

Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity

Note-taking guide for session rapporteurs

METADATA

Session title: Neighbourhoods as Sites of Community and Cultural Development

Presenters: Clarence Bayne, June Creelman, Mirela Duculescu

Day: Thurs. May 1

Time: 1:00 p.m.

NOTES

1. Short overview/summary of presentation

Welcoming remarks by Lidia Varbonova

KEYWORDS AND REFLECTIONS

- Different continents – Different approaches
- Old infrastructure continue and sustain for the future
- Network /Funding – Keeping neighborhood spirit
- Ownership in regulations
- Flexibility to build infrastructure – Self mobility and stability
- Tension between builders, artists, politicians, media, architects
- Places and spaces – Digital paths, online approach, connecting with the future
- Media coverage – How to lobby and work with the media

CASE STUDY #1

Empress Cultural Centre Project

Montreal, Canada

Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grace (a.k.a. N.D.G.)

Guest Speaker: **CLARENCE BAYNE**

N.D.G. is the maverick in social issues. Pioneer in social housing and keeping the planet green.

N.D.G. is in the western part of English speaking Montreal. Expressing themselves in the English language puts them in a difficult situation and creates a certain fear around the French.

Our hope is improving the service and respecting democracy. Everyone of any region is entitled to services offered by the City. There has been unfair distribution of funds for the development of the art culture.

The Empress was built in 1927 with the Egyptian Art Deco style. Building represented cultural life.

English speaking artists need cultural facility. They need a place to continue to express themselves.

The provincial government did a study. It supports the intent to provide 10 to 15 million aside to provide a facility for the English sector. There has been some confrontation towards politicians.

New building:

- 400 seat theatre
- Black box-style rehearsal and creation space to accommodate 125 seats
- Basement for studio rentals.

International Symposium 2008
Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity
April 28 - May 1, 2008
Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa, Canada
www.symposium2008.ca

CASE STUDY #2

Glebe Community Centre

Ottawa, Canada
Glebe Neighborhood

Guest speaker: **June Creelman**

Glebe Community Centre was a former church
Community has 10,000 residents, 50 % rental
Walkable community

City of Ottawa bought church in 1974
Considered a poor choice
No pool, no parking, wasted space
Seen as a compromised solution
Little investment was made in the building. The City let it decline.
No other space was available

Early 90's the City wanted to build a mega recreational complex outside of our community.

1996- Community protested: "Save our community centre. Don't shut it down"

6 yrs of constant lobbying, compiling priorities and fundraising

2003 – City investment of \$4 million

Current

City operates the building.
Includes a daycare and a community newspaper office
G.N.A.G. (Glebe Neighborhood Activities Group) does most of the programming

Results:

- Parks and recreation aspect moved towards cultural infrastructure.
- Dramatic increase in programs
- 5 times more rental revenues
- Increased attendance
- Cultural catalyst
- A gathering place with 400 capacity
- A place for theatre, music, pottery, weddings, dog training, public meetings

Lessons:

- Importance with location
- Community involvement / partnership
- Importance having big beautiful room
- Multiple uses and users
- Integration – Parks and Recreation / Culture
- Property management by the City

CASE STUDY #3

Cultural and architectural promenade route in the historical centre of Bucharest, Romania

Guest speaker: **Mirela Duculescu**

A municipal plan was approved to beautify the promenade in Bucharest but nothing was done with it.

International Symposium 2008
Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity
April 28 - May 1, 2008
Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa, Canada
www.symposium2008.ca

Zoning plan included:

- A promenade for pedestrians and bikers
- Preservation of architectural heritage of historical buildings

Project:

- Planning to connect the promenade from Cismigiu Garden to Icon Garden.
- Both green areas are to be united
- Eliminate overhead electrical wires and have them buried underground
- Increase green space and number of trees
- Closing car access was controversial
- Everything was approved by the municipality and then they did nothing
- No money
- Numerous changes in politicians

2. Key points and significant themes of presentation

- Existing heritage infrastructure vs. non-existing heritage infrastructure
- Funding challenges
- Political controversy
- Community involvement and lobbying

4. Interesting questions and/or comments from the audience

- Comparison of Bucharest project to Amsterdam project. Reclaiming their culture.
- Comparison of neighborhoods to communities
- Generational differences
- Types of facilities needed. Meeting space vs. cultural space

Note taker: Monique Lachapelle