

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: CATALYST: ARCHITECTURE FOR
CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Magalys Mercedes Joyce
Master of Architecture
2016

Thesis Directed By: Lecturer
Elijah Luke Northen
School of Architecture, Planning, and
Preservation

In major cities today, there are neighborhoods that have been continually underserved and as a result are in decay. Private investors and developers turn to these particular neighborhoods, propose large developments that gentrify these areas, displacing communities and with them their social, political, and economic issues. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze South West, Baltimore, a community composed of 8 neighborhoods on the verge of being gentrified, by incoming development. Through investigating the key issues present in this community for many years, this thesis will attempt to develop a catalytic environment, which will facilitate change within the community by providing a place for its members to help tackle these issues, improving their circumstances, and the circumstances of the neighborhoods they form part of.

CATALYST: ARCHITECTURE FOR CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

By

Magalys Mercedes Joyce

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture
2016

Advisory Committee:

Lecturer, Elijah Luke Northen, Chair

Lecturer, James Tilghman, Committee Member

Professor, Brian Kelly, Committee Member

Professor, Mathew Bell, Committee Member

© Copyright by
Magalys Mercedes Joyce
2016

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband, Brian, who always made sure everything was taken care of around the house, and for all of his love and support. To my family, whose love and encouraging words kept me going. Lastly but not least, to God, whom through which all of this was made possible.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family, thesis committee members and friends, with whom without their love and support, none of this would have been possible.

Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Southwest Baltimore Social, Political, Economic Issues	3
Section 1: Historical Evolution	3
Industrialist Past: Booms and Busts	3
Segregation	6
Economic Decline and Disinvestment	7
Sections 2: Present Day Conditions and Demographics	10
Employment and Education	10
Vacancies, Crime and Violence	13
Section 3: Southwest Partnership Vision plan	18
7 Neighborhoods One Goal	18
Identified Issues and Assets: Formation of Committees	19
Section 4: Summary	20
Chapter 2: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Case Study and Strategies for Community and Urban Planning	22
Section 1: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, DSNI Case Study	22
Organizational History	22
Strategic Focus	23
Summary	25
Section 2: Strategies for Community and Urban Planning	25
Jamie Lerner “Urban Acupuncture”	25
Chapter 3: Selecting a Building Type and Developing Program	26
Section 1: Arriving at a Building Type	26
Programming for Community Needs	27
The Typology	27
Section 2: Precedent Analysis	28
Eastside Human Services Building in Denver, Colorado	29
Sephardic Community Center	31
Surry Hills Library and Community Centre	31
PCH International Innovation Hub	32
Summary	33
Section 3: Architectural Program	34
Program Organization	34
Southwest Baltimore Library and Community Hub	35
Southwest Baltimore Recreation Center	36
Southwest Baltimore Workshop & Training Center	36
Summary	37

Chapter 4: Site Selection and Analysis	39
Section 1: Selecting a Site	39
Mapping Exercise	40
Section 2: Overlay and Synthesis	44
Section 3: Site Analysis	46
The Sites	46
Three Site analysis	50
Site Analysis Summary	52
Chapter 5: Catalyst Design & Development	55
Section 1: The Master Plan	55
Existing Conditions	55
Proposal	56
Summary	57
Section 2: The SOWEBO Library and Community Hub	59
Existing Conditions	59
Methodology	62
Design Process	62
Proposal	64
Section 3: Reflection	78
Bibliography	81

List of Tables

Table 1 Baltimore Public School Performance (source: Diane W. Cipallone, “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” (School of Finance Litigation, University of Illinois Press, summer 1998) pg. 99)	12
Table 2 is a matrix for comparing how precedents meet the three focus area categories and the specific programs used to meet them. (source: author).....	29
Table 3 illustrates the program elements needed for the design of the Southwest Baltimore Community Center summarizing the activity categories, support spaces and spatial needs. (source: author)	37

List of Figures

Figure 1 Pine Street in the 1930's illustrating working class housing (source: Maryland Historical Society Photographs, "Street Scene" observed Oct. 29, 2015, http://mdhsphotographs.tumblr.com/page/25).....	5
Figure 2 Street Car (source: Maryland Historical Society Photographs, "Electric Street Car #1328 Washington Street" observed Oct. 29, 2015, http://mdhsphotographs.tumblr.com/page/25).....	5
Figure 3 Diagram highlights the infrastructural intervention that has isolated Southwest Baltimore from the rest of the city. (Source: author & Google earth)	9
Figure 4 Vacancy diagram (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015).....	14
Figure 5 Diagram of fear of crime (source: Ralph B. Taylor and Jeanette Covington, "Community Structural Change and the Fear of Crime" vol. 40, No.3 (Oxford University Press, Aug 1993) pg. 377).....	14
Figure 6 Youth Programs (source: author, ARCH 601 Spring 2015).....	15
Figure 7 Crime (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015).....	15
Figure 8 Crime and Vacancy Overlay (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015).....	16
Figure 9 Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods Housing Values (source: author, Zillow Housing Data).....	17
Figure 10 ACT Framework and plan (source: "Youth Opportunity & Development" Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative DSNI, observed December 13, 2015 (http://www.dsni.org/youth/).....	25
Figure 11 East Side Human Services Building Ground Floor Plan (source: "East Side Human Services Building/ RNL" Archdaily observed December 13, 2015 http://www.archdaily.com/267761/eastside-human-services-building-rnl).....	30
Figure 12 Sephardic Community Ground Floor Plan (source: "Sephardic Community Center / BKSK" 29 Oct 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. http://www.archdaily.com/84992/sephardic-community-center-bksk/).....	31
Figure 13 Surry Hills Library ground floor plan (source: "Surry Hills Library and Community Centre / FJMT" 25 Apr 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. http://www.archdaily.com/57339/surry-hills-library-and-community-centre-fjmt/).....	32
Figure 14 PCH International Innovation Hub, (source: "PCH International Innovation Hub / ChrDAUER Architects" 08 Sep 2015. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. http://www.archdaily.com/773233/pch-international-innovation-hub-chrdauer-architects/).....	33
Figure 15 Map of schools (source: author).....	40
Figure 16 Map of the location density of people in relation to vacancy (Source: author).....	41
Figure 17 Baltimore metro bus and charm city circulator routes and stops (source: author).....	41
Figure 18 Map of new, proposed, and cancelled development. (Source: author).....	42
Figure 19 Map of anchor institutions. (Source: author).....	42
Figure 20 Map of social and community assets. (Source: author).....	43

Figure 21 Map of community event locations (source: author).....	43
Figure 22 Map of historic sites and designation. (Source: author)	44
Figure 23 Overlay synthesis map. (Source: author).....	45
Figure 24 Map of potential sites & master plan boundary (source: author)	45
Figure 25 Map of potential sites and major connections to the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods and Baltimore city. (Source: author)	46
Figure 26 Diagram of <i>Site 1</i> with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods. (Source: author).....	47
Figure 27 Map of <i>Site 2</i> with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods. (Source: author).....	48
Figure 28 Map of <i>Site 3</i> with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods. (Source: author).....	49
Figure 29 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to schools (source: author).....	50
Figure 30 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to public amenities. (Source: author).....	51
Figure 31 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to public transit. (Source: author).....	51
Figure 32 Diagram overlay of the three sites in relation to density of people. (Source: author).....	52
Figure 33 Diagram of the triangulation of the three sites with Site 2, the location selected for the Southwest Baltimore community, as the mother ship and the other two sites (Site 1: Recreation Center, Site 2: Workshop & training) as the satellites (source: author)	54
Figure 34 Diagram of existing conditions (source: author)	55
Figure 35 Existing street section and plan (source: author).....	56
Figure 36 Proposed Master plan (source: author).....	57
Figure 37 Proposed Street Section (source: author)	58
Figure 38 Site boundary (source: author)	60
Figure 39 Existing uses diagram (source: author)	60
Figure 40 Circulation Diagram (source: author).....	61
Figure 41 Existing Conditions Diagram (source: author).....	61
Figure 42 Parti Diagram (source: author).....	64
Figure 43 Proposed Site Plan with corresponding site cross section below (source: author).....	66
Figure 44 First floor plan diagram (source: author).....	67
Figure 45 Second floor plan diagram (source: author)	68
Figure 46 Third floor plan diagram (source: author)	69
Figure 47 Exploded axon diagram showing layering of spaces (source: author)	70
Figure 48 Sectional Diagrams showing how spaces interact and overlap internally (source: author).....	71
Figure 49 Approach from intersection Baltimore Street & South Arlington Avenue (source: author).....	72
Figure 50 Approach from Hollins Street (source: author)	73

Figure 51 Perspective down South Carlton Street (source: author).....	73
Figure 52 Perspective of South Carlton Street and Community Forum (source: author)	74
Figure 53 Library (source: author).....	74
Figure 54 Café (source: author)	75
Figure 55 Rooftop play space (source: author).....	75
Figure 56 Community Stoop with views to courtyard (source: author)	76
Figure 57 Courtyard (source: author)	76
Figure 58 Longitudinal Section (source: author)	77
Figure 59 Partial elevation & wall section detail of glazing system design (source: author).....	77
Figure 60 Partial elevation & wall section detail of terracotta wall system design (source: author).....	78
Figure 61 Aerial View of SOWEBO Library & Community Hub (Source: author) ..	80

Introduction

What does the thesis title “Catalyst: Architecture for Change and Social Justice” really mean? First it is important to begin with understanding what a catalyst is, and how it can be used for change and social justice. This thesis is not proposing in any way that architecture in itself can achieve social justice, but rather using architecture and the use of architectural design as a means towards the achievement of an ultimate end, which for the Southwest Partnership in Baltimore is the creation of a “ awesome, healthy, architecturally beautiful, diverse, cohesive community of choice built on mutual respect and shared responsibility.”¹

So what is a catalyst? A catalyst, as defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is “an agent that provokes or speeds significant change or action.”² Architecture could be used as an “agent” that could in fact “provoke” and or “speed” significant change within its environment. This does not mean that architecture itself is creating the change, but it can be used as an instrument, tool, and or key ingredient for achieving and end. Positive change and social justice is that end.

Social Justice is the view that “everyone deserves equal, economic, political, and social rights and opportunities.”³ Southwest Baltimore is community of people that through the years have experienced the opposite of Social Justice. Due to major key historical events and policies put in place that deprived them of equal

¹ Southwest Partnership, “Southwest Partnership Vision Plan” (Baltimore City, Spring 2015) pg. 3

² “Catalyst Definition” Merriam-Webster Incorporated, accessed Oct. 28, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/catalyst>

³ “Social Justice”, National Association of Social Workers, accessed Oct. 28. 2015, <http://www.naswdc.org/pressroom/features/issue/peace.asp>

opportunity, a part of the Baltimore City that was once vibrant, diverse and enriched by the height of the industrial revolution, has suffered a major decline, like most former industrialist cities, and is currently in social, political, and economic decay.

This thesis will begin to guide a way for analyzing cities, like Baltimore, that have areas very close to illustrious downtown neighborhoods with vibrant business and commercial districts, that are very far from the image being marketed. Through the use of historical research and analysis of the current conditions of city and the specific areas that are in decay, discover the underlying, economic, political, and social issues that will become the framework for researching and analyzing what has been done architecturally to help solve similar issues, as well as informing what can be done when designing and architectural catalyst (agent), that can help address such issues.

Chapter 1: Southwest Baltimore Social, Political, Economic Issues

Section 1: Historical Evolution

Industrialist Past: Booms and Busts

Southwest Baltimore has a rich social, economic and political history that makes it one of the most unique areas in Baltimore City. The rise of the industrial revolution in the late 18th through early 19th centuries brought much growth to the area. Though it continued to see growth until about the 20th century, changes in urban policies and the introduction of “disastrous” infrastructural construction eventually led to Southwest Baltimore’s decline.⁴

Manufacturing and the industrial revolution in the early 18th century attributed to the growth of Baltimore City as one of the major cities in the United States. Southwest Baltimore played a huge role during the industrial revolution being the area house Baltimore Company Ironwork, which was the first major industry introduced to the area opening its doors in 1730. Though the Iron works company closed its doors in the early nineteenth century, by 1830 the height of the industrial revolution arrived in Baltimore City with the development of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the first national, and the first world wide long distance neighborhood. With the cornerstone being laid in 1828, the construction of the B&O followed by the construction of the Mount Claire shops by railroad officials, Southwest Baltimore

⁴ University of Maryland School of Architecture Planning and Preservation Graduate Program in Historic Preservation Studio Fall 2014 “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” (University of Maryland, 2014) pg.13

soon became the “center of railroad technological innovation”. Due to the new large demands for workers the B&O required, James Carroll, the owner of the land upon which the railroad and shops were constructed on, executed his own development plan to accommodate the need for new worker housing. This industry also attracted large amounts of immigrants, initially consisting of Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine in 1840’s, followed by German immigrants not long after. Most of these immigrants began settling the Southwest section of Baltimore, primarily due to the large amounts of workers needed for the westward expansion of the railroad. Mount Claire shops by 1852 had employed over 1000 men.⁵

The anticipation of housing needs for the railroad workers caused speculators to begin a period of rapid housing development throughout the Southwest area, which mirrored what was going on in the rest of the city and by the 1830’s, approximately four hundred new homes were constructed annually. The rapid development of such row homes also prompted new industries such as iron and brick manufacturers, which began to move into the low-lying neighborhoods of Southwest known as Pigtown.⁶ Though the overall residential building type being developed were row-homes, the design of the residences revealed income levels through its width, depth, height, and ornamentation. The growth of the middle class, and white-collar workers spurred new developments of residential high-end, large three to four story townhome residential blocks known as Franklin Square and later Union square The luxurious details that these townhomes displayed provided a market for the local industries, like iron manufacturers and created a demand for furniture, stimulating the growth of the

⁵ “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 13

⁶ “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 13-16

furniture manufacturing industry in the area.⁷ These residential squares were also site for the domestic working class, which prompted the development of working class housing concurrently with elite housing. The alley house neighborhoods were usually for developed for the working class and though they were thought of as exclusively African American communities, immigrant and native-born working class Americans lived there as well. By the 1850's, Southwest Baltimore had reached a "remarkable" degree of ethnic diversity within a single socioeconomic class, with Irish, German, and free African Americans living side by side.⁸

Figure 1 Pine Street in the 1930's illustrating working class housing (source: Maryland Historical Society Photographs, "Street Scene" observed Oct. 29, 2015, <http://mdhsphotographs.tumblr.com/page/25>)

The introduction of new developments and public transportation enabled a period of further residential and commercial growth in the Southwest neighborhood post Civil War. The streetcar in 1888 was one major public transport innovation that prompted a huge economic boom in Southwest Baltimore, which continued to stay strong through the cities ups and downs.⁹

Figure 2 Street Car (source: Maryland Historical Society Photographs, "Electric Street Car #1328 Washington Street" observed Oct. 29, 2015, <http://mdhsphotographs.tumblr.com/page/25>)

⁷ "West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization" pg. 17

⁸ "West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization" pg. 17

⁹ "West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization" pg. 18

Segregation

Though Southwest Baltimore maintained a level of strength and progress through most of, racial segregation component will play a hug role in the decline of the area starting as early as the late 19th century. Baltimore’s development plans created a “schizoid social landscape of rich and poor, native and foreigner, white and black in back to back rows”. As the wealthy and upper middle class began to move into neighborhoods developed for them, the poor began to move into areas left behind. African Americans began to move into the low-lying areas of Pigtown for housing affordability. As various socioeconomic groups competed for resources and decent living in an overcrowded city during the mid 19th century, tensions began to escalate.¹⁰

Becoming a leader in establishing racially segregated housing in 1911, Baltimore city passed ordinances that mandated African Americans could not move into blocks that were 50% white and vise versa. These ordinances forced the concentration of African Americans in areas they already inhabited and severely limited their freedom and choice of housing throughout the city. Although the Supreme Court deemed racially segregated housing unconstitutional, “de facto segregation” persisted through fear, intimidation, redlining, and restrictive housing covenants.¹¹

After the Great Depression, the city finally took black resident housing needs into consideration. The city however still adhered to their racially segregated housing patterns. With funding provided by the federal government as well as the New Deal

¹⁰ “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 22

¹¹ “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 22

vision inspiring the public housing projects, Baltimore City built “Poe Homes” in the Poppleton. Named after the renowned writer Edgar Allen Poe, who had resided in Southwest Poppleton neighborhood, the newly developed housing project was aimed at aiding many black families through the provision of improved housing and playgrounds for children. The development of this project displaced many residents that were not given housing due to their socioeconomic status. These groups of people included unemployed, unmarried residents, and large families.

Economic Decline and Disinvestment

Due to the overcrowding of Baltimore City, mirroring conditions seen in many post industrialist cities across the globe, suburban developments in the outer parts of the city attracted many upper and middle class residents out of Southwest Baltimore. This is known as the white and middle class flight, which contributes the overall decline of the Southwest area. Though this halted new development, much of what was there staid intact. The proposal of infrastructural changes and urban renewal plans created a huge wound economical, which the Southwest neighborhoods have not been able to recover from.

In 1943, Baltimore City Planning commission hired Robert Moses to design a freeway system for Baltimore’s heavily traversed and unorganized roadways. The proposal called for a sunken highway, complete with green spaces and parks that would displace 19,000 people. This however raised no concern for Moses who stated “The more of them [residents] that are wiped out the healthier Baltimore will be in the long run.”¹²This proposal did not go unopposed and though many advocacy

¹² “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 23

groups such as Relocation Action Movement RAM, protested a one-mile stretch of the US-40 highway was built. This created a huge scar in the urban fabric that would separate the North and South previously connected neighborhoods of West Baltimore City. In 1982 Martin Luther King Drive was built as transitional interface between two highway spurs, I-70 and I-395, and city streets. Created a hard eastern edge and separation from the Central downtown Baltimore area it is a 6 lane traffic highway that wards off pedestrian traffic from entering West Baltimore.¹³ These infrastructural changes negatively impacted and were major contributors to the economic decline of the businesses in Southwest Baltimore causing business to close shop move out and also prompted a lack of investment.

Urban Renewal period between 1949 and 1960 severely damaged Southwest Baltimore and has made it very difficult to recover from in present day. Though Urban Renewal did not have the same impact in Southwest as it did in other areas which were wiping out whole neighborhoods by being declared, “blighted “or “slums”, indirect developments caused devastating blows the Southwest economy. Baltimore business owners in the Retail Merchants Association formed a committee for the Greater Downtown and as a result, the construction of the Charles Center, a large-scale business center, began. This group of people shortly after planned the revitalization of the Inner Harbor and with it the development of new stores, and the creation of a “Harbor Place.” Most of the federal aid went into the redevelopment of the Inner Harbor and though those neighborhoods benefited, the other neighborhoods

¹³ “West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization” pg. 24

on the periphery and its local business owners began to experience a huge decline in their revenue, which prompted them to close shop and move elsewhere for business.

To finish killing off almost all commercial activity in Southwest, race riots spurred after the death of Martin Luther King Jr. In 1968 created a very difficult situation for local business owners to recover from and led to the rash abandonment of the Southwest Business corridor along Baltimore Streets. Though monetary incentive was given to local business owners as an incentive to stay, this did close to nothing to remedy the situation.

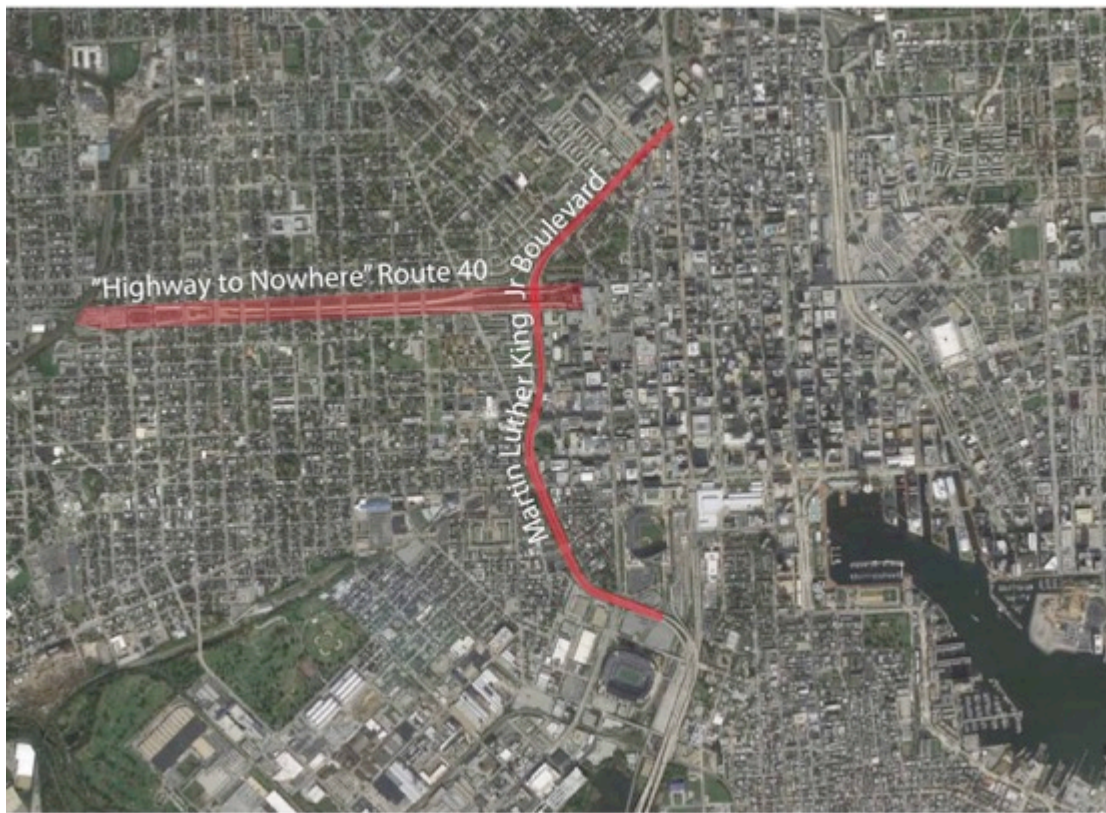


Figure 3 Diagram highlights the infrastructural intervention that has isolated Southwest Baltimore from the rest of the city. (Source: author & Google earth)

Sections 2: Present Day Conditions and Demographics

Jumping to the present day, Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods face many social, political, and economic issues that have evolved through time. Unrest filled the streets of Baltimore city as the people of Baltimore City protested and rioted, after the death of Freddie Gray in April 2015. Though the protest and rioting was caused by the police brutality that ultimately ended the life of Freddie Gray, this escalated way beyond a mere protest to violent rioting that caused the City of Baltimore to shut down and establish curfew for its citizens as the police force, the government tried to find ways to put an end to the unrest. What this really illustrates are social, political and economic pressures that have developed over time, causing a massive explosion of violence and protesting in West Baltimore. The lack of equal rights and opportunities, among other things is one of the major issues that cause tensions to escalate in major cities today.

Employment and Education

When looking at education and employment levels throughout Southwest Baltimore it is important to note that though there have been some improvement in the overall quality of education in Baltimore City Public Schools, BCPS, very recently there are still a large group of people, primarily the African American community making up a staggering 72.3% of the Southwest Baltimore population, that are suffering from lack of educational and employment opportunities. Though Elementary and Middle Schools have raised their education levels to satisfactory,

High Schools still have very high dropout rates.¹⁴ When looking at educational levels acquired by Southwest population, 29% have acquired a High school diploma, 20% have gone to High school but have dropped out and 7% have less than a high school diploma. This makes more than half of the population. When comparing this to the employment levels more than half of the population makes less than \$34 thousand a year and 19% percent out of 5,700 total employees in the Southwest neighborhood have jobs in Retail trade, which do not typically require high school diplomas. According to the U.S. 2010 Census data about 17,000 people live in the Southwest neighborhoods, with more than half of the population ranging from the ages of 19-64 its remarkable that less to see that more than half of the population is unemployed, which negatively impacts the overall economic health the area.¹⁵

To shed some light on this information, Baltimore city education, specifically when it comes to the education of its large African American population have and continued to demonstrate a lack of social justice. The public school education system was a huge social justice movement that was conceived of the idea that everyone should have access to free, quality education. Baltimore city public schools were historically segregated and though the idea was for both blacks and whites to have the same educational curriculum, the education of blacks was simply aimed at only giving them enough education to perform laborer tasks and not rise above this station.¹⁶ Looking at more current times, Baltimore City initiated suits against state

¹⁴ Southwest Partnership Baltimore, "Vision Plan", pg.42

¹⁵ Southwest Partnership Baltimore, "Vision Plan", pg.40-42

¹⁶ Gladys Helene Bradley, "The Education of Negroes in Maryland", (The Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 16, No. 3 Summer 1947) pg. 371

based on claims that students were denied adequate education.¹⁷ Baltimore schools have repeatedly failed to reach a satisfactory level of performance on the Maryland School Performance Assessment program, MSPAP, tests.¹⁸ The first suit, *Hornbeck v. Somerset County board of Education*, the plaintiffs claimed that the state was failing to provide BCPs schoolchildren with an adequate funding. This was thrown out on the account that showing “that educational resources available in the poorer school districts are inferior to those in the rich districts does not mean that there is insufficient funding provided by the States system for all students to obtain adequate education”.¹⁹ BCPS reframed their statement for the *Bradford v. Maryland State Board of Education* by saying that the “resources sufficient and appropriate to enable BCPS to meet or make meaningful progress toward meeting contemporary education standards”.²⁰ This ended up in a huge settlement of \$230 million in state education aid over a period of 5 years, which has brought some benefit to the overall public school system as illustrated in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1 Baltimore Public School Performance (source: Diane W. Cipallone, “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” (School of Finance Litigation, University of Illinois Press, summer 1998) pg. 99)

¹⁷ Diane W. Cipallone, “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” (School of Finance Litigation, University of Illinois Press, summer 1998) pg. 87

¹⁸ Cipallone “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” pg. 89

¹⁹ Cipallone “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” pg. 93-95

²⁰ Cipallone “Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations” pg. 95

Though there is some improvement being made today, there is still a significant amount of work to do towards education and employment levels in Southwest Baltimore and in Baltimore city as a whole. Past legislations and policies passed continue to make it particularly difficult for African Americans to rise above their current stations. The lack of opportunities that are caused by not having attained adequate education and skills necessary to gain employment in a modern society is an enormous obstacle that needs to be overcome.

Vacancies, Crime and Violence

There is a direct relationship between vacancies, criminal activity and disinvestment. Mapping these layers made it evident that the areas with the lowest housing values that suffer from disinvestment are also the areas with high levels of vacancies and criminal activity. This makes a substantial amount of sense considering there is a spike of criminal activity, when there are no eyes on the streets. The rapid decrease in population prompted by the white-flight and infrastructural changes in Southwest Baltimore, has generated social and economic chaos, and has made it very difficult to recover from.

There was a study conducted in Baltimore City, August 1993, that linked external forces acting on a neighborhood such as, economic decline, social changes, and or settlement patterns, with weakened control of neighborhoods leading to fear and crime. This is due to lack of community organization, common principles values, and unsupervised youth groups running rampant through the streets. The study states that a “community socioeconomic status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability were linked to victimization and offender rates through their influences on

unsupervised local teen corner groups, and low levels of local organizational involvement.”²¹



Figure 4 Vacancy diagram (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015)

Figure 5 Diagram of fear of crime (source: Ralph B. Taylor and Jeanette Covington, “Community Structural Change and the Fear of Crime” vol. 40, No.3 (Oxford University Press, Aug 1993) pg. 377)

²¹ Ralph B. Taylor and Jeanette Covington, “Community Structural Change and the Fear of Crime” vol. 40, No.3 (Oxford University Press, Aug 1993) pg. 376



Figure 6 Youth Programs (source: author, ARCH 601 Spring 2015)



Figure 7 Crime (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015)

Without community involvement and organization around a set of principles, crime will continually increase. The shortage of recreational & educational spaces catered to the youth makes them more susceptible to partake in criminal activity in their neighborhoods.

The large amounts of vacancies as well as the high levels of crime in Southwest Baltimore, has led to continual disinvestment, and a continued decrease in housing values in four of the seven neighborhoods that make up the Southwest Partnership. The Southwest housing values on average is about \$98,709 with numbers as low as \$13,000 in Franklin Square, a neighborhood historically developed for the upper middle class.²²



Figure 8 Crime and Vacancy Overlay (source: author, GIS Data, ARCH 601 Spring 2015)

²² Southwest Partnership Baltimore, “Vision Plan”, pg.40-42

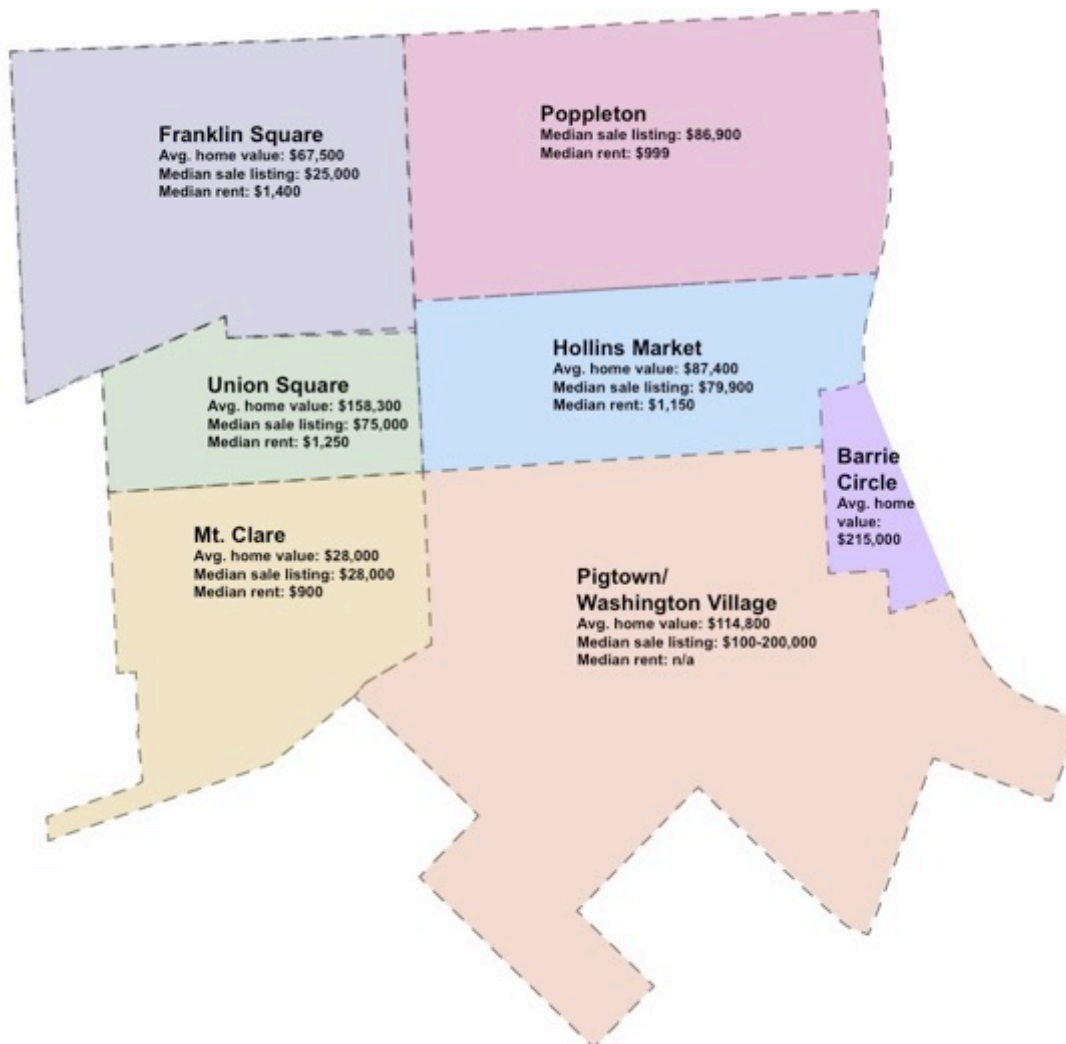


Figure 9 Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods Housing Values (source: author, Zillow Housing Data)

Section 3: Southwest Partnership Vision plan

7 Neighborhoods One Goal

The Southwest Partnership consists of seven neighborhoods known as, Barre Circle, Franklin Square, Hollins Roundhouse, Mount Clare, Union Square, Pigtown and Poppleton. The University of Maryland, University of Maryland Bio Park, University of Maryland Medical System, Bon Secours Baltimore Health System, and the B&O Railroad Museum are anchor institutions that also form part of the Southwest Partnership. This partnership was formed as an organization that guarantees, “ all partners a vote” but that the Southwest Partnership will be “resident driven”.²³

The reason for the formation of this partnership was for the outlining of an overall plan and recommendations for the development of the Southwest neighborhoods. Through community activism and fundraising, money was raised to hire consultants for the development of a Southwest Partnership master plan. Together they looked at the issues and developed a “Vision Plan” illustrating the potential of the Southwest Baltimore area as a great place for development and economic growth. Located less that one mile from the illustrious Inner Harbor, Southwest Baltimore is a prime location for development. The University of Maryland saw this opportunity and developed the University of Maryland Bio Park as the eastern Gateway along Baltimore Street.

The Southwest Partnership established a vision plan as way to draw community members as well as people outside of the community and get them excited about the

²³ Southwest Partnership Baltimore, “Vision Plan”, pg.4

future of Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods. The Southwest Partnership vision statement is as follow:

“The Southwest Partnership envisions, an awesome, healthy, architecturally beautiful diverse, cohesive community of choice built on mutual respect and shared responsibility. We embrace all diversity: from race, gender, and sexual orientation to economic, educational and housing choice. Our diversity is our strength...”²⁴

The ultimate goal of the Southwest Partnership is to allow for the community to participate in the process of developing their neighborhood, and rather than being gentrified, attract newcomers to the neighborhood while maintaining existing residents.

Identified Issues and Assets: Formation of Committees

The “Vision Plan” is the result of almost two years of conversations and collaboration between community members, institutions, and professional consultants. Through their planning efforts issues were identified and committees were developed to tackle specific issues. The issues identified are as follows:

- Improve real and perceived public safety
- Increase the effectiveness of the voice of residents, business owners, and institutions
- Improve the quality if the built and natural environment

²⁴ Southwest Partnership Baltimore, “Vision Plan”, pg.4

- Retain and strengthen the economic viability of existing business while attracting outside institutional, commercial, small business, and individual investment
- Build regional awareness of the strengths and opportunities for living and working in the area
- Improve the quality of life and access to economic opportunities for current residents²⁵

The committees formed based on the issues identified are as follows:

- Housing Development
- Workforce and Education
- Safe and Walkable Street
- Commercial Development
- History and Branding

These committees listed above will spearhead the planning for their respective categories and collectively will ensure that the “Vision” is being met.

Section 4: Summary

The Southwest Baltimore Partnership has been able to put together a master plan that illustrates what they have envisioned, it brushes over a key component to the overall success of this plan and that is its people. Southwest Baltimore is a very unique neighborhood and its people are one of the strongest, hidden assets that it has, and without focusing on its people first, and helping them achieve their full potential, it is very unlikely that this vision plan will be successfully executed without

²⁵ Southwest Partnership Baltimore, “Vision Plan”, pg.9

displacing a majority of its members that are in dire need of assistance. The key ingredient for the blossoming of the Southwest Baltimore community is not the urban master plan, but rather the empowerment and organization of its residents to take on this master plan. A community's success is dependent on its people having a common goal to strive towards, and without the improvement of its member's circumstances, it is very unlikely that the circumstances will change for the better. The majority of the residents within the Southwest neighborhoods suffer from inadequate levels of education to attain employment and improved income. The shortage of youth related activities and educational afterschool programs targeted towards keeping students motivated and excited about school, as well as giving them a safe place to commune and have fun afterschool. Without places and programs geared towards guiding the fruitful advancement of the youth in both education and in life, it will leave them vulnerable to partaking in unfavorable recreational practices causing a rise in crime and perceived safety of the residents of the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods. The increase of criminal activity in the area will continue to drive disinvestment, causing a decline of the neighborhoods economic status. By providing workforce development related facilities aimed towards assisting the currently unemployed residents improve their status through access to educational programs, job training, and job placement opportunities, will allow for the rise of a stable group of gainfully employed, educated and empowered citizens that will begin to improve the socioeconomic status of the neighborhoods.

Chapter 2: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Case Study and Strategies for Community and Urban Planning

Section 1: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, DSNI Case Study

Organizational History

Founded in 1984, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, DSNI is a non-profit community-based, planning organization forged out of the “passion, ingenuity and determination” of the Dudley residents aiming to reclaim their neighborhood ravaged by disinvestment, arson fire and dumping. Dudley Street Neighborhood located in Boston, Massachusetts, suffered from many of similar ailments many inner city neighborhoods, like Southwest Baltimore face. The DSNI mission was geared towards empowering Dudley residents “to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse and high quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners”.²⁶ The community residents worked really hard to establish a comprehensive plan and a shared vision for a “new, vibrant, urban village” and in order to achieve this they while fulfilling the community mandate of “development without displacement” they gained eminent domain authority, purchased vacant land, protected affordability and family stability through a community land trust.²⁷ A community that used to be in decay, is now prospering thanks to the following:

“Together, we have created greater civic participation, economic opportunity, community connections, and opportunities for youth. We have built community across our diversity of language, race & ethnicity, age. We have

²⁶ “Organizational History” Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative observed December 13, 2014, (<http://www.dsni.org/dsni-historic-timeline/>)

²⁷ “Organizational History”

invested in our young people and the youth in turn have invested in the community.”

Without the community working together to rebuild each other, the Dudley Street Neighborhood would not be the place it is today. Once garbage filled lots have been rebuilt with affordable houses, parks, playgrounds, gardens, community facilities, and new businesses that make it the healthy, stable, and vibrant community that it is today. The strong sense of community involvement focused around shared values is what makes this a very compelling case study for the Southwest Partnership.

Strategic Focus

Similarly to the Southwest Partnership, the DSNI created focus groups organized based on the major issues that need to be addressed. Where the Southwest Partnership committees were planned around urban planning goals and strategies, the DSNI primary focus is the community and its members. Their focus areas are as follows:

- Community empowerment
- Sustainable and Economic development
- Youth opportunities and development.

Community empowerment was formed around increasing their residents involvement in the decision making by building leadership skills, as well as informing them and equipping them with the tools necessary to engage and collaborate to realize their shared vision which in turn will transform the neighborhood into the vision. The Sustainable and Economic Development committee “engages residents, community partners and other stakeholders in planning and controlling the

physical and economic development of the neighborhood” in order to achieved the vision of a “vibrant and thriving community”. This is done by reviewing local development projects to ensure that they meet the neighborhood collective vision, promoting affordable housing, working closely with residents regarding issues of safety and quality of life, working closely with partners and local businesses to ensure that the resident minority work hours are maximized, as well as funding local food projects, such as urban gardens and food hubs for community access to healthy foods. The most awe-inspiring of the strategic focuses is the Youth Opportunity and Development. Often looked over, the youth rarely get the attention and opportunities they deserve, and in many low income neighborhoods, the lack opportunity and development specifically targeted towards the youth, noted in the earlier chapter exposes the youth to crime related activities that can negatively impact their future as well as the future of the communities they form part of. The DSNI works closely with the youth from 0-24 providing them with the resources necessary to meet the Boston Promise Initiative, BPI goals. These goals are as follows:

- Vibrant thriving communities
- Strong & healthy families
- Children entering schools ready to succeed
- Successful students and schools
- Post secondary completion and career readiness

By providing the youth with the tools, support, connections and opportunities they need to succeed, they will be able to achieve success not only in school but also in

life. The DSNI also work closely with parents equipping them with the tools necessary to be effective leaders and help guide their children to success.

Figure 10 ACT Framework and plan (source: “Youth Opportunity & Development” Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative DSNI, observed December 13, 2015
(<http://www.dsni.org/youth/>)

Summary

There are many valuable lessons worth taking from the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. This case study is arguably the only good example for community development in the United States, that by working closely with its residents and arming them with the skills necessary to thrive, it is possible to rebuild a community once devastated to one that is strong, vibrant, and prosperous, without displacement. Though they have achieved many successes in the past years, the work never ends. The DSNI still has a task at hand and must continue to endeavor to keep their community strong through unforeseen circumstances like recession and changing times.

Section 2: Strategies for Community and Urban Planning

Jamie Lerner “Urban Acupuncture”

One of the sources of inspiration for this thesis originated from the poetic writing about urban planning for cities by the author Jamie Lerner, renowned architect, urban planner, and politician. This book focuses on a method called “Urban

Acupuncture” as a way to treat ailing spots within cities and not only revitalize the specific place but the entire area that surrounds it. He states that:

*“...Successful urban planning involves triggering healthy responses within the city, probing here and there to stimulate improvements and positive chain reactions.”*²⁸

Jamie describes good acupuncture as a “spark that sets off a current that begins to spread.”²⁹ In his book he discusses the various cities and places he’s visited and what he considers good acupuncture. Good acupuncture is not always an architectural one. Good acupuncture is about understanding places better, understanding what is missing in a neighborhood before designing. It is about good programming. Good design does not always attribute to good programming. Good programming requires a deep understanding of problem people and places.³⁰

Chapter 3: Selecting a Building Type and Developing Program

Section 1: Arriving at a Building Type

In order to select a building type that will accommodate the programmatic needs of the Southwest Baltimore Neighborhoods it is important to refer back to the lessons learned from the DSNI case study, as well as the teachings from Jamie Lerner, “Urban Acupuncture”. In order to arrive at a solution it is important to understand the issues and needs of the people and neighborhood you are designing for. A cure can only be found through understanding the disease.

²⁸ Lerner, Jamie. Translated by Margolis Mac, Peter Muello, and Daher Ariadne “Urban Acupuncture” (Island Press, 2014) pg.1

²⁹ Jamie Lerner, “Urban Acupuncture” pg.3

³⁰ Jamie Lerner, “Urban Acupuncture” pg. xv-xvi

Programming for Community Needs

Referring back to *Chapter 1*, looking closely at the historic and present day circumstances of the Southwest Baltimore neighborhood there is a strong need for community grassroots focusing on the personal development and empowerment of its residents which will in turn contribute to the revitalization of the Southwest Baltimore and Baltimore City as a whole. Drawing inspiration from “*Urban Acupuncture*” and DSNI the proposed areas of focus for the Southwest Neighborhood are as follows:

- Community empowerment: establishing shared community goals and values through community organization and collaboration, collective resident leadership and control, establishing communities political power and voice, fair and equal share of opportunities and resources, and mutual and shared responsibility and accountability.
- Workforce development: establishing programs and partnering with organization geared towards providing residents with the skills, resources, tools and opportunities necessary to attain adequate employment.
- Youth Opportunity and Developments: establishing programs aimed at youth’s educational and personal development for success in school and life, through family involvement and community engagement, as well as providing ample recreational spaces for the youth to engage in leisurely activities in a safe and controlled environment.

The Typology

Based on the areas of focus established above, the architectural type best addresses the need for flexibility to integrate programs specifically chosen to address

community needs is a community center. A community center is simply described as a building and or place in which members of the community may gather for social, educational, cultural, and or recreational activities.³¹ There is a broad range of programs and uses that can be incorporated allowing for a variety of examples to look at. Not all community centers are the same and this is primarily due to the fact that not all communities are the same, and requires this architectural type be adjusted programmatically to address the specific needs of the community it forms part of.

Section 2: Precedent Analysis

Due to the large variety of community centers and the range that exists programmatically and architecturally, it was necessary to select precedents to study through the areas of focus established in the previous section. By analyzing precedents through this lens, it will lend to a more efficient deliberation in selecting program necessary to better serve the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods. A matrix was created to assist with this process (see **Table 2**).

³¹ “Community Center” Dictionary.com observed December 13, 2015 (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/community-center>)

Precedent Analysis Program Matrix				
Precedent Name & Location	Community Empowerment	Workforce Development	Youth Opportunity & Development	Programs
Eastside Human Services Building/ Denver, Colorado	x	x		Offices for food stamp application, low income energy assistance, Medicaid eligibility, family assistance, childcare enrollment, child welfare program and workforce development services
Sephardic Community Center/ Brooklyn New, York	x		x	Educational, recreational, and social programs such as gyms, preschool, meeting spaces for social groups, performance and celebratory spaces, youth and adult specified zones
Surry Hills Library & Community Center/ Sydney, Australia	x		x	Community Library and Childcare center, computer labs open to community, community gathering and event space, commercial teaching kitchen, and neighborhood center administrative offices.
PCH International Innovation Hub/ San Francisco California	x	x		Fabrication Labs, collaboration space, community gathering and presentation space, communal kitchen

Table 2 is a matrix for comparing how precedents meet the three focus area categories and the specific programs used to meet them. (Source: author)

Eastside Human Services Building in Denver, Colorado

This is a project designed in Denver, Colorado as part of the better Denver bond project who's project is to assist family's in low income neighborhoods through providing them with a variety of social service program. This 54,000 square foot

facility designed by RNL architects includes a series of offices and classrooms with which to accommodate the following programs:³²

- Food stamp application
- Low Income energy assistance
- Family and adult Medicaid eligibility
- Temporary assistance for needy families
- Child Care enrollment
- Child welfare programs
- Work Force development programs.

Figure 11 East Side Human Services Building Ground Floor Plan (source: “East Side Human Services Building/ RNL” Archdaily observed December 13, 2015
<http://www.archdaily.com/267761/eastside-human-services-building-rnl>)

Though it is called a human service building, it is as a community center. This center features program in two of the three focus area categories providing the community with social services for community empowerment as well as having programs specifically aimed towards training and workforce development services (refer to **Table 2**).

³² "Eastside Human Services Building / RNL" 03 Sep 2012. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. <<http://www.archdaily.com/267761/eastside-human-services-building-rnl/>

Sephardic Community Center

The Sephardic Community center by BSKK architects in Brooklyn, New York, originally designed as a cultural center for the Sephardic Community, has grown over time to encompass educational, athletic and social services programs.

Figure 12 Sephardic Community Ground Floor Plan (source: "Sephardic Community Center / BSKK" 29 Oct 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015.

<http://www.archdaily.com/84992/sephardic-community-center-bksk/>)

This 100,000 square foot building features a gym, pool, spa, a 170 student preschool, community meeting spaces, performance space, and a celebratory space open for community use. Interesting aspect of the program is the fact that there are programmed spaces catered to specific age groups ranging from children to senior citizens.³³ Referring back to the precedent analysis matrix, this community center features programs in 2 of the 3 focus area categories, providing for community empowerment through community engagement spaces, and providing specifically programmed areas for the youth to interact with each other as well as their community.

Surry Hills Library and Community Centre

The Surry Hills library and community center designed by FJMT architects, located in Sydney, Australia is known more for its sustainable and innovative design than it is for its program. The interesting aspect of this project is the fact that it was

³³ "Sephardic Community Center / BSKK" 29 Oct 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/84992/sephardic-community-center-bksk/>)

birthed out of close consultation with the community it now forms part of. There was a need for a library, community center, and childcare service center, and rather than creating separate buildings for each of these areas, it was accommodated into one.³⁴ This Surry Hills Library is a hub catered allowing for various levels of community engagement. The design of the building served to empower the community by allowing them to participate as consultants during the process as well as providing spaces catered for learning and early child development meeting two of the categories in **Table 2**.

Figure 13 Surry Hills Library ground floor plan (source: "Surry Hills Library and Community Centre / FJMT" 25 Apr 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. <http://www.archdaily.com/57339/surry-hills-library-and-community-centre-fjmt/>)

PCH International Innovation Hub

Taking cues from Southwest Baltimore's history around workforce development around technological innovation during the industrial revolution, it was important to study a precedent of different nature and not just a community center. PCH International Innovation Hub by ChrDAUER architects is located San Francisco is not a community center but rather a center for product design, manufacturing, and

³⁴ "Surry Hills Library and Community Centre / FJMT" 25 Apr 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/57339/surry-hills-library-and-community-centre-fjmt/>)

distribution. As center for innovation that allows those who participate within it to “ideate, develop, produce, and deliver.”³⁵

Figure 14 PCH International Innovation Hub, (source: "PCH International Innovation Hub / ChrDAUER Architects" 08 Sep 2015. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. <http://www.archdaily.com/773233/pch-international-innovation-hub-chrdauer-architects/>)

The programmatic elements as well as the openness within the plan allows for innovation through providing the workers open space for collaboration as well as providing more private rooms for training and administrative purposes. This Innovation hub has programs that can contribute to community empowerment by providing spaces open for community engagement and collaboration. It can also contribute greatly towards workforce development by providing community members with the training and the tools to use modern technology in fabrication and manufacturing that they can use to gain employment in today's modern industries.

Summary

Using the matrix illustrated in **Table 2** allowed for an analysis of the various precedents listed above with regards to areas of focus that are necessary for addressing the needs of Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods. As previously stated, no community center is the same, and vary widely based on the needs of the specific community it is trying to address. None of the precedents studied, met all the programmatic needs for the Southwest community, but rather provided good examples for programmatic implementation in at least two of the three areas of focus

³⁵ "PCH International Innovation Hub / ChrDAUER Architects" 08 Sep 2015. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/773233/pch-international-innovation-hub-chrdauer-architects/>)

listen in the previous section. Given this discovery, it was apparent that the design of one community center within the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods could not begin to address all the issues that the community faces. It is necessary to implement a series of anchor institutions, which would work as a variation of a community center, individually focusing on tackling specific issues, and collectively working on catalyzing and unifying the community as a whole.

Section 3: Architectural Program

Using the programmatic examples yielded from the precedent analysis in the previous section, this thesis will formulate a list of programmable spaces for the development of three Southwest Community anchors.

Program Organization

In order to categorize the program more efficiently it was necessary to organize program based on activity than using the focus areas. When organizing program using the focus areas, there was notable degree of overlap between community empowerment, workforce development, and youth opportunity and development. This is not a negative, as it demonstrates how the focus areas can work together to achieve the revitalization of the Southwest neighborhoods, but given this large degree of overlap, the program will be better understood when categorizing them based on activities that work together rather than areas of focus. The activities are what lead to the realization of the focus areas. The activity categories are as follows:

- Southwest Baltimore Library and Community Hub

- Southwest Baltimore Recreation Center
- Southwest Baltimore Workshop and Training Center

These categories listed above are the anchor institutions that will form the basis for selecting activities that will support the Southwest Baltimore focus areas and initiatives.

Southwest Baltimore Library and Community Hub

This category is focused on developing programs around improving the quality of community engagement, interactions and education in Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods through providing the community with spaces for engagement and interaction as well as, providing centralized access to resources. These spaces include:

- Library for centralized access to resources and information
- Early Learning Center to prepare the minds of young children for success in school and in life
- Computer & Digital Fabrication Lab for addressing community needs such as training, schoolwork, applying for jobs, and various other educational uses as well as allowing for learning innovative ways to use modern technologies for designing and fabrication
- Community Engagement Spaces for community's to host outreach and informational meetings. It is also meant as a place where community can come together and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis.

- Social Services is aimed at providing the community with centralized access to basic services such as job application, application for health insurance, and providing assistance and counseling to families in need

Southwest Baltimore Recreation Center

This anchor is aimed at providing the youth primarily with a place for recreating afterschool, and on weekends, and be engaged in fun, entertaining, and productive leisurely activities, that will dissuade them from getting involved in less than favorable criminal activity. It is also to be another location for community engagement and interaction. Some spaces to be included are

- Gymnasium for indoor sports and recreational activities
- Indoor pool, for all year swim based recreational activities and sporting events
- Café for communal gathering as well as providing additional source of revenue to support facility needs
- Outdoor recreation spaces such as courts for outdoor sporting activities, and gardens for therapy and growing of local produce.

Southwest Baltimore Workshop & Training Center

This category is aimed at providing a venue for workforce development and training. Partnering up with local training programs and institutions in order to create a centralized training center for community members to gain the skills and tools necessary to attain employment. The support spaces could include:

- Workshop spaces for training of various fields from construction to cosmetology
- Studio spaces for startups
- Gallery space for exhibiting, promoting and selling work produced by community members

Summary

The finalized program illustrated in **Table 3** below, lists the activity category and the support spaces needed for each category. Birthed out of an in-depth study of the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods history and people the following program form the “Catalysts” that will help trigger a chain reaction for the revitalization of Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods and Baltimore City as a whole. These programs are the internal organs crucial to the success of these catalysts within the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods.

LOCATION	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EMPOWERMENT	AREA SQFT	YOUTH OPPORTUNITY & DEVELOPMENT	AREA SQFT	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	AREA SQFT	TOTAL AREA SQFT
SOWEBO LIBRARY & COMMUNITY HUB	ASSEMBLY SPACE/ COMMUNITY HALL	7,500	EARLY LEARNING CENTER	6,500	TEACHING KITCHEN	1,500	
	EXHIBIT GALLERY/ PRENTATION SPACE	2,500			CLASSROOMS (3)	3,000	
	CAFETERIA	2,000			COMPUTER LAB	2,500	
	INFO CENTER	500					
	LIBRARY (READING ROOMS & STACKS)	15,000					
	OFFICES (15-20)	3000					
	TOTAL	30,500		6,500		7,000	44,000
SOWEBO RECREATION CENTER	COMMUNITY LOUNGE	2,000	GAME ROOM	2,750			
	SOCIAL HUB	3,000	INDOOR GYM	8,000			
	INTERNET CAFÉ	1,500	EXERCISE ROOM	2,000			
	MEETING ROOMS	2,500	EARLY LEARNING CENTER	6,500			
	COMMUNITY GARDEN	5000	OUTDOOR TENNIS COURTS	4,000			
	TOTAL	14,000		23,250			37,250
SOWEBO WORKSHOP & TRAINING CENTER	EXHIBITION SPACE	5,000	DAY CARE	3,500	WOOD SHOP	3,000	
	CAFETERIA	3,000			OFFICE/ STUDIO SPACE	14,000	
	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	500			FABRICATION LAB	3,000	
					HEAVY EQUIP. ROOM	2,500	
					RECYCLED MATERIAL ROOM	1,500	
	TOTAL	8,500		3,500		24,000	36,000

Table 3 illustrates the program elements needed for the design of the Southwest Baltimore Community Center summarizing the activity categories, support spaces and spatial needs. (Source: author)

Chapter 4: Site Selection and Analysis

Section 1: Selecting a Site

Given the program illustrated above in Table 3, it was necessary to take a “divide and conquer strategy”, in order to tactfully insert these programs in three sites that would work together to unify the neighborhoods and tackle the issues discovered from different angles. By doing this it will allow for a greater impact within the community.

In order to select the sites that would best accommodate these new anchor institutions and its program it is essential to establish a set of parameters that can be used as a filter during the site selection process. Given the large amount of vacancy present in Southwest Baltimore it provides a wide variety of opportunities in terms of places to implement this project. The success of this facility and its program as a Catalyst however is dependent on its location. Its location will be determined based on using the following parameters:

- Location in relation to people
- Location in relation to schools and other educational facilities
- Location in relation to transit
- Accessibility and walkability

In order this project to become a fruitful effort; it is critical that it be accessible to the people and the schools. Given that most of the members of the neighborhood walk and or take public transit it is important that the site is accessible, walkable and have good connection to transit.

Mapping Exercise

To begin selecting a site, it is important to begin by mapping the location of the following layers:

- Schools: due to the fact that there is strong educational component it is necessary to identify the existing education facilities the community center will be partnering with.



Figure 15 Map of schools (source: author)

- People: understanding where the people are, is important for the selection of a site that will be accessible to its residents.



Figure 16 Map of the location density of people in relation to vacancy (Source: author)

- Transportation: understanding public transit is important in order to serve the larger community



Figure 17 Baltimore metro bus and charm city circulator routes and stops (source: author)

- New developments: mapping new developments is important in order to select a site that will not conflict with current projects that have been approved

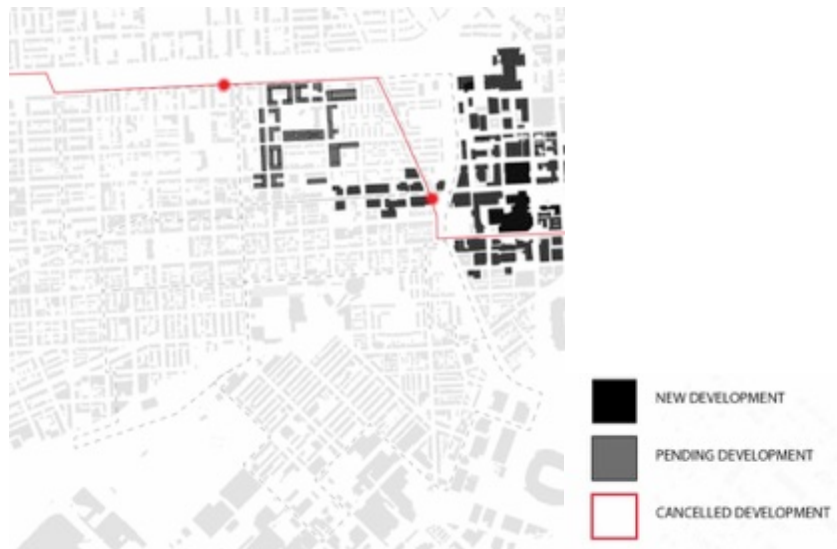


Figure 18 Map of new, proposed, and cancelled development. (Source: author)

- Anchor institutions: the anchor institutions are the partners in the Southwest Baltimore revitalization effort and it is important to map their location due to the fact they form part of the assets and strengths the community has



Figure 19 Map of anchor institutions. (Source: author)

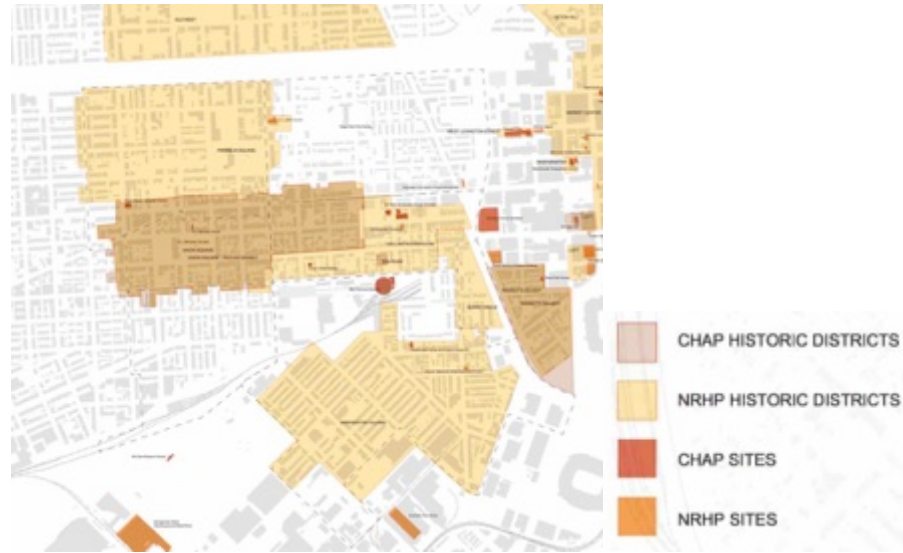


Figure 22 Map of historic sites and designation. (Source: author)

Section 2: Overlay and Synthesis

Taking from the information gathered through the mapping exercise in order to analyze the information in a way that would yield potential site options it was necessary to overlay the maps to arrive at a conclusion. The image below illustrates the process of looking at all the information together, choosing potential sites based on their location to the various layers extracted during the mapping process and relating back to the whole by drawing major connections. Based on this site analysis three sites were selected due to the promise they show for implementing the catalyst within the communities based on the list of parameters.



Figure 23 Overlay synthesis map. (Source: author)



Figure 24 Map of potential sites & master plan boundary (source: author)



Figure 25 Map of potential sites and major connections to the Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods and Baltimore city. (Source: author)

Section 3: Site Analysis

Now that three sites have been narrowed down, it is important to peel back to layers and analyze the three sites side by side. It is also necessary to re-filter the sites through the list of parameters used for site selection, in order to have a basis by which to carefully examine each site, and provide evidence and reasoning for site selection and insertion of the three anchor institutions to be developed.

The Sites

Site 1 is a western site located in the Franklin Square neighborhood. It consists of a practically empty city block with a couple of existing condemned vacant buildings that are slated for demolition. As noted in the previous chapters, Franklin Square is one of the neighborhoods in Southwest Baltimore that suffers from disinvestment and the majority of its housing stock is in decay. This site is located along Baltimore Street, the historic business corridor and one of the major connectors

to the abutting southwest neighborhoods and the Baltimore city center. This site could serve as a western anchor to the Southwest neighborhoods and with the implementation of a “community catalyst” can potentially spark revitalization, investment and economic growth.

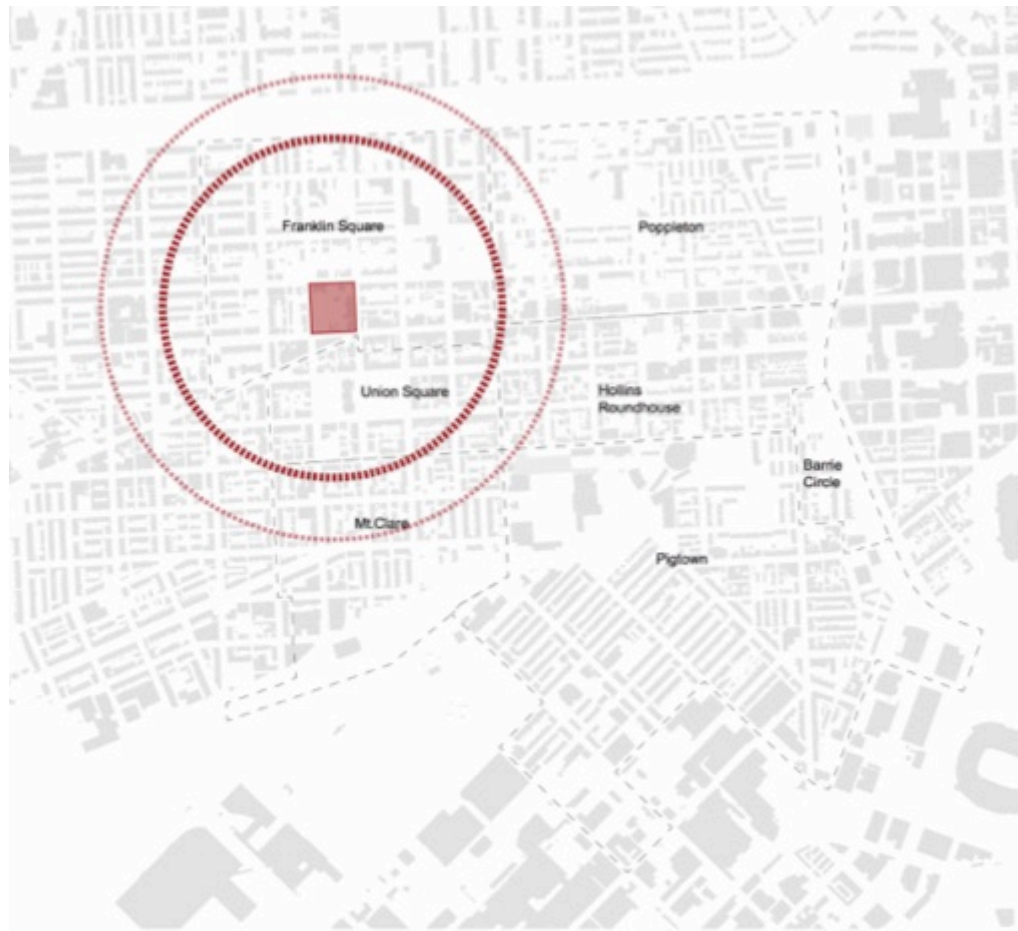


Figure 26 Diagram of *Site 1* with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods. (Source: author)

Site 2 is centrally located in the heart of the Southwest Baltimore neighborhood. Located in the Hollins Roundhouse district, it builds off of the current

strengths that is the Hollins Market district and offers the prospect of establishing this social and business center into a vibrant and thriving community hub. With one building worth saving, the Hollins Market site presents the opportunity for adaptively reusing an existing vacant historic building and drawing direct connections to the historic market building.



Figure 27 Map of *Site 2* with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods. (Source: author)

Site 3 is centrally located in the heart of the Southwest Baltimore neighborhood. A little southeast of *Site 2* and located in the Hollins Roundhouse

district, it builds off of the current strengths that is the Hollins Market district. In the location of this site there is an existing vacant warehouse building, which presents the opportunity for adaptively reusing an existing vacant historic building.



Figure 28 Map of *Site 3* with an inner 1/4-mile radius distance circle and an outer 1/3-mile radius circle to illustrate walkability and accessibility to the other southwest neighborhoods.

(Source: author)

Three Site analysis

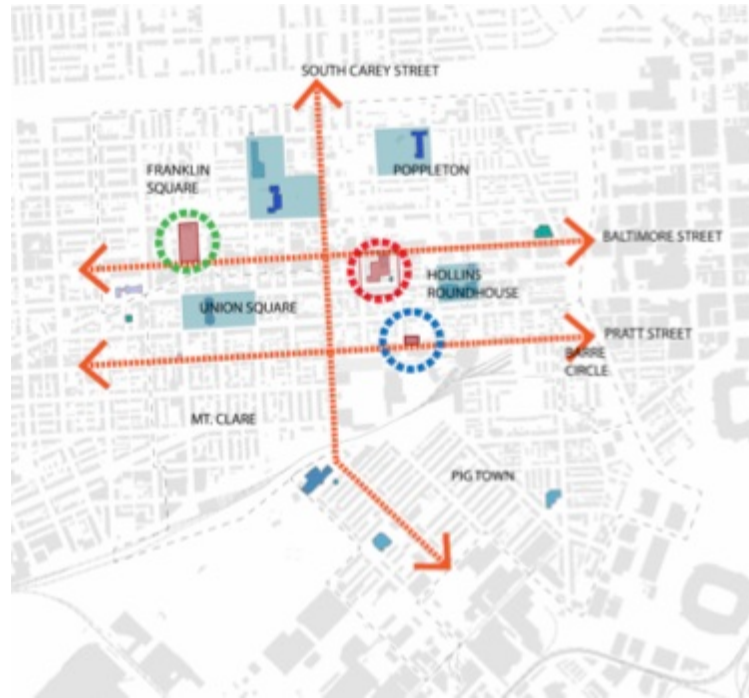


Figure 29 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to schools (source: author)

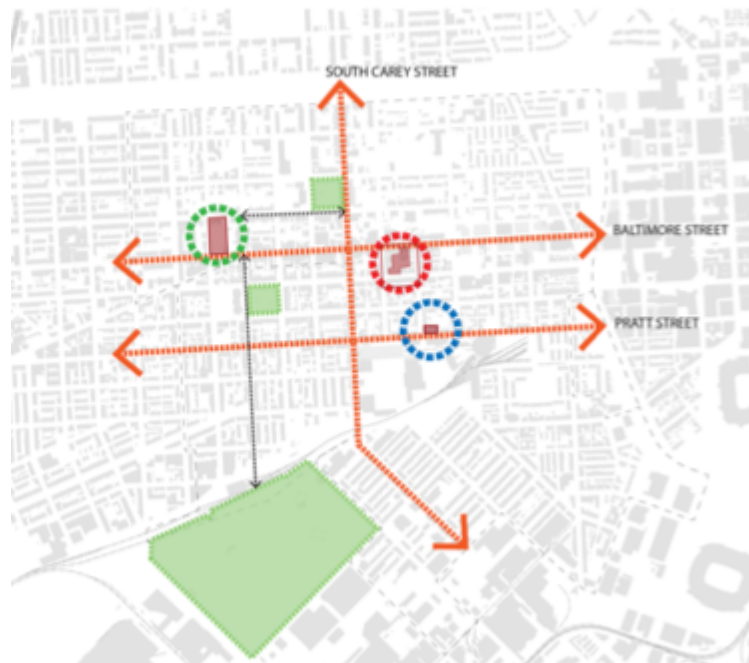


Figure 30 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to public amenities. (Source: author)

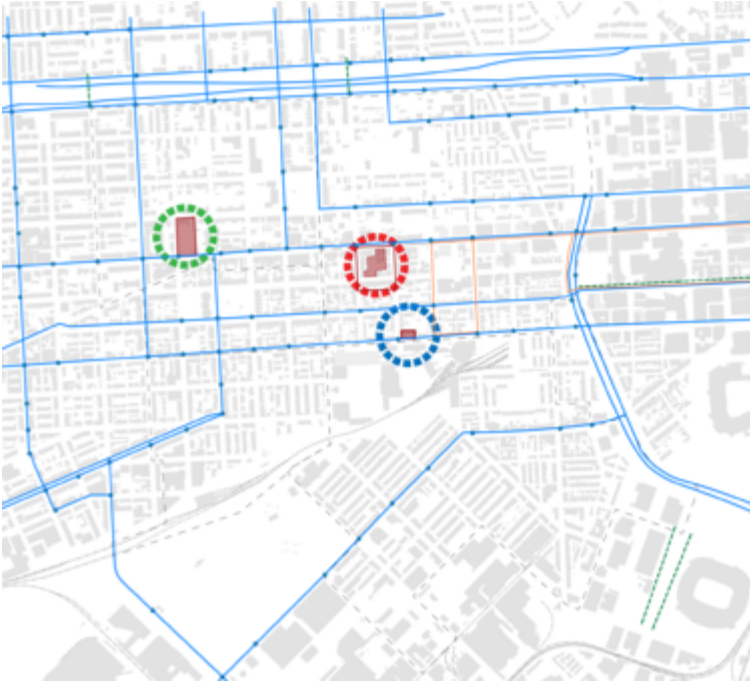


Figure 31 Diagram overlay of all three sites in relation to public transit. (Source: author)

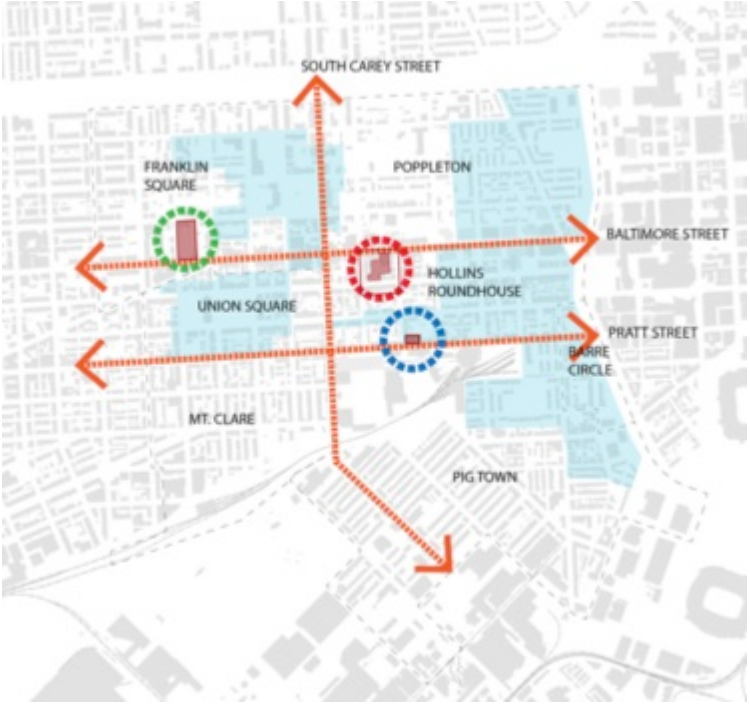


Figure 32 Diagram overlay of the three sites in relation to density of people. (Source: author)

Site Analysis Summary

After re-filtering the sites through the site analysis process by using diagrammatic overlays there are advantages and disadvantages present in both sites. *Site 1* offers great connections to the Union Square, and Mt. Clare neighborhoods of southwest but offer less than favorable connections to the 4 remaining neighborhoods. It has good connections to about half the schools in southwest, but offer direct connection through major public streets. It is has favorable connections to density of people and has direct access to public transit. Its location can be a potential disadvantage when it comes to accessibility and walkability from the other neighborhoods and schools. However, its location to public amenities and schools makes it an excellent candidate for the placement of the Southwest Baltimore Recreation Center

Site 2 offers great connections to the majority of schools, densities and people. It has favorable connections to the majority of the southwest neighborhoods and public transit. The disadvantage to this site is that it is located in an already existing community hub not affording for much room to grow and requires working closely with local business owners to create a design sensitive to their spatial needs. It also offers less of a direct connection to parks and potential recreational spaces. However, being located at the heart of the Southwest Baltimore communities, and how accessible it is to people, schools, and transit makes it an excellent candidate for the placement of the Southwest Baltimore Library and Community Hub

Site 3 offers great connections to people, transit, and some schools. It however does not afford good connection to major public amenities. The fact that there is already a workable existing, vacant factory building on site, allows for the possibility of an adaptive reuse project that would comfortably fit the programmatic needs of the Southwest Baltimore Community Workshop & Training Center. Also its location with regards to *Site 2* allows for it to be used as a direct extension of the Southwest Baltimore Community Hub.

In conclusion, after seeing the benefits that all of the sites had to offer, *Site 2* stuck out as the most central, offering great access to people, schools, transportation, and public amenities. That being said, though this thesis continues with the mission of the three site approach, given that *Site 2* is in such a central location offers allows for the opportunity of developing that site in particular as the mother ship, and the other two sites, *Sites 1 & 3*, though ideally to be developed with *Site 2* for this triangulation of activity, and division of program to be successful, will be treated as satellite sites. *Site 2* will serve as the main community Hub. *Site 1 & 3* will offer programmable spaces as seen in **Table 3** that differ from *Site 2*, but all three will have program that focus on the three main focus areas, community engagement and empowerment, workforce development, and youth opportunity and development.



Figure 33 Diagram of the triangulation of the three sites with Site 2, the location selected for the Southwest Baltimore community, as the mother ship and the other two sites (Site 1: Recreation Center, Site 2: Workshop & training) as the satellites (source: author)

Chapter 5: Catalyst Design & Development

Section 1: The Master Plan

Existing Conditions

After having digested all of the social, political and economic issues that exist within Baltimore, moving into design it was necessary to look at the existing urban context. When analyzing the Southwest Baltimore neighborhood at the urban scale you will find an inactive commercial corridor that needs to be revitalized. The issue of vacancy at the macro scale is a big one, and one that needs to be addressed. Also when analyzing the Baltimore street corridor, the street as it is currently designed, is not conducive for a pleasant pedestrian experience. There is an overall lack of street trees, and the storefronts tend to be very closed off, creating a visual wall that does not allow for pedestrians to engage with them.

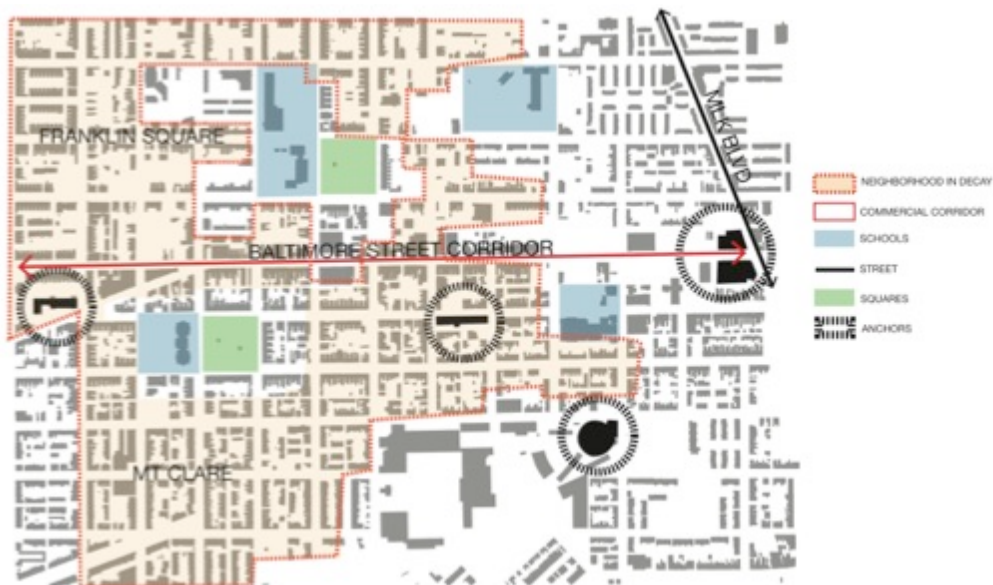


Figure 34 Diagram of existing conditions (source: author)

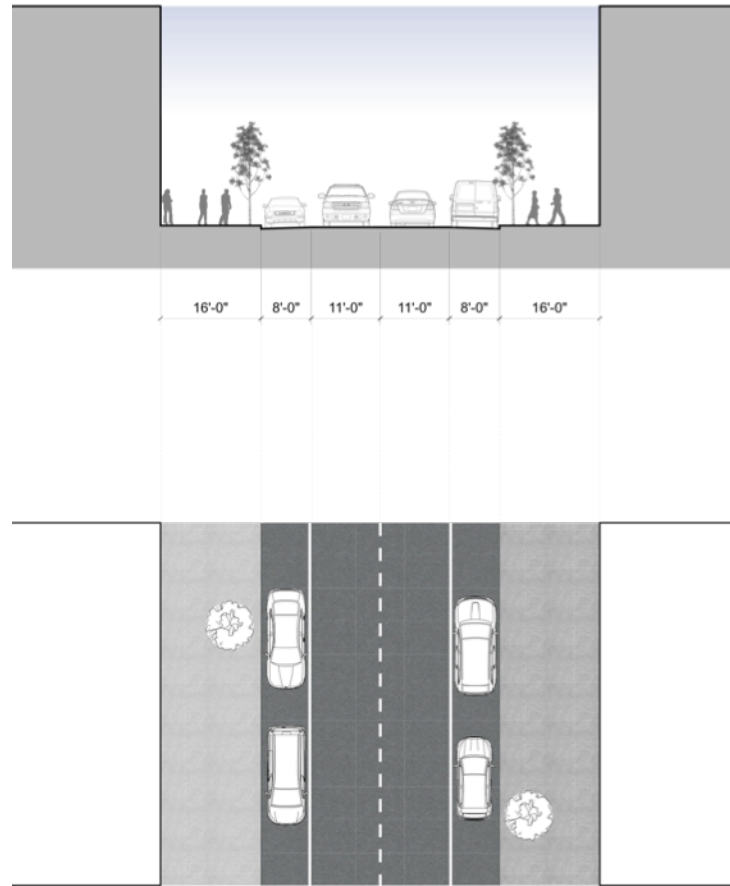


Figure 35 Existing street section and plan (source: author)

Proposal

After having done site analysis, and arriving at the three sites, the overall goal of the master plan is to unify and connect the new three anchor institutions proposed for development, with the rest of the community. It is geared towards building on strengths, and expanding on them. The master planning strategies are as follows.

- Emphasizing Baltimore Street Corridor and South Arlington Avenue as direct links from one anchor institution to the next through signage and other way finding techniques

- Activate storefronts along Baltimore Street and implement new street plantings for a nicer pedestrian experience (see **Figure 37**).
- Reduce two lanes of parking to just one lane, and introduce two bike lanes, for protected and safe riding along heavily transited streets such as Baltimore Street and Pratt Street (see **Figure 37**).



Figure 36 Proposed Master plan (source: author)

Summary

In short, the goal of the master plan is to introduce these 3 new anchor institutions that begin to build on and link to existing anchor institutions noted on **Figure 37**. By doing this we are not only building on the existing strengths of the anchor institutions that already exist and introducing new ones as a way of unifying and expanding on this strength, but it will also help catalyze investment and development along these major arteries such as Baltimore Street, and begin to

increase and centralize community assets. By expanding and centralizing community assets in order to make it accessible to the community will help build on the economic viability of these neighborhoods for development and also strengthen social ties within the residents. The reactivating of storefronts with the introduction of new local business and stores will reinvigorate and breath back the life that has been lost along Baltimore Street, and make it the thriving commercial corridor that it once was. Finally by removing a lane of parking and in turn, introduce, new street planting and bike lane, will allow for not only an much nicer pedestrian experience along a major thoroughfare but also create a way for bikers to safely travel from one anchor institution to another.

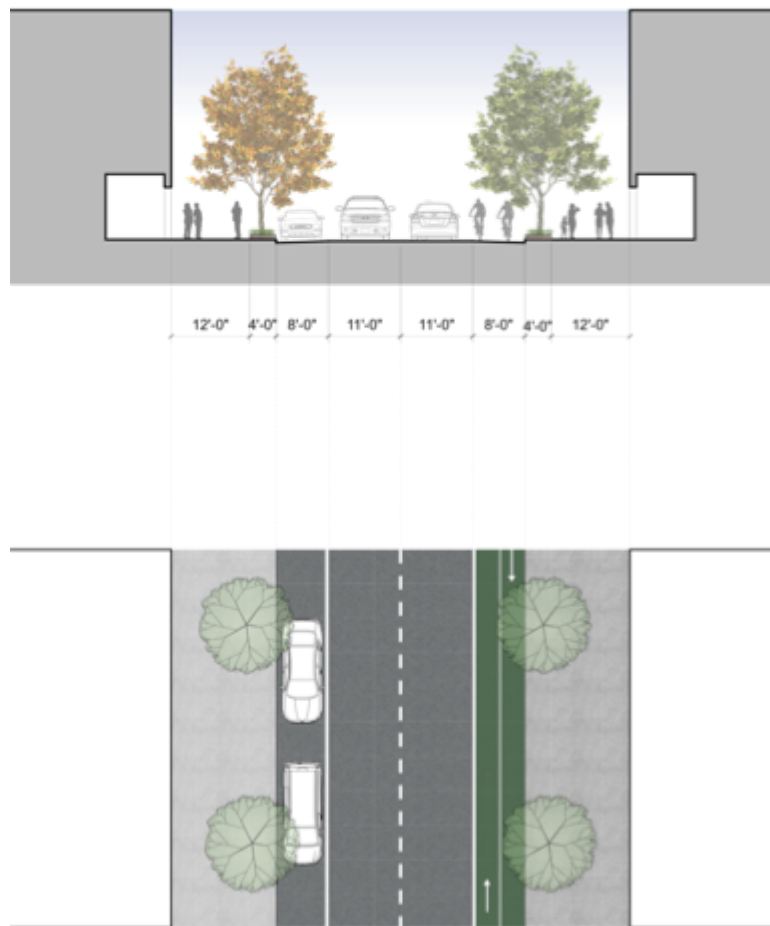


Figure 37 Proposed Street Section (source: author)

Section 2: The SOWEBO Library and Community Hub

In this thesis we will focus on the design of the SOWEBO (Southwest Baltimore) Library and Community Hub, due to the fact that it is to be the mother ship, of the other two satellite sites. The term SOWEBO was chosen in lieu of using Southwest Baltimore, due to the fact that this is what the residents used to identify their neighborhood.

Existing Conditions

Site 2, as mentioned previously, is located in the Hollins Roundhouse neighborhood. It is an urban infill site. The site as it exists currently is comprised of mostly commercial & retail buildings, with some residential buildings starting to appear as you move south. Vehicular circulation occurs along Baltimore Street to the north (runs east to west), South Carrollton to the west (runs north to south) and South Arlington Avenue to the east (runs north to south). There are also alley streets that cut through the site and though meant for services such as trash pick up, are currently used by pedestrians as midblock shortcut connectors from Baltimore Street (north of site) and Hollins street (south of site). This site is also located directly north of Hollins Market, which is a food market that is currently servicing community members, and the primary site for the SOWEBO Arts festival, and other major community events that happen annually on Hollins Street. The northwestern quadrant of the Site has buildings that are currently condemned and are going to be torn down, and at the center of the site are two parking lots, which for the most part are underutilized.



Figure 38 Site boundary (source: author)



Figure 39 Existing uses diagram (source: author)



Figure 40 Circulation Diagram (source: author)



Figure 41 Existing Conditions Diagram (source: author)

Methodology

This thesis is really aimed at taking the issues at both a social and urban level and finding ways to help resolve them through the use of architectural design. That being said, having discovered that one of the main issues is that there is an overall lack of community engagement & empowerment, it was important to find ways architecturally to enhance community engagement & empowerment at both a social level and at an urban level.

Looking back at the current forms of circulation that exist on site, the midblock alley streets are quite striking, because it is an example of how though meant for service, has taken on a different character based on the way the community uses it as another form of pedestrian circulation. Looking at the broader context of how people interact and behave in Baltimore city as a whole, you will begin to see people communing on their stoops, and alleyways. These moments that are meant as merely service take on a new life, one of community based on the residents and how they use it. These elements mentioned are the basis by which the design of the SOWEBO Library & Community Hub is based on, which is that of creating a microcosmic environment based on the daily social, and urban interactions of the residents.

Design Process

The design process began by taking the alley streets and internalizing them. By doing this, it would create a way by which not only to organize the program around, but as a way to link and extend back into the urban context. The program was

organized in four major categories, education, engagement, social services, and recreation. The education component makes up all educational programmed spaces such as the library, computer and digital fabrication labs, and classrooms. The engagement component relates to community spaces for fostering social interactions such as assembly spaces, meeting rooms, and café space. Social services include offices for both the Southwest Partnership and other community leading organizations, as well as providing offices for people who can aid community members in things like family counseling, getting food stamps, enrolling children in day care, etc. Recreation is really aimed at creating external spaces where the community can gather, recreate, and host events.

The placement and organization of this program is crucial to the success of this institution, and so it was important to organize the program in such a way that not only allows for internal interaction between them, but also really reach out to the community and draw them in. The way this was done was by placing the library at the corner of Baltimore Street & South Arlington, really making a presence and a statement about education. Secondly, the communal café was located along Hollins street facing Hollins market, making a statement about food and community. At the intersection of the two internalized alley streets is the community forum, meant to be the location for all community meetings. At the termination of the east west alley, Booth Street, and running parallel to South Carlton Street, is a new community Garden courtyard that is meant to open up and receive people from both the communal café and the community forum.



Figure 42 Parti Diagram (source: author)

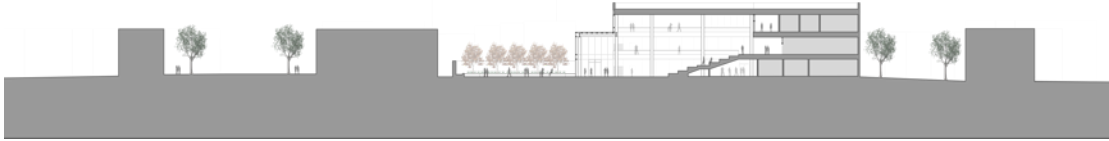
Proposal

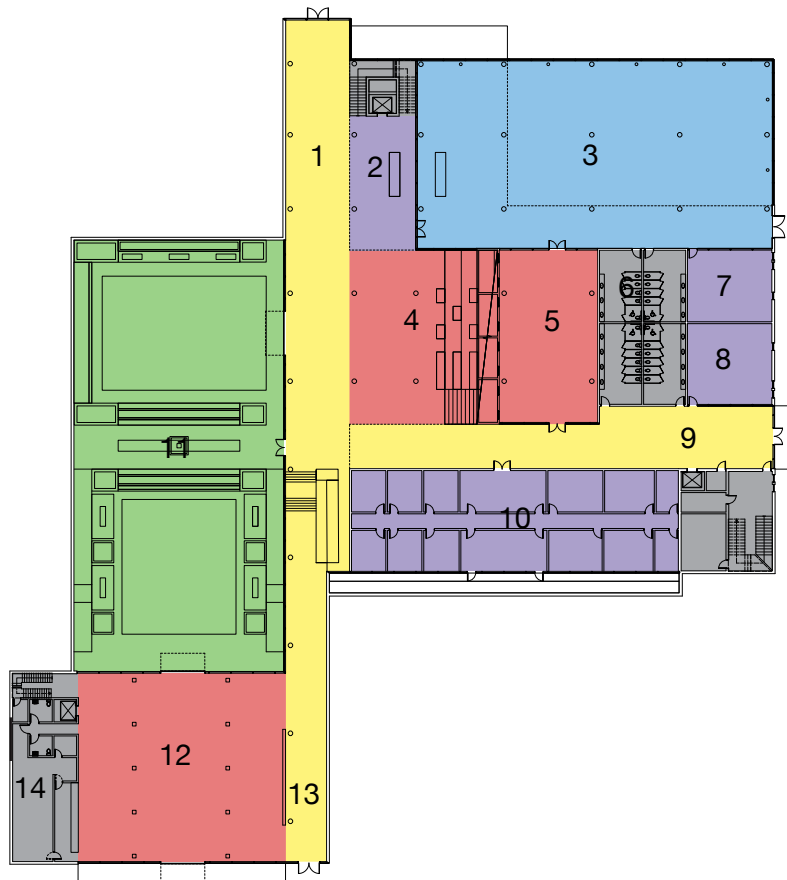
The design of the SOWEBO Community center is one based on maximizing the level of community engagement and interaction. Located at the heart of the Southwest neighborhoods the community center aims at providing residents with educational and social resources necessary for community empowerment. The site as it exist is one which offers a potential for creating a real destination for the residents, with the historic Hollins market to the south and Baltimore street to the north, this site allows for linking the future strength of Baltimore street as a commercial corridor with Hollins market. Taking South Carlton and Booth Street currently mid block streets and internalizing them within the community center created an inner street by

which to organize program. At the intersection of these two streets is the community forum where community meetings will be held. Starting with this forum at the center, designed to be a platformed grand stair case for ample seating all other programmatic elements are placed around it, meant to resemble Baltimore city stoop culture, with the intent that no matter where you may be in the building or what you may be doing you are always aware of what is going on and are invited to participate with the community. With education being a key issue, a new library to be an extension of the Enoch Pratt library system is placed at the corner of Baltimore Street and South Arlington Avenue anchoring itself and making a statement about the importance of education within the community. Along Hollins Street, marking the southern entry is the cafe. Intended to not only to be part of the community center, it is also intended to work as an extension and build on the vibrancy that currently exists in Hollins Market. At the terminus of the east west access there is to be an internal courtyard. This courtyard is meant to serve as an extension of the major community spaces and provide a peaceful inner block Garden. Divided as an upper and lower garden, the upper is intended to open up and be an extension of the public forum where the lower courtyard is intended to be an extension of Hollins street and the cafe. The first floor also houses administrative office and social services officers for social workers, community leaders, in order to centralize access to social services and resources and strengthen social ties within the community. The upper levels consists of classrooms, computer and digital fabrication lab, bonus meeting rooms an early learning center intended to provide much needed assistance to working families as well as prepare kids for school at a young age.



Figure 43 Proposed Site Plan with corresponding site cross section below (source: author)





FLOOR 1

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. SOUTH CARLTON ENTRY | 9. BOOTH STREET ENTRY |
| 2. RECEPTION | 10. SOCIAL SERVICES |
| 3. LIBRARY | 11. COURTYARD |
| 4. COMMUNITY FORUM | 12. CAFE |
| 5. MEETING ROOM | 13. HOLLINS STREET ENTRY |
| 6. RESTROOMS | 14. KITCHEN |
| 7. LIBRARY STAFF OFFICE | |
| 8. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE | |

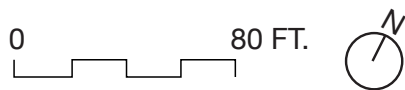
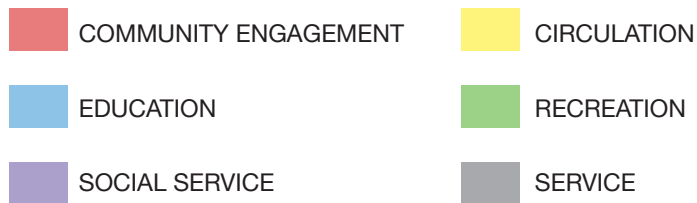
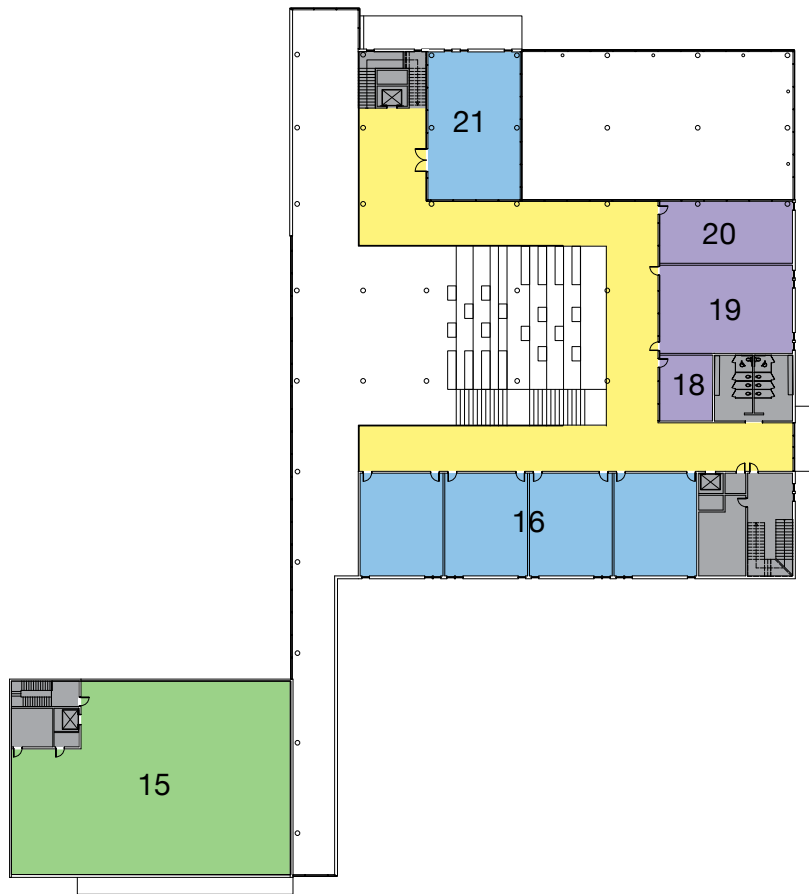


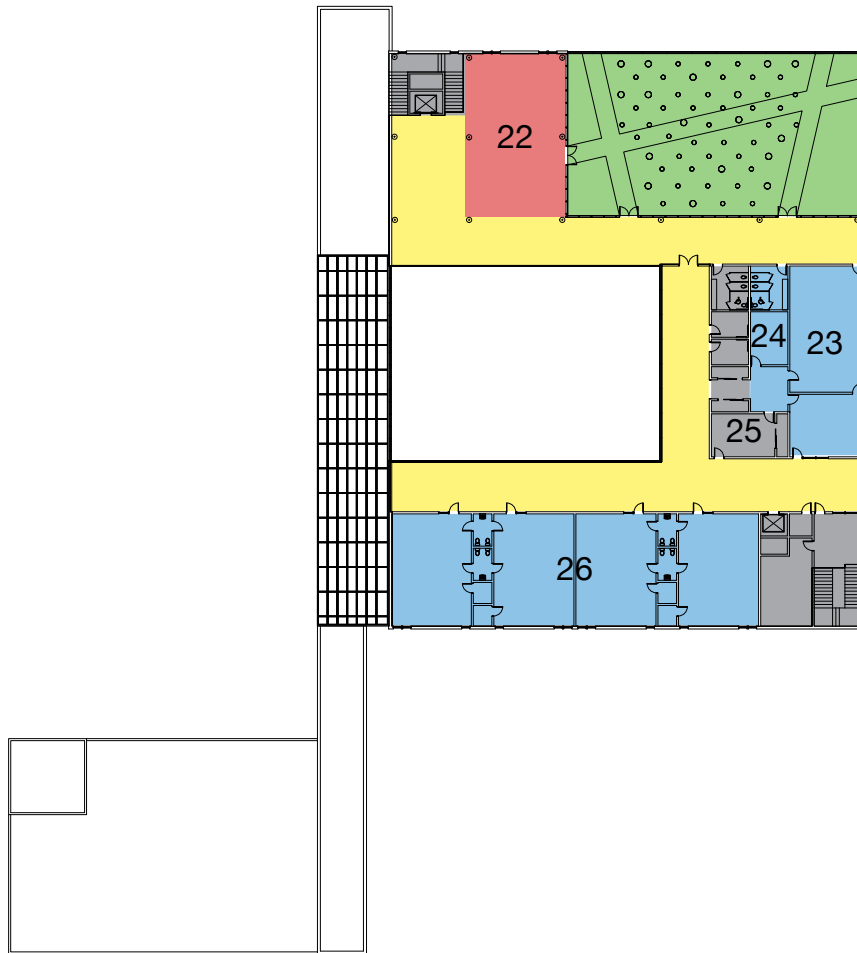
Figure 44 First floor plan diagram (source: author)



FLOOR 2

- 15. ACCESSIBLE ROOFTOP
- 16. CLASSROOMS
- 18. SENIOR ROOM
- 19. MEETING ROOM
- 20. YOUTH ROOM
- 21. COMPUTER / DIGITAL FABRICATION LAB

Figure 45 Second floor plan diagram (source: author)



FLOOR 3

- 22. COMMUNITY LOUNGE/ FLEX SPACE
- 23. DAY CARE STAFF OFFICES/ BREAK ROOM
- 24. NURSES OFFICE
- 25. KITCHEN
- 26. CLASS ROOMS

Figure 46 Third floor plan diagram (source: author)

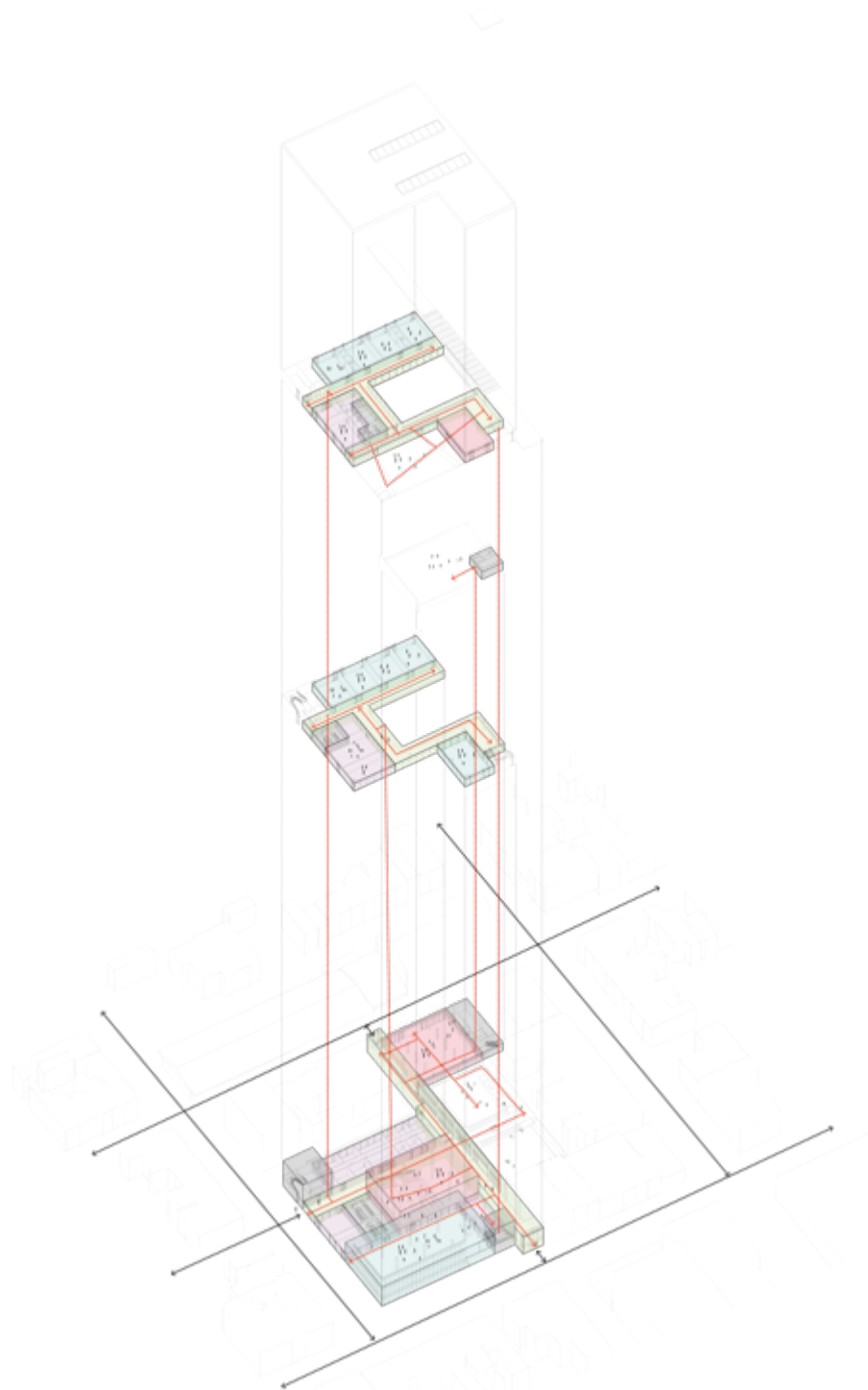


Figure 47 Exploded axon diagram showing layering of spaces (source: author)

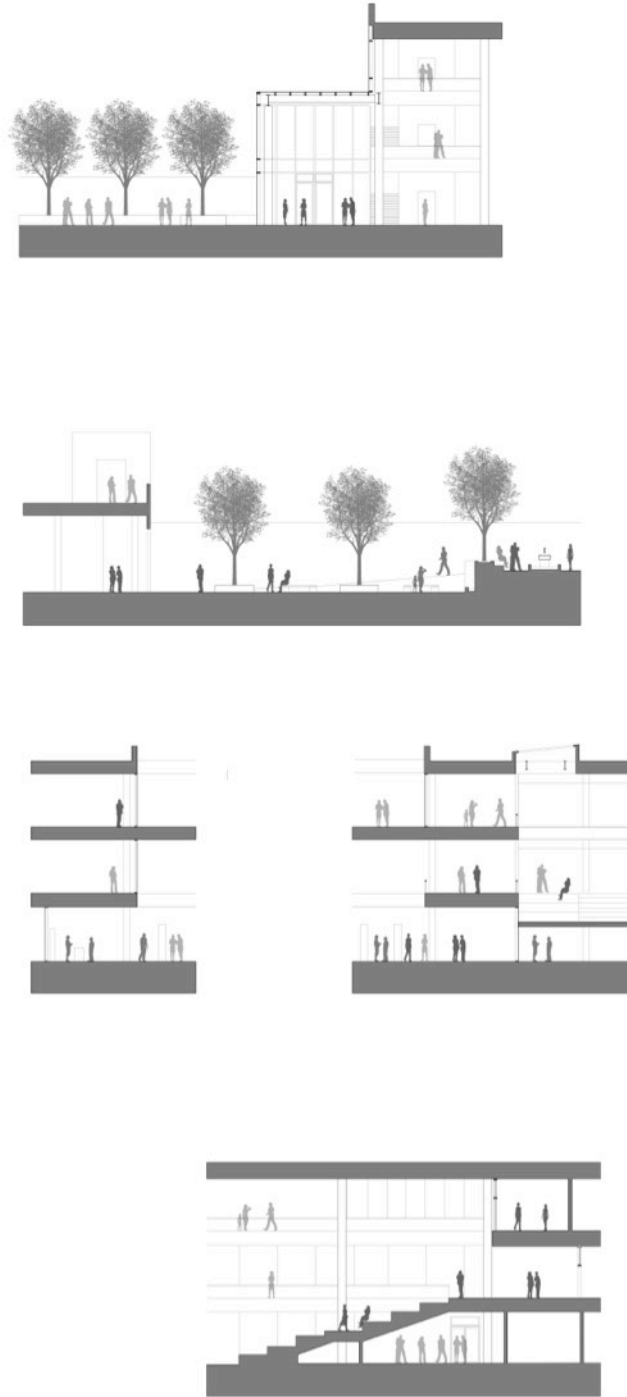


Figure 48 Sectional Diagrams showing how spaces interact and overlap internally (source: author)

The exterior is designed in such a way that the most public spaces are open and visibly interactive and engaging from the street approach, through the use of an expansive butt glaze curtain wall system, in order to draw people in based on the activities that are going on within the building. The semi-public and private spaces are less open, but use alternating floor to ceiling windows, which still provide privacy, but allow for views, and ample daylight to filter the interior spaces.



Figure 49 Approach from intersection Baltimore Street & South Arlington Avenue (source: author)



Figure 50 Approach from Hollins Street (source: author)



Figure 51 Perspective down South Carlton Street (source: author)



Figure 52 Perspective of South Carlton Street and Community Forum (source: author)



Figure 53 Library (source: author)



Figure 54 Café (source: author)



Figure 55 Rooftop play space (source: author)



Figure 56 Community Stoop with views to courtyard (source: author)



Figure 57 Courtyard (source: author)

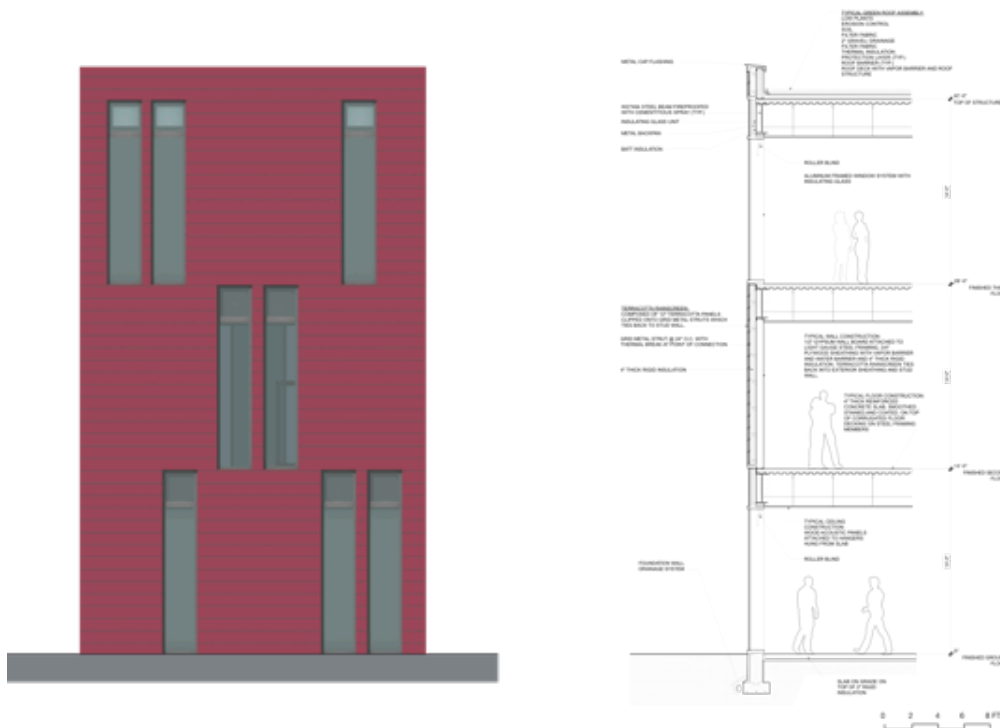


Figure 60 Partial elevation & wall section detail of terracotta wall system design (source: author)

The material quality of this building is one that pulls from the Baltimore context of brick row houses, but with a contemporary twist. Terracotta rain screens are used in lieu of brick walls, which allows for the essence of the Baltimore row house context to still exist, but with a much simpler modern twist. The red color used is an exaggeration of the brick coloring, and is meant to make a bold statement, that leaves a lasting impression on one's memory and experience.

Section 3: Reflection

This thesis explored ways in which to design for inner city neighborhoods that are in decay. There is a very real issue today, where most politicians, investors, and developers, look at these blighted areas as crime ridden, eyesores to their beautiful

city, and focus their attention on developing other locations, where areas that are considered slums, or the areas you don't go to in the city, are filled with people who matter and are currently lacking the resources, and investment necessary in their community to survive. The current proposals are, and have been to tear down vacant buildings as a way to remove crime, but in reality all it does is leave an empty space and displace the crime elsewhere. The traditional way of solving problems have been through removal and displacement, but here the proposal is to tactfully insert program that aims at solving the issues and not displacing them.

The intent and goal of this community center is to provide centralized access to resources, create an environment for social interaction and engagement among people of all ages, backgrounds, and cultures, in order to strengthen social ties among residents and empower the community to rise above their present circumstances and become a vibrant, happy, healthy community of residents who are positively contributing to the much needed change their neighborhoods need.



Figure 61 Aerial View of SOWEBO Library & Community Hub (Source: author)

Bibliography

Southwest Partnership, "Southwest Partnership Vision Plan", accessed May, 18, 2016, (<http://southwestpartnershipbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Southwest-Partnership-Vision-Plan-.pdf>)

"Catalyst Definition" Merriam-Webster Incorporated, accessed Oct. 28, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/catalyst>

"Social Justice", National Association of Social Workers, accessed Oct. 28, 2015, <http://www.naswdc.org/pressroom/features/issue/peace.asp>

University of Maryland School of Architecture Planning and Preservation Graduate Program in Historic Preservation Studio Fall 2014 "West Baltimore Street Toolkit for Commercial Revitalization" (University of Maryland, 2014)

Gladycy Helene Bradley, "The Education of Negroes in Maryland", (The Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 16, No. 3 Summer 1947)

Diane W. Cipallone, "Gambling on a Settlement: the Baltimore City Schools Adequacy Litigations" (School of Finance Litigation, University of Illinois Press, summer 1998)

Ralph B. Taylor and Jeanette Covington, "Community Structural Change and the Fear of Crime" vol. 40, No.3 (Oxford University Press, Aug 1993)

"Organizational History" Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative observed December 13, 2014, (<http://www.dsni.org/dsni-historic-timeline/>)

Lerner, Jamie. Translated by Margolis Mac, Peter Muello, and Daher Ariadne "Urban Acupuncture" (Island Press, 2014)

Lyndon, Mike and Garcia, Anthony. "Tactical Urbanism" (Island Press, 2015)

"Community Center" Dictionary.com observed December 13, 2015 (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/community-center>)

"Eastside Human Services Building / RNL" 03 Sep 2012. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/267761/eastside-human-services-building-rnl/>)

"Sephardic Community Center / BKSK" 29 Oct 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/84992/sephardic-community-center-bksk/>)

"Surry Hills Library and Community Centre / FJMT" 25 Apr 2010. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/57339/surry-hills-library-and-community-centre-fjmt/>)

"PCH International Innovation Hub / ChrDAUER Architects" 08 Sep 2015. ArchDaily. Accessed 14 Dec 2015. (<http://www.archdaily.com/773233/pch-international-innovation-hub-chrdauer-architects/>)