



EP 12: Developing and revitalizing communities

Veronica Smith in conversation with Stephanie Fortunato

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Stephanie Fortunato: Hello, and welcome to The Three Bells. This podcast is one of a series brought to you by the Global Cultural Districts Network, in which we explore what's happening around the world on those busy and sometimes congested intersections of cultural and urban life. The Three Bells is produced by AEA Consulting and The Binnacle Foundation. The podcast and supporting material can be found at www.thethreebells.net. If you like what you hear, be sure to subscribe on your podcast listening platform of choice.

I'm Stephanie Fortunato, Director of Providence's Department of Art, Culture and Tourism. Providence, Rhode Island is the ancestral land of the Narragansett people. We acknowledge the traditional owners and first nations people across all the lands and countries who are joining us today and pay our respects to elders past, present, and emerging. First nations people are our original storytellers, artists, and custodians of culture.

Today, I have the opportunity to be talking with author Veronica Smith. Veronica has dedicated her career to economic and community development. Since 2018, she has led Impact Brands, a consulting and advisory firm that specialises in strategic planning, community engagement and community revitalisation. We'll be talking about her work, including her recent book - *When Communities Disappear: The Unspoken Truths of Community Revitalisation, Ideologies and Policies in the United States*. After my conversation with Veronica, I'll be joined by Adrian Ellis for our key takeaways segment to identify some insights from today's conversation.

So please stick around. But now, welcome Veronica! Thanks for joining us on The Three Bells.

[00:01:46]

Veronica Smith: Thank you so much for having me. I'm super excited to be here.

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Stephanie Fortunato: So great. Well, your book is incredibly interesting and I think I'd like to just start out by saying, you know, I have worked in and around creative economic development for most of my career. And I have my own ideas about this, but I wonder if you could start out by letting us know, you know, what do you think, what is economic development to you and how does it relate to communities?



The Three Bells: a podcast about culture in its urban context produced by AEA Consulting and the Binnacle Foundation for the Global Cultural Districts Network.

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[00:02:14]

Veronica Smith: Yes, definitely. I'll start by saying that economic development, the way that I like to describe it is, it's everything that we do. It's all of the things that make our worlds thrive, our communities thrive, our neighbourhoods, and it even includes arts culture. So if we think about our schools, our grocery stores, our parks, our workforce, these are all the different things that encompass the word economic development. And in the context of community, if we just look around our communities, look around our neighbourhoods, a lot of the things that I just referenced, are things that we utilise on a daily basis. And so in a nutshell, that is economic development. It is the movement of people, it is the connectivity to place including workforce, the things that give us life, the things that we need to thrive. That, that is what economic development is in, in the most layman's terms.

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Stephanie Fortunato: And I know you mentioned this briefly, but you know, what do you see as the role of arts and culture in community and economic development?

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Veronica Smith: I think that when we think historically, or when I think historically about arts and culture, it really was what built some of our cities. So if we think about places like New York, the Bronx, the diversity of such cities. I think that recently Sacramento has been named one of the most diverse cities-

Stephanie Fortunato: And that's where you are right?

Veronica Smith: Yes, yes. I'm here in Sacramento and we often kind of discount arts and culture. And oftentimes I would, I imagine that that's because people don't understand the history of arts and culture and the word diversity and inclusion. So if we think about some of our most inner cities and the people that comprise those places and where they came from, and their struggles.

So going back to New York, if we think about hip-hop culture and graffiti and, and dance, and you know, some of the things that the individuals were going through in the seventies and eighties; the things that they didn't have, the disinvestment that was happening in their city is really what birth arts, and culture movements.

And some of that tends to get lost in the work that we do. But that really is, it is so critical for people to understand that a lot of the things that are entertaining them today were birthed from movements that really have everything to do about community and revitalisation and economic development to a degree, depending on where you live within the United States.

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Stephanie Fortunato: Yeah, you know, many of the members of the Global Cultural Districts Network have been established as a result of, or an essential element of, sort of an art space revitalisation scheme within their communities. And I think, you know, I know you've looked a lot at, you know, what it takes to build and sustain healthy communities. So what are some of those things that we should be looking at, and whose job is it to define and decide what those things are?



[00:05:35]

Veronica Smith: I think that first and foremost, we have to start with the people that are in a particular place. We have to examine what those people have access to, um, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally. And that mentally and emotionally statement also includes what does their financial health look like?

What does their educational levels or educational health look like? Um, we have a tendency as practitioners to come up with solutions to fix the problem as we perceive it without going into the minds and into the fabrics and into the souls of the people, into the, in that community and that neighbourhood to understand what the problem is for them, as opposed to what we think the problem is.

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Stephanie Fortunato: I have to say right there that's what my experience of economic development has largely been. It's sort of a deficit approach, you know, how do you harvest economic activity where there's a market failure? And really, I think you're right. We need to be thinking about neighbourhood-based economic opportunities and thinking about some of the measures around local ownership or the strategies and, and think about how to implement them in ways that engages the communities who live there and respects the lived experiences and the opportunities that are present. I wonder, you know, what do you see as authentic community engagements?

[00:07:12]

Veronica Smith: Authentic community engagement really begins where the people are on the day-to-day basis. So you're probably familiar with the good old term, town hall community engagement meeting. And that really doesn't organically engage the people who most need to be engaged with. So I believe that one of the, the best approaches is meeting people where they are, that might be the barbershop. That might be the corner store. That might be big mama soul food kitchen. That might be the Asian restaurant that's rooted in the hood. And it really comes down to developing real, authentic relationships with people. And that is the way that you get people to embrace you and to share their struggles with you.

And then they'll go out and get a bunch of other people from their community that are dealing with the same issues, and they let you in. One of the things that some of our leaders, our elected officials, and just leaders of organisations don't understand that you're not able to tap in because people don't like your tactics.

And people, quite frankly, don't have a reason to like you or like me, just because I have this title. And I think that that's the part that, that people often miss. People like to be perceived as human beings. People like to have a voice, to tell how they're feeling, how they got here, what their customs are.

They want you to experience that, you know, many cultures will – you connect most over a meal. And I see that's one of the things that you're doing um, that I've seen in Los Angeles that I've adopted myself in terms of community meals. You know, the best conversations happen over food.

So really just that authenticity is it's, you're not an expert. You don't, we don't all have all of the solutions. We don't know everything.



[00:09:14]

Veronica Smith: So sometimes we just have to humble ourselves. I think sometimes people are afraid to go into places that where there's discomfort, if they don't resonate with, with a certain type of people.

And that's what we have to do in order to truly engage people in the community.

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Stephanie Fortunato: I wonder what the responsibility of cultural institutions is to engage with these social issues. I know in your book, you've looked a lot at poverty, politics and policy and the relationship there. And I wonder, you know, is, do cultural institutions, do cultural leaders have a responsibility to their communities to engage in these conversations and to begin the work of repairing the harm that has been done in some cases?

[00:10:03]

Veronica Smith: Absolutely. I think there's definitely a role and I think it would boil down to, for starters, how we're defining cultural institutions. Um, that can be very broadly defined and considered, or it can be very narrow. But when we look at many of our institutions in where they are today, versus where they originated, as it relates to being for the people, there is a huge disconnect. I probably shouldn't name any names or I won't name any names, but-

Stephanie Fortunato: Oh, you got to give us some case though, you got to give it.

Veronica Smith: (laughs) Um, you know, if we're talking about, just say for instance, an organisation like the, I'll just use the NAACP because I am a woman of colour, I'm a black woman. And so in all fairness as a member, I'm assuming that my membership has not lapsed. As a member, I will say and as a researcher, I don't know that what we are doing today has kept pace with the birth of the organisation.

And why is that? Because when you have people who have different ideologies, as it relates to their role as a leader and their role in a community, sometimes there is a disconnect. So many of our cultural institutions have become disconnected from the types of people and the types of communities that they were birthed to serve.

They'd become disconnected with the movements that they have been birthed to serve. And so sometimes, with our cultural organisations – no different than our faith based organisations and government institutions, we see some of the same issues happening internally. And unfortunately, the community is being done a disservice because these organisations could be stronger than they are today when it comes to some of these very things that we are, that we're talking about today on this podcast. And that was kind of a PC answer. But if you want to ask me some follow-up questions about that response, feel free to.

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Stephanie Fortunato: I was trying to think about how to formulate that, Veronica. I guess on one level, I want to think a little bit about uh, sort of intergenerational baton, handoff that needs to happen. So, tell me a little more about that.



[00:12:41]

Veronica Smith: I think that, that intergenerational shift has posed some challenges uh, because if you look at some of the leaders in cultural institutions, like the NAACP, many of them have, have just lasted for a very long time. So if you look at some of the age of, of the leadership there, they tend to be older. And so they are to some degree, often still stuck in their era, whether that was the issues of the sixties to seventies, they are still latched on to their methods of communication, their methods of organising, their methods of fundraising.

And there, there tends to be a disconnect from the young leaders or the youths that are coming up and are trying to participate in the movement based on things that they may have learned in college or in graduate school or high school. And so that is really one of the things, one of the struggles that I see with many organisations is how do we do better succession planning? You know, many of many of the organisations have no such thing. So if someone dies, sometimes the organisation just folds because there was no plan in place to hand it off to the next generation of leaders that are coming up. And that is what I mean by we're doing the community in our neighbourhoods that most need these organisations a disservice, by not being better prepared.

Movements shift, movements change, issues change. And so the, the, the freedom fight that we were fighting, that our parents were fighting in the sixties and seventies is not the fight that I'm fighting and it's not the fight that my 15 year old son or my 22 year old daughter are fighting. Their issues are different.

Their struggles are different, their desires are different. And a lot of our uh, 100 year old, 50 year old organisations miss that mark, when they don't invest in the youth, when they don't invest in the leaders that we will depend on to lead us when we are too old to lead or teacher or do anymore.

Stephanie Fortunato: (laughs) So we can't do that forever.

Veronica Smith: Right? No, it's not healthy. (laughs)

[00:15:14]

Stephanie Fortunato: No, I think it's good advice, right? You know, investing in youth and thinking about the leadership development and the pathways for the next generation. I think that's something that has come up, sort of across issues on this podcast in lots of different ways.

And I think, you know, there is an intersectional analysis that you're talking about as well that also impacts the way that we approach issues for our time for our places, right. Um, are there any institutions that you've come across that are doing a really good job at addressing some of these challenges?

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Veronica Smith: You know, I have seen that there are some very forward thinking community development corporations out there that are tackling some of the challenges that we are seeing very effectively.



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Veronica Smith: And it's those organisations, one of them, I believe it's West Angeles Community Development Corporation. In Oakland there's an, I think it's East Bay Community Development Corporation, and they are really good at layering, or they're really good at understanding the intersections of a lot of the things that we're talking about today from affordable housing to economic self-sufficiency.

You know which is, synonymous to financial literacy um, depending on the organisation or the leadership, and workforce and economic development. So the most effective organisations are those that understand the intersections of all of these things that equate to healthy people, healthy community, healthy outcomes, and ultimately, the building of prosperity or the building of wealth – which is most important for many of our underserved individuals and underserved people.

If we do not have the foundation, if we are not teaching the foundation for self-sufficiency for sustainability, we talk about sustainability as it relates to green spaces and sustainability as it relates to economic development and climate change and all of these things, but we're not investing those millions of billions of dollars into the sustainability of people. And the organisations that understand the importance of that, are the ones that we need to be investing in.

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MUSIC TRANSITION

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Stephanie Fortunato: I think that you're getting to this, but Veronica, why did you write this book?

[00:17:58]

Veronica Smith: One of the reasons that I wrote this book, well, the pandemic is what pushed me to write this book. Like I had a lot of time on my hands at home when we first went into lockdown. Um, but I was, I was thinking about my conversations and the panels that I've been on, the conversations that I've had with different organisations or with potential clients and clients. And my mind was just going. And I said, let me start to get some of these things down into some form, so that this'll be a leave behind if nothing else.

And so really, as I started to outline, the book kind of morphed into an overview of just so many different things that are critical or have been instrumental or are history tidbits that people just don't know that affect our lives. And so what, you know, the outcome of the book, really, if you think about each of the chapters in the book, each of the chapters can be their own book, but it's really hard to digest some of the, some of our history, some of the history of the United States.

And so I was really thinking about, okay, how can I just put a little bit out there? How can we make this entertaining? How can we make people want to talk more about these very uncomfortable topics, but we need to have a better understanding of these topics as practitioners if our outcomes are going to be better, or if we're going to have outcomes that move the needle on things like wealth creation.



[00:19:40]

Veronica Smith: Otherwise, we're just spinning our wheels – as we have been doing, when we look at the successes of many of our revitalisation programs in the United States over the past 50 years.

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Stephanie Fortunato: Tell me a little more about that part of it. So I, one of the things I think is interesting is the way that you look at the historical record, but you take the lens of breaking down the myths and sort of trying to separate community memory from what actually happened. So when you think about some of those economic development initiatives, the big ones that have sort of you know, wrapped communities around, around certainly our country, but there's probably similar examples from around the world.

You know, what, what, what are some of the, the sacred things that you found were hard to break? When you're trying to separate the, the record from the stories that we have told too often about the impact of these economic development initiatives.

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Veronica Smith: I think that, when I think about the original urban renewal programmes, and I've look at the pandemic that many cities are having, as it relates to the quote unquote 'affordable housing crisis', it almost makes me cringe when I hear the conversations. When I hear the delivery across some of the diocese, when I'm listening to individuals talk about this crisis. But yet there is no connection to how we got here and what often happens or what I'm seeing is now we, we see people that are trying to put in place policies that were at one point policies or are already policies as it relates to housing type, housing density and other places and it's clear that there is a disconnect on the original affordable housing, AKA public housing movement that the United States government created.

And so it's very hard for me when I look at our leaders across the nation, talking about things. And it becomes very apparent and clear that they have no understanding or history of the original programmes that they are setting policy for as it relates to the origins of that policy that I believe originally, originated in New York.

And I go into that in the book. So that is just very, it's a very hard one for me to, to swallow and it goes back to the generational crisis that we have. So we have a lot of younger leaders that are being brought up and that are taking seats, that are taking some really huge seats. And they're very passionate and they know their history and know that they know the fight of their people.

But when they're missing that policy piece, that history piece that affects all people, and not just their people, we are risking doing a disservice in putting us back, taking us back in wiping out some of the progress and some of the places where there has been progress due to a lack of understanding of how we got here and what policy really means.



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Stephanie Fortunato: I know Veronica, I read in your bio that you worked for government in Sacramento, correct?

Veronica Smith: Correct.

Stephanie Fortunato: For a little while. Um, I wonder, you know, something I find is, sometimes when I come into the room uh, even though, I may be new to the conversation or, or to the particulars of the community where I am entering the room, I represent the city and all of the historical, cultural, social baggage that comes with being a member of the city of Providence's staff. And it's sometimes hard to get over that. And I wonder, you know, have you found that also in your conversations with communities about economic and community development?

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Veronica Smith: Oh, yes, I have been cursed out, I have been talked down to, I have seen it all. And ironically, I'm actually now the strategic advisor to a new elected official for the city of Sacramento who I actually met when I was working there and helped him open up his grocery stores in an underserved community.

So to be back in this different role is just very interesting. But one of the things that I had to do was I had to learn how to connect and I had to learn how to stand my ground. And I had to learn how to build my own um, coalitions in the community of people who would defend me in those rooms. But just being a, you know, city of Sacramento representative or a county of Sacramento representative, people didn't want to hear it.

And I have heard it all and I had to really develop some tough skin and figure out what I needed to do to not give up, because I know why I do this work. And so that, I really had to do some soul searching. Part of that was part of this book and part of, what I, you know, fight for, and part of my plight on a daily basis, to be honest.

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Stephanie Fortunato: So since you opened it up, why do you do this work?

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Veronica Smith: I do this work for a variety of reasons. And one of the reasons that I've stayed the course, but figured out my own path was being a, primarily the only woman in the room as it relates to development and economic development or being the only woman of colour in the room. And so I have done a lot of strategies. I've read a lot of talking points. I have been the voice for so many men that so many people don't realise and they'll never know that. And it was just time for me to come out of the background to give my own words a voice.

And so honestly, that's why I decided to stay in this space, even after leaving. That's why I choose to work with the type of people that I work with. And that's why I'm just so passionate about being relational and giving people the tools or arming them with the tools to change their own circumstances, because it's often not, not going to happen the way that they want it to happen as it relates to government's role.



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Veronica Smith: Um, and this conversation that I've started in my work, does not end in my book. One of the things that I will be releasing is the Uncomfortable Couch, which is an extension of many of the things that are in the book that are encouraging day-to-day people to have a conversation – whether it's over a meal or just whether it's over a cup of coffee and let's begin to outwardly talk about some of these things that we don't like to talk about outwardly, but that we need to talk about outwardly with people other than our spouses and our friends and our most trusted family members. If we want to truly impact and make change, we got to start saying some of the things to the world, that are uncomfortable.

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Stephanie Fortunato: The uncomfortable couch, that sounds like a title that was born from this period of lockdown and is definitely something that we need to set up in commons around the world so we can have those conversations, yeah right, with people beyond our families and friends and begin to make that change. Is there anything that you would like to say to the world to make the change right now?

[00:27:16]

Veronica Smith: What I would like to say is that we all have a story. We all have a voice, and it's very important to changing many of the things that we would like to change. If we don't share what we've gone through, what we're going through, then who are we to criticise?

[00:27:31]

Stephanie Fortunato: Well on that, thank you for sharing with us today. A key goal of The Three Bell's podcast is to ensure that these conversations are practical and relevant and to enable the ideas discussed to be translated into reality and into plans for the future. So thank you, Veronica for sharing your ideas. We look forward to taking them forward and to changing our communities.

After this talk, we'll be speaking with Adrian Ellis, Founder of the Global Cultural Districts Network, and we'll be thinking about critical reflections and ideas that we can all use. Veronica, thank you so much.

[00:28:12]

Veronica Smith: You're welcome. Thank you so much for having me.

[00:28:15]

MUSIC TRANSITION

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Stephanie Fortunato: Hello, Adrian. So nice to talk to you this morning.

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Adrian Ellis: And you, Stephanie. And I'm really looking forward to hearing your spin on what was an extremely interesting interview and one that for me, definitely, um, begin to open up new territories.



[00:28:40]

Stephanie Fortunato: So I think, Veronica, she's an economic development professional with you know, two decades of experience in the field. And within that experience, she has often been – as she says, the only woman and often the only woman of colour in the room. And so she has a very unique perspective, I think, on economic development work in community and she's really advocating for more of a bottom up or a community-centred approach to economic development initiatives. And she has a much broader definition of economic development than I think most practitioners that I've met have. I think what drives her interest is looking at the past, looking at history as a way to understand where we are today and to help create better policies for the future.

[00:29:31]

Adrian Ellis: That sounds right. And if there is a criticism of, many aspects of, contemporary policy analysis, it's that it's ahistorical. It doesn't take adequately into account how strong the DNA is of communities, of power structures, et cetera. And doesn't adequately take culture and with a small scene to account, when it's thinking about change and development.

How does that play out in practice? And I guess there are two sides of that. One is, what are the examples of ahistorical development, community development strategies that are inadequately attuned to the importance of history, uh, leading us down a blind alley. And I guess the other side of it is, what are some of the happier stories where a deeper understanding of the history of the community has taken into account? And that there are economic and social gains thereafter.

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Stephanie Fortunato: So I think that there, Adrian, probably are more examples of economic development initiatives that are so disruptive that you really have to work hard to rebuild trust among a wider community for them to actually achieve the outcomes and goals that they have purportedly set out to in the beginning.

But I do think that there are plenty of great examples of community development initiatives that are taking that more intersectional approach that Veronica advocates for. And I think we heard that in Jia-Ping Lee's interview about what's happening in Kuala Lumpur and her work with placemaking there.

And I also think we heard it with Manal, in the work that she's doing. So I think that there are examples even within our network that we could point to. And then certainly I think the investments that ArtPlace America has made in community development in arts and culture within community development and using that as a strategy to really deepen and amplify the possibilities of working at the intersections.

I think that ArtPlace has done a remarkable job about thinking about that – what do we need to invest in? And, where are the possibilities for empowering local community ownership in real authentic ways? And I think that's what Veronica is advocating for and in her work as well.



[00:31:48]

Adrian Ellis: So, one of the things that's touched on uh, in the discussion is the impact of gentrification. Well, the impact of economic development on existing communities and ways of protecting those. What's your take from your experience in Providence of the extent to which uh, historical communities and their aspirations are respected in the economic development.

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Stephanie Fortunato: It's a hard one. Um, so I, you know, I think what I have seen here in Providence, I mean, we are a small city in a small state and in many ways, the past is always present. Um, is that a past that has a lot of voices that have been silenced. Certainly it is just like everywhere else. Um, but I think that there is an awareness, there's always a, a sort of tipping the hat to the, what has happened to bring us to this place. And, you know, she talked about urban renewal. And so that certainly is a force here in Providence that has had a dramatic effect on everything that has happened in the city since that time, right? And so that is often a starting place for the conversation about why whatever economic development initiative needs to move forward.

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Adrian Ellis: Right. How does that play out in practice?

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Stephanie Fortunato: We have undergone a truth-telling reconciliation and reparation initiative. So really looking and taking a very honest approach to what has happened in the city since it was quote unquote 'established in 1636'.

And so that work, the truth-telling work, there's been a report that has been published that looks at source documents, primary source documents, and is really putting together the history of our city through the lens of indigenous land dispossession, through the lens of the enslavement of people of African heritage.

And then really taking an honest look at the systemic racism that is present in every system that governs our lives here in Providence. And the purpose of that truth-telling, the purpose of that looking to the past is to of course, understand how we got here today. But there is that idea of optimism and empathy and another theme that I think we've talked a lot about on this podcast that, through that understanding and through that lens, we will be able to make better policy decisions in the future that will centre, you know, communities that have been historically oppressed and left out of these systems because these systems have not been created for them or by them. In fact, they've been created to oppress them, right?

So I think there is, there are some practical steps that we can take at the community level to really use the historical legacy and the cultural legacy and, you know, all of that, that is, that we inherit to be able to inform our choices about the future.

And I think that's becoming a more accepted practice by the economic development professionals that I work with. You know, really, it is about local ownership as much as it is about – I think in the past, it might've been more about bringing in that, big fish, right.



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Stephanie Fortunato: Um, you know, the, the one company that's going to change the trajectory for our city. I think now there is a much greater awareness, attention to an investment in making sure that our local communities are having the chance to be the change. And, and I know that sounds a little hokey, but, but it's true right? And I think that's what Veronica hopes that her work will inspire as well.

[00:35:32]

Adrian Ellis: So all histories are contested and increasingly we, we embrace the idea of the plurality of histories. One of the questions is clearly, whose history and who tells it? And in an academic context, that's an interesting territory to explore and reach. In a policy territory, one ultimately has to make some sort of decisions and those decisions have to be informed by some sort of mechanism of articulation and decision around the historical narrative. How does that happen in practice?

In other words, what are the, what are the tools that one uses to make sure that one understands what the underlying historical cultural assets are? And, and I mean, intangible as much as tangible that the tradition, the practices, the values. What toolbox does one use to make sure that that does indeed ultimately inform policy making?

[00:36:26]

Stephanie Fortunato: So to think a little bit about ArtPlace America again, and um, I know I keep coming back to this, but I had the privilege of being a grantee through that programme. And I was part of that network.

And some of the things that I learned from that work I think do give us some, some strategies for really thinking about implementation. And so, you know, they looked at community development along a matrix both of cross sector issues, as well as stakeholders who needed to be involved in those conversations. And so I think in terms of thinking about community development as intersectional work or interdisciplinary work, you know, ArtPlace was very aware of that from the beginning. And some of the things that I think came up across the grant funded projects were the need to build coalitions and builds diverse coalitions, right.

So that is about, you know, involving cross sector partners in all of those policy decisions and the frameworks. But it's also about, you know, involving different people on, on, with different places on the spectrum of positional power, um, as a way to really build collective power, right? Um, and I, I think that, you know, sort of in our world, arts and culture, we have a resource that many other sectors don't have, because so much of our work is aimed at sort of transformation.

I think of thinking and of places, and of, you know, sort of it's the minds and hearts right? That's always in our quiver there. So I think in some ways arts and culture work is cross-cultural work, is cross sector work right? So, so we have sort of a natural uh, affinity or a natural or an inherent skillset uh, that can be applied to this work really easily. And I think that's important for cultural institutions to keep in mind, you know, when they think about their own role within, within their communities, what's their responsibility to be involved.



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Stephanie Fortunato: But I think, you know, to get back to some of those strategies, you know, in addition to thinking about building coalitions and building collective power, it is also about facilitating collaboration. And I think that we heard that from Veronica and her calls to meet the community where they are.

That's a, that's a concept again, that we've heard through this podcast, but I think it's important to recognise the inherent knowledge of communities in this work and to somehow find ways to integrate that in with, within policy frameworks. And the other thing that, you know, I heard from Veronica was this idea of the intergenerational changes that happen within legacy organisations and legacy institutions, you know, she pointed to the NAACP. Uh, but I think you and I could probably point to lots of the, of the established legacy cultural institutions around the world who have struggled with growing pains. And you know, they've struggled with them well beyond my career.

Well beyond my perspective on this, right? And, and they've survived that in many ways. And in part, probably because of the sort of hegemonic view uh, that they can present. But they're wrestling with that. And I think that cultural institutions, I mean, are involved in these conversations day to day. And you know, I was also thinking a little bit about Diane Ragsdale and what she says about needing a moral imagination. And it's true with cultural institutions, it's also true for economic development professionals, right? We need to make sure that there is space for that.

Adrian Ellis: Those were two significant bites that were fluent and interesting. Thank you.

Stephanie Fortunato: Well Adrian, it has been a pleasure to speak with you on The Three Bells.

[00:40:20]

Adrian Ellis: And it's been a pleasure to listen to you and to appreciate an angle on community development uh, that is under-articulated in policy terms. And I think that's the underlying value of Veronica's contribution, which is to begin to expand the perspectives or to continue to expand the perspectives that need to inform effective sustainable community development.

Stephanie Fortunato: Thank you so much, Adrian.

Adrian Ellis: Talk to you soon.

[00:40:46]

Stephanie Fortunato: The Three Bells is produced by AEA Consulting and supported by The Binnacle Foundation for the Global Cultural Districts Network. The podcast and supporting materials can be found at www.thethreebells.net. And if you haven't already done so, please subscribe to our feed and rate us on your podcast listening platform of choice. My name is Stephanie Fortunato. Thank you so much for being with us today and I look forward to joining you again soon.

[00:41:12]

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