

COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

HOW THEY CAN WORK TO PROVIDE LAND TENURE FOR GREEN
SPACE PROJECTS

Marge Misak, Presenter
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Land Banks

- ▶ Return vacant, abandoned, and tax foreclosed property to productive use
- ▶ Quasi-governmental authorities
- ▶ Hold properties tax-free, and dispose of properties intentionally.
- ▶ Do not maintain long-term interest or restriction on land it sells.



Land Trusts

- ▶ Enable community control over land and create community assets for the long run.
- ▶ Membership-based nonprofits, usually, sometimes municipally created.
- ▶ CLTs retain ownership of land, leasing it with the structures on it, with resale price restrictions. CLTs also develop and maintain affordable rental, commercial spaces, gardens, and community facilities.
- ▶ A CLT holds land in “trust” and uses its ownership to keep its eye on how it is used, its condition and its affordability.

Land banks and Community Land Trusts do work together!

Adapted from The Answer from Shelterforce, www.nhi.org/go/theanswer

Community Land Trust: Security of Tenure on Land For Community Needs

Dual Ownership

- Individual owns the improvements (i.e. house)
- CLT owns the land

Leased Land

- Long-term agreement ties house & land together
- Homeowner = Leaseholder

Types of Residential Development

- Single-family detached houses
- Condos
- Coops
- Co-housing
- Rental housing
- Mobile home parks



Types of Non-Residential Development

- Retail space
- Community facilities
- Urban parks
- Community gardens



Stewardship

- ▶ Ongoing
- ▶ Plan for things going right; Write it down for when they go wrong!
- ▶ Promote Engagement
- ▶ Protect Security of Tenure
- ▶ Enforce Agreements

Green Space Land Trusts

- ▶ Mission may include more than one type of development on land trust land
- ▶ May use variety of ownership structures to advance green space initiatives:
 - ▶ They may lease land or own it if they want to provide land for urban ag
 - ▶ They may provide services only (Athens Land Trust)
 - ▶ They may own land and lease it
 - ▶ Urban Ag may be their primary focus and they use a variety of agreements to provide access to land.

Community Greenhouse Dudley Neighbors, Inc



- ▶ Dudley Greenhouse
- ▶ Former Site of an abandoned automotive garage
- ▶ Contaminated and unsuitable for housing
- ▶ 10,000 sq ft Commercial Greenhouse
- ▶ Completed 2005
- ▶ Total Development Cost \$1.5 Million
- ▶ Leased to The Food Project
- ▶ Operational greenhouse and year-round learning space



- ▶ Nonprofit urban land trust in Chicago for preservation of established community gardens.
- ▶ Decisions to acquire a garden based on:
 - ▶ Feasibility for site acquisition.
 - ▶ Evidence of long-term viability.
 - ▶ Evidence of stakeholder support.
 - ▶ Environmental integrity of the property.
- ▶ NeighborSpace acquires gardens through fee simple title or long-term leases, but then has agreements with garden groups.



- ▶ Similar to NeighborSpace in Chicago, NGT is a land trust dedicated to preservation of established community gardens in Philadelphia.
- ▶ NGT acquires properties through outright fee simple ownership or long term leases and has shorter term agreements with garden groups.
- ▶ Like NeighborSpace, NGT provides liability insurance and some technical assistance; assists with capital improvements and education.
- ▶ NGT has a Priority Acquisition Plan to strategically identify and prioritize gardens for preservation to meet NGT's land preservation goals in order to scale up community garden preservation across Philadelphia.



- ▶ Founded in Athens, GA, in 1994, with a dual role to protect open spaces, and to keep the housing lots affordable
- ▶ ALT manages conservation easements to preserve open space, develops affordable homeownership using CLT ground leases and rental housing.
- ▶ Its urban agriculture work does not always include owning land:
 - ▶ West Broad Market Garden is a Certified Naturally Grown (organic), half-acre urban farm on the grounds of a historic African-American elementary school
 - ▶ The garden has a Community Supported Agriculture Program and weekly produce stand.
- ▶ Williams Farm is a five-acre urban farm located very close to downtown, where ALT is creating a center for healthy food production and agricultural education.



Marge Misak

Equitable Development Solutions LLC

marge.misak@gmail.com