



## About New Community Corporation

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### **New Community is recognized as;**

- The largest and most comprehensive community development organization in the United States
- A large-scale deliverer of comprehensive programs and services
- A leader in affordable housing and economic development
- A model, nationally and internationally, among non-profit, social entrepreneurship, and CDC communities
- Having beneficial partnerships on the local, national, and global level

### **New Community History**

Over 40 years ago, the civil disorders of 1967 tore through Newark's Central Ward. The result of many years of political disenfranchisement, poverty and unemployment, deteriorating housing conditions, and poor police-community relations, the community had had enough. Five days of conflict left over 23 dead, more than 1,000 injured, nearly 1,600 arrested and \$15 million worth of property in ruins. The real toll was far deeper. The disorders were a disaster that threatened lives and homes and ripped apart the very fabric of the community.

Impacted by decades of white flight to the suburbs, Newark had hit rock bottom. Shopkeepers fled, most never to return. Residents were left without essential services. There were no homes, no jobs and no hope. The Central Ward of 1967 bore a closer resemblance to the bombed-out cities of Europe after World War II than to the largest city in New Jersey, one of the most prosperous states in the nation.

Much of the Central Ward lay in ruins and its residents, mostly poor minorities, desperately needed housing, employment, and social services. The aftermath of this history-altering event caused the media and political leaders to write Newark off as one of the nation's most hopeless cities.

Incumbents in Newark's City Hall showed little interest in addressing neighborhood problems as very little of the Federal anti-poverty money directed to Newark actually filtered down to benefit the poor. With no other options for improving their community, citizens were left with the challenge of taking on a grass roots approach

and creating interest in the plight of their neighborhood in hopes of turning things around.

"I used to tell people I was convinced someone was going to put a fence around Newark and we'd end up living on a reservation," says NCC founder Monsignor William J. Linder. "My own thinking was that we needed to get a development corporation committed to low-income neighborhoods, and the disorders forced us to get together and start implementing."

The 1967 disturbances laid bare the pressing needs and outrages of life in Newark, a city without many of the most basic resources and services taken for granted in most urban centers. Huge numbers of people desperately needed work, but there were few jobs. There were growing numbers of young families, but day care was virtually nonexistent and mothers had no place to leave their children. Hospitals were strained by the crush of patients and health care was difficult to obtain. Decent, affordable housing was virtually impossible to come by. Many wondered, "Would the community bounce back?"; "How would all of these issues be solved?"

That summer a group of residents led by Monsignor William Linder, a young parish priest, began meeting informally at the Queen of Angels church, a local Catholic church, to begin answering these questions. They talked about why their neighborhood had exploded, what might be done to make life better and how to avert a repetition of the disaster.

In January 1968 New Community Corporation was born out of the disorder, poverty and despair with the hope of revitalizing the community through faith, hope, and leverage. With little resources, no money, and no political influence, the group led by Monsignor Linder faced overwhelming odds against success.

The original NCC Board of Directors included Willie Wright, President; Timothy Still, Vice President; Elma Bateman, Secretary; Arthur J. Bray, Msgr. Thomas J. Carey, Joseph Chaneyfield, Robert Curvin, Kenneth Gibson and Father Linder.

Their goal was simple and bold: to develop safe, decent and attractive housing for poor residents in a new community within the Central Ward. They sought to use the new housing to spur neighborhood revitalization. To promote interest and pride, they developed a process for community participation in developing the new housing, including actively involving residents in the design process.

They proposed developing a 45-acre tract--South Orange Avenue to the north, 15th Avenue to the south, Jones Street (now Irvine Turner Boulevard) to the east and

Bergen Street to the west--covering fourteen city blocks in the heart of the Central Ward.

NCC began by purchasing two acres of land. The Board envisioned the development of this land as a small beginning, which would have a significant impact. "The two acres--and from them the entire 45--will stand as a symbol of a community that rebuilt itself physically and spiritually." they wrote.

The early days brought severe challenges. There were numerous confrontations with black nationalist and activists who were acquiring a large local following. White conservatives, who were anxious to block political or economic gains by blacks, objected to NCC's efforts to improve life in the Central Ward and used racially inflammatory tactics to block progress.

There were few models for the kind of resident-led community development NCC was trying to achieve. It took years of struggle to develop housing plans that would be approved by state and federal authorities, to secure financing for construction, and to cultivate skills members would need to undertake the complex task of a housing development.

## **New Community Accomplishments**

New Community's first real estate development project opened in 1975. It was followed by a series of family and senior residences that were built and opened throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In 1985, NCC completed the renovation of its current headquarters, St. Joseph Plaza located on West Market Street. This became one of NCC's first economic development projects, converting the formerly shuttered church into a 24,000 square foot complex that included office & conference space, a restaurant, and jazz club. An extended care facility opened in 1986 and a transitional facility for homeless families, called Harmony House, was completed in 1989. The New Community Neighborhood Shopping Center, including a Pathmark supermarket, opened its doors in 1990.

The NCC Neighborhood Shopping Center has been an asset to consumers in the Central Ward for almost twenty years. Prior to this development, there had not been a major supermarket in the City of Newark for more than 30 years. An NCC-owned Dunkin' Donuts, is also located at the Bergen Street shopping center. All earnings from the NCC franchise are reinvested in the community through NCC's programs and projects.

The pace and scope of NCC's undertakings mushroomed during the 1990s to include a rapidly expanding presence in health care, Hispanic development and immigration

services, a state-of-the-art workforce development & job training facility, one of New Jersey's largest welfare-to-work programs and community-based charter schools.

Over the course of four decades, New Community had become the nation's largest, most comprehensive and accomplished provider of community-based programs and services. Today, it stands as the nation's most compelling model of "critical scale" community-based development.

The \$25 million Community Hills development of two- and three-bedroom town homes, for instance, provides home ownership opportunities on the site of the former Hayes Homes public housing project, adjacent to the flashpoint of the 1967 disorders.

New Community's latest housing development, Roseville Commons, will provide 50 units of low and moderate income housing in the West Ward of Newark through a partnership with RPM Development Corp., one of New Jersey's leading private developers of affordable housing. Ground is scheduled to be broken on the mixed-used project, that will also include retail space, during the latter half of 2009.

Guided by its mission "to help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement," New Community has also moved into education, early childhood learning and the expansion of community-based health care, with the opening of a major health care complex in 2004.

In addition to its 180-bed Extended Care Facility, New Community is also offering home care through its Essex Valley Visiting Nurse Association. Wellness Clinics staffed by a nurse practitioner were also established in two of New Community's senior residences in early 2009.

New Community is also opening a 30-bed sub-acute unit within its Extended Care Center in 2009, catering to patients who require shorter stays than the typical nursing home offers.

In its commitment to providing comprehensive and holistic services, NCC is leading the way for the next generation of community-based development.