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## Culture Influencing Community Change

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# The Big Picture: Planning for the Future of Culture in Communities

Just as a cultural institution must periodically take stock of its strategic position within a community, so do cities need to examine the impact of growth, development, resource shifts, and change on the cultural community as a whole. This session focuses on the design and implementation of several cultural planning, mapping, or policy development processes; each responds to specific but varied community conditions. Presenters identify the issues that led to their planning efforts, define the scope and purpose of their work and, in some cases, share significant outcomes. Who supports these efforts? Who benefits?

Session Designer: Kathleen Cerveny  
The Cleveland Foundation

Panelists: Peggy Amsterdam  
The Cleveland Foundation  
Kinshasha Holman Conwill  
New York Foundation for the Arts  
Thomas Schorgl  
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Regina Smith  
Arts and Sciences Council of Charlotte-Mecklenburg

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**Schorgl:** We're going to introduce everybody, starting on my far right. Regina, would you tell people who you are and where you're from?

**Smith:** Regina Smith, with the Arts and Science Council in Charlotte, North Carolina.

**Amsterdam:** Peggy Amsterdam, with the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance.

**Conwill:** Kinshasha Conwill, with the *Cultural Blueprint*, New York Foundation for the Arts.

**Schorgl:** I'm Tom Schorgl. I am president of a group called the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, and I am sitting in for Kathleen Cerveny today from the Cleveland Foundation, who was the chief designer of this particular panel. And Kathleen sends her love to all of those who she knows, and hopes that she'll be able to join you next year.

When we started out this concept, we started with twenty-five talking points, only twenty-five talking points. Then we had a conference call and we reduced that down to ten talking points. Then we decided we could do this in four talking points. The four talking points, just to pique your interest, are:

We will start out with the Book of Genesis, Civics 101, then going to Launch and Tracking, and end up with the Book of Revelations. Each of our panelists have had either the beginning stages of community cultural planning; have done many community cultural plans, have inherited a community cultural plan; or have recently completed and are implementing a community cultural plan.

So we thought to keep this lively, and to keep your blood sugar up, that we would, instead of talking to you for fifteen minutes apiece and then opening it up for questions, start out with these four topic areas. Some of our panelists will have a lot to say on each topic area, depending on where they are in the process, some of them will not. We'll move through that, and then we do want to have a dialog with you. Any and all questions are okey-dokey. Right panelists?

The Book of Genesis really looks at some particular areas. In other words, what prompted your efforts in terms of arts and cultural planning in your particular community? Was there a time frame involved? Were there any sort of specific outcomes that were expected

at the beginning of the planning process? And who and how did you design that planning process?

We're going to open this up and I will see if anybody wants to volunteer. If they don't, then I will just go to one of the panelists. So, who would like to volunteer? Peggy!

**Amsterdam:** Sure, I think there are probably people in this room who know about this better than I do, but I'll try my best and they'll keep me honest. I'm new to the Cultural Alliance, and I walked in about a year ago just as some of the initial work was being done.

We were supposed to start by giving you a little bit of background, too, on our cities and what we're dealing with. Philadelphia has about a million and a half people. The region is defined for this purpose as five counties, and the population is six million people. But the governmental jurisdictions are very complex, and I can go into them a little bit later if anyone's interested...just know that they're very diverse and Heather just told me there are over five thousand municipalities in Pennsylvania, and most of them are in the Philadelphia region. So we're dealing not only with city government, a mayor, city council, but also various county commissioners, and then numerous township folks and other municipalities.

The idea was to do a plan for the region to look at one of the oldest cultural workings in a city in the country. We have some of the oldest and some of the largest internationally-known cultural institutions as well as the wide array, as you can imagine, of community-based organizations. Little planning was done. There's been a lot of talk about regionalism, and about ten years ago, an attempt to create a regional cultural fund that failed. That was part of the impetus to look into this, possibly looking into the creation of a new supplemental funding source that could be an attempt at regionalism, which gets talked about a lot in the Philadelphia region, but nothing has ever come of it.

A lot of things at work in the city as far as population moving out of the city into the suburbs, an old history of the people from the suburbs coming into the city to receive their cultural amenities. Now of course suburban sprawl, and people in the suburbs who need their cultural activities there where they live, but there's not the same infrastructure there.

**Smith:** Charlotte has been planning for quite some time. We started our first cultural planning process in the mid-seventies, due to the corporate community's desire to revitalize the downtown area. Since the mid-1970s, we've been developing plans for the community and with the community, with the city and county onboard, and our corporate community at the table as well.

We have a little under six-hundred thousand people in the city of Charlotte, with a seven-county region, our MSA is about 1.5. The Arts and Science Council has been in existence since 1958, so we have a long tradition, as I mentioned, of distributing dollars, and a long tradition of planning with the community.

I mentioned earlier that the corporate community wanted to develop a vision and include art and culture as part of that vision, in revitalizing the downtown area, which we call Uptown. We can't quite decide if it's Uptown, Center City, or Downtown, so if I kind of flow back and forth, you'll know it's somewhere in the central district. Our agency provides that private and public sector conduit, not just for resources, but the planning. We are the planning entity for our community. So I'll stop there.

**Conwill:** There are eight million stories in the Naked City. This has been one of them. There are a little more than eight million people in the City now, but they, as Ken Prewitt's comments would suggest, look a little different from what they looked like back in the time of the Naked City.

This is a private activity which was organized by the New York Foundation for the Arts in collaboration with our beloved cultural community of New York City. So while the Department of Cultural Affairs has been cooperative in providing us information, we are independent of them and we are funded by primarily foundation grants, as well as corporate grants.

We had initial funding from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, Warhol, New York Community Trust, and, subsequently, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Rockefeller Foundation, Ford, J.P. Morgan, Chase, the Greve Foundation, and, I'll double-check my list. Because at GIA, one miss... AT&T. I meant to mention that, absolutely, at the top.

One of the things that occasioned this timing of Ted Berger and other members of the cultural community going to the current Commissioner of Cultural Affairs and saying, "It's time to do something about cultural

policy in New York City," is the fact that we will have the biggest change in the city's government in its history, which will have a key moment tomorrow when we hope – believe! – we will elect a Mayor.

Of course, the very serious issues of September 11th have had an impact on everything, but we had our own issues as well with the election, and it's been a tumultuous time, and our runoff votes were not counted correctly, et cetera. But we will have a new Mayor, and as importantly – and we'll see, perhaps it may be more importantly, we don't know – we'll have a new City Council. Three-quarters of the City Council turns over because of term limits. Four of the five Borough Presidents will be new. We will have a new Controller and a new Speaker of the Council. That is an enormous change, and while there is a permanent government, one always believes, the key players in government will change.

Many of them have experience in government, some more than others, and others have experience in civic activities; the City Council is an enormously interesting group of people that includes community activists, as well as second-generation elected officials who are taking their parents' seats in the Council. So we have a rich array.

Part of what generated this notion, besides the timing, which made a compressed timeline for this activity, was the fact that New York City basically has a *de facto* policy for giving out over \$120 million. It's a lot of money, it's the largest public money of its kind, yet it's given out in a rather opaque process.

Part of what our report does, and we'll talk about later, is really unpack that process and talk about where the money goes, talk about of the twenty-three hundred cultural organizations we mapped, how many get money, how many don't, and how they do that. This is the first study of its kind in the almost thirty years since there was a study by a commission appointed by then-Mayor Abraham Beame, headed by Martin Segal, which led to the separation of the Department of Cultural Affairs from the Parks Department. When you look at the language of that report, it promised a new era of independence and also increased activity, and part of the report shows that that has been a mixed report in the past thirty years.

**Schorgl:** In Cleveland, and in northeast Ohio, which is about 2.7 million people in the seven-county

region, you can link this cultural community process to a very specific effort on the part of the Cleveland Foundation.

The Cleveland Foundation, in 1995, wanted to know what was happening to all their money in terms of performing arts organizations. They had been giving a lot of it to a number of performing arts organizations, and they had noticed that those performing arts organizations were having some difficulty some years and some growth other years. They commissioned the Civic Study Commission on Performing Arts, an analysis of some of the endemic things in terms of performing arts organizations that might be addressed and corrected. As they started to do that, they looked nationwide at other communities of similar size and they started to notice that there was something systemic in these other communities that did not exist in Cleveland and northeast Ohio, and that was a community-based arts and cultural planning process.

With that, in 1996 they released their analysis of these eleven performing arts organizations with some very specific strategies on how those organizations might work together or combine costs to reduce some of their expenses. Also out of that particular process came a big push to do a community cultural plan.

We have a very large private and corporate funding community in northeast Ohio, with about two-hundred fifty foundations of various sizes. Four of them, with the Cleveland Foundation, joined together to launch this initiative. This was an initiative also that was not placed in any existing not-for-profit organization. The corporate community, the foundation community and the arts and cultural community felt that there should be an initiative that was objective and would come from the outside, although be housed in Cleveland and take on that process. We had thirty-six months to complete this; we in fact were able to do it in thirty months.

I can go into some of the other things, but I want to pass this back to my colleagues in terms of any specific outcomes that you had expected in any of your planning processes or that you hoped to see in terms of your planning process.

**Conwill:** I was going to do unexpected outcomes. Can I do that instead?

**Schorgl:** Yes, you can.

**Conwill:** Part of the methodology for our process was five town hall meetings, one in each borough. They were easier to put together than we thought. In retrospect, perhaps, it feels like that. But they were quite welcomed.

We planned them each with a member of our twenty-five-member working group, which was made up of heads of cultural organizations, from Bill Laguado at Bronx Council on the Arts, to Judy Zook at the Bronx Botanic Garden, the Metropolitan Museum, BAM – Brooklyn Academy of Music, and many others. In each borough, a member of the working group, and an academic institution, or educational institution, was a co-host with a series of cultural organizations, usually the local arts council. There was great testimony by everyone in the audience at those events about the importance of culture to them, and there were a variety of people at the events. They included a number of members of the cultural community, but also corporate and foundation funders, artists, educators, and members of the college community and others who might have heard about it.

Very soon you'll be able to hear what the report from the Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy said, because I cannot reveal the results, except to say that the report we commissioned really gave teeth and nuance to the public participation in culture by New Yorkers. It gave the first-ever statistical information that told in great detail what New Yorkers felt about culture, what the opportunities were, as well as what the obstacles were.

**Schorgl:** Expected outcomes? Unexpected outcomes?

**Smith:** In Charlotte, the Arts and Science Council is really a hybrid organization. It's the United Arts Fund and a local arts agency rolled into one.

When we started the cultural planning process, the Arts Fund function was very strong and embedded within the community. Actually, the agency started as an arts fund and has added on local arts agency functions as the years have gone by.

Expected outcomes, definitely, from the artists' community. The needs of the artists were not being met, services to individual artists were not being met, as well as emerging organizations. There are organizations that are developing, and grassroots organizations that are developing, and how did they fit within the model of an arts fund, or this entity that has only

raised dollars for a small group of organizations in the past? So artists' issues and grassroots organizations issues.

The other part that has come up throughout the years has been facilities. Where do organizations and individuals perform? We haven't quite approached the issue of live/work space yet, but I think it's probably within the next plan, will be an issue. Gallery space and space for emerging organizations to produce and present their work will definitely be an issue.

**Amsterdam:** We are finishing the first year of what we're calling a planning process. One of the first things that happened when I took this job was the discussion of, "Where do we go from here?" Our consultants had just finished a year of research, and also, this project was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the William Penn Foundation, and all of us together felt that we needed some more time.

For me just being new to Philadelphia, so many people wanted to be heard in this process that hadn't been heard yet, and therefore the need to spend some more time in the community, more time than was expected in the beginning.

**Schorgl:** There were definitely expected outcomes when the planning process started, and I'll go into more detail as we go through our presentations.

But sustaining arts and cultural assets, and that was a code word for individual artists and arts and cultural organizations of various sizes and shapes and expressions. There are about four hundred different arts and cultural organizations in northeast Ohio. About a hundred fifty of those are 501(c)(3) not-for-profits, which have at least paid part-time staff and a board. So you can see that there are lots of other types of clubs and initiatives that exist in this urban, suburban, and rural area of seven counties.

Sustaining those arts and cultural assets, in terms of public sector support, which there's precious little of locally in northeast Ohio. This idea of capacity-building, which ten years ago was known as technical assistance, and twenty years ago was known as business practices – connecting arts and cultural assets to more people in the region. This led to some fantastic market studies that I will share with you later. What we learned from that was quite revealing.

An extremely important point in terms of expected outcomes, especially from the foundation community

and the corporate community, is the arts and cultural sector, joining with the public sector and the private sector, would now have a seat at the public policy table. With the research, and the public meetings that were done – there were forty-two public meetings done throughout the sixteen months of this process – we could push our way onto the table in terms of public policy. And then finally develop a research base and work that longitudinally out from a point, which was the beginning of the planning process.

What is the public policy table? We're talking about the Chamber of Commerce, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the religious community, elected and public officials, all these great things that corporate leadership put together, and they go out and create all these wonderful plans. Then we all find out later that arts and culture was an afterthought. We wanted to break ourselves out from that so that we weren't going to be on the periphery of community development, but we would be at the center of community development.

Let's talk a little bit about process design. I know Peggy's in the middle of her process design. Kinshasha, you're in the final stages, but you can't release any of the details, and you've gone through four process designs. So, what did you do? Quantitatively, qualitatively.

**Smith:** Part of the challenge is having been within an organization for two years and then being asked to present on plans that have taken place since the mid-seventies.

The process itself has varied with each plan, and will change even with the next plan. We've hired consultants to come in and survey the community, and survey individuals and the corporate community and so on, and they've told us exactly, in some cases, what they thought we wanted to hear, and in some cases what we really didn't want to hear.

For the most part, our agency will more than likely, instead of going to a consultant to develop the plan next year, do so in-house. We've hired a VP of planning to do the coordination, and bringing in consultants to coordinate the work of the consultants in very specific elements of our planning process. We've already started some of that.

Most of you have already started on the regional focus in developing your plans; you're looking at that now. Charlotte-Mecklenburg started off again look-

ing at the Center City area, and now we're starting to look at the impact on the region. Part of our challenge is to bring that process along internally, and then look at the region as a whole.

**Armstrong:** A steering committee was created – and this was, again, before I was employed at the Cultural Alliance – and a consultant was hired. They used Wolf Keanes. When I came in, the contract was up and the brochure that you see is the result of the initial planning stages.

Because we were new at this, there were a lot of questions about, "What is cultural planning? What is this cultural planning process? If it's going to affect us, what does it mean?"

So for me, as I came in inheriting this plan, it was important for me to have a way to explain – we're a membership organization – to the two-hundred fifty members of the arts and cultural community, that we were involved in the midst of this cultural planning process, and this is where we were to date. And that we would be going out and eliciting some more response from people as well.

**Conwill:** The part I can't reveal is our conclusions, but I'll leak them in a general way, only general, Ted.

But the process is no secret. The twenty-five member working group, which I mentioned, was of cultural leaders throughout the city. We also had a Citizen's Advisory Committee, which included foundation executives, business leaders, educators. It was co-chaired by Richard Parsons, co-chief operating officer of AOL Time Warner, and Linda LeRoy Janklow, who chairs the board of Lincoln Center Theater.

The Citizen's Committee met once, but they reviewed a lot of material electronically. The working group really was a working group. It met every month for about thirteen months.

We also had a special relationship with the New York City Partnership, which is our Chamber of Commerce, and one of their VPs was on our working group, and the CEO was on our citizen's group. That helped us to figure out certain kinds of language and positioning that would make this eventual study more translatable to a broader civic audience.

We also had a project team that did different parts of the work, so Gregory Candell, who was the chief project consultant, did a lot of interviewing. He did

one-on-one interviews, and quotes from those interviews are throughout the report. The report is called "Culture Counts."

We had focus groups; we looked at different kinds of groups. We had two focus groups on artists, one on community-based organizations, one with funders, one with leaders in the arts and education community. We also had the town hall meetings that I mentioned, one in each borough.

The cultural indicator study, which is the same as the Fordham Institute study, was commissioned by NYFA for this process. NYFA did the instrument, and Yankalovich conducted a random survey of over eight hundred New Yorkers in all boroughs from eighteen to sixty-five years of age.

We did a mapping project with the New York Public Interest Research Group, and we mapped the entire city by borough to show where cultural activity takes place. That's where we found our number of twenty-three hundred, and compared that to what the Department of Cultural Affairs funded, and found quite a gap there.

We also had a real estate report done by an organization called The Center for an Urban Future, which is a very small and nimble think-tank in New York City.

We did enormous data gathering. One of the members of the project team had a responsibility almost solely for gathering data, and we did everything from gather historic data on funding at the federal and state level for the City of New York, to the city's own funding, some of it for the past thirty years. Then we focused on the late eighties, because that's a key part of a point we want to make in our report.

We also put in models from other cities, and we were visited by friends like Peggy, and other people who came with her like Greg, to talk about what other cities were doing. We looked at Pittsburgh, Providence, San Francisco, the London Lottery. All of those things are cited in our report. We see the report ultimately as a primer for this new set of elected officials, so they can come to one place and find out the history of DCA, its current funding, what are the strategies other cities have tried, and look at this as background for the same thing that you said, Tom, which was making sure that culture is at the table in any public policy.

**Schorgl:** Process design was very interesting. It was extremely important that we create a working steering committee that was made up of leadership from these three sectors. We all know about the public and private sector, but we also wanted to break out arts and culture as a separate sector here. The public and private sectors work pretty well in Cleveland and northeast Ohio in terms of rejuvenation of downtown Cleveland, putting out the fires on the river, those types of things which were important about twenty years ago. We wanted to make sure that this planning process was not a mini-micro-management of arts and cultural organizations, because that was a big fear, especially with the major institutions.

We brought people into the steering committee, like the heads of the two foundations that support arts and culture at the highest level in northeast Ohio, the Cleveland Foundation and the George Gund Foundation. We went to the religious community and brought in some leaders from the religious community. We went to the AFL-CIO. Cleveland is a big union community, and it was important for us to have the rank and file at the table, and we had the president of the AFL-CIO, who was on that steering committee. The Visitors and Convention Visitors Bureau, the heads of major arts organizations, heads of small arts organizations, individual artists, performing and visual artists were part of that steering committee. We really tried to make it reflect the diversity of northeast Ohio.

I have now five County Commissioners from five different counties in the seven-county region that serve on my board. That can be a benefit most of the time, and sometimes it can be a real nightmare. To have five different elected officials from five different counties involved in a regional cultural planning process, and what's more, have some ownership in that and make sure that it's implemented, was very important to set at the front end.

We designed both quantitative and qualitative protocols, we did nine quantitative assessments in the back of this brochure. You'll see a summary of our various protocols in terms of economic impact analysis, market study, we did a two hundred fifty thousand household market study, a number of different metrics to measure the impact of arts and culture.

By the way, if you're interested in every piece of that information, you can go to [www.cultureplan.org](http://www.cultureplan.org), and you can download *every* piece of what we

did in terms of analysis, including forty-two public meetings.

Now, the public forums were very interesting, because we were hoping to reach about five hundred people in these public forums, and we did them throughout seven counties. We ended up with close to a thousand individuals participating, but we did it through an iterative process. We went out and asked people to participate in goal design, and then we brought that back in and we checked it against the quantitative information that we were developing. We took it back out again, invited a bunch of people based on twenty different task forces of a hundred and ten people telling us who the leadership was in their tiny township or their major metropolitan area in terms of artists and bakers and candlestick makers. At the end of it, we really did have a plan that there was some ownership in the goals, objectives and strategies, which made the rollout of this plan a very big public event in northeast Ohio.

We also involved arts and cultural organizations as well as other community leaders in some of those protocols. When we were working with the consultant, we said, "No cookie cutters, guys. What we want are protocols that are going to be useful for this community, and something that will go beyond the planning process so that we can establish this research base."

We had task forces that met with Tom Wolf. And I love Tom, and Tom learned that his particular protocol on economic development had some application and other pieces didn't.

What came out of this, interestingly enough, is that the partnership became the general contractor of this plan. We went out and subcontracted specialists to help us with different pieces of it. The result was it worked very well, and continues to work very well in our region.

**Question:** I have a question, since you brought it up. What criteria do you all use to choose these consultants?

**Schorgl:** We put together a massive RFP. And the RFP was based on a hundred and fifty key person interviews that we did in a hundred and eighty days from the public sector, the private sector, and the arts and cultural sector. Based on that information, and of course, the information that came out of the



Cleveland Foundation's Civic Study Commission on the Performing Arts, we had a pretty good bucket of data to sort out and do these protocols around.

**Conwill:** We like Craig, we think he's cool. No, we talked to three consultants, and we had a dollar fifty. We had less time. We had the pressing deadline of this election, which is tomorrow. But we did look at three consultants who do this kind of work.

**Question:** Were they all local?

**Conwill:** No.

**Question:** I live in Connecticut, in a town called Westport, which a lot of you may have heard of, and I'm on the board of our Arts Council. We're in a quandary, and I thought maybe coming here would help.

We've done surveys of the community to see what they wanted in an arts center. I think we have an inferiority complex, because we couldn't figure out really what they did want.

We used to have a big place, a school that was very good for the Arts Council, with studios and everything, but the town took it back because it was a school. So we haven't had a place to have visual artists like myself to have a place to go.

Now we're trying to rent a space. We eke out a living, or whatever you want to call it. You know...money. We don't have wealthy supporters, we don't have corporate supporters. You know, they make big, big mansions, and we feel there must be some people who have money to support the arts, but it just doesn't seem to come.

**Schorgl:** You said you've gone through a planning process?

**Question:** Yes, we have.

**Schorgl:** Okay, was that a planning process that you launched at the local arts agency? Or was that a planning process that engaged not only your board and your staff, but also asked the head of the Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor of the village, the County Commissioners, to be at that table too?

**Question:** Well, yes we did, we had a more or less professional person do the work.

**Schorgl:** No, that's not what I asked. Here's what I asked. Were you able to get those people from the corporate community, the real estate agents that are building the starter castles, and the other folks at the table? Or was this something that really came out of your good desire and your passion to do it, but didn't have any ownership from those other groups that are forming policy in your community?

**Question:** No, the town just had a town planning committee.

**Schorgl:** I was trying to lead the witness.

**Smith:** Part of it, and I think what Tom is getting at, he's taught me very well, is planning with the community versus planning for the community. It seems from your description that you're doing a lot of planning for your community as an Arts Council. By engaging others within the area – city, town, council, so forth – you're now in a very different place. You've invited different people to dinner. So there's a very different conversation that takes place when you have those folks around the table versus you're talking to your arts organizations as a local arts agency, or talking to your board members.

**Conwill:** I think it's important, though, for us not to impose too many assumptions on this conversation. It's not just because the questioner is a friend of mine, but this is a very small community, and this is a person who is an artist, a contributor to the community, so she's inside and outside.

I think just as we would say that we don't want cookie-cutters from consultants, I think we, in talking with our colleagues here don't want to say that you can have the same process everywhere. The scale issues are a lot different.

But I do think you're getting the gist of what our colleagues will say, but I want to caution our colleagues that this is not a municipality, this is really a very small town, and that the person speaking is someone who is very involved in the community. So I'm speaking for you as well as others.

**Schorgl:** I'm going to jump in. I don't disagree with that. I don't think that you should try to emulate any sort of cultural planning process.

I was in Washington, D.C., a few months ago, and we talked about the Cleveland Model, so to speak,

and it would be totally inappropriate for Washington, D.C., given all of its different counties and its three states and its national jurisdiction, to attempt a planning process like that. Their planning process will be much different.

However, I do believe there are root causes that you have to go after. One of those root causes is, you as a passionate artist and community leader with a local arts agency need to move forward in whatever method you would like to move forward in and engage those other leaders. Bring them to the table. Because if you don't, it doesn't matter what process that you use, it's going to be an inward-looking process. The elected officials, the corporate people, aren't going to pay much attention to it. We've got to be aggressive when it comes to moving arts to the center of community development.

**Audience:** You have to put your money where your mouth is.

**Conwill:** That's what she's saying we should do.

**Question:** Can you talk a little bit about to what extent and how you engage the local media as helping you push the agenda? I know that in New York and other cities, big and small, it's very hard to entice the local media to get on good positive stories that talk about the future rather than the gun reports and the crime reports. How do you strategize to get local papers, radio, television personalities to help push your agenda?

**Malloy:** Just in general, that's always very difficult, and it's building one friendship at a time, and being able to give them good, solid facts. You need to be strategic about that, as you're rolling out something that's so involved with so many different people from the community.

**Conwill:** But have you gotten coverage, for instance, on the process?

**Malloy:** We have not. But we didn't want to, at this point. We're not there yet.

**Conwill:** You're not seeking it.

**Schorgl:** We sought coverage immediately, and we went to the *Plain Dealer*, and we went to the *Akron Beacon-Journal*, and we went to all the suburban news-

papers right at the beginning, introduced ourselves, laid out what we hoped to accomplish after thirty-six months, and asked to have a person cover us. Also public radio, public television; the commercial television stations weren't interested, and I think there's one radio station left in the United States, and that's Clear Channel 1, and they weren't interested, either.

But in any event, we asked them to assign a reporter to this. The fact that we had the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the head of a number of different corporations, the heads of Pastors and Missions, the head of AFL-CIO, they took notice, and they did follow us.

What we did with those news articles, both printed and electronic, is develop a newspaper and electronic media interpretation of the planning process. I'd be happy to send it to you, it's fascinating. In some cases, it has a lot to do with reality, and in others, it doesn't. But it's a fascinating review.

The other thing that you have to realize is that they're going to report it the way they see it. They're not players, they're referees. They may not report it in the same manner that you'd like to see it roll out.

**Conwill:** We have found that the *Cultural Blueprint* has been living in the media, even though it is not released, because there's a little buzz out there. Because the election process is going on, one of the things that some of the members of the cultural community did, not necessarily with our permission, but I think it worked out well, is when people wanted to perhaps jump on culture during this process, or to make statements one way or the other, they said, "Wait for the *Cultural Blueprint*." I mean, it puts a lot of weight on the process, but it also meant that there was a sense that there was something comprehensive coming out, let's not just talk off the top of our heads like we New Yorkers like to do.

So it has been mentioned in the *Times*, there was a report in *Crain's New York*, the business paper, specifically about the process, and it had, as you've mentioned, some things that were absolutely right and some things that were absolutely wrong. National Public Radio had something on the local edition, where they interviewed members of the cultural community who included people on the working group for the *Cultural Blueprint*.

As we begin to roll this out in the next few days, starting with it going on NYFA's Web site

at [www.nyfa.org](http://www.nyfa.org), we will be seeing how some of the other strategies work, including a very long media list with local newspapers, of which there are many, many, many, and other media outlets in New York City.

For us, the idea of letting it float out there in the world as a coming thing over the past several months has built up some anticipation, and has really seeded the process. Whether we'll get the exact kind of feature coverage, at least, we don't know, but I think we will see what happens, and if some other things provide some synergy to that.

**Schorgl:** I think there's a way to build up to it, also, if you're doing some of these quantitative research pieces, in that you can release those ahead of the plan, and it does give some context to what you're about and what you're trying to develop, as we release the economic impact analysis.

**Question:** Kinshasha, I wanted you to speak to, if you could, the timeline in terms of when NYFA began to roll this out, even internally, and where you got to today in terms of, how much longer do you think it's going to actually take you to roll this out?

Also, it seems to me that what you've done in effect is allow the community to own the *Blueprint*, and how did you do that? It's almost as though NYFA is not the advocate, but that in fact the entire cultural community in New York has become an advocate for this *Blueprint*.

**Conwill:** Thank you. Yes, I think and hope that's true.

This started either about a year and a half to two years ago, or twenty-five years ago, depending on how you count. In the town hall meetings when we introduced this process, Ted Berger would often call himself the designated hitter, because this team of cultural people in the city for years have been saying, "We need a policy, we need a policy."

What happened with this urgent moment of the change in government, is we are able to have an impetus. You should know the context of this is that a lot of sectors in New York are doing that. There was a big park report, which was "1% for Parks," which we were all jealous of at the time. There's a big housing report. There's a big economic development report. So that's all the context of that.

But it started with those conversations that Ted and others in the community had among themselves, and then with the Commissioner. The Commissioner then had some breakfasts, and it became clear that this could not actually be a city project, because with the change in government, no new group would want to embrace that.

We have had different points at which we thought we might roll this out, the last one being right around September 11th, and so we literally stopped the presses and then reconvened the working group and the artists' group to ask them for their advice as to whether or not this was something to do. We heard all of the things that you have thought yourselves, I'm sure, and heard at the conference already, particularly the things in the last session about what matters now and what should we do now. What everyone began to say to us is that this means more than ever, that it should mean more than ever.

And, too, the thing of buy-in. One of the things that happened, starting with the town hall meetings and then moving forward with the working group, is that people started talking about issues that weren't necessarily about the *Blueprint*, but just about borough issues in Queens, or borough issues in the Bronx. People began to form little alliances right in the room and say, "You know, why don't we ever get together on our own?"

We were just going to print a blank sheet of paper with something at the bottom that said, "We kept a working group of twenty-five New Yorkers together for a year," and just consider that the accomplishment.

Ted doesn't know this and neither does Penny, but a certain person who's on our working group and was here at the conference came up to me and said that the work that NYFA has done on this is more amazing than ever, and is going to be more important, not just in terms of Culture Counts itself, but in terms of having defined a community at a time like this in the city. As one representative of one of the candidates said, "Can we just go to one person now?" And of course, you can't. You can't. But it's at least defined for them a sense that here's a community that is cohesive, that has come together on common goals. And they said it couldn't be done. It's a credit to NYFA, of course, but also to the community itself that they were willing to do this.

**Question:** I have a question about the staffing of this. I mean, was there staffing? How did all of that happen?

**Schorgl:** You're looking at twenty-five percent of my staff. We subcontracted a lot of the research, and then we worked in partnership with various organizations within northeast Ohio. The Neighborhood Community Development Corporation, which is about thirty-two different CDCs, was extremely important. We had an alliance with them. The Greater Cleveland Growth Association, we aligned with them and used some of their staff in terms of the research piece and rolling out the plan. So what that also provided us with was a greater base of ownership in this planning process.

I was sort of "Clerk of the Works." I made sure that we kept on task, and that the protocols that we had subcontracted were met in terms of their finishing times. Primarily through the qualitative research, we did most of the public forum work. So the forty-two public forums we facilitated ourselves. We worked, in terms of presentations, on each of the protocols as they rolled out to various civic groups.

Then we authored the plan. We synthesized the materials as they came in, and authored the plan. We had two reports ahead of the final plan that distilled information as it came in. So we acted as the general contractor of the plan, managed it.

**Question:** I have a question about university involvement. I know you were saying in the New York *Blueprint* that you had university partners. I'm wondering what level of the university, how many universities, whether any of the other cities involved universities in partnerships at all, and how successful that was.

**Conwill:** Each of our town hall meetings involved a university, and the participation varied. In the Bronx, the president of Lehman College greeted us, the deputy borough president of the borough greeted us, and our colleague Bob Laguado was our main contact there.

In Brooklyn, BAM and the two arts councils there helped bring that together, and it was at the Brooklyn campus of Long Island University, and a professor welcomed us to that campus.

At CUNY Graduate Center, the Center for the Study of Philanthropy co-sponsored this and helped to

underwrite it, because this is the only place we actually had to pay for, and they helped us pay their own organization, CUNY, to use their beautiful auditorium. But it was a beautiful auditorium.

We had hoped, to one of your points, to have a deeper relationship with the Center for the Study of Philanthropy because of their work with private philanthropy, and tried to see if we could make a nexus. We weren't quite able to do that.

The College of Staten Island, the Performing Arts Center there, and Queens College. And usually the places that had performing arts centers in Queens and Staten Island, the heads of those entities welcomed us. We did everything from use their mailing list to, if they had a Web site, have the town hall meeting on their Web site. Except for CUNY Graduate Center, which in every other way was totally generous, everything else was free at all the organizations – including, when we asked, providing refreshments and staffing.

One of the thoughts is that we might go back into those boroughs again and do some kind of briefing on the report, because we have that kind of infrastructure of organizations in place.

**Schorgl:** Just briefly, from two different aspects. In terms of having the colleges, and there's Case Western, there's Cleveland State University, Baldwin-Wallace, a number of community colleges. They were all pretty active in the community dialog and the public process side.

We initially tried, but it was clear to us that a lot of the research that we would have loved to have subcontracted to the universities, today we would still be trying to get that research. We decided that that was not the way to go if we wanted to finish this in time. It's too bad, because there are some really good research departments within Case Western and Cleveland State University that we would like to ultimately keep this information in perpetuity. We don't know; we're still working on that.

There have been some changes, though – I'm happy to say – within a number of those universities, big leadership changes, and they're becoming more public-sensitive. So that may change the research part.

**Question:** Peggy, I have a question for you. The cultural planning in Philadelphia, as I understand it, started under the Rendell Administration, or when

Rendell was still in office. Ed Rendell as Mayor was, let's say, a pretty active arts cheerleader. The current mayor, from what I've been reading, is not nearly as close in that enthusiasm. How do you deal with that?

And I'm also curious across the panel how you deal with the lack of, or overactive, support from the Mayor's office or other major politicians from your city or region.

**Amsterdam:** Yes, we have been seeing a lot of support from the Mayor himself. We have been in touch with some people in the Office of Planning, Chief of Staff, City Commerce Department, people who, we can gather, who seem to have some understanding, and we certainly intend to use them as we roll this out.

Again, it's not just for the city. My hope is that some of the work that we're going to do in the suburban areas will bring in some of these people, and using things like the Delaware Valley Planning Council, Greater Philadelphia First, and the Chamber of Commerce, that are very active in the region. So really looking at the other regional organizations and using them as the partners.

But there has been very little coming from the Mayor's office. He did announce about a week ago that he's adding to the City Cultural Fund.

**Schorgl:** Other panelists?

**Smith:** The Mayor's office has been actively involved, but again, we're a conduit for City and County funding, so it's critical to have both the Chairman of the County Commission and the Mayor, as well as the City Manager, onboard. They're in essence a part of our board as well, so they're at the table.

**Conwill:** As I mentioned, we have briefed the candidates who are up for election tomorrow. But I do want to say, maybe it's the obvious, it's hard to over-emphasize the impact of 9-11 in New York. As we talk to the candidates, and as we talk to whoever will be the mayor, the whole idea of rebuilding lower Manhattan and of rebuilding New York; the downturn in the economy which preceded 9-11.

The emerging role of the state is a big question mark. This new Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Authority, which may be headed by our soon-to-be previous mayor, all of that is going to be in the mix, and it's going to be a challenge. One that we're completely

up to, but it's going to be a real challenge to figure those things out.

One other comment that is related, I promise. In a policy round table this morning – there was a very quick discussion at eight a.m. about all the policy initiatives that are being done all over, the Pew and Wallace and Rockefeller and everyone. One of the concerns that I raised there was trying to get our studies, our research, and our plans to adhere in the public arena. As you go in and say, "We did this great survey, and we found this and that," and they're like, "We've got to pay the water bill, we've got to employ all these people, we have no housing starts, we have all these terrible things." Trying to get them to be as fascinated with our findings as we are, and to think they're as important as we believe they are, is a real challenge.

**Schorgl:** In terms of just Cleveland, the Mayor of Cleveland was neutral. That was a good thing, because the Mayor of Cleveland was very powerful. Had he been against this whole planning process, it would have been very difficult. Had he been for it, and enthusiastically involved in it, it may have gone a little bit quicker.

In terms of northeast Ohio, the action for one of those expected outcomes, and the action with local public sector support, is not in the cities, especially the major metropolitan areas. Cleveland has lost over five-hundred thousand people in the last ten to fifteen years. They haven't gone far. They've gone to the first ring of suburbs, and now the second ring of suburbs. So the action in terms of tax revenues on a local basis are in the counties. That's where we focused a lot of our efforts, with County Commissioners.

Now that's changing a little bit, because of financial markets, but still, when you look at a metropolitan area such as Cleveland, we've had a lot of ruptured water pipes in the past two years in downtown Cleveland, and one of the reasons is because some of those water pipes were hewn out of ironwood... Wood! Not iron, but wood. When you have an infrastructure that's a hundred twenty to two hundred years old, and it starts to fall apart, and the tax revenue base shrinks, funding is going to go to things like that.

**Question:** I represent an Arts Commission that was created as a result of a community culture plan, and since our existence we've been doing component

planning around such issues as culture diversity, public art, and cultural tourism. So now for all of you, the process is complete or almost complete, the plan is in place, at the end of the day, how does that affect the foundations?

**Schorgl:** How does it affect the local foundation in terms of what we're doing? What they're going to do for us? Would anybody like to take that one on?

**Conwill:** I'm not sure I understand the question.

**Question:** Do you have priorities identified, initiatives and goals and objectives? You need to accomplish those. How do you get the foundations to support that effort?

**Schorgl:** Okay, let me jump off. Our community cultural plan is not a singular. It's not the community partnership of arts and culture that's taking us all on. In fact, in the back of our plan, you'll see that there are a number of identified partners that must participate in this.

We identified four functional gaps out of our cultural planning process – public policy, broad communications, research, and capacity building – as being gaps within the northeast Ohio area that potentially the partnership, based on its core competencies, could fill. But there are many other issues that other arts and cultural organizations, public governments, private sources, must identify, arts education being a huge piece of that.

The foundations and the people I've talked to in our local foundations feel as though the plan provides them with a good blueprint of what potentially are the problems and what to look for in terms of future issues or proposals that may come to them.

I think also that, at least in Cleveland, the foundation community has realized that it is important to continue to support what we're doing as long as we're able to show that it is having some impact and change around those four areas. We're involved in three public policy initiatives right now. If we can show value, I think that we're a player in terms of receiving funding.

In the planning process, the four foundations – two of them the Cleveland and the George Gund Foundation – did not take money from their arts and cultural allocations to fund the planning process. It came from their own planning pool. So they didn't take any

money away, which is extremely important to the arts and cultural community. They didn't rob Peter to pay Paul.

**Conwill:** Can I just say one other thing about the question? I think that in certain ways, surely the main audience, if you will, other than the public, the media, for this study, is the elected government of New York and its policy makers. But I think to Tom's answer that the idea that the report identifies critical issues in the cultural community, kind of points a way towards some of the things that could be done.

If research and advocacy is to continue, it's much more likely that it's going to be funded by the private sector, particularly foundations. This meeting has shown that in terms of the interest, particularly in key foundations in this issue. There are some specific 9-11 issues which Ted will be talking about at a subsequent panel which are related to this, because one of the things that happened with 9-11 and the *Blueprint* coming together that way is, they're now in some ways linked, and even though they're separate realities, I think that they will find some connection, and that Culture Counts will be an important baseline set of information for informing some other things like private funding.

**Schorgl:** I know I'm putting funders on the line here, but there are some funders in the room. How would you respond to that question? After a community cultural plan is done, what would you expect?

**Audience:** I'm hoping that the cultural planning that we're doing in Washington and the surrounding counties will help provide criteria so that we as funders will know how to be more effective in our grantmaking. Right now, there's so much choice, there's so much possibility, just helping to navigate and help us create criteria is the most important thing for us.

**Audience:** I think the reason that we were interested in funding the cultural plan in Philadelphia was so that we would be responding to needs that had been identified by the community instead of trying to figure those needs out ourselves and figure out a response to it. Really to know whether or not whatever we did would in the end be more effective and would be important and helpful to the arts community.

**Audience:** I will say up front I'm from the Cleveland Foundation. The main point for our organization was exactly that, to have a blueprint to go into the community and say, "This is what the community – and we mean the real people in the community – have stated were their objective and their goals for arts in Cleveland, and in the seven-county region."

We use it when grantees come to us to say, "How does what you're doing fit within this cultural plan?" And quite honestly, we as staff use it for our board. Not all of our board is totally familiar with the arts community in Cleveland, and we have something to show them, to say, "This is how important arts are in Cleveland. This is why, when you look at annual allocations for each of our program areas, arts needs to be an important part of that."

**Audience:** For us, it was a very timely report, because we were in the process of looking at arts grantmaking, and are now planning to go back into arts grantmaking. So the results are very helpful to us in that sense.

But what I want going forward are two things. One, the importance of a tool that this cultural blueprint is for New York City in terms of public education for the arts, and constituency-building for the arts by the public. And then another tool for advocacy, as well, given all that has happened and given the state of the arts community as it was before September 11th. So we're looking at that.

**Schorgl:** Other questions? Yes, sir?

**Question:** Do you see yourselves continuing on as an intermediary organization when you've completed your plan?

**Schorgl:** That's a fabulous question, one that my wife keeps asking. A little bit of background.

The Community Partnership of Arts and Culture was not incorporated as a 501(c)(3) until a year ago. We were under the umbrella of the Cleveland Foundation, and we were an independent organization, not-for-profit, but not a 501(c)(3), and that was by design.

One of the things that interested me in coming to Cleveland to take on what could have been an assignment, and move my three children and my wife two hundred miles north, was the fact that when I talked with the head of the Cleveland Foundation, Steve Minter, the head of the Gund Foundation, David

Berkholtz, and may he rest in peace, Bob Bergman, who was at that time the director of the Cleveland Museum, and they were interviewing me for this assignment, they said, "Let's see what the issues are. Let's determine where the gaps are. If there are no gaps, if these strategies can be handled by all the arts and cultural organizations that exist given their mission statements, and the other not-for-profit organizations, then we will have succeeded in our mission for this assignment and we should pull up the stakes, roll up the tent, and go off."

What happened is that there were four strategic gaps, and I went and told my wife about this. I was excited! She said, "Why are we going to Cleveland for maybe three years and then you don't have anything?"

I said, because I saw what happened during the CETA project, where federal money came in, and there was a number of arts councils that were created throughout the United States. I saw the good intentions of the National Endowment for the Arts in terms of the locals program, which no longer exists, which took it to another level. And "form follows function" is a real important issue here.

What Cleveland was able to do was determine that there were some functional gaps, and out of that has come this hybrid organization, called the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture. Being an intermediary is part of that, and that definitely came out in all the research that we did.

**Conwill:** It's very complicated in New York, not that it's not complicated in Cleveland. I think in a perfect world, it would be great if there could be, whether or not I was involved with it at all, a *Cultural Blueprint* entity, because it really is nonpartisan, non-this, non-that, independent and all that. It really is not about the City budget. There are many organizations and institutions that lobby the City, the State budget, for particular initiatives.

Uncoupling a broad advocacy in education effort from an advocacy for money would be an ideal situation. But it may just be ideal and not realistic.

**Schorgl:** Other questions? Yes?

**Question:** I've only been living in New York a year, so I'm not sure about this, but I get the feeling that it's such a strong arts community that it takes on everything on its own. And when you were saying that the community that was involved in the *Blueprint* was

the cultural community, meaning educators and artists and arts organizations, that was something I contrasted differently to the Cleveland situation, which is the unions, the NAACP, the local government, the Latino community, native community, et cetera.

I was wondering, when New York was deciding who would be participating, were they thinking of going broader, or is that just too large a task because there are eight million people?

**Conwill:** Just quickly, I think that if we did it again, I would surely advise that our working group be mixed with the kind of folks you're talking about. The citizen's committee was the best that we did at that. We had ministers, we had educators, we had all kind of folks, and the town hall meetings themselves were quite diverse. There was a strong feeling that, given the brevity of time and the need in some ways to pull together expertise quickly from the people who knew the most about culture, this was different from what a two-year or three-year process might have been. That said, I still think in a perfect world, we might have included other people.

**Question:** Have your reports allowed you to help generate support from the corporate and private sector communities, and is there anything that you would have added or changed to make it better suited to that kind of effort?

**Smith:** The first cultural action plan was targeted at facilities. What that meant is, really, we didn't have any cultural facilities for presenting or performing art, and we're still working on the visual art component.

But ultimately what it meant from that plan that started in the mid 1970s was \$100 million in investing in cultural facilities over a 15-year period. Without the corporate community, it wouldn't have happened. The first plan was about revitalizing downtown, uptown, Center City, whatever we call it today.

More recently, part of Charlotte's culture is corporate influence. They continue to be right there with us in terms of our annual fund drive, driving, or at least assisting us in driving the cultural community to look at some very key issues like stabilization. It's critical. It's a part of who we are.

**Schorgl:** In terms of our corporate community, Cleveland for a long, long time has always been in the

top five when it comes to private philanthropy in any particular area, but there's been a major shift in terms of regional and national headquarters in Cleveland over the past ten years, and they've left Cleveland.

One of the things that came out of our analysis, that we're working very closely with the Chamber of Commerce on, is the high-tech, the biotech, the closely-held privately-owned organizations that have maybe or fifteen people in them, that because of the type of work that they are involved in are making jillions of dollars a year, but fall off the radar screen because they're not part of the "Old Boys" network. We're working with a group called the Council of Small Business Enterprise to connect arts and cultural philanthropy with those members, because they are looking for ways to give, they're just not part of a legacy or a tradition.

The other thing that we've seen in Cleveland is the entry of social venture philanthropy. There is a group that has formed in Cleveland with the assistance of the Cleveland Foundation, and it will be fascinating to see how that group evolves. Because art and culture is a piece of their interest. It's not their only interest. They will take a much different approach to philanthropy than most corporations. It'll be hands-on.

To end with what you said, anything you would have done differently, I think we'll now go to the Book of Revelations, and we'll finish on that piece, and I'll start with Regina. Any pearls of wisdom for the group in terms of community cultural planning?

**Smith:** Wow! I would say what this group represents is that there is no perfect way. Each community has its own culture, and what works in one community doesn't necessarily work in another, and you really have to find out what is going to work in your community. But I think, ultimately, bringing different types of individuals and organizations to the table is critical. The ACLU, the NAACP, they're all critical. But being at the table is also important as well, in terms of shaping public policy.

The other thing that I would say is being flexible. Within our last cultural action plan, we were probably focused on the larger organization, and the community said to us very clearly, "No, you need to shift. You need to shift gears." You need to be flexible and be willing to make the shifts as they come.



**Amsterdam:** I'd add to that just the timing, the need to have the time. I don't know how you are doing it in New York in such a short time span, but it definitely takes a while to involve all these facets of the community. In our particular case where we are looking at regionalism, which has been attempted before and hasn't really been successful, building that advocacy base in places where we haven't had it before. So that's where we would be going.

**Conwill:** I ditto what's been said. My only other comment would relate to the comment I made before, and that I made in the policy discussion this morning. I think that not just any individual entity trying to do this, but as a kind of community of planners, that there need to be some ongoing dialog and connection.

One of the hardest things for us was to find out what else was happening, to see who else was doing stuff. A lot of it was anecdotal at first, and then we found the URL or the person or whatever.

But I think that finding ways to gather and learn from each other on an ongoing basis is really important, because some of the things that will endure will endure beyond a 9-11 or beyond whoever is mayor. On a basic practical level, keeping in touch with each other and finding a way to disseminate our findings, our practices, our processes, so that people who do this after us don't have to start from scratch. In an ideal world, these processes should not be one-time things. They should continue and be refreshed and renewed, because the community of arts and culture is not static.

**Schorgl:** From a micro level, you're going to find that there's a tremendous amount of energy around a community cultural planning process from arts and cultural organizations and individual artists. In that field of energy, on one side of that field is high anxiety, and that's usually the larger institutions, because they're fearful that you're going to start to micromanage them or do something that is authoritarian or totalitarian, and you need to constantly be in touch with all of the constituents of the cultural community, regardless of the size.

Interestingly enough, on the other side of this energy field are the smaller arts and cultural organizations and individual artists who are eager about the process, because they have nothing to lose and they have a lot to gain. So they want to be kept up-to-date.

From the macro side of things, I think, be bold. Because this is your opportunity to work with leaders in all sorts of different walks of life and leadership positions from the public and private sector so that you, with them, can start to define what the arts and cultural ecosystem is in your community, and not let someone else define it for you.

I think with that, we have reached the point of saturation of your patience, and we appreciate your time. The panel members will be around to take any questions or contributions. Thank you.



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