

Urbanarium Records

Finding aid prepared by Maria Socia

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Local History & Genealogy Division

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Summary Information

Repository	Local History & Genealogy Division
Creator	Rochester Institute of Technology. Urbanarium..
Creator	Rochester Institute of Technology.
Title	Urbanarium Records
Date [inclusive]	1970-1982
Extent	14.6 Cubic feet 12 boxes
Language	English
Mixed materials [Box]	5
Mixed materials [Box]	6
Mixed materials [Box]	7
Mixed materials [Box]	8
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Mixed materials [Box]	10
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Mixed materials [Box] 2

Mixed materials [Box] 1

Abstract

The Urbanarium Records document a local citizens' organization that operated in the 1970s through the early 1980s to address community needs and opportunities in the greater Rochester area. The collection includes reports, correspondence, charts, financial records, meeting minutes, scrapbooks, negatives and contact sheets documenting the organization's planning phase, administrative and financial operations, and programs.

Citation

Urbanarium Records, [Box#, Folder#], Local History & Genealogy Division, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y.

Historical Note

The Urbanarium was an independent citizens' organization created to address community needs and opportunities in the greater Rochester area. It began in 1970 at the Rochester Museum of Science and moved to the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in 1971. The organization received a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, for startup and support for their first three years of operation. RIT was the host institution for these early years in addition to being a large contributor to the Urbanarium's programs. The Urbanarium started its first operational year in March 1974 and was incorporated in July 1978. During its lifetime it received two separate grants from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, which was more than matched by donations from over fifty organizations and more than two hundred individuals. In the fall of 1982, the Urbanarium decided to disband because their time was spent primarily on fundraising, leaving minimal opportunities to work on community issues.

While in existence, the Urbanarium created and sponsored programs, projects, and workshops on numerous important area-wide issues such as education, youth employment, and community spirit. Some of their leading accomplishments include the establishment of a central police force; the development of new jobs through the expansion of tourism; the creation of Project RAISE (Rochester Area Initiative to Stimulate Employment), which prepared and aided youth in finding employment opportunities; and their help in the formation of the GRCA (Greater Rochester Citizens for Action), an independent organization created to give citizens an opportunity to take action on local issues impacting their future.

Scope and Content Note

The Urbanarium Records, 1970-1982, comprise reports, correspondence, charts, financial records, meeting minutes, scrapbooks, negatives and contact sheets documenting the organization's planning phase, administrative and financial operations, and programs.

Planning phase documents composed of reports, meeting minutes, correspondence, and other papers outline the goals, objectives, strategies, and financial planning prior to the Urbanarium's first operational year in March 1974. Administrative and financial records include general files, such as mission statements and policies and procedures; personnel files containing hiring materials and recommendations letters; correspondence on an array of topics, including programs, marketing, and inquiries; and meeting minutes for the Board of Trustees, the Urbanarium Council, the Steering Committee, the Program Committee, and the Implementation Committee. Administrative and financial records also include documents concerning the operations of the Urbanarium councils, evaluations and reports assessing the success of the goals and objectives of the Urbanarium as a whole as well as individual programs; documents for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation prospectus concerning the Urbanarium's efforts to secure

continued funding after the first three operational years; and financial records and sponsorship, which include budgets, fiscal reports, and funding received and denied by individuals and corporations.

Programs, projects, and workshops comprise various records documenting the proposals, formation, operations, and actions of numerous programs created or sponsored by the Urbanarium. Some of these programs include the Rochester Idea, modeled after the "Toronto Idea" of 1973, a campaign that gave all citizens an opportunity to express ideas that would improve their community. This program led to the conversion of the Platt Street Bridge to a pedestrian park and overlook. The Discovering Town Centers program was created to acquaint the community with present and future opportunities for downtown Rochester and surrounding town centers. Several projects grew out of this program, including a media festival; the Transit History Bus, a traveling exhibit on public transit; TRANS-ED, a simulation game designed by the University of Michigan concerning a mass-transit system; and Project MUSE, an exhibit intended to create awareness of the Discover Town Centers project and other Urbanarium programs. Educational projects took on many structures, including a conference called "Inventing Our Educational Future," and an Education Coalition, which was formed in 1980 to focus on issues concerning financing an education, racial/cultural isolation, and delivery of educational services. Youth education and employment issues were primarily tackled in youth forums and conferences during 1979 and 1980. These forums and conferences were designed to give youths a voice while determining and addressing needs and eventually led to the creation of Project RAISE.

Scrapbooks are composed of newspaper clippings and photostats on various Urbanarium projects, especially RAISE and the GRCA. Also documented is general information on the Urbanarium, such as sponsorship, elections, and the first and last awards dinner.

Negatives with corresponding contact sheets document various Urbanarium events and projects including RAISE conferences and banquets, tourism training sessions and bike tour meetings, youth forums and conferences, and Urbanarium members and board meetings.

Arrangement

The collection is organized into five series: Series 1: Planning phase, 1970-1974; Series 2: Administrative and financial, 1971-1982; Series 3: Programs, projects, and workshops, 1973-1982; Series 4: Scrapbooks, 1978-1982; Series 5: Negatives and contact sheets, 1979-1982.

Series 2: Administrative and financial is divided into eight subseries: Subseries 1: General, 1973-1982; Subseries 2: Personnel, 1973-1982; Subseries 3: Correspondence, 1974-1982; Subseries 4: Meeting minutes, 1974-1982; Subseries 5: Urbanarium councils, 1973-1980; Subseries 6: Annual reports and evaluations, 1972-1981; Subseries 7: W. K. Kellogg Foundation prospectus, 1971-1982; Subseries 8: Financial records and sponsorship, 1971-1982.

Series 3: Programs, projects, and workshops is divided into thirteen subseries: Subseries 1: Proposals and needs assessments, 1973-1977; Subseries 2: Land Use Seminar, 1974; Subseries 3: City Spirit, 1973-1975; Subseries 4: Leadership Development, 1975; Subseries 5: Rochester Idea, 1973-1976;

Subseries 6: Discover Town Centers, 1974-1977; Subseries 7: Choices for Action, 1978-1979; Subseries 8: Police Services, 1978-1982; Subseries 9: Tourism, 1980-1982; Subseries 10: Education, 1973-1982; Subseries 11: Youth education and employment and Project RAISE, 1979-1982; Subseries 12: Issues Management and GRCA, 1980-1982; Subseries 13: Miscellaneous projects, programs, and workshops, 1973-1982.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Local History & Genealogy Division 3/2014

Access

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this collection.

Use

Permission to publish, reproduce, distribute, or use in any current or future manifestations must be obtained in writing from the Rochester Public Library Local History & Genealogy Division.

Custodial History

The custodial history is unknown.

Processing Information

Processed in March 2014 by consulting archivist Maria Soscia. This project was made possible by a grant from the Documentary Heritage Program of the New York State Archives, a program of the State Education Department.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Greater Rochester Citizens for Action.

- Monroe Community College.
- Nazareth College (Rochester, N.Y.).
- Rochester Area Initiative to Stimulate Employment (RAISE).
- University of Michigan.
- University of Rochester.
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
- Xerox Corporation.

Personal Name(s)

- Altier, Theodore, 1921-2002
- Andronaco, Margaret (Andronico)
- Colmen, Joseph G., 1920-
- DePrez, Gene
- Ellis, Peter
- Enders, Marilyn J.
- Geissinger, Michael
- Lander, James
- Miller, Paul A., 1917
- Remington, R. Roger
- Skinner, Stanley
- Speegle, James Reed

Subject(s)

- City planning--New York (State)--Rochester
- Civic improvement--New York (State)--Rochester
- Educational planning--New York (State)--Rochester
- Small business--New York (State)--Monroe County
- Youth--Employment--New York (State)

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Greater Rochester Citizens for Action. *Meeting the Educational Needs of the Emerging Employment Market*. Rochester, N.Y.: Urbanarium, [1982]. Rrq370.113 M495m

Greater Rochester Citizens for Action. Small Business Task Force. *Small Business in the Community of Monroe: Economic Viability and Vitality*. Rochester, N.Y.: GRCA, 1982. Rqr338.642 S7352s

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Planning phase

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