Trisha Logan & all our contributors,

THANK YOU.

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acronym

NIMBY

meaning

NOT **I**N **M**Y **B**ACK **Y**ARD

implication

NOT IN **MY** BACK YARD

FROM THE EDITORS

The phrase "Not In My Backyard" and it's colloquial acronym "NIMBY" are commonplace in the vocabulary of urban planners, both in academia and in the professional practice of the discipline. The phrase is used to describe the attitudes of residents that understand the requirement for a public good, but do not personally want to sacrifice their neighbourhoods to allow said good to be carried through. The implication of NIMBY-ism is of people who value their own neighborhood above the overall welfare of the city, and as such, is naturally a point of contention for planners who treat this attitude as an obstacle to their processes.

Treating NIMBY-ism in this way undermines the pride residents take in their neighborhoods. This sense of attachment to one's neighborhood as perhaps the ultimate goal of practitioners working to shape the built environment becomes secondary to development - specifically developments that are planned to benefit the public at large. How do we rationalize and quantify the residents' understanding of a neighborhood when it competes with our understanding, as practitioners, of the same neighborhood?

The brief for this issue's articles was to profile a New York City neighborhood with the goal of portraying what differentiates the neighborhood from others in the city and allows it to be defined as a discrete part of the city. If this was to be discerned, our hope was that a cursory understanding of the root of the deep neighbourhood pride demonstrated by New Yorkers can be gleaned.

Love,
URBAN Magazine

neigh·bor·hood
noun (plural neighborhoods)

british english I neigh·bour·hood

/nāber͡ˌho͡od/

a district, especially one forming a community within a town or city

the area surrounding a particular place, person, or object

the set of points whose distance from a given point is less than (or less than or equal to) some value

synonyms

vicinity, environs, purlieus, precincts, vicinage, district, area, locality, locale, quarter, community, neighborly feeling & conduct

origin

from the old english nèahgebùr, from nèah 'nigh, near' + gebùr 'inhabitant, peasant, farmer'

Jordanna Lacoste

GOWANUS BROOKLYN

UPCOMING PLANNING EFFORTS & THEIR AFFECTS –

In 2008, the New York City Department of City Planning (NYC DCP) proposed a rezoning plan for the neighborhood of Gowanus in Brooklyn. The neighborhood – which surrounds the notorious Gowanus Canal, now designated a Superfund site by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – has long been characterized by its industrial nature and low-density, diverse makeup. The original proposal by the DCP included rezoning 25 blocks along the canal to allow for more mixed use and residential development. While it called for preserving the industrial nature of the neighborhood, the introduction of additional residential developments would no doubt have threatened many industrial and light manufacturing businesses. In 2009, after the EPA placed the Gowanus Canal on the Superfund National Priorities List, the DCP shelved the proposal. Now, with the canal cleanup projected to begin in 2015 and a host of developers looking to capitalize on the neighborhood's trendy appeal, the City is looking to reopen the planning and rezoning effort in Gowanus.

Like much of the Southwest Brooklyn waterfront sites, the Gowanus neighborhood is heavily industrial. Today, much of this has been relegated to light industrial and manufacturing businesses, such as artisan food production facilities, small wood shops, artist workspaces, and entertainment businesses. These small, independently owned light industrial businesses are thriving in the neighborhood. However, with rapid changes occurring in the neighboring areas of Carroll Gardens, Red Hook, and Park Slope, and the recent real estate boom in Brooklyn, developers are now looking to build new residential developments in the neighborhood. A rise in new 'hot spot' businesses, restaurants, and bars in the area – including a new Whole Foods, the Bell House concert hall, and the Royal Palms Shuffleboard Club – are attracting new crowds to the neighborhood and sparking interest from developers looking to capitalize on these growing trends. Some of

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the major upcoming developments include the Lightstone Group's 700-unit rental complex at 363 and 365 Bond Street, and the Hudson Company's 790,000-square-foot mixed-use development at Smith and Fifth streets, slated to open in 2017.

The new Gowanus planning effort – spearheaded by City officials and organized by the Pratt Center for Community Development, who are serving as the planning consultants for the project – is once again looking to make the neighborhood friendlier to mixed-use development. This effort would no doubt strain the flourishing industrial businesses in the neighborhood. After several invitation-only planning meetings, the Pratt Center for Community Development organized several public hearings regarding this new planning effort, termed the 'Bridging Gowanus' series. At the third meeting, the most recent of the 'Bridging Gowanus' series, there was a clear sense that residents were concerned with the future of the neighborhood if no limits are set for new development projects. Residents also feared that affordable housing might be used as a tool by developers to push through new development in the neighborhood. Throughout the meeting, residents demanded more transparency for upcoming high-rise development projects.

The meetings and the new planning efforts in Gowanus bring up some issues and debates that have been occurring around other historically industrial areas of Brooklyn. With the Brooklyn real estate boom and development interests in East Brooklyn skyrocketing, the industrial nature of many Brooklyn neighborhoods is being threatened. Some incentives are being provided to keep Gowanus primarily industrial. The neighborhood is part of the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), which was created under the Bloomberg administration in order to incentivize industrial business creation within the allocated IBZ areas. The purpose of IBZs is to foster industrial businesses in areas that have a large industrial presence by providing tax credits and incentives that help these businesses remain competitive against real estate pressures. Industrial businesses can provide valuable high-wage, low-skill jobs for many New Yorkers, and the current landscape in Gowanus has allowed for independent entrepreneurs to open up new businesses and thrive. New planning efforts will likely undermine the industrial presence in the neighborhood, pushing out local businesses due to sky-high rents spurred by new development interests.

The zoning of the Gowanus neighborhood, which is designated M1 and includes light industrial uses, storage facilities, and wholesale services, has helped keep the neighborhood primarily industrial. However, should the area be rezoned, much of the current landscape in the area will likely change. Upscale residential developments are already underway and industrial businesses are not the only victims of these upcoming changes. The very nature of the neighborhood – a diverse community with primarily low-density development – is also at risk. Residents fear an increase in rents and overwhelming traffic will forever change their neighborhood. Hopefully, the concerns of residents are considered throughout this process, and Gowanus will keep a semblance of its current and unique nature in the future.

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Ariana Branchini

MANHATTAN NEW YORK

MICRO NEIGHBOR-HOODS —

Novelty and diversity are key elements that keep New York City a vibrant center of innovation. These qualities are encapsulated in the city's many neighborhoods, villages and ethnic enclaves. And now – due to limited land and sky-high real estate prices – smaller and more specialized micro neighborhoods put these qualities on full display. Throughout the city's five boroughs, small districts typically limited to a one to three block area are being carved out of larger neighborhoods. Micro neighborhoods are the boutique to the neighborhood's department store or the food truck to the local 50-seat restaurant. Often, these sections of the city crop up as the result of newcomers changing or revitalizing an area. But how long can New York sustain this spatial rebirth, and who will want it? Micro neighborhoods are an expression of the city's ingenuity and they appeal to a fad-centric culture. They are a space to innovate, but they may also be a symptom of the larger gentrifying forces sweeping the city.

New York City has long been known as a fast paced, exciting, and ever-evolving city famous for its patchwork of neighborhoods. In the five boroughs, the city's neighborhoods range from ethnic enclaves to business districts and specialty zones. Spatial boundaries in New York exist in some cases as strictly drawn, formal borders that lend their names to an acronym-defined neighborhood. Houston Street's NoHo/SoHo distinction is an easy example, or the "Triangle Below Canal," known more commonly as TriBeCa. Areas attached to a particular industry, such as the Garment District or the Financial District, are as well known as larger boundaries, such as the Upper West Side. History also plays a role in neighborhood naming in New York City – Midtown East's Murray Hill takes its name from the successful 18th century Quaker merchant Robert Murray who helped establish the area around his estate. The Landmark Preservation Commission is responsible for the city's 110 historic districts, many of which are centered on landmarks. However,

informal and often changing neighborhood designations also exist. In a trend-setting city churning out fads like the cronut faster than a commuter can get from Williamsburg to Chelsea, it's not surprising to see new shops and activities changing even the most established neighborhood. Seemingly as a result of New York's pricey and limited real estate options, micro neighborhoods are cropping up in every borough. New monikers can be an opportunity for the entrepreneurs to make the most of the city's limited land and provide diverse opportunities to its diverse inhabitants.

Today, New York-based publications have named hundreds of micro neighborhoods across the city's five boroughs. One of the first and most famous micro neighborhoods is a small three-block stretch on Bleecker Street, part of the larger neighborhood of SoHo. Names now recognizable throughout the whole city and even the country, including fashion designer Marc Jacobs, as well as the original Magnolia Bakery, were key to this micro neighborhood's explosive popularity. These attractions created a stir among locals and visitors alike, and soon Bleecker between West 11th and West 10th emerged as one of the most popular and expensive real estate options for chic businesses and their customers. The speed of this growth was unprecedented at the time, and the phenomenon continues well over a decade later. In some cases micro neighborhoods are simply a case of renaming a neighborhood or granting it a new acronym moniker such as "SpaHa" for Spanish Harlem or MiMa for Midtown Manhattan in an attempt to rebrand an area.

While some cases of rebranding and specialization speak more directly to the influx of luxury preferences in one of the world's most expensive cities, the after effects of this phenomenon are also visible in the less swank-oriented enclaves of the outer boroughs. As Manhattan's Little Italy and the Lower East Side become higher-end and less immigrant friendly, outer borough micro neighborhoods pay tribute to a new wave of ethnic enclave. For example, Richmond Hill in Queens is now known as "Little Guyana" and the neighboring Jackson Heights has one of the largest concentrations of Indian immigrants in New York City. The Bronx and Brooklyn are also home to new micro neighborhoods based around diverse ethnic and cultural heritages. Vestiges of Eastern European immigration are visible in Brooklyn's "Little Odessa," located in a section of Brighton Beach, while a few miles north in Greenpoint, locals fight gentrifying forces in an effort to maintain "Little Poland". The ripple effect of Manhattan's land values has spurred the reincarnation of once peripheral parts of the city. If this trend enables greater recognition and access to public resources for these neighborhoods' residents, few would complain that micro neighborhoods and neighborhood change have caused a harmful disturbance. However, if these neighborhoods become more popular to young and higher earning newcomers pushed out of Manhattan by its exclusionary prices, sustaining a living in New York City may become even more unattainable for most.

The micro neighborhood phenomenon can be explained by high real estate prices and limited land availability in a city with few remaining options for physical growth. However, larger questions are emerging when considering the trends of neighborhood change centered around New York's most expensive and elite sections of Manhattan, and now Brooklyn. Can a city survive on buzz alone? If change and diversification of neighborhoods continue at this rate, can anyone maintain meaningful community ties? Micro neighborhoods are contentious uses of the limited space in New York City. Perhaps they are a catalyst for transforming larger sections of the city (for better or worse), and maybe they are even contributing to a larger sense of innovation and cultural attraction. While all of these changes take place, some things New Yorkers value may be forced to change as well, including their own ability to be a part of the neighborhood. Change is inevitable, and in many cases welcome. But rapid,

unrelenting transformation and reincarnation of neighborhoods may eventually become a difficult reality for residents and incumbent business owners.

Daniel Hewes

MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

AN EVER EVOLVING NEIGHBOR-HOOD —

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There is a new skyline taking shape in New York City, and Midtown Manhattan is at the center of this change. Long-time residents of the area can easily identify the new additions to the skyline over the last decade. New residential and office towers are continually being constructed to meet the growing demand for housing and office space in the area. In a city with an expected population of over 9 million by 2030, changes to established neighborhoods and new developments are inevitable. No matter the weight of local groups or the relative power of real estate developers, any New Yorker will say that these changes are simply a fact of life in the city.

Midtown Manhattan has witnessed a steady pace of development over the past few years. Columbus Circle was completely transformed when the Time Warner Center was constructed in 2004. Hudson Yards is being marketed as the new center of the city, with completion slated for 2018. The Midtown East Rezoning could lead to numerous state-of-the-art development projects through the selling of air rights by the City. Midtown has historically been a mix of residential, business, and commercial clusters. While the sections closer to the Hudson River are more heavily residential, areas along 5th Avenue are more commercial and business oriented.

There's no better example of the changes occurring in Midtown Manhattan than on 57th Street. This wide, two way corridor slices through the heart of Midtown Manhattan and is home to famous and historical attractions such as Carnegie Hall, Steinway Hall, the Hearst Tower, the Arts Students League, and Tiffany & Co. Stretching from the Hudson to the East River, 57th Street spans 2 miles and runs through several distinct neighborhoods with their own unique mix of commercial, residential and retail uses. Additionally, this street has historically been at the forefront of high-end real estate for the wealthy. Many of buildings that still remain are lasting examples of the first wave of high-end apartment buildings in Manhattan, including the Osborne, Alwyn Court, the Parc Vendome and the Ritz Tower, to name a few. These are among the few landmarked buildings along this bustling and evolving street. Rizzoli Bookstore, which was one of the most iconic and historic bookstores in Manhattan, wasn't so lucky. The 109-year-old structure was demolished in April 2014 after the site failed to gain individual landmark status. Not surprisingly, the two neighboring buildings were also sold and demolished, sparking speculation as to what new tower will eventually be erected in its place.

In April of 2009, construction for the building known as 'One57' began on a lot between 6th and 7th Avenue, starting what will no doubt be a total transformation of the Midtown skyline. The building can be seen as a prime example of the changes taking place along 57th Street in Midtown. One57 is a towering 1,004-foot high mixed-use development. It has also been the subject of several highly publicized controversies over the past few years. Before it was even built, the 11,000 square foot penthouse sold for over $90 million to the prime minister of Qatar; and during Superstorm Sandy, a crane that was completing the top of the building collapsed, forcing nearby residents and businesses to evacuate for 2 weeks. No matter the context, One57 has certainly become a conversation starter for the neighborhood. This building has exposed many long-standing tensions between the neighborhood and developers due to the lack of community input evident in the project's development.

The disputes between neighborhood residents and developers don't end with One57. Farther down on 57th Street, one block west of One57, new construction is also occurring on a lot between Broadway and 7th Avenue. This lot is slated to be the home of the new Nordstrom Tower, which will dwarf One57 by over 500

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feet. Just north of this site, on another empty lot along 58th Street and Central Park South, there will soon be a 920-foot high, ultra-exclusive residence on Central Park South, arguably one of the most sought after addresses in the city. On the East Side, along Park Avenue, four other super-towers are being constructed that are projected to be completed in the next decade, three of which are over 1,000 feet in height. Paul Goldberger of Vanity Fair stated in his article "Too Rich, Too Thin, Too Tall?" that "four of them are on 57th Street alone, which day by day is becoming less of a boulevard defined by elegant shopping and more like a canyon lined by high walls."

In early 2014, the Municipal Arts Society (MAS) released a report titled "The Accidental Skyline," outlining the effects that these towers will have on the neighborhood, and even included a shadow study for Central Park. Concerning the buildings, MAS stated, "The current generation of contenders are hyper-tall, super-slender towers that are, for the most part, as-of-right, meaning that environmental review and public input are not required." This can be problematic considering the permanent effect these buildings will have, not just on Midtown, but the entire city. There is currently no regulation requiring that developers and landholders engage with the community and residents regarding new development projects.

Community Board 5 held a town hall style meeting in the winter of 2013, a rare opportunity for residents to voice their opinions regarding recent changes to the neighborhood and hold the developers accountable for the impacts these structures will have on the area. Members of every level of local government – Borough President Gale Brewer, State Senator Liz Kruger, Assemblyman Richard Gottfried and City Councilman Corey Johnson – gave remarks. The panelists included architects, journalists, heads of conservancies and non-profits, however not one representative from the Department of City Planning (DCP) was in attendance. With over 500 residents present and strong representation from political leaders and academics, the absence of the DCP raised many questions. In the meeting, Gary Barnett, President of Extell, minimized any potential impact his towers will have in the future. His answers were quick and scripted, and repeatedly stated that these new towers will be entirely beneficial to the surrounding neighborhood, yet failed to specify how.

Community engagement and consideration should not be treated as an inconvenience or an additional step; it has to be something internal to the development process, especially when no communication between the parties is mandated. With a track record of being non-participatory, the city is shaping into a metropolis void of public input and opinion.

The skyline for midtown will forever be changed by a handful of buildings that are being erected simultaneously along a stretch of five avenues across one street. This fairly concentrated group of buildings will alter the heart of the city forever. However, a lack of community input in these projects has left the public silent throughout the process. Community participation and input is at the heart of bridging private and public interests. Private pressures push large-scale development into the hands of a powerful few. If changes are occurring that are void of community engagement, cities will continue to be shaped at the expense of those who call these neighborhoods home.

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Sharon Moskovits

RED HOOK BROOKLYN

PRESERVING MARITIME & INDUSTRIAL MANUFAC-TURING —

Just east of the Ikea in Brooklyn, nestled between the Erie Basin, Gowanus Bay, and Henry Street Slip, sits the Gowanus Bay Terminal (GBX) – a 30-tenant industrial park at the heart of the neighborhood of Red Hook, Brooklyn. The site, owned by entrepreneur John Quadrozzi, Jr. of Quadrozzi Urban Enterprises, offers a hint of the neighborhood's past, one where maritime and industrial industries spanned the waterfront of Red Hook, and most of Southwest Brooklyn. The site of GBX centers mainly on the concrete business, and also includes other industries with a strong focus on water-based transport. In light of the quickly evolving landscape of Red Hook and the high value of waterfront properties, GBX is but one of a select group of sites in the neighborhood that is set on preserving not only the region's past, but also the well-paying industrial and maritime jobs that have long serviced the local community.

Surrounded by water on three sides, Red Hook has always had a strong connection to the water. The neighborhood began as a fifty-acre marshy island, separated from the rest of Brooklyn, but grew as neighboring areas were leveled and filled. Its proximity to water and its location just over one mile south of lower Manhattan made Red Hook ideal for maritime industries. The construction of the Atlantic Basin in the 1840s and the Erie Basin in 1869 further established this focus in Red Hook. Until the 1950s, the area was dependent on grain trade via the Erie Canal and Hudson River from the Midwest.

Maritime industries in the region declined by the 1940s and 1950s, marking a shift in the neighborhood. This, coupled with the construction of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway and the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, saw the rise of more truck-based transport, thus isolating Red Hook from the rest of Brooklyn and New York City. The expressway created a physical barrier by separating the neighborhood from

the rest of the borough.

With limited subway access – the closest subway station to Red Hook is the Smith/9th Street Station, which is roughly a 10-minute walk from the very edge of the Red Hook – the neighborhood remains fairly isolated. Despite this seeming inconvenience, many residents prefer the isolation, citing a stronger neighborhood character that has been fostered by this separation. Yet, even this has not been a deterrent for rapid changes to the neighborhood. The once working class neighborhood, with a high proportion of its population living within the NYCHA Red Hook Houses, is now transforming – or "gentrifying" – at nearly the same rate as surrounding Brooklyn neighborhoods. Ikea moved in a few years ago, Fairway Market is now a mainstay, and the streets north of Van Brunt Street are scattered with high-end boutiques and restaurants. Amidst these changes, the importance of preserving the neighborhood's established industrial and maritime past cannot be understated.

Red Hook is an ideal location for manufacturing and industrial industries; its proximity to highway access makes it convenient for truck-based transport, and its waterfront access ideal for maritime uses. With this combination of local freight transportation, Red Hook has been able to successfully attract manufacturing companies that provide high-paying blue-collar jobs. A large proportion of the neighborhood is still comprised of these industries and the neighborhood's waterfront lies within the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ). The IBZ seeks to preserve and protect these industries amidst increasing economic pressure to develop the waterfront for residential use. Given the high unemployment rate (19.8%) and relatively low education level throughout much of Red Hook, these industries—along with the appropriate job training services – are vital to the community. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, maritime jobs pay an average of $55,000 per year and manufacturing jobs pay an average of $59,000 per year. With an annual median income of $25,000 in Red Hook, it is important that these jobs be preserved and geared towards hiring local residents.

Properties such as GBX are not only focused on preserving the past, but on helping the community at large. GBX has a locally focused hiring policy that prioritizes local hires and requires that all tenants contribute a percentage of their rent to community organizations. It is this model that will most benefit Red Hook in the long run. GBX was also the subject of a recent first year planning studio that evaluated and proposed the expansion of the site, with the goals of increasing waterfront access to neighborhood residents; securing more high-wage, low-skill maritime and industrial jobs for the community; providing adequate job training services for residents; and highlighting the area's maritime past. The proposal included a publicly accessible waterfront park and doubled the amount of space for both industrial uses and maritime transport docks. The studio project also encompassed a strong community focus, through the distribution of surveys and a community meeting, and the proposal was specifically geared towards serving the needs of local residents. Many attendees at the community meeting cited increasing well-paying industrial and maritime jobs, as well as maritime and waterfront historical programming, as elements they would like prioritized on the site.

At a time of rapid growth and change throughout Brooklyn and New York City, it is important to not forget the city's rich history. GBX and other similar industrial properties are helping to preserve that past and remain a small reminder of the city's historic connection to the waterfront and maritime activity. For neighborhood's such as Red Hook, these industries not only offer a glimpse into the area's history, but also provide greater opportunities for

jobs and job training for local residents. While waterfront property values continue to soar throughout New York City, specific focus must be made to preserving these industries and histories in New York City.

This article is based on research and a report compiled by the Spring 2014 Gowanus Bay Terminal studio group.

Studio members were Daniel Hewes, Houman Saberi, Kellie Radnis, Olivia Jovine, Phil Betheil, Sharon Moskovits, Wei Guo & Yuheng Cai.

SHARON MOSKOVITS is a 2015 Master's of Urban Planning Candidate at Columbia University. She was also a member of the Spring 2014 Planning Studio involving Gowanus Bay Terminal. As a New York City native, Sharon has always been deeply invested in preserving the historic nature of the city and fostering sustainable growth that centers on community involvement.

Becca Book

FLUSHING QUEENS

PLACE MAKING & ASSIMILATION –

According to US Census statistics, Queens is the most ethnically diverse county in the country, and the most diverse urban area in the world. Flushing has proved to be a bastion of this diverse population; 53.5% of all neighborhood residents are foreign-born, the third highest proportion of any neighborhood in the city, and significantly higher than the citywide average of 36%. This diversity can be traced back to the very founding of Flushing. The area rapidly diversified following the Post-Immigration & Nationality Act in 1965 and Post-Cold War diasporas, when a large Chinese and Korean population settled in Flushing. Today, the area is home to a vibrant economy lead by a diverse array of business and supported by various well-established cultural organizations. Its economic success has drawn the eye of the city and developers who plan to construct a large shopping complex in Flushing, which will be home to national retailers. This project sets us at a critical juncture to question how politicians, city agencies, and of course planners can best interface with immigrant communities.

Founded in 1645, Flushing was the first permanent settlement in Queens. The history of religious acceptance can be traced back to the original town charter, which included provisions explicitly protecting religious freedom. This respect for religious plurality was challenged by a later governor and residents organized to protect the religious minorities of their town. John Bowne, a Quaker imprisoned for practicing his beliefs, became a leader of this movement. In fitting tribute to his memory, the street in Flushing bearing his name is now home to ten places of worship representing congregations from around the world. Community members often refer to Flushing as the 'birthplace of religious freedom.' However, this self-proclaimed air of religious acceptance became strained after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 led to a large influx of non-western immigrant groups, which many Anglo-Saxon residents feared would be inassimilable. The Immigration and Nationality Act represented a radical change in immigration policies, most notably the skills requirement, which favored doctors, lawyers, and engineers – members of an "urban bourgeoisie." This lead to a rapid growth in the numbers of South and East Asian immigrants to the United States, many of whom obtained education at home.

A second wave of diversification in the cultural landscape has occurred since the 1980's, solidifying Flushing as an epicenter of the immigrant community. A large part of this shift has been attributed to Taiwanese immigrant and real estate developer, Tommy Huang, who bought many properties in the 1980's recession and made them accessible to Asian entrepreneurs. He developed low-rise residential units with street level retail space – a familiar and preferred typology for Taiwanese small business owners that encouraged their adaptation to the new community and allowed their businesses to flourish. This innovation catalyzed a chain of immigration from East Asia and led to the blossoming of the Asian immigrant community in the area. The influx of Taiwanese business owners changed both the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood and its income demographics. In 1980, Flushing was a predominantly Anglo-Saxon area that was in decline, with over 50% of all businesses closed. Huang's investments catalyzed a wave of 'migrant gentrification' that changed downtown Flushing into the diverse center we see today.

These waves of immigration have not just ethnically diversified Flushing, but have also guided its rapid growth and expansion, making it the fourth largest central business district in New York City. This trend is anchored by a strong network of local small businesses - nearly ninety percent of which have fewer than 10 employees. The aspirations of recent immigrants helped increase the number of small businesses and average income in Flushing, even as the economy in other areas of the

country suffered during the economic recessions of the early 90's and 2008. Total wages, jobs, rent levels, home values, and school enrollment levels have all increased within the last decade in Flushing, overcoming trends of the Great Recession and outpacing job growth in Queens and New York City as a whole. This trend was largely supported by growth in the number of small retailers, food services and health care providers, which account for nearly 29% of total employment in the area.

Despite New York's reputation as the archetypal 'melting pot' for global immigrants, little assistance is available for recent immigrants or residents with limited English proficiency. The growth and economic success of Flushing has occurred largely without assistance or acknowledgement from the city government. Little research has been done to determine why the area is prosperous, and little effort has been made to tailor economic development and city planning initiatives to the diverse population groups within New York City. It was not until 2003 with the Equal Access to Health and Human Services Act that the city government proved their willingness to work with groups of different ethnic backgrounds. This act helps fulfill the often quoted Title VI of the Civil Rights act of 1964, which states that "No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded in participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal benefits." The Act mandates that all official notices and government services offered in New York City be available in Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian and Spanish.

Researchers spoke with John Choe, who was the chief of staff for NYC Comptroller John Liu when this act went into effect. Choe interprets this legislation as the first step in a long path to culturally sensitive law enforcement in New York City. Choe now heads the organization One Flushing, which was founded with the goal of representing the collective needs of small business owners in the Flushing community. This has proven to be a unique task, as these businesses are closely associated with the diverse array of ethnic groups and communities that populate the area. In order to be a functional, equitable organization, and also to garner the appropriate attention from the broader city government, it was deemed necessary to form an organization that would unite the many heterogeneous groups that make up Flushing. Significant language and cultural barriers had to be overcome to unite the organization within the community, and networking with various religious organizations and other centers of immigrant life assisted in doing so.

"Because Flushing is so diverse you can't have the cookie cutter model of economic development ... you really need to understand the community as a network of different cultures... unlike other economic development organizations, we very much center our organizing around different faiths, cultures and languages in Flushing and we try and really have a grassroots understanding of how those communities operate and what makes them different, and how you effectively provide services that are tailored for that community."
John Choe, 2013

The economic growth of Flushing has caught the eye of the city and developers hoping to capitalize on this growing market. In hopes of encouraging further economic growth in the area, "Flushing Commons," an $850 million mixed use development was approved in 2010. The city sold off large tracts of a five-acre municipal parking lot to TDC Development Corporation/Rockefeller Group, who has approval to construct 620 residential units and 185,000 square feet of retail space. "One Flushing" has begun a discussion that questions whether these decisions are being made with input from immigrant groups. Present debates and chal-

lenges center widely on the loss of free parking facilities for business owners. Although a series of community benefit agreements were drafted between the developer, the city, and local residents – including phasing the project, allowing parking onsite during construction, and provisions for small business outreach service – these agreements contain very little language that is legally enforceable. Recent citywide elections create additional uncertainty as to whether the de Blasio administration will enforce the various concessions established with Bloomberg representatives.

Although the project has been delayed due to the recession, it is clear that its realization will greatly alter the face of the Flushing small business eco-system. TDC Rockefeller hopes to attract large, nationwide retailers as tenants, under the pretense that these 'big-box' stores will not compete with local small businesses for customers. However, these reassurances have been largely unfounded. While TDC Rockefeller announced that the project would have 'no adverse impact' on existing businesses, an assessment of the Environmental Impact Review by researchers at Hunters College shows that the developers under-represented the number of businesses in Flushing by one half, ignoring many 'second story' professional and personal service providers. By neglecting to include these businesses, TDC Rockefeller presented a simplified snap shot of the local Flushing economy as one composed only of ethnic grocery stores, restaurants and specialty retailers.

Development will likely further strain the already crowded transportation network that serves the area. The Flushing Main Street Station is the busiest New York City Transit subway station outside of Manhattan and the 10th busiest in the entirety of the New York City subway system. Automobile infrastructure is also pressed for space, vividly demonstrated at the intersection of Main Street and Roosevelt Avenue, which is now the third busiest intersection in all of New York City. Transportation capacity must first be addressed to allow for continued economic growth.

Flushing has provided a home, an economic incubator, and a center for culture and acculturation for many immigrant groups in New York City. Creating a separate space for immigrants supplies them with many services and a unique community. This assists in acculturation through creating connections and ties between new immigrants and their better-established colleagues – both integrating them into the local community and legitimizing their efforts towards establishing a unique neighborhood with many characteristic businesses. In Flushing this process is even more complex, as there is not a clear 'host community' – the majority of the neighborhood's population are relative newcomers, primarily East Asian.

Flushing Commons has the potential to create new jobs and much needed housing, including affordable housing that will serve the growing center of Flushing; however, the proposal largely fails to incorporate the voices of the small business owners who established the vibrant economy that distinguishes Flushing today. From undercounting businesses to reneging on community benefits agreements, developers have failed to sufficiently account for the needs and aspirations of the largely immigrant based community in the area. While complying with the terms of the agreement established with the community in 2007 would assuage some of the negatives of this development, this example exposes larger, systemic concerns. The underrepresentation of immigrant businesses in the original EIR, as well as the difficulties in bringing the needs of a culturally diverse group of business owners to the city's attention, demonstrates a lack of understanding of the unique way in which immigrant communities have and will continue to contribute to American cityscapes.


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As New York City and the country as a whole become host to an increasing number of immigrants, many lessons can be learned through the challenges and successes of Flushing. Planning efforts need to continue to develop culturally sensitive services and initiatives to better target services to underserved segments of the population. By communicating with well-established community and religious groups with a large immigrant constituency, we can develop more inclusionary planning practices that attempt to serve and strengthen immigrant subgroups, historically ones of the most vulnerable populations. Identifying and developing relationships with nodes in the immigrant community will become increasingly important. In this way we can overcome many cultural and language boundaries that have limited the amount of input immigrant groups have had in the development of urban space. In a rapidly diversifying nation, the only way to design an urban environment that meets the needs of its inhabitants is to make use of the already established centers for dispersal of information and culture.

These established centers that bring communities of immigrants together exist in many different spaces throughout New York City, the US, and the world. What should be noted is that the immigrant community and its associated centers of connection have different physical and social manifestations depending on the spatial context within the urban fabric. What we currently see in Flushing is not the same as what is occurring in downtown Manhattan within Chinatown. The social and spatial formations of communities – whether they take the form of informal social networks, community centers, religious spaces, or distinctive housing and business typologies – each form as a result of the interaction between the immigrant community and itself, the larger community that it finds itself within, and its spatial location and physical surroundings. Planning efforts can foster the creation of these spaces and enhance immigrant community formation and integration, or they can frustrate these efforts, negatively affecting community social and spatial organization.

This article is based on research and a report written for Professor Irazabal's Fall 2013 Transnational Planning class.

The report's co-authors were Elizabeth Martin-Cohn & Hannah Fleischer.

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NAMES OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN

Alphabet City
Astor Row
Battery Park City
Bowery
Brookdale
Carnegie Hill
Central Harlem
Chelsea
Chinatown
Civic Center
Clinton
Columbus Circle
Cooperative Village
Diamond District
Downtown Manhattan
East Harlem
East Village
Ellis Island
Financial District
Five Points
Flat Iron District
Flower District
Fort George
Gas House District
Garment District
Governors Island
Gramercy Park
Greenwich Village
Hamilton Heights
Herald Square
Hudson Heights
Hudson Yards
Harlem
Hell's Kitchen
Inwood
Kips Bay
Koreatown
Le Petit Senegal
Lenox Hill
Lincoln Square
Little Brazil
Little Germany
Little Italy
Little Senegal
Loisaida
Lower East Side
Lower Manhattan
Madison Square
Manhattan Valley
Manhattanville
Marble Hill
Marcus Garvey Park
Meatpacking District
Midtown
Midtown East
Midtown West
Murray Hill
NoHo
NoLita
Nolita
NoMad
North of Houston
North of Little Italy
North of Madison
Peter Cooper Village
Photo District
Radio Row
Randalls Island
Rockefeller Center
Roosevelt Island
Rose Hill
San Juan Hill
Silk Stocking District
SoHo
South of Houston
South Street Seaport
Spanish Harlem
Strivers' Row
Stuyvesant Square
Stuyvesant Town
Sugar Hill
Sutton Place
Tenderloin
Theater District
Times Square
Toy District
TriBeCa
Triangle Below Canal Street
Tudor City
Turtle Bay
Two Bridges
Union Square
Upper East Side
Upper Manhattan
Upper West Side
Uptown
Viaduct Valley
ViVa
Wards Island
Washington Heights
Waterside Plaza
West Harlem
West Village
Yorkville

BRONX

Arthur Avenue
Bainbridge
Baychester
Bedford Park
Belmont
Bronx River
Bronxdale
Bruckner
Castle Hill
Central Riverdale
Chimney Sweeps
Islands
City Island
Clason Point
Co-op City
Concourse
Concourse Village
Cooperative City
Country Club
Courthouse
Crotona Park East
Downtown Bronx
East Bronx
East Morrisania
East Tremont
Eastchester
Edenwald
Edgewater Park
Fieldston
Fordham
Harding Park
Hart Island
High Island
Highbridge
Hunter Island
Hunts Point
Indian Village
Kingsbridge
Kingsbridge Heights
Lacona
Longwood
Marble Hill
Melrose
Morris Heights
Morris Park
Morrisania
Mott Haven
Mount Eden
Mount Hope
North Bronx
North Brother Island
North New York
North Riverdale
Northeast Bronx
Northwest Bronx
Norwood
Olinville
Orchand Beach
Parkchester
Pelham Bay
Pelham Bay Park
Pelham Gardens
Pelhan Islands
Pelham Parkway
Port Morris
Rat Island
Rikers Island
Riverdale
Schuylerville
Soundview

South Bronx
South Brother Island
South Riverdale
Southeast Bronx
Southwest Bronx
Spuyten Duyvil
The Blauzes
The Hub
Throggs Neck
Throgs Neck
Tremont
Twin Island
University Heights
Van Village
Van Nest
Wakefield
West Bronx
Westchester Square
Williamsbridge
Woodlawn
Yankee Stadium

QUEENS

Arverne
Astoria
Astoria Heights
Auburndale
Bay Terrace
Bayside
Bayswater
Beechhurst
Bellair
Belle Harbor
Bellerose
Blissville
Briarwood
Breezy Point
Broad Channel
Cambria Heights
City Line
College Point
Corona
Ditmars
Douglaston
Downtown Flushing
Dutch Kills
East Elmhurst
Edgemere
Electchester
Elmhurst
Far Rockaway
Floral Park
Flushing
Flushing Chinatown
Forest Hills
Forest Hills Gardens
Fort Totten
Fresh Meadows
Fresh Pond
Glen Oaks
Glendale
Hamilton Beach
Hammels
Hillcrest
Hollis
Hollis Hills
Holliswood
Howard Beach
Howard Park
Hunters Point
Jackson Heights
Jamaica
Jamaica Center
Jamaica Estates
Jamaica Hills
Kew Gardens
Kew Gardens Hills
Koreatown
Laurelton
LeFrak City
Linden Hill
Lindenwood
Little Egypt
Little Neck
Long Island City
Malba
Maspeth
Meadowmere
Middle Village
Murray Hill
Neponsit
North Corona
North Shore Towers
Northeastern Queens
Northwestern Queens
Oakland Gardens
Old Howard Beach
Ozone Park
Pomonok
Queens Village

BROOKLYN

Admiral's Row
Barren Island
Bath Beach
Bay Ridge
Bedford
Bedford-Stuyvesant
Bensonhurst
Bergen Beach
Beverley Square East
Beverley Square West
Beverley Squares
Boerum Hill
Borough Park
Brighton Beach
Brooklyn Heights
Brooklyn Navy Yard
Brownsville
Bushwick
Cadman Plaza
Canarsie
Caroll Gardens
Central Brooklyn
Chinatown
City Line
Clinton Hill
Cobble Hill
Columbia Street Waterfront District
Coney Island
Crown Heights
Cypress Hills
Ditmas Park
Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass
Downtown Brooklyn
DUMBO
Dyker Heights
East Flatbush
East New York
East Williamsburg
Eastern Brooklyn
Farragut
Fiske Terrace
Flatbush
Flatlands
Fort Greene
Fulton Ferry
Georgetown
Gerritsen Beach
Gowanus
Gravesend
Greenpoint
Greenwood Heights
Highland Park
Homecrest
Kensington
Little Odessa
Little Poland
Madison
Manhattan Beach
Mapleton
Marine Park
Midwood
Mill Basin
New Lots
New Utrecht
Northern Brooklyn
Northwestern Brooklyn
Ocean Hill
Ocean Parkway
Park Slope
Pigtown
Plum Beach
Prospect Lefferts Gardens
Prospect Heights
Prospect Park South
Red Hook
Sea Gate
Sheepshead Bay
South Park Slope
Southeastern Brooklyn
Southern Brooklyn
Southwestern Brooklyn
Startett City
Stuyvesant Heights
Sunset Park

Sunset Industrial Park
Vinegar Hill
Weeksville
White Sands
Williamsburg
Windsor Terrace
Wingate
Wyckoff
Wyckoff Heights

STATEN ISLAND

Annadale
Arden Heights
Arlington
Arrochar
Bay Terrace
Bloomfield
Brighton Heights
Bulls Head
Castleton Corners
Charletson
Chelsea
Clifton
Concord
Dongan Hills
Egbertville
Elm Park
Eltingville
Emerson Hill
Fort Wadsworth
Graniteville
Grant City
Great Kills
Greenridge
Grymes Hill
Hamilton Park
Heartland Village
Huguenot
Lighthouse Hill
Livingston
Manor Heights
Mariners Harbor
Meiers Corners
Midland Beach
New Brighton
New Drop
New Springville
Oakwood
Ocean Breeze
Old Place
Old Town
Pleasant Plains
Port Richmond
Prince's Bay
Randall Manor
Richmond Valley
Richmondtown
Rosebank
Rossville
Saint George
Sandy Ground
Shore Acres
Silver Lake
South Beach
St. George
Stapleton
Stapleton Heights
Sunnysie
Tot Hill
Tompkinsville
Tottenville
Tottenville Beach
Travis
Ward Hill
Westerleigh
West New Brighton
Willowbrook
Woodrow

The Official, Professional, Technical & Colloquial Names of New York City Neighborhoods by Borough

Peter Erwin

EASTHARLEM MANHATTAN

IMAGINING WHEN IT THRIVED –

In most parts of New York City, buildings clamor over each other to be seen. In the Financial District, gothic towers peer around glass and steel skyscrapers – as though competing for the attention of incoming ships – while the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges eagerly usher commuters into the fray of the work week. In Midtown, contemporary office buildings and palatial condominiums loom over Central Park in one of the world's most memorable skylines. Even in Harlem, the neon lights of the Apollo Theatre and Sylvia's Restaurant are beacons to visitors along 125th Street. But while famous landmarks and national brands promote much of New York, historic buildings idle inauspiciously in East Harlem, where shopkeepers and vendors incrementally change the streetscape.

Visitors to East 116th Street will observe an assembly of sooty awnings and vendors' carts belonging to fast food restaurants, funeral parlors, butchers, and discount salesmen. Salsa music often plays, though mostly from passing car radios. While the street is lively, the neighborhood comprises around 65 percent of the residents that it once did. Many buildings are resigned to vacancies in the upper floors. Still, residents know that their buildings are also historic. In East Harlem, one should walk along 116th Street with an eye trained above the awnings, at the facades, friezes and ornaments of forgotten landmarks. The history and character of the neighborhood is often hidden in plain sight.

One example of a landmark in disguise is the historic Cosmo Theatre building. Located along the south side of 116th Street between Lexington and Third Avenue, the Cosmo Theatre was built in time for the release of the original film adaptation of Oliver Twist in 1922. The impressive design had a 1,500 person capacity and featured a stage for live performances as well. The theatre helped form the epicenter of East Harlem for more than fifty years. It was located only a few doors from the corner of 116th Street and Third Avenue, or "Lucky Corner," where New York's first progressive politicians stood on soap boxes and rallied for union rights and immigration reform. Several blocks of 115th and 116th Streets contained the institutions that formed the backbone of the community, such the historic Italian Savings Bank and the East Harlem Health Center, later Public School 57. In its first decade, the theatre experienced a series of fires caused by acetate film, and a $10,000 robbery in 1927 that was reported in national newspapers. No matter the event, the Cosmo was constantly in the headlines when East Harlem's population was at its peak.

The Cosmo continued to be a landmark for Puerto Rican and Dominican residents who moved into East Harlem during the middle of the Twentieth Century. Records show that Celia Cruz and Tito Puente performed at the Cosmo before rising to fame (the two later performed for audiences at Radio City Music Hall). The Cosmo also showed Spanish-Language films until its closing in the 1980s.

The façade of the theatre still features three closed arches and terra cotta and limestone detailing. An enormous marquis adorned the theatre, but was replaced by a standard retail awning. Most impressive of all, the building had a roof garden that was open to the public. While some of the original interiors likely survive, they are hidden behind dropped ceilings and plaster walls. The building currently houses a large clothing store.

East Harlem is a beautiful neighborhood, but unlike many areas in New York, it does not strive to be seen. The neighborhood's layout is a legacy of the real estate speculation that occurred there when transit lines were expanded in the early Twentieth Century. Much of the area is made up of residential tenement blocks that were constructed all at once by speculative developers. But as 116th Street grew into a popular commercial strip, property owners vied to build the grandest facades and marquees. The former Cosmo Theatre is one of these treasures from the neighborhood's gilded age. There are dozens more inspiring buildings and fascinating stories to be uncovered in a day's walk around East Harlem.


COSMO
TODAY
RAW DEAL
ALSO
PIZZA • GYRO • FRANKS
S • PIZZA • ICE CREAM

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This issue of URBAN Magazine was set in a modified Georgia and Mission Gothic type families