

Draft Proposal for Planning
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THE NEIGHBORHOOD ZOO

The Neighborhood Center of the First English Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio, and the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C., join in this proposal for a planning grant to develop a locally governed neighborhood zoo in the near east side area of Columbus.

The purpose of this proposal is to obtain financial support for an inquiry into the problems and approaches to establishing a neighborhood zoo, as a place of local pleasure and education in animal care and life science. The six month planning study will be staffed and conducted at the Institute for Policy Studies and at the Neighborhood Center in Columbus. Upon completion of this inquiry, a detailed report with recommendations for implementation will be presented.

Our interest is in developing a successful program that will be a model approach for other cities. While all cities need neighborhood zoos, Columbus is an excellent place to begin because of the creative professional staff of the Neighborhood Center, inaccessibility of the Municipal zoo to this local neighborhood, and the surrounding agricultural countryside.

1. The Neighborhood Center

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 place they will continue to achieve such successful programs as the current community based pre-school center for retarded children, the interracial inter-cultural day care center, the one to one guardian and guidance program for helping youth parolees 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.

2. The Neighborhood

The near east side area of Columbus is an integrated neighborhood in the poverty scale. Its residents are predominantly Negro and white Appalachian. 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.

An expressway has recently been built forming two boundaries of the neighborhood. On its rim are half lots which were cleared except for the garages. There are also condemned buildings and vacant lots in other parts of the neighborhood as well, which can be redesigned to accommodate the neighborhood zoo.

3. The Development of Zoos

A traditional Victorian zoo is a pleasure park--run by a corporation for the members' enjoyment. It is small, centrally located, and embellished. In Europe there are still many such zoos; yet in this country they are rare. Instead we have large municipal zoos run as professional institutions with a sophisticated educational focus. Moats replace cages, informative pamphlets replace elephants in skirts, the animals are more important than the lemonade. The zoo is apt to be on the edge of the city and inaccessible to the poor.

Zoos have recognized that if they are to effectively educate, some of the old fashioned fun and intimacy must be returned. This difficulty has been met with two recent developments. The first is the children's zoo where children can closely observe and touch the animals. The second is the mobile zoo where a trailer of animals visits schools and neighborhoods.

In the children's zoo, animals are often rotated several times a day during the summer because of the noise and handling by so many different people. Even with the rotation they become subdued or shocked into behavior that is unnatural even for zoo animals. In the mobile zoo, the animals have a more quiet life and enjoy better health but because the visiting time and space are limited, children cannot closely or regularly observe or touch the animals.

Despite these drawbacks, both developments have brought the fun of a zoo closer to children, as well as continuing the educational advances in zoo organization. A neighborhood zoo seems the next step.

4. The Next Step in Zoo Development

We look forward to a neighborhood zoo which advances these welcome trends, at the same time eliminating the drawbacks. Children will be zoo-keepers responsible for the health and well-being of the animals. This responsibility will include seeing that animals are not over-handled by strangers. The animals will live in the neighborhood where they can be observed frequently and at leisure.

Our neighborhood zoo is not, of course, a replacement for the city zoo which can professionally present and inform. Rather it is a supplement that is well suited to the modern educational aims of zoos. For it will be a place where children can learn the life sciences and animal care on a continuing basis.

At the same time we would hope for a return to these aspects of the old fashioned zoo: a small zoo, self-governing, and centrally located. In short, a return to its casual pleasure.

We also anticipate something new in zoo development, the zoo as a center for the community. There is always life in a zoo; that is its definition. A neighborhood zoo brings into it the life of the neighborhood. Its homes may already contain a dog who can enter the zoo's pet show. Aquariums built at the zoo could move into the homes. The old people who possibly grew up on a farm and know so much about animals can participate. The shops and stores will contribute day old carrots or bones. Finally, this life will be extended out of the neighborhood and even out of the city. For example, the 4-H and the Agricultural Extension Service advisors at the zoo will arrange for animals and their keepers to go to the farm, perhaps to leave chickens who grow up at the zoo and to pick up some eggs for the zoo incubator.

5. Specific Areas of Inquiry

The following areas of inquiry represent major concerns. They do not represent a complete list.

A. Where? Zoo Site.

Zoning, sanitation, and public health regulations must be considered. The local officials of these agencies will be consulted. The standards of the Humane Society must also be studied. The help of biologists, veterinarians, and zoo officials will be sought to determine the qualifications of a site with regard to ventilation, water, heat, and spaciousness. With these recommendations and requirements in mind, a careful inventory of the neighborhood can begin and the most suitable location found.

B. What? Zoo Structure

This area of inquiry will determine what animals are most appropriate. Such factors as feeding and breeding, plus environmental and ecological matters will be considered. The suitability of specific animals to programs of education in natural science will also be investigated. People expert in the above matters; consultants from the Department of Agriculture, 4-H staff biologists, educators, and science teachers will participate.

C. How? Zoo Organization

Problems of specific operating techniques, governing body and personnel will be investigated. The role of co-operating groups such as 4-H and the School of Agriculture at Ohio State will be determined. Social workers will be able to suggest meaningful ways to relate the organization of the zoo to the community. University officials from Antioch and Ohio State will be consulted to discover what part their students might play in the organization of the zoo. Officials of the Columbus Zoo or other zoo officials would also be helpful in supplying effective

administrative procedures.

D. How Much? Costs of Zoo Operation

The costs of obtaining animals, maintaining both animals and sit, as well as the zoo's recreational and educational programs will be assessed. The relevance of the neighborhood zoo program to various public and private organization goals will be considered, in order both to assist those purposes and derive from those programs minimum financial support.

E. Application to Other Cities

Study will be made of the variables of neighborhood community in other cities and other local areas within the cities to determine required adaptations of the developed model to fit the different physical and social features of neighborhood environment.

F. Implementation of the Report: Plan and Recommendations

The measure of this project success will be the facility of its actual demonstration in Columbus. Involvements and commitments for funding the model plan of this feasibility study will be a continuing staff and consultant endeavor.

6. Significance of the Neighborhood Zoo

We anticipate a zoo which will occupy a significant place in the lives of the children who are zoo-keepers. The zoo will provide a setting for learning experiences. These learning experiences will be designed to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes relative to the life sciences. For example, some knowledge of how the animal's body is constructed and its functions is basic in animal care. (Perhaps the care will precede the knowledge, but this will only enrich it.) Skills developed in animal care may be the foundations for vocational training in such fields as laboratory technology, agriculture, or medicine. Animal care requires punctuality, cleanliness, and an awareness of balanced diet--all traits that are helpful in any occupation, as well as home and community life. Knowing animals will also form attitudes toward Nature and its beautiful and curious varieties.

For the zoo-keepers, the zoo will be a responsibility. Another life will depend upon their care. They will be needed in the most basic of ways. The zoo will also be a place where there is a living thing at which they can get angry or which they can love. It is generally true that children who find it difficult to relate to other people may achieve contact with an animal. For many children this may be the first significant emotion in their lives.

For the younger children who visit the zoo, it will be a permanent yet changing pleasure park. For the older people the zoo will be a respite from city life as well as a place where their skills and experience are valued.

Finally, the zoo is a bridge out of the city. This is true both literally and figuratively. The zoo will provide totally urbanized children with a sense of the rural. This experience will provide a permanent basis of comparison between country and city life. This is important for children whose normal experience is so limited that anything natural may be considered alien. It is also hoped that an actual rural situation will be experienced. This will be done by means of a program which will be worked out with the 4-H and Agricultural Extension Service. The learning experiences at the zoo will be a preparation for these outings. Quite often city children taken into the country become hostile to nature because it is unfamiliar to them. (Viz. picnickers who without understanding the ecology, violate it with beer cans.) The hostility and alienation generated by ignorance will be ameliorated through an enlightened sensibility of nature which we feel will be brought about by the zoo. The horizon of the city dweller will be broadened enough to include nature's works.

7. Personnel

- Project Coordinator: Milton Kotler, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.
- Project Director: Janet Langen, National Institutes of Health
- Associate Director: Ralph Bonner, Director, Neighborhood Center, First English Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio
- Research Associate: _____
- Advisory Panel: (Consultant services and advisory panels will be drawn from the following group.)
1. Dr. Frank Baker, Animal Scientist, Extension Service, Department of Agriculture
 2. Edgar Reeves, Director 4-H program, Department of Agriculture
 3. Dr. Marlin Perkins, Director, St. Louis Zoo
 4. Christopher Jencks, Institute for Policy Studies
 5. Dr. Joe Turner, Office of Science and Technology, White House, Washington, D.C.
 6. Marcus Raskin, Institute for Policy Studies
 7. Rev. Leopold Bernhard, Pastor, First English Lutheran Church
 8. through 15. _____

8. BudgetPersonnel

Project Coordinator	
Project Director	\$ 6,000
Research Associate	4,500
Associate Project Director, 6 months-one-third	1,500
Secretary, 6 months full-time-IPS	2,500
Secretary, 6 months one-half time	1,250
Consultants, 30 days at \$75.00/day	2,250

Supplies

Office Supplies--telephone, stationary	
IPS, Washington	500
Neighborhood Center, Columbus	250
Typewriters--2 at 6 months rental	180
Publication of Report	1,000

Travel

30 Consultants round trips to Washington and Columbus, average \$70.00 each	2,100
Consultant for 30 days--per diem \$18.00 per day	540
10 Staff trips to Columbus and Washington, average \$55.00	550
Staff per diem for 60 days in Columbus and Washington, \$18.00 per day	1,080

Employee Benefits 1,575

Institute Overhead-15% 3,866

TOTAL \$29,641.