Public Participation in Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment: The Role of Community Organizations

by

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Introduction

Many practitioners and scholars consider public participation an essential component of the planning process. Participation provides local knowledge for decision making, empowers communities by contributing to social and political capital, and increases the credibility of planning decisions by officials. Many also view public participation as a principle of democratic society and an indisputable "good" thing: the public's involvement in the planning process is essentially positive and more participation is often assumed to be better. While much current planning research supports the benefits of participation and these participatory ideals, far less has been written on the subject of participation in brownfields and the role of community organizations in the brownfields planning process. This research examines the ways in which participation through community organizations happens in a planning context by looking at the conditions that are present for participation to take place. This research perspective is unique since it addresses specific organizational forms of participation, the conditions under which they operate most effectively, and the impacts that organizations may have in participation.

1. Statement of Problem

Brownfields are a national problem. These polluted sites affect human and environmental health, depress neighborhood property values and contribute to chronic problems often in areas that have experienced years of economic decline. A majority of

these sites are located in communities of color and low-income which have historically had less access to the political process and to the decisions that directly affect them.

New brownfield policies and programs provide unprecedented opportunities for cleanup and redevelopment and many call for increased participation by community stakeholders. Yet as the focus of planners, politicians, and developers has increasingly turned to brownfield sites, what these sites turn into and what they should turn into remains unclear. Brownfields represent competing agendas, unequal access to power and decision making, neoliberal "professionalization" of public programs, and larger issues of gentrification and change to neighborhoods that are often ill-prepared to plan for these sites.

Participation, in the eyes of many scholars and practitioners, could provide local knowledge, express community needs, empower individuals, and influence policy. Participation, generally, is fundamental to citizenship and the democratic process. Some view community organizations as a way to mediate between the difficulties of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment and as an effective means of getting the public involved (Berry, Portney, Thomson, 1993; Ihrke & Johnson, 2004; McKnight, 1997). Despite calls for increased participation in brownfields, however, many factors prevent organizations from fulfilling this role: economic conditions, outside capital and control, and political relationships are but a few of the conditions that may affect organizational influence.

2. Purpose of Study

My research examines whether community organizations are playing a role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment and, if so, what affect this role has on project process, outcomes, and neighborhood residents. This study also looks specifically at whether community organizations are encouraging residents to participate in brownfield projects. I also examine the ways which individuals and organizations are able to access the decision making process, a process that often is controlled and rationalized by those in power. I make recommendations for programs and policy and for further research.

This research also addresses other questions and debates in the literature. Doescommunity participation ever occur without community organization activity? Does the presence of a community organization always guarantee involvement of that organization? Can community organizations address the variety of issues involved in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment projects given organizations' often narrowly focused agendas (e.g. community development corporations and housing)? This study addresses these and other questions by exploring the role of community organizations in the brownfields planning process and the conditions in which organizations play that role, using the King County, Washington brownfields program as the focus of study.

Brownfields:

Cities across the country face the problem of abandoned, contaminated land – often known as brownfields – with new federal and state programs aimed at reducing liability and enhancing redevelopment opportunities. Brownfields, according to the federal

government, are “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant” (EPA, 2006). Brownfields generally consist of older industrial and commercial sites where there is known or perceived pollution in groundwater and soil. Contamination (or the perception of contamination) negatively impacts redevelopment of these sites mainly due to liability issues and funding availability. Prior to the enactment of federal and state brownfields legislation, owners of brownfield sites were often held in the chain of liability even though they did not cause or contribute to the contamination. Additionally, because of the unknown nature of the contamination and the cost of cleanup, traditional financial lenders were hesitant to provide funding for projects on brownfield sites. Therefore, brownfield sites have remained vacant, unsightly, and sometimes harmful to neighboring residents despite, in many cases, a demand for developable land.

Brownfields have become an increasingly visible planning issue in recent years for a variety of reasons. Brownfields often represent the last remaining land available for development in cities; smart growth advocates see these sites as a viable alternative to developing virgin land on the outskirts of cities and and as an option to combat urban sprawl and its associated negative effects. Brownfield sites are often in residential areas and areas of high-minority and low-income populations who have traditionally been left out of the planning process. Federal and state brownfield programs are relatively recent creations and are still ‘testing the waters’ in terms of program components and

effectiveness. Brownfield programs present ample opportunities for study due to their continuing evolution as programs and policies.

3. Background and study framework

Academic research and professional practice encourage public participation in the planning process and routinely cite the benefits of collaborations between government, developers, and neighborhood residents. Public participation plays an important role in scholarly debates on communicative planning and community organizations and provides a relevant framework for this study. Using a framework based primarily on urban planning, social work, and environmental justice, this study examines whether, when, and how community organizations are the mediators between state government, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. This study also explores the primary factors influencing community participation by individuals. This research does not exclude identification of other roles played by community orgnizations, for example, several organizations in this study fulfilled education or advocacy roles in their communities.

Scholars and practitioners call widely for public participation and current developments in environmental policy increasingly emphasize public participation. Participation can benefit government agencies, developers, and residents by providing information, community opinions, constituency support, political influence, and program and policy changes. Public participation is fundamental to the democratic process and promotes citizen empowerment, capacity-building, community control, and government responsiveness (Berry, Portney, Bablitch, and Mahoney, 1984; Fiorino, 1990; Faber &

McCarty, 2001; Laurian, 2004; Elwood, 2004). Public participation also plays an important role in brownfield studies, communicative planning theory and practice (Healy, 1996; Solitare, 2001; Innes & Booher, 2002; Bartsch, 2003; Innes, 2004). Communicative planning ideals appear in recent brownfields literature (Solitare, 2005), perhaps not surprisingly, given the importance in the communicative and brownfields literature of all stakeholder voices and the emphasis on social and environmental justice goals. Many debates exist in the literature and practice concerning spatial and political context, stakeholder equity, and project outcomes. My case studies provide insight into the communicative planning debates and use these debates to inform the methods used in this study, particularly the interview questions. Community organizations in these cases do not exist or act alone: multiple social, political, and economic forces are at play, possibly influencing the process and outcomes of these cases. But if so, how much? Do community organizations truly have an equal place at the stakeholder table or do powerful elites dominate? Are the outcomes of these cases the ones that communities and their organizations wanted even if they did not happen in a participatory or communicative manner? Do no results still spell success for these groups and is the process just as important? Valuing planning processes, as noted in the literature review in this study, reflects changes in planning practice in recent decades and a shift to more meaningful and deliberative partnerships between residents, government, and developers, regardless (to some) of whether projects achieve their intended outcomes.

Scholars and practitioners also maintain an ongoing debate over the strategy, objectivity, and composition of community organizations (Beierle & Konisky, 2000; Konisky &

Beierle, 2001; Portney, 2005; Swindell, 2000). Issues of recruitment (how individual participants are chosen), composition (the final makeup of the group), and mandate (the role each participant assumes within the group) can call the legitimacy of the group and its decisions into question (Davies, Blackstock, Rauschmayer, 2005). And while many researchers and practitioners assert that participation by community organizations in planning is important, others fear that proposals calling for the inclusion of citizen groups can lead to co-optation of those groups by government or business as simply a means of "rubberstamping" plans and do not ensure that the interests of the group are truly represented (Crowfoot and Wondolleck, 1990). Some researchers also question whether individuals are able to leave private/personal interests behind when participating in a community organization and adopt a publicly centered decision-making perspective (Davies, Blackstock, Rauschmayer, 2005; Rockloff & Moore, 2006).

Beyond the debates on communicative planning and community organizations, this research is relevant to other ongoing changes in planning practice related to community organizations:

- Community organizations have seen a shift in their responsibilities and roles over the past few decades. Primarily, this change has been in response to a shift of previously public responsibilities to local areas (Checkoway, 1995, p. 2) but possibly the recognition that local organizations can better represent and respond to local needs or are the only prospect for areas with little hope of outside help (Kretzman & McKnight, 1996; Portney, 2005). Studies like this one are

necessary to inform organizations, and other stakeholders, of their better roles in the planning process.

- Related to the previous point, the scholarly literature has expressed an ongoing concern with a shift toward the professionalization or more corporate-like organizational models for planning and environmental decision making (Faber & McCarthy, 2001; McCann, 2001). These models are a response to what some have seen over recent decades as increased 'corporate' planning (Friedmann, 1973) or, more commonly, a neoliberal policy agenda that emphasizes a smaller and more efficient state, and the social, political, and economic benefits of unfettered market activity (Elwood, 2004). These benefits, however, are achieved through 'liberation' from all forms of state interference, shrinking and/or privatization of public services, dismantling welfare programs, and reduction of meaningful public participation opportunities (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). As will be shown in the case studies, increased calls for public participation in brownfield programs appear at odds with public programs that increasingly benefit private interests
- Environmental response to contaminated sites has changed. Earlier methods of managing environmental risk and contamination oversight -- focusing solely on cleanup and relying on positivist rational knowledge – have given way to more comprehensive, market-influenced, locally-inflected environmental programs (Fiorino, 1990). Brownfields, however, remain a relatively new issue in planning and policy makers and planners continue to search for appropriate roles for

stakeholders, new models for the cleanup and redevelopment process, and accurate measures of success.

- Streamlining the participation process -- by such ways as informing policy guidelines and program requirements, tapping local assets, and promoting local organizational skills – can make participation more effective for governments seeking input, knowledge, and validation and for local residents and community organizations seeking influence, community building, and preferred outcomes.

This study responds to previous calls for new studies and new methods. Existing studies tend to limit the scope of research by focusing solely on the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program, often failing to examine non-federal sites, community organizations and organizations' roles in the planning process, and making assumptions about participation and the roles that community organizations play (Greenberg and Lewis, 2000; Beierle and Konisky, 2000; Solitare, 2001; Lange and McNeil, 2004). For example, rather than assume that organizations and their constituents would want to have input on the design and programming of the Olympic Sculpture Park, I gathered data showing that organizations in the neighborhood had little interest in doing so (despite not having a true avenue for meaningful input anyway) and focused their energies on educating their constituencies and supporting the developer. Also, indicators of successful programs and projects remain mostly economic in nature and not indicative of social or political costs and benefits. In my study, for example, Rainier Court, Harborview's Ninth and Jefferson Building, and the Olympic Sculpture Park are all considered economic and environmental success stories by the Seattle/King County

Brownfields Program yet my research uncovered many residents dissatisfied with certain project outcomes and organizations that have lost some trust within the neighborhoods they serve.

4. Research Questions

My research identifies the mediating role that community organizations play in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. I describe the context, politics, processes, and outcomes and examine the impact that these items have on community organizations and participation. I based my descriptions, questions, and analyses on existing brownfield studies, local observations, community organization debates, and the communicative planning literature. I seek to fill in the gaps in the brownfields literature and inform planning practice regarding the role of community organizations.

Four questions direct this study:

1. How do community organizations involve individuals in brownfield cleanup and redevelopment sites in King County, WA?
2. How does community organization involvement affect the outcomes of these brownfield projects?
3. What role do community organizations play in the brownfields cleanup and redevelopment process in King County, WA?
4. Under what conditions do community organizations play a role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment?

This study also questions some assumptions and arguments in the literature. As noted earlier, the brownfields literature disregards community organization placement within the cleanup and redevelopment process. Even if mentioned, community organizations are often agglomerated with other forms and methods of public participation, masking their unique characteristics and contributions to public participation. Organizations, if present in a neighborhood, are either assumed to be interested and involved in brownfields decisions (Greenberg and Lewis, 2000) or denied and oppressed by powerful elites (Brachman, 2004; Hanks and Morrison, 2003; Laurian, 2004). Brownfields practice makes many of these same assumptions (Solitare, 2005). The cases chosen for this study challenge these assumptions and fill in this gap in the literature by showing the variety and depth of community organization involvement, influence, collaboration, and limitations present in brownfield cleanup and redevelopment projects. For example, despite a wealthier and more educated residential population, the Belltown community organizations influenced the overall decisions at the Olympic Sculpture Park to a lesser extent than their counterparts involved in the Rainier Court project in the poorer Rainier Valley neighborhood. Belltown organizations, however, exerted considerable leverage on specific aspects of the Park project and in many other redevelopment projects in the neighborhood.

5. Procedures

Characteristics of Qualitative Research:

I apply multiple qualitative research methods in this study. My research attempts to describe and explore phenomena in a specific setting and to understand how people are

interacting and understanding this setting. Qualitative research methods allow me to conduct in-depth studies, discuss issues of process, relationships, and meaning, and identify complex dynamics that are at play in each planning situation. Qualitative research "is a systematic, empirical strategy for answering questions about people in a particular social context" (Locke, Spirduso, Silverman 2000, p. 96). Qualitative research is appropriate for this study due to the natural setting in which the cases are studied, the use of multiple sources of data, and the holistic perspective that is necessary to understand the broad, panoramic viewpoints and multiple levels of context (Creswell, 1998: Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 1990).

Qualitative Research Strategy – Case Study:

This research examines community organizations and public participation using case studies in King County, Washington. King County's brownfields program provides an appropriate setting for case study research. City and regional planning research, such as studies of plans, neighborhoods, or public agencies, including organizational processes, often employ case study research methods (Yin, 1984). Researchers prefer the case study when examining contemporary events but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated (as opposed to an experiment) (Yin, 1984). Case studies are bounded by time and activity, and the researcher collects detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995, p.15). Yet the case study strategy implies much more than simply studying the phenomenon in the field: studying a case involves exploring the relation to the complex dynamics to which the case intersects (Groat and Wang, 2002. p.347). Case studies expand and generalize

theories (analytic generalization) rather than enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization) (Yin, 1984).

King County, a mix of urban, suburban, and rural land uses with a population of over 1.7 million, is clearly linked to a multitude of contextual factors and theoretical issues. The area (which includes the city of Seattle) experiences continuing population and economic growth, an increasing demand for land in a state with a Growth Management Act, and a growing need for affordable housing. The area also counts an increasing number of millionaires and growing local philanthropy, much of this based upon the large, local technology industry. Related to this, the Seattle region maintains one of the most technology-savvy and internet-connected populations in the country. Together, these factors give the local population greater access to local officials, information, and each other amidst a rapidly changing physical, social, and economic landscape, a landscape that is also changing in many other American regions.

Rationale for Cases:

I chose my cases based upon evidence of completion and participation and to maintain consistency with other brownfield studies. At my request, Lucy Auster, the director of the King County brownfields program, compiled a list of all brownfields projects in the county that had received assistance from the county's program. She listed 25 projects, 16 of which were completed or nearing completion: the other projects were either just starting up or had come to a halt. Ms. Auster later refined this listing and provided me with contact information, addresses, and brief notes of assistance provided by her office,

the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS, the County's contractor for brownfields technical assistance), and EPA for the 16 completed projects. I applied criteria for selecting my cases: first, the project had to be completed or nearing completion; second, the project had to have evidence of some public participation and community organization involvement; and, third, a range of participation across the cases had to be present. This left out a majority of the 16 projects. Many projects used county brownfields funding to simply conduct soil and groundwater assessment for future marketing and site transfer and did not require public participation. Some projects, usually small sites that were being redeveloped into local businesses (for example, a restaurant and a bakery), did not require public participation. One project was a study of contamination studies for an area of unincorporated King County. I selected three cases that fit all of my selection criteria (see Figure 1 for locations):

Three Case Studies:

Rainier Court is a former vehicle storage lot (and site of much illegal dumping) redeveloped into affordable housing and commercial space. Southeast Effective Development (SEED) community development corporation, a long-standing and respected organization, owns the site in a low-income, high-minority and, until recently, low-demand area of Seattle. SEED involved community residents according to the requirements of the Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Fund (BRLF) but also has a history of communication and trust with neighborhood residents. The organization's vision, site control, longevity, and strong political connections strongly affected the outcome of this project. SEED officials see themselves as playing an advocacy role for

community residents in local brownfields projects; my research identifies other roles for the organization as well.

Harborview Medical Center, a quasi-public entity, cleaned up a former dry cleaning site for the location of a new clinic and office tower in the heart of a residential neighborhood with a history of large, adjacent, institutional uses. Harborview's redevelopment of the site is consistent with a master plan for the area. Community organizations in the neighborhood conducted minimal outreach to residents on this project despite being active and powerful stakeholders in other neighborhood planning projects: individuals appear to have participated of their own accord primarily through the outreach efforts of the medical center. The community organizations in the neighborhood did not greatly affect the outcome of this project, specifically, but significantly impacted the creation of the Major Institutions Master Plan, which guided the brownfields redevelopment.

The **Olympic Sculpture Park** is a Seattle Art Museum (SAM) project on contaminated industrial land near downtown Seattle and a burgeoning high-end residential district. Private donors provided a majority of the funding for this very high-profile project. SAM, government, and community leaders agreed almost unanimously on the park's location, cleanup, programming, and benefit to the city. Neighborhood residents appreciate the park's positive aesthetic and financial impact on their area despite having essentially no input into the design or programming of the space. Community organizations and community residents did not feel a great need to participate in this

project because it had no apparent downsides, a large amount of official promotion, and private funding. Unlike the other two cases, the project impact area of the Olympic Sculpture Park spans a very large area and called upon expertise, opinions and donations from across the city and region.

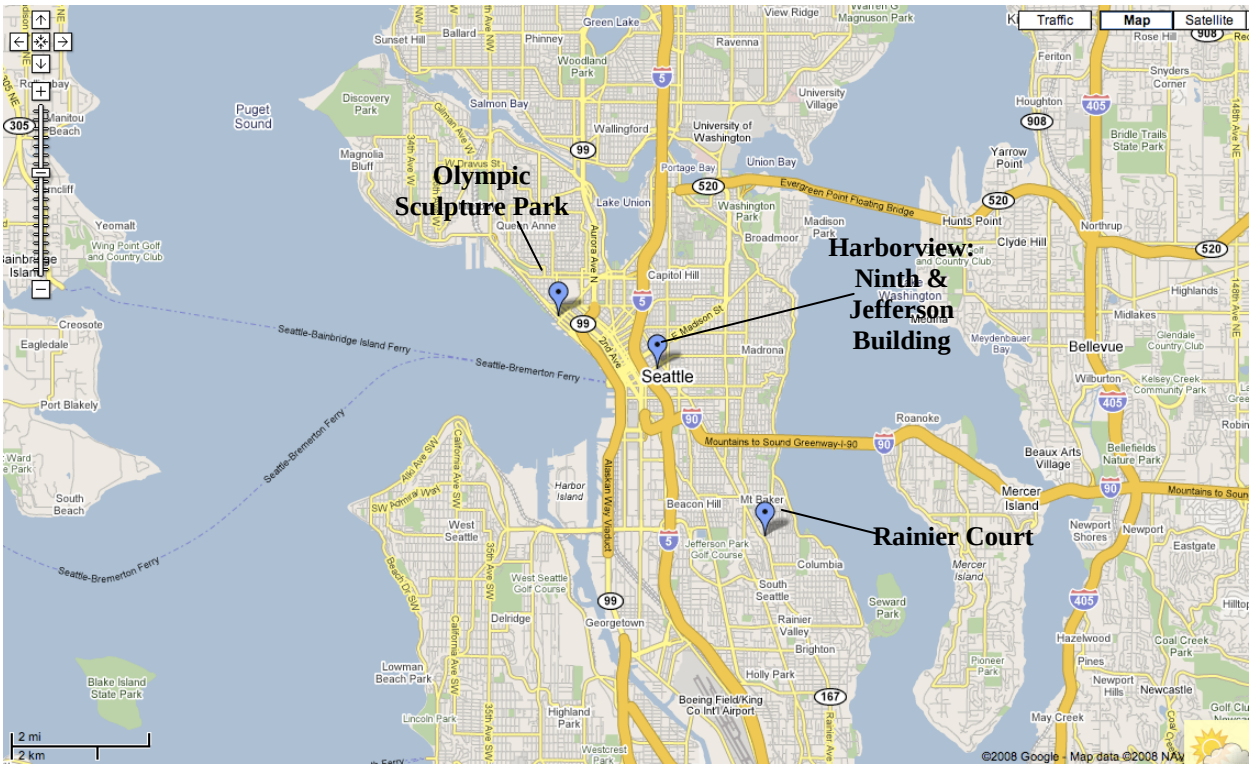


Figure 1.1: Case Study Sites

All three sites are located in the city of Seattle and are the beneficiaries of funding and technical assistance from the county program. These sites represent contrasting situations where, at times, community organizations appear to be integral to the planning process and resident involvement and other times where they do not. These cases share many of the same economic, political, and social conditions, similar county program assistance, similar physical characteristics, and some of the same stakeholders, therefore making them appropriate for cross-case analysis.

According to Stake (1994), cases should be selected for their learning potential, representative nature, and variety. My cases worked well in this respect. Learning potential deals with issues of logistics, receptiveness of the research and researcher, and the resources available. All but one of the interviewees agreed to meet with me (the interviewee who initially declined later agreed to meet) and appeared quite frank in terms of planning processes, successes, and mistakes. Logistically, ample documentation of these projects existed due to the reporting requirements of the agencies involved and local publicity. As for variety, these cases presented contrasting community organization involvement in cleanup and redevelopment decisions. These cases represented a spectrum of involvement, from essentially no input for the Olympic Sculpture Park to substantial input for Rainier Court. The cases identify various levels of organization support for the developers of each; including formal input channels for Harborview along with informal methods for input and outreach.Each case offered insight into the roles that community organizations play in practice, identified the conditions under which they operate, and informed the debates in the scholarly literature.

Data Categories:

I created the following data categories based on the assumptions of community organizations noted earlier in the chapter, local observations, communicative planning literature, and previous research on both brownfields and community organizations which identify factors or prerequisites for effective and meaningful participation (Vidal, 1992; Solitare 2005).

1. Participation mission and methods: many organizations and some programs have a stated mission to involve individuals in the planning process (Bartsch and Dorfman, 2000). The First Hill Community Council, for example, stated that part of the organization's mission is to involve individuals in neighborhood projects, such as Harborview's Ninth and Jefferson Building. Others, such as developers and government agencies, employ informal methods of public participation identified through interviews as well as documentation. SEED, the Rainier Court developer, stated that it plays a "catalyst" role in its mission statement and an "advocacy" role in interviews, yet makes no specific statement for individual involvement. The group, however, provided many opportunities for individual input on Rainier Court. Other groups often mentioned that they canvassed the neighborhood for opinions and outreach through casual face-to-face contact on the street.
2. Previous relationships: communicative planning advocates point to the importance of second and third-tier effects of collaboration (Innes and Booher, 1999), such as spin-off partnerships, new ideas for use in other situations, and new institutional forms of planning, where understandings have been built over time and players have been mobilized (Innes, 2004). The cases in this study show several examples of prior working relationships, both good and bad, between government, community organizations, and developers that affected the current brownfield projects.
3. Ownership: site ownership is not mentioned as a factor in the brownfield studies reviewed, yet initial interviews identified at least one government official and one

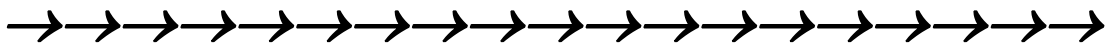
community organization leader who observed that many brownfield projects may be nothing more than private property transactions and not necessarily ripe for public participation. Another community organization leader, however, claimed that ownership of the site was a key component to public participation.

4. Stakeholder equity and power influences: Communicative planning scholars and practitioners claim that truly collaborative planning will not be dominated by elites (Innes & Booher, 2002; Innes, 2004; Healy, 1996). Others insist that this perspective willfully ignores the power and context of political, economic, and social realities (Fainstein, 2000; Huxley and Yiftachel, 2000; Webler & Tuler, 2000). My cases highlight the decisions and non-decisions made in the planning process and how these decisions were the results of power, the rationalization of decisions and knowledge, and the 'mobilization of bias' (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963; Flyvbjerg, 2002; Coaffee & Healy, 2003) The cases show that power imbalances prevented community organizations from effectively conveying residents' concerns for the site redevelopment and influencing project outcomes. The Olympic Sculpture Park case, in particular, exhibited very similar power relations and maneuvering seen during the failed Seattle Commons project, a precursor to the Sculpture Park (Iglitzen, 1995).
5. Size of the project site, spatial context, and the scope of the planning area: Size, context, and scope are a point of contention in the communicative planning debates (Fainstein, 2000). For example, NIMBYism (not in my backyard) in socially homogeneous areas and loss of local knowledge in metropolitan-wide planning efforts can occur despite the best of communicative planning intentions.

Brownfields research also often fails to distinguish between projects of varying scales (Yount and Meyer, 1999) and spatial contexts. One community organization in this research, noting the spatial context of their site, stated that their influence was possibly more powerful because few others (developers and government officials) were interested in the site. Another organization leader stated the importance of the developer's function (the developer is a hospital) and the large geographic area it serves possibly influences how she interacts with development plans.

6. Redevelopment and expertise: Does the type of redevelopment affect the importance of a community organizations' involvement in brownfield projects? Vidal (1992) states that CDCs with clearly defined strategies and experience in specific program areas (most often housing) greatly influence the organizations' accomplishments in planning projects. Other organizations in this research, however, feel that they can, should, and do comment on a wide variety of projects despite not having professional staff members with direct experience in residential or commercial development.
7. Existing plans: Interviews and documentation research identify existing master plans for some areas containing brownfield projects. Do these pre-existing plans influence participation? Is this another second-tier effect from previous collaborations between community organizations, government officials, and developers? One interviewee noted that an existing plan for the area leaves little ambiguity for redevelopment and may, in fact, deter participation by both individuals and organizations.

I initially suspected that participation either occurs or does not occur (and with clear direction) through community organizations when these categories are in place:



If a…	Enters a brownfield project with these conditions…	Then there will be…	And…
Community Organization	Stated participation mission Previous relationships with developers, government, institutions Site ownership Redevelopment plans consistent with organizational expertise Equity and power	Increased participation by individuals	Greater effect on brownfield project outcomes
	Large size and scope, high-demand context Existing neighborhood master plans	Less or no participation by individuals	Lesser or no effect on brownfield project outcomes

Table 1.1: Factors that may influence public participation in this study

However, I also expected that the cases would show great nuance in each category and would likely reflect the interrelated and interconnected nature of planning processes and characteristics such as political context, social and economic conditions, and past relationships. Yet I used these characteristics and my initial assumptions to construct the interview questions and data collection procedures.

Data Collection Procedures:

This research employs multiple sources of evidence. According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research uses multiple methods of data collection that are interactive and humanistic (p. 181). Although qualitative data collection methods are traditionally based on open-ended observations, interviews, and documents, new materials such as emails and images are increasingly used. I collected evidence from initial interviews with officials; site identification and clarification; documentation and secondary data collection; and follow-up interviews with officials, organization leaders, residents, and other relevant stakeholders.

Document review:

I compiled documentation from a number of sources. I gathered site data, including size and the nature of the contamination. I looked at project timelines, costs, and ownership. I reviewed meetings, attendance, correspondence, and land use. For each site I studiedplanned reuse, stage of cleanup and redevelopment. My sources included the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle; the County's brownfields planner; municipal planning agencies; site developers; local organizations; the EPA Region 10 brownfields

coordinator; and the state's Office of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, which administers the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. Newspaper and other media articles and programs provided significant insight into participation issues, neighborhood issues, and project controversies due to the public nature (to varying degrees) of all three sites.

Interviews:

My extensive interviews with stakeholders in the county's brownfields projects identified participation efforts, motivations, methods, politics, and effects for each site using the categories above as well as new factors that were identified through interview participants. Information continued to be gathered through interviews with Ms. Auster of the county's brownfields program and Mr. Bayley from ECOSS. I met with the brownfields administrator of the Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development, the agency which applied for and received the federal funding to start the state's brownfields program (including the Seattle/King County program). I also met with community organization leaders, rank-and-file members, community residents who were not member of a local organization, project managers, local municipal officials (including the Department of Planning and Development, Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Economic Development, Office of Housing, and City Council staff), environmental regulators, project proponents, and other stakeholders as determined through data collection.

I interviewed 36 people for this study using a reputational method that identified the stakeholders in the projects starting with Ms. Auster at the Seattle/King County brownfields program. I gathered additional stakeholder names from these initial interviews and proceeded to interview them. I continued this process until there were no other stakeholders identified. I was also able to identify stakeholders from project documentation and media stories. Several interviewees were also identified through chance encounters at the project sites. These methods allowed me to identify stakeholders that I would otherwise likely have missed and also to triangulate those that I had identified: the same name mentioned in multiple interviews indicated that a person was indeed a likely stakeholder in the project. However, these methods do not guarantee representation and may not have identified individuals left out of the planning process for these sites. Despite residents' input for this study, I risked including only those who were already a part of the local elite decision making bodies. Other residents, perhaps those with divergent opinions from the status quo or with little access to decision making bodies, may still not be heard: identifying those individuals would make for a stronger and more complete study. Additionally, the economic development potential of a site, particularly in lower-income neighborhoods, may mute public concern about cleanup or environmental risk (Wernstedt and Hersh, 1998). With more time and resources, additional methods, such as surveys, could produce these hidden individuals.

Preliminary discussions with officials led me to believe that many, but not all, participants in brownfields projects in this study would be cooperative and forthright. Almost all interviewees gave generously of their time to answer my interview questions.

Interviews were conducted in person to obtain in-depth understanding of stakeholders' experiences with the planning process and participation at each site. Meeting sessions varied in length and lasted from 30 minutes to 120 minutes.

I employed an open question format and outline script for all of the interviews, approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Michigan. I covered the data categories discussed above with all interviewees although some respondents could not answer all questions (e.g. some residents who were non-members of a local organization could not tell me whether an organization had previous working relationships with government agencies or developers). I asked interviewees questions such as, did ownership of the site matter to the project? Were all stakeholders treated equally? How did community organizations affect residents' involvement in this project? Did the size and/or location of this project affect stakeholders and participation? Did public participation affect the outcome of the project? I also discovered early in the interview process that interviewees were expressing a difference between 'cleanup' and 'redevelopment' in the projects. I incorporated this distinction into the questioning as well as a general question about the interviewee's satisfaction with the project, which often drew out more personal opinions on the issues that I uncovered. The interview questions can be found in Appendix 1.

Data Analysis Procedures:

I conducted within-case and cross-case analysis of the data. I framed the within-case analyses in each case study chapter by the debates in the literature discussed above but

also to reflect the key issues of each case, including specific events, key decisions, outcomes and stakeholder roles. Chapter 7 includes the cross-case analysis and answers the research questions guiding the study by identifying the common themes and characteristics of community organizations in the planning process.

The findings from the data sources provide answers to the questions guiding this study. I answer Question 1 by identifying the mission statements, stated outreach methods, and informal procedures through document review, and personal interviews with organization leaders, members, and non-members. Question 2 utilizes document review (notably media coverage) and interview data. Interviews regarding community organization leaders' goals for a project along with interviews with other stakeholders, particularly questions from the communicative planning literature on stakeholder equity and power influences, determine whether an organization was important to the actual project outcome. Question 3 identifies any mediating role of community organizations through stakeholder interviews and document review questions based upon the community organization and communicative planning debates and the brownfields literature. The interview data categories listed earlier provide the basis for answering Question 4 and identifying the conditions under which a community organization did or did not play an important role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. The cases chosen for this study represent a range of community organization involvement, expertise, and influence as well asother non-organization participants and participation methods. This range showcases the myriad factors present when community organization involvement is important to the brownfields planning process.

Strategies for Validating Findings:

According to Creswell (2003), validating the findings of qualitative research adds credibility and accuracy to the work. "Validity…is seen as a strength of qualitative research, but it is used to suggest determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the reader of an account" (p.195). He also offers eight primary strategies to check the accuracy of research findings and suggests that the researcher chose one or more (p. 196). For my study, I will primarily use *rich, thick descriptions* to "transport the readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences" (p. 196).

Role of the Researcher:

I believe that participant trust in me as a researcher was a factor in determining access to interviewees and data as well as whether the responses that I gathered from these sources were truthful. As a researcher, I attempted to minimize perceived bias by emphasizing my university affiliation and my lack of affiliation with government, community groups, developers, lenders, or other stakeholders. I also emphasized that I am not a nearby resident of any brownfield site and therefore not personally affected by the results of this study. Although I have tried to be value free and objective at every step of the way, and because of my structural position as a white middle class male, certain value beliefs and conjectures may have unconsciously entered the research process. I know that it is impossible to be totally objective and certain bias may have informed the research process.

Through the variety of data sources discussed above, and the questions posed, I believe my findings provide a rich and detailed picture of community organizations and public participation at brownfield sites in King County and answer the research questions directing this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Academic research and professional practice encourage public participation in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment and other planning processes and routinely cite the benefits of collaborations between government, developers, and neighborhood residents. In particular, many scholars claim that community organizations play a mediating role between individuals and government and encourage public participation. However, community organizations face a multitude of contradictions when entering into brownfields projects that may hinder their ability to play a traditional mediating role. These organizations may play a modified role that contributes to a project but may not encourage participation. As shown in this study, brownfield programs, policies, and studies often advocate for increased participation by all stakeholders but, in reality, the pressures of economic development, outside capital, and political maneuvering may lessen the role and need for individual and group input. The literature review frames the conundrum that community organizations face when attempting to encourage public participation in brownfield projects and, in particular, focuses on the debates within several key areas.

In this review, 1) I look at the negative impact and new tools for dealing with brownfields and how the brownfields literature emphasizes the importance of participation in the cleanup and redevelopment of these distinctive parcels. 2) I continue this argument to

address how participation in planning, generally, is often regarded as an important normative venture despite many disagreements over such things as definitions, methods, representation, and costs. 3) Following this, I look at how one aspect of participation – community organizations – is identified as having the potential to promote participatory democracy, advocate for individuals, and impact project outcomes. This potential exists notwithstanding critics who claim that organizations are subject to manipulation, personal interests, and financial pressures. Part of this section looks at Community Development Corporations – a key stakeholder in the Rainier Court case study – and their characteristic features that make these organizations sometimes suited for encouraging public participation despite economic and political challenges. 4) The communicative planning literature, which follows, agrees with much of these benefits but critics also agree with the detractors and point out the realities of context, power, and space.

The following literature review, while not exhaustive, provides a framework for examining whether community organizations play a mediating role; whether community organizations actually promote individual involvement; whether community organization involvement makes a difference to project outcomes (and if they had an equal role with other stakeholders); and what kind of public involvement community organizations promote.

Brownfields – Problems, Opportunities, and Public Participation:

Brownfields are the unfortunate legacy of our industrial past but new federal and state programs are creating opportunities for cleanup, redevelopment, environmental justice,

and smart growth. Brownfields, according to the federal government, are "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant" (EPA, 2006). In laymen's terms, brownfields are generally older industrial or commercial sites – factories, dry cleaners, gas stations – where there is known or perceived pollution in groundwater and soil. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that there are more than 450,000 brownfield sites across the country (EPA, 2007) although quantification is difficult without actual site inspection and testing: deterioration and contamination problems that often plague vacant industrial and commercial sites are virtually impossible to quantify beyond the community level (Collaton and Bartch, 1996).

Brownfields negatively impact the communities in which they are located. Brownfields, by their very nature, are potentially hazardous to human health and the environment: Love Canal may be the most extreme example of this hazard. Contaminated sites of lesser scale, and the focus of the EPA and state brownfields programs (the most serious contaminated sites are handled under the EPA Superfund Program), impact the health of many community residents (Greenberg, Lowrie, Mayer, Miller, & Solitare, 2001). Air quality and drinking water quality, for instance, may be affected. Contamination (or the perception of contamination) has also traditionally impacted the redevelopment of brownfield sites due to liability issues and funding availability (GAO, 2005). Prior to the enactment of federal and state brownfields legislation, owners of brownfield sites were often held in the chain of liability even though they did not cause or contribute to the contamination. Additionally, traditional financial lenders were hesitant to provide

funding for projects on brownfield sites because of the unknown nature of the contamination and the cost of cleanup. Therefore, brownfield sites have remained vacant, unsightly, and sometimes harmful to neighboring residents despite, in many cases, a demand for developable land. Many developers choose "greenfield" sites for their projects because of these liability fears and additional project cleanup costs (Committee on Government Reform, 2006).

A consistent and long-term lack of redevelopment and reinvestment in brownfield sites due to fear of liability and lack of funding contributes to a devastating effect on neighborhoods. "The abandonment of properties and exodus of higher earning families from many of our older cities are reducing property tax revenues that support many school systems and critical municipal services" (Greenberg et al, 2001). Brownfields abandonment has coincided with economic and infrastructure policies that have encouraged regional shifts in manufacturing and development of suburban land resulting in a continuous cycle of depressed property values and public health concerns in inner cities (Wong and Owens-Viani, 2000; DeSousa, 2006).

These negative brownfields factors affect high-minority and low-income communities more so than the general population. Higher minority populations are disproportionately burdened by environmental hazards, partly due to residential proximity to hazardous waste dumps (UCC, 1987, USEPA, 1992). Brownfield properties are no exception: although located in thousands of neighborhoods across the country, brownfields are

mostly in poor communities of color (Greenberg et al, 1998; Ross & Green Leigh, 2000; Freeland, 2004)

New Opportunities and Pitfalls:

New federal and state programs provide unprecedented opportunities for communities to cleanup and redevelop brownfields, however, pitfalls on the road to revitalization exist. Interest in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment has exploded in recent years and brownfields programs have arguably become the linchpins of current efforts to devise more effective waste cleanup programs (Wernstedt & Hersh, 1998). As evidenced by the federal definition and accompanying federal and state programs, brownfields have become an increasingly visible planning issue for a variety of reasons. Brownfields revitalization addresses inner city economic concerns, environmental justice issues, human and environmental health concerns, community revitalization efforts, and smart growth techniques (DeSousa, 2006).

Most brownfield programs maintain that regulatory flexibility is necessary to remediate contaminated properties, bring them back into productive use, and address many other social and economic issues (Wernstedt & Hersh, 1998; McCarthy, 2002). Developers are increasingly attracted to brownfield sites due in part to these new liability protections and funding mechanisms (Alberini, Longo, Tonin, Trombetta & Turvani, 2004). In turn, new development can bring much-needed property tax revenue, jobs and overall economic revitalization to urban neighborhoods (Ross & Green Leigh, 2000; Wong & Owens-Viani, 2000). Along with economic growth, brownfield redevelopment clearly addresses

immediate and potential environmental risks to human health and the environment, particularly in neighborhoods with already increased health issues (Ringquist, 2003). Communities that clean and redevelop brownfields sites also, intentionally or not, contribute to “smart growth”. Smart growth is defined asdevelopment that revitalizes neighborhoods, protects working lands and open space, keeps housing affordable, provides more transportation choices, and complements recent proliferation of growth management and planning legislation (Wolfe & Delecki, 2005; EPA, 2006, DeSousa, 2006). Brownfields often represent the last remaining land available for development in cities; smart growth advocates see these sites as a viable, sustainable alternative to developing virgin land on the outskirts of cities. Smart growth combats urban sprawl and its associated negative effects, including climate change.

Brownfields revitalization can also lead to unintended consequences, including gentrification, unwanted new land uses, and lack of benefits for residents (CPEO, 2005: Rast, 2006). As will be shown in the case studies, community residents sometimes fear the effects of brownfields revitalization, from increased traffic congestion to neighborhood gentrification. Brownfields redevelopment can either have a galvanizing effect on a community or be divisive due to conflicting visions and lack of stakeholder involvement (Bartsch, 2003). And despite official proclamations of economic benefits to residents (EPA, 2005), bankers and developers are often the direct beneficiaries of brownfield incentives and redevelopment (Solitare, 2005).

Participation in brownfields:

Brownfields programs and literature often tout the importance of public participation in the planning process to address issues such as gentrification and incompatible uses, yet evidence points to conflicting methods, rationales, and levels of involvement. Officially, government programs promote public involvement throughout the brownfields cleanup and redevelopment process (EPA 2005) but participation policy is often no more than a set of recommended procedures and methods that, in practice, are not necessarily influential, legally enforceable or meaningful (Arnstein, 1969; Laurian, 2004; CPEO, 2005; Solitare, 2005).

For many reasons, stakeholder participation is more important to brownfields redevelopment projects than to a typical greenfield real estate transaction (Bartsch, 2003) but "the specific role of the public in brownfields redevelopment is unclear" (Greenberg and Lewis, 2000). Brownfield sites are often in residential areas and areas of high-minority and low-income populations who have traditionally been left out of the planning process. These complicated sites represent the loss of economic vitality to a region but at the same time offer the potential for numerous competing visions of new development and growth (Bartsch, 2003). Relatively recent federal and state brownfield programs continue to test the waters in terms of program components and their effectiveness to deal with these distinctive sites. Many state and local brownfield programs contain few or no provisions for public participation so program administrators are left to determine how, and if, to involve the public.

Public participation, therefore, should play an important role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment due to the distinctive characteristics of these sites. However, as noted above, the complicated and negative nature of brownfields can create both unified visions and divisive consequences. In the next section, I show how similar debates exist in many aspects of planning and that while public participation is considered a positive, normative goal, conflicting notions of definitions, methods, representation and costs endure.

Public participation:

Public participation is not only a brownfields issue: planning research and practice often advocates for increased public participation in planning decisions yet continues to struggle with participation methods, effectiveness, and meaning. Scholars and practitioners call widely for public participation in planning and current developments in environmental policy are increasingly emphasizing public participation. By involving the public, these scholars and practitioners argue, benefits will incur unto the community, government, and developers. Despite these benefits, however, public participation continues to be an evolving subject. While public involvement in planning projects is often considered "good," debate continues about its very definition, the appropriate or best methods, the benefits and costs, and the extent of participation (Day, 1997; Chess, 2000).

These participation debates parallel changes in planning decision making over the past half-century. Public participation in many planning decisions has evolved from technical

rationalization to grassroots power to meaningful involvement (Ross & Green Leigh, 2000). Much current thought on participation focuses on the planning process, meaning, diversity, and collaboration. Today, planners and other government officials increasingly accept that there are other ways of knowing, many based in non-positivist social science. This knowledge can emanate from the community: local communities possess grounded, experiential, intuitive, and contextual knowledge which is more often manifested in stories, songs, visual images, and speech (Sandercock 1998). Schneekcloth and Shibley remind planners that the "endless meetings" of the planning process are indeed an outcome – one of learning, deliberation, memory, values, respect, hope, and a host of other transformations (Forester, 1999). Albrechts notes the change in approach to public involvement in which there is "learning from action not only what works but also what *matters*." Participation issues, according to the academic and practice respondents of Albrechts' survey, "must be defined in a way that is meaningful for the groups concerned in their language and according to their perceptions of these problems and challenges."

To make participation meaningful, many scholars now advocate involvement in which citizens can actively take part in decision making, participate freely and equally, and engage in dialogue with other stakeholders (Burby, 2003; Solitare, 2005). This approach distances itself from earlier Arnstein-style perspectives of overthrowing existing power structures (Arnstein, 1969). Arnstein, it should be noted, remains highly influential in participation discussions. Despite the urban renewal and weak participation context of the time in which she wrote, her 'ladder of citizen participation' continues to provide a yardstick by which many planning and environmental studies measure participation

quality. Her ladder ranges from non-participation ('manipulation' and 'therapy') to tokenism ('informing,' 'consultation,' and 'placation') to citizen power ('partnering,' 'delegated power,' and 'citizen control'). To Arnstein, citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power (p. 216), and while some of her economic determinations are not necessarily relevant to this study (e.g. benefits like contracts and patronage), her inclusion of the 'have-nots' in information sharing, goal and policy setting, and tax allocation remains a strong principle among many who advocate for increased meaningful participation in planning processes and brownfields redevelopment, no matter what 'rung' they fall on. As will be shown, some cases in this study exhibited what would have been called 'non-participation' or 'tokenism' in Arnstein's time yet the interviewees often clearly felt satisfied with this level of inclusion. Whether or not a case falls into the category of 'citizen power' may mean less than the level of citizen satisfaction with information sharing, goal setting and resource allocation.

Despite increasing acceptance and advocacy, public participation in planning may not always occur. Meaningful public participation that involves true partnerships between public agencies and local communities is difficult to achieve despite government-mandated community involvement (McCarthy, 2002). Some see technocrats as a benefit: Scientists and other 'experts' make many planning and environmental decisions based upon positivist scientific methods and some proponents view decisions in the environmental arena as a matter of professional expertise with no need for large-scale public involvement (Portney, 2005). Some scholars have noted the efficiency of top-down decisions and, at times, the public's acceptance of, and possibly preference for, an

agency decision maker (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004). As long as agencies are flexible and responsive, even tightly managed and strictly advisory processes can be successful (Beierle and Konisky, 2000)

Politically, government officials may not be willing to give up power to the public. Individuals continue to demand greater involvement in planning processes, but planning establishments continue to 'defend' themselves (Alfasi 2003) and planning projects are often the site of political struggle (McCann, 2001). Flyvbjerg's (1998) account of planning in Aalborg, Denmark painted a stark picture of those in power rationalizing decisions and passing them off as reality. He notes that those in power define what counts as rationality and knowledge and, therefore, reality (1998). Those in power have often used planners and the planning process to justify and legitimize their agendas (Booher & Innes, 2002) and influence who participates in the planning process (Lowry, Adler & Milner, 1997).

Power, however, can also be broken down into more nuanced factors. Power, influence, and authority all exist in relational terms; that is, one cannot have power in a vacuum, but only in relation to someone else (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963), The differences lie in whether the subject complies because of fear of deprivations (power), esteem for 'higher' values (influence), or recognition that the command is reasonable in terms of his/her own values (authority) (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963). These factors can play out in various levels of interactions but, for the purposes of this study, many tend to see a concentration of power in governance, both process and culture (Yiftachel, 1998; Coaffee & Healy,

2003; Elwood, 2004). Some have noted that the 'mobilization of bias' – organized institutional practices of those with power – rationalizes 'knowledge' of an issue, neutralizes threats to the power structure, and creates a situation of 'non-decision' making which prevents an issue from even becoming a question for decision (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963; Flyvbjerg, 2002; Coafee & Healy, 2003). Planning is inextricably tied to governance and these power relations (Peiser, 1990; Yiftachel, 1998; Huxley, 2000). For example, the Harborview case study in this research clearly had a very limited participation process that was tightly controlled by those in power at the Department of Neighborhoods and Harborview Medical Center, thus limiting the players and issues which would even be discussed.. Similarly, some saw the mayor's stronger leadership style and pro-development agenda fortified by his dismantling of certain procedures that empowered neighborhood planning. In the Rainier Court case, the mayor's agenda for a denser city ran up against a neighborhood that did not necessarily want density: a respect for influence and authority (for SEED and city officials), along with a rationalization of the need for higher density in the city, contributed to the relative lack of conflict in the case. Sandercock (1998) argues that old styles of planning are concerned about making public decisions more rational, focusing on advanced decision-making, on developing blueprints for the future, and on an instrumental rationality that considers and evaluates options and alternatives. However, the dominant societal forces continually attempt to discredit community participation (Bellah, 1991; McKnight, 1997). Even when public participation processes are in place, some argue that participation methods are controlled and designed to elicit support for decisions and plans that those in power are promoting, particularly in light of increasing neoliberal governance tendencies which

professionalizes decision making and inhibits genuine public participation (Crowfoot & Wondolleck, 1990; Chess & Purcell, 1999; Faber & McCarthy, 2001). Elwood (2004) notes the example of HUD's EZ/EC program in Chicago as a prime example of retention of power despite the rhetoric of participation, an example very similar to the CAC in the Harborview case in this study:

> The entire governing board of the EZ/EC process in Chicago was appointed by the Office of the Mayor. Only later after the fierce objections of community organizations was a governing body created to involve neighborhood residents and organizations. While creation of this body, the Empowerment Zone Coordinating Council (EZCC), is an important move toward more participation, the powers of the EZCC are limited…The practice of citizen participation through the EZ/EC program's application in Chicago, while it satisfies HUD's expectation of 'stakeholder involvement," has not greatly altered the roles and relationships of state and civil actors in the community revitalization processes of the program. The pressure of local groups to create the EZCC introduced a somewhat more diverse voice into the mix, but primary power to control revitalization programming and funds is still vested in the Mayor's office and City Council, as has long been the tradition in Chicago.

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Frequently used methods may also actually prevent the public from participating, especially in a meaningful manner. Some perceive public hearings and comment periods, for example, as reactive in nature, insufficient at deliberation, able to engage only a small number of participants, and weak at addressing dynamic and complex environmental issues (Konisky and Beierle, 2001; Fiorino, 1990). Citizen advisory councils (a key component of the Harborview case study in this research) may have the opportunity to influence decision makers but often do not have decision making authority themselves (Webler and Tuler, 2000).

Defining Public Participation:

Numerous definitions of public participation currently exist. Several definitions of public participation are examined below which reflect a breadth of interpretations: like the discussions noted above, some incorporate deliberation and mutual learning and others adhere to traditional methods of involvement.

The Environmental Protection Agency's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as the Superfund program, provides a definition that reflects changing attitudes about public participation, acknowledgement of local context, and increasing transparency due in part to previous mismanagement and scandal (Daley, 2007):

> community involvement activities consist of incidental requirements for public notices and public comment on proposed response actions. In addition, structured programs designed to facilitate public involvement throughout the Superfund process such as community relations plans, TAGs, and the development of an administrative record file are required. The regulations are broad enough to allow flexibility for individual communities. It is the community's prerogative to choose how involved in the Superfund process it will be. Nonetheless, EPA or the lead agency is required to make announcements, organize public meetings, and allow for public comment on proposed remedial actions to ensure the process protects human health and the environment with public consent. (Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], 2006)

This definition, however, also shows the continued use of traditional participation methods that are reactive in nature and reflect the rationalization of power described above. One could interpret this definition as a public participation reinforcing the existing power structure.

The Department of Energy's National Environmental Policy Act's (NEPA) definition adopts a more communicative, meaningful, and non-positivist stance:

> The Secretary's Public Participation Policy Statement defines public participation as open, ongoing, two-way communication, both formal and informal, between DOE and its stakeholders—those interested in or affected by its actions. The purpose of such interactive communication is to enable both parties to learn about and better understand the views and positions of the other. Public participation provides a means for DOE to gather the most diverse collection of options, perspectives, and values from the broadest spectrum of the public, allowing DOE to make better and more informed decisions. In addition, public participation benefits stakeholders by creating an opportunity to provide comment and influence decisions. (Department of Energy, 1998)

Some perceive participation as an issue of awareness and information sharing (Greenberg and Lewis 2000). The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 identified participation as Principle 10 of its Agenda 21, a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally, and locally by organizations of the United Nations system, governments, and the major groups in every area in which there is human impact on the environment:

> Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided. (United Nations, 1992).

All of these environmental participation examples reflect a changed perspective of public involvement. The term "public participation" and the definitions outlined above have evolved from a concept based on outcomes and methods to one of meaning, values, and process. Shifts in concept and definition have coincided with changes in social, cultural,

and economic contexts, particularly during the turbulent second half of the 20th century. The growth of the civil rights movement, an increase and then subsequent decrease in federal programs and resources, and increases in issue-oriented groups and changing identification of "social" problems all contributed to the evolution of public participation. The changing nature of cities requires a continuous evaluation of the ways we define and attempt to solve shifting urban problems or risk being overwhelmed and outmaneuvered (Sandercock 1998). Indeed, the threats facing contemporary cities are not what they were when people like Jane Jacobs formed her ideas about urban neighborhoods and urban planning (Ouroussoff 2006).

Views among scholars about desirable types of public participation, at least theoretically, have generally evolved from a top-down, method-oriented approach to one that is more grassroots, process-driven, and searching for meaning. However, not all view participation in this manner and reception of this participation evolution in practice continues to be unclear. Whether by acceptance of technocracy, political control, or ineffective traditional tools, many individuals and community organizations remain outside the planning process for brownfield sites. For the purposes of this research, I will often refer to the EPA definition, usually in the context of its adoption by the brownfields program in Washington State, as well as more meaningful participation methods, including Arnstein's "ladder." EPA provides a relevant programmatic standard which can be clearly linked to participation efforts at individual brownfields projects but which still maintains traditional methods of participation that may not be effective and may only reinforce and legitimize the goals of those in power. Arnstein and many others likely

would not consider the EPA definition to be public participation at all. Arnstein, on the other hand, gives me a popular and influential normative base from which to compare case study methods but may also be seen by some as unrealistic and unnecessary (and not necessarily completely relevant to a brownfields study given the context in which Arnstein wrote). For example, most of the 'participation' in this study would likely be considered tokenism. While the primary purpose of this research is not to measure levels of participation and assign labels of "good" or "bad," these definitions allow me to place participation efforts in perspective with programs at several governmental levels and other brownfields research studies.

The Benefits and Costs of Public Participation:

While the definition of public participation is still open to debate, many scholars and practitioners acknowledge the benefits of public participation in planning. Yet negative consequences for the public, government, and planning projects may arise as a result of participation. Many scholars and practitioners focus on, and even assume, an affirmative and normative view of public participation – the public should be involved, participation is always good, and more is always better – yet the difficulties of representation, group mentality, highly-technical language, and other issues often remain obscured in the name of inclusion. This is not to say that these positive views of participation are wrong or are being seen through rose-colored glasses: the benefits of participation have been extensively documented and will be discussed below. Rather, little attention has been paid to the notion that participation can have costs that are either unforeseen or not properly assessed by stakeholders. Like the changes seen in the definitions of

participation based on the changing view of who, how, and why people participate, the perceived benefits of participation must also measure these same, shifting viewpoints. Some claim that the debate surrounding participation is, in fact, no longer about representative government versus citizen participation (Irvin & Stansbury 2004). Yet these claims are countered by a growing cadre who state that public participation is either simply a complement to representative democracy (Kathi & Cooper 2005) or a hindrance to sensible governance and community goals (Follansbee 2006; Portney 2005; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002).

Benefits:

Scholars and practitioners call widely for public participation (Berry, Portney & Thomson 1993; Renn et al, 1993; Greenberg et al, 1998; Sandercock, 1998; Laurian, 2004; Kathi & Cooper 2005; Sandercock, 2005). Relevant to this study, current developments in environmental policy increasingly emphasize public participation (Beierle & Konisky 2000; Chess, 2000; Wong & Owens-Viani, 2000; Hanks and Morrison 2003; Portney 2005; Solitare, 2005). By involving the public, these scholars and practitioners argue, benefits will incur unto the community and government officials. On practical levels, participation can promise benefits for environmental, planning, and social service agencies and developers as well as for overall community well-being. For agencies and developers, participation is a method for planners to collect and provide information about community needs, identify attitudes and opinions, generate new ideas, and build constituency support. For communities and citizen organizations, it can offer opportunities to gain representation and be heard, exercise political rights and influence

policy decisions. Participation can also correct social inequities, fulfill roles due to shifts in societal responsibilities, and promote social capital and improved community institutions. Without community involvement, standardized solutions (those that are developed outside the community) have sometimes been found to be notoriously unreliable because they reduce the reliance on local knowledge and skill and limit the flexibility of people at the front lines to solve the problems they encounter (Schorr, 1997). Indeed, enabling and empowering organizations and individuals working at the grassroots level can assist government programs with limited resources.

Many environmental policies and programs acknowledge these benefits. For example, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) specifies five benefits from public participation:

- Identify Issues:
- Enhance Mutual Understanding:
- Make Better Decisions:
- Enhance Community Support and Minimize Delays:
- Promote Environmental Justice:

Like the definitions discussed above, this list exemplifies the emphasis of much current thought on participation in policies, programs, and scholarship. Identifying issues through a diversity of opinion and backgrounds highlights the need for local knowledge and decision making through non-positivist means; mutual understanding and better decisions reflect deliberative, non-technocratic practice (Forester, 1999).Enhancing

community support and promoting environmental justice emphasizes meaningful and value-laden processes.

Public participation can also address larger societal issues (issues that clearly manifest themselves in brownfields programs). First, participation can counter social inequities. Minority and low-income communities often bear an unfair burden of contaminated sites. These environmental justice communities, by their very nature, lack resources, capacity, and access. They are saddled with a history of outside decision-making, institutional racism, and discrimination. Second, participation can help fulfill several roles and societal shifts. As noted earlier in this study, previously-public responsibilities are shifting to local areas and top-down planning is increasingly unavailable (legally impossible, financially unfeasible, etc.). Communities, through participation, may be able to shift the rationality used by the state which justifies top-down planning and create a new rationality based on local knowledge. Third, social capital can increase through participation. Social capital improves the quality of social institutions, helps communities function more effectively, and creates a direct and positive effect on economic development. Improved social capital also balances the inequities that exist between races and classes. Additionally, participation can change institutions where privilege has embedded itself in societal norms, roles and organizations. Changing social institutions can also change the inherent biases in laws and policies.

Public participation can therefore have many benefits to community residents, government, and project outcomes. Deliberative and meaningful processes promote

shared values, equity, empowerment, streamlining, and hopefully better decisions. These are the benefits that much of the practice and scholarly literature promote. Most of these same studies also assume that these benefits are universal and normative: the public *should* be involved and rarely is there a reason to justify public participation in and of itself. But participation involve costs as well. These costs are discussed below.

Costs:

Compared to the benefits of public participation, less has been written about the costs and much of the literature "romanticizes" communities as repositories of local democracy, local knowledge, and progressive potential (Sandercock, 2005). Socially and economically, many communities may not be aware of or prepared to pay these costs. Involving the public in decision making can be a time consuming process and can possibly add to the costs of a project. For example, the passage of time creates negative impacts such as increased social and economic costs for displaced workers, further compromise of endangered species habitat, increased costs for staffing participative processes, and increased expenditure of time by involved publics (Lawrence & Deagen 2001).

Citizens can also become complacent or even angered with participatory processes (Day, 1997). "Theorists need to acknowledge that working out policy decisions and implementation details over a protracted series of meetings is an activity that most citizens prefer to avoid." (Irvin and Stansbury 2004, p. 58). When people are moved to involve themselves in planning processes, it is sometimes because they believe decision

makers have found a way to take advantage of their positions or because they distrust the governing authority (Greenberg & Lewis, 2000; Alfasi, 2003; Hanks & Morrison, 2003). Conversely, acceptance of government's ability and legitimacy has been shown to be predicated on that government's record of responsibility and accountability (Webler and Tuler 2000). Low levels of participation may, in fact, be signs of the government's success rather than failure at meeting citizens' needs (Day, 1997). Consequently, public participation in the United States is often connected to resentment, dissatisfaction, and puzzlement rather than to legitimacy, trust, and enlightenment. (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002, p. 10). For example, interviewees for the case studies in this research – notably at the Olympic Sculpture Park -- overwhelmingly stated that they would participate and/or fight a brownfields redevelopment based on distrust or the feeling that an outsider (government, developer) was taking advantage of an individual or community.

Costs can also adversely affect a community and project outcomes due to misrepresentation. Ideal discursive democracy, in which all local residents would deliberate all matters of common concern, is often impossible due to large-scale impacts of projects (and therefore large numbers of residents affected).The scope of larger projects can result in a lack of time for residents to participate, a lack of interest, and a lack of resources for the state to facilitate widespread, in-depth discussion (Day, 1997; Davies, Blackstock, and Rauschmayer 2005). Even assuming all residents of a community could deliberate about a matter of concern, the sheer size of the group could impact the quality of the discourse, with speech-making and rhetorical appeals replacing

conversation and reasoned arguments (Dept. of Energy/NEPA, 1998). Additionally, the highly technical jargon used in many environmental topics, such as brownfields, often leaves citizens baffled, confounded, or uncertain as to where their interests lie: the extent to which citizens are participating in a meaningful way is thus questionable (Day, 1997). Also, strongly partisan members, whose livelihood or values are strongly affected by the decisions being made, may dominate the proceedings (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004).

Community organizations may comprise one way to bridge the gap between ideal democracy and top-down decision making, yet they too are the subject of intense debates over representation, conflicts of interest, and project influence. The following section identifies community organizations' potential in public participation.

Community Organizations:

As the role of federal and state governments has decreased in a variety of policy and program areas, community organizations are increasingly seen as an effective scale for planning and decision making. The tacit acceptance of federal devolution and the ascendancy of local community-based strategies includes an expectation that local organizations, in general, and community development corporations, specifically, will play a more active role in planning and implementing community revitalization efforts (Gittell and Wilder, 1999). Yet despite the assertions of many researchers and practitioners that participation by community organizations in planning is important, debate continues about the true effectiveness and representation of these organizations.

The mediating role played by community organizations, identified by many scholars, may indeed play an important part in providing access to the planning process. They can provide access to power. They can build social capital and yield other benefits from participation, outlined earlier, for those that often have the least access to such things. *Mediating structures* stand between individuals and larger institutions of public life (Berger and Neuhaus 1977; Williams 1985). Mediating structures help community members relate to and gain protection from the large, impersonal institutions of public life.

Mediating structures may also assist participants in defining and framing the realities, viewpoints, and problems of the community. Mediating structures provide individuals with a framework in which they can experience the realities of community life and influence how the community defines its conditions and therefore its problems (Williams, 1985). Taylor claims that environmental problems are social problems since "groups in a society perceive, identify, and define environmental problems by developing shared meanings and interpretations of the issues" (2000, p. 509). Therefore, environmental activists and government officials from outside the community can have vastly different perceptions from the local residents on what constitutes an environmental problem (McCarthy, 2002). Some larger institutions appear to understand this concept: the Environmental Protection Agency envisions that relationships established with regional and community organizations will bring about a better understanding of environmental problems because of better access to local knowledge (EPA 1996). And although

creating this framework is important and influences the likelihood that people participate, framing must be accompanied by social and institutional networks (like community organizations) in order to facilitate activism (Taylor 2000, p.517).

Additionally, mediating structures may foster participatory democracy and empower people by helping them gain more control over their lives. Berger and Neuhaus argue that public policy should protect and foster mediating structures and whenever possible, public policy should utilize mediating structures for the realization of social purposes.

While mediating structures can be institutions such as churches and schools, community organizations can also fall under this definition and may play a strong role in public participation. Berry, Portney and Thomson (1993) are quite clear on the influence of community organizations:

> The pattern of community participation is strong and clear for low- and middle-SES (socio-economic status) residents. People who live in neighborhoods with strong organizations tend to participate more, and people who live in neighborhoods with weaker associations tend to participate less…Stronger neighborhood associations, by definition, mean more extensive door-to-door outreach efforts, more frequent neighborhood events, more information going out to neighborhood residents, and more volunteers spending more time to make all of this happen. A more active neighborhood group creates more opportunities to participate than does a weaker group. (p.95)

In Laurian's (2004) recent study of environmental decision making, she states that community groups provide opportunity structures that may facilitate participation. She asserts that participation is least costly and potentially beneficial for the individual if active community organizations are in place to cover costs, such as monetary resources and time commitment, that may be more difficult for poor communities to bear. Kathi

and Cooper (2005) conclude that citizen organizations, such as neighborhood councils, have emerged as an appropriate vehicle for citizen participation at the local level; Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) have written extensively on the role of the association as facilitator between the individual and the state and claim that associations are "the vehicles through which citizens in the U.S. assemble to solve problems." The Portney and Berry (1997) study of five American cities demonstrates how a strategy of empowerment through neighborhood associations helps residents gain political capital. A study by Berry (2005) looks at the impact of non-profits in civic engagement and concluded that these organizations are highly efficient, low-cost, and staffed by professionals and volunteers who are passionate about their mission. Neighborhood-based groups can help government officials gauge local concerns and plan in a more even-handed fashion (Ross & Green Leigh, 2000). Non-profits are also valued because they are seen as imaginative and flexible and can tailor national or state programs to fit particular local circumstances and needs.

However, the scholarly literature on community organizations shows a lack of consensus on the specific roles of these groups in participation and a lack of clarity regarding group composition, representation, objectivity, and strategy. Contrary to many researchers and practitioners who assert that participation by community organizations in planning is important, others fear that proposals that call for including citizen groups can lead to co-optation of those groups by government or business as simply a means of rubberstamping plans and do not ensure that the interests of the group are truly represented (Crowfoot and Wondolleck, 1990). Some researchers question whether individuals are able to leave

private/personal interests behind when participating in a community organization (Day, 1997); whether individuals can take on a publicly centered decision-making perspective (Swindell, 2000); and whether factors such as organization leadership personalities may influence a group's commitment to representativeness and basic democratic principles (Davies, Blackstock,Rauschmeyer, 2005).

Strategically, researchers and practitioners disagree on whether community organizations should focus on conflict or consensus, reflecting some earlier views (e.g. Alinsky, 1972) of public participation. Some see that citizen groups contending with powerful government agencies or large corporations often must take the hardest possible line – total victory – to keep the support of their members and maintain their momentum (while risking total failure) (Davies, Blackstock, Rauschmeyer, 2005). Others maintain that community organizations are more effective, especially over a longer period of time, when taking smaller steps, conceding on some issues, working closely with government, business, and other organizations, and "recreating" themselves in order to maintain volunteer interest (Medoff and Sklar, 1994; Baum, 1999). Closely related to this issue of conflict versus consensus is whether organizations are better serving local citizens by seeking project-specific outcomes or community empowerment: influencing project outcomes may show momentum and clear victories but not contribute greatly to empowering local citizens to participate in future planning issues.

Community Development Corporations:

Related to this research, Community Development Corporations (CDC), identified in one of the case studies, exhibit some qualities distinct from other neighborhood organizations and are themselves the subject of continuing study. CDCs are non-profit organizations that generally engage in comprehensive neighborhood development, often producing and rehabilitating housing and sponsoring economic development and social service programs in disempowered and disinvested neighborhoods (Stoecker, 2003; Bratt & Rohe, 2007). Often community-based like the other organizations in this study, CDCs have grown significantly in number and importance in the last 30 years reflecting federal decentralization of programs to the state and local level. Their growth signalsa commitment to providing services and leadership in communities that need help that other agencies cannot or will not serve (Vidal, 1992). Unlike government, CDCs can respond to development opportunities, and they can more easily assemble and coordinate the disparate programs needed to respond to neighborhood problems effectively (Walker, 2002).

Some researchers have pointed to the inherent contradictions of a CDC to act as developer, landlord, and business owner while articulating ideologies of empowerment and local community control (Gittell & Wilder, 1999; Bratt & Rohe, 2007). Although this may be seen as a success in partnering activities, residents in the Rainier Court case still have misgivings about the role that the CDC is playing. According to Stoecker (1997), community misgivings are not unwarranted but may also be unavoidable due to the multiple roles that CDCs take on:

> It is this insecure and unpredictable middle location that CDCs occupy. CDCs manage capital like capitalists, but do not invest it for profit. They manage projects but within the constraints set by their funders. They try to be community oriented while their purse strings are held by outsiders. They are pressured by capital to produce exchange values in the form of capitalist business spaces and rental housing. They are pressured by communities to produce use values in the form of services, home ownership, and green spaces. This is more than a "double bottom-line." It is the internalization of the capital-community contradiction and it leads to trouble. (p. 5)

Indeed, the CDC can achieve success as an organization yet that success may not translate into direct benefits to the resident community and their definition of success (Twelvetrees, 1989).

CDCs, occupying conflicting middle ground, may not necessarily be motivated to pursue public participation. Although some researchers note that CDCs try to advocate for the neighborhood and encourage participation (Vidal, 1992, Glickman & Servon, 2003), Stoecker claims that CDCs are not adequate representatives of the neighborhood due to capital-community contradictions, and cites Bratt's (1989) claim that CDCs do not necessarily aim for, nor achieve, widespread participation (Stoecker, 1997, Stoecker, 2003). Some researchers agree that organizations, generally, can exist and carry out work without broad community participation so long as they raise outside money, employ core staff, and occasionally seek broader community approval of such routine items as board directions and staff performance (Baum, 1999). Indeed, some have observed that the more the CDC has succeeded to increase the economic development potential of a brownfield site, the greater the chance that environmental quality objectives and public concern/input may be muted (Wernstedt & Hersh, 1998). To take this one step further, a CDC may never have the ability to ever achieve "good" citizen participation, from an

Arnstein perspective, or possibly even meaningful participation involving learning and deliberation. If a primary goal of a CDC is to build housing, housing requires capital. According to Stoecker (1997), if CDCs work in poor communities, they therefore have little capital: CDCs must go outside the community to look for capital and thereby give up community control. Others disagree: some researchers feel that to be effective, CDCs must draw strength by expanding their circle of financial supporters by attracting resources from outside their neighborhoods (Vidal & Keating, 2004; Bratt & Rohe, 2004). The Rainier Court case in this study may fall somewhere in between these arguments. SEED never maintained community control over the cleanup and redevelopment process, despite being the developer of the site, yet it did manage to engage the community in multiple two-way dialogues about the project. While SEED could not implement every recommendation and wish of neighborhood residents for this project, the residents felt that SEED listened to their concerns and did what was possible within the constraints of outside funding.

Communicative Planning:

Community organizations and public participation play a role in communicative planning theory (Healy, 1996; Innes & Booher, 2002; Innes, 2004) and communicative planning debates inform this study in several ways. Communicative action uses language and dialogue to achieve mutual understanding and consensus. It overcomes different validity claims from various stakeholders in the planning process (Innes & Booher, 1999; Takahashi & Smutny, 2001). The "communicative turn" (Healy, 1996) has recently

shown up in the brownfields literature (Solitare, 2005), perhaps not surprisingly given the importance in the communicative literature of stakeholder equity, deliberation, learning, and promotion of social and environmental justice goals.

Scholars and practitioners increasingly promote consensual approaches for developing strategic plans, particularly where complex environmental and social issues are being dealt with and where many different interests are likely to be affected by policy decisions (Connely & Richardson, 2004). CDCs, possibly due to assimilation in the capitalist system of development while struggling for declining federal funding, increasingly shun the confrontational conflict-oriented approach to addressing poverty in favor of an approach that is more consensual and trust-based (Stoecker, 1997; Bratt & Rohe, 2004). The long-term efforts to democratize planning may be nothing more than an attempt to deal with the capitalist-democracy contradiction discussed above regarding CDCs (Sandercock, 2005). The communicative style of planning may be nothing more than the latest adaptation of capital in its drive for new forms of urban development and profit (Sandercock, 2005).

These debates provide guidance for some of my research questions. To assume that participation in brownfields is a good, essential, fair, and meaningful notion (Solitare 2005, Greenberg & Lewis, 2000) places us at risk of ignoring the following debates in communicative literature on stakeholder equity, spatial context, and political, social, and economic realities (Fainstein, 2000):

- *Stakeholder equality* – Communicative planning theorists insist that stakeholders in a planning process that is truly collaborative will not be dominated by powerful elites (Innes & Booher, 2002; Innes, 2004; Healy, 1996) yet others claim that this perspective willfully ignores the power and context of political, economic, and social realities (Day, 1997; Fainstein, 2000; Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000; Few, 2000; Abram, 2000).
- *Process vs. outcomes* – Communicative planning primarily identifies and analyzes the process of planning and often is not concerned with outcomes claiming that the process can be effective even when it does not accomplish what its participants originally intended (Innes & Booher, 1999, Baum, 1999; Glickman & Servon, 2003). A common mistake, they say, when a process fails to produce a plan or policy, is for observers to conclude that no significant agreement was reached, yet there may be intangible or tangible (albeit informal) second and third-tier effects (Innes & Booher, 1999). Critics claim that the outcomes are indeed important, communicative outcomes are not of the highest quality, and ignoring the outcomes is yet another example of ignoring context. Fainstein (2000) provides a useful comparison:

  The communicative theorists make the role of the planner the central element of discussion. Both the context in which planners work and the outcome of planning fade from view. Unlike the rational modelers, the communicative theorists have found a subject, but like them they lack an object. Whereas in legal theory the object of analysis is the relationship between the legal system and society and in medical theory the concern is with the human body, in

communicative planning theory the spotlight is on the planner. Instead of asking what is to be done about cities and regions, communicative planners typically ask what planners should be doing (p.455).

Critics also wonder what the communicative theorists would make of unjust, yet collaborative, outcomes or outcomes that are not based on a communicative process, such as the outcomes in the Olympic Sculpture Park case study in this research, (i.e. bureaucratic, top-down decisions) and yet still produce desirable results (Day, 1997; Fainstein, 2000).

- *Space and Place* – According to critics of communicative and planning theory, space and place provide a context and an outcome for assessing the influence of politics, economics, and social capital on the planning process(Neuman, 2000). If planning is about the production of space and place, some wonder why communicative planning theorists have based so much of their thought in Habermas' communicative rationality (despite Innes' (2004) claims that this is not so) given that Habermas has, in short, no conception of how 'places' are produced and how that process is integral to the process of communicative action and valuation (Harvey, 1996). "So it is ironic that his work has been taken up in the field of planning, a set of practices that above all else should be concerned with the production of space and place" (Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000). Spatial context can also influence process and outcomes when conducted within narrow spatial boundaries,

> opening up the possibility of NIMBY behavior. It can also be considered when looking at metropolitan-wide planning that may sacrifice the local-level familiarity and knowledge that is the rationale for participatory neighborhood planning, as will be shown in the Harborview and Olympic Sculpture Park cases (Fainstein, 2000). Some researchers have also found the context of cities differing greatly, for example, with respect to the acceptability of CDCs and local governments working together closely (Glickman & Servon, 2003).

I must reiterate, however, that my research is not examining communicative action but rather borrowing communicative action debates to provide useful comparisons to community organizations and public participation in my research. Although the communicative debates may be oriented more toward the role of urban planners within the planning process, these same debates provided a useful framework for my interviews. And while this research used case studies and not direct observation, critics argue that case analysis, which places cases in a broader context and makes comparisons, can be useful (Fainstein, 2000). And despite the focus of communicative action on language and dialogue to resolve conflicts, identification of others' viewpoints also figures prominently in the communicative literature. In my cases I found several instances among residents to appreciate other viewpoints. Several neighborhood residents, for example, stated that they understood the need for Harborview Medical Center and of the serious life-or-death cases that the hospital serves, despite the inconvenience to themselves of increased neighborhood noise from medical helicopters. Like the critics (Abram, 2000; Fainstein, 2000; Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000), I focused on the arguments

of context, power, and individual/group/community interactions, rather than on the role of the planner and examination of dialogue. Community organizations deal with the same issues of political realities, conflict versus consensual approaches, pressure to produce results, spatial and economic context, and outsider and elite control of resources. I address these factors in the cases studies to follow.

In the beginning of this chapter, I explained that community organizations should play a mediating role but that numerous contradictions within brownfields, public participation, community organizations/CDCs, and communicative planning may make this role difficult to achieve. Public participation in brownfields is seen by some as more important due to the distinctive characteristics of these sites, yet the role for the public in the planning process remains unclear. Public participation, in theory, has shifted from a top-down, technical model to one of meaningful participation of all stakeholders but, in practice and definition, traditional methods and structures are often still in place. In order to increase public participation, some scholars and practitioners point to community organizations (including CDCs) as mediators between individual residents, government and developers. Community organizations can theoretically encourage individuals to participate in the planning process but face pressures from outside funding and political contexts to produce physical results. Related to factors of meaningful participation, debates within the communicative planning literature informed part of this study, particularly the interview questions, regarding issues of process, power, and context.

As shown, scholars and practitioners promote organizations as advocates for increased public participation but economic realities (e.g. outside funding for CDCs, increased land value with increased competition), political realities (e.g. city government context, political relationships), and social realities (e.g. fewer resources in poor communities, institutional racism) may not allow this role to be truly achievable. Organizations may alter their mediating role in an effort to fulfill duties to their constituencies and accept the methods and means by which they feel they can make a difference in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. The following chapter discusses further the context of the EPA, brownfields, and the Seattle region and how these factors may influence the case studies.

Chapter 3

EPA, Brownfields, and the Seattle Context

This research examines community organizations and public participation using case studies in the Seattle/King County, Washington brownfields program. The joint city/county brownfields program provides an appropriate setting for case study research. King County, a mix of urban, suburban, and rural land uses with a population of over 1.7 million including the city of Seattle, experiences continued population and economic growth and increasing demand for land in a state with a Growth Management Act and a region with an urban growth boundary. Brownfields are increasingly viewed as viable development sites in Seattle that are consistent with the mayor's goal of increasing neighborhood density, neighborhood revitalization, and environmental sustainability. Based upon the activity of the Seattle/King County Brownfields Program, brownfield cleanup and redevelopment projects appears to be a growing interest. It may also be indicative of a shorter history of pre-environmental-regulation industrial uses and relatively recent attention to land conservation and urban density in western U.S. cities.

Revitalizing these contaminated sites can be a controversial and drawn-out process. Decision making in Seattle, and the public's involvement in this process, mirrors the debates over public participation covered in Chapter 2. Many view Seattle's political and planning decision-making – known locally as the 'Seattle Process' -- as 'consensus-loving and process-oriented', to the point of postponing decisions (Galloway & Ho;

2006). Others see the "endless public reviews" as a means for learning, organizing, and community-building (Sutton, 2004). Seattlealso reflects changes that have occurred in federal environmental programs over decades. As federal environmental programs have increasingly devolved to the local level, city government and community organizations have acquired new responsibilities for implementing brownfield programs. Local government and organizations in Seattle, with loose and unenforceable policies from EPA as a guideline and a variety of local factors, have attempted to implement community involvement practices within the brownfields program with mixed results.

This chapter begins with a discussion of 1) the context of the federal EPA brownfields program, the EPA's public participation program, and its influence on local level programs. 2) Following this, I examine Washington's cleanup, funding, and growth management programs and how these impact the brownfields program in Seattle/King County. 3) I conclude this chapter with a look at the influence of local factors on public participation in the brownfields program, such as increased population growth, the "Seattle Process," the high-tech industry, and the design review process. By examining influences at all levels of government, I provide several framework layers to analyze the case studies that follow.

EPA & the Brownfields Program

History:

Industrial and commercial contamination go back as far as industry itself. Contaminated output from industrial production was not widely considered a hazard as recently as the

mid-20th century. Research and empirical evidence created new arguments for the ill-effects of industrial production: Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring", published in 1962, is often considered to be one of the first large-scale calls to the hazards of industry on human and environmental health. Subsequent examinations and evidence over the past few decades increased public scrutiny of industry and led to major changes in the administration, enforcement, and reduction of hazardous industrial and commercial output and the relatively-new issue of polluted lands, or brownfields, left behind.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created in 1970 as a response to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) recommendation passed by Congress late in the previous year. President Nixon called for "a strong, independent agency." The mission of the EPA would be to:

- Establish and enforce environmental protection standards.
- Conduct environmental research.
- Provide assistance to others combating environmental pollution.
- Assist the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), established by NEPA in developing and recommending to the President new policies for environmental protection (Lewis, 1985)

The EPA, however, served primarily in a compliance capacity during this time – "to give real bite to the federal enforcement bark" (Lewis, 1985) – as well as in a technocratic capacity tackling complex scientific issues. It would take another call from a concerned citizen to open up EPA to citizen involvement on a larger scale.

In 1980, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and its funding arm, known as Superfund, which addresses the most serious

hazardous waste sites, was passed largely due to the problems at Love Canal (Collaton & Bartsch, 1996; EPA, 2007 A). "By 2000, 92 percent of the sites listed on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) were either undergoing cleanup, removed from the NPL because cleanup was complete, or were removed from the list because remediation goals were achieved" (House of Representatives, 2006, p.3). The focus of hazardous waste cleanup thereafter turned to the less seriously contaminated sites: brownfields (House of Reps, 2006).

EPA has shifted focus for dealing with hazardous waste sites since the agency's inception and the days of Love Canal. In the 1980's and 1990's, EPA changed its strategy from enforcement, oversight, and cleanup to liability relief and redevelopment. The Agency recognized that lenders, investors, and developers – the private market -- feared that involvement with brownfield sites might make them liable for cleaning up contamination they did not create (Elliott and Bourne, 2005). EPA (and municipalities) began to see the opportunities in brownfields: redeveloped parcels of land generate needed tax revenue and employment, curb urban sprawl, and remediate contamination that threatens public health and the environment (Yount and Meyer, 1999). Developers were drawn to these sites by profit potential and legal protection. The EPA also introduced more participation efforts to offset the strictly technocratic basis of decision making and to allow for more local knowledge, community support, and neighborhood prioritization of hazardous waste sites. The Brownfields Program is evidence of this shift in strategy. The Brownfields Program was introduced in 1995 under CERCLA and the new strategy quickly rippled down to state and local initiatives, notably through federal encouragement

of cleanup of sites under state Voluntary Cleanup Programs (VCP) (House of Representatives, 2006). The federal government loosened enforcement regulations, perhaps not coincidentally with the decline of federal assistance and oversight since the Reagan era in many other programmatic areas, leaving state and local governments and community organizations to pick up the programmatic pieces. Similar to the shift seen at the federal level, voluntary cleanup programs limited state oversight to the most hazardous contamination and shift the burden of responsibility to the site owner and the private sector.

The Brownfields Program solidified in 2002 at the federal level and clarified the importance of state and local programs in the reclamation of contaminated land. The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2002 (HR 2869) gave the existing brownfields program independent legislative authority to add certainty to program authorities and improve funding and other cleanup and redevelopment tools. The Act initially increased a funding pool for cleanup, redevelopment, and job training programs, expanded site eligibility, and clarified liability relief, including some relief to small businesses from Superfund liability. The Act, recognizing the primacy of states in the implementation and success of brownfields revitalization, established or enhanced state VCPs. According to the EPA, and clearly reflective of larger shifts from federal to state and local level agencies, “state programs are at the forefront of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment, as both the public and private markets recognize the responsibilities and opportunities given to states” in the Brownfields Law (EPA, 2006 A, p.3).

The financial component of the federal brownfields program consists of several significant funding sources. Initially, EPA provided small amounts of seed money to local governments that launched hundreds of two-year brownfield pilot projects. Through passage of the 2002 Brownfields Act, policies that EPA had developed over the years were passed into law (EPA, 2007 B). Brownfields grants continue to serve as the foundation of EPA's Brownfields Program. These grants support revitalization efforts in four areas. 1) Brownfields Assessment Grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. 2)Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants provide funding to capitalize loans that are used to clean up brownfields. 3) Brownfields Job Training Grants provide environmental training for residents of brownfields communities. 4) Brownfields Cleanup Grants provide direct funding for cleanup activities at certain properties with planned greenspace, recreational, or other nonprofit uses (EPA, 2007 B).

EPA brownfields funding is not without accountability requirements, including some public participation recommendations. Citizen involvement began to be expressed in federal and state laws and programs in the 1960's, notably the maximum feasible participation requirements of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Lowry, Adler, and Milner, 1997). However, the discovery of hazardous waste at Love Canal in Niagara Falls, NY in the late 1970's sounded a citizens' alarm on toxic leakage into residents' homes and yards adjacent to the abandoned canal, used for decades as a dumping ground for Hooker Chemical (Day, 1997). This event galvanized public environmental concern

and intensified the demand for meaningful public involvement in decision making at contaminated sites (Wernstedt & Hersh, 1998). In 1980, Congress passed the Superfund law and a year later EPA released its first participation policy.

EPA's original Policy on Public Participation (Federal Register, 1981) claimed to

> strengthen EPA's commitment to public participation and to establish uniform procedures for participation by the public in EPA's decision-making process. This in turn will assist EPA in carrying out its mission, by giving a better understanding of the public's viewpoints, concerns and preferences. It should also make the agency's decisions more acceptable to those who are most concerned and affected by them. (EPA, 2007 C)

Despite these proclamations, the Agency endured severe criticism in the early years of the Superfund program due to scandal, mismanagement, and poor community relations (Daley, 2007). Under the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, Congress stipulated that the EPA must improve its community relations programs: numerous citizen and environmental groups were active in promoting improved community participation during the reauthorization (Daley, 2007). EPA updated the policy in 2003, recognizing:

- Changing needs of the public
- New statutes and regulations (including CERCLA and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice)
- New and expanded public participation techniques
- New options for public access to information and involvement through the Internet
- EPA's emphasis on assuring compliance
- Increased use of partnerships and technical assistance
- Increased capacity of states, tribes and local governments to carry out delegated programs (EPA, 2007 C)

This policy, however, is not a rule and remains legally unenforceable. Solitare (2005) claims that this policy limits participation in brownfields redevelopment for two primary reasons:

> First, the policy is only applied to the remediation of a brownfield site; it is not applied to the future use or redevelopment of the site. Second, the policy was developed for only EPA staff use, not for use by state, tribes and local governments, which are the primary governments for brownfields redevelopment. In addition, the EPA cannot require state, tribes and local governments to follow the policy. (p. 919)

Thus in awarding brownfield grants, EPA applies ranking criteria rather than specific public participation requirements. The rankings criteria for public involvement break down into two categories, community notification and community involvement. The grant applicant is responsible for providing community notification and opportunity for public comment about the cleanup plan. The proposal must also demonstrate how the applicant was or will be involved in the community notification (e.g. attend a public meeting or respond to comments) (EPA 2007 D). Several examples of specific activities include: discussing a brownfields proposal during an open government meeting (e.g. city council sessions); holding a public meeting; placing a public notice in a local newspaper or community bulletin board; notifying affected residents door-to-door; and soliciting public comment (EPA, 2007 D).

Washington State/King County/Seattle:

Washington's brownfields program maintains consistency with the federal program primarily through the implementation of liability protections and financial incentives, administration of properties through the VCP, adoption of EPA's "brownfields"

definition, and identification of ranking criteria for public involvement. The Washington program developed over time through statutory and regulatory amendments to the state's 1991 Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) rather than through specially designated brownfields legislation (as seen in other states and the federal government) (EPA, 2006, p.141). The state provides liability assurances through prospective purchaser agreements, covenants not to sue, lender liability exemptions and a contaminated aquifer policy (EPA, 2006). Generally, these assurances allow liability protection provided the site owner did not cause or contribute to the contamination, continues or completes a cleanup, and/or maintains institutional controls (proprietary or governmental controls often restricting uses on a property).

King County and Seattle's financial incentives, which all of the case studies in this research received in some form (not all received brownfields funding, per se), continue to grow through successive EPA grants. In 1998, King County and the City of Seattle, operating as a single entity and in conjunction with the Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) received a $200,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot Grant to conduct environmental site assessments in King County. Between 1998 and 2007, the county and the city received an additional $1,700,000 in EPA Assessment Grant funds, including $200,000 for the Harborview Medical Center expansion cleanup discussed later in this study (King County, 2007). The Washington State Department of Ecology provides technical review of the cleanup projects. The funds are to be loaned out within five years.

The objectives of the State's RLF are:

- Support self-sustaining efforts by local governments and private owners by offering low interest loans to clean up brownfield properties already assessed for contamination.
- Leverage funds by linking loan recipients with assistance offered through the related brownfields programs.
- Strengthen collaboration between the federal, state, and local agencies involved in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment creating a sustainable model of cooperation.
- Create sustainable jobs by new or expanded businesses.
- Increase tax base to local areas (Washington Office of Community, Trade, and Economic Development [CTED], 2007 A).

Some grant funds have been used to contract with the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS) to run the Environmental Extension Service (EES). The EES provides free technical assistance to private individuals and businesses, nonprofit organizations and municipalities in assessing and cleaning up brownfields in the Puget Sound region (Environmental Coalition of South Seattle [ECOSS], 2007).

The EES and the Brownfields Program were created out of the Duwamish Coalition, a public-private partnership that met from 1993 to 1997 to address economic development and environmental contamination at the Duwamish River Superfund site in South Seattle. The coalition was created to help implement the 1990 Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) by developing strategies to encourage development in urban areas, reduce sprawl, encourage economic development and protect the environment." (King County, 2007). In 1990, the Legislature stated that "uncoordinated and unplanned growth" posed a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and health, safety, and high quality of life (CTED, 2007). The Legislature also found it in the public interest that citizens, communities, local governments, and the private sector

cooperate and coordinate with one another in comprehensive land use planning (CTED, 2007). The GMA, by some accounts, demanded unprecedented cooperation between counties and their cities concerning what, where, and how development should occur (Porter, 2006, p. 143).

Growth management, the state VCP, and the brownfields program appear, in some respects, to be cooperating and streamlining the brownfields cleanup and redevelopment process. The GMA, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the Shoreline Management Act were amended in 1995 "to better integrate long-range planning and site-specific environmental review, and to explicitly allow development agreements as a tool for assuring long-term project planning which can allow for the complex mix of cleanup and development planning and approval presented by brownfield projects" (Wolfe & Delecki, 2005, p.4). In addition, MTCA and SEPA revisions eliminated multiple layers of approval for projects with cleanup components. Perhaps this streamlining should not come as a surprise: the GMA is administered by CTED, the same agency that administers the brownfields program. Some redundancies still exist: a Washington state official closely involved in the brownfields program noted in an interview for this study that public involvement is required for both the brownfields program and SEPA and that developers have expressed discouragement over this redundancy.

Public involvement requirements in the King County/Seattle Brownfields Program:
The Seattle/King County Brownfields Program maintains some public participation criteria for applicants. Applicants to the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund must submit

a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to receive funds. The PIP follows guidelines laid out in the Public Involvement Manual created by the state in accordance with the federal Brownfields Act of 2002 and under the guidance of the MTCA public involvement requirements (see full PIP requirements in Appendix). Generally, PIPs require several features:

- interviews with local officials, residents, public interest groups, and other interested parties to facilitate public understanding of the project
- designating a project spokesperson
- creating an information repository near the site for all cleanup action administrative materials
- publishing a public notice on the project
- conducting a 30-day public comment period (Washington Brownfields Coalition, 2004).

The VCP and liability relief statutes do not require public involvement (EPA, 2006, p. 142). In fact, "public benefit" requirements under the MTCA were significantly relaxed in 1997 for Prospective Purchaser Agreements, one of the liability protections offered under the state Brownfields Program (Wolfe & Delecki, 2005, p. 5).

Upon closer inspection, the public involvement requirements for Brownfields funding in Seattle actually "require" very little. Much like EPA's unenforceable public involvement policy, Washington's program primarily "encourages" applicants to conduct certain functions under the rubric of involvement. For example, the Manual encourages interviews with local officials and other stakeholders and states that applicants "may" conduct public meetings and "may" produce fact sheets, newsletters, and other documentation to keep the public informed (Washington Coalition PI Manual, p.3; EPA, 2006, p. 142). Further, what constitutes "appropriate" interviewees and "significant"

comments (to which the applicant must respond in writing and maintain in the public repository) appears to be at the judgment of the applicant (Washington Brownfields Coalition, 2005, p. 5).

Seattle/King County context:

Seattle and King County's history and current growth constraints provide a rich background for brownfields redevelopment. Seattle's frontier-city roots (settled in 1852) placed a high value on land as a functioning commodity and source of wealth, rather than as a shared community asset. Seattle, like most American cities in the time before zoning, mixed land uses. Heavy industry, for example, could often be found near residential areas. Seattle also changed the land to use as it saw fit. The 19th century regrading of steep hills in the current downtown area (e.g. the central Seattle neighborhood Denny Regrade) through the use of hydraulic sluicing remains a proud achievement and a constant reminder of land commodification to many in the city. Local industry began with lumber, manufacturing, shipbuilding, steel production, and coal mining followed by aviation manufacturing and more recently by high-technology industries, notably the 30,000 local employees of Microsoft (City of Seattle, 2007 A).

The growth and subsequent growth-management mindset of local officials and residents alike reflects Seattle's population shift. The city's numerous boom and bust periods currently appear stable. The local population projections maintain adequate, if not impressive, increases and pressures of growth are mimicking these numbers (Puget Sound Regional Council [PSRC], 2007). Auto traffic is among the worst in the nation

and has led many to question the advantages of the suburban, car-oriented lifestyle (Seattle Post Intelligencer, 2006 A). Mayor Greg Nickels' 'Center City' strategy focuses on encouraging economic growth, transportation, new housing, and revitalized urban neighborhoods through such tools as zoning changes, a new light rail line, and new mixed-use development. The mayor's urban agenda, sprawl, zoning changes, the Growth Management Act and the appeal of a newly-vibrant downtown has led to the construction of many new housing units and commercial spaces in the central city. Generally, density has increased rather sharply throughout the county over the past 15 years (Porter, 2006, p. 144). The demand for land in the city of Seattle increased considerably in recent years and is seen clearly in the rising cost of housing. The demand for land in recent years has become so high that formerly undesirable parcels, including brownfields, coupled with the prospects for increased profits, are now seen as viable options for development. For example, continued development and rising home prices in the "up and coming" neighborhood of Columbia City and other areas of the Rainier Valley (where one of the case studies for this research is located) are a "foregone conclusion," according to one local economist (Seattle Post Intelligencer, 2007 B).

Within this dynamic setting, public participation in Seattle holds a curious position. The region maintains a reputation for intensive public participation, fragmented decision making, and complex consensus-building processes (Bay & Parsons, 2000). The "Seattle Process," often cited by locals, appears to be an extreme form of community input whose ultimate effectiveness many question (Parrish, 2004; Faga, 2007; Westneat, 2007). The increasing use of citizen ballot initiatives to overturn legislative and/or popular votes

often confounds even the heartiest of politician and populist (the Growth Management Act was the result of a citizen initiative to curb sprawl) (McGann, 2006). Also, as the home of Microsoft and other high-technology companies, Seattle provides many city services, information, and access to public officials through the internet to match its status as one of the most wired cities in the world (Seattle, 2007 B) in the most wired region of the country ("Internet Use by Region in the United States". 2006).

Seattle's neighborhood planning efforts in the 1990's generated measurable successes and accolades, including efforts at increasing meaningful public participation (City of Seattle, 2007; Sirianni, 2007), and may partly explain the city's active citizenry and extensive 'process.' Participation efforts grew out of the 1994 comprehensive plan, a requirement of the 1990 Growth Management Act, which involved little public participation early in the process. Neighborhoods reacted confrontationally to the plan's call for urban villages and areas of increased density but without local input for these programs. The mayor and city council responded with a Neighborhood Planning Program in 1994 that established a new Neighborhood Planning Office (now defunct), funding for neighborhood planning, learning tools, a formal review of neighborhood plans by all relevant city departments, city staff accountability, and Neighborhood Planning Office project managers' relational organizing. The new participation efforts, like those discussed in Chapter 2, were largely based on ideas of mutual learning, relationships, trust, deliberation, asset-based community development, and understanding of others' perspectives (Sirianni, 2007). Other efforts complemented the 1994 changes. A City Neighborhood Council, comprised of 13 neighborhood district representatives,

provides coordination for distribution of the Neighborhood Matching Fund and budget prioritization (City of Seattle DPD, 2007). Neighborhood coordinators, in every neighborhood and involved at some level for all of the case studies in this research, officially serve as a primary link to City government for individuals and groups in a specific neighborhood. The coordinators' work includes advising community organizations in interpreting and responding to City policies and providing staff support to community organizations, community councils, neighborhood associations and neighborhood district councils (City of Seattle, 2007). Neighborhood residents, city officials, and others appreciated and praised this refocus on neighborhoods, public participation, and mutual understanding (Seattle Planning Commission, 2000; Harrell, 2007; Seattle PI editorial, 2007).

Participation efforts in Seattle have lost some steam, dedication, and direction in subsequent years. The economic downturn in the early part of this decade forced budget cuts at the Department of Neighborhoods. The current mayoral administration, which some praise for playing a long-needed and strong leadership role, appears to be attempting to undo many of the changes made in the 1990's by such tactics as funding decreases, elimination of staff, and elimination of a grassroots activists leadership development program (Siriani, 2007, Seattle City Auditor, 2007). The Neighborhood Planning Program also contained some inherent flaws. A 2007 audit showed the weaknesses of the process 13 years on. The process did not clarify how the plans would be implemented, many broad policies lacked specific goals, and participants did not feel that their enormous time investment was fully appreciated by the city. Maintaining

citizen involvement has been difficult due to lack of commitment and resources by the city.A number of recommendations were beyond the control of the citizen groups or the city (this point is clearly seen in the concerns over the loss of affordable housing and gentrification in the case studies in this research) (Seattle City Auditor, 2007).

Procedurally, Seattle planning projects generally require public participation through two routes: the State Environmental Policy Act and design review, the latter used most of the time. The City of Seattle's Design Review Program provides a forum for citizens, developers and the City to review and guide the design of qualifying commercial and multifamily development projects (City of Seattle, 2007 C). Each of the seven design review boards across the city consists of a design professional, a developer, a community representative, a local residential representative, and a local business representative (City of Seattle, 2007 D). Most interviewees for this study responded that one of the few formal methods for input on a brownfields project was through design review public meetings. A recent audit of the design review program noted the need to strengthen several key public involvement aspects of the program, including improving communication between developers and the neighborhood, improving communication between the neighborhoods and the city, and incorporating design review board recommendations into the final project construction. Of these points, the notion of incorporating board recommendations scored lowest of the three rating categories, meaning that there may be significant opportunities for strengthening this aspect of the program. Therefore, public involvement, even through official means, doesn’t necessarily indicate project/outcome influence in Seattle.

As the case studies in this research show, community organizations and Community Development Corporations in Seattle voice strong opinions on a variety of issues and appear to have strong connections to city officials and other organizations but maintain muted connections and relevance to some individual residents. City officials work closely with a number of CDCs to create affordable housing and new commercial space in distressed communities throughout the city (Seattle Office of Economic Development, 2007) and Seattle's CDCs rank high in terms of output, strength, and neighborhood impact (Walker, 2002). The city also relies heavily on CDCs and community organizations for insight and input into community concerns and other forms of neighborhood information. Developers of the brownfields sites in this study found that aligning with community organizations proved advantageous for gaining approvals and preventing future negative site impacts.

Another city participation program relevant to this study is the Major Institutions Master Plan. This program, aimed at hospitals and universities, creates local committees through special authority legislation. The details of the Major Institutions designation and its influence on public participation will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Conclusion:

As discussed in Chapter 2, the federal government has been delegating more programs, such as hazardous waste cleanup and brownfields, to state and local governments since

the Reagan administration. In response, state and local governments have created new brownfields programs. Yet, with very loose, EPA-staff-only, unenforceable policy for public participation, state and local governments have been left to figure out how and if to involve the public in brownfields revitalization projects. Subsequently, government and community organizations, which have their own methods and means for involving the public (but not necessarily in an environmental hazard context), attempt to apply what they know to new brownfield programs in hopes of addressing community concerns.

Seattle exhibits several factors that may influence citizen participation and collaboration. Seattle historically commodifies land for profit. As shown in Chapter 2, real estate profit sets the stage for a capitalist-democracy conflict, particularly when a community development corporation, for example, finds itself pulled in many different directions. Additionally, the Seattle Process may also be reflective of a citizenry that distrusts government and feels that opportunity to be heard should be an overarching goal of city officials. Citizens possibly participate more often and more effectively in planning processes, through such devices as citizen ballot initiatives and internet-based city outreach. Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Process in 1994 reflected many of the theoretical changes occurring in public participation by emphasizing mutual learning, deliberation, understanding, and relationships. In practice, all of these efforts proved at least partly fruitful but recent economic difficulties, increased political control by the current mayor, and lack of coordination show that the Neighborhood Planning Process may not have been able to reach its full potential. Finally, we see evidence of multi-stakeholder environmental cooperation in the state and region (GMA, Duwamish,

coordination in 1995 of the three environmental regulations) so there may exist a history and pattern of cooperation in the area, in addition to the Neighborhood Planning Process, that could explain the lack of intense conflict surrounding the brownfield cleanup and redevelopment decisions in the following three case studies.

Chapter 4

Olympic Sculpture Park

As discussed in Chapter 1, I chose my cases based upon several criteria for study. All three sites are completed or nearing completion, located in the city of Seattle, and funded (sometimes with technical assistance) from the county program. These sites represent contrasting situations where, at times, the community organization appears to be integral to the planning process and resident involvement and other times does not. These cases share many of the same economic, political, and social conditions, the same county program assistance, similar physical characteristics, and some of the same stakeholders, therefore making them appropriate for cross-case analysis. I also chose these cases to enlighten this study's central issues and debates of mediation and participation. The three cases that follow are arranged from least to most public participation (Olympic Sculpture Park, Harborview's Ninth & Jefferson Building, and Rainier Court) and ends with the organization (SEED) that exhibited the most effort to involve neighborhood residents in the brownfields redevelopment. I have also highlighted prominent dates in the planning process section of each case to serve as a chronology.

The Olympic Sculpture Park case provides a stark contrast to Rainier Court and Harborview. The Park is a Seattle Art Museum (SAM) project on contaminated industrial land near downtown Seattle and a burgeoning high-end residential district. This project

created a regional and national showcase for art on one of the last remaining waterfront parcels of land in downtown Seattle. Private donors, notably one locally-prominent Microsoft billionaire, provided a majority of the funding for this very high-profile project. SAM, government, and community leaders appear to have agreed almost unanimously on the park's location, cleanup, programming, and benefit to the city. Neighborhood residents appreciate the park's positive aesthetic and financial impact on their area. Unlike the other two cases, however, the Museum created no public advisory committee nor sought input, per se, from the Belltown neighborhood in which the project is located. Community organizations and community residents felt no great need to provide input into this project because it had no apparent downsides, a respected developer, a large amount of official promotion, and significant private funding. Neighborhood organizations, in fact, provided a great deal of support to the Museum, primarily at the Museum's request, and the Sculpture Park project, by most accounts, is held in high esteem. This case examines participation and community organizations within the context of a rapidly changing neighborhood, private funding and land ownership, and trust in institutions and government.

I interviewed 11 individuals for this case, including representatives of the Seattle Art Museum, the community organizations discussed below, the Department of Planning and Development, the Department of Neighborhoods, City Council Staff, former officials of neighborhood organizations, and two residents not affiliated nor referred to me by the community organizations or city agencies. The community organization representatives and most of the former officials are also residents of the neighborhood. As I note below,

I did not interview any homeless or very low-income individuals which may have resulted in some missing opinions, particularly about other needs for the neighborhood (e.g. affordable housing).

Site History and Neighborhood Context:

Figure 4.1: Olympic Sculpture Park site and neighborhood

The Belltown neighborhood's transformation from industrial grittiness to residential chic continues with the construction of SAM's Olympic Sculpture Park. In fact, the area's transformation began not long after settlement with the regrading of several hills in the neighborhood to enable Seattle's northward expansion (Crowley, 1999). The neighborhood, which forms the northern edge of the downtown business district, is one of the oldest in the city, close to the site of Seattle's original white settlers' landing in the mid-1800's. As a waterfront neighborhood, the area contained numerous industries,

many related to the shipbuilding and shipping industries. One of these industries was oil: proximity to Alaskan and Canadian oil fields and a sheltered, year-round, deep-water port made Seattle a natural site for oil refineries, transfer, and storage. Unocal Oil found the location ideal for such activities and set up a facility for transfer and distribution of fuel oil in the early 1900s (Department of Ecology [DOE], 1999). Unocal continued fuel oil activities at the site along Elliot Avenue and Broad Street until 1975, by which time the site contained a host of structures including numerous above-ground storage tanks, one underground heating oil tank, and above- and below-ground product pipelines (DOE, 1999).

During Unocal's site occupancy, leaking tanks contaminated the soil and groundwater with petroleum hydrocarbons (DOE, 1999; Hansen, 2006). Unocal discovered pollution problems six years later, in 1981, when the company sought to sell the land for offices and condominiums (Stiffler, 2007). Unocal entered into an Order on Consent with the state Department of Ecology in 1988 and began in situ treatment using bacteria to essentially "eat" the oil. This experimental treatment failed and, after threats from DOE, Unocal and the state resorted to traditional excavation of over 120,000 tons of soil and on-site pump treatments of groundwater. Inaccessible pockets of oil pollution remain under Elliott Avenue and the railroad tracks that bisect the property but, according to DOE, pose no threat to human health and the environment.

As Unocal and other industries moved operations out of the neighborhood, residents, artists, and business owners moved in, attracted to the location and existing buildings.

Former warehousing operations provided ideal space for artists while proximity to highways and downtown were attractive to commercial and light-industrial uses, such as graphics and printing concerns supplying downtown businesses. A growing number of people also viewed the area as an attractive residential district, having witnessed "industrial chic" areas such as SoHo in New York City grow into viable, walkable, historic, and unique urban neighborhoods. The area also offered an alternative to Seattle's increasing auto congestion and longer commutes. In the mid-1970's, City Council approved new zoning measures to encourage high-rise residential construction. This measure has resulted in the intense and ongoing densification of the neighborhood: for example, in the years 1995- 2002, the number of residential housing units in Belltown increased by over 50% (DPD, 2005).

Today, the neighborhood is a study in contrasts. The population of just under 9,000 has a median household income of approximately $32,000 and a per capita income of over $46,000, significantly lower and higher, respectively, than the city average (PSRC, 2003). The neighborhood also claims renters, native born, and native English speakers as a high majority of the population (except for the high number of renters, this is fairly consistent with the city average). Belltown's population also mirrors the city in terms of racial and ethnic makeup: white residents constitute almost 75% of the population in the neighborhood with black, Asian, and Hispanic groups each making up less than 10% of the remaining population (City of Seattle DPD, 2006). Poverty rates and income levels, however, show sharper contrasts. The number of households in the neighborhood making over $100,000 per year compares similarly to the city average yet the number of

households in Belltown making under $10,000 per year is almost 20% of the household population, far above the 9% for the city as a whole. The neighborhood, due to its proximity to shelters and transportation, still claims a high homeless population despite the influx of wealthy residents, shoppers, and restaurant goers. The city's demographer has stated that Belltown most likely has the "sharpest disparity" in factors such as income and real estate (Le & Parvaz, 2002).

While densification and high-end residential condominium construction soared, the neighborhood saw little open space added to the urban landscape -- the neighborhood has one of the lowest ratios of park area to population within Seattle (DOE, 1999) -- although one idea that would have had great impact on the neighborhood was proposed amidst the residential building boom in the late 20th century. Seattle open space proponents reached a watershed moment in the 1990's with the idea of creating the Seattle Commons, a "Central Park" for the city just to the east of Belltown in the South Lake Union neighborhood (another formerly industrial area becoming newly chic). A citizen floated the idea of the Commons Park idea in several columns published in The Seattle Times in the spring of 1991 and the idea became popular enough to be put to a vote in spring 1996. The measure failed due to what many perceive as a lack of understanding of density, the importance of urban amenities, and the overall elements of successful cities (Johnson, 2006). The Commons project also represented a turn to professionalization for public projects: by looking to private developers to build and develop the park and its attendant amenities, the Commons effort was viewed as a way to raise land values and tax revenues without major public expenditures, something politicians found most attractive (Iglitzin,

1995). In fact, many of the Commons' neoliberal techniques and stakeholders were echoed in the ensuing Olympic Sculpture Park process: the 'real work' of developing the project was carried out by many outside professionals and experts; the potential success of the Commons would have been partially due to the informal and low-key support of the mayor and his top aides; and the Commons board remained in control of the vision for the site and the parameters for discussions. Although the driving force behind the Commons was the a group of influential private citizens who set agendas and timelines, a groundswell of small business owners and local residents portrayed themselves as "powerless" against the "powerful movers and shakers" who threatened the area with a loss of affordable housing units and market considerations before the needs of low-income people (Iglitzin, 1995).

The failure of voter approval was also a failure for Seattle's first attempt at a sculpture park: John Shirley, the former president of Microsoft, and his wife Mary had proposed to include an area of the Seattle Commons for sculpture, within which many pieces would be donated from the couple's extensive personal collection. The couple, however, kept the dream of a sculpture park alive and soon discovered an interested, and potentially better aligned party.

Stakeholders and Community Organizations:

Figure 4.2: SAM Director Mimi Gates (along with Seattle Mayor Greg Nichols and Washington Governor Christine Gregoire) on Opening Day, January 20, 2007

> On opening day, when SAM director Mimi Gates steps up to the microphone to acknowledge applause, the first things she should say is "Thank you, Microsofties. (Hackett, 2007)

Although somewhat facetious, the above quote from an opening day special section of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reflects the philanthropy, interrelatedness, familiarity, and greatly changing face of Seattle's economy, civic pride, and urban planning. Stakeholders involved in the Olympic Sculpture Park are surprisingly few, considering the size and scope of the endeavor. However, fewer stakeholders appear to represent the enormity of private wealth in the region, the impact of the technology sector on the transformation of the cityscape, and the ability to "go it alone" when resources are marshaled for a single purpose. "Microsofties" refers to the many current and former employees of Microsoft who have earned millions, and sometimes billions, of dollars through stocks and options in the world's largest software company, headquartered to the east of Seattle in Redmond, Washington. Such intense wealth, often coupled with youth,

ambition, and a bit of cockiness, translates into many things in the Seattle region: locally-owned professional sports franchises, restoration of historic theaters, and the revitalization of entire neighborhoods. New wealth also translates into support for the arts.

> Virginia Wright, who with her husband, the financier Bagley Wright, has been at the forefront of collecting contemporary art in Seattle and has served on the museum's board since 1959, credits the change in the art climate to locally based entrepreneurial companies. "There wasn't much going on until the 1980'and 1990's," she said. "It's companies like Microsoft, Amazon, and Starbucks in such a big way – not just for the people directly involved but all the others who invested in them. That made us all have more money to spend on art." (Sheets, 2007)

Additionally, Mimi Gates, not incidentally, is the stepmother to Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft and for many years the world's wealthiest person.

This combination of wealth, a new sense of philanthropy, interrelatedness (some may say incestuousness), and home-grown familiarity puts the major stakeholders of the Olympic Sculpture Park on a different plane, in one sense, from many other brownfield projects and certainly from the other two cases in this study. However, in another sense, there are striking similarities in terms of common good, local connections, trust, and the freedom that certain resources afford which will be explored later in this study.

The top contributors to the Sculpture Park include John and Mary Shirley, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Charles Simonyi (all with Microsoft affiliations) as well as Jeff and Susan Brotman (co-founders of Costco, the largest membership warehouse club chain in the world), Bagley and Virginia Wright and Robert Arnold (local

philanthropists) and Ann Wyckoff, whose daughter Martha, a trustee of the Trust for Public Land, hatched the idea of the Sculpture Park in its current location with SAM director Mimi Gates.

In addition to these financial contributors and SAM, the Park includes other stakeholders. The City of Seattle maintained interest in this project from the beginning since the Park would add to the City's roster of open space through private funding and not take away from the shrinking budget of the City's parks department. The City and SAM developed an initial concept plan for the site which they then handed off to the Park's designers once they were chosen. The Park also includes project advisors such as the People for Puget Sound, Transportation Choices, the Washington Park Arboretum, and the Seattle Aquarium who give direction on aesthetic and ecologic factors but do not appear to have had greater roles than those in an advisory capacity.

Community organizations in the neighborhood view themselves (and are viewed by others) as stakeholders in this project. Community groups assisted SAM and kept abreast of the project's progress but had little input into the actual redevelopment design or program. The Belltown Business Association (BBA), the Belltown Community Council (BCC), and the Belltown Housing and Land Use Subcommittee (BHLUS) represent different, but not exclusive, interests in the neighborhood. The BBA represents the business interests in Belltown and does not appear to concern itself with what it sees as more residential concerns. The BCC involves itself in residential issues such as public safety, parking, traffic, and sanitation; provides a public forum to enhance the livability

and safety of the Belltown neighborhood; and serves "as a liaison between Belltown and the City of Seattle" (Belltown Community Council [BCC], 2007). The BHLUS conducts the "heavy lifting" such as producing papers on policy issues and proposed developments that will impact the area (Z. Batchelder, personal communication, April 5, 2007) and appears to be very well-informed:

> BHLUS is keyed in on everything. They've got a couple of retired architects and planners. They know more about what's going on at City Hall than I do [laugh]. Comp plans, anything to do with land use…there's been so much development in the last ten years. They've watched their neighborhood completely change and so they've made it their business to pay attention to everything…and people pay attention to them. Nothing happens without them knowing about it! (Seattle Neighborhood Coordinator)

The organization places priority on three areas: following current and proposed developments to make sure they are consistent with Belltown's neighborhood plan; promoting more parks and open space; and improving streetscapes (J. Pehrson, personal communication, March 19, 2007).

Together, these groups feel that they represent neighborhood issues from several standpoints and often referred to each other in the course of this research. Many of the officials interviewed for this research have maintained positions in their respective organizations (and sometimes multiple organizations) and other neighborhood-related committees for years.

Olympic Sculpture Park Process:

The Olympic Sculpture Park rose from the ashes of the failed Seattle Commons vote in early 1996. John and Mary Shirley wished to see a sculpture park on the grounds of the Commons and maintained their desire for this in some capacity after the vote. Their vision was well-known to their friends Virginia and Bagley Wright – the Wrights and the Shirleys sit on SAM's Board of Trustees – and SAM director Mimi Gates. Although the Museum maintains that the opportunity for the sculpture park was in accord with a master plan (which envisioned adding 300,000 square feet of space over 20 years), a sculpture park, per se, was not necessarily the planned embodiment of that vision (Russell, 2004).

In the summer of **1996**, Mimi Gates and TPL trustee Martha Wyckoff discussed the idea of a sculpture park while on a fly fishing trip in Mongolia (Seattle Art Museum [SAM], 2007). Upon their return, Wyckoff asked TPL senior project manager Chris Rogers to conduct an inventory of sites in the Puget Sound region for a possible sculpture park. Rogers, Gates, Wyckoff, the Shirleys, and the Wrights identified the former Unocal site as high priority in early 1998 and, despite the passing of a deadline for proposals, Unocal reopened the bidding process for the site after Rogers flew to California to meet with Unocal officials (Seattle PI, 2007). Several developers had placed bids on the site. Significant cleanup had occurred after the DOE and Unocal excavated soil and treated groundwater, and cleanup to residential standards was considered within reach for whichever developer took control of the site. During this time, the Shirleys agreed to fund $5 million of the purchase price and endow the park's operations with a $20 million

gift if SAM and TPL could acquire and raise the rest of the money for the waterfront site (Sheets, 2007).

Unocal accepted the SAM/TPL bid for the site in late **1998** with a $100 deposit and gave the organizations a reduced price of $17 million. The parties negotiated a purchase agreement in February 1999. Mayor Paul Schell enthusiastically supported the project and agreed to work with the Museum to address improvements to adjacent Myrtle Edwards Park and the Alaskan Way right-of-way (DOE, 1999; SAM, 2007). Following the signing of the purchase and sale agreement with Unocal, SAM entered into negotiations for a Prospective Purchaser Consent Decree with the DOE to define the Museum's remedial action obligations as a potential future owner of the site: SAM's Board of Trustees demanded that the a decree was needed before private funds for the project would be raised (DOE, 1999).

SAM publicly announced the project in **1999** as negotiations were being finalized. Some, if not many, of the neighboring residents and businesses were surprised by this announcement, even those who had been involved in committees and downtown issues for a long time.

> I'm a board member of the BBA. At the time this was proposed, I was [an official] of the BBA and [member] of the downtown district council and I was pretty close friends with Chris Rogers. The decision made to proceed on this appeared to me was made with the TPL and John Shirley and the Art Museum and Mayor Schell, long before anyone knew what was happening. Those people wanted to do this and this was the site that was chosen, this was the site that was available. So then it was announced 'a sculpture park is coming,' the involvement of the community groups was really to support this, not instigate it,

> because the instigation seemed to happen long before it was announced. (BBA board member)

The neighborhood reacted positively on this news, in part because few people had thought about this parcel of land becoming permanent open space. The Belltown neighborhood plan had identified open space as a priority, and it has been a high priority for the BHLUS, but the plan never looked at the Unocal site for this desired use (Tom Graff, personal communication, April 5, 2007). In fact, some people did not believe that the park would happen at all, even after the announcement.

> He [Chris Rogers] came to our meeting in '99. He said to us 'well, we'd like to buy this old blackstock lumberyard and turn it into a sculpture park and it's going to cost $14 million' and we were all like well there's no open space in Belltown and if something in the interest of the city isn't done with this land, it'll be turned into condos which we already have plenty of. So we were all like 'yeah, manna from heaven. If you think you can make it happen, go for it!' It was the dot-com heady days, and there were a lot of big numbers being tossed around. I was almost disbelieving – 'sure, if you want to make that happen, go ahead [said sarcastically].' (BCC official)

> This was not a site, with Unocal here, that the community said should be a park. It's not like they didn't say it shouldn't be a park but if you look at the Belltown neighborhood plan that we were doing in 1998 there was talk of more green space in Belltown but this was not a site that was looked at…it was never discussed as a Unocal park. I think most people, if they thought about it, thought it would be sold to the highest and best use: the City of Seattle can't buy that property without bankrupting the parks department or putting up another levy so it was never contemplated. (BBA Board member)

SAM embarked on a capital campaign to raise fund for three major projects: the Olympic Sculpture Park, the downtown museum expansion, and the Seattle Asian Art Museum renovation. Although the bulk of the money for the Sculpture Park was raised through major gifts from museum board members, SAM aggressively pursued public donations for the remaining funds through a public outreach campaign that continues as of this writing.

> They [SAM] clearly needed to engage people from a fundraising perspective. They were trying to raise a hell of a lot of money and needed to sell everybody on this idea, so they engaged people broadly, certainly for that reason [fundraising]. (City official)

In **2001**, SAM encountered what would be the two biggest obstacles of the entire project. The state Department of Transportation (DOT), responding to the weakened Alaskan Way Viaduct highway damaged in the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, told SAM that a tunnel might be needed to go under the sculpture park should the state and/or voters decide to rebuild the much-reviled viaduct in such a manner. According to Chris Rogers, planning for the tunnel to extend under the Sculpture Park postponed the project's progress for eighteen months, "as designers from both sides sought creative solutions for incorporating a six-lane buried tunnel under the new park" (SAM, 2007, p.22). A Seattle newspaper and others interviewed for this project perceive this search for a solution to be more aggressive: "With the DOT refusing to reroute the tunnel option away from the park, SAM delays construction and mobilizes board trustees, patrons, politicians, and environmentalists. Rogers is in charge of the effort." (Seattle PI, 1/18/07, p. F10). The tunnel option, at least for the time, was dropped due to high construction costs. The opening of the park, however, may have impacted a public vote on the viaduct replacement.

The second obstacle for SAM was another site acquisition. The Unocal site consists of 6 acres of the approximately 8.5 acre park. Mayor Paul Schell promised early on, through city parks department head Ken Bounds, that the city would transfer a parking lot and strip of land along the shoreline to the park. A third piece of land, a billiards hall at the corner of Elliot Avenue and Broad Street, was already purchased and had been permitted

for a 13-story condominium tower. As the city-side gateway to the Sculpture Park, this .33-acre piece of land was crucial for aesthetics and connections to the surrounding neighborhood. SAM once again marshaled resources to try and purchase this parcel, realizing that the cost of the land was increasing since the property owner was aware of how much this piece meant to SAM. The museum negotiated a difficult purchase and sale agreement with the land owner and used bridge loans provided by the city to fund the purchase. One interviewee stated that his organization wrote a letter of support urging the city to provide this loan. The city had also considered condemning the property and turning it over to SAM if negotiations failed (Bishop, 2000).

From this point, progress on the Park proceeded with only minor problems. The New York design team of Weiss/Manfredi was chosen from 52 applicants in a design competition sponsored by the museum. The architects created a design that incorporates Elliot Avenue and the railroad tracks that bisect the property and recreates a portion of the old hill that was regraded over a hundred years earlier. Additionally, a waterfront streetcar maintenance building on the city-owned portion of the property was demolished to make room for the park. Waterfront streetcar service, without the maintenance barn, has been replaced by bus service. Several parties opposed this move but the city backed SAM's vision and ordered the building and associated rails removed in 2004. The Olympic Sculpture Park opened to the public on **January 20, 2007** to rave reviews.

Figure 4.3: Olympic Sculpture Park

Public Participation and Redevelopment Outcomes:

By all accounts, SAM conducted extensive outreach efforts leaving neighborhood residents and business owners seemingly very pleased with the results of these efforts. Neighbors and officials, however, make no presumptions that whatever input they had made any difference to the project design. Yet all interviewees for this research expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the outcome of the project -- much more so than the other two cases in this study.

Public participation appears to have been motivated by three distinct factors: official requirements, fundraising, and support. First, the DOE required public outreach and participation efforts as part of the cleanup agreement with SAM. The agreement clearly details the tools, purposes, and methods for facilitating public participation in the Unocal site cleanup: formal public comment periods, responses to public comment, information repositories, and mailing lists are some of the tools. One may notice that these tools are very similar to the Public Involvement Plans of the other two cases in this research despite not being required for this project. SAM received no brownfields assessment funding from Seattle/King County brownfields office and, therefore, was not required to conduct a PIP. The Seattle/King County Brownfields Office provided the Sculpture Park with $34,500 in Underground Storage Tank cleanup grants ("USTfields"). One may also notice that the DOE participation methods, similar to those discussed in Chapter 2, are of a very traditional nature and not necessarily conducive to meaningful, deliberative participation, indicative of the one-way output of information that SAM intended to control. In addition to these required participation methods, SAM also sent out several direct mailings across the city of Seattle, created two programs for the city-operated television station The Seattle Channel, and maintained up-to-date project information on the SAM website.

Participation in this case also appears to be clearly divided between outreach, support, and input. Interviewees for this research often noted the efforts of SAM using the term "outreach" rather than "participation" and clearly used the former term to represent a one-way flow of ideas about the project. Interviewees, including those from SAM, also

agreed that whatever ideas they may have had for the project would most likely have been overruled or ignored by SAM's director, project manager, and the project's major benefactors.

> You know it's not like we weren't kept informed. Mimi [SAM director Mimi Gardener-Gates] briefed my committee, Mimi herself came out. And their people talked to us, but it wasn't like we were in on the decisions. And I'm not expressing any bitterness. (Neighborhood resident/former organization leader)
>
> I don't think we impacted it at all. (neighborhood organization leader)
>
> SAM had a vision of a sculpture park that would be funded essentially by the museum and be open to the public free of charge but it definitely would be a private facility therefore we were going to oversee the design as well. But people would say to me 'well what is that design process? What's the program? It would be great if we could have ballfields, etc.' Look, you know SAM's mission is the visual arts and that's really what it's going to be. But you know Seattle's a very democratic place [laughs] and people would say 'you know it would be great if you could do XYZ' and I would remind them that this was a property that was purchased on the private market and it could be 125-foot tall condo buildings. (SAM official)
>
> They had decided on a lot of stuff already. (neighborhood resident)
>
> It's not like you can really influence it. And I was more involved because I was on that leadership committee and I attended a lot of press conferences and public hearings on this on behalf of the Belltown community and on behalf of the art museum and I told Mimi directly and designers directly things that would be helpful but it's not like they are going to listen to me. My impression is that they listened to John Shirley. (neighborhood organization leader)
>
> The client group was Mimi, John Shirley, maybe the board president. That's it. You couldn't reach them to give input. Mimi talks a good story, she acts like she's very interested in what people have to say. But at the end of the day was this as much her vision too? I don't know. These are very good questions. This was a vision that John Shirley had, the art museum bought into, we implemented it, and there was not a lot of additional input required. (former neighborhood organization leader)

Despite having very few chances for input on this project, all interviewees for this research agree that input was not the focus of the outreach: outreach was conducted for

financial and political support. SAM needed to raise massive sums of money for the ever-increasing price tag of the Sculpture Park, despite having major benefactors. SAM also needed support from the City for two key pieces of land and a guarantee that certain negatively-impactful projects would not proceed. Neighbors and neighborhood organizations gladly supported the project and provided letters of support, money, testimony, and other assurances that the neighborhood was in agreement with SAM on the Park.

> So when it was announced that a sculpture park is coming, the involvement of the community groups was really to support this, not instigate it. (neighborhood organization board member)
>
> I donated to put my name on the walkway. That was a direct result of the presentation. (neighborhood resident)
>
> In fact, the role I played is Chris [Rogers] would contact me and say 'we need to get this billiards site. Some developer bought it because he knew the sculpture park wanted it. So write a letter to the city of behalf of the neighborhood saying buy this piece of land so that it can be incorporated into the park.' Things like that. I went down to City Council chambers once to lobby with Mimi and Chris. (neighborhood organization leader)
>
> Once it was announced there's this gazillionairre who's willing to front the money and make this happen and has got the Calder piece, then it was a matter of 'does the neighborhood support it and how much support are you willing to give to help create a public front for this project, not that they needed a front for this but Chris [Rogers] needed support for the art museum for federal and state grants and permitting with the City of Seattle and it helped if the neighborhood embraced it. So we were kind of used in that way. (former neighborhood organization leader)
>
> Without the city's cooperation, I don't think this would have happened. (neighborhood organization leader)
>
> We were certainly substantial community supporters. We generated some fundraising activity on their behalf including a contribution from us on behalf of our members. But probably our greatest contribution was in support as the art museum went through the travails of dealing with the transportation consequences and the general approval process of dealing with the city. There were instances and sometimes at a very late notice to come to events that were being held by the

> King County Council as they did an onsite hearing and things like that just to show our community support for the museum's intention of converting the space to the sculpture park we now have. (neighborhood organization leader)
>
> The organizations provided a lot of support for some things that we were going after, so they were helpful there. (SAM official)

SAM's reputation proved to be a major asset in this project and influenced public participation and neighborhood organization reaction to the project. Most interviewees for this research expressed negative views toward the City of Seattle Parks Department and an overwhelming opinion that this project could not have been accomplished if the Parks Department were in charge. Ironically, the Parks Department has an extensive public participation process that would undoubtedly have allowed the public greater input and influence into the Sculpture Park's final design. In fact, interviewees often stated that the Sculpture Park, even with extensive funding, would never have happened with public input due to many competing objectives. On the other hand, SAM's reputation for quality and civic objectives created good will among stakeholders and a level of trust not seen with the Parks Department or other entities.

> The city [City of Seattle Parks Department] has shown a total inability of managing urban parks in Seattle. (former neighborhood organization leader)
>
> I mean if it was the Corps of Engineers, I bet we would have just ripped them because they don't have a good reputation in this town. God knows if it was Burlington Northern, forget it. There would have been a lot of concern. If it was a private developer, it would have gotten intense scrutiny. (former neighborhood organization leader)
>
> We were sure SAM was doing a good job. We weren't concerned that they were going to rape the area. (neighborhood resident and organization member)
>
> [What if the City Parks Department was doing the same project?] We would be in there. (neighborhood organization member)

Finally, all people interviewed for this research consider this type of project to be essentially unobjectionable. As opposed to more high-rise condominium development or office space, a park is a "no-brainer," according to a city official. Others uniformly agree that open space is warmly welcomed in a neighborhood that is sorely lacking in such an amenity.

Although minor compared to the compliments received on this project, I uncovered one negative theme during this research related to the reputation of SAM and the aftermath of such a large project. All parties, with the exception of the waterfront streetcar supporters, appear to be quite satisfied with the outcome of this project, yet a few interviewees commented that the aggressive and privileged attitude of SAM possibly damaged the museum's reputation with city officials in the Department of Planning and Development. SAM approached several city requirements, such as permitting and getting access to the city-owned waterfront parcel, as something that need not be discussed due to the civic benefit of the park. A senior city planning official commented that SAM "pissed off a lot of people at the city [Planning Department]."

> I heard that in terms of the whole permitting process that they [SAM] were a major pain in the butt to work with. (city official)
>
> It's an elitist organization. (former neighborhood organization leader)

Residents and neighborhood organization officials indeed appear to view SAM as an elitist organization but do not seem to mind. City officials expressed most of the negative comments and basically seemed bothered that SAM did not want to follow city planning protocol. Whether or not this will affect SAM's working relationship with the City of Seattle on future projects remains to be seen.

A multitude of factors affected public participation and the role of community organizations in the Olympic Sculpture Park project. Power, in this case, resided with essentially two entities: John Shirley and Mimi Gates (as representative of the board of SAM). John primarily approved the site, chose the programming, and chose and approved the architects and designs. He could exercise this power because of his large financial contribution and the threat of pulling this funding essentially forced concessions by other stakeholders: without his funding, the city would get no park, SAM would get no new exhibit space, and local residents would get no new open space.

SAM also had some power but much more influence and authority. SAM, in terms of project logistics and specifics, sometimes heavy-handed city officials in order to gain concessions (additional land, blocking tunnel plans, etc.). SAM also had a great deal of respect from the public and used this authority to its advantage, particularly in fundraising. SAM's reputation, private funding, strong outreach, and the benefits of open space (particularly when compared to additional condominium and office development in a neighborhood saturated with such uses) created an atmosphere of minimal participation yet strong community support. Despite the appearance of shared power with local organizations on certain project components, individuals Individuals and community organizations provided very little, if any, input into the Park design and space program despite having a history of strong community involvement on other projects and a reputation for keeping up-to-date on developments within the neighborhood borders. In fact, several interviewees discouraged more public participation and noted that the design

of the park, and indeed the park itself, would have been compromised with extensive public input.

> When we hired Weiss Manfredi, we had a very public process, we had a committee that made the selection and did the interviewing but we also brought the candidates to town to do presentations, to respond to questions, we wanted to see how people would interact with the neighbors and others. It was not a public committee, it was a SAM committee, with some community representation but it was very much a SAM-directed, controlled process. My bias is that good design gets diluted through that democratic process. You don't want input. It doesn't serve the design process well. This is not a public park but I can certainly tell you that I think a lot of public parks are really poorly designed because they are trying to achieve consensus and I think a lot of them are better driven by a vision that is smart and well-informed and certainly responds to feedback but you want to stay true to that vision. And I think a public process will tell you whether you are on track or not to doing something that is the right thing for a certain location. (SAM official)

> It [the Sculpture Park] wouldn't have been focused on art. It would have been diffused into a bunch of other little needs for a bunch of other little constituents. It would have been fractured, it would have lost its cohesion. There would be a hygiene center for the homeless, more parking, a City Light power station… It would have become a tug of war between the mayor and council. I don't think there was any tug of war between Mimi and John and Chris over press coverage or anything like that. (neighborhood organization leader)

Interviewees added that they not only trusted SAM and the design of the park but also distrusted the City's efforts at public participation. Interviewees feel that the city is often misguided in its efforts to engage the public and often gets caught up in bureaucracy and process. Too often, interviewees explained, the city falls into the trap of the "Seattle Process" and attempts to please as many people as possible, at the expense of clear, quality design, programmatic goals, and a cohesive long-range vision for the future.

> But having exposure to the parks department, they struggle with bureaucracy and their own rules and regulations like any other department. The benefit of a private organization is that while they have to meet all the standards that the city would establish, they aren't tied up in their own underwear in terms of who they can use how they can get things executed. (neighborhood organization leader)

> You know the city always struggles on outreach on whatever issues, on projects, on programs. (city official)
>
> I think this region doesn't do a very good job with the 'vision thing.' We don't, for whatever reason. We're not very successful at doing this kind of broad…even in our comprehensive planning, it was more about looking at elements: land use, public safety, and parks and open space, and then sort of planning neighborhood by neighborhood. But we don't create this vision of what the city or even the region ought to be like with broadly involving not only the key political and other leaders but the citizenry more broadly in terms of crafting a vision for a desirable future and moving forward together. This area is notorious for being fractionated and doing things patchwork and the Seattle Commons was an attempt at it and it failed. (city official)
>
> Outreach is outreach: you don't have to reinvent the wheel. But it's the responsiveness and the decision making that would have been mired down [by the city]. There would have been too many people participating and I don't mean activists. Too much in city government would have been participating in it to allow things to move forward in a timely manner. There's a reason there hasn't been another world's fair in Seattle! They've allowed the process to take things over. (neighborhood organization leader)

It is doubtful that organizations and residents had any real power in this case. Organizations and residents could not threaten to pull support since the region-wide scope of the project would have drowned out the dissent. Organizations may have had some impact and power on getting some details worked (e.g. additional land parcels) but this probably would have happened anyway since city officials were strongly, but behind-the-scenes, supportive of this project. With no deprivations to inflict and no great conflict of interest, community organizations and residents had no real power in this case and, thus, no real participation opportunities and decision making ability. City officials also wielded little power in this case despite having the ability to transfer land to SAM and alter other projects that would have negatively affected the Sculpture Park. City officials also did not have any conflict of interest with SAM over this project: officials wanted this park as much as SAM and John Shirley. This project was also a benefit to

city officials since the city did not have great authority in this case due to the low public opinion of the parks department.

The neighborhood's socio-economic dynamics do not appear to play a strong role in this case. Despite a majority white and increasingly wealthy population (populations who have traditionally had stronger roles in planning processes), community organizations and individuals could not influence the design and programming of the Park. The interviewees for this case, however, acknowledged that the fact that the project was a park greatly influenced their need to participate. The area's significant homeless and poor population did not have a significant voice in this project either but since I did not interview any homeless people for this research, I can not be sure of the their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the Sculpture Park.

The neighborhood's rapid development and significant rental population may partly explain the neighborhood's acceptance of the Park project and the absence of noticeable conflict in this case. Residents and community organizations, used to years of condominium development and increased density, may have been more grateful for an open space project than other neighborhoods in Seattle. Unlike the Rainier Court neighborhood, for example, which strongly supported increased affordable housing and commercial development, Belltown residents expressed an interest in open space (but as I noted above, my interviews may have missed homeless and/or low income individuals who would prefer affordable housing). Renters, who constitute a large portion of the neighborhood population, may not have felt that they had a significant stake in the

neighborhood nor knowledge of neighborhood projects due to their new tenure. Renters may also not have been aware of the community organizations in their neighborhood due to unfamiliarity with neighborhood resources. Framed by the literature debates in Chapter 2, the Olympic Sculpture Park exhibits some clear characteristics. SAM provided outreach (but not input) on the Park redevelopment and followed an already-existing cleanup plan with traditional roles for public participation, and those interviewed did not express a concern for the cleanup. In one sense, community organizations played a mediating role by 'defining realities' and provided a framework for understanding the project, the cleanup, and the neighborhood's needs. They did this primarily by informing and educating (the BHLUS, more than the other organizations, advocated and seemed more adversarial for some projects in the neighborhood but it was unclear to me how much the group actually encouraged individuals to participate in the planning process). However, in their dissemination of infrmation, organizations downplayed the cleanup, whether by trusting the DOE agreement or by not fully understanding the severity of the contamination, and this translated into individuals' lack of concern for the site pollution. The organizations also helped gauge the neighborhood's concerns and supported the developer in this case. Some could view this case as a cooptation of community organizations by SAM and city officials but organizations often fight other projects in the neighborhood (against the density-building stance of the current mayoral administration) and residents expressed a desire for open space before the idea for the project even existed. Without a doubt, however, economic, political, and spatial contexts played a strong role in this case. Private funding, private property, a respected and well-connected institution, government endorsement, and a dense, waterfront, upscale neighborhood

impacted the outcome and process of this project and produced very desirable results with very little meaningful public participation. Compared to the other two cases that follow, input on the project was significantly less and the community organizations played essentially a non-adversarial role with the developer of the site yet interviewees overwhelmingly support this project more than Harborview's Ninth and Jefferson Building or Rainier Court.

Chapter 5

Harborview Medical Center, Ninth & Jefferson Building

As the second case, Harborview represented a kind of "middle ground" between the other cases in this study. The developer (Harborview Medical Center), the neighborhood groups (some more active in this project than others), and the Citizens Advisory Committee played roles that contrasted with the Rainier Court and Olympic Sculpture Park cases with both lesser and greater involvement by individuals, influence by the community organizations, and satisfaction with the planning process and project outcomes.

Harborview Medical Center, a quasi-public entity, cleaned up a former dry cleaning site for the location of a new clinic and office tower in the heart of a residential neighborhood with a history of large, adjacent, institutional uses. Harborview's redevelopment of the site maintained consistency with a master plan for the area. Community organizations in the neighborhood conducted minimal outreach to residents on this project despite being active and powerful stakeholders in other neighborhood planning projects: individuals participated of their own accord primarily through the outreach efforts of the medical center. Community organizations, however, maintained a pivotal link between the medical center, Harborview's Citizens Advisory Committee, and officials with the city's Department of Neighborhoods and Department of Planning and Development. The

community organizations in the neighborhood did not have a great effect on the outcome of this project, specifically, but significantly impacted the creation of the institutional master plan, which guided the brownfields redevelopment.

I interviewed 12 people for this case. Interviewees represented the CAC, Harborview Medical Center, the Department of Neighborhoods, the Department of Planning and Development, the adjacent affordable housing development and various neighborhood organizations discussed in this case, and two residents who were encountered on the street and not affiliated with the neighborhood organizations (one resident occasionally attends meetings, the other rarely does so). One, and possibly two, of the interviewees live below the poverty level.

Site history and neighborhood context:

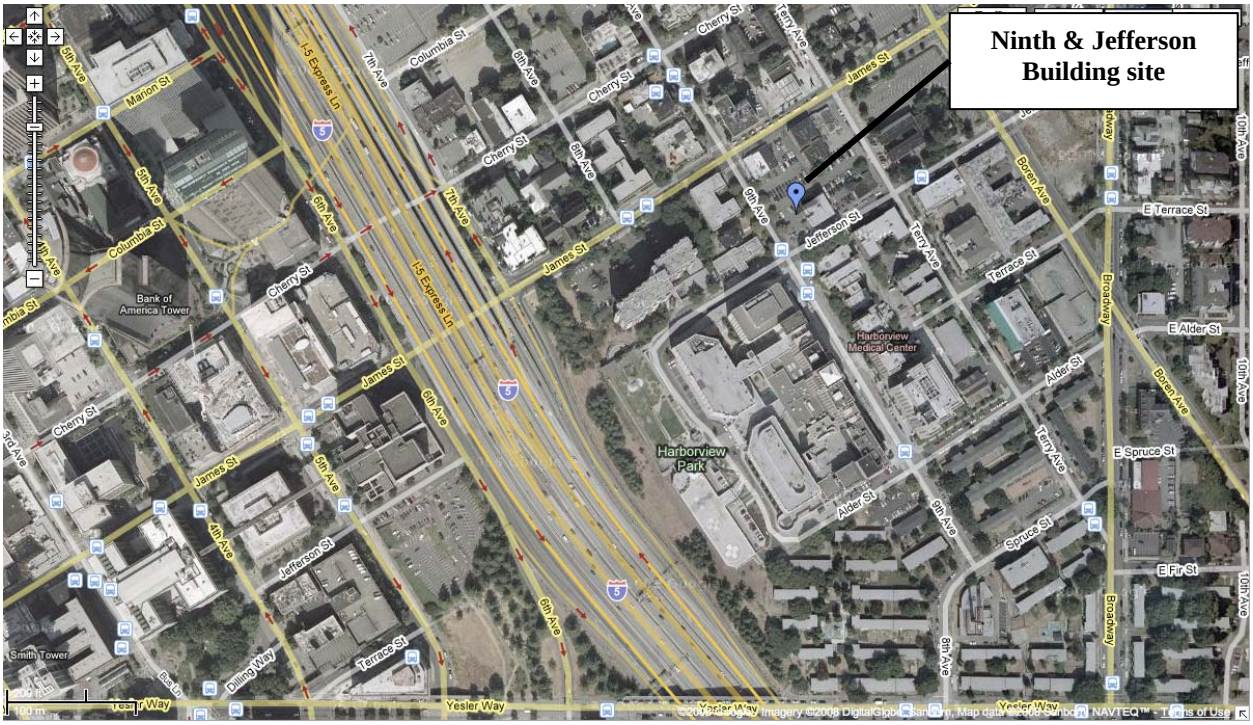

Figure 5.1: Harborview Ninth & Jefferson Building site and neighborhood

First Hill is one of Seattle's oldest and most changed neighborhoods. The neighborhood started out as a tony area of town for the late 19th century elite who wanted to escape the skid row and crowded conditions of downtown to the higher ground and better air quality of the Hill. As residents continued to move east with the advent of better transportation and accessibility to the farther reaches of newly fashionable Capitol Hill, First Hill's better air became attractive to hospitals. By the early 20th century, the neighborhood was known as "Pill Hill" due to the concentration of hospitals: locals still refer to the area by this moniker. Hospitals and medical-related services continue to constitute a major portion of the local economy and land uses. The medical field makes up the highest percentage of jobs in the First Hill neighborhood and the hospitals are internationally renowned for treatment in many specialties (Seattle PI, April 26, 1997).

The neighborhood underwent economic and residential transitions by the middle of the 20th century, a transition that continues to the present day. The elite residents who had first settled the neighborhood moved out and were replaced by a more economically and racial diverse populace. The neighborhood's residents are more economically disadvantaged, transient, and slightly more racially and ethnically diverse than the city as a whole. The population almost exclusively (close to 90%) rents their housing and falls significantly below the city average for household and per capita income levels. The poverty level for the neighborhood is twice the city average. Residents are primarily native-born and speak English.

Higher density residential construction continues to replace older, single-family residences and First Hill claims the second highest residential density in the city. The First Hill Urban Village neighborhood plan of 1998 called for more housing and a preference for a variety of housing types, including affordable workforce housing (City of Seattle, 2008). Despite these calls, some residents perceive a loss of affordable housing in the neighborhood, particularly rental housing (Seattle PI, 4/26/97; Debby Gibby interview). As regional housing market costs have increased, along with the demand for affordable housing among the neighborhood's economically disadvantaged, the number of affordable units in the neighborhood decreases due to condominium conversions and expanding institutional uses. A large number of condominiums and market-rate apartments are currently under construction on First Hill (particularly on the west side of the Hill, surrounding the Ninth & Jefferson site) in response to the increased cache of city living and the inconvenience of long commutes, and apartment rents are rising as condo conversions sharply reduce the number of available apartments (Jones, 2007). Housing affordability levels in the Puget Sound region have dropped to an all-time low (Prosperity Partnership, 2007). Housing densities and the residential concentrations remain among the highest in the city and region, yet continue to compete for space with some of the largest institutions in the Pacific Northwest, which are expanding programmatically and spatially.

How First Hill will grow into the future may depend in part on the First Hill Urban Village neighborhood plan adopted as part of the city's comprehensive plan. As part of the plan, the neighborhood states its visions and goals for the future:

First Hill envisions itself to be:

- A home to people with a full range of incomes, abilities, and interests
- A regional center for state-of-the-art health services
- A dynamic neighborhood ready to meet the challenges of the future
- A community that celebrates its rich history and cultural heritage
- A premier city neighborhood with opportunities to grow
- A premier business and employment center with opportunities to grow ("First Hill Neighborhood Plan" 2007)

The visions and goals laid out in the plan, and seen clearly in this case study, reflect the constraints and tension witnessed today between institutional uses and residents, economic and community development, affordability and growth, and historic preservation and new construction.

Harborview Medical Center and Major Institution designation:

Harborview Medical Center began as a six-bed King County welfare hospital in a two-story South Seattle building in 1877. In 1931, when the center wing of the present hospital location was completed, King County Hospital's name was changed to Harborview (Harborview Medical Center [HMC], 2007 A). Harborview Medical Center is owned by King County, governed by the Harborview Board of Trustees, and managed by the University of Washington. The hospital serves as a multi-state regional level 1 trauma center, able to respond to major catastrophic events, particularly earthquakes in the Pacific Northwest.

Harborview lies in a Major Institution Overlay District, as designated by the City of Seattle's land use code. The Major Institution designation began in the early 1980's in response to programmatic and spatial expansion by institutions across the city (Seattle

Planning Commission, 2000). An official at the city's Department of Neighborhoods summarized the origin and current structure of the designation in an interview for this research:

> Seattle found many years ago that there was a great deal of conflict, especially with medical institutions, related to the transition in Seattle between being a state-serving city and a regional-serving city. After the 1960's when Seattle began to explode, many of our institutions, or hospitals especially, began to be regional trauma centers, for instance for Harborview they serve Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska. Because of that, as a result they began to explode in growth. And as they began to expand out into communities, the inevitable conflict between the scale and nature of development required to support a regionally serving hospital, like Harborview, and the existing development surrounding it, which was often very low density, often single family in many cases. The city had a dilemma – how do we deal with that? Some cities developed simply an institution zone. We found that because of the way our city was oriented and the location of things we found that wasn't very worthwhile because if you were looking at a specific institution zone using any kind of standard zoning or land use criteria, you could never justify the kind of transitions along the edges that you were getting. So instead the city negotiated a compromise. The institutions got the ability to almost virtually ignore zoning. An overlay would be established. They could propose to the city the changing of any development standards or criteria within that overlay zone. The underlying zoning would continue: in some institutions it's single family with a 37 foot height limit but their overlay zone may go up to 250 feet. And they did – almost all the institutions did that. In exchange for allowing that process the community was given a couple of assurances. The community was told 'we're going to put a boundary around the institutions and they will not be allowed to grow without coming back to the city and asking for change in their boundary beyond that. But within that boundary, they could be quite intense. And, 2, you will be involved and the city will play a brokering role with you, the community, and the development of plans and programs and the heights and everything within that zone. And in order to do that we'll form a formally civic-appointed citizens committee for each institution that oversees community involvement in the development of that plan.

According to the city's land use code, Major Institution overlay district rules supersede underlying zoning for the area (Seattle Land Use Code, 23.69.006). Additionally, the design of buildings at major institutions (educational or medical campuses) or other governmental entities (county, state or federal) are not required to be reviewed by one of

the City of Seattle's boards or commissions, such as the design review process discussed in Chapter 3. The "civic-appointed citizens committee," the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), appointed for the creation of the master plan, has since morphed into the second, standing committee that is still in existence today.

The land use code, as discussed above, dictates the composition of the CAC and the Department of Neighborhoods enlists a protocol for formation. The Committee consists of approximately twelve individuals representing local residents, land owners, renters, and businesses, as well as users of the institution and the institution itself. Solicitation letters go out to mailing lists for everyone that lives within two blocks of the institution, every community organization in the district, an institution-created list of possible candidates, and the neighborhood coordinators' contacts in their jurisdiction. Notices are also placed in the city's land use bulletin, the paper of general record, and the local newspaper. The Department of Neighborhoods also follows up with phone calls and emails to others that they feel may not be captured in the previous manner. "We typically get, depending on if it's a 'hot' institution with an issue or not, 50-60 volunteers for 12 members plus alternates" (city official). The land use code specifies that committee members should have some relevant experience. The CAC, according to the city's land use code and to city officials interviewed for this research, is "balanced, independent, and representative" (Seattle Land Use Code, 23.69.032) and, "at least if it's functioning well, forms a bridge between the community and the institution. It doesn't always happen." (city official interview).

A city official admits that the original master plan CAC contains much more influence than the standing committee. The master plan CAC produces one of three documents (the others produced by Harborview and the city's Department of Planning and Development) of supposedly equal weight for review by city council for final Master Plan approval. "They have a lot of power at that point" (city official interview). After plan approval and transition to the standing committee, the CAC is strictly advisory and no longer has the statutory role before the hearing examiner and the city council and "sometimes it's a reality that people on the standing committee struggle with." (city official interview). A resident and member of the original and standing CAC agrees: "one thing you learn if you are on the citizens advisory committee is that the word 'advisory' does not mean that you decide, and if you think that the word 'advisory' means that you decide you are going to be an even unhappier camper." (resident/CAC member interview).

Stakeholders & Community Organizations:

In addition to Harborview Medical Center and the CAC, the Ninth and Jefferson project includes other neighborhood stakeholders. The neighborhood supports several active and well-known neighborhood organizations involved in the Ninth and Jefferson (NJB) project: the First Hill Improvement Association (FHIA); the First Hill Community Council (FHCC), which was disbanded for a few years and only recently reformed; and the Yesler Terrace Community Council (YTCC). I confirmed the relevance of these organizations to the NJB project with Ted Divina and Jose Cervantes, neighborhood

coordinators for the Central District and Capitol Hill/First Hill respectively, as well as with other interviewees.

The Community Councils represent neighborhood interests to the larger neighborhood district councils. The First Hill Improvement Association, founded in 1958 by a group of concerned residents, originally fought attempts by the State Department of Transportation to have just one overpass across the new Interstate 5 highway connecting First Hill with downtown Seattle. Their efforts brought 4 overpasses, and created the foundation for a community group that has fought for the interests of the area for over 46 years (First Hill Improvement Association, 2007). The FHIA promotes the area, keeps citizens abreast of events in the community, and represents residents, business owners, the hospitals, and property owners (FHIA official interview): this differs from the First Hill Community Council which represents only neighborhood residents (city officials interviews).

I would like to make a note about the FHIA at this point that may provide some explanation for the group's involvement on the NJB project. An official at the FHIA is also a senior project manager at one of Seattle's largest real estate development firms. When I first contacted this official to request an interview about the NJB, she responded that the NJB was essentially of no concern for her organization, nor should it be a concern for the neighborhood residents:

> As far as I am aware, there has been absolutely no discussion of environmental issues regarding this site with our group. As a developer in Seattle, the handling of environmental issues on any individual project is never cause for public discussion --- that is between the developer, lender, DOE, and any known adjacent property owner that is directly effected. There is no "public comment

> process," therefore we have nothing to offer on this site nor any knowledge that it was a brownfields issue.

I received the following response after sending a second request for an interview:

> It's not an unwillingness to talk -- we just don't know anything about the site (at all). The contact I gave you at Opus [the contractor] is much more familiar with that area and the development around Harborview Hospital (owned by the county). Since it's being developed as additional medical office support for the hospital, there isn't much interface between the public and the development process.

Further interviews and documentation research show, however, that there is indeed a public comment process, there was some interface between the public and Harborview, and the FHIA does have some concerns with new institutional development in the neighborhood, which will be discussed below. Subsequently, this official contacted me several months after this email exchange to speak about the NJB and FHIA's role in the neighborhood. According to this official, FHIA views itself as "the conscience of the neighborhood" and the "enforcer of the plan" (neighborhood plan) and provides a "friendly reminder" about the provisions of the plan that developers, including Harborview, must follow.

Ninth and Jefferson Building Process:

The Ninth and Jefferson Building project continues the expansion of the Harborview Medical Center into the First Hill neighborhood (see Figure 5.2). The NJB project involves the development of an entire block of First Hill with approximately 450,000 feet of space in a 14-story tower for the Harborview Medical Center. The project is to house a center for infectious disease control, the King County Medical Examiner, laboratories, the Involuntary Treatment Act Courtroom, retail, and underground parking (HMC, 2006

B). The Project is part of a larger HMC expansion and earthquake stabilization project, funded through a $193 million voter-approved bond issue. Of the $193 million, $120.3 million will be used for cleanup and redevelopment of this new facility. In addition, as requested by the surrounding community, the new building will have 2,000 square feet of retail space and will create an estimated 220 temporary construction jobs and 40 permanent retail jobs (Public Involvement Plan application).

Figure 5.2: Harborview Ninth & Jefferson Building site and downtown Seattle (background)

Residential uses occurred on the NJB site from the late 1800's until 1960. In about 1960, the residential dwelling was demolished and a commercial building was constructed at

the site. Since that time, the site has been leased to a variety of commercial enterprises, including laundromats, dry cleaning, restaurants and a beauty salon. The site contained rental housing and two businesses prior to NJB construction: the Happy Garden Restaurant and the coin-operated White Town Laundry (PIP document and Harborview official interview). A former governor of Washington owned the site prior to purchase by Harborview.

The NJB project falls within the purview of the Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP) for the area. The project as such has been in the crosshairs of the Medical Center for several years and within the consciousness of the neighboring public and the CAC. The Plan called for construction on the Ninth and Jefferson site and allowed buildout of the entire block up to 11 stories. The Master Plan originally called for a two-phase NJB project: construction of the underground parking garage and 5-story building base paid for by the original bond followed by the tower and, most likely, another voter-approved bond several years later.

Input for the master plan and the NJB project began when the CAC for the Master Plan formed in **1994** or **1995** (city official interview). According to King County's Public Involvement Plan for the NJB project, "the primary mechanism for involving the local community in cleanup decisions and reuse planning" is the CAC. The original CAC completed their charge with the plan approval by the City Council in 1999. The original CAC included members of the FHIA, the YTCC, and the FHCC. Only a member of the YTCC continues to serve on the standing committee that exists today.

King County put the Harborview Bond Project bond before voters in November **2000** to fund construction of two adjacent projects: the NJB and the Inpatient Expansion Building and Seismic Upgrade (IEBSU). Voters approved $193 million for both projects with NJB getting a majority of the funding. According to the NJB project's public involvement plan, Harborview held a community charette in 2001 involving the CAC, First Hill residents, former patients, social service agencies, King County and the City of Seattle (PIP, Attachment 5). No one outside of Harborview interviewed for this research mentioned this charette.

King County purchased the NJB site in September **2003. The county** conducted a Phase I site investigation, discovering past dry cleaning operations, and Phase II soil and groundwater sampling under the parking lot and sidewalks in anticipation of the purchase. The Phase II sampling identified detectable levels of tetrachloroethylene. The tetrachloroethylene contamination at the site is presumed to have originated from historic dry cleaning operations.

King County, through the City and County's joint Brownfields office, applied for an EPA brownfields cleanup grant in 2004 and received $200,000 for the removal of the tetrachloroethylene contaminated soil (EPA brownfields fact sheet, 2004). Beginning approximately at the time of application for the grant, Harborview, DPD, and the CAC conducted almost all of the public participation efforts for this project. The three groups met throughout 2004 to discuss and coordinate strategies on potential issues with the site,

primarily design changes from the original master plan and some traffic impacts. However, these issues were slight enough to warrant no further action from what was already designated in the master plan. (city official interview).

DPD required standard notification procedures for this project:

> We typically do a public notice within 300 feet of the site, a mailing notice, and then we also put out the white board on the site itself. And I think that maybe the way things are laid out up there that there aren't very many residential units within 300 feet….we also do an online information bulletin. (city official interview).

The general public could access and comment on the cleanup plan for the site, called an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), from **May 2, 2005 to June 1, 2005** (HMC, 2007 C). The cleanup plan received no comments:

> I received absolutely zero comments…For whatever reason, we didn't receive any comments on any issue related to Harborview. Maybe the folks that were interested were well-informed early on by the CAC or maybe Harborview did some of their own outreach early on, which could have very well happened. (city official interview)

The CAC and Harborview did indeed conduct their own outreach but whether that outreach focused on cleanup or redevelopment issues remains unclear. The CAC's outreach appears limited to reporting back to their constituents and gathering public sentiment regarding project issues. Since the land use code states a preference for several CAC members with organizational and/or professional affiliations, there does appear to be a CAC link to community groups, property owners, residents, and business groups. Harborview, as part of their ongoing outreach for the Master Plan and outreach stated in the brownfields cleanup grant public involvement plan, utilized several participation methods. Harborview conducted the aforementioned community charette in 2001 (which

ultimately resulted in the decision to not vacate neighborhood streets, much to the delight of neighborhood residents interviewed for this research), produces a quarterly newsletter on capital projects, sends emails to interested parties, maintains a website for capital projects, attends community meetings when asked, and "knocks on doors" of adjacent residents. As part of the Master Plan guidelines in the land use code, Harborview also maintains a publicly-accessible data repository for the project. Harborview officials told me that their "intent is for everyone's voice to be heard clearly…we stay in touch with our neighbors" (Harborview official interview). Harborview received several public comments and responded to each comment in writing (these comments will be discussed below).

Cleanup activities commenced in August **2005** in accordance with the Washington State Department of Ecology's Voluntary Cleanup Program and a determination of "No Further Action" was issued in the fourth quarter of 2006 (HMC, 2007 C).

The NJB project encountered a major stumbling block in the course of redevelopment negotiations. Turner Construction negotiated $15 million more to accommodate higher construction costs for the Inpatient Expansion Building and Seismic Upgrade project across the street. This increase, coupled with an additional $15 million increase in estimates for the NJB, left a $30 million shortfall (Ervin, 2006; Cohen, 2006 A). To address this shortfall, the King County Facilities Management Division proposed the option of using a lease-lease back approach for building occupancy and the Harborview Bond Oversight Committee developed a strategy to continue the project (County

Executive Correspondence 9/18/06). Essentially, Harborview turned over construction of the NJB to the National Development Council, a private corporation, who then hired the project developer. The National Development Council will technically own the building when it is completed and lease it back to King County/Harborview Medical Center for $13.6 million a year until construction bonds are paid off, at which point the county will take ownership of the building (Cohen, 2006 B). The deal, which was approved by King County Council on October 30, **2006**, also allows the NJB to be constructed in one phase and with three additional stories. The design alteration allows greater setbacks from the street and seems to appeal to stakeholders involved in the project. The Ninth and Jefferson Building project is scheduled to be completed at the end of **2008.**

Public Participation and Redevelopment Outcomes:

Despite the appearance of extensive outreach efforts, both required and stakeholder-initiated, stakeholders in the NJB project appear to have mixed feelings about public participation and the influence of community organizations in this process. Stakeholders addressed several issues apparently to successful completion but others remain unresolved. Perhaps the greatest feeling about this process from the residents' perspective was summed up best by a local resident and member of the CAC: "part of [the planning process with Harborview] has to do with an awareness that stopping the train is not possible so let's soundproof the station!" Although Harborview officials see the planning process for the NJB as "completely collaborative," many interviewees for this research appear to concur with the train station metaphor.

Public Participation:

Public participation for the NJB project occurred in two specific stages and this impacted the level and influence of participation efforts. The CAC formed for the creation of the Master Plan exerted much more influence and appears to have had a great amount of say in the final Plan, given the constraints of the CAC's regulatory origins (discussed below). All of the interviewees for this research agree that the Master Plan CAC was particularly influential in expressing the neighborhood's concerns for the development of the Harborview campus and the NJB in particular:

> That's the only way to have any community control of power – to be a part of the committee that forms and works on the original Master Plan and then get on the standing committee. Those are the steps to power and influence. (resident/organization member)
>
> Obviously, the CAC would have had a venue for that early on [referring to public comments on the plan]. (city official)
>
> Yes, that committee [the CAC] was involved in monitoring a lot of things that were related to the institution's plan, and brownfields, and to the general development of the NJB. (city official)
>
> It [the CAC for the Master Plan] has some fairly significant oversight functions, it doesn't have control over anything but its opinions are taken very seriously by the mayor and city council and hearing examiner. (city official)

But the nature of the discussions focuses on the impacts of the building itself, not necessarily the design of the building or whether the building should even be built at all:

> The concern was…they [the CAC] got involved in things like haul routes. How are materials going in and out of the neighborhood? Is it protected? Are they adequately assured that contaminated materials are not going to be further contaminating the neighborhood? (city official)

> Our concern is where the building meets the ground. Issues like retail, parking, sidewalks, lighting, safety and traffic. Traffic is a major concern. (organization official)
>
> No we don't have the ability to stop projects – we do have the ability to move truck routes. (resident/CAC member)

Most stakeholders view the CAC as reasonably representative of the neighborhood and neighborhood issues. Only one interviewee for this research expressed some frustration with the composition for the CAC, stating that she believes the Department of Neighborhoods deliberately tries to keep her and the neighborhood organization that she represents off the Committee because she is viewed as a 'troublemaker' and someone who will cause disruption to the planning process (see quote below). Most neighbors, community organizations and officials believe that the CAC is fair and as representative as it is allowed to be despite the fact that the city has the ultimate say in who is on the committee:

> I think it is now [representative of the neighborhood]. I think that in its original configuration it missed the north side. You are aware that it is the city that puts together the CAC right? (resident/CAC member)
>
> This is very unusual: they have added people to the CAC when it became clear that there was a group in the surrounding population that didn't get asked in the first place. (resident/CAC member)
>
> He [the director of the Department of Neighborhoods] may come back to me and say 'hey, you don't have enough diversity' at the same time we're trying to make sure that renters are represented and homeowners are represented, and property owners, and apartment owners, apartment renters…it gets to be a huge balancing issue to try and make sure that the diversity and full range of interests in the neighborhood are represented because it is a fairly formal committee. (city official)

But one interviewee felt that the Department of Neighborhoods may not have wanted controversial figures involved:

> The major institution and the city has (sic) the right to decide who sits on those committees and if they think you're controversial or you'll put a spoke in their plans, the major institution will say 'hey, I don't think she'll be a good candidate.' And while I may see their point of view, I also take the point of view that every time I have worked on a project that had contention, we've always ended up with a better product and it's always to the benefit of the major institution. They just need to be forced…this is where community involvement really makes a difference. (organization official)

While the above interviewee's opinion contrasts with the opinions of other organizations, hospital officials, and city officials on the issue of CAC composition, this opinion may be more reflective of the recent re-formation and spatial area of interest (several blocks north of this project site) of the group than with deliberate bias as a "controversial" organization. I discovered members of the CAC who, according their own and others' opinions, have controversial and strong opinions that may not agree with Harborview's plans. These members and other interviewees feel that their long history in the neighborhood and immediate spatial adjacency to the project site (adjacency as a resident or as the spatial focus of the organization) may matter more to Committee inclusion than their controversial views.

Other Participation Efforts:

Most interviewees for this research commend Harborview for its outreach efforts and the hospital appears to have made great strides in informing the community about the NJB and other capital projects on the campus. In fact, Harborview received an award in 2001 from the Planning Association of Washington for citizen involvement directly related to the NJB:

> Connecting the Visions: Harborview Medical Public Benefits Charettes was an Honor Award winner in the Citizen Involvement category. This ground breaking

> approach to defining public benefit for the purposes of deciding whether local streets should be vacated 'set a new standard,' according to one judge. (Planning Association of Washington, 2001)

This may be related to Harborview's status as a public entity:

> Well, Harborview is public. And I really do think that because of Harborview's public status it may have something to do with their better performance on neighborhood outreach than some other major institutions…better than a private institution. (resident/CAC member)

And many people, though not all, believe that Harborview is becoming a better neighbor through such efforts:

> Our relationship to Harborview? It's a good relationship. They come to us if they need support with something and also present to the group with a new project. (organization official)

> They [Harborview] attend community meetings when asked. They have a hotline number and that number is available to people in the neighborhood: I think the number goes to the planning office and then the planning office goes to the construction people and say 'no, no, no, you cannot start at 6am.' They pass out flyers…they're getting to be a better neighbor. (resident/CAC member)

> Harborview gets the best grade on keeping the neighborhood informed and doing what they can to ease the impacts of major construction on the neighborhood and there is no way that having major construction down the block or across the street is not going to be a big nasty deal. (resident/CAC official)

> They [Harborview] feel that they do a good job [with outreach] but I don't feel that they do an adequate job. (organization official)

Additionally, most interviewees for this research made a point of mentioning that the First Hill neighborhood may be less confrontational and more accepting of new development than other, particularly less urban, neighborhoods. This appeared, to me, to be a point of pride:

> We're fairly development tolerant. (organization official)

> Essentially, First Hill has been, I think, less confrontational with processes like this than some other neighborhoods. (resident/CAC member)

> You get the impression from me that everything is contentious here but the most contentious major institution master plans aren't in the urban areas. They are in places like Northwest Hospital, which is smack dab in the middle of a single family neighborhood. There is actually more hostility in a single family neighborhood than in an urban area because a lot of it is difference in attitudes. They're all 'it's all about me and my property' and a person in an urban area they have a different attitude about thinking about what's best for everybody. (organization official)

Finally, interviewees for this research often noted Harborview's role in lifesaving and as a regional amenity. This factor, and the others mentioned above, may explain a certain level of tolerance for Harborview's development activities and a lack of significant conflict in this project. Regarding a different Harborview project that involved the relocation of a helipad for emergency transport, one resident states "the neighborhood pretty much looks at it as providing a necessary service…you know that there is a large noisy something overhead and I'm on the flight path and it's pretty obnoxious but on the other hand the person in that helicopter is probably seriously bleeding and needs to get there." (resident/CAC member)

Outcomes:

The NJB project involved several of the neighborhood's key stakeholders. Overall, neighborhood stakeholders seemed mildly satisfied but not enthusiasticabout the outcomes of the NJB project and the Master Plan process generally. City officials express surprisingly similar attitudes:

> Yeah, I guess so [when asked if he was satisfied with the outcomes of the NJB]. (city official)

> If I had to sit down and measure what I thought about the Ninth & Jefferson project, I personally don't think it's the best plan and the best use. I think they can do better, however, it's not the worst thing I've seen yet. It's not something I can be happy with but I can learn to live with it. (organization official)
>
> The Major Institutions Master Plan is as good as it's going to get and it's a fairly good document. (organization official)

Despite the fact that the NJB site is a brownfield, stakeholders expressed almost no concern about the cleanup of this site other than haul routes through the neighborhood for trucks carrying contaminated soil. All interviewees stated that they trusted that Harborview and the state Department of Ecology would conduct a cleanup in accordance with state cleanup standards. All of the concerns with this brownfield dealt with the redevelopment, not the cleanup, of the site.

The project addressed several issues brought up by the neighborhood stakeholders and city officials but was not able to resolve the concerns of all involved. The original plan to vacate 9th Avenue was met with opposition by the neighborhood and, through the charette process, Harborview and the neighbors were able to propose a skybridge as an alternative (the city planning department prefers not to allow skybridges but made an exception in this case and granted a permit). Additionally, the neighborhood persuaded Harborview to change the truck haul routes for this project to go around the Yesler Terrace housing project and avoid a school and a nursing home, both with active street crosswalks. And, as mentioned above and in the Public Involvement Plan submitted for the brownfields cleanup grant, the neighbors expressed a desire for street level retail that was lost when

the building on the site was demolished to make way for the NJB. Harborview agreed to include street level retail in the NJB project.

Two issues remain unresolved. First, neighbors and city officials are concerned that the replacement street level retail at the site will not be affordable to residents or even to most users of the hospital, especially given Harborview's significant treatment of un-insured and low-income patients. The EPA fact sheet for the cleanup grant paints a picture of neighborhood poverty and institutional responsiveness:

> Harborview Hospital is located in a federally designated Enterprise Community in the city of Seattle. While the hospital serves the entire city of 563,374, the neighborhood's immediate population of 6,025 is significantly more impoverished. Nearly 70 percent of Harborview patients are covered by Medicaid or other government programs, or are uninsured. These and other needy populations will be served by the clinics and other facilities to be housed in the facility. At the request of the surrounding community, the new building that will be built on the site after cleanup will have 2,000 square feet of retail space and will create 220 temporary construction jobs and 40 permanent retail jobs.

As one resident explained:

> We've asked for street level retail. I've seen an uncomfortable amount of street level retail around town…and it's also real that the square foot costs of the new building is probably higher than the storefront of the coffeepot and toaster building [referring to the old building where you could not have the coffeepot and toaster plugged in at the same time for fear of blowing a fuse]. But the dry cleaner, shoe repair, whatever, are not likely to move in. And how many poofy restaurants per block can you put in? (resident/CAC member)

The retail affordability issue echoes a larger, second issue that remains unresolved and caused probably the biggest upset both within the CAC and between the CAC, Harborview, and the neighborhood residents. Interviews and documentation for this research repeatedly mentioned the loss of affordable housing in the city of Seattle and in the First Hill neighborhood. The community councils and the city's neighborhood

coordinators expressed great concern for the future of affordable housing and how the loss of this type of housing is going to affect the neighborhood's diversity, considered a valuable asset by those interviewed for this research. A number of affordable units (it was never made clear to me exactly how many) were destroyed when the old building at the site was torn down. The agreement, according to a member of the CAC, was that the units would be replaced in kind. Harborview, however, responded by saying that there was no way that they could replace the housing one-for-one. A CAC member recalls the controversy:

> They [Harborview] were to have replaced them one for one, but they came up with this 'alternate' arrangement whereby they had replaced it with fewer units but for a longer period of years and the units that they had replaced them with are senior housing rather than workforce housing. I don't remember if it was the entire, but it was a strong, strong majority of the CAC that were miffed to the point of frothing at the mouth….So a majority of the CAC said 'you said that you were going to replace it, you promised. This is not what we call a replacement. This is not one for one.' And Harborview said 'we've been looking and looking and looking,' which was true, 'and this is the best we can do and according to the agreement we can't proceed until we replace it with something and so we're going to do it.' And that was the end of it. (resident/CAC official)

Some neighborhood residents viewed this as a betrayal by the CAC against the neighborhood:

> There are a lot of rumblings because they [Harborview] took down a lot of housing units. There are people in the community who feel that the people on the standing committee betrayed the community. And knowing how many [affordable] housing units we've lost over the years and the lack of affordable housing, it's a big deal. (organization official)

Community Organizations:

As mentioned above and detailed throughout this chapter, the CAC is without a doubt the primary access point to influence decisions about the NJB and other capital projects at Harborview. Community organizations, however, play an important role in the NJB process, notably through the dependence of city officials, neighborhood coordinators, and Harborview officials on the organizations for gauging the concerns of the neighborhood and recruiting new members to the CAC. Neighborhood coordinators and city officials all stated that they "rely" on community organizations for accessing and involving neighborhood residents in the planning process. While NJB project decisions are influenced mainly by the CAC, filling the CAC appears to be placed, both procedurally (through neighborhood coordinators and city officials' outreach methods) and legislatively (through CAC member requirements in the land use code), primarily in the hands of the neighborhood organizations. Aside from the CAC, however, community organizations and individuals have few venues or more direct access for influencing decisions at Harborview.

Public participation in this case was generally somewhat similar to the Olympic Sculpture Park. Access to decision making bodies was tightly controlled by those in power (in this case, the Department of Neighborhoods and Harborview administration controlled access to the CAC) and traditional methods of public participation were used. However, this case offered residents and community organizations some access to the CAC, which was the only real venue for influencing major decisions for this project. Specifically, public participation only had some real power in the formation of the Major Institutions Master Plan. The CAC, with some representation by local residents, influenced the size and

scope of the Plan. The CAC exercised this power through the land use code which vested authority for creation of the Master Plan in three ostensibly equal branches: the CAC, Harborview officials, and the Department of Neighborhoods. Outside of the CAC, residents were able to interact with the planning office and contractor at Harborview and their input changed certain procedures (truck routes) and project plans (the skybridge). Residents also attempted to influence larger issues at the site. Although residents did not gain back the affordable housing that was lost in the building demolition, many (but not all) felt that Harborview and the CAC listened to their concerns and attempted to provide for the lost housing.

The fact that this site was contaminated mattered little to residents and community organizations. Organizations, like at the Sculpture Park, did not view the cleanup as a concern and one even considered it not cause for public discussion. An official at the city's Department of Planning and Development offered that community organizations and Harborview may have done a good job informing residents about the cleanup.

Community organizations in the neighborhood varied in their efforts to promote residents' participation in the planning process, ranging from no involvement to encouraging individuals to participate in this and other neighborhood projects. The organization that perhaps best exemplified the mediating possibilities of community organizations, however, was largely left out of the planning process and the CAC, although I am unclear whether this had to do with the group's 'troublemaking' reputation or primary focus on issues in other sections of the neighborhood. All community

organizations in this case played a mediating role in the sense that they gauged public concern for city and Harborview officials, worked with the hospital for some changes, and assisted in providing a framework for the neighborhood's concerns by informing and educating. In defining realities, however, at least one organization felt that contamination issues (and some redevelopment issues) were essentially not a neighborhood concern. Although it may have appeared that the community organizations were co-opted by government officials and the hospital, organizations in this case have conflicted with Harborview and city officials on other issues and other neighborhood groups on First Hill have fought hospitals outside the CAC and have emerged, at least temporarily, victorious (Eskanazi, 2004).

Context and neighborhood dynamics played an important role in this case. Politically, Harborview remains an important and powerful player in its own development and participation methods (as witnessed by the approval of CAC members) and the Department of Neighborhoods enforced this limited participation structure. Harborview senior executives (the president himself, according to one city official) were intensely interested in this project and held the true decision making power in this case. The decision to build this structure, remove the existing uses, and install new amenities was in the hands of senior hospital officials. As opposed to the Olympic Sculpture Park, the power in this case was not given to Harborview officials by virtue of money but rather by virtue of authority. Residents, organizations, and Harborview officials had, and continue to have, a conflict of interest over several issues but Harborview could not impose sanctions or deprivations on the neighborhood. Instead, Harborview used the Master

Plan as justification for the project, backed up by the authority of the Department of Neighborhoods and Department of Planning and Development. Organizations and residents basically shared the belief in this authority, thus justifying it. Harborview officials also rationalized information that, at least according to some interviewees, won out against other arguments. This rationalization was most apparent in the decision to not replace all of the affordable housing lost in the demolition of the old building. Harborview said, and the CAC and many others ended up believing, that it had tried to find replacement housing but could not do so. Whether by authority or a better argument, many believed this opinion and conceded, although the issue still remains.

Residents greatly feared the economic impact of neighborhood gentrification and loss of affordable housing. Their fears were increasingly realized as many were re renters of low income whose apartments were being converted to condominiums as downtown living became increasingly popular for middle and upper income professionals. The next case in this study, Rainier Court, addresses many of these same fears but with a different outcome and possibly a model for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment projects.

Chapter 6

Rainier Court

The Rainier Court case highlights the potential and pitfalls for Community Development Corporations that take on brownfields cleanup and redevelopment projects. Unlike the neighborhood organizations in the Harborview case, the Southeast Effective Development Community Development Corporation (SEED) maintains a very strong presence within the Rainier Valley neighborhood. Until recently, its strong ties to Seattle City Hall has helped the organization accomplish many projects and still retain local respect due to strong public involvement efforts and consistency with the neighborhood plan. Neighbors have expressed mounting concern, however, that increasing density and rising home values, partly due to SEED's development work, may be forcing them out of the neighborhood. The following case exemplifies the capital/community debate discussed in Chapter 2 and sheds light on the vital yet delicate role that the CDC plays in this changing neighborhood.

Rainier Court is a former vehicle storage lot (and site of much illegal dumping) redeveloped into affordable housing and commercial space. SEED, a long-standing and respected organization, owns the site in a low-income, high-minority and, until recently, low-demand area of Seattle. SEED involved community residents according to the requirements of the Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Fund (BRLF), and also has a history of communication and outreach with neighborhood residents. The organization's

vision, site control, longevity, and strong political connections greatly affected the outcome of this project. SEED officials saw themselves as playing an advocacy role for community residents in local brownfields projects; my research identified other roles for the organization as well.

Site History and Neighborhood Context:

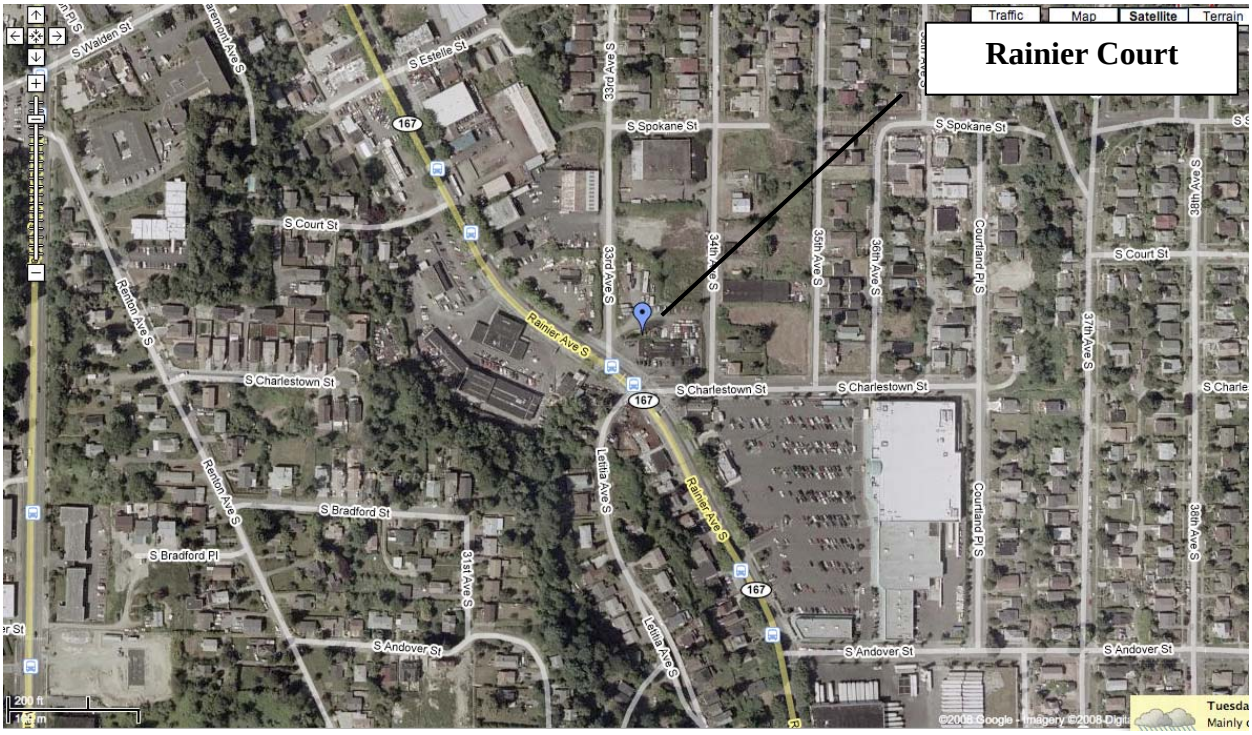

Figure 6.1: Rainier Court site and neighborhood

The Rainier Valley neighborhood of Seattle bears the scars of long-term economic decline and neglect but is currently witnessing a rebirth due to community reinvestment, rising real estate values, large-scale transportation improvements, and gentrification. The Rainier Valley has been the city's most diverse neighborhood for the past 40 years, with 60 different ethnic and cultural groups reported in the 2000 census. "When compared

with the rest of Seattle, the Rainier Valley contains the greatest concentrations of low- and moderate-income people in the city, and many pockets of poverty. Seattle's two largest public housing projects are located in this neighborhood, and 15%-20% of residents receive food stamps." (Southeast Effective Development [SEED], 2005). The neighborhood contains almost equal proportions of white and non-white residents and has owner-occupied housing rates almost equal to the city as a whole. The neighborhood's household and median income levels fall below the city average and approximately 22% of the population lives below the poverty level.

The 13 people interviewed for this case included representatives from government (EPA, DPD, Office of Economic Development, Office of Housing, City Council, Department of Neighborhoods); SEED and other neighborhood and business organizations; a SEED board member; and two residents living near the project (one recommended to me by another interviewee and one not recommended to me by any of the other interviewees). Interviewees reflected the diverse racial and ethnic makeup of the community but may not have been representative of the neighborhood's lower-income residents (I did not ask interviewees for their income level). However, SEED would likely have addressed any representation that I may have been missing in my interviews: this development was specifically addressing the needs of lower-income individuals.

The Rainier Court cleanup and redevelopment exemplifies community-based initiative amidst negative economic conditions and rapid neighborhood change. For years, the neighborhood's lower income translated into lower rents and lack of development due to

negative return on investment for developers. The Rainier Court site's mix of dilapidated building, fenced-off lots, and overgrown weeds reflected environmentally harmful past uses (Baerny, 2004). Since the 1940's, the site has been used for commercial purposes, including vehicle storage, welding, office space and a mortuary (SEED, 2005). The site also suffered from legal and illegal dumping of construction debris and contaminated fill. It housed a number of industrial businesses, such as electrical maintenance and auto repair, with activities that may have contributed to soil and groundwater contamination (Cook, 2004). The 7-acre site has been blighted for the past 30 years and has been used not only for illegal dumping but also criminal activity. In 1997, the City of Seattle assisted neighborhood volunteers in removing tons of garbage, including furniture, cars, baby diapers, tires and drug paraphernalia from the site. Cleanup and redevelopment of the site, according to SEED, will result in new housing and jobs and serve as a catalyst for additional investment in the area. (SEED, 2005).

In recent years, Southeast Seattle has indeed witnessed significant redevelopment. The Rainier Valley Square shopping center opened in the late 1980's with 104,000 square feet of new commercial space and successful retail outlets. Since then QFC grocery store, Lowe's Hardware and Starbucks have opened successful stores in the area. The two local public housing projects are being redeveloped into mixed-income neighborhoods with increased density and quality design, through U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Hope VI Grants (SEED, 2005). In addition, the Sound Transit Link light rail project located along Martin Luther King Way South, less than a mile from the Rainier Court site, will begin service in late 2009.

SEED:

Southeast Effective Development formed as a community development corporation over 30 years ago to address neighborhood disinvestment and economic decline. As stated in the original mission, the organization strives to improve the quality of Southeast Seattle neighborhoods, businesses, and public institutions (SEED, 2006). SEED maintains current networks and relationships that stretch back to the organization's genesis: current King County Executive Ron Sims and former Seattle mayor Norm Rice are both founders of SEED; Earl Richardson, the current director of SEED, was once the director of the Seattle Office of Housing. According to a SEED official, the organization's business and political relationships with the city and county are quite strong, partly due to connections with Sims and Rice (SEED official interview). This official added that the ability to stay high on the agenda of successive mayors is "critical" to SEED projects.

SEED works toward several broad and long-range goals in order to achieve its mission. Similar to the apparently conflicting goals of the First Hill neighborhood plan discussed in Chapter 4 and the capitalist/democracy debate discussed in Chapter 2, SEED hints that it may be dealing with contradictory issues:

> SEED's enterprise is consistent with trends in areas that are not often found working in tandem: affordable housing, economic development, arts and cultural programs. In Southeast Seattle, SEED has proven to be effective by influencing these community-based business dimensions through stewardship resulting in:
> - Increased affordable housing stock
> - Improved and additional retail and commercial enterprises, and
> - Increased cultural facilities and entrepreneurial opportunities

> Additionally, SEED provides support and fiscal agency services for new and emerging coalitions and grass roots organizations. SEED seeks to build upon existing successes and extend our reach through expansion of housing, economic development, arts and cultural opportunities. The phases of this strategy include continuous improvement to the infrastructure of the organization, systematically adding housing programs, and expanding of retail, cultural, and commercial ventures. (SEED, 2006).

SEED engages in numerous projects throughout the community and has, according to the organization, brought over $200 million into the Rainier Valley for economic development, affordable housing, and arts programs (SEED, 2007 A). Interviewees for this research concur with this assessment and often note that initial contact with SEED was through previous neighborhood projects and events, not the Rainier Court redevelopment project.

Stakeholders and Community Organizations:

Many neighborhood and city stakeholders contributed to the Rainier Court project although the extent and influence of involvement appears quite mixed. SEED worked closely with the Seattle/King County brownfields office and the Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to secure funding from EPA grants and revolving loans for site sampling and cleanup. The Seattle Office of Economic Development (SOED) offered a Community Development Block Grant low-interest loan to SEED and the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle, with partial funding from the County's EPA grants. SOED also provided technical assistance, soil and groundwater sampling, and underground storage tank removal. Although the project lists EPA and the Senior Housing Assistance Group as additional partners, involvement by these entities

appears to be limited to grant oversight and housing management respectively. No other community groups, other than SEED, are listed as partners in this project.

Rainier Court Process:

The Rainier Court project consists of a four-phase development (Phase I is the primary subject of this research) on 7 acres in the heart of southeast Seattle. The project began in the mid-1990's on the heels of a commercial redevelopment SEED was completing only a block away. SEED's development of the Rainier Valley Shopping Center was a blessing to a neighborhood that, to this day, suffers a dearth of retail opportunities. The Rainier Court site, at a prominent bend on busy Rainier Avenue South, consisted of several parcels of light industrial, commercial and residential land uses with almost 20 separate landowners. A number of operations on these parcels contributed to the extensive and varied site contamination, including: metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) related to dumping and contaminated fill; perchloroethene (PCE) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) related to electrical equipment maintenance and cleaning; and petroleum hydrocarbons leaked from the six underground storage tanks on the premises. SEED approached the Rainier Court project unaware of the extent of contamination.

Rainier Court, or at least the concept of neighborhood redevelopment in this area, grew out of ongoing neighborhood planning occurring as a result of state's Growth Management Act requirements. The city's **1994 Comprehensive Plan** designated the North Rainier area as one of seven "urban villages" with the intent of encouraging

"growth in areas with the infrastructure, services and zoning capacity to handle it." (Seattle Comprehensive Plan). The Plan, prescient at the time, stated that "North Rainier needs to face the challenges of population and employment growth through the year 2014…the City's designated growth targets for the North Rainier Valley Hub Urban Village are 3,500 new jobs and 1,200 new households," a 50% increase from current household figures (Seattle Comprehensive Plan).

Many community members were actively engaged in neighborhood planning during this time and SEED was a part of the process. At the same time, however, SEED had set its sights on the collection of underutilized and likely-contaminated parcels of land at the intersection of Rainier Avenue South and 33rd Avenue South, adjacent to the recently-completed Rainier Valley Shopping Center. SEED benefited from neighborhood dialogue that took place as a result of the Urban Village plan. Open channels of communication with a community who was engaged and knowledgeable about neighborhood planning issues and opportunities gave SEED clear direction for the location, size, and type of redevelopment:

> There was a group of folks...who had spent the last two or three years already talking about those kinds of issues, asking questions like 'how could we support the development of housing in a way that would produce quality affordable housing, that would create some activity in these places, that could support retail.' There was a vocabulary that was established, there was a familiarity with some core concepts, they had worked through some of the more challenging issues that typically eat up a lot of your time when you're working on a specific project. It seems impossible to me to imagine that an organization like SEED could have proceeded on those projects without some significant opposition that may not have carried the day but it would have been something that they would have had to deal with if the neighborhood planning process hadn't paved the way. (resident/SEED board member)

SEED began assembling land in **1994** and took almost eight years to complete this task, one of the biggest challenges to the organization but also a key to its success. Interviewees suggest that SEED's ability to wait six years to assemble the project site would have been difficult for a private developer.

The project encountered a major obstacle that forced a complete shift in project strategy. Up until this point, SEED envisioned a completely commercial enterprise for the Rainier Court site, much like the shopping center it had just completed on the nearby block. By **1999**, SEED realized that landowners of two key pieces of land could not be persuaded to sell. These street-front pieces would be crucial to attracting commercial tenants to the project. A local resident and community organization official interviewed for this research noted the difficulty in acquiring these pieces:

> I wish they [SEED] could get control of the piece that's sitting in front of the building. We have a little bit of old ownership in Rainier Valley left over from the bad old days where people sat on property for years: there wasn't enough of a market and they just continued to not do much with their properties and that's a prime example there. The project would be so much more but the years of assemblage on that, quite frankly, have a lot to do with what the outcome is because money gets funny when it takes that long. I mean, it's really difficult. (community organization official)

Without street-front access and visibility, SEED shifted the project to instead build a 6-story, 230-unit affordable senior housing rental complex with 15,000 square feet of retail uses on the first floor. Design and permitting of the project occurred through most of **2003**. Although neighborhood residents still desired the original commercial development, the urban village plan also called for increased residential construction at higher densities:

> The residential environment comprises multi-family, single-family, and mixed-use housing in clean, safe neighborhoods affordable to a broad range of people. Housing density increases near the core of the urban village and around transportation hubs. Multi-family housing is not concentrated in one area, allowing increased density while not overwhelming the community. (Department of Neighborhoods, 1999, p.34)

Neighborhood residents and city officials remained supportive of the project despite this shift in strategy since affordable housing was one of several goals to come out of the neighborhood planning process. SEED's ability to keep the neighborhood informed of these major changes throughout the long development process will be discussed below.

SEED found financing of the project to be another major challenge but had several advantages: the organization owned the site, which developers found attractive; SEED had a track record of successful construction projects in the neighborhood, which added to the group's credibility; and the city was "highly supportive" of the group, according to SEED and city officials, and was committed to assisting the organization through financing and expediting the permitting process. Despite these advantages, SEED still struggled to attract private investors to the project:

> It was very difficult to attract private capital to the project. The Rainier Valley is one of Seattle's poorest and most ethnically-diverse areas. Persuading investors and developers to back the Rainier Court project was a tough sell not only because the acreage sat on contaminated land, but also because of its location: no one wanted to invest in an area with low rents and high crime…[land] purchases were initially funded by a series of grants and low-interest loans from government sources. No private investor would take on such a risk until momentum had developed in 2004. (Phoenix award application, p.6)

SEED's funding challenges, however, didn't completely overshadow the group's desire to proceed on the project with as few requirements as possible:

> …for Rainier Court, they [SEED] purposefully didn't go after city [housing office] funding and wanted to go it alone to avoid a lot of the city's requirements. Our funding comes with a lot of bidding requirements, wage rates to be paid, and lots of different things. So to the extent that he [SEED executive director Earl Richardson] could do the project without that, like any private developer, pick whoever he wanted to be the architect, pick whoever he wanted to be the contractor, pay whatever wage rates the contractor was going to pay, and not have to deal with strings… (city housing official)

Although other forms of financing, such as tax credits, contain many requirements (Washington State Housing Finance Commission [WSHFC], 2007), these requirements often lie on the tenancy side of the redevelopment process (e.g. the number of housing units dedicated to low income families; the number of years a unit will be dedicated to low income families) or with market and contractor feasibility (e.g. housing market studies; the financial capacity of the development team). SEED managed to avoid city hiring requirements by not accepting funding from the Office of Housing, requirements which would have likely slowed down the redevelopment process, which was already under a tight schedule due to the low income housing tax credit timelines. SEED finally managed to attract capital to the project and fully finance the remaining construction: SEED provided limited equity, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission provided low-income housing tax credits and bonds, and US Bank provided conventional financing (Phoenix award application, p. 12). Phase I of the Rainier Court project was completed in late 2004 and the first occupants moved into the building in **December 2004** (see Figure 6.2). The EPA recognized the Rainier Court project with the **2005** Phoenix Award, the highest honor for a project of this kind, and the award committee called Rainier Court a "national model" (Cook, 2006).

Figure 6.2: Rainier Court, Phase I

Public Participation and Redevelopment Outcomes:

Public Participation:

SEED actively engaged neighborhood residents, businesses, and community organizations in the Rainier Court project and also had to navigate through a variety of requirements that sometimes put the group at odds with neighbors. SEED's initial involvement in the mid-1990's neighborhood urban village planning discussion provided a dialogue and a platform from which to focus on site-specific projects:

> There was a pre-made process, if you will. They didn't have to create the avenues through which they would make contact with key folks involved and the questions about how the neighborhoods would develop over time. So if we were engaged in decisions about zoning in the neighborhood planning process that, while the area I

> was focused on didn't exactly include the Rainier housing development, a lot of the neighborhoods were dealing with similar issues, and were making zoning recommendations that would make it easier to do housing development in Southeast Seattle. (resident/SEED board member)

Overall, residents, other community organization leaders, SEED board members and city officials interviewed for this research seem pleased with the Rainier Court project and with SEED's outreach efforts. Unlike the distinct participation phases seen in the Harborview project, SEED maintained a continuous dialogue with the community and city and county officials. SEED continues to attend neighborhood community organization meetings to update members on project progress and to address neighborhood concerns (Phase II is now complete; Phases III and IV are currently under construction):

> They [SEED] continually got to us and some of our meetings were kind of tense, but they kept coming back. And I can't speak for other neighbors but I felt like they were really trying to work with us and kind of trying to give us what we wanted. (resident)

> I don't think SEED can be faulted for lack of public input because when they did go through a lot and when they were trying to get these plans moved forward, the neighborhood groups were really wanting to see something move forward so they were very happy that SEED was taking this on and doing something there. I think SEED probably did more than what others would have done in terms of neighborhood input. (city economic development official)

> They [SEED] have been very good at engaging the neighborhood. (resident)

The project has also gone through the city's design review process, which includes public comment. Public comment focused primarily on density and massing of the building but also addressed traffic, streetscape, and owner occupancy issues. Several interviewees for this research also noted a lack of design attractiveness for the exterior of the building, especially given the building's prominent location. Like Harborview's Ninth and

Jefferson Building, SEED maintains an information repository for interested community members to review and conducted the required 30-day public comment period on remediation plans. SEED also conducted monthly updates (in writing and in person) on the planning and cleanup process to community groups in the neighborhood. A SEED official stated that she felt SEED educated the community on the contamination at the site. Whether as a result of their outreach efforts or not, the SEED official stated that neighborhood residents expressed little concern for the site contamination (I received the same lack of concern from other individual interviews for this research).

Issues and Outcomes:

The neighborhood expressed several concerns about the Rainier Court project which, to date, have not been completely addressed. Neighborhood residents, community organizations, and business groups identified issues related to increased traffic, parking difficulties, adequacy of streetscape improvements, and owner-occupied units:

> Overall, it was a fairly positive process. There were definitely strong feelings on the part of the neighbors. We wanted owner-occupied units, we wanted attractive units, we wanted something that would blend in with the existing neighborhood and we worked very, very, hard to push that agenda. (resident)

Interviewees expressed a desire for environmental cleanup in the area but did not necessarily rate it as a concern:

> The neighborhood residents were more interested in redevelopment issues. (SEED official)

> The brownfields portion of it, I think, was a non-issue frankly because I don't think many people knew about it. I think people saw it as a collection of parcels, usually with a single-family home on it or nothing, that was in pretty poor shape for years and years, maybe with junk cars or garbage, individual ownership by a lot of different people and essentially it looks like nothing's going on there. So to have a redevelopment, I think people see it as 'hey, something's happening here,

> finally!' so I don't think the brownfields aspect of it came into play really at all. (community organization official)

The biggest issue to come out of the Rainier Court project concerned the density of the building. Residents not only expressed concern about the density of the building itself during design review meetings, community meetings, and interviews for this research but about how this project will serve as a harbinger for the future buildout of the neighborhood: "there have been some negative comments, I think, because people would have like to have seen a less-dense project" (SEED board member). Neighbors link the Rainier Court project with increasing neighborhood gentrification and, consequently, with SEED. A SEED official expressed concern that for "the first time ever" there is a "backlash against density" and that "gentrification is a big issue now." When I asked a resident if SEED is seen as part of the gentrification problem, she replied "I think so. I think to some extent it is possible that they are seen like that."

Despite being linked to density and gentrification issues, many people think that SEED officials were doing the best they could in a difficult situation. Interviewees almost unanimously claim that they truly believe SEED is doing what's best for the neighborhood but must make decisions, at times, for political or business reasons that may not mesh completely with neighborhood desires. For example, neighbors and city officials understand that the funding requirements for this project essentially dictated the high density and large profile of the building:

> It's a tough balance – we want to get something done, but you want to get something that the community desires too. Would it be nice for it to be less dense? That would be nice but for them to feasibly develop something here, they had to rely on housing tax credits and the scale of it to make it feasible. If the environmental wasn't an issue and these other cost factors weren't an issue, it

> might have been less dense. So it's pretty intense here, the density, but part of it is because there's not much going on around it. So as this starts to fill in, I think the stark density there will blend in a little better. (city economic development official)
>
> I feel that overall they were trying to do what they could to help us but they still had a business to run and a project to get done. I know that they are supposed to be proponents of low-income, good, affordable housing. I think that there definitely is a business side, I don't think they make a lot of money, I think that they have a lot invested in seeing their projects be successful and I think there is the whole political thing of getting stuff done." Is it for community benefit or for keeping themselves alive? I think it's for community benefit and it's a very tough position. They need to build lots of units for very little money and I think that because they have a lot of federal grants, the restrictions are even tighter but I think they see themselves doing what they do for the community. (resident)
>
> But you [SEED] are living in two different worlds. You're living in the community and you're living in a larger political process that is designed to get certain things done. (resident/SEED board member)

Community Organizations:

SEED initiated and greatly influenced almost every aspect of this project. Rainier Court would most likely not have been built if it had not been for the efforts of SEED. The organization maintains a long-standing presence in the community, expertise in real estate transactions, and close ties to city leaders. All interviewees for this research concur that SEED is the driving force behind the Rainier Court project:

> SEED was instrumental in helping to redevelop this section [of the Rainier Valley]. Nothing happened there for years just because the cost for a typical developer to go in and not only buy all these parcels but to do the cleanup was prohibitive to redevelop. That's why a neighborhood group like SEED was very useful to work with. (city economic development official)

No one, however, believes that SEED maintains total control or has any real power in this project:

> Power is always an issue. Regulators and financiers have a great deal of power. We [SEED] don't control regulations and we don't have money. (SEED official)

> It's a very important balance but it's not an equal power environment. I think SEED had the drive and the interest to get the project built and without that you don't get projects built. But they needed to be funded by a city agency and that was aligned with some national objectives that was channeling funds from the federal government. And it had to be broadly in line with what the surrounding neighborhood wanted…you can't do projects like that with full opposition of the community. (SEED board member)

This case, however, exhibited the only real decision making power held by organizations or residents in this study. SEED executives, notably, Earl Richardson, and the board of directors determined the exact site, the use, the financing, and basically all outcomes. Like Harborview, SEED could not truly withhold anything from residents in order to gain concessions to a common point of view. Overall, SEED, other organizations, residents, and even city officials were of like mind regarding the need for neighborhood improvement. These same stakeholders, however, differed in their opinions on the specific vision of the neighborhood, particularly in terms of density (a city goal) and gentrification (a developer and real estate industry goal).

Despite a perception of unequal power, SEED maintains a symbiotic relationship with the city's leadership that enables both parties to get many tasks accomplished. As shown in Harborview, the Department of Planning and Development relies on community organizations to engage neighbors in order to uncover and resolve issues. More importantly, in this case, however, is that DPD, the Department of Neighborhoods, the Office of Economic Development and other city agencies rely on SEED (and other community based organizations across the city) to help achieve community and economic development objectives.

> This is a good example of how we try to approach community development in Seattle, which I think is a lot different from other cities where I think in a lot of

> cities it tends to be more centralized where you'll have a city department that goes out and says 'this is what we want' and we're going to get money for this particular purpose and we think we know what the community wants in this area. Where in Seattle we really try to work closely with community groups. So we try to find CDCs who have a much closer on-the-ground feel for what the neighborhood wants, what are the priorities for development, what are the key areas to redevelop, what kinds of development do they want to see. (city economic development official)

SEED, in return, relies on the city for funding, assistance through the development process, and overall visibility. Both parties, at least in interviews for this research, appear to believe that this relationship is a good one.

While SEED plays a functional role with the city of Seattle in order to get economic and community development projects done in an often-neglected neighborhood, SEED's role as a mediator between the city and local residents remains a little more ambiguous. The organization conducted outreach for the Rainier Court project that all parties interviewed for this research appear to approve of. Residents feel that their comments were, for the most part, taken into consideration by SEED, if not fully implemented. Additionally, SEED's development of the Rainier Court project coincides clearly with the goals of the neighborhood plan. However, neighborhood residents rely less on SEED to mediate with city officials. Southeast Seattle residents directly engage with city personnel on a regular basis on a variety of matters. The transparent government discussed in Chapter 3 facilitates regular interaction between the active Southeast Seattle citizens and official often without a need for a community organization mediator. Officials with the city and SEED hold no pretense that much of the citizenry is unaware or too intimidated to contact the city directly:

> It's possible, especially in a place like Seattle – it's a different environment here – if you want to be involved and especially if you just want to stop something from happening it's easier here than in a lot of places. (resident SEED board member)
>
> One person can oppose it and cost a developer millions of dollars. (CTED official)
>
> They contact the mayor's office. They contact city council members who then contact us. They contact us directly. They email. It's pretty easy. Yeah, they let us know. Sometimes it's individually, sometimes it's through a community organization. (city housing official)
>
> If this wasn't a SEED project, we wouldn't have worked with SEED. I think we would have worked the political route, so we probably would have worked with the Department of Construction and Land Use. We were working really closely with members of the city council…the police department. I think we had a whole coalition of regulating and various city agencies, so we would have worked through them. (resident)

As vocal and active as the neighborhood residents are (Harrell, 2007), this same activism may have been a reason for a long period of no construction, according to one long-time resident and SEED board member:

> The historical context for the southeast was one where the existing community's set of desires for what the community would look like and be like in the future largely dictated a set of technical constraints on development, through zoning predominantly, that were unrealistic and that we hadn't accounted for the nature of the relative market attractiveness of our environment. And the question was were we going to wait 20 more years for any real interest under the current zoning rules to make some housing happen or were we going to be a little bit more proactive to get something to happen. So there is a long history of real involvement in southeast and the assumption is not 'well, if anybody is interested in doing anything here, we want it.' Just the opposite. That led to largely, inadvertently, 20 years of almost no activity occurring. The only reason a project of that scale could happen is because of the non-profit developer. (resident/SEED board member)

Indeed, interviewees expressed a common respect, though not necessarily trust, for SEED. City officials and neighborhood residents count on the organization for initiating development projects, especially housing projects since cities are forbidden to directly

invest in housing in Washington State: "We have a state constitution that mandates against the city being direct investors in housing, so SEED will have a huge role to play" (community organization official). Neighbors seem to have a regard for the role that SEED has been playing for over thirty years and perhaps mitigate their vocal nature due to this:

> I think the fact that SEED was the developing agency…I think we all like SEED for the most part, we like Pat (SEED's Economic Development Director), she's a really nice person, and we probably went a little easier than we might have if it was some out-of-Seattle private developer that came in and we felt like it was purely for profit. But I think it was that they are a part of the community and not someone coming from outside trying to ram something down our throat. They were dealing with similar issues to what we were all dealing with. [Being a local organization made a difference?] Yeah, that made a huge difference. (resident)

SEED, however, walked a fine line in this case between using its decision making power for influence, authority, and rationalization of outcomes. Because of its mission to the neighborhood, SEED was viewed as a trusted authority by neighborhood residents; because of its political connections and business experience, SEED was influential in obtaining financing and city approvals. Yet SEED also relied on its authority to rationalize the density of the project and possibly keep gentrification talk out of project discussions. SEED officials claimed that the financing of the project dictated the unusual density for the neighborhood and neighbors claimed that they understood the bind that SEED faced. However, SEED also owned many parcels of land and would have been stuck with them had the organization not shifted from the original commercial development to higher density housing. By assuming that it would convince the owners of the streetfront parcels to sell (which they did not), SEED had to use its authority and trust to get neighbors to essentially concede on the density of the building.

Rainier Court primarily reflects many of the mediating and meaningful participation possibilities of community organizations discussed in Chapter 2 and can possibly serve as a model for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. Although the public participation plan for this site employed a number of traditional mechanisms, SEED maintained an ongoing, two-way dialogue with residents going back to the Neighborhood Plan formation of the early 1990's, exemplified by the monthly updates on the project planning and cleanup to neighborhood organizations and residents. These updates may have affected the low level of residents' concern about the project contamination (although some interviewed for this research believe that, despite their own knowledge of the contamination, other residents may still not have been aware of site pollution). The economic and political context of the development also played a strong role. Despite being politically well-connected and having the respect of many leaders in the city administration, outside funding requirements dictated much of what SEED could do to placate neighborhood residents. Yet SEED's decision making power allowed the organization to create a development that addressed neighborhood needs and provided residents an opportunity to give input on the building's final design. Economically, this poor neighborhood has until recently welcomed new development as a potential source of employment, needed retail opportunities, and affordable housing for residents. Yet as the neighborhood's fortunes have changed, so too have the definitions and opinions of neighborhood needs and development (Langston, 2006). As the developer in this case, the 'mediating' role between individuals and government and/or developer is not entirely applicable; however, SEED educated, informed, framed, and allowed as much

neighborhood resident input into the project as possible. While this might not be seen as true 'citizen power,' this amount of access and input into this brownfield project is far more than the other two cases in this research and certainly reflected the principles of information sharing, goal and policy setting, and resource allocation that Arnstein espoused.

SEED's redevelopment of the Rainier Court site represents a crossroads of sorts for the organization and for the neighborhood. As the technical challenges of tackling a brownfields cleanup fade, and as confidence in the organization's ability to achieve results increases, the effects of the redevelopment and what it symbolizes to a neighborhood undergoing rapid economic and social change are undeniable. SEED's "one-of-us" image is no longer as impenetrable as it once was: the more SEED accomplishes, the more it becomes associated with neighborhood change and gentrification. SEED played a very important role in the cleanup and redevelopment of Rainier Court – probably the biggest role of all the stakeholders – and there are many in the neighborhood and at city hall who appreciate the work that the organization does. Neighbors and city officials view SEED as a voice, but not the only voice, of neighborhood concerns: as a SEED official expressed to me, "I see us as a broker, diplomat, and advocate for the neighborhood." SEED, however, faces the difficulty of accomplishing new projects amidst the difficulty of trying to find a new image.

Chapter 7

Cross-Case Analysis

In chapters 4, 5, and 6, I examined three detailed cases on brownfields cleanup and redevelopment in Seattle. I will now use these cases to identify factors affecting public participation and the mediating role of community organizations in the cleanup and redevelopment process. Identifying these factors across the cases will help me answer my research questions from Chapter 1.

I organized this analysis based on the data categories outlined in Chapter 1. I begin with a summary table looking at the categories affecting participation and mediation and identifying how the cases responded in each category. I added several factors that became visible during the course of research. Following the table, I discuss specific examples, nuances, and major findings from across the cases which subdivide each category, consistent with my discussion in the introduction of this research that "participation" cannot be a generic, catch-all phrase. I also discuss how my findings compare with and support the literature review in Chapter 2. I end the analysis by answering my research questions and identifying some areas for further research.

The table below outlines the factors discussed in Chapter 1 that influenced community organizations and participation in the case study brownfield projects. I have highlighted

the factors that were important for both greater and lesser participation by placing an asterisk in the appropriate box. For example, I marked "site ownership" for both Rainier Court and the Olympic Sculpture Park because, as seen in the case studies, this factor allowed a certain amount of control over participation. This chart is primarily for quick reference purposes.

Following the chart, I briefly discuss the findings of each factor and then delve into greater detail on the major findings of this research.

Factor	Harborview	Rainier Court	Olympic Sculpture Park
Stated participation mission		*	
Previous relationships with developers, government, institutions		*	*
Site ownership		*	*
Redevelopment plans consistent with organizational expertise	*	*	*
Equity and power	*	*	
Large size and scope, high-demand context		*	*
Existing neighborhood master plans	*	*	
Brownfield Status			
Site Specific Impacts	*	*	
New Use		*	*
Funding/Regulatory Requirements	*	*	
"Local" status & trust		*	*

Table 7.1 Factors influencing community organizations and participation

Participation Mission:

In all of the cases, neighborhood organizations stated, either in writing or verbally, that they have a mission to involve the public. Their methods were similar and often took the form of regular meetings, newsletters, websites, flyers, and sometimes mailings and often word-of-mouth. Some organizations felt that they had a specific participatory role to play in redevelopment projects, whether or not they were brownfields.

Even without a formal mission to involve individuals in the planning process, all neighborhood organizations interviewed for this research stated that they would involve themselves in a redevelopment project that affected their constituents. However, as site developers, only SEED stated that public participation was essential to the planning process and the organization would face great opposition to the Rainier Court project if participatory actions had not taken place. Harborview officials were bound by the regulations of the Major Institutions Master Plan and stated that the views of the CAC were taken into consideration, yet those on the committee (and those not on the committee) do not believe that their recommendations are necessarily heeded by the hospital. SAM did not feel that participation, for input's sake, was necessary at all in terms of a mission or as a responsibility to the community. The museum felt that participation was solely a tool for support and fundraising.

Perhaps the most important aspect in this category is that all of the organizations in the cases had maintained some kind of participatory role in the community prior to the brownfield project, crossing over with the 'previous relationships' discussion to follow. The community organizations in these cases primarily educated and informed their constituents and often gathered input on neighborhood concerns, which was relayed to city officials. Regularly scheduled meetings were the most popular method of outreach. Some organizations sent out mailings on neighborhood issues, wrote articles for the neighborhood newspaper, and posted information on websites or on community bulletin boards. One of the organizations in the Olympic Sculpture Park case produced policy papers and conducted analyses on proposed developments in the area. Overall, community organizations employed fairly traditional methods of participation with only one organization leader (in the Harborview case) stating that she pushed the members of her group to go out and participate in neighborhood issues. Generally, the methods used by organizations in this study educated and informed neighborhood residents but rarely resulted in individual involvement in these or other planning issues. Residents felt that they were informed and often seemed satisfied with the participation methods used by community organizations (given the low number of residents interviewed for this research, however, overall resident satisfaction with these traditional participation methods is difficult to gauge).

Previous Relationships:

All of the cases in this research exhibited a reliance on relationships to a great extent to achieve project goals, however, these relationships do not necessarily translate into

increased public participation. Organizations, individuals, and government officials in each of the cases built ties with each other over many years, some positive and some negative. For example, SEED built strong ties with city and county government officials, partly due to the past involvement of current government leaders and partly due to SEED's willingness to work in a section of Seattle with little development. SEED needed government cooperation for funding, expedited permitting, and other hurdles. SEED's record of accomplishments impressed not only government leaders but also neighborhood residents. Because of past interactions, residents felt that SEED was often acting in the best interest of the neighborhood even when the outcomes of certain decisions weren't always to the neighbors' liking. Additionally, many residents in the cases often felt comfortable contacting government official directly, rather than acting through an organization like SEED, since previous projects had often brought residents and officials together.

In fact, direct contact with city officials became a common theme throughout the cases. As noted in chapter 3, Seattle prides itself on a transparent government structure and one that is accessible and accountable to the public. The changes and enhancements made to neighborhood planning in the 1990's appears to allow individuals and organizations to feel comfortable enough to make direct contact with officials and express opinions on redevelopment projects.

Not all relationships, however, are positive: some negative relationships had blossomed out of previous collaborations. Neighborhood individuals and organizations warily

watched both Harborview and city agencies such as the Parks Department. In fact, the Belltown neighborhood's relationships with, or at least perceptions of, the Parks Department were fragile enough to warrant a general distrust of any project that the agency might have undertaken. All interviewees in Belltown expressed a glaring lack of confidence in the Parks Department's ability to achieve the same results as SAM, even if the Parks Department had access to the same funding. Interviewees agreed that if the Parks Department had indeed taken on a similar project, individuals and organizations would have pressed heavily to be involved. In contrast, SAM achieved a level of trust with the community through years of contributing to a civic artistic vision for Seattle, yet often without any public participation or outside input.

Ownership:

Two individuals, one closely related to the city/county brownfields program and the other a neighborhood organization leader, stated to me early in this research that the public may not have any right to participate in many brownfield cleanup and redevelopment projects due to these parcels often being private property. The three cases show that most interviewees believe the opposite to be true.

Interviewees overwhelmingly felt that they could, should, and do participate in many development projects, regardless of ownership. However, interviewees also admitted that their participation might not make any difference in the outcomes of private property development. Although this issue does indeed get at the heart of private property rights

in the United States, from a participatory viewpoint these cases seem to downplay the role of property ownership.

Site ownership played somewhat of a factor in participation. Developers felt that ownership of the site did indeed give them the right to do what they wanted without having a great sense of accountability to the community (if that was not in their mission). SAM admitted that their site was private property and that determination of the vision and project logistics was essentially theirs: outside input was not needed or wanted. If the Olympic Sculpture Park was planned for public land, it is quite likely, according to interviewees, that the project as it is now would never have happened. On the other end of the spectrum, SEED felt that ownership allowed them to make more decisions with input from the public than would have possibly happened if a private developer was conducting the project. Despite public ownership of the site, First Hill organizations felt no greater need or right to participate in the Harborview project.

From a neighborhood point of view, individuals and organizations responded strongly to the suggestion that private property may not require neighborhood intervention. Almost all respondents claimed that they often comment, protest, or support private developments in their neighborhoods. Interviewees were split on the effectiveness of voicing their opinions: some feel more strongly than others that developers actually take their input into account and change designs or programs. One neighborhood organization leader told me emphatically that development is mostly a private property matter and not ripe for public participation: this same leader also works for a large private developer.

Redevelopment Plans:

Organizations appear able to react and respond to a variety of redevelopment outcomes in this research. SEED, the one organization that actually did develop a brownfield, switched from developing a purely commercial site to developing a housing site after negotiations for the final streetfront parcels failed. SEED's success with commercial property development was one of the factors in drawing support for the Rainier Court housing development. SEED continues to promote a variety of program areas rather than focusing on one specific theme, such as housing. All interviewed for this research expressed satisfaction with SEED's other program areas as well as with housing and commercial development.

Other organizations felt qualified to respond and participate in brownfields redevelopment at Harborview and at the Sculpture Park, whether or not they actually had the chance to do so. Some, such as the BHLUS, aggressively stay informed of all developments in their neighborhoods and even go so far as to publish papers or newspaper articles on such matters. The often long-standing leadership and experienced boards of these groups provide a wealth of knowledge on a variety of land use issues from which to draw conclusions and express neighborhood opinions. Also, neighborhood residents and individuals do not appear to participate at any varying rates despite a variety of projects types, from sculpture to lower-income senior housing to hospital services.

Stakeholder Equity and Power Influences:

Most stakeholders in each of these projects expressed great awareness of the imbalance of power in the decision making process. Notably, however, Harborview saw the decision making process surrounding the Ninth and Jefferson Building as "completely collaborative" yet the evidence in the case study showed that decision makers rarely employed two-way, meaningful participation. And while SAM officials never said directly that they are in control of this project, it was often assumed and hinted during interviews. Others interviewed for the Olympic Sculpture Park stated this point more directly.

For some stakeholders, the appearance of power, or at least an equal place at the decision making table, was illusory despite some favorable conditions, such at site ownership. SEED, for all of its connections, experience, and land ownership, still feels that they did not have a powerful hand in the decisions that were being made at Rainier Court. SEED stated quite clearly that without independent funding or the power to make regulations, the groups was dependent on outside entities for completing projects and therefore, as discussed in Chapter 2, had to give up a certain amount of community control. SEED also expressed the importance of maintaining awareness of the political and economic context within which it works. Without staying on the agenda of successive mayoral administrations, SEED feels that it would accomplish far less in the Rainier Valley.

Other community organizations in these cases felt even less powerful, often despite having the ear of city hall and other government officials. Yesler Terrace Community Council, for example, boasts a long-standing leadership and a respected place in the city housing department and in the neighborhood, including acknowledged respect from Harborview officials. YTCC could not, however, prevent the destruction and most likely permanent loss of affordable housing in the neighborhood

Size/Scope of Project:

Each case, although approximately the same size, had a different scope that affected the type of stakeholders involved in the project and the way that individuals and community organizations perceived the project. All interviewees considered their respective cases to be a significant size for their neighborhood – SEED added that this was the largest project to date for the organization and a great challenge – and the size of the project was at least a factor in the awareness of the neighborhood: residents could not ignore Rainier Court's prominent location and activity after years of neglect.

More importantly, the scope of the project influenced participation. Two factors were significantly in play. First, the regional draw for the project contributed greatly to the importance placed on the project by the developer and the public, thereby diluting the influence of local neighborhood participation, had there been any. Second, the importance of the function, often with larger scale impact, often lessened criticism and made the political context of the site much more apparent. For example, the regional draw for the Olympic Sculpture Park – indeed, the project has since received national and

international press coverage and accolades – made it a high priority for the City of Seattle and prompted the possibility of using eminent domain to gain control of the billiard hall parcel for SAM. Interviewees doubted their impact if they were allowed to provide input due to the importance and large-scale visibility of this project to the current mayoral administration and to SAM. From a different perspective, First Hill residents and organizations often noted in interviews the importance of Harborview's mission to the community and the entire Pacific Northwest. One low-income housing resident stated that she felt she couldn't complain too much about helicopter noise near her apartment when someone in the helicopter was possibly bleeding to death. Yet, the Ninth and Jefferson building's size appears not to be an influential factor for organizational participation, possibly due to the neighborhood's acceptance of large-scale institutions.

Existing Plans:

Existing plans for a neighborhood played a major role in two of the three cases. SEED received guidance and justification for the location and space program of the Rainier Court site from the North Rainier Valley neighborhood plan conducted ten years prior. When SEED found that the commercial aspect of the site was not feasible due to a lack of street front visibility, the group found that housing, and in particular lower income senior housing, was a justifiable and needed resource outlined in the plan. As important as the plan was for guiding and justifying SEED's development, the neighborhood plan laid the foundation for neighborhood redevelopment dialogue and identification of stakeholders. Stakeholders were already discussing issues of housing and commercial needs when SEED was formulating Rainier Court.

A plan also influenced Harborview's Ninth and Jefferson project. The Major Institution Master Plan laid out very specific functions, programs, and spatial needs for the hospital and guidelines for how the decisions on these factors would be made. The MIMP created the Citizens Advisory Committee, intended to be the neighborhood voice for redevelopment decisions. The existing plan, in this case, not only guided the type and location of development, but also overruled existing zoning and created a neighborhood committee that was never conceived or approved by the neighborhood. The CAC received approval from the City's Department of Neighborhoods but with strong membership suggestions from Harborview's top leadership. The role of the Major Institution Master Plan in the Harborview case was undeniable: the Plan called for a "citizens" advisory committee, which is essentially the only formal line of input for neighborhood participation, yet concentrated the creation of that committee in the hands of the city and the hospital.

The Belltown neighborhood plan lacked an overarching vision, catching neighborhood organizations by surprise. Belltown's neighborhood plan never received special status, like Harborview, or specific guidelines, like SEED, and provided only general recommendations for open space in the neighborhood. As a result, the largest undeveloped parcel in the neighborhood, the Unocal site, was never even considered for future public open space until SAM stepped in.

Brownfields Designation:

A brownfield*s* designation barely influenced participation in this study. Almost everybody I interviewed considered contamination essentially a non-issue. All interviewees stated their awareness of the contamination at each of the case study sites yet all had confidence that the cleanup would proceed and risk would be kept low. Harborview area residents and organizations expressed some concern for the trucks that would be passing through the neighborhood with excavated contaminated soil but primarily noted that the issue was the traffic, not the contaminated soil. I will discuss this major finding in greater detail in the 'summary of influential factors' section to follow.

Site-Specific Impacts:

Immediate impacts, such as design, density, traffic/parking, and issues of gentrification and loss (of housing) greatly affected participation. Neighbors felt that these issues impacted them directly. Some or all of these issues appeared in every case. For example, the only negative comments I received about the Olympic Sculpture Park, a nearly issue-less case for residents and organizations, concerned increased traffic and potential parking difficulties. All respondents in the other cases mentioned traffic and parking. Individuals and organizations in the Rainier Valley mentioned the design and massing of Rainier Court, often referring to the impact that the density of the site could have on the neighborhood. Developers in each of the cases seemed to consistently respond to and ameliorate these issues, finding them much easier to address than other, larger issues. For example, Harborview changed the truck routes after neighbors

complained yet the hospital could or would not replace the affordable housing that was torn down for the Ninth and Jefferson Building despite vocal complaints from the CAC, a group that supposedly had the strongest link to neighborhood input.

New Use:

The new use of the redevelopment greatly influenced participation. None of my interviewees could deny the benefit or desirability of a park and, therefore, did not feel a great need to participate if given a chance to do so. However, new uses also represented larger issues of change and possibly gentrification and loss to a neighborhood. Residents view the Rainier Court development as both a needed amenity and as a precursor of changes to come to the neighborhood. Residents often equated density with gentrification and placed at least some of the blame for change on SEED. Brownfields cleanup and redevelopment are two very distinct issues and interviewees overwhelmingly responded in these cases to the redevelopment aspect of brownfields.

Funding/Regulatory Requirements:

Developers, individuals, and organizations also participated in these case studies largely due to requirements established in brownfields funding, design review, and Department of Ecology cleanup agreements. As noted above under 'participation mission and methods,' many stakeholders participated not only out of a mission to involve community members in the decision making process but also to fulfill funding or regulatory requirements. The organizations and developers in these cases were motivated by regulations and programmatic guidelines as well. SEED and Harborview indeed

followed their Public Involvement Plans for brownfields funding, even though the brownfields program only suggested certain actions (using the term 'may' instead of 'will' in submission instructions) and SAM conducted involvement actions in order to comply with environmental cleanup agreements with the state. Outside of these requirements, I witnessed little in terms of additional participation efforts except for SEED. As mentioned above, however, there are those who had been conducting participation efforts prior to engaging in a brownfield project and many of those efforts coincided with requirements for funding.

"Local" Status and Trust:

Interviewees consistently expressed a strong desire to keep outside developers from taking advantage of the neighborhood. Respondents expressed a strong desire for 'locals' to conduct the cleanup and redevelopment and stated that neighborhood participation would have been different if a developer from outside the neighborhood had conducted the project. SEED earned enormous trust over the years among the residents I spoke with for this research, many of whom claimed that they would have reacted differently to an outside developer (and often do). SEED's local status helped the group proceed even when certain decisions, such as the density and design of the building, were not necessarily in line with the neighbors' visions for the site. Neighbors therefore possibly participated less in this case due in part to their trusted and local view of SEED.

Familiarity may bring about a certain level of trust. Consistent with authors in Chapter 2 (Day, 1997; Greenberg & Lewis 2000; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002), neighborhood

residents and organizations often participated depending upon the reputation and trust of the developer. For example, neighbors would have participated much more in the Olympic Sculpture Park if the Parks Department were conducting the project, partly owing to a lack of trust in the Department's ability to complete the project properly. An outside developer building the Rainier Court project, or something similar, would most likely have received far more input and opposition from residents.

SAM exhibited a distinctive rationale for participation: *fundraising*. The Museum admitted, and others interviewed for this research confirmed, that outreach was a fundraising tool. SAM, as a respected local institution, needed to raise millions of dollars and did so by essentially advertising the project using direct mailings, presentations to community organizations, television shows, and other methods. The public responded enthusiastically to this approach and donated millions of dollars, despite not having any input on the project.

Summary of Influential Factors:

These three cases present a number of factors influencing participation. Residents and organizations involved themselves primarily over site-specific matters, such as traffic, parking, and design, often because these were the issues that residents felt they could influence. Although residents expressed equal or greater concern over other factors such as density and loss of affordable housing, they were also realistic that there was probably very little they could do to change the outcome for these issues.

Developers appear primarily influenced by funding and regulatory requirements for involving the public in the cleanup and redevelopment process and, to a lesser extent, by maintaining good neighborhood relations. SAM, on the other hand, proceeded with massive outreach efforts mainly as a way to raise millions of dollars for the Sculpture Park.

Residents also participated due to a sense of accessibility to city officials and a set of relationships built with developers and others through previous projects. Residents felt comfortable contacting city officials to express opinions, placed a certain level of trust in local developers, and often relied on a developer's reputation when determining how much they were willing to participate. Despite the non-profit/civic-oriented nature of the developers in these cases, residents have clashed on other projects with these developers or with other civic-minded developers. Finally, residents appear greatly influenced by the end use of the project. Interviewees could not come up with a strong reason for objecting to the Olympic Sculpture Park, despite having very little, if any, input on the project. On the other hand, residents and organizations at least partly objected to certain aspects of both Rainier Court and the Ninth and Jefferson Building, despite a more concerted two-way participation effort and a partial 'public good' sense to both projects.

The conditions mentioned above overshadowed other factors, such as ownership, mission, and expertise. Ownership of land itself is not enough to determine whether a developer will pursue intense public participation in a project and will not keep the public from expressing opinions and becoming involved. A developer or organizations with a

mission to involve the public may make a difference but could not be determined clearly in these cases. The developers that maintain public involvement missions, SEED and Harborview, also accepted brownfields funding that includes specific public involvement activities. SAM, which does not have an involvement mission in sites like these, did not accept funding with public involvement strings.

Overall, a major finding of this research is that contamination was not an issue in any of the cases and that community organizations may be partly responsible for this lack of concern. Contrary to Bartsch's (2003) claim in Chapter 2, stakeholder participation in these brownfield projects does not appear to be any more important than participation in non-brownfield projects. Almost all interviewees were aware of the soil and groundwater contamination yet expressed trust that the sites in these cases would be cleaned up or capped to protect them from harmful exposure. Traditional methods of informing neighborhood residents about cleanup plans were often met with little or no response. Several factors may explain why these brownfield projects were met with so little concern. First, the new uses likely dictated concern about the cleanup and SEED's residential project meant more education on cleanup issues than a clinic building or open space. Second, community organizations, in their education roles, consistently stated that they told their constituents that the cleanup was not a concern (one organization leader even told me that "environmental issues on any individual project is never cause for public discussion") and neighborhood residents likely trusted these organizations and expressed similar viewpoints. Whether correctly or not, organizations interpreted risk of harmful exposure in a way that deemed the contamination non-threatening. Third, with

no visible signs of pollution or harmful effects on residents' health, some individuals and organizations likely thought that the contamination was contained and not affecting them. And fourth, interviewees may simply accept that a certain level of pollution exists in their neighborhoods. Several interviewees stated that they assume that there are many contaminated sites in their neighborhood.

Related to this finding, individual and community organization participation opportunities in the brownfields process focused on the cleanup and not the redevelopment yet the redevelopment was the issue that generated the most concern. Although traditional, methods for public participation existed mainly on the cleanup side of the project. As noted above, residents had very few issues with the contamination itself. Residents were dealing with a variety of issues in their respective communities and some felt that their voices were either not being heard or made little difference in neighborhood outcomes. For example, affordable housing was a major concern for the residents of First Hill and the neighborhood plan called for more housing to include affordable units. Harborview, however, did not replace all of the affordable units that were torn down for the new Ninth & Jefferson Building. The CAC was the only real venue for expressing concerns and even then only in an advisory capacity.

From a contextual standpoint, the cases are partly a product of their individual settings yet may be applicable to other areas with similar characteristics. As noted in Chapter 2, participation is often linked to resentment, dissatisfaction, and distrust. Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Program, which drastically changed the way city officials

approached public participation, grew out of dissatisfaction with the 1994 Comprehensive Plan. If the Neighborhood Planning Program did not create a sea change to more meaningful participation, at the very least the city government's enhanced participation efforts changed citizens' attitudes toward their involvement in the planning process. City initiatives included a new Neighborhood Planning Office, funding for neighborhood planning, and increased city staff accountability. Most interviewees felt that they had a right to voice their opinion and provide input on planning projects in their neighborhood. To be sure, traditional methods of public participation are still in place and the current mayor and what some see as his pro-development stance are dismantling some 1994 changes. The "Seattle Process" of protracted consensus building never really materialized in this study. The public involvement plans and the design review process basically proceeded as usual and did not appear to be any longer or more drawn out than those for other projects. Because of the efforts that city officials implemented in the 1990's, citizens may trust that the participation process for development projects works, whether or not it is meaningful and whether or not they actually participate. As shown in Chapter 2, low levels of participation in these cases may, in fact, be a sign of success and trust in the participation process and in the developers of these particular projects. Interviewees stated that distrust in other developers or city agencies, such as the Seattle Parks Department, would have resulted in greater public participation. Seattle's technologically advanced and "wired" status may also facilitate direct accessibility by the public, allowing residents direct access to government officials and information and thereby reducing the need to use community organizations for representation and voice.

In certain circumstances, more participation, and participation that impacted outcomes, would have been useful to address larger, neighborhood-wide concerns. Residents and organizations in these cases often felt no great need to provide input on the redevelopment itself – some even stated that public input would have produced an inferior product – yet many individuals and organization leaders felt that larger issues of affordable housing, gentrification, and density were not addressed. These larger concerns may be distinct to brownfields since brownfield sites are often found in communities that have witnessed little redevelopment over many years. Such communities are now faced with increasing social and economic change, often as a result of growth management priorities, scarcity of developable land, and new tools that facilitate brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. For example, the Belltown neighborhood had been witnessing dramatic neighborhood change for years but the Rainier Valley was only recently seeing the changes of gentrification and density and many interviewees of the latter neighborhood expressed fear about these changes. Public involvement plans could be changed to provide a better outlet for concerns on the redevelopment side of brownfield projects and to place them in a more comprehensive neighborhood context. Additionally, residents need a tool for implementation that tries to guarantee that their concerns are actually addressed. For instance, residents of First Hill could have benefited from some kind of guarantee that they would have received in-kind affordable housing units after the redevelopment of the Ninth & Jefferson site.

Community Organizations, Their Role, and Research Questions:

From the literature discussed in Chapter 2, I expected community organizations to play a mediating role in their respective neighborhoods but encounter challenges to this role by political, economic, and other contextual factors. I expected organizations to try and gather residents' opinions, mobilize individuals, and access government officials and developers on behalf of neighborhood residents. Mostly, however, I expected community organizations to foster participation by residents in each brownfield project. However, I also expected mediation to be complicated by the contradictions discussed in Chapter 2. Whether or not community organizations could or would be influential, representative, objective, and consensual remained to be seen.

Research Question Results:

My first research question asked *"how do community organizations involve individuals in brownfield cleanup and redevelopment sites in King County?"* Organizations involve individuals in a variety of ways, both formally and informally, but rarely involved individuals in the cleanup issues at these sites. All organizations in this research held regularly scheduled meetingsopen to the public, to present and discuss neighborhood issues, including projects such as the ones in this study. Organizations printed and distributed newsletters, maintained websites, and sometimes canvassed the neighborhood by going door to door. One organization occasionally wrote a column for a neighborhood newspaper. Informally, organization leaders stated that they often inform individuals and receive feedback by random encounters in the neighborhood and often

rely on word of mouth for these same duties. As discussed above, however, organizations often did not feel that the contamination at these sites were a cause for concern and passed this sentiment on to neighborhood residents. SEED, with the assistance of ECOSS, felt that it provided some education to neighborhood residents on the issues of contamination and used ECOSS's services to provide interpretation of technical issues, yet residents provided no comment on the cleanup plan.

Although my cases exhibited a wide range of participation methods and fulfilled federal and state requirements, many would not qualify as meaningful and would rank low on Arnstein's ladder of participation. Developers in each of the cases conducted a variety of 'outreach' efforts, most often including presentations to various groups (some, like SAM's presentations before hundreds and thousands, being quite large), websites, newsletters and mailings. Yet, 'outreach' is quite different from 'input' and only in certain ways did some developers heed the advice given by residents and organizations. SEED, as a developer that received Seattle/King County brownfields funding, involved individuals primarily based upon the Public Involvement Plan submitted as a requirement for funding. SEED does maintain fairly strong outreach efforts that began before Rainier Court and continue to this day on a variety of projects.

SEED and Harborview both gathered neighborhood input and attempted to make changes, to varying degrees, to the projects based upon this input yet neither developer addressed all of the important neighborhood issues. For example, SEED never reduced the density of the building and Harborview never replaced affordable housing with an in-kind amount. SEED claims that the requirements of funding forced the Rainier Court to

be the size it is, while Harborview stated that it tried but ultimately could not find equal affordable housing space in the First Hill neighborhood. Residents still appear somewhat satisfied with the outcomes.

SAM, as site developer, made no pretense that it was looking for input on the Olympic Sculpture Park yet residents appear to be very pleased with the outcome. SAM's methods would likely rank very low on both Arnstein's ladder and EPA's participation definition. Yet the residents and organizations in this case were by far the most satisfied of the three cases. Although the new use is desirable, satisfaction and lack of participation may not be completely a factor of the project being open space: interviewees consistently stated that if the Parks Department was conducting this same project, more participation and input would likely have resulted but the outcome would likely have been far less satisfying than the Olympic Sculpture Park. . This case, however, highlights the decisions and 'non-decisions' made by those in power and the benefits lost as a result of low/meaningless participation processes. Residents in this case, particularly, can hardly be said to have been empowered or even moved toward a greater sense of citizenship and community: the interviewee who stated that she did not even know that her community council existed exemplifies this missing piece of participation. Overall, developers in each of the cases met their respective requirements for public involvement but, as noted in Chapter 3, loose "requirements" for public involvement by EPA translated into loose "requirements" in Washington State and often lacked a sense of fulfillment compared to components of meaningful participation.

The second research question, *"how does community organization involvement affect the outcomes of these brownfield projects?"* reflects whether an organization had any power in decision making for a project. In the case of SEED, the primary community organization was the instigator and developer of a site in a long-neglected part of town and had the authority to make many of the project decisions, supported by local residents, other organizations, and city officials.. The project itself most likely would not have happened without the involvement of SEED. Other organizations in the neighborhood, as non-developers, supported SEED's efforts and allowed SEED to develop this project essentially without any other organizations' assistance.

As non-developers in the other two cases, community organizations affected outcomes in different ways. First, the organizations in all cases placed a lot of importance on site-specific issues, such as traffic and parking, and they were greatly influential to these ends. For example, due to the CAC, Yesler Terrace Community Council and other First Hill organizations, the Ninth and Jefferson truck routes were moved away from the middle of the neighborhood and a school and nursing home. The groups also heavily lobbied and ultimately supported, in person, a skybridge rather than vacating streets for the Harborview project.

Indeed, community organizations influenced the outcomes of projects due to their support rather than their opposition. SAM repeatedly asked local Belltown organizations to support efforts to acquire land, receive funding, endorse right-of-way changes, remove

unrelated uses, and oppose tunnel and street reconstruction. Community organizations, both business and residential, wrote letters and testified in person alongside SAM. According to SAM officials and organization leaders, local organization support was extremely important to achieving these goals and possibly achieving the Sculpture Park as seen in current form.

However, without decision making power or even the ability to expand the dialogue of project issues, community organizations failed to influence the larger issues related to the outcomes of these cases, notably the loss of affordable housing, increasing density of the neighborhood and an advancing fear of gentrification. Changing truck routes or asking for construction to start later in the morning appeased neighbors, which are easier issues for a developer to address. Generally, community organizations could only achieve smaller victories in issues with which they opposed the developer (even if the developer was another community organization) and achieved larger victories by supporting the developer in issues with which all parties agreed.

My third question asked *"what role do community organizations play in the brownfields cleanup and redevelopment process in King County, WA?"* This question focuses on the "mediating" role discussed in Chapter 2. Community organizations play a type of mediating role in brownfields redevelopment in Seattle (but not cleanup, as discussed above) but the role is as much for the benefit of city officials and developers as it is for individual neighborhood residents. Neighborhood-based groups in these cases indeed

helped government officials gauge local concerns and attempted to plan in a more even-handed fashion (Ross & Green Leigh, 2000). However, residents often dismissed the need for a community organization and one interviewee did not know that her local community council even existed. Mediating structures may help community members in other cities relate to and gain protection from the large, impersonal institutions of public life, as noted by Berger and Neuhaus (1977) and Williams (1985), but community members in this study did not feel they needed protection from institutions that may not be that impersonal. Contrary to these authors, community organizations in these cases did not provide increased access to the planning process or facilitate activism. Also, organizations in this study exhibit mixed tendencies at framing issues in their neighborhoods: BHLUS produced papers and analyses based upon neighborhood concerns but SEED and FHIA sometimes disagreed with neighbors over issues and priorities. Community organizations informed and educated more than mediated: organizations regularly informed their constituents and gathered input and opinions but residents also felt able to directly contact officials and developers.

> I would like to say that there is mediation going on but it's much more education. Bringing people to the information and getting them to figure it out in their minds. That's my main role. (Belltown community organization leader)

From a city official perspective, community organizations provided an extremely valuable avenue for accessing individual neighborhood residents to gauge community sentiment, gain local knowledge, and recruit for local boards, such as the Harborview CAC. City officials admitted that they relied heavily on community organizations for

these functions and could probably not achieve the same results without local organizational assistance.

Community organizations also played a consensus role rather than a conflicting role in this study. As noted in Chapter 2, some scholars feel that community organizations are more effective, especially over a longer period of time, when taking smaller steps, conceding on some issues, and working closely with government and business, while others believe that consensus by organizations is simply a matter of assimilation into the capitalist system. In particular, CDCs, possibly due to assimilation in the capitalist system of development while grasping for declining federal funding, increasingly shun the conflict-oriented approach in favor of an approach that is more consensual (Stoecker, 1997). These debates highlight the capitalist-democracy contradiction discussed in Chapter 2.

SEED dealt with this contradiction: it shunned some funding from the city housing office in order to maintain control over certain project components yet could not fulfill all of the community's wishes, such as a lower density project, due to the requirements of other outside funding and general business goals. One could clearly see the conflict between 'SEED the community organization' and 'SEED the business.' As discussed in Chapter 2, Vidal (1992) notes that CDCs try to be a neighborhood voice yet Stoecker (1997) claims that CDCs are not adequate representatives of the neighborhood due to capital-community contradictions, and cites Bratt's (1989) claim that CDCs do not necessarily aim for, nor achieve, widespread participation. I offer that the CDC in this case may be

somewhat representative of the neighborhood but may not always be able to act in the best interests of the neighborhood, despite the organization's beliefs. From a participation standpoint, SEED conducted more two-way participation efforts than other organizations in this study, and certainly more than SAM and possibly more than Harborview, the other developers. But just because SEED conducted participation efforts does not mean that those efforts will always make a difference to the project outcomes.

The First Hill Improvement Association may stand as a better example of Stoecker's misrepresentation and the "rubberstamping" of plans that may not ensure that the interests of the group are truly represented (Crowfoot and Wondolleck, 1990). My interaction with a leader of the FHIA could call into question whether the individual in the Harborview case is able to leave private/personal interests behind when participating in a community organization, whether this individual can take on a publicly centered decision-making perspective, and whether factors such as organization leadership personalities may influence a group's commitment to representation and basic democratic principles (Day, 1997; Swindell, 2000; Davies, Blackstock, Rauschmeyer, 2005). I received a blanket statement from this leader offering that no public comment was required nor needed in this case, primarily due to the private property status of the site. The leader showed a blatant disregard for the facts (public comment was indeed required and the property, owned by a King County entity (at least initially), is arguably public). This leader's viewpoint may be understandable given her position with a large private real estate development firm in Seattle.

Finally, my fourth research question *"under what conditions do community organizations play a role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment?"* relates closely to the factors discussed in Chapter 2. Community organizations play a role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment primarily when there are strong ties to stakeholders and an understanding of neighborhood concerns.

Community organizations benefit from site ownership simply because it allows the group to conduct as much public participation as it sees fit. This fact, however, underlies organizations' need to seek outside funding and adhere to regulations that are out of the group's control and may limit the influence of the input the group has sought from neighbors. SEED, for example, received substantial input from residents and other organizations about the Rainier Court site but could only implement what was financially and politically feasible. That said, an organization's participation mission plays a factor whether or not the group owns the site. Organizations in each of the cases felt it was their duty to inform and involve individual residents regardless of ownership or type of project. For example, organizations stated in all cases that they have and will continue to provide input on, and possibly protest, new condominium developments, office space, and retail establishments from private developers.

Community organizations play a strong role when the new use is one that the organization and residents support. The community organizations in these cases provided valuable support to developers when the community valued the project or project component. The Sculpture Park and the skybridge in the SAM and Harborview cases,

respectively, show the importance of a community organizations literally standing beside a developer when asking for city approval or funding. Organizations also benefited from existing plans in one of the cases yet were somewhat left out of the decision making process by another plan. SEED benefited greatly from both the specific directions for housing and commercial space on a specific piece of Rainier Avenue as well as from the dialogues that the neighborhood planning process fostered years earlier. Generally, neighborhood residents understood that SEED's project fit in with community goals and were able to express any concerns through the relations that had been established by the process. To the contrary, the Major Institutions Master Plan, originally intended to protect neighborhoods from wanton institutional development as well as protect institutions from neighborhood interference during development, essentially kept community organizations out of the planning process if they were not on the CAC, a group whose membership is controlled by city and Harborview officials. Neighborhood residents had less access and possibly less influence with a master plan for the area. Belltown organizations were caught off guard by SAM's project since the general nature of the neighborhood's plan for open space never considered the Unocal site for open space, something that the neighborhood, ironically, desperately wanted. Community organizations could have possibly taken the lead on this project, such as SEED did in the Rainier Valley, if the direction had been laid out in the neighborhood plan.

Finally, and possibly the most important factor, community organizations played a strong role when previous relationships had been built. This factor takes on several meanings in this study. First, relationships between the organizations and their constituents allowed a

certain level of trust to enhance support of an organization's actions, even when those actions do not necessarily coincide with neighborhood goals. Second, organizations benefited from relationships with officials in city government. SEED, for example, maintained high-level status on the agenda of several mayors partly due to former SEED members now in high-level government positions. City officials respected and sought out the opinions of many organizations in the city due in part to their long-standing working relationships and local knowledge: the Belltown Community Council maintains close ties with city hall and its letter of support for SAM's acquisition of the billiards hall and waterfront parcels most likely mattered more to city decision makers than that of an unknown organization. Third, many community organizations have become trusted sources that the city mines for knowledge, neighborhood sentiment, and personnel for boards such as the CAC. Even though the community organizations in First Hill may not have easy access to higher-level decision making at Harborview, they are sought after for CAC membership and are the only real primary access points for neighborhood influence.

As seen at various points in this analysis, the role of trust is closely related to relationships and reputation in this study. Although there is extensive literature on this subject and not necessarily the primary subject of this study, community organizations (as well as government, developers, and others) gave and received certain amounts of trust that possibly influenced participation levels. SEED most likely benefited from a neighborhood trust that the organization works, most of the time, in the neighborhood's best interest: if not, neighbors trust that SEED essentially had to act to fulfill financial or

political obligations in order to complete a project or maintain healthy relationships with city officials. In some cases, neighborhood residents and organizations may participate less because they either see no inherent downside to a project or do not fear that a project developer will cause harm to the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents and organizations trusted SAM to create a successful outcome yet did not trust the City Parks Department to do the exact same job, partly because public participation and multiple agendas would have led to a 'least common denominator' outcome. In addition, community organizations, and others, earned neighborhood trust simply by being labeled as a 'local:' SEED and SAM exemplify this phenomenon. Some organizations and developers, however, cannot always expect this trust just by proximity alone. Neighborhood residents appear to trust Harborview and the CAC (which consists of many local residents) less than others in this study, mainly due to poor, but improving, relationships. From a cleanup perspective, case study interviewees trusted that DOE and project developers would clean their respective sites to safe levels.

Conclusions

Participation: The three case studies exhibited a wide range of what can be called "public participation" but most often the exchanges and interactions between developer and resident were one-way or outreach. Community organizations accepted more input on projects to varying degrees of success. SEED appears to have conducted the most in terms of two-way exchanges of information by attending meetings and giving

presentations, asking residents what their issues were with Rainier Court and attempting to address those concerns. SAM officials were not looking for input or for residents to influence the outcomes of the Olympic Sculpture Park. Participation by individuals and organizations most likely would never be considered true participation from a meaningful participation perspective yet many in this study were satisfied with the level of outreach, and sometimes input, that occurred. Many interviewees in this research consider the public participation in this study to be adequate and, at times, exceptional. Others from outside these cases, and from the literature in Chapter 2, would most likely designate these projects as 'poor' participation. These cases tend to agree with those authors in Chapter 2 pointing to at least one result of responsible, trustworthy, and accountable government: that is, lower levels of participation. The cases also agreed with authors promoting mutual understanding as part of meaningful participation. For example, city officials tapped community organizations to gauge the community sentiment on issues. Residents also tried to understand why an action was happening even though it might not be in their best interest. These cases, however, also support the scholarly literature that points to the problems with power structures that limit dialogue and opportunities for participation before projects even begin. The cases in this study have shown that project frameworks were already established prior to project initiation by various levels of governance and decision makers: EPA, Washington State, Seattle's Brownfields Office, and even civic-minded developers all placed limits around the issues and the participants in each case. In particular, this research contributes to the brownfields literature by highlighting the inherent and structural problems embedded in the program from the highest to the most local of levels. Stating that participation should happen does not

overcome the difficulties and frustration that will appear after efforts produce no discernible results for participants. The overarching control of state and private decision makers – particularly in light of increasing neoliberal governing tendencies – will likely never allow local residents to retain any significant decision making control in its current state. In many cases, community organizations, and CDCs in particular, found themselves bound by requirements outside of their control yet these requirements were essential for the organizations' existence. Recommendations that call for greater participation and decision making control may not be realistic, feasible, or desirable. This dilemma that Stoecker discussed in Chapter 2 is indeed a real issue for these groups as shown and supported by this research. True community-controlled decision making may not be in the best interest of the community and a collaborative or other approach may be better suited for many stakeholders. Brownfield programs may find use in customizing participation requirements to fit the needs and desires of the community rather than applying a blanket approach to all projects.

My research also questions the true opportunities that community organizations provide for participation by highlighting the importance of context, nuance, and institutional constraints. This research clarifies and defies the notion in some of the literature which makes the assumption that organizations are always involved, facilitating, and effective. The cases support the 'mediator' role in theory but the role is more nuanced that what many scholars state. Organizations were just as effective and useful for city officials and developers looking for community sentiment and support. This research also adds evidence to some scholars' concern about whether community organizations can leave

personal and private interest behind and take on a publicly-oriented decision making perspective.

Perhaps Taylor's assessment that environmental problems are socially constructed extends to defining 'good' participation: residents in these cases considered public participation to be, generally, sufficient. Yet residents and officials alike should realize locally-constructed definitions are at least partially the result of social control by those in power. I feel that this conclusion requires additional research since the focus of the research is to identify the roles of community organizations and not necessarily to uncover how participants and non-participants feel about or rate the participation process in these cases.

Priorities, relationships and reality: Community organizations faced a daunting list of issues in this research and ones that must be prioritized based not only upon neighborhood importance but also on resource availability, funding requirements, relationship maintenance, and situation realities. Organizations faced tough obstacles and would be hard pressed, even in the best of circumstances, to address issues like gentrification and affordable housing loss within the context of site-specific brownfields redevelopment. Organizations and developers met on issues that were easily addressed, such as truck routes, but often could not, or would not, tackle larger issues affecting the neighborhood. Sometimes the stakeholders in these cases needed to maintain relationships and risked being left out of this and other processes if thought to be too

"radical:" for example, one of the First Hill community organizations felt deliberately left out of the Ninth and Jefferson project and the CAC because Harborview and the city did not want the activist group disturbing the process. In some cases, the community organizations had to make decisions based upon funding requirements and other resources (as seen with SEED). Organizations may be able to play a strong role in forming realistic community priorities and relating these issues to developers and government officials.

The cases in this research confirm the clear concern in the literature about power imbalances and their relationship to the growing impact of neoliberal tendencies in public programs and public participation. As state and local governments continue to accept the devolution of federal programs, and decreasing federal funding, they are forced to rely on financial efficiency, 'business-friendly' attitudes and streamlining of programs and personnel despite calls for public participation. Amidst the rhetoric of increasing citizen voice and democratic power that emanates from various levels of government launching participatory initiatives, the actual power of neighborhood residents to influence the planning and revitalization processes that are transforming their communities are frequently pre-determined within a variety of constraints posed by neoliberal urban policy (Elwood, 2004). In Seattle, public and private were often at odds, even within the brownfields program office itself: an initial interview with an official in that office stated that perhaps the public does not have a role in the redevelopment process of private property. Outside of this office, there was plenty of evidence to support these concerns. The Washington State brownfields program sits in the Office of Community, Trade, and

Economic Development and, through interviews for this research, officials in that office see the brownfields program as a tool for economic development, adopting an entrepreneurial stance often espoused by neoliberal policy. Government officials predetermined the process for public participation and, especially in the Harborview case, predetermined the primary stakeholders, setting the stage for 'non-decisions' to be made (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963) Developers and government officials often co-opted the language of inclusion and participation but remained firmly in control of the workings of the cleanup and redevelopment process. On a larger scale, community needs and issues were often not addressed because of a lack of opportunity for meaningful involvement, the inherent short-sighted nature of having to produce financially viable outcomes, and the projection of current dominant interests. Perhaps most disturbing in these cases is the public's lack of seeing their non-involvement as a problem and government officials concurrence with this attitude. Despite having few objections to these projects, citizens rarely felt empowered as citizens or truly in control over the decisions that were affecting their lives and their neighborhoods. Government officials often did not see the need to empower their constituents and thus legitimize their own professional existence. Citizen acceptance of the current participation process all but assures that the status quo will remain in place and that brownfield cleanup and redevelopment decisions will be made by a few dominant stakeholders.

This point brings up the role of politics in the planning processes in these cases. The mayor's agenda, city officials, and others in power often exhibited the rationalization of decisions discussed by Flyvbjerg and others in Chapter 2 and often defined what counted

as reality. Participation processes were often traditional in nature and used to legitimize the goals of those in power. For example, Harborview and Department of Neighborhoods officials tightly controlled the primary public participation venue – the CAC – and those who sat on it. And SAM, while calling what it did 'public participation,' was never looking for input on the Sculpture Park, which had already been designed. Even the definitions of public participation used by Washington State and the EPA, and the standard for the Public Involvement Plans for these cases, were a reality created and maintained by those in power.

Cleanup and redevelopment*:*

This study was never about brownfields, per se. Community organizations and individual residents in each of the cases felt that the environmental contamination that makes a site eligible for a brownfields designation was not a great concern and therefore did not feel a need to participate early in the projects. This is not to say that neighborhood residents were unaware of the contamination: interviewees expressed knowledge of some kind, if not the specific source, of contamination at their respective case study sites and at other locations in their neighborhoods. Some, such as First Hill residents, noted that they often expect the ground in their neighborhood to have some kind of contamination. Community organizations may have influenced these opinions, however, by not emphasizing the contamination themselves.

Like the shift in EPA and state brownfield programs, community organizations focused almost exclusively on the redevelopment in each of the cases yet the requirements for participation in the redevelopment side of the brownfields process are weak and fairly unenforceable. Organizations, if they had focused as heavily on the cleanup of the site, probably could have gotten more residents involved earlier in the process but the extent to which that would have made a difference in the outcome of the projects remains unclear. With weak participation requirements for brownfields redevelopment, community organizations may not impact a site despite their best intentions and abilities.

Mediators:

Community organizations played a strong mediating role in many situations across the cases in this study but often from a top-down perspective. The organizations relayed information to their constituents and played an education role in many cases, often alerting residents to site plans, meetings, and sometimes the cleanup and redevelopment process. Organizations also gathered neighborhood input and relayed that information to developers and city officials. Officials, mainly used organizations for their input gathering abilities, knowledge of local issues and individuals (who could participate on boards and committees), and ability to advertise information. City officials felt that organizations were a strong connection to neighborhood residents and used the mediating (and 'local' affiliation) of organizations to access individual residents. Organizations, for their part, rarely felt used by the city and indeed often felt that city officials greatly respected the neighborhood groups. Local community organizations may be the link between development capital and expertise and the neighborhood trust.

Policy Implications, Recommendations for Practice, and Future Research Areas:

This research has shown that, for several reasons, community organizations often do not provide the opportunity structures that allow local residents the chance to participate in brownfields decision making. In particular, two findings related to this were quite striking: the lack of concern about brownfields contamination and the lack of input pathways for public participation. To address these findings, I would like to provide some policy and practice recommendations for current environmental program officials as well as others in federal, state, and local government.

First, the glaring gap between the cleanup and redevelopment sides of brownfields, while not a new phenomenon, is still occurring. Policy makers have yet to find an appropriate mix of economic development ambition and environmental cleanup enforcement despite more than a decade of experimentation. In the present cases, the only real venue for public input – the environmental cleanup side – is virtually ignored while the redevelopment side remains mostly untouchable by local residents due to the structure and control of decision making.

Policy makers would be well-advised to initiate closer ties between these two sides of the brownfields program. The EPA, Department of Ecology and the Office of Community, Trade, and Economic Development should be integrated on this program much more than their current operations. Each sees the other as a separate entity with distinct goals yet it

would be the integration of these goals that could address the common and long-term visions that these sites need. Rather than treating, for example, cleanup plans and density as separate items, the new integration could provide a newer and larger framework for examining change in neighborhoods. For example, the Department of Ecology could better emphasize the importance of cleanup standards through the lens of a high-density residential building or a public open space. EPA, which had basically no involvement in these cases, could use its authority to shine a light on the redevelopment outcomes of these projects in addition to promoting cleanup standards in a more public and two-way forum.

Second, the participation requirements and evaluation components of both programs and policies reflect this same cleanup/redevelopment gap. Brownfields are almost always measured in quantitative terms: numbers of acres cleaned up, numbers of jobs created, amount of tax revenue generated, etc. Yet the cases showed missing qualitative pieces such as the quality of the participation efforts and the concerns about future effects on the neighborhood from these developments. As shown, current traditional methods and entrenched power interests hinder participation and make benefits, such as local needs, empowerment and democratic ideals, difficult to measure. Policy makers need to modify the requirements for participation, redefine the methods for evaluating the success of the program, and question the governance structures that hinder impactful public participation, thus integrating the cleanup and redevelopment sides of brownfields.

On more immediate, practice levels, brownfields officials could use current tools for promoting better integration of community organizations and individuals into the decision making process. TAGs (Technical Assistance Grants), for instance, could be applied to all brownfield grant recipients, and particularly for community organizations, for increased technical interpretation and outreach. An educational component could also be built into the program for educating officials, community organizations leaders and residents about more meaningful participation techniques. The application process itself could reward recipients who identify and implement more meaningful participation methods and prove so through follow-up evaluations. The application process could also be the primary venue where all issues related to the cleanup and redevelopment, including issues of gentrification and change, are vetted and, hopefully, resolved. Also, such structures as the Major Institutions Master Plan could be altered to allow a more democratic voice for membership inclusion and confirmation.

This research examined only three cases which exhibited little conflict and semi-public purposes. Additional research could complement the work conducted here and perhaps provide different and starker interpretations of the importance of participation through community organizations in brownfields. There are other areas of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment that may need further study. For example, my research has an obvious need for cases with private, non-local developers creating for-profit structures. These types of cases would test the responses of interviewees who claimed that local respected developers were a factor in participation. Many, like the Belltown residents stated that they protest certain developments in their neighborhoods by other developers. Some, like

the residents of the Rainier Valley, claim that they have stopped development by outside developers. These kinds of cases would shed light on the techniques used for impacting decisions (if decisions are indeed affected) and whether or not the same structures that kept out input in this study keep out protests in other situations.

This research would also benefit from additional cases involving major conflict, regardless of the developer. For example, another hospital in the First Hill neighborhood recently attempted to demolish and redevelop an older medical building within the purview of its respective Major Institution Master Plan. Adjacent residents protested vigorously and the hospital eventually dropped the redevelopment. Cases like this could expand upon the ideas of power and influence in decision making covered in this study and identify techniques for more direct public participation. Also, additional cases in other cities, with less transparency and deeper social and economic divisions, could identify whether community organizations are more important for local residents to access the planning process.

Examples of more meaningful, two-way participation techniques (with and without improved governance structures allowing more decision making input) would assist in testing ideas discussed in this study; notably the impact of participation on outcomes, the quality of outcomes, whether participation equated to increased power, and whether participation contributed to empowerment and citizenship.

Additional research into the concept of environmental risk would help in identifying why residents and organizations in this study did not perceive their brownfields to be a concern. Projects of this kind can and do generate enormous concern, protest, and policing. They also can create a galvanizing effect upon a neighborhood, promoting participation, citizenship and empowerment within local residents and organizations.

While this study is qualitative in nature, focused on the role of community organizations, and limited by time and resources, I would also conduct additional interviews and propose a survey to gather further information on participation rates, participation methods, project issues, and overall satisfaction to confirm the results from this current research. Many individuals may be left out of the planning process for the very reasons that scholars note in Chapter 2, such as top-down planning, technocracy, and institutional racism.

Community organizations, developers, and city officials may be unaware of the potential for greater public participation and the techniques for achieving greater satisfaction. Future research could focus on participation knowledge and recommend education to achieve greater awareness of participation's potential.

Evaluation techniques may be useful: In conducting this research, I realized that there were essentially no evaluation processes in place to identify, or even define, successful projects and issues or problems that stakeholders faced in these cases. The Seattle/King County Brownfields Office lists success stories but this is simply a listing of completed

projects and does not consider outstanding project issues and community concerns. Future research could look at other evaluation programs and even put a trial program in place in Seattle that could link community organizations with brownfield officials to easily create a method for evaluating programs.

This research shows the role and potential for community organizations in brownfields. This research also identifies a lack of participation but may have more to do with issues of stakeholder power and trust than with environmental contamination. Community organizations can and do play a mediating role but in ways which may not be accentuated in the literature in Chapter 2. Additionally, organizations, and CDCs in particular, face a glaring contradiction of being a business, an advocate, and an activist. Despite many calls for increased public participation in the literature and in practice, achieving greater public participation may not be necessary (or at least necessary in all phases of a project) and possibly even detrimental. What planners and scholars should avoid is catch-all participatory democracy clichés and truly focus on the needs of the communities as defined by the communities themselves. Government officials and developers in this study attempted to implement 'public participation' but often ended up with an outreach/advertising effort that lacked any real path for input. Community organizations maintained a closer connection to community sentiment and needs but lacked the resources and power to put those feelings into actions. Officials, developers, organizations, and individuals must work together to identify appropriate and effective methods for addressing each community's brownfields issues.

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