

Chapter 2

Bushwick Planning: 1970s to Current Times

2.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter examines urban life in Bushwick in the 1970s to current times. It includes the demise of Bushwick in 1977 and the recovery in the 1980s to current times. The reader is introduced to the recovery up close in accounts of Rauscher (author) which were gained from field trips he made to Bushwick, Northeast Brooklyn and other parts of Brooklyn from 1979 to 2010. Finally, the movement to green designs and their importance to Bushwick's future development is reviewed. The chapter ends on the note of opportunities for Bushwick to embrace sustainable urban planning (SUP) approaches.

2.2 Bushwick: 1970s and Demise

Bushwick's boundaries (Plate 2.8) today is defined (matching the historical boundaries) by Brooklyn Community Board 4 (Flushing Avenue on the north, Broadway on the southwest, the Queens Borough line to the northeast and the Cemetery of the Evergreens on the southeast). By the mid -1950s, migrants began settling into central Bushwick. The U.S. Census records show that Bushwick's population was almost 90 % white in 1960, but dropped to less than 40 % in 1970 (U.S. Census). As white families moved out of Bushwick (noted in the previous chapter), new immigrants took over homes in the southeastern edge of the neighborhood, closest to Eastern Parkway. A strong desire among these new residents towards home ownership and block associations helped the neighborhood survive the economic and social distress of the 1970s.

The signals of trouble in Bushwick were evident in the report *Preventive Renewal Areas, NYC* (NYC City Planning Commission 1972). This report mapped a large number of 'preventive renewal areas' (Plate 2.1).

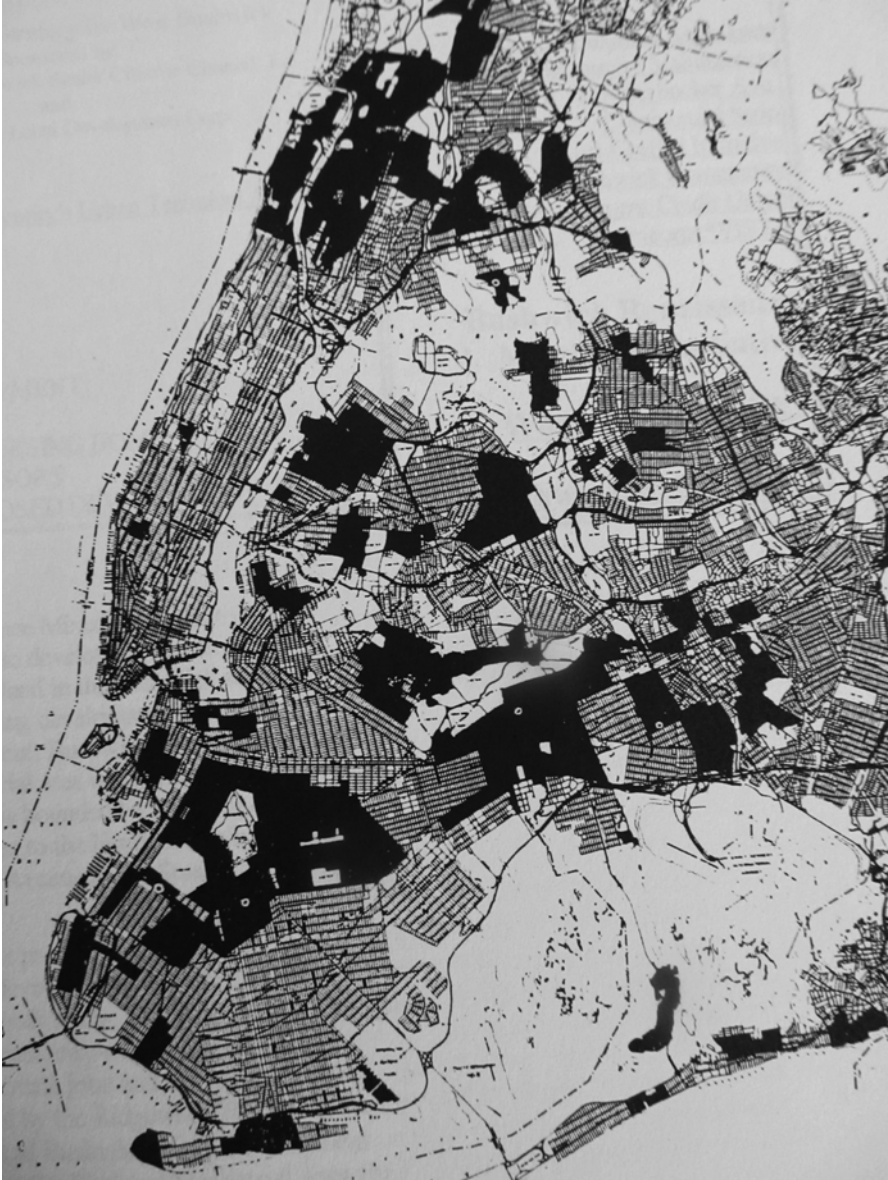


Plate 2.1 Preventive renewal areas, New York City 1972 (Source: NYC City Planning Commission 1972 (NYC [1972](#)))

A closer look at the extent that Bushwick and its surrounding were signaled as needing attention is provided in Plate 2.2. Bushwick is central-right in the picture with the designated ‘preventative renewal area’ extending north along Myrtle Ave into Queens. Note also the targeted renewal areas included parts of Greenpoint and



Plate 2.2 Bushwick within preventive renewal areas 1972. Bushwick (*center-right*) is shown with a large section labeled as ‘preventative renewal area’ (Source: NYC City Planning Commission 1972 (NYC [1972](#)))

Williamsburg (the two blackened areas to the left of Bushwick along the East River, respectively). The report’s comment on Bushwick was:

Bushwick has one of the highest fire rates in the city. Repair loans were meant to remove housing violations (and contain the spread of fires) and help preserve the neighborhood. If nothing is done to combat the deteriorating housing stock this area will be lost as a viable residential area. Failure to act would be disastrous.

The conclusion of the report was prescient for what was ahead for Bushwick residents, leading up to the fires of 1977. The City explained to the Federal Government in the early 1970s (after the above report) that a multi-billion dollar loan was required to get the city on a financial pegging to carry out required programs. The request was a major news item across America, and the Federal Government refused to assist.

At the same time, the past history of the building of high-rise public housing blocks was being shelved in favor of low-rise medium density developments. Plate 2.3 shows the extent, at one stage in New York City history (1960s/1970s), of the policy to build high rise housing blocks. The area is in a redevelopment area of New York City. It was apparent that the social isolation of living in high-rise buildings in poorer areas had contributed to administrations going back to low and medium rise housing in the 1980s onwards.



Plate 2.3 High rise in a redevelopment area in New York City (Source: City of New York Archives 2010)

In contrast to high rise housing promoted by administrations in the 1960s and 1970s as the answer to mass housing, the housing tradition of low rise in most of early Brooklyn (Chap. 1) was given a lower priority. The extent that early Brooklyn embraced low rise for many years, and still achieving a high density is illustrated in the ‘rows of housing’ of three story walkups, mixed with medium rise, in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Sunset Park (Plate 2.4). The lack of open space however, even here, was a shortcoming of Brooklyn over many years (in spite of providing a range of ‘city playgrounds’ and opening school playgrounds for local residents in the long summer school holidays of 3 months).

The blackout and the fires in Bushwick in 1977 were devastating. It appeared there had not been sufficient advancement programs implemented pre-1977, these perhaps preventing the severity of the incident. A discussion on this question is presented later in this chapter, examining author (Rauscher) research in Bushwick. In addition the writings about Bushwick by urban planners and others is commented on.

2.3 Recovery and Urban Planning

In 1979 swaths of Bushwick’s more blighted areas (which were similar to sections of South Bronx troubled areas in the early 1970s) resembled bombed out European cities of World War 2. It was obvious the city was not coping with urban problems



Plate 2.4 Low rise residential at Sunset Park, Brooklyn (Source: City of New York Archives 2010)

at the time and preventative measures had not been listened to in the years prior. There were signs, however, that citizen and company investment in some areas of Brooklyn, including Bushwick, was opening up. These areas included: Williamsburg, Greenpoint, Brooklyn Heights and the Downtown Brooklyn (looked at in Chap. 5). The restoration of homes was becoming popular.

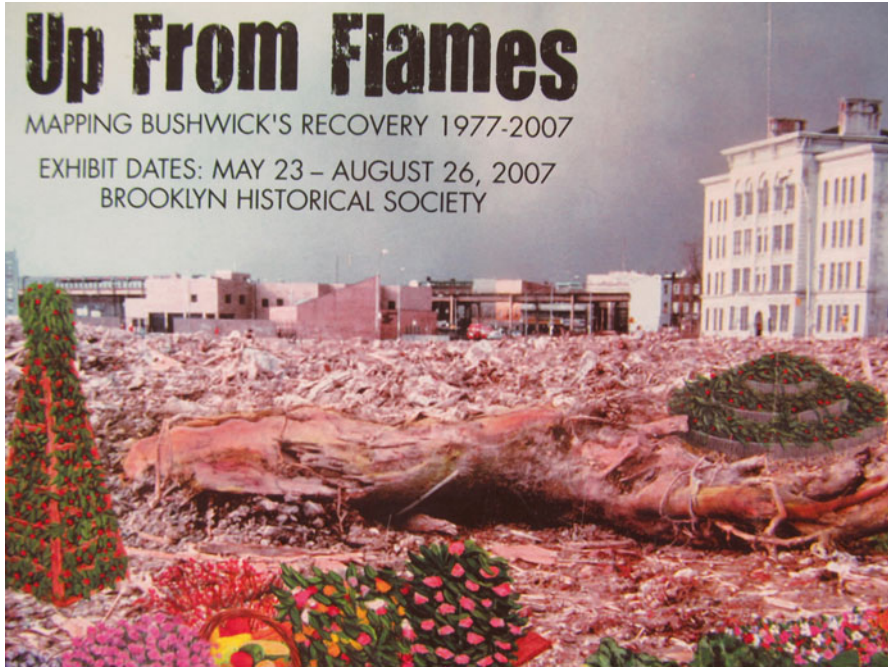


Plate 2.5 Up From Flames (Source: Brooklyn Historical Society, Archives [2013](#))

Mapping Bushwick's recovery from 1977 to present was undertaken by the *Up From Flames* group (Plate 2.5).

The group's website (www.brooklynhistoricalsociety.org) summarizes the work of the group including: interactive history map of Bushwick completed by the Academy of Urban Planning students; a Bushwick 1977 landscapes slide show; a Bushwick Today; and Points of View. Community planning in NYC, commencing in the 1990s, was considered the best means of gaining the best outcomes for neighborhoods and the city overall. On looking at the history of planning affecting Bushwick, Up From Flames comments: "A policy of planner shrinkage allowed Bushwick to sink into ruin. Cutbacks in social services, including fire protection, made the neighborhood vulnerable to fire. The nation witnessed the desperation of this abandoned community through the rioting and looting that occurred during the 1977 New York City Blackout". On a positive historical note, Up From Flames goes further: Once the critical needs of Bushwick were recognized, the media put pressure on the City to take action. Bushwick could no longer be ignored. Under Mayor Koch, collaborative planning between city and local government created innovative long term solutions to Bushwick's housing crisis. Finally, Up From Flames reinforced a message picked up by the urban planners: "Today's Bushwick is the product of carefully considered public policy that laid the groundwork for growth and private investment. The current challenge for policy makers is to sustain affordable housing in today's heated real estate market."

The rise of Bushwick from the late 1990s and through the 2000s was the signal of renewal residents had worked for since the 1977 fires. A walking tour of Bushwick www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/about/bushwick-walking-tour.shtml provides an overview of the renewal investment made by the City of NY and not-for-profit organizations in the 1990s. One such not-for-profit group in Bushwick that has done considerable work for renewal is the Ridgewood-Bushwick Senior Citizens Corp (RBSCC) www.rbscc.org, working tirelessly from the 1970s to today and was involved in several of the projects.

Major projects completed by the RBSCC during (and noted in the walking tour program) included Buena Vida Nursing Home, 48 Cedar Street, corner Evergreen Avenue (was opened in 2001). This home (eight story and containing 240 beds) caters for senior citizens and came about through the efforts of the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council working with the city, state and federal governments. Partnership New Homes Program, 55–67 Cedar Street, consists of eight two-family homes. This was an initiative of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the New York City Housing Partnership. The brick homes, feature a three-bedroom owner's unit with a full basement and fenced backyard, and a one-bedroom rental unit. A total of 149 two-family homes were the initial start of this program, with homes scattered throughout Bushwick.

Central Avenue contains additional Partnership homes, including: low-income housing for seniors (143 Himrod Street); The Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council 60-unit building, owned and managed by the Council. Adjacent to the senior housing is the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Hope Gardens. This development is located on a number of blocks throughout Bushwick (e.g. 140 Himrod Street) and consists of three-story townhouse-like structures. More than 1,000 units of NYCHA housing were built in several phases in the early 1980s as part of an Urban Renewal plan designed to redevelop the most devastated areas of Bushwick.

Two multi-family buildings that front both sides of Harman Street (160 and 173) were built in 1995 as 42-unit low-income rental developments under the Permanent Housing for Homeless Families Program (City/State "85/85" Program) (sponsored by The RBSCC). Other homes in the vicinity of Himrod St were rehabilitated through the Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Program. In a research field trip in 1990 there were signs of renewal not only in Bushwick but in most neighborhoods in Brooklyn.

An overlook view of life in Bushwick was provided by Village Voice in 2002 (*Village Voice* 2002). Summarizing statistics contained in the article illustrates the high number of working class people who still predominated in the area at the time. The article notes that Bushwick was once filled with textile factories, as well as breweries. Many of the new residents were Hispanic, with a high dependence on welfare benefits. Bushwick was still infamous as one of the poorest sections of Brooklyn at the time (still suffering the stigma of the fires of 1977). This is to be examined more closely in Chap. 5. The Village Voice states that up to 40 % of the population was reliant on public assistance in 2002. The Village Voice also noted a

turnaround in housing was well underway, seeing empty lots being developed into city-subsidized housing. Finally, the article notes that many houses were city owned properties, sold or rented through the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (DHPD).

A concise history of changes in Bushwick before and after the fires of 1977 is presented by Steven Malanga (Make the Road 2008) (www.maketheroad.org). His focus is Bushwick as a Brooklyn neighborhood that is gradually recovering from decades of misguided urban policies. Malanga takes a tour of Bushwick through the eyes of a local resident as follows.

Start: taken from web (13 Nov 2013)

These days, when Morris Todash walks the streets of Bushwick, a two-square-mile neighborhood of 100,000 people in central Brooklyn, he likes what he sees. On the long-abandoned seven-acre site of the former Rheingold Brewery, new two-family homes and condominiums have sprung up. On the side streets along Broadway—not so long ago, pockmarked with desolate lots where stray dogs wandered amid burned-out cars—more new homes arise and old ones get impressive face-lifts.

New businesses—an organic grocery store, a fashionable restaurant—seem to be opening on every corner. Todash, whose insurance firm has served the neighborhood for more than 40 years, can hardly believe that this is the same Bushwick that became synonymous with urban chaos during the late 1960s and early 1970s, ravaged by fires, rioting, and looting until it resembled a war zone. “When I first came here to open a business, this was a shopping destination for all of Brooklyn,” Todash says of the neighborhood’s commercial district. “After the looting, no one wanted to come here any more.”

Ruinous policies battered it down. So total was the devastation that even as New York began rebounding in the mid-1990s, Bushwick remained largely untouched by gentrification. Only recently—after years of tireless work by government (especially the police), local groups, and the private sector—has the revitalization of this once-proud neighborhood begun. With Bushwick beginning to thrive again, New York City has finally left behind the disorder and failure that flowed from the misguided reforms of the sixties and seventies. Yet if Bushwick is back, no one should forget what happened to it.

End: taken from web (13 Nov 2012)

Jerilyn Perine, an urban planner, led the Department of Housing Preservation and Development between 2000 and 2004, comments on the urban health of Bushwick in a paper at the International Cities and Towns Society conference in Australia (Perine 2005). The paper examined a brownfield site (abandoned urban lands, often contaminated from previous uses). The site was the Rheingold Brewery (reviewed in Chap. 5). It was Perine’s comments however that contribute further in understanding the urban demise of Bushwick in the 1970s. Perine notes that the community was “wary of government schemes to improve their community. Often such efforts resulted in wide spread demolition and displacement of long-term residents.” She notes that Bushwick residents had recently added “gentrification to their long list of worries and concerns.”

Perine reflects on why the 1970s was not a good time for America’s cities. She explains: “The stage for their (cities) decline had been set in the decades following World War 2 when the Federal Government, seeking to address critical housing shortages, began to subsidize suburban development.” This development was done through highway construction and low cost, long term mortgage lending. Perine points out that “the exodus of stable, moderate and middle income urban American

families had begun taking their local taxes with them. In the 1970s high inflation and unemployment followed the decline of manufacturing. The withdrawal of the Federal Government from housing and other urban assistance programs left most American cities reeling from population losses, physical decline, financial instability and rising crime rates.”

Perine, in reviewing further the impact of all the trends noted above, noted that the loss of manufacturing jobs (1/2 million within 20 years in New York City in 1960s/1970s), cut off the supply of jobs to workers with little education. She writes that “such jobs had been the stable of waves of immigrants coming to New York and enabled them to move up the economic ladder. Now immigrants on the bottom would stay there, with few opportunities for jobs.” She points out that the exodus of jobs left thousands of acres of vacant industrially zoned land, thus impacting the very same neighborhoods that the neediest families lived in. Perine notes that moderate and middle income families moved out to outer suburban areas and Long Island, (while) neighborhoods like Bushwick attracted poorer families. She writes: “With unscrupulous landlords filling their properties with families on public assistance (and banks reluctant to make loans in such areas) the housing conditions deteriorated. Given buildings simply became worth more to their owners if they were burnt down in a fire and insurance could be collected, then if they were maintained for rental housing.” Perine presents the alarming statistic that “between 1970–1981 over 321,000 housing units were lost to the housing market (in New York City) through fire (primarily arson), deterioration, abandonment and demolition.” She goes further: “This calamity, unprecedented in America’s history, was not evenly distributed across the City, but rather it was concentrated in three primary areas: ... South Bronx, Harlem, and four communities in Brooklyn, including Bushwick.” Perine quotes Robert Caro’s book *The Power Broker* (Caro 1974). Caro outlines in his book the New York City housing catastrophe at the time, particularly in the South Bronx (the book being a definitive work on the decline of New York City’s neighborhoods).

Perine is critical of the Government’s lack of intervention in places like Bushwick in the 1970s and when actions did take place they were poorly conceived and executed. She states: “Whole blocks were demolished, displacing long time residents and leaving in its wake empty lots as redevelopment schemes could not get off the ground.” She continues: “With its extreme poverty (by the 1980s, 80 % of Bushwick’s adults were unemployed), and low scale mostly wood frame buildings, Bushwick’s housing stock was vulnerable to arson. Entire blocks simply went up in flames.” She then addresses the event on a hot summer night in 13 July 1977 (9:30 pm) when the city suffered a major blackout. In Bushwick, she writes (its worth reflecting on the Bushwick cultural factors outlined above): “looting came in three district waves. First and almost immediately were the career criminals, in abundance in Bushwick at that time...They descended on Broadway, Bushwick’s main commercial street, with an immediacy and seriousness of purpose that overwhelmed the local police precinct. Second came the ‘alienated teenagers’ and third, poor people exploiting the lawlessness and greed that the situation presented.”

Perine continues, in detailing this urban lesson for Governments to consider in the future: “While 31 low income neighborhoods (in New York City) were damaged in looting that night, Bushwick suffered the worst devastation...crowds began to burn buildings as well. By the time the lights came back on the next day 134 shops on the main retail street, Broadway, were looted and damaged and 45 of them were burned out and destroyed. By the time the 1970s came to an end (two and half years after the arson fires of 1977) Bushwick had lost 20 % of its housing, one out of every five apartments was destroyed; one third of its population left and half of its businesses were lost.”

Perine points out, on the positive response to the ills of the City, that the City launched the Ten Year Plan (1986), with the plan continuing at the time of Perine’s paper (2005). She notes that since 1986 more than 200,000 housing units had been rehabilitated or newly constructed through different City programs. She notes: “Thousands of units were rehabilitated or newly built in Bushwick during this period. Stores began to return and new waves of immigrants continue to move in.”

In addition to Perine’s insights, an on-the-ground examination of Bushwick was undertaken by John A Dereszewski (self published 2007). He comments on Bushwick of the 1970s as well as reviewing the recovery of Bushwick up to 2008. His work compliments the writings explored above, namely, *Up In Flames* (www.brooklynhistoricalsociety.org) (2013), *Malanga* (Make the Road 2008), and Perine (2005). Dereszewski notes that arson and abandonment devastated Bushwick’s central core well before the black of 1977. He comments that “on blocks like Himrod St and Greene Ave (between Central and Wilson Aves) every building had been abandoned. Due to funding shortages...most of the abandoned buildings, almost all of which were unsalvageable, were not demolished. This created the impression of essentially living in a war zone.” He indicates, that before the blackout, several Government actions were taken that strengthened the community. In the early 1970s the City opened a Neighborhood Preservation Office charged with completing a locally based development plan. This office took the initiative to develop this plan in close collaboration with local community board, Brooklyn CB4. The community board was able to open a local office and hire a small staff in May 1977. In spite of these positive moves, the arson fire (Dereszewski writes) was an entirely Bushwick event. He writes that it added an exclamation point to Bushwick’s particular plight and brought the full spectrum of the community’s decade long descent into arson assisted housing abandonment and absolute despair to the general public’s consciousness.

2.4 Recovery Up Close

Dereszewski (unpublished 2007), commenting above about Bushwick in the 1970s comments on the first steps to recovery. He comments on a Bushwick Action Plan (as promoted by the CB4) with the community insisting low-rise scale that typified Bushwick be maintained. Dereszewski comments: “...housing would only be two or, at most, three stories high and would be constructed on existing block fronts. In all, the City would construct 1,076 low income and 243 senior citizen housing

units in Bushwick during the early to mid-1980s. There would be no additional ‘super blocks’ in Bushwick.”

Derezewski comments on the introduction of the NYC Housing Partnership, a collaborative effort involving the City and the business community. He notes this introduced two family housing that (through subsidized mortgage rate and tax abatements, was affordable to most working families). Derezewski points out that Partnership Housing became the dominant form of new residential development throughout all portions of Bushwick. He writes: “Consistent with the Action Plan, these residences preserved the exciting community scale and, being constructed on vacant land, did not displace existing residents.” Derezewski focuses on strategies that needed immediate and concrete results, while the area waited for new housing, particularly to the long-term residents of Bushwick who had withstood the worst. He notes the actions of the City to build a sense of community in outlining programs such as: demolition (dangerous buildings eliminated); tree planting (to address the dearth of street trees with the City responding by planting several thousand trees by the late 1970s); parkland development (the City identified large vacant areas for recreational development); economic development (noting the strength of the Knickerbocker Ave shopping district); a ‘Bushwick Initiative’ effort to stabilize and improve housing, combat crime and improve the health and quality of life in a targeted area commenced; private market housing, at an acceleration space, had been constructed in Bushwick (many are three story ‘Fedders Housing’ units); and, finally continued migration of young artists and professionals from Manhattan to Williamsburg, went further to Bushwick along the ‘L’ rail line.

Derezewski writes further: “this migration trend began to transform the formally depressed industrial zone along Bushwick’s northern border into a gentrifying district of converted lofts, coffee houses and exciting bars and restaurants. It has also steeply increased the property values and rental costs in this previously low income community.” He concludes that special attention should be given to preservation of Bushwick’s most stable and architecturally significant neighborhoods. In a sense this takes the story back to the original foundations of Bushwick as outlined in Chap. 1.

In every story there is always an unsung hero, perhaps in the Bushwick story of the 1970s that recognition would go to Father John Polis (a Monsignor) (born in New York City during the Depression), St Barbara’s Roman Catholic Church, Central Ave, Bushwick (Plate 2.6). The author (Rauscher) interviewed Father at his church in 1982 to discuss the recovery of Bushwick (see also the role of churches in Bushwick in Chap. 1). In writing about Father Polis, Chas Sisk of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University (Columbia University) (12 Dec 2003) wrote of Father’s significant role in supporting the community of Bushwick in trying times. Sisk writes: “he worked tirelessly on key issues of housing and community services”. Sisk adds “that people saw Father as a ‘radical’ ahead of his times in responding to the needs of Bushwick residents and taking up the cause with city hall. He worked closely with young people at the office of El Puente, a youth center located next to St. Barbara’s. He was aware that two-thirds of Bushwick’s population was Latino with a per capita income of half the average. Polis’s hero was Ivan Illich, a Catholic theologian active in the 1960s and early 1970s. Illich became a popular writer on how to combat poverty and injustice. Father Polis co-founded in



Plate 2.6 Father Polis, Parish Priest St Barbara's R. C. Church, Bushwick (Source: Raymond Rauscher)

1978 the East Brooklyn congregations to take up social causes (see Chap. 6 to learn about the innovative high school that this group founded in Brooklyn)."

While home ownership during the recovery (and still today) was less than 20 % there has always been an owner pride of ownership (U.S. Census 2007). On two of several field trips to Bushwick post -1977 fires, by the author (Rauscher) the recovery from the demise was noticeable (Plate 2.7). Here the securing of housing is seen in three streets in the Dekalb/Central Ave section of Bushwick. From left to right, the first two photos show two-story family homes in Cedar St (note the added security in the second house). Basements were often rented out. The next two photos (Cedar St) show a single story home (set back from the street) under restoration in 1979 and completed by 1982. The pride in home ownership is convincing here. The last two photos show new two-story town houses in Menahan St and three story walk up apartments in Central Ave.

2.5 Community Recovery

While housing was shown signs of recovery as noted statistics on Bushwick reflect the continued social and economic needs of the area. The population of Bushwick was 129,980 in 2007 (U.S. Census), with about 1/3rd of residents born overseas. At that time the population falling below the poverty line was still one in three. Nearly three out of four residents in 2007 came from the Hispanic-American community, a trend that had started in the 1960s as noted in Chap. 1. Finally, In spite of many



Plate 2.7 Renewal in Bushwick neighborhoods. *Left to Right:* Two Family Homes (Cedar St); Single Family Homes, with added security (Cedar St); Single Street Set Back Home under restoration in 1979 (Cedar St); Completed restoration of same home in 1982; new town houses (Menahan St); three story walk up complexes (Central Av) (Source: Ray C. Rauscher)

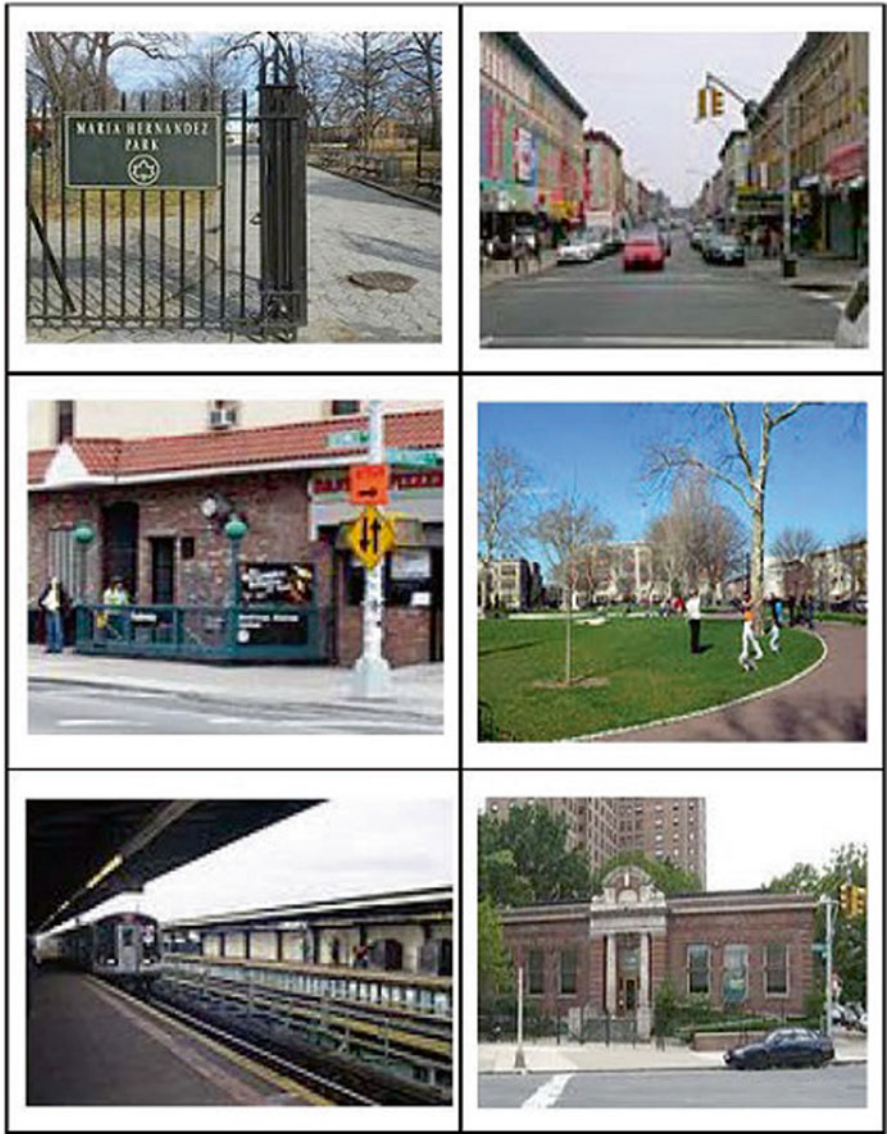


Plate 2.8 Bushwick Community Profile. *Left to Right:* Maria Hernandez Park; Knickerbocker Av; BMT Canarsie Line at Montrose; Irving Square Park; Myrtle Ave Line; and Bushwick Public Library (Source: Wikimedia)

advances to curtail crime in Bushwick, post the 1977 fires, the area in 2007 still had one of the City’s highest rate of felony crimes (U.S. Census).

A look at the community side of the recovery can be seen moving around Bushwick (Plate 2.8). Here (left to right) is the upgraded Maria Hernandez Park;

Knickerbocker Ave; BMT Canarese Line at Montrose; Irving Square Park; Myrtle Ave Line; and Bushwick Public Library.

By the early 2000s Bushwick started to benefit more widely from the private and public interests in renewal. The improvements experienced in Bushwick by 1999 was summarized in an article from *The People's Voice* (a Bushwick newspaper). Another sign of positive improvement was the renovations to St. Barbara's Church as reported on in 2000. Artists had discovered Bushwick by the 1990s as witnessed in the creation of the Arts in Bushwick group in early 2008. The group is completing a cultural vitality project and by 2013 had successfully staged a number of weekend arts festivals with 50+ venues having open house shows. The vigor of community, business and government efforts are reflected in the content of this organization's web site (www.artsinbushwick.org). Finally, Bushwick gentrification and its effects on the community continue today as a real estate boom (early 2000s) removed many homes from the poorer sectors. (as noted in comments by urban planners and others earlier in this chapter).

2.6 Moving to Green Design

The City of New York has a long history of assisting industry and its own administration to embrace green design features in buildings. In 2010 the City launched *The Green Building Handbook* (City of New York 2010) to provide further incentives in this area of sustainability planning. The City applies its green design features under Local Law 86, known as the 'Green Building Law' (City of New York 2005). The law applies to City-owned and City-funded buildings, but is also used as a starting point for any developer interested in green building. In addition green buildings are also a key component of PlaNYC: A greener Greater New York (PlaNYC) (www.nyc.gov/planyc), the City's long-term sustainability plan (to be examined in Chap. 3).

The US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system is a standard used throughout the country and applied to New York City. This ratings system can also be applied to neighborhood development also (very applicable to the renewal programs to be examined in Chaps. 3 and 4). The Green Building Handbook points out that New York City is more energy efficient than many other American cities given its dense urban fabric. It is also noted in the handbook that, with car ownership low in the City, the City's greenhouse gas emissions is near 80 % from energy consumed in buildings. Reference is made in the manual to the green building educational results stemming from work of the then Brooklyn based (now closed) Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment (BCUE). The Centre chose to rehabilitate a vacant factory using the LEED standards to create a model for energy and building materials efficiencies (Plate 2.9).

In addition to government and non-profit group's renewal initiatives (e.g. BCUE's example) in green design, private industry has also been busy with applying green



Plate 2.9 Green Design, Brooklyn. Exterior of Green Design Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment (Source: *The Green Building Handbook* (City of New York 2010))

design to restoration and infill projects. Of particular notice in Bushwick is the integration of post-modern buildings and the inclusion of green design features (i.e. energy saving inclusions). The Troutman Street condos, for example, represent this trend toward green design (Plate 2.10).

A building, representing post modern design, using the LEED standards (buildings are certified under the program) was a further building under Thread PL (Plate 2.11). Tread (unpublished) comments on the need “integrating sustainable principles in every aspect of the design process...there is a need to incorporate sustainability at the outset of the design as it ensures an efficient and well thought out results.” At the time, green design groups such as New York State Environmental Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) (solar and construction efficiencies) www.nyserda.ny.gov and GreenHomeNYC (a not for profit group whose aim is to bring green design information to resident and developers to achieve a ‘systemic changes to building practices’). Given the arson fires Bushwick experiences (Chap. 2) the evolution of safer buildings has been on the City of New York administrators’ agenda. The City has been running the Environmental Protection Green Building Competition (rewarding excellence in sustainable design and systems integration).

Building green within Bushwick, and through the urban world, can produce additional health benefits. The Green Building Handbook argues that by planting

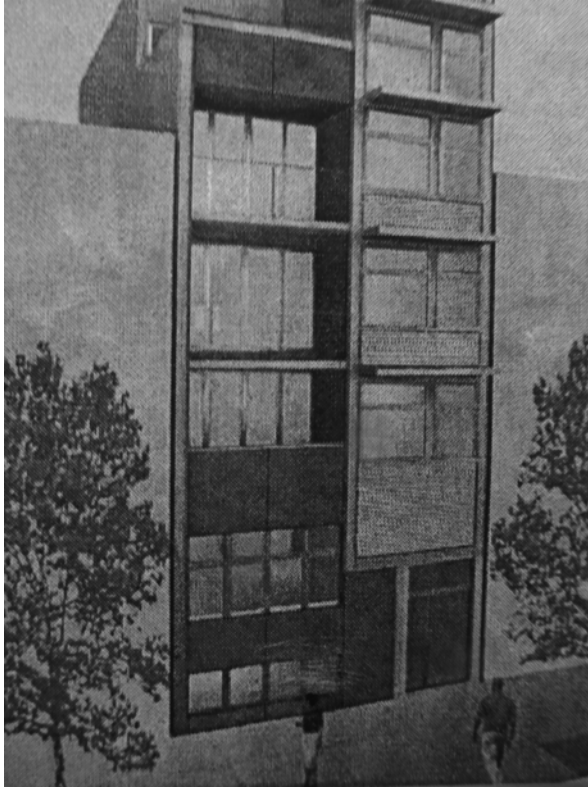


Plate 2.10 Bushwick Post Modern Building Troutman Street Condos (Source: Thread [2008](#))

vegetation on roofs will not only minimize storm water runoff and associated pollution to waterways, but also creates a positive attribute for the residents. Plate [2.12](#) is an illustration of a roof top garden in Manhattan, provided as a model by The City of New York for developers to consider in new or renewal projects.

2.7 Chapter Summary and Conclusions

This chapter looked at urban life in Bushwick in the 1970s to current times. Included was: the demise of Bushwick in the 1970s; the planning of recovery; the recovery steps, including author field trip results; and, the movement to green designs in Bushwick.

The next chapter looks at how Bushwick, Brooklyn and all urban areas could benefit from applying planning and development approaches that incorporates sustainable urban planning (SUP).

Plate 2.11 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified Building (Source: Thread 2008)

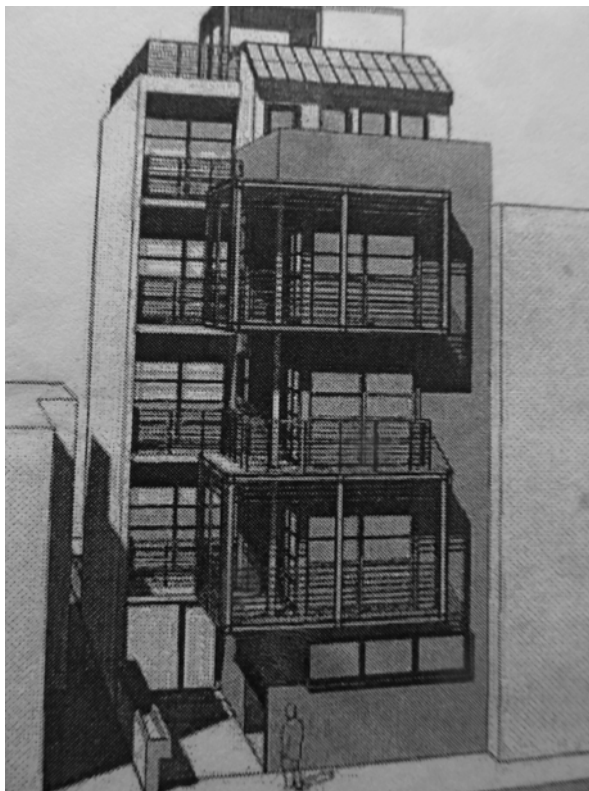


Plate 2.12 Roof top gardens and solar installation. Location: Battery Park City, Manhattan (Source: The Green Building Handbook (2010). New York City Economic Development Corporation)

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