

the livable city

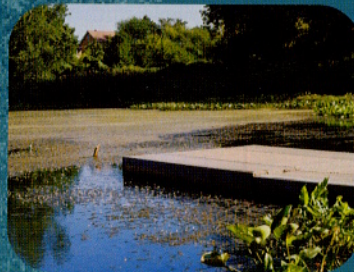
COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING



BUILDING ON LOCAL KNOWLEDGE



Livable neighborhoods make a city livable. Throughout the world there is increasing recognition of the importance of community-based planning in creating healthy communities and cities that work—socially, culturally, and economically. Effective community-based planning can uncover the special characteristics of a place; help the members of a community forge a sense of common purpose; identify opportunities for meaningful public and private investments; and, above all, renew the belief of the public and government in the value of civic participation. Successful community-based planning is based on the visions and active participation of the people who live and work in a community; those who know first-hand what is needed and what is appropriate to meet the requirements of both present and future generations. Their long-term commitment is crucial to a plan's implementation and ultimate success.



INTRODUCTION

Eva Hanhardt

New York is a diverse city composed of many unique neighborhoods. Because of its size and complexity a strictly centralized planning process is inadequate. Historically, New York City has been a leader in recognizing the importance of community-based planning, strongly influenced by neighborhood preservation and advocacy planning efforts in the 1950s and 1960s.

Community-based plans represent and celebrate New York City's diversity. Yet, when put together they also create a compelling picture of common ideas, hopes and dreams. Today the City faces an urgent need for timely development of affordable housing, open space, and economic development that benefits all New Yorkers. Considered both individually and in the aggregate community-based plans, with their emphasis on these pressing issues, represent among the best planning being done in New York. They have the potential, if implemented, of meeting real citywide needs and not simply local interests.

In Spring 2001, a coalition of community and environmental justice organizations, community boards, planning professionals, and civic groups formed the Community-based Planning Task Force to promote community-based planning practice. The Task Force reached out to citywide and city council candidates calling on New York City to partner with communities by providing official recognition and greater support for community-based plans and facilitating implementation. Already some elected officials and public agencies have responded by using community-generated plans in developing local and citywide policy.

In this issue of *The Livable City* we have been able to present only a representative sample of community-based plans. However, we encourage you to look at "Planning for all New Yorkers," a briefing book of community-based plans, to see more examples. It is available on the Municipal Art Society website: www.mas.org. After reading about the creative ideas coming from communities around New York we are confident that you will agree that supporting community-based planning is key to the future strength and livability of our great city. •

Eva Hanhardt is co-director of the Municipal Art Society Planning Center.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING?

Ron Shiffman

Community-based planning is the current name given to a planning concept that is growing in practice in New York City and elsewhere, having evolved from participatory and advocacy planning efforts of the 1960s.

Building upon the principles of maximum participation, community empowerment and participatory democracy, community-based planning provides both the opportunity and the obligation to engage people in the process of determining their own future. It requires communities and planners to coordinate their efforts with others and meet mutually developed community standards. As a result, while people take the opportunity afforded them by the Charter to shape the destiny of their communities, they are also compelled to understand the implications of

their decisions and the need to coordinate their efforts with those of other communities.

Therefore, community-based planning entails far more than the devolution of planning from the city to the community. This type of planning recognizes the expertise of everyone—young and old; rich and poor; residents as well as business owners—those with professional training and those that live, work and play in a place.

Community-based planning obligates communities to adhere to the principles of social, economic and environmental equity that we, as a city and society, aspire to achieve. Most importantly, it requires an open dialogue between all interests in the community and city, while also making room for advocates who represent the needs and aspirations of future generations. •

Ron Shiffman is director of the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development.

Myth: "People aren't interested in planning." The thousands of individuals who have worked on all types of community-based plans testify to the fact that the public is interested in planning. What may be interpreted as disinterest is often due to the difficulty working people and parents of small children have in attending official public hearings or meetings that are generally scheduled during the weekday or early evening. Community-based planning is generally much more responsive to individual needs and schedules. In addition, people are more willing to participate when they feel that planning actually responds to their real needs and desires, rather than being a "pro-forma" exercise where the decisions have already been made.

THE ROOTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING IN NEW YORK CITY

Tom Angotti (with Ron Shiffman)

New York's community-based planning tradition is an outgrowth of protest and organizing against official neglect and unpopular government plans. It was built on a history of public advocacy and social action in the city that started in the early 1900s and gained new force in the 1960s.

Around the beginning of the 20th Century, settlement houses and progressive philanthropies surveyed and exposed the deplorable living and public health conditions in immigrant communities and advocated for social legislation and housing codes. In the 1930s, tenant organizing linked with labor movements helped sustain the push for progressive reforms.

After World War II, tenants organized to secure the continuation of wartime rent controls. The Harlem rent strike in the 1950s, and squatting and homesteading restrained the city's pro-developer planning efforts. Political pressure from communities and labor helped create the largest stock of municipally owned housing, limited-equity co-ops, and public housing in the nation.

Opposition to the highway and public works projects of the Robert Moses era arose in working and middle class neighborhoods during the 1950s. Struggles against the Lower Manhattan Expressway and the Downtown Brooklyn urban renewal plan demonstrated that citizens could very well defeat plans that were developed without their input. In 1961, Jane Jacobs' classic work, *The Death and Life*

"If the planning process is to encourage democratic urban government then it must operate so as to include rather than exclude citizens from participating in the process. "Inclusion" means not only permitting the citizen to be heard. It also means that he be able to become well informed about the underlying reasons for planning proposals, and be able to respond to them in the technical language of professional planners."

Paul Davidoff, *Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning*, AIP Journal, November 1965

of *Great American Cities*, captured the revulsion of local communities to urban renewal and massive public works.

Federally funded urban renewal programs of the 1950s and 1960s displaced many low-income integrated communities and disproportionately displaced people of color. Opposition to urban renewal was closely connected to the civil rights movement. The



1966 community conference on formation of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

Federal government launched the "War on Poverty" and the Model Cities program in the 1960s in response to increased political and social pressure. "Maximum feasible participation" of the poor was an important principle underlying these initiatives. Struggles for greater control of neighborhood institutions emerged, including the struggle for community control of neighborhood schools. Many communities developed alternative plans at this time that challenged official city plans. The pioneer Cooper Square plan, for instance, rejected the official urban renewal plan for the Lower East Side that would have resulted in widespread displacement.

The work of professional planners and architects supporting community efforts during this period gave rise to new advocacy organizations and today's community-based planning movement. Walter Thabit, who helped shape the Cooper Square plan, founded Planners for Equal Opportunity, a national organization of advocate planners. Its successor, Planners Network, is based in

New York City. Paul Davidoff, who went on to found the urban planning program at Hunter College, coined the term "advocacy planning" and laid the theoretical framework for progressive planning. Ron Shiffman and George Raymond started the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development. Their work with the central Brooklyn community led to the

formation of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, the first of some 200 community development corporations (CDCs) in the city and over 3,000 nationwide. Architects led by Richard Hatch and Max Bond came together to form the Architects Renewal Committee for Harlem or "ARCH."

Neighborhood preservation, community planning and advocacy efforts in the 1950s and 1960s laid the foundation for new decentralized planning structures in New York City. These included Mayor John Lindsay's "Little City Halls," community planning districts, the Urban Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), and eventually, through a citizen-led Charter initiative, the 197-a planning

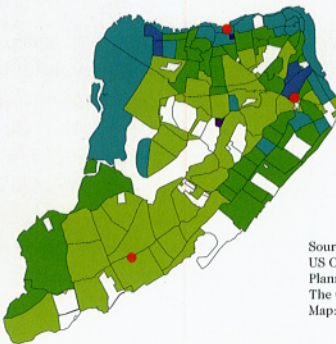
process we have today. However, despite the history of grassroots organizing and planning it was not until the 1989 Charter revision that city government explicitly recognized community-initiated plans.

The environmental movement that emerged in the 1970s generated renewed interest in the health consequences of poor planning in neighborhoods. Today's environmental justice movement, which grew out of the environmental, community, and civil rights movements in the late 1980s, has become one of the strongest advocates for community-based planning. The struggles against the concentration of noxious waste facilities in communities of color, for neighborhood open space and for equitable and sustainable community development, continue the historic efforts of communities to gain control over the plans for their future. •

Tom Angotti is a professor of Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter College.

Community-Based Planning in New York City & New York City Median Income

61% of Community-Based Plans are from Low or Moderate Income Neighborhoods



Sources: US Census 1990, US Bureau of the Census, 1990. *Planning for All New Yorkers: A Briefing Book of Community-Based Plans*. The Community-Based Planning Task Force, 2001. Map: M. Birmingham

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING MILESTONES

<p>1950</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC Planning Commission (CPC) proposes the creation of 66 local planning districts. 	<p>1951</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manhattan Borough President Robert F. Wagner establishes twelve "community councils" to advise him on land use and budget. 	<p>1954</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert F. Wagner takes office as mayor. 	<p>1954</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In <i>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</i>, Jane Jacobs argues against the sprawling and inefficient government bureaucracies of 	<p>1959</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • America's larger cities and recommends the creation of "administrative districts," "run by a "district administrator" as the primary subdivision of city agencies. 	<p>1960</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defeat of Lower Manhattan Expressway Plan reflects mounting 	<p>1962</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community opposition to autocratic planning and development of Robert Moses era. 	<p>1963</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC Charter revisions reflect calls for "decentralizing" big city government. CPC is instructed to divide the city into community 	<p>1963</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • districts, each one governed by an advisory community planning board comprised of 5 to 9 local residents. • Establishment of the Pratt Center for Community Improvement, now known as the Pratt Institute Center for Community and 	<p>1965</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Development (PICCED), the first university-based program in the United States to provide planning and architectural assistance to communities on a sustained basis. • Antipoverty programs launched by the federal 	<p>1965</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government, based on three innovative NYC programs that emerged from President John F. Kennedy's Council on Juvenile Delinquency. 	<p>1965</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council, in collaboration with PICCED, completes a 	<p>1965</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive plan for the revitalization of Bedford-Stuyvesant, the first community-initiated plan in NYC. • The Architect's Renewal Committee for Harlem [ARCH] is formed to provide planning and architectural services to Harlem and other low-
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WHY COMMUNITIES PLAN

Communities engage in planning for a variety of reasons. They may be creating alternative proposals in response to private or public development plans that threaten to substantially change the character of their neighborhood or reduce their quality of life. They may be addressing critical issues or needs that they feel are not being adequately addressed by city, state or federal government. Or they may be capitalizing on development opportunities in their neighborhood. In addition to sponsoring their own plans communities may also be invited to participate in plans initiated by government agencies, local and citywide institutions and private foundations responding to local and citywide needs and opportunities.



top: Stuyvesant Cove, Manhattan – before development.
bottom: Stuyvesant Cove Park and bike path.



top: Future parkland: Bush Terminal Piers, Sunset Park.
middle: Housing development opportunities, South Bronx.
bottom: Deteriorated commercial strip, South Bronx.

Much of the community-based planning in New York City is occurring in low- to moderate-income minority neighborhoods that have experienced significant disinvestment over the past four decades and are beginning to undergo revitalization. Many of these are waterfront neighborhoods that are struggling to balance housing, open space and economic development needs, while confronting ongoing environmental burdens and inequities. •

Myth: "Community-based plans are characterized by Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) attitudes and only serve narrow local interests." While clearly concerned with local issues, in reality most community-based plans are positive visions of what communities *do* want rather than what they *don't* want. For example, plans call for more affordable housing, not less; more economic development, not less. Nor do most plans argue that they should be exempt from their fair share of burdens, rather than burdens be equitably distributed throughout the city.

FROM LIVABLE COMMUNITIES TO A LIVABLE CITY

While community-based plans can serve as important catalysts for neighborhood change, their potential contribution to citywide planning and public policy is equally substantial. Plans that are linked geographically or share common themes may offer creative responses to broader citywide issues, trends and opportunities and serve as building blocks to a more sustainable and livable city.

Imagine if all of the community-based plans in New York City were part of a decentralized planning framework that both informed and was informed by citywide plans and policies? To a large extent this framework already exists. The Department of City Planning's strategic planning and data support functions, the fifty-nine community boards, and Charter Section 197-a provide a strong basis for a coordinated community-based planning strategy.

However, there are weaknesses in this framework that prevent plans developed under Section 197-a from being truly effective and integrated into citywide planning, and overlook the contributions of other community-based plans. Community-boards have generated most of the 197-a plans to date, yet they are at a severe disadvantage compared with other city agencies that have planning staff, funds and technical resources at their disposal. Despite undergoing an extensive public review and approval process 197-a plans have no legal standing once adopted by the City Council and merely serve as policy to guide the actions of city agencies. And while the Department of City Planning must consider neighborhood plans in developing its Strategic Plan and reviewing zoning and land use proposals, this is generally limited to 197-a plans and other agency plans.

Moving toward an effective community-based planning framework.

The Platform for Community-based Planning developed by the Community-based Planning Task Force presents a fresh approach to planning in New York City based upon the following principles:

- Planning in New York City should be "community-based" rather than "top down."
- The City must view communities as partners, not as adversaries.
- Community-based planning activities must be inclusive—with broad representation on community boards and official recognition of all community-based plans.
- The City should commit to the implementation of completed and/or adopted plans.
- The City should adopt principles of equity, environmental sustainability and contextual development in meeting citywide needs.

City Planning's Strategic Plan, released in April 2002 and built upon the notion of a city of neighborhoods, provides a perfect opportunity to support community-based planning efforts and develop a workable framework. The Department's Strategic Planning Objectives, aside from restoring and enhancing Lower Manhattan, focus on Hudson Yards, Long Island City, Jamaica, Bronx Center, the Brooklyn waterfront, East Harlem, and other areas that have completed community-based plans. This is an opportunity for the City to not only learn from but also implement some of the creative ideas developed in these neighborhoods.

Placing the Department of City Planning under the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding, along with the Economic Development Corporation, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and the Department of Business Services has greatly improved coordination among these agencies and increased the potential for comprehensive development strategies and policies. But greater coordination and collaboration is also needed between the Department of City Planning and community boards, local organizations and civic groups engaged in community planning efforts. Such a partnership is critical not only to frame local issues in a citywide context and ensure the equitable distribution of burdens as well as benefits throughout New York City, but also to build a sense of common purpose and forge consensus. •



WINDOW ON NEIGHBORHOODS

New York is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own history and character. Going from one to another sometimes feels like crossing into a different world. Yet, unless we spend time in these neighborhoods we never really understand them or the people that live and work there. Most of the time we are passing through on our way to somewhere else.

Driving along the elevated Gowanus Expressway or riding the #7 subway line to Main Street Flushing may provide glimpses of neighborhoods: a busy shopping street, a thriving community garden, a vacant factory building, or newly constructed row houses. These fleeting images may inspire interest or concern, however they tell us little of the people living and working in these neighborhoods, the health of their children, the hopes and aspirations of recent immigrants, or the threat of displacement as conditions improve and property values rise.

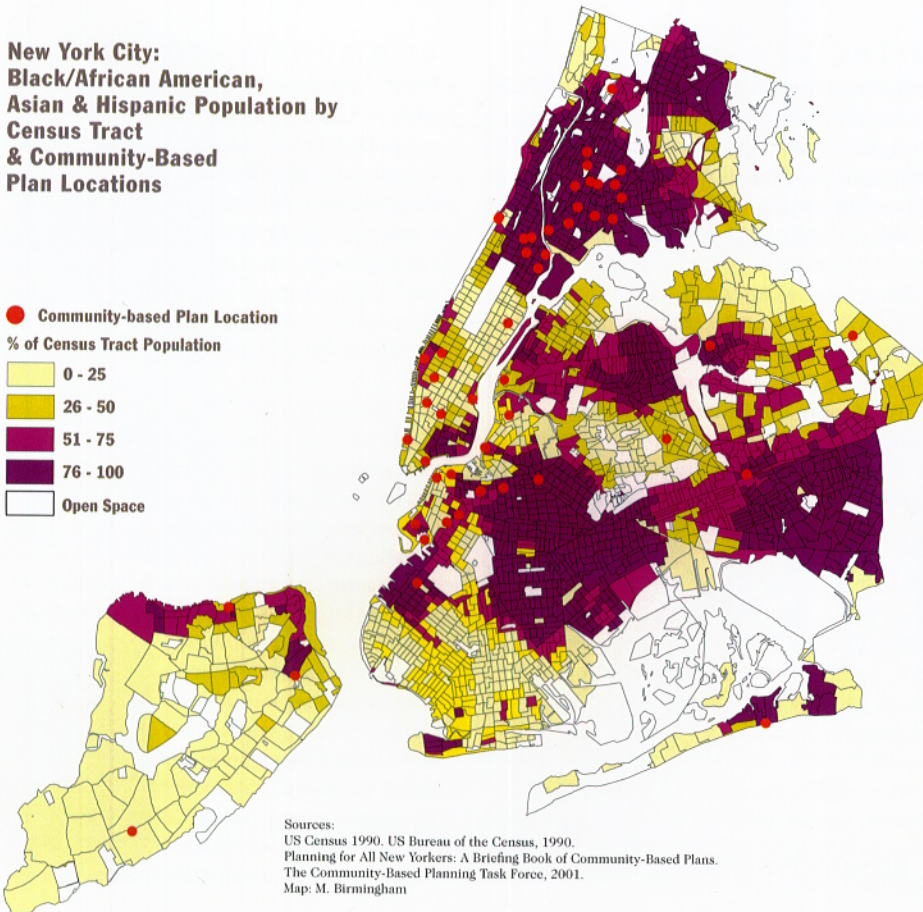
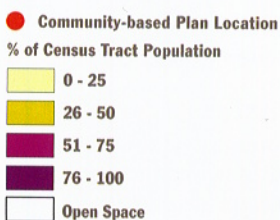
Community-based plans open a window on neighborhoods. They describe educa-

tional programs in the community garden; they reveal efforts to create a manufacturing incubator in the unutilized factory building; and they report on the social and economic health of the community. They also call attention to problems and issues in the area; the need for entry-level jobs for the growing immigrant population; the rise in asthma hospitalization rates; and erosion of the neighborhood's historic fabric. While this information is of interest to anyone curious about the city and its diverse neighborhoods, it is critical for city and elected officials who make decisions that shape the future of these neighborhoods and the communities that live in them.

Perhaps more important than merely describing local conditions, community-based plans provide the community's perspective on local issues, opportunities and priorities. They are an important tool for building partnerships between local organizations and city government. •

What is a 197-a Plan? Under Section 197-a of the New York City Charter the Mayor, the City Planning Commission, the Department of City Planning and Borough Presidents, along with community boards and borough boards, may sponsor plans for the *development, growth and improvement of the city and of its boroughs and community districts*. Once a 197-a plan has gone through public review and has been approved and adopted by the City Council, it serves as *policy to guide subsequent actions by city agencies*.

New York City: Black/African American, Asian & Hispanic Population by Census Tract & Community-Based Plan Locations



Sources:
US Census 1990. US Bureau of the Census, 1990.
Planning for All New Yorkers: A Briefing Book of Community-Based Plans.
The Community-Based Planning Task Force, 2001.
Map: M. Birmingham

and moderate-income communities.
•Planners for Equal Opportunity (PEO) is formed. The forerunner to Planners Network, a progressive national planning organization based in NYC.

•In *Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning*, published in the AIP Journal, Paul Davidoff argues that planners should engage in the political process as advocates of the interests of government and other groups rather than solely acting as technicians.

1966

•John V. Lindsay takes office as mayor.
•By 1966 all borough presidents have appointed local com-

munity boards in informally created districts.
•Senators Robert F. Kennedy and Jacob Javits and Mayor Lindsay join with the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council and PICCED to announce the establishment of Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration

Corporation, one of the country's first community development corporations (CDCs).
•Model Cities program is established by the federal government. Aimed at alleviating social, economic and physical problems through the develop-

1967

ment of local plans involving maximum participation of the poor.
•CPC establishes borough offices to improve communication between City Planning's central office and community groups.
Borough office staffs

1969

serve as liaisons to community boards.
•City Council passes legislation establishing staff positions for community planning boards and enlarging them to 50 members.

1970

•Mayor Lindsay declares 1970 "the year of the neighborhood" and creates the Office of Neighborhood Government to address lack of coordination among city agencies and improve delivery of municipal services.

VARIATIONS: SCALE, SCOPE, SPONSORSHIP

There is no set formula for developing community-based plans. They vary widely in scale, scope, and sponsorship and are shaped to a large extent by the issues they seek to address and the results they hope to achieve. What they have in common, however, is community participation in the planning process, partnership arrangements, and broad consensus on goals and recommendations. Community-based plans may be

LOCAL PLANS

Community-based plans generally focus on a particular neighborhood or locality. The Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Plan, for example, addresses regional transportation impacts and development pressures on a specific neighborhood on Manhattan's west side. The North Shore Greenbelt Waterfront Access Plan focuses on a specific stretch of Staten Island shoreline. Most of the community-based plans developed under Section 197-a of the New York City Charter focus on individual community districts or parts of community districts. While local plans primarily serve local needs and interests, they often also have relevance to city-wide policies and actions. •

SCALE



Business activity, Hell's Kitchen.

HELL'S KITCHEN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Vision: Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association, in partnership with the Design Trust for Public Space and Design + Urbanism, has drafted a comprehensive plan calling for a mixed-use neighborhood to protect existing jobs, homes, and businesses. The plan recommends mitigating the environmental, social and economic consequences of traffic



Bus depot framed by new development, Hell's Kitchen.

congestion, while increasing the residential population and maintaining the existing neighborhood character.

Background: Hell's Kitchen South houses a number of major regional facilities, including the Port Authority Bus Terminal, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, the



9th Avenue, Hell's Kitchen.

Penn Central rail yards, and entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. Sandwiched between massive walls and transportation infrastructure is a mixed-use neighborhood full of residences, eateries, markets, small manufacturers and businesses. Development pressures have increased in recent years due to Hell's Kitchen's proximity to Midtown Manhattan and Times Square.

Progress: The Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Plan was released in June 2002 as an alternative to the city's official plans for the area. Consideration is currently being given to translating it into a 197-a plan or a zoning plan under Section 197-c. •

NORTH SHORE GREENBELT WATERFRONT ACCESS PLAN

Vision: North Shore Waterfront Greenbelt, a coalition of community and advocacy groups, has developed a waterfront access plan that reconnects historic communities along the north shore of Staten Island with their waterfront.



West Brighton waterfront, Staten Island.

Key recommendations include the provision of public waterfront access, preservation of historic sites and creation of nine new acres of parkland.

Background: The Greenbelt plan focuses on the north shore of Staten Island, in particular the neighborhood of West Brighton. This historic waterfront was once home to the Lenape Indians. Above the waterfront, on the high ground, is the site of the Lenape Indians burial ground as well as Civil War and Revo-

TARGETED PLANS

Plans are often limited in scope, responding to a specific issue, opportunity or need such as historic preservation, waterfront access, or affordable housing. Targeted, issue-based plans may cover a wide geographic area, for example OWN's alternative solid waste management plan. Or they may zoom in on a particular neighborhood, as in the Warren Street Revitalization Plan, an affordable housing plan developed by the Fifth Avenue Committee in Park Slope Brooklyn, and a historic preservation plan for the Gansevoort Market district in lower Manhattan. •

SCOPE



Gansevoort Market, Lower Manhattan.

GANSEVOORT MARKET PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAN

Vision: Under the guidance of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, local residents, elected officials and business owners have developed a historic preservation plan to designate the Gansevoort Market neighborhood a New York City Historic District. Such designation would document and acknowledge the area's unique sense of place, and provide a framework for compatible new development.

Background: Gansevoort Market is an architecturally rich, mixed-use neighborhood consisting of industrial, commercial and residential buildings. Landmark quality buildings and visually cohesive streetscapes reveal the area's historic evolution and create a distinctive and compelling neighborhood character. The neighborhood faces

increasing pressure for large-scale development from the real estate industry.



Gansevoort Market, Lower Manhattan.

Progress: Save Gansevoort Market recently met with elected officials and city agencies, including the Departments of City Planning and Business Services, to promote the area's architectural significance and the diversity and vitality of its small business base, and to protect its 1000 plus blue-collar jobs. •

COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

As an alternative to targeting one particular issue, community-based plans may cover a wide range of issues with the goal of developing integrated, sustainable solutions to community development needs. The foundation sponsored Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program, for instance, produced integrated strategies for improving socio-economic conditions and quality of life in six South Bronx neighborhoods. Many of the community-sponsored 197-a plans are comprehensive in scope. The plans for Greenpoint and Williamsburg, adopted in early 2002, address a number of interrelated issues, from housing and economic development to transportation, open space and environmental quality in creating a comprehensive blueprint for future development in Brooklyn Community District 1. •

COMMUNITY GENERATED PLANS

Plans initiated by grassroots organizations or civic groups, such as Mothers on the Move's Truck Movement Plan, are often in response to a specific need, threat or development pressures. They may grow out of protest; as alternatives to public or private development plans; or in response to government inaction. Community opposition to a Department of Environmental Protection proposal to construct the Croton Water Treatment Plant on the Jerome Park Reservoir, for instance, fueled the Jerome Park Reservoir Plan. Whatever the impetus, most community generated plans are built upon a clear vision of what residents want for their future and their children's future, whether it is access to education and jobs, a safe, healthy environment, recreational opportunities, or affordable housing. •

SPONSORSHIP



Mothers on the Move demonstration.

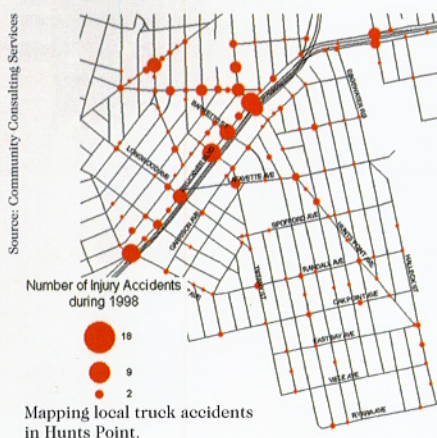
MOTHERS ON THE MOVE TRUCK MOVEMENT PLAN

Vision: The truck movement plan generated by Mothers on the Move, a grassroots organization of community residents, focuses on moving truck routes away from the residential community of Hunts Point in the Bronx to protect residents from the dangers of truck traffic. Besides causing accidents, these trucks also generate noise and air pollution.

Background: The Hunts Point peninsula in the Bronx is home to several thousand residents and hundreds of large and small businesses. It is also home to New York's produce and meat cooperative markets, numerous large warehouses and over 20 waste transfer stations. The consequence of all this activity

is that Hunts Point attracts at least 65,000 vehicle trips each weekday, including 11,000 truck trips entering or leaving the peninsula. Many of these trucks drive through or near residential areas on their way to destinations within Hunts Point.

Progress: Mothers on the Move continues to meet with elected officials and city agencies and to organize demonstrations as part of their campaign to get their truck route implemented. •



Increasing levels of truck traffic in NYC.

COMMUNITY-GOVERNMENT PLANS

Plans sponsored by a government agency, such as the NYC Department of City Planning's Downtown Flushing Plan, may be developed in partnership with the local community in response to locally identified issues and needs. While these plans generally represent broad consensus on goals and recommendations the planning and decision-making process is controlled to a large extent by the sponsoring agency.

THE DOWNTOWN FLUSHING PLAN

Vision: The Downtown Flushing Plan presents a long-range vision of new retail, commercial and residential development and supporting transportation, open space and community facility improvements, using zoning as a tool to channel growth and improve existing land uses. The Department of City Planning partnered with Queens Community Board 7 to generate several key zoning recommendations establishing new opportunities for medium density commercial and residential development, both downtown and along the



Flushing River, Queens.

Also establishes eight demonstration districts—"Little City Halls"—headed by district managers and including "service cabinets made up of officers of city agencies" to encourage more local planning and improve local service delivery.

1972 •Report released by City Comptroller Abe Beame charges misuse of funds by the Office of Neighborhood Government.

1973 •CPC takes steps to strengthen community boards and enable them to participate more effectively in the city's de-

cision-making process. Innovations include: publication of community planning handbooks; decentralized public hearings; and increased role in the capital budget process.

1974

•Office of Neighborhood Government is disbanded.

•Model Cities program is terminated.
•Abe Beame takes office as mayor.
•Responding to growing community pressure and citywide civic sup-

port CPC, under the leadership of John Zuccotti, proposes Charter revisions that would give communities a greater say in the planning process, while preserving a central voice to protect city-wide interests.

"There must be a redistribution of authority so that matters local communities. At the same time, City-wide needs and plans transcend the interests or boundaries of any one community and flow from the concept of a two-tiered municipal foundation for a successful decentralization effort. I believe the process is timely, essential and right."

John Zuccotti

highly localized or cover wide geographic areas; they may target particular issues or take a comprehensive approach to a wide range of issues. They also vary widely in the degree of community ownership and control of the planning and decision making process depending on whether they are generated by the local community or by a city agency or non-profit entity in partnership with the local community. •



Preservation of historic burial grounds.

lutionary War cemeteries. The shore road of Richmond Terrace began as an Indian footpath and was one of the earliest roads built in the 1700s.

Progress:

Conceived in 1989, this plan has received substantial support from elected officials and environmental, historic preservation and civic associations. Despite this support North Shore Waterfront Greenbelt has had difficulty implementing the plan, due primarily to lack of funding. •



waterfront, Staten Island

CITYWIDE PLANS

While some plans may be community-based in that they involve local stakeholders and consider local needs and impacts, they encompass much larger geographic areas, such as a borough or the city as a whole. "Taking out the Trash," the alternative solid waste management plan sponsored by the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods (OWN), balances the citywide need for solid waste management against local impacts and draws on a broad coalition of community organizations and local interest groups to achieve that balance. •

TAKING OUT THE TRASH:

A New Direction for New York City's Waste

Vision: Spearheaded by the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods, this plan set out to restructure the City's solid waste system following the closing of the Fresh Kills Land Fill in an equitable and sustainable manner, to relieve the burden of waste facilities clustered in low-income communities of color and to reuse and

recycle valuable resources, creating economic development and jobs.

Background: This plan serves as an alternative to the NYC Department of Sanitation's plan, which centered on building massive 5,000-ton per day waste transfer stations in Linden, New Jersey, and in low-income, minority waterfront communities in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The OWN Plan initiated an extensive participatory process, assembling advice and support from various organizations and community groups.



Protesting New York City sanitation policies.

Progress: In November 2000 OWN and other groups persuaded the City Council to mandate a study of the commercial waste



Waste transfer facility, Brooklyn.

problem. The Council also significantly increased funding for waste prevention and reduction. In addition, the Department of Sanitation agreed to a moratorium on the siting of new facilities in Williamsburg/Greenpoint and a preference towards no new facilities in the South Bronx.

OWN achieved a major victory in July 2002 when Mayor Bloomberg adopted the centerpiece of the OWN plan: retrofitting all of the City-owned marine transfer stations for export of residential and commercial waste by barge, and the phase out of the inland, truck-based waste facilities. •

GREENPOINT & WILLIAMSBURG 197-A PLANS

Vision: The Greenpoint and Williamsburg 197-a plans, though separate entities, share a common vision of a continuous publicly accessible waterfront, improved environment and quality of life, and new development that balances the need for housing, industry and open space and respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.

Background: Greenpoint and Williamsburg developed over more than 100 years as working class immigrant neighborhoods alongside water dependent heavy industry on the north Brooklyn waterfront. Declines in heavy industry in New York City since the 1970s have left large stretches of this waterfront underutilized and ripe for development. Mounting opposition to ongoing environmental problems and the influx of undesirable private and municipal uses, and concern about the nature of development

being proposed for the waterfront led community residents in the late 1980s to begin working toward a comprehensive revitalization plan for the area.



Site of new waterfront park in Williamsburg.

Progress: Communities in Greenpoint and Williamsburg have worked hard, since even before the plans were adopted, to implement some of their recommendations. Creation of a waterfront park at the former Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal, construction of a pier and esplanade between Kent and Java Streets, and plans for a park at the end of



Proposed residential development site.

Manhattan Avenue are largely the result of their efforts. The Department of City Planning is preparing to rezone parts of the East River waterfront to permit residential and commercial development. Despite such progress however, struggles continue against the development of new power plants and other noxious uses on the waterfront that are in direct conflict with the plans. •

"Planning should be left to the experts." Many of knowledge and information are necessary for the development of a good plan. Expert technical knowledge is, of course, critical but "lived experience" is equally important, especially in defining the goals of a plan. In those instances where professional planners or public sector staff have helped communities create their plans, the community as the "client" has defined local needs and opportunities and ultimately approved the plan.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

underutilized 44-acre waterfront, and the creation of a Waterfront Access Plan.



Main Street, Flushing.

Background:

Downtown Flushing has experienced enormous growth in both commercial and residential development since the 1980s and is one of the city's fastest growing retail hubs. It is an area rich with racial, economic and cultural diversity. Residential areas adjacent to the built-up commercial core are characterized by one- and two-family homes.

Progress: The plan, released in 1993, mandates that zoning changes along the waterfront cannot take effect until the heavily polluted Flushing River and its tidal wetlands are cleaned up. This should commence in 2003, once construction of a combined sewer overflow tank sited on the channel is completed. •

COMMUNITY-INSTITUTION PARTNERSHIPS

Local or citywide institutions including universities, non-profit organizations, and private foundations may also sponsor community-based plans, either at the request of the community or in response to locally identified needs and opportunities. While these plans are largely managed by the sponsoring organization, they are generally developed in close partnership with the community and often include substantial efforts at local capacity building. The foundation sponsored Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP), which spawned six Quality of Life Physical Plans for neighborhoods in the South Bronx, serves as an example. •

CCRP QUALITY OF LIFE PHYSICAL PLANS

Vision: Quality of Life Physical Plans, developed under the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program, are centered on the notion that it takes more than just bricks and mortar to revitalize entire neighborhoods and that children and families, as well as businesses are better served through an integrated approach that combines both physical and programmatic improvements, including housing,

economic development, community facilities and services, open space, and public safety measures.

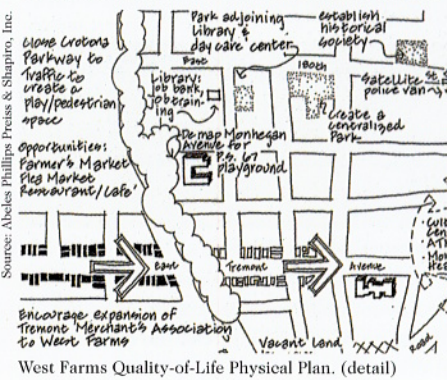
Background: CCRP was initiated by the Surdna Foundation in 1992 as a demonstration of rebuilding distressed urban neighborhoods from the ground up. It currently receives support from 19 other national and local foundations and corporations. Six well-established South Bronx community development corporations (CDCs) participated in the initial demonstration: the MBD Community Housing Corporation; Mid Bronx Senior Citizens Council; Mount Hope Housing Com-

pany, Inc.; Phipps CDC-West Farms; PROMESA, Inc.; and Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association. The CDCs each established a Task Force in their community and worked with the Task Force and professional consultants to develop a Quality of Life Physical Plan for their neighborhood.



Job training and employment services.

Progress: The second phase of CCRP was launched in 1998 when four of the CDCs that participated in the initial program formed CCRP, Inc., a non-profit corporation that serves as their vehicle for joint action. Early efforts under CCRP have already produced over 200 new jobs; immunization programs; new school, youth and Head Start/child care programs; the New Bronx Employment Service; neighborhood safety efforts; a Beacon School; and several substantial economic ventures. •



West Farms Quality-of-Life Physical Plan. (detail)

ing the future of our neighborhoods can be decided in and with the community. These issues must be articulated. Required programs and projects which must be identified, justified and advanced. Both perspectives are essential to good government. Both are equally important and together provide a framework for planning that bringing the communities more closely into the planning process.

Chairman of the City Planning Commission. Testimony before the State Charter Revision Commission, 1974.

1975

•Substantial revisions to the New York City Charter introduce the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) under Section 197-c and the possibility of officially recognized community-initiated planning under Section 197-a, establishing the

advisory powers of community boards with respect to zoning and land use and providing the opportunity for local communities to adopt a proactive role in planning and land use in New York City.

•The revised Charter directs the mayor to draw up a new citywide map of 59 community districts and revives the concepts of "district manager" and "service cabinets," conceived by Mayor Lindsay.

•City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) is established under a

1978

mayoral order, pursuant to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

•Edward I. Koch takes office as mayor.

1982

•The "Waterfront Revitalization Program," sponsored by the Department of City Planning (DCP), is the first plan to be adopted under Charter Section 197-a.

SCALE

SCOPE

SPONSORSHIP

LINKAGES: COMMON THEMES, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While community-based plans generally focus on local issues and concerns these are often manifestations of larger citywide policies and trends. In addition to offering creative solutions in their own neighborhoods, community-based plans have the potential to play a crucial role in defining citywide planning goals and principles and shaping public policy. Community-based plans can also serve as building blocks for larger ini-

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Jonathan Bowles

An increasing number of communities from every corner of the city have been initiating their own detailed plans for community-based economic development. Often spurred on by changes in the local economy, gentrification, the proliferation of unhealthy municipal facilities, a desire to create more jobs and the failure of city planning officials to seek local input in economic development decisions, the community-based plans aspire to give local residents and businesses a greater role in determining the economic future of their neighborhoods.

The community-based economic development plans vary greatly. Some aim to revitalize commercial strips and create an economic identity within a neighborhood. For instance, the Myrtle Avenue plan recommends rezoning, streetscaping and working with individual merchants to

breathe new life into its commercial corridor and improve its image.

Others, like the plans for the Bronx Center Hub and Jamaica Center, hope to create a regional center, attract new businesses and greatly expand employment opportunities. The plan for the Bronx Center Hub, for example, seeks to attract new regional chain stores and high-tech businesses, develop new buildings, ease traffic congestion and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment—all with the intent of redeveloping the area as the “main street” for this part of the Bronx.



Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn.

Most of the community-based plans also share a number of important goals and recommendations. These include preserving a neighborhood’s historic character and prohibiting noxious uses, bolstering locally owned retail establishments, enhancing the appearance and aesthetic of commer-



The “Hub” at Third Avenue and 149th Street, Bronx
cial strips, protecting existing jobs in high-performance manufacturing industries, preparing the local workforce for jobs, and improving the quality of life. •



New commercial development in Jamaica, Queens.

Jonathan Bowles is the director of research at the Center for an Urban Future.

Myth: “Community-based plans impede comprehensive citywide planning.” Supporting community-based planning does not mean rejecting comprehensive or citywide plans and policies. Rather, it assumes that community-based plans are informed by citywide needs and opportunities and, in turn, serve as the building blocks for appropriate and equitable comprehensive and citywide plans. Community-based plans help to identify where and how citywide needs can be successfully met, with both benefits and burdens being distributed equitably. OWN’s community-based solid waste management plan, for example, was recognized by the City as the most viable alternative citywide approach.

OPEN SPACE AND WATERFRONT ACCESS

Toya Williford

Historically, much of New York City’s 532 miles of shoreline has been developed for industry, shipping and transportation, with little opportunity for public access or recreational use. While declines in heavy manufacturing and maritime activity since the 1960s have left large stretches of the waterfront unutilized, this important natural resource has remained out of reach of adjacent communities.

With 3.8 acres of municipal parkland per 1,000 residents New York City lags behind other cities of comparable density such as Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore. The large number of community-based plans calling for public open space and waterfront access reflects inadequacies in both the level and distribution of New York City parkland and the desire of New Yorkers to reclaim their waterfront.

For the past several years communities throughout the city have worked to promote a vision of their waterfront that includes public open space and improved pedestrian and bicycle access. With the development of Hudson River Park, Stuyvesant Cove, Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal Park and Gantry Plaza State Park, the

Community-based Open Space Recommendations: Creating a Citywide Green Network



Source: MAS Planning Center.
Map: M. Birmingham

dreams of some communities are finally becoming a reality.

Community-based open space proposals have the potential for creating intra-borough connections and linking existing public open space resources citywide. In many instances waterfront communities are reaching out to

build alliances that extend beyond their immediate boundaries. The Brooklyn Waterfront Working Group, a coalition of local and citywide organizations and elected officials hosted by Borough President Marty Markowitz, is coordinating plans for a Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway connecting exist-

ing and proposed waterfront open space from Bay Ridge to the Newtown Creek. Individual components include a proposal by UPROSE for a Greenway-Blueway supporting water-based recreational activities in Sunset Park; a plan by the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway Task Force and the Regional Plan Association for a recreational greenway extending from Red Hook to South Williamsburg; and “Riveroute,” a state-funded waterfront access study in Community District 1. These initiatives, once completed, will open up 18 miles of waterfront for public access and substantially improve the health and quality of life of Brooklyn residents and workers. •

Toya Williford currently works as a program officer at the Independence Community Foundation.



Barriers to North Brooklyn waterfront and views.

TRANSPORTATION

Lisa A. Schreiberman

Increased attention to environmental quality and public health has influenced the way in which communities are viewing and addressing transportation issues in New York City.

Community-based transportation plans are becoming more multi-modal: In the Sheridan Expressway Plan, groups that started by identifying a highway as the primary obstacle to neighborhood cohesion are now also looking at ways to reduce

truck traffic in the area by improving rail freight service.

They are also more comprehensive: Realizing that a reduction in automobile traffic in New York City will only occur if a network of alternatives is available, the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance’s Harbor Loop Plan seeks to create ferry service throughout New York Harbor.



Plan for the Sheridan Expressway.

Community-based transportation plans are becoming more proactive: Mothers on the Move chose to address the severe conflicts between pedestrians and trucks in Hunts Point rather than wait for the City



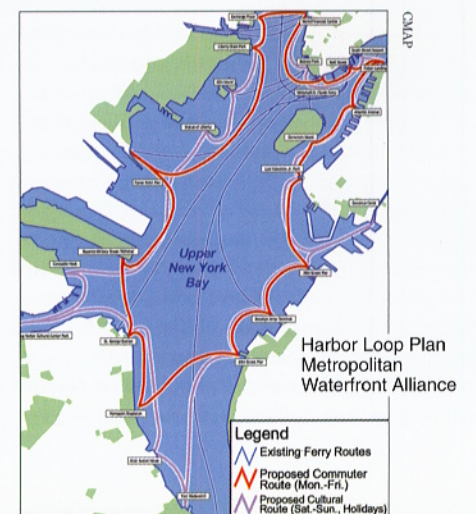
Harlem River Park is cut off from the waterfront.

Department of Transportation’s proposal. They have recommended truck routes, proposed new directions for streets and suggested locations for traffic calming.

Transportation is being considered with other land uses as part of an integrated approach to community development: The East 125th Street Enhancement Study strives to reconcile East Harlem’s need for open space and waterfront access with extensive highway and bridge infrastructure along the Harlem River.

Advances in community-based transportation planning bode well for future public policy, as innovative, grassroots responses to transportation issues capture the attention of decision makers. •

Lisa A. Schreiberman, AICP, is an assistant adjunct professor in the Urban Affairs and Planning Department of Hunter College.



Bruckner and Sheridan Expressways, South Bronx.

1986 •Manhattan Community Board 4 initiates the first community-sponsored 197-a plan, in response to rezoning and development pressures in Chelsea that threaten displacement and loss of neighborhood character.

1989 •Revisions to the New York City Charter shift the burden of environmental review from community boards to DCP, removing a major obstacle for community boards engaged in 197-a planning, and direct

CPC to adopt rules establishing minimum standards for form and content of 197-a plans as well as a procedure and schedule for review, similar to that of ULURP. •“Partnership for the Future,” a 197-a plan for

1990 Bronx Community District 3 is submitted by the community board. •David N. Dinkins takes office as mayor. Appoints a progressive and diverse City Planning Commission.

•Publication of “New Directions for the Bronx,” a broad-based planning initiative led by Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer and facilitated by the Regional Plan Association (RPA).

1991 •CPC’s “Rules for the Processing of Plans Pursuant to Charter Section 197-a” are adopted by the City Council. Extensive public participation organized and led by New York Lawyers for the Public Interest helps

focus the Commission on critical issues.

1992 •“Partnership for the Future” becomes the first community-generated 197-a plan to be approved and adopted by the City Council.

•Development of Bronx Center plan, a participatory planning initiative led by Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer and facilitated by the Urban Assembly, Municipal Art Society (MAS),

tiatives. They may be geographically linked, as in the case of the Brooklyn waterfront plans, or address common themes, issues and opportunities related to transportation, open space and waterfront access, economic development, housing, environmental justice or zoning. When viewed collectively these plans begin to build a comprehensive citywide strategy.

HOUSING

Joe Weisbord

Community plans increasingly contemplate the central impact of affordable housing on the prospects for current and future residents alike. Tight housing supply exacerbated by declining production generates market pressures that jeopardize the tenure of existing residents. Increasing housing costs also limit future residents to those that can afford higher prices.

Many of the community-based plans coming from New York City's low- and moderate-income neighborhoods recommend production of a mix of new housing types as well as actions to preserve the existing stock. For example, the Fifth Avenue Committee housing plan for lower Park Slope recommends development of supportive housing for homeless adults,

and others point to strategies marrying land use planning and zoning to innovative financing and public investments aimed at achieving a sustainable mix of housing types for a wide-range of income levels.

Joe Weisbord is the campaign director of HousingFirst! an alliance of organizations promoting affordable housing for all New Yorkers.



Mixed-density residential development, East Harlem.



La Puerta de Vitalidad – new 61-unit low-income apartment building in Melrose Commons, South Bronx.



NYC Housing Partnership homeownership development, South Bronx.

multi-family homeownership opportunities for working families, and new rental housing for a range of income levels. In the Bronx the Melrose Commons housing plan recommends increased residential densities to expand affordable housing opportunities for seniors, new three-family homes, and rental housing for households of various sizes and income levels. These plans



Housing preservation, Fort Greene.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Eddie Bautista

Environmental and public health concerns are major priorities in low-income communities of color in New York City, many of which are located in waterfront neighborhoods surrounded by industrial uses and transportation infrastructure. These communities have historically been shut out of the political and planning processes that have shaped their neighborhoods. As a result they house a disproportionate share of noxious industrial uses and municipal facilities. They also suffer from insufficient city services, few open space amenities, and a lack of private sector investment.

A number of grassroots environmental justice organizations and coalitions have emerged in New York City in recent years to

challenge environmental policies and land use decisions on both local and citywide levels and address inequities in the distribution of environmental burdens as well as amenities such as public open space.

In addition to organizing public and political pressure many environmental justice organizations have been working proactively to revitalize their neighbor-



Environmental restoration, Eib's Pond, Staten Island.

hoods, both economically and environmentally, and improve the quality of life of their communities.

Finding ways to address environmental injustice is a common element in many New York City community-based plans. For example, the draft 197-a plan for Hunts Point calls for environmentally sustainable economic development along the waterfront,

use of clean fuel vehicles in industrial operations and creation of the South Bronx Greenway; Mothers on the Move's Truck



Ad-hoc use of parking lot — West Harlem waterfront.

Movement Plan recommends alternative truck routes to reduce the level of accidents and truck emissions in their residential neighborhood; the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods (OWN) proposes a more equitable and sustainable alternative to the City's solid waste management plan; and "Harlem on the River," a plan by West Harlem Environmental Action calls for the creation of a riverfront park to provide open space and waterfront access for the West Harlem community.



"Harlem on the River" open space proposal.

In addition to addressing local concerns and needs, such plans have the potential to inform a comprehensive citywide approach to the redevelopment of industrial waterfronts and the fair and equitable distribution of municipal services and infrastructure.

Eddie Bautista is the director of community planning at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest.



Mixed-use neighborhood, Sunset Park.

ZONING

Ethel Sheffer

Zoning is a tool that localities employ to regulate the size, shape and particular features of buildings, as well as the activities that can take place in a neighborhood or district. It is not the same as planning, but is supposed to rest upon and serve planning principles. The Zoning Ordinance is the key legal document that regulates use, bulk and density of property in New York City.

Although the Zoning Ordinance governs the entire city, it recognizes that there are different kinds of neighborhoods and discrete activities and uses. While planners

and laymen would agree in general with the idea of citywide planning as a goal, distinctive neighborhood planning through suit-



Brownstone mid-block, East Harlem

able zoning may be the best kind of planning in a city as varied as New York. Critics of neighborhood planning, on the other hand, often assert that this approach is too parochial and complex, but a constructive response to this criticism is that local-area planning and locally tuned regulations can truly reflect the heterogeneity of city neighborhoods. Neighborhood zoning



Seventh Avenue, Chelsea.

may be complex, but if well done, can be effective in reinforcing neighborhood character and providing for appropriate growth.

There are several important examples of zoning and community planning throughout New York City. They include: the Chelsea 197-a Plan and subsequent zoning change under Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, which sought to control growth, while preserving the traditional form, scale and social character of Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood; a zoning plan by Manhattan Community Board 11 and Civitas that seeks

to preserve the distinctive low-rise character of East Harlem while encouraging appropriate development on the avenues; the South Richmond Zoning Study, aimed at rezoning neighborhoods within South Richmond, Staten Island to reflect the area's existing low density residential character; and the Downtown Flushing Plan, aimed at strengthening and expanding residential and commercial uses within and adjacent to Downtown Flushing.

A cooperative planning process that employs zoning as a tool, both for preservation of existing land use and for shaping future development, is highly desirable for communities engaged in local planning. Use of geographic information systems (GIS) to map the unique characteristics of individual neighborhoods can also help communities obtain a better understanding of available options.

Ethel Sheffer is president of the New York Metro Chapter of The American Planning Association.

PICCED and the Parod-neck Foundation.

1993 •The Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan is developed through a community-driven process led by We Stay/Nos Quedamos

Committee and assisted by Bronx Center. •The "Civic Alternative to Riverside South" is developed with support from citywide planning and civic groups including MAS, RPA, and Westpride.

1994 •Rudolph W. Giuliani takes office as mayor. •Successive budget cuts over the next eight years reduce the number of liaison planners in DCP's borough offices. Centralized approach and focus on land-use regulation

lessen the department's role in community-based planning.

1996 •The 197-a plans for Chelsea and Red Hook are adopted.

1997 •The "Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan," a 197-a plan sponsored by the Manhattan Borough President, is adopted. The Stuyvesant Cove 197-a plan is adopted.

1999 •The "New Waterfront Revitalization Program," updating the 1982 197-a plan, is adopted.

2002 •Michael Bloomberg takes office as mayor. •The Greenpoint and Williamsburg 197-a Plans are adopted. •Of the eighteen 197-a plans initiated since the 1975 Charter, eight have been adopted to date;

another eight are either in development or undergoing review; one was withdrawn; and another was rejected.

CREATING A BETTER CITY THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING

In many ways the journey people travel in creating a neighborhood plan is as important as the final destination. Experience and knowledge gained through active participation in planning help shape civic responsibility and create community identity. Much of the impetus for community-based planning in recent years stems from the perceived loss of community and erosion of civil society in America and efforts to regain a collective

voice and identity in low-income communities that have become increasingly marginalized and disenfranchised. This is reflected in one of the guiding principles for Bronx Center, the plan to revitalize a 300-block area in the South Bronx, initiated in 1992 by Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer.

"We must continue to anchor the Bronx Center on a participatory planning process that develops civic responsibility and helps rebuild civic life."

The Bronx Community Forum, the outreach component of Bronx Center, served initially to draw people into the planning process, however its ultimate purpose was to establish an ongoing mechanism for public dialogue and encourage participation in civil society. With the change in city administration in 1994 many of the recommendations in the Bronx Center plan were put aside. The Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan, developed through a community-driven, collaborative process,



Community planning workshop, Bronx Community Board 3.

is one of only a few elements of Bronx Center to be implemented. There are still efforts to establish a community planning center in Melrose Commons to provide the space and resources for an ongoing community forum.

Development of the Greenpoint and Williamsburg 197-a plans involved community residents and businesses, local leaders, institutions and organizations in what were often lengthy debates on the future of their neighborhood. While the

adoption of the two plans in early 2002 was a significant achievement, the creation of a well informed, articulate, and committed group of "citizen planners", well versed in collaborative problem solving and negotiation was as great an achievement. The sense of empowerment and ownership acquired through this collective endeavor has contributed to the formation of new community organizations and coalitions that are well poised to respond to increased development pressures, promote plan implementation and demand accountability from both the public and private sectors.

In a similar way, efforts by citywide coalitions to engage all members of the public in visioning the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, while critical for establishing consensus and broad oversight of development activity, also create a sense of community, civic responsibility and collective ownership that is as significant as all future development efforts. •

Myth: "Community-based planning takes too long." Although it may take time to develop plans with a high degree of community participation, the level of consensus achieved up front usually shortens the public approval process and reduces the likelihood of time-consuming lawsuits. In many instances community-based plans have taken a long time due to a lack of adequate resources, information and governmental support.



The landmark courthouse on 161st Street and Brook Avenue has long been sought by We Stay/Nos Quedamos Committee as a community planning center for Melrose Commons.

LIST OF COMMUNITY-BASED PLANS (as of October 4, 2002)

PLAN	SPONSOR
Bronx	
Bronx Center	Bronx Borough President's Office Bronx Center Steering Committee
Decommissioning the Sheridan Expressway	The Point CDC, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice
Hunts Point Draft 197-a Plan	Sustainable South Bronx, The Point CDC
Partnership for the Future: A 197-a Plan for the Revitalization of Community District 3	Bronx Community Board 3
Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan	We Stay/Nos Quedamos Committee, HPD, DCP
Claremont Village:	The Residents of Claremont Village
Creating a Public Housing Community	
West Farms Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	Phipps CDC - West Farms
Mid-Bronx Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council
Mount Hope Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	Mount Hope Housing Company
Crotona Park East Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	MBD Community Housing Corporation
Mount Hope/Mount Eden	PROMESA, Inc.
Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	
Longwood/Hunts Point	Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association
Quality of Life Physical Plan (CCRP)	
Jerome Park Reservoir Plan	Jerome Park Conservancy
Waterfront Revitalization and Access Plan	Cherry Tree Association
Discovering the Center:	Bronx Borough President's Office, City College
A Vision Plan for the Bronx Hub	
Bronx CDS 2000: A River to Reservoir	Bronx Community Board 8
Preservation Strategy	
Achieving a Balance: Housing and Open Space in Bronx Community District 3	Design Trust for Public Space, Trust for Public Land, Bronx Community Board 3
Protecting our Hunts Point Neighborhood from Dangerous Truck Traffic	Mothers on the Move
Brooklyn	
Williamsburg Waterfront 197-a Plan	Brooklyn Community Board 1
Greenpoint 197-a Plan	Brooklyn Community Board 1
Red Hook: A Plan for Community Regeneration (197-a Plan)	Brooklyn Community Board 6
Sunset Park 197-a Plan	Brooklyn Community Board 7
The Renaissance Plan	Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council
The Community-Based Gowanus Neighborhood Plan	The Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club
Warren Street Revitalization Plan	Fifth Avenue Committee, Brooklyn Community Board 6
Economic/Commercial Revitalization Plan	Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project LDC
Old Brooklyn District 197-a Plan	Brooklyn Community Board 2
Brooklyn Bridge Park	Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corp.
Bedford-Stuyvesant 197-a Plan	Brooklyn Community Board 3
Red Hook Shoreline and Public Access Plan	South Brooklyn LDC
Manhattan	
South Street Seaport Historic District Rezoning Plan	Manhattan Community Board 1, The Seaport Coalition
Open Space and Recreation Plan	Manhattan Community Board 1
Special Greenwich Village Hudson River District (197-a Plan)	Manhattan Community Board 2
Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Plan	Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association, Design Trust for Public Space
The Chelsea Plan: Community Board 4 197-a Plan	Manhattan Community Board 4
Reclaiming the High Line	Friends of the High Line, Design Trust for Public Space

PLAN	SPONSOR
Sharing Diversity Through Community Action (197-a Plan)	Manhattan Community Board 9
197-c Zoning Plan (groundwork)	Manhattan Community Board 11, CIVITAS
East 125th Street Enhancement Study	CIVITAS
A Community View: Upper Madison Avenue 94th - 125th Streets	CIVITAS
New Directions: East Harlem Triangle, Randalls and Wards Islands	Manhattan Community Board 11
Proposed 197-c Zoning Plan	Friends of NOHO Architecture
Harlem on the River	West Harlem Environmental Action, Inc., Manhattan Community Board 9
197-c Zoning Plan	East 79th Street Neighborhood Association
Stuyvesant Cove 197-a Plan	Manhattan Community Board 6
East River Repowering Project	Manhattan Community Board 6, East Midtown Coalition for Sensible Development, Manhattan Borough President's Office
Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan (197-a Plan)	Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Gansevoort Market Proposed Historic District Plan	Hudson River Park Trust
Hudson River Park Design Guidelines Master Plan	Shorewalkers, Inc.
Harlem River Lake Park Plan	Institute for Rational Urban Mobility
Auto-Free Light Rail Boulevard for 42nd Street	Cooper Square Community Development Committee
Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area: Planning Study and Recommendations	
The Village of Harlem (197-a Plan)	Manhattan Community Board 10
Queens	
Vision for Jamaica Center	Greater Jamaica Development Corporation
Forest Hills/Rego Park Rezoning Study	Queens Community Board 6
The Downtown Flushing Plan	DCP, Queens Community Board 7
Queens Community Board 11 197-a Plan	Queens Community Board 11
Arverne-By-The-Sea	Arverne Working Committee
Hunters Point Waterfront Alternate Plan	Hunters Point Community Coalition
Reuse Plan for Fort Totten	Queens Borough President's Office
Staten Island	
Design & Restoration Guidelines for Eib's Pond	Fox Hills Tenant Association
North Shore Greenbelt Waterfront Access Plan	North Shore Waterfront Greenbelt
South Richmond Zoning Study	Staten Island Community Board 3
Citywide	
The Harbor Loop: Proposed Harbor Loop Ferry System for the Upper New York Bay	Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
Talking out the Trash: A New Direction for New York City's Waste	Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods, Consumer Policy Institute

The Livable City is a publication of the Municipal Art Society of New York. Each edition focuses on a prominent issue related to New York City's physical environment.

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The Municipal Art Society is a not-for-profit organization located at 457 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022
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Cover: Aerial photographs copyrighted by the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

The MAS Planning Center wishes to thank the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation and the Sordna Foundation for their support of the Campaign for Community-based Planning. We also wish to thank the New York State Council on the Arts and The New York Times Company Foundation for their support of this issue of The Livable City.

This edition of The Livable City evolved out of the Campaign for Community-based Planning. The Campaign calls on New York City to take a bold new approach to planning by adopting policies and principles outlined in this document.

Special thanks to the Community-based Planning Task Force for their untiring efforts in advancing the importance of community-based plans.



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