

COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE

APPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Final Report Prepared for the Urban Farming Institute of Boston

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Project Context	Page 2
Section 1a. Partner Profile	Page 2
Section 1b: Community Land Trusts for Urban Agriculture	Page 3
Section 2: Methodology	Page 4
Section 2a: Research Questions	Page 4
Section 2b: Methods	Page 4
Section 3: Results	Page 5
Section 3a: Overview	Page 5
Section 3b: Organizational Profiles	Page 9
Section 4: Discussion of Lessons Learned	Page 19
Section 4a. Challenges	Page 19
Section 4b. Opportunities	Page 20
Section 4c. Recommendations for Future Action and Research	Page 21
Section 5: Works Cited	Page 22
Section A: Appendix	Page 23
Section A1: Interview Questions	Page 23
Section A2: NeighborSpace Partnership Agreement	Page 23

Section 1: Project Context

This research was conducted in partnership with the Urban Farming Institute of Boston (UFI) as fulfillment for the requirements of UEP 293-09 Practicum. The project design resulted from collaboration with UFI board member Barbara Knecht and Executive Director Pat Spence. The deliverables of this project are intended to meet the organizational needs of UFI as the board explores the possibility of establishing an independent or subsidiary Community Land Trust (CLT) entity.

Section 1a. Partner Profile

Founded in 2012, UFI works to support the development of urban farming in Boston and other urban areas of Massachusetts. The organization is focused on furthering opportunities for urban agriculture through training programs, educational outreach, policy advocacy, and research and development. UFI's work broadly addresses three areas: farmer training, land acquisition, and education/technical assistance:

Farmer Training: This area provides vocational training for urban farmers in Boston; in 2013, UFI launched Boston's first urban Farmer Training Program for local residents to engage in hands-on learning. Community members received specialized agricultural training by working ¼ acre plots on UFI's currently-held farmland.

Land Acquisition: UFI's land acquisition processes seek to transform vacant lots into productive neighborhood assets, and is intended to benefit those living in the communities within UFI's service area.

Education/Technical Assistance: UFI's educational outreach is rooted in an annual farming conference, which brings together agricultural entities from throughout the state to participate in workshops, seminars, and hands-on learning. UFI is building a replicable model and intends to provide technical assistance for similar organizations.

Presently, UFI manages land in partnership with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's CLT entity, Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI). TPL acquires vacant, city-owned land from Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development. TPL prepares the land for agriculture; eventually, that land is held by DNI, operating as the CLT entity. DNI is effectively holding this land

in trust for UFI, using a long term ground lease mechanism. UFI manages the land, either using it for its own purposes or leasing it to individual farmers.

While this process has been effective, UFI operates in an expanded service area, including the neighborhoods of Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury, and beyond. DNI can technically hold land throughout the City of Boston, but is primarily committed to serving the Roxbury neighborhood. At this time, UFI is considering establishing its own CLT, either as a subsidiary or an altogether separate entity. In this stage, it is important to gather contextual information about the logistics of an urban agricultural CLT, such as land acquisition processes, board structure, funding, and key partnerships.

Section 1b. CLTs for Urban Agriculture

CLTs provide a unique opportunity for urban agricultural practices. Stabilizing land for agriculture in high-cost urban areas may help eliminate land competition that makes land unaffordable for farmers, and can also reduce blighted vacant land. Further, an increase in urban production can also improve access to fresh and healthy foods for the neighborhood. (Loh, 2015) The CLT model offers significant potential, but is often challenging to establish, and is therefore seldom utilized. This research seeks to understand how existing CLTs manage their land with the intent of supporting the development of a successful governance structure for Urban Farming Institute to manage their properties.

The National Community Land Trust Network commissioned a study in 2012 to investigate urban agricultural activities in Community Land Trusts, and 37 CLTs reported agricultural activities across the country. A range of benefits were noted among CLTs supporting agriculture, including food security, health education, vacant land remediation and neighborhood safety. Connections between housing and agriculture appeared in several ways, including agriculture serving as a draw for residents to the housing programs, as residents felt that with agriculture and arts, housing became not simply a home but a *community*. (Yuen, 2014)

An in-depth review of thirteen agriculturally-involved Community Land Trusts suggests that the CLT mechanism can be used for three primary purposes: securing a stable and affordable supply of land to support agricultural work; supporting programming and offering technical assistance; and engaging in direct agricultural production. Ensuring land tenure is noted as the closest fit for the

typical land trust model to intersect with agriculture. Land tenure is cited as the greatest barrier to urban agricultural implementation and sustainability, which supports CLTs as a strong pairing for agriculture. (Rosenberg & Yuen, 2012).

Section 2: Methodology

Section 2a. Research Questions

This research aims to understand the applications of the CLT model for urban agriculture, which are fully outlined in Appendix A1 at the end of the document. The research team developed overarching question areas to guide this research:

1. What are the distinguishing characteristics of CLTs with an agricultural component?
2. How are maintenance responsibilities and insurance liability delegated between lessor (the CLT entity) and lessee (the individual farmer or other tenant)?
3. How is the board structured?
4. What property acquisition processes are employed?

Section 2b. Methods

The above research questions are addressed using a mixed-method approach. The 2012 report by Greg Rosenberg and Jeffrey Yuen, “Beyond Housing: Urban Agriculture and Commercial Development by Community Land Trusts,” was used as a foundation; the agricultural project directory in that report was used to determine the sample size for the following interviews and surveys. The agricultural project directory includes CLT projects that incorporate an element of agricultural activity into their programming.

An online survey addressing the above question areas was circulated to a 18 CLTs whose programming incorporated some element of agriculture. The intent was to amass a generalized body of information about how urban agricultural CLTs are addressing organizational and logistical questions pertinent to UFI’s stage of development. As a follow-up, targeted urban agricultural CLTs (those with missions or programming focused on agricultural activities) were contacted by phone for more in-depth interviews, conducted by phone.

Section 3: Results

Section 3a: Overview

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES					
Name of Organization	Location	Number of Properties	Year Established	Agricultural Programming	Typical Lessee or Tenant
NeighborSpace	Chicago, Illinois	100+	1996	community gardens	community gardening and nonprofit groups
Mosaic Community Land Trust	Pottstown, Pennsylvania	1-5	2011	community gardens	community members
Sawmill Community Land Trust	Albuquerque, New Mexico	10+	1996	community gardens orchard	community members
OPAL Community Land Trust	Eastsound, Washington	10+(130 tenants total)	1994	5 parcels for ½ acre neighborhood gardens	neighborhood residents
First Homes Community Land Trust	Rochester, Minnesota	10+	2000	2 parcels for neighborhood community gardens	Neighborhood residents

MAINTENANCE AND INSURANCE LIABILITY

Name of Organization	Tenant Maintenance Responsibilities	Landowner Organization Maintenance Responsibilities	Tenant Insurance Liability Requirements	Landowner Organization Liability Requirements
NeighborSpace	snow and weed removal, trash removal, general maintenance	water, property taxes, insurance	none	pays for entirety of insurance liability coverage
Mosaic Community Land Trust	none	all	none	pays for entirety of insurance liability coverage
Sawmill Community Land Trust	residents pay all utilities; gardening committee responsible for weeding, maintenance and trash removal	ground maintenance for homes	none	pays for entirety of insurance liability coverage
OPAL Community Land Trust	members responsible for maintenance; tenants pay a small fee to cover water and fence maintenance	administrative services	none	CLT gathers cost of insurance from homeowners in neighborhood.
First Homes Community Land Trust	all	none	homeowner insures and pays for the entire home and lot coverage	none; listed as "additional insurer" on the homeowners policy

BOARD STRUCTURE

Organization Name	Board Size	Board Composition	Meeting Schedule
NeighborSpace	13 voting board members 2 <i>ex officio</i> 1 <i>non voting</i>	7 government directors 6 non-governmental directors (1 of those 6 is a community garden leader)	4-5 meetings/year
Mosaic Community Land Trust	7 board members	4 community members 1 retired local architect/property owner 1 Executive Director of a Community Housing Development Organization 1 is Treasurer of CLT	monthly
Sawmill Community Land Trust	11 board members	$\frac{1}{3}$ homeowners $\frac{1}{3}$ community partners $\frac{1}{3}$ community members at large	monthly
OPAL Community Land Trust	9-13 board members	$\frac{1}{3}$ homeowners $\frac{1}{3}$ government/community partners $\frac{1}{3}$ community members <i>*have a Property Acquisition Subcommittee</i>	8 meetings/year
First Homes Community Land Trust	7-9 board members	3 CLT Homeowners 1 government official 3 community members	monthly

PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Organization Name	Key Partnerships	Acquisition Processes	How did you fund your first property?
NeighborSpace	<p>City of Chicago Chicago Park District Cook County Forest Preserve</p> <p>Various Foundations (financing through grants)</p>	<p>Majority are city-owned land with an existing community garden or urban farm; ~10% of properties are acquired through leases with City of Chicago; a very small amount of the properties are acquired through land donation, community fundraising project or financial donations from a foundation</p>	city-owned land acquired through an intergovernmental agreement
Mosaic Community Land Trust	<p>financial support: Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation, local businesses and banks logistical support: local nurseries</p>	donation	donation
Sawmill Community Land Trust	<p>McCune Foundation Wells Fargo several City Councilors</p>	vacant, city-owned land is transferred or purchased by CLT	city partnership
OPAL Community Land Trust	<p>USDA Farmer's Home Loan Program Washington State Housing Trust Fund Private lenders and donors</p>	<p>Purchasing Legacy Gifts, donations</p>	<p>Washington State Housing Trust Fund Community Development Block Grant</p>
First Homes Community Land Trust	<p>Rochester Area Foundation MN Housing CDBG</p>	grants	grant funding and city partnership

Section 3b: Organizational Profiles



NeighborSpace
Community Managed Open Space

NeighborSpace: Chicago, IL

Website: <http://neighbor-space.org/>

Contact Person: Robin Cline, Assistant Director : Rcline@neighbor-space.org; (773) 826-3127

Mission:

NeighborSpace is the only nonprofit urban land trust in Chicago that preserves and sustains gardens on behalf of dedicated community groups. The organization shoulders responsibilities of property ownership – including basic insurance, access to water, and links to support networks – so that community groups can focus on gardening. NeighborSpace works to protect local sites by:

- Providing permanent protection against potential development
- Establishing local partnerships that ensure community management and control
- Covering basic liability insurance for gardeners and volunteers
- Developing resources and opportunities through the Stewardship Mini Grant Program
- Providing stewardship support, and technical assistance

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

NeighborSpace is primarily agriculture-focused; however, this is majority non-commercial activity. NeighborSpace manages land for non-commercial community gardens, but is interested in expanding into the commercial agricultural realm by acquiring larger, currently vacant properties for larger-scale urban farms.

Organizational Context:

Founded in 1996, NeighborSpace was created to address cross-sectoral concerns about open space access in Chicago. A local philanthropic organization, Chicago Community Trust, brought together intergovernmental organizations to discuss how best to preserve and increase open space in Chicago. Central to this discussion was the recognition that community gardening was already happening in spaces throughout Chicago; however, these spaces were not necessarily secure in the long-term.

NeighborSpace currently manages over 100 parcels of land, some of which are 3-4 lots in size. This land is used by community garden groups and organizations including Growing Home, Growing Power and Heartland Human Care Services. Rather than using a typical ground lease, NeighborSpace uses a “Partnership Agreement” to establish terms with such groups (see Appendix: Section A2 for an example Partnership Agreement).

Maintenance and Insurance Liability Policies:

NeighborSpace is responsible for the insurance liability for all parcels. In addition, NeighborSpace pays all property taxes, insurance and water utilities. The lessee groups are responsible for snow and trash removal, as well as general property maintenance.

Board Structure:

NeighborSpace’s board has 13 voting directors, two ex officio members and one non-voting member. The organization seeks a 50/50 balance of governmental and non-governmental directors: six are representatives of the City of Chicago, and six are not government affiliated. One voting member is a jointly-appointed non-governmental director; currently this member is from the Chicago branch of TPL. The Board of Directors are appointed rather than elected, and the non-governmental directors bring a range of skills and experience from which the organization benefits. For example, the board includes one former lawyer, who provides legal assistance for NeighborSpace; the board also has directors with financial expertise and with previous experience working with related organizations.

Property Acquisition Processes:

NeighborSpace is primarily focused on acquiring parcels on which gardening activities are already occurring. For gardeners interested in having their space acquired, the process includes obtaining a letter of recommendation from their local Alderman and providing proof of community benefits (photographs or other documentation of garden-based events, gatherings, etc.). Recently, NeighborSpace has been approached by community groups interested in converting vacant lots into larger-scale urban farming operations. Although NeighborSpace does not currently hold land for commercial agriculture, this recent interest has led the organization to consider revising their acquisition process to accommodate larger urban farms.

Key Partnerships:

From its inception, NeighborSpace has worked in close partnership with the City of Chicago. Both the City and the NeighborSpace entity see open space as a priority issue; this mutual investment provides NeighborSpace with a certain degree of leverage in terms of municipal support and funding. This partnership model between NeighborSpace and the City of Chicago is up for review in 2018. While NeighborSpace staff members

anticipate that the City's commitment to the project will not have changed, they suspect that they will be encouraged to obtain outside funding to increase the sustainability and self-sufficiency of the organization.



OPAL Community Land Trust, Eastsound, Washington

Website: www.opalclt.org

Contact Person: Lisa Byers, Executive Director, (360) 376-3191

Mission:

OPAL CLT works to create a stable supply of permanently affordable housing to maintain the character, vibrancy and diversity of the Orcas Island Community in Washington State. The organization often builds entire neighborhoods, which range from 7 households up to 32. They have 130 tenants of their properties in total.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

As OPAL builds neighborhoods, the organization creates food garden spaces within each neighborhood. These spaces range from $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre down to $\frac{1}{8}$ acre. There are currently 5 garden locations, which range in involvement and numbers of people. The organization's motivation behind agriculture is to support people to grow their own food as a healthy part of living, and to improve access to healthy food. Sometimes groups find that they have an "exuberant harvest" and share it with food bank, but they do not grow commercially, and do not have a training program.

Maintenance and Insurance Liability Policies:

Insurance for gardens: the CLT owns land, and the land is leased to and utilized by others. CLT gathers cost of insurance from homeowners in neighborhood.

Board Structure:

The organization utilizes the "classic" CLT structure: $\frac{1}{3}$ homeowners, $\frac{1}{3}$ individuals from government agencies or partners, $\frac{1}{3}$ community members. They believe that this has worked very well for them. The board is 9-13 people, and meets 8 times a year. They have several board members who have experience as master gardeners or community partners.

Property Acquisition Processes:

The organization has a Property Acquisition committee that meets in addition to the board – are able to analyze more thoroughly for utilization. Sometimes it is active and sometimes it is quiet. Having a group of people with that focus and experience is valuable. They have a development sector for their work. They have acquired several properties through the Washington State Housing Trust fund, as well as the USDA Farmer’s Home Loan Program, as well as bequests.

Key Partnerships: OPAL works to keep relationships with social service agencies.

Additional notes:

Over the years, OPAL has wanted to be more proactive in holding land for agricultural purposes but they haven’t been able to find a business model for it. In affordable housing there are many more available resources in order to fund projects, but not as much exists in the agricultural realm. The staffing levels required to meet real estate financing are very challenging, and can be costly.

**Mission:**

Sawmill CLT is a nonprofit membership organization that owns and holds land in trust for the benefit of the community while preserving the affordability of the housing on the land permanently. Sawmill is home to 93 individual single family homes, and another 250 apartments.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

Sawmill has a 27 acre trust with 93 individual single family homes, another 250 apartments. Those who lived in the apartments did not have access to growing space; most do not even have balconies. Therefore, Sawmill had many requests for spaces to grow. After 15 years, they were able to develop a 2-3 acre plot of land into the garden. The organization hosts 2 community gardens with raised beds and an orchard. One of the gardens is tailored towards senior residents. The two gardens total 42 raised beds.

Maintenance and Insurance Liability Policies:

Liability for the garden is paid out of administrative overhead costs. There is a gardening committee responsible for overall weeding, trash and maintaining. They are all volunteers. Each person with a plot pays only for the cost of water, which is \$50 per season (NM has two growing seasons each year).

Sawmill Community Land Trust, Albuquerque NM
Website: <http://www.sawmillclt.org/>
Contact Person: Kimberly Rose, Executive Director; (505)764-0359

Board Structure:

The CLT has 11 board members, with a subcommittee for urban ag: 3 board members and 3 community garden experts (2 external, one participates). It meets monthly. In an interview, the organization suggested to always include bankers and attorneys on the CLT board. Bankers can help CLT be aware of federal and local banking resources, and an attorney can offer legal advice and agency.

Property Acquisition Processes:

Procured a 27-acre parcel for housing and held it until they were ready to develop and utilize it for agriculture.



First Homes Rochester Area Foundation, Rochester, MN

Website: <http://www.firsthomes.org/>

Contact: Shirley Lee: Shirley@rochesterarea.org

Mission:

Build and improve the quality of life in the greater Rochester area through philanthropic leadership and community partnerships. Our core values are: Integrity, Collaboration, Inclusion, Innovation, Stewardship

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

As the name might suggest, First Homes is primarily dedicated to housing. While none of their currently held parcels were acquired with an agricultural purpose in mind, the CLT has two vacant lots (where a blighted house was removed) that have been converted to community gardens for residents. Maintenance and Insurance Liability Policies: *[Note: the following applies to housing.]* The CLT homeowner is responsible for the insurance policy of the entire home and lot coverage, with First Homes listed as an “Additional Insurer” on the homeowners policy. The tenant is responsible for all maintenance and utilities.

Board Structure:

The board ranges in size from seven to nine members. Currently, there are seven: three CLT homeowners, three community members, and one government official. The board meets monthly.

Property Acquisition Processes:

Properties are acquired with funding from the Community Development Block Grant program as well as grants from the Rochester Area Foundation and Minnesota Housing. A combination of grant funding and city partnerships facilitate property acquisition.

Key Partnerships: First Homes' work is supported through municipal partnerships and the Rochester Area Foundation.

Additional Notes: The information was obtained from survey responses only.



Mosaic Community Land Trust, Pottstown, PA

Website: <http://mosaicclt.org/>

Contact: mosaicclt@gmail.com

Mission:

MOSAIC Community Land Trust provides permanently affordable housing and healthy living choices to people of modest means, and through education and participation, creates a vital community with a focus on arts and culture to stabilize neighborhoods and improve the quality of life in Pottstown. MOSAIC is actively seeking to acquire more land for community gardens and increase resident engagement.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

Primarily focused on housing, MOSAIC has between 1-5 parcels dedicated to community gardening. Community garden programming is supported by funds from the organization's development budget. MOSAIC has a community garden manager who leases small plots to interested neighbors for a fee.

Maintenance and Insurance Liability Policies:

The CLT is responsible for the entirety of the insurance liability as well as all general maintenance related to the garden site.

Board Structure:

MOSAIC has a board of seven directors. Four of these directors are community members, one is a retired architect who owns property in Pottstown, and one is MOSAIC's Treasurer. The final director is the Executive Director of a local Community Housing Development Organization. The board meets monthly.

Property Acquisition Processes:

All of MOSAIC's properties have been acquired through donation. They have partnered with a local attorney who worked pro bono to legally transfer the properties and to gain tax exempt status.

Key Partnerships:

MOSAIC's key partnership with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation provides most of the financial assistance for operation. Local businesses and banks also provide financial support.

Additional Notes:

This information was obtained from survey responses only.



Southside Community Land Trust, Providence, RI

Website: <http://www.southsideclt.org/>

Contact: sclt@southsideclt.org (401) 273-9419

Mission:

Southside Community Land Trust provides access to land, education and other resources so people in Greater Providence can grow food in environmentally sustainable ways and create community food systems where locally produced, affordable, and healthy food is available to all.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

Southside CLT's programming is singularly focused on agriculture. This includes youth and adult agricultural education programs, community gardens farmer training and commercial farms. Southside has 13 community gardens which support over 250 community gardeners. The CLT also has a 0.75-acre demonstration farm called City Farm, located in South Providence. Outside of the city, Southside supports Urban Edge Farm, its larger-scale (50-acre) business incubator farm. The site hosts seven farmers, who sell produce at Providence-area farmers' markets, in Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares, and to local restaurants and soup kitchens.

Financial Information:

The financial information below was obtained from Southside Community Land Trust's 2013 Annual Report, available on their website. While this table provides financial data regarding funding and expenditures, information about insurance liability or maintenance policies was not available.

INVESTED

Southside Community Land Trust Financial Data*

INCOME

Individual Gifts	\$132,299
Earned Income	\$178,680
Corporate Contributions	\$ 35,740
Foundations Revenue	\$350,586
Government Revenue	\$ 78,518
Other Income	\$ 14,507
Total Income	\$790,330

EXPENDITURES

Agriculture Equipment and Supply Programs	\$ 60,812
Administration	\$427,400
Development	\$ 92,350
Total Expenditures	\$175,131

Net Revenue	\$ 34,637
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Total Assets	\$1,279,740
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Total Liabilities	\$ 7,377
Total Equity	\$1,272,363

Total Liabilities and Equity	\$1,279,740
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*Unaudited

Source: Southside Community Land Trust, 2013.

Land Acquisition Processes:

Following permissive zoning for urban agriculture in the State of Rhode Island, the Providence City Council and Mayor Angel Taveras put forth a comprehensive plan to expand municipal support for urban agriculture. In 2013, “the State of Rhode Island Department of Health and the City of Providence Offices of Sustainability and Healthy Communities partnered with SCLT to develop Lots of Hope. Recent progress in local food policy Through Lots of Hope, the City of Providence leases land to SCLT for \$1 and together we build community gardens & farms where people can grow food for their families or for sale to their neighbors. In 2013, funding for construction was provided by the State of Rhode Island Department of Health, The Rhode Island Foundation, and the Funder’s Network for Smart Growth & Sustainable Communities” (Southside Community Land Trust, 2013).

Additional Notes:

Southside CLT’s range of experience, programming and project structure represent promising resources for informing UFI’s process. However, we were unable to reach any staff person at Southside for an interview. All of the information above was gathered from Southside CLT’s website and 2013 Annual Report. Due to Southside’s similar mission and close geographic proximity, it is highly recommended that UFI’s staff reach out to Southside for further information on their practices, challenges and advice.



Athens Land Trust, Athens GA

Website: <http://www.athenslandtrust.org/>

Contact: .admin@athenslandtrust.org; (706) 613-0122

Mission:

Athens Land Trust conserves, empowers and sustains communities through responsible and visionary land use.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

Athens Land Trust is unique in that it is both a housing-focused CLT and a conservation land trust. Athens CLT also supports a community agriculture program. The mission of this program, which was incorporated into the Athens CLT model in 2010, is to address food insecurity and increase neighborhood development in vulnerable Athens communities. Program areas include a community garden network, a Young Urban Farmer training program, and resource coordination for urban farmers, community gardeners, and school gardens. Athens CLT also has two larger-scale commercial market gardens: half-acre West Broad Market Garden, which has a CSA program and weekly produce stand, and Williams Farm, a five-acre urban farm.

Board Structure:

Athens CLT is governed by a 15-member board of directors, which meets on a monthly basis. Although it is unclear from the available information whether Athens CLT seeks to maintain the traditional tripartite board structure, it is clear that their directors have a diverse range of experience and identities. For example, the board appears to represent a broad range of interests by including farmers, homeowners, business owners, a former state legislative policy analyst, and a commercial developer.

Land Acquisition Processes: At first challenged by prohibitive zoning codes, Athens CLT was ultimately able to acquire affordable urban agricultural land for their West Broad Market Garden through a partnership with Clarke County School District (Rosenberg and Yuen, 2012).

Additional Notes:

Athens CLT has programmatic similarities to UFI (an emphasis on education and agricultural training as well as a commercial agriculture component). While their model is different in that it was an expansion of previously housing- and conservation-focused work, there are still lessons to be learned from Athens. While we were unable to get in contact with a representative of Athens CLT, it is highly recommended that further information on their management, funding and acquisition practices is gathered.



Troy Gardens/Community GroundWorks

(Madison Area Community Land Trust), Madison, WI

Website: <http://www.communitygroundworks.org/>

Mission:

Community GroundWorks connects individuals to urban agricultural and natural lands within a diverse learning community. The organization grows wholesome and organic food for local tables, steward urban natural areas, inspire healthful eating, and offer hands-on learning opportunities.

Organization Context:

Troy Gardens (now Community GroundWorks) is a project of the Madison Area CLT (MACLT). Originally a community garden and open space comprising 31 acres, the area was slated for redevelopment in the mid '90s. MACLT intervened to purchase the property and transferred management to Community GroundWorks. It now also hosts 30 units of mixed-income housing.

Involvement with Agricultural Activity:

Today, Community GroundWorks manages a community garden, a restored urban prairie, a commercial CSA farm, and multiple education and outreach projects.

Additional Notes:

Like Southside CLT and Athens CLT, Community GroundWorks serves as an excellent example of leveraging the CLT model for urban agriculture (especially relevant is the commercial agriculture component). Because they were unavailable for interview, it is suggested that UFI follow up with a staff member from Community GroundWorks or MACLT for further information.

Additional Consultants: Greg Rosenberg and Darci Schofield

As part of this research, we also had conversations with consultants and experts in the field of urban agricultural CLTs. Greg Rosenberg was a founding member of the National Community Land Trust Network, and was instrumental in establishing Troy Gardens of the Madison Area CLT. Darci Schofield is the Urban Program Director at the TPL. Conversations with these experts provided helpful context for our research.

Section 4: Discussion of Lessons Learned

Perhaps the most compelling takeaway from this research is that there are few precedents for CLTs dedicated solely to *commercial* agriculture. The majority of CLT projects are primarily focused on housing, with a smaller-scale agriculture component added on later, often at the request of residents. Many of these agricultural components are non-commercial (community and neighborhood gardens) and are funded by a portion of the organization's development and/or housing budget. However, UFI is not without predecessors from whom there are lessons to be learned. There are opportunities for partnership and technical assistance with related organizations, some of which are geographically proximal to Boston. Indeed, this lack of precedence represents an exciting opportunity for UFI to operate at the forefront of action regarding urban agricultural CLTs and to serve as a model for related initiatives in the future.

Section 4a. Challenges

"When I talk to new groups I often say, do one thing and do it well before you go on and do the next thing. The desire to move fast feels really urgent when you're starting, but the reputation builds when you do things well. It's best not to rush into things." - Lisa Byers, OPAL Community Land Trust

Sustainable Funding: Meeting funding needs is a significant concern for CLTs focused on agriculture. Southside CLT in Providence, RI has a market farm that sells to area restaurants and farmers markets, as well as an annual plant sale and membership fees. All of these areas combined, however, meet only 20% of the organization's expenses. (Yuen & Rosenberg, 2012) This challenge was noted in conversations with OPAL CLT as well as Sawmill CLT - typically urban agriculture funds had to come from non-agricultural sources. Grant funding continues to be a significant portion of organizational funding for CLTs.

Capacity: CLTs require a significant amount of capacity. UFI currently has only one full-time staff person, and a significant amount time, technical knowledge and expertise may be required to start and manage a CLT.

Section 4b. Opportunities

While it is important to consider potential future challenges, it should also be noted that UFI is uniquely positioned to “hit the ground running,” rather than beginning the process of establishing a CLT from scratch.

Existing Partnerships: First, UFI has already been operating within the CLT framework through its existing acquisition partnerships. UFI’s relationships with experienced, well-resourced partners such as DSNI (and DNI), TPL, and other allies throughout the state of Massachusetts should be maintained for organizational support, value alignment, and technical assistance.

Organized Constituency: UFI has a robust network of already organized constituents. UFI’s current Farmer Training Program graduates represent a broad base of potential lessees who are already invested and committed to the organization. This constituency is rooted in the local community and can serve as an enormous asset in terms of capacity-building.

Section 4c. Recommendations for Future Action and Research

This research works to knit together a range of perspectives from CLTs practicing urban agriculture as a part of their work. As we learned through our research, the vast majority of CLTs that utilize urban agricultural practices do so only as a secondary function to support residents, rather than a primary purpose. Moving forward, we recommend the following:

1. Connect with CLTs focused on supporting commercial urban agricultural work.

It may be most helpful to learn more about support mechanisms for commercial urban agriculture. We suggest reaching out to the following three CLTs, which we were not able to interview directly:

- Southside Community Land Trust
- Athens Community Land Trust
- Troy Community Land Trust

2. Research sustainable funding sources.

Examine opportunities including capacity expansion, and property stewardship/management, and consider how this may impact the organization's capacity to manage/support a CLT structure over the long-term.

3. Begin to establish cross-sectoral partnerships that can support UFI's work in the future.

Many of the CLTs with which we spoke mentioned the importance of their close working partnerships with the municipal government, private foundations, community groups and other nonprofit entities. As exemplified by NeighborSpace's collaboration with the City of Chicago, finding a way to connect UFI's mission to a beneficial outcome for the City of Boston could serve the organization well. There are many possible ways to frame this "mutual benefit"; for example, municipal support for UFI's work could help the City of Boston reach open space goals for 2030 or advance the goals put forth by the Office of Food Initiatives.

4. Consider strategies to operate as a part of a network.

Given capacity and funding considerations, is an independent CLT viable? Other models may be more straightforward for the organization, including a central server model that may provide technical assistance, structural support, and more. Regardless, connecting with the nascent Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network could provide opportunities for structural and functional support, resource sharing, value alignment/policy advocacy, and technical assistance.

Section 5: Works Cited

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Section A: Appendix

A1. Interview Questions

Below are the interview and survey questions used to address the research questions:

1. Please provide the name and location of the Community Land Trust (CLT) or agricultural organization you currently are affiliated with.
2. What year was your CLT established?
3. To whom do you usually lease land? (Example: individual commercial farmers, community garden groups, individual non-commercial farmers and gardeners)
4. How are maintenance responsibilities and utilities (for example, snow removal, water utilities) usually delegated between lessor and lessee?
5. How is insurance liability balanced between the tenant and the CLT/landowning organization?
6. How many properties does your organization currently hold?
7. How many board members does your organization have?
8. What is the structure of your organization's board, and what stakeholders do your board members represent? (Example: Our board is 25% community members, 25% tenant farmers, 25% government officials and 25 % CLT staff.)
9. How often do you meet?
10. What is your process for acquiring properties, and who is involved? (Example: Vacant, city-owned land is transferred to CLT ownership through a partnership with the city.) (Example: We use grant money from X Foundation to purchase privately-held land.)
11. How did you fund the acquisition of your first property? (Example: grant funding, eminent domain, donation, easement, city partnership, etc.)
12. Are there any key partnerships that support your organization logistically, financially, or politically? (Example: technical assistance from X nonprofit, funding from X Foundation, etc.)
13. If you could give one piece of advice to a starting urban agricultural CLT, what would it be?

Section A2. NeighborSpace Partnership Agreement

<http://neighbor-space.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/NBSP-partnership-agreement-Updated-Dec-2014.pdf>