

1. Legal Training in the Community

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

MEMORANDUM #8

30 April 1965

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Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT: ACTION PROJECTS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS

The fourteen items of this memorandum describe a set of action projects proposed as community foundation enterprises. They fill out the image of new institution building, discussed in earlier memoes, which neighborhood community organization must initiate in the task of urban reconstruction.

These projects are advanced for application in lower class urban communities. They were developed for a Columbus settlement house agency preparing to incorporate as a neighborhood community foundation governed by a board of elected representatives of a community membership of 6000.

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1. Legal Training in the Community

A program in community law and legal training is being developed between the Law School of Ohio State University and the Neighborhood Center of the First English Lutheran Church. A group of third-year students, under the direction of Professor Messerman, will hold a legal clinic twice weekly in the neighborhood center for residents of the community. Through their legal assistance, the poor in need of legal service will gain assistance; while the students develop training skills in the general practice of law. Such a community framework of training practice will expose them to all areas of practice: domestic relations, criminal law, contracts, administrative law, property, etc.

Further training benefits will come from law student and professional social work exchange. Through the professional staff the students will learn about the problems and functions of social welfare and their relation to law and legal practice. This familiarity with agencies, programs and procedure will be a helpful asset in their future professional practice.

The work of the student group will be supported by a panel of law professors, practicing attorneys, professional social workers, etc. The panel will further guide the students to explore areas of research in law and community problems. Work in legal re-definition may proceed in such fields as landlord tenant law, administrative law, etc.

In our fast changing society it is imperative that law and court grow to meet the problems of poverty so that the people retain their faith in the justice of law, rather than the force of the streets. Law school students can creatively assist this progress.

A further field of legal development which the students and panel will explore is the creation of new community forums of arbitration and mediation aimed at peaceably confronting and resolving the many current disputes of man and man in the urban community.

2. Day Care Program

The Neighborhood Center seeks to expand its existing inter-cultural, interracial day care center, which is now operated by the local chapter of the American Association of University Women. Currently the program serves 13 children.

The children in the community can benefit through this program for which facilities for expansion are available. Furthermore, there is strong interest in developing sub-professional training in teaching the day care assistance through this expanded operating program.

Unemployed as well as under-fulfilled employed people in the neighborhood area can be brought into this training and day care role. The role of these AAUW women in the operation of the program is a current key resource for training and curriculum development in this new occupational direction of teaching assistance in day care.

3. Pre-School Retarded Children Program

The Neighborhood Center wishes to expand its existing pre-school retarded children program, now operating on a small grant from the Columbus Council for Retarded Children. The current program serves a small number of children for three mornings a week. 1) There is interest in a five day program; 2) enlarging the number of participating children to 20; 3) adding another professional, and developing sub-professional training for 10 positions.

The greater possibilities of successfully training the retarded on a regular basis within the familiarity of the community is the key interest of the professional staff of the Center. This is consistent with the general direction of mental health and rehabilitation toward a community framework for program development and practice.

The sub-professional facet of the expanded program responds to the acknowledged need for intimate and constant staff-student attention and supervision. The Center is seeking an ideal 2-1 ratio of students to sub-professional teaching assistant. Two professionals will guide the teaching program, as well as develop the sub-professional role and occupational training.

Certainly in the area of retardation, the sub-professional concept makes real sense, answering an acknowledged need which professionals alone cannot adequately serve. While the professional is able to guide a retarded children teaching program, he cannot provide the constant attention and supervision required. His effort can be best realized through the help of trained sub-professionals.

Ohio State University and relevant professional associations and public institutions will participate in this program.

4. Parole Program

The current one-to-one youth parole program of the Center will be further developed. This project relates youth parolees to members of the congregation and residents of the neighborhood community in a guidance project, with the Center as institutional guardian.

The direction of further program development will be to enlarge and diversify the project activities around which the parolee and related family can jointly work.

The interest is in bringing the parolees into the variety of community projects of the Center, around craft functions and sub-professional service training. Such projects as the day care program, neighborhood zoo, Academy of Community Arts, house rehabilitation and redesign projects, retarded children training, etc., involve work and service roles for these parolees. The Center will pay for this work in return for project assistance, thereby establishing a good community work alternative for parolees, school dropouts, etc. unwilling or unable to return to school. Such community occupation will be

a valuable work therapy for rehabilitation through community work responsibility.

This approach to parolee rehabilitation is an application of the community framework approach in mental health. More than a mere term, community framework in the context of the Center's projects means the actual tasks of new institution building in community and society.

The Ohio Corrections System, Ohio State University, Parole Board, and other relevant agencies will participate in developing this expanded program.

5. The Neighborhood Zoo

The Center will develop a Neighborhood Zoo, corporately owned by the residents of the area. The zoo will be a place of pleasure for young and old in the community; as well as a center for education in life sciences and animal care training.

The USDA Extension Service and Ohio State University School of Agriculture will develop a curriculum in life sciences. 4-H will staff the animal care training. Extension will provide animals, veterinary inspection, and other services. A farm in the area surrounding Columbus will be developed as a year-round life science education in association with the neighborhood zoo program. (SEE APPENDED DRAFT PROPOSAL.)

6. Student Ombudsman Program

An Administrative Agent, or ombudsman program will be developed in the community with Ohio State University and Antioch College.

Students will gain academic credit through a program of social practice in community. The general direction of the intended program is to develop student specialists in different governmental social welfare and social control programs. He will concentrate his semester work in one field; for example, public housing, public assistance, etc.--learning the law and administrative regulations and procedures in depth. The two purposes of this concentration will be to serve residents in the community who have difficulties relating to these programs and their full benefits; as well as to understand for critical analysis and examination the nature, operation, and quality of the governmental programs.

7. Neighborhood Health Center

The interest here is to develop a community-governed health center. There are many health functions that city and private hospitals do not provide for the poor. Good examples are convalescence, rehabilitation, hygiene instruction and mental health. Can these functions be developed and served through a community-governed health center?

In these health programs, new training and occupation roles

for sub-professionals can be developed for the unemployed in the neighborhood. The doctors or nurses in the program, through associations with the medical and nursing associations, will develop curriculum and training programs. As in the legal training program, the medical school of OSU will assist in exploring these new approaches and functions in community medicine. Can the Army Medical Corps model of half doctor-half nurse be applied to developing a new occupation for the poor in community health?

8. Tutorial Training Program

It is important to shift the perspective of tutorial programs from volunteer charitable service to pre-professional teacher training. Middle class students who tutor the uneducated should pay for that apprentice teaching experience. Tutorial experience for high school students is a strong recommendation for college admissions and professional opportunity.

Currently the Jewish Community Center provides a number of tutors for supplementary instruction at the Neighborhood Center. The Center seeks to re-focus this program as a pre-professional teacher training program, funded by the Jewish Community Center in whole or through matching funds.

In redesigning the program, strong attention will be given to increasing the benefit of this pre-professional teacher training. Training of tutors by professionals in new teaching methods, machine instruction, educational psychology, etc. will be included.

In effect the tutor is today a sub-professional, but without thorough training. New tutorial teaching methods and curriculum will be developed with the cooperation of University, Office of Education-HEW, and the Columbus Board of Education.

9. Academy of Community Arts

In poor urban communities the problems of home economics are rates, pest control, collective bargaining in apartment rent, etc. The problems of architecture are redesigning apartments and buildings to accommodate the structure of existing family units. The problems of engineering are the development of cheaper materials for the structural improvement of dwellings, as well as simpler methods of do-it-yourself improvements for the poor. The problems of public health include the ecological control of rats. Since control is neither effective city-wide or by the single dwelling, there may be possibilities of neighborhood community control. Can engineering add features to existing physical boundaries of rivers, expressways, etc. to make them impassable for rats? The problem of medical rehabilitation for the poor requires that rehabilitation techniques be developed with reference to cracked sidewalks, linoleum instead of carpeting, etc.

The general issue raised here is that there are many directions of research and development in the fields of industry, trades, and professions which the University can explore within a community framework. The Neighborhood Center seeks to establish, with University, Professional, Industrial, and Trade associations, such a community framework for research and development within the neighborhood community. This work will be centered in a separate structure called the Academy of Community Arts.

In pursuit of this work, unemployed or under-fulfilled residents will be employed in staff research assistant capacities. Many new sub-professional possibilities lay in this direction of bringing university research into the field.

The academy will also be a center of fine arts in the community. Paintings in the municipal museum cold storage will be brought into the community. The community can purchase, display, and commission new art by young artists. An artist in residence will be established at the Academy for fine arts instruction. Providing him with a studio and two room apartment in a community building could bring inexpensive instruction to the community.

The Academy will also be a center of craft training and production serving the material needs of the other community projects--zoo, house rehabilitation, hostelry, etc. Young and old, retired skilled artisan and school kids, neighborhood poor and middle class suburban members of the church congregation--all can join together in common tasks of community art and invention.

Home arts, fine arts, and community arts will be the subject of the Academy program.

10. House Rehabilitation and Redesign Project

A project will be developed with five pilot structures for the rehabilitation and interior redesign of existing multiple dwelling structures which house the neighborhood poor. Most existing apartment units were built with the middle class assumption of a large living room, small bedrooms and kitchen. In terms of poor Negro family units of single parent and 4-7 children, the project will examine the possibility of re-designing the interior units according to different models more consistent with low-income family structures.

For example, two models can be considered:

- (a) Radial bunks around center play room for children, with connecting passage to efficiency sitting room-kitchenette for adults.
- (b) Kibbutz principle in three story apartment building. Conversion of basement and first floor into play-sleep-study dormitory for the children of parents living in the building. Redesign of second and third floor into one room efficiency apartments for parents or single mother. A new den leader for children would be required.

The School of Architecture of Ohio State University will be brought into the Academy of Community Arts to work with the community on this redesign project. This project development conveys a fuller image of the community research and development function of the Academy as it will seek to explore new products and trades for industry and labor through a community framework. The labor unions will participate in this housing project on the basis of its contribution to construction trade innovation.

11. The Student Hostelry

Currently the Neighborhood Center has a student staff of 62. As a settlement house agency it is playing a critical training role in the field of social welfare for students of National University and Ohio State University in Columbus. In addition, a work/study association with Antioch College is now being arranged.

In return for this practice training, supervised by joint university faculty and Center professional staff panels, the students contribute valuable service to the community. They are an important and inexpensive staff resource.

There is a strong interest in developing a more continuous and regular program of student project work. Instead of coming to the Center one or two evenings a week, it would often be desirable in terms of project development to have students contribute a continuous weekend, or even, during vacations, week long work period. Yet, as desirable as this is, there are currently no facilities and provisions for such extended periods of work-study and project participation.

Additional students from Antioch and Wilberforce College would like to come to the Center for community work. Indeed, students all over the country are seeking communities in which to work. Children of the suburban congregation members of the Lutheran Church would also like to involve themselves on weekends in community efforts. Through this interest of the younger church people there is a basis of relating the suburbs to the core city. Yet there is no local accommodation for a weekend effort, while a discontinuous one-day-a-week contribution leaves the student too foreign to the community.

The Neighborhood Center aims to try a solution to this problem of providing room and board facilities for continuous student work in community by building a Student Hostelry. This student hostelry will be developed by the people in the neighborhood, through professional advice and help in the Academy of Community Arts. It is important that the neighborhood people develop the hostelry as their own invitation of welcome to outsiders.

A building will be found and redesigned as a community inn. The National Student Association and the colleges and universities related to the Center's program will be involved in this effort.

12. Community Owned Housing

With the development of the Academy of Community Arts, the Neighborhood Zoo, and five rehabilitated pilot multiple dwellings, and the Student Hostelry as additional physical structures owned by the Neighborhood Center, the Center will develop a program of research and development in the field of community owned property and real estate management.

Incorporated as a non-profit, tax-exempt community foundation, the Center and its anticipated 6000 membership will support research in the Academy and at universities on new directions of public property management by tax-exempt foundations. Can extended mortgage programs for purchase of structures and rehabilitation be developed with FHA and private banks for this corporate community ownership effort? Can lower interest payments be advanced through FHA financing or can metropolitan community trusts and national foundations advance 2% of a 4½% interest loan? Can the incorporated neighborhood borrow interest-free loans for housing and general public facility purchase from national foundations under extended mortgage plans? Can the Center, incorporated as a neighborhood community foundation, hold housing under its trust powers for a definite duration of use? Are federal rebates of local property tax to community foundations possible? These and many other inquiries into the economic feasibility of community foundation real estate will be advanced through research and development.

13. Neighborhood Community Insurance Policy

The Center will explore with Nationwide Insurance Company in Columbus the feasibility of developing a group insurance plan covering the territorial membership, 6000, of the Neighborhood Center. Currently, auto, life, health, etc. insurance all embody actuarial variables that are community based. Can the Center then move to advance this adaptation of the group principle, so well developed by business firms, to territorial corporate community?

Such a plan, managed by the Center, might hold substantial insurance savings for the individual families of the community, as well as save them, with the reliable insurance program of a dependable company, from the fly-by-night firms that currently exploit the poor for high premiums and instant cancellations.

14. Model Charter Development Project

Currently the Neighborhood Center is preparing to incorporate as a non-profit, tax-exempt community foundation. A democratic, self-governing charter for the community of 6000 residents built on direct membership is currently being developed. This Constitution will have model value for community organizations and private settlement house conversion all over the country.

The Neighborhood Center will change from a professional settlement house agency into the social, educational, and governmental center of a community polity. The Center, in short, seeks to become the center of urban community settlement. The districts of this ward republic will be the block organizations and residents surrounding the Center. Two-thirds of the board of directors will be elected from the community, with one-third board membership appointed from various public and private institutions of the city. The professional staff will work for and be responsible to the membership of this self-governing community. The projects of the settlement house will then become the projects of the community, tapping the creative imagination and thought of democratic polity.

The Community Foundation instrumentality is adaptable for this purpose. It can fulfill the funding, investment, and financial distribution capacities required by self-governing community for project financing and operation cost. Through the freedom of by-law construction, this instrument can be written and ratified as a democratic constitution for direct participation of the membership of community in foundation decisions. Finally, this instrument can provide for necessary associations with other institutions of the city, the University, Community Trust, Public Agencies, etc.

The new charter will be developed by September, 1965, in time for the funding of the proposals described in this memorandum. It will be the receiving, non-profit tax-exempt corporation for grants from government, foundations, and private contributions.

The Neighborhood Center of the First English Lutheran Church is an accredited settlement house agency, governed by a board of directors representative of the community and administered by a professional social work staff. Progressive efforts have been made to involve community initiative and decision in the settlement house activities. It is the belief of the Neighborhood Center that if the community is to benefit, they must be involved in the program decision. If the people of the community know and feel it is their own state they will continue to achieve such successful programs as the current community based pre-school center for retarded children, the interracial labor-cultural day care center, the day to day guardian and guidance program for helping youth members back into the community, the block club movement and other neighborhood programs. These programs have gained for the Neighborhood Center a great respect among the interfaith church community, professional organizations, the business community and the residents of the church neighborhood.

3. The Neighborhood

The near west side area of Columbia is an integrated neighborhood in the poverty scale. Its residents are predominantly negro and white Appalachians. Housing and the schools are over-crowded. Unemployment and relief are high. But the area is fortunately graced with open space and small dwelling structures. There are trees and grass and even an occasional quiet spot.