Homestead Community Land Trust
Newsletter
Winter 2001 Issue #5

Homestead’s First Project Obtains Key Funding

By Sheldon Cooper, HCLT Director

The past three months have been great for the Delridge House Project. Our goal of saving and land-trusting a classic Delridge bungalow—by moving it onto HCLT-owned land—took several large steps forward. In November, Seattle’s Office of Housing awarded Homestead $35,000 to reduce the cost of land for the project. This is the first time that a community land trust project has received funding from the City of Seattle, and we plan to make it the first of many!

December brought a flurry of activity. We moved ahead with our purchase-and-sale agreement for the land that will become the permanent site of the house. We also received a construction loan from the Institute of Community Economics. This funding will allow us to move the house, build the foundation and finish the renovation. ICE is loaning HCLT this money from its Revolving Loan Fund, a pool it operates to help community land trusts across the country with development projects.

Most recently, Seattle’s Department of Neighborhoods awarded us a $10,000 Neighborhood Matching Fund grant for the project. This grant was supported by the Delridge District Council, and many local residents and businesses who collectively pledged over $20,000 worth of donated labor and materials.

From the Ground Up: The Inside Scoop

By Linda Novenski, HCLT Member

[Editor’s Note: Novenski was a member of Homestead’s ground lease and resale formula committee. Over the past three months, the group—composed of HCLT members and supporters—spent several Saturday mornings working on these documents, which are central to Homestead’s mission. The ground lease defines the unique dual-ownership relationship between the individual homeowner and HCLT (as landowner). The resale formula is used to calculate the maximum resale price for homes on CLT land, which will allow HCLT homeowners to build equity even as it preserves the permanent affordability of our homes for future low-income homeowners. The group did a great job, and the results will contribute to Seattle’s eventual stock of permanently affordable owner-occupied homes.]

I love to sale on Saturday mornings. It was an ideal morning for garage sales on Capitol Hill. But here I was on the #36 bus, heading for a who-knows-what kind of meeting of Homestead Community Land Trust.

I had first learned of HCLT at the Renters’ Summit, in June 2000. That gathering stirred my too-long dormant sense of idealism, and I signed up for more information from HCLT. When I received an invitation to help with their first ground lease/resale formula, I knew it was a call to get “active” again.

Looking out the bus window, views see LEASE, next page
HCLT Membership Profile: Mas Koba

Mas Koba is a Capitol Hill resident and retiree. He is one of Homestead's longest-running members. The following is a paraphrase of our conversation.

When did you become involved in Homestead?
Back in 1989. At that time we were meeting down at Pike Place Senior Center, [and] the group was called Operation Homestead. We were fighting for homeless people. Landlords were closing up vacant buildings because they thought they were too damn expensive. Homestead wanted to break into those buildings to rehabilitate them. The group did picketing and occupations.

I approached one of the advocates and said that there’s a more civil way to do this. If we could find a place and purchase the thing, we could fix it up and make it habitable and make a deal with the City and the landlord... At that time the group became Homestead Community Land Trust. One of my jobs was to do the research to see what properties were available.

We got all the details worked out in 1993. We looked around for a first project, and found a property at 20th and Union that we thought was our best bet. The only way we could purchase the thing was to get the City to give us a loan. The deal didn’t go through.

What got you involved?
My desire to see people being able to help themselves and not having to rely on [other people] all the time. The less that something which helps is a handout, the better it is.

Where do you live? Have you seen the real-estate boom near you? I’ve lived in a coop for seventeen years. It’s pretty hard for me to comprehend the costs. The

of Vietnamese grocery stores and Chinese and Japanese restaurants dissolved in my mind, giving way to the images of Cass Corridor, in Detroit, scene of my first experiences with activism back in 1969. I remembered working to establish a unique parent-run cooperative childcare center in the basement of a church. There I was not only introduced to the labyrinth of city regulations and politics, but to just how difficult it could be to bridge cultural differences in our wonderfully diverse co-op. I wondered how HCLT was structured, and in what way I could contribute.

I soon found out. Sheldon Cooper and Pat Lavalle facilitated each of the meetings, which consisted of members and non-members. At the initial meeting we viewed “Homes and Hands: CLTs in Action”, which confirmed my belief that this was a very worthwhile endeavor. Over the course of the 4 times we met before the general membership meeting, there was an average of about 6 participants at each discussion. I really appreciated the preparation that Pat and Sheldon put in, giving us handouts and guiding the discussions with an outline.

As the process of discussion and formulation unfolded, I sometimes grew impatient with the time necessary to reach a consensus. It’s not as if we had a party platform we all agreed with. In fact, drawing up this first lease meant more clearly defining what HCLT was all about. Did we fulfill our intention by simply insuring that this property would be preserved as affordable housing from one buyer to the next? Or did we have an obligation to include clauses in the lease that would insure that the homeowner amplified HCLT’s pursuit of affordable housing by stipulating to whom and for how much they could rent rooms? Should we use a percentage of the median income, or the minimum wage as our income guide? It wasn’t easy. The discussions were lengthy and fervent. We didn’t always complete the outlined agenda, and I was anxious to meet our deadline to present the ground lease/resale formula for approval at the general membership pancake breakfast. At all times, though, I was aware of the historic importance of this first ground lease, and knew it was better to get it done well than to get it done fast.

When, at the Annual Pancake Breakfast, some members expressed a desire to review and/or amend our proposed lease/resale formula, my heart sank! Would this process ever end?? No longer a matter of getting it done well v. fast. I simply wanted it done! Well, one more marathon meeting gave all voices a chance to be heard. And debated. And included. The final document was ratified via email/U.S. mail.

It isn’t always easy being a responsible member of society, but I’ll tell you this: getting to know and work with other responsible members of society is positive and life affirming. My small contribution to the formulation of this first lease has already been repaid with interest. I am happy to be counted as a new member of Homestead Community Land Trust.
Quick News

The Annual Membership Meeting and Pancake Breakfast on November 18 was great. Twenty people, including eight new members, gathered to eat pancakes and digest information. Outgoing HCLT board member Syd Fredrickson served as emcee for the event. HCLT Director Sheldon Cooper gave an update on the Delridge Project and ran elections for the board*. HCLT member Scott McClay presented a summary of the ground lease/resale formula committee’s work, and many folks pitched in with set-up, cooking, clean-up, questions, insights, and enthusiasm.

*(Homestead’s current board includes Michael Gross, Mira Latoszek, Scott Noland, Oscar Rodriguez, and Janet Welt.)

You are invited to our monthly meetings
Get the latest news, make your opinions known, get involved.

Next meeting: February 15th (Thursday)
@ HCLT HQ, 1309 13th Ave. South, 6:30 PM
and subsequent second Wednesdays
Contact HCLT to confirm
(206) 323-1227 or homesteadclt@yahoo.com

About Homestead Community Land Trust

“We are drawing together our diverse communities to build and permanently preserve decent, affordable housing and real self-determination in the places where we live and work.” - Homestead CLT mission statement

Since our incorporation in 1992, we have been working to bring the community land trust model of permanently affordable homeownership to Seattle neighborhoods. To this end, we:

* engage in outreach and educational efforts with community and neighborhood groups, local government leaders, and funding and lending institutions.
* support the creation of neighborhood-based projects that undertake housing development designed by local people to meet local needs.
* are creating permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for low-income residents, encouraging community reinvestment without displacement, and empowering neighborhood and citywide communities to take control of their housing and land-use needs.

Homestead CLT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and donations are tax-deductible.

We are a membership-based organization, and our strength is in our numbers. Join us now as we undertake Seattle’s first-ever permanently affordable homeownership project, and help keep housing affordable for ourselves, our neighbors and the next generation.

☐ Yes, I want to become a HCLT member

Name: ______________________
Address: ____________________
Phone: ______________________
Email: ______________________

☐ Please remove me from the mailing list

Cut out and send to: Homestead Community Land Trust, 1309 13th Ave S., Seattle, WA 98144

Members

help preserve affordable housing for ourselves and future generations, have a say in key HCLT decisions, receive our quarterly newsletter and notices about meetings and events, are eligible to apply to buy homes on Homestead land (certain income requirements apply) and can vote and run for positions on the board of delegates.

Membership

is open to all Seattle residents who

1) agree with our mission.
How You Can Help

Looking to buy a house, or know someone who is?

Homestead Community Land Trust is now soliciting potential homebuyers for our first home, a charming three-bedroom, one-bathroom bungalow in Seattle’s Delridge neighborhood (pictured at left, before moving and remodeling).

To qualify, families must make less than 80 percent of King County median income. For a four-person family, the maximum income is $50,200, and for a three-person family it is $45,200. Families must also be able to put down around $5,000 and qualify for a mortgage of approximately $118,000. The total monthly payment for housing costs, including mortgage, insurance, taxes, utilities and lease fees, will be about $1,150. We hope to select the family that will purchase the home in April, and sell it in July.

For more information, call Homestead at (206) 323-1227.

Have property to sell?

Give us a call. HCLT is always looking to explore different development options. Alternatively, if you want to sell in the traditional market, HCLT board member Michael Gross--a Windermere real-estate agent with fourteen years of experience in Seattle--will donate 50% of his commission to HCLT’s work.

Become a Member.

With Homestead on the cusp of breaking ground for Seattle’s first permanently affordable home at the beginning of this new year, now’s a better time than ever to become a Homestead member, or to renew your membership. And it’s easy--just fill out the form inside and drop it in the enclosed envelope. Thanks!

Homestead Community Land Trust
1309 13th Ave South
Seattle, WA 98144

EXCITING NEWS ON HCLT’S FIRST PROJECT!