



*In conjunction with the College of Design Annual Urban Design Forum  
March 16 & 17, 2012*

*The Natural Learning Initiative*

## **Growing In Place:** NLI annual symposium on intergenerational urban design for children and families

**March 16th, 2012**

Marbles Kids Museum  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
9:00am-4:00pm

The majority of people live in cities. To encourage new families to embrace urban domestic life, and not move to low-density suburbs, cities need to be designed to support the healthy development of children and the adults that care for them. New policies are needed to support the healthy development of children, to motivate their independent mobility outdoors where they can engage with the natural world. A new intergenerational paradigm of urban landscape planning, design, and cultural animation is proposed that includes neighborhood networks of attractive, traffic-protected pedestrian and bicycle routes connecting meaningful destinations such as schools, playgrounds, parks and open space, cultural institutions, stores, and social services.

Learn from leading experts on urban pathway design, the significance of parks and open space, European urban innovations, urban "wildlands," urban food systems, and how young people and families can be engaged through playwork and cultural animation. Join this annual focus on urban neighborhoods and their sustainable design for health and wellbeing of children and families in the 21st century.

### **SPEAKERS**

#### **Opening**

**Robin Moore**, Director, The Natural Learning Initiative; Professor of Landscape Architecture, College of Design, NC State University.

**Grant Meacci**, ASLA, Division Manager, Urban Design Center, Raleigh Department of City Planning, Raleigh, NC.

**Brian Starkey**, RLA, ASLA, Principal, OBS Landscape Architects, Raleigh. President, Executive Committee, North Carolina Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).

**Gene Bressler**, FASALA, Professor and Head of the Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Design, NC State University.

### **Presentations**

**Charles (Chuck) Flink**, FASLA. Principal, Alta Planning and Design, Adjunct Professor, Landscape Architecture, NC State University.

#### *Greenways and Urban Trail Networks: Policies for Attracting Children and Families*

Greenway and urban trails have become crucial urban design elements in the support of active lifestyles. However, limited available research suggests that use by children and families is low—a conclusion supported by the American Trails organization. Chuck will present successful examples of pathway developments where children and families are a focus and review planning and design policy changes that may be required to increase intergenerational use.

**Adina Cox**, MNR, BLA. PhD Candidate, Research Associate, Natural Learning Initiative, College of Design, NC State University.

#### *Urban Greenways: What makes them Attractive to Children and Families?*

Why is use of urban greenways and trails by children and families so low? Adina has been researching the answer and will share preliminary results of her study on use of urban greenways and trails by children and families in communities in four states and will discuss implications for policy and practice.

**Dwane Jones**, CNU-A, CPESC, PhD Candidate, College of Design, NC State University.

#### *Complete Streets: How Complete?*

Residential streets provide a crucial support for intergenerational independent mobility by linking home to the wider world of experience. Dwane will share the results of his research on “complete streets” in Charlotte, NC.

**Tina Govan**, AIA, Raleigh, NC.

#### *Boys of the Creek.*

The story of a group of boys, the creek they played in, and how they grew up in downtown Raleigh, NC, exploring the outdoors (video).

**Simon Atkinson**, PhD, Professor, Community and Regional Planning, University of Texas and NC State University.

#### *Healthy Communities: European Models*

What are the most advanced international examples of sustainable urban developments that support healthy community lifestyles—including children and families? Simon will share the results of recent field research conducted in Vauban, Freiburg, Germany, and Westerpark, Amsterdam, including the well-established Dutch concept of “Woonerf,” or protected precinct.

**Dee Merriam**, MLA, FASLA. Centers for Disease Control, Healthy Community Design Initiative.

#### *Healthy Communities: The Role of Local Open Space*

The viability of health-supporting intergenerational neighborhoods depends on easy access to a safe public domain, where local open space, including pedestrian-friendly streets, stream corridors, neighborhood parks, schoolgrounds, and wild zones provide meaningful destinations for children and families within walking/biking distance of home. To create such networks requires new types of built environment policy bringing together public, private, and nonprofit sectors to forge a new vision of healthy lifestyles. Dee will review recent successful US examples.

**Paul Gobster**, PhD, FASLA, Research Social Scientist, U.S. Forest Service and Editor-in-Chief, *Landscape and Urban Planning*.

*'In-between Space': Managing Local Landscapes for Wildness and Nature Play*

There is a commonly held belief that nature does exist and cannot be designed as wild space in the city. The truth is that urban open space, parkland in particular, is often managed as low-level ecological quality—just shade trees and mown grass. Such landscapes are not only boring and uninteresting to children, they exhibit low ecological value to other life forms. Paul will introduce the concept of 'in-between' space that offers 'wildness' for intergenerational enjoyment and present successful examples where the principle has been implemented.

**Joanna Massey Lelekacs**, RLA, LEED AP ND, Extension Associate, State Coordinator, Incubator Farm Project, Center for Environmental Farming Systems, NC State University.

*Urban Agriculture as an Integral Part of Local Food Systems*

Daily access to fresh fruits and vegetables represents a major preventive health issue in many low-resource, US urban communities. NC State University has been engaged with an impressive array of extension programs that address aspects of urban agricultural systems. Joanna will define the "local food system," describe its key components and relationship to urban agriculture, illustrate some of the challenges and successes of planning and designing urban food production, and reflect on potential connections to the new awareness of healthy nutrition issues affecting children.

**Mike Lanza**, MA Ed, MBA. Chief Play Officer, Playborhood.com, Menlo Park, CA.

*Grassroots Initiatives for Children's Placemaking*

The vast majority of children don't roam far enough on their own to reach public parks. Parents are increasingly acting on their own to make their yards and blocks into inviting places for children to play freely every day. Mike will present his own experience to turn his block into a vibrant place for free play for his three young boys, and will also share diverse examples of outstanding grassroots efforts throughout North America.

**Robin Moore**, Dipl.Arch., MCP, ASLA, Director, Natural Learning Initiative, NC State University, Raleigh, NC.

*Cultural Animation of the Urban Landscape: Newly Emerging Professional Roles.*

As a result of the burgeoning lifestyle health crisis, new constellations of professional fields are emerging that integrate health sciences, agricultural sciences, policy development, landscape architecture, and urban design to create new built environment solutions. How can these technical solutions be invested with social-cultural meaning? Playwork and cultural animation, well-established professions

internationally, provide processes for engaging communities in creating cultural meaning. Robin will illustrate and review these new professional roles that can support cultural realignment of the built environment.