# About the Authors and Their Articles

**By the Editor**

## The Articles

About Inclusion. Today, our nation faces an array of important and difficult issues ranging from the COVID19 crisis and its impacts to how to more completely provide racial justice, increase socio-economic equity, and how to maintain social order while also preserving civil rights and liberties. That these issues have emerged in a presidential election year, when the nation is already very politically polarized only further complicates their resolution. The ADRR has an obligation to contribute as best it can to the resolution of these issues. We need to determine how The ADRR can make productive and credible contributions, and our response hopefully will emerge over the coming months. However, we do have some time to do that since these issues are unlikely to be resolved quickly, and post-election times might bring more tolerance, reasonableness and understanding to our public discussions.

The article by Stephen Goldsmith in this issue, Artists as City Builders: Ideas for Inclusion, identifies one path that our future articles and discussions might productively follow: provide existing, but insufficiently recognized examples of how downtown organizations, companies, projects and programs can contribute to the resolution of the above mentioned problems. Greater inclusion is certainly a central need that today is being strongly voiced in our public realm. Stephen, who is an artist as well as a planner, has been involved in several projects, and knowledgeable about still others, that focused on providing artists better spaces to live and work, and that involved zoning, planning processes, and development processes that were inclusionary. He also brings to the discussion many of the sensibilities associated with Jane Jacobs's approach to urban well-being.

About Improving Methodological and Analytical Tools. My article in this issue, Toward Developing a New Approach to Designing and Executing Downtown Market Research Projects: Part Two, details solutions to the analytical, methodological and data problems that have made so much of the market research done on downtown retail very problematical. Today, more than ever, as we try to recover from the devastation the pandemic has brought to so many downtown merchants, it is critical that such market research be as accurate and reliable as possible. Besides promoting the insertion of online sales into such analyses, I strongly argue that the key concept is the capture rates of retailers – not the gaps or leakages so often focused on by analysts. Moreover, to have a chance of properly estimating those rates, analysts must first have a fairly good idea about the competitive strengths of the specific retailers the downtown has a good chance of recruiting. That is a subject usually deferred to a follow-up retail recruitment program.

To me, it is rather telling that academics have done so little to either identify these problems or to resolve them. Also, a lot of the people they have trained don't know what they are doing when it comes to market analysis.

As the editor, I have been eager to bring to the forefront any sound technical and methodological tool that can help us to better analyze, manage and develop our downtowns. Big data is one of those tools. Mike Stumpf's article, Enhanced Decision-Making With Mobile Device Tracking Data, shows just how useful such data can be for anyone doing or using the products of downtown economic development planners/strategists. It also meshes nicely with one of the points that I drive hard in my article – the need to have far better definitions of a downtown's consumer trade areas. I think Mike's article certainly establishes that mobile device tracking data can offer great advantages over the ring and drive shed analyses so often used today by retail market analysts.

Some downtown managers and stakeholders might think the topic of trade area definition is nerdy and irrelevant for them. However, it can indeed be relevant if they are making decisions, especially those involving investing money, that are influenced by such downtown market studies, and/or are hiring analysts to do them. Ill-defined trade areas mean their studies are wrong from the get-go!

Cold Weather Downtown Activation. In towns that have a real winter, one of the most frequent reasons that downtown leaders have given me for not developing well activated public spaces is their weather: it's too cold, too snowy, too slushy, too dark, etc. These days, many downtown leaders also are looking for ways to keep their downtown customer traffic up during the colder months so they can be there to also patronize suitably acclimatized restaurants for more months. That means they need more activation during these cooler months. The article by Max Musicant, Winter Downtown Activation Strategies, details how these downtowns can achieve a good deal of vibrancy in spite of their weather. Indeed, he often shows how to leverage that kind of weather. Many downtown leaders and stakeholders might heed his observations about attitudes:

> "*A community's attitude and the story they tell about winter sets the stage: is it a magical time of year where the dark and cold provide a palette for imagination, community and delight? Or is it something to be suffered through? What you see in your mind's eye is what you get*."

Max is based in Minneapolis, so he has some real "cold weather cred."

Spotlighting A Different Kind of Value Capture That Can Help Fill Storefronts. Value capture has become a bit of hot topic in recent years, as its use has leapt from real estate development projects using such tools as tax increment financing (TIF), to the funding of transportation development projects as well as operational costs. In both instances, the captured increase is on the dollar value of land. The last time I looked, the use of TIFs is sanctioned in about 44 states, and has been around for many decades. However, the three Spotlight articles in this issue focus on variants of a new play on the value capture concept that has emerged over the past decade. *It is a use that is closely related to helping fill downtown and Main Street storefronts with tenants that meet community needs or wants, and that have a substantial amount of community support*. What it captures is how much the local consumers' psychologically value existing merchants, or the creation of a specific kind of new business

establishment, or of a venue that allows them to interact socially. The "capturing" occurs through mechanisms that monetize those psychological valuations. For example:

- Norm Walzer's article, Community Investment in Downtown Businesses, describes community owned/supported businesses where local residents band together and buy businesses they want keep alive. They have, for example, helped save several rural grocery stores, and several movie theaters in small towns across the nation. They also helped to keep many pubs, that function as essential third places , alive in the UK. They usually best fit in when there is enough market support for an operation to be marginally profitable, but not enough to attract normal private sector investment. They also usually require an existing organization to serve as a necessary spine as the project unfolds.
- Jerome Barth's article describes how local residents may want so much to keep a local shop alive that they will pay more for some items or privileged services it offers. He insightfully points out how often local residents can have rather strong positive feelings about local shops because they are such an integral part of the quality of life that their neighborhood offers. In support of Jerome's thesis are the Spotlight articles in the last issue of The ADRR where you will find frequent mention of local residents trying to help local merchants they like stay afloat during the Covid19 by buying gift cards, etc. But, even more telling, is Jerome's implication that if readers reflect, they too will soon come up with their own shop or eatery/bar they would have paid something extra for to keep open. The key challenge is how to monetize these psychological community values.
- Andrew Dane's article shows how a neighborhood's perceived need for an indoor socializing venue, the 602 Social Club, provided a strategically pivotal tenant for a project that eventually:
    - Substantially renovated two buildings
    - Provided spaces for two locals to open businesses
    - Stimulated a nearby butcher shop to do an impressive expansion
    - Nurtured a new small real estate development company.

  Along the way, community members worked for free and paid dues.

Many downtown leaders may want to consider the possible use of the community value leveraging tools, given the uncertainty about how many downtown merchants will survive and recover from the pandemic's impacts, the consequent high storefront vacancy rate, and the stiffening market forces that might make "normal" business development and attraction significantly more difficult. It may well be that downtown management organizations will have to be far more proactive in developing new businesses than they ever were. Moreover, given all sorts of possible financial constraints at all levels of government, one of their strongest assets may be the willingness of local residents to one way or another play a key role in the downtown's business development and retention activities.

All of these community value capture tools in their own ways have limited potentials for scalability. There will be, for example, a limit to the number of people or organizations who want to buy shares in a new downtown retail venture or how much money any of such

investors can afford to place in this type of project. However, that is often countered by the strategic impacts of the stores they can open or keep open. A community owned grocery, for example, not only erases or prevents a food desert, but also will bring in a relatively high amount of customer traffic, and that helps to attract other businesses to open nearby, and to retain those who are already there. Similarly, Dane's 602 Club project helped to make the rehabilitation of two buildings feasible, and provided spaces for two startups by local residents, and encouraged another nearby retailer to expand.

Most of the community owned businesses have been in more rural type locations, but there is little reason why they could not be used effectively in urban locations. In our dense, less affluent neighborhoods local churches, BIDs, LDCs, EDCs, CDCs, etc. could be the organizational spine that is oft needed to make a community owned business happen.

**Some Biographical Info About The Authors**

*Stephen A. Goldsmith, The Center for the Living City.*
Stephen is an artist and founder of Artspace, a non-profit organization developing affordable live/work space for artists and other creators, and incubator space for non-profit agencies. His work across disciplines includes design collaborations on many public spaces including the design of parks, large scale water features, multi-use streets and public walkways. As planning director during the 2002 Winter Olympic Games, he produced an international symposium titled, The Physical Fitness of Cities: Vision and Ethics in City Building. His book What We See: Advancing the observations of Jane Jacobs, co-authored with Lynn Elizabeth, won the Jane Jacobs Urban Communication Prize in 2010. Stephen also spent 13 years as an Associate Professor in the College of Architecture + Planning the University of Utah where he developed their undergraduate program in Urban Ecology.

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*N. David Milder, DANTH, Inc.*
David has completed leading edge work on downtown central social districts, arts districts, multichannel retailing as well as numerous retail assessments and downtown revitalization strategies for downtowns of all sizes in many parts of the nation. In the 1980s, he created the Downtown Safety, Security and Economic Development Program for Regional Plan Association to address a key barrier to downtown revitalization. He is well known for his work on niche downtown revitalization strategies. He has published numerous articles in periodicals such as the Economic Development Journal, Urban Land, Main Street News and Downtown Idea Exchange. He also has contributed chapters to books produced by the American Planning Association and the International Downtown Association. He is the author of two books on downtown revitalization: Niche Strategies for Downtown Revitalization (1997) and Downtown Business Recruitment (2005).

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*Michael Stumpf, Place Dynamics*.
Michael has been practicing market research and strategic planning in commercial development and local government for more than 30 years. Having begun his career with the Census Bureau and transitioning into business site selection, he brought a great deal of technical knowledge to his work as an economic development director. Seeing the need to base planning on better data and analysis that were being offered he left to found Place Dynamics in 2005. Its core mission was, and still is, to offer unparalleled "insight and strategy." Michael continues to lead the company's international practice in market and economic research, economic development, and business district vitality. Known for consistently introducing new data and techniques into the practice, Place Dynamics has worked with communities of all types, from rural counties to some of the largest cities in the country.

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By the way, Mike is also the administrator of the Downtown Revitalization Group on LinkedIn.

*Max Musicant, The Musicant Group*
As Principal, Max leads the placemaking practice of The Musicant Group. Under his leadership, the firm has pioneered a holistic and organic approach to the creation of place that integrates design, events, and management systems all through the lens of the user experience. Since its founding the firm has demonstrated that community and commercial interests all benefit from more humane, inviting, and lively places for people.

Prior to founding The Musicant Group, Max began his career at the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) in Queens, NY. While there he worked with one of the early leaders of the Bryant Park Corporation to devise and implement placemaking strategies for the GJDC, one of the oldest and largest community development corporations in New York City. He received an M.B.A. from the Yale School of Management and a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

His influences include: William H. Whyte, Christopher Alexander, Alexander Garvin, Nasim Taleb, and Jane Jacobs. Places that have influenced him include: Bryant Park in New York City, Lake Harriet in Minneapolis, and Travers Park in Jackson Heights, Queens; Paris, Beirut, and Johannesburg.

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*Norman Walzer, Center for Governmental Studies, NIU*
Norman is a well-known specialist in rural economic development. He holds a Ph.D. in economics and started at CGS in 2008 after retiring as founding director of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs located at Western Illinois University. At WIU, he had served as professor and chair of the Department of Economics and then as Dean of the College of Business and Technology.

At CGS, Norm serves on the Community Work Force and Economic Development team conducting applied economic research and assisting state and local governments on policy issues. Areas of expertise include rural community and economic development; governmental structure and local public finance; entrepreneurship in both private and public agencies; and community strategic planning/visioning. He is a past president of the Community Development Society and has published regularly in the scholarly and professional literature on these issues. His most recent research involved Community Supported Enterprises and how they preserve or expand social capital. He advised the Department of Commerce and Community Opportunity in preparing a 5-year Statewide Economic Development Plan (2014) and led a CGS team that staffed the Governmental Consolidation and Unfunded Mandates Task Force (2015). Currently, he serves as co-chair of a working group on rural workforce development issues for the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and continues to research best practices in governmental structure issues.

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*Jerome Barth, The Fifth Avenue Association*
The Fifth Avenue Association is one of the original BIDs created to solve urban problems in the New York of the early 1990s.

Jerome is also the founder and Principal of Town Square Consulting, a boutique firm offering the advice of outstanding urbanists and public space specialists to Municipalities, Conservancies, Business Improvement District and private real estate owners on how to create program, finance, design and manage quality public space. In particular, Town Square focuses on how to transform spaces into authentic and lively destinations that promote safety, commerce, investment, and opportunity for people from all walks of life.

Jerome spent his formative years working for the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, 34th Street Partnership and held senior positions at Friends of the High Line and the Times Square Alliance. He was involved in the creation and development of all types of activities, from the first public Wi-Fi network in American to juggling lessons to the now iconic Winter Village at Bryant Park.

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*Andrew Dane, Neighborhood Planners*.
Andrew is an urban planner and analyst with over 25 years of public and private sector experience. He founded Neighborhood Planners to help clients and communities prepare attainable visions for the future and implement steps to get there. He believes that "great neighborhoods make great communities," and therefore he focuses on helping people solve problems through a better understanding of local challenges as well as local assets. His team of consultant partners values strong, lasting partnerships with their clients, regulatory and funding agencies.

Neighborhood Planners specializes in:

- Neighborhood, Corridor, and Downtown Planning

- Market Analysis and Feasibility Studies
- Community Engagement
- Real Estate Project Development
- Economic Development Assistance
- Project Funding and Implementation

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