

Making the Imagined Real:
How Institutional Entrepreneurs Transform Public Spaces

by

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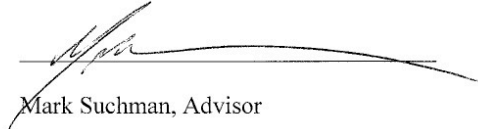
A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Sociology at Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island
May 2014

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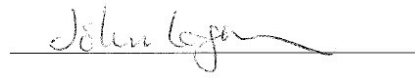
This dissertation by Miriam Plavin-Masterman is accepted in its present form
by the Department of Sociology as satisfying the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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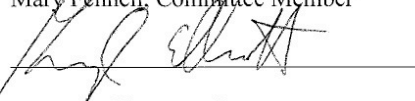
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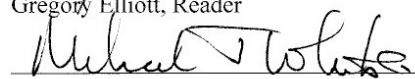
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The printed pages of my dissertation hold more than the simple culmination of years of graduate study at Brown University. These pages also reflect the relationships with many generous and inspiring people I have met since beginning my graduate work back in 2008. The contribution of each person has been important to my development as a scholar and teacher:

To my advisor Mark Suchman, whose feedback always served to make my project better, and who demonstrates that rigorous scholarship can and must be accessible to everyone and that scholars have a responsibility to use the privileges of academia to imagine and create a better world, no pun intended.

To my committee members John Logan and Mary Fennell, for their encouraging words, thoughtful criticism, and attention during busy semesters.

To my professors for showing me by example and through challenging coursework how to think, teach, and teach others to think: Dennis Hogan, Gregory Elliott, Gianpaolo Baocchi, Ebony Bridwell-Mitchell, Michael White, Marion Orr.

To Rachel Franklin for her help with ArcGis.

To my colleagues for sharing their enthusiasm for and helpful comments on my work, especially Sukriti Issar, Aisalkyn Botoeva, and Meghan Kallman.

To the Department of Sociology staff for assisting me with the administrative tasks necessary for completing my doctoral program: Joan Picard and Amanda Figgins.

To my invaluable network of supportive, forgiving, generous and loving friends and family without whom I could not have survived the process, especially my parents, sister, and son for their love, support and understanding during the long years of my education.

And finally, to Christopher, my spouse, cheerleader, drill sergeant, voice of reason, counselor and life raft. Thank you for always coming to my defense.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In Summer 2010, I went to visit my parents, who still live in New York City, where I grew up. My father suggested we take a walk on the High Line (an elevated park created from a railroad remnant), as something to do. We walked on the first section, the only part open, and the experience was surprising. As a native New Yorker, I was used to people interacting in the subways, at ground level, and from up high. Seeing the city from 30 feet up provided a whole different way to experience and interact with my surroundings. While we were walking, I kept thinking about the space, and found myself repeating a phrase followed by a question over and over: “This is so amazing! Why would someone make this?”

When I got home I began reading about the park and the Friends of the High Line, the group that had advocated for the park’s creation. While the long and sometimes torturous process of the High Line’s creation was interesting, I knew that would not be enough for a dissertation. I did a little more research and found that there were two other, similar groups who had started their projects close to when the Friends of the High Line began to work on the High Line, yet were in very different places in terms of project development. Once I found these two other cases I realized I had a comparative case study, at least the shell of the dissertation.

To make this interesting, I knew I needed to figure out a different angle of explaining or evaluating the process of repurposing abandoned structures into parks. How these parks actually get created (or not), and the experience of people in putting a coalition of support together to create the parks was most interesting to me, and that led me to a qualitative approach -- really getting into the process and experiences of these individuals. Studying how these groups use discourse as a strategic tool appealed to me because all these groups are trying to get people to think differently about spaces they see, and are having to do so over long periods of time. Discourse in the context of physical objects is also interesting because the objects themselves carry meanings, intended or not.

The timing of this project was fortuitous. Cities are trying to increase their park acreage, since living near open, green space has many benefits for urban residents. In April 2009, the Center for City Park Excellence at The Trust for Public Land released a report called “Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System”. The report presented data on parks in multiple cities throughout the United States and analyzed seven ways that city parks provide economic benefits: boosting property values, tourism, through direct use, health benefits, community cohesion, and enhancing clean water and clean air.

In San Diego, for example, the study determined that, with approximately 5 percent of tourists coming to the city to visit the parks, park-derived tourist spending in 2007 totaled \$114 million. That generated \$8.6 million in direct sales and other tax revenue as well as a collective increase of \$40 million in residents' wealth.¹ Another anecdote from Boston describes how, by offering inexpensive recreation (or free recreation), parks save residents money. In Boston, the study determined that the economic value of direct park use was \$354 million.

The health benefits of parks offer further economic benefits and savings. Chow (2009) nicely summarizes three studies that found that living near such parks has beneficial effects on city residents' health, especially the health of children. A study jointly carried out by the University of Glasgow and University of St Andrews in Scotland found that living near parks provides an overall health boost, independent of social class. Using 2001-05 mortality data for a sample of over 350,000 people in the United Kingdom, and examining the link between exposure to greenery and different causes of death, researchers found that the health gap between the richest and poorest groups of people was the smallest in areas with the most green spaces – it was only about half of the gap of the areas with the least greenery. Significantly, researchers also found that even small green spaces in living environments made a difference to people's risk of contracting fatal diseases. The study

¹ Balboa Park also contains several venues like the Zoo that are destinations separate and distinct from just being in a park.

team's report stated that "the implications of this study are clear – environments that promote good health might be crucial in the fight to reduce health inequalities" (Mitchell and Popham, 2008, p. 1660). Another study, carried out at the Indiana University School of Medicine found that children who live in areas with more greenery actually have a lower likelihood of being obese. The researchers used a sample of over 3,500 inner-city children and found that the greener the neighborhood, the lower the risk of obesity (Bell, Wilson, and Liu, 2008).

People value the time they spend in city parks, whether walking a dog, playing basketball, or having a picnic. Along with these expected leisure amenities, city parks can also provide measurable health benefits, from providing direct contact with nature and a cleaner environment, to opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. A telephone survey conducted for the American Public Health Association found that 75 percent of adults believe parks and recreation must play an important role in addressing America's obesity crisis (apha.org).

Because of the different ways people experience parks, cities need to provide all types of parks, from neighborhood facilities to large natural areas. In fact, many of the health benefits associated with parks, including providing contact with nature, increasing physical activity opportunities to help increase fitness and reduce obesity, and mitigating climate, air, and water pollution impacts on public health, can be best achieved through small-scale, readily accessible sites.

Park space is at a premium in cities, and it is not easy to create a park in a fully developed and built out city. Efforts to add smaller green spaces have included developing public plazas, civic squares, greenways, gardens, pocket parks, and linear parks (pps.org). In the 1960's, due to the interest in outdoor activities, abandoned rail trails played an increasing role in meeting the demand for more recreational opportunities. Because of the limited availability of open space near urban areas and increasing land prices,

government agencies and advocacy groups began to consider and evaluate land not generally associated with parks.

Many types of manmade corridors, such as causeways, canals, street rights-of-way, and abandoned railroads (Bentryn 1976) were recycled for park and trail development. Abandoned railroad tracks were especially good candidates, since they met several important criteria, particularly at ground level. First, biking, walking, and other linear recreational activities were increasing in popularity (railstotrails.org). Second, there were also a lot of abandoned railroads available for reuse. These railroads were often fragments of older railroads that had been absorbed into larger conglomerates and had no use for these pieces (railstotrails.org). Many thousands of miles of rail lines have been abandoned in recent years. In 1920, about 260,000 miles of railroad track were in service in the United States. By the year 2000, that number had dropped to a 100,000-mile core rail system (railstotrails.org). Although not all abandoned tracks are desirable for linear parks, many could easily be adapted.

The development history of railroads meant there were linear remnant rail segments on many different kinds of land, including traditional parkland, wilderness, and elevated sections. An elevated section is exactly what it sounds like – a remnant of a rail line elevated above the ground. These tend to be freight lines built to move goods into cities, and usually are close to former (and current) warehousing districts. As a result these kinds of parks tend to come into contact with more private land than do traditional parks, and require different kinds of coalition-building efforts throughout the development process as compared to traditional parks. I will explore the implications of the kinds of coalition building required for elevated parks in detail in Chapters 3-7. The first of these kinds of parks was built in Paris in 1994, after a six-year construction process. The promenade now runs from the Bastille Opera to the eastern city limits and sits approximately three stories up (<http://www.aviewoncities.com/paris/promenadeplantee.htm>). Figure 1.1 shows an image of

the Promenade Plantée.

Figure 1.1: A bridge on the Promenade Plantée



Source: <http://www.paris.fr/english>

The route combines enclosed sections (passing between modern buildings) and open sections. At the same time the Promenade Plantée was created, the viaduct on top of which the railroad is situated was also renovated and renamed Viaduc des Arts. The arcades were converted into shops, galleries and crafts workshops, totaling about 50 artisans. Figure 1.2 shows an image of the Viaduc des Arts.

Figure 1.2: Viaduc des Arts



Source: <http://www.paris.fr/english>

In the United States, three Friends of the Park advocacy groups have attempted to turn abandoned elevated railroad tracks into linear parks in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. These advocacy groups have been active since 1999/2000, and they are the only ones as far along as they are in the process. Their attempts, successful and unsuccessful, are the focus of this dissertation. The places studied here are what the Victorians might have called promenades or esplanades, where people can walk while avoiding traffic in the streets. As elevated, linear urban parks, they symbolize and celebrate the daily experience of living in the city and the difference between spaces as they are laid out and how they are actually used – what deCerteau (1984) calls “the practice of the city” (1984:102).

In New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia – older, dense cities that can feel packed with people and are typically underserved by parks – any new nook with trees and grass is both a blessing and a design opportunity. These parks in particular serve as reminders of how aging former train tracks might be reused and recycled into something new. Opportunities to reuse old infrastructure, buildings, and spaces change the way people interact with and think about their own neighborhoods.

New York’s High Line, Chicago’s Bloomingdale Trail, and Philadelphia’s Reading Viaduct are elevated over streets at heights of 15 to 30 feet. Users are able to experience urban space in ways that are different from other public works, and achieve views of the urban landscape that would never otherwise be accessible. In the case of New York’s High Line, for example, it was all built entirely separated from New York’s main north/south avenues. The park snakes through city blocks, providing a unique view of the city space, where you are in a park in the interior of a city block. In the case of Philadelphia’s Reading Viaduct, the potential park cuts at an angle across the grid of downtown Philadelphia, providing views not possible from street level. At the same time, these projects allow a view into the social health of a city, through development of its public spaces and how these spaces are used. The use of the High Line (recently recognized as one of New York City’s top tourist destinations), in

addition to similar developments in cities in Europe and elsewhere, shows how city dwellers need these public spaces as social gathering spots.

In the cases of these particular elevated trails, determining who actually owns the rail trail and how much of it is owned by what entity has been confusing. There have been federal, state, and local legal issues to sort out. If the rail trail is owned by a railroad company, they may have forgotten about it, or consider it very low priority (Harnik 2010). Creating one of these trails is in fact so difficult that it requires an extended partnership among: city Parks, Public Works and/or Transportation departments, federal and state agencies, private sector citizen groups, foundations, and /or corporations. Such a partnership becomes critical because the political and structural issues are too intense for government to handle without support from local citizenry, and financial and legal issues are too complicated for the private sector to manage without public agency assistance. Funding issues are also complicated. For many of these projects, most of the funding comes from the federal government, or some combination of federal, state, and local governments.

This project draws upon literature from organizational sociology, social movements, urban sociology, landscape design, and architecture in demonstrating the conditions under which organizations interpret, transmit, and filter their visions for space. Struggles over these parks can be viewed through multiple lenses – the role of architecture and construction, the influence of money and politics on how spaces are used, and the roles played by culture and discourse in creating a social identity, a community of interest in support of building these parks.

Complex urban projects like these generally need ardent support from “Friends of” advocacy groups to make them happen. Park activities benefit communities in a whole host of ways, as stated earlier. And successful parks draw upon multiple complementary constituencies to ensure strong levels of use (Jacobs, 1961), implying that advocates for the

park must make the park's narrative appeal successfully to different stakeholders to ensure it actually happens. Altshuler and Luberoff (2003) note that both public entrepreneurship and business support have been key elements of successful megaprojects –of which these (potential) parks are exemplars.

The cases thus incorporate awareness of the role of the neighborhood, the architects and designers, and, ultimately the decision-makers in making the imagined real – and since what is imagined 'lives' in a specific neighborhood these are crucial pieces of the puzzle. For example, in Designing the High Line, authors Hammond and David (Friends of the High Line's cofounders) describe how the process of realizing their project was helped in large part by two things. First, photographer Joel Sternfeld's pictures became the centerpiece of a 2001 New Yorker article, and people who had never heard of the High Line began talking about the pictures and related possibilities. Second, the Friends of the High Line focused on the visual imagery of the abandoned structure and the quality of the renderings of what might be, allowing for public feedback that could inform the final design and implementation of the project.

The role of economic interest in urban development has been well studied and well documented. However, it does not tell the whole story; an economics-based viewpoint alone does not explain why individuals without a clear economic interest devote time and effort to making these parks a reality. The project also relies upon understanding whether and how local entrepreneurs advocating for their projects can tell a compelling story and build coalitions in support of proposed new public amenities. The role of message in building coalitions has not been well studied in attempts to understand the process and impacts of the development of public space (Battilana and Dorado, 2010).

My research questions center around identifying the discourse-based processes necessary to build coalitions and navigate institutional settings in pursuit of public goods. I evaluate attempts by these three advocacy groups to frame the discourse around these parks as

part of their overall goal of making the parks a reality. Framing occurs in nearly all genres of discourse, as a way of getting specific messages across or exchanging specific ideas; this technique is often used as a means of persuasion or instilling a specific worldview in peoples' minds. When done well, it can have profound political, social, or behavioral consequences. This dissertation is at its heart a narrative of the meaning of large physical objects in local neighborhoods. The kinds of stories examined in this dissertation focus on answering questions like: Where do we live? What does it mean to live here? Who wants to improve the neighborhood? Who gets to benefit from the improvement?

The work is presented in self-contained chapters. Chapter 2 details the theoretical frameworks used in evaluating the discourse themes in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Chapter 3 provides my data collection and methodology for analyzing the data. In order to understand the themes in the discourse and why they are important, each park needs to be seen in context. Important themes in some cases reflect the demographics of the cities, the long process of development, the ability to organize the community in support of the Park (or not), the influence of elites on the process (real and/or perceived), the challenges of building in these spaces, the ability of the Friends of the Park groups to create a shared common identity around development of these spaces, etc.

Chapter 4 presents a comprehensive case study of New York's High Line and the efforts of the Friends of the High Line. Chapter 5 presents a comprehensive case study of Chicago's Bloomingdale Trail and the efforts of the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail. Chapter 6 presents a comprehensive case study of Philadelphia's Reading Viaduct and the efforts of the Reading Viaduct Project. Each of the case study chapters provides insight into how Friends of the Park groups do (or do not) form coalitions of support to turn abandoned infrastructure into parks. Chapter 7 provides a comparative chapter evaluating both the completeness and consistency of themes in the discourse around these parks, along with common themes that cut across all three cases.

New York's High Line may in fact be a paradigmatic example of a new urban ethos that is manifestly public (definitely not privatized, not sequestered behind a wall) but also clearly a project of local real estate capital. In contrast, the Philadelphia and Chicago projects are more mixed, and the parks they are proposing are far less "elite" in public perception. Perceptions of these parks intersect with key discourse themes in both predictable and unexpected ways, and influence park development trajectories in all three cases. In the next chapters, we will see how.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This dissertation seeks to explain variation in the development of nontraditional urban spaces using case studies of urban elevated linear parks in New York (High Line), Chicago (Bloomingdale Trail) and Philadelphia (Reading Viaduct) between 1999 and 2012. In those three locations, nonprofit community groups have attempted to or have successfully created public-private coalitions to re-purpose urban public space into elevated urban linear parks. These three case studies are located in similar cities, the projects started around the same time, the groups are trying to do similar things, and yet the three projects are in very different stages of project development.

These urban linear park projects are a combination of entrepreneurial efforts of advocacy groups and characteristics of the sites. Both have to be compelling and plausible in getting governments, philanthropists, wealthy individuals, and community members to take the project and the group seriously. The groups are actively trying to frame themselves as capable, as legitimate, as forward-thinking in their attempts to build coalitions of support. There are characteristics of the group that can make it easier or harder for the group to achieve its task, including how organized the group is, the kinds of skills the group has in organizing the community, whether the group is able to raise money, and if there is any organized opposition or a competing group.

The advocacy groups in each case are also actively trying to frame the objects in question in the discourse as something other than what they currently are. The reframing is no easy task since these objects are large, immovable, and immutable unless the groups are successful. There are also characteristics of the site that could make the physical object more or less available to being repurposed, including the location, the neighborhoods the proposed park runs through, the

site conditions and related costs to transform the site, how users could actually access it, if the city needs a park in that location, etc.

I argue that success in these ventures is dependent upon these community groups acting as entrepreneurs to “sell” their proposed projects to the coalition of public and private actors required to make it a reality by using imagery and discourse strategically and in different media. The interaction between space and imagery is complex, since the words and images used must simultaneously make sense with the space as it currently exists and translate imagined meanings into real ones. The spaces as they currently exist are (or were), abandoned, decrepit, and often described as eyesores or blighted. The community groups are asking neighborhood residents, multiple levels of government, potential donors, and others, to imagine the abandoned structures as working parks and work together to make that imagined future turn into a real one.

All of these projects are public space projects, situated in particular neighborhoods. Urban space is often a site of contestation, especially in fully developed cities like New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. There are struggles over who gets to determine what happens to a space. These three case studies reflect attempts, successful and not, to repurpose abandoned spaces for public good. Any project involving the public good has multiple steps and interactions among organizations and institutions that contribute to how and why it gets made.

Many people study economics-based arguments, as the impetus or driving force behind any urban redevelopment project. There are other factors as well, including the role of discourse, or conversation about the projects, that contribute to any project’s ultimate success – present to some degree in all cases, but not well studied or understood. Public projects take a long time to come to fruition. Discourse plays a role in understanding how a coalition of public and private actors gets created and sustained over long periods of time, how public campaigns are organized, etc. The themes developed and sustained around projects plausibly affect project outcomes.

The role of discourse is an under-studied concept, and one that can help these entrepreneurial organizations drive change by resolving competing institutional logics, those

patterns of activity by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material subsistence and organize time and space (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Understanding how discourse works in this context matters because the extent to which entrepreneurs resolve competing logics has an effect on their venture's viability (Battilana and Dorado, 2010, Tracey, Phillips, and Jarvis, 2011). I bring together literature from Institutional Entrepreneurship, Social Movements, and Urban Political Economy (with a particular focus on the neighborhood) under one framework that allows me to explore how these entrepreneurs develop and influence themes in the discourse around their projects to build coalitions of support. The framework originated in the Institutional Theory/Institutional Entrepreneurship literature, but is interdisciplinary in nature, reaching out to aspects of both Social Movements and Urban Political Economy.

All of these literatures have specific perspectives on how discourse themes are believed to work. In addition, the literatures summarized below have multiple tensions in how they view the roles of discourse and the most relevant themes or tropes needed to build coalitions of support for a given project. Institutional entrepreneurship theory argues for themes relying on links to existing logics--how things *should* work. Social movements theory argues for themes designed to mobilize the community from the bottom up, and/or to influence elites in order to gain a certain movement- motivated outcome. Urban Political Economy argues that growth is good – targeting elite, growth machine-based interests.

In combining these bodies of literature I am trying to understand how the entrepreneurs use discourse across a variety of dimensions linked to their own success and viability, combined with the kinds of discourse themes that would be applicable to or appropriate for the physical object they are attempting to repurpose. The links and tensions among the literatures are especially important because what is being discussed and imagined is an existing physical artifact that is located in a particular place. I end this chapter with a discussion of research contributions.

2.1a1 Neo-Institutional Theory and Change/Institutional Entrepreneurship

At the heart of neo-institutional theory is the notion that institutions (the state, the church, family, etc.) affect and determine organizational structure; organizations are embedded in a series of social structures. The level of analysis focuses on the organization and its links to its operational field, or set of organizations interacting with and influencing one another. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that once a set of organizations emerges as a field, a counterintuitive situation develops: rational actors make their organizations increasingly similar *to each other* as they try to change them *in response to the pressure of the environment*. The process of institutional definition and structuration consists of: 1) an increase in interaction among organizations in the field, 2) the emergence of defined structures of domination and patterns of coalition, 3) an increase in the amount of information organizations must process, and 4) participants in the set of organizations realizing they are in a common enterprise (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 148,155-156).

Once this has happened powerful forces emerge that lead organizations to become similar (more similar) to each other. This kind of homogenization is based on a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble others facing the same set of environmental conditions. Isomorphism can work to stabilize social behavior (Scott, 2004), and like DiMaggio and Powell, Scott argues compliance on the part of the organizational form is a likely response to this type of pressure. Similar-looking organizational forms have an easier time gaining and maintaining legitimacy in the field -- which is “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions.” (Suchman 1995, p. 574). In other words, the focus is on organizations creating and maintaining the correct-looking structures and processes, not on what they produce; outsiders use the structures and processes created to understand and recognize what these organizations are when they see them. This becomes an issue for the three Friends of the Park organizations, since they are both new and do not look like existing Friends of the Park organizations (except for the Friends of the High Line, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 4).

Empirically there is good evidence that institutional changes occur in ways that are congruent with the neo-institutional approach. Leblebici, et al (1991) used archival research in a historical case study of the U.S. radio broadcasting industry (3 15-year periods) to uncover and explain 3 endogenous mechanisms of change: analogies used to make sense of/manage new phenomena, private agreements between identifiable parties, and conventions (the practices adopted by some constituents to solve coordination problems). In this industry, newer, less-powerful peripheral players that were trying to make money while dealing with shifting coordination problems and competitive pressures introduced new practices. Once conventions were adopted by central players, these conventions transformed the organization of the industry by changing the basis of transactions – and *becoming new institutional practices*. The organization of the field was thus contingent upon institutionalized definitions of what was being transacted. In a similar fashion, the more these Friends of the Park groups can receive positive reactions of their approach to public space redevelopment, the more it can become taken for granted and influence change at the organizational level.

Institutional innovations may spread at first for performance reasons and an organizational desire to be seen as being leading edge. Later in the diffusion process innovations are more likely to be adopted for reasons related to seeking or maintaining legitimacy and reducing uncertainty, and promoting actual performance is of secondary importance. Early differentiation gives way over time to homogeneity of approaches and even of organizational structures in later stages of the diffusion process. Meyer and Rowan (1977, p. 340) outlined these mechanics of isomorphism: "[O]rganizations are driven to incorporate the practices and procedures defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized society. Organizations that do so increase their legitimacy and their survival prospects, independent of the immediate efficacy of the acquired practices and procedures." The Friends of the Park groups studied here have to both behave in ways expected of traditional Friends of the Park groups and stretch that definition to encompass parks not even developed, in spaces considered blighted and ugly and not parks.

2.1a2 Organizational Field

The concept of the organizational field within neo-institutional theory extends the notion of organizational embeddedness in its focus on the social and inter-subjective aspects of organizational environments (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Scott, 2001). I use the concept of *organizational field* to mean “those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life, key suppliers, resources and produce consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services and products” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 143). As Scott (2001) explains, “organizations are ...strongly influenced by their environments — and ...[s]ocially constructed belief systems and normative rules exercise enormous control over organizations—both how they are structured and how they carry out their work.”

Institutional logics illustrate how socially constructed broader belief systems in turn shape the cognition and behavior of actors in a given environment. Thornton and Ocasio (1999: 804) define institutional logics as “the socially constructed, historical patterns of practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality.” Logics, organizational fields and institutional change are all tightly connected. Institutional logics are the organizing principles that shape the behavior of field participants. Because they refer to a set of belief systems and associated practices, they define both the content and meaning of institutions (Reay and Hinings, 2009). Institutional logics therefore link institutions and action, and are an important concept for understanding organizational fields (Friedland and Alford 1991; Scott et al. 2000; Thornton and Ocasio 2008).

Since an organizational field is at its core a community of actors held together by their joint values and beliefs (Scott 2008), describing the institutional logic that guides actor behavior helps to define the field. Institutional change is usually associated with a new logic for the field (Lounsbury 2002; Scott et al. 2000; Suddaby and Greenwood 2005). There is a relatively recent, but growing, body of work arguing that bridging or manipulating institutional logics –

particularly when they are overlapping, plural in nature or only partly developed (Barley and Tolbert 1997; Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy, 2004) -- is in fact a key mechanism to explain institutional change (Green, 2004). Lounsbury (2006) shows how two competing logics within the mutual funds industry, one based on trust and the other on performance, influenced firms' boundary decisions. Even though this describes the consequences of changes in meaning, we are still left without a clear picture of how meaning is actually constructed in the field, given the presence of multiple overlapping or competing logics. (Mohr 2006).

Other accounts of meaning within the existing literature have primarily emphasized the concept of legitimacy and attempts to appeal to or influence perceptions of legitimacy. Gaining legitimacy is a challenge for organizations; they gain cognitive legitimacy primarily by conforming to established models/standards (Suchman 1995). The implication is because so many other organizations look like each other, if one looks different, at least in form, that organization risks losing perceived legitimacy. This becomes an issue when new organizations, especially the 501(c)(3) groups² studied here, are attempting to create something new and are also attempting to appeal to legitimacy in support of their project. Looking too different from other 501(c)(3) groups or other "Friends of the Park" groups in organizational form, or trying to do something unusual and unexpected for such a group may make their search for legitimacy harder.

For example, 501(c)(3) groups are restricted in the political and legislative (*lobbying*) activities they may conduct. (<http://www.irs.gov>). They are prohibited from supporting political candidates, prohibited from conducting political campaign activities to intervene in elections to public office, and are subject to limits on lobbying. They risk loss of tax-exempt status if these prohibitions are violated. (<http://www.irs.gov>). For all three of the groups, political support is crucial, yet they are limited in the kinds of support they are allowed to solicit and how they are allowed to do so; this balancing act is an important one to highlight given that, as explained later,

² A 501 (c) 3 group is an American tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a focus on at least one of the following categories: Religious, Educational, Charitable, Scientific, Literary, Testing for Public Safety, to Foster National or International Amateur Sports Competition, or Prevention of Cruelty to Children or Animals Organizations.

these groups are trying to use language, symbols, and discourse themes to develop and maintain support for their proposed projects.

Recent research has emphasized that institutional entrepreneurs actively engage in symbolic management to influence the legitimacy of their emerging field (Aldrich and Fiol 1994; Aldrich 1999; Zott and Huy 2007b). Institutional entrepreneurs are *actors who leverage resources to create new or transform existing institutions* (DiMaggio, 1988; Garud, Hardy, Maguire, 2007; Maguire, Hardy, Lawrence, 2004); this definition is applied to the three 501c (3) groups profiled in this dissertation and working on projects in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Institutional entrepreneurs attempt to design a vision for change and frame it in ways that appeal to those actors needed to give it legitimacy and implement it. To spread their vision and have it take root, entrepreneurs use discourse and themes, which are built off rhetorical arguments referring to already-established institutional logics. For example, Adrian Benepe, former New York Parks Commissioner, argues, “there should be more than one way to run a park” (Benepe 2012 Interview). Cities face challenges in continuing to be the sole steward for their parks in the face of huge budget challenges and a list of pressing needs. Developing new models could bring more resources into the equation but also add more value. As will be discussed more fully in Chapter 4, in New York City’s case, this search for another way to run a park led to the development of the Central Park Conservancy and later the Bryant Park Conservancy. It also opened the door for Friends of the High Line to propose themselves as a conservancy for their proposed park. The logic in New York of alternative park management arrangements was already there.

For these advocacy groups, the institutional work required to transform existing institutions focuses on cognitive elements -- meaning systems and cultural foundations based on a consensus of shared conceptions of social reality (Scott, 1994, 1995). While entrepreneurs could use legal sanctions or moral governance as the basis for legitimacy (Scott 2001) those definitions alone are not consistently applicable to the kind of work performed by the three 501c(3) advocacy groups studied here. For example, as will be discussed further in Chapter 4 (The High Line), the City government was not interested in turning the High Line into a park and not able to just tear the

High Line down due to federal Surface Transportation Board guidelines. In addition, there are (and were) environmental hazard cleanup issues as well that limited interest in using eminent domain. These entrepreneurs are attempting to get their organizations and the related physical project to be recognizable and culturally supported, and as discussed are attempting to do so using imagery and discourse; thus a focus on legitimacy based on cognitive elements is most relevant.

Performing that cognitive work depends on the cooperation of “communities of practice” to make intended new institutions real (Brown and Duguid 1991, Lave and Wenger 1991, Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). The basic argument made by Lave and Wenger is that communities of practice are everywhere and that we are generally involved in a number of them - whether that is at work, school, home, or in our civic and leisure interests. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do – in this case, advocating for park development -- and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. This is made more difficult when the process is one of redefinition or recreation (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006), making something new out of the shell of something existing, as in the case of the proposed linear parks.

Like all entrepreneurs, these advocacy groups face pressures, often competing ones. These advocacy groups combine institutional logics that have little in common, or even are in conflict. The entrepreneurs draw upon both nonprofit and for-profit institutional logics, which is why the logics may be in conflict or compete. Interest in managing competing logics has extended to investigating differing organizational mechanisms designed to manage these competing logics (Pache and Santos, 2010; Reay and Hinings, 2009), along with how entrepreneurs successfully broker between different logics (Bjerregard and Luring, 2012). The extent to which these entrepreneurs resolve the competing logics has an effect on their venture’s viability and sustainability (Battilana and Dorado, 2010, Tracey et al 2011).

Discourse is an under-studied operational mechanism that can help entrepreneurs deal with competing logics, a way for entrepreneurs to use conversations about the proposed project to

combine these differing logics into something new, and in doing so create legitimacy for the project they are proposing. The entrepreneurs' themes within the discourse are associated with specific "institutional vocabularies", including structures of words, expressions, and meanings, which they use to articulate, manipulate, and recombine important institutional logics (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005, p. 43). This kind of institutional work demands actors that are immune to or somehow less affected by the governance mechanisms of their institutional environments (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). The activities that these actors engage in to disrupt institutional structures are largely discursive and relate to what Lamont and Molnar (2002) have described as "boundary work": the entrepreneurs appear to disrupt institutions primarily by manipulating the social and symbolic boundaries that constitute them.

Discourse analysis in institutional entrepreneurship can illuminate the processes through which the entrepreneur can fashion, communicate and embed stories that support the creating, maintaining or disrupting of institutions; some forms of institutional work that are obvious candidates include advocacy and constructing identities (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Zilber argues that organizational actors use discourse "in their efforts to protect their vested interests in the current institutional order while also working to better their group's position by bringing about changes in the field." (Zilber, 2007: 1036).

Discourse analysis in this case also extends to the visual, the use of the physical artifact both in its current (unrenovated) state and in its future imagined one. Physical artifacts can be a mode of construction, maintenance, and transformation of meaning (e.g. Kress Van Leeuwen, 2001, Raab, 2008). The use of the artifact itself to carry meaning is both important and tricky for these entrepreneurs, since the structure has to absorb two sets of meanings simultaneously – the existing and the aspirational -- which is partly why studying the discourse around repurposing existing physical objects is so interesting.

The ability to make the imagined park real may depend on these community-based institutional entrepreneurs' ability to influence themes in the discourse along multiple dimensions

of institutional work and at multiple levels. Tracey et al (2011) highlight the challenges for institutional entrepreneurs faced with having to manage competing institutional logics.

Entrepreneurs have to make the case as to why their proposed venture solves an existing problem (envisioning), show an organizational template or otherwise highlight their capacity to make the venture happen (creating), and link their efforts to both higher-status legitimate actors and larger, macro-level conversations (legitimizing).

Institutional entrepreneurs need to find and mobilize allies to help them in managing the discourse around their proposed projects and support the implementation of divergent changes – doing the project. Those institutional entrepreneurs lacking high status may try to obtain legitimacy by convincing higher-status actors or resource providers to endorse their project (Singh et al., 1986). Higher-status actors can provide legitimacy for entrepreneurs' projects by allowing them to leverage formal authority, social capital, or some combination of the two.

Using the formal authority of higher-status actors can bring many benefits to institutional entrepreneurs. It can help them frame the discourse for public consumption, (Fligstein, 2001), bring order and legitimacy to a set of divergent ideas, (Maguire et al, 2004), and even promote discussion by others inside and outside their field. (Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy, 2004). As we usually think of it, social capital is associated with an actor's place in an interconnected web of social relations – giving actors information and support, among other benefits. (Maguire, 2004.) Linking with higher-status actors can increase the legitimacy of a change project by using the higher social position to collect support for the project from other critical actors (Hwang and Powell, 2005.)

Implementing any change is expensive, particularly when it involves building or reshaping physical entities, such as the built environment. It becomes more complex when the process is within the context of the public sector; the entrepreneurs are trying to create a new public good (the park), but are doing so in a way that is completely different from how the public sector has traditionally done so – as discussed in Chapters 4-7, by combining public and private money in

new and different ways, allowing the Friends of the Park group a leadership voice in development of the project, etc. . Oftentimes, such entrepreneurs are at the forefront of destroying existing bureaucratic rules and/or influencing existing structures in creative ways. As will be discussed further in Chapter 4, the Friends of the High Line worked with New York's Department of City Planning to solve a crucial development issue in an innovative way and enable the High Line to move forward.

In addition, these entrepreneurs face the challenge of solving an incredibly complex problem that no single organization, public or private, could undertake on its own and hope to solve. Thus they need to rely on multiple public and private entities and balance multiple competing logics. Saz-Carranza and Longo (2012) highlight the efforts of organizations involved in public-private joint ventures to manage competing logics. While their work did not look at a single organization balancing the logics, their research involving joint ventures was among the first to focus on the organization as an entity managing competing logics, as opposed to a field-level perspective.

The institutional entrepreneurship perspective, while providing a clear picture of how managing the discourse around a project can work in general to achieve legitimacy for new norms or ideas, does not clearly address the relational nature of the entrepreneurship projects this project studies. Nor does it address the temporal nature of agency – in other words, the same kinds of themes do not necessarily lead to the same responses or outcomes given the same actors at different times. The Social Movements literature, however, does address some of the gaps I have identified.

2.1b Social Movements

Social movements as a concept is a type of collective action that can be used to explain why collective resource mobilization occurs, how it manifests itself when it does occur, and explain the impact of the mobilization, whether it be a political victory, a cultural change, a social victory, etc. Social movements are often considered as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a

population, which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society.” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1217.)

Research into social movements began by examining resource mobilization processes and how grievances spur action. Turner and Killian (1972) argue “. . . that there is always enough discontent in any society to supply the grass-roots support for a movement if the movement is effectively organized and has at its disposal the power and resources of some established elite group” (p. 251). In other words, this approach to organizing takes the view that change is driven both by elites’ command of resources and grass-roots community support to address a problem; change comes from above and below. In both the New York case (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4), and the Chicago case (discussed in more detail in Chapter 5), the advocacy group was also able to build community support for the project based on addressing the discontent of the lack of open space. Both advocacy groups were able to harness resources controlled by elites, including private donors, elite nonprofits, and powerful public figures to build momentum for each project.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) take Turner and Killian’s argument further, positing that grievances and discontent may be defined, created, and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations, and that is how resources can be mobilized in support of an issue. In fact, they argue, social movements may not even be grievance-based. And, supporters, providing money, facilities, and/or resources, may have no commitment to the values that underlie specific movements. The authors describe interactions among resource availability, any preexisting organization of preference structures, and entrepreneurial attempts to meet preference demand. “Different historical circumstances and patterns of preexisting infrastructures of adherency will affect... strategies of SMO [social movement organizations] entrepreneurial activity” (1977: 1237); this is a recognition of temporal effects on strategies and outcomes. Jenkins (1983) also argues for group organization as a driver of success of the social movement’s objectives and for a more emergent interpretation of collective interests. It is entirely possible that collective interests are socially constructed and created by the mobilization processes.

The social movements literature has converged on the idea that the ability of activists, including institutional entrepreneurs, to bring about change depends upon framing processes and mobilizing structures (McAdam, McCarthy Zald, 1996). Benford and Snow (2000b) argue that framing processes, the way in which social movements attempt to shape thinking, should be considered along with the ability to mobilize resources as a mechanism available to social movements. Framing processes and developing key themes in the discourse are a way for social movements to bring together both grievances and resource mobilization. The 501c(3) groups are attempting to shape the discourse in ways that tap into existing grievances and encourage community members and others to mobilize in support of the new proposed parks.

Polletta (1998), goes further, arguing that studying social movement discourse can help us to understand the impact of movements on recruitment and institutional policymaking; in short, to understand the effects of social movements. She goes on to make the point that as a society we have a tendency to tell stories to make sense out of what seems strange or even potentially disturbing. By definition, the situation seems strange or disturbing when social movements are involved – we observe collective action smashing against structures, we are questioning what had been taken for granted, etc. Developing key themes in the discourse “may serve to contain the disruptive within a familiar form, to turn the anomalous into the “new.”” (1988: 422); in other words, they turn what could be potentially upsetting to constituencies into something new and exciting.

Giugni (1998) argues that researchers studying social movements often disagree on the causes of protest, its development over time, and its fate, but seem to agree that there has been limited study of the effects of social movements (McAdam et al 1988, Tarrow 1993). Social movements and social movement organizations are hard to connect to the actual changes they seek; even when social change occurs in the most dramatic fashion possible, as in a revolution, the connection between change-seekers and the revolution is challenging to conclusively draw (Amenta, 2006, Guigni and Bosi 2012, Suh, 2012). The central problem of connecting social movements to outcomes of social change is that of causality. How do researchers tie collective

action, insurgency, and protest to outcomes that are so frequently the result of, for example, policy? It has become almost commonplace to refer to this lack of knowledge regarding social movements' outcomes, which is amazing, since the whole point of social movements is to bring about change.

Building on Benford and Snow's work on social movements (2000b) the two fields of institutional entrepreneurship and social movements have begun to overlap more strongly. Scholars have illustrated ways in which institutional entrepreneurs use field frames (Hoffman and Ventresca 1999; Lounsbury and Glynn 2001; Lounsbury, Ventresca and Hirsch 2003) to attempt to influence the cognitive, normative and regulatory landscapes in which their organization is embedded (Rao, Morrill, and Zald 2000, Lounsbury and Glynn 2001; McAdam and Scott 2002; Lounsbury, Ventresca and Hirsch 2003). The overlap between social movements and institutional entrepreneurship has extended to focus on framing the discourse to shape meaning systems and landscapes (Snow et al 1986).

Rao, Morrill, and Zald (2000) are arguing that institutional entrepreneurs need to act like social movements in their attempts to create new organizational forms. "Social movements play a double-edged role [in constructing new organizational forms]: They de-institutionalize existing beliefs, norms, and values embodied in extant forms, and establish new forms that instantiate new beliefs, norms and values" (2000:2.) The act of destroying the old forms, establishing new forms and shaping the corresponding meanings is in fact what institutional entrepreneurs do, and is another point of convergence between the two bodies of literature. Rao, Morrill, and Zald (2000) argue, in fact, "that institutional entrepreneurs lead efforts to identify political opportunities, frame issues and problems, and mobilize constituencies. By so doing, institutional entrepreneurs spearhead collective attempts to infuse new beliefs, norms, and values into social structures, thus creating discontinuities in the world of organizations." (2000: p.2)

Institutional entrepreneurship and social movement approaches to discourse, however, differ in the relationships they see between discourse themes and new organizational forms. As

Rao, Morrill, and Zald (2000) explain, social movements give rise to new organizational forms under certain conditions linked to *market or organizational failures*. Two of the conditions they specify are very similar to the Envisioning work entrepreneurs must undertake -- in framing their proposed project to show how it solves a problem that prior institutional arrangements could not. The first condition described by Rao, Morrill, and Zald is when ‘normal’ incentives are inadequate to create public goods”, (2000: 9) and the second is when market mechanisms are inadequate to reduce negative externalities (2000:10). But, as Polletta (1998) highlights, when a social movement’s activists have achieved success, such as creating a new organizational form, they have a complicated balancing act to undertake. They often have to face criticism of co-optation and need to produce stories that will both defend their current position while at the same time using mobilizing structures to press for more changes. And it is still not clear whether managing the discourse in the long run supports or undermines an organization’s efforts to draw in members and supporters; the use of themes and the implied marketing associated with those themes contradicts the desired perception of activists as "experts" who should be more likely to present their position in the form of well-evidenced arguments.

Part of what drives this difference in how themes and organizational forms work is the way the two sets of literatures define and describe organizations attempting to mobilize resources. Because Polletta is a traditional social movements theorist, she sees the key resource mobilizing groups as activist organizations, which are often built around oppositional identities – organizing against something. The organizational theorists who have moved into social movements theory bring with them the view of resource mobilization as a tool used by institution-building organizations, hoping to institutionalize themselves within the new order. They are focusing on organizing for something.

Rao et al's work on discourse in support of organizational creation also does not account for how a social movements approach works in support of a partially public good³, as in the case of the three Friends of the Park projects. Combining the two perspectives of institutional entrepreneurship and social movements begins to create a picture of how we might understand re-creation or transformation of an organizational form to create a public good, particularly the ECL framework describing work entrepreneurs need to do in order to make their project a reality. But since the transformation occurs in a physically constrained specific neighborhood (or set of them), the role of the neighborhood is critically important. A complementary perspective comes from the Urban Political Economy view of how land is developed at the neighborhood level.

2.1c Urban Political Economy

A third perspective that helps us to understand the varied development of these parks comes from scholarship on Urban Political Economy. Jane Jacobs (1961) argued that the physical environment of the city has fundamental, direct effects on social life, especially at the neighborhood level. De Certeau (1984) framed the neighborhood as the physical representation of how people live in and use a city; the *practice* of the city, not just the concept of the city. The concept of a neighborhood is a sociological construct. It is a set of interactions, human behaviors that have meanings and expectations among its members; actions based on shared expectations, values, beliefs and meanings among individuals. The neighborhood is a piece of a larger community (such as a city or town), which in turn is comprised of both people and institutions occupying a spatially defined area influenced by ecological, cultural, and sometimes political forces (Park et al 1925). Suttles (1972) later built on the work of Park and others by incorporating a more nuanced understanding of how local neighborhoods form identities. It is not simply from

³ Partially public goods can be tied to purchases of private goods, thereby making the entire package more like a private good. Shopping malls, for instance, provide shoppers with a variety of services that are traditionally considered public goods: lighting, protection services, benches, and restrooms are examples. Charging directly for each of these services would be impractical, so the mall finances the services through receipts from the sale of private goods. In the case of the three Park projects, especially New York, the public space provided by these projects is paid for and sustained by a combination of public money and private money, thus the public and private goods are "tied" together.

free market competition, as originally articulated; it could be by having outsiders define both identity and boundaries.

Like Institutional Theory, the Urban Political Economy approach explicitly integrates politics and culture with market forces to show the impact on the development of the city, community, and neighborhood; how actors with agency influence the landscape (Walton, 1993, Gottdiener and Feagin, 1988), and how economic and political interrelationships influence both urban form and function. Unlike Institutional Theory, this body of literature provides a spatially situated perspective. How much of a local decision to develop land occurs purely at the neighborhood level? Not much. But how this relationship plays out between the neighborhood and the system looks very different depending on where one lives. Change happens as the result of the continuing and irresolvable struggle over exchange values (gained by making money off the land), vs. use value (people actually using the land and communities attached.) This struggle contests how places are used, for example, or what the future of the places in question should be. Cochrane (1999) argues that urban politics can be best understood as a process in which elites drive growth-oriented policies, and the power of their discourses is unchallenged. Given that actors with agency can influence cities, neighborhood residents often lack faith in the equalizing nature of “free and efficient” markets – in an echo of Granovetter (1985), economic relations are embedded in social relations.

Cities are organized through the ‘growth machine’ (Logan and Molotch, 2007), a pro-growth coalition of business and city leaders under the claim that growth is [always] good for cities. The ‘growth machine’ has been a driving force in urban development in the United States, with local interests (media, politicians, developers) playing a large role in the creation of a coalition pushing local growth for its own sake, and the national government often subsidizing local development-based projects. Development of cities and by extension neighborhoods is uneven as a result of this process. There is an explicit understanding that people and groups have an unequal ability to influence urban form. There are constant struggles over use values and exchange values. While economics affects decisions to develop or not develop a project in a particular area, it is not

the only factor at work. The neighborhood is a place of contestation within the city; both use and exchange values are themes in discourse around development, supported by coalitions, fighting for dominance. Stoecker (2004) pointed out the inevitable challenge of commodifying a (supposedly) community amenity like the proposed parks. When the amenity itself is constructed there is an implicit use value. Once the park is commodified it becomes subject to the controls of the market; those external relationships needed to maintain its exchange values dominate community relationships. In other words, the exchange value tends to win.

Some of this contestation is expressed via discourse and framing: Wilson and Wouters (2003), Newman and Lake (2004), and Stoecker (2004) all argue that discourses representing neighborhoods as unhealthy and decaying or as opportunities for capital investment and profit serve to limit community organizations' control over planning, policymaking, and development. However, in contrast, Martin (2003a) argues that efforts to assign meaning to a neighborhood, or "place framing" is a different use of discourse, and one that enables community organizations to enhance both the legitimacy and power of their agendas for change. Elwood (2006) argues that both the production of spatial meanings in neighborhoods and the spatial scaling⁴ of participation, policymaking, or contestation, affect the agency and autonomy of local actors such as community organizations. Specifically, she points out that "state institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations all engage in a range of spatial politics through which they attempt to influence urban change and decision-making processes." (Elwood, 2006: 324.) Raco (2000) and J. Fraser et al. (2003) also show that policy regimes and planning practices aimed at improving conditions in a city target a local spatial scale as being both ideal and appropriate. Their reading of this selection of a local spatial scale as the appropriate one for community

⁴ Defining the scale that applies to a policy objective (e.g. city-wide, neighborhood-based, etc. Understanding the range of policy objectives that are being considered at one particular scale helps ensure that risks, constraints and opportunities across different spatial scales are considered in the development of supporting and opposing evidence.

organizations' involvement is that it limits the autonomy of community organizations in urban politics.

Location as a place of contestation is also true when talking about areas designated for tourist development. The issues raised by tourism link directly to struggles over use and exchange values. By definition, urban space is always used, thus it always has use value. A site's exchange value comes simply from buying up land and transforming the use from whatever it currently is to one that serves richer users (individuals, businesses, or both). Tourism complicates this picture for two reasons. First, the new (rich) users are transient, and the developers (e.g., hotels) are stationary. So the exchange value of tourism is ongoing, depending on a constant stream of users, instead of a one-time transfer from poor(er) to rich(er). That constant stream may or may not be seeking an authentic, site-specific experience, linked to a history of past uses. Second, this brings back Stoecker's (2004) argument about the amenity becoming subject to market controls and how external relationships needed to maintain its exchange values dominate community relationships.

Who the park is for is important when we consider the kind of discourse themes used to encourage its development. There are those who live in the neighborhood and can benefit simply because they live near the proposed park. There are other beneficiaries who can be identified and appealed to, depending on the kinds of themes developed in the discourse- -those who support the development of urban green space, for example, and/or those who welcome the growth that comes with urban development.

The parks in question in the three case studied are intended to serve both residents and tourists – but not necessarily equally. Of the 3 million visitors the High Line Park in New York drew in 2011, 1.5 million were non-City residents. (www.thehighline.org, Satow 2012). The Reading Viaduct, given its downtown location near Philadelphia's Convention Center, is also intended to serve both residents and tourists. By contrast, Chicago's Bloomingdale Trail is designed primarily for residents. This distinction matters in how use and exchange values are viewed, and what themes are used by each side in the fight over land use between the growth

machine and local residents. Growth plans for land become a major force for organizing political action and for creating political positions. Canan and Hennessey (1989) depicted the struggle in Moloka'i between developers and residents; at the time of the article, Moloka'i was one of the last islands in the Hawaiian chain to be targeted for resort development. The county and the state both supported increased tourism as the economic choice to counterbalance the island's agricultural decline. The struggle over land in this case was especially intense because of the difference in how competing interests defined land. For the growth machine, land is capital that can be enhanced in value by more profitable uses/development (Logan and Molotch 1987). "For the indigenous people, the land is the source of cultural identity, social life and spirituality. Given the attractive lure of needed jobs, conflicts necessarily surface." (Canan and Hennessey, 1989, p.238)

Gill (2000) examined the resort community of Whistler, British Columbia, focusing on the social and political dynamics of growth. She argued that Whistler evolved from a phase of uncontested growth-machine dominance, to a phase of local contestation that was then moderated by the introduction of growth-management practices. The local contestation, over time, led to both social and environmental imperatives being imposed upon the economic imperatives of the growth machine. This dynamic will be explored further in Chapter 4, where residents around New York's High Line have recently begun to organize against its further development.

There are sets of tensions – tourist vs. local resident, economic growth vs. cultural politics, that we would expect to see in the discourses around the proposed projects in the three cases studied. Looking at space both from a tourist-based and resident-based growth perspective, in the last few decades, urban political economists and urban geographers (Jackson, 1991, Jonas and Wilson, 1999, McCann, 2002) have taken an interest in analyzing how local spaces are produced and in whose interest they are produced – and this may or may not be in the interests of the growth coalition. "[T]he political economy of urban change [cannot] be understood without a more fully developed understanding of its cultural politics," (Jackson, 1991, p. 225). McCann (2002) also argues that this process can be thought of as a cultural politics, where "meanings are

struggled over, social values are naturalized, and by which ‘common sense’ is constructed and contested.” (2002; p. 385.) For local spaces, meaning is constructed side by side with space.

In fact, the meaning-making discourses are nearly inseparable from the “place-making politics of local economic development...a characteristic of the politics through which various interest groups – neighborhood activists, social activists to business coalitions – struggle over how and in whose interests local space economies are developed.” (2002: p. 387) There is a struggle to shape meanings that closely reflect interests of particular groups (Jackson, 1991, Tett and Wolfe, 1991, Jordan and Weedon, 1995, Allen, 1996) which is especially relevant in the three cases I am studying due to tensions between tourists and locals.

These politics are situated spatially, and Mitchell (2000) explains that ‘cultural politics is about... strategizing in the realm of...meaning to create new worlds....new ways to live. Or....strategizing about preserving the old.’ (2000: 161) In effect, opposing sides develop imagined representations of place -- the traditional growth coalition advances themes in the discourse closely linked to their material interests, and the opposition constructs different arguments around what place and meaning are in order to articulate a competing vision. As Jackson (1991) notes: “even an abandoned building [is] subject to diverse readings by diverse groups in different material circumstances: a source of recreation...; an opportunity for reinvestment, or a threat to neighboring properties.” (1999:226)

In McCann’s (2002) case study of proposed development in Lexington, Kentucky, and the case of New York’s High Line in the late 1990’s/early 2000’s, it initially looked as if the growth coalition-backed themes would be triumphant over the neighborhood open space theme. The themes supported by the growth coalition seemed more economically compelling and more relevant, and the community-based activists seemed to have an uphill battle to change the proposed plan for the space. In the Lexington, Kentucky case the growth coalition-backed theme in the discourse was fiercely challenged and ultimately did not shape how the space was used. In the case of the High Line, the growth coalition became part of the Friends of the High Line

coalition, and their desires were considered in plans for developing the space. This process of co-opting the growth coalition will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 7.

In the public space cases studied here in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, gentrification⁵ has occurred, is underway, or is hoped/projected for the areas around the park; the tensions created by gentrification processes adds to the complexity of emotion around the places where people live. (Logan and Molotch 1987). This is especially true in the last ten to fifteen years, as the role of the state in gentrification has changed (Hackworth and Smith 2001). The state has played more of an active role in gentrification as states are required to develop their own sources of revenue and federal disbursements have decreased. In addition, developers are pursuing gentrification projects in areas that need public support to mitigate profit risks; their proposed projects could be in areas that have yet not developed enough density or affluence to enable the company to make money without a subsidy on the development side. Hackworth (2002) also highlights how the land economics of inner-city investment have changed in ways that accelerate certain types of neighborhood change, including increased affluence and development—particularly in New York. As Smith (1986) points out, capital has no new territory left to explore, so it redevelops or subdivides urban space. Harvey (1985) argues that the urban environment is built, destroyed, and rebuilt to allow for a more efficient circulation of capital. How this plays out looks very different given each metropolitan area's history of urban development.

Gentrifying areas are heightened sites of conflict and contestation and affect community-based institutional entrepreneurs' ability to develop the park. Community support is important, and a fragmented or changing community may be so focused on internal tensions that it may not be able to provide support. In some cases, the park itself is a site of contestation between use values and exchange values in the neighborhood. For example, in the Philadelphia case, the community is not even in agreement about what to call the neighborhoods the proposed park, the

⁵ The process by which the middle-class (and the rich as well) begin to live in a traditionally working-class area of a city, changing the character of the area.

Reading Viaduct, runs through. Residents of Chinatown call the adjacent area Chinatown North, and claim the right to determine what happens to the entire Viaduct. Residents of the adjacent space call it Callowhill, and argue that both communities have a say in what happens to the Viaduct. In either case, the discourse around the proposed park become more complicated, and could make the sites in question resistant to embracing particular themes, as well as make the spaces less able to support a proposed theme in the discourse.

As stated earlier, each of these literatures has a particular viewpoint on the kinds of discourse themes that matter in development of urban space. Table 1 summarizes my beliefs as to the dominant themes coming from each strand of literature, as well as *projections* for how Friends of the Park groups would use an ECL framework to try and make their projects happen. As stated earlier, I believe that the Friends of the Park groups need to frame the discourse in all three of the ECL dimensions in order to be successful, and that more balance among the dimensions is linked to the venture's viability. In Chapters 4-7 I will explore which of the themes summarized in Table 2.1 are important in which cases, and which emergent themes also play an important role. I will also explore whether the discourse in each case is balanced among the ECL dimensions, whether the discourse in these themes is positive or negative, and explain the role the theme played in helping (or not helping) turn the project from thought to reality.

Table 2.1: Comparison of Types of Discourse Themes

Type of Discourse theme	Urban Political Economy	Social Movements	Institutional Entrepreneurship	Projected Community-Based Institutional Entrepreneur -- Friends of the Park theme
Who we are vs. What we do	Who we are	What we do	Both	Both
Zero Sum vs. Positive Sum	Zero Sum	Either – more likely Zero Sum	Either	Positive Sum
Use	Achieve desired development for land use	Mobilize resources, influence elites	Bridge institutional logics at the cultural-cognitive level to gain legitimacy	All
Desired goal	Land use/control “growth is good”	Achieve social justice/change the world Effect institutional policy changes	Acceptance of new organizational form “the company is appropriate to solve the identified problem”	Land use/control “Green space is good” Acceptance of new organization
Top Down vs. Bottom Up Target Audience	Top Down	Bottom Up	Top Down	Both
Financial Growth vs. Lifestyle/ Amenity Growth	Financial	Lifestyle	Either	Both
Persuasion vs. Logrolling Politics	Either	Either	Persuasion	Persuasion
Temporally contingent	No	Yes	No	Yes

Adapted from Klein, Dansereau, and Hall (1994) and Navis and Glynn (2011)

2.1d Spatial artifact sense-making

The materiality, or physical location, of the spaces in these three case studies is of particular importance; the proposed park cannot be simply anywhere. While the organizational culture literature says artifacts are important in interpreting culture (Gagliardi, 1990), there have been few attempts to analyze them, particularly spatial artifacts, in much of the organizational literature. This might be due to many researchers focusing on culture taking the physical object as background (Van Maanen, 1988).

Built space is a kind of “spatial artifact” (Yanow 2004a), and this label considers the human role in shaping the spaces we use, and the kinds of spaces that communicate meanings – whether those meanings are social, political, cultural, or some combination. In analyzing physical artifacts, the researcher is investigating the meanings that artifacts represent. The meanings of these spatial artifacts are created and put into practice by either the use of primarily visual objects, or by integrating the visual and the verbal in such a way that each needs the other to be fully understood. (Meyer et al 2013). This extends Berg and Kreiner’s (1990) work on exploring the relationship between built space (in their case, a structure), and what it is meant to signify “in the life of society.” (1990: 43). These community-based institutional entrepreneurs are using imagery and themes incorporating the park, itself, as artifact to convey those signifiers.

Gagliardi (1990) argues “material artifacts and the organization of space...are more apt to reveal enacted cultural themes and tension implied by the actors’ constant efforts to create and recreate social reality.” (Gagliardi, 1990, p. 33) In her work on the New York Botanical Garden, Johnson (2009) makes a similar argument, positing that “it seems likely that the resources and constraints bound up with local settings play a greater and more nuanced role in organizational identity dynamics than has lately been acknowledged. ... a place may offer a founder powerful cultural materials with which to construct a persuasive story about why this place in particular needs or merits the organization under construction; such cultural materials are especially powerful when they serve to attract political and economic resources.” (Johnson, 2009, p. 6)

Visual, physical artifacts play a particular role in discourse (Grant, Hardy, Oswick and Putnam 2004, Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy 2004, Cornelissen, Holt, and Zundell, 2011). They are objectified within social groups to enable mutual or shared interpretations (Raab 2008), they can work in balancing multiple stakeholders’ expectations (Meyer et al 2013), and can be used deliberately to induce or encourage specific, selected cognitive processes. They are persuasive rhetorical devices (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999, Scott and Rajeev, 2003), at least as powerful as verbal language, and are a distinct way of making sense of situations (Meyer et al 2013:28).

Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) talk about the process of interpreting artifacts, particularly those linked to organizational change, as being a process of sense-making. Based on their case study of an Israeli bus company's change in colors, and how that change was received, they argue that this process occurs along three independent and important dimensions. The first dimension the authors describe is *instrumentality* – does the artifact serve a functional purpose? The second dimension is *aesthetics* – how does it look? And the third dimension is *symbolic* – what does it represent – and to whom? This use of dimensions is a way of addressing Berg's (1990) question: "How do we know that a certain design will evoke a certain emotional, aesthetic, or intellectual collective response?" (p. 43). All of the Friends of the Parks groups are trying to evoke a positive response in community members, potential donors, etc., in their attempts to make the proposed park a real park.

Images presented by the visual artifacts help construct social reality, since the visuals are interpreted within a specific cultural context (Kuasirikun 2011). In organizational settings, the meanings of visual artifacts are affected by how they are handled (Heracleous and Jacobs 2008). Aspects of visual artifacts, particularly in the case of these abandoned elevated railroad tracks, are more difficult to ignore compared to aspects of verbal texts (Meyer et al 2013). The Friends of the Park groups are trying to change shared meanings around these physical, grounded spaces through management or influence of the discourse around the spaces themselves. This presents a challenge, since the spaces can only be what they are; they cannot be wider, longer, or in a different location. The interaction between space and theme is complex – the theme must make sense given the space as it currently exists, which is literally not a tabula rasa, and yet must change what and 'how' the space means (Yanow 2005) in a dynamic environment. The space then must support the new theme, and aid the "Friends of" groups in translating the imagined meanings into real ones.

The visual mode of sense-making and its role in discourse is relevant for research focusing on legitimation and logics (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001, Kress 2010, Meyer et al 2013). The visual and the verbal forms of discourse are integrated, though, and need to be interpreted and

understood together. Combining Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (IAS) approach to how individuals make sense of a physical object thus provides a complementary framework to the Tracey et al (ECL) framework used to evaluate the entrepreneur's attempt to make a venture viable through discourse work.

2.2 Contributions of Research

2.2a Theoretical

This project describes conditions under which a local advocacy group successfully develops and consistently manages themes in the discourse around their proposed project. The discourse themes work at multiple levels – individual, group, and organizational - to build coalitions of support for a public park located in a specific neighborhood. Successful and consistent use of themes, especially as they relate to the park as physical artifact over time, is a necessary, though not sufficient, component of the advocacy group's ability to bring its project to life. Findings from this research can be extended beyond elevated linear parks, to shed light on how interest groups form in support of public space projects, how they do (or don't) acquire backing from public and private actors, and how logics of collective action, economic interest, and public good can be reconciled in support of neighborhood public spaces.

This project has implications in understanding how entrepreneurs deal with public spaces and their interest in transforming those spaces. City governments and planners know that green spaces and public spaces matter to urban residents. They also know that it is very difficult to find large spaces to transform into green or public spaces, so that being creative in repurposing abandoned structures or sites is important. The frameworks applied to Friends of the Park efforts in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia highlight the kinds of work that needs to be done in order to develop support for these needed spaces.

All of these literatures provide a particular lens through which sensemaking, or meaning-making about events that are unfolding, occurs. Using Pike's (1967:42) definitions of emic and

etic⁶, these literatures are primarily etically relevant. The etic perspective uses frameworks from Tracey et al (ECL) (2011) and Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (IAS) (2004) to compare the development process across the three case studies and try to explain relations between elements of the process. The ECL framework discusses the kind of activities required by the group, itself. First, entrepreneurs have to explain why their proposed venture solves an existing problem; this is what the ECL framework calls Envisioning. Next, entrepreneurs have to show an organizational template or otherwise highlight their capacity to make the venture happen; this is what the ECL framework calls Creating. Third, entrepreneurs have to link their efforts to both higher-status legitimate actors and larger, macro-level conversations; this is what the ECL framework describes as Legitimizing. As you might expect, the audiences for these kinds of work may not be the same, thus requiring the skills to navigate among multiple groups or actors.

Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz's IAS framework is about the proposed park as a physical artifact – in other words, the object the entrepreneurs want to repurpose. How organizations communicate their messages visually can affect their perceived legitimacy; entrepreneurs use cultural accounts to create legitimacy for new ventures (Navis and Glynn, 2010), though current work has primarily focused on framing and verbal narratives to show their capabilities. Adding a use of the visual, in this case the physical artifact, can help explain how legitimacy of new ventures can be visually as well as verbally constructed. Visual rhetoric and visual framing are central parts of the strategic repertoire of culturally skilled entrepreneurs and effective use of visual rhetoric may separate the successful entrepreneurs from the unsuccessful ones (Meyer et al 2013:38).

The challenging part is integrating the two frameworks together. Many discourse themes in the Envisioning dimension, some in the Creating dimension, and some in the Legitimizing

⁶ As Pike (1967: 42) defines it, the emic perspective focuses on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to the members of a given society. From Pike's point of view, the etic approach is useful for penetrating, discovering, and elucidating emic systems, but etic claims to knowledge have no given priority over competing emic claims. In other words, objective knowledge is an illusion, and that all claims to knowledge are ultimately subjective.

dimension actually apply to the artifact as an object as well as to the group transmitting the message. These "ECL" dimensions are all activities, and they need an actor, which is the Friends of the Park (FotP) group; but they are also done with respect to a specific object, namely the potential park in the neighborhood. And to make integration more complicated, the AIS dimensions seem to fit best in the *Envisioning* and *Legitimizing* dimensions. The *Creating* dimension is more practical, including themes like skill-building, funding, timing, technology and politics. The use of these two frameworks together enable us, as observers, to understand the impact of the presence (or absence) of key themes on project development, as well as balance across the three dimensions contained within each. It is not clear from either framework whether the three dimensions need to happen consecutively or concurrently, or what happens if one of these dimensions of work is not addressed.

The role of discourse is understudied in approaches to urban development, particularly in understanding debates over control and shaping of urban public spaces. Abbott (1991, 1992; Abbott and Hrycak 1990) argues that the inherently process-oriented nature of discourse is critical in much of sociological inquiry. Franzosi agrees that focusing on a discourse, theme-based lens “shifts concerns away from variables to actors, away from regression-based statistical models to networks, and away from a variable-based conception of causality to narrative sequences. That view brings sociologists closer to sociology's own concerns with issues of agency”. (Franzosi, 1998; p. 550). This project is process-focused, with three 501(c)3 advocacy groups attempting to do the same thing at around the same time, in similar cities, and with differing outcomes.

While evaluating the discourse around a given project is not necessarily an exhaustive analysis, it can be a useful way to structure the comparative study of these three Friends of the Park groups. The three literatures brought together -- Institutional Entrepreneurship, Social Movements, and Urban Political Economy -- have particular viewpoints regarding the kinds of discourse themes and tropes that are used, and who the target audiences for those themes are. Institutional entrepreneurship theory implies that the most effective themes are legitimacy-based

themes relying on links to existing logics--how things *should* work -- very much in line with the ECL framework's "Legitimizing" dimension of work on bridging logics. These themes tend to be macro level. Social movements theory implies that the most effective themes are those designed to mobilize the community from the bottom up, and/or to influence elites in order to gain a certain movement-motivated outcome – very much in line with the ECL framework's "Creating" dimension of work on bridging logics. These themes tend to be at the meso, or middle level. Urban Political Economy argues for an instrumentally focused theme that growth is good – targeting elite, growth machine-based interests --also very much in line with the ECL framework's "Creating" dimension of work on bridging logics. These perspectives can be incompatible without understanding the multilevel bridging work performed by *community-based institutional entrepreneurs* to reconcile competing themes and underlying institutional logics.

Combining the approach to how entrepreneurs perform their work with a framework evaluating how artifacts make sense to people gives complementary perspectives and can shed more light on the process of public space development. This combination of frameworks evaluates the entrepreneur's ability to frame two sets of messages regarding their proposed park. The first set of messages is about the entrepreneurial group as a group. The second set of messages is about the physical object they want to turn into a park.

It is no easy task to develop and consistently use themes built off different logics and meant to operate at different levels. Appealing to existing institutional logics is a tool these new entrepreneurial organizations use in their search for belonging or legitimacy. The Friends of the Park groups need to make other actors in the organizational field believe that the proposed parks can be thought of and made sense of as parks, even though currently they look nothing like parks. At the same time these Friends of the Park groups are appealing to different sets of actors in terms of being the organization that can create the park. Using a *growth is good* logic based in theories of urban political economy, the Friends of the Park groups are trying to appeal to a variety of potential public and private donors needed to create the park in terms of a return on their

investment – through increased property taxes and home values, new jobs, related investment, etc.

The Friends of the Park groups are also trying to show community members and other supporters that they can actually make the project a reality. This is important since both potential and actual supporters need to see some progress in order to continue their support. The view of discourse as an important determinant of project success is an alternative explanation to three well-developed non-economic explanations for why urban projects do or do not happen.

1. Mayoral leadership, or the Great Man theory (Carlyle, 1888, Carneiro, 1981). This approach explains that a complex urban development project would get constructed if the mayor were influential; if due to either her/her intelligence, charm, charisma, or political skill the mayor was able to use the power of the Mayor's office in a way that made a difference to project trajectories. This explanation would project more success for the Friends of the High Line in New York and the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago due to the influence of the Mayors in each city.
2. Community politics -- this explanation is rooted in the social movements-based political clout of neighborhood groups; the more successful, more connected neighborhood-level groups would enjoy increased levels of organization and mobilization, thus leading to project success. This is similar to the Matthew Effect, where success breeds success, but this explanation for project success is centered on the influence of the groups, themselves, and how that influence aids project outcomes. The Friends of the High Line, as described in Chapter 4, is very well-connected, more so than either the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail or the Reading Viaduct Project.
3. City-wide demographics/income-structure – this explanation is under the umbrella of the Urban Political Economy literature, is a variant of the growth machine (Logan Molotch 1997), and the main point is that in cities with high numbers of wealthy individuals, complex urban projects are more likely than cities without high numbers of wealthy

individuals. This theory would project success for the Friends of the High Line in New York given the high number of wealthy individuals in the immediate county, and failure for the Reading Viaduct Project given the low number of wealthy individuals in the immediate county.

I believe that these three well-developed non-economic explanations are important causal factors, but that discourse can play a moderating role in the trajectories of these projects. In some cases discourse plays an enhancing or accelerating role. In other cases discourse, can act to hinder or or retard a project's progression. In evaluating the discourse around the groups and their attempts to repurpose abandoned public spaces, I am trying to understand which dimensions matter most -- if at all -- in how these groups attempt to shape the discourse around the spaces. For example, in the IAS framework, does an emphasis on *Instrumentality*, *Symbolism*, or *Aesthetics* make a difference in the outcomes for these venture? For the ECL framework, does it matter more for the venture's viability for the entrepreneurs to focus on *Creating* and *Legitimizing* discourse and less on *Envisioning*? Could emphasizing *Envisioning* instead of *Legitimizing* lead to venture viability if it is accompanied by a secondary focus on *Creating*, because *Creating* themes are the most tangible and practical?

I believe completeness and consistency of themes in the discourse matter for venture viability. I define completeness as being where the themes are represented in ways that provide all information needed to encourage the desired reader or listener reaction. Consistency is defined as the themes not being fragmented, missing, self-contradictory, ambiguous, or unclear. In the entrepreneurship and business strategy literatures, vision, including imagery about products, markets, and organization, has had important effects on organization-level performance , both theoretically, (Isenberg,1987,Peters, 1988, Slater, 1993)and empirically (Filion, 1991, Kotter, 1990, Westley and Mintzberg 1989). In their comprehensive review of leadership, business strategy, and entrepreneurship theories, Baum, Locke, and Kirkpatrick (1998) identified specific attributes said to be necessary for a vision to be effective (i.e., to significantly affect organizational performance), including that the vision is clear (Jacobs &

Jaques, 199, Nanus 1992), future-oriented(Collins & Lazier 1992, Jacobs & Jaques 1990), stable/consistent (Locke et al 1991), and has the desirability or the ability to inspire (Sashkin 1988; Sims & Lorenzi 1991).

The attributes of the Friends of the Park group's vision as conveyed through dominant themes in the discourse also matter because they are linked to Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) on the part of project supporters – those behaviors that are performed voluntarily, that are not explicitly rewarded, yet are useful for organizational functioning (Organ, 1988). These include behaviors like organizational loyalty, which is defined as endorsing, supporting and defending organizational objectives (Borman and Modwilo, 1993), or spreading goodwill, protecting the organization, and defending it against threats, even under adverse conditions (Podsakoff et al, 2000, Van Dyne et al, 1994). And OCB includes individual organizational initiative, which describes task-related behaviors going above and beyond the minimal expected performance or requirement levels – behaviors that are both voluntary and extra-role. Doing so, employees show enthusiasm, tackle additional tasks themselves, or motivate fellow employees to do the same (Podsakoff et al, 2000). There is empirical evidence for a link between OCB and organizational performance, such as increasing employee and management productivity, improved coordination, improved organizational branding and attractiveness, increased performance, and improved ability to adapt to environmental changes.

I believe that complete and consistent themes can lead to organizational citizenship behaviors(OCB)s. These OCBs can lead to increased organizational performance on the part of the 501c(3) entity. That increased organizational performance in turn can lead to intangible outcomes such as legitimacy, which are critical to the new ventures' survival, and indicators of increased performance can be observed in the *Creating* and *Legitimizing* dimensions of the ECL framework.

Because of the importance of stability/consistency and completeness of themes, and their link to different aspects of organizational performance, I think that a focus on *Creating* and

Legitimizing matters more for venture viability than a focus on *Envisioning*. In addition since the spaces themselves are constrained (very narrow, linear, etc.), *Envisioning* work may not be needed to the same degree as work in the other dimensions, regardless of how bad the spaces look in their abandoned state.

2.2b Empirical contributions

This project considers multiple levels of analysis. Many studies of institutional entrepreneurship focus on the organizational or individual level of analysis. Institutional entrepreneurship, especially when its outcome results in the creation of a physical object, is a collective action and it needs to be studied as such. According to Schoonhoven and Romanelli (2001, p. 387), “The Myth of the Lonely Only Entrepreneur can and should be laid to rest.” In addition, the institutional work required by these advocacy groups happens at the micro, meso, and macro levels; studying all of those levels together provides a more complete picture of the entrepreneurial process.

Furthermore, although entrepreneurship is linked to the creation of new organizations, not enough attention is devoted to the creation process, including fundamental questions such as: Where do new firms come from? How are they organized? How do they evolve? (Aldrich, 1999). Early work on organizational fields (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) reflected an assumption that fields may be treated as ‘entities’ or systems -- but they were treated in a way that has led to overly structural accounts of entrepreneurship. A different approach to field level processes and a re-engagement with the role of agency and interest during field reproduction has encouraged a rethinking and reconsideration of institutional processes (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). As Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, p. 216) argue in their conceptualization of ‘institutional work’, “[a]long with understanding the processes through which institutions affect organizational action, research has become increasingly concerned with the effects of individual and organizational action on institutions”. As highlighted earlier this work remains at a relatively early stage of

development. A challenge in advancing the work lies in finding ways to theorize and incorporate an understanding of action and, in turn, its complex inter-relationship with both specific institutions and wider social structures. Thus this project builds on the recent work by Battilana and Dorado (2010), Tracey et al (2011), and Saz-Carranza and Longo (2012) in focusing on the multiple kinds of institutional work required for entrepreneurs to succeed in their ventures.

The institutional approach is further complemented by the focus on the physical artifact – the built space – as the outcome of the attempt to create something new. Artifacts are not often talked about in an organizational setting; this is particularly true of the built environment. In an empirical gap not addressed in Battilana et al's (2009) review article, this dissertation contributes to institutional theory through a focus on the physical artifact, using the case of elevated urban linear parks. Combining the IAS work on dimensions of physical artifact meaning with the three types of institutional work required for venture viability (Tracey, Phillips and Jarvis 2011) can illuminate how entrepreneurs attempting to create a physical artifact make their case, and what dimensions matter.

Many case studies of traditional institutional entrepreneurship focus on success stories. While that is important, it is also important to take a truly comparative approach; comparing successes and failures may shed more light on the process of institutional entrepreneurship. The three sites studied, evaluated over the same 13 year period, range from the completed (New York) to the in-process (Chicago) to the barely started (Philadelphia). In addition, this project contributes to the discussion about shaping the neighborhood by exploring coalitions of community activists, politicians, and business elites developing in heretofore-unexpected ways to develop public spaces.

The case for the park must be made differently to different kinds of stakeholders. While the three literatures referred to earlier provide insight, any one of them alone does not tell the whole story. These community-based institutional entrepreneurs need to combine and resolve conflicts between existing logics, develop mobilizing structures to organize collectively, and co-

opt or go around the growth machine in their attempts to develop new shared meanings and change cognitive-cultural perceptions and related practices around the proposed new park. These efforts depend in part on the entrepreneur's ability to resolve conflicts between the institutional logics the entrepreneurs draw upon. The efforts also depend in part on the entrepreneurs' ability to use the physical artifact – the park, as an object – to “invoke” without explicitly arguing; this action can enhance or soothe the competition between different institutional logics” (Meyer et al 2013:527). And resolving conflicts is critical for the success of these organizations. Battilana Dorado, who focus on entrepreneurs combining logics and their ability to gain and maintain legitimacy, argue that a common organizational identity “that strikes a balance between the logics the organization combines” enables sustainability (2010:1435).

This project aims to understand how these community-based institutional entrepreneurs manage their competing logics to achieve legitimacy in their interactions with the communities, governments, donors, and other nonprofits involved in making these parks real. This research will extend this literature by focusing on “new” organizations without institutionally prescribed and well-established “archetypal” forms” (2010:1419).

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

My proposed research focuses on the practices and interactions of organizations attempting to create urban linear public parks. The organizations of central importance are the 501(c)3 “Friends of” groups acting as community-based institutional entrepreneurs. While my central unit of analysis is the individual organization, my research will attempt to extrapolate to the intra- and inter- organizational level. My project seeks to explain variation in the development of new urban linear parks as public spaces in New York, Chicago and Philadelphia. Specifically, how much variation exists among the three organizations attempting to make their imagined parks real and create a new public good, and what are the causes of that variation.

3.1 Research timeline

As I will describe in more detail later in this chapter, in order to evaluate the themes in each dimension for presence, completeness, and consistency, I collected multiple kinds of qualitative data. The data included interviews, documents, videos, photographs, and renderings. I evaluated the qualitative data and assigned references to the High Line, the Bloomingdale Trail, and the Reading Viaduct, to a code describing the main point of the reference, an ECL dimension (Envisioning, Creating or Legitimizing) and an IAS dimension (Instrumentality, Aesthetics, and Symbolism). The qualitative data collection for this project started in January 2011 and finished in July 2012. I also analyzed the physical areas adjacent to the actual and proposed parks through comparative census data in order to understand who lives near these sites and whether and how that might affect the parks’ trajectory of development and their openness to certain discourse themes.

3.2 Research Setting

This project is a three case comparative study using park development projects in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. These three cities all have active park projects. They are, in fact, the only three currently active park projects in the United States involving reusing elevated tracks, and they started their projects at around the same time period.

The three cities have many similarities. New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia were ranked in the top 10 of cities around the country, based on the size of their population. New York ranked first with 8,391,881 people. Chicago ranked third with 2,851,268 people, and Philadelphia ranked sixth with 1,547,297 people (www.census.gov). These are densely-settled cities, with a high ratio of developed areas per capita (high rise buildings, commercial and industrial centers). As a result of this dense settlement in some ways residents of these kinds of cities need access to public parks more urgently. Figures 3.1-3.3 show the parks in relation to the larger city sites.

Figure 3.1: High Line Park, New York City



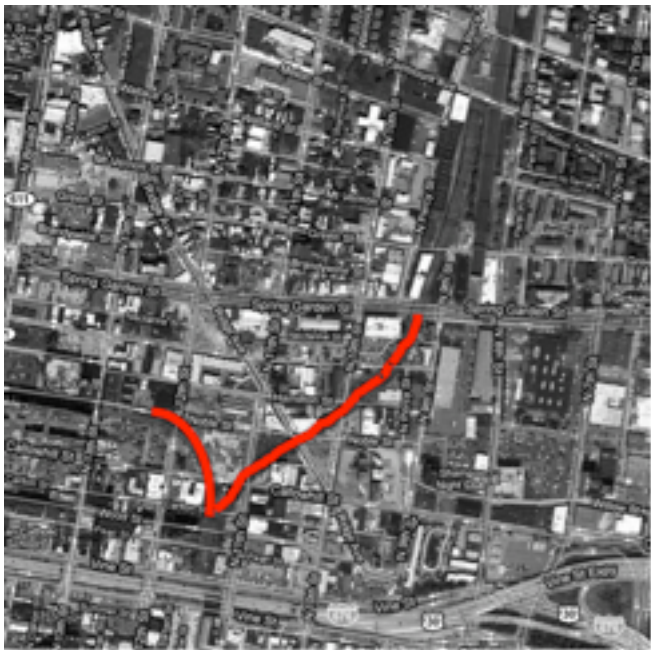
Source: The Author

Figure 3.2: Bloomingdale Trail, Chicago



Source: The Author

Figure 3.3: Reading Viaduct, Philadelphia



Source: The Author

The cities are politically liberal, tending to vote Democratic. Both Philadelphia and New York are early colonial cities, and this history is reflected in their architecture and to some degree in their infrastructure, whereas Chicago is a city that came to prominence over a century later than either New York or Philadelphia.⁷ Finally, the three park locations are in each city's downtown areas, and share various similarities as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Summary Table of Three Cases

Location	New York City	Chicago	Philadelphia
Park/Public Space Project	High Line	Bloomingdale Trail	Reading Viaduct
Population living downtown rank (based on 2010 Census)	1	2	3
Public space location within city	Chelsea/Meatpacking District	Humboldt Park/Logan Square	Callowhill/Chinatown
Project status	Phase 1 opened in 2009, Phase 2 opened in 2011 Phase 3 in design	In design process Projected to open in part by 2014 and completely by 2016	City in process of obtaining complete stewardship
Park length	1.5 miles	2.65 miles	.86 miles
Prior Use	Freight line	Freight line	Passenger line
Cost	\$150 million (actual to date) \$240 million total	\$91 million (estimated)	\$36 million (estimated)
Community Advocacy Group	Friends of the High Line	Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail	Reading Viaduct Project
Park Administration	Friends of the High Line (via contract with Parks Conservancy)	Chicago Park District and Trust for Public Land	Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation

⁷ New York developed a special relationship with Chicago that never existed between it and other United States cities: its "coronation" of Chicago as the western terminus of the Hudson River-Erie Canal-Great Lakes trade route to the nation's interior. New York pushed for Chicago's success to assure its own over east coast rivals like Boston and Philadelphia without the much sought for water route to the west. As a result, Chicago has always had a strong east coast connection. And due to 1) the city's rise, 2) its power and energy during the industrialization and immigration that followed the Civil War, and 3) the development of American cities as social laboratories, Chicago's development during the era far more followed the route of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia than did its mid-western peers. This was especially true in terms of the city's population density, ethnic diversity, traffic, public transit, etc. (skyscrapercity.com, ww.academicamerican.com)

3.3 Approach

My three site case study follows Daft and Lewin's (1993, p. ii) prescription that research on new organizational forms should be "characterized by midrange theory and method....and research that does not presume to test hypotheses empirically." I organized my approach to collecting and analyzing qualitative data along the lines of Yanow's (2005) framework of the three inquiry processes in which data about the physical built environment is 'accessed'.

1. Observing the site and accessing it physically
2. Talking to people conversationally and in-depth via snowball sampling
3. Identifying, locating, and closely reading documents
 - a. Primary data – memos, blogs, correspondences, presentations
 - b. Secondary data—newspaper accounts, films, maps, photos

I believe that the process by which the "Friends of the Park" group actually brings the park into existence depends to a great extent on the group's ability to determine the themes and descriptions that are used in discussing their potential project and plan for the artifact; can these groups shape the rhetorical discourse while ensuring they appeal successfully to multiple stakeholders? The question is not *whether* discourse matters; it is *how* discourse matters in bringing these parks into existence. Fundamentally, what is it about specific themes that matter, and how does that change over time? Are the messages about the entrepreneur, the FoTP group, consistent? Are they complementary to or contradicted by messages about the proposed park, itself?

3.3a Observing the site and accessing it physically

Mapping the sites physically includes locating them spatially, physically walking on and around the locations, and recording my observations as an observer – what are the sites like, where are they located, how do you get to them, what is around them, etc. I was able to see how each site fits in with its physical surroundings; how it works and interacts with its surrounding

environment. In each case a user of the site passes very close to (or through) existing structures. There are residential structures within five feet of each structure's edge, along long stretches of the structure. There are also commercial structures very close to the park in the cases of both New York and Philadelphia. In Chicago the commercial structures are not quite as close to the edge of the proposed park.

At each of these locations, I visited and walked on and around the sites multiple times. I was able to contact members of the advocacy organizations and arrange to meet them at the site at least once in each of the three cases. In all cases, they are the official gatekeepers for accessing the park – especially important in the cases of the Viaduct and Bloomingdale Trail, where the city did not own or control the complete site. So while access to the Reading Viaduct and Bloomingdale Trail are not technically allowed, being with a member of the advocacy group gave me limited permission to be onsite.

In New York, I walked on the High Line (for the two sections currently open) by myself and with a member of Friends of the High Line. I took pictures of the surrounding areas as well as of both sections. Figures 3.4 and 3.5 show the High Line in relation to the surrounding area, particularly with respect to 10th Avenue, the nearest thoroughfare to the High Line.

Figure 3.4: View of High Line from across 10th Avenue, Summer 2011



Figure 3.5: View of High Line from across 10th Avenue, Summer 2011



Figures 3.6 and 3.7 show images from the two sections of the High Line currently open. Figure 3.6 shows the High Line passing under the Standard Hotel. Figure 3.7 shows a stacked parking garage adjacent to the High Line (walkway is shown in bottom of picture).

Figure 3.6: View of High Line Section 1, Summer 2011



Figure 3.7: View of High Line Section 2, Summer 2011



In Chicago, I walked around the surrounding areas of Logan Square and Humboldt Park both on my own and with a member of the Logan Square Neighborhood association to experience the Bloomingdale Trail in relation to those more residential neighborhoods. Figures 3.8 and 3.9 illustrate a sense of the Trail seen in context in the neighborhood.

Figure 3.8: Bloomingdale Trail as seen from Bloomingdale Avenue, Fall 2011



Figure 3.9: McCormick YMCA (future access point) as seen from Bloomingdale Trail, Fall 2011



I also walked on the Trail (even though it is not open to the public) with employees of the Trust for Public Land and members of Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail. Figures 3.10 and 3.11 show the Trail itself. In Figure 3.10 you can see the end of the trail. Figure 3.11 is a particularly unusual perspective, since the Trail is 16 feet off the ground and yet is dwarfed by the “El” passing overhead.

Figure 3.10: Bloomingdale Trail, looking toward the terminus, Fall 2011



Figure 3.11: Bloomingdale Trail, “El” passing overhead, ,Fall 2011



In Philadelphia, I walked around the Callowhill and Chinatown areas both by myself and with members of the Reading Viaduct Project, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and members of the Callowhill Neighborhood Association. Figures 3.12 and 3.13 provide a sense of the Viaduct in relation to the surrounding streets.

Figure 3.12: Reading Viaduct entrance at grade, looking toward Spring Garden, Spring 2011



Figure 3.13: Reading Viaduct from street level, Spring 2011

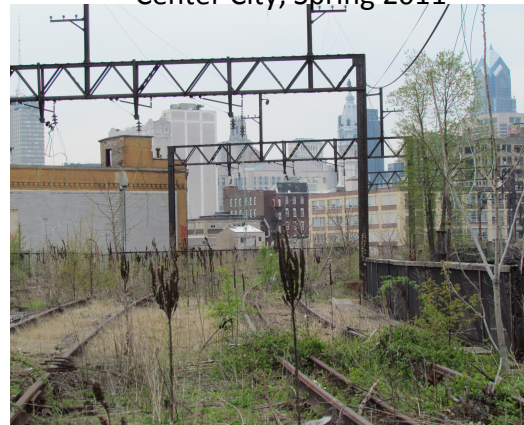


Even though it is not open to the public, I also went up onto the Viaduct itself, along with members of the Reading Viaduct Project, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and members of the Callowhill Neighborhood Association. My trips to the Viaduct included both the part currently controlled by the City of Philadelphia (via SEPTA, its transit authority) and the part still controlled by the Reading Company. Figures 3.14 and 3.15 show views from the Viaduct.

Figure 3.14: Reading Viaduct, Fall 2011



Figure 3.15: Reading Viaduct, view of Center City, Spring 2011



3.3b Demographics/Geographic Information Systems Mapping

I combined this work with demographic analysis, using GIS mapping of the areas around the three parks, in order to understand the demographics of the areas, and how representative they are of the city as a whole. I looked at the census tracts around the actual and proposed parks in 2010 and for 2000 to compare the areas in terms of demographics. Census block group data were considered as well, but little information is available at the block group level. In addition, none of these areas is densely populated when compared to other areas in their cities. The census tracts around the High Line yield a combined population of just over 42,000 people, as compared to an average census tract density for New York City of just under 15,000 per census tract⁸. The twenty census tracts around the Bloomingdale Trail contain a total population of slightly under 48,000, compared to the average for Chicago, which is slightly under 7,000 per census tract. And the seven census tracts adjacent to the Reading Viaduct contain a population of slightly over 18,000, compared to an average for Philadelphia of approximately 5,000 per census tract. Table 3.2 lists the GIS data sources I used for these analyses.

Table 3.2: GIS Data sources

Project	Geographic Data	Demographic Data
New York	Data Format: File Geodatabase Feature Class / ESRI Shapefile Projection: NAD_1983_StatePlane_New York_Long Island_FIPS 3104_Feet Coordinate System: Lambert Conformal Conic	ACS/Summarized Data/ 2006-2010/5-Year Summary File Social Explorer Tables (SE), Census 2000, U.S. Census Bureau and Social Explorer

⁸ I used 2010 Census Bureau data for "urbanized areas." In Census-speak, an urbanized area consists of one or more "central places" -- essentially, incorporated cities at the core of a metropolitan area -- and any adjacent territory with a general population density of at least 1,000 per square mile. The Census Bureau gives the population and density for each central place in the urbanized area. It also gives the population and density of the area *not* within one of the central places. I assigned weights to the central places and the "non-central" place according to their respective percentages of the total urbanized area population.

Project	Geographic Data	Demographic Data
Chicago	Data Format: File Geodatabase Feature Class / ESRI Shapefile Projection: NAD_1983_StatePlane_Illinois_East_FIPS_1201_Feet Coordinate System: Transverse_Mercator	ACS/Summarized Data/ 2006-2010/5-Year Summary File Social Explorer Tables (SE), Census 2000, U.S. Census Bureau and Social Explorer
Philadelphia	Data Format: File Geodatabase Feature Class / ESRI Shapefile Geographic Coordinate System: GCS_North_American_1983 Datum: D_North_American_1983	ACS/Summarized Data/ 2006-2010/5-Year Summary File Social Explorer Tables (SE), Census 2000, U.S. Census Bureau and Social Explorer

3.3c Interviews

The third part of my data collection included unstructured and semi-structured interviews with key individuals at each of these locations. My interview process began through existing sources and contacts, using a snowball technique where existing study subjects suggest future subjects from among their acquaintances. I began by reviewing publicly available documents on the development of each project to determine a list of potential interviewees. My interviews focused on nationally recognized experts in park development, members of the “Friends of the Park” groups in each case, employees of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy working on the Chicago and New York projects, employees of the Trust for Public Land working on these projects, project architects, City officials, local community associations, and opponents of the projects (both past and current.) These players were chosen because of their relevance to my theoretical propositions and because they are in the best position to understand and explain the trajectory of the parks’ development since 2000. Table 3.3 contains a list of the interviews I conducted, with approximately 11-12 interviews in each case. ⁹

⁹ [Note that I respected the rights of these individuals not to reveal their names if they wished; since the individuals consented I am not using pseudonyms.]

I began developing a referral tree with the assistance of a former professor of mine from Dartmouth College who knew the current President of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the TPL's former director of park development. The President of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) provided 4 key links – the Director of Center for City Park Excellence, the directors of the New York and Chicago TPL offices, who were able to speak about the High Line and Bloomingdale Trail projects, and one of the cofounders of Friends of the High Line. Each of those links in turn provided other links. The director of New York City's TPL office put me in touch with New York's Parks Commissioner. The director of Chicago's TPL office provided introductions to other members of her staff, who took me on a tour of the Bloomingdale Trail, and members of the Chicago Parks Department. Those links continued to provide other links, particularly among the government agencies and other nonprofit entities involved in the projects. Each time I received a referral I would double check that name against my list of people and organizations I knew to be involved in each of the projects. In almost all of the cases the link I received was someone I already had on my list of people and organizations.

Independently of that set of referral links, I went back to the original list of organizations and individuals I had compiled based on my research on each project. I began directly contacting individuals who were quoted as talking about the project, either on the pro or con side, and with each contact (made initially via email) I included a small description of why I wanted to speak with them and what my project was about. Many of the individuals agreed to speak with me, and they in turn suggested other individuals I could speak with.

While there can be issues with access, I was able to make contact with sources in the "Friends of the Park" groups involved in all three parks, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, advisors to the High Line, architects, City officials, and numerous community advocacy organization members/neighborhood organizations. However, not every individual I identified as a supporter or an opponent agreed to be interviewed. In those cases I used audio and/or video recordings of their statements, other interviews they provided to print sources, and other quotes they gave to newspaper or other sources. This was particularly important in the case

of one opponent in Philadelphia, who repeatedly cancelled several interview appointments at the last minute. For that individual, and the organization he represented, I found audio and video recordings of his statements, and multiple quotes he gave to newspapers.

Some may argue that snowball sampling may lead to selection bias.¹⁰ I believe I have minimized bias related to this sampling method in several ways. First, all of these projects involve governmental action. As a result, they have public hearings and have publicly available documentation of decisions they made or actions they took, including who said what and when. I used these publicly available documents to verify that the people I was directed to are the right people to talk to. In all three cases I also used publicly available documents or presentations to ensure that I was getting information from multiple viewpoints. In addition, while traditionally snowball strategies have primarily been used as an aid to accessing the vulnerable or the deviant, some studies have used them to engage with the ‘hard to reach’ among urban elites. For example, Saunders’ (1973) study of urban politics is an example where a ‘reputational’ method was used. Respondents were asked who held power in the local arena. This led to a series of contacts and the establishment of a subjective indication of the relative local power bases.

Table 3.3: Personal Interviews Conducted

Project	Individual	Title
All three cases	Deepa Prahalad	Author, business strategist and consultant specializing in opportunities at the intersection of consumer experience, technology and strategy.
High Line	Peter Stein	Former director of Trust for Public Land (TPL) urban parks program
High Line	Peter Harnik	Director, Center for City Park Excellence
High Line	Andy Stone	Director, NY office, Trust for Public Land (TPL)
High Line	Jeff Ciabotti	Vice President, Trail Development, Rails-to-Trails
High Line	Danny Fuchs	Analyst, HR&A Advisors (advisor to the Friends of the High Line during the development process). Their chair is still on the board of FHL.

¹⁰ In its simplest formulation snowball sampling consists of identifying respondents who are then used to refer researchers on to other respondents. Snowball sampling contradicts many of the assumptions underpinning conventional notions of sampling but has a number of advantages for sampling populations such as the deprived or elites (Atkinson and Flint, 2001).

Project	Individual	Title
High Line	Lauren Danziger	President, Meatpacking District Improvement Initiative Former President, Chelsea Neighborhood Association
High Line	Robert Hammond	Cofounder, Friends of the High Line
High Line	Len Greco	Vice President and Project Manager, Economic Development Corporation
High Line	Adrian Benepe	Parks Commissioner, New York City, 2000-12, currently Trust for Public Land Director of Public/Private Coalition Development
High Line	Michael Bailey	LiRo Engineers, Project Engineers for Phases 1 and 2 of the High Line
High Line	Mat Zucker/Bryan Fuhr	Residents of Ten23, a building adjacent to the High Line
Bloomingdale Trail	Eric Oberg	Project Manager, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Bloomingdale Trail	Beth White	Director, Chicago Office, Trust for Public Land
Bloomingdale Trail	Sarah Morton	Director, Bloomingdale Trail docent program, Trust for Public Land
Bloomingdale Trail	Ben Helphand	President, Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail
Bloomingdale Trail	Raul Echevarria	Executive Director, Puerto Rican Cultural Center (Humboldt Park), former board member, FBT
Bloomingdale Trail	Lucy Gomez-Feliciano	Health Outreach Director/Active Living, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, former board member, FBT
Bloomingdale Trail	Matthew Urbanski	Project Manager, Michael van Valkenburgh and Associates (landscape architect on BT project, runner-up for High Line)
Bloomingdale Trail	Chris Gent	Park District Liaison, Cultural Affairs Department deputy director of planning and development
Bloomingdale Trail	Joseph Bornstein	Chicago Park District project manager for Bloomingdale Trail
Bloomingdale Trail	David Leopold	Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) coordinator for Bloomingdale Trail
Bloomingdale Trail	Kathy Dickhut	Chicago Department of Zoning/Land Use Planning (ZLUP), liaison to Bloomingdale Trail
Reading Viaduct	Todd Baylson	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Reading Viaduct	Sarah McEneaney	Cofounder, Reading Viaduct Project
Reading Viaduct	Jamie Moffett	Independent filmmaker/community activist in surrounding area
Reading Viaduct	Mark Focht	First Deputy Commissioner, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Department
Reading Viaduct	Paul Levy	President, Center City District
Reading Viaduct	Linda Dottor	Program Manager at Community Design Collaborative (community design center that provides pro bono preliminary design services to nonprofit organizations, including the Reading Viaduct Project and their competitor, ViaductGreene)
Reading Viaduct	Alan Urek	Director, Strategic Planning & Policy Division, City of Philadelphia

Project	Individual	Title
Reading Viaduct	John Hoch	Project Manager, Economic Development, City of Philadelphia
Reading Viaduct	Jon Edelstein	Director, Sustainable Development, Department of Commerce, City of Philadelphia Former director of brownfield redevelopment
Reading Viaduct	Michelle Robinson	architect and sustainable development activist
Reading Viaduct	Paul vanMeter	Cofounder, ViaductGreene

All interviews were recorded and transcribed. In addition, there were some individuals who gave public presentations, participated in panel discussions, or gave interviews to media outlets about these projects. Those interviews were collected, and where in audio or video form, were transcribed. Table 3.4 lists the additional primary sources I used.

Table 3.4: Additional Public Sources, Presentations, and Interviews

Project	Individual (s)	Title	Source/Date
All three projects	Don Rakow	Cornell Plantations Director	Why We Need Green Spaces: Luncheon and Lecture, Lenox Hotel, Boston MA 11/16/12
High Line	Michael Bloomberg	Mayor, City of New York	Mayor's Weekly Radio Address, 9/26/12
High Line	Amanda Burden Diane von Furstenberg Joshua David and Robert Hammond	Commissioner, City Planning Designer, Philanthropist Cofounders, FHL	A Conversation about the NYC High Line. (2011) Video interviews with Charlie Rose. 11/17/11
High Line	Joshua David	CoFounder, FHL	Philly's Reading Viaduct & NYC's High Line, Radio Times with Marty Moss-Coane. Radio Broadcast 11/02/11
High Line	Patrick Cullina	Director of Horticulture, FHL	Lecture at Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy Meeting. Video presentation and slides. 10/02/11
High Line	James Corner	Landscape architect, James Corner Field Operations	The Atlantic, print interview 07/05/11

Project	Individual (s)	Title	Source/Date
			Inhabitat.com, video and print interview 08/03/10
High Line	Malcolm Gladwell Jerilyn Perine, John Mollenkopf Robert Hammond	Author Executive Director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council, former Commissioner of New York City's Housing Preservation and Development Department Director of the Center for Urban Research, at the CUNY Graduate Center Cofounder, FHL	CUNY Panel Discusses High Line's Impact Video broadcast Thehighline.org/blog. 12/08/10
High Line	Lauren Ross	Curator and Director, FHL Arts Program	Austin Examiner, 9/11/10
High Line	Peter Mullan	Vice President of Planning & Design, FHL	Turning the Tide: New York's Waterfront in Transition. Audio presentation and slidecast. CUNY. 03/17/10
High Line	Joshua David, Robert Hammond CoFounders, FHL		All Things Considered radio broadcast. New York, NY: NPR. 09/03/11 Interview magazine, Video interview, Fall 2010 Life Enhancer of the Year, Wallpaper magazine, Video interview, 2009 Q&A: Friends of the High Line interview, CNN.com, 3/15/07
Bloomingdale Trail	Janet Attarian Tom Kennedy Carol Ross Barney Matthew Urbanski Beth White	Project Manager, CDOT Project Manager, ARUP Ross Barney Architects Architect, MVVA Chicago Office Director, Trust for Public Land	The Bloomingdale Trail Public Meeting to Present Framework Plan May 15, 2012 (via Chicago Public Access Television)

Project	Individual (s)	Title	Source/Date
Bloomingdale Trail	Ben Helphand Andrew Vesselinovitch	President, FBT Director of the Chicago Urban Parks Program at The Trust for Public Land, Greater Chicago Area	The Bloomingdale Trail: The Making of Chicago's Premiere Linear Park. Chicago Architecture Foundation: Sustainable Architecture Lunchtime Lecture Series. Radio Broadcast 10/13/09
Reading Viaduct	Isaiah Thompson John Struble Joshua David	Investigative reporter, Philadelphia Inquirer Founding member, Callowhill Neighborhood Association, co-founder of the Reading Viaduct Project Cofounder, FHL	Philly's Reading Viaduct & NYC's High Line, Radio Times with Marty Moss-Coane. Radio Broadcast 11/02/11
Reading Viaduct	Jamie Moffett	Independent filmmaker/ community activist in surrounding area	Reading Viaduct Park Promo, January 25, 2011
Reading Viaduct	John Chin Andy Toy Sarah McEneaney	Director, PCDC Project Manager, PCDC CoFounder, RVP	Discussion of the Future of Chinatown North, Public Meeting, July 22, 2009 retrieved via http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvRbWjbPFLg

3.3d Document Analysis

The final part of my qualitative data collection involved analyzing the discourse around each of these projects, as described in documents. The documents in question consisted of primary data, such as memos, blogs, correspondences, and presentations dating back to 1999 and accessed via archival searches. They also included secondary data, such as city reports, community board meeting minutes, newspaper accounts, films, maps, and photos. I searched city government archives; since all of these projects are public, there were references to all of them available for download. From 2011 onward I used “spider searches”, where search engines would provide an email with links to articles and videos weekly after crawling the Internet looking for any

reference to my projects. Table 3.5 shows a list of the kinds of documents and other items used for each project. Certain types of documents were small in number, and were sampled purposively due to their import. In New York, these kinds of documents included Federal Surface Transportation Board meeting minutes, the Design for Public Trust report (2002), the Friends of the High Line Design Competition and Responses, the Friends of the High Line RFP, the West Chelsea Rezoning Plan, Community Board meeting minutes, Videos prepared by the New School Visual Arts program, and invitations to fundraising events in New York.

In Chicago, these documents include the Logan Square Open Space Plan, “After School matters” (Bloomingdale Trail oral history, , prepared by the Logan Square Neighborhood Association), community visioning documents for the Trail, invitations to fundraising events, and invitations to access park openings. In Philadelphia, these documents include the Chinatown 2004 plan, “Greenworks 2009”(City of Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace), “Philadelphia 2035” (the plan for long term city development), invitations to fundraising events, the “Above-below-beyond” exhibit, and the 2004 University of Pennsylvania charrette . In all cases, these documents were picked because they had strategic importance to the discourse.

I reviewed the other kinds of documents for duplication, and ended up with approximately 485 items for the High Line, 310 items for the Bloomingdale Trail project, and 220 items for the Reading Viaduct Project. The meeting minutes, articles, blogs, images, and renderings were consistent throughout the timelines reviewed but were not represented in equal proportion. Approximately 2/3 of the references came from articles, and the rest were approximately equally distributed. For these documents I randomly sampled 10% of the articles from each quarter of the year, with the number of articles in a given quarter ranging from 3 to 12 . In any given article there could be as few as two or three references or as many as 20. The references from the articles tended to be more distributed across themes than blog references, which tended to have fewer references across a narrower number of themes. In addition, since all projects had in-process components, I was able to observe public meetings and the development/refinement of the public relations and social media campaigns, particularly in Philadelphia and Chicago, to see

how discourse themes were received.

Table 3.5: Other Documents and Items used in Document Analysis

Project	Type of Document	Type of image, video, podcast, etc.
New York/High Line	Federal Surface Transportation Board meeting minutes (2000-onward) Community Board (2 and 4) meeting minutes (2000-onward) Design for Public Trust report (2002) West Chelsea Rezoning Plan City Planning Commission minutes (2003-onward) Other city planning documents HR&A 2002 report on economic impact of High Line EDC 2011 report on economic benefits of parks on residential real estate Articles in local newspapers (Villager, Chelsea today, etc.) Articles in New York Times High Line blog posts Other community blog posts Architectural preservation articles Construction trades articles Articles written in other media outlets	Joel Sternberg photos (2001) RFP and Contest for High Line (2003-2004) Bowery Boys podcast (2009) Photos taken by people illegally climbing up to the High Line Architectural drawings and renderings Videos prepared by the New School Visual Arts program Invitations to fundraising events Facebook posts
Chicago/Bloomingdale trail	Logan Square Open Space Plan Other city planning documents City reports Blogs from FBT and others Trust for Public Land reports Articles written in media outlets – including the Chicago Sun-Times Neighborhood planning reports – After School matters, prepared by the Logan Square Neighborhood Association Fliers prepared by FBT Community visioning session reports CMAQ Submission	Architectural drawings and renderings Photographs Public meeting presentations – including photographs of flip charts used for brainstorming and suggestion recording Outside the Loop podcast Invitations to fundraising events Invitations to access park openings Facebook posts

Project	Type of Document	Type of image, video, podcast, etc.
Reading Viaduct Project	Chinatown 2004 report City Council meeting minutes Greenworks 2009 – City of Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace Philadelphia 2035 JLS report on economic impact of redeveloping vs. tearing down the Viaduct Other neighborhood planning reports Blogs from RVP and others Articles written in media outlets Fliers prepared by RVP	Public meeting presentations and PDFs of annotated public boards Architectural drawings and renderings Photographs Invitations to fundraising events Facebook posts Above-below-beyond exhibit Charrette (2004) ABC news local video

I used the information provided by the interviewees and that provided by my archival data (my field notes, internal documents, and media articles) to build a development history and database. I was careful in building that database to create a balanced picture of what had happened based on the perspectives of all participants. In the cases of both Chicago and Philadelphia I specifically looked for ways to identify project descriptions that had been influenced by the development of the High Line and the opening of its first two phases.

The document analysis was designed to measure the extent to which differing groups' discourse themes are important and have the ability to influence organizations and the park's development trajectory. When using the park as artifact in the built environment, what kinds of discourse themes did the Friends of the High Line, Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail, and the Reading Viaduct Project engage in? With whom? Who engaged the community? How? Using what imagery, what words? Who engaged the larger community? In each of the three cases I was also looking for fragmentation in a theme, variance among speakers, and/or variance over time. This analysis would enable me to understand the presence (or absence) of themes over time, whether the themes were complete, and whether the themes were consistently treated.

All the transcribed interviews, presentations, and speeches were imported into nVivo (a CAQDAS program) where they were coded several different ways. First I classified the

interview and presentation data I collected along the IAS dimensions laid out by Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (1994) – instrumentality, aesthetics, and symbolism. For example, discussions of how the park would be used or accessed were coded as Instrumentality. Discussions of the look of the park, or its design, or designers, were coded as Aesthetics. And discussions of what the park would mean for the neighborhood or the city were coded as Symbolism. Within each category I coded more finely, and analyzed the data in terms of actor, time, and audience trying to identify similarities and differences among interviewee responses within a given theme.

Then I coded the data along the ECL dimensions of the institutional work required for entrepreneurs to resolve competing institutional logics – envisioning, creating, and legitimating. For example, future renderings of the park were coded as Envisioning. Some themes, particularly in the *Envisioning* dimensions, make heavy reference to aspects of IAS, such as attempting to get the community to Envision the park through a focus on its aesthetics. Discussions of the organization’s capacity, either internally or through coalition-building with capable outside actors were coded as Creating. Discussions of community support were coded as Legitimizing. Within each of the projects I looked for specific sub-themes that were contained in each set of three dimensions described above.

Based on the themes I saw in the interviews and presentations I developed a list of keywords that fit with each theme. Then I did a frequency search of the other documents, grouping similar words into categories such as Access/Usability, Investment, Cost, etc. I was actively looking for new themes to emerge, as well as any patterns within the themes I developed based on the interviews and presentations. For each theme I went back through the articles where the keywords were located, and then reviewed the passage to determine whether the intent was consistent with the theme as I was using it.

Then I classified the passage or image in several ways. First, I assigned the passage or image into a theme and identified whether it was positive, negative, or neutral in tone. Then I reviewed my initial coding for each framework and assigned the reference to an IAS dimension

of artifact sense-making and a type of institutional work laid out as necessary for new entrepreneurs' ventures in the ECL framework. I compared patterns across the three cases in terms of distribution across dimensions of institutional work and artifact sense making. The comparisons, while displayed quantitatively in Chapters 4-7 and the concluding chapter, are qualitative heuristics. I was careful not to over-interpret the differences, since they are qualitative, and not appropriate for significance testing. Tables 3.6-3.8 are lists of sample keywords I used in nVivo coding for the three cases. Note that the words are assigned to one category for simplicity of presentation. The category each word is assigned to is where that word was coded at least 75% of the time. This includes words that appear in cross-dimension themes.

Table 3.6: Alphabetical codes and words used, based on interviews, presentations, and articles –Friends of the High Line

Code	Words used	Rafaeli/ Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	Percentage of coded discourse, pre-opening/post-opening
Aesthetic/ Design	Abandoned, acres, amazing, beautiful, boundaries, boundary, bridge, broad, character, describe(d), description, different, elevated, frontage, height, illicit, incredible, interesting, landscape, magical, materials, mile(s), modern, moss, narrow, path, pedestrian, plant(s), planting, pretty, raised, shadows, stories, structure(s), track, tracks, unique, urban, value(s), vision, visual, wonderful, access(ible), action(s), active, activity (activities), architect(s), architectural, architecture, connected, connection, design(ed) , designation, designers, elevator, emotion, emotional, emotions, energy, experience, feature(s), hotel, place(s) proposal(s), proposed, recreation, RFP, run(s), running, safe(ty) space(s) slow stairs, view(s), walk, walking	Aesthetic	Envisioning	19% -- pre opening 28% post-opening

Code	Words used	Rafaeli/ Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	Percentage of coded discourse, pre-opening/post-opening
Art and Artists	Artist (s), art(s), galleries, gallery	Symbolic	Legitimizing	1% - -same pre and post opening
City	New York City, New York, Block(s), borough, Broadway, city, downtown, Eighth Avenue, Hudson, impact(s), Lower Manhattan, Madison Avenue, Ninth Avenue, NYC, officials, Seventh Avenue, Sixth Avenue, Street (s) New Yorkers, ULURP	Symbolic	Legitimizing	9% pre opening 10% post-opening
Coalition	City Council, administration, agencies, Amanda Burden, commission(er), committee, department, Wendy Pels, Keys, Diller/von Furstenberg, Falcone, Gifford Miller, Mayor, ,Michael Bloomberg, Public-private,zone, zoning, capacity, director, Community Board	Instrumentality	Creating	9% pre opening 6% post-opening
Development/ Cost	Data, economic, estimated, figure, fund(s), funding, million, money, cost, effect(s),, approved, build(ings), built, create(d), creating, creation, creative, develop(ed), developer(s), development(s), loft, meet(ings), regulation(s), traffic, DIA, Whitney Museum, rezoned, rezoning, agreement, air rights, analyses, analysis, anticipated, commercial, concrete, conditions, construction, dcp, eis, demolition, federal, Mayor Giuliani, government, house(s), million, mitigation,money, MTA, opportunities, opportunity, phase, plan(s), planned, planning second section first and second sections tower(s), Hudson Rail Yards, year(s)	Instrumentality	Creating	14% pre opening 20% post-opening

Code	Words used	Rafaeli/ Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	Percentage of coded discourse, pre- opening/post- opening
Green	Environment(al), garden, green, horticulture, national, natural, nature, park(s)	Aesthetic	Legitimizing	4% same pre and post-opening
FHL	FHL, friends of the High Line, Highline Josh (ua) David, food rfp, food vendors, maintain, maintenance, members, open(ed) opening, operation(s), org, organization, process, program(s), success(ful), tour(s), Robert Hammond, visitors	Instrumentality	Creating	17% pre opening 9% post-opening
History	Conrail, chapter, existing, CSX, freight, historic, history, industrial, industry, infrastructure, landmarks, manufacturing, original(ly), preservation, preserve(d), railroad, traditional, train(s), warehouse(s), water, waterfront	Symbolic	Envisioning	5% pre-opening 6% post-opening
Neighbor- hood	Tenth/10 th Avenue, eleventh/ 11 th Avenue, affect(ed), affordable housing, area/from, assess(ment), below, business(es), cb2, cb4, Chelsea, child(ren), Clinton, community, concerns, density, gentrification, Gansevoort, parking garage (s), improvement, market-rate housing, meatpacking, midblocks, neighborhood(s), owner(s), public plazas, population, redevelopment, residential, residents, school(s), underneath, youth	Symbolic	Legitimizing	24% pre-opening 16% post-opening
Similar Projects	Philadelphia, Reading Viaduct, Chicago, Bloomingdale Trail, Atlanta, Beltway, Detroit, Dequindre Cut, Paris, Promenade Plantee, Jersey City, Embankment	Symbolic	Legitimizing	NA pre opening 1% post-opening

**Table 3.7: Alphabetical codes and words used, based on interviews and articles,
Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail**

Code	Words used	Dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	% of coded discourse
Access/ Usability	Up, access, access points, embankment, entrance, grade, ramp, Ymca, elevated, raise(d), walk(ed), walking, path(s), run (s), running, connect(ing), connection(s), link, children, kids, students, transportation, active/ activity/activities, opportunities, opportunity, possible, potential, school(s), pedestrian(s), multi, multiuse, recreation(al), young, corridor, commuter, exercise, garden, health, length, play(ing), purpose, recess, route, mile(s), traffic, users, uses, used, using, variety, distance, family, seating	Instrumentality	Envisioning	27%
Aesthetic	architect(s), architecture, architectural, pretty, wide(r), width, linear, urban, abandoned, wonderful, unique, awesome, beautiful, perspective, amazing, concept, concrete, detail, grass, imagine, physical, preliminary, promenade, scale, section, surface, transform, views, acres, different, great	Aesthetic	Envisioning	9%

Code	Words used	Dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	% of coded discourse
Development	project(s), plan(ned), planners, planning, plans, build, building, buildings, built, develop(ed), development, district, create(d), creating, department, charrette, framework, structure(s), bridge(s), CDOT, construction, infrastructure, engineering, official(s), opened, opening, effort, Mayor, objective, viaduct, vision, agencies, Alderman, approach, ARUP, collaborative, decade, Emanuel, retaining, TPL, Chicago, make, phase, guidelines, walls, funds, funding, fundraising, money, million, State, cost, Federal, grant, acquisition, campaign, CMAQ, expensive, foundation, government, numbers, resources, economic, amount	Instrumentality	Creating	23%
FBT	Friends, process, team, program(s), programming, Board, support, Helphand, Ben, Beth, members, advocacy/advocates, association, FBT, advisory, involvement, partners	Symbolic	Creating	6%
Green	park (s), land (scape), green, greenway, natural, nature, trees, environment	Aesthetic	Legitimizing	7%
High Line	New York, High Line, Chelsea, Manhattan, New York City, West Side	Symbolic	Legitimizing	2%
History	rail (s), railway, railroad, tracks, train (s), industrial, owned, owner, Canadian, history, past	Symbolic	Legitimizing	3%

Code	Words used	Dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	% of coded discourse
Narrative	idea, narrative, story	Symbolic	Legitimizing	1%
Neighborhood	communities, community, place(s)/space(s), neighborhood(s), neighbors, resident(s), public, area(s), square, home(s), house(s), housing, local, Humboldt, old, property, Bucktown, discussed, discussion, Northwest, Wicker, civic, avenue, block(s), adjacent, streets, concern(s), concerned, town, artists, gentrification, impact, meet, meeting(s), organization(s), org, organizations, organized, engage(d), engagement, event(s), outreach, presentation, website, committee, exhibit, feedback, survey, safe(r), safety, privacy, private, lighting, lights, fence, fencing, police, window(s), crime, trespassing, condos, eyes, graffiti, night, security	Symbolic	Legitimizing	23%

Table 3.8: Alphabetical codes and words used, based on interviews, presentations, and articles, Reading Viaduct Project

Code	Words Used	Rafaeli and Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact	Type of Institutional Work	Percentage of coded discourse
Access/ Usability	Above, access, bike(s), bridge, connect(ed), connection, elevated, opportunity, path, promenade, purpose, ran, recreation, run(s), running, school, walk(ed), walking	Instrumentality	Envisioning	4%
Aesthetic	Abandoned, amazing, awesome, beautiful, blight, desolate, different, exciting, important, interesting, landscape, light(s), linear, mile(s), new, over, pretty, raise(d), Reading viaduct, skyline, space(s), spaced, special, spur, structure, transformed, trash, tunnel, ugly, urban, viaducts, view(s), wide	Aesthetic	Envisioning	22%
Coalition	Administration, Alan Greenberger, City council Councilman DiCicco, Department, Government, maintain, maintenance, Mayor, officials, Paul Levy, University of Pennsylvania, Stakeholders	Symbolic	Creating	7%
Design	architect(ure), create(d), creating, design, improvement(s), industrial, infrastructure, proposal, proposed, section(s), vision	Aesthetic	Envisioning	4%
Development/ Cost	Budget, build(ing), buildings, built, construction, cost(s), crvnid develop(ed), developer(s), developing, development, dollar(s), economic, expensive, feasibility, foundation, funding, funds, land, lot, million(s), money, month(s), own(ed), owner(s), pennsylvania, phase, plan(ned), planners, planning, plans, project(s), raising, redevelopment, remediation, renovation, Inga Saffron, SEPTA, study, support, tax, worth, years	Instrumentality	Creating	18%
Green	Acres, environmental, green(way), greenworks, Philadelphia 2035, nature, park(s), trees	Aesthetic	Legitimizing	5%

High Line	Chelsea, High Line, Joshua David, Manhattan, New York City, similar projects	Symbolic	Legitimizing	6%
History	Historic(al), history, old, ownership, owns, Paris, preservation, rail(s), railroad(s), railway, terminal track(s), train(s)	Symbolic	Legitimizing	5%
Neighborhood	area(s), art(s), artist(s), Asian-american, attraction, Broad (Street), Callowhill, Chinatown North, Chinese, community, commuter, condos, demolished, demolishing, demolition, loft district, East (boundary), “The Eraserhood”, Fairmount (Avenue), Garden (Street), impact, location, Market (street), neighborhood(s), neighbors, Noble (Street), Northern Liberties, Philadelphia/Philly, Philadelphians, place, resident(s), residential, Spring (Street), streets, vacant, Vine (Street)	Symbolic	Legitimizing	24%
Opponent	Affordable housing, against John Chin, Andy Toy, PCDC, Isaiah Thompson, Maya Yuen, oppose(d)	Instrumentality	Envisioning	2%
RVP	9th street branch, John Struble, Sarah McEneaney, Jamie Moffett, org, organization, potential, RVP	Instrumentality	Creating	3%

In each of the cases I was looking for themes that emerged in the data, consistency or difference in how these themes were treated over time, and particular unusual patterns in the data. I then reviewed the codes to understand what subthemes developed and whether those subthemes appeared consistently over time, or were unique or time-specific occurrences. Finally I reviewed the discourse in each theme and dimension to understand whether there were gaps in the discourse and if so for how long. For New York I performed two analyses – one pre-opening and one post-opening, to understand how the type of discourse changed given this important event, and how the discourse sorted into different categories before and after the opening. For both Chicago and Philadelphia I did one analysis each, since both projects are in the pre-opening stage. Table 3.9 shows the illustrative examples of the data sources used in each theme. There are seven

different types of data used to evaluate discourse across dimensions, but not all types of data are represented in each theme. Showing the sources of the themes in this way is designed to provide a picture of the richness of information types, the role specific documents played in providing source materials for the themes, and to highlight the contrast among the cases in the depth of sources used in certain themes.

Table 3.9: Types of Data Sources Mapped to Themes

Theme	FHL	FBT	RVP
Aesthetic / Design	FHL Joel Sternberg photos FHL Images FHL Presentations FHL Community Board Meeting Minutes FHL Design Trust for Public Space 2002 report FHL RFP Architectural drawings and renderings Photographs Interviews Articles Blogs	FBT Community Visioning Meetings and neighborhood planning reports Architectural drawings and renderings Photographs Interviews Articles Blogs	RVP Public meeting presentations and PDFs of annotated public boards Architectural drawings and renderings Photographs Interviews Articles Blogs
Art and Artists	Interviews Articles Blogs GIS data Photos taken by people illegally climbing up to the High Line, Architectural drawings and renderings Videos prepared by the New School Visual Arts program		
Access/ Usability	FHL Community Board (2 and 4) meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL City Planning Commission minutes (2003-onward) Articles Interviews Blogs Videos Presentations	FBT Logan Square Open Space Plan FBT Neighborhood planning reports FBT Invitations to fundraising events FBT Invitations to access park openings FBT Facebook posts FBT Community visioning session reports Interviews Blogs Videos Presentations	RVP Charrette (2004) RVP Above-below-beyond exhibit RVP Charrette (2004) RVP ABC news local video Interviews Blogs Videos Presentations

Theme	FHL	FBT	RVP
City	FHL Federal Surface Transportation Board meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL Community Board (2 and 4) meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL Design for Public Trust report (2002) FHL West Chelsea Rezoning Plan FHL City Planning Commission minutes (2003-onward) Other city planning documents FHL HR&A2002 advisory report on High Line impact on surrounding neighborhood EDC 2011 report on economic benefits of parks on residential real estate Census Data GIS Mapping Interviews Photographs Articles Blogs	FBT Neighborhood planning reports FBT Logan Square Open Space Plan Other city planning documents City reports Blogs from FBT and others Trust for Public Land reports FBT Neighborhood planning reports FBT Community visioning session reports Census Data GIS Mapping Interviews Photographs Articles Blogs	RVP Chinatown 2004 report RVP City Council meeting minutes RVP Greenworks 2009 – City of Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace RVP Philadelphia 2035 RVP ABC news local video Census Data GIS Mapping Interviews Photographs Articles Blogs
Coalition	FHL Federal Surface Transportation Board meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL Community Board (2 and 4) meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL Design for Public Trust report (2002) FHL West Chelsea Rezoning Plan FHL City Planning Commission minutes (2003-onward) FHL HR&A2002 advisory report on High Line impact on surrounding neighborhood EDC 2011 report on economic benefits of parks on residential real estate FHL Invitations to fundraising events FHL Invitations to park openings FHL Facebook and blog posts Articles Photographs Interviews Blogs Videos Presentations	FBT Logan Square Open Space Plan FBT Neighborhood planning reports FBT After School matters, prepared by the FBT Logan Square Neighborhood Association Fliers prepared by FBT FBT Invitations to fundraising events FBT Invitations to access park openings FBT Facebook posts FBT Community visioning session reports Articles Interviews Photographs Blogs Videos Presentations	RVP Chinatown 2004 report RVP City Council meeting minutes RVP Greenworks 2009 – City of Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace RVP Philadelphia 2035 RVP Above-below-beyond exhibit RVP Charrette (2004) RVP ABC news local video Articles Photographs Interviews Blogs Videos Presentations

Theme	FHL	FBT	RVP
Development/ Cost	FHL City Council Meeting Minutes FHL CB Meeting Minutes FHL HR&A2002 advisory report on High Line impact on surrounding neighborhood Articles Interviews Blogs Presentations	FBT CMAQ submission FBT Outside the Loop podcast FBT Invitations to fundraising events FBT Invitations to access park openings FBT Facebook posts Articles Interviews Blogs Presentations	RVP Chinatown 2004 report RVP JLS report on economic impact of redeveloping vs. tearing down the Viaduct RVP Invitations to fundraising events RVP Facebook posts Articles Interviews Blogs Presentations
Green	Images Renderings Presentations Blogs Articles Interviews	Images Renderings Presentations Blogs Articles Interviews	Images Renderings Presentations Blogs Articles Interviews
History	FHL Federal Surface Transportation Board meeting minutes (2000-onward) FHL Community Board (2 and 4) meeting minutes (2000-onward) Design for Public Trust report (2002) FHL Articles in local newspapers (Villager, Chelsea today, etc.) FHL Articles in New York Times Census Data GIS Mapping Articles Interviews Photographs Blogs Presentations	FBT Community visioning session reports FBT Logan Square Open Space Plan and other city planning documents FBT Outside the Loop Podcast FBT Trust for Public Land reports Neighborhood planning reports FBT Community visioning session reports CMAQ Submission Census Data GIS Mapping Articles Interviews Photographs Blogs Presentations	RVP Chinatown 2004 report RVP City Council meeting minutes RVP Greenworks 2009 – City of Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace RVP Philadelphia 2035 Census Data GIS Mapping Articles Interviews Photographs Blogs Presentations

Theme	FHL	FBT	RVP
Neighborhood	FHL RFP and Contest for High Line (2003-2004) FHL Bowery Boys podcast (2009) FHL Photos taken by people illegally climbing up to the High Line FHL Videos prepared by the New School Visual Arts program FHL HR&A2002 advisory report on High Line impact on surrounding neighborhood EDC 2011 report on economic benefits of parks on residential real estate FHL Invitations to fundraising events FHL Invitations to park openings FHL Facebook and blog posts Architectural drawings and renderings Interviews Presentations Articles Blogs Photographs Census data GIS mapping	FBT Logan Square Open Space Plan FBT Neighborhood planning reports FBT After School matters, prepared by the FBT Logan Square Neighborhood Association FBT Invitations to fundraising events FBT Invitations to access park openings FBT Facebook posts Architectural drawings and renderings Interviews Presentations Articles Photographs Blogs Census data GIS mapping	RVP Chinatown 2004 report RVP JLS report on economic impact of redeveloping vs. tearing down the Viaduct RVP City Council meeting minutes RVP Greenworks 2009 – City of Philadelphia RVP Philadelphia strategic plan for greenspace RVP Philadelphia 2035 RVP Invitations to fundraising events RVP Facebook posts Architectural drawings and renderings Interviews Presentations Articles Photographs Blogs Census data GIS mapping

CHAPTER 4: FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE – FROM ‘TWO GUYS AND A LOGO’ TO A CONSERVANCY

The High Line is now a fully realized park built on an elevated former freight rail trestle. When completed, it will run from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District, through Chelsea, to 34th street; the two sections below West 30th Street are already open to the public. The High Line was built, originally, as a freight railroad line in the 1930's to serve Manhattan's West Side; it did so for nearly fifty years. The rail line was constructed as an elevated line in response to longstanding disputes over transportation safety among public officials, railroad companies, business owners, and civic activists. Street-level rail service had existed since the 1800s, and long experience had taught residents to hold pedestrian safety as a primary concern; to prevent injuries and deaths, men on horseback known as the 'West Side Cowboys' were hired to walk in front of each train waving red flags to warn pedestrians of oncoming locomotives (www.thehighline.org).

The High Line officially opened as a working rail line on June 28, 1934, hailed as a wonderful example of public planning that had successfully met the needs of the public and private sectors (Svendsen, 2010). High Line trains served the key function of bringing freight, food and other merchandise, after it had been offloaded from the waterfront, to factories and warehouses along New York City's busy industrial West Side, allowing warehouses to accept rail cargo above street level through second and third level cargo bays. It ran from 34th Street (now the Hudson Rail Yards) down to Spring Street, just south of Canal Street. By the 1960s, the growth of trucking (and the fact that longer distance rail deliveries to Manhattan had to make the long trip from west of the Hudson River via Albany) made the High Line obsolete. Its last freight run was in 1980, when it took a carload of frozen turkeys to the Gansevoort Meat Market. The High Line's southernmost part, from Gansevoort Street to Bethune Street, was demolished in the 1980s. Nearly sixty-five years after the Line's original opening, Friends of the High Line would

refer to this history as part of their effort to preserve the High Line as a public resource. By the 1980s, the majority of freight service had long since been relocated across the Hudson River in New Jersey or replaced entirely by truck transport (Svendsen, 2010).

The story of the High Line's proposed demolition, preservation, and eventual redesign as a public park has caught the attention of international artists, architects, celebrities, business entrepreneurs, and writers. The lack of existing, dedicated parks groups within the Chelsea and Meatpacking neighborhoods gave the Friends of the High Line (FHL) an opportunity to stand out as the leading open space advocate in this community. According to early supporters of the High Line, Chelsea property owners who sought the old rail line's demise were widely regarded (and described as) outdated in terms of their ideas for neighborhood revitalization (Hammond and David public presentation, 2011). In addition, the opposition was thought to be, and publicly characterized as, greedy and motivated by self-interest rather than public service.

Any project has multiple pieces that contribute to how and why it gets made. Many people study economics-based arguments, as the impetus or driving force behind any development project, and will argue that logic in explaining the High Line's development and success. There are other factors as well that contribute to any project's ultimate success – present to some degree in all cases, but not well studied or understood. These other factors -- how a coalition of public and private actors gets created and sustained, how public campaigns are organized, etc. -- plausibly affect project outcomes, and this chapter systematically evaluates and describes how the 501c(3) group known as the Friends of the High Line (FHL) used discourse and presentation to make the case for the High Line to be created. Several questions are addressed:

- How did the 'two guys with a logo' convince other players, especially government entities and private donors, that they could actually make the project a reality, given the early opposition, long development timeline, and high costs?
- What was most important in this "selling" process -- what the High Line would look like, how it would work, or what it could mean for the neighborhood?
- How did their messaging change after the first section opened in 2009?

The FHL and its supporters can be considered successful because they managed to develop and support several key themes around how the park would look, how they (with the help of government and others) would actually get the park open, and how the park would fit in with the industrial neighborhoods in which it is situated. In support of these themes, the Friends of the High Line used public presentations wherever possible, to show current and future High Line images. They also strategically used interviews, fundraisers, and other gatherings where they could meet people in person to build connections and again show images. Over time the themes around the park changed slightly, from “High Line as urban oasis” (Del Signore, 2012) to High Line as both urban oasis *and* catalyst for gentrification. This change is reflected in the different tones in the discourse pre and post-opening.

As with the Reading Viaduct in Philadelphia (discussed in more detail in Chapter 6), the abandoned High Line was generally seen as an agent of blight, limiting economic development. Its structure cast dark shadows, the area under the tracks attracted all kinds of illegal activities, and business owners faced challenges in using land parcels efficiently for development or redevelopment (Hammond and David public presentation, 2011). In fact, in the 1980s, soon after the last rail car left the High Line, adjacent property owners began clamoring to tear down the remaining tracks. Rudolph Giuliani, New York’s mayor for much of the 1990s, could not wait to tear down the High Line (Behance Team, 2009). His administration, aware that Chelsea was slowly gentrifying into a neighborhood of galleries, restaurants, and loft living, felt the surviving portion of the High Line was an ugly deadweight (Goldberger, 2011). They were certain this remnant of a different kind of city had to be removed for the neighborhood to realize its full potential.

But, in fact, almost a decade after the Giuliani administration tried to tear the High Line down, it has been turned into one of the most innovative and inviting public spaces in New York City, attracting two million visitors in its first year of operation; in 2012 it was named New York City’s most popular tourist destination (Debucquoy-Dodley, 2012). Parks in large cities are usually thought of as refuges, as islands of green amid seas of concrete and steel, but when you

first see the High Line, it looks exactly like the kind of thing urban parks were created to get away from—a harsh, heavy structure supporting an elevated rail line that once brought freight cars right into factories and warehouses and that looks, at least from a distance, more like an abandoned relic than an urban oasis. Section One of the High Line opened to the public in June 2009 and runs from Gansevoort Street to West 20th Street. Section Two (20th Street- 30th Street) opened in June 2011. Section Three (30th Street- 34th Street) has been brought under City control and FHL is currently in the process of raising money to complete its construction, tentatively scheduled for completion in 2014. Figure 4.1 shows the High Line Park, as it winds its way down the West Side of Manhattan, in New York City.¹¹

Figure 4.1: High Line Park Map



Source: Friends of the High Line

¹¹ Note that the map includes section 3, which has been negotiated under City control but has not been constructed.

4.1 A Brief History of Civic Action

In an interview with CNN in 2007, Joshua David and Robert Hammond, the co-founders of Friends of the High Line (FHL) described how they got started. David said that he lives down the street from the High Line in Chelsea in Manhattan and for many years never paid attention to it, since it is nestled between buildings in Chelsea (David Hammond, 2007). But then he was working on a project researching the neighborhood and spent a lot of time walking around West Chelsea; he became much more aware of the High Line. Hammond added that he read in The New York Times that they were going to tear down the High Line, and that the sections of it were all connected – something observers could not tell from street level. Hammond could not believe it. He thought some group would be working to preserve it so he went to a community meeting to volunteer. (David Hammond, 2007)

Hammond and David ended up sitting next to each other at the same community meeting and realized no one else wanted to save the High Line. Upon learning there was no organized effort to save the line, Hammond and David befriended each other and began a campaign "out of their kitchens" (public lecture by Hammond, 2007, public lecture by Hammond and David, 2011). Hammond argued that their initial goal was simply preserving the High Line. Many community-based organizations, especially those focused on urban planning, get started trying to stop something from happening (Elwood, 2006). There was a degree of that when Hammond and David started, as illustrated by the following quote.

Mayor Giuliani at the time wanted to tear it down, so at first we were fighting just to keep it. But the goal long-term was always to bring the public up here. It was such a magical experience for us; we wanted to make it public... It's an interesting feeling because you see the New York skyline in the background -- the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building -- and you have this great juxtaposition with the wildflowers and the grasses. (David and Hammond, 2007.)

While Hammond and David may have met by chance, and had no professional experience in urban planning, politics, or real estate development, they did have an important set

of skills for deploying a successful urban park campaign. Both had direct experience negotiating, organizing and programming. Hammond was a consultant for a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors and non-profits, including the Times Square Alliance, Alliance for the Arts and National Cooperative Bank (NCB), in addition to being an artist (thehighline.org). David was a freelance magazine writer and editor for *Gourmet*, *Fortune*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Wallpaper*, and others (thehighline.org). Both are said to have influential partners in the world of entertainment and media. Both were very involved in the gay community based in Chelsea; Hammond describes the Chelsea gay community as providing many early supporters (Behance Team, 2009).

Hammond and David also were not undertaking this effort in any kind of indigenous, residential neighborhood; Chelsea at the time did not have many non-gays or non-artists living there. There were relatively few organized neighborhood groups, but the FHL did have to manage municipal, governmental and personal opposition, especially on the part of property owners with air/development rights under the existing High Line structure. The triumvirate of opposition is not all that surprising given the urban planning implications of doing something with the real estate occupied by the High Line. At the time the FHL got started, the discourse around the High Line itself represented the structure as unhealthy and decaying. Tearing it down was framed as providing opportunities for capital investment -- this spatial strategy is designed to minimize community organizations' control over planning, policymaking, and development (Wilson and Wouters 2003, Stoecker 2004).

The two cofounders launched an appeal to save the High Line that was full of a sense of optimism about city life expressed through great public works of art. Hammond and David were able to leverage social networks that included people who had access to power, financial resources and key decision-making capabilities (Behance Team 2009, Svendsen 2010, Benepe 2012 Interview). Their appeal captivated many influential New Yorkers including Hammond's Princeton University roommate, Gifford Miller, who was then Speaker of the City Council (Hammond 2011 Interview, Benepe 2012 Interview). Several Hollywood actors living in New York City also became enamored with the cause and campaign. Famed fashion designer Diane

von Furstenberg, a long-time resident of the Meatpacking District, contributed her personal time, contacts, studio, and financial resources (von Furstenberg interview with Charlie Rose, 2011). Former Parks Commissioner Benepe pointed out that the city began to support this initially ‘wacky idea’ (Benepe 2012 Interview) when they realized that the Friends of the High Line (FHL) were forming a conservancy to operate the High Line, and that FHL was able to raise funds from wealthy philanthropists and celebrities for the High Line’s development.

The first step in the process of converting the High Line into a park was to legally rule out any chance that it would be demolished. In order for the federal government to approve tearing down the line under federal Surface Transportation Board guidelines, requesting parties were required to provide evidence that adequate resources were available for demolition. Before the Friends of the High Line got involved, no one had asked the City to confirm this money was actually available. The Friends of the High Line had to do a great deal of outreach immediately so they could raise money to sue the City in 2001 and force the City to provide this information (Hammond interview, Sundance Channel, 2009).

According to city planners, the election in 2001 of Michael Bloomberg as mayor was a critical turning point (Svendsen, 2010, Burden 2011 Interview with Charlie Rose, Stone 2011 Interview, Benepe 2012 Interview). Many public officials noted the stark differences, in both style and substance, between Mayor Giuliani and Mayor Bloomberg with regard to urban economic development. The project itself also appealed to Mayor Bloomberg’s multifaceted agenda, which included support for the arts, public education, business, and improving the quality of the local environment (Greco 2011 Interview, Benepe 2012 Interview). Andrew Stone, New York City Director, Trust for Public Land agreed with the key role played by the mayor’s office in the High Line’s development:

Bloomberg’s getting elected mayor was a huge advance for the Friends of the High Line. They had political struggles and technical struggles. Technical struggles including everything from engineering feasibility to fundraising, and political struggles being it’s extremely hard to move something like this without the support of the mayor. So clearly, if you kind of say that those are the two big struggles and like half of it is the political, like well, that the election of the mayor changed things so much.

(Stone Interview, 2011)

In many ways, the High Line became a favorite issue of politicians; on this issue, they heard from constituencies not normally involved in community development (Behance Team 2009) and they could link the High Line to any number of positive visions for New York City. While developers, decision-makers, politicians and the public mused over potential designs of the High Line, Friends of the High Line pressed ahead with legal action to stop the demolition while raising significant private dollars to finance its reconstruction. Despite the many successful efforts to engage public support and financing, the early opposition to the High Line by the development community was intense and the rail line came close to destruction.

In the final analysis over whether to go forward with the High Line's redevelopment, it came down to how the financial resources, including real estate taxes and development rights could be leveraged. Mayor Bloomberg asked his then-Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, Daniel Doctoroff, to assess a final piece of the proposed project: to decide whether or not the High Line was economically viable over the long term. An advisor of the Friends of the High Line described an exchange between FHL and the Mayor's Office:

Doctoroff came to us and said, 'Hey, I don't care about all these pretty pictures, - we have so many parks and we can barely maintain them as it is.' So, we did an economic feasibility study. We dipped into the pretty economic pictures that showed it did make financial sense. We said if we could prove that in over twenty years the incremental tax revenues to the city will be greater than the project cost — even though the city is not going to pay for it and we find that it is actually buildable and you can actually do it, would you get on board? And he said, 'Yes.' (Fuchs 2011 Interview)

In late 2004, New York City named a design team for the High Line. New York City also joined the state, CSX Transportation and Conrail (the current and former owners of the High Line) in applying for federal approval to convert the structure to permanent public space through the federal rail-banking program. In November 2005, Mayor Bloomberg announced that New York City had acquired the High Line from CSX Transportation. At the same time, the city and CSX signed a trail-use agreement that allowed the 1.45-mile viaduct to be used for public

recreation. The title transfer and the trail-use agreement, concluded on November 4th of 2005, were the final legal steps necessary to transform the High Line (Amateau, 2005).

In a process running parallel to the acquisition, and citing the Grand Central Station and Times Square redevelopments as precedents, planners at the New York City Department of City Planning rezoned the area around the High Line and changed it into an arts district which would attract tourists and art-related businesses.¹² The City Council approved the Special West Chelsea District in 2005, and this created a High Line Transfer Corridor, approximately 100 feet wide and including the High Line and adjacent lots between West 18th and West 30th Streets. Owners of property under the High Line were permitted to transfer their development rights¹³ to other designated sites within the special district. (Department of City Planning 2005). This rezoning was designed to preserve views around the High Line without compromising the park's light and air (Department of City Planning, 2005, Svendsen, 2010, Benepe 2012 Interview).

But actively encouraging the rezoning was a difficult decision for FHL to make. FHL Board Chair Phil Aarons actively supported this approach, arguing, “if the High Line was going to be saved, the development rights over the High Line were going to have to land somewhere. And wherever they landed, you would have taller buildings” (Hammond and David, 2011: 23). Joshua David had a difficult time accepting that developers would play such a large role in the project.

Robert [Hammond]: Josh [David] said, “Look, if you’re going to work with these developers, I’m out of here. You can keep going, but I’m not going to help you anymore.” We almost parted ways.

Josh [David]: It took me a while to move past this. At first I think I just denied it and told myself there was a different way it could turn out. Then, over time, my perspective changed. But

¹² In the late 1990s, the Department of City Planning created a zoning mechanism for a new theater sub-district that allowed the transfer of development rights from certain theaters to other sites in the sub-district. This enabled both property and business owners in Times Square to renovate vacant buildings and improve streetscapes (Svendsen, 2010)

¹³ Property owners under the High Line had air ‘development rights’, or the right to build up if the High Line were demolished. Preserving the High Line meant that those owners could not build up, and would lose out on the ability to turn development rights into economic benefit. Transferring their rights to other owners, who could then build higher, meant that all owners affected by the High Line would either be compensated or allowed to build.

it was certainly a major issue for me. Phil [Aarons, FHL's Board Chair] was describing a future I couldn't see myself as part of.

Hammond and David, 2011, 23-24.

The rezoning worked; developers were appeased in the short-term, and were ultimately happy with the overall plan – happier than they would have been if the High Line had been torn down (Hammond 2011 Interview). Section One of the High Line opened to great acclaim and crowds in June 2009 at a cost of \$85 million, including public and private funding. Section Two of the High Line opened at a cost of \$64 million in June 2011. Both sections contained privately endowed, named features like the Falcone Flyover (thehighline.org). Section Two of the Park also opened to acclaim and soon huge crowds began converging on it. Recent estimates of annual visitors to the Park exceed 3.7 million¹⁴ (thehighline.org, Benepe 2012 Interview). This is the same number of annual visitors to the Statue of Liberty (doi.gov), and about 10% of what Central Park sees annually (<http://www.centralparknyc.org>).

Under an agreement with the City, FHL manages the maintenance and operations of the park, with responsibility for an annual budget of three million dollars (Hammond 2011 Interview, Benepe 2012 Interview). Of that, two million dollars is dedicated solely to maintenance and operations and the remaining one million is used for programming targeted toward children and the local community- (David and Hammond 2011 Public Presentation, Hammond 2011 Interview).

FHL led another campaign to preserve the northern portion of the line that runs from 30th to 34th Streets and is located within the West Side Rail Yards. This campaign was also successful, with FHL announcing in November 2011 that negotiations to secure this last piece had been completed ("Major Step Forward: All Stakeholders Pledge to Complete the High Line at the Rail

¹⁴ Because the High Line can only be accessed by stairs and elevators, the FHL must treat the park as a building with a capacity limit and count annual visitors. There are signs posted on the High Line indicating the capacity of the structure.

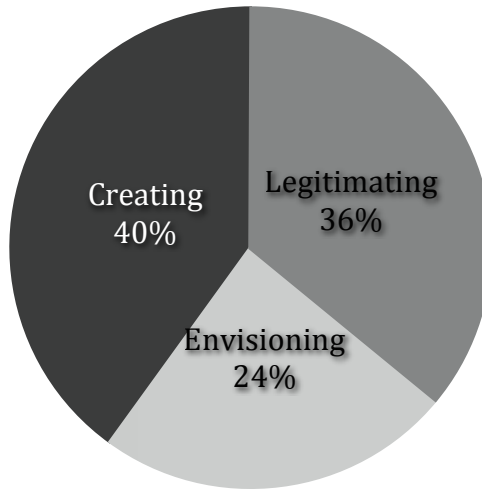
Yards,” 2011, Hammond 2011 Interview). The estimated total cost of capital construction of Section Three, also known as “High Line at the Rail Yards”, is \$90 million.

4.2 Discourse Themes as Mechanism for Resolving Competing Logics

Research questions, here, focus on two main issues. First, whether and how the Friends of the High Line, as an organization, was and is able to develop, influence, and manage themes in the discourse around their proposed new park, Second, understanding how consistency of discourse is a necessary but not sufficient determinant of their venture's viability. A project development database was developed comprising field notes, interviews, presentations, videos, and written articles. The data was then grouped into first-order categories; those categories were used while looking for areas of agreement and disagreement across time, actor, target audience and data source. This was essentially an inductive process, drawing on the development database and focusing on the presentation of the High Line by the Friends of the Park groups and others.

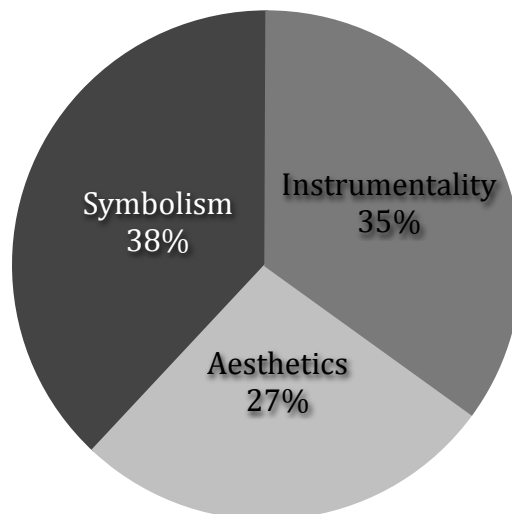
Using the ECL framework, the data was refined into a group of subthemes according to the different forms of institutional work that the entrepreneurs performed -- problem framing and counterfactual thinking, building the organizational template, and connecting with a macro-level discourse (2011: 64). In each of the cases data was evaluated for themes, consistency or difference in how these themes were treated over time, and particular unusual patterns in the data. The importance of themes in the discourse changed from pre-opening to post-opening, with a new theme emerging post-opening. Overall the tone of the discourse changed as well, from a very optimistic pre-opening set of themes, to a more negative, in some cases, bitter, post-opening emphasis on the design of the park itself and the changes to the neighborhood. Pre-opening, the themes of Aesthetic/Design, Neighborhood, and FHL/Coalition accounted for 67% of the total. Post-opening, the themes of Aesthetic/Design, Development/Cost, and Neighborhood accounted for 63% of the total. Figure 4.2 illustrates the proportions devoted to discourse on each kind of institutional work around the High Line before it opened.

**Figure 4.2: Distribution of Institutional Dimension in the Discourse,
Pre-Opening of High Line Park**



When examining the dimensions of artifact sense-making in the pre-opening discourse, there are strong emphases on the dimensions of Instrumentality and Symbolism. Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of discourse along the physical artifact dimensions of sense-making (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004).

**Figure 4.3: Distribution of Artifact Sense-making Dimensions,
Pre-Opening of High Line Park**



From pre to post opening, the discourse around the High Line shifted in several ways. First, there was an increased focus on Aesthetics, or the look of the park. Second, there was an increased focus on the cost of the project, as parts of the project opened and more construction was planned for other sections. The emphasis on the capacity of FHL to create the park somewhat diminished in importance. The original emphasis on the neighborhood decreased dramatically and the discourse began to split in the neighborhood theme. While issues were raised as far back as 2006, it is not until the High Line opened that the opposing side gained traction in the discourse and affected the overall tone. This shift in how the neighborhood is treated in the discourse will be explored more fully in the post-opening *Legitimizing* section of this chapter.

4.2a 2000-2009, pre-opening, Envisioning- Aesthetics/Design

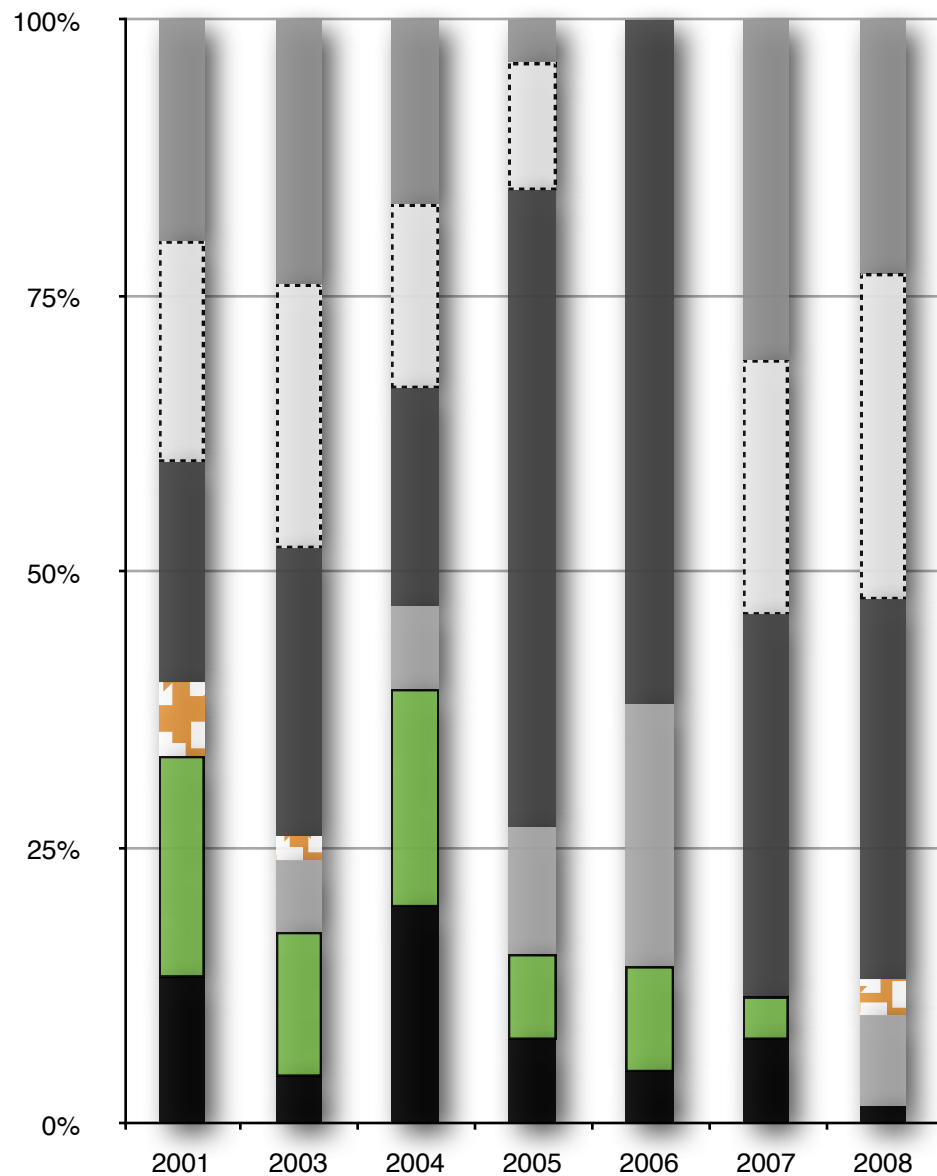
Envisioning work involves reframing the High Line to show how it solves a problem that prior institutional arrangements could not. The dominant theme in this category of institutional work was Aesthetics/Design, with 23% of coded words. The themes in this dimension are in both the Aesthetics and Instrumentality dimensions of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' typology. In addition to examining the overall percentage of coded words for each theme it is also important to look at how the theme was addressed in the discourse over time and whether it was addressed in a positive, neutral, or negative way.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of positive, negative, and neutral discourse in the themes within this dimension from 2001-2008. The Aesthetics theme dominates and most of the discourse around that theme is positive. That theme appears in Figure 4.4 as dark gray. The negative tones appear early on in the project's development, which can be attributed to the blight of the existing structure and how project opponents were characterizing the High Line.

The negative tones also appear toward the later parts of the discourse as well, when there is some discontent with some of the design choices made by High Line designers- i.e. the park is

perceived as ‘precious’ (Stone 2012 Interview). The Access/Usability theme is addressed in positive or neutral ways. And the Arts/Artists theme, which developed later in the discourse, is also addressed in a positive or neutral way.

**Figure 4.4: Envisioning Dimension,
Relative Distribution of Themes over Time**



The aesthetic and design components of the High Line incorporated the neighborhood's grittiness and the structure's former states of decay and neglect. Hammond and David were nostalgic and romantic about having a train running through the neighborhood (James Corner Field Operations, et al, 2008). The High Line, at its core, may be seen as a right of passage; when it was built the project required private right-of-way agreements through 350 properties, and required the removal of 640 buildings (Hotz, 2005). Part of what makes the connection to the past so much part of the aesthetic is this idea of the park as easement in the air, as elevated promenade (Mogul 2005) creating and enabling movement back and forth across public and private boundaries. But Hammond and David also recognized that the High Line was loud, crowded, and dirty for those who actually had lived next to the train while it was in service. It was this sense of grittiness (Hotz 2005), of abandonment, (Perez 2004, Mogul 2005), the structure's link to a bygone era (Amateau 2006, Smith 2006), combined with a sense of illicitness (David and Hammond 2011 public presentation), that became part of the park's aesthetic.

Hammond admits that, in the beginning, FHL was "two guys and a logo" (Hammond 2011 Interview). He convinced friends at the design firm Pentagram to design the logo pro bono, which was used by both the organization and the park. The intent of the logo was to imbue a sense of legitimacy; FHL had to look like more than what they were.

Adam Gopnik's 2001 New Yorker article and the accompanying Joel Sternfeld photographs had gotten people talking about the High Line. FHL and their supporters built on this set of images and consistently used words like "dreamy" (Hotz, 2005), "one of a kind" (Amateau, 2006), "magical" (David Hammond, 2007), "unusual" (Smith, 2006), "stroller's paradise" (Schmerler and Simonson, 2007), "urban wonderland" (Topousis, 2007), and "secret" (Robinson, 2005) to attempt to capture the different sense of place the potential public space would generate. They gave public presentations to anyone who would take them, and constantly called bloggers and journalists in attempts to give tours and get articles written about the project (Hammond and David presentation, 2011). Wherever possible the Friends of the High

Line took people up onto the space to give users the experience of the space, and also showed High Line images whenever possible in their talks and presentations. The High Line as an artifact was not simply a transmitter of information, or means of communication: it was used by FHL as a mode of meaning-construction (Kress Van Leeuwen, 2001; Raab, 2008).

Hammond and David also consistently focused on the *amount* of space available but *without calling it a park*, arguing that there were few chances for the City to design “1.5 miles of Manhattan”(McGraw Hill Construction, 2003, Robinson, 2005, David and Hammond 2011 Public Presentation, Hammond 2011 Interview). This is similar to the work done by Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (FBT) today in Chicago, where there is little emphasis on the green-ness of the project. This emphasis in New York is notable given the lack of neighborhood green space in Chelsea and the Meatpacking District.

Part of the focus on design in the High Line discourse had to do with the background of early supporters. Hammond and David came from artistic backgrounds and many of their early supporters were artists, architects, preservationists (Latz 2002) and media/marketing people. In other words, their supporters cared what things looked like. Part of the importance of design also came from the structure itself. Robert Hammond thought that, when Paris undertook an earlier version of elevated viaduct re-use, they just “put a park up high “with the Promenade Plantee in Paris (Hammond 2012) and he thought that was a mistake. He strongly believed that High Line should take its cues from the structure on which it would sit. This may be post-hoc rationalization; once you are up on the structure you cannot get away from the experience of being elevated.

The High Line meanders through places you ordinarily cannot go. The height, about three stories up, is just enough to alter the user’s point of view. Hammond remembers that actually taking people up onto the High Line and then getting them to tell others about the experience was one of the most effective ways of selling early potential supporters on the site’s aesthetic and

design (Hammond 2011 Interview) -- an explicit embrace of the physical object as media and discourse strategy (Meyer et al 2013).

FHL held a series of open meetings where it used effective visuals to present the community, media, and public officials with a captivating vision of how the park could be revitalized and redeveloped. FHL also held an open design competition soliciting any and all ideas. One non-winning entry featured a 1.45 mile outdoor, elevated swimming pool. Another included a roller coaster (Perez, 2004). Yet, the fanciful nature of these designs did not call for serious opposition. The range of solutions and exciting visuals expressed an inspirational celebration of the High Line, its possibilities and New Yorkers' love of the City; it was also a clever tactical move that garnered glowing coverage in the *New York Times* and drew even broader public support for the project.

In another example of the role of design in envisioning the project, as construction started, the work required new ballast, with sections of the old rail ties and rails replaced. "We don't want people to forget that the High Line was a railroad, [so t]he rail ties and rails will be numbered and stored so that we can replace them wherever appropriate," (David, via Amateau, 2006). In addition, the team realized they could not keep the self-sown vegetation on the High Line; the weeds, grass, bushes and trees had to be removed. As much as possible, plantings were designed to reproduce what was there and the new ballast was designed to accept new wind-sown seeds. The timeline graphic shown in Figure 4.5 was a part of the group's public presentations. This projected timeline shows plantings and bird species they proposed to attract to the High Line during the first four years. Designed by the landscape architecture firm James Corner Field Operations, the image artfully evokes the evolution of flora and fauna over the course of four years. The graphic is an example of FHL's attempts to fire the public's imagination—and in the process cultivate political power and support.

Figure 4.5: Timeline Graphic Used by Friends of the High Line

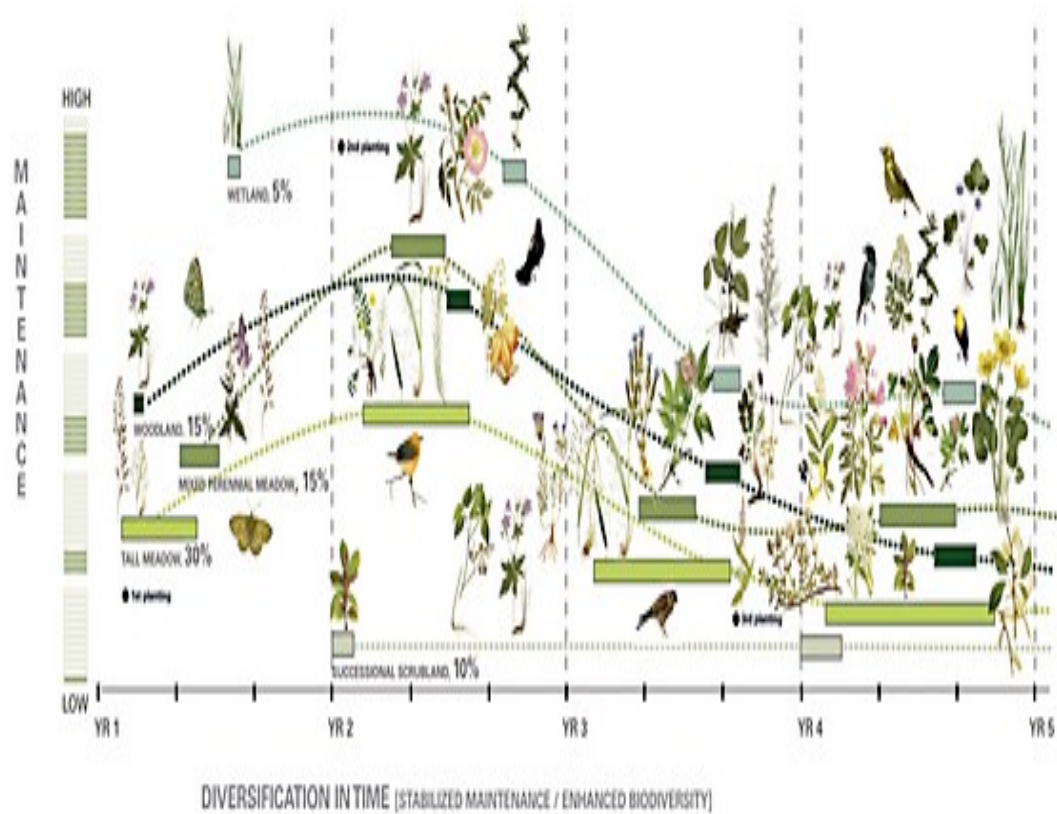


Image © 2004. James Corner Field Operations with Diller Scofidio Renfro. Courtesy the City of New York.

Aesthetics and design played a large role in shaping the public's opinion of the High Line. As Michael Bailey, engineering project manager for Sections One and Two, pointed out,

“I knew that if they [FHL] had the money to build what the renderings showed it would be important for LiRo [his company] and it would be an amazing project, but it would depend on if they really have the money.... Too often tremendous dreams and beautiful projects run into economic realities.” (Bailey 2011 Interview).

The group also raised so much private money -- one-third of the \$152 million raised to develop Sections One and Two was from private donations-- that they were able to devote a great deal of thought to the aesthetics without compromising needed construction elements (Greco 2011 Interview, Bailey 2011 Interview).

Discourse on the aesthetics of the space can drive home both constraints and opportunities; both are important because it is a way of making the project feel more real. If stakeholders are debating where to put benches, or what they should look like, they have, implicitly, already bought in to the project happening. This tactic has been used by real estate agents and car dealers, among others. Real estate agents encourage potential buyers to think of a room as fulfilling a certain function – office, nursery – or able to accommodate a particular piece of furniture, such as a grand piano or large television. Car dealers encourage potential buyers to discuss car colors, accessories and options, well before any discussion of pricing. The tactic is designed to change the entire discussion to one focused on ‘getting it to look right’, as opposed to ‘should we do it?’ This approach, focusing on what the High Line will look like, is also very much in line with Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz’ (2004) aesthetics dimension of a physical artifact’s meaning. The design can, and in this case did, have implications for how the High Line would be viewed by those inside the immediate neighborhood and beyond. As Andrew Stone of TPL’s New York office pointed out:

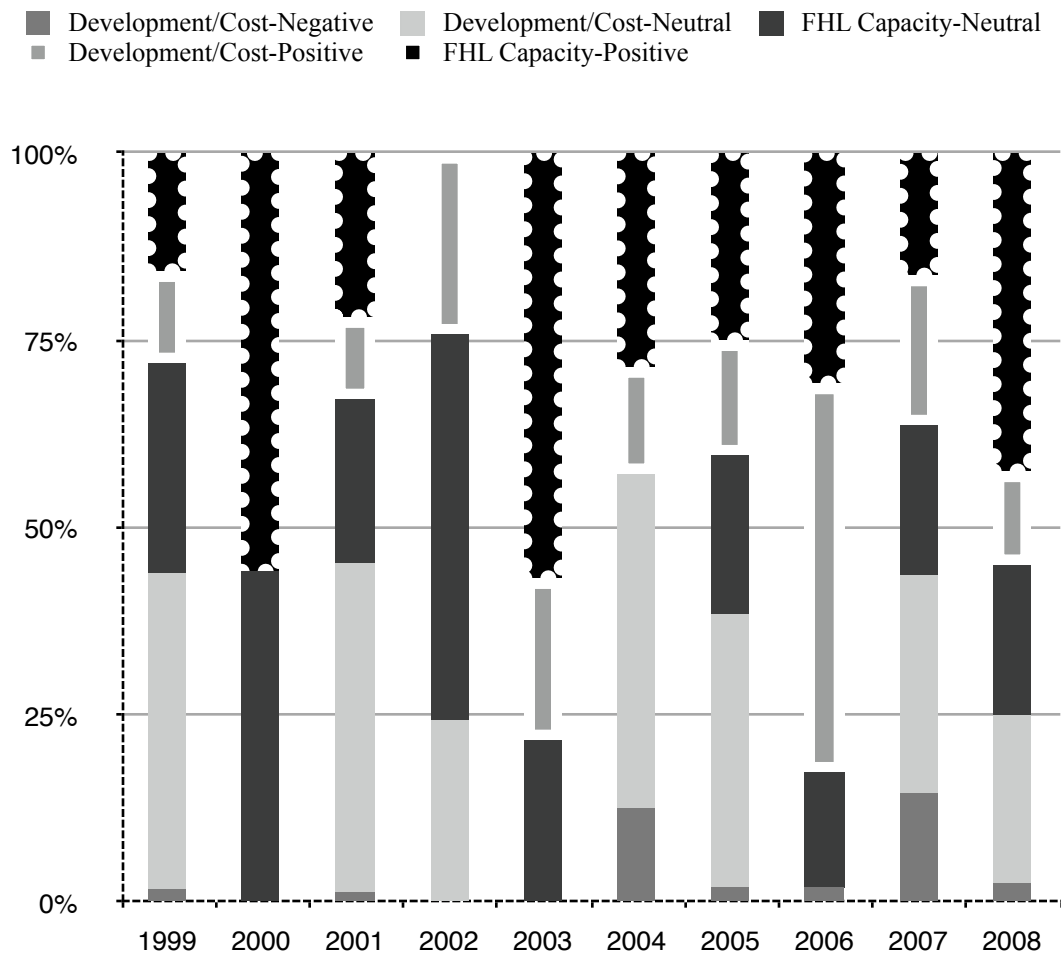
“Accommodating neighborhood people?” It’s sort of like, “Not really”. It’s like, the High Line is amazing. It’s one of a kind, but it wasn’t designed to have accommodating neighborhood residents as one of its guiding principles. The reality is, ... that the design of the High Line is for, for me, is a particular kind of regional resource first and foremost. It’s almost like you make certain decisions in your master plan and your overall design, and I think that it’s designed as a regional resource--and a very particular kind of regional resource that’s appealing to tourists. It has a real wow factor.” (Stone 2012 interview)

4.2b 2000-2009, pre-opening, Creating-FHL and Coalition of supporters

The *Creating* category of institutional work uses discourse to highlight the capacities and skills of the Friends of the High Line to carry out the project. As laid out in the ECL framework, the discourse in this category has to explain why the organizational template proposed – in this case, FHL as the operating body for the High Line -- makes sense as a solution to the problem FHL has reframed. The themes in this dimension fall into the *Instrumentality* dimension of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz’ (2004) artifact sense-making typology. Figure 4.6 shows the

distribution of themes over time, as a percentage of the discourse, as well as the proportion of positive, neutral, and negative messages for each theme. The dominant theme in this category was the FHL, themselves (who made themselves highly visible) and their work on raising money and building supporters as they transformed themselves into a conservancy managing the High Line. This theme accounted for 19% of the pre-opening discourse, and most of the discourse around that theme is positive. That theme is shown in Figure 6 as solid black with white zigzags. The Development/Cost theme is addressed initially in positive or neutral ways, and negative messages about this theme do not appear until later in the discourse, after the project opened. Development/Cost shows in Figure 4.6 as solid medium gray (negative), light gray (neutral), and white and gray striped (positive.)

Figure 4.6: Creating Dimension, Relative Distribution of Themes, 1999-2008



Hammond and David wanted Friends of the High Line to represent the local Chelsea and Meatpacking neighborhoods. They sought to create a base of community support, to get members of the local community to believe FHL could make the project happen. Friends of the High Line hosted public street events and art exhibits; FHL Board members began to visit the homes of local residents (including those in the two nearby public housing facilities) to talk in more detail about the proposed project (Svendsen, 2010). Residents remember David setting up a small table on the street to educate the community about the need to save the High Line. “I didn’t believe the city would permit [the High Line],” longtime resident Joan Tramontano recalled (Humm, 2012).

Both David and Hammond argued that the collection of supporters from the beginning was part of what made the High Line possible. They worked with creative people like photographer Joel Sternfeld, neighborhood gallerists and artists, and the graphic designer Paula Scher of Pentagram. “And Phil Aarons, our Board Chair, has been invaluable since the beginning, when nobody really believed this would happen. Where else would you find so many people who see the opportunity in 1.5 miles of rusting steel?” (Hammond, 2008)

In parallel to their community building efforts, FHL began to assemble connections to and highlight government agency members and wealthy private individuals, also with the goal of making themselves capable of bringing the project to fruition. They relied initially on connections; there is a substantial body of work showing that social ties play a key role in entrepreneurial activity (Sorenson and Audia, 2000, Hoang and Antoncic, 2003, Jack, 2010). Ties are the media through which FHL as an entity can gain access to a variety of resources – information, advice, problem-solving, etc. -- held by other actors. In fact, researchers have illustrated how social ties are fundamental to venture creation and early growth, as “new organizations are clearly social entities from the beginning” (Ruef et al., 2003, p. 196).

One key example of the strength of social ties is what happened once Gifford Miller, City Council member and former college roommate of Robert Hammond’s, had changed his mind about the High Line. In 1999, he told Hammond, “saving an old rail line was a stupid

idea” (Hammond and David, 2011); by 2002 he had become an ardent supporter. He and others in the City Council began passing resolutions in support of the High Line and Miller began making introductions to other City Council members, who in turn made introductions to other members of government. As City Council Speaker, Miller earmarked \$15 million to plan and design the park, and U.S. Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) included \$5 million for the High Line in the House version of the 2005 six-year federal transportation bill (Hotz, 2005).

Back in 2001, Friends of the High Line also became involved in gaining support from mayoral candidates, including frontrunner Michael Bloomberg, and possible planning commission members. They focused attention on Amanda Burden, then a member of the City Planning Commission, and someone known for her work in reshaping public spaces – particularly the planning and design of Battery Park City. Amanda Burden concurs in this description.

“They took me up on the High Line before I got this job [as City Planning Commissioner] and I fell ...passionately in love with it, but I had no power. But the first moment I got appointed by Mike Bloomberg as planning commissioner I said, ‘ this is my project and my priority.’” (Burden Interview, Charlie Rose, 2011)

Celebrities such as Kevin Bacon and Edward Norton appeared at benefits to raise money for the High Line, and their pictures were in many New York and national magazines (De Moncheaux, 2005). A yearly fundraiser, hosted by fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg and actor Edward Norton, quickly became a staple on New York's society pages (Hotz, 2005). The High Line became a glamorous cause for New Yorkers exhausted by the aftermath of 9/11, unable to focus on the rebuilding of the Twin Towers, and yet wanting to do something to improve the city. While it would take years to work out plans for redevelopment of the World Trade Center site, the High Line was a project that could be done relatively quickly (Elkin, 2011). Phase One’s groundbreaking in 2006 was full of celebrities and elected officials.

The public was made aware of how much progress FHL was making, and how they had convinced the government and private individuals to support the project in the media, via newspapers and images, as well as on the High Line itself. When Section One of the High Line opened, FHL was very creative with sponsorship, allowing organizations and individuals to put

their names on parts of the High Line, including the Diller-von Furstenberg Sundek (thehighline.org) and collecting private donations for other specific features such as 10th Avenue Square (Topousis, 2007) -- what Charles Isherwood of the *NYTimes* calls “The graffiti of the philanthropic class” (Isherwood, 2007).

Visitors to the High Line can also see names of donors on railings and on plaques along the High Line, so donors have a measure of visibility; particularly for corporate and foundation donors who give \$2,500 and over, this kind of acknowledgement matters and can lead to increased donations (Friends of the High Line, 2009). FHL cofounder David said the Friends have been able to attract big donations “because donors see the High Line as something optimistic and promising about New York. It gives them a new perspective on the city and positions New York as a leader” (Humm 2012).

Section Two of the High Line opened in June 2011. Like Section One, Section Two contained named features like the Falcone Flyover¹⁵(thehighline.org). Section Two of the Park also received acclaim and crowds. Of the 3.7 million annual visitors, approximately 50% are tourists and 50% are from Greater New York — with half of the latter group from the surrounding neighborhoods (Humm 2012, Benepe 2012 Interview). Friends of the High Line continues to actively raise funds for the Campaign for the High Line, which supports the capital construction of Section Three /High Line at the Rail Yards, as well as other capital projects, and the endowment for the High Line’s future maintenance and operations. In Fall 2011, the Friends published a list of large donors, including The Tiffany Co. Foundation’s \$5 million challenge grant, Donald Pels and Wendy Keys’ \$5 million grant, and the Diller /von Furstenberg Family Foundation’ \$20 million pledge – the largest pledge to a public park in New York City’s history at that time. To date, Friends of the High Line has raised nearly \$58 million toward this phase of the Campaign for the High Line (“Major Step Forward: All Stakeholders Pledge to Complete the High Line at the Rail Yards,” 2011).

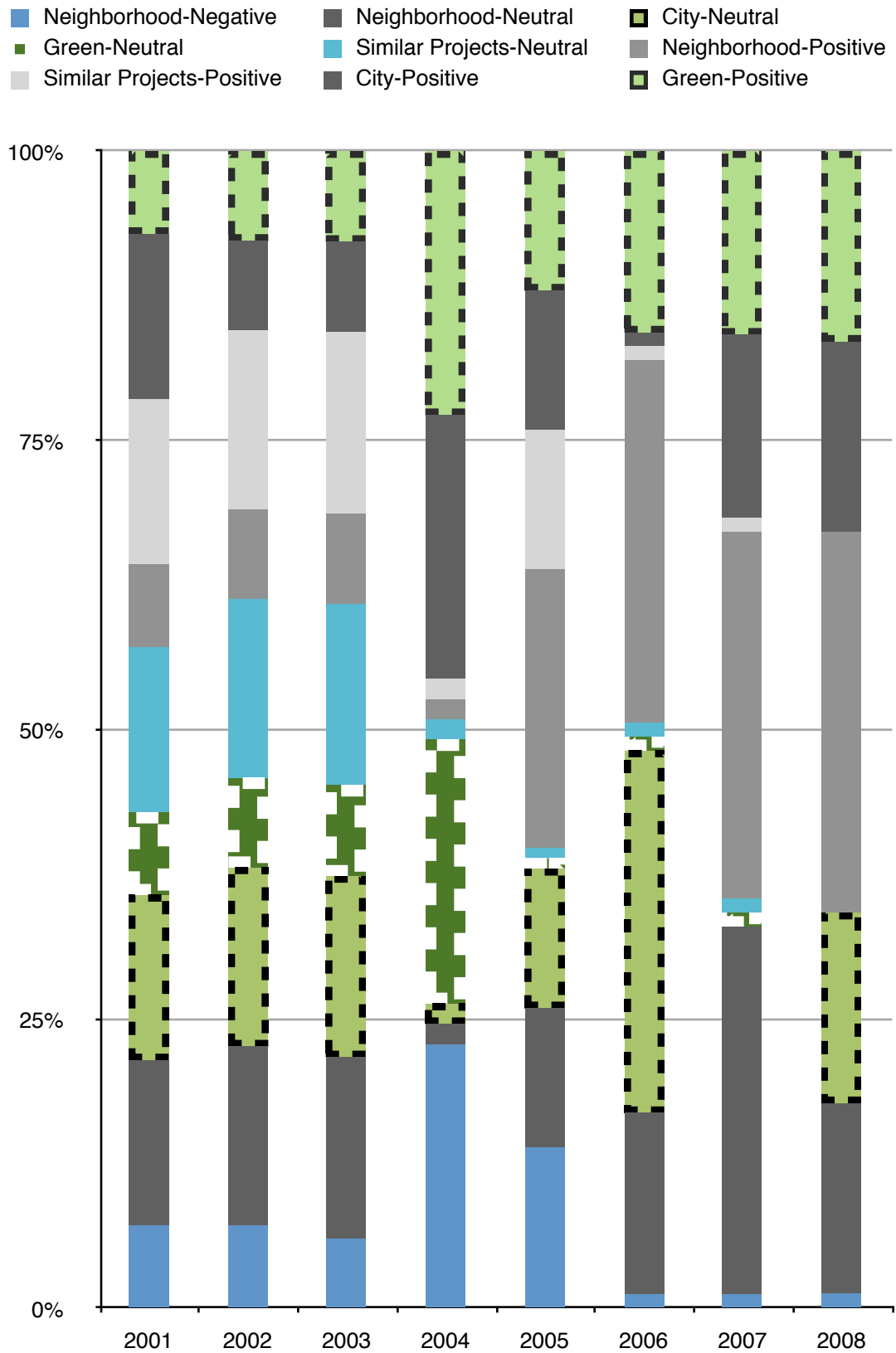
¹⁵ The Falcone Flyover contains an elevated walkway eight feet above the High Line that allows visitors to look down onto trees and plantings on a spur of the original freight line that has not been developed for walking.

Focusing on FHL's abilities to raise money and get government support acts in a recursive, reinforcing way – it reassures community members, government agencies, and potential donors that the advocacy group involved can actually make the project happen. That also supports the instrumentality dimension of a physical artifact's sensemaking, by focusing on the operational piece of *how the park will open and operate*. This, in turn, is linked to the question of 'how will it work?' – for the community, for the Parks Department, for the City of New York, and the answers to the question may increase potential users' and donors' confidence in the eventual outcome and their willingness to participate in the process. But this focus in the discourse came at a cost, which I will discuss in more detail in the post-opening section on Development). FHL focused on raising money for construction, not maintenance, and their choice not to create an endowment or some sort of neighborhood improvement district for ongoing maintenance and operations was glossed over in the pre-opening discourse. This choice affected the tone of the post-opening discourse.

4.2c 2000-2009, pre-opening, Legitimizing-Neighborhood

The *Legitimizing* part of the pre-opening discourse focused most heavily on connecting the supporting rationales of the project to larger discussions about the Chelsea/Meatpacking neighborhood. All themes except for *Green* appear in the *Symbolic* dimension of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (2004) IAS framework. Figure 4.7 illustrates the distribution of the *Legitimizing* themes over time.

Figure 4.7: Legitimizing Dimension, Distribution of Themes in the Discourse



Within the category of neighborhood, two different sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme, by far the most dominant, involves how the High Line both respects the neighborhood's history and provides a needed amenity to residents. The tone of this theme is primarily positive or neutral in the pre-opening section of the discourse. The positive or neutral tones are shown in Figure 7 as being solid black or vertically striped. The second sub-theme involves the effects the park will have on the current process of gentrification, its impact on lower income residents, and those residents' perception that perhaps the High Line is not for them. This theme appears, in one way or another, in the New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia cases, and is shown in Figure 7 as solid white with a black outline. Themes of the implications for the city, the 'greenness' of the project, and discussion of similar projects were far less prevalent in the discourse, but were also treated neutrally or positively. This is not a surprise given the physical structure of the High Line and its corresponding inability to provide traditional park experiences – including playgrounds and open fields. As former Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe put it, "right now, [the High Line] is a very grown up space." (Benepe 2012 Interview). Andrew Stone of the Trust for Public Land's New York office, concurred, saying that "you can just go over to Hudson River Park and Hudson River Park provides a lot of green amenities for the community; and it's not as needed on the High Line." (Stone 2012 Interview)

On the positive side, FHL pushed hard to link the High Line to revitalizing the neighborhood. "It was built to move in eggs and butter to factories in New York City. Now it can be used to move people in and out of the galleries, restaurants, apartments and offices that those warehouses have become," (Hammond, via Burghart, 2003). And city officials argued that the High Line...was... a "critical element" in the city's West Side revitalization plan (Doctoroff, via Burghart, 2003) and it would prop up that area (Benepe 2012 Interview).

As articles began appearing citing the positive responses of community leaders and business owners toward the new project, FHL again focused on the community base of support. "The High Line is about a group of community members who rallied around it," (David, via Humm 2012) and the FHL believe it is those community roots that have made it so successful.

Gallery owners praised the city's commitment to public space (Robinson 2005), saying the project would be good for everyone in the neighborhood. Other retailers were optimistic about increased pedestrians and diversity of activity. They especially highlighted the impact on the galleries (Robinson 2005) and the Whitney Museum's future move to the Gansevoort Street terminus, replacing an old meat processing plant that occupies the lot now (Topousis, 2007).

In 2007, Hammond said his group estimated that the High Line would generate \$260 million in new tax revenues over the next twenty years, due to new building construction and increases in existing property values, making a classic growth-machine argument (Logan and Molotch 1987). "Development would have come to this neighborhood, but without the High Line it would not have come as fast or with as much value," (Hammond, quoted in Topousis, 2007). In North America, growth has long been the Holy Grail of city politics; much of the outward expansion of cities took the form of competition among urbanizing municipalities vying for residential, commercial and industrial development (Logan and Molotch, 1987, 179-99). Hammond's argument was based on the pervasive assumption that an absence of growth, or even slow growth, is an undesirable economic condition for cities.

On the other side, while projected public taxes earnings and private investment opportunities related to the High Line project proved to be an attractive idea to private investors and public economic planners alike, local community associations began to resent the high priority attention that the High Line was receiving in comparison to other rezoning proposals. Both civic and block associations had identified redevelopment priorities that included affordable housing projects, transportation improvements, and new outdoor parks and recreational facilities (Design Trust for Public Space, Conard, Smiley, 2002). A local civic association member remarked, "The High Line is nice, but perhaps because of it we don't have all the other things that we need in this community" (Comstock 2009). Other civic associations felt silenced as the applause for the High Line by the media and government planners became deafening.

And the FHL tried to have it both ways, trying to distance themselves from the zoning-related deals being struck all around the High Line -- the deals that most likely enabled the High Line park to exist at all. The relationship among the city (in rezoning the West Chelsea Arts District), the developers, and the High Line, is consistent with arguments advanced by Hackworth (2002) and Hackworth and Smith (2001) about the more direct involvement of government in the gentrification process, and closer relationships with corporate developers and the initial gentrification process. The West Chelsea rezoning was an attempt to balance the development-based interests of the growth machine, whom the FHL had co-opted through the rezoning efforts, with the neighborhood focus of community residents. After all, both FHL cofounders live in the neighborhood and have for years; and as mentioned earlier, they were ambivalent about the deal struck to benefit development.

To support their neighborhood-based position, FHL pointed to potential programs serving the "mostly low-middle-income neighborhood" where "90 percent of kids here are on a public lunch program." (Sicha 2003, Hammond 2011). The neighborhood residents themselves were undecided about the rezoning proposal and its link to the High Line. On the one hand, 400 largely enthusiastic people attended a community input forum in November 2003. But, at around the same time, Chelsea residents worried at community-board meetings that the rezoning plan so critical to the High Line would create a forbidding wall along 10th Avenue (Sicha, 2003).

In reality, the High Line would be a physical representation of a social wall that already existed. Chelsea contains two low-income housing projects, and frankly, art dealers did not create a cluster in West Chelsea because they wanted to be close to public housing. Under the rezoning plan, the "West Chelsea Arts District" would be segregated both physically and economically from the two public housing projects across 10th Avenue and near the High Line.

In the pre-opening discourse, the Friends of the High Line and their supporters focused on the idea that the High Line would revitalize the neighborhood. FHL tried to engage the community actively, through school-based and other local programming. They linked

development of the High Line to increased amenities for residents. The FHL did this through discussion of the Whitney Museum and the arts/gallery district, through talking up the benefits of increased density and pedestrian traffic in a relatively sparsely populated section of Manhattan, and through planning to have a significant amount of the facility programming be locally-focused (Humm 2012).

They have tried to get all parts of the community to support the High Line through conversations about how critical this is for the neighborhood and even the City. Their efforts to frame the issue as something larger than just the neighborhood is a spatial technique community organizations often use in the urban planning process (Martin 2000, 2003b). They have also tried to distance themselves somewhat (without a great deal of success) from the High Line rezoning and resulting skyrocketing residential and commercial real estate prices in order to make a neighborhood-centric position clearer and more consistent. This approach, and its contrast with the approach of the Philadelphia advocacy group, is discussed in more detail in the Philadelphia chapter (Chapter 6) and the Cross-Case Comparison chapter (Chapter 7).

4.2d 2000-2009 pre-opening summary

The earlier parts of this chapter focused on the consistency of message and dominant theme within each type of institutional work in the pre-opening discourse. The completeness of discourse in the three dimensions of work, combined with the consistency of message in dominant themes within each dimension, reflects the ability of the advocacy group to develop coalitions of support behind the project. The *Envisioning* discourse occurs at the micro level, primarily among individuals. The discourse around *Creating* occurs at the meso level, in discussions around the advocacy group as an organization. And *Legitimizing* occurs at the macro level, linking the organization and its efforts to larger societal themes. Interestingly, even though Aesthetics/Design is a strong theme, the pre-opening discourse is heavily weighted toward the *Creating* and *Legitimizing* dimensions of institutional work these entrepreneurs have performed in order to make their project a reality as opposed to *Envisioning* discourse. Table 1 summarizes

the dominant themes within every dimension along with a note on the tone and consistency within each theme. The discourse is consistent in tone and most of the discourse is neutral or positive. The only exceptions are the development/cost theme and gentrification subtheme within the neighborhood theme, which are neutral or negative in tone.

Table 4.1 – Summary of Themes within Institutional Dimensions in the High Line Park discourse, pre-opening

Dimension of Institutional Work	Theme	Tone of theme in discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Envisioning	Aesthetic/ Design	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Legitimizing	Art and Artists	Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	City	Positive	Yes
Creating	Development/ Cost	Neutral or slightly negative in discussion of cost vs, investment	Mostly
Legitimizing	Green	Neutral	Yes
Creating	FHL/Coalition	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Envisioning	History	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Subtheme- changes/ gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of neighborhood revitalization-neutral or positive	Consistent within each subtheme but split overall
Legitimizing	Similar/Other Projects	Positive or Neutral	Yes

Figure 4.8 highlights the distribution of pre-opening discourse among all three dimensions. Almost all of the discourse is positive and neutral; less than 10% of the discourse is negative in tone. The negative themes in the discourse are colored light gray (Envisioning), black dashes (Creating) and vertically striped (Legitimizing).

Figure 4.8: Distribution of discourse among the three dimensions of institutional work, pre-opening of High Line Park

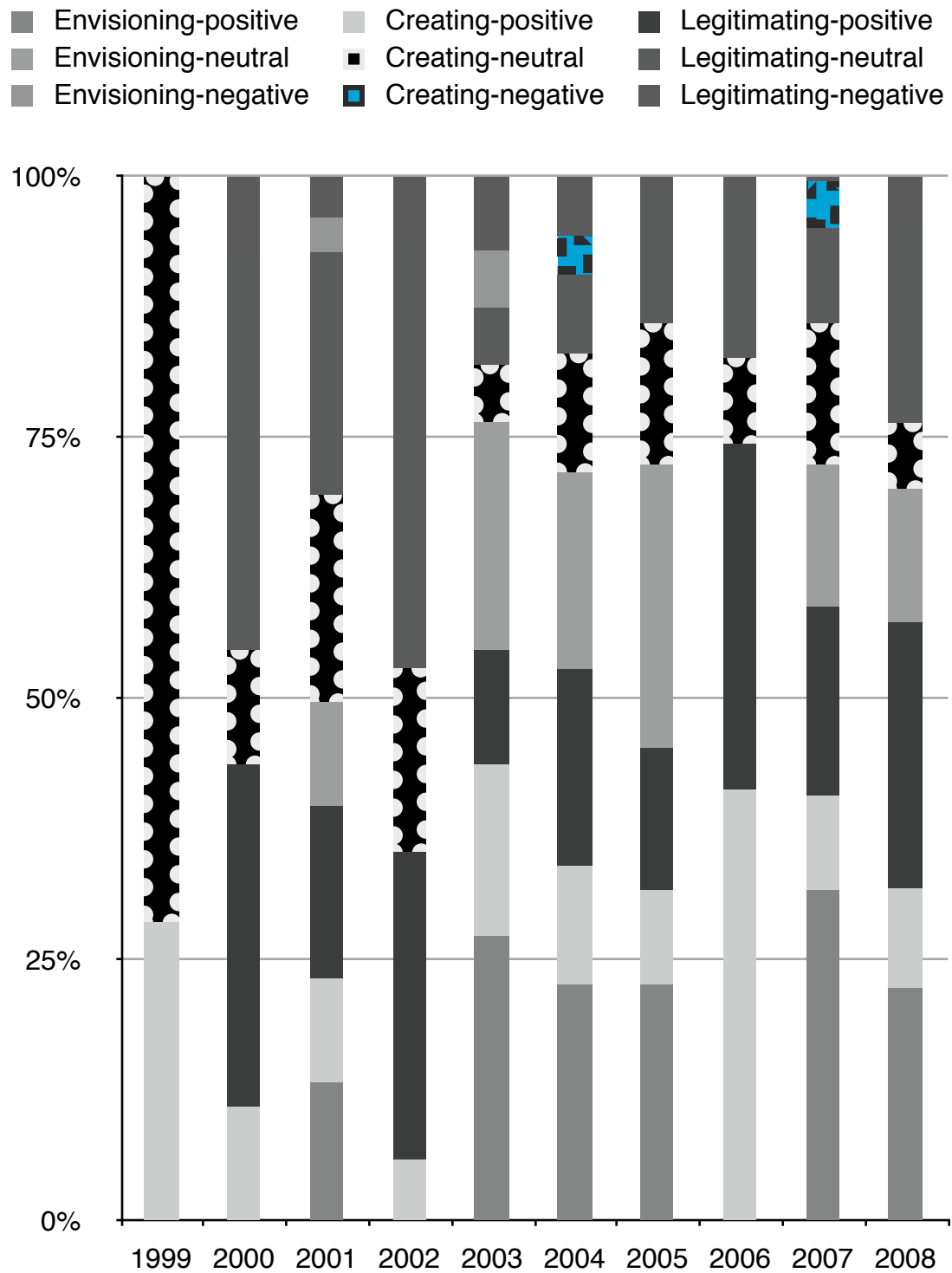


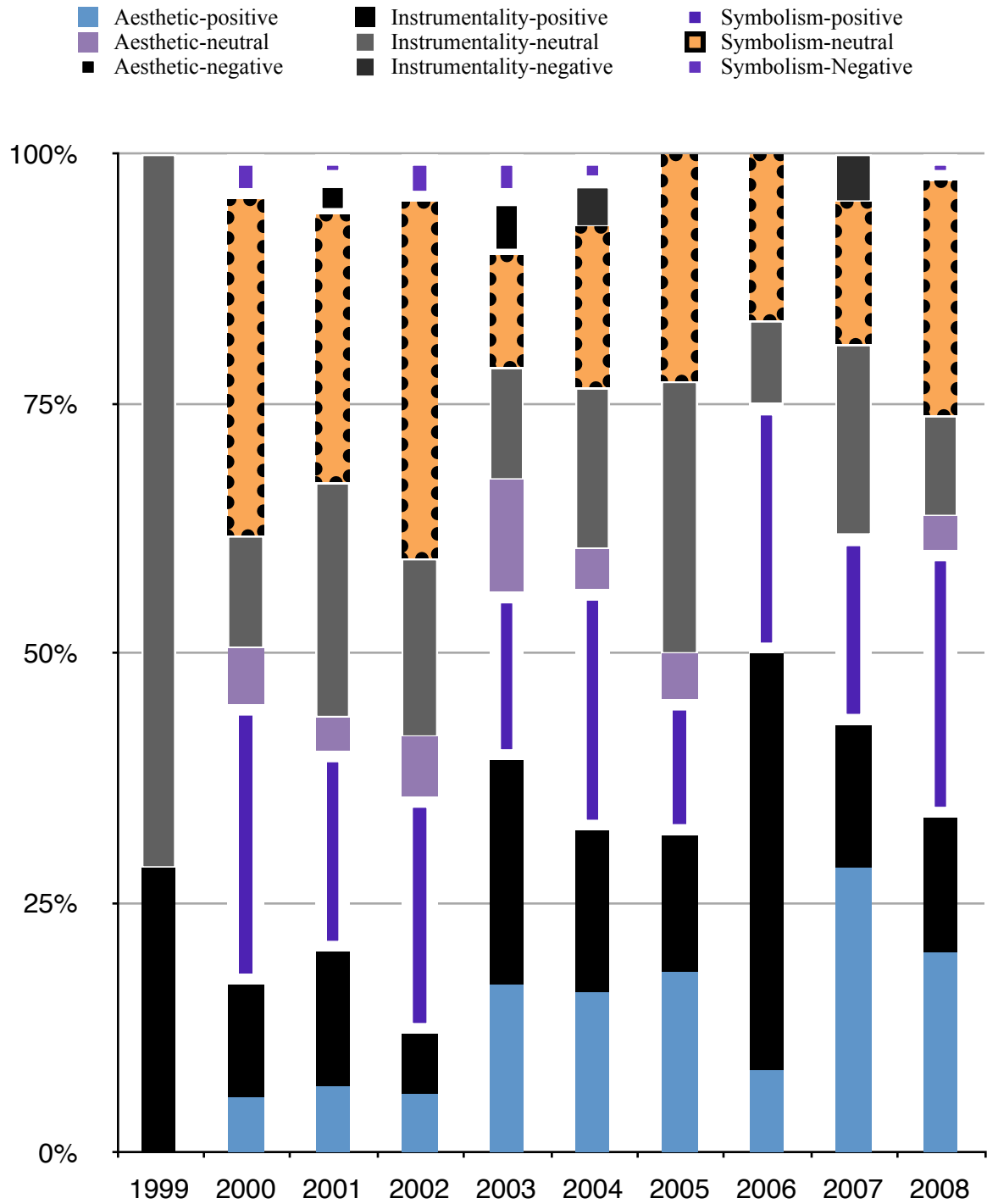
Table 4.2 summarizes the split among the artifact sense-making dimensions in the pre-opening discourse, along with the tone and consistency. The overall tone in the themes of the discourse is positive and consistent, again with the exceptions of the focus on cost and concerns about gentrification.

Table 4.2: Summary of Themes within Artifact Dimensions in the High Line pre-opening discourse

Rafaeli and Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact sensemaking	Theme	Tone of theme in Discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Aesthetic	Aesthetic/ Design	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	Art and Artists	Positive	Yes
Symbolic	City	Positive	Yes
Instrumentality	Development/ Cost	Mostly positive or neutral. Some negative in discussion of cost vs. investment	Mostly
Aesthetic	Green	Neutral	Yes
Instrumentality	FHL/Coalition	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	History	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	Neighborhood	Subtheme- changes/ gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of neighborhood revitalization-neutral or positive	Consistent within each subtheme but split overall
Symbolic	Similar Projects	Positive or Neutral	Yes

Figure 4.9 illustrates the distribution of discourse among physical artifact sense-making dimensions. As with the distribution of discourse among types of institutional work, almost all of the discourse is positive and neutral. The positive discourse accounts for approximately 30-40% from 1999-2008, and the neutral discourse is another 40-50%. The negative themes are grouped at the top, with Aesthetics-Negative shown in black surrounded by white lines, Instrumentality shown in dark gray, and Symbolism-Negative shown in a light green.

Figure 4.9: Distribution of discourse along physical artifact sense-making dimensions, pre-opening of High Line Park



4.2e 2009-onward, post-opening

After the High Line's first section opened in 2009, the discourse around the Park changed slightly. The three most important themes, totaling nearly two-thirds of the coded words, were Aesthetics/Design, with 28% of the discourse, Development/Cost, with 19% of the discourse, and the Neighborhood, with 16% of the discourse. Figure 4.10 shows the distribution of institutional work, post-opening.

Figure 4.10: Distribution of Institutional Work in the Discourse, Post-Opening of High Line Park

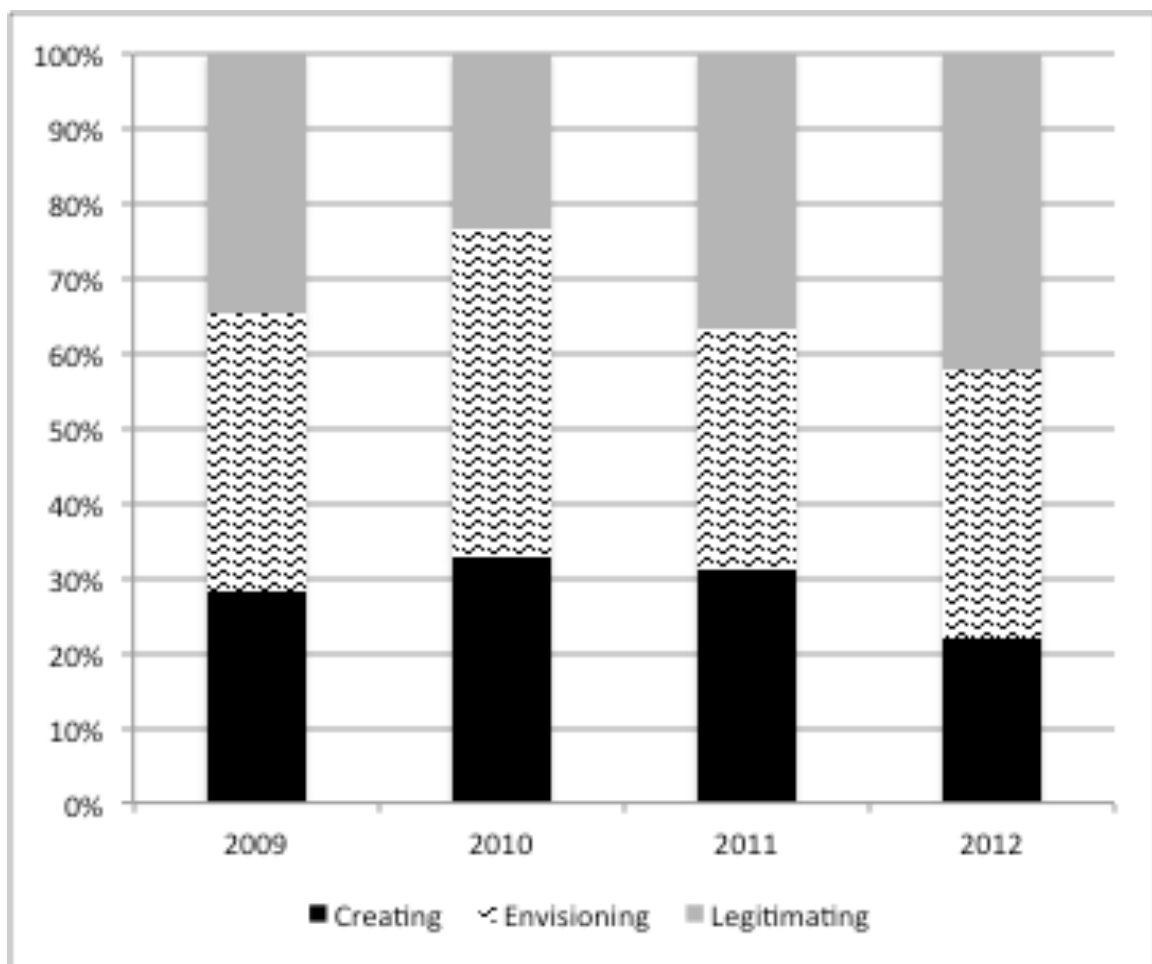
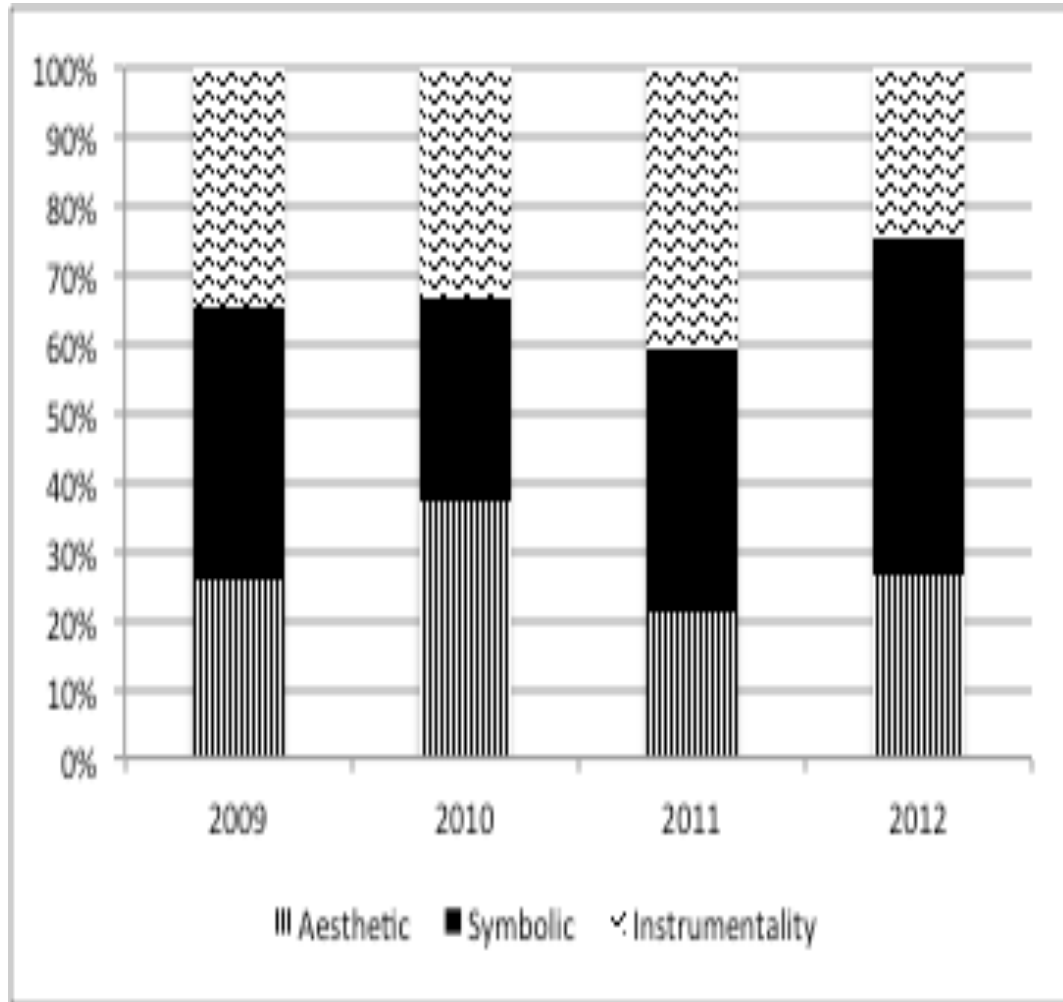


Figure 4.11 highlights the split in the discourse among the dimensions of physical artifact sense-making, and again demonstrates a nearly equal split among the three categories. Since the

pre-opening period, the most dramatic change in the discourse has been the shift in tone for the Instrumentality dimension– from the positive emphasis on opening the High Line to the negative emphasis on finding the money to maintain it. A second tonal shift involves the Symbolic dimension of the neighborhood; pre-opening there was a lot of talk about how the High Line would be a reflection of the neighborhood’s industrial past, while post-opening the discourse has been more defensive on the part of the FHL, pointing out the High Line’s benefits, while the community did not seem to be buying into the benefits claimed.

Figure 4.11: Distribution of Artifact Dimensions, Post-Opening of High Line Park



The changes in the discourse and dominant themes, with increased focus on Aesthetics, may be the result of several factors. First, Section One of the Park began to win awards for design and accolades for innovation. Second, while the Park did partially open in 2009, plans to open the second section were continuing and the third section had not yet been brought under City control. The Friends of the High Line were simultaneously in operating and planning mode. Third, the High Line's impact on the Neighborhood was more dramatic and more mixed than predicted by FHL (David and Hammond 2011 Public Presentation, Humm 2012). As stated earlier, in 2007, FHL estimated that the High Line would generate \$260 million in tax revenues over the next twenty years. As of June 2011, Mayor Bloomberg announced that "preserving the High Line as a public park [had] revitalized a swath of the city" (McGeehan, 2011) and generated nearly \$500 million in tax revenues (NPR, 2011).

4.2f 2009-onward, post-opening, Envisioning-Aesthetic/Design

Soon after the High Line opened, the Park, the High Line's designers, and the FHL began to win awards for various aspects of the project – this theme of the *award-winning project*, or *award-winning design* began to recur throughout the discourse. In short order, the High Line won a spot on the New Yorker's list of "10 Most Positive Architectural Events of 2009", the International Association of Art Critics (IACA) First Prize for "Best Show in a Public Space" (2009) and the New York Landmarks Conservancy's Lucy G. Moses Preservation Project Award (2010). The Department of City Planning's 2005 West Chelsea Rezoning ¹⁶ won the Urban Land Institute's 2009 Global Award for Excellence. The High Line's team of designers won the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA)'s Design Award for Urban Design (2010), and the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)'s 2010 General Design award. That same year, the cofounders of FHL were awarded the Jane Jacobs medal for

¹⁶ Rezoning preserved the High Line, and created a High Line air and light corridor through setback requirements.

New Ideas and Activism (Lindquist, 2010). The FHL could now claim ‘award-winning’ design in its marketing materials, and it did. As indicated earlier, the FHL had connections to city planners and celebrities and this helped in raising money. These awards, however, were arms-length, due to the James Corner Field Operations/ds+r design, and not to the FHL’s social network.

The cofounders became media darlings, popping up on the Sundance Channel (Hammond and David, 2009), wallpaper.com (David and Corner, 2009), Dwell.com (Hammond, 2010), Interview magazine (David and Hammond, 2010), NPR (2011) and making the rounds of the lecture circuits. There, they had a threefold message to deliver – first, they continued to talk about the project and their advocacy work in terms of its vision, which was to bring the experience of being up on this “amazing structure and seeing the city from this very special vantage point” (David and Hammond 2010) to New York City. This strategy involved pictures of the High Line before and after, wherever possible. Second, they talked about the first section itself in terms of its design features, including a water feature, a sundeck, the “snazzy pathways of smooth concrete planks and the backless, thin, “peel-up” benches” so different from typical park benches (Kilgannon, 2010), etc. Hammond also commented that:

people really love [the High Line’s movable chairs]. It gives them a sense of control over the space. We looked at having the designers design the chairs. They came up with all these different kind of chairs, but in the end we just used regular Parisian park chairs that you see all over parks all over the world. They're light, they're a simple design, and it's fascinating to see how many people use them in different configurations. – Hammond 2012 Interview

And third, they also continued to sell the vision of both Section Two and the as-yet-unavailable Rail Yards section, by describing the Flyover, the lawn space – 4,200 square feet, that anywhere else would be considered almost inconsequential -- that, in New York, would be “just right for picnics” (Amateau, 2010), and a viewing spur with an empty frame where a billboard used to be. They focused on describing the second section as smaller and more intimate, somehow, than the first (Kilgannon, 2010), playing up the voyeuristic elements. The second section runs right up next to windows of residential buildings. “It feels like a Venetian canal, compared to the southern part...Like you’re walking through the set of ‘Rear

Window.’” (Benepe, quoted in Kilgannon, 2010). This part of their media strategy relied heavily on a combination of pictures of the space and encouraging visitors to go to the High Line. Early on in the project’s development Hammond expressed a belief that getting people up onto the structure was an effective strategy in getting their support for the project (Hammond and David public presentation 2011). He was right and FHL continued to push the user experience as part of their media strategy. This approach is in line with Raab’s (2008) argument that visual manifestations (in this case, the user’s experience of the High Line) both represent reality and assist in constructing it.

There were also increasing attempts to link the park’s design to the economic development in the neighborhood – to make the aesthetic of the park the link across *all* discussions around the park. City Planning Commissioner Burden, a longtime High Line supporter, picked up this mantle, arguing that “good design is good economic development, and I know this is true” (Burden, quoted in Satow, 2012).

The High Line also became a shorthand for innovative urban projects, and its design was used as a standard against which other projects were measured, with London River Park architect Gensler being called to task by the British Design Council/Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (DCCABE) for not taking enough “inspiration from the High Line” (Waite 2011), which is “truly a grandstand where you obtain long views up cavernous streets and watch the activity of the city below” (Waite 2011). As other urban projects with varying levels of similarity began to be talked about, they got “High Line” added to the end of their names – Philadelphia’s High Line (Saffron 2009), Chicago’s High Line (Eakin 2012), Mexico City’s High Line (Samuelson 2011), Vancouver’s High Line (Pablo 2009), etc. FHL and the High Line’s design team took this as a real affront, and in the discourse they attempt to differentiate the High Line’s aesthetic, but not necessarily its function, from these other projects. In a talk given in 2011, after Section Two opened, the architectural firm DS+R (diller scofidio + renfro) stressed that calling these other projects “High Line” does not make them so – or ensure they can capture the same effect of the High Line. DS+R’s Renfro argued that,

"everybody thinks that they can put a Bilbao up, y'know, a copy. I don't see how these cities could think that just having an elevated train line makes for a success — the kind of success we've seen with the High Line." (Diller, Scofidio, Renfro, 2011).

Robert Hammond expressed his opinion that “in Chicago and Philadelphia they use “High Line” to describe the function of the park – it’s elevated and was a rail line, but *not* the aesthetic, since that has to be driven by the local community needs. Not every community wants their park to look like the High Line.” (2011 Hammond Interview). This argument is not entirely believable. Particularly in terms of design renderings and showing what the proposed parks could be, other cities, especially Philadelphia, are using the phrase High Line *specifically* to conjure up images of that park and use it to generate support for their own projects. This point is discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.2g 2009-onward, post-opening – Creating-Development/Cost

As mentioned in an earlier section, the Friends of the High Line were relentlessly focused on raising money for construction. They did not create a fund dedicated to maintenance and operations before opening Section One and, as a result, have been forced to remain in fundraising mode to keep the Park going. The development discourse around the park has been full of sour notes post-opening, due to FHL’s response to this funding shortfall and what are seen as high project construction and operating costs.

First, there was an attempt to create a business improvement district – designed to have the community close the gap in the park’s operating costs with a tax on those living near the High Line, exclusively (Kovaleski 2009). That proposal made the adjacent businesses furious and ultimately failed, politically. The FHL also tried to persuade the buildings abutting the High Line to pay annual fees. Indeed, the Standard Hotel does embed a High Line fee in its room charges, but some of the other buildings balked. The residential building *Caledonia*, for example, was asked to pay \$800,000 annually for use of a door as an easement:

The building always knew it would have to pay a fee to the Parks Department for this access point: the building built and provided a bathroom and elevator that the City has an easement to access. But asking for \$ 800,000 a year for the use of a door is excessive and out of touch with reality [so the door is never opened]. (Steinberg 2012).

Like the attempt to push through the improvement district and associated fees, these moves by FHL were seen as somewhat grasping and panicked. While many surrounding building owners are happy to have the traffic and associated revenues related to 3.5-3.7 million annual visitors, they do *not* want to pay extra for it. This is a classic example of free rider problems as related to public goods.

This theme has some crossover into the theme of the neighborhood, but it is located in the development/cost section because of conflict in the discourse about who should bear the brunt of development around the High Line – in effect, how will the park operate. The latest development/cost related conflict between the community and the High Line relates to the original rezoning done to enable the High Line’s development. As mentioned earlier, back in 2005, the City Planning Commission passed zoning changes that allowed developers with air rights under the High Line to sell them to developers at the ends of the Park. This was designed to maximize the High Line’s light and air and enable development of adjacent buildings. In 2011-2012, developer Jamestown Properties wanted the city to give them that same rezoning so they could build both hotel and commercial space above the already-existing Chelsea Market, adjacent to the High Line – even though Chelsea Market’s location made it **ineligible** for the zoning and increasing the building’s height would affect the High Line’s air and light.

Despite an agreement with Jamestown Properties to donate as much as \$19 million for the High Line’s maintenance fund, Chelsea Market’s possible vertical expansion remained an ongoing subject of contentious debate by the public and among the members of Community

Board 4 (C.B. 4) ¹⁷. On May 31, 2012, capping more than a year of discussion on the matter, the full board of C.B. 4 reached a “No, Unless” verdict that would only support the Jamestown project if certain design changes were made, and certain community “gets” (such as funding for affordable housing) were added to the current proposal (Humm, 2012). Manhattan Borough President Stringer also stated his opposition to the Jamestown project, arguing, like many other members of the community, that the High Line open space Jamestown would privatize and cash in on was enriched with tax dollars as part of a public process intended to create a park (Chen 2012).

After listening to the objections of residents and the Community Board (Chelsea Now, 2012, Holowka, 2012), the City Planning Commission modified Jamestown’s proposal. Part of the proposed addition to Chelsea Market will now be set back from the High Line, providing more air and light over the elevated park (Budin 2012, Chaban 2012). In addition, to address C.B. 4’s stated concerns about affordable housing, roughly one-third of the \$19 million Jamestown had promised to the High Line will go instead into an affordable housing fund, which can be spent on projects in the neighborhood (Budin 2012, Chaban 2012).

With the proposal’s modified passage over strong community opposition, skeptics and opponents argue that something other than responsible urban planning is behind the city’s certification of Jamestown’s proposal; with the exception of the committee chair, every City Council member left the Chelsea Market October 2012 public hearing as soon as the public testimony against the proposal began (Budin 2012). The perception is that the FHL is desperate for the millions Jamestown will pay into a High Line maintenance fund. In return, FHL has agreed to support the rezoning that will produce the floor area bonus needed to add onto Chelsea Market (Holowka 2012, Katz 2012, Chelsea Now 2012). According to this perspective, FHL is now reduced to letting an opportunistic Jamestown use both the park and the community just to

¹⁷ Community Boards are local representative bodies. They meet once each month and members address items of concern to the community. Manhattan CB 4 comprises the area between 14th and 59th streets - to the west of Eighth Avenue north of 26th St., and to the west of Sixth Avenue south of 26th St., commonly referred to as the Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen neighborhoods.

keep the High Line in fresh paint (Holowka 2012, Chaban 2012, Finn 2012). This perspective is also consistent with Stoecker's (2004) argument about exchange values dominating community values as related to public amenities.

The overall approach taken by the community is consistent with Gill's 2000 work on the resort community of Whistler, British Columbia, and how that area's development evolved from uncontested growth-machine dominance, to more local contestation, in turn moderated by the introduction of growth-management practices. In the case of Whistler, over time, the contestation led to both social and environmental imperatives being imposed upon the growth machine's economic imperatives. The approach is also consistent with Mitchell's (2000) work on the imagined representations of place. In this case, the FHL finds itself allied with the traditional growth coalition, advancing themes closely linked to their material interests, while the opposition, based in the community, is constructing other arguments around what place and meaning are. As mentioned in Chapter 2, buildings – in this case, Chelsea Market – are subject to “readings by diverse groups in different material circumstances: a source of recreation...; an opportunity for reinvestment, or a threat to neighboring properties.” (Jackson, 1991:226) And this theme in the discourse is also consistent with Jenkins' (1983) argument for a more emergent interpretation of collective interests -- socially constructed and created by social mobilization processes. The Friends of the High Line spent time and effort organizing the adjacent community around the park and the organization is now faced with an organized community on the opposite side, fighting back against further development and wanting to protect the High Line.

4.2h 2009-onward, post-opening -Legitimizing-Neighborhood

This part of the discourse diminished substantially in visibility after the opening of Section One, and focused on two main subthemes. Like the discourse around development, the negative and sour notes in this part of the discourse intensified. This can be seen in the discussions surrounding the economic impact of the High Line in terms of investment in and

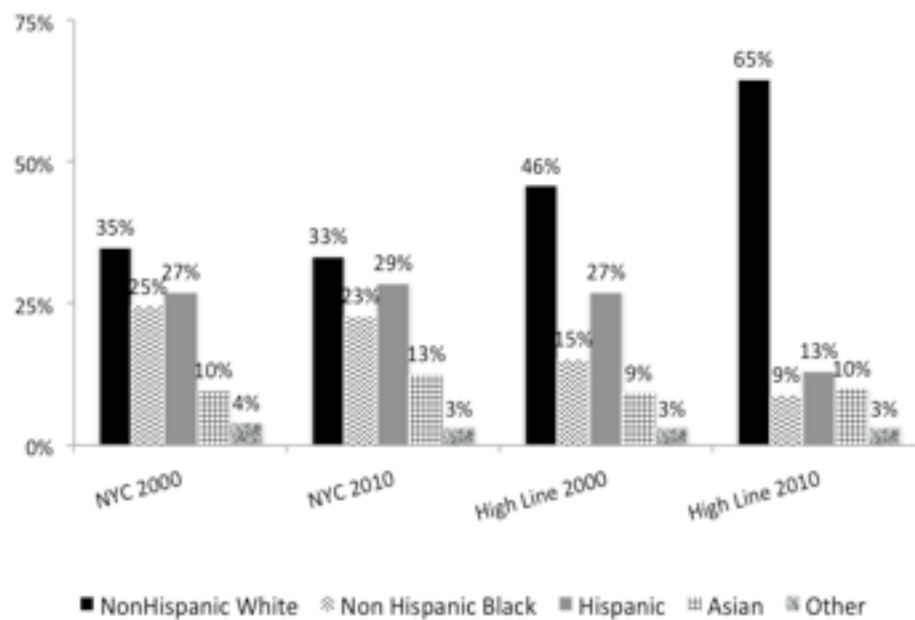
around the High Line, including a focus on construction occurring in the West Chelsea and Meatpacking areas -- new buildings and warehouse conversions, condominiums, hotels, galleries and public spaces designed by big-name architects like Gehry, Nouvel, Meier and Selldorf (Kershaw 2010). In the five years since construction started on the High Line, 29 new projects have been built or are under way in the neighborhood, according to the New York City Department of City Planning. More than 2,500 new residential units, 1,000 hotel rooms and over 500,000 square feet of office and art gallery space have gone up (NYC Department of City Planning, 2012). As noted earlier, Commissioner Amanda Burden linked the High Line's design and overall presence to the area's economic development, and pointed out that between 2009-2012, the High Line has generated \$2 billion in private investment in the area, over \$500 million in increased taxes, and has created 12,000 jobs (Satow 2012).

But on the flip side, there has been more grumbling in the discourse around the High Line about who the \$2 billion benefits, who lives in the fancy new buildings, and who has the new jobs created by the High Line. Some argue that the overall effect of the city's rezoning has created expensive, market-rate housing and has been middling at best in terms of affordable housing (Satow 2012). Stoecker (2004) pointed out the inevitable challenge of commodifying a (supposedly) community amenity like the High Line Park. When the amenity itself is constructed there is an implicit use value, but once it is commodified it becomes subject to the controls of the market; those external relationships needed to maintain its exchange values dominate community relationships.

Some argue that the High Line merely created a boom market for real estate without any real benefits for the local community. "The High Line didn't create any new affordable housing, only condominiums for the rich, and the park itself has no open spaces for kids, but is more something for tourists to walk through," said Miguel Acevedo, president of the tenants' association at the Robert Fulton Houses, an affordable-housing development in the neighborhood (Satow 2012). As in the cases of Chicago and Philadelphia, this theme reflects underlying anxiety about the ways in which the neighborhoods near the park have changed since 2000.

There has been a significant increase in population for the High Line-adjacent census tracts¹⁸, from 28,000 to 42,000 in 10 years, an average annual increase of 4.07%. At the same time, the neighborhood has seen changes in racial composition and increased affluence. Figure 12 shows the changes in demographic composition in the High Line area, as compared to New York City as a whole.

Figure 12: Population in High Line Adjacent Census Tracts and New York City, By Race, 2000 and 2010



Sources: ACS Factfinder 2005-2009, NYC Department of Planning, Census 2000 and 2010

Individuals in the High Line census tracts make more money, on average, than individuals in Manhattan or New York City. Based on 2010 Census data, the median household annual income for these seven census tracts is over \$83,000, compared to nearly \$69,000 for Manhattan, as a whole. This \$14,000 is an income premium of approximately 21%. The income premium has significantly increased since the 2000 Census, when the median household income for the High Line adjacent tracts was slightly over \$54,000, compared to an average for

¹⁸ For purposes of situating the park, I use seven census tracts that are adjacent to the High Line in its current and planned future form. They are census tracts in Manhattan, numbered 83,89,93,97,99,103,111,115,and 117 as of the 2010 census.

Manhattan of \$56,000. Since 2000, the area around the High Line has gone from being slightly less affluent than Manhattan as a whole to significantly more affluent than Manhattan as a whole.

The areas adjacent to the High Line have experienced average annual growth of 4.3%, compared to an average annual growth rate for Manhattan of 2% over the same time period. While overall, the High Line adjacent tracts are more affluent than Manhattan on average, there is still a wide distribution of household income within the High Line adjacent tracts. There still are areas where income is on the lower end of the income distribution, including the two low-income housing projects— and advocacy groups representing these areas are those complaining about being left behind by the High-Line related development. Changes in the neighborhood have been reflected in the removal of longtime businesses in and around the High Line (Del Signore 2011), and increasing complaints by newer residents of luxury buildings about the area's industrial businesses and services (Del Signore 2011, Katz 2012). But at a 2011 CUNY panel discussion, Hammond took pains to say that the High Line is not simply for the wealthy:

most people think of Chelsea as just a very wealthy neighborhood. But, approximately, about 90 percent of the kids in the neighborhood are on a lunch program. You have two large, low income housing projects there. ... So it's an interesting gentrification issue, where you're not pushing people out that were right next to the High Line. But it's going to be a neighborhood of very wealthy and very poor. That's why a lot of our programs focus on the people in the neighborhood or actually all of our programs we try to focus on locals. – Hammond, 2011

Despite Hammond's point, after analyzing the post-opening discourse in this category, the FHL has only been moderately successful in ensuring that longtime members of the community feel like the High Line also serves them. In addition, the neighborhood is struggling to accommodate the influx of residents drawn by the High Line and the arts gallery district. Interestingly, both older and newer community residents have complained vigorously about the 2011-2012 Jamestown Properties deal. However, at the time of this writing, it appears that deal will go through, albeit in a modified form. At this point, it may not matter to FHL that the community does not feel like this park is for them. There is not much the community can do to

stop development around the High Line.

4.3 Summary and Conclusions

The post-opening discourse differed from the pre-opening discourse, both in terms of institutional work (ECL) and in terms of physical artifact sense-making dimensions (IAS). The earlier parts of this chapter focused on the consistency of message and dominant theme within each type of work. The completeness of the dominant themes in each dimension, as well as the consistency of message within each type, reflects the ability of the advocacy group to develop coalitions of support behind the project. In both cases, the post-opening discourse reflected a nearly even split among the three dimensions, in contrast to pre-opening discourse that focused on *Creating* and *Legitimizing* institutional dimensions and *Instrumentality* and *Symbolism* artifact dimensions. Aesthetics and Design become much more important in the post-opening discourse. The post opening balance may reflect less urgency in the *Creating* dimension, since the project is at least partially open. The balance may also reflect less urgency to focus on the Neighborhood theme in the *Legitimizing* dimension, because the project can only be where it is, which is in the Chelsea/Meatpacking neighborhood. The post-opening balance, however, glosses over the discord in certain parts of the discourse, particularly in the case of the Neighborhood theme – a trend that intensified after 2011, with the opening of the second part of the High Line. Table 4.3 summarizes the post-opening discourse in terms of the themes within dimensions, along with the overall tone for each theme and consistency with which theme is handled.

Table 4.3: Summary of Themes within Institutional Dimensions in the High Line discourse, post-opening

Dimension of Institutional Work	Theme	Tone of theme in discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Envisioning	Aesthetic/ Design	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Legitimizing	Art and Artists	Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	City	Positive	Yes
Creating	Development/ Cost	Neutral or slightly negative in discussion of cost vs, investment	Mostly
Legitimizing	Green	Neutral	Yes
Creating	FHL/Coalition	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Envisioning	History	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Subtheme- changes/ gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of neighborhood revitalization- positive	Negative tone of gentrification subtheme strongly consistent, and dominates the more fragmented revitalization theme
Legitimizing	Similar/Other Projects	Positive or Neutral	Yes

Figures 4.13 and 4.14 show the post-opening discourse and the split among institutional dimensions and types of discourse – positive, neutral, or negative. While most of the discourse is still positive in tone, there has been an increase in the amount of negative discourse since the High Line opened. When comparing Figure 7 (pre-opening discourse) to Figure 13, the changes in discourse are striking. Post-opening, the discourse generally appears more balanced among the three dimensions of institutional work than the pre-opening discourse did. However nearly 20% of the discourse since 2009 is negative in tone, as compared to approximately 10% of the discourse pre-opening. The largest proportion of the negative discourse is located in the *Legitimizing* dimension – not surprising given the tensions between the FHL and the neighborhood.

Figure 4.13 shows the distribution of institutional work, post-opening. The three negative themes are shown at the top, as they were in Figure 4.7. The Envisioning-Negative theme is shown as a gray hash, the Creating-Negative theme is shown in solid white, and the Legitimizing-

Negative theme is shown in solid black. As shown in Figure 4.13, these three themes together account for approximately 20% of the discourse around the High Line, which is substantially increased from the 10% of pre-opening discourse that was negative in tone.

Figure 4.13: Distribution of Institutional Work in the Discourse, Post-Opening of High Line Park

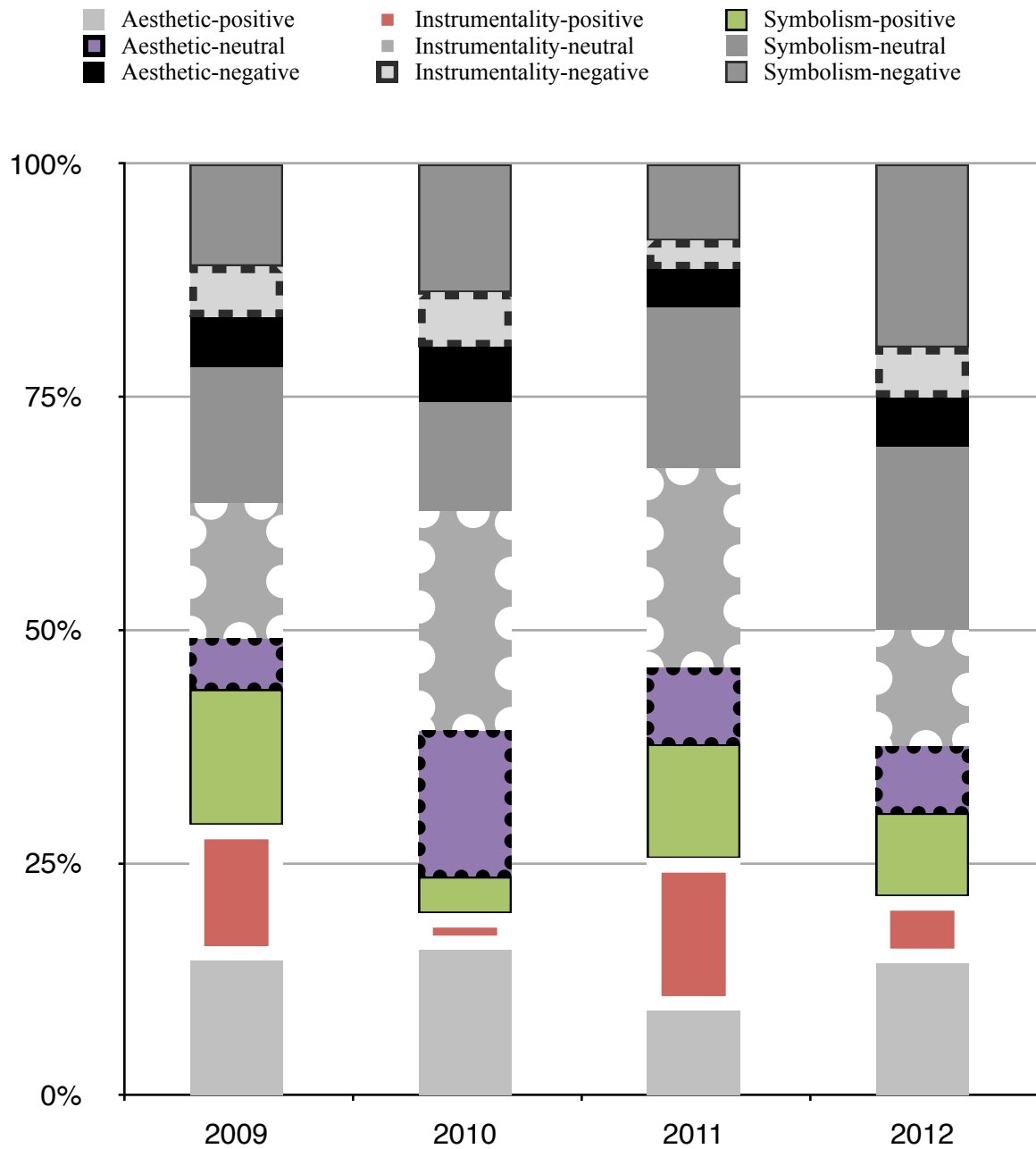


Table 4.4 summarizes the split among the artifact dimensions in the post-opening discourse, along with the tone and consistency. The overall tone in the themes of the discourse is positive and consistent, again with the exceptions of the focus on cost and concerns about gentrification.

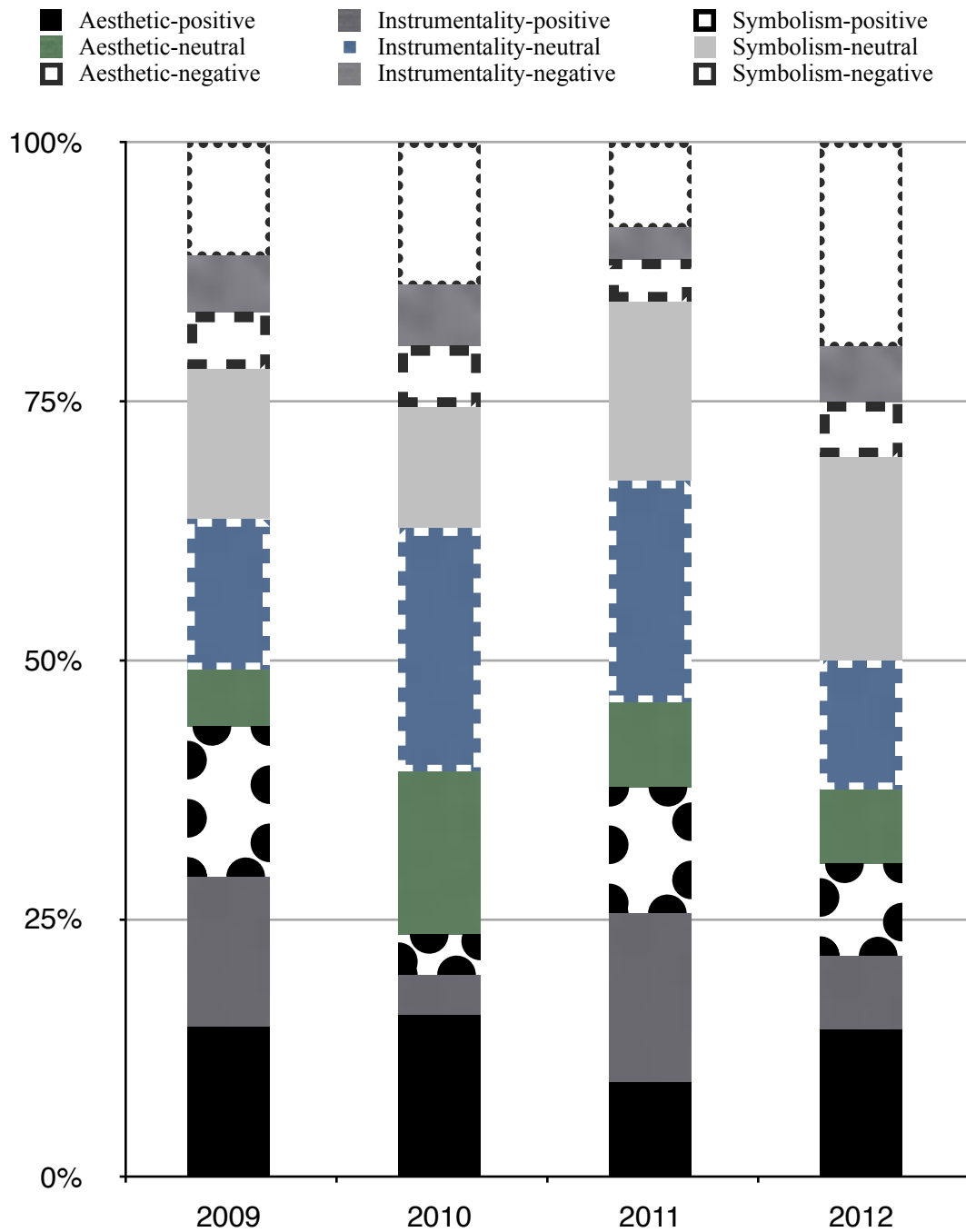
Table 4.4: Summary of Themes within Artifact Dimensions in the High Line discourse, post-opening

Rafaeli and Vilnai Yavetz dimension of physical artifact	Theme	Tone of theme in Discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Aesthetic	Aesthetic/ Design	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	Art and Artists	Positive	Yes
Symbolic	City	Positive	Yes
Instrumentality	Development/ Cost	Mostly positive or neutral. Some negative in discussion of cost vs. investment	Mostly
Aesthetic	Green	Neutral	Yes
Instrumentality	FHL/Coalition	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	History	Positive or Neutral	Yes
Symbolic	Neighborhood	Subtheme- changes/ gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of neighborhood revitalization-neutral or positive	Increased focus on negative changes linked to development of the High Line
Symbolic	Similar Projects	Positive or Neutral	Yes

Figure 4.14 highlights the split in the discourse among the dimensions of physical artifact sense-making; compared to the pre-opening period, the most dramatic change in the discourse has been the shift in tone for *Instrumentality* – from the positive emphasis on opening the High Line to the negative emphasis on finding the money to maintain it. A second tonal shift involves the *Symbolic* dimension of the neighborhood; pre-opening there was a lot of talk about how the High Line would be a reflection of the neighborhood’s industrial past, while post-opening the discourse has been more defensive on the part of the FHL, pointing out the High Line’s benefits, while the community did not seem to be buying into the benefits claimed. The negative themes are shown at the top of Figure 4.14, with Aesthetics-Negative shown as a series of black wavy lines,

Instrumentality-Negative shown as black dots on a white background, and Symbolism-Negative shown as solid black. By 2012 the negative themes in the discourse account for 30% of the discourse around the project.

Figure 4.14: Distribution of Artifact Dimensions, Post-Opening of High Line Park



This project is dynamic and long-lived, and maintaining complete and consistent themes over time is not a given. This chapter has argued that FHL can be considered successful because from 2000 to 2012, FHL and its supporters consistently used several key themes in discussions about the High Line Park to build a deep and broad coalition of support from businesses bordering the Park, city government agencies, and other interested organizational actors. FHL used a combination of discursive techniques and media including images, tours, in person participation in municipal meetings (Community Board, City Council, and others), presentations, and print and live interviews. In contrast, opposing voices were unsuccessful in their attempts to frame the discourse. Their efforts to develop themes were inconsistent, the types of media used in support of their arguments was much narrower, and was generally based on print interviews or in-person participation at Community Board and City Planning meetings.

The strongest themes were about how the park would look, how FHL would ensure it got constructed, and linking the park itself to the symbolic meaning of the local neighborhood. Given the initial support from the artistic and preservation communities, and the role *Envisioning* plays in a venture's viability, it is not that surprising that there was such emphasis on what the park would look like instead of a focus on the practical aspects of the park's development. The focus on the FHL as a capable organization lent the venture an air of imminence and of anticipation – could these two guys actually pull it off? The cofounders, for their part, enjoyed the curiosity and admiration they inspired as it became clear the High Line would actually open. They were politically and media savvy and knew how to cultivate and maximize exposure and support.

Post-opening there was a renewed positive emphasis on the existing High Line Park's aesthetic, an emphasis, though very mixed in tone, on the development of the rest of the High Line and development occurring around the park, and somewhat negative messages about the relationship between the High Line and the surrounding neighborhoods. This post-opening trend, a mix of overwhelmingly positive discourse about the aesthetic and design of the Park with neutral or even negative discourse about the resulting development and impact on the neighborhood, matters for how we see the venture's viability.

And, because the development trajectory of the High Line focused on opening the Park at the expense of ongoing operations, the High Line conservancy is now in a constant fundraising position. That creates all sorts of tensions between the FHL and the neighborhood as the FHL tries to keep the park going, and also explains the neighborhood's opposition to the Jamestown deal – will the High Line conservancy 'sell out' the park's air and light to make money to keep the park going? Can the neighborhood stop them? The Jamestown deal might not have ever happened if the High Line were fully funded, because the FHL and the community might be on the same side of the argument. However, because of the ongoing pressure to fund the High Line, development battles will continue to play out as the area around the High Line becomes ever more in demand.

To a certain extent, the success or failure of any public space depends on its ability to realize the imagination of its users. Neither the pre-project hype nor the post hoc explanations or rationalizations have any likelihood of being provable. But the development of a consensus around these conclusions is interesting in and of itself. Observers can take issue with some aspects of the park's design, but what is fascinating about the High Line, what makes its design concept simultaneously breathtaking and, maybe even a little cringe-inducing, is the kind of imagination it evokes. Hammond and David's key insight was to incorporate decades of neglect into the design fabric of the park, to make it something celebrating New York's forgotten industrial past (Bourne, 2012). In *Designing the High Line*, Robert Hammond described the sense of the passing of time, (Hammond, 2008), arguing that an observer could see what the High Line had been built for, and see how its moment was now gone. In a sense, the High Line embraces its formerly blighted, decayed state of industrial ruin. Everywhere you look you see that the neighborhood displays everything from the 'old' Chelsea of parking lots and run-down brick facades to the new, lovingly restored cracked plaster and multi-million-dollar gardens made to look like neglected weed beds (thehighline.org, Bourne 2012).

But the High Line, whatever else people say about it, is a sincere and creative response to a genuine social phenomenon. It takes an undeveloped, emotional yearning shared by a large and

disparate group of people and makes it visible and tangible in three dimensions. It is also a more modest kind of public-private coalition, standing in stark contrast to “the model used in the ‘90s, and the early part of the 20th century, where when cities thought about large public/private partnerships, they invariably thought about sports stadiums” (Gladwell 2011).

What you make of it is largely determined by what you think of its underlying subject, which, in this case, is gentrification. If you are part of the community sidelined or pushed out by the new wealth gentrification inevitably brings, then no doubt what some see as the High Line’s overly precious attention to symbols of industrial decay and ruin — all those landscaped plants — may seem calculated to annoy you. If, on the other hand, you are part of a gentrifying wave, as so much of young New York now is, then you and your compatriots will revel in the distressed steel girders and exposed brick walls. Or, if you are an outside observer, you may think, as I do, that the High Line is, in fact, a really nice place to spend a sunny afternoon in New York.

CHAPTER 5, FRIENDS OF THE BLOOMINGDALE TRAIL: PUTTING THE COALITION TOGETHER

The Bloomingdale Trail, when complete, will be the longest elevated trail in the country, a nearly 3-mile long (12 acre) linear urban park. It rises 15 feet above street level and is slightly more than 30 feet wide for most of its length. (www.mvvainc.com). The Trail runs through four different Chicago wards; the first, the 26th, the 32nd, and the 35th (www.bloomingdaletrail.org). The First Ward contains parts of Wicker Park and Humboldt Park and is primarily Hispanic. The 26th Ward also runs through Humboldt Park and is also primarily Hispanic. The 32nd Ward contains the Trail-adjacent neighborhoods of Bucktown and Wicker Park, and is generally whiter and more affluent than the other wards. The 35th Ward contains parts of Logan Square and Humboldt Park and is more socioeconomically and demographically mixed than the other wards. Figure 5.1 shows the Bloomingdale Trail relative to the Greater Chicago area.

Figure 5.1: Bloomingdale Trail



The existing right-of-way cuts across a patchwork of urban land uses including several dense residential communities, a light manufacturing district, major commercial streets, a rapid transit line, an eight-lane interstate highway, and a river. The urban park/bike trail conversion is in process, and will be sandwiched into a dense urban environment; the Trail's unique features also pose many unique development problems. The communities through which the trail travels are home to almost a quarter-million residents. The right of way belongs to The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Based on a 1911 agreement with the City of Chicago, if the Railroad decided to abandon the right-of-way, it had to be returned to the City in the condition in which it was received, a help in clarifying ownership and control issues (Helphand 2011 Interview).

The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (FBT) have been working on this project for ten years, as of this writing. They have raised money from private donors and the federal government to begin the first phase of construction, which involves opening the entire Trail at a low level of finish. With the dedicated help of the Trust for Public Land (TPL), the FBT are in the process of raising private money for the second phase of construction. They have had to build a coalition of supporters -- combining socially distinct but spatially-contiguous communities, government agencies, private donors, non-profits, other interested local organizational actors, etc. Their neighborhood support comes primarily from the communities of Logan Square, Bucktown, and Wicker Park. There has been little involvement by Humboldt Park community members -- either actively supporting it or organizing against it -- leaving the impression that the community is neutral on the issue or apathetic.

Any project has multiple pieces that contribute to how and why it gets made. Many people study economics-based arguments, as the impetus or driving force behind any development project, and will argue that logic in explaining a project's development and success. There are other factors as well that contribute to any project's ultimate success -- present to some degree in all cases, but not well studied or understood. These other factors -- how a coalition of public and private actors gets created and sustained, how public campaigns are organized, etc. -- plausibly affect project outcomes, and this chapter systematically evaluates and describes how the 501c(3)

group known as the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail used discourse and presentation to make the case for the Bloomingdale Trail to be repurposed as an elevated linear park. This chapter addresses several questions:

- How did FBT and their supporters make the case for the Trail to be created?
- How did the officers of the FBT, starting as a group of interested private citizens, convince other players, especially government entities and private donors, that they could actually make the project a reality, given the long development timeline and high cost?
- What was most important in this process -- what the Trail would look like, how it would work, or what it could mean for the neighborhood (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004)?
- How did the FBT resolve competing logics – in this case, the logic of green space vs. the logic of economic interest?
- How effective was FBT in developing a shared social identity around this potential open space?
- Did their messaging change after the High Line's first section opened in 2009?

The FBT and its supporters can be considered successful because they were able to develop and support several key themes around the Trail and their efforts to develop the Trail, over time and across audiences. First the FBT focused on emphasizing how the Trail would work – literally how users would access the parks and Trail and what they would do once on the Trail. The FBT also developed and maintained themes around how the Trail would be operated once open, and how the Trail would fit in with the disparate neighborhoods it connected. Any project of this scope requires some public funding; in this case, a broader coalition developed around the Trail, including individuals without a clear economic incentive to support the project. How the project is presented over time -- and to whom -- is at least partially determinative of its progress. FBT was able to develop strong themes in each of the three dimensions of institutional work – Envisioning, Creating, and Legitimizing -- needed to make the Trail a reality. In addition, the FBT was particularly strong in the Instrumentality and Symbolism dimensions of artifact sensemaking outlined by Rafaeli and Vilnai– Yavetz (2004).

The dynamic nature and lengthy timeline of urban development projects means that consistent management of discourse around these projects cannot be taken as a given. However, the presence of key themes and the consistency with which they are treated can be seen as a

measure of FBT's ability to resolve the competing logics they are drawing upon and frame their solution – the Trail -- as the correct one for the identified problem.

5.1 Brief History of Civic Action

The Bloomingdale Trail has been under consideration as a development project since 1997, when the Canadian Pacific announced its eventual phase-out of the Bloomingdale Line, an elevated railroad right-of-way on Chicago's northwest side comprised of reinforced concrete retaining walls, soil, and 37 bridges where it crosses other roads. As part of the City of Chicago's Open Space plan (City of Chicago et al, 2004, Stephen 2012), the City identified potential pockets of green space that could be developed. In 2002, the City of Chicago and The Chicago Park District, an independent local governmental entity, were able to refocus efforts to follow up on the Citywide open space plan started five years earlier, and began developing the Logan Square Open Space Plan.

The plan was created through the close collaboration of community residents, businesses, the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD), the Chicago Park District (CPD) and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) (Logan Square Open Space Plan Task Force, 2004). The Plan listed eleven locations in the Logan Square area that if, developed, would address the current deficiency in Logan Square's open park space acreage. That list included plans to convert the nearly three-mile long Bloomingdale Line into an elevated, multi-use, linear park and trail (Logan Square Open Space Plan Task Force, 2004), a project currently expected to cost \$81 million.

The City of Chicago, DPD, CDOT, and CPD held 12 community meetings to consider the project as part of the city's Logan Square Open Space Plan (Logan Square Open Space Plan Task Force, 2004). In total, 450 community members attended those 12 meetings, and at a broad level, all 450 community members were considered part of the Logan Square Open Space Plan Task Force. The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (FBT) was initially a group of Logan Square-based

bike enthusiasts that began discussing the Trail and the prospect of developing it, as a result of attending the community meetings. In the wake of the Open Space Plan meetings, this group realized they needed to organize formally, not only to show support for trail development on the embankment, but also to back up this support with community-based planning.

In October, 2002, six members of the task force formed the formal entity now known as The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (FBT) as part of their work on the Open Space Plan (Stephen, 2012). Ben Helphand, the current President of FBT, was among them. These six individuals had backgrounds ranging from community organizing to operating small restaurants to community garden preservation (www.bloomingdaletrail.org). This group of six soon became a group of 20, and FBT was actively involved in the development of the Logan Square Open Space Plan, enthusiastically advocating for the conversion of the Bloomingdale Trail embankment into an elevated, multi-use, linear park and trail.

The initial group of twenty people has swelled to almost 1,000 through outreach (fliers in English and Spanish, community meetings in every neighborhood, active recruitment, social media, etc.) Through organizing community events FBT has strived to be the community's introduction to and voice for the vision of the Trail. As Ben Helphand, FBT's president comments,

our initial goals were, you know, "Preserve the right-of-way." What we found pretty quickly is pretty much everybody liked this idea, and nobody was actively against it. We visited all the community groups, made presentations, got official endorsements from all the local elected officials. So, very quickly [a] need to circle the wagons was irrelevant. And what we turned into is really more of a champion of this, keeping the wheels greased, keeping people excited about it, holding events, keeping the idea in the forefront of people's minds and imagination. And that has been our main focus over the years. (Helphand, WBEZ interview, 2009).

FBT has stepped into a role as the voice of the community and focused on building a coalition of partners to support Trail development. The leadership at FBT reached out to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) for help in the initial stages of advocacy, including asking RTC to help spread the word about the Bloomingdale Trail to its membership and encourage them

to attend public meetings (Oberg interview 2011, Helphand interview 2011). FBT has focused on this role, even as the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national land conservation organization¹⁹, has taken a public leadership role in spearheading private fundraising and overall project development for the Trail. TPL has worked on the Bloomingdale Trail project since 2006, when the City of Chicago and the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail asked for assistance with land acquisition, community participation, and design competitions.²⁰

TPL and FBT created the Bloomingdale Trail Collaborative as a framework for public and private sector partnerships to do the project. The Collaborative has engaged nearly 25 organizations and agency departments in this project. The most important agencies, and those most heavily involved, are CDOT, responsible for applying for Federal funding, the Chicago Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning (CZLUP), responsible for permitting and land acquisition for access parks, and the Park District (CPD), with ultimate operational and maintenance responsibility²¹.

In 2007, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning designated CDOT for federal transportation funding for design and engineering work. In November 2008, the City of Chicago released a request for proposals to address the engineering analyses required in the preliminary design of the trail (TPL, Winter 2008-2009). In June 2010, CPD's Board of Commissioners approved a challenge grant of up to \$450,000 to TPL, to coordinate the Bloomingdale Trail Civic Engagement and Stewardship Project. Under the terms of the challenge grant, The Trust for

¹⁹ The Trust for Public Land is the nation's leader in creating parks and conserving land for people-from the inner city to the wilderness. They are a national organization that is focused on urban public spaces in the form of city parks and playgrounds, urban gardens and other green projects in and around cities, large and small.

²⁰ The Trust for Public Land, in its capacity as owner's representative for the Chicago Park District, is working with the Chicago Park District and two City departments: the Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Economic Development. Once the Trail is complete, the Chicago Park District will assume ownership of the Trail. (tpl.org).

²¹ In a unique arrangement with the city of Chicago, the TPL is actually corralling all the local non-profits, city agencies, donors, and railroad companies involved. The organization, which usually functions simply as a land trust, is also becoming the "agent" that manages the park over the long-term.

Public Land will expand participation to additional community and civic organizations that have already expressed an interest in playing a role in the Bloomingdale Trail's development.

Most of the project's \$46M Phase One budget is being covered by \$37 million in federal anti-congestion and air-quality funding federal funds (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2011), and part of TPL's challenge grant involved a commitment to raise the remaining 20% of needed funds. But even as the project was moving forward and design for Phase One had been awarded, there was not a clear sense of when the Trail would actually open (Vance 2009), and the Trail's development seemed to be moving very slowly. This limbo ended abruptly when Mayor Rahm Emanuel was elected in 2011, and announced that the Trail would open by the end of his first term (2011 Helphand Interview, 2011 White Interview).

In March, 2012, TPL announced that it had met its \$9 million first phase fundraising goal, by securing donations from three local, Illinois-based entities -- \$5 million from Exelon Corporation, \$1 million each from Boeing and CNA, with the Chicago Park District providing the remaining \$2 million in funding (Kamin, 2012, Vance, 2012). In that same month, the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail organized a community meeting where the design team could present preliminary renderings of the Trail. "The whole structure was built to keep people out," said Chicago architect Carol Ross Barney, who led one of the three design firms that worked on Phase 1 of the project.²² "Our work has been [how] to get people in and up there" ("Bloomingdale Trail Public Meeting 2012-0308," 2012).

Under a plan introduced May 16, 2012 to the City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago's transportation department will buy the Bloomingdale Trail from the Canadian Pacific Railway for \$1 plus "\$105,000 in administrative fees associated with the vacation of the railroad right-of-way" (Kamin, 2012). The first phase, which involves opening the entire park/Trail at a minimal finish level, is due to open in 2014, by the end of Mayor Emanuel's first term.

²² With the first phase of the Trail scheduled to open in 2014, a new team will take over the final design for the Park District, with only MVVA continuing on.

5.2 Discourse Themes as Mechanism for Resolving Competing Logics

My research questions focus on whether and how the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail are able to influence or manage the discourse around their proposed new park; use of discourse tropes is an under-studied operational mechanism that can help these entrepreneurial organizations resolve competing institutional logics and drive change (Green, 2004). Understanding how discourse works in this context matters because the extent to which entrepreneurs resolve competing logics has an effect on their venture's viability (Battilana and Dorado, 2010, Tracey, Phillips, and Jarvis, 2011).

A project development database was developed comprising field notes, interviews, presentations, videos, and written articles. The data was then grouped into first-order themes; those themes were used while looking for areas of agreement and disagreement across time, actor, target audience and data source. This was essentially an inductive process, drawing on the development database and focusing on the presentation of the Bloomingdale Trail by the FBT and others. The data was refined into a group of subthemes according to the different forms of institutional work that the entrepreneurs performed -- problem framing and counterfactual thinking, building the organizational template, and connecting with a macro-level discourse (Tracey et al, 2011: 64). In each of the cases data was evaluated for themes, consistency or difference in how these themes were treated over time, tone (positive, negative, or neutral), and particular unusual patterns in the data. The process used to assign, or code images, words, and phrases to themes is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

When looking at the discourse around the Trail, its aesthetics, its development path, its relation to the neighborhood, a set of consistent themes emerges. The way these themes are discussed is also complete and consistent over time, with the only slight divergence being initial conversations and discussions around access to the Trail, itself, and a disagreement over how much security the immediate neighbors will have once the Trail opens. In each of the three kinds of institutional work in the ECL framework, one theme dominated. Access/Usability dominated

the *Envisioning* dimension. The Development process dominated the *Creating* dimension. The theme of Neighborhood dominated the *Legitimizing* dimension. These three main themes together accounted for 73% of the coded discourse.

Notably, when using Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (2004) IAS dimensions of artifact sense-making, the dominant themes were in the Instrumentality and Symbolic dimensions due to the twin emphases on accessing the park and the impact on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Instrumentality describes whether the artifact serves a functional purpose. The *Symbolic* dimension describes what the artifact represents – and to whom. *Aesthetics*, or how the artifact looks, was far less important in the discourse of this project. The following section explores the dominant theme in each dimension. Note that there is more than one theme in each dimension.

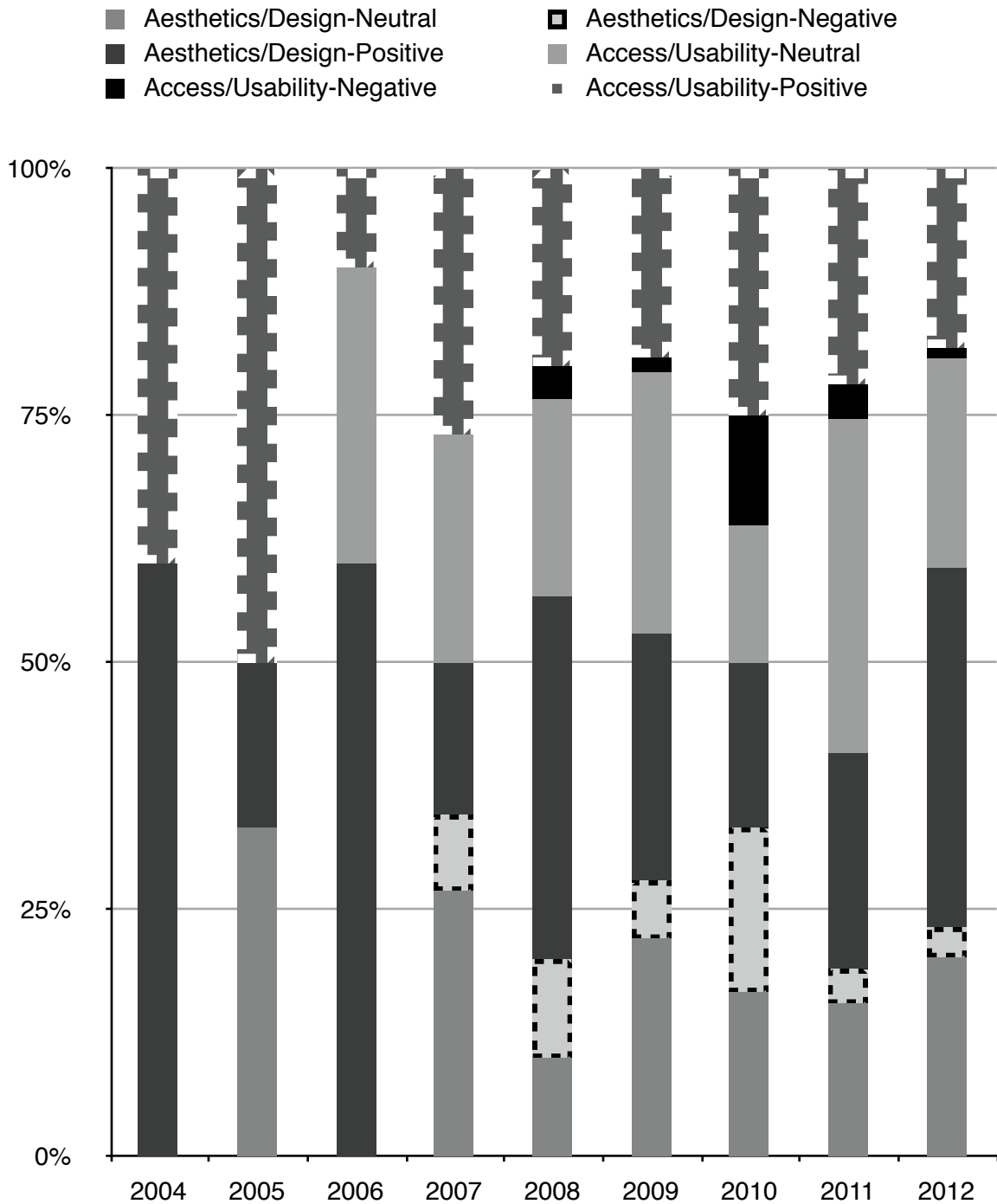
5.2a Envisioning Work

The dominant theme within the *Envisioning* dimension was Access/Usability, with 27% of the overall discourse. Most of the discourse, for both Access and Aesthetics, was positive or neutral, a trend that held over time. The themes in this dimension cut across Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz's artifact sensemaking dimensions of Aesthetics and Instrumentality. Figure 5.2 shows a distribution of the discourse among themes and tone between 2004 and 2012. The Access/Usability theme dominates and most of the discourse around that theme is positive or neutral.

Note that in 2010 there is a relatively large portion of the discourse that is Access/Usability-negative. This reflected concerns of “residents whose houses abut the line; they complained that trespassing on the tracks had soared since the city and advocacy groups began publicizing the trail conversion concept. This illegal traffic included daytime use by bicyclists, joggers, and dog walkers, but the line was also attracting squatters and vandals at night. ... [Aldermen], Canadian Pacific [Railroad], the 14th District police, CDOT, and trail advocacy groups...showed up for a public meeting [in July 2010]with about 60 residents who demanded

that the line be secured. Shortly afterward the city fenced off vacant lots by the line at Kimball and at Milwaukee and Leavitt.” (Greenfield, 2010).

Figure 5.2: Distribution of themes, Envisioning dimension, 2004-2012



5.2.a1 – *Envisioning Dimension, Access/Usability:*

Space is a social object in its own right (Castells 1983), a complex social construction -- based on values and the social production of meanings -- that affects spatial practices and perceptions (Lefebvre 1991). In the discourse around how to *Envision* the Trail is the "struggle... to assess [and institutionalize] a cultural meaning from a spatial form" (Castells 1983:14). FBT focused on how to access the space in question as part of their efforts to develop a shared vision and cultural meaning for the Trail. The intersection of access and usability issues has come about because if the Trail is only for pedestrian use (as with the High Line in New York) that determines the kind of access points needed to get up to the Trail. If the Trail is designed to incorporate bicycles, that use requires a different kind of access, one based more on ramps, and thus requiring more complex kinds of development efforts to link the Trail and the ground. In addition, the entire Trail is anticipated to open at all at once²³, unlike either the High Line Park in New York or the Reading Viaduct in Philadelphia. This operational plan also affects both access and usability (Leopold 2011 Interview, Bornstein 2011 Interview, White 2011 Interview). For example, opening the entire Trail at once means all eight access points will be open (for ADA compliance reasons) when the park opens (bloomingdaletrail.org), as opposed to the High Line Park, which had initial access points designated for each section as it opened.

The graphic shown in Figure 5.3 is a part of the group's public presentations, illustrating how the Bloomingdale Trail interacts with its surrounding. This image, showing how the Trail should interact with the parks below, is very much in line with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) work on how visual images can carry normative ideas behind a veil of seemingly objective representation.

Beth White, the director of TPL's Chicago office, and co-project manager for the overall project, puts it this way:

²³ The initial phase is referred to as "Bloomingdale Basic" and the refinements and enhancements are referred to as "Bloomingdale Enhanced" (Bloomingdale Public Meeting 3-8-12).

As shown at a high level in Figure 5.2, I found some variation in the discourse regarding how access was discussed, both by speaker and over time, although there was relatively quick convergence (within 2 years) to a common theme and way of addressing park access. In terms of usability, there was even less variation by time or type of speaker, and more clarity around the concept. Although development of the Bloomingdale Trail has moved in fits and starts since 1997, articles about it did not begin to appear consistently until 2004, after the Logan Square Open Space Plan was released. Beginning at that time, and for several subsequent years, the focus of articles and of the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail was about encouraging users to get up onto the Trail, illegally, and look around. The idea was that being up on the Trail, experiencing it first-hand, would “sell” you on it. This initial focus on access also glossed over the illicit or illegal nature of *how* to access the Trail, itself.

Beginning in 2005, in addition to articles, there began to be blog posts about the Trail and its potential, including detailed descriptions of how to get up onto the Trail (illegally) to check it out. Part of this was in response to the FBT’s tagline....”LOOK UP....IT’S THE BLOOMINGDALE TRAIL!!!” Bloggers began to post descriptions of their treks on the Trail, including how to access it. The following are some examples:

<http://www.chicago.metblogs.com/>Serena and I hiked a chunk of the BT this Saturday. It was pretty awesome. The best ‘on ramp’ we found was just south of the Logan Square YMCA. And we hopped off in Wicker Park right at Damen. Highlights include an intravenous drug user and some crack aficionados, a 20 foot ‘bum nest’ made of about 3000 pieces of clothing, some pieces of train junk, quite a few dirty soggy stuffed animals which gives the place a nice creepy ambiance, a few abandoned train cars, and thousands and thousands of broken bottles. (Chi, 2005) www.chicago.metblogs.com

<http://www.yelp.com/>The Bloomingdale trail's an abandoned, elevated train track. There are several overpass/bridges where a person on foot can gain access to it with some climbing. However, I'm pretty sure the property is still owned by one of the rail/train lines, so you'll be trespassing. Googling it I find the "friends of the Bloomingdale trail" organization who seems to be leading that effort. For now, it's an overgrown elevated back alley that provides a unique opportunity to explore urban wilderness. Check it out before it and all the homeless dudes and drug addicts who seem to live up on it are gone and it's overrun by \$3k yuppie strollers! www.yelp.com 10/6/2006 Review from Mark S. (Chicago, IL) 108 friends, 465 reviews

Even in the beginning stages of the project it was clear that the Trail would have to work in conjunction with the ground-level access points, and being able to experience the Trail and park at multiple levels was part of the appeal. (Pietrusiak, 2004, Dickhut 2011 Interview). Later bloggers and journalists also emphasized being up above the city streets, and took care to describe what the Trail currently looks like, in attempts to use the visual nature of the object as part of their discourse (Cornelissen, Holt, Zundel, 2011). In a review posted on www.yelp.com, 8/21/2007, *Joshua K. (Chicago, IL) 0 friends, 8 reviews* posts:

The Bloomingdale trail is basically a giant Berlin wall in Chicago with a railroad track that's out of service. I got up to the trail by Albany street, where you see a bunch of neon pink string coming off the ledge for no reason in particular other than to add that unique flair we all love in unique neighborhoods. Reaching the top, you feel kind of epic, since there's not a whole lot of places you can reach the top of the trail.

In Joyce Dominick's 2008 article, she describes the reaction of local residents to the proposed Trail as well as citing the progress made to date in acquiring land needed for access parks. The online version of her article includes a one minute slideshow, showcasing the abandonment of the Trail, the encroachment of nature, and even a local resident climbing over a fence to get up onto the Trail, as shown in Figure 5.4.

**Figure 5.4: Resident climbing onto the Trail,
from slideshow accompanying 2008 Medill article**



Source: Dominick, 2008

Dominick quotes the resident, Scheitler, as saying,

[c]limbing up the trail you discover an entirely different world. all you had to do was climb up the side of the embankment and get onto the trail. (Dominick, 2008)

City officials and Trust for Public Land employees working on the project focused on the *safety issues* around access. Since the space was not initially designed to let people in, their concerns were based on the danger of people climbing up to this space and walking around and falling off. As Chris Gent, Park Liaison, Department of Cultural Affairs, put it, “we just wanted to make sure that it was going to be something that the Park District would be able to own and operate safely” (Gent 2011 Interview). Joseph Bornstein, Project Manager, Chicago Park District, concurred, saying, “we would like to limit access, that’s something that’s almost non-negotiable in terms of keeping safety paramount”(Bornstein 2011 Interview) . Bornstein’s comment could be construed as negative, while Gent’s comment is more neutral.

Andrew Vesselinovitch, Parks Director, Chicago Office, Trust for Public Land, explained that “because this is an elevated trail, unlike many parks, you need to be very conscious of where the entrance and exit points are going to be. And prior to my involvement, there was a discussion of where these access points were gonna be. Many of them are existing parks” (Helphand and Vesselinovitch WBEZ 2009 Radio Interview). This inclusion of the ground-level parks as access points was partly driven by the fact that they could open before the elevated portion of the Trail (Helphand 2011 Interview, White 2011 Interview).

In 2007-2008, once it became clear that the park was moving forward, and the City was intent on developing it as a park, discussions began to focus on *how* to access the park, since it was nearly 15 feet off the ground. As David Leopold, Chicago DOT Project Manager described,

Our space is certainly similar [to the High Line] in terms of the idea of a lifted landscape. I think it’s similar in terms of we use the old infrastructure for a new purpose that it wasn’t originally intended for, but that these can have lives beyond the original intention. I think what’s different, of course, is that ours is a multi-use path as opposed to more of a strolling environment. You know, ours is certainly intended to be welcoming to bikes...[and] is a raised embankment; has a little more earth to it, with 28 bridges

crossing over various streets through the neighborhood and things like that. So in terms of the existing infrastructure it's much different, and I think it allows us to do different things that maybe the High Line would not have. (Leopold Interview, 2011)

The key issues quickly became how many points of access there would be for the park, how they would be designed, and how the trail would balance competing, possibly conflicting trail and park uses. "There is a tension between is this a multi-use path that connects a group of parks? Or is it a park in itself?" (Bornstein 2011 Interview) Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail continued to organize charrettes and community meetings in order to be prepared for when the City ultimately issued an RFP for the first phase of work. They "learned in the charrettes that walking and biking were neck-and-neck in terms of how people wanted to use the trail" (Galef, 2009).

Design work on Phase One began in 2011 (Greenfield, 2011) and the multi-firm team awarded the Phase One contract, along with FBT and TPL, organized a series of public meetings in the early fall, culminating with a multi-day charrette in October 2011. Like all FBT-organized events, the flyers were in both English and Spanish (Helphand and Vesselinovich 2009 WBEZ Radio Interview). David Leopold from CDOT commented that the coalition deliberately does outreach to the different communities. But, he added:

[w]e've had lower turnout from communities in the western end of the trail, particularly from the Humboldt Park neighborhood and Logan Square neighborhood, or particularly Spanish-speaking constituents or people who have English as a second language. So all of our outreach materials are bilingual, and certainly working with local neighborhood organizations to outreach to specifically Spanish-speaking residents, things like that; making sure that not only is the trail clearly communicated, but that we've got buy-in in attendance at our public meetings as well. (Leopold Interview, 2011)

FBT has consistently organized community visioning events throughout the long-stalled process of developing the park, and that work has helped shape the tone and content of discussions about how the park can and should be used and accessed. Organizing sessions like the 2011 charrette, where community members show up and weigh in on the proposed designs, are critical, because it makes the park and Trail very tangible for community members. They are really able to think hard about the kinds of activities and programming that would go on at each

location – in effect, how they would use the Trail and associated parks. The visioning process the FBT used creates associated mental pictures, potentially even of themselves up on the Trail, and, implicitly, buy-in. These activities highlight their agenda-setting activities and impression management activities (Meyer et al 2013).

The design team also reached out to the community, through the FBT, TPL, and other coalition partners, to bring community members into the design process. They wanted to understand what members wanted the park and Trail to look like (even if not everything on the wish list was achievable.) Part of this process involved the Fall 2011 charrette, where community members actively participated in discussions around the aesthetics of the Trail and Park (Vance, 2011). It became clear from those discussions that community members wanted a park and multi-use trail but feared conflict between people walking and biking (Dries, 2012). They also found that that community members wanted many access points, and really saw the elevated part of the trail as about getting into nature (October 2011 charrette meetings, Vance 2011). Remarkably, given the disparate nature of the communities connected by the Trail, there has not been a lot of disagreement about the kinds of activities that would take place on the Trail (Vance 2011, Vance 2012).

As a result of the trail's narrow width, the design team decided to plan activities on the trail to serve individuals and small groups and focus less on accommodating big gatherings. Part of this involves having a range of seating for individuals and small groups on the Trail. The consensus was that the ground level should be used to accommodate neighborhood uses such as playgrounds, basketball courts, skate parks, and access parks, and that this set of uses can enhance the relationship between the ground level and the elevated park (October 2011 charrette meetings, Vance 2011, Vance 2012). This planning of activities and access from the parks at ground level is critical -- if the project is to be successfully sold as a park, it will need to include some level of traditional park amenities: large open spaces for large groups, ball fields, play areas, all things that would be hard to accommodate on a narrow viaduct, but can be accommodated in the adjacent facilities for those functions. This is in contrast to the positioning

taken by the Friends of the High Line (FHL) and supporters, who focused on the High Line as a beautiful open space as opposed to a park. The positioning of the High Line is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Since both bicyclists and pedestrians would use the trail, questions surfaced about how to separate the two uses safely. The group also wanted to know how the park would work for different segments of the neighborhood – who is it designed for? (Helphand and Vesselinovitch WBEZ 2009 Radio Interview). There were and still are feelings by some members of the community that the Trail has been designed for the cyclist community, not the Hispanic/minority community. The Hispanic/minority community has members who might use the Trail as a safe walk to school, etc – the cycling community, far less so. (October 2011 charrette meetings, Vance 2011, Gomez-Feliciano 2011 interview, Echevarria 2011 interview).

I totally respect and acknowledge ADA access, and as it looks now, there would be access at least every half mile with a ramp so that it's accessible to everyone. What I have been suggesting is that they put in place staircases in between every half mile, because there are more able-bodied than unable-bodies to get up there. And I think that is also going to help get more of the local people up. – Lucy Gomez-Feliciano, Health Issues Coordinator, Logan Square Neighborhood Association

I think it has a potential to function as a park but that potential can only be realized to the degree that people see it as something that they own, something that's part of their community, their neighborhood. If people don't – you know if the residents don't use it then it will be relegated to merely a bike trail or bicycle trail. -- Raul Echevarria, Puerto Rican Cultural Center

The usability discussion and park/trail programming have been largely driven by the sources of funding. The choice of discourse themes is always constrained to some degree by the physical object – its location, its visual characteristics. The first phase of the project is being funded largely through Federal Congestion Mitigation/ Air Quality (CMAQ) transportation funds, so the Trail must accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians. (Leopold 2011 interview, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2011). Frankly, it would not be productive to de-emphasize the cycling part of the Trail; it does explain at least in part the focus on access and usability themes in the Envisioning discourse. “It was very helpful explaining to the public that it would

have to accommodate bikes as well as people walking to the bus stop,” Vesselinovitch said. “People understood that you can either allow bicycles or try to find [nearly] \$40 million somewhere else” (Brake, 2012). As a result of the programming requirements the line will have a shared bike/pedestrian path running the length of the trail as well as shorter, additional pedestrian-only segments along the wider portions. This programming requirement, plus the Trail’s narrow width, limits the amount and kind of plantings that can occur.

At a March 2012 public meeting, the design team unveiled a framework plan that responded to the October 2011 charrette. The framework plan does not show the location of every tree or the exact finish on every surface. It does, however, highlight the team’s goals of creating a space “that is Chicago as it is”, (Ross Barney, March 3-8-12 Public Meeting,). An important objective of this framework plan is to balance the trail and park aspirations. As Joseph Bornstein, from the Chicago Park District, described it,

“some people think the trail itself should be you know, like the High Line in New York. That the trail itself will be decked out in the amazing every single inch of the way. Whereas others think, you know, there are parts where the trail is a little wider where you can do some really cool things but for the most part it’s going to be a trail, an elevated trail. And the fun parts will be pretty much just the parks along the way.” (Bornstein 2011 Interview)

A concession made to the pedestrians was the decision to limit cycling to no greater than 20 MPH (Chicago-pipeline.com, Vance 2012). Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show two different types of access points for the Bloomingdale Trail, as presented at the meeting. These access point renderings are important because they show the community that the design team heard their input – but also that not every access point will have every feature. In Figure 5.5 you see a combination of walking and sitting, while in Figure 5.6 you see walkers and bikers.

Figure 5.5: Bloomingdale Trail, berm access point



Source: Arup, Ross Barney Architects, Michael Van Valkenburgh

Figure 5.6: Bloomingdale Trail, Damen Avenue ramp access point



Source: Arup, Ross Barney Architects, Michael Van Valkenburgh

FBT, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and TPL continued to push both the functionality and aesthetics of the Trail, describing the combination of levels as a charm bracelet, with the access parks functioning as the charms and the Trail acting as the bracelet (White 2011 Interview, Kamin 2011, Donovan 2012) at multiple visioning sessions and meetings. This was done to keep the local community engaged and keep the image of the Trail fresh in peoples' minds during the long process of development.

At a series of public meetings in May 2012, again organized by FBT, TPL, and the Phase One Design team, there was again a focus on access/usability issues, specifically related to the access points. At those meetings, residents were divided into groups and assigned to different access points. In the groups, residents answered questions regarding appropriate types of activities and programs, responded to designs for the access points, and identified who the target users would be. As with the charrette and community visioning sessions, these meetings provided residents more clarity around the project and made it feel more tangible. Unsurprisingly, the responses to the questions posed changed as one moves west to east, from less to more gentrified neighborhoods. The proceedings were reported at the blogsite www.gridchicago.com, where one

commenter, Ash L, wrote; “I love that the concerns at each park get more stodgy the further east you travel. tai chi and dog parades? yeesh.” (Vance, 2012)

A focus on the access and usability issues as part of the *Envisioning* process makes the project feel more real. If residents are debating how to get up to the Trail, or arguing over the activities that would take place at the access points, this changes the entire discussion to one where people are focused on ‘getting it done’. This approach also makes the Trail seem imminent, a situation which has both pros and cons given the project’s long development history.

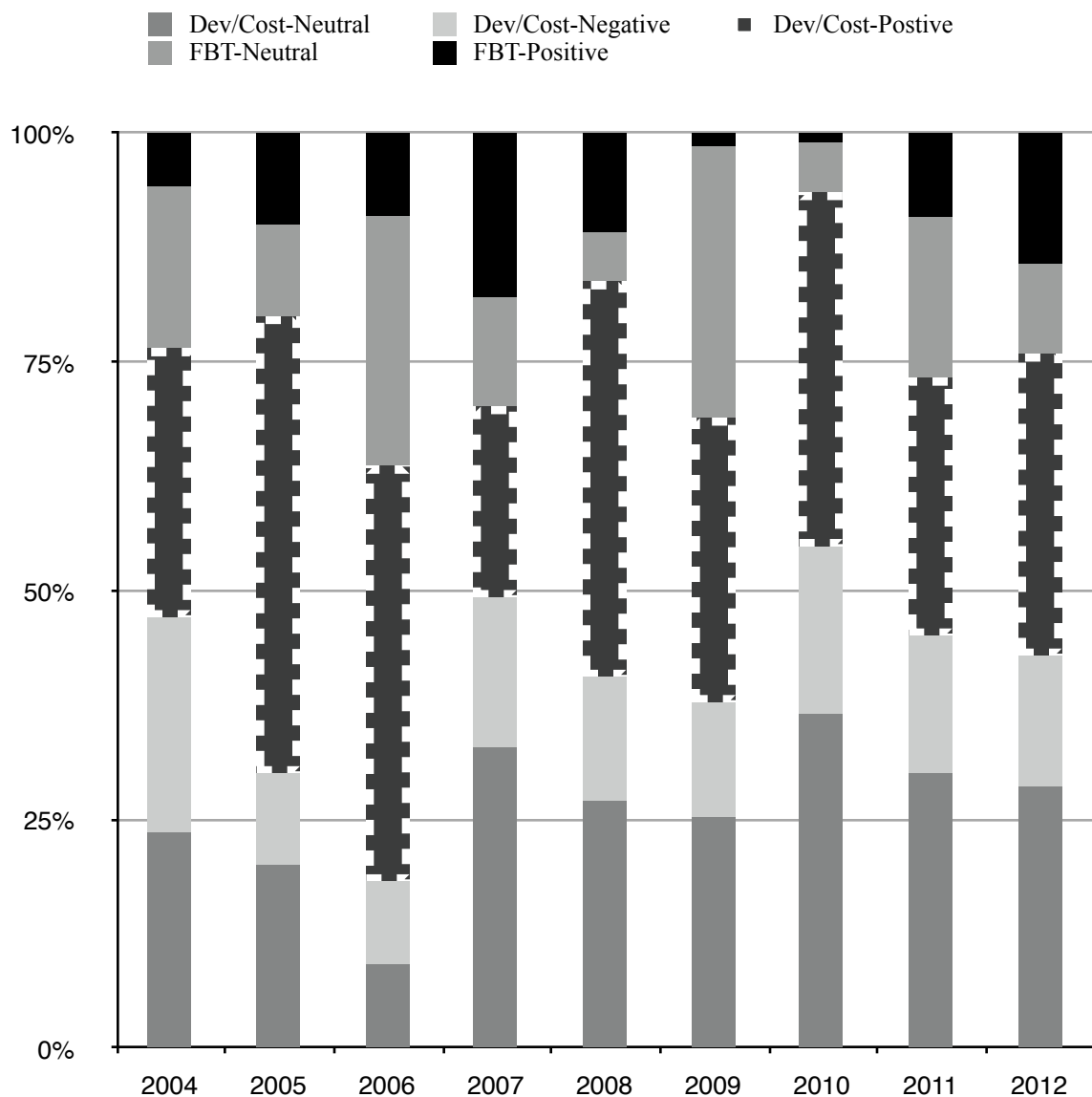
5.2b Creating Dimension-Development/Cost

This dimension of institutional work uses discourse to highlight the capacities and skills of the Friends of the Bloomingdale to carry out the project. The discourse in this dimension has to explain why the organizational template proposed – in this case, FBT as the community voice for the Trail -- makes sense as a solution to the problem FBT have reframed. This is in line with Johnson’s work on the New York Botanical Garden, where she pointed out that “a place may offer ..founder[s] powerful cultural materials with which to construct a persuasive story about why this place in particular needs or merits the organization under construction.” (Johnson, 2009, p. 6) The themes in this dimension cut across Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz’s Instrumentality and Symbolic dimensions of artifact sensemaking.

Figure 5.7 shows the distribution of discourse in this dimension from 2004-2012, as well as the proportion of positive, neutral, and negative messages for each theme. The dominant theme in this dimension was the overall process of Trail development and associated costs. Most of the discourse is positive or neutral. Negative messages within this theme start off at about the same level as neutral themes, but quickly become less prevalent in the discourse, starting in 2005-2006. Negative themes become stronger again when the project has been under development for several years without much momentum. The dominant theme of Development/Cost-Positive is shown in Figure 5.7 in black. The discourse and dialogue around development of the Trail fell into two

broad subthemes, due to the extended nature of the Trail’s development process. On the neutral/negative side, journalists and bloggers expressed skepticism over whether the project would actually happen, despite the City’s support. On the positive side, the ten + year process enabled the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail to define and refine their role in an ongoing Trail, and allowed City government agencies, TPL, and FBT to explain, consistently, the roles of different network partners in the Trail’s development along with framing the cost as an investment.

Figure 5.7: Distribution of Discourse Themes, Creating Dimension



As illustrated in Figure 5.7 through FBT's capacity, shown in positive and neutral tones, articles, interviews, and websites were generally consistent around why the Trail was even a possibility, and why the FBT organized in the first place. The Chicago Plan Commission approved the trail as part of a plan to remedy the shortage of open space in Logan Square, which has the city's second-worst parkland-to-people ratio. (Logan Square Open Space Plan, 2004, Dickhut 2011 Interview, Helphand 2011 Interview, www.bloomingtondaletrail.org, Dominick 2008, Kamin 2010, Kamin 2011).

From the beginning, one of the main goals of the FBT was to keep the embankment from being parceled off to developers and leveled for condominiums. This intent has also consistently come through in the discourse, along with FBT's role as the voice of the neighborhoods. For several years, there was not a lot of momentum around the Trail, and FBT worked to raise awareness of the possibilities and held unofficial tours of the Trail. In 2006 FBT began actively working with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and began to build a coalition of support for the project. TPL happened at the time to be working on another Chicago-based project, as well. Ben Helphand, the current President of the FBT, explains that

“[w]e invited them to come take a look at this piece of land next to the Bloomingdale Trail, because we knew that the adjacent land would be so important. And it was kind of a match made in Heaven, you know, we're experts in our neighborhood, and they're experts on, you know, how to get a massive future public park built with public and private support”. (Helphand 2011 Interview)

TPL began developing the theme of the Trail and the role of FBT while discussing the Trail's possibilities in its quarterly newsletters (TPL, Winter 2006, Summer 2007, Winter 2007-2008), with particular focus on the access parks needed to link the Trail to the ground. Ground-level access parks were a critical part of the Trail, and since they were actually developable ahead of the Trail itself, those parks became the TPL's main focus. (TPL.org, White 2011 Interview, Helphand 2011 Interview, Oberg 2011 Interview, Ciabotti 2011 Interview) Both FBT and TPL felt that opening the parks would increase awareness of the project and provide much-needed green space for the four communities adjacent to the Trail. Through its own money

as well as private donations, the Trust for Public Land helped the City of Chicago to acquire four city lots needed to access the Trail (activelivingbydesign.org, 2007), though the City has ownership and maintenance responsibility. In each case, the Trust held the land temporarily before turning it over to the Chicago Park District.

Their efforts were reported in the local papers, along with their investment in the Trail. “So far, the Trust has spent \$2 million buying properties to be used for access to the elevated trail” (Dominick, 2008, also see TPL Winter 2007-2008). TPL and FBT also highlighted private, corporate donors involved in supporting the new parks.

“Foundations giving money to BT: Alcoa, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), New Communities Program, MetLife, Oberweiler Foundation, Dr. Scholl, Related Midwest, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, and Searle Funds at the Chicago Community Trust.” (TPL, Winter-2007-2008).

FBT put up signs at the future access points highlighting their roles. Figure 5.8 is an example of one of those signs, at the park that opened in 2010 as Albany-Whipple. This park was renamed Julia de Burgos Park in 2012, after the Puerto Rican poet, in a nod to the Hispanic heritage of the Humboldt Park residents, where the park is located (www.bloomingtondaletrail.org).

Figure 5.8: Future Park and Bloomingdale Trail Access Point, 2009



Source: Rachelle Bowden, rachelleb.com

However, by 2009, there was an increase in the number of articles and quotes that began to raise questions about the Trail itself. Community members accepted that TPL was buying land to develop as parks, but the development of the Bloomingdale Trail was closing in on a decade. While the contract for Phase One development was awarded in 2009 to a multi-company construction and development group led by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, the team was effectively in a holding pattern for nearly two years (Greenfield, 2010, Vance, 2011) and advocates were wondering what was taking so long. At the same time, not surprisingly, estimates for the park's cost began to increase. Initial estimates put the Trail at \$20 million (Pietrusiak, 2004). By 2010, estimates had tripled to \$60 million (tpl.org, 2010, Greenfield, 2011). Some of this increase can be attributed to better information about the kind of work required to convert the structure to a Trail and Park, including completed engineering studies and thus the condition (and any repair work required) of all 37 bridges along the Trail (White 2011 Interview, Bornstein 2011 Interview). Some of it can be attributed to increasing the scope of work, including plantings. Some of it can be attributed to developing the access parks.

Even by the next year, estimates had reached between \$75 million (Doobay, 2011) to over \$81 million, with \$46 million of that dedicated to Phase One and the remainder to Phase Two (Kamin, 2011). Phase One, or “Bloomingdale Basic” (Dries 2012), is focused on opening the complete trail system and access points to the public. Phase Two will focus on building and sprucing up existing parks next to the trail, including walkways, architectural flourishes and public art, as well as providing for long-term maintenance (Donovan, 2012). These estimates do not include the costs of acquiring the land used for those parks, which to date have been at least \$2 million (activelivingbydesign.org, 2007).

It fell to City agencies, FBT, and TPL, to explain the project's increasing price tag and delays in building despite the apparent support. And this was challenging because in 2011, there was not an approved plan that showed detailed programmatic requirements, though the bike trail

concept was fully developed and would run the length of the park²⁴. Part of the delay was due to the heavy reliance on public funding for Phase One (Pietrusiak, 2004, Fagel, 2009, Bornstein 2011 Interview, Leopold 2011 Interview, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2011). There were concerns that Chicago, as cash-strapped as it was, would have to shoulder most of the construction cost (Kamin, 2011). The team had to explain that the project's first phase is being funded largely through Federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) transportation funds, so the Federal government would be providing much of the first phase's funds. Part of the delay in construction was also due to the fallout from the 2008 economic slowdown, projects just taking longer to be approved, and new administrations in both Washington D.C. and the City of Chicago. As Joseph Bornstein of the Chicago Park District explained:

To get to why can't you just start building it now and why does it need to take that long? I've always found – and please do not let this come across as condescending but – people who don't work in industries where you build things never understand how difficult it is to get all your approvals and do all your steering and as well to line up all the necessary funding for something.” (Bornstein 2011 Interview)

TPL's challenge grant, awarded in 2010, enabled it to develop a detailed and comprehensive plan to build private philanthropy and community participation between 2010-2012. The grant's goals included developing the organizational structures necessary to raise private and government funding, develop sponsorship, develop public programming, develop a stewardship plan in coordination with Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail, and generate strategies for civic engagement and volunteer participation in the construction, conservation, and use of the greenway. It is important in the discourse that the relationship between FBT and TPL is clear, along with group's role in development. TPL is very clear that they are project-driven, and not planning to be involved in the Trail for the long-term; once the Trail is open and the structures highlighted above are in place TPL will not be actively involved with the Trail. In contrast, since

²⁴ This level of detail was important because a general scope of work was required to submit the project for CMAQ funding.

the Trail 'lives' in a specific place, the neighbors and the neighborhood are still going to play a large role. With the ultimate goal of having FBT as the long-term steward of the trail, TPL is functioning as the agent and "green infrastructure developer," as Beth White, TPL's Chicago Office Director, put it (Coorens, 2012). TPL is taking the lead on future fundraising efforts as well as overall coordination and management of the project. "They're being very helpful about building up the capacity of Friends of the Trail so that when they leave, we can continue to be a strong community advocate" (Helphand 2011 Interview).

In April 2012, City officials made a series of dramatic public announcements regarding Phase One Trail funding. In a news conference surrounded by renderings of the Park, Mayor Emanuel announced Chicago had secured \$37 million in federal funding for Phase One of the project, and a combination of private Chicago-based companies donated \$7 million of the final \$9 million. (Donovan, 2012, Greenfield, 2012). Of the \$46 million required for Phase One, taxpayers are only providing \$2 million, out of the Chicago Park District coffers. At the same conference it was announced that TPL would continue to seek private and corporate donations for Phase Two, which current estimates put at another \$36 million. The federal government is supplying over 75% of funding for Phase One, but only slightly over 40% of the total cost of the project. Showing the capacity of FBT to get at least Phase One built can go a long way in convincing potential donors to give. This is important for the project's long-term viability. New York's High Line functions based off of generous donations that not only helped with renovations but maintain its pristine look. Beth White (TPL Chicago Area Office Director) admitted that organizers are concerned about options for maintaining the park once it soft launches in 2014 (White 2011 Interview, Dries 2012).

City officials have consistently taken pains to say that not everything people want aesthetically in the Trail will be there, due to funding limitations and the pressure to open the Trail all at once. Chris Gent, the Park Liaison from the Cultural Affairs Department said, "It's a very different and unique space but not everything can be accommodated." (Gent 2011

Interview). Kathy Dickhut, from the Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning, concurred, saying that “I’m sure we can get something open from end to end that’s safe, that’s usable, that’s interesting.... Will it include everything everybody’s thought about and everybody wants? Probably not, but that doesn’t mean that over time things can’t be sort of embellished” (Dickhut 2011 Interview).

Some of the demands for certain items or activities to be built into the Trail’s development have come about, unfortunately, as a result of the many community-visioning sessions FBT has organized throughout the long development process. There are many members of the communities affected by the Trail who have faithfully come to and participated in community visioning sessions, over a period of years, and ‘kept the faith’, so to speak. As a result, there is also a sense that expressing a particular vision over years and years, even without funding and/or clear plans for the park, somehow makes that vision more likely to be implemented. That is what the FBT wanted community members to do all along – but sometimes individuals get bought-in to what they have expressed and for budgetary or other reasons it is not possible to accommodate those demands. That can leave community members feeling cheated or affect their motivation. There is also a comparative challenge given the high level of finishes of the High Line, a ‘sister project’ of the Trail, which notably did not open all at once. In fact, the High Line opened its first and second phases two years apart, and the third phase is scheduled to open approximately when the ‘Bloomingdale Basic’ opens.

Focusing on the development process, and particularly FBT’s role in keeping the community believing the Trail would happen, reassures community members and potential donors that the advocacy group involved, and advocacy, in general – can actually make the project happen. FBT also developed and touted the consistent theme that minimal City of Chicago taxpayer money was involved. Making sure community members know that \$44 of the \$46 million required for Phase One came (theoretically) from outside of the City coffers works to dampen project opposition. This theme also supports the instrumentality dimension of a physical

artifact's meaning, by focusing on the operational piece of *how the park will get constructed*. This is again linked to the question of 'how will it work?' - for the community, for the Park District, for the City of Chicago and the answers to the question may increase potential users' and donors' confidence in the eventual outcome and willingness to participate in the process.

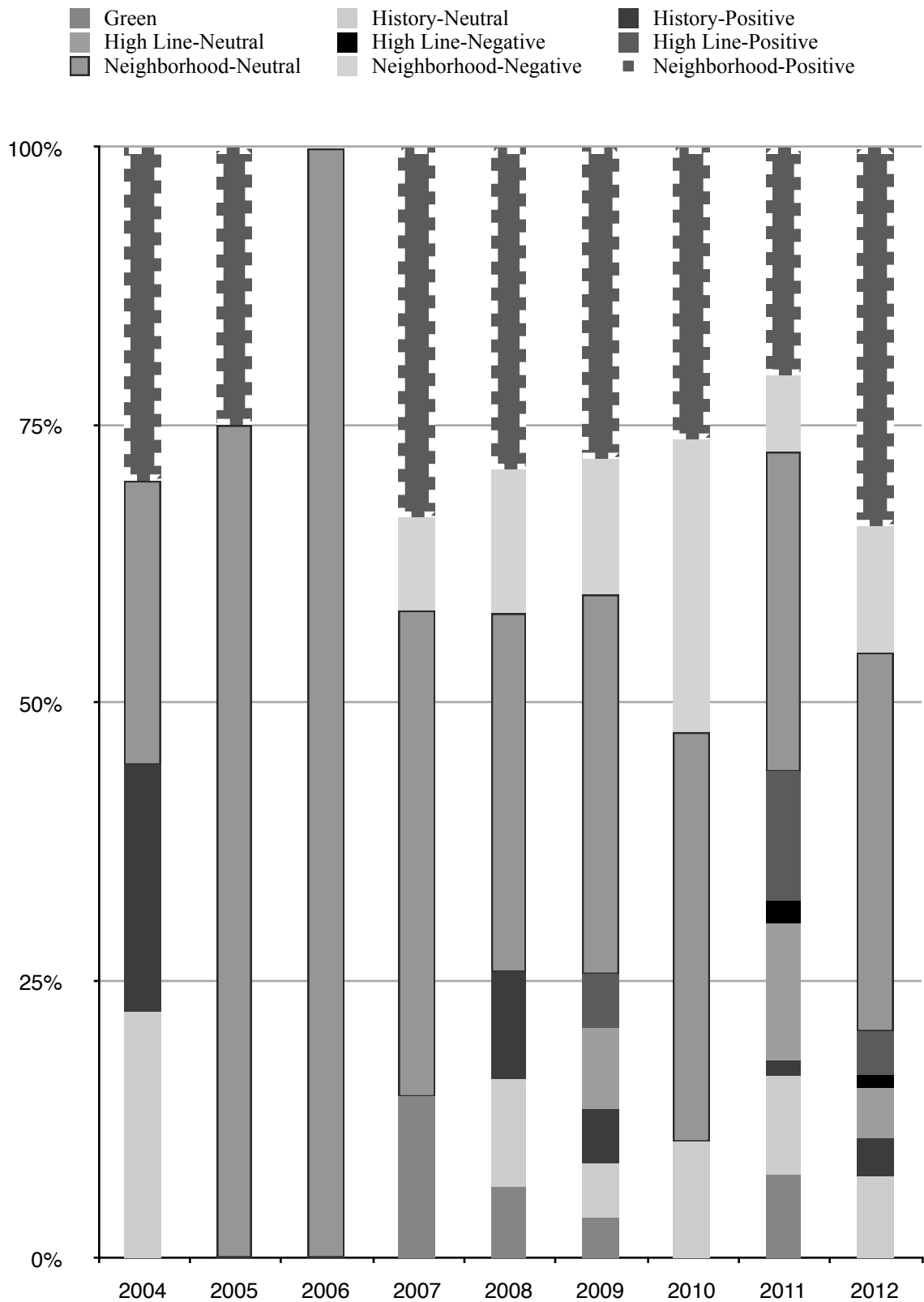
5.2c Legitimizing Dimension - Neighborhood

The final part of the discourse around the Bloomingdale Trail involved legitimating the project, or connecting the supporting rationales of the project to macro-level discussions, with the dominant theme being that of the role of the neighborhood. The themes in this dimension are primarily associated with the Symbolic dimension of artifact sensemaking in the IAS framework. The one exception is that the Green theme is an Aesthetic theme in the IAS framework in other projects but part of legitimating the Trail here, since one of the reasons the Trail became a priority is because the surrounding area is significantly under-parked, which is reflected in the discourse.

Notably, there was not very much discussion about the High Line, even though that is the only similar project in the United States currently open. From talking with the individuals involved, it appears that the FBT coalition was afraid that explicitly using the High Line's words and phrases would have made their project appear more elitist than they intended. Within the overall theme of the neighborhood two different sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme, by far the most dominant, involves issues of *safety and security* for neighborhood residents. This theme shows up in the discourse and cuts across the themes of 'neighborhood-neutral', 'neighborhood-positive', and 'neighborhood-negative.' The second sub-theme involves the effects the park/Trail will have on the current process of gentrification, especially along the Western part of the Trail, and affecting long time residents. This shows up in the discourse as 'neighborhood-neutral and neighborhood-negative'. This concern is common to all three cases studied here – New York (Chapter 4), Chicago (Chapter 5), and Philadelphia (Chapter 6). Figure 5.9 shows the distribution

of discourse over time. Neighborhood-neutral shows up in Figure 5.9 as black. Neighborhood-negative shows up as a marble pattern, and Neighborhood-positive shows up as a brick-pattern. Those three patterns dominate the discourse. The neighborhood-negative theme saw an increase in percentage of the discourse around the Trail in 2010, and this was partly due to an increase in gentrification happening in the less affluent areas adjacent to the planned Trail. The increase in negatively themed discourse is also related to the strong priority placed on developing the Trail as opposed to other green spaces in the neighborhood – by 2010 the Trail project was the only park project in the area with any momentum. The 1997 City Space Plan found that Logan Square had the second lowest amount of open space per capita (0.6 acres for every 1,000 residents in metro Chicago (Logan Square Open Space Plan, 2004), yet developing a linear 12.4-acre park on the Bloomingdale right-of-way – with the fear that it was designed for cyclists, not pedestrians – accounts for over 80% of new green space proposed in the plan.

Figure 5.9: Distribution of Discourse Themes, Legitimizing Dimension, 2004-2012



5.2c1 – Legitimizing/Neighborhood Safety and Security

While community members generally support the proposal, many have expressed concerns, including design, access and public safety. Design and access concerns were addressed in earlier sections. Public safety concerns are addressed in this section. In particular, given existing problems with youth gangs in the community, some residents fear the Trail could become contested public space, especially at night (Greenfield, 2009, 3-8-12 Public meeting). There is currently no regular maintenance or security on the Bloomingdale Trail, though the transit police of Metra (the regional commuter transportation agency) occasionally patrol the area. Although a revitalized and city-maintained Trail would seem to address many safety issues, current conditions temper residents' perceptions of the future. Community residents and neighborhood activists want assurances that their privacy will be respected and that once the Trail becomes actively used as a park, crime and vandalism will go down (Dominick 2008, Fagel 2009). One part of the design that reflects the neighborhood-centric focus of the Trail is that there are no bathrooms planned for either the Trail or any of the access parks (3-8-12 Public meeting, bloomingdaletrail.org). A lack of bathrooms in the design limits opportunities for homeless people to linger on the Trail, limits opportunities for general sexual predation or whatever²⁵, but also limits use of the Trail by non-residents. So while the FBT and its supporters are encouraging Trail use, they are sending a clear message that they are really encouraging neighborhood Trail use. This is a clear contrast to the High Line project in New York, where “the High Line is one of a kind, but it wasn’t designed to have accommodating neighborhood residents as one of its guiding principles” (Stone 2012 Interview).

The neighborhood safety theme is where there was the most disagreement in the discourse surrounding the development of the Trail. City officials and supporters of the project all felt strongly that the Trail would be much safer for residents once it was converted for use into

²⁵ A popular anti-homeless prejudice.

a park. Beth White, of the Trust for Public Land, believes building the park will decrease the potential for criminal activity. “Right now it’s a place where people can hide. We’ve met with the police department of the 14th district and they believe, as we do, that when it does become a park, it’s going to become much safer” (White 2011 Interview).

Chris Gent, the Park Liaison from the Cultural Affairs Department, agreed with White, pointing out that a key issue would be security, and one of the ways to manage community members’ insecurity is to encourage as much use as possible and have many people up there (Gent 2011 Interview). Members of the FBT have also emphasized that the Trail is close to 12 elementary schools; part of the concern of the immediate community is being able to use the Trail as a Safe Walk to School ®. The FBT and its supporters see increasing the diversity of users as increasing safety overall. This sentiment is very much in line with Jane Jacobs’ concept of eyes on the street (Jacobs 1961) ; the Trail, like streets, would be safer when more people are on it. The Trail would also be safer when people are able and willing to watch from windows. Increasing diversity of users is also in line with Sampson and Raudenbush’s (1999) definition of collective efficacy - “the linkage of cohesion and mutual trust with shared expectations for intervening in support of neighborhood social control” (1999:612-3) – here, the neighborhood’s efficacy exists relative to specific tasks such as maintaining public order in use of the Trail and access parks.

At the March 8th, 2012 public meeting, Glenn Brettner from the United Block Club of West Humboldt Park and a member of the Humboldt Park Advisory Council, also argued that, "I do not see ... that this will be less safe. There will be more people and more lighting which tends to lessen not increase crime." (Coorens, 2012, 3-8-12 Public meeting). And FBT President Ben Helphand insists that “the only long-term solution to crime is the Trail itself; anything we can do to hasten its creation will bring permanent safety to that corridor” (Helphand 2011 Interview).

Those residents living right next to the Trail still do not quite believe this assessment, referring instead to their current anecdotal experiences with the Trail. The following is an

exchange between a resident and the CDOT project manager from the March 8, 2012 public meeting:

“Audience member: Hi, ... I live over Baymont Avenue and Wilton and we are very worried because right now police can’t even control it and how would you like it if your neighbor looks in your window or throws a rock? That is our concern, the safety more than anything else ... when that girl got hit over the head a few years ago on Baymon[t] Avenue and then we had two robberies and then you had something the other day. Police can’t control it. Where you gonna get the safety with the police? I’d like to know.

Janet Attarian, CDOT:

Well obviously we’ve looked at safety a lot. It’s a big use. We do feel obviously having the trail become a public amenity is going to obviously be a big change. There are many philosophies about eyes on the street, about bringing positive uses to a space and how that can change the safety and the security. I will say that the police have been an incredible partner with us so far They have been giving us feedback about how to design it in such a way that it can be meaningfully patrolled by them..”

(Bloomingtondale Trail Public Meeting 2012-0308, recorded by Chicago Public Access TV)

Residents also expressed concerns that people would be able to look right in their windows and be using the park/Trail until late at night ²⁶ – that even controlling access would not eliminate voyeuristic actions, and residents would still feel unsafe. Residents expressed their concerns about the tension between addressing the desire for privacy and also having “eyes on the trail”. While making the Trail into a park patrolled by police would make it safer overall, it would also bring more people up onto the Trail. In theory, this would mean more people who could in some cases look right into their homes – including the police.

Residents have pointed to the High Line and its impact on the immediately adjacent residents as supporting their position (Fall 2011 charrette, Vance 2011, Bloomingtondale Trail Public Meeting 2012-0308). Their concerns have been consistently raised with members of the design team, who have made efforts to address privacy concerns via grade changes and potential plantings (Vance 2011, Bloomingtondale Trail Public Meeting 2012-0308, Beatnikdika, 2011, City-

²⁶ Chicago parks close at 11 pm.

data forum 2012). Joseph Bornstein of the Chicago Park District was at the charrette as well, and relayed his interpretation of the neighbors' concerns.

At the October 2011 charrette, [neighbors adjacent to the Trail] all put things up saying I need privacy. Like people can't get access. They were all really vocal about some sort of screening or some sort of grade separation or something because you could without much effort walk right from the trail onto someone's balcony. You know? Really no effort at all. It's right there. So those people were very heavily represented and you know, at one point you have that sort of feeling of sympathy for them in terms of well, you know, of course you don't want a majority of people peeping into your windows. (Joseph Bornstein, 2011 Interview)

However, Bornstein added, there is limited sympathy for those -- few in number, but generally white and relatively affluent -- community members who bought property next to the Trail in the previous five years, since they knew or *should have known* that development of the Trail would be happening (Bornstein 2011 Interview, City-data forum, 2012). This sentiment was shared by other members of the project team (Leopold 2011 Interview, Urbanski 2011 Interview, Oberg 2011 Interview). The following is an exchange from the March 8th, 2012 meeting between blogger *Chicago-pipeline* and resident Jonathan, who purchased his home just 18 months ago at Hermitage and Bloomingdale:

"Did you not know of the trail, its plans?" The Pipeline asked him.

"The person I bought it from claimed that you only see a few people a day on the trail," Jonathan replied.

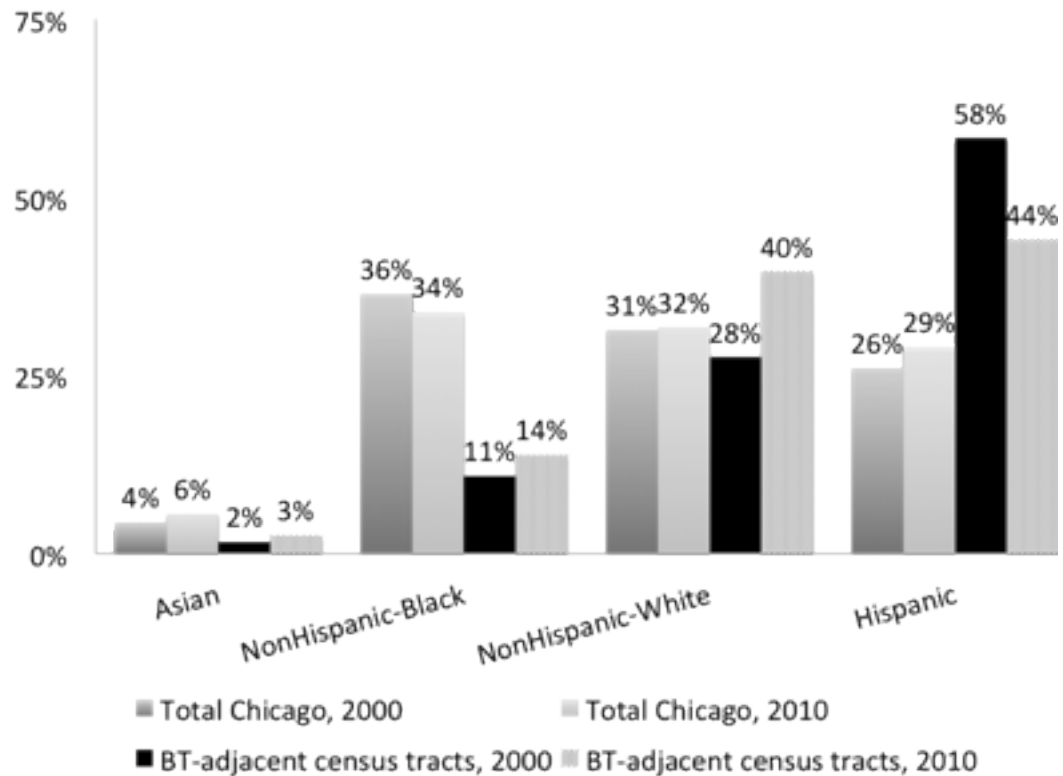
"Hypothetically, if you did not live next to the trail, how would you feel about it?" The Pipeline asked. Jonathan replied that "Most of my neighbors who aren't directly next to it are positive [about the trail.] It's the ones next to it that have reservations," Jonathan admitted.

5.2c2 Legitimizing/Neighborhood-Gentrification

Both the Humboldt Park and Logan Square areas have already seen demographic shifts, bringing more affluent whites into their communities and displacing longtime, primarily Hispanic, residents. In the past ten years the area around the Bloomingdale Trail has become more White and less Hispanic, while the group of census tracts as a whole has seen almost no change in overall population. As Figure 5.10 shows, in 2000, the overwhelming majority of

people living in census tracts near the Bloomingdale Trail were Hispanic, but this number dropped substantially over the following decade²⁷.

Figure 5.10: Bloomingdale Trail Adjacent Census Tracts and Chicago Total Population, 2010 and 2000, By Race



Sources: American Community Survey, City of Chicago GIS

In addition, the median household annual income for these twenty census tracts is approximately \$52,350, compared to \$46,781 for Chicago overall. This income premium is approximately 12%, and household income has increased an average of 3.6% annually since 2000, when it was slightly over \$36,000 for the Trail-adjacent census tracts (www.census.gov).

²⁷ For purposes of situating the park, I used 20 census tracts, all in Cook County that are adjacent to the planned future form of the Bloomingdale Trail. They are census tracts 2301, 2302, 2303, 2308, 2309, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, and 2416 (ACS 2005-2009, American Fact Finder (www.census.gov)).

The concerns of longtime residents of the area seem to reflect, accurately, the changes in their neighborhoods and the people around them.

The dialogue is consistent in the sense that supporters of the Trail see that not all community members feel part of the Trail's development process or engaged in the outcome (Gomez-Feliciano et al, 2009). As Raul Echevarria, former FBT board member, pointed out, both Humboldt Park and Logan Square community organizations had identified the Trail as a source of open space, independently of the FBT (Echevarria 2011 Interview). But that was as far they got: due to budget and time constraints the groups did not develop detailed plans to redevelop the space.

In 2009, the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA)²⁸ was one of 25 sites to participate in the "Active Living by Design" Initiative, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and coordinated at LSNA by Lucy Gomez-Feliciano, health organizer of the LSNA. That initiative had among its primary goals creating safe, inviting places for activity that were connected to surrounding communities (Gomez-Feliciano et al 2009). The "Active Living by Design" Initiative intentionally chose to use limited resources to promote tangible programs and projects leading to increased physical activity, including advocating for the Bloomingdale Trail project, instead of developing its own campaigns.

Around the same time, FBT reached out to both Gomez-Feliciano and Echevarria, among others, to build sufficient support in the planning task force in order to "ensure that it's not just a[n] intensification that's just gonna further the displacement of long time residents" (Echevarria 2011 Interview). Gomez-Feliciano, a former FBT Board member, said that she actively supports the Trail and is working with the area's residents to reassure them. "We are doing outreach with long time residents who do not feel this is for them but for the new incoming residents. We want this to be for everyone." (Gomez -Feliciano 2011 Interview).

28 an organization that works to create and preserve affordable housing in the Logan Square community.

But Echevarria and Gomez-Feliciano also pointed out that FBT has had mixed success in understanding the Humboldt Park and Logan Square communities, and in encouraging real participation. This has become more problematic as Logan Square has gentrified. Yes, a lot of planning has happened, yet the plan of outreach to said communities and the surrounding residents (houses, homeowners, organizations, block clubs, churches) right next to the Trail never really turned into resident support. As a result, project support has come primarily from the East and North sections of the Trail, and there has been scattered support from other segments of the community. Echevarria said he thinks it is partly to do with how the FBT members have been used to organizing the whiter, more affluent parts of the Trail community.

This is very much a Logan's Square driven project and ... they sort of have a way of working that is not – that was not really in line, in alignment with Humboldt Park.... And so they struggled with it. [I had]some frustration just in maintaining that this is not working, using the same organizing [approach from Logan Square is] not gonna work in Humboldt Park. It's not gonna be just – it can't just be white male driven..... I mean they tried to make adjustments but it was just too much...it was just too much work you know to build beyond ... their comfort way of working.

Echevarria 2011 Interview

Further, he argued that their bilingual fliers are *not enough* to address the cultural differences between the communities – “they have to ask themselves why don't people come to meetings?” (Echevarria 2011 interview) Gomez-Feliciano agreed with that assessment and highlighted the LSNA's attempts to do outreach through a high school oral history project.

One summer [2008], we were able to have a team of 25 young people and two instructors do oral histories and photographs within two blocks. One of the things that the young people do is they serve as ambassadors, right. So as you interview people, you're also informing people about the future of this space, because a lot of people didn't know. So that was one [of our] projects.

---Gomez-Feliciano 2011 Interview

Other examples of minority outreach include organized events underneath the Trail's viaducts, and active recruitment for the community visioning sessions and charrettes. Gomez-Feliciano pointed out that if FBT members just sent “it [the notice of the charrette] out to their friends it would not include a lot of the brown population in that community. ... So, you know, I reached out to people to make sure that the people attending those charrettes are

diverse.” (Gomez-Feliciano 2011 Interview) But Echevarria challenged her efficacy in getting participation, arguing that

I think the only way that it would just really work [with] the local park is just with me or someone like me were driving those components in Humboldt Park. And other folks on the board,there was a Latina on the board [Lucy Gomez-Feliciano] but she was from Logan Square, [and I] think that she was also for buying a Logan Square way of doing things. She would not – she was not that successful.

Echevarria 2011 Interview

The interviews with Echevarria and Gomez-Feliciano give the impression that the Humboldt Park and Logan Square communities view the Trail as inevitable and have for some time. While residents are not against the trail in concept, they may be against how it has materialized and yet know they cannot affect the outcome. While Humboldt Park and Logan Square residents think a Trail would be nice, there is not an organic grouping of people who want to put their time and energy into the Trail (Echevarria 2011 Interview); tellingly, there is also not an interest in organizing opposition to the Trail. It is possible that many members of this less affluent community really do not have the time to invest on either side of the project given their need to work, etc. Interestingly, both Echevarria and Gomez-Feliciano left the FBT Board due to changing job responsibilities. Gomez-Feliciano has continued to do outreach for the project through LSNA. Echevarria does not do outreach for the project in his role, since his responsibilities as Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center take up most of his time.

The City’s efforts to develop the Trail (including identifying it) is consistent with Hackworth (2002) and Hackworth and Smith’s (2001) arguments about the more direct involvement of government in the gentrification process and may partly explain residents’ lack of engagement with the project. While Hackworth (2002) was writing specifically about New York, his point is more general and could be extended to include Chicago’s government structures as well. In Chicago, City government has identified areas near Logan Square as lacking green space (Bornstein 2011 Interview, Helphand 2011 Interview), and development of the Trail is one high-profile response to that need.

Promoting the idea that the Bloomingdale Trail is for the neighborhood does not completely resonate with the Western communities nor does it alleviate their concerns. Frankly it cannot do that, given that the neighborhoods on the Trail's Western side *are* changing. It is not entirely clear, here, which is the chicken and which is the egg: Is the park going to exacerbate the existing demographic changes already going on around the residents of Humboldt Park or Logan Square or would those changes happen anyway?

These concerns that the new Trail is not for the current community members are not limited to Chicago. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy employees working on the Trail commented that they hope the Trail is seen as an asset for the neighborhood, but they cannot predict what will happen to the neighborhood once it is built. Eric Oberg, from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, commented that “ if it looks like them, it feels like them, and they have an ownership of it, too. And the hope is that it’s a reflection of them, and vice-versa. ...and that it creates a tighter knit community.” (Oberg 2011 Interview). Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has seen gentrification happen in other communities once trails there do open. (Oberg 2011 Interview, Ciabotti 2011 Interview). Similar questions are being asked in New York, where gentrification has occurred around the High Line, and are being asked in Philadelphia as well. The concerns resonate with Stoecker’s (2004) argument about exchange values dominating community values as related to public amenities, as in the cases of Park development here.

5.2c3 Legitimizing – The High Line

As noted earlier, there was not much discussion of the High Line in interviews or in articles. The High Line – regardless of whether it was cause, effect, or neutral – has been linked to gentrification in its surrounding areas. As highlighted earlier, gentrification -- in general, and

spurred by the Trail in particular -- is a touchy subject for Logan Square and Humboldt Park residents and one the FBT and its supporters want to downplay.

When the High Line was mentioned, it was in very consistent ways. Occasionally, articles in the newspapers would refer to the Bloomingdale Trail as “Chicago’s High Line” (Pietrusiak, 2004, Moser, 2011) or “Chicago’s answer to the High Line” (Galef, 2009, Greenfield, 2010, Roecker, 2011). Bloggers pointed out that the space physically reminded them of the High Line (Bowden, 2009, Sedey, 2011, yelp.com 2012, Eakin 2012).

But, when the High Line was discussed by those connected with the project, it was consistently in the context of how this project will not be like the High Line, in use (Matthew Urbanski, fall charrette, Vance 2011, Helphand 2011 Interview, Leopold 2011 Interview), in design, (Matthew Urbanski, fall charrette, Vance 2011, White 2011 Interview), or structurally (Leopold 2011 Interview, Bornstein 2011 Interview). In a 2009 article by John Greenfield, FBT President Ben Helphand was quoted as saying, "The High Line and the Bloomingdale are very different beasts. You think Bucktown's a wealthy neighborhood? Go to Chelsea.²⁹" (Greenfield, 2009) Helphand referred to this same sentiment in his 2011 interview, explaining that

“they often say Chicago is the city that works, and unlike New York and the High Line, [the Trail] has a very practical transportation aspect to it of connecting transit lines, bus lines to it, Metra, in a way that will allow people to use it as a practical commuting route, which makes it a different kind of space [than the High Line]” (Helphand 2011 Interview).

Chris Gent, the Park liaison from the Cultural Affairs Department, concurred, saying “I’ve always told people it’s not going to be the High Line. You don’t have the density like you do around the High Line. You don’t have the clearance and height. So it’s a very different and unique space” (Gent 2011 Interview).

While providing a frame of reference for Trail supporters trying to explain their projects, there are some strong differences that limit the usefulness of comparing the Trail and the High

29 Fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg and her husband, media mogul Barry Diller, alone donated \$15 million toward the first two phases of the High Line project, and an additional \$20 million to Phase 3.

Line. First, there are physical differences. As Chris Gent pointed out, the Trail is closer to the ground than the High Line, in most cases approximately 15 feet off the ground, compared to the 30-foot clearance of the High Line. The design team's lead artist, Frances Whitehead, argues that "[e]ven though this is an elevated trainline like the High Line, that's where the similarity ends. This is a massive, grounded, concrete... piece of infrastructure. It is not up on legs. It is a completely different feel and is a completely different design challenge" (Whitehead, via Dries 2012). Another difference is the very high cost and shorter distance of the High Line - the development costs for the High Line were approximately \$75 million per half mile, nearly the same cost as the entire Bloomingdale Trail. Finally, there is the usability issue – the Trail is designed to accommodate both bikers and pedestrians, so making comparisons to a pedestrian-only esplanade is not necessarily very helpful.

The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and their supporters have focused on the symbolic idea that this Trail is for the neighborhood, and have linked development of the Trail to increased safety and security for residents. They have tried and continue to try to get all parts of the community to support the Trail, and the access parks, through conversations about the coalition of supporters and the limited role of taxpayer money. They have distanced themselves from the High Line and related comments about elites, the wealthy, and gentrification related to the High Line in order to make a neighborhood-centric position clearer and more consistent.

5.3 Summary and Conclusions

The discourse is divided almost equally among the three dimensions of institutional work these entrepreneurs have undertaken in order to make their project a reality. The earlier parts of this chapter focused on the completeness and consistency of message for each dominant theme within each dimension of work. Since each of these kinds of entrepreneurial work happens at different levels, I believe that the distribution of discourse along the three dimensions of work, combined with the consistency of message within each dimension, reflects the ability of the

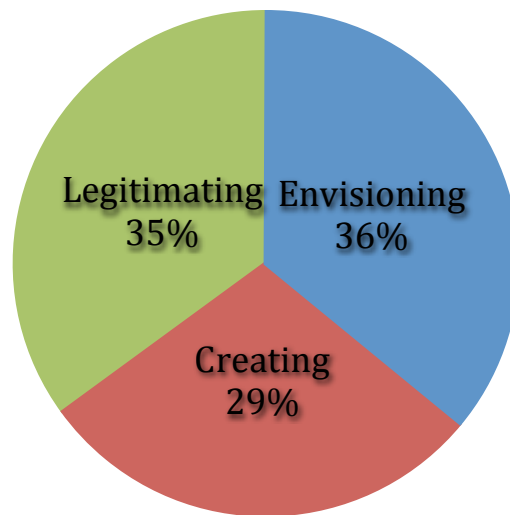
advocacy group to develop coalitions of support behind the project. The *Envisioning* dimension emphasizes the micro level and happens primarily among individuals – as with the community visioning sessions. *Creating* occurs at the meso level, in discussions around the advocacy group as an organization. And *Legitimizing* occurs at the macro level, linking the organization and its efforts to larger societal themes. Table 5.1 summarizes the dominant themes within every dimension along with a note on the tone and consistency within each theme. The discourse is consistent in tone. Most of the discourse is neutral or positive. The only exception is the gentrification subtheme within the neighborhood theme, which is neutral or negative in tone.

Table 5.1 – Summary of Themes within Institutional Dimensions in the Bloomingdale Trail discourse

Dimension of Institutional Work	Theme	Tone of theme in discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Envisioning	Access/ Usability	Neutral or Positive	Yes
Envisioning	Aesthetic	Positive	Yes
Creating	Development	Neutral	Yes
Creating	FBT-Capacity	Neutral	Yes
Legitimizing	Green	Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	High Line	Neutral or Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	History	Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	Narrative	Positive	Yes
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Subtheme-gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of safety-neutral or positive	Consistent within each subtheme but split overall

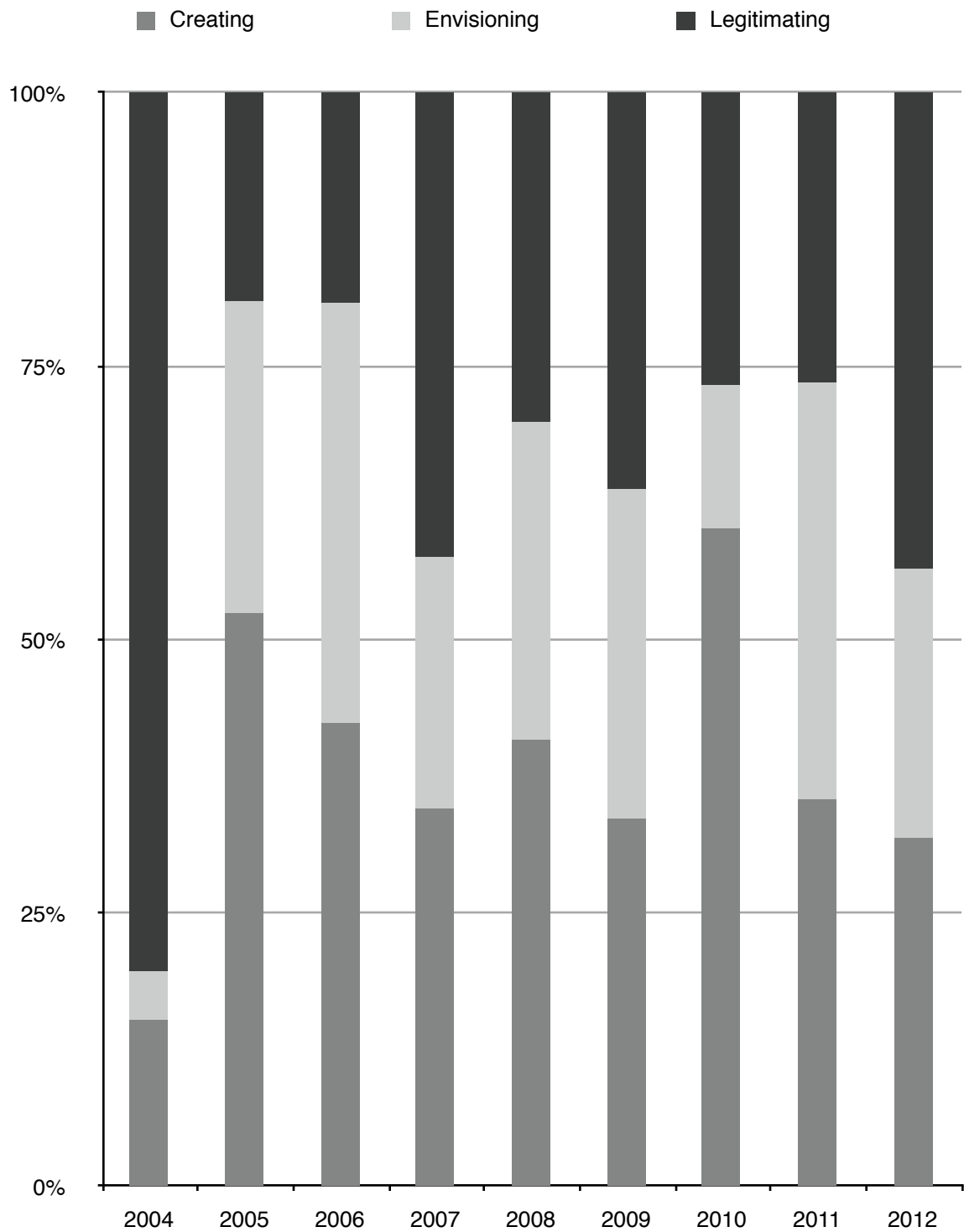
Figure 5.11 illustrates the proportions devoted to discourse on each kind of institutional work.

Figure 5.11: Distribution of Discourse, by Dimension of Institutional Work



In addition to being consistent in tone, the discourse is relatively balanced among the three dimensions of institutional work entrepreneurs need to perform in order to make a venture happen. Figure 5.12 shows the distribution over time by dimension and theme for all three dimensions of institutional work linked to venture viability; in addition to an overall balance among the three dimensions of institutional work, there has also been balance over time, with each dimension accounting for approximately one-third of the discourse, with the exception of 2004, 2007, and 2012, where more of the discourse focused on themes in the *Legitimizing* dimension.

Figure 5.12: Distribution of Discourse Themes Among Dimensions, 2004-2012



This kind of split could indicate that the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and their coalition of supporters gave nearly equal time to each dimension of institutional work through active investment in the discourse. Each of the three dimensions plays a necessary role in seeing the venture through – in ensuring its viability. Notably, this split looks remarkably like the post-2009 split in the discourse around the High Line (described in Chapter 4), and very different from the split around the Reading Viaduct (described in Chapter 6). As with the High Line, the success or failure of the Bloomingdale Trail depends on the ability of the advocacy group and its coalition to focus and bring to life the imagination of its potential users (and donors). While the High Line is clearly successful, with construction mostly finished, and strong usage by residents and non-residents, the Bloomingdale Trail is, I would argue, at least partially successful. FBT and its coalition of supporters have raised enough funds to construct the entire Trail, albeit at a low level of finish, with construction starting Summer 2013. They have gathered some information on who is projected to use the Trail – estimates from the Mayor’s Press Office tout that “thousands of Chicagoans will be able to use the trail to commute to work each morning” (Mayor's Press Office, 2012) and the Trail could be a “safe route to school for thousands of children who attend the 12 public and parochial schools within easy walking distance (Mayor's Press Office, 2012). Bicycle use is estimated to be approximately 2275 bicycle trips daily, or 750,000-825,000 annual bike trips, depending on weather (Deng and Sheren, 2011).

But the pre-project hype is just that: hype. If anything, the High Line experience in New York showed that there is not a proven methodology for forecasting how used the Trail will be, and by whom. There, initial estimates of annual visitors were under 500,000. The most recent estimates are over 3.7 million (thehighline.org).

The development and stability of these strong themes, the distribution of themes within the discourse and its facial similarity to the High Line discourse once open, are interesting because they point to a necessary, but not sufficient, determinative relationship between project presentation and project progress. For each dimension of institutional work there was a dominant theme, with particular emphasis on the functional nature of the park – focusing on how users will

interact with the park, and how the park will actually get constructed. There was also a focus on linking the park to a discussion about making the neighborhood safer, which is also related to use of the park.

The discourse is not equally split among the three dimensions of physical artifact sense-making outlined by Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004). The dimension of instrumentality dominates, accounting for 50% of the coded themes in the discourse around the Bloomingdale Trail. The dimension of symbolism accounts for one-third of the coded themes, and aesthetics is far less important in the discourse. This split is substantially different from the High Line (as described in more detail in Chapters 4 and 7), which is approximately equal among the three dimensions post-opening. It is also very different from the Reading Viaduct discourse (as described in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7), which heavily favors the dimension of symbolism.

FBT and its supporters did not spend a great deal of time on the aesthetics and how the park would look. Ben Helphand argues that was purposeful, since “we want the Park to reflect that “Chicago is the ‘City that Works’” (Helphand 2011 Interview). That may be due to programming requirements and budget limitations, it may be post-hoc justification, or it may be an accurate reflection of the underlying attitude. That said, there is not a lot of discussion about the *beauty* or *magic* of the Trail, as opposed to the discourse seen both in the High Line (discussed in Chapter 4) and the Reading Viaduct (discussed in Chapter 6). Those elements are just less important in the discourse around the Bloomingdale Trail.

Among the three artifact dimensions, focusing on *Instrumentality*, whether by design, luck, or both, is a reasonable position to take. It shows that the advocacy group is putting its effort into making the park a reality. There are particular institutional logics linked to Chicago, “the city that works” (Helphand 2011 interview) that make this focus on *Instrumentality* make sense for the project as a whole. And as stated earlier, focusing on how to build the park and access the park brackets, or sidesteps, much of the potential conflict about whether the park should be built in the first place. Table 5.2 shows the split among the artifact dimensions, along with the tone and

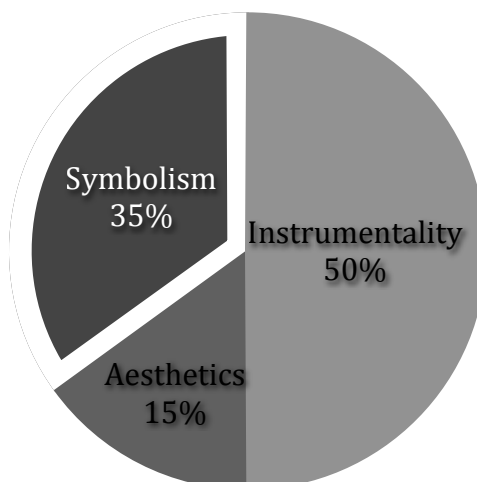
consistency. Importantly, the overall tone in the themes of the discourse is positive and consistent, and this works with the Instrumentality focus in support of the Bloomingdale Trail.

Table 5.2 – Summary of Themes within Artifact Dimensions in the Bloomingdale Trail discourse

Dimension of physical artifact sensemaking	Code	Overall tone of theme within discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Instrumentality	Access/ Usability	Neutral or Positive	Yes
Aesthetic	Aesthetic	Positive	Yes
Instrumentality	Development	Neutral or Positive	Yes
Symbolic	FBT-Capacity	Neutral	Yes
Aesthetic	Green	Positive	Yes
Symbolic	High Line	Neutral or Positive	Yes
Symbolic	History	Positive	Yes
Symbolic	Narrative	Positive	Yes
Symbolic	Neighborhood	Subtheme-gentrification – neutral or negative Subtheme of safety-neutral or positive	Consistent within each subtheme but split overall

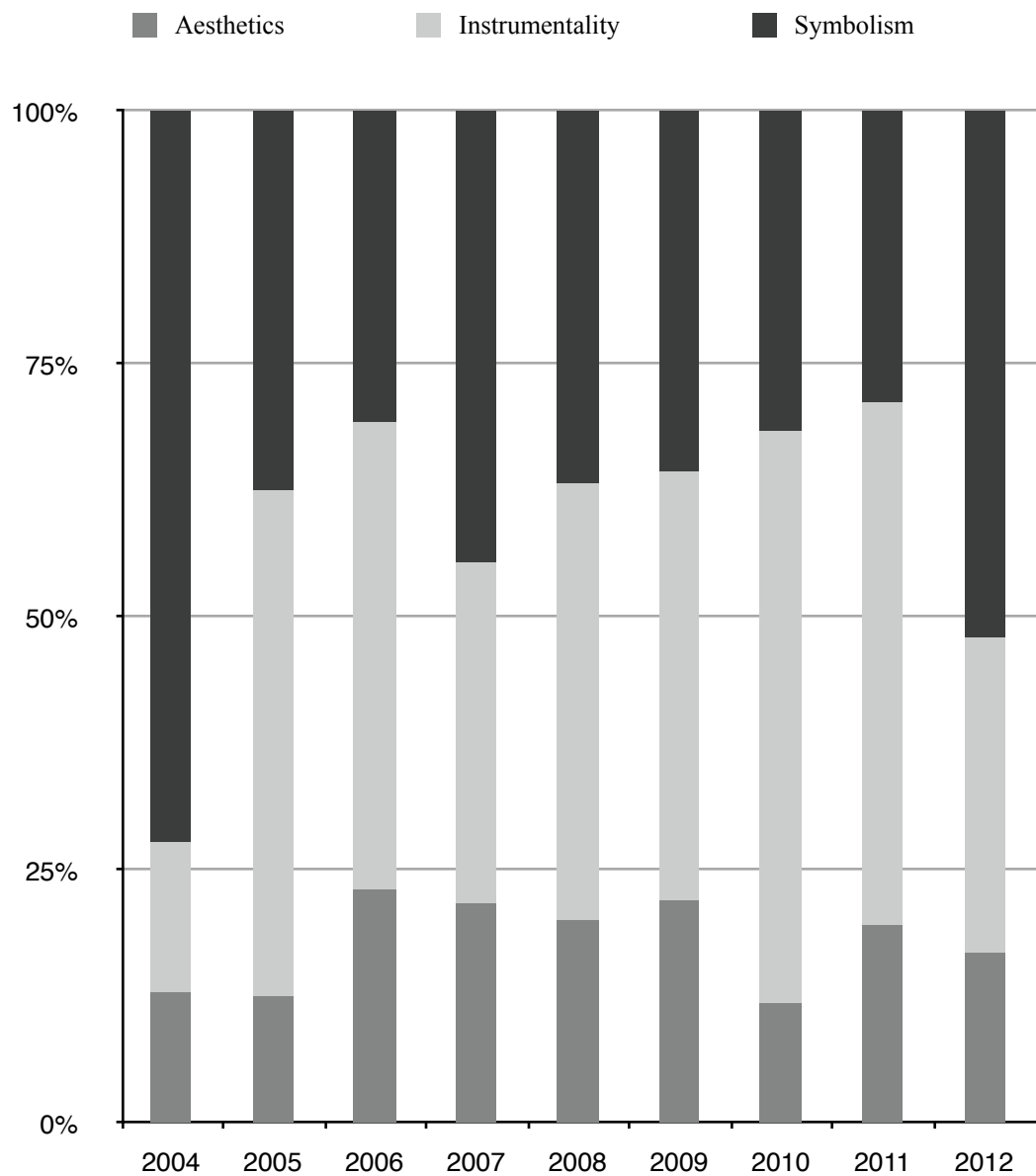
The overall allocation of discourse for the Bloomingdale Trail is shown in Figure 5.13, with Instrumentality dominating the discourse.

Figure 5.13: Percent of discourse, dimensions of physical artifact sensemaking



In addition to dominating the overall discourse, Instrumentality also dominated the discourse over time, except for 2004 and 2012. The discourse also consistently reflected the strong presence of themes within the Symbolism dimension. The distribution over time is shown in Figure 5.14, with Instrumentality shown in solid light gray on the stacked bars and Symbolism shown as black.

Figure 5.14: Distribution of Discourse among Artifact Dimensions



This chapter has argued that, since 2002, FBT has consistently presented several key themes in discussions about the Bloomingdale Trail to build a deep and broad coalition of support, coming from members of the communities bordering the Bloomingdale Trail, city government agencies, commuters, and other interested organizational actors. This project is dynamic and ongoing since 2003, and maintaining consistent themes over time is not a given. FBT's ability to be consistent in developing and maintaining a vision of the potential park *focusing on how it would work* can be considered a measure of success. The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail has worked with other members of the coalition to raise funds for the first phase of construction, and that external economic achievement can also be considered at least partially successful.

The strongest themes were about how the park would work, how it would get constructed, and providing reassurance to the adjacent neighborhoods that the park was for them, not a group of external elites (real or perceived). Given that what is proposed is a park, it was surprising to find the relatively low priority of "green" discourse. One might expect much more in the way of "green is good", or "parks are great", or even links to exercise, than what actually appeared in the discourse. The lack of visibility may be because, when you say something is a park, people know what that means and most will agree on a definition that has nothing to do with things "green." It may also be due to the focus on access point parks as part of the Trail.

Unlike the High Line project, there was relatively low visibility of Aesthetics in the discourse. Given the role Envisioning plays in a venture's viability, one might expect more emphasis on what the park would look like. Aesthetics is a dominant theme in the discourse around the High Line, the only project of this kind currently open in the United States. Instead, the FBT and its supporters chose to focus on the practical aspects of the park's development. In effect, FBT has treated the Trail and access parks as symbolic and physical opportunities to connect four neighborhoods – Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Bucktown, and Wicker Park. This strategy appears mostly to have worked in smoothing over racial or neighborhood-based tensions. That, itself, is notable given the different socio-economic statuses of the four communities the

park runs through. Beth White of TPL has described the Trail and park combination as being a charm bracelet, with the parks dangling off the chain of the Trail (White 2011 Interview, Kamin 2011, Donovan 2012). Another way to think of it is that by focusing on Instrumentality and Symbolism dimensions of the park as artifact in making its case, the FBT has been able to use the Trail as the charm bracelet, and the communities as the charms, in its presentation and influence of the discourse over the past ten years.

CHAPTER 6, THE PHILADELPHIA STORY: MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

After more than a decade of effort, Philadelphia's Reading Viaduct Project (RVP) has made very little progress toward repurposing the .86 mile remnant elevated passenger and freight train track known as the Reading Viaduct into an elevated public urban green space. While City government officials, including current Mayor Michael Nutter, have indicated their support for the project, the City currently owns only .25 miles of the entire space, with the rest remaining under private ownership by Reading International. No money has been raised for construction of any part of the Viaduct. Some parts of the community are excited about the possibilities and other parts of the community are entrenched in organized opposition, seeing the structure as blight literally hemming them in.

The Reading Viaduct is an elevated passenger and freight train track built in the 1890s, comprising a combination of embankment sections bridged by steel structures and arched masonry bridges. The structure offers spectacular views of both the immediate neighborhoods and the Philadelphia skyline. The two branches of the Reading Viaduct are within the boundaries of Philadelphia's First Ward, and run through two very different neighborhoods. One is the gentrifying Callowhill area, also known as the Loft District (Boyer, 2009), which is primarily supportive of efforts to redevelop the Viaduct. The other is the ethnic enclave of Chinatown, which refers to Callowhill as Chinatown North, sees the Viaduct as a blighting constraint, and generally wants to tear the Viaduct down. Figure 6.1 shows the Reading Viaduct in its current form. The black box around the Viaduct highlights its shape relative to Philadelphia's gridded streets.

This chapter systematically evaluates and describes how the 501c(3) group known as the Reading Viaduct Project (RVP) has used discourse and presentation since 2003 to make the case for the Viaduct to be repurposed as an elevated linear park. RVP has been unable to build a broad coalition of support among community members, private foundations, and government agencies. Since 2010, RVP has had to compete for control of the project and related dialogue with ViaductGreene, another advocacy group claiming to speak for the area around the Viaduct. Several questions are addressed in this chapter:

- Why has RVP been unsuccessful in building a coalition of support?
- How did RVP attempt to “sell” its story – to the community, to government agencies, to other interested local organizational actors?
- How did they and their supporters attempt to make the case for the improvements that the Viaduct would represent, using themes, images, phrases, and symbols?
- How did RVP attempt to convince other players that RVP had the capacity to make the project a reality, given the long development timeline?
- How did RVP attempt to link development of the Viaduct to larger conversations – about urban green space, about history, about similar urban improvement projects and their impact?
- How did RVP attempt to reconcile competing logics – in this case, the logic of a park vs. the logic of economic-interest driven urban development?

This project is dynamic and long-lived, and maintaining consistent themes over time is not a given. This chapter argues that project presentation is a necessary, but not sufficient determinant of project progress, and that the fragmentation found throughout the discourse around the Viaduct is a result of RVP’s inability to resolve the competing logics being applied and to frame their solution as the correct one for the identified problem.

6.1 Brief History of Civic Action

Efforts to redevelop the Reading Viaduct have been in process for over ten years. Initially, the Callowhill Neighborhood Association (CNA) advocated for the Viaduct’s development under its umbrella of neighborhood projects, inspired by the grassroots efforts of The Friends of the High Line in New York. The CNA is a relatively young organization; it formed in 2000 to assist with a wide range of neighborhood development initiatives, including Neighborhood Cleanups, Block Captains, Litter Can Program, and a Town Watch Program (Boyer, 2009, planphilly.com).

In 2003, Sarah McEneaney and John Struble of the CNA helped found the Reading Viaduct Project (RVP) as a separate community group dedicated to the preservation and adaptive reuse of the abandoned Reading Viaduct. At the end of 2003, RVP held its first meeting as a dedicated nonprofit with 25 neighbors and concerned citizens. The members of the RVP are generally artists, primarily white and Asian, living in the Callowhill section of Philadelphia. They claim they “currently have a volunteer Board and over 200 supporters/subscribers from

throughout the Mid-Atlantic region” (readingviaduct.org, 2011).

Also in 2003, the City of Philadelphia obtained a grant from the William Penn Foundation to fund a study analyzing the cost to demolish the Viaduct compared with the cost of reclaiming the Viaduct for use as a linear park. Conducted by Urban Engineers, the study concluded that development as a park and recreational pathway, including landscaping, benches, access ramps and staircases, was estimated to cost \$5.1 million, whereas demolition of the structure was estimated to cost between \$35.5 million and \$37 million. (McEneaney 2011 Interview, Levy 2011 Interview, Urek 2011 Interview, Edelstein 2011 Interview). RVP has not really engaged with either the Trust for Public Land or the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, two large and well-known entities involved in both the New York and Chicago projects and other similar projects, in attempting to build a broader coalition to develop the Viaduct (Ciabotti 2011 Interview, Stone 2011 Interview, Harnik 2011 Interview, van Meter 2012 Interview).

Since 2003, RVP’s efforts to advocate for the Viaduct have been limited, mostly consisting of taking City officials on tours of the site, giving presentations about the site, or taking City officials to see New York’s High Line, approximately two hours away. In addition to funding constraints, the limited efforts of RVP may be due partly to the complicated nature of site ownership. The mass transit authority Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), which is part of city government, owns .25 miles of the Viaduct. Reading International, the Reading Railroad’s former operator and now an international movie theater operator, owns the remainder (McEneaney 2011 interview, Edelstein 2011 interview).

In 2000 and 2004, Reading International and the City of Philadelphia engaged in rounds of negotiations around transferring ownership of the Viaduct from the company to the City. Each time, Reading offered to pay for part of the environmental cleanup required as part of the transfer, but the City government was in transition and unable to complete the negotiations.

“In 2000 they made an offer where they would give us, you know, a large amount of money and the Viaduct to walk away. And we didn’t respond because we were switching mayors and it was just a big mess.” (Edelstein 2011 Interview). In 2004, “[Reading] made another offer for less money. It was \$500,000 to donate the Viaduct and walk away.” (Edelstein 2011

Interview).

After years of nothing happening, the project seemed to gain momentum in 2010, once Paul Levy of Center City District (CCD) ³⁰ became an active supporter. Levy is well-known throughout Philadelphia and respected by members of city government for his work in cleaning up the downtown neighborhood of Center City. In 2010, CCD began working with both the Reading Viaduct Project and the City's Departments of Commerce and Parks Recreation to review the site's history and evaluate development options. The CCD was drawn into the project by RVP co-founders McEneaney and Struble, and Levy described the experience of walking on the High Line as the key factor that changed his mind:

For years people were talking about the Viaduct as a connector...I kept saying 'it connects nothing to nothing. It's a stub now and it runs through a weak neighborhood.' But two years ago I saw the High Line and it changed my perspective. Philadelphia is a gridded city and the Viaduct cuts at an angle across the streets and gives you a completely unusual perspective on the downtown skyline....I began to say, 'this is not a connecting path. It is an anchor space for revitalizing the core of the city. (Levy 2011 Interview)

Once Levy became an active supporter, he began focusing on understanding how much it would cost to demolish or renovate the Viaduct. With grants in 2010 from the William Penn Foundation and Poor Richard's Charitable Trust, the CCD commissioned a feasibility analysis of the entire Viaduct with consultants Urban Engineers, Cecil Baker + Partners, and Friends of the High Line, NYC. The City also engaged real estate developer Jones Lang LaSalle (JLS) to analyze the impact on the surrounding neighborhoods of demolition or renovation. The team evaluated total and partial demolition and several renovation scenarios, assessing impacts on local real estate and community development (Center City District, 2010, Levy 2011 Interview, Levy, 2012). JLS estimated a 1-4% increase in property values in the neighborhood if the Viaduct were demolished and 4-8% increase in property values if the Viaduct were renovated (Center City District, 2010, Levy 2011 Interview). As Levy described:

The big number for demolition [based on the 2010 assessment, not the 2003 evaluation] was \$50 million dollars and ...half of [that] cost ... was dealing with the disposal of potentially contaminated soil. ... Then we looked at renovation alternatives and

³⁰ The Center City District (CCD) is a powerful neighborhood improvement district organization.

obviously we have this wonderful model [the High Line]. ...We ... got parameters for the engineering from the designers of the High Line and in this process we came up with square footage allocations for landscaping and the earth to support that. ... The total renovation option for the Viaduct is \$37 million. That's just cost. That's not design or anything.

As part of renewed momentum behind the project, in May 2011 the City of Philadelphia entered into a third round of serious talks with Reading International to determine how to transfer ownership of the Viaduct. However, with the opening of the High Line, Reading International's view of the Viaduct has evolved as well. As David Edelstein put it:

Now, essentially, ... they want us to pay for it. ...They evolved into an entertainment-related industry and company, ... and then they have these kind of railroad legacy assets that they kind of mention in passing as a liability. And – I mean, that's what's particularly frustrating to us 'cause you know, they don't acknowledge that they have any value on their balance sheets, but you know, they're acting as if they do have a lot of value and they expect to do something with them. (Edelstein 2011 Interview).

In the fall of 2011, at Levy's urging, RVP began developing plans for a Callowhill Reading Viaduct Neighborhood Improvement District (CRVNID), which needed City Council approval to be implemented. The CRVNID was designed to signal neighborhood support and momentum behind the project; there was also a concern that without an NID the project could be in the position of constantly raising money for maintenance, as has been the case with New York's High Line (Levy 2011 Interview). Levy mentioned that while City Councilman Paul DiCicco, representing both the Callowhill and Chinatown areas, was in support of the NID, Chinatown's advocacy groups

“are actively lobbying against it because they see this as somehow or other taking control of their area, and I've been trying to assure them 150 ways that [the NID is just a] maintenance organization [and it] doesn't have [those powers]” (Levy 2011 Interview).

At the time of the interview, fall 2011, Levy seemed confident that the measure to create the NID would pass with DiCicco's support. A number of neighborhood residents, including (but not limited to) a large contingent of Asian-Americans, came to testify against the measure during a September 2011 hearing, arguing that the extra tax burden was an undue burden and that they would not be represented by the new entity. Chinatown residents argued that their neighborhood

would be better able to reclaim itself by tearing down the Viaduct, at least in part; this would enable the space underneath to become regular parcels of land that could be developed into affordable housing for the community. Opponents claimed to have letters from 53% of property owners opposing the CRVNID (Thompson, 2011), over the 50% required to prevent passage.

The struggle over whether to keep or tear down the Viaduct is the latest in a long line of Center City visions that have threatened to destroy Philadelphia's Chinatown: Market East, the expanded Convention Center, a proposed stadium, the Vine Street Expressway, the proposed relocation of Foxwoods Casino. Chinatown residents have fought each development, sometimes losing but often winning. Unsurprisingly, residents are wary of attempts from outsiders to force improvements on the area.

The NID vote was scheduled for December 2011(Thompson, 2011). After the contentious hearing in September, City Councilman DiCicco offered two compromises in an effort to save the CRVNID (Thompson, 2011, Hahn, 2011) First, the creation of Viaduct Park proved too divisive to keep associated with the CRVNID's official purpose, so the funding of the Viaduct was explicitly precluded in the CRVNID's initial five years. Second, large parts of Chinatown were carved out of the CRVNID, so they would be unaffected by the property tax surcharge.

Even with changes to the CRVNID, itself, and support from city government, Chinatown-based opposition continued to organize against the CRVNID, arguing primarily that the additional tax was burdensome on the residents and that the taxes would be used to fund the Viaduct's maintenance (Russ, 2012). Despite the opposition's insistence that over 50% of property owners submitted opposition letters, those letters required verification, so the City Council voted in December 2011 to approve the CRVNID in case there were not enough valid opposition signatures (Hahn, 2011, Brey 2012).

In January 2012, enough opposition votes were verified to officially put the possibility of forming a CRVNID to rest, with 52% of property owners voting against the measure (Brey, 2012). It is believed to be the first time a Philadelphia community rejected an NID (Russ, 2012).

RVP's members were surprised by the continued opposition of those who had their areas carved out of the CRVNID (Russ, 2012, McEneaney 2012 Interview). They were also surprised by the level and amount of misinformation they had to combat in the CRVNID (McEneaney 2012 Interview). July 2012 marked a second attempt to revive the NID (Brey, 2012, McEneaney 2012 Interview) and it remains unresolved at the time of this writing.

The current focus of the RVP and its supporters is on development of the .25 mile spur already owned by the city and the possible use of that spur as a proof of concept, since Reading International has not transferred ownership of the remaining parcel to the City. The idea is to generate support and momentum through developing a small piece, and encourage participation and discussion of alternatives once something tangible exists. Design expert Prahalad suggests just this strategy in dealing with a long-lived and as-yet undeveloped project. She refers to it as showing a “small win” (Prahalad 2012 interview).

In 2011, with a new round of foundation grants, the CCD, partnering with the City, commissioned a schematic design by Studio Bryan Hanes and Urban Engineers, focusing on the smaller, SEPTA-owned spur. An on-line survey, relied on by the designers, drew only 59 extended replies (Levy 2012). The survey was not well publicized, though it was intended to get public reactions to the Viaduct. The lack of publicity was partly due to the limited funds available to the project and partly a failure of public relations. Unlike efforts in Chicago and New York, RVP and its supporters did not engage in community visioning sessions to generate enthusiasm about the survey or to supplement the sparse replies. The minimal response to the landscape architects' survey could indicate lack of knowledge about the project, lack of caring, or both. This failure on multiple fronts will be explored in more in detail in the next sections. In March 2012, the team incorporated the preferences from the limited survey work and produced a series of renderings. The response from the Greater Philadelphia area was enthusiastic. The cost of the schematic alternative selected was estimated to be \$6-8 million. (Popkin, 2012).

The next phase, funded by a City Commerce Department grant to the CCD, produced bid

documents for the SEPTA-owned .25 mile portion from Callowhill to 13th and Noble Streets at the end of 2012. Project partners are now seeking sources for construction financing and a mechanism for funding long-term maintenance. Negotiations are still ongoing between the City and Reading International for the larger portion of the Viaduct (Levy, 2012).

6.2 Themes in Discourse as Mechanism for Resolving Competing Logics

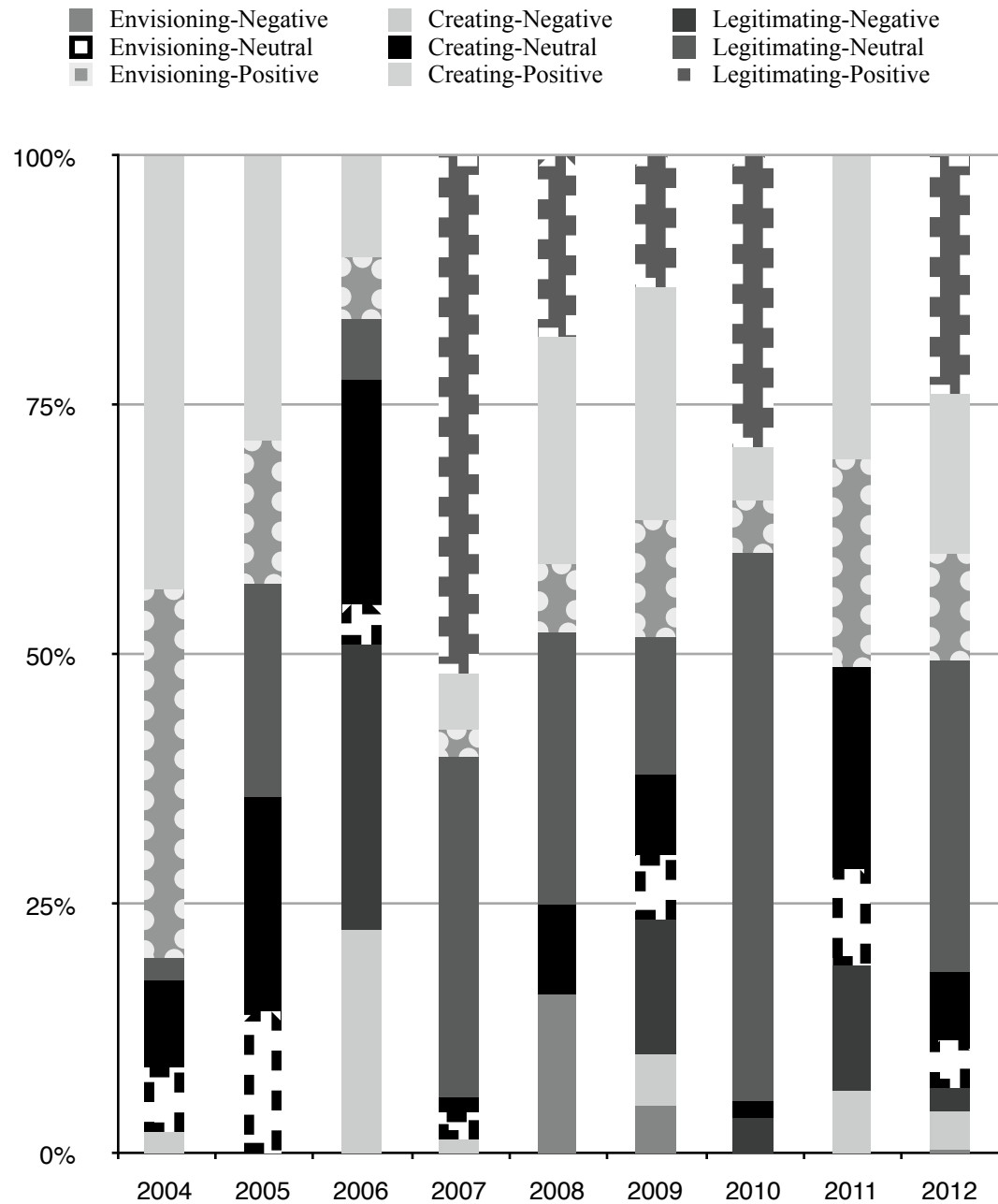
My research questions focus on whether and how the Reading Viaduct Project, as an organization, is able to influence the discourse around their proposed new park. I am also interested in demonstrating the link between project presentation and progress by understanding both dominant themes and consistency with which they are treated. In Chapter 2, I described how Tracey et al (2011) highlight three different kinds of institutional work, occurring at different levels, required for entrepreneurs to make their venture a reality. As in Chapters 4 and 5, this chapter uses the ECL framework to evaluate the process used by the entrepreneurs, combined with the IAS framework of dimensions of a physical artifact's sense-making, to evaluate the discourse.

In each of the three categories of institutional work in the ECL framework, one theme dominated. The dominant theme in the *Envisioning* dimension was Aesthetics/Design, with 25% of the discourse. In the *Creating* dimension the Development process dominated, with 18% of the discourse. In *Legitimizing* discourse, the Neighborhood, with 24% of the discourse, was the dominant theme in this dimension. These three main themes together accounted for 68% of the coded discourse.

Given the long development history for this project it is also important to examine how the themes developed over time. Figure 6.2 shows a timeline of dominant themes found in the discourse by dimension of institutional work and whether or not the tone of the theme was positive. The discourse is fragmented throughout all three dimensions of institutional work, with most of it being either neutral or negative as opposed to positive. There is an emphasis on

Creating discourse early on and later *Legitimizing* discourse becomes more dominant. As shown below, especially since 2008/2009 (concurrent with the current Mayor taking office and the High Line's Section One opening), the discourse around the Viaduct has been mostly neutral or negative.

Figure 6.2: Timeline Showing Dominant Discourse Themes Within Dimensions of Institutional Work

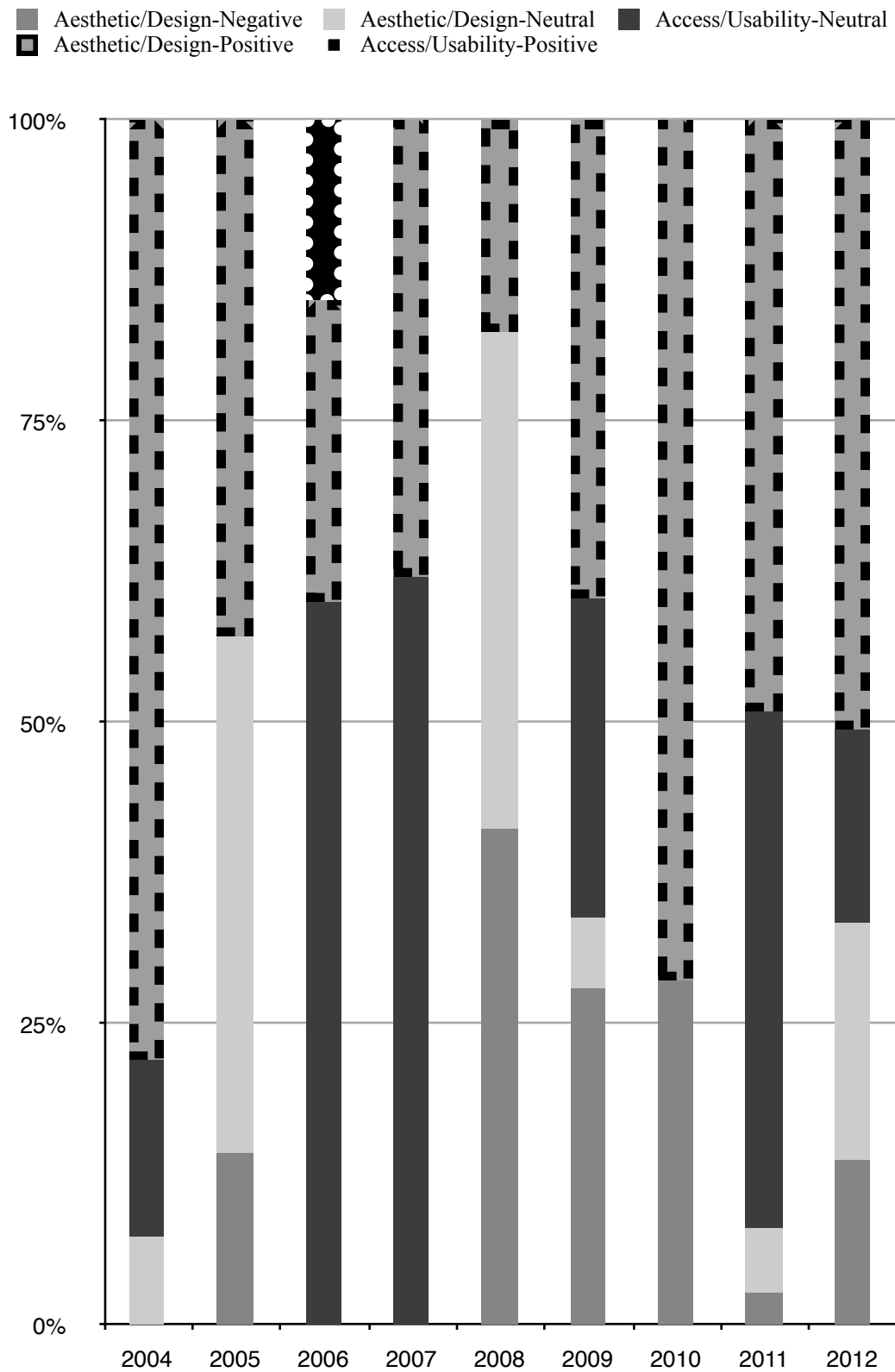


When using Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (2004) IAS framework, the dominant themes were in the Aesthetic and Symbolic dimensions. *Aesthetics* describes what the artifact looks like. The *Symbolic* dimension describes what the artifact represents – and to whom. *Instrumentality*, or how the artifact works, was far less important in the discourse of this project. The following section explores the dominant theme in each dimension. In addition, I explore two secondary themes – access/usability in the *Envisioning* dimension and the High Line in the *Legitimizing* dimension. While neither is the dominant theme, both those themes support my contention that the overall discourse around the Reading Viaduct is fragmented, thus affecting the venture's viability.

6.2a Envisioning

One of the continuing challenges faced by the RVP is the ability to create a consistent mental picture for the Viaduct in the minds of potential supporters, and this presented a challenge since visual objects can (and often do) carry unintended messages (Meyer et al 2013). While the Aesthetics/Design theme dominated and most of the discourse was positive, the discourse was also incomplete and fragmented regarding the project. This pattern of gaps and fragmentation held over time, and there was also a negative theme that was well organized. I also considered the theme of Access/Usability because fragmentation around how the Viaduct would be used, and the fact that the RVP and its supporters are not in full agreement about its use, exacerbates the fragmentation found elsewhere in the discourse. Figure 6.3 shows the distribution of the discourse over time in the Envisioning dimension of institutional work. While Aesthetics/Design dominates the discourse in 2010 (after the opening of New York's High Line, both before and after that time that theme is far less prevalent. The talk about the proposed park in the Envisioning dimension is more likely to be negative or neutral than positive. The themes in the Envisioning dimension are in Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz's artifact dimensions of Aesthetics and Instrumentality.

Figure 6.3: Envisioning Dimension, Distribution of Themes Over Time



6.2a1 Envisioning-Aesthetics

The analysis separates aesthetics from access/usability because how the Viaduct should work is different from what it should look like, though a lack of agreement on the former can contribute to uncertainty about the latter. The Viaduct has been discussed since 2000 and there has been a lot of disagreement about what it would do and how it would work. The discourse around the aesthetics of the space has fallen into two broad categories; those who saw it as blight and those who saw it as an opportunity. As mentioned earlier, the language around blight and related terms came from Center City residents living in Chinatown, the ethnic advocacy group Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation (PCDC), and their supporters.

Casting the Viaduct as blight or blighting influence has been an entrenched element in the discourse since 2008. Attempts by Chinatown advocacy group PCDC and their supporters to frame the Viaduct as blight were very much in line with tactics highlighted by Wilson and Wouters (2003), Newman and Lake (2004), and Stoecker (2004), where the framing of a neighborhood or structure as blight serves to limit the control of community organizations like RVP over neighborhood planning, policymaking, and development. The PCDC experiences the opposite effect: framing the space as “blight” actually increases PCDC’s control.

The RVP and its supporters cast the space in terms of the vistas, opportunities, and differences from other, urban environments -- tactics also in line with the framing work highlighted by the authors above, expressed as counter-framing tactics to combat the image of the Viaduct as blight. In 2004, graduate students in the University of Pennsylvania School of Design participated in an intense, four-day-long charrette to develop concepts for the reuse of the structure (Rosof and Fallon, 2004, Wilner, 2004, Goldin, 2007). Figures 5.4 and 5.5 show images from that charrette. Figure 5.4 shows the Viaduct as an above-ground walkway connecting to the second stories of surrounding affordable modular artists lofts. The yellow structure shown is a skateboard ramp imagined on the Viaduct (Rosof and Fallon, 2004). Figure 5.5 shows the overall charrette goals and a small rendering of a treatment. (Rosof and Fallon, 2004).

**Figure 6.4: 2004 Charrette,
Skateboard ramp**



Source: Fallon and Rosof

**Figure 6.5: 2004 Charrette,
Campus Map**



Source: Fallon and Rosof

At the time, it seemed as if these ideas could have spurred more discussion of the Viaduct and momentum around the project. RVP co-founder McEneaney was quoted as saying she was hoping, with city support and prodding, that the railroad would pay for remediation (Rosof and Fallon, 2004). And organizer Kyle Gradinger remarked that “they had been invited to present to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Design Advocacy Group, the Penn Design Board of Overseers, and Shawn McCaney with the Pew Charitable Trusts” (University of Pennsylvania, 2004).

However, 2004 also marked the release of the Chinatown Neighborhood Plan, developed over a two-year period. This planning process was coordinated by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), and developed by the design firm Kise, Straw Kolodner (KSK), involving seventeen different stakeholder groups, including the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation (PCDC), Asian Americans United (AAU), and the Callowhill Neighborhood Association (CNA) – notably including RVP cofounders Struble and McEneaney (Heller, 2009). The 2004 neighborhood plan described a community that has slowly been hemmed in to the south. Jane Jacobs (1961) was among the first to link the physical environment with direct effects on social life. In this case, the physical hemming in of Chinatown’s residents,

particularly by outside forces, had led to feelings of being both hemmed in/under siege and cut off. Additionally, Chinatown had experienced rapidly rising residential prices which created pressures to expand, encouraging the community to look north (to Callowhill) for future expansion. Expansion needs combined with PCDC's stated need for affordable housing in the Chinatown community, enabling PCDC to continue to promote Chinatown's position as an ethnic and cultural gateway.

The 2004 development report also called for the teardown of at least part of the Viaduct. As described in the plan, Chinatown residents consider the decaying Viaduct structure dark, dirty, ugly, unsafe, a blight on their neighborhood, and an impediment to much-needed housing development (Gradinger, 2004, Wilner 2004, DcnPhilly 2010). Unlike the focused language on blight emanating from the PCDC and others, RVP and its supporters notably were not in agreement about what the Viaduct's opportunity was. Some supporters describe the Viaduct as a set of ruins (Carey, 2007), primarily used by the homeless (Anhorn, 2008), or "while remarking that [it] is in a very central location, few seem aware of its existence." (Carey, 2007) More recently, blogger Karen Amart of PennPlanning described the Viaduct's neighborhood as not being fit to house a park, and "the Viaduct would offer amazing views of downtown, but also, in its existing state, views of incredible blight" (Amart, 2011).

Still others see it as prime real estate, over which the public sector can gain control, demolish the Viaduct, and redevelop the land as much-needed affordable housing. Some also see the Viaduct's diagonal northern spur as a hindrance to positive growth, creating a swath of small, triangular parcels that cut through the neighborhood. (Heller, 2009). At best, the RVP sent mixed messages by having its two cofounders participate in development of the 2004 plan, and implicitly endorse its result. The RVP did not counter the PCDC's blight-based framing of the Viaduct or its proposed solution, allowing any momentum gained from the charrette to evaporate.

The project does have strong supporters, primarily from Callowhill and outside the immediate neighborhood, who often use words like *stunning*, *rare*, and *serene* to describe the

Viaduct, “both stunning skyline vistas and a rare peaceful oasis in the heart of Center City”. (Grading, 2004). And Inga Saffron of the Philadelphia Inquirer described her 2004 visit to the Viaduct where

“[t]he towers of Center City gleam on the horizon like a faraway Oz. Somehow the harsh industrial landscape on its fringes makes the viaduct feel like a serene oasis, rather than a gritty outpost.” (Saffron, 2004)

Local blogger Michael Froehlich took his cue from Saffron’s 2009 article reviewing New York’s High Line, and argued that “demolishing the Viaduct—an estimated \$35 million [to do]—would strip Philadelphia’s loft district of [a] potentially valuable amenity and make it a less distinctive place to live” (Froehlich, 2009). Attempts to describe the possibilities in this case are reminiscent of Martin’s (2003a) work on “place framing”, or assigning meaning to a neighborhood. Place framing produces spatial meanings in neighborhoods, and if done consistently and effectively this in turn enables community organizations to enhance both the legitimacy and power of their agendas for change.

While City officials and other supporters admit the structure is considered a blighting influence (Edelstein 2011 Interview, Urek 2011 Interview, Thompson, Radio Times 2011 Interview) they argue that it is also a really interesting elevated space (Thompson, Radio Times 2011 Interview), and a “cool space...just trying to get to the right place”. (Edelstein 2011 Interview), emphasizing that the structure’s height allows you “to really see the city from an entirely different perspective than you can just 30 feet below on the ground. the views from up there are spectacular.” (David, Radio Times 2011 Interview).

When done consistently, discourse on the aesthetics of the space can make a project feel more real. If stakeholders are debating where to put benches, or what they should look like, they have, implicitly, already bought in to the project happening. Here, RVP never got past the basic question of ‘should we do it?’ although focusing on what the Viaduct will look like is very much in line with Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz’ (2004) aesthetics dimension of a physical artifact’s

meaning.

6.2a2 Envisioning-Access/Usability

The .25-mile part of the Viaduct owned by SEPTA is accessible at grade. But how people will use the Viaduct (walking, biking, etc.) determines how users will need to access the structure above grade. RVP and its supporters were not and still are not in agreement over how to describe what they wanted to do. Since RVP's founding, some called the Viaduct a green space, some said it could be a park, some called it a bicycle trail, some said it was a link or connector among communities, others described it as an anchor, and still others talked of it as a commuting option.

In 2004, Kyle Gradinger wrote an article about the Viaduct for the Philadelphia City Paper. He described how "[s]ome Callowhill Loft District residents say they would like to see the viaduct converted into a linear park, like those in Paris and New York. Still others would like to see it as a Rails to Trails bicycle route that would connect North Philadelphia neighborhoods with Center City"(Gradinger, 2004). And despite forming an advocacy group dedicated to preserving the Viaduct, co-founder John Struble was hesitant in 2004 in describing how he thought the Viaduct should be used. "I don't think I should be [the] one to decide what it should be. Everyone should think about it" (Saffron, 2004).

By 2006-07, articles in blogs and newspapers began describing a complete lack of grassroots support for anything to be done with the structure (Dougherty, 2006), and this coincided with a lack of activity on the Reading Viaduct Project website. In 2008-09, the Reading Viaduct was still described as abandoned, with residents and community members still unsure about what it could be (Froehlich, 2008). It was also still described as a lost opportunity (Froehlich, 2009), and there was a vague mention in a 2009 article about how "some Philadelphians have been advocating for a park on the Reading Viaduct" (Heller, 2009).

It is important to note that 2009 was also the year Section 1 of the High Line opened in New York City. This did not lead to consensus in terms of what the Viaduct would be; publicly

RVP was still offering differing, competing uses for the Viaduct in 2009, while disagreements were still being aired. On RVP's website, they listed "The Viaduct's potential, cross-country ski trail" in 2009, as part of their timeline of events. And in an article by Brakeman in 2009, McEneaney "did admit she has her own visions of an amenity: public space, including bike trails, walking trails or children's Park." (Brakeman, 2009). This set of differing explanations for what the Viaduct will be continues to the present day, as RVP attempts to leave the programming of the Viaduct open in order to cast as wide a net of support as possible. Struble and McEneaney of RVP were quoted as brainstorming uses for the Viaduct in April 2012, including "[p]ublic art, dog park, bike lane, ...[and] roller coaster" (Jacobs, 2012). In the proposal for the NID, and in other public talks given by RVP and its supporters, there are no estimates for actual use of the Viaduct, if converted. It may be that leaving the Viaduct's uses undefined was an intentional, strategic move and the RVP planned to define the space more specifically once other similar projects opened. Or the RVP intended to refine the message once a coalition of support to 'do something' began to coalesce around the project. Under other circumstances, without organized opposition, that plan might have worked. The challenge for RVP, however, is that they left their desired uses for the space undefined and unexpressed, while their opposition was clear and coherent in framing the Viaduct as blight. The lack of definition of the space was perceived as RVP's lack of a plan and contributed to the project's lack of momentum, in fact inhibiting support.

Once Paul Levy of the Center City District became a supporter he began giving presentations and talks describing the Viaduct as an esplanade-type park that would act as an anchor (Levy 2011 Interview), attempting to provide a counter frame and build buy-in. This idea of the Viaduct being primarily described as a park echoes sentiments expressed by City officials (Focht 2011 Interview, Edelstein 2011 Interview, Hoch 2011 Interview, Urek 2011 Interview). Focht, from the Parks Department, in particular stressed the importance of understanding how the park will actually work, since at the time of the interview in 2011 there was still not a clear picture.

There's really three phases [involved in making the Viaduct happen.]. There's raising the

money. There's going through a civic engagement process to envision what this new public space would look like, you know, what do the residents and visitors want out of the space. And then ... doing the environmental remediation and building it. (Focht 2011 Interview)

This approach of raising the money before envisioning the space is unique to Philadelphia and the Viaduct. Both New York and Chicago carried out those activities in the reverse order, as discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5. To make matters more complicated, beginning in 2010, a competing advocacy group, ViaductGreene, began to push its vision of a three-mile linear park and bike trail in the same neighborhoods of Philadelphia. This vision included both the Reading Viaduct (what ViaductGreene calls the 9th Street Branch), and a second piece, running at grade and below ground, called the City Branch. This combination of an elevated viaduct park and a submerged rail bed would be a 3-mile linear park (van Meter 2012 Interview, Popkin, 2012). ViaductGreene is currently quite small, but has at least as many members as the Reading Viaduct Project (viaductgreene.org). Since 2010, ViaductGreene has been holding street level walking tours of the branches in partnership with both the Reading Viaduct Project and Design Philadelphia for interested members of the public (likeminded.org). ViaductGreene's two co-founders, Liz Maillie and Paul van Meter, also spent much of 2011 meeting with representatives from Philadelphia's departments for Urban Planning and Economic Development, and the Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (likeminded.org)

ViaductGreene needs the elevated portion of the Viaduct to move forward for its project to be successful, as the submerged portion will not work as a standalone park/trail. ViaductGreene's members acknowledge that the below-grade part of the park may be a difficult sell, at least initially, since unlike the elevated portion no one can see this piece from the street. "Before I went down there, I thought, 'This could be a little bit creepy,' " said Leah Murphy, a board member of ViaductGreene. "But the space was so broad. There's no traffic. There's no noise. It's like an urban oasis" (Gammage, 2012). Figure 6.6 shows the complete proposed park. The map itself, however, is misleading. More than half the space shown as available for the park is sunken, if not completely underground, and much of it is used for parking (PhiladelphiaSpeaks, 2012).

Figure 6.6: Complete Proposed Park, 9th and City Branches



Source: ViaductGreene.org

Paul van Meter, one of the co-founders, is a gardener with a strong “interest in industrial places where ... things look beautiful and no one planned it” (van Meter 2012 Interview.) Currently, van Meter sees his group's job as raising the profile of the Viaduct as part of the larger combined project through working with the community and by having an ideas competition, as the High Line did³¹. To ensure the park has community involvement, co-founder Liz Maillie said the group has been meeting with community groups to find out their needs. “A park is not successful unless it’s serving the people that live adjacent to it” (Maillie, quoted in Rodriguez, 2011). Van Meter concurs, pointing out that “we’ve done a lot of outreach in the communities about what they’re about, what do they want, and we’re doing more of that all the time” (van Meter 2012 Interview). While his group works with the RVP in organizing events and tours of the location (Rodriguez, 2011, the highline.org), van Meter draws a distinction between the missions

³¹ Van Meter knew the Friends of the High Line from having competed in their early ideas competition, and in 2010, ended up in Berlin at the same time as some of the High Line operations people. Together they saw a Berlin park and that made him rethink the possibilities for the Viaduct (van Meter 2012 interview).

of the two groups:

The Reading Viaduct project, they originated with this piece of blight in their neighborhood. They don't want to run a park. They don't want to build a park or design a park. They want the city or somebody to make that happen for them. With the blight, we are modeling our organization after Friends of the High Line, and are constantly driven by the idea that the High Line was never part of the community plan, the city plan, a parks department plan. It was never part of any plan. (van Meter 2012 Interview)

Van Meter has somewhat romanticized the Friends of the High Line in his description. The High Line was never part of the city's plan for green space until the FHL began to advocate for the space to become a park. Van Meter argues that the Viaduct being identified by the city of Philadelphia as a space they want to develop has led to the RVP being less aggressive and proactive than they need to be in order to get the Viaduct developed.

ViaductGreene does have one big backer – the public transit agency SEPTA. In addition to the .25-mile elevated portion of the Viaduct, the transportation company owns the sunken right-of-way and is eager to let someone else take care of it. The company seems willing to consider leasing the submerged part of the proposed park to a nonprofit like ViaductGreene to maintain the space, arguing that the space is actually safer and more maintainable if repurposed as a sustainable asset (Hill, 2012).

By 2011, RVP, supported by ViaductGreene, was focused on suggesting that the Viaduct should be turned into a park. This viewpoint was supported by the earlier-mentioned very limited survey work conducted by the Center City District (Center City District, 2011) and March 2012 images released by Studio/Bryan Hanes Architects showing renderings of the SEPTA spur, to support moving forward with that part of the Viaduct. Figure 7 shows a map of the SEPTA spur. Figure 8 shows combined before and after image from the renderings themselves, which received a very positive response from some parts of the greater Philadelphia community (Corcoran 2012, Popkin 2012, Spikol 2012, Zale 2012).

Figure 6.7: Map of the Quarter-Mile Spur with Relationship to the City



Source: Bryan Hanes Architects

Figure 6.8: 2012 Rendering, Before/After – with City View



Source: philly.curbed.com

In all renderings the architect, by design, shows only young people or families (Levy 2011 Interview). This is an attempt to appeal to the young demographic living in and near Center City. The focus on young people and families is also designed explicitly to draw comparisons to New York’s High Line, where initial renderings also focused on a younger demographic (thehighline.org, 2003-2004).

While RVP and Center City District were openly promoting the Viaduct as an esplanade like the High Line, ViaductGreene was still suggesting that the Viaduct accommodate bicycles. This was due to the larger project ViaductGreene is promoting, which is a combined bike trail and park. Jamie Moffett, a well-known local independent filmmaker, and public supporter of a Reading Viaduct park, was also talking about the Viaduct as a bike trail, arguing “one thing that is resonating well with folks is we’re referring to the viaduct as a kind of Interstate 676 for cyclists and pedestrians. It can be a healthy interstate for people to commute in between different places” (Petrucchi, 2011). This basic disagreement among RVP supporters about what the park will be makes planning and coordinating more difficult. The disagreement can lead to confusion. Especially when combined with contested discussions about what the park will look like, disagreement about how it will work can also make the organization seem less focused

(DCnPhilly, 2010, Prahalad, 2011), and can decrease the likelihood that the organization is taken seriously.

6.2b Creating -- *Development and Cost*

This dimension of institutional work uses discourse to highlight the capacities and skills of the RVP to carry out the project. The dominant theme in this dimension was the long process of development and project cost, which appears in the Instrumentality dimension of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz's typology of artifact sense-making. Unlike the discourse in either New York/Friends of the High Line (Chapter 4) or Chicago/Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (Chapter 5) the secondary theme was the coalition of supporters behind the Reading Viaduct Project. The other two projects' *Creating* discourse focused on the capacity of the 501c(3) group to make the project a reality. This project's discourse focused on the symbolic nature of the 501c(3) group's supporters, and appears in the Symbolic dimension of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz's typology of artifact sense-making. With the exception of the Center City District, the coalition of supporters for RVP did not actually do anything to bring the project closer to reality. They became symbols of shallow support as opposed to arranging financial resources, changing zoning requirements, or providing much beyond a list of names. Unlike the supporters in Chapters 4 and 5, the coalition was a coalition in name but not in action.

The development/cost discourse evolved over time, as new information and the competing/extended ViaductGreene opportunity became part of the discussion. However, the theme of development/cost and how it was treated remained fairly consistent across speaker and time. The key issues around development of the Viaduct were and are 1) renovation vs. tear-down, and 2) whether the development was actually going to happen. There were large gaps in the discourse – a flurry of activity in 2004, due largely to the UPenn charrette and 2004 Chinatown Plan, then trailing off until 2007, when the High Line broke ground. There was also a shift from emphasizing Development to emphasizing Coalition in 2009, when the High Line's

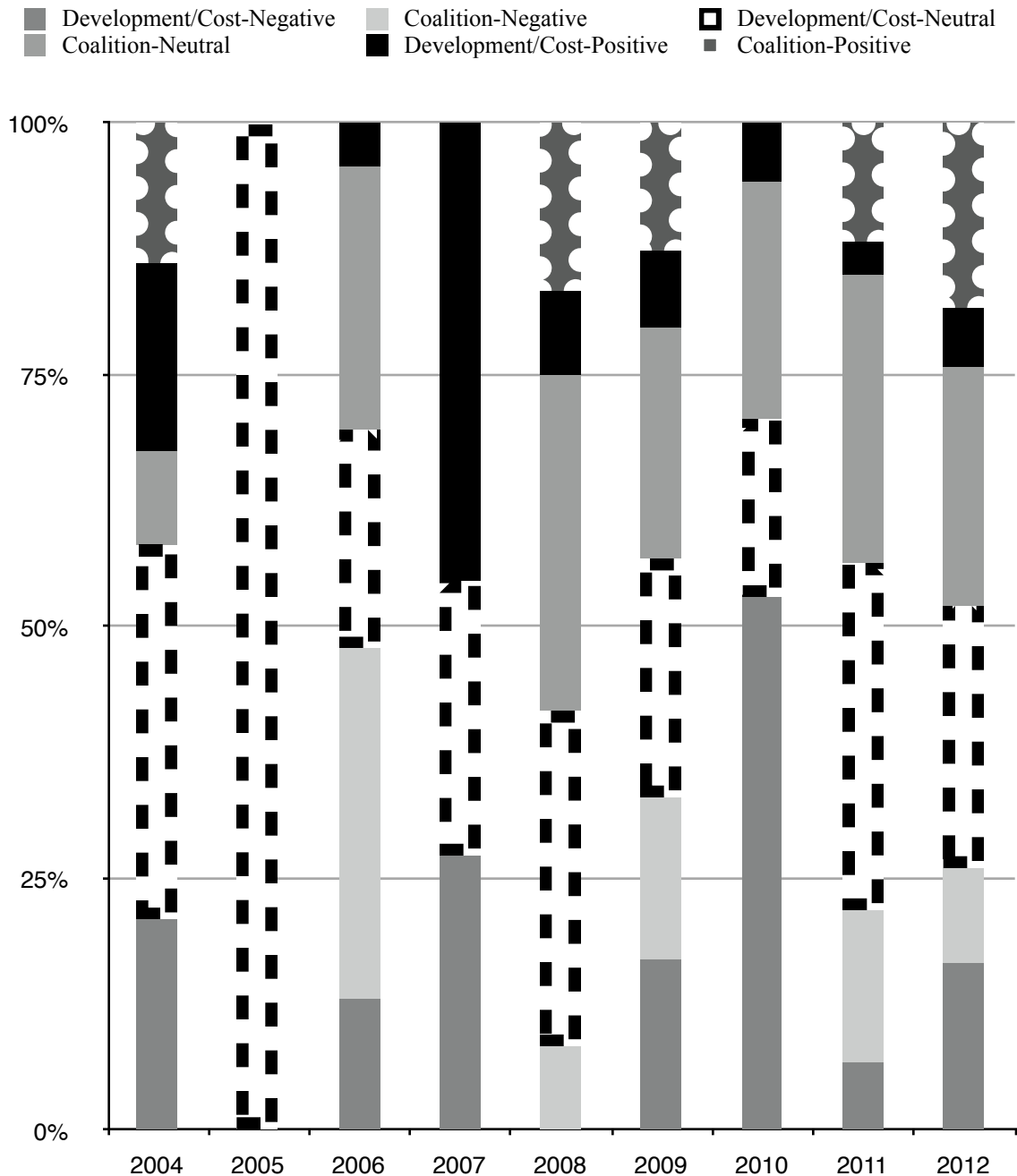
first phase opened and the Chinatown community meeting happened.

For years, citizen groups in Chinatown have seen the demolition of the Viaduct -- which somewhat awkwardly transects the neighborhood -- as the first step in developing what they call Chinatown North and other residents call Callowhill (Heller, 2009, Thompson, 2011, Levy 2011 Interview). John Chin, executive director of the PCDC, argued that "The Viaduct has a blighting effect"; demolition "would make available a lot more land to build housing targeted for more lower-income families" (Chin, quoted in Timpane, 2009). Neighborhood groups in Chinatown fear that if the Viaduct is developed, it will attract gentrification, not the mixed-income residential growth the area needs. They have good reason to expect this. Outside groups have a history of forcing "improvements" on Chinatown, as mentioned, often dicing up and hemming in the neighborhood without benefiting it much. (Thompson, Radio Times 2011 Interview). Chinatown residents are wary, as Chin was quoted as saying, of projects that are "not focused on serving the existing people in the community," that are "done in a vacuum and [do] nothing for Chinatown residents" (Chin, quoted in Timpane, 2009). It has been challenging for RVP and its supporters to discuss the opposition to their project. In describing those who wish to tear it down, RVP members and supporters use phrases like "they [Chinatown residents] want to be a victim" (Levy, 2011 Interview). For her part, McEneaney expressed a sense that "I just can't understand it, and feel like I'm never going to understand it. I wish they would come around. The[ir] argument just doesn't make sense." (McEneaney, quoted in Timpane 2009). RVP and its supporters are convinced that the Viaduct will be beneficial for the neighborhood and this position has led to myopia. They cannot see how to assuage the feelings of the Chinatown advocacy groups who believe they took the brunt of Philadelphia's urban renewal plans, or determine how to develop plans to include affordable housing in a larger plan for the area beyond initial high-level discussions.

Figure 6.9 shows the distribution of the *Creating* discourse over time. A recurring pattern in this dimension of institutional work as well as in *Legitimizing* work is the absence of themes in the discourse, or gaps at certain points. In the *Creating* dimension of discourse, the coalition-

positive theme, shown as white dots on a dark background, disappears in 2005, 2007, and 2010. At those times, no one is speaking positively about building a coalition to do the project – barely even those supporting it. Any discussion of the coalition is neutral (shown as black diagonal lines) or negative (shown as black arrows on a white background).

Figure 6.9: Themes in Creating dimension discourse, 2004-2012



RVP has tried to change the tone of the conversation as more detailed estimates have emerged around renovating vs. tearing-down the Viaduct. The evolution of the cost of the project is inevitable in a project that has taken over ten years to develop thus far. Van Meter of ViaductGreene estimates the total cost of his preferred option, the complete three-mile project, to be \$80 million (Hill, 2012), which he believes could be done in stages along with fundraising³². Even though ViaductGreene proposes a much larger project than simply doing the elevated portion – the portion that is the sole focus of the Reading Viaduct Project – both groups are in the public eye and distributing their numbers, which confuses things.

With the exception of the failed Neighborhood Improvement District (CRVNID), there was not much discussion about how to pay for the Viaduct. The CRVNID itself was hotly debated (Thompson, 2011 Radio Times Interview, PhiladelphiaSpeaks, 2012, Russ 2012, Levy 2012). Much of the discourse around the CRVNID and its failure focused on the sense that it was forced upon the residents of Chinatown and that it was linked to the Viaduct. As proposed, the CRVNID would have funded public improvements within the designated district through an additional 7% property tax. The tax itself, along with questions about what entity had the power to decide how that money would be spent, and on what projects, drove the opposition.

Wrapped up in all of the CRVNID debate was the Reading Viaduct, acting as proxy for a host of tensions in a contested neighborhood. The CRVNID originally included the creation of a linear park along the viaduct as a project, but the issue proved too divisive to keep associated with the CRVNID's official purpose (Hahn, 2011, Russ, 2012). Even though the CRVNID was not created exclusively to fund a linear park along the Reading Viaduct, it could have provided a significant, dedicated funding stream to support the Viaduct's ongoing maintenance. The failure put the burden for development back into the hands of the City and raised questions – again – about who really wanted the Viaduct to become a park. Even before the CRVNID's failure, Mark

³² ViaductGreene is working with the Community Design Collaborative to perform a site analysis and provide cost estimates for doing the submerged section of the proposed park (Popkin, 2012).

Focht from the Parks Department alluded to the City of Philadelphia assuming they would have to foot the bill for development of the Viaduct (Focht 2011 Interview). It seems from the discourse that the City is waiting to have full control of the entire property (Edelstein 2011 Interview, Levy 2012) before attempting to raise money to develop it.

RVP is absent from fundraising discussions, even those surrounding development of the SEPTA spur (Focht 2011 Interview, Levy 2012). Advocates hope construction of that piece of the Viaduct will begin next year. Van Meter of ViaductGreene remains skeptical, but it is not clear whether that skepticism is driven by his own self-interest in the larger project, by the realities of the economic downturn, or something else:

The William Penn Foundation put some money aside for a local landscape architect, Bryan Hanes, just to do schematic design and come up with some beautiful drawings for a section of it. Now, whether that ever happens, I have a lot of doubt whether that will happen. Once the physical drawings are going to be done, which is the end of the year, then somebody has to raise seven or eight million dollars to make it happen.” (van Meter 2012, Interview)

Given the ten-plus year development process thus far, and the likelihood that city government will have to pay all or part of the Viaduct’s cost, the discourse has reflected considerable skepticism, especially post-2009. This could be related to the economic downturn, but that was only moderately mentioned in the discourse (McCabe 2011, Russ 2012, philadelphiaspeaks 2012). The links between the long development process and the nature of the neighborhood itself showed up more clearly in the discourse (Amart 2011, Levy 2012, philadelphiaspeaks 2012). There was also some contrast here with the discourse around the High Line, particularly comparing the RVP and the FHL in terms of the perceived skills and capacity to persevere in a contentious setting.

Overall, there was more consistency in the discourse around the Viaduct in the *Creating* section than in the *Envisioning* section. However, there are recurring questions about the abilities of the RVP to realize their proposed park. Focusing on the advocacy group’s abilities to raise money and get government support acts in a recursive, reinforcing way – it reassures community members, government agencies, and potential donors that the advocacy group involved can

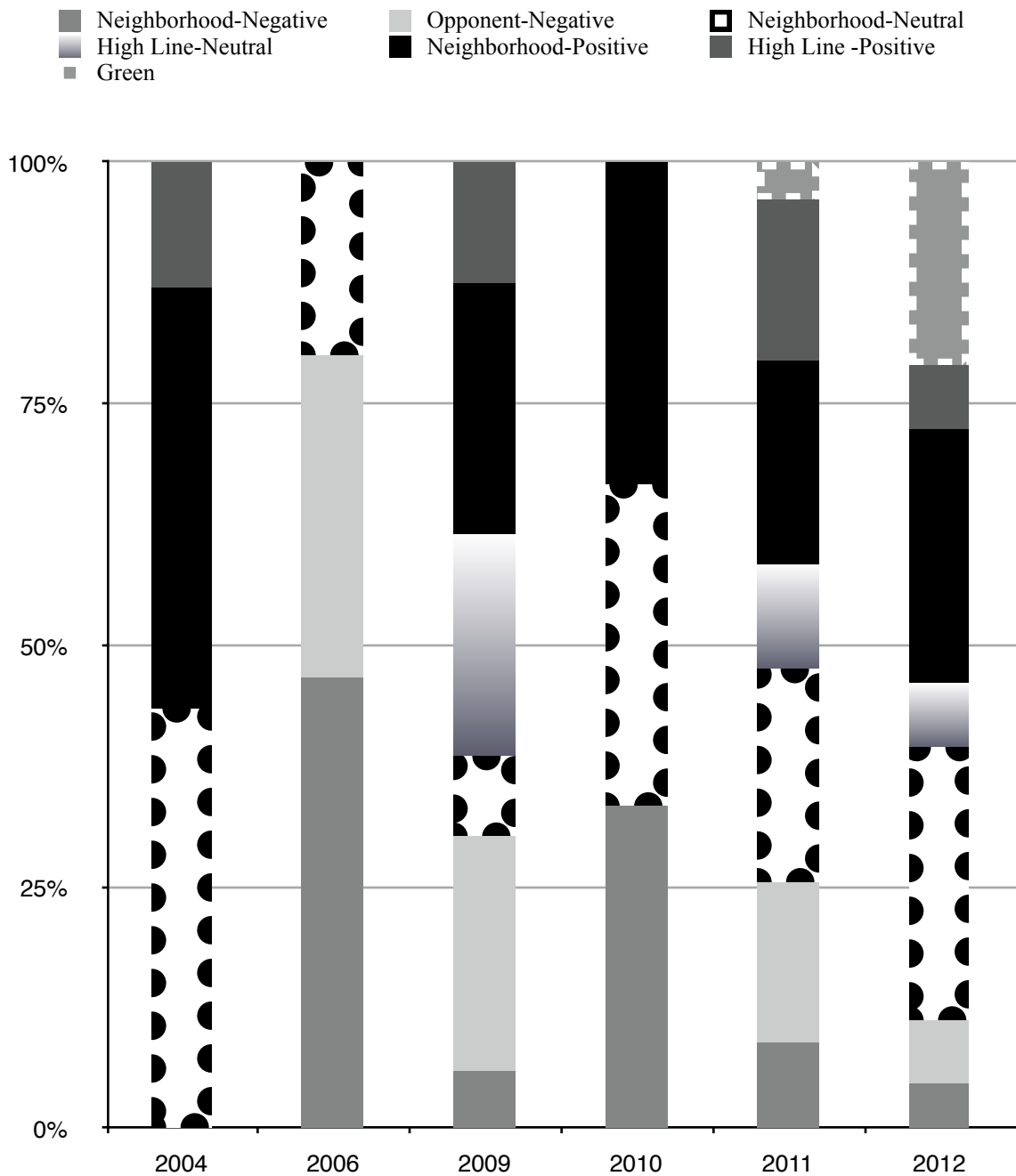
actually make the project happen. This kind of discourse is situated in Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (2004) instrumentality dimension of a physical artifact's sensemaking, describing how the park will work. Here it is the opposite situation, where the focus is on RVP's lack of ability to raise money and inability to get deep governmental support. Unfortunately for RVP that focus also acts in a recursive way, causing anxiety about whether the project will come to fruition. This is the inverse of Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' (2004) instrumentality dimension of a physical artifact's sensemaking, by not focusing on the operational piece of how the park will open and operate.

6.2c Legitimizing

The final part of the discourse around the Viaduct involved legitimating the project, or connecting the supporting rationales of the project to improving the neighborhood. With the exception of the green theme, all the themes in this dimension of discourse were in Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' Symbolic dimension of artifact sensemaking. There was a lot of discussion about New York's High Line, the only similar project in the United States currently open, and under two hours from Philadelphia. Proponents of the Viaduct made classic growth machine arguments (Logan and Molotch 1987) when referring to the High Line and its success in inspiring urban renewal as they tried to legitimate the project. However, opponents also referred to the High Line, but in a negative way, to oppose the project as an elitist, gentrification initiative. Groups engaged in a back-and-forth struggle to shape spatial meanings of the Viaduct as well as the surrounding neighborhoods to appeal to particular interests (Jackson, 1991, Tett and Wolfe, 1991, Jordan and Weedon, 1995, Allen, 1996) such as those in Chinatown who want the Viaduct at least partially torn down, or those in the Callowhill area who want a neighborhood amenity. Figure 10 shows the distribution of the discourse over time in this dimension of institutional work. The discourse is fragmented, with large pieces showing up as negative or neutral over time, and offsetting the positive themes presented. For purposes of interpreting Figure 6.10, the negative themes are shown at the bottom, with neighborhood-negative theme displayed via a brick pattern and the

opponent-negative theme displayed as solid gray. Neighborhood-positive shows up towards the top of the stacked bars in a vee pattern. In addition, there are several large gaps in the discourse, with no themes in this dimension appearing in 2005 or 2007-2008.

Figure 6.10: Legitimizing Institutional Themes in the RVP Discourse, 2004-2012



6.4c1 Legitimizing- Neighborhood

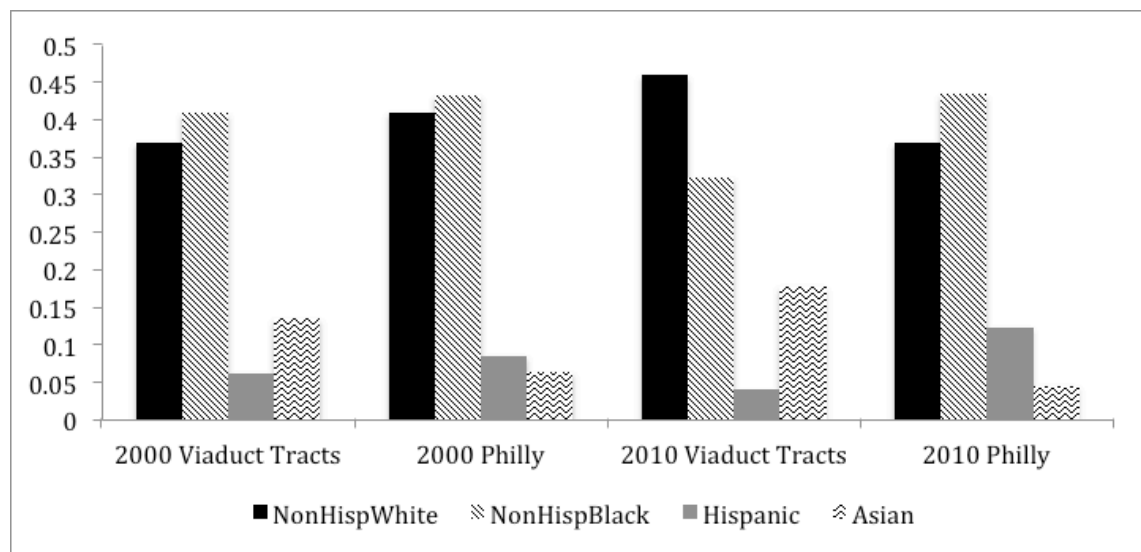
Individual urban redevelopment projects take place in a specific part of the city; they are not just anywhere and their location is generally not negotiable – with few exceptions, such as a sports stadium. When repurposing an existing space or structure (as distinguished from building new in a green field), the impact of the project on that neighborhood becomes even more important – since the conversation is not ‘build it here or somewhere else’, but instead ‘do it here or don’t do it at all.’ That is the case for the entire length of the Viaduct (albeit with different communities); part of the set of arguments RVP was making and will continue to make about the Viaduct involve how this planned park is good for the neighborhood. It is important to remember in this case that the proposed Viaduct exists in two very different neighborhoods; the ethnic enclave of Chinatown and the not yet gentrified (but whiter) Callowhill. Another set of arguments RVP and its supporters made to complement the neighborhood focus, but less successfully, was attempting to frame the issue as more than just a neighborhood issue – a spatial scaling up, possibly to increase RVP’s agency (Martin, 2000). If RVP can change the conversation to one about the impact on Philadelphia as a city instead of just their immediate neighborhood, they might be able to generate a wider group of supporters.

The discourse in this dimension was less fragmented than elsewhere but was contained in two separate categories that are clearly irreconcilable. The first subtheme is about how this park could be transformative for the neighborhood, with an emphasis on the Callowhill section of the neighborhood. The second subtheme is primarily driven by supporters of the Chinatown part of the neighborhood, particularly Chinatown’s development group (PCDC,) and is about contesting the nature of Callowhill itself. The PCDC is conveying the sense that this potential park is being imposed on the neighborhood, and that the residents of Chinatown would not choose a park. The latter approach depends on understanding how Chinatown’s identity has formed and listening to the argument “stop telling us what we need (Chin, 2009)”. Chinatown in Philadelphia looks as it

does not simply from free market competition (Park et al 1925); outsiders have defined both its identity and its boundaries (Suttles 1972).

Philadelphia, like other cities, has been encouraging people to move back to the downtown area. But the areas that were affordable to live in, like Callowhill, lacked some key amenities. Much of the language used around transforming the Callowhill neighborhood focused on its current blighted state and its downtown location, so close to Center City -- a theme used by RVP and its supporters since the group's inception. Residents of Chinatown are nervous about the changing demographics in and around the Viaduct, and they are at least in part correct that the neighborhood is changing. Figure 6.11 shows the changes in the Viaduct neighborhood from the 2000 to 2010 census.

Figure 6.11: Distribution of Race, Viaduct-adjacent census tracts vs. Greater Philadelphia, 2000 and 2010



Back in 2004, Gradinger pointed out that part of the Viaduct's appeal is that it provides a large, available tract of land in a city center – and it is important to turn that into a public space geared for 21st-century lifestyles. (Gradinger, 2004). And Saffron compared the proposed park's impact on the 'Loft District' to the Schuylkill river recreation path's impact on the southeastern edge of Center City (Saffron, 2004). In 2011, John Randolph of the Schuylkill River Trail pointed out the River Trail's impact and argued that the Viaduct area could have comparably positive

results.

when I started on that project [Schuylkill River Trail], no one believed there would be any economic spin-off that would justify the [then] \$14M project. Today there are half a billion dollars worth of residential and commercial projects that are either on the river or that brag about their proximity to the Schuylkill Banks, and there is at least an equivalent amount being planned. There is no question in my mind that Philadelphia's Reading Viaduct Project will lead to the revitalization of the surrounding neighborhood.-

John Randolph of the Schuylkill River Trail, via Jamiemoffett.com

To the Reading Viaduct supporters, including Paul Levy of Center City District, a park would spur investment and revitalize an area so close to downtown it could become the city's next neighborhood success story. It is, for Levy and his organization, a Center City vision. They imagine an amenity for residents and workers in the expanding communities of both Callowhill and Chinatown. With 32% of local land still vacant, they envision a mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood close to downtown. (Center City District, 2010, Levy 2011 Interview, Levy 2012).

As mentioned earlier, this desire is located at the epicenter of another, competing vision, that of Philadelphia's century-old Chinatown community to survive in the face of Center City visions that have threatened to destroy it: Market East, the expanded Convention Center, a proposed stadium, the Vine Street Expressway, the proposed relocation of Foxwoods Casino (Timpane, 2009). Chinatown residents have fought each development, sometimes losing but often winning. The Chinatown 2004 plan that called for parts of the Viaduct to be demolished to create rectangular parcels to develop subsidized housing "gave Chinatown the sense of ownership of calling [Callowhill] Chinatown North, so this was their expansion area in their mind." (Levy 2011 Interview).

Fundamental disagreement about what to call the neighborhood in question matters for how united the neighborhood is or can claim itself to be. Mitchell (2000) explains that opposing sides develop imagined representations of place, and what to call the neighborhood is inextricably linked to how it is represented. One example of this is that the 2011 proposed but unsuccessful NID was called the Callowhill Reading Viaduct NID. On the now defunct website for the CRVNID, text indicated that the CRVNID would be managed by a 501c(3) and used the

Callowhill Neighborhood Association as an example (<http://www.crvnid.org/WhatisaNID.shtml>).

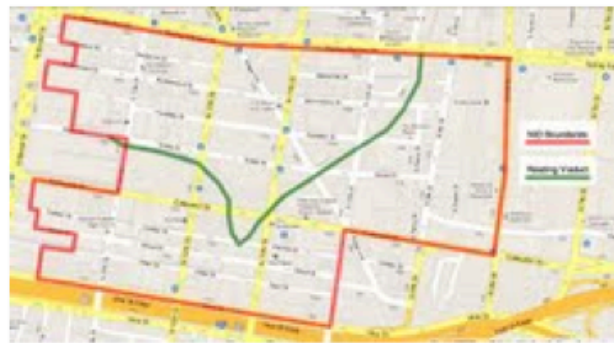
Figures 5.12 and 5.13 illustrate both the CRVNID boundaries as promoted by RVP, and the same map of the CRVNID with the Viaduct shown.

**Figure 6.12: CRVNID
Boundaries, as Shown by
RVP**



Source: CRVNID

**Figure 6.13: CRVNID Boundaries, with
Viaduct**



Source: the author

Leaving out the Viaduct from the picture is notable – and the residents in question know exactly where the Viaduct is. The NID as promoted by RVP does not feel inclusive at all. It is not hard to see why the residents of Chinatown, who call the Callowhill area something else entirely, would feel that the tax and related park were being imposed on them without their consent and were designed for others.

Levy and others believe that affordable housing and a completed Viaduct project are possible in the two adjacent neighborhoods. Harris Steinberg of PennPraxis/University of Pennsylvania argues that there is room for both the park and housing, both in terms of its physical location and of economic and development. If done properly, the Viaduct could be the centerpiece of a transformed community with ample room for high-density, mixed income and mixed-use development (Timpane, 2009, jamiemoffett.com). The Viaduct is flanked by abandoned factories and warehouses, and development would help revive the neighborhoods, Sarah McEneaney said. “If Viaduct Park [were to be built] the old buildings would be renovated. ...there is so much

vacant land in the area, there's plenty of room for development and the Park”. (McEneaney 2011 Interview)

This theme is also consistent with Philadelphia’s history; William Penn’s original master plan for the city assumed that its urban fabric would be regularly relieved by parks (Juday, 2012). With this original goal in mind, the Viaduct’s supporters argued, the neighborhood around the Viaduct is noticeably lacking in green public land (van Meter 2012 Interview). Supporters focused on how an elevated park could be an important component in the revitalization of the area. And the Reading Viaduct does fill an immediate need for parkland, as Alan Urek pointed out:

All of Center City...is considered rather underserved by neighborhood-accessible open space in a lot of ways and that was one of the arguments in favor of the Reading Viaduct Project, because it would bring in some acreage of open space that would be directly accessible to the people who lived within a half-mile. (Urek interview, 2011)

Ellen Somekawa, Executive Director, of Asian Americans United³³, and a RVP board member, added, “the absence of green space is a very striking thing for this neighborhood. I’d like to cut a little bit against this thing of ‘are you for the poor people of Chinatown or are you for the rich people in the lofts’. What they have in common, though, is this desire for livability.” (Radio Times, 2011). John Hoch of the Planning Department pointed out that

our department supports the idea of [the Viaduct] as an open space element that reaches into Center City and serves the Chinatown community. . . [But] – Chinatown is not the only interested party in terms of the geography where the Viaduct exists. Though they have been very successful and aggressive in claiming that territory as their own. ...The notion that Chinatown is the only actor we’re dealing with, here—Chinatown would love that but I don’t think that’s really the case. (Hoch 2011 Interview)

With development progressing slowly on the SEPTA spur, Chinatown's leadership seems cautiously open to the Viaduct park idea, at least in part, and provided it includes affordable

³³ Asian Americans United’s mission is to build leadership in Asian American communities to build neighborhoods and unite against oppression. AAU has worked in Philadelphia’s Asian American communities and in broader multiracial coalitions around quality education, youth leadership, anti-Asian violence, immigrant rights, and folk arts and cultural maintenance.

housing. The controversy over the future of the Viaduct is said to boil down to “the basic needs of the community versus an amenity... That's the debate for me.” (John Chin, PCDC, quoted in Brakeman, 2009) Levy has laid out some ideas already, based on working with architect Cecil Baker to develop proposed housing in the existing irregular parcels; PCDC executive director John Chin finds them intriguing (Thompson, 2011 Radio Times Interview, Levy 2011 Interview). This kind of compromise may be what can bring the two communities together; perhaps it will lead to a discussion or compromise about what to call the neighborhood itself. The lack of agreement on a name for the neighborhood is representative of far larger disagreements.

Without a doubt, development of the Viaduct would cause some level of disruption within the Chinatown and Callowhill neighborhoods. Profoundly disruptive situations can generate protracted periods of “sensemaking and restructuring” (Weick, 1995, Barley and Tolbert, 1997, Suchman 2010), which is why the consistency and nature of themes around legitimating the development are so important. The Reading Viaduct Project has not been able to manage the intense conflict about the phrases, images, and logics for thinking and talking about the new venture. The lack of control over the conflict has led to inertia, with the innovative process slowed while different organizational actors – PCDC, RVP, Center City, city government agencies- spar over control issues.

6.4c2 Legitimizing - High Line

The High Line is a natural fit with the Reading Viaduct as a comparative project. The High Line is the only similar project open in the United States, it started its development process only a few years before the Viaduct, and it faced organized opposition – in fact more organized than the Viaduct (David, 2011). Also like the High Line, the Reading Viaduct offers a window into a bygone industrial era, and the days when cities were places where things were made and then shipped all over the country and the world. Visitors can still see the faded lettering on the sides of former industrial buildings that once served as automobile, bicycle, shoe, glass and

balloon factories (Timpane 2009, La Farge 2011).

The first High- Line-related theme around the Reading Viaduct was a growth machine (Logan and Molotch, 1997), inspired theme, pointing out the visitor traffic, investment spurred by development, urban development impact, and other positive attributes of the High Line. The second High- Line-related theme involved explaining all the constraints Philadelphia faced in building the park and how the Viaduct was not enough like the High Line (and Philadelphia not enough like New York) to be successful.

In the first subtheme, journalists and others pointed out that like the High Line, the Viaduct offers stunning views of the Philadelphia skyline (Froehlich, 2009, Rosof, 2009, Saffron, 2009, Saffron, 2011) as well as intimate glimpses of everyday life in the streets below (La Farge, 2011). Timpane compares the two projects in his 2009 article.

The Highline is a disused section of elevated freight railway in Manhattan... now transformed into an elegant, elevated park. With its lush array of plants, it's eco-friendly benches and tables, it affords views of city and sky you can't get anywhere else. Philadelphia has its own candidate for a High Line Park – the Reading Viaduct. Folks who've been up there report beautiful, singular views of the skyline and surrounding neighborhoods. (Timpane, 2009)

The Callowhill neighborhood of the Viaduct, while less densely populated than Chelsea (one of the High Line –adjacent neighborhoods), shares some characteristics with pre-High Line era Chelsea. It is a blighted area of the city adjacent to established and expensive areas -- only Callowhill is more blighted than Chelsea was. And, like the High Line, the Viaduct supporters are trying to start small – develop one piece of the property (Levy 2012) and use that to build support and encourage participation and private donations. After the High Line opened in New York in 2009, the RVP and its supporters began actively trying to draw parallels between it and their proposal. The High Line became a shorthand for Viaduct development possibilities. Linda Dottor, of the Community Design Collaborative, (a local design group working with nonprofits, including the Reading Viaduct Project) recounted that:

there was a talk here last week, on transforming public landscapes. It had a couple of speakers from Chicago, and New York. They all mentioned the High Line and they all

talked about how we should do it here. So, in this raised consciousness, the High Line has sort of made other people kind of want to do this.” (Dottor 2011 Interview.)

The development of the High Line put some parameters around what was actually possible to do with the Viaduct. The High Line brought \$2 billion in private investments into New York City and created 12,000 permanent jobs (Satow, 2012). It also attracted two million visitors in its first year alone (Pennenvironment.org, highline.org), and over 3.7 million visitors in the last year (highline.org). As numbers linked to the impact of the High Line on the surrounding neighborhood began to circulate, supporters became even more excited.

In a Brakeman article from 2009, he quotes RVP Board Member Louis Chang as saying, “[t]he only way for that [area] to get activated is for [the Viaduct] to get activated.” He said the blocks around New York’s High Line had been dilapidated but began to rebound when the park was formed. Likening that effect to the 1989 movie “Field of Dreams,” he said, “It’s like ‘if you build it, they will come.’ It’s not even a question” (Brakeman, 2009). Other media outlets and local bloggers argued that The Reading Viaduct project’s reclamation of neglected urban space (Saffron, 2011) would help revitalize a community that needs green space, would create infrastructure, and would bring new development (Sundance Channel, 2011) with the “*same effect as the Highline did*” [emphasis added] (Philly Bike Journal, 2011).

On the other hand, many argue that the High Line is simply not comparable.

[E] very few weeks I read about some new building or some new expensive addition to the landscape along the High Line or companies or developers, you know, spending millions of dollars to leverage the value they see in the High Line. I don’t think that anyone expects that that would happen here, so it’s a very different model. I think there’s some kind of public open space amenity that could be accomplished. (Urek 2011 Interview)

Bloggers and journalists expressed their concerns that “the High Line ...got built because it runs through several neighborhoods on the west side of Manhattan that had already been booming.” (Philadelphiaspeaks, 2012), and that it was not a case of ‘build it and they will come’, but more like ‘build it and they are already there’ (Rybcynski, 2011). James Corner, principal of James Corner Field Operations, a New York architecture firm that designed the High Line with

Diller Scofidio + Renfro, was quoted as saying “[d]espite the High Line’s visibility and help in showing donors and residents nationwide what is possible with an abandoned trestle, ... The High Line is not easily replicable in other cities. ‘It’s not just, ‘Build a cool park and they will come.’ It’s, ‘Build a cool park and connect it to a framework.’” (Shivory, 2011) Further, journalists, bloggers, and other commentators have also noted that the High Line did not revitalize its surrounding neighborhood on its own. It was the “High Line plus” – plus all the other stores and amenities that developed around the park (Heller, 2009, Rybcynski, 2011). Blogger Karen Amart from PennPlanning asked an important question: “right now, would people want to come to the neighborhood? Does the area attract people?” (Amart, 2011) And she expressed concerns, shared by others, that right now, the area feels uncomfortable, unsafe, and out of the way and lacks fundamental amenities designed to encourage people to be in that neighborhood (Heller, 2009, Amart, 2011, Sweeney 2012, PhiladelphiaSpeaks, 2012).

At the same time, RVP and its supporters tried to downplay the costs of building the Viaduct relative to the High Line (Levy 2011 Interview, McEneaney 2011 Interview, van Meter 2012 Interview), explaining that they did not think that the \$150 million spent on Sections 1 and 2 of the High-Line (highline.org) were necessary for the Viaduct to be an asset for its neighborhood (Loviglio, 2012). Levy and others emphasized the price tag of less than \$8 million (Levy 2011 Interview, van Meter 2012 Interview, Loviglio 2012) for the SEPTA spur. They also argued that the Viaduct could be different in a good way, going so far as to invite FHL cofounder Josh David to talk about the Viaduct project in November 2011, where David highlighted his belief that “the Reading Viaduct in some ways is a greater opportunity than the Highline in that it’s much wider and offers you I think a lot more potential for different kinds of development as a park.” (David, Radio Times Interview, 2011)

This split in the discourse is about understanding whether or not the High Line is a good comparable, and whether or not Philadelphia can have similar, though smaller-scale success with the Viaduct as New York did with the High Line. The split, particularly given the success of the High Line, is at least in part due to the lack of fundraising for the Viaduct to date and the lack of

programming decisions for the Viaduct. The discourse in this dimension falls under the umbrella of *Legitimizing* discourse, but I do not think it can be considered entirely separate from the *Envisioning* discourse, either. Unresolved yet core questions about the Viaduct can interfere with the advocacy group's ability to link their project to larger conversations about urban renewal and community development.

6.3 Summary and Conclusions

Like any large-scale urban renewal project, the Viaduct faces many challenges in moving from the status quo of planning to actualization; while the discourse centers on a debate between demolition and reclamation, either of those options costs money, and quite a bit of it. It is easy to just leave it alone. Overcoming these challenges requires generating and maintaining momentum, creating viable coalitions among advocacy groups, and a clearly articulated outcome. If the discourse around the Viaduct were supportive of this endeavor, we would consistently see individuals and organizations expressing how the project can be a solution to an existing problem, how the RVP, as part of a coalition, has the ability to make the park happen, and how this project is related to other, broader, important conversations about green space, urban living, neighborhood development, etc. That is not in the discourse.

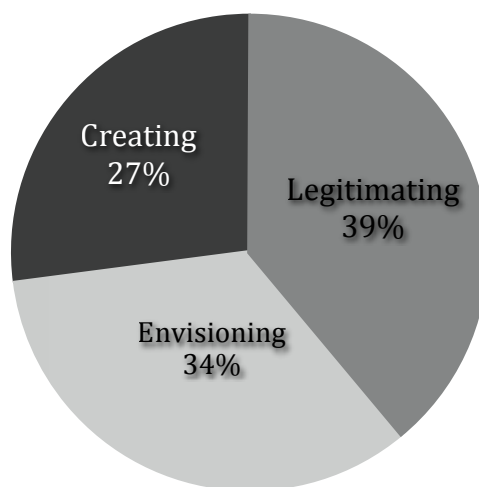
The Reading Viaduct Project has attempted to make the case that Philadelphia needs a Reading Viaduct Park, that the park makes sense for the neighborhood and city in large and small ways, and that RVP should be leading the charge for the community. To that end they have used different images, symbols, and words to illustrate the potential benefits of the Reading Viaduct. Table 1 summarizes the dominant themes within every dimension along with a note on the tone and consistency within each theme. The discourse is not consistent in any dimension, ranging from negative to neutral or positive.

Table 6.1 – Summary of Themes Within Institutional Dimensions in the Reading Viaduct discourse

Institutional Work Dimension	Theme	Tone of theme in discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Envisioning	Access/ Usability	Neutral	Moderately. There was disagreement about what the Viaduct would actually be and that affected the consistency of the discourse
Envisioning	Aesthetic	Negative when talking about the blight of the abandoned Viaduct Positive when talking about the Viaduct's potential	No – extremely fragmented
Creating	Development	Neutral or negative	No – extremely fragmented
Creating	Coalition/ RVP	Neutral	No-moderately fragmented
Legitimizing	Green	Neutral or positive	Yes
Legitimizing	High Line	Neutral or positive	No
Legitimizing	History	Neutral or positive	Yes
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Negative when talking about Chinatown's views of the Viaduct Positive when talking about the Viaduct's potential to revitalize the Callowhill area	Consistent within each subtheme but strongly split overall
Legitimizing	Opponent	Negative	Yes

Figure 6.14 illustrates the proportion of discourse spent on each of the three dimensions of institutional work the ECL framework identifies as necessary for entrepreneurs.

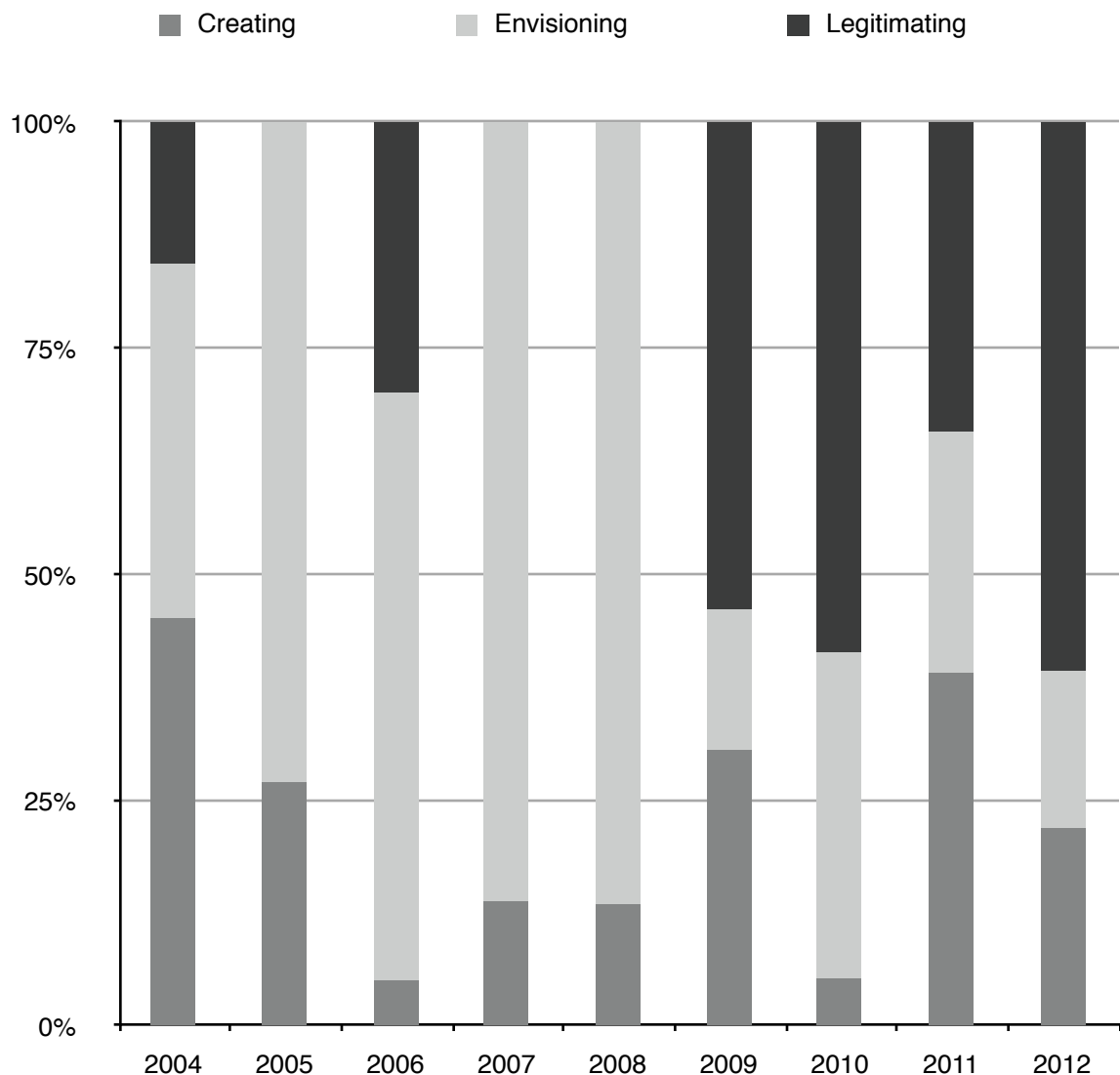
Figure 6.14: Percentage of discourse spent on each of the three dimensions of institutional argumentation, overall



The discourse is tilted toward *Legitimizing* work – creating and supporting links to larger

conversations. RVP has focused intently on gaining legitimacy for the project, but their search for legitimacy was based on an overreliance on Philadelphia-based groups within and parallel to city government to build legitimacy, as opposed to efforts to speak for the local community. While the discourse focused slightly more on *Envisioning* as a secondary area, that too was heavily contested and RVP's focus came at the expense of work in the *Creating* area. In 2011, more of the discourse was devoted to *Creating* because of the failed attempt to implement a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID). Figure 6.15 shows the distribution among dimensions over time.

Figure 6.15: Distribution of discourse among each of the three dimensions of institutional argumentation, 2004-2012



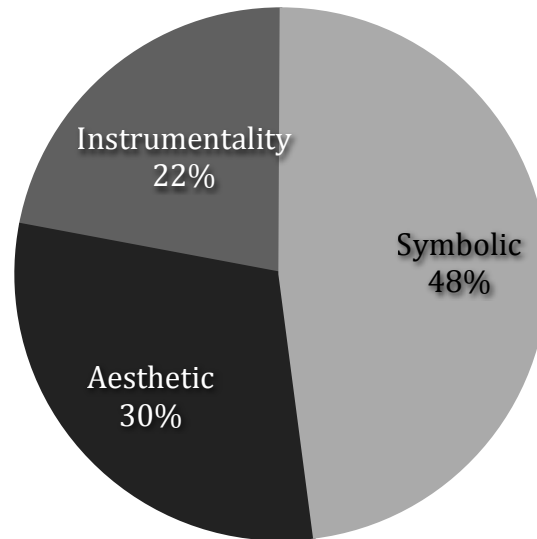
While there is one-quarter to one-third of the discourse in the *Envisioning* dimension, what discourse is there is heavily fragmented and contested, implying that the RVP has not been successful in framing their desired solution as necessary – or even that other institutional arrangements are falling short. The *Creating* dimension and its focus on the development process also highlight an area of challenge for the RVP. The discourse around the Viaduct’s development was extremely contentious, especially related to their ability to build community support and the cost of the project. This tension spilled over into the *Legitimizing* dimension, in the area of discourse around the neighborhood. The RVP’s efforts to gain project legitimacy were top-down, as opposed to the two other advocacy groups studied in Chapters 4 and 5, whose efforts were both bottom-up and top-down. Table 6.2 shows the split among the artifact dimensions, along with the tone and consistency.

Table 6.2 – Summary of Themes within Artifact Dimensions in the Reading Viaduct discourse

Dimension of physical artifact sense-making	Theme	Tone of theme in discourse	Consistent use of theme in articles, interviews, discussions, and presentations
Instrumentality	Access/ Usability	Neutral	Moderately. There was disagreement about what the Viaduct would actually be and that affected the consistency of the discourse
Aesthetic	Aesthetic	Negative when talking about the blight of the abandoned Viaduct Positive when talking about the Viaduct’s potential	No – extremely fragmented
Instrumentality	Development	Neutral or negative	No – extremely fragmented
Symbolic	Coalition/RVP	Neutral	No-moderately fragmented
Aesthetic	Green	Neutral or positive	Yes
Symbolic	High Line	Neutral or positive	No
Symbolic	History	Neutral or positive	Yes
Symbolic	Neighborhood	Negative when talking about Chinatown’s views of the Viaduct Positive when talking about the Viaduct’s potential to revitalize the Callowhill area	Consistent within each subtheme but strongly split overall
Symbolic	Opponent	Legitimizing	2%

The overall distribution of the discourse among the three dimensions of artifact sense-making is shown in Figure 6.16.

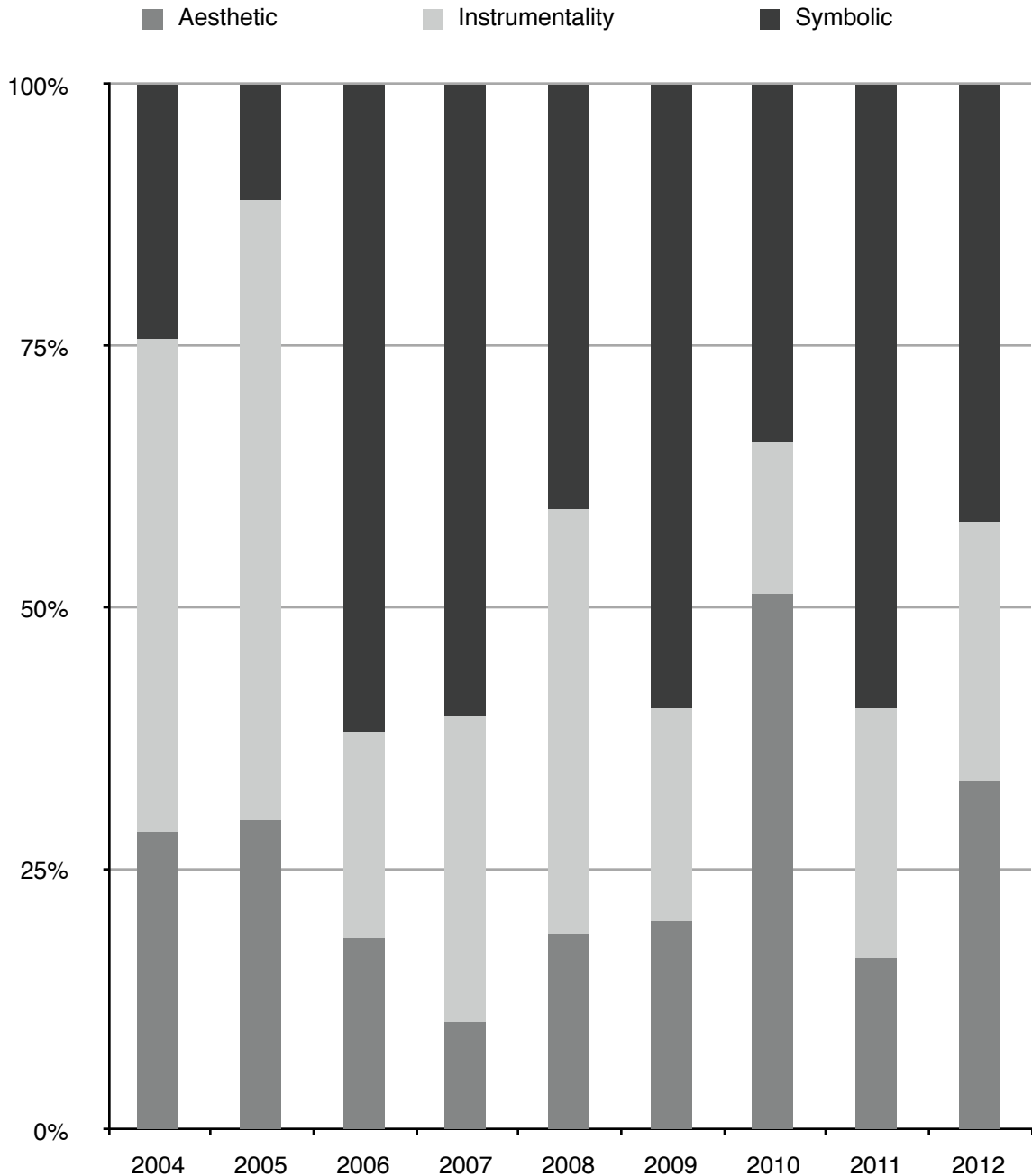
Figure 6.16: Percentage of discourse spent on each of the three dimensions of artifact sense-making



This focus on top-down legitimacy is also reflected in the split in the discourse based on dimensions of artifact sense-making. The dialogue around the Reading Viaduct is not balanced among the three artifact sense-making dimensions. Focusing on Symbolism at the expense of the other two dimensions, whether by design or luck, is not a reasonable position to take. It shows that the advocacy group is not putting its effort into construction, raising money, building support or doing other tangible things aimed at making the park a reality. This is in stark contrast to the focus on Instrumentality (how the park will work) in Chicago (Chapter 5) and also in contrast to the balance among the three dimensions in New York (Chapter 4). The focus on Symbolism highlights the surface-level focus on what the park could mean for the community without a corresponding grounding in reality. And as stated earlier, focusing on what the park will look like (Aesthetics) without defining how to build and access the park exacerbates much of the potential conflict about whether the park should be built in the first place. While Figure 6.16 highlights the overall distribution of discourse, Figure 6.17 shows the distribution of discourse among the three

Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz artifact dimensions over time. The Symbolic dimension dominated the discourse, with 40-50% of the total over time, even though there was more variability year over year. The Symbolic dimension accounted for between 40% and 60% of the discourse around the Viaduct in 4 of the 9 years. The Symbolic dimension is shown as dark gray in Figure 6.17.

Figure 6.17: Distribution of discourse among artifact dimensions, 2004-2012



If the Reading Viaduct is to be preserved and at some point transformed, RVP and its supporters need to influence the dialogue around it to highlight neighborhood revitalization, rather than a standalone project. RVP and its supporters have calculated economic benefits related to doing the elevated part of the Viaduct project but developed no real programmatic solutions. As stated earlier, in the face of entrenched opposition that is not enough. Friends of the Park groups in both New York and Chicago had a plan for each space and they promoted that plan. As discussed in Chapter 4, the opposition in New York wanted to tear down the structure and the FHL had to provide a reason to keep it. As discussed in Chapter 5, there was not deep opposition to redeveloping the Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago, and there was also a plan to link the trail to the ground using small pocket parks. Urban revitalization is not about picking and choosing physical projects from other cities and sticking them into one's own, devoid of context. Unlike the High Line, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Reading Viaduct's surrounding neighborhoods are not in a position to memorialize the history of a blighted past; that blighted past is still very much present.

With the arrival of the competing advocacy group ViaductGreene it is not clear which project should move forward. While RVP has tried to get buy-in for its project, the fragmentation throughout the discourse, in all three areas critical for an entrepreneurial venture's viability, led to an overall lack of clarity about the group. In addition, the discourse is fragmented about the Viaduct, itself, indicating a lack of clarity around the physical artifact. In the other two projects studied in this dissertation, the Friends of the Park groups built coalitions of support from both top-down and bottom-up sources. In Philadelphia the RVP has relied almost exclusively on top-down support, and does not have a base of support from the community.

One scenario is that the fate of the Viaduct becomes independent of the fate of RVP. In that case, CCD or some branch of city government such as the Parks Department takes control of the project, shapes the message, and provides stronger and more direct governmental direction and support because RVP cannot be an effective champion. Under this scenario, the SEPTA spur will likely get constructed in the next few years, since it is controlled by the city of Philadelphia.

There will likely be a lag between the SEPTA spur and the remaining part of the elevated Viaduct being developed, since Reading International still controls the remaining part of the Viaduct.

A second scenario is that the fate of RVP and the fate of the Viaduct remain intertwined. This is problematic for development, since RVP has not put together a coalition of support or a coherent message to oppose the existing fragmented and contentious discourse around the Viaduct. Under this scenario, RVP continues to struggle to develop a coalition, and messages around the Viaduct remain unclear and contested. The SEPTA spur may be developed, since it is under city control, though the larger project is an open question, as is the ultimate fate of either advocacy group.

CHAPTER 7: Cross-Case Comparisons

This project studied presentation of discourse themes as a mechanism to drive change, and has compared the consistency and completeness of presentation of key themes among the three elevated linear park projects currently active in the United States. Understanding where each project is helps situate analyses. For these cases, three related outcomes can be considered measures of success³⁵, and Table 7.1 summarizes the outcome measures for each case.

Table 7.1: Outcomes, By Case

Outcome	New York- High Line	Chicago-Bloomingdale Trail	Philadelphia-Reading Viaduct
Groundbreaking and construction of these parks	- Section 1 opened in 2009 - Section 2 opened in 2011 - Construction documents for Section 3 are in process (thehighline.org) - Funding for Section 3 is 50% complete	- Funding for Phase 1 is complete - Project scheduled to begin construction Summer 2013 - Some access point parks already open	- Construction documents for SEPTA spur are in process - No funding in place for construction
The use of the park, once open	- Pre-opening estimates 350,000 annual visitors (David and Hammond, 2011) - Most recent annual count 3.7 million (Satow 2012, Moss 2012)	- Pre-opening estimates: Thousands will use it to commute to work daily (Mayor's Press Office, 2012) - Thousands of children will use it as a safe route to school (Mayor's Press Office, 2012) - Estimated 2275 bicycle trips daily , or 750,000-825,000 annual bike trips	No numbers available
Who uses the park	25% local 25% other NY 50% tourists	- No numbers available - Programming implies focus on immediate area	No numbers available

Looking at New York/FHL, Chicago/FBT, and Philadelphia/RVP together, though they are in varying stages of completion, can shed light on the process of institutional entrepreneurship, particularly in the context of urban public spaces. A common thread in each of these projects is the “primary involvement of local communities, forming organizations, raising

³⁵ Because the Chicago park is not open yet I am using estimates.

capital, and cultivating the support of local government” (Olson 2009). My approach uses two frameworks together to evaluate each group’s attempt to make their ventures viable. I used Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz’ IAS (2004)³⁴ framework to evaluate the dimensions individuals use to make sense of the physical artifact. I evaluated which dimension dominated each project’s discourse. For New York’s High Line pre-opening it was the Symbolic dimension, based primarily on the theme of the Neighborhood. For New York’s High Line post-opening it was the Aesthetics dimension and the Aesthetics theme. In Chicago, the Instrumental theme of Access/Usability dominated the discourse. And in Philadelphia, the discourse around the development of the Reading Viaduct focused on the Symbolic dimension and the Neighborhood theme.

I also evaluated the development and consistency of themes in dimensions of envisioning, creating, and legitimating discourse (Tracey et al 2011) around each project. In each case, I examined the dominant theme in the discourse in each dimension of institutional work. In the cases of Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (Chicago) and the Reading Viaduct Project (Philadelphia) I also actively looked for the effect of the High Line in the discourse – its impact on each city’s project. By grouping the data into themes in these different dimensions and evaluating the completeness and consistency of discourse I am looking to explain the progress each of the three groups has made. Table 7.2 summarizes the important institutional themes, by case.

³⁴ The three dimensions are Instrumentality – how does it work?, Aesthetics – what does it look like?, and Symbolism – what does it mean and to whom?

Table 7.2: Important Institutional Work Themes, by Case

Dimension	New York/ High Line pre- opening	New York/ High Line post- opening	Chicago/ Bloomingdale Trail	Philadelphia/ Reading Viaduct
Envisioning	Aesthetics	Aesthetics	Access/Usability	Aesthetics Access/Usability
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Yes – consistently positive	Yes – consistently positive	Yes – neutral in tone	No – opponents framing Viaduct as blight and supporters describing the opportunity were equally strong in the discourse
Creating	FHL-capacity	Development and Cost	FBT-Capacity	Development and Cost
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	Slightly mixed between framing of cost vs. investment in project	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	Mixed between neutral and negative – framed as cost and many open questions about who would/how to pay for the project
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood High Line	Neighborhood High Line
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Mixed – positive discussion	More mixed – more negative tones in the discussion	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	No – opponents and supporters do not agree on what to call the neighborhood or whether to frame the Viaduct as another High Line or not

Looking at the written, verbal, and visual discourse across all three case studies results in seven comparative areas. Some of these comparative areas are intra-framework, while others cut across the dimensions outlined in the ECL and IAS frameworks.

- Balance across themes, and the implications of the discourse being unbalanced in any one dimension
- Consistency of themes, of speaking with a single voice
- Envisioning discourse can be done in ways that either support or clash with Creating discourse
- Legitimizing discourse can enhance or undermine Creating discourse
- Different properties of the artifact may be differentially relevant for Envisioning versus Creating discourses
- The importance of acknowledging the physical and demographic realities of the site surrounding the proposed park
- Aesthetics discourse can work with or against discourse in the Symbolism dimension;

7.1 Importance of balance across dimensions

Entrepreneurs need to communicate often, and communicate along a variety of themes (Tracey et al 2011, Prahalad 2010); the more radical the idea the more communication is required. The three cases studied here had slightly different allocations of the discourse among the dimensions of institutional work – Creating, Envisioning, and Legitimizing. The distribution of discourse along the three dimensions of work, as well as the consistency of message within each dimensions, reflects the ability of the advocacy group to develop coalitions of support behind the project. Balance matters, to a point; even getting the design part perfect is not enough to make a project successful. The entrepreneur has to make a connection with people and the design has to clearly communicate the intended change (Prahalad 2012 Interview).

Before opening section one of the High Line, the *Creating* discourse, the capacity of FHL to carry out the project, was the dominant dimension. *Legitimizing* discourse followed closely behind, with its focus on links to larger conversations about the Chelsea and Meatpacking District neighborhoods. This was true both overall and over time, as described in detail in Chapter 4. While the discourse around the High Line before it opened was not equally balanced, the dominance of *Creating* discourse provided details linked to how and when the park's first section would open, and how it would be funded – it is a discourse full of specifics.

Both the Chicago/Bloomingdale Trail and post-opening High Line discourse were close to equally balanced across the three ECL dimensions, indicating they were communicating at all levels; the main difference was the emphasis placed on *Creating* discourse. The FBT discourse reflected a more consistent treatment of the dominant themes than the post-opening FHL discourse, as summarized earlier in Table 2. As described in Chapter 4, as the neighborhood around the High Line became more gentrified, there was a corresponding increase in negative tones in the *Legitimizing* dimension about the impact on the neighborhood. The mixed discourse around the park reflects neighborhood dissatisfaction, but since the park is already open, there is no power to change anything.

And the discourse around the Reading Viaduct, as described in Chapter 6, looked different still. That project's discourse was unbalanced in the direction of *Legitimizing* discourse, and importantly *Creating* discourse was the least prevalent. In addition to the *Legitimizing* discourse being heavily contested, which was discussed in detail in Chapter 6, the *Creating* discourse was relatively less focused on details, making the venture appear less viable.

7.2 The importance of consistency of themes, of speaking with a single voice

Unlike either the FHL or the FBT, RVP could not develop and maintain a consistent explanation for what the project would be in any theme in any of the ECL dimensions. For example, in the *Envisioning* dimension, the RVP had an initial positive reaction to its project (2004), and after the High Line opened in 2009, the discourse in 2010 was very positive as well. But overall the tones in the discourse showed a more reserved reaction to the Viaduct than the FBT or FHL faced, and the RVP did not help itself. With a few exceptions, the *Envisioning* discourse around the Viaduct had more negative and neutral tones in it (relative to positive tones) than either of the other two projects. The overall impression of the Viaduct was less positive than the overall impressions of the High Line or the Bloomingdale Trail. RVP compounded the difficulty with reception with a lack of clarity of message in either the neutral or positive tones. Figures 7.1-7.3 show the distribution of tones in the discourse in the *Envisioning* dimension for each project over time.

Figure 7.1: Distribution of tones, Envisioning Dimension, Friends of the High Line

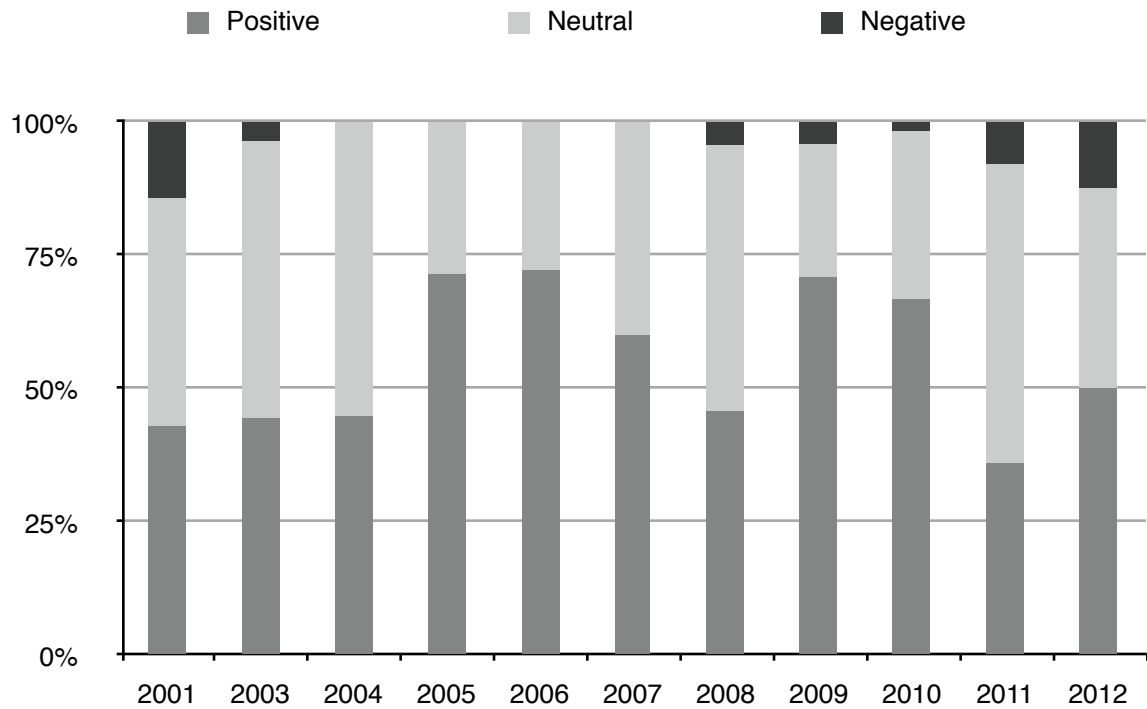
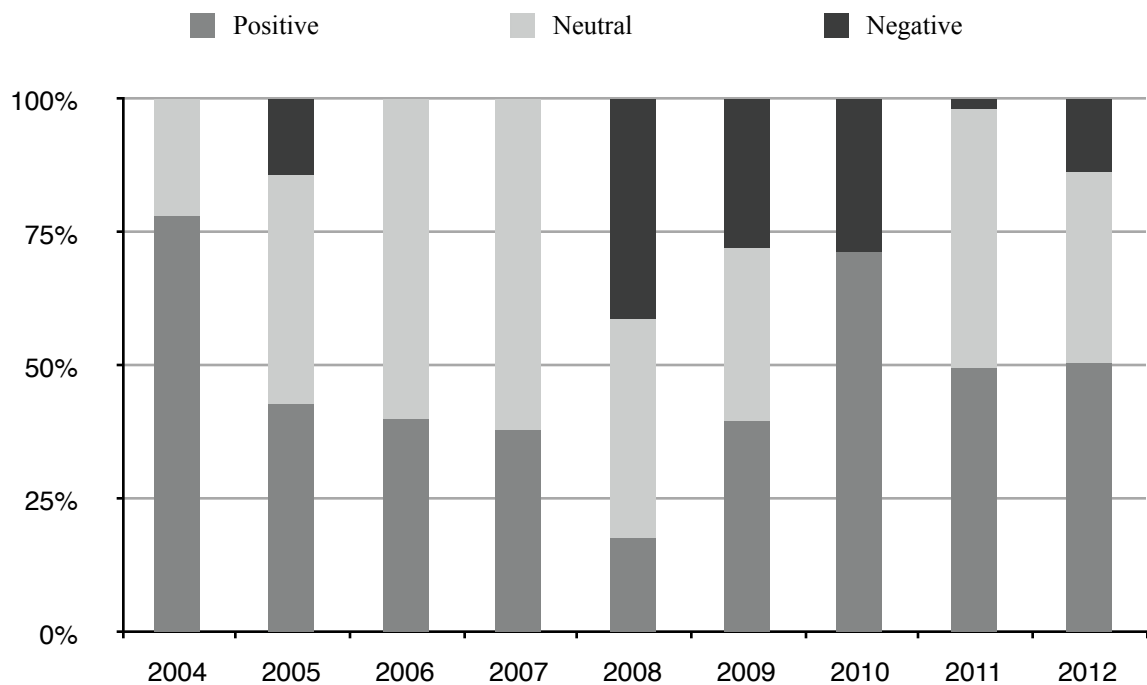
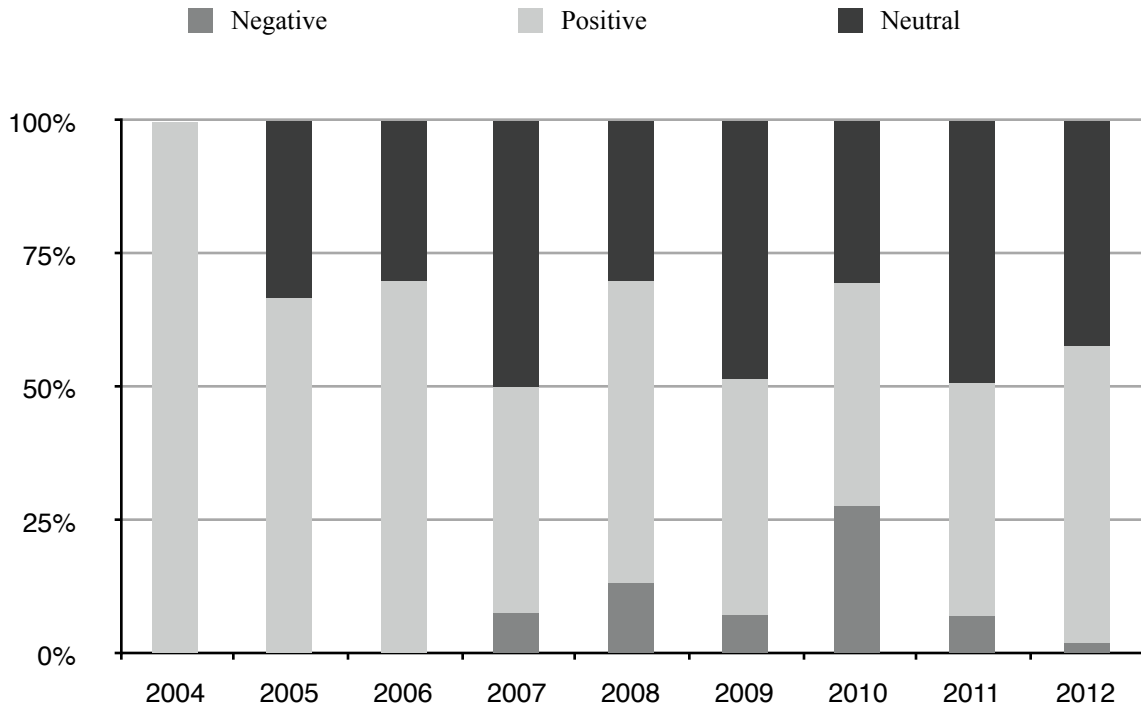


Figure 7.2: Distribution of tones, Envisioning Dimension, Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail



**Figure 7.3, Distribution of tones, Envisioning Dimension
Reading Viaduct Project**



Within the *Envisioning* dimension, the theme of access and usability can be used in support of or against appeals to aesthetics. In the case of the FBT, clear messages about access and usability played a key role in understanding what the Trail and associated parks would look like, and assisted in strengthening aesthetic themes. Joseph Bornstein, from the Chicago Park District, said the Trail isn't just a linear park, but part of a broader system. "How long it takes you to get to the Trail and access it is as important as the park itself" (Bornstein 2011 Interview). The link between access/usability and aesthetics in the FBT discourse also focused on what makes the Trail/park really different from the High Line. For example, the Trail/park is in a residential area on the west side of Chicago and much lower to the ground (around 14 feet high on average, compared to the 30 foot average height of the High Line). When complete, the Trail will be accessed via a combination of ramps and parks, in effect creating seamless connections between the old rail-line and the four neighborhoods it cuts through. In contrast, the High Line is in a dense commercial area, much higher off the ground, and only accessible via stairs and elevators.

In the High Line discourse, the access/usability theme was nonexistent, I think partly because it could only be accessed via stairs and elevators. The *Envisioning* discourse in the High Line focused primarily on the Aesthetics and the involvement of the artistic/design crowd, with a clear and focused message.

In the case of the RVP the fragmentation of discourse in the access/usability theme increased the fragmentation in the aesthetics theme. From time to time, differing sets of uses for the Viaduct were and continue to be proposed by McEneaney and Struble, RVP supporters like Jamie Moffett, Paul van Meter, Paul Levy, and others; for example, whether the Viaduct will have bicycles or not remains an open question. The lack of programmatic boundaries around the space is not necessarily a problem for how people can envision the space. Rather, it is the lack of specificity about the Viaduct combined with *contradictory* explanations that makes the project look less capable. It is a combination of the RVP and its supporters trying to imply that the Viaduct could be all things to all people, and yet not being well informed about the possibilities and consequences of programming the Viaduct. The presence of 501c(3) group ViaductGreene and its competing/extended project only exacerbates the situation. As Prahalad explained, when multiple groups speaking for the project have somewhat competing visions and resources are scarce, people tend not to commit to either project (Prahalad 2012 Interview). The presence of each makes the other seem less likely.

7.3 Envisioning discourse can be done in ways that either support or create conflict with Creating discourse

In New York, Friends of the High Line *Envisioning* discourse was done in ways that highlighted how the group created new coalitions of interested parties coming together to work on the project. As described in Chapter 4, one reason the Aesthetics theme was so dominant in the Envisioning dimension was because of the arts-related backgrounds of many members of the advocacy group. Robert Hammond emphasized that from the beginning there was a commitment

to design. “It wasn’t enough for us to save this and put up a planter. All along there...we were going to make a commitment to design” (Behance Team, 2009).

As part of their appeal to the aesthetic, in New York, Hammond and David of Friends of the High Line (FHL) consistently focused on the *amount* of space available. Manhattan is so congested, and any amount of open space is so rarely available, that prominent supporters like von Furstenberg and Diller were intrigued by the possibilities (2011 Hammond interview). In the case of New York, the FHL’s co-founders clearly had a bold vision (Stone 2011 Interview, Ciabotti 2011 Interview) and actively promoted pictures and renderings very early on (Gopnik, 2001, Behance Team, 2009). Their focus on the amount of open space was consistent, clear, and linked to New Yorkers’ need for open space. This focus came through in the discourse, regardless of who was describing the project (Hammond 2011 Interview, Hammond and David CNN interview 2007, Diane von Furstenberg interview with Charlie Rose, 2011).

The FHL’s ability to frame the discourse around open space was directly linked to and supportive of their coalition of supporters, financial and otherwise. The FHL got donations and expressions of support from individuals and groups not normally involved in public works projects, as described in detail in Chapter 4. This unusual coalition, and the amount of money the FHL raised, highlighted their skill at convincing government officials, supporters, and other interested parties that they could turn the High Line into a park.

Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago consistently focused on how the space would be used, which was partly based on the source of funding commitments. Knowing that the project would be funded primarily through the federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program, and thus was required to have a significant bicycle component, brought this theme to the forefront. Unlike the High Line in New York, and due to the need to accommodate bicycles, the Bloomingdale Trail is accessed via parks and ramps. Focusing on the access parks and the other connections between the ground and the Trail has some spillover between *Envisioning* and *Creating* discourse for the FBT. They are able to show community members that

the access parks can open even before the Trail does, which makes the whole project seem more complete and imminent than it really is. This increases confidence that the FBT can actually get the Trail to happen.

The *Creating* discourse also emphasized the FBT's ability to get the project funded at minimal direct taxpayer cost, as described in Chapter 5, and it allowed the FBT to use the physical layout of the Trail -- the way in which it needs to be accessed -- as the anchoring point for their *Envisioning* discourse. While FHL's *Creating* discourse and corresponding crossover into *Envisioning* focused on their capacity to get city residents to donate and become supporters, the connections between the two dimensions in Chicago focused on FBT's capacity to separate the two sources of support -- the financial and the community participation. Their organizational capacity was linked to buffering Chicago city residents from the Trail's financial demands.

The RVP tried to focus on what the Viaduct could look like, in contrast to the surrounding blight, and called it open space without clearly explaining what it would actually be. As mentioned in Chapter 6, unlike the High Line, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Reading Viaduct's surrounding neighborhoods are not in a position to memorialize the history of a blighted past, and they are not particularly interested in doing so since that blight is still very much present. When RVP and its supporters tried to appeal to aesthetics in the discourse around the Viaduct, talking about how beautiful the Viaduct could be, the resulting discourse became dominated by opposition that highlighted the extent of the current blight instead of focusing on the Viaduct as a possible solution.

RVP and its supporters were unable to frame the discussion in a way that capitalized on the possibilities, assuaged anxieties, or even took advantage of momentum. While students at Philadelphia-area universities worked in intensive week-long charrettes many times over the last ten years, RVP did not effectively publicize those efforts, capitalize on the output from those events, or expand on them. The charrettes had passing write-ups in newspapers (Saffron 2004) but were not widely displayed. Generally, they came to be seen as 'pretty pictures' (McEneaney

2011 Interview) instead of as a starting point for discussion of real opportunities; this framing appeared in the *Creating* discourse as questions and skepticism about whether the RVP could put together a coalition of support to make the Viaduct a reality.

7.4 Legitimizing discourse can enhance or undermine *Creating* discourse

In the case of FHL in New York, the lack of an existing neighborhood group focused on parks gave them an opening early on; FHL was able to claim the right to speak for the neighborhood, and as described in detail in Chapter 4, spent time and effort building up community support . In addition, there was recursive action between the *Creating* and *Legitimizing* discourses that reinforced each. For example, FHL was set up early on as a conservancy in charge of maintaining and operating the High Line, and the efforts of the City agencies, though important for permitting and zoning, were framed as secondary in the *Creating* discourse. The FHL was heavily involved in all aspects of the High Line's development – from the ideas competition to the request for proposals and resulting evaluation/selection of the architect, and it was the public face of the project as well. New York has a history of conservancies involved in managing their parks, including the Central Park Conservancy and the Bryant Park Conservatory (Benepe 2012 Interview). The city government gave FHL legitimacy as an entity once they were designated as a park conservancy.

FHL rose to the occasion, as described in detail in Chapter 4. They mastered intricate details about the park, including, but not limited to, filing lawsuits to block demolition, working with City Planning on developing the redistricting plan for West Chelsea (Behance team 2009), and raising money from private donors to ensure certain design features could be implemented (Hammond, Tedtalks, 2011, Foderaro 2012). Their command of the material provides the sense that FHL is completely invested in seeing the project to fruition. In addition, this *Creating* discourse feeds back into *Legitimizing* discourse in discussions of the FHL's efforts to work with the local community to develop local-focused programming. The interactions with the

community provide legitimacy endorsed from below, in addition to what the FHL has already achieved with legitimacy granted from above through interactions with city government agencies.

The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail also had crossover between *Legitimizing* and *Creating* discourse themes, and positive developments in one assisted the other. Like the FHL, the FBT was trying to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the local community and the eyes of the government agencies needed to bring the project to life. The FBT was consistently described as the stewards of the Trail, a title that gave them some legitimacy with both the community and government agencies. As described in Chapter 5, the *Legitimizing* discourse around increasing safety through development of the Trail was designed to reassure the community and make them feel heard. The *Creating* discourse demonstrated FBT's ability to get the federal government to pay most of the cost, while limiting direct local taxpayer investment to \$2 million of the total, or slightly over 4%. Since the immediate community is not being asked to contribute financially, members are more open to supporting the project; this emphasis in the discourse also reassured the community and allowed FBT to count on them for support.

Unlike the cases in New York and Chicago, the RVP is trying to publicize a network of supporters within city government -- particularly in the Parks Department, the Sustainable Development Department, and the Deputy Mayor's office -- to build legitimacy within the community and garner support for their project. They are trying to use top-down legitimacy, based on government backing, without pairing it with a more emergent interpretation of collective interests (Jenkins 1983).

The discourse is very fragmented and inconsistent in terms of how much support exists in the ranks of city government, and often crosses over with *Creating* discourse in terms of discussing RVP's capacity. What is in the discourse reflects continuing unease about RVP's capacity to bring the project to completion, in any role. Government officials and others have mentioned RVP's lack of fund-raising ability (Focht 2011 Interview, Levy 2011 Interview, van Meter 2012 Interview), which may partly explain the government's lukewarm support. But RVP has not

moved to address this shortcoming, either by expanding their coalition-building efforts to include those skilled at fund-raising, by coming to consensus on a programmatic plan that would make the Viaduct eligible for government monies, or by producing some tangible output showing their progress. Instead, the project's lack of funding is consistently mentioned, and many see this as a sign that RVP does not have the capacity to function effectively as the project's leader or to organize others to assist with fundraising. The presence of the competing advocacy group ViaductGreene only makes things worse, as described in Chapter 6.

The themes in the *Legitimizing* discourse were focused on arguing with the opposition about whether the project was good for the neighborhood instead of trying to develop advocates within the Chinatown community, as described in detail in Chapter 6. The confusion in this dimension's discourse only increases when RVP members, speaking in public about the project, are not able to respond to basic questions about what will happen to the neighborhood if the Viaduct is developed, especially questions about any negative consequences. The following is an exchange between a caller at NPR's Radio Times and RVP cofounder John Struble in November 2011.

Caller: We wonder what your guests have in their vision for the artist loft building. It's an old Reading deco building. What happens to us when the elevated park is built and is successful?

Marty Moss-Coane [Radio Times host]: It's a fair question. I'm going to toss it to John Struble. John, go ahead.

John Struble: I really don't know how to answer that. I think if - you know, hopefully they'll be able to stay there. I don't really know how to answer that.... But the future is pretty much wide open as far as I can see."

Radio Times, 2011

In the case of the Radio Times exchange above, Joshua David from the Friends of the High Line (FHL) was participating via phone. David responded to the question asked Struble by describing what the FHL did in New York, in conjunction with City agencies, to enable existing artists to stay. (David, Radio Times Interview, 2011). It is unclear whether this

assuaged listener concerns. If anything, it highlighted the gap between the work FHL did to build its own capacity as an organization and the work not done by RVP.

7.5 Different properties of the artifact may be differentially relevant for *Envisioning* versus *Creating* discourses

All of these parks – actual and proposed – are urban, elevated, and narrow. The FHL used those properties to its advantage in its 2003 ideas competition, where they got people thinking creatively about the space and its potential, even if -- perhaps, especially, if -- what they wanted to do was not actually possible. There was a dark side to some of the entries, including one that used the spaces between the girders as prison cells. But many were lighthearted. Several entries included swimming pools or rowing courses (Bernstein, 2004; roller coasters appeared in half a dozen entries. Elements from some of these designs found a way into the High Line's ultimate design, and into the *Envisioning* discourse. These designs for the complete High Line (Sections One-Three) appeared and were publicized for several years before Section One's fundraising was finalized, and before Section Three was even under City control.

Both the FBT and RVP attempted to use the physical layout of the spaces to their advantages as well in *Envisioning* the proposed parks. The FBT did so by emphasizing the links between ground and Trail, and focusing on the idea of the Trail as a connector. The Trail's linear nature, and the fact that it crossed through four very different communities, lent itself nicely to that image. The RVP used the Viaduct's physical plan in their *Envisioning* work as well, because the layout was unusual, even for an elevated linear park. The curve in the Viaduct enabled views normally not available in the gridded city center, and the opportunity to see that was definitely highlighted in the *Envisioning* discourse around the Viaduct.

It is also true that ownership of each site was not necessarily clear or straightforward to acquire. The path to ownership is a property of the artifact directly related to the ease of site redevelopment and by extension to *Creating* discourse. In all of the *Creating* discourses, the path to ownership played a role. Sometimes the path to ownership served to highlight the capacity of

the FoTP group and their ability to make the park a reality, sometimes not. In the case of the FHL, the path to site ownership and control was complicated, to say the least. The High Line was owned by CSX, and CSX let the FHL bring people up on the High Line with CSX escorts. According to Robert Hammond of FHL, “CSX was agnostic -- they didn’t want to pay to tear it down, they were playing FHL against the developers” (Hammond 2011 Interview). But the FHL had to work first against the City and CSX and then with them to arrange for the site to be brought under City control. Their successful efforts in this regard came through clearly in the discourse and strengthened the perception that FHL was serious and intended to make the park happen.

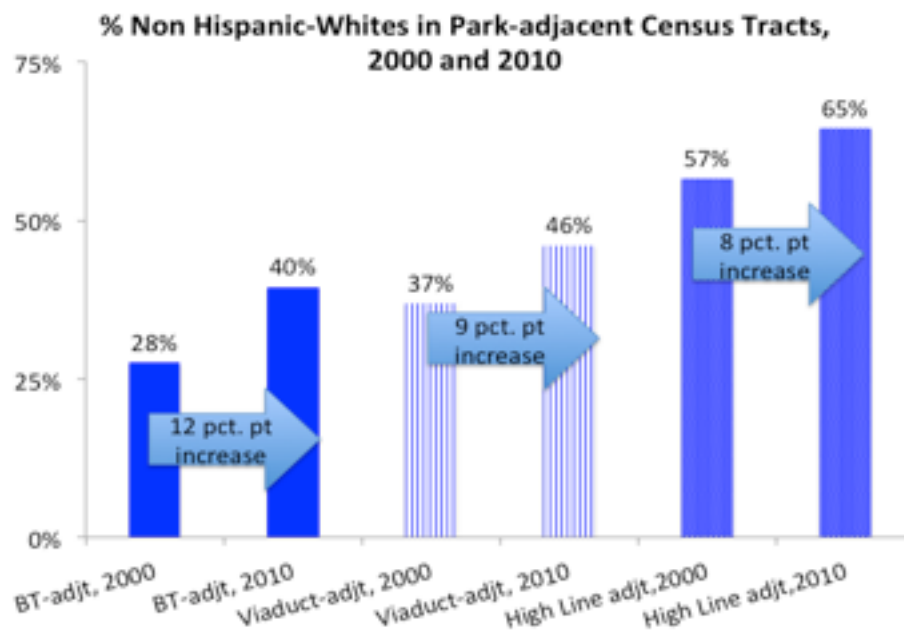
In Chicago, the FBT was helped, mostly by luck, with clear site ownership documents regarding disposition of the Trail. In 1911, the City of Chicago had negotiated a contract with Canadian Pacific specifying that the City would regain control of any abandoned line, in the condition in which CP received the line. This document was discovered in 2004-05 (Helphand 2011 Interview) and it paved the way for FBT and the City to move forward with the project. The *Creating* discourse around developing the site reflected a sense of determination, of slow and steady progress, due to not having to fight to get site control.

In Philadelphia, as described in Chapter 6, the city had several opportunities to take control of the entire site and did not. To put it bluntly, city officials did not miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity. The unclear path to site ownership and control added to the confusion around the Viaduct, itself. This became another source of frustration and conflict as opposed to helping RVP focus on developing a plan for the site. The frustration is reflected in the *Creating* discourse but unfortunately for RVP that lack of resolution has spilled over into other dimensions. It becomes much harder for RVP to acquire Legitimacy, or to convince community residents that developing the Viaduct addresses green space scarcity, when opponents can (and do) point out that the site is not completely available for development and there is no clear plan to get control. To date, the entire site is still not under City control and negotiations with Reading International have not progressed.

7.6 The importance of acknowledging the physical and demographic realities of the site surrounding the proposed park

In all three cases, long-time neighborhood residents complaining about changes in the neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed parks are correct: their neighborhoods are changing. Since the last census, all three areas have become whiter and more affluent. The areas around the High Line and Bloomingdale Trail have also become more educated since the 2000 Census. In the areas around the (proposed) parks, which are close to downtown and ripe for development, these changes have been stronger and more pronounced than city-wide changes over that same time period. Figure 7.4 illustrates the increase in population percentage of non-Hispanic Whites in each of the three cases since the last census. Figure 7.5 illustrates the city-wide changes in population percentage for non-Hispanic whites over that same time period.

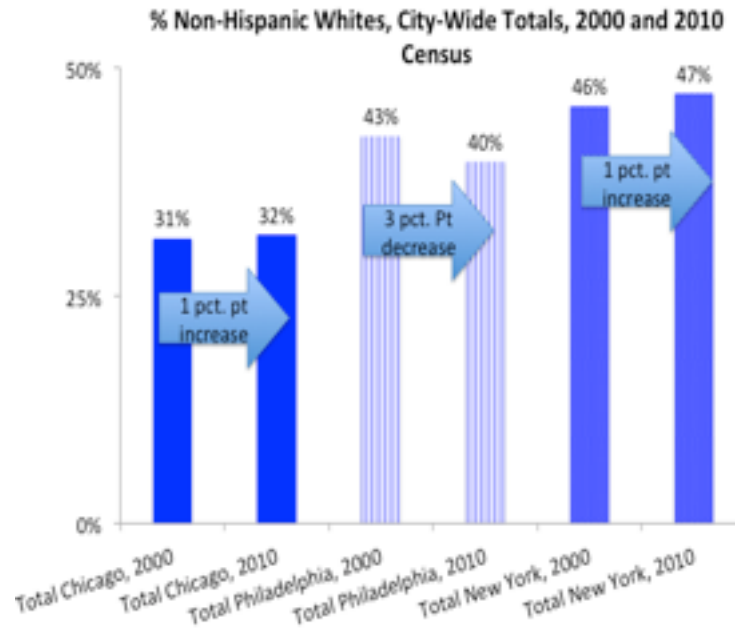
Figure 7.4: % Non-Hispanic Whites, Park-adjacent Census Tracts, Census 2000 and 2010



Note: adjt = adjacent

Source: census.gov, American Community Survey Factfinder

Figure 7.5: % Non-Hispanic Whites, City-Wide Totals, Census 2000 and 2010



Source: census.gov American Community Survey Factfinder

Figures 7.6 and 7.7 illustrate the substantial increases in median household income in the Park-adjacent census tracts as compared to city-wide changes between the 2000 and 2010 censuses.

Figure 7.6: Median Household Income, Park-Adjacent Census Tracts, 2000 and 2010

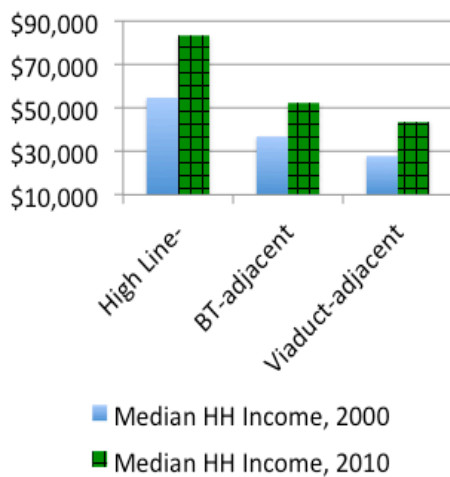
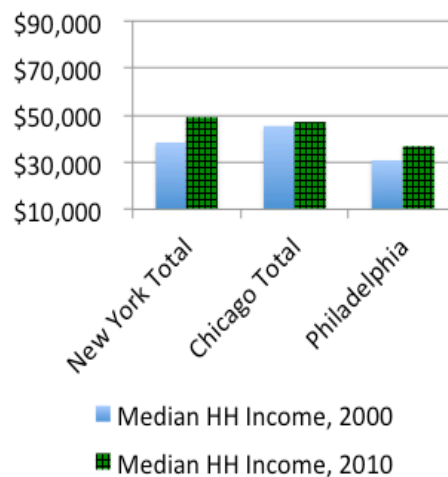


Figure 7.7: Median Household Income, City-Wide, 2000 and 2010



Source: American Community Survey, Census.gov

Finally, Figures 7.8 and 7.9 show changes in educational attainment (percentages of the population 25 and over with bachelor's and master's degrees) for the Park-adjacent census tracts and city-wide. Note that the Reading Viaduct adjacent area has seen less of an increase in educational attainment than the other two cases; in fact, that area has experienced a decline in college graduates from 2000-2010, but a significant increase in those with Master's or other professional degrees over the same time period. The other two cases had increases in both areas over time, at rates exceeding city-wide changes between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 7.8: Educational Attainment, Park-Adjacent Census Tracts, 2000 and 2010

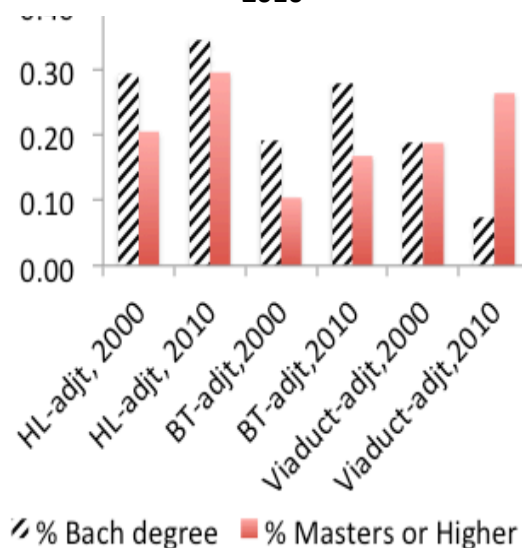
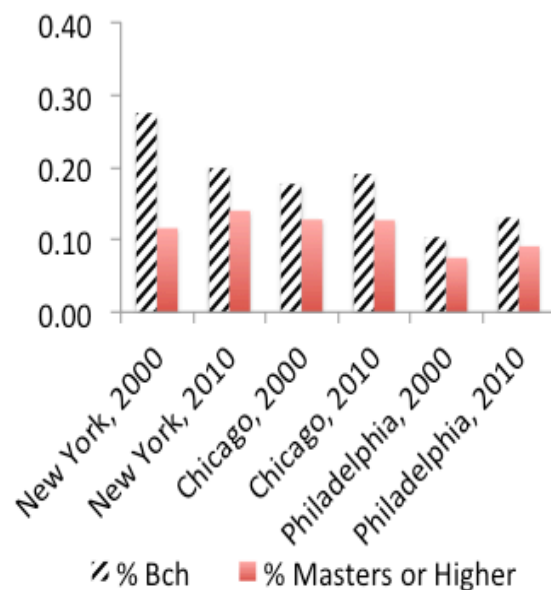


Figure 7.9: Educational Attainment, City-Wide, 2000 and 2010



Source: American Community Survey, Census.gov

As discussed in Chapter 4, The High Line is surrounded by new luxury residential buildings, low-income housing projects, and everything in between. It is an old and familiar story, this mixture of rich and poor, especially in Manhattan. In Chelsea, the influx of wealthy people has pushed up real estate values dramatically since 2003 (McGeehan 2011). This is a benefit to those who already own (since their apartments increase in value) and a challenge to anyone who wants to buy or rent. Commercial rents have also increased, resulting in pushing out small neighborhood

services and stores and replacing them with upscale boutiques and restaurants (Feeney 2011, Humm 2012).

In Chicago, like New York, there was anxiety in the *Legitimizing* discourse about the effects of gentrification. The Trail runs through four very different neighborhoods, increasing in affluence as you move west to east. The concerns about gentrification emanate from the western, more Hispanic neighborhoods, and as mentioned in Chapter 5, even rail trail conversion advocates admit that gentrification has happened in other urban areas once trails are converted to recreational use. The Bloomingdale Trail's designers made programming choices that would imply this Trail is primarily for the neighborhood's residents, however, and could assuage residents' anxieties. The designers arrived at these programming choices partly by considering the space's physical constraints and partly through multiple community visioning meetings. First, the multi-use path is touted as a commuting option for those biking to work (Mayor's Office 2012). Second, the Safe Routes to School Program is focused on the Trail as a walk-to-school option for children attending one of the dozen schools near the Trail (Mayor's office 2012). Third, the access points to the Trail are primarily neighborhood pocket parks, as well as the local YMCA. Some of those pocket parks have already opened and others will open before the Trail opens (bloomingdaletrail.org).

The benefits to the FBT are clear: opening the parks first enables the FBT to publicize project momentum, allows the project to get some sense of park usage, and encourages community participation. There are also benefits to the community, identified as one of the most park-poor areas of the city, due to the focus on improving the neighborhood by adding these parks. The discourse around the pocket parks, in particular, focuses on the lack of green space in the neighborhood, and this focus reinforces the sense that the parks and Trail are for the neighborhood. As Lucy Gomez-Feliciano of LSNA pointed out,

“we were looking for something that would allow residents to be more active – to have more places to exercise – and the trail and parks do that. But it's not like Englewood or the West Side here. There are no vast parcels of available land. This was a genius idea. We need green space. These are dense communities.” – Gomez-Feliciano 2011 Interview

In contrast, to date, as reflected in the discourse around the Viaduct, the RVP has not coherently engaged the residents of either Callowhill or Chinatown. Inconsistent interactions with the community are surprising since the RVP members primarily came out of the local neighborhood association (CNA.org); in theory they have some familiarity with the Callowhill area. The lack of connection with Chinatown residents was evident since the 2004 Chinatown North plan and subsequent meetings, including the 2009 follow-up meeting; it was also apparent during the ill-fated campaign for the NID, and the RVP's surprise at the level of opposition they faced, as described in Chapter 6.

The lack of strong engagement with Callowhill residents is more surprising and more damaging, especially since the RVP members are all Callowhill residents. At the most basic level, the RVP appears unable to connect with the surrounding neighborhoods, to develop evangelists and advocates in all parts of the surrounding communities. This failure is significant because it gives credence to the counter-trope Chinatown PCDC's leaders have been pushing since 2006, arguing "no grassroots support for a landscaped esplanade truly exists in either the Callowhill loft district or Chinatown sections" (Dougherty, 2006).

Throughout the discussion around the Viaduct, there are also concerns about the area's perceived overall gentrification, especially coming from the vocal Chinatown advocacy groups. One of the issues facing the Viaduct's development is the combination of sparse local population and the perceived lack of a wide-ranging draw in the neighborhood, not likely to encourage new residents. As discussed in Chapter 5, there is also currently little in the Viaduct neighborhood that will pull in day-trippers or tourists (Amart 2011), and the project is just far enough off of the beaten path to not have enough gravity on its own. So the project has the double hurdle of there not being enough in the neighborhood to attract more people to live there, and not enough in or near the neighborhood to encourage spillover tourism.

What makes this case different from the discussions around the High Line or even from Chicago is that the proposed amenity is seen as a catalyst for kick-starting revitalization instead

of being a result of it. If, a decade ago, the neighborhood near the Viaduct took off the way other surrounding Philadelphia neighborhoods have, this would be a moot point -- the project, very likely, would have been completed a few years ago. The RVP wants to link development of the Viaduct to development of the neighborhood, and to Philadelphia's history. But it does not acknowledge the views of the ethnic enclave Chinatown, or that Chinatown's expansion plans for Callowhill include calling it "Chinatown North" (Heller 2009). The lack of acknowledgement of the demographic reality around the Viaduct at least partly explains the lack of community support for RVP and its plans.

7.7 Aesthetics discourse can work with or against discourse in the Symbolism dimension

As described in detail in Chapters 4 and 6, both the pre-opening High Line and the Reading Viaduct discourses emphasized *Symbolism*, though the High Line's discourse also emphasized the *Instrumentality* dimension, or how the park would work – due to the focus on the FHL's capacity to build the park and raise money. The symbolic dimension of the discourse around the Reading Viaduct was strongly dedicated to contesting the symbolic implications of the Viaduct and what it would mean for the neighborhood. This theme reflects the longtime residents' anxiety of being left behind, somehow –as the remnant of the Viaduct was left behind. The theme also reflects the failed attempts by the RVP to seriously engage with the different parts of the surrounding community and include them in plans for the space. In Philadelphia, the symbolism of the physical artifact was nearly 50% of the discourse but the themes were so highly contested that they have prevented the community from supporting the project. In addition, there was so much conflict in the Aesthetic discourse around whether the Viaduct was blight or opportunity that it spilled over into the symbolic dimension as well.

Philadelphia faces similar issues with the symbolic artifact dimension and the *Legitimizing* institutional work dimension in the discourse. There is a lot of emphasis placed on them and yet they are so fragmented and contested that they hinder the project's progress. The

RVP and its supporters are clinging to the idea of the Viaduct as neighborhood amenity, without doing the hard work in other parts of the discourse to provide details about how the park would work, what its programmatic boundaries are, how money would be raised to build the Viaduct, how ownership would be transferred to the City, etc. And in their continued emphasis on the symbolic nature of City support the RVP is hitting a nerve with Chinatown residents' existing grievances, those feelings of the City coming in and doing whatever it wants to Chinatown. At the same time, opponents of the project are framing the Viaduct as blight and are doing so effectively. This pushback has implications for Aesthetics – what the project would look like, because the current images of blight and are presented consistently and effectively. The pushback also has symbolic implications in terms of what development of the Viaduct would mean, and to whom – and by implication, who it is not for. The consequence for RVP is that they are building a foundation on quicksand.

The FHL, by contrast, focused on the Aesthetic in a way that was coherent and consistent with the symbolic nature of the proposed park. Their renderings, in particular, drove home the juxtaposition of green and industrial, of wild and planned, and the contrast was striking. Robert Hammond explained how the FHL got “CSX to agree to allow photographer Joel Sternfeld up there and he took amazing pictures. We began to build a community and constituency compelled by images of the High Line. We wanted to give the impression of creating something innovative and unprecedented ” (Hammond 2011 Interview). The idea that this innovation could transform the neighborhood began to take hold in the discourse around the project, and the Aesthetics and the Symbolic themes began to strengthen each other.

7.8 Summary and Conclusions

Both the Friends of the High Line and the Bloomingdale Trail have had consistent strong themes, operating at different institutional levels, in the dialogue, tropes, and images around their projects. The FHL's images in particular served to draw attention to the potential of the park, and

the opportunity to change the neighborhood and the city. While a focus on the look of the park was not the dominant theme, the way in which the images were presented allowed the FHL to bootstrap their way to other themes and develop those themes consistently. Today, FHL are widely considered to be a successful park advocacy organization. They built a groundswell of support for their project, navigated complex ownership and control issues, and extended development timelines, and they now manage and operate the High Line in New York.

The Bloomingdale Trail discourse was not as aspirational as the High Line, in tone or image. The focus was mainly on the Trail's instrumentality, and the access and usability themes within it were consistent over time and across speakers and audiences. The FBT discourse was both practical and methodical, which makes a lot of sense given how the project was being funded, at least initially. I conclude from this that the usability theme was meaningful, important, and relevant in getting the community and other stakeholders to organize around the imagined new park to make it real. The Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail act in a more limited capacity to engage the community in support of the Trail's development, compared to the FHL. They have formed close working relationships with powerful non-governmental organizations, such as the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land. The latter organization has been tasked, among other things, with developing private philanthropy on the project's behalf. By actively reaching out to collaborate with key organizational actors, FBT has helped create a coalition of public and private actors committed to opening this project. Construction starts in summer 2013, with the first phase scheduled to open in 2014, and hopes for the project are high.

While there are supporters in city government who would like to see the Viaduct turned into a park, the RVP has not developed a network of collaborators dedicated to making their project a reality, and has not effectively or consistently influenced the discourse around the Viaduct. They have ineffectively name-dropped city government supporters in attempts to get Chinatown-based community members on board, a move that has badly backfired. RVP has also relied on efforts of entities such as Center City District to move the project along, and that entity and its leaders are polarizing in the city. The CCD partnership has opened some doors and closed

others, as described with the failed NID effort in Chapter 6. If the small city-owned SEPTA spur is constructed as a proof of concept it will be due to the fundraising and organizational efforts of the CCD, not RVP or the competing group ViaductGreene. The obvious hope is that once Philadelphia residents see the redeveloped spur, they will pressure the city government for movement on the other pieces currently owned by Reading International. RVP may have been an initial catalyst for the project, but to date they have not demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between the site and neighborhood, or an understanding of how to use social movements approaches to organizing to do the hard work needed to win community support. As a result there has been, and continues to be, heavily contested and fragmented discourse around their project. Instead of finding a source of agreement and bootstrapping off that into other common themes, the RVP has spent its time fighting battles on multiple fronts with extremely limited success on any one front. The disjointed nature of messaging around the project, and the corresponding lack of momentum and progress, are indicators that RVP in their current incarnation are not the group likely to make the imagined real in Philadelphia.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

All three of these cases have existing physical structures, namely abandoned elevated railroad tracks. Each of these Friends of the Park groups came into being with the goal of repurposing these abandoned railroad tracks. Anything done to these physical structures involves money, whether it is repurposing them or tearing them down. Leaving them alone requires some money for maintenance, or dealing with the occasional lawsuit related to individuals climbing up onto the structures. Every choice involves money. While all of these choices cost money to be implemented, money is not the determining factor.

Entrepreneurs like the Friends of the Park groups need to communicate often, and communicate a variety of themes to achieve their desired outcome of making specific abandoned structures into parks; the more radical the idea, the more communications are required (Pralhad 2010). And these entrepreneurs are trying to develop incredibly complex projects, which are neither a purely social nor a purely for-profit initiative. The Friends of the Park organizations, as new entities, have to create, explain, and consistently use discourse themes built off multiple different logics and meant to operate at different levels.

The Friends of the Park groups need to make other organizations operating in the organizational field make sense of these abandoned structures as parks, even though in their existing state the structures look nothing like parks and they likely won't look anything like parks for years to come. Appealing to existing institutional logics is one tool these new entrepreneurial organizations use in their search for belonging or legitimacy. In order to develop these projects the Friends of the Park groups must balance a logic of urban park development against a logic of profit-driven economic interest. The groups need both private and public organizational support and funding to turn their imagined parks into real ones.

This project has looked at the ways that three Friends of the Park groups use discourse themes in coalition-building as they attempt to gain support to turn abandoned rail structures into public spaces reflecting the communities where they live. Individual action on behalf of a new venture is important, but when working to spark large-scale culture change regarding the development of these parks, I have demonstrated that it is even more important to develop an overarching strategy. To be successful, the three advocacy groups studied here need to put forth a constructive vision, along with clearly-stated goals that people can relate to. Such a combination helps to guide the specific decisions that people, groups, and organizations within a movement make as they work to change the situation on the ground. In short, the ways in which the proposed park articulates a certain conception of the public good and draws both aesthetic inspiration and money from governments, philanthropists, and local businesses is central to the story told here.

These public space projects and the governance structures that produce them are innovative and nontraditional. Instead of being purely driven from the top-down, or purely led by design and designers, the 501c(3) groups trying to make these parks a reality are pulling elements of both strategies and combining these elements with a sense of place. Yes, there is top-down leadership (from the Mayor's offices in New York and Chicago). There are also elements, particularly in New York, of a more design-led process. The High Line is full of high quality and photogenic elements. But there is an ongoing dispute about whether the High Line spaces in Sections 1 and 2 are lovely as objects, but not all that functional as public gathering places. In the High Line's Section 3 as well as in Chicago's Bloomingdale Trail, we see a more place-sensitive approach; in other words, that they balance style and function. For example, in the High Line's Section 3, there is a children's play area. It is small, given the constraints of the space, but nonetheless its existence reflects an acknowledgement that the areas around the High Line are changing to become more family-friendly. The Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago is explicitly designed for local residents – its programming is a mix of bicycle and walking lanes on the Trail itself, and almost all of the access points to the Trail are via pocket parks with local programming,

often named for individuals important to the local community. These choices are both instrumental and symbolic (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004), and they speak to the community's needs. In the case of the High Line, the discourse around the park's programming has become clearer, more descriptive, and more detailed since the first section of the park opened. The discourse has continued to be a mix of Creating and Envisioning themes (Tracey et al 2011) as the second and third sections move from idea to execution.

Though designers and architects are still leading the process, there is a concerted effort in both New York and Chicago to gather community input and ensure that the final design responds to the wishes of the communities that live, work, and play around the spaces. This has been particularly beneficial in Chicago, where the neighborhoods the Bloomingdale Trail runs through are disparate in ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Like the Bloomingdale Trail, Philadelphia's Reading Viaduct runs through very different neighborhoods, some of which are gentrifying and some of which are not. Yet the Reading Viaduct Project has not managed to get community input into the process in a way that affects proposed designs, gets buy-in, or gives the Viaduct momentum. The RVP have been unsuccessful, as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, in using social movement themes, including who they are as an entity speaking for the community, or the social justice implications of bringing green space to an underserved area, to gain community support. Their other themes have been developed and used in ways that are hard to understand and are often contradictory.

All three groups are ultimately aiming to create spaces through a "place-led approach" (pps.org). This kind of approach, held up as the gold standard by community planners (pps.org), takes the place-sensitive approach a step further. Instead of merely relying on community *input*, this approach to designing public spaces is built on community *engagement*. Community input involves members of the community coming to a few meetings and commenting on renderings or programmatic suggestions. Community engagement, by contrast, involves community members becoming advocates for the project, in addition to providing the kinds of feedback mentioned above. Chicago's Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and New York's

Friends of the High Line are trying to move their processes of community interaction to this goal. Philadelphia's Reading Viaduct Project has not managed to gain enough community support for this to be a viable approach.

Community support is important for the success of these projects, because people who participate in a place-led development process feel part of, or invested in, the resulting public spaces. The process of developing community support that can lead to place-led development is the process of building networks of connections, and is not linear or deterministic. Over time, the Friends of the Park groups have to do outreach with the adjacent community or communities, have to take time to understand the complexities of the communities, why the communities feel special or unique, and ensure that the discourse around the proposed spaces acknowledges those particularities. Community support is not just emotional; individuals participating are more likely to serve as stewards of the spaces themselves, once they open (pps.org). Successful, place-led processes can turn proximity into real purpose, and turn the planning and management of shared public spaces into a social group activity that builds social capital and reinforces local societal and cultural values. Each group's efforts to design and advocate for each park rely on both place-specific themes and more global themes in the discourse.

I have primarily relied upon two frameworks to evaluate the success and the mechanisms of these projects (see Chapter 2). The different literatures I used have particular viewpoints regarding the kinds of discourse themes that are used, and who the target audiences for those themes are. I examine processes of legitimation, drawing both on Tracey's framework of bridging logics, and institutional entrepreneurship theory that talks about how processes should work. I also evaluate processes of creation and envisioning, drawing on Tracey's framework and social movements theory, which explains how effective discourse themes are designed to mobilize the community from the bottom up, and to influence elites in order to gain a certain movement-motivated outcome. The three Friends of the Park groups are trying to show community members and supporters that the project can become a reality. This is important in the sense that potential and actual supporters need to see some progress in order to continue their support.

Urban Political Economy literature argues for an instrumentally focused theme that growth is good – targeting elite, growth machine-based interests, and describing the economic benefits of the parks – one part of the ECL framework’s “Creating” dimension of work on bridging logics. The Friends of the Park groups are trying to appeal to a variety of potential public and private donors needed to create the park in terms of a return on their investment – through increased property taxes and home values, new jobs, related investment, etc. Social movements and growth machine perspectives can be incompatible without understanding the multilevel bridging work performed by community-based institutional entrepreneurs to reconcile competing themes and underlying institutional logics.

Table C1 summarizes the kinds of themes I believe are linked to each literature, as well as which cases used which themes. As shown in the table, with the exceptions of the *Financial Growth vs. Lifestyle/ Amenity Growth* and *Persuasion vs. Logrolling Politics* themes, the RVP used discourse themes drawn from Social Movements or Urban Political Economy. Both the FHL and the FBT tended to use themes that cut across all three strands of literature in attempting to make their respective cases for turning abandoned railroad tracks into parks. The exception to this for FBT is the *Financial Growth vs. Lifestyle/ Amenity Growth* theme, where the FBT’s themes focused more on lifestyle and not on financial growth. The lifestyle themes in that case were due more to local concerns with health, such as childhood obesity rates in areas adjacent to the Bloomingdale Trail (Margellos-Anast et al, 2008).

Table 8.1: Comparison of Types of Discourse Themes

Type of Discourse theme	Urban Political Economy	Social Movements	Institutional Entrepreneurship	FHL	FBT	RVP
Who we are vs. What we do	Who we are	What we do	Both	Both	Both	Who we are
Zero Sum vs. Positive Sum	Zero Sum	Either – more likely Zero Sum	Either	Positive Sum	Positive Sum and Zero Sum	Positive Sum and Zero Sum
Use	Achieve desired development for land use	Mobilize resources, influence elites	Bridge institutional logics at the cultural-cognitive level to gain legitimacy	All	All	Achieve desired development for land use
Desired goal	Land use/ control “growth is good”	Achieve social justice/ change the world Effect institutional policy changes	Acceptance of new org. form “the company is appropriate to solve the identified problem”	All	Land use/ control, achieve social justice	Land use/ control
Top Down vs. Bottom Up Target Audience	Top Down	Bottom Up	Top Down	Both	Both	Top Down
Financial Growth vs. Lifestyle/ Amenity Growth	Financial	Lifestyle	Either	Both –	Lifestyle	Both
Persuasion vs. Logrolling Politics	Either	Either	Persuasion	Both	Both	Persuasion
Temporally contingent	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

I evaluated the extent to which all three dimensions of institutional work are represented in the discourse. My initial hypothesis was that balance among all three

dimensions of institutional work was a cause of project success. That turned out not to be the case. In the Friends of the High Line case in New York, the discourse showed the capacity of the FHL to envision, create, and legitimate the High Line with the *Creating* and *Legitimizing* dimensions dominating the presence of *Envisioning* themes in the discourse. The discourse around the Bloomingdale Trail showed a focus on *Legitimizing* and *Envisioning*. However, although the split among the three dimensions with the Bloomingdale Trail was closer to being even than FHL, there were large differences between each cases' focus on *Creating* vs. *Envisioning* discourse. Figures C1 and C2 show this distribution.

Figure 8.1: Distribution of Institutional Work in the Discourse, pre-opening of High Line Park

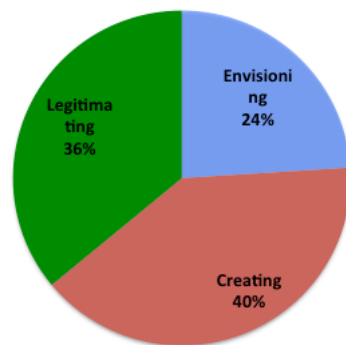
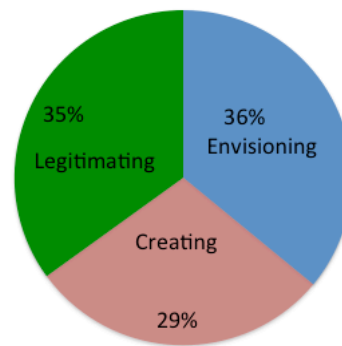


Figure 8.2: Distribution of Institutional Work in the Discourse, Bloomingdale Trail



The heavy focus on *Creating* in the discourse around the High Line Park, is, I argue, intentional. The Friends of the High Line (FHL) wanted to create public confidence that FHL as an organization could make the High Line a reality. In addition, the development schedule of the project meant that they were opening in stages. Each stage thus required a progression from idea to execution, a process that has been repeated three times. The FHL combined a focus on its own organizational capacity and extensive financial backing with two strong themes. First, they focused on linking the High Line as a project to discussions of the neighborhood as an entity. Second, they focused on how the High Line would enhance and benefit the neighborhood. This push was both pragmatic and

effective, resulting in the public having a broader view of the project .

The FHL approach to the High Line is also consistent with Jane Jacobs' analysis of types of parks: when Jacobs talks about parks, she breaks them down into two categories: community parks, like Washington Square in New York or Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, and destination parks such as Central Park in New York (Jacobs 1961). These are two different classes of parks and it is unfair to treat them the same way. Essentially, destination park amenities need to attract people from all over the city, while neighborhood parks need to directly serve their neighborhoods. Lots of parks fail, Jacobs argues in The Death and Life of Great American Cities, because they either (a) attempt to be a destination park without destination park-type amenities or (b) attempt to be a neighborhood park without offering good neighborhood service. Analyzing FHL's discourse around the High Line using this approach, we can see that the themes began to change to emphasize the destination amenities provided by the High Line (Benepe 2012 Interview, Stone 2012 Interview).

Like the Bloomingdale Trail, the Reading Viaduct discourse favored *Legitimizing* and *Envisioning* discourse at the expense of *Creating* discourse. But unlike the Bloomingdale Trail discourse, this split did not lead to success. The Reading Viaduct Project discourse has shown a contested capacity to envision, limited ability to create, and mixed legitimization. The themes in the *Legitimizing* dimension were focused on arguing with the opposition about whether the project was good for the neighborhood instead of trying to develop advocates within the Chinatown community. Themes within the *Envisioning* dimension kept focusing on trying to explain, repeatedly and often contradictorily, all the options for what the Viaduct could be instead of making sure images of the Viaduct were relatable to the community. This concept of relatability is important – as design guru Prahalad points out something can look great and not be relatable and thus not garner support (Prahalad 2012 Interview).

A neighborhood park fails because it fails to directly interact with the sociology of the city (Jacobs 1961). The themes in the discourse around the Reading Viaduct did not interact with the

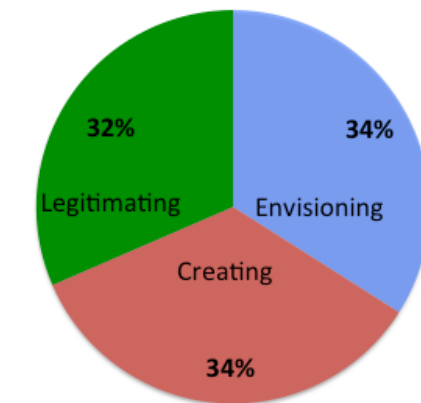
sociology of Philadelphia as a city, and this may partially explain RVP's struggles to connect with the community. When a group can get consensus on what the park should be, or how it might work, those points of consensus become anchoring points upon which to build more consensus, and the group is able to link the points of consensus together. As in the case of the Reading Viaduct Project, when there is not consensus, where there is a dispute, or contested themes, or contested framing, the group is spending much of its time and effort trying to build consensus, not trying to build off of existing consensus.

It is also true that in the case of Philadelphia, the Reading Viaduct Project relied on top-down legitimacy due to relationships with government officials, and this was not combined with bottom-up legitimacy based on the backing of the neighborhood. This focus led to two negative outcomes for the RVP. First, their focus continued to be on top-down legitimacy, invoked by claiming support from city officials in the hopes that somehow this would lead to the project being taken more seriously, or their efforts to move the project forward would gain momentum. Their efforts to claim 'endorsement from below' from the community continued to fall short, and in the discourse it appeared that the RVP gave up, somewhat, on attempts to win over Chinatown. Second, RVP continued to focus on Legitimizing discourse to shore up their case. But a fragmented and contested discourse in the Legitimizing dimension is a weakness not compensated for by consistency in other areas. Weakness in the Legitimizing dimension is problematic, because it means the organization is not being accepted by its environment (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). This has the effect of making the project seem smaller, not larger, particularly combined with the decreased importance in the discourse of the organization's capacity.

Both the Bloomingdale Trail discourse, shown in Figure C2, and that of the High Line post-opening show a nearly balanced split among the three dimensions of venture viability. The High Line split is reflected in Figure C3. This split, combined with the consistency found in the dominant themes, could show the coalition building and maintenance in both cases. Each type of institutional work happens at a different level, so understanding how to influence

the discourse at each level could well be a determinant of organizational capacity and growth for the advocacy group in each case.

Figure 8.3: Distribution of Institutional Work in the Discourse, Post-Opening of High Line Park



Source: The Author

In Chapter 2, I raised the question of how discourse themes matter. Applying the ECL and IAS frameworks to these cases as organizing tools has enabled comparisons across cases, as I have demonstrated. However, it is tempting to over-interpret the results simply on the basis of comparative statistics. All three groups used discourse themes in the three dimensions of institutional work. And all three groups devoted approximately one-third of their discourse to Legitimizing work. They devoted differing percentages to the three dimensions, but I cannot conclude solely from the differing percentages that a certain percentage made one group more or less successful than another. Discourse themes based on political economy, social movements, and institutional entrepreneurship all played some role in these three projects getting to be where they are. The percentage of discourse dedicated to a theme or an area has to be considered side by side with the tones and consistency of message related to that theme.

In the *Envisioning* and *Creating* dimensions for both the Friends of the High Line (pre-opening) and Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail, the dominant themes were consistently treated.

In the case of the Reading Viaduct, the dominant themes in those two dimensions were contested and fragmented. The *Legitimizing* dimension had less consistency in both the High Line and Reading Viaduct discourses, where it was mixed to negative. One of the ironies in the discourse around the High Line is that there were not strong negative tones in the neighborhood theme until after the High Line opened, new residents moved into the area, and those new residents acted in a clichéd ‘pull up the drawbridge’ fashion and began opposing further development. The Bloomingdale Trail discourse was consistently positive.

The cases diverged somewhat in the prevalence of the *Creating* dimension. As mentioned earlier, the Friends of the High line in the New York case focused heavily on *Creating*. This dimension incorporates elements of social movement theory in terms of organizing support and appealing to high status elites, and discourse involving support from below and above was observed in discussions of the FHL’s capacity to make the project a reality. This dimension also draws heavily on urban political economy theories of elite-driven growth, with an emphasis on exchange values. This was discussed in detail in Chapter 4, particularly the emphasis in the High Line discourse on how much money had been raised for the project and who or what entities had donated. Some examples include fashion designer Diane Von Furstenberg and her husband Barry Diller, and Phillip and Lisa Falcone.

In contrast, Chicago/FBT and Philadelphia/RVP focused more on themes in the *Envisioning* dimension and somewhat less on *Creating*. Themes in the *Envisioning* dimension are more about mobilizing the community in support of the proposed park, and draw more heavily on social movement kinds of themes and institutional entrepreneurship themes. The emphasis in both cases focused on the look of the park as a tool around which to organize support from the local community. However, while the discourse themes in the FBT consistently described the Trail and its aesthetic relationship to the surrounding areas, RVP discourse was disjointed and disorganized. There was nearly as much negative talk in the discourse around the Viaduct as positive in the Envisioning dimension, which is partly why the discourse seemed unfocused.

To return to how Tracey's framework treats institutional entrepreneurship themes, social movement themes, and urban political economy themes, all three cases devoted at least one-third of the discourse to themes in the *Legitimizing* dimension, those linked to ideas about how things should work. That can be traced back to theories of institutional entrepreneurship. The search for legitimacy, while present in all three cases, did not lead to the same outcomes. In the case of the Reading Viaduct, the discourse in the *Legitimizing* dimension was so fragmented as to render the themes almost irrelevant.

I don't think that focusing on any one dimension is necessarily indicative of success or failure. I think it has more to do with the advocacy group's use of relevant themes within each dimension and how those themes are treated, whether it was positively, negatively, or neutrally. Consistency of discourse within the theme seems to matter more than overall balance. The successful groups had consistent, unfragmented, complete, at least neutral, and mostly uncontested discourse in all three dimensions. While the Friends of the High Line had a more mixed discourse in the *Legitimizing* dimension compared to its *Envisioning* and *Creating* discourses, even the discourse in that dimension was far more coherent and constant in its use of key themes than the Reading Viaduct Project was. Table C2 summarizes the important discourse themes in each case by type of institutional work proposed by Tracey et al (2011).

Table 8.2: Important Institutional Work Themes, by Case

Dimension	New York/ High Line pre- opening	New York/ High Line post- opening	Chicago/ Bloomingdale Trail	Philadelphia/ Reading Viaduct
Envisioning	Aesthetics	Aesthetics	Access/Usability	Aesthetics Access/Usability
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Yes – consistently positive	Yes – consistently positive	Yes – neutral in tone	No – opponents framing Viaduct as blight and supporters describing the opportunity were equally strong in the discourse
Creating	FHL-capacity	Development and Cost	FBT-Capacity	Development and Cost
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	Slightly mixed between framing of cost vs. investment in project	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	Mixed between neutral and negative – framed as cost and many open questions about who would/how to pay for the project
Legitimizing	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood High Line	Neighborhood High Line
Consistent treatment of theme within dimension	Mixed – positive discussion	More mixed – more negative tones in the discussion	Yes-consistently neutral and positive	No – opponents and supporters do not agree on what to call the neighborhood or whether to frame the Viaduct as another High Line or not
Overall dominant sense-making theme	Neighborhood (Symbolism)	Aesthetics (Aesthetics)	Access/Usability (Instrumentality)	Neighborhood (Symbolism)

However, my research also demonstrates that focusing on the design (*Envisioning*) without straightforward and coherent details of how a project will get there (*Creating*) and how the neighborhood will look when it is complete (*Legitimizing*) just does not work; “if it’s completely open and not clear how you would actually do it, the imagination is just not there” (Pralhad 2012 Interview). You can think of balancing the discourse as ‘staging a house’; if you leave up

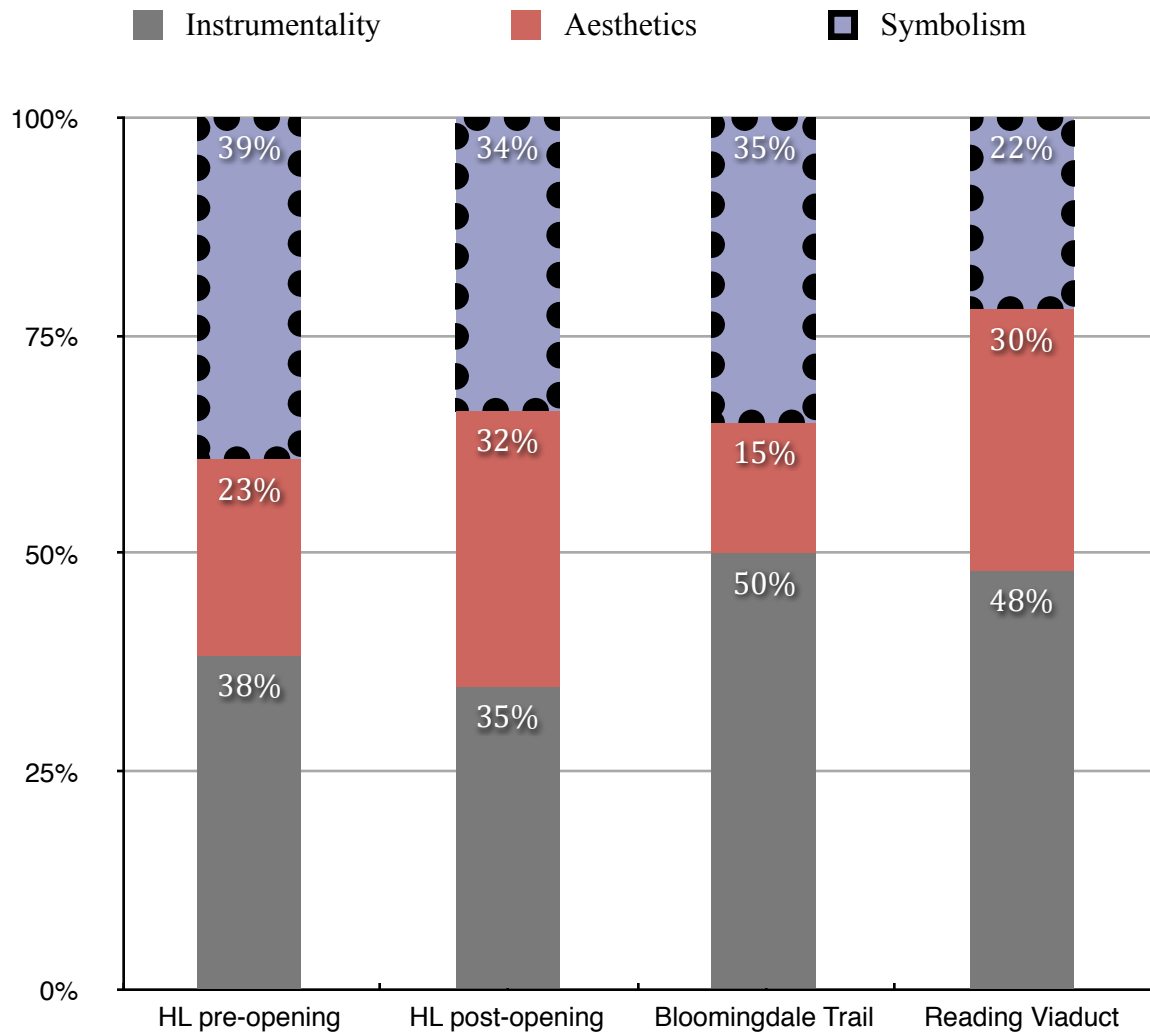
your family pictures, it is difficult for buyers to imagine themselves living there, but if you take everything out then buyers cannot figure out if their sofa will fit in the living room. The Friends of the High Line spent a great deal of time focusing on the *Creating* dimension, as described earlier and in detail in Chapter 4. While the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and the Reading Viaduct Project had less than one-third of the discourse focusing on themes in this dimension, they did so for different reasons. In the case of the FBT, I believe they spent less time on *Creating* because they knew that there was funding available for the Trail to be completed at a certain level of finish and they had a high level of mayoral support in a city with a traditionally strong mayor's office (see Chapter 5 for more detail). In other words, they didn't focus as much on that dimension because they didn't need to. In contrast, RVP did not focus on *Creating* because they could never get past the disagreements about what the Viaduct was or if anything should be done, and their support at the government level was shallow, and mostly a show.

This study does evaluate the importance of discourse themes in turning a physical object into something different, so it is necessary to evaluate the projects' discourse in terms of the dimensions of making sense of the physical artifact (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz' 2004). There is some crossover with the dimensions of institutional work described earlier, but this evaluation of the discourse examines what aspects of the park, itself, the advocacy group focused on in their attempts to make the project a reality. Figure C4 highlights the differing focus on Symbolism, or what the park means and to whom, in the discourses in all the cases.

The High Line discourse pre-opening was more balanced than post-opening. While the High Line focuses on *Symbolism*, *Instrumentality* (or how the park would work) was a close second pre-opening. The two dimensions switched places post-opening. This focus on instrumentality appeared to have provided momentum to the project's development: the public, the neighborhood, potential donors, and government officials believed the FHL would make the park a reality. The FHL post-opening discourse seems to be evenly focused on the three aspects

of the High Line park itself.

Figure 8.4: Distribution of Artifact Dimensions in the Discourse, All Cases



As you can see, the Bloomingdale Trail discourse is also skewed toward the dimension of *Instrumentality*, or how the Trail would work. The focus on *Instrumentality* can be traced back to discussions of usability in the discourse and the strong emphasis placed on working out the issues around how to use and get to the Trail. The second dimension in this case is the *Symbolism* of the park, or what it means and to whom.

In the case of the Reading Viaduct, nearly one-half of the discourse is devoted to a

contested dialogue and debate about whether the park should even happen at all, what it means for the neighborhood, who lives in the neighborhood, and how the area's demographic composition can or should affect development. The remainder of the Viaduct discourse is focused first on what the park would look like and then how it would work. This lack of focus on the tactical nature of the park is linked to both a discussion around access and usability of the space itself and the relative lack of discussion of the capacity of the RVP.

The consistency of discourse seemed to matter more than the distribution among artifact dimensions described by Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz. The three case studies had very different distributions among *Aesthetics*, *Instrumentality*, and *Symbolism*, yet that does not explain their differing outcomes. Half of the Bloomingdale Trail's discourse focused on the dimension of *Instrumentality*. Nearly half of the Reading Viaduct Project's discourse focused on the dimension of *Symbolism*. Friends of the High Line initially focused on *Symbolism*, but after 2008, the discourse became very balanced. Like the dimensions of institutional work, the ability to have constant and coherent and relevant themes appears to matter far more for success than the focus on one or another.

When I started this project, I believed that fragmentation and disjointed themes in the discourse around these projects would explain lack of success, and that consistency of message would lead to project success. But I think it is more nonlinear than simply dominance leading to more dominance, or incoherent messaging causing more contestation and opposition. The two successful Friends of the Park groups operate in New York and Chicago. In each case, the group found an initial theme or combination of themes that reflected an understanding of the site's location and the realities of actually getting the site built. From the very beginning, the FHL and FBT have tried to envision and create parks that would pay homage to the surrounding neighborhoods and their histories.

In New York, at every stage of the process, the FHL attempted to preserve and present the history of the High Line. Old railroad tracks were removed, tagged, and (where possible)

replaced in the park so visitors would better understand the story of the railroad. The original Art Deco railings were preserved at great expense. The project's award-winning plant design was inspired by Joel Sternfeld's 2001 photographs of meadows and wildflowers. It may not be quite as wild, messy, or unplanned as we would want, but as a piece of adaptive reuse of transportation infrastructure it is impressive. The team that restored the High Line did so with sensitivity, innovation, and authenticity.

In Chicago, the FBT and the Trust for Public Land get much of the credit for involving the community in developing programmatic solutions for the Trail. While construction has not yet begun on the Trail, just getting to the point where work can begin was a complex, cooperative effort between municipal, state and federal agencies, plus private businesses, the police, local communities and residents, who had concerns ranging from access to security to privacy to lighting. The level of neighborhood involvement has been high and sustained. Where the FHL focused on incorporating history into their project, the focus for the Bloomingdale has been on making the Trail usable and functional for the community. It's a completely different anchoring point, but it is one that makes sense in each community. The ability to find that critical anchoring point, the foundation that allows the advocacy group to bootstrap onto other themes and build a sense of momentum, is not based on economic dominance. Instead I think it is based on incorporating knowledge of the features and constraints of the situation into discourse themes. That in turn can lead to project progress, sources of funding, etc., which in turn can lead to more success.

In conclusion, this study focused on demonstrating the conditions under which organizations interpret, transmit, and filter their visions for public space. Using the ECL framework highlights how Friends of the Park engage in discourse work at multiple levels in order to drive institutional change in support of a physical public amenity. The institutional work associated with institutional change remains both important and under-explained. This dissertation focused solely on attempts by entrepreneurs to repurpose abandoned urban spaces into new public park spaces.

At the time this project began, the only park of this kind was open in Paris, and the only U.S.-based efforts to transform railroads into elevated linear parks were underway in New York, Chicago and Philadelphia. Both Chicago and Philadelphia have the challenge of managing public expectations in light of the runaway success of the High Line Park in New York City. That may have affected the discourse and language used to describe and advocate for these projects, even unconsciously. Since 2011, several other projects have gotten underway in New Orleans, Boston, Jersey City, Mexico City, Queens (Randolph 2013), Vancouver, and elsewhere; advocacy groups can choose from two successful models of influencing discourse around their proposed projects. Perhaps extending the two frameworks used here in these other settings will develop the frameworks further and begin to shed more light on the effects of a discourse that is balanced or not, or focused on *Creating* the park instead of *Envisioning* the park. Perhaps other researchers will explore these phenomena in other settings repurposing existing spaces, and the results of that research will extend or challenge these findings.

All of the new groups in other cities are able to point to the High Line (and soon the Bloomingdale Trail) as examples of what they want to do. But, particularly with the High Line, this is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, public officials and private citizens will have a better idea of what these advocacy groups are proposing. But as Witold Rybcinski of the University of Pennsylvania points out, “Advocates would like to see the High Line model take off nationwide in the same way Central Park was copied in the 19th century. But that’s a tougher proposition than they think, and it probably won’t be worth the effort” (Rybcinski, 2012). Not many American cities offer the combination of spatial density and history as New York, and part of the High Line’s appeal has been its ability to blend old and new, industrial and green, together in unexpected ways. That part of the project is not something that can be easily duplicated.

And it is extremely unlikely that any of the projects mentioned above will be able to raise the kinds of money Friends of the High Line (FHL) did, particularly from private wealthy individuals and corporations, with the possible exception of Mexico City. The sources of funding may affect the kinds of discourse themes focused on, as we saw in Chicago, as well as the

emphasis on dimensions of bridging work. Where in New York FHL was able to highlight design in their Envisioning discourse due to the sheer amount of private money they raised, the FBT in Chicago focused on the use of the space, because they already knew they would be making design tradeoffs in exchange for government funding. It was a practical choice, and the sense of practicality and pragmatism is prevalent in the FBT discourse.

That said, these projects are innovative in their approaches to reusing abandoned industrial structures. The issue of finding new public spaces in cities, particularly new green spaces, is not disappearing, and it is not getting any easier. It may well be the case that Friends of the Park groups will continue to develop and advocate for these new spaces. As they attempt to appeal to multiple different sources for support, both financial and other, the advocacy groups for these other projects may view the FHL/New York approach to bridging logics and artifact dimensions as aspirational given their own project's constraints. The pragmatic approach used by the FBT Chicago may be more of a practical choice.

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