

Action Strategies for Community Development

In politics one hears “where you stand, depends on where you sit.” The same can be said about strategies for neighborhood development. The answers to fundamental questions like: “Where do we start?”, “What do we want to achieve?” and “How do we get there?”, will be much different depending upon where one is “sitting” in the community development process.

Our starting point is the neighborhood organization - and that makes all the difference in building strong communities.

While the perspective of the book is neighborhood residents and organizations, the approach is to create *critical partnerships* among the many individuals dedicated to community development.

These include

- neighborhood residents
- volunteers and paid staff of community organizations like neighborhood groups, local churches, and Community Development Corporations
- employees of area or region-wide community development organizations like the local affordable housing builders and the Enterprise Foundation
- the staff members of school districts, city planning offices, social service agencies, health care providers, economic development organizations, and other similar groups.

Many people working together are necessary based on a critical appreciation of the importance of neighborhood organizations and local residents.

The stepping off point comes from the inspiring efforts of a low income community in Boston called the Dudley Street Neighborhood. Their story is in a book titled *Streets of Hope*. After many years of work, Dudley Street residents said their strongest tools were: “*the concept of the master plan and the action of aggressive community organizing.*” (Medoff & Sklar, p.265)

This chapter will cover why this is so and what it means in terms of neighborhood planning.

What Is Covered In This Chapter?

The following topics will be addressed below:

- Lessons from a short history of neighborhood planning.
- A definition of “social capital” and why social capital is of critical importance to neighborhoods.
- Values that underlie community development work.
- Three different planning models for community development: Rational Planning, Assets Based Community Development, and Community Organizing. We will talk about what they are, how they work, and in which situations they are used.
- Some long-term guidelines for neighborhood development activity.
- Roles of planners and roles of organizers.



Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

The needed critical partnership for community development involves convergence of the work of many, coming together from neighborhood homes, businesses and churches; local school rooms and offices, government agencies; banks and developers' offices; and many others. This coming together requires an unwavering dedication to neighborhood improvement, social capital,

and empowerment. It also requires an understanding and sympathy for the bureaucratic requirements of job descriptions, demands, and hierarchies. It means creatively engaging the programs of large organizations like local governments and school systems that reach out to communities, such as Community Oriented Policing and Community Schools.

The approach is about openness, communication, creativity, empathy, patience, and flexibility. It is always with one's eyes on the prize of safe, enjoyable, and well-functioning neighborhoods.

A Short History of Planning, or "What Is Past Is Prologue"

The field of urban planning began as neighborhood planning and had its roots in the teeming tenement districts of New York in the 19th Century. The city was a sleepy, mostly rural place in 1800 with only 60,000 residents. As New York changed from a merchant and finance center to an industrial one, it expanded rapidly. There were once farms and cottages in the upper part of Manhattan. By 1860, the population grew to 814,000 and the city entered the 20th century with 1,850,000 residents. (Ford, *Slums & Housing*, pp. 72-79, 140)

Confronted by this rising tide of humanity, property owners greedy for quick wealth prevailed on the New York Commission to subdivide the city into a grid block system of 25' x 100' lots. This was the most flexible and marketable subdivision of land ("the most cheap to build") and few sites were left for public facilities. Into this dense grid were built the housing tenement buildings – often two buildings to a lot, each rising four to seven stories. One floor of the tenement typically contained four small apartments with two rooms (sometimes 12' x 10' and 10' x 6' in size). Each room might contain as many as six persons. Owners were dividing the living spaces into the smallest area capable of holding human life. By 1890, one section of New York had an average density of nearly 1,000 persons per

acre, about 30% greater than in Bombay, India at the time. Tenements often were poorly built and dangerous. By 1900, more than two-thirds of New Yorkers (2.4 million individuals) were living in tenements as defined by law. (Ford, pp. 84, 187, 202)



Lower East Side of Manhattan

Compounding the press of sheer numbers was the virtual absence of sanitary sewer and water facilities. Privies were located in tenement basements and in small open areas between buildings on the small lots. By the close of the century, the City was described as "one elongated cesspool." Regular epidemics of typhus, typhoid, yellow fever, cholera, dysentery, and smallpox broke out. (Ford, p. 130)

In the midst of this squalor, urban planning emerged from the activities of the Settlement House workers. The first U.S. Settlement House was University Settlement established by Stanton Coit in 1886 in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The first Settlement workers were from the middle or wealthier classes, inspired by religious tenets of service, and lived among the people whose lives they worked to improve. (Coit in Pacey, *Readings in the Development of Settlement Work*)

Their goals and circumstances in these neighborhoods drew them into a wide range of community improvement efforts. (Lurie, Encyclopedia of Social Work, p. 690) These included:

- availability of regular education, kindergarten, pre-school, and after-school programs;
- recreation, parks and playgrounds;
- sanitation, potable water, and garbage collection;
- libraries;
- public safety;
- legal aid;
- social services for the elderly, homeless, and the disabled;
- health care;
- job training; and, above all,
- housing reform.

The settlement house workers focused on the neighborhood as a whole, attempting to create a "harmonious whole" by strengthening the family and residents working cooperatively to eliminate local problems. In the course of their work, many Settlement workers recruited and trained local leaders. (Alden in Pacey, p. 56)

Tammany Hall politicians had their hands in the profits of the tenements. They controlled the Department of Buildings, appointment of judges, real estate transactions, and public works projects. While they garnered the political support of tenement residents through small favors, the reformers of the era knew that these politicians "sell out their own people" and "cause the troubles they relieve." (Steffens, Shame of the Cities, pp. 211-212)

Housing reformers focused on the obvious need for effective, government regulations. Scores of studies between 1800 and 1900 by State legislative committees, mayor's committees, charitable and religious organizations, professional associations, and other governmental agencies underscored the abhorrent tenement conditions. Tenement Housing laws were drafted in 1867, 1879, 1887, and 1895, but even when adopted they did little more than prevent conditions from worsening. "Model tenements" projects were built by reformers

but had little impact on over-all conditions because a handful of good dwelling were built while tens of thousands of slum units were raised. (Ford, p. 202) Some of the commentaries seemed to place blame on immigrants for their condition: "congregated armies of foreigners They bring with them destitution, misery, and too often disease." (DeForest & Veiller, The Tenement Housing Problem, p. 72)

It was not until an effective political force coalesced between 1884 and 1901, uniting the housing reformers, Settlement House workers, social service groups, community and religious leaders, that progress was made. Jacob Riis had written local newspaper articles about the plight of tenement residents for 20 years, culminating in the book *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). A series of widely publicized public meetings were organized by the Tenement Housing Committee in 1900 attended by more than 10,000 people. After 15 years of effort to educate the public, the housing reform movement in New York gathered enough strength to break through the obstructions of politicians, bureaucrats, and tenement owners and enact the first truly effective set of regulations, the Housing Reform Act of 1901. (DeForest & Veiller, pp. 110-115, Ford, pp. 123-124)

The description of inhumane conditions and a sound program for improvement were finally joined with a moral and ethical position and effective political organizing to overcome economically and politically entrenched interests. Nearly 100 years of facts and moral suasion had been ineffective absent an organized political force. Virtually all the leaders in the housing reform movement had Settlement House backgrounds. These workers understood that it was not "contrivances [schemes, technological or otherwise] but persons" who will save society. (MacMahon in Pacey, p. 108)

The preceding section described the broad scope of the Settlement House workers' activity. Their methodology very nearly defines neighborhood planning

for community development today. The approach "looks for results . . . to the neighborhood as a whole. Its first business is to survey its field, to find out what needs to be done. Then it seeks to make contacts—to get in touch with all the elements that go to make up the social life of the neighborhood, to organize and correlate the neighborhood forces for good, that conditions may be improved for all." (White in Pacey, p. 92)

In 1909, Benjamin Marsh, the former leader of the Committee on Congestion of Population in New York, published one of the first planning texts, *An Introduction to City Planning*. The book strongly emphasized the need for a community plan and government regulation to achieve the plan's objectives. (Marsh, *An Introduction to City Planning*, New York: Committee on Congestion, 1909)

CONCLUSION

HAVE YOU LEARNED?

First, That Government is the most important factor in securing good living conditions ?

Second, That the Tax Payer has to pay the bill for congestion of population and the evils resulting ?

Third, That efficient administration is necessary to make "Good Government?"

Fourth, That YOUR city cannot secure healthful conditions without a City Plan for the entire city ?

If you have learned these four things,

WILL YOU NOT?

First, Secure a City Plan for your entire city?

Second, Set about getting an efficient administration in your city ?

Marsh, An Introduction to City Planning

The first National Conference on City Planning, also held in 1909, was organized

primarily by leaders of the Settlement House movement. At its modern emergence in the U.S., planning was equated with neighborhood planning and addressed a wide range of issues including schools, housing reform, public health, transportation, expansion of parks and recreation, and more effective public services. (Proceedings of the First National Conference on City Planning, 1909) Over time, this comprehensive approach became more and more fragmented into hundreds of specialties in land use planning, architecture, social services, housing, economic development, and so on. The approach here of neighborhood planning for community development strategically pulls together these threads within the boundaries of the neighborhood and reclaims what was lost nearly 100 years ago.

There is a strong line of connection between the Settlement workers active toward the end of the 19th century and the Dudley Street activists in Boston nearly 100 years later. It always has been "the concept of the master plan and the action of aggressive community organizing" that made the difference.

Social Capital: What It Is and Why It Is Important.

We are all aware of financial capital – wages, wealth, property. But we seldom think of something that is more important than financial capital – the concept of "social capital." Social capital is more important to neighborhoods than financial capital, physical capital, and even human capital, and this section discusses why.

A visitor to the United States in its early years, Alexis de Tocqueville, observed that a key quality of our country was the tendency of people in communities here to get together to solve common problems. This action is what we have come to mean by social capital. (de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*)

Social capital is:

- Located in neighborhood places.
- A broad and dense network of personal relationships based on families, friendships, and acquaintances.
- A large number of formal and informal associations and neighborhood institutions.
- Rooted in family life.
- A high level of involvement in community life.
- Community norms of behavior and values.
- Feelings of trust among neighborhood residents.
- A process of communicating acceptable behavior and values, monitoring actions, and taking action when the norms are violated.
- A shared belief in the neighborhood's capacity to organize itself to take action in relation to needs.
- Connections among neighborhood businesses, churches, schools, and organizations.
- Linkages to extra-neighborhood assets such as teachers, business owners, bankers, elected officials, social service officials, police, court officials, and religious leaders.
- Effective neighborhood action. (See esp. Sampson in Ferguson & Dickens, pp. 253-265)

Social capital is no more complicated than the ordinary actions of neighbors to know one another, help each other, and work to improve the neighborhood.

It all seems obvious, but the vast array of governmental officials, bureaucrats, business and development leaders, and school administrators and teachers often act, either consciously or not, to marginalize neighborhood residents' ability to improve their own communities.

The following sections illustrate ways that social capital has been found to improve neighborhoods and people's lives, as well as how its absence frequently has disastrous consequences.

Public Safety

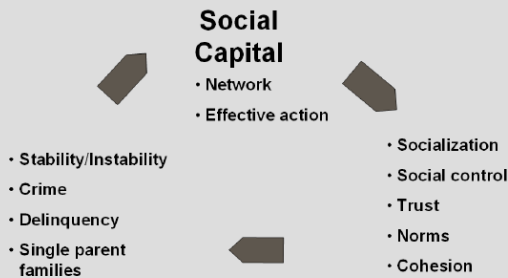
People studying crime and public safety have different views about its causes. Some believe that high rates of crime and fear are based on the break-down of primary institutions (family, church, kinship, neighborhood) and social bonds. Others think that crime and disorder is based on differing values of certain people ("subcultures", e.g. gangs). This is related to the concept of a "culture of poverty." (Lewis, Working Papers, pp. 3-11) (Recent studies found, however, that lower income African-Americans and Latinos in high crime areas actually are less tolerant of crime and deviance than Whites.) (Sampson, p. 254)

Some studies linked crime, delinquency, and disorder with poverty, high mobility, single-parent households, divorce, race, domestic violence, immigration, and neighborhood diversity. These do not look beyond the simple associations to understand the ways by which these conditions have led to problems.

When other studies look at how social capital affects crime and disorder, they found something very interesting. In neighborhoods with characteristics apparently related to public safety problems (e.g. low incomes, single-parent households, high immigration, etc.), but high social capital, the connection was greatly reduced or disappeared. (Sampson, pp. 259-261) In other words, social capital intervened in and reduced the connection between a number of social and economic problems and crime, delinquency and disorder. An important key for action was found.

This perspective also points to something else: that crime and fear of crime reduce social capital by making people fearful, isolating them in their houses, causing them to be distrustful of one another, and making it more difficult to work together.

Community building is building social capital



Social Capital and Public Safety

This view provides the foundation for Community Oriented Policing (COPs) and other techniques to forge partnerships between neighborhood residents and the police in insuring safety. These partnerships attempt to build and strengthen neighborhood social capital. (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, *Community Policing: How to Get Started and Skogan, On the Beat*)

Schools

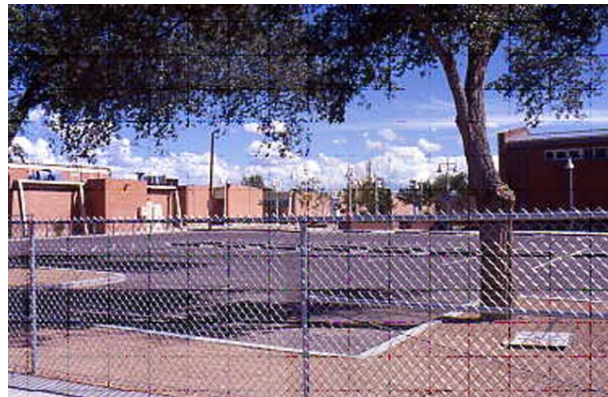
Over time education has been increasingly professionalized (teachers are service providers, and students and parents are passive clients). Responsibility has been delegated by parents and communities to educators, resulting in standardization of what is learned, and separation of schools (physically and socially) from neighborhoods.

Sixty years ago, a perceptive teacher noted: "Many schools are like little islands set apart from the mainland of life by a deep moat of convention and tradition." (Carr in Minzey & LeTarte, *Reforming Public Schools*, p. 63)

In many schools, low achievement, disorder, and high failure rates are the norm. The parents and residents of these neighborhoods are seen by some teachers and school administrators as lacking assets and motivation, perhaps even as threatening to the schools and the students. Schools are kept in isolation from the community. This reinforces negative

stereotypes of low-income people especially, fueling their sense of powerlessness and frustration. In such schools, neighborhood social capital is actually broken down.

Studies of the relationship between community involvement and student success show that many schools are missing important opportunities for success. Anne Henderson has been publicizing this linkage for more than 20 years. (Henderson, *A New Wave of Evidence*, 2002) Her work shows that parental involvement in education has positive outcomes on student achievement. Involvement has been shown to improve attendance, discipline, achievement, self-esteem, graduation and continuation to postsecondary education, and reduce parent-staff conflict. When schools address the needs of students in a family context, students also do better in school



Henderson's work also shows that the more parents are involved in schools, the more they attempt to improve other community conditions, also enhancing student achievement. Her work underscores the importance of social capital in improving the lives of students, parents, and communities.

In the world of education, this partnership has been called "Community Education." Community Education is the concept of service to the entire neighborhood by providing for all the educational needs of all its members. Local schools serve as the catalyst for engaging community resources to address community problems. (Minzey & LeTarte, pp. 52-59)

The Texas Communities Organized for Public Services (COPS) found that “the most common strategies for accumulating social capital did not develop within the . . . schools but rather in . . . neighborhoods.” (Shirley, *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform*, p. 253)

Human Services

The same story can be told about the professionalization of human services. Settlement House workers, now claimed as their own by the social work field, were active in the late 19th Century when little distinction was made between the physical and the human condition of neighborhoods. Afterwards, community service became institutionalized in federal, state, and local agencies especially during the Great Depression. As early as 1922, one Settlement worker wrote: “when the idea [service program], explored and developed . . . by individuals, has made good, the State comes along, appropriates it, and makes it part of its own machine. Voluntary effort has . . . triumphed all along the line when it finds itself extinguished by the State.” (Carruthers in Pacey, p. 151)



Over time, humans became categorized and translated into an almost bewildering number of needs. Helping one another became a job. Neighbors were reduced to “statistics” and categorized as clients. Social services now are fragmented, crisis oriented, suffering from insufficient funding, and their effectiveness is frequently questioned. John McKnight, one of the leaders in social change, wrote: “The power to label people deficient and declare them

in need is the basic tool of . . . oppression.” (McKnight, p. 16)

Just as in the fields of public safety and education, those in human services began to realize the importance of social capital and to see people as part of place-based communities. Studies showed that family, friends, and neighbors were the primary sources for those seeking and receiving help. (Froland, etc., *Helping Networks*, p. 17) These “informal care-givers” were found to be as helpful, or more helpful, than professionals. Informal helping is voluntary, spontaneous, based on the individual, sensitive to personal preferences, flexible, based on self-reliance, reciprocal, and simply perceived as part of every day life. (Froland, pp. 21-26, 35)

The most effective informal helping occurred in social networks that featured:

- diversity,
- quality,
- interconnectedness,
- formal and informal organizations
- supportive, communicated, and enforced traditions, norms of behavior, attitudes, and
- neighborhood stability. (Froland, pp. 40-41, 137-149)



A distinct approach to human service work grew up around informal helping networks and what are called “ecosystem” approaches. (Meyer & Mattaini, in Mattaini,

The Foundations of Social Work Practice, 1999, pp. 3-19) The more traditional goals of individual and family well being were expanded to community development. The main task for human service workers became to identify and foster community helping networks, working with them, supporting and strengthening them.

Kretzman and McKnight take a different approach that arrives at this place from a different starting point - the neighborhood. Their Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) approach started with community residents, identifying their individual and organizational resources, and building from there. This method is covered below in this chapter and in the chapter on neighborhood based human services.

Economic Development

The United States went through a massive economic restructuring starting in about 1970. While more than 40% of all jobs at the start of the 1970s were lost during that decade, the economy grew from about 70 million jobs to 90 million in the same period. (USDOL, Office of Secy, The "New Economy", <http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/flsa/report-neweconomy>) Older cities like Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis lost more than half of their manufacturing jobs during the past three decades and employment shifted from cities to suburbs.

Incomes of the bottom 1/5th of households have fallen while those of the top 1/5th have increased rapidly. The wages of non-supervisory workers dropped nearly 20% between from 1970 to 1990. ("Spiraling Down: The Decline of Real Wages", *Dollars and Sense*, April 1992) The percentage of year-round workers paid low wages increased by 50%, to nearly 20% of all workers, just from 1979 to 1990. The percentage of families with children in poverty increased by more than 30% during this period. (US Bureau of the Census, "Workers with Low Wages: 1964 to 1990", 1992; US Bureau of the Census, "Trends in Relative Income: 1964 to 1989", 1991; Medoff & Sklar, p. 192)

In all, the U.S. workforce has become more polarized by income and resources. Jobs with the greatest growth in total numbers are those paid the lowest wages and with the least claim to benefits – service workers, retail sales, cashiers, clerks, janitors and cleaning people, nursing aides, food counter workers. (Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, p. 71)



The "Creative Class" of high-tech workers, business managers, financiers, engineers, lawyers, analysts, designers and so on, has doubled in size and has prospered. (Florida, pp. 68-70, 72-77)

In the course of the massive social dislocation produced by economic change, social capital has been pulled apart, left in shambles in many low income neighborhoods, and sometimes rebuilt in other places.

In this context, some economists have concluded that by asking people "to consider the economic landscape from a social perspective, new appreciation of market power and opportunities . . . emerge." (Gittell & Thompson, in Saegert, etc., *Social Capital and Poor Communities*, p. 120)

Social capital can be found to foster neighborhood economic development in many ways. These include:

- securing financing;
- hiring, retaining, and training good employees;
- identifying markets;
- finding suitable and affordable facilities;
- obtaining technical assistance related to accounting, business law, analysis, marketing, and management; and

- gaining support from local government including public safety, city services, and infrastructure. (Gittel & Thompson in Saegert, pp. 115-135; Dickens in Ferguson and Dickens, esp. pp. 404-423)

By the last tally, there were more than 3,000 Community Development Corporations (CDC) in the U.S. (Natl. Cong. For Com Ec. Dev., *Coming of Age*, 1999) These organizations are producing houses and jobs and providing social services in an evolving comprehensive approach to neighborhood development. CDCs provide good examples of how social capital can be drawn upon and built up by neighborhood economic development activities.



In summary, social capital has been found to:

- create and sustain neighborhood public safety,
- foster educational success,
- meet human service needs, and
- foster economic development.

Neighborhood planning focused on building social capital shows how these efforts can be pulled together in a place; provides a foundation for neighborhood planning by identifying the starting point of community development; illuminates how neighborhoods can make thoughtful decisions about approaching community development; describes where neighborhoods begin these efforts; and how

articulates how planners and other agency staff members may help neighborhood efforts.

Back to Basics: Values and Vision

Personal values and the community's vision are the bedrock upon which all neighborhood development is built, guiding strategies and programs. They are the fundamental litmus test against which actions should be reviewed.

Without leadership that embodies personal values that are consistent with community development, programs are destined to lose their way. What are these values? An all-inclusive list is not possible, but these values that are shared by different religious communities – Muslim, Christian, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist. They are held by people who do not have theistic convictions such as those in the Society for Ethical Culture. Quite simply, they include humility, love, service (good works), selflessness, respect for community, reverence for life, and include living one's life according to these principles.

Contemporary community development is rooted in scriptural values. Notably, these include the Interfaith coalitions supported by Industrial Areas Foundation and Gamelias Foundation organizers. Base Ecclesial Community (BEC) organizing is mostly seen in Latin America but is being used in Latino neighborhoods in the U.S. presently. (Hanna and Robinson, pp. 172-177)

The second critical foundation of community development is long term vision for the future. A vision statement is a description of what the community will be like in the long-term (such as 20 to 25 years), when the community has been successful in its efforts. The vision is comprehensive in scope and covers topics such as young people's lives, education, housing, people who are challenged by drug and alcohol dependency, senior citizens, and so on. Each of the parts should be a clear and compelling expression of the community's love and respect for one another and its

hopes for the future. As a whole, it is a shining expression of faith and a compass that directs activities.

The Means of Community Development

Our values and vision guide us forward. The end product of what should be created, supported, expanded is neighborhood social capital. The examples above related to Public Safety, Education, Human Services, and Economic Development all point to the critical importance of good social capital to community development.

This effort is not so simple, because underlying all the efforts to improve schools, build affordable housing, provide alternatives to gangs and drugs for young people, and so on, is the matter of power. Individuals, groups, and agencies that share the same objectives often fight over who has the authority to undertake the work. Social capital is power and it should reside, in large measure, within the neighborhood.

Three Paths of Action

The approaches to improving the neighborhood can be reduced to the following approaches:

- Rational Planning,
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), and
- Community Organizing.

The table below summarizes the key differences among these.

		Resources	
		Local	External
Control	Local	"Assets Based Community Development"	Community Organizing
	External		Rational Planning

Rational Planning, by and large, assumes that external resources will be used to improve the community and control over the process and programs is outside the neighborhood.

Assets Based Community Development, in contrast, emphasizes mobilizing local resources to improve the community, carrying out this work locally.

Community Organizing takes a different approach: the process is controlled within the neighborhood, but it is focused on bringing external resources to bear on community problems.

Community organizations and planners should be familiar with all of these approaches. Each can be, and should be, used depending on the circumstances, as will be addressed below. Let's move now to a review of each community development approaches: their natures, assumptions, strengths and shortcomings.

Rational Planning Model

Rational planning is the de-facto standard for government agencies. The uses to which this approach is applied are quite large. All the following types of plans use the basic elements of Rational Planning and share many of the underlying assumptions:

- neighborhood,
- comprehensive,
- corridor and center,
- transportation,
- human service,
- housing,
- educational plans and so on.

Modifications of the Rational Planning model to address some of its shortcomings are called “equity” planning and “consensus building”, also discussed below.

It is unfortunate that this approach is called “rational” or “scientific” planning because it implies that those who disagree with its outcomes are irrational or unscientific. Rational findings and recommendations can be quite different, for example, for rental property owners and for their tenants.

There are several potential biases inherent in Rational Planning that must be addressed for it to achieve legitimacy. In the most basic way, the plan process assumes that everyone affected by the plan, the “stakeholders” brought into the planning process, are equally equipped in the tools of “rational” analysis: verbal expression, literacy, facility using socio-economic data and maps, and so on. It is unethical to limit certain people’s participation in the planning process based on these preconditions and doing so short-changes the educational function of neighborhood planning.

The mere effort, the mere intention to plan, is liberating individually and for the neighborhood. Withholding the opportunity to plan for the neighborhood may be the greatest way for those in power to sustain powerlessness, inequality, and poor conditions.



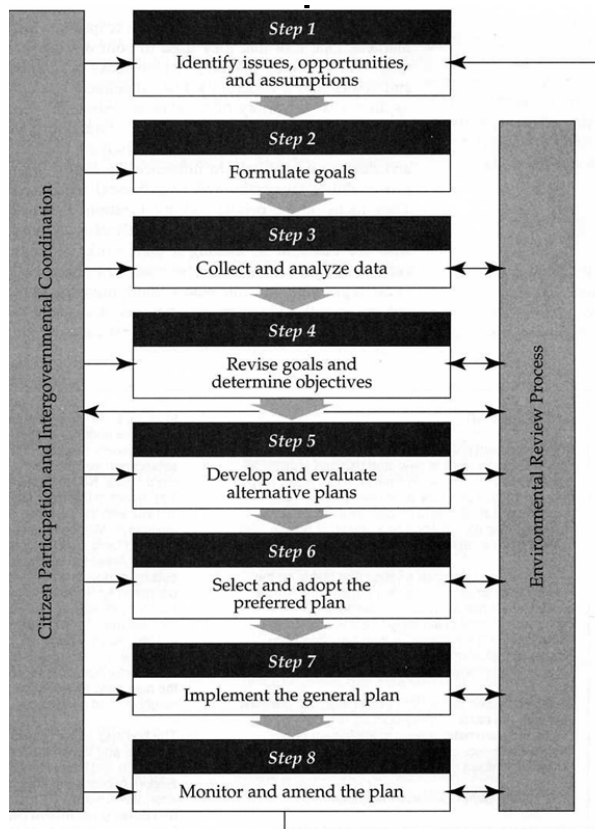
“Couldn’t people see what he had done? Why weren’t they grateful?”

Caro on Robert Moses in *The Power Broker*

A plan sometimes, however, can be worse than no plan at all if it embodies, legitimates, and sustains the status quo of inequality and unacceptable human and physical conditions. The Rational Planning led to this outcome in center city urban renewal of the 1950s and 1960s and in many of Robert Moses’ projects in New York City. This section includes preconditions suggested for neighborhood organizations to meet when participating in a Rational Planning process.

Elements of Rational Planning

The handbook of planning, *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, contains the following chart of the Rational Planning process. (Hoch in So, pp. 23-24) This outline is from the State of California and therefore contains greater emphasis on environmental review than other governments might include.



Rational Planning Process

Step 1. At the very start, the planning process needs to be framed broadly. *What are the concerns that led to beginning the plan and brought people together to work on it? What are the starting ideas about how the conditions have been changing over time, why this is happening, and what will result if the trend continues? What can be done to improve the situation? What are the staffing and organizational commitments, both within and outside the planning process, to improve the community? What are the ground rules of the planning process?*

Step 2. At this step, the planning group identifies the first set of long-term goals to be achieved through the planning process and its implementation. A goal is a description of the desired condition of the community when the efforts have been successful. Setting goals can be quite confusing because people often confuse the actions needed to achieve a good result, with the result itself. It is important to keep people focused on the goal as an outcome.

Step 3. In this step, plan participants first identify the actual conditions in the community in relation to the goals first. *(What are the barriers to overcome? What are the community's strengths?)* The information to be collected is informed by the goals. Only after this background data has been collected and discussed do participants consider why the unacceptable conditions exist (cause and effect).

Step 4. As result of the steps above, people are better informed about both their community, the important local trends, and what might be causing the problems. It is helpful at this point to revisit the goals, state them more clearly, drop some, and add others. The planning efforts also need to be more specific, going beyond the general goals to what specifically is intended to be accomplished as objectives of the plan. Objectives are written in relation to each of the goals.

Steps 5 and 6. Planning groups tend to move between these two steps until they reach a final agreement. The goals and objectives are translated here into sets of actions, or strategies, to reach them. The key questions to be answered at this stage are: *What broadly stated set of actions will be taken? Who will take the action? Whom or what will be affected?* Usually there will be alternative approaches. In fact, a variety of suggestions is encouraged. Once the planning group is satisfied that they have surfaced, a reasonably complete number of good ideas, it moves on to the next task. For each of the goals and related objectives, the different strategies are reviewed and evaluated critically. As a result of this process, the list of action strategies is narrowed and polished to identify those most likely to be effective. This set of strategies and objectives and the record of the work conducted to this point becomes the plan.

Step 7. At this point, the strategies in the adopted plan are translated into specific programs and projects that begin to be implemented. It is a good idea to keep implementation as a step in the planning process. Normally, the agency

responsible for planning, let's say the Planning Department, has only limited authority for carrying out plan strategies, generally just those involving land use and zoning. Implementation can break down at this stage unless the group responsible for the plan continues its work through the implementation phase that necessarily involves different agencies and organizations.

Step 8. All good Rational Planning models loop back on themselves by monitoring and evaluating implementation activities and adjusting the course if need be. A number of options are available to the planning group. The strategies and programs can be sound, but the implementation weak. This leads to possible changes in management efforts, staffing, or placement of the program in the governmental structure. Sometimes the program does not work well and another approach is needed. Sometimes the general strategy needs to be reconsidered. The planning group should be open to all of these possibilities. On occasion the changes needed rise to the importance of amending the plan itself.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Rational Planning Method; or the "Faith Can Move Mountains" Problem

It is very important for neighborhood associations to be careful in terms of their involvement in the Rational Planning approach. Some beginning thoughts related to its possible good and bad qualities and condition-setting for involvement are critical. Let's start with the possible snares for community groups.

- *Inherent bias.* A serious consideration is that the Rational Planning approach, in and of its nature, favors a participant more comfortable with speaking in public, writing and reading, and analyzing data. In other words, it favors those with a higher level of education, background in the planning subject, and greater comfort with the public process of planning. It was necessary for my father to stop his formal education after 5th grade and work to support

the family. Was he a bright and competent individual? Yes. Would he be comfortable in a Rational Planning group? Not unless the group was run in a particularly sensitive way, which is very unlikely to occur

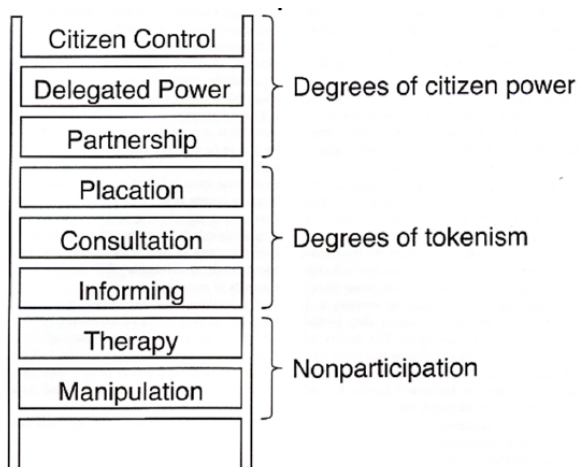
If carried out in the usual fashion, the Rational Planning process can marginalize some of its participants and even reinforce participants' sense of powerlessness and lack of self-worth. It happens over and over, that the group which begins the planning process gets smaller over time, as those who are uncomfortable with the approach lose interest and withdraw. Those "still standing" at the end of the process have a great deal more control over the plan than the group which began.

- *Who is in the room?* A critical issue at the very start is which organizations / groups have been invited to participate, how many representatives for the different points of view are included, and whether or not residents of the neighborhood have sufficient representation to ensure that their concerns and suggestions will be reflected in the final plan. At the start of every Rational Planning process, someone decides who will be invited into the room. Often these decisions are made consciously to control the outcome of the planning effort. Neighborhood organizations must ensure that their interests are protected through the very composition of the planning group.
- *How will decisions be made?* The beginning rules about whether decisions will be made through majority votes or through consensus, or near consensus, also are important. When there is a strong difference of opinion with a planning group and decisions are made by majority vote, adoption of the plan does not resolve the differences and conflict is moved into the implementation phase. On the other hand, requiring consensus when there may be strong differences of interest means that important concerns are

compromised away or simply dropped and the resulting plan may be limited in effectiveness.

The Rational Planning approach of "consensus building" attempts to address these concerns by (a) ensuring that all interests are represented in the planning process, (b) all are informed, equally "empowered" in the process, with truthful communication encouraged, and (c) common ground is sought among people with different interests. This approach improves the Rational Planning model but does not overcome situations where groups and interests are fundamentally at odds.

- *Types of citizen participation.* Arnstein carefully examined the ways that government involved neighborhood residents in the Model Cities programs. She produced the following informative "ladder" of citizen participation. (Arnstein, "A ladder of citizen participation" in JAPA, July 1969, pp. 216-224)



Ladder of Citizen Participation

The bottom two rungs, Therapy and Manipulation, are classified by Arnstein as non-participation. Citizens are asked to be involved in order to gain legitimacy for what the government or other vested interests want to do, make them feel better about the situation that they have not actually affected. The next

two levels - Informing and Consultation – involve "one way" communication from the professional staff to the residents, passive data collection by the professionals, and participation in the process without true access to staff resources to empower citizens.

Placation involves small improvements or concessions by the sponsoring agency. While certainly not ideal, placation is better than nothing at all.

The last three ladder levels, Partnership, Decentralization, and Citizen Control, contain true citizen participation. Power is shared between government agencies and neighborhood organizations. To differing degrees, the power to control a local program is either extended in a conditional and legalistic way or else held by the community organization. This tends to occur when the organization has an independent source of power (e.g. membership, resources, land).

While community involvement in the middle rungs of the ladder is acceptable, the formation of social capital most readily occurs at the top levels of engagement. Neighborhood organizations need to be aware of the Rational Planning process role provided for them in the ladder of citizen participation.

- *Does rational planning truly reflect the way change takes place?* This intellectual approach of Goal » Plan » Program » Evaluation » ↓ makes some basic assumptions that can be called into question. It assumes that members of the planning group, especially the professional staff leading the effort, have the technical expertise to know the realistic range of possible actions that can be taken to solve the problems. It also assumes that resources, usually either financial or staff, that can be used to correct a problem are known and likely to be available.

Often this is not the situation, unfortunately, what I call the "Can Faith Move Mountains?" problem. Frequently, within a government agency, the individuals who are best-informed about governmental activities and the availability of resources simply are not involved in the planning process. Possibilities are constrained by the knowledge of the professional staff members guiding the process.

On a more fundamental level, one may not know whether something is possible until it is tried. New approaches are as much a product of faith and commitment as they are of rational decision making, and sometimes rational decision-making stands in the way of progress. The actual effort to try a new program creates the circumstances that affect whether it will be successful, unsuccessful, or somewhere in between. This decision making framework is evolutionary, process-oriented, and essentially different than Rational Planning. How many good ideas have never been tried because the Rational Planning method has little room for faith to move mountains?

Another way to view this is considering planning as education. Planning can be a way for neighborhood residents to learn more about their community, about the problems they face, and about the actions that can be taken to improve their lives. This type of education evolves, builds on itself, and is informed by action. Empowerment and self-worth underlie a process that is especially useful to those who have more to gain through empowerment, yet one wonders whether the constraints of the Rational Planning approach discourage this process from unfolding.

- *Government fragmentation.* Rational Planning assumes that once the plan has been adopted, governmental resources, regulations, and staff activities will be employed to carry it out. In fact, the typical fragmentation in the structure of government makes this uncertain. The

agency producing the plan may not be the agency responsible for the programs to implement it. Those who are asked to implement may not be responsible to the agency conducting the plan and they may be unwilling to do so. Individuals at a higher organization level who can compel action may be too busy or too disinterested to cause it to take place, or they may actually oppose its implementation.

In Albuquerque, the district planning process was set up so that the City Councilors would participate in it and help ensure the plan's adoption and implementation. The Chief Administrative Officer, however, who was appointed by the Mayor, opposed the plans simply because they were less dependent on the mayor to implement them. This led to a very bumpy road and resulted in the ultimate demise of the program.

- *Objectivity.* Another set of assumptions in the Rational Planning approach is that the professional planner managing the process brings expertise to bear on the problem and operates in a detached and objective manner. The objectivity of the professional planner has come under question however. Davidoff said that all planners come from certain class backgrounds, all decisions have political meaning, and that it would be better to articulate values rather than assume that planners are "value-neutral."
- *What is the true purpose of community planning?* The end product of the Rational Planning process is the achievement of consensus-based outcomes, such as additional units of affordable housing, more individuals with jobs, a greater number of business start-ups, and so on.

In a more fundamental way, the real way to evaluate the planning effort is not so much the affordable housing units or the jobs, but the impacts on neighborhood social capital. The products of planning should be

understood as means toward this end. When thought of in this way, one can question whether the planner as the key actor in the process is appropriate. *One can ask, whether social capital was increased by relying upon government agencies to achieve the plan's objectives?* Some other appropriate questions include the following. Did the process result in better-informed residents and their increased capability to make life better? *Did the Rational Planning process strengthen organizations within the neighborhood? Did it increase local organizations' effectiveness in solving local problems? Did it produce local organizations that were better connected to key public and private sector decision makers?*

Reasons to participate in the Rational Planning process.

The discussion above seems to weigh in heavily in terms of the problems of Rational Planning. There are a number of reasons why Rational Planning is helpful and should not be dismissed out of hand.

First and foremost, in general what is worse than Rational Planning is no planning. The true goal of disempowering neighborhoods is most blatantly seen in the desire by some to totally eliminate neighborhood-level and, in fact, all planning. Those with position and economic power often operate at ease behind closed doors. Despite the caveats presented above, the Rational Planning process does assume that all stakeholders, including neighborhood residents and local businesses, have a legitimate role in charting the future.

Second, when Rational Planning adopts the "equity planning" approach it addresses issues of adequate housing, health and human services, economic well-being, and so on from the viewpoint of enlarging the opportunities of those with few resources. (Krumholz & Forester, Making Equity Planning Work) Improving the material condition of those with little is a laudable goal in spite of the fact that it does not go far enough in terms of building social capital.

Preconditions for Rational Planning:

- Neighborhood organizations are stable, have sound leadership, and a reasonably large and active membership.
- Neighborhood organization has independent access to technical assistance. This function may be performed by the organization's staff, students and faculty members from a local university, or capable volunteers.
- From the onset, the Rational Planning process adopts the "equity planning" approach, intending to improve the lives and conditions of those with few resources in the neighborhood.
- Groups and individuals invited to participate in the process and the decision-making rules are carefully considered to address the neighborhood's legitimate concerns and suggestions, and ensure their inclusion in the final plan.
- The neighborhood organization is committed to meet independently to monitor the planning process and develop strategies for participating in the effort.
- The plan should have integrity in the form of recognized legitimacy by elected and appointed officials at the top levels of government.
- The planning process engages government agencies that control programs important to neighborhood residents. These agencies are committed to implement the plan.
- The planning process covers implementation, issues such as how recommendations will be delegated to different agencies. Members of the planning group stay involved in monitoring how the plan is carried out.
- The neighborhood organization is committed to building local social capital through the Rational Planning process. Neighborhood involvement is never at the bottom of Arnstein ladder of citizen participation.
- The planning process is used consciously as a way for residents to learn and to be empowered.

Third, the model reflects the reality that improving neighborhood conditions sometimes involves participating in a complicated technical/political process to gain access to resources external to the neighborhood.

Decision-making for access to the resources of local government requires knowledge of the legislative, budgetary, and implementation processes. The means of expressing program reform is cast in technical terms by government. Identifying plan strategies and programs entails knowledge of a variety of similar projects in other places with objectives in mind. The professional planner in the Rational Planning process, even with limited knowledge and authority, can help neighborhood residents negotiate this unfamiliar and challenging path.

Lastly, an adopted plan that reflects the interest of neighborhood residents is itself a touch stone for future decisions. When the governing body is asked to review a development decision, neighborhood residents can point to the plan and seek a result that is compatible with it. When a city or county department is crafting its annual budget, the plan can be used to support funding to implement the plan's recommendations. A good plan can guide decisions to improve the neighborhood.

In the final analysis, should neighborhood associations participate in Rational Planning processes? The answer is yes, under well-considered conditions. The sidebar lays out issues the neighborhood organization should consider in making this decision. The neighborhood should use the Rational Planning process, rather than be used by it.

Perhaps the best way to end the discussion of Rational Planning, and to put the approach in perspective, is simply to quote from *Streets of Hope* that "The heart is far more important than the head." (Medoff & Sklar, p. 249)

Assets Based Community Development

Assets Based Community Development, or ABCD, is at the opposite end of the spectrum from Rational Planning. It focuses, first and foremost, on the *capacities* of neighborhood residents, businesses, and groups. The frame for neighborhood planning shifts from the agency to the community and its residents become the agents of action.

There is a clear voice of outrage in the writings of ABCDs originators, John Kretzman and John McKnight, regarding treatment of low income people by the professional care-givers. This voice is heard clearly in McKnight's *The Careless Society: The Community and Its Counterfeits* (1995) and it contains a message about Rational Planning, not directly but by inference.

McKnight believes that one of the central problems in our society is that social capital has been damaged by the professionalization of caring in planning and service systems. Neighborhoods and their residents are defined as "in need", "deficient", and "problems" to be solved. He offers the following monologue by the professional helper: "As *you* are the problem, the assumption is that *I*, the professional servicer, *am the answer*. *You* are not the answer. *Your peers* are not the answer. *The political, social, and economic environment* is not the answer." (McKnight, p. 46). The survival of the professional helper depends upon the continuance of need and deficiency. The ascendancy of professional problem-solving undermines the capacities of the "primary structures of society: family, neighborhood, church/synagogue, ethnic groups, (and) voluntary association." (McKnight, p. 20) McKnight says that: "The most significant development transforming America since World War II has been the growth of a powerful service economy and its pervasive serving institutions." (McKnight, p. x)

McKnight's voice has an almost biblical anger about the dehumanization inherent in the transformation of a fully formed person

into client, but this also his weakness. He pays little attention to the economic and political conditions underlying the great social disruption of America's cities from the war to the present. The service economy neither *created* these conditions, nor *formed itself* in relation to them.

It is better to explore a different perspective on the dynamics of our private economy. The great dynamic engine of U.S. capitalism expands, transforms, and casts aside. Although the private economy is a social construction, the human consequences of its functions, positive and negative, are largely by-products. The great economic transformations occur in a particular place and are husbanded by an "apparatus of interlocking pro-growth associations and governmental units" called a "growth machine." (Logan & Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, p. 32) This affiliation acts to shift the cost of growth to other areas and to other individuals in their own locations, while capturing as much of the gain as possible. The authors write that this activity results in "exploiting virtually every institution in our political, economic, and cultural systems," and through its actions, disenfranchises others (Logan & Molotch, pp. 34, 63).

Kretzman and McKnight really are treading onto the mechanism of power in society. In localities, what passes as a debate about specifics like whether and where a new road will be built or the charges for new development, is actually a contest about power that is far more important than the specific issue. Business leaders and developers know this. Their narrow self-interest leads them to ameliorate some of society's worst problems, but they resist transferring power to community and neighborhood organizations because this ultimately infringes their scope of action.

Powerful business leaders penetrate politics at national, state, and local levels through their involvement with political campaign and continual monitoring and lobbying of government decision-makers. Many elected officials, in turn, adopt the growth machine's proprietary interest in power

and control and are reluctant to strengthen local organizations. This attitude pervades the planning and social service activities that are responsible to elected officials ultimately.

The world, of course, is more complex. In our society personal power is a psychological defense against loss of position, status, and wealth. This compounds the economic self-interest discussed above.

Why, though, are we increasingly removed from engagement in community and the support that comes from friendships and true caring? And why is it that planners and social service professionals do not move first to engage and empower local citizens? To simply lay this at the feet of social service and planning professionals is not appropriate.

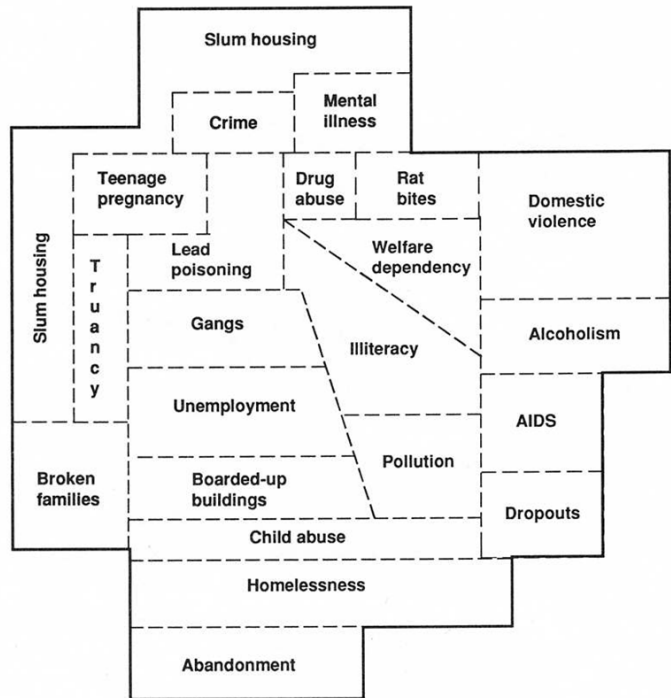
McKnight speaks movingly and expansively about the necessity to “engage in a new struggle to reinvent America. . . . We must reallocate the *power, authority, and legitimacy* that have been stolen by the great institutions of our society . . . that thrive on the dependency of the American people.” (McKnight0, p. 100)

The strength of Kretzman and McKnight’s approach is that it points us to what can be done to rebuild neighborhood social capital. The remainder of this section introduces their guidance for how this can be done.

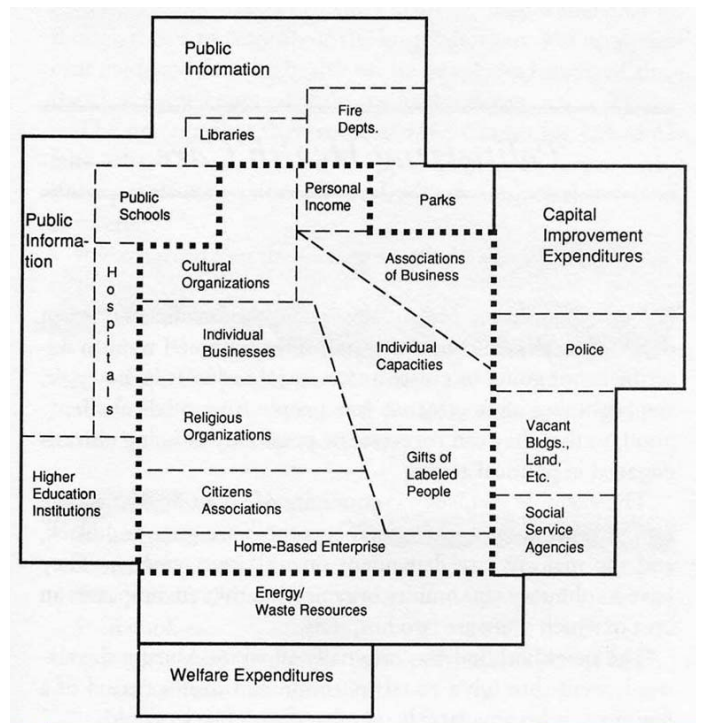
Beginning Perspectives: Neighborhoods of Needs or Neighborhoods of Assets

The figure above right represents Kretzman and McKnight’s depiction of neighborhoods often as seen by the professional planner or service provider, as full of people in need.

The theory of ABCD uses as a starting point the concept that the neighborhood, no matter what its economic status, is full of assets, as shown in the second figure at right, which can be marshaled to improve community life.

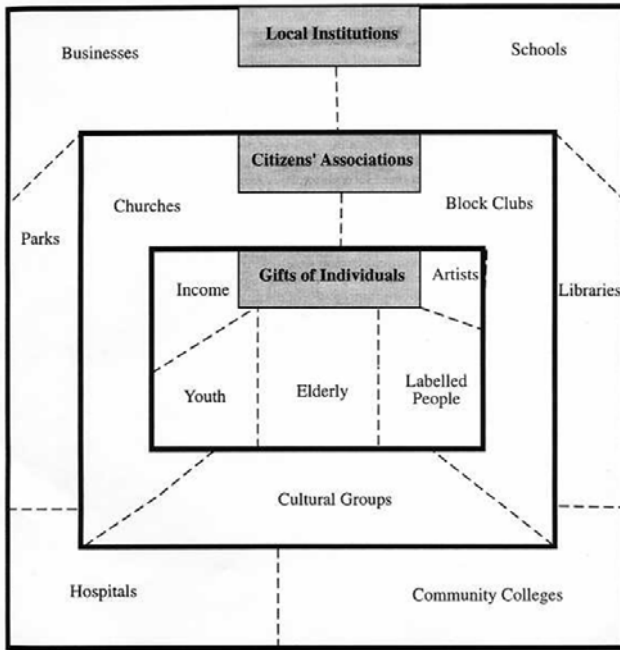


Neighborhoods Viewed as Full of Problems



Neighborhoods as Full of Assets

The first step in the ABCD approach is to identify and locate the neighborhood’s local abilities, capacities, and assets. The idea is to cast a wide net in terms of neighborhood capabilities and is represented from the following chart from their book, *Building Communities From the Inside Out*.



Identifying Neighborhood Residents' Assets

The work starts with identifying neighborhood residents' capabilities in the form of personal skills, community work, and entrepreneurial interests and experience. This inventory is assembled through a local survey.

Through this organized effort, Assets Based Community Development rebuilds real relationships and celebrates the value of each neighborhood resident.

The checklist below represents a typical form to use to collect information about personal skills and community organizational abilities.

The check list makes it clear that everyone has capabilities they can offer others in the community. These might include:

- caring for the elderly and sick;
- office work like typing, word processing, or bookkeeping;
- home repairs and construction skills;
- routine building maintenance;
- food preparation;
- child care;
- security;
- teaching subjects like reading and math;
- transporting people; and
- playing an instrument and singing even.

Kretzman and McKnight define three types of local assets:

- Residents of the neighborhood especially including those who are ordinarily seen as "in need" rather than as valuable members of the community. These include young people, those with disabilities, the elderly, low income people, and those on welfare.
- Local formal and informal organizations, associations, smaller groups, and small businesses in the neighborhoods such as churches, book clubs, sports teams and recreational clubs, service organizations, self-help groups, and informal child care circles of friends.
- The neighborhood-located facilities of city, state, and national organizations such as medical centers, bank branches, libraries, schools, university facilities, and parks, including public and private agencies, and not-for-profit groups.

Capacity Inventory

Hello. I'm with (local organization's name). We're talking to local people about their skills. With this information, we hope to help people contribute to improving the neighborhood, find jobs or start businesses. May I ask you some questions about your skills and abilities?

Part I—Skills Information

Now I'm going to read to you a list of skills. It's an extensive list, so I hope you'll bear with me. I'll read the skills and you just say "yes" whenever we get to one you have.

We are interested in all your skills and abilities. They may have been learned through experience in the home or with your family. They may be skills you've learned at church or in the community. They may also be skills you have learned on the job.

Health

Caring for the Elderly _____

Caring for the Mentally Ill _____

Caring for the Sick _____

Caring for the Physically Disabled or Developmentally Disabled _____

(If yes answered to items 1, 2, 3 or 4, ask the following:)

Example of Assets Inventory

Part II—Community Skills

Have you ever organized or participated in any of the following community activities? (Place check mark if yes)

Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts	_____
Church Fundraisers	_____
Bingo	_____
School-Parent Associations	_____
Sports Teams	_____
Camp Trips for Kids	_____
Field Trips	_____
Political Campaigns	_____
Block Clubs	_____
Community Groups	_____

Example of Assets Inventory

The above community skills inventory covers past informal helping activities in group settings. The inventory calls to mind past neighborhood engagement that could form the basis of future activities if it were facilitated locally.

At a third level, the personal inventory focuses on what skills and knowledge the individual holds that might be translated into small scale economic activity. Micro-lending programs (see Chapter * on economic development) begin with just this premise: that almost everyone has skills and interests around which make it possible to earn an income and build a business.

There are a number of examples of forms that can be used to collect such information. Besides *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (shown in the inserts above), other ABCD workbooks are useful, including:

- *A Guide to Capacity Inventories: Mobilizing the Community Skills of Local Residents* and
- *A Guide to Mapping and Mobilizing the Economic Capacities of Local Residents*.

The Assets Based Community Development Institute listed at the end of this chapter is a good source for a variety of helpful publications and advice.

Experience of groups collecting the inventory has shown that an exhaustive check-list,

trying to cover every possible asset, is difficult to use. There is a trade-off between the creativity that is fed by an expansive approach and the difficulty of undertaking it. It is a best to have some general ideas of where the community development effort is heading and let those ideas guide the creation of the form. Approaching the survey in this way makes it easier to put the information to good use after it has been collected.



Kretzman and McKnight

How to conduct the inventory. There are several ways that this information can be obtained, including the following.

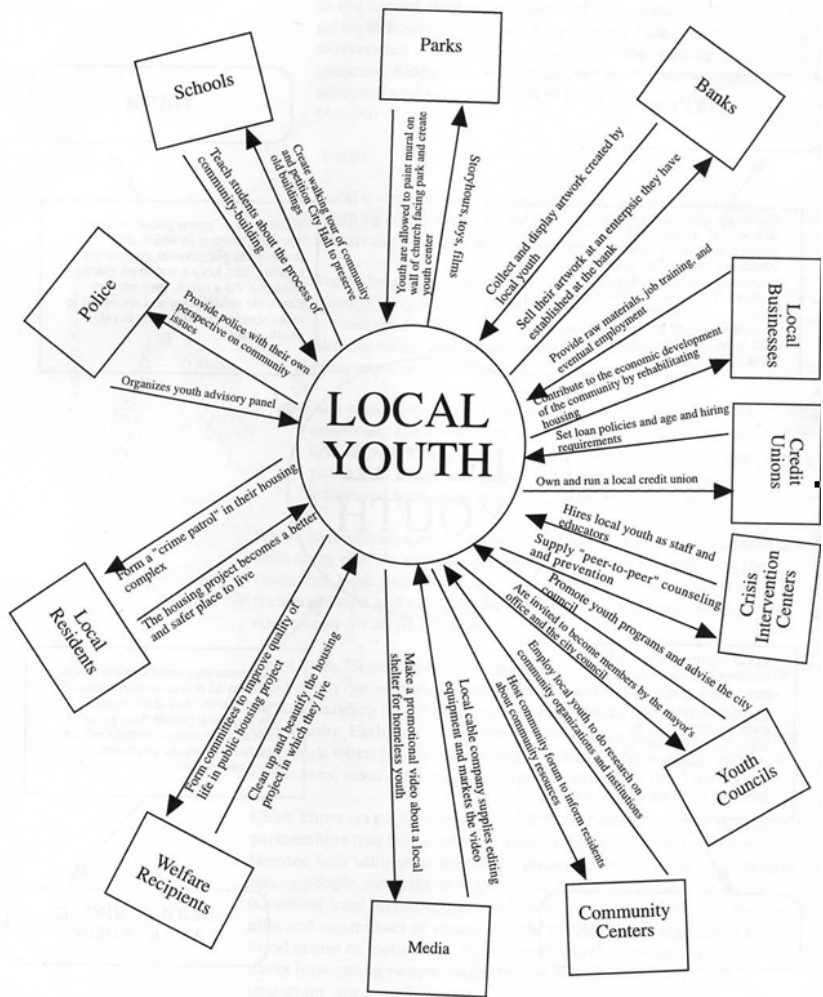
- Passing out the form at meetings of neighborhood groups after enlisting the support of the leadership of the organization for the effort.

- Conducting the inventory face-to-face (peer-to-peer) at a person's home. It may be important to have two people conduct the survey and have a statement of support from a known neighborhood organization or church group.
- Carrying out the inventory at a public party held for the community.
- Collecting the information in a telephone interview or on a self-completed form. A "reverse directory" of telephone numbers by street address can be helpful with this approach, as it obtaining the names and telephone numbers of organization members. These methods are more impersonal and are therefore less compatible with the basic objective of making personal connections.

There is no "right" answer to how this should be done. It depends on what the organization is attempting to accomplish and the extent of its personal and financial resources. Because the process of conducting this inventory is a critical part of the Asset Based Community Development process, it is important not to rely on volunteers from the outside to collect the information. Often the first contact of local resident with the ABCD effort and a good initial impression is vital. The community group should immerse itself in the process and the information obtained.

The attached graph provides a representative example of the connections identified between young people and other neighborhood residents, organizations, and institutions

Chart Three: One-on-One Relationships



Power of Youth: Reciprocal Relationships

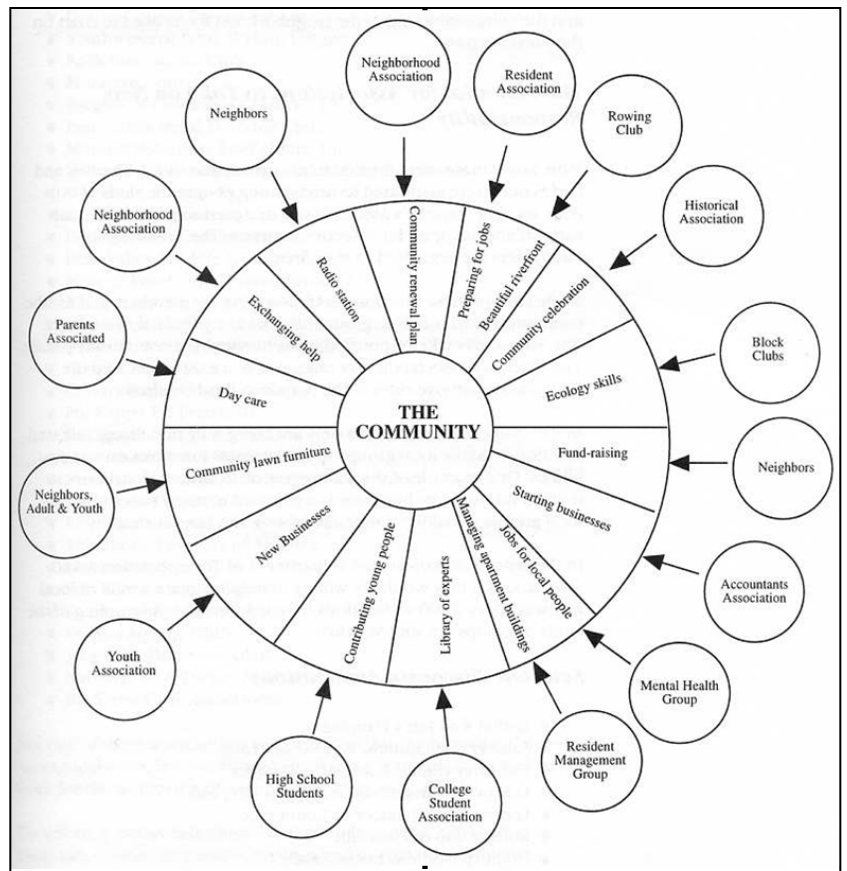
Identifying Neighborhood Association Assets

Neighborhood formal and informal associations, organizations, and clubs are an expression of social capital. These organizations were formed to address some social, economic, political, self-help, or recreational need. The Assets Based Community Development Institute has found literally hundreds of such groups in low-income neighborhoods, such as the Logan Square Neighborhood of Chicago.

These associations can be identified through the following sources:

- Neighborhood churches, libraries, and parks that host meetings of local organizations.
- Community newspapers and newsletters of local organizations and neighborhood associations.
- Telephone books – either the Yellow Pages under Associations, Organizations, Fraternities or in reverse directory listings for the neighborhood.
- Key informants such as religious or political leaders or persons who can be found on almost every block who are well connected to neighborhood grapevine.

Each of these groups and associations probably will already be providing a community service, as shown in the accompanying chart. There are literally thousands of examples of this service energy.



Connecting All Neighborhood Assets

The ABCD effort is not limited to these groups' current activities. The role of community leadership is to identify as many of these centers of change as possible and engage them in creating a new vision, plan, and programs for the future.

Tapping the Power of Local Institutions

At the third level of ABCD are the institutions located in, and possibly serving, the neighborhood that are parts of larger organizations. *Building Communities* . . . identifies parks, libraries, schools, community colleges/universities, police, and hospitals, and this list can be expanded to fire stations, social service centers, recreation and community centers, banks, credit unions, other businesses located in the neighborhood.

These organizations are likely to be providing assistance to the community

already, sometimes in ways that go beyond their core mission. Even if they are not, however, the local leaders' task is to call on them, establish in each a sense of responsibility for the neighborhood, and energize them to focus their considerable and varied resources to improve the neighborhoods in which they are based.

This is sometimes simply a matter of expressing what should be obvious: that we have broad connections and responsibilities to the place where we live, work, and run a business. There may be a convergence of approaches, where a neighborhood oriented program within a governmental agency, such as Community Oriented Policing or Community Education, meets a community effort, such as in ABCD, to forge a new partnership. In other cases, locally based agencies and businesses are resistant to working in consort with neighborhoods. In those situations, it is better under ABCD to build up the network of personal and

organizational relationships before these agencies are re-contacted to support the community.

Kretzman and McKnight talk about each of the possible institutional partners in terms of resources of people, facilities, materials and equipment, and economic power. It is helpful to consider, as examples, how the staffs of these organizations might help develop communities. Here are some possibilities.

- *Parks.* Coach and teach young people athletics, arts, music, and drama.
- *Libraries.* Offer classes for people of all ages in GED, literacy, and language; compile and write community histories; help research and write grant proposals.
- *Schools.* Provide pre-school, and before and after-school programs, counseling, tutoring, conflict resolution, Adult Basic Education, recreation, literature appreciation, math and computer enrichment. Offer a wide range of educational programs for adults and seniors in the neighborhood and help link young people to local businesses.
- *Colleges and Universities.* Use well-trained faculty and staff in community development (housing, business development, youth and adult education, health care, research) to provide valuable technical assistance to neighborhood organizations.
- *Police.* Use police officer roles under Community Oriented Policing to forge partnerships with neighborhood residents to understand and address the causes of crime and disorder. Use police officers act as government ombudsman linking community residents to local services especially related to correcting the physical signs of disorder (e.g. abandoned cars, building code violations, and illegal dumping).
- *Hospitals.* Set up health clinics in local schools, teach health education, establish nursery schools, and counsel victims of sexual and domestic abuse using hospital staff.

Building Communities from the Inside Out points out many ways that local institutions can help community development efforts in terms of the use of facilities, equipment, investments, and other expenditures. Here are some examples of the assets of these institutions that can be put to good use.

- *Facilities:* meeting rooms, class rooms, theaters, auditoriums, gyms and other sports facilities, art studios, computer rooms, shops, health clinics, kitchens and cafeterias, and even display cases and bulletin boards.
- *Equipment:* sports, audio-visual, wood-working, car repair, and printing equipment; computers; books and other learning materials; medical supplies and equipment; and copy machines.
- *Economic Development:* purchase goods and supplies locally; hire local residents as para-professionals, teachers' aides, outreach workers, crime prevention specialists, tutors, activity leaders, and so on; employ neighborhood young people; invest in neighborhood housing and businesses; deposit funds to neighborhood credit unions and community development financial institutions.

How does this work in practice? ABCD workbooks indicate there is "no uniform answer to this question" (Guide to Mapping and Mobilizing, p. 31). In a general way, the initial community development goals of the neighborhood organization need to be translated into improvement strategies and projects based on the resources and interests identified by the community. The ABCD publications counsel paying attention to both individual level and community level approaches. Literally hundreds of projects are possible and, in general, ABCD encourages as broad and deep a nesting of community improvement activities as possible.

Returning to our original focus of building and strengthening neighborhood social capital, the principal strength of ABCD is in the internal workings of social capital. ABCD focuses primarily on creating a dense and wide network of social relations among

How Does the Community Use Local Assets and Build Social Capital?

There are three basic steps in the ABCD approach to community building:

- Identify the assets of neighborhood residents; local groups, organizations, and clubs; and city-wide or larger public, private and non-profit institutions with facilities in the neighborhood.
- Productively connect these people, organizations, and institutions to one another in ways that multiplies their power and effectiveness for community development.
- Create relationships that are mutually beneficial and reciprocal. This work begins with linking the neighborhood residents to one another and to local associations. Establishing links to externally controlled institutions located in the neighborhood occurs after the locally-focused connections are made.

neighborhood residents and organizations. It is through these connections, and shared values of love and service, that community development emerges.

Conclusions about ABCD

The ABCD approach encourages a great deal of excitement and a release of community energy. The workbooks distributed by the ABCD Institute and the Institute's internet list-serve are bursting with wonderful examples of projects following this approach and carried out by neighborhood associations, libraries, parks, hospitals, religious organizations, economic development groups, service organizations for the developmentally disabled, alliances for youth, and so on. It is quite easy for someone to tap into these sources of information, dialogue, and training.

The strengths of ABCD are apparent but it is important to sound a cautionary note about some community development issues that are not well addressed by this approach.

*First, more attention is needed to address the steps between the neighborhood assets inventory and a community plan of action. Ideally, this would deal with the concepts of strategies, objectives, and projects and programs that are consistent with the strategies to achieve the objectives. (See strategic planning Chapter * of this workbook.) It is essential to define where to start, who to involve, what resources are needed, how the strategies and programs fit together, and ultimate purpose of the action.*

Second, the organization carrying out all the activities in ABCD is a shadowy presence operating in the background of the picture, belying the importance of the local organizations. The foundation for is building a power base and the means of power is organization. Focusing on building and strengthening organization through carrying out the community development process is very important.

Third, an effective organizer is critically important to establishing a strong community group. The organizer is essential to start, build, and maintain the community group. Understanding the nature of the role, and the qualities and functions of such a person is essential to the success of the effort.

This chapter began with an observation from the Dudley Street Neighborhood that their strongest tools were: *"the concept of the master plan and the action of aggressive community organizing."*

*Lastly, crafting critical partnerships with public agencies such as school systems, social service agencies and police departments charged with community development is necessary. The steps to "build community from the inside-out" at some point must meet and collaborate with the many external organizations charged and funded for this mission. The chapters in this workbook covering Community Education (Chapter *), Community Policing (Chapter *), Housing (Chapter *), and Human Services (Chapter *) address how progressive approaches within*

governmental agencies can work effectively with community organizations to build social capital. The extent of the challenge in some neighborhoods requires nothing less.

The most compelling spokesperson and practitioner about the community's requirements of power and organization has been organizer Saul Alinsky. Reviewing Alinsky's sage advice fills in many of the gaps in the ABCD approach.

His work is not without problems. The following discussion of Alinsky's approach also addresses some of the ways the Industrial Areas Foundation and the related work of the Interfaith coalitions have improved on Alinsky's methods.

Complementing ABCD, which turns inward to the neighborhood to build social capital, Community Organizing focuses on the aspects of social capital that involve linkages and effective action related to governmental, business, and other organizations external to the neighborhood. Our focus on social capital helps to unify these community development approaches and explain why each is important.

Community Organizing

Curiously enough, one of the icons of community organizing, Saul Alinsky, started as a graduate student in criminology at the University of Chicago in the 1930s. He worked for the Institute for Juvenile Research and collected life stories of juvenile delinquents in the neighborhoods where they lived and in correctional facilities. Through this perspective, Alinsky and others developed the theory that the breakdown in family, church, and kinship within neighborhoods undermines the transfer of social norms from one generation to the next, producing crime, a view similar to social capital as previously discussed.

Alinsky worked for an Institute-based community intervention called the Chicago Area Project, located in the Back of the Yards neighborhood, an immense slum located next to the giant Union Stockyard in Chicago.



Chicago Back of the Yards Neighborhood

The setting of Upton Sinclair's expose, *The Jungle*, and near Jane Addams' Hull House settlement, it was a combustible mix of Serbs, Croatians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles and Lithuanians. Alinsky helped form the Back of the Yards Council in 1939 to improve local conditions through the mobilization of all the neighborhood's existing leaders and organizations.

Alinsky started with union organizing tactics applied within a neighborhood which contained a more complex number of interrelated issues. He always saw his role as working for the "have nots", those without money and power. Over time, he devised a set of tactics to draw on the strength of numbers and commitment, sometimes the only assets of the poor. He formed the Industrial Areas Foundation as a training center and base for community organizing campaigns across the country. In 1946, he distilled his experiences in the book *Reveille for Radicals*, a book that is still in print and contains valuable insights. (Alinsky, Reveille)

In the 1950s he formed The Woodlawn Organization in an African-American neighborhood in Chicago's South Side. In the 1960s, together with lead organizer Ed Chambers, he worked in another well-known community campaign focused on the hiring practices of Eastman Kodak in an African-American community in Rochester, New York. He worked regularly to improve conditions in low-income communities of color.

Later in life Alinsky began to focus on middle class neighborhoods. He did this not only for pragmatic reasons, because more than 75% of the population identified with the middle class, but also because thought they were trapped in the middle, "threatened by all sides," and worried about unemployment, retirements, medical care, taxes, and beset by "unfulfilled dreams." (Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*, pp. 184, 187). Alinsky said that the radical was dedicated to the "destruction of the roots of all fears, frustration, and insecurity of man, whether they be material or spiritual." (Alinsky, Reveille, p. 16)

Shortly before his death at 63, Alinsky published *Rules for Radicals*. His two small volumes should be on the shelves of everyone interested in social change and community development. His approach to community organizing still is appropriate, especially when there are intractable differences between neighborhood interests

and those controlling vital resources or with those taking action in stark opposition to the neighborhood.

Discussing Alinsky's contribution to community organizing does not fully express the measure of the man. In *Reveille for Radical*, he describes a radical, talking about himself in the same words. Radicals, he said, "really liked people, loved people, all people. They were the human torches setting aflame the hearts of men so that they passionately fought for the rights of their fellow men, all men. They were hated, feared, and branded . . ." (Alinsky, *Reveille*, p. 9) He was steel willed and self-righteous: not the kind of person you wanted to cross, or if you were a business executive or government official, not the person you wanted to see in your waiting room. He quoted Jehovah: "I will render vengeance unto my enemies, and those that hate me will I requite." (Alinsky, *Rules*, p. 18). And he meant it.



Saul Alinsky

"*Power is the right word.*" (Alinsky, *Rules*, p. 49)

Alinsky, shown in the preceding photo, believed it is critical for community organizations to possess, build, and utilize power. Power is the ability of the community to achieve that which it

intentionally sets out to do. Alinsky did not want to use a different word for power, to minimize, to "dilute the meaning . . . the hate and love, the agony and the triumph . . . leaving an aseptic imitation of life." In fact, power is what allows the neighborhood to obtain resources to rehabilitate homes, receive adequate police services, make sure that children are learning in the local school, guarantee services like trash pick-up and street paving, have good quality parks, recreational equipment, services, and so on.

There is a reluctance to talk about the importance of power. Too often power has led to arrogance, isolation, and abuse. But power can be a balm to the powerless. Usually, the gathering of power by a low-income community means that there is a "balance of power" between the neighborhood and other forces affecting residents' lives. It seldom means the kind of unrestrained control that leads to abuse.

Powerlessness is, moreover, equally conducive to abuse as unrestrained power. Self-destructive behavior, such as drug addiction, crime, disorder, and school failure, is more closely related to the absence of personal power and efficacy. A measure of power in low income communities is quite likely to create better partnerships with local governments, businesses, and developers. Research by Rohe and Gates found that more than 80% of those interviewed who were directly involved with neighborhood planning efforts believed that citizen-government relations had improved as a result. (Rohe and Gates, *Planning with Neighborhoods*, pp. 117-119)

So what is power? Usually people say power is the "ability to act." The ability to act means that individuals or groups can take effective action to reach their goals and objectives. Power does not always imply conflict. In fact, often it is best to achieve desired results without a gloves-off fight. Conflict engenders resistance, anger, and even long term opposition. It is a high risk strategy. If one loses in a campaign, the organization is set back. Even winning requires pulling back and reestablishing more temperate day-to-day relationships.

The ability to act can be carried out through networks of relationships, through simple communication, through participation in political or administrative processes, through using the human and organizational assets in one's own neighborhood. Power can be exercised in a whisper.

In the broadest sense, power is the same as social capital as discussed here. But sometimes considering things in the broadest way does not give the needed specifics to neighborhood organizations. In the section above on Assets Based Community Development, we discussed how social capital can be created through neighborhood-based efforts drawing on local residents and organizations. This is a part of developing neighborhood power. Power also built and expressed through the ability to obtain external resources. Many times a public campaign is required to obtain rightful respect and achieve position in the political arena.

One IAF organizer, Michael Gecan, explains this well when he says: "when we are called by the neighborhood or religious leaders of a city, we tell them that we won't come to solve a housing problem or an education problem or a low-wage problem. No, we say we'll try to help them solve a more fundamental problem – a power problem." (Gecan, *Going Public*, p. 9) Quite fundamentally, the bottom line is not better housing, responsible police service, good schools, and so on; the fundamental concern is the power to achieve these goals.

Alinsky was the master of the form of power creation associated with public campaigns. The following part of this section focuses on how he proposed this be done. This discussion will fold into Alinsky's views the refinement of the approach by the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) after his death in 1972.

The importance of organization

For Alinsky and the IAF, the means to power is a strong and durable organization. He said: "power and organization are one and the same." (Alinsky, *Rules*, p. 113) Power

comes directly from the fundamental need of humans to improve their own lives (self-interest), to help ones' neighbors, to improve local conditions, and to be effective and self-actualizing in the world. This cannot be achieved in its fullness by an isolated individual. Through an organization, individuals realize that what seems to be a personal problem actually is shared by the community. Through an organization, people come realize that problems range through many aspects of life and a program is needed to address them that is "broad, deep, and all-inclusive." (Alinsky, Reveille, p. 56) They also see that the entire community needs to be mobilized to improve its circumstances in a way that meets its residents' hopes for the future.

Great circular relationships are being described here. The need for power, when locally directed, helps to create organization; and the strength of the organization expressed through action reinforces its power. The motivation to improve local conditions leads to organization, and the existence of a powerful organization provides the motivation to change and improve. This mutually reinforcing pattern of action, motivation, and organization is key to the Alinsky and IAF approach.

"There is no such animal as a disorganized community." (Alinsky, *Rules*, p. 115)

Just as the scope of the program for an Alinsky group is broad, all of the existing local organizations in the neighborhood form the foundation of the group: "all of the churches, civic, social, athletic, recreational, labor, nationality, and service organizations and many of the business-men of [the] community." (Alinsky, Reveille, p. 48) As with Alinsky's approach, ABCD found that even marginalized neighborhoods have hundreds of local organizations. This approach assumes that the initial leadership of the neighborhood organization comes from the leadership of the different groups, many of whom are "completely unknown outside the community" (Alinsky, Reveille, p. 72).

Alinsky realized, however, that the experience of living poor in a community that is mostly neglected by government agencies and businesses leads to feelings of prejudice, despair, surrender, and apathy. Despite a structure of existing organizations, many had atrophied in membership, activities, and vision. As a result, the IAF deliberately created new organizations, not collaborations or alliances of existing groups. (Gecan, p. 135)

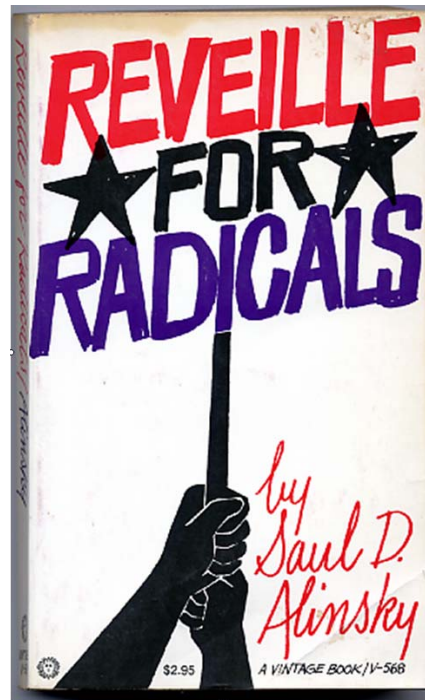
The organizer is an active partner in building this group. This process begins with what is referred to as a "Habit of Relating." It involves countless individual and house meetings with community residents, pastors, leaders of other organizations, business owners, elected officials, public employees, and others. This simple activity of making personal contact through face-to-face meetings does a great deal to overcome the sense of isolation and powerlessness in our society. Just as the word for "soul" has its roots in "breath," the personal dialogues are the threads of the IAF organizing method that weaves community back together. The community emerges as a tapestry of individuals, families, wives, husbands, children, pastors, congregations, workers, and more.

This process calls for more than simple sociability because it requires people to connect "publicly and formally." (Gecan, p. 21). As such, the personal relationships have purpose, discipline, and mutually agreed-upon norms. In other words, these relationships gather dignity and honor through thoughtful progress toward the goal of community development.

In the course of the work, old leaders are strengthened and new leaders emerge. The IAF approach is to build leadership skills and roles consciously and broadly among the membership.

Role of the organizer

The IAF calls building a strong and reliable base the "sponsoring committee phase." (Gecan, p. 12). Until the power base of the community organization is established, no major issues are confronted. This work is activated by an organizer, a very important role for Alinsky and the IAF. Organizers are



essential to start and build an organization and to it keep it going. (Alinsky, Rules, p. 65) The organizer "lives, dreams, eats, breathes, sleeps" establishing a strong community organization that can address local issues. (Alinsky, Rules, p. 113)

The organizer must be invited into the community by a significant proportion of the local organizations, clubs, churches, and population. This invitation is based on his or her:

- commitment to the neighborhood,
- knowledge, skills, and connections,
- commitment to build the community organization, and
- willingness to take action to improve conditions.

The organizer helps create this association foundation initially through the series of meetings in the neighborhood described above.

The organizer essentially is the staff member of the community, with qualities including:

- Skills in leadership and organization building and recruitment,
- Ability to communicate, educate, and train,
- Action-orientation,
- Non-dogmatic communication,
- Understanding of tactics, i.e. the choices of action and the location and nature of political resources,
- Flexibility to adapt to changing situations,
- Ability to set aside personal judgment aside (democratic faith that in the long run people making their own decisions will arrive at the correct conclusions), and
- Recognition that compromise ("doing best for the most") is essential. (Alinsky, Rules, pp. 63-80)

Based on the perspective that leadership must come out of the neighborhood, the organizer works to foster and support local leaders. Shirley in describing the IAF practice in Texas noted "as part of the organization's emphasis of leadership development, every citizen who participates in Texas IAF actions is referred to as a "leader." (Shirley, p. 49) This implies working non-egotistically and not putting the organizer in the position of leading meetings, negotiating, or representing the community.

"Organizations need action as an individual needs oxygen." (Alinsky, Rules, p. 120)

For both Alinsky and IAF, the organization is formed ultimately through engagement in issues. In a way that echoes McKnight, there is a clear distinction made between problems, needs, and issues. "Problems" and "needs" arise from an external and intellectual view of the neighborhood. An issue is an unacceptable condition that has been identified by the community

and that residents want to change. For both Alinsky and McKnight, the rise in professional "helping" has led to a rapid increase in the number of needs and just as fast a decrease in the number of issues. Professional service delivery has created passive "clients" and not active citizens who are organized to create change.

The successful community organization's engagement in an issue is approached carefully. It almost never is begun until there are sufficient people, organization, discipline, and money to undertake it. (Gecan, p. 37) The steps involve the engagement of community leadership in education and learning, planning the action, execution, and evaluating the results. Even after an issue has been identified, considerable work goes into testing and retesting strategies of action. The IAF's organizational culture is one of accountability that holds dear the personal compact made when people join and participate in a neighborhood organization.

Good issues for community action are ones that:

- Are strongly felt within the neighborhood,
- Have a high educational and communications value in terms of the nature of local conditions, why the conditions exist, and what can be done to improve them,
- Are specific and contain achievable outcomes,
- Have a high symbolic value to the neighborhood, and
- Will galvanize participation and increase membership.

This focus on organized community action clarifies in a number of ways the difference between community development and more narrowly framed efforts of Community Oriented Policing (COP) and labor organizing. Community organizing calls for the broad participation of neighborhood residents through work in multiple issue areas. One advantage of working on a number of issues is that there is no lapse in the action that would lead inevitably to flagging interest and reduced involvement.

Single focus organizing has a weakness in maintaining the continuity of action that organization-building requires.

Alinsky, in *Rules for Radicals*, offers a number of lessons about tactics for neighborhood organizations. (Alinsky, *Rules*, pp. 125-164) Here are a few of the important ones:

- Have fun,
- Draw on the community's resources, mobilize as many local organizations as possible,
- Act within the experience of supporters and outside the experience of opponents,
- Identify the target of the action, polarize the situation, and personalize the conflict,
- Understand when it is necessary to challenge the rules of "proper" and legal behavior,
- Address the issue in person,
- Keep applying the pressure, but do not allow an action to drag on,
- Be flexible in the course of the action and make use of the opponent's reaction,
- Make the opposition live by their own rules,
- Creatively use the of divisions of interest within the opposition, and
- Always have a solution or alternative ready and be ready to compromise.

There is an evolution in the approach from Alinsky to the IAF. In the former, there is a kind of "no holds barred," blood and sinew approach to community organizing. This is tempered in the more recent work of the IAF. The IAF understands that it is important to maintain long term positive relationships with elected officials and public employees.

Gegan describes the ways that New York Metro IAF interacted with Mayor Rudy Giuliani over the Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismonds shooting by police officers. Prior to these events, IAF had been frozen out of communications with City Hall because of its support of Living Wage legislation that was adopted over the mayor's opposition. Rather than participate in public protests of the police shootings, IAF met quietly

with Giuliani. They sought "renewed access to the mayor, regular meetings with commissioners, a professional pattern of responses to our requests, public recognition when things went well, public criticism when they did not" (Gegan, p. 114). They also addressed issues related to housing, education, and the police, specifically greater recruitment of minority officers and better response to legitimate complaints about police behavior, attitude, and response.

Gegan reports a number of positive outcomes from this approach affecting thousands of New Yorkers, outcomes that would have not been possible without "the existence of an intricate and long-term public relationship." (Gegan, p. 125; also pp. 112-126). Here we see the functioning of a complex situation that is created when power and force is used in a campaign strategy to secure concessions that improve the neighborhoods, but with public officials who have on-going control over important public assets. The focus of Community Organizing on external resources has inherent political limitations that must be handled very thoughtfully.

From Alinsky to IAF: A reconsideration of values.

For Alinsky, "spiritual values and considerations of justice, equality, peace, and brotherhood" in political action were often viewed as a facade covering the real motivating substance of self-interest. (Alinsky, *Rules*, pp 22-23). Especially under Ernesto Cortez' leadership working in San Antonio, Texas, IAF intentionally "reclaim[ed] the emancipatory currents of the "Judeo-Christian heritage", the requirements of service to those in need and the dignity of the poor. (Shirley, p. 38). We should take this further by being more inclusive. The moral and ethical foundations of the organizing work have been rooted all along in the social gospel, the currents of liberation theology, and the commitment to good deeds. In the evolution from Alinsky to Cortez, these underlying values were be more honestly called upon in coalescing the work of priests, ministers, rabbis, and other religious leaders.

The value of religious and ethical beliefs supporting community development work is very important. More important is the dignity afforded all people based on their intrinsic worth and their life-affirming actions especially in the context of poverty, ill-health, and other personal challenges.

Community organizing as education

Alinsky, in *Reveille for Radicals*, said that the ultimate objective of any popular movement is education. Organizations should be continually searching for ways that lead the community to be receptive to learning and education should be a phase of every project. (Alinsky, *Reveille*, pp. 155, 158) It is quite clear that learning is involved with identifying problems and issues, understanding their nature and why they occur, determining the assets the neighborhood holds that might address them, and coming up with strategies, tactics, and programs to reduce or eliminate them. Basic learning in terms of readings, writing, and math skills, and civic skills are needed to work in a group, make presentations, represent the organization before public officials, and accomplish the goals of the organization.

There is an important difference between a classroom and a community and between a student and a neighborhood resident. A community group needs to identify the conditions and the climate that lead to learning in the neighborhood.

In the introduction to *Black Metropolis*, Richard Wright said: "And we can ask, after reading the scandalous facts of the low level of literacy among Negro migrants in northern cities, if more education without more opportunity will solve anything." (Drake and Clayton p. xxxii) Alinsky knew there was a connection between personal and political empowerment and learning. He said that unless people thought they could change an unacceptable situation, they were unlikely to even think about it. Once a community has power based

in organization, "when confronted with questions of change, they begin to think and to ask questions about how to make the changes." (Alinsky, *Rules*, p. 105)

The comprehensive development agenda of a neighborhood organization breaks down personal and community isolation and, by its broad scope, makes real and functional learning possible.

South American educator and activist Paolo Friere developed the concept of "critical consciousness" and influenced Liberation Theology. He talks about the inherent passivity and oppressive quality of the traditional method of education, where the teacher is the source of all information and knowledge and the student is the passive receptacle. We are all to an extent, and the poor especially, oppressed if we are passive citizens and the quiet objects of schools, government, and the economy. Personally transformative social change involves neighborhood residents as the leaders in their own emancipation. Critical consciousness results from problem-posing "educational projects" that are carried out in the context of community organizing. (Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, p. 67-68). Friere said we should seek more broadly "not merely for freedom from [want], but for . . . freedom to create and construct, to wonder and to venture." (Friere, p. 68)

It is a short step, then, from Community Organizing to the concepts of "communities of learning" in the education field. One of the practitioners of Community Education, Rene Cardenas, said that the purpose of community development has never been building a road or improving a park, but "to teach others to teach themselves, to learn how to learn, and to evolve from a history of dependence . . . to one of independence and helpfulness." (Clearinghouse, *Coming Home*, p. 9)

The Three Paths of Community Development

A few comments are appropriate at this point about the differences between Rational Planning and both Assets Based Community Development and community organizing.

- Rational Planning tends to prioritize problems in terms of their assumed importance to the neighborhood. ABCD and community organizing stem from issues that are important to the neighborhood and around which leadership and organization can be developed.
- In Rational Planning, improvement strategies (and even problem identification) are based generally upon the broad agreement of diverse stakeholders in the planning process. In ABCD and community organizing, the concerns of the “have nots” set the priorities and, very often, political tension between the “haves” and the “have nots” is a positive quality of a strategy.
- In Rational Planning, the desired outcome is improvement in some identified condition, such as small business formation, jobs, or housing. For ABCD and community organizing, improvement in neighborhood conditions is a means to the end of higher awareness, participation, motivation, and organization; in short, to greater social capital.

The differences between ABCD and Community Organizing come about because of the work’s primary focus. ABCD is principally, but not entirely, focused within the community. It begins with the identification of all the neighborhood’s human and organizational assets and carries out community development by drawing on this base. Community organizing, alternatively, attempts to acquire resources, policies, and regulations that are externally controlled to improve local conditions. The consequence of this perspective is that sufficient political authority and power must be marshaled to affect the person or organization making key decisions. The

scope of responsibility of the decision-maker (Mayor, County Commissioner, Governor, State Legislator, etc.) affects the power base that must be mobilized to influence it. If the decision is made by the mayor, a city-wide coalition is called for. If the decision is made the governor, some state-wide program and organization is required. It is easy to see how community organizing, which begins with building a neighborhood base, evolves into a broader-based effort.

Power is manifest in social capital. Social capital is essential for both ABCD and community organizing, but each tends to address a different aspect of social capital. ABCD looks within the community’s network of relationships, its norms, and its ability to tap its own strengths to address local issues. Community organizing focuses on mobilizing local resources in campaigns to affect external decisions and resources. In other words, it addresses the part of social capital that calls for effectiveness outside the neighborhood. Both types of neighborhood power are needed.

Roles of Planners

The roles of planners and their relationship to the community change a great deal based on the community development model employed. The table on the following page summarizes the important differences in roles under ABCD, community organizing, and Rational Planning.

In general, the role of the planner recedes under the Assets Based Community Development and the community organizing approaches. This is not to say that the planner’s role is marginalized because it is still very important to the neighborhood. Given the primary concern with building neighborhood social capital, the community itself, its residents, leaders, and organizations, take a far more central and active role under ABCD and community organizing.

For whom do planners work under ABCD and community organizing? It is difficult to provide an exhaustive list, but here are

	ABCD / Community Organizing	Rational Planning
Values	* Values articulated by planner * Equity, Inclusion * Advocate for less powerful and wealthy	* "Value Free" * Impartial, Objective
Objectives	* Transformation of individual residents * Community empowerment and control	* Plan document * Improvement projects
Agency of Action	* Community action * Community based organizations	* Government agencies * Elected officials * Private businesses
Community Role	* Subject of plan * Establishes goals, strategies, projects	* Object of plan * Formal and proscribed citizen participation
Planner Role	* Support for neighborhood residents * Technical expertise * Educator	* Convener * Technical expertise * Mediator * Consensus builder * Educator

representative types of organizations that hire planners whose approach is consistent with ABCD and community organizing:

- third party organization like the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Enterprise Foundation,
- federal and state funded neighborhood planning resource centers,
- churches,
- community coalitions,
- some social work agencies, school districts, and health care organizations,
- local government neighborhood planning offices, and
- Community Development Corporations.

Planners for regular line agencies of federal, state, and local governments generally employ the Rational Planning approach although they are more tolerant of ABCD.

The American Planning Association's 1979 guide to neighborhood planning discouraged planners from adopting the Alinsky approach because of the divided allegiance that work for a governmental agency often entails. (APA, quoted in Peterman, p. 31) All planners, however,

must be aware of the importance of neighborhood social capita, as well as their role in either enhancing or diminishing it, and they must have a working knowledge of the variety of legitimate ways to be a community development planner in order to be effective.

Reflections on Thirty Years of Community Development Work

William Peterman, in *Neighborhood Planning and Community-Based Development*, makes some comments that are relevant to this discussion, based on his nearly thirty year history providing technical support for neighborhood development efforts. His comments reinforce the need to accept the importance of all the community development approaches addressed here.

Peterman cautions us correctly not to narrow our focus too greatly within the neighborhood. It would be short sighted to ignore the changes that have taken place in this country even since the Model Cities program in the 1967. The locus of economic and political control has moved beyond cities and states, even beyond the nation, in terms of the increasingly integrated global economy. As the political importance of cities has declined, the commitment of the federal and state governments to address their problems has diminished. In a more general way, Peterman asks whether it is appropriate to concentrate our efforts on the neighborhood. He calls on us to ask whether the neighborhood focus is too isolating and inward looking to be a usable strategy for community development.

Peterman draws a questionable distinction (that we have not made) between neighborhood planning and "community building." He concludes that neighborhood based community development is valuable. Whatever its limitations, neighborhood conditions would have been worse absent this effort. Peterman wholeheartedly supports the creation of "viable, healthy, and constructive communities." (Peterman, p. 113) It is a matter of *how* we do it.

Conditions of effective neighborhood based action.

Here are Peterman's four criteria for successful neighborhood development work: (Peterman, p. 155)

1. Sufficient and continuing monetary resources and technical resources must be available both for individual projects and for comprehensive community development.
2. Community development activities must spring from community organizing. Without such an approach, "neighborhood revitalization . . . almost always results in gentrification and displacement." (Peterman, p. 156)
3. Community leaders must "build and maintain strong and direct ties with public officials, technical, legal, and final experts; and other community organizations and umbrella coalitions."
4. The on-going relationships between the neighborhood organization and government staff must have an atmosphere of creative tension, neither too friendly nor too antagonistic.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) offers a good picture of how a neighborhood benefit from all three, as shown in Streets of Hope. Residents grounded themselves in the Assets Based Community Development approach. However, DSNI leaders concluded early on that they did not want to become housing or human service providers. They chose, rather, to play the roles of "organizer, planner, monitor, enabler and protector of the community interest." (Medoff & Sklar, pp. 268-271) They continue to do so for two reasons: first because being program managers stretches the organization's human resources too thin over important functions and second, because the roles of program manager and community advocate are seen as potentially in conflict. They prioritized their community organizing.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the three principal approaches used to carrying out community development: Rational Planning, Asset Based Community Development, and community organizing. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. Each can be either consciously used by neighborhood residents or represents a planning process into which the neighborhood inevitably is drawn. In other words, all three of these approaches, used in appropriate and thoughtful ways, can result in better neighborhood conditions.

Some people say that neighborhoods are relics of the past and perhaps were never very important to city life. They say that neighborhood-based efforts are inherently limited and likely to fall short. This is wrong for many practical and ontological reasons.

There is even a more profound goal of the work of Assets Based Community Development and community organizing than building a new recreational centers or a certain number of affordable housing units. By taking concrete action to improve local conditions, individuals in possession of "responsibility, strength, and human dignity" are formed (Rev. p. 50). The efforts identified in neighborhood development are nothing less than a call to residents' best and most humane selves.

Let us close this chapter with a different way of thinking about this work. One of the four Buddhist vows is "Although sentient beings are innumerable, we vow to save them Even though it is impossible, we have to do it because our true nature wants us to." (Suzuki, p. 45) In the last analysis, working to improve the condition of the poor and otherwise challenged, caring and helping one another, ensuring that government works in the interest of all the people, building a network of friendship and mutual responsibility within our neighborhoods, is simply something that we must do for humanity's good and not just for material or economic reasons.

Resources

Listed below are some of the organizations that train people in Asset Based Community Development and community organizing. There are no better people from whom to learn than practitioners and no better way to learn than practical experience.

(Insert address and contact info)

- Asset Based Community Development Institute
- Center for Third World Organizing
- Industrial Areas Foundation
- Gamaliel Foundation
- Midwest Academy
- National training and Information Center
- The Organizer Training Center