Arts In Suburban Communities – The Need for Strategic Partnership**October 16, 2000, 3:30 p.m.**

Moderator: Rip Rapson

0. *The McKnight Foundation*

Panelists: Ta-coumba Aiken

0. *artist and Metropolitan Regional Arts Council boardmember*

David Allen

0. *Director of Public Art, Metro Transit*

Jack Becker

0. *FORECAST Public Artworks*

Bill Morrish

0. *Design Center for American Urban Landscape at theUniversity of Minnesota*

Opening: Rip Rapson is the new President of the McKnight Foundation, and prior to that, he was in the Design Center for the American Urban Landscape at the University of Minnesota. He is an attorney and was the Deputy Mayor of Minneapolis. I'll turn it over to him.

Rapson: Welcome everybody. I didn't fully comprehend that this was Part II of a series, and so let me see how many folks were in this afternoon's early session on the suburbs.

As noted, I'm at the McKnight Foundation; I work for Neal Cuthbert. We all work for Neal Cuthbert at the McKnight

Foundation and are happy to do so. McKnight has had a very high level of interest over the last number of years in questions of urban/suburban policy generally, and in particular, urban/suburban issues of cultural work.

My sense, from talking to a couple of you in the audience, is that the myths that you got to play with in the earlier session probably were a pretty good introduction for the panelists we've got today. What I'm going to do is push folks just a little bit to take us beyond the stock presentations into a higher level of engagement, probably with the help of you all through questions, on some of these issues that were beginning to be formed in the earlier session. Rather than treat this session as completely separate, I hope we can build on it and develop some of those themes further.

Let me introduce each of the panelists, just very briefly. I hope that we can then move fairly quickly through the presentations and give folks an opportunity to ask questions, make comments and otherwise interact.

To my right, almost always, is Bill Morrish, who is my former boss, so I get to say good things about Bill.

Bill has led the Design Center for the American Urban Landscape for the last ten years, and I think it has been under Bill's leadership that the Design Center has emerged as one of the most insightful and in many ways cutting edge organizations in the country, thinking about issues of urban and suburban public policy and urban design.

He also has a deep grounding in the arts. He developed the Phoenix Public Arts Program a number of years ago with his then wife, Catherine Brown, and has worked off and on in Minneapolis/St. Paul and our greater region on a variety of cultural projects. We're happy to have Bill here.

Who's after Bill? Ta-coumba Aiken is one of our great treasures in Minnesota. I've watched Ta-coumba's work for years and years. He has been unfailing in his commitment to public art and to the possibilities of community building through public art. He is just a great guy to have on any panel, but in this context, he is particularly

helpful. He serves on the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and I think he is going to tell us a little bit about some of the work that they have done.

David Allen is the director of Public Art for the Metro Transit Commission in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. As we begin on our journey here toward light rail transit and all of the related infrastructure investments, having David in that position is going to be extraordinarily helpful. He was the former director of Public Art for the San Jose Arts Commission for almost a dozen years and has worked extensively in this field. We're delighted to have you, David, thank you.

Jack Becker, as probably many of you know, has been one of our great community workers in public art work. He has most recently been affiliated with FORECAST, and they have just done a series of interesting projects involving community and public art and, again, the role of community building in the arts. I think he is another one of our local treasures, and we are delighted to gather so many on one panel.

Let's move as quickly as we can on to the community part of the conversation. Laying the groundwork through a series of case studies is probably helpful.

Morrish: I have been involved in the arts for quite a number of years. Since moving to the Twin Cities, we have been trying to find out what is going on in the metropolitan urbanization in America. What was interesting about the session before, "The Myth of the Suburbs," was the discussion that the suburbs are homogeneous, and they are a united voting block, and they all tend to be conservative. Those myths are as much fiction as anything. I'm going to go through about six or seven slides and talk about, thematically, the urban development questions that are being faced by communities that would be formally known as suburban communities.

A lot of what the arts are being used for, and sometimes probably inappropriately classified in the foundations, is really community development and community planning. More money has probably been siphoned off to community development, and many of the

artists and people involved in the arts are really involved in community development.

For over a year, we went out through ten western states and saw over seventy case studies. We came back confirmed that people have no idea what they're doing when they are building cultural facilities because they haven't thought about their audience before they started. A lot of the models that we will be looking at are obsolete – theatre models and museum

models. We're applying them in a completely different context.

What's important is to understand the suburbs that we're talking about. Where we're going to have the most profound change and where a lot of artists are moving to, are the ones that arrived at the age of fifty years – the post-World War II metropolitan area. What's wild about the fifty-year-old age in America is that we do one of two things at fifty years old. We tear down the place or we put a plaque on it. It's after fifty that historic preservationists become interested in it. In fact, there is a whole move to go and start finding the authentic first suburb.

There is the discussion of the National Trust about, Maybe we should preserve sections of Levittown, and somebody jokingly said, Why not? We redid Williamsburg a couple times. It isas much a part of our tradition and myth asWilliamsburg.

What's important about this diagram is that those communities have gone through a phenomenal change in fifty years. For a city and a metropolitan area and a population to change from being essentially the edge of the city and the rural areaand to think, fifty years ago the cows were just about where the airport is now. There might be still a few cows out there, but now it is miles before you come to the animals.

It has now evolved past the notion of edge city, which is the phenomenon of the 80's, Joel Garreau and all this hysteria about no mixed diversity in the suburbs of the second tier. It's gone past that to a metropolitan region. One of the big things we have to understand is that devolution is now in effect – a transfer of power from the federal

level to the state level. That means the state has a much more powerful role in the distribution of funds to cities. Where cities used to get funds directly from the federal level, you now have cities having to work with state government, which is an experience unto its own.

What you're beginning to see is a change in geography and mentality. It's not just the match of the cultural facilities of the center and the suburb as the set of rings – first, second and third – which we discovered in the conference was actually constructive to sociologists in the 1940's as a way to organize this data. That became part of the urban planning lexicon, even though it never really existed. What we are now seeing is the communities have to become metropolitan towns, whether you're the city of Minneapolis, the town of St. Louis Park, or the community of Blaine. You're now going to have to be something of the scale of town. We use that word intentionally because it's a scale issue, and metropolitan means you're hooked up. It isn't just the geography that I'm part of the Twin Cities; it is that I'm actually hooked up into a metropolitan system of relationships.

Now, what's interesting, if I were to put up the old list of a city's basic functions – and I don't mean just the public sector – whether it's a suburban community or not. The difference between the city and suburban community is really the size of its staff and its tax base. The two things that they used to have to think about were tax base and schools. Now this is the list of what every community is looking at. Instead of health, safety and welfare, you have quality of life. The problem is that no one has quantified this. No one knows what this is, except that when something is at a City Council, everybody knows that isn't what they want. A lot of people have talked about Well, artists can get involved with this, and so forth. That's true, but it's a bigger issue than that.

As you can see, what we're talking about is a system of things here. Instead of just seeing roads or art, you see relationships and systems in this list. This is important, because we begin to start thinking about arts development.

Of course, there is a little resistance out there. There is a tremendous amount of denial going on in the area that nothing is going to

change, and the only way to deal with this is to maintain the status quo. But if we look at the status quo without any in-migration of populations, then every metropolitan area is going to increase at least by 25 percent in the next ten years, will undergo 20 percent worth of change. Within that change, status quo will still mean a phenomenal amount of change.

What we have to begun to see is that we can't do this by a set of individual projects. I love arts facilities and I work with them, but I'm very sobered and humbled by how difficult they are. You're not going to save a city by theatre; you're not going to save a city by a baseball stadium; and you're not going to save a community by one arts event. It's going to be how you link the things together between the art, the economic development, the social structure, and the environment. It's how it's linked together. The activity is going to become by empowering the fragmented pieces that exist there. There is a wellspring of really interesting pieces out there, but they are highly fragmented and can only be activated through connection.

What we've discovered in working in the first ring suburbs – and we use this as a kind of pivot point to look at the whole metropolitan area and not just the suburbs themselves – is to look at these six ideas.

1) Assess what you have and want to preserve. That's a pretty classic one.

2) Connect system and stack investments. Now, artists and designers, anybody who works on the fringe, know this pretty well. We have great aspirations to building giant temples, but are given pieces of plywood and string. That doesn't slow us down. Connecting systems and stacking investments means we really have to understand almost more about the system-delivery mechanism than the people who run it, such as Public Works or other areas in thecity.

3) Work at appropriate scale to the issue. This isprofoundly different than finding the bigproject.

4) Plan big by aggregating the small. Again, this is an anti-big project direction.

5) Use civic involvement as a problem-solving tool. More importantly, I think it is a problem-setting tool. How do we use communities to set up the arts organizations, rather than the arts organizations to set up the people?

6) Put race and economics on the table. You might as well bring it up Day One because you're going to go through the whole problem when they start talking about we don't like density; we don't like those people; and if we have public artists who like the city, then those people will come. I didn't know those people were so attracted to art and sidewalks, but that's a very important list.

What's interesting is that there is more going on than I think a lot of us understand. To get it going, we're going to have to get into the fragments and elements and pieces and begin to show people how to aggregate across. What we have been doing is working with, not one town, but coalitions of towns to get agendas going. It's easier, actually, to get five or six communities going together than one. Six organizations in one. Like we say, you might as well have a grueling one-year's worth of terrible meetings than three years of fragmented terrible meetings because you'll get much farther along.

Thank you.

Allen: Thank you, Bill.

I'm going to show you a scattering of projects. I was with the City of San Jose for close to fifteen years. The program was implemented in 1986. I'll talk a little bit about San Jose and give you some background. It truly is a suburban community. It was actually the very first civilian settlement in the state of California, being founded in 1776 by the King of Spain. San Jose today has a population of approximately 900,000 people, which exists in an area known as Silicon Valley, which has over 2,000,000.

Up until World War II, agriculture was its primary industry. Following World War II and into the 50's, that changed with the advent of subdivisions. Developers were given carte blanche to go anywhere and build anything they wanted, starting out from the city center, such as it was, heading out towards the foothills in all

directions.

With that came the development of the integrated circuit and all the work that took place up in Palo Alto, just north of San Jose, and now it's a hotbed for technology, world renowned.

San Jose experienced tremendous growth following World War II, and I'd say that probably 90 percent of the development and redevelopment of San Jose has occurred since that time. Maybe 95 percent of the area of San Jose is suburban. There is a small downtown area, approximately eight by ten blocks that you could define as an urban area, even though it hardly feels urban. Even the downtown feels suburban in many ways.

In 1986 the City approved a two percent for art program, which was based on capital construction of the city and a Redevelopment Agency. And since that time, the Redevelopment Agency pumped about $1.5 billion into our downtown. Not all of that was subject to two percent, but quite a bit of it was.

The majority of the projects that we did in SanJose from that point until now have been downtown oriented, leaving the neighborhoods behind. What I would like to show you are a couple of projects that we did in the neighborhoods.

I'd like to start out by showing the background of how it's done. This is a project that was done in a park, one very typical park, just a rather flat square park. You're looking at the artist's studio. This was the studio of Linda Walsh. This was a very small project – $12,000. That was two percent of an irrigation program. This points out the problem that we had with our program in trying to bring public art out into the neighborhoods.

What Linda proposed was a series of tree guards, cast, bronzed tree guards and a bench that would commemorate Carol Murdock, who was the first elementary school principal of an elementary school adjacent to the park that was later named for her. You can see the work as it's being installed. It's fairly phenomenal for a $12,000 budget to end up with this much bronze. It's a wonderful piece. The community was involved in the determination of what they wanted.

We had community meetings; Linda staked out the park for two weekends, and we circulated flyers around the neighborhood, inviting them to meet with her. This was a fairly typical process that we used in San Jose for many, many of her projects.

Because of our difficulty in addressing the needs of the community, we started receiving calls from various community groups wanting to know when we were going to do a public art project in their neighborhood, in their park. The answer routinely was that we don't have a project taking place there that would produce the two percent to fund it. So they asked, Well, how can we do our own?

As a result of that, the San Jose Arts Commission created a pilot program that we titled TheArt and Community Places Program, which was intended to provide seed money to nonprofit, community-based organizations that wanted to do public art projects in their neighborhoods.

This is the first project that resulted from that. We provided $15,000, which was part of a $55,000 budget. This is John Battenberg. This is in a neighborhood in South San Jose called Almaden Valley. This is a local park adjacent to a library, surrounded by tanks and SUV's.

This is the second project through that program, again in another neighborhood park. This is Susan Beran. This is called "Tree of Life" – it's a whirlygig. If you ever saw the movie *Twister*, the artist that they depict there was supposedly modeled after Susan's work, and I guess there was a court case about that.

This project and the two others that I will show you were done through an organization known as the Willow Glen Beautification Committee. This was a committee that was formed by two organizations – the Willow Glen Neighborhood and the Willow Glen Business Association. These two organizations had never worked together on anything. It was this project that brought them together for the very first time. Generally, they worked at odds, and I think that's really typical in small neighborhood business districts surrounded by residences.

This project was a series of three. The artist was Ken Hepburn. They

are rather small-scale sculptures that are located on Lincoln Avenue, which is a very prosperous business district that was recently visited by Al Gore. He decided to use that as the background for the mayor of San Jose to endorse his campaign.

I'm not really commenting on the success from an aesthetic point of view, but I just thought it would be good for you to see the kinds of work that comes out of these grassroots projects where an arts commission takes a hands-off approach in terms of encouraging communities to define their own work.

This last piece is a work by Chief Bush. It's about a $25,000 project. What's interesting about this is that this piece was actually proposed for the Lincoln Avenue site, and it wasn't selected. Instead, the Ken Hepburn pieces were. But the sponsors of it liked it so much that they decided to locate it in an adjacent park about four blocks away from Lincoln Avenue. So much for site-specific work.

Most of the projects I have just shown you took place in mainly white economically well-to-do communities – communities that could go out and raise money to commission these works. That's not the case with a number of the communities that exist in San Jose. Certainly, the east side of San Jose does not have the economic wherewithal of raising significant amounts of money, even $40-$50,000.

In 1996 the San Jose Arts Commission and the Silicon Valley Arts Council teamed up to commission Tom Wolfe to do a cultural plan for our region. One of the major findings that came out of that plan was the realization that all this attention that we've given to our downtown and all of the money and investment that have gone into building two new theatres, two new museums, and countless art spaces, that there is a desire to have more diversity in terms of the neighborhoods and have access in the suburban neighborhoods.

The thrust for the arts in San Jose changed quickly from looking at the downtown to figuring out ways that we can grow the arts out in the various communities. One of the first projects that was a partial result of that cultural plan is the Mexican Heritage Plaza. It is a $35 million project that includes a 500-seat state-of-the-art theatre and

includes gallery space, workshop spaces, multi-use facilities, as well as an actual plaza that you can hold events in. This is a project that, while beautiful, is almost an answer to a question that was never asked for that community. As a matter of fact, we brought Tom back in specifically to look at the viability of this project because no organization really existed to run the facility or to provide the programming.

Parallel to the design and development of the physical facility, the Office of Cultural Affairs in the City of San Jose developed an incubator program that helped to create an organization that would take on the operation of programming of this facility. With that project, we had a fairly significant public art project. We commissioned Ann Chamberlain and Victor Zaballa to work with the architects to integrate designs into the facility.

There was also a partnership with this project that involved Mexican Heritage Corporation, which was assembled by a number of political leaders in the community. They ended up providing approximately $3 million towards the project out of the $35 million, and they are continuing to raise money.

As part of the public art project, Ann and Victor created a wall system with niches, and I'll show you some slides, that involved the community in the creation of the tiles. There were workshops held at a local tile manufacturing facility. The second weekend, they had over 500 people attend – it was a mob. We actually produced so many tiles that we couldn't use them all in the wall. The tiles also included photographic tiles. The neighborhood residents were invited to bring in photographs of their families, of people that were important to them, and they were transformed onto these tiles and included into the wall.

In addition to those walls, Victor and Ann designed, using a hummingbird motif, a series of hummingbirds that would then be rendered into several walls flanking the entryways into the plaza to provide some color.

There are four main entrances into the plaza, and Victor designed the four gates to represent the earth, wind, fire and water. In addition to

that, you see at the bottom of the slide, there are these thresholds. Those are mosaic inlay tiles that relate to each of the respective themes. Alan Hess, the architecture critic for the *San Jose Mercury News*, called the gates the best part of the project.

The last project I'll show you was another strategic partnership. About ten years ago, I was asked by our City manager to meet with a group of veterans who were interested in creating a memorial to local veterans who had served the country. I was told to work with them, provide encouragement. We might be willing to provide a site, but no money.

We ended up locating a particular site, which is next to the Guadalupe River, on the flanks of the downtown, where an old subdivision and the downtown meet. I'll never forget the first meeting with that group of veterans. They pulled out of their hip pocket a drawing that was a very classic, very traditional sort of memorial; one that you might see that would have been created maybe 100 years ago. We had a conversation about the Vietnam Memorial and Maya Lin's work, and I asked them how they felt about that. To a person, they were actually very enthusiastic and felt that it was probably the best memorial that they had seen.

With that, we embarked on an odyssey that took about nine years. We hosted a national design competition that had 214 entries. The prize was a $25,000 cash award for a design that would be selected, with the winning artist or designers provided an opportunity to further develop the design and work with the committee to create the work. At this point, we still didn't have money for the project.

The committee raised $50,000 to help fund the competition and help fund the cash prize. Well, my program, the Office of Cultural Affairs, ended up running the competition, which cost us about $75,000. So that was our first financial commitment to the project.

We selected an esteemed panel of public art experts and art experts, including members of the veterans committee, which was not an official organization at that point. They were just individuals interested in creating a memorial.

The entries were placed on public display for two weekends. We got a lot of press in the paper for this. Hundreds, if not several thousand people, came through our Convention Center where these were displayed on those two weekends to look at the designs.

This is the winning design. I'll show you several shots of it. It's a simple panel that depicts 100 white flags on 30-foot tall flagpoles, with one garrison-size – that's the largest size American flag – on a 70-foot pole that would sit in front of a roughly 60-foot long by 8-foot tall glass wall that would include remembrances and memorabilia of people that had served. It was interesting because it was probably one of the more subtle entries into the competition; it was virtually all black and white, whereas many of them were highly colored. The panel was quite gifted I think in being able to ferret out the unique qualities of this proposal.

With the selection of the proposal, the City started to get interested, and we put up $25,000 seed money to help them raise more money. The winning design was created by a group of young architects out of New York City calling themselves Manhattan Projects, which was ironic considering the nature of a Veterans memorial.

This is the model depicting it. We used this to fundraise and fundraise and fundraise. And we fundraised for about four years. Eventually, the total budget for the project became $1.2 million. About half of that was raised by the veterans committee. The other half was eventually put up by the City of San Jose and the Redevelopment Agency.

This is the finished piece.

Without the commitment of the twelve-member committee that met virtually every month for nine years, without their dedication, without the understanding of municipal agencies of the importance of the project, and the willingness to work together, this project would never havehappened.

So there's your strategic partnership. Thankyou.

Becker: I work with a small nonprofit organization called

FORECAST Public Artworks. We've been around about 22 years now. Actually, we grew out of the CETA Program of the late 70s. That was a jobs training program that put a lot of artists to work in the community and engaged them in dialogues, and I really think public art is about that – dialogue between artists and the community – artists thinking about their audiences and the sites they are going to create works for. FORECAST grew into an organization that helps facilitate those kinds of dialogues.

We have a couple of programs that we do. One is a national journal called *Public Art Review*, which comes out twice a year and that fulfils part of our educational mission to help people of all different types learn about this field of public art.

In addition, we have an annual grant program called Public Art Affairs that has been around about eleven years now, and it's a statewide re-granting program. We get support from the Jerome Foundation and, like a number of other nonprofit arts organizations, we re-grant to artists who are interested in both researching and developing public art ideas at sites of their choosing, subject matter of their own selection, as well as small implementation grants up to$4,000.

Because we've been doing the magazine and grant program for so long, we have developed a database of over 1,500 artists. We have a huge resource library from doing the magazine that has turned our office into quite a resource for public and private agencies that are interested in developing public art. Now they hire us to work as a consultant or a partner to help them realize their own goals of a public art project in relation to a government facility, a new building, an open space, etc.

We've been able to translate these programs into an earned income project for our nonprofit, and now about half of our income is generated through earned income, which gives us a lot more flexibility and freedom to plan ahead.

I want to talk a little bit about the Public Art Affairs Grant Program because it's an excellent model for encouraging artists of all different disciplines to get out of their studios, out of their homes and into the

community and engage people in dialogue. Whether they are visual artists, performing artists, poets, dancers, photographers, our only criteria is that it happens outside of traditional venues, outside of galleries and theatres and museums, and that it is freely accessible to the audience. The artists can decide whether they're trying to reach 10,000 people at a festival or a very small number of people on an intimate scale in a neighborhood.

The research and development portion of this is critical because artists have ideas, and yet they are not encouraged and they are not funded to go out and develop those ideas and often don't have the time or the resources to pursue them. That has been a unique aspect of this grant program that is easily replicated in any community around the country, whether you have a targeted geographic area or whether it's statewide and you're encouraging artists to simply explore areas they are interested in pursuing. That's very different from the traditional notions of public art, which are that somebody has the money and wants to commission an artist and they've got the wall, and the artist has to come to them and design a project that meets their needs.

We're asking artists, what do you want to do in public and how can we support that, and are there career development opportunities that you can take advantage of? We are finding out that artists are indeed creative problem solvers and can address numerous kinds of issues that are out there in the community and access funding that is far afield from the arts, whether it's the environment, or education or AIDS, or issues of racism, violence, or working with young people.

There is really no area that an artist could avoid in terms of public art. They are all out there. If you want to rent a skywriter and write a haiku in the air, that's your prerogative, and we would support those kinds of efforts. By encouraging artists who write their own ticket and their own job descriptions, we think that the definition of public art is going to expand, and at the same time develop audiences, and develop audience's awareness and appreciation of a much broader range of possibilities than they might have been aware of before.

When people ask me, how do you define public art? I say that usually people define public art by what they've been exposed to. If

you've never seen a pyrotechnic performance event, it's probably not going to be on your list of things that qualify as public art. By encouraging artists to experiment in public, it has a domino effect that can spill over into many areas, that eventually increases people's awareness, understanding, and support of what artists can contribute to their community and problems that artists can address if you invite them to the table.

I try to encourage people to think that way in their early planning phases of public improvement projects, or community development projects. Having artists at the table and having that perspective has proven very valuable, and there are a couple of projects that I want to show some slides of and let you know about.

One of them grew out of the Public Art Affairs Program and features an artist named Jeff Rapkin. I was thinking about photography and photographs, and I got a few slides to show in advance of Jeff Rapkin just because I've recently discovered the work of Chris Spouse.

Anyway, Chris Spouse has gotten a big reputation lately just by going out and photographing suburbs and edges, as he refers to them, and I thought I'd just show a few of those to illustrate perhaps what people look at the suburbs and think about. Of course, it's a study in contrasts.

The project that Jeff Rapkin got funding for was to photograph boarded houses in the inner city. At that time in 1991 in Minneapolis, there were about 300 boarded houses. His idea, which he later applied for project money for, turned into a project called Condemnation Minneapolis Boarded Houses Project. He took 100 photographs like this and mounted them to aluminum signs so there was a black and white image on an aluminum sign that had a voicemail phone number at the bottom of them.

He realized he wouldn't be able to put these up in the suburbs if he asked permission, so he decided to load them in the back of a pickup and start attaching these signs to whatever he could find in Bloomington and Maple Grove and Brooklyn Park. I'm going to read one of his statements here so that you can get his perspective on this.

He wanted to show the problems of urban decay to a suburban audience. People who live in what they perceive to be "safe suburban neighborhoods" can't understand the powerful emotional impact that boarded houses have on the people who live amongst them. A boarded house is the negation of a civilized society, representing social unrest, domestic disorder and the abandonment of human needs.

So he wanted to confront people who live in the comfort of the suburbs to consider some of these urban problems. What was unique about it is most public artists really don't know what people think of their work; they don't hear the responses. His voicemail phone number gave you a message about the project and some information about urban housing problems and invited you to leave your comments on a recording, which he later transcribed and put into documentation about the project.

It was interesting because about a third of the people were really upset by the idea of these images of boarded houses in their community; another third were really intrigued and wanted to know more; and the other third thought maybe he was trying to sell the houses or the car in the driveway, or whatever, and how could they get in touch with the owner of thecar?

It attracted a lot of attention, especially from the media. It became a cover story in *The Pioneer Press*. It was picked up by CNN, and they followed him around putting these signs up and turned it into a television program that got him attention. He was on a half-hour radio talk show, and it was fascinating, the dialogue that resulted, and it wasn't all one way.

There were some people in South Minneapolis who were equally upset with his project, and they called it another example of exploitation of inner city blight. What was really ironic about it is that people moving to the suburbs think that they are getting away from the problem of boarded houses – they won't have to look at them anymore – when in fact, some of those boarded houses are the result of people leaving the inner city and moving to the suburbs. If you just wait a few years, you'll see plenty of boarded houses in the suburbs, too.

It was interesting. Of course, he didn't know what people would do with them. He knew they wouldn't last long wherever he put them up, that people would take them down, maybe put them up in their living room, or throw them away, or whatever. He wasn't able to track all of the outcomes, but he did record these messages, and it was a fascinating experiment that, again, leads to really interesting conversation.

Now, mostly what FORECAST funds are temporary public art projects because at $4,000, and the fact that we don't want to own any art ourselves at FORECAST, we really look at this as a laboratory opportunity for artists to try things out, have something to put in their portfolio and be able to build on that to obtain future commissions.

As I mentioned before, as a result of doing these programs for a while, we are getting hired by folks who want public art to be part of their projects. One of them is in the City of Richfield, which is one of the first-ring suburbs here in Minneapolis, at 66th and Lindale, not too far from the City Center. There is a development going on called Woodlake Center, which is a mixed-use development that includes shops and retail. There's a bank, there's a parking ramp that the City of Richfield kicked in. There is also an apartment building and they're completing an assisted-living project.

This is the model, and it shows what the 66th and Lindale corner will look like, and a plaza that is being developed right out on the corner, which they have reserved for a project involving an artist from Costa Rica where Richfield has a friendship city relationship. In the back, and this was again during construction, you can see they tried to save a couple of the trees that were on the site. This is an example of goodwill, but I have a feeling those trees' days are numbered.

The apartment building is called Oaks on Pleasant, and the people who brought us into the project wanted to create an urban village, and have the site in between these buildings be attractive, to be a place people want to gather. They wanted art to be a part of it, and they actually were honoring a vice president of the Richfield Bank who died last year and left his family with some money, and they thought this would be a great way to honor Bill Kirchner.

The idea was, can you help us get some local artists to produce some works for this site? It's created the Kirchner Sculpture Garden, of which five pieces have been installed and five more are in the process of being developed for next spring and summer, with a major dedication set for next August.

These pieces have just gone into the ground, and the plant material hasn't really developed around it, but you're going to get the idea that art can be integrated into even the seating elements at the site, works that provide seating that look more like sculpture.

One of the unique projects out there is a labyrinth created by Derek Young, which has about 370 stepping stones, with a boulder in the center. It really does add an element that you would not expect to find in Richfield, and so they're trying to create a city center.

Clearly, this was the result of a partnership, because when they came to me, they had a really strong interest in it but no idea how to find artists, how to get them in there and how to have it work with the mission of the project.

The potential for partnerships is incredible because you're connecting needs of people with resources, and the artists and arts organizations can play a vital role in that connecting. Many ofthem are starting to realize that now and findways to support themselves through thatmeans.

Rapson: Thanks, Jack. Ta-coumba.

Aiken: I'm Ta-coumba Aiken, and I am a public artist, and I consider myself an art activist. And can we turn the lights off for one second?

Okay, now can we turn them backon?

In a matter of seconds, I wanted you to realize that you can use your imagination to create a thousand different possibilities in the realm of public art.

You're dealing with the thing of people. People, places and

connections. A lot of my stuff had taken place in the urban settings. First with murals, trying to get rid of some of the urban blight and recreate communities, give cultural identities.

It occurred to me that there was a rural community out there that was asking for things and nobody was responding to them. So, of course, as an African American, I figured why not go out there and respond? I created histories of communities where, if I'm going in, I really have to delve into what their histories are and they really have to believe that I'm serious about it.

So we would meet at places like the VFW. I'd get a mural on a grain elevator in a small town of 700 people, where the first person I met owned the grain elevator and he said, I hate art. And I'm saying, that's great. I had his wife show the slides in the VFW, so at least one person would like art, and she could push italong.

The wife of the mayor used to be a writer in Soho, so she had seen artists doing all of these kinds of things. She was looking for partners, people who could help encourage these people to do something, but in a way connected so that they would understand it. The town had a grain elevator, which I considered, and she considered, sort of the Oscar of the town, the thing that made them and other people realize this was a strong, viable town. You have the history, which they were proud of but they never really talked about. You have the one person who thought that maybe art might bring these people together.

So we would work and talk and plan, and I would have them pull images out of shoeboxes. When they realized that there was something that was going to go on this 84-foot grain elevator, they started to bring in more and more. Families actually came back to town to see it. One of the biggest things was having a helicopter from Channel 11 come and do a story on it. So that become a story in its own right, you know, that Channel 11 did the story about the grain elevator, but all the newspapers in the area did stories about it.

I realized that something was going on in the community that had nothing to do with art, and it was called a drought. People were worrying about what was going on with their farming communities. So one little change in the design was to create a part of the top of

the image where it was two children playing with a computer, and stalks of corn. That kept the kids realizing that they didn't have to run away from that community; that there was something important and viable there because that's what people were telling me. The elders were trying to tell me, how are we going to keep our kids, and the kids were saying, nothing is happening here. To have those two things matching up, and people talking and people working. All of a sudden the whole thing was generated bythem.

The reason I first went out there was because Valspar had donated 1,100 gallons of paint to them, and I was the guy that was screaming, why don't you donate paint to rural communities? Why are you only donating it to metropolitan communities? So I would stick my nose in a lot of things just to try to get people to get a voice. If they wanted to do something, I've always said, let's do it; it's a possibility. But I wasn't jumping in to be the lead at it. I tried to find who the leaders were in those communities. Every community has leaders, has an immense amount of talent. So my duty was to find out where that was and what that was. So even if I designed and created this mural, my main goal was to draw out of them all the other talents that were in that community.

Looking at rural communities made me realize that the suburbs were having the same problem. Nobody believed they existed. Where do you live? St. Louis Park. Oh, you mean the suburb of Minneapolis. And then, no, no, no, I live in St. Louis Park. Oh yeah, right, the suburb of Minneapolis. You could go 55 to 100 miles away, and they were still calling them bedroom communities of Minneapolis or St. Paul. People started to get tired of that, but they couldn't figure out – and they're still working on how to figure out – how to create their ownidentity.

Community centers, centers of entertainment, that kind of thing, were things that they were working on, but they wanted to try to find some things that were not as politically heavy as who's paying for the community center. Whose money is this going to be to do this? Who is it going to really represent? That's why it's starting to seem that communities are starting to look, and instead of thinking they're competing for the same money, deciding to create themselves in the clusters and work to say, Well, what is the similarity between us?

What are the things that we can do?

They're starting to have some series of murals where artists are doing histories of towns. Someone said, Well, they're taking it away from you. I said, Well, I never owned it. I was just there for a moment to try to spark something on. My community is clearly the Twin Cities.

It's important that we keep going back and forth in sharing, and the hat that I wear as a board member of the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council is that I wanted to see what was happening in the region, what was happening in the areas around the Twin Cities. And there were a lot of people requesting grants to do something substantial to bring arts to their community instead of them going to where the arts were. Or maybe creating it right out there.

It's been interesting to see all of these many things starting to happen. A lot of times I thought I would get run out of town when I came in, that they'd say, oh that's the guy that did the grain elevator, get him out of here. You know, it's going to start trouble. But it turned out to be the opposite, where they were saying, hey, can you come to our town? Sometimes it wasn't even about doing art. Sometimes, it was to save the small school that was being shut down for making a bigger regional or districtschool.

I realized that art had a different kind of duty than just beauty. I didn't mean for that to rhyme, so don't think of Jesse Jackson and me, please. It was the whole thing of creating and developing and weaving a spirit together, and people having a voice and having a way of saying this is what we look like, or this is what we feel like, or this is the kind of theatre that we can create, or this is the kind of sculpture that we can make.

That's the whole thing of looking at suburbs. We have to see and help people get together to identify what that personality is.

The main reason I didn't bring any slides was because I knew there was going to be a lot of great and interesting examples of what's going on, and some of mine are right down the street on 12th and Micklett and on Olson Highway and Lindale. But the main thing is that blank wall you see, or that empty screen that you see, that's the

greatest possibility. That's the greatest possibility when you bring people together to discuss and keep talking, and come back. Like David was talking about the committee that met all the time. The work that Jack does where artists get to find out what a community might be thinking and saying. Being able to share their voices and their experiences and their resources for a win-win situation in the full circle of things that doesn't stop after theproject.

What we're trying to create more and more are projects that have a continuum. If it's not in that community, it's in the next community – not to duplicate, but to create and re-energize the thing that the people that started those communities did in the first place. They looked at a blank piece of land, and they didn't just see growing corn. They saw the church; they saw the school; they saw the water tower; they saw life.

What I believe public art is doing now is to guarantee people a continuous life instead of the accidental thing we fell into of getting out of the community and building these houses. There was no life because you rush back into the city and then you come back to the place you live and you really don't know who lives next to you, but you know they might have a car similar to yours so you're going to change yours next week.

I grew up in the suburb of Evanston, Illinois, and people never let us be Evanston. We fought very hard to be it, but we were always the first suburb of Chicago, and they have a little bit more of an identity.

I can relate with all of these different levels. The thing that I think is so wonderful about being in the Twin Cities is nobody thinks that it's impossible. They do believe in possibilities and those possibilities have been fortunately, and sometimes accidentally, funded to make it happen and we want to see more.

Let's look at ourselves and who we are coming in there, and what are we really giving, and make sure that we know what the talents are and then bring that together for some. That's the question mark; that's the blank slate. Whatever that is, when people buy-in together and work together and fight together, something wonderful will come out of that.

Rapson: Quick questions? Comments?

Question: We all know cases where people work on public art projects that are ultimately rejected. What do you think, is there a process by which you can decommission a piece of public art?

Morrish: Yeah, the Robert Irwin piece.

Let me go back. I was part of the Phoenix Arts Program, and I know you know the whole crackpot story of the freeway, which probably had nothing to do with the art but was a way for the mayor to get revenge. But I think what was wrong with that project – and actually Deborah White Harris and I have talked about it a lot – is it wasn't grounded correctly. Whatever happened to that soundwall was going to be a problem because the people were still wounded by the soundwall.

I think that the issue is grounding the notion of creating an aesthetic public realm. A lot of public art projects and theaters and performing halls, and so forth, are not grounded in their audience and in the place.

I'll tell you, from friends at the funding standpoint, funding agencies don't want to give that money out. It isn't glamorous; it looks like a bunch of planning work. But it's all political in foundation work, I mean structurally, inside. Because you have to change the delivery system down to the fact that Public Works will mow the lawn, or that the art can move around, and all those kinds of things.

Foundations won't give you the $50,000 of time that it will take to lay down the base because they are tending to look towards a quick product. Or a product quicker than the development we now need in order to do it.

In 1985, just to give you a sense of the Western States Arts Federation, we calculated that at a minimum it took $30,000 just to get the program set up for an arts organization to think about a facility, and that's in '85. I find it hard to even find $30,000 now from a foundation that will let you do a feasibility study. That's what we thought was the minimum at that time to do the work with the city

councils, the audience, and all the money. So it's the up-front foundation work.

Becker: I was just going to say that I think the desire for public art far exceeds the capacity to take care of it. There are a lot of problems with permanent public art that nobody's taking care of it, and within a few years it becomes a liability instead of an asset. One of the bricks that should be laid early in policies and procedures is about how you're going to take care of the work after it's completed, because a lot of the people think, Well, the mural is up, we're done. Really the life of the mural is just gettingstarted.

So several city agencies – if this is a public agency – they have de-accession policies laid out as to how to remove a work whose life is up. It's all relative. There is no such thing really as permanent public art. It all lasts only a certain amount of time and then it's used up, or it deteriorates, or it becomes so expensive to take care of that people can't afford it. Depending on the situation, there are ways to support the removal of a work of art, but it should come out of the same kind of support that creating a work of art might have in the first place.

Question: *[inaudible]*

Rapson: Can I reinterpret that question a littlebit?

Hypothetically, I went to the program officers at my foundation and said, what would a suburban foundation arts portfolio look like? Would it be fundamentally the same as what we've done in the inner city, but simply with an extension to other high-quality work in suburban places? Or, based on what we've heard and what you've talked about in the earlier session, would it be fundamentally different? What would it look like? How would it be different? How does it stretch the foundation beyond what it has traditionally done? How does it reinforce what we have traditionally done?

That is not exactly a fair restatement of your question. Maybe yours is a more interesting question. I would almost push that back out to you all. What would the answer to that be? What would you have a hypothetical Midwestern foundation do? Yes, sir?

Becker: I would have a Midwestern foundation not concentrate on the arts, but get more involved in the process, because I think what Bill was talking about is that in actual fact, we have all kinds of examples of art that gets placed someplace. It has just no relevance, or is a positive nuisance, like where everybody had to walk around the plaza in New York because of the Richard Serra piece.

The point I think that Bill is making is, and I think the earlier discussions were that somehow the art has to rise up out of the people into a process of getting at the way it's got to go.

Morrish: Thank you.

Rapson: Let me push back, though, Jack. That's interesting and that's helpful, but why does that make my portfolio in a suburban setting any different? What am I doing out there that's different? Or, is it the same? Should it not be different?

This is actually quite a live issue for a number of foundations around the country. I think they are trying to stretch and understand what their portfolio should be. If they ought to have any kind of suburban cultural portfolio, and if so, is it the same or different? So, you have said that it's got to be process-based.

Becker: What you did in St. Paul with River Front Corporation is the sort of thing that I think could be done.

Rapson: Other reactions? Yes?

Audience: I would encourage foundations to think more comprehensively about funding to the community development process and educating artists in that process. I am finding the disparity between community planning and artists trying to do public work. There is still this huge divide, as much as we try to make mergers happen; they're not always done well. That's what I've found. Or they're trying to replicate ones of other suburban communities, which is just homogenizing further.

Aiken: I went to Houston to talk to a community arts organization involved in community development. The kind of no-zoning that was

in Houston was encroaching in the last little area of original community that was there. We started working and talking about the artist as a community developer, as a person that looks at the politics, looks at the financial aspects of the people that live in the community, how long they've lived, the history of it, and what that was all about before we ever started to talk about even putting a stick down on the ground.

There was a park that they were talking about maybe moving or changing. We brought everybody together – bankers, developers, artists, community elders – and walked them through the park, had them just look at it. Some people talked about history. The park board had said, Oh wow, we're going to do a running path in here! We're going to put asphalt down! And everybody went, Huuuuuuuh! But these trees are like 120 years old! So all of a sudden the communication started. And then we went back and I said, let's draw. Let's just draw it. It was the whole thing of looking at it.

A thing that we did recently with Midtown Greenway, with the Intermedia Arts, was to commission ten artists to look at different communities that connected with the Midtown Greenway – a bike path and running path that people were going to be using – and other people were looking at developing onto, because this is a very viable new area of residential elitism, very expensive property.

But there were people already living there, and we wanted to make sure those people were considered in this whole development game. We had artists look at different things by working with some of the people in the community to see what they might have liked, and they came up with some wonderful things.

But it was processed. It was a conceptual thing; it wasn't anything that we were going to put down there. We wanted to allow people the ability to think and to take it beyond, this is going to be done this way and that's it.

Becker: I think it's great to look at the role that art can play in urban sprawl, which I don't think has been really addressed and there isn't much research on it. Mostly, we hear about highways, schools and

sewers, and how they contribute to metropolitan development patterns. It's only recently that arts have even become a priority in outlying regions.

The question for funders is, are you using a different measuring stick for considering arts support when it's not in the inner city than you would for first and second ring suburbs? Is it a different measuring stick? What are the criteria? Are they different?

There were some people that spoke very well at the first panel earlier today about the needs out there. They may be different, but there are some serious needs. Establishing some criteria that relate to those needs and how they're distinct from inner city needs would really be a good starting point.

Audience: I'm from Washington, and the Meyer Foundation has traditionally supported Washington metropolitan communities. Increasingly, we're looking at how to bind our region together. Our portfolio has not necessarily expanded, and yet we are looking at how we can be better serve the region as a whole. I'm sure what we are asking is, How can we help build a regional identity? What forces can we bring here? And this is very tricky.

I probably have fourteen symphony orchestras in the metropolitan region. We have probably thirty choral art societies. Montgomery County, Maryland just did a cultural plan. They knew that they had eighty arts works. When they finished the cultural plan, they had 300 arts organizations. The county, as well as the state of Maryland, is putting $200 million into cultural facilities where only one organization has even done a business plan for the operation of thosefacilities.

Morrish: So, what's wrong with that? Continuing in a fine tradition?

Audience: Well, $53 million has to be found from the private sector to fund these facilities. Maryland has one of the lowest individual giving rates, even though it's pretty prosperous. There is not a tradition of philanthropy by individuals.

Morrish: I know a lot of foundations, one recently here in the

Midwest, that have become interested in regionalism. The jump from Washington to regional is important, but the problem is that it ends up saying you need a $200 million cultural facility in some people's minds. You have to have a big center. We're going to have all these arts organizations comehere.

The thing that you need to do is, one, get all the other foundations to say, Yes, there is a region, we've always had a region. When you make that argument, you jump up all over the scale, and everybody is looking for something giant to see in that horizon. Those giants have been there a long time anyway. But if the foundation said no, what we've got is this cosmopolitan set of centers, and a network and a web.

The foundations are going to plan big by aggre-gating small, principle number one. You're going to clean out some of the arts organizations that should be taken out of the plaza. It's harder getting rid of an arts organization than it is a piece of sculpture. That's how a foundation is funded, is on the network-based system. The problem is, arts are still thinking super computer is the answer when PC has already shown you that it's not.

The heart of this urban/suburban/going to regionalism is still a disdain for the suburbs as being cultural voids. What we do is we say, We're going to have an urban regional plan, and all of them will shove the suburbs in there because they're empty.

As much as I like Chris Spouse's photographs, I think they're completely wrong. I mean, I can take a picture of my neighborhood from 1900 and it will look the same – a raw hill, terrible thing. But the question is, what are the ways of culture and community that are going to be grown from that?

The problem is, we're still stuck in that old rhetoric, which is a literary problem that the suburbs might contain culture or not. We have not overcome that, and we fund lots of artists who like to make the critique of emptiness. But the thing is, we can do it all over our society.

By going back and taking all of the subsections of neighborhoods,

we transcend D.C. versus Virginia, Virginia versus Maryland. It's breaking up that way anyway. The people in Charlottesville were saying, Oh, we never have to worry about growth. We're way up here in the hill. I said, yeah, stand up in the trees and see what's coming down, and it ain't Yankees. You're now known as Manassas adjacent – forget Washington, D.C.

That's what we've done here in the suburbs, is to break it away from St. Paul versus Minneapolis, center versus edge. One of the first things we talked about in the Houston Cultural Arts Plan was that the Arts Council would make a set of maps that would show people routes to get home because the highway was jammed. And on the way, here's a history route you can go on; here's an arts route to go on. We took the issue of being jammed in traffic and the fact that, I don't want to go into the darkness of Houston, and turned it around. And said, Here's a shortcut to home, and by the way, you may want to live someplace along the way.

Audience: Going back to your mythical Midwest Foundation and your comment about connecting systems and stacking investments, I think we really need to go back to approaching foundations. It seems to me the arts strategy needs to be part of the overall foundation strategy. Because if it isn't, then you're out there just funding a piece of the arts. You aren't really accomplishing anything in the long run.

Morrish: Well, we know in Cleveland, if the first ring suburbs of Cleveland go, you can forget what you do inside of Cleveland, right?

Rapson: That's a very interesting point. Do you perceive that you are typical or atypical of your foundation colleagues in weaving that picture together?

Audience: I'm probably not typical.

Rapson: I suspect you are atypical.

Audience: We have this huge investment in artistic facilities and the speakers in the first session are telling us, forget about it. People aren't going to go there. You've got to put new stuff out there to meet all their needs.

Morrish: Again, we're talking programming and not so much facilities. Watch out from this. I mean, I'm a designer. I'm ready to design everything in the world.

Audience: But even programming, if you don't have it as part of the funding strategy.

Rapson: Exactly. Right. If it isn't part of your community development strategy.

Question: Yeah, it doesn't matter.

Aiken: What we should be looking at is the differences of who the people are and what they're doing, what their desires and their dreams are, not what economic level they're on or anything like that. It is almost ridiculous to just say because somebody moved away from one area, they shouldn't be funded because they don't live in the area where we're funding. Well, where did that come from? I don't even understand it.

Maybe if it's the directive of the foundation that they get their money from the metro area and they won't go out any further, that's understandable, but the goal is to supply people with something that will enhance the spirit of that community and give it life and growth.

Then you have to start looking at each one of these. When you say suburb, you're still saying a million different entities. You have to say whatever the things are that you look at in any community, you create those categories and say, Well, what are the things that are happening in the community which is called the suburb. And try to find means and ways of finding out what their needs are and what their desires are.

I don't think we should ever go out and say, Hey, we got a bunch of money, so do you want some art? It's sort of like there might be a certain area of doing the feasibility study, seeing what is out there that's missing and how art can help enhance that or make it work. If we believe art helps to enhance and give continuous life to a community, then there is going to be a great need anywhere that we can help supply the funds or the wherewithal to do it.

Morrish: The succession notion that you're getting to – art and culture, it's added and constantly overlaid to something that is new. A lot of what you're looking at is something that is brand new. If you look at the origin of cities, there was never any public realm in the first stages of the cities – Paris, Rome, whatever – is a pretty rational kind of crowd and a very minimal sort of establishment.

The question is, what's the mechanism for the place to mature? To grow, to diversify, which it will after its first succession. I think what you were talking about, this continuum, is like the idea where all of a sudden the community sees that there is culture on all those blank walls. That's the second and third layer.

Aiken: Or, what is the thing that's next?

Morrish: Yes. That's a great question. What's next, rather than, you don't have any. It's what do I do with that? That's the inner city thing,too.

Mayotte: One of the differences is the discussion between talking about individual artists in the cities and suburbs and arts centers, and this whole question of new art centers that are developing within the suburban areas. I think there is a difference when you're talking about the need for planning and infiltrating some strategies into a region when you're talking about art centers and the strategic amounts of money. That's where the difference happens in that these are new things – new concepts – and have sometimes adversarial and sometimes complementary relationships to existing art centers. That's where there is a need for talking about a strategy. Artists create art out of some of the same impulses wherever they are, but art centers serving a suburban community may be different just because of the difference in those needs that that community has and is developing as it changes.

Rapson: This is Denise Mayotte, program officer from McKnight. How would you do that in your program? If the local community comes in and says we want a multicultural, multidisciplinary arts center, how would you go about asking those same questions within the confines of your foundation structure?

Mayotte: One of the things that I'm thinking as I'm listening to this is how important it is that there be discussion between all the potential funding areas and doing some sort of strategic thinking about the role and involvement of these new facilities.

Morrish: Right now, you can do an inventory of every community arts center that's being slated in all the metropolitan areas. It's not too hard to take a couple of months to line it up. The question is, how does it become a center in both programming and arts that brings together multiple sets of projects, that can get to an agenda of creating a cultural arts network in the community? So the people see the connections. There is a lot of analogy in our parks system.

When Barcelona was finally allowed to use its culture – Catalonian culture – and Madrid allowed them to be an independent state, they decided that they wanted to represent Catalo-nian culture. The mayor said, I have no money. We want to become a great international city, but what do we have? The City had a lot of fragmented pieces of land left over from bad roads, bad projects.

So they listed all the bad things they had done and said, The goal is that when we're done in the next five years, the City will own no remnant parcels. We don't know what we're going to do with that, but when we get done, it will all be a part of the public realm or the neighborhood or something. But we will not have any fragments. Fragments equals disjointed community. They put that into the system and ran itthrough.

I think the point is, given all the cultural centers and art centers that are being made in this area – and it's not that hard to do – you could create handbooks, all kinds of things, to get them up to speed with programming and a lot of other things to help lead the change. These are unique opportunities. It's only going to be in the next five years, where these communities are going to go through this radical change where they're going to have to become metropolitan towns to compete. You've got software companies and everything else. They're looking for identities. They're going to go around making little squares and say, Well, if we do brick and bell towers, we'll be fine. I don't need that much Williamsburg.

So, what else can we do? Here's an opportunity. You could use those bases because that's where the latchkey programs are. That's where the intersection of family, kids and community is happening. That's an example of a strategy that one could do, where the culture becomes an infrastructure that helps people talk about what the options are for change rather than show up for a workshop. People need to know what their options are.

Rapson: I'd like to thank our panelists very much.