

BONNIE WINFIELD
PRESIDENT

SPECIAL
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INTEREST:

~ Waste Water
Renewal

~ CO₂ Emissions
Rising

~ Arrival of Spring
Weather

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Baltimore

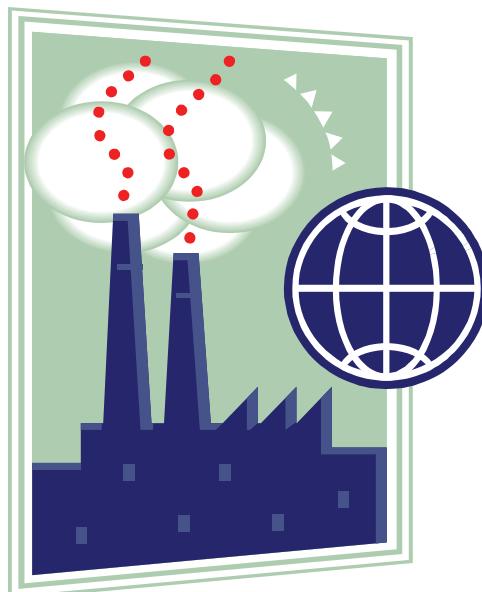
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New Sources of Global Warming Discovered

Seattle — A group of leading environmental scientists have discovered that garbage produces carbon dioxide in addition to methane. The scientists were initially skeptical of their discovery because there has been a longstanding assumption that methane was the only byproduct of deteriorating garbage. However, the environmental scientist collected data from three hundred different landfills across the United States and discovered that 98% of the landfills analyzed produced a considerable amount of carbon dioxide. With this new discovery, environmental experts are warning citizens to recycle everything possible so that carbon dioxide counts don't exceed the safe level of 384 parts per million. (Continued on page 11)



Revolution in Water Filtration Systems

Washington — A research team from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, has created a breakthrough in water filtration systems. The technology created by the research team comprises of a radioactive emitter that produces gamma radiation. This radiation (Continued on page 17)



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Professor Winfield

Mapping Urban Ecology

13 March 2009

A Happy Medium

Since the late eighteenth century, mankind has been fascinated by a revolutionary invention called the automobile (Automobile History). Society has dedicated thousands upon thousands of hours attempting to make automobiles more efficient, faster and even lighter. However, with the many technological advancements vehicles have made since their inception, they have had difficulty finding a harmonious coexistence with many of the United States' largest cities. They have become a nuisance for pedestrians wishing to enjoy something as simple as afternoon shopping as well as frustrating city officials with their chronic morning and afternoon rush hour traffic jams and accidents. Furthermore, the carbon dioxide emissions from their gas-guzzling engines have continued to pollute our skies and intensify the effects of a well-known "disease" that plagues our world – global warming. It is my belief that a truly "healthy city" is one which creates a peaceful and efficient coexistence between these technological menaces and the people, places and things that inhabit our cities.

Edward Abbey once stated, "You can't see anything from a car; you've got to get out of the contraption and walk, better yet crawl, on hands and knees," in order to successfully witness the magnificence of a city that is operating like a well-oiled machine with all of its visible mechanisms working in unison to create a product that is extraordinary (Active Living Network). When I went to Philadelphia for our second Jane's Walk, I certainly felt as if I was being this attentive to details when we observed Society Hill and the Old City. Walking down South Street, I thought that we might have taken a wrong turn because this boulevard of animation made it seem that Philadelphians were still celebrating the Phillies' World Series Championship from months ago. It was very different in comparison to the Old

City and its cobblestone streets. Cars were jammed into every available parking space like puzzle pieces and people populated the expansive sidewalks like children at a local pool on a blistering summer afternoon. With all this activity occurring though, I felt a sense of acceptance from the abundant diversity that was mixing together on this street. This part of Philadelphia was able to successfully manage the presence of automobiles (few were actually traveling along South Street) while also promoting many of the things which it had to offer; i.e. distinctive stores, fine dining, historical architecture with a modern flare and a diverse population of citizens who seemed to blend together so naturally that it made me feel immediately accepted as stated previously. I wish Jane Jacobs would have been there to witness this scene, she would be glad to see that an astonishing amount of diversity encouraged the spectacle on South Street rather than inhibiting the potential it had.

In Jacobs' most famous book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, she outlines the four main ideas which she believes create diversity. When she discusses diversity and what it means for her, she attempts to emphasize that, "a dangerous situation is the standardization of what is being produced or reproduced everywhere – where you can see the same products, in the same malls, in the same chains in every city... there's a sameness" (Makovsky). Diversity of city, in Jacobs' mind, is comprised of four basic needs: need for primary mixed uses, need for small blocks, need for aged buildings and a need for concentration (Jacobs 152 – 221). Through her countless observations of cities across the United States, Jacobs has established a solidified argument for what needs to occur in a city so that diversity can be created. When she refers to "need for primary mixed uses," she sets forth the concept that, "The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function; preferably more than two" (Jacobs 152). In short, Jacobs realizes that a "healthy city" must have a location where inhabitants cannot only go to work, but also be able to enjoy a fine restaurant, purchase produce from a grocery store and even shop for a new wardrobe all in close proximity to one another. These characteristics guarantee that a large concentration of people will always be present in the

immediate vicinity of a “healthy city.” This concentration of people must be carefully defined to make sure there is no misinterpretation between “high densities of dwellings and overcrowdings of dwellings” (Jacobs 205).

High densities of dwellings mean, “Large numbers of dwellings per acre of land,” whereas overcrowding of dwellings refers to, “too many people in a dwelling for the number of rooms it contains” (Jacobs 205). Jacobs states that for the “need for concentration” to be met, “the district must have a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purpose they may be there. This includes people there because of residence” (Jacobs 200). And so, if primary uses such as restaurants, clothing stores and supermarkets attract people to them, diversity can begin to be achieved. Also, when a city combines the more architectural aspects such as incorporation of aged buildings and small city blocks, which prevent, “isolated, discreet street neighborhoods,” from becoming, “helpless socially,” diversity is able to flourish at unimaginable levels (Jacobs 178). With all this taken into consideration, I would now like to argue that cities able to strategically balance automobiles and people are considered to be “healthy cities.”

To begin, I ask which of these city streets appears to be more appealing to the eye while also conveying a sense of pleasantry so that one would feel comfortable spending time there? While looking at these two photos, consider several aspects that either invite or deter you from walking down them. What types of emotions come about when looking at the commotion in the bottom picture? Are the wide sidewalks, large amount of



Figure 1

"Places to Visit in Le-Touquet." A-taste-of-france.com. 2009. 9 Mar. 2009



Figure 1

"How NYC's Congestion Pricing Plan Crashed." Earth Island Institute. 2008. 9 Mar. 2009

shops and absence of cars in the top photograph more inviting than the endless sea of vehicles that appear to be demanding for more space in order to maneuver? Hopefully, one would agree that the picture located at the top appears to be a more welcoming and emotionally acceptable place to spend one's leisure time. Jacobs described a "healthy city" best when she said, "Equilibrium ensures the continuity of elements needed for human life – land, air and water" (Jacobs 355). A "healthy city" must be able to ensure that automobiles and people don't have to compete for space while integrating aspects of nature that welcome outdoor activity. An example of this is Baltimore, Maryland, a city I frequent to in order to enjoy the atmosphere of Inner Harbor and Orioles' baseball games.

Baltimore is a heavily populated city located near the Chesapeake Bay that has found a way to attract visitors to locations of interest while accommodating to the avid traveler and local businessman. The city is known for its gorgeous Inner Harbor and the expansive area provided for people to enjoy such attractions as The ESPN Zone, the National Aquarium, Federal Hill Park and Fort McHenry without having to worry extensively about traffic jams and unsafe drivers. Baltimore has managed to implement a public transportation system consisting of buses and the Metro (electric railway system) to assure that individuals' automobiles will be less likely to clog the main streets of travel in the city. "Traffic exerts pressures upon itself; vehicles compete with each other, as well as with other uses," and this means with an increase of cars comes an accumulation of traffic and thus, slower movement (Jacobs 365). Also, within the past fifteen years Baltimore has constructed an enormous convention center that caters to a wide variety of activities and with the creation of the convention center came the introduction of parking decks that in some instances, extend to heights of ten stories, which provide a great deal of parking to citizens who wish to use their own vehicles for transportation. These parking decks have saved many historic buildings from being torn down and replaced by parking lots that use large amounts of unnecessary space. In her book, Jacobs points to the fact that using modes of mass transportation decrease automobile populations, "Buses are themselves important manifestations of city intensity and

concentration... if their efficiency is encouraged, this too results in further attrition of automobiles, as a side effect" (Jacobs 365). In addition to incorporating mass transit, the city has appealed to the pedestrian as well in several effective ways.

As mentioned, Inner Harbor handles a large amount of pedestrian traffic quite efficiently and the city accomplishes this by extremely wide sidewalks and a paved area bordering the water that allows people to freely roam the area. This spacious walkway enables pedestrians to interact with merchants, enjoy restaurants such as Phillips Seafood and even admire the historic ships that are docked in the Harbor. Just recently, the city embarked on a revitalization project that resulted in the replacement of sidewalks along the main corridor of traffic in the downtown. These sidewalks were a revolutionary step towards a "greener" Baltimore because they were made from recycled tires (Rubber Sidewalks). The sidewalks allowed tree roots to expand and even permitted rain water to reach the roots which yielded huge environmental benefits.



Figure 2 Pedestrian Area in Inner Harbor

"Inner Harbor." [Baltimore's Tremont's Historic Venue and All-Suite Hotels](#). 2009. Tremont Suite Hotels. 10 Mar. 2009



Figure 4 Rubber Sidewalks

"Rubber Sidewalks, a Bouncier Step and It's Green Too." [APG Pollution Prevention Program](#). 16 Aug. 2007. 10 Mar. 2009

With all these accommodations made to both pedestrians and automobiles, Baltimore is the epitome of a "healthy city." It has managed to successfully adapt to the transportation needs of the 21st century while also giving its citizens and visitors enjoyment through the sights and sounds of the city.

This peaceful coexistence between automobiles and people has catapulted Baltimore into a thriving city with many years of growing still to do.

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