quality of life in Paterson by maximizing the benefits of both State and Federal funding (a rare event as the federal government continues devolving its fiscal responsibilities for core services and public goods down to local governments).



[www.patersonhistory.com](http://www.patersonhistory.com)

The current plan for the Great Falls Park was developed by Field Operations, an internationally recognized and award-winning landscape architecture and design firm. One of their

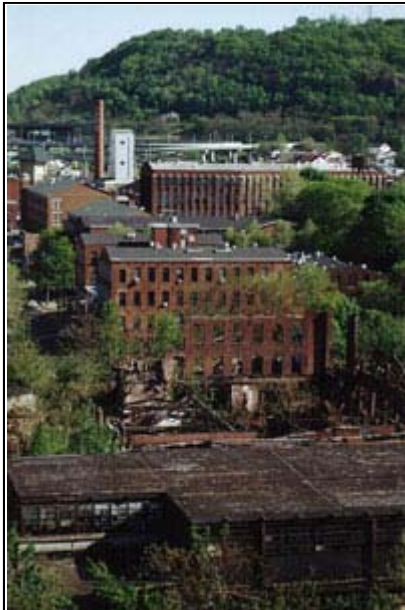
most recent projects, now underway, is the Highline, an elevated former train line in NYC. The entire Highline will be converted and redeveloped into a park and public space that cuts approximately seven stories above Manhattan's meat-

packing district and Chelsea neighborhood. No stranger to former industrial landscapes, Field Operations' plan for the Great Falls Park calls for the integration and transformation of many of the derelict industrial spaces into vibrant public spaces for all to enjoy. By creating a system of "living rooms," each taking advantage of the unique nature of the micro environments in which their history originates. From the former raceways that fueled the engines of silk industry, to the majestic Great Falls overlook, and former ATP Site, each "room" will reclaim the land and existing industrial building stock into historically significant and modern public space. The final draft plan calls for the reclamation of the ATP site (right) into a walking area and archeologically significant place to learn about Paterson's powerful industrial legacy and its role in paving America's economic path to independence (image below). The final designs also call for a more modern and interactive public space directly below the Great Falls themselves—designed to support breathtaking views, and public events that will draw visitors from the region.

Building off of this effort, several organizations, led by area non-profit, New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) are hoping to create a

comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan that builds off this historic opportunity and plan for the Great

Falls Park by linking it to a comprehensive and resident-led neighborhood planning and revitalization effort.



The ATP site in Paterson.  
[www.patersonhistory.com](http://www.patersonhistory.com)

This initiative is being funded in partnership with the Wachovia Regional Foundation, the NJ Department of Community Affairs' Division of Community Resources, J.P. Morgan Chase, and others. Several of New Jersey's best and brightest graduate and undergraduate students in the planning, policy, architectural, and social sciences will also participate in this work through the Housing & Community Development Scholars program, organized with New Jersey Institute of

Technology (NJIT), Wachovia Bank, and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This planning process is designed to place neighborhood residents and local institutions at the center of the community renewal and revitalization process. For NJCDC and our community partners, this is particularly important in low-income and minority



Reclamation of the ATP site in Paterson. Rendering by Field Operations.

neighborhoods, like Paterson, where too often, powerful outside interests determine the shape of housing and economic development efforts—overriding the interests of local residents, institutions, and long-standing community stakeholders. From NJCDC's viewpoint, democratic, bottom-up, participatory planning is essential because it produces a more representative and holistic end product. The plan NJCDC aims to create will have the strong backing of residents and prominent institutions—a critical component for ensuring these neighborhood priorities will be implemented in the face of indifference and potentially opposing forces. To that end, the main goal of this initiative will be the creation of an actionable, 5-10 year revitalization plan. It is hoped this plan will build off and reflect upon previously conducted analysis, conduct rigorous new analysis that reflects the city and region's current trends, and lay the foundation for innovative ways to improve the neighborhood. Also critical will be capitalizing on the sustainable business sector, and working in consonance with green-sector jobs and preparing for the second industrial revolution that builds opportunities in a less consumptive, efficient, and sustainable way.

The moral of the story is, keep your eye on Paterson; there are inspiring things afoot. From a new Great Falls National and State Park, to the revitalized and expanded St. Joseph's Hospital Complex, to the Greater Spruce Street Neighborhood and Historic District, the time is now to visit and see how planning is playing a critical role in restoring Paterson's important legacy in urban revitalization, sustainable development, and renewed citizen involvement!



Reclamation of the ATP site in Paterson. Rendering by Field Operations.



## APA-NJ Members Participate in Holmdel Bell Labs Charrette

By Carlos Rodrigues, PP / AICP  
Past President, APA-NJ

APA-NJ members Carlos Rodrigues, Gail O'Reilly and Janki Patel participated in a recent inter-disciplinary design charrette organized by Preservation New Jersey, AIA-NJ, DocoMomo, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Recent Past Preservation Network, and the Cultural Landscape Foundation. The three-day charrette was hosted by Holmdel Citizens for Informed Land Use and facilitated by Clint Andrews, chair of the planning program at the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers.

The subject of the charrette was a two-million square foot former Bell Labs facility located in Holmdel, designed by famous modernist architect Eero Saarinen and set within a site plan designed by equally famous landscape architects Sasaki, Walker and Associates. Built between 1959 and 1962, and expanded in 1966 and 1985, the facility once housed 6,000 scientists, researchers and support staff on the 472-acre tract. Both the building and the surrounding landscape are considered of great historic significance as significant examples of mid-century modern architecture and have been deemed eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Research conducted in the building led to several significant technological advancements, including the transistor and the cell phone.

The building was vacated by Lucent-Alcatel (successor to Bell) two years ago and has been on the market since. An interested developer proposed several schemes, which did not respect the site's historic qualities, including demolishing the building and subdividing the site with single-family lots. Fortunately, this was not well accepted by the municipality and the developer has left the scene. There are no current redevelopment prospects on the horizon, which is not surprising given the current real estate market downturn and constraints associated with the property itself.

The redevelopment of the facility poses thorny questions for the planning and

design community. While clearly an icon of a certain period of our recent history, where corporate America and modernist architecture aligned to create new models for the corporate workplace, the facility – with its vast building set in splendid isolation within 472 acres of lawn, ponds and woods -- is also emblematic of a bygone era of suburban sprawl, with all that it represents in terms of waste. From a sustainable development point of view, the site is as out-dated as Stonehenge. A simple re-tenanting or re-purposing of the building has no future in our current world.

Bell Labs and other comparable case studies raise difficult issues with which the historic preservation movement must come to terms with. At Bell Labs, the rigid formality of the massive building and the strict geometry of the access roads, circulation system and parking lot layout seem terribly dated and mall-like. Indeed the same formal model was used all over the nation to build regional malls. Should we seek to preserve all the early examples of the auto-oriented environments we created in the 50s and 60s, whether they were workplaces, places of commerce, residential or other, no matter how unsustainable these land use models are? I think not.

During the charrette, the APA-NJ members were fortunate to work with top-notch professionals from leading architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation and engineering firms. There was also compelling testimony from former workers at the facility and current residents.

The charrette generated many valuable ideas. There was clearly an emphasis on finding viable models to both re-purpose the building and retrofit it to make it and the surrounding landscape perform better from a sustainability point of view, without compromising the essential elements of its historic character. This objective appeared achievable, no matter what the ultimate use – or uses – ended up being. Indeed there was a noticeable emphasis on mixed-use solutions as the most viable and most appropriate.

However, perhaps the planners' most significant contribution was to point to the big picture. If all we do is find more energy efficient ways to run the same building within the same land use pattern, how sustainable is it? Even if a "silver bullet" solution is found (a single user with deep pockets willing to take on the entire facility such as a university or some other research, educational or health care institution) – will that not simply perpetuate the existing, unsustainable land use and transportation pattern? Regardless of current market conditions – and there is lots of vacant office in Monmouth County, with more to come as a result of Fort Monmouth's decommissioning – is a replacement office use the most appropriate solution?

From a planning perspective, the building and its grounds served as a "center" of sorts for Holmdel – a suburban community otherwise comprised of non-descript, single-family subdivisions. Bell Labs was the largest local employer, the center of innovation and ideas. The community yearns for that, along with the lost employment and tax revenues, but has no vision for how to take advantage of the redevelopment opportunity currently presented and turn it into a transformative experience for the community. The planners must ask: where are the children of the scientists that worked such long hours at Bell Labs? Are they still in Holmdel? The answer, of course, is no. There is nothing but nostalgia to hold the next generation in place.

In a sense, Holmdel and Bell Labs is a story oft repeated throughout America. We are all well acquainted with the history of company towns, whether the industry was roses, blueberries, steel, gambling, or electronics. In a world of global markets and global corporations, the single-industry town isn't a good bet.

As with any other charrette, the expectation is that the community will take the ideas generated during the charrette to heart and carefully evaluate them. While we cannot expect to have provided a full solution to the issue, we hope to have contributed to it.



## Asbury Park Revitalization – A West Side Story

By Patrick Durkin, Director, Real Estate Development, Interfaith Neighbors, Inc., Asbury Park, NJ

Interfaith Neighbors, Inc., a community based not for profit agency that has served the residents of Monmouth County for the past twenty years, is in the first years of the implementation of its Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Plan for the West Side Neighborhood of Asbury Park.

The overall vision for the Asbury Park West Side Neighborhood Plan is to create an attractive, inviting, and safe community with decent and affordable housing, a healthy business district providing jobs and services, and community/recreational programs. To achieve this vision, the plan is divided into five overarching goals: improve housing conditions; economic revitalization; improve community and recreational facilities; improve public spaces and infrastructure; and improve social conditions. Some history of Asbury Park will help to put this plan and the efforts to implement it into some perspective.

A once vibrant resort destination dating back to the 19th century, Asbury Park has, in recent years, been losing some of its appeal. Its decline was accelerated by the civil disturbances in 1970 when Asbury Park, like in other cities around the country, left large parts of the city burned out and abandoned. In Asbury Park, that area was the West Side, particularly along the Springwood Avenue corridor. What had been the primary commercial area for the West Side was left in ruins. At the time, the abandoned buildings were bulldozed and today, some 36 years later, many vacant lots remain. There has been no significant redevelopment on the West Side of Asbury Park (or in most of the rest of the city, either) for over 30 years.

Over the past six or seven years, many parts of the city have begun to experience a renaissance. Particularly along the waterfront area, millions of dollars in private funds have been committed toward rebuilding the oceanfront area of the city. Likewise, significant private investment has been made in the down-

town commercial area. However, the West Side - historically the poorest part of the city - has not attracted the same development interest and investments.

We believe it is imperative that the West Side be included in Asbury Park's revitalization. This is important not only for the West Side itself where the needs are great and the neglect has been longstanding, but it is important for the city as a whole if Asbury Park is to realize its full potential.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program, administered by the NJ Department of Community Affairs, provided the ideal vehicle to bring badly needed resources to the West Side neighborhood. The NRTC Program offers corporate investors a dollar for dollar credit against their New Jersey state business tax obligation for each dollar that they invest, up to a maximum of \$1,000,000.00 per year, in a DCA approved plan sponsored by a not for profit community based agency for the revitalization of one of the State's distressed neighborhoods. Interfaith Neighbors plan for the West Side of Asbury Park was the third such plan approved by DCA.

### The Neighborhood

The West Side is bounded by Asbury Avenue on the North, Memorial Drive on the East, Ridge Avenue on the West, and the Township of Neptune on South. Census tracts 8072 and 8073 comprised the neighborhood. The train station, city Hall, and Downtown Asbury Park all border the neighborhood on the East. Neptune borders the area on the West and the South. Residential areas lie north of Asbury Avenue.

According to the 2000 U.S. census, the West Side's population of 4,668 comprises 28% of the city's population. The majority (86%) of the population is black



Former Howard Johnson's renovated and reopened as Salt Water Beach Cafe on the boardwalk in Asbury Park. [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com),

or African American and 5% is identified as White. Only 6% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, although there has been a significant increase in the Latino population in the years since the 2000 census was completed. There is a growing West Indian population in the neighborhood with 7% of the population identifying themselves as of Haitian or Jamaican ancestry. The population is relatively young with 42% of the population under 18 and 50% of the population between the ages of 19 and 64 years. Only 6% of the population is 65 years or older. Of the 770 households with children, 68% are female-headed.

The West Side has historically been the poorest section of Asbury Park. While the boardwalk was developing in the late 1800s as an upscale resort area, the West Side emerged as home to service workers. The neighborhood evolved into a vibrant African-American community known for its residential character and as a commercial and entertainment hub. However, the area never had the services and infrastructure found in the rest of the city, and by the 1930s, was already showing signs of neglect with depilated housing stock and a lack of city services. These conditions worsened as Asbury Park's prominence as a resort destination declined in the post World War II years. In 1970, years of neglect culminated in the Fourth of July civil dis-

(Continued on page 14)

## Planning for a More Sustainable Hudson County

*By Chuck Latini, PP, AICP and  
Jeffrey Perlman, AICP*

*Chuck Latini and Jeffrey Perlman work at  
Heyer Gruel; the firm is working on the  
Sustainable Hudson County plan.*

Hudson County has long been a leader in promoting Smart Growth in New Jersey. With a State Planning Commission endorsed Strategic Plan, the Brownfields Redevelopment Stakeholder initiative, strong cross-coordination in and amongst various governmental agencies, as well as leadership and staff that truly understands the importance between balancing competing community and economic development interests, it was merely a matter of time that they would be one of the leaders in New Jersey on yet another important initiative – tackling climate via sustainability.

Recognizing that the effect of global warming are as severe in Hudson as they are in neighboring New York City, the County has chosen to "think globally, by acting locally". This principle was the premise behind the current draft of the Hudson County Re-examination of its Master Plan. It takes the global scientific



research of climatologic data assessing the impacts of Climate Change and creates a local rational nexus between many development practices involving traffic and drainage (the two main topics under the County Planning Act that empower our county planning boards). In a nutshell, it ties planning and design issues together that were always considered separate and distinct.

So, what has the county done? For one, they took the proverbial box and set parameters based on the County Planning Act. Then, by taken traditional definitions and comparing them against real world possibility, they worked to stitch together a game plan to pull things together creatively (and we believe within the confines of the County's purview).



For example; what is the function of a tree? And given what we know of them, why don't we think of them as integral part of our infrastructure- circulation and stormwater? After all, trees are more than pretty streetscape amenities, they are essential components to pedestrian travel. By enhancing the pedestrian environment, they can provide a safe and secure refuge from vehicular traffic, which is a necessary component to alleviating traffic congestion.

However, street trees do much more than merely enhance aesthetic conditions. When carefully considered within streetscapes designs and its associated infrastructure, trees can be vital components of the stormwater system; soft infrastructure if you will. This approach has historical roots in places like Mendoza, Argentina, and is being aggressively pursued in places such as San Francisco,



where trees are important to the physical and environmental infrastructure of the city.

While Mendoza's "Aquacinas" were originally developed to carry snow melt water from the Andes to the city for access to the people and the economy, this water system is also utilized to feed street trees and cool a city that is essentially built in a desert. Hudson County's approach is similar to that of Mendoza and San Francisco, where trees will now be viewed as essential infrastructure, by utilizing trees to reduce stormwater runoff and reduce the heat-island effect in urban areas.

The added benefits to this approach are that trees remove carbon from the atmosphere and thereby reduce the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The County's policies will undoubtedly play a significant role in improving local life in Hudson, while making a mark globally.

The County seeks to use this approach to eventually separate an antiquated combined sewer system while shading county streets, improving water quality, and improving the circulation system. It is through this initiative that streets are to be designed to move people and not merely vehicles.

Through this planning effort, the County is also seeking to plan for a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled, not only through creating a more pleasing bicycle and pedestrian environment but also on place-making as a key economic strategy.

Additionally, the County has identified reasonable walking distances to the County's open space amenities; parks, plazas, and greenways, all with a goal of ensuring that the County continues to think holistically- that every aspect of a community is inextricably linked. When combined with current and future mass transit opportunities, the County will continue to grow as a vital component and integral to the function of the most dynamic regional marketplace in the world.

## Race & Planning - A Call for Dialogue

By Paul Gleitz, P.P. AICP,  
Charles Latini, P.P. AICP, and  
Jeffrey Perlman, AICP

### Part 1 of a 2 part Series

Last month, a posting on the APA-NJ listserv sparked a heated discussion about perceived racial and ethnic hiring preferences by the person who posted a job opening for a City of Newark job. The discussion forced us to pause and contemplate a situation long ignored. While it may anger people that an individual revealed his inner thought process for evaluating candidates for new positions based on his personal experience, it clouds the real news of the day. Newark, our largest city, with some of the worst and intractable problems facing urban America today, has decided to give significant credence to planning by reconstituting its Division of Planning and Economic Development. While the office may be 40 years behind and certainly a few dollars short for the task ahead, it is none the less here, real and happening under the leadership of Mayor Booker.

While our profession is brought this great news that our largest city is raising planning to its proper place in City hierarchy, we spend our time debating how offensive it is that race could be an issue in the hiring of staff. The profession of planning is just like the larger Country we find ourselves in, blind to the realities of race in America in the 21st century. All this happened on the anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, in the midst of an historic presidential race that finds a black man and a white woman vying for the nomination of their party to stand for the Presidency, when over two million people are incarcerated (many of them people of color), when the gap between the haves and have not is wider than ever, we focus on this sleight of hand of reverse discrimination.

All of us are elbow deep in interpreting the ever changing landscape of affordable housing rules, how do we react when suburban communities shrink at the thought to providing housing for "those people"? When urban communities face rehabilitation requirements of 100s of

units, do we ask, "How did we get here"? Or even try to understand the plight of people whose hardships are unimaginable?

Today we remain forced by the MLUL to focus on the boundaries of a parcel and legally we can only ask about the impacts on sewer lines and traffic intersections. However, and much greater than this, we can never get to the real question; What are the larger implications of our policies and how this project, application, or proposal affects our community physically and more importantly socially? How does this proposal better our community by recognizing the needs of real people?

Our hope is that we take this opportunity to begin a meaningful dialogue on the issues of race, poverty and justice and our role in these issues as planners. We support the idea of an APA-NJ sponsored forum on these issues. Let us turn this opportunity for the profession in Newark with the creation of a Division of Planning and Economic Development and not just consider it an opportunity for a few of our colleagues to get interesting positions, but an opportunity for the profession to bring all of our intellect, passion and creativity to bear in solving the greatest problems of our largest city. Problems that have been largely created through our indifference to race and public policies since the birth of our nation. Policies that have created dramatic, harsh environments through which communities must fight tooth and nail to pull themselves out of, or merely survive.

Words mean everything and certainly we must consider them carefully, the truth remains that the City of Newark is working hard to address many issues that are beyond most of this State's comprehension. We certainly believe that whoever gets hired is first and foremost qualified, but as important, is able to listen and understand the deep seeded resentment that is present within some of our most challenged neighborhoods. This understanding will certainly lead the City and this State in the right and proper path, that history does matter and how do we pull each other through toward a better future.

# A Housing Market Perspective of TOD

By Stephanie E. DiPetrillo

With the deep slump in New Jersey's housing market, despite mortgage rates holding at 30-year lows, one bright spot remains—locations that are transit-rich. That was the analysis of Jeffrey Otteau, president of [Otteau Valuation Group, Inc.](#), a well-regarded real estate appraisal and research group, during a presentation at the 2007 NJ State League of Municipalities Conference.

According to Otteau, New Jersey is part of the national housing affordability crisis arising out of exaggerated home prices, spurred by low interest rates. Median home prices in the state have risen since the early 1970s from about \$75,000 to nearly \$400,000 in 2005. In 1999, a family earning the median income could more than afford to put down 20 percent and make their payments on a 30-year fixed rate loan, but that is not true today. Today, one out of every six residents spends more than half of their income on monthly housing expenses, and the average New Jersey resident suffers the second highest monthly housing costs in the nation.

The housing affordability gap between prices and personal resources has been aggravated by lagging personal income and the state's loss of high paying jobs. Some indicators for the immediate future do not look promising, Otteau contended, such as a dimming employment picture, a poor business tax climate and

accelerated outward migration of affluent residents.

Factors driving this jump in housing prices are numerous. One of them is that the urban housing market, particularly in Manhattan, has remained strong. Manhattan's outsized housing prices, amounting to \$1,100 per square foot, allows home sellers in the surrounding suburbs to exact premium prices from potential home buyers who are leaving Manhattan and considering New Jersey as a residential location. (This factor points to transit-rich locations, particularly those served by rail, holding, and likely remaining, as the strongest element in the state's residential market.)

A second factor is the ever-decreasing availability of land in New Jersey. Land prices in the state are among the highest in the nation. The amount of land for home construction is constrained by state and federal environmental regulations, municipal development constraints and down-zoning, except for age-restricted units. A third factor is high construction costs. A fourth factor is above average costs, such as property taxes and insurance. NJ residents pay the highest per capita taxes in the United States. In addition, monthly housing costs in NJ are 53 percent higher than the national average.

## Where the Housing Market is Growing

Affected by the strength of the Manhattan housing market, as well as a national trend showing distinct preferences among 20-somethings and baby boomers for live-work-play locations such as New Jersey, the one bright spot in this slumping sector is housing in transit-rich locations. While expensive suburban homes languish on the market, with 48 weeks of inventory, housing near locations with excellent rail connections to Manhattan is flourishing with less than a six-

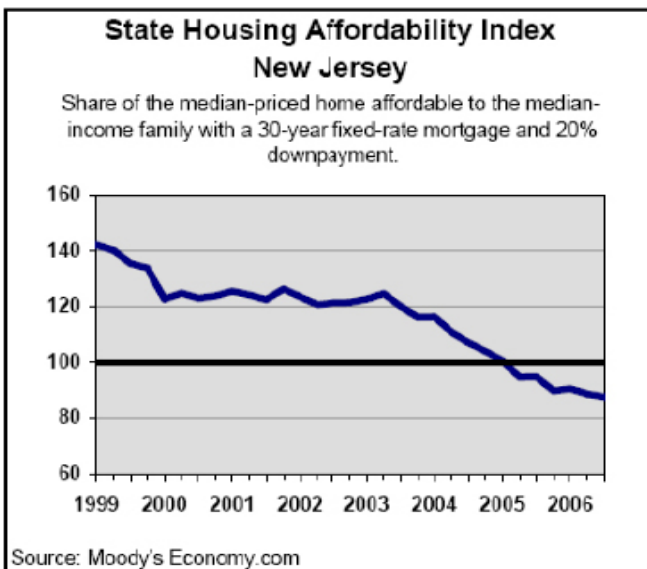
month supply of unsold homes. These markets include Glen Ridge and Montclair on the Montclair-Boonton Line; South Orange Village, Maplewood, Millburn, Summit and New Providence on the Morris & Essex Gladstone Branch; and Roselle Park, Cranford, Westfield and Fanwood, with stations on the Raritan Valley Line.

A reading of 100 means a family earning the state median family income (reported by the Census Bureau) can qualify for a mortgage on a typical median-priced existing single-family home, assuming a 20% down payment. An index above 100 signifies that a family earning the median income more than qualifies for a mortgage loan on a median-priced home. This index has been declining in New Jersey since 1999. In 2005, such a family could no longer afford to purchase a median priced home in the state.

## Approaching the European Experience

Given the challenge of purchasing a home in the state, the housing market in New Jersey is becoming much more like that in Europe. The age of first time home buyers is rising as many postpone buying a home until their forties. Affordability has also constrained mobility—the average period of ownership is now 10 years and rising. To manage rising prices, 40-year mortgages are becoming more common and 50-year mortgages are on the horizon. The corollary of the home ownership market is the rental market. Rental demand is growing with an expanded and more affluent renter population as people with good salaries find that they still can't get into the home ownership market. As a result, a luxury rental market is emerging in the state.

Housing built near rail offers a real solution to this squeeze. Higher density construction and smaller unit size helps to boost affordability. These locations primarily attract young professionals and aging baby boomers, households with few school-aged children. Smaller units, studios and one-bedroom apartments,





are thus the most desirable. Living in a location with excellent transit allows residents to lower monthly costs by trading transportation costs for housing. This has been borne out in recent studies that have found that those living in transit-rich locations tend to own fewer vehicles and use them less. Mixed-use

development near transit delivers lifestyles that consumers seek and spurs activity in our state's downtowns.

Efforts to improve rail service reinforce this market. For example, the Trans-Hudson Express Tunnel (THE Tunnel) should serve to push the value of rail-

served development higher at locations benefiting from improved service.

*This article appeared in the January 2008 issue of Transit-Friendly Development, a newsletter published by the Voorhees Transportation Center at The Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers.*

## Is Regulatory Reform on the Horizon?

By Carlos Rodrigues PPIA/ICP

New Jersey is abuzz with a variety of initiatives aiming at reforming the State's archaic and archane web of land development statutes and environmental regulations:

1. A Task Force convened by DCA Commissioner Doria – asked to provide recommendations on how the State can deliver on the Administration's promise of 100,000 units of affordable housing – is assembling its recommendations, which will likely include a call to comprehensively reform the state's land use regulatory framework. The Task Force's steering committee is sifting through wide-ranging recommendations submitted by 6 separate working groups. The range of recommendations to emerge from these working groups – which in many cases applied not just to housing, but to other land uses as well, suggests a wide consensus among stakeholders that the NJ system is deeply flawed.

2. A large group with representation from a variety of real estate development and economic development groups, land use professionals, and urban areas has been working on a wide-ranging legislative package known as the Smart Growth Economic Stimulus Act of 2008. The major intent is to reform the land development review process with a view towards promoting smart growth and economic development. The package is seeking legislative sponsors.

3. NJDEP Commissioner Jackson has created an advisory committee tasked with recommending changes to a number of the agency's regulatory programs. The committee's recommendations are

due later this year.

4. New Jersey Future has convened a series of stakeholder meetings with a view towards developing recommendations for a workforce housing initiative.

5. Regional Plan Association (yours truly) has been working on changes to the MLUL that would authorize and promote form-based zoning.

6. The Legislature is already swamped by a flurry of legislative proposals. Too many to itemize here, we should nevertheless mention Assembly Bill 500, sponsored by Speaker Joe Roberts and others, which would profoundly change the state's affordable housing landscape.

All this activity suggests that there is a growing impatience and sense of frustration among smart growth advocates and others, whether inside or outside the planning community, with our current land use regulatory framework, which doesn't seem to be working well for anyone any more. With the state's economy tanking, job growth flat-lined, a state budget that is deeply in the red, a vast backlog of vital unfunded public infrastructure projects and a deep crisis in the housing industry there is a growing awareness that we need to be smarter about our land use regulations. This is compounded by the realization that collectively, local zoning and state regulations are more often than not thwarting the very projects that smart growth advocates so dearly want. The bureaucratic maze is pricing out large segments of New Jersey's workforce; affordable housing is not being built; transit-oriented development is not happening in a meaningful way; and environmental

regulations are increasingly intrusive, without delivering any added value to the environment itself.

In fact, the unintended consequences, on the ground, of archaic, poorly conceived and inflexible regulations – whether it is Euclidean zoning, CAFRA or stream encroachment -- are the most compelling reasons why we need to change them.

With this in mind, it has been painful to watch the shrill reaction of those who view with extreme alarm the very possibility that a public discussion of land use regulatory reform might be in the works. Early drafts of some of Doria's working group reports were reportedly leaked to newspapers, leading to a flurry of articles and editorials full of high pitched sounds of alarm warning that DCA wanted to trash environmental regulations. Even the usually reliable New York Times published an editorial – which was factually incorrect on several counts -- castigating Governor Corzine for the supposed recommendations of one of these working groups. Never mind that the media clearly misunderstood the substance of the recommendations (we always expect them to). And never mind that the recommendations in question have not yet been endorsed by the Steering Committee, not to mention DCA or the Governor's Office. This is the equivalent of writing a film review based on unedited raw footage and seems to me to flaunt journalistic ethics.

Nevertheless, it does remind us that the trigger-happy conspiracy theorists and other supporters of the status quo will go to great lengths to thwart any attempts at a rational discussion of the flaws in our system.

## ...Asbury Park Revitalization – A West Side Story

*(Continued from page 9)*

turbances that resulted in the burning of several blocks of Springwood Avenue. Over the next 30 years, the city's boardwalk and downtown areas were virtually abandoned and the West Side declined even further with little redevelopment occurring on the blocks left vacant by the civil disturbances from the 70s.

This downward trend appears to be reversing in most of Asbury Park. The city has broken ground on three of what will be multiple projects to construct over 3,000 luxury condominiums on a 56-acre waterfront redevelopment zone, which is a mile long and several blocks deep, extending west from the boardwalk. Improvements are also visible in the downtown area, where new stores and restaurants have opened and in many residential areas, where housing values are rising and units are being renovated.

While this rebirth has not significantly impacted the West Side, it creates both opportunities and concerns for this community. On the one hand, the community may benefit from additional jobs and resources accompanying the redevelopment. For example, there may be new markets for West Side businesses making the redevelopment of Springwood Avenue as a commercial hub possible. On the other hand, there are concerns that redevelopment may lead to a shortage of affordable housing through the demolition of blighted properties in the redevelopment area and rising real estate prices throughout Asbury Park and the West Side.

This neighborhood plan is being developed to capitalize on these opportunities while ensuring that the West Side is revitalized for the people of the West Side.

### **NRTC West Side Asbury Park Plan Elements**

The IFN NRTC plan for the West Side is a ten year plan involving some 60 initiatives. These projects fall into five main areas: housing, economic revitalization, community and recreation facilities, public spaces and infrastructure and social

conditions. These are the areas of need that have consistently been identified by neighborhood residents in every planning effort going back some 30 years.

In the area of housing, the plan will address the need to provide more affordable rental housing; to increase homeownership rates among low-income residents; to encourage the development of moderate market rate housing and to improve the safety and condition of rental housing.

In the area of economic revitalization, the plan seeks to develop low-rise, mixed use buildings along Springwood Avenue; develop new commercial anchors such as stores and office buildings; to rehabilitate existing storefronts; to develop programs to support local businesses; to develop the area within 1/2 mile of the transit center as a Transit Village; to provide jobs for the West Side residents; to attract visitors to West Side businesses.

In the area of community and recreational facilities, the plan seeks to provide additional youth programs; to better use public spaces and provide additional public spaces where feasible; to expand senior center services and facilities; to develop a community center with meeting rooms, branch library, cultural center and providing job training resources.

In the area of public spaces and infrastructure, the plan seeks to develop a neighborhood gateway focusing on streetscape and facade improvement; to improve overall physical conditions in the neighborhood; to improve signage in the neighborhood; to enforce and develop design guidelines for the neighborhood; to work on overall neighborhood beautification through art programs and community clean-up efforts.

And finally, in the area of improved social conditions, the plan seeks to support community efforts to reduce crime; to develop gang prevention education programs; to support drug prevention efforts; to enhance and support childcare, daycare and healthcare programs; and to

strengthen the capacity of neighborhood based non-profits.

### **Corporate and institutional Support**

Interfaith Neighbors has long enjoyed a strong working relationship with the City of Asbury Park. That relationship is key in the implementation of the West Side NRTC plan. Interfaith works closely with a number of city Departments in carrying out the various elements of the NRTC plan. It would be impossible for the plan to succeed without the support and cooperation of the city.

In addition, Interfaith enjoys support from a number of Corporations. IFN has had a 12 year partnership with the New Jersey Natural Gas Company in its Affordable Housing efforts. We have also enjoyed long standing support from the Jersey Central Power and Light Company and a long relationship with PNC Bank. These three corporations, along with Selective Insurance Company and Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield, have combined to provide \$1,000,000.00 in investments to support Interfaith's first year initiatives under the NRTC plan.

Interfaith also received an Implementation Grant from the Wachovia Regional Foundation that will fund the administrative expenses of carrying out the plan over the next five years. This will allow 100% of those corporate investments to go directly into project expenses.

Finally, Interfaith Neighbors enjoys widespread support from the neighborhood residents. IFN's 20 year track record of successfully operating in Asbury Park and our reputation in the community, combined with our commitment to working with residents and community groups, stand in stark contrast to previous development efforts that were the antithesis of community based planning. We believe that by working closely with all of the stakeholders in the community we can produce sustainable results.

### **First Year Initiatives**

Interfaith has focused its first year efforts under the plan in the areas of affordable





A vacant street in Asbury Park. [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

install dehumidification equipment in the pool area. This is important since this indoor pool is one of only 5 in all of Monmouth County. In addition, on this project, we were able to leverage the NRTC money with additional support from the Gas Company and the Monmouth County Community Foundation to provide heat into the locker room areas for the first time in twenty years and to completely renovate the restroom facilities at the Club

housing, youth based recreation programs and public safety. We have also funded some of the pre-development costs of the project that will be the corner stone of our Year 2 initiatives. In the area of affordable housing, Interfaith currently controls 5 scattered site parcels in the West Side. These sites will yield 7 units of affordable, for-sale housing. There will be three single family detached homes and two 2-family homes constructed. Two of the single family homes are currently under construction, ground will be broken on the third home in June and the 2-family homes are scheduled for construction later this fall.

Youth based recreation programs were a high priority in the first year. We felt it was important to increase the opportunities for the kids of the West Side to be involved in positive recreational activities as opposed to the other less positive opportunities that all too often present themselves to the young people of the West Side Neighborhood.

The efforts that were supported included a variety of projects:

- Funding for field lighting for the Asbury Park Little League Field has allowed the league to expand the number of players served and, since there is only one Little League field in Asbury Park, has allowed the league to effectively double the playing time those teams have during the evening hours.
- Replacement of the HVAC equipment at the Boy & Girls club and to

- Outfitting of a gym for the PAL Boxing program. This program has been attempting to operate in Asbury Park for the past several years. However, those efforts have been hampered by the lack of a permanent facility to operate the program from. The program has not had a permanent place to keep a ring set up. Working with the city we were able to identify space in a city building that is currently used for storage that the city will make available to the PAL Boxing Program. Interfaith will build out the boxing gym by installing an HVAC system, bathrooms and locker rooms. This will provide a home for the PAL Boxing program that will allow the program to expand the numbers of West Side kids that can participate.

Public Safety has been a concern consistently expressed by West Side neighborhood Residents. To address that concern, Interfaith Neighbors proposed a pilot program to the Asbury Park Police Department to install video surveillance cameras in two of the more crime plagued areas of the West Side. The Police Department had already been looking into this type of equipment. Again being able to leverage commitment of NRTC dollars, the Police Department was able to secure additional funding through the State's UEZ program and the U.S. Department of Justice and Madison Marquette, a developer involved in the city's beachfront redevelopment, to expand the project city-wide. The initial phase is scheduled to be in place by mid-June.

And finally, first years NRTC funds have been allocated to pay for pre-development costs for the mixed use project that will anchor Interfaith's Year 2 NRTC initiatives.

The Springwood Avenue Mixed-Use project will be the cornerstone of Interfaith Neighbors' Year 2 initiatives under their West Side Asbury Park Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Plan. The project will consist of the development of a 3 story, approximately 30,000 square foot building that will house the city's Senior Center, 10 units of affordable rental housing and a combination of city services and commercial space at grade.

As stated above, the Springwood Avenue corridor had historically been the center of commercial activity on the West Side of Asbury Park. In its day, Springwood Avenue was a prosperous commercial thoroughfare lined with stores, churches, taverns and restaurants. It was the center of activities for West Side residents. Since the civil disturbances of 1970, most all of that activity has been gone. While there have been many planning initiatives over the years, no significant reinvestment has been made in the West Side community.

A significant milestone was recently achieved when the Asbury Park City Council adopted the Springwood Avenue Redevelopment Plan. This plan is a product of more than two years of community based planning and has won awards for the process it followed to gather community input during the planning process so that the plan that has been adopted genuinely reflects the desires of the community with respect to what a redeveloped Springwood Avenue will look like.

The plan calls for a mix of commercial, retail, entertainment, parks and housing along the Avenue.

Interfaith Neighbors' mixed-use project is located at the center of the Springwood Avenue redevelopment area. It is one of the first three proposed projects for the redevelopment zone. The other

*(Continued on page 24)*

## On Borrowed Time: Urban Decline Moves to the Suburbs

**By Michael Gecan, Executive Team Member, Industrial Areas Foundation**

*Michael Gecan is on the national staff of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), a Chicago-based community organization established in 1940 by Saul Alinsky (who is generally considered to be the father of community organizing). There are currently 57 IAF affiliates functioning in 21 states, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Mr Gecan is also the author of Going Public: An Organizer's Guide to Citizen Action. This article appeared in the March/April issue of Boston Review ([bostonreview.net](http://bostonreview.net)) and is reprinted with permission.*

A few months ago, about 125 leaders from religious institutions, civic organizations, and social service groups met at Etz Chaim synagogue in the town of Lombard, in DuPage County, to wrestle with a new reality: a budget crisis. Budget crises aren't supposed to happen in places like west suburban DuPage. It is home to nearly one million souls and more than 600,000 private sector jobs. It boasts a median income of \$70,000, one of the highest in the nation. And yet the county, strapped for cash, was threatening to cut convalescent services, veterans' services, housing assistance, breast cancer screening, and many other essential public functions.

Until recently DuPage County had been one of the big winners during the forty-year decline and imminent collapse of Cook County. Major corporations fled Chicago's failing downtown and moved to DuPage's open spaces and tax-friendly towns. Working class homeowners on the west and southwest sides of the city sold their bungalows and bought ranch houses, Cape Cods, and new town homes in Wheaton and Naperville and Downers Grove. Families troubled by the city's public schools happily sent their children into shining new facilities and well-equipped classrooms. County government prided itself on its lean budgets and effective service-delivery.

By the date of the meeting, however, the developers who had helped double

DuPage's population in just 30 years had run out of land. The income generated by their construction efforts had dwindled to a trickle. Education and public safety costs continued to climb. Scores of specialized local districts and commissions—water, sanitary, and others—absorbed hundreds of millions of dollars that never made it into the general operating budget of the county and were subject to little, if any, scrutiny or oversight. And residential real estate taxes—the backbone of the county's budget due to the long-standing agreement to attract and retain business by keeping commercial taxes low—soared.

The leaders facing the crisis were themselves a new reality—more diverse than anyone would have imagined just ten years ago. In the modern synagogue meeting space, sitting around tables of ten, were approximately fifteen Muslim leaders from mosques and community centers, five Hispanics who were part of an exploding population drawn to the county by plentiful employment, and several African immigrants and African Americans. About one out of four participants were not white—a ratio that represents the make-up of the new DuPage. They were brought together by the leaders and staff of the local Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) affiliate called DuPage United.

The organizer of the group, Amy Lawless, asked me—a veteran organizer with IAF working in both the Chicago and New York metropolitan areas—to give a 30-minute talk about the state of the county. I started off where I often do, by thinking back to the west side of Chicago, to the corner of Ferdinand and Springfield near Garfield Park, where my family lived. There was no way to know, in the 1950s, that we were living at the city's high point. The massive economic and political, civic and religious institutions had seemed as solid and stable as glaciers to those living with them or in their shadows. From the second floor of our double-brick corner house, we could see the tavern that we once owned, the then-modern building that housed Newark Electronics, where my

father and I would someday work, and the row of houses that blocked a view of Tootsietoy Company, where my mother would be employed. Four blocks north was our parish, Our Lady of the Angels. Many thousands attended Mass each Sunday. Sixteen hundred children packed its classrooms.

By the mid-1980s, it was all rapidly declining. Today, our home, along with thousands of others, is abandoned. A state social service center fills the old electronics plant. Tootsietoy's products are mostly made in China. And the parish church and school have closed. In that pleasant synagogue meeting space, with the last of the new McMansions going up across the street, with 60,000 more workers commuting in to DuPage each day than commuting out, with the local football teams on the rise and the SAT and ACT scores still high, I suggested that perhaps the county had hit its own high-water mark and that without clear-eyed re-evaluation, it was poised, as Chicago had been in the mid-1950s, for decline.

DuPage is not alone, of course. In Nassau and Suffolk Counties in New York, in Montgomery and Baltimore Counties in Maryland, in Bergen and Essex and Middlesex Counties in New Jersey, in almost every mature suburb in the northeast and Midwest and mid south, families face these same conditions. A Roman Catholic pastor I met in Nassau County described it as suburbia's midlife crisis. It may be part of America's midlife crisis as well.

No longer young, no longer trendy, no longer the place to be, no longer without apparent limitations or constraints, these places, like people, have developed ways of avoiding reality.

*Denial (supported by ever-stronger doses of public relations). One way is just to deny that there are new realities, or that these new realities will ever affect them. Hundreds of older cities and suburbs, large and small, do this. Denial keeps the real estate crowd happy—selling the safety and schools and jobs of the sub-*

urbs, while ignoring the property taxes and rising school and public safety costs, hoping that the younger and fresher and business-hungry counties further west, or the factories of China and tech campuses of India, don't tempt too many companies to leave.

*Gimmicks.* A municipality buys a soccer team, or minor league baseball franchise, or jai alai fronton, or casino, or all of the above. Bigger municipalities start selling or leasing large parts of themselves. Just two years ago, Chicago leased the Skyway in an attempt to generate revenue and plug holes in an election-year budget. In late 2007, the papers were filled with stories about another \$250 million gap. What's the next one-shot? Naming rights are being discussed. And, of course, there is always the summer Olympics of 2016. In a desolate corner of the near-south side, amid boarded up gray stones and eerily empty boulevards during what should be the morning rush hour, a beleaguered local pastor told me that the possibility of an Olympic swimming venue (proposed by the city, for eight years in the future, as part of an Olympic bid with little or no chance of succeeding) would help revive the neighborhood.

*Blaming "others."* In cities of the 1950s, the "others" were the black workers who had arrived by the hundreds of thousands for jobs that were just beginning to disappear. They needed housing and schools for their children. And the Democratic machine was more than happy to enrich itself by taking money from the developers and real estate hustlers who were running white ethnics out of their neighborhoods and steering minorities in. The political establishment blamed the blacks for the neighborhoods' decline. This extraordinary trope made it possible for a major American city to demolish much of its public housing stock—nearly 18,000 units—and essentially not replace it. Ten years ago, these 18,000 families were promised replacement apartments. To date, fewer than 2,000 have been built, most not affordable to the original renters. When I described this situation to two young and prosperous Chicago businessmen, they expressed no surprise. Blacks were the problem, weren't they? And they had

to hand it to Mayor Daley for figuring out how to evict them without greater opposition. Today, in the suburbs, the new "others" are immigrants—Hispanic and Muslim. Some blame them for the current fiscal crisis. Meanwhile, the structural, financial, and political challenges of the suburbs—built into their creation and preceding the newest wave of immigrants by three decades—are not dealt with.

*Withdrawal: Increasing fragmentation and privatization.* As the budget crises persist, as the gimmicks become more transparent and inadequate, as the racial and ethnic rhetoric rises, those with resources begin to protect their own interests. Walls of all kinds are built. Private colleges and hospitals will become fiefdoms—supplying their own security, sanitation, even housing at times. Private schools for those who can afford them multiply. Gated communities have become the norm. Most suburbs had little public housing or public transportation to begin with. But the logic for anything "public" will be challenged as revenue to support any shared public activity shrinks. The forces for and against public effort, public institutions, and public life will soon collide in the public schools and public safety agencies of the suburbs.

We have moved a long way from the vision of the nation that Abraham Lincoln described in his Message to Congress, on July 4, 1861, "To elevate the condition of man . . . To lift artificial weights from all shoulders; To clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all; To afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life . . ." "All" is what FDR had in mind when he formulated the New Deal. It is not a word you hear in the public arena—city, county, state, or nation—these

days.

Instead, in the Land of Lincoln, older cities like Chicago and counties like Cook have already shown how to focus on the few. Their economic strategies have benefited those who own the businesses that cater to the tourist trade, not the workers who make the beds and chop the onions. They have created enclaves around universities and hospitals where parents can buy condos for their student-children and where private security forces patrol the streets. They have sequestered revenues generated by business and medical clusters within those districts, thus starving the larger public housing, health, transit, and educational systems in the sprawling ghettos just outside the gates. They have encouraged construction of homes and apartment towers that few local residents can afford, which are bought as investment by European and South American elites. And they have kept control of the courts, jails, and police forces—patronage for the operatives who guarantee machine incumbency, the industry of incarceration weakly buffering the loss of the steel and auto and other manufacturing industries of the past.

Many of the paths of laudable pursuit have been closed or semi-privatized—walled, gated, guarded—for some time.

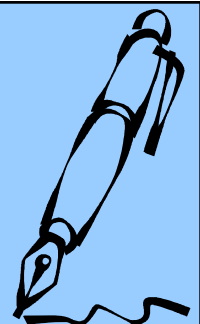
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## Write for the APA-NJ Newsletter!

The APA-NJ Bulletin welcomes planning-related articles, editorials, event announcements, and photos. Please e-mail submissions and questions to APA-NJ Bulletin Editor Rebecca Hersh at: [rebeccamhersh@aol.com](mailto:rebeccamhersh@aol.com)

### Upcoming Deadlines:

- Friday, **June 27** or the July/August 2008 issue
- Friday, **August 29** for the Sept/Oct 2008 issue
- Friday, **October 24** for the Nov/Dec 2008 issue





## ...Urban Decline Moves to the Suburbs

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For three generations of African Americans, the city and county have been places of a deep and extended depression. For the white-ethnic working class, the results have been more mixed. Hundreds of thousands of families, like mine, lost equity repeatedly as each neighborhood on the west and south sides was re-segregated. Fearful whites sold low. Blacks desperate to flee tenements bought high. The real estate hustlers, with the blessing of the Democratic machine, made fortunes and kicked a percentage back to the local ward alderman or committeeman. Other whites accepted the instability of repeated neighborhood change for the stability of patronage employment. The city government that put food on the table took money from their savings accounts at Pioneer Bank and Talman Savings and Loan in the form of lost home equity. For more recent immigrants, the city has been stripped of opportunity in some places and sealed off in others.

The Democratic machine and its allies have fought an increasingly costly rear-guard action for nearly half a century. At the end of that period, the image of the city has been burnished, but Chicago is basically broke. Housing abandonment, homelessness, and foreclosure rates are all at historic highs. 34 public school children were murdered during the 2006-7 school year alone. The police force stag-

gers under multiple charges of abuse and corruption. The old bungalow bedrock of the city—blue-collar and tax-paying—has disappeared.

It is instructive to compare Chicago with New York, which seemed in even worse shape 30 years ago. Most Americans remember the famous tabloid headline: "Ford to New York: Drop Dead." As late as the mid-1980s, a major magazine sported a picture of a darkened city on its cover with the letters, "NYC RIP." Indeed, beginning in the late 1970s, the city was locked in a very public life-and-death struggle. Only emergency action by labor unions and others saved the city fiscally. But, when faced with municipal mortality—perhaps *because* it had to face its own mortality—a strange thing happened. The city slowly began to revive.

This revival didn't start in City Hall or in some political gathering. It wasn't engineered by a major builder like the legendary Robert Moses. And it wasn't the brainchild of a great corporate or financial titan. This building began locally, in some of the most forgotten corners of a city that was battling the equivalent of a virulent and advanced form of cancer. It started in East Brooklyn and the South Bronx and the Manhattan area called Washington Heights.

In the late 1970s, a little known group

called the Community Preservation Corporation (CPC) began rehabilitating apartment buildings in one of the areas that Hollywood loved—drug-ridden Washington Heights. After 14,000 units were built in a decade, most of the rental housing in the area had been returned to useful life. In 1980, one of our organizations, East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC), began its work in an area a touring mayor from Boston dubbed, "The beginning of the end of civilization." EBC built 3,000 new, affordable, owner-occupied homes on the vacant acres there, and is constructing 1,500 more as we speak. In the South Bronx, another IAF group, South Bronx Churches, built one thousand homes starting in 1986, while other efforts led by Father Lou Gigante and Mary Daily built or renovated thousands more. Common Ground created 2,000 units of housing for formerly homeless people, giving them shelter, services, and an alternative to the streets. 2,000 more are now in development. Over a 25-year period, more than 200,000 units of housing have either been upgraded or built from scratch. A million New Yorkers have returned to the city, pushing its population back over 8.25 million. The city spent \$500 million a year in some years on housing production. In the process, New York transformed lots filled with rubble and tires into neighborhoods for the hard-working families that lived in public housing, but couldn't afford even a starter home in a suburb. Those families held on. They saved. They bought. And they benefited from one of the greatest public works efforts in modern times. Private developers vie for the remaining lots in places like Mott Haven or East New York, where they can now build market-rate housing. This, although with its own challenges, was utterly unthinkable in 1980.

During this same period, a similar renewal effort was occurring in public transit. In the 1970s and 1980s, New York City subways were famous for breakdowns, fires, and crime. The number of riders plummeted in what seemed to be a death-spiral. Massive state support solicited by Richard Ravitch and

## Call for Award Nominations

**Submissions for APA-NJ's 2008 Awards for Planning must be received  
by 5pm on July 11, 2008.**

These awards honor plans, planning and design initiatives, reports, built projects, individuals and organizations that are in the forefront of planning and design in New Jersey. Recipients of APA-NJ's 2008 Awards for Planning will be recognized for their achievements at the APA-NJ/Rutgers University Annual Planning Conference November 6-7, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick and will receive a certificate and a free ticket to the event. Submission details at [www.njapa.org](http://www.njapa.org).

engineered by the late Speaker of the Assembly Stanley Fink and then-Governor Mario Cuomo helped stabilize the system. An epic campaign to block the construction of a West Side highway led by Marcy Benstock saved billions for mass transit. Relentless advocacy by Gene Russianoff and the Straphangers Campaign kept the problems and potential of the transit system on the radar screens of the press and politicians. Able management by Robert Kiley meant that the funds raised and saved were put to good use. A workforce of 40,000 transit employees, most city dwellers, kept the trains and buses running. Today, breakdowns are rare and crime is remarkably low. Predictably, riders jam the trains and buses at all hours of the day and night. New York is now *expanding* the subway system by adding spurs and new lines.

Finally, the police department has benefited from the leadership of three mayors over a twenty-year period. David Dinkins secured the funds to hire additional cops. Rudy Giuliani made public safety the hallmark of his administration and hired Bill Bratton to revolutionize police work in the city. And Michael Bloomberg both institutionalized and improved on Giuliani's work, making New York one of the safest big cities and a challenge for the Hollywood crowd looking for edgy street scenes. This year, the number of homicides may dip to 500—down from 2,250 little more than a decade ago.

These three major improvements are so large in scale that they are hard to see, absorb, or interpret. Each improvement had a different trajectory and a different character, but they shared some characteristics.

Each was extremely costly, requiring sustained financial support for fifteen years or more. But each long-term investment, once it hit critical mass, also generated extraordinary value. The value of real estate has soared in the toughest and most distant corners of each borough. An NYU study has shown the existing homes near IAF's Nehemiah sites benefited greatly from our construction.

Each improvement took time to build,

reach critical mass, and generate a chain reaction in the right direction. The turnaround in public safety has occurred over a fifteen-year period. The renewal of the transit system started nearly 25 years ago. And the revival of the housing stock is in its 30th year, if you count, as we do, the work of CPC in Washington Heights as the starting point.

Each improvement was led by a mix of leaders. The overwhelming majority came from the civic or voluntary sector and from the government sector (both elected officials, but as, or more, importantly, able administrators in the housing, transit, and public safety fields). The private sector could point to an occasional participant, but, by and large, it lagged the other two sectors by a large margin.

And each improvement was contentious. Those leaders involved in each of these three efforts were by no means in sync, cooperative, or even civil to one another. On the contrary, each effort was accompanied by disputes, rivalries, jealousies, and open warfare at times. There was no centralized "meeting of all the stakeholders" in some lavish foundation conference room or elegant university hall.

What to make of this? Even today, the conventional wisdom is that New York is out of control, dangerous, dirty; a nice place to play, but a terrible place to live. And Chicago is tidy, orderly, safe, and a great destination for tourists, business people, and university students. As someone who has lived in and around both cities for nearly 30 years each, I know how hard it is to be objective about them. And stereotypes, once set, often trump reality. Besides, Chicago is the private preserve of the Daley clan, and the current Daley projects all that's positive about the city and takes any criticism of it personally. Chicago has a face and a lake front focus. New York is no one's personal preserve, not the current mayor's (who is a billionaire), not the previous mayor's (who was a presidential candidate), not the next mayor's. New Yorkers relish their edginess and untidiness, even exaggerate it at times. New York has a blur of faces and multiple points of interest.

One conclusion to draw is that it is better in the long run—as an individual or as a municipality—to face reality. Sometimes, a crisis, like New York's flirtation with bankruptcy, can help trigger that confrontation. The reality in New York 30 years ago was that both the market and the government had failed miserably—the market unwilling to invest in devastated areas or support a dying city, the government wasting hundreds of millions on do-nothing programs run by local groups connected to hapless pols.

When I described the situation in DuPage County and other areas to a well-respected Republican advisor, he responded in the predictable way: "How about cutting business taxes? Wouldn't that attract commerce and people?" But business taxes have *always* been low in Republican-led DuPage County and are decreasing as a percentage of overall revenue. Even with low taxes, even with 600,000 private sector jobs, even with 60,000 more workers traveling to the county for work than commuting from it, the county finds itself in structural fiscal distress.

Besides, when reality is finally and fully faced, it is not all bad. While a whole generation of institutions has declined, a new generation has begun to emerge. In DuPage, the Muslim and Hispanic communities are rising and eager to contribute to the next phase of the county's life. Evangelical congregations are growing and thriving all across the country, many arriving at their own mid-life moment after 30 years of astonishing growth. The local community college—The College of DuPage—attracts a diverse cohort of 30,000 students to a single sprawling campus. Community colleges, which began decades ago as small and often isolated vocational schools, now educate 45% of college students in the United States. Vibrant networks created and led by those recovering from alcohol and substance abuse are major presences in almost every urban neighborhood or suburban development. In Long Island, these recovery communities are navigating their ways into the public arena cautiously and creatively. From the most forlorn corners of Chicago's west side to the packed streets of East Harlem,

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social entrepreneurs are establishing hundreds of new public schools and public charter schools. In all of these areas, organizations like DuPage United and East Brooklyn Congregations and Washington Interfaith Network and Greater Boston Interfaith Organization are beginning to imagine, design, and implement solutions to what once seemed to all intractable social problems.

A second conclusion is that many of the current political structures and leaders are either unable or unwilling to deal with these new realities. When you find the exceptions, like a reluctantly persuaded but then fully committed Mayor Ed Koch or a housing commissioner like Felice Michetti, fine. But waiting for most to act or blaming them when they don't are often not constructive responses. This puts the burden of thinking and acting back on a new type of civic leader: a volunteer with a real following in a local community, but also with a range of analysis and understanding that crosses town or county or city boundaries. The renewal of most of the failed cities of the failed state of Ohio—Dayton, Toledo, Cleveland, Youngstown, Sandusky, Lorain, and many others—depends on men and women who live in and care about those cities. But they will need to relate to leaders well beyond their own towns. And they will need to become a kind of ad hoc economic strategy team for their area, for their state, and for the struggling midwestern region described in Richard Longworth's fine book, *Caught in the Middle*.

A third conclusion is that this work will require a new set of allies and partners if it is to succeed. The rebuilding of East Brooklyn depended on the extraordinary leadership and financial support of three religious bodies—the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island, and the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church of St. Louis. These three institutions disagreed on almost everything doctrinally, but came together to invest millions of no-interest construction financing to help EBC build affordable housing. Other key

allies were the late I.D. Robbins and the current general manager of the effort, Ron Waters. These two construction professionals helped facilitate and oversee the extraordinarily difficult and complex rebuilding effort. Another significant ally was the Community Preservation Corporation, which provided invaluable technical assistance and financial support.

Each of these allies was not "local" in the same sense that the East Brooklyn organization was. The local congregational and community leaders had to have the confidence necessary to identify and trust talented people from other spheres. But when they did, they deepened and extended their impact well beyond what anyone could have imagined at the start. A *Harvard Business Review* piece by John P. Kotter describes the need for leaders to "align" the right participants to improve the odds of making major changes. The current alignment of local and national dynastic leadership, tired liberal programs, stale conservative tax policies, and fragmented municipal entities is all wrong. A new alignment—a new generation of local leaders, visionary supporters like the late Bishop Francis J. Mugavero, top professionals in the fields of finance and new business creation, academic talent that's not too cautious or not on the establishment's payroll—is needed. Better yet, a number of new alignments.

A fourth conclusion is that new kinds of money, from new sources, used in creative ways, will be required if cities, counties and regions are to revive. A relatively modest fund of \$8 million, raised from religious sources by East Brooklyn Congregations in 1982, fundamentally changed the way its proposal to build affordable, single-family homes was received. The group of pastors and lay people from a part of the city that had been designated by the elites for "planned shrinkage" had somehow amassed a sum of money that impressed the mayor, his commissioners, newspaper editors, and developers. That revolving construction fund has generated housing with a current market value approaching one billion dollars. New

pools of money—in the hundreds of millions in smaller cities and billions in larger cities and metropolitan regions—will need to be created by these organizations and their allies. Local governments will need to reject the low-tax or anti-tax theology of the post-Reagan era. Higher taxes in support of carefully targeted social and economic strategies will be key to the rebuilding of older American cities and maturing suburbs. During the most productive years of its housing revival, New York City spent more than the next fifty American cities combined on housing creation and rehabilitation. It shows. The return on this investment is incalculable.

A fifth conclusion is that there may be a need for less government and more planning. Today, there is as much, or more, local, county, and state legislative activity as ever despite decreasing revenues for fewer and fewer priorities. The virulence of internal disagreements and personal vendettas will only increase as resources disappear. Political disputes will resemble academic battles: more intense because they concern so little. For citizens to continue to spend time and energy in this dynamic is deadly, a slow form of political suicide.

I ended my remarks on a lovely late-October night with a challenge: citizens in suburbs like DuPage—historically Republican, politically moderate, located between the vast fields and farms that produced the midwest's first phase of prosperity and the once-robust manufacturing center of Chicago that forged the region's second period of wealth—need to align themselves with new leaders from other sectors and cut and clear new paths for peoples' laudable pursuits in the decades ahead. The very act of doing so, of opening these paths, engaging all, figuring out how to offer all people an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life, would reinvigorate people and places and position them for the next rich phase of our local and national experience.



# NJ APA Executive Committee

## President

Courtenay Mercer, AICP/P.P.  
Mercer Planning Associates  
46 Marlborough Avenue  
Middlesex, NJ 08846  
Term: 11/07-11/10  
Phone: (732) 369-6491  
E-Mail: [pres@njapa.org](mailto:pres@njapa.org)

## Past President

Carlos Rodrigues, AICP/P.P.  
Regional Plan Association  
179 Nassau Street, 2nd floor  
Princeton, NJ 08542  
Term: 11/07-10/09  
Phone: (609) 228-7080  
E-Mail: [crodrigues@rpa.org](mailto:crodrigues@rpa.org)

## First Vice-President

Deborah Lawlor AICP/P.P.  
[New Jersey Meadowlands Commission](#)  
1 DeKorte Park Plaza  
Lyndhurst, NJ 07071  
Term: 11/07 - 11/09  
Phone: (201) 460-4671  
E-Mail: [slopehl@optonline.net](mailto:slopehl@optonline.net)

## Second Vice-President

Jeffrey Perlman, AICP  
Heyer, Gruel, & Associates  
63 Church Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Term: 11/06-10/08  
Phone: (732) 828-2200  
E-Mail: [jeffiperlman@gmail.com](mailto:jeffiperlman@gmail.com)

## Treasurer

John Reiser  
Planning - Office of Smart Growth  
P.O. Box 800  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0800  
Term: 11/07-10/09  
Phone: (609) 943-9938  
E-Mail: [jreiser@newrisedesigns.com](mailto:jreiser@newrisedesigns.com)

## Secretary

Amy Sarrinikolaou, AICP/P.P.  
CMX  
200 State Highway Nine  
Manalapan, NJ 07726-0900  
Term: 11/07 - 10/09  
Phone: (732) 577-9000  
E-Mail: [asarrini@hotmail.com](mailto:asarrini@hotmail.com)

## Professional Development Officer

Charles Latini Jr., AICP/P.P.  
Heyer, Gruel & Associates  
63 Church Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (732) 828-2200  
E-Mail: [Charleslatini@yahoo.com](mailto:Charleslatini@yahoo.com)

## Housing Committee Chair

Vito A Gallo, P.P.  
17 Sheridan Road  
Summit, NJ 07901  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (908) 418-3732  
E-Mail: [vitoagallo@comcast.net](mailto:vitoagallo@comcast.net)

## Legislative Committee Chair

Michael Powell  
NJ Community Development Corporation  
P.O. Box 6976  
Paterson, NJ 07509  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (973) 413-1635  
E-Mail: [mpowell@njcdc.org](mailto:mpowell@njcdc.org)

## Redevelopment Committee Chair

Robert Cotter AICP/P.P.  
[Jersey City Division of City Planning](#)  
30 Montgomery Street, Suite 1400  
Jersey City, NJ 07302  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (201) 547-5010  
Fax: (201) 547-4323  
E-Mail: [bobbyc@icnj.org](mailto:bobbyc@icnj.org)

## Sustainable Design Committee

Angela S. Clerico, LEED-AP  
Banisch Associates, Inc  
111 Main Street  
Flemington, NJ 08822  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (908) 782-0835 x21  
E-Mail: [angelaclerico@banisch.com](mailto:angelaclerico@banisch.com)

## Northeast Area Representative

Linda Wills, AICP/P.P.  
878 Traphagen Road  
Wayne, NJ 07470-7996  
Term: 11/06 - 10/08  
Phone: (201) 460-3879  
E-Mail: [lewills@optonline.net](mailto:lewills@optonline.net)

## Northwest Area Representative

Eric Snyder, AICP/P.P.  
Sussex County Administrative Center  
1 Spring Street, Newton 07860  
Term: 11/06 - 10/08  
Work: (973) 579-0500  
Phone: (973) 267-3244  
E-Mail: [esnyder@sussex.nj.us](mailto:esnyder@sussex.nj.us)

## Central Area Representative

Maura McManimon-Fennessy, AICP/P.P.  
NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency  
P.O. Box 18550  
Trenton, NJ 08650-2085  
Term: 11/06 - 10/08  
Phone: (609) 278-8803  
E-Mail: [maura\\_mcmanimon@hotmail.com](mailto:maura_mcmanimon@hotmail.com)

## Southern Representative

Tara B. Paxton AICP/P.P.  
[Township of Brick](#)  
401 Chambers Bridge Road  
Brick, NJ 08723  
Term: 11/06 - 10/08  
Phone: (732) 262-4783  
E-Mail: [tpaxton@twp.brick.nj.us](mailto:tpaxton@twp.brick.nj.us)

## Southern Shore Representative

Louis C. Joyce, AICP/P.P.  
Land Dimensions Engineering  
6 East High Street  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
Term: 11/06 - 10/08  
Phone: (856) 307-7800  
E-Mail: [lcj50@yahoo.com](mailto:lcj50@yahoo.com)

## Bulletin Editor

Rebecca Hersh, AICP/P.P.  
Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center  
Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
33 Livingston Avenue, Fifth Floor  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901  
Term: Appointed Annually  
Phone: (609) 915-5365  
E-Mail: [rebeccamhersh@aol.com](mailto:rebeccamhersh@aol.com)

## 1st Year Student Representative

Katie White  
Rutgers University  
27 Seaman Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Phone: (952) 200-6416  
E-Mail: [Whit0931@umn.edu](mailto:Whit0931@umn.edu)

## 2nd Year Student Representative

Carrie McCarthy  
Rutgers University  
63 South Adelaide Ave  
Highland Park, NJ 08904  
Phone: (703) 725-2901  
E-Mail: [cmm@eden.rutgers.edu](mailto:cmm@eden.rutgers.edu)

## Chapter Administrator

Michael E. Levine, AICP  
[NJ Chapter of the APA](#)  
C/O URS Corporation  
One Riverfront Plaza  
14th floor, P.O. Box 790  
Newark, NJ 07102-9715  
Phone: (973) 286-4708  
Fax: (973) 504-7097  
E-mail: [mlevine@njapa.org](mailto:mlevine@njapa.org)

## Webmaster

Brian Carson  
E-Mail: [webmaster@njapa.org](mailto:webmaster@njapa.org)

## Upcoming Events

### Leading from the Middle Open House May 15 and June 4, 5:30 - 7 pm

#### Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Leading from the Middle helps planning, public affairs and community development professionals become more influential and effective. It is the only program designed by and for urban planners that offers workshops, peer coaching and one-to-one performance coaching. To register for this free open house, visit [www.theleadinginstitute.org](http://www.theleadinginstitute.org). For info contact Leonardo Vazquez at [vazquezl@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:vazquezl@rci.rutgers.edu) or 732-932-3822, x711.

### Planning Law Review: North Jersey June 25, 2008, 4:00-5:30PM

#### Newton, NJ

#### Sussex County Community College, Building B: Room 104

RSVP to (973) 579-0500 or [ESnyder@sussex.nj.us](mailto:ESnyder@sussex.nj.us)

In our effort to provide diverse and affordable opportunities to attain AICP Certificate Maintenance (CM) credits, the APA-NJ is providing access to the APA Audio/Web Conference series. Through this program, we are able to purchase a single access to the conference, and broadcast it to as many people as we can fit in a venue. To defray chapter costs, we ask that each attendee pay \$5.00. Because this is a nationwide audio/web conference, it must begin at the specified time. Please be sure to arrive early. 1.5 CM credits requested.

### Planning Law Review: South Jersey June 25, 2008, 4:00-5:30PM

#### Brick Township, NJ

#### Brick Township Civic Plaza, 270 Chambers Bridge Road

RSVP to 732-262-4783 or [tpaxton@twp.brick.nj.us](mailto:tpaxton@twp.brick.nj.us)

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### Land Use in New Jersey Conference June 26 & 27, 2008

#### Iselin, NJ

This two-day conference on Land Use in New Jersey is for lawyers, developers, land-

owners, planners, and agency officials. Find out the latest developments in planning and permitting. Hear from our distinguished faculty what state, regional and local regulatory agencies are doing to manage the increasing pressures of growth in the region. Leading attorneys, policy makers and consultants will bring you up-to-date on flood hazards, wastewater and stormwater management, wetlands and Highlands, and how those developments impact growth. This event is seeking AICP Certification Maintenance credit. To register, visit [www.lawseminars.com/register.php?SeminarCode=08LUNJ](http://www.lawseminars.com/register.php?SeminarCode=08LUNJ), call 1-800-854-8009 or email [registrar@lawseminars.com](mailto:registrar@lawseminars.com).

### Site Remediation in New Jersey July 9, 2008

#### Newark, NJ

Sign up to hear from an experienced faculty of leading lawyers, consultants, agency representatives and developers on the current, specific issues which govern successful redevelopment of contaminated properties. Faculty will discuss latest legal developments, practical tools and solutions important to the marketplace and stakeholders. This event is seeking AICP Certification Maintenance credit. To register, visit [www.lsinews.com/LSI/08/08CPNJ-r.htm](http://www.lsinews.com/LSI/08/08CPNJ-r.htm), call 1-800-854-8009; or email [registrar@lawseminars.com](mailto:registrar@lawseminars.com).

### SPRAWL

#### March 20th – August 24, 2008 Jersey City Museum

Jersey City Museum, in collaboration with several other participating New Jersey venues, has organized SPRAWL, a bold, multi-venue exhibition that will bring together work by artists statewide to focus on New Jersey's legacy of sprawl. The effects on urban, suburban, rural and marginalized landscapes are all addressed by these exhibitions. For information, go to [http://www.artdaily.com/index.asp?int\\_sec=2&int\\_new=23130](http://www.artdaily.com/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=23130)

### Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference September 3-5, 2008

#### Seattle, WA

Join hundreds of bicycle and pedestrian advocates, elected and appointed officials, bike/ped specialists, transportation experts, land-use planners, safe routes to school coordinators, public health practitioners, and many more who want to make our cities and communities more walkable and bicycle-friendly places. This year's Conference theme is "Transforming Communities: Beyond Sustainability." Several of these sessions will highlight activities in New Jersey. For information visit [www.bikewalk.org](http://www.bikewalk.org).

### A Vision for the Future: Reducing Flood Impacts in the Garden State October 21-22, 2008

#### Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ

This two-day conference will cover information important for engineers, floodplain managers, emergency management officials, code officials, planners and other professionals involved in floodplain management. The plenary and concurrent sessions will address many topics of importance to New Jersey, including both riverine and coastal issues. To be considered for a presentation at one of the concurrent sessions, please see the Call for Presentations form at [www.njafm.org/NJAFMCall2008.pdf](http://www.njafm.org/NJAFMCall2008.pdf). Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are also available. This event is seeking AICP Certification Maintenance credit. For more conference information, visit: [www.njafm.org/AnnualConference.html](http://www.njafm.org/AnnualConference.html).

### 2009 National Main Streets Conference Becoming Main Street 2.0

#### March 1-4, 2009

#### Chicago, Illinois

The 2009 conference will focus on ways technology can enhance implementing the Main Street approach. How do you use new technologies to manage your program and engage your constituents? What is social networking and how does it apply to Main Street? How can you get local businesses to take advantage of e-commerce? How do you recruit volunteers online? **2009 Call for Presentations: Submit proposals May 12 – July 14, 2008.** For more information, visit [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org).

### Call for Best Practices in Affordable Housing

The Institute for Meadowlands Studies (IMS) at Rutgers University, an operation of the Center for Urban Policy Research at the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy is compiling a collection of best practices in affordable housing. Selected projects will be featured as case studies in an upcoming IMS publication. An ideal project is completed and occupied; however, developments that are currently under construction, undergoing rehabilitation, or still in the planning stages are also of interest. To suggest a best practice case study, please contact: David Listokin, Professor Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy Rutgers University: Phone: 732-932-3133, ext 550 or e-mail: [listokin@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:listokin@rci.rutgers.edu).

**To include an event on this calendar, please e-mail [rebeccamhersh@aol.com](mailto:rebeccamhersh@aol.com)**

## Call For Sessions 2008 Annual Planning Conference

Hyatt Regency Hotel  
New Brunswick, New Jersey  
November 6 – 7, 2008

New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association  
and  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

### Session Proposals Due June 16, 2008

Send submissions to:  
Rebecca Hersh, AICP/PP  
Phone: 609-915-5365  
Email: rebeccamhersh@aol.com

### All proposals MUST include:

1. Session Title
2. A brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of the session
3. Proposed speakers and moderators
4. Session coordinator/moderator contact information
5. How the session will meet AICP Certification Maintenance (CM) criteria
  - The content of CM activities must be designed to meet a specific planning-related training objective.
  - The content of CM activities must be designed to teach subjects in appropriate depth and scope for the level of the typical AICP member (i.e. a planner in current practice with at least two years of professional experience). Note: Activities that are intended for planning commissioners are not eligible.
  - The content of CM activities must be unbiased and non-promotional. An organization's services or products may be discussed prior to or after the completion of the CM credit portion of the activity.
  - The content of CM activities must address demonstrated educational needs of AICP members.
  - The content of CM activities must communicate a clearly identified educational purpose or objective.
  - Activities must be led by one or more experts on the subject discussed during the activity. An expert is defined by APA as a professional who has made a contribution to the profession through practice, teaching, research, or publications; completed works that proclaim individuality and mastery of the principles of planning taught; and whose work demonstrates outstanding quality and professionalism.
  - CM activities must use learning methodologies and formats that are appropriate to the activity's educational purpose or objectives.

***Sessions that do not contain this information will not be considered.***

### Tips for Successful Sessions

- Provide a discussion groups/exchange format rather than a lecture
- Focus on findings, not on process
- Be ready to provide contact information session notes, and handouts to all attendees
- Focus on best practices that can be applied in other localities
- Present tangible issues (as opposed to research results)
- Use expert speakers
- Visual (PowerPoint) presentations

*Note: All session speakers, moderators and panelists must register and pay for the conference.*



## ...Asbury Park Revitalization

(Continued from page 15)

two proposed project are an expansion of the Sister's Academy, a private elementary school for girls run by the Sisters of Mercy located at the far western end of the redevelopment zone, and the 611 Market project, which will replace a existing small food market with a much large grocery store at grade with rental housing on two upper floors. This project is located near the center of the redevelopment zone just west of Interfaith Neighbors' project. The City of Asbury Park has designated these three projects as "fast track" projects that they have said they will work with in every way possible to expedite in order to jump start the redevelopment of Springwood Avenue.

The City of Asbury Park will truly be a partner with Interfaith Neighbors in the development of our project. To begin with, the land that the project will occupy presently consists of three city owned lots at the intersection of Springwood Avenue and Atkins Avenue. The City Council has passed a Resolution indicating the city's intent to convey this property to Interfaith Neighbors for the purpose of this development project.

In addition, as noted above, the city will occupy a large part of the building. One floor will be dedicated to the Asbury Park Senior Center. On the ground floor, two units of the city's Police Department, the city Social Services Department and Asbury Works, the city's job placement center, will all occupy space. Not only does this provide the project with a strong 'anchor tenant' but it locates important city social services at the heart of the neighborhood that needs them most.

Interfaith's mixed-use project is one of three so-called "fast track" projects that the city is looking to have jump-start the redevelopment efforts along Springwood Ave-

nue. For a Neighborhood that has seen almost no reinvestment since the civil disturbances of 1970, this could hardly be more important.

Other year 2 initiatives will continue to focus on recreational opportunities, on business development programs, on development of Arts programs and a number of other programs to support the revitalization of the West Side Neighborhood. And this is just Year 2 !

We envision that at the end of the implementation of the NRTC plan, the West Side of Asbury Park will be different in several substantive ways. The housing stock will be improved and there will be more options for affordable rentals and homeownership opportunities. The once vibrant commercial activities of the West Side will have returned. Community and recreational facilities will have been improved and expanded. Public spaces and infrastructure will have been expanded and improved and finally, social conditions on the West Side will have improved as the residents are more engaged in the activities of their own neighborhood. However, perhaps the most important change we hope to see is that 30+ years of frustration and disappointment will have been replaced with a renewed sense of purpose and hope.

Unlike other planning initiatives that have been developed for the West Side but never implemented, we are determined that this effort will result in real, substantive improvements for residents of the West Side neighborhood.



## Planning Assistance Program: RFP and Call For Volunteers

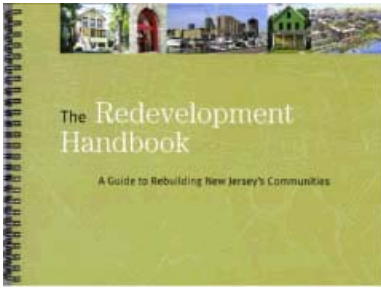
The Sustainable Design Committee is creating a Planning Assistance Program to help municipalities develop a sustainable design plan for a specific project site within the community. The primary goal of this program is to advance community development projects that embody sustainability principles and practices, in both design and operation.

The Planning Assistance Program is an intensive two-and-a-half day workshop, during which the chosen municipality will receive assistance from a team of distinguished NJ Professional Planners to create a Sustainable Design Plan for a site of the municipality's choosing. The workshop will include public information gathering sessions, stakeholder interviews, design work sessions and a final presentation detailing the recommendations of the design team. The municipality will receive a report that summarizes the planning process, rendered design concepts, design standards and implementation strategies, as well as professional services recommendations and costs estimates to implement the Plan. **The deadline to apply for this program is May 30, 2008.**

The RFP can be found here: [http://njapa.org/rfp/rfp\\_05\\_30\\_08.pdf](http://njapa.org/rfp/rfp_05_30_08.pdf).

APA-NJ feels it is important to assist communities in need, and offer services such as this to focus on sustainability and effectively demonstrate how community design principles can be applied in New Jersey municipalities. We are currently building a pool of members interested in volunteering their time to staff a design workshop. We hope to run two programs a year, starting this fall. Volunteers will not be asked to serve on every panel, but rather will be chosen based on their expertise and the needs of the community. If you are interested in participating in a panel, please e-mail your resume and any other relevant information to the Chapter Administrator at [mlevine@njapa.com](mailto:mlevine@njapa.com).

# Redevelopment Handbook: A Guide to Rebuilding NJ's Communities



by Stan Slachetka and David G. Roberts © 2003. This *Handbook* has been jointly published by the NJ Department of Community Affairs and the NJ Chapter of the American Planning Association. This book "is an easy-to-understand, practical guide that will help municipalities that are considering redevelopment."

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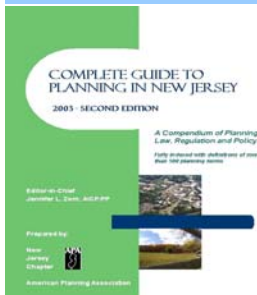
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