COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
NATIONAL WEEKEND PROGRAM
NEW HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

Developing Broad-Based Support for CED Initiatives in Philadelphia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Definition of Problem
   (1 - 5) Exhibits

B. Project Goals
   (1 - 5) Exhibits

C. Activities and Time Line

II. METHODS/CONFERENCE DESCRIPTION

A. Materials

B. Evaluation

III. RESULTS/RECOMMENDATION

IV. APPENDICES
INTRODUCTION
The community economic development practitioners, namely, Jerome Mitchell, Mary Moore, and Linda Richardson, from the City of Philadelphia in the State of Pennsylvania, chose to work together as a group to establish a vehicle which would afford the opportunity for small low-socio-economic community groups to come together and share information, resources, and future plans for combating the ills that plague the communities in the City of Philadelphia. A vehicle that would cause the community sector, public sector, and private sector to collaborate, communicate and cooperate in planning and implementing programs in economic development for neighborhoods seemed to be missing link in spite of the efforts presently being put forth in the various communities.

Jerome Mitchell is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation, a non-profit organization committed to the economic development and growth of the section of the City of Philadelphia shown as "D" in the attached Planning Analysis Section Map (see Summary and New Observer News Article).

Mary L. Betts-Moore is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Acres of Diamonds Community Development Corporation, a non-profit organization located in the Central Section of Lower North Philadelphia, committed to implement a plan of action which includes the creation of a comprehensive human services and human rehabilitation coordinating system that will accompany economic revitalization initiatives (see Concept Development Paper and demographics; also personal resume).
Linda Richardson is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Black United Fund of Philadelphia, Inc. (BUF), a non-profit organization serving as the Philadelphia Chapter of a National effort to provide funding and technical assistance to local non-profits and organizations striving to provide programs and social services to residents in the low-socio-economic communities in Philadelphia. (See attached brochure and Annual Report for BUF).

The Project Advisor, Michael Swack, met with the group at the September, 1988 Class Weekend outlined the requirements for CED project in the program. At the October, 1988 Focus Group meeting, Jerome Mitchell, Linda Richardson and Mary Moore began their work as a team to put together Community Economic Development Convention in Philadelphia by October, 1989. The Project Group met in Philadelphia during the months of November and December, 1989 to plan their assignments, appointments and plan of action to communicate to others the intent of sponsoring a CED forum and providing others the opportunity to assist, participate, or advise them of means, resources, finances, facilities, and/or other individuals interested in community economic development in the City of Philadelphia. The Project Group spent January thru July visiting agencies, individuals and corporations, banks and governmental agencies to present the idea and opportunity to participate in these efforts. In the August and September months time was spent communicating to presentors, exhibtors, and funders for confirmations and amount time committed to the CED Conference. Every efforts was put forth by the Project Group to contact any one and every one who considered themselves as community economic development providers and/or practitioners, in the community/public and private sectors in all sections of Philadelphia to
(1) inform them of the proposed conference; (2) offer them the opportunity to participate; and (3) assure them that the conference would, in fact, occur with their assistance or without their assistance.
I. PROBLEM

The overall need for the establishment of a vehicle which would afford opportunities for communication, exposure, education and information, as well as cooperation and collaboration among community economic development practitioners, and the various other sectors involved in community economic development in the City of Philadelphia is critical at this present time (see attached needs assessment, Exhibit "1" and Project Contract, as Exhibit "2").

II. PROJECT GOALS

The overall goal of the project was to organize a platform for all representatives of the community, private and public sectors to discuss and work on some long term solutions for the above stated problem. (see attached list of conference goals and objectives, marked as Exhibit "3".

III. ACTIVITIES AND TIME LINE

The project group began their meeting on September 24, 1989 with Michael Swack, their project advisor. A Focus Group schedule was established for the Saturday at each class weekend during lunch time to meet and discuss goals, objectives and progress of the project. Project planning meetings, assessments and information gathering was undertaken from October, 1988 through the actual occurrence of the conference in October, 1989, (see CED Project Interim Report, Exhibit "4" and Third Quarter Interim Report, Exhibit "5"). The following exhibits 6 through 13 will describe various actions taken by each of the project group members leading up to the actual date of the conference in October 1989.
ANALYSIS

The identification of the problem need, to establish a forum for providers of community economic development at all levels to communicate, collaborate and cooperate, was right on target in the City of Philadelphia. The planning, time-table, coordination and work-harmony within the project group occurred with a certain amount of ease. Compilation of the budget and financial needs to sponsor such a forum came to a realistic figure. The process of putting together a conference did not present any difficulty. However, the commitment and actual obtaining the proposed dollar amount before the conference date presented a problem. Because the dollars needed to bring a paid coordinator on board to spend the required time to plan, correspond and actual follow up with the presentors, exhibitors and participants, the project groups was forced to act as coordinators and funders to finance the conference.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The conference site, content, presentors, exhibitors and time were quality. However, I would recommend that a group spend their first efforts getting committed dollars to hire a paid coordinator to handle the logistics, correspondence and follow up to assure a balanced, large audience to attend such a much needed conference. The conference was rich in the resources, workshops and information provided, but the attendance and persons benefitting from the efforts were not as high as possible, if there was a paid person working full time for two months on getting persons to attend.
CONCLUSIONS

The learning experience verified the problem need identified and the results accomplished a vehicle that will meet on an on-going basis to resolve the problem need. However, the mix of smaller level technical assistance providers and what is considered the more higher level developers and community economic service providers will probably not happen. What I see in Philadelphia happening will be two levels of participation. The ABC level groups will have to create their own entity to communicate, collaborate and cooperate. Develop a network that will gain support from the public and private sectors and interact with XYZ groups at functions given by the City in the form of conferences, banquets, and political socials.

An additional learning experience verified that the different sexes, races, cultures, and backgrounds bring to the table different mind-sets, goals and development plans. The two will never mix for implementation, and will therefore have to become two separate efforts. For example, a visit to the Executive Director of the Greater Philadelphia Economic Development Coalition, Ms. Patrice Nelson, revealed that their feelings, plans and thinking were geared towards focusing on the more higher level CED agencies and concentrating on a small amount of completed projects, as opposed to funding several agencies, and the smaller level CED organizations. With hundred of acres of vacant lots and thousands of abandoned houses in North Philadelphia alone, it appears impossible to combat these ills, separate and apart from all levels of community economic providers, as well as the public and private sectors working together.