

Carolina Planning

Summer 2009 Volume 34



Resilient Cities

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From the Editors

Lately it has become clear that no economy, be it city, regional, or national, can guarantee prosperity or uninterrupted growth. As city after city and country after country faces foreclosures, bankruptcies, and decreasing productivity, we desperately look for systems that can weather the storm, that possess or discover within their borders the assets they need to stay afloat—or to rebuild what they have lost. When we find those cities that have lost only a few jobs or cancelled a small number of projects, we are tempted to believe they have an equilibrium that others lack; but in the end, are there any “resilient cities”, or only resilient people who tenaciously determine what they must maintain and what they must alter in order to adapt to changing circumstances?

This issue of *Carolina Planning* explores a number of lenses through which resiliency can be viewed. Pierre Clavel and Sara O’Neill-Kohl provide a study of a grass-roots movement among factory workers in Chicago in the 1980’s, which recognized the forces of globalization arrayed against domestic industrial jobs, but nevertheless chose to mobilize a network of education and organizing to give workers options other than waiting for the doors to close.

At the same time, on the other side of the world, immigrants to Johannesburg found their own ways of adjusting to the laws and constraints of a legal system that heavily favored landlords, even when the injustices of apartheid gave way to more racial equity. Tanja Winkler writes of the upheaval that came to one inner city neighborhood in Johannesburg and how the vulnerable residents created their own equilibrium in order to carry on life and commerce in a zone that exists almost beyond the law.

Closer to home, five case studies survey cities and towns from the mountains of North Carolina to the Albemarle Sound. In each case, local governments have engaged residents and workers to come up with new uses for abandoned buildings, or new industries for bypassed workforces. Much more than a travelogue through distressed textile or tobacco economies, these snapshots help planners look behind the scenes at the famous success stories of the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis, or the Edenton Mill Village preservation project. In both cases, individuals and organizations made choices and took risks on strategies that enabled new communities to be planted in very traditional cultural settings.

We also hear words of wisdom in interviews with two of planning’s best-known experts: Norman Krumholz and Timothy Beatley. Krumholz, the renowned Cleveland planner and champion of equity planning, shares lessons from his 40-year career and recommends new roles for planners in the 21st century. Beatley, who has

traveled the world in search of innovative place-making techniques, highlights his favorite cities and discusses local and global strategies for building sustainable communities.

Honoring a long-standing UNC-Chapel Hill Department of City and Regional Planning tradition, we publish excerpts from the Best Master’s Project of 2008, in which author Michael Schwartz explores the impacts of bicycle parking facilities on Chicago’s rail system. And, continuing with last year’s new feature, we bring you the latest campus news in our Student Connection.

Finally, in our largest book review section to date, current Masters students recommend essential additions to every practitioner’s summer reading list.

Thank you for your readership and continued support of *Carolina Planning*.

Editors:

Wendy Baucom and Heather Schroeder

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