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Contributing Writer

-Like an oasis in a drying desert; monetary support for the South Side Settlement House, located at 310 Innis Avenue, simply dried up. The city's power brokers, however, at least, saw the need for an official farewell so they opened the doors one last time for final goodbyes.

As a former board member, I felt compelled to walk through the empty building. And while there,

ghosts of past occasions hovered about. The mood was reflective but somber.

Although this landmark was being shut down, there was optimism among some that Columbus's south side would not wither away. Among those in attendance on this day including community activists, former chairperson and two term board member Carrie Garnes; Millie Strasser, historian; Marie Sunami, former director and her husband John Sunami, designer of the trademark semi-spiral staircase.

Donna Bates, secretary of the Reeb-Hosack/Steelton Village Community emceed the ceremony.

"By the time we found out it was closing, it was too late, but we wanted to give the community the time to bid farewell," Bates stated.

"We rebuild the blocks by sharing memories," Sunami told the attendees.

The celebration concluded with a banquet on the former settlement site on Reeb Avenue. Fortunately, *Community Development for All People*, another local charity, has assumed responsibility for some of the settlement's programs. It is also worth noting that the city has plans to renovate the former Reeb Elementary School and convert it into a South Side Community Center.

These developments are all part of a larger plan to take the city of Columbus to the next level.

With the bold planning of community rebuilding and expansion; from the inner downtown core to the metropolitan communities to the east, west, north and south, Mayor Michael B. Coleman; along with various local organizations and individuals with like-vision, have set out to make Columbus a world class city.

The engine for this expansion is primarily a partnership with the area's hospitals, Columbus

Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) and The Ohio State University. Nationwide Children's Hospital along with a new John Maloney Health Center are projected to anchor development on the Southside /Parsons Avenue corridor.

Grant Hospital anchors downtown, while St. Ann's and Riverside do similarly on the far North Eastside of town as well as the far Northwest section of the city. Additionally, the Ohio State University East Wexner Hospital coupled with the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) and the city are poised to play a major role in the redevelopment of the near Eastside.

The main point of contention on the near Eastside is the historic Poindexter Village housing complex, an entity that many would like to see refurbished and renovated rather than torn down. PACT (Partners Achieving Community Transformation) claims that there are no plans for the site, which I find unlikely.

It is more likely that the partnership between OSU, CMHA and the city will produce a medical park of some kind. After all, Mt. Carmel East and West have medical campuses on the near Westside as well as the far Eastside. It is also likely that OSU-Wexner Medical (on main campus) will help transform the Northside.

Before long, Columbus residents will barely recognize their city. In recent years, Columbus has been compared to Indianapolis as an upcoming mid major city. With all of the redevelopment taking place in the city, the only things that set Columbus and Indy apart are a professional football and basketball team.