Community Forestry in the Urban Environment:
Some Lessons Learned in Baltimore, Maryland, 1989-2003

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Parks & People Foundation
Baltimore Ecosystem Study

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Executive Summary

Need for Evaluation

The impetus for this research came from discussions with people that have been involved in community-based natural resource management and development in Baltimore for many years. Discussions with such individuals have revealed that community forestry and related activities have been in constant evolution and adaptation since 1989. There was an acute need to capture information that has not gotten passed along. As one observer put it, "how we *do* and how we *define* community forestry has changed." In order to benefit from such programmatic adaptations, it is worthwhile to look back and capture understanding of how and why the process has changed over time.

Intended Audience

This report was commissioned by the United States Forest Service and the Baltimore Ecosystem Study but the hope is that it may serve a purpose for a wider audience. The pages that follow are addressed to all that have an interest in the way that social and environmental problems are connected and solutions are sought within the urban environment. The U.S. Forest Service will find the results of an attempt to highlight the major events, changes, and lessons that have been learned from over a decade of experimentation with community forestry in the parks, streets, and vacant lots of Baltimore, Maryland. The Parks & People Foundation will find in this report a synthesis of lessons learned by a range of people involved in community forestry work (both employees, students, and neighborhood participants) mediated through the analyses of the author. It is intended for this report to be a useful, constructive, and critical examination of the complexities and conflicts that are inherent to community forestry and, by shedding light on them, to open the door for potential solutions. In addition, it should serve as a reminder of the history of the community forestry project in Baltimore as a whole and may be used as an introductory training document for community foresters in the future. Researchers may find that the questions posed or implied throughout provoke new lines of inquiry into topics that deal with the application of investigative methods in practical settings. Outside of Baltimore, this study and the ensuing report may be of interest to individuals or organizations in other cities that are considering (or already are) implementing similar projects in their local neighborhoods. Moreover, neighborhood residents and community organizations that have been or are currently involved in community forestry activities may find this report to be helpful in sharing experiences and learning from those of similar groups. In this report, they will also find an attempt to assess and communicate their perspective on community forestry.

Goals and Objectives of Research

The primary goal of this project was to contribute to the search for effective, efficient, and equitable ways to improve social and environmental conditions in inner-city neighborhoods. The primary objectives of this project were as follows: synthesize the important themes effecting community forestry work over the past decade, highlight important considerations on multiple levels (i.e. organizational and neighborhood), examine how and why strategies have changed over time and how people have responded to such changes, and give a baseline of information on which to base future research, monitoring, and evaluation. This report is not intended to offer solutions, but to provide descriptions of how the community forestry project has operated since 1989. Rather than providing narrow suggestions and recommendations for strategy changes, it approaches the topic from a broader viewpoint.

This report should be read as an attempt to analyze how community forestry as a whole has operated in Baltimore over the period from 1989 to 2003. The use of 'community forestry' is not intended as a sweeping generalization, but instead as a method for encouraging others to compare their experiences with those presented herein. It is worth pointing out that over a decade of experimentation with urban environmental rehabilitation was difficult to capture in one short summer and this project may not encompass all of what might fall under the umbrella of community forestry in Baltimore during that period. In addition, other organizations have been involved in similar efforts to those of URI and Parks & People, again preventing this project from being able to represent all of community forestry in Baltimore.

The analyses presented in the report should serve as either encouragements or warnings for others engaged in projects similar to those which has been undertaken in Baltimore. This study and report will hopefully contribute to the iterative process of understanding how and whether community forestry operates within the American inner-city and may serve as a tool for learning in cities other than Baltimore as well. This study looks at the ideas that lie behind community forestry, the organizations that are connected by it, and how community forestry interventions fit within the context of the communities in which they are being implemented.

Overview of Report

In general, the lessons contained within this report are a synthesis of insights gleaned by a range of people involved in community forestry work from 1989 to the present and observations and analyses conducted by the author. It begins with a problem statement that presents the overarching question that this report set out to address. This is followed by a section that outlines the theoretical foundation of this study. It describes some of the sources that have influenced community forestry since its inception. In addition, it presents the Human Ecosystem Framework (HEF) and how it was applied in this case. The discussion of the HEF leads into a brief overview of the conceptual model that was used to guide this research. This is followed by a description of how the research was designed, conducted, and analyzed.

The major body of the analysis is divided into two parts. First, the community forestry project is analyzed on three levels: 1) the city of Baltimore, 2) the relevant organizations, and 3) the participating neighborhoods. On each level, this report describes trends, relationships, and processes that have directly influenced community forestry in practice. In other words, this section discusses the overarching context that community forestry has operated within. Second, this report presents a closer analysis of the community forestry project itself. This section deals with how community forestry is defined, how community forestry programs identify where and with whom to work, the dynamics of implementing community forestry, and the problem of continuity in individual projects. In conclusion, this report offers a comparison (or generalization) that may reveal larger insights and one angle by which to understand the complexity that is urban community forestry. This is followed by a list of potential lines of inquiry for the future that could contribute to the continual development of understanding in this critical area of work.

Problem Statement

Since 1989, city agencies, non-profit organizations, and residents have been attempting community-based environmental rehabilitation within inner-city neighborhoods of Baltimore, Maryland. The creation of vacant lot green spaces, street tree plantings, community gardens, and tree nurseries have been viewed as strategies for repairing the distressed social and environmental conditions typical of America's post-industrial urban centers. Discussions and on-site observations have revealed uneven outcomes across Baltimore neighborhoods and uncertainty as to which factors determine the trajectory of a particular project over time. Furthermore, a recent follow-up report suggests that neighborhoods and projects that were the focus of attention and resources ten years ago now exhibit an "increase in neglect and abandonment" and a "lack of continuity and interest in maintaining [the initial effort]" (Jiler, 2003). As one informant pointed out, getting a project off the ground is the easy part—it's building the capacity and support mechanisms necessary to leave behind more than just a physical product that is the real challenge.

Some research in Baltimore has contributed to answering questions related to the factors that influence community forestry projects. The Parks & People Foundation (2000) reports that "sustainable and viable community-managed open spaces share a number of common characteristics": a person who acts as a catalyst within the community, community interest, community participation from the onset and in all phases of the project, community cohesion, a community-originated and appropriate project design, adequate funding, participant age diversity, an organized principal group, a division of labor and responsibility, support from city agencies, clear site delineation and boundaries, presence of strong 'community-based or community-assisting organization', access to information and resources, and adaptability to change (Foundation, 2000). This type of analysis is helpful in that it identifies conditions that are important (or necessary) when developing community forestry activities within neighborhoods. What this approach lacks, however, is an understanding of how the community forestry program functions, how it has changed over time, and what the underlying values, debates, and decisions are that influence its projects. Research was needed to further identify and describe factors that contribute to this situation, to develop a more substantive understanding of factors on multiple levels, and to better understand the efficacy of using environmental rehabilitation projects as a tool for neighborhood revitalization. This report offers some explanation of the apparent challenges of sustaining environmental rehabilitation projects in inner-city neighborhoods by primarily examining the community forestry project. The community forestry project refers to the ongoing cycle of defining the parameters of the program, deciding where and how to focus limited resources, working with people, groups, and neighborhoods, and thinking about the future. The overarching question that this report will address is: *What are the key conditions within the community forestry project that affect the continuity and interest in maintaining inner-city environmental rehabilitation projects in Baltimore, Maryland?*

Theoretical Framework

This study of community forestry in Baltimore, Maryland was based on two theoretical foundations that can be categorized under the umbrella of social ecology. It may be helpful to begin by stating that social ecology has been defined as "the study of the relations between human communities (groups or populations) and their respective environments, especially their physical environments" (Burch, n.d.). Put another way, social ecology looks at the "contributions natural environments make to observed social and behavioral patterns" (Burch, n.d.). One may be interested in the influence of place on the behavior of social groups or the role of social behavior on place (i.e. the surrounding biological and physical environment). Both lines of inquiry could be seen as a social ecological approach. The primary emphasis of social ecology is the relationship between communities and their environments rather than the relations between individual persons and their environments.

The relationship between groups of people and their environment also forms the basis for the concepts of community forestry that are the subject of this study. Thus, the first theoretical foundation described will be that of community forestry and will include some of the concepts that inform the questions and hypotheses of this research. In reading this section, one may ask, Why look at community forestry sources that discuss it's application in the developing world or in rural environments? In response, I would suggest that just as these approaches formed a baseline of experience and inspiration for community forestry as applied in Baltimore's urban environment, these approaches should also be used as a baseline for this report. In other words, these are the ideas that people initially brought to Baltimore from other settings and it is worthwhile to discuss the changes that have occurred in relation to the initial ideas. Although at times this was demonstrated explicitly in sources (see (Burch & Grove, 1996); (Burch & Grove, 1993); (Grove, Vachta, McDounough, & Burch, 1993); and (Subedi, 1992)), in general there was an informal, implicit understanding that people were coming to Baltimore with experiences doing community forestry in non-urban locations and trying to adapt what they had learned there to a new environment. Two important caveats should be stated however.

All this is not to say that community forestry strategies or approaches didn't change over a decade, but instead to facilitate the attempt to see how they changed. In addition, I should also state upfront that simply because people came to Baltimore with certain ideas about community forestry (which I will discuss below), we must not assume that people, groups, and institutions in Baltimore in the early 1990s were a blank slate on which community forestry could be written. In fact, this research suggests that not only was a significant amount of community forestry occurring in Baltimore already in the 1980s and early 1990s (for example, tree planting in the Hollins Market neighborhood and community gardens in many other areas), but a mutual exchange of information and ideas between the Yale/Urban Resources Initiative and local people was more the norm.

A social ecology approach also implies a "systems viewpoint on both human society and nature" (Burch, n.d.). The human ecosystem, defined as "a coherent system of biophysical and social factors capable of adaptation and sustainability over time", thus provides the second theoretical foundation for this report (Machlis, Force, & Burch, 1997). This concept will be discussed in brief detail to explain the use of the human ecosystem as an organizing framework for research and ecosystem management. In addition, a simple conceptual framework used to organize this research will also be discussed below. I would like the reader to note that although an interdisciplinary model of an urban ecosystem was used as a theoretical framework for

organizing research, this research focused exclusively on social and cultural patterns and processes within this system.

Community Forestry

Approaches to linking social and ecological deficits in urban areas was inspired and informed by programs designed for rural developing countries. Community (or social) forestry is a "bottom-up" approach of working with groups of people to create tree-based systems to meet local needs and concerns (Grove et al., 1993). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) asserted that community forestry "should encompass any situation which ultimately involves local people in a forestry activity for the direct benefit of those people" (FAO, 1978). These programs are directed at more far-reaching goals than the planting, growing, and maintenance of trees; they are also designed to trigger social and cultural change through the active involvement of beneficiaries in the design and implementation of the reforestation effort (Cernea, 1985); (Noronha & Spears, 1985). The social goals of community forestry in this context include "group formation and collective action, institutional development, and the establishment of sustainable social structures and value systems to mobilize and organize groups and individuals" (Cernea, 1991 in Grove, W.R. Burch, & Pickett, 2002).

Building on these principles, community forestry has more recently been adapted and applied to the inner-cities of the United States. Like the deforestation crisis anticipated by rural development practitioners in the 1970's, ongoing environmental and social deterioration in American inner-cities has led to the development of urban community forestry programs. Many urban communities regularly encounter social problems such as poverty, crime, housing decay, unemployment, drugs, homelessness, and broken families. Environmental concerns in the form of air and water pollution, shortage of open space, lack of tree cover, soil erosion, and degraded landscapes can exacerbate existing social and economic problems. Due to both declining tax bases and budget cuts, city agencies have been limited in their efforts to maintain, protect, or restore the natural resource base. This leads to a need for community-based activities to take responsibility for environmental services.

In practice, urban community forestry programs assist neighborhood residents in the planning, execution, and sustaining of forestry-related projects (Grove et al., 2002). The creation of vacant lot green spaces, street tree plantings, community gardens, and tree nurseries (all of which fit within the term urban community forestry) have been viewed as strategies for repairing the distressed social and environmental conditions typical of America's post-industrial urban centers. The incentive for this approach is based on the assumption that certain activities are more effective in meeting existing local needs if communities directly participate in determining and addressing those needs (Grove et al., 1993). In areas where social support networks are important components of life and may be declining, collaborative approaches to improving environmental conditions or creating common spaces can help develop or sustain neighborhood social ties. The presence of trees, grass, and other vegetation in poorer inner-city neighborhoods not only supports the use of such common spaces, but also has been shown to enhance mental functioning and the ability to manage major life issues (Kuo, 2001). Moreover, research has demonstrated that green spaces are related to lower amounts of both property crimes and violent crimes (Kuo & Sullivan, 2001b) and reduce aggression and violence (Kuo & Sullivan, 2001a). In addition, studies suggest that community-driven tree plantings have better survival rates than tree plantings done without local support, citing increased senses of ownership and responsibility as possible factors (Sklar & Ames, 1985 in (Grove et al., 1993)). Environmental rehabilitation in blighted neighborhoods may be key to improving the appearance of neighborhoods and in changing residents' perceptions of their surrounding environment.

"Ultimately, the outcome of community-based greening efforts might be physically and socially more supportive places to live" for residents facing an array of difficult circumstances (Kuo, Sullivan, Coley, & Brunson, 1998).

Along these lines, community forestry should be seen as having a decidedly social function that complements (or in some cases outweighs) the biological and physical functions associated with conventional forestry in both urban and non-urban settings. The theoretical origins and orientations of community forestry described above inform this report, with the recognition that the urban environment poses some significantly different challenges than non-urban environments.

The Human Ecosystem Framework

In the mid-1970s, Stearns and Montag articulated the need for a more holistic view of urban areas that would enable the study of whole functioning systems rather than their separate parts. They argued for a step beyond the metaphors that human ecologists of the Chicago school, such as Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, borrowed from biological ecologists in the 1920s and 1930s. Stearns and Montag described an approach which involved trying to understanding problems, not in isolation, but within their ecological context. A conceptual view of urban ecosystems was developed that was comprised of human population, non-human population, physical structure, and resource flows. Overall, Stearns and Montag were defining the need for a new social ecology aimed at an interdisciplinary understanding of human and environmental systems. By integrating biophysical and sociocultural variables into a workable model, it could be possible to understand, predict, and compare pattern and process in a complex urban ecosystem (Stearns & Montag, 1974).

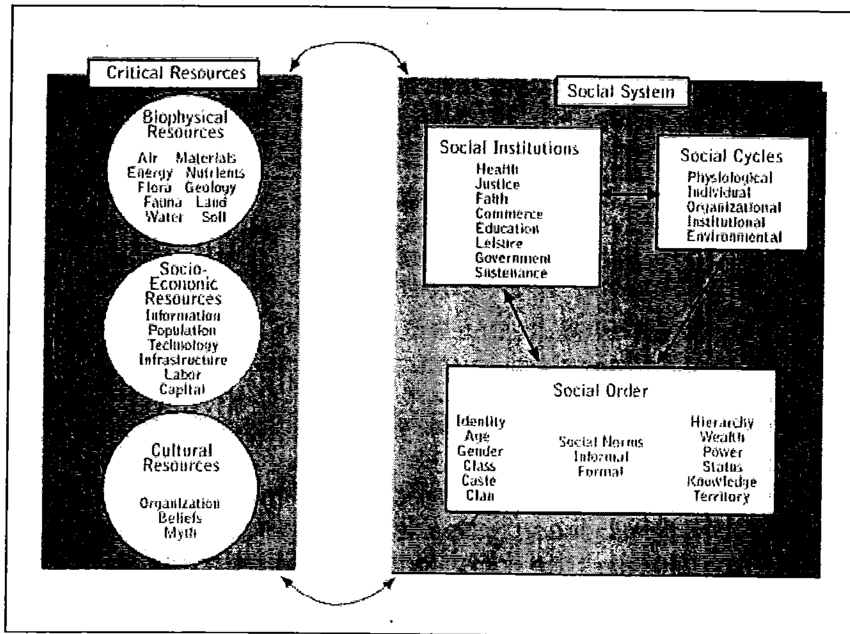

Figure 1: Human Ecosystem Framework.

Early models of ecosystems, prior to such efforts as described above, removed humans from the conceptual system and categorized them as a disturbance or invader, thus preventing ecologists from producing a unified theory of ecology. To rectify this shortcoming, Machlis,

Force, and Burch developed a model of a "human ecosystem" which integrated human systems with their environment by merging biophysical and sociocultural variables into an organized framework (see Figure 1). They defined the human ecosystem as "a coherent system of biophysical and social factors capable of adaptation and sustainability over time." Although the argument could be made that very few natural ecosystems anywhere in the world are free from human influence (either historical or current), the need for such an integrated approach was especially necessary for understanding human-dominated urban ecosystems. The categories Machlis, Force, and Burch employed to organize human ecosystems—critical resources and the social system—are made up of the essential elements of ecosystems that may be considered for research. Flows and linkages bind all the components together and link the categories of elements. The human ecosystem can help to more effectively understand the complexity of such systems and to guide the choice of relevant indicators for measurement and analysis (Machlis et al., 1997).

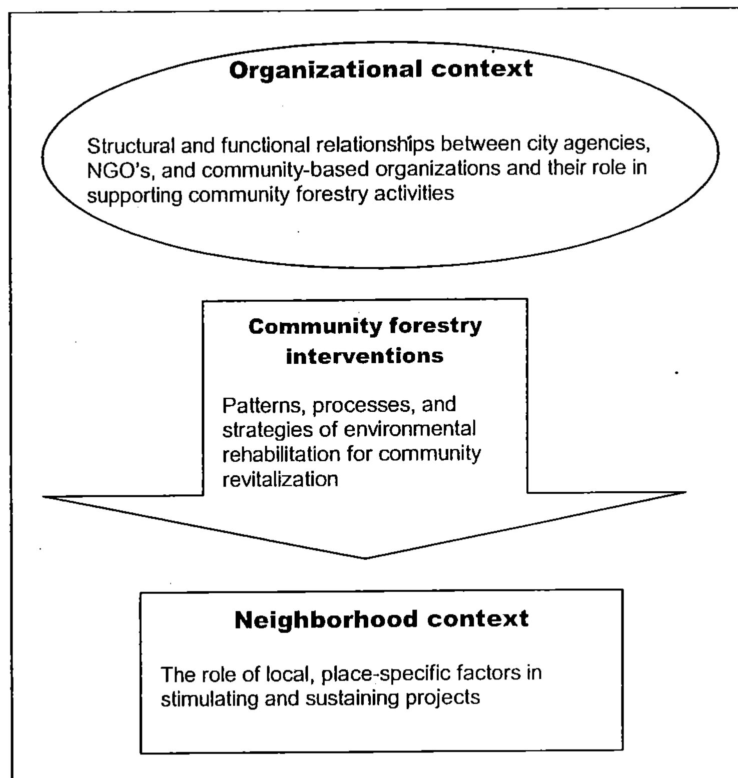

Figure 2: Conceptual model of research design.

In the case of this research on community forestry, the human ecosystem model was used primarily during the data analysis phase. As themes emerged from qualitative research, the model was used to highlight some of the critical connections between factors that influenced this topic. For example, a community forestry project will take the material form of biophysical resources (land and flora) but its implementation, use, and continuity will be influenced by factors within every other category (i.e. the cultural resource of organization and the social cycle of institutions). The model was also used to organize these connections that affect urban community forestry in Baltimore. Most influential to the approach taken by this research, Machlis, Force, and Burch suggest that "human ecosystems can be described at several spatial scales and/or units of analysis, and these are hierarchically linked. Hence, a family unit,

community, county, region, nation, even the planet can fruitfully be treated as a human ecosystem." Based on this principle, I developed a conceptual framework to guide this inquiry—specifically the choice of interview respondents and the organization of results.

This framework is a way to conceptualize the analysis of multiple scales of influence that affect each other and the topic of study (in this case community forestry projects). The hierarchically nested view of systems within systems can be applied to any place or problem—there are always small-scale local factors, mid-level circumstances, and then larger-scale contextual constraints. For this study, I chose to analyze the following three levels of factors that influence community forestry in Baltimore (Figure 2). The *organizational context* comprises the role of city agencies (i.e. Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of Housing and Community Development), NGO's (primarily the Parks & People Foundation), and community-based organizations (such as the Washington Village-Pigtown Neighborhood Planning Council) in supporting community forestry activities. The *neighborhood level* refers to the role of local, place-specific factors in stimulating and sustaining projects. For example, the nature and amount of local leadership; the specific interests, needs, and concerns of the neighborhood participants; and the degree of social cohesion in the neighborhood. The third level, the *community forestry project*, is really the intersection of the above two. The practice and strategies of using environmental rehabilitation for community revitalization (i.e. community forestry projects) were treated as a separate level since they are neither fully within the organizational or neighborhood spheres of influence. The community forestry project exists at the overlap of the organization and the neighborhood levels and are therefore somewhat unique of both.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Research Design

Although this report resembles an evaluation in certain ways, it's worth noting that there was no intent to assign blame or to determine whether funding should be continued or cut. Rather, this research is intended to contribute to the search for effective, efficient, and equitable ways to improve social and environmental conditions in inner-city neighborhoods. In addition, it is intended to be an effort to compile different perspectives together and to reach some conclusions for future improvements and change. The goal of the research was to investigate the factors influencing community forestry projects that have been carried out since 1989 throughout the city of Baltimore.

The concepts of "success" and "failure" have often been applied in end-of-project evaluations or in order to frame the characteristics that positively and negatively affect project outcomes. However, terms such as success and failure are problematic: they are inherently value-laden, difficult to measure, and relative to who is doing the defining. Such measures are dependent on whether the stakeholders defined clear and measurable objectives at the inception of the project which is often rare. In cases where goals and objectives have been clearly stated, a professional evaluator Lawrence Salmen argues that it still makes little sense to use them as benchmarks against which projects should be measured. To the extent that goals and objectives have been determined without consultation with project beneficiaries, they simply reveal the intentions of the project planners and managers. Thus the positive effects may be "well outside the range or scope of thought from the institutional or agency perspective" and may differ substantively from the intended effects (Salmen, 1987). Therefore, the conscious choice was made to avoid such an approach in this report and instead an attempt was made to explore (with a range of stakeholders) the factors that most influence project outcomes.

As discussed, the design of this research stemmed from the conceptual framework that focused on three levels in order to be able to examine both 'macro' and 'micro' forces. On the organizational level, interviews were conducted with current and past employees of the Parks & People Foundation (other than community forestry field workers), the Baltimore Recreation and Parks Department, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the Baltimore City Planning Department. On the neighborhood level, interviews were conducted with local residents, key community forestry participants, or local leaders. On the subject of community forestry interventions, interviews were done with current and former community forestry field workers from Yale/URI, Parks & People, or other organizations. Based on this conceptual model, interview respondents were selected in such a way to ensure a roughly balanced representation of all three categories of people involved with community forestry work in Baltimore. Ten people on the organizational level, 15 community forestry field workers, and 11 people on the neighborhood level were interviewed (see Appendix for list). It is somewhat misleading, however, to separate the interviews into these three categories since on almost all occasions, the people interviewed had knowledge, experience, and opinions on multiple levels. Thus, the separation became more for grouping information and ensuring balanced representation than for creating concrete categories of respondents. In addition to representation of multiple levels of influence, interview respondents were also chosen based on whether their experience was current or historical. In other words, efforts were made to ensure that a roughly equal distribution of people were interviewed across the timeline from 1989 to 2003.

In general, this study was decidedly inductive. It allowed the people interviewed to offer the topics and factors they thought were most important to an understanding of the topic. As certain important themes began to develop (such as the role of local leadership) the questions asked became more focused on finding out more about the topics that people seemed to be stressing in their accounts. Therefore, the research fluctuated from inductive to deductive over the course of the summer.

In order to focus on local neighborhood factors, three neighborhoods were chosen for case studies. The following characteristics were sought in each case when selecting neighborhoods:

1. Stimulation of community forestry activities by Yale/Urban Resources Initiative;
2. Continuous environmental rehabilitation efforts in some form since the early 1990s;
3. Density of information and experience in the neighborhood that is accessible for research (i.e. reports, project sites, local contacts, and photographs); and,
4. Overlap with the Baltimore Ecosystem Study's Demography and Social Science research (i.e. field observation survey, photo narrative, and telephone survey).

Based on the above criteria, Sandtown-Winchester, Pigtown-Washington Village, and Franklin Square were selected for closer study. Each case study drew upon existing demographic and social data from the U.S. Census, the Baltimore Ecosystem Study, and the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance; key informant interviews; participant observation in active community forestry projects; informal discussions and observations; and documents and reports.

Data Collection

The following data collection techniques were used for this research, listed in order of importance:

1. In-depth, semi-structured interviews—a total of thirty-six interviews were conducted with current and past officials of the Parks & People Foundation, the Baltimore Recreation and Parks Department, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the Planning Department; local residents, key community forestry participants, or local leaders; and current and former community forestry field workers from Yale/URI, Parks & People, or other organizations. Random sampling for respondents was deemed likely to be unsuccessful due to an anticipated unwillingness of respondents and safety concerns, and therefore non-random sampling was be used. Interview respondents were chosen initially through the advice of key informants that have been close to community forestry activities for extended periods of time, and subsequently community forestry field workers provided assistance in making contact with neighborhood participants. On a few occasions, neighborhood participants were willing to suggest other people in the neighborhood to interview. An interview guide was always used, however due to the range of experiences of the respondents, the questions asked often differed quite heavily from person to person based on their level and type of involvement in community forestry. Detailed notes from these interviews were always taken by hand, and about one-third of the time, a tape recorder was used in addition to the written notes.
2. Informal field observation—In order to identify key factors that would be difficult to extract through interviews, I used some methods familiar to social anthropologists. I performed numerous community forestry site visits, I participated in walking or driving tours around neighborhoods with local residents or community forestry field workers, I

attended Parks & People as well as local community meetings, and I engaged in unstructured discussions with people on the street while walking around neighborhoods. In all cases, detailed field notes were recorded after or during the experience.

3. Secondary sources—Over the summer, a large number of reports and documents were collected from Parks & People, Yale/URI, and from the files of former employees. These reports were analyzed during the Fall of 2003, after the field work was completed, and were used to support or contest findings from the summer research.
4. Participant observation—One a few occasions, I was able to participate in current community forestry activities, either at the invitation of Parks & People staff or a neighborhood resident. Typically, this involved helping out with manual labor in a community garden or on a vacant lot maintenance project. Again, detailed field notes were written after the observation was over.

Analysis

The methods described above can primarily be categorized as qualitative field research and therefore the analysis of the data collected reflected that decision. Following Taylor & Bodgan, I took a methodological position somewhere between grounded theory and analytic induction whereby data collection and data analysis go hand-in-hand with the intention of recognizing patterns and themes (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Through ongoing theorizing and attempts to make sense of the data, concepts emerged, research interests got increasingly focused, leads and hunches were followed, and questions became more directed. This in and of itself did not create theory—however, the variables that initially appeared especially salient were then given special attention in subsequent interviews and can be further examined in the future.

To analyze the large amounts of textual data from detailed interview and field notes, the technique of 'coding' was utilized (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). 'Coding' is designed to help classify and organize individual pieces of data from statements and observations within the interview and field notes. As important concepts and patterns arose during the coding process, the complementary technique of 'memoing' was employed to write about the fuller meaning and understanding of the developing concepts. While coding was done immediately after the interviews took place, the memoing was done during the Fall of 2003. Qualitative data analysis software (QSR's N6) was used to assist in the compilation, organization, and management of data.

The City, the Organizations, and the Neighborhoods

The City of Baltimore and Community Forestry

The city of Baltimore, Maryland has many characteristics that make it a likely setting for the implementation of urban community forestry. On the other hand, many factors make Baltimore an extremely challenging case. The following section does not attempt to give a comprehensive profile of the city. This would not only be too brief to be anything but superficial, but would also be not entirely useful to someone interested in this topic. Instead, factors that directly influence the specific political, economic, environmental, and social climate that community forestry operates within will be discussed. In other words, I have chosen some aspects of Baltimore that seem relevant as background to the conditions that organizations and neighborhoods face in the process of transforming and rehabilitating local environments. In addition, I have tried to highlight those conditions that are somewhat unique to Baltimore rather than repeating information that are typical of most post-industrial American urban settings.

Population

The city of Baltimore, Maryland covers approximately 80 square miles and is currently home to approximately 650,000 people in 276 distinct neighborhood communities (U.S. Census, 2000). The current population of Baltimore is approximately one-half of what it was in 1940: 1.2 million people (Olson, 1997) in (Dalton, 2001). Over the past 50 years, Baltimore has experienced intensive and extensive demographic and economic changes as businesses and residents have left the city. Between 1950 and 1990, Baltimore City lost 23% of its population, and shrunk in regional importance as its population dropped from 71% to 31% of the Baltimore metropolitan area's population (Rusk, 1996). In the last decade alone (1990-2000), Baltimore lost another 85,000 people (11.5 % of the 1990 population); the decreasing number of whites in the city accounted for 96% of this population decline. In 2000, Baltimore was 64% black, 32% white, and about 2% each of Asian and Hispanic. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Hispanics in Baltimore increased by 46%.

Middle- and upper-class residents have primarily been the ones to participate in this outmigration, essentially leaving the urban poor to occupy the inner-city. As the fortunate seek "greener pastures," those left behind are faced with the problems of decreasing population, declining environment, and unstable communities. But this trend is nothing new—it has been a part of Baltimore's historical development for more than a hundred years. Dalton (2001) points out, citing Olson (1997), that the migration taking place in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries "was contained within the *new* city limits" thereby confining the migrating flows of capital and investment inside the recently expanded city boundaries. By the mid-twentieth century, however, "the line between the city and county divided the zones of investment and disinvestments" meaning that the city no longer benefited from the tax revenue from this population group (Olson, 1997) in (Dalton, 2001). The declining population of Baltimore has been felt most severely in the poorest neighborhoods of the city, significantly decreasing the amount of social resources to draw upon when organizing a group to work on a community forestry project. In some neighborhoods where community forestry activities were initiated in the early 1990s, many of the original participants have moved out—not necessarily out of the city but to better neighborhoods—taking their motivation and skills with them.

Economy and Fiscal Crisis

Once a major shipping port, the industrial and manufacturing economy in Baltimore has also been steadily on the decline. Deindustrialization has been a common feature of 20th century American cities and has greatly affected economic opportunities in Baltimore as well (Rusk, 1996). At the same time, city governments in the United States have collectively witnessed a major shift in the relative amounts of federal and municipal expenditures during the 20th century. In the early 1900s, cities were almost entirely financially self-sufficient; today, they have become increasingly reliant on large grants from state and federal governments. The changes in federal urban policy since in the 20th century have had lasting impacts on Baltimore's development and fiscal stability (see Dalton, 2001). The decline of population has severely impacted Baltimore's tax base: between 1990 and 1995, the city's overall budget decreased by $20.5 million. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of city employees declined from 12,669 to 11,229 (an 11% decline in the municipal workforce). In addition, anti-tax trends in national politics have led to an expectation that some combination of private, non-profit, and volunteer/community sectors will take up the slack.

While these urban disinvestments trends and ensuing fiscal inadequacy have greatly impacted Baltimore's municipal government, the city's population has also been hard hit by decades of economic decline. Of Baltimore's 650,000 people, 23% are below the federal poverty level (compared to 14% below poverty in the United States) (U.S. Census, 2000). In 1997, 34% of Baltimore children were defined as poor, which is 19.5 percentage points higher than in the state of Maryland and 21.6 percentage points higher than in Baltimore County (Dalton, 2001). Almost half of Baltimore's neighborhoods are "poverty neighborhoods" in which 20% or more of the residents fall below the poverty line; in one-fifth of the city's neighborhoods, more than 40% of residents are poor (Rusk, 1996). Between 1950 and 1990, Baltimore saw the average income of city families drop from 92% to 59% of the average income of suburban families (Rusk, 1996).

The fiscal crisis endured by the city of Baltimore makes community forestry an attractive and even necessary option for people with the interest and desire to improve their local neighborhood environment. The city has been consistently strapped financially, and has dedicated its limited resources to fighting the major battles of crime and drugs. Therefore, programs (public or private) that offer to give individual people the power and resources to implement environmental rehabilitation projects ought to be successful in attracting attention in a city where the municipal government is lacking the resources and manpower to do so. The economic hardship endured by the citizens of Baltimore, however, makes community forestry often seem, at worst, a frivolous idea or, more promisingly, a goal to keep in mind for the future once the basic needs are taken care of. Often, community forestry participation can competes for time with other more fundamental needs, such as raising children, providing for a family, or working on more pressing neighborhood problems. In some cases, economic hardship and struggles for survival may cause people to be reluctant to participate in community forestry efforts unless such activities can address or alleviate some of these needs.

Housing and Vacant Land

Recently, investment in housing has been miniscule in Baltimore City in relation to the surrounding county as well as statewide: in 1999, 29,757 housing units were authorized to be built in Maryland; 3,752 (or 12%) of which were in Baltimore County, while only 191 (or 0.6%) were in the city (Dalton, 2001). As a result of the demographic and economic trends discussed above, the housing and civic infrastructure that was once supported by a much larger population and tax base has been difficult to maintain and much has fallen into disrepair. A 1996 report

estimated that the city contained approximately 40,000 vacant lots covering an estimated 11% of its total land area, of which only about 12,000 are under city ownership and supervision (Community Resources, 1996). The massive demolition of housing that led to the current situation greatly affects the social ecology of neighborhoods. In addition to vacant and derelict land, thousands of homes have been abandoned and boarded-up. This has turned some areas into "ghost towns" as rows of houses have been abandoned, and in some cases, entire blocks of abandoned homes have been bulldozed. As one Parks & People official remarked, "when asked what would happen with the space, the city didn't have a concrete plan." These conditions elevate vacant land management and housing reinvestment to the forefront of many neighborhood residents' concerns. This creates a high demand for programs such as community forestry that can offer tangible solutions for dealing with individual lots. Community forestry is seen as a valuable way to deal with derelict spaces in a neighborhood and to attract housing investment to the neighborhood. However, in neighborhoods where vacant and derelict space is almost as common as occupied housing, the problem can be too large for people to handle and individual efforts can seem insignificant amongst the surrounding scale of blight. Of course, such disinvestment processes have occurred at different rates in different neighborhoods. It is imperative to consider the same questions in the local context as well.

Culture

Baltimore's unique character has developed throughout its history as a city. This is described in the prologue of McDougall's (1993) book Black Baltimore:

> Partly as a result of its history—a paradoxical mixture of slavery, commerce, industry, and suburbanization—Baltimore today combines aspects of urban living that can be found only in isolation in other cities of the eastern seaboard and the Midwest. For example, Baltimore is predominantly black, like Washington, D.C., yet it also has a significant white ethnic population, like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago. In fact, enclaves of ethnic Europeans remain within the city's urban core, giving the city a unique flavor. Baltimore is the southernmost city of the North, and the northernmost city of the South, its population and physical structure marked by the slave plantation, the merchant ship, and the factory...Having developed at the at the crossroads of the different cultures that have shaped America—part slave, part free; part "native" white, part immigrant; part southern, part northern, and part Midwestern—Baltimore is rich in the social, civic, and cultural organizations produced by all these strains (1).

In relation to community forestry, the Southern influence is important to highlight. A large number of African-American Baltimoreans migrated to the city from rural parts of the U.S. for employment and stayed. In many neighborhoods, it's often the older generation that has bridged the rural-urban gap in their lifetime that undertakes environmental improvement projects, especially ones that involve vegetable gardening. Community foresters should (and often do) recognize that these people are often concerned about the loss of an agricultural knowledge base in future generations and community forestry and gardening projects can be seen as a form of cultural preservation. This sector of the population often has retained some intuitive knowledge and skills in growing plants and vegetables. It is possible that current community forestry and, more importantly, community gardening efforts may be seen as somewhat of a continuation of the cultural history of people who have moved to Baltimore from rural environments. However, a darker history also remains with Baltimore residents—most neighborhoods are still heavily segregated. About three-quarters of the 55 community statistical areas in the city have populations that are over 75% of one race (either white or black) (Alliance, 2002).

In addition, several neighborhood informants expressed concern at the isolation felt by many of their neighbors. The fear of leaving the home is compounded by a general hesitance to leave

one's neighborhood, leading to a narrow vision of city life that may in turn lessen the likelihood that people become inspired by examples of neighborhood greening in other parts of the city. Sherry Olson wrote that "for some reason neighborhoods seem to be a real and universal phenomenon in the Baltimore region" (Olson, 1976). She attributed this to the organization of the construction industry, the normal pedestrian range, and the development of socialization patterns, all of which were influenced by the physical landscape. Crenson noted that "what strikes observers as distinctive, perhaps, is the extent to which the city's internal variety seems to be organized into distinct neighborhood communities. Other large cities are alleged to provide a less congenial environment for them" (Crenson, 1983).

In Baltimore's most distressed neighborhoods, there also seems to be a culture of cynicism based on broken promises by organizations and politicians unable to deliver tangible results. Mayor O'Malley's campaign of billboards, bumper stickers, and television ads telling Baltimore's citizens to "Believe" is designed, in his words, "as an anecdote to cynicism that has taken over Baltimore." O'Malley and his administration believe that "there is a real culture of failure that exists in Baltimore...[that] needs to be eradicated" (Danois, 2003). Baltimore has been stuck in cycles of deterioration and decline for decades, and therefore, people are justified in their skepticism that lasting changes can be made by individual people, plans, and programs. As community foresters and programs come to neighborhoods offering their assistance, this underlying tension must be kept in mind. This calls into question the assumption that such areas are fertile ground for community forestry.

Organizations and Community Forestry

The story of community forestry in Baltimore cannot be told without the history of the changes occurring within the Baltimore Recreation and Parks Department and the Parks & People Foundation since 1989 (see Table 1 for a timeline of selected programs, products, and staff changes). Although Dalton's (2001) analysis covers this topic in relation to the general field of natural resource management within the Gwynns Falls watershed and the city of Baltimore, the following section will highlight the organizational changes (growth and decline) that occurred in relation to their implications for community forestry. Dalton works to explain the reasons behind the reversal in relative importance between Parks & People and the Department of Recreation & Parks by analyzing the organizational structures and the internal growth and decline of the two actors, both of which appear to create a set of conditions that made this reversal of prominence necessary, if not inevitable. Although the internal growth and decline of the two main organizational actors is informative, it is important to also consider the interactions and relationships between the two. Although education and recreation programs are probably more significant in terms of personnel and financial resources, community forestry has arguably been the most continuous and important program for URI and Parks & People. Thus it provides a lens through which to view the entire situation. Therefore, in addition to organizational change, this section will examine the relationships between the Parks & People Foundation and other institutions in the city related to community forestry, the partnerships that have been developed as a result, and the degree to which there have been transfers of ideas, innovations, and technologies from URI/Parks & People to other groups of people or organizations. Rather than simply stating these as objective facts, opinions and perceptions from interviews will be used to show a variety of different perspectives on this period of experimentation and organizational learning, and how people close to the situation believed these changes were effecting community forestry. This section will conclude with a brief summary of the various programs that "spun off" the initial community forestry ideas.

Organizational Growth and Decline

Background: A Birth of Community Forestry in Baltimore

In 1989, the Baltimore Recreation and Parks Department began exploring the application of community forestry to the urban environment of Baltimore. The Parks Department, and in particular the director Dr. Ralph Jones, believed that conditions were appropriate for a program that could involve communities in forestry and open space management. This program was seen as having the potential to improve ecological conditions and foster the development of social networks and community strength to meet social needs. A partnership was then formed between the Department and the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. The Urban Resource Initiative (URI) was created under the auspices of the Parks & People Foundation, a local non-profit organization, to perform regional analysis, develop organizational networks, facilitate organizational change and community development, and provide educational training (Grove et al., 1993). The Parks & People Foundation would serve to keep the program in tune with the communities' needs, acquire funds, and help develop linkages among communities, their stressed environment, and the Recreation and Parks Department (Burch & Grove, 1996).

The initial intent was for URI and Parks & People to initiate pilot projects based on innovative community-based natural resource management ideas, of which community forestry was one. The pilot projects would serve as experimental tests of the relevance and efficacy of such ideas within the specific context of Baltimore, and would eventually be transferred to city agencies and neighborhood residents. Community forestry, in particular, was developed in collaboration with the Forestry Division: it was located within its facilities and operated with its equipment. Thus, the initial motivation behind URI and community forestry was to create a "research and development" program that would have the flexibility to experiment with new ideas, but the application of such ideas would eventually be transferred to the Department of Recreation and Parks. There was always the intention that Yale would decrease its influence in Baltimore over time, but a decision would eventually have to be made whether to turn the community forestry program over to the Forestry Division or to Parks & People.

Baltimore Recreation and Parks Department

In the second half of the 20th century, the Recreation and Parks Department experienced a long period of stability and growth, followed by a period of rapid downsizing and budget cuts. Between 1940 and 1980, the Department and the infrastructure it oversaw benefited from federal investment in urban renewal and park improvements (Dalton, 2001). The City Forestry Division didn't contract out any of their work—they grew all their own trees in a nursery and planted about 4,000-5,000 trees per year in Baltimore's parks on city streets. From the time Calvin Buikema became a forester for the Department in 1969, "it seemed as if there was no end to the amount of money that could be spent on tree planting and parks. [The Department] had lots of money for supplies and could order things in surplus. It seemed like the money would always be there." Mr. Buikema recalls a staff of about 400-500 permanent employees; the Forestry Division itself had about 125 employees. In addition to the vast stream-valley park system and the hundreds of thousands of street trees, during this period the Department also ran the Zoo, Memorial Stadium, over 100 recreation centers, three boats at the Inner Harbor, and golf courses. Although these responsibilities were gradually taken away over time and many of these services contracted out, they serve to highlight the scope of the agency at one time.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Programs	URI partnership between Yale and Baltimore RPD began	Interns reported reccomendations for Community Forestry, Natural Resource Management, and Education programs	Project RAISE program initiated	Training program for BRPD field staff began	Implementation of community forestry projects began	Revitalizing Baltimore program and funding began, focus on Gwynns Falls Watershed	Prof. Burch and Morgan Grove reduce their role in URI program activities	Community Grants program of PPF created	Baltimore Ecosystem Study began	Vacant Lot Restoration Program (P&P and DHCD) created		Bureau of Parks field staff and Captial Projects and Planning transferred back to Dept. of Recreation and Parks		Vacant Lot Restoration Program (P&P and DHCD) ended	Green Schools Restoration and Education Initiaitve funded to do restoration of schoolyards
	Morgan Grove spent summer identifying needs and opportunities	Project RAISE program initiated	Community Forestry program began to work with local representitiv es from neighborhoo	Neighborhoo d Plans for Action developed for 6 communities	Implementation of community forestry projects began in 30 neighborhoods	KidsGrow program developed at PPF for city recreation centers	Yale discontinued funding of URI: Management of URI taken over by PPF		Bureau of Parks field staff and Captial Projects and Planning transferred to Public Works					Green Career Ladder Program initiated with PPF, BES, and WPNPC	Reveal Baltimore program began
			OBURI program developed		URI and OBURI began working in Sandtown-Winchester	CORE (formerly OBURI) transferred to Outward Bound								Urban Ecology Collaborative began between 7 cities	Revitalizing Baltimore money ends
						Tree Tribe training program began									
Products		Community Forestry Stewardship Handbook developed	Strategic Plan for Action developed for BRPD	Watershed Management Plans developed for BRPD (Herring Run)	Watershed Management Plan developed for BRPD (Jones Falls)	Watershed Management Plans developed for BRPD (Gwynns Falls)	RB Monitoring and Evaluation Performed by James Jiler and Suzanne Pelletier		Jones Falls Watershed Association founded	Open Space Management study in six cities				Jiler and Svendsen do rapid M&E of early URI activities	
				Training manual for BRPD field staff created	Neighborhood Plans for Action developed for 6 communities		Jiler performs monitoring and evaluation of community forestry projects								
Staffing	Morgan Grove became first URI intern in Baltimore	5 URI summer Interns	6 URI summer interns	6 URI summer interns	19 URI summer interns	URI summer interns reduced down to 5		Funding for Paul Jahnige's work in East Baltimore ended	Amanda Cunningham hired as PPF community forester - focused on Franklin Square	Amanda Cunningham focusing on watershed associations and riparian planting projects	Patricia Pyle hired by BRPD as Park and Community Forester	Frank Rodgers hired to do community forestry at PPF	Frank Kline hired to do community forestry at PPF	Frank Kline let go	
		Grove (URI project manager)	Grove (URI project manager)		James Jiler hired to implement community forestry projects year-round	Erika Svendsen, Gary Letteron, and Janet Parker hired under RB									
					Shawn Dalton hired as URI Project Coordinator										
					Paul Jahnige hired to do community forestry in East Baltimore	Bryant Smith hired as community forester		Patricia Pyle hired as RB community forester	Superintendant of Parks Bulkema resigns: Director Perritt resigns	Jim Dicker, city arborist, left City Forestry - yet to be replaced		Bryant Smith left PPF	P&P Volunteer Organizer hired and resigned 10 months later		
					Jackie Carrera began as Executive Director of PPF	Sally Loomis hired as RB project manager	Community forester and KidsGrow positions to be transferred to BRPD (did not happen)								

Table 1: Timeline of Select Programs, Products, and Staffing Changes

This decline of the Department of Recreation and Parks began in the 1980s as the federal government began to cut back on investment in urban parks and recreation programs. In the 1980s, the Recreation budget decreased from $10 million (for 123 recreation centers) to $6 million (for 79 recreation centers) (Caverly, 1991 in Dalton, 2001). The Bureau of Parks was on a similar trajectory as well: the parks' maintenance staff was cut from 384 in 1987, to 187 in 1997, to 53 in 1999 (overall, an 86% decrease of staff). Calvin Buikema saw the staff managing Druid Hill Park drop from 100 people to 14 or 15; most of the work is now done by contractors. Despite the declining prominence of the Department, in 1989, MR. Buikema (then Superintendent of Parks) thought that the Department was "still an aggressive and prominent agency." Under the directorship of Dr. Ralph Jones, the agency had a leader that had vision, creative ideas, and the ability to make things happen. He met Dr. William Burch of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and became excited about applying community forestry ideas to Baltimore. (After Dr. Jones tragic and sudden death, there was never again an agency head that fully understood what URI and Parks & People were originally trying to do.) At this point, the partnership between Yale, URI, P&P, and the Department was formed. When URI was established, Morgan Grove recalls that there was "no one at the city or state forestry that talked about relationships with communities." There was no geographic information system (GIS) capabilities in any of the departments and "no one thought about watersheds or the connection between trees, water quality, and the [Chesapeake] Bay." In part, the fact that the Department was undergoing such hard times made the partnership all the more attractive in the beginning—it seemed like a way to supplement functions that would otherwise have to shut down. Eventually the changes experienced by the Department of Recreation and Parks were too great for it to be the recipient of the programs and initiatives piloted by this partnership.

During the second half of 1990s, the Bureau of Parks witnessed the most severe of the cuts and organizational changes. Between 1995 and 2000, while the overall Department budget dropped from $35.5 million to $19.8 million (a 44% decrease), the Bureau of Parks' budget declined from $13.8 million to $4.1 million (a 70% cut) (Dalton, 2001). In 1997, the entire Bureau of Parks' field staff was removed from the Department of Recreation and Parks and relocated to the Department of Public Works, partially explaining this severe budget cut. However, this restructuring had dramatic effects in ways other than budgets. Laura Perry, former President of the Park Board and board member of the Parks & People Foundation, saw this as "a complete evisceration of the department...the budget cuts [were] so severe, and parks [were] the most disposable looking aspect. It was such a sharp break...[the Department] came back so different from what it was when it left that it was no longer an agency that could handle something like community forestry. The morale, leadership, and staff have almost all gone." Calvin Buikema saw the Bureau of Parks "slashed to bits" as the priorities in the city became almost exclusively crime, education, and public safety.

Today, the City Forestry Division pales in comparison to what it once was—in leadership, staff, equipment, and expertise. In 1997 Calvin Buikema resigned as Superintendent of Parks leaving a major leadership gap in the Department and breaking the strong connection that had developed between the Department, URI, and Parks & People. The Division no longer even has a City Arborist. In the early 1990s, Jim Dicker filled this leadership role within the Division and, along with Superintendent Buikema, his influence was critical to bringing community forestry to the agency. Since he left in 1998, the Department has not replaced him and there is currently no one on staff with community forestry responsibilities. Jackie Carrera, executive director of Parks & People, says that "when they lost Jim Dicker there was no big picture thinker left, and no comparable experience was left at City Forestry that could look at the whole of the urban forest." Parks & People was instrumental in advocating for a reinstatement of this position, and currently, the city is advertising for the position, but has not successfully filled it. A

forester from the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources explained that the "qualifications for the job are such that the [current employees]...can't meet the requirements." The staff cuts have been most heavily felt by the middle management of the Department. As one Department official points out, "the problem in the agency is lack of organizational infrastructure...there is no middle management because of the [budget] cuts. All decisions are made by the Bureau heads who are removed from the actual reality...and the low level people don't have the skills or talent [they once had]." In 2000, Mayor O'Malley reinstated the Department or Recreation and Parks by transferring the Parks Department out of the Department of Public Works. But as Mayor O'Malley has explicitly stated, his agenda involves dealing with the most pressing issues in the city (i.e. crime) before investing in departments like Parks and Forestry. The agency has essentially been left to operate on a greatly decreased budget and is struggling to fulfill the basic requirements of the job. This decline makes their ability and willingness to engage in community forestry significantly lower than it was when the partnership was formed. The organizational development of the Parks & People Foundation from 1989 to the present reflects an opposite trend.

The Urban Resources Initiative and the Parks & People Foundation

Currently the Urban Resources Initiative (URI) has been folded into the programmatic operations of the Parks & People Foundation. Therefore this discussion will treat them both together. Although they began as separate entities, their development has been intimately linked and community forestry has been a continuous thread running through both URI and Parks & People. In the early 1990s, the Parks & People Foundation was a small organization in a developmental stage. It experienced rapid growth and, between 1992 and 1996, the organization grew from running four programs with a $500,000 budget to twelve programs with a budget of $2 million (Dalton, 2001). By 1999, the Parks & People budget actually matched that of the Department of Recreation and Parks (see Dalton, 2001).

As discussed above, URI was created in 1989 to begin a process of improving the Department of Recreation and Parks for the citizens of Baltimore. Parks & People's role in the partnership was to administer the funds for the operation of URI's five initial programs: community forestry, GIS, park planning and management, environmental education, and natural resource management training. Over the next four years, interns from Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies constituted the field staff and spent summers in Baltimore working on the five program areas. In 1993, URI began to have a year-round presence in the city as a full-time URI Project Coordinator was hired. In 1994, the Revitalizing Baltimore (RB) project began with federal funding from the United States Forest Service. RB was instituted within Parks & People and thus assumed many of URI's activities. Around the same time, Yale ended its financial and academic support in Baltimore and, by 1995, the responsibility for URI's programs had been transferred to Parks & People who now had the resources to hire full-time staff to run community forestry activities. In the following years, Parks & People continued to grow rapidly while undergoing a struggle to define it's identity—sports programs and an well-attended educational summer camp have grown within the organization, while community forestry has struggled to maintain a cohesive and continuous role. A Community Grants program was created in 1996 to allocate small sums of money to community groups all across the city that would be interested in doing greening projects in their neighborhood. In 1998, the Vacant Lot Restoration Program was initiated to rehabilitate one vacant lot in numerous neighborhoods around Baltimore. The Community Grants program has been a continuous feature of community forestry at Parks & People, whereas the VLRP has been terminated.

The staff of Parks & People has also shifted over time. The organization had only 2 people on staff in the early 1990s, whereas it now has at least fifteen full-time employees. When the RB project began and funding was allocated to Parks & People, there was an attempt to locate the positions within the Recreation and Parks Department, but Parks & People perceived the Department as uninterested or unwilling. The new community forestry positions were therefore established at Parks & People. There appears to be a significant amount of turnover amongst community forestry field workers within the organization. A former field worker likened his work to post-war conflict resolution where it is exceedingly difficult to sustain the level of energy required by the job for more than two years. This can be a problem as turnover and personnel shifts can cause the loss of neighborhood contacts and relationships, the need to retrain new employees, and a disconnect between previous lessons learned and current activities. One informant described that the people that "really believed in the social value of community forestry have left." At one point, there were nine staff doing community forestry in one form or another. Although the community forestry program has been increasing its geographic focus to cover the entire Baltimore City area rather than individual neighborhoods, it currently employs only four full-time staff members (2 of whom are entirely dedicated to office work, while 2 spend part of their time in the field).

A former URI intern suggested that the rapid growth experienced by Parks & People combined with the increased demands placed on the organization by funders and political leaders caused it to "lose its ability to connect to what was happening in the neighborhoods." Another former community forestry field worker perceives Parks & People as becoming increasingly "top heavy." This shift is a critical component as far as community forestry is concerned. "Maybe there are just too many pots on the stove," she said, "and the organization can't do it all." She also recalled that in the early 1990s, a successful model of community forestry was being established by URI interns and under RB, but this has been changed so many times that it no longer resembles where it came from. Another more recent community forestry field worker sees the program as "having morphed over time" as the organization followed the paths toward likely sources of money.

In addition to the Community Grants program, community forestry within Parks & People is now increasingly focused on schoolyard renovations and street tree inventories within a large sub-watershed in West Baltimore within the Gwynns Falls watershed. The organization no longer readily engages in citizen-based tree planting initiatives in neighborhoods around the city and has terminated the Vacant Lot Restoration Program (VLRP). A recent influx of federal funding has led Parks & People staff to wonder whether the organization can keep up with the money that is coming in. It has also led to a general feeling of confusion and uncertainty about the priorities and future of community forestry within the organization. Community outreach and involvement is one of the first things that gets easily forgotten as the organization moves towards having fewer and fewer people in the field (working directly with neighborhoods). Staff have expressed concern that there has been an explosion of city, state, and federal interest without community involvement to accompany it.

As budget cuts have been a factor in the Department of Recreation and Parks' inability to institutionalize community forestry and other URI pilot projects, funding has also been an extremely influential factor for community forestry within Parks & People. As one former community forestry field worker warned, "funding determines everything." Funders want tangible results and products that you can see, such as numbers of trees planted or vacant lots rehabilitated. But one comment from a current community forestry staff member complicates the previous observation: "we used to do more neighborhood tree plantings, but that funding dried up." Others have noted that community forestry can be hard to fundraise for because, in

practice, it often necessitates a high degree of community organizing and capacity building in order to get trees planted or gardens built. Community forestry also poses a unique challenge for an organization: it neither fits neatly in the sharply divided social and environmental categories that are available for funding. In addition, funding sources that are broadly directed at citywide programs run counter to some community foresters' desires to focus on small, concentrated areas. In relation to community forestry on a citywide scale, one informant used the analogy of "spreading too little butter on too large a piece of bread." In other words, community forestry programs can become too diluted to have a significant impact on one particular area as they get spread out across an entire city. In general, there appears to be a paradoxical nature in funding community forestry work. There is a tangible pressure that, in order to retain sources of funding, progress must be constantly shown. While at the same time, in order to make progress, time and effort must be spent on working in a non-product oriented manner with people and groups. This poses difficult dilemma for community forestry that will be discussed in a later section: whether it is possible to prioritize working to organize and support people or whether physical products (like trees and vacant lot clean ups) will become the focus of community forestry work.

Aside from the eight or nine years of steady (but declining) federal funding under the RB program, Parks & People's community forestry work has not experienced much financial continuity or stability. In light of this situation, many informants and sources discussed the flexibility with which the Parks & People Foundation reinvents itself based on cues from the funding community. In general, this type of flexibility can be seen as the extreme alternative to being susceptible to the budgetary demise experienced by the Department of Recreation and Parks. Dalton (2001) saw Parks & People's ability to be "an organizational chameleon" as the key to their successful growth and development as an organization. The organization is "structured in order to remake itself in response to cues from its environment, in particular funding opportunities." A former community forester also saw this as essential to her ability to be creative and flexible within her job—a quality she believed was essential to her work. However, this continuous redefinition has been perceived by other observers as leading to institutional identity crises and a lack of overall focus (this will be discussed further in "The Community Forestry Project" section). From this perspective, constantly adjusting in order to pursue available grant opportunities and bending to pressures from funding institutions can been seen as damaging to the community forestry program's ability to remain consistent to certain goals and priorities. In addition, the pressure to repeatedly repackage the programs to fit funders' requirements decreases the likelihood that a continuity of institutional learning will be present. Other smaller-scale community forestry programs in Baltimore have been more wary of the "funding steers projects" phenomenon. Overall, there is a balance to be struck between allowing funding sources to entirely dictate how, where, and with whom an organization works and being so inflexible that funding opportunities become extremely limited.

This discussion of funding will come as no surprise to anyone working in a non-profit organization—the reality of financial uncertainty, competition, and the pressure to fundraise is a powerful force. At Parks & People, staff that are expected to work in the field are also required to spend extensive amounts conceiving of new project ideas, applying for grants to fund the project, and then executing the project within the allocated amount of time. This can put tremendous strains on the time of the community forester as they struggle to maintain these organizational responsibilities while remaining dedicated to their work in the field. A former community forestry field worker for Parks & People recalled that "everything was decided in the proposal stage and people spent more time working on the proposals than they did implementing them." Another difficulty is that there is often a disconnect between foundations and community forestry. While grants often come in one-year or one and a half year

increments, community forestry work often requires long-term investments of time and resources. "There is no such thing as a one-year effort" in community forestry, according to one key informant. Another difficulty arises around the timing of funding in relation to the interest, motivation, and capacity of the target beneficiaries to utilize the money. The challenge is to have both motivation and funding in place at the same time—otherwise you have money without people wanting to do projects, or people ready to do projects before the money is in place. Community forestry in Baltimore has benefited from a long-term investment of federal funding from the U.S. Forest Service, and the ability to sustain ongoing efforts has been a direct result of this financial stability. While it's easy to say that stable, long-term funding sources need to be in place in order for community forestry to work, this is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve in practice, especially in the current economic climate of the United States. But to simply ignore these difficulties and contradictions would be to miss out on one of the most important lessons to be learned from the past decade of community forestry in Baltimore.

There is no doubt that these parallel, yet opposite organizational narratives influenced how and under what roof community forestry was implemented in Baltimore. But a closer look at the interactions between the two organizations (as well as other actors in the city) may provide additional lessons that are useful in understanding the challenges of developing community-based forestry and open-space efforts within a city and its neighborhoods.

Partnerships, Relationships, and Transfers

As discussed above, community forestry and related activities in Baltimore began with a partnership between an academic institution (Yale), a public agency (the Baltimore Department of Recreation and Parks), and a non-profit organization (Parks & People). Partnerships were originally seen as the way to build institutional capacity for community-based programs, affect organizational change, and institutionalize community forestry and other activities within existing structures. The fourteen years of subsequent activities have been characterized by a large number of partnerships between Parks & People and other public and private organizations, but there are lessons to be learned by examining these partnerships, the nature of the relationships that have been developed, and the degree to which there have been transfers of 'technology' or innovative practices. Dalton's analysis suggests that "a single unifying requirement of [Parks & People's] staff is the ability to create and perform well within complex interorganizational partnerships" (Dalton, 2001). Although it is certain that numerous partnerships have been formed over time, few, if any, of these have been sustained for long durations. Dalton also points out the tendency for the partnerships that have been formed to create dependency among organizations upon Parks & People, but the degree to which these partnerships led to community forestry outcomes is uncertain. The following section will highlight this aspect of the organizational context surrounding community forestry by reporting on the challenges and outcomes from some of the major partnerships, both formal and informal, that have been attempted since 1989.

Parks & People Foundation and the Department of Recreation and Parks

This partnership, along with URI, formed the first attempt at creating community forestry and related programs in Baltimore. It was intended to be an exchange of technical expertise, ideas, and education between organizations. It was founded upon a commitment to improve the ability of the public agency to serve the city. Programs piloted by URI and Parks & People would eventually be "spun-off" and institutionalized within the public agency. A Parks Board member recalls that community forestry "got a pretty good welcome in the Department and people like Cal [Superintendent of Parks] and Gennady [head of Capital Projects] were open to it. The

interns were also quite well received for the first five or so years." But, as Dalton (2001) points out, by the late 1990s, the initial partnership between URI, Parks & People, and the Department of Recreation and Parks had lost much of its ability to be useful to the Department.

Some observers have noted the development of an antagonistic relationship between the two organizations. As Parks & People began to provide programs that should be offered by the Recreation and Parks Department, tension developed within the relationship between the two organizations and the Department began to mistrust the intentions of Parks & People. Some members of the Department thought that the role of Parks & People should have been to raise money to support the work of the public agency and to create a community forestry unit within the Forestry Division. References were made to foundations in other cities that exist for the sole purpose of raising money and increasing support *for* their parks departments and supplementing the resources allocated to the departments by the city. By replacing some of the need for the agency itself, some people perceived Parks & People as jeopardizing the jobs of city employees and lessening the likelihood that resources would be allocated to the Department in the future. One respondent who has been involved in this partnership from the beginning referred to it as "a lost opportunity"; he believed in Parks & People's attempts to be helpful, but saw their desire to rapidly grow as an organization to be out of step with the ability of the Department to keep pace. This perspective seems to suggest that conditions within both organizations prevented the partnership from being as successful as people originally hoped. However, it is worth noting that although the Department of Recreation and Parks may not have been ready or able to capitalize on what was being offered by URI and Parks & People, there are ways in which the decline of the city agency may have actually contributed to the rise of the non-profit. As the city was less able to provide recreation opportunities for youth, manage its park lands, and fill requests for tree plantings, a private organization that was fundraising to fill this niche appears more attractive and necessary to foundations. In the competitive world of funding, this would give the non-profit organization greater justification for their existence and reduce the incentive to assist the Department in rebuilding their capacity to handle such programs themselves. One former Parks & People employee regretted that there was so much focus on "building partnerships and making themselves indispensable, that [Parks & People] neglected capacity building within the public agency that should be responsible for the work that they took over doing. This happened at the expense of creating the circumstances to allow Recreation and Parks to benefit from this work...[and instead] they decided to just do a lot of things for them." In addition, interviews suggested that, on some occasions, assistance was offered to the Department by Parks & People regardless of whether or not it would meet the needs of the Department.

Despite the failures of the partnership with the Recreation and Parks Department, there have nevertheless been some positive outcomes. One agency official recalled that "community forestry was like a breath of fresh air as new ideas were infused into the city." According to the former Superintendent of Parks, URI made the Department start to "look at watersheds, stream buffers, community-based work, tree planting, erosion control, flood protection", and other innovative ideas that did not exist within the minds of Department staff until this time. "Yale changed people's ideas of how to work in parks," he said, pointing out examples of Gwynns Falls and Herring Run as areas where there have been significant improvements. In part, this result was accomplished by the training program that was established in 1992 for the maintenance and management staff of the parks. A former URI intern believes that this was the "best project URI ever did...people respected [the park staff] as important professionals." Although it was unclear what criteria he was using to make this distinction, he cited the following reasons for such a statement. In addition to imparting the park staff with technical knowledge about the ecological importance of their jobs, the training program is believed to have provided,

for a brief time, a level of empowerment for the members of the Bureau of Parks that actually take care of the city parks on the ground. The question of why this project was abandoned often arose in conversation and interviews, but remains unanswered.

Parks & People Foundation and the City Forestry Division[1]

As with the Department of Recreation and Parks as a whole, there is currently very little left of the original partnership between URI, Parks & People, and the City Forestry Division. Over the period of analysis, Parks & People has essentially operated a parallel forestry program that has been somewhat more community-focused and proactive than the city. But the transfer of the community forestry program over to the Forestry Division never happened. In the mid 1990s, Yale's funding of URI ended and the decision had to be made whether to turn the community forestry program over to the city or to Parks & People. People close to the situation at the time saw the decision to transfer the responsibility for the program to Parks & People as necessary due to "the city's dysfunctional staffing problems." Institutionalizing community forestry within the Department of Recreation and Parks could have been something of a "kiss of death." During the budget cuts and agency restructuring that occurred shortly after this decision was made, community forestry would likely have been the first thing to be cut and the Department and Forestry Division would not have been in any position to try to protect it. It is worth noting that there is the perception that Parks & People was not completely willing to work towards transferring community forestry to the city. This criticism is similar to that stated generally in relation to the Department of Recreation and Parks, but there is little evidence that this unwillingness played a significant role. In fact, Parks & People still believes that the community forestry work that they have "piloted" should still be institutionalized somewhere within the public sector in Baltimore. According to executive director Jackie Carrera, Parks & People has come to "own" the program more than they would like, and remains willing to work with the city to get to a point where they can accomplish such a transfer. However, aside from these statements, there are no indicators that show effort being made to transfer community forestry work to the Forestry Division or any other city or state agency.

In recent years, the relationship between the Forestry Division has been strained. A former community forestry field worker recalled that when he began working at Parks & People, it took him over a year to get on good footing with Forestry crews. He found there was little respect in the Forestry Division for Parks & People. Parks & People has made an attempt, for example, to work with Forestry on a survey of street trees in the Greenmount-Barclay neighborhood. This was an idea that originated within Parks & People. The Forestry Division was then informed, and the survey went ahead without considering how and whether it would be beneficial to Forestry. In fact, a year later, Parks & People is still trying to figure out how to integrate this work into the Forestry Division which has rejected the results on multiple grounds. Forestry sees the results as invalid and suspect since they weren't collected by a professional forester, and they feel that if they accept these results, they are opening up a "Pandora's box" whereby anyone in the city could make claims that Forestry would have to accept. In addition, if the city accepts the results of this survey, then they are exposed to liability under state law to address the dead trees immediately, which they don't have the resources to do. This example highlights a situation in which lack of communication and collaborative intent between Forestry and Parks & People has led to substantial amounts of time spent collecting information that is unhelpful and unusable for Forestry.

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[1] Due to difficulties getting access and scheduling conflicts, this section is absent of representatives from the Forestry Division itself. Therefore, this section should be seen as less balanced and complete than the others.

Positive outcomes have also been a part of the relationship between Parks & People and the Forestry Division. Community forestry became the first liaison between the citizens and communities of Baltimore and the Forestry Division. URI and community forestry began to shift the perspective of the Forestry Division towards seeing people as a key component of their work, rather than as an annoyance or obstacle. In addition, the efforts by Yale, URI, and Parks & People to work with the Forestry Division brought a new feeling of professionalism and empowerment to the staff. The partnership elevated forestry work in Baltimore to a higher level and observers noted that people began to see their work within a larger context of improving the quality of life and the urban environment of Baltimore. Parks & People has also been an effective advocate for Forestry within the city on issues of funding, resources, and staffing. More recently, Parks & People has worked together with Marion Bettingfield of the Forestry Division to institute a computerized record-keeping system for tree planting. This system, if utilized, would allow the tree planting efforts by both organizations to be imported into a geographic information system (GIS) and tracked over time and across space. As noted above, the perspective of the Forestry Division is generally absent from this analysis, indicating that this description may be incomplete.

Parks & People Foundation and Other City Agencies

After the partnership with the Department of Recreation and Parks seemed less viable, Parks & People began to experiment with new methods of community forestry that involved partnering with different city agencies. In 1998, the Vacant Lot Restoration Program (VLRP) was created with funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Recently, this program was terminated and the consensus opinion from both the city and Parks & People seems to be that this program failed to live up to the expectations of either partner. Being partnered with a city agency drew Parks & People into the role of a contractor that had to respond to maintenance requests. As it was described, a neighborhood resident would call their councilperson and complain about a vacant lot, the word would get to DHCD, who would then expect Parks & People to respond to the maintenance request. While the city expected this kind of service, Parks & People remained committed to working with proactive community motivation rather than creating a program that was entirely reactive and complain-driven. The program did not meet the city's expectations either, according to a community forestry field worker that worked on the program. They expected results that the VLRP could not provide.

More recently, Parks & People has begun to work with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Baltimore Ecosystem Study (BES) on a water quality improvement project in one West Baltimore watershed (Watershed 263). The concept behind this project came from Revitalizing Baltimore technical committee meetings and was intended to be the first attempt to manage an area in the city along watershed (or "sewershed") boundaries. DPW would be responsible for the infrastructure improvements, Parks & People would be the liaison to the communities within the watershed and provide assistance with schoolyard and neighborhood greening projects, and BES would collect data and monitor the effects of the changes. This partnership is still young, but conversations with a Parks & People employee indicated that it is getting off to a rocky start. In the Fall of 2002, Parks & People did a pilot project on the Franklin Square Elementary School's grounds whereby the design and implementation was all community- and school-based. Although large amounts of money have now been raised by Parks & People for this project, there is little certainty as to what role the organization can and will play in the implementation. DPW has moved quickly and contracted a lot of the schoolyard renovation work out to private firms, while Parks & People and the community involvement piece of the partnership has been left straggling behind. The engineering firms have gone to work on many projects before any of the community outreach could be done. Currently, there is confusion and

concern amongst Parks & People community forestry staff as to their responsibilities in relation to this project and its potential to be fundamentally different from the community-based model that characterizes community forestry. This brings into question Dalton's (2001) assertion that Parks & People has "reached a point in its history where the organization has a coherent public image and a well-defined character...its staff is confident and understands the role of the organization in the partnerships in which it is engaged." This no longer appears to be the case in regards to the most recent partnership in which the organization has become deeply involved.

Parks & People Foundation and Other Non-governmental and Community-based Organizations

Parks & People's community forestry work has become increasingly inclined to create partnerships with smaller organizations possessing local connections and the ability to dedicate their staff time to implementing greening projects. "Integration" and "meshing" with other organizations seems to be a main goal of the organization. There appears to be a subtle shift towards seeing less of a role for their staff in the field or in neighborhoods doing community forestry. This could be a positive development since there are many organizations in the city that contribute different aspects to community-based environmental rehabilitation: CivicWorks, the Neighborhood Design Center, the Master Gardener program of the Maryland Cooperative Extension, Citizens Planning and Housing Association, place-based organizations like Operation Reach-Out Southwest and the Washington Village-Pigtown Neighborhood Planning Council, and community development corporations such as the People's Homesteading Group. Such organizations have their own expertise, local presence, and niche within the urban ecology and community development fields in Baltimore and could increase their effectiveness by working together. For example, the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) has project design and participatory planning expertise, Parks & People has the community outreach and forestry/greening expertise, and CivicWorks has the construction and capital-intensive implementation capabilities. However collaboration between these groups has been limited and has not yielded obvious positive returns from Parks & People's perspective, and there even seems to be a degree of competition between them. There is often resistance to collaborate within organizations that each have different organizational ideologies, varied funding commitments, and their own internal problems. In addition, the tendency to expect local organizations to do community forestry instead of Parks & People implies that there is no value to having a staff of professional community foresters.

The experience of URI in Sandtown-Winchester involved a partnership with a local community development corporation. The current director of this organization still references the influence of URI on their current planning, land-use, and housing efforts. "All that we do," he said, "has a green component" and suggests that this may be attributed to URI's involvement in the neighborhood and with the corporation in the early 1990s. A current partnership between Parks & People and the People's Homesteading Group, a community development corporation in Greenmount-Barclay, is matching the local presence of a community anchor with the resources and expertise of a citywide greening organization. Examining the outcomes of this partnership in the future will show how well two organizations with different ideologies and objectives can work together.

Parks & People Foundation and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Although no formal community forestry partnerships have been made with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Parks & People and Revitalizing Baltimore have been responsible for making important changes within this state-level agency. A DNR employee asserted that his agency "has begun to learn a new language and how to talk to new types of

people." This statement is interpreted to mean that RB and Parks & People have successfully integrated a state agency that has historically avoided Baltimore into the city and are working to change the image of who the agency serves. For example, a Strategic Forest Lands Assessment was done on a statewide-basis to assess the forests, but entirely ignored Baltimore City. Parks & People convinced the agency to correct this omission, thereby leading to a valuable urban forest assessment. This may have contributed to the agency's decision to consider urban areas as part of their jurisdiction and part of the responsibility of the foresters within DNR's Forest Service. Parks & People was also instrumental in the passing of state legislation this past year that now allows DNR to give formal technical and financial assistance to non-profit organizations in Baltimore City.

Spin-off Programs

Environmental Education and Youth Development—In the early 1990s, URI developed KidsGrow, an Outward Bound program (OBURI), and Project RAISE. OBURI was transferred to Outward Bound in 1994, while Project RAISE was discontinued. KidsGrow has remained in operation in one elementary school and one recreation center and is now working with the Baltimore Ecosystem Study on developing a curriculum. The Green Career Ladder project has recently emerged. It is a partnership between Parks & People, the Baltimore Ecosystem Study, and the Washington Village-Pigtown Neighborhood Planning Council.

Steffi Graham's Photography Project—Since the early 1990s, Steffi Graham, a professional photographer, has been donating her time and expertise to documenting community forestry activities and sites throughout the city's neighborhoods. Aside from being artistically spectacular, her photographs could be a valuable resource for future research into community forestry in the city. Her work could be used to understand the human energy and excitement that went into much of the early community forestry work, to compare the current status of many sites with a documented image of their previous condition, and to stimulate conversations with neighborhood residents or community forestry participants in further research.

Tree Tribe—The Tree Tribe was initiated in 1994 as a way to train local people to serve as their neighborhood community forestry contact. This program created a model for how to educate people with no experience in forestry or community greening in the process of working within the political system to accomplish neighborhood environmental improvement projects. In addition, this program discovered two exceptional individuals that have since gone on to do related community development or greening work. Terry Smith became the head of Public Safety in Washington Village-Pigtown and Frank Rogers became a community forester at Parks & People.

Natural Resource Management Training Program—In 1992-1993, Shawn Dalton designed and implemented a training program and manual for the field staff of the Herring Run parks district. Five staff persons were trained to conduct the program in the other two watersheds of the city (Jones Falls and Gwynns Falls). This program was intended to introduce the field staff of the Bureau of Parks to the concepts of natural resource management and to highlight the importance of their work to the overall ecological health of the city and the Chesapeake Bay. This program was implemented but did not become an ongoing part of the Department's field operations or training.

Revitalizing Baltimore (RB)—The early community forestry projects in Baltimore attracted the attention of the United States Forest Service's (USFS) State & Private Forestry (S&PF) Northeastern Area's Urban and Community Forestry Program, which was interested in

developing new concepts of urban ecosystem management and community forestry. Revitalizing Baltimore (RB) was created in 1994 as a federally funded "collaboration among federal, state, and local government agencies, community groups, and non-profit organizations to link urban revitalization with environmental restoration" (Grove et al., 2002). RB was institutionalized within the Parks & People Foundation and provided a stable source of funding for community forestry, environmental education, watershed protection, and technical and scientific information sharing.

Gwynns Falls Greenway—As a result of ideas generated by URI and Parks & People, the Department of Recreation and Parks has been building a greenway trail along the Gwynns Falls River from the outermost edge of the city to the harbor. This trail will connect various parts of the city parks system together with many neighborhoods in West Baltimore. Similar plans are in the works for the Jones Falls River.

Baltimore Ecosystem Study—In 1996, the National Science Foundation (NSF) funded the Baltimore Ecosystem Study (BES), one of two urban Long Term Ecological Research Projects, in order to understand the long term relationships among social and ecological patterns and processes in the city (Grove et al., 2002). This study brought together researchers who had been involved with community forestry and ecosystem management in Baltimore since 1989 with social and natural scientists from the Institute for Ecosystem Studies and various other academic and research institutions. Data from the Demography and Social Science group of BES is highlighted below to show the usefulness in understanding some of the characteristics present in community forestry neighborhoods. Currently, BES is working on further survey data that will refine their ability to see social and ecological patches within Baltimore. This could be of great utility to community forestry programs in targeting areas in which to concentrate their work.

Charm City Land Trust—In 2003, a needs assessment was completed amongst community gardeners in Baltimore to better understand the potential for creating a land trust in the city. This project was instigated by a 2000 report entitled *Neighborhood Open Space Management*.

Neighborhoods and Community Forestry

Community forestry in Baltimore has made an impact on scores of neighborhoods all across the city—each one having its own unique mix of assets and challenges. Figure 14 in the Appendix shows the distribution of various types of community forestry projects that have been implemented across the city. In order to balance the generalizations about community forestry that characterize this report, three neighborhoods were chosen as case studies. Figure 15 in the Appendix shows the location of the three neighborhoods chosen for study in relation to each other and to the city as a whole. These three neighborhood case studies are not extensive, but will be used to highlight the local factors that existed in each neighborhood and the ways in which these factors have affected the use and continuity of community forestry in each. These case studies are the foundation for much of the discussion appearing in "The Community Forestry Project" section. The three neighborhoods chosen (Pigtown-Washington Village, Franklin Square, and Sandtown-Winchester) all have been the focus of community forestry activity to varying degrees over the period of time covered by this report (1989-2003). The other neighborhoods that were not included in this study, but have participated to various degrees in community forestry programs are:

- Canton, Patterson Park Area, and Fells Point
- Middle East and McElderry Park
- Greenmount West and Barclay

- Waverly and Better Waverly
- Reservoir Hill
- Belair-Edison
- Edmondson Village
- Harlem Park and Upton
- Carroll Park Area and Washington Village-Pigtown
- Hollins Market
- Union Square

Sandtown-Winchester

Community Profile

Sandtown-Winchester is a 72-square block neighborhood of approximately 9,200 people (Planning, 2000). According to the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance (BNIA), 24% of families in the joint Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park Community Statistical Area[2] are run by a single parent with children living below the federal poverty level and 54% of the labor force (or 9,447 people) is unemployed (Alliance, 2002). The median household income is less than $19,000 and the median sale price of houses is only $12,000 (significantly less than Franklin Square and Pigtown, and $50,000 lower than the Baltimore average) (Alliance, 2002). The population of Sandtown (97% African-American) has also been steadily declining for decades: the most recent U.S. Census reports that it decreased by another 1,692 people between 1990 and 2000. During this decade, the Census shows that the most notable decrease was in the number of people between the ages of 25 and 34 years old. This age group declined by 800 people (almost half) representing a flight of young adults who might otherwise be expected to become the next generation of neighborhood leaders. The neighborhood is mostly run by women; over 1,400 (almost 70%) of Sandtown's families are headed by a female householder without a husband (Planning, 2000).

Sandtown residents have heard the promises of transformation since the early 1990s when the area became the target of a high profile experiment in urban revitalization. A front page article in the *Washington Post* called it "a multi-year experiment in urban resurrection, a national test case designed to show that wholesale neighborhood transformation is both possible and cost-effective" (Gugliotta, 1993). Real estate developer James Rouse and the Enterprise Foundation were responsible for this initial push to improve living conditions in Sandtown. A partnership developed between Rouse's Enterprise Foundation, the mayor's office, and a coalition of churches (Baltimoreans United In Leadership Development or BUILD) and the Sandtown-Winchester Neighborhood Transformation Initiative was created. Over the decade Enterprise built 500 new affordable housing units, the city rehabilitated several hundred vacant rowhomes, and a public housing project received a thorough refurbishment (Olsen, 2003). The good news is that, in 2000, the U.S. Census reported that about one-third more occupied housing units were owned than in 1990. However, this figure is less impressive when you consider that the total number of occupied units has dropped by 11% over the same period of time (Planning, 2000). More people owned their own homes, but more houses had been torn down than were built, thereby increasing the amount of vacant and derelict space in an area that already had more than enough to go around. The BNIA data estimates that a high 22% the Sandtown

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[2] Community Statistical Areas (or CSAs) are clusters of Baltimore neighborhoods arranged into 55 areas. Data was compiled for the CSAs by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicator Alliance (BNIA). According to BNIA, the clustering is used because neighborhood boundaries do not consistently align with U.S. Census tracts.

CSA's residential properties are vacant (compared to 6% in Baltimore City) and only 35% of housing units owner-occupied (compared to 65% citywide) (Alliance, 2002).

The Enterprise Foundation estimates that $70 million was invested in the project. A recent article in *The Next American City* asserts, however, that this figure is too low. The writer (who is also a biographer of developer James Rouse) argues that "if you count all the grants, all the public—and private—sector efforts, and especially all the physical construction, the actual figure is easily *twice* that amount" (Olsen, 2003). Astoundingly, his article concludes that about $14,000 was spent per resident on efforts to revitalize the neighborhood (Olsen, 2003). But after millions of dollars have been spent, the neighborhood still faces many of the social problems it did a decade ago, and people are still fleeing for the suburbs or securer parts of the city. Faced by these continued threats, Sandtown community gardener and activist Inez Robb concludes, "there's a lot more to neighborhood revitalization than just housing."

Using data collected by the Social Science and Demography group of the Baltimore Ecosystem Study (BES), other characteristics can be inferred about life in Sandtown-Winchester. The Baltimore Ecosystem Study uses data collected through survey research and field observation as well as from sources such as the U.S. Census and PRIZM® to classify and characterize social and ecological dimensions of neighborhoods (or patches) over time and across space (Grove, 2000). BES researchers take the data from each respondent in their telephone survey and associate it with a PRIZM® classification.[3] Sandtown-Winchester is almost entirely classified by the PRIZM® system as belonging to the "Inner Cities" category. This cluster is described by the source of PRIZM® data: "concentrated in America's poorest neighborhoods in large eastern United States cities, these young, African-American single parents live in multi-unit rental complexes. High unemployment and public assistance are prevalent here. When work is available, they have service and blue-collar jobs. They have grade school and high school education levels."[4] The BES survey results from 2000 suggest the following characteristics of clusters similar to Sandtown-Winchester (see Table 2): 45% of those surveyed said that they either agreed or strongly agreed that people in the neighborhood are willing to help one another; 42% either agreed or strongly agreed that it is a close knit neighborhood; 51% agreed or strongly agreed that there are many opportunities to meet neighbors and work on solving community problems. Trust of neighbors was more evenly distributed with 30% agreeing or strongly agreeing that their neighbors can be trusted, 32% were indifferent, and 38% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Over 50% agreed or strongly agreed that there is an active neighborhood association and 54% agreed or strongly agreed that churches, temples, and other volunteer groups are actively supportive of the neighborhood. In addition, Table 3 shows that people in this PRIZM® classification see clean streets and sidewalks, parks and open spaces, and safety and security as being about equal in terms of major problems (Grove, 2000). The generalizations that such data provide do not entirely fit with the empirical observations conducted for this study. Sandtown-Winchester did not appear to be a close-knit neighborhood of residents willing to help each other, as the majority of the responses would suggest. Although religious institutions did seem to play a prominent role in the neighborhood, the neighborhood associations may not have been as active as the data suggests. In relation to the neighborhood problems, cleanliness of streets and sidewalks as well as safety and security were the main concerns on the minds of most residents interviewed.

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[3] "PRIZM® classifications categorize the American population using Census data, market research surveys, public opinion polls, and point-of-purchase receipts. The PRIZM® classification is spatially explicit allowing the survey data to be viewed and analyzed spatially and allowing specific neighborhood types to be identified and compared based on the survey data" (BES, DemSoc, Morgan Grove, mgrove@fs.fed.us).

[4] http://cluster1.claritas.com/claritas/Default.jsp

Inner City Blues	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree
People in the neighborhood are willing to help one another.	16.3%	13.8%	25.0%	12.5%	32.5%
This is a close knit neighborhood.	27.5%	6.3%	23.8%	12.5%	30.0%
People in this neighborhood can be trusted.	28.6%	9.1%	32.5%	16.9%	13.0%
There are many opportunities to meet neighbors and work on solving community problems.	25.0%	9.2%	14.5%	18.4%	32.9%
There is an active neighborhood association.	24.3%	8.1%	16.2%	5.4%	45.9%
Municipal (local) government services (such as sanitation, police, fire, health & housing dept) are adequately provided and support the neighborhood's quality.	23.7%	6.6%	28.9%	13.2%	27.6%
Churches or temples and other volunteer groups are actively supportive of the neighborhood.	14.1%	11.5%	20.5%	11.5%	42.3%

Table 2: Selected BES Survey Results for "Inner Cities" PRIZM Classification.

	Major Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Not a Problem
Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks	23.2%	31.7%	45.1%
Quality and availability of parks and open spaces	19.5%	24.4%	56.1%
Safety and security	20.7%	42.7%	36.6%
Air quality	11.0%	26.8%	62.2%
Water quality	14.6%	24.4%	61.0%

Table 3: BES Survey Results for "Inner Cities" PRIZM Classification : Neighborhood Problems.

A Local History of Community Forestry in Sandtown-Winchester

From the beginning, the people behind the plans and funding for Sandtown realized that, in order to halt the spiral of decline, coalitions of residents, community development corporations, and city agencies would have to address all the problems of the neighborhood simultaneously. When URI contacted Sandtown's Community Building in Partnership (CBP), there was an interest in the potential for community forestry programs to fit into the overall plans being generated in the neighborhood. In the summer of 1993, URI intern Alexis Harte began working with CBP's open space coordinator Bill Hobbs. Bill Hobbs was a well-respected, local leader from Sandtown that knew people, knew how to get things done, and believed in the importance of greening in the revitalization of a neighborhood. Numerous projects were started during 1993 including a wildflower garden, community gardens, a tree nursery, a 'beautification garden', a tree inventory and maintenance program, and a demonstration garden. The tree nursery was a special case since it was an experiment with a one-time infusion of labor and resources. Intern Alexis Harte and CBP's Bill Hobbs conceived of this idea as a way to counter the "culture of apathy that existed in the neighborhood...by accomplish[ing] a physical task and initiat[ing] a process that is self-perpetuating." The physical side of the project was intended to supply Bill Hobbs and the neighborhood with a local supply of trees to plant and to provide some economic benefit to the community. URI interns worked to highly publicize the event in the neighborhood, the media, and among city politicians. In the labor sharing tradition prominent in other societies, over 150 people turned out for the event and the tree nursery was built in one day. Alexis recalls that "people were pleased with the event, a lot of work got done, and a statement was made." In 1995, however, many of these projects had already been abandoned or discontinued (Jiler, 1995). "After the one-day barn raising, the site had been generally neglected for the following one and a half years" (see Figure 3) (Jiler, 1995).

Figure 3: Former site of community garden and tree nursery.

After the summer of 1993, URI consulted and advised CBP on future open space programs for the neighborhood. URI's community forestry expertise led them to devise and propose a tree planting program, but "this was eventually rejected and a program oriented towards gardening...was developed instead" (Jiler, 1995). Jiler reported in 1995 that "the biggest challenge in Sandtown [was] to incorporate more forestry projects with the gardening work already being carried out. Forestry has not been a primary concern in Sandtown...open space activities have focused on gardens and beautification" (Jiler, 1995). In fact, he observed community gardens expanding rapidly in the neighborhood while tree planting and nursery activities were non-existent. Over a two year period, the number of community gardens in the neighborhood increased from none in 1993 to 20 sites in 1995, all of which were independently initiated and maintained by residents (Jiler, 1995). In the mid-1990s, there was a dispute between URI/Parks & People and CBP over a financial issue. This put a halt to most of the interaction between the

two organizations and ensured that some of the initial URI projects were no longer supported. This period of detachment did not mean an end to community-based greening activities in the neighborhood, however. Aside from a Vacant Lot Restoration Program project in Sandtown that still exists but is only maintained and used by one or two people, Parks & People has had little contact with the with the neighborhood since the mid 1990s. However, they recently received increased funding to work in Watershed 263 (which includes Sandtown) and have reestablished communications with CBP.

Today, there is a strong-willed collection of local people that have been planning and implementing community gardening and open space management activities in the neighborhood for the past few years. There is a concentration of eight green spaces within a four block area in the southeastern corner of Sandtown and an organization called Urban Conservancy was started by two local women to address vacant land issues in the area (see Figure 4). CBP does some maintenance work on a few sites that they are responsible for, but there is no real overlap between their work and that of the individual community gardeners. CPB increasingly sees open space management as purely a public safety concern and is therefore most concerned with preserving the image of cleanliness and order. The Urban Conservancy is a volunteer organization that has defined a demonstration area in which they are working to create various types of site types that can then serve as inspiration and guides for people to base their own local work on. They have also done a survey of vacant land in the neighborhood and of residents to find out what they would like to see happen with the vacant lots and the level of interest they have in contributing to this effort. Inez Robb, the leader of the Urban Conservancy, said that people's interests ranged from "a place for children to play, a way to get rid of trash, an area with some trees and shade, a place to rest, a flower garden, to a vegetable garden." She found that most people were willing to step up and help: "many people expressed that they wanted to do something, but weren't sure what or how." Maybe most importantly, the Urban Conservancy has been providing leadership training and support to people starting community gardening activities by helping them organize groups, meetings, and workdays. Parks & People now supports some of these activities through small community grants, but the impression given by conversations with Sandtown garden activists and leaders is that they perceive the organization as helpful solely in its ability to provide financial support, and primarily at the initial implementation phase of the project.

Figure 4: "Our Garden" in Sandtown-Winchester: one of many green spaces concentrated in the SE corner of the neighborhood.

Individuals in the neighborhood now care for individual sites while a few different organizations (i.e. CivicWorks, Neighborhood Design Center, and the Maryland Cooperative Extension) are contributing different types of assistance for projects. However, little coordination exists between the projects in the area. When receiving tours of the sites from neighborhood

residents, physical spaces were identified in terms of the one person who was responsible for it, and the varying levels of upkeep and use were explained by individual time constraints, abilities, or personalities. One gardener said that people are becoming "spread too thin" now that there are numerous gardens and green spaces, but no mechanism to share or institutionalize the burden of upkeep amongst a larger group of people. There was once an attempt to create an open space committee in the neighborhood but this no longer exists. Local youth are involved, especially in the gardens of expert gardener and leader Justine Bonner, but like much of the gardening in Sandtown it is decentralized. However, it is also clear that the activities currently going on are attracting people to get involved. Interest in gardening and greening appears to be building within the neighborhood and at least three projects are being planned as of the summer of 2003.

Lessons Learned in Sandtown-Winchester

In 2002, Jiler's analysis of community forestry in Sandtown noted certain changes in the neighborhood: he saw an increased emphasis on private housing rather than open space development, community gardens established a decade ago had disappeared, and the tree nursery "had sprouted into a forest and it seemed unlikely that trees were ever moved and planted" from where they were placed ten years ago (Jiler, 2002). He attributed the changes in the neighborhood to three major factors: the lack of leadership to take over where Bill Hobbs left off, the lack of continued presence and support from URI and Parks & People, and the focus of CBP on building housing and doing maintenance rather than "building open space programs with the community" (Jiler, 2002).

The need for leadership in the neighborhood was certainly a major issue. As the mural on the side of CBP's office in Sandtown shows, Bill Hobbs is depicted alongside James Rouse as the two prominent figures that were instrumental in the recent history of the neighborhood (Figure 5). Hobbs was a key reason for why so much initial activity was generated in the neighborhood in 1993 and 1994. But aside from the one-time event of the barn raising, Alexis Harte says there "wasn't really much involvement from the community in their work." Instead they relied on the expectation that because Hobbs was so well-respected, "people could get behind what he was doing and feel ownership because they trusted him." But if the case of the tree nursery is an example or a larger trend in community forestry, getting people to participate can be very successful but the long-term abandonment and lack of use suggests that people in the neighborhood did not feel ownership of the nursery or involved in its utilization as a resource. Bill Hobbs passed away in the mid-1990s and left a leadership vacuum and lack of continuity in regards to open space management and greening activities in the neighborhood. As evidenced by the relative lack of community forestry activities after Hobbs passed away, his leadership in the neighborhood was not something that was

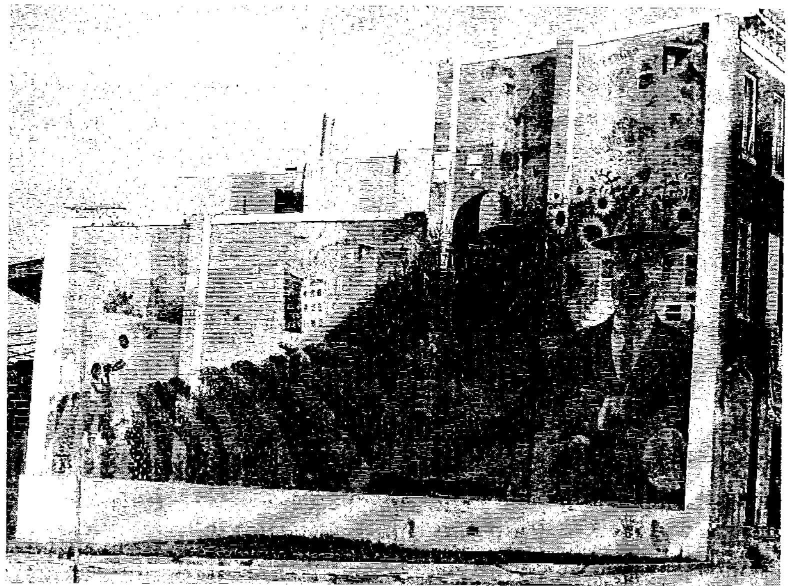

Figure 5: Mural of Bill Hobbs (left) and James Rouse (right)

replaced. The identification and support of active local leaders is necessary, but not sufficient; sustainable community forestry projects do not rest entirely on the shoulders of one individual. The efforts of the individual drive individual projects. However, understanding how to transfer the individual energies and actions of a local leader into a support structure that can be reproduced and sustained is the challenge.

Sustaining projects without full dependence on an individual local leader entails investing time and resources into leadership development and creating support structures within local institutions that can reduce the need for the efforts of one person. One idea posed by a Sandtown community gardener is for people to join together and do a rotating schedule of maintenance on all the green spaces, which would improve the ability to sustain projects and get people to start working together. An organization like Parks & People could play a facilitating role and bring people together to plan for how to take care of their lots communally, rather than as individuals all caring for their immediate plot. Erika Svendsen refers to this necessity for a "human chain" that can pass on inspiration, information, and skills to new people as the original catalysts get older or move away. People in Sandtown also foresee the potential benefits of hiring an open space coordinator for the neighborhood that would be an organizer, facilitator, and resource for materials and assistance, and could coordinate volunteer and youth programs in relation to greening projects.

From the perspective of organizations like URI or Parks & People, experiences in Sandtown show how partnering with community-based organizations and expecting them to do the work of community foresters can be problematic. They have other issues, concerns, and plans and their funding is often not for tree planting, gardening, and organizing residents for projects. In Sandtown, there was a conflict within CBP between Hobbs and the leadership over the purpose of community forestry and gardening. Seeing it as a way to make aesthetic changes in the neighborhood, CBP hired a landscape designer at a certain point to draw up plans that would then get implemented in the neighborhood. Hobbs, on the other hand, thought that projects should be able to directly address the needs of the people in the neighborhood. Hobbs envisioned gardens designed for productivity and food crops and programs that could have economic benefits for the neighborhood. URI intern Alexis Harte also recognized the importance of working to develop community forestry activities that would have economic value, and many of the initial project ideas (i.e. Christmas tree farm, herb gardens, and tree nursery) were attempts to fit community forestry activities into local needs and concerns. This example highlights the differing purposes of community forestry programs and community organizations.

In addition to leadership and organizational support, the lack of continuity exhibited by the initial URI/CBP projects and the endurance of other independent gardens can be understood by another factor. Trees and forestry were not a good fit ("appropriate technology") with the interests and history of the neighborhood, whereas gardens are still happening with minimal support from outside. Although the tree nursery was a way to transfer the technology and skills necessary to create local micro-enterprise, people did not embrace the idea. It became clear early on that the neighborhood was not culturally predisposed to trees, and instead greening work defaulted or naturally transitioned into gardens. This is still evident today as people doing greening in the neighborhood are still gardening, and CBP has become reluctant to consider trees. The fact that the tree nursery and forestry activities did not catch on in Sandtown shouldn't have been a problem in and of itself and should have been accommodated. Gardens were, and are, part of an agricultural tradition that older people in the neighborhood remember from their youth and these memories and skills don't exist with regard to trees. Further evidence for this is apparent in the mural (Figure 5) which depicts a rural, agricultural scene in

front of an urban backdrop suggesting the affinity people in the neighborhood have with vegetable gardening and farming.

The fact that Parks & People is now playing a much smaller role in the neighborhood than URI did in the early 1990s, may lead to two different outcomes. The residents themselves may feel much more ownership and responsibility for the projects that have been or are currently being developed. Sandtown gardener and resident Justine Bonner believes from experience that outside groups should be there to provide help, but you have to form a group of people that are willing to work with or without money from outside. She argues that projects are more successful with very little support from organizations and therefore capacity has to be built without dependency on outside funding or assistance. The flip side is, however, that these efforts are again based on the initiative of individual people working on individual projects. The Urban Conservancy and other people in the neighborhood have expressed the idea of trying to hire someone to be the open space coordinator for the neighborhood and thereby institutionalize a position for someone that becomes the official resource for the neighborhood to go through. As of now, no institution is in place to ensure that people are working together to make sure that responsibilities are shared. Whereas URI provided a presence in the neighborhood and worked to organize groups of people, Parks & People's increasingly hands-off approach leaves almost everything up to people in the neighborhood.

Washington Village-Pigtown

Community Profile

Pigtown has been undergoing recent changes that are typical of a former industry-supported neighborhood, yet in other ways it has an essence that is somewhat unique within Baltimore. It's location, first of all—within walking distance of the inner harbor, literally in the shadows of the new football stadium and Camden Yards, and adjacent to a large city park—gives it a potential appeal to developers, politicians, and residents. However, the building of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (a major thoroughfare from the highway into the western and northern parts of the city) created a physical barrier between Pigtown and the financial and commercial core of the city. In the 19th century, the community regularly witnessed herds of pigs running through the streets as they were unloaded from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad switching yard and led to slaughterhouses. The railroad and other industries based in and around Pigtown supported a substantial working-class population. However, as the industries that once supported the neighborhood collapsed, so did the livelihood of Pigtown's residents. In the 1990s, Pigtown was declared an Empowerment Zone and thus became eligible for the federal funding program infusing money into the worst urban neighborhoods in the country.

The Empowerment Zone has led to the creation of the Washington Village-Pigtown Neighborhood Planning Council (WPNPC) which has replaced much of the perceived need for the three community associations that once struggled for co-existence in the neighborhood. One Pigtown resident remarked that today, the neighborhood has literally begun to "move upscale and downscale at the same time" suggesting that the people that are moving in are more well-off than previous residents, while the people that have been in the neighborhood for a long time are still experiencing the neighborhood's economic decline (see Figures 6 and 7). Recently, the neighborhood has seen signs that some combination of investment, revitalization, and gentrification is beginning to appear alongside the prostitution, drug dealing, and poverty that still characterizes scattered pockets. The neighborhood name—which often reveals a lot about how people perceive the neighborhood—has been revised with the addition of

"Washington Village" tacked onto the front of "Pigtown" and a new townhouse development (Camden Crossing) is being constructed one block behind the main neighborhood artery (Washington Blvd.). In fact, one resident remarked that he's seen real estate brokers advertise houses for sale within Pigtown's borders as being located in "Federal Hill West"—a newly invented name designed to capitalize on the currently popularity of another nearby neighborhood.

Figure 6: Boarded-up vacant houses are a problem.

Washington Village-Pigtown is currently home to approximately 5,400 people. The currently racial mix of the neighborhood (about ½ white and ½ black with a rapidly increasing Asian population—up 136% from 1990 to 2000) is quite a change from what it was in 1990. Over the last decade, 2,000 whites have left the neighborhood and almost 800 blacks have moved in to take their place. In 1990, Pigtown was 72% white, and 26% black and contained 1,000 more people than it does today (a 15% decrease in total population). As a result, the number of occupied housing units in the neighborhood has dropped by 240 (10.6%) while the number of vacant units has risen by 250 (81%) (Planning, 2000).[5] Due to the commercial and industrial decline in the area, BNIA data shows that an extremely high 39% of commercial property is vacant (Alliance, 2002).[6] Despite the high levels of unoccupied or vacant property, there are only 215 vacant lots in the Washington Village CSA compared to 741 and 1,155 in the Southwest Baltimore and Sandtown-Winchester CSAs, respectively (Alliance, 2002). The fact that vacant land is much less of a problem in Pigtown than in either Franklin Square or Sandtown-Winchester means that community forestry has been less a vacant land strategy than an effort to increase the number of street trees in the neighborhood.

[5] The fact that a large section of the neighborhood is being rebuilt as a housing complex does not appear to be reflected in these data.

[6] Compared to 4% citywide, 10% in the Southwest Baltimore CSA, and 15% in the Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park CSA. For some reason, although the number of vacant commercial properties is roughly the same in all three case study neighborhoods, BNIA data reports that the Washington Village CSA has far fewer total commercial properties than the other two. This causes it to exhibit proportionally higher commercially vacancy (Alliance, 2002).

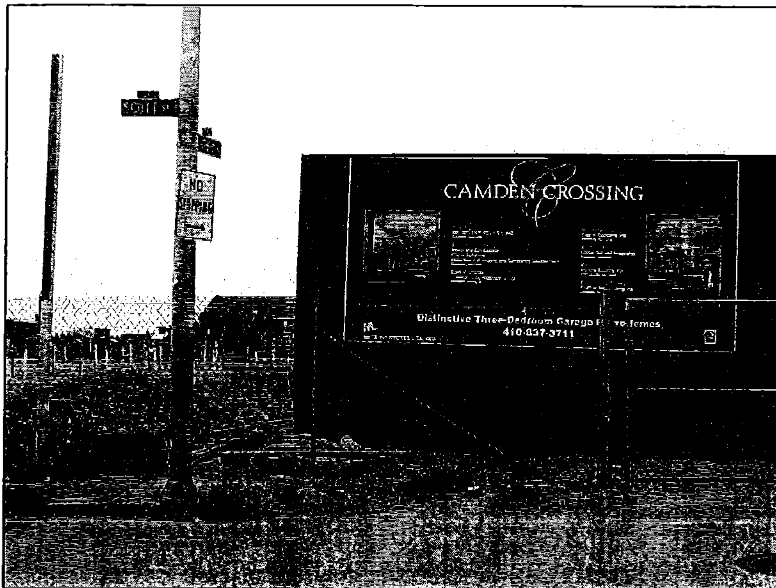

Figure 7: Large townhome development being built.

The BES and PRIZM® data suggest a different set of neighborhood conditions and concerns. Pigtown is split between the PRIZM® categories of "Single City Blues" and "Mid City Mixes" indicating at least that it is slightly more economically and racially diverse than Franklin Square or Sandtown. According to BNIA, the racial diversity index for Pigtown is 55.7% (compared to 41.6% for Southwest Baltimore which contains Franklin Square and 3.3% for Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem-Park) (Alliance, 2002).[7] The economic diversity index, however, suggests that the three CSAs are roughly equal in economic diversity (Washington Village-Pigtown at 61.8%, Southwest Baltimore at 62.3%, and Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park at 53.6%) (Alliance, 2002).[8] Although the "Single City Blues" classification, which applies to much of the western half of the neighborhood, is similar in responses to questions regarding neighborliness, trust, and organizational support, the "Mid-City Mixes" classification differs. The "Mid-City Mixes" which fits the eastern half of the neighborhood responded more positively to questions of neighborliness, trust, and organizational support than either the "Inner Cities" or the "Single City Blues" (see Tables 4 and 5). "Single City Blues," as defined on the PRIZM® website, "is found mostly in Eastern mega-cities and in the West, and includes many singles. Often found near urban universities, this cluster hosts a fair number of students. With few children, it is a mixture of races, transients, and night trades, and is best described as a 'poor man's Bohemia.'"[9] "Mid-City Mixes," on the other hand, is defined as: "above-average in ethnic diversity with a similar mix of service, white-collar, and blue-collar employment. Living in urban rowhouse neighborhoods...Cluster 30 is three-quarters Black and has a high incidence of college enrollment."[10]

[7] The racial diversity index is defined as the "percent chance that two people picked at random will be of different race/ethnicity" (Alliance, 2002).
[8] The economic diversity index is defined as the "percent chance that two households picked at random will earn a median household income in a different income range" (Alliance, 2002).
[9] http://cluster1.claritas.com/claritas/Default.jsp.
[10] Ibid.

Single City Blues	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree
People in the neighborhood are willing to help one another.	20.0%	16.7%	23.3%	23.3%	16.7%
This is a close knit neighborhood.	20.0%	10.0%	36.7%	20.0%	13.3%
People in this neighborhood can be trusted.	33.3%	13.3%	23.3%	20.0%	10.0%
There are many opportunities to meet neighbors and work on solving community problems.	21.4%	21.4%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%
There is an active neighborhood association.	13.8%	6.9%	24.1%	31.0%	24.1%
Municipal (local) government services (such as sanitation, police, fire, health & housing dept) are adequately provided and support the neighborhood's quality.	3.4%	13.8%	37.9%	27.6%	17.2%
Churches or temples and other volunteer groups are actively supportive of the neighborhood.	10.3%	10.3%	24.1%	27.6%	27.6%

Table 4: Selected BES Survey Results for "Single City Blues" PRIZM Classification

In terms of neighborhood problems and concerns, both PRIZM® classifications in Pigtown seem to be less concerned about parks and open space, water quality, and air quality than the "Inner Cities" classification of Franklin Square and Sandtown. However, the "Single City Blues" PRIZM® classification that fits to the western half of the neighborhood is more concerned about safety and security (33% believe it's a major problem compared to 22% for the other Pigtown classification and 21% for the classification of the other two neighborhoods). In addition, the "Mid City Mixes" classification that fits with the eastern half of Pigtown is significantly less concerned about cleanliness of streets and sidewalks (14% said that it's a major problem) than either the classification that fits the western side (23%) or the other two neighborhoods (23%) (see Table 6). In Washington Village, the median household income is $22,271 (about equal to Southwest Baltimore but about $3,000 higher than Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park). The median sale prices of houses, however, is much higher than in either of two other CSAs: $35,295, compared to $15,000 in Southwest Baltimore and $12,000 in Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park (Alliance, 2002).

Mid-City Mixes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree
People in the neighborhood are willing to help one another.	9.0%	7.7%	24.4%	21.8%	37.2%
This is a close knit neighborhood.	14.1%	10.3%	24.4%	17.9%	33.3%
People in this neighborhood can be trusted.	11.8%	15.8%	28.9%	23.7%	19.7%
There are many opportunities to meet neighbors and work on solving community problems.	15.6%	9.1%	20.8%	23.4%	31.2%
There is an active neighborhood association.	16.2%	6.8%	10.8%	14.9%	51.4%
Municipal (local) government services (such as sanitation, police, fire, health & housing dept) are adequately provided and support the neighborhood's quality.	10.4%	6.5%	28.6%	23.4%	31.2%
Churches or temples and other volunteer groups are actively supportive of the neighborhood.	9.5%	6.8%	23.0%	18.9%	41.9%

Table 5: Selected BES Survey Results for "Mid-City Mixes" PRIZM Classification

	"Mid-City Mixes"			"Single City Blues"		
	Major Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Not a Problem	Major Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Not a Problem
Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks	14.1%	35.9%	50.0%	23.3%	33.3%	43.3%
Quality and availability of parks and open spaces	11.5%	20.5%	67.9%	10.0%	26.7%	63.3%
Safety and security	22.1%	35.1%	42.9%	33.3%	36.7%	30.0%
Air quality	6.5%	28.6%	64.9%	6.9%	24.1%	69.0%
Water quality	9.1%	26.0%	64.9%	6.9%	34.5%	58.6%

Table 6: BES Survey Results for "Mid-City Mixes" and "Single City Blues" PRIZM Classification : Neighborhood Problems.

A Local History of Community Forestry in Washington Village-Pigtown

As Jiler points out in his 2002 report, "Pigtown has a decade long history of community forestry beginning with URI, later with RB, and finally with Gary Letteron's work with the Empowerment Zone" (Jiler, 2002). In 1993, URI intern Erin Hughes was assigned to Pigtown to do an initial assessment of the possibilities and interest for community forestry. She initially approached her work by identifying key people in the neighborhood, engaging in informal conversation with residents, and getting to know the social and cultural institutions of the area. Erin Hughes recalled that when she would go into a neighborhood and talk to people, trees were the last thing she would bring up after spending time learning about their lives, their neighborhood, and their problems. She found that the leadership in Pigtown was somewhat formalized around churches, health services, and community associations, but there was very little informal leadership or organization. She refers to Pigtown in the early 1990s as a "community of strangers," and saw community forestry as a way to bring people together. In the early 1990s, three different community associations operated in the neighborhood and engaged in very little communication and collaboration, according to URI reports (Jiler, 1995), (Hughes, 1993). URI began by trying to find common ground between the three organizations and to help them share responsibilities in a tree planting and open space program. But "by January 1994, the groups were as divisive as ever" and the recently-appointed community steward resigned (Jiler, 1995). Nevertheless, a few projects (i.e. creation of a 'tot lot', vacant lot rehabilitations, tree plantings, and a clean-up of the Gwynns Falls) were initiated and plans for the development of a community forestry program were prepared (see Figure 8).

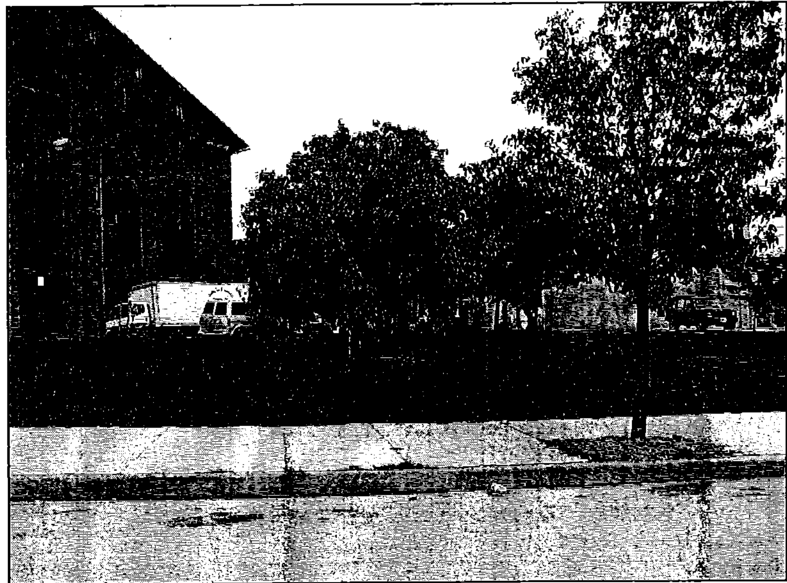

Figure 8: One of the earliest URI projects in Pigtown still being kept up by local residents.

In April 1994, the newly-funded Revitalizing Baltimore's (RB) Neighborhood Stewardship program selected Pigtown as a target neighborhood in which to establish community forestry demonstration projects. RB assumed all of the initial commitments and relationships established by URI. Erika Svendsen (the RB program manager for Neighborhood Stewardship), Gary Letteron (RB community forester), and Arnie Sherman (head of the Southwest Community Council) began to collaborate more actively on developing community forestry activities in the neighborhood. One of the first projects was to transform a vacant lot across the street from the George Washington Elementary School and develop an educational program for kids to participate in the implementation and maintenance of the site (see Figure 9). The lot was purchased by the adjacent homeowner who was supportive of the project, but after a few successful attempts to involve the school, the educational goals for the project were discontinued. A URI report attributes this to the overburden of the teachers and their subsequent inability to participate (Jiler, 1995). In addition, Svendsen and Letteron were instrumental in making contacts with potential participants, executing lot rehabilitation projects,

and sparking tree plantings on Pigtown streets as well as in Carroll Park (Jiler, 1995). RB also worked with Arnie Sherman to engage merchants and business owners on Washington Boulevard in tree planting projects, as well as to use community forestry to bring the three factious neighborhood associations together, but both initiatives failed for different reasons. Many of the businesses saw trees as a nuisance due to their tendency to obscure the visibility of their shops and signs and perceived them as producing a street environment less safe. Sherman says that, in the interest of public safety, they wanted lights and surveillance cameras instead of trees.

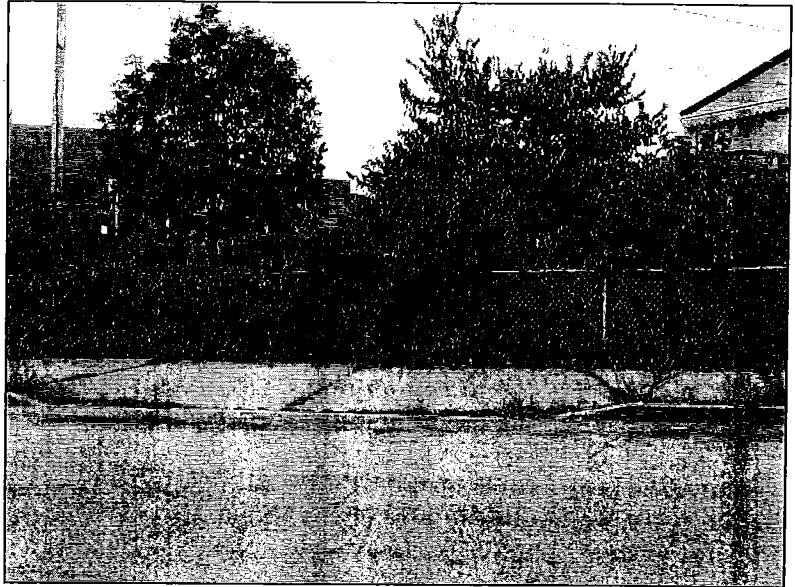

Figure 8: Green space across from elementary school, now overgrown.

The Empowerment Zone designation provided an influx of money that led to the creation of the Washington Village-Pigtown Neighborhood Planning Council (WPNPC), a non-profit organization designed to coordinate public social services for Pigtown and nearby Morrell Park. People involved in the initial creation of WPNPC (including Arnie Sherman) had a holistic view for how problems in the neighborhood should be addressed and open space management and forestry fit in well with the physical development and community building aspects of their mission. Sherman saw trees as "the simplest and most viable way to get people involved in neighborhood activities and improvement...allow[ing] people to create a positive impact rather than working to fix a negative one." Programs such as public safety, community service, and forestry were integrated together and everything operated under one roof (the former neighborhood bath house on Washington Boulevard). Gary Letteron was hired by WPNPC in 1998 as a community forester, preserving continuity between the work he began with Erika Svendsen, the connections they made in the neighborhood, and the new organization. His decision to leave RB (and Parks & People who was administering funding and supervising his work) was, in part, due to his resistance to the shift towards doing community forestry all across the city. Gary Letteron felt that community forestry must be something that is done on a neighborhood scale, and WPNPC in Pigtown was set up to do exactly that. Currently, Gary Letteron's tree planting activities in Pigtown still benefit from the support of Parks & People's community grants program and have become a formal part of the Public Safety program of WPNPC run by Terry Smith.[11] This has generally been a beneficial integration, but Letteron now has many responsibilities outside of community forestry and thus less time to dedicate to organizing projects. As discussed above, WPNPC also partners with BES and Parks & People on the Green Career Ladder program which is run out of the basement of WPNPC's office.

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[11] Terry Smith was a member of the original Tree Tribe program and resident of Pigtown. His involvement in community forestry and open space management was a critical factor in his decision to leave his previous job to work to improve the neighborhood.

Lessons Learned in Washington Village-Pigtown

Gary Letteron's continuous involvement with community forestry in Pigtown has been central to its success and achievements, however certain problems are beginning to emerge as a result of the complete reliance on the abilities and energies of one person. Letteron is an extremely charismatic leader and virtually everyone who has worked with him greatly admires his organizing style and his unlimited energy. He has a combination of local credibility, respect, and likeability that makes him an effective leader in the neighborhood's community forestry efforts. The presence that Letteron has in the neighborhood also deters vandalism from trees planted and green spaces restored, which may increase the likelihood that trees survive and green spaces aren't destroyed. But Jiler inferred from his observations and conversations in 2002 that "the projects carried out [in Pigtown] seem to be through the physical labor of Gary's work, including the beautification planter boxes and street tree plantings which are only maintained when Gary weeds and waters them" (Jiler, 2002). Despite the attention Gary pays to vacant lot parks and trees in the neighborhood, the upkeep of Pigtown's green spaces is still highly contingent on whether there are nearby residents that value, protect, and care for them. Interviews and site visits with Letteron supported these observations—the conditions of almost every green space or community forestry project in the neighborhood was explained in relation to the efforts (or lack thereof) of one or two residents. The importance of a few individuals cannot be overemphasized and it has been suggested that focusing on these people is the only way that community forestry is going to get done. The importance of these individuals often goes far beyond community forestry—they are usually important stabilizing factors and represent a major resource for the neighborhood. But Chris Ryer, the former director of WPNPC, believes that "if Gary left, there wouldn't be a lot of new initiatives and things would get maintained only if individuals are there to do it."

Through his work with Letteron on community forestry in Pigtown, Arnie Sherman has learned that "you can organize people around a daily event very easily, but long-term maintenance is the problem. The ability to sustain and maintain the site is really hard unless you have someone on site that is committed to caring for [it] and taking initiative. A lot of enthusiasm was there in the community, but now no one uses [many of the spaces]." Sherman admits that, like many community organizers, he and Gary focused on providing the initial spark of energy that brings people together to solve immediate problems or take concrete action. But he recognizes that there is a real need to develop support structures (either formal or informal) and leaders that will assume ownership and responsibility for a newly-created green space. Chris Ryer believes that in Pigtown, "informal organizations weren't created and, as a result, everything depends on the efforts of one or two people rather than networks of people or organizations." Too often, they judged what they were doing based on how many trees they planted instead of, for example, how many community residents they got to attend an event. He urges that community forestry practitioners and programs stop focusing solely on projects and physical products and work to build formal and informal institutions in order to ensure that environmental rehabilitation work is sustained or carried further in the future. Letteron is currently trying to conceive of ways to do just that.

In order to decrease the burden of responsibility for his position, Letteron is beginning to brainstorm for ways to create a mechanism by which green spaces and trees (the "green infrastructure") can be sustained into the future. One idea that seems possible is the creation of a local neighborhood maintenance crew, staffed by local people, that would be responsible for cutting grass, weeding, and keeping the spaces clean. There is less of a vacant lot problem in Pigtown that in other parts of the city, so the work would be more focused on maintenance than on creating new rehabilitation projects. WPNPC is ideally structured to set up such a program.

They have the ability find a secure funding source, the job training and employment counseling programs that could direct people into the crew jobs, and the established organizational structure to support the administration and logistics of the new program. Additionally, this idea would help to create the much-needed links between community forestry and economic opportunities that have been generally missing all along.

Community forestry activities in Pigtown have always demonstrated the importance of enjoyment, fun, and social interaction in bringing people together. Chris Ryer remembers one of the first community forestry events in Pigtown: "It was 5 PM on a Tuesday on Washington Boulevard. Gary and Spoon pulled up with music blasting and ten kids in this crazy truck, and every house on the block opened up. People wanted to help and shovel, and by 8 PM the block was full of trees, people talking to each other, bringing out the grills, and thinking about other issues like vacant houses, robberies." Arnie Sherman also tells stories that highlight the importance of the way community foresters interact with people and create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere around the work:

> We had a huge barbeque pit with polish sausages and potato salad...what's neat about Gary is that he sort of lays the trees out just about where he wants them to go early in the morning and then he gets the barbeque going as people start to come. They figure it out. If they've never done it before, then he'll show them how to get the burlap off, and how to roll the tree in, and how to mound it. But you plant it where you want to. And somehow, without being dictatorial, he makes it into a huge party where everyone picks their own thing to do and works with whoever they want to. He's a magician.

Community forestry in Pigtown also suggests the importance of scale in this line of work. What has separated Gary Letteron's community forestry work with WPNPC from his role at Parks & People under the RB program is his current dedication to one clearly defined neighborhood area. Gary stresses the importance of concentrating his efforts in one discreet area and doing community forestry on the neighborhood scale rather than city wide. Even within the relatively small boundaries of Pigtown, Sherman has seen that it is "better to take on fewer areas and stay there until things take hold, rather than moving on to the next spot before they do." In Pigtown, interviews and observations have shows that working on the neighborhood scale means that the community forester is able to develop strong contacts and relationships with local residents, leaders, and organizations; to create a presence whereby people begin to see community forestry as an integral part of the neighborhood; and to gain the respect of the local people by virtue of spending more time there. URI intern Erin Hughes stressed that "leadership in community forestry has to be local." She sees Gary as being able to achieve credibility and legitimacy by

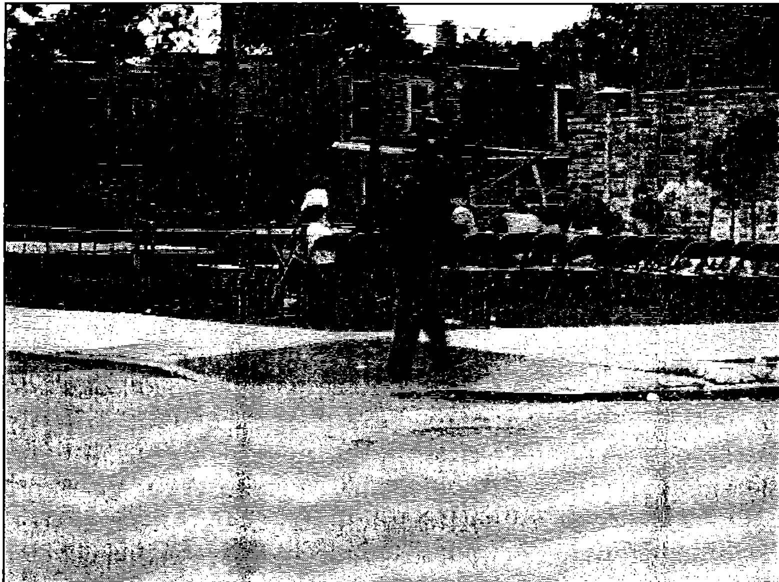


Figure 9: "Village Green" in Pigtown: recently rehabilitated vacant lot serving as a neighborhood social space.

establishing himself in the community. Compared to Parks & People who has increasingly distanced itself from concentrating on individual neighborhoods, WPNPC still has very strong contacts and presence in Pigtown. But even so, they are still too far "off the ground" according to Letteron, and as a result they are doing a poor job of outreach since neither Gary nor Terry Smith are able to dedicate as much time to being "out on the streets" as they would like. A better spatial understanding of the effect of a concentration of community forestry projects versus a dispersion may be useful.

A main concern expressed by Letteron and others in Pigtown has been the tendency for WPNPC's existence to have a disempowering effect on community groups and residents. As it has assumed the local responsibility for many neighborhood issues, community associations and individual activists feel less needed. Although their effects on the neighborhood may not have been large, the three community associations that once existed have all but disappeared since the creation of WPNPC. It created formal leadership positions for people like Gary Letteron and Terry Smith to work on public safety, open space, and community forestry. But Letteron believes that they have had much less success in "developing local leadership." WPNPC has operated somewhat like a miniature city government, serving its clients rather than bringing people into the structure of the Village Center or creating informal community institutions to carry out projects like tree plantings.

Community forestry in Pigtown is struggling with the same dilemmas. When Gary's job sometimes falls into the realm of "professional tree planter," he feels that this "disempowers people by doing the work for them." Letteron worries about slipping into the role of being a purely service-based organization, rather than supporting a type of community forestry that comes from "within." Letteron maintains that "the most successful projects are instigated and done by insiders." He draws a distinction between what he calls "non-governmental forestry" and "community forestry"—the first is characterized by a non-profit organization doing forestry activities *to* the neighborhood rather than *with* it, while the second involves building capacity of groups to do projects themselves and helping to develop informal organizations or leadership. Chris Ryer has seen that "vacant lots were never institutionalized and depend on [mandatory] community service rather than community ownership to keep them up." Gary Letteron defines community forestry by the extent to which neighborhood people take it upon themselves to initiate local environmental rehabilitation projects and the job of the community forester is just to support them in these activities.

Finally, community forestry in Pigtown has demonstrated the potential for tree planting activities to have unintended outcomes, some more desirable than others. Former RB staffer Kim Lane has learned the lesson that "sometimes what you think is good is actually different from what people who live or work in the area think is good." She recalls planting trees on the main street and finding out that business owners were angry because they believed that their signs would no longer be visible and the shade of the trees would make the block less safe. She found that this type of situation could be avoided by thorough planning which takes into account the voices of the community rather than making assumptions about what people want. "If you don't do this," she says, "it won't be a surprise when things aren't taken care of and don't last." When they don't last, interviews have suggested that un-maintained open space projects actually begin to have negative effects on the neighborhood. People begin to use them for illegal activities (drug dealing or dumping) and perceptions of neighborhood decline or deterioration can increase. On the positive side, community forestry in Pigtown has also been responsible for creating the Friends of Carroll Park advocacy group which has successfully secured the city's commitment to a $3 million park renovation and rehabilitation project.

Franklin Square

Community Profile

Franklin Square is a relatively small neighborhood in West Baltimore, about a mile and a half away from the central business district and the Inner Harbor. The corner of Fayette and Monroe Streets—and the neighborhood as a whole—achieved local and national attention when Baltimore writers David Simon and Edward Burns published *The Corner* in 1997. *The Corner* chronicled a year of life in one of the prominent open-air drug markets in the city. Fayette and Mount was the center of the story, but the book shows how the effects of the drug scene were tragically afflicting the entire neighborhood (Simon & Burns, 1997). Today, "the corner" is empty, but drugs remain a major problem in the neighborhood.

Baltimore Street serves as the southern boundary of the neighborhood and the main commercial artery, while Highway 40 emphatically marks the northern border separating Franklin Square from Harlem Park. Currently, there are approximately 3,550 people living in the neighborhood—over the past decade, this number has fallen by 23% (in 1990 the population was 4,600). The neighborhood population has remained almost completely African-American (96%) while 2% of the neighborhood is white, 1% is Hispanic, and 0.5% is Asian. Over 50% of families are headed by a female householder with children under 18 years of age. As Figure 9 shows, although all age groups except for one have declined in number, the majority of the population change has occurred among the population between the ages of 18 and 34 (Planning, 2000). This age group has dropped by almost half of what it was in 1990, suggesting a trend towards a neighborhood predominately populated by the young and old. Although these are the age groups that have been primarily involved in community forestry projects, the decline of young adults is a troublesome shift in a neighborhood that is struggling to change its image.

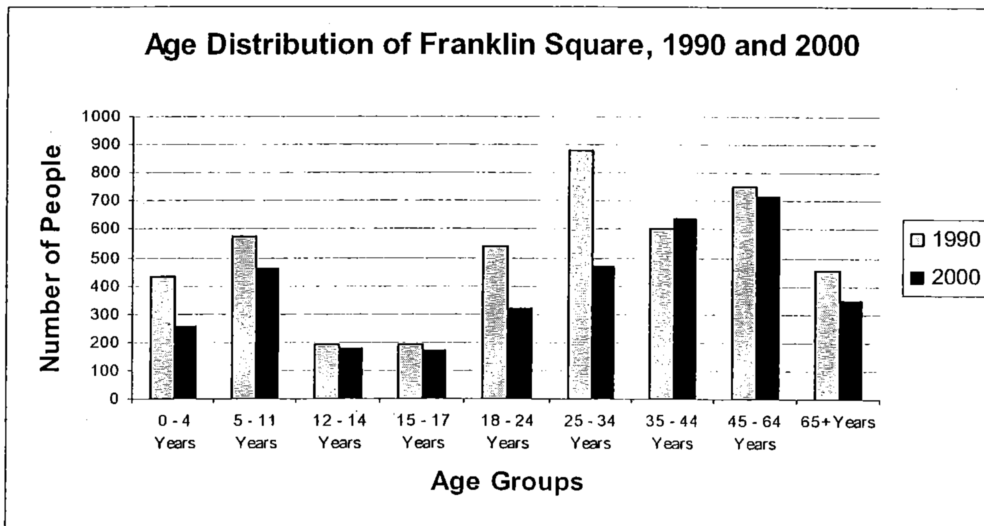


Figure 9: Age Distribution of Franklin Square, 1990-2000.

A parallel trend to the population decline in Franklin Square has been a significant effort by the city to tear down vacant buildings (see Figure 10). James Jiler reported in 2002 upon returning to the neighborhood that he "could not help but notice the single fact that more buildings had been razed and vacant lots now seemed in greater abundance than housing" (Jiler, 2002). Data

from the Baltimore City Planning Department indicates a decline of about 100 housing units between 1990 and 2000, but the amount of vacant units in the neighborhood has increased by over 25% during this period to 113. In 2000, only 30% of homes were owner-occupied (Planning, 2000).

The Southwest Baltimore Community Statistical Area[12] which includes Franklin Square has a median household income of $23,000, 20% of households receive temporary cash assistance, and the median sale price of homes is $15,000 (compared to an average price of $52,000 in Baltimore City) (Alliance, 2002). Like Sandtown, Franklin Square is also almost entirely classified by the PRIZM® system used by BES as belonging to the "Inner Cities" category. The BES survey results from 2000 suggest the same characteristics mentioned above (in relation to Sandtown) for Franklin Square (see Tables 2 and 3).

A Local History of Community Forestry

In November of 1993, URI began working with community organizations in Franklin Square on environmental rehabilitation and community forestry projects. The neighborhood had major problems with vacant lots, drugs, and nuisance properties that encouraged illegal usage. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center, headed by community leader and activist Ella Thompson, requested URI's help in dealing with these issues. Ella Thompson organized tutoring, arts and crafts, and other recreational activities but saw a larger role for herself, and for the recreation center, in revitalizing the neighborhood and resisting the control exerted by the drug scene. The recreation center was "a major social resource for the neighborhood" but, in partnership with URI, became "a hub for open space activities" (Jiler, 1995). The recreation center was an anchor in the neighborhood, but did not play an active role within the Franklin Square Community Association (FSCA) despite the fact that it was engaging in initiatives that addressed many of the most pressing neighborhood issues. A URI status report from 1995 reported that "there was a strong feeling that the more involved the community became in open space activities, the more difficult it would be for drug dealers to operate openly" (Jiler, 1995). Vacant lot and open space programs were seen as a way to address such problems and provide educational and recreational activities for local youth as well. One of the initial projects was the successful demolition of a "major neighborhood crack house" which subsequently became the Memorial Garden. URI collaborated with two other NGOs (the Community Law Center and the Echo House) in getting the property deemed a nuisance and demolished and then worked with the recreation center and local residents to design and create the garden. It was completed in

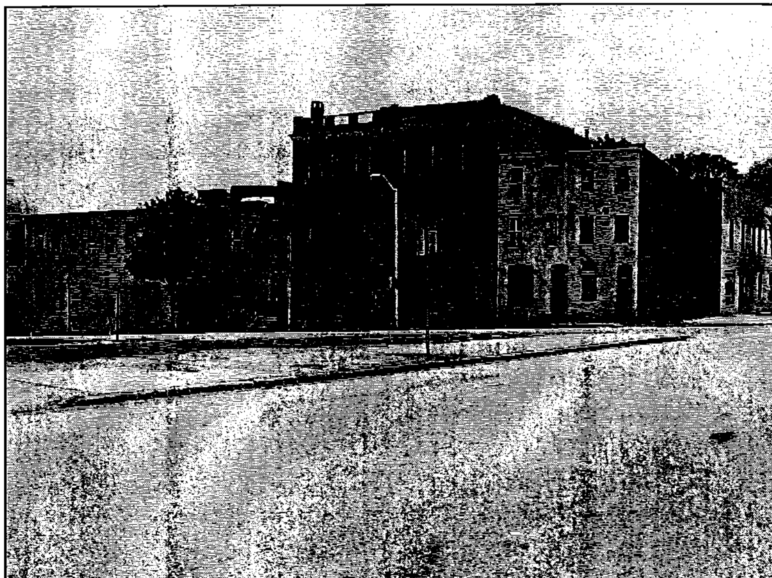


Figure 10: Emptiness of a street corner in Franklin Square.

[12] The neighborhood of Franklin Square falls within the larger Southwest Baltimore CSA.

December of 1993 and by the summer of 1994, it became the site of a summer program for neighborhood children. In addition, Franklin Square participated in an Outward Bound/CORE program during the summer of 1994 (Jiler, 1995).

In the spring of 1994, Franklin Square became one of the neighborhoods involved in Revitalizing Baltimore's (RB) Neighborhood Stewardship program run by Erika Svendsen. From 1994 to 1995, the Memorial Garden was maintained with assistance from RB staff. Based on the success of this project, RB staff stimulated other open space activities in the neighborhood. Together with the FSCA, Erika Svendsen examined the vacant land situation in the neighborhood and targeted sites where there was adequate interest and support from residents. RB's Neighborhood Stewardship program and Franklin Square residents fenced popular dumping and drug dealing locations, performed trash clean-ups, did tree plantings around the recreation center, integrated children into all open space activities, installed trees in planter barrels on one treeless block, and planted grass on other lots around the neighborhood. Six vacant lot community gardens other than the Memorial Garden were created.

Along with Ella Thompson, Shirley Boyd was another important and courageous figure in efforts to create safe open spaces and gardens in the neighborhood. Erika Svendsen, as a community forester, developed close relationships with both women and attributes her outreach success and her ability to overcome barriers in the neighborhood to her relationship with these two women leaders. Another community forester described the leadership that existed in the neighborhood at this time: "Ms. Shirley was a real caretaker. They just got her going and she knew what to do from there. She was a leader in an understated way and always welcomed kids. She was respected even by the drug dealers, and she definitely helped sway the neighborhood [away from drugs]." Svendsen's relationship with Ms. Thompson and Ms. Boyd (both personal and professional) was key to this partnership between community forestry and Franklin Square. These two women saw that there was something important that community forestry could offer and their acceptance gave Erika legitimacy in the neighborhood.

In 1997, after RB had been absent from the neighborhood for a while, Parks & People assigned community forester Amanda Cunningham to Franklin Square for one year. The neighborhood appeared to be a promising place to work since Erika had developed extensive contacts and presence in the neighborhood during RB and a KidsGrow program was being done in the elementary school and run by a teacher who was also a neighborhood resident. However, Amanda had a very difficult time finding support or interest for community forestry in the neighborhood at this time. Ella Thompson had passed away, Shirley Boyd was less able to contribute, and the community association was very hostile and distrustful of Cunningham's presence. In fact, she recalled that she was never even able to get invited to a community association meeting and therefore was not able to go through any of the official channels of the neighborhood. Instead, Cunningham worked to develop individual relationships with other people in the neighborhood that were receptive to doing projects and was able to find more support this way. Overall, she was frustrated with this experience and didn't see many results from her work during this year. The Kids Grow program continued either in the recreation center or the elementary school, but very little else happened after 1998.

In 2002, another approach to vacant land management began in Franklin Square. The Operation Reach Out Southwest (OROSW) program of the Bon Secours Community Support Center started to rehabilitate vacant land around the neighborhood in order to improve the local housing market. They began using an approach of targeting vacant and derelict spaces around the neighborhood and using a CivicWorks crew to do what they refer to as "clean and green." In other words, vacant lots are cleaned of trash and garbage, seeded with grass, and planted with

a few trees around the edge of the lot (Figure 10). The philosophy of the program is to initially make an visual and physical impact and then engage citizens after they see what can be done. Lots are targeted based on the prominence of their location or their proximity to high home ownership blocks and are categorized by their future potential for development. This approach is part of an overall community development strategy whereby the vacant lots are intended to attract investment in housing in the neighborhood. The ultimate goal of the program is to eventually transfer as many of the lots as possible to private ownership. Community involvement, stewardship, and capacity building are not important parts of the program and in fact OROSW is currently experimenting with a vacant lot maintenance competition as a way to create incentives for community members to take responsibility for these spaces in the future. Since October 2002, OROSW reports that it has "cleaned and greened" 45 sites (170 total vacant lots).

Figure 10: OROSW's "clean and green" strategy for vacant lots.

In 2003, KidsGrow was still in operation at Franklin Square Elementary School. It is now a year round program that operates after school during the year and for the entire day in the summer months. It is an environmental education program that involves kids in active neighborhood greening projects in order to teach them the possibility of affecting local change. The participating kids are between 8 and 10 years old (3rd to 5th grades) and the teacher is an energetic, high-spirited woman that lives in the neighborhood and has been involved in the program for six years. On the day I visited the program, the kids were impressively engaged in the activities and many expressed how much they liked the program and what fun it is. They used to utilize a garden across the street from Ms. Shirley Boyd's house but had to discontinue use of this site due to an unsafe incident. Now, Frank Rogers from Parks & People brings the kids to the community garden on the grounds of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum to work on the tree nursery that he maintains there. Parks & People staffs the KidsGrow program with one summer intern and BES is currently in the process of developing a curriculum. According the KidsGrow intern in the summer of 2003, the program in Franklin Square works much better at the elementary school than it does at the recreation center in Morrell Park. The dedicated and continuous nature of the Franklin Square program is in contrast to the disorganization and lack of commitment that she sees at the other site.

Lessons Learned

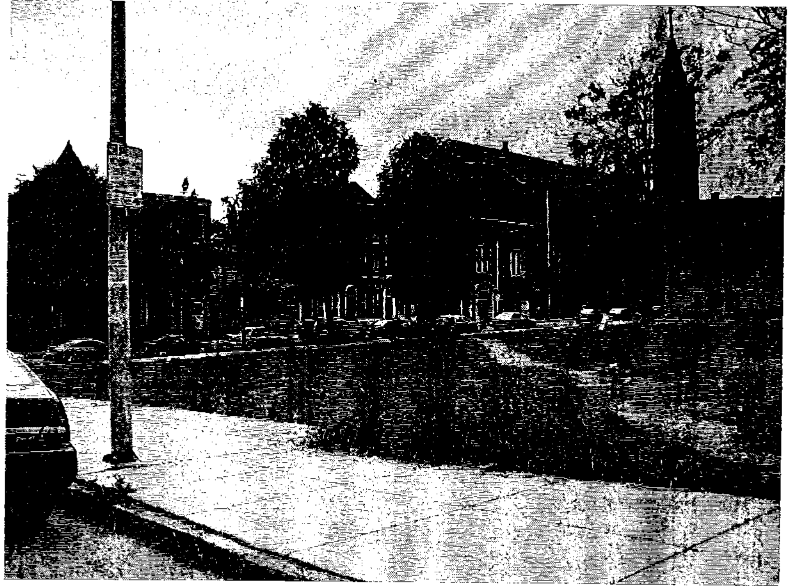


Figure 11: Former site of the Memorial Garden, now a vacant lot.

In 1995, the URI status report observed the problem that "there are more vacant lots that people willing to care for them" but optimistically speculated that "this may change" (Jiler, 1995). Judging by the disappearance of most of the original gardens and green spaces in this neighborhood, it appears that this problem initially noted by Jiler did not change, but instead got worse. In 2003, there were few remaining signs of the community forestry activities of the 1990s. Lots improved by OROSW are abundant throughout the neighborhood, but all except two of the vacant lot gardens have disappeared (including the once-prominent Memorial Garden, see Figure 11). People remember when it was bulldozed as the city demolished adjacent vacant buildings. James Jiler observed that "the recreation center—the pride, joy, and hope of open space renewal eight years ago—seemed in equal disrepair" (Jiler, 2002). Kim Lane, a former community forestry worker with RB and currently at the Baltimore Police Department, recalled that the disappearance of the Memorial Garden is "not anyone's fault...the neighborhood is improving and changing and everyone that was involved is no longer around." She says that the garden "worked while it was there and served to get people out of their homes and working together." This indicates her view that as conditions change, the fact that a garden becomes less important for the neighborhood may mean that people no longer feel such an urgent need to take action.

The two sites that remain are next door to and across the street from Ms. Shirley Boyd's house, and although she has slowed down in her ability to be active in neighborhood greening activities, her consistent presence has been the reason behind the continued existence of these sites. As former community forester Alexis Harte pointed out, "local upkeep and maintenance depends on whether you have a strong community leader that can take responsibility for the space." Erika Svendsen believes that to sustain a mosaic of open space and community forestry projects in a neighborhood, the community forestry field worker must remain committed to sustaining relationships with the people that are most likely to be responsible for the sites. James Jiler reports that as the leadership that was once present left, got older, or passed away, "Franklin Square never received the 'new blood' necessary to turn the corner of decline" (Jiler, 2002).

Amanda Cunningham's experience in Franklin Square lends further support to argument that relationship building and leadership are critical components of neighborhood-scale community forestry. These factors determine whether there will be a collaboration between community forestry field workers, their organization, and the neighborhood groups or residents. Without engaging in the development of relationships and identifying the source of leadership and authority within the neighborhood, the projects implemented are not likely to get off the ground

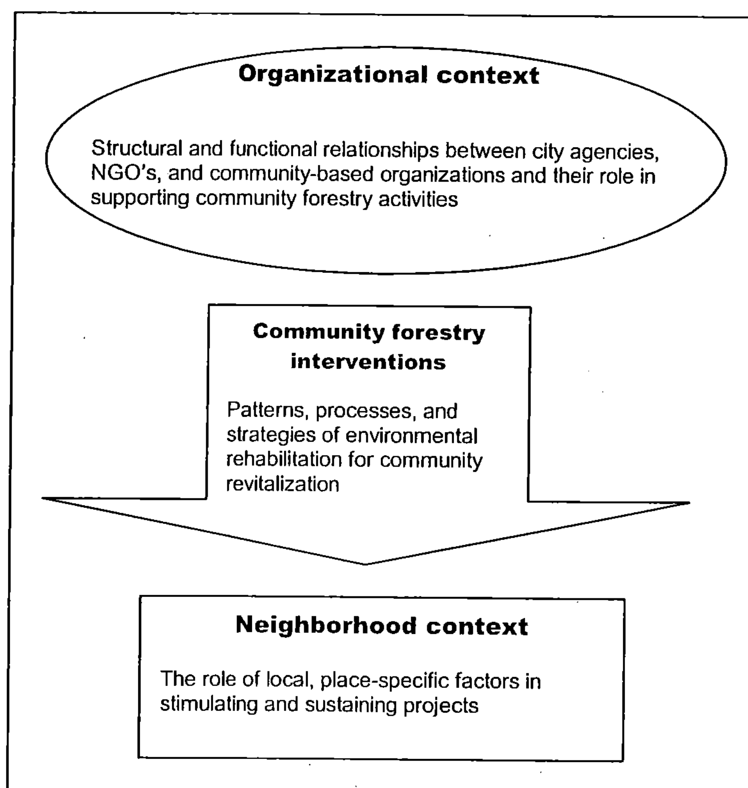
or to be sustained. Svendsen arrived in the neighborhood after the two main leaders that Erika worked with were no longer active. Ella Thompson had passed away and Shirley Boyd had lost a lot of the energy she once had for organizing projects and participation. In the early to mid-1990s, these women "were on a mission, had gardening intuition and background, knew the neighborhood, and weren't going anywhere," says Erika Svendsen. As long as they were around, both the community foresters and other interested residents were successful at getting things done in the neighborhood. The absence of key relationships with residents made it extremely difficult for Cunningham to gain access and acceptance in the neighborhood. During the early to mid-1990s, the stabilizing and legitimizing effects of these leaders and the relationships between the community forester and the residents made the activities effective in the neighborhood. Cunningham's difficulty with the community association eventually caused her to resort to the same strategy, however. She started to look for individual people in the neighborhood that expressed interest or leadership potential and decided to dedicate her time and resources into helping them. Guy Hager at Parks & People sees the lack or organizational structure in the neighborhood (or their inability to work within it) as precisely the reason for what he refers to as a "disappointment." Although Cunningham's grassroots approach may have suffered without the welcome, approval, or support from the community association, it also highlights the importance of neighborhood leaders and relationships with people and the consequences of what happens where both are absent. In 2003, Ms. Shirley Boyd said that "most of the people who would have been interested in doing [community forestry or gardening] have left the neighborhood." Although she admits to slowing down, she says that there are vacant lots around the neighborhood that she wants to work on but just doesn't have the support.

Aside from a brief interview with Ms. Shirley Boyd, no neighborhood residents were interviewed from Franklin Square. It was difficult to find contacts for people that were originally involved in community forestry and people that remained were no longer accessible. Therefore, the perspective of neighborhood residents on community forestry work over this period is underrepresented here. However, the general sense that I got is that community forestry played an important role in the neighborhood at a specific time when people were fighting against the drug dealing that had taken over the neighborhood. Community forestry activities and field workers were allies and assets in this struggle. Eventually it seems many of the people that were once involved left the neighborhood and community forestry either lost it's appeal to those that remained or became too burdensome for individuals like Shirley Boyd to continue by herself.

Ironically, the initial approach taken by URI and RB has been replaced by a program that is on the other side of the spectrum in terms of its focus on community and capacity building. The OROSW program is not community-based in its approach to working in the neighborhood, but it has generated a lot of interest among residents, curiosity from people outside of the neighborhood interested in the "Clean and Green" competition, and admiration from city government employees. They are making a major impact, but there may be significant amount of distrust in the neighborhood for a process of which they aren't a part. The long term maintenance of the small parks that are being created will be interesting to see. Other reasons why this type of open space management is being applied by OROSW include: community organizing money is increasingly difficult to get now, rehabilitating large numbers of vacant lots in a standardized way presents an image of order and control in a neighborhood where both are lacking, and this is a low-cost, high-efficiency way to make a visual impact. This effort should be followed to see how it works and lessons should be taken from this approach.

The Community Forestry Project

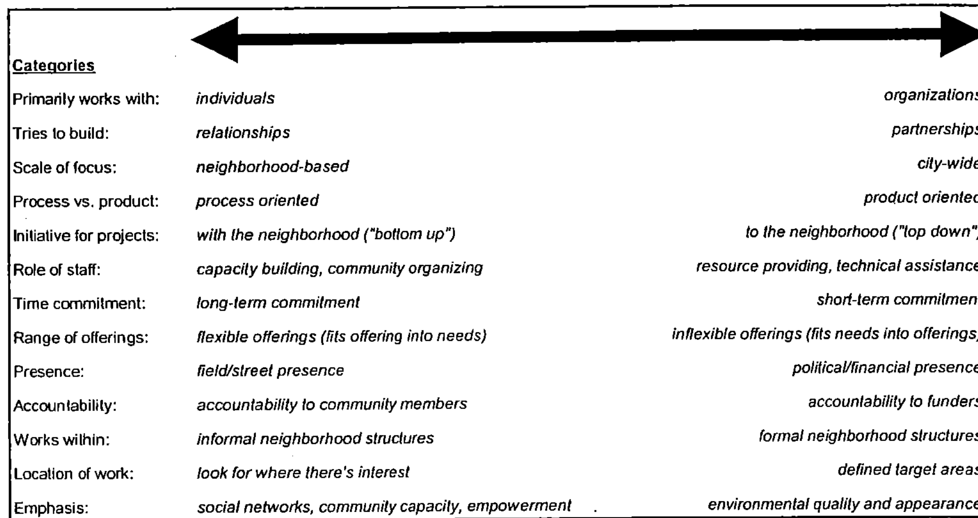
The previous sections have addressed the contextual conditions that surround the Baltimore community forestry project. The city profile and the organizational overviews provide a view from "above" the community forestry project while the neighborhood case studies provide a view from "below." In between the organizations and the neighborhoods is another entity that, at least for analytic purposes, exists independently of them both. The "community forestry project," as this section is called, represents the intersection between the programs and staff of the organization (in this case URI and Parks & People) and the neighborhood participants (see below). In other words, the operations of the projects themselves and the strategies used to implement them will be presented in more abstract and general terms than before. This section will discuss, in logical order, the parameters that are used to direct the operations of the community forestry project, the process of targeting or identifying where to offer services, the dynamics of working with people or neighborhood groups in the implementation phase, and the considerations that are made for the future.



Defining the Parameters

There are three "parameters" that are all necessary components and should be defined in order to increase the transparency and legibility of the community forestry project. These three parameters—*goals, objectives,* and *success*—are interlinked in that they can all be treated individually, but there is really no clear separation between any of them. Goals are the most generalized and should be defined in order to demonstrate the overall purpose of community

forestry. Objectives, on the other hand, are specific, concrete targets that state exactly what community forestry plans to accomplish in order to fulfill the predefined goals. Success, like the other two parameters, is a word without meaning until it is given one. It is therefore imperative that in order to do monitoring of program activities, to evaluate the effects of a program, and to make informed decisions on what and why to make changes, a definition of success must be stated clearly.[13] The definition of success, of course, should reflect the goals and objectives stated previously.



Categories	←	→
Primarily works with:	*individuals*	*organizations*
Tries to build:	*relationships*	*partnerships*
Scale of focus:	*neighborhood-based*	*city-wide*
Process vs. product:	*process oriented*	*product oriented*
Initiative for projects:	*with the neighborhood ("bottom up")*	*to the neighborhood ("top down")*
Role of staff:	*capacity building, community organizing*	*resource providing, technical assistance*
Time commitment:	*long-term commitment*	*short-term commitment*
Range of offerings:	*flexible offerings (fits offering into needs)*	*inflexible offerings (fits needs into offerings)*
Presence:	*field/street presence*	*political/financial presence*
Accountability:	*accountability to community members*	*accountability to funders*
Works within:	*informal neighborhood structures*	*formal neighborhood structures*
Location of work:	*look for where there's interest*	*defined target areas*
Emphasis:	*social networks, community capacity, empowerment*	*environmental quality and appearance*

Figure 12: Community forestry spectrum.

These parameters have been both poorly defined and inconsistent over the decade of community forestry that is covered by this study. This has been made evident through interviews done with the people who have been most closely involved with community forestry throughout the period of analysis and a small group of local neighborhood participants that, although not necessarily representative of community forestry participants in general, also give insight into the perspective of the intended beneficiaries of the project. Although a systematic approach could be taken in which community forestry documents could be analyzed for changes in formal institutional declarations of such parameters, this study is working under the belief that such formal declarations are not what ultimately guides the program. This has more to do with the individual people involved in the program—those doing the work to make projects happen—and larger structural forces that constrict or influence such decisions. From such interviews, two "ideal types" of community forestry can be defined that highlight many of the choices that are made when defining the parameters of community forestry. Figure 12 shows the community forestry spectrum: a group of thirteen categories that constitute the major orientations of a community forestry program or project. Needless to say, there is no such thing as community forestry that exists purely on the right or left side of this spectrum; instead there is always a point in between the two extreme poles that characterizes the definitions of goals, objectives, and success.

In Baltimore, community forestry efforts have consistently shifted around in terms of where they would fall on each of these categorical spectra. As Guy Hager pointed out, "there is a

[13] Success was a concept that many people interviewed chose to bring up. Although there may be more utility in choosing other terms, such as outcomes or consequences, the fact that community foresters and staff members often use the term "success" warrants its discussion here.

divergence of thought and ideas of what community forestry is all about and who refers to themselves as a community forester." Not only is there confusion as to what community forestry means within the organization, but Jackie Carrera, the executive director of Parks & People, remembered that when they had a larger staff that was trying a lot of different approaches, the public image of what Parks & People actually did suffered as well. In very general terms, urban community forestry in Baltimore began more aligned with the left side of the spectrum in most categories. This approach aimed to strengthen the networks, relationships, and shared purpose that often comprise notions of 'community'. In addition, it developed a strong presence within neighborhoods and primarily focused on individual people. It remained flexible and tailored community forestry offerings to the needs and interests of those people and operated within informal neighborhood structures. As Parks & People has grown as an organization, the number of staff dedicated to field work has decreased, philosophies of community forestry have changed and, overall, have shifted towards the right side of the spectrum. This approach relies on an illusion the community structure, strength, and stability exists in certain areas and can therefore support a short-term infusion of resources. Building partnerships with organizations on a city-wide scale has decreased the "field presence" of the project at the neighborhood level. This has been offset by an increase in the political presence and public image of Parks & People within the city on environmental and recreation issues. Community forestry now appears to be dedicated to issues of environmental quality and appearance rather than social networks, community capacity, or empowerment.

A former URI Intern and RB evaluation researcher stressed that there must be a definition of what the intentions of community forestry are. The question will always arise: Do you care about the communities or the trees? He said that you "have to make this clear out front and then what you do [as a community forester] can stem from that. Otherwise it's too broad to say both...yes they are related, but you have to decide whether people are the means to trees, or trees are the means to community." This research suggests that when programs divert their attention from strengthening communities to simply infusing them with resources, continuity of community forestry efforts tend to weaken. Jackie Carrera said it well during our discussion of the most challenging, but important aspects of this work: "[we] have to be focused on the end goal of building community and leadership development and on making sure that what we are offering as a service is not just a tree in the ground, but we are leaving the community with the ability to take care of it from there and do more of it in the neighborhood on their own, if they so desire." This discussion of the community forestry spectrum is directly related to the definition of goals, objectives, and success. The following table presents interview responses to questions about what the appropriate definitions of goals, objectives, and successes in community forestry should be.

The perception of community forestry *goals* that were mentioned in interviews clustered around the following major components:

- Capacity building at the community level.
- Transforming neighborhoods and addressing neighborhood problems.
- Low emphasis on the environmental impact of the work.
- Organizing people in the neighborhood to get to know each other.
- Meeting the needs of beneficiaries with community forestry projects.
- Prioritizing the *process* of community forestry rather than the *product.*

Goals	*Objectives*	*Success*
Showing local people that people believe in them. Teaching people that they can make their space look better and how to do it.	Provide people with material and social support to develop, expand, and spin off other projects (not just in greening, but in employment, education, health care, housing, crime, and safety and everything that fits into community development).	On the community side, success is evaluated by how well you mobilize citizens to work on CF issues over an extended period of time, rather than a one time event (a planting or a clean up).
Community forestry is about building capacity at the community level.	CF is a way to get people out of the house and talking, putting trees in the ground and building community.	On the institutional side, by how well you have been able to change the effectiveness of the Forestry Division and institutionalize the idea of CF within the agency.
CF is not about tree planting, it is about how to transform a neighborhood.	The theory is that if you get people together to plant a tree, maybe they can get together around a more volatile problem.	You should measure success by the effectiveness, the policies, and the sufficiency of resources within the Forestry Department.
Focused on the end goal of building community and leadership development. It's about making sure that what we are offering as a service is not just a tree in the ground but we are leaving the community with the ability to take care of it from there and do more of it in the neighborhood on their own if they so desire.	These things take time, you have to invest in people, develop leadership, and results aren't often tangible, and not visible. But this has to be balanced with trees in the ground.	Failure is clear when you just count the trees. You need to look at how many people get involved and stay involved or get the boost to something else better. So if it takes a side road, that's an incredible success.
CF is not a panacea for improving neighborhoods. Supposed to involve people in addressing problems.	Hiring local people to do maintenance work.	Success is localizing the project.
CF is defined by her as a tool for community development, tool to involve and increase community participation in the evolution of the community. Environmental impact, but it's much less in an urban environment (air, water, etc.). Hard to think of it as an environmental improvement.	The work gets people to meet each other, even on the same block as they come out of their houses and plant a tree and meet their neighbors for other side of the street in doing so. In addition, CF can be a launching pad for other collective action within the neighborhood to focus on other projects.	How many projects of more than 4 years old are actively continuing to operate within the city of Baltimore? This is one measure of investment by the community and our success in identifying projects that the community really values.
Tree planting is a tool for community organizing, but not the reason that it gets done (not intentional), but effective. It gets done because people want shade, trees, not environmental issue since "removing 15 square feet of cement is not going to save the Bay". He goes for the self-interest angle.	If the goal is tangible numbers of trees, then focusing on the people that call up and want them is the most effective way to achieve that.	Life of the project is not a good indicator of success because needs, environments, and neighborhoods change. Might have served a need this year, but not next year. For the time the project was maintained, it might have served a need and if you just come and look at it 2 years later and it's all overgrown, what you need to know is what happened during that 2 year period.

Trees are the most simple and viable way to get people involved in neighborhood activities and improvement. It also allows people to create a positive impact rather than working to fix a negative one.	Objectives broadly speaking were to balance improving the local environment and strengthening community. The basis of CF was the interaction between these two.	Trees and survivorship measures. Community strengthening (it is difficult to identify and measure an indicator relating to the bonds that are created). Spin off projects in the neighborhood and organizationally. Involving diverse elements of the community.
This definition needs to be broadened further than just tree planting and environmental projects, and focus more on the people. It must be widened to include other types of capacity building activities for areas that are not yet ready to take on a CF project or are more interested in something like an art space or playground than a garden. This means closer attention paid to the needs of the neighborhood and efforts to offer a wide range of projects that can address these needs.	CF should be able to offer innovative activities which improves the site in ways that may or may not include natural resources to do that. More artistic or other kind of project to service community. There should be a better package or system that CF can offer and this should evolve from what is currently being done.	PPF's system of vacant lot rehabilitation did not answer the city's needs or match what the city expected because the resources really weren't there. This is why we need to define what CF is and what success really means to people. To us, little cleaned up lots and some raised beds was a success, but not to the city.
"So many times we get so focused on the project and not the people that project will affect and involve." The focus should not be so much on the product and more so on the people involved in the process.	The goal is productive private or communal ownership, and doesn't matter which type as long as its owned (commercial development, side yard, land trust, etc.).	You have to evaluate success by what it is that people wanted, and that's what we should try to help them achieve.
Trees have some environmental benefits, but they are really about people. About organization, pride, and getting people to maintain things.	Over time, we became more obsessed with logistics to the detriment over our concern for people. We judged ourselves by whether we got the tree in the ground, not by how many people we got out to the event.	A good measure of success would be: Are there people still involved in taking care of the site or project that URI or PPF helped to create?
Process is more important, but they work together. Product is powerful also, as in plucking a tomato and giving it to someone.	If people got together on a simple thing like a tree planting or a vacant lot clean-up, then this could provide a base and a forum for other discussions about health, crime, or drugs.	In order to determine what success looks like, you have to sit down with the people involved and find the need of the time and address that. You also have to ask whether this will be a need of the future, with realistic understanding that the organizer might leave or the neighborhood might change. It might not be here in three years. You build the definition based on this, and just part of success is that people are willing to keep it going.
Creating community is what the work is aimed at achieving, bringing people together and showing them tangible results from their work. Because the projects are simple, people see that their ideas or work can lead to something real happening in the neighborhood and this can be an empowering experience.	Use the environment as a way to build capacity overall, then it's more of success. If you ONLY count the trees, the it looks like a waste of money.	Everyone needs to be on the same page about success. We need both an overarching definition which defines CF success. This prepares us to be able to define success within the particular community, if the overarching definition of success is directed at achieving the goals of the community.

The following list summarizes the major points that were touched on in discussion of concrete *objectives* that community forestry is trying to achieve:

- Creating spin-off projects and providing a base to address other volatile neighborhood problems.
- Getting people out of the house, meeting each other, and talking.
- Investing in people and leadership.
- Planting trees and rehabilitating the environmental conditions of sites.
- Establishing ownership of vacant land.

As evidenced by the table of interview responses, success is an extremely subjective concept. One respondent commented on the way definitions of success vary based on the specific position of the person defining it. He said that "benefits must be seen on government level, non-profit level, neighborhood level, and individual level. Different stakeholders have different priorities which leads to a slew of definitions of success." On the neighborhood level, another respondent noted that "success for one neighborhood is not success for another." All the same, some common threads can be seen in the responses given. The majority of responses clustered around the following conceptualizations of *success*:

- Length of time that the project was either in use, maintained, or serving specific needs.
- Localization of the project amongst members or institutions within the neighborhood.
- Number of people involved and duration of participation.
- Number of spin-off activities, even if ostensibly unrelated to community forestry.
- Number of gardens, parks, and trees planted.
- Survivorship of plants on the site.
- Diversity of involvement.
- Degree of transfer of responsibility out of the hands of Parks & People.

These parameters represent a summary of how many of the major participants view the definition of goals, objectives, and success in the community forestry programs. As evidenced by the range of responses, the definitions may lean in many directions. This suggests that a concerted effort to restructure future projects around transparent definitions of program parameters and to define them in an inclusive and open way involving multiple stakeholders may be necessary.

Targeting and Identifying Opportunity and Capacity

A topic that is becoming increasingly discussed is the need to identify and then target discrete areas or groups that have a high potential to "succeed" with the lowest amount of input from Parks & People. This is a purely rational, business-oriented strategy that any organization is bound to take in order to maximize their effectiveness with limited resources. It is a truism that different neighborhoods or groups of people have varying levels of capacity to undertake a community-based forestry or greening project. In Baltimore, people have begun to use the term "community readiness" to convey the message that some areas have a certain set of conditions that make the implementation and sustainability of a project more possible. This section will discuss some of the complications and opportunities involved in such an approach.

The idea of community readiness is based on the need for better understanding of the local conditions of neighborhoods where community forestry is happening (or about to happen) and a systematic analysis of where the services offered can be most effective. This approach also suggests incorporating more planning into the initial stages of community forestry efforts (i.e. the

Community Grants program). In this case, community groups or project managers could initiate some form of the "know your community" process (see Paul Jahnige's report, *Knowing Your Community, Showing Your Community*) to understand and document the dynamics of the neighborhood and to more effectively create plans that incorporate multiple perspectives within their block or neighborhood. This sort of process could address the need to consider both community forestry opportunity on one hand, and organizational and institutional capacity on the other.

Opportunity and capacity, two important aspects of any community-based project, can also be understood as spectra. The diagram below (Figure 13) shows the intersecting spectra of opportunity and capacity, and examples of areas or groups that fall in each of the four quadrants. This concept suggests that it would be possible to have indicators that tell you about the levels of capacity and opportunity that are present. The following is a list of examples of the types of indicators that could be used to ascertain the capacity and opportunity of a neighborhood:

- *Capacity*: how many people know each other, what is the level of interpersonal interaction, how many people belong to local groups, how many people own homes, how many people have worked on local issues before, is there an organizational structure to receive and manage grants, do they have paid employees, are there community organizers, is there informal or formal leadership?
- *Opportunity*: how many empty tree pits are there, is there a perceived problem with vacant lots, is there interest or skills in gardening or tree planting, are there people with time and ability, is there a funding source, will people make maintenance commitments, do people have programming ideas, are there experienced residents?

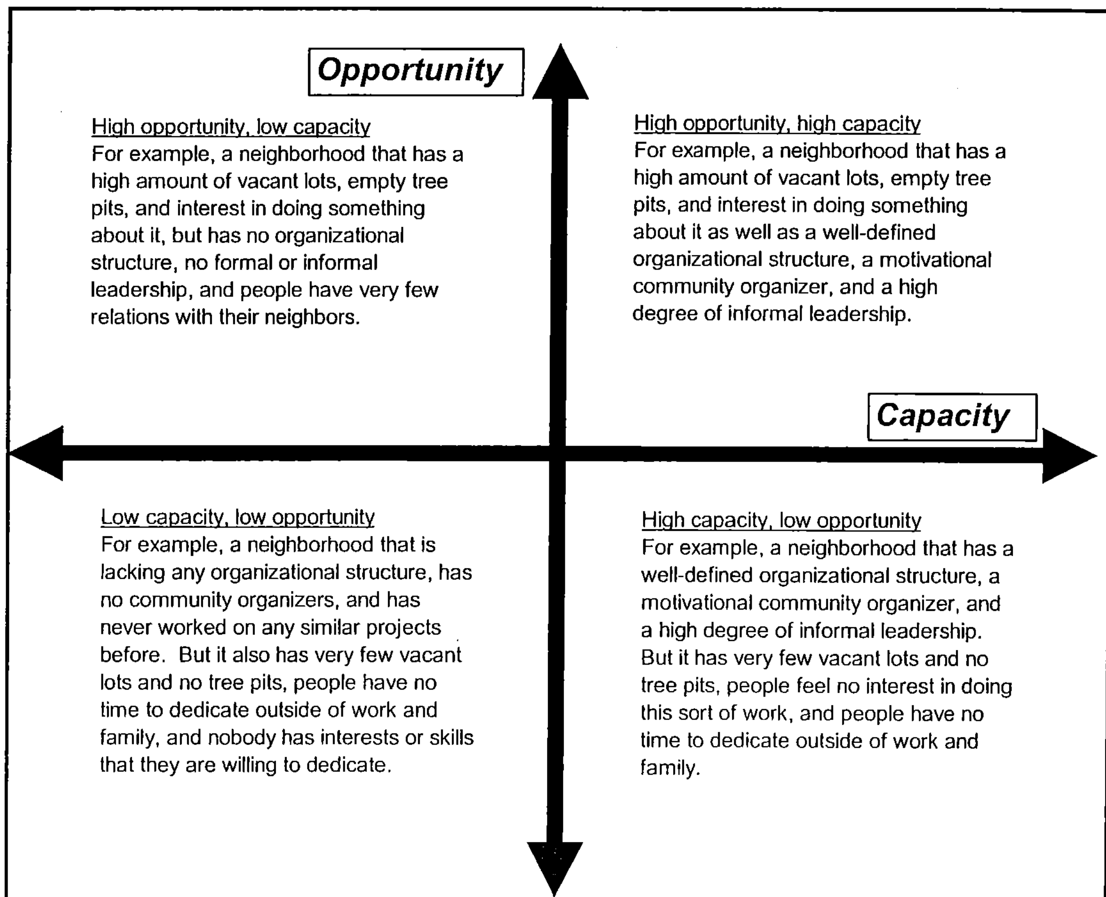


Figure 13: Opportunity and Capacity Spectra.

It is worth noting that these indicators are very difficult to assess. There are at least two approaches that could be taken. The Social Science and Demography group of the Baltimore Ecosystem Study collects data on many of the aforementioned indicators through telephone surveys and field observations. This data could be used in order to create a capacity and opportunity index ranking for many areas around the city of Baltimore and could thus facilitate the identification of target locations for community forestry work. Although this approach has much systematic and scientific appeal, it may also grossly over-generalize, experience difficulty answering the most important questions (i.e. who are the most capable and interested informal leaders in the neighborhood?), and operate on a scale that is much larger than appropriate for community forestry projects. In addition, it may overlook conflicts that exist in the neighborhood and larger structural forces that are at work. Social capital, the focus of some BES research, may not be a good enough indicator for where community forestry projects should be targeted since it doesn't provide much information about the presence of a key individual that can bring people together and make a project happen.

The alternative (or complement) could be a more locally-based participatory research process that would yield an insider perspective on the same questions being answered by the efforts of BES. These indicators and issues could be addressed through a participatory research process that works with local residents to see if such conditions exist and if they are found to be low, people involved in the assessment of the capacity of the neighborhood, for example, may be stimulated to begin to create it. However, there should be the assumption that there is an equal level of knowledge and capabilities across all parties to the participation effort. After this has been done, the group could proceed to a form of community forestry that is dependent on the outcome of the "know your community" activity. Such an assessment of capacity and readiness may not be able to be identified by people outside of the community. In addition, the process of looking for it can give people the ideas and resources to start to create the readiness themselves. Such opportunity and capacity do not exist as static entities, but ones that are constructed over time by local actors. Parks & People could potentially use grant money to help or stimulate communities to engage in this process as a precursor to a Community Grant, and a staff member or BES researcher could be provided to help facilitate the assessment in various communities. Such a participatory assessment of community readiness (opportunity and capacity) may lead to the following outcomes, some of which have already been addressed by other local projects (such as the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance):

- Build a base of internally-valid information about Baltimore communities to inform the programs of Parks & People.
- Tie into BES research and complement the social and demographic data collected through telephone surveys and field observation.
- Provide opportunities for local people to get to know their community and neighbors.
- Lead to a two-way assessment of community readiness between "insiders" and "outsiders."
- Set clear goals, objectives, concerns, and indicators to measure and to achieve with community forestry projects.
- Begin to build organizational and institutional capacity through the act of assessment.
- Empower community residents to document and use their knowledge of their community.

Both approaches to identifying and targeting areas where community forestry is likely to be successful may be based on a hope for justifications and excuses to "give up" on neighborhoods like Franklin Square. These neighborhoods present the most challenging obstacles for a community forester and make it difficult to see tangible, physical products from investments of time and resources. There is a common perception that community forestry in Baltimore now has the expertise and knowledge to know how to work with all different types of neighborhoods and people, and therefore should be able to target particular areas strategically (i.e. watershed 263) and do community forestry there. This assumption may be premature or unrealistic, since there are now less staff to dedicate to such field work, and the further a program gets from having community forestry field workers in the "field," the less likely they will be to build the relationships and trust that is needed. In addition, the result of a "target area" approach may be that the more well-off, middle class neighborhoods will be the ones to get trees and support from Parks & People. Many of these areas would be able to achieve results in transforming their environment with or without community forestry support, even if they were required to pay for it. Why, one might ask, should such privileged neighborhoods be the beneficiaries of this kind of work when there are so many other neighborhoods in the city that could use it? However, the reverse mistake can also be made. Seeing the most impoverished and deteriorated neighborhoods as the ones most "deserving" of community forestry support is to be led by an idealistic desire fueled by guilt. Choosing only to work in the "worst" neighborhoods rather than those that have the basics taken care of jeopardizes the likelihood of benefit from a community forestry program. Some communities are just not ready for community forestry projects. But as one former community forester put it, "that is the reason community forestry has to be redefined and innovated so that it can work in these situations as well."

Leadership and the Individual

A combination of two approaches—both based on community development—has characterized urban community forestry in Baltimore. One approach aims to strengthen the networks, relationships, and shared purpose that often comprise notions of 'community'. The other relies on an illusion of community structure, strength, and stability to support a short-term infusion of resources. While Parks & People directs support at projects that are decidedly "community-based," some community forestry field workers appreciate the clearly demarcated plots of vegetable gardens, for example, since they prevent the dependence on what one called "fuzzy community ownership." While some see the strength of urban community forestry to be in it's ability to create social ties and encourage neighborhood communalism where it is lacking, others see the lack of individual responsibility as a precursor to the deterioration and abandonment of projects.

Site visits of community gardens and tree planting activities and conversations with residents revealed that the ebbs and flows of projects are commonly related to the presence or absence of individual persons. Often local residents would say that "things were going well until he died" or "she got too old to be active and then moved away." The condition of sites was frequently explained by local residents because of the presence or absence of key individuals. This is not to suggest that there aren't other factors that influence the ability (or inability) of these individuals to make an impact, but that individual leaders seem to be critical components of any long-term strategy designed to stimulate community revitalization through environmental rehabilitation projects.

Fear and isolation is pervasive in many inner-city neighborhoods of Baltimore where people don't really know their neighbors, don't feel safe in their neighborhoods, and exhibit what a

community activist referred to as a "bunker mentality," suggesting images of a war zone where the primary concern of people is the protection of their own and their families personal safety. He described the social conditions in the community he works in: "People have a real bunker mentality and certainly don't think of their neighborhood as a community...People make alliances with people they think they can trust. There are some really nice people, and others aren't. The people that get things done don't really know each other, they hunker down in their house. Everyone is suspicious of everyone else, and for good reason. Many families are wrapped up in the drug business in one way or another so you have to be very careful who you deal with, because you might get wrapped up." The head of a community development organization in Sandtown-Winchester laments that "nowadays, less people know each other and people don't communicate like they used to. Neighbors used to be able to discipline you, but now you might not even know your neighbors and you certainly wouldn't discipline their kids." In the absence of organized or cohesive community, community forestry staff have often relied upon identifying individual people in the neighborhood—local leaders that are active in their quest for change, often in the name of a safer neighborhood and improved quality of life. These individuals are sometimes related to formal organizations in the neighborhood, but many times they have their own busy lives and aren't necessarily even connected to local block groups or community associations. However, many community forestry field workers see these individuals, rather than formal community groups, as the key to a successful collaboration with a particular block or neighborhood. In fact, these individuals are often the most effective way for a field worker to establish a link to the neighborhood and the ensuing trust, credibility, safety, and organizing ability that they depend on to do their job. In addition, an active individual, when operating amongst like-minded people who want change but don't have the vision or resources to actualize it, can have the effect of inspiring and stimulating others to take on similar greening activities or supporting existing neighbors that are active on other nearby greening projects.

This research has identified some characteristics that are often present in successful leaders of community forestry activities:

- Commands the respect of people of all age groups and backgrounds.
- Develops the trust of neighbors, as well as amongst others.
- Has the ability to mobilize and engage other residents in addressing local issues.
- Has a local presence and authority in the neighborhood.
- Can build support for ideas, solutions, or changes that are occurring.
- Is tied into networks of active leaders in other neighborhoods, city agencies, or community organizations.
- Receives financial, material, or technical support from organizations.
- Has ideas for specific things that can change and a vision of what is possible.
- Has something to gain from the improvement of the neighborhood.
- Has a higher level of education and relative advantage over the rest of neighborhood.[14]

In addition to the above characteristics, charisma is one of the most important, yet least tangible qualities of a leader. As Max Weber argues, charismatic authority plays a major role in social change, but is a transitory form of authority that can only be exercised for a short period of time. It is difficult to effectively transfer charismatic authority to others, and rarely is charismatic authority and leadership something that can be institutionalized (Weber, 1978). It has been

[14] These characteristic qualities are derived from interaction with community forestry participants and interviews done with field workers. Some specific examples of these leadership qualities are presented with the neighborhood case studies, while others have presented without evidence for the sake of brevity.

demonstrated in the case studies above that community forestry programs and projects are fundamentally dependent on individual charismatic authority to make things happen. It is for this very reason that the importance of locating individual leaders around the city is the key to successful community forestry.

Life in the inner-city taxes all forms of human resilience and those active in the struggle to preserve or restore a certain quality of life or level of safety can easily tire. Loss of leaders to burn out, death, or moving can lead to the abandonment of efforts that they spearheaded or the site they served as the primary caretaker for will fall into disrepair. Although this is not to say that a garden, for example, didn't play an important role or fill important needs, but that in order to sustain such sites or activities, support structures must be fostered that can sustain the loss of the individual leader or make leader not necessary. This research suggests that, ultimately, all community forestry efforts are reduced to the efforts of individual people. The identification and support of active local leaders is necessary, but not sufficient; sustainable community forestry projects do not rest on the shoulders of one individual. The efforts of the individual—especially when supported institutionally within the neighborhood or by outside organizations—drive individual projects. However, the challenge lies in understanding how to transfer the individual energies and actions of a local leader into a support structure that can be reproduced and sustained.

Thinking About the Future: Mechanisms for Sustainability

This research has been aimed at advancing the understanding of urban community forestry, particularly the social factors that influence the outcome of its projects. It has asked, What conditions affect the continuity of inner-city environmental rehabilitation projects? Discussions and on-site observations, however, revealed uneven outcomes across Baltimore neighborhoods and uncertainty as to which factors determine the trajectory of a particular project over time. Furthermore, a recent follow-up report suggests that neighborhoods and projects that were the focus of attention and resources ten years ago now exhibit an "increase in neglect and abandonment" and a "lack of continuity and interest in maintaining [the initial effort]" (Jiler, 2002). As one informant with a history of involvement with community organizing and revitalization in Washington Village-Pigtown pointed out, getting a project off the ground is the easy part—it's building the capacity and support mechanisms necessary to leave behind more than just a physical product that is the real challenge. The key problem of open space is upkeep. There is a need, therefore, to understand this lack of continuity and suggest how and whether it is possible to extend a one-time spark of energy into a sustained effort.

A community organizer involved with community forestry in the mid- to early-1990s felt this was the major impediment to making long-term changes. "The problem with most community projects," he said, "is that they become too task oriented. They should stop looking at projects and build formal and informal organizations in order to make things happen in the future. In Pigtown, informal organizations weren't created and as a result everything depends on the efforts of one or two people rather than networks of people or organizations." The following is a list of some initial ideas for ways in which efforts could be sustained through incentivizing, coordinating, or hiring.

- *Investing in people*: this includes job training, hiring local people, creating localized positions within neighborhoods, and training leaders.
- *Creating maintenance programs*: formally developing systems or creating incentives for ongoing maintenance. Funding could be found to hire and manage local greening crews or create programs like the "Clean & Green Competition."

- *Building institutional capacity*: organizing greening or open space management committees within the neighborhoods that are self-sufficient.
- *Strengthening networks:* recognizing the important function of meetings, workshops, and evaluation sessions amongst residents and in developing citywide networks of people that can support and learn from each other.
- *Facilitating neighborhood collaboration:* developing collective responsibility for projects where there is only scattered individual support.
- *Supporting community organizers:* community organizers are able to effectively accomplish many of the tasks listed above.

These potential mechanisms to support community forestry in neighborhoods once it is initiated must be complemented by monitoring and evaluation (M&E), which is an important part of any evolving and learning community forestry program. Parks & People, like all non-profit organizations, is constantly experimenting to find what works, but without making concerted efforts to look back on past experience, it is impossible to know what works and what doesn't. Community foresters have tried numerous approaches and therefore built up a valuable body of experience. But this is not effectively transferred as people leave the organization or the neighborhood. The question arises, How do you transfer this experience? Community forestry staff lose information over time, and there is an acute need to capture information that has not gotten passed along. M&E should be focused on tracking some of the indicators suggested throughout this section that arise from the definition of goals, objectives, and success. In addition, M&E must also be able to answer the simple questions of "who, what, and where." In other words, it is vital to track the people involved, the activities accomplished, and the locations worked. Other considerations include the secondary benefits that are outside the realm of tree planting and greening, but get into issues community development and capacity building. Alongside work that is being done, someone has to be documenting what is happening so people know what is successful, what isn't, and, most importantly, why not.

On the individual project level, a more formal M&E program could be instituted within the grants program. Groups might track their performance during the grant rather than after it's over. The final report could be a summary of what they've done throughout the year. This would suggest that groups play an active role in monitoring their performance and Parks & People could select the indicators (along with community representatives) that they deem to be most indicative of successful projects (i.e. volunteers, group meetings, events, trees planted, etc.).

There could also be room for a quarterly meeting or celebration that performs the function of a focus group evaluation. This would provide the opportunity for participating community forestry groups to share experiences and would allow people in the neighborhoods to come together and discuss their projects and get feedback from other people and from staff. Such an event would also allow staff to glean a better understanding of what is working and what isn't on an ongoing basis. Community forestry staff could facilitate a discussion that would get people to think about how services could be improved and how they could alter aspects of the program that haven't been as successful. Kim Lane at the Baltimore Police Department currently uses this type of idea as a resource for her grantees and to improve her program. This serves to facilitate exchange ideas within groups and to develop relationships between the members. It also gives her insight into the learning that is happening with her program. This type of event could be implemented in a community forestry program as an evaluation task, whereby a regular celebration could have a component of sharing experiences, lessons, and ideas and therefore become a continuous record of lessons learned over time.

Some Conclusions, Recommendations, and Considerations

In summary, one of the main lessons that comes out of this research is that it is not possible for community forestry programs or field workers to get individual people or groups in Baltimore neighborhoods to do what they want them to do. As Gary Letteron put it, "you can't engineer community forestry." The countless factors that influence the likelihood that a community forestry effort takes hold in a neighborhood make it fruitless to search for individual characteristics that must be met. It is absolutely essential that the spontaneity and unpredictability of such efforts is accepted and celebrated. Community forestry, despite what funding institutions may think, must be something that comes from inside neighborhoods where there are people that have the interest, skills, and capacity to draw upon the resources provided by a program like Parks & People. Community forestry does not offer solutions to neighborhood problems—these are much larger than anything that could be addressed by getting a group of people together to plant trees or gardens in vacant lots. What it does offer is the stimulus and support for neighborhood groups and individuals to transform their local environment through simple projects—this is a service that does not normally exist in city government agencies and non-profit organizations such as Parks & People are filling this need. Overall, decisions must be made about what community forestry is intended to achieve. It must either be accepted that community forestry is just a tool for getting people together and the product is secondary, or commitments must be made to building sustainable structures in communities that can work to maintain and create capacities and incentive to keep projects going. Alternatively, it could be decided that the real value of community forestry has little to do with the people that are involved and should purely dedicate itself to getting trees planted. Certainly, the connections between community building and environmental quality must remain the fundamental tenets of urban environmental rehabilitation. But it should also be recognized that either task is a tremendous challenge by itself, and to attempt to achieve strides in community development and environmental rehabilitation simultaneously is a significant undertaking.

A comparison between the history of neighborhood community forestry activities in Baltimore and the history of relationships between URI, Parks & People, and the Department of Recreation and Parks may reveal larger insights. The way URI and Parks & People have approached working with the Parks Department and other Baltimore city agencies shows interesting similarities to ways of doing community forestry in neighborhoods. These similarities highlight lessons that are common and thus generalizable beyond narrow boundaries. In retrospect, just as there was little readiness within the Recreation and Parks Department to receive assistance and change from outside sources, so too was there a need, within neighborhoods, to understand that certain levels of capacity, opportunity, and other characteristics must be exist in order for people to be able to capitalize on community forestry inputs. Capacity building should have been prioritized on both levels before major change could begin, however it is worth noting that waiting for such conditions to arise would probably been unsuccessful as well. The infrastructure and leadership of the Recreation and Parks Department has been severely lacking and has prevented the department from embracing or being able to receive CF. Similarly many neighborhoods that have been the target of community forestry efforts have failed due to similar barriers. Empowerment was a concern on both levels. URI and Parks & People were dealing with a disempowered agency with disenfranchised employees much like a community forester finds when working with a neighborhood like Franklin Square. Before community forestry can take hold on either level, empowerment must come first.

The disjunction between the most pressing issues facing the city and its neighborhoods (crime, drugs, housing) and that of the community forestry project (trees, parks, greening) was expressed both by the unwillingness of the mayor's office to dedicate resources to parks and forestry and by the unwillingness of neighborhood leaders to fully embrace and sustain greening projects. On both levels, certain things must come first before trees and parks can be seen as a worthwhile concerns. The most immediate concerns must be addressed first and foremost. How an organization interacts with the city agency or an individual community forester interacts with their assigned neighborhoods largely influences the outcome in both cases. In either context, informing people from an outside perspective what would be best for them leads to resentment and unwillingness to embrace the recommendations, even when they are being offered with the best of intentions. As Parks & People has been perceived by the Parks Department as forcing certain types of assistance without an inside understanding of what is needed, one is reminded of how a community forestry project might be received if it is imported without a prior assessment the neighborhood and a conscious effort to tailor the assistance to what would be most helpful to the people that will ultimately benefit.

Finally, the following overarching question must be asked: Why do community forestry projects continue to stimulate and receive high levels of interest and support despite a history of ongoing failures and disappointments? In Baltimore, there has been a special logic, rooted in the relationship between the community forestry project and funding, that may help to clarify some things and raise questions about others. The continued existence of the community forestry project depends primarily on funding from philanthropic institutions and the federal government. Although the federal government has occasionally been willing to dedicate large sums of money for extended durations, foundations rarely operate in this manner. Foundations, at least in the United States, are notorious for favoring "new" projects—innovative ideas that will benefit from a year of "seed money" and then become self-sufficient. If the idea "works," then the foundation may decide to invest money in the exportation and replication of the successful model in other locations, but is often reluctant to reinvest in the original organization again. This gives rise to what may be called the "utility of failure" within the community forestry project—as one approach does not work, it is entirely rational to come up with new ideas and new models that have more promise, and therefore more potential to attract foundational support.

Non-profit organizations are therefore under extreme pressure to reinvent themselves in order to seem "fresh" and "new." This reduces the incentive to stick with commitments to a certain type of project, a particular neighborhood, or a specific group of individuals. Ironically, this long-term commitment and vision has been cited as crucial to any success at all. In addition, as many community forestry field workers in Baltimore pointed out, "their job is to work themselves out of a job." This is not the case, however, on an institutional level, where the institution's ultimate job is to make sure that it survives. A non-profit institution must be primarily concerned with reproducing itself. Failures or disappointments experienced by the "old" way of doing things thus constitute necessary parts of this system. It is essential to stress that this argument in no way implies intentionality or conspiracy on the part of community forestry workers in Baltimore. A quote from James Ferguson's study of development projects abroad help to clarify: he says such "systems have an intelligence of their own" and this is just how "things work out" (Ferguson, 1994).

One can now attempt to understand why there is continued interest and support in Baltimore for community forestry projects despite little confidence that they are achieving intended effects. The "success" that community forestry has had in increasing the status and power of the non-profit organization that manages it can be contrasted with the "failures" to improve the quality of life and the environment of deteriorated inner-city neighborhoods. It is worth questioning

whether the two go hand in hand. Another quote from Ferguson's study helps to illuminate the situation: "failure here does not mean doing nothing; it means doing something else, and that something else always has its own logic." If community forestry is to provide more than "social encouragement" and create something more than "feel good" projects that have little lasting impact, such concerns must be taken seriously.

Questions for Future Research or Thought

The following is a list of some of the questions that remain unanswered. This is just a start to the questions that may prove to be important in the future development of an effective, equitable, and efficient method of achieving urban environmental rehabilitation and community development.

- What alternative institutional structures are there that could receive the transfer of the community forestry program from Parks & People?
- What is the effect of greening and crime and drug activity and how does greening and defensible space interact to this end?
- Does community forestry lead to empowerment?
- What support mechanisms are necessary or sufficient to sustain initial sparks of greening activity?
- What are the characteristics of persons, groups, or blocks that benefit most from community forestry?
- What are ways in which community forestry can more directly address fundamental needs (i.e. jobs, safety, and crime)?
- How can networks be created between participants and practitioners outside of local areas?
- What is the role of a collaborative local "greening committee" in organizing, coordinating, and sustaining community forestry project efforts?
- How can the spin-off effects of community forestry project be measured?
- Who is community forestry intended to benefit?
- What is the position of community forestry on gentrification?
- How can one community determine its readiness or capacity to achieve collective action for a community forestry project?
- How does community forestry fit into housing changes (i.e. demolition, vacancy, development, rehabilitation, etc.)?
- What is the appropriate "lifespan" to expect from a community forestry project?
- What other approaches, aside from community forestry, could achieve the desired results more effectively?

Appendix

Selected Indicators for Three Community Statistical Areas

	Sandtown-Winchester Harlem Park	Southwest Baltimore	Washington Village	Baltimore City
Median household income	$18,924	$23,070	$22,271	$30,078
Median sale price of houses	$12,000	$15,000	$35,295	$52,075
% of housing units owner-occupied	35%	41%	49%	65%
Number of reported Part 1 criminal offenses per 1,000 people	102	128	168	100
% of reported Part 1 criminal offenses classified as violent	26%	23%	15%	11%
Number of juveniles ages 10 to 17 arrested for drug related offenses, per 1,000	100	92	62	43
% of single-parent families with related children under age 18 living at or below federal poverty level	24%	21%	13%	13%
% of households receiving temporary cash assistance	19%	20%	16%	11%
% of residential properties vacant	22%	15%	9%	6%
% commercial properties that are vacant	15%	10%	39%	4%
Number of vacant lots	1,155	741	215	12,573
% of CSA covered by trees (tree canopy)	5%	6%	6%	20%

Table 2:Source: Alliance, 2002.

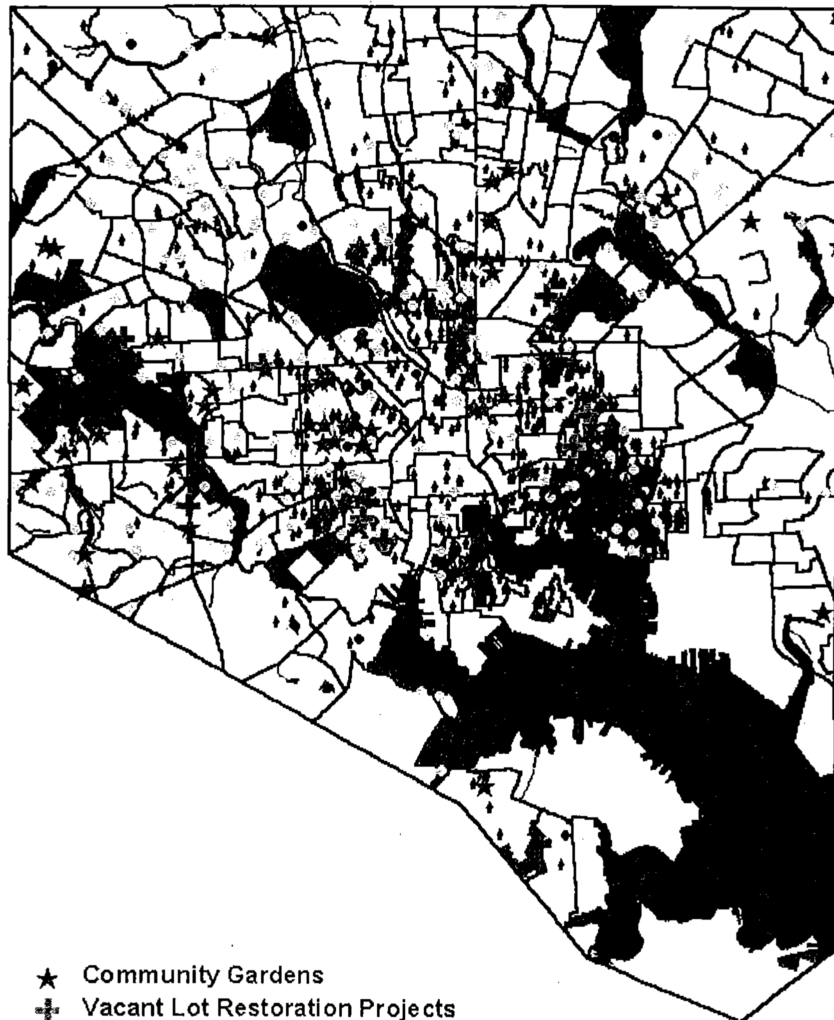
List of Interviews Conducted

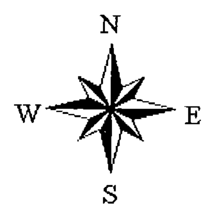
Respondent's Name	Description	Number of Interviews
Alexis Harte	Former URI intern in Sandtown-Winchester	1
Amanda Cunningham	Community forester at Parks & People	2
Arnold Sherman	Former resident and community activist in Washington-Village Pigtown	1
Calvin Buikema	Former Superintendent of Parks for the City of Baltimore	1
Charles Smith	Director of the Midtown Benefits District and former head of the Greenmount West community association	1
Chris Ryer	Baltimore City Planner and former head of the Washington Village-Pigtown Empowerment Zone	1
Emmanuel Price	Executive Director of Community Building in Partnership, Sandtown-Winchester	1
Erika Svendsen	USFS researcher and former RB community forester	3
Erin Hughes	Former URI intern in Washington Village-Pigtown	1
Frank Kline	Former Vacant Lot Restoration Program coordinator at Parks & People	1
Frank Rogers	Community forester at Parks & People	2
Gary Letteron	Community forester at WPNPC (Washington Village-Pigtown) and former RB community forester	3
Gennady Schwartz	Head of Capital Projects at the Department of Recreation & Parks	1
Guy Hager	Director of community forestry programs at Parks & People	2
Inez Robb	Founder of the Urban Conservancy, community activist and resident of Sandtown-Winchester	1
Jackie Carrera	Executive Director of Parks & People	1
James Jiler	Former URI intern and RB evaluator	1
Joanne Osborne	Community forestry participant and resident of Sandtown-Winchester	1
Justine Bonner	Community forestry participant and resident of Sandtown-Winchester	3

Kim Lane	Head of Community Grants for the Baltimore Police Dept. and former RB community forester	1
Laura Perry	Board member of the Recreation and Parks Dept. and Parks & People	1
Mary Cox	Head of URI at Parks & People	1
Michael Beer	Founder of Jones Falls Watershed Association	1
Mike Galvin	Urban and community forester at the Maryland DNR	1
Morgan Grove	USFS social scientist, BES researcher, and former URI project manager	2
Patricia Pyle	Former community forester at Parks & People and the City Parks Dept.	1
Paul Jahnige	Former URI intern and community forester for Parks & People	1
Peter Duvall	Community forester in Charles Village	1
Sally Loomis	Former head of community forestry and grants at Parks & People	1
Sandra Smith	Community forestry participant and resident of Sandtown-Winchester	1
Shawn Dalton	BES researcher, former URI intern and Parks & People staff member	1
Bryant Smith	BES/USFS researcher and former Parks & People community forester	2
Steffi Graham	Photographer of URI programs	2
Zach Hall	Director of land management at Bon Secours OROSW	1

Maps

Distribution of Parks & People's Community Forestry Projects Across Baltimore City





GIS data provided by the Parks & People Foundation

Figure 14: Distribution of Parks & People's Community Forestry Projects Across Baltimore City

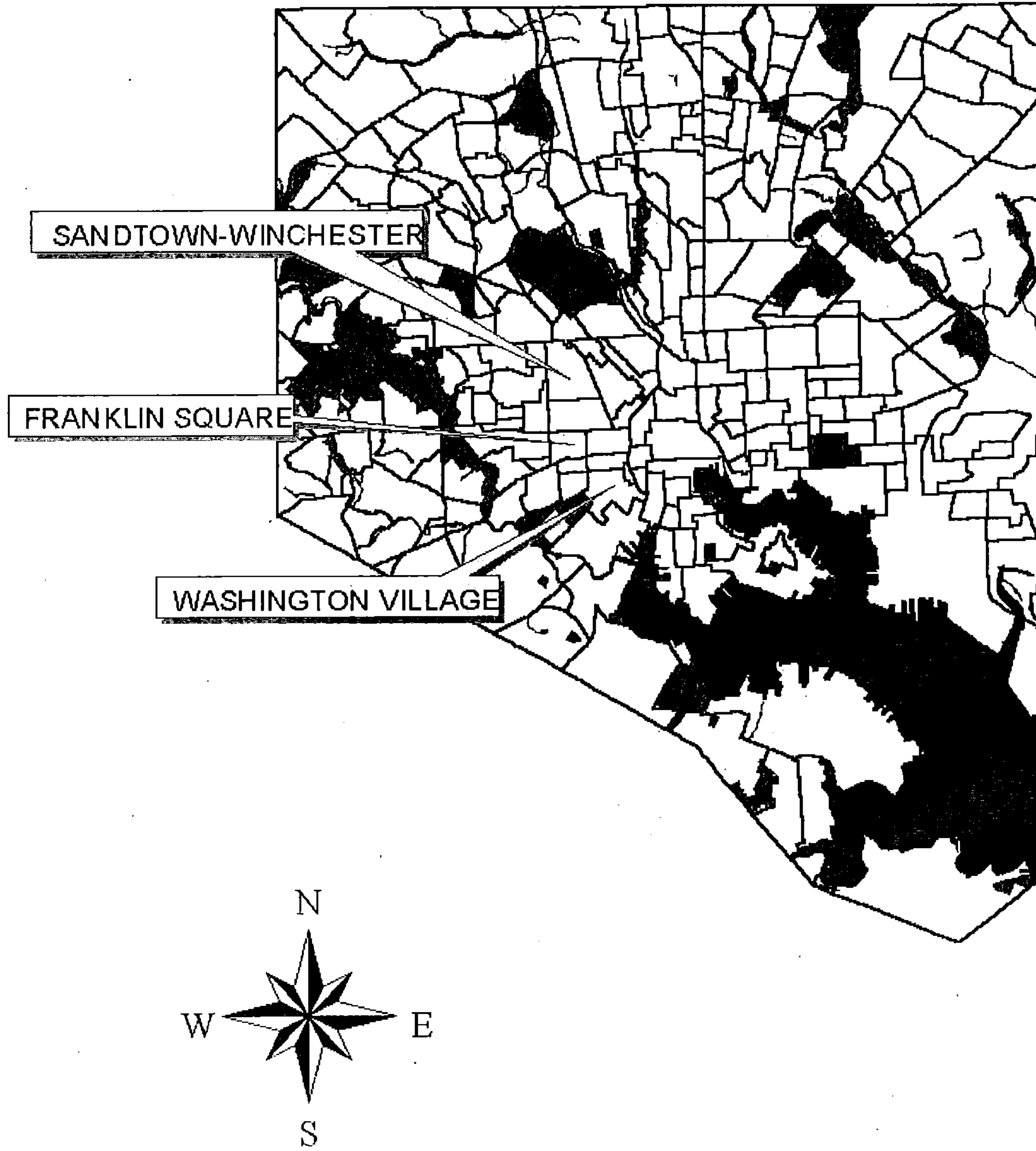
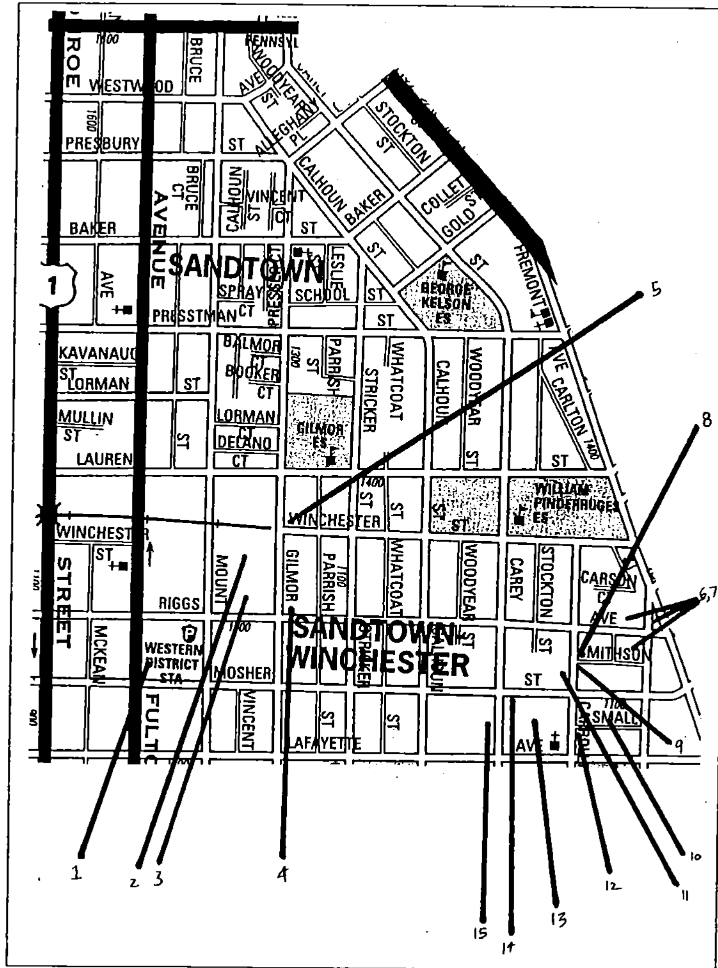
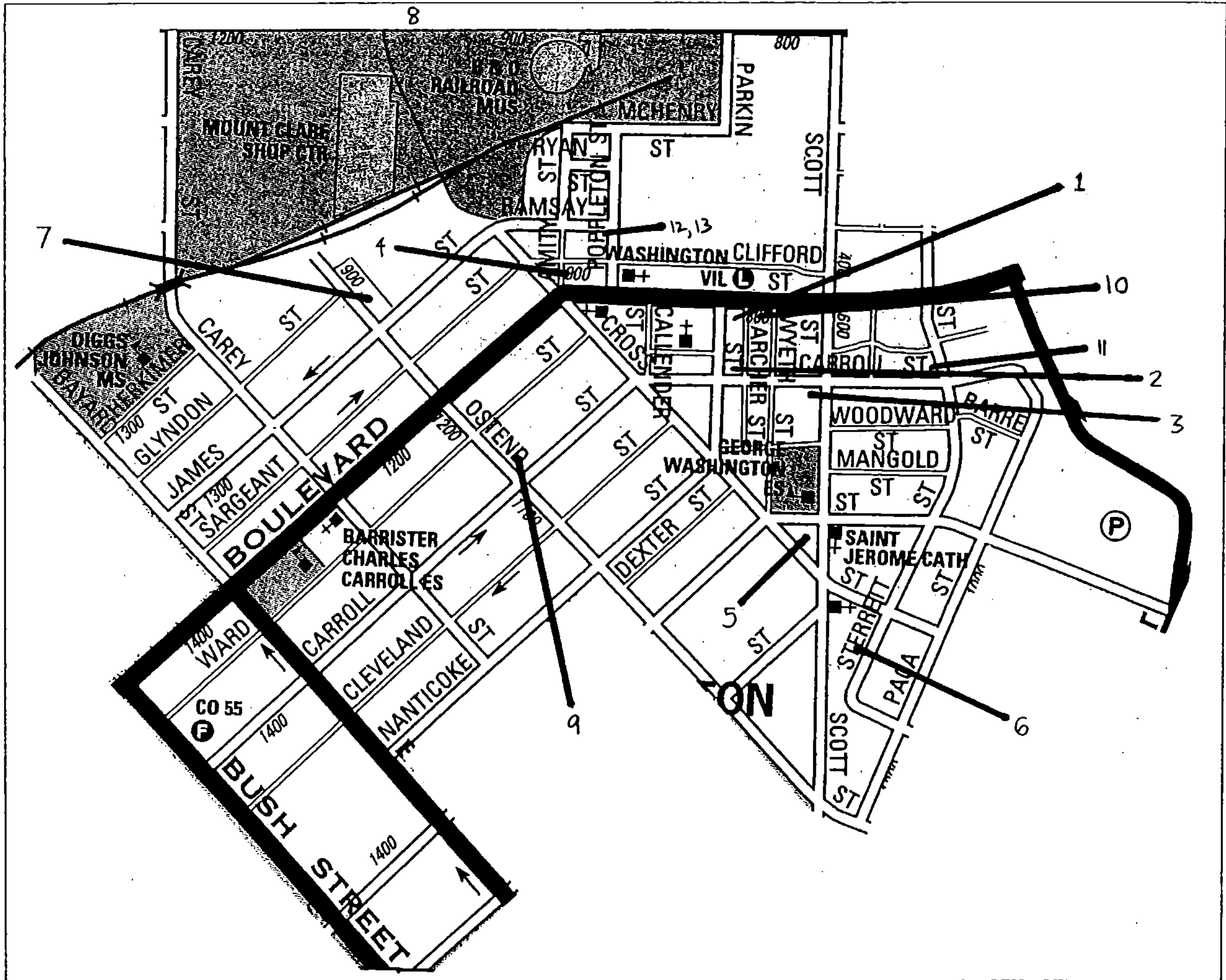


Figure 15: Location of Case Study Neighborhoods



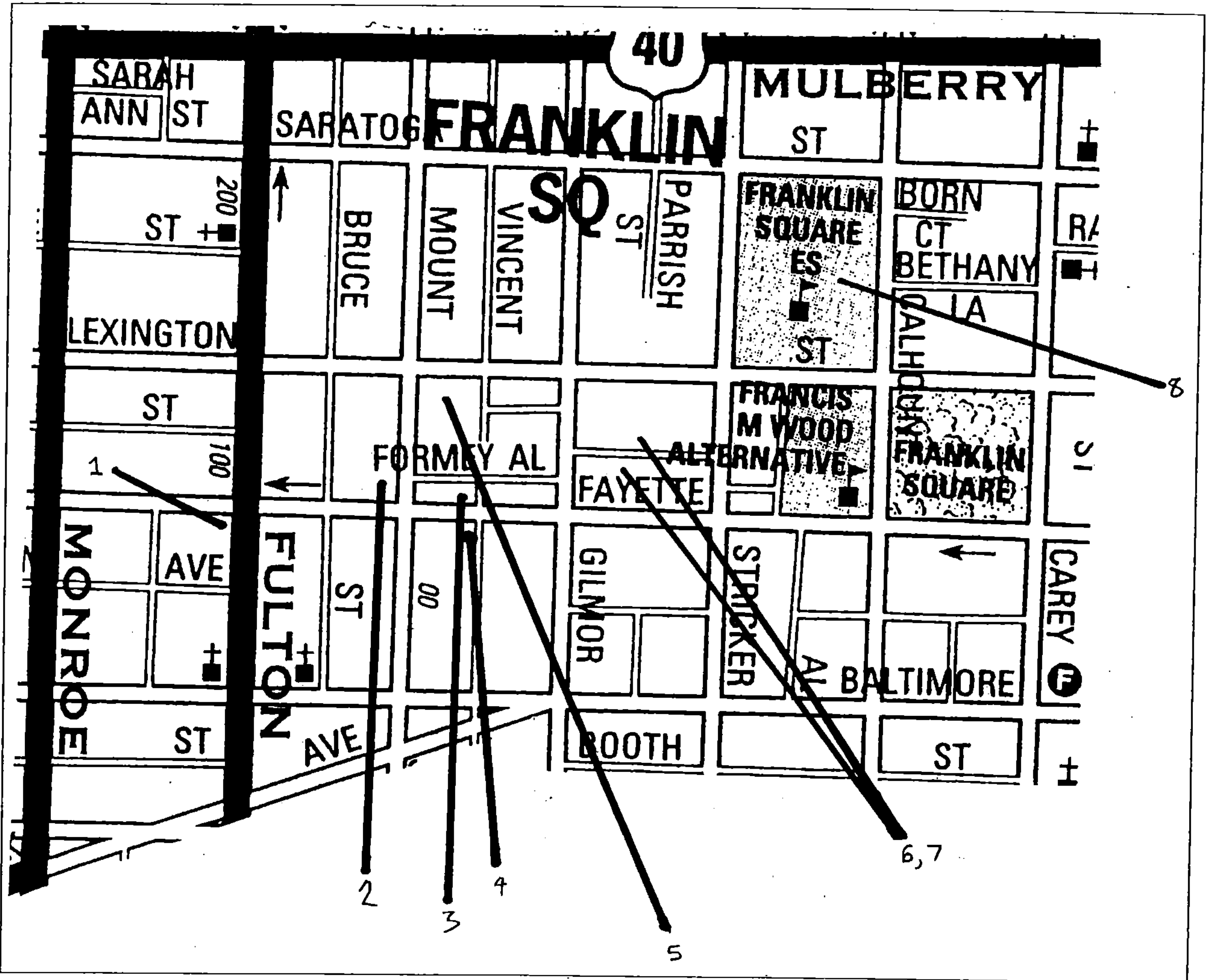
Community forestry and garden projects Sandtown-Winchester (visited Summer 2003)

1. Urban Conservancy vacant lot project
2. Former site of URI/CBP tree nursery (now abandoned)
3. Former site of URI community garden (now abandoned)
4. Vacant lot garden across from Lee's market
5. Park maintained by CBP
6. Urban Conservancy vacant lot and tree projects
7. Urban Conservancy vacant lot and tree projects
8. Civic Works and Carrolton Ave. vacant lot project (in progress, Summer 2003)
9. Vacant Lot Restoration Project (Parks & People and Carrolton Ave.)
10. Small Street vacant lot project (half complete, Summer 2003)
11. New Beginnings vacant lot project
12. Carrolton Ave. corner lot
13. "Our Garden"
14. "Memory Garden"
15. Carey St. corner lot



Community forestry and garden projects Washington Village-Pigtown (visited Summer 2003)

1. WPNPC "Village Green"
2. "Tot Lot"
3. Scott & Carroll side lot
4. "Rodney & Narda's Triangle Park"
5. George Washington Elementary School garden (now abandoned)
6. "Squid Garden"
7. "Terry's Garden" and Skater Mural
8. B&O Community Garden
9. Mural lot
10. Side lot next to "Village Green"
11. Carroll & Barre Sign Lot
12. Corner lot (Rodney & Narda)
13. Corner lot (Rodney & Narda)



Community forestry and garden projects Franklin Square (visited Summer 2003)

1. Bon Secours tree plantings
2. "Memorial Garden" (now abandoned)
3. "Ms. Shirley's Garden"
4. Corner Garden
5. Franklin Square Recreation Center and Playground (OROSW tree plantings)
6. OROSW tree plantings
7. OROSW tree plantings
8. Franklin Square Elementary School Garden

Participatory Site Assessment Survey

Sources: Based on Urban Forest Typology Tool, U.S. Forest Service, E. Svendsen & L. Campbell, 2003; Biophysical and End-of-Season Surveys, Urban Resources Initiative; and Community Open Spaces, Appendix B, M. Francis, L. Cashdan, L. Paxson, 1984.

1) **Date survey taken:** ______________________________

2) **Name of Participant:** ______________________________

3) **Contact Information (phone/email/address):** ______________________________

____

____

____

4) **Role and/or Affiliation of Participant:** ______________________________

5) **Contact Information for Affiliated Group:** ______________________________

____

____

____

6) **Project Name/Description:** ______________________________

7) **Location (address/block/intersection/street boundaries):** ______________________________

____

____

8) **What type of people/groups work on this site?**

Individual

School

Community group

Government agency

Non-profit organization

Business

Other ______________________________

9) What is the size of the group that organized/organizes the work (core group)?

Small (1)

Moderate (2-5)

Large (6+)

10) How many key participants work on this project/site?

Few (1-3)

Moderate (4-9)

Many (10+)

11) Who are they (names, contact information)? ______________________________

____

____

____

12) How many non-core people have worked on the site?

Few (1-3)

Moderate (4-9)

Many (10+)

13) Does the group meet on a regular basis? How often? ____________________

____

14) Who has ownership and jurisdiction over the site? _________________________

____

15) What is the site type?

Flower box/window display/planter
Street tree
Sewershed/wet street
Greenstreet (traffic island)
Dog run
Playground
Playing field
Local nursery (city, private, or community)
Produce market
Green rooftop (functional, produce, or decorative)
Public courtyard/atrium/plaza
Botanical garden
Waterfront (beach, boating, views)
Greenway (bikeway or trail)
Community vegetable garden
Vacant lot
Cemetery
Brownfield/polluted/industrial site
Covered/historical stream
Stream/river/canal
Park
Protected/natural area
Watershed

16) What is the location of the site relative to the rest of the neighborhood?

Isolated location (on edge of neighborhood)

Integrated into major activity areas/flows

17) What scale does the group work on?

Region
City
Watershed
District
Neighborhood
Block

Other: ____________________

18) How (and by whom) was the site designed/planned? ____________________

____

19) How long have you been involved with this project/group/site? ____________

____

20) What year did the project begin/people begin working on the site? ____________

21) Has there been consistent work being done since then? ____________

____

22) What are your/the group's goals for this site/project? ____________

____

____

____

23) What benefits come from having worked on this project or created this site/space?

____

____

____

24) How do you know if this project/site is being effective or making an impact?

____

____

____

25) How do you see the group or project having an impact on the surrounding community?

Area around site has improved

Inspires other into positive action

Build network of people/trust

Provides educational experience

Creates democratic space

Adds nature to the area

Attracts investment (economic/ownership)

Stabilizes block or neighborhood

Cultural center

Safer streets

Builds pride

Provides food

Provides shade

Place for children to play

Other: ______________________________

26) What is the group's budget? ______________________________

____

27) What are the major sources of funding?

Group fundraising in neighborhood

Outside funding (foundation/nonprofit)

City agency

State (program or agency)

Federal (program or agency)

Other: ______________________________

28) When was funding secured?

Initiation of project

Site design phase

Construction phase

Management and maintenance phase

Other: ______________________________

29) What is the dependability of funding?

One-time/not dependable

One-time/dependable

Continuous/not dependable

Continuous/dependable

30) What is the source for the materials used on this site?

Found/scrounged by group/individuals

Given to group by technical assistance group

Given by private source (foundation or business)

Given by government agency (city department)

Other: ______________________________

31) What are the economic benefits that come from the site (selling flowers, vegetables, fruit, wood, etc.)? ______________________________

____

32) Are there any paid workers that contribute to the site/project? ______________

____

33) Who uses the site? ______________________________

34) How many people use the site in a year?

Few (1-10)

Moderate (11-99)

Many (100+)

35) How do they use it? ______________________________

____

36) What kinds of events or activities are held here? ______________________________

____

37) Is there any major nearby/adjacent use or activity (sitting on stoops, hanging out on corner)? ______________________________

38) Site accessibility to neighbors?

Closed to use

Open at specific hours

Always open

39) What are some of the strengths/assets of the site/project? ______________________________

____

____

40) What are some of it's weaknesses/problems/challenges? ______________________________

____

____

41) What do you hope to see as the future for this site? ______________________________

____

____

42) Do you think the site is a success or failure? Why? ______________________________

____

____

FILL OUT THE REST LATER

43) Number of trees on site: ____

44) Condition of trees on site:

____ Open tree pit

____ Newly planted

____ Healthy adult

____ Declining/dead

45) Maintenance

None (0) Poor (1) Average (2) Good (3) Excellent (4)

46) Vegetation quality and coverage:

	% coverage	**quality (0/none-4/excellent)**
Tree/shrub:		
Vegetables/fruit:		
Grass/groundcover/mulch:		
Barren/empty areas:		

47) Infrastructure (check one of each that exists)

____ Seating

____ Fences

____ Paths

____ Signs

____ Trash cans

____ Water source

____ Composting facility

____ Lights

Other: ____

48) What is the size of site?

Small (Less than ½ acre)

Moderate (½ to 2 acres)

Large (2+ acres)

NOTE: This survey was not formally used during fieldwork due to the small number of neighborhood participant respondents that were accessible. However it could have been useful, and it is included here in hopes that it may be at some point in the future.

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