

## Built Environment Meeting 2/17/10

Those present: Irasema, Saima, Georgette, Kathleen, Michelle, Rich, Lorna, Justin, Deqa, Laney, Jeanette, Rachel, Paul, Meera, Jesse, Virginia, Pat

Jesse will talk about anti racism

Framing for next steps of logic model

Jesse Mills' presentation:

Has presented with the House Leader training as well as an all day training that was open for everyone involved in BHC, as well as statewide trainings for California Endowment

Is a resident and has been working for 8 years with primarily east African communities on issues of equities. As an academic he wants to work in the community with the community to bring information to others who don't have access to it. Is interested in pulling minds together to make a difference.

Has done this presentation from 6 hours to three hours and this one is brought down to one hour.

Wants to bring up ideas and then wants to have a discussion about these ideas. What is useful for us to take anti-systemic racism into the framework of the built environment?

He has been studying these issues for the past 10 years on this topic and still feels like he is only scratching the surface.

Agenda:

Migration History and urban development

Anti-Systemic Racism Framework

Alternative Approaches to Land Use

Migration histories and Urban Development in City Heights

1700s and before: Traditional Kumeyaay homeland

1770s Kumeyaay people colonized and missionized (removal and enslavement)

1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo U.S. annexes Mexican land

1852 Kumeyaay pushed to remote reservations

1912 City of San Diego incorporates City Heights (4,000 residents) 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition (boosters promote City Heights) tried to make San Diego the first pacific port after the Panama Canal.

1910 Great Migration of African Americans from South (segregation south of the 94 freeway) Jim Crow laws specifically kept African Americans away from City Heights (now is kept separated to south of the 8)

1925 US Border Patrol established to police racial boundaries

1942 Japanese Internment

1947 I-15 Corridor planned through City Heights

1948 Bracero Program

1953 American Indian "termination" (Assimilation Policy)

1954 Operation Wetback (sending back the people who were brought during the Bracero program)  
1954 Federal Segregation “separate but equal” ends  
1950’s Suburbanization, Disinvestment, White Flight (public resources get sent to the suburbs instead of the urban core, and many who left became absentee landlords)  
1960’s Urban decay and blight  
1975 End of war in Vietnam  
1975 Arrival of refugees from Southeast Asia  
1978 Arrival of refugees from Ethiopia (famine related, many are Somali)  
1980’s Densification (30,000 people per square mile) (booster strategy: because property values are declining people have to make a denser area so that they can still gain money from their rents)  
1994 Price Urban village  
1995 Arrival of refugees from Somalia (Civil war 1989)  
2000 Arrival of lost boys from Sudan  
2003 Arrival of Somali “Bantu”  
2003 War on Terror ORR restructuring ICE created  
2007 Arrival of refugees from Myanmar (Burma)  
2009 Building Healthy Communities, TCE

*Transportation system is built for shoppers to go to downtown and shopping areas, not for places where people live*

*Says that we should all watch the PBS documentary called “the Price of Renewal” which is a documentary about City Heights. Watch with a very critical lens because it is a booster film for Price Charities*

*The war on terror has escalated crimes to aggravated felonies so that when people get arrested they can get deported.*

*This is because many Somalis are targeted by the war on terror as possible “al Qaeda members”*

*It’s important to see this history in context so that you can see that if you are trying to make things better sometimes you are making them worse*

*Deindustrialization and the re-institution of slavery: discussion of surplus population and how they have ended up in prison*

Questions Jesse posed to the group:

**How does the migration of people impacts planning and the built environment?**

Civic engagement impaired

Legal and technical expertise minimized

Displacement and Disempowerment exacerbated

**How does the urban development history impact planning and the built environment?**

Disinvestment is the appropriate way to talk about it, not “blight” which always has racial and class implications

Exploitation and profit extraction

Gentrification as displacement (return migration from white flight is one way to think of it)

### **What land use decisions impact community health and social justice?**

What are “safe zones” for targeted populations (populations of people who capitalism doesn’t need and therefore get tracked into prisons) if these people were at the table the discussion would be different: they would discuss areas where they work, areas that people would not want to walk, areas where they are targeted, etc.

Literally mapping out the space of city heights: what it looks like for these people  
Then looking at an area and seeing it as how it can be better  
The men are afraid in the daytime.

This is very important to see here in City Heights: These people are profiled when they are walking in the daytime.

Structural antagonism: the interests of the 7=11 as a deterrent to keeping people from coming into the store. When Somali culture is centered around hanging out outside and socializing with one another. This is an issue of a private business keeping the people out of their space. “the normal shopper is deterred or fearful a group of black people”

#### Outcome 4

Residents live in communities with health-promoting

Land use

Transportation

Community development

Anti-systemic racism framework:

Be knowledgeable about current and former residents

Empower residents in land use planning, project approval, and oversight

Alternative approaches to land use:

Central open public space resourced for community building education and decision making

Resident ownership and collective ownership

Clean mixed use zoning

Recovery and incorporation of Kumeyaay ecologies

Recover and incorporate immigrant ecologies

Cultural orientations, for example the nuclear family is just one Anglo/Euro cultural norm that should not be imposed on others. Other forms are not deviant, simply different. Community design should not reflect this European norm in City Heights. Learn what people's actual histories are like, what they learned when they were living in the camps

The process of understanding needs requires patience. Many newcomers don't even know what they need yet. They may not even have the vocabulary yet  
Needs are one of the key challenges

The people in city heights have been used for planning grants and have been surveyed to death . The residents don't trust us because they don't see results.

How do you engage people in creating a community center so that it's useful for those who want to use it. If you build it they won't necessarily want to come to it.

People want to mix. Do people want to mix? How do we create a space where people will want to mix? Actively engage people in the process so that they will feel important

Engaging people in the sense of where needs are identified can not be brought to people in the same way that they always have been.

We need to discuss the context in which people are being approached. We can not come to people in the way that they always have been

The surveys from BHC have come from the heart of residents. They are telling us the truth of their basic needs

What people said at the house meetings was very different depending on who they spoke to. People want community centers and comfortable meeting places that may not be one big building, but several places...

We have to continue listening and working with residents daily and invest time with them daily because they need so much work to understand the basic information that we take for granted. With just two house leader presentations that is not sufficient to really engage and give the educational tools to residents

What are we going to be doing? How committed are we? We are here until may, but what are we going to be doing and how are we going to be getting from here on down the line in years for the future?

### **Why are we here and who are we responsible to?**

We've been talking about what resident driven means but we should define it ourselves for ourselves personally...

Do we feel like we really understand people's needs? Or do we need to step back and really begin to discuss with people what their needs really are....

Some people have discussed that we really are just at the beginning  
Its unfortunate that we have this really limited timeline

We have the surveys and we feel like we need more input but we may need to move forward with what we do have because this logic model is not the end all be all and

we can continue to gather information and not get stuck here and put together with what we can with what we know

Our job is to define a really good process

Successful community projects brought together around something that was a catalyst. This helps a lot. The question of resources is only a tool to figure out what you need to do.

This process is very backwards because the resources are coming first and we are trying to scramble to figure out what to do with it.

Successful community development processes take 30 years. Political, economic, social, and developmental strategies. People need to decide to stick around for as long as it takes to turn the situation around. We can decide to stay in for the long haul

We can look at the resources from the endowment and just see it as one piece.

If the resources are gone tomorrow, how many people will still be at the table tomorrow?

The process of coming together to create a plan is very important. We can begin through a small group to bring people together to invest in people or invest in a process.

We have an opportunity to learn from other people's mistakes. We can really begin to figure out how to move from point A to point B.

The resources cloud the issue. But we can still think strategically even though the resources are available.

We will not be able to solve these issues in just 10 years. Not all of these resources are preset devoted to just programmatic goals. We can't load the dice ahead of time. There will be some ideas as to what people want to see. We need to portion out the resources to popular education and to understand what people really need.

Price model vs. Jacobs Center Model:

Price just said he wanted something done and got it done.

Market Creek Plaza: There were capacity building to help residents understand how to look at community plans before they were able to even look at the plans. This was about sustainability. If the residents were able to own the process, they would be able to take care of it and support it. Capacity building is key to any successful community process.

To do:

Look at: Resident momentum team's vision and mission statement draft document

How to do what we are doing and fan out and get input

Nohelia will be going out with some students and talking to people on the streets with residents about gentrification