

Delta Pace: Living Environment

INITIAL CONTRADICTIONS

At the time of the Consult, the people of Pace were for the most part past oriented. Their community story pointed to a time when the railroad ran, a vital business district drew Saturday crowds, and two highschools were filled with children. Many others were present oriented, concerned primarily with day to day needs. There also existed in Pace (1) a very apparent lack of public facilities like parks and community meeting space, (2) the predominance of ramshackle substandard housing, and (3) the absence of basic services, particularly paved streets, well functioning water lines, and most critical, a sanitary sewer system. Improvements in these arenas would be costly, and to obtain federal funding, detailed engineering and architectural plans would be required. The citizens had little vision of controlling the use of space, and community space, both common and private, was poorly maintained. Key contradictions were the lack of corporate activity focused on common tasks, and dormant leadership. Also, identity images were demoralizing, there were no consensus structures, and modes of citizen engagement were fragmented.

ADVANTAGES

At the same time, the construction of a new town hall and a new post office in the downtown area had given the people a glimpse of the possibilities for downtown redevelopment. The existing storefronts, although deteriorated, exhibited a unified architectural style, and about half on second look required very little work for major visible impact. Further, through the eyes of an architect the lay of the land in Pace was ideal. The removal of the railroad tracks had left a wide open space through the center of town, framed by bayous at either end. Private but underutilized land existed, carrying the potential for radically transforming the space images of the people in the community while also offering needed services and facilities. Community workdays prior to the Consult had given the people an image of what they might be able to do together.

CHALLENGE

The challenge was to use these "before our noses" advantages to act on the major perceived contradictions. It was to find a medium through which all or most of the document contradictions could be tackled. The potential of radically altering time (future orientation) and space (land use patterns, needed improvements) was high. Quick, visible "miracles" could be used to begin the space transformation task, but the past and present oriented time focus demanded an explosion of very real images for the near and distant future. This long range planning had to be balanced by immediate signs and accomplishments in order to keep the hoped for future in "do-able" perspective.

TACTICAL JOURNEY

The initial thrust on care for corporate space was a series of eighteen workdays beginning before the consult. The major felt contradiction—the lack of adequate sewage facilities—was the necessary first focus. All of the sewer ditches were cleared of rubble, and driveway culverts were opened to at least make the open ditches flow properly. Vacant lots were cleared, and tons of garbage hauled to the seldom used Pace dump. Also, the Youth Service Corps was established through two key tactics on visible common space. A centrally located shaded area was cleared of tall weeds and park benches were constructed. The youth then acquired fifty oil drums, which they painted with the grid and distributed along the roadsides. Two buildings were demolished on workdays. The key focus of this initial workday series was visible change with maximum community participation.

An early contradiction was the absence of any established dynamic pattern for leadership and teamwork for workdays. ("Too many chiefs, not enough Indians.") "Chief's Meetings" were initiated and team organization for each workday was organized.

As workday participation began to lag, the need was apparent for a major miracle on common space. The document had called for a playground. A downtown lot was ideal, in that it was simply a large sewer ditch. The transformation of the lot would move on the key perceived contradiction, with the space radically transformed. Three hundred linear feet of sewer culvert was obtained in kind, as were 108 loads of dirt and the use of heavy equipment and operators. There were three weeks of detailed planning, setup and procurement by the auxiliary and key community leaders. Task-team assignments were made for specific tasks to employ 125 people in an eight hour start to finish playground construction. A critical factor enhancing the event was the participation of fifty Xerox employees from throughout Mississippi, who also covered all remaining capital costs. Another simultaneous event of the day was the painting of the laundromat, which framed the park opposite the town hall. Painting it the same colors as the Town Hall began to unify the design quality of the downtown area.

Already we were a bit uneasy about moving on transformation of key common space without the unifying design called for in the document. However, initiation steps for the plan had already begun. A scope of services was submitted to the Mississippi Research and Development Center for comprehensive planning assistance, and the Mississippi State School of Architecture had decided to do Pace as a pilot for its new small town design program. These commitments were framed through key contacts on the state level. The consultants soon made their initial site visits and began detailed collection and inventory of the data necessary for beginning the planning process. Groups of residents visited Mississippi State to make descriptive presentations to professors and students, and many community residents were consulted for key input into the inventory.

The second quarter tactics included the regularizing of town garbage pickup and mowing of common space by city CETA employees. Six youth CETA positions were secured, and these youth became the key week I work force. The introduction of the pay factor immediately decreased volunteer participation in community work projects, and corporate workdays lagged. Simultaneously, renovation was begun on a downtown building for use by the preschool, which was operating temporarily in a mobile classroom at the elementary school. Attempts were made to engage youth and key adults in the construction, with little success. A tight deadline for construction completion was introduced with the story that Title 20 program funding was contingent on completion by September 1st (2 months.) This story was bureaucratically induced and not further explored, and consequently a "deadline amnesia" set in. The auxiliary threw all efforts into construction completion, bracketing other tactics crucial to breaking key contradictions. A youth engagement maneuver brought a church youth group to Pace for a week to work with the Youth Service Corps rebuilding a footbridge in a nodal location and twenty to thirty Pace youth participated, but their motivity decreased again soon afterward.

Also during that summer, discussions were begun and families visited door to door in a campaign to name unnamed streets and rename all others. Residents did not know where they lived- there were no common street names defining community space. A beautification commission was reactivated (a pre-consult occasional structure) for this purpose. Because the tactic was dealing with symbolic identity, it quickly became a hot one, surfacing tensions in every arena of cultural life (racial, historical, etc.) It was not until stake structures were put in place two months later that a community consensus could be reached. The quarterly town meeting (assembly) gave rise to the planning of a work day to make routed wood street signs. A large youth force was mobilized. However, the signs were not put into place until nearly two months later (January) because the legalities of renaming streets had not been dealt with and a contingent of dissenters threatened the Board of Aldermen with a suit.

The third quarter emphasis was on putting the stakes in being. The effort was organized by residents who had attended GRA and worked on stake and guild formation. Stake workdays literally transformed common space, vacant lots and alley ways; with a high degree of participation. The stakes were further actuated by their responsibility for the 100% household survey. To back up, this was a key tactic in the inventory phase of the Comprehensive Plan being done to this point by the outside consultants and auxiliary in consultation with the Board of Aldermen and key residents. The impact of doing the survey through the stake structure was astounding. A map of households was done in the stake meetings. It was surprising that people did not know their neighbor's names. Community people were trained to do the interviews and tracking, and within two weeks all households had been surveyed, giving us the crucial objective population and housing data needed for concrete planning. The survey also included questions on the family's desires for housing improvements. The key tactic was the analysis of data by community people in the stake meetings. For four consecutive weeks key descriptive statistics were presented and the stakes had a chance to reflect. They were given a very different set of eyes for looking at their stakes and community. They discovered, for instance, that nearly a fourth of the families had no running water. The mapping of households grounded for them the possibility of geographic care.

The stake survey discussions set the stage for the beginning of the Comprehensive Planning meetings. A self-conscious Design Guild was formed to act as the body that would review consultants' planning recommendations and make necessary revisions. This group met weekly over a period of four months. The ten studies in the Comprehensive Plan were put on a timeline and a rhythm was established which went as follows: The appropriate consultant in the first week presented his recommendations, and in the second week the group discussed the presentation and made decisions. One high point in the meetings was the presentation of a town model and downtown design and housing design alternative by Mississippi State University architecture students. Finally, the plan recommendations were presented at a town meeting assembly for consensus with eighty citizens in attendance. These meetings journeyed the group from their past and present time orientation to a position of deep passion toward a comprehensively designed future with very visual and detailed holding images.

In quarter four, state, regional, and national framing was intensified for funding of the major community development proposals. The comprehensive plan technical documents were the key tools in demonstrating the seriousness of funding requests. Simultaneously, tactics were begun toward actualization of immediately do-able planning elements. The street signs were put up, a welcome sign was erected. Trees were planted throughout the community according to the landscape plan. The county released funding was for constructing one badly needed bridge. Clean-up workdays were reinitiated, this time with participation of county employees and equipment. The key maneuver was water system up-grading. The water system had about fifty leaks in its mains, further, it was owned and operated by a private water association that traditionally had not been representatively controlled. A necessary tactic for obtaining sewage system funding was the transfer of ownership to the town. A meeting was held with seventy-five in attendance to vote on the transfer, which was tentatively approved. At the meeting a presentation was made of a recently completed study done by an environmental health specialist from another state university, reporting the presence of fecal coliforms (human waste) at all sample points in the water lines. This catalyzed a community wide effort to repair water line leaks. This common and pressing concern elicited participation from all groups in the community as never before. Over a period of two months, all of the water line leaks were repaired.

Quarter V tactics included heavy focus on other key elements in the Comprehensive Plan. For the first time, maneuver planning methods were introduced to the guilds. Two living environment maneuvers were planned for the quarter: (1) "Storming the Storefronts" was a one day event in which every storefront would receive a coat of paint. All of the owners (except one), bought their own paint and supplies. Sixty residents participated, with twenty in kind ladders and scaffolds.

(2) The second maneuver was "On the Street Where You Live". To date, no visible signs had been accomplished in the crucial arena of private space and housing. With the June 30 "Do-ment" date approaching, it was critical that some significant tactics be completed. The sewer system had not been built, and thus no funding, either private or public, could be released for housing construction. It was decided that a large number of homes in a contained area would be painted, with necessary minor repairs also carried out, toward the goal of radically altering the appearance of the area. One contradiction was that

volunteer participation had lagged over the cold late winter months and work days had nearly ceased. Most homes and yards were poorly cared for, but at the same time, (as with the storefronts), most actually required very little work for visible transformation. Another secondary contradiction was the relative dormancy of one of the stakes. A block was chosen that was located within this stake, with key visibility importance to the entire community. Finally, a mindset was rapidly emerging that the ICA had money available, if one would only wait long enough, to be spent on private space. A few residents bought their own materials and one by one, the seventeen homes were painted, and all yards were landscaped. As the maneuver work progressed, it became apparent that the residents were each more concerned with their own property than with that of others (a logical expectation). Also, there were a few on the front and who refused to participate. Much anguish was spent over ways to get their commitment from the start. However, as work progressed, block residents were able to capitalize on visible signs to gain these families participation. The initial intent was to engage the whole community in work on this one block. The gimmick was the vision for doing the same thing block by block until the whole town was done. In reality, participation beyond the block concerned was minimal, restricted primarily to key community leadership. One helpful tool was a map with every house, which was colored lot by lot as work was completed. Another key gimmick was an objective deadline--a celebration that would bring state level dignitaries for a site visit.

Quarter VI has included continuation of work on a new laundromat facility and a restaurant by youth CETA workers. The key tactic to date was a youth work camp in which fifty outside youth worked with residents and thirty Pace youth to complete "On the Street Where You Live" tactics on two more streets, as well as to landscape the center median strip on one end of town in accordance with the plan.

Another signal event was the paving of three streets by the county. This was catalyzed by a Community Development Block Grant application for sewage facilities and street repaving in a tightly defined low income area (limited to enable maximum pointage for applicant screening). The County Supervisor, in an election year, responded by paving the streets in the higher income areas, which were in fact in worse condition.

All of these tactics and maneuvers were spun from the advantage of the overarching framework of the Comprehensive Plan and planning process. The tactics directly addressed seven of the ten underlying contradiction arenas defined in the document, through a unifying, dynamic, long term plan of action. The Comprehensive Plan, now in hand in the form of artistic and technical documents, is the essential tool for obtaining funds needed in all program arenas. Reflection on this journey has shown us a lot about how to spin tactics and maneuvers through one or more pivotal program proposals.

UNDERLYING CONTRADICTIONS CHART

ICA Consultants									
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
THE INCOMPLETE DELIVERY OF BASIC SERVICES IN DELTA PACE	THE INAPPROPRIATE APPLICATION OF TRADITIONAL VALUES IN DELTA PACE	THE RESTRICTED ACCESS TO CAPITAL FUNDS IN DELTA PACE	THE INADEQUATE CARE OF COMMUNITY SPACE IN DELTA PACE	THE DEMORALIZING IMAGES OF CIVIC IDENTITY IN DELTA PACE	THE INEFFECTIVE STRUCTURES FOR LOCAL CONSENSUS IN DELTA PACE	THE FRAGMENTED MODES OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN DELTA PACE	THE LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT IN DELTA PACE	THE CONFINED SCOPE OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN DELTA PACE	THE NARROW RANGE OF PRACTICAL SKILLS IN DELTA PACE
Unknown Available Services	Laissez Faire Response Pattern	Inadequate Tax Millage	Few Fire Hydrants	Inadequate Residential Housing	Unwanted Base Rate Increase	Non-Communicating Village Groups	Excessive Bill Paying Surcharges	Uncompetitive Local Market Handling	Inadequate Training Opportunities
Unrequested Foodstamp Distribution	Unscheduled Extracurricular Events	Unmet Federal Requirements	Unprofitable Land Use Practices	Inadequate Maintenance History	Uneven Power Concentration	Segmented Citizen Responsibility	Inadequate Harvest Wages	Minimal Commercial Activities	Improperly Trained Administrators
Unavailable Legal Information	Habitual Lifestylc Routines	"Dishonorable" Grant Acceptance	Inadequate Water Control	Limited Transportation Access	Ineffective Pricing Participation	Unorganized Industrial Promotion	Insufficient Buying Power	Small Existing Market	Inadequate Technical Training
Inadequate Watermain Locations	Limited Farm Crops	Inadequate Industrial Base	Insufficient Rental Returns	Insufficient Water Pressure	Limited Political Involvement	Lost Communication Channels	Increased Taxation Fear	Continuing Commercial Decline	Exclusive Farming Skills
Incomplete Sewage Package	Traditional Farm Marketing	Expensive Irrigation Costs	Obscure Ownership Records	Unhelpful Vandalism Image	No School Input	Inconsiderate Herbicide Use	Low Agricultural Profits	Remote Supply Centers	Untrained Fire Fighters
Small User Population	Past Oriented Concerns	Unproven Payment Ability	Unregulated Land Development	Poor Social Environment	Conflicting Citizen Priorities	Crop Dusting Spillover	Large-Scale Mechanized Agriculture	Declining Community Population	Limited Crop Management
Inadequate Information Spread	Unrequested Building Inspection	Unfunded Fire Department	Few Formal Complaints	Inadequate Fire Protection	Farm Service Primacy	Unconsented Pesticide Guidelines	Unemployed Highschool Graduates	Excessively Duplicated Products	Limited Business Experience
Ambiguous Enforcement Procedures	Dual School Systems	Inadequate Police Funds	Racially Separated Residences	Excessively Wind-Blown Dirt	Little Agency Cooperation	Non-Resident School Personnel	Inadequate Job Opportunities	Outside Purchasing Habits	Limited Farming Experience
Expensive Legal Costs	Irritation Response Pattern	Insufficient Housing Funds	Divisive Road Patterns	Incomplete Garbage Collection	Unrequested Telephone Referendum	Unobserved Drinking Age Laws	Distant Work Places	Limited Buying Power	Inadequately Trained Leaders
Unaffordable Fulltime Physician	Unprovided Infant Care	Tedious Funding Procedures	No Maintenance Codes	Multiple Disciplinary Problems	No Organized Participation	Uncoordinated Health Planning	Large-Farm Government Emphasis	Distant Public Transportation	Untrained Clerical Personnel
Inappropriate Transportation Modes	Ingrained Segregation Habits	Expensive Farm Equipment	Unknown Facilities Design	Open Sewage Frontage	Inadequate Citizen Input	Individualistic Sewage Treatment	Limited Job Information	Inadequate Economic Incentives	Inefficient Employment Mechanisms
Oversized Maintenance Equipment	Urban Problems Feared	Insufficient Property Base	Extensive Rice Hydrodynamic	Unlikely Development Reputation	Prevalent Citizen Powerlessness	Improper Program Implementation	Incomplete Direct Transportation	Unattractive Local Businesses	Inadequate Skills Curriculum
Inadequate Fire Code	No Attendance Enforcement	Unknown Grant Varieties	Inoperative Shutoff Valving	Limited Resident Professionals	Uncommunicated Annexation Authority	Uncoordinated Authority Structures			
County-Based Street Repairs	Unmeaningful School Name	Outdated Property Assessments	Unknown Purchasable Land	Faulty Firefighting Equipment	Unknown Building Codes				
Inadequate Sports Equipment	Traditional Hiring Practices	Expensive Crop Treatment	Unplanned Public Works	Failure Self Story					
Changing Government Laws									
Poor Services Motivation									
No Specialized Transportation									
Absent Housing Code									
Junk Removal Aggravation									
Lax Parental Response									
Inadequate Traffic Control									
Unorganized Health Facilities									
Privately Owned Water									
24	15	15	15	15	14	13	12	12	12
I	II				III			IV	

Delta Pace: Living Environment

Time	Quarter I	Quarter II	Quarter III	Quarter IV	Quarter V
<p>Contra- dictions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -no corporate work patterns -paralysis of overwhelming sewer construction task -youth unengaged, garbage throughout town -workday lag, "too many chiefs, not enough indians" -nothing new in place, no visible miracle -downtown deteriorating, no capital monies -lack of unity in downtown design -lack of access of heavy equipment -no comprehensive design and development plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -poor town maintenance systems -no unifying symbol identity -apparent lack of consensus mechanisms such as street naming -no jobs for youth -"pay factor" lag in volunteer youth engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -stakes not taking strong footing, -lacked focus neighborhood space uncared for. -little knowledge of turf on part of residents, -no objective data on population and housing -no structure for comprehensive plan input -limited future vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -theoretical nature of planning divorced from do-ment. -water system poorly managed -water system privately controlled -water system in ill repair -community leadership consensus fragmented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -tactical action fragmented, not unified -extreme negating impact of downtown deterioration -lack of business (local) participation in comprehensive plan and other project programs -dormancy of owners relating to property maintenance and upkeep. -poor visible appearance of neighborhoods -major felt concern for housing not moved on to date-- loss of hope -youth unengaged, Stake II inactive

Delta Face: Living Environment

Time	Quarter I	Quarter II	Quarter III	Quarter IV	Quarter V
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -18 workdays on consecutive Sats. -first focus on sewer ditches, major felt need -establish youth service corps thru particular tasks--painting and distributing trash cans and park creation -began chiefs mtgs--on workdays, every one an indian, in meetings everyone a chief. -built playground in one day, Xerox employees assisted, paid for construction. -painted laundromat to match town hall -inkind maneuver on area construction companies for equipment use. -framing with state and architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -regularized garbage pickup and lawn mowing--town personnel -street naming process begun through existing beautification commission -organized stakes and held quarterly assembly -secured six youth Ceta salaries -held youth work corps camp, brought in 20 youth from Arkansas to work w/Pace youth for one week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -stake workdays held -100% household survey and land use map done by stakes. reflection/analysis in Stake meetings. -formed design guild estab. a weekly mtg pattern -comprehensive plan meetings--use of visual tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -workdays focused on immediate implementation of minor plan proposals--street sign, welcome sign, tree planting and cleanup workdays initiated -held mass meeting for vote on water system transfer -included presentation of study, indicating hazard of water system leaks (created a crisis -water leaks repaired on workdays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -maneuver strategy methods introduced to guilds -"storming the storefronts" maneuver, solicited owners to buy all materials -one day paint up, fix up event on storefronts with 60 participants -workdays focused in "on the street where you live" maneuver -youth work camp (60 outsiders) -owners bought materials -40 homes painted, with minor repairs common space landscaped.