

**URBAN PLANNING WORKSHOP: SACRED HEART CHURCH PARISH OF  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The 2005 Urban Planning Workshop will carry out a planning study of a neighborhood within the Sacred Heart Church Parish of New Brunswick, NJ. Our client will be a collaborative consisting of:

- The Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen (CCDOM)
- The Sacred Heart Church
- The Housing and Community Development Network of NJ (HCDN)

The study neighborhood is located in the north-west portion of the City, close to the main campus of Rutgers University (Figure 1). It includes approximate 5 city blocks and is a predominately transient, Latino neighborhood. The study area is defined by George Street to the north; Livingston Avenue on the west, Commercial Avenue to the east and Sanford on the south. Although the neighborhood is dominated by residential uses, a significant number of institutional facilities exist in the area including a mix of public and parochial schools, a teen center, the City library and approximately 20 churches.

An immediate goal of Sacred Heart and CCDOM is to complete a physical and demographic survey of the neighborhood. A public kick-off meeting is scheduled to take place on September 8, 2005 in order to inform residents about the on-going study and to carry out a survey that will be distributed to residents attending the meeting.

**2. PLANNING ISSUES**

Sacred Heart, DDCOM and the HCDN have suggested a number of study objectives that will guide the workshop program:

- To complete a summary and analysis of the on-going survey efforts.
- To combine the building conditions and demographic survey results into a physical plan for the neighborhood. This should build on the area's assets and suggest development strategies that address some of the main issues confronting the neighborhood.
- To identify an action plan that should include initial implementation programs. The plan should be designed so that it would be applicable to meet the local Department of Community Affairs guidelines related to Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit programs.
- To allow for meaningful community input into the work process. This will include several interactive public meetings and events organized by the client group. The study must also involve a number of groups working in the neighborhood, including New Brunswick Tomorrow, Civic League of Greater New Brunswick, the Puerto Rican Action Committee, and New Labor.

### **3. WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENT**

The Planning Workshop will prepare an illustrated planning report that will analyze existing conditions within the neighborhood and identify recommendations for future revitalization. Information will also be collected on relevant case studies and programs conducted in other urban areas in the USA where efforts have been made to revitalize urban neighborhoods.

The twelve-week work program for this workshop will include the following steps:

- Meet with the client group to review study objectives, background information, etc.
- Participate in resident meetings and solicit input from local community representatives.
- Conduct site analyses and on-site surveys as a follow up community efforts. Existing conditions related to land uses, building conditions, housing and economic data, zoning characteristics and other data will be mapped.
- Conduct meetings and interviews with relevant State and City agencies and departments, local stakeholders, and others to determine needs and opportunities and begin the process of formulating neighborhood revitalization strategies.
- Prepare detailed plan proposals encompassing land use recommendations, housing investment proposals and proposals to improve the quality of life for study area residents.
- Develop presentation material (maps, PowerPoint presentation, etc.) and a final, illustrated report.

In addition to the planning work required to complete the above assignment, the workshop will seek to cover the following areas of interests/skills:

- Examination of selected urban planning case studies, focusing on urban projects in the local region.
- Provide a general introduction to planning practice including elements such as land-use and urban design analyses; environmental impact studies; zoning; transportation planning; market studies and community participation.
- Presentation techniques: reports, graphic presentation, slide presentation, etc.
- Provide insight in urban planning/design consultancy (e.g. client promotion, job administration, work process).

### **4. TIMETABLE**

The 12 week program will be divided into two sections, and will include an interim presentation as well as a final presentation. The first half of the semester will focus on detailed analyses of existing conditions and issues; the second will concentrate on the

preparation of ideas and proposals for the study area. The preliminary schedule is outlined below:

Week 1	Workshop introduction; overview of assignments.
Week 2	Site meeting in New Brunswick; meeting with client group.
Week 3-4	Work on individual assignments related to site analysis; site surveys; meetings and interviews with residents and local stakeholders; review of relevant case studies.
Week 5	Prepare findings for interim presentation.
Week 6	Interim presentations to client (in New Brunswick).
Week 7	Mid-term break (Travel program to review relevant case studies in other cities).
Week 8	Review study objectives and assignments for remainder of workshop; submit draft report of existing conditions/issues.
Week 9-11	Follow-up meetings with area representatives; preparation of recommendations.
Week 12	Preparation for final presentation
Week 13	Final presentation to client group, City officials and other study participants (in New Brunswick).

A written report will be prepared prior to the end of the semester.

## **5. SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER 21-OCTOBER 26**

Regular workshop sessions are scheduled weekly, on Wednesdays from 1:00 pm - 4:10 pm. Additional meetings and on-site work will involve regular visits to New Brunswick. The schedule for the first part of the semester is as follows:

Week 1	September 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to workshop</li><li>• Participatory planning: overview</li><li>• Assignments for existing conditions analysis</li><li>• Case Study: Willow Street, Waterbury, CT</li></ul>
Week 2	September 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site visit and survey of neighborhood</li><li>Meeting with CCDOM and Sacred Heart and other study participants</li></ul>
Week 3	October 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review individual assignments. Topics to include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Existing land uses</li><li>- Building conditions</li></ul></li></ul>

- Natural Assets
- Market and Economic conditions
- Transportation (roads, transit, parking)
- Social Services
- Context: linkages and surrounding uses/facilities

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| Week 4 | October 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up site visit/surveys</li> <li>• Preparation of material for community meeting scheduled for October 15.</li> </ul>   |
| Week 5 | October 19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review study area issues/community meeting results.</li> <li>• Prepare for interim presentation</li> <li>• Guest: Frank Fish, Principal, BFJ: Zoning analysis. Case study: East 76<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan</li> </ul> |
| Week 6 | October 26 | <b>Interim Presentation</b> to Client Group, in New Brunswick (2:00 p.m.)   |

## 6. CONTACTS

Our client and other potential study participants include the following:

### CLIENT GROUP:

- Michael Powell  
Housing and Community Development Network of NJ  
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Tel: (609) 393-3752 ext.
- Nancy Finn, Community Liaison  
Church of The Sacred Heart  
56 Throop Avenue  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Tel: (732) 545-1681
- Marlene Sigman, Director of Housing Development  
Catholic Charities, Dioces of Metuchen  
271 Smith Street  
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
Tel: (732) 826-9160  
Fax: (732) 826-8342

### OTHER CONTACTS

- Glen Patterson, Director, New Brunswick  
Department of Planning  
Tel: (732) 745-5153

## **7. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

As far as possible, the workshop has been structured to enable workshop students to work as “consultants” for the HMFA and the City’s Department of Housing and Economic Development. This will involve teamwork as well as work on an individual basis. The workshop requirements include:

- Regular attendance at classes
- Full participation in necessary field work and data gathering
- Completion of writing assignments for the mid-term and final reports
- Participation in oral presentations to client