

Video

Pandemic Response: New York's Neighborhoods Now Initiative

Date: May 12, 2021

00:00:00 --> 00:00:03: Hi, I'm Jennifer pair and I will be the moderated
 00:00:03 --> 00:00:05: for our panel today.
 00:00:05 --> 00:00:07: When I think about the COVID-19 pandemic,
 00:00:07 --> 00:00:10: I constantly oscillate between the very large in the very
 00:00:11 --> 00:00:11: small.
 00:00:11 --> 00:00:15: We recently surpassed 3,000,000 deaths worldwide from
 COVID and sadly
 00:00:15 --> 00:00:18: there are so many individuals in our friends and our
 00:00:18 --> 00:00:20: families who we've lost to this virus.
 00:00:20 --> 00:00:24: There's the ubiquitous fear COVID-19 has found across
 communities and
 00:00:24 --> 00:00:28: the attacks and hate crimes perpetrated against individuals,
 00:00:28 --> 00:00:32: specifically Asians. There is a global economic catastrophe
 when it
 00:00:32 --> 00:00:35: comes for all travel and commerce has been halted.
 00:00:39 --> 00:00:42: There's a global economic pastor fee that comes when all
 00:00:42 --> 00:00:43: travel and commerce is halted,
 00:00:43 --> 00:00:47: and then seeing shop after shop in my neighborhood posting
 00:00:47 --> 00:00:48: stores for rent signs,
 00:00:48 --> 00:00:51: I think about the ubiquity of ambulance sirens in the
 00:00:51 --> 00:00:54: early days of the pandemic and the silence at night
 00:00:54 --> 00:00:56: of a once vibrant community.
 00:00:56 --> 00:00:58: For all of us cope it is very real.
 00:00:58 --> 00:01:01: However, like most things in life that pandemic didn't hit,
 00:01:01 --> 00:01:03: New Yorkers equally here and across the country.
 00:01:03 --> 00:01:08: COVID-19 has disproportionately affected communities of
 color.
 00:01:08 --> 00:01:10: In response to the pandemic in New York,
 00:01:10 --> 00:01:13: the urban design form in the Van Alen Institute launched
 00:01:13 --> 00:01:16: neighborhoods now to channel pro bono resources from New

York

00:01:16 --> 00:01:19: based design firms into community driven recovery strategies.

00:01:19 --> 00:01:22: Our panel today is going to start with Daniel McPhee,

00:01:22 --> 00:01:25: the executive director of the Urban Design Forum,

00:01:25 --> 00:01:27: who will introduce the neighborhoods Now initiative.

00:01:27 --> 00:01:31: Their nest, Sinclair and Farzana Gandhi will share their work

00:01:31 --> 00:01:34: in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford Stuyvesant.

00:01:34 --> 00:01:37: Next, David Brown will discuss the project in Washington Heights.

00:01:37 --> 00:01:41: Following the presentations, we will have a discussion about the

00:01:41 --> 00:01:43: successes and challenges of this initiative.

00:01:43 --> 00:01:46: With that, I'm pleased to introduce Daniel McPhee.

00:01:46 --> 00:01:49: Thank you, Jen, and thank you to the UI community

00:01:49 --> 00:01:50: for welcoming us today.

00:01:50 --> 00:01:53: I'm damik via the executive director of the Urban Design

00:01:53 --> 00:01:54: Forum,

00:01:54 --> 00:01:57: where a membership organization, gathering architects,

00:01:57 --> 00:02:01: planners, developers and activists to confront the defining challenges facing

00:02:01 --> 00:02:02: New York City.

00:02:02 --> 00:02:04: It's a pleasure to be here with my partners to

00:02:04 --> 00:02:06: share neighborhoods now.

00:02:06 --> 00:02:09: A community design response to the COVID-19 pandemic led in

00:02:10 --> 00:02:12: conjunction with the balance too.

00:02:12 --> 00:02:15: The pandemic shocked New York City before it even infected

00:02:15 --> 00:02:16: a single New Yorker.

00:02:16 --> 00:02:21: Fear of disease, devastated Chinatown restaurants and continued xenophobia has

00:02:21 --> 00:02:24: since driven a rise in anti Asian crime.

00:02:24 --> 00:02:26: When the city shut down in mid March,

00:02:26 --> 00:02:28: it became the worldwide epicenter.

00:02:28 --> 00:02:30: After Wuhan and Milan before it.

00:02:30 --> 00:02:33: We missed our chances to lock the city down and

00:02:33 --> 00:02:35: we suffered the consequences.

00:02:35 --> 00:02:38: It wasn't just that we weren't ready with supplies,

00:02:38 --> 00:02:41: it was also that our city wasn't quite built to

00:02:41 --> 00:02:42: take care of New Yorkers.

00:02:42 --> 00:02:45: We have overcrowding in much of our housing stock.

00:02:45 --> 00:02:48: Poor air quality and environmental health in many of our

00:02:48 --> 00:02:49: neighborhoods,

00:02:49 --> 00:02:52: and there's a lack of access to excellent public health
00:02:52 --> 00:02:52: care.
00:02:52 --> 00:02:56: The pandemic hit hard and hit hardest in communities of
00:02:56 --> 00:02:56: color.
00:02:56 --> 00:02:58: Next came the economic crisis.
00:02:58 --> 00:03:03: Our cities, immigrant communities, hospitality workers and
00:03:03 --> 00:03:06: cultural producers were
00:03:06 --> 00:03:10: left with near nothing in relief.
00:03:10 --> 00:03:12: Stimulus programs weren't reaching black and Latino
00:03:12 --> 00:03:15: businesses and food
00:03:15 --> 00:03:15: pantries were slammed.
00:03:15 --> 00:03:19: And yet New Yorkers kept finding ways to help their
00:03:19 --> 00:03:22: neighbors.
00:03:22 --> 00:03:24: Mutual aid groups emerged so people could call up
00:03:24 --> 00:03:27: neighbors
00:03:27 --> 00:03:28: to ask for help with groceries or even take care
00:03:28 --> 00:03:31: of their kids during the work day.
00:03:31 --> 00:03:35: Following George Floyd's murder, many of us came back
00:03:35 --> 00:03:36: together
00:03:36 --> 00:03:39: for the first time,
00:03:39 --> 00:03:41: marching in masks across the Brooklyn Manhattan bridges.
00:03:41 --> 00:03:44: It was a tremendous act of solidarity and proof of
00:03:44 --> 00:03:48: our city's resilience.
00:03:48 --> 00:03:49: Looting began to take place not only in wealthy
00:03:49 --> 00:03:52: neighborhoods
00:03:52 --> 00:03:55: like Soho,
00:03:55 --> 00:03:57: but in some neighborhoods across the city,
00:03:57 --> 00:04:01: like the Northwest Bronx. It was one of the most
00:04:01 --> 00:04:05: inspiring and difficult moments that many of us had ever
00:04:05 --> 00:04:06: experienced in New York.
00:04:06 --> 00:04:09: In that moment we needed a different kind of design
00:04:09 --> 00:04:12: practice,
00:04:12 --> 00:04:13: one that was focused on service to the neighborhoods that
00:04:13 --> 00:04:15: had kept us safe during the pandemic.
00:04:15 --> 00:04:17: To neighborhoods that were unable to access relief.
00:04:17 --> 00:04:20: Into neighborhoods that unfairly seen the consequences of
00:04:20 --> 00:04:23: looting and
00:04:23 --> 00:04:26: police violence.
00:04:26 --> 00:04:29: With the Banana Institute, we began to wonder what the
00:04:29 --> 00:04:32: design and development community could do in that same
00:04:32 --> 00:04:35: spirit
00:04:35 --> 00:04:38: of mutual aid.
00:04:38 --> 00:04:41: How can we support hard hit neighborhoods?
00:04:41 --> 00:04:44: Get the guidance that they needed?

00:04:17 --> 00:04:20: For the last year, it's been our privilege to support
 00:04:20 --> 00:04:21: 11 outstanding community organizations,
 00:04:21 --> 00:04:24: navigate the challenges of reopening.
 00:04:24 --> 00:04:26: There are mix of social service providers,
 00:04:26 --> 00:04:32: business improvement districts, affordable houses and
 cultural groups.
 00:04:32 --> 00:04:34: They are located across four boroughs of the city and
 00:04:34 --> 00:04:36: serve a mix of black,
 00:04:36 --> 00:04:38: Latino, Asian neighborhoods that are home to many of our
 00:04:38 --> 00:04:39: cities,
 00:04:39 --> 00:04:43: thriving immigrant communities and essential workers.
 00:04:43 --> 00:04:46: Over 200 volunteers have joined us to provide pro bono
 00:04:46 --> 00:04:46: services,
 00:04:46 --> 00:04:49: and even though it was originally intended as a six
 00:04:49 --> 00:04:49: week Sprint,
 00:04:49 --> 00:04:54: we're still supporting many of our partners one year later.
 00:04:54 --> 00:04:56: Here's a look at the org chart.
 00:04:56 --> 00:05:00: Community partners are at the top defining the priorities and
 00:05:00 --> 00:05:01: directing our teams.
 00:05:01 --> 00:05:05: Working groups of designers were tasked with different kinds
 of
 00:05:05 --> 00:05:05: spaces,
 00:05:05 --> 00:05:08: from retail to restaurants to open space.
 00:05:08 --> 00:05:12: We also assembled a crew of wraparound experts
 representing community
 00:05:13 --> 00:05:13: development,
 00:05:13 --> 00:05:16: financial institutions, graphic designers, lawyers,
 00:05:16 --> 00:05:20: engineers and planning firms that advise each of our teams.
 00:05:20 --> 00:05:23: We also worked with a number of city agencies to
 00:05:23 --> 00:05:26: answer questions and navigate some of the city's challenging
 permitting
 00:05:27 --> 00:05:27: processes.
 00:05:27 --> 00:05:29: And we're at the bottom in an institute in the
 00:05:30 --> 00:05:30: urban design form.
 00:05:30 --> 00:05:33: Recruiting the partners, assembling the teams,
 00:05:33 --> 00:05:36: and facilitating a lot of the weekly calls to report
 00:05:36 --> 00:05:38: and share their learnings.
 00:05:38 --> 00:05:40: It's hard to sum up the vast amount of work
 00:05:40 --> 00:05:41: undertaken over the last year,
 00:05:41 --> 00:05:43: but I'm going to get a shot.
 00:05:43 --> 00:05:47: First off, we had some beautiful signage developed by our
 00:05:47 --> 00:05:48: teams in English,
 00:05:48 --> 00:05:52: Spanish, Bengali and Arabic, and distributed to hundreds of

small businesses.

00:05:52 --> 00:05:53: In bed stuy our graphic designers even welcomed local residents

00:05:53 --> 00:05:56: to volunteer their likenesses and developed a signage approach that

00:05:56 --> 00:06:00: proudly boasted the neighborhoods black and Muslim identities.

00:06:00 --> 00:06:03: Our teams help permit build out and preserve many retailers and restaurants including tropical rotisserie in the Northwest Bronx,

00:06:03 --> 00:06:07: depicted here.

00:06:07 --> 00:06:11: In one neighborhood, Jackson Heights,

00:06:11 --> 00:06:13: only one restaurant had signed up for outdoor operations before

00:06:13 --> 00:06:14: our team started knocking on doors.

00:06:14 --> 00:06:18: And they've since assisted over 20 restaurants.

00:06:18 --> 00:06:20: Teams are also responding to needs that are a lot

00:06:20 --> 00:06:23: harder photograph.

00:06:23 --> 00:06:26: We've hosted PBP loan workshops,

00:06:26 --> 00:06:27: led landlord tenant mediation clinics addressed longstanding building violations and

00:06:27 --> 00:06:29: much more.

00:06:29 --> 00:06:36: When the worst of the pandemic abated,

00:06:36 --> 00:06:37: we also began to strategize safe and socially distanced events,

00:06:37 --> 00:06:39: including a winter market complete with Santa behind plexiglass.

00:06:39 --> 00:06:42: And this summer we're hoping to contribute to community dealing

00:06:42 --> 00:06:46: with cultural programs and memorials,

00:06:46 --> 00:06:49: celebrating neighborhood heroes that we've lost.

00:06:49 --> 00:06:50: We've also been hard at work and public space.

00:06:50 --> 00:06:54: It's been so important as a place of refuge and

00:06:54 --> 00:06:57: respite during the pandemic.

00:06:57 --> 00:07:00: Teams have installed temporary plantings,

00:07:00 --> 00:07:02: wayfinding tools, and arts installations,

00:07:02 --> 00:07:04: and our work continues in advocating for deeper investment and

00:07:04 --> 00:07:07: better design in parks and plazas across the boroughs.

00:07:07 --> 00:07:10: And of course, there's plenty of guidance about how to return to the office safely.

00:07:10 --> 00:07:11: The capital improvements that might entail,

00:07:11 --> 00:07:14: and some of the ventilation upgrades and things like that.

00:07:14 --> 00:07:17:

00:07:17 --> 00:07:18:

00:07:18 --> 00:07:20:

00:07:20 --> 00:07:24:

00:07:24 --> 00:07:28: We've captured most of our strategies on line at neighborhoods

00:07:29 --> 00:07:29: now Dot NYC.

00:07:29 --> 00:07:33: You can check out some of our trainings DIY plans

00:07:33 --> 00:07:37: to improve public space and guidance about safely returning to

00:07:37 --> 00:07:37: work.

00:07:37 --> 00:07:41: We're only one small effort helping New York City neighborhoods

00:07:41 --> 00:07:42: recover from the pandemic,

00:07:42 --> 00:07:45: but I think we have the seed here of something

00:07:45 --> 00:07:45: important,

00:07:45 --> 00:07:47: which is designed law, finance,

00:07:47 --> 00:07:51: public health, all aligning in service of community development.

00:07:51 --> 00:07:54: I think the great promise of our community in this

00:07:54 --> 00:07:57: moment is to empower underinvested communities to shape their own

00:07:57 --> 00:08:00: futures and provide them with the resources that they need

00:08:00 --> 00:08:01: to thrive.

00:08:01 --> 00:08:03: Our work is far from done,

00:08:03 --> 00:08:05: but it's been a year well spent and I'd love

00:08:05 --> 00:08:06: to pass things off to my colleagues.

00:08:06 --> 00:08:10: Farzana and Ernesta talk about their work in Bedford Stuyvesant.

00:08:10 --> 00:08:11: Thank you.

00:08:15 --> 00:08:19: Hi, my name is Farzana Ganian Firth from Fursona Gandhi

00:08:19 --> 00:08:23: design studio and I'm here joined by Dennis Sinkler,

00:08:23 --> 00:08:27: CEO of Bed Stuy Restoration Corp are most fabulous client

00:08:27 --> 00:08:29: and favorite client.

00:08:29 --> 00:08:31: As we like to say.

00:08:31 --> 00:08:35: I work really extended beyond the solid line that you

00:08:35 --> 00:08:36: see here,

00:08:36 --> 00:08:39: which is the block that restoration owns and acts as

00:08:39 --> 00:08:43: a landlord for what we saw was that restoration with,

00:08:43 --> 00:08:46: through its commitment for the Community,

00:08:46 --> 00:08:50: really extends its practices beyond to the Gateway bid,

00:08:50 --> 00:08:53: which is represented by the dashed line in this math

00:08:54 --> 00:08:54: and beyond.

00:08:54 --> 00:08:57: And so we saw all of our work as a

00:08:57 --> 00:09:01: prototype and as a model for the community at large.

00:09:01 --> 00:09:05: The work that's represented today in our presentation is really

00:09:05 --> 00:09:07: a collaboration between four firms.

00:09:07 --> 00:09:12: Cone, Patterson fox, James Corner Field operations Farzana Gandhi design

00:09:12 --> 00:09:14: studio and 80 Super lab.

00:09:14 --> 00:09:16: With that, I'd like to hand it over to the

00:09:16 --> 00:09:19: nest to chat a little bit about Restoration's mission.

00:09:24 --> 00:09:29: Thank you so much for his honor and thank you

00:09:29 --> 00:09:29: to Dan.

00:09:29 --> 00:09:33: I'd like to just write out thank Van,

00:09:33 --> 00:09:38: Alen Institute and Urban Design Forum for this initiative.

00:09:38 --> 00:09:44: It was crucial to reviving the community of Bedford Stuyvesant,

00:09:44 --> 00:09:48: and most of all I like to send my my

00:09:48 --> 00:09:48: earnest.

00:09:48 --> 00:09:54: Thanks and thanks for this organization to the dynamic.

00:09:54 --> 00:09:58: Neighborhood now team that made it all happen.

00:09:58 --> 00:10:03: Perfect service and restoration, which I'm the Chief Operating officer,

00:10:03 --> 00:10:08: is the nation's first community development organization.

00:10:08 --> 00:10:11: And it partners with residents and businesses to improve the

00:10:11 --> 00:10:13: quality of life in Brooklyn.

00:10:13 --> 00:10:18: Are located in Bedford Stuyvesant and will comprise of basically

00:10:18 --> 00:10:20: 9 buildings on a single block,

00:10:20 --> 00:10:26: all of which provide either Commercial Services or program services

00:10:26 --> 00:10:28: for the community.

00:10:28 --> 00:10:31: The home of Vital program services for gaining employment,

00:10:31 --> 00:10:37: securing financial sustainability and achieving overall Wellness with the goal

00:10:37 --> 00:10:40: of closing the racial wealth gap.

00:10:40 --> 00:10:42: I wanted to note that restoration,

00:10:42 --> 00:10:45: arts and culture is.

00:10:45 --> 00:10:50: A vital, vitally important entity and part of our organization

00:10:50 --> 00:10:54: and that their offerings are renowned worldwide.

00:10:54 --> 00:10:58: They are an essential component to community development.

00:10:58 --> 00:11:03: In total, these programs work to ensure that all families

00:11:03 --> 00:11:08: in central Brooklyn have the opportunity to become prosperous and

00:11:08 --> 00:11:09: healthy.

00:11:09 --> 00:11:11: Our organization dates back to 1966,

00:11:11 --> 00:11:15: when Bobby Kennedy, along with in New York Mayor John Lindsay and Senator Chaffetz,

00:11:15 --> 00:11:17: presented his plan to about 1000 people.

00:11:17 --> 00:11:20:

00:11:20 --> 00:11:24: The new entity that was formed in that day would
00:11:24 --> 00:11:30: become what is now known as Bedford Stuyvesant
Restoration Corporation.

00:11:30 --> 00:11:33: The program for the development of Bedford Stuyvesant.
00:11:35 --> 00:11:39: Will combine the best of Community Action with the best
00:11:39 --> 00:11:41: of private enterprise systems.
00:11:41 --> 00:11:43: Neither by itself is enough,
00:11:43 --> 00:11:48: but in their combination lies our hope for the future.
00:11:48 --> 00:11:53: The initiatives that were undertaken by neighborhood now
have been
00:11:53 --> 00:11:58: an integral part for ensuring the sustainability of vital
community
00:11:58 --> 00:12:00: development organizations.
00:12:00 --> 00:12:05: This form of inspired collaboration follows the blueprint that
gave
00:12:05 --> 00:12:07: rise to restoration and its beginning.
00:12:07 --> 00:12:11: It has sustained this creation and is now an anticipated
00:12:11 --> 00:12:14: essential for rebuilding to scale this,
00:12:14 --> 00:12:20: our nation's first community development organization.
00:12:20 --> 00:12:24: The spirit and the substance upon which a fair and
00:12:24 --> 00:12:29: Equitable nation society can should and must be re
established.
00:12:31 --> 00:12:37: The collaboration with neighborhood now takes on
heightened significance,
00:12:37 --> 00:12:40: as we note that many of the neighborhoods with the
00:12:40 --> 00:12:44: highest number of cases per capita are areas with the
00:12:44 --> 00:12:49: lowest median incomes and the largest average household
size.
00:12:49 --> 00:12:52: Nationwide Kings County, which is actually Brooklyn,
00:12:52 --> 00:12:57: is 11th among the top 50 in COVID-19 confirmed cases.
00:12:57 --> 00:13:00: And it's second.
00:13:00 --> 00:13:06: Of the top 20 concerning deaths by COVID-19.
00:13:06 --> 00:13:11: Accordingly, we had to ensure that at minimum protocols
precracked
00:13:11 --> 00:13:16: prescribed by CDC state and local authorities were put in
00:13:16 --> 00:13:20: place before resuming our on site operations.
00:13:25 --> 00:13:27: As its basic operating protocol,
00:13:27 --> 00:13:32: the neighborhood now team provided pro bono design that's
engineering
00:13:32 --> 00:13:33: and architecture,
00:13:33 --> 00:13:37: public health, legal, economic development expertise.
00:13:37 --> 00:13:42: And they were a lifeline of support to Restoration's reopening
00:13:42 --> 00:13:43: efforts.
00:13:43 --> 00:13:47: The goal of the project is to develop easily deployable

00:13:47 --> 00:13:52: strategies on how to safely effectively transition out of the
00:13:52 --> 00:13:57: lockdown and to move on to long term recovery efforts.
00:13:57 --> 00:14:04: Practical strategies developed include. Safely reconfiguring
space did identify and
00:14:05 --> 00:14:06: protect personnel.
00:14:06 --> 00:14:11: Outfitting community, indoor and outdoor areas for social
distancing.
00:14:11 --> 00:14:16: Identifying protocols for cleaning and maintenance of offices
and program
00:14:16 --> 00:14:20: sites in alignment with CDC and governmental mandates.
00:14:20 --> 00:14:26: Employing best practices for HVAC and air flow and
repurposing
00:14:26 --> 00:14:31: vacant spaces as places for convening and cultural use.
00:14:31 --> 00:14:35: Also, we wanted to clearly convey messaging as two
essential
00:14:35 --> 00:14:36: protocols.
00:14:36 --> 00:14:39: We wanted to help create a sense of confidence for
00:14:40 --> 00:14:44: returning staff through expert implementation and over
communication.
00:14:44 --> 00:14:48: And we also wanted to support reopening efforts of tenants
00:14:48 --> 00:14:52: located on the Plaza as well as their remote sites.
00:14:52 --> 00:14:54: As a result of a concerted,
00:14:54 --> 00:15:00: hands-on approach. By our neighborhood now team
restoration has been
00:15:00 --> 00:15:05: able to safely reopen multiple remote program sites including
our
00:15:06 --> 00:15:06: jobs.
00:15:06 --> 00:15:08: Plus at the Pfizer location.
00:15:08 --> 00:15:14: Our Economic solutions center. At the Restoration Plaza
campus as
00:15:14 --> 00:15:17: well as free tax preparation site an RDO.
00:15:17 --> 00:15:23: Each vaccination site, which to date has vaccinated over
8000
00:15:23 --> 00:15:24: people.
00:15:24 --> 00:15:27: In 21 days that it's been open.
00:15:27 --> 00:15:31: I'd like to turn this back over to Farzana Gandhi.
00:15:31 --> 00:15:36: Who will take you through some of our other works
00:15:36 --> 00:15:38: with our bid organizations?
00:15:38 --> 00:15:41: Thank you your nest. Your work is an inspiration to
00:15:41 --> 00:15:44: us all and it was an absolute pleasure and continues
00:15:44 --> 00:15:46: to be a pleasure to work with you.
00:15:46 --> 00:15:48: So to kick things off,
00:15:48 --> 00:15:51: back in the summer, our team started with a robust
00:15:51 --> 00:15:54: community engagement campaign.

00:15:54 --> 00:15:57: Given COVID issues we had to do this virtually,
00:15:57 --> 00:16:02: and so we started with a number of Community conversations

00:16:02 --> 00:16:06: on zoom where we invited over 21,000 community residents.
00:16:06 --> 00:16:09: Over 820 people tuned in live on Facebook,
00:16:09 --> 00:16:14: and many engage directly through questions and even posts of
00:16:14 --> 00:16:16: questions in the chat.
00:16:16 --> 00:16:21: We invited stakeholders representative of a variety of diverse sectors
00:16:21 --> 00:16:23: within the bedside community,
00:16:23 --> 00:16:28: including arts and culture, small businesses and religious organisations.
00:16:28 --> 00:16:32: What we heard was that you know small businesses were
00:16:32 --> 00:16:34: having trouble meeting COVID compliance.
00:16:34 --> 00:16:39: There was inconsistent signage. There were long queues on sidewalks
00:16:39 --> 00:16:42: and then there were many issues that plagued the bedside
00:16:42 --> 00:16:46: community even prior to the pandemic that were exacerbated.
00:16:46 --> 00:16:49: Issues of trash collection deliveries,
00:16:49 --> 00:16:52: double parking congestion, lack of access and heat,
00:16:52 --> 00:16:54: and no landscape.
00:16:54 --> 00:16:59: We started by developing opportunities hand in hand with the
00:16:59 --> 00:17:04: Community to reclaim sidewalk space to find opportunities for sidewalk
00:17:04 --> 00:17:09: rights swapping as well as greening and developing safe social
00:17:09 --> 00:17:13: distancing during community events.
00:17:13 --> 00:17:18: We broadcasted our our efforts and our our proposals on
00:17:18 --> 00:17:19: social media.
00:17:19 --> 00:17:25: Ask for robust feedback and we found that people were
00:17:25 --> 00:17:25: very.
00:17:25 --> 00:17:30: Very enthusiastic to present their their ideas and their questions,
00:17:30 --> 00:17:34: and this was very welcome.
00:17:34 --> 00:17:37: We found first of all that education and communication were
00:17:38 --> 00:17:41: one of the most important elements in a post or
00:17:41 --> 00:17:44: during pandemic world and we tried to demystify many of
00:17:44 --> 00:17:48: the city guidelines through a series of three pamphlets for
00:17:48 --> 00:17:53: three different audiences for office workers and clients for small
00:17:53 --> 00:17:54: business owners.
00:17:54 --> 00:17:57: And then a be a good neighbor program that started
00:17:57 --> 00:18:01: to find ways that neighbors could swap exterior vacant lot

00:18:01 --> 00:18:04: space or even interior storefront space.

00:18:04 --> 00:18:08: In a in a time of much needed open space.

00:18:08 --> 00:18:11: Here is just one pamphlet opened up and you see

00:18:11 --> 00:18:15: that it details many measures for how a small business

00:18:15 --> 00:18:21: could reopen safely from hygiene and cleaning protocols to protective

00:18:21 --> 00:18:26: equipment protocols, how to protect ones customers through contact lens,

00:18:26 --> 00:18:30: contactless payment options, flexible work hours,

00:18:30 --> 00:18:35: and staggering staff to PPE dispensing and even DIY Outdoor

00:18:35 --> 00:18:38: set sidewalk setups and barriers.

00:18:38 --> 00:18:42: On the flip side of the pamphlet we detailed very

00:18:42 --> 00:18:46: easy to follow diagrams that showed how one way flow

00:18:46 --> 00:18:52: and circulation could be demonstrated within bodegas and small beauty

00:18:52 --> 00:18:54: supply stores.

00:18:54 --> 00:19:00: Partitions could be developed within hair and nail salons with

00:19:00 --> 00:19:04: areas that could be set up for queuing an.

00:19:04 --> 00:19:09: Various measures could be represented for outdoor setups for restaurants

00:19:09 --> 00:19:10: and cafes.

00:19:10 --> 00:19:12: We worked with partner and partners.

00:19:12 --> 00:19:14: It's developed signage for the community.

00:19:14 --> 00:19:18: We even invited our community to pose for that signage.

00:19:18 --> 00:19:22: And then we worked with restoration on their block to

00:19:22 --> 00:19:23: D,

00:19:23 --> 00:19:28: densify their spaces, find one way flow for circulation safely

00:19:28 --> 00:19:32: through the various buildings on their block.

00:19:32 --> 00:19:37: D 10s. Find spaces for various uses and setting up

00:19:37 --> 00:19:43: clear signage across the Plaza to develop those circulation flows.

00:19:43 --> 00:19:47: We did. We developed a set of environmental graphics on

00:19:47 --> 00:19:51: the plazas a series of 6 foot squares that could

00:19:51 --> 00:19:55: be populated by a local artist with local ideas of

00:19:55 --> 00:20:01: murals that celebrated the sites historic significance.

00:20:01 --> 00:20:07: We started painting those squares and outlines for squares on

00:20:07 --> 00:20:08: the Plaza.

00:20:08 --> 00:20:13: We held community build days to paint additional wayfinding and

00:20:13 --> 00:20:18: even produce barrier building workshops with the community.

00:20:18 --> 00:20:22: And we received donations to plant the Plaza,

00:20:22 --> 00:20:26: which was a much needed greening and an uplifting of

00:20:26 --> 00:20:27: spirits.

00:20:27 --> 00:20:30: As you can see here by a quote from our.

00:20:32 --> 00:20:38: Our founder or CEO. Bedford Stuyvesant restoration quarters during a

00:20:38 --> 00:20:39: sinkler.

00:20:41 --> 00:20:43: And we ended or we followed our.

00:20:43 --> 00:20:47: We continue our work with a series of small business

00:20:47 --> 00:20:52: workshops here to present the community with safe COVID practices,

00:20:52 --> 00:20:56: both indoor and outdoor. And how to make that happen.

00:20:56 --> 00:20:59: With permits and funding. Here we are seeing just a

00:20:59 --> 00:21:04: sample that starts to show an understand indoor ventilation strategies

00:21:04 --> 00:21:08: and DIY filtration systems and even a slide that starts

00:21:08 --> 00:21:11: to talk through outdoor heating possibilities.

00:21:11 --> 00:21:15: But whether you're using electric versus fast.

00:21:15 --> 00:21:19: And we continue our work with local partnerships not only

00:21:19 --> 00:21:24: to meet the various centers that the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration

00:21:24 --> 00:21:26: core allows us to engage with,

00:21:26 --> 00:21:29: but and with the community beyond.

00:21:29 --> 00:21:32: And we hope to develop a series of workshops and

00:21:32 --> 00:21:35: programs to include our artists to develop murals,

00:21:35 --> 00:21:40: memorials. An artist walks as we move forward to develop

00:21:40 --> 00:21:46: additional social and environmental resiliency in our community.

00:21:46 --> 00:21:48: With that, I'd like to hand it back to David

00:21:48 --> 00:21:50: Brown from Woods Baggett,

00:21:50 --> 00:21:54: who will speak a little bit about his work with

00:21:54 --> 00:21:55: new trades now.

00:21:55 --> 00:21:57: Great, thank you so much.

00:21:57 --> 00:21:59: Hi, I'm really excited to be here to represent the

00:21:59 --> 00:22:03: Washington Heights team and our efforts to support the local

00:22:03 --> 00:22:07: community and the neighborhood now initiative in Washington Heights.

00:22:07 --> 00:22:10: Our team consisted of cloth which is the Community League

00:22:10 --> 00:22:13: of the Heights who are who was the Community group

00:22:13 --> 00:22:16: and sort of facilitator of our conversations with the community.

00:22:16 --> 00:22:19: The coordinating firm of Arab and the team of Stantec,

00:22:19 --> 00:22:23: Ginzler Woods, Bagot and design advocates which approached public Space

00:22:23 --> 00:22:24: office,

00:22:24 --> 00:22:26: education, restaurants and retail.

00:22:28 --> 00:22:30: So this quote by Yvonne Stone at the executive director
00:22:30 --> 00:22:31: of Cloth,
00:22:31 --> 00:22:33: really gave a lot of inspiration and motivation for our
00:22:33 --> 00:22:34: work.
00:22:34 --> 00:22:36: We are very concerned about her mom and pop small
00:22:36 --> 00:22:38: businesses and their return.
00:22:38 --> 00:22:39: What that can look like and also,
00:22:39 --> 00:22:42: in reopening the community in a way that a celebratory
00:22:42 --> 00:22:45: we're hoping that through this effort we can address not
00:22:45 --> 00:22:46: just the small businesses,
00:22:46 --> 00:22:48: but also give some kind of new look to the
00:22:48 --> 00:22:50: neighborhood that reinvigorates our community.
00:22:50 --> 00:22:53: And I think this idea of resilience and kind of
00:22:53 --> 00:22:55: using that kind of reaction to a crisis as a
00:22:55 --> 00:22:57: way to kind of transform for the better,
00:22:57 --> 00:22:58: was something that we were.
00:22:58 --> 00:23:00: It was very top of mine and the work that
00:23:00 --> 00:23:04: we're doing collectively after numerous conversations with
the community and
00:23:04 --> 00:23:05: local business owners,
00:23:05 --> 00:23:07: we understood that they had a lot of concerns around
00:23:08 --> 00:23:09: and around the future.
00:23:09 --> 00:23:12: Uncertainty because policy and regulations kept changing
daily in the
00:23:12 --> 00:23:14: early part of the pandemic so no one knew if
00:23:14 --> 00:23:17: they were to make investments and build things like how
00:23:17 --> 00:23:19: long that could last and so therefore it would be
00:23:19 --> 00:23:22: worth the financial investment in public health and safety
were
00:23:22 --> 00:23:24: obviously top online as you as you could imagine at
00:23:24 --> 00:23:27: that time. So those fear about kind of what and
00:23:27 --> 00:23:29: a lack of understanding about what to do.
00:23:29 --> 00:23:30: And how they could do it?
00:23:30 --> 00:23:32: So these were a few kind of key points that
00:23:32 --> 00:23:35: cannot came up in our conversations around safe extension
of
00:23:35 --> 00:23:37: restaurants into the street,
00:23:37 --> 00:23:39: protecting them from traffic, you know,
00:23:39 --> 00:23:42: creating an all weather pavilion so that we could actually
00:23:42 --> 00:23:45: extend that investment kind of into the winter months at
00:23:45 --> 00:23:46: the early part of this,
00:23:46 --> 00:23:48: when we were first engaging in conversations.
00:23:48 --> 00:23:51: The restaurant program only went until September,

00:23:51 --> 00:23:53: so there's no kind of idea of how it could
00:23:53 --> 00:23:54: be extended,
00:23:54 --> 00:23:57: so we were trying to think about about that.
00:23:57 --> 00:24:00: You're in public spaces to allow for social distance activity,
00:24:00 --> 00:24:04: creatively communicating COVID-19 safety guidelines so
very similar to what
00:24:04 --> 00:24:06: Frazzano was showing with the signage,
00:24:06 --> 00:24:08: which is just amazing. Making use of available into your
00:24:08 --> 00:24:12: outdoor spaces for educational programs and improving
coordination with the
00:24:12 --> 00:24:15: owners of vacant storefronts so that we can facilitate
temporary
00:24:15 --> 00:24:17: uses and activities.
00:24:17 --> 00:24:20: So this led to our approach to help the community
00:24:20 --> 00:24:22: really understand what the opportunities could be,
00:24:22 --> 00:24:25: both short term and long term and create a toolkit
00:24:25 --> 00:24:28: that would enable them to develop their own solutions.
00:24:28 --> 00:24:30: So we looked at how we can support restaurants and
00:24:30 --> 00:24:31: retailers.
00:24:31 --> 00:24:34: We looked at how we can Createspace for outdoor programs
00:24:34 --> 00:24:35: for education and other uses,
00:24:35 --> 00:24:39: and how we can create a safe and healthy public
00:24:39 --> 00:24:40: public realm.
00:24:40 --> 00:24:44: Our concept proposals included multiple tools at the
opportunity locations
00:24:44 --> 00:24:45: we identified,
00:24:45 --> 00:24:49: including permit applications, design solutions and signage
and implementation map
00:24:49 --> 00:24:52: so they know you know the kind of steps to
00:24:52 --> 00:24:55: take in order to kind of implement some of these
00:24:55 --> 00:24:58: strategies on their own and visuals that would help get
00:24:58 --> 00:25:01: the community excited about what the potential could.
00:25:01 --> 00:25:04: Because I think part of it was people didn't really
00:25:04 --> 00:25:07: know what what actually could you know could take place
00:25:07 --> 00:25:09: in on these in these open streets.
00:25:11 --> 00:25:14: So we developed, you know these resources to help people
00:25:14 --> 00:25:16: kind of understand what to do.
00:25:16 --> 00:25:19: You know which included tips on how to create their
00:25:19 --> 00:25:19: own furniture,
00:25:19 --> 00:25:21: where to kind of source the materials,
00:25:21 --> 00:25:24: how much things cost so that they could get a
00:25:24 --> 00:25:27: really good understanding of what they can afford to do.
00:25:27 --> 00:25:30: You know, backgrounds on sort of the permit application so

00:25:30 --> 00:25:31: that people know,
00:25:31 --> 00:25:34: kind of how to do it and how to kind
00:25:34 --> 00:25:37: of apply to build the restaurants in the outdoor spaces.
00:25:37 --> 00:25:40: This is an overall map that the team developed to
00:25:40 --> 00:25:42: identify opportunity locations,
00:25:42 --> 00:25:44: including you know, places where we could.
00:25:44 --> 00:25:47: We thought it would be good ideas for open streets,
00:25:47 --> 00:25:49: places. We thought that there could be more kind of
00:25:49 --> 00:25:51: food and beverage activation.
00:25:51 --> 00:25:54: Certain different clauses that we wanted to activate and allow
00:25:54 --> 00:25:57: kind of businesses to kind of spill out into and
00:25:57 --> 00:25:59: sort of ways to kind of expand the pedestrian space
00:25:59 --> 00:26:01: to get more.
00:26:01 --> 00:26:03: Opportunity for people to spread out.
00:26:06 --> 00:26:09: Here's a plan and kind of image that Stantec developed
00:26:09 --> 00:26:11: as part of their public Space Research.
00:26:11 --> 00:26:14: This is looking at the Plaza de Las Americas,
00:26:14 --> 00:26:17: which was once a kind of thriving space in the
00:26:17 --> 00:26:18: in the Community,
00:26:18 --> 00:26:22: with farmers markets and and kind of temporary retail and
00:26:22 --> 00:26:23: outdoor dining that was,
00:26:23 --> 00:26:27: you know, just utterly decimated by COVID and became the
00:26:27 --> 00:26:28: real kind of barren spot.
00:26:28 --> 00:26:31: And in the neighborhood. So they're currently working.
00:26:31 --> 00:26:33: Actually with the United Palace,
00:26:33 --> 00:26:36: which is one of the.
00:26:36 --> 00:26:38: Kind of.
00:26:38 --> 00:26:41: Spaces, that's kind of acting on the edge of the
00:26:42 --> 00:26:46: Plaza and with Witikon nonprofit to kind of implement some
00:26:46 --> 00:26:47: of these ideas.
00:26:47 --> 00:26:49: And this is a proposal by Gensler to create outdoor
00:26:49 --> 00:26:52: classrooms or using easy to build furniture elements.
00:26:52 --> 00:26:54: And you know they're kind of looking at where they
00:26:54 --> 00:26:56: can locate in the community.
00:26:56 --> 00:26:58: Close too close to schools and close the book stores
00:26:58 --> 00:27:01: so there can be some kind of outdoor reading spaces
00:27:01 --> 00:27:04: and have kind of outdoor events and things like that,
00:27:04 --> 00:27:07: so this is also kind of in development and will
00:27:07 --> 00:27:10: be kind of built in the next coming months.
00:27:10 --> 00:27:11: And So what our team did,
00:27:11 --> 00:27:13: the Woods Bagot team kind of looking at restaurants as
00:27:13 --> 00:27:16: we first started looking at the regulations and really kind

00:27:16 --> 00:27:19: of understanding what the rules were so that we could

00:27:18 --> 00:27:21: communicate that to the Community.

00:27:21 --> 00:27:24: And then out of that we developed this kit apart.

00:27:24 --> 00:27:27: Switch included Barack aid that's required to kind of create

00:27:27 --> 00:27:29: the open streets and we tried to create something that

00:27:29 --> 00:27:32: was safe and mobile so it can be easily moved

00:27:32 --> 00:27:35: and we try to allow embedded infrastructure like waste collection

00:27:35 --> 00:27:37: and an potential like water sources and stuff for the

00:27:37 --> 00:27:41: community that they could actually become something more than just

00:27:41 --> 00:27:44: a barricade, but actually something that kind of provides additional

00:27:44 --> 00:27:45: urban amenity.

00:27:45 --> 00:27:48: We developed this Flatpack restaurant kit that where we had

00:27:48 --> 00:27:50: this idea that would be really nice if there could

00:27:51 --> 00:27:52: be kind of off-site fabrication.

00:27:52 --> 00:27:54: And then when it arrived on site,

00:27:54 --> 00:27:56: will be very easy for laymen,

00:27:56 --> 00:27:59: people that don't have experience building things to kind of

00:27:59 --> 00:28:02: quickly and easily assemble it on site and really minimize

00:28:02 --> 00:28:03: the kind of on site work.

00:28:03 --> 00:28:07: And then finally kind of flexible furniture design that allowed

00:28:07 --> 00:28:10: to adapt to a lot of different configurations.

00:28:10 --> 00:28:12: So then we showed we took kind of one test

00:28:12 --> 00:28:15: block on Broadway between 164th 165th St and and really

00:28:15 --> 00:28:18: tried to visualize how you know during the week it

00:28:18 --> 00:28:21: could be used for open restaurants and help kind of

00:28:21 --> 00:28:24: activate those spaces and then on the weekends you could

00:28:24 --> 00:28:28: actually kind of pull out that mobile furniture and those

00:28:28 --> 00:28:31: barricades and really kind of create this active,

00:28:31 --> 00:28:33: thriving kind of neighborhood space.

00:28:33 --> 00:28:36: And we try to show how vacant storefronts could be

00:28:36 --> 00:28:38: used to help store some of the barricades.

00:28:38 --> 00:28:40: And some of the mobile furniture so that.

00:28:40 --> 00:28:44: During the week they could easily kind of pulled out

00:28:44 --> 00:28:45: and and removed.

00:28:45 --> 00:28:47: We also gave you know,

00:28:47 --> 00:28:50: again, sort of information on sort of pricing and sourcing

00:28:50 --> 00:28:50: materials.

00:28:50 --> 00:28:53: There was kind of a whole set of instructions that

00:28:53 --> 00:28:55: about how to kind of put these things together.

00:28:55 --> 00:28:58: You know what size? You know the material that would

00:28:58 --> 00:29:01: be required and so that became kind of part of
 00:29:01 --> 00:29:05: our toolkit and instructions that we that we help provide.
 00:29:05 --> 00:29:07: And then we really kind of went into the design
 00:29:07 --> 00:29:10: of the all season canopy is as something that you
 00:29:10 --> 00:29:12: know we kind of went into more detail at the
 00:29:12 --> 00:29:15: time. Again, this will sort of July August last year.
 00:29:15 --> 00:29:19: We really wanted to actually kind of start the conversation
 00:29:19 --> 00:29:22: about extending the restaurant program into the winter.
 00:29:22 --> 00:29:25: Through this design, people weren't really talking about at
 that
 00:29:25 --> 00:29:26: time,
 00:29:26 --> 00:29:27: so we started thinking about it.
 00:29:27 --> 00:29:30: Kind of double layer skin where air from the inside
 00:29:30 --> 00:29:31: could exhaust out,
 00:29:31 --> 00:29:34: but it still protect from the wind and create kind
 00:29:34 --> 00:29:35: of a heated space.
 00:29:35 --> 00:29:39: And that would be easily kind of fabricated out of
 00:29:39 --> 00:29:42: these kind of flat flat panel pieces of plywood that
 00:29:42 --> 00:29:44: will be pre cut off site.
 00:29:44 --> 00:29:47: Actually, over the winter silento just a local restaurant in
 00:29:47 --> 00:29:50: the neighborhood reached out and wanted us to try to
 00:29:50 --> 00:29:52: install one of these for them.
 00:29:52 --> 00:29:55: So that kind of led us into kind of reaching
 00:29:55 --> 00:29:56: out to Home Depot and events.
 00:29:56 --> 00:29:59: Cape, who provided the materials and even skate,
 00:29:59 --> 00:30:02: provided the fabrication installation so you know,
 00:30:02 --> 00:30:05: huge thanks to our sponsors for this project,
 00:30:05 --> 00:30:07: but we went into a kind of design development mode
 00:30:08 --> 00:30:09: with Arab and you know,
 00:30:09 --> 00:30:12: really kind of vetted through the whole idea of this
 00:30:12 --> 00:30:14: kind of very simple.
 00:30:14 --> 00:30:16: Is you know easy assembled plywood,
 00:30:16 --> 00:30:19: plywood, pavilion, all made with kind of slotted connections.
 00:30:19 --> 00:30:21: We really wanted to try to minimize the need for
 00:30:21 --> 00:30:24: tools and stuff so that anyone could kind of put
 00:30:24 --> 00:30:25: this together easily onsite.
 00:30:25 --> 00:30:28: Numerous zoom calls to kind of work through some of
 00:30:28 --> 00:30:31: the details which got to be a little more complex
 00:30:31 --> 00:30:32: than we expected initially,
 00:30:32 --> 00:30:36: but we kind of developed it into this design.
 00:30:36 --> 00:30:39: That you see here. This Is Us kind of prototyping
 00:30:39 --> 00:30:39: it,

00:30:39 --> 00:30:41: you know, trying to test to make sure that it
00:30:41 --> 00:30:42: can come together easily and quickly,
00:30:42 --> 00:30:45: and that you know all the pieces kind of fit
00:30:45 --> 00:30:46: together correctly.
00:30:46 --> 00:30:48: And we developed this little animation to help.
00:30:48 --> 00:30:51: Hopefully this place, yeah.
00:30:51 --> 00:30:53: To help you know whoever was putting it together,
00:30:53 --> 00:30:55: understand how to do it and kind of see the
00:30:55 --> 00:30:57: sequence of how how it comes together.
00:31:10 --> 00:31:11: Next slide, then even escape,
00:31:11 --> 00:31:13: started to do the fabrication.
00:31:13 --> 00:31:16: So everything was kind of build out using a CNC
00:31:16 --> 00:31:18: milling machine and they're in their factory.
00:31:18 --> 00:31:21: They installed it kind of and staged it in their
00:31:21 --> 00:31:22: in their space.
00:31:22 --> 00:31:24: Just because this was kind of a prototype,
00:31:24 --> 00:31:27: wanted to make sure we could work through any any
00:31:27 --> 00:31:27: issues,
00:31:27 --> 00:31:30: but it came together pretty quickly and easily,
00:31:30 --> 00:31:31: they said.
00:31:31 --> 00:31:34: This is the team, the design team and the construction
00:31:34 --> 00:31:34: team.
00:31:34 --> 00:31:37: Kind of in their space.
00:31:37 --> 00:31:40: This is Sergio who didn't make it for the first
00:31:40 --> 00:31:40: photo shoot.
00:31:40 --> 00:31:43: And this is them actually installing it on site,
00:31:43 --> 00:31:45: which just happened yesterday. So we're really excited.
00:31:45 --> 00:31:47: The team design team is going out Friday to help
00:31:47 --> 00:31:50: paint it and sort of celebrate the opening of this
00:31:50 --> 00:31:51: new space for for Cilento.
00:31:51 --> 00:31:54: So really excited to have been a part of this
00:31:54 --> 00:31:55: project.
00:31:55 --> 00:31:57: Nearest the team that can help put it together yesterday
00:31:57 --> 00:32:00: from advance Cape and some friends of the restaurant
owner.
00:32:00 --> 00:32:02: Nuts, and that's it for me,
00:32:02 --> 00:32:04: so I'll hand it back over to Jenn to help.
00:32:04 --> 00:32:06: Kind of facilitate the conversation.
00:32:10 --> 00:32:14: Thanks David, and thank you to all of our panelists.
00:32:14 --> 00:32:18: I'm going to ask everyone to now turn on their
00:32:18 --> 00:32:22: videos in turn on their monitors and their microphones.
00:32:26 --> 00:32:29: And I'd like to start with a couple of questions

00:32:29 --> 00:32:30: and earnest.

00:32:30 --> 00:32:33: I have my first question is for you.

00:32:33 --> 00:32:37: So you and Farzana touched on the many structural inequality's

00:32:37 --> 00:32:40: that impact the lives of many people in bed stuy,

00:32:40 --> 00:32:42: such as the colocation of social,

00:32:42 --> 00:32:47: economic issues like overcrowding and health disparities that go on

00:32:47 --> 00:32:48: for many generations.

00:32:48 --> 00:32:51: While these issues have really led to a lot of

00:32:51 --> 00:32:53: inequality over the decades,

00:32:53 --> 00:32:57: the two issues of health and economic opportunities have really

00:32:57 --> 00:33:00: been quite pronounced over the past year.

00:33:00 --> 00:33:03: So my question for you is how do you see

00:33:03 --> 00:33:07: these design interventions address these issues and other issues of

00:33:07 --> 00:33:11: any qualities in the community that the bed stuy Restoration

00:33:11 --> 00:33:14: Corporation works in?

00:33:14 --> 00:33:21: Well, they've allowed us to continue to serve those populations.

00:33:21 --> 00:33:27: That have that are be set by any qualities that

00:33:27 --> 00:33:32: are set by health issues and financial issues.

00:33:32 --> 00:33:36: We've been able to get back on site.

00:33:36 --> 00:33:40: We have remote sites and we have our our main

00:33:40 --> 00:33:40: site.

00:33:40 --> 00:33:44: We've been able to get back on site and to

00:33:44 --> 00:33:50: start working face to face with people over the timeline

00:33:50 --> 00:33:51: of the pandemic.

00:33:51 --> 00:33:56: We have been focusing basically on doing a lot of

00:33:56 --> 00:33:57: our work remotely,

00:33:57 --> 00:34:03: but as we've seen even with something so simple as

00:34:03 --> 00:34:04: just attacks site.

00:34:04 --> 00:34:08: Certain things need to be done in person and with

00:34:08 --> 00:34:12: the help of the neighborhood now team are wonderful team.

00:34:12 --> 00:34:15: We've been able to.

00:34:15 --> 00:34:20: Number one. Make staff feel safe so they want to

00:34:20 --> 00:34:26: come back on site and also to provide additional protections

00:34:26 --> 00:34:30: for clients and staff so they are able to resume.

00:34:30 --> 00:34:31: Their work.

00:34:34 --> 00:34:36: So it's essentially been it's.

00:34:36 --> 00:34:39: It's been a great effort overtime and we hope to

00:34:39 --> 00:34:43: be able to continue to work with neighborhood now to

00:34:43 --> 00:34:45: expand on our phase reopenings.

00:34:48 --> 00:34:51: Maybe I can just add to that their nest.

00:34:51 --> 00:34:54: I think that you know.

00:34:54 --> 00:34:58: What what the pandemic really brought to light was that

00:34:58 --> 00:35:03: you know the structural sort of systemic inequality is that

00:35:03 --> 00:35:05: many of our communities face.

00:35:05 --> 00:35:10: Perhaps things that planners and architects and public officials knew

00:35:10 --> 00:35:10: about,

00:35:10 --> 00:35:14: but it really wasn't part of the public conversation,

00:35:14 --> 00:35:18: right? And I think that that's been a positive that

00:35:18 --> 00:35:21: has come out of all of this right,

00:35:21 --> 00:35:24: that I think we are all now more aware of

00:35:24 --> 00:35:28: these issues and it's really up to architects and designers

00:35:29 --> 00:35:31: to kind of step up and be a part of

00:35:31 --> 00:35:36: that conversation. And I think the way that design can

00:35:36 --> 00:35:37: start to.

00:35:37 --> 00:35:41: Create some some effect or change to the communities.

00:35:41 --> 00:35:46: Benefit is through empowering the communities a lot of the

00:35:46 --> 00:35:49: work that David shared right in terms of low cost

00:35:49 --> 00:35:50: solutions,

00:35:50 --> 00:35:55: DIY solutions, things that community members can build on their

00:35:55 --> 00:35:55: own.

00:35:55 --> 00:35:59: We've also been developing a kit of parts for quickly

00:35:59 --> 00:36:03: deployable furniture for vacant lot proposals,

00:36:03 --> 00:36:06: for example, that we hope to roll out in the

00:36:06 --> 00:36:07: later springs.

00:36:07 --> 00:36:11: The summer and really empowering the community through education and

00:36:11 --> 00:36:12: community.

00:36:12 --> 00:36:17: Communicating how these things can be done quickly.

00:36:17 --> 00:36:21: Is is part of. I think the design solution.

00:36:21 --> 00:36:25: Arizona you brought up a couple of different issues that

00:36:25 --> 00:36:26: I'd love to.

00:36:26 --> 00:36:29: I'd love to hear from the rest of the panel

00:36:29 --> 00:36:30: on one of them was about.

00:36:30 --> 00:36:35: Ann, where designers are typically located in the conversation and

00:36:35 --> 00:36:38: the agency and the role that designers have and what

00:36:39 --> 00:36:41: it means to empower a community.

00:36:41 --> 00:36:44: So if you, and maybe David could speak to that

00:36:44 --> 00:36:47: and and you know Dan and earnest person love to

00:36:47 --> 00:36:49: have your opinion on it,
00:36:49 --> 00:36:51: but you know, with all of these,
00:36:51 --> 00:36:56: obviously the terrible things that happened in 2020 that precipitated
00:36:56 --> 00:37:01: this work and the structural inequality is that underserved communities.
00:37:01 --> 00:37:04: Have faced how do designers or locate them?
00:37:04 --> 00:37:07: How do you as a designer locate yourself in the
00:37:07 --> 00:37:08: conversation?
00:37:08 --> 00:37:12: And how might this impact your work in the future?
00:37:12 --> 00:37:15: I'll go first, so I'll say that I think it's
00:37:15 --> 00:37:18: interesting I I'm actually looking forward to farzana's answer on
00:37:19 --> 00:37:19: this,
00:37:19 --> 00:37:22: 'cause I think she's been doing this a lot longer
00:37:22 --> 00:37:22: than we have,
00:37:22 --> 00:37:25: and I think for us you know it's one of
00:37:25 --> 00:37:28: the first times we've actually engaged in this type of
00:37:28 --> 00:37:28: work.
00:37:28 --> 00:37:31: And it's a really different set of skills and tools
00:37:31 --> 00:37:34: that required a lot more around kind of communication and
00:37:34 --> 00:37:35: trust building I think,
00:37:35 --> 00:37:38: and I think that was something that we actually see
00:37:38 --> 00:37:39: you.
00:37:39 --> 00:37:42: Candidly. We kind of struggled with at the beginning,
00:37:42 --> 00:37:43: I think coming into a.
00:37:43 --> 00:37:46: Washington Heights is sort of outsiders that we didn't have
00:37:46 --> 00:37:50: that sort of trust built up with the local neighborhood,
00:37:50 --> 00:37:52: and I think that probably to do this kind of
00:37:52 --> 00:37:54: work really successfully.
00:37:54 --> 00:37:57: You kind of have to be embedded in a community
00:37:57 --> 00:37:57: instead of,
00:37:57 --> 00:38:00: you know, be there for the long term and really
00:38:00 --> 00:38:02: start to build those relationships.
00:38:02 --> 00:38:04: That will kind of work.
00:38:04 --> 00:38:06: There's, you know, things have to happen.
00:38:08 --> 00:38:11: No one had a lot faster and a lot more
00:38:11 --> 00:38:14: kind of sort of DIY or very much more hands
00:38:14 --> 00:38:15: on than probably.
00:38:15 --> 00:38:19: Architects are typically used to working building it yourself,
00:38:19 --> 00:38:22: sourcing things yourself. You know getting costing,
00:38:22 --> 00:38:26: you know, costing yourself stuff that need a lot of
00:38:26 --> 00:38:29: times we rely on on other parts of the design

00:38:29 --> 00:38:31: team or construction team to do so.

00:38:31 --> 00:38:34: I think in that sense you know we had to

00:38:34 --> 00:38:35: kind of,

00:38:35 --> 00:38:38: you know, we're still, I think trying to learn.

00:38:38 --> 00:38:40: Some of the right ways to do these things and

00:38:40 --> 00:38:40: I will,

00:38:40 --> 00:38:43: you know, hopefully will continue as we continue to do

00:38:43 --> 00:38:44: this type of work,

00:38:44 --> 00:38:47: but I think that's that's that's the main thing is

00:38:47 --> 00:38:50: it just takes different types of skills and different hats,

00:38:50 --> 00:38:52: an kind of much more kind of time to kind

00:38:52 --> 00:38:53: of build those relationships,

00:38:53 --> 00:38:56: I think.

00:38:56 --> 00:38:58: Yeah, I think David's got it right.

00:38:58 --> 00:39:03: I mean, I think that the community engagement portion of

00:39:03 --> 00:39:08: this is is was instrumental right to getting it right

00:39:08 --> 00:39:09: in some fashion?

00:39:09 --> 00:39:12: I think community engagement is a skill.

00:39:12 --> 00:39:16: It's it's difficult. You have to.

00:39:16 --> 00:39:20: You know, kind of communicate in a way that builds

00:39:20 --> 00:39:20: trust.

00:39:20 --> 00:39:22: As David was saying, forms.

00:39:22 --> 00:39:27: Partnerships identifies people that are already working in the Community

00:39:28 --> 00:39:31: and sort of piggybacking on their work right,

00:39:31 --> 00:39:35: rather than trying to develop your own in some ways

00:39:35 --> 00:39:39: and really starting to speak to the Community as true

00:39:39 --> 00:39:42: partners and true collaborators in the work.

00:39:42 --> 00:39:46: So all of the proposals that we came up with.

00:39:46 --> 00:39:50: We're very much through brainstorming with the community,

00:39:50 --> 00:39:53: and so I think that engagement at the start of

00:39:53 --> 00:39:54: a project is important.

00:39:54 --> 00:39:57: It's also important during the project,

00:39:57 --> 00:40:01: a lot of our build activities were done in partnership

00:40:01 --> 00:40:02: with community members,

00:40:02 --> 00:40:04: and then after the project,

00:40:04 --> 00:40:09: it's really important for us as designers and planners to

00:40:09 --> 00:40:12: understand that transparency is paramount.

00:40:12 --> 00:40:17: Great sort of understanding or communicating the effect or the

00:40:17 --> 00:40:21: impact of the work is clearly important to community that

00:40:21 --> 00:40:25: oftentimes gets bombarded with a lot of engagement,

00:40:25 --> 00:40:28: but not a lot of results right?

00:40:28 --> 00:40:31: And so there's a lot of engagement party in that
 00:40:31 --> 00:40:32: respect,
 00:40:32 --> 00:40:35: and it's important to follow through.
 00:40:38 --> 00:40:41: I'm I am AM.
 00:40:41 --> 00:40:46: I'm I'm not certain that my response really answered your
 00:40:46 --> 00:40:46: question,
 00:40:46 --> 00:40:50: and I guess it's been cause.
 00:40:50 --> 00:40:56: I keep seeing this effort as a response to.
 00:40:56 --> 00:40:59: An ongoing problem.
 00:40:59 --> 00:41:05: We've done I, I think a magnificent job in addressing.
 00:41:05 --> 00:41:09: The results of.
 00:41:09 --> 00:41:14: Systematic problems that have existed and I don't know if
 00:41:14 --> 00:41:15: it's possible,
 00:41:15 --> 00:41:19: but what I'd like for these types of initiatives to
 00:41:19 --> 00:41:23: look at is the causes the causes of these these
 00:41:23 --> 00:41:24: problems.
 00:41:24 --> 00:41:30: There the reasons why minority communities were more
 00:41:30 --> 00:41:32: greatly impacted
 00:41:32 --> 00:41:37: by the pandemic is.
 00:41:37 --> 00:41:43: Be cause of lower medium incomes.
 00:41:43 --> 00:41:47: Insufficient wages, jobs that aren't.
 00:41:47 --> 00:41:50: Up providing upward mobility and these are things that that
 00:41:50 --> 00:41:52: restoration has continually struggled with.
 00:41:52 --> 00:41:55: So I I would like I would challenge us to
 00:41:55 --> 00:41:57: think about what can be done.
 00:42:00 --> 00:42:02: Ahead of time, what can be done?
 00:42:02 --> 00:42:08: What measures can be taken in advance of these types
 00:42:08 --> 00:42:08: of?
 00:42:08 --> 00:42:12: Matter is these types of problems having to be resolved
 00:42:12 --> 00:42:15: and I'm I'm not sure what the answer is.
 00:42:15 --> 00:42:18: I'm not sure how, how we how we address these
 00:42:18 --> 00:42:19: things,
 00:42:19 --> 00:42:23: but. Uhm? I think we need to think about how
 00:42:23 --> 00:42:28: we can pull together our resources to resolve the causes
 00:42:28 --> 00:42:30: of these problems.
 00:42:30 --> 00:42:33: Even more so than addressing the results,
 00:42:33 --> 00:42:36: which I think. Has been done really,
 00:42:36 --> 00:42:40: really well by our team.
 00:42:40 --> 00:42:43: But the the the the causes still remain.
 00:42:43 --> 00:42:48: The problems still remain, and those are things that that
 00:42:48 --> 00:42:51: I'd like us to take a look at how we
 00:42:51 --> 00:42:52: can really resolve.

00:42:57 --> 00:43:01: Turn us, I think that's a really excellent point,
00:43:01 --> 00:43:04: and I was struck by something that Dan had in
00:43:04 --> 00:43:06: his presentation,
00:43:06 --> 00:43:10: which was the organizational chart that really started with the
00:43:10 --> 00:43:15: Community groups at the top and put the facilitators at
00:43:15 --> 00:43:15: the bottom.
00:43:15 --> 00:43:19: And Dan a question for you is how this process
00:43:19 --> 00:43:22: might be replicable and in the future,
00:43:22 --> 00:43:26: how it might serve a better definition of resiliency,
00:43:26 --> 00:43:30: or when there are. Major disruptions to the status quo
00:43:30 --> 00:43:34: and in response to their nests question.
00:43:34 --> 00:43:38: Do you imagine or how do you imagine the a
00:43:38 --> 00:43:44: process that could help address the actual causes rather
00:43:44 --> 00:43:46: than
00:43:46 --> 00:43:48: just the outcomes?
00:43:48 --> 00:43:52: Yeah, in some ways the model is relatively simple.
00:43:52 --> 00:43:54: It's looking at people like their nest and Restoration
00:43:54 --> 00:43:57: Corporation
00:43:57 --> 00:43:58: saying these guys know what they're doing.
00:43:58 --> 00:44:01: Let's support them in whatever way we need it whenever
00:44:01 --> 00:44:04: they way they need,
00:44:04 --> 00:44:06: and so that means assembling a team of sometimes.
00:44:06 --> 00:44:08: Maybe it's engineers, planners, designers with whatever.
00:44:08 --> 00:44:11: Whatever it is that they actually called for.
00:44:11 --> 00:44:16: So I think the model is replicable,
00:44:16 --> 00:44:17: right? There are institutions throughout our city bids,
00:44:17 --> 00:44:19: community development, corporations, membership groups
00:44:19 --> 00:44:20: that have been calling for
00:44:20 --> 00:44:22: these kinds of help.
00:44:22 --> 00:44:24: Very long time, this is something that we heard in
00:44:24 --> 00:44:26: the Northwest Bronx,
00:44:26 --> 00:44:27: our community partners said, you know,
00:44:27 --> 00:44:29: I have been calling for this forever and now it's
00:44:29 --> 00:44:30: like drinking from a fire hose.
00:44:30 --> 00:44:32: We have so much so many services.
00:44:32 --> 00:44:35: So how do we make sure that it doesn't just
00:44:35 --> 00:44:38: feel like a firehose?
00:44:38 --> 00:44:39: How do we make sure that it's part of the
00:44:39 --> 00:44:41: culture of planning and development in the city that important
00:44:41 --> 00:44:43: Community players like dyrness actually get the services and
00:44:43 --> 00:44:44: the
00:44:44 --> 00:44:47: support that they need?
00:44:47 --> 00:44:49: Thanks thanks Dan. You know as a as a wrap

00:44:47 --> 00:44:47: up,

00:44:47 --> 00:44:50: I think it's an interesting way to look at this.

00:44:50 --> 00:44:54: You know everything that we've talked about I think has

00:44:54 --> 00:44:58: gone so far beyond the traditional conversations around design.

00:44:58 --> 00:45:01: It's talked about law, we've talked about finance,

00:45:01 --> 00:45:05: public health, community, the importance of feeling safe and aligning

00:45:05 --> 00:45:09: all of these services in service of community development.

00:45:09 --> 00:45:13: And I think it's very important element Durness that you

00:45:13 --> 00:45:16: added is that we also need to look very closely.

00:45:16 --> 00:45:20: And address the causes, not just the outcomes and so

00:45:20 --> 00:45:23: moving forward with this project you know,

00:45:23 --> 00:45:26: Dan, you had said at the beginning this was a

00:45:26 --> 00:45:29: 6 initially conceived as six weeks print,

00:45:29 --> 00:45:32: and now we're a year in and I just like

00:45:32 --> 00:45:34: to ask the panelists.

00:45:34 --> 00:45:38: In conclusion, what a successful outcome looks like to them

00:45:38 --> 00:45:40: in this project.

00:45:40 --> 00:45:41: And so I'll start Dan,

00:45:41 --> 00:45:44: how about with you?

00:45:44 --> 00:45:46: Yeah, one of the funny things about this project is

00:45:46 --> 00:45:49: it was wonderful to build so much out outside and

00:45:49 --> 00:45:50: get to brag about the beautiful work.

00:45:50 --> 00:45:52: But some of the things that I loved most where

00:45:52 --> 00:45:55: some of those really hard and during challenges we have

00:45:55 --> 00:45:57: a team that's trying to figure out how to deal

00:45:57 --> 00:45:59: with an enduring rat in his station.

00:45:59 --> 00:46:01: That's not. That's not something that you put in your

00:46:01 --> 00:46:02: marketing materials,

00:46:02 --> 00:46:05: but it's something that the community has wanted to deal

00:46:05 --> 00:46:06: with for a very long time.

00:46:06 --> 00:46:09: There's another group that's actually been collecting an

00:46:09 --> 00:46:11: inventory of

00:46:09 --> 00:46:11: all of the vacant buildings in their neighborhood,

00:46:11 --> 00:46:13: and now they can advocate around that.

00:46:13 --> 00:46:14: They can say to the city.

00:46:14 --> 00:46:17: Here's what we want to see different happening in our

00:46:17 --> 00:46:18: neighborhood,

00:46:18 --> 00:46:20: so it's the kind of less sexy projects for the

00:46:20 --> 00:46:22: kinds of things that have been longstanding.

00:46:22 --> 00:46:25: Those are the kinds of things that I consider to

00:46:25 --> 00:46:26: be the great success of the project.

00:46:29 --> 00:46:31: Thank you, dear nest.

00:46:31 --> 00:46:34: I think we have to take what we've learned with

00:46:35 --> 00:46:38: regard to this pandemic and continue to apply it.

00:46:38 --> 00:46:41: I don't think things like this pandemic going to go

00:46:42 --> 00:46:42: away.

00:46:42 --> 00:46:46: I think we're going to have these types of challenges

00:46:46 --> 00:46:49: coming back to us time and time again and we

00:46:49 --> 00:46:52: have to think about how we set up our infrastructure

00:46:52 --> 00:46:56: for remote access. We have to think about just the

00:46:56 --> 00:46:59: way we maintain our facilities.

00:46:59 --> 00:47:01: We have to think about.

00:47:01 --> 00:47:05: The way we.

00:47:05 --> 00:47:06: I guess even just our our,

00:47:06 --> 00:47:11: our physical cleanliness and the other things that we've

00:47:11 --> 00:47:12: learned

00:47:14 --> 00:47:18: with regard to.

00:47:18 --> 00:47:22: Protecting ourselves against.

00:47:24 --> 00:47:28: These types of viruses and and and.

00:47:28 --> 00:47:34: Diseases that that we've had to deal with.

00:47:34 --> 00:47:39: So restoration is looking at rebuilding the entire block and

00:47:39 --> 00:47:42: what I've asked our development team to do is to

00:47:42 --> 00:47:47: think about how we need to rebuild.

00:47:47 --> 00:47:51: So that we are able to survive and continue to

00:47:51 --> 00:47:54: work in these types of environments,

00:47:54 --> 00:48:02: we also want to continue.

00:48:02 --> 00:48:05: Obviously our efforts to provide families in this Community

00:48:05 --> 00:48:07: with

00:48:10 --> 00:48:16: the ability to to save.

00:48:16 --> 00:48:21: So that they are able to.

00:48:21 --> 00:48:26: Just survive justifies it. We found that in many instances

00:48:26 --> 00:48:31: just having savings that you can rely on in in

00:48:31 --> 00:48:35: the event of an emergency or are critical and it

00:48:38 --> 00:48:41: is hard for us to understand the cause.

00:48:41 --> 00:48:45: I've never had to recently never had to.

00:48:45 --> 00:48:51: Suffer or or not be able to do something of

00:48:51 --> 00:48:54: consequence because I didn't have \$5 in my pocket.

00:48:54 --> 00:48:57: And this is the situation that many people in this

00:49:01 --> 00:49:03: community encounter so.

00:49:03 --> 00:49:06: I think that going forward a restoration needs to make

00:49:06 --> 00:49:09: sure that we're prepared for these types of situations in

00:49:09 --> 00:49:12: order to function properly,

00:49:12 --> 00:49:15: and we have to bring our programming to scale so

00:49:06 --> 00:49:09: that we are able to assist more people in the
00:49:09 --> 00:49:12: Community in ways that they desperately need.
00:49:12 --> 00:49:15: And as I said, I don't think that these types
00:49:15 --> 00:49:17: of situations are going to go away,
00:49:17 --> 00:49:21: and I think now that we're better prepared to deal
00:49:21 --> 00:49:24: with him and to continue with our efforts to support.
00:49:24 --> 00:49:27: And rebuild the community.
00:49:31 --> 00:49:35: Thank you for that Arizona.
00:49:35 --> 00:49:39: Thanks Ernest for me success in this project is to
00:49:39 --> 00:49:44: find solutions that aren't COVID Band-aids right that aren't
just
00:49:44 --> 00:49:48: trying to solve the problem at hand right now through
00:49:48 --> 00:49:50: social distancing. So so on,
00:49:50 --> 00:49:54: but rather get to the heart of the problem is
00:49:54 --> 00:49:56: doing this was speaking,
00:49:56 --> 00:50:03: you know, speaking about prior really developing
partnerships and programs
00:50:03 --> 00:50:05: and proposals that can.
00:50:05 --> 00:50:10: You know, really create vibrant public spaces in the
community,
00:50:10 --> 00:50:13: creates local artists, murals you know,
00:50:13 --> 00:50:17: memorials, ways to build, capacity for the community,
00:50:17 --> 00:50:22: and build social resiliency so that you know the community
00:50:22 --> 00:50:26: can really come together in a way unprecedented way.
00:50:26 --> 00:50:30: For for perhaps the next disaster.
00:50:30 --> 00:50:32: And so it's important, I think,
00:50:32 --> 00:50:35: to plan and prepare and develop capacity.
00:50:37 --> 00:50:40: Thank you for that and David.
00:50:40 --> 00:50:43: Yeah, I think I just want to echo what you
00:50:43 --> 00:50:46: know for as an Internet source saying I think you
00:50:46 --> 00:50:46: know success.
00:50:46 --> 00:50:49: For me, probably looks like just continued engagement and
and
00:50:49 --> 00:50:52: recognizing that you know there's always going to be more
00:50:52 --> 00:50:53: work to do,
00:50:53 --> 00:50:55: and you're never going to reach a point where you're
00:50:55 --> 00:50:56: saying this is done.
00:50:56 --> 00:51:01: You and I were talking earlier today about how.
00:51:01 --> 00:51:03: We are a lot of people are talking about a
00:51:03 --> 00:51:05: return to normal and how do we get back to
00:51:05 --> 00:51:06: normal and pre COVID?
00:51:06 --> 00:51:08: But what this is kind of exposed that there's a
00:51:08 --> 00:51:11: lot of communities that probably that normal never really

existed.

00:51:11 --> 00:51:14: And Dan there's probably something they don't really want to

00:51:14 --> 00:51:15: go back to.

00:51:15 --> 00:51:17: They want to look forward and so how can this

00:51:17 --> 00:51:20: be kind of transformational in terms of community,

00:51:20 --> 00:51:23: building an and sort of relationship creation so that we

00:51:23 --> 00:51:25: can continue to kind of keep working on this on

00:51:25 --> 00:51:28: this project since it's going to be an ongoing effort

00:51:28 --> 00:51:28: for many years so.

00:51:32 --> 00:51:35: Thank you for that. And with that I'd like to

00:51:35 --> 00:51:39: thank Dan Farzona Dear Nest and David for their continued

00:51:39 --> 00:51:43: work and participation in the neighborhoods now projects and

00:51:43 --> 00:51:46: to the Urban Land Institute for hosting this session.

00:51:46 --> 00:51:49: Thank you very much.

00:51:49 --> 00:51:51: Thank you.

00:51:51 --> 00:51:51: Thank you.

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