Using History to Forge Community Sustainability

Serving Veterans in Washington, NC and Beyond

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Stories compel, stories illustrate, stories offer

Humans instinctually belong to social groups or communities defined by clear purpose and understanding

*What is a community?*

a sense of belonging, sharing common values, expressing diversity, sharing space and place –

Rediscovering the power of community and sustaining it lies at the heart of Pamlico Rose Institute for Sustainable Communities (PRISC)
How do we learn to be a strong and sustainable community?

PRISC’s mission involving preserving history and Veterans can provide clues.

A strong community has resilience to overcome adversity and be stronger to confront future adversity.
PRISC Mission - Sustaining Communities

Preparing and sustaining communities to help reduce stress

Stress

Periodic - Hurricanes, floods, fires, depression - uncertainty to when adversity strikes

Continuing - poverty, social, cultural and economic inequalities, hunger, education deficiencies, violence and crime and others
Military and resilience

Military develops resilience in Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen

Today’s mission involves facing civilians as allies or enemies

Combat vastly different than 40-50 years ago

New war on terror has increased the trauma and emotional toll combat has had on our service members
PTSD - Public Health Impact

PTSD increases in men and women so does behaviors such as substance abuse.

PTSD – combat related- but also the impact of serving – i.e. sexual assault or military sexual trauma for a high percentage of females.

Results are similar, depression, substance abuse, homelessness and suicide, but the experience effects differently.

Isolation often occurs – both conscious and unconscious, emotionally, physically and socially.

“….the irony that-for many veterans as well as civilians-war feels better than peace, adversity can turn out to be a blessing, and disasters are sometimes remembered more fondly than weddings or tropical vacations.”
Numbers

PTSD in DoD

31 percent of Vietnam veterans

10 percent of Gulf War (Desert Storm) veterans.

11 percent of veterans of the war in Iraq & Afghanistan

20 percent women Veterans in Iraq and Afghanistan

Women who experience Military Sexual Trauma (MST) are 9X more at risk for PTSD

Suicide

7,400 veterans took their own lives, accounting for 18 percent of all suicides in America. (Veterans make up less than 9 percent of the U.S. population).

Risk of suicide for veterans is 21 percent higher when compared to civilian adults

For women it is 85 percent higher than civilians over that time

Addiction

Opioids prescribed to military members has quadrupled, due to combat-related injuries and muscle strains

73% of female Veterans who experience MST abuse alcohol and drugs

Homeless

there were 49,933 homeless Veterans on a single night in January 2014 in the United States

80% of homeless veterans suffer from mental health disorders, drug and/or alcohol abuse
Social Resilience

is an individual’s capacity to work with others to find opportunity in tragedy and advantage in adversity and, consequently, the group’s capacity to reach these endpoints.
Social resilience

“Community” of veterans – capitalize on common military experience in “brotherhood” and living shoulder to shoulder

Strength and recovery found in making units or groups stronger

Supporting recovery for one community or tribe advances strength for all intersecting groups or communities – helping others, we are helping ourselves

Build skills - understanding others, mitigating bias, willingness to learn and be engaged, empathy
The Power of the Community

The Power of the Community to Create Health is far Greater than any Physician, Clinic or Hospital

--Mark Hyman

We believe the key to improving the health of these at-risk individuals lies in addressing not only individual level needs but also community level needs.
Approaches to housing and reintegration needs of disabled Veterans

Construction of individual homes for Disabled Vets through a variety of nonprofits

“Homes” and programs that offer individual therapy for PTSD and substance abuse

Homeless Shelters

Halfway Houses
PRISC missions

Growing community by preserving history

1) Preserving local history through research, rehabilitation and reutilization of historic structures

2) Providing access to affordable and structurally sound housing and reintegration experience for our veterans

3) Promote research into and application of social resilience
Problem #1 – Local historic districts reveal “gaps” as seen in a number of substandard or vacant failing houses

• Gaps increase as one moves to periphery of district
• Impacts on the “relevance” of the district and detracts from the continuity and community aesthetics of the district
• Creates security and safety issues
• In a small community such as Washington, NC, these gaps create distinct & obvious transitions
Problem #2 – Physically and/or Emotionally Disabled Veterans Suffer Complications related to Military Experience

• High rates of substance addiction, mental health disorders, homelessness and suicide

• Difficulty re-integrating into community and lack of support systems and useful skills and programs of resiliency

• Lack of Housing Opportunity, Homeless shelters and Residential Recovery Programs

• Two populations needing support: Disabled Veterans and families & Female Veterans with substance abuse

• Both needing a house & home to live in an/or transition through
Reintegration Home – Rose Haven

Sober living for female veterans with substance abuse

- Brings a common population together to help facilitate further recovery
- 4-6 residents with one PRISC provided live-in house coordinator; will self-govern
- Social resilience program helps build community ties within home and in the greater community

“Rehabbing home and souls”
The House
219 E. 3rd

Pre-1892
Last standing house in that neighborhood

1916 – African-American woman and daughter had a laundry service

1930s – Barn built for blacksmith

More history to follow!
The sweet spot for re-integration

Recovery

Confronting
Rehabilitation
Reintegration

Individual
Social
Community Gardens
Historical Enclave

• Pocket neighborhoods as re-envisioning urban space
• Build community through common green space and passive boundaries through landscape
• HE borrows on concept and re-utilizes endangered homes to create neighborhood for disabled vets
• “Tribe”
• Community within a community
• Vets pay 80% of market value on completed house
Research on Social Resilience

• Three-stages
• “needs” assessment of population of female Vets
• Application to Rose Haven as a model
• Qualitative assessment of ongoing program
• Stage 1, survey/focus group/interview/analysis, starts Summer 2017
We are working with many organizations

State Historical Preservation Office
Congressman Walter Jones
Stop Soldier Suicide
First National Bank
Century 21
VA Clinic - Greenville, NC

And others
WHY US?
Genesis Story - Pamlico Rose Institute for Sustainability (PRISC)

Growing Community by Preserving History

- Betty Ann Sands – mother, educator, quiet activist, environmentalist, and neighborhood advocate
- Legacy of her life left to her 6 children in spirit and $
- Son Robert Greene Sands – anthropologist, archaeologist in Department of Defense
- Formed Pamlico Rose Institute for Sustainable Communities – a North Carolina 501(c)(3) in 2016
- Teamed with David Steckel; veteran, and retired DoD civilian, and recruited a passionate BoD that shares mission
The Team – PRISC Staff and BoD
PRISC Staff

Robert Greene Sands, PhD – CEO/Chairman of BoD, anthropologist with DoD experience and archaeology/cultural preservation background

David Steckel, MSBP - project engineer, US Army veteran, retired USAF test engineer

Jackie Eller, PhD – research associate, sociologist, and former Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate School, MTSU

Kelly Earp, PhD – research associate, anthropologist in community health, vast experience in start-up and small business

Chase Taylor – ECU SECU Fellows Intern
Tom Haines - Vice Chair, retired Major, US Army and Senior Executive Service (SES), Defense Intelligence Agency

Alexis Davis - Secretary, Century 21 real estate agent

Allison Greene-Sands, PhD - Treasurer, Chief of Strategy, DoD, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO)

Gary Patton - retired, Major General, US Army

Brenda Rogers – USAF Veteran, IT Professional, Beaufort County Community College

Rich Prakopcyk – Landscape Architect

Kelly Earp, PhD – Public Health
Why Washington, NC?

Located within 2 hours of several military bases and a VA clinic 20 minutes away

Has one of the largest local historic districts in North Carolina

Has a strong tradition of supporting veterans

A very engaging waterfront and residents have a strong community advocacy approach

Rebounding real estate market

BEAVERDALE BRICK

Presented To

BETTY VOLM - PRESIDENT 1996-97

February 1998

In appreciation of her outstanding service to the
Beaverdale Neighborhood Association
What Can You Do?
There is no better time than now.
The time to live is now. The time to dream is now.