

SDAT | NEW ORLEANS

AUGUST 2009

AIA Communities by Design
ENVISION. CREATE. SUSTAIN.



THE GENTILLY COMMUNITY

new orleans, louisiana

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans hard - flooding most of the city. In the six square mile district known as Gentilly, located three miles north of the French Quarter, Katrina's devastation was particularly profound. Two breaches in the London Avenue Canal inundated Gentilly with more than ten feet of water; immediately displacing its 45,000 residents, its businesses, and its three post-secondary institutions. For the next several years, the nation focused on fixing the New Orleans area; serious public and private initiatives were created to accomplish the task of rebuilding the Gentilly Community and the levee system that protects it. Despite the intense external focus on rebuilding, less than 40% of Gentilly's residential, commercial, and institutional population has returned. For those that have come back and reinvested, the failure to stabilize the community has created deep and rampant skepticism, planning fatigue, and distrust internally and externally. In December 2008, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) sent a

team of volunteer architects, planners, economists, educators, and community organizers to conduct an economic, environmental, and social equity assessment on the Gentilly Community and to propose an implementable strategy to improve its conditions.



GENTILLY'S CONDITION

POLITICAL:

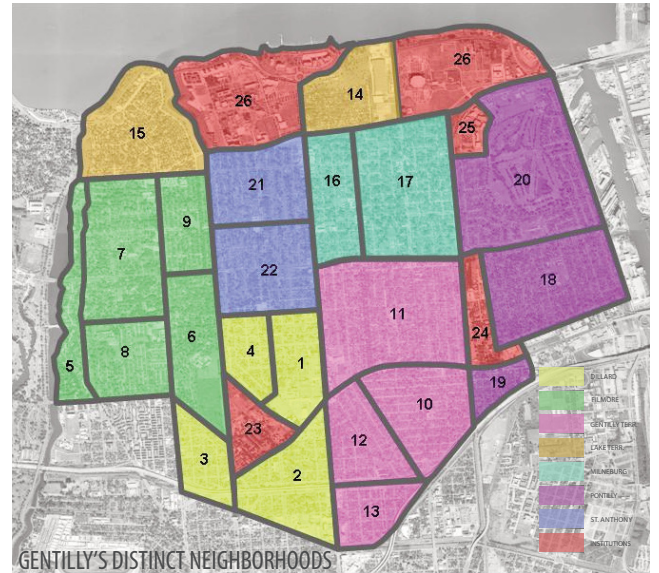
Gentilly's political boundaries form New Orleans Planning District 6 and are neatly contained by natural and man-made boundaries: Lake Pontchartrain, City Park, Industrial Canal, and Interstate-610. An aerial view of the district suggests an organized homogenous block which belies the reality that the area is comprised of four secondary-education campuses and twenty-two (22) ethnically and socioeconomically diverse neighborhoods that, if not openly hostile towards each other, are uncooperative. Exacerbating the complex political and social conditions in Gentilly, is a list of needs that far exceeds the District's capacity to address. Districts within a city which fail to optimize their political voice fare worse than districts that do; District 6, having yet to establish a cogent voice to represent its collective, has failed to optimize its political potential.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Flood control, managed under the auspices of the Army Corps of Engineers, has been New Orleans' priority in large part because until there is confidence that the City can survive another major storm, private equity sources will be scarce. Since Katrina, more than \$15 billion has been spent in building 350 miles of levee walls and more than a dozen pumping stations (pictured to the right). The levee system overhaul effort, the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System, is intended to withstand a storm that has a one percent chance of occurring each year; while an improvement, the system is not designed to withstand a storm of Katrina's magnitude. Construction of the levee system is scheduled for completion sometime in 2011.

INSTITUTIONAL:

The rebuilding of Dillard University is the success story of Gentilly and their work has had a modest catalytic effect on some of the surrounding neighborhoods. Dillard's progress is the result of its own internal leadership, hard work, and financial commitment. Though the physical grounds have improved, enrollment has yet to return to pre-Katrina levels. The same can be said of all four institutions in and around the Gentilly district: Dillard, University of New Orleans Lakeside, Tulane University, and Southern University at New Orleans



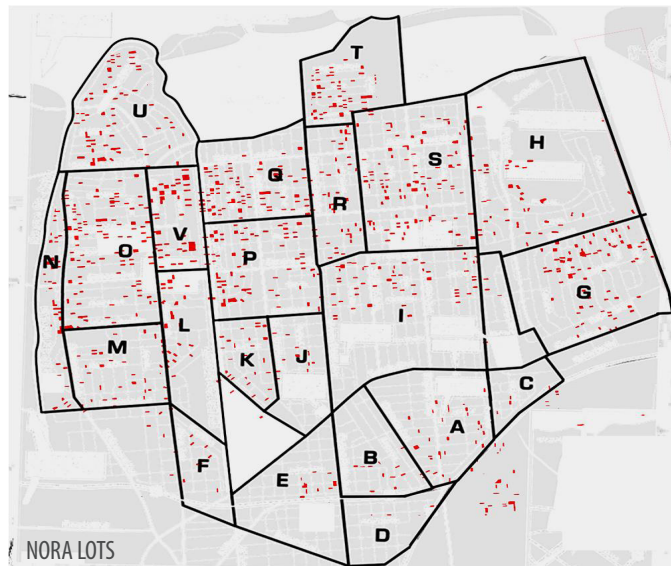


HOUSING ISSUES

gentilly, louisiana

RESIDENTIAL:

Residential neighborhoods have not rebounded as Dillard University has however. Many of the neighborhoods have a varied topography, the minimally flooded houses were reoccupied quickly, but now find themselves, and their largest investment, surrounded by vacant houses and empty lots. Despite a persistent sentiment from those who have returned, more than 10,000 vacant houses and lots remain scattered across Gentilly's neighborhoods. Ownership of lots varies; many families chose not sell (but have not rebuilt), and 4,500 former residents sold their houses through Louisiana's Road Home program - these lots are now controlled by the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA). These lots would play a key role in the SDAT Team's recovery plan mentioned later in this report.



PLANNING A NEW GENTILLY

RETAIL/COMMERCIAL:

There are four main commercial zones in Gentilly- none of which have returned to their 2005 conditions. What is left behind are abandoned shopping centers at gateways into neighborhoods serving as a constant reminder of what may never recover in Gentilly.

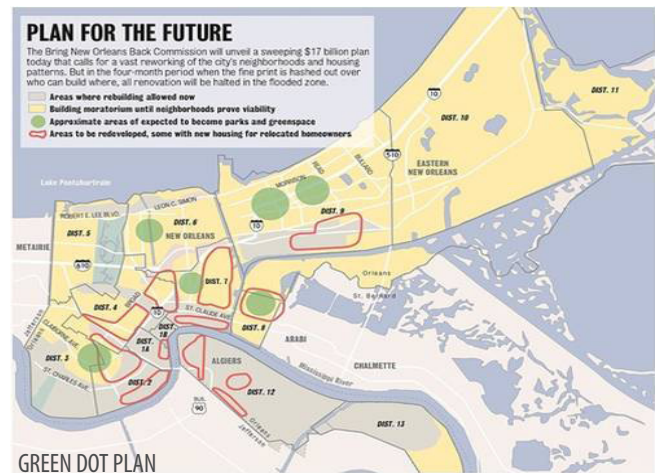
PLANNING:

New Orleans has had four significant planning initiatives since Katrina. The first, sanctioned by Mayor Nagin, was the Urban Land Institutes “Bring New Orleans Back ” Plan, aka the “Green Dot Plan,” published in January 2006. ULI determined that Gentilly was unsustainable in its current densities and would remain so. The plan was to strategically begin a subtractive process in the community and to reinvest in certain areas but not in all areas because of finite capital and resources. This very smart idea was interpreted by the Times Picayune newspaper with devastating consequences. A questionable graphic interpretation by the Picayune staff rendered the plan dead on arrival while galvanizing residents against planned contraction of neighborhoods. In April 2006, DPZ conducted an extensive, 8-day charrette for Gentilly; this effort produced a thoughtful and comprehensive document that provides a long-term framework for rebuilding the district from a new urbanism perspective. The pitfall of the DPZ plan was that it was unsanctioned and therefore lacked the force of law behind it, as such, not much ever happened. In January 2007 the third planning initiative was published, the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) which “addresses specific actions necessary to facilitate the recovery and rebuilding of New Orleans.” This multi-level planning process aimed to knit together the previous initiatives and to integrate community input from neighborhoods into a comprehensive rebuilding plan. Currently in draft form, the City of New Orleans is preparing to publish the fourth major planning initiative, the New Orleans Master Plan (NOMP) under the auspices of the City Charter and the City Planning Commission. This plan, developed by Goody Clancy Associates, is to incorporate previous efforts and is buttressed by the force of law. This report was developed prior to publication of the NOMP.

The Dilemma? Despite these initiatives, Gentilly remains a district with no capital or a framework to get capital, it has insufficient densities to support any plan, and it lacks political clarity. The question is: what can be implemented in the absence in each of these important components?



GENTILLY WOODS SHOPPING CENTER, 2009



GREEN DOT PLAN



DPZ PEDESTRIAN SHED PLAN

THE STRATEGY

THE SDAT RE-ASSESSMENT:

With the advantage of having had the ability to study previous Gentilly planning initiatives, the SDAT concludes that a conventional economic, environmental, and social sustainability assessment of Gentilly's long-term trajectory is unsuitable for the following reasons:

1. Gentilly lacks the basic qualifications of a *sustainable location*; existing mostly below sea level, the area relies upon an expensive series of canals, levees, and pumps that must be in continuous operation to keep the area from flooding creating unique problems with distributing capital to other city needs, i.e. school systems.
2. The cost-benefit of rebuilding Gentilly based on its current densities is difficult to defend on a sustainable basis
3. Gentilly is not one neighborhood rather 22 separate communities lacking a cogent voice .

Notwithstanding these issues, community spirit remains Gentilly's greatest asset and a principle resource in the SDAT Team response. In reaction to its re-assessment, the SDAT Team has focused on two issues: 1) why the previous planning efforts failed to take root; and 2) given the current realities, what are the minimum tools needed to create a healthy community in Gentilly?

DEFINING OUR PROBLEM:

Each day removed from the Katrina event corresponds to a geometric distancing of the nation's collective willingness to make New Orleans its priority. The window of opportunity to focus the nation's strength on fixing the systemic infrastructure issues of New Orleans is gone; its future will be determined, not by the financial resources of the outside world, but by the local actions of its own residents. Within these circumstances, **The SDAT Team's problem was to develop a systemic strategy, that in the absence of capital and proper densities could improve the situation in Gentilly.**

THE STRATEGY:

The SDAT Team expected the strategy to address all of the following criteria:

1. Neighborhoods and commercial zones remain in ruin; the strategy needs to convert these liabilities into assets, efficiently.
2. Planning action must be immediate while addressing long-term needs.
3. SlowreinvestmentandpopulationreturnsuggestsGentilly'sefforts needs to be on attracting new people and new businesses.

4. Given the limited supply of public and private resources in the city, and the limited support from the federal government, the plan must rely principally upon leveraging existing community assets to reinvest in its future.
5. The strategy must also integrate the need to bring the community together in a common effort around long-term recovery and help it overcome existing barriers to enhanced collaborative work.

The SDAT Team's strategy is to develop a framework designed to organize neighborhoods to improve their environment by identifying a problem that requires them to work together. Because closer inspection reveals that Gentilly is not one but actually 22 distinct neighborhoods, the approach is to create a problem that makes these 22 work together so that Gentilly develops a potential resonance to attract capital, attract population, and to eventually improve the quality of life. It is necessary that the problem be one that is reasonable; in order to bypass the need for political or outside funding, local assets will need to be efficiently utilized and leveraged.

The first task is to find a reasonable problem for the Gentilly community to work towards. After thorough research, the Team decided that building a catalytic asset is a problem which can meet its strategy criteria. Gentilly's current capital situation limits the types and magnitude of a catalytic project that can be done efficiently. What the community does have, is space.



THE CATALYST ASSET

THE COMMUNITY GARDEN:

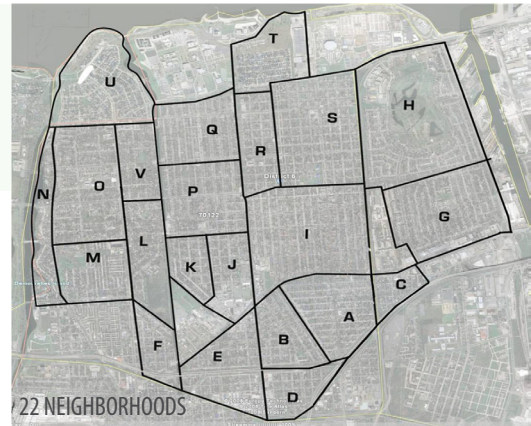
A green space project such as a community garden or urban farm is an relatively easy and sensible catalytic project. It converts a liability (blighted zone) into an asset (green space), provides immediate action while meeting long-term needs, may create a revenue stream if treated as a urban farm, and can knit the community together. We think of a community garden or urban farm as knitting the community together because it helps knit the immediate group together, which it does, but the SDAT Team suggests taking it a step further.

The objective is to apply the strategy to a framework; looking at all of Gentilly and its independent neighborhoods and linking them together in some physical fashion.

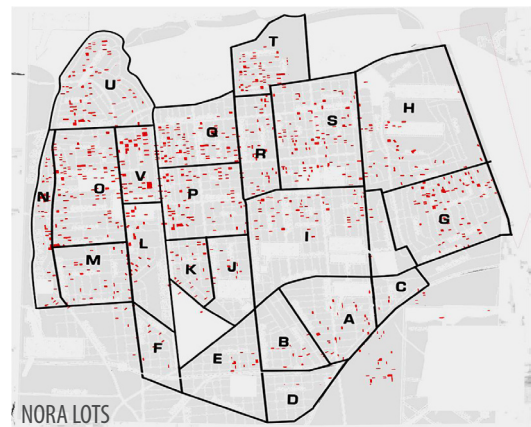


THE FRAMEWORK

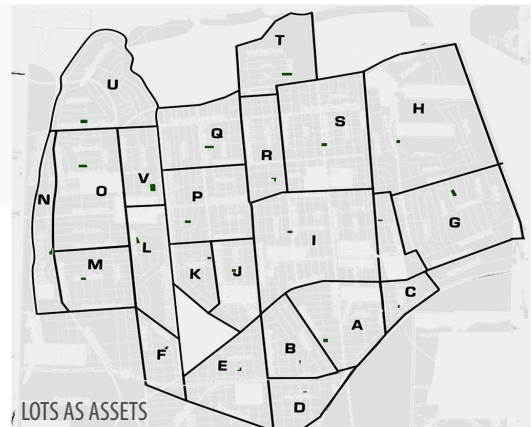
- Looking at Gentilly and its 22 independent neighborhoods: addressing the criteria of integrating the need to bring the community together in a common effort.



- The NORA lots: these red dots represent lots from the previous *Road Home Program* which was the Federal subsidy that New Orleans administered which offered a dollar amount to displaced NOLA residents for Katrina-damaged property if the lot owner agreed to return to either New Orleans or Louisiana. The result was that the Road Home Program ended up with thousands of lots without so much as a charter that would allow them to dispose of the lots. The lots were eventually turned over to NORA which does have the ability to sell and deal with these lots. In the new ability to acquire the lots, the SDAT Team recognized an opportunity unique to Gentilly and focused on building on these assets.



- The Team's proposal was to take four NORA lots within each Gentilly neighborhood and to treat these lots as the assets that each neighborhood begins to develop (labeled as green dots).

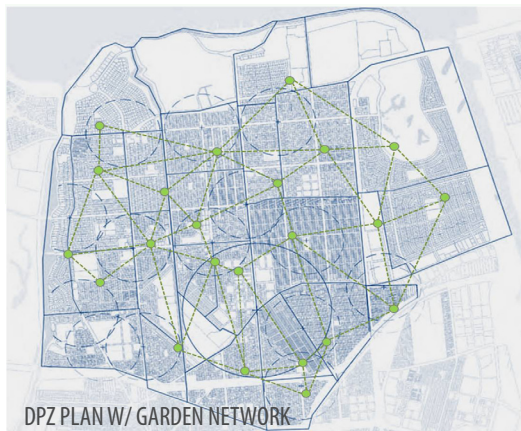




- Turning the lots into exterior spaces: These lots would be developed into green spaces such as a community garden or urban farm- converting liabilities into local assets.



- The next step is to knit the spaces together which is important because it creates a physical framework. The connections can be as simple as signage or connecting bike paths and are interactive - they can start simple and evolve over a period of time. The network is also organizational which is the real key. The project is not about the physical garden or urban farm being the answer, it is about the ability to connect neighborhood "A" to neighborhood "T" in a meaningful way. The concept is extraordinarily simple and resonably profound in its application.



- An interesting characteristic of the community garden initiative, is that it is inclusive - the DPZ plan, the UNOP plan, any previous or subsequent plan, can be laid over this network and they can build.

THE GENTILLY COMMUNITY GARDEN COMPACT (GCGC)

THE GENTILLY COMMUNITY GARDEN COMPACT:

In order to provide the appropriate formal organizational infrastructure for the community garden initiative, the SDAT Team recommends that a Gentilly Community Garden Compact be formed to include representatives from each neighborhood, as well as major institutional stakeholders in the community. Through a compact, the initiative will have credibility and inclusive representation to successfully petition the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority for the disposition of one vacant parcel in each Gentilly neighborhood that can be turned into a community garden project. The management structure of the compact could include representation from key institutions in Gentilly, including the Dillard University CDC, the University of New Orleans, City-Works, and the Gentilly Community Improvement Association. The core functions of the Gentilly Community Garden Compact (GCGC) would be the following:

1. Administration of the community gardens process
2. Securing funding and technical assistance for the core efforts of the Gentilly community.
3. Managing the formation and operation of a limited liability corporation (LLC) to receive assets from sponsoring government agencies and private entities.
- 4.

The SDAT Team further recommends that the Gentilly Community Garden Compact form a Limited Liability Corporation as the formal organizational structure for the initiative. The core need for an LLC would be to help leverage and aggregate financial resources for rebuilding, while limiting risk to all participating parties. The Team believes that the gardens could be immediately capitalized for additional investments in rebuilding, and the initial capitalization could be approximately \$220,000. The LLC would also help implement a

feasible governing structure made up of the community and institutional stakeholders. The LLC could serve as a vehicle for providers of technical assistance in the community covering financial, real-estate, landscaping, and other areas as needs arise.

The early stages of implementation will require a new commitment to collaboration among Gentilly's major institutional stakeholders, as a representative leadership group with the capacity to partner with NORA on the disposition of existing vacant parcels in the community, and form and manage an LLC in partnership with the Gentilly neighborhoods. It will also require an intensive communications and neighborhood organizing effort to garner support from all of Gentilly's diverse neighborhoods, including the leadership of the GCIAs as well as individual meetings at the neighborhood level with Neighborhood associations and civic groups. The leadership group should facilitate the collaborative design of guiding principles and operating procedures that are established through community dialogue and consensus. It should also work to form specific communications protocols and build effective working relationships to move the initiative forward swiftly and effectively.

As the GCGC initiative progresses, neighborhoods will be empowered to create community gardens that serve as local amenities to the neighborhood depending on their specific desires. As every neighborhood collaborates to design and build its own community garden, the GCGC should lead efforts to provide physical and financial linkages between every garden project in Gentilly, thus realizing synergies for new investment, strengthening connections between neighborhoods, and laying the groundwork for broader partnerships on public work throughout the community.

WHAT WE LEARNED IN GENTILLY:

These are some observations made by the Team that may have resonance in other communities:

- 1. Bottom-Up strategies such as the community garden network concept are far less capital intensive and have the ability to leverage latent opportunities that other strategies may not see. For example, the NORA lots existed for any to pick from, however no previous plan was looking at using them as assets. The key to applying this strategy to other cities is to creatively try to figure out what the local latent opportunities are.
- 2. In order for to harvest these opportunities, a community must have a cogent voice. 22 different voices working in their own direction can be politically neutralized in a nanosecond.

CONCLUSIONS:

Through its observations, dialogues and conversations with the Gentilly community, the SDAT team identified enormous challenges to recovery, an acute frustration among citizens, business owners and institutional stakeholders regarding the pace of progress, and significant trust issues between the community and local government, as well as within Gentilly’s diverse neighborhoods and institutions. However, the team also found profound commitment to a brighter future, a series of historic opportunities for dramatic and lasting community change, and incredible potential within Gentilly for rapid improvement. The SDAT Team recommendation represents a simple statement about the need for a beginning to visible, tangible progress in the community.

We believe that implementation of the team recommendations would result in immediate community benefits and the foundation for long-term progress and sustainability. It is our collective hope that the SDAT process and the pursuit of its recommendations represents a new beginning for the Gentilly community. The return of the community’s citizens represents a profound commitment

SAMPLE CONCEPTUAL GARDENS

The SDAT team designed several conceptual garden designs to illustrate the variety of scale, design and use that could be employed in each neighborhood.



THE SDAT TEAM

Chris Giattina, SDAT Team Leader

Chris Giattina is president of Giattina Aycok Architecture Studio, a fifty-person architecture firm known regionally for elegant, sustainable solutions to complex problems. Under his design leadership, GA Studio's work has been consistently recognized for design excellence and has received over sixty national, regional, and local AIA design awards and publications.

Giattina earned a Masters of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Science from the Georgia Institute of Technology. He currently teaches for Auburn University's Urban Studio Thesis Program and is a frequent critic for architectural juries and competitions at Georgia Institute of Technology and Illinois Institute of Technology.

His belief that good design optimizes leverage on resources has guided a theoretical and practical pursuit for sustainability. He is nationally recognized as a leader in the field and has served as the team leader for multiple AIA's SDAT.

Karin Pitman

An architect and landscape architect, Karin Pitman, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP, has over twenty-four years of combined architectural, landscape architectural, and planning experience. She brings an understanding of the comprehensive design and development process that includes site assessment and selection, procurement of funding, facility and master planning, building and landscape design, construction documents, and construction administration. Since receiving a Bachelor of Architecture from Arizona State University in 1984, Ms. Pitman's career has included experience in both the private and public sector ranging from interactive programming, land/policy planning for small and large scale developments, design and construction documents, and presentation graphics for a variety of projects throughout the southwest and beyond. Clients she has worked for include various cities and school districts, universities and community colleges, Native American pueblos, military bases and national labs, Maricopa County Flood Control District, as well as numerous commercial development corporations and non-profits.

Known for her creativity, Ms. Pitman is a former Faculty Associate with Arizona State University's School of Architecture and Planning, has been included in numerous juried art and architectural exhibits, and has spoken at various venues on the topics of creativity, community planning, regional architecture, presentation graphics, and xeriscape design. Ms. Pitman has participated as a team leader, graphic specialist, or participant for more than twenty-five public design charrettes including several Search for Shelter and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) events, for affordable housing, building and site studies; as well as numerous visioning workshops. While her freehand drawing skills are her biggest asset, Ms. Pitman is also proficient in AutoCAD, Revit, and Sketch Up. As an AIA member, Karin served a four-year term with the national Young Architects Forum Advisory Committee, a three-year term as AIA Albuquerque President, and was honored with a national award, the 1998 Young Architects Award, for her pro-bono contributions to housing the homeless in Phoenix.

THE SDAT TEAM

Roland Anglin

Roland Anglin is the Director of the Initiative for Regional and Community Transformation (IRCT) at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University. The IRCT is a national initiative whose mission is to support the transformation of marginalized communities and people through the production of relevant knowledge and public policy strategies.

He is also Executive Director of the Center for Race and Ethnicity, a university-wide center devoted to facilitating research and enriching education on matters of race and ethnicity. Dr. Anglin spent eight years at the Ford Foundation, where he served first as the program officer responsible for community development. Subsequently, he was asked to become Deputy Director for Community and Resource Development which is part of the Asset Building and Community Development Division at the Ford Foundation. At the Foundation, Anglin was given major responsibility for grant making to enhance the capacity of community-based organizations involved in economic and community revitalization. Dr. Anglin also helped to conceive the Sustainable Metropolitan Development Initiative, a multi-pronged effort seeking to promote compact, transportation-friendly communities that are sensitive to racial and income equity.

After leaving Ford, Dr. Anglin went to the Structured Employment Economic Development Corporation, a national community development intermediary. At Seedco, Dr. Anglin was the Senior Vice President responsible for building the capacity of community-based housing organizations in 23 cities partnering with Seedco.

Kristian Kofoed

Kristian Kofoed is a Senior Urban Planner with the City of Seattle. With over 14 years of experience in planning, his practice has addressed complex land use and urban design issues, environmental review, and the legislative process. He is also co-chair of the Washington APA's pro-bono community planning program and has convened five planning charrettes for small Washington cities. He is a licensed attorney and freelance art critic. In 2009, Kristian will work with the Dublin City Council as a Fulbright Scholar, exploring how art can be used as an urban regeneration tool.

Ken Bowers

Ken Bowers returned from New York City to Raleigh, his home town, in July of 2006 to take a position as the City's Deputy Planning Director. Among other duties, he is currently functioning as the Department's Project Manager for a far-reaching update to the City's 18-year old Comprehensive Plan.

Prior to joining the Raleigh Department of City Planning, Mr. Bowers worked as a planning consultant and Principal with the firm of Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates in Manhattan, where he specialized in land use planning; downtown, neighborhood, city and regional economic development strategies; and market feasibility studies throughout the Tri-State region of New York/New Jersey/Connecticut and beyond. Mr. Bowers has a Bachelors of Science in Physics from North Carolina State University and a Masters in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He holds a certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners and is also a licensed Professional Planner in the State of New Jersey.

THE SDAT TEAM

Odette Ramos

Ms. Odette T. Ramos, President & CEO, founded Strategic Management Consulting in 2005 and continues to be the lead consultant. Ms. Ramos has numerous years experience in strategic planning; devising and holding to action plans; and starting up organizations. She has started and strengthened neighborhood groups, non-profits, and businesses, and other organizational structures that do not fit the typical molds. She has organizational development and management experience, as well as fund-raising, resource development, marketing, and media planning experience. These, coupled with her skills and experience in community organizing and meeting facilitation, have been channeled to help facilitate processes and sets of actions that enable groups to implement their plans. More importantly, Ms. Ramos adds organizational strengthening to every plan, and works with groups to structure and strengthen themselves as needed.

Her work has primarily been in Baltimore specifically in community building, with particular emphasis on organizational development and strengthening, and organizational strategy experience with unique configurations and transition processes. During her time as President and CEO of Strategic Management Consulting, she facilitated strategic planning processes for several diverse groups; conducted a broad community planning process; performed executive transition services including interim director; helped several groups design and build new organizational structures (both staff and board level); and created board manuals, personnel policies and other items as needed. Ms. Ramos uses an inclusionary approach to her work, ensuring all staff, board, and other stakeholders are involved as much as possible in the process in order to secure buy-in and accountability.

Previous to that, she was the Executive Director and Founder of a unique alliance called the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, which after 7 years is still a strong and successful organization. Before that, she was the Neighborhood Programs Director for the Greater Homewood Community Corporation in northern Baltimore City. Ms. Ramos was named one of Maryland's Top 100 Women by the Daily Record in 2007, and is part of the 2006 class of The GBC LEADERShip. In her volunteer time, Ms. Ramos is involved in her neighborhood association, is the Chair of the Policy Committee for the Greater Baltimore Committee's Emerging Business Council, on the Board of the Goucher College Alumni and Alumnae Association, is on the Board of the Community Mediation Program (Governance and Fund-raising Chair) and on the Board of Unchained Talent. In 2000 she was one of the founders and organizers of the Neighborhood Congress and its chief spokesperson. In 1998, she also helped to start the Village Learning Place and transition the Board of Directors from a "hands on" founding Board to a governing Board. Ms Ramos has also run several political and issue oriented campaigns.

Ms. Ramos graduated with Honors from Goucher College in Baltimore in 1995 majoring in a self-created major called Social Justice. She went on to earn a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Public Administration in 1996 from the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey through the Harold Martin Fellowship. Ms. Ramos was raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico and relocated to Baltimore in 1991. Formerly a resident of Charles Village, she currently resides in the Coldstream-Homestead-Montebello neighborhood in Baltimore City.

AIA CENTER FOR COMMUNITIES DESIGN STAFF

Erin Simmons

Erin Simmons serves as director of Design Assistance at the AIA's Center for Communities by Design. Her work centers around selected initiatives involving community outreach and facilitation to foster leadership opportunities for AIA members, AIA local components, and the public. She focuses on the relationship-building aspects of creating healthy, sustainable, safe, and livable communities. Erin manages the design assistance programs offered through the Center including Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. Erin holds a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design. She earned her BA degree in history from Florida State University. Before joining the AIA Erin was senior architectural historian and historic preservationist with Terracon Consultants, Inc., in Duluth, Ga. Prior to Terracon Consultants, Inc. she served as a historic resource surveyor in Georgia.

Joel Mills

Joel Mills serves as Director of the Center for Communities by Design. He provides process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, he works with AIA components, members and partner organizations to provide technical assistance to communities across the country on sustainability and urban design.

His experience includes community-based technical assistance, process design, facilitation and training across a number of fields including juvenile justice reform, local government, education, family strengthening, civic media and emergency management. During the 1990s, Mr. Mills spent several years supporting international democratization initiatives by providing technical assistance to parliaments, political parties, local governments, civic and international organizations. His scope of work included constitutional design and governing systems, voter and civic education, election monitoring and administration, political party training and campaign strategy, collaborative governance, human rights and civil society capacity building. He maintains active memberships in the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), and the Mid-Atlantic Facilitators Network. He also serves on several public and private boards.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The SDAT Team would like to acknowledge the contributions and hospitality of the following organizations and institutions that contributed to the process:

- City-Works New Orleans
- Dillard University
- University of New Orleans
- Council Member Cynthia Hedge-Morrell
- The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
- The Gentilly Civic Improvement Association
- United Way of New Orleans