



## Preliminary Agenda

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**Tuesday, August 4, 2009**

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- 3:00 PM      **Check-In/Registration**  
Education and Library Complex
- 3:30-3:45    **Welcome and Introductions**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex
- 3:45-4:45    **Rachel Flynn, AIA, Director, Department of Community Development**  
Richmond, Virginia



Title: **“Making the Connections: Urban Greening, Economic Vitality, and Environmental Sustainability”**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

Description: Lush green spaces in metropolitan neighborhoods and city centers have long been appreciated for their intrinsic beauty. They grace innumerable artists’ portfolios, travel brochures, picture postcards, snapshots, and more, but public officials, planners, and others only recently have begun to articulate and to quantify the full range of economic, environmental, and social benefits that urban gardening and greening provide. Among these are higher property values, enticements for new businesses, stormwater management, wildlife habitat, improved air and water quality, access to fresh produce, recreation, and an increased sense of wellness, belonging, and community connection, to name only a few. There is little dispute now that urban gardens and green spaces constitute a key factor in the vitality and appeal of successful cities and urban areas.

Background: **Rachel Flynn** is a licensed architect with more than twenty years experience in architecture and urban planning. She has been Director of Richmond’s Community Development Department since March 2006. Before coming to Richmond, she served as Director of Community Development in Lynchburg for eight years. She has received numerous awards for her vision and leadership, including Best Civic Leader, Central Virginia Visionary, Most Influential Leader, Preservationist of the Year, and Outstanding Urban Conservationist.

Flynn holds a masters degree in public administration from Harvard University. She also earned an undergraduate degree in architecture and a masters of science in engineering and construction management from Catholic University.

5:00-6:30 **Evening Options** (choose 1)

- **“Gem on the James” Guided Bus Tour** of noteworthy examples of downtown greening in Richmond, including Church Hill neighborhood gardens, parks, and the new green roof on the Virginia Association of Counties LEED silver-rated historic building on Main Street. Complimentary “Green Tonic” beverages included. (\$20 fee and pre-registration required)
- **Unwinding in an Uber Urban Garden**—Take in Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden at your own pace or join a 45-minute guided Garden tour, visit “Butterflies Live!” in the Conservatory, and enjoy a complimentary “Green Tonic” beverage in the shade. (Garden admission included in registration; pre-registration required for free Garden tour.)

6:30-7:45 **Buffet Dinner: “Summer Salad Sampler”** featuring fresh local produce and signature salads (included in registration)  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

7:45-9:00 **Timothy Beatley**, Heinz Professor of Sustainable Communities  
University of Virginia School of Architecture  
Charlottesville, Virginia



Title: **“Biophilic Urban Design: Planning for Nature-Friendly Communities”**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

Description: Humans are hard-wired to connect with nature, according to Harvard biologist and conservationist E.O. Wilson, who labeled this affinity “biophilia”: “the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms.” Much contemporary empirical evidence now supports Wilson’s theory that connecting with nature is essential for our wellbeing. As a result, a substantial number of proposals and projects that integrate nature into human and built environments are either in place or are under way. The evidence of the social, psychological, pedagogical and other benefits from exposure to nature is mounting and impressive.

Yet, as the global population becomes increasingly urban, ensuring such contact becomes more difficult. Now more than ever we need creative urban design and planning that make nature the centerpiece of everything we build, not an afterthought. Many specific urban design tools and ideas are available to re-earth cities and bring nature back to urban neighborhoods, such as regional greenspace systems and greenbelts, green rooftops and walls, stream daylighting, green streets and alleys, urban forests and community gardens, and urban biodiversity conservation efforts of many sorts. But we also need new strategies to educate urban residents about the biodiversity and wildness around them and to nudge them outside and in closer contact with nature. Projects from cities in North America, Europe, Australia, and other parts of the world offer compelling examples of the possibilities.

Background: **Timothy Beatley** is Teresa Heinz Professor of Sustainable Communities in the Department of Urban and Environmental Planning, School of Architecture at the University of Virginia, where he has taught for the last twenty years. Much of Beatley’s work focuses on the subject of sustainable communities, and creative strategies by which cities and towns can fundamentally reduce their ecological

footprints, while at the same time becoming more livable and equitable places. He is the author or co-author of more than fifteen books, including *Green Urbanism: Learning from European Cities*, *The Ecology of Place*, and *Native to Nowhere: Sustaining Home and Community in a Global Age*. He recently co-authored two new books with Australian planner Peter Newman: *Resilient Cities* and *Green Urbanism Down Under*. Beatley holds a PhD in City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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**Wednesday, August 5, 2009**

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8:00 AM      **Check-In/Registration**  
Education and Library Complex

8:30-8:40    **Welcome and Introductions**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

8:40-9:45    **Leni Sorensen**, African-American Research Historian, Monticello  
Charlottesville, Virginia



Title:            **“Plantations, Farms, and Gardens: An Historical Overview of Agriculture in Central Virginia”**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

Description:    Today, all across the Commonwealth, community gardens, organic farms and farmer’s markets make available the bounty of our region. They are the latest in a long history of Virginia’s agriculture; famous 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginians gardened, 19<sup>th</sup> century enslaved Virginians gardened, 20<sup>th</sup> century urban dwellers are returning to gardening. Any history of Central Virginia gardening necessarily overlaps with the history of mono-crop plantations and multi-crop farms over four centuries of agriculture. Understanding the changing world of local agriculture encourages us all to build upon that long history.

Background:    **Leni Ashmore Sorensen** has worked for more than two decades as an interpreter of African American history at historic house museums throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. She has lectured, led teacher workshops, and designed programming and exhibits for museums nationwide. She currently works at Monticello at the International Center for Jefferson Studies and also teaches gardening, historic

cookery, and home canning at her home in Western Albemarle County. In 1992 she received a B.A. in history from Mary Baldwin College in Staunton. She later earned both an M.A. and a Ph.D. in American Studies at the College of William and Mary.

9:45-10:45 **LaDonna Redmond**, President and CEO  
Institute of Community Resource Development  
Chicago, Illinois



Title: **“Graffiti & Grub: Food and the Hip Hop Generation”**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

Description: Although the United States has long been known as the breadbasket of the world, a substantial and growing number of individuals and families in cities across the country are hungry or have access to only a limited range of foods. For many, removing barriers in the conventional food system to healthy, affordable foods is a matter of justice. LaDonna Redmond founded the Institute for Community Resource Development in western Chicago to address this issue in her community and ultimately engaged whole neighborhoods in community gardening, educational programs, and a community-owned grocery store. The Institute’s success serves as a national model of how a community can engage citizens in the work of securing their own food resources.

Background: **LaDonna Redmond** is president and CEO of the Institute for Community Resource Development (ICRD), Chicago, IL, whose mission is to rebuild the Chicago area’s local food system by providing grocery stores with sustainable products in urban communities of color, organizing farmers markets, converting vacant lots to urban farm sites and distributing locally grown produce to restaurants.

A community activist and mother of a child with severe food allergies, Redmond began researching the food system in order to feed her son. Through her work, she discovered that people in urban communities want, but have limited access to, healthy food. This discovery led Redmond to get Chicago Public Schools to evaluate access to junk food in schools and create a task force to examine the potential of other pilot changes, such as connecting farmers to schools. Her discoveries also have led the Mayor of Chicago to consider urban agriculture as a good use of urban space.

Redmond has received numerous awards for her work and has been featured in a variety of local and national publications. She writes columns for two Chicago-area

publications. In addition, she serves on a variety of governmental and nonprofit boards related to her work and is in demand as a speaker on topics related to sustainable agriculture and food justice.

10:45-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:15 **Philadelphia Green Panel:**

**Blaine Bonham, Jr.** Executive Vice President, Pennsylvania Horticulture Society

**Joan Reilly**, Senior Director, Philadelphia Green Program

**Maitreyi Roy**, Pennsylvania Horticulture Society Vice President for Programs



**Title:** “The Power of Greening: PHS’s Philadelphia Green Story”  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

**Description:** Philadelphia Green, a program of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), is the most comprehensive urban greening undertaking in the nation. Since 1974, Philadelphia Green has supported the development and on-going care of community gardens, neighborhood parks and high-profile public green spaces throughout Philadelphia. The essence of the program’s success is collaboration. Partnerships with neighborhood residents, community organizations and city agencies have enabled Philadelphia Green to use greening as a community-building tool, educating and empowering people to make the city a more attractive and livable place through horticulture.

This session will illustrate the impact of greening on the urban environment. In particular, it will show how thoughtful public-private partnerships with government and community can result in sustainable landscapes and revitalized communities. It will also highlight Philadelphia Green’s civic engagement and capacity-building strategies, underscoring the important role community residents and civic organizations play in restoring neighborhood parks and creating community gardens.

**Background:** **J. Blaine Bonham Jr.**, executive vice president of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), founded its urban greening program, Philadelphia Green, in 1974. Under Bonham’s direction, Philadelphia Green moved from a small, grassroots initiative to the forefront of urban greening and now serves as a model for cities throughout the country. In addition, Bonham oversees PHS’s education,

publications, membership, and development departments, with a total budget of more than \$12 million.

In 2003, Bonham helped Philadelphia Green create the Green City Strategy, a land management program that enabled the City of Philadelphia to convert eight million square feet of once derelict land to attractive and productive green space. Among his other accomplishments, Bonham was also a founding member of the Neighborhood Gardens Association/A Philadelphia Land Trust, an organization that assists communities in making gardens a permanent part of the neighborhood fabric. He currently chairs the board of the Greenspace Alliance, a regional organization that advocates for the preservation of open space and natural resources as critical regional assets.

Bonham holds a bachelor of science degree in political science from Pennsylvania State University and an associate of science degree in horticulture from Temple University. He completed a Loeb Fellowship in advanced environmental studies at Harvard University in 1991.

**Joan Reilly**, PHS Senior Director, oversees Philadelphia Green, leading the work of building community and improving quality of life in Philadelphia's neighborhoods and downtown public spaces through horticulture. Joan's specialty is an innovative approach to cross-sector partnerships. Her first endeavor, the award-winning Parks Revitalization Project, engaged representatives from PHS, government, and the community in an effort to take back neighborhood parks from decades of neglect and abuse and transform them into treasured assets that gather and serve the larger community.

Reilly also developed the new City Harvest Program, another unique public/private partnership, this time building on work PHS has done for three decades creating and supporting community gardens. The new program links community gardens, food cupboards and inmates at the Philadelphia Prison to give low-income families access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Reilly holds a masters degree in education and has more than thirty years experience in community organizing, organizational development and training.

**Maitreyi Roy**, a landscape architect, serves as Vice President for Programs at PHS and, among other duties, oversees its Philadelphia Green program. In 2007 she was selected as an Eisenhower Fellow to travel to urban centers in Spain, Germany, Belgium, France and Ireland to study best practices in urban open space policies, planning standards and landscape design. As part of her fellowship, she examined sustainable development strategies and successful open space revitalization models in older cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Berlin, Lyon, Munich and Frankfurt. The focus of her fellowship was on understanding redevelopment and transformation strategies; understanding policies, ordinances and practices to

develop and maintain sustainable open space systems, best practices in stormwater management and urban reforestation; and the nature of public/private and non-profit partnerships that have emerged to support open space infrastructure in its design, planning, implementation and stewardship.

Roy also served on the staff of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department from 1988 to 1993, where she helped plan and implement a citywide capital investment initiative that focused on revitalizing and restoring neighborhood parks across the city. Throughout her career, Roy has been instrumental in the creation and preservation of green space and in the field of community-based design. Starting as an architect in India, her interest in open space issues took her to the School of Design at Harvard University where she graduated with a Masters in Landscape Architecture in 1988.

12:15-1:30 **Lunch** (included in registration) and  
**Presentation by Drew Becher**, Executive Director  
New York Restoration Project  
New York, New York



Title: **“Trash to Treasures: Greening One Block at a Time”**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

Description: New York Restoration Project (NYRP) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reclaiming and restoring New York City parks, community gardens and open spaces in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout the city’s five boroughs. Since its founding in 1995 by Bette Midler, NYRP has achieved dramatic results by investing in the greening and beautification of underserved communities throughout New York City. NYRP staff and a corps of volunteers have planted hundreds of thousands of trees, shrubs and flowers to support the restoration of the City’s parks and community gardens; removed more than 1,929 tons of garbage and debris from project sites; saved 114 community gardens from commercial development; transformed an illegal dumping ground into the five-acre Swindler Cove Park and Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse; and launched the largest urban reforestation campaign in America while continuing to serve thousands of families and at-risk youth through environmental education programs and events.

NYRP, in partnership with New York City’s Department of Parks and Recreation, spearheads one of New York City’s most ambitious environmental programs –

MillionTreesNYC – an initiative that came as the result of New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s and Bette Midler’s dream of planting and caring for one million new trees over the course of a decade. Since its launch in October 2007, the initiative has planted and is caring for over 240,000 trees citywide – 20 percent ahead of schedule.

Background: **Drew Becher** has been Executive Director of New York Restoration Project (NYRP) since July 2006. His background includes broad experience in city government, public/private partnerships, and community/grassroots outreach. Firmly committed to improving New York City’s parks, community gardens and open spaces, he has launched a variety of innovative programs designed to improve the quality of urban life and to attract economic growth in New York City’s five boroughs. One of the most ambitious is the MillionTreesNYC initiative, a citywide movement to plant and care for one million trees by 2017, which Becher undertook with help from Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and NYRP Founder Bette Midler. It is the most extensive plan to strengthen an urban environment ever adopted by an American city.

One hallmark of all such NYRP projects is an emphasis on quality design. To meet that high bar, Becher typically enlists the help of some of the country’s best landscape architects and designers in NYRP projects. One example was the re-imagining of NYRP’s 57 community gardens, which have been featured in numerous major publications including *Architectural Digest*, *The New York Times*, and *Metropolitan Home*.

1:30-1:45 **Q & A with Morning Speakers**

1:45-3:00 **Workshop A: Basics of Sustainable Gardening**

“Sustainable gardening” means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By following specific guidelines, even beginning gardeners can confidently maintain healthy plant-and-soil systems that can be used productively over time in harmony with the planet. Join us for an overview of these principles and how to put them into practice. Find out how compost, rain gardens, companion planting, integrated pest management, and even bees and worms may all figure in.

- *Soil—sustainable garden planning; farmscaping—***Cindy Conner**, Owner, *Homeplace Earth*, and Instructor, *J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College*
- *Bees—***Keith Tignor**, Virginia State Apiarist
- *Composting and water management (rain barrels, rain gardens)—***Karen Carter**, Henrico County Extension Agent
- *Self-sufficiency—***Danny Finney**, Builder-in-chief and Instructor, *Tricycle Gardens*

## **Workshop B: Urban Gardening and Urban Greening for a Robust Economy**

How important are green spaces to a community's economy? Extremely important, according to numerous studies that have measured the respective economic contributions of specific elements of communities' "green infrastructure." Trees, plants, and open spaces in urban centers have now been shown to have a measurable effect on tourism, property values, business relocations, productivity, health, air quality, water quality, and more. The reason they are so valuable is their link to the community's quality of life. What are the implications for greater Richmond?

- *Quality of life and the economy overview—Thad Williamson, UR Assistant Professor, Jepson School of Leadership Studies*
- *Green maps, planning overview—Meghan Gough, VCU Assistant Professor of Urban Studies and Regional Planning*
- *Viewsheds, value of aesthetics—Leighton Powell, Executive Director, Scenic Virginia*

## **Workshop C: Creating Greener, More Resilient Communities**

Community gardens with abundant fruits and vegetables, abandoned property transformed into verdant green spaces, broken neighborhoods reunited through a common purpose—these are all possible outcomes of successful urban greening initiatives, as we have seen from spectacular results in other communities. Greater Richmond may be on the verge of a similar breakthrough. If so, key ingredients will be vision, leadership, citizen engagement, and determination. What will it take to close the gap?

- *Vision, leadership, inclusivity—Harris Wheeler, Horticulturist and Instructor, Richmond Technical Center*
- *Workforce development—Lisa Taranto, Director, Tricycle Gardens*
- *Proposed new Urban Forestry Commission ordinance—Paul DiPasquale, Chair, Tree Subcommittee, City of Richmond Urban Design Committee*
- *Civic engagement—Jess Barton, Virginia Grassroots Coordinator, Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

## **Workshop D: Sustainable Land Use, and Water Quality Management**

If the environment encompasses both nature and culture, then sustainable land use requires humans to respect the carrying capacity of natural systems as we alter the landscape for our own purposes. The good news is that myriad strategies exist to achieve that goal, and conscientious property owners, engineers, architects, builders, community activists, and others are working to ensure that it happens. Whether the focus is the individual, neighborhood, or regional scale, the answer usually lies in the plant world. Find out how innovations such as green roofs, green

walls, tree trenches, constructed wetlands, riparian buffers, and other green solutions all play a part. Are we making progress here in Richmond?

- *Green building design, LEED-ND green building standards—Chris Earley, Principal, Greening Urban, LLC architecture firm (confirmed)*
- *Regional perspective—Sheila Sheppard, Coordinator, Partnership for Smarter Growth*
- *Protecting waterways—Michelle Kokolis, Watershed Scientist, James River Association*

### **Workshop E: Food Security, Access, Nutrition, and Health**

According to Michael Pollen, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*, food our country consumes travels an average of 1,500 miles from farm to fork. The result is a complex web of interconnected relationships involving farms and producers, food processing companies, distributors, truckers, grocers, institutional and individual consumers, and waste management professionals. Increasingly, farmers markets, community gardens, food banks, churches, and other charitable organizations also play an important part. How does the Richmond region's food system compare? Are there food deserts here? Are we vulnerable to major disruptions? How can we ensure that the food we eat is really good for us and that there is enough for everyone?

- *Regional overview, nutrition—Sally Norton, Scientific and Program Administrator, VCU Department and of Social and Behavioral Health (invited)*
- *Access to healthy foods—Alice Freeman, Director, Healthy Hearts Plus (invited)*
- *Creation care perspective—David Cooper, Director, United Methodist Urban Ministries of Richmond*
- *Health—Dr. Danny Avula, Deputy Director, Richmond City Health District*

### **Workshop F: Wild Card! Open Space Design Workshop 1 to Be Announced**

3:00-3:30

**Break**

3:30-4:45

**Afternoon Session II: Concurrent Workshops Repeated (choose 1)**

Workshop A: **Basics of Sustainable Gardening**

Workshop B: **Urban Gardening and Urban Greening for a Robust Economy**

Workshop C: **Creating Greener, More Resilient Communities**

Workshop D: **Urban Greening, Sustainable Land Use, and Water Quality Management**

Workshop E: **Food Security, Access, Nutrition, and Health**

Workshop F: **Wild Card!** Open Space Design Workshop 2 to Be Announced

4:45-5:00 **Q & A and Wrap-Up**  
Massey Conference Center, Education and Library Complex

5:00-6:00 **Grassroots Gathering and Wine Tasting** (cash bar)  
Robins Room and Atrium, Robins Visitors Center