

NEGOTIATING WITH THE GROWTH MACHINE: COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENTS AND VALUE- CONSCIOUS GROWTH

COLLEEN CAIN, PHD

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ROAD MAP

- **Review:** literature on growth machine theory, stadium building, and Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs)
- **Describe:** case study
- **Address:** “What are implications of CBAs for pro-growth agendas?”
- **Suggest:** Deconstruction of growth, areas for further research

THE GROWTH MACHINE/COALITION

“an apparatus of interlocking pro-growth associations and governmental units” united behind the doctrine of “value-free development” (Molotch 1976)

THE GROWTH MACHINE AND URBAN STADIUM BUILDING

- **1990s: urban stadium boom**
- **Stadium building typifies growth processes in today's cities**
 - emphasis on city center attractions
 - the symbolic economy
 - global trope
- **Urban saviors?**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GROWTH MACHINE

- **Inherent tension between growth machine and community**
 - Examples: urban renewal & revitalization
 - Result: displacement, inability to afford living costs, environmental hazards
- **Focus on opposition**
- **CBAs = negotiation**

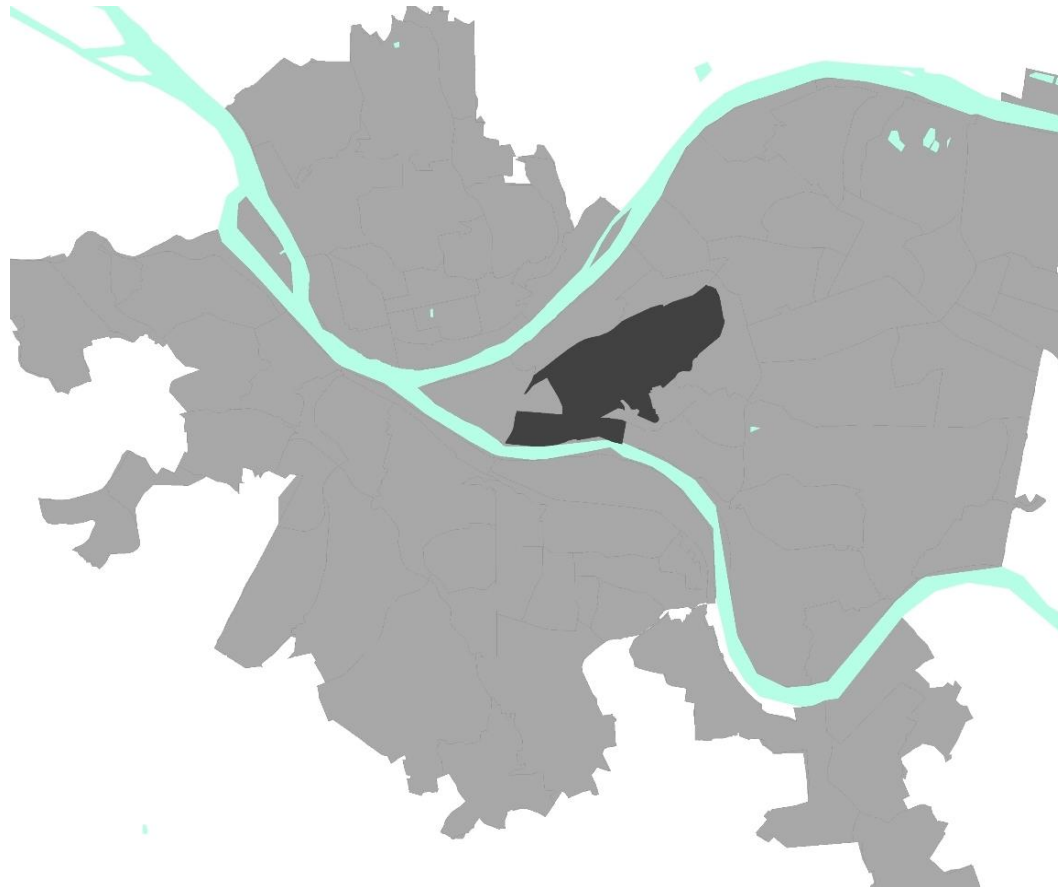
COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENTS AS NEW STRATEGY

- **CBA as unique community response:**
 - contracts between private developers and community-based coalitions
 - Inclusive and enforceable
- **CBA and sports facilities**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

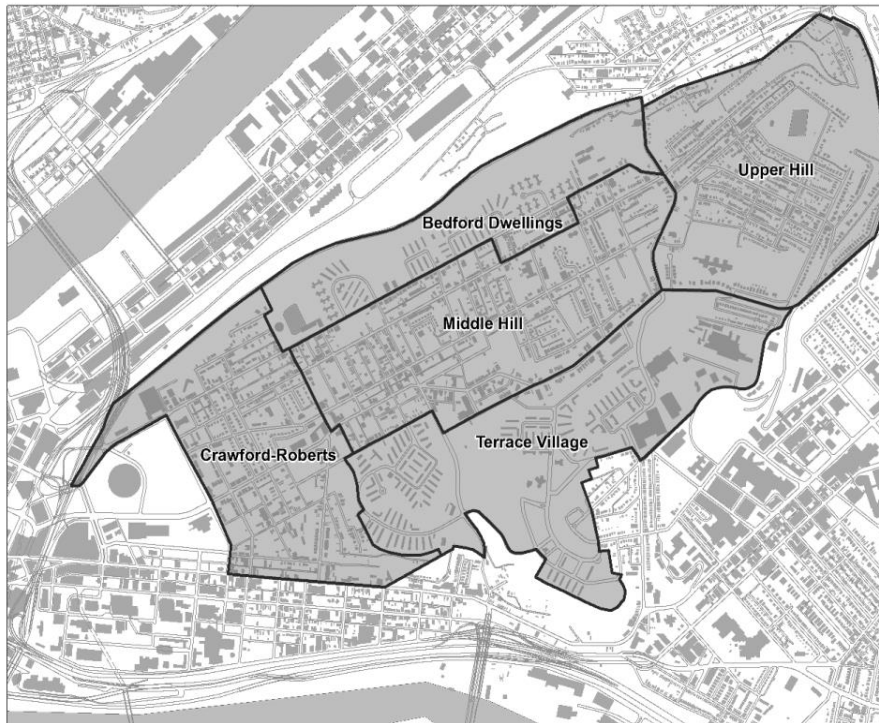
- **What does this relatively new community strategy (the CBA) mean for pro-growth agendas and value-free growth?**
- **What can one learn about pro-growth dynamics from communities' attempts to negotiate with the growth machine/coalition?**

CASE STUDY LOCATION: HILL DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD

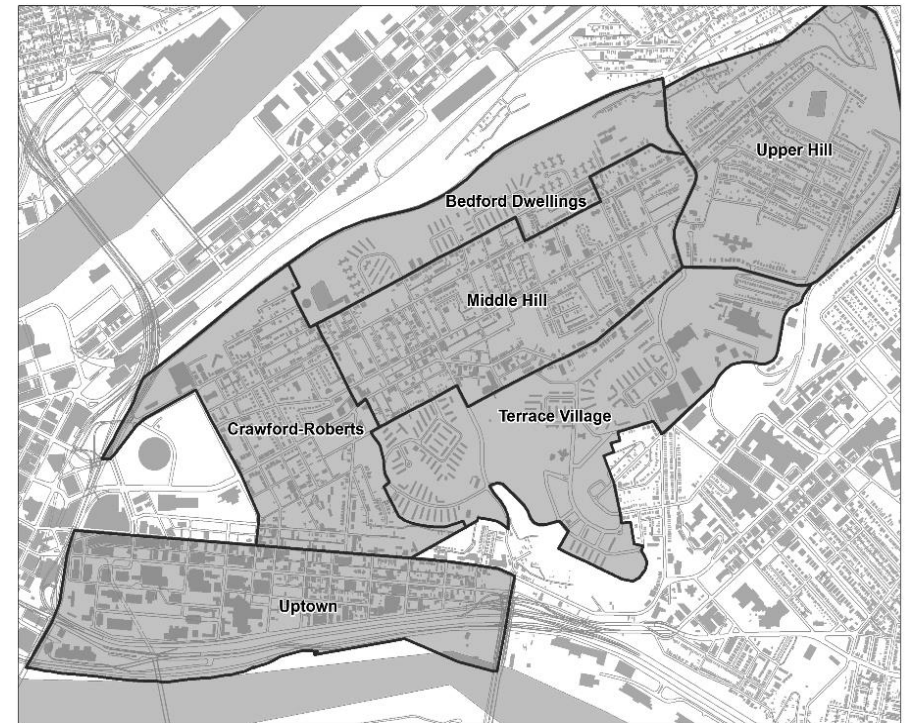


(Source: Pittsburgh Department of City Planning. Map created for author by Jarrod West.)

MAPPING THE HILL DISTRICT



A



B

(Source: Pgh. Dept. of City Planning. Map adapted from Sheridan and Perkey 2008, created for author by Jarrod West.)

BEFORE AND AFTER URBAN RENEWAL



(Source: Photographer Unknown, Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Room. Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh. 1956.)



(Source: Photographer Unknown, Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Room. Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh. 1961.)

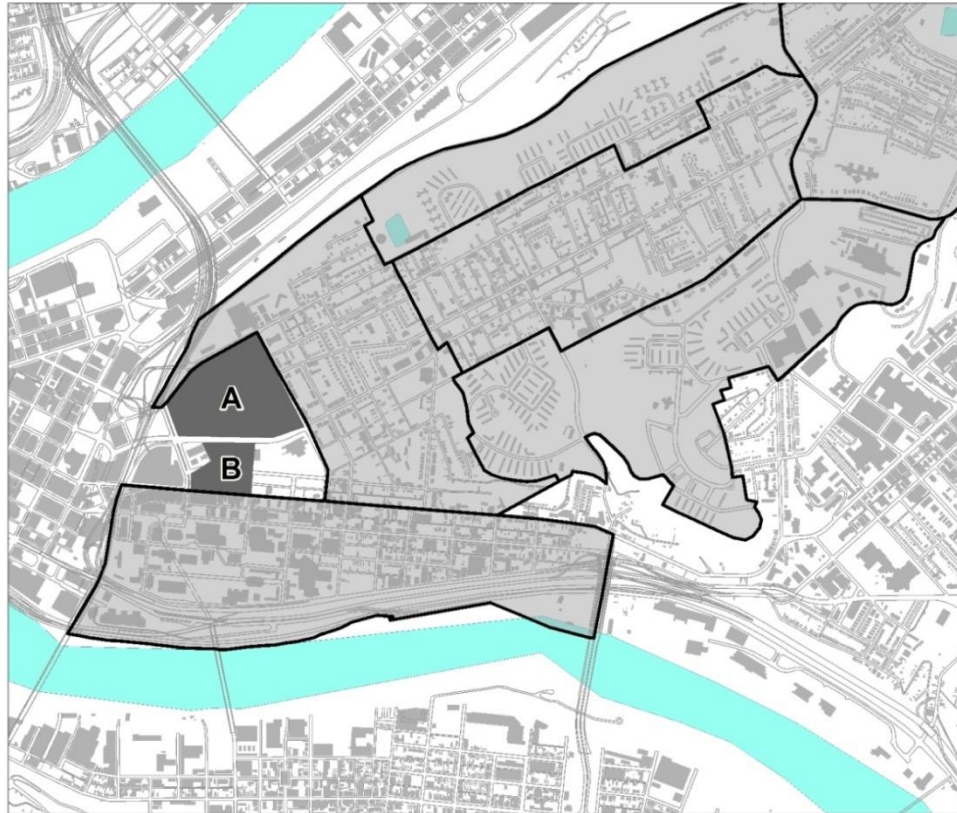
A NEW ARENA: CONSOL ENERGY CENTER



(Source: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

- Cost: \$321 million
 - Annually: \$7.5 million from PA; \$7.5 million from casino
 - Penguins annual rent \$4.1 million
 - + Pens \$15.5 million, PA \$10 million, SEA \$5.5 million

ARENA SITES



(Source: Pgh. Department of City Planning. Map created for author by Jarrod West.)

ARENA CONSTRUCTION



(Source: Photograph taken by author. May, 2009).

THE CBA: CHANGING REDEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS

- **A New and Improved Approach**

- Organized, well-resourced, well-connected
- Legally-binding

At one point, it became clear to us that [the non-community entities] weren't looking at it as a binding agreement. So instead of just talking about the concepts, we started putting legal language in front of them and started drafting, and I think that was important to get them to see a little bit more clearly, you know, we're not just talking about if you feel like it, you can do xyz.

- Accountability and “value-conscious” growth

What developer would say, “Oh, this is the right thing to do. We need to just give back. I know we're going and getting all this, but you know, I just can't sleep at night unless I just...” It doesn't work like that. If I don't have to go through any red tape, any fighting, any obstacles, I'm in hog heaven. You know, it's confusing for even some political people. [They] say, “Why, how can you do this?” It's our taxes, it's our land, this is our community, you know? So [the CBA] is a new thing, and so it's not maybe the best one, but it's beginning to talk about accountability.

- **Toward Community Empowerment**

THE CBA: A CHALLENGE THAT STOPS SHORT

- **CBA as Developer Burden**

- *I think in places that are hard to develop though, if you do this in such a way that it becomes even more burdensome to get developers to develop in, I think that you have to be careful about that.*

- **Community involvement as problematic**

- *if “you do it for one [community], then every time you do a major project in a neighborhood, everybody’s going to be crying that they want a CBA, so where do you begin and where do you stop?”*
- *I think government officials have a hard time embracing [CBAs] because there’s a feeling that this will slow the project down, that somehow this will affect our ability to sell bonds or our ability to get other approvals and we don’t want to be delayed with citizens getting involved, **the people whom we represent**, we don’t want them involved in the process.*

THE CBA: A CHALLENGE THAT STOPS SHORT (CONT.)

- **A Reactive Tool**
 - Ideal: developers use CBAs to gain government approval
 - Reality: pre-existing alignment between public and private sectors
- **Growth Coalition Adaptations**
 - Isolating CBA negotiations from other community participation
 - Failing to cooperate or participate in negotiations
 - Contributing few concrete benefits

MOVING FORWARD: DECONSTRUCTING GROWTH

- **Larger deconstruction of growth**
 - Challenging preconceived notions, asking new questions
- **Dominant growth ideology**
 - City success = profit potential
- **New measures of city success?**
- **Further research**
 - New places
 - Further deconstruction
 - New standards
 - Growth coalition perspectives

CONTACT INFORMATION

Colleen Cain, PhD

Senior Policy Analyst

Northeast-Midwest Institute (www.nemw.org)

Email: ccain@nemw.org