Upfront Takeaways

- Community hotspots galvanize the attention of multiple creative actors around similar values: support for local people and interest in art & design solutions.
- Commercial vacancy, low-cost housing and small job economies allow for independent creative work.
- Short term and ephemeral projects support community building; provide opportunities for design teams to develop pilots/projects and learn to work together.
- Transitional moments and expected change provide opportunities to reprioritize and reorganize. Creative actors can aid in shaping this process, spark dialogue and imagination, develop shared, participatory experiences and build alliances.
Ronit Eisenbach & Partners 2013...
Eisenbach’s Long Branch, Partners, 2013-2017

Sharon Mansur, Dance Artist
John Ruppert, Sculptor, UMD Professor
Edgar Alvarado, AOB & UMD Art, Arch Alum
Richard Jaeggi, Ghandi Brigade
Gerrit Knaap, NCSG
Willow Lung-Amam
Paul Grenier, MHP
UMD architecture, dance & art students
Casa de Maryland
Ghandi Brigade
Docs In Progress
IMPACT Silver Spring
Long Branch Business League (LLBL)
Long Branch Recreation Center
Montgomery County Foundation
Montgomery County Public Library
Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP)
UMD Architecture Program
UMD Art & Architecture Library Endowment
UMD Department of Art
UMD National Center for Smart Growth
UMD Office of Diversity & Inclusion
UMD Program in Architecture
UMD Studio Art Department
Long Branch, Maryland

Washington, DC

Demographic Info

Population: 49.9% White, 23.2% Black, and 46.9% Hispanic, of that group 34.5% hail from Latin America, the majority from Central America.

Citizenship: 39% are not US citizens. Of the US citizens 47% are US born, 2% were born abroad, and 12% are naturalized.

Age: median age is 30.3 and 5.3% of the population is 65 years or older.

Education: 60.5% have less than high school graduation. 6.6% are High School graduates, 30% have some college or associate's degree, and 2.9% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Income: Median household income is $52,897 and the unemployment rate is 8.7%.

Housing: 33% of homes are owner occupied, 67% renter occupied.

Occupations: 31% management, business, science and arts, 32% service, 23% sales and office, 22% natural resources, construction, and maintenance, and 8.2% in production, transportation and material moving.
LONG BRANCH CHALLENGES, 2009:

- **Investment brings gentrification**: A new light rail line in an underserved, diverse first ring DC suburb is expected to spawn development and increase value, potentially forcing longtime residents and local businesses out.

- **Where is it?** Long Branch lacked strong visual identity and public infrastructure.

- **Fragmented Community**: The diverse population offers cultural, economic and social richness. This also means it is composed of many communities whose paths may not cross and who speak different languages.

- **Is there a there, there?** Spatial center is a large surface parking lot built in the 1970’s.

- **It’s been a long time coming**: It is difficult for people to imagine change and know how to get involved.
Connecting People & Places

On Site: Ten Installations, 2013
Superblock Party, 2013
Unity Portrait, 2014
Multi-pronged efforts: Pop-up Art, Cultural Events, Performances, Murals + Color

**Mural and Façade Program** (including structures that will likely be demolished with new development)

**Art Installations & Performances** add delight. Works are strategically placed to encourage new images and spatial connectivity.
Honoring Places of Community Value & Memory

Miles Glass Building. “Still Here, Almost Gone, Spring 2014
A ‘Placeholder’ can be a way of marking one’s place and affirming, “I belong here. This is my place.” The American Flag placed on the moon by Neil Armstrong, or the new murals in Long Branch can be seen to have this meaning. We move and change and the places around us change, too. A “Placeholder” can also be a meaningful image or object that we save because it stands in for something else, perhaps another place, event, or an important person in our lives. Or a “Placeholder” object can be unimportant in and of itself, like a bag left on a chair that stands in for something more important, perhaps the person we are waiting for. The performance and objects we have temporarily added to Long Branch were developed and located to explore these ideas, stimulate dialogue and frame efforts to “make place” here. We invite you to join us and to consider “place as a work in progress” and the roles we can play in affirming community identity and creating meaningful places.

Ronit Eisenbach & Sharon Mansur Long Branch, Maryland
Parking lot - Thinking

"Here's a different way to see. Expand your imagination."

Playground - Being

"You can enter into it. Get in the middle."

Street - Seeing

"This is what it is. Notice"
Parking lot - Thinking

"Here's a different way to see. Expand your imagination."

Playground - Being

"You can enter into it. Get in the middle."

Street - Seeing

"This is what it is. Notice"
Proyecciones Públicas! Public Projections!
Arts on the Block

2006....
Representative from Anacostia Watershed Society visiting the Carroll Avenue Community Center, 8733 Carroll Avenue, Silver Spring on November 28, 2017 to discuss importance of environmental stewardship for our local waterways.
Arts on the Block
Carrol Avenue/Quebec Terrace
“I helped design these signs, and watching the kids put them together really made my heart feel happy because they were working on something that was going to be a part of our community for a long time.”

– Common Ground Teen Mentor Maria Gomez
“It is exactly initiatives like this one, conceived by Arts on the Block that demonstrate that despite obstacles, good things are accomplished when we work together.” Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett at the stairs’ dedication.
Joining Forces

The LightScape Garden & Lantern Library Project: Improving Literacy, Safety & Community through Design 2016-2020

Carroll Avenue/Quebec Terrace, just outside of the Long Branch Sector Plan, In Montgomery County on the border of Prince George’s County
Let’s do it! Vamos a hacerlo!

Create a space for the children & community.
Crear un espacio para los niños & comunidad.

What does this playground mean to you?
¿Qué significa para usted este parque infantil?

How would you love to ‘feel’ in this new space?
¿Cómo le encantaría “sentirse” en este nuevo espacio?

How would you love your children to ‘feel’?
¿Cómo le gustaría que sus hijos se sintieran?

What would you love to see in the space?
¿Qué más le gustaría ver en este espacio?
WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

Rain Gardens are specially designed to slow down and soak up stormwater using native plants. They are strategically located to capture runoff from impervious surfaces, such as roofs, streets and parking lots. Rain gardens fill with a few inches of water after a storm and then water filters into the ground, rather than running off to a storm drain.

- Enhanced wildlife habitat
- Water conservation
- Improved air quality
- Native species conservation
- Reduced erosion
- Filters water pollution

¿QUÉ SON LOS JARDINES DE LLUVIA?

Jardines de Lluvia son especialmente diseñados para reducir la velocidad y absorber las aguas pluviales utilizando plantas nativas. Están estratégicamente localizados para capturar la escorrentía de superficies impermeables como techos, carreteras y aparcamientos. Los jardines de lluvia se llenan con unas cuantas pulgadas de agua después una tormenta y luego el agua se filtra en el suelo en lugar de correr hacia un drenaje de aguas pluviales.

- Mejora el hábitat de la vida silvestre
- Conservación del agua
- Mejora la calidad del aire
- Conservación de especies nativas
- Reduce la erosión
- Filtra la contaminación del agua
Luminous Library
Biblioteca Luminosa
Left: Architect Ronit Eisenbach discussing the Lightscape Garden model (right) with the community.

Left: Lucia Meijia of the YMCA provides Spanish translation for Anne L’Ecuyer (AOB).

Right: Children recording book ideas for Library Lanterns during the Community Meeting.
A state bond bill will support increasing lighting to increase safety. Proposal for placing Illuminated Little Free Libraries around the neighborhood.
PARTNERS AND SPONSORS:

Carroll Avenue Apartments & Residential One Management

Denchfield Landscaping

University of Maryland National Research Initiatives

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Department of Environmental Protection
Montgomery County - Maryland

Montgomery County 1776

Maryland

Jim and Carol Trawick Foundation

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DPLA
Digital Public Library of America
DESIGN TEAM:

DESIGN LEAD    

Architect: Ronit Eisenbach, Architect
Design Assistant: Austin Raimond, Sadie Dempsey, Russell Holstine
Design Team: Heather Summers, Sara Ghafar Samar
Interns: Lais Barbosa, Ana Maria Ferraz

AOB ARTISTS

Common Ground Youth Artists
Natalie Ramirez, AOB Teaching Artist

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Lila Fendrick, Landscape Architects

LIGHTING DESIGN

Debra Gilmore

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Peter Neubauer, Neubauer Consulting Engineers

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

Daren Shumate

CIVIL ENGINEER

Heshmat Eskandari, T.E.S Consultants

FABRICATION

Thomas Acciavatti

Design & fabrication
Hindsight Before You Begin

- As time evolves and projects grow in scale, more funding, planning oversight and administrative support is required; older projects need maintenance.

- As successful creative partnerships develop over time, more ‘connective tissue’ and design innovation is possible, neighborhood itself generates elements of planning.

- Works that were produced independently begin to be seen as a collection, and the community is further known as a ‘place’ which can bring both wanted and unwanted attention.

- Network of partners in the region develops over time with both long term players and new creative shoots, taking on characteristics of a creative ecology.

- Permanent projects take a long time from promise to delivery, develop strategies to circle back to community to check decisions, avoid disappointment and build stewardship for future.