Field Session – 007

1. Vibrant Open Spaces in Chicago’s Cultural Neighborhoods

   Enjoy visiting three of the most authentic ethnic neighborhoods in Chicago. Learn their history and see how their public spaces reflect the cultural background of their residents. Listen firsthand from the designers and city officials that participated in making those spaces their challenges and their successes.

2. Field Session Co-Leaders:

   José L. Magán, ASLA. Founder and Principal of Accent Urban Design
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   Jenna Jones, ASLA, Project Manager and the Director of Marketing at site design group, ltd.
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   Additional Presenters:

   Gerardo G. Garcia, LEED AP, Coordinating Planner with the Chicago Department of Planning and Development
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   Stacey Libra, ASLA, Landscape Architect with SmithGroupJJR
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   Stephen Ostrander, Senior Planner in the Local Planning division of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
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   Patricia Saldaña Natke, AIA, President and Design Principal of UrbanWorks
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   Kris Sorich, Associate ASLA, Senior Landscape Designer with the Chicago Department of Transportation
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   Bridget C. Stalla, P.E., Civil Engineer with the Chicago Department of Transportation
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   Arvin Villanueva, Civil Engineer at Terra Engineering, Ltd.
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   Bill Wood, P.E., Civil Engineer with SmithGroupJJR
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3. **Learning Objectives:**

- Gain awareness of the cultural diversity of three Chicago neighborhoods.
- See firsthand the differences and similarities between public spaces in different ethnic communities in Chicago.
- Understand how to incorporate cultural aspects of a neighborhood into the design of public spaces.
- Test the effectiveness of the design tools that have been applied to cultural landscapes.
- Learn about adapting residual spaces for public use.
- Learn about working with brownfields.

4. **Presentation Outline:**

**A. Introduction at McCormick Center – José Magán & Jenna Jones**

The Chicago Neighborhood Development – Bridget C. Stalla & Kris Sorich / Chicago Department of Transportation (50 minutes)
1. Chicago Neighborhood Development – José Magán
2. Brief historical review of Chicago neighborhoods
3. Role of city administration in the development of cultural neighborhoods
4. Influence of cultural neighborhoods in the growth of the city
5. Cultural icons in public spaces

**B. Chinatown**

1. Ping Tom Memorial Park & Ping Tom Park East – Jenna Jones (30 minutes)
   a. Background and history
   b. Cultural design
   c. Construction challenges
   d. Lessons learned
2. Reading the neighborhood – Stephen Ostrander / CMAP & Man Men Lee / Alderman Solis’s Office (40 minutes)
   a. Streetscapes
   b. Building facades
   c. Gates
   d. Icons and symbols
   e. Infrastructure and paving

**C. Pilsen**

1. Zion Evangelical Ghost Church – Francisco Lassio / Alderman Solis’s Office (20 minutes)
   a. Adaptation of a church to public and private open spaces
   b. Cultural design
2. Reading the neighborhood – Francisco Lassio / Alderman Solis’s Office (10 minutes)
   a. Streetscapes
   b. Building facades
   c. Murals and graffiti
   d. Infrastructure
3. Plaza Tenochtitlan – Francisco Lassio / Alderman Solis’s Office (10 minutes)
   c. Adaptation of residual spaces for public use
   d. Movers and shakers
   e. Cultural design
   a. Background and history
   b. Cultural design
   c. Construction challenges
   d. Lessons learned
D. La Villita (Little Village)
   1. La Villita Park – (Celotex Site) – Stacey Libra & Bill Wood/ SmithGroupJJR & Gerardo G. Garcia / Chicago Department of Planning & Development (30 minutes)
      a. Brownfield adaptation
      b. Cultural design
      c. Construction challenges
      d. Lessons learned

2. Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO) Site

E. Trip back to McCormick Center
   1. Questions and answers, comments & evaluations

5. Field Session Timetable:

   8:00 a.m.  Classroom Presentation
   8:50 a.m.  Loading bus
   9:00 a.m.  Bus departs from McCormick Center
   9:10 a.m.  Bus arrives to Chinatown; unloading at S Wentworth Ave and W 19th St
   9:20 a.m.  Tour around Ping Tom Memorial Park & Ping Tom Park extension
   9:50 a.m.  Tour around Chinatown
   10:30 a.m. Loading bus at S. Archer Ave and S. Wentworth Ave
   10:40 a.m. Bus departs from Chinatown
   10:50 a.m. Bus arrives at Pilsen; unloading in front of Guadalupe Reyes Park
   11:00 a.m. Tour around Evangelical Ghost Church in Pilsen
   11:20 a.m. Loading bus in front of Guadalupe Reyes Park
   11:30 a.m. Bus departs from Guadalupe Reyes Park
   11:40 a.m. Bus arrives to Plaza Tenochtitlan; unloading
   11:50 a.m. Tour around Plaza Tenochtitlan
   12:00 p.m. Lunch in restaurants along W. 18th Street and S. Blue Island Ave
   1:00 p.m.  Tour around Benito Juarez High school
   1:30 p.m.  Loading in front of Benito Juarez HS at W. 21th St. and S. Blue Island Ave
   1:40 p.m.  Bus departs Pilsen
   2:00 p.m.  Bus arrives at La Villita Park
   2:10 p.m.  Tour around La Villita Park and arrival at LVEJO
   2:40 p.m.  Tour around LVEJO
   2:55 p.m.  Loading bus in front of LVEJO at Troy Ave and 28th St
   3:05 p.m.  Bus departs Little Village
   3:30 p.m.  Bus arrives at McCormick Center

6. Sources:


   Ostrander, Stephen, 2015. Chinatown Community Vision Plan, CMAP

7. **Maps and Additional Information:**
http://chicagocollections.org/
http://libguides.depaul.edu/c.php?g=253455&p=1691160
https://www.newberry.org/chicago-neighborhood-guide

8. **Neighborhoods:**

**Chinatown**

Photos source: city-data.com

Looking to escape the anti-Chinese violence that had broken out on the west coast, the first Chinese arrived in Chicago after 1869 when the First Transcontinental Railroad was completed. By the late 1800s, 25% of Chicago's approximately 600 Chinese residents settled along Clark Street between Van Buren and Harrison Streets in Chicago's Loop. In 1889, 16 Chinese-owned businesses were located along the two-block stretch. In 1912, the Chinese living in this area began moving south to Armour Square. Some historians say this was due to increasing rent prices. Others see more complex causes: discrimination, overcrowding, a high non-Chinese crime rate, and disagreements between the two associations ("tongs") within the community. The move to the new South Side Chinatown was led by the On Leong Merchants Association who, in 1912, had a building constructed along Cermak Avenue (then 22nd Street). While the building's design was typical of the period, it also featured Chinese accents such as tile trim adorned with dragons.

In the 1920s, Chinese community leaders secured approximately 50 ten-year leases on properties in the newly developing Chinatown. Jim Moy, then-director of the On Leong Merchants Association, decided that a Chinese-style building should be constructed as a strong visual announcement of the Chinese community's new presence in the area. Chicago-born Norse architects Christian S. Michaelsen and Sigurd A. Rognstad were asked to design the new On Leong Merchants Association Building in spring, 1926. They drew their final design after studying texts on Chinese architecture. When the building opened in 1928 at a cost of a million dollars, it was the finest large Chinese-style structure in any North American Chinatown. It was often informally referred to as Chinatown's "city hall." In 1928, Michaelsen and Rognstad designed two other buildings in the area.

During the late 1980s, a group of Chinatown business leaders bought 32 acres (130,000 m2) property north of Archer Avenue from the Santa Fe Railway and built Chinatown Square, a two-level mall consisting of restaurants, beauty salons and law offices, flanked by 21 new townhouses. Additional residential construction, such as the Santa Fe Gardens, a 600-unit village of townhouses, condominiums and single-
family homes is still under construction on formerly industrial land to the north. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the new addition was the creation of Ping Tom Memorial Park in 1999; located on the bank of the Chicago River, the park features a Chinese-style pavilion that many consider to be the most beautiful in the Midwest.

**Pilsen**

In the late 19th century, Pilsen was inhabited by Czech immigrants who named the district after Plzeň, the fourth largest city in what is now the Czech Republic. They replaced the Germans and Irish who had settled there first, in the mid-nineteenth century. The population also included smaller numbers of other ethnic groups from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, such as Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats and Austrians, as well as immigrants of Polish and Lithuanian heritage. Many of the immigrants worked in the stockyards and surrounding factories. Pilsen was home to both wealthy professionals and the working class, with the whole area knitted together based on the ethnicities, mostly of Slavic descent, who were not readily welcome in other areas of the city.

Although there was some increase in the Hispanic presence in the late 1950s, it was not until the early 1960s that there was a great spurt in the numbers of Latinos in Pilsen. This was due to the displacement of Latinos from the neighborhood that UIC currently occupies. In 1970, Latinos became the majority population in Pilsen, surpassing the population of people of Eastern European descent.

Many of the newer residents of the neighborhood are not Latino, and it is projected that the neighborhood will continue to become more diversified in the years ahead. The non-Latino population in Pilsen is still a minority as of the 2010 Census. Infill construction of condominiums and single family homes is now in full force on the east side of the neighborhood, as Pilsen becomes one of the next major development areas for infill construction. Some local advocacy groups have formed urging the neighborhood’s alderman to curtail gentrification to preserve the Mexican-American culture.

**La Villita (Little Village)**

Now predominantly inhabited by Mexican immigrants, Little Village was originally settled by Eastern
European and Irish immigrants in the late 19th century, after the Great Chicago Fire sent the population of Chicago center to the outlying countryside. Jobs created by industrial development in the early 20th century also attracted residents to the area.

By the mid-20th century, Little Village saw a marked increase in Polish migrants, and in the 1970s a large influx of Mexicans moved to the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is called "Mexico of the Midwest" by many of its residents. Little Village celebrates Mexican Independence Day every September with a parade down 26th Street. It is the largest Hispanic parade in Chicago. The Parade attracts thousands of spectators each year who flock to the neighborhood to show support and pride for their heritage.

For green spaces and recreation in Little Village, residents enjoy the community parks: Washtenaw Park, Shedd Park, and Piotrowski Park, which was for many years the neighborhood’s largest public park and its most popular outdoor retreat. Additionally, La Villita Park, dedicated in December of 2014, is an impressive 21 ½ acre park that occupies a former brownfield which was originally Celotex, an industrial complex that had polluted and degraded the site. The Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO) conducted a democratic and inclusive process to identify an appropriate name for the new park.

Copied/Adapted from Wikipedia

9. Notes:
Vibrant Open Spaces in Chicago’s Cultural Neighborhoods

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AGENDA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Ping Tom Memorial Park @ 300 W. 19th Street</td>
<td>9:20 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Chinatown Square @ 2133 S. China Place</td>
<td>9:50 a.m.</td>
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<td>C. Chinatown Public Library @ 2100 S. Wentworth</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Guadalupe Reyes Park @ 821 W 19th Street</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Plaza Tenochtitlan @ Loomis Street &amp; Blue Island Ave</td>
<td>11:50 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Benito Juarez High School @ 2150 S. Laflin Street</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. La Villita Park @2800 S Sacramento Ave</td>
<td>2:10 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. LVEJO @ 28th Street and Troy Avenue</td>
<td>2:40 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Pick up Location @ 28th Street and Troy Avenue</td>
<td>3:05 p.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:
Ping Tom Memorial Park:
www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/Ping-Tom-Memorial-Park

Chinese American Service League:
http://www.caslservice.org/

Wells-Wentworth Connector:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:
Guadalupe Reyes Park:
www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/Guadalupe-Reyes-Park

Benito Juarez Community Academy:
www.benitojuarez.net

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:
La Villita Park:
www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/la-villita-park

Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO):
www.lvejo.org

Focal Point Chicago:
www.focalpointchicago.org