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***WEST RIVERFRONT CASE STUDY - A MODEL
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FRAME WORK***
by: Tonya P. Holland

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Urban and Regional Planning Program
Plan B: Final Draft
due: December 6, 1995**

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This case study is an informational report that gives the background data about the West Riverfront Community. Following this report is an analysis of a controversial planning issue, that engulfed the community. The issue of Environmental Justice, in reference to land use, along with how the West Riverfront community is handling the inequality will be examined.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A university has a unique role in society that few other institutions have which is the capacity and the privilege to generate new ideas, apply these concepts, conduct experiments, evaluate their impact, and take risk. Institutions are able to use their talents in many diverse ways, whether they solely conduct research for an foundation, governmental entity, private firm, or a specific community that may need assistance. The last example of *communities* is one that has become a controversial issue for many departments in large and small institutions of higher education. This is particularly true if the community is *distressed*. The term distressed may refer to a community that is challenged socially and economically. Poverty often times is associated with distressed communities. In addition, urban and rural areas are both prone to elements of distress (LaMore, Rex; Community and Economic Development Course Packet; 430 RD;pp. 3-4).

From my experience with community development, the reason why distressed communities have stirred controversy is because they are associated with *risk*. Placing time, energy, and financial resources in a community that possess risk is like investing monetary resources in an unstable financial deal. To some, the question arises and is asked, "What sense does make to invest in an area that may not offer you any return ?" That *return* may come in the form of a revitalized economic development plan, or new housing, or an infiltration of new

Community in the context of this paper can be reviewed in terms of a smaller community (a particular neighborhood) within the larger geographical community (a city or county). The term community in the executive summary is specifically referring to the research area (West Riverfront-Southwest Detroit, Michigan) that is used in this analysis.

residents. However to take a risk, like a distressed community, and help the residents create a new plan of action that could be motivated crusade, is an element within the foundation of urban planning and community and economic development.

A requirement associated with completing a master degree from the Urban and Regional Planning, at Michigan State University is devoting an entire year to a community through a Practicum class. As mentioned earlier, the purpose for devoting time to work with communities is to activity work with their organizations in order to create a *sustainable plan of action*. During my practicum experience, I worked with a community in Southwest Detroit, name the West Riverfront community. This particular neighborhood was interested in various issues from housing rehabilitation, commercial development, to environmental clean-up plans . However, their main objective was to produce a plan for the Detroit city Planning Department. This was a plan to give strategies and recommendations for the revitalization contaminated land located in their community. The motivation to work towards solving environmental problems created a fervor that drove them to fight for control of land uses in their neighborhood.

Interestingly, the community, at the time, didn't realize that they advocating for environmental justice. Since environmental issues seem to surface within the subtopics of the community development plan, it became apparent that this community was doing more than trying to develop a plan for city of Detroit. This community was primarily interested in *environmental equality*. As the year progressed, it became obvious that this same small

community easily fit into the of Environmental Justice model. A definition of environmental justice, in reference to this community, *means social transformation directed toward meeting human need and enhancing the social and economic quality of life*. Sustainable equality in health care, shelter, human rights, species preservation, and democracy-using resources are many of the struggles which the movement fights for (Community Development Research Notes; Practicum; 1993-94) Furthermore, a central principle of environmental justice stresses equal access to natural resources and the right to clean air and water, adequate health care, affordable shelter, and safe work place. The failure to satisfy such basic needs is not the result of accident, but of institutional decisions, marketing practices, discrimination, and an endless quest for economic growth (Anderson, Andy; "Environmental Equity"; 1994). Environmental problems therefore remain inseparable from other social injustices such as poverty, racism, sexism, classism, unemployment, urban deterioration, and the diminishing quality of life resulting from corporate activity. Urban renewal, highway development, investment decisions, and land-use patterns. The West Riverfront community, in Detroit, is an example of environmental and social issues stemming from power, industrial production and poor investment decisions.

The West Riverfront community expressed in several meeting with the students and the city, that environmental equality meant equitably distributing society's resources, creating equitable policies that support sustainable communities, and meeting basic needs for physical and psychological health Community Development Notes; 1993-94). As a result, a conclusion, I devise from research in West Riverfront, is that environmental justice is

concerned with eliminating the stratification of privileges and decreasing the exploitation connected with people's health and the production and use of society's resources. Environmental inequality results, in part, from a lack of political power, which affects the entire fabric of social life. People who live near toxic-waste sites because of housing discrimination and poverty-both intimately relate to the distribution of political power and resources, which correlates to environmental injustices.

The West Riverfront community is one that lacks a political voice or power and suffer from the city's limited resources. However, the West Riverfront community's plan of action uses the environmental justice model to create a prototype that produces substantive long-term systematic change in the community. This principles in the model confront political, social systems. The model addresses issues of housing, potential industrial investors, commercial development, land use development, and community development to reduce the causes of distress by recognizing and building the capacity of community and individual resources (Anderson, Andy; "Environmental Equity"; 1994). For the West Riverfront community battling environmental injustices, by developing a plan of action through the community, had begin with *cause* or an *idea*, which transformed their lives along with their community. This particular case study is a summary of a larger data report conducted by the 1993 Michigan State Practicum Team. The case study is designed to read as a report which can allow the secondary data to be used for future research within the area. The second half of this paper entitled, Analysis of the West Riverfront Community and Their Association with

Environmental Justice is a critique of the Detroit's planning decisions that have produced an environmentally destitute community, struggling to regain economic strength.

Though the research done in Southwest Detroit has served as a vehicle of learning opportunities. From the experience I have been able to work with the city of Detroit's Planning Department involving the revitalization contaminated land in the West Riverfront neighborhood. The association of a university entity has made the city planning department listen and allow the students at MSU a chance to recommend environmental suggestions. Such an opportunity has allowed the issue of environmentally contaminated property to finally receive some recognition.

In addition, to doing field research for year involving environmental contamination problems, I have been able to study the Environmental Justice model to see if Detroit's planning practices have construct environmental inequalities within one of its oldest communities. In order to truly evaluate whether environmental inequalities exist, this paper is designed to examine West Riverfront community as a *case study*. The case study has been designed to serve as a data/information report. The first section, of the case study, highlights the concept and history of faith base non-profit corporations and their role in economic revitalization. It's important to briefly review the role of faith base non-profits because they are now the economic strength behind revitalizing distressed urban cores. In the example of West Riverfront, faith base non-profits, served as a main role in creating plans for the city of Detroit to eliminate illegal dumping and generate environmental clean-up. The Apostolic

Corporation is the non-profit organization, created from Apostolic Faith Church in Detroit, and was the initiator of the project. This organization's desire to revitalize West Riverfront, was to generate new housing/rehabilitated housing, and commercial economic growth.

The following sub-section in the case study/report describe the research area. The history and the tradition are important elements in order to understand the dynamics of such a diverse area. This analysis allows one to empathize with residents and their desire to recapture the growth surrounding culture, economic development and community involvement. Additionally, demographics in relation to the West Riverfront community has been researched and surveyed. This will be presented in bullet form with accompanying dates in the report. This information is included to compare the subsector/ smaller community to the entire city of Detroit. Furthermore, this is done to give the reader an idea of how the larger community (Detroit) correlates with West Riverfront. For example, population data was gathered, in the West Riverfront area, to look at issues of potential new housing and community services. This information, along with greater Detroit's demographic information, allows one to draw conclusions as to where potential housing is being built (if at all), and questions whether the West Riverfront is an location for developers. Since data was collected in reference to land uses, it was discovered that new housing may not be an option because of land contamination problems associated with West Riverfront. During the time data was being collected for the case study, the city was doing no planning for housing rehabilitation or commercial economic development. Residents in the area solely blame the environment, associated to contaminated land. Moreover they believe

environmental inequalities and a lack of political power have caused their community to be forgotten by the city of Detroit. Therefore, one can see the importance of adding demographics to the overall analysis. It can enable one to understand the consequences of environmental inequalities that plague the community. Environmental responses and recommendations made by the practicum team are also included in the case study.

Recapturing *community collectiveness* appeared to be important to the Southwest Detroit subsector. This concept refers to neighborhood organizations and residents working together as a whole group. This approach is important because it would enable the residents to confront environmental problems involving the city, delinquent landowners and proprietors of industry. This section also introduces the designation of Detroit's Empowerment Zone and community programs which could benefit the West Riverfront neighborhood. Later in a separate appraisal from the case study, there will be an analysis of the environmental justice model and its relation to West Riverfront and the Empowerment Zone. This analysis is done to show how federal dollars are being planned to help the problem of contaminated land and/or environmental justice issues.

Finally, the last section of the case study deals with the proposed project the practicum designed for the West Riverfront community. Essentially, the proposed project are recommendations for a community development plan. Since the city of Detroit, at the time, did not have a city planner to review concerns of the southwest sector of Detroit, the practicum team created recommendations for the final project. The intention was to aid the

community and the city of Detroit with revitalization ideas in reference to housing, commercial development, environmental cleanup and community collaboration. In a separate analysis from the case study, there will be an evaluation of the recommendations. The purpose, is to explore whether these recommendations can realistically work with the environmental justice model.

Following the case study, a separate analysis involving the environmental justice model and its connection to the residents in West Riverfront will be examined. This discussion will start off reviewing the environmental justice model. Reviewing the model will involve the definition, preamble, and the repercussion of toxic waste in communities. *Quality of life* and its definition in reference to environmental justice and communities will be examine. Investigating Detroit's attempt to protect individuals from environmental hazardous in the West Riverfront community will be explored. The failures of the legal system in reference to Detroit and environmental equality will also be reviewed. The city's effort in using the legal system to either aid or destroy the community in Southwest Detroit will also be reviewed. Naturally, the next section will deal with the West Riverfront community's effort in protecting themselves from environmental inequalities. Reviewing public participation will be examined because it directly correlates with the community's effort in defending themselves from the failures of the legal system. The concluding section, involving the environmental justice model and West Riverfront community, outlines optimistic and realistic strategies. By evaluating practicum recommendation should illuminate whether our strategies are realistic. Understanding that all communities can aid state and local legislation,

communities can develop realistic strategies to help planners and developers use mix-zoning properly. Knowledge of these uses offers respect to the environment with the community and the residents living in it.

In conclusion, valuable experience in land acquisition, zoning, land use law, and community and economic development was achieved. As a result of gaining these skills, a final summary discussing where the environmental justice movement may progress; and its place on the national agenda will be included. In addition, an exploration questioning where this leaves communities still battling environmental inequalities in the future will also be addressed.

Introduction

If you put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never goes dry. Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, restore the ruined houses (Isaiah 58:9-12).

Faith Based Development: West Riverfront Case Study

The purpose of the biblical verse to express the importance of faith and trust generated by as church, when dealing with distressed communities. *Faith* in the church has been the strength in many communities, and it serves as a catalyst for differing views on how communities should develop. Sometimes using the bible verse as an example of what should be done in oppressed situations creates a foundation for residents who rely on the church in their communities. The church has served as the courage needed in many movements and crusades. Now the church is assisting in the economic development, environmental clean up efforts, and rehabilitation of housing. Furthermore, this type of financial strength is being used to lead movements that can benefits development efforts in distressed communities.

While the church's most important function throughout history has been to provide a spiritual base, it is also performs a number of key community functions. Community development plans and programs are becoming some of most popular. They have become a permanent function in many churches around the country. Within Detroit many examples of churches taking back their neighborhoods and communities exist. The Apostolic Church is just one of

the many congregations that has decided to assist in the revitalization of the Delray community.

Over the last two decades, ²community development corporations (CDCs) have become an integral part of American social and economic framework. They have succeeded where pure private-sector initiatives and massive government programs have failed. For example, CdCs in Philadelphia and Phoenix, as well as in small cities of rural Mexico, have made solid economic, environmental and social programs by blending resources from business and government with grass-root decision making and local skills (Carpenter, Susan; Solving Community Problems by Consensus; 1992). Though CDCs are still young, they are just beginning to flex their muscle. Such strength has allowed them to become main player in crusades and movements surrounding issues of equality in housing, commercial development and environmental concerns.

There are now between 3,000 and 5,000 CDCs nationwide (Barry, Patrick; Rebuilding the Wall; pg. 102). The community development corporations have become the principle suppliers of low-income housing movements and environmental movements involving land use. In order to get a community development corporation started it essential to figure out what purpose does one you want to serve. Some neighborhood organizations solely want to start a CDCs to create a plan of action for the larger community (city) to do planning in the

² The formation of nonprofit entities that address local problems, in communities. They become an integral part of economic development (Barry,Patrick; Rebuilding the Walls; 1989).

area. Other neighborhood organizations want to start CDCs to add power to a particular crusade or movement. In the Case of Delray/West Riverfront their main reason for starting a CDC was to recapture abandoned land that was contaminated and facilitate base line assessment to start residential clean up for the purposes of land acquisition. This would serve as part of their crusade involving environmental inequalities and would allow them to land bank for future economic development projects.

Faith base development becomes crucial in the growth of CDCs. Through community unification, church congregations and neighborhood associations have banded together to rebuild their communities. Some critics, would suggest that many church congregations have members who live outside the church's immediate neighborhood and have no vested interest in fighting for movements or helping to revitalize the area. The logic behind such criticism is that those who attend the church do not live in the area and are not concerned because the problems associated with the community are not in their "backyards". This is critique is not accurate. Use the example of the West Riverfront community, many of the heads of committees and environmental movement leaders do not live in the area, but they desired to see the area become revitalized because they've watched the area become destroyed by insensitive urban planning. As a result, to rebuild the area has become a mission for community inside and outside the boundaries of Delray/West Riverfront.

The Apostolic Development Corporation (ADC), of the Apostolic Faith Temple Church, has sponsored a community planning effort to revitalize the Delray neighborhood as part of its

mission. In conjunction with the Apostolic Development Corporation, the Michigan State University's (MSU) Practicum Team is working with community members, Detroit city agencies and other environmental organizations. The efforts of working together as a collective group has enabled Michigan State University's planning program and its practicum students to create a Community Development Plan

About the West Riverfront (Delray) Community

Delray is also known as the West Riverfront subsector, according to the Detroit Planning Reports. This community development plan will refer to the Community Development Corporation run by the area as the West Riverfront neighborhood. The decision to refer to Delray as the West Riverfront emphasizes the importance of the riverfront area. West Riverfront is a community of amazing diversity in cultural, economic, and environmental features. The West Riverfront area is primarily nonresidential and exhibits great complexities in land use issues.

The neighborhood is bounded by the Detroit River, the Fisher Freeway, and West Grand Boulevard. The Community Development Corporation (CDC) that encompasses the area runs from West Grand Boulevard to Livernois Avenue and between Fort Street and West Jefferson Avenue. Phase I of the community development project is concentrated in the area that is south of Fort Street, north of West Jefferson Avenue and between Ferdinand Avenue and Junction Street.

Project Description

Michigan State University's Planning Practicum Team has used various techniques of the planning process to create a comprehensive community development plan for the West Riverfront area. The planning process first involves a background analysis of the neighborhood (history), a site analysis, a preliminary market study, land use history, environmental issues, a housing analysis, a feasibility study and finally a strategic implementation plan. The process involves surveys, data collection, and consultation with residents, property owners, and relevant organizations. The main focus of the community development plan is to benefit existing corridor residents, business and property owners, as well as local, state, and federal agencies in guiding investment and programming decisions for the area.

Community Development Approach

One of the practicum team's primary objectives is to provide community building techniques and short - and long-range plans for economic, physical and social development. As a result, strategic planning can represent many diverse forms of effort in community development. It is distinguished from other forms of planning primarily in proactive programs; however, the process is also exemplified by economic development. Indeed, many small communities find economic development and community development almost indistinguishable. Strategic planning can be defined as a process by which a community envisions its future and develops the necessary procedures and operations to achieve goals and objectives. There are three fundamental aspects of this definition:

"Envisioning" involves a belief that aspects of the future can be influenced and changed by what is done now. The strategic process allows us to shape the future rather than simply prepare for it. This process differs from long-range planning, which focuses on trends, forecasts, and projections.

It focuses on the process of planning as much as on the plan that is produced. The process of self-examination, the confrontation of difficult choices, and the establishment of priorities that a successful strategic planning process. A "shared vision" through "consensus-building" is the measure of success.

Implementation is the "bottom line" of the action plan. Monitoring and evaluation of what is accomplished sets in motion the next planning cycle within community development.

In addition to following the guidelines for strategic planning, the team is following the principles of community development set forth by the Community Development Society, as follows:

- ◆ Promote active and representative citizen participation so that community members can meaningfully influence decisions that affect their situation.**
- ◆ Engage community members in problem diagnosis so that those affected may adequately understand the causes of their situation.**
- ◆ Help community leaders understand the economic, social, political, environmental and psychological impacts associated with alternative solutions to the problem.**
- ◆ Assist community members in designing and implementing a plan to solve agreed upon problems by emphasizing shared leadership and active citizen participation in that process.**
- ◆ Disengage from any effort that is likely to adversely affect the disadvantaged segments of a community.**
- ◆ Actively work to increase leadership capacity (skills, confidence and aspirations) in the community development process.**

The group's approach at this point is one of technical assistance and encouraging self-help.

Currently, the community is in need of both. The practicum team has attempted, with success, to facilitate a group cohesiveness that fosters capacity building, provided products

to supplement their goals and objectives, encouraged the process of skill building and in doing so facilitated technical competency.

Apostolic Development Corporation

The Apostolic Development Corporation (ADC) is the sole sponsor of this project. It is a church based community development corporation, which is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. The ADC's overall mission is to revitalize the community by developing housing, education, jobs, and fostering community and economic development. ADC is currently investigating a project called *Project Restore*, which is a mixed use residential treatment facility on a six acre industrial parcel lying adjacent to the church. The ADC has also requested that the City of Detroit assist in upgrading the adjacent neighborhood, commonly known as Delray, for residential and other mixed use development.

Community Needs Assessment

The West Riverfront Practicum Team reviewed the most pressing issues facing the Delray area. Realizing that community goals are important, the Apostolic Development Corporation's proposed economic development and housing rehabilitation project will affect a number of different group and organizations. They include the following: current residents of West Riverfront area, Environmental Response Committee, Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, the City of Detroit, and industries within the area. There may be other groups indirectly affected, however, those mentioned above will be impacted the most by this proposal. Realistic alternatives cannot be developed without consideration of how

each alternative affects these groups. The broad goals of these groups have been identified through research, discussion, and community meetings. The goals which have been identified for each are as follows:

Apostolic Development Corporation

◆ This church based community development corporation is a nonprofit organization arranged by Apostolic Faith Temple Church. The overall mission of the corporation is to revitalize the community by developing housing, education, jobs, and fostering community economic development within the area bounded by West Grand Boulevard, Vernor, Livernois, and the Detroit River.

Community Residents:

- ◆ Attract new residents while maintaining existing residents.
- ◆ Cleanup the area and enforce environmental regulations.
- ◆ Eliminate zoning conflicts.
- ◆ Attract additional job opportunities.
- ◆ Increase retail opportunities and enhance local retail availability.
- ◆ Improve housing opportunities and quality, real estate values, as well as overall aesthetics.

Environmental Response Committee

◆ As of the writing of this case study, the Environmental Response Committee had not yet furnished the team with their goals and objectives as an organization. It is important, however, to recognize the important role that this organization will play in the future of the West Riverfront community.

Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision:

- ◆ Prevent the abandonment of buildings.
- ◆ Prevent and cleanup illegal dumping.
- ◆ Cleanup and prevent further contamination of sites.
- ◆ Improve the air quality within Detroit, especially in Southwest Detroit.
- ◆ Reduce conflicts between land uses.

The City of Detroit:

- ◆ Protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of Detroit.
- ◆ Maintain or improve the fiscal health of the city.
- ◆ Provide services needed by the residents and businesses of the city.
- ◆ Provide the opportunity for activities within the city that will increase the tax base.
- ◆ Improve the image of the city.

Industry:

- ◆ Make a profit (or stay in business).
- ◆ Provide employment opportunities.

Collaboration/Community Interaction

In order to facilitate community interaction to implement the community development plan, a core group needs to be organized within the neighborhood. This would consist of committed people who understand the needs and attitudes of the community. These people need to be able to work well together and should be prepared to invest much time and energy.

Community interaction should include the expression of the desires of the community residents for whom the plan is to be prepared. Therefore, the community as a whole needs to set two major goals:

- (1.) A long-term vision that is feasible to obtain.
- (2.) One or two realistic, achievable short term goals that will bring people together and start to make a difference.

A reference guide of resource organizations which provide information, advice, training, expertise and/or funding can be found in Appendix E of the 1993 Practicum report. This list can be utilized to target community agencies that may aid the West Riverfront in implementing the community development plan. As steps are taken to implement the community development plan, it may be useful to have a list of government agencies serving the West Riverfront area; this list can be found in Appendix F. Also, in the same 1993 practicum report, a valuable list of homeowners in the project area and their mailing addresses can be found in Appendix G of the 1993. The purpose of this case study appendixes will not be added.

THE WEST RIVERFRONT COMMUNITY
History of West Riverfront

History of West Riverfront: Chronological Dates and Data

In order to understand the issues facing the West Riverfront neighborhood, background information on the community needs to be presented. In the following pages, the history and demographics of the West Riverfront community are discussed.

1836 - West Riverfront area first recorded on Wayne County Plat under the name Belgrade.

1877 - Belgrade incorporated as a town.

1880 - Wayne County Court legally established the Village of Delray with an elected President and Council. Named after the Mexican town of Del-Ray.

- Delray began to experience an influx of industrial activity.
- Rapid immigrant residential population growth followed the industrial boom. Delray soon became an ethnic melting pot.

1905 - The Village of Delray was annexed into the city of Detroit.

- Became vital player in automobile manufacturing with the development of the Fisher Body Plant.
- Delray's location on the Detroit River provided the area with the ability to combine the natural resources necessary to develop the iron, brick, railroad, shipbuilding, salt, and other industries.
- Environmental problems that the area is facing today began.

1940 - Residents who prospered in the Delray area began to leave for newer places such as the downriver suburbs.

- An influx of an African-American population became prevalent.
- Stagnant residential and industrial growth. Population begins to decrease.

1964 - Construction of the Fisher Freeway is completed, causing a barrier to the city. The freeway, along with the Ambassador Bridge, Zug Island, and the Detroit River successfully seclude Delray from the rest of the city.

1993 - Apostolic Development Corporation renamed Delray as the West Riverfront.

1994 - City announced West Riverfront as part of future Empowerment Zone application.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Between 1970 and 1990, the West Riverfront area decreased in population by 841 people (2,366 to 1,525), a 35.5% decrease (U.S. Census). This is slightly higher than the City of Detroit's percentage decrease of 30.2% between 1970 and 1990. Population projections estimated by SEMCOG show that the West Riverfront Area's rate of population decrease should decrease over the next 20 years (-10.9% in 2010 down from -16.6% in 1990), but still will be slightly higher than the city's (-8.8% in 2010 from a -15.7% in 1990). The percentage change per year has slowed significantly, indicating that there is a stable base population in this community.

Race

The racial composition of West Riverfront when compared to the City of Detroit is much more diversified. We see that 49.3% are white, 40.8% are black, with 12.1% of Hispanic origin, and the rest (10%) are of other races. The city as a whole is not as diverse, with 75.7% black, 21.6% white, 2.8% Hispanic, and the rest (2.7%) of other races.

Residential Market

A detailed list of properties in the Phase I area of the Delray/West Riverfront community shows that there is a substantial number of vacant lots owned by the Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD). There are additional "vacant" properties owned by private individuals/companies that appear to be vacant, under utilized or abandoned. The 23 initially identified CEDD owned vacant properties have a combined true market value of

\$12,000. Many of these properties are located adjacent to existing single family homes, thus adding to the potential for future residential development. The average home price in the market area is under \$15,000. The City of Detroit has a growing need for affordable housing; the West Riverfront area could service that need by providing low cost single-family housing units.

NONRESIDENTIAL MARKET

Metropolitan Detroit's vacancy rate for the industrial real estate market rose 2.1 percentage points in 1991, and absorption fell from 6,113,000 square feet in 1990 to 5,393,000 square feet in 1991. Downsizing and consolidating were two of the major reasons for this decline. The market is generally split into two categories: high-tech and distribution centers and the automotive industry. The west side of the region seems to be supporting more of the high-tech industrial and distribution warehouses, due to proximity to the airport, port facilities, and railways.

Employment in "Other Manufacturing" is projected to increase during the period 2000 to 2010 (SEMCOG Regional Development Forecast). This indicates that jobs will be created over the next 7 years, and may require potential employees to have a higher degree of technical skills. The West Riverfront community is in a position to take advantage of this trend toward high-tech and distribution centers. The zoning of the area supports this type of growth, and although it may not be ideal when evaluating the housing needs of the area, it is a preferable option to the heavy industrial development that it is currently being promoted.

Metro Detroit and Windsor, Ontario were ranked together as the world's sixth most livable urban area according to the Population Crisis Center. The area was considered "best" in cost of living, quality of housing, communications, education, transportation and pollution control efforts (CB Commercial, 1992).

Retail sales were expected to increase due to the large influx of Canadian shoppers entering via Windsor. There are many positive factors that may make West Riverfront conducive to retail/commercial development: location to major throughways; proximity to downtown area and the downriver communities; and the lack of adequate shopping within the city.

EMPOWERMENT ZONE

The Delray community is one of several neighborhoods in the City of Detroit to be included in the application for participation in the federally funded/sponsored Empowerment Zone Program. The Empowerment Zone Program is designed to afford communities real opportunities for growth and revitalization. The framework of the program is embodied in four key principles: Economic Opportunity, Sustainable Community Development, Community-Based Partnerships, and Strategic Vision for Change (U.S. Dept. of Housing, 1994).

There will be six urban areas selected to receive federal grant funds, tax benefits and preference for other federal programs. There are several communities included in Detroit's proposed Empowerment Zone. All of the Detroit communities will be working together to develop a strategic plan to send to the federal government for consideration as a designated Empowerment Zone. Some of eligibility criteria (based on Detroit's data) for selection as an Empowerment Zone include those listed below

Urban Population - may have a maximum of 10% of the city's total population.

Urban Size - not to exceed 20 square miles, not to be located in more than two contiguous States, and it should contain no more than three noncontiguous parcels or have one continuous boundary.

Poverty Rate - must reveal that the area suffers from pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress.

Information in this section of the case study is based on presentations and materials provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the Empowerment Zone Conference held in Detroit. Since Detroit has been selected as an Empowerment Zone, as a city they have the opportunity to take advantage of the following programs.

◆ **COMMUNITY BUILDING PROGRAMS:**

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

ADC has already applied for funding under this program; however, states may give priority to Empowerment Zones.

Urban Community Service Program

Provides grants to urban institutions of higher education (IHEs) to assist projects designed to encourage the use of urban IHEs as sources of skills, talents and knowledge that can serve the urban areas in which they are located. This program includes planning activities, research, training, etc.

John Heinz Neighborhood Development Program (HUD)

Provides funds to community-based organizations to increase their capacity to carry out housing and community development activities.

- Create permanent jobs in the neighborhood;
- Establish or expand businesses within the neighborhood;
- Develop new housing, rehabilitate existing housing, or manage housing stock within the neighborhood;
- Deliver essential services with lasting benefit to neighborhoods; and
- Plan, promote, or finance voluntary neighborhood improvement efforts.

The ADC has already applied for funding under the Community Development Block Grant Program. Application for funding under this program should continue to be closely monitored. Support from the mayor and City Council for West Riverfront community's program could assist them in obtaining moneys from the CDBG program.

The Urban Community Service Program provides funding to establish urban development projects through area universities. Projects, such as the one being completed by Michigan State University's Practicum Team, could be continued under this program. In addition, other sources of assistance might include the Urban Affairs Department at Michigan State University and the special community development program at University of Michigan Law School. Services may include planning activities, legal advice, community development, surveys, etc. Application for these funds should be made as soon as the designation is granted.

The John Heinz Neighborhood Development Program appears to be a program that could benefit the Delray community directly. The community organization needs to establish itself in the neighborhood so that support and awareness of these programs can be initiated. The initial step in developing solid community relations is to hire a full-time Executive Director for the Apostolic Development Corporation. An Executive Director would provide the skills, knowledge and talents to obtain funding for future programs.

◆ **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS:**

Section 108 Loan Guarantee (HUD)

Section 108 Loans guarantee notes issued by units of local governments. It can be used to finance the following projects:

- housing and rehabilitation of privately owned units for residential purposes;
- expansion of for-profit businesses including equipment and physical plant;
- financing and rehabilitation of low-income and public housing;
- acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of neighborhood and community facilities;

- site improvement on community owned land which could be leased to a developer to carry out a commercial or industrial development project;
- site development including structure removal and land clearing;
- purchase of land or buildings for any authorized economic development use;
- infrastructure development which can include street reconstruction and/or sewer system repairs.

Note: HUD is also providing Section 108 Economic Revitalization Grants to go along with the 108 Loan Guarantees. Their purpose is to enhance the viability of those projects through interest rate subsidies, debt service/operating reserves, etc.

Community Outreach Program-Michigan State University

Michigan State University through the Center for Urban Affairs has conducted a program through HUD. Two additional University will be working with the program, along with MSU, in relation to the empowerment zone. COPC was established to run for two years (1995-1997) in order to aid Southwest Detroit in its revitalization efforts. Housing, economic development, and environmental contamination cleanup are all efforts the community outreach program is trying to establish.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program (HUD)

ADC has already applied for funding under this program; however, States may give priority to Empowerment Zones.

One Stop Capital Shop (SBA)

Delivers financial, business and technical assistance to small, minority and women-owned businesses through the following components:

- Small Business Lending Company
- Micro-Enterprise Lender
- Certified Development Company
- Business Information Center
- and other similar enterprises

EDA Public Works Program (Commerce/EDA)

Grants are provided to units of government, and public or private nonprofit organizations to help distressed communities attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify their economies, and generate long-term, private sector jobs. A sample of projects may include some of the following:

- Water and sewer facilities primarily serving industry and commerce

- Port improvements
- Business incubator buildings

Many of the economic development programs cited under the Empowerment Zone Program are administered by the city. However, the previously mentioned programs may provide some funding sources for local businesses and can directly assist those that wish to start their own business. Land acquisition, residential rehabilitation and site improvement all are activities eligible for financing.

The One Stop Capital Shop promotes small, minority and women-owned businesses. Some of the West Riverfront neighborhood residents may be able to participate in this program by receiving capital to start their own home-based business, i.e., child care, secretarial, etc.

The ADC may want to begin looking at the talents of the residents of the neighborhood and make them aware of this program. They may also need to advise and apply for zoning variances for individual homeowners who wish to enter into such a venture.

The EDA Public Works Program is something that will be addressed by the City of Detroit. However, the West Riverfront community should take an active interest in this due to its proximity to port and water and sewer facilities. This program also provides grant money for business incubators. The old Wayne County Community College building on Fort Street, as well as several others, may provide suitable buildings where this type of business venture could be established.

◆ **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS:**

"Brownfields to Greenfields" - Contaminated Sites Demonstration (EPA)

Provides funding to examine ways to convert contaminated sites to clean productive uses

This program, in conjunction with the Michigan Reuse and Reclamation Program, could potentially provide the funding for assessment of some of the abandoned industrial sites located in the West Riverfront area. Representatives from the City of Detroit will need to be involved in the administration and application process for these programs. Presently, under the Community Outreach Program the brownfield incentive is one that the West Riverfront community is using to create an alliance with the Environmental Justice movement. In the environmental justice analysis, located in the second half of this paper, there will be discussion as how the Empowerment Zone has enhanced the environmental justice movement for the community residents of West Riverfront.

◆ **HOUSING PROGRAMS:**

This section is included in the case study to show that the West Riverfront community has options when looking at homeownership in spite of the environmental contamination that has destroyed potential property for new development.

Rental Assistance Certificates (HUD)

Encourages owners to construct or rehabilitate rental housing for very low-income families at rents within the HUD-established fair market rents for the area.

HOPE for Homeownership of Single Family Homes (HOPE 3) (HUD)

A competitive grant program providing single-family homeownership opportunities to low-income families and individuals who are first-time homebuyers. Must be owned or held by federal, state or local governments. HOPE 3 grants may only be awarded to private nonprofit organizations, public agencies and cooperative associations. Activities may include the following:

- Property Acquisition
- Property rehabilitation
- Financial assistance to homebuyers

HOPE 3 and Rental Assistance Certificates programs will receive special consideration through the Empowerment Zone program. These programs address the rehabilitation goals set forth by the West Riverfront community. West Riverfront has several parcels within its focus area that are owned by the city. The HOPE 3 program could be used to acquire properties within this area. However, support from the city will be necessary, i.e., zoning change, possible back taxes, etc. This program is available without Empowerment Zone designation and could be pursued immediately. The community needs to decide if now is the time to request the zoning change so that they can further their land acquisition and redevelopment goals.

◆ TAX INCENTIVES:

In addition to the funding sources, there are tax incentives afforded to the Empowerment Zone. Businesses located within the boundaries of the Empowerment Zone are provided with an employer wage credit of up to \$3,000 per year per employee for wages and training expenses for employees who are residents within the "zone." This program's purpose is to

promote hiring from within the "zone" and encourage people to move into the neighborhoods designated as Empowerment Zones. Businesses will also be able to take an additional \$20,000 in expense deductions through Section 179.

The West Riverfront community may not benefit directly from all of the various program options available; however, the secondary impacts of economic revitalization can have a significant influence on the community. With environmental problems that could be debated as injustices inflicted on the community, these programs is a beginning for the community. The development of jobs and the cleanup of land is a key component of the Empowerment Zone Program. Cleaning up parcels of land makes it appealing to future developers, which can stimulate job growth and economic Within the CDC there are several large parcels of land that, if developed, could provide employment for area residents. Planning and community participation in the selection process regarding the type of industry and its location will be important in the upcoming months. According to the Strategic Plan, the first step will be to build an empowered community by developing a plan to get the community and businesses involved in the decision making and funding decisions with which the ADC will be faced with.

PROPOSED PROJECT

PROPOSED PROJECT _____

The Proposed Project Section has been included to display the recommendations generated by the practicum team, in relation to environmentally contaminated land, current zoning, and the probability of land acquisition by non profit organizations.

It has been the responsibility of the practicum team to create an easy-to-follow plan for the improvement of overall living conditions in the West Riverfront neighborhood. In doing so, the team has devised several categories of action on which to focus in respect to the community development plan. The following pages describe the activities and categories:

Collaboration

In order for the implementation of the improvement plan to take place, the various individuals and organizations which take interest in West Riverfront must reach an agreement on how to work together. All of these parties have information and other valuable resources which can be used to enhance efforts in the community. With collaboration among these various groups, the development plan will be all-inclusive, meeting the needs of the community.

In order to facilitate community interaction to implement the community development plan, a core group needs to be organized within the neighborhood. This would consist of committed people who understand the needs and attitudes of the community. These people need to be able to work well together and should be prepared to invest much time and energy to build an implementation plan.

Community interaction should include the desires of the community residents for whom the plan is to be prepared. Therefore, the community as a whole needs to set two major goals:

1. A long-term vision that is feasible to obtain.
2. One or two realistic, achievable short term goals that will bring people together and start to make a difference.

Cleanup

One of the first and most effective steps toward improving living conditions in the West Riverfront community is to improve the neighborhood's environmental quality. This entails cleaning up the vast amounts of illegally dumped trash, reacclimating areas that have contaminated soil conditions, and developing strict rules and regulations for environmental standards to be enforced by local government agencies.

Implementation strategies for environmental cleanup should be organized by the community with clear goals and objectives. Volunteers from the community can establish a preliminary cleanup effort with the local residents. Having a limited pool of volunteer resources, board members of the organization will have to locate people from different environmental support programs to help create an action-oriented agenda. This agenda should be a unification of the ambitions, ideas and goals of the entire neighborhood. The main purpose of facilitating a strategic plan for environmental cleanup is to create safe conditions and preserve the quality of life for residents.

Rehabilitation

The development strategy proposed by the MSU practicum team deals with both minor and major rehabilitation of many of the existing housing units in the neighborhood. Minor

rehabilitation would consist of yard cleanup, removing unwanted fences/barriers, and painting or siding the exteriors of homes. Major rehabilitation may consist of all of the above plus reshingling roofs and installing new windows. This alternative to total redevelopment is much more cost-effective and preserves the existing character of the community. The benefits to the community from rehabilitation are also more quickly realized than are the benefits from redevelopment. The area designated for rehabilitation within the community development plan will be determined by moneys allocated from government agencies or other programs that fund a wide range of housing and community development projects. Rehabilitation programs may come in the form of loans for residential or commercial use.

Land Acquisition

In order to ensure that the land uses in the area remain residentially oriented, the community must either petition for the present industrial zoning to be changed to residential, or they must acquire the land in order to keep additional industrial and other incompatible land uses from occurring. If land is acquired, the community would then have a powerful influence on the development of the area.

Any community can change demographically and be affected by national or local politics in relation to economic development. The ability of the community to acquire land may also be affected; the community will need an implementation plan involving their vision for the properties within the area. This community development plan is needed as a preliminary blueprint for local government to review. It is needed to secure public participation within the

planning process. In order to implement an effective plan, the community needs to propose ideas and suggestions for current and future land use. *The following pages display charts depicting the proposed project activities, a description, the parties involved and potential funding/information sources.*

REHABILITATION

Action/ Focus	Description	Parties Involved	Funding
Minor Exterior Rehab	- Repaint, repair siding, replace broken windows, general touch-up.	- Residents, ADC: organize work groups to help residents (U-SNAP-BAC).	- Donations of materials, gov't housing rehabilitation grant money and foundation gifts could be applied (HOME, Rental Rehab Program).
Major Exterior Rehab	- Residing, new windows and roof structural repairs	- Residents, ADC, building inspectors (technical assistance).	- Gov't housing rehabilitation grant and foundation moneys are available.
Minor Interior Rehab	- Clean-up, plumbing/electrical repairs, repainting, re-drywalling, extermination of pests.	- Residents, ADC (organize work groups to help residents).	- Donations of materials, gov't and foundation grants.
Major Interior Rehab	- New drywall, insulation, new plumbing/electrical systems.	- Residents, ADC, building inspectors (decide if structure is usable or not).	- Govt and foundation grants can be applied as well as private donations.

LAND ACQUISITION

Step/ Action	Description	Parties Involved	Funding
#1- Push for rezoning	- Zoning must be changed from M-4 to residential.	- ADC, residents (collective voice), city zoning/planning office.	- No funding needed.
#2- Purchase land	- Buy up vacant and other available properties in order to control development.	- ADC (function as land banking/trust institution).	- Foundation grants are available for this specific action. Gov't funding programs could also be applied.
#3- Reorganize and replat land.	- To make overall layout of properties more spatially efficient.	- ADC, city planning/design department (technical assistance).	- No funding needed.
#4- Develop and/or sell the land to new residents.	- To promote a pride and strength in the community, it is best to have residents own their homes.	- ADC, individuals interested in living in West Riverfront. ADC should assure adherence of all developments to the codes specified in the development plan.	- Local banks and other lending institutions, gov't grant programs, and foundation moneys could all be applied.

COLLABORATION

Step/ Action	Reason	Parties Involved	Funding
#1- Hire an executive director.	- The community needs someone with organizational and leadership skills who can devote enough time and effort toward getting the job done.	- Board of Directors of ADC should be directly involved in hiring this person because they know what kind of person is best for the job.	- Seed money from various gov't grant programs and grant foundations could be applied toward paying salary and supplying equipment.
#2- Develop a neighborhood plan.	- The community cannot develop in a way beneficial to all unless a solid, comprehensive plan is in place.	- ADC, community residents, the city government and other concerned parties should all have a say in how the plan is formulated.	- Seed and research money as well as technical assistance are available from public and private funding sources.
#3- Workshop for skills and technical assistance.	- Would benefit all involved to learn methods and details of community development.	- ADC and community residents would benefit most from learning the array of options open to them to improve their community.	- Seed money from gov't programs and granting institutions are available for this sort of technical training and awareness activity.
#4- Newsletter	- To keep community residents informed of happenings that pertain to their neighborhood and its development.	- ADC or perhaps another group from within the community could be formed to obtain information for keeping residents abreast of recent developments.	- Contributions from residents and grants could be obtained to pay for production costs as well as paying someone for their time and efforts.

CLEANUP

Action/ Focus	Description	Parties Involved	Funding/ Backing
Land	- Community-wide collection and removal of surface garbage (ie - tires, paper, metal).	- Neighborhood residents, ADC, local businesses and industries, DNR, EPA, local neighborhood groups (United Citizens of SW Detroit, SW Detroit Improv. Assoc. {for info})	- Gov't funds from DNR and EPA as well as foundation grants could be applied and new enforcement policies could be installed to keep pollution from reoccurring.
Water	- Testing and purifying residential water service by repairing and improving existing water and waste systems.	- ADC, Dept. of Public Works, neighborhood residents.	- Grants from foundations and public programs along with DPW funds could be applied.
Residences	- Backyard cleanups and exterior repairs would have immediate results for residents.	- Neighborhood residents, ADC (could organize work groups to assist residents in cleaning up their lots.	- Personal initiative would be the driving force in this case and tough ordinances against trash and littering could be created.
Industry	- Full-scale cleanup of polluted and degraded industrial sites.	- Local industries and businesses should be most responsible for their own messes, but residents might have to take the initiative to remove the waste (Detroit Industrial Property Improvement {for information}).	- Grants from DNR, EPA and foundations could be applied along with tougher pollution requirements on industries.

TIMETABLE CONSIDERATIONS_____

Effective implementation of the proposed project requires an understanding of the time line for various activities. This section of the report will describe approximately how long these activities may take to complete.

Rezoning Request

Possibly the most important activity which must be undertaken to implement the project is rezoning portions of the target area from M-4 (heavy industry) to R-2 (residential). The rezoning process typically requires up to four months to complete, however, this particular rezoning request, due to anticipated controversy, may take at least six months to complete according to City of Detroit Planning Commission staff.

The rezoning from M-4 to R-2 in the West Riverfront Community is a potentially controversial rezoning request because of several factors. The first being the objections raised by business interests within the area. This rezoning could cause problems for future business operations. These problems could arise due to the proximity of heavy industrial uses to residential land uses. Other issues involve the preservation of land for future industrial expansion within the City of Detroit and the suitability of the land for residential uses. Such conflicts will require additional time for city staff visits to the site, review plans and reports (such as this report). Public hearings will also be required. As a result of these factors, the rezoning can be expected to take at least six months to complete from the date of the submittal of the formal rezoning applications.

Rehabilitation

Another consideration is the time needed to obtain building permits which will be required to undertake the rehabilitation of existing houses in the area. The first requirement of this process is the completion of the rezoning process as it is difficult to obtain building permits for nonconforming uses (the current situation of residential uses within an industrially zoned area).

Obtaining a building permit involves receiving clearance from the Building and Safety Engineering Department and then approval from the Zoning Department. These departments investigate the application's conformance with building codes and zoning ordinances. The time typically required for this process is approximately one month. After obtaining these permits, rehabilitation or construction work can begin. The time required to complete the construction phase will vary depending on the scope of work and the resources available.

Land Acquisition

At present, it is virtually impossible to acquire the CEDD owned land in the West Riverfront area. Case example; Ms. Perkins attempted to buy a lot adjacent to her home from the city in order to expand her property. The CEDD would not allow her to purchase the lot. Subsequently, the lot has become a parking lot for the industry that is just across the street from her home. Officials at the CEDD would not reveal any reasons for holding onto the land or discuss proposed plans for the vacant parcels. Assembly of proper land configurations will be crucial to all of the redevelopment efforts in this section of Detroit.

Targeting funding sources to implement the project's strategies is probably the most important factor to this Community Development Plan. Currently, the city of Detroit's rental rehab and home programs are awaiting legislative approval. It is expected to occur sometime in June. The ADC needs to keep abreast of the passage of this legislation to ensure immediate access to funds through the application process.

The ADC has already made application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that are administered only in target areas of the City of Detroit. At present, the status of the application is not known by ADC or the MSU team. The expectation that it would be ruled upon soon. Usage of the CDBG program moneys has to occur by the end of this calendar year.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS_____

The project, in a large, encompassing sense, includes many aspects that go beyond Phase I. Priorities for the West Riverfront area were established so that measurable goals could be set and a strategy developed towards meeting them. Aspects of the proposed project include the following: organization collaboration, rezoning properties, rehabilitating homes, acquiring CEDD owned land, and activities leading to major and minor clean up. All of these aspects are interrelated, yet should be discussed separately as to their cost. For example, ADC would not want to acquire CEDD owned land as long as it is still zoned M4 "Heavy Industrial". Therefore, the costs associated with rezoning and rehabilitating properties impacts the acquisition of that land.

Collaboration

The cost for organization collaboration should include the salary of an Executive Director, scheduling of workshops for ADC board members and the community that address the issue of leadership building and organization collaboration, and possibly the salary for an intern and publication of a community newsletter. The leadership building and organization collaboration workshop(s) should be provided by a Detroit based community development agency.

The cost for a leadership building workshop varies based on the organization conducting the workshop. Two local agencies conducting such workshops are listed below.

Neighborhood Resource Center Project

Contact: Penni Brown or Rebecca Slay

341-3859

Cost: free

Workshops: scheduled from time to time, none scheduled currently

United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit

contact: Geneva Williams or Edward Egnatios

226-9400

Cost: \$30/person

Workshops: May 19, 1994 at Engineering Society

June 23, 1994 at Walsh College in Troy

Rezoning

Although there is no fee charged by the City of Detroit for processing a rezoning request, the request will have to be prepared and defended by someone with experience in such matters.

In order to avoid the fees of a consultant, the ADC should contact the University of Michigan's Urban Planning Program and Law School where students perform services for communities as part of the practical experience aspect to their education. The Detroit City Council requires a report and recommendation from the City Planning Commission on all rezoning proposals before it takes final action. The reports prepared thus far by the Michigan State University West Riverfront Practicum Team should be valuable tools in supporting the rezoning request, although no official report is required of the applicant. Through the utilization of university students and the resources available to them, the ADC can pursue a rezoning request at little to no cost to the community.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of homes in the West Riverfront neighborhood will involve activities leading to minor exterior and major exterior rehabilitation projects. Because the cost for total gut rehabilitation is enormous, it is not included as part of the proposed project. For exterior rehabilitation of homes in the neighborhood, the cost will range from \$2,000 to \$5,500 per house. Improvements that can be accomplished in the \$2,000 estimate include painting the exterior, removing chain link fences and yard cleanup. At the higher end of the exterior rehabilitation price scale, the activities include reshingling the roof, installing vinyl siding, and installing new windows on the house.

Land Acquisition

The acquisition of vacant land in the neighborhood is limited in phase I of the project to those properties owned by the Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD), including an initial compilation of 23 properties with a combined market value of \$12,000. This information was obtained from the City of Detroit's Tax Assessor's Roles. The Tax Assessor's Roles did not, however, include a list of delinquent taxes on these vacant parcels that a potential purchaser may be responsible for. Unfortunately, it was not feasible for the West Riverfront Practicum Team to determine the total tax liability for the CEDD owned properties. ADC will have to investigate this matter on a parcel by parcel basis as funds for acquiring the land become available.

Cleanup

Currently, the possibility of land contamination due to previous industrial land uses is a large problem in the West Riverfront area. Because of the size and complexity of the issue, it is not proposed that phase I of the project address it. The problem of contaminated land should be addressed at the state and national level through the respective Environmental Protection Agencies and their various clean up programs.

Smaller scale levels of clean up that can be addressed in phase I include the removal of the hundreds of tires that have been illegally dumped on the vacant parcels in the area as well as simple maintenance of residential lots such as removing garbage and overgrown vegetation.

The cost for the latter form of cleanup is not readily available because a comprehensive list of the properties to be cleaned up has not yet been developed. Once this list is developed and a thorough site analysis is completed for each parcel in order to measure the level of cleanup necessary, it will be possible to determine cleanup costs.

CASE STUDY CONCLUSION

Many tools in the planning process were utilized in creating this Community Development Plan for the West Riverfront Community. After much consideration, research, communication with residents and weighing of the alternatives and their impacts, this Community Development Plan recommends four immediate goals for West Riverfront to work towards in revitalizing the neighborhood. To summarize, the four goals/priorities are collaboration, land acquisition, rehabilitation, and cleanup.

They were set so that the West Riverfront Community and ADC would have attainable goals that may be reached without too much time passing. After meetings with ADC and community residents, the MSU Practicum Team decided that the community needed goals that were achievable in the short-term so that the community would have something to rally around in order to accomplish future long-term goals that will not be as easily achieved.

In addition to describing the plan for revitalization of the neighborhood, this Community Development Plan was designed to be a valuable source of information in the future for ADC and the community. The MSU Practicum Team went to great lengths to include the names of organizations that may assist the community in implementing this plan, as well as list numerous potential funding sources for the activities included in this plan.

Appendix I of the 1993 Practicum Data report has a list of the reports the team has done in support of this Community Development Plan. The MSU Practicum Team believes that this

Community Development Plan, if fully implemented, will set the course for revitalization of the West Riverfront Community - a neighborhood well worth saving.

**ANALYSIS OF THE WEST RIVERFRONT COMMUNITY: THEIR STRUGGLE
INSIDE THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT**

Introduction: Environmental Justice - The Foundation

Struggling to eliminated marginalization among the nations low income is a reality within the Environmental Justice movement. The movement is concerned with getting communities educated about environmental hazards and encouraging them to participate in making planning and policy decisions. Community and environmental groups have created powerful grassroots organizations which have produced a new dimension within the environmental justice movement. They have used the correlation of race and class in relation to hazardous dumping practices and negligent environmental management. As a result, many organizations and forums have been established in effort to utilized formal and informal public participation power. The People of Color Caucus formed (within the early stages of the environmental justice movement) the first national People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. This gathering was held in Washington DC in October 1991. Soon after, in March 1992, the Environmental People Forum was held, which involved a diversity of citizens from all races and ethnic groups (Epstein, Barbara; pp. 149). This multiracial coalition of regional environmental justice organizations brought together 110 representatives of local groups, both white participants and people of color, to examine racial discrimination regarding toxic dumping and social relations between the races within the framework of the movement. Since these efforts have been deemed as important, social activists have begun to move environmentalism to the left in a effort to address some of the distributional impact and equity issues. The use of formal and informal participation, for all disenfranchised communities, has become an important step to diffuse marginalization; and to produce defensive tactics to fight environmental injustices.

Although, it has become apparent that ecological sustainability and socioeconomic equality have not been fully achieved, there is clear evidence that the 1980s ushered in a new era of cooperation between environmental and social justice groups. For example civil rights activism has allied with environmentalists in battling injustices in communities (Epstein, Barbara; 1993). Currently, this dual activism is seen in Detroit's West Riverfront community. Organizational leaders have confronted the city regarding issues of civil rights in reference to public health and contaminated land clean up. This effort carried out by the West Riverfront community, was done to address the marginalization they felt as a disenfranchised community fighting for environmental justice. Questioning civil rights violations, in relation to environmental injustices, has been used to strengthen the movement. It appears that community leaders and environmental organizations want to encourage an individual's liberty to a safe environment.

Even though environmental crusades have allied themselves with social justice groups, the reduction of resources in public policy addressing environmental injustices remains a problem. Limited funding coupled with the lack of involvement (due to other social factors) from minority groups is still an unfortunate reality. Because racial, ethnic and low income communities have been and continue to be beset by poverty - unemployment and problems related to poor housing, education, and health are prevalent. These communities cannot always afford the luxury of being primarily concerned about the quality of their environment (Peskin, Henry M; "Environmental Policy and the Distribution of Costs and Benefits";

1978). This becomes especially true when confronted by plethora of pressing problems related to their survival.

Introduction: Principles of Environmental Justice

The principles of environmental justice encompass social transformation directed toward meeting human needs; and enhancing the social and economic quality of life. In order to create environmental policy a working definition and principles, regarding environmental justice, needs to be addressed. A definition of environmental justice was produced in order to create the principles for the movement. According to Dr. Robert Bullard, a leader in environmental justice research, environmental justice can be summarized through a collective definition:

Environmental justice, can be defined as disenfranchised communities that are able to empower themselves by actively working together to build collaborative relationships with government (local, state, and federal) and industries.

The effort is to have communities gain control of their quality of life. Communities that are powerless and have little political, social and economic authority are often times the bearers of environmental inequalities. Therefore, the following is a working definition of environmental injustice:

Environmental Injustice can be defined as is the inability of distressed communities to collectively control planning and policy decisions which support toxic disposal in their communities. The lack of political power does not enable them to control their quality of life (Bullard, Robert; 1994)

The definition above explains why grassroots activist, throughout the 1970s and the early 1980s, were the first to raise the awareness of environmental justice. The 1987, report published by the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, helped focus a serious examination of disenfranchised communities and the environment among academic researchers and the government.

Establishing definitions regarding environmental justice assisted participants in the 1990 University of Michigan Conference on the Incidence of Environmental Hazards. Understanding the movement and developing goals helped to institute the EPA office of Environmental Equity (now the office of Environmental Justice). The establishment of the EPA office and the research, used to develop environmental justice reports, equips groups in disenfranchised communities with the certainty they need to organize around environmental hazards in their neighborhoods. In addition, such publications expose disturbing correlation between the geography of hazardous waste facilities and distressed communities. Moreover, these publications reveal the attitude of the government (state and federal), industries and multi-national corporations, in reference to environmental toxic pollution (Hamilton, James; 1993).

After establishing a definition of environmental justice and instituting the Office of Environmental Equity, principles regarding the movement were created by the Multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit October in 1991. This was to formulate an environment justice framework. The *preamble* was produced to build a national and

international movement involving all people of color. Their mission was to fight the destruction of land in their communities, and encourage environmental equality. In addition, the preamble is to respect diverse cultures within these communities and to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the social and economic development.

Principles of the Preamble:

- 1. Environmental justice** demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all people, free from any form of discrimination or bias.
- 2. Environmental justice** mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for human beings and other living things.
- 3. Environmental justice** calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.
- 4. Environmental justice** demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision making including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement, and evaluation.
- 5. Environmental justice** affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild cities and rural areas balanced with nature, honoring cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing access for all to a full range of resources.
- 6. Environmental justice** calls for education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

Although all of the principles of the preamble are not summarized above, the other precepts of environmental justice are sustainable equality in health care, shelter, human rights, species preservation, and democracy-using resources (Bullard, Robert; People of Color-Environmental Groups;1994). Furthermore, a central belief of environmental justice stresses

equal access to natural resources and understanding the concept property rights/liberty. This component is essential in improving democracy, when dealing with *property rights*. The failure to satisfy such needs is not the result of an accident, but of political and institutional decisions, marketing practices, discrimination, and an endless quest for economic growth (Bullard, Robert; People of Color-Environmental Groups). Environmental justice, therefore, will continue to strive for equal distribution of society's resources, equitable policies that support sustainable communities, and the basic needs of physical and psychological health. By equally distributing resources allows for neighborhoods, like West Riverfront, to be innovative in economic revitalization and property development within their community.

In order to achieve the principles of environmental justice, which address the protection of communities from hazardous waste dumping, a restructuring of attitudes towards *land use decisions* is essential (US General Accounting Office; "Sitings of Hazardous Waste Landfills and their Correlation with Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities; 1983). A starting point towards *change* for communities is to challenge *property rights* and the *logic of industrial capitalism's*, in relation to economic growth. A second component which could encourage change, is recognizing that everyone has a claim to a clean environment, not just those who can afford it. Encouraging the idea of security by maintaining a sustainable ecological system rather than economic superiority, would be the third restructuring component in which the environmental justice movement would recommend. Achieving environmental equality will require incorporating ecological issues into a larger social-justice agenda for change; and consider alternative patterns of economic development. Finally, the

fourth component is the creation of a collective bargaining process for citizens as a means to develop democratic approaches for decision-making (Temple, Paul H; and Farber Stephen; "The Complementarity between Environmental and Economic Risk; 1993). That process begins with social planning that involves community residents more directly in economic development, land use, zoning, and other policy decisions.

Dr. Kenneth Sexton, author of "Minorities and the Poor are Clearly More Exposed" argues that conservativeness in this type of decision making process creates a token participation process, comprised with residential or community leaders. By trying collective bargaining involving citizen participation could avoid a anarchy of a capitalist marketplace; and the rigidity of a centralized state/local bureaucracy. Detroit is an example of a city which experienced the second situation of centralized local bureaucracy.

The city of Detroit's Planning Department under the Young Administration completely rejected the idea of public involvement. This resulted in the community becoming polarized from the city. Face to face communication regarding land use was not possible. The issues of poor planning and environmental management became such a controversial matter that both parties found it difficult, if not, impossible to work together. In addition, the city's level of concern, regarding consensus building, was not present.

Environmental Justice - A Community's Attempt to Protect Itself

The environmental justice movement has attempted to build its fundamental principles on the practice of democracy. The centralization of political power as well as its concentration has

the potential to afflict the principles of democracy in relation to land use. This can occur with policy and planning decisions that do not include representatives of diverse groups (Zimmerman, Klaus; Distributional Considerations and the Environmental Policy Process; 1986). For people, particularly those in low income communities (with little political voice) to regain their sovereignty, restore their environment, and understand their land rights fundamental changes in the structure of government are required. They needed to that permit effective discussion, debate and decision making. In order for democracy to function for citizens it becomes important that citizens are educated of changing environmental law and policies. This would allow property owners an opportunity to protect themselves and their communities from everyday abuses of economic power, which no level of regulation of conventional governance can fully protect them. The understanding of property rights (i.e. zoning regulations, nuisance, Act 307) by educating oneself can provide a greater level of public health, safety, and environmental protection in conjunction with existing laws (Peskin, Henry M, 1978).

Public participation is an example in which citizens can change power relations between themselves and diverse modes of production. The environmental movement believes participation (whether formal or informal) is essential in practicing and building democracy. It allows communities to take control of their communities and enriches the quality of life. In order for citizens to protect themselves, participation coupled with resources can challenge from environmental inequalities and encourage community growth. Experiencing independence from environmental injustices can be established by monitoring improper land

uses. Effective popular control at the local level will demand reorganizing basic institutions of commerce and culture, as well as governmental policies, so that citizens can evaluate proposals and determine agendas about technologies, transportation, investment decisions, and waste disposal (Peskin, Henry M; Environmental Policy and Distribution of Costs and Benefits; 1978).

Obviously, for many communities the crusade involving environmental justice is more than an equity issues. For example, the West Riverfront community and its leaders working towards constructing a political voice in the city of Detroit. They wanted to participate in the planning of their neighborhoods. Land banking, redevelopment of abandoned land, and housing rehabilitation are only few planning objectives, in which they would like to play major role.

While creating a political voice and exercising democracy through participation, there still remains a concern for having environmental hazards disposed in disenfranchised communities. Environmental justice has created a way to broadcast environmental discrimination and inequalities, but more can be accomplished. Communities at risk are interested in securing environmental justice issues on a *national agenda*. Placing environmental justice on the national agenda may offer some protection, while states and local governments prioritized their social and political agenda. Federal support encourages statewide political, legal and governmental entities to look at this concern as a problem that deserves immediate attention.

While state and local governments decide if environmental justice is worth placing on the political and social agendas, we cannot justify continuing to burden distressed populations with the toxic producing systems. By manufacturing items that create by-products that can pollute communities continues to makes it difficult for older cities (with limited resources) to initiate clean up efforts. Corporations and policies protecting them must be prevented from producing toxic ³¹hazardous wastes/substances which end up in disenfranchised communities.

Environmental Justice on the Nations Political Agenda

After the 1987 land mark study was released by the United Church of Christ Commission for Radical Justice, *Toxic Waste and Race in the United States*, environmental justice became an important issues for the political arena. The study established a startling and disturbing trend-- the locations of toxic waste sites are disproportionately linked to communities of color in the United States. Further studies have exposed that low-income Caucasian communities are popular locations as well (Roberts, Sam; Not In My Backyard; 1993). Five years later, in 1992, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a controversial report regarding

"Hazardous Waste" is the term used by the EPA to define byproducts of industrial production which present particularly troublesome health and environmental problems. Newly generated hazardous wastes must be managed in a approved "facility", which is defined by the EPA as any land and structures thereon which are used for treating, storing or disposing of hazardous waste (TSD facility). Such facilities may include landfills, surface impoundments or incinerators. A "commercial" facility is defined as any facility (public or private) which accepts hazardous wastes from a third party for fee or other remuneration (Edmons, Edwin; Commission for Racial Justice United Church of Christ).

the lack of contaminated land clean up in these areas. The results of the report encouraged the creation an Office of Environmental Equity. This office functions as a source to initiate a number of environmental justice projects in 10 regions and taken the lead in coordinating an interagency research workshop. This effort was cosponsored with the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (Mushak, Betty; Environmental Equity: A New Coalition for Justice; 1993).

As environmental justice evolved, the message began to reach the White House with the election of President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore. In 1992, environmental activists Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. and Robert D. Bullard) served on the Clinton Transition team involving natural resources and environment hazards and assisted in preparing a brief book for the newly designated EPA Administrator Carol Browner. In a speech at the African American Church Summit held in Washington, DC vice President Gore acknowledged environmental discrimination (through race and class) as *a national problem*. These efforts helped the environmental justice movement shift to the national agenda. President Clinton signed an Executive Order on environmental justice, February 11, 1994. This endeavor has encouraged environmental policy regarding pollution and contaminated land clean up (Bullard, Robert; People of Color of Environmental Groups; 1994).

Environmental Justice on the State's Agenda - Regulatory Systems and Governmental Responses to West Riverfront

Since the "New Federalism" era, states have been given more responsibility over regulating legislation which includes environmental laws. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

(EPA) has been pursuing a policy of delegating more responsibility to state agencies which takes the burden away from the federal government. Their reasoning encompasses that *some* state governments need to create and implement regulations to protect public health. Though public participation involving environmental concerns has improved (at the state level) the environmental justice movement and other environmental movements are still concerned. Their concerns surround the belief that public involvement is being restricted by regulatory agencies. In addition to limited participation, federal and state budget reductions also have caused environmental groups to be alarmed. Funding limitations involving, potential environmental programs, could create serious policy implications and possibly further the limitation of public involvement. The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment cautions that such program funding reductions may present an unacceptable combination of shifting, increasing responsibilities to the states without corresponding increases in necessary resources (O'Conner, John' pp. 87). The attitude of the federal government, in relation to environmental management during the Reagan years is reflected below:

" Public policies ushered in by the Reagan Administration signaled a reduction of domestic programs to monitor environmental management and protect public health. Reduction of efforts to protect public health is especially disturbing in light of the many citizens who unknowingly may be exposed to substances emanating from hazardous waste sites" (Edmons, Edwin; Commission for Racial Justice United Church of Christ).

Reviewing the elimination of funding allocations and the downsizing of governmental agencies causes one to believe that this sentiment still exists. In 1984, 25 states reported a 63.5 percent resource shortfall in funds for hazardous waste enforcement Edmons, Edwin;

Commission for Racial Justice United Church of Christ). Presently, resources involving environmental management are still being reduced. This policy has been characterized as an abdication of, rather than a shifting of, the agency's responsibilities. As a result, such formal relinquishing of power can place states in a vulnerable situation when it comes to funding and environmental management.

The West Riverfront community is an example of how environmental management could be sacrificed if federal and state resources are limited. The community depends on the State of Michigan's Baseline Assessment program to help determine what type of contamination is on abandoned land. Presently, the Department of Natural Resources can waive the cost of assessments through the city of Detroit. This program is important to community organizations who have a desire to acquire parcels of land, from the city, for future development. If the program's additional funding is cut, the cost of an assessment would be the responsibility of the community. Certainly, this will become a reality if the city receives reduced allocations for environmental clean up. As a result of shifted responsibility from the federal government to state agencies, funding decisions rely on state discrepancy. Therefore, if federal allocations to states (involving environmental programs) are reduced, they have the ability to redistribute local funding which effects communities like West Riverfront. Reduced funding for environmental organizations and communities can make redevelopment of contaminated land nearly impossible.

Realizing that funding for contaminated land clean up is limited, regulatory agencies controlled by the state have created answers. They could respond to failures of environmental laws that were unable to regulate pollution. Since states do differ, legislatively, regulations involving property cleanup and contaminated land redevelopment contaminated land are going to be dissimilar. In Michigan, Act 307 once held owners responsible for past contamination. The Department of Natural Resources has amended this legislation, and created some leniency in relation to liability. Under the past Michigan Environmental Response Act (MERA) an innocent owner of contaminated land could face liability for previous contamination if he/she didn't investigate the property's prior land uses (Department of Natural Resources; Interim Instructions for BEA; 1995). Under the new MERA a significant change has occurred and the government in Michigan has responded to pollution and produced solutions/remedies for environmental management. In reference to environmental justice, community organizations can take control of past injustices of illegal dumping, and use land acquisition as a tool for future development. The amendments to Act 307 make it possible for community non-profit or for-profit developers to clean up property with less risk. Ultimately, this can encourage successful land redevelopment.

Detroit Failures in Environmental Regulations

Although the state regulatory systems are working towards environmental justice, local government can be slow to respond. The city of Detroit's governmental system under the hierarchy of Mayor Coleman Young has proven that city planning (in reference to the Southwest sector of Detroit) was not important. According to city planners in the Planning

Commission, land use planning in other areas of Detroit was not considered since downtown riverfront development became the focal point of the Young Administration. This attitude couple with other factors, such as the 1960 riots resulted in poor planning of the Southwest sector, particularly in the West Riverfront community. The area became only popular for industrial plants. Chemical, waste sewer treatment and manufacturing industries appeared to locate themselves within the community. Research conducted in the area during 1993-94, by Michigan State University, shows that commercial development was non-existent on the West Riverfront side verse north of Fort Street in Mexican Town. Furthermore, by conducting a simple windshield survey it was clearly seen that heavy industrial development was isolated to the Delray/West Riverfront side. It has been argued by the main environmental organizations in the community (Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision) that there is clearly an unequal distribution of industrial plants in West Riverfront verses the rest of the city.

According to the history gathered on the area, it seems logical that there would be a greater amount of industrial facilities on the Delray side because the community's proximity to the river. It appears that factories in Detroit were developed near the river and earlier communities built themselves around the factories (Morell, David and Magorian, Christopher; Risk, Fear, and Location Opposition: Not in My Back Yard; 1982).

Today, however, the environmental groups in the Southwest Detroit area believe that there are other viable parcels of land in Detroit that can house these industries. By introducing the

idea to industries that it is "normal practice" to place all heavy industrial plants in this section of the city, without recognizing if zoning for these industries is suitable, is environmentally unjust. Over the years it has been assumed that the Southwest sector of Detroit is the industrial hub of the city. Today, residents are frustrated because the city is having difficulty promoting a harmonious environment for residential communities adjacent to heavy industry. It appears that the city of Detroit has allowed industries to escape legal restrictions. Consequently, illegal dumping, trash control and land contamination have resulted from lenient or non existing restrictions (Community Development Project; 1993).

Since the city of Detroit has taken a passive position on environmental issues plaguing the West Riverfront community, industries have not put forth the effort to remedy the problems they have caused. Essentially, non existent code enforcement and non exist clean up regulations have not promoted the exercise of environmental laws in Southwest Detroit. By overlooking environmental legislation, created to protect communities, a mistrust between the residents of West Riverfront and city planning officials has emerged. Some may argue that the city of Detroit is not solely to blame for disregarding environmental laws. In fact, state and federal governmental laws truly did not come into effect until the 1970s. In the next section, a discussion surrounding the failure of environmental regulations and what effect it had on the city Detroit and the West Riverfront community. The purpose of this exploration is to comprehend the city's negligence in enforcing environmental regulation.

Failures of Detroit's Environmental Regulations

Despite nearly a quarter century of apparently vigorous governmental action and the creation of weighty new laws and protection agencies, distressed communities are still at risk of environmental hazards. Neither the weight of the regulatory programs (creations of post 1970s laws) or the common laws guarantees the protection of the environment or of the public's health and safety. Even the best federal regulations have been unsuccessful in protecting communities fighting for Environmental Justice at the local level. Legal power, a lack of resources and limited education about the environment and land use rights causes many communities to lose the battle against corporations and industries. Detroit's West Riverfront community is an illustration of how a community's unfamiliarity in state/local regulations, involving the land use caused unequal environmental protection.

Interviews conducted, by the practicum team, with the Apostolic Development Corporation and residents revealed that their efforts in locating help from the city was fruitless. It was revealed by the director of the non-profit organization and members of the Southwest Environmental Vision organization, that city was unwilling to regulate airborne glass particles from a nearby glass recycling plant or enforce codes on a housing demolition recycling plant. No one in the community could identify the hazards that could result from either facilities. Furthermore, unidentifiable orders from a waste/sewer treatment plant were prevalent. Questions were introduced to the residents about the effects of warm weather and the increased smell of odors, in relation to their health. The practicum team received the same repeated responses. The community couldn't accurately describe what negative effects

these odors had on their health. Despite health related problems that may have posed risks, the odors themselves were a nuisance. It was difficult for community members to articulate the law involving nuisances, generated by industries, to the city of Detroit. Consequently, these same problems exist today.

Past Transgressions

Realizing the city had little involvement with community because of the previous administration, the relationship with the city planning department and the planning commission has been limited. According to an interview conducted in September 1993 with Detroit's Planning Commission, it became clear that the city has played a passive role in urban planning. The reason for a lack of urban planning, particularly in Southwest Detroit, was due to a lack of resources. A city planner had not been assigned to the Southwest sector because of other economic development priorities. The assistant director of planning commission, Marcus Loper, mentioned that during the Young Administration, downtown development was the main priority of the city of Detroit. As mention previously, economic development through riverfront development was important to the city for the purposes of revitalization (Interview-Detroit Planning Commission; 1993).

Since commercial development was moving out of Detroit, other economic development strategies were needed to stimulate economic growth. Consequently, land use issues in Southwest Detroit was not on the city's economic agenda. Therefore, the local government in Detroit played a limited role as a regulatory agency in contaminated land clean up. As a

result, the city of Detroit planning department had a difficult time understanding the needs of Southwest Detroit and the West Riverfront community. The lack of interest demonstrated by the local government and the frustration from community leaders in Southwest Detroit closed the opportunity for coalition building among citizens. As a result, limited dialogue was produced to produce feasible solutions to West Riverfront's land contamination problems.

The lack of pollution regulations and passive planning in Detroit gives the appearance that the city accepts that the system of production which creates pollution. Placing regulations on the types of products being produced and questioning the by-products does not seem to be realistic for cities who are in need of industry, for economic growth. Community organizations, striving for environmental justice, need to educate themselves on the types of pollution which affects them. Moreover, they need to take direct action, with cities, by forcing them to regulate industries. Essentially, communities will have to command the attention of local governments and pressure them to monitor the by-products (wastes) of production. (Sexton, Kenneth; "A Cause for Concern"; 1992).

Failure of Detroit's Environmental Regulations - Concluding Thoughts

The year long research project conducted by the practicum team revealed that community fully understood that the city had a shortage of resources to enable them to establish programs which enforced environmental regulations. However, the community believed that if the city lacked resources, at least they could attempt to demonstrate that they supported the

neighborhood's effort in facilitating environmental clean up. Establishing a structure of social equality or what I understand as environmental democracy is an objective for the community.

Environmental democracy, a term coined from the practicum project, is a term that reflects the rights and liberty of residents and their property (Community Development Practicum Project;1993). It allows communities to control the *quality of their lives* in relation to diverse land uses. Empowering communities by allowing them to actively participate in planning and legislative decisions involving the neighborhoods (encompassed in the environment) is an expression of environmental democracy.

Moreover, the expression of *environmental democracy*, can be created into a system that can respect the private ownership of production. However, it should also require that manufactures who threaten the environment and public health, place attention on how they lower environmental risks for communities adjacent to their industry. By utilizing ²democratic review with public participation, this can be attempted. In essence, formal public participation may need to be re-evaluated by our legal system to create a *checks-and-balance system* (possibly using an type of quasi-judicial entity created with residential leaders to make sure regulations are followed by industries) that governs communities to be "watchdogs". Because the local and state government do not normally challenge what is

For the purposes of this section democratic review is defined as an aim to revitalize the representative system through local consensus building processes, by eliminating both political inequality and environmental deterioration (O'Conner John; pp 52).

produced, and how, it tends to regulate legislation after the fact. A product or process is generally not subject to review until large numbers of people are hurt, sickened or killed. Once this happens then the government appears to investigate and applies protective measures, using the legal system as a shielding mechanism (Morell, David and Magorian Christopher; "Risk and Fear of Local Opposition"; 1982). In several laws and planning journals there is evidence that shows that pollutants can be stopped from entering the environment by either pollution controls or by eliminating the activity that generates pollutants (Bello, Walden; pp. 199).

For instance, the Michigan Department of Transportation, uses these pollution controls and encourages air quality regulations. Cities follow these regulations to receive federal and state funding. This pollution control has been designed into a state program called, "Ozone Action" days. It serves to regulate pollution generated activities (using lawn mowers, pumping gasoline during day hours, barbecuing etc.) to enhance air quality (Michigan Department of Transportation; "Ozone Action Days"; 1992). This regulation makes cities aware of environmental pollution; and welcomes public participation in helping design future environmental programs.

Since environmental laws truly did not come into effect until after the 1970s uniting different levels of the government to construct environmental programs (such as "Ozone Action Days") was not perceived. Comprehending that environmental laws did not serve to unite governmental agencies or the judicial system, these two entities played a key role in causing

communities to be vulnerable to pollution. Pre-1970s non existent regulations created a ³laissez-faire (ie. the opposition of governmental interference) attitude towards precautions involving environmental hazards. Moreover, since these industries provided an avenue for employment and economic development, regulations were not enforced, and environmental concerns involving hazards were overlooked. Therefore, it shouldn't be surprising that local planning agencies support economic growth that ignored future problems associated with certain types of industrial development. Proposals that offer economic incentives to mitigate local opposition for the establishment of new hazardous waste industries (and have the potential of generating hazardous waste) should not be accepted.

West Riverfront blames the city of Detroit for not properly planning for these types of facilities, and for sacrificing their communities for economic gain. If the city knows that there is a potential for industrial owners to contaminate and abandon land, then appropriate measures should be taken to protect the residents from the effects of *mixed zoning*. By not communicating with communities and changing zoning, according to industry, gives the appearance that the Detroit city planning department only responds to the needs of heavy industry and economic revitalization. Conclusively, this raises disturbing social policy questions in reference to feasible or ethical economic development within the city of Detroit.

A doctrine opposing governmental interference in economic affairs beyond the minimum necessary for the maintenance of peace and property rights (Webster; Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary).

After reviewing the city of Detroit's role as a regulatory system, for the community of West Riverfront, their shortcomings could have been remedied if the community were invited to participate. Perhaps the most important issue to illuminate is that regulatory systems in the United States appear to be fundamentally limited in using *public participation* (Zimmerman, Klaus, "Distribution Considerations and the Environmental Policy Process"; 1986). This becomes evident when communities are not informed about planning and policy changes which may affect their communities. When capital gain and economic development conflicts with regulations that are suppose to protect communities, these same communities should have the right to voice concern or offer alternative suggestions. It appears in the past, that the federal and state government have been accustomed to making policy decisions without the use of public participation. However the use of public participation has proven to be an effective vehicle for policy and planning decisions. In addition, public participation has allowed citizens to create a political and social voice about regional and nations interests (Moore, Robert; pp. 128)

The Dawn of Public Participation _____

Over the last 25-30 years there has been a considerable change in public expectation concerning the level of openness with local and state governments. Public participation has proven to more important within the decision making the process. In order to legitimize policy and planning decisions, communities want representatives to take part in the design of strategies (James L. Creighton: Involving citizens in Community Decision Making). This outlook has become especially crucial regarding controversial issues of environmental

hazards, and the role of *formal* and *informal participation*. This innovative process is a procedure which helps communities protect themselves from environmental inequality/injustices. Involvement in policy and planning decision enables community organizations to be informed and educated about changes that occur in their neighborhoods.

Recently, it appears that environmentalism has shifted its agenda to actively include people of color and low income residents in public participation strategies (Mushak, Betty; "Environmental Equity: A New Coalition for Justice"; 1993). Because of an abundance of documentation which shows these individuals (within their communities) are subject to a disproportionately large amount of pollution and other environmental stressors; they are ideal crusaders for the environmental justice movement. These individuals now are represented at public participation forums, held by governmental entities, to assist in policy implementation. Since the environmental justice movement has become a fertile arena for multiracial groups, their representation has strengthen. The environmental justice principles, which is a foundation for the movement's preamble, addresses that all citizens have a right to make government responsive to environmental concerns. Since public participation for these communities usually starts at a grassroots level this appears to be the best way to build coalitions with other organizations. As a result, formal and informal participation involving government agencies has been introduced and used effectively to address environmental concerns.

To promote restructuring within the environmental justice movement, formal and informal participation became the primary step in obtaining macro-strategies and economic and political democracy on the national agenda regarding the movement. The "Right to Know" law, lead by Center in Wilarington, East Los Angeles and South Central Los Angeles, ignited other communities in other states to legitimate themselves through formal participation. This particular law of 1986 gives public access to information about toxic substances that can affect a community or individual's quality of life (health and safety). The grassroots organization in California, advocated for the following three new rights which altered the relationship between the public and industry.

(1) The right know about the health effects and environmental impacts of materials used by the plant under investigation.

(2) The right to inspect facilities where citizens and experts working for communities, have access to view, test and witness the operation or process of the manufacturing site.

(3) The right to negotiate agreements with responsible parties over issues affecting human and environmental health, safety and welfare (O'Conner, James; pp. 59).

Formal participation is part of the new model of democratic socialism in which public power and decision making is collective with governmental entities. (Moore, Richard; Head Louis;pp. 120).

Such a model has created mandated participation, initiated by the federal government, through various Acts. Mandated participation-whether it be in 'internal decision making or participation involving the general public-is an attempt to restore or improve the democratic process (Nieves, Leslie;"Not in Whose Backyard"; 1992). The West Riverfront community, for example, created an alliance with other organizations. This was accomplished to finally break down the community's barriers and effectively work with the city of Detroit. Through mandated public participation guided by of the Empowerment Zone, the community members now participate as an advisory board on Detroit's Brownfields Strategic Team. Though it's taken mandated participation to get the community and the city working towards common goals, the future benefits will outweigh the effort.

Citizen participation also provides a mechanism to insure democratization of long range policy and planning (Mushak, Betty; "Environmental Equity: A New Coalition for Justice; 1993). This process permits those affected by policy changes to have a place in decision making process. In practice, citizen participation depends on the level of organization of the interest group or movement. This effort immediately places the interest group as a stakeholder; and those who can become efficiently organized can exercise political power. In addition, it also depends on the sophistication of the participants, the amount of time and energy they can devote to a task, and their ability to reach a consensus and eliminate internal conflicts.

Participation initiated through a public or private entity which invites interest groups the participates. These groups are constituent groups representing a interest groups within the community (Pateman; 1970).

Though mandated formal participation is often times difficult during the planning process it has proven to be valuable for implementing new planning and policy strategies. (Benveniste, Guy; *Mastering the Politics of Planning*; 1991). Circumstances, such as environmental contamination of property within a community involves many participants with distinctive roles. By establishing open dialogue through formal participation allows for all parties to express ideas and recommendations. In general, mandated participation is an attempt to restore or improve the democratic process. As mentioned previously, such an improvement within the democratic process allows distress communities to verbalize their strategies regarding environmental management.

If formal participation is not an option, informal participation can be still be useful. *Informal participation* involves communities taking incentive to organize among themselves and create communication networks. This can be accomplished through local governmental departments, city council members, universities etc. Community organizations, can still create strategies without begin invited to take part in mandated public participation forums (LaMore, Rex; *Community and Economic Development Course Packet*; 1994). An example of this can be seen when community leaders take the first step in scheduling meetings with owners of industries and discuss concerns of pollution. Informal community meetings with local government support, can sometimes create changes with neighboring industries.

In sum, to cultivate positive action through grassroots organizations and influence the federal government to produce laws, like to Right to Know Act, formal and/or informal participation

is essential. Local environmental organizations, striving to eliminate land use inequalities, must create public/private partnerships that support public involvement. The West Riverfront community has already started, and solutions to environmental problems are being constructed. In order to achieve solutions the community used the *consensus process* coupled with public participation. The consensus process entails (1) identifying major interests affected by an issue (2) bringing together representatives from both sides together (3) bringing both sides together to educate one another about their respective concerns. The final result is to generate options and then reach an agreement that all sides can accept (Carpenter, Susan; Solving Community Problems; 1992). Thus, in order for the environmental justice to grow, the movement will have to encourage participation so consensus building can foster.

Background Information - Empowerment Zones

State and local governments nominated areas to be designated as either an empowerment zone or an enterprise community. Each city was required to provide a strategic plan and demonstrate social and economic need. Cities must meet eligibility criteria related to population, distress, size and poverty rate. Once selected, the designation will remain in effect for up to 10 years. The designation may be revoked if the state modifies the boundaries of the area, or does not comply with the agreed strategic plan (Detroit Planning Department; Tax Incentives to Empowerment Zones; 1995). In 1994 and 1995, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development designated up to six empowerment zones and 65 enterprise communities in urban areas.

Environmental Justice and Detroit's Empowerment Zone: Effective Strategies for Progress

The excitement that has captured the city of Detroit due to the designated federal empowerment zone has offered an chance to revitalize communities. The designation has created economic hope in distressed neighborhoods by introducing innovative housing and commercial development strategies. Most importantly, the designation has offered developers and community organization chance to *redevelopment abandon land once contaminated*.

Since Southwest Detroit is designated as part of Detroit's Empowerment Zone the community has benefited from environmental clean up programs, encouraged by the city. The empowerment zone designation has influenced the city of Detroit to applied for other federal grants which will stimulate the clean up of Brownfields sites. A Brownfields manual will be developed to help profit and non-profit developers comprehend state and federal environmental regulations . The manual will aid future developers on how to conduct baseline assessments; and possibly offer distress communities grant money to fund these assessments.

Such efforts may not have been produced if the empowerment zone's principles hadn't inspired environmental management. Neighborhoods like West Riverfront have an advantage because the community is located within the empowerment zone. The area has been targeted for state funding initiate clean up. It has become obvious the designation has quicken the pace of environmental clean up because of potential economic revitalization.

In addition to funding, the West Riverfront community has benefited from the empowerment zone designation because urban planners are now assigned to the area. *Land use planning* is now a priority because redevelopment promises economic sustainability. Furthermore, public involvement in land use planning, now encourages communities to participate on advisory boards. Clearly, the empowerment zone has offered incentives for improved environmental management in Southwest Detroit. Thus, the environmental justice movement is serving as a model for to Detroit.

Since the designation, universities are encouraged by the city to work within the empowerment zones. This invitation encouraged other federal agencies to fund redevelopment efforts, facilitated by universities. Michigan State University has been funded by HUD to create a Community Outreach Program to work within empowerment zones. Resources from this grant has allowed the university to address the environmental problems in Southwest Detroit (particularly West Riverfront). Such an opportunity enables the MSU Community Outreach Team to review past recommendations from urban and regional planning practicum courses and implement them. Presently, three previous recommendations have become attainable goals which support the mission of the environmental justice. By uses the expertise of universities and community organizations, environmental inequalities can be limited through strategic long range planning.

Environmental Goals:

(1) A new Land Use Plan that realistically provides recommendations for contaminated property.

(2) The creation of the Brownfields Manual which aids potential developers with state environmental regulations.

(3) A community environmental strategic sub-group, which encompasses all the environmental groups in Southwest Detroit. This is exciting because at one time all the environmental groups segregated themselves away from one another.

Conclusion

The environmental justice framework attempts to uncover the underlining assumptions that may influence environmental decision making. In this analysis, a case study/data report was presented to see if the West Riverfront community fit into the framework of the environmental model. The environmental justice was then summarized in relation to the West Riverfront community. The environmental justice framework consists of five basic characteristics summarized in the analysis:

(1) incorporates the principle of the "right" of all individuals to be protected from environmental degradation

(2) adopts a public health model of prevention (elimination of the threat before harm occurs) as the preferred strategy

(3) shifts the burden of proof to polluters/discharges who do harm, discriminate, or who do not give equal protection to racial/ethnic minorities, and other "protected classes"

(4) encourages public involvement and consensus building with diverse representatives

(5) redresses disproportionate risk burdens through targeted action and resources (Bullard, Robert; People of Color-Environmental Groups; 1994).

The goal of an environmental justice framework is to make environmental protection more democratic. More importantly, the framework brings to the surface ethical and political

questions. Questions regarding whether Detroit was negligent in planning for industrial parks in relations to communities, is an example. Some may conclude that economic growth far outweighed public protection; and ethics in planning were ignored. Regardless if this true, the West Riverfront learned that generating a position through public involvement is essential in protecting communities from environmental inequalities.

Working together community stakeholders have assisted public decision-makers in identifying at risk populations, contaminated property, research gaps, and action models to correct existing and future threats. By making their voices heard the crusade has made a difference in the lives of people and the physical environment.

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