ASSESSMENT OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT IMPLEMENTED BY THE URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Final Report

The University of Maryland at College Park
Urban Studies and Planning Program
Project Officer: Dr. Marie Howland

Prepared by:

Burt S. Barnow
Institute for Policy Studies
Wyman Park Building
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
Telephone: (410) 516-5388

John W. Trutko
Capital Research Corporation
1910 N. Stafford Street
Arlington, Virginia 22207
Telephone: (703) 522-0885

February 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

I.   INTRODUCTION

In 1994, The United States Department of Education awarded a five-year grant under the Urban Community Service Program (UCSP) to the Urban Studies and Planning Program (URSP) at the University of Maryland at College Park. As stated in the Department of Education's original request for grant applications, the "purpose of the Urban Community Service Program is to encourage urban institutions of higher education or consortia of such institutions to serve as sources of skills, talents, and knowledge to devise and implement solutions to pressing and severe problems in their urban communities."[1] The grants are intended to encourage urban academic institutions to collaborate with other private and civic organizations to develop innovative and effective approaches to responding to problems with urban communities. The program is also designed to afford students in urban academic institutions an opportunity to learn more about the problems within their communities and participate in developing solutions to these problems. Only an accredited institution of higher education that has been designated as an urban grant institution or a consortium of such institutions may apply for an UCSP grant. To be designated as an urban institution eligible to receive an UCSP grant, the institution must meet one of the two following requirements:

- be a nonprofit municipal university, established by the governing body of the city in which it is located and operating as of July 23, 1992; or

- meet each of the six following criteria: (1) be located in an urban area; (2) draw at least 40 percent of its undergraduate students from the urban area in which it is located or from contiguous areas; (3) carry out programs to make postsecondary education opportunities more accessible to residents of that urban area; (4) have the capacity to provide resources to the needs and priorities of that urban area; (5)

---

[1]Department of Education, "Urban Community Service Program: Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 1993," CFDA No: 84.252.

offer a range of professional, technical, or graduate programs; and (6) demonstrate and sustain a sense of responsibility to the urban area.

Under the program, grants are awarded to conduct the following activities: (1) planning; (2) applied research; (3) training; (4) resource exchanges or technology transfers; (5) delivery of services; and (6) other activities to design and implement programs to assist urban communities to meet and address their pressing and severe problems. Some examples of the types of "pressing and severe" urban problems that these grants are designed to address are broadly defined and include the following:

- workforce preparation;

- urban poverty and alleviation of poverty;

- heath care, including delivery and access;

- underperforming school systems and students;

- problems faced by families, children, the elderly and individuals with disabilities in urban settings;

- campus and community crime prevention;

- urban housing, infrastructure or environmental concerns; and

- economic development.[2]

The grant received by the University of Maryland under the Urban Community Service Program was for a total of $1.0 million.[3] The period of performance under the grant was for five years -- beginning October 1994 and ending in September 1999. As described in its original

---

[2]Department of Education, "Urban Community Service Program: Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 1993," CFDA No: 84.252.

[3]The exact amount of the grant was $1,021,186. The University of Maryland provided a non-federal match of $471,532, bringing the total budget for the project of $1,492,718.

proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, the University planned to involve URSP faculty

and graduate students "in the provision of planning, applied research, training, and technical

assistance services to address high priority problems" in two urban Maryland communities: the

Southeast Baltimore community (located in the City of Baltimore) and the Palmer Park

neighborhood (located in Prince George's County, a county adjacent to Washington, D.C.).[4]

These two Maryland neighborhoods were selected because while they faced economic decline

and social dislocation, they both retained active citizen-based organizations committed to

revitalization. URSP noted in its original proposal that "carefully planned interventions are

necessary to ensure a sense of community and restore economic vitality...Both communities are

actively organizing to address their problems, and the purpose of this proposal is to offer

additional needed planning, research, and organizing support."[5] The Southeast Baltimore area

was also selected as one of the target areas because a number of URSP faculty, graduates, and

students had provided prior applied research and technical assistance in the area. Beside its

perceived need for assistance, the Palmer Park area was selected because the University is

located in the same county (Prince George's County) and URSP faculty and staff had been

involved recently with similar communities surrounding the District of Columbia. As discussed

in greater detail in the main body of the report, the scope of work under the grant was divided

into five project components (details on each of these five components are provided in Sections

---

[4]The University of Maryland at College Park, Urban Studies and Planning Program, "An Application to the Urban Community Service Program," submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, June 3, 1994, p. iii.

[5]The University of Maryland at College Park, Urban Studies and Planning Program, "An Application to the Urban Community Service Program," submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, June 3, 1994, p. 2.

II-VI below):

- *Economic Development in Southeast Baltimore*
- *Housing Stock Maintenance in Southeast Baltimore*
- *Education in Southeast Baltimore*
- *Park Usage and Safety in the Patterson Park Neighborhoods of Southeast Baltimore*
- *Housing Rehabilitation and Ownership in Palmer Park[6]*

Each of these five program components was designed to be directed by a URSP faculty member and to provide graduate students with valuable field experience in community revitalization planning and implementation. Under each of the project components, URSP planned to coordinate closely with area residents and community organizations, such as the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, Southeast Development, Inc., the Southeast Planning Council, and Friends of Patterson Park. As discussed in greater detail below, tasks and activities undertaken varied across program components, but included: survey administration and analysis; economic feasibility studies; development of data bases; assistance with preparation of grant applications; support and technical assistance for planning/oversight committees; and development of reports, brochures, and other program documentation.

As part of the original grant announcement, the U.S. Department of Education required each grant recipient to include an evaluation that would "produce descriptive information and other data about both the process and results of implementing each component of the project." In response to this requirement, the University of Maryland contracted in November 1999 with the Institute for Policy Studies of The Johns Hopkins University and Capital Research Corporation to

---

[6]The proposal also identified two other complementary tasks to be integrated with each of these five program components: (1) training and (2) creation and dissemination of a UCSP newsletter.

document and assess the implementation experiences and results of the five major components undertaken under the grant. Study findings are based primarily on (1) review of program documentation and deliverables produced under the project, (2) in-person and telephone interviews with URSP faculty and graduate students involved in the projects, and (3) telephone interviews with local agency officials and community leaders involved in the project. Appendix A provides a list of individuals interviewed for this report and a copy of the discussion guide used to structure interviews. Sections II-VI document the tasks and assess the results of each of the five major components undertaken under the project. Section VII provides conclusions and implications of the study, including "lessons learned" from the project about encouraging urban universities to serve as a valuable resource for ideas and skilled manpower to design and implement solutions to help stabilize and revitalized urban communities.

II. PROJECT COMPONENT #1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN SOUTHEAST BALTIMORE

Like many older large cities, Baltimore has suffered from deindustrialization in recent years, with many manufacturing jobs leaving for the suburbs, other urban areas in other parts of the nation or overseas, or simply disappearing. Southeast Baltimore has been especially hard hit by these trends. The University of Maryland's proposal for this project notes that 11 percent of the acreage in the area was vacant and 24 percent of the industrial/warehouse space in the area was unoccupied when the proposal was prepared. In an effort to revitalize the area, the Southeast Community Plan of 1993 calls for several efforts to rebuild the economic base in the area:

- Creation of a new industrial park in Southeast Baltimore: Create a state-of-the-art industrial park to stimulate employment and business opportunities; and

- Expand port-related industries: Identify new storage and warehouse facilities and study port-related spin-off industries.[7]

To assist the community implement these efforts, the University of Maryland proposal

had two objectives under this project component:

- **Objective 1: Cooperate with Southeast Development Inc. (SDI) and the Southeast Community Organization to solve very real problems of job loss and industrial decline in Southeast Baltimore, by creating a job retention and industrial park job strategy and assisting the city in strategy adoption.**

- **Objective 2: Provide a valuable, hands-on learning experience for Urban Studies and Planning Program graduate students that teaches them about the full technical and political complexity of planning and economic development.**

The objectives of this component differ from those of the other project components in two ways.

First, the other components include more than one substantive objective. Second, this is the

only component that has an objective that is targeted specifically on the students; it is not clear

whether the presence of a student-oriented objective represents a true distinction or if the

researchers who prepared the other components of the proposal implicitly assumed that student

growth was an objective of the project.

As work on the economic development task progressed, more specific objectives were

adopted. In the Progress Report submitted June 30, 1996, covering the first year of the grant,

four objectives are identified for the economic development project component:

- **Revised Objective #1: Recommend specific parcels to be assembled for an industrial park, and conduct an economic feasibility study for an industrial park on currently unoccupied sites;**

---

[7]Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland at College Park "An Application to the Urban Community Service Program," June 3, 1994.

- **Revised Objective #2: Identify the characteristics of firms successfully competing in the Canton and Fells Point industrial districts in order to develop strategies and marketing techniques for attracting new industry and marketing the industrial park identified in the first objective;**

- **Revised Objective #3: Identify problems faced by existing businesses in order to develop strategies for retaining existing firms; and**

- **Revised Objective #4: Create a computerized data base for accomplishing the first objective and to aid in future planning decisions for the Canton and Fells Point industrial districts.**

The revised set of objectives makes it easier to gauge project component progress.

In addition to the planned activities, the progress report of June 30, 1996 notes that the University of Maryland team undertook an additional task for the project. A number of business leaders who were interviewed expressed the view that the Mayor was unconcerned with the Canton/East Baltimore industrial district. To deal with this issue, the University of Maryland team initiated a conference hosted by the University along with the Southeast Community Organization, the Baltimore Development Corporation, and the Canton/East Baltimore Chamber of Commerce. Representatives of 112 local businesses attended the conference, where they were able to meet with the Mayor and several of his top aides.

To meet the first objective, the researchers conducted a survey of every parcel of land in the Canton/East Baltimore industrial district. Interviews were conducted with every owner who would speak to the team, and visual inspections were made of other properties. Four potential sites for an industrial park were identified in the area. All were formerly used as landfill sites or dumps. One site, on Pulaski Highway, was identified as the most promising site. A symposium was held to discuss the potential sites in January 1997, and over 100 individuals attended the symposium. Two graduate students working on the project conducted an in-depth financial

analysis of the preferred site, and a second community meeting was held in May 1997.

As a result of the project, the community learned that although much of the land appeared vacant, it was actually fully used. Work on this part of the project also stimulated the Baltimore Development Corporation to become active in the area. Although the University of Maryland met its objectives on this part of the project, the preferred site has not been developed into an industrial park. Because of legal concerns, the city's legal department would not permit an analysis of the proposed site for contamination, and so no progress could be made on using the site.

To meet Revised Objectives 2 and 3, 107 firms in the area were surveyed. An important result of this component of the project was the development of a methodology for identifying which firms in an area are most likely to stay in the area and which firms are most likely to leave. Dr. Howland published an article in *Economic Development Commentary* on how the "footloose" firms that are likely to flee can be identified. Revised Objective 4, developing a computerized database on land use, was completed early in the project. The database was used to help identify sites for the proposed industrial park.

We conducted interviews with several students and with an individual at a community organization involved in this project component. One student, who worked on the project for about nine months on a half-time basis, felt that the project provided a valuable experience, and he particularly benefited from conducting interviews with businesses. A second student, who worked on the project for about 15 hours per week, helped with planning and scheduling for the survey effort, administered the survey to about 100 local businesses, conducted analyses of the data, helped write the final report, and made presentations to the community and city officials.

He indicated that he "loved" the internship: "I met a lot of people through the internship, especially business people...I learned how they saw things and how to deal with business people...I learned about their perspectives and about the power of small businesses in communities." This internship also helped him in securing his first job when he completed studies at the University -- he obtained a job as a community organizer with one of the community development organizations that he worked with under his internship. He also credited the internship with providing valuable, "real-life" experience that help to prepare him for his initial job out of school, as well as his current job with the Prince Georges' County redevelopment agency.

A third student, who worked on the project 20 hours a week over a two-year period, was involved in a range of activities that "gave me good exposure to planning as a profession." He helped design and manage the Geographic Information Systems data system, which enabled the project team to create maps that helped visualize where an industrial park was viable. This student also helped interview business leaders and landowners to accumulate data on properties. Finally, he contributed to several articles published in a community newsletter. This student, who is currently working with a software firm, indicated that initially upon graduating from the program he secured a research position. He indicated that although he is not currently in a planning position, he has used some of the skills he developed during the internship in his current job. In looking back, he found the project to be a "rewarding experience" and was "glad for the skills I gained and the opportunities it presented." He found that the project was "run very well," though indicated "there were times I was frustrated because others did not take what we were trying to do as seriously because we were graduate students."

The representative of the community organization found the project to be valuable in several ways. First, he learned a great deal about the business community in the Canton area. In particular, he learned that the economic health of the area was much stronger than he had thought, and he also learned about the particular workforce development needs of the industries in Canton. The community organization was very pleased with the students who worked on the project and the tasks they accomplished. He characterized the survey of area businesses as "fantastic," and his organization was impressed enough with one of the students that they hired the student upon graduation. The person added that the students would not have been as valuable if they had not received extensive support from Dr. Howland. Overall, he characterized the project as highly beneficial to the area.

III.   **PROJECT COMPONENT #2: HOUSING STOCK MAINTENANCE IN SOUTHEAST BALTIMORE**

The Southeast Community Plan includes a recommendation to support the revitalization of neighborhoods on the west, north, and east sides of Patterson Park (in Southeast Baltimore). In January 1995, the University of Maryland in concert with the Patterson Park Neighborhood Initiative (PPNI) launched a study of housing in the Patterson Park area of Southeast Baltimore. This study was intended to help develop strategies to preserve and maintain well-managed rental housing, as well as encourage and facilitate homeownership opportunities.   This particular project component had five objectives:

> •   **Objective 1: Work with the Patterson Park Neighborhoods to analyze the "life histories" of a sample of housing units in a transitional Southeast neighborhood to identify significant events that turn well-kept owner-occupied or renter-occupied units into poorly kept units**.

- **Objective 2: Identify the implications of these findings for interventions aimed at preserving well-maintained units so that the Patterson Park Neighborhoods Initiative and other housing preservation initiatives in Southeast Baltimore can take actions to promote well-managed housing.**

- **Objective 3: Develop a neighborhood database reflecting socioeconomic as well as housing conditions in the Patterson Park Neighborhoods.**

- **Objective 4: Provide a forum for discussion between community groups and private landlords to discuss their own views regarding the dynamics of the rental housing market.**

- **Objective 5: Develop neighborhood-based interventions to preserve well-managed owner or renter occupied units.**

Underpinning the work on this project component were three basic premises: (1) a building's history can provide valuable insight into understanding its current condition; (2) transfers of title and the circumstances surrounding the change of ownership represent critical moments in the building's history and the condition of the building as it ages; and (3) the issues and concerns of landlords provide an important perspective needed to develop effective community-based housing strategies.[8]

The first activity under this project involved selection of 100 occupied rental buildings to provide a sample for comparing and contrasting "life histories" of the buildings. Title searches were conducted on each of these 100 buildings, which provided a history of when a building was sold, how much the mortgages were for, and who bought and sold each building. One interviewee from a community-based organization familiar with this effort noted that "the ownership records were not all that helpful...the title search probably should have been followed

---

[8]Tracy D"Angelo and Alex Chen, "Rental Housing," *The Community News,* Issue #1, June 1995, p. 5.

up by a knock on the doors of the units to see what had happened to the particular unit, when, and why."

Using U.S. Census data (dating back to 1970), as well as wide array of information from other sources (such as city and state agency data), researchers at the University of Maryland were able to create a community database on the Patterson Park community. The goal of this effort was to develop a community information database that would provide the Patterson Park Neighborhoods Initiative (PPNI) with a tool to visualize the housing landscape to analyze real estate patterns and trends and to develop strategies appropriate to the specific demands of the area. Researchers wanted to make the database easily accessible, timely, and relevant. In addition, they wanted the database to provide PPNI with a means to communicate with others such as the community groups, public agencies, and private organizations. The University researchers designed this database around a commercial-based desktop mapping software ("Mapinfo"). Data were collected at two levels of detail: (1) the first focused on population and housing data that had been aggregated to the census block level; and (2) the second focused on address-specific information. Specific street addresses were used to record data from a variety of sources -- for example, data were linked to specific street addresses, such as a recent home sale, a criminal incident, or whether a unit was owner-occupied housing unit. In addition, physical assets within the community (e.g., churches, schools, social service agencies) were also linked to a specific address. Using the desktop mapping software, researchers were then able to provide a spatial presentation of the data gathered (e.g., data were presented graphically within the context of a base map of Patterson Park). The mapping software helped researchers address such questions as: Where have recent property sales occurred? Where has crime occurred? Where are

vacant lots located?

Using the database and the mapping software, researchers from the University made a presentation (in November 1995) to representatives form the Patterson Park Neighborhood Initiative, the Baltimore City Planning Department, local non-profit organizations, and community representatives. During the presentation, maps were used extensively to display the distribution of variables related to demographics, crime activity, reports of lead poisoning, housing sales activity, and lots and building vacancies in Patterson Park. The maps also showed the location and holdings of major landlords in the area -- demonstrating that numerous small, independent landlords dominate the Patterson Park rental market. The researchers also made several important recommendations designed to promote long-term stabilization and development of the housing market in the Patterson Park area, including: the formation of a Patterson Park Property Owners' Association; the establishment of a PPNI-sponsored clearinghouse of housing information and assistance; the creation of a set of community-based education modules to be used by local schools; the creation of mechanisms to increase local church involvement in stabilization and revitalization efforts; and the development of community-based lead paint removal contracting firm. Both the researchers and community leaders involved in this project agreed that the data collection effort and spatial mapping contributed to a better understanding of developments in the area and helped in the formation of recommendations for action. In addition, staff from the University provided a training session on desktop mapping. While the database was used extensively by University researchers for analysis purpose, the database does not appear to have been used by PPNI or other community groups to conduct additional analyses (beyond those done by University staff).

In 1996, the University researchers conducted a survey aimed at determining how church congregations were dealing with the impact of demographic changes within Southeast Baltimore. This survey was conducted with a total of 48 respondents, including clergy, community members, and representatives of various neighborhood groups. The survey provided valuable information about trends in growth among church congregations, key concerns of clergy, how churches view their role in their communities, and the services available through churches.

To expand and strengthen understanding of the rental housing market, University researchers conducted a survey of Patterson Park landlords and held several workshops for landlords. Though able to complete interviews with a small number of the more than 200 landlords in the Patterson Park area, researchers found that many landlords were simply not cooperative when asked to complete the survey. Though survey results were limited by non-response, University researchers were able to conclude from the interviews that landlords were generally not familiar with the city regulations on housing and were in need of basic information regarding property management. In conjunction with PPNI, the University sponsored three landlord workshops. The topics chosen for discussion were based on concerns voiced by landlords. The three topics that were the focus of the workshops were: lead paint legislation, tenant screening procedures, and trash collection. City officials came and spoke to landlords on these topics. Several hundred landlords were invited to each workshop, with between 20 to 40 landlords actually attending each session. These sessions provided an opportunity for landlords to see that they were not alone with their problems and to obtain some useful information. The sessions also provided an opportunity for landlords to talk with one another about common problems and discuss possible solutions. The workshops also afforded some opportunity for

landlords and PPNI to get to better know one another and helped to foster better communication between landlords and PPNI. The University of Maryland researchers hoped that the landlords would take over the workshops and continue to sponsor addition sessions. Although a group of landlords agreed to do so, additional meetings were not convened. In addition, the project was unable to get PPNI and other community groups to meet and work together on a continuing basis with area landlords. One PPNI administrator noted, "We learned from the workshops how landlords think...but could not get landlords to be part of a regular group."

Overall, the housing planning project provided several useful analytical products -- particularly the detailed mapping of the housing market within the Patterson Park area and establishment of a database for future analysis of housing and socio-economic trends in the Patterson Park area. In addition, the project resulted in some sharing of information between community groups and landlords, including the sponsorship of three workshops involving Patterson Park landlords. However, the involvement of landlords was limited to a relatively small number of landlords and did not extend beyond the end of the grant period. Though over the long-term the housing data base developed under this project component may prove to be useful and supportive of the housing planning and development process, there was little evidence that the research activities conducted had (by the end of the grant period) contributed to the development of neighborhood-based interventions to preserve well-managed owner or renter occupied units.

IV.   PROJECT COMPONENT #3: EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST BALTIMORE

The Education Planning project covered the areas of the Southeast Community Plan,

which includes a total of 16 schools. Underpinning this planning effort was the belief that

improving education is essential to stabilizing the Southeast Baltimore community. The

Southeast Planning Council decided education was too complex an issue to include in the first

round of the Southeast planning process. Instead, the Council recommended that a group be

formed with a specific focus on education and that this group be responsible for development of

a comprehensive plan for improving education in Southeast Baltimore. The Education Planning

Project had four objectives:

- **Objective 1: Establish an Education Planning Committee**.

- **Objective 2: Develop a Southeast community plan for education, including a statement of values and expectations, identification of problems and needs, and formulation of intervention goals and strategies.**

- **Objective 3: Develop a database on educational issues of concern to Southeast Baltimore residents.**

- **Objective 4: Begin to implement interventions serving community education goals.**

Activities under this project began in January 1995 and continued through to the end of

the grant period.[9] The early months of the project were devoted to forming the planning group --

in the early stages referred to as the Coordinating Committee -- and setting in motion research

and planning activities. A small (six member) Coordinating Committee was initially formed,

which included the University of Maryland faculty member responsible under the grant for this

project component. This coordinating committee initially held a series of meetings with the

Superintendent of the Baltimore City Schools, Area Assistant Superintendents, some principals

---

[9]In fact, the faculty member responsible for this project continued to work with this planning project after the conclusion of the grant.

from schools within the planning area, PTA and PTO officers, Southeast education activists, local foundations, civic organizations, and other education groups. These early meetings helped to introduce the planning project within the community and the schools, refine the scope of the project, and identify resources that might be available for implementation of the plan.

In the summer of 1995, the Coordinating Committee formed three work groups to conduct research needed for the planning process to move forward -- (1) an Interview Group, responsible for conducting interviews with principals, teachers, parents, and students at Southeast schools; (2) a Data Group, responsible for collecting and analyzing data on education and the schools; and (3) a Models Group, responsible for identifying successful models and programs in other localities that might be applicable to Southeast Baltimore. These three groups were to conduct research activities and report back at the first meeting of the Education Task Force planned for the early fall 1995.

In October 1995, the Southeast Baltimore Education Task Force convened a kick-off meeting, which was attended by about 70 people, including parents, teachers, principals, students, and other community members. During this initial meeting, the work groups reported on the results of their research activities. The Interview Group reported on the results of discussions about strengths and weaknesses of schools with principals, teachers, parents, and students conducted at all 16 Southeast Baltimore schools. The Data Group reported on initial analysis of data on students attending the 16 Southeast Baltimore schools over the three previous academic years. The Models Group recommended that four work groups be formed to further the planning process: (1) a School Programs Group, to consider innovations that could improve the education process, (2) a Safe Schools Group, to examine ways to make the schools safer, (3)

a School Community Relations Group, to talk about ways of involving more parents in schools, and (4) a Resources Group, to examine the range of economic and non-economic resources schools could draw on to implement the plan. The Task Force formed four workgroups. The workgroups included parents, teachers, business leaders, high school students, other community members, nonprofit agency staff, education activists, Americorps volunteers, and college students. These workgroups, which were assisted by faculty and graduate students from the University of Maryland, met regularly throughout 1996 with the goal of providing the analyses and information necessary for producing the education plan.

The planning process stretched across about a four-year period, culminating in the publication of a final plan in February 1999 -- *The Southeast Community Plan on Education: Toward a Future of Hope and Opportunity.* The report was presented to the New Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners and the Chief Executive Officer. The Task Force work groups also gathered input for the plan through community meetings and symposia, meetings with school officials, and consultation with education experts. In addition, the Task Force surveyed principals, teachers, and parents at the schools to help with formulation of plan recommendations. Throughout the process, University of Maryland faculty and graduate students played a critical role in helping to guide the process forward and provided analyses that helped with the plan development. According to one official from a community-based organization who was involved from the beginning of the planning process: "Faculty and staff from the University of Maryland helped with developing the plan, providing research help and coordination which helped to sustain the Task Force. For example, students studied issues related to school safety, attendance, independent funding sources, and church involvement in

local schools." A leader on the task force noted that faculty and graduate students from the University of Maryland "helped with research, for example, on what are best practices around the country, and asked thought-provoking questions." Several months prior to finalizing the planning report, the Task Force convened a Community Assembly to discuss and refine the final recommendations included in the report. The final plan included 18 recommendations for improving education in Southeast Baltimore. Several examples of the recommendations that emerged in the report are: (1) strengthen parental involvement in school improvement planning; (2) establish diverse long-term partnerships between schools and community institutions; and (3) assist schools with after-school programs that promote growth and involved family and community members.

In terms of the four original objectives under this project, while the first two goals were met, the last two goals were only partially met as of the end of the grant. Under the first objective, the project successfully established an education planning committee (referred to as the Southeast Education Task Force). Over the course of this project, a total of about 40 individuals were on the Task Force. An estimated 600 individuals from the community had some level of involvement with the project (including attending meetings of the planning group and discussing the plan), with a core group of about 25 individuals responsible for much of the substantive work on developing the plan. Following the completion of the plan, the Task Force continued to meet and focus on implementation of the plan. One of the most important outcomes of this project was that it served as an umbrella under which it was possible to pull together members of the community and schools -- and to focus their collective energy on improving local schools.

The most tangible product of the planning process was the plan itself, which included a statement of values and expectations, identification of problems and needs within the schools, and formulation of intervention goals and strategies (i.e., a series of recommendations). According to one participant in the planning process, it took substantial time and community involvement to reach a point at which the plan came together: "After four years, people finally agreed that it was a good idea to develop a plan -- people finally had confidence that they had something worthwhile to say. In 1999, the plan was drafted, which helped to codify people's thinking."

Although the project did end up providing some useful analyses and data on students within the schools, which helped in formulating the final education plan, the project fell short of accomplishing the third objective -- of developing a database on educational issues of concern to Southeast Baltimore residents. Unfortunately, the Data Group experienced difficulty in obtaining data on students and teachers from the school system (a representative of a community-based organization we interviewed who was involved in the planning process observed that "this task was made more difficult because the school system was reticent to provide data"). While some basic data were obtained, there was some disappointment among project staff that the school system could not provide more comprehensive and up-to-date data that would have been helpful in the planning process.

In terms of the fourth project goal -- beginning to implement interventions in line with the education plan and serving community education goals -- there was little time left (slightly over six months) under the University's grant from the Department of Education to implement the plan. However, faculty and students were involved in a number of initiatives either in the

schools or affecting the schools that supported specific recommendations included in the plan.

Some of these activities were undertaken before the plan was published and others were initiated

shortly after plan publication. Several examples of activities undertaken included the following:

- With the help of a graduate student, one of the elementary schools in the Southeast region developed a mentoring program. The school was able to recruit two local citizen groups to provide volunteers to work with students in grades one through three.

- Project staff met with the empowerment zone (EZ) staff and was able to get EZ to fund extended school day programs.

- The project was able to obtain grant funding for GED instruction at two schools.

- Project staff worked with two principals to develop full-service community schools.

- Parent development programs were funded in several schools.

- Project staff assisted with organizing testimony before the General Assembly on a capital budget for the schools.

Overall, the University faculty and staff were successful in providing the support needed

by the Task Force in developing the education plan. One leader of the Task Force recommended

that technical assistance to local communities "should be an ongoing activity of the university...it

is very helpful." Despite the input and help of the University, the planning process extended over

a much longer time than originally envisioned -- in part, because it took a long time to gather

views from the many stakeholders involved in the educational system, reach consensus on the

plan, and produce the final plan. As a result, by the time the plan was published, there was little

remaining time under the grant to implement major parts of the plan. As noted earlier, there was

some activity on the part of University faculty and students and the Task Force to pilot test and

implement some aspects of the plan at some schools prior to and immediately after the plan was

completed.

V. PROJECT COMPONENT #4: PARK USAGE AND SAFETY IN THE PATTERSON PARK NEIGHBORHOODS OF SOUTHEAST BALTIMORE

Patterson Park, located in Southeast Baltimore (approximately one mile east of Baltimore's Inner Harbor), is the second largest park in the City of Baltimore (covering 155 acres). Over the years, the park's design and uses have changed, and there has been a succession of different structures and facilities erected throughout the park. Major facilities within the park include a covered ice rink, a boat lake, a swimming pool, a bath house (now used for storage), a recreation center, an observation tower, an area of community gardens, and a number of sports fields and courts. While the park continues to be well used, a number of concerns have emerged in recent years, which were a focus of the URSP's efforts under the grant, including: (1) concerns that many of the park's facilities have fallen into disrepair (e.g., the lake was no longer useable for boating, walkways were crumbling, and buildings needed repairs), (2) concerns about public safety within and around the park, (3) a lack of a coherent plan for the future development of the park, and (4) lack of a citizen organization to act as an advocate for the park redevelopment.

As set forth in the original proposal, the Patterson Park Usage and Safety Project had three main objectives:

- **Objective 1: Analyze uses, problems, and possibilities in the park.**

- **Objective 2: Assist residents in preparing an action plan to increase park usage and safety.**

- **Objective 3: Create a master plan for Patterson Park.**

The tasks conducted by the faculty and students at the university supported these three main

objectives, though the scope of the effort was scaled back and changed when the city took the lead role on the development of the master plan for Patterson Park. The role of faculty and staff under the grant was characterized by faculty, students, and community activists involved in the project as a supportive one which contributed significantly to the development of the master plan and to the creation of a citizen organization to act as an advocate for the park. While there was some success in raising funds to support redevelopment of the park (about $3 million of an estimated $10 million required has been raised), actual implementation of the master plan had not occurred as of June 2000.

The major project activities undertaken under this component were primarily in support of the first objective under the scope of work -- analysis of uses, problems, and possibilities in the park. The research activities provided important background information to assist the City of Baltimore in the development of the master plan and for raising funds for implementation of the plan. URSP made Patterson Park the subject of its Fall 1994 "Planning Studio" at the University. Throughout the Fall 1994, a group of seven URSP graduate students met with residents, neighborhood organizations, community groups, and schools and merchants in the area surrounding the park, gathering information about the park and finding out how residents feel about it. To collect information, the graduate students used a variety of methods, including:

- observations were conducted in the park from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. to capture a wide range of park activities;

- surveys were designed and given to local community associations for distribution to neighborhood residents -- these surveys were designed to measure park usage and views on the park (e.g., safety);

- focus groups were held in all surrounding neighborhoods to gather additional views on local feelings, experiences, and concerns associated with the park;

- in-person interviews were conducted with key city officials, community leaders, and park users;

- "mental mapping" exercises were conducted with youngsters in the local middle schools to get an idea of children's perceptions of the park; and

- studies of park history were reviewed.

The results of this study were published in a report, *Patterson Park: Putting the Pieces Together,*[10] which provided a history of the development of the park, analysis of its uses, and recommendations for possible future development of the park. The report also included a list of recommended sources for funding and assistance to aid in the further development of a master plan for the park. One of the recommendations of this report was to establish a nonprofit group that would take responsibility for various park management tasks and to raise funds to supplement public park funding.

In a collaborative effort undertaken with the City's Department of Recreation and Parks, the URSP faculty and students conducted a survey in the Summer 1995 to assess park usage and how users viewed the park. Over the course of several days, observers stationed at the park edges monitored pedestrian and automobile traffic; a second group of observers canvassed the park at predetermined times to find out how the park was used on a typical day and by whom. In addition to observation, URSP conducted telephone interviews with a random sample of neighborhood park users and non-users to obtain community input about the park. The results of this survey effort, which were subsequently used as a background source of information for

---

[10]M. Berglund, S. Davis, J. Hanson, S. Kane, R. Paul, M. Simon, and D. Trimble, *Patterson Park: Putting the Pieces Together,* Fall 1994 Graduate Planning Studio at the University of Maryland-College Park, 1995.

developing the park's master plan, were published in a 1996 report, *Patterson Park -- How People Use It and Feel About It.*[11]

When work on this project component began, it was learned that the City's Department of Recreation and Parks had already hired a consultant and was in the process of developing an action plan for the park. Thus, there was no need for URSP to take the lead on the development of the master plan. Instead, URSP provided support for development of the plan and with UCSP grant funds assigned a graduate student to work directly with the Department of Recreation and Parks to assist in development of the plan and with getting the community involved in the planning process. This student helped schedule and attended organizational meetings involving residents of the community and was involved in the conduct of a community-wide survey of residents to obtain input on their use of the park and recommendations for park development.

With input and support provided by URSP faculty and staff -- which included support for the five subcommittees working on the development of the master plan -- the master plan was completed in January 1998. Despite approval of the plan by the City's Planning Commission (in the Spring 1998) and success in raising funds to support plan implementation, as of the summer of 2000, implementation of the master plan had not yet begun (and was a source of concern and frustration within the Patterson Park community).

As one final task under this project component, University of Maryland researchers conducted a study assessing the value of community participation in the master planning process for Patterson Park. This study consisted of conducting focus groups with citizens who were

---

[11]S. Brower, E Strocko, and M. Brosius, *Patterson Park -- How People Use It and Feel About It,* Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks and Urban Studies and Planning Program of the University of Maryland, 1996.

involved in the master planning process to find out whether or not they felt the planning effort

was worthwhile and/or beneficial for the park and the surrounding neighborhood. City official

who were either involved in the planning effort, or might be responsible for implementing the

project or managing the park, were also interviewed. The results of these interviews, published

in a report entitled *Community Participation in the Plan for Patterson Park in Baltimore,*

Maryland: An Assessment,[12] indicated that both the City and community felt that it was important

to involve residents in the master planning process.

Our interviews with faculty, students, and community residents involved in this project

component indicated generally that activities initiated by URSP had helped significantly to move

the planning process along -- providing needed manpower, expertise, and information to guide

the planning process. According to those interviewed, among the main contributions made by

URSP to the Patterson Park planning effort were the following:

- Faculty and student participation helped increase community participation in development of the park plan. It was noted that community participation was not all that essential in terms of affecting the eventual plan; however, because of community involvement residents became convinced the plan was, in fact, their plan. The process both helped to gain community buy-in to the plan and established trust between residents and the city (and the planner).

- At least in part as a result of the involvement of the university, community subcommittees were set up to assist in the master planning process, and the Friends of Patterson Park, which had long been a dormant grassroots neighborhood organization, was revitalized. One interviewee noted, "The input, skill, and energy of one of the interns was instrumental in getting Friends of Patterson Park off the ground as an organization. Due to the input of faculty and interns from the university, we have an organization (Friends of Patterson Park) and that organization is not going away."

---

[12]S. Brower and E. Todd, *Community Participation in the Plan for Patterson Park in Baltimore, Maryland: An Assessment,* Urban Studies and Planning Program of the University of Maryland, 1998.

- The reports developed under the grant provided valuable input for development of the master plan and helped with raising funds for (eventual) implementing the plan. According to one community activist we interviewed: "The project resulted in a wonderful background report, which has proved useful in preparing grant applications, helped with lobbying in Annapolis, and provided a useful reference on the park." Another interviewee involved in the process noted that the URSP effort helped to sharpen the master plan: "Student and faculty input on the master plan (developed by the city) helped to make the plan more targeted and useful."

- The tasks and activities conducted under this project component provided students with "real life" experiences, which reinforced what was learned in the classroom and, for some, provided valuable experience for securing future work.

Overall, according to those we interviewed, this project component produced complementary benefits for the community (in terms of a well-designed master plan) and the university (in terms of linking faculty to the community and providing real-life experiences for faculty and students). One community activist noted the need for project such as this one to be replicated in other communities: "The types of assistance provided are transferable...in fact, non-profits everywhere need help that universities can provide...we were glad to have them work with us...they did not just produce some academic stuff that sits on the shelf."

VI. PROJECT COMPONENT #5: HOUSING REHABILITATION AND OWNERSHIP IN PALMER PARK

Palmer Park is an unincorporated community of approximately 7,000 residents in Prince George's County.[13] Built in the 1950s, the community was originally a middle-income suburban community, consisting of attached single-family housing units. In recent years, however, the community has experienced a number of problems -- key businesses in the major shopping center

---

[13]See Palmer Park Neighborhood Action Partnership, Inc. *Palmer Park Community Plan for the Revitalization of the Palmer Park Neighborhood of Prince George's County, Maryland*, January 1997.

have closed, a number of properties are distressed or abandoned, and some problems with crime

and drug trafficking have emerged. The Palmer Park project differs from the other projects in

that Palmer Park is a suburb of the District of Columbia rather than in a southeastern portion of

Baltimore.

The University of Maryland's proposal had three objectives for the Palmer Park project:

- **Objective 1: Help identify abandoned and/or poorly maintained rental units and develop strategies for rehabilitation of these units.**

- **Objective 2: Assist tenants to become owners of rehabilitated housing.**

- **Objective 3: Develop neighborhood appearance standards for Palmer Park.**

The proposal focused only on housing, but the Palmer Park community wanted to

increase the scope of work. A startup meeting was held in January 1995 with about 60 area

residents. One of the conclusions that emerged from the meeting was that it was not a good

strategy to focus only on housing. The residents and University of Maryland researchers

concluded that they needed to address issues such as crime, trash collection, and business health.

 Thus, early in the project a decision was made to create a comprehensive community plan for

Palmer Park as a fourth objective. As the University's May 12, 1995 application for continued

funding states, "The plan is necessary because project participants now realize that housing

rehabilitation cannot, by itself, produce the kind of community improvement that will make

Palmer Park attractive to first-time homebuyers."

One of the first steps undertaken in the project was a decision to create a nonprofit

corporation to represent the residents' interests and implement the plan. Thus, the Palmer Park

Citizen Association formed the Palmer Park Neighborhood Action Partnership (PPNAP), and

incorporated the new organization as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

To meet the first objective, University students and neighborhood residents conducted an external survey of all dwelling units in Palmer Park. The survey was important in identifying the size and nature of the housing problem in Palmer Park. The survey identified 390 homes with problems visible from the street, and the problem units were classified into five categories:

- 16 homes were abandoned and/or vacant and were not boarded up.

- 23 units were vacant but had secured doors and windows.

- 50 homes were occupied but had multiple problems observable from the street.

- 240 homes were occupied or unoccupied and had only one or two major problems observable from the exterior, such as roofs, gutters, or fencing.

- nearly 60 units had minor painting or other cosmetic problems.[14]

The first objective also called for development of rehabilitation strategies for the problem units. One activity that was undertaken to meet this objective was organizing a community housing fair on affordable financing for repair and rehabilitation of housing. This activity also was directed toward the second project objective, assisting tenants to become owners, but we were not able to obtain evidence of how successful the housing fair was at promoting rehabilitation or ownership. Another activity undertaken to meet this objective was working with PPNAP in preparing a proposed amendment to the Prince George's County Housing Code that would have enabled the community to have poorly maintained property seized, improved, and sold. Based on our interviews, however, it does not appear that this part of the project has led to any success in rehabilitating property.

---

[14]Ibid, p. 12.

Several actions were taken to meet Objective 2. As noted above, a housing fair was held early in the project to inform residents about financing available for purchasing and rehabilitating housing. The project also assisted the community in obtaining a $10,000 grant from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to provide a nine-week training program for young people in the community to learn construction work. This grant leveraged a $15,000 grant from the local private industry council. Eight residents completed the program, six of whom work in construction and the other two enrolled in the Job Corps.

The third objective was to develop neighborhood appearance standards for Palmer Park. The standards were developed, and they were published in the *Palmer Park Community Plan.* The Plan notes that "Neighborhood Appearance Guidelines are an important component of the Palmer Park Community Plan....By implementing these guidelines, Palmer Park will become a more attractive and better serviced community."[15] Unfortunately, as one of the residents of Palmer Park noted in an interview, the guidelines are not enforceable, so they have had no effect on the maintenance of the community.

Our review of the progress reports, literature provided, and interviews with residents indicated that the project was quite successful in assisting the Palmer Park neighborhood. One resident of the neighborhood stated, "Jim Cohen was the best thing that ever happened to Palmer Park." Significantly, the success of the project was not so much in achieving the three objectives contained in the proposal to the Department of Education; instead, Dr. Cohen and his students worked with the community to emphasize activities that would be of the most benefit to the residents. Perhaps the best example of the flexibility and responsiveness of the University of

---

[15]Ibid.

Maryland team was in interpreting their mandate broadly and working with the community in forming the PPNAP and helping them develop the *Palmer Park Community Plan.* The plan includes a vision statement along with goals and specific objectives in five specific areas: housing, economic opportunity, public safety, community services and environmental quality, and organization and participation. The University of Maryland researchers worked with the community on all of these issues, not just those that were described in their proposal to the Department of Education.

The University's involvement in Palmer Park, and the creation and dissemination of the Palmer Park Community Plan, resulted in the County government's paying greater attention to Palmer Park's needs. For example, the Director of the County's Department of Public Works made certain that her agency addressed those elements in the plan for which her Department had responsibility. As a result, street lighting in the community was upgraded (including the placement of additional street lamps) and potholes were filled. Also, the County established a Model Blocks program, focused on Palmer Park Road, under which a range of county services will be provided to improve housing and employment opportunities. One result of Model Blocks is the reservation of county Single Family Home Rehabilitation funds for Palmer Park homeowners.[16]

Another way in which the project benefited the community beyond what was in the

---

[16]One student (who had worked as an intern at the University on a different project, the Economic Development of Southeast Baltimore project) now working with the Prince Georges County redevelopment agency indicated that the county had selected the Palmer Park community for a $10 million investment project, in part, because the community had a comprehensive plan. This plan gave Palmer Park a competitive advantage over other communities that did not have a plan and was a key reason why the Palmer Park area was selected.

proposal is that the University team worked with the PPNAP to obtain a number of specific grants that provided a variety of services. Grants that the University of Maryland team helped the community obtain include: the $10,000 construction training grant described above; a $10,000 grant from the Meyer Foundation to enable the community to hire a part-time resident coordinator; a $20,000 general support grant from the Public Welfare Foundation to acquire and furnish an office in a shopping center; a $3,770 grant from the Meyer Foundation to provide technical assistance to the PPNAP Board of Directors; and a $19,600 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assist in the cleanup of Cattail Branch Creek in the Palmer Park neighborhood.

There were also a number of spin-offs from the planning project that are expected to benefit the Palmer Park community in the future. For example, the Palmer Park Neighborhood Action Partnership initiated two programs that are now being carried out by other entities. One is a computer learning center for latchkey children, located in the Kenmoor School. The other is the Palmer Park Boys and Girls Club, now administered by a separate community organization.

Finally, this project also provided the students who were involved in working on the project with a valuable learning experience. For example, one student, who worked on the Palmer Park project for 20-25 hours per week (on average), provided technical assistance to community organizations, assisted with financial analyses, and helped with development of the comprehensive plan for Palmer Park. He noted that the availability of the internships (which provided a stipend and partial tuition reimbursement) under this grant was a major factor in his decision to attend the University. He found the internship to be a "fantastic experience...undoubtedly, it was the best part of my experience at the University." He found the

internship valuable from the standpoint of putting theories learned in the classroom to effect in the community: "The internship helped with understanding the community development process...what makes communities work well and the forces that keep communities from not developing...how individual dynamic are important and about the role politics at the community level plays in community development." This student is now a director of an alternative school. He credits his internship at the University both for helping him to obtain his job in the first place and for providing valuable experience that has helped him to be more effective on the job. Finally, he noted that all of the other students involved in the internships under the University's grant got a lot out of their experiences and that often students shared experiences and what they had learned with one another.

A second student we interviewed worked on the project for about 20 hours per week over a two-year period. She was involved in a number of project activities that proved to be valuable learning experiences, including: co-leading a number of work groups, assisting with the development of the community development plan (including analyzing data and helping to draft the plan), and planning and attending many meetings with community leaders. This student indicated that her internship under this project provided valuable experience that she is now using in her work as a federal government official with the Environmental Protection Agency:

> ...I found it to be a very good learning experience...an excellent introduction to grassroots revitalization efforts, local planning efforts, the relationship between communities and the services available to assist them in achieving their goals. It has been very useful actually having that local government perspective now that I am working at the federal level because I understand some of the dynamics and issues they're facing and some of the relationships with county and state government that help illuminate some of the relationships that we deal with heading back down the other way working through states to reach communities.

She noted that overall "this was one of the most significant experiences in my life."

Thus, the Palmer Park project was successful in providing a number of services that the community would not likely have obtained in its absence. The community learned a great deal about working with the county and other authorities, and the establishment of the PPNAP should help them sustain the efforts that started under the project's leadership. The project also provided students with a valuable learning experience, which reinforced what was learned in the classroom. Despite the fact that this project continues to have an impact on the community, community-based organizations may miss the grantsmanship provided by the University of Maryland team, and this could make it difficult to sustain activities that require outside funding.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

As discussed earlier (in Section I), the overall purpose of the Urban Community Service Program grants is to encourage urban institutions of higher education to serve as "sources of skills, talents, and knowledge to devise and implement solutions to pressing and severe problems in their urban communities." Based on a review of the materials produced under each of the five project components, as well as interviews with University of Maryland faculty and staff and individuals within the communities served by these projects, we conclude that the tasks and activities undertaken under the UCSP grant did support this overall objective. The wide-ranging activities undertaken across the five program components under the grant supported a second major objective of UCSP -- these activities expanded interaction and collaboration between University faculty and students and other community organizations and community leaders. These collaborative efforts contributed to formulation of strategies and approaches to responding

to problems within the Southeast Baltimore and Palmer Park communities. All five project

components involved extensive interaction and linkages with "grassroots" community

organizations. In addition, the wide variety of research activities undertaken by graduate students

at the University provided many "real life" opportunities for students to learn more about the

problems within their communities and participate in developing solutions to these problems.

Students, faculty, and individuals within the local communities all agreed that the graduate

students involved in research activities under the UCSP grant gained valuable experiences and

these students provided much needed manpower, energy, and expertise to further the planning

and implementation of community development activities.

Representatives of community organizations observed that faculty and graduate students

expanded the level of analysis of community problems and strategies. University researchers

introduced new analytical tools (such as mapping software) and techniques that otherwise would

not have been available or used by community organizations. Faculty and staff developed and

produced a series of research products -- including background reports, planning documents, and

briefings -- that tangibly contributed to community dialogue and provided a framework for

community development activities. In several instances, faculty and staff also helped with the

development of grant proposals, which brought added resources to communities. Faculty and

staff also provided technical assistance and labor to help local organizations with implementation

of recommendations that emerged from planning reports and other studies. However, faculty

noted that the primary thrust of their work focused on providing research support and

recommendations for further action -- and that community organizations and advocates largely

undertook the implementation activities. Faculty noted that the focus of grant activities was on

supporting the planning and implementation activities of community organizations. Active and sustained involvement of individuals and organizations within the community was critical to defining the scope of work and timetable for research activities undertaken by faculty and students. Ultimate success of each of the program components in moving forward community development objectives and activities rested on close and continuous collaboration between the University researchers and community organization. The work of faculty and students could not -- and should not -- be viewed as a substitute for engaging community organizations and individuals.

Given the limited resources available for our assessment, we could not conduct a cost-benefit analysis. Thus, we cannot draw any conclusions about whether the benefits of this project exceed the costs. We can conclude, however, that the projects were beneficial to the students and helped the local community organizations better develop their objectives and strategies and to implement strategies to meet these objectives.

APPENDIX A:

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Faculty at Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland:

Dr. Howell Baum, Faculty of the Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland - Directed Project Component #3, Education in Southeast Baltimore

Dr. Sidney Brower, Faculty of the Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland - Directed Project Component #4, Park Usage and Safety in the Patterson Park Neighborhoods of Southeast Baltimore

Alexander Chen, Faculty of the Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland - Directed Project Component #2, Housing Stock Maintenance in Southeast Baltimore

Dr. Jim Cohen, Faculty of the Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland - Directed Project Component #5, Housing Rehabilitation and Ownership in Palmer Park

Dr. Marie Howland, Director of the Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland - Overall Project Manager and Directed Project Component #1, Economic Development in Southeast Baltimore

Other Interviewees:

Marty Dubroff, Former Student, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland

Sister Barbara Ann English, Chair of the Southeast Education Task Force

Chris Helmers, Staff, Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation

Kevin Harris, Former Student, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland

Shirley Lloyd, Staff, Banner Neighborhoods

Mary Roby, Community Organizer, South East Community Organization (SECO)

Edward Rutkowski, Former Director of the Patterson Park Neighborhood Initiative (PPNI)

Mark Showalter, Former Student, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland

Ken Strong, Administrator, South East Community Organization (SECO)

Nancy Supik, Community Organizer, Banner Neighborhoods

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES (CONTINUED)

Dan Trimble, Former Student, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland

Sylvester Vaughns, Member of the Patterson Park Neighborhood Action Partnership

Stephanie Vonfeck, Former Student, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland

Discussion Guide for Partnering Local Organizations --
Economic Development Planning in Southeast Baltimore (Project Component #1)

A.   Background on the Interviewee/Partnering Agencies

- Name
- Role in the Project Component
- If individual is affiliated with an organization -- some background on the organization:
  - Year Founded; How the Organization Has Grown over Time
  - Mission and Goals
  - Service Area
  - Target Population (if relevant)
  - Major Programs/Components Administered
  - Annual Funding and Types of Funds

B.   Program Involvement and Types of Assistance

1.   How did you first hear about or come to work with the U. Of Md. (i.e., the Urban Community Service Program) on this project?

2.   When did your involvement (or your organizations) in this project start? Is it ongoing? If not, when did it end?

3.   Why did your organization decide to collaborate with the University on this project? What did you hope to get out of partnering with the University? What were the overall goals and purposes of the collaborative effort? Did project goals change over time? If so, how and why did they change?

4.   Were the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the University documented in a contract or memorandum of understanding? If so, can we obtain a copy?

5.   What was the specific nature of the U. of Md. role and involvement in the project?

- financial resources
- staffing
- types of assistance/services provided, including intensity of effort (e.g., number and types of meetings held, specific types of expertise/help provided)

What was the specific nature of your organization's role and involvement in the project?

6. What is your assessment of how well the University performed in providing assistance/services under the project? Were there specific areas where the university was particularly effective? ...less effective?

7. What kinds of implementation barriers were encountered during project start-up? What factors affected start-up? Were there any ongoing challenges to achieving project goals?

8. The University's proposal to the Department of Education identified key objectives for the Economic Development Planning in Southeast Baltimore project. Let's discuss how well you think they achieved each of these objectives and, if they did not meet any of the objectives, why? [Notes from start-up meeting are included as background]:

   • **Objective 1: To cooperate with Southeast Development, Inc. and the Southeast Community Organization to solve problems of job loss and industrial decline in the area by creating a job retention and industrial park job strategy and assisting the city in strategy adoption.** Students and the faculty member prepared several reports dealing with these issues. The first report dealt with the existing businesses in the area. The second report analyzed industrial ownership in Southeast Baltimore, and a third report discussed strategies for overcoming barriers to redevelopment.

   • **Objective 2: To provide a valuable hands-on learning experience to graduate students that teaches about the technical and political complexity of planning economic development. [Need more feedback from Marie on this.]**

9. Overall, was the collaborative project successful in achieving its goals? Did it have any tangible effects on the local community? Can you identify any specific impacts that this project had on the surrounding community? What would you say were the 2 or 3 most important impacts of the initiative?

10. Did the project produce reports, briefings, or internal studies, and if so, could we have copies of relevant documents? What was the general quality and usefulness of the products? Were they widely disseminated?

11. Were there specific aspects of the project with which you were disappointed? Were there ways in which the project might have been enhanced?

12. Would you recommend involvement of other agencies like your own in similar initiatives with the U. of Md.? ...with other local universities? Why?

13. Do location or other distinctive features of this initiative make it either non-transferable or limit it transferability to other sites? Are there features of the project that you would suggest replicating in other areas? ...not suggest replicating in other areas?

Discussion Guide for Partnering Local Organizations --
Housing Stock Maintenance in Southeast Baltimore (Project Component #2)

A.   Background on the Interviewee/Partnering Agencies

- Name
- Role in the Project Component
- If individual is affiliated with an organization -- some background on the organization:
  - Year Founded; How the Organization Has Grown over Time
  - Mission and Goals
  - Service Area
  - Target Population (if relevant)
  - Major Programs/Components Administered
  - Annual Funding and Types of Funds

B.   Program Involvement and Types of Assistance

1.   How did you first hear about or come to work with the U. Of Md. (i.e., the Urban Community Service Program) on this project?

2.   When did your involvement (or your organizations) in this project start? Is it ongoing? If not, when did it end?

3.   Why did your organization decide to collaborate with the University on this project? What did you hope to get out of partnering with the University? What were the overall goals and purposes of the collaborative effort? Did project goals change over time? If so, how and why did they change?

4.   Were the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the University documented in a contract or memorandum of understanding? If so, can we obtain a copy?

5.   What was the specific nature of the U. of Md. role and involvement in the project?

- financial resources
- staffing
- types of assistance/services provided, including intensity of effort (e.g., number and types of meetings held, specific types of expertise/help provided)

What was the specific nature of your organization's role and involvement in the project?

6.   What is your assessment of how well the University performed in providing assistance/services under the project? Were there specific areas where the university was particularly effective? ...less effective?

7.   What kinds of implementation barriers were encountered during project start-up? What factors affected start-up? Were there any ongoing challenges to achieving project goals?

8.   The University's proposal to the Department of Education identified key objectives for the Housing Stock Maintenance in Southeast Baltimore project. Let's discuss how well you think they achieved each of these objectives and, if they did not meet any of the objectives, why? [Notes from start-up meeting are included as background]:

   •   **Objective 1: Work with the Patterson Park Neighborhoods to analyze the "life histories" of a sample of housing units in a transitional Southeast neighborhood to identify significant events that turn well-kept owner-occupied or renter-occupied units into poorly kept units**. They identified 100 properties and did title searches on these properties. A brief report was included in one of the newsletters.

   •   **Objective 2: Identify the implications of these findings for interventions aimed at preserving well-maintained units so that the Patterson Park Neighborhoods Initiative and other housing preservation initiatives in Southeast Baltimore can take actions to promote well-managed housing.** On p. 85 of the proposal, this is described as "understand the decision making process of landlords and resident managers." Work on this objective included a survey [get more data on who, when, how many] and the workshops.

   •   **Objective 3: Develop a neighborhood database reflecting socioeconomic as well as housing conditions in the Patterson Park Neighborhoods.** They did develop a database, but the database has not been used by the community. Alex will make use of the database for research on Ed Rutkowski's corporation.

   •   **Objective 4: Provide a forum for discussion between community groups and private landlords to discuss their own views regarding the dynamics of the rental housing market**. It does not appear that this objective was met [right??]

   •   **Objective 5 (found on p. 85 of the proposal): To develop neighborhood based interventions to preserve well-managed owner or renter occupied units.** Nothing was done on this objective.

9.   Overall, was the collaborative project successful in achieving its goals? Did it have any tangible effects on the local community? Can you identify any specific impacts that this project had on the surrounding community? What would you say were the 2 or 3 most

important impacts of the initiative?

10. Did the project produce reports, briefings, or internal studies, and if so, could we have copies of relevant documents? What was the general quality and usefulness of the products? Were they widely disseminated?

11. Were there specific aspects of the project with which you were disappointed? Were there ways in which the project might have been enhanced?

12. Would you recommend involvement of other agencies like your own in similar initiatives with the U. of Md.? ...with other local universities? Why?

13. Do location or other distinctive features of this initiative make it either non-transferable or limit it transferability to other sites? Are there features of the project that you would suggest replicating in other areas? ...not suggest replicating in other areas?

Discussion Guide for Partnering Local Organizations --
Education in Southeast Baltimore Project (Project Component #3)

A.   Background on the Interviewee/Partnering Agencies

- Name
- Role in the Project Component
- If individual is affiliated with an organization -- some background on the organization:
  - Year Founded; How the Organization Has Grown over Time
  - Mission and Goals
  - Service Area
  - Target Population (if relevant)
  - Major Programs/Components Administered
  - Annual Funding and Types of Funds

B.   Program Involvement and Types of Assistance

1.   How did you first hear about or come to work with the U. Of Md. (i.e., the Urban Community Service Program) on this project?

2.   When did your involvement (or your organizations) in this project start? Is it ongoing? If not, when did it end?

3.   Why did your organization decide to collaborate with the University on this project? What did you hope to get out of partnering with the University? What were the overall goals and purposes of the collaborative effort? Did project goals change over time? If so, how and why did they change?

4.   Were the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the University documented in a contract or memorandum of understanding? If so, can we obtain a copy?

5.   What was the specific nature of the U. of Md. role and involvement in the project?

- financial resources
- staffing
- types of assistance/services provided, including intensity of effort (e.g., number and types of meetings held, specific types of expertise/help provided)

What was the specific nature of your organization's role and involvement in the project?

6.   What is your assessment of how well the University performed in providing assistance/services under the project? Were there specific areas where the university was particularly effective? ...less effective?

7.   What kinds of implementation barriers were encountered during project start-up? What factors affected start-up? Were there any ongoing challenges to achieving project goals?

8.   The University's proposal to the Department of Education identified key objectives for the Education in Southeast Baltimore Project. Let's discuss how well you think they achieved each of these objectives and, if they did not meet any of the objectives, why? [Notes from start-up meeting are included as background]:

•   **Objective 1: Establish an Education Planning Committee**. This committee has been established and is ongoing.

•   **Objective 2: Develop a Southeast community plan for education, including a statement of values and expectations, identification of problems and needs, and formulation of intervention goals and strategies.** After 4 years, people finally agreed that it was a good idea to develop a plan–people finally had confidence that they had something worthwhile to say. In 1999, the plan was drafted, which helped to "codify people's thinking," but did not have "original ideas." It is anticipated that the plan will be implemented if funding becomes available.

•   **Objective 3: Develop a database on educational issues of concern to Southeast Baltimore residents.** This objective was not met. Unfortunately, they found the school system hard to work with. The school system did not cooperate in providing data, and they finally were able to obtain about 2/3 of what they requested through unofficial channels. Data on teachers was not provided. Data on students showed deterioration in test scores by grade 5.

•   **Objective 4: Begin to implement interventions serving community education goals.** Some programs were implemented, but they had to do things opportunistically. Parents initially did not come to meetings, but they were able to obtain a grant to do parent organizing. They were able to get an addition built a one school. Some training was conducted through other grants. Some analyses from the data obtained were published. (Need to get more specific stuff here.)

9.   Overall, was the collaborative project successful in achieving its goals? Did it have any tangible effects on the local community? Can you identify any specific impacts that this project had on the surrounding community? What would you say were the 2 or 3 most important impacts of the initiative?

10.   Did the project produce reports, briefings, or internal studies, and if so, could we have copies of relevant documents? What was the general quality and usefulness of the products? Were they widely disseminated?

11.   Were there specific aspects of the project with which you were disappointed? Were there ways in which the project might have been enhanced?

12.   Would you recommend involvement of other agencies like your own in similar initiatives with the U. of Md.? ...with other local universities? Why?

13.   Do location or other distinctive features of this initiative make it either non-transferable or limit it transferability to other sites? Are there features of the project that you would suggest replicating in other areas? ...not suggest replicating in other areas?

Discussion Guide for Partnering Local Organizations --
Patterson Park Project (Project Component #4)

A.   Background on the Interviewee/Partnering Agencies

-      Name
-      Role in the Patterson Park Project
-      If individual is affiliated with an organization (e.g., Parks Department) -- some
       background on the organization:
       -      Year Founded; How the Organization Has Grown over Time)
       -      Mission and Goals
       -      Service Area
       -      Target Population (if relevant)
       -      Major Programs/Components Administered
       -      Annual Funding and Types of Funds

B.   Program Involvement and Types of Assistance

1.   How did you first hear about or come to work with the U. Of Md. (i.e., the Urban
        Community Service Program) on the Patterson Park Project?

2.   When did your involvement (or your organizations) in this project start? Is it ongoing? If
        not, when did it end?

3.   Why did your organization decide to collaborate with the University on this project?
        What did you hope to get out of partnering with the University? What were the overall
        goals and purposes of the collaborative effort? Did project goals change over time? If so,
        how and why did they change?

4.   Were the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the University documented in
        a contract or memorandum of understanding? If so, can we obtain a copy?

5.   What was the specific nature of the U. of Md. role and involvement in the Patterson Park
        project?

        -      financial resources
        -      staffing
        -      types of assistance/services provided, including intensity of effort (e.g., number
               and types of meetings held, specific types of expertise/help provided)

        What was the specific nature of your organization's role and involvement in the Patterson

Park project?

6.   What is your assessment of how well the University performed in providing assistance/services under the Patterson Park project? Were there specific areas where the university was particularly effective? ...less effective?

7.   What kinds of implementation barriers were encountered during project start-up? What factors affected start-up? Were there any ongoing challenges to achieving project goals?

8.   The University's proposal to the Department of Education identified three key objectives for the Patterson Park Project. Let's discuss how well you think they achieved each of these objectives (and, if they did not meet any of the objectives, why?):

➢   **Objective 1: Analyze uses, problems, and possibilities in the park.** [Note: Seven students (as part of a class project) worked a study, which provided a history of the development of the park, analysis of its uses, and recommendations for possible future development of the park.]

➢   **Objective 2: Assist residents in preparing an action plan to increase park usage and safety.** [When work on the project began, it was learned that the city had already hired a consultant and was in the process of developing an action plan for the park. Thus, there was no need to work with residents in preparing an action plan for the park. Instead, an U. of Md. student was hired and worked at the Parks Department to conduct analyses and assist in development of the plan.]

➢   **Objective 3: Create a master plan for Patterson Park.** [Note: The master plan was completed, but never implemented.]

9.   Overall, was the collaborative project successful in achieving its goals? Did it have any tangible effects on the local community? Can you identify any specific impacts that this project had on the surrounding community? What would you say were the 2 or 3 most important impacts of the initiative?

10.   Did the project produce reports, briefings, or internal studies, and if so, could we have copies of relevant documents? What was the general quality and usefulness of the products? Were they widely disseminated?

11.   Were there specific aspects of the project with which you were disappointed? Were there ways in which the project might have been enhanced?

12.   Would you recommend involvement of other agencies like your own in similar initiatives with the U. of Md.? ...with other local universities? Why?

13.   Do location or other distinctive features of this initiative make it either non-transferable or limit it transferability to other sites? Are there features of the project that you would suggest replicating in other areas? ...not suggest replicating in other areas?

Discussion Guide for Partnering Local Organizations --
Housing Rehabilitation and Ownership in Palmer Park (Project Component #5)

A.   Background on the Interviewee/Partnering Agencies

- Name
- Role in the Project Component
- If individual is affiliated with an organization -- some background on the organization:
  - Year Founded; How the Organization Has Grown over Time
  - Mission and Goals
  - Service Area
  - Target Population (if relevant)
  - Major Programs/Components Administered
  - Annual Funding and Types of Funds

B.   Program Involvement and Types of Assistance

1.   How did you first hear about or come to work with the U. Of Md. (i.e., the Urban Community Service Program) on this project?

2.   When did your involvement (or your organizations) in this project start? Is it ongoing? If not, when did it end?

3.   Why did your organization decide to collaborate with the University on this project? What did you hope to get out of partnering with the University? What were the overall goals and purposes of the collaborative effort? Did project goals change over time? If so, how and why did they change?

4.   Were the roles and responsibilities of your organization and the University documented in a contract or memorandum of understanding? If so, can we obtain a copy?

5.   What was the specific nature of the U. of Md. role and involvement in the project?

- financial resources
- staffing
- types of assistance/services provided, including intensity of effort (e.g., number and types of meetings held, specific types of expertise/help provided)

What was the specific nature of your organization's role and involvement in the project?

6. What is your assessment of how well the University performed in providing assistance/services under the project? Were there specific areas where the university was particularly effective? ...less effective?

7. What kinds of implementation barriers were encountered during project start-up? What factors affected start-up? Were there any ongoing challenges to achieving project goals?

8. The University's proposal to the Department of Education identified key objectives for the Housing Rehabilitation and Ownership in Palmer Park project. Let's discuss how well you think they achieved each of these objectives and, if they did not meet any of the objectives, why? [Notes from start-up meeting are included as background]:

   • **Objective 1: Help identify abandoned and/or poorly maintained rental units and develop strategies for rehabilitation of these units.** Students worked with residents to do door-to-door survey of housing status.

   • **Objective 2: Assist tenants to become owners of rehabilitated housing.**

   • **Objective 3: Develop neighborhood appearance standards for Palmer Park**

9. Overall, was the collaborative project successful in achieving its goals? Did it have any tangible effects on the local community? Can you identify any specific impacts that this project had on the surrounding community? What would you say were the 2 or 3 most important impacts of the initiative?

10. Did the project produce reports, briefings, or internal studies, and if so, could we have copies of relevant documents? What was the general quality and usefulness of the products? Were they widely disseminated?

11. Were there specific aspects of the project with which you were disappointed? Were there ways in which the project might have been enhanced?

12. Would you recommend involvement of other agencies like your own in similar initiatives with the U. of Md? ...with other local universities? Why?

13. Do location or other distinctive features of this initiative make it either non-transferable or limit it transferability to other sites? Are there features of the project that you would suggest replicating in other areas? ...not suggest replicating in other areas?