



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry
Newtown Square, PA

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USDA Forest Service Living Memorials Project

Design Collaborative

FINAL REPORT

April 2005

Acknowledgments

Theodore Eisenman, Principal of Environmental Design & Communications, LLC, managed the project and Matt Arnn, Area Landscape Architect, USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, supervised daily operations. Thanks go to community participants Barry Goodinson, Paula Hewitt, Mike Hill, Rick Magder, and Nando Rodriguez for their invaluable assistance; Peter Trowbridge of Cornell University; Lee Weintraub of the City College of NY; Ron Kagawa of Virginia Tech; Dr. William Burch and Colleen Murphy-Dunning of the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies; David Kamp of Dirtworks PC; Robin Morgan, Phillip Rodbell, Area Director Kathryn Maloney, and Deputy Director John Nordin of the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry; Lindsay Campbell, Erika Svendsen, Morgan Grove, and Mark Twery of the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Research Station; Northeastern Research Station Director Michael Rains; and Deputy Chief Joel Holtrop and Chief Dale Bosworth of the USDA Forest Service, Washington Office.

**USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry**

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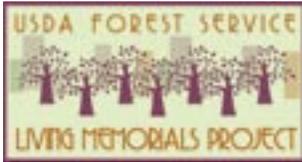
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Introduction

The USDA Forest Service, in the process of creating the Living Memorials Project, identified a unique educational opportunity for landscape architecture students and their academic institutions. Bringing together citizens and design students in collaborative efforts has proven beneficial to all involved. Citizens of a community feel the satisfaction of seeing their input realized in student designs, while the students gain priceless practical experience by participating in the progressive steps of a real project.

The design and creation of a living memorial through the Living Memorials Project is intended to be a symbolic, cathartic event for communities devastated by tragedy and disaster. The design collaborative, through committing design students and community members to a common cause, has proven valuable not just as a mutual learning experience in creating a memorial, but by challenging the use of traditional brick-and-mortar tributes. Creating open spaces and parks as memorials elicits the emotional involvement of both the students and the community, beginning with a creative alliance and culminating in a commemorative space that visitors can enter, not simply view. Living memorials are an accessible, affirmative remembrance, providing a place for peaceful thought, reflective recollection, and quiet homage. The process of working with neighbors and strangers in creating these living memorials serves to form social bonds, which survive long after project completion. Built work from some or portions of the presented designs may or may not result; ultimately, the design process advances the dialogue of how we invest in the physical, social, and ecological fabric of our communities.

Project Overview

Responding to the public's desire to honor and memorialize the tragic losses that occurred on September 11, 2001, Congress authorized the USDA Forest Service to create the Living Memorials Project, utilizing the resonant power of trees and green space to create lasting, living memorials to the victims of terrorism, their families, communities, and the Nation. Cost-share grants and technical assistance support the design and development of more than 50 community memorial projects in the New York City and Washington D.C. metropolitan areas and southwestern Pennsylvania.

The focus of the Living Memorials Project is the healing power of trees. Trees commemorate and honor lost individuals while restoring the spirit of individuals and enhancing communities. One of the added dimensions of planting trees is the creation of space for individuals to connect with the restorative powers of nature in their own way, on their own terms, and at their own pace. The Living Memorials Project, in essence, provides the opportunity to create spaces for the ordinary and extraordinary moments of our lives.

The design collaborative was initiated to increase citizen involvement in the design process and applies site analysis, employing the design skills of students while providing them with hands-on experience in a professional, public setting. During the 2004 cycle of projects, three Living Memorial recipient groups and three graduate-level landscape architecture programs agreed to participate in this collaborative project:

- Cottage Place Gardens (Yonkers, NY)
Professor Lee Weintraub's Design Studio at City College of New York (CCNY), partnered with Groundwork Yonkers
- Open Road Park (Manhattan, NY)
Professor Peter Trowbridge's Plant Design and

Establishment course at Cornell University, partnered with Open Road

- New Jersey Avenue and O Street Park (Washington, DC)
- Ron Kagawa's landscape architecture students at Virginia Tech, partnered with Greenspaces for DC

Professors and students were provided flexibility in determining how to engage their respective sites and partner communities, which encouraged creativity and local initiative, while working within the academic structure and schedule of the respective universities. Participating programs agreed to certain minimum guidelines to ensure some consistencies across the three partnerships, including:

- a participatory design process with the partner community
- a mid-term and final review of design work
- development and submission of specified design boards and reports.

Project binders, prepared and provided to each of the academic partners, served to situate the project within a critical pedagogical framework. The binders included reading materials in five categories: Living Memorials Background, Environmental & Ecological Services of Parks, Social & Public Health Benefits of Parks, Participatory Design, and Memory & Healing.

The project culminated in an exhibition of student design boards at the Municipal Arts Society (MAS) in mid-town Manhattan between July 17 and August 25, 2004. The MAS, a leading urban design institution and advocacy group in New York City, organizes walking tours, hosts lectures, facilitates multiple urban design projects, and houses The Urban Center book store, specializing in architecture and design resources. Display of the students' designs in this setting guaranteed an attentive audience.

Project Specifications

University partners agreed to the expectations and deliveries outlined in a memorandum to participating students authored by the design collaborative management team. The memorandum reiterated that the project designs need not literally refer to the events of 9/11, but strive to create "living places that rejuvenate and heal." Specific requirements for two deliverables at the end of the academic year were a 30-inch high by 40-inch wide design board for public viewing and a 4-page design summary in electronic PDF format.

Students were apprised to create their boards with the understanding that they be able to stand on public display for 2 months and enable someone with no familiarity with the site to grasp and appreciate the intended design. Guidelines for incorporation of identified elements ensured some uniformity, facilitating display of submissions from all three universities in a single exhibition while allowing the individual students sufficient freedom to communicate their design concepts. Electronic summary specifications identified the methodology for providing a means to consolidate the design elements of the boards for a final report to enable future dissemination to a wider audience.

**Cottage Place Gardens
Yonkers, NY
City College of New York, Yale University
School of Forestry and Environmental
Studies, Groundwork Yonkers**

Description

Professor Lee Weintraub's spring semester graduate-level landscape architecture design studio at City College of New York (CCNY) partnered with Groundwork Yonkers to develop a Living Memorial at Cottage Place Gardens, a public housing development in Yonkers, New York. Located in southwest Yonkers overlooking the Hudson River, Cottage Place Gardens is a low-income community with many long-term residents. The community, however, has suffered a number of homicides over the past few years, and the physical landscape is in poor condition: abandoned lots surround the perimeter, the ground in many places is barren and eroded, and much of the vegetation is unattractive and dying. Executive Director Rick Magder described the goal of the project: "to reclaim lost ground . . . by exploring the connection between the events of September 11th and the ongoing experience of upheaval in certain communities."

Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies also participated in this project through Dr. William Burch's "Global to Local Pattern and Process in Urban Ecosystems" course, described as follows:

"This course explores some theories and techniques of measurement, planning, and management being developed by social and biological scientists along with those of engineers and designers about the

causes and consequences of observed regularities in the structure and processes of urban ecosystems. Students will have the opportunity to explore some of the interplay between issues of identity and urban livability as driven by trends in livelihoods, lifestyles and legacies where trees, lawns, and other plants, soils, people, streets, sewers, organizations, laws and institutions, along with fluxes in demographic, disease, nutrient, seasonal, life, academic, and sports cycles, are shaping the pattern and process of all urban ecosystems."

The triad partnership at Cottage Place Gardens proved helpful in thoroughly understanding the challenges of the site and improving the design solution. The partners coordinated their efforts and defined their roles:

- Groundwork Yonkers provided overall project coordination
- Yale assumed responsibility for assessing pattern and processes in the built, biophysical and sociocultural environment; identifying community needs; and developing a sustainable outdoor program
- CCNY developed an open space improvement plan to facilitate restoration of the 'residential fabric', fostering a stronger sense of community.

Process
February and March 2004

Students of Dr. William Burch's "Global to Local Pattern and Process in Urban Ecosystems" course at Yale spent 2 full days in Yonkers and Cottage Place Gardens. Activities consisted of a guided tour

of Yonkers by Rick Magder, Executive Director of Groundwork Yonkers; meetings with a local planner; site walks; and meetings with Cottage Garden residents.



Site context discussion.



View of channelized waterway running below and through the city.



Discussion about the socioeconomic condition of Yonkers.



Discussion with Steve Whetstone, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development for the City of Yonkers.

Process
February and March 2004

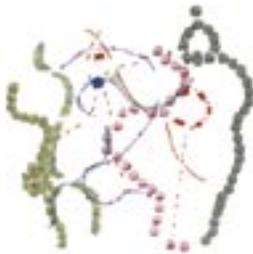
Professor Lee Weintraub's graduate landscape architecture students, with Groundwork Yonkers and representatives from Yale, led an evening charrette (design workshop) with about 25 Cottage Garden residents. The goal of the charrette was to identify the opportunities and challenges of the site. Results were presented on flip charts and recorded on a large base plan.





The Living Memorial at Cottage Gardens

Yonkers, New York



Undulations of Memory

Ribbons of celebrations

Cordons of life

Serpentine of pleasures for everyday life in the Cottage

Waving down to the River



Each building will have a surrounding garden delimited by shrubs.

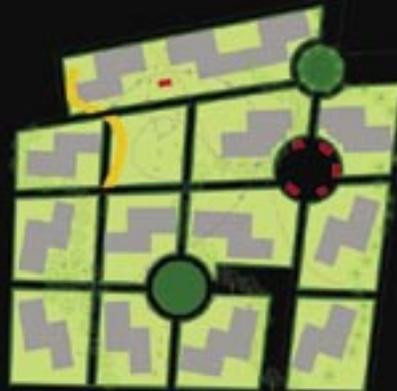
Every garden will be different, designed by its residents and a landscape architect.

Superimposed on these different gardens, ribbons of benches, cherry trees, colored lamppost, white birches, and water features will run through the site down to the river

**ELEONORE LEFEBURE
KARINE DUTEIL**

LEGEND

- EVERGREEN / CONIFERS
- CHERRY TREES
- CHILDREN PLAYGROUND/ GIANT SLIDE
- LIGHTING
- WATER
- COMMUNITY GARDEN
- WHITE BIRCHES
- BENCHES



**A plan for the Cottage Gardens Community
Yonkers, New York**

Meeting the needs of the Community of Cottage Gardens, addressing issues of the site, creating a better, healthier place to live using a layered, zoning/pedonal approach, while providing opportunities for play, peace, exercise, privacy, interaction, reflection, congregation, consumption, celebration, movement - living - through a series of "moments" organized on a grid.

The layers include:

1. Paved, reduce impervious surfaces, increase planted areas, establish green roofs, install on-site storm water management system to address erosion issues, reduce contribution to municipal storm sewer system and provide a soft, cool, shaded, more aesthetically pleasing site.

2. Safe, more pedestrian friendly circulation system, with direct routes and extensive, winding paths for strolling, exercise or play.

Section-Elevation along north path facing South



Section Elevation through the Meadow



3. Plantings and water system to create habitat for wildlife.

4. Careful selection of plants due to the high incidence of asthma/asthma-like sufferers in urban environments - all determined to be low pollen producers, low VOC emitters and/or high pollutant trappers.

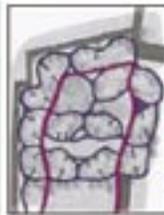
Plants along wet/dry stream bed and in bio-filtration swales along roadway and below lower path will slow movement of water to encourage penetration, will tolerate changing moisture conditions and may provide some filtration of pollutants.

The benefits of trees in an urban environment are many, including those already mentioned and others.

5. The "moments" consist of sculptural and/or structural elements at various points on the site positioned based simply on a grid. Examples include a wood deck meditation platform for connecting with the inner or spiritual self, the drum circle for connecting with community and the contemplation - "World View" chairs for connecting with nature and the "biggie picture".

Ideally there would be twenty "moments" in all.

USDA Living Memorials Project
Design Collaborative
City College of New York
Professor Weintraub/UL
Design Studio
Susan Laitner
Dawn McKenzie



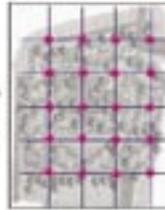
Circulation



On-site Stormwater Management



Planting



Moments organized on a Grid



Community Drum Circle



Section-Elevation along south path facing North



World View Chairs



Section-Elevation amphitheater with world view chairs



Meditation Platform



Plan View



Section-Elevation along lower path facing East



WATER PLANTS

**New Jersey Avenue and O Street Park
Washington, D.C.
Virginia Tech and Green Spaces for D.C.**

Description

This project grew out of a larger Living Memorials project situating tree groves in each of Washington, D.C.'s eight wards. The groves are designed to serve as "satellites" to a larger, center grove on Kingman Island in the Anacostia River. Green Spaces for DC is the lead agency of a coalition of government agencies and nonprofits planning the groves. Ron Kagawa's Landscape Architecture Studio at Virginia Tech, Washington-Alexandria Architecture Center (WAAAC), and Barry Goodinson, Executive Director of Green Spaces for DC, reviewed the eight groves and selected the park at New Jersey Avenue and O Street, NW as their collaborative project site.

Virginia Tech provided this course description for the project:

"Green Nature: Human Nature"

"Frederick Law Olmsted once referred to urban parks as the "lungs of a city," exceptional places of nature, cleansed air, restored body, mind, and soul -

amidst a bustling metropolis. How may a landscape in which nature represents the normal progression of life as germination, growth, maturity, senescence, and death, commemorate the sudden events of September 11, 2001? Can a landscape renew our spirit as it draws life into the city?

This architecture and landscape architecture proposal seeks conception of a living memorial for Washington, D.C. as an urban landscape of national remembrance and healing at a community and individual scale. Through sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, selected proposals will be exhibited at the Municipal Arts Society of New York during the summer, 2004."

This project did not fully materialize. A community partner representative was never identified, and due to mid-semester staffing complications at Virginia Tech, most of the students in the design studio dropped out of the class (see Recommendations).



Paul Laurence Dunbar Memorial Park will honor the first published African-American poet and Shaw resident from 1898 through the early 1900s.

The park, located at New Jersey and O Streets, NW in the neighborhood of Shaw in Washington, DC, is the only public green space in a several block radius. Surrounding neighborhoods, such as Dupont and Logan Circles all have cohesive social centers and greens.

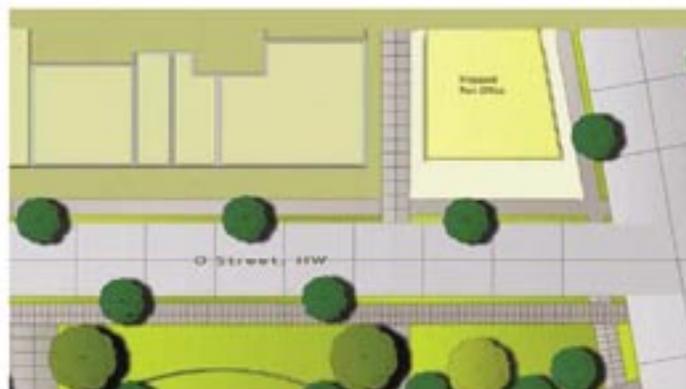
Federal Washington, just a few blocks south of New York Avenue, also has many urban social centers and green spaces that symbolically serve as America's front yard.



1874 map of Washington showing the site at New Jersey & O Streets, NW

Shaw lacks a cohesive neighborhood center. The objective of this design is to provide "lungs" to the inner-city neighborhood. By redesign of the park and reconfiguration of neighborhood circulation patterns, "lungs" are created in both a physical, green sense and a socio-economic sense.

The triangle north of the park formed by 4th Street, O Street, and New Jersey Avenue will be blocked to traffic to accommodate a much-needed post office. The adjacent abandoned buildings will be fitted for retail. The addition of these features such as the post office will ensure the park becomes an important part of a resident's daily routine. The students from nearby Dunbar High School will also benefit from having retail establishments close at hand.



Proposed reconfiguration north of O Street showing new post office and other retail establishments

Open Road Park Manhattan, NY Cornell University and Open Road

Description

Graduate students from Professor Peter Trowbridge's landscape architecture course, "Creating the Urban Eden: Woody Plant Selection, Design and Landscape Establishment" at Cornell University partnered with Open Road, an advocacy group, in Manhattan's East Village. Open Road Park is a 1-acre former brownfield site next to East Side Community High School. The site, an abandoned bus depot, was transformed 15 years ago into a vibrant community park through a highly participatory design process under the guidance of Paula Hewitt. Today, approximately 150 people of both genders, all ages, and multiple socioethnic groups engage daily in a broad range of activities; teachers from the high school use the park for science and environmental education, teenagers play basketball and volleyball, members of an adjacent mosque grow vegetables and flowers, and families with children enjoy the pond and quiet sitting areas.

Some block residents, in the wake of September 11th, angrily called for members of the neighborhood mosque to leave the community. The park became a spontaneous community gathering place, establishing a zone of safety and mutual respect. Fostering the process of community healing,

Open Road conceived of Healing Trees, a Living Memorials project to enhance the physical character of the site through a participatory design process. Project partners included the New Design School, 11th Street Block Association, Medina Masjid Mosque, Mary Help of Christians, Green Thumb, and the NYC Parks Department.

Professor Trowbridge's plant establishment and design course proved well suited for this project, due to its critical focus on urban trees. The course is the first of a two-semester sequence that familiarizes the landscape architect/horticulturist with plant identification, establishment, and appropriate use and design. Students engage in the practice of site assessment and related planting design in this portion of the course.

The design process was significantly enhanced by Paula Hewitt's expertise in participatory design. The methodology consisted of a community factfinding study by Open Road members, a site inventory and analysis by Cornell students, a mid-term charrette at Cornell attended by five Open Road participants, and a final presentation at Open Road Park, attended by over 150 students, community members, and related professionals.

Process

March 6, 2004

Twenty students from Cornell arrived at the park at 10:00 a.m., engaging in an intensive 2-hour inventory of plants, soils, site conditions, and use assessment. The Cornell students then discussed their findings with Open Road community members,

which led into a broader conversation about the overall site. Open Road participants supplemented the physical site assessment by developing a socio-cultural survey of the neighborhood.



Introduction



Tree Inventory



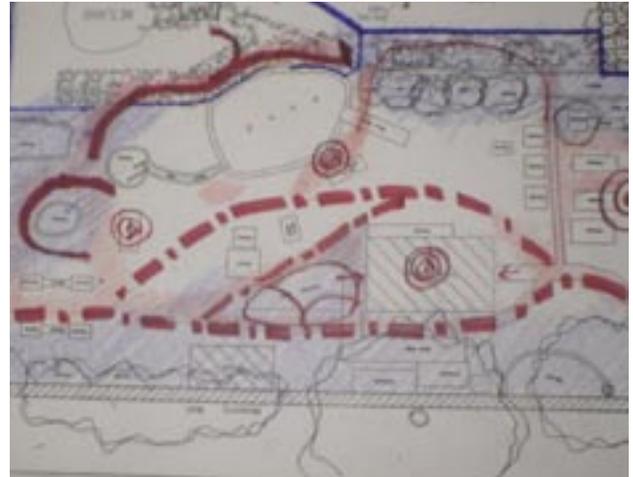
Soil pH



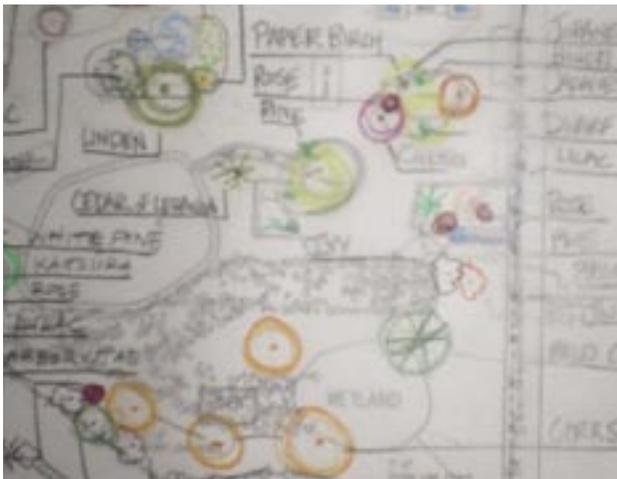
Site Dimensions



Bulk Density



Circulation Patterns



Tree Inventory



pH Zones



Activity Zones



Group Discussion

Process
April 8, 2004

A team of five Open Road members and directors traveled to Cornell University to participate in a 3-hour charrette with the landscape architecture students who had visited Open Road earlier in March. Cornell presented initial findings from its site inventory and analysis, and Open Road shared conclusions of its sociocultural factfinding. This

background provided the context for the afternoon's schematic design charrette. Open Road participants spent 20 to 30 minutes with each of the Cornell teams, responding to initial design ideas and discussing the opportunities and constraints of the site.

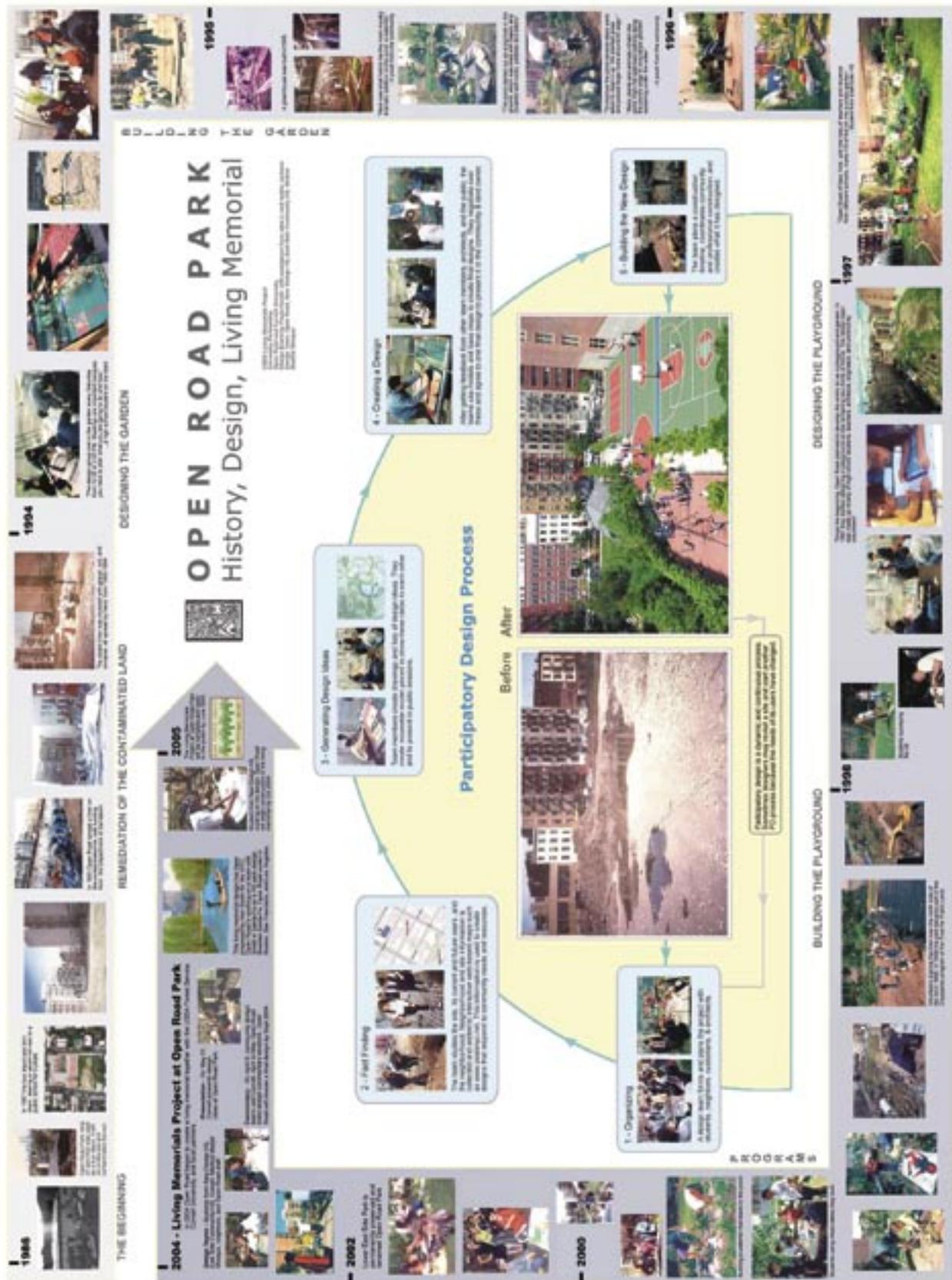


Process
May 21, 2004

Open Road organized a 4-hour public viewing of design proposals developed by eight Cornell student teams. In addition to open viewing for local citizens, three groups from local schools participated as jurors. This provided the Cornell designers with critical feedback and facilitated a greater understanding of the landscape design process for local youth. Participants included 60 ninth grade students from New Design High School,

65 seventh through twelfth grade students from East Side Community High School and Beacon program (attended by students from Mary Help of Christians, Medina Masjid Mosque, and Public School 19), and 25 second through sixth grade students from the PS 19 after-school program, run by Chinatown Planning Council school. The event culminated with a buffet dinner prepared by several families of the Open Road community.





LES PARK: THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE GARDEN

In Commemoration of the Lives Lost on September 11, 2001

Over a year of this work, we had a vision of a beautiful garden filled with children, families, and friends. The unique character of this park already brought together many different backgrounds. In this design we decided that this was very important and developed a master plan that serves as a functional, which will bring more people together to learn, inspire, and create something for themselves as well as their neighbors. Organizing this site will enhance the functional uses and allow many activities to take place at one time. This design concept was to enhance the existing site and create a living memorial that will be a place for people to come together and share their stories. The design concept was to enhance the existing site and create a living memorial that will be a place for people to come together and share their stories. The design concept was to enhance the existing site and create a living memorial that will be a place for people to come together and share their stories.

PURPLE STATION

What is a green space?

A green space is a place where people can go to relax, play, and enjoy nature. It can be a park, a garden, or a simple area of grass. Green spaces are important for our health and well-being. They provide a place for us to get exercise, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of nature. Green spaces also help to reduce air pollution and provide a habitat for wildlife.



OVERALL PLAN



DESIGNED BY ANJELY KIM, SENIOR DESIGNER, IN TROY SQUARE

BLUE STATION

What is a green space?

A green space is a place where people can go to relax, play, and enjoy nature. It can be a park, a garden, or a simple area of grass. Green spaces are important for our health and well-being. They provide a place for us to get exercise, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of nature. Green spaces also help to reduce air pollution and provide a habitat for wildlife.



YELLOW STATION

What is a green space?

A green space is a place where people can go to relax, play, and enjoy nature. It can be a park, a garden, or a simple area of grass. Green spaces are important for our health and well-being. They provide a place for us to get exercise, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of nature. Green spaces also help to reduce air pollution and provide a habitat for wildlife.



RED STATION

What is a green space?

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ORANGE STATION

What is a green space?

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GREEN STATION

What is a green space?

A green space is a place where people can go to relax, play, and enjoy nature. It can be a park, a garden, or a simple area of grass. Green spaces are important for our health and well-being. They provide a place for us to get exercise, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of nature. Green spaces also help to reduce air pollution and provide a habitat for wildlife.



Lower East Side Memorial Garden

As part of our design concept, we wanted to create a space that would be meaningful to the community and provide a place for reflection and healing. The garden is designed to be a place where people can connect with nature and each other. We want to create a space that is both beautiful and functional, and that can be used by the community for many years to come.

Goals:

- Create a space that is meaningful to the community
- Provide a place for reflection and healing
- Create a space that is both beautiful and functional
- Provide a place where people can connect with nature and each other

Design Process:

1. Research and site analysis
2. Conceptual design
3. Preliminary design
4. Final design
5. Construction

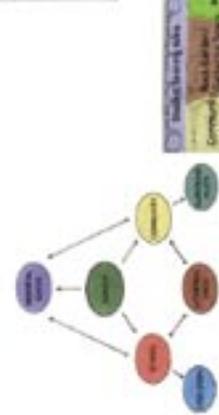
Plant List:

- Native plants
- Drought-tolerant plants
- Low-maintenance plants
- Plants that are easy to care for
- Plants that are visually appealing



Plant List

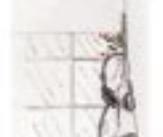
Plant Name	Quantity	Notes
Red Maple	1	Plant in the center of the garden.
White Birch	2	Plant in the back garden.
Japanese Maple	3	Plant in the mature garden.
... (many more rows)



NOTES:

- All amendments of plants have been recommended.
- All planting depth of 1 foot for the Memorial Day Garden.
- All specifications are detailed below.
- All plants are to be planted in the ground.
- All plants are to be planted in the ground.
- All plants are to be planted in the ground.

USDA Living Memorials Project
 Design Collaborative - Lower East Side
 Cornell University
 Urban Eden #72
 Ellen Chase
 Kuba Heil
 Cheryl Quinn



Two Planters

Wellness Plants

Grass Bed Trellis

Back Garden with Bench Garden

Memorial Day Garden

Modified Tree

Memorial Garden of Empty Beds

Municipal Art Society of New York Exhibit Manhattan, NY

The project culminated with a 7-week exhibit at the Municipal Art Society (MAS) of New York, one of the city's premiere venues for architectural exhibits and resources for urban planning. The exhibit occupied the main lobby, stairwell landing, and second floor hallway exhibit space. On August 25, the MAS

sponsored a public event to celebrate and close the exhibit. Approximately 40 people attended the event, including student and community participants, urban planning and landscape architecture professionals, and the public.



LIVING MEMORIALS PROJECT

U S D A F O R E S T S E R V I C E



THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

USDA FOREST SERVICE
LIVING MEMORIALS PROJECT

DESIGN COLLABORATIVE

In response to an overwhelming public desire to honor and memorialize the tragic losses that occurred on September 11, 2001, Congress authorized the USDA Forest Service to create the Living Memorials Project. This initiative invokes the power of trees and green space to create public places that rejuvenate and heal.

During this year's cycle of projects, three community groups in New York City and Washington, D.C. were teamed up with landscape architecture design studios from City College of New York, Cornell University, and Virginia Tech. These partnerships provided an opportunity for local citizens to participate in the design process, while giving students an important hands-on experience.

Some, or portions, of these designs may result in built work. Ultimately, they help to advance the dialogue on how we invest in the physical, ecological, and social fabric of our communities.

living memorials

what

Sacred green spaces for community and personal reflection in the wake of September 11, 2001.

Such is the want and instinct of humans to turn the energy of suffering and loss into meaning for the future. This initiative involves the reuniting power of trees and green places to bring people together and create lasting, living memorials to victims, families, communities, and the nation.

why

In response to an overwhelming public desire to honor and memorialize the tragic losses that occurred on September 11, 2001, the U.S. Congress authorized the USDA Forest Service to create the Living Memorials Project. Backed by the professional, scientific, and financial support of the Forest Service, the Living Memorials Project has resulted in the planting of thousands of trees and the bloom of hundreds of acres of green space from New York City to Washington, D.C. The Living Memorials Project has inspired the reclamation of community parks and street trees, and renewed bonds between friends and neighbors through grassroots organizations that cross local divides to those lost and those who survived others. The project involves Federal, State, City, and Community partners, but the spaces themselves are local neighborhood places available to all who seek to find personal peace and strength through nature.

where

To date, the Forest Service Living Memorials Project supports 50 projects throughout the northeast and mid-Atlantic. Project sites range from forests, to parks, to community gardens, to civic centers, and reclaimed space (on previously undeveloped sites). Stewards include state agencies, municipalities, environmental and community-focused nonprofits, and partnerships (often with informal community groups). These sites of social meaning have strong groups and function primarily as places for commemoration, community planting, reflection, and local events.

design

Recognizing that restorative landscape design principles can be applied to public spaces, the Living Memorials Project solicited proposals from communities for healing places that could serve the public in the aftermath of September 11. There were a central component of these designs for several reasons: A tree is a universal icon that invokes an innate emotional response, and this simplicity of design resonates across socioeconomic and cultural boundaries. Trees are a positive affirmation of life that celebrates the future.

Designing with trees does not mean decorating with trees, and The Living Memorials Project discourages communities from using trees as secondary elements to highlight sculptural or built monuments. Trees also grow and change over time, which differentiates a living memorial from a static architectural monument.

These are democratic spaces that provide common ground for reconciliation and healing, and The Living Memorials project hopes to expand and enhance these places to communities in need.



"It is a new green trend to memorialize the site of the World Trade Center, growth against death, vigils in the wake of terrorism, and the steady reaching for the sun."
E.S. White in "Trees in New York," 1948

project



www.livingmemorialsproject.net 1

living memorials

After September 11, 2001, people gathered in our public parks and public spaces to begin the healing process, and many efforts were undertaken to plant trees in honor of the lives lost. The urban forest provided a special refuge for rescue and recovery workers at ground zero in NYC, as well as for individuals throughout the country who found nature a rejuvenating companion. The Living Memorials Project seeks to sustain and enrich these efforts by building on community momentum and offering trees as an investment in our communities.

university design exhibition

The design and creation of living memorial is meant to be both a symbolic, healing event in the wake of tragedy and disaster, as well as an investment in the physical fabric of our communities. There is historical precedence for memorializing events with trees and engaging the natural environment in times of crisis. Nature helps to heal the spirit and to reconnect people. Trees are also a powerful symbol of life and renewal, and serve to honor the spirit of community for generations to come. Although designers cannot literally create community, they can design physical settings that bring people together, and they can also facilitate a process that cultivates the bonds that unify people. Participation in the design process brings self-esteem, joy and personal investment in our home places.

During this year's project stage, applicants had the opportunity to request design assistance from graduate-level university students. Landscape architecture design studios from City College of New York, Cornell University, and Virginia Polytechnic and State University expressed interest in learning up with community partners to develop living memorials. This collaboration benefits participating communities by providing design assistance from leading academic institutions, and giving students an opportunity to apply their skills in a professional, public setting. The engagement between students and citizens also yields meaningful lessons, as community members gain insight into the memorial design process and students learn about the personal experiences of people affected by the tragedy.

Facilitated by landscape architect Theodore Eisenman and Matt Amn, each university studio class was partnered with a community group: City College with Groundwork Workers; Cornell University with Open Road NY; Virginia Tech with GreenSpaces for DC. Each partnership was tasked with creating a new site or modifying an existing site. Professors and students had flexibility to determine how they engage their respective sites, and the project encouraged a participatory design process consisting of an initial site visit, a design workshop (shared) with local citizens, a mid-project review, and a final presentation to the community. The designs displayed here are the results of these partnerships.

The Living Memorials Project would like to thank Paula Hewitt, Nerdo Rodriguez, Rick Maglier, Barry Goodson, Mike Hill, Peter Townbridge, Lee Weintraub and Ron Kagawa for their invaluable assistance in making this project possible. In addition, we would like to thank Robin Morgan, Philip Rudwell, Northeastern Area Director Kathryn Makorney, Deputy Chief Josef Holthop, and Chief Dale Bosworth of the USDA Forest Service.



project



www.livingmemorialsproject.net 2

living memorials

www.livingmemorialsproject.net/mem_projects

The USDA Forest Service Northeastern Research Station has worked in partnership with the Living Memorials Project to conduct an ongoing, open and participatory social and site assessment of public spaces that have been created, used or enhanced in memory of the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

hypothesis: community-based projects which are linked initially to trauma and/or loss are embedded with social meaning shaped by local identity, values, and traditions but affected by regional networks and more global events. Projects that have the greatest potential to re-knit social cohesion are those which help re-establish a locus of control and neighborhood efficacy. Projects that are imbued with an ecological approach in process, design, and maintenance have even higher potentials of fostering open systems essential for building trust and cooperation. In some cases, the memorials themselves were either left unfinished, unmarked or still evolving.

methods: created a national registry which serves as an on-line inventory of sites and social meanings. To date, over 500 Living Memorials have been located in every state in the nation. These were Erika Svendsen and Lindsay Campbell went into the field to interview 100 community groups using social ecology methods of patterned discourse, observations, photo-narrative, and mapping.

One of the most basic findings was that after September 11, communities needed space. Space to create. Space to teach. Space to restore. These **social motivations** formed the basis of patterned human responses observed throughout the nation. A **site typology** emerged emerging to specific forms and functions, that often reflected a variance in attitudes, beliefs and social networks. The functions of these memorial projects are affected by the **site location**, along with the memorial message and ongoing public use.

project

national registry of living memorial projects

site typology

to heal

- Average size: 10,000 sq ft
- Most were dedicated
- Planned by local government or local nonprofit
- Large to allow a meaningful memorial program
- Part of urban core

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to learn

- Average size: 10,000 sq ft
- Municipally planned project
- Built as a legacy or tribute
- Often in parks, plazas or public spaces
- High public visibility
- Often used for educational purposes

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to restore

- Average size: 10,000 sq ft
- Community initiated
- Often in parks
- Local, ongoing design, planting, and care
- Often associated with a specific event
- Often in urban or suburban areas

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to beautify

- Average size: 10,000 sq ft
- Primarily in urban or suburban areas
- Often in parks or public spaces
- Often in urban or suburban areas
- Often used for educational purposes
- Often in urban or suburban areas

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to teach

- Average size: 10,000 sq ft
- Often in parks
- Often in urban or suburban areas
- Often used for educational purposes
- Often in urban or suburban areas

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

viewshed

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

site location

Project leads were asked: "Why was this particular site selected?" Memorials were created all over the nation in places of social meaning, both connected to Sept. 11 and to everyday community life.

event related

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

public

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

gathering

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to beautify / to restore

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

sacredness

Project leads were asked: "Do you consider your site to be a sacred space? If so, why?" A pattern of stewardship motivations relating to the desire to leave a legacy emerged from the diversity of responses.

to teach / to connect

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to gain control

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA

to create / to express

Living Memorial Project, Seattle, WA



Conclusions

This project grew from the premise that the overarching mission of the Living Memorials project could be advanced by collaborating with and drawing upon the design skills of academic institutions and through facilitating and increasing direct citizen involvement in the landscape design process. Each of the three university/community collaborations presented unique conditions. To provide guidance for future projects of a similar nature, this section briefly summarizes each of the partnerships, followed by recommendations.

Cottage Place Gardens (Yonkers, NY): This project was exceptional in that two academic institutions participated, each with distinct schedules and pedagogical approaches. The attempt to merge Yale's socioecological methodology with CCNY's design process was not fully successful because a fully collaborative partnership never developed due to the distance between the schools, conflicting academic schedules, and a lack of clarity as to how each could best support the other. The result was essentially two discrete processes, both of which had value and provided substantial learning opportunities to the students. Professor Lee Weintraub of CCNY stated, "The Living Memorials project enabled the students to experience ordinary day-to-day community life. These experiences lead ultimately to respect and a better understanding of the places they may be entrusted to design in the future. More importantly, the process empowered the residents and emboldened the students."

Having two academic institutions participate proved to be a drawback; the process, goals, and expectations were not entirely clear to Cottage Place residents. Fortunately, Groundwork Yonkers, with an ongoing presence, provided direction and clarification and worked with residents to synthesize and incorporate student recommendations with

community needs and desires. Commenting on this collaborative project, Rick Magder of Groundwork Yonkers offered numerous thoughts and recommendations:

"Both the participatory process and the design work were extremely valuable to the project. All of our projects are participatory with local people they affect. However, we are a small organization and the opportunity to have 25 students from two major universities focused on the community was a great resource and opportunity. I think the neighborhood involved appreciated and enjoyed the students' enthusiasm for the community and interest in learning about them and the local environment.

The times that the students were onsite really helped us galvanize interest in the project from the residents. Building the connection between these communities and major universities is especially helpful for the young people in the neighborhood, who might begin to believe that they can in fact attain a college degree. For us at Groundwork, the creative energy that the students brought opened our eyes to some new possibilities, both programmatically and in terms of design improvements to the site. The research generated, especially by Yale, in terms of local data and maps are things we can use in the future. At the same time, the wonderful, beautiful designs created by CCNY are on the walls throughout our office and have been shared with the residents. We have taken many of the student ideas and incorporated them into our thought process for the final project. In fact, we are actively trying to pursue funding for one of the programmatic ideas generated by Yale called "WalkingRX."

"As far as the landscape design work done by CCNY, very little of it is applicable to the final project because its scope was just too broad for the

funding that we have under this project. I think it is a great concept in general. As I've noted above, there is much to be gained by the involvement of academic institutions of such high caliber in local community development initiatives. It can be a powerful experience for everyone. I also think having both Yale and CCNY involved was a plus. However, in the future, such collaborations should not be only 3 months long (one semester, more or less). Community projects do not work that way. It is a major flaw in the project design that the students came and went. An academic commitment for at least a year is essential for this to work well.

"The other issue was the speed that the student work played out. Ideally, Yale would have been on the ground earlier to feed into the design process. But due to rapid launch of the project and different academic schedules, this was not possible. The speed also had other implications. Both classes had their own academic goals and agendas already set, which did not always serve the overall project. For CCNY, in particular, the Living Memorial Design was an added-on 2-week segment that felt very rushed and focused at a level that was way too broad to be helpful to us and our final installation. For these collaborations to work I think the academic partners must be clear about what they are getting into and must commit to serving the project's goals. To do this, they need some lead time, even 6 months to a year, to integrate the project into their curriculum.

"Lastly, as I have said before, we greatly appreciate the support of the Forest Service. At the same time, projects that involve community stewardship can only succeed over a period of time (3-5 years). Once funding for the Memorial project ends next spring we have to replace it with funding from somewhere else. Now that we are in the community we cannot simply walk away. Thus, longer-term Forest Service grants at lower funding amounts are better for project and program sustainability."

According to Magder, three final concepts were developed for the Living Memorials project. The proposals were reviewed by senior staff and the director of the Municipal Housing Authority and received approval to proceed. Two community meetings in the fall of 2004 resulted in selection of the final concept by the residents and the tenant council. The project, which focuses on new memorial gardens and play spaces for children and youth, broke ground in April of 2005. The planting of 29 trees occurred in May and dedication of the playground will take place on September 11, 2005. Community members, students, and local artists continue to work together on a mosaic project, with completion expected in early 2006.

New Jersey and O Street Park (Washington, D.C.): This project did not fully materialize. A community partner representative was never identified, and most of the students in the participating design studio at Virginia Tech dropped the class due to mid-semester staffing complications.

Open Road Park (Manhattan, NY): This project evolved into a dynamic and extensive collaboration, which continues beyond the Living Memorials project. Professor Peter Trowbridge of Cornell and Paula Hewitt of Open Road are now collaborating on a rooftop landscape design for a high school renovation project on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

Several underlying factors contributed to this successful partnership. Open Road is a unique organization, with over 15 years of ongoing human and capital investment. Resident members Paula Hewitt and Nando Rodriguez provided long-term leadership and promotion of resident involvement in the evolution of the site throughout the years, and the park is already a prominent and highly valued place in the local community.

The park is physically and administratively linked to an adjacent high school, which maintains important ties with teachers and students. Additionally, park leaders and users have a history of participatory design. The Cornell students' contribution, as part of their work for the course, "Creating the Urban Eden: Woody Plant Selection, Design and Landscape Establishment," was exceptionally well suited to the project's focus on living plant material. Students conducted important technical site analysis regarding soil conditions, hydrology and plant viability. The partners' mutual receptivity and commitment to a participatory process resulted in design proposals that directly incorporated community needs and desires.

Said Peter Trowbridge of the experience:

"The Living Memorials project at the 12th Street School in the lower East Side of Manhattan was an excellent project for my class. The students were able to engage in a complex urban site assessment exercise, which is difficult to find in NYC. The physical site assessment, combined with the social consequence of their work, brought the students to a new level of understanding regarding landscape architectural design. Students were able to respond to inputs from several different "clients," including Open Road (the advocacy group for the school), the Living Memorials staff, school staff, and students as well as representatives from the nearby community. In the end, their work reflected the complexity that is the constituency of the school.

"Inputs from the Living Memorials staff were terrific. In advance of students engaging in their site visits, we received University Design and Exhibition notebooks that outlined the Living Memorials goals and mission, environmental and economic services, social and public health benefits, the participatory design process, and reading on memory and design. This binder of information was exceptionally instructive for our students and faculty as we worked through the design process with the school and the community. We had several scheduled

phone calls and a consistent flow of e-mail to make the project smooth and mutually fulfilling for the client and student groups. Living Memorials staff brought faculty, students, and a representative of Open Road to the Cornell campus for a structured participatory design process, which greatly facilitated the work of the landscape architecture students. If any improvements could be suggested, it might be made more explicit what is really possible to achieve with communities for the resources at hand. In a straightforward design project, this would be made clear. With the complexity of a community participatory process, the ability, responsibility, and especially the timeframe for execution are never quite clear."

"We hope that the student work from Cornell provided the school, staff, and Open Road with a concrete base for future design work by the Lower East Side school and community. Because of the artificial timeframe that we work within at the university, the real-time attributes of a project like Living Memorials are difficult at best to have follow-through without an advocate like Open Road or the staff of Living Memorials."

Said Paula Hewitt:

"It was valuable for our group to see how landscape architects work, to visit the Cornell studio, to see a wide variety of design solutions for the same site our local group has been working with, and to look at the site from a very different perspective. Many members of our community group didn't really have a clear sense of what a living memorial was until they saw the Cornell student designs. It was valuable for our group to go through the structured design process with new partners and with a new, very different design goal."

"We received excellent support, direction, and communication. We're happy to be continuing with the landscape architecture professor from Cornell and his students at Seward Park, a high school renovation project, and we're following the

same process that we developed with the project managers for the Living Memorials project. A recommendation for future collaboration would be to begin both the academic student work and the community process at the same time. We also would have enjoyed more interaction with the other universities and community based groups participating in the Living Memorial project.”

Planting of The Open Road Park Living Memorial took place in May and June of 2005, following finalization of the designs by teams comprised of students and community members. The final designs, which include four Living Memorial areas within the park, utilized eight Cornell student design boards. Ten mature trees were planted in three of the four areas; a wildlife zone in the center of the

park received three trees, as did a large, previously empty (due to lack of funds) tree pit at the main entrance, which draws new visitors to the park. A section equipped with electricity and water, designed for large gatherings of up to 200 people, received four trees.

The fourth Living Memorial area is the community garden beds. Redesigned and rebuilt through this project, this revived portion of the park fostered an increase in membership and encourages the planting of diverse varieties of food plants representative of the various origins and cultures of the garden members. The dedication ceremony for this Memorial will occur on September 11, 2005.

Recommendations

The initial round of collaborative projects served to identify those practices and procedures that enabled success, as well as deficiencies that caused delays or failure. Three basic categories of critical elements were identified: time and distance, funding, and communication.

Time and distance elements were identified as the most relevant factors influencing successful collaborative efforts. Early identification of participants, well in advance (3 to 6 months) of the project start date, enables all parties to properly prepare for the necessary time commitments. This early planning also enables identification of community partners with strong personal ties to the neighborhood. Requiring a minimum 8-week commitment from the academic partners to fully develop design proposals and aligning both the academic and community design timelines increase interaction and subsequent relevancy of the proposed designs. Increasing interaction through additional joint meetings and activities promotes final designs more reflective of the input of both partners. Geographic proximity of the university and the

community project site, identified as lacking in the project that failed to come to fruition, is an important consideration, because the distance the students must travel (and the concurrent time commitment) inhibits both frequent site visits and interaction with the community. Promotion of relationships beyond one semester between the academic and community partners encourages commitment by both towards seeing the project realized.

Project funding is best accomplished by considering smaller, multiple grants over longer time periods. This approach promotes long-term project viability and removes the vulnerability engendered by single-source financing.

Determining project specifics in advance (the entire timeline, budget, logistical constraints, and other factors) and communicating those expectations, in detail, to all participants promotes success. Design students are able to produce designs that accurately reflect the needs of their community partners when time and performance specifications are clear to all involved at the beginning of the project.

**A Message from Matthew Arnn,
Landscape Architect, USDA Forest
Service Northeastern Area:**

I hope the above synopsis of the successes, failures, and lessons learned from the initial Design Collaborative projects serves to pique the curiosity of others interested in urban design, architecture, and renewal to seek further information about how they might initiate and participate in similar projects. The USDA Forest Service Living Memorials Project can facilitate and foster collaboration in the creation of community memorial spaces by bringing together citizens, students, and universities through the design process. Members of the public interested in initiating Living Memorial projects in their own communities can receive guidance, technical

resources, contacts, and other assistance, while actively affecting the skillfully produced design of a realized project. Universities with landscape architectural design programs can offer their students unique, real-life, real-time experience, distinguishing their programs from those offered by other institutions.

Please contact me at: marnn@fs.fed.us or visit the project Web site: www.livingmemorialsproject.net to learn how we can help your community or university participate in a Living Memorials Cooperative Design Project.

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