EDITOR'S NOTE

Lawrence S. Drexler

This issue of *Delaware Lawyer* provides a thought-provoking look at the impact of violence that plagues parts of Wilmington on the children who live there. Our writers also provide thoughts regarding Wilmington's future.

We challenge the Bar to rise up in response and ask members to personally commit to help break down the isolation of these communities.

In the first issue of the *Delaware Lawyer*, Harold Schmittinger, the Chair of the then newly-created Delaware Bar Foundation, described the purpose of the magazine as "fill[ing] a void and provid[ing] Delaware lawyers with an outlet for scholarly and responsible works of appeal to the professional and public alike."[1]

In this issue we honor the Bar Foundation's mission and the original intent of the founders of *Delaware Lawyer*. Jane Stevens contributes an article on the "direct link" between childhood trauma and adult behavior, including mental and social problems that may lead to prison.

Understanding these connections is essential to determining how the justice system (including the agents of school discipline) can best respond to this population and chart a course to mitigate or minimize the long-term consequences of toxic stress events.

Lamont Browne, principal of the EastSide Charter School, brings real-world classroom experience to the theory of toxic stress, explaining both the manifestations and the school's response. When Dr. Browne was hired as Head of School for the 2011-2012 year, students' test scores were 30 points behind State averages. EastSide is rapidly closing that achievement gap under Dr. Browne's leadership.

Ashley Widdoes is the Mentor Coordinator for EastSide Charter and writes about the benefits of mentoring. Mentoring is something we can each do to mitigate the impact of toxic stress on this generation of primary school children. Ashley is the point of contact for readers interested in making a difference as a mentor.

Dhazhea Freeman's poem "Why I Write" gives us a view from an eighth-grader at EastSide Charter. Each time I read this poem, I am struck by the contrast of stark images — and her knowledge that opportunities for a better life do exist.

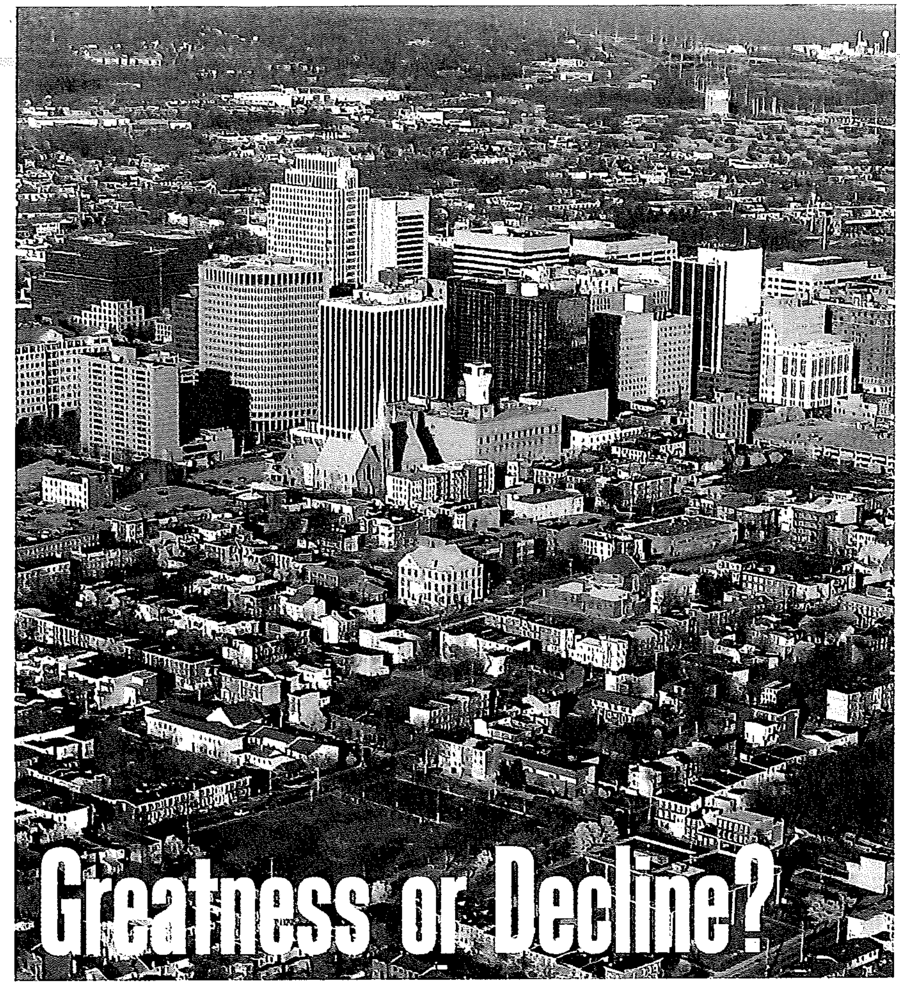
Richard Voith contributes a scholarly article of the past and future prospects for the City of Wilmington. While I appreciate Dick's insights, I confess that I'm still stung by the memory of Dick hitting a buzzer-beating basket for Haverford College in 1977, defeating my alma mater Franklin & Marshall. Chuck Durante describes that win as the greatest in Haverford history, knocking the Diplomats out of the MAC tournament and denying them an invite to the NCAA Division 3 Championship.

Finally, I am pleased to have an article describing an earlier time in Wilmington from the best writer I know and a role model for all that I do, my father, Dave Drexler.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Delaware Lawyer* Volume 1, Number 1 Spring 1982 pg. 3.

Richard Voith
President and Founding Principal
Econsult Solutions, Inc.



Wilmington on the Edge: Greatness or Decline?

As urban areas make a comeback, Downtown Wilmington has the potential for growth and new vitality.

Wilmington is a story of two cities, both of which have promise but still have to confront significant challenges. Downtown Wilmington has a strong employment base and has benefitted from significant private investment in the commercial and residential sectors. Major financial institutions anchor the downtown, where nearly 32,300 people work. Over the last decade, there has been a small but important increase in the number of people living downtown, which has contributed to its vitality.[1]

Despite the increasing number of residents, however, downtown Wilmington has yet to reach the critical mass of activity that characterizes vibrant downtowns. Moreover, it remains isolated from nearby Wilmington neighborhoods despite their close proximity.

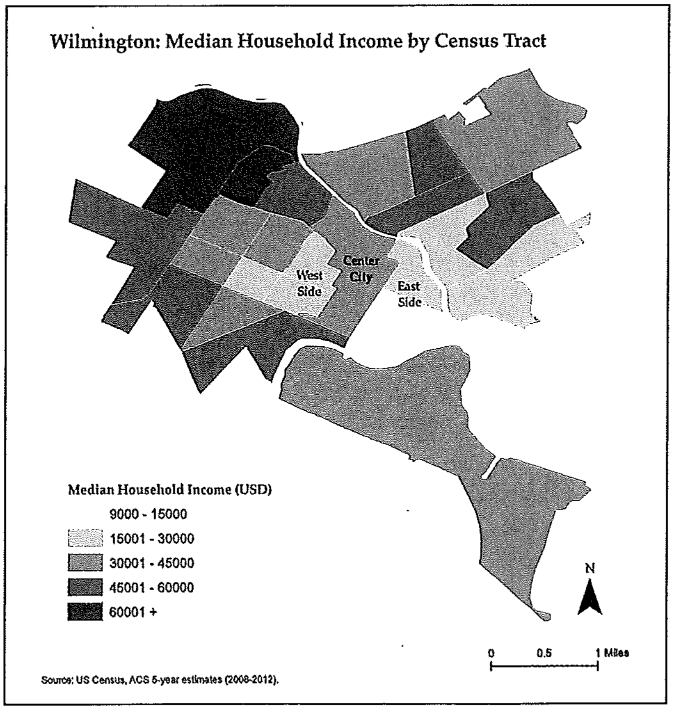
Central Wilmington neighborhoods adjacent to downtown have not fared as well. Residents of these neighborhoods have low or modest incomes and education, confront real and perceived public safety issues and have seen their neighborhood populations decline while the neighborhoods remain disconnected from the more prosperous downtown.

Both the East Side and West Side neighborhoods adjacent to downtown saw double-digit declines in population from 2000-to-2010, and that trend continued from 2010-to-2013.[2] Residents of these neighborhoods have a median income less than half that of downtown residents, although there is considerable variation in income within the neighborhoods.[3]

Both the East Side and West Side are primarily minority neighborhoods and both neighborhoods have been adversely affected by Wilmington's high violent crime rate. The city reported 903 violent crimes (per 100,000 people) in 2012, far above the national average of

214. Still, both East Side and West Side neighborhoods have the advantage of being favorably located relative to the employment opportunities downtown.

Because Wilmington is a small city with just 71,000 people and only 17 square miles of land,[4] the fates of the downtown and nearby neighborhoods are tightly linked economically, fiscally and socially. How Wilmington copes with the challenges currently confronting the city's central neighborhoods will determine, in part, whether the city participates in the broader renaissance of American cities in the 21st century.



Understanding the Urban Prospect: *The American City in the 21st Century*

Until at least the 1990s, people of the Baby Boom generation experienced decades of urban decline for most of their adult life. After New York City narrowly avoided bankruptcy in the late 1970s, no one was predicting growth or prosperity for cities. Deindustrialization and loss of manufacturing jobs, racial animosity and social problems, and the development of efficient highway systems coupled with deteriorating urban transit made continued city decline and corresponding rapid suburban growth seem inevitable.

This was particularly the case in the older Midwest and the Northeast regions, which were developed earlier than the newer, suburban-style, auto-dependent cities in the Southern and Western parts of the nation that continued to grow without interruption.

Over the last two decades, a regime shift has been taking place in the historical centrifugal pattern of urban population and employment trends in American cities. The systematic economic and demographic decline of central cities that was prevalent from the 1960s to the 1990s has slowed, and in many cases, reversed. New York City did, in fact, increase its population by 1,334,198 (18 percent) from 1980 through 2013.[5] Many other formerly declining cities, both small and large, including Philadelphia, Wilmington's neighbor, have stabilized and begun to grow once again.

While suburbs are still growing, the "inevitable" decline of American cities appears not to be inevitable at all, but rather a particular historical moment that coincided with the growth of the auto-oriented suburbs and the transition from an industrial economy to a service-oriented economy.

A New Urban Era

Urbanism in the United States has reached a new equilibrium. Cities are once again becoming places where job creation, innovation and economic opportunities arise. Moreover, many cities are developing residential neighborhoods that offer a higher quality of life than has ever been possible in American cities. The cultural images of cities have changed from hugely negative ones depicted in movies such as *Fort Apache the Bronx* to more positives ones in movies such as *Sex in the City*, although the Baltimore-based television show *The Wire* is a reminder that all is not well in the city.

Evidence for the broad trend of past divergence of cities and suburbs and recent convergence is seen in the relative growth rates of cities and suburbs. The share of metropolitan residents living in suburbs increased from 23 percent in 1950 to 45 percent in 1980. It has since stabilized after it rose to 50 percent in 2000 and only increased by one percentage point over the last decade.[6]

Additionally, the continued improvement in cities is evident in the most recent population data from 2010-2013. Central cities in large metropolitan areas saw their population increase by 1.1 percent annually, a higher rate than seen in the respective suburbs of each area, which grew by 0.9 percent annually over the same period.[7]

Wilmington may be beginning to share in the positive trends. Although Wilmington lost 2.5 percent of its population from 2000-2010, its population is estimated to have increased slightly from 2010-2013.

Some of the reasons why cities have seen improving fortunes are shaped by the actions of the cities, while others are not under their control. The reasons U.S. cities have stabilized and begun to grow include:

- Many suburbs are nearing their maximal development given the limitations of suburban zoning.
- Local suburban governments often discourage new development for fiscal and environmental reasons.
- Highway capacity expansion has dramatically slowed as enormous capital expenditures are required to rebuild existing roads.
- The millennial generation is less auto-oriented and more city-oriented than recent prior generations and find cities more attractive for access to amenities, jobs, housing and friends.
- Many Baby Boomers have

downsized into high-amenity urban neighborhoods with convenient proximity to healthcare.

- Highly skilled workers are more productive in cities, and consequently want to work in cities as U.S. cities have transitioned to a "knowledge-based" economy.
- The decline in household sizes across all age groups also has contributed to an increase in demand for smaller central city residences.
- Immigrants have greatly helped with the revitalization of urban neighborhoods.

The emergence of these forces that have been driving the revitalization of U.S. cities have important implications for the future of Wilmington. Despite the extended national period of slow growth since the financial-induced recession of 2008, current-day Wilmington can benefit from the trends that have favored cities.

Wilmington: Opportunities and Challenges

Although cities are better positioned to compete in the modern economy than they have been in 50 years, Wilmington faces challenges to fully take advantage of positive urban trends. These challenges fall into three broad categories:

- Creating an excellent urban quality of life.
- Building on and diversifying beyond the current strong finance-based employment base.
- Ensuring that improvements benefit a broad base of the Wilmington population.

Urban Quality of Life

Successful cities are ones that provide an alternative, complementary option to the car-oriented suburban lifestyle that has dominated American development over the last half-century. Cities that provide safe, walkable and diverse environments are attractive to significant segments of the population, including the millennial generation, empty-nesters and families.

This means that basic services, such as public safety, are prerequisites for creating a vibrant city. The current reality and perception that Wilmington's violent crime is far too high must be addressed, first and foremost. Providing basic public services are necessary but not sufficient for the city to reach its potential.

Because successful cities depend, in part, on vibrant walkable environments, land use and design become key policy considerations. Creating these vibrant urban environments often requires rethinking prior preconceptions. Density is not necessarily bad, and often it is good. Mixed-uses are good. Travel options — walking, bicycling, transit and cars — all play important roles.

Cities need vibrant downtowns. A vibrant downtown is a city's calling card to the world. The density of economic activity in a vibrant downtown provides the fiscal resources necessary to support healthy neighborhoods. Downtowns also have the potential to provide employment and income to neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods, on the other hand, can provide affordable, convenient and attractive places to live with easy access to the opportunities of a vibrant downtown. Thus, it is in the interest of Wilmington as a whole to have a prosperous downtown that is well connected to its neighborhoods.

Although Wilmington benefits from a very strong base of major employers and institutions and has the potential to have a vibrant urban core, it still lacks the residential density and diversity of activities to create the perception that downtown Wilmington is an attractive place to be, and, just as importantly for neighborhoods, an attractive place to be near. Moreover, there is an insufficient physical and perceptual connection between downtown and the neighborhoods.

Wilmington needs to continue to create a vibrant center and forge a more cohesive relationship between its neighborhoods and the downtown area. Wilmington residents also would benefit from improved transit connections with Philadelphia, which would offer residents of both cities a broader array of opportunities for work, culture and play.

Economic Diversity

The Wilmington economy is heavily dependent on the finance industry.[8] The city of Wilmington's Annual Budget report noted Wilmington's reliance on the finance, banking and credit card industries that make up its economic base. However, many of the employees in those industries are not Wilmington residents.[9]

In order to provide opportunities for a broader array of residents, Wilmington should seek to build upon its strong finance base with other industries, including hospitality, retail and other service sector jobs that may be better suited to the skills of current residents. To the extent that it is possible to increase specialty manufacturing and provide training, this may prove a viable avenue for improving opportunity in the city.

There has been much written about the "creative class" and their role in creating vibrant cities. In recent years, many cities have seen a revitalization of urban neighborhoods by entrepreneurs in the creative, information technology and hospitality sectors. People with dreams and visions have taken root in cities and positively transformed neighborhoods. These smaller-scale activities should be encouraged in addition to larger-scale economic development.

Sharing Benefits of Revitalization

Neighborhood residents are often skeptical of downtown and neighborhood revitalization — and for good reason. Housing affordability is crucial to fostering social inclusivity, but urban revitalization can drive up both rents and house values, which would diminish the supply of affordable housing. The conflict between urban growth and housing affordability can lead to the displacement of longtime residents. Growing and revitalizing cities can respond to this issue by understanding and explicitly planning for housing affordability.

The preservation and production of affordable housing in a growing city may require significant intervention in the housing market, especially to protect longtime and fixed-income residents. Approaches to ensuring affordable housing run the gamut from publicly produced and managed housing to publicly subsidized housing, through down-payment assistance and low-interest mortgages to low-income tax credits and housing vouchers, to rent control. Other options include municipal-level regulatory requirements, such as zoning and inclusionary housing mandates, project-specific requirements to include affordable housing, market-rate developments and protections against rising property tax increase for longtime homeowners. Each of these approaches has its own set of challenges, and, if approached too aggressively, may prevent private investment in neighborhood improvements.

Essentially, there needs to be a balance in protecting the quality of life of existing residents with the inevitable influx of new residents that will come with improvements in urban centers.

Another approach to preserving affordable housing in the face of growing attractiveness of cities is the non-profit community land trust (CLT). These have been established to acquire and manage properties with the goal of providing perpetually affordable housing (and other community amenities) to existing residents. CLTs facilitate the preservation of affordable housing by removing the cost of land from the purchase price and by limiting the future price for which the home can be resold if the homeowner leaves the trust.[10]

In planning for affordable housing and inclusive development, communities have to balance the demand for affordable housing with the need to preserve and enhance home values, which fund the production of public services. Wilmington will need to enhance its capacity to provide urban amenities, such as public safety and quality infrastructure, in order to retain existing residents and to attract new ones across various income groups, education levels and cultural backgrounds. ◆

Econsult Solutions' Gabrielle Connor, Ashley Motta, Leslie Parker and Greg Paone all contributed to this article.

FOOTNOTES

1. *"Population Distribution and Change: 2000 to 2010,"* U.S. Census (2011).
2. The population of the combined East Side and West Center City downtown areas declined from 11,545 to 10,027 (15 percent) from 2000 to 2010.
3. The American Community Survey estimates median income for the four relevant tracts in 2013 inflation- adjusted values: Tract 9 ($27,179), Tract 16 ($29,028), Tract 21 ($24,977), and Tract 29 ($14,906).
4. U.S. Census Bureau 2012.
5. U.S. Census Bureau.
6. Jackson 1985, NHGIS 2014.
7. U.S. Census Bureau,
8. As of 2012, 12 percent of jobs available in Wilmington were in a finance-related industry.
9. American Community Survey (2008-2012) reported that only 7.5 percent of the civilian employed population of Wilmington's downtown area work in a finance-related industry.
10. For a more detailed look at the housing affordability challenge, *see "The affordability Challenge: Inclusionary Housing and Community Land Trusts in a Federal System."*