A Changing America and the New American Dream

Rail-Volution		October 2008

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Not all visions represent progress
The past represents the dream of a different America...
...and the present represents the dream of a different world.
America needs a new American Dream built on livability

• A changing America
• Building blocks for livability
  – Community
  – Sustainability
  – Health
  – Choice
  – Placemaking
CHANGING AMERICA

- “Demographics are destiny”
- A different kind of values election
- A new economic equation
- A new regional development dynamic
Demographics are destiny
The demographics of housing demand have changed dramatically: 1950s-90s...
...today
Increased diversity extends far beyond age and race

- Married couple with children—less than 25% of the housing market.
- Traditional (one-worker) family—less than 15%...
- Singles—more than 33%...

Information from Laurie Volk, Zimmerman/Volk
Baby boomers and millennials represent a powerful...growing...market force

- The Baby Boom—82 Million 1946-1964
- The Millennials—78 Million 1977-1996

Information from Laurie Volk, Zimmerman/Volk
Changing Values: congestion is now viewed as undermining quality of life

Average commuter today spends more than an entire workweek per year stuck in traffic. — TEXAS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Boston Globe reported that more than 75% polled now report that a shorter commute would be a primary factor in choosing a next house.
A growing awareness that compact communities are healthier

• CDC: Denser communities have less obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure

• According to a recent national health survey, sprawl and low density correlate more highly with reduced health than...
  – race
  – reducing income by 50%
Sustainability has become personal

Positive proof of global warming.

18th Century


Bob Berkebile, FAIA, BNIM Architects
Many more people now understand living in urban neighborhoods is “green”
...policy should focus on green building and green planning

© Jonathan Rose Companies, LLC...courtesy of Kaid Benfield, Natural Resources Defense Council

Esquimalt, BC
...access to transit means they need fewer cars

TOD housing in large cities produces 40-50% fewer cars per household than other new housing and reduces vehicle miles by 38%.

URBAN LAND INSTITUTE
WWW.ULI.ORG
...America needs smart growth to reverse the inexorable rise in fuel consumption
...a new political equation is emerging: mayors are signing the Kyoto Accords

Bob Berkebile, FAIA BNIM Architects

As of March 19, 2007 425 mayors have responded to Mayor Nickels' challenge to adopt the goals of the Kyoto Protocol.
A New Economic Equation: sprawl has become too expensive

- Urbanized land grew 400% faster than population, 1950-90
- Lincoln Institute—northeast states can save $25 billion by pursuing more compact development over the next 25 years
- Denser communities use less energy: Manhattan uses least per capita of any U.S. city
Housing demand is moving toward density

Demand for…

Large lot suburban housing…

Small lot suburban and urban housing…

200

203

200
The value of mixed-use, walkable developments is rising

GROWTH IN RENTS 2000-2007
FOR MIXED-USE, WALKABLE DEVELOPMENTS: +40-200%

GROWTH IN RENTS 2000-2007
FOR SUBURBAN OFFICE PARKS: 0%
The Plan

Whites live in cities.
The crowning glory of civilization.

Minorities move into cities.
Hello
Goodbye

Whites flee cities to suburbs.
Ah, this is better.

Whites move into second-ring suburbs.
Cities are dead. This is better still.

Minorities move into first-ring suburbs.
This is better. I guess.

Whites move back into cities.
It worked.

The vast white ring conspiracy.
Are we implementing “The Plan”? 

- Chris Leinberger: America’s new slums are appearing at the fringes of suburbia
- Arthur Nelson: America continues to “…seriously overbuild our outer suburbs…”
- Harriet Tregoning, Planning Director, District of Columbia: “For the first time since World War II, DC is gaining in its share of the region’s class A office space.”
- USA Today: cities like Pittsburg and Cleveland are reclaiming an increasing share of their region’s wealth…for the first time since the Depression
Three mixed-income strategies

• Plan for a corridor: Boston’s Newest Smart Growth Corridor
• CDC-led partnership: One Roxbury Crossing, Boston
• City sponsored redevelopment: Andrew Adkins, Alexandria, VA
Boston’s newest smart growth corridor
Transit context

- 3 existing commuter rail stations
- Buses to Red or Orange Lines
- Direct connection to Red Line subway, BRT to the airport and eight commuter rail lines at South Station
Sponsor: coalition of CDCs
Goals

• More transportation choice -- new stations for the most underserved parts of Boston
• More housing choice – opportunities for greater mixed-income housing and higher density mixed-use development around new stations
• Connecting people to jobs—quick commutes to jobs in Readville, Newmarket, an expanding South Bay shopping center, and downtown Boston
• Enhanced quality of life—creating connections along the line to parks, cultural activities and adjacent neighborhoods
Strategy

• Plan was an advocacy document to secure legislative support for funding of new stations and increased rail service

• Document establishes vision for CDC development of affordable housing and mixed-use development around station areas
Enhance “Main Street” with transit-oriented mixed-use development

Uphams Corner
300-400 new housing units | 40,000 square feet of new or renovated commercial space
Housing and businesses replace former industrial sites

New Columbia Road Station
200-300 new housing units | 50,000 square feet of non-residential space
Mixed-use development supports a new station

New Four Corners Station
150-200 new housing units | 25,000-35,000 square feet of commercial space
New housing and services for another neighborhood

**New Talbot Avenue Station**
270 new and 60 renovated housing units | 125,000 square feet of retail space
Redevelopment of an auto dealership

New Cummins Highway Station
70-100 new housing units
Revitalize a former industrial corridor

*Readville Station*

50-80 new housing units | 10,000 square feet of new commercial space
Current results...

• CDC’s plan has won support from the state for development of 5 new commuter rail stations and increased service
• CDC’s have also secured foundation, state, and other funding sources for major land acquisition along the corridor
• CDC’s have sponsored a subsequent community process to do more detailed planning around each station area
• CDC’s currently have 700 housing units and other commercial development in the planning and development stage
• CDC leadership has ensured very high levels of affordability in new TOD housing
• Project has been recognized for the National Award for Regional and Urban Design from the AIA and a Charter Award from CNU in 2006.
One Roxbury Crossing, Boston

- 2 miles from Boston Common
- Near Longwood Medical Area and two universities
- Racially and economically diverse community
Sponsor: Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services
Goals

• Provide affordable housing adjacent to transit
• Redevelop a blighted site into a lively mixed-use neighborhood square
• Help residents understand the economic tradeoffs of density and the amenities that can come along with it, through the community process
The strategy

- MHNHS led a community-based planning process
- …secured strong community support for redevelopment
- …urged the MBTA to put the site up for bid
- …made a successful bid
- …secured a development partner—New Boston Fund
- …and is now in development
Process

• Walking tour of the site
• The “Three E’s” Task Force
• The TOD Task Force
• The Housing Task Force
• Community Planning Workshops #1 – 4
  (Goody Clancy lead)
Community planning workshops: #1 & 2

- Development of the Mission Statement and the core principles
- Block massing and edges exercise with foam blocks and markers
#3 & 4

- Development Economics 101 seminar
- Financial analysis of the development framework alternatives
- Developing consensus on the community’s preferred vision
The community’s preferred vision

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<td>Residential</td>
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<td>32 affordable townhomes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>242 spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plaza space</td>
<td>1/2 acre</td>
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Townhouses with bays and stoops
Plaza space
Retail with housing above
Iconic cross-walks
Bike parking station
Improved pedestrian crossings
Enhanced bus shelters
Station Street office entry
The dollars...

- Housing ($6 mil)
- Retail ($1 mil)
- Community space ($1 mil)
- Plaza and public spaces ($2 mil)
- Institutional office +10 mil

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Goals

• Provide affordable housing adjacent to transit
• …and extend the benefits of TOD to current public housing residents
• Breakdown barriers between two different communities and create a cohesive mixed income neighborhood
The strategy

- City conducted a TODistrict community-based planning initiative
- …secured strong community support for redevelopment
- …invited the Housing Authority and public housing community to join in a community-wide initiative to create a new generation of mixed-income housing
- …created a plan which uses “the TOD premium” to fund roughly 50% of the cost of redeveloping public housing
Process

• Walking tour of the public housing developments transformed into mixed-income housing in DC and Alexandria

• Braddock East Advisory Group formed, included public housing residents, members of the surrounding community

• Intensive community education process
Key points in community education

• Public housing and other residents got to know each other
• Crime, racism, different life styles and other issues associated with mixed-income communities are…
  – Sometimes real
  – Manageable if the community works together
• Mixed-income housing that welcomes back public housing residents who seek to return requires increased density
• …well designed density can create a welcome neighbor
• Not all public housing residents want to return…redevelopment can create new location choices
The community’s preferred vision
The dollars...

- Replacing 60 existing public housing units on site ($20 mil)
- Relocating 30 units offsite ($11 mil)
- Creating 20 affordable ownership units on site ($3 mil)
- Social and human services ($6 mil)
- Residual land value of 150 market rate housing units on site $15 mil
- TIF-like value of 150 market rate housing units on site $5 mil
- Tax credits and other public funds $20 mil