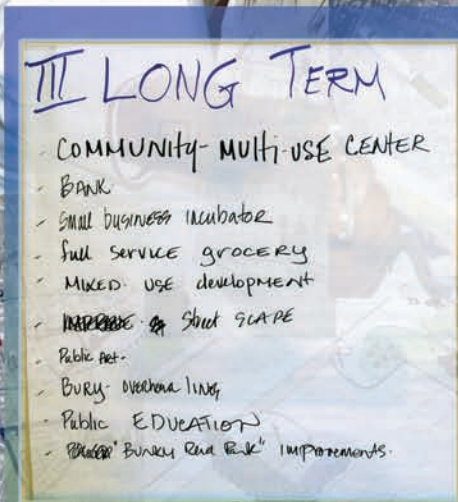




Community Revitalization in New Cassel, New York



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for:

SUSTAINABLE LONG ISLAND



Community Revitalization in New Cassel, New York

December 2008

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A Case Study
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I am responsible for the findings, conclusions, and recommendations contained in this study.

—Mary Ann Allison, Ph.D.
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Executive Summary

This study documents the continuing community revitalization taking place in the hamlet of New Cassel, focusing on the decade from 1998 to 2008.

Sustainable Long Island—a nonprofit organization dedicated to economic growth, environmental health, and equal opportunity on Long Island—acted as a catalyst and facilitator in support of this renewal process and sponsored this research to encourage celebrations of the many revitalization accomplishments as well as to provide a case study with an emphasis on the institutions, partnerships, and processes that helped make them possible.

At the turn of the 21st century, New Cassel suffered from the effects of race, gender, and class segregation and discrimination; a lack of affordable housing; no downtown center; environmental contamination; overcrowded housing; and community despair and discord.

As 2008 comes to a close, many New Cassel residents feel their community is both cleaner and safer than it was in the 1980s and 1990s. Residents note with delight the construction of seven (soon to be nine) new buildings in downtown New Cassel, most of which are nearing completion. Soon the community will be served by more affordable housing and a new park; a bank, full-service grocery store, and pharmacy among other new and expanded businesses; and a new community center. To support a safe, attractive, and “walkable” downtown center, next year a streetscaping program will transform the portion of Prospect Avenue that runs through New Cassel, adding broad sidewalks with outdoor seating, community art, and traffic calming. Some elements of the rebirth—such as the summer youth programs and community participation in planning processes—are not visible but are equally important to the community’s health.

At the outset of this process, Reverend Patrick G. Duggan, then Executive Director of Sustainable Long Island and Bishop (then Reverend) Lionel Harvey, Chairman of the Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation (UNCCRC)—helped to create the conditions under which discouraged and divided community residents could come together and form an organization with a unified agenda that represented all stakeholders in New Cassel.

In 2002, after four years of community outreach, education, and organization, more than 800 community residents and stakeholders developed a comprehensive Vision Plan describing their hopes for New Cassel during a facilitated community participation process. Formally adopted by the Town of North Hempstead in 2003, this plan has helped a committed multilevel government partnership raise more than \$80 million in public and private funding and guides the ongoing renewal work.

The key starting conditions that facilitated New Cassel’s recent successes include the strong support of civic and faith-based groups; the presence of existing infrastructure such as sewers; the Town of North Hempstead’s ownership of many development sites; and significant attention to brownfields and underused lots (with considerable work remaining).

Lessons Learned: Successes and Challenges

Pioneered in New Cassel and elsewhere, social change techniques are now spreading throughout Long Island and to other geographic areas. Sustainable Long Island has served as an important focal point to provide this shared learning. Among the positive lessons learned in New Cassel are:

- Despite the “odds”—the prior failures and complex, constantly-changing challenges inherent in multiple-stakeholder revitalization programs—success is clearly possible.
- Formal community participation fuels energy and optimism as well as government revitalization processes. It also helps to ensure that suburban renewal initiatives actually address community wants and needs.
- Government partnerships can work to the benefit of communities: In this case, partnerships among the Town of North Hempstead, Town Community Development Agency, Nassau County, New York State, and federal agencies all worked together to benefit New Cassel. Partnerships of this type require both significant political will and considerable collaborative effort.
- A third-party organization with expertise in participatory planning and community asset building, such as Sustainable Long Island, can be instrumental in bringing diverse community members and government officials together to redefine the decision-making structure and to develop the networks and processes that can sustain long-term development.
- A strong mandate from the community is one of the keys to successful fundraising. Many government officials interviewed for this study indicate that the ability to refer to the New Cassel Vision Plan and to coordinate with a community-based organization (UNCCRC) increased their ability to obtain funds.
- The formalization of the legal partnership instilled confidence in many community stakeholders that the public sector was committed to the planning process. This approach can contribute to the effectiveness of many future participatory efforts.
- As in other areas of the United States, a faith-based approach, involving the participation of multiple religious organizations, can be effective in mobilizing communities even—and perhaps, especially—where there is a history of discrimination and neglect.
- When part of a substantive and disciplined process, large-scale vision charrettes can be catalytic and regenerate optimism.
- An effective block captain program can serve as a powerful communication system and mobilize resident participation.

- Community organizations can take responsibility for achieving goals, not simply representing a community. By sponsoring block captain and summer youth programs, UNCCRC demonstrates its ability to provide services on its own as well as in concert with others.
- The willingness of businesses to invest in communities makes a crucial difference.

Of course, the process has not been without difficulties. These include the improprieties exhibited by some government officials; construction and financial problems experienced by property developers; contention over the appropriateness of union labor; racial discord; and disagreements within the community and among the organizations working to support the revitalization. Outstanding challenges include:

- Development and revitalization processes are long and slow. It is challenging for both the government and for civic organizations, including UNCCRC, to sustain both funding and community participation.
- Throughout Long Island—and common to many renewal projects around the world—builders, non-profits, and community stakeholders often complain about the time and costs of bringing a construction project from conception to the start of construction.
- Awarding multiple projects to a single real estate developer in a revitalization project of this size increases the level of risk, especially in economic downturns.
- There are genuine conflicts in the New Cassel community. Political power counts and is uneven in the community. Change always generates opposition and the struggle to confront and address conflict can be viewed as an important part of the development process.
- Jobs, job training, and union involvement in construction projects are big, complex, and systemic issues.
- The term *affordable housing* has many different meanings. Local government officials and residents are aware that federal definitions do not address the needs of all New Cassel residents.

A review of other revitalization initiatives indicates that efforts in New Cassel face obstacles that are not just local in nature: long-standing patterns of privilege and discrimination; onerous government bureaucratic processes; and lack of sufficient funding for affordable housing, public transportation, education, and other elements of suburban revitalization. It is important that local measures are complemented with efforts at the national and global levels.

Recommendations for strengthening community processes include additional community asset building; facilitation of networks of mid-level players; use of a balanced scorecard approach in

developing community goals; and transparent tracking of community vision plans. Future research studies of the systemic problems often encountered in urban and suburban redevelopment are also indicated. Because every revitalization situation is different and the situation in New Cassel itself changes over time, no single “cookie-cutter” plan will be effective. Each situation should be carefully considered before assuming these lessons apply.

With many successes to celebrate, community revitalization in New Cassel is an ongoing process. The stakeholders who shared these lessons hope that others will benefit from them and will, in turn, share their own learning.

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Introduction: The Case Study Approach

Community revitalization is a long, complex process—one that is vital not only to the health of individual depressed communities, but also to the overall health of the United States, where one-fifth of the population lives in *first suburbs* such as New Cassel (the older, inner suburbs surrounding one of the hundred most populous cities in 1950).¹

Urban vitality is also an important factor to the health of the world, where more than 50% of the population lives in urban and suburban areas.² Historical and current institutional racism and inequities in attention, funding, and support for communities along lines of race and ethnicity, class, and location have created—and, unless addressed now, will continue to create—blight and injustice.

This study examines the history, successes, key factors and lessons learned during New Cassel community revitalization effort from 1998 to 2008.

One of the most critical events of this effort—the New Cassel revitalization Visioning Charrette, which took place in July 2002—is featured in pictures on the cover of this document. After several years of intense preparation, more than 800 diverse stakeholders participated in a week-long series of meetings, and, with the support of professional facilitators and suburban planners, developed a shared vision for their community that was documented in a formal Vision Plan. Six years later, *all* of the long-term goals listed on the flip chart in the center of the cover illustration are becoming reality:

- The Community Multi-Use Center has been designed, the land has been acquired, and construction will begin early in 2009.
- The building that will house the full-service grocery is 70% complete and a local business owner has stepped forward to expand his business and offer this service.
- There are six new mixed-use buildings nearing completion and a seventh almost ready for construction.
- Funding and plans for the streetscape, public art, and buried utility lines are coming together and work has already begun on some elements.
- In the area of public education, block captains have helped to pass district school budgets, students have participated in community planning processes, and there is a summer youth camp.
- Martin “Bunky” Reid Park has seen a number of improvements.

But the preparation of a plan does not ensure that it will be implemented. This case study explains why the *Vision Plan for New Cassel* has been so successful, as well as what obstacles must be faced in achieving such success.

To prepare this report, we conducted more than 150 interviews with more than 60 people and reviewed thousands of pages of related documents, plans, Websites, and news articles. We also studied regional, national, and global research reports (for example, the Long Island Index, the

U.S. Census, and the United Nations State of the World Population). Finally, we also identified relevant case studies and theoretical approaches.

This document combines two distinct approaches to documenting urban and suburban renewal: 1) an approach typically used in the urban planning field, which has a focus on physical changes; and 2) a methodology used in the field of social and organizational learning, which concentrates on changes in organizational structures, methods, and processes.

Case studies of community revitalization and suburban renewal are often presented as straightforward, cause-and-effect sequences. Tidy charts and timelines may enhance the perception that a case study can fully describe the important activities of many individuals and groups over decades and that this case can provide a set of “proper” activities that fit all situations. Nothing could be further from reality. Rather, the New Cassel case study demonstrates that planning processes must respond to contingencies.

In the past, some case studies of communities have included hurtful characterizations of community residents and placed inappropriate blame on individuals and groups. While I remain committed to reporting the situation accurately, it is not my intention to create embarrassment or blame. In addition to celebrating successes, however, it is important to try to understand what didn’t work well and where there were and are disagreements.

In every case study, the author makes a series of important decisions about time, place, and point of view, which make a significant difference as to who and what is included or excluded. (Appendix C offers more detail on research methods.) It is inevitable that some will feel left out. As principal investigator, I, Mary Ann Allison, offer my apologies in advance.

And because Sustainable Long Island commissioned this study, not only to provide documentation but also to include recommendations, there is a natural emphasis on their key role and activities. At the same time, both Sustainable Long Island and I recognize that they are but one of many important players in this process.

New Cassel's revitalization is an important process for everyone on Long Island who is interested in transforming the way neighborhoods in our region are developed.

It's significant because it's the first time elected officials and community groups have come together in a sustained way to transform not only the physical landscape of a downtown, but also the way in which decisions are made.

The community is an equal partner in the revitalization process. One of the key drivers of success in this process was the establishment of Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation, a local group that has a Memorandum of Understanding with the local government to be at the table when decisions are made about the New Cassel community.

This is the first and only example that I know of where there is a legally enforceable partnership that can sustain itself in spite of any changes in leadership both politically and locally.

—Sarah Lansdale, Executive Director,
Sustainable Long Island (2008)

The Hamlet of New Cassel: a Brief History

Located in the heart of Long Island's Nassau County, about 20 miles from Manhattan, the unincorporated hamlet of New Cassel is among America's "first suburbs," with a history going back to the 18th century.

One of Long Island's oldest African American villages, New Cassel was first settled as a farming community by former slaves, who had been freed in the mid-1700s by Quakers.³ After the American Revolutionary War, a neighboring farm community was settled by former Hessian mercenaries who had fought for the British. In the early 1900s, the area became more populous as immigrants from Europe moved into inexpensive boarding houses.

Over the years, the area had many names, including Guinea Town, after the Guinea Coast of Africa, the ancestral home of some of the early settlers, and Grantsville, either after Ulysses S. Grant or because the land was granted to the original settlers. It was briefly known as Gold Coin Town after the Buchner Company established a business there to process Gold Coin Chewing Tobacco. A developer, also in the 1880s, trying to make the area appealing to new German immigrants, first used the name New Cassel.⁴

In the 20th century, along with its neighbors on Long Island, New Cassel entered the modern age, acquiring many essential utilities and services. Electricity first came to the New Cassel-Westbury area in 1902 and other utilities such as sewers followed. But not all infrastructure was beneficial or even benign. The construction of major roadways on Long Island—Northern State Parkway, started in 1931, and Wantagh Parkway, begun in 1938—created major problems for New Cassel's agricultural industry, as farmers could no longer bring animals to market without crossing neighboring farms. Long Island Rail Road tracks also separated part of the community. This pattern of being isolated or divided by major transportation arteries continued throughout the rest of the century.⁵

Nevertheless New Cassel flourished, in part due to the influx of returning World War II Black and Latino veterans who were often unable to buy houses in other Long Island communities. Simultaneously, New Cassel's situation became even more complex as its predominantly African American population was joined by an increasing number of Hispanic as well as Haitian residents in the last half of the century. New complications arose from differing customs, languages, and citizenship, as well as varying levels of education and job training.

In the 30 years after World War II, many members of the community organized in a powerful way, forming a civic association which established a neighborhood watch, working in the school system (with association members sitting on the Westbury Board of Education), supporting a community center, and publishing a monthly newspaper. There were local Black Boy Scout troops and a drum and bugle corps. New Cassel's Prospect Avenue was home to many local (often Black-owned) businesses, including a locally-owned restaurant, grocery store, liquor store, and several beauty salons. There were services for immigrants—including after-school tutoring for children and literacy and English classes for adults. The local Kiwanis and 369th Veterans Association were also active.

Speaking as a community resident, Nassau County Legislator Roger Corbin, District 2 (2007), remembers New Cassel when it was a vital community:

When my family moved to New Cassel in 1958 it was a moderate, middle-class community. Home ownership was way over 85%. We had parents who were indigenous to the area, we lived here, we went to school here, and our parents were part of the PTA.

Unfortunately, in the 1980s, many sources of public funding and private investment dried up. Support from government programs and public officials waned. Community problems—including drugs, gangs, and overcrowded housing—increased. Racial and class steering, especially in the area of housing, exacerbated the situation. New Cassel, which was part of the Town of North Hempstead, also suffered from a lack of political power.

...when the Town of North Hempstead voted for representatives, since we were such a small [part] of the... town, we could never put somebody in [office who] represented...our community.

So New Cassel began to deteriorate...Folks began to move away. Then they started to rent rooms and basements, and the property tax base started to erode. Roosevelt Field [a shopping mall] and Fortunoff [a large department store] started to grow and [they] killed off our little down-towns.

—Roger Corbin (2007)

Some community residents and activists moved away because they got tired of trying to keep the community healthy without government support. New Cassel community leader Mildred Little (2007) described the situation:

We came out here for a better way of life, and we had it for some time. But by the late 1970s, drugs and gangs had become a problem and absentee landlords had devalued the area with illegal and overcrowded apartments. Gradually, people started giving up and moving out.

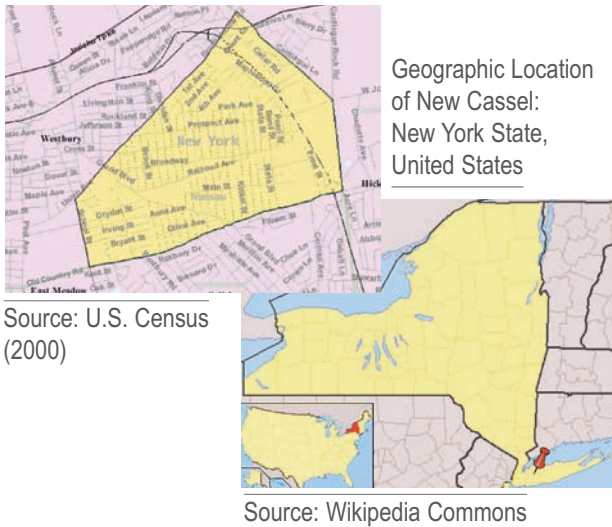
By the turn of the 21st century, in many ways New Cassel was in a downward spiral, suffering from governmental neglect, corruption and criminal activity, a disproportional concentration of welfare services, and a host of economic and environmental problems.

As of the 2000 Census,⁶ New Cassel had a population of 13,298, living in an area of 1.5 square miles,⁷ (see Figure 1 on the following page), making the official density 9,073 people per square mile. However, based on anecdotal information from Nassau County support services staff,⁸ there are indications that as many as another 10,000 undocumented immigrants may live in the community. Even if the number is half that many, this places a strain on community resources, especially those allocated based on official benchmarks.

Tables 1-6 (on page 6) provide a comparison of New Cassel statistics with those of the town, county, state, and for the United States as a whole.

In the year 2000,⁹ 47% of New Cassel residents identify themselves as Black/ African American; 32% as white; and the remaining 21% as other races or mixed race. New Cassel had the highest concentration of Latino/ Hispanic (Hispanic is the word used by the U.S. Census) population (all races) of any community in Nassau County (41%).¹⁰ Nearly half (45.3%) of the total population reports having been born in another country, and, of these, 92.1% come from Latin America. Spanish is the primary language at home for 37.6% of New Cassel residents.

Figure 1. New Cassel, New York



Comparatively recent immigrants from Haiti also add to the community's diversity, with an estimated 16% of New Cassel residents speaking French/Haitian Creole¹¹ at home.

The average New Cassel household size is 4.5 people—significantly larger than most households in the surrounding areas and throughout the country. New Cassel income of \$15,673 per person (listed as per capita) is 62% lower than the \$41,521 per person income in the Town of North Hempstead as a whole and 27% lower than the per person income for the country as a whole (\$21,587). The high cost of living on Long Island, compared with the country as a whole, is an important

factor in understanding how federal guidelines may not be effective in supporting New Cassel residents. In the New Cassel community, 10.5% of the families and 14.8% of the individuals are below the poverty level. While 30% of households in the United States spend 35% or more of their income on rent, in New Cassel this figure rises to 52.6%. Unlike many other areas on Long Island, many of the rentals in New Cassel are not standard apartments but are detached houses, sometimes so overcrowded that they violate the zoning code.

The employment rate and types of occupations also play an important role in the level of prosperity in New Cassel. Indeed, as reported by the Gallup World Poll,¹² which continually surveys citizens in more than 140 countries, representing 95% of the world's adult population: "What the whole world wants is a good job." While 17.2% of New Cassel residents who are employed work in management and professional jobs, most New Cassel residents are employed in service, sales and office, and production and transportation.

While many New Cassel residents have continued to live productive lives over the years, government officials, citizens and nonprofit leaders cite a number of complex factors that have precipitated the need for revitalization, including:

- the Town of North Hempstead's designation (conscious or unconscious) of New Cassel as a marginal area which it neglected during much of the 20th century;
- the pervasive effects of race, gender, and class segregation and discrimination in housing, education, employment, and access to support resources;
- the draining of private citizen time and energy to devote to community health;
- the lack of a downtown center—an earlier town center was destroyed by a combination of market forces and urban renewal clearance without rebuilding; and
- the lack of a regional plan for the development of Long Island that adequately responds to the changing and diverse needs of all Long Islanders.

Tables 1 - 6. Census Statistics for New Cassel, the Town of New Hempstead, Nassau County, New York State and the United States

Table 1. Comparisons of Population and Income

Population and Income	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Total population	13,298	222,611	1,334,544	18,976,457	281,421,906
Average household size	4.46	2.84	2.93	2.61	2.59
Average family size	4.40	3.27	3.34	3.22	3.14
Median household income	\$55,428	\$81,039	\$72,030	\$43,393	\$41,994
Median family income	\$55,042	\$94,156	\$81,246	\$51,691	\$50,046
Per capita income	\$15,673	\$41,621	\$32,151	\$23,398	\$21,587
Families below poverty level	10.5%	3.1%	3.5%	9.2%	9.2%
Individuals below poverty level	14.8%	4.8%	5.2%	12.4%	12.4%

Table 2. Comparisons of Racial Composition

Self Identified Single Race	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Black or African American	47.3%	6.4%	10.1%	15.9%	12.3%
Caucasian	31.6%	79.0%	79.3%	67.9%	75.1%
All other (including mixed race)	21.1%	14.6%	10.6%	16.1%	12.5%

Table 3. Comparisons of Ethnic Composition

Self Identified Ethnicity	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	41.1%	9.8%	10.0%	15.1%	12.5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	58.9%	90.2%	90.0%	84.9%	87.5%

Table 4. Comparisons of Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

Median Housing Costs	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Median house value	\$165,600	\$354,100	\$242,300	\$148,700	\$119,600
Median rent	\$1,296	\$1,086	\$964	\$672	\$602

Table 5. Comparisons of Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in 1999	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Less than 19%	16.9%	32.8%	30.2%	31.9%	32.4%
20 to 29%	19.3%	20.2%	22.5%	21.2%	23.2%
30 to 34%	5.2%	6.7%	7.3%	7.1%	7.3%
35% or more	52.6%	32.0%	31.8%	33.4%	29.5%
Not computed	6.0%	8.3%	8.2%	6.3%	7.5%

Table 6. Comparisons of Occupation Type

Occupation Type	New Cassel	Town of North Hempstead	Nassau County	New York State	United States
Management, professional, and related occupations	17.2%	48.1%	41.0%	36.7%	33.6%
Service occupations	28.1%	11.4%	13.7%	16.6%	14.9%
Sales and office occupations	23.1%	28.4%	30.4%	27.1%	26.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.7%
Construction, extraction and maintenance	7.1%	5.3%	7.0%	7.6%	9.4%
Production, transportation and material moving occupations	24.3%	6.8%	7.8%	11.7%	14.6%

Source: U.S. Census (2000) Note: Some columns total 99.9% due to the process of rounding numbers.

Organizations Key to the Revitalization Process

Most of the revitalization work in New Cassel has been undertaken by private organizations and government agencies, often working in partnership. This section provides an introduction to the players.

Community and Faith-Based Organizations

There are many community and faith-based organizations active in supporting and sustaining the quality of life for New Cassel residents. Anecdotal estimates place the number of churches at over 50; among the many community organizations are:^{13,14}

- the Carmen Community Association,
- New Cassel Business Association,
- New Cassel Environmental Justice Project,
- New Cassel Improvement Committee,
- New Cassel Neighborhood Watch,
- New Cassel/Westbury Neighborhood Advisory Council,
- the Progressive Civic Association of New Cassel,
- the Unified Civic Association of New Cassel, and
- Westbury Community Improvement, Inc.

In this case study, the focus will be on one particular organization—the Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation (UNCCRC)—that came together under the leadership of Bishop (then Reverend) Lionel Harvey of the First Baptist Cathedral of Westbury. Sustainable Long Island helped to organize UNCCRC with the goals of uniting the New Cassel community and ensuring that the community had a voice in hoped-for revitalization. This emphasis on UNCCRC does not imply that other group activities did not contribute to New Cassel. Quite the contrary, it is clear that the community benefits from the work of many community-based organizations. UNCCRC was organized in 1999 to represent the diverse residents of New Cassel and to partner with the Town of North Hempstead, Nassau County, Sustainable Long Island and others. Obtaining nonprofit 501(c)(3) status as of July 2002, its mission is to facilitate community revitalization, sustainable development and a shared vision in the New Cassel community.¹⁵ UNCCRC is the only local community organization on Long Island that has a written partnership with a local municipality.¹⁶

Town of North Hempstead

The Town government is headed by Supervisor Jon Kaiman and six town council members. May Newburger was the town supervisor at the outset of this renewal process and played an important role in the subsequent success.

Councilman Robert Troiano represents District 6, which includes New Cassel. Mr. Troiano is the Town of North Hempstead's first African-American elected official. Supervisor Kaiman (2008) reported that all policy and project initiatives in New Cassel are coordinated through both his and Councilman Troiano's office as "Mr. Troiano has become an essential catalyst for project development and problem resolution in the New Cassel area."

In 2003, the Town moved from electing four at-large town council members to a system of six districts, each of which elects its own council representative, thereby giving New Cassel a stronger voice in its governance, and, second, that land use rules are set locally by the Town of North Hempstead rather than at the county or regional level.

All Town of North Hempstead Departments provide services to New Cassel; those most closely involved with community revitalization include:

- Building,
- Community-Based Planning,
- Parks,
- Public Works, and
- Planning and Economic Development.

There are several independent town agencies. Of these, the Community Development Agency, Neville Mullings, Executive Director, plays the largest role in this study.

Since 1975, the Town has been a member of the Nassau County Urban Consortium. The Consortium consists of 31 local municipalities (cities, towns, and villages) that have entered into a memorandum of understanding with Nassau County to participate as recipients of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) funds. The Town Community Development Agency is the authorized entity that administers the Town-apportioned CDBG funds and advances the Town's community development initiatives.

Nassau County

Nassau County is led by elected officials County Executive Thomas R. Suozzi and the 19 members of the Nassau County Legislature. Thomas Gulotta was the Nassau County chief executive as this revitalization began.

Roger Corbin is the former deputy presiding officer of the Nassau County Legislature and representative for District 2 that includes New Cassel and Westbury.

Rev. Patrick G. Duggan is one of four Deputy County Executives appointed by Mr. Suozzi and heads the Office of Economic Development, the principal arm of county government involved in the New Cassel revitalization. An important figure in revitalization from the outset, Rev. Duggan has been a leader of the revitalization effort from multiple organizations and roles.

Among the many Nassau County government entities which have actively supported New Cassel Revitalization are:

- the Office of Economic Development,
- the Office of Housing and Intergovernmental Affairs (OHIA),
- the Office of Housing & Homeless Services (OHHS),
- the Nassau County Planning Commission (NCPC),
- the Nassau County Police Department (NCPD),
- the Department of Public Works (DPW), and
- the Department of Social Services (DSS).

Among these, OHIA has provided the largest financial support in its capacity as administrator for all federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds awarded to Nassau County since 1975 in the following programs:

- the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG),
- the HOME program,
- the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and
- the American Dream Down Payment Initiative (ADDI).

New York State

Funding from New York State has played an essential role in New Cassel revitalization

Of the many areas of New York State government that relate to New Cassel, the most important to this study are:

- the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) and the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR),
- the Departments of Education (especially the critical Westbury School District),
- the Departments of Environmental Protection, State, and Transportation;
- the Empire State Development Corporation (lead for the state's economic development efforts),
- the Housing Finance Agency (HFA),
- the New York State Economic Development Assistance Program (NYSDAP), and
- the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA).

David Paterson is the current governor; George Pataki and Eliot Spitzer preceded him in this decade of revitalization.

In the New York State Legislature, Senator Craig Johnson represents District 7 and Assemblymen Charles Lavine and Rob Walker represent District 13 and 15 respectively, which include New Cassel.

U.S. Government

President George W. Bush has explicitly supported faith-based community development efforts, as exemplified by this description on the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Website:¹⁷

President Bush's Faith-Based Initiative originated from the simple idea that our best chance to overcome a community's deepest problems is to tackle them from within, by welcoming those community partners who truly know how to change lives and entire communities.

As an active leader in the Initiative, HUD has set the standard in policy reforms that welcome organizations rooted in the community. We are leveling the playing field for these organizations, affording them the opportunity to effect an even greater change in neighborhoods across America. These policy changes have allowed faith-based and community organizations to make a unique impact in the lives of society's most vulnerable citizens, channeling America's compassion in new directions.

Bill Clinton was president when the New Cassel initiative started. While presidential administrations have significantly affected the federal approach to community development and the level of available funding, changes in policy and appropriations generally do not have immediate consequences, thus New Cassel benefited from programs initiated in earlier presidential administrations.

U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton and House Representative Carolyn McCarthy (from District 4) have been particularly active in supporting legislation that has generated funding for revitalization and have visited New Cassel personally to support this effort and participate in groundbreaking ceremonies.

Of particular importance in this case study—especially as sources of funds—are:

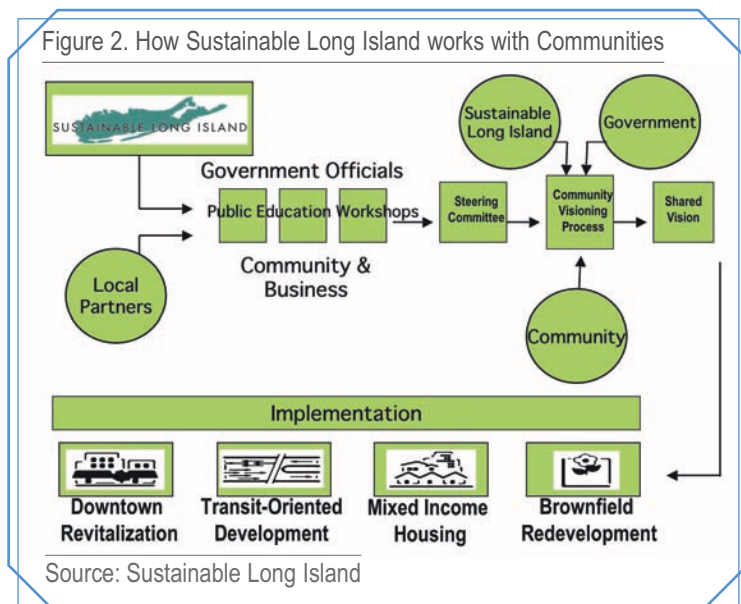
- the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD, with origins in the Kennedy-Johnson era),
- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, a Nixon legacy) and Environmental Data Standards Council (ESDC), and
- the Federal Transit Administration (FTA, started in the Clinton administration).

Sustainable Long Island: A New Concept in Regional Support

In the mid-1990s, a group of civic leaders and philanthropists came together to discuss new approaches to promote social and environmental justice.¹⁸ Drawing on their experiences with a rich mix of foundations—including the Long-Island based Rauch Foundation, the Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund, the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock, and the Long Island Community Foundation—they brought a wealth of ideas and an appetite for experimenting with a new approach for meeting goals of shared economic growth, environmental clean-up and continuing health, and increased social equity throughout Long Island. They hoped to create bridges among people, government, developers, and funders. After two years of study, they launched Sustainable Long Island, which attained 501 (c) (3) status in November 1998. Co-founder Amy Hagedorn remembers the group hoped to “give people an opportunity to shape the future of their communities.”¹⁹

Today, Sustainable Long Island’s mission²⁰ remains: “to promote economic development, environmental health and equity for all Long Islanders, now and for generations to come.” The group is an advocate for Smart Growth programs in which plans for development “serve the community’s needs without displacing residents or compromising environmental health.” Sustainable Long Island was in the vanguard of the Smart Growth and sustainability movement, now active worldwide.

Sustainable Long Island engages in action-learning by catalyzing and prototyping new ways of social organization and collaboration.²¹ Figure 2 provides an overview of the processes the organization uses in working with communities. As its staff members learn from experience and adjust to each situation, this process changes.



The typical planning procedure is a top-down process. It's actually one that many planning schools still teach, and it's akin to the way Robert Moses²² worked. He had the big ideas and he executed them; he got the money and he did it with or without community approval.

Sustainable Long Island's community-based process, on the other hand, is a bottom-up approach, which doesn't push the local municipality out of the way because that doesn't work either. Instead it brings the community to the decision-making table, so that everybody with a vested interest in the community has a voice in the future.

—Sarah Lansdale, Executive Director, Sustainable Long Island (2007)

New Cassel is one of the eight Long Island communities where Sustainable Long Island has acted as a revitalization catalyst and facilitator. Sustainable Long Island contributes to and learns from every community and organization with which it works and serves as a focal point on Long Island for sharing successes and lessons learned. Studies of community and economic development around the world^{23, 24, 25, 26} reinforce the effectiveness of this approach.

Other Regional Non-Governmental Organizations

The Long Island Housing Partnership (LIHP) is another of the key regional organizations that have supported the New Cassel renewal process. The Partnership seeks to provide affordable housing opportunities “to those who, through the ordinary, unaided operation of the marketplace, would be unable to secure decent and safe homes. LIHP realizes this mission through the development and sponsorship of affordable ownership and rental units, as well as through related services.”²⁷

Other regional nonprofit organizations working in New Cassel include the Institute for Sustainable Development, the Long Island Community Foundation, the Long Island Progressive Coalition, the Salvation Army, and the Sandy River Charitable Foundation. Studies prepared by the Horace Hagedorn Foundation, the Long Island Index, and the Rauch Foundation provided—and continue to provide—information and a context for making decisions.

Community Planning: Coping with “Wicked” Problems

Even the most carefully crafted renewal plans, designed with the participation of multiple organizations working in partnership, are often confronted with vociferous contention and disagreement. Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber,²⁸ researchers working at the University of California, developed a theory—the theory of “wicked problems”—to describe the types of challenges encountered in urban planning and community revitalization. They came to understand that people working in community planning are faced not only with the challenges of constructing buildings and rebuilding infrastructure but also—even before they begin construction—with the more difficult challenges of developing stakeholder consensus on what should be built, how it should be used, and where development should take place.

...[I]n a pluralistic society there is *nothing like the undisputable public good; there is no objective definition of equity*; policies that respond to social problems cannot be meaningfully correct or false; and it makes no sense to talk about “optimal solutions” to social problems unless severe qualifications are imposed first. Even worse, *there are no “solutions” in the sense of definitive and objective answers*²⁹ [emphasis added].

Rittel and Webber define “wicked problems” as having certain characteristics, including:

- There are many people who care about, or have something at stake in, how the problem is resolved. This makes the problem-solving process fundamentally social rather than technical.
- There is no definitive statement of the problem because it is embedded in an evolving set of interlocking issues and constraints.
- The constraints on the solution, such as limited resources and political ramifications, change over time. The constraints change—ultimately—because we live in a rapidly changing world. Operationally they change because many are generated by the stakeholders, who come and go, change their minds, fail to communicate or otherwise change the rules by which the problem must be solved.
- Because there is no objectively “right answer,” what is important is that the stakeholders work out and accept whatever solution looks most promising.
- The problem-solving process ends when you run out of time, money, energy or some other resource—not when some perfect solution emerges³⁰ [order of points changed].

These characteristics describe many of the difficulties faced by those supporting the revitalization. In particular, the issue of changing constraints has been a problem for New Cassel stakeholders.

For example, the population of the community naturally changes as young people become adults, mature leaders retire, and employment opportunities prompt relocation. Furthermore, many of the key figures working to support the community change positions over time. While facing many discontinuities arising from changes in organizational staffing, New Cassel revitalization efforts have strongly benefited from the persistence of interested players who, even after changing positions, continue to support the initiative.

The challenges that UNCCRC has confronted in the areas of fundraising and staffing are indicative of the common struggle to find enough sufficient resources just to keep working.

Another way in which wicked problems appear is the constant shifting of economic conditions exemplified by the current financial crisis (ongoing in December 2008). The downturn has strongly affected government funding sources and private lending. It also influences the value of buildings in development and on the market and resident capacity to make rent and mortgage payments. Even in periods of economic stability, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Kaiman has pointed to the significant attention—"a constant, weekly battle"—required to coordinate mismatches in funding requirements.

Conditional grant payout requirements that include, among other things, raising local matching funds which carry various strictures themselves and the conditions which precede fund expenditures such as zoning approvals and building permits encapsulate one of these battles. "The government just took back a million dollars because we had not spent it yet," he said. "Their own rules didn't allow us to use it yet. We're trying to get it back." (2008) Here, indeed, is a situation as described above "embedded in an evolving set of interlocking issues and constraints."

Table 7 below provides examples of how New Cassel stakeholders have taken on wicked problems related to their particular circumstances.

Table 7. Examples of "Wicked Problems" faced by the New Cassel Community

Characteristics of Wicked Problems ³¹	Examples in New Cassel Revitalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many people who care about, or have something at stake in, how the problem is resolved. This makes the problem-solving process fundamentally social rather than technical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the residents and business owners, there are many stakeholder organizations in New Cassel including UNCCRC and other community organizations, churches, the school district, the various levels of government, government service providers in the community, and interested nonprofits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no definitive statement of the problem because it is embedded in an evolving set of interlocking issues and constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With many points of view, different definitions of the problem arise naturally. For example, some New Cassel stakeholders do not think that renewal is needed at all.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The constraints on the solution...change over time. The constraints change—ultimately—because we live in a rapidly changing world. Operationally they change because many constraints are generated by the stakeholders, who come and go, change their minds, fail to communicate or otherwise change the rules.... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One example of conflicting constraints are the government restrictions on funding that require matching grants. The matching grants often come with their own restrictions which conflict with those issued by the government.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because there is no objectively "right answer," what is important is that the stakeholders work out and accept whatever solution looks most promising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because there are so many people and organizations working in New Cassel, compromises and adaptations to changing circumstances are important.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem-solving process ends when you run out of time, money, energy or some other resource—not when some perfect solution emerges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most organizations involved in community renewal face funding challenges. For example, UNCCRC's efforts have been constricted not because the goal changed but because they have not always had sufficient funding.

A Narrative of New Cassel's Renewal: People and Stories, from 1998 to 2008

The Beginning

As is often the case in narratives of social change, the story begins in several places at about the same time—gaining momentum through many factors, organizations, and processes.

In 1998, for instance, the New Cassel-Westbury Neighborhood Advisory Council obtained a federal Department of Justice Weed and Seed designation, which uses the support of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to cooperate in “weeding out” violent criminals and drug abusers and [urges] public and private organizations to “seed” positive development with human service programs.³²

At the same time, the Town of North Hempstead was developing the political will to address the neglect in New Cassel and lobbying in Washington, D.C. for the funding programs needed to do so. One example of this political resolution is the acknowledgement by then-Town of North Hempstead Supervisor May Newburger, who publicly stated that New Cassel had previously been ignored and would now receive constructive attention from the government. As Town Supervisor Kaiman (2008) later recalled:

I was commissioner of Public Safety [then], but also an advisor to Supervisor Newburger. It was suggested to Art Gianelli [Director of Operations for the Town] and me that we might want to seek an ...EPA [federal Environmental Protection Agency] brownfields grant for the New Cassel area.

It was a \$300,000 site assessment grant that, if we got it, could open the door to economic revitalization of the area.

What struck us was that even though it was an EPA grant, the basis for getting the grant had to be economic development. You had to show that you would look at the cleanup of underutilized properties for the purpose of economic development. So you got the best of both worlds: you improve your environment and you improve your economy.

Simultaneously, Sustainable Long Island was in formation, developing as an organization with a mission, methods, trained staff, and a strategy to begin its work. In 1999, when Rev. Patrick G. Duggan, Sustainable Long Island's first executive director, approached the organization's board of directors about working in New Cassel, the board consented reluctantly, recalling that earlier investments from other organizations had produced mixed results in the hamlet. In a few mission-defining months, Sustainable Long Island went from a broadly-based policy organization to a hands-on community facilitation team, applying regional and global thinking to concrete local challenges in New Cassel.

Using a combination of community outreach and faith-based approach, Rev. Duggan and the Sustainable Long Island staff began meeting with leaders and members of the New Cassel

community. After a series of exploratory meetings, they asked Bishop (then Reverend) Lionel Harvey to serve as a focal point for a new organization which could represent the many diverse and often contentious voices in New Cassel. Because he was new to the area, Rev. Harvey brought little historical baggage with him.

Patrick Duggan talked to me about Smart Growth and about opportunities that were in the New Cassel area and how it had been neglected.

After a couple of meetings of sitting down and just getting an idea of what Smart Growth really was, it was decided that the best way to mobilize was to get the clergy together. I would be the head to try and make this happen.

We held a great meeting and had great response from all the clergy. There are 47 churches in the New Cassel area, all very diverse. Hispanic and Haitian, we have our Caribbean brothers, Caucasian and African American. And we all came to the table. There must have been about 20 or 25 folks that day who were just clergy.

We were able to sit down and talk about some of the needs that the parishioners had, some of the needs of the community. Sustainable Long Island was able to come in and take us through some things and from there it started.

—Bishop Lionel Harvey, President of the Board of UNCCRC (2007)

This was the start of UNCCRC, a powerful community force in this story of renewal. The Duggan-Harvey partnership helped create the conditions under which discouraged and divided community residents could come together. Many New Cassel residents found a faith-based approach to community development powerfully motivating and several residents interviewed for this project³³ believe that Divine Intervention was the deciding factor in the success New Cassel has experienced.

As part of its charter for community asset-building Sustainable Long Island helped recruit and train UNCCRC board members. The work to include the whole community was challenging. Harvey (2007) remembers that bringing this diverse and often argumentative community together “was very, very difficult. We were able to—and Sustainable was able to help us—...bring in a diverse group of people.”

When asked to define UNCCRC, its first executive director, Sheila Tate, wrote:

What makes UNCCRC unique is its commitment to providing residents, businesses, clergy, civic organizations, property owners, and students—all stakeholders—with an opportunity to participate in the revitalization of New Cassel neighborhoods through the use of community-based visioning.³⁴

Using a “Go slow at first, in order to go faster later,” over the next five years, UNCCRC (especially Sheila Tate and Sarah Kahn) and Sustainable Long Island staff (especially Patrick G. Duggan and Vanessa Pugh) engaged in a monumental community education and outreach program. They met with church and civic leaders, business owners, the superintendent of

schools, and Town officials and commissioners—more than 500 meetings in all. They made presentations at church services, in schools, at meetings in homes, and for individuals and families. Although there was some small resistance from discouraged residents, Tate (2008) remembers that much of “the resistance came from the community leaders...who felt that they had already done this. Why are you trying to do it again?”

Building Momentum: The Charrette and Vision Plan

Revitalization picked up momentum in 2000. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the Town of North Hempstead a \$200,000 grant for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot in New Cassel. These EPA Pilot Project grants are designed to help states and communities test ways to clean up and redevelop brownfields for sustainable reuse. Successful applications can lead to additional opportunities for federal and state funding (including substantial cleanup, revolving loans, and job training grants). The project team was authorized to conduct a site survey of up to 50 commercial sites along Prospect and Union Avenues in order to select the most suitable places for redevelopment. The Town created a Community Involvement Plan to help bring in affected citizens, groups, and members of the community. Sustainable Long Island agreed to provide community involvement facilitators, assist with the data collection, and share the results.

Town Supervisor May Newburger awarded UNCCRC and Sustainable Long Island \$150,000 to support a community planning process which would enable residents to form and articulate their vision for community revitalization in New Cassel and the development of a plan to support their goals.

We pulled together a meeting with UNCCRC at First Baptist Church where we had every government entity that had anything to do with New Cassel in the room. It was in that meeting that Supervisor Newburger committed \$150,000 to the visioning effort. It was at those organizing efforts that the buzz was created.

—Rev. Patrick G. Duggan, Deputy Nassau County Executive (2007)

In May 2000, four groups—UNCCRC, the Town, the Town Community Development Agency, and Sustainable Long Island—signed a memorandum of agreement³⁵ to formalize their partnership in support of New Cassel. From a social and organizational learning perspective, this is a key event.

With Sustainable Long Island as a non-voting facilitator, these groups formed a 10-member New Cassel Community Steering Committee to identify and meet community needs. The committee used a variety of methods for engaging the public. Using the three dominant languages of the community (English, Haitian Creole, and Spanish—see Figure 3), the outreach campaign included large mailings; newspaper advertisements; announcements in churches, schools, and other organizations; and home

Figure 3. Illustration of Outreach in Multiple Languages



Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

visits and block association meetings. Extending an existing tradition, a variety of block and area clean-up days focused attention on the existing assets and the promise inherent in New Cassel.

More than 100 residents signed up to be block captains, connecting families and individuals to the community renewal efforts. The block captain program³⁶ was a powerful force not only in “getting the word out” but also in mobilizing resident participation. Newly-active residents saw that they could make a difference for themselves and their neighbors.

Figure 4. Some of the leaders supporting the 2002 New Cassel Vision Charrette: Vanessa Pugh, Sustainable Long Island; Hon. May Newburger, Town of North Hempstead; Bishop Lionel Harvey, UNCCRC



Courtesy Sustainable Long Island

Figure 5. Pictures from the 2002 New Cassel Visioning Charrette Tours



Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

Sustainable Long Island (see Figure 4) worked with Dan Burden, Director of Walkable Communities, Inc.,³⁷ to prepare a robust community-wide education and vision building process, building on the considerable outreach work which had already taken place. An experienced designer and facilitator who had successfully teamed with Sustainable Long Island in the past, Mr. Burden consults with many communities to build understanding and consensus. As the name implies, Walkable Communities’ mission is to help communities become more pedestrian-friendly. Their premise:

Walkable communities put urban environments back on a scale for sustainability of resources (both natural and economic) and lead to more social interaction, physical fitness and diminished crime and other social problems.

—Dan Burden, Director of Walkable Communities, Inc.³⁸

As part of the Visioning Charrette, the design team arranged for a number of pre-meeting focus groups, educational walking tours and the community planning, itself, which concluded with the production of a New Cassel Vision Plan. In urban and suburban planning, a charrette is an intense, often multiple-day collaborative design session which includes a wide range of stakeholders.

...For the community visioning process.... we...engaged high school students to help us canvas door-to-door, we put signs out on the roads. It was like a major...political campaign.
—Sheila Tate, former Executive Director UNCCRC (2008)

The pre-meeting focus groups—conducted with business and property owners, nonprofit and foundation representatives, childcare and youth leaders, clergy and religious leaders, politicians, UNCCRC board members and students at the Park Avenue School summer program—helped to set a powerful context for the actual vision meetings and to strengthen the network of people needed to carry the vision forward.

The community responded enthusiastically. In July more than 800 people joined in one or more of the vision tours (see Figure 5 on the previous page) and meetings (see Figure 6) entitled “Seeking a Shared Vision for New Cassel.” Translators helped those less comfortable with English to participate fully. A short video with excerpts from the Visioning processes is available on Sustainable Long Island’s Website.³⁹ Here is the summary of the community values⁴⁰ expressed by residents and other stakeholders:

- Safe
- Clean
- Ambition, pride, determination
- Community unity
- Affordable housing
- Friendly
- Caring
- Sharing
- Education
- Respect
- Jobs, business
- Beautiful

Figure 6. Pictures from the 2002 New Cassel Visioning Charrette



Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

Building on the discussion of values, the stakeholders voted for their top priorities. These priorities⁴¹ were, in order of importance:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Safe, clean environment | 8. Police protection |
| 2. Better schools | 9. Traffic light at Hopper Street |
| 3. Youth recreation center | 10. Daycare center |
| 4. Affordable housing | 11. Safe public space |
| 5. Movie theater | 12. Landscaping |
| 6. Senior citizen center | 13. Local businesses/jobs |
| 7. Lighting | |

The resulting New Cassel Vision Plan included a listing of community priorities, architectural and streetscape renderings, proposed zoning changes, and a Vision Implementation Matrix listing 14 Action Items with planned activities designated with short, medium, and long-term steps. (The richly illustrated Vision Plan, based on the community's vision and written by Sustainable Long Island, is available for downloading from the Town of North Hempstead's Website.⁴²)

The Action Items from the Plan⁴³ are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Enforcement | 8. Streetscape Program |
| 2. Community Cleanup | 9. Gateways |
| 3. Funding | 10. New Codes and Design Guidelines |
| 4. Community Art | 11. Façade Improvements |
| 5. Community Asset Building | 12. Youth Civic Program |
| 6. Traffic Engineering Study | 13. Parks |
| 7. Pedestrian Safety | 14. Community Multi-Use Center |

The full Implementation Matrix is shown in Appendix A. The level of detail in the Matrix exemplifies the thoroughness of this planning process.

With active support from Nassau County,⁴⁴ including pledges of financial support, the Town of North Hempstead adopted the Vision Plan in March 2003.⁴⁵ In July 2003,⁴⁶ the Town expanded the hamlet's Urban Renewal Plan to include the Vision Plan, as illustrated by this excerpt from Article II of the Plan:

The recently produced area vision plan, Seeking A Shared Vision for New Cassel: Vision Plan for New Cassel (the "Vision Plan"), is the clearest statement of community objectives. During the course of a multi-day planning event, community stakeholders identified significant issues in New Cassel, and formulated concepts to revitalize the area.

Recommendations included actions to reconstruct and revitalize the Prospect Avenue corridor, improve the appearance of buildings, reduce criminal activity, address overcrowding and illegal housing, develop community cultural and recreational facilities, improve parking conditions, and reduce litter.⁴⁷

The objectives of the Town Urban Renewal Plan are:

1. To eliminate substandard conditions within the Project Area as identified in the New Cassel Urban Renewal Area Study, June 2003.
2. To improve the condition of deteriorated or dilapidated buildings within the Project Area.
3. To create new housing opportunities.
4. To redevelop vacant, underutilized, and deteriorated properties.
5. To enhance the aesthetics and overall image of the Project Area.
6. To improve public safety.
7. To help generate economic activity.
8. To improve community facilities.⁴⁸

As the Urban Renewal plan itself notes, the timing of the work to accomplish these objectives was then and remains highly dependent on both the acquisition of the land targeted for redevelopment projects and the necessary funding from government and foundation grants (especially those anticipated from the federal Community Development Block Grant Program and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program), business investments and grants, and taxes. A copy of the plan is available from the Town of North Hempstead Website.⁴⁹

Site Development Takes Shape

On September 30, 2003,⁵⁰ the Town revised its zoning codes for Prospect Avenue in New Cassel to allow the mixed-use buildings called for in the Vision Plan.

During the next month, the Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, in cooperation with the Town of North Hempstead and Nassau County, issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for seven sites (sites A, B, C, D, E, F, and G; Figure 7 is a reproduction of the RFP for Site A). In response, they received 34 proposals from real estate developers. To support the goal of creating a transparent process that was responsive to community needs, a multi-stakeholder committee was formed with members from UNCCRC, Town Community Development Agency staff, Nassau County Economic Development staff, and economic development consultant Andrew Hyman,⁵¹ who reviewed the proposals and performed due diligence on the respective developers. The public was invited to attend the meetings in which developers presented their proposals.

Figure 7. Solicitation for Developers for Site A

Development Opportunity:
701 Prospect Avenue, New Cassel

NASSAU COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
THOMAS R. SHOZET
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
5015 T. AVENUE
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
400 COUNTY SEAT DRIVE
MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD
NEVILLE MALLINGS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

Nassau County
You Want to Be Here!

Inquiries on this property:
Phone: 516.371.0578

Site Area: 56,003 Square Feet.
Site Location: New Cassel, Town of North Hempstead, NY.
Permitted Development Coverage: 70%.
Preferred Development Program: Mixed-use.
Regional Access: Long Island Expressway (LIE — 495), Exit 40; Northern State Parkway, Exit 34 - Brush Hollow Road and Wantagh State Parkway, Exit W1.
Local Access: Jericho Turnpike (New York State Route 25); Old Country Road; Post Avenue and Union Avenue.
Public Transportation: Long Island Railroad - Westbury Station and Long Island Bus (N35).
Development Incentives include: Nassau County Industrial Development Agency financing — payments-in-lieu-of-real-estate-taxes, sales-tax exemption, mortgage-recording-tax abatement. NYS Real Property Tax Law Section 485-b tax relief may be available as-of-right.

www.nassaucountynydevelopment.org

Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

Originally, UNCCRC and Sustainable Long Island^{52, 53} planned to participate directly in the development and subsequent management of Site H, sometimes called the Demonstration Project. The hope was that the development of this site would demonstrate both the effectiveness of the combination of commercial and residential space in a single building as well as the possibilities for community and nonprofit organizations to partner in site development and management.

Unfortunately exemplifying the difficulties inherent in facing wicked problems, the early development process got bogged down in bureaucratic delays and funding problems and was further complicated by disagreements between UNCCRC and Sustainable Long Island. In January 2004, in a change of course⁵⁴ which addressed other renewal objectives, the decision was made to use a minority-owned business—A & C Development Partners—to develop Site H. This decision was made outside the RFP process but with the consent of the renewal partner organizations.

In March 2004, the committee and the CDA selected the following three developers: the Bluestone Organization (Site A), a partnership between the Sheldrake Organization and UNCCRC (Site E), and a partnership between Douglaston Developers, LLC and the Anna and Philip Kimmel Foundation (Site F). UNCCRC is partnering with Sheldrake Associates on the Site E development. After a start-up period, UNCCRC plans to manage this property, generating income to help support the organization's activities.

Early in 2004, several of the key New Cassel players—Patrick G. Duggan, Jon Kaiman, and Sarah Lansdale—changed positions, taking roles they still hold today. Table 8 provides a list of various leadership positions and the people occupying those positions at the start of the process as well as today.

Table 8. Changing New Cassel Revitalization Leadership Positions

Leadership Positions Associated with New Cassel	Nassau County, Deputy County Executive for Economic Development	Sustainable Long Island, Executive Director	Town of North Hempstead, Supervisor	UNCCRC, Executive Director
At the beginning	Peter Sylver	Rev. Patrick G. Duggan	May Newburger	Sheila Tate*
As of November 2008	Rev. Patrick G. Duggan	Sarah Lansdale	Jon Kaiman	Kennetha Pettus
* The first UNCCRC Executive Director held this position for a very short time; Sheila Tate was the second Executive Director.				

Although changes in leadership roles often present significant challenges, this revitalization process actually benefited from a continuity of interested players who moved around but remained committed to New Cassel. When Jon Kaiman succeeded May Newburger as town supervisor in January 2004, he continued, as he had been doing in prior positions with the Town, to identify public and private investment to implement the community's vision. David Wasserman, chair of the Town CDA during both the Newburger and Kaiman administrations, helped to provide continuity.

With Rev. Duggan's move to head the Nassau County Office of Economic Development in February 2004, the Town-County government partnership working on behalf of New Cassel was considerably strengthened. Succeeding Rev. Duggan in the position of Executive Director at Sustainable Long Island, Sarah Lansdale was able to draw on her prior experience as Sustainable Long Island's Brownfields Program Coordinator.

In April 2004, the CDA reopened the RFPs for Urban Renewal Sites B, C, D, and G, soliciting additional proposals suited to the New Cassel vision. The next month, Stoneridge Homes, Inc. was chosen to redevelop Sites B, C, and D and Wheatley Hills Nursery, Inc. was designated to redevelop Site G with an extension of its existing nursery business. The acceptance of these proposals, as in the earlier cases, was conditional, pending a satisfactory land disposition agreement (terms and conditions for the transfer of site ownership), which included a timetable for drawings and specifications, zoning approvals, if required, and the initiation and completion of construction.⁵⁵

Also in 2004, the Town of North Hempstead began working on the Prospect Avenue streetscape, traffic calming, and pedestrian safety using a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) administered by the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT). Construction was scheduled for 2006. It has not been easy. Implementing an envisioned streetscape requires the coordination of an extremely complex series of interlocking players, including public utilities and multiple government agencies, permits, projects, and grants with expiration dates. (In spite of Long Island's frustrating development environment of "one-step-forward, a half-step-back," the Town Planning and Economic Development Department, supported by strong political will and the ability to refer to a community mandate, ultimately managed to persevere, issuing RFPs for streetscape design and traffic engineering in April 2008. A rendering from the streetscape plans can be seen later in this document.)

Near the end of 2004, a joint announcement was issued by Nassau County Executive Thomas R. Suozzi and Legislator Roger Corbin, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Jon Kaiman and Councilman Robert Troiano, UNCCRC, the Town CDA, and Sustainable Long Island: A ceremonial ground breaking—honoring essential government funding—would take place on Tuesday, December 14 at 1:00 pm.⁵⁶ Senator Clinton and Representative McCarthy presented the town with a \$1.25 million check to help with environmental cleanup and revitalization projects. The ceremony took place at Stoneridge Homes' Site B (see Figure 8) and was followed by a celebration at the First Baptist Church of Westbury.

In her remarks Senator Clinton said:⁵⁷

I am proud to be your partner in making this vision a reality. I am very excited about what this means for this community, but I am particularly pleased that it was a community effort, which started right here in this church, that led to this day. This is a wonderful example of a faith-based initiative.⁵⁸

Figure 8. Site B Groundbreaking, December 2004

From left to right: Hon. Roger Corbin, Nassau County Legislator; Hon. Thomas R. Suozzi, Nassau County Executive; Hon. Carolyn McCarthy, US Congresswoman; Hon. Hillary Clinton, US Senator; Hon. Jon Kaiman, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor; Bishop Lionel Harvey, First Baptist Church of Westbury; Hon. Robert Troiano, Town of North Hempstead Councilperson; May Newburger, former Town of North Hempstead Supervisor; Amy Hagedorn, President, Sustainable Long Island.



Courtesy: Sustainable Long Island

Bishop Harvey spoke about the many partnerships, highlighting the fact that nothing would have been possible...

...without the Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation, without the Sheila Bates, without the Sarah [Lansdales] and without the Amy [Hagedorns] and all the people who worked so hard...and gave unselfishly...and made sure New Cassel came together.⁵⁹

Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman (2004) said:

We understand that there will be some roadblocks along the way and that we will make some mistakes, but at the end of the day, we believe we are going to have a brand new main street. And that's because of all the people in this room and all the people in this community who have come together and participated, let their voices be heard and put themselves on the line.⁶⁰

Former North Hempstead Supervisor May Newburger reminisced about visiting the community during her first campaign for Town leadership years earlier. Because New Cassel was not part of her district as a state assemblywoman, she had not had occasion to visit it before this campaign:

I left and said, "I have never heard of New Cassel. I did not know it existed." And I think that is what we have repaired [now]. It's not that you were neglected; you were ignored. I thank you all for helping me see it. So this day is about the people who were involved all along, including Mildred Little, Margaret Miller-Scott, and so many more. I learned from you and I hope that I listened.⁶¹

"Living the Changes" of Revitalization Planning

Many New Cassel residents date the current revitalization successes from Newburger's recognition of, and continuing commitment to, the New Cassel community.

In June 2005, Sustainable Long Island led a walking tour of New Cassel to watch foundations being poured for the new construction.⁶²

A month later, Town Supervisor Kaiman⁶³ announced that, after negotiations, Neptune RTS, an electric transmission business newly locating in the industrial area of New Cassel, had committed \$10 million to support one of the big dreams that arose during the 2002 New Cassel charrette: the hoped-for Community Multi-Use Center (total cost estimated at \$15 million). Earlier in the year, Neptune RTS⁶⁴ had met with New Cassel stakeholders to explain their plans for locating a station which converts electricity from DC power to AC power in the industrial area of New Cassel. Unlike many earlier businesses, this "clean" plant will produce no pollutants and will not affect ground water—meeting the Town and State standards for noise and EMF—and not affecting ground emissions. The announcement also meant a successful conclusion to the efforts of Legislator Corbin,⁶⁵ who had been instrumental in bringing New Cassel to Neptune's attention in the preceding years.

In May 2006, a second groundbreaking celebration⁶⁶ took place, this one at Site A (see Figure 9), often called the Gateway to New Cassel. By building on a site whose main feature for years had been an abandoned gas station, the developer, the Bluestone Organization, took an important step in transforming the first impression of New Cassel for visitors and residents. Councilman Troiano explained the significance of the construction to the community:

This vacant lot, which existed for many years as a symbol of emptiness and despair, is being replaced by a beautiful physical structure that will symbolize the spirit of renaissance and renewal in this community. Standing at the gateway to New Cassel, this development will serve as a powerful reminder of the resurgence taking place in this community.⁶⁷

In addition to a high quality of life for New Cassel residents, it is important that the real estate developers investing New Cassel feel that they will be able to create viable businesses. And, according to Eric Bluestone, company president, this is the case. He is using New Cassel to expand his business: "...this was an opportunity to do something we've been doing very well in the city, but in a new market."⁶⁸

Day in and day out, the complex work supporting revitalization continued.

In 2007, residents and stakeholders really began to "live" the changes. A number of middle class homeowners who had been thinking of moving away decided to stay.⁶⁹ Business owners and residents began to take the new buildings under construction seriously and to consider applying for new apartments and business spaces. There are many success stories, and details of the progress on the eight Community Development Agency Redevelopment Sites are included in the next section of this report.

Of course, not all of the plans worked out smoothly. Councilman Troiano described the disappointment of a local entrepreneur whose plans for expansion into a new line of business fell apart.⁷⁰ Some residents who won a UNCCRC lottery to apply for newly-constructed apartments didn't meet the financial requirements, even with the help of financial counselors.⁷¹

Throughout the Town of the North Hempstead, building and construction was disrupted by corruption. In 2007, five Town of North Hempstead Building Department employees and former employees, including the commissioner, were arrested on a variety of charges⁷² including grand larceny, accepting bribes for permits and certificates of occupancy, filing false tax returns, and offering false instruments for filing. Of those arrested, three have pleaded guilty, one has been acquitted, and one is awaiting trial. Town Supervisor Kaiman recently reported that "new leadership, a beefed-up employee roster, a new computer system and an overhauled code book"⁷³ are putting the department back on track.

Figure 9. Site A Groundbreaking, May 2006

Left to right: Neville Mullings, Executive Director Town of North Hempstead CDA; Daphne Wilson, Executive Director UNCCRC; Hon. Robert Troiano, Town of North Hempstead Councilperson; Hon. Jon Kaiman, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor; Hon. Roger Corbin, Nassau County Legislator.



Courtesy Sustainable Long Island

Difficulties involving real estate developers also came to light. Minutes of the January 25, 2007 North Hempstead CDA meeting report that the agency and the Town would be conducting soil testing to investigate charges that Stoneridge Homes had over excavated and not yet restored Site B to the specifications in the approved engineering plan.⁷⁴ A year later, it became clear that, although Stoneridge had three buildings nearing completion, the business had developed significant financial problems.⁷⁵ First Sterling Financial of Manhasset, N.Y., became the developer for Sites B and C, and negotiations are ongoing (2008) concerning the ownership and completion of Site D.

While some in-progress construction faltered, other projects didn't start when originally expected. Don Campbell, the director of Community Development and Government Affairs at the Sheldrake Organization (and former director of housing and community development for Nassau County) explains there are many contributing factors to delayed construction but:

I think the overriding reason [is that] the project overall...was very ambitious....

All [of the New Cassel developers] were going after the same types of funding, the permitting and variances and zoning changes, all at the same time. Although it was a good way to see as much impact as possible quickly, clearly, having seven projects in a small area at the same time is a very difficult task.⁷⁶ (2007)

By 2008, the Community Center had entered the design process. It will be located, as residents proposed in 2002, on a one-acre property (owned by the Town) next to Bunky Reid Park and the Magnolia Gardens Senior Living Complex.

In February 2008, in response to an application from the Nassau County Office of Housing and Intergovernmental Affairs and City National Bank of New Jersey, the New York State Banking Department designated New Cassel as the first Banking Development District (BBD) in Nassau County. City National, a minority-owned and managed commercial bank, will open a branch bank at Redevelopment Site C. With experience in other urban minority communities, City National has also committed to working closely with small businesses in the area and to partnering with nonprofits and local churches to provide financial expertise to residents and business owners. Nassau County Executive Thomas R. Suozzi noted:

[T]he impact of having a BBD in New Cassel is part of an overall shared vision from the residents of the area and is vital to the economic development of the community.

BBD incentives spur economic development and provide... much-needed banking services such as savings and checking accounts, mortgages, small business loans, [and] fostering job creation.... [They also] promote community stability, revitalization, and long-term development.⁷⁷

Also as of 2008, four New Cassel businesses are certified by the Nassau County Office of Economic Development and New York State in the state Empire Zone program (the zone was designated in 2006). This program was created to stimulate economic growth through state tax incentives designed to attract new businesses and to enable existing businesses to expand and create more jobs. "To qualify for certification, a business must be able to demonstrate that it

will create new jobs and/or make investments in the empire zone and be consistent with the local zone's development plan, including a cost-benefit analysis."⁷⁸

The four New Cassel businesses⁷⁹ are:

- Bioreclamation, Inc.;
- Cardoza Plumbing Corporation (a woman-owned minority plumbing contractor business);
- Cyrostar Industries, Inc. (a bio-medical equipment company); and
- LIDARC (an Internet hosting company).

Together these businesses created 68 new jobs in 2007, with Cardoza Plumbing creating almost all of the new work opportunities (65 of the 68). Over the next five years, these businesses are officially projecting a total of 119 new jobs, including 25 in 2008.

As 2008 comes to a close, A & C Partners is applying for the certificate of occupancy for Site E. People and businesses will begin moving into the long-awaited buildings in early 2009.

Table 9, on the following page, is a timeline summarizing the key events in the revitalization process.

Funding Sources

Over the last decade, New Cassel has benefited from the determination and skill of real estate developers and public officials who juggle deadlines and bureaucratic requirements for complex funding approvals. So far, more than \$80 million from both public and private sources has been contributed to New Cassel's revitalization initiatives. Examples of significant funding sources⁸⁰ include:

- real estate developer equity and deferred developer fees and Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) equity.
- anticipated sales proceeds and commercial and residential first mortgages.
- HUD Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) funds which are used to support a wide range of activities including housing, economic development, business revitalization, and infrastructure.
- the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) which supports development providing residential rental and ownership for low- and moderate-income households.
- EPA and New York State Brownfields and Superfund Revitalization programs which enable governments and communities not only to assess and clean up environmentally-damaged land and water, but also to qualify for subsequent funding for economic development and job training.

Table 9. Selected Points in the New Cassel Community Revitalization Timeline

pre-1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lots along Prospect Avenue purchased; Town CDA supports façade improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive community organizing efforts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ While campaigning, May Newburger acknowledged New Cassel had been ignored and promised support
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ US Department of Justice Weed and Seed designation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sustainable Long Island founded
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lobbying efforts begin for New Cassel by the Town of North Hempstead
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sustainable Long Island begins to meet with community leaders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reverend Harvey begins at First Baptist Church
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sustainable Long Island continues to meet with community leaders, elected officials, and funders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sustainable Long Island invites Dan Burden to tour New Cassel with community leaders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early funding success: Environmental Protection Agency \$200,000 funding for Brownfields awarded to the Town
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May–Public meeting held at Park Avenue Elementary School with Clergy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation formed (UNCCRC)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ First executive director hired for UNCCRC
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town commits \$150,000 to hire Sustainable Long Island and UNCCRC for community visioning process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Memo of Understanding signed by Town, Town CDA, and UNCCRC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive outreach to community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ UNCCRC holds first Summer Youth Program
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ July–Community Vision Charette held and Vision Plan prepared
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ UNCCRC Block Captains hold first annual Christmas Tree lighting
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ March–Vision Plan presented and adopted by Town
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ July–Urban Renewal boundaries expanded to include Vision Plan area along Prospect Avenue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ September–Town zoning codes amended for mixed-use buildings in New Cassel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ October–Request for Proposals (RFPs) issued for sites A, B, C, D, E, F and G
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ January–Site H (the Demonstration Project) awarded to A & C Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ March–More sites awarded: A to Bluestone, E to Sheldrake and UNCCRC, F to the Kimmel Foundation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ April–RFPs reopened for sites B, C, D, and G
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May–Site B, C, and D awarded to Stoneridge; Site G to Wheatly Hills Nursery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ December–Groundbreaking with dignitaries including Senator Clinton and Representative McCarthy at Site B
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Groundbreaking on demonstration project (Site H)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town negotiated \$10 million grant from Neptune RTS to (partially) fund Community Center
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Youth help design Community Center in vision charrettes in the Westbury School District
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May–Groundbreaking on Site A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nassau County secures New York State Empire Zone Designation for 10 areas including New Cassel
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Residents comment that the revitalization feels real
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New Cassel designated as a New York State Banking Development District
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Designs completed for Prospect Avenue streetscaping and Community Center

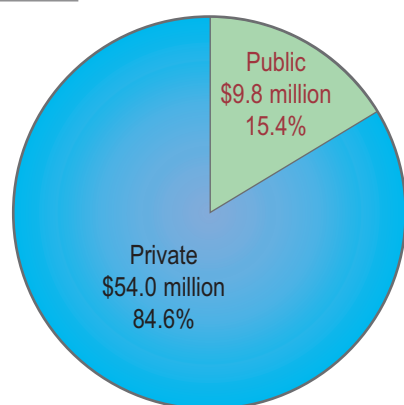
- the Neptune Regional Transmission System, LLC grant to the Town of North Hempstead, which will support the construction of a New Cassel community center and other community goals.⁸¹

The current plan for the development of the community center anticipates, in addition to the grant from Neptune RTS, funds from the New York State Economic Development Assistance Program (NYSEDAP), and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The strategy for supporting the Prospect Avenue Streetscaping draws on the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA), the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and depends, of course, on active cooperation from Long Island utilities. When one set of conditions changes, the entire funding plan may need to be restructured.

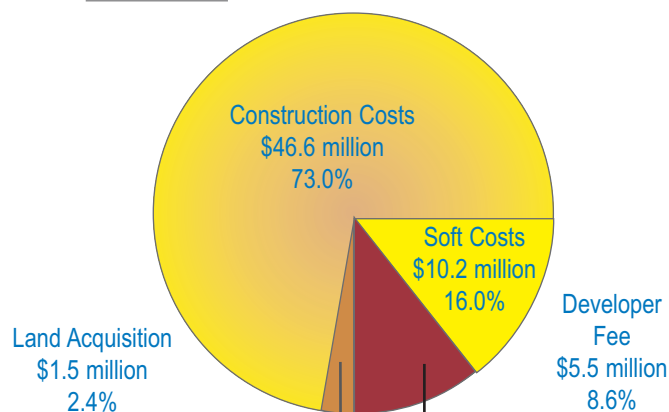
The charts in Figure 10 summarize funding for New Cassel urban renewal sites A through H (with the exception of Site G which is a completed expansion of a commercial nursery business). Eighty-five percent of the funding for these developments came from private sources, with the rest coming from public funds. This case study is an excellent example of leveraging public and private dollars to do what neither could do alone.

Figure 10. Sources and Uses of Funds for CDA Mixed-Use Urban Renewal Buildings; Total: \$63.8 million

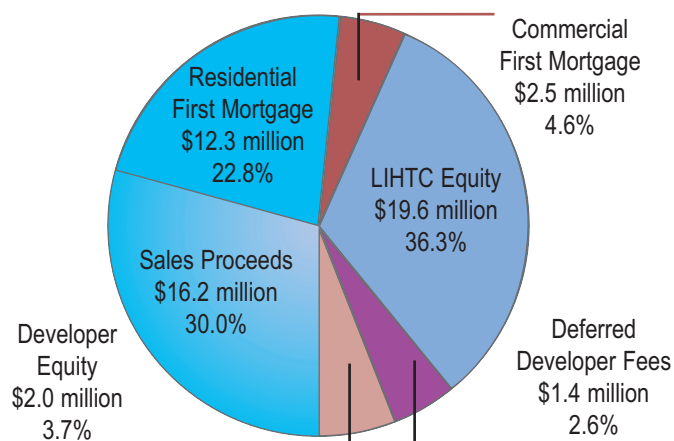
Sources of Funds



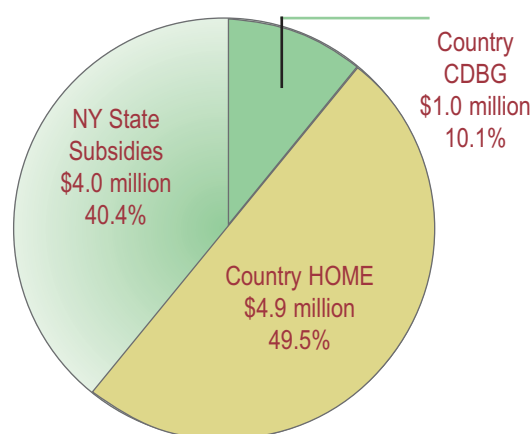
Uses of Funds



Detail: Sources of Private Funds; Total: \$54.0 million



Detail: Sources of Public Funds; Total: \$9.9 million



Note that almost three-quarters (73%) of funds were allocated to construction costs, while only 2.4% were used for land acquisition, since the Town CDA had acquired much of the requisite land over the preceding 50 years. Many community revitalization programs in other locations face significantly larger costs for the purchase of land.

Tracking the Progress

A Spectrum of Successful Outcomes

As 2008 comes to a close, there are many successes to celebrate in New Cassel's decade of revitalization. Residents and neighbors from close-by communities note with delight that many of the new buildings in downtown New Cassel are nearing completion. Construction will begin on the community center early in 2009. Many New Cassel residents feel their community is both cleaner and safer than in the 1980s and 1990s.

As is often the case, the physical results do not reflect some important areas of accomplishment—especially the processes and support structures which enabled the successes. Important process and structure accomplishments include:

New Cassel's revitalization is the brick-and-mortar reality that came from the expressed desires of its community members and it's also the dream come true of Sustainable Long Island's founders.

While the community activists and local funders who started the two-year journey of founding Sustainable Long Island knew we wanted to help change the way communities served their people, we also knew that it would not be easy to insure access to opportunity and positive economic, environmental and equitable development.

In our early days we modeled ourselves after successful programs like the Center on Wisconsin Strategy and the Campaign for a Sustainable Milwaukee; we talked about bottom-up/top-down processes and sustainable development and community revitalization, before they became more commonly used terms.

New Cassel's revitalization demonstrates Sustainable Long Island ideals translated into reality. It's a testament to the community's vigor and determination, as well.

I am so proud and happy for the community when I drive or walk on Prospect Avenue and see the transformation ongoing there. The change that is happening confirms that all of the upfront work and heavy lifting done by everyone in this process is well worth the effort.

—Amy Hagedorn, Co-Founder and President, Board of Directors, Sustainable Long Island (2008)

- The formation of UNCCRC to represent the diverse residents of New Cassel and to partner with governments and Sustainable Long Island.
- The extensive community and government outreach and education effort (more than 500 meetings during the start-up period).
- A block captain program which, at its height, included 100 leaders. Although the level of activity has diminished over time, some captains continue to be active and, in May 2008, they helped pass the Westbury school budget in the first round of voting.
- Mobilization of robust community participation in visioning and revitalization activities, especially the "Seeking a Shared Vision for New Cassel" events July 26-29, 2002 and the creation of the formal plan that was adopted by the town.
- The RFP process conducted by the Town of North Hempstead CDA that included more transparency than is often the case.
- Designation of New Cassel as Nassau County's first Banking Development District (BBD) in February 2008.

An important ongoing symbol of community health is the annual New Cassel Christmas tree-lighting ceremony. Combining physical and social infrastructure, the Bluestone Organization (the real estate developer) is coordinating with UNCCRC to plant a tree for the ceremony in front of the new building located at 701 Prospect Avenue.

There are also indicators of increased attention to community health throughout Long Island. Thinking back to the early days of when Sustainable Long Island was first “walking into New Cassel bodegas to talk to whoever was there at the time,” Rev. Duggan, who was then the Executive Director of Sustainable Long Island (2008), comments:

You never heard the words “sustainable development” back then. Now they are everywhere. And now people are not “just” talking about being sustainable in the environment but also in economics and justice.

When Sustainable Long Island began facilitating visioning charrettes, no one knew what they were. Now it’s exciting to see that visioning and other community involvement processes are being used more and more often everywhere on Long Island.

Progress on the New Cassel Vision Plan Implementation Matrix

While plans inevitably will be altered over time as the circumstances and environment change, returning to the original goals helps to promote accountability, transparency, and learning. Thus, it is important to measure New Cassel’s progress against the community Vision Implementation Matrix and priorities, as well as the CDA urban renewal plans.

First, a review of the New Cassel Vision Plan Implementation Matrix, developed in July 2002 and adopted by the Town of North Hempstead in March 2003, indicates accelerating, but mixed, success, with greater accomplishments where there are clear areas of responsibility and substantial experience in addressing the objectives.

What follows is a summary of progress as of November 2008. Note that some implementation items are much larger and require more resources than others. Initially, the Implementation Matrix projected three phases of implementation—immediate, intermediate (6-24 months), long-term—to begin as of the date it was adopted by the Town. However, because many significant events took place before the plan was adopted and the timelines for many objectives have been adapted to changing circumstances, I am providing an overall status, rather than reporting by phase.

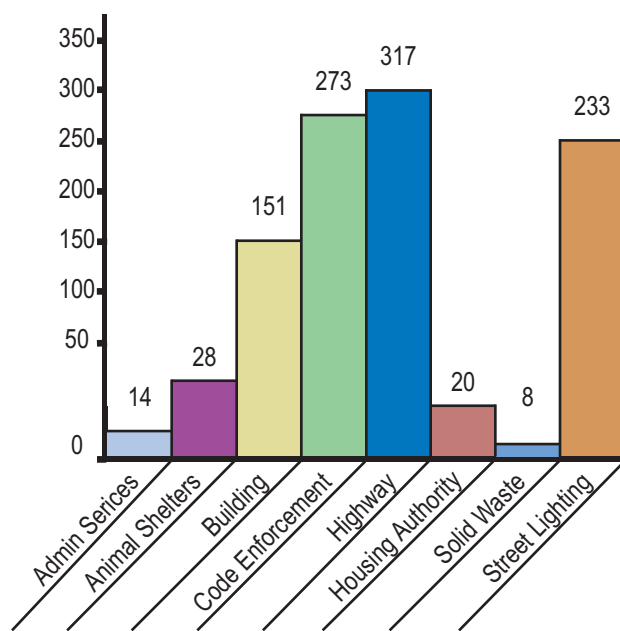
1. Enforcement: Good progress

As a result of both the Visioning and the overall revitalization process, there have been requests for increased Nassau County Police patrols (in cars and on foot) as well as increased code, especially housing code, enforcement. Residents described a feeling of amplified police presence following the Visioning. Several commented that their awareness of police presence is seasonal; they notice the police more often in the summer. UNCCRC Board Member Jackie Caines applauds the Nassau County Police for being willing to attend community meetings.

Before and after the Visioning, UNCCRC staff and board members and Town of North Hempstead CDA and Community Planning officials worked with individual residents to encourage and support resident reports of code violations. Sheila Tate, executive director of UNCCRC from 2001 to 2004, remembers that providing support for violation reporting and enforcement was a difficult and time-consuming process. Many residents and organizations such as churches did not know or understand the law. Some were shy or just didn't want to get involved in potential conflicts. Exacerbating this situation, there was, as in many communities, disagreement among residents about the appropriateness of the codes. Nonetheless, reports and complaints were made and offending businesses (such as a liquor store too close to a church) were closed.

Illegal housing (such as multiple families in a single-family house) was addressed. In 2004, the Town "pursued over 100 illegal housing cases; [and] joined forces with the District Attorney's office to go after absentee landlords who may be committing crimes against the town and their tenants...."⁸² *The New York Times* described one example—a one-family house in New Cassel—in detail where there were "cited zoning violations, safety hazards and bed spaces for 30

Figure 11. Town of North Hempstead 311 Calls from New Cassel Since Inception of the Service (2005)



Source: Town of North Hempstead

people, including beds in hallways and one under a stairway."⁸³ In his 2005 State of the Town address, Supervisor Kaiman said, "I am aware that the people we are displacing are moms and dads, sons and daughters, old and young, people like you and me. We have an obligation to treat such residents humanely, and with respect, but this does not relieve us of our obligation to enforce our codes."⁸⁴ The Town Department of Community Services works with social service agencies like the North Shore Family Guidance Center to relocate individuals and families who lose their housing.⁸⁵

In 2006, the Town created a 311 System, named TownStat, which encourages residents to call for non-emergency help. Figure 11 shows the 311 calls for New Cassel since the beginning of the program. Note that calls about the highways, code enforcement, and street lighting predominate.

2. Community Cleanup: Good progress

Just before and after the Visioning in 2002, UNCCRC and the block captains held a series of successful neighborhood clean-up days. Clean-up supplies are housed in a shed located in what will become the Swalm Pocket Park. The Town now has an annual Earth Day that encourages neighborhood clean-ups.

3. Funding: Good progress

As noted earlier in this report, well over \$80 million has been raised in public and private funds. For all of the groups involved in revitalization, the processes of both raising and administering funds is never finished.

4. Community Art: In development

Councilman Troiano describes the plans for including community art and memorials of “community warriors” such as Mildred Little and Margaret Scott in the new streetscape along Prospect Avenue:

There won’t be any graffiti here. We stand on the shoulders of many community leaders from the past. The children and grandchildren of those leaders will be walking these sidewalks. Imagine their pride when they see pictures of their family members displayed as heroes. (2008)

Figure 12 is a rendering of one of the planned kiosks.

Figure 12. Rendering of New Cassel Streetscape, Community Art



Courtesy: Town of North Hempstead Department of Planning and Economic Development

5. Community Asset Building: Substantial early progress

As this report demonstrates, New Cassel has many assets: people with skills, energy, and a willingness to contribute to the community. When mobilized, the community is very effective. Unfortunately, some of the divisions among residents along lines of race and ethnicity, religious affiliation, and citizenship status are again dividing the community.

6. Traffic Engineering Study: In development

7. Pedestrian Safety: In development

8. Streetscape Program: In development

These three goals are being addressed by the Town in concert.

Neal Stone, a senior planner for the Town, summarized these points from the 2002 Vision Plan to be incorporated in design proposals to be submitted to address the streetscape, traffic, and pedestrian safety:

- Streets: narrower with textured crosswalks, bulb-outs, and speed tables
- Land Use: mix of retail and residential
- Sidewalks: wider, with benches/seating, and trash receptacles
- Setbacks: minimal front-yard and side-yard setbacks
- Parking: rear-yard, on-street or underground
- Bicycles: bike racks; and dedicated lanes connecting to Wantagh State Pkwy
- Transit Stops: bus shelters, benches, and signage
- Landscaping: community art, street trees, planters, and kiosks
- Facades: brick facades, hanging plants, outdoor seating, sign/light standards⁸⁶

To address these issues, the Town of North Hempstead issued RFPs for work on Prospect Avenue on April 2, 2008⁸⁷ and design work is proceeding (Figure 13 illustrates some of the planned program). Major sources of funding include, at the federal level, the Department of

Figure 13. Renderings of the New Cassel Streetscape Program



Courtesy: Town of North Hempstead Department of Planning and Economic Development

and with less cost and than going through the requirements for a new traffic light. If the streetscaping program were to be delayed now in order to complete the New York State Department of Transportation's required study, it would endanger the existing grant funding for other parts of this program which carries timing restrictions. A traffic signal could still be introduced at a later date by Nassau County (which operates all of the traffic signals on Prospect Avenue).

Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Transportation Administration; at the state level, the New York State Department of Transportation; and at the local level, the Town of North Hempstead.^{88, 89}

Implementing the Prospect Avenue Streetscape Program is a complex, interdependent series of processes with multiple and sometimes conflicting deadlines. Burying the overhead utility lines—another feature of the New Cassel Vision—is a good example. It is a contentious and expensive issue. New Cassel residents join most other Long Island communities in wanting their overhead lines buried. Everyone wants to be first. According to a study commissioned by LIPA⁹⁰ (the Long Island Power Authority, a nonprofit organization which provides most of the electrical power on Long Island), it would cost \$33.3 billion to bury the 19,418 miles of existing and planned overhead power lines on Long Island. Currently the Town plans to draw on a combination of HUD EDI (Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Incentive) and Town resources to fund this work which will cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars per hundred feet.⁹¹

Because a “traffic light at Hopper Street” was one of the priorities from the Visioning process, it is appropriate to list an update here. As part of this streetscape project, the Town⁹² will be constructing textured crosswalks and bulb-out sidewalks at the corner of Hopper Street and Prospect Avenue, as well as speed tables on Prospect Avenue to ensure drivers slow down at this intersection. This work is intended to create increased safety at this intersection more quickly

9. Gateways: Good start

Community Development Agency Site A now provides an inviting gateway at the corner of Prospect Avenue and Brush Hollow Road. Using funds from a 2006 New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area Grant of \$200,000, Town Planning and Economic Development staff conducted a survey in the summer of 2008 to assess possibilities for additional gateway development.⁹³

10. New Codes and Design Guidelines: Complete

On September 30, 2003,⁹⁴ the Town revised its zoning codes for Prospect Avenue in New Cassel to allow the mixed-use buildings called for in the Vision Plan.

11. Façade Improvements: Some progress

Beginning in the 1970s and continuing intermittently through today, the Town CDA facilitates façade improvements. With the new prosperous look of the redevelopment sites along Prospect Avenue, more businesses and homeowners are becoming interested in upgrading their buildings.

12. Youth Civic Program: Substantial but insufficient progress

UNCCRC,^{95, 96} with support from Dr. Constance Clark, Superintendent of Westbury Public Schools, and the Town (agreement as of May 3, 2005),⁹⁷ has sponsored a Community Vacation Camp for several years. Bishop Harvey (2007) highlights this importance of learning for the area's children:

...[When] we think in terms of the projects, it's not only the brick and mortar, it's the political influence, it's the social impact that we have, and [it's] putting in things for our children to ensure that they're being taught.

On a smaller scale, New Cassel and Westbury students from five schools participated in a one-day visioning session, sponsored by the Town of North Hempstead, to brainstorm about the new Community Center to be built in New Cassel.⁹⁸ The students' ideas—including a multi-purpose gymnasium, a children's theater, a recording studio, and a technology center—are helping to shape the Center's design. "I think that it is very important for there to be a community center in Westbury," middle school student Gabriela Cuellar said. "I think that there should be a swimming pool, a basketball court, and a club for children."⁹⁹

13. Parks: Good progress

The new pocket park at Swalm Street is in the design process. Since the Visioning Charrette in 2002, the Town of North Hempstead has made several improvements to Bunky Reid Park, including rehabilitation of the basketball and tennis courts, as well as many of the walkways and complete renovation of the restrooms.¹⁰⁰ As part of the overall streetscape, artwork and plantings will help to give Prospect Avenue a park-like feeling.

14. Community Multi-Use Center: In development

Figure 14. Renderings of the Community Multi-Use Center



Courtesy: Town of North Hempstead Department of Planning and Economic Development

With initial funding in hand from Neptune, active planning is taking place for the new Community Center, based in part on the visioning work done by students. As noted earlier, the Town of North Hempstead CDA has acquired the appropriate land and construction is scheduled to begin in the first half of 2009. The Center is designed to be used by all ages and includes space for both active and passive recreation. Planned spaces (see Figure 14) include a gym, stage and auditorium, TV broadcast studio, reading room, and a computer room with Internet access.

Since the plans for an Internet café in downtown New Cassel fell through, the Internet access at the Community Center is of particular importance. A Rauch Foundation study¹⁰¹ indicates that lack of access to the Internet is a fact of life for many Long Islanders, especially those with little education and low income.

Councilman Troiano notes that the Center will be named in honor of an important New Cassel leader who worked tirelessly for the community in the past to help keep memories alive and to inspire current residents, especially young people.¹⁰²

Progress on Additional New Cassel Vision Priorities

Given the circumstances and participants surrounding the 2002 Visioning Charrette, the Implementation Matrix focused primarily on community safety and suburban renewal. There are four other vision priorities not included in the Matrix: better schools, a movie theater, a day care center, and local businesses/jobs.

Schools:

Many New Cassel residents cited the importance of good schooling during their interviews. Schools were not the focus of most of the revitalization activities and evaluating education systems is a complex task. Thus, this case study does not address the question of New Cassel schools other than to recommend that a separate study be conducted as part of a continuing examination of the community's progress.

Movie Theater:

At present, there are no official plans to bring a movie theater or a day care center to New Cassel. The new Community Multi-Use Center auditorium touches on these areas, as it will have the capacity to screen films and will provide recreation opportunities for children.

Day Care Center:

The Multi-Use Center does not provide the day care services desired by the community. There are several in-home day care providers in the community and a Head Start program but no central community day care center. Some residents expect that this will change with the revitalization efforts.

Local Businesses/Jobs:

There has been mixed progress on the priority of attracting local businesses and creating new jobs. The Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, in partnership with the Town and Nassau County, is recruiting a variety of businesses to occupy the mixed-use buildings under development. Several local businesses are expanding or moving to new quarters. Successful businesses from neighboring communities (a pharmacy owner from the neighboring Village of Hempstead, for example) and regional businesses (City National Bank of New Jersey) are also being recruited. The goods and services offered by these businesses will be most welcome in New Cassel. As one resident (2008) said:

I'll be really happy when I can walk downtown to the bank and the grocery store. That will make New Cassel a real town.

According to the 2008 Long Island Index,¹⁰³ the highest paying industries on Long Island are finance and insurance, information and communication services, and business services. While the new businesses are likely to employ a few local residents, there will not be many new high-skill, high-paying jobs resulting from this aspect of the suburban renewal. There is no process in place to track the number of community residents employed during the construction, but anecdotal evidence suggests that few residents have been hired, and even those few have provided unskilled labor for short periods of time.

Nor have there been any job training programs. Although there was some discussion of training to be offered by Long Island unions, several residents (2008) described these potential opportunities as taking place "too far away to get to." The Town Department of Planning and Economic Development¹⁰⁴ will be looking for organizations such as BOCES (The Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County) that could provide adult job training at the Community Center.

The use of minority workers and union labor and the application of prevailing wage laws are contentious issues. The RFP¹⁰⁵ for the redevelopment projects included the following paragraphs in support of minority and union participation:

MBE/WBE PARTICIPATION

It is the policy of the Project Sponsors that (i) women and minority individuals and (ii) women and minority owned business enterprises *should*

have maximum opportunity to participate in any and all components of these development opportunities, including but not limited to, ownership, financing, design, construction, management, operations, and employment after project completion [italics added].

UNION PARTICIPATION AND WAGE LAWS

The Project Sponsors *encourage* the use of union and minority/women labor. Developers are required to meet the prevailing wage laws for construction.

The Project Sponsors are *contemplating the possibility* that a Project Labor Agreement (“PLA”) with the Long Island Building and Construction Trade Council may be necessary. Should PLA be so executed, the chosen developer(s) will be required to adhere to all elements of the PLA, as applicable [italics added].

Town Supervisor Kaiman (2008) has observed that this wording was not as binding as perhaps the Town intended. Although the Town understands the need to exercise additional care in the wording of RFPs, changing the language will not change the substantive and long-standing social and economic issues.

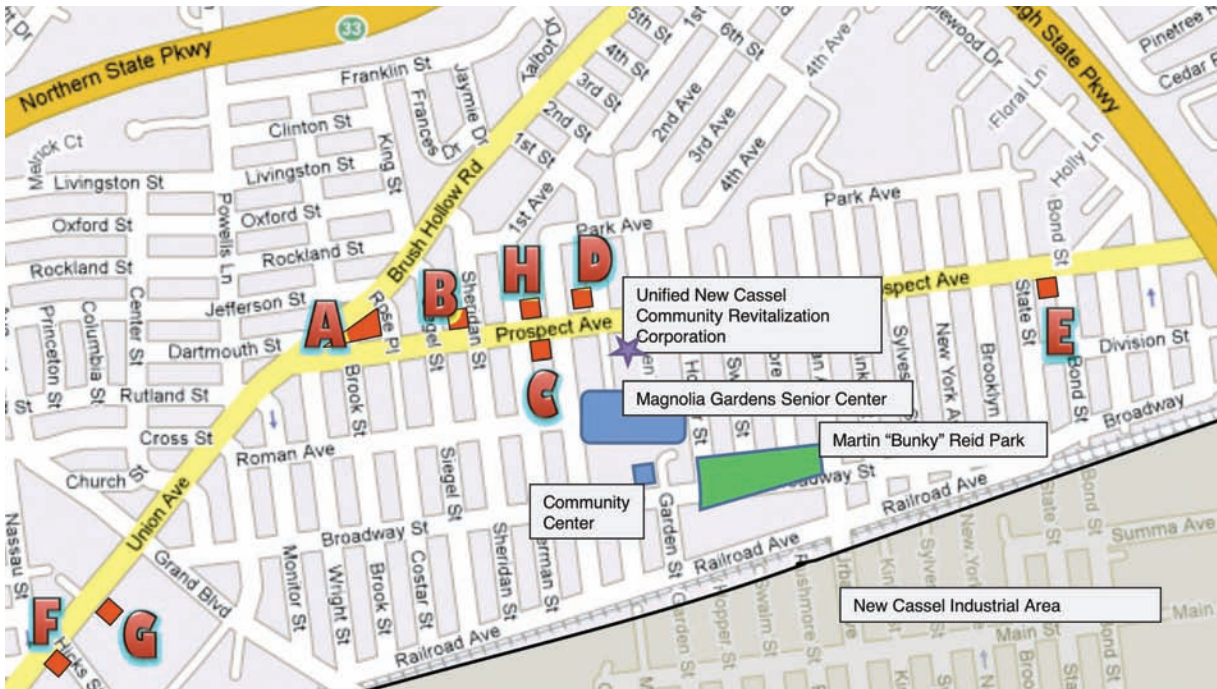
Supervisor Kaiman has held numerous meetings with developers and unions which he describes as quarrelsome. The phrase “required to meet the prevailing wage law for construction” is open to many interpretations. Long-standing economic conditions make it difficult or impossible for many developers of suburban renewal projects to employ union labor or pay prevailing wages. Some developers suggest that employing union workers is so expensive that a requirement to use union labor would effectively prohibit suburban renewal. While some unions have been willing to negotiate on rates of pay, others have not been willing to do this. The Building and Construction Trades Council of Nassau-Suffolk (2008) reports offering to open union membership to New Cassel residents employed in the redevelopment. The subsequent interactions are not clear but the offer was not accepted.

Progress on Community Development Agency Urban Renewal Sites

Residents have noted with delight the ambitious new construction projects in downtown New Cassel, including mixed-use buildings and affordable housing. Redevelopment of all eight CDA sites is expected to produce more than 150,000 square feet of residential and commercial space, consisting of over 200 residential units, more than 40,000 square feet of retail space, and a gateway park. The map on the following page (Figure 15) provides an overview of the renewal sites. (Note that both the plans for, and the status of, these projects changes frequently.)

Following the map, Figures 16 through 23 are pictures of the eight development sites being built along Prospect and Union Avenues in New Cassel’s downtown with a few notes about the plans and status for each project.

Figure 15. New Cassel Revitalization Site Map



Courtesy: Wayne Tomac, AICP, Sustainable Long Island

Figure 16. Site A (Gateway to New Cassel): 701 Prospect Avenue



1. Site A before construction: Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering: Courtesy Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, 3. and 4. Construction as of August 5, 2008 Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development.

Site A Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developer: The Bluestone Organization. ■ Progress as of November 15, 2008: approximately 95% complete. Estimated completion time: December 2008. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now developing advertisements for housing rentals and business leases. ■ Projected Costs: \$20 million.¹⁰⁶ Private financing \$17.3 million (86.5%), Public financing \$2.7 million (13.5%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located: at the corner of Prospect Avenue and Brush Hollow Road: 46,151 sq. ft. site. ■ Housing: 57 rental units, underground parking garage, gateway park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed income, 50% to 80% AMI (Area Median Income for Nassau County is \$74,600).¹⁰⁷ 10 units are HOME assisted. ■ Commercial sq. ft.: 20,400. Forecasted businesses include a restaurant, deli, dentist, and beauty supply company. ■ Note: Developer planting a live tree for community annual Christmas tree lighting.

Figure 17. Site B 733—735 Prospect Avenue



1. Site A before construction: Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering: Courtesy Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, 3. Construction as of August 5, 2008 Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development.

Site B Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developer: As of September 2008: First Sterling Financial of Manhasset, NY. Original developer: Stoneridge Homes, Inc. ■ Progress as of November 15, 2008: approximately 70% complete. Estimated completion time: Spring 2009. ■ Projected Costs: \$9.5 million.¹⁰⁸ Private financing \$8.4 million (88.4%), Public financing \$1.1 million (11.6%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located: on the north side of Prospect Avenue between Siegel Street and Sheridan Street: 27,423 sq. ft. site. ■ Housing: 24 rental units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable, 50 to 60% AMI. 7 units are HOME assisted. ■ Commercial sq. ft.: 12,000. Forecasted businesses are a grocery store (relocation and expansion of a current New Cassel business) and a coffee shop.

Figure 18. Site C 816—822 Prospect Avenue



1. Site C before construction: Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering: Courtesy Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, 3. Construction as of August, 2007

Site C Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developer: As of September 2008: First Sterling Financial of Manhasset, NY. Original developer: Stoneridge Homes, Inc. ■ Progress as of November 15, 2008: approximately 80% complete. Estimated completion time: Spring 2009. ■ Projected Costs: \$6.9 million.¹⁰⁹ Private \$6.3 million (91.4%), Public \$0.6 million (8.6%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located: at 816-822 Prospect Avenue: 20,000 sq. ft. site. ■ Housing: 24 rental units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable, 50 to 60% AMI. 7 are HOME assisted. ■ Commercial sq. ft.: 3,800. Forecasted businesses are a bank (City National Bank of New Jersey) and a convenience store.

Figure 19. Site D 839 Prospect Avenue



1. Site D before construction: Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering: Courtesy Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency, 3. Construction as of August, 2008 Courtesy Town of North Hempstead Planning & Economic Development, 4. Site as of August, 2008 Courtesy of Neal Stone.

Site D Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developer: As of November 2008: developer of record: Stoneridge Homes, Inc. Negotiations in progress. ■ Progress as of November 15, 2008: approximately 95% complete. Estimated completion time: Spring 2009. ■ Projected Costs: \$3.2 million.¹¹⁰ Private financing \$2.8 million (86.9%), Public financing \$0.4 million (13.2%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located: at 839 Prospect Avenue at its northeast intersection with Grand Street: 13,608 sq. ft. ■ Housing and commercial: 6 mixed-use row buildings (3 condominiums, 3 rentals). Owner must occupy business or residential space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed income, 50 to 80% AMI - Forecasted businesses are a cell phone store and an athletic shoe store. "Lost" planned Internet Café.

Figure 20. Site E Prospect Avenue at Bond Street



1. Site E before construction: Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development

Site E Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developers: The Sheldrake Organization and UNCCRC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After a start-up period, UNCCRC will manage the building. ■ Progress as of November 15, 2008: construction not started. Securing financing and Town Planning Board approval. Estimated completion time: 2010. ■ Projected Costs: \$14 million.¹¹¹ Permanent financing through buyer mortgages, combined with down payment assistance grants and loans.¹¹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located: on Prospect Avenue between State and Bond Streets: 54,000 sq. ft. ■ Housing plans: 3-story, 36-unit townhouse complex. Each unit with 3 bedrooms and one-car garage.

Figure 21. Site F 512—514 Union Avenue



1



2

1. Site F the Anna and Philip Kimmel Foundation Apex (completed in 2003) Courtesy Sustainable Long Island,
2. The Anna and Philip Kimmel Foundation Apex II construction as of summer 2008 Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development

Site F Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Developers</u>: Anna and Philip Kimmel Foundation and Douglaston Development ▪ <u>Progress as of November 15, 2008</u>: approximately 85% complete. Estimated completion time: Spring 2009. ▪ <u>Projected Costs</u>: \$8.7 million.¹¹³ Construction financed with developer equity, New York State Housing Tax Credits and TNH Senior Endowment Grant. Permanent financing includes NY State Housing Tax Credits, Housing Trust Fund Loan, HUD HOME funds, and a federal home loan bank grant.¹¹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Located</u>: at the southwest corner of Union Avenue and Hicks Street: approximately 34,000 sq. ft. ▪ <u>Housing</u>: 35 units, a combination of live-work, studio, and one-bedroom apartments, including some senior citizen housing.

Figure 22. Site G 542 Union Avenue



1

1. Site G Wheatley Hills Nursery
Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development

Site G Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Owner and developer</u>: Wheatley Hills Nursery. ▪ <u>Progress as of November 15, 2008</u>: 100% complete. ▪ <u>Costs</u>: \$0.3 million.¹¹⁵ Privately financed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Located</u>: adjacent to 530 Union Avenue: 10,800 sq. ft. ▪ <u>Commercial</u>: expansion of existing nursery and flower shop (business opened in 2001). ▪ <u>Note</u>: This site has historical significance in that this property was owned by the descendants of a former slave.¹¹⁶

Figure 23. Site H (the Demonstration Project): 821 Prospect Avenue



1



2

1.Site H Construction as of August 5, 2008 Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development, 2. Architectural Rendering Courtesy Nassau County Office of Economic Development

Site H Developer, Progress, and Financing	Site Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Developer</u>: A & C Development Partners - Early in this project, Sustainable Long Island and UNCCRC planned to participate as developers. ▪ <u>Progress as of November 15, 2008</u>: approximately 99% complete. Estimated completion time: December 2008. ▪ <u>Projected Costs</u>: \$5.9 million.¹¹⁷ Developer financing includes developer equity, construction loan, and federal HUD HOME and CDBG funds via Nassau County. Permanent financing includes condominium sales and TNH, Nassau County, and NY State subsidies.¹¹⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Located</u>: northwest corner of Prospect Avenue and Grand Street: 13,058 sq. ft. ▪ <u>Housing</u>: 7 duplex units, owner plus rental over commercial space. ▪ <u>Commercial</u>: 3,600 sq. ft. Forecasted business is a pharmacy to be owned and operated by a Nassau County businessman who operates a similar pharmacy in Hempstead.

Learning from Experience—and Sharing the Lessons

Many people involved in the New Cassel revitalization were eager to share their experiences and learning. Social change techniques, pioneered in New Cassel and elsewhere, are now spreading throughout Long Island and to other geographic areas. Sustainable Long Island provides an important focal point for facilitating this shared learning.

The Positive Lessons Learned

Despite the “odds” posed by “wicked” problems—prior failures and the complex and constantly-changing challenges inherent in multiple stakeholder revitalization programs—success is possible:

- **Formal community participation** fuels residents’ energy and optimism, as well as the governmental revitalization processes. It also helps to ensure that suburban renewal initiatives actually address the community’s wants and need.
- **Government partnerships can work** to benefit communities. In this case the Town of North Hempstead, Town CDA, Nassau County, New York State, and federal officials all worked together to benefit New Cassel. Partnerships of this type require significant political will and considerable collaborative effort.

Thus far, all of the key government officials involved in the project have been from the same political party (the Democratic Party). This suggests several questions for further research: Does same-party membership facilitate revitalization processes? Does specific party membership make a difference?

- **A third-party, non-partisan organization with expertise in participatory planning and community asset-building** can be instrumental in bringing diverse community members and government officials together to redefine the decision-making structure and to develop networks and processes that can sustain long-term development. Sustainable Long Island is a prime example.
- **A faith-based approach can be effective** in mobilizing communities, as has been the case in other areas of the country.¹¹⁹ This may be the case even—and perhaps especially—where there is a history of discrimination and neglect.
- **Large-scale vision charrettes can be catalytic** and regenerate optimism, when part of a substantive and disciplined process.
- **An effective block captain program** can serve as a powerful communication system and mobilize resident participation.
- **A strong mandate from the community** is one of the keys to substantive fundraising. Many government officials interviewed for this study indicated that the ability to refer to the New Cassel Vision Plan and to coordinate with UNCCRC increased their ability to obtain funds.

- **The formalization of the legal partnership** instilled confidence in many community stakeholders that the public sector was committed to the planning process. This approach can contribute to the effectiveness of many future participatory efforts.
- **Community organizations can take responsibility** for achieving goals, not “simply” representing a community. By sponsoring block captain and summer youth programs, UNCCRC demonstrated its ability to provide services on its own as well as in concert with others.
- **The willingness of businesses to invest** in communities makes a crucial difference. Without the commitment of real estate companies to build in New Cassel, most of the Urban Renewal construction projects would not exist. Private sources account for 85% of the funding for six of the urban renewal buildings [sites A, B, C, D, E, H]. A third of the private funding is supported by low-income housing tax credits. In addition, without the \$10 million community investment made by Neptune RTS, it is unlikely that the Town would be in a position to begin construction on the Community Center in 2009.

I encourage those active in the New Cassel revitalization—especially community residents—to share their experiences by presenting at conferences and meeting with residents in other communities.

Key Factors Supporting Success

Because every revitalization situation is different, no single “cookie-cutter” plan will be effective for every community. This section, then, is designed to assist groups in comparing New Cassel’s revitalization efforts to their own community, and to decide which lessons could apply to them.

During the New Cassel revitalization, there were three distinctive elements of decision-making structure:

- formal community participation in the planning process (including a written memo of understanding);
- broadly inclusive participatory planning processes which generated a formal plan; and
- a vision plan formally adopted by government.

In addition, the UNCCRC did not limit itself to educating and representing the community. In programs such as the summer youth camp and the block program, this community organization took the lead developing and conducting key programs.

Table 10, on the following page, summarizes the key organizational structures, methods, and process strengths that contributed to New Cassel’s revitalization success.

Table 10. Organizational Structures, Methods, and Process Strengths

<p><u>Businesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significant real-estate developer investment from outside the community ■ One large corporate contribution ■ Regional bank willing to open a community branch ■ With government support, some local businesses willing to expand facilities and increase hiring 	<p><u>Community:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inclusive, representative, community organization ■ Developed general agreement on vision for community ■ Formal memo of understanding with government ■ Draws on community strengths such as faith-based organizations ■ Coordination with the local School Board and Superintendent ■ Conducts community programs
<p><u>Government:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong, sustained political will and commitment to the project ■ Strong partnership at multiple levels ■ Specific local representation (Town Councilmanic District provided specific area representation as compared with at-large Districts) ■ Owned most of the land used for urban renewal sites ■ Able to attract investment from real estate developers ■ Able to attract business contribution to community development projects ■ Funds at the federal and state level to support programs for affordable housing, environmental clean-up, and transportation ■ State banking and business development programs for under-resourced communities 	<p><u>NGOs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive, catalytic outreach work from a regional NGO ■ Support from skilled, knowledgeable third-party mediators, facilitators, and community outreach and asset-building specialists ■ Participative planning facilitation by regional and national organizations ■ Participation from a regional not-for-profit housing developer supporting affordable ownership and rental units ■ Indirect but very important regional foundation support

Besides these social processes, suburban renewal projects in New Cassel also benefited from two important physical circumstances. First, much of the land needed for the new buildings was purchased by the Town CDA before 1998. And, second, unlike some communities farther out on Long Island, New Cassel has a sewer system, often a key requirement for downtown development.

When anticipating specific outcomes, communities must understand that there are differences in definition and methodology for many of the elements listed in Table 10. For example, there are many different purposes for and, therefore, ways of approaching, a visioning process. One type of process is the extensive, professionally facilitated 2002 Vision Charette that included more than 800 diverse stakeholders and resulted in a Vision Plan formally adopted by the Town of North Hempstead. Another is the 2005 series of one-day vision events conducted in five Westbury School District Schools in which students contributed their ideas for the design of the new Community Center. While the Town used student ideas and students learned about community-based planning, this visioning did not result in a formal plan.

Some of the design elements present in the 2002 Visioning Charrette were:

- the presence of a strong, inclusive, and representative community group;
- extensive outreach and community education (several years of education and meetings in multiple languages);

- diverse stakeholder participation, including youth;
- professional facilitation and planning expertise;
- professional facilitation; and
- the creation of a formal plan and implementation matrix.

There are, of course, many other factors that can contribute to achievement. As Rittel and Webber suggest in their discussion of wicked problems, “Because there is no objectively ‘right answer,’ what is important is that the stakeholders work out and accept whatever solution looks most promising.”¹²⁰

Some Outstanding Issues and Obstacles

Naturally, a process of this size and complexity has not been without difficulties. These include improprieties on the part of some involved government officials;^{121, 122} construction and financial problems on the part of property developers;¹²³ removal of NGO officers for cause;¹²⁴ contention over the appropriateness of union labor; and disagreements within the community and among the organizations supporting the revitalization. Many residents, advocates, and officials found this disheartening and hope for techniques that will prevent future failures.

All organizations—public and private—encounter human frailties and economic and political limits. Here are some of the issues:

- **Revitalization processes are long and slow.** Design, regulatory processes, and building construction often take much longer than the participants—especially residents—would like, even they think they have mentally prepared for a process that takes years. It is challenging for both the government and for civic organizations, including UNCCRC, to sustain both community participation and funding.

UNCCRC has found it difficult to keep community residents involved and motivated year in and year out. Residents will mobilize around significant threats and well-orchestrated events such as the Visioning Charrette but, in other times, often turn their attention to child-rearing and homework, PTA, home upkeep, and the requirements of their jobs. It has also been difficult for UNCCRC to sustain adequate funding and to find people “with the right skills and sparkle”¹²⁵ to staff the organization. The Town of North Hempstead and Nassau County face similar challenges.

Sustainability of the revitalization process, itself, is an important consideration at the outset of projects. It is useful to modulate the work and successes so that there are frequent celebrations as well as opportunities for shared learning.

- **Throughout Long Island, builders and community stakeholders often complain about the time and cost** of bringing any construction project from conception to the start of construction. This complaint is common to many renewal projects around the world. It is important to find both the political will and the difficult-to-find expertise necessary to streamline the bureaucratic process while maintaining safeguards and transparency.

- **Awarding multiple projects to a single real estate developer in a revitalization project of this size increases the level of risk**, especially in times of economic downturns. Real estate developments in New Cassel face greater risk and lower expected return on investment than developments in wealthier communities. While it was good news that a number of regional developers bid on New Cassel projects, the quantity and diversity of bids was disappointing. The CDA, supported by the Town and County, addressed this issue in part by opening a second, extended round of the RFP process. But it cannot be held responsible for long-standing patterns of economic behavior.
- **There are genuine conflicts in the New Cassel community.** Political power is unevenly distributed: Some residents and observers believe that Black residents are better organized and, therefore, more powerful than Latino residents. Change always generates opposition and the struggle to confront and address conflict can be viewed as an important part of the revitalization process.

There are cultural differences between at least some Latino residents and some Black residents. New Cassel residents, for example, neither agree on whether the housing code limiting the number of people who can live in a house is appropriate, nor on whether the current housing code should be enforced. There is resentment towards people seen as taking advantage of free education. In this case, the perception is that young people (primarily Latino) are attending Westbury High School for free because their parents are not citizens and do not pay taxes. But it is important here to note the results of a Horace Hagedorn Foundation study of the economic effects of Long Island's Hispanic population,¹²⁶ which counters this common perception. The study shows that Hispanic people contribute more to Long Island's economy in the \$925 million in taxes collected than they receive—an estimated \$732 million, including services and schooling provided by undocumented workers and immigrants. The net gain is about \$614 per person of Hispanic ethnicity.

There are more than 50 churches in New Cassel, according to Sheila Tate,¹²⁷ the former executive director of UNCCRC. Many faith-based organizations are active in New Cassel's revitalization, and some observers who have worked extensively in the community believe this creates tension and diminution of resources. The challenge, then, is to discover community development practices and policies that build on the institutional strengths of religious institutions and to use intermediaries with expertise when appropriate.

Internal community conflict is hardly unique to New Cassel, as evidenced by the substantive body of literature, both practical¹²⁸ and academic,¹²⁹ which addresses community conflict. Many organizations and individuals now offer mediation skills and conflict management training for facilitators of social change. For example, the State of California Attorney General's Office Community Relations Service¹³⁰ offers conflict resolution services, with emphasis in areas of difficulty similar to some of those experienced in New Cassel (schools, gangs, civil rights, and competition for resources, as examples). In another instance, the Pew Partnership for Civic Change,¹³¹ which was founded to help generate strategies helpful in making communities stronger, offers a Leadership Plenty Institute for community leaders from all sectors which includes modules entitled *Managing Conflict and Facing the Challenge of Racism and Race Relations* (please see Appendix B for more information about this program).

On Long Island, both Sustainable Long Island and ERASE Racism¹³² offer mediation services.

- **Jobs, job training, and union participation in construction projects are big, complex, and systemic issues.**

In 2003, Eddie Hunter, a New Cassel block captain, was asked whether the redevelopment plans would bring what he believed the community needed most: job opportunities.

It's nice. But are there going to be jobs for people in the neighborhood?
You've got to have jobs or training.

Thus far revitalization has not generated as many jobs for residents as the residents had hoped. The ability to award jobs becomes a power base. There is a contention between some religious leaders and some union officials. (In some cases, one individual fills both roles.)

As I noted in earlier in this report ("Progress on Additional New Cassel Vision Priorities") more—and better—jobs have been important to the community from the start, but job training and new job creation was not listed in the Vision Plan Action Matrix. Jobs and union roles are also common issues, addressed with varying success, by other communities. Here the players could benefit by building on their successful experience in the Vision Planning Charrette. Outreach and formal facilitation processes could be used to engage unions, developers, on-site employers, and residents in uncovering shared values and exploring methods to create well-paying and secure employment.

- **The term *affordable housing* has many different meanings.** Local government officials and residents are aware that federal definitions do not address the needs of all New Cassel residents. This presents a challenge that must be addressed at regional and national levels. (Affordable housing is one of the 11 goals tracked annually by the Long Island Index.)

Even when Long Island residents are provided with professional financial services assistance, they are often not able to meet the requirements for rental or purchase. Many of the 25 winners in the first UNCCRC housing lottery did not clear the hurdles even with the financial counseling arranged by UNCCRC. Some UNCCRC board members (2008) suggest that education and help should start much earlier in the process. Board members also report that they will ask to be notified of financial turn-downs *before* they happen so that board members are in a position to work with disappointed residents.

- **Revitalization efforts are especially vulnerable to economic downturns.** While, at the close of 2008, home foreclosures are increasing everywhere, a report prepared for the Nassau County Legislature earlier this year showed "a staggering impact on African American homeowners."¹³³ Approximately 85% of Nassau County's African American homeowners live in the areas expected to be most affected. While statistics were not reported for other categories of minority homeowners, it is reasonable to predict that New Cassel's Hispanic and Haitian home owners will be equally hard hit.

- **Many different types of skills are required to develop, coordinate, and sustain projects of this kind.** Community residents and NGO officials pointed to the need for leadership, communication, fundraising, and outreach training. Government officials called on local colleges and universities to offer urban planning and community revitalization programs.

As an example, the Nassau County Office for Economic Development assembled this list of technical skills required of government employees working on the New Cassel project: community development, community finance development, real estate development, suburban planning, and zoning. “In addition, there must be an understanding of the new way of effective community participation strategies and how they extend the capacity of government to perform economic development functions” (Duggan, 2007).¹³⁴

- **Some individuals were so effective that the process began to depend on them.** For example, everyone interviewed for this case study agrees that Sheila Tate was very effective as executive director of UNCCRC and that momentum slowed when she retired. Formal succession planning for all organizations can help to ensure that progress is not dependent on particular individuals.
- **Despite extensive outreach, almost everyone feels left out of some aspect of the process.** Some New Cassel residents, when approached to be interviewed, made statements such as: “You don’t want to talk to me. I didn’t go to *that* meeting [the Visioning Charrette].” Civic leaders, politicians, and funders report feelings of similar exclusion not only in the process but also in reports, case studies, and press coverage. Participatory processes do not generate “perfect” results. However, because they enable groups to address the wicked problems inherent in multiple stakeholder efforts, they generate better solutions and greater overall satisfaction than top-down, hierarchical control.

A review of the long-standing and widespread nature of these problems with a systems theory perspective¹³⁵ indicates that any local revitalization effort faces national- and global-scale obstacles: long-standing patterns of privilege and discrimination; onerous government bureaucratic processes; and a lack of sufficient funding for affordable housing, public transportation, education, and other elements of suburban revitalization. It is important that local measures are complemented with national and global efforts. In a globally-connected world, it is important that residents and NGOs be broadly connected, contributing to and learning from others engaged in supporting community health at the national and international level.

Additional Recommendations for Effective Process

While New Cassel's revitalization program included many factors that supported its success, I would recommend a number of additional ways to help spur effective process.

- Those facilitating redevelopment efforts must engage a wide range of stakeholders and provide them with the resources needed to participate in the decision-making process. They also must be able to mediate disputes that threaten the revitalization process. "Value-based" leadership techniques—which identify and use shared values to motivate independent behavior—have been shown¹³⁶ to be useful tools in situations where authority and power are distributed and, therefore, are likely to be helpful in suburban revitalization programs.
- Participatory community processes benefit from substantive community asset-building and the development of horizontal networks of mid-level players from all sectors, known as heterarchies.¹³⁷ Heterarchies both support the efforts of—and reduce the strain on—organizations such as UNCCRC. With appropriate funding, current efforts could be accelerated by drawing on programs already in use around the country.

For instance, the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, founded to promote strategies helpful for making communities stronger, offers a Leadership Plenti Institute¹³⁸ which has generated results in other regions of the United States (see Appendix B for more information).

- Independent school districts are local sources of know-how and can make substantive contributions to planning and implementation in many areas. In addition to an understanding of youth services and adult education, school personnel often have expertise in fiscal matters, methods of gaining access to government officials and agencies, and researching potential sources of funds.

Although it was a powerful step when the Town of North Hempstead adopted the Vision Plan and, as this study indicates, excellent progress has been made on the plan, no provision was made for tracking the progress and sharing the results. This and other community development and ongoing maintenance projects would benefit from an information and tracking focal point (such as online project tracking and a "balanced scorecard" with a supporting document repository in a community wiki).

- The 2002 Vision Implementation Plan Matrix naturally reflects much of the immediately preceding community education which was centered on the concept of Walkable Communities. The Matrix did not include some things of value to the community such as better schools and more local jobs and job training. To ensure a broad perspective, I would encourage communities and stakeholders to consider the benefits that many businesses reap from the use of the balanced scorecard concept.

Developed in 1992 by Norton and Kaplan,¹³⁹ the concept moved multi-national businesses from measuring performance with a single indicator—profit—to measuring multiple indicators, often in various permutations of four areas: financial results, internal operations, customer satisfaction, and employee learning and growth.

Of particular (and perhaps unexpected) interest is the work begun by the tiny nation of Bhutan and the attention it has drawn to the goal of measuring happiness. Bhutan's leaders^{140, 141} suggest that Gross National Happiness (GNH) is as important as the more ubiquitous GNP (gross national product). The work in Bhutan suggests that four appropriate categories for community revitalization might be:

1. sustainable and equitable socio-economic development,
2. preservation and promotion of culture,
3. promotion of good governance, and
4. conservation of the environment.

This approach is not intended to suggest that any one NGO or government body should be responsible for progress in all categories. Quite the contrary, evidence^{142, 143} suggests that teams of organizations will be more effective. Nor does this imply that these are the only appropriate categories. Rather, it is to suggest that a balance of goals is important to the health of any community. Sustainable Long Island, for example, works primarily in three of the four areas.

Table 11 below synthesizes the Bhutan-derived categories and Sustainable Long Island's focal points in a balanced scorecard format. The New Cassel Vision Plan Matrix Items and those Values and Priorities that were not included in the Matrix have then been placed in the appropriate boxes.

Table 11. One Approach to Community Revitalization: Balanced Scorecard Using Sustainable Long Island's Focal Points and the New Cassel Vision Matrix

<p>Sustainable & Equitable Socio-Economic Development Sustainable LI: Economy and Equity</p> <p>New Cassel Vision Matrix Elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Funding 4. Community Asset Building 9. Gateways 11. Façade Improvements <p>Additional New Cassel Values and Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education/Better schools ■ Local jobs and businesses 	<p>Preservation and Promotion of Culture</p> <p>New Cassel Vision Matrix Elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Community Art 8. Streetscape Program 12. Youth Civic Program 13. Parks 14. Community Multi-Use Center <p>Additional New Cassel Values and Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Community unity ■ Ambition, Pride, Determination ■ Friendly ■ Caring ■ Sharing ■ Respect ■ Beautiful ■ Movie theater
<p>Promotion of Good Governance Sustainable LI: Economy and Equity</p> <p>New Cassel Vision Matrix:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enforcement 6. Traffic Engineering Study 7. Pedestrian Safety 10. New Codes & Design Guidelines 	<p>Conservation of the Environment Sustainable LI: Environment</p> <p>New Cassel Vision Matrix:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Community Cleanup

Leading Indicators: Assessing the Capacity for Sustainable Change

Even before community stakeholders decide to undertake a revitalization program, it is important that they track the status of certain indicators. Leading indicators—in contrast to lagging indicators which report results after they have taken place—specify the foundational elements necessary for success at the outset. Lessons learned from other examples of community revitalization,¹⁴⁴ suburban regeneration,¹⁴⁵ and social challenges¹⁴⁶ indicate that one of the key leading indicators of the capacity to address social challenges is the robust participation *as partners* of at least three sectors: governments, businesses, and civil society (see Figure 24).

The first sector, providing political will and powerful government partnerships that support New Cassel, has been a substantive factor in successful revitalization.

The second sector, business, included real estate development companies (all headquartered outside of New Cassel) that bid on urban renewal sites and invested not only their money but also their time, expertise, labor, and business expectations in New Cassel. Wheatley Hills Nursery (Site G), a local business, invested in a significant expansion with some support from the Town of North Hempstead Community Development Agency. Other local businesses have invested in modest improvements, in some cases supported by the Town CDA.

In addition, Neptune RTS made a \$10 million contribution to support the construction of the Community Center—the result largely of negotiations led by Town of North Hempstead supervisor Jon Kaiman in 2005. Indeed, Neptune’s original commitment to New Cassel was a grant of only \$3,500. When, during implementation planning, Supervisor Kaiman came to understand the level of forecasted profit from this venture, he negotiated the large Neptune RTS contribution.¹⁴⁷ But overall, New Cassel revitalization has not had the benefit of multiple large corporate benefactors (see Figure 25). Because much of the world’s wealth is located in large businesses, they can—and some would argue, should—be a major participant in creating and maintaining healthy communities. In many cases this requires the community to cultivate relationships with big business, similar to, and parallel with, lobbying the government. However, at present, the New Cassel revitalization effort has no other business partners with similar substantive capacity. There may be new business opportunities for communities arising from the “green building” movement: the Center for Neighborhood Technology¹⁴⁸ and the Rocky Mountain Institute¹⁴⁹ provide guidance in this area.

Figure 24.
Revitalization Leading Indicators: 3 Major Players

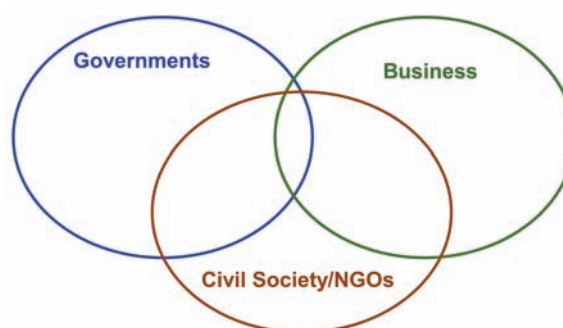
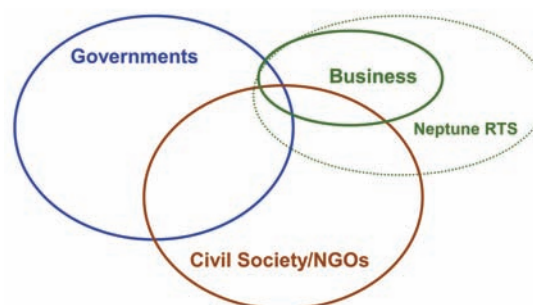
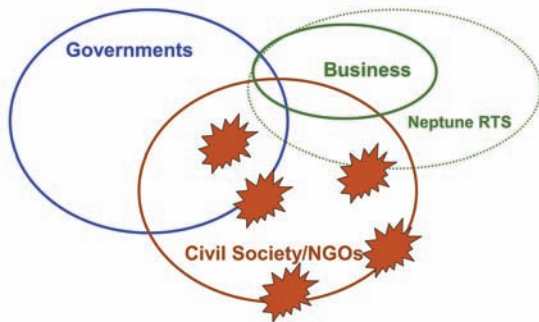


Figure 25. New Cassel Revitalization:
3 Major Players—Business Smaller Contributor



In the third sector, New Cassel is well served by a variety of civil society, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations. But, the community has continuing history of internal dissension (see Figure 26). Even the Sustainable Long Island Board of Directors was initially reluctant to engage with New Cassel at the outset of the revitalization process, based on unfruitful prior experiences. And Bishop Harvey described the “very, very difficult” work of bringing the

Figure 26. New Cassel Revitalization:
3 Major Players—Dissension in Civil Society



community together which followed the decision to embark on the revitalization journey.

Despite this challenge, the journey took place and this case study records the successful result of that journey. Unfortunately, while there was a comparatively high sense of unification and inclusive representation earlier in this decade (especially at the time of the Visioning Charrette), discord is returning and it is again difficult to maintain a sense of unity.

Success and change often generate opposition, and when these issues are ignored or

suppressed, they fester. Exposing and addressing these issues enriches the sustainability of community revitalization efforts, and several NGOs now provide services which enable successful communities, such as New Cassel, to maintain and build on their accomplishments and move further into participatory democracy: America Speaks¹⁵⁰ and the Center for Social Inclusion¹⁵¹ (which work nationally) and Future Search,¹⁵² Public Conversations Project,¹⁵³ the World Café,¹⁵⁴ and the Plowshares Institute¹⁵⁵ (which work globally).

Concluding Thoughts

With many successes to celebrate and challenges still to be faced, community revitalization in New Cassel is an ongoing process.

There are many new questions: As buildings are completed, who are the residents and business owners moving in? Do the new businesses and streetscaping create the walkable downtown that New Cassel residents hoped for? How is the new Community Center used? How is UNCCRC's role changing? Is the block captain program being reenergized? Are the young people who attend the summer youth programs more active in the community?

Ultimately, this study leads me to suggest an enriched model for examining the major players in community-building and maintenance programs (see Figure 27). Plainly, government partnerships and the political will to support community health remain key. But because wealth and expertise is housed in large corporations, I recommend that these corporations consider means by which they might invest in community revitalization—even in places where they do not have a significant presence as these locations often have the most pressing needs. Bearing in mind corporate responsibilities to shareholders, this is not a straightforward consideration. Nevertheless, an examination of the distribution of the world's wealth suggests it is an important one. There are many exemplary businesses leading the way in community service (and it is interesting to note that the use of the balanced scorecard approach often prompts increased community support).



Turning to the third sector, civil society, which encompasses residents, stakeholders such as business owners, religious leaders, and nonprofit organizations, I propose that it may be useful to distinguish between formally organized groups and the population as whole. It is essential to work with groups that represent the community (and perhaps impossible to proceed without them) and, at the same time, avoid confusing them with the full population.

There is also a critical difference between community and single-issue-based foundations and NGOs and "external" organizations, such as Sustainable Long Island, whose charter is not tied to a specific community but acts as a catalyst and facilitator throughout Long Island. Skilled third-party organizations may be able to bring fresh perspectives, requisite skills, and effective mediation techniques to communities bogged down in contention and history.

The stakeholders who shared the lessons of New Cassel hope that others will benefit from them and will, in turn, share their own learning.

Appendices

Appendix A: New Cassel Vision Implementation Matrix

New Cassel Vision Implementation Matrix

(Projected from the date of final adoption by the Town of North Hempstead Town Board)

Action Item	Immediate (present to 6 months)	Intermediate (6-24 months)	Long Term
Enforcement	Request increase police patrol and foot officer; increase code enforcement		
Community Cleanup	Community Cleanup Initiative: Volunteer trash pickup and street celebration; public education; street sweeping by County; emphasis on code compliance		
Funding	Identify funding opportunities for all Action Plan items.	Continue funding efforts; Establish a Local Development Corporation (LDC); seek public, private investment	Continue funding efforts; Mixed use buildings constructed and occupied
Community Art	Work with school to develop a youth program to contribute art to public space; Conduct a community art contest to help identify local talent.	Begin display of community art; conduct a craft fair featuring arts and craft produced in the community; utilize local talent to conduct art programs	Continue to nurture the arts within the community
Community Asset Building	Identify people, groups, institutions and other community based assets; determine how these assets can contribute to the revitalization of New Cassel	Identify gaps in programs and services; match community resources to needs; establish a community technical assistance program.	
Traffic Engineering Study	Complete an engineering study to verify feasibility of narrowing Prospect Avenue. Lower posted speed limit.	Re-stripe Prospect Avenue to interim cross section specifications	Reconstruct Prospect Avenue; bury utilities
Pedestrian Safety	Study ways to facilitate pedestrian safety. Establish a program to add missing sidewalks and repair existing pedestrian crossings.	Add high visibility crosswalk markings and pedestrian signal heads as needed.	Add medians and bulbs outs during Prospect Avenue Reconstruction
Streetscape Program	Develop required preliminary plans or obtain permits as necessary. Purchase and distribute trash cans and benches to participating shopkeepers and bus stops. Hang banners.	Install bus shelters; install lighting; purchase and distribute planters	Final phases of streetscape in conjunction with the reconstruction of Prospect Avenue
Gateways	Gateway at Prospect and Brush Hollow	Gateway at Prospect and Bond	
New Codes and Design Guidelines	Adopt codes and standards to support the vision plan	Establish overlay district; adopt codes and standards	
Façade Improvements	Outreach to commercial property owners to provide information about TNH/CDA sponsored programs	Complete façade improvements	
Youth Civic Program		Establish in-school planning and community-building training program for youth	
Parks	Identify existing parks and potential sites; review existing conditions	Develop plans to improve existing parks and identify potential for new parks	Martin "Bunky" Reid park improvements; water-well site
Community Multi-Use Center	Identify potential sites and issues that must be addressed before design and building can begin.	Complete preliminary designs	Community Multi-Use Center

Appendix B: Overview of Pew Leadership Plenty Modules¹⁵⁶

Pew Civic Change Module	Description
Module One: Finding Leaders Within How can we creatively use our individual skills to build community leadership?	This module introduces the theme of LeadershipPlenty® that the “plenty” in community leadership comes from recognizing the wealth of capacities that people in the community possess. Reinvigorating civic leadership with new energy and diverse experience strengthens communities. The purpose of Module One is to help participants begin the exploration of leadership development by uncovering their own unique skills and reflecting on their experiences of community.
Module Two: Identifying Community Assets How can we go about discovering undervalued assets in our community? How can we be more inclusive in identifying our community’s leadership potential?	The concept of LeadershipPlenty® highlights the diversity of people in every community who are its potential leaders. Module Two develops in participants an understanding and appreciation of the assets model for community change pioneered by John Kretzmann and John McKnight. The activities in this second module give participants an opportunity to train their eyes on the leadership assets in their community and brainstorm about how these assets can be mobilized for change.
Module Three: Managing Groups for Results How do our different backgrounds and experiences affect our participation in groups? How can team members communicate more effectively with each other	What happens when people come together to solve community problems? The ability of a group to take action and accomplish results can be thwarted by the fact that it is difficult to work together effectively as a team. These tensions are a natural part of group work. All groups that endure the test of time experience fairly predictable stages of development. The purpose of Module Three is to increase participants’ understanding of group dynamics and familiarize them with issues and tensions that most groups experience.
Module Four: Making Meetings Work Better How do conflict and tension play an integral role in group work? What are some techniques for facilitating productive meetings that accomplish specific results?	What happens when people come together to solve community problems? The ability of a group to take action and accomplish results can be thwarted by the fact that it is difficult to work together effectively as a team. These tensions are a natural part of group work. All groups that endure the test of time experience fairly predictable stages of development. The purpose of Module Three is to increase participants’ understanding of group dynamics and familiarize them with issues and tensions that most groups experience.
Module Five: Managing Conflict How can we better understand conflict and its role in community work? How can we make conflict work for us rather than against us?	Communities are groups of people who may not know each other and have had different life experiences, but who live in proximity to each other and have interests in common. Our vision of the world and how it operates is influenced by our culture, our parents, our age, our personality, and a whole range of other factors. Module Five addresses the inevitable fact of life: individuals do not always agree. The challenge and opportunity for a community leader is to learn how to manage conflict and to channel its energy in a positive way. The purpose of Module Five is to explore the necessity of conflict in group work and its role in the consensus-building process.
Module Six: Building Strategic Partnerships How can we organize an effective partnership? How can we minimize the risks that come with partnerships?	Building partnerships between diverse organizations and individuals marshals the community’s resources, talents, and assets for change. By identifying their own self-interests and understanding and acknowledging the interests of others, organizations are able to build and sustain strategic partnerships. The purpose of Module Six is to help community leaders understand partnerships better and engage in them more effectively as they strive to solve complex community problems
Module Seven: Moving from Talk to Action How do leaders plan and actually get started on a community change project? How can we achieve measurable outcomes along the way? How do we know if our action plan is working and how can we change our plan?	Ambitious visions are not realized in a day. Module Seven examines the strategies that help leaders chart the journey from community vision to concrete action. This module takes a bird’s-eye view of the tough terrain to travel from talk to results. The purpose of Module Seven is to enable a group to get started, to make measurable progress, to celebrate accomplishments, and to revise plans if necessary
Module Eight: Valuing Evaluation How do we evaluate our projects and our progress?	Many of us think the word “evaluation” means being tested—that someone is going to tell us everything we are doing wrong. LeadershipPlenty® introduces evaluation as an opportunity for groups to reflect on the results of their work. Developing project goals and strategies to reach these goals, as well as anticipating a project’s outcomes are primary steps in planning or conducting a program evaluation. The purpose of Module Eight is to help participants understand and value evaluation and learn the main steps for determining the effectiveness of a program.
Module Nine: Communicating for Change How do we inform others about the importance of this work? How do we communicate our message to different audiences?	Community change doesn’t occur in a vacuum or among an isolated group of citizens. For substantive change to occur, many people in a community need to know about it and be involved. This doesn’t just happen. It takes deliberate effort and specific skills to sustain a conversation in the larger community about the issue(s) you are addressing. Module Nine introduces strategic communication as an important tool for achieving results by developing and sharing a powerful message with targeted audiences
Practicum: Facing the Challenge of Racism and Race Relations How does race affect the way our community addresses (or doesn’t address) problems? How can dialogue help a group move forward on a tough issue such as race and racism?	We suggest that LeadershipPlenty® groups use this practicum as an opportunity to hold conversations about racism and race relations because this is an issue with which most communities in America are grappling. To move forward on a wide range of areas – from quality education, to affordable housing, to living-wage jobs – communities and individuals must examine how racial issues influence the current state of affairs. The practicum was developed in collaboration with the Study Circles Resource Center, and it introduces the study circle as a practical tool for community discussions.

Appendix C: Case Study Methodology

This is a *Type 2 case study*, which means that it is an examination of a single case (New Cassel revitalization) in which multiple groups are studied (community members, UNCCRC, various government entities, Sustainable Long Island, etc.). Because multiple groups have been included, the research is defined as *embedded*. Because it includes recommendations, it falls into the category of action research.

To the extent possible within the constraints of time, funding, and access, I have tried to reduce the effects of bias by using multiple sources and methods of data gathering, multiple investigators, and applying multiple theories.

Some of the important considerations in defining the scope of this study were:

- Considerations of time: If this case study were to have started in 2002 with the Vision Charrette, it would not have included the essential groundwork leading up to that event. Beginning in 1990 would have enabled the case to include the Town of North Hempstead's lobbying and grant activity for reclaiming brownfields and the formation of Sustainable Long Island but would have excluded the history of the annual HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) grant to the Town of North Hempstead which began in 1975 (and was intermittently employed in New Cassel). Reaching back too far makes a case study unwieldy. This study focused on the decade from 1998 to 2008.
- Considerations of place: Communities are not bounded by formal lines drawn on maps. There are many different geographic areas which this case might have covered: the original New Cassel Urban Development Area with or without the two subsequent additions or the residential area by itself or with the heavy industry area south of the railroad tracks. It might also have included the neighborhood called Poet's Corner, the neighboring village of Westbury. Or, as one resident described them, "some of my neighbors from Salisbury, that's south of Old Country Road." (2007) This case study included all of the geographic areas in the hamlet but focused on some areas more than others, in part determined by accessibility of information.
- Considerations of points of view: As in any social system, the situation, the players, the goals and resources are always changing. Even—perhaps especially—the question of the need for revitalization and the appropriate story of the community's history is viewed differently by many people. While many agree that, as of 1998, a sensitive redevelopment of downtown New Cassel Prospect Avenue continues to be an appropriate goal, some community residents and other key players feel that a blanket characterization of New Cassel as requiring revitalization both misses the genuine pleasure many residents took (and take) in their homes and neighbors as well as many of the existing strengths of the community and its history of resident involvement and activism.

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<u>USES</u>		<u>SOURCES</u>		Public	Private	% Total
('000)						
Acquisition	500	Residential Loan	6,200		6,200	31.00%
Construction Costs	14,000	Commercial Loan	1,900		1,900	9.50%
Soft Costs	3,600	LIHTC Equity	7,100		7,100	35.50%
Developer Fee	1,900	HOME	1,000	1,000		5.00%
TOTAL	20,000	State Subsidies	1,700	1,700		8.50%
		Deferred Developer Fee	500		500	2.50%
		Developer Equity	1,600	0	1,600	8.00%
		TOTAL	20,000	2,700	17,300	100.00%

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<u>USES</u>		<u>SOURCES</u>		Public	Private	% Total
('000)						
Acquisition	177	Sales Proceeds	1,200		1,200	12.63%
Construction Costs	6,771	Residential Mortgage	2,641		2,641	27.79%
Soft Costs	1,701	LIHTC Equity	4,031		4,031	42.42%
Developer Fee	853	CDBG	500	500		5.26%
TOTAL	9,502	HOME	600	600		6.31%
		Deferred Developer Fee	462		462	4.86%
		Developer Equity	68	0	68	0.72%
		TOTAL	9,502	1,100	8,402	100.00%

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<u>USES</u>		<u>SOURCES</u>		Public	Private	% Total
('000)						
Acquisition	130	Sales Proceeds	556		556	8.01%
Construction Costs	4,894	Residential Mortgage	1,644		1,644	23.69%
Soft Costs	1,129	LIHTC Equity	3,728		3,728	53.71%
Developer Fee	788	HOME	600	600		8.64%
TOTAL	6,941	Deferred Developer Fee	394		394	5.68%
		Developer Equity	19	0	19	0.27%
		TOTAL	6,941	600	6,341	100%

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<u>USES</u>		<u>SOURCES</u>		Public	Private	% Total
('000)						
Acquisition	85	Sales Proceeds	2,773		2,773	86.85%
Construction Costs	2,395					
Soft Costs	386					
Developer Fee	327	HOME	420	420	0	13.15%
TOTAL	3,193	TOTAL	3,193	420	2,773	100%

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