Friends, faculty, and students:

The City and Regional Planning Program turns 50 this year. Something happened 50 years ago that is worth taking note of.

It was the 1960s. Robert Moses and other master builders were at their peak. People like Paul Davidoff (who founded Hunter’s planning program), Ron Shiffman (who founded the Pratt Center), and Jane Jacobs (who has inspired generations of planners) took up the good fight for communities that were being run roughshod over. Advocacy planning was one of a series of social movements arguing for change from stodgy politics and top-down misinformation.

Fifty years later and we are again in a period of reform. A community organizer is president. Commissioner Sadik-Kahn has brought alternative transportation to the fore in our metropolis. The city is enriched by a slew of community-based organizations, local development corporations, and civic organizations. And Jane Jacobs is everyone’s patron saint – including many who don’t understand it. That said, Robert Moses has been rehabilitated and reincarnated in grand plans, most particularly in Asia. In our own city, the planning emphasis is still on zoning and large-scale projects, rather than on livability and problem solving. The architectural style – with its emphasis on form and technology – is akin to brutalism with nice materials (glass instead of concrete).

In honor of the 50th anniversary, and so as to explore this dichotomy, students are publishing Intractable Democracy with oversight from Professors Eve Baron and Ron Shiffman. This publication takes stock of where we have been, and it provides clues as to where we are going. New and distinguished alumni, current students, faculty, and ten of our eleven past chairs provide articles that demonstrate the breadth of our interests. To order a copy, send a $20 check made out to Pratt Institute with GCPE in the subject line – our mailing address is at the back.

This newsletter, multipliCity, is part of a larger story for the City and Regional Planning Program as it looks forward to the next 50 years. We have enriched our relationship with the Environmental Sustainability Program, the Historic Preservation Program, and the Facilities/Construction Management Program, and now enjoy a seamless relationship with the Pratt Center. All of the studios cited in the newsletter, for example, were cross-disciplinary with students and faculty from at least two of the programs, if not three. In addition, two of the studios were in connection with Pratt Center projects and priorities. All of the studios, and our courses in general, emphasize community problem-solving and bottom-up policy making to address the challenges of the environment, economic vitality, and social justice – which comprise our definition of sustainability. New research in the department includes the sustainable master plan for Long Island and work for a court-appointed monitor fighting exclusionary zoning in Westchester.

It is part of a 50 year continuum in which we have, in my view, remained the most dynamic, mission-based, and innovative planning program in the City of New York, and the most unique in the nation. Here’s looking forward to the next 50 years.

John Shapiro
Chair, 2008 to Present

Cover: A mid-century photograph of Pratt Institute’s Higgins Hall, which houses the School of Architecture and the PSPD (Courtesy Pratt Archives).

Above: Higgins Hall as it is today. The summer 2010 issue will feature papers and speeches delivered at the 50th Anniversary Conference, which was held May 14-15.
A Green Light District for the Southside
Fall 2009 Sustainable Development Studio

In the fall semester, students from Pratt’s Planning and ESM programs partnered with El Puente, a Brooklyn-based community rights institution, to develop the Southside Green Light District Plan for the fall 2009 Sustainable Development Studio (Plan 653-02). El Puente came to the studio course, taught by Ron Shiffman, Mercedes Narcisso and Stuart Pertz, with a vision for the Southside of Williamsburg, Brooklyn that aspired to reduce the carbon footprint of the entire community, while creating a community standard for measuring the wellness of the neighborhood.

The resulting plan is a roadmap for creating a local demonstration project that responds to emerging local and national policy initiatives and empowers the community by engaging every family and/or individual in achieving the objectives of El Puente’s Green Light District.

The new plan for the Southside consists of two parts: a community wellness plan (the Green Line). The Green Line functions much like the Poverty Line in expanding a resident’s right to know the overall quality of their community conditions in contrast to others. The Green Line establishes the baseline upon which the success of the recommendations outlined by the Green Light District can be measured.

Personal health, community health, and our planet’s health are all so intricately entwined that true community development cannot happen without considering these pieces in concert. The ambitious goal of the Green Light District Plan is to dramatically enhance all of these components of wellbeing to make the Southside the most sustainable urban neighborhood in the country – physically, economically, and socially – by the year 2020.

As El Puente’s founder Luis Garden Acosta put it, “This is an experiment, focusing on the development of the entire community from a wellness perspective, home by home, building by building – engaging the community inch by inch in the Southside, and further.”

Global Perspectives:
International Approaches to Planning, Sustainability, Preservation & Design
by Alex Sommer, CRP

During their professional careers, planners and designers often have the opportunity to work in different countries, cultures, and contexts. The PSPD is happy to be able to accommodate and expand its international course portfolio, providing unique experiences to its students and alumni, as well as students and professionals from the New York City metro area. In the last six months alone, the program has conducted an intensive participatory planning studio in Goa, India and an exploratory seminar in Sao Paulo, Brazil. This summer, we are offering a seminar in Istanbul, Turkey and a studio in Berlin, Germany, with more international courses in upcoming semesters.

As the PSPD formalizes its international course offerings, its faculty is developing a strict pedagogy to ensure that curriculums and participants adhere to Pratt’s policy of sustainability and participatory planning. PSPD clearly recognizes the potential for conflict and is conscious of the need to avoid intellectual colonialism when entering a community offering “help.” PSPD only organizes courses in locations where faculty know a strong network of grassroots organizers and educators, and where local actors have invited them in.

With a shrinking globe and international issues hitting close to home, planners and designers cannot ignore the importance of gaining a global perspective. Pratt’s ethos of ‘bottom-up’ planning and sustainable design meshes just as well with community development here in Brooklyn as it does in neighborhoods around the world.
In January 2010, the Panchayat of Agonda, in the southern Taluka of Canacona, India hosted a four-day Sustainable Development Participatory Planning Workshop. Students from Pratt’s City & Regional Planning and Environmental Systems management programs developed and facilitated this workshop with students from Goa College of Architecture (GCA). The team received consultation and support from the Council for Social Justice and Peace (CSJP) represented by Father Maverick Fernandes, and from Agonda Panchayat, represented by the Sarpanch (elected head of the Panchayat) Mr. Jovi Fernandes.

Recent news in Goa has included passionate debates on elements of the Regional Plan 2021 for Goa (RP 2021) which was presented in 2009 for public comment and adoption. These discussions reveal strong sentiments and deep concerns about the implications of proposed new developments in Goa. RP 2021 provides a platform for the Panchayats (local governments formed at the village level), to write their respective Development Plans. It identifies current challenges, growth projections, and sustainable development goals for the State of Goa. Constitutional Amendments intended to correct some ‘top-down’ governance practices empower the Panchayats with an assigned set of responsibilities that include proposing Development Plans for adoption.

As a poster child for ‘Incredible India,’ Goa is promoted as a tourism destination. It is scenically situated between the Sahyadri Hills to the East and Arabian Sea to the West. With its coastal villages, paddy fields and hospitable people, it is seen as a place of happiness and celebration. Unfortunately, Goa is also a victim of its own popularity. Infrastructure has not kept up with rampant development, and tourism has brought with it undesirable social and environmental ills. This awareness figures strongly on residents’ minds and gives them cause for alarm. In spite of limited resources and training, Panchayats have stepped up to take on their responsibilities.

Students can be a resource for small communities and in return get valuable practical experience. Pratt has a strong orientation towards community planning and sustainable development that lends itself well to a grass-roots participatory process. Interaction with the local community was a meaningful experience. Working together in teams, the students also formed new international ties and gained cross-cultural appreciation.

Agonda may be one of the first coastal villages to push back against a speculative real estate market, which poses an ever-present threat to the village’s character and environment. Residents made clear at the onset that they are determined to protect their natural environment and maintain the place as a “village”. Talking about sustainability and achieving a balance between environmental conservation,
social equity and economic development was like preaching to the choir.

To collaborate internationally, Pratt, GCA, CSJP and Agonda Panchayat held five web-meetings between September and December of 2009. These were important for establishing a relationship and to ensure there would be no surprises for the community in Agonda. It also allowed the Pratt team to hear directly from leading professionals in Goa.

The Pratt team would gather at 7:00 a.m. in Brooklyn and a group in Goa would stay late. Students researched sustainable development practices on selected topics, shared their findings at the workshop, and drew out people’s knowledge of their place, listing concerns and possible solutions, leading to recommendations.

The participatory workshop in itself was a deliverable. Through an interactive process, the student facilitators assisted Agonda to: have a shared understanding and a common ground, establish a vision, and develop preliminary recommendations for incorporation into a Development Plan. The Development Plan will be prepared by the Panchayat in the future.

CRP student Alex Sommer offered his reflections from the workshop. He said, “The studio was an example of how not only government officials, but also residents, are taking part in a new model of participatory planning outside of New York City. Stakeholders, with the help of the Pratt team, are rethinking their roles in the development process. No longer sitting on the sidelines, residents are practicing their rights to not only develop a vision for their community, but also guide and control development for generations to come.”

In New York City, streets make up over a quarter of the land area and provide over three quarters of the publicly accessible open space. We all use them every day, whether walking to the train or a store, riding the bus or a bike, driving, or just hanging out. Nearly fifty years ago, in The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Jane Jacobs wrote, “Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets.”

However, in spite of the central role they play in our lives, streets have received relatively little attention in our society – from planners, academics, advocates, or from the public. In the decades since Jacobs wrote those words, streets have come to be seen as conduits through which to funnel increasing amounts of traffic and transportation.

After five decades of trying ceding over their street space to accommodate the ever-growing volumes of automobile traffic, U.S. cities have recently begun to discover the importance of more thoughtful street design. Cities are learning to shift priorities to emphasize safety, efficiency, sustainability and livability, and to appreciate the resulting economic, environmental, social and health benefits for residents.

New York City has become a leader in this new movement to reimagine urban streets. In a few short years, New York has rolled out numerous innovative designs and programs, begun rebalancing street space, published detailed reports, and established an unprecedented set of street design guidelines. New bike lanes and public spaces are popping up citywide, programs such as Bus Rapid Transit and the Plaza Program are emphasizing community-led planning, and designs are incorporating green features never before used in the city, such as for reducing stormwater runoff.

This fall, PSPD students had the opportunity to learn first-hand how to develop more walkable, bikeable streets as part of a 1-credit mini-course on sustainable transportation. This course was led by two New York City practitioners who have been deeply involved in New York City’s pioneering efforts. Andy Wiley-Schwartz is an Assistant Commissioner for Planning & Sustainability at the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), and Michael Flynn, a Pratt alumnus, has served at DOT for nearly five years, where he has planned, designed and implemented numerous plaza, bike lane, and safety projects. Both are co-authors of the recently released New York City Street Design Manual (www.nyc.gov/streetdesignmanual).

In the course, students gained a holistic understanding of pedestrian and bicycle planning, from key principles of safety, access, and public space usage, to the details of design and data collection, to methods for measuring success. This course allowed students to give streets back their rightful place as our cities’ front yards and doing Jane Jacobs proud.
In September 2009, students from the Pratt Institute’s Graduate City and Regional Planning program were charged with creating a conceptual plan for Coney Island Avenue, between Cortelyou Road and Prospect Park, in Brooklyn. The goal was to build upon community resources and strengths, and address identified weaknesses.

Students met with the client, the Church Avenue Business Improvement District (BID), to identify goals of the conceptual plan, and undertook a comprehensive analysis of the area’s history, demographics, transportation options, land uses, zoning, urban design and economic conditions. Students then worked under the guidance of Associate Professor Jonathan Martin and Visiting Assistant Professor Alison Schneider and Georges Jaquemart of BFJ Plannings, Inc., with help from Rob Lane of the Regional Plan Association. The result was Taking a New Road: A Conceptual Plan for Coney Island Avenue. This plan envisions Coney Island Avenue as a multi-modal connector rather than a thoroughfare; a vibrant commercial corridor rather than a service road; a community meeting space rather than a border; and a home for the many communities, cultures and peoples that live in the area.

With these visions in mind, students made proposals for economic development, transportation, zoning, land use and urban design. These recommendations included:

1. **Facilitate Economic Development** by supporting local businesses and providing opportunities for new businesses to develop along the corridor through the creation of an automobile repair and service vocational training center, a local business incubator, and expanded retail, mixed use and commercial zoning.

2. **Green the Corridor** by providing street trees and plantings, a landscaped center median, and new open space in the form of “pocket parks” to create an invit-

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Greening the Construction and Facilities Management Program

by Helen Rubinstein, EMS

Today, nations, cities and businesses are confronting the challenges posed by climate change. In NYC, for example, we know that buildings account for 80% of greenhouse gas emissions and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels will require new innovative planning, development and management strategies. Certainly the work done in the Construction and Facilities Management (CM/FM) professions will play a crucial role in the development and implementation of a new “green and sustainable” economy. Pratt Institute’s Facilities Management program is committed to developing a “state of the art” curriculum that incorporates the knowledge and tools that leaders in the Facilities Management field feel are critical when addressing this challenge.

For this reason, the Pratt CM/FM department held a roundtable event, called the “Greentable Discussion,” on the subject of specific educational and re-training needs in the field of Facilities Management. On January 21, industry professionals and Pratt faculty came together to discuss the skills that today’s graduates will need to be successful in the field. The goal of this event was to solicit expert advice from both the public and private sectors on how the Pratt Programs’ existing courses and curriculum should be expanded, enhanced and/or modified to meet industry needs and to make our graduates competitive in the new “sustainable” marketplace.

The initiative was financed by a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education from the US Department of Education. The event was facilitated by Professors Eva Hanhardt and Carol Reznikoff, CM/FM Chair Harriet Markis, and Environmental Systems Management Coordinator Jaime Stein, along with significant input from graduate student, Helen Rubinstein.

The event is part of a larger effort on behalf of the Facilities Management department, and others, to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum. Some proposed means to do so are: to keep up with trends in sustainable issues, raise knowledge and understanding of green certifications and methods and best practices, and also to encourage and increase FM student enrollment in PSPD electives.

The effort follows the growing trend of “greening the curriculum” in various other educational institutions as well as by the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA), which accredits the FM program.
The Eldridge Street Synagogue, constructed in 1887 on Eldridge Street in Manhattan’s Lower East Side, provided a compelling project for Historic Preservation students this year.

Over the past 20 years, the synagogue has undergone a $20 million restoration that replenished its splendor and intricate details. It will culminate this fall with the installation of a new stained glass window designed by artist Kiki Smith and Pratt Professor and architect Deborah Gans.

Originally designed by Peter and Francis William Herter, the synagogue was one of the first constructed in the LES by Eastern European Jews during the height of immigration. Upon its completion, the façade featured an amalgamation of Moorish, Gothic and Romanesque flourishes. By the mid 1930s, only a vestige of this once thriving congregation remained as Jewish immigrants relocated to the Upper West Side, the Bronx, and Queens. Additionally, a great rose window on the east façade was lost and replaced with glass brick sometime in the 1940s. By the mid 1950s, due to diminishing funds and rising maintenance costs, the congregation shut the doors to the main sanctuary and began to practice in a small chapel at the lower level.

The recent renovations have left the leadership of the Museum at Eldridge Street with new challenges: How does a museum present a site to visitors while maintaining a sense of the sacred for the existing congregation? What portions of the synagogue’s history should be preserved? How should the missing rose window be replaced? Should it be replaced?

In 2009, Amy Stein-Milford, Deputy Director of the museum, created an opportunity for graduate students to work collaboratively on designing a new architecture tour of the synagogue with the goal of addressing the preservation issues that the synagogue has faced in its past and to convey to the public the motivations behind the decisions that were ultimately made.

Tara Kelly, Project Director and recent graduate of the Historic Preservation program, worked with HP students from Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Pratt Institute, including Michael Owen, Megan Ricks, Catherine Stutts, and Melissa Umberger. This team has spent the past year researching and interpreting physical elements of the synagogue such as the façade, streetscape, sacred elements, women’s gallery, paint program, stained glass and lighting. During the second half of the project, the students researched architectural influences, creative examples of adaptive reuse, and preservation projects that make use of green technology.

The final aspect of the restoration was the treatment of the rose window. Following a painstaking review process, the decision was made to commission a new window that would incorporate pre-existing imagery from the synagogue. The design by Kiki Smith and Deborah Gans will reflect a new vision, one that suggests the museum’s movement forward, while demonstrating its connection to its past. The museum is a center of learning for new generations of visitors and is very much alive today as it was when it opened its doors in 1887.

The launch of the new architectural tour will coincide with the installation of the east window in early fall 2010.
In the last couple of years, a major change has taken place in how planners have begun to think about the old industrial cities of the nation’s Rust Belt like Cleveland, Detroit or Youngstown. For one thing, we are paying them more attention; for another, we are starting to think about what long-term, sustained population and job loss really mean for a city, how to start making plans that reflect that reality, and to ask whether a city can be smaller and at the same time stronger and more sustainable.

There is no question that these cities are shrinking. Detroit has gone from nearly 1.9 million people in 1950 to barely 750,000 today. Cleveland, Buffalo, Gary, St. Louis and many others have all lost over half of their peak population. This is not a short-term blip, but a long-term trend, reflecting the triple whammy of the national migration to the Sunbelt, the suburbanization of our metro areas, and the deindustrialization of cities that were once manufacturing powerhouses. In most cases, these cities’ loss of jobs and population is still going on, not leveling off. What does this mean for these cities?

They have huge amounts of vacant land and buildings for which no development use is likely to emerge for the foreseeable future. Detroit contains 40 square miles of vacant land and 35,000 to 40,000 vacant buildings. Almost half of the parcels in Youngstown are vacant lots or abandoned buildings. These cities and their counterparts have large areas where scattered occupied houses sit amidst acres of vacant land and gaping, empty houses. Many of the people who still live in these houses are elderly homeowners, trapped by their poverty and by the reality that their house has, quite literally, no value. There are eight census tracts in Buffalo – where nearly 16,000 people lived in 2000 – where not a single home purchase mortgage was made in 2007.

This is not the total story. These cities have universities like Case Western Reserve or Carnegie-Mellon, medical centers like the Cleveland Clinic, historic neighborhoods, world-famous art museums, beautiful lakes and rivers. They have vital, thriving neighborhoods like Allentown in Buffalo or Tremont in Cleveland; they have many other neighborhoods, though, where the fabric is fraying and the area is struggling against the forces of decline. Many of these neighborhoods, like Buffalo’s West Side, have dedicated citizens and organizations like the West Side Community Collaborative, who are fighting to hold their ground and reclaim their community. Sadly, as the foreclosure crisis and the recession deepen, more such neighborhoods may be losing than gaining ground.

For the shrinking cities to find a sustainable future, they need to concentrate on using their assets to build a new economy to replace the old industrial one, shoring up their still-vital neighborhoods, and thinking about new ways of using the residual land. In Detroit, Dayton or Youngstown, that could be one-third or more of the city’s land area.

What do you do with hundreds or thousands of acres of vacant land in a city that already has far more houses, stores, office buildings and factories than it will need for decades to come? Some of the most exciting thinking going on in

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these cities focuses on that question. Cleveland has started an initiative called Re-Imagining a More Sustainable Cleveland – a partnership of city government, universities, CDCs, and foundations which have come together to think creatively about the city’s vacant land. With funds from a local foundation, the initiative recently gave community groups 56 mini-grants to try different greening strategies on vacant parcels around the city, from orchards and vineyards to phytoremediation and stormwater management. In Detroit, people are looking at how to jumpstart urban agriculture at a commercial scale.

Planning is about people and resources, though, not just about land uses. Cities are messy things. As they shrink, they do so irregularly. People still live even in the most devastated sections of these cities. While some of them want to move, others, like the woman in the last house on an otherwise vacant block in Detroit who told a reporter “I refuse to move unless the Lord says so,” want to stay put. The days of urban renewal, when government simply told people to get out, are long gone. Cities will have to make their case, and get their citizens on board. It can be done; between 2002 and 2005 Youngstown city officials, working with faculty and students at Youngstown State, reached out to thousands of local residents as they put together a plan based on the proposition that Youngstown was a smaller city, and that it had to plan for that reality rather than for its one-time growth aspirations.

Resources are another problem. Shrinking is fiscally painful. With fewer taxpayers and taxing properties, shrinking cities find themselves in an increasingly tight fiscal bind, unable to provide decent services for their citizens, let alone invest in their future. It’s easy to talk about shrinking streets, and sewer and water lines, but a lot harder to do in reality. Reconfiguring urban land is expensive. With thousands of derelict properties in need of demolition, and thousands of sites contaminated by decades of industrial use and urban pollution, simply cleaning up abandoned areas in Detroit or Buffalo may cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Helping even a few dozen people to move into more stable, livable neighborhoods could cost millions. No one knows where that money is going to come from, just as – despite talk about the green economy and alternative energy sources – no one really knows how these cities will be able to build new, sustainable economic engines to offer their residents decent jobs and incomes.

Nobody said it would be easy. The idea that a city can grow smaller but stronger is a radically new planning paradigm, a different way of looking at planning in a country where we have traditionally assumed that planning was about growth and where to put the houses, shopping centers and highways that the growth machine demanded. For people practicing planning today, or entering it over the next few years, the opportunity to engage with this issue is one of the most exciting and meaningful challenges on offer.

Alan Mallach, senior fellow of the National Housing Institute and the Brookings Institute, is the author of many works on housing and planning, including Bringing Buildings Back and Building a Better Urban Future: New Directions for Housing Policies in Weak Market Cities. He served as director of housing and economic development for Trenton, N.J. from 1990 to 1999. He joins the City & Regional Planning program to teach a course on “Shrinking Cities” this summer.
On March 11, after several years of stalling due to lawsuits and economic woes, developer Bruce Ratner broke ground on his $4.9 billion Atlantic Yards development in Prospect Heights. If fully built, the new development will include 19 residential towers, as well as an arena (currently set to open in 2012) that will house the Brooklyn Nets NBA team. Ratner has employed the power of eminent domain to take property from neighborhood residents and businesses for the development.

I joined a group of neighborhood residents activists, and other Pratt students, to peacefully protest the groundbreaking ceremony for the “Soul of Brooklyn.”

There are several factors that have united the opposition, including protesters who gathered that day, as well as over 50 civic groups, more than 7,000 petition signers, and 4,000 regular donors to Develop Don’t Destroy Brooklyn, an organization formed to oppose the development.

The general sentiment was best expressed by the chants overheard at the protest: “Shame on you! Shame on you!” uttered to the passing dark Cadillacs, BMWs, and Mercedes. That sentiment captures the frustration and anger with this project, due to three main issues: First, eminent domain, used to take (or steal) peoples’ homes against their will, is normally only applied for developments that provide public uses and needs, not so that the government may take privateland and give it to a private developer for his/her own benefit. Second, the promises that the developer made to provide low income and affordable housing in the project through community housing group ACORN are no longer considered “valid” under the contract because ACORN no longer exists. Third and perhaps most important is the use of government funding in the project for the purposes of generating highly profitable revenues for the city’s wealthiest while displacing and destroying an existing community. We see this happening all over NYC, so this comes as no surprise, but ultimately that doesn’t make it right.

The protestors that were present aren’t against progress and development. However they are against the destroying of communities, the seizing of homes, and the blatant ignoring of the residents whose lives are being turned upside. Protestors would welcome development, if it took into account their thoughts, feelings, desires and needs.
Eavesdropping on a Conversation with CLUI Director Matthew Coolidge

Matthew Coolidge, the founder and director of the Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI), has a passion for his work that captivates a room. I was lucky enough to be one of the “chosen few,” in this case 1 of 12 students who were invited to sit in on an interview for BOMB magazine while Debora Gans, architect and Pratt professor, interviewed Mr. Coolidge. BOMB magazine, a quarterly publication that cuts out the middle man and publishes “conversations” between visual artists, writers, composers, directors and architects (and other creative professionals), recorded this interview that will be available for all to hear (on their website) and read. Their interest in CLUI is understandable - the organization does fascinating work. Matthew and his team use the United States as their playground, navigating the country to find “unusual and exemplary land use conditions.”

CLUI looks at land by characteristics such as use, nodal point, zone and theme. An example is the Gulf Coast and its oil culture. CLUI’s research is often compiled into photo exhibits, on display at their base in Culver City, California, and a variety of mobile units. They put together educational bus tours, for “hands on proximity,” of our nation’s deserts, waterways, and cities, and other unusual spots such as the Los Angeles garbage dump. Coolidge noted that the tours to the dump fill up very quickly, which he attributes to the, “human psyche’s Freudian-esque attraction to its waste products.” He commented that people don’t usually think about boring places, thus the reason they’re boring, until we actually explore them. The research done at CLUI is stored in a database on their website so the public can have access to it. Categories to search under include: transportation, water, cultural, industrial, mining, waste, military, nuclear and R&D (or one can search by state or keyword).

Coolidge spoke about specific genres of sights including; military training grounds, automobile test tracks, sunken villages, erosion, lines of site, and a project being done on our very own Hudson River (to name a few). In “Up River: Points of Interest on the Hudson from the Battery to Troy,” the cultures that reside along the river are examined (this work was also published in a book entitled Upriver). The Hudson is rich in history, from its early transportation uses and artistic inspiration through today’s more modern and changing uses. He pointed out the quarried mountains along the river that, from one side, seem perfectly whole, yet when seen from the other are gutted and barren.

Photographs by CLUI relay images of our country; from untouched to completely abused sites, everything is laid bare and is used as a vehicle for thought. The images allow us to look at our own country, and see how we have choosen to develope our land. CLUI’s projects and imagery are objective, and by no means do they wish to direct or persuade thoughts- just facilitate and encourage them.

Thank you to Matthew Coolidge and the Center for Land Use Interpretation, BOMB magazine and Deborah Gans.
JOAN BYRON of the Pratt Center received the 2009 Civic Leadership award from the Rudin Center for Transportation Policy. Mrs. Byron recently spoke on a panel at Wagner: NYU called, “State of the City 2010: Transportation Access for the Under-served and Underrepresented.” This year’s State of the City event brought many different voices to the table from City officials, agencies and advocacy groups to highlight transportation access issues facing the under-served and underrepresented in New York City.

GITA NANDAN principle of thread collective along with partner Elliott Maltby- Recently won the prestigious New York State Council for the Arts, Architecture Planning + Design award. The NYSCA funding will support the realization of a master plan and schematic designs for the Added Value farm and construction of the Red Hook Center for Sustainability and Culture.

SIGNE NIELSEN, a professor at Pratt and one of the founding principles at Matthews Nielsen Landscape Architecture firm, was recently named part of the West 8 team for the recently commissioned Governors Island Master Pan. The City and the State together released the Governors Island Park and Public Space Master Plan, a comprehensive design for 87 acres of open green space, rejuvenating existing landscapes in the National Historic District, transforming the southern half of the island, and creating a 2.2 mile Great Promenade along the waterfront. Matthews Nielsen expect to begin the next phase of their design work in mid-summer. In addition, Matthews Nielsen’s proposals for Hunts Point Landing and West Point Foundry Preserve have been selected as “pilots” to test the Sustainable Sites Initiative, ASLA’s answer to LEED for site design. Signe was also a panelist on the April 18th “On the Water’s Edge: NYC Waterfront” at the ASLA. On April 27th Signe was on a panel for the official release of the Sustainable Site Design Manual and discuss its relevance to the Green Codes Initiative of the Mayor’s Office of Sustainable Design. She will also be speaking on another panel on May 3 called, “Architecture, Art and Landscape,” discussing whether lines are blurring among these disciplines (to be held at the AIA Center for Architecture).

RON SHIFFMAN, a board member to the Center for Living Cities, has an essay, entitled “Beyond Green Jobs to Green Economic Development and Qualitative Sustainable Development: Seeking a New Paradigm,” in What We See: Advancing the Observations of Jane Jacobs, a recently published collection of original essays by leading thinkers that honors the late Jane Jacobs. The book is a timely reflection of renowned urbanist-activist Jane Jacobs life’s work. Ron was also quoted in the New York Times article “Despite Much Rezoning, Scant Change in Residential Capacity” by Kareem Fahim published on March 21, 2010. In addition, Professor Shiffman participated in the Residential, Commercial, Institutional and Industrial Buildings sector Technical Work Group for the Climate Action Plan process for New York City. Please visit the website at www.nyclimatechange.us for additional information. On May 6th Shiffman will be the Keynote speaker for the Salzburg Congress on Urban Planning and Development in Austria, lecturing on “Beyond the Urban Myth of the Post-Industrial City.”

Faculty, Students and Alumni: Please stay in touch, and tell us what you’re doing these days! E-mail anything and everything to Lacey Tauber at: ltauber@pratt.edu
An EMS professor who started the North Brooklyn Compost Project, which is now in its 6th year, has taken on a very large project: NYC’s combined sewer overflows (CSOs). Kate Zidar helped to develop Minds in the Gutter, an open design call for submissions of ideas for managing stormwater runoff from NYC roadways and sidewalks. The project explored what agencies and individuals are thinking about and working on with regards to better managing urban runoff. The first viewing of the Minds in the Gutter designs took place on Earth Day at the Museum of the City of New York. Deborah Marton, Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space, moderated a panel discussion about the submissions, featuring some of the competition’s jurors, exhibiting designers and representatives of the S.W.I.M. Coalition. At Pratt this summer, Kate is teaching a Design/Build course that will be a direct follow-up to the Minds in the Gutter exhibit. Students will work with Kate to review the winning designs, research locations for implementation, and work through the regulatory and permitting processes to get the designs in the ground. Professor Zidar is also leading the site selection on a US Forest Service grant with Newtown Creek Alliance, Riverkeeper and Gaia Institute to locate a green infrastructure capital project within the Newtown Creek drainage area.

SPOTLIGHT
Kate Zidar

Award Recipients

PLANNING CONVOCATION AWARDS

American Institute of Certified Planners Outstanding Student Award: ELLYSON GOETZ

American Planning Association Metro Chapter Outstanding Student Award: ANUSHA VENKATARAMAN

Commitment to the Profession Award: ALISON SCHNEIDER

Outstanding Merit Award: MOLLY SLEVIN

Excellence in Academic Achievement Award: JAMES CARRINGTON

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT CONVOCATION AWARDS

Outstanding Merit Award: DIANA HARARI CHEREM

Excellence in Academic Achievement Award: MEGAN HOUSTON

DEPARTMENTAL PLANNING AWARDS

Community-Planning Award: ALLISON RICHARDS

Commitment to Environment Planning Award: NATASHA DWYER

CRP First-Year Outstanding Student Award: ALEXIS ROURLK WILLIAM CABRESE TOKUNBO ANIFALAJE

EMS First-Year Outstanding Student Award: TYLER CARUSO

HP First-Year Outstanding Student Award: SEAN MICHAEL CONWAY

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONVOCATION AWARDS

Outstanding Merit Award: MELISSA A. UMBERGER

Excellence in Academic Achievement Award: MEGAN E. RICKS

Pratt Green Week 2010

Sustainable Pratt hosted a series of exhibitions, films, forums, and lectures as part of its fourth annual Green Week from March 29 to April 3, 2010. All Green Week events took place on the Brooklyn Campus and were free and open to the public. For the complete Green Week 2010 schedule, please visit www.sustainablepratt.org. Sustainable Pratt is an organization of Pratt’s faculty, administration, and student body that works to integrate sustainability into the Institute’s curricula, operations, and programs. Sustainable Pratt and Green Week 2010 are co-chaired by Interior Design Professors Carol Crawford and Tetsu Ohara.
The Pratt Planning Alumni Association is Revived!

Under the leadership of two alumni, Alison Cordero and Nancy Campbell, the association kicked off its membership drive at the department’s 50th Anniversary party on May 14. The role of the association will be tri-fold. The first is to strengthen Pratt Planning and PSPD networks through the generations. The second is to work with the Pratt Institute Planning Student Association (PIPSA) to connect current and past students to job and internship opportunities as well as mentorship. The third is to raise funds for the program to recruit and support students of all backgrounds – economic, geographic, ethnic, and racial. To get involved with the Alumni Association or to receive updates on its activities, please e-mail: prattplanningalum@gmail.com

Mailing List

The Pratt Institute Planning Student Association (PIPSA) is putting together an active directory of all PSPD graduates.

If you’re an alum, please send your name and e-mail address to: info@prattplanning.org

If you know an alum, please do us the favor of forwarding this newsletter to your friend or colleague. There are presently e-mail records for only 10% of our alumni!

Thesis Library

The City and Regional Planning Program is transferring all alumni theses to the Pratt Library, and many are missing! If you still have a copy, please send it and a one-paragraph summary to:

electronic (preferred):
ltauber@pratt.edu

via mail:
Lacey Tauber
Assistant to the Chair
PSPD, Pratt Institute
200 Willoughby Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11205

We are creating two collections of theses. Paper copies will be produced, bound and available at the Pratt Library. Electronic copies will be available at the PSPD offices: Higgins Hall, 61 St. James Place (Room 206).

Mentorship Program

Have you considered becoming a mentor in your field?

The Pratt Career Services office maintains an online mentorship system that students and alumni can use to get in touch about career-related questions and opportunities.

Don’t think you have the time? The program offers flexible levels of involvement. You can determine the number of contacts you want per month or even advise solely via email. Plus, you can opt out of the system when you need to and then return later.

To register, go to: myinterfase.com/pratt/mentor

Donations most welcome. Feel free to indicate how you would like the money spent:

1. General use.
2. Paid interns at the Pratt Center for Community Development, The Municipal Art Society, the New York Industrial Retention Network, and other civic and community organizations.
3. For $20, order a copy of Intractable Democracy, celebrating 50 years of Pratt planning.

Make checks payable to Pratt Institute with GCPE in subject.

Programs for Sustainable Planning and Development

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