

## COMMUNITY PLANNING AND REGIONAL CENTERS

Throughout the region, communities are taking a more active role in planning for the direction and extent of new development. Residents, community activists and business owners are taking the lead as they craft new plans to spur residential and commercial development. Several communities have created plans to help neighborhoods benefit from new projects and protect local residents from the negative impacts of unbridled growth and gentrification. These efforts are particularly critical in communities with new or proposed infrastructure or development projects, such as the Brooklyn Waterfront, East Harlem and the Newark Arts District.

The panel will discuss the important role that community based planning plays as the region continues to prosper and push the boundaries of the central business district. As the region's growth brings both new opportunities and challenges to these neighborhoods, how can community based planning help to integrate local needs with regional initiatives? How can communities pursue sustainable economic development without losing the cultural integrity of the neighborhood? What role can manufacturing play in the new growth economy, and how can community-planning efforts help to sustain the local job base?

Since its founding in 1978 by community and business leaders, Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SWBIDC) has sought to encourage business investment and job creation in the depressed industrial corridor of Southwest Brooklyn and to serve as an advocate for the neighborhood. To accomplish this, SWBIDC strives to encourage entrepreneurship and business activity, prepare local residents for employment and advocate on important capital investment projects. SWBIDC plays a leading role in revitalizing the Sunset Park business community by offering programs and services that enhance the competitiveness of local firms and improve the quality of life for everyone. Since 1995, SWBIDC's activities with local businesses have leveraged over \$117 million in private investment and led to the creation of over 1,750 jobs in the Sunset Park, Red Hook and Gowanus communities. In addition to assisting the business community, SWBIDC also seeks to build partnership with community-based organizations such as UPROSE and Neighbors Helping Neighbors to ensure that the residents and business leaders in southwest Brooklyn are working together to bring about change that benefits everyone. Ms. Williams will address the importance of partnerships between business leaders, community advocates and residents.

Comprehensive cultural planning is a relatively new concept within the overall context of community planning. Many communities across the country have adopted such plans in recent years as a way of using the arts as a catalyst for cultural and economic growth. Sometimes the planning is regional and other times it may be more localized. In either instance cultural planning is a response to a community's cultural needs by providing a plan for adequate cultural funding, cultural facilities, arts education programs in local schools, housing for artists, opportunities to exploit the region's assets through cultural tourism and a plan to extend arts and culture into the neighborhoods. The City of Newark, New Jersey has embarked on the creation of a cultural plan to assure that the economic and cultural impact of the state's new center for the performing arts—the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, which extends to the entire city. Mr. Oglesby will address the impetus for the plan and the community collaborations necessary to assure its implementation.

The Manufacturing Land Use and Zoning Initiative is a project by the Municipal Art Society (MAS) in partnership with the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development (PICCED) to identify issues and opportunities facing manufacturing districts and mixed-use communities in New York City. The goal of the project is to provide the civic community, general public and government officials with information, tools and recommendations for evaluating and guiding both short-term and

long-term land use policy. Working with diverse stakeholders, including community as well as business leaders, the Manufacturing Land Use and Zoning Initiative produced a report which examines existing conditions and provides recommendations on how and where to retain and revitalize the city's manufacturing base. The study finds that manufacturing is very much alive in New York City and that, in fact, it offers promising ground for job growth. The study concludes that, by retaining and supporting manufacturing, the City can help ensure that New York City's economic growth benefits individuals and low income communities who have been largely left behind in the City's recent economic boom. However, the future of the manufacturing sector in New York and in the region depends on maintaining community support for manufacturing and mixed use zoning.

In recent years, many communities near manufacturing areas have taken the initiative to develop their own community-based plans. Almost all of these community plans call for job development, as well as housing and open space. Although, most communities support manufacturing businesses as generators of jobs, manufacturing zones are increasingly perceived as linked to health and quality of life problems. As a result, while most of the community-based plans call for protecting manufacturing and creating mixed-use zones, they also, insist on limiting the concentration of noxious uses and requiring enhanced environmental performance. Eva Hanhardt will discuss how, with the support of community/manufacturing alliances, the recommendations of these community based plans and of the Manufacturing Land Use and Zoning Report can lead to the future health of both the economy and the environment.