

the future of planning for economic democracy and self-determination

towards a post-COVID just recovery

MIT CoLab \ Just Urban Economies \ September 25, 2020

About MIT CoLab Just Urban Economies

- operationalize economic democracy and self-determination among marginalized communities in the New York City region
- facilitate learning, diffusion of ideas, movement building, and collective action
- documenting, evaluating, analyzing and communicating lessons learned from economic democracy experiments within and beyond our networks



Economic democracy and self-determination

- “An economic, social and political system that puts capital and resources under democratic control and ownership” – from BCDI and MIT CoLab, Economic Democracy Training Series, 2015
- Variety of practices and structures include CLTs, cooperatives, credit unions, participatory budgeting, community asset mapping
- Also known as social and solidarity economy

CoLab's approach to economic democracy:

- Civic infrastructure
- Shared ownership over the assets that drive regional economy
- Governance over the way value is defined and created in society

what if...
we owned it?

#ownthebronx



Fight back and fight forward



Fight back and fight forward

Bronx Community Wins Big on Development Project Committed to Living Wages and Local Economy

Monday, 06 January 2014 09:58
By Laura Flinders, *Yes! Magazine* | Report

Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter never dreamed she'd become an activist. "I was just a mom concerned about school overcrowding," she says, until a neighbor invited her to a meeting of a local community organization, the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC). "I was used to people complaining about what was missing in our community," she recalls. "It was at NWBCCC that I first heard people talking about how to bring about solutions."

Public schools in the Bronx were overflowing, she learned, because the population was growing. And although the shopping options in the area were multiplying, investment in public services like schools wasn't keeping up.

When she joined the board of the Coalition in 2005 and discovered that the local armory was lying empty, Pilgrim-Hunter found herself engaged in a deep public process of imagining what might be brought in to fill the building: not another low-wage mall or a big box store to benefit some far-off owner, but a project that offered real opportunities for her children and her grandchildren; something that would lift the spirits and boost the economy of local people.

"We knew we didn't need a mall," she says. "More poverty wages in this, the poorest urban district in the country? Just to send another generation into poverty?"

This fall—more than a decade later—Hunter-Pilgrim gazed past the chain-link fence that still surrounds the block-long Kingsbridge Armory, and peered into what was once the National Guard Drill Hall. At 180,000 square feet, the cavernous room is big enough to contain a world of dreams—and right, now it's holding hers. "What we need in the Bronx isn't just jobs. It's a new economy," she said.

"Our new economy: this is it. This is where it starts."

The Bronx on Ice

A long-empty landmark building in the Northwest Bronx is set to become what is being billed as the largest indoor ice-skating center in the world, according to a plan approved by the New York City Council this December in a 48-1 vote. The 720,000-square-foot Kingsbridge National Ice Center will feature a suite of nine rinks, including a 5,000-seat rink for international competitions. It will attract the world's greatest athletes, say its backers, who include former New York Rangers star Mark Messier and figure skating Olympic gold medalist Sarah Hughes.



The Bronx's Kingsbridge Armory. (Photo: [Pro-Zak](#))



Highlights from The Bronx



Highlights from Brooklyn



East Brooklyn
Call to Action
for Health and Economic Justice!

Come discuss the topics that are most important to you.
It's time to take ownership of...

Your Health Your Housing Your Education
Your Future

Date/Time
Saturday, April 27, 2019
10AM - 2PM

Location
P.S. 156 Waverly
104 Sutter Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11212

Light refreshments will be served

Contact us at EBCall2Action@gmail.com for more information or click [here](#) to register.

ONE BROOKLYN HEALTH SYSTEM
BROOKDALE
The Leader of Healthcare in East Brooklyn

1199SEIU

Nurses Association

NYC Health Center for Health Equity

EBC EAST BROOKLYN CONGREGATIONS CONNECT • ACT • WIN

COMMUNITY CARE BROOKLYN

DC 37 AFSCME AFL-CIO

Rogosi Institute

BMS



COVID-19 impacts

75% of NYC frontline workers are POC,
62% women, 50% foreign born

COVID-19 death rate for Black
Bronxites is 4.6x higher than that of
white Manhattanites

Nationally, the number of active Black
and Latinx business owners decreased
by 41% and 32%, respectively, in the
first two months of the crisis



Future(s) of planning

Reparative planning (Williams 2020)

Abolitionist planning (UCLA 2017)

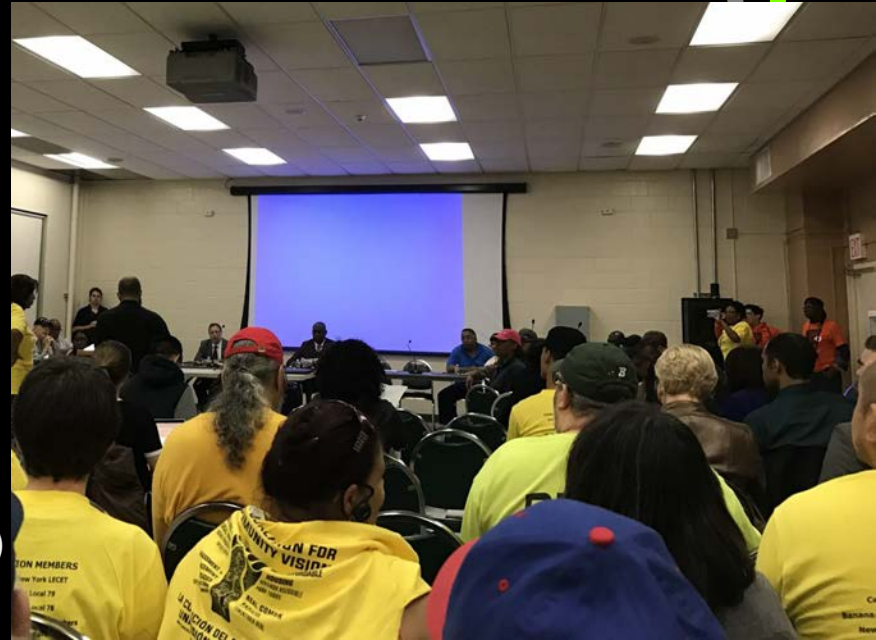
Insurgent planning (Miraftab 2009)

Antisubordination planning (Steil and Delgado 2019)

Therapeutic planning (Sandercock 2004)

Transformative planning (Kennedy 2018; Angotti 2019)

Planning from below (Harnecker and Bartolomé 2019)



Future(s) of planning

Decentralized

Participatory Action Research &
Participatory budgeting

Beyond participatory: democratic
control and ownership

Intersectional: addresses race, gender,
indigeneity, ability, sexuality



Other worlds are possible

Fideicomiso Caño Martín
Peña, San Juan, PR



Chantier de l'économie
sociale/Caisse d'économie
solidaire/CSN/FTQ,
Québec



Paths to a post-COVID just recovery

- Expand democratic, community ownership of land and housing by POC
 - Community Opportunity to Purchase Act would allow local CBOs to purchase distressed properties
 - Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act would allow tenants to purchase their distressed buildings
- Incorporate sustainable, health-related manufacturing space on the ground floor of mixed-use projects set aside to generate local jobs (Bridge Rockaway and La Peninsula model)
- Center environmental justice
 - Funding to support and scale community wifi networks and solar power networks for resilience and just energy transition
 - Re-frame CLTs as a tool to also fight for environmental justice and resilience
- Invest in community care and healing
 - NYC should redistribute divested funds towards community-based models that work towards harm reduction, violence prevention, and crisis-intervention
- Develop Municipal Procurement Trust
 - funded by the interest on the loan from larger institutions or by fines from enforce MWBEs procurement goals
 - Invest a portion of public pensions in burgeoning MWBE businesses located within the city

Questions for discussion

- What resonated with your experience, your practice, your ideals as a planner and city dweller?
- It's 2030 - where are you, what do cities look like, what are you doing as a planner?
- What questions still remain for you?

