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# Seen and Sheltered: Effective Responses to NIMBYISM

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*In partnership with*

**The New York Asian Women's Center**

**and**

**The Workplace Project**



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## **Seen and Sheltered: Effective Responses to NIMBYISM**

*A report by Margaret Abraham and Gregory M. Maney (Department of Sociology, Hofstra University) in partnership with the New York Asian Women's Center and the Workplace Project*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report examines opposition faced by two community organizations seeking to establish facilities and services for immigrants. NIMBYism (Not in My Backyard) is a community-identified issue and concern negatively affecting the well-being of both victims/survivors of domestic violence seeking support and safe spaces for shelter and day laborers seeking safe, accessible public spaces for organizing and searching for employment. The objectives of our research were to learn lessons from past campaigns and to offer recommendations for better practices that can assist community organizations in providing much needed services to marginalized and vulnerable populations while also enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

The two cases that we chose to examine were an effort by the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC) to establish a domestic violence shelter, and an effort by the Workplace Project to establish an official hiring site for day laborers. In both cases, advocacy organizations sought to empower marginalized and vulnerable immigrant populations. In both cases, NIMBYism and the response to NIMBYism involved publicly elected and appointed officials, courts, police, journalists, activists, clergy, and foundations. The two cases, however, differed in terms of their outcomes, the type of services proposed, the population served, and the demographics of the project location. This combination of similarities and differences make a comparison especially useful in pinpointing factors contributing to effective responses to NIMBYISM.

We collected several sources of data, including social science and activist literatures on collective organized responses to NIMBYISM; archived documentation; surveys of organizational staff; and focus groups with some of those who played integral roles in the leadership teams of the advocacy organizations. The following are some recommendations to address the issues identified based on the literature review and the findings from our study:

#### **Recommendation 1: Ensure that any Facility Planning Anticipates a Range of Possible Community Reactions.**

- Learn about the neighborhood, its demographics and contextual history
- Research major stakeholders, including potential targets, allies, and opponents
- Consider “unanticipated consequences” in the planning process, including potential objections and defenders of the status quo
- Understand and be mindful of institutional rules and processes
- Verify that the project meets any zoning and “re-zoning” requirements
- Identify and establish linkages to broader issues that can support the project
- Work with professional consultants that have experience with similar projects
- Develop a positive message about the project at the outset that is likely to play well with general audiences

**Recommendation 2: Locate and Sustain Allies to Ensure Support for the Project**

- Find people in the neighborhood to champion the project
- Garner support from potential allies by providing them with information that will enable them to support the project and address potential opposition
- Use opposition as a rallying cry to mobilize supporters
- Publicly support allies who are confronted by opponents
- Practice strong cross-culturally competent facilitation to ensure open, authoritative deliberation among diverse constituencies

**Recommendation 3: Consult and Work with Local Officials Early in the Process.**

- Learn where elected politicians and relevant government agencies stand on the issue and their public track record
- Reach out to those who can give you what you want early in the process
- Identify and publicize policy precedents and authoritative political rhetoric that public officials can use to justify their support for the project

**Recommendation 4: Develop Advisory Boards**

- Work with officials to develop advisory boards so that stakeholders, including opponents, can participate in the consultation process
- Where possible, avoid community forums that can provide opportunities for opponents to pressure or manipulate targets. Devote all possible resources to mobilizing constituents and allies to be a visible, respectful presence at such forums where unavoidable

**Recommendation 5: Manage the Media in Ways that Increase Support**

- Include spokespeople sharing characteristics in common with most residents
- Define service users as valuable members of the community, as facing a social problem that they are not responsible for, and as deserving of support so that journalists can use this framing in their coverage of the campaign
- Provide fact sheets to journalists to encourage accurate reporting. Request that journalists correct factual errors

**Recommendation 6: Build Trust for Community Acceptance**

- Develop a long-term strategy for reducing opposition through public education
- Provide information that encourages community acceptance and that addresses misinformation and unfounded fears
- Engage in both listening and talking with opponents throughout the process
- Educate the community about the needs and rights of those seeking services
- Develop through literature distribution and other activities an expanded notion of citizenship that is more inclusive and addresses the problems of stereotyping and discriminatory practices
- Where appropriate and safe, facilitate informal, equal status interactions between service users and other residents
- To better avoid the tendency to drop public education in the face of crises, provide/secure funding for a staff member whose primary responsibilities focus upon public outreach

## **Visto y Apoyado: Respuestas Efectivas al NIMBYism**

*Un reporte por Margaret Abraham y Gregory M. Maney (Departamento de Sociología, Hofstra University) en colaboración con el Centro de Mujeres Asiáticas de Nueva York y el Centro de Derechos Laborales*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (SPANISH)**

Este reporte examina la oposición enfrentada por dos organizaciones comunitarias que buscaban establecer facilidades y servicios para inmigrantes. El NIMBYismo (por sus siglas en ingles, Not in My Backyard, o No En Mi Patio) es un tema identificado por la comunidad y una preocupación que afecta de forma negativa a los victimas/sobrevivientes de la violencia domestica, que buscan apoyo y lugares seguros para refugiarse y los jornaleros que buscan lugares seguros y accesibles para organizarse y buscar empleo. Los objetivos de nuestra investigación consistían en aprender lecciones de las campañas previas y buscar recomendaciones para mejores prácticas que pueden ayudarle a las organizaciones comunitarias a proveer los servicios que necesitan las poblaciones marginadas y vulnerables mientras mejoran la calidad de vida de todos los residentes.

Los dos casos que escogimos para examinar eran un esfuerzo del Centro de Mujeres Asiáticas de Nueva York (NYAWC) para establecer un refugio para victimas de violencia domestica y un esfuerzo por el Centro de Derechos Laborales de establecer un sitio oficial de contratación para jornaleros. En los dos casos, el NIMBYismo y la respuesta al NIMBYismo involucraron a los oficiales elegidos y nombrados, cortes, policías, periodistas, activistas, clérigos, y fundaciones. Los dos casos tuvieron resultados diferentes en cuantos a sus resultados, el tipo de servicio propuesto, la población servida, y las características demográficas del lugar donde se proponía el proyecto. Esta combinación de similitudes y diferencias hacen que la comparación sea especialmente útil en encontrar factores que contribuyeron a las respuestas efectivas al NIMBYismo.

Colectamos información de varias Fuentes, incluyendo artículos de la ciencia social y activistas acerca de las respuestas colectivas organizadas al NIMBYismo; documentación de archivos; encuestas del personal de las organizaciones y grupos de enfoque. Con algunas personas que jugaron papeles importantes en los equipos de liderazgo de las organizaciones activistas. Lo que sigue son algunas recomendaciones para enfrentar los temas identificados en la literatura y lo que encontramos por medio de nuestro estudio:

#### **Recomendación 1: Asegurar que Cualquier Planificación para un Proyecto Anticipa un Rango Amplio de Posibles Reacciones de la Comunidad**

- Aprenda acerca del vecindario, su área demográfica, y su historia contextual
- Investigue los participantes mas importantes, incluyendo los posibles blancos, aliados y opositores
- Tome en consideración las posibles “consecuencias no anticipadas” en el proceso de planificación, incluyendo las posibles objetores y defensores del estatus quo.

- Entienda y tome en cuenta las reglas institucionales y procedimientos
- Verifique que el proyecto cumple con cualquier requisito de la “zonificación” de esta área
- Identifique y establezca conexiones a temas mas amplios que podrían apoyar al proyecto.
- Trabaje con consultantes profesionales que tienen experiencia con proyectos similares.
- Desarrolle un mensaje positivo acerca del proyecto, algo que pueda atraer a audiencias generales.

### **Recomendación 2: Localize y Sostenga a Aliados para Asegurar Apoyo para el Proyecto**

- Encuentren a gente en el vecindario que van a ser campeones para el proyecto
- Busque apoyo de aliados posibles, por medio de proveerles información que permitirá que ellos apoyen el proyecto y enfrenten a la posible oposición.
- Use la oposición como una coyuntura para movilizar a los apoyantes.
- Apoye públicamente a los aliados que son enfrentados por los opositores
- Practique una forma de facilitación del proceso que integre a las culturas diferentes para asegurar que haya una consideración abierta y fuerte entre las diferentes constituyencias.

### **Recomendación 3: Consulte y Trabaje con Oficiales Elegidos Locales al Principio del Proceso**

- Aprenda que posición tienen los oficiales elegidos y las agencias del gobierno local y su historial de votación.
- Haga alcance a los que pueden darle lo que uno quiere temprano en el proceso.
- Identifique y publique antecedentes políticos y mensajes claros y fuertes que los oficiales elegidos pueden usar para justificar su apoyo para el proyecto.

### **Recomendación 4: Desarrolle Juntas de Asesoría**

- Trabaje con los oficiales para desarrollar juntas de asesores para que los que están interesados en el proceso, incluyendo los opositores, puedan participar en el proceso de consulta
- Donde sea posible, evite los foros comunitarios que proveen oportunidades para los opositores que presionen o manipulen los oficiales. Enfoque todos los recursos posibles a movilizar a los constituyentes y aliados para ser una presencia visible y respetuosa en esos foros cuando no se puede evitar.

### **Recomendación 5: Maneje los Medios en una Forma que Aumenta el Apoyo**

- Incluya a voceros que tienen características en común con muchos de los residentes.
- Defina a los que usaran el servicio como miembros valiosos de la comunidad, quienes enfrentan un problema social que no han causado, y que merecen apoyo, para que los periodistas puedan usar este marco en su cobertura de la campaña.
- Provea hojas informativas para los periodistas, para promover la información correcta. Pida que los periodistas corrijan cualquier error de información.

**Recomendación 6: Construya la Confianza para que Acepte de Comunidad**

- Desarrolle una estrategia al largo plazo para reducir la oposición por medio de la educación publica
- Provea información que promueve el entendimiento de la comunidad y que enfrenta la mala información y los temores.
- Asegúrese de escuchar y hablar con los opositores, durante todo el proceso.
- Eduque a la comunidad acerca de las necesidades y los derechos de los que buscan servicios.
- Use distribución de literatura y otras actividades para desarrollar un concepto mas amplio de la ciudadanía, que es mas participativo, y que contesta a los problemas de estereotipos y practicas discriminatorias.
- Donde es apropiado y seguro, facilite reuniones entre los que usan el servicio y los otros residentes, donde sean de estatus igual, e informales.
- Para evitar la tendencia de dejar a un lado la educación publica en el momento de crisis, proveer o conseguir fondos para un miembro del personal que tenga responsabilidad primaria de enfocar en el alcance al público.



## INTRODUCTION

Municipalities throughout the U.S. have witnessed strong, organized opposition to meeting the increasing need for affordable housing, quality jobs, and safe public spaces for marginalized and vulnerable immigrant populations. One form that this opposition takes is popularly known as NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard). NIMBYism is “the protectionist attitudes and exclusionary/opposition tactics adopted by community groups facing an unwelcome development in their neighborhood” (Dear 1992: 1). When taken together, studies of NIMBYism reveal its dualities and contradictory dimensions (e.g., White and Ashton 1992). Residents opposing facilities can be motivated by values such as environmental sustainability, democratic accountability, and social equality. Prejudice and stereotypes of less powerful social groups can also motivate opposition. Some scholars have challenged the utility of NIMBYism as a label for opposition to the siting of social service facilities (e.g., Heiman 1990; Piller 1991; Lake 1993; Rabe 1994). We agree that the NIMBY label should not necessarily imply selfish or illegitimate motives on the part of opponents. A dispassionate understanding of residents’ perceptions and motivations better facilitates social change by helping service advocates and policy makers to constructively address concerns.

NIMBYs often view themselves as the custodians or guardians of place. Initiatives to share space in new ways that support marginalized and vulnerable groups can be actively resisted by NIMBYs as unwelcome and undesirable changes in their neighborhoods. Responses to NIMBY movements require the attention of those interested in effectively addressing social problems and promoting social justice. Although the impact of cases of NIMBY varies according to construction of the issue, the neighborhood contexts, the stakeholders and powerholders involved, and the nature of resistance, NIMBY opposition can have serious consequences for immigrant populations. It can lead to increased financial costs, delays in, and even the denial of affordable housing, safe public spaces, and services for those in need. It exacerbates tensions and hostilities among groups and communities in neighborhoods. It can reinforce common myths and stereotypes that contribute to oppressive and exclusive public policies and resident practices.

Community based organizations that support ethnic minority immigrant victims/survivors of domestic violence and workers participating in day labor markets frequently encounter NIMBYism. Public statements portraying immigrants as criminal, dangerous, and undeserving of sympathy or services reinforce and rationalize concerns over declining property values, increased

taxes, rising unemployment, higher crime rates, and diminished quality of life. Racial and class segregation, the transient nature of shelter residence and temporary employment, and the use of spaces in unexpected ways—all fuel mistrust and misunderstandings of those perceived as outsiders belonging to unfamiliar cultures. These structural and cultural obstacles impede the efforts of community-based organizations to provide neighborhood-friendly housing and official hiring sites that promote the human security of shelter residents and day laborers respectively.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW: FREQUENT RESPONSES TO NIMBYISM**

A wide range of forms and sources of NIMBY campaigns have been identified. Neighborhood-based organizations have mobilized in opposition to hazardous waste and waste transfer facilities, certain types of industrial facilities, energy facilities, transit facilities, large scale agricultural operations, detention centers, busing, needle exchange programs, mental health facilities, and a range of housing facilities (e.g., subsidized dwellings, group homes for people with serious mental illnesses or other disabilities, halfway houses, and housing for people who are homeless). Unfortunately, few studies have addressed the effectiveness of responses to such opposition. The available research suggests that common approaches to preventing and responding to NIMBYism are either ineffective or fraught with dilemmas.

Given the frequent expression of concerns about property values, some analysts have proposed various compensatory schemes, including property tax credits and funding for local schools and roads, property value guarantees, and home value insurance (Bacot, Bowen, and Fitzgerald 1994; Zeiss and Atwater 1989; Fischel 2001). Other studies, however, suggest that these schemes do not reduce opposition based upon ideological grounds and, if anything, intensify resistance by contributing to distrust and by underscoring the costs of the facility (Kunreuther et al. 1990; Portney 1991; Kasperson, Golding, and Tuler 1992; Frey, Oberholzer-Gee, and Eichenberger 1996; Schively 2007).

The presentation of scientific evidence by experts suggesting that proposed facilities pose minimal risks to the health and safety of residents typically does not decrease opposition. Contradictory evidence presented by different experts can deepen a sense of uncertainty and mistrust (Strike, Myers, and Millson 2004). Opponents often either do not believe the experts or bring in experts sharing their opinions (Kunreuther and Patrick 1991; Graber & Aldrich 1993; Kearney and Smith 1994; Busenberg 1999; Futrell 2003).

Other frequent responses to NIMBYISM carry likely costs that call their advisability into question. Municipal control over land use provides opponents with opportunities to exclude facilities (Clingermayer 1994; Judd and Swanstrom 1998). One response has been to trump the power of local authorities through Federal intervention. Oakley (2002), for instance, found that intervention by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development was critical to the establishment of a housing development for homeless persons. The author also notes other cases where housing facility proponents have successfully challenged local zoning laws in Federal court. If campaign statements and cabinet nominations are indicative, we expect Federal support for proposed service facilities for immigrants to increase under the Obama administration. The potential downside to external intervention is that it enhances the ability of opponents to attract national-level support, including funding, staff, research, and advice on strategy (Frey and Oberholzer-Gee 1996). In effect, a local dispute becomes a national test-case. National organizations supportive of strict immigration laws continue to see large amounts of funding, enabling them to devote considerable time and effort to a range of campaigns.

Another dilemma that service proponents face is whether or not to engage residents in discussion at the onset of their projects. Some proponents choose not to do so in efforts to lay low and secure victory before opponents are alerted to their initiatives (Rabe 1994). Others fear that notifying the public of service facilities violates service users' rights to confidentiality. In the case of domestic violence shelters, maintaining confidentiality is essential to the safety of clients. Educational efforts to de-stigmatize service users are long-term projects that drain valuable organizational resources. In the meantime, badly needed services are not being provided. Moreover, addressing residents' concerns can give the impression that facilities proponents must achieve consensus and, therefore, secure approval from opponents before proceeding. Nonetheless, a failure to engage residents in dialogue and include them in decision-making from the onset strengthens and rigidifies opposition (Kasperson, Golding, and Tuler 1992; Lober 1995). Residents often become angry when a service facility is approved by authorities without prior consultation (Leroy and Nadler 1993; Rabe 1994).

Another common response to opposition is to locate service facilities in areas acceptable to most residents (Easterling and Kunreuther 1995; Strike, Myers, and Millson 2004). These areas tend to either be commercial or industrial or highly impoverished (Boone and Modarres 1999; Arnold 2000; Maantay 2002). As such these areas are often not acceptable to service users

or beneficial to their well-being because of the lack of employment opportunities and quality public services. Even if service proponents are willing, locating facilities in deprived areas reinforces the class and often racially/ ethnically-based stigmatization of both long-time residents and service-users, as the most vulnerable enter the most marginalized neighborhoods.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Team and Focus

This report is the result of the action research project on NIMBYism encountered by two community organizations—*The New York Asian Women's Center* and *The Workplace Project*—that sought to create spaces and services for immigrants. NIMBYism is a community-identified issue and concern given the experiences of both victims/survivors of domestic violence seeking support and safe spaces for shelter and day laborers seeking safe, accessible public spaces for organizing and searching for employment. Nonetheless, both organizations admitted that they had not spent much time developing ways to prevent or respond to NIMBYism. As is typical in the non-profit world, a lack of resources and staff combined with a high volume of needs among the serviced population makes sustained planning difficult.

In this context, the community organizations voiced to the action researchers a strong desire to learn lessons from past campaigns and to develop a set of promising practices for future campaigns. Our research team was most interested in answering the following four questions:

- (1) What are the main strategies used by community organizations to respond to NIMBYISM?;
- (2) Which strategies have helped to secure desired policy changes, which haven't, and why?;
- (3) What are the major recurring dilemmas in responding to NIMBYISM?; and
- (4) What strategies have most effectively reconciled or transcended these dilemmas?

An important aspect of the research is to facilitate critical and constructive self-evaluation, highlighting organizational strengths and efficacious collective action. Heightened awareness of strengths and better practices should assist NYAWC and the Workplace Project in pre-empting and responding to efforts to exclude immigrant populations that both groups support and organize. At the macro level, we hope that such a report will help our community partners to shift public policy away from laissez-faire or prohibitive responses to immigrants towards more proactive, inclusive responses such as shelters for abused women and children and official hiring sites for day laborers.

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

We collected several sources of data. The academic partners searched and summarized the social science and activist literatures on collective organized responses to NIMBYISM (see above). The community partners collected archived documentation related to their work and experiences (e.g., newspaper articles, official statements, and minutes of meetings). Next, the academic partners administered surveys to organizational staff and conducted focus groups with some of those who played integral roles in the projects' leadership teams. Beyond answering our four research questions, the survey and focus group instruments (available upon request) were designed with three additional goals in mind. First, respondents/participants were asked a series of questions designed to establish a timeline of the campaign. In so doing, we sought to better understand the sequences and processes through which advocates engaged authorities, opponents, and bystanders. Second, we asked questions based upon what social movements research suggests promotes effective strategy (e.g., leadership composition, organizational structure, and decision making). In so doing, we not only assessed the relevance of these factors to the outcomes of the campaigns, but also encouraged a greater focus by advocates upon these factors in reference to future efforts to establish other facilities. Third, the academic partners asked questions regarding what the community partners thought were important lessons from their experiences. In so doing, they hoped to better understand the outcomes of their campaigns and to share these insights with other community organizations. The archival data was analyzed by the academic partners. Survey responses across organizations were merged and compared. The focus group discussions were transcribed and analyzed using the qualitative software package NVivo!

## **Cases and Contexts**

In an effort to better answer the four questions raised above, we asked our community partners to select cases that differed in terms of the degree of the success of their efforts to locate service facilities.<sup>1</sup> The two cases selected are: (1) the New York Asian Women's Center's (NYAWC) establishment of a specific domestic violence shelter, and (2) the Workplace Project's proposed creation of an official hiring site for day laborers. Although both organizations work with

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<sup>1</sup> The Workplace Project subsequently led a successful campaign to establish a worker center in another municipality in the County.

marginalized and vulnerable populations and a common goal is the provision of safe spaces, services and empowerment, their experiences provide two different contexts to compare NIMBYism. Beyond their contrasting outcomes, the cases also differ in terms of the type of services proposed, the population served, and the demographics of the project location.

For the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC), opposition was sparked by their purchase in June 2003 of a four family brownstone house to be converted into a twenty bed residence primarily for Asian battered women and their children. This specific building was a corner property located in an urban residential neighborhood, in a block predominantly owned by Italian Americans. However, the broader neighborhood had a mix of long-time Italian American residents and upwardly mobile professionals who owned these brownstones as well as rentals occupied by younger people in their twenties. The area had good schools and was perceived as a safe place with easy access to shops and most amenities. Gentrification had increased the value and the prices of homes in this urban neighborhood.

The renovation of the brownstone house by a Chinese construction crew initiated a series of questions to the construction crew on “whether some kind of program” was coming. Further inquiry led to the discovery by neighbors of the plan to open a shelter for abused women and their children. Soon thereafter, in an attempt to force the shelter to relocate by breaching confidentiality, some neighbors publicized the shelter’s location through fliers, banners, and websites. Residents felt that they should have been informed and consulted prior to the purchase of the property. Community meetings were held, dozens of people picketed in front of the shelter, attempts were made at restraining orders to stop the shelter opening, and threats were made to publicize the shelter location in the ethnic press. Although the resistance by opponents of the shelter was partially framed as a potential threat to the safety and security of the elderly and children in this residential neighborhood, a considerable amount of the opposition was also based on racial and ethnic, class and gender stereotyping. However, it is important to note, that there were also members in the community who supported the NYAWC and demonstrated their support at community meetings, through letters and articles in the media. For its part, the NYAWC devoted considerable time, resources and energies in addressing the opposition of neighbors, answering questions on safety, and explaining to their funders and the public the importance of continuing support for the shelter. They defended the right and importance of this location and were finally successful in opening the shelter. Over the last few years, the New

York Asian Women's Center has not experienced NIMBYism and is actively engaged in community building and service provision. It has not encountered issues with neighbors or safety issues at the shelter and hopes to use the lessons learned for opening more shelters.

The second case involves the Workplace Project's initiative to create a worker center for day laborers searching for employment. Taking place in public spaces, day labor markets bring contractors looking for low-skilled to semi-skilled manual labor for small contracts often lasting only a day together with workers willing to provide this type of flexible labor. An informal day labor market formed along a major thoroughfare in Huntingport.<sup>2</sup> Some residents objected to this market. As with the NYAWC case, it is important to note that several members of the community supported the day laborers at community meetings as well as through letters and articles in the media.

Based upon complaints received, the mayor of Huntingport announced that after a certain date it would be illegal to stand on a corner and search for employment. Seeing flyers announcing the change in policy, some of the day laborers contacted the Workplace Project and requested their assistance. In an effort to bring about a negotiated settlement to the dispute, day laborers supported by the Workplace Project proposed the establishment of a worker center. Worker centers are official hiring sites sanctioned by the local government and funded through public-private partnerships. These sites typically provide sheltered facilities with bathrooms. Day laborers at the sites generally agree to a minimum fee schedule for various jobs, and are selected for work either on a first come-first serve or lottery system.

Opposition to the worker center was likely intensified by its proposed location in an area whose demographics differed considerably from our first case. Instead of being urban, the municipality is suburban, with 8,399 residents according to the 2000 Census. Rather than being racially diverse, 87% of residents were listed as "White." The lack of regular interaction across socioeconomic and cultural differences most likely heightened fears and anxieties regarding the unexpected use of public space by less familiar social groups. While rental housing existed, 43.7% of housing units were single-family owner-occupied homes. The values and prices of these homes were relatively modest, with a median value of \$212,000 compared to \$242,300 for the entire County. As a result, it is likely that more residents felt their material interests were

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<sup>2</sup> In an effort to protect the confidentiality of the service users and organizers, we use pseudonyms for the locations of both cases.



severely threatened by the hiring site than in a municipality with a large rental housing stock and rapidly increasing property values.

Nonetheless, through a series of well-publicized protests by day laborers, the Workplace Project was initially successful in getting the mayor of Huntingport to permit a hiring site on public property. Less than a year later, however, the mayor reversed his decision under pressure from a vocal group of residents led by the Concerned Citizens Association of Huntingport. Residents stated their opposition mostly in terms of safety concerns, opposing law breaking behavior, preserving a high quality of life, and protecting home values. Negative gender, ethnic, and class-based stereotypes of day laborers also frequently appeared in their statements.

Eventually, a site was then opened in the adjacent municipality of West Huntingport. The site closed less than a month later as a result of pressure on the landlord and intimidation of workers and staff. Two years later, a support organization named Huntingport Citizens for Viable Solutions opened Casa Colectiva. Privately funded, the center is not a hiring site. Instead, it provides a range of social services to immigrant workers. Recently the center has experienced difficulties in remaining open due to a lack of funding. Since a new mayor was elected on the promise to “get these day laborers off our streets,” ticketing of day laborers in Huntingport has, once again, intensified. Nonetheless, the workers continue in large numbers to seek employment on the village’s streets. Over the last few years, the Workplace Project has experienced success in some campaigns to establishing worker centers while continuing to encounter insurmountable resistance to other campaigns.

In both cases, NIMBYism and the response to NIMBYism involved publicly elected and appointed officials, courts, police, journalists, activists, clergy, and foundations. This broad-based involvement makes both cases important opportunities to understand how communities are defined in terms of where power is located, how issues of diversity and protecting immigrants’ rights are constructed, and what strategies foster just and positive community relations in rapidly diversifying neighborhoods.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Preparation, Development, and Adaptation of Strategy**

From the perspective of one prominent social movement theorist, strategies involve efforts to resolve dilemmas of the types discussed above (Jasper 2004). Ganz (2000) identifies several



factors that enhance the capacity of organizations to make the right decisions. According to the author (p.1005):

Strategic capacity is greater if a leadership team includes insiders and outsiders, strong and weak network ties, and access to diverse, yet salient, repertoires of collective action and also if an organization conducts regular, open, authoritative deliberation, draws resources from multiple constituencies, and roots accountability in those constituencies.

In particular, regular, open, authoritative deliberation allows for the adaptation of strategy based upon experiences arising in the course of encountering opposition. These adaptations to environmental contingencies may be crucial to whether or not service facilities are ultimately established (McCammon et al. 2008).

According to survey respondents and focus group participants, NYAWC did little in the way of initial research and planning as they had not anticipated any opposition to the shelter given their prior positive experience in opening three other shelters. None of the leadership team on the project had experience with NIMBY opposition and were taken by surprise. As one staff member recalled during the focus group “One thing is we had very good relationships with our neighbors with our prior communities. So we kind of like let our guards down.” Over time, however, the organization did bring in outside consultants who helped them to formulate a strategy. Holding external and insider knowledge not possessed by staff, these consultants drew upon their outside experiences to make recommendations for promising practices. The leadership team brought in a consultant from public relations firm. The consultant advised a key staff member in meetings involving residents to “*be as calm as possible*” and “*don't let anybody fluster you and let your anger get a hold of you.*” A strategic consultant who volunteered his services helped NYAWC to “*use our elected officials in a way that we hadn't.*” (focus group participant)

Upper-level staff, board members, and consultants held meetings where they discussed the situation. These meetings led to the adaptation of strategy. For instance, the project organizers had initially met with large groups of residents opposed to the shelter. They came to realize that these meetings were counterproductive and decided to hold smaller meetings with representatives from the opposition instead. These meetings were also halted when they “*turned out to really not be productive*” (focus group participant).

Like the NYAWC, the Workplace Project conducted little advance research or planning. Unlike the NYAWC, the Workplace Project did not choose Huntingport as an ideal location for establishing services. Instead, they responded to calls by day laborers to intervene in a crisis situation where the rights of workers to search for employment were seriously threatened. None of the five day laborers on the leadership team had past experiences with this type of campaign. While the lead organizer of the Workplace Project did have experience with opposition to efforts to establish an official hiring site elsewhere, these experiences were not translated into practical lessons for the rest of the leadership team. No consultants were brought in to assist in the development of a strategy. Early contacts with supportive local church leaders provided insider knowledge, resources, and ties that greatly assisted advocates in negotiating with local officials. Pressure by opponents, however, eventually resulted in these leaders exiting the campaign. Subsequent meetings with outsider allies were often chaotic and seemingly endless. According to one of the day laborers leading the campaign “*We [the day laborers] put down the points we wanted or what we agreed to. And then she [leader of Huntingport Citizens for Viable Solutions] talked about something else. The meeting came out the same and it never arrived at a conclusion*” (focus group participant). Consequently, few if any strategic adaptations were made over time in response to oppositional concerns or tactics. The finding suggests that strong cross-cultural facilitation may be needed to realize the benefits of open, authoritative deliberations in the context of diverse organizing settings.

### **Establishing Ties with Targets Early in the Process**

Our analysis of the two cases suggests that projects will be more successful if advocates reach out to major stakeholders early in the process. Targets are those with the power to give advocates what they want. Early outreaches to targets can help organizers to determine whether or not they are sympathetic. Early outreaches, however, pose difficulties for domestic violence shelters given the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the site. In instances where targets are not sympathetic, advocates may be better off avoiding taskforces and instead focusing upon ways to generate pressure on the target.

In adherence to the rule to protect the confidentiality of the shelter, the NYAWC did not consult with targets prior to proceeding with their purchase of a house. In fact, the targets contacted NYAWC after having been approached by opponents of their project. Our focus group

reveals that a key NYAWC leadership member regretted this failure: *“I would go immediately to the elected officials, just as a courtesy, give them a heads up and that we're coming and that we don't foresee any problems...just because I think that would really diffuse a lot of the ‘sneaking in’ thing.”*

While the Workplace Project approached the Mayor of Huntingport early on, the approach was made in the form of a meeting demanding an end to the ticketing of day laborers and contractors by the village and the establishment of an official hiring site. Efforts to cultivate sympathy were made indirectly through Catholic clergy who had good relations with the mayor and members of the village board. Along with pressure in the form of petitions and protests by the day laborers, these efforts appear to have increased the mayor's receptivity to permitting a hiring site to be organized given the short duration of the campaign (3 months) following intensive efforts by the mayor to shut down the market over the course of the previous year.

### **Constructive Engagement with Opponents**

Whether, when, and how actors interact with one another will have major effects upon service location outcomes. Our analysis suggests that projects will be more successful if sympathetic targets establish representative deliberative bodies rather than rely upon open public hearings or community forums. Sympathetic elected officials are more likely to intervene when they can formally play an intermediary role. Asking authorities to establish advisory boards for the service facility permits them to play this role while avoiding the risks of open hearings and community forums that can be stacked and packed with opponents. Neither open hearings nor community forums typically create focused or sustained dialogue. Instead these formats are mostly conducive to debate and the entrenchment of positions. Properly facilitated and structured negotiations, on the other hand, can produce discussions that result in policy outcomes addressing multiple concerns and meeting multiple interests.

NYAWC staff found community forums to be intimidating and unproductive. Accordingly, they drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Assemblywoman Joan Millman and Councilman Bill DeBlasio. Signed by several other prominent politicians, the MOU included the establishment of an 11-member community advisory board to address issues related to the establishing the shelter. The MOU presented officials as addressing residents' concerns while also ultimately facilitating the establishment of the shelter. As one survey respondent put

it, the politicians were “*very supportive but had to walk a fine line. If they seemed like they were pro-shelter, they would have a hard time gaining the trust of the opponents.*”

While difficult, NYAWC staff found interactions with opponents within the context of the community advisory board to be useful. Through addressing concerns and enhancing trust, the board actually helped to change the perceptions of some of the residents who were initially opposed to the shelter:

*And as painful as those [meetings] were at times I feel like they did eventually move towards progress. The last meetings that we had the neighbors almost had run out of steam. And we would joke around at points, and so I do feel like that, you know, that did eventually move things towards a point where it was safer to be in the neighborhood* (focus group participant).

Through petitions and protests by day laborers and their allies, advocates successfully pressured the Mayor of Huntingport to establish a temporary hiring site on public property. No advisory board for the site, however, was proposed. In the absence of such a board, increasingly organized public opposition to the site led the mayor to shut it down. The Mayor organized a series of community forums as a way to appear more responsive to residents’ concerns. With the assistance of an organization that had successfully mobilized against a proposal to establish an official hiring site in a neighboring county, local opponents packed these forums. Like NYAWC staff, supporters of the official hiring site found these events to be intimidating. During the focus group, one Latina supporter of the site described her experiences:

*At the meeting, people were saying that they [the day laborers] are dirty, that they try to pick up women, or almost rape them. When I raised my hand to speak, the man who was in the front of my husband and I turned around and screamed at me. So I left and went out of there feeling a drag. And my husband says ‘what a shame that we’re the only Latinos among a lot of other people.’* (focus group participant ).

Without an advisory board, these meetings became the main basis for influencing the mayor and the village board. With opponents heavily outnumbering supporters, the mayor refused to re-open an official hiring site within the limits of Huntingport.

## Availing of Opportunities

Some social contexts provide greater opportunities for success than others. Legal changes that substantively address movement demands both result from and produce ways of writing and talking that portray: (1) a social problem as a policy priority, and (2) groups affected by the problem as not the source of the problem and, therefore, deserving of support. The precedent of supportive intervention by authorities coupled with the availability of familiar and authoritative policy rhetoric to legitimate intervention encourages the emergence of powerful allies. The presence of these opportunities made success far more likely in the NYAWC case than in the Workplace Project case where such opportunities were mostly absent.

NYAWC framed establishing the shelter in terms of domestic violence against women. Under pressure from women's rights organizations, Congress took up the issue of domestic violence, passing the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 and reauthorizing it in 2000 and 2005. The Act provides funding to investigate and prosecute violent crime against women, including domestic violence. In the course of securing approval of this legislation, a public discourse emerged that portrayed women experiencing domestic violence as victims worthy of support.

Government agencies and officials who publicly supported establishing the shelter framed their support in terms of domestic violence as a major policy priority and sympathy for battered women. In a letter to New York State Assembly woman Joan Millman, the Commissioner of New York City's Department of Health, Thomas Frieden, wrote:

*Domestic violence is a major public health problem affecting every community, regardless of race, ethnicity and socio-economic status. We as a society have a responsibility to assist the victims of domestic violence and to work toward addressing the conditions that perpetuate violence.*

In a publicly released statement, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez said "*The most important thing to realize here is that these women are not criminals—they are women in need who have suffered a great deal and are looking for a safe place to go.*" The NYAWC also had allies in the New York State Office of Children and Family Services and the Department of Buildings. These agencies were so outspoken on behalf of the shelter that they were named in the civil suit along with NYAWC.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The DOB was supportive as the NYAWC had not violated any zoning laws.

In contrast to an established, authoritative, and sympathetic discourse around domestic violence, the Federal government has not addressed the issue of day labor markets. Whereas government intervention to prevent domestic violence is now a relatively well established norm, government intervention to prevent the exploitation, harassment, and endangerment of immigrant workers is not. Along with the policy uncertainty surrounding immigration issues, public discourse regarding these markets has often portrayed day laborers as being in the country illegally and, therefore, undeserving of support (Maney and Abraham 2009). The mayor echoed this oppositional framing in his letter to the *Huntingport Observer*:

the Immigration and Naturalization Service has investigated this matter and has advised us that due to budget constraints it only enforces immigration laws in factories and along borders of other countries, not on local streets (“From the Mayor,” 6/30/00).

The day laborers and their allies used civil liberties laws and court rulings to prevent the Mayor of Huntingport from intensifying efforts to shut down the market. As he wrote in the same letter:

*Unfortunately, these ongoing negotiations are made difficult by several rulings from the US Supreme Court, which has deemed that loitering is not illegal anywhere in the country and allows day workers to assemble in public places. These decisions have greatly restrained the actions that the village and [removed] County Police Department can take. If we attempt to expel people from public property, it is a violation of their civil rights and would likely result in an expensive lawsuit against the village.*

Advocates, however, did not argue that establishing an official hiring site was important to protecting civil rights and enforcing labor laws. In the absence of familiar, authoritative policy rhetoric, the mayor couched his decision to create the site in terms of group mediation. At the ceremony to open the official hiring site, he stated that the location was temporary and “*We’re looking for a building, so that the needs of the workers can be met, and at the same time, respects the needs of the community*” (*Huntingport Observer* 04/21/00). As with other comments by the mayor, the quote presents the workers as an outside group whose needs conflicted with those who truly belong in the community.

Gender played an important role in constructions of victimization in both cases. Public officials frequently constructed women and children who would use the proposed shelter as victims of domestic violence worthy of assistance. In a letter to a constituent dated October 29, 2003, New York City Councilman Bill de Blasio wrote “*I appreciate your concern about this*

*issue. As I'm sure you know, the City faces a pressing shortage of beds for women and children who have been victimized by domestic violence.*" NYAWC staff encouraged this discourse and used it to successfully mobilize a local women's group.

Rather than being portrayed as victims of the global economy forced to come to the United States to support their families, public officials frequently constructed the male immigrant workers as criminals victimizing residents and, therefore, undeserving of an official hiring site. In explaining his decision to close the official hiring site that he had opened fourteen months earlier, Huntingport's Mayor was quoted in the *New York Times* as stating "*There were many complaints of harassing women. You know, 'Chiquita, Chiquita,' with kissing noises as they passed. One of the men actually exposed himself to a girl at the bus stop...*" (New York Times; 06/13/01). Ironically, a patriarchal discourse that disempowers women by portraying women as victims increased active support for the shelter. The same discourse that portrays men as powerful reduced support for the official hiring site by fueling concerns about safety by portraying immigrant men as potential victimizers and abusers.

### **Drawing Different Identity Boundaries**

The cases examined here suggest that proponents of services for stigmatized populations are likely to benefit most from a two-pronged identity strategy. As a source of opposition, stigma depends upon strong identity boundaries between 'us, the residents' and 'them, the intruders.' An effective media and public education strategy, therefore, is to blur the boundaries between service users and other residents. Doing so, however, runs the risk of not mobilizing potential allies and supporters who would participate in response to framing that demonizes opponents. This suggests that community organizers may best be served with contrasting internal and external frames. Nonetheless, it is important to note that this dual framing runs the risk of confusing potential supporters and of encountering accusations of misleading the public.

Although some key staff and board members who were Asian were the primary interface with the community, the NYAWC chose to additionally include as many non-Asian spokespeople as possible at the advice of their public relations consultant. In the words of one survey respondent "*We chose them because we wanted to show more non-Asian faces so that neighbors could identify themselves with them.*" Attributions of similarity by residents sharing the spokespeople's ethnicities along with few reminders of the different ethnicities of service



users likely contributed to high levels of sympathetic media coverage combined with eventual support from some residents initially opposed to the shelter.

While by no means the sole spokespeople, day laborers from El Salvador, Honduras, or Mexico featured prominently in the media campaign to establish an official hiring site. The decision, in part, reflected the Workplace Project's commitment to helping immigrant workers find and use their own voices. Having Anglo allies speak for the day laborers is not particularly empowering. Despite the personalized, melodramatic narratives told by the day laborers, media coverage may have reinforced a sense that service users did not belong in a place implicitly defined in class, ethnic, and racialized terms.

Interestingly, in both cases opponents tried to blur identity boundaries in their public relations work. Shelter opponents organized as Concerned Citizens of Kameron Glen had a Chinese man as their spokesperson although their leader was an Italian American male. Similarly, opponents in Huntingport sent out a Salvadoran man to gather information on the day laborers and to present himself as a spokesperson for Latinos. We suspect that these practices constituted attempts to reduce the empirical credibility of any frames presenting opposition as being racially or ethnically motivated.

While blurring identity boundaries in media work appears to have reduced opposition to the shelter, reinforcing boundaries in organizing increased participation by allies and members. NYAWC used opposition as a rallying cry for support. A foundation responded positively, offering additional funding for the facility and providing a strategy consultant free of charge. Board members who were previously inactive suddenly became quite involved. The staff themselves experienced a stronger commitment to the organization as a result of the opposition. One of the project leaders recalls having the following reaction after being menaced by an opponent as she walked to the subway station:

*...for me it was a moment of truth, of solidarity, across generations, across racial lines, and to really embolden me that we needed to fight this. Because it really was about more than our shelter and about our women; it really was about something so innately wrong* (focus group participant).

From the beginning, clergy in Huntingport were considered to be important allies of the day laborers. Rather than intensify their commitment to the hiring site, opposition brought about a retreat in the levels of public support. As noted above, meetings involving both day laborers



and a group of mostly European American supporters known as Huntingport Citizens for Viable Solutions were generally characterized as negative experiences. Instead of highlighting differences with opponents that could serve as a basis of unity, the meetings drew attention to differences among proponents. In the end, the leadership drew primarily upon a shared pan-ethnic identity as a basis for mobilization. In the words of a focus group participant, “*We Latinos here saved ourselves.*”

### **Holding the Media Accountable**

As matter of law and practice, domestic violence (DV) shelters typically keep their location confidential so as to protect the victims from abusers. Studies have indicated that battered women face increased danger of being killed by their abuser after they have left the relationship. Therefore as in past practice and in compliance with the law, the NYAWC had not publicized its shelter and had planned to move into the neighborhood as discreetly as possible. NYWAC had not anticipated community opposition, given their prior record of having had no opposition on rental properties as shelters. Also given the confidentiality required of DV shelters, the group had not sought to assess or identify potential supporters or opponents within the neighborhood.

Recognizing the opportunity presented by these requirements and procedures, opponents sought to force the shelter to relocate by breaching confidentiality. Organized under “The Concerned Citizens of Kameron Glen,” these opponents publicized the shelter’s location through fliers distributed throughout the neighborhood, banners, and websites. CCKG also threatened to publicize the location in the ethnic press. One of the NYAWC’s key staff members had previously been a journalist. She used her experience and networks to convince the ethnic press that publicizing the location would constitute a serious violation of professional ethics.

While the media was, for the most part, balanced in offering the perspectives of both proponents and opponents of the worker center in Huntingport, stories consistently presented the day laborers as being from outside of the community. For instance, a story appearing in the *Huntingport Observer* quoted, without question, the Mayor as stating: “*We’re looking for a building, so that **the needs of the workers** can be met, and at the same time, respects **the needs of the community***” (emphasis added; 04/21/00). It was only when the Village Board moved to purchase a rental apartment complex housing day laborers did journalists acknowledge that day laborers not only worked, but also lived in the community. Because of this error in fact, the

Mayor and the Trustees remained unchallenged in their assumptions that the only party in the conflict that they had a responsibility to as constituents were residents opposed to an official hiring site.

### **Ownership of Facilities**

The NIMBY literature does not specifically address the relative value or role of full, private ownership of facilities as compared to renting property or using public funding and space in determining opposition or outcomes. Nonetheless, in several cases, opponents have successfully pressured local officials and private building owners to not use their properties for use as service facilities. By removing this dependency as a source of power for opponents, full, private ownership of facilities by service providers may offer a promising strategy in specific cases and contexts. Moreover, because of the frequent heavy financial reliance of municipal authorities upon property taxes, ownership enhances the ability of advocates to assert local citizenship rights and to demand local government accountability.

In the short-term, full ownership of the shelter by NYAWC increased opposition, as residents likely viewed the chances of removing the shelter once established as being remote:

*I think, even also from the community point of view, it would've been maybe different too, because their seeing us as really invading their neighborhood in a way that it wouldn't of been if Mr. Joe Shmo owned it and was renting it out. I mean they really, I think, felt more threatened by it. It was just, in every way, for both sides it was a more permanent step that we were embarking on (focus group participant).*

Once established, however, the perceived permanence of the shelter demobilized opposition not only by reducing expectations of the likelihood of success, but also by quelling many of the residents' concerns. Some of the main fears that motivated opposition were demonstrably dispelled. For instance, a NYAWC focus group participant noted that many of the residents feared a shelter would lower property values. A house next door to the shelter was immediately purchased after coming up for sale. Soon after the sale, a number of the residents in the neighborhood took down signs from their windows opposing the shelter.

Initially, Huntingport's mayor agreed to locate the worker center on public property adjacent to several privately owned residences. While assurances by the Mayor that the center was only temporary allayed some residents' concerns, for others it signaled an opportunity to do

away with the site completely. The proposed use of public space and monies for the project gave greater voice to opponents as taxpayers than if the center were privately funded and located on private property.

Being denied a public site for the worker center, the Workplace Project rented space from a privately owned, commercially zoned building in West Huntingport. Because the space was rented rather than owned, opponents were able to successfully pressure the owners to evict their tenants. Moreover, whereas NYAWC's purchase of their building involved a specific time-defined, one-off plea to funders in the context of building this shelter, the need to pay rent on an ongoing basis resulted in ongoing appeals to and negotiations with funders. Strong differences in opinion existed between the Workplace Project and the day laborers, on the one hand, and foundations on the other. As a result of these differences, another organization-- the Huntingport Citizens for Viable Solution (HCVS)— had received funding to run Casa Colectiva— a center established to provide social services to day laborers. As one of the focus group participants put it: *“That was another lesson. We were renters. In other words, regulated. And they told us whether we could do it with them or not... We trusted that the people running the facility were going to respect workers’ self-determination. They didn’t.”* Another focus group participant talked about strings being attached by one organization funding Casa Colectiva: *“One important thing is who gives the money. Because it depends who is giving out the money what's going to be or not...In other words, we can't have anyone here who talks about abortion. We can't have anyone here who talks about that. In other words, it's limiting.”*

Renting not only increased the vulnerability of service providers, but also of service users. Less than two months after establishing an off-the-street hiring hall on a village-owned lot, Huntingport officials announced a plan to take over apartment building to allow for private redevelopment into luxury apartments. The building in question was mostly rented by Latinos, including day laborers. While possibly coincidental, the timing suggests that the plan was intended to solve the ‘day worker problem’ by removing day laborers from the community. Only through an anti-discrimination law suit were advocates able to block the redevelopment plan.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some recommendations to address the issues identified based on the literature review and the findings from our study:

**Recommendation 1: Ensure that any Facility Planning Anticipates a Range of Possible Community Reactions.**

- Learn about the neighborhood, its demographics and contextual history
- Research major stakeholders, including potential targets, allies, and opponents
- Consider “unanticipated consequences” in the planning process, including potential objections and defenders of the status quo
- Understand and be mindful of institutional rules and processes
- Verify that the project meets any zoning and “re-zoning” requirements
- Identify and establish linkages to broader issues that can support the project
- Work with professional consultants that have experience with similar projects
- Develop a positive message about the project at the outset that is likely to play well with general audiences

**Recommendation 2: Locate and Sustain Allies to Ensure Support for the Project**

- Find people in the neighborhood to champion the project
- Garner support from potential allies by providing them with information that will enable them to support the project and address potential opposition
- Use opposition as a rallying cry to mobilize supporters
- Publicly support allies who are confronted by opponents
- Practice strong cross-culturally competent facilitation to ensure open, authoritative deliberation among diverse constituencies

**Recommendation 3: Consult and Work with Local Officials Early in the Process.**

- Learn where elected politicians and relevant government agencies stand on the issue and their public track record
- Reach out to those who can give you what you want early in the process
- Identify and publicize policy precedents and authoritative political rhetoric that public officials can use to justify their support for the project

#### **Recommendation 4: Develop Advisory Boards**

- Work with officials to develop advisory boards so that stakeholders, including opponents, can participate in the consultation process
- Where possible, avoid community forums that can provide opportunities for opponents to pressure or manipulate targets. Devote all possible resources to mobilizing constituents and allies to be a visible, respectful presence at such forums where unavoidable

#### **Recommendation 5: Manage the Media in Ways that Increase Support**

- Include spokespeople sharing characteristics in common with most residents
- Define service users as valuable members of the community, as facing a social problem that they are not responsible for, and as deserving of support so that journalists can use this framing in their coverage of the campaign
- Provide fact sheets to journalists to encourage accurate reporting. Request that journalists correct factual errors

#### **Recommendation 6: Build Trust for Community Acceptance**

- Develop a long-term strategy for reducing opposition through public education
- Provide information that encourages community acceptance and that addresses misinformation and unfounded fears
- Engage in both listening and talking with opponents throughout the process
- Educate the community about the needs and rights of those seeking services
- Develop through literature distribution and other activities an expanded notion of citizenship that is more inclusive and addresses the problems of stereotyping and discriminatory practices
- Where appropriate and safe, facilitate informal, equal status interactions between service users and other residents
- To better avoid the tendency to drop public education in the face of crises, provide/secure funding for a staff member whose primary responsibilities focus upon public outreach

## **CONCLUSION**

NIMBYism has enormous consequences for both day laborers and victims/survivors of domestic violence. Inattention to such problems leads to the persistence of common myths and stereotypes that contribute to oppressive practices. It precludes the effective identification, intervention, and prevention of NIMBYism. Studies like this report can assist advocacy groups in creating services for marginalized and vulnerable immigrant populations. They can be used as a tool for encouraging strategic thinking, planning, and practice among community organizers. Through lessons learned and recommendations for promising practices, organizations can hone their strategies to maximize community support for services as well as to minimize the effects if not transform anti-immigrant/anti-minority attitudes and practices. We recommend a holistic approach by advocates that strives, in the short-term, to establish service facilities and, in the long-term, to expand support for the facilities and service users in the neighborhood. In the process, community organizations can improve their efforts to provide services that ensure safety and enhance the overall quality of life of all the residents and workers in these neighborhoods.

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## ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

### **The New York Asian Women's Center—**<http://www.nyawc.org>

The New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC) helps battered women overcome violence and govern their own lives, free of abuse. The Center also works to raise public awareness about domestic violence, advocate for the rights of battered women, and create an agenda for social change. Founded in 1982 as the first domestic violence organization on the East Coast to serve the Asian communities, the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC) helps battered women overcome violence and govern their own lives, free of abuse. The Center also works to raise public awareness about domestic violence, advocate for the rights of battered women, and create an agenda for social change. All of NYAWC's services are free and confidential, rooted in our philosophy of empowering women and supporting their choices so that they can lead their lives without fear of violence.

### **The Workplace Project—**<http://www.workplaceprojectny.org>

The Workplace Project (Centro de Derechos Laborales), founded in 1992, is a membership based organization that unites immigrant workers and their families for better working and living conditions. The Workplace Project was founded on the belief that while simply providing services might alleviate some of the pain of exploitation; it would do nothing to fix the problems in the long run. Instead, it has chosen to build community centers of and for immigrants, which work through a cycle of outreach, leadership training, membership building, and organizing for change in the labor context. Our mission is to end the exploitation of Latino immigrant workers on Long Island and to achieve socioeconomic justice by promoting the full political, economic and cultural participation of these workers in the communities in which they live.