EXPANDING OWNERSHIP
shared equity and collaborative ownership for housing and agriculture

Webinar 1: Community Land Trusts
Staff Organizers
(in chronological order by webinar)

Fran Miller, CAFS @ Vermont Law and Graduate School

Sarah Danly, White River Valley Consortium (Vital Communities)

John Haffner, Vital Communities

Sarah Wraight, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission

Alana Redden, Vital Communities

Erika Hoffman-Keiss, Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation
Shared Equity and Collaborative Ownership

community land trusts  ground leases
cooperatives  variations on CLT model
resident-owned communities  LLCs
other co-ownership agreements
equity-building lease provisions
deed restrictions & easements
Models where individual homeowners, landowners, and land stewards share ownership with each other or with the community, in order to make it more affordable to have some ownership.
Our goal is...

- To think creatively about different ways that land use and land ownership could work in, and for, our community
- To gain inspiration and insight from great work happening in other states that we may never otherwise stumble across
- NOT to imply that younger generations or marginalized communities should give up on the opportunity for wealth building and settle for being renters forever

- NOT to imply that any one of these tools is right for all people or for all communities
- While also recognizing that there are many excellent efforts happening in Vermont already
- But rather to consider tools that could help MORE people build equity, even when traditional property ownership is not accessible.
Session 1: Community Land Trusts
“A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit corporation that holds land on behalf of a place-based community, while serving as the long-term steward for affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other community assets on behalf of a community.”

- Center for Community Land Trust Innovation
Agenda

• Brief introduction and history of CLTs by Fran Miller, Senior Staff Attorney at the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems at Vermont Law and Graduate School

• Nora Lichtash, Executive Director of the Women’s Community Revitalization Project, speaking about the formation and current work of the Community Justice Land Trust in Philadelphia

• Johanna Rosen, Commons Alliance Facilitator at the Agrarian Trust, speaking about the Agrarian Commons model being implemented across the country

• Q&A with Audience

• Closing & introduction to next webinar in the series
Community Land Trusts: History

Center for Community Land Trust Innovation: https://cltweb.org/

Grounded Solutions Network: https://groundedsolutions.org/

For a comprehensive history of Community Land Trusts, go to https://cltweb.org/clt-roots/.

For more background information on community land trusts, go to https://cltweb.org/what-is-a-community-land-trust/.
What is a Community Land Trust?

- A nonprofit corporation that holds land on behalf of a place-based community

- The nonprofit serves as the long-term steward for community assets such as affordable housing, community gardens, farmland, civic buildings and/or commercial spaces

- The nonprofit is governed by residents of the land trust, community residents, and public representatives
Community Land Trust Innovators

- **1942 Koinonia Farm, Americus GA:**
  - 1400 acres, pecan business, 2 residential communities, civil rights movement space

- **1947 Constructivist Movement in India:**
  - Gandhi, 3 million acres of land gifts to create self-help villages

- **1967 New Communities Land Trust, Albany GA:**
  - 5,700 acre farm organized by Slater King, Shirley and Charles Sherrod, Robert Swann. Black families shared businesses, schools, housing. (Lead organizer murdered and offices bombed by white supremacists, but still exists today, on less land.)

- **1969 Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom Farms, Mississippi Delta:**
  - Black civil rights organizer, 680 acres, cooperatively owned farm and “pig bank”
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Women’s Community Revitalization Project

Proyecto de Mujeres para la Revitalizacion Comunal

WCRP

social & economic justice for women & their families:

building homes, building leadership

Nora Lichtash
nlichtash@wcrpphila.org

Community Land Trusts--Community Control For Long Term Affordability
Goals:

• Why we worked with others to establish a Community Land Trust (CLT)

• What it took to start the CLT &

• What we’re doing to change land disposition policy in Philly
Put your thumb up when I read a statement that’s true for you

• Grew up in Vermont
• Chose Vermont as your home
• You’re focused on housing access
• You’re focused on farmland access
• Feel that the area you live in is affordable
• You yourself or someone you know has struggled to find an affordable place to live or to farm

• Believe that people who live or work in a region should have some say about development in their community

• Think that if enough folks come together you’ll be able to shift policy and resources to increase housing & farmland access
WCRP has developed 340 units

Best practices and innovations in:
- Energy conservation
- Accessibility
- Design that supports families
- Affordability
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR STABILITY & WELL-BEING

House 340+ families (1250 family members)

Average starting income $14,000
After 4 years, average income $25,000+

More than 20% of tenants have family members receiving Social Security Disability
ORGANIZING:
Building power to win strong policies and new resources
Our Neighborhood: Too Much Vacant Land

1 in 4 pieces of land in our community is vacant
Market pressure on all sides

S: Northern Liberties (2006)

(2011)

W: Infill Student Housing near Temple U

E: Fishtown

FOR SALE

CITYSPACE

215.262.3650

FOR SALE

SOLD

AMBER KEDAR
215.252.4770
The cumulative impact, verified
Listening project to determine right course of action

325 interviews
neighbors asking neighbors

How has the neighborhood changed?

How does vacant land affect your life? And the neighborhood?

What do you think about creating a Community Land Trust?

photos by Harvey Finkle
How does a Community Land Trust work?

1. **Publicly-Owned Vacant Land**
2. **Ground Lease (99 years)**
   - Land is held in trust by a community organization (CLT) in perpetuity
3. **Transferred to Community Land Trust**
4. **Restored & Put Back to Community Use**

   Structures on the land are owned by families, businesses & organizations.
Grace Townhomes
36 units of permanently affordable homes, lease purchase

Mamie Nichols Townhomes
Community Justice Land Trust Successes

- **Completed two lease/purchase townhouse developments** (71 homes);
- **Constructed and sold pilot homeownership development** (5 homes).
- By the end of December families will **move into new rental townhome development** (33 homes) &
- Early in 2023 CJLT will begin **construction of lease/purchase townhomes** (27).

- Realized that these **issues affect many neighborhoods**; working in coalition with groups throughout Philly.
- Built a **shared vision of sustained affordability** and have influenced **funding requirements** at Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, Federal Home Loan Bank and at the City’s Division of Housing
How is Philly changing?

**CHANGE IN INCOME VERSUS HOUSING COSTS**

2000-2016

**NORTH PHILLY**

- **Change in Median Household Income**, 2000-2016: +363%
- **Change in Median Gross Rent**, 2000-2016: +41%
- **Change in Median Home Sale Price**, 2000/2002 - 2016/2018: +35%

**SOUTH PHILLY**

- **Change in Median Household Income**, 2000-2016: +292%
- **Change in Median Gross Rent**, 2000-2016: +35%
- **Change in Median Home Sale Price**, 2000/2002 - 2016/2018: +27%

**WEST PHILLY**

- **Change in Median Household Income**, 2000-2016: +169%
- **Change in Median Gross Rent**, 2000-2016: +19%
- **Change in Median Home Sale Price**, 2000/2002 - 2016/2018: +78%

*BETWEEN 2000-2016, CITYWIDE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME DECREASED 10% WHILE HOUSING COSTS INCREASED.*

Note: All have been adjusted to 2016 dollars.

How is Philly changing?

Portions of South, North, and West Philadelphia are undergoing the most rapid change.

Sources: 2000 Census, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates
Land Justice Campaign

THE PROBLEM: PHILADELPHIA HAS A HOUSING & FOOD AFFORDABILITY CRISIS.

THE SOLUTION: CITY OWNED VACANT LAND MUST BE RETURNED TO COMMUNITY USE & HANDS.
The Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities (PCAC) is a coalition of community, disability, faith, labor and urban agriculture organizations that have joined together to pass laws that address the City’s housing and food affordability crisis.

Through our Land Justice Campaign, we are working together to keep our communities strong.
THE PROBLEM

- Philadelphia has a housing and food affordability crisis.
  - Affordable, accessible homes are out of reach for most Philadelphians.
  - Community open space and gardens are being lost to development.

- In the past 5 years, only 1 in 3 dispositions of City-owned land supported the development of affordable housing. Just 1 in 10 went to a community garden or open space.

- The City owns more than 5,000 parcels of surplus vacant land and has disposed of less than 700 of them in the last 5 years—at this rate, it will take 35 years for the City to dispose of its publicly-owned vacant land.

- Meanwhile, housing markets are changing rapidly, and with each piece of land lost to for-profit development, the City loses an opportunity to shore up affordability and community-serving uses.

GARDENS ARE AT RISK OF REDEVELOPMENT
THE COSTS

Residents cannot afford to meet their basic needs.

- In Philadelphia **half of all renters and nearly 1 out of every 3 homeowners are cost burdened** — after paying their housing costs there’s not enough left to cover other basic needs.

- Food insecurity is on the rise in Philadelphia; more than 300,000 residents — **almost 1 out of every 5 city residents** — live in households that do not have enough to eat over the course of a year.

Communities are being broken apart.

- In North, West and South Philadelphia **displacement due to rising housing costs** since 2000 **has pushed out 32% of Black community residents**.

- **Community gardens and farms** that have been sources of affordable nutrition and places where people gather are **uprooted**.

PEOPLE ARE BEING FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES
The Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities (PCAC) calls on Philadelphia’s elected officials to adopt a progressive policy that will prioritize the disposition of public land for permanent affordability to community-controlled entities that will work cooperatively alongside community members to make decisions.

**THE SOLUTION**

City owned vacant land must be transferred to groups that will put the land back to use and ensure permanent affordability and community control.

- **PERMANENT AFFORDABILITY**: accessible and affordable homes, gardens, farms and community businesses need to be protected from market forces in order to ensure affordability over the long term, preserve our communities, and increase opportunities for all Philadelphians to thrive.

- **COMMUNITY CONTROL**: Land and the housing or other buildings on the land should be owned and controlled through democratic structures and processes by those who live, work or worship in that community.

**THE TIME IS NOW:**

We call on City Council to pass legislation that puts vacant land in community hands!
OUR VISION

A different system that prioritizes permanent affordability and community control

What do we mean by PERMANENT AFFORDABILITY?
Homes, community gardens, and community buildings that are rented or sold for an affordable price now and into the future (for at least 99 years, with an option to renew)

What do we mean by LAND SECURITY?
The ability to remain on land without threat of displacement, either through ownership or a very long-term lease; land security allows people’s relationships to the land to deepen, encourages community participation in caring for the land, and justifies public investment

What do we mean by COMMUNITY CONTROL?
Democratic structures and processes through which community members have a voice in making decisions about what happens in their neighborhood

What do we mean by COMMUNITY-SUSTAINING USES?

Homes and apartments that sell or rent for prices that remain affordable to low- and moderate-income households who were able to occupy the building initially; permanent affordability prevents displacement.

Urban farms and community gardens where growers produce food for community members and community residents have access to plots; land security prevents displacement.

Community facilities such as senior centers, daycare centers, and other businesses or organizations whose goods and services meet basic community needs; community oversight and control ensures that facilities are responsive to the community.
The Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities (PCAC) is having our next coalition meeting to learn about Community Land Trusts and how organizations can partner with them.

**JOIN US! COALITION MEETING**
Thurs. May 27th 6-8pm
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2585283067

Contact Nora at nlchtash@wcrrphila.org for more information or with questions

**SUMMER TEACH-INS**
4th Thursdays, 6-8pm

- June 24th - Community Control in Practice—Mapping Vacant Land in Your Neighborhood
- July 22nd - Community Control in Practice—How to Involve Community Members In Getting the Development You Want in Your Neighborhood
- August 26th - CLT Development: Getting Into the Weeds of What it Takes to Start and Run a CLT.
Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities

Rally for Land Justice

WHEN: September 16th 9:00 a.m. (before city council session)
WHERE: Dillworth Plaza (in front of city hall)

For More Info reach out to
Nora 215 280 1549 or Shay 267 992 0852

THE TIME IS NOW:
WE CALL ON CITY COUNCIL TO PASS LEGISLATION
THAT PUTS VACANT LAND IN COMMUNITY HANDS!
SOLUTIONS: Land Justice Campaign-
- Fighting for policies to expand permanent affordability and community control
Supporting land access for next generation farmers
Farmers are aging...
- For every farmer under 25, there are 5 over 75 years old
- 400 million acres will change hands in next ~20 years

Farmland ownership continues to consolidate...
- 41% of farmland is held by largest 8% of farms
- Majority of farmland is owned by non-farmers
- 98% of farmland is owned by white people

Land values are rising...
- Not aligned with sustainable production value
- 37 mid-size farms closed each day (2012 - 2017)
- Investment in farmland increasing

Our farmland is in crisis
Structures

Tools

- Agricultural conservation easements
- Long-term ground leases
Collective stewardship for ecosystem health

Habitats, farm, food and equity are considered holistically

Board of directors with farmer, community and trust representation

Tenure given to working farmers, with a commitment to race, class and gender equity

National-level Agrarian trust provides oversight, funding and legal support
- Local land holding entities with local governance
- Provide farmers with long-term lease tenure and opportunities to build equity
- Land is removed from speculative market
Agrarian Commons launched 2020
Agrarian Commons leases

- Affordable
- Long-term
- Stewardship practices required
- Ability to build equity in buildings
Little Jubba Central Maine Agrarian Commons

Liberation Farms coordinates access to land, seeds, training, technical assistance, and marketing for Somali Bantu family farmers.
West Virginia Agrarian Commons
Southwest Virginia Agrarian Commons

Garden Variety Harvests at Lick Run Farm
Models & inspirations

- Community Land Trusts (CLTs)
- New Communities Inc. in Georgia
- Terre de Liens in France
- Equity Trust and 99-year leases
- Kibbutz movements post WWII
- Cooperatives, including Poudre Valley Community Farms
Examples, variations

- Caretaker Farm (MA)
- Grow Food Northampton (MA)
- North Amherst Community Farm (MA)
- Red Fire Farm (MA)
- Indian Line Farm (MA)
- Roxbury Farm (NY)
- Thompson Finch Farm (NY)
- Peacework Farm (NY)
- Land in Common (ME)
- Community Farm Land Trust (WA)
- Sustainable Iowa Land Trust (IA)

- Rural CLTs
  Earth Bridge CLT (VT/NH)
- CLTs with urban farms
- Intentional communities with farms
  Cobb Hill Cohousing (VT)
How To Get Involved

- Land donation
- Farmers looking for land
- Commons Alliance
- FaithLands

Stay up to date on new project developments by subscribing to the newsletter and following Agrarian Trust on your favorite social media!
Thank you!

www.agrariantrust.org

Johanna Rosen, Commons Alliance Co-Facilitator

johanna@agrariantrust.org
Some Vermont organizations

• Twin Pines Housing Trust, tphtrust.org
• Windham Windsor Housing Trust, homemattershere.org
• Champlain Housing Trust, getahome.org
• Vermont Agrarian Commons, agrariantrust.org/commons/Vermont-agrarian-commons
• White River Land Collaborative, whiteriverlandcollaborative.com
• Earth Bridge Community Land Trust, ebclt.org
Next Webinar: Ground Leases
Tuesday, January 10, 5:30-6:30pm

• This webinar will look more closely at a “ground lease,” where a resident, homeowner, or farmer owns the buildings that they live in and use, but only rents the land that those buildings sit on, and how to ensure that is a stable and equitable experience.

• Speakers:
  • Bridget Spann and Don Zasada of Caretaker Farm, speaking about their experiences using two ground leases (and partnership with a land trust) in a land succession arrangement with the preceding farmers
  • New Hampshire Community Loan Fund & ROC-New Hampshire, speaking about resident-owned communities, a model where manufactured home park residents purchase the land as a cooperative
Jamboard for connecting in the meantime

https://jamboard.google.com/d/13JBATaUH5hW3z9mk7O0Ydad82oX0I_JryYm06ZAn9wA/edit?usp=sharing

*If you add your email address we may also use that to start an email chain amongst interested community members at some point in this process.

You can also email sdanly@vitalcommunities.org to be put in touch with any of the organizers if you don’t want to share your own email address on the jamboard.