Abstract: Making Cities Liveable Conference 2013

Sustainable Community Design Strategies in the USA

This paper adds to the body of work that examines case studies and best practices that successfully implement sustainable development strategies at the neighborhood or community scale. It seeks to examine new approaches to sustainable community development that are integrative in nature and exhibit a wide range of sustainable urban design strategies including: energy savings, environmental and water conservation, greenhouse gas emission reductions, recycling, waste management, economy and cultural responsiveness.

The paper provides a geographic cross-section of exemplary sustainably designed communities in the three regions of the U.S.: the West, the Midwest, and the South. Thus, it will discuss innovative strides being made to achieve a more sustainable urban form in: Civano, Arizona (West region), Prairie Crossing, Illinois (Midwest Region) and Glenwood Park, Georgia (South region). Some of these “success stories” are documented and promoted through a vehicle of a United Nations conference, Habitat II, by way of the Best Practices and Local Leadership Network.

The methodological framework for the study employs primarily a case study method as a research strategy in order to describe the emerging trends and approaches of sustainable community design and management practices at the community scale and the neighborhood scale.

The paper will characterize the major design and planning elements of the project. It will identify the range of goals established for the project by the different stakeholders and project partners, and examine the processes by which they moved towards these goals. It will also elaborate on the quality of the outcomes in achieving a range of sustainable urban development strategies. Finally, the paper will discuss the degree of success across a range of variables and discuss the progress made in regards to the transferability of the experience.

--Professor Margarita Hill