

Towards an Updated Approach to Neighborhood Planning

Since the publication of the earliest conceptions of the neighborhood by Clarence Perry in the 1920's and the subsequent formalization of neighborhood planning standards and criteria in the manual *Planning The Neighborhood* (Hygiene of Housing Committee 1960), there have been far-reaching changes of both a social and technical nature which suggest the need for a new look at this approach to neighborhood planning. The purpose of this article is to reexamine the neighborhood unit concept in light of this advancing knowledge and evaluate how applicable those original assumptions underlying the neighborhood are for the contemporary planner developing a process to plan our residential environments.

This review begins with a brief synopsis of the earliest physical planning model for neighborhoods. Following this, recent research concerning the relationships between social, mental, and physical outlooks upon, and uses of the neighborhood will be introduced to uncover a broadened array of concerns which should be considered when planning residential environments. These ideas are then applied in an illustrative planning process which concludes the paper.

Historical Background

While the physical model employed in practice is largely based on *Planning the Neighborhood* which brought the goals, principles, and standards used in residential area planning together in a unified form, the earlier source from which much has been drawn is the work of Clarence Perry (1929; 1939). Perry introduced the neighborhood unit concept which set down principles to guide the development of residential areas in a unified manner. Housing was to be considered in relation to open spaces, community facilities, local shops, and traffic flows so that resident needs would be efficiently served. By defining an area of local attachment to be inhabited by a homogeneous population with shared values and interests, social concerns associated with physical plans could also be addressed.

It was not until the publication of *Planning the Neighborhood* that most of Perry's principles were translated into formalized standards, although that document disclaims any intention of prescribing the social dimensions of the neighborhood, especially regarding matters of racial and income segregation.

Instead it follows closely the accepted public objectives of its day, such as health, safety, convenience, and economic efficiency. Today it is important to consider additional matters such as social equity, environmental quality, and resource conservation as part of a multiple-objectives planning framework (Kaiser et al. 1974, pp. 107-208; Hufschmidt 1971). There must also be a sensitivity to designing the neighborhood to correspond to resident needs, values, and life styles, and to include citizen participation in the process. Such issues were not central to the earlier neighborhood planning approaches, and their rising importance signals the need to develop a process which is better suited to our current planning context. We proceed now to recent research which sheds light on the neighborhood.

Social, Mental and Physical Orientations to the Neighborhood

According to Suzanne Keller, author of *The Urban Neighborhood*, "The sociological conception of neighborhood emphasizes the notion of shared activities, experiences and values, common loyalties and perspectives, and human networks that give an area a sense of continuity and perspective over time" (1968, p. 91). Using this definition, it is possible to organize recent work on the social dimensions of

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neighborhood. It is useful to note first that while Perry's neighborhood unit concept denotes a clear-cut spatial entity, recent thought suggest that there are multiple levels of residential space, including the immediate microenvironment, the proximate or local environment, and the larger conceptual environment,¹ each of which plays a significant role in the activity time budget² of family and individual life.

Activity Patterns as a Dimension of Neighborhood

The first aspect of Keller's characterization of a neighborhood, "shared activities and experiences," involves both a temporal and a spatial dimension which interact with each other. Activity patterns may refer to time periods of residency, daily and weekly routines, or cyclical event scales, as well as to the spatial locus of patterned movement in terms of "experienced space" as defined by the actual physical spread of daily activities by residents and "perceived space" based on the cognitive awareness of potential locations not yet experienced.

The "experienced space" perspective, employed by Chapin (1974) focuses on a "mean locus" of activity range determined via a summing of the crow-flying distances from a person's home to every out-of-home activity visited during a 24 hour period. In data from the Washington, D.C. area, a very extensive commutershed is shown for many out-of-home activities. While the main job is the dominant out-of-home activity, it was also found that eating, drinking out, and shopping portray an extensive pattern, and one that is dispersed as compared to the more centralized employment plot. Additionally, socializing and recreation, while showing a con-

provide more solid footing for concepts such as user needs, residential satisfactions, and lifestyle preferences and aspirations as they are reflected in daily activity patterns and expressed resident values (Brown and Moore 1971; Michelson 1977).

The neighborhood planning efforts which have equated the physical and social aspects of the neighborhood and have attempted to achieve social objectives through physical design may have been misguided. Cognitive and experiential perspectives of space may need to be examined more closely in future planning practice.

Shared Values and Loyalties as Dimensions of the Neighborhood

The second aspect of Keller's definition involves notions of shared values and loyalties, and leads to consideration of whether physical layout principles are an appropriate basis for planning resident behavior patterns and social interaction. Solow *et al.* comment that "While there is some evidence that the physical layout can be conducive or resistant to functional and social interactions, it is increasingly recognized that factors such as the characteristics of residents, degree of mobility, social values, norms, attitudes and other determinants influence social behavior considerably more than the physical environment itself" (1969, p. 38).

When Perry framed his planning principles, he consciously sought to influence the behavior of residents through the physical environment. There is growing evidence suggesting that the values he was hoping to achieve are no longer central planning concerns and no longer match the values held by residents of existing communities. His stress upon the village lifestyle and the nuclear family as the cornerstones of neighborhood life may be inappropriate in our pluralistic, highly mobile, metropolitan society. His top-down, expert-oriented planning does not leave room for the assessment of the perceptions, values, and preferences of residents, nor does it allow for their participation in the process. Finally, the provincial character of the local concerns over school busing and property protection which may emerge from neighborhood unit planning run counter to the metropolitan-wide stake in high quality education and equal housing opportunities for all.

Human Networks as a Dimension of Neighborhood

The third aspect of Keller's definition, human networks, hinges upon the relationship of proximity and homogeneity to neighboring. Each community may define the role of the neighbor in a unique manner. For one it may mean sharing food and giving aid in emergencies such as times of sickness; for another it may mean casual conversations in each others' houses; while for a third it may only entail salutary greetings or visual recognition on the doorstep or along pedestrian pathways. In any case,

“. . . there have been far-reaching changes of both a social and technical nature which suggest the need for a new look at . . . neighborhood planning.”

siderably less extensive activity space, still conform to a larger radius than that of the traditional neighborhood unit. This would seem to indicate that the heightened mobility exhibited by an automobile-oriented society calls for a lessened emphasis on the provision within walking distance of opportunities to satisfy daily social, economic and cultural needs. However, if future gas prices continue to climb or fossil fuels become more strictly controlled, the form of these relationships may be tempered.

On the other hand, studies of moving behavior provide a bridge to the broader "perceived space" perspective. By probing the different ways in which the environment enters into the consciousness of the individual while making the periodical "big decision" of residential choice, these studies

it is evident that if the planner is to understand and plan for social well-being in neighborhoods, he must identify the social processes going on within them in relation to physical siting factors and population variables.

Both Kuper (1953) and Festinger, Schacter, and Back (1950) found a strong connection between spatial proximity and the orientation of places of residence to one another (position on the block, relationship of doors and windows to other units, paths and common spaces) and the formation of friendships. Establishing such acquaintances may be conditional, however, upon the existence of a similarity of values (such as ideas on childrearing) and stage in the life cycle among residents (Gans 1968; Michelson 1970). This may imply that a new style of residential planning may be necessary which provides for sufficient homogeneity at the level of the block to allow for consensus rather than conflict among neighbors while enhancing opportunities for friendship formation based on common needs, backgrounds, and obligations. At the community level, a more balanced, heterogeneous population would be desirable and equitable.

The use of local shops and the attachment by residents to local friends and organizations is bound up within the conception of the neighborhood as a residence-serving physical delivery unit. The extent to which local services are used and various forms of social exchange occur indicates the importance that such facilities and services have for neighborhood design. Alternately, technological, economic, and social changes affect the locus of people's activities and may alter the individual's sense of neighborhood.

The Extent of Localization of Facilities Within the Neighborhood

The importance of services and facilities to residents can be established from considerations of nonuse as from factors associated with their use. Gold (1972) has found that, in an era of increasing leisure time opportunities, neighborhood parks are seldom used by more than 10% of the service area population. Relative to the frequency of visits and time spent in nonurban recreation areas, there is a decrease in the use of public parks in urban areas. Nonuse suggests to Gold that unless a participatory approach to parks planning is formulated, incorporating concepts of multiple use, flexibility, and design for a variety of people, citizens will become unwilling to support parks with taxes.

Foley (1952), in his study of a residential district in Rochester, New York, did not address the question of nonuse. Instead he tried to assess the degree to which residents are either *neighbors* who use local facilities, engage in formal neighboring, and recognize their district as a unified community; or *urbanites* who are attached to individuals, organizations and institutions stretching beyond the neighborhood to the larger city.



Residents with similar values and activity patterns gather in public spaces.

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He discovered that the typical Rochester resident was part urbanite and part neighbor, exhibiting neighborly characteristics in proportion to the size of the nucleus of local facilities available to him. Individuals along this local-urban continuum can be distinguished on the basis of socioeconomic characteristics such as stage in the life cycle, occupation, and ethnicity, as well as by such information as length of residence in the community and degree of mobility.

Recently, Albert Hunter, working in the same Rochester neighborhood tried "to test the dynamic causal proposition of the ecological, social, and cultural-symbolic 'loss of community' which this neighborhood has experienced over the 25 years since the Foley study" (1975, p.540). Hunter suggests that "emergent and perhaps persistent counter forces do exist for the creation and maintenance of local community solidarity. The prevalence of 'ideological communities' around major institutions located in older areas of central cities, such as medical complexes and universities, though relatively unique within a metropolitan area, may be sufficiently general nationwide to provide a limited but persistent set of counter values to the 'loss of community' in urban settings" (1975, p. 550).

Recent Trends Emphasizing a More Extensive Area of Interaction

According to Hoover (1968, p.237), the most basic aspect of urban spatial organization is the interdependence among activities. Mills (1972, p.12), finds that urban areas exist because people have found it advantageous (in terms of political centralization, military protection, goods and information exchange, and religious/cultural domination) to have a spatial concentration of activities. As modern society has evolved, certain patterns of urban activity have changed to meet the shifting scale of the

functional city. Specialization and diversification of institutions, assembly line production, high speed transportation, and computerized communications have brought about a new metropolitan order which supercedes the face-to-face, personalized interaction which once took place in the neighborhoods of the city (Mumford 1961).

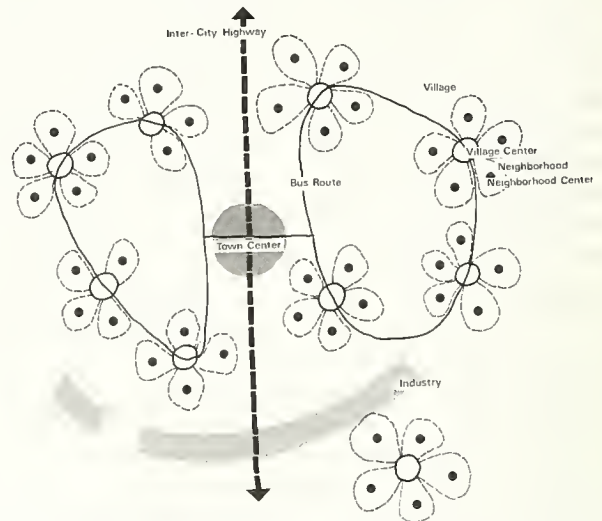
Probably the most timely example is the change in household shopping patterns: the shift in buying habits away from the cluster of small, local-serving stores toward the institutionalized shopping center with its broader range of services, drawing upon a more extensive residential territory made possible by the car. The change in the retail distribution system has had significant impacts upon neighborhood planning, as evidenced by the difficulties in Columbia, Maryland, a new town which has incorporated a modified version of the neighborhood unit scheme illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Originally the developers had hoped to find sponsors for a "Ma and Pa" type of local grocery store for each neighborhood, but this proposal proved financially infeasible and was dropped in favor of a chain store operation. These too have been financial failures, due to the small scale (1000 households) and low density of the neighborhoods, and the continued use of village supermarkets by residents (Slidell 1972).

The failure of the local store has undermined achievement of the social organization concept which the founders of Columbia were seeking when they planned these neighborhoods. It was hoped that by providing a proprietor who would be concerned with the functioning of the community, the local store could become a service and communications center, acting as a central point for local social interaction. This is a role that appears unsupported in the planned community, primarily because of the stores' inability to maintain economic solvency, but also due to the continuing attachments of residents to other nonlocal and metropolitan-wide pursuits.³

Dewey (1957) and Issacs (1948), recognizing the increasingly specialized nature of individuals' activity choices, were among the first to question the self-sufficiency of the neighborhood unit. Considering today's "throw-away" societal consciousness, as represented by shifting fads in the use of leisure time, there are difficult problems in designing capital-intensive facilities that accommodate changing public whims in their use. Since we can expect continual changes in the makeup of our population, and since there are different needs and uses of space by various age and ethnic groups, facilities that were attractive to one population may go unused by another. This suggests two alternatives:

1. Assume high mobility of households and build communities with this expectation, designing neighborhood facilities for couples, for childrearing families or for senior citizens, and planning on households moving with each change in the life cycle, or

Figure 1
Columbia New Town Concept



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2. Assume low mobility of households and build communities with this expectation, designing neighborhoods with facilities that can be adapted to changes in life cycle. Neighborhood facilities might be accommodated in shell-like structures which are continually updated to correspond with changing needs in the resident population, thereby encouraging them to remain immobile.

Trends catalogued by Webber (1963;1964) and Meier (1962) indicate some limitations to this line of reasoning. Advances in telecommunications and transportation have made physical proximity less important for the maintenance of close relations, creating communities characterized by business and professional ties kept over great distances with few correspondingly intense local associations. Even as these factors are making the spatial locale less important in everyday affairs, there are countervailing forces that tend to recreate opportunities for human interactions, as with growth of the office function in center city.

Webber views this country as being increasingly molded by an urban communications network, leaving no portion of the nation untouched by developments elsewhere and standardizing the behavior and values of rural and urban residents of all ethnic backgrounds. The result is an emerging system of order and organization which is far different from traditional notions of the typical urban neighborhood setting.

Seemingly then, while metropolitanism and regionalism and the rising importance of issues of social equity and environmental quality indicate trends toward a widened perspective, counteracting considerations of individual and group identity, political decentralization and local citizen participation are evidence that attributes of size, impersonalization and powerlessness that go with the

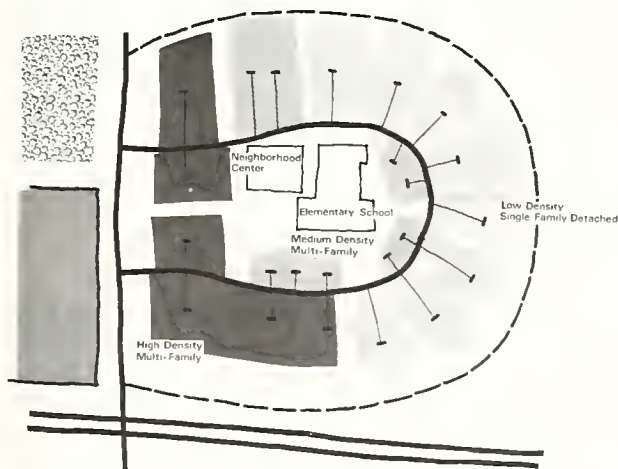
nonplace phenomena are unacceptable to urban residents. This points to the potential for conflicting purposes which will be encountered in residential planning

The Congruence of Social, Mental and Physical Concepts of Space

Michelson has developed a typology for examining the interfaces between the three measures of local socio-spatial congruence: experiential, neighboring and mental factors (1970, pp. 193-217). Translating these to match the previous review, we have examined *activity patterns of experienced space, social interaction in neighboring space, and cognitive perspectives of mental space*. Each of these dimensions may have value in assessing the salience that residential environments have for accommodating or precluding social, cultural, and psychological patterns of residents.

On the one hand, there is an overall match among these perspectives in that aspects of each may provide insights into long neglected realms of the neighborhood, and may help to define a new scale of analysis for residential planning. On the other hand, a mismatch may exist in that planning with these notions in mind may result in the development of homogeneous, exclusionary communities. If these are to be avoided, then planning must consciously seek to reflect diversity and pluralism rather than trying to mask the conflict where it exists. The residential environment should allow for the expression of individualized life styles capable of blending together into an identifiable community image. Planning must also reflect traditional concerns for cost efficiency in service delivery, and public health, safety, and convenience. This set of planning objectives is addressed in the planning process outlined below.

Figure 2
Columbia New Town Neighborhood Concept



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An Illustrative Planning Process For Residential Environments

This section attempts to define the scope of an "updated approach to residential planning." At the heart of such an undertaking lies one fundamental principle: since residential areas serve vital social as well as shelter functions, it is essential that this reformulated approach not only consider basic housing and community facility requirements conceived within engineering and design standards, but also social dimensions such as activity patterns, spatial imagery, and environmental preferences.

For our purposes, "residential environment" will be defined as "the land, facilities, services and social structure which supplement the home in providing for satisfaction of individual and family needs, social interaction, personal development and political participation and which delimit the territory appropriately included in the design of residential development" (Solow *et al.* 1969, p.47).

Such a definition gives latitude for bringing into the planning process recognition of the variable locus of activities associated with the basic residential functions of households of differing characteristics. Household members function within, and have attachments to the proximate, adjoining and accessible environments in the city, each serving a range of purposes and providing for various forms of personal and organizational interactions. Their perceptions of, and satisfactions with the home environment at the scale of the dwelling unit are affected not only by characteristics of that residence, but are also influenced by and are influences upon neighborhood and metropolitan perceptions and satisfactions (Campbell 1974, p.258).

The Functions of Residential Environments

To assure that planning for residential areas is fully responsive to value-laden and behavioral considerations brought out in the previous sections, the shelter and social functions of residential environments are best defined around what have become widely attributed to be human and social needs. While Maslow's hierarchical continuum, ranging from physiological to self-actualizing needs (1970, pp.35-46), and Warren's listing of social needs (1963, pp.9-11) provide helpful insights, it is necessary to express needs in terms which are meaningful for planning. As such, the environment can be seen as the context in which satisfaction of needs is either hindered or facilitated. Needs themselves are the building blocks which work in varying environmental settings to account for different forms of behavior. They are the primary units of analysis in planning for residential environments (Perin 1970, pp.121-136).

Marans' categorization of needs is illustrative of one form which relates directly to the residential environment. It ranges from physical needs for exercising, releasing tension, and finding private

and natural settings to social needs for security, affiliation, recognition, and status (1975, p.9).

Building from such a foundation, need-based planning functions may be defined as they emerge from the congruent socio-spatial relationships established earlier. One illustrative set of functions that could be used as guides to planning the neighborhood would include shelter, security, childrearing, symbolic identification, social interaction and participation, and leisure.

The *shelter* function encompasses physical elements used by household members in the localized vicinity, such as playgrounds, religious centers, convenience shops, elementary schools, streets, and utilities. The dwelling unit itself is deemphasized as a planning element since its features are not part of the land use planning realm, while employment, higher education, and most shopping activities are more regional in nature.

The *security* function may be expressed as the role which the environment plays as a safe, stable, and ordered setting for daily activities. This can be reflected in physical safety from traffic, natural hazards, and criminal violence or in mental well-being resulting from harmonious land use relationships and visually restful surroundings. Security is also affected by a confluence of factors: the scale of design, the homogeneity of the populace, the clustered nature of buildings and their relation to walkways, streets, open spaces, entrances, and lighting, which help in establishing real and symbolic barriers of influence and opportunities for surveillance.

The residential environment is the place where most *childrearing* occurs, since it is where most of the child's needs are satisfied and where the family, school, peer groups, and neighbors transmit their values and norms to the child. Since parents desire consistency between their values and those which the child encounters in his or her local acquaintances, they may place importance on insuring a

“There must also be sensitivity to designing the neighborhood to correspond to resident needs, values, and life styles . . .”

similarity of values and interests in their choice of friends and community.

Symbolic identification with, and attachment to a particular locale, is most consonant with a high level of participation in local organizations, finding age-related peer groups, a long residence in the community and a constant use of local facilities (Hunter 1974; Suttles 1968). The symbolic function may be an integrative mechanism, manifested in common awareness of territorial boundaries and name associated with that residential environment, or it may extend to a cultural identification with the popularized image of the community. Symbolic identification may also express exclusionary sen-

timents which must be openly and persuasively dealt with by the planner.

Social interaction arises out of the need for companionship, social recognition, status, and belonging. Suitable layouts for pluralistic populations may be best achieved through designs which encourage occupation of small spaces (a block) by groups with shared values, a similar stage in the life cycle and socioeconomic status. Overall amalgamation of these individual enclaves is obtained at a more inclusive spatial level through integrated usage of common facilities (such as secondary schools, parks, and community centers)

“Each community may define the role of the neighbor in a unique manner.”

and common identification with the community image or territorial base.

Participation may also involve individual commitment and collective political action aimed at community improvement and control. The increased number of neighborhood-level organized units which have proliferated over the past decade, including community development corporations, multiservice centers, and little city halls hint at a new role and range of planning activities at this scale. While the time for Kotler's (1969) and Hallman's (1974) form of neighborhood government may not yet have come, the American Law Institute has developed a process for the participation of neighborhood organizations in administrative and judicial hearings concerned with the local land development ordinance and regulations (1975, pp.86-89).

It can be anticipated that the *leisure* function of residential environments will become increasingly important as the work week shortens and energy shortages mount, placing greater emphasis on local rather than regional facilities. Developers of planned residential environments now commonly include recreational facilities close to residences, recognizing the basic need for exercise and the status-conferring nature of these investments. In some cases the provision of such facilities has been shown to ensure their frequent usage and maintenance, while heightening the desirability and overall amenity of the environment (Burby and Weiss 1976).

Planning Objectives and Evaluation Criteria for Residential Environments

A set of objectives which tie directly back to the residential functions identified earlier are used here to illustrate the range and kinds of objectives to be considered in the course of the collaborative process. Figure 3 shows the relationships between these objectives and the evaluation criteria.

Evaluation criteria should be formulated concurrently with the development of planning guidelines which specify the principles to be followed and

standards to be achieved in design alternatives to insure consistency among these specifications. However, since the guidelines for residential planning are still in need of research, it is not yet possible to rigorously define a set of evaluation criteria.⁴ Instead, five illustrative kinds of criteria are introduced.

Range of Life Style Choices indicates to what degree the proposed living environment allows individuals and households an opportunity to pursue their own identity and living style. Plans would be assessed as to their sensitivity to behavioral objectives such as the variety of opportunities available to residents for use of their free time in familistic, self-actualizing, and other pursuits. For physical objectives, plan assessment would consider the mix of housing costs and densities, the range of leisure-time opportunities, and the variety of environmental amenities associated with each alternative.

Public Convenience would consider how different physical arrangements would offer residents a savings in travel time in the course of going about their daily round of activities, be this via foot,

bicycle, automobile, or mass transit. There is a relationship between time savings and the range of life style choices offered, for if residents can be spared travel time in activity pursuit, and if the environment offers residents a variety of opportunities to enjoy the free time they have gained, then the two criteria operate in unison (Chapin 1971; Meier 1959).

Cost-Efficiency examines the public provision of education, recreation, and social services, and the viability of private sector supply of shopping, medical care, and other services. A benefit-cost analysis, employing a cost-effectiveness criterion, could be utilized to rank alternatives as to their impacts (Lichfield 1975; Hill 1973).

Environmental Vulnerability—Since the objectives above are centrally concerned with the use of space for certain shelter and social functions, environmental concerns are cast primarily in the role of constraints. Three evaluation measures would seem to be necessary: one involving impacts on the functioning of ecosystems, one considering the degree of environmental pollution, and a third assessing the effects on aesthetic and historical qualities. The

Figure 3

Functions Serves by Residential Environments, Planning and Development Objectives, and Illustrative Criteria for Evaluating Progress Toward Achievements of These Objectives

ILLUSTRATIVE KINDS OF EVALUATION CRITERIA

FUNCTIONS	OBJECTIVES	Range of Life Style Choices	Public Convenience	Cost-Efficiency in Service Delivery	Environmental Vulnerability	Social Interaction Opportunities
Shelter	Provide a cost-efficient layout. Provide a range of housing unit types and densities of varying costs with associated amenities. Provide access to daily activity centers.	*	*	*	*	
Security	Minimize the impacts of vehicular and natural hazards upon residents. Enhance opportunities for personal development and well being, order and stability in the environs.				*	*
Childrearing	Provide a safe, healthy, imageable and stable environment with the appropriate facilities for familistic pursuits.	*				*
Leisure	Protect the quality of the natural and built environments for recreational use. Provide access to both open spaces and community facilities.	*	*	*	*	
Social Interaction and Participation	Preserve the social community. Provide opportunities for socializing, social control, social organization, and mutual support.	*	*			*
Symbolic Identification	Establish or maintain a comprehensible, cohesive, and focused community identity which may promote the laying of territorial claims by residents.	*			*	*

exact nature of the relationships involved here is still to be determined, but evaluation systems are now being developed for such a purpose (Leopold 1971).

Social Interaction Opportunities-A final criterion would consider the social interaction opportunities afforded by the spatial organization of the residential environment. Burkhardt's method for determining the degree to which a neighborhood functions as a socially interactive unit, based upon behavioral patterns of neighboring, use of local

“ . . . there are difficult problems in designing capital-intensive facilities that accomodate changing public whims in their uses.”

facilities, participation in neighborhood organizations, and attitudinal dimensions expressing commitment to the locality may have value here (1971, pp. 85-94). His identification of residential mobility, degree of land use mixing, and residential density as surrogate measures for a “neighborhood social interaction index” is suggestive that easily obtainable data may be used to operationalize such an evaluative criteria.

The application of such criteria to the evaluation of alternative plans might proceed in the manner outlined by Hill in his goals-achievement matrix method (1968).

Models of Planning and Development

This final section of this article is one interpretation of the direction in which management agencies should proceed if a participatory approach to planning residential environments is to be implemented. As an illustration, three models or strategies for direct community involvement are described which give latitude for administrative innovation in terms of staffing, operations, budgeting, and forms of public pressure for action employed. Each of the three models assumes public funding of community planning and development organizations set up on a continuing basis, along with basic informational, coordinative, and technical assistance provided by central municipal agencies, allowing each locality to formulate its own operating style based on resident priorities for action.

The *central services model* is one in which designated community organizations receive technical assistance from city hall or the county courthouse on a task force basis. Functioning primarily as a diagnostic team, it would be composed of physical and service delivery planners financed by and provided through one or more central agencies. Such teams would move from one community to another from year to year, probably being most effective in middle- and upper-income communities where value positions are more readily comprehended by professionals. For lower-income and ethnic communities, no matter how much care

is taken to identify problems or how much emphasis is given to using value-free techniques of investigation, there is a strong likelihood that some concerns and needs in the communities will be overlooked or misunderstood. This risk can be minimized by bringing local paraprofessionals onto the team.

Much of the recent experience with community development block grants reflects some version of the task force approach, with multidisciplinary teams focusing their attention on small target areas (Yurman 1976).

In Atlanta, where planning is done at both the city-wide and the neighborhood levels, twenty-four neighborhood planning units have been created, each with a task force comprised of planners, interns and volunteers that does the comprehensive planning with the help of citizen groups (Department of Budget and Planning 1976). The staff efforts involve outreach in the form of citizen identification of problems and potential solutions, as well as the coordination of on-line budget priorities within each department with the expressed desires of citizen groups. This exchange process is modified by the orientation which the staff must have toward city-wide and system-wide needs and problems in addition to neighborhood projects. It would appear that where a task force model, employed in cities with Atlanta's kind of planning orientation, is combined with one or the other of the two models discussed below, it would function smoothly, since

“ . . . neighborhood parks are seldom used by more than 10% of the service area population.”

there is likely to be a high degree of congruence between city-wide and local community objectives.⁵

The second model is the *semi-autonomous model*, based on the concept of an individual assigned to a community from a central agency, acting as a provocateur (Davidoff 1965). Under this model, the activities pursued by the advocate would be dictated by community priorities as established within a collaborative participation process. The resources for planning and service delivery would again come from the budgets of city hall or county courthouse agencies. The advocate's tactic would be to represent the community inside the city government in its attempt to gain support and needed facilities.

In San Diego, California, the neighborhood planning program revolves around the premise that the residents should prepare a plan for city adoption, rather than the other way around (Neighborhood Decentralization 1976). The city of Boulder, Colorado, has gone so far as to prepare a workbook to guide neighborhood groups in the preparation of their plans (Department of Community Development 1976). If their plan is adopted, then not only will the neighborhood gain the power to review and have input on proposed land use changes in the area, but

the group can also develop yearly work programs to submit to their neighborhood planner who will act as the community advocate, seeking funds for their proposals.

The third approach is a *self-directed model*, where the community would employ its own planner. This individual would operate on the community's behalf, working to obtain for it a share in municipal improvements and services, while also seeking private and federal sources of funding for local programs. Community development corporations are typically private, nonprofit organizations with their own programs, funds, and staff. They are governed by a board selected by neighborhood residents and may sponsor business enterprises, housing rehabilitation, and public service referral systems.

Another option would be to have self-directed organizations receive annual programming under a community development type of funding, competing directly with other governmental units for federal monies under a mini-block grant program. This could be modeled after the Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) program, administered by the Urban Reinvestment Task Force for HUD and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB). Local NHS corporations are typically composed of residents of targeted neighborhoods, representatives of financial institutions, and local government officials. Funds are generated largely from a federal grant and a local contribution (by lenders or the city) and are used to administer a revolving loan fund and cover operating expenses (Ahlbrandt and Brophy 1976).

In evaluating the relative prospects for applying each of these models in any particular city, it would be useful to consider:

1. which one will best allow for achievement of stated objectives
2. which one is most politically, economically, and socially feasible
3. which one is strongest in a participatory sense

Notes

1. These three terms describe the varying scales of space in which people perform activities on a day-to-day basis. For further explanation see Hall (1969); Sommer (1969); Hester (1975); Barker (1968) and Appleyard (1970).
2. An activity time budget measures the way in which a household or an individual allocates time on a periodic basis (hour-by-hour, daily, weekly).
3. A related piece of evidence to document this claim is the fact that only 20% of the residents use the recreation facilities in Columbia, indicating the relatively minor potential these have as local-serving residential facilities (Slidell 1972).
4. Innovative systems which could be consulted in reference to guidelines and standards are Bucks County Planning Commission (1973) and Sanibel Planning Commission (1975).
5. In this regard, the New York City experiment with decentralization through the Office of Neighborhood Government represents a blending of the central services and semi-autonomous models of organization. See Fainstein (1976).



Children enjoy a well-designed neighborhood play space.

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Conclusion

The findings from the social sciences reviewed here do not reinforce traditional definitions of neighborhoods as identifiable socio-spatial units. Instead, they suggest that the planning emphasis might be better placed on the functions these areas serve for their residents, whatever spatial form they may take. From a shelter viewpoint this would mean an emphasis on facilities and services rather than on bounded service delivery areas. From a social perspective, the emphasis would be on the design of space to fit the social order of communities—the security, leisure time, social interaction, and participation functions important to residents. Such a focus would need to be guided by an overriding concern for insuring the provision of equitable housing, education, and employment opportunities for all members of the society while maintaining environmental integrity.

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