

Abstract

Yeoville presents a particular context of the inner city in decline and has been identified by the city as a suburb in need of regeneration. In 2004, The Yeoville Rockey/Raleigh High Street Development was conceived as the urban regeneration strategy for the upgrading of the suburb. The objectives of this strategy were to upgrade strategic public facilities and to improve urban management of the area over a period of five years.

Through the prioritisation of a privatised urban management system, the aim was to attract a new middle class back into Yeoville (gentrification). However, the absence of a plan for dealing with the socio-economic challenges faced by the existing poorer residents has leads to cultural and class conflicts.

International experience has shown that in order to achieve the long-term, strategic regeneration of poorer neighbourhoods, social networks and community development should be prioritised. An effective regeneration strategy should budget for capacity building from the outset and should involve citizens in the design and decision making process in order to ensure that the needs of all the local actors are met and that all possible resources are mobilised. At the forefront of this approach are alternative methodologies like social network analysis, which aim to reconnect the social, cultural and economic dimensions of society to rhythms of space and time. The focus on the mapping of existing social capital resources helps to pinpoint the opportunities, and constraints presented within neighbourhoods and ultimately guide the restructuring process in a meaningful and relevant way.

Keywords:

Urban Regeneration – Gentrification - Social Networks - Rhythm Analysis