

**Baptist Town Community and Economic Development Initiative:  
Winter 2009 Site Visit Summary**

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March 2009

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**Community Development Project**  
Building Opportunities Together

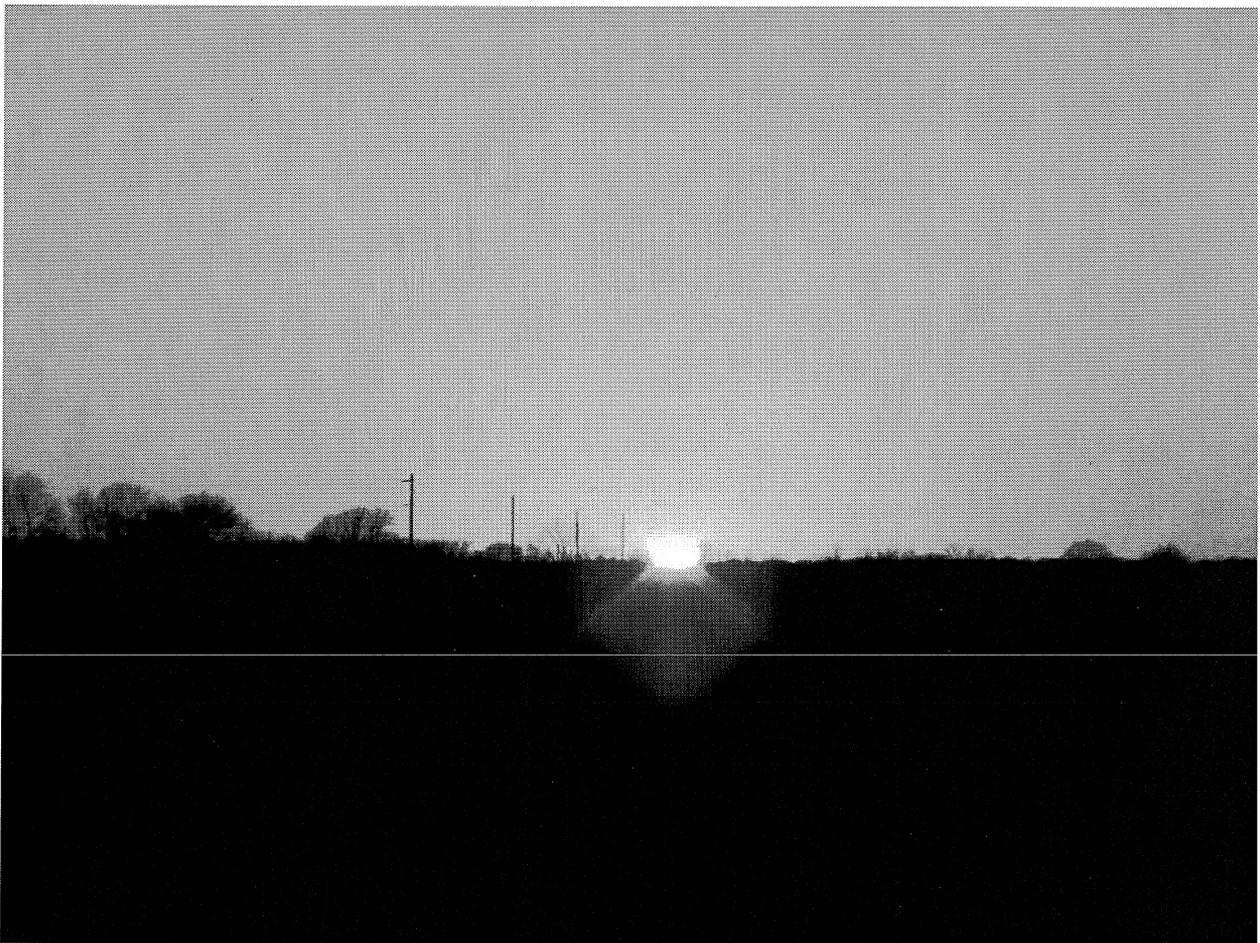
## Acknowledgements

The Community Development Project (CDP) would like to thank the Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation for its generous support of our work.

In addition, we would like to recognize and thank everyone in the Baptist Town and Greenwood community who participated in our events, helped us coordinate our site visit, and shared their experiences with us. We would like to extend a special thanks to Greenwood Mayor Sheriel F. Perkins and her Chief Administrative Officer, Alecia Reed-Owens, JD, for their tireless support of our work.

We would also like to thank the following professors for their advice prior to our site visit: Marshall Ganz, PhD, MPA, and Julie Wilson, PhD, of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government; Xavier de Souza Briggs, PhD, MPA, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Christian H.M. Ketels, PhD, of the Harvard Business School.

*Disclaimer: The views presented here are those of the authors and not necessarily those of The Ash Institute or its directors, officers, or staff.*



## PREFACE

Over the course of our initial two-week visit, we were touched by the rich spirit of the Greenwood and Baptist Town community. Residents welcomed us into their homes, their businesses, their churches, and their schools. They talked with us about Greenwood's heyday as a cotton hub and about the city's key role in the Civil Rights movement. They also told us about the challenges their community faces, mentioning unemployment, crime, poor housing, and limited educational opportunities. In the face of these numerous and deep challenges – challenges that can be seen throughout the entire Delta region – Greenwood and Baptist Town exhibited remarkable optimism. We were impressed by their entrepreneurial drive, their collaborative spirit, and their clear vision. Their attitudes deepened our own commitment to a long-term partnership.

Across our members' wide development experiences, Greenwood stands apart. Few other communities have been so welcoming. Certainly, none have fed us as well! While good southern cooking certainly enticed us, we were initially drawn to Greenwood because we believed in its prospects for economic growth. We knew that civic leaders, an active mayor, and university partners had already laid some of the groundwork necessary for successful development. We did not anticipate, however, just how well Baptist Town residents had prepared themselves to take on their own development challenges. Their insight and organization continue to impress us. Whether cooking us breakfast, talking with us on the porch, or participating in one of our workshops, Baptist Town residents always inspire us.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CONSULTING TEAM

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**CITY OF GREENWOOD**

**SHERIEL F. PERKINS**  
*Mayor*

**ALECIA REED-OWENS**  
*Chief Administrative Officer*

**Office: (662) 453-2246**

**Fax: (662) 455-7635**

February 13, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my utmost pleasure to write this letter in support of the Community Development Project (CDP). As Mayor of the City of Greenwood, I had the opportunity to observe and work with this talented and dynamic group of young people during their recent visit to my community.

Throughout their initial two-week stay, CDP assessed the needs of residents within Baptist Town, an African American Community located within the City of Greenwood that was once a thriving middle class neighborhood and home to Blues Legend Robert Johnson. When CDP arrived in our city, they took advantage of every minute and got right to work. Although I was very impressed with their professionalism, time management and organizational skills, I was most impressed with their ability to win over the hearts of many residents who thought the group's efforts would prove fruitless. CDP did not just enter into the homes of our residents and offer solutions to their problems; CDP listened and helped the residents realize their own potential to make a difference within their community. I am honored to say that the City of Greenwood strongly and proudly supports the efforts of CDP.

CDP has proven to be very valuable within our community. I am truly convinced their work here will have an everlasting impact for many of our residents. I firmly believe that CDP is the restoration of hope many of our residents have long desired. As Mayor of this great city, I am proud to say that CDP has helped to ensure that our goal of "Moving Greenwood Forward, Together" becomes a reality.

Sincerely,

Sheriel F. Perkins  
Mayor

SFP/ao

February 23, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

The Community Development Project (CDP) was a great inspiration to me, because it is not often that a young black man is exposed to things outside his familiar surroundings. It is very unlikely that a young black man is taught how to fight back in a political manner such as letters, petitions, organizing meetings, etc. What we are used to are late night gunshots, bottles breaking, fights taking place and the cops protecting and serving their personal interests. We are used to seeing our young brothers drop out of high school, graduate in prison and watch their kids grow up in visiting rooms of state facilities, where even the baby is subject to a thorough search. THIS IS OUR NORM, it's been that way so long we all have in one way or another accepted it.

We only dreamed of a park for our kids to play, we only dreamed of clean streets, we only dreamed of a safe environment and a peaceful, drug-free neighborhood. We prayed for our dreams to come true, we all did. The little boys shooting dice prayed for a merry-go-round, the little girls wanted swings and slides, the teen boys wanted safety from gang pressure and a place to shoot hoops, the teen girls just want to be able to walk without grown men harassing them, asking questions like "When can I hit that?"

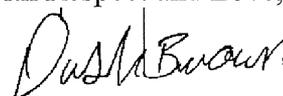
The CDP heard our dreams and they saw our vision, then they made this statement: "A change is going to come." Many have spoken those words but few have done anything about it. The CDP acted on our dreams, they set out to reconstruct our mind frame in two weeks, and they taught us how to organize by organizing us. They did a skill assessment so we could see what talents we have to work with. They gave us hope and awoke spirits in this town from long ago; now you can hear them in the voices of the youth as they poured out their hearts through words, pictures, and even dance. Who would've thought this feat would be accomplished by such a diverse group of young men and women from all walks of life? Not me. If the CDP did nothing else with their time here, they've changed me.

Thanks for it all.

*"The CDP acted on our dreams, they set out to reconstruct our mind frame in two weeks, and they taught us how to organize by organizing us."*

– Dash Brown  
Baptist Town Resident

With Respect and Love,



Dash Brown  
Baptist Town Resident

## Who We Are & What We Do

The Community Development Project (CDP) harnesses the academic and professional resources of Harvard University to facilitate civic engagement in economic development projects in underserved communities.

Our philosophy is grounded in a fundamental belief in the importance of locally driven economic development initiatives. We believe that success will be achieved when everyone, from community members to businesses and government, unites behind common interests and a shared vision for the future. As such, our goal is to bring people from all walks of life and from every sector together, see what the community wants for its future, and then work with everyone to build a vision of, and provide support for getting to, that goal.

The CDP Consulting Team is made up of Harvard Kennedy School students. We are diverse in race, ethnicity, and cultural heritage, and we all share a vision of America as a place where everyone has a chance to succeed. We are committed to making this vision of equal opportunity a reality. Most of us have a personal connection to communities in the South, and some of us have ties to the Delta in particular. We were drawn to Greenwood and Baptist Town because of their rich history and because we strongly believe that the residents of Greenwood and Baptist Town are in a unique position to shape their community's future. Together, we will design a path to a better future for Baptist Town and for the broader community of Greenwood.

### Our Vision for Greenwood & Baptist Town

CDP envisions a Greenwood and Baptist Town in which everyone – from residents and their representatives to businesses and nonprofit organizations – works together to develop better homes, clean and safe streets, youth programming, and access to good jobs.

### Our Mission

CDP will work with Baptist Town residents to build locally driven partnerships and solutions that improve the quality of life within Baptist Town and Greenwood. We will achieve this by:

- Strengthening the ability of residents to advocate for their interests and achieve their goals;
- Connecting residents with local, regional, and national resources;
- Engaging the greater Greenwood community in the revitalization of Baptist Town; and
- Raising awareness of the assets and needs of Baptist Town, Greenwood, and the Delta region.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CONSULTING TEAM

# Baptist Town Community and Economic Development Initiative

## Background

Baptist Town is a 100-year-old African American neighborhood located just east of downtown Greenwood, Mississippi. The neighborhood, which forms part of a ring of African American communities that circle the downtown, is visibly bounded by the Illinois-Central and Columbus-Greenville railroads to the West and South respectively, the Pelucia Bayou to the North, and the Union Cotton Compress to the East.

A strong sense of place and identity binds the community of Baptist Town. It was once home to blues legend Robert Johnson, famed actor Morgan Freeman, and has produced a number of local Civil Rights leaders including leading female figures like Arance Williamson. In addition to its rich cultural and political heritage, the geographic boundaries of the area have created a very tight-knit community, rooted in a large contingent of long-term residents who have watched the community transform over the years.



*Blues legend Robert Johnson once lived and played in Baptist Town. Baptist Town may also be his death site.*

As Greenwood's economy transitioned from "Cotton Capital of the World" to a catfish-production hub and home to world-renowned Viking Range Corporation, Baptist Town has faced many challenges. Although many Baptist Town citizens maintain jobs in the more stable industries, disinvestment, outmigration, isolation, and the much larger issue of economic destabilization crippling the Delta as a whole have considerably damaged the community. Today, Baptist Town struggles with low educational attainment, drugs and crime, absentee landlords and a severely dilapidated housing stock.

In recent years, a few groups have investigated opportunities for development in Baptist Town, most notably the Carl Small Town Center at Mississippi State University, which commissioned a study in 2002. Today, there is considerable interest in generating economic activity in the community via historical tourism, including a Mississippi Blues Trail Marker scheduled to be unveiled in Summer 2009.

## Goal of Baptist Town Economic Development Initiative

The goal of the Baptist Town Community and Economic Development Initiative is to partner with Baptist Town and Greenwood citizens to rejuvenate the Baptist Town community and help it build upon its past in order to create a prosperous future. The redevelopment of Baptist Town

will require a long-term, sustained effort, and must utilize resources from both within and outside the community. CDP's initiative will take place in 3 phases and over at least a two-year period:

PHASE I. CDP will focus on raising community awareness throughout Greenwood and building the social capital, confidence, and hope that will be required for more intensive projects in Baptist Town. CDP will also employ a range of research methods to better understand the conditions and viability of pursuing various economic development initiatives.

PHASE II. CDP will focus on actively engaging the Greenwood-Baptist Town community in planning and coordinating a comprehensive community and economic development plan for Baptist Town.

PHASE III. CDP will focus on helping the Baptist Town and Greenwood community implement their development plan and on monitoring progress. Potential CDP Activities would include:

- Assistance with grant writing
- Assistance with program development and evaluation
- Identification of partners for future community and economic development initiatives
- Remote consulting services

## Primary Objectives

The project has the following *3 primary objectives*:

1. Identify the assets and most pressing needs of the community.
2. Develop short-term and long-term solutions for how Baptist Town can be economically revitalized, and provide logistical support for implementing these solutions.
3. Utilize the successes of Baptist Town to explore implementation of similar ideas across Greenwood.

These key objectives will be met through the following specific activities

### *Objective 1 Activities*

- a. Conduct a community skills assessment.
- b. Develop a community asset map.
- c. Hold community economic development workshops.
- d. Implement quick, low-cost activities that involve the community, e.g., a Baptist Town community banquet.
- e. Assess the feasibility of creating an Economic Development Taskforce (EDT) composed of leaders from the local political, business, and social spheres of Greenwood. EDT, with support from CDP, would identify, coordinate, and implement a plan of action to improve economic conditions in Baptist Town. If CDP does not believe that forming an EDT will be feasible, we will explore other options for ensuring the economic revitalization of Baptist Town.

### *Objective 2 Activities*

- a. If forming an EDT proves feasible, CDP will help EDT plan and implement a comprehensive economic development strategy for Baptist Town.
- b. Monitor the Taskforce's progress and achievement of goals.

*Objective 3 Activities*

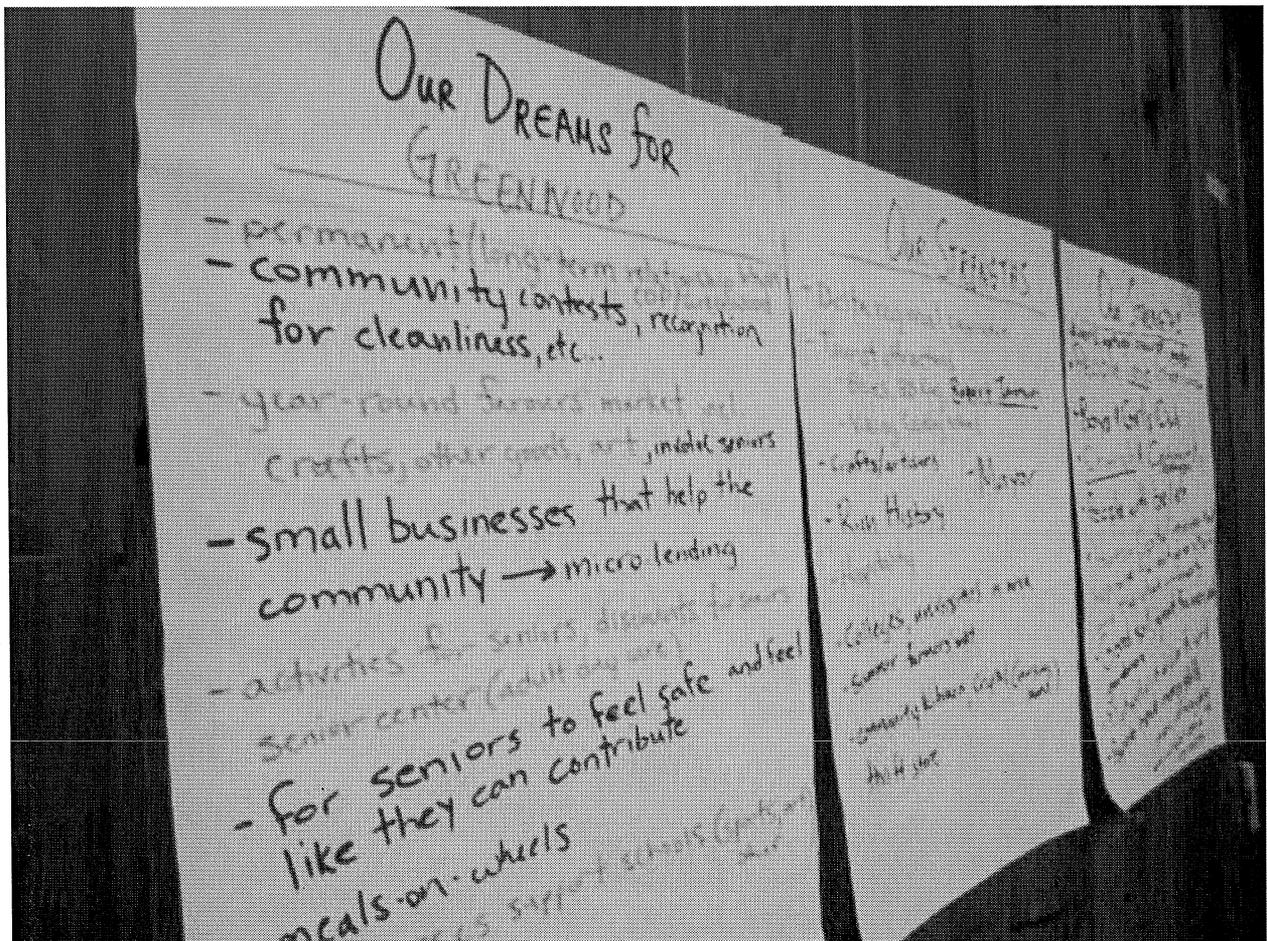
- a. Distill lessons learned and disseminate successful knowledge to the greater Greenwood community.
- b. Utilize the successes of Baptist Town’s development model to explore implementation of similar ideas in greater Greenwood.

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*“[CDP’s work] lets the people of this area know that there is hope, that nobody has forgotten about them.”*

– Bill Clay, Greenwood Resident and Youth Advocate

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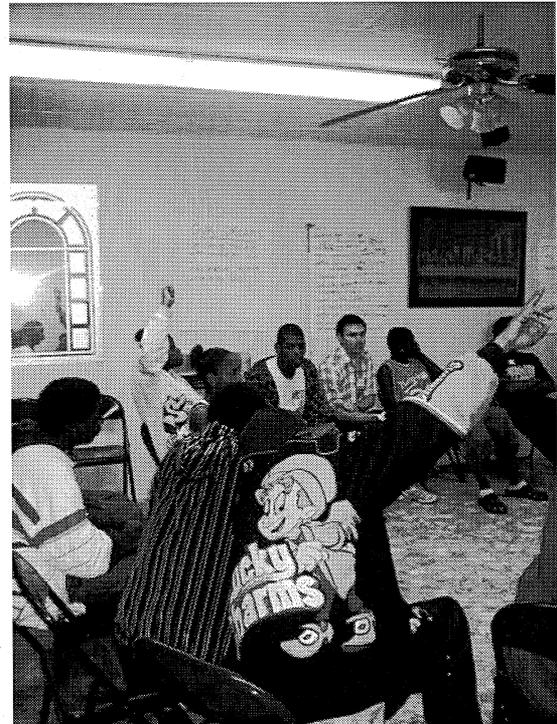
# Summary of Winter 2009 Site Visit

January 4-18, 2009, Greenwood, Mississippi

## Our Entrance Strategy

### *Mapping Community Assets and Needs*

The goal of CDP's initial Greenwood visit was to learn from Greenwood and Baptist Town residents. To that end, CDP team members met with community members one-on-one and in groups to get a sense of where they see Baptist Town in the short and long term, and how we will get there. Throughout these conversations, the goal was not only to examine the difficulties present in the community, but also to uncover the assets and resources that the community could draw upon to build success. As part of this process, we conducted an intensive ethnographic assessment of the Baptist Town community to collect both quantitative and qualitative information about the skills and resources of residents as well as their quality of life.



### *Visioning and Vision-Based Planning*

We also coordinated community workshops, giving Greenwood and Baptist Town residents a forum in which to share their concerns, and engaging them in a conversation about their vision for the community's future. Specifically, we wanted to know what residents see as Greenwood and Baptist Town's strengths, needs, resources, and challenges. The workshops allowed residents to begin formulating strategies to address their challenges.

*Baptist Town young adults participate in a community-visioning workshop, where they brainstormed their community's strengths, needs, resources, and challenges. They also thought up strategies for addressing community concerns.*

### *Engaging the Community*

The workshops served as a catalyst for the formation of a Baptist Town community organization. Partnering with CDP, the community organization has begun to develop a leadership structure and identify challenges it currently has the capacity to address.

In order to broaden support for Baptist Town community initiatives and increase the capacity of the Baptist Town community organization, CDP members met with a range of civic leaders from across the city of Greenwood. Our meetings with these leaders in business, government, religion, academia, and social services allowed us to understand past and present development efforts. These leaders gave us insight into past projects that have worked and those that have failed, helping us clarify effective practices and common obstacles. In the future, we hope to engage these civic leaders in community-driven development efforts.

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:

### INTRODUCING OURSELVES TO THE COMMUNITY

#### Introductory Breakfast Meeting at City Hall

On January 5, CDP made its initial introduction to the Greenwood community at a breakfast meeting at City Hall arranged by Mayor Sheriel F. Perkins. Attendees included a diverse group of leaders in government, business, and the Baptist Town community. At the meeting, we explained who we are, presented our goals for the initial visit, and described our long-range vision. After our presentation, we distributed press packets to the media, networked and spoke informally with meeting attendees. Although this breakfast meeting was our first interaction with most of the individuals in attendance, they welcomed us wholeheartedly. Each person we spoke with offered their support to our group, whether by sharing a useful resource, mentioning a new idea, or inviting us to their home or workplace to talk one-on-one. We left this first meeting with many new contacts, some new ideas, and a few new friendships.

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*“When CDP arrived in our city, they took advantage of every minute and got right to work. Although I was very impressed with their professionalism, time management and organizational skills, I was most impressed with their ability to win over the hearts of many residents who thought the group’s efforts would prove fruitless.”*

– Mayor Sheriel F. Perkins

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#### Baptist Town Community Meet and Greet

On January 8, CDP met with several Baptist Town residents at a Meet and Greet hosted by McKinney Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, the most prominent church in Baptist Town. Although CDP had already spoken with several Baptist Town residents in their homes, the Meet and Greet marked our whole-group introduction to the community, and a time to explain in better detail our goals for the January trip and beyond. The residents of Baptist Town packed McKinney’s Fellowship Hall to share with us a few of their concerns and their hopes for the future. They stressed the importance of community solidarity as a first step for any kind of development of Baptist Town, and they indicated an eagerness to both learn from one another and share community resources. Through informal conversations, we began to get a better sense of the pulse of the community, and the Meet and Greet ended with residents sharing their stories with us and expressing support for a partnership with CDP.

# MAPPING COMMUNITY ASSETS AND NEEDS

## Community Skills Assessment and Asset Map

### *Overview*

CDP conducted a door-to-door survey of the formal and informal job skills that Baptist Town community members currently have, the skills that they want to develop, and the social networks that they currently possess. This assessment was designed to identify community strengths and needs in order to uncover opportunities for economic development, encourage residents to think deeply about the tools they have to contribute to the community, identify resources that residents have outside of Greenwood-Baptist Town, and identify community leadership.

### *Methods*

CDP administered 51 form-based surveys during January 6 to January 17, 2009. Surveys were designed to be 15-60 min long and conducted by two-person teams – a primary interviewer and a note taker. The surveys were ethnographic in nature and captured a great deal of quantitative and qualitative information including work experience and professional skills (formal and informal), education levels, homeownership and personal assets (i.e., cars), social networks and civic involvement. The surveys were divided into 6

sections: demographics, family characteristics, day-to-day living, civic involvement and networks, skills and work experience, and perceptions about the effectiveness of local government in addressing community concerns. Categories in each of these sections were informed by US Census classifications. Additional data was captured on information related to social programs and health insurance, as well as more qualitative information on quality-of-life issues (e.g., safety and infrastructure).

We divided the Baptist Town neighborhood into 4 quadrants. Each team was assigned to a single quadrant. Through this process, we were able to knock on every door in the community at least once. Given time constraints and other obligations of the overall project, we made a best effort to return to households that were unavailable. In order to further overcome self-selection bias, surveys were administered at different times of day and on weekdays and weekends. Often survey participants spoke about skills and characteristics of other members of the household. While we captured this information as well, surveys were assigned to individuals *and not households*. Participants retained the option to respond to the survey anonymously and were guaranteed privacy of information. However, they could grant permission to include identifying information with their responses.

Given the ethnographic nature of the surveys, potential next steps include:

1. Creating a more sophisticated survey instrument and employing random sampling techniques and a shorter form.

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*“I never knew that, through all of the residents of Baptist Town, that we, as a community, have so many skills and a willingness to put those skills to work as one, for the betterment of the Baptist Town Community.”*

– Mary Saaka  
Baptist Town Resident

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- Expanding our population to include the half-ring of predominantly African American communities that surround downtown Greenwood, such as the Gee Pee (Gibbs-Palace) and Grittney neighborhoods, and administering a larger survey following the steps noted above.

### *Preliminary Data*

This data represents proportions strictly associated with our survey respondents. While anecdotal figures estimate the Baptist Town population to be comprised of 150 households, we cannot confirm this figure and are thus unable to claim that the data we derive can be applied to the whole population. However, we believe that we captured data from at least one-third of residents.

The following data represents preliminary findings. We chose to include these figures because they offer some introductory information on the community. In our final report, we will investigate in much greater depth and sophistication the data we have obtained.

It is apparent in the preliminary findings that percentages were not calculated using the whole survey pool. For most of the items analyzed, we were unable to achieve 100% completion and so the percentages are based on the number who answered the particular question. Table 1 offers some very basic figures on the social and economic characteristics of Baptist Town residents.

**Table 1. Baptist Town Preliminary Data Findings**

Item	Percentage	Percentage (2000 Census - Tract 9507, Leflore County Greenwood, MS)
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
No HS Degree	25.6 % (10 of 39)	50.4%
GED	5% (2 of 39)	n/a
HS Degree	28.2% (11 of 39)	24.8% (includes GED)
Attended some College (incl. associate, junior and vocational/technical)	20.5% (8 of 39)	15.9%
College Degree	15.4% (6 of 39)	2.7%
<b>Employment Rate</b>	31.8% (14 of 44)	48.7% (in labor force)
<b>Homeownership Rate</b>	31.7% (13 of 41)	41.7% (owner-occupied units)
<b>Health Insurance</b>	55.8% (19 of 34)	
<b>Civic Engagement</b>		
Church-based	73.3% (22 of 30)	n/a
Non-church based	26.6% (8 of 30)	n/a

A major portion of the survey is dedicated to identifying industry sectors and skills in which Baptist Town residents have both experience and expertise. Table 2 is a listing of these. The employment sector category details a number of classifications. Percentages are not offered

because they reflect primarily *an* individual rather than a group (in part due to the low employment levels). Prior sectors are also listed to identify historical sources of employment and the potential for transferability of skills, trades and jobs over time. The top skills category reflects a strong diversity of skills that were most commonly identified. However, in no instance did this surpass ten individuals, so percentages were not included. Our final report will clarify these categories and assess the skills against variables like age, educational attainment, and homeownership.

**Table 2. Baptist Town Sectors and Skills**

<b>Employment Sector</b>	<b>Top Skills</b>
<b><i>Current</i></b>	<b>Repair (Auto, Machine)</b>
Manufacturing/Food Production	<b>Manufacturing</b>
Self-Employed	<b>Care Giving/Healthcare Services</b>
Personal Care/Home Healthcare	<b>Food Production</b>
Services (Cashier, Store Management)	<b>Office/Clerical</b>
<b><i>Prior</i></b>	<b>General Management (Retail, Office)</b>
Agriculture	
Clerical	
Transport Services	
Services (Food)	
Domestic Services (Housekeeping)	

## VISIONING AND VISION-BASED PLANNING

### Community Economic Development Workshops

CDP conducted four Community Economic Development Workshops – two for Baptist Town residents (one of which included solely Baptist Town children and young adults) and two for the entire city of Greenwood – involving more than 100 Greenwood residents. The Workshops were interactive community discussions about the possibilities for economic development and were meant to engage and encourage individuals to think creatively, generate new ideas, and build momentum for creating a community-led economic development strategy. Specifically, participants were asked to brainstorm about what they saw as their community’s challenges and assets, their vision for the future, and strategies for realizing their vision (See Appendix H). In examining the responses of Workshop participants, it is clear that community members throughout Greenwood converge around many

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*“[T]he Community Development Project opened my eyes that I was not the only one in my neighborhood who cared about its surroundings and the future of it .... Their surveys and workshops not only began to turn the wheels but brought together all of the wheels.”*

– Alice Leflore-Banks  
Baptist Town Resident

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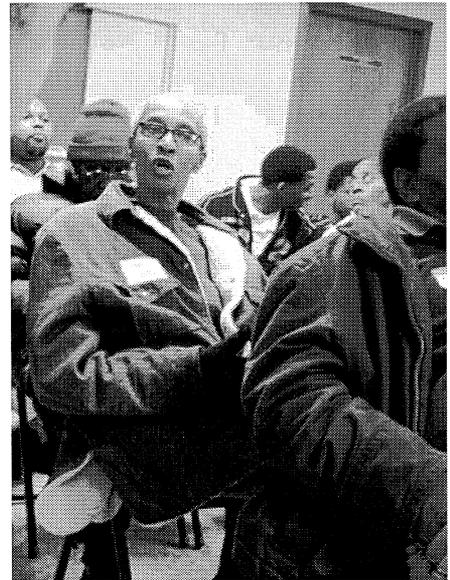
key issues, including the need to address dilapidated housing, teen pregnancy and truancy, the desire to make better use of existing community resources, and an optimistic vision for Greenwood and Baptist Town's future.

## ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

### Launching a Baptist Town Community Organization

Over the course of CDP's two-weeks in Greenwood and Baptist Town, we assessed – through formal and informal interviews – the attitudes of residents, community leaders and stakeholders toward forming some type of task force, which would be focused specifically on the development of Baptist Town. It became clear through our discussions with community leaders and residents, however, that before residents of Baptist Town could address development issues while sitting at an equal footing with outside actors – be they business leaders, government officials, or institutional leaders – it was necessary for an organization strictly comprised of Baptist Town residents to be created.

Through CDP's interactions with Baptist Town residents, we found many with a desire to form such a group and good evidence of organic leadership upon which to build. For example, several residents had been instrumental in organizing community clean-ups in the past. One woman had brought together a team, sent out petitions, held a town meeting and persuaded the city government to do a substantial amount of rehabilitation work on a neighborhood park. Others showed prior leadership experience in the workplace, their churches, or in other organizations including a local racial reconciliation group.



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*“CDP did not just enter into the homes of our residents and offer solutions to their problems; CDP listened and helped the residents realize their own potential to make a difference within their community.”*

– Mayor Sheriel F. Perkins

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After our series of workshops in Baptist Town, we compiled a list of residents who expressed a desire to form a community group and those who were observed to have leadership potential. We met with these individuals – a diverse group representing old and young, male and female – and discussed the way to move forward. We talked about the principles and norms that make groups work well and what each person present hoped to achieve through the development of a community group. We also discussed the potential objectives of the group, an immediate process through which the group could begin to function, and the supporting role CDP would play. CDP facilitated this discussion; however, the meeting attendees ultimately decided what they wanted their group to look like and how they would govern themselves.

Since we left – and as of February 18, 2009 – the group has had two meetings, involving over 20 residents. They have begun developing mission and vision statements; started to draft bylaws to govern the group’s activities; elected a chair, co-chair, and secretary; and formed a rough committee structure. Some activities the group is beginning to work on are: a neighborhood watch program, an after-school youth program (including, potentially, cooking classes, mentoring for young women, and GED training), additional community-led clean-ups, and continued advocacy to city and regional government on park construction and the placing of a historic “blues trail” marker in Baptist Town.

## **The Columbo Interview**

The Columbo Interview was a structured, in-depth (usually 60-90 minutes) qualitative interview that was used to learn about previous development efforts and why they were or were not successful; to uncover current development efforts; to discuss a vision for the future, including the possibility for a Baptist Town Economic Development Taskforce; to shed light on existing community power dynamics; and to identify community leadership. (See Appendix F)

A key component of the Columbo Interview was the Snowball Sampling Technique. Snowball sampling is a qualitative interview process that involves identifying respondents who are then asked to refer interviewers on to other respondents.<sup>1</sup> This technique seeks to make use of the social networks of identified respondents to provide interviewers with “an ever-expanding set of potential contacts.” Snowball sampling is “based on the assumption that a ‘bond’ or ‘link’ exists between the initial sample and others in the same target population, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintance.”<sup>2</sup>

During our January site visit, we conducted more than 40 Columbo Interviews. CDP made audio recordings of each interview. For its initial interview sample, CDP made a concerted effort to speak with individuals who came from a broad spectrum of the Greenwood-Baptist Town community. This initial sample included Greenwood and Baptist Town residents; local business owners; industry and commerce officials; city, county, state and federal government officials; religious leaders; and the media.

## **BAPTIST TOWN CELEBRATION BANQUET**

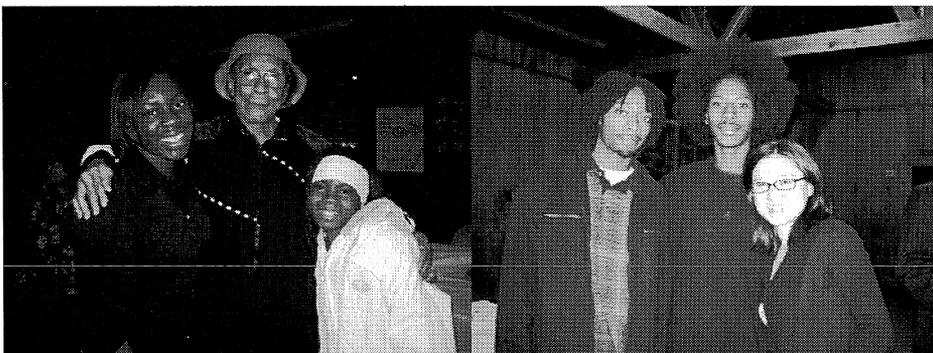
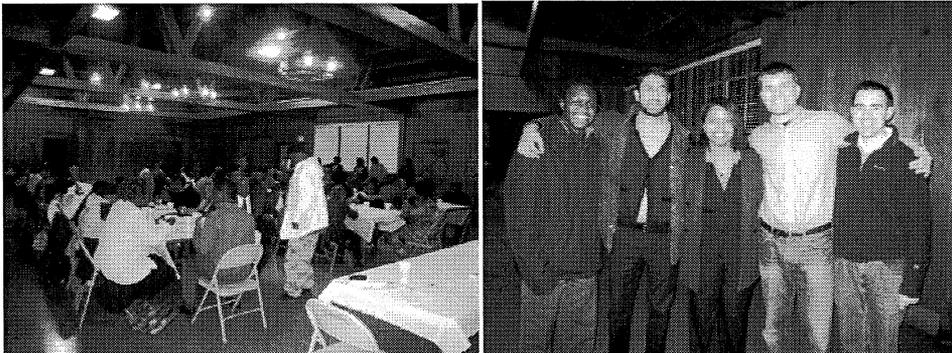
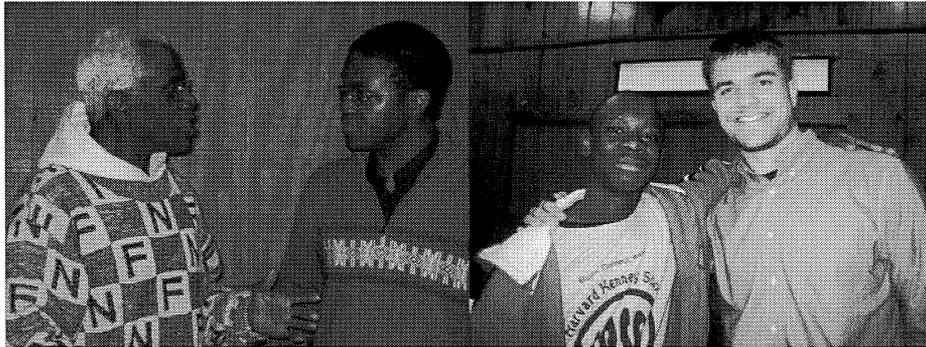
On January 16, residents from Baptist Town and greater Greenwood joined us in a celebration and reflection on the ways in which community mobilized to begin “Moving Greenwood Forward, Together,” a theme which the residents themselves highlighted. Sponsored by Mayor Perkins, the night was an opportunity for CDP to remind everyone of the strategies that Baptist Town residents had identified to face their biggest challenges and of the strengths and talents within the community. Most importantly, it was a chance to thank the residents of Baptist Town

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<sup>1</sup> Thomson, Adaptive Sampling in Behavioural Surveys, *NIDA Research Monograph* (1997): 296-319.

<sup>2</sup> Atkinson and Flint, Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies, *Social Research Update* 33 (2001).

and Greenwood who had generously opened their homes to us and let us get to know their families. Members of CDP each took a moment to reflect upon how each of us had grown personally from our first visit. We then we shared our next steps as an organization as well as our plans for a continued and strengthened partnership with Greenwood. The evening began with a Praise Dance from 14-year-old Baptist Town resident Korwin Wilson (a former student of one of our members); and after thanks from the Mayor and a delicious meal, the night ended with the Baptist Town residents teaching CDP members a few dance steps.



## LOOKING FORWARD:

### CDP's Future Commitment to Baptist Town and Greenwood

For meaningful change to take place in Baptist Town and Greenwood, everyone – from community members and their representatives, to businesses and nonprofit organizations – must devote significant time and effort. Recognizing the need for a long-term strategy, CDP has committed itself to working with the Baptist Town-Greenwood community over at least the next 2 years. As part of this multi-year commitment, CDP has outlined a number of specific activities that it hopes to engage in over the next few months and beyond, including:

#### *Final Site-Visit Report*

CDP will publish a written report, chronicling its January 2009 site visit and making recommendations for the future development of Baptist Town and Greenwood. The report will serve as a strategic planning tool for instituting community-driven development activities.

#### *Future Site Visits*

The CDP Consulting Team intends to make several more trips to Baptist Town and Greenwood over the next 2 years. CDP is exploring the possibility of conducting site visits in Spring and/or Summer 2009 and sending an intern to Greenwood and Baptist Town during Summer 2009. However, conducting these and any additional site visits will be contingent upon the availability of sufficient financial support.

#### *Support the Development of Baptist Town Community Initiatives and Leadership*

CDP continues to offer the Baptist Town community organization advice and support through regular calls and emails with group members, and we are actively exploring ideas to help build the group's capacity with trainings, to help it grow and be inclusive and representative, and to help it achieve its programmatic aims. In addition, CDP will continue to investigate projects and initiatives throughout Greenwood and the region where Baptist Town residents may be impacted.

CDP has been inspired by the ideas and commitment of Baptist Town residents. They have developed a community organization with a diverse membership, including lifelong residents and young people, college graduates and high school dropouts, experienced activists and first-time civic players. The Baptist Town community organization has also recognized its limitations, setting ambitious goals, but goals that do not overly strain its current capacity.

CDP believes in the Baptist Town community organization's growth potential. We believe that partnerships with Greenwood civic leaders and external resource providers could significantly expand the organization's capacity to fight for and carry out development projects.

#### *Technical Assistance*

CDP will offer technical assistance to the Greenwood-Baptist Town community in support of its future community and economic development activities. Such assistance might include:

- Grant identification and writing
- Program development and evaluation
- Identification of partners for future community and economic development initiatives

### *Baptist Town Economic Development Taskforce*

One of the primary goals of CDP's January site visit was to assess the feasibility of constructing a local entity dedicated to furthering equitable economic development in the Baptist Town community. This entity – which could take the form of a taskforce or working group – would be a lasting and representative body focused on the development of Baptist Town and the community's integration into the larger Greenwood and regional economy. It would also work to cultivate partnerships between Baptist Town and external resource providers.

CDP believes that a Baptist Town Economic Development Taskforce – consisting of primarily Greenwood and Baptist town residents who represent sectors critical to the area's development (political, religious, business, cultural, nonprofit, etc.) – is still a feasible option for the development of Baptist Town and Greenwood. However, it is uncertain when such a Taskforce could be assembled. A key stakeholder on the Taskforce would be the Baptist Town community, which could, perhaps, draw representation from the Baptist Town Community Organization. Attention must be paid to adequately developing Baptist Town's internal capacity and leadership before its representatives can take a seat at the Taskforce table, vigorously advocate for Baptist Town's interests, and achieve their goals.

### *CDP as Ambassadors for Baptist Town and Greenwood*

CDP is impressed by Baptist Town's rich history – from its Civil Rights past to its rich blues heritage. With regional business leaders seeking to capitalize on these pieces of history, we believe that Baptist Town can position itself as an asset to Greenwood and to the entire Delta region. Recognizing these trends, CDP has committed itself to serving as an ambassador for Baptist Town and Greenwood. In this role, CDP envisions raising awareness about the assets and needs of Baptist Town and the Delta region among our HKS colleagues, connecting budding social entrepreneurs to Greenwood civic leaders, and stimulating research on rural economic development.

## APPENDIX A:

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CONSULTING TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

The Community Development Project (CDP) Consulting Team is made up of students from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

**Alice Abrokwa** is a native of Auburn, Alabama and a recent graduate of Princeton University where she studied Public and International Affairs and African-American Studies. Abrokwa is jointly pursuing a Masters in Public Policy and Law degree in the hopes of one-day helping to reform the criminal justice system by serving the public as an attorney. She has been involved in the Minority Introduction to Engineering and Science program (MITES) at M.I.T. since 2005 as a mentor and writing tutor for underprivileged and underrepresented high school students entering their senior year. Abrokwa is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Carl Allen** is from New Hope, Minnesota. Allen worked for three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural West Africa in teaching, water and sanitation, and various other community and youth development activities. Prior to this experience, Allen studied engineering at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, and worked in Chicago. He is now a Master in Public Policy/Urban Planning candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School.

**Andrew Amo** is from Ghana by way of New York City. Prior to coming to Harvard, Amo managed private tutoring for Kaplan Test Prep and founded an academic consulting company in Ghana that prepared students for higher education in America and Europe. He is presently developing Ghana's first work-study program for university students, as well as an online tutoring platform for inner-city youth in Boston and New York City. Andrew received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Harvard College and a Master's degree in Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Morna Ha** is from New York City and studied history at Dartmouth College. She has been an advocate and organizer around immigrant rights, youth leadership development, and civic participation with the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium. She has also worked with the New York Immigration Coalition to look at the impact of civil liberties erosions after 9/11. In the summer of 2006, she volunteered with the People's Organizing Committee in New Orleans organizing Katrina survivors to develop a people's plan to rebuild the city. Currently, she is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Jayant Kairam** is originally from Pelham, New York. Prior to joining the Kennedy School as a Master in Public Policy candidate, he was a project manager at the New York Industrial Retention Network where he worked on economic development policy that advocated expanding a blue-collar workforce through supporting local businesses and principles of environmental sustainability. From 2004-2006, Kairam served as a US Peace Corps Volunteer in Cape Verde, West Africa, where he worked on issues of rural development and association building. Kairam is a 2003 graduate of Vassar College.

**Terry McDonough** is from Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania. He serves as the Director of Development at Edward W. Brooke Charter School in Boston. Before taking his current position and coming to Harvard, McDonough taught 7th grade English and chaired the English department at Edward W. Brooke. Prior to that, he taught high school in South Korea. He also taught 5th grade in Marianna, Arkansas with Teach for America. McDonough earned a BA in English from The College of William and Mary. He is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Babak Mostaghimi** is from Blacksburg, Virginia. Alongside CDP, Mostaghimi is the Executive Director of Educating the Future, an organization that helps first-year teachers in the Mississippi Delta. Before Harvard, Mostaghimi was a 5th grade teacher in Shelby, Mississippi through Teach for America. In Shelby, Mostaghimi became School District Teacher of the Year and was nominated for the Mississippi Teacher of the Year program. Mostaghimi earned a BA in Economics and International Relations from Johns Hopkins University. He is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Ololade Olakanmi** is a native of Iowa. A graduate of Grinnell College in Biology and Philosophy, Olakanmi has conducted research projects at Jackson State University, the University of Iowa, Georgetown University, and the National Institutes of Health. Olakanmi also worked for two years as a research fellow at the American Medical Association, where he investigated health disparities and hospital communication. Olakanmi is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

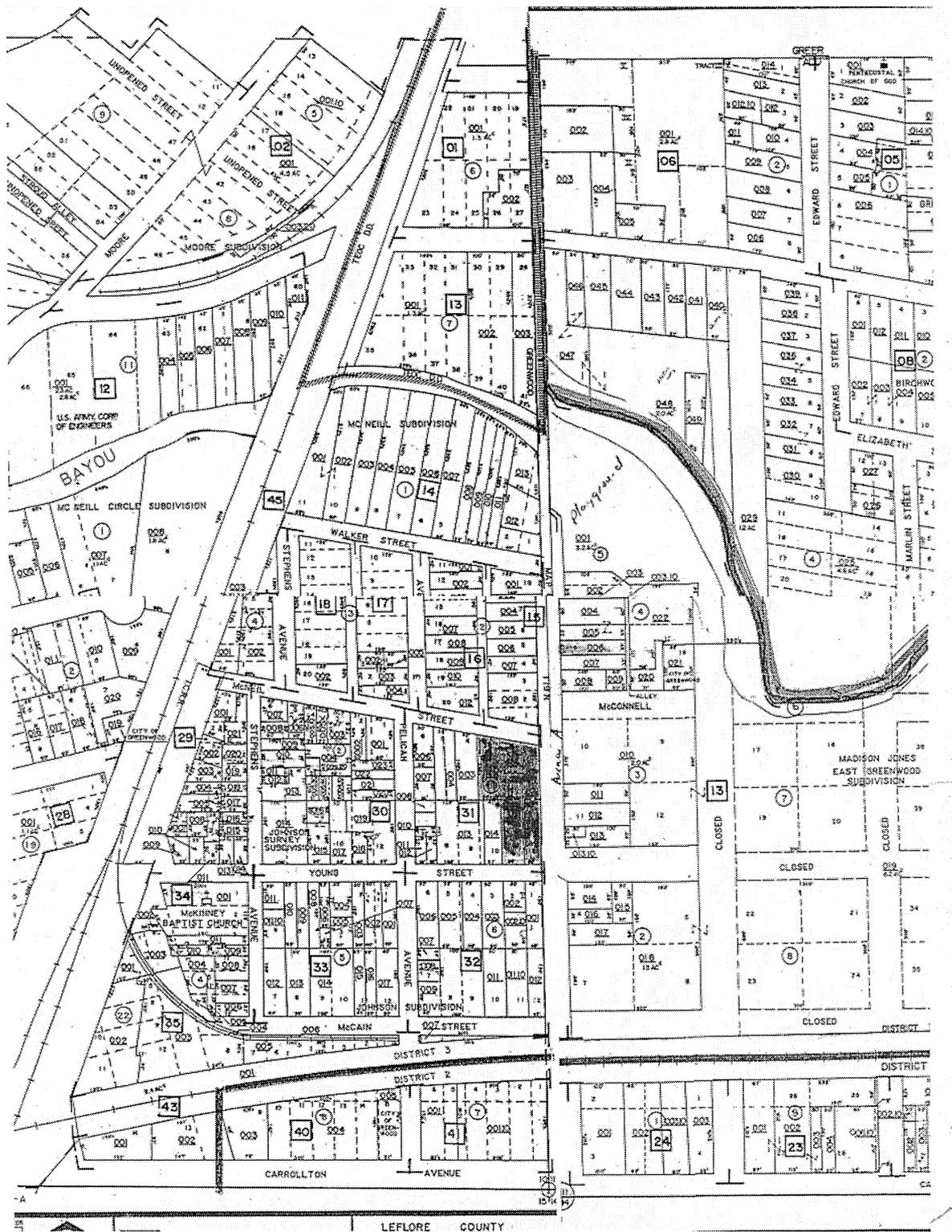
**Cheryl Scott** is originally from southern California, and a graduate of Wellesley College in Massachusetts where she studied French and Africana studies. Prior to attending Harvard, Cheryl coordinated mentoring and tutoring programs for at-risk youth in the San Francisco Bay Area. While at Harvard, Cheryl focuses on social policy issues including poverty alleviation, criminal justice reform, and economic development. Cheryl is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

**Benjamin Veghte** hails from Clearwater, Florida. For the past 6 years, Veghte has been a consultant for the European Commission and a Professor of Political Science at the University of Bremen, Germany. The focus of his current work is devising policy approaches to mitigate poverty in African American communities in the United States. His research and teaching have focused on US social policy contrasted with European patterns of welfare state development; and the relationship between US foreign, trade and social policies in comparative context. Veghte earned his M.A./Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in Modern European History and his B.A. from Columbia University and Oxford University. Veghte is a Mid-Career Master in Public Administration candidate.

**Lin Yang**, prior to coming to the Kennedy School, spent two years teaching high school mathematics in Helena-West Helena, Arkansas, as part of Teach for America. While there, Yang helped his students accomplish passing rates on the state geometry test that beat both the school and the state average. He also started a college-advising program for his students. His focus at the Kennedy School is on political and economic development, education, and community organizing. Yang earned his BS in Policy Analysis and Management from Cornell University. He is a Master in Public Policy candidate.

# APPENDIX B:

## MAP OF BAPTIST TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD



## APPENDIX C:

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR SITE VISIT

Date	Activity
Sunday, January 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive in Greenwood from Memphis.</li> </ul>
Monday, January 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with Mayor Perkins and other constituents, interest groups, community leaders, and public officials at 9am in City Hall.</li> <li>• Debriefing meeting with Mayor Perkins and Alecia Reed (CAO)</li> <li>• Ride-along tour of Baptist Town</li> </ul>
Tuesday, January 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with Hollis Watkins in the morning</li> <li>• Pass out flyers advertising the Baptist Town-CDP Meet 'n Greet and other activities.</li> <li>• Meet with the City Council at 4pm at City Hall.</li> <li>• Begin Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey Trial Run</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Bill Krump, Mary Saaka, Elmus Stocksdales</li> </ul>
Wednesday, January 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> <li>• Spread word for Baptist Town-CDP Meet 'n Greet and other activities.</li> <li>• Bible Study McKinney Baptist Church (6-6:30pm) Baptist Town and non-Baptist Town Church members will be present. Rev. Brown.</li> <li>• Voters League 8pm. Sponsored by Senator Jordan. Elks Hall.</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Angela Curry, Beth Stevens, Tim Kalich</li> </ul>
Thursday, January 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> <li>• Baptist Town-CDP Meet 'n Greet 5:30-6:30pm, McKinney Baptist Church Fellowship Hall</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Sarah Whitfield, Taylor Dillard, Lise Foy, Sylvester Hoover, Carl Winters</li> </ul>
Friday, January 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDP Delta Tour:</li> <li>• Sunflower County Freedom Project 10:30am</li> <li>• Indianola—The Crown for Lunch 11:30-12:30</li> <li>• B.B. King Blues Museum Quick Tour</li> <li>• Cleveland- look at the development projects in that area. 1:00-1:45</li> <li>• Mound Bayou</li> <li>• Shelby tour, school, downtown. 1:45-4pm</li> <li>• Go to Fatbaby's or Airport Grocery (time dependent)</li> <li>• Clarksdale—Morgan Freeman's Ground Zero</li> <li>• Return to Greenwood</li> </ul>
Saturday, January 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Development Workshop and Fish Fry</li> </ul>
Sunday, January 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Zion Baptist Church Sunday Worship</li> </ul>
Monday, January 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch at the Rotary Club</li> <li>• Economic Development Brainstorming Workshop for Ward 3 and 4 at 6-7:30pm. Location: Youth Center</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Senator Jordan, Paige Hunt, Tennill Cannon, Mark Owens, Betty Stipler, Victor Stokes, Rep. Willie Perkins</li> </ul>
Tuesday, January 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour of Bankston Elementary School, MS Valley State University</li> <li>• Economic Development Brainstorming Workshop for Baptist Town residents. Location: McKinney Baptist Church Fellowship Hall (6-7:30pm)</li> <li>• Mayor’s Chew and Chat (Wards 1 and 2; 6-7:30)</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Ronnie Stevenson, Ethel Knight, Marqui Washington, Bennie Herring, Bill Clay, Bishop Glass, Percy Powell</li> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> </ul>
Wednesday, January 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WGNL radio interview</li> <li>• Visit to Community Kitchen and Hoover’s Country Kitchen</li> <li>• Economic Development Brainstorming Workshop for Ward 5, 6, and 7. Location: Youth Center (possibly Voters League)</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Bryan Lott, John Poros, Allan Hammons, Spooney</li> <li>• Voter’s League Meeting</li> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> </ul>
Thursday, January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Community Coming Together – Youth Center, Marquis Washington.</li> <li>• Economic Development interviews with Charles McCoy</li> <li>• Continue Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> </ul>
Friday, January 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Stimulus Package Meeting for State of MS</li> <li>• Debrief with Mayor and CAO Alecia Reed</li> <li>• Complete Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> <li>• Baptist Town Celebration Banquet, Youth Center at 6pm</li> </ul>
Saturday, January 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final day of Baptist Town Job Skills Assessment Survey.</li> <li>• Conduct final targeted Economic Development interviews.</li> </ul>
Sunday, January 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depart Greenwood</li> </ul>

APPENDIX D:

ARTICLES FROM THE *GREENWOOD COMMONWEALTH*

January 5, 2009

# Harvard group announces plans for Baptist Town

Bob Darden  
Kennedy  
School of  
Government  
student  
Babak  
Mostaghimi,  
left, talks  
with Green-  
wood Ward 3  
Councilman  
Charles  
McCoy and  
Ward 7 Coun-  
cillman Taylor  
Dillard.



## *Two-year plan would transform area*

By **BOB DARDEN**  
*Staff Writer*

A group of 10 Harvard University Kennedy School of Government students this morning announced an ambitious two-year project to transform Greenwood's Baptist Town community.

"Our job here is to make sure that we understand what everybody wants, what the community feels, and not just come and have some sort of project," said Babak

Mostaghimi, who spoke on behalf of the group, which calls itself the Community Development Project.

Mostaghimi addressed a packed City Council room of business and community leaders.

Some of those attending included Bill Crump, director of Viking Range Corp.'s government affairs division and executive assistant to the president; Lise Foy, executive

See **HARVARD**, Page 9

# Harvard

*Continued from Page 1*

director of Main Street Greenwood Inc; Paige Hunt, executive director of the Greenwood Convention & Visitors Bureau; Beth Stevens, executive director of the Greenwood-Leflore County Chamber of Commerce; Angela Curry, executive director of the Greenwood-Leflore Industrial Board; Arance Williamson, retired city councilwoman; and Dr. Pauline Pearson-Stamps, former Greenwood School Board member.

"We believe that people deserve an opportunity to provide for their children, live in decent neighborhoods and build strong communities. To that end, we support local efforts in uplifting neighborhoods," Mostaghimi said.

He said the group was drawn to Baptist Town because of its rich history, and it believes Baptist Town and Greenwood can be revitalized.

This isn't a situation where an outside group will merely issue a study, Mostaghimi said.

"None of us have the entire answer. Together, however, we can make a profound change that will shape a strong vision for Greenwood and Baptist Town," he said.

"The

## "The Community Development

Project has a vision that we are starting to see today in this room - of bringing everyone together to come up with solutions that the community wants."

### *Babak Mostaghimi*

Development Project has a vision that we are starting to see today in this room - of bringing everyone together to come up with solutions that the community wants. That businesses, governments and people can work toward and that everyone benefits from," Mostaghimi said.

For the next two weeks, the group will be raising community awareness and holding informational interviews with business, government, community leaders and residents with the goal of organizing economic development workshops throughout Greenwood, he said.

Another component will the

be the compiling of a "community skills map" to gauge the skill level and qualifications of Baptist Town residents as well as those they wish to develop, Mostaghimi said.

"We will be able to discover the community's strengths and needs in order to uncover opportunities for economic growth and development," he said.

On Friday, Jan. 16, the group will hold a Baptist Town Community Celebration Banquet.

Phase II will coordinate various components within the community in the hopes of forming a Baptist Town Economic Development Task Force.

Mostaghimi said the task force, which will have 12 members, will be reflective of Baptist Town and the business community, he said.

Greenwood Mayor Sheriel Perkins said it wasn't by accident that the Harvard students came to Greenwood.

Cyd McKenna, an Massachusetts Institute of Technology student who interned with the mayor last summer, was instrumental in getting the Harvard students to come here.

"She caught on to the dream that we have for Greenwood," Perkins said.

The young people have already made an impression, she said. "I now have another family"

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### Give Harvard group a chance to work

Editor, Commonwealth:

As I read the online Jan. 5 Commonwealth article about the Kennedy School group's Greenwood project, I was imagining the negative reaction in Greenwood.

Sure enough, there were already several rather snide, cynical comments on the Web site, including one making fun of the group leader's name.

Googling the leader's name in quotation marks, "Babak Mostaghimi," would show multiple links, with evidence that Mr. Mostaghimi is no stranger to the Delta, having been a teacher in Shelby with the Teach America program. One link is to a diary he wrote about his Shelby experiences in the "Education World" publication.

I lived in Greenwood from 1971 to 1997, so I am not unfamiliar with Greenwood's problems. I doubt that the Harvard group expects to perform miracles in two years. They seem to be serious, dedicated people, and perhaps they will have valuable insights and be able to start something that will help Greenwood.

There have been some previous attempts at focus-group-type meetings, but while I lived in Greenwood, these were never really kept going or acted upon. I hope the good people of Greenwood will give the Harvard group a chance, participate, cooperate, avoid getting defensive or offended, avoid criticizing too soon, seriously consider what everyone says, even "outsiders," and no more cheap shots about a fellow's name, please!

Read his diary about Shelby on the "Education World"

site. He is one of the "good guys."

Don Pierce  
Santa Fe, N.M.

### Community's children need mentors

Editor, Commonwealth:

I have chosen child mentoring as my senior topic at J.Z. George High School.

Child mentoring is very important in today's society. Most children do not have mentors to actually explain to them the factors of behavior.

Our community lacks mentors. We as children need mentors.

Mentoring may decrease the bad behavior rate. It also may help children to stay in school and raise their grades.

Kameshia Harris  
Carrollton

## APPENDIX E:

### PRESS RELEASES

January 5<sup>th</sup> Press Release



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Building Opportunities Together

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: Alice Abrokwa, 334-332-3106

January 5, 2009

Carl Allen, 732-242-2510

Babak Mostaghimi, 617-821-1221

#### THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT EXPLORES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES WITH GREENWOOD

(Greenwood, MS) From January 5 - 18, the Community Development Project (CDP), an organization of public policy graduate students who are committed to public service, will join residents of Greenwood's Baptist Town neighborhood to begin exploration of opportunities for economic revitalization. During the two-week visit, CDP members will conduct community workshops, a door-to-door community skills map, and meetings with Greenwood residents, business leaders, and government officials to understand the city's current strengths and challenges, as well as opportunities for economic development. CDP hopes its stay will eventually culminate in a sustainable partnership between Baptist Town and Greenwood residents who are invested in building a brighter future.

With a belief that America is a place where all individuals should have a chance to succeed, CDP supports towns like Greenwood whose residents are in a unique position to secure a better future for themselves. About one-third of Greenwood lives below the poverty line and recent plant closings and layoffs have exacerbated already high unemployment rates. The people of Greenwood, however, have been working to address some of these trends and promote economic opportunities. To this end, CDP believes Baptist Town is a starting point for further progress: "Successful community development begins with the people and requires uplifting all of a city's neighborhoods. Baptist Town can be the beginning for broader improvement to Greenwood and hopefully the Delta," said Babak Mostaghimi, a CDP project leader and former teacher in Shelby, Mississippi. "Its rich history of social activism and community building to this day reflects a capacity to create a better life for its families. CDP will complement this ability with additional resources, energy, and knowledge for long-lasting development."

Alice Abrokwa, CDP project member originally from Alabama, continued, "The ultimate goal is to build a collective vision for Baptist Town's future. Through a community skills map we will, for the first time, not only take into account Baptist Town's needs but also its resources. The larger community workshops will help generate ideas for and a vision of economic development in Greenwood by using lessons learned in other community development efforts across the nation. These activities, along with meetings with community members, will lay the foundation

for a partnership between community, business, and government leaders tasked with developing an action plan to create economic opportunities that match the skills and input of the residents.”

“We are excited to work with the people of Baptist Town, Greenwood, and the region. Sustainable development needs the hands of all individuals,” said Carl Allen, CDP project member and former Peace Corps volunteer. “As history has shown, successful attempts to strengthen a community are only possible when everyone impacted is involved and dedicated. Each individual has something to contribute in the economic development process. We encourage Baptist Town residents to join in these efforts and share their expertise with us at the community events and meetings.”

CDP, formed in 2007, is an organization of public policy graduate students from Harvard University committed to public service. CDP believes in linking civic engagement with economic development in underserved communities in order to produce sustainable community development. Though not officially part of the Harvard University, CDP draws on its networks and academic resources to inform its work.

*Please see the attached team member bios.*

###

January 16<sup>th</sup> Press Release



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Building Opportunities Together

For Immediate Release

January 16, 2009

Contacts: Alice Abrokwa, 334-332-3106

Carl Allen, 732-242-2510

Babak Mostaghimi, 617-821-1221

### Community Development Projects Begins Next Phase in Partnership with Greenwood

(Greenwood, MS) The Community Development Project (CDP), an organization of public policy graduate students who are committed to public service, will enter into the second phase of its work as it prepares to depart from Greenwood, MS. Between January 5 and 18, the CDP joined with Greenwood and Baptist Town residents in exploring the opportunities for economic and community development. Over the course of its stay, the CDP laid the groundwork for a sustainable partnership with Greenwood residents invested in building a brighter future. At the end of the initial phase of its work, the CDP:

- Conducted more than 40 in-depth interviews with Greenwood and Baptist Town residents, business leaders, government officials and public agencies about their perceptions of past development efforts, Greenwood's most pressing current issues, and their visions for the future of Greenwood and Baptist Town.
- Completed a community skills map, interviewing approximately 1/5 of Baptist Town residents. The map reveals the skills and talents of these residents as well as their needs.
- Brought together over 100 individuals through four community-wide workshops to reflect on Greenwood's biggest challenges and strengths and to develop a vision for the future of Greenwood and Baptist Town. Two of these workshops were centered on youth and their unique and vital perspectives.
- Engaged for countless hours getting to know Greenwood and Baptist Town through informal interactions and conversations.

"Though the first phase of our work," said Babak Mostaghimi, a CDP project leader and former teacher in Shelby, Mississippi, "we have heard citizens voice concerns about housing quality, lack of support for our youth, employment opportunities, neighborhood safety and cleanliness, and healthcare issues. But we have also seen an eagerness and willingness from individuals to work across boundaries like age and race to build a better Greenwood."

"Though we are leaving, we see these past two-weeks as just the beginning of our involvement with Greenwood and Baptist Town," said Alice Abrokwa, CDP project member originally from Alabama. "Shortly upon synthesizing the information we have gathered, CDP will begin to: 1)

develop partnerships all around the country which will bring resources and expertise to assist in efforts here ; 2) continue to support the collective efforts of Baptist Town residents to address key issues; and 3) increase the awareness of Greenwood and Baptist Town to a larger public.”

“We want to thank Greenwood for opening up their homes and sharing their thoughts and knowledge with us,” said Carl Allen, a CDP project member and former Peace Corps volunteer. “Over these two weeks we have met truly amazing people and have felt the immense hospitality, history and sense of community pride that are the hallmarks of this city. The CDP members feel energized and ready to begin a productive partnership with Baptist Town and Greenwood as an example of how grassroots community development efforts can achieve success.”

*CDP, formed in 2007, is an organization of public policy graduate students from Harvard University committed to public service. CDP believes in linking civic engagement with economic development in underserved communities in order to produce sustainable community development. Though not officially part of the Harvard University, CDP draws on its networks and academic resources to inform its work.*

# APPENDIX F:

## CDP INTERVIEW FORMS

### Community Skills Map

BAPTIST TOWN COMMUNITY SKILLS MAP: Form A- SIDE 1

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

Interviewer Names: \_\_\_\_\_



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECT

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### PRIVACY STATEMENT:

Your participation in this community skills map is completely voluntary and you can choose to not to answer a question at any time by saying "Next question." The Community Development Project will not share any information which could identify you (like your name or address) with your responses to this skills map unless you give us your permission.

#### SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. How old are you? 15-19  20-24  25-34  35-44  45-54  55-64  65+
2. Observe gender.  Male  Female
3. Educational level:  
Less than 9th grade  African American or Black, Not Hispanic   
9th to 12th grade, no diploma  White, Not Hispanic   
High school graduate (including GED)  Hispanic or Latino   
Some college, no degree  Asian   
Associate degree  American Indian and Alaska Native   
Technical degree  Two or more races   
Bachelor's degree  Other   
Graduate or professional degree
4. What race/ethnicity do you think of yourself as?  
5. Marital Status:  
Married   
Unmarried partner   
Single   
Divorced   
Widowed
6. Employed?  Yes  No Current or Last Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of time in this job: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION 2: FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

- Do you have kids?  Yes  No If so, how many? Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_ Are they in school?  Yes  No
- If so, how old are they?  Infant-5 yrs  6-12 yrs  13-18 yrs  19-25 yrs  26-34 yrs If so, what grade(s)?  
 Infant-5 yrs  6-12 yrs  13-18 yrs  19-25 yrs  26-34 yrs Length of time family in Greenwood:  
 Infant-5 yrs  6-12 yrs  13-18 yrs  19-25 yrs  26-34 yrs  
 Infant-5 yrs  6-12 yrs  13-18 yrs  19-25 yrs  26-34 yrs Length of time in this house:  
 Infant-5 yrs  6-12 yrs  13-18 yrs  19-25 yrs  26-34 yrs Parents live in home?  
 Yes  No
- Have you lived outside Greenwood?  Yes  No If so, Where last? \_\_\_\_\_ Length of time parents lived in Greenwood: \_\_\_\_\_
- Friends or family living outside Greenwood?  Yes  No Parents' Former Occupation(s), If Any: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION 3: DAY-TO-DAY LIVING *Describe interviewee's daily routine (daily activities and where they go to meet daily household needs) and free time*

- Own your own car?  Yes  No How else do you get around? \_\_\_\_\_
- Travel outside Baptist Town:  Daily  Weekly/Bi-weekly  Monthly  Rarely

#### SECTION 4: CIVIC INVOLVEMENT AND NETWORKS

*Describe extent of interviewee's involvement and name organization/group*

Are you or any of your family members involved in....

Local church?

Youth organization? (ex: Boy/Girl Scouts, after-school program)

Volunteer Organization?

Parent Teacher Association?

Athletic team/group?

Other?

*List people in interviewee's network, relationship to interviewee and skills*

NETWORKS IN BAPTIST TOWN:

NETWORKS OUTSIDE BAPTIST TOWN:

**BAPTIST TOWN COMMUNITY SKILLS MAP: Form A- SIDE 2**

Indicate length of time with skills mentioned and use blank space to explain how Interviewee was trained or if they know where to go to gain more experience; if working, note if and how they use skills in job.



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**SECTION 5: SKILLS AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

Describe any other skills:

Top Skills: (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Experience in: Length of time w/ skill (Write "Y" in one blank):

Construction, Manufacturing, Trans. < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

<input type="checkbox"/> Installations/General repair	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Painting and plastering walls	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roofing	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Welding	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Truck driving/other transport	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other: _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Have you ever taught anyone these skills?  Yes  No  
 Do neighbors pay you for skills?  Yes  No  
 Would they be willing to?  Yes  No  Not Sure  
 Skill(s) you would like to learn:

Sales and Service occupations: < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

<input type="checkbox"/> Hairdressing	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caregiving	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Food Services	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Office work	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and public services	_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Retail	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other: _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

I learned about current/last job from:

- Friend or Relative
- Neighbor
- Newspaper/ad
- Online

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of longest job: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe last work experience:

Farming, Fishing, Forestry: < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

Did you receive health insurance in this job?  Yes  No  
 Best/worst things about working in Greenwood:

Management, Professional, Educ. < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

Are you aware of the EITC program?  Yes  No  
 Have you ever received the EITC?  Yes  No  
 Do you know anyone who could help you file the EITC?  Yes  No  Not Sure

Health, Social Services, Govt.: < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

**SECTION 6: POLITICAL FEELINGS**

Self-Employed: < 1 year 1-5 years 5-10 yr 10+ yrs

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

**PERMISSION TO INCLUDE IDENTIFYING INFORMATION WITH RESPONSES:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission to the Community Development Project to include my name and address with these responses. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER NOTES:**

# Columbo Stakeholders Interview Form



COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEW FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

Interviewer(s) Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIVACY STATEMENT:** *Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary and you can choose to not answer a question at any time. While we would greatly appreciate using your person and statements in our analysis and recommendations we understand if you would like to withhold use of your identity. Please indicate if you would like to withhold identity: Yes/No*

### INTRODUCTION SCRIPT :

- 1). Hello, Mr/Mrs \_\_\_\_\_, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and this is \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with us today. We know you must be very busy, so we'll try to keep this brief. As you may know, we're a part of a larger group of students from Boston who have been tasked by the mayor to investigate possibilities for the economic development of Baptist Town and Greenwood as a whole. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Baptist Town and Greenwood over the upcoming months and possibly years. Currently, we're here for two weeks doing a number of things: meeting the community, holding a few focused economic development brainstorming sessions, conducting a job skills survey in Baptist Town and finally interviewing community leaders – which is why we're here with you. From this interview, we'd like to get a picture of Greenwood and Baptist Town's past and present, who have been the individuals/organizations spearheading economic development efforts, what has worked and what hasn't, and what you see as the possibilities for the future of Greenwood and Baptist Town. After our time here, we hope to produce a set of recommendations which we'll share with all the community leaders we've spoken with – and then we'll decide where to go from there.
- 2). Are there any questions you have up front about us or anything I've said?
- 3). Would it be alright if we tape-recorded the conversation? I should also say that if there's anything you'd like to be officially "off the record," you just let us know and we'll turn off the recorder. Thank you.

### Section 1: Personal Information

1. What's your name? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where do you live in Greenwood? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you originally from Greenwood? If not, where? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3a. If not, what led you to Greenwood? \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2: Role/Influence

1. What is your profession/job? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your education level? \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3: Picture of the Past** – *In this part we would like to hear your opinions on past efforts to develop Greenwood and Baptist Town. In particular, we'd like to hear about successes, failures and the people you believe guided these efforts.*

1. Name what you think are Greenwood and Baptist Towns most important resources/assets and challenges and how they have figured into previous development efforts? \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3: Picture of the Past** – *In this part we would like to hear your opinions on past efforts to develop Greenwood and Baptist Town. In particular, we'd like to hear about successes, failures and the people you believe guided these efforts.*

1. Name what you think are Greenwood and Baptist Towns most important resources/assets and challenges and how they have figured into previous development efforts? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4: Understanding the Present** – *After having talked about the past, we'd like to hear your opinions about current efforts and the individuals leading them. Talk to us about who you consider to be decision-makers, leaders and organizers – those that have influence and get things done...*

1. What organizations/individuals, new and old, do you think are doing the most work to improve BT? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1a. If none in BT, what about Greenwood? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What's your opinion of the effectiveness of government/boards/committees and the various development agencies and business groups? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4: Towards the Future** – *In this section we'd like to discuss the economic potential of BT and Greenwood and what types of activity you'd like to see and who it should lead it. In addition, we'd like you to indicate how Greenwood could leverage its resources to achieve the efforts you speak about.*

1. What do you think of the short and long term economic prospects for the region? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How will Greenwood/Baptist Town tap into or contribute to the broader economy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Are there any particular projects or programs that you consider absolutely necessary for Greenwood's future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 5: Potential for a Taskforce** – Finally, we would like to discuss the idea of building a local entity that focuses on developing BT and strengthening connections to Greenwood. This entity, which we refer to as a Taskforce, is similar to a community association. However, its members would come from a larger, more diverse base. The taskforce is just one idea, if you have other ideas on ways to nurture development in BT we would love to hear them.

1. What do you think of the idea of forming a Baptist Town Taskforce? What should its focus/mission be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Would it get enough support from key people and groups to last? What conflicts of interest might arise with such a group? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What would be the key skills/capacities/assets/support that such a group would need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Whose buy-in/approval/support would be absolutely necessary for this group idea to move forward? Who else would have a lot to contribute to such a group? Could we contact them to do an interview like this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

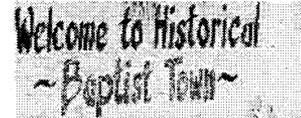
5. How could this group be accessible to all citizens, and do you think that type of representation is necessary? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX G:

OUTREACH TO BAPTIST TOWN



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
Building Opportunities Together



*You are invited...*

*to a Banquet to Celebrate Baptist Town  
Hosted by Community Development Project \*\**

*Fri. Jan 16th, 6PM  
Greenwood Youth Center*

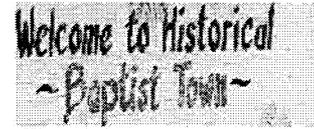
*Thank you for welcoming us to your community and sharing your ideas. We hope you can  
join us to celebrate all that we've learned and all that we look forward to learning  
together in the future.*

*See you there,  
CDP*

*\* Dinner will be served  
If any questions, please contact Olo at (319) 594-0574*



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**  
Building Opportunities Together



## INTERESTED IN HELPING BAPTIST TOWN GROW?

### Who we are

The Community Development Project (CDP) is a diverse group of public policy graduate students from Boston, Massachusetts who are committed to public service. We believe people deserve opportunities to provide for their children, live in decent neighborhoods, and build strong communities. We support local efforts in uplifting communities.

### Why we are here

Baptist Town and Greenwood hold a special place in America. Work done in this community in pursuit of civil rights, a rich musical tradition and cotton production contributed to the America we know today. But roughly 1/3 of Greenwood residents live in poverty and recent economic hard times have made many families struggle even more.

**TO BUILD A BETTER, BRIGHTER FUTURE, THE VOICES AND IDEAS OF BAPTIST TOWN & GREENWOOD RESIDENTS MUST BE HEARD AND TURNED INTO ACTION**

### WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE YOUR VOICE AND YOUR IDEAS!

*Between January 5-18, CDP will be joining Greenwood and Baptist Town residents to learn from and partner with you, business leaders and elected officials to build a vision for creating better opportunities. We look forward to meeting you at the following events:*

- ◆ **MEET AND GREET**  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 8TH, 5:30 - 6:30 PM  
MCKINNEY FELLOWSHIP HALL
- ◆ **FRONT PORCH COMMUNITY SKILLS MAPPING:**  
*How can you contribute to better Greenwood?*  
BEGINNING WEEK OF JANUARY 12
- ◆ **BAPTIST TOWN DISCUSSION ON GREENWOOD'S FUTURE**  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13TH, 6 - 7:30 PM  
MCKINNEY FELLOWSHIP HALL

*For more information or to get involved, please contact Terrence McDonough at 617-777-2395 or [terrence.mcdonough@gmail.com](mailto:terrence.mcdonough@gmail.com).*

## APPENDIX H:

### CHALLENGES AND DREAMS OF BAPTIST TOWN RESIDENTS<sup>3</sup>

#### Challenges We Face

- **Youth:** Not enough role models, inadequate play areas and afterschool activities; teen pregnancy, truancy and high school dropouts (particularly young men), negative peer pressure
- **Housing:** Substandard housing, need home maintenance skills, house fires
- **Community Building / Attitudes:** Too little outside-the-box thinking, lack of unity in Baptist Town, not enough activities for people, problems with self-respect and confidence, lack of motivation, racism, peer pressure, not welcoming to outsiders
- **Health:** Smokers, drugs, health, STDs, teen pregnancy, drinking
- **Elders:** Disabled community members, lack of transportation for elderly
- **Neighborhood Safety:** Violence and guns, robbery, trespassing, littering and trash, gangs, poorly lit streets
- **Poverty**

#### Our Dreams / Visions for Our Future

- **Youth:** Summer camps and camping trips for our kids to see and experience new things; children playing; positive activities for 3-14 year olds so they can act like kids; a park with activities for kids, benches, and barbecues; arts program (e.g., dances, plays), big brother-big sister mentoring; more children in schools, less teen pregnancy, less truancy
- **Housing:** New housing development, better homes, renovated housing
- **Community Building / Attitudes:** Community pride; community centers with youth activities; adult and teen education center; self-respect; businesses, government and citizens coming together; community involvement; a community accepting of outsiders, look out for elders better
- **Neighborhood Safety:** Speed limit enforcement, clean lots and curbs, adequate street lighting, peaceful sounding, no violence, litter-free streets, lower crime rates, increased public works, neighborhood watch
- **Job Creation:** Career development center, better and more jobs, technology training beyond the factory level, job training that creates jobs in the community; job skills workshops (e.g., carpentry, cashiering, computer skills, auto repair and maintenance)

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<sup>3</sup> This is not the full list of dreams, challenges, strengths, and strategies enumerate by Baptist Town and Greenwood citizens.