

POLICY AND DESIGN FOR HOUSING

Lessons of the Urban Development Corporation 1968-1975

POLITICS: The Role in Developing UDC Projects
Panel 3, June 11, 2005, 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

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Symposium Saturday June 11, 2005, 9:00am-6:30pm

@ CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street

STUDENT PANEL PRESENTATION:

Grace Campana, student, Environmental Psychology Department, Graduate Center of the City University of New York

PANELISTS:

Robert Litke - Director, Department of Planning and Design, City of Houston, TX;
Former Executive VP, Roosevelt Island Development Corporation

Eugene Norman - Former UDC Project Manager, Design and Construction

Peter Stand - Principal, Magnusson Architecture and Planning, PC

Lawrence Goldman - President, New Jersey Performing Arts Center; Executive Assistant to the President of the NYS UDC; Executive VP, Roosevelt Island Development Corporation

MODERATOR: Ronald Shiffman - Director Emeritus, Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development

TED LIEBMAN: Before we have our student presentations, I want to introduce the moderator for the Politics panel. The gentleman who is the moderator is Ron Shiffman, who I met at Pratt Institute in 1957. Ron Shiffman and I were friends then, but very interestingly, we took two very different paths in our lifetime. My going to the private architectural route after seven years of public service and Ron starting from the very beginning, being a teacher, activist, organizer, the person who created the Pratt Center, PICCED, which still exists, and is probably the author of bottom up versus top down. And, with a true conscience about people and neighborhoods and communities, there were times when we were trying to get a private development in the Bronx he was not necessarily my best friend, but he's remained a true friend throughout. A wonderful committee member that helped organize all the events of yesterday and today, and he's really a very important person in New York City.

RONALD SHIFFMAN: Thank you very much Ted. Before we get into the panel, I really want to introduce Susan Seagert, a faculty member at the Graduate Center, here at CUNY, one of our great institutions in New York -- not only CUNY, but Susan is, that's what I'm talking about. She has run the environmental psychology program here, and she and her students have done an unbelievable job in interviewing residents and working along with the committee in assessing some of the issues and problems that exist today. We've asked Susan to introduce each of her students and to give you a brief overview of the methodology that they used and then we'll get into their presentation. And unlike this morning, we're not going to have a series of speakers; it's after lunch and we need a slightly different format, and I'm going to try pick up on some of the themes that were talked about this morning and try to probe them with some of the panelists. I'll get into that in a couple minutes, but first let me turn it over to Susan.

TED: I just want to mention one thing about Susan since I've taken this prerogative. In 1979, Alan and I were working on a downtown plan for Denver, Colorado, and we assembled a team that involved a landscape architect, ecologist, a developer, and an environmental psychologist, because that was a time when Denver did not believe that it could get people to move downtown. And Susan, through a series of questionnaires, found out that there were many more people that were willing to move downtown. It was a time when it was not assumed that after 3:00 children were the city's responsibility. They were the parents' responsibility, because obviously the mother would be at home, waiting to receive them. So, we brought her in as a design partner in a planning problem back in 1979, and she since then, I've watched her develop a program, which is really a housing design program at CUNY even though it's environmental psychology that she teaches.

SUSAN SAEGERT: Thanks. I want to introduce the students. We did research on Marcus Garvey Village and Roosevelt Island as a first year methods project in the first semester. For me, it was like taking a class of baby ballerinas who just came to school that first day and saying guess what, Lincoln Center by December, and they rose to the occasion and I want to introduce them: Grace Campana, who'll be presenting the politics session, Ray Tu, Alison Dean, Martin Downey, Gregory Donovan, Jennifer Gessaking, Kim Liebman, Dorian Louie, Lauren Tenny, and Danielle Woodward. I'm going to tell you the methods they used. They observed space use, they took field notes, they took photographs, they interviewed key informants like management personnel, old-timers and hangers-on. They did systematic surveys of both sites and they did longer open-ended interviews and informal conversations with residents, too. In a few minutes, two of the students are going to bring down a methods handout and we're going to give it to you. So with that, Grace can begin.

GRACE CAMPAGNA: In turn, on behalf of the students, I'd like to thank Susan for encouraging us in our adventures last year doing research out in the field. OK, this is the politics part of the session. In environmental psychology, we like to look at the interaction between the environment and the human element. So UDC basically gave us the built environment in these various housing projects and what we're looking at now is how the other half of the equation, the human half, held up in the decades since these projects opened. And in turn, how the built environment was affected by what happened with the social element that was living there.

UDC's vision, as we heard this morning, was basically to increase the supply of well-designed housing in the belief that people of moderate-income really deserved to live in quality home environments. To produce integrated mixed-income and mixed-race communities in these new developments, and to create housing that stabilized communities that were seen to be at risk at the time. On a national scale and on a state scale, there was a Model Cities program that had a hope of infusing cash and social supports so that housing, schools, services, employment, and community control could all be ameliorated as a result. And the idealistic attempt in retrospect was that in the following decades, poverty would be eliminated and there was a real commitment to that, at that time. What happened after that, as we've heard this morning and last night, is for a variety of reasons, economic reasons, political reasons, and such, in the early '70s that support was withdrawn -- the resources were no longer there. UDC neared default in New

York State. Also, New York City had immense financial problems, and there was also political backlash against what was seen as a threat of outsiders coming into what had been till then, segregated communities.

At Marcus Garvey Village, we saw this pretty explicitly. Without the resources and social impact of the Model Cities program, the vision of having a community there, never quite materialized. The social programming was not quite there, and the ownership of the housing development was transferred to a private community. When we went to visit Marcus Garvey Village, we were sort of struck with what we had hoped would be a more open, sharing, highly used environment. Instead, it seemed to have these markers of territoriality that were more exclusive and exclusionary than what we had hoped from the readings we had prepared ourselves with. The community organization atrophied, as did the community itself on a larger scale, and poverty went up significantly to a point where almost half of all the families were below the poverty level in the year 2000. And the neighborhood was very, very heavily minority. This is not to say that low-income minority communities do not have incredible strengths, but the trouble is, the material resources that come with socio-economic integration, are simply not available to this sort of a community. So when we spoke to the people at Marcus Garvey, they were very conscious of the role that these subsidies played and allowed them to live in this sort of housing stock. When we spoke to the people there, they were still pretty amazed and taken aback at the quality of the housing that they were living in. There was this perception that poor people do not get to live in duplexes, and the fact that they lived in a duplex, was something very special to them.

At Roosevelt Island as well, there was a real appreciation of the housing stock and how much it meant to people living their lives in this sort of housing. One resident noted how special her views were. How she took pride in seeing these views as a status symbol and it was something she would never have been able to afford had she had to go out and buy her place or rent her own place by herself. At Roosevelt Island, there's also a fear of being pushed out as Mitchell-Lama and other subsidies expire as these housing developments reach the end of their terms. There's a real sense of risk that this sort of environment that they've become used to living in was something that was going to be threatened. We've lived here for 30 years but now we're going to have to leave it in a year or so because we won't be able to afford it. At Roosevelt Island, the vision that UDC had, decades ago, has pretty much been turned over to a vision of luxury developments and that's being seen at Manhattan Park, and the Octagon Project, where only 20% of the units are designated for low-income families. At Roosevelt Island, there's a sense of the place being controlled by outsiders who don't necessarily have the interests of the residents central to what their concerns are. 14% of the respondents felt that the Roosevelt Island Operating Commission (RIOC) is meeting the responsibilities; that's fairly low and almost all the respondents felt that RIOC should have a majority of residents on board. There's a further concern with governance, and Eastwood going private. The change in the nature of the housing development that's coming onto Roosevelt Island is another source of concern. So the question that we leave the panel with at this point is how do we match resources with the rhetoric.

RON: OK, for those of you who are New Yorkers, you'll notice that Vito Lopez and David Yassky, our State Senator and our City Council Member, are not here. I guess that in the world of politics,

it's always OK to say no at the last minute -- we got a call yesterday evening and the day before yesterday that both of them were called away on other business. And, I think maybe that's part of the problem today -- that the issue of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income people is not as pressing an item as other issues. If you feel there's a little anger in my voice, there is, but I think to some degree, the panelists we have before us are in a way, a much better substitute. You've met most of them. You haven't met Lawrence Goldman, who's at the far end. He did introduce himself briefly so I'm not going to introduce him. I suggest you look at the handbook that was given out and you read his biography. It's a very impressive one. I'd rather hear him than hear myself introduce him. You know Gene Norman, who was introduced before. Peter Stand introduced himself from the audience; he's not in the book. The one thing I'll add about Peter, that he did not mention is that he has spent about the last eight years, I believe it is even longer, since 1991, working with Nos Quedamos in the Bronx, in a synergistic effort between architects and a community-based group, fighting for quality housing in the community.

And you all heard Bob Litke a little bit earlier in the day, and I just really urge you to read the bios because I'm a great believer in short introductions and getting down to the meat of the matter. The last question raised was how do we meet the rhetoric, at least that of the '60's, with resources. And I want to paraphrase something that Bob said before he left on the last panel. He basically said that if Ed Logue were alive today, and he had the power, and he had the resources, how would he do it today? I'd like to change that a little bit and ask the panelists, starting with Lawrence and Bob Litke, to respond initially because they both worked with Ed directly and then, Gene -- actually all of you worked at UDC, so I'll ask all of you to respond. If Ed were around today, how would he fight for the political power that's needed to get housing and the social and economic issues back on the public agenda? How would he fight today to make sure that the buildings built in the '60's were maintained and operated properly? Why don't we start with you, Larry, and you can throw in anything else you want to throw in including your song.

LAWRENCE GOLDMAN: Well, Ed and power were almost inseparable. He had a great instinct for getting his politics straight. What has recently happened with Mayor Bloomberg this week, that is not getting his West side stadium, without commenting on the desirability of such a stadium, could never have happened with Logue, because Ed always knew where the power was. Mayor Bloomberg, somehow with all his planning, missed where the power was on this decision. Ed knew that the power, at least in those times, the zeitgeist is I think very different now, knew that the power was with the political chief executive, and he always got that right. He got that right in New Haven and he got that right in Boston, and he got that right certainly in New York State. Nelson Rockefeller was the center of things and he made damn sure, at least in my experience, that anything that he was going to do that was at all controversial, I don't want to talk about the Nine Towns program, that he had the governor's backing.

He also understood the legislature. It's been a while since I've worked in New York State, but at least at that time, the legislature was all about the legislative leadership. That's all you had to have. If you had 2 or 3 people in the legislature lined up, that was fine. I'm sure Sharon and Janet remember this: Ed had in his office a series of sliding panels, with cork backing, where he could put up various plans and then slide a plan away and then slide in another plan, but on the

innermost panel, that is the one that you had to slide everything else away to reveal, he had a sign printed by his graphics department, saying, "No Man's Life or Property is Safe While the State Legislature is in Session." He tried to remember to cover that up before any legislators visited his office, but the unification of power was very much what he was about.

Although, you know, he was Robert Moses and the anti-Robert Moses, all at once. He was not a bottom up kind of guy. He was a top down kind of guy and he knew where the power was and he knew how to unify it and he knew how to use it. I will just end on this point. Ed always used to talk about the absolute essential imperative to unify planning and development. He hated the notion of separating planning and development. Now, when you separate planning and development, anybody in this room who has been a planner, which most of you have been at one time or another, knows that that kind of creates countervailing forces in the system. When you unify planning and development, you're able to move the system and build 33,000 units of housing and three new towns and lots of other stuff and do it quickly. It's not necessarily the most democratic way, but it's very efficacious.

ROBERT LITKE: It's interesting that Larry started and said just about everything I would have said. Let me add one thing. Ed knew how to consolidate power and he knew that the key to power was the political leadership. I would note that Dick Lee, Mayor Lee in New Haven, and John Collins in Boston and Nelson Rockefeller in New York State, all three of those political leaders, were what I call builders. They wanted to build things, and that's where Ed excelled. He knew how to make it happen if he was working for a builder. You show me a political leader today who's a builder, and I would say Ed Logue could replicate what he did in the past. But without a builder, he would be as frustrated as the rest of us are and he would not be capable of bringing the political tools to a head. I would also comment that Larry is totally right in that you have to bring development and planning together, and just as an aside, in Houston where I've been working in the heat for fourteen years, I came extraordinarily close to bringing development and planning under one roof. For a period of time, I had control -- control of neighborhood inspection and property maintenance issues. I had control of building permits. I had control of planning. I was striving to control housing and then we got a new administration and now I'm a planner again. So, it takes the political leadership that wants to make something happen, and then if you have a bureaucrat who loves power (Ed Logue loved power, I love power), you can make things happen.

RON: If I could summarize from what the last two speakers just said, Ed Logue today would be unemployed. I mean we have a President who doesn't give a damn about the cities, who doesn't give a damn about many things. We have a Governor, who's incapable of thinking about development in the proper way. Maybe we have a Mayor who was fixated on the wrong project, but at least he might be a builder. But without political leadership there is no role for something like UDC. There is no role for a leader like Ed Logue to come forth and begin to marshal political forces to move towards a new consensus in the country that we must do something.

ROBERT LITKE: I mean I'm just too old to be idealistic anymore, and I don't believe so.

PETER STAND: Let me take a shot at this. I definitely think that without political will, I would agree with you, we are left in a bit of a swamp, because the redevelopment of neighborhoods, the

redevelopment of affordable housing, the building of public schools, etc., requires public money, and without political will to allow that public money to flow, it's not going to happen. However, let me put a however in there, in the vacuum, and I'll call it a vacuum, since the demise of UDC, in the abandonment of the city by its political leaders in order to support their own back pockets, I'll say right away I'm kind of ignorant about the rest of the United States, but I'm somewhat knowledgeable of the City of New York, we've had community development corporations that have arisen in the Bronx, in Northern Manhattan, in Brooklyn and in Queens, in order to fill a void. They filled a void because there was mass abandonment and arson. They filled a void because their schools were non-performing. They filled a void in order to take over dilapidated buildings and restore them. And I think that's a tremendous resource that exists today that someone, a builder like Ed Logue, could take advantage of because these groups need an ally like him.

In the City of New York, however, we're very fractured in our structure. We have a City Planning Commission that is a planning commission that has no role in development. We have a housing agency that focuses on housing, and forgets that people living in the housing need to eat, shop and go to school. We have a Department of Education that doesn't understand that schools are primary blocks of building communities, and there is no overriding, and I might use the word czar, which might be an unpopular word, but there is no one bringing all of these resources together, in terms of working to knit local ideas together in a broader municipal plan for development with an agency that has teeth in it. Another example, we have a regulation in our city charter called 197-a, that allows community boards to plan and subjects these plans to the public review process. Once these communities meet and they take several years to develop this tremendous dialogue within communities, these plans are subject to public review, God knows what the cost of this is at the end of the day. However, the plans have no financing, no teeth, and in many ways, they're a politically wasted effort, except for the fact that it allows organizing to go on within neighborhoods. So, I would agree that we need political will, although the structures that we have today are different than those we had 30 years ago.

LAWRENCE GOLDMAN: Even the intellectual context isn't there. I mean when was the last time anyone heard the phrase, "urban policy"? Nobody talks about that anymore. One place where there used to be interchange in our views about urban policy was the Metropolitan section of the New York Times. But that doesn't exist – now it's all about crime and fashion and gossip. And it's not articulated in Washington. There are no governors, to my knowledge, talking broadly about urban policy. It seems to have just passed out of the lexicon in a way that it doesn't get articulated, there's no political leadership for it, and I'm disconnected more than I used to be from universities, but you don't even hear it coming out of the universities very much anymore.

EUGENE NORMAN: Well, it's tough to be the last speaker. The previous speakers have said many of the things I would respond to in terms of that question. However, back in the '60's there was a slogan that, I remember, talked about power to the people. Well, we have to find a way to make more of that happen. Right now mention was made about community boards. They are part of the process, yet they can only make a recommendation; it has no teeth. It doesn't make government do anything for the community, when projects are planned in those community boards areas. So I'd love to see a way where local people take the leadership that's missing right now. It doesn't have to be on a citywide basis. It could be on an individual community board

basis. But they need to have the power to assess what's going on. They need to have the resources to strengthen their own mechanisms so that they have planning technicians, I'll call them, who can advise them properly. But they're not being heard. They're not being financed. They don't really play a role.

And if Ed Logue was around today, I don't think he'd play a role either, because without the will and determination of a Rockefeller in the State of New York to create a UDC, it won't work. We note that when UDC went away, in its place arose something called the Empire State Development Corporation, having nothing to do with housing, having nothing to do with the many problems in the urban areas, but having everything to do with the free market. And the free market doesn't seem to have a place for people who have been disenfranchised, who need help, who need assistance to make that leap to become part of the free market.

RON: I need to share some of my own feelings on this issue and so I'll tell a little anecdote about when I met Ed Logue. I met Ed Logue in 1964. I had started working in Bedford-Stuyvesant with a group of residents in the community that was opposed to an urban renewal plan, and we tried to stall and were successful in stalling the urban renewal plan, which would have led to the demolition of what we now know as Stuyvesant Heights. But, in working with the community group, we said we can't just say no, and Stu Pertz was around at that time, and he knows a little bit about this, we have to come up with alternatives. And we decided we would go look at what, at that time, were good models of urban renewal, or we were told were good models, and we hired a bus and we went up to New Haven, and we met with Ed Logue and some of the folks from the Dixwell area renewal project. What we saw going on there was Community Progress Incorporated, a group that was training people on how to get back into the work force, giving people skills. We saw new schools that were being developed around the community school model. Later on, these failed. We saw Dixwell, which was low-rise infill housing of a medium density, not the high density that we saw later on, and we came back and we adopted that prototype for Bedford-Stuyvesant, and came up with some alternatives.

Ed later on came down and helped train the group in Brooklyn to become a bit more articulate. Out of that grew the first Community Development Corporation in the United States. We also were able to attract Robert Kennedy to that model, a bit later on, and that set my career and a many other things in place. Today, there are 50 such organizations in New York alone. Ed helped train the first one. I don't know if he knew it, but he did. What we found is that there are a lot of little Ed Logues. People like Yolanda Garcia, who unfortunately died a few months ago, who created Nos Quedamos in the Bronx and then built a few hundred housing units, taking the same kind of aggressiveness that UDC had and put it to work there.

When Christine Flynn earlier talked about the City of New York building 300,000 units of housing that was based on a policy that bubbled up from grass roots organizations throughout the City of New York. Each of them demanding and finally getting, when Mayor Koch was running for his third term, a housing policy. At that time, they called it the Housing Justice Campaign, or Justice for Housing, I forget what it was, but it was a play on the word justice, and just us, and housing, and today we see complementary efforts in Housing First and a number of other efforts in New York City, bringing housing back to the forefront of the agenda. Later on, Shaun Donovan is

going to be here. He's talking about a new Inclusionary Housing program in New York. That didn't come from the top. That bubbled up from community-based groups demanding a partnership with the private sector. Unlike Bob Campbell earlier, I believe in democracy in planning. I believe that democracy shouldn't be confused with decision-making and that democracy shouldn't be confused with implementation. It's debate. It's organizing. It's creating constituencies for what you do, and then you can move policy.

LAWRENCE: In the service of getting a little lively dialogue going here...

RON: Please do that.

LAWRENCE: You're for democracy in planning, therefore, it would seem to me you would be against the Nine Towns program because if you go into Nine Towns in Westchester, the democracy would dictate, you wouldn't get anywhere near any of those towns with assisted housing.

RON: No, I am not against the Nine Towns plan and not against the....

LAWRENCE: I suspected that. I suspected that you were not, but you need to explain.

RON: ...and the reason for it is that there are overriding guiding principles so you deal with the principles as well as the obligation locally ...

LAWRENCE: Who decides the overriding guiding principles?

RON: And I really believe in the right to override local zoning ordinances, where there is discrimination, and there has to be a certain number of principles that we adhere to that are inalienable rights of people. So you don't allow for those rights to be violated, but you do engage people. You shouldn't confuse, as I said earlier, democracy with decision-making, and what you need sometimes is decision-making that's based on principle.

ROBERT LITKE: I think you're absolutely right but if you want action, democracy is a very slow and painful process. If you want to wait 30 years for the people's views to bubble up in a coherent fashion in order to influence, on some temporary basis, the political system, do it, because I believe it takes a long time to change things, it took a long time to screw things up, but if you want 33,000 units of housing in five years, you need a power structure to do it.

RON: If you look at what the community-based groups did in New York City, they built a comparable number of units in that number of years because they forced the City to develop the policies, which have continued from the 1980's to today, and they're done in multiples, they're not done by one agency. At a session that we had earlier in the year, in planning for this, we were basically arguing that it would be great if we had a UDC, because you need government to respond. Let's face it, UDC was able to move in because there were sites throughout the state, some of which came about because of poor planning efforts or stupid demolitions and some of it was done primarily to get rid of minority populations in discriminatory ways. UDC came in, and,

in many places such as Marcus Garvey, the community wanted them. Ed Logue could walk into Brownsville without a guard, although he couldn't go into Bedford without a guard, because the communities had been organized in Brownsville and in the South Bronx and other places.

ROBERT LITKE: I would totally agree with everything you've said Ron, which simply goes back to Larry's point and my point, that Ed Logue could not make it in today's environment.

RON: Then what do we do? Do we say, "it was history", and then don't deal with moving forward? Are there any ideas that any of the four of you, or anybody in the audience, have on how we might get a housing agenda back on the table,.

ROBERT LITKE: Yes, I'd like to see the civic movement strengthened. I'd like to see neighborhood based development organizations strengthened and empowered elsewhere besides New York City. I'd like to see the architectural profession nationally, get a sense of good politics and work to create a lobby to make change. The biggest political failure in society, in my view, has been the inability of the architectural profession to wake up and see that the world needs to be changed -- they talk about a profession of change and they don't do anything except design buildings.

AUDIENCE: It would also be very good to elect better leaders and more visionary leaders.

AUDIENCE: We are a representative democracy, but not a democracy. There's a big difference. When everybody votes simultaneously, you have nothing, it's chaos. We're a representative democracy and that's what we have to do. If what you say is that there are no politicians who represent us, then either we are such a minority that we well deserve this or we increase our participation in the universe in any way possible to make sure that we are a part of it.

PETER STAND: When I graduated from college in 1975, most of the clients and firms that I worked for at the time, were traditional clients, and you'd do a set of drawings and they'd find a builder and build a building. My firm now is very active in affordable housing in the City of New York. The bulk of our clients are now builder/developers; these are entities that develop, they build, and then they manage their developments. Now, what does this mean, I mean in the broader context of what we're talking about. Well I think it means there's a new paradigm, and I think the ability to link these builder/developers with CDC's, with the people who provide program, is something that is absolutely essential. There is a organization, however biased it might be, called the New York State Association for Affordable Housing, which is basically a private developer's lobby for affordable housing. Because these individuals have found out how to make money doing this, and that's a good thing because if they make money, that means there's more housing.

So where does the architectural profession fit into this. I know my partners and I have tried to educate ourselves in terms of financing. I know we've tried to educate ourselves and become part of the equity components of deals. I know that we've tried to educate ourselves and work with combinations of community development corporations and for profit businesses in order to achieve this. I think the architectural profession, as a whole, needs to be more political and more involved. On this question of electing the right people, whatever that means, we had a national

election a while ago and I don't know what that means anymore, electing the right people. I've seen how the architectural profession does interventions over the course of a weekend and I know how my firm has devoted ten years to partial pro bono work in communities in the Bronx in order to work on their redevelopment and also to stay alive as a business. So, I think there's a broader commitment that needs to be made across the board. I don't know how Ed Logue would fit into this, but I know that without a visionary, without someone who understands comprehensive planning as well as financial development issues, we are going to be sputtering along with little bright lights of success, but without a broader overall coordinated policy. And I think it's incredibly important for our professional organizations, both in architecture and in planning, to become more political because by their very nature, architecture and planning are political.

EUGENE NORMAN: In a way, these are very depressing times given that architects are not forceful enough or don't know how to get forceful enough to organize and make their own statements and views heard so that political candidates or people in office understand them. Community groups struggle along without proper technical assistance and are underfinanced, and, it just seems to me, there needs to be a way to support political candidates with the clear understanding that they're expected to do certain things if they succeed and get into office. I wish I knew how to do that. I wish I knew what formula to plug that all into, but in my heart of hearts, I think that's what has to happen. We don't have anyone either on a national level or even in the State of New York right now, who cares about these kinds of problems. To me, that means you have to find people who want to be in office. You have to support them with a clear understanding of what has to be part of their agenda. And you have to monitor their progress, their support for things as it goes along to make sure that they don't back-step on it.

RON: Let me get back to Bob's earlier question. Let's for a moment assume, that later this year, New York City elects a Mayor, maybe it's this Mayor or another Mayor that discovers the need to focus on a housing agenda, and some of us believe that Bloomberg is beginning to move in that direction, and the following year we elect a Governor who is committed to a housing agenda. How would you go about, given the growth of community-based groups in New York in the development community, how would you go about designing a new delivery mechanism based on both the positive and negative reflection of what happened at UDC? How do you get a new entity that could go back to Wyandanch and could go back to the Nine Towns and make sure that we begin to effectively develop integrated suburbs? How do we begin to develop, at a scale that New York City needs and other cities need, the kind of affordable housing and integrated housing we need?

LAWRENCE: I don't believe that I'm actually going to say this, but given where we are in this country, I can't imagine, Ron, doing what you just challenged without creating huge incentives for the private sector to respond. It doesn't feel to me that you could recreate the concentration of powers as Bob put it that UDC had, and I think that if you're going to do it at the scale that your question implies...

RON: ...but what would you do?

LAWRENCE: What I would do is find a way to harness the private sector and decide what areas of the development of this housing can be properly and effectively subject to public policy. For example, I've seen in my new city, Newark, a lot of housing that has been built in certain sections of Newark and it is just horrible. It is just so bad the way one after another of these three-family units have been shoehorned in without any preservation of public space, without any notion to leave a little space open in the middle and create the counterpart of a village green, or if you have some recreational facilities, or if you find ways to organize the development to create some kind of public amenity and light and air and space and room for children to play, playgrounds and so forth. I would try to figure out what is in the proper realm of public policy and then I would create as strong incentives as you could to get the private sector, the private development sector, to respond, constrained only by those guidelines.

ROBERT LITKE: I would do that and I would strengthen the partnership between this new entity that you want to create without a lot of power led by a politically elected builder, I would strengthen the partnership with these community-based organizations. I would spend a lot of money educating these community-based organizations and the general public on what street space and street life is all about, and not worry so much about the design of the building as much as I would about the public space. If the public space works, the building works. It's as simple as that as far as I'm concerned. I think recognizing today's terms, you would have to have lots of incentives to attract the private developer to do what they can do very well if there's money to be made. If there's no money to be made on poor people, you have to subsidize them, and the more you subsidize the private sector, the more they'll respond. It's as simple as that. If there were more young people in this audience, I wouldn't be quite as cynical as I am. I hope that the next generation, some of you young folks out here and others that are not here but are still in school, will get inflamed and outraged by what the hell is going on and be a lot more aggressive in the future. I think if I was 50 years younger, I would probably be a bomb thrower, but those days are long gone.

EUGENE NORMAN: This is going to sound a little far-fetched. I like what Bob said, and I certainly like the whole way that this part of the conversation is going, what Larry said was also important, but it takes money, and here's the part that you may laugh at, I would create a kind of mega bucks lottery for housing. The people are willing, everybody's willing to buy lottery tickets, but I would have them dedicated towards housing, building up a fund so you can get some things done. It should be separate from the normal lottery, which supposedly goes to education, but everybody says it doesn't. This would be one lottery dedicated solely for housing initiatives.

PETER STAND: I actually think that we do have some possibilities. I'm younger than you guys. I was only an intern at UDC so I still have a little hope left. I do think that we have existing mechanisms. I mean, after all, housing created in New York City, at least in the years since I graduated from college, has always been subsidized. High-end stuff on East End Avenue gets 10 to 20 year tax abatements on it. Through tax credits, major corporations take deductions and become participants in affordable housing. Certainly the federal government has been known to drop in, at a moment's notice, to help out General Motors, Chrysler, the pharmaceutical industry, the energy industry, because when there's the ability for private business to make money, specifically with our current administration but I think with most administrations, the government

is there to assist them. However it doesn't appear as if housing or cities appear anywhere on the national agenda. And, until they do, they will not receive any of these priorities.

We have existing programs and new programs that can be created, noting that when housing is subsidized, schools need to be subsidized, open space needs to be subsidized, that the way of tax relief for corporations, the re-prioritization of resources the federal government spends, could be accomplished. Again, I need to add that there is a need for the active participation of the professional organizations in architecture and planning. There's a broad educational agenda that needs to start in adult education, it needs to start in kindergartens; after all, we take earth science in school, but most of us are raised in the city, and we know nothing about our city and how our city is developed. And maybe it will take an extra 10 or 15 or 20 years to get there, but I think those are the directions that we need to move in.

AUDIENCE: inaudible question.

RON: Shaun Donovan is going to be here on the next panel and I don't know if he's in the room yet, but, there he is, but his agency has housing production statistics and I'm sure we could get it for you. The other point is that about a year and a half ago, before Shaun became Housing Commissioner, New York City re-zoned some industrial land along Fourth Avenue. There was a fight there. Many of us wanted it to be re-zoned with what we call "inclusionary housing" requirements, so that a certain percentage of affordable units would be required or at least be bonusable. If you built to one level, you would build as of right, if you included affordable housing, you could build to greater densities on those sites, at greater heights. However, we lost that fight.

Recently, the City came forward with a plan to re-zone one of the major areas along the Brooklyn waterfront in Greenpoint and Williamsburg, opposite 34th street. This was the result, I must say, of a local 197-a plan where the community had a clear direction and a clear path. While I don't agree with the ultimate action of the City Planning Commission, there were a lot of things that were won by the community in the re-zoning plan, that were based on the 197-a plan. One of these proposals was that the community wanted inclusionary housing. They wanted a high percentage, 40 to 50 percent, of the units to be set aside for residents at the median income of the community. That was not won, but what was won, was that the City came forth originally, and Shaun can correct me if I'm wrong, with something like 20% inclusionary housing, and I think it wound up with close to 33% after it went through the public process of the public hearings, with over a thousand people, mostly young people coming out and demanding affordable housing and other issues.

And so through the public and democratic processes, we saw the first beginnings here of a housing program, and with the Mayor's commitment, now not only to inclusionary housing, but also for using Battery Park City monies as a resource to set up a Housing Trust Fund. We are beginning to see the evolution of a housing policy, and a commitment to follow through. The point I wanted to keep from what Gene said earlier is that by creating dedicated resources, which was the hope years ago for Battery Park City money, that there would be a dedicated resource that would be one of a number of sources of funding, that you get away from the vagaries of government, of this year it's in, this year it's out. Do you think that it is at all feasible to get

dedicated sources of funding, or is it just another 67 year-old foolish idealist talking?

ROBERT LITKE: It's a great foolish idea for a 67 year-old. We have lotteries that are dedicated to education. Education has gone down the tubes in this country. We have other lotteries that are dedicated to the health system and it's going down the tubes. If you want to see housing go further down the tubes, then set up a dedicated fund. (laughter)

RON: I think the moral of the story is don't move to Houston. (laughter)

EUGENE NORMAN: I have to just poke my nose under the tent to say to my good friend Bob Litke, these things go down the tubes because they're not managed properly. The lottery for education is siphoned off and money goes into the general fund all the time. I'm saying, let's borrow a phrase from Al Gore, let's create a lockbox, and let's put that money in the lockbox.

LAWRENCE: Just as a question of fact, I don't know how many of you knew Bob Litke in the '70's. I did, and despite what he says, he was every bit as cynical then as he is today. (laughter)

ROBERT LITKE: But I forgot. (laughter)

AUDIENCE: David Parker: I'm really disappointed. I came all the way up here to listen to the great oracles who I worked with in the early '70's. Here are the four of you throwing up your hands, and saying Ed wouldn't know how to cope with this situation. My name by the way is David Parker. I was the manager of Audoban. For your students, by the way, the complete story of Audoban is contained in my doctoral thesis at The State University of New York at Albany, a little plug. Now, back to the point. I say to you nonsense. Ed would know exactly how to handle the current situation if he were here and back in his 40's or 50's. Somebody said this morning, another oracle, said Ed had an instinct for going to where the power is and I would submit to you, that instinct would be just as viable today as it was 30 years ago, or 40 years ago. He would still have an instinct for power. He would go to Trammel-Crow, or some of the other major developers and say let's figure out how to do this and I'll help you with the government side, and I'm convinced that my great leader would find a way to solve this, not sit on his ass. (applause)

AUDIENCE: Susan Saegert: I just wish I had that much faith in great leaders. I was going to speak I guess on the other side of that question on the democracy side. I've worked with hundreds of community groups in New York City, hundreds of tenants organizations in New York City, and I find that they have a vision of housing that's very similar to the principles that Ted and Alan and others articulated in the exhibit about what housing should be like? what are the principles that should govern it? They choose to work on open space and schools at the same time that they work on housing and they desire design quality. What they don't have actually is someone who, and I guess this is what the 197a plan does when it's good and what Ron does when it's good, and I've seen many projects that are, is to bring that together into a vision. Then of course that does get us back to the power question, but I think that ought to get us besides to the money question, to the ownership question, to the reason that the ten year plan in New York City was possible, because there was land, so I'm saying to myself, where is there land now? There are expiring use restrictions and there could be intervention around those becoming tenant

controlled or becoming community controlled. There are failing CDC properties, which probably need some kind of a bailout. There's a massive amount of foreclosure now, which is bordering on the illegal. Those are my thoughts and I'm not even educated properly on this, but what are your thoughts about where basically the property would come from?

ROBERT LITKE: It's a little outside my area. I've been away from New York for too long.

RON: Well, I think there is a lot of potential if we want to look at it creatively. First of all, I think the re-zoning of the underutilized manufacturing areas, and doing it in a sensitive way. I think the other is by truly bringing about mixed-use areas. Today, you know we all have print shops in our own living rooms and bedrooms, because of the way computers work. We can mix manufacturing and residential uses in ways we couldn't before. So if we surgically look at some of the areas that were zoned manufacturing, we could both expand the housing supply in those areas, and, most importantly, maintain the manufacturing base that's there, that by the way, is still very much alive in the City of New York. The next thing you can do is to build on many of our commercial strips. A lot of the upper floors of commercial buildings on our retail strips are vacant, from periods of time when they were afraid to rent the space above for fear of burglary or other reasons. Also, you could creatively use the intellectual capacity of the design community, redesigning these buildings in such a way that we can enter them from the back or from other ways so that we don't lose the retail frontage streets. Are there ways? We did it in Bed-Stuy, along Fulton Street, in the redesign of some of those buildings. You can maintain the integrity of the commercial space with residential above. You can do inclusionary housing, where we're building.

And the other thing, and this gets back to design, and I agree with some of the observations about lousy design. We should never allow again, the building of suburban housing in New York, including what Ed Logue did in the Bronx. We have to be sure that the kind of housing we build is the kind that Ed and Ted and others developed, which are low-rise, high-density structures, building at a density that is befitting a city, befitting the infrastructure that exists below it. We don't need any more, and excuse me if there are folks here who were in love with it, Nehemiah kinds of housing in New York. It was destructive of the environment and it was destructive of the commercial and economic integrity of those communities.

PETER STAND: I'd just like to add to that too, because I also think there's an element of political will. I'm aware, without going into particulars, of a couple projects, an old one in the Bronx. It is on a city-owned piece of land. It's adjacent to a subway line. There's a strong move by the City's Economic Development Corporation to do this as a commercial development. A number of proposals were submitted. Over half of them had housing on them, and EDC decided to eliminate the housing. Now, this is housing that is adjacent to public transportation lines on top of a commercial development in the northwest Bronx. I'm sure this occurs throughout the City, again because there's no integrated policy to look at need. There are also local elected officials who feel threatened because the demographics of the neighborhood are changing, and this housing would attract "the wrong people". So a whole series of politically motivated decisions are made, that are really not in the long-term interests of the community and I'm sure this happens time and time again. I think there are actually many opportunities, hidden opportunities, that exist in the city.

AUDIENCE: Mr. Litke. Mr. Goldman, when you worked on Roosevelt Island I don't think you ever imagined that 30 years later the landlords would all want to be buying out and privatizing all the original apartment buildings, so that after the current crop of tenants leaves, that 2000 market rate apartments will no longer be subsidized. Did you ever imagine this would be happening?

ROBERT LITKE: Yes we did. We talked about it a lot. We were very concerned about it, but we didn't know how to solve it given the structure of the laws that existed then and do today.

PETER STAND: Let me add something. As an architect, I just renovated a UDC apartment building on Yonkers Avenue in Yonkers, which was purchased by a developer from Portland, Maine. It used preservation tax credits in order to maintain its affordability for the residents who live there. It was a ten-story tower, a twenty-story tower and a set of town houses. I think with motivation, there are opportunities, and I think this is something that the State of New York and the City of New York needs to focus on because I think that's where most of us live.

LAWRENCE GOLDMAN: I agree with the disappointment that underlies the question. I think that a wonderful experiment is at risk.

AUDIENCE: I'm not a 67 year-old idealist, but I was born in '67 and I am an idealist as well. (laughter) I also happen to be an architect and I think that's why I've stayed in the profession. But I'm just going to offer a bottom up possibility, because I don't obviously have control of politics or policy, which I would love to as well, and I grew up in a time and I do admire this generation's vision. At the same time, we're working in a different climate right now and I think what we can do as a profession of architects is actually take on more responsibility, and the firm that I work for happens to do just exactly that. I think we started off trying to just build modern houses, in communities that actually didn't accept that, and the way that we started to do that was actually to do construction management, and that's a whole another discussion. But on the other side now, what we're trying to do is actually build housing in New York and this is on a very small scale; we're not trying to build these giant slabs or recreate these Corbusian ideas, but what we are trying to do is actually do development. And so I think, as a challenge to young architects, we're saying look, instead of waiting for the powers that be, or waiting for people's ideals to come along, go ahead and take up that responsibility yourself, and take both ends. Don't be afraid of the legal ramifications, just go for it and do the development yourself. Make a model. Instead of just doing prototypes of how to build modern housing. Do prototypes of business, and I think that's a possible way of the future. (applause)

AUDIENCE: Hi, I just wanted to know that even if we do succeed, I was thinking about what you said about inclusionary housing. Even if that number goes up, down, wherever it goes, it doesn't matter if we win in the sense that we get more inclusionary housing, because that inclusionary housing is not really inclusionary. My point is for example, you mentioned Battery Park City. The guidelines that are going with those programs are inherently wrong, OK. What's going on is that you have the median for those apartments, to be able to be called affordable, right now is like 42 or 50% of the median income, and in a place like Battery Park City, where there is such a high income, it turns out to be that a studio apartment under those programs would be like \$1,600,

which for me is not affordable. For many people, for many young architects, this would not be affordable. So, you know even if we do have more inclusionary housing, those guidelines would need to be changed because right now even though it's called that, it's really not that.

RON: I agree with you about Battery Park City. I don't think that's what the intention is out in Williamsburg and Greenpoint. If it is, I can tell you there'll be a lot of unrest, and I don't think that's the case.

AUDIENCE: The low-income housing limit for Greenpoint/Williamsburg is, I believe, is \$56,200. That's the maximum, that's the lowest of the three categories. The median income for Community Board 1 in Brooklyn is \$27,000, so those people cannot get into the lowest bracket housing in that re-zoning. And that's voluntary inclusionary zoning, so...

RON: I said earlier that there were many parts that I did not like. Part of it was also the bulk, but we can get into that another time. The principle's been won there though I think in winning the principle, we have to acknowledge it, and we need to fine tune it, we need to change it, but it was zero on Fourth Avenue, and it's significantly different there. Making it deeper, making it more effective has got to continue to be on the agenda, but no to acknowledge that it was a victory, I think takes away a lot of the energy that I think the community deserves to be applauded for. Shaun.

AUDIENCE: Shaun Donovan: Just a quick note on that. The medians that are used in Greenpoint/Williamsburg, and anywhere else are metropolitan area median incomes. They don't vary, like in Battery Park City or anywhere else; they're a single number. Our estimates are that 2/3 of the units that are produced in Greenpoint/Williamsburg of the affordable units, will be available to families making between, for a family of four, making between \$30,000 and \$40,000 a year, given the programs that are being used. So while I agree that there's a segment of the population there that will not be reached, and frankly can't be reached without vouchers or some other resource, there is a large share of those units that will reach well below families making \$50,000 or more a year.

RON: OK, unless there are any comments our panelists want to make, I think we'll conclude this panel and move on to the next one. I just want to say one thing. Shaun Donovan, who'll be on the next panel, was in many ways one of the prime movers behind Housing First. Maybe he wants to deny it now, but it was the advocacy groups that really helped push a housing agenda in New York to where it is today. Anyhow, thank you all and thank you all for coming.