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Building upon the work of others: The CCBI Experience

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Overview and Highlights of Cleveland Community Building Initiative

1989 The Rockefeller Foundation commissions a study of Cleveland's neighborhoods

1990 The Cleveland Foundation Commission on Poverty

1991 Cleveland Community Building Initiative Council (CCBIC)

1993 CCBI incorporated and 1994 notified of its tax exempt status

2003-04 CCBI merges with Neighborhood Centers Association and then goes out of business.

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CCBI's Mission

.....to reverse the conditions that lead to and maintain poverty by taking a community building approach which includes the creation of Village Councils that develop and oversee neighborhood-specific plans.

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Five Principles to address Concentrated Poverty

- Comprehensive and integrated plan
- Plans tailored to neighborhoods
- Begin with an inventory of assets, not deficits
- Involve residents in shaping strategies
- Testing and evaluation important in the neighborhoods to determine what works well

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CCBI: Ten Years of Change and Challenge in Central Village ('93-'03)

Tax base regenerated
% of people below poverty line decreased but Central remains poor
High School graduates low but higher the City of Cleveland as a whole

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CCBI: Ten Years of Change and Challenge in Central Village ('93-'03)

Crime and violence continues to be a challenge
Health status no better than the rest of the City
But were these changes linked to the involvement of CCBI in the Central Village or to the target neighborhoods??? How do the changes link to alleviating concentrated poverty???

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Central Village Successes

- Built relationships with social service entities through the Central Village Linkage Council
- Partnership with St. Vincent Hospital
- Homebuyers workshops, Asset walk-through of new construction

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Central Village Challenges/Failures

- Difficulty attracting new residents and economically advantaged residents to the Council
- Limited strategies no linked to the mission to alleviate concentrated poverty
- Limited visibility for the CVLC office located in the mostly abandoned basement at St. Vincent Charity Hospital
- Tight resources and internal competition for resources

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Central Village Challenges/Failures

- Asset Inventory list of nonprofit and public institutions with no analysis. No mapped assets of people and the human resource capacity.
- Central and Village Staff turnover

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Lessons learned from the Initiative

- Collaboration among the private, public and nonprofit sector imperative!!!
- Organizing important to getting neighbors connected. History of Organizing in Cleveland stopped in the 1980s leaving a void that CCBI tried to fill.

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Lessons learned from the Initiative cont'd

- Single foundation initiative may lead to one foundation funding all projects and activities
- Need political support to garner public funds. No political support and isolated from the community power structure with no public funds

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Lessons learned from the Initiative cont'd

Strong and consistent Foundation and Programmatic Leadership important

Early successes important. If you ask people what they want to do in a neighborhood you have to be prepared to deliver it.

Long-term goals should relate to short-term actions.

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Readings which might be helpful as we move forward....

"Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building" by Potapchuk, Leiderman, Bivens, and Major. You can download the PDF document at the Center for Assessment and Policy Development website..<http://www.capd.org>

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Readings which might be helpful as we move forward....

Silver, Ira. *Unequal Partnerships: Beyond the Rhetoric of Philanthropic Collaboration* (Routledge, 2006). This book makes a major contribution to our understanding of the hierarchical relationship between foundations and the organizations they fund. It investigates community-based organizations' strategic attempts to assert influence over foundation funding priorities. The book draws upon several years of research about comprehensive community initiatives undertaken by foundations in cities across the U.S. during the 1980s and 1990s; initiatives that aimed to give community-based organizations unprecedented access to foundations' purse strings. A chief dilemma built into these initiatives is that they aimed to be collaborative even while foundations maintained a vested interest in gate-keeping the kinds of neighborhood revitalization reforms that community-based organizations received grants to undertake. Ironically, it is precisely because these purported "partnerships" required sponsors to cede some of their funding power that the initiatives enabled foundations to retain control over the kinds of antipoverty programs community-based organizations pursued.

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