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UPCOMING EVENTS

• **November 21 & November 29**

Housing Administrators:
Uniform Housing Affordability
Controls Training.

*Mount Holly (21st) and
Somerville (29th)*

www.nj.gov/dca/coah/
uhactraining.shtml

• **December 9**

Housing and Community
Development Network of NJ
Annual Membership Meeting
*War Memorial Building
Trenton*

www.hcdnnj.org

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Community Affairs and
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Public Policy

Summer Institute on Community-based Planning a Success

Forty practitioners interested in giving their communities a greater voice in planning for their future completed the Community Development Institute's (CDI) first two-day Summer Institute on Community-based Planning in June, 2005.



Participants report their recommendations on increasing community involvement

The training was co-sponsored by the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDNNJ) and the American Planning Association's New Jersey Chapter. Practitioners from nonprofits, local governments, public housing authorities, and private institutions worked side-by-side with experts to gain information and learn techniques for dealing with some of the

major challenges encountered in the community planning process. Topics included discovering methods for engaging community residents, resolving conflict, working strategically with local and state government, and acquiring abandoned properties for revitalization.

A simulated planning exercise led by Dennis Brunn and Michael Powell from the HCDNNJ as well as Lalitha Kamath and Steve Finn from CDI enabled practitioners to strategize about productive ways to bring community residents into the planning process and sustain their involvement. Through a role-playing exercise organized by Sanford Jaffe and Linda Stamato, co-directors of the Bloustein School's Center for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, practitioners learned about the barriers to resolving conflict and a new approach to building consensus which reframes problems according to common interests. Robert Cotter, Director of Jersey City's Division of Planning and Robert Kull, Burlington County Regional Planning Coordinator, gave students an inside view of how government planning offices function. Their advice included the best time to [continued on page 7]

Fifteen New Leaders in Community Development

The APA/Leadership Plenty program, sponsored by the Community Development Institute, graduated its first class of fifteen new leaders in community development and urban planning in September. The Leadership Fellows began their training by attending bi-weekly modules on leadership development from January to June at the Bloustein School. The sessions examined the literature on best practices, discussed effective methods to be better leaders and analyzed the organizational and external factors



The new graduates and their coaches

influencing leadership. Participants also took part in classroom exercises and role playing to discover their leadership strengths. [continued on page 5]

Conflict Resolution: Why Policymakers Resist Collaborative Approaches to Solve Problems

By Linda Stamato, Co-Director, Center for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

The Center for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution (CNCR) at the Bloustein School has an interdisciplinary interest in how people negotiate satisfactory outcomes, make peace, and turn potentially destructive conflict into constructive opportunities within multiple settings, including planning and public policy. While, in the last few decades, there has been much theoretical discussion of negotiation there is very little actual field research. Our current project on resistance to collaboration in public contexts responds to this need.

With support from the Hewlett Foundation, we are investigating the question of why policy-makers and planners resist the use of collaborative, problem-solving approaches, and, specifically, mediation and facilitation, as means to manage, if not solve, public disputes. Despite advocacy and some experience, public officials generally have not taken up collaborative processes. We need to understand why, since creative, coordinated, collective action may be increasingly critical to solving certain societal problems.

Those interviewed and scheduled to be interviewed include public managers (commissioners, agency heads, directors in state and regional governmental entities); former governors; legislators (current and former); facilitators, mediators and conveners; community activists; local officials including mayors, freeholders, environmental commission members, etc. The study draws upon a national sample with a high concentration of respondents from New Jersey.

Here is some of what we've learned so far:

- Policy decision-makers don't understand what facilitation, mediation, and consensual decision-making is all about; they believe that when entering such processes they give up all, or a portion of their decision-making authority
- There is a perceived lack of time and resources for leaders or agency staff to initiate/participate in collaborations
- Policy-makers and staff are used to solving problems in ways they are comfortable with or which they believe are dictated by laws, federal agency practices, or court orders; absent changes in "the controlling authorities," innovative approaches are less likely
- Policy-makers aren't clear on whether they have the *authority* to enter a consensus process; they don't want to "get into trouble," i.e., criticized by a superior, for example, or, by community leaders, say, for agreeing to participate in a process that is seen as abandoning public responsibility for decision-making
- Agency managers and staff lack training and experience in collaboration
- Without a body of experience to draw upon, agencies often believe that there are significant time, resource, political, or accountability risks that make collaboration an unwise choice
- Formal rules don't specifically allow, for example, to "stay the clock" in administrative hearing schedule requirements when the parties are in mediation; rules are perceived as impediments to collaboration in that they don't allow sufficient time for collaborative processes to work
- Leadership by (or encouragement or support from) the governor of a state or his/her commissioners is often insufficient or lacking altogether.
- Prevailing professional norms in certain fields create barriers to the use of facilitative processes [continued on page 7]

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Neighborhood Planning website

www.neighborhoodplanning.org

This site provides educational resources for anyone who wishes to learn more about neighborhood planning, preservation, and improvement. Also included are eleven distinct slide shows on neighborhood planning and suggested readings on each topic.



Linda Stamato and CNCR co-director, Sanford Jaffe, discuss conflict resolution with Summer Institute participants.

Our Featured Speaker: *Dr. Carla Cooke-Harris*

***Forging Capacity* is pleased to feature Carla Cooke-Harris, Ed.D who is currently the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships in the New Jersey Department of Human Services. Dr. Cooke-Harris discusses the formation of Community Collaboratives to prevent child abuse and neglect.**



As part of the sweeping reforms to New Jersey's Child Welfare System, the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships (DPCP), within the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Children's Services (OCS), was newly created. The mission of DPCP is to work collaboratively with stakeholders, including consumers, community residents, service providers and others to build strong communities, strengthen families and keep children safe. A few principles that guide the work of the Division include the following: children should be and feel safe and supported in secure families and strong communities; true collaboration and community change demands that diverse voices be heard, especially those who have been marginalized and disenfranchised; every community possesses inherent strengths, power, and resources and when given the opportunity will make and implement decisions that improve the quality of life for the residents; and we can do more together than apart.

The goal of DPCP is to develop the state's prevention and early intervention system into an integrated network of locally based, family-centered and culturally competent services and supports that make it possible for families to get the help they need within their own communities before a crisis occurs. The Division provides vehicles for everyone to take responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect and influence the five (5) core factors that lead to maltreatment including housing, domestic violence, mental health, physical health and substance abuse.

One of the Division's initiatives aimed at meeting this task includes the development of Community Collaboratives in neighborhoods with the highest incidence of child abuse and neglect. Community Collaboratives are neighborhood hubs where residents can go for support, information, referral and services. They are a partnership between the OCS and identified communities to work in collaboration toward the agreed upon goal of improving results for children and families. Nationally, collaboratives

are recognized for their success in reducing the incidence of abuse and neglect, as well as, reducing both the necessity for out-of-home care and the need for child protection services.

Community Collaboratives determine community assets, develop an integrated prevention network, evaluate the local service delivery system, partner with service providers to deliver services identified by the community, and increase social connections and support networks between neighbors. Collaboratives develop governance structures that are made up of 51% community people and include local leaders, parents, youth, faith-based and school representatives, service providers and others. Established governance bodies are independent of the state and responsible for their fiscal and program components.

In Fiscal year 2005, DPCP provided start-up funding in the amount of \$25,000 to fourteen (14) community collaboratives located within Essex, Monmouth and Cumberland counties.

This Fiscal year, DPCP will provide twelve (12) collaboratives (11 of the original 14; 1 new collaborative in Mercer County) with funding up to \$150,000 to support asset mapping and resource family recruitment. Three (3 of the original 14) will receive \$25,000 for operating costs. In January 2006, DPCP will begin development of 6 new collaboratives. We will utilize data collected by the Division of Youth and Family Services' Data Analysis Unit to identify where collaboratives will be established and work with various stakeholders within the identified communities around implementation. The success of the Community Collaborative Initiative is rooted in the commitment of many individuals that volunteer their time and offer their professional expertise. I want to take this opportunity to thank those who often remain nameless but believe change is possible and are truly champions for children.

DPCP is committed to reaching out to work in partnership with others throughout the state that are dedicated to transforming communities into healthy, supportive environments for children and families. I look forward to hearing more about your initiatives, thoughts and suggestions and invite you to contact me via email at carla.cooke-harris@dhs.state.nj.us.

You may visit the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships' website at:
<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ocs/index.html>

Voices from the Field:

A Conversation on Community-based Planning in New Brunswick

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, and Sacred Heart Church are organizing a resident-driven community-based planning effort in one of New Brunswick's neighborhoods, which they hope will become a model planning process for other communities. *Forging Capacity* invited Nancy Finn, a community organizer at Sacred Heart Parish, and Jessica Giorgianni, a Bloustein School graduate planning student and NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA)/Wachovia Housing Scholar Intern, to share key features of this planning effort.

Forging Capacity: Tell me about yourself, Nancy. What led you to work in this field?

Nancy: I'm a community organizer and I was hired by this parish to come and work in the community. Catholic Charities, which does a lot of work in this neighborhood, was looking into applying for the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit planning grant. Since I was already working here in the neighborhood, I became connected with Catholic Charities to work on the planning grant.

Forging Capacity: What kind of neighborhood comprises the plan area.



Residents assemble around a neighborhood map at the kickoff community meeting.

Nancy: The plan area encompasses about 40 blocks of the city's 2nd Ward, and is bounded by Livingston and Commercial Avenues from Welton to Sanford Streets. It is a largely residential area, adjacent to downtown New Brunswick, with a main commercial strip along Remsen Avenue. The population is largely Latino (75%) and the balance is African-American and other ethnic groups. It is also a very young population.

Forging Capacity: What prompted you to form this plan?

Nancy: The Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program was the main catalyst because it offered the opportunity for Catholic Charities to take a comprehensive look at the services it was providing and how these services could be further enhanced.

Forging Capacity: Who are your partners?

Nancy: First, and foremost, is the Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, and Sacred Heart Church. Catholic Charities has several operations here in the neighborhood, including a health center, the YES preschool, a homeless shelter, an outreach center, as well as other services.

Jessica: We get a lot of technical support from the Housing and Community Development Network of NJ, largely from Michael Powell, the Network's Community Planning Specialist. The Princeton University graduate planning studio class is another partner. The class has conducted a physical survey of the neighborhood and will also write the plan. The NJ Department of Human Services is a potential partner. The outreach center has been really helpful in getting information about the residents. We also have New Labor as a partner which is an organization that works with new immigrants on labor issues and English as a second language.

Forging Capacity: What are the plan's short-term and long-term goals?

Nancy: In the short-term, we hope to ensure adequate turnout at our community meetings. We also intend for a minimum of 200 surveys to be completed by residents. The survey will address demographics and neighborhood needs.

Jessica: The medium-term goal is to have the plan finished.

Nancy: The information from the residents will be what focuses the plan. We are working with the Princeton University studio class to write the plan which will use the information we obtain from the physical and resident surveys and the input provided by residents throughout the planning process. The first draft of the plan will be completed by December. The final plan will be turned in by April of next year to DCA. Because we are in the beginning stages and just getting the resident input, we are

not sure how long it will take to fully implement the plan, but we surmise it may take 5 to 10 years.

Forging Capacity: *How will you conduct outreach and keep residents involved?*

Nancy: Monthly community meetings are planned for September through December. We have been speaking with church and community leaders to get the word out. We hope to engage everyone.

Jessica: We have been distributing flyers to churches, outreach workers, and also going door-to-door. We have been giving flyers and related information to other community organizations so they can see our take on community planning. In addition, we will be sending out invitations for each meeting to keep people involved.

Nancy: At our kick-off community meeting on September 8th to introduce the planning effort, over 100 people attended. We provided a translator because many of our residents only speak Spanish. We also provided food so they would not have to worry about supper. Residents were given the survey and offered assistance for completing it, if needed. We have also been distributing the survey in the community. Residents were also given disposable cameras at the kick-off meeting and asked to go out and take pictures of the neighborhood's strengths, problems and opportunities. At our October meeting, residents used these photos to conduct a SWOT analysis to determine the projects and locations where the plan needed to focus. Residents will also be on committees to fine-tune the plan and determine priorities.



Residents and facilitators analyze photos to determine neighborhood strengths, problems and opportunities.

Forging Capacity: *What kind of reaction have you gotten from local government and the larger institutions in the city?*

Jessica: They've been very interested and supportive.

For the most part, the organizers are trying to keep a low profile so that the residents will remain the main speakers.

Forging Capacity: *How will you measure success?*

Jessica: Getting residents involved and their voices heard; translating that input into the plan; submitting the plan to DCA and getting it implemented will be some of the ways to indicate success.

Nancy: In addition, we hope for sustained neighborhood involvement and that there continues to be a community organization here that looks to the future, so that as we go down the road, regardless if demographics change, collaboration with churches, businesses, and the residents will always remain.

Leadership Graduates *[continued from page 1]*

The second part of the program involved pairing the Fellows with Coaches for one-on-one coaching sessions held over the summer. Coaches were senior professionals from leading community development and planning-related institutions in New Jersey. In preparation for their coaching duties, coaches received instruction from Enrique Garcia-Bejar, a leading trainer in executive coaching.

"The course gave me many tools to further develop my leadership skills and to recognize them in others," said Liz Smith, one of the graduates who also facilitates a community revitalization process with Plainfield residents. Jaime Sharrock, who manages a HOPE VI development process for the Jersey City Housing Authority said, "As a young planning professional, the APA/Leadership Plenty Program helped me enhance my capacity for leadership in order to create positive change within my organization and the communities where I work."

Coaches as well as Fellows benefited from the program. Shirley Ward, the Director for Community and Urban Affairs at Public Service Electric and Gas Company found the coaching experience changed her: "To be an effective coach you must question ideas and practices. I found that being new to this process I started to ask myself, 'was I walking the talk.' A coaching experience not only helps the person you're coaching to grow and change his/her world, it provided me with an opportunity to develop and change my world. This was a valuable learning experience for the both of us."

APA/Leadership Plenty will resume next spring under a new name, The Leading Institute.

Hot Topic Update:

Reaction to *Kelo vs. New London*– Backlash and Opportunity

Since the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the use of eminent domain in its *Kelo vs. New London* decision, a backlash to limit its use, especially for economic development, has erupted in at least two dozen states, including New Jersey. At the same time, this tempest has provided an opportunity for those who believe in eminent domain, but agree reforms are needed, to promote improvements in how it is practiced.

Legislative efforts which have surfaced in New Jersey to curtail or prohibit eminent domain use have included:

- A call for the governor to enact a statewide moratorium on eminent domain.
- Assembly bill A-4392 and its companion Senate bill S-2739 are proposed to prevent the seizure of occupied and maintained private homes for economic development.
- Amendments to the state constitution are offered that would: exclude economic development from the term ‘public use,’ specifically prohibit private homes and businesses from being taken for economic development, and empower a state committee to determine if a proposal met the public use criteria.
- A member of NJ’s congressional delegation will introduce legislation in the U.S House of Representatives that lists specific criteria that must be met in order for eminent domain to proceed, including:
 - *proof that all alternatives have been investigated
 - *homeowners must be well compensated
 - *redevelopment plans should include affordable housing for families and seniors
 - *residents should be permitted to petition the local government to consider the project in a referendum.
- Bogota voters passed a referendum this November to prohibit local government from condemning private property for private development for the purpose of increasing tax revenue.
- The Middlesex Borough Council has banned its own use of eminent domain for redevelopment.

Although there is agreement that New Jersey’s Local Housing and Redevelopment Law provides much more due process than found in Connecticut and other states, there is also growing recognition that modifications to New Jersey’s eminent

domain law are needed to make the redevelopment process more open and participatory and adjust compensation to fairer levels.

The New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association, which represents planning professionals in the state, is considering endorsing a position statement regarding redevelopment and the use of eminent domain. The position would support the use of eminent domain as a long standing tool of last resort for redevelopment and discourage efforts to limit its applications to certain land uses or to exclude economic development from the concept of public purpose. However, the NJAPA recognizes that the redevelopment process in New Jersey can be improved and is considering the following recommendations:

1. Strengthen the link between the planning process under the Municipal Land Use Law and the redevelopment process under the Local Housing and Redevelopment statute (e.g. adding a redevelopment element to the municipal master plan as a prerequisite to an "area in need of redevelopment" designation and redevelopment plan adoption).
2. Strengthen the planning content of the Redevelopment Plan (e.g. requiring an explicit vision statement and a community design framework that makes the redevelopment plan more meaningful to ordinary citizens and stakeholders).
3. Strengthen the notification requirements to property owners, tenants and to the community-at-large, prior to taking action regarding redevelopment.
4. Strengthen the public process leading to redevelopment designation to include increased citizen participation and meaningful public visioning sessions.
5. Explore new legal/financial mechanisms to allow affected property owners to share in the appreciation and other benefits that the redevelopment may bring (e.g. possible equity interests or innovative partnerships).



DCA Grants for Neighborhood Planning

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs is accepting applications for the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Planning Grants.

DCA will fund five grants of up to \$50,000 each for community development corporations to develop resident-driven neighborhood plans in eligible communities. (An approved neighborhood plan is required to apply for project implementation funding under the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program. The grants allow organizations financial support to develop these plans). According to DCA, the funds can be used “to support direct expenses that are essential to the planning process, including consultant fees and neighborhood outreach efforts. Applicants must demonstrate their capacity and commitment to revitalize their neighborhood and provide evidence of a history of involvement, as reflected in on-going grants, programs and resources brought to the neighborhood due to their participation.”

As funding is limited and some applications have already been received, interested organizations are encouraged to submit their applications as quickly as possible. Application information, including a list of eligible municipalities, can be viewed at DCA’s Division of Community Resources web site at: www.state.nj.us/dca/dcr.

Summer Institute *[continued from page 1]*

approach government in the planning process and the types of data and assistance planners could contribute to neighborhood planning efforts. An exercise conducted by Diane Sterner and Leonard Robbins from the HCDNNJ showed the class how to use several new tools enabled by state legislation to acquire and reuse vacant and abandoned properties for community revitalization.

Practitioners’ responses to the training were very favorable. Evaluations concluded that the sessions were engaging, well-presented and very informative. Many participants expressed an interest in attending expanded training on the subjects covered, e.g. conflict resolution, roles of planning boards, and case studies of neighborhood planning.

Instructional materials used in the Summer Institute, including the community engagement exercise and practitioners’ recommendations, can be viewed on CDI’s web site at www.policy.rutgers.edu/cupr/cdi.

Conflict Resolution *[continued from page 2]*

and inhibit their use (e.g. planners sometimes feel that since facilitators are not experts in planning, they should not bother to engage with them or be part of a process they facilitate; professional status confers legitimacy)

- Negotiation is perceived as a sign of weakness, particularly if parties see themselves as powerless and wanting courts to bring parties more into balance; in other words, they want to go to court where they believe power is equalized and where their positions are more likely to be given weight and, they anticipate, vindicated, and the remedies (or damages) they seek provided. Representatives of poor communities, in cases that raise issues of environmental injustice, resist negotiation and mediation (again, perceiving that seeking to negotiate sends a message that one’s position is weak.)

For now, it appears that to fix resistance to collaboration, different actions are required at different levels:

- Federal level: legislation is required;
- State level: Governor’s initiative/strong leadership at agency levels is needed;
- Local level: Non-governmental actors are more powerful; local organizations have potential for significant impact on policy and process decisions. What is needed is the willingness of local groups to participate in and, indeed, push for collaboration in order for serious engagement to take place.

Stay tuned for additional findings, interpretations and recommendations.

What’s Shakin’ ?

A Rutgers/New Jersey chapter of Planners Network (PN) is forming at the Bloustein School. For three decades, PN has brought together progressive professionals and activists to examine how to improve equity in our communities and world, about how decisions are made and resources allocated. PN has chapters in numerous states and leading universities and includes students, academics, community organizers, professional planners, and activists concerned with urban planning and social and environmental justice. The chapter plans to organize forums, walking tours, film screenings and other educational and advocacy events.

To learn more, contact Jeremy Nemeth <[jнемeth@eden.rutgers.edu](mailto:jnemeth@eden.rutgers.edu)> and visit the PN web site at www.plannersnetwork.org.

FORGING CAPACITY

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Director's Cut

We are pleased to issue this next edition of *Forging Capacity* where you will find articles of interest to further your own, as well as your organization's, capacity building efforts.

Forging Capacity reports on two recent CDI activities to better equip practitioners to lead and engage their communities. We conducted our first two-day Summer Institute on Community-based Planning with a committed and lively group of practitioners and experts from around the state. We also salute a new core of 15 emerging leaders who graduated from the CDI-sponsored APA/Leadership Plenty program and extend our appreciation to their coaches, who are among the state's leaders in community development and planning. We're encouraged by the commitment shown by these practitioners and look forward

to hearing about their successes and struggles.

We are learning more about why those who make and implement public policy have resisted a collaborative approach to solving problems. *Forging Capacity* discusses the early findings of an ongoing study on this question by the Bloustein School's Center for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution.

We are also optimistic about the work that is taking place in our communities and the state to build supportive systems and environments for strengthening our children and families and improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Two examples described in this newsletter are the community collaboratives network created by the state's Division of

Prevention and Community Partnerships and the community-based planning process in New Brunswick conducted by Sacred Heart Church and Catholic Charities.

At the same time, we are energized by the debate that is occurring to improve the process by which resources are assembled to revitalize municipalities. The Supreme Court has upheld the use of eminent domain since we wrote about it in our last edition. Our Hot Topic follow-up examines the backlash from opponents looking to craft a legislative remedy to limit the power of eminent domain as well as the opportunities this turmoil has provided for supporters to reform eminent domain through better planning linkages and improved compensation benefits.

*Stephen Finn, Director
Community Development Institute*