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What is the Urban Land Institute?

Mission: Provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

30,000 members worldwide:
- Developers
- Investors, Bankers and Financiers
- Architects and Designers
- Public officials
- Academics

ULI expertise:
- Research
- Education
- Best practice
- Advisory panels
- Ideas exchange
Mission: To encourage and support excellence in land use decision making. By providing public officials with access to information, best practices, peer networks and other resources, the Rose Center seeks to foster creative, efficient, practical, and sustainable land use policies.

Daniel Rose
Rose Center Programming

Forums: invitation-only events for public officials

- 2012 Shaw Forum on Innovative Public-Private Partnerships and Finance (with the ULI Center for Capital Markets and Real Estate)
- Multifamily Housing Development and Finance (with the ULI Terwilliger Center for Housing)

Workshops and webinars

- Lessons in Creating a Thriving Arts & Entertainment District from Baltimore’s Station North (November 2012)
- Implementing Sustainable Development in Your Community Workshop (Charleston, Fayetteville, Atlanta with the Home Depot Foundation, 2011)

ULI Fall Meeting

- Scholarships for public officials
- 2012 Mayors’ Forum on Public-Private Partnerships
Daniel Rose Fellowship

- Four cities selected for yearlong program of professional development, leadership training, assistance with a local land use challenge
- Mayor selects 3 fellows and team coordinator
- Participating cities to date: Charlotte, Detroit, Houston, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Nashville, Oakland, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Providence, Sacramento and Tampa
2012-2013 Class

Austin

Hartford

Louisville

Tacoma
City Study Visits

- Assembles experts to study land use challenge
- Provides city’s fellowship team with framework and ideas to start addressing their challenge
- Part of yearlong engagement with each city
The Panel

- **Co-Chair:** Ana Gelabert-Sanchez, Gelabert-Sanchez & Associates, Coral Gables, FL
- **Co-Chair:** Chris Kurz, Linden Associates, Inc., Baltimore, MD
- Andre Brumfield, Gensler, Chicago, IL
- Rick Chellman, Nelson\Nygaard, Portsmouth, NH
- Antonio Fiol-Silva, Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, Philadelphia, PA (Rose Center Advisory Board)
- Rodney Gonzales, City of Austin, TX (Daniel Rose Fellow)
- Charnelle Hicks, CHPlanning, Ltd., Philadelphia, PA
- Glenda Hood, Hood Partners, LLC (Rose Center Advisory Board)
- Ricardo Noguera, City of Tacoma, WA (Daniel Rose Fellow)
- Richard Ward, Ward Development Counsel, LLC, St. Louis, MO
- Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, Louisville Metro Government, KY (Daniel Rose Fellow)
Land Use Challenge

How can planned improvements and local assets be leveraged to establish the Albany Corridor as a neighborhood destination and gateway to downtown?
Presentation Outline

1. Observations
2. Quality of Life
3. Urban Design
4. Economic Development
5. Leadership
6. Concluding Thoughts & homework
The Good

• New anchors (YMCA, Library Branch, Community Health Services, Performing Arts Center) and older anchors (University of Hartford, Artists Collective) attract people to the Avenue
• Growing college population
• Potentially transformative development opportunities at both ends of the Avenue (Westbrook Village, city-owned property)
• New immigrants bringing entrepreneurial spirit
• Surrounding destinations with potential economic influences (St. Francis Hospital, West Hartford, Downtown, Keney Park, University of Hartford)
More Good

- Successful small businesses that can grow
- Available land
- Committed mayor and a new attitude among city leadership to change status quo
- Community leaders who want to work for change
- $14M for street improvements
The Bad

- History of neglect: governmental indifference and complex, irregular, lax enforcement resulting in physical deterioration and illegal land uses
- Sewer and bridge construction impacts
- Government agencies, neighborhood organizations, and major institutions act in isolation
- Lack of private sector capital investment
- High city tax structure compared to suburbs
- Corridor appears to be “dumping ground” for city problems

BUT most of the factors can be changed with new attitudes
The Ugly

- Perception of public safety
- Trash, broken sidewalks and street condition
- Inconsistent building design, setbacks, entrances
- Auto-oriented access encroaches on pedestrian realm
- Lack of communication—in all forms and directions
- Lack of trust

BUT all of these factors can be changed with committed leadership, will and small amount of money.
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Code Enforcement

Broken Window Theory: physical disorder signals that behavioral disorders are acceptable

• Reallocate city resources to dedicate additional staff to regular code enforcement and fine collection (ROI)

• Revise and align to establish ONE clear set of rules and fines that meet needs (dumpsters, broken windows, trash, parking, setbacks, safety hazards, overgrown grass, illegal dumping, curb cuts)

• Publicize “target zone” – communicate the attention being given – clean up, pay up, or get out
Public Maintenance

• Rows of missing street lamps
• Downed trees in the parks
• Broken & missing sidewalks
• Deteriorated landscaping – mud instead of grass or paving
• Solid waste management – dumpsters on sidewalks, trash
• Put street trees and planters in public rights of way
Residential Stability

- Examine subsidized and special needs housing policies to avoid over-concentration in neighborhood
- Stabilize home ownership in the corridor and provide supports to established homeowners
- Focus city resources on supports for new owners, foreclosure avoidance
- Address illegal or non conforming uses (e.g., rooming houses, group homes)
Open Space and Recreation

- Seek opportunities for shared use at Quirk Middle School new construction
- Establish partnership with Y, PD/PAL, Rec Division on Building B to ensure vibrant center for swimming, playing, leagues, fitness classes, etc.
- Maintain existing playgrounds and open spaces (e.g., behind YMCA)
- Open/vacant lots – consider mini-parks, renewed green space – partnership with horticultural society/non-profit (Philadelphia example)
Public Safety

• Perception is reality – safety must be seen
• Foot, bike, mounted, Segway patrols – visible patrols, community-oriented policing
• Develop more “eyes on the street” – storefronts and facilities should have windows and entrances addressing the street – welcoming pedestrians (crossover with Urban Design)
Celebrate Identity

- Brand the neighborhood around its people, ethnic composition, international identities
- Consider a common name or brand for the 2 neighborhoods
- Research and promote historical significance of corridor back to colonial times – Heritage Trail from Revolutionary War Days
Promote Arts and Culture

• Establish outward signs of the activities happening on-site
• Pursue partnership between UHart Performing Arts, Arts Collective, Library
• Investigate an ‘artist colony’ concept for live/work space, galleries, reuse/rehab old homes for $1
Low Hanging Fruit – cheap, easy, fun, magnetic!

- World Fest – promote international flavor of the neighborhood either in the neighborhood or parks – introduce food to Hartford!
- Urban gardening and/or farmers’ market on vacant land
- Cyclovia, PARK(ing) Day
- Route 5Ks/ marathons up and down Albany and Homestead
- Neighborhood cleanups – Mayor Segarra’s Clean and Green Team!
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Gateways & Existing Institutions

Upper Albany

Clay-Arsenal
Gateways, Existing Institutions & Connections
Proposed Improvements
Same Length-Shifted East
Same Length-Including Woodland
Vehicle Impact Speed vs. Pedestrian Injury
(initial impact only)

AIS Severity (6=fatal)

Impact Speed (mph)

Usually Fatal

Small Injuries
Portsmouth, VA
High Street
Portsmouth, VA
High Street
Portsmouth, VA
High Street
Portsmouth, VA
High Street
Portsmouth, VA
London Boulevard
Portsmouth, VA
London Boulevard
Portsmouth, VA
Liverpool Street
Portsmouth, VA
Liverpool Street
Portsmouth, VA
Liverpool Street
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Capitalize on Key Institutions and Employers

• Regional: University of Hartford, St. Francis Hospital, The Hartford and Aetna

• Community and Neighborhood
  – YMCA
  – Artists Collective
  – Library
  – Public Safety Complex
  – Schools
  – Chrysalis Center
  – Small businesses

• Downtown
Cluster Retail Shopping and Services

• Characteristics of these clusters:
  – Pedestrian-friendly environment
  – Joint-use, shared, and public parking

• Façade program

• Proximity to affluent communities to the west
  – Attract adjacent neighborhoods to eat and shop
“Town Center” Project

• Create strategic destination at intersection Albany Avenue and Woodland Street
• Bravo Center along with the arts center (Library, Arts Collective) and bakery are key components
• Goal is to create a destination that complements the other three corners
• Consider urban mixed use, rather than single purpose
• Check-in with the neighborhood to confirm their desires
• Need new name, brand
Westbrook Redevelopment

- Excellent opportunity to create vibrant new mixed-income, mixed-use development
- Develop new mixed-income housing with integrated commercial and institutional uses along Albany
- Take advantage of the frontage to Albany and consider as a public plaza, market place, or connection that invites surrounding neighborhoods
- Gateway to West Hartford and University of Hartford
Homestead Avenue brownfields redevelopment

• Dreadful barrier and negative image impacting the larger community
• Perfect location for business services in support of nearby major institutions and corporations
• Brownfield cleanup and repurposing, primarily for diverse business services, examples:
  – Printing
  – Shipping (FedEx, UPS)
  – St. Francis laundry
  – Expansion of St. Francis Hospital and related uses
Main Street/Albany Avenue Intersection

- Gateway to Downtown and Albany corridor
- Potential for higher-density residential, corporate headquarters and major institutions
- Potential UConn campus anchor
- Seek state funding to complete the remaining streetscape improvements from Bedford Street to Main Street
Housing Investment Strategy

• Understand the different market segments being served
• Target housing options to:
  – Downtown
  – Major employers and institutions
• Define the types and funding of housing needs
• Facilitate rehabilitation and upgrades
• Infill and develop larger sites for new construction
• Consider partnerships with UConn and UHart
• Concentrate housing to foster economic development and further support clustering of personal and retail services
Market sites to investors

- Continual assessment and inventory of sites
- Network with brokers
- Maintain a website with inventory of available sites
- Promote the sites to developers and investors
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Vision

- Mayor sets priority and agenda
- Ongoing community engagement will hold stakeholders accountable
- Neighborhood charrette as first step for a unified vision
- Partnerships and champions emerge
- Create action agenda and timeline; allocate resources and establish metrics and benchmarks
- Celebrate successes
Program Implementation

- Prioritize projects in support of the vision and plan
- Monitor timeline and progress
- Develop short-term and long-term strategies to maintain momentum
- Ensure collaboration and communication among stakeholders for better governance and partnerships
Governance

- Expedited development process
- Comprehensive strategies (e.g., vacant land)
- Ombudsman/Neighborhood Services Office
- State and federal project liaison
- Licensing and enforcement
- Navigation aids (e.g., anti-litter campaign)
- Reorganizing for success
Governance

• Mayoral priority
• City Council leadership
• Public safety and Public Works outreach and communication
• School system
• State and federal support as this is a corridor of regional significance
• Pilot worthy of repeating in other neighborhoods
• Learn from best practices
• Support and develop capacity
Community Partnerships

- Business organizations and merchants
- Residents
- Educational institutions
- Arts institutions
- Anchor institutions
- Neighborhood activists
- Social service industry
- Ethnic and Newcomer Interests
- Healthcare and insurance industry
- Faith communities
- Neighborhood groups

Champions come from these community entities
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Concluding Thoughts

- Communicate to develop trust, reach out, show a little love, celebrate success at every point
- Raise your standards and expectations
- Be relentless in achieving change in gov’t processes
- Change economic development and design guidelines to reflect new priorities
- Develop and hold yourselves accountable for benchmarks, goals and dates
- Ensure the planned street improvements achieve your goals
- Focus on the catalyst areas (i.e., nodes and gateways)
Homework Assignment

- Create, where not existing, communications vehicles between city government and neighborhood stakeholders (e.g., websites, community newsletters, social media)
- Establish an ombudsman and neighborhood services officer from city staff
- Conduct a community design charrette to define a vision for the corridor
- Create short-term and long-term timelines for public and private investment goals

Report back at Fellowship retreat, April 11-12
Thank you to the following people; their assistance was essential to the panel’s work: