PART TWO: LCC TODAY

Images: Particpants at the charrette style workshops.

Chapter Four
Participation

Many plans, master plans, and comprehensive plans are collecting dust on a shelf – dead on arrival. Why is this? Is it the fault of the client not being able to effectively describe their dreams, hopes and desires? Is it the fault of the professional for not listening well enough, or the inability to translate those dreams successfully? Were cultural norms taken into consideration? This list can go on, ad infinitum. An important question to ask is, "what method of practice was used for planning and design and was it appropriate for the project?" The University of Oregon's Urban Design Lab uses the method of participatory research and design Dr. Gillem uses in academia and in his professional practice with The Urban Collaborative, LLC. This mode of practice engages the client - and a wider spectrum of users - to generate knowledge to inform the design process in a transparent, collaborative, consensus-building process.

This chapter indirectly answer the questions above, while expressing why the method of participation in planning and design is an appropriate method to use. Additionally, the Urban Design Lab defines what participatory planning entails, and look into the method's history, its advantages, its shortcomings, and the overarching concepts of the process and how they works.

DEFINITIONS

Participation is a flexible concept. It has different meanings for different people in different fields, who use different methodologies. The following are synonyms for participation in planning and design: citizen participation, community design, community planning, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, participatory action planning, citizen involvement, citizens' action group, participatory design, democratic participation, and a variety of action planning methods. The United Nations requires participation in many of its programs and defines participation as "sharing by people in the benefits of development and involvement of people in decision making at all levels of society." This is neither clear nor a complete definition. Henry Sanoff asserts that participatory design stresses the importance of the user and the collaborative learning process with the professional. This process is about creating knowledge simultaneously with education, and development of an actionable plan (Sanoff 2008). In a 2005 article, Sanoff described community design with the same definition, stating there are many alternative styles of participation, based on the idea that professional knowledge is insufficient in the resolution of social problems (Sanoff 2005). For the purpose of using a singular name, we will refer to the process of planning and design that includes participation as 'participatory planning' for the remainder of this document and found Comerio's working definition of participatory planning the most complete. Comerio defines participatory planning as a transparent, democratic process that uses consensus building through the collaboration of ideals, values, objectives and input from all participants (Comerio 1984). It is implied that through the participation of user groups, the design process

is transparent, would give the users/client more control and therefore, through this method, be more just and complete.

Participatory planning, as a method, has been used extensively in the design fields of landscape architecture, architecture, urban design, and planning due to its institutionalization in those fields at universities like Harvard, UC Berkeley, the University of Oregon, and others. A significant number of landscape architects, architects and planners use participation as a primary part of their practice (Francis 1983), including American landscape architects Randy Hester and Mark Francis; architects Giancarlo De Carlo (Italy), Christopher Alexander (America), John Habraken (Netherlands), Ralph Erskine (England-Sweden), Walter Segal (England), Lucien Kroll (Belgium), Nabeel Hamdi (England); and American planners Judith Innes, Katherine Crewe, and Raymond Burby. In view of the fact that participatory planning has many aliases and proponents, it is germane to point out that participatory planning also has many organizations geared to furthering the use of participation in its varied fields. Some of these include:

- An alliance called Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (CPSR) defines participatory design as "an approach to the assessment, design, and development of technological and organizational systems (CPSR, 2010).

- The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), founded in 1990, is an organization that promotes the values and best practices associated with involving the public in participation with government, private, individual and institutional endeavors (IEP2, 2010).

- The Participatory Geographies Working Group (PyGyWG, pronounced PiggyWig), a UK based organization, which focuses on raising awareness, perceived value, and furthers the knowledge and use of participatory approaches, methods, tools and principles within academic geography (Royal Geographical Society, 2010).

SEVEN DEGREES OF PARTICIPATION.

In 1946, Kurt Lewin introduced the term, "action research" (Chein et al. 1948). Action research is one approach of social research that combines generation of knowledge with changing the social system through professional interacting in or on the social system. John Collier also saw the need for developing an approach to action-oriented research that demands collaboration between client and practitioner (Susman et al. 1978). The act of changing the system through user experience is the basis of action research and is intertwined within the methodology and history of participatory planning. Numerous articles and books have been written about participation. Schneekloth and Shibly (1995) write about place making, Sanoff (2000, 2005, 2008) writes about community participation, Whyte (1991) about participatory action research; and Hester (1984, 1990, 2006) about community design. There are differences

among their methods, but they are all supporters of participation in planning and design. More specific to the fields of landscape architecture, architecture, and planning, New Urbanist firms Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) and Calthorpe Associates have integrated the solicitation of public opinion prior to designing new communities. DPZ launched the Mashpee Commons, a strip mall to New England Village transformation. DPZ incorporated dialogue with nearby businesses and social groups. Calthorpe Associate's commenced the planned Playa Vista community, a former Howard Hughes Aircraft plant in Los Angeles, with a public charette. The above examples highlight participation, but to what degree are the participants really included?

Participatory planning implies an open process that is best described by Wulz as, "ranging from well-meaning listening, to discussion, to the self-build 'do it yourself' concept" (Wulz 1986). In the article, The Field of Action Research (1948), authors Chein, Cook and Harding outline four categories of action research:

1. Diagnostic: the least interactive with the client, where the professional is only associated with the gathering and translating of information and then gives the findings back to the client.

2. Empirical: this happens when the professional only examines the issues and feeds that data back to the client.

3. Participant: the most collaborative method occurs when client and professional gather, translate, and take action through dialogue.

4. Experimental: this method occurs when client and professional collaborate continuously throughout the entire process on all levels.

This four-category outline varies in some degree from and fits within the Wulz spectrum (1986). Wulz outlines seven modes of participation ranging from least to most involvement by the user in the decision-making and design process. The degree of participation ranges from active to passive are:

1. Representation: the most passive form of participation where the designer has complete autonomy over the design process; using expert knowledge, ideas and values, although the client sets the scope.

2. Questionary: a systematic study using a survey or questionnaire to gather user needs and desires, and put through a rigorous statistical analysis. In this mode, there is still no limited interaction between the researchers and researched.

3. Regionalism: by combining some aspects from the two previous modes of participation,

regionalism focuses on gathering knowledge through values, ideals and culture specific to the local characteristics of a geographical delimited area.

4. Dialogue: is based on the notion that through informal conversation designers can glean experiential knowledge from the client and use that information as a source that may or may not guide the process and its outcomes.

5. Alternative: this occurs when the designer presents the user with a range of alternatives, in an understandable format, that allow the user to impart their opinion through choice; it is especially pertinent when the alternatives have been developed through the preceding classifications.

6. Co-design: this category of decision-making creates the most balance between the designer and the user; it necessitates that the user participate in decision-making from the onset of the process.

7. Self-decision: in this approach, the designer provides technical advice to self-help, design and build activities and otherwise has a minimal role in the design process.

Wulz's different levels of involvement - best thought of as a spectrum between poles - are a result of the varying influence and interaction on and between the professional and the user in planning and design. On the left side of the spectrum (see figure 4-1), the process is professional-centric, and on the right, user-centric. The spectrum creates a sliding scale where the decreasing influence of the professional is directly followed by an increase of the user's influ-

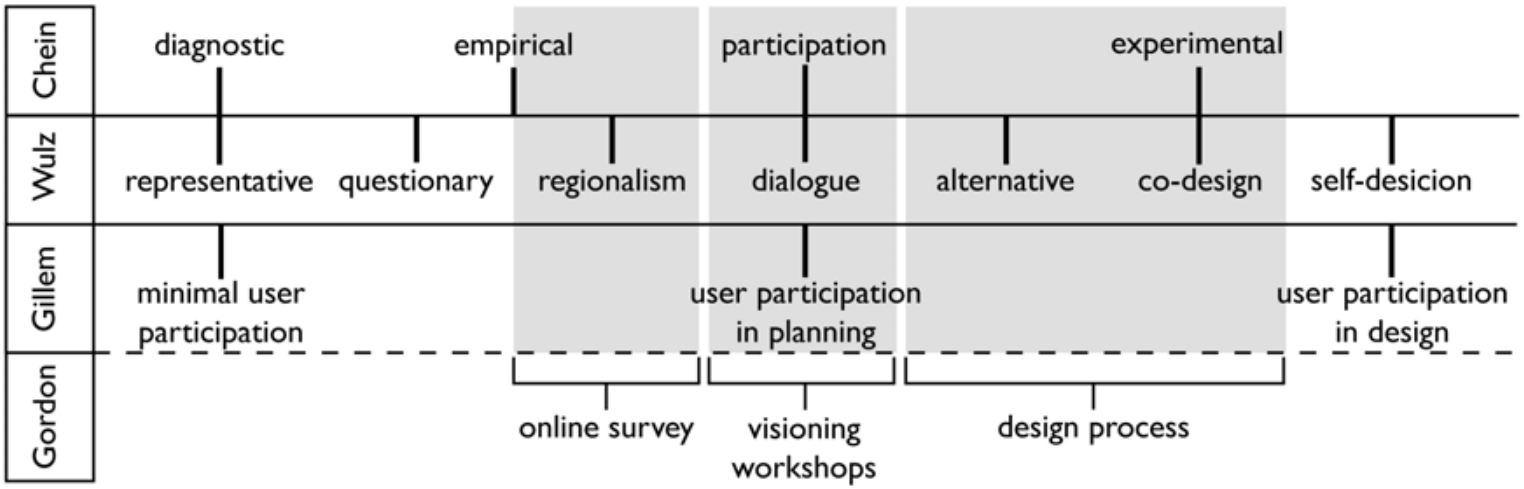

Figure 4-1
Spectrum of participation in planning and design.

ence. In Gillem's (1996) published master thesis, he states that, "this seven-point structure is flexible enough that it can be applied in the planning phase, where project goals and concepts are generated, and in the design phase, where solutions are created" (Gillem 1996).

In Francis' 1999 article, Proactive Practice, he argues that most traditional practitioners approach practice where the client comes to them with a solution, not a problem; only to give form to a preconceived solution (Francis 1999). By following the traditional approach to design, the professional places themselves on the left side of the spectrum. This spectrum is also outlined in Shelly Arnstein's seminal work, A Ladder of Citizen Participation, which produced an understanding of the degree of citizen participation, ranging from nonparticipation, to the manipulation of citizens described as tokenism, to complete citizen control in the process (Arnstein 1969). Professionals choose the methods they employ and therefore they choose the degree and timing participation takes in their process.

For the planning process of this project, The Urban Design Lab (labeled Gordon on the Spectrum) uses multiple categories on the spectrum of participation that range from regionalism to dialogue. The UDL used an online survey to collect values, ideals, and preferences that are culturally specific to the local characteristics of Lane Community College users; and have engaged the client, community members, local landowners, developers and professionals to generate knowledge to inform the design process in a transparent, collaborative, consensus-building process. For the design process of the project, we lean slightly to the right of the spectrum, utilizing both alternative and co-design to create the most balance between the designer and the user through collaboration and consensus-building. Using an iterative, interactive process of participation I expect that the level of participation, in the planning and design phases on the scale to slide slightly left and right.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Praxis, meaning 'do' or 'doing' in Greek; refers to the ability to change particular circumstances by acting upon them (Susman et al. 1978). Marx made praxis a central belief in his theories on social reform, justice, equity and equality (Marx 1963). The America principles of democracy, freedom of speech, the right to assemble, voting, and equal representation (Comerio 1984) can also be found in the philosophical backings of participation, and can trace its theoretical roots back to the principles of democracy in Plato's Republic. The theory of praxis was the foundation of the civil rights movement of the 1960's, and theoretically centered around social justice through empowerment; hence citizen participation (Susman and Evered 1978; Comerio 1984; Sanoff 2008).

In the 1960s, community design in the United States developed out of advocating for the rights of poor and minority groups, and was supported by government funding and programming. Many designers used community or partici-

patory design as a means for social change (Francis 1983; Crewe 2001; Sanoff 2005; Sanoff 2008). Social conflict and the desire to improve the physical environment for people who were underserved and did not have the resources distinguished the 1960s as the era for change through advocacy. Designers taking part in the participatory planning movement saw themselves as educators, enablers, facilitators, and social activists. Two phases of advocacy in community design characterized the late 1960s and 1970s. The first was idealistic and the second, entrepreneurialism.

The 1970s was characterized as a decade of incredible grassroots organization, during which professionals provided technical assistance through Community Design Centers (CDC) (Comerio 1984). Many of these centers were organized by university faculty, students, and young volunteers and funded by government programs. Most of the professionals staffing the CDCs had limited technical experience, but strong ideological beliefs. Trends towards enabling the community instead of providing for it helped maximize the collective knowledge of local demands and needs (Hamdi and Goethert 1997). A change in practice from idealism to entrepreneurism began to shift in the late 1970s as the political climate became more conservative. Funding cuts had the greatest influence in this shift, forcing community design participants to become more practical. The goal of the ideological practice was to promote social justice and empowerment, while the latter model replaced the political model of empowerment with one of economics. Comerio, among others, argues that the end of government funding was only one of the market forces influencing the new shift in entrepreneurial practice. Another was that people were willing to pay for these services.

By the 1980s professionals and community members had realized that participatory planning was a strong mechanism for expressing the communities' needs by translating them into usable plans for social and environmental change (Francis 1983). A changing economy and designers' entrepreneurial endeavors have forever broadened the focus of this method (Francis 1983; Crewe 2001). Additionally, environmental perception studies by Henry Sanoff's (1978) participatory model for environmental awareness; John Zeisel's (1984) participatory designs for children's environment, elderly housing, and central business districts; and Christopher Alexander's (1987) collaborative campus experiment at the University of Oregon. Alexander and his colleagues used a participatory process to bring people together, to create community, and to design their own space. In The Oregon Experiment, Alexander noted two reasons for user participation:

> "First, participation is inherently good; it brings people together…in their world…involves them in their world…creates feeling between people and the world around them, because it is a world which they have helped to make. Second, the…users…know more about their needs than anyone else…so the process of participation tends to create places which are better

adapted to human functions than those created by a centrally administered planning process" (Alexander 1975, 40)

Other design activities include: small town conservation, historic preservation, downtown economic revitalization, management of neighborhood change, and landscape and building assessment.

The 1990s and 2000s brought refreshed activity in participatory design, as individuals like Randy Hester and Mark Francis worked to empower communities. Changes in practice and theory have greatly transformed participatory planning from its beginnings as a tool of radical intervention in neighborhoods and quest for social justice into an established methodology of professional practice (Francis 1983). Today, practitioners like Henry Sarnoff maintain that participatory planning "continues to be one of the key concepts in American society" (Sanoff 2008).

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS.

The main difference between the participation process in the past and the present is that today it tends to be driven more by professional norms than legislative mandates. In its long history as an acceptable method of planning and design, participation and collaboration have been vetted innumerable times; its theories remain the same. Hence the benefits and limitations of this planning and design methodology are well documented. Almost every article I reviewed critiqued the many methodologies that were presented and all of them have benefits and limitations.

Benefits of participation. In his book, Participatory Action Research, William Foote-Whyte refers to the merging of research and organizational goals, suggesting, "that research is designed to enable, empower and generally facilitate the goals of the organization or group being researched." Bonilla notes that by using a participatory design process, results that the user identified, can be used to develop a vision and culminate in a design intervention that is genuine and legitimized by the agents and actors involved in the planning process (Bonilla 2009). Additionally, Sanoff found that citizen participation also means building an increased sense of community among the population (Sanoff 2008), which creates a more stabilizing process (Atlee 2003). Bonilla believes that "people come to learn about each other, to share their experiences and different points of view, to build a better understanding and awareness of the project and process (2009).

Many people come to the table with the preconceived notion that their ideals and values are different only to learn that they share the same concerns. Innes agrees that the inclusion of stakeholders can ensure that local knowledge is incorporated into the plan, and thus it should contribute to learning and better plans as ideas flow back and forth between planners and affected interests (1995). Additionally, creating events that allow social interaction between groups that normally do not mix can develop a sense of commu-

nity through face-to-face interaction, and publicly affirming community values - creating citizen attachment to community and place (Burby 2003). It also increases empowerment by allowing people, organizations, and communities to have control over their affairs, adding to social capital and mutual trust (Francis 1983; Sanoff 2008). Moreover, Crewe postulates that "[t]he more designers value the input of citizens, the more appropriate their designs will be for the users concerned" (Crewe 2001). The transparent, collaborative process provides solutions to problems from participants of different backgrounds, with different ideals and interests. Participants put forth their knowledge and opinions at an equal level regardless of position - economic, political or social – creating a place of shared learning where professionals and participants learn from each other. This planning process reflects on solving problems collaboratively, increases understanding of planning, participation and design, builds social capital, while finding real solutions and strategies for better economic, social and environmental development.

Consensus-building is necessary for decision-making, and effective communication is needed for consensus. The idea of planning as a consensus-building process is well documented in planning and plan-making. Specifically, four chapters in The Practice of Local Government Planning, Third Edition, (Baum 2000; Hoch 2000; Kaiser and Godschalk 2000; Klein 2000) emphasize consensus-building. Participant-inspired design guidelines can increase the confidence of the designer and fosters a sense of solidarity amongst the participants (Albrecht 1988; Silverman et al. 2008). Schneekloth and Shibley write that place-making stresses the importance of creating dialogue where groups of people can question and construct the knowledge needed for greater satisfaction. According to a survey by Crewe, participation has encouraged park use by furnishing participant-preferred environments, and created a sense of ownership through community participation, assuring protection of the space over time. Additionally, Wulz and Crewe believes that participation can unite opposing views and opinions through consensus and dialogue (Wulz 1986) and can ease conflicts between designers and residents (Crewe 2001).

Limitations of participation. Arnstein discusses some of the limitations inherent to community participation in her influential 1968 article regarding tokenism and the perception of user power and powerlessness (Arnstein 1969). The level of participation a professional decides to incorporate into their process can create limitations. "The nature of shared responsibility is both a strength and a weakness of the process (Goethert and Hamdi 1988)." Hamdi makes the point that a 'shared' level of participation is the most advantageous for participants. This is "when both community and outsider share responsibility, both assume a 'stakeholder role and both assume active involvement [in the decision-making and consensus building process] (Goethert and Hamdi 1988)." Consensus-building in collaborative work is bound to have some semblance of bias. Research by Day (1997) points out that community participation can be biased towards individuals and groups who have access to resources and information, allowing for those

individuals and groups to become more engaged in public dialogue and hijack the process. Additionally, competing interests among community members or stakeholders also impede full participation. As participants grow in number, the difficulty in attaining helpful group action rises because each person holds their own set of values and needs and everyone must be heard within the timeframe available (Peña 2001). Furthermore, control of the overall process is variable depending on the level of consensus. In Johann Albrecht's *examination of humanistic planning theories*, he affirms that "[t]he greater the consensus, the less the need for control, and the less the consensus, the more the need for control" (Albrecht 1988).

The professionals' abilities and expertise as a facilitator of the process can have significant influence on the process. The professional holds a position that balances on a fine line between dominating the project and allowing it to flow naturally. For instance, David's article on the problems of participation highlights the loss of perspective when a researcher participates in the planning process and must keep in their mind that whether they play the part of facilitator or educator, the professional is an active participant in the process and that position must not be misused (David 2002). It is important not to use the findings to support their own preconceived design solutions and expert knowledge. This goes for the participants also. For example, a key stakeholder, who did not participate in any of the planning workshops; reviewed one of the alternatives and verbalized his prejudice against a design move that supported a key idea generated through the participatory process. According to Schneekloth and Shibley, "part of the professionals role is to embed the work, research, and action in the framework of the people who must live in, manage, and maintain the environment in question" (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995). To do this, professionals must observe and interpret information gathered during the process. Francis concurs that "[a]s designers, it is essential to remind ourselves that the project is ultimately theirs, not ours" (Francis 1983).

THE SIX PRINCIPLES

Practice, whether traditional or participatory, involves a process that is, hopefully, a means to an implementable plan. In this process, the traditional model advocates for the client, regardless if the work is public or private, large or small scale; and uses a top-down design approach. The top-down design approach is restricted by what Mark Francis calls "the culture of practice" (Francis 1999). The traditional culture of practice, used by many design professionals in a variety of fields, can be characterized as client-serving, exclusive, project-oriented and authoritarian. In an article published in the *Journal of Architectural Education*, Mary Comerio's assertions overlap with many of the differences Francis points out between traditional and participatory methods (see figure 4-2). Participatory methods use a bottom-up procedure; takes the focus off the client and expands it to include the users, is problem oriented and is inclusive; creating a collaborative process that unites and empowers its partici-

pants in a democratic way (Comerio 1984b; Francis 1999). So, why is it that many plans are never implemented? In Goethert and Hamdi's book Making Microplans, they state "problems of implementation arise not so much because people locally lack information or skills, but because they lack an adequate framework for articulating and prioritizing problems, defining solutions, and building consensus and partnerships"(Goethert and Hamdi 1988). Introducing a participatory planning process provides the opportunity for dialogue to create greater stakeholder involvement, develops a stronger plan, and increases the likelihood that a plan would be implemented. Hence, producing a plan that will be referenced, often (Burby 2003).

In *Making Microplans*, and in their follow up book, *Action Planning for Cities*, Nabeel Hamdi and Reinhard Goethert assert that the collaborative-consensus building approach to participation is built around an interdependent collection of principles. Gillem (2001) highlights some of these principles and asserts that the following six principles are crucial for successful user-participation:

1. **User involvement:** The pursuit of participation in planning and design is based on the premise that environments work better and are more readily accepted when user participation is integrated into the process. An effective step to broader stakeholder involvement is to invite a variety of groups to take part in the process and to ensure that participation is meaningful. According to Schneekloth and Shibly, "the inclusion or exclusion of peoples and knowledges frame all action by limiting what can be known and who is empowered to make decisions" (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995). According to Burby, by involving a broad stakeholder group there is increased understanding of the issues for the participants and professionals, stronger plans are developed, and an increase in consensus amongst the group (Burby 2003). Cameron agrees that user involvement in the process creates better experiential knowledge and ownership of outcomes among the participants, and in the case of professionals, improves the inputs through expert knowledge and technical information (Cameron, Hayes, and Wren 2000). Furthermore, by taking part in collective action, participants become aware of common needs and identify with one another (Healey 1997).

Traditional	Participatory
client focused	user focused
top down approach	bottom up approach
exclusive	inclusive
project oriented	problem oriented
authoritarian	collaborative & empowering

Figure 4-2
Comparing modes of practice.

2. **User decision-making:** This principle is based in the enabling quality of a user-involved, participatory process. Sanoff asserts that the process of consensus building "allows for an iterative dialogue of idea generation and debate towards decision making (Sanoff 2000)." Peña characterizes the

decision-making process as something that must be done in a "timely [manner]…by the client - not the [professional] (Peña 2001)." And Gillem advocates that "[t]he aim [of user decision-making] is to enable the users to make decisions early and often… (Gillem 1996)" thereby fulfilling two objectives: (1) to produce knowledge, leading to action that is directly useful to the user group, and (2) to empower the participants through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge. According to Peña, if the consensus and decision-making process produces the benefits of enabling the user group…"every decision the client makes during programming [should simplify] the design problem by reducing the number of alternative design solutions to those that meet the program requirements (Peña 2001)."

3. Group focus: Interaction and interdisciplinary work among the participants necessitates the principle of collaboration. According to Sanoff, people become involved only if they feel they will be affected (Sanoff 2000), therefore limiting the cross section of people, experiences, and knowledge they bring to the table. Each person holds their own set of complex needs and values, and until all of the groups concerns are out on the table, the participants will not be group oriented. Moreover, self-interest is a basic human trait that can add contention amidst the group decision-making process. According to Hamdi and Goethert, successful collaboration will "begin with a discovery of common interest and subsequently with inducing a convergence of interests…(Hamdi and Goethert 1997)." Additionally, Sanoff maintains that in order to effectively facilitate user-based group decision-making, an atmosphere must be created that… "is clear, communicative, open, and encourages dialogue, debate and collaboration (Sanoff 2000)."

4. Workshop atmosphere: Many professionals use planning and design workshops as a platform for participation to gather knowledge through dialogue and consensus (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995). There are many advantages to facilitating a workshop atmosphere. For example, Tom Atlee's concept of collective intelligence is defined as, "[a] shared insight that comes about through the process of group interaction, particularly where the outcome is more insightful and powerful than the sum of individual perspectives (Atlee 2003)." The workshop process Atlee discusses takes its form through group interaction, is problem based and opportunity driven, is focused on an intentional process that produces decisions, objectives, and recommendations for the shared environment. There are a variety of strategies to developing an effective workshop. For instance, workshops with fewer participants can be held in a single room with everybody participating in the same activities, as opposed to workshops with many participants, where they

may have to be broken up into separate rooms for break-out sessions, only later to reconvene and report on their findings to the entire group. Either way, Sanoff believes that dividing the participants into working groups of six to eight participants is optimal. Peña agrees, "increased involvement… causes more conflicting information." Hamdi reinforces the idea of smaller groups, which allows each participant to share their personal ideas and values, keeping the focus community oriented (Goethert and Hamdi 1988). "Good technique may be summarized into good communication (Goethert and Hamdi 1988)."

5. On-site: Another principle important to the process is to conduct the collaborative workshop in the local area (Peña 2001). Goethert recommends that there are two benefits to holding workshops on-site. "(1) it reinforces the bias towards the community; and (2) it allows involvement by other community members normally excluded, i.e., women and children (Goethert and Hamdi 1988)." The cost of overlooking a particular user who, for instance may not be able to participate if the workshop is off-site could completely immobilize a project (Thomas 1995). Schneekloth and Shipley call the on-site space the 'dialogic space' and define it as a place "in which hopes, fears, ideas and frustrations about a place and the people who live there are discussed (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995)." Additionally, holding workshops on-site may afford the opportunity for participants to feel more comfortable and empowered (Sanoff 2000), which leads back to the first benefit of on-site workshops.

6. Improvisational nature: There is no single way of working with participants. But Sanoff, Peña, and Hamdi and Goethert support that the process must maintain a level of flexibility. Schneekloth and Shibley recognize that since each project has different problems and its participants have different values and needs, each workshop will have a different nature, leading to improvisation (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995). Additionally, Schneekloth and Shibley assert that through their experiences "the tasks [that unfold in the workshop atmosphere] are not discrete, [or] sequential…they occur simultaneously and iteratively throughout…(Schneekloth and Shibley 1995). Goethert and Hamdi add that since the goal of the workshop is to identify alternative ways in which the problems can be addressed there is no one-way to predict for the outcome (Goethert and Hamdi 1988).

THE PROFESSIONALS ROLE

By using a participatory method, the professional brings their theoretical knowledge and professional expertise to the process, while the participants bring their experiential knowledge and the state of the circumstances which they

are trying to change. Although the professional must bring many other skills to the process, there are really only two hats the professional must wear. One is as a facilitator and the other is as a documenter.

Facilitator: Working in a setting where collecting and interpreting knowledge depends upon conversation, Schneekloth and Shibley "stress the importance of creating a dialogue wherein groups of people can affirm, interrogate and construct the knowledge they need to make and maintain their own places (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995)." The collection of knowledge is not an exact science. It frames the possibilities and outlines a course of action. It is individualistic and sometimes short sighted on the participants' part (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995; Peña 2001). Peña continues to assert that it is the professionals' responsibility to remain observant and vigilant over the collaborative, consensus building process and to identify, translate and evaluate the ideas generated through dialogue. It is this role that allows the professional to invoke a sense of openness among the participants. Francis continues to assert that participation requires discussion and that the professional needs to foster an open, safe, enabling environment in order to raise the right issues or ask the right questions and manage the discussion (Francis 1983).

When community members participate, they come with their own baggage, whether they are for or against the project at hand; they must be welcomed in to the workshop where dialogue can proceed unimpeded. The workshop is a space that must remain committed to the "openness to many points of view…(Schneekloth and Shibley 1995)." Dialogue will almost always stimulate disagreements and conflict. It is up to the facilitator to acknowledge and constructively maintain the mission of the workshop and the creation of new knowledge. Friedman argues,

> "Dialogue includes the possibility and indeed the likelihood of conflict. Outside the domain of dialogue, such conflict is destructive: we seek victory over the other. But within a relation of dialogue, conflict – insofar as it leads to discoveries and transformations of the self – will only strengthen the relation. In agreement, we confirm each other in our shared experiences; but in disagreement, we affirm each other in our difference."

Documenter: Planners and designers need to be good listeners, observers and most importantly good recorders. A good practitioner needs all of these skills. This process of documentation "is premised by two notions: (1) the process of writing the description sharpens the thinking of the participants and draws out commitments, and (2) the charts allow traceability or review and awareness of the steps taken in reaching a conclusion (Goethert and Hamdi 1988)." The participatory method has multiple steps. During the first step, the planning process, participants take a very active role in documenting and presenting their collec-

tive group knowledge by sorting and prioritizing. There are numerous ways professionals facilitate good documentation of a project. One is by designating a second professional as a note taker of the over all process. Another is by assigning one professional to each user-group workshop table, facilitating within the group and making sure that sufficient notes are taken.

During the workshops, massive amounts of information will be produced and will need to quickly and effectively be sorted into broad groupings. Peña suggests using the analysis card technique of brainstorming and collecting ideas. Gillem suggests the Crawford Slip Technique. This technique allows for the quick brainstorming and collection of ideas that are then sorted thematically and ranked through a syntax analysis. The themed data is then graphically represented and presented to the entire group. Hamdi points out that diagramming, mapping and modeling are additional good procedures that can be used for data gathering and documentation (Hamdi and Goethert 1997). All of these techniques create dialogue and facilitate teamwork that is supportive of the collaborative, consensus building process.

A good documentation process can make the second step of the process, design; easier. The professional needs to be able to organize the mess of information into understandable plans. The documentation process allows for a clear prioritization of issues in both graphic and written form. This allows the professional and client to quickly and efficiently trace the sequence and steps of each stage of the workshop. The documentation of the planning process should lead to a series of broad goals with a number of key issues that are referred to as principles. By the conclusion of the workshop a problem statement should be agreed upon. Peña says, "The product of [the] programming is a statement of the problem. Stating the problem is the last step in the [planning stage] and it is also the first steps in the [design stage] (Peña 2001)." It is the responsibility of the professional to implant the knowledge gathered from the workshop back into the framework of the plans of the people who live, work and recreate in the environment under study.

Data Collection. To obtain valid information the right information must be acquired to study. Hester and Gillem both highlight two primary areas to study and analyze: (1) the physical environment, and (2) the human environment (Gillem 1996; Hester 2006). The physical environment, as described by Gillem as the built environment "deals with those elements that are observable and measurable and that may influence the projects direction (Gillem 1996)". The elements Gillem refers to are the hierarchal pattern or structure of buildings, roadways and pathways that link together to create a sense of place. Hester contends that the built environment reflects our values and can often lead to changes in our behavior (Hester 2006) and therefore is linked to the latter area of study; the human environment. The human environment encapsulates the needs of the user and how the physical environment makes the user feel, i.e. a dark courtyard might make a person feel unsafe lead-

ing to a space that will be left unused.

The professional is the catalyst in the participatory process with the necessary expertise to introduce the methods and techniques available for effective communication. The following are a variety of methods and techniques available to effectively study the two areas:

- Attentive observation of the user at the workshop, meetings and interviews allow for the collection and documentation of participant needs, problems, perceptions and values (Schneekloth and Shibley 1995; Hamdi and Goethert 1997).

- Brainstorming allows for numerous ideas to be generated in a short amount of time and "concentrates on generating ideas, discovering alternatives and soliciting response from the group (Hamdi and Goethert 1997)."

- Graphic techniques, like diagramming, mapping, and modeling, are helpful approaches to documentation, prioritization of views, and opinions for realizing broad principles and project goals (Peña 2001).

- The professional is accountable for the process of inquiry to review and evaluate, clarify and extend the understanding of the inputs and outcomes generated throughout the participatory process (Dick 2009).

Taking action. This chapter has been outlining the collective process that makes up participatory planning, while also pointing out that ideals, values and needs are collected along with opportunities and constraints connected to the site. Every choice made during the design stage of the process must correspond with the principles, which support the goals that are rooted in the vision, which was generated from the users' participation in the planning stage. The result of the participatory process should lead to "an explicit statement" of the problem (Peña 2001). Goethert and Hamdi outline the course of action that informs the participatory planning process (Goethert and Hamdi 1988):

(1) Problem identification: identifying, prioritizing, documenting and analyzing the problem;

(2) General strategies: preparing alternate approaches of the problem(s);

(3) Program agreement: review and evaluation of alternative approaches measured against the vision, principles, and goals;

(4) Implementation: planning for how to best carry out the agreed upon proposal; and

(5) Monitoring and evaluation: learning and reflecting on the actions and results.

Participatory planning is a professionally-led effort that produces decisions and actions that are shaped and guided

by a process that seeks to merge knowledge, created by local experience; with expert theory, of the professional; to generate a guiding vision. Improved quality of decisions, consensus building, empowerment, generating a greater sense of community and a better understanding of shared experiences are many of the benefits of successful participation. However, with all of its benefits, this methodology also has many limitations. A concerted effort of the project facilitator must make user involvement meaningful and real, while remaining mindful of any obstacles that may block the equitable participation of all users. With this in mind, it is the responsibility of the professional to maintain effective communication in a safe collaborative environment, to foster a transparent, consensus-building and reflective approach that allows for the participation of a broad group of stakeholders.