



THE BULLETIN

A DAILY NEWS UPDATE ON THE MISSISSIPPI RENEWAL FORUM IN BILOXI • OCTOBER 13, 2005

Barbour: no business as usual after Katrina

BY ROBERT STEUTEVILLE

An estimated 500 people – a standing room only crowd – attended the first day of the Mississippi Renewal Forum, hearing Gov. Haley Barbour say that for the first time in the state's history, the recovery and renewal effort from Hurricane Katrina will be done right. The state has suffered four major catastrophes in its history, Barbour explained. After the Civil War, the state received no help and did not recover until after World War II. After the 1927 flood, the federal government tried to help the state through the efforts of the Hoover Commission, but the Great Depression intervened. After Camille in 1969, "it was business as usual," Barbour said. "They were building service stations on the beach two months later. This is our fourth chance, and I'm determined that we are not going to miss that chance."

The crowd included 110 experts in planning, architecture, and land development from across the nation as-

The skeletal structure of a church and other buildings in Long Beach, as photographed from a helicopter ride on Tuesday afternoon.



SANDY SORLIEN

CONTENTS

Helicopter reveals devastation, page 3

Three steps of recovery, page 3

They've got maps, page 4

Mississippi by the numbers, page 5

Interview: Andres Duany, page 5

The Mississippi Renewal Forum: what is it? page 6

Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal, page 8

CNU team leaders, page 8

Mississippi counties, page 8



SANDY SORLIEN

The Mississippi Renewal Forum participants listen to presentations on Wednesday.

sembled by the Congress for the New Urbanism. These were joined by local officials, planners, and architects, and state and federal officials on the first day of a weeklong brainstorming session called a "charrette" to generate ideas, images, plans, codes, and other tools to help communities rebuild. Specifically addressing the out of state experts, Barbour said: "We need your help and we appreciate it. We will be eternally grateful."

Thirty years from now, people are going to say of those who were in charge after Katrina, "They got it. They understood. They did what had to be done," Barbour said. "You are going to have as much to do with whatever is said [in the future] as anybody," he

told the group.

Barbour joked that he had "never heard the word charrette before, let alone tried to spell it." He added that this forum is only one of many mechanisms for citizen and expert input on the reconstruction effort, including extensive town hall meetings and special studies.

Local meetings to begin immediately after

The first town hall meeting for residents will take place on October 19, a day after the Renewal Forum ends, says James Barksdale, chairman of the Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal, which is partnering with CNU to put on the forum. The commission is not a governmental agency and is funded from private sources, Barksdale said. That offers the advantage of not having to wait for legislative approval – which slowed down decision making after Camille and Hurricane Andrew in Florida, he said. The Forum itself is largely funded by the Knight Foundation, a charitable organization created by the Knight-Ridder Newspapers. Knight-Ridder owns the daily SunHerald in Biloxi.

THE BULLETIN

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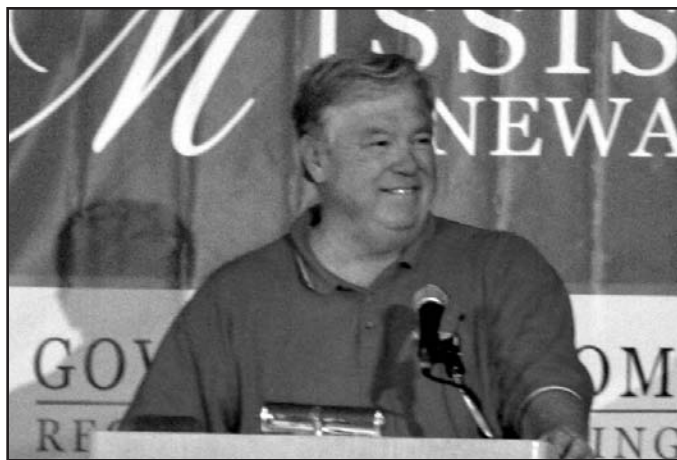
Contributors: Philip Langdon,
 Jason Miller, Sandy Sorlien,
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The CNU team members "are here to work with you," Barksdale told local officials. "They are not here to tell you anything. If you don't like what they say, don't listen to them. But they have done this hundreds of time before." These points were similar to Barbour's statement about the commission headed by Barksdale. "The Commission's role is advisory, it has no authority to impose any decision on anybody."

The forum participants should place top priority on designing solutions for the middle class and poor, Barksdale said. "Start with them – they are the ones that will be most affected by the new flood lines." He was referring to new standards set by FEMA that will affect lending practices. Barksdale added that local public officials, many of whom lost their homes, have been making heroic efforts on behalf of citizens. It's difficult to do long-range planning under these circumstances, but it is also critical, he said. "It's the worst time to do this, it's the best time to do this," Barksdale said.

The Renewal Forum is unprecedented in size, Barksdale said. "It's 10 times larger than any such planning exercise ever attempted," he said. He added that the effort would be controversial. "You can't get a group together of this size – except maybe on motherhood – without controversy."

Gov. Haley Barbour



SANDY SORLIEN



SANDY SORLIEN

Andres Duany, right, walks to the helicopter

Helicopter reveals devastation

On the first day of the Renewal Forum, many member of the design team flew in a Blackhawk helicopter to view the devastation. The event was filmed and brought home to the participants the extent of the devastation. North Carolina architect Milton Grenfell observed that buildings placed close together in urban areas fared better than those that were on their own. In one case an accessory unit behind a house survived when the house did not, Duany noted. Also, Duany said that in many cases the older houses survived where newer houses collapsed.

Three steps of recovery

There are three stages to bringing back the Mississippi Coast, according to officials. Recovery involves getting people into housing – temporary and otherwise – getting the streets

cleared, and figuring out issues such as insurance. That takes a year to a year and a half. The rebuilding effort takes 5 to 10 years and involves getting the communities back to normal, with residents, economic activity, civic institutions and the like. Renewal, which could take 20 years, involves making the communities better than they were before Katrina. The job of the Forum participants is to think in terms of a 10 to 20 year time frame – not to focus mainly on the crisis, Duany says. On the other hand, Miami architect Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk noted that it might be good to envision how to create one perfect place in each community in the short term.

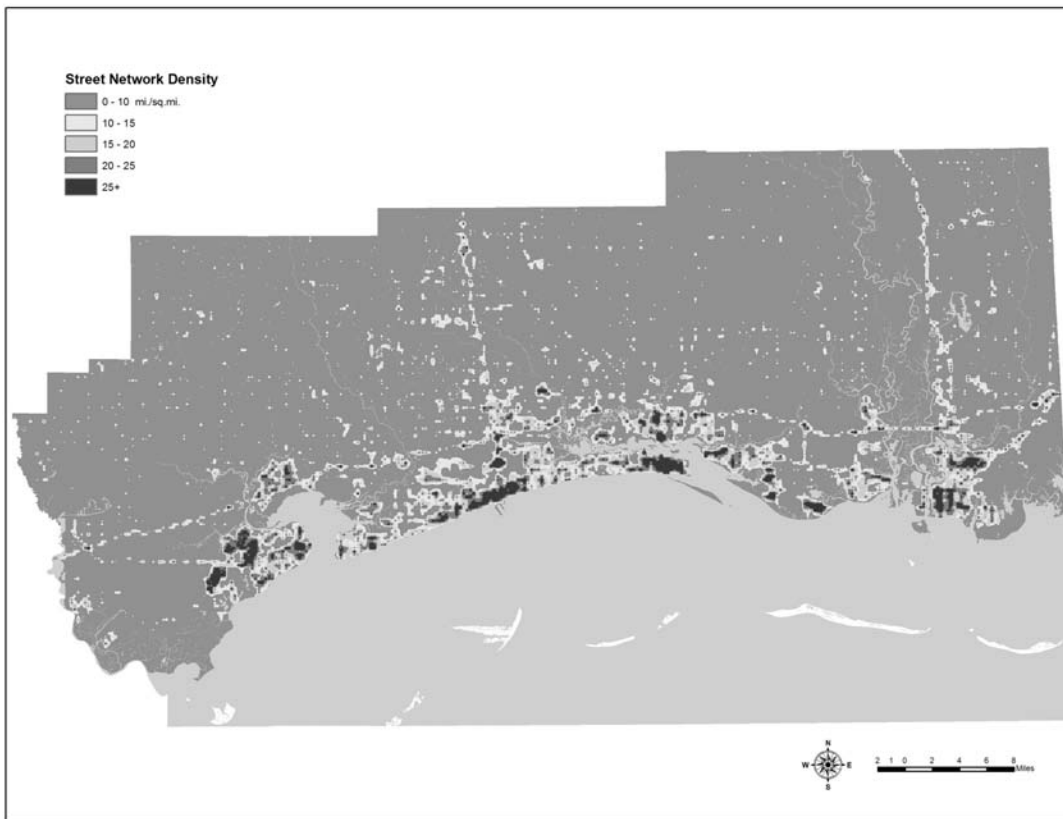
features throughout the Mississippi Gulf region, according to Eliot Allen, principal of Criterion, based in Portland, Oregon.

Criterion will also be available to do custom mapping for each team that focuses on any area, all the way down to individual neighborhoods. These can cover the following: aerial photos; damage assessments; demographics; business locations, types, and jobs; government jurisdiction boundaries; national register historic sites; housing units and types; soils; topography; existing land-use; zoning; state-owned land; federal land; streets by class; railroads; transit routes; MPO traffic analysis zones; natural gas service areas; water service areas; wastewater service areas; power transmission line rights of way; flood zones; surface waters; wetlands; watersheds & subwatersheds; and wild-life habitat areas.

In addition to mapping, Criterion is able to simulate land-use and transportation scenarios for impact evaluation; and in 3D for visualization.

They've got maps

Base maps produced by Criterion Planners will be delivered to each of the 11 planning teams at four scales: 1:5000, 1:2000, 1:1000, and 1:500. These maps will show streets, parcels, building footprints, and water



This map of street network density indicates a strong potential for urbanism in the Gulf Coast communities

CRITERION PLANNERS

Mississippi by the numbers

- Nearly 500,000 Mississippians registered for assistance with FEMA.
- About 1,400 remain in shelters.
- At least 15,000 have been provided with temporary housing by FEMA and the state.
- About 25,000 "blue roofs" (temporary tarps over damaged roofs) have been placed statewide, allowing families to continue to live in their own homes.
- More than 1,400 individuals are living aboard the Carnival Holiday cruise ship berthed in Mobile, which will be moving the Pascagoula when it is safe to do so.
- About 5,000 travel trailers and mobile homes are currently occupied by individuals and families. FEMA estimates the need for mobile homes and travel trailers at 35,000 in Mississippi. Many trailers are located to the north of effected areas, waiting for the availability of utility hookups.
- The top priority is to place in temporary housing those families who are living in shelters and unsafe conditions. In addition to these people in specific locations, many residents have moved in with relatives or in houses with other families.

Interview: Andres Duany

The following interview on the Mississippi Renewal Forum was conducted by Bill Walsh of the Healthy Business Network, www.healthybuilding.net

HBN: I've always loved the metaphor I once heard architects Frank Gehry and Renzo Piano use to describe their contrasting commissions near Chicago's Grant Park: an architectural conversation. After completing his signature design, Gehry said he was thinking, "Let me hear from you, Renzo." The metaphor comes to mind as I think of the design challenge in

rebuilding the Gulf coast of Mississippi. Nature has spoken through Katrina, what do you have to say?

AD: First, I am glad it is going to be a very big conversation. We expect to be joined by some 200 highly experienced design professionals, highly motivated public officials, and a genuinely interested public. The nature of the challenge will require that much experience and collective intelligence.

HBN: How so?

AD: The situation is very problematic. We are not starting with a clean slate. Not to rebuild along the Mississippi coast would obliterate billions of dollars of wealth. So there is really no question of about whether the coast will be rebuilt. That horse has left the barn. Yet it is a dangerous place to build, One can envision structural solutions, but they are all very expensive and therefore have social and political implications.

HBN: What are some of the trade-offs in your view?

AD: For example, one could elevate new construction so as to absorb future storm surges. Apart from being costly, it is a challenge to create a walkable town that is essentially on stilts. Another option would be to "harden" construction to a hurricane code standard. This has been done in certain communities along the Florida coast since hurricane Andrew. In either case, the cost of coastal rebuilding designed to withstand another Katrina makes affordable housing on that land very difficult, and may even be beyond the reach of middle class property owners.

HBN: That statement legitimizes the concerns of many who believe that across the Gulf coast, but especially in New Orleans, former residents who were poor, and especially poor and black, will not be included in rebuilt communities. The current President of the National Council of Churches,

Bishop Hoyt, whose diocese includes Louisiana and Mississippi churches, has called for a just rebuilding. How do you respond?

AD: Too often we don't use the freedom we have in this country to speak publicly about unpopular things. We must have a free discussion of sensitive subjects in order to create a true dialogue. The discussion involving race and poverty and what it costs to deal with it in such circumstances is crucial and we should have it. By the way, the circumstances in

New Orleans, which is what everyone is usually referring to is different from the coastal communities. These have their special challenges but also more opportunity in some ways. In Mississippi I look forward to learning from Bishop Hoyt and the collective wisdom that the charrette process is designed to tap.

Let's not delude ourselves, the rebuilding is not going to eliminate poverty. But as a nation we do have enough wealth to create all of the affordable housing we need. And

The Mississippi Renewal Forum: what is it?

The Mississippi Renewal Forum is a seven-day planning effort, unprecedented in its scope and intensity, in response to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. A partnership of Gov. Haley Barbour's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal and the Chicago-based Congress for the New Urbanism, the forum will produce planning and architectural tools that can guide local and state officials in rebuilding 11 cities in three counties along the entire length of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

The CNU team, headed by world-renowned Miami architect-planner Andres Duany, consists of 100 architects, planners, development experts, and other professionals from across the US. They will join with local experts and public officials in a high-energy series of workshops and design sessions.

Unprecedented effort

Never before have so many resources been assembled so quickly to aid rebuilding across a broad area. But the process behind the forum is familiar to new urbanists, who use collaborative meetings, called charrettes, to achieve community consensus in complex planning efforts. Among the participants in the forum are experts in environmental protection, road and

transit planning, social issues, economic development, and the design of residences, neighborhoods, and town centers. The group also will include urban designers and town planners who have devoted years to studying the architecture and layout of traditional Southern towns.

In addition to sessions examining multi-jurisdictional issues in South Mississippi, individual workshops will focus on the communities of Waveland, Bay St. Louis, Pass Christian, Long Beach, Gulfport, Biloxi, D'Iberville, Ocean Springs, Gautier, Moss Point and Pascagoula.

From a base of operations at the Isle of Capri Hotel, the teams will work to create the planning building blocks for great neighborhoods. Tools include neighborhood-based plans, simplified codes and approval procedures for buildings, and the design of low-cost buildings of character. Other design concepts will look to integrate gracefully the formerly water-based casinos, now likely to be built on land, into the fabric of towns.

While the logistics and some expenses of the forum will be covered in part by a grant from the Knight Foundation, the CNU professionals are donating much of their time at greatly reduced rates, or for free in many cases.

we can see to it as part of the rebuilding that poverty is not concentrated to become new slums. We must reframe the value of affordable housing in terms that appeal to liberals and conservatives alike. For example, the repeal of many bureaucratic permitting processes would lower costs and increase the capacity of the poor and the middle class to construct simple, decent homes for themselves

HBN: We at HBN have a specific interest in materials policy and environmental justice. These come together in Louisiana where citizens have been trying to transform the petrochemical industry for years. By not using vinyl in green buildings for example, we can reduce indoor air contaminants, but since most vinyl plants are in Louisiana we can help transform the industrial base to less harmful materials, bio-based materials for example.

AD: The issues of materials policy and environmental justice are compatible with the new urbanism movement, but they are not intrinsic to our movement. I am wary of stringing other agendas on to the New Urbanism. There are so few of us. Should we not focus our own unique contributions?

HBN: So if we come to the new urbanist table, in Mississippi for example, with such an agenda, you welcome the ideas so long as we bring resources to implement it?

AD: Yes.

HBN: This has been a far ranging discussion. We will take up your ideas about New Orleans in another edition. I appreciate the extra time you have spent with us today.

AD: It has been a special pleasure to converse with you as I gradually found you not to be an uninformed idiot.

HBN: That may be news to a few people, so I'm going to quote you.

FORUM SCHEDULE

October 11

Daytime arrival and check-in
Dinner at hotel, 7 p.m.
Informal discussions after dinner

October 12

Morning: Organizational session
11:30 - noon: Commissioner's Briefing
Afternoon: Reports from local and CNU consultants
Dinner at hotel, 7 p.m.
Evening: Discussion

October 13

Meetings at municipalities - Tour areas with Mayors, elected officials.
Evening: Late dinner (8pm), with design afterwards.

October 14

Morning, noon and night: design
Lunch, noon to 1pm
Meet with Local Architects: 3 p.m.
Dinner at hotel, 7 p.m.

October 15

Morning and early afternoon: Design.
Lunch, noon to 1 p.m.
Concurrent Sessions with ayors, elected officials, local leaders and planners: 3 p.m.
dinner at 7pm.

October 16

Design morning, noon and night.
Lunch, noon to 1 p.m.
Dinner at hotel, 7 p.m.

October 17

Morning: Design and production.
Lunch, noon to 1 p.m.
Presentations: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Dinner and informal meetings.

October 18

Teams departs

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON RECOVERY, REBUILDING AND RENEWAL

Jim Barksdale, Chairman
Derrick Johnson, Vice Chairman
Ricky Matthews, Vice Chairman
Jerry St. Pe, Vice Chairman
Joe Sanderson, Vice Chairman
Anthony Topazi, Vice Chairman
William Winter, Outside Counsel

Commissioners - County

Chris Anderson - Jackson
Reuben Anderson - Hinds
Chuck Benvenuto - Hancock
James Black - Harrison
Gerald Blessey - Harrison
Hank Bounds - Jackson
Felicia Dunn Burke - Harrison
Fred Carl - Leflore
David Cole - Itawamba
Mark Cumbest - Jackson
Maurice Dantin - Marion
Tommy Dulaney - Lauderdale
Donald Evans - Harrison
Robbie Fisher - Hinds
Paul Franke - Harrison
Robert Gagne - Hancock
Richard Gollott - Harrison
Clark Griffith - Harrison
Brooks Holstein - Harrison
Jim Holleman - Stone
Warren Hood, Jr. - Forrest
James Huff - Smith
Robert Kane - Hancock
Kay Kell - Jackson
Suzy McDonald - Pearl River
Duncan McKenzie - Harrison
Pat Nichols - Harrison
John Palmer - Hinds
Bill Parsons - Hancock
Diane Payne - Jackson
Ron Peresich - Harrison
Charles Pickering - Jones
D'auby Schiel - Harrison
George Schloegel - Harrison
Robert St. John - Forrest
Chevis Swetman - Harrison
Reginald Sykes - Harrison
Phil Teel - Jackson
Shelby Thames - Forrest
Richard Thoms - Newton
Philip West - Adams
Dayton Whites - George
Glade Woods - Pearl River

Commission Staff

Henry Barbour - Executive Director
Brian Sanderson - General Counsel

CNU TEAM LEADERS

Architecture: Susan Henderson
Coding: Sandy Sorlien
Communications: Ben Brown
Environment: Doug Farr
Management: Andres Duany,
John Norquist
Planning: Bill Dennis, Bay St. Louis;
Stefanos Polyzoides, Biloxi; Jaime Cor-
rea, D'Iberville; Neal Payton, Gautier;
James Moore, Gulfport; Dhiru Thadani,
Long Beach; Steve Schukraft, Moss Point;
Victor Dover, Ocean Springs; Dan Solo-
mon, Pascagoula; Laura Hall, Pass Chris-
tian; Robert Orr, Waveland
Traffic: Rick Chellman

COUNTIES AND CITIES OF THE MS COAST/2000 POPULATION

Hancock County/42,967
Bay St. Louis/8,209
Waveland/6,674

Harrison County/189,601
Biloxi/50,644
D'Iberville/7,608
Gulfport/71,127
Long Beach/17,320
Pass Christian/6,579

Jackson County/131,420
Gautier/11,681
Moss Point/15,851
Ocean Springs/17,225
Pascagoula/26,200

LODGING AND STUDIO:

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CONGRESS FOR THE NEW URBANISM

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