Carleton University

**“Preserving the Value of Place”: Restructuring Urban Governance
Through Third Sector Initiatives**

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The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts**

Institute of Political Economy

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Abstract

This thesis questions the impact of neo-liberal reforms on the space, processes and relations of governing social matters in urban settings. As low and moderate income earners struggle to access a safe, decent quality of affordable housing, a number of urban centers have begun to explore a third space of governance that lies beyond the market and the state. It is my contention that experimenting with progressive political discourses and constructing a space for creative, alternative processes of urban governance to unfold are both possible and practical responses to a re-configured context of contemporary social governance. Through the lens of neo-Foucauldian governmentality, this project explores how the City of Burlington, Vermont has constructed an embedded role for a community land trust within the local governing framework, what this has meant for the city's lower income communities, and how this has affected local efforts to preserve the value of place.

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Introduction

*"Those who command space can always control the politics of place even though, and this is a vital corollary, it takes control of some place to command space in the first instance."*¹

David Harvey, 1989

Harvey's words are instructive to anyone interested in the social and political economic relations of the city. At the heart of his statement is a suggestion that we not forget the essential dynamics of place that provide us a grounding or basis from which we may gather support and energy in our efforts to (re)shape the social and physical environments of the urban fabric.

Staring across Lake Champlain at the hill tops of the Adirondacks, I watched the sun set on my first day in Burlington, Vermont. Reflecting on why I was in the city, my thoughts drifted back to the previous months I spent in City of Winnipeg, Manitoba, my home town. My interest in Winnipeg as a potential case study stemmed from my roots in the city and a related concern for the social and physical decay that has plagued many of the city's inner neighbourhoods. More specifically, I had hoped to investigate how the combined efforts of political authorities, community-based groups and local residents were contributing to an effort to protect against the threats of urban decay and gentrification in one particular neighbourhood.

Soon after arriving in Winnipeg, I was informed by a number of credible sources that although my idea was intriguing, restrictions of time, finances, and a lack of available information-based resources would compromise the quality of such a project. However, all was not lost. Through the disappointment of having to turn away from my

¹ David Harvey, The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 234.

original ideas, I was introduced to the concept of a community land trust (CLT) as mechanism and organization for preserving the affordability and livability of housing in an urban setting. The concept of a community land trust (CLT) is originally rooted in rural-based issues of land control and conservation. By the late 1970s, the Institute for Community Economics (ICE) based out of Greenfield, Massachusetts adapted the rural model so that it could be developed in an urban setting. ICE has produced a number of documents relating to the technical aspects of creating and managing a CLT in an urban setting including The Community Land Trust Handbook (1982). According to the ICE definition:

“A community land trust is an organization created to hold land for the benefit of a community and of individuals within the community. It is a democratically structured nonprofit corporation, with an open membership and a board of trustees elected by the membership... The CLT acquires land through purchase or donation with an intention to retain title in perpetuity, thus removing the land from the speculative market.”²

At the time I began my research, a group of academics, professionals and activists were in the process of constructing a CLT as a means for dealing with the housing concerns of a west-end neighbourhood of Winnipeg. However, as a recently embarked-upon venture, there was not enough information readily available to produce a comprehensive study. It is at this point in my journey that I was introduced to Burlington, Vermont and the Burlington Community Land Trust (est. 1983).

Over the past two decades, the majority of urban centers in the United States have been plagued by a widening gap between the average cost of living and the capacity of low and moderate income earners to access a safe, decent quality of affordable housing. At the same time, the levels of financial and political support that cities received

² The Institute for Community Economics, The Community Land Trust Handbook (Emmaus, Penn.: Rodale Press, 1982) 18.

throughout the post war era for the production and revitalization of urban housing have decreased considerably. To this end, most of the major cities in the country have been forced to confront the threat of a deteriorating inner city housing stock, the concentration of exclusive, private development activities in suburban enclaves, and the encroaching potential of gentrification in older urban neighbourhoods. Transitions in the politics of the urban playground have seen a recent increase in social and political economic activity developed and supported through locally-based mechanisms and arrangements. Thus, there are three central issues at hand. First, the capacity of low (50-80% area median income) and moderate (81-100% area median income) income earners to access and afford a safe, decent quality of shelter in urban settings has become a concern in most major American cities. Second, in the past two decades, the historic and low income neighbourhoods in most major cities have suffered high levels of social and physical deterioration. Third, although an increasing number of cities have explored progressive responses to these matters, most have been unable to mobilize and/or maintain a public or private commitment to a long-term course of action. From one perspective, it is important to be mindful of the interactions and implications between each of these concerns, and to recognize that each can not be conceived as black and white, but rather as multi-faceted issues influenced by broader structural arrangements, social relations and inequalities. However, to begin to think about these matters at such a level requires a deeper exploration into the underlying and specific relations, practices and processes that reflect broader influences and connections. As such, I will be focusing my thoughts specifically around the third concern, as a means of problematizing the first and second. This thesis is primarily concerned with looking at how Burlington, Vermont has

successfully mobilized and supported a community land trust (CLT) as a device for confronting matters of housing accessibility and affordability, and its relation to the larger issue of neighbourhood decay in the city and the Greater Burlington Area.

Within contemporary urban settings, the structure and process of responding to the concerns of local residents has increasingly shifted toward the resources of third sector, nonprofit organizations, and the space of community. In this context, I understand the notion of a political economic shift or restructuring to mean “a ‘brake’, if not a break, in secular trends, and a shift towards a significantly different order and configuration of social, economic and political life.”³ As cities have assumed a greater role in the provision of social services, the facilitation of community and economic development, and the management of urban revitalization efforts, creative partnerships between public offices and private interests have increased in both quantity and capacity. My analysis of the local experiences in Burlington is framed by three central questions. First, how have broad-scale processes of political economic restructuring impacted publicly-directed housing programs and the roles of actors in Burlington’s local housing arena? Secondly, as a major component of the governing arrangement that has surfaced in Burlington, how has the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT) offered a progressive response to the housing and neighbourhood concerns of local residents that is said to be ‘beyond the market and the state’? And finally, how have the BCLT and the third sector in general, been embraced in the city, and how have their activities benefited particular spatial and social communities?

³ Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 1989) 159.

This thesis seeks to respond to each of these questions through the set of ideas that I develop in the following chapters. This thesis is organized into four chapters. The first chapter provides an insight to the methodological dynamics of my research. Conducting social research is an engaging and dynamic process comprised of a variety of phases which raise the possibility of employing different methodological and analytical approaches to mediate and facilitate the production of knowledge. The first chapter of this thesis will explore the ideas of critical realists and those of governmentality scholars that provided a methodological value at different phases of my research. In this project, I have drawn upon the experiences of individuals who are directly affiliated with the BCLT and/or the political economy of housing and urban development in Burlington. Furthermore, I have had to consider my role as an ‘outsider’ and how this may have affected both the people with whom I spoke as well as myself.

Over the past two decades, the focus of political discourses concerned with governing the social concerns of urban residents have increasingly shifted away from constructing centralized political programs, instead looking toward the potential of creative, alternative partnerships with private (for-profit and nonprofit) actors and organizations. While this is not to say that the centralized political agencies and institutions of the state have become redundant, it does none the less point to the rise of a changing territory of governing relations, mechanisms and processes. In the second chapter, I will provide a deeper analysis of governmentality as a research tool for thinking about the changing context of social governance through neo-liberal restructuring. This chapter seeks to provide the groundwork for thinking about the notion of the ‘progressive city’ as the result of a specific political discourse. This will be

accomplished by concentrating on the works of governmentality scholars that have focused on the dispersal of formerly public social programs through neo-liberal restructuring and the concomitant rise of community as a space of identity and resource in 'post-social' governance.

Drawing upon the work of several key analysts in the fields of urban politics, geography, sociology and planning, the third chapter covers an empirical presentation of the changing context of socially-assisted housing in the United States. For much of the post-war period, the federal government assumed an active role in responding to the urban housing concerns of low-income residents. During this period, social agencies of the central state constituted the primary sources of economic investment in low-income housing as well as the principal mechanisms of social management and service delivery. However, through a combination of broad-scale, political economic restructuring and a shift in the priorities of the federal government toward matters of international security and prestige, the set of relations and processes linked to the governance of urban housing concerns have increasingly shifted toward urban and regional scales of political activity. Although the federal government has remained as the primary well of economic resources, the process of responding to urban housing concerns and the actors involved in the management and delivery of housing-related services has changed. Through political discourses grounded in conceptions of community and civic engagement, and local ownership and empowerment, cities such as Burlington have begun to explore the progressive potential of governing arrangements and partnerships that bring together the resources and capacities of public and private actors. This chapter will explore the

growing trend of constructing locally-based governing relations and processes through the new social economy and third sector organizations such as community land trusts.

Through an analysis of the conversations that were held with active representatives of Burlington's local housing sector, the fourth chapter seeks to reconstruct the set of events, processes and relations that have contributed to the development and support of the third sector as a governing partner in the city. For over twenty years, the City of Burlington has been under the helm of the local Progressive Party (Coalition). In their inaugural election campaign (1981), the Progressives ran on a platform stressing the need for city politics to become a more engaging and empowering practice. More specifically, the Progressives focused on the need to resolve the housing woes of the lower income residents brought about through a speculative private market, a low vacancy rate and an aging local housing stock. Throughout the Progressive era in Burlington, the BCLT has been the centerpiece of an agenda to de-commodify a portion of the housing in the city, and to provide and preserve housing opportunities for those excluded by the economic and social barriers of the private market.

The thoughts developed in this thesis are my interpretation of the role and efforts of a group of actors to preserve the value of place in the City of Burlington. It is my hope that this work captures the attention and imagination of those interested in exploring the changing structure, practice and process of confronting the social matters of the city, and with questioning the progressive potential of urban governance in a neo-liberal context.

Chapter One: Methodological Considerations

Introduction

My objective in exploring the set of processes and relations that have surrounded the development of a community land trust (CLT) in Burlington, Vermont is grounded in the idea that progressive urban governance is both possible and practical in a neo-liberal political economic context. In the early stages of my research, it was clear that the local developments in Burlington represented a unique experience of both mobilizing and sustaining an interest in affordable housing concerns, particularly given the expansion of de-regulated, privatized, and marketized systems over the last two decades. This led me toward three initial questions: why has third sector housing developed in urban settings such as Burlington? How do the structure and services of the BCLT constitute an alternative, affordable housing strategy? And, how has third sector housing, and in particular the BCLT, remained a viable option for the residents of Burlington?

Through this project, I intend to explore how events in the political economy of socially-assisted housing contributed to a demand for an alternative approach to affordable housing in the City of Burlington. This project is not designed to provide an answer to the more general problems of housing affordability that have affected urban centers across North America, but does look to understand and explain how Burlington has, and continues to manage its particular set of housing concerns. As the first city in the United States to experiment with an urban community land trust, Burlington offers a viable setting for questioning the potential of alternative governing relations and arrangements to those which characterized the post-war era of state-centered and regulated systems of social governance. I also seek to move away from the rigid

frameworks of analysis which claim that social conditions are the result of either social structures or particular agents. Rather than polarizing aspects of structure and agency, my consideration for the place and potential of a third sector, affordable housing option is framed by a position that posits social structures and agents in a dynamic interplay with one another, thereby facilitating the reproduction or transformation of socio-political arrangements. By focusing on the space of interplay between structure and agency, I am able to analyze the developments in Burlington as both a response to broader political economic transformations, and a set of developments that have been highly influenced by the capacities of local actors and agencies.

Approaching Social Research

Through social research the pursuit of knowledge need not be restricted to singular approaches or theoretical positions. As the layers of our objects of analysis are revealed, it is often the case that our perceptions of those objects will change thus altering both what we claim to know and how we describe that knowledge. According to one source, “we should combine theories and methods carefully and purposefully with the intention of adding breadth or depth to our analysis, but not for the purpose of pursuing ‘objective’ truth.”⁴ In the context of my research that has focused on the relations and processes of governing low-income housing concerns in the City of Burlington, I have utilized the methodological and analytical devices of critical realism and governmentality. I do not seek to claim that each of these approaches are entirely compatible with one another, nor do I attempt to combine the thoughts of critical realists

⁴ Nigel G. Fielding and Jane L. Fielding, *Linking Data* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1986), 33.

with governmentality scholars. Rather each has provided a methodological value to my research at different stages. While the work of critical realists helped to establish a grounding for the early phases of data collection and in preparing for the set of interviews that I held, the ‘openness’ of critical realism’s approach to social research left a space of possibility available to engage a governmental analysis of my original findings. As such, this section will explore the dynamics of critical realism and governmentality that have proven beneficial for my analysis of the relations and processes of governing low-income housing concerns in the City of Burlington.

Critical realists argue “that the reality of the external world of concrete objects, and the truth about such reality, are what they are independently of our cognition of them. They are what they are independently of human beliefs, conceptualizations, descriptions, sentences, perceptions, conventions, languages and so on.”⁵ By this rationale, one should not conflate or confuse the ontological and epistemological conditions of the social world, but rather approach social reality and its inherent social objects as entities that pre-exist our knowledge and observations of them.

For example, as an object of the social world, the ontological context of the BCLT is not determined by my awareness or observation of its third sector housing initiatives, but exists independently of my knowing what the BCLT has or has not accomplished in the city of Burlington. For the critical realist, “it is not a matter of choosing between contextualizing or law-invoking explanations, but of deciding *how far, or at what depth are our particular objects of interest influenced by their context?*”⁶ In the early stages of

⁵ Caleb Miller, “Realism, Anti-Realism, and Common Sense,” In: (Ed) William P. Alston, Realism and Anti-Realism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 13.

⁶ Andrew Sayer, “Behind the Locality Debate: deconstructing geography’s dualisms,” Environment and Planning A 23 (1991): 288. Italics in original.

my research this sense of questioning the place of the BCLT in the local setting of Burlington and in relation to a broader context of a restructuring of governing relations and mechanisms was not subjected to a rigid theoretical framework that may have situated the BCLT in a context other than that which it is actually situated in. That said, critical realism provided a methodological device that rejected the idea that knowledge is gained purely through observation; that what we know may be reduced to what we can say; that knowledge represents a thing or product that can be assessed independently of any consideration for its production; and that science may be assumed to represent the highest form of knowledge.⁷ Instead, critical realism provided a framework for constructing a research agenda for exploring how a set of underlying processes and engagements have actively shaped and re-shaped the BCLT as a social object as well as the collection of actors linked to its place in the local housing sector. As such, the initial benefit of using an approach such as critical realism allowed for a later reflection on the information that had been revealed at which time the governmental aspects of the land trust and the governing arrangement in Burlington's housing sector surfaced.

The process of conducting research in the social world encounters challenges that can not be remedied by establishing a fixed or controlled environment, such as is the case in positivistic inquiries of the natural sciences. The social world represents an open, complex system that is both stratified and emergent, and differentiated and changing.⁸ As a result, our capacities as social researchers to know *how* our objects of analysis *are* within that world are both possible and uncertain. In this sense, the capacity to

⁷ Andrew Sayer, Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach (London: Routledge: 1992).

⁸ Roy, Bhaskar, The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences (Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd., 1979).

understand, and more importantly, to *explain* the context of a social object requires an intimate connection between knowledge and practice from the very beginning.⁹

The positions that are articulated through the critical realist literature create an open possibility for exploring the effects of political economic restructuring on local governing relations and concomitant governing arrangements. In order to reveal the local dynamics in Burlington that both contributed to the fostering of a progressive local housing strategy, and that have supported the place of that strategy for the past two decades, it is important to establish an analytical framework which focuses on the process of governing and the roles of those involved in that process. The concern for governing relations and processes articulated through the governmentality literature prove to be effective in this regard.

Through the governmentality literature, thinking about the meaning and impact of governance in specific contexts and through specific relations moves beyond a consideration of power and authority as a set of self-evident aspects. Instead, the notion of an 'analytics of government' is forwarded as a process of studying how certain situations, issues and relationships are governed, how governing regimes emerge, exist and change, and how certain elements of governing arrangements affect the outcome.¹⁰ More specifically, an 'analytics of government' involves questioning the type of governing authority or regime of governing practices, the forms of knowledge employed by and produced through the governing regime, the role and capacity of the regime's technical components, how the entity to be governed is revealed and re-constructed through the practices of government, and what the specific goals and motivations of the

⁹ Sayer, 1992.

¹⁰ Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London: Sage Publications, 1999).

regime are as a source of government.¹¹ At a further level, an ‘analytics of government’ also provides a manner for thinking about the consequences resulting from a set of governing practices.

The activities that have defined the space of the third sector network of housing and urban redevelopment agencies represents an example of a regime of governing practices that has organized around a specific set of mentalities for governing certain urban matters in Burlington. The relation between the BCLT and municipal public offices are a further example of a regime of governing practices, in this case focusing on the government of housing concerns for a low-income community. An ‘analytics of government’ takes concern with questioning how such regimes emerge and take the form that they have, how different sources have contributed to the development and maintenance of the regime, what forms of knowledge the regime employs and produces, how its technical components function, and how the goals of the regime have been constructed.¹² This not only acts to reveal the nuances of socio-political relations and mechanisms that have developed to facilitate governing practices, but also how certain mentalities of government are constructed, maintained and transformed. Instead of treating a specific context as an ideal or less than ideal set of relations and practices, the perspective of an ‘analytics of government’ examines how we govern and how we are governed.¹³ That is rather than looking at the case of Burlington through the lens of a grand theory of power, authority, or the state, an analytics of government offers a basis for thinking about how the context of urban governance in the city contributes to and is reinforced by the housing and urban revitalization activities of the third sector.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Sayer, 1992.

As researchers, we tend to approach our objects of analysis with a degree of theoretical pre-conceptions and values that are our own. Furthermore, as we come to learn and understand more about the context of the object that we are specifically concerned with, our original positions and perceptions are susceptible to modification or enhancement. The production of knowledge through social research is not a static condition. Instead, it represents an essentially *social activity* that creates an opportunity to engage both the researcher and the object of analysis in a dynamic interplay. In the context of this project, my research not only creates an environment through which I may question how the BCLT (as my object of analysis) is in reality, but also a capacity to understand more about myself in relation to it.¹⁴

At first glance, it seemed as though the BCLT was a valuable asset for low and moderate income residents of Burlington who were motivated and able to improve their living conditions. As I began my research on the CLT model in Burlington, the social and political values that I hold made it difficult to want to challenge how effective the BCLT (as a nonprofit housing organization) was at producing and preserving affordable housing.¹⁵ Through the methodological lens of critical realism, I re-assessed my early research agenda, approaching the BCLT from a theory/value laden position while looking to the governmentality literature in my attempt to explore and explain the set of relations and processes that were and continue to be involved in governing the city's housing concerns. More specifically, the analytical features of both critical realism and governmentality provide a means for raising a variety of questions about the role and

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The selection of literature dealing with alternative housing models paints the BCLT as the organization which best exemplifies the positive benefits that a CLT initiative can bring to an urban community.

place of the BCLT in the context of its localized social reality and as an outcome of a set of events at a broader scale.

By approaching the BCLT as both a social object linked to a broader program of political economic restructuring and as a representation of a place-specific political discourse, my project moves beyond superficial descriptions to question why and explain how the BCLT has transformed the process of producing and preserving affordable housing opportunities. By focusing on the set of observable and unobservable events that have, and continue to unfold through the BCLT's housing activities, my initial theoretical/normative assumptions about the BCLT can be adapted or solidified as a means to explaining the place and dynamics of third sector housing in Burlington.

The data that I collected came from both primary and secondary sources. Early in the research process, I noticed that most of the literature, documents and internet resources that discussed third sector housing and the BCLT spoke very little about the challenges, conflicts, and short-comings of the organization throughout its tenure. Instead, almost all of the resources that I was encountering posited the BCLT as the proto-typical third sector housing organization that other urban centers may seek to emulate in the process of responding to their own affordable housing concerns. By combining the methods of literature and document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and direct observation of the social/physical environments that have been the objects of the BCLT's focus and efforts, I established a research agenda that provided a means to explore the accuracy of secondary reports.

Whether a research project is developed through a single method, theory, or investigation or through multiple techniques in a process of triangulation, one of the

primary goals of the researcher is the search for a pattern of consistency. While the social world does not represent the fixed or controlled environment of a laboratory to replicate findings, the process of evaluating claims about how a social object is constituted in reality must attempt to draw parallels between the senses and references of primary and/or secondary sources involved in the study. This can be difficult when taking into consideration the rather subjective epistemological condition of the social world. The capacity to know a social object to the point of being able to explain how that object is in reality is not an objective exercise. That said, while the notion of 'truth' may be a rather elusive concept, there none the less remain certain ways of knowing and understanding a particular social object that are more effective at explaining the real context of that object than others. For example, certain groups or individuals that have been actively involved around the same (or similar) social object for a number of years are likely to put forward the most accurate representation of that specific social object. In my analysis of the BCLT, a series of interviews were conducted with representatives of local housing organizations and political offices that can be said to have a high degree of awareness for the housing activities in Burlington and the place of the BCLT in the local and regional housing sectors.

The majority of information that I have collected and analyzed in the case of the BCLT is qualitatively oriented and concerns processes, events, relations, and episodes rather than drawing from statistical aspects. This study is organized in accordance with an 'intensive' research design that allows for a focus on a particular case and a process of questioning how a social object exercises certain causal powers in that context.¹⁶ Instead

¹⁶ The concept of an 'intensive' research design is opposed to an 'extensive' research design which is concerned with discovering common properties and general processes across a population as a whole.

of developing ambiguous, aggregate-level classes for analysis, an intensive research design is concerned with identifying how specific individuals or groups relate to one another and contribute to a particular social condition through causal powers. Some research designs force the researcher to establish who and what will be studied in advance, leaving little space for altering approaches to research practices as previously hidden ideas or objects are brought to the surface. I have selected an intensive research design as it provides a degree of flexibility in research practices and “an acknowledgement of the need to develop research procedures which do not inhibit learning-by-doing.”¹⁷ Although an intensive design provides my research project with a framework for assessing and explaining how a set of localized processes and relations have affected the context of the BCLT’s operations, my findings should not be interpreted as universal representations.

Research Methods

This research project developed from an initial interest in looking at the decaying state of inner city housing in Winnipeg (the city which I come from), and the various activities which have surfaced in response to these conditions. After spending the summer of 2003 in Winnipeg working on a project which concerned the issues of housing and homelessness in the city, I realized that my initial intentions would not materialize. Conversations with local activists, academics, and public officials revealed that a project such as the one that I was proposing would encounter many caveats with regard to the limited availability of information.

Sayer, 1992.

¹⁷ Ibid, 245.

That said, one neighbourhood-based organization had been experimenting with the community land trust model as a means to deal with a deteriorating physical and social landscape in a central area of the city, and the recent hikes in rent and housing costs. At the time, the particular organization was still in the process of working out the details of its CLT arrangement, making it an unlikely candidate for a master's thesis. Fortunately, there were a handful of people in the city with an interest in housing-related issues that were able to direct me toward a number of resources concerning the history and nature of the CLT model, and a list of North American cities that had developed the model.

As I began to concentrate my efforts on becoming more familiar with CLTs as an alternative housing strategy, I found that a limited amount of research had been done on CLTs, mostly involving the same group of individuals and organizations. In one sense this felt like a set-back as I had moved away from the case of Winnipeg for the very reason that there was not a sufficient quantity of accessible information. However, as I became more immersed in the topic, I was able to collect a dependable quantity and quality of information to construct the beginnings of my analysis. The Faculty of Architecture's (City Planning) library at the University of Manitoba, the Urban Institute (University of Winnipeg), and the internet proved to be valuable resources in the early stages of collecting secondary sources on housing, cities, and CLTs. Furthermore, publications released by the Institute for Community Economics (ICE) provided comprehensive and essential materials throughout the writing of this thesis.

When I determined that I would have to look outside Winnipeg for a more appropriate case study, I hoped to find another Canadian city that had successfully

worked with the CLT model. In the end, I encountered the same problem that many researchers wishing to focus on an urban Canadian context come across. That is, the bulk of the literature on CLTs concerned American case studies, the most prominent of which happened to be Burlington, Vermont. As I continued to come across the case of Burlington in the CLT literature, I began to investigate the socio-political context of the city by conducting a variety of information searches over the internet.

For the most part, I assumed that Burlington, and Vermont in general, were representative of a more conservative element (socially and economically) dominated by a rural-oriented space of serene, picturesque landscapes that acted as havens for the upper and middle classes of the American Northeast. As I began to explore the contexts of Burlington and Vermont more closely, my original perceptions were partially confirmed. There were definite signs that the geographic and economic conditions of the city and the state reflected a lucrative character. However, as I uncovered more about the historical and socio-political dynamics of the area, these perceptions barely scratched the surface. Through further research, I determined that Burlington constituted a small urban center that had been governed by a progressive, socially conscious regime for over twenty years. Aside from the revelation that Burlington had in fact been a relatively progressive center for over two decades, it also became apparent that the state of Vermont had a history of social and political activism, specifically in regard to its history of town-hall politics and local concerns for conservation and preservation. However, it was also revealed that many residents of Burlington were finding it increasingly difficult to afford to live in the city. As the cost of living in and around the Greater Burlington Area has escalated over the past two decades, wages for those at the middle and bottom ends of the socio-

economic strata have remained stagnant. This has been compounded by an increasingly deteriorating urban housing stock, and the fact that there has been very little new housing production in or around Burlington during the same period. That which has been produced has for the most part been beyond the economic capacities of those in greatest need.

With local housing concerns at the forefront of the political agenda, it became clear that Burlington offered a unique urban example of practically engaging city residents, third sector organizations, and elected officials in an attempt to respond to rising costs of living, threats of gentrification, and the social and physical decay of local neighbourhoods (with a major focus on the neighbourhood to the north of the downtown area). Through a combination of personal intrigue, a predominant presence in the available literature, and the amount of time that the city had been working with the CLT model, Burlington (and in particular, the BCLT) was selected as the most appropriate case study for this project.

The limited quantity of data on the BCLT was not necessarily a problem that concerned me, as that which was available was rather comprehensive. What I was concerned with was the degree to which the majority of analyses consistently claimed that the BCLT represented a 'successful' case of initiating a third sector housing strategy. Between my lack of familiarity with Burlington or the BCLT, and the relative uniformity of claims being made in the housing literature, it was clear that my study would be enhanced by traveling to Burlington to establish a first-hand account of the BCLT's role in providing and preserving affordable housing options. This would also provide me with

an opportunity to utilize the resources of local institutions that would not be readily available in Ottawa.¹⁸

The time that I spent searching the internet for resources and narratives about Burlington and the BCLT helped to direct my attention to a number of public offices and housing organizations working at the local and state level that were closely affiliated with the land trust. Prominent individuals associated with these organizations were later selected as possible interview candidates. Prior to returning to Ottawa in the fall of 2003, I prepared the required documentation for receiving ethics approval from Carleton University. This study received ethics approval in July, 2003.

Upon receiving clearance from the ethics committee at Carleton, I contacted the individuals whom I selected as possible interview participants. Eight different organizations/offices were selected as possibilities for interviews, with a ninth office added to the list upon my arrival in Burlington. To ensure a broad spectrum of representation, I selected individuals and agencies that represented the city, the state, the federal government, local nonprofits and community leaders. An even number of men and women were interviewed.

I first contacted the group of potential interview participants through a mailed letter detailing who I was, an introduction to the project that I was looking to conduct, and why I was asking for their participation in the study. Two weeks after I sent out the letters, I contacted each of the potential candidates by phone and email to re-introduce myself, to establish whether they would be willing to participate, and when (in the last week of September, 2003) I could hold the interview. Each of the potential candidates

¹⁸ The main library at the University of Vermont, the Burlington Public Library, and the Burlington Free Press archives provided ample sources of information regarding major political and housing-related events in the city and involving the BCLT.

that received notices indicated that they would be willing to volunteer their time and to share their experiences.¹⁹

I originally structured the interviews so that each participant would be asked the same set of direct questions in the same order (other than minor deviations for the BCLT representative). At the time, I was still not clear what the central focus of my project would be. That is, it was my intention to use the interviews as an opportunity to provide me with enough information, or confirmation of that to which I was already aware, so that I could narrow down exactly what the object of my analysis would be. With this in mind, I tested the questions that I devised on a number of fellow students with a limited amount of knowledge about housing, the CLT model or Burlington. This was done purposely to show whether or not the questions that I constructed were clear and articulate, even to those with a limited or lack of knowledge about the specific topics. While the feedback that I received was positive, the majority of students suggested that I revisit the literature on qualitative interviews and interviewing strategies, particularly given my uncertainty about how I would be analyzing the data I received.

Prior to leaving for Burlington, I revised the structure of my interviews in line with a nonscheduled standardized interview format. According to Raymond Gordon, “the nonscheduled interview gives the interviewer some choice as to the order of the questions, freedom to attempt alternate wordings of the same question, and freedom to use neutral probes if the first response to a question is not clear, complete, or relevant.”²⁰ This type of interview format provided me with an opportunity to conduct an exploratory

¹⁹ Copies of the letter of information, the informed consent form, and the research instrument used for the interviews have been provided in the appendices.

²⁰ Raymond Gordon, Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques and Tactics (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1975), 61.

dialogue while at the same time assuring that a certain number of consistent questions were asked of each of the interview participants. In reconfiguring my approach to the style and structure of the interview, I established a manner for balancing my control of the interview and the questions being asked with a recognition that those participating in the interviews had a closer attachment to and awareness of the city, its politics, and the activities of the BCLT than I did at the time. Upon making the necessary changes to the structure of my interview questions, my objectives in holding the interviews were to see if people's responses would be consistent with or challenge that which had been reported in the literature, and to allow for responses that revealed the social and political nuances of living in or around Burlington. Had I not adjusted my approach to the interviews, it is likely that I would have only been able to achieve my first objective. Thus, it was essential that I not restrict participant's responses to rigid style of questioning.

The majority (six) of the interviews were held at the offices of the interview participants. Two of the interviews were held at participants' residence, and one interview was held in a car while I received a driving tour of the city and the various projects (past and present) in which the BCLT and other local housing organizations were involved. Although I originally estimated that the interviews would last between 45 minutes and one hour, a few of the interviews lasted for close to two hours. Despite the fact that more than half of the interviews were held in office/professional settings, I made a conscious effort to keep the dialogue and atmosphere as casual as possible. Each of the participants agreed that I could tape-record our conversation. Judging by the willingness of the participants to go over and above the basic questions that I put forward to them, I do not feel that tape-recording the interviews compromised the quality or accuracy of

what I was told. Furthermore, in most cases, our conversations would carry on well past the time that I turned off the tape-recorder, yet would not change in the tone or from the subject matter that we were speaking about while the tape was running.

Once I completed all of the interviews, I was able to reflect not only on what was said during each of the interviews, but also on the implicit dynamics between I as the researcher/interviewer, and the participants as my subjects for an hour or two. The participants whom I engaged in this project held prominent positions within the housing sectors or political offices of Burlington and Vermont. Thus there was a small likelihood that they would be intimidated or feel inferior to myself as the researcher. At the beginning of each interview, the participants openly responded to my questions, but seemed uncertain as to how aware I was of the current and historical housing debates in the United States and in Burlington. In the majority of the interviews, participants would ask me certain questions to possibly test my level of awareness or to assert their place and knowledge in relation to myself. Once the participants were comfortable with the background knowledge that I was coming into the interview with, they not only seemed more at ease with themselves, but also appeared to accept me as less of an unformed, naïve outsider and more so, as an educated student seeking to expand my knowledge and awareness of urban matters.

I returned to Ottawa in the beginning of October, 2003 and began the process of transcribing each of the interviews. Despite the fact that I was dealing with only nine interviews, they represented hours of conversation and a large amount of data making the process of transcription a time consuming effort. I unfortunately was unable to return the transcribed copies of the interviews to the participants, primarily due to temporal and

financial constraints. Whether I have directly or indirectly applied the ideas that were exchanged during the interviews, I have attempted to capture the specific particularities of each conversation, and not reduce one participant's thoughts and perceptions to a scale below any of the others. That said I have identified a high degree of consistency across the responses that were given to most of the questions throughout the nine conversations. I did not come across any responses or ideas in one interview that were radically different from the others, though some participants were able to reveal more nuanced, specific dynamics than others.²¹

The central concern of this project has become more established with time and as a result of the knowledge shared by those with a political, residential, and emotional attachment to the city of Burlington and the housing concerns of its residents. The lived experiences of those who have contributed to and understand the conditions of third sector housing in Burlington have greatly influenced the quality and length to which I have been able to develop my own ideas in the following pages.

²¹ The exchanges of information that were more in-depth were often linked to how long the participant had been living in or around Burlington, or to do with the nature of the organization or office that they were representing.

Chapter Two: Theorizing a Progressive Governing Discourse

Introduction

Over the past two decades, social and political action has increasingly drawn upon the resources of local authorities and the commitment of local actors. This has greatly impacted the space and context of locally-based social matters such as education, health care, local labour relations and activities around the production and preservation of affordable housing. While America's cities have shouldered an increasing burden of responsibility for the welfare of their residents, they have (in most instances) lacked the fiscal and legislative means to effectively respond to the diversity of socio-economic concerns and physical decay of local environments. In response to the changing territory and dynamics of urban governance, more than ever before, local officials are entering into creative and often progressive partnerships with private for-profit and nonprofit organizations and neighbourhood-based groups to expedite political programs and respond to the social concerns of local residents.

Through a progressive political discourse that has highlighted elements of community and civic engagement along with a promotion of local ownership and empowerment, Burlington has been identified as one of America's most 'livable' and 'progressive' cities. As such, public authorities in the City of Burlington have constructed a space for local third sector organizations to become the primary actors managing and delivering formerly public services, specifically in areas concerning housing and urban revitalization. The impetus for developing a community land trust (CLT) in Burlington over twenty years ago pointed to a set of locally-based concerns for the production of affordable housing, the preservation of housing and its affordability,

and the protection of those individuals excluded by the barriers and devices of the private real estate market. At another level, the land trust represented an instrument of social management and organization that was believed to compensate for the impact of a restructured political economy of socially-assisted housing in the United States. That said, rather than governing upon citizens through mechanisms and programs of social control, the dynamics of the land trust signified a shift toward a condition of governance that sought to exercise control by enhancing the place and capacities of certain individuals to efficiently and effectively manage their own affairs. By creating housing opportunities and providing housing-related services such as low-interest mortgage financing or homeownership counseling services, the land trust actively engaged a pool of residents through their common interest in accessing decent quality, safe, affordable housing. In my analysis of how the land trust developed and has remained a staple of the local housing sector in Burlington, my thoughts are developed through a concern for the governing arrangement and set of processes that have facilitated such a context.

This chapter reflects on the set of ideas that have supported my analysis of the re-configured spatial, social, and political processes of governing the housing concerns of low and moderate income residents in the City of Burlington. To facilitate an exploration of the notion of the progressive city and to engage an analysis of the changing relations and processes of governing local housing matters in the City of Burlington, this chapter will develop the works of neo-Foucauldian scholars that have focused on the concept of governmentality. Taking concern with the exercise of political power, the governmentality literature offers a research agenda that is less focused on *what* the 'real' circumstances of society are and instead seeks to explore and explain *how* a collection of

mentalities, philosophies and other machineries impact the functioning of 'real' situations and the behaviours of 'real' political subjects.²² That is, governmentality does not seek to prescribe a theory or ontological condition but rather looks to explain or describe how certain relations and processes effect social outcomes. Within this thesis, it is my contention that the shift toward neo-liberalism has produced a space of possibility for exploring alternative, progressive governing arrangements between public and private actors, particularly at the urban scale. For the purposes of my analysis, I do not employ the notion of governance (or governing) in a sense that is limited to the space of state institutions or formal hierarchies. Instead, I will utilize the notion of governance in a more general manner involving the over-all coordination of social relations. This understanding reflects the interpretation that has been developed through the governmentality literature, and more specifically in the work of Wendy Larner.²³ Removing the traditional attachment of the state to a concept of governing will further permit a consideration for the process of engaging, and roles ascribed to non-state actors in the local housing sector of Burlington:

For the purposes of my research, I am primarily concerned with the aspects of governmentality that have been developed to explore and interpret neo-liberalism, the effect of political economic restructuring on the pattern of social governance, and the rise of community as both a space and resource in governing. Foucault stipulated that governmentality be interpreted as an art of knowing that which is to be governed and

²² William Walters, "Decentering the Economy," *Economy and Society* 28/2 (May, 1999): 312-323.

²³ Wendy Larner, 1997, "A Means to and End: Neo-liberalism and State Processes in New Zealand," *Studies in Political Economy* 52 (spring, 1997): 7-38.

therefore knowing how to govern.²⁴ As local actors and agencies have assumed a greater responsibility for managing the issues and affairs of urban populations, it has become increasingly important for local authorities to establish comprehensive and effective governing arrangements that reflect the diversity of social interests within the city. The thoughts that have been developed through the governmentality literature provide an analytical tool for thinking about the changing roles and responsibilities of local actors and agencies in light of a broader restructuring in the relations and processes of governance. That said, Foucault's thoughts prove to be an instructive manner for approaching a case such as the Burlington Community Land Trust.

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section is designed to introduce the notion of governmentality as developed through the works of Foucault and neo-Foucauldian scholars. This section is intended to provide a base understanding of governmentality and the notion of government that is implicit to the related literature. In the sections that follow, I will develop the governmental interpretations of neo-liberalism and the restructuring of political power and social governance associated with the rise of neo-liberal tendencies. I have selected to focus on these aspects as a means of theorizing the notion of community that has been constructed through the work of Nikolas Rose.²⁵ Rose's fundamental argument is that through neo-liberal transitions in the space and scope of governing social actors, an element of community has come to characterize the organization of social interests and to represent a 'post-social' territory of identity and governance. By developing the set of ideas that governmentality offers with regard to the

²⁴ Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," In: Graham Burchell et al (Eds), The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991): 87-104.

²⁵ Nikolas Rose's thoughts on the subject of community and the restructuring of forms of social governance are covered comprehensively in the text: Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

notions of discourse, power and governance, the chapter will close by positing the changing role of third sector organizations in urban governance and the concomitant notion of the 'progressive city' as having the potential of being a governmentalized urban setting.

Understanding Governmentality

This section will introduce the subject of governmentality and its interpretation of the notion of government. The question of how we, as individuals, groups, or perhaps even cities seek to govern ourselves reveals that different ideas or mentalities of government exist, and that not every circumstance or aspect of conduct may be regulated, controlled or shaped to the same degree by a universal source of government. Through the impact of neo-liberal reforms on the space of social governance, cities have assumed a greater level of responsibility for organizing and managing aspects of social welfare and security, and for responding to the diversity of social, political and economic interests of growing urban populations. Through a case study of the governing relations and processes in the City of Burlington's local housing sector, my research questions how the local context of governance has been restructured through a progressive political discourse and the resources of third sector organizations such as the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT). To this end, the thoughts developed within the governmentality literature provide an analytical resource for questioning how a progressive governing arrangement has been constructed and supported in the City of Burlington.

Originally developed through Michel Foucault's essays and lectures, governmentality is not a theory, or a method, or a philosophy. Instead, it refers to an approach or set of strategies that are inherently linked to devices, mechanisms and relations that actively influence the shape and direction of individuals' behaviour. In other words, governmentality involves a set of socio-political processes that aim to establish "the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end."²⁶ Furthermore, Foucault has argued that as society has been 'governmentalized', "the finality of government resides in the things it manages and in the pursuit of perfection and intensification of the processes which it directs; and the instruments of government, instead of being laws, now come to be a range of multiform tactics."²⁷ The ideas first developed on the subject of governmentality represented a shift in the manner of approaching the issue of government and governance.²⁸ Through governmentality, a greater emphasis has been placed on questioning and revealing the processes of governing as opposed to more traditional analysis of social and political administration through the state and its related institutions. While the governmentality literature does not argue that the state has become a redundant form of socio-political power and influence, it does provide an avenue for considering the place and role of quasi-public, private and third sector organizations in the process of governing social matters and enhancing the place of individuals and groups as capable, rational and ethico-political governors of their own circumstances.

²⁶ Foucault, In: Burchell et al (Eds), 1991, 93.

²⁷ Ibid, 95.

²⁸ In this sense, government refers to a degree of control and influence over social and personal behaviour and action while governance refers to an interactive set of devices, mechanisms, and relations that facilitate the process of governing.

As such, governmentality represents an analytical approach that begins by examining the role and effect of discourse as a social and political activity. It has been claimed that discourse constitutes more than representations of language and meaning; that it is “not just a means of reflecting or representing social entities, relations and identities but also as a means of constructing them.”²⁹ This is directly linked to Foucault’s conception of power (see the following section for an extended discussion of Foucault’s idea of power) as an active and productive condition as opposed to Marxist interpretations of power as a repressive exercise of control grounded in the class-based social relations of capitalism. In this sense, the ends and means of governing arrangements and authorities are articulated through a political rationality (or field of discursive engagement) that is the product of particular sets of social relations (without the focus on class and hegemony found in Marxist and neo-Marxist interpretations). That said, the rationalities through which political discourses are revealed do not represent a context of governance in and of themselves. By establishing the issue of governance as an engaging process or set of processes, a governmental approach is further concerned with exposing the roles and dynamics of the technologies that represent the practical elements and tools of governing. That is, through technologies of government, political rationalities and their related discourses are mobilized, governing through the interests of specifically targeted populations. In the context of my analysis, I am most concerned with exploring how a progressive political discourse based upon notions of community and civic engagement, and local ownership and empowerment have been expressed in the

²⁹ Wendy Larner, “A Means to an End: Neo-liberalism and State Processes in New Zealand,” Studies in Political Economy 52 (spring, 1997): 13.

City of Burlington and exercised through the local governing relations, arrangements and processes between public authorities and third sector actors.

Within the governmentality literature, the notion of government is less concerned with describing an institutional setting or a theory of the state, and instead represents a process or set of processes for directing and regulating conduct.³⁰ This understanding of government presumes that action and behaviour (both on an individual scale and at a broader level) can be regulated and controlled. In this sense, conduct refers to individuals' behaviour, actions and comportment (i.e. the articulation of a set of behaviours). Through the governmentality approach, the issue of government is explored as a 'conduct of conduct' through which governing authorities seek to construct arrangements and mechanisms that engage individuals and groups in the process of their own governance. Through a 'conduct of conduct', government is said to constitute: "any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge that seek to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite and shifting ends and with diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes."³¹

The concept of government espoused through governmentality is recognized as both a rational and a moral exercise. From the perspective of rationality, government represents any attempt to shape human conduct in accordance with the rationale devised by those in positions of social, political and economic authority. Thus, the rational aspects of government refer to the modes of thought and discourse that construct and

³⁰ Colin Gordon, "Governmentality: An Intro," In: Burchell et al (Eds), 1991, 1-52.

³¹ Mitchell Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 11.

exercise political programs, and are reflected through technologies that encourage a certain type of behaviour in those with whom they deal.³²

From another perspective government can be interpreted as a moral activity. Government is moral from the perspective that human conduct is regulated, controlled and shaped according to a particular code of action. At another level, government is a moral activity in that individuals (both governors and governed) are capable of questioning their own behaviour, and in a sense governing themselves. Thus, government is not only about the exercise of authority over others, or how abstract cases such as populations or the state are governed, but also how we govern ourselves.

Through a review of Foucault's writings on the subjects of government, discourse and power, it is possible to discern two meanings of governmentality. The first describes a relationship between government as it has been explained above and other forms of power (specifically sovereignty and discipline). In this sense, governmentality refers to a process or relation that seeks to construct and maintain a condition of security for the population by directly influencing and controlling behaviour. Exercising sovereign power through the juridical and executive capacities of the state, and disciplinary power through diverse mechanisms of social and personal control, a government of individual and group conduct is achieved. It is best to think about this type of relation as a sovereignty-discipline-government series rather than focusing on the regulatory capacities of one element. That is, each relies upon and actively reinforces the others. According to one source, this notion of governmentality "encompasses those institutions and practices concerned to defend, maintain and secure a national population and those that secure the economic, demographic and social processes that are found to exist within

³² Rose, 1999.

that population.”³³ As a series of sovereign power, disciplinary power, and the government of conduct, institutions such as standing armies, intelligence services, hospitals, schools and prisons can be linked to a broad program of social control, closely affiliated with mentalities of government between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The second meaning of governmentality looks more at the actual processes of governing, and questions how different mentalities of government are constructed and how government is made possible in different settings. As the social relations and political economic structures of cities have been re-shaped by the various events and dynamics accompanying the rise of neo-liberalism, the second sense of governmentality has assumed a more prominent position as an underlying theme to an ‘analytics of government’. In this context, the idea of governmentality focuses less on the concentration of power as a means to social control, and more on engaging and implicating individuals and specific groups as responsible managers of their own circumstances. From this perspective it has been stated that “political power is exercised today through a multitude of agencies and techniques, some of which are only loosely associated with the executives and bureaucracies of the formal organs of the state.”³⁴ The understanding of power that underlies much of the governmentality literature as well as my analysis of the third sector activities in Burlington argues that:

“Power is not to be taken as a phenomenon of one individual’s consolidated and homogeneous domination over others, or that of one group or class over others... Power must be analyzed as something which circulates... It is never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hand, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth... And

³³ Dean, 1999, 20.

³⁴ Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, “Governing Economic Life,” *Economy and Society* 19/1 (February, 1990): 1.

not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.”³⁵

Foucault’s interpretation of power challenges an understanding of socio-political relations as static and bound to a given space, or as the dichotomous notion of a hegemonic, monolithic center and a collectivity of subjugated masses. Instead, this concept of power describes an environment through which multiple sources of energy and influence contribute to a diverse system of governance. Governmentality describes a set of relations that are established between social and political economic authorities, organizations, experts linked to those organizations and individual social actors. Through this set of relations, mentalities about how we as individuals, groups or larger associations could best be governed are made practical and technical, culminating in a re-configuration of the place and processes of government.

Neo-liberalism & Social Governance

It has been claimed that neo-liberalism has embodied a “profound transformation in the mechanisms for governing social life.”³⁶ Neo-liberalism has developed as a principal label with reference to the changing structure and dynamics of social governance that unfolded through the late 1970s and early 1980s in much of the advanced capitalist world. At the heart of these transitions has been the idea that “good governance means less government.”³⁷ That is, a neo-liberal agenda is said to reflect notions that a minimalist state represents the most efficient and effective governing context, and that

³⁵ Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” In: Colin Gordon (Ed), Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 98.

³⁶ Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, “Political Power Beyond the State,” British Journal of Sociology 43/2 (June 1992): 200.

³⁷ Rose, 1999, 5.

private markets and actors hold the solutions to the governing dilemmas of large-scale bureaucracies and public programs. In this sense, neo-liberalism represents an ideology and/or policy agenda of those on the 'New Right' that advocate de-regulation and privatization as a means of enhancing competition, economic efficiency and personal choice. From the alternative standpoint of governmentality, it has been claimed that the restructuring of the place and role of formal state-based authorities in governing populations and economies has introduced a shifting territory of social governance characterized by an extension of political, economic and social partnerships between public authorities and specific organizations or communities of interest.³⁸ This line of argument is particularly relevant in the case of Burlington which has constructed an active and effective space for third sector organizations to represent a community-level mechanism of social management and service delivery in the local housing and urban development sectors.

For much of the time between the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the concept of social responsibility and organization developed through the capacities of the central state. During this time, matters of social security, justice, rights and solidarity controlled by the political apparatuses of state-based institutions that "set the terms for the way in which human intellectual, political and moral authorities... thought about and acted upon their collective experience."³⁹ This is not to say that political organizing and social action ceased to exist beyond the realm of the state for much of the twentieth century. Rather, it represents an indication of the different context of governing that was

³⁸ Wendy Larner and David Craig, After Neo-liberalism? Local Partnerships and Social Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, August 2002.

³⁹ Nikolas Rose, "The Death of the Social? Re-figuring the Territory of Government," Economy and Society 25/3 (August, 1996): 329.

institutionalized between the early stages of urban, industrial capitalism in the United States, and the impact of neo-liberal restructuring on the space of governing practices. The re-invention of government through neo-liberalism has challenged traditional notions of social government and social citizenship. Through neo-liberal restructuring, processes of governing have become less about exercising control through relations such as the state and civil society, the public and the private, or communities and markets. Instead, from a technical perspective, the capacity to govern has relied upon the development and support of a set of indirect relations “for shaping and normalizing the ‘private’ enterprise, the ‘private’ firm, the ‘private’ decisions of businessmen and parents and the self-regulating capacities of ‘private’ selves.”⁴⁰ That said, “neo-liberalism does not abandon the ‘will to govern’: it maintains the view that failure of government to achieve its objectives is to be overcome by inventing new strategies of government that will succeed.”⁴¹

Within the governmentality literature, it is argued that neo-liberal restructuring has challenged the place of traditional state-market-civil society relations. From a governmental perspective, “the dream or nightmare of a society programmed, colonized or dominated by ‘the cold monster’ of the state is a profoundly limiting as a way of rendering intelligible the way we are governed today.”⁴² As such, governmentality looks beyond an understanding of government as an administrative arrangement between a centralized, sovereign political authority and a territorially bound population. Instead, it describes a socio-political context through which a set of political processes, rationalities

⁴⁰ Ibid, 8.

⁴¹ Nikolas Rose, “Governing ‘Advanced’ Liberal Democracies,” In: Andrew Barry et al (Eds), Foucault and Political Reason (London: UCL Press, 1996), In: Barry et al (Eds), 53.

⁴² Ibid, 38.

and technologies are constructed to organize, manage, and essence govern individuals, not as a collectivity of social agents under the guise of the nation, but as political subjects capable of making their own rational, responsible choices. The re-location of formerly public political programs and responsibilities to the private, nonprofit or voluntary sector has not rendered populations less governable than they were under a system of centralized control. Instead, these transitions have created different methods of translation, alliance and action than were established under the guise of social government. Rather than situating the populations of national territories as the subjects of government, the 'governmentalization' of the state and society has resulted in the proliferation of governing mechanisms and relations through various technologies of government.

The concept of technologies of government provides a tool for thinking about the rise of various third sector organizations through the space of the new social economy. Rather than exercising political power from a direct, centralized institution such as the state, various organizations have been constructed to deal with specific concerns ranging from the production and management of rental housing, to the preservation of an affordable stock of single-family housing, to offering counseling and a safe space for the homeless. While each of these areas is designed to regulate and respond to a specific category of individuals and interests, they none the less share a common governmental dynamic of attempting to construct and engage active citizens and manage targeted populations. These aspects of civic engagement and social management have been linked to the construction of governing technologies of agency (deployed from below) and

performance (utilized from above).⁴³ In regard to the roles that have been adopted/constructed by third sector organizations and actors, technologies of agency are those employed to increase the capacity to engage and empower individuals who would otherwise be repressed in their attempts to exercise their roles as social agents.

Conversely, an analysis that is concerned with technologies of performance may posit the role of the third sector as an extension of a broader governing program that is in a sense an extension of socio-political control 'from above'. That said, while each may provide a fruitful analytical tool for questioning the role and place of organizations like community land trusts in a context of neo-liberal governance, I have specifically problematized the idea of agency. For the sake of clarification, I have provided a deeper explanation of the role of technologies within a governmental perspective.

Technologies of agency refer to mechanisms and organizations that have developed as a result of the proliferation of formerly public services. They have also been referred to as technologies of citizenship, seeking to enhance and empower the self-governing capacities of individuals or specific groups.⁴⁴ These types of technologies function through a bottom-up governing structure and seek to re-construct disenfranchised and marginalized individuals as socially engaged citizens, with a larger goal of enhancing their self-governing capacities. As sources of empowerment for particular groups of individuals who come to identify themselves (hence the citizenship connection) with the space and rationalities of the specific program governing their interests, technologies of agency cover a diverse range of activities. These may include

⁴³ Dean, 1999.

⁴⁴ Barbara Cruikshank, "The Will to Empower: Technologies of Citizenship and the War on Poverty," *Socialist Review* 23/4 (1993): 29-55.

community and economic development, community policing, health services, low income housing and services for the homeless, and environmental impact studies.

Just as neo-liberal restructuring has led to a proliferation of technologies of agency, there have also been a number of technologies of performance established to facilitate governing arrangements and processes. Technologies of performance refer to those that have been established as new forms of expertise and calculation, and are utilized by social, economic, and political authorities as a means of indirectly regulating individuals and organizations. These types of technologies involve such elements as quasi-market arrangements, the privatization of former public services, accounting and auditing services, and contract-based relations. In essence, technologies of performance are designed to create a sense of transparency in governing and to measure degrees of accountability. While technologies of agency seek to enhance individuals' capacities to make choices and empower them through their specific interests, technologies of performance are designed to hold individuals accountable for the choices they make. Thus, while the first provides a resource for establishing governing arrangements from below, the second reinforces the place of authority figures and institutions by calculating the degree to which social actors have effectively managed their responsibilities as actively engaged citizens. This sense of governmentality implies that "individuals are to be governed through their freedom, but neither as isolated atoms of classical political economy, nor as citizens of society, but as members of heterogeneous communities of allegiance..."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Ibid, 41.

A Community Mentality

Nikolas Rose has argued that “a mutation, rather profound, if still uncertain, in the ways of thinking and acting that used to be conducted in a ‘social’ language”⁴⁶ has unfolded in most advanced liberal territories of government. As the contexts of social and political activity have been increasingly de-centered by neo-liberal pressures, governing practices have been re-shaped through a growing politics of community. The issue of community has been addressed in the governmentality literature as a political construction for stabilizing particular sets of relations and establishing alternative governing regimes to that which characterized the era of social government. In opposition to the unitary nature that concepts of social welfare, security, and citizenship entailed, the idea of community has developed as a more localized source of identity, responsibility and control. With the proliferation of technologies of agency at the local level over the past twenty years, communities have been constructed and regulated in such a manner that they have been made technical, or governmental. That is, according to particular mentalities of rule, communities representing sets of relations and shared interests have been established as both a resource in facilitating the processes of governance, and an object to be governed. As the contexts of political power and activity have shifted away from one of social government, “a new way for demarcating a sector for government...deployed in novel programs and techniques which operated through the instrumentalization of personal allegiances and active responsibilities: *government through community*.”⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Rose, 1996, 331.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 332. Italics in original.

The idea of community has been expressed through a number of interpretations, most of which are tailored to a specific discipline or school of thought. From a governmental standpoint, communities represent sources of empowerment and engagement, but also constitute tools of social organization through which individual members may be governed. Still, what constitutes the idea of community? For the purposes of my investigation I will utilize the understanding developed by Amitai Etzioni and employed through the work of Nikolas Rose. As such:

“Community is defined by two characteristics: first, a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals, relationships that often crisscross and reinforce one another (rather than merely one-on-one or chainlike individual relationships), and second, a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms and meaning, and a shared history and identity- in short, to a particular culture.”⁴⁸

In the governmentality literature, the re-birth of a community-based governing discourse has been directly linked to the impact of neo-liberal restructuring and the proliferation of formerly public governing responsibilities. As such, there is an important spatial dynamic to be aware of when examining the restructured context of governing matters such as affordable housing concerns. From a spatial perspective, governing through the political programs and institutions which defined the era of social government involved organizing individuals under the banner of a single space (the nation) and emphasized a condition of solidarity within that space. In this context, the diversity of social interests and associations between individuals were set aside in favour of an articulation of social citizenship.

With shifts in the space of social relations and political economic structures, individual allegiances have focused less on the idea of a national relationship for security

⁴⁸ Amitai Etzioni, *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society* (London: Profile, 1997), 127.

purposes and instead have increasingly drawn upon commitments to communities that appear less remote and artificial than the contexts established through distant political programs. It has been claimed that through the impact of neo-liberal restructuring, “individuals no longer inhabit a single ‘public sphere’, nor is their citizenship conferred upon them through a singular relationship with the state. Rather, citizenship is multiplied and non-cumulative...”⁴⁹ Nikolas Rose has described this process as the rise of a “third space”⁵⁰ of governing, offering an alternative option to the capacities of the state or the private market. In this sense, community is posited a type of natural, extra-political zone that facilitates processes of governing by drawing upon the close affinities of its members.

From a spatial perspective, community can involve a set of relations entirely localized within a single, condensed geographic environment, but can also speak to a context that spans the geographic borders of cities and nations drawing members together through a set of shared interests or mutual goals and obligations. Thus community has been identified as both a local and virtual set of relations. In the sense that community does not always represent a geographically localized arrangement, it is appropriate to think about community as the result of a network-oriented engagement that utilizes various discursive tools and technologies for connecting individuals across a broader space to the elements of a particular place.

The most important aspect of community for my assessment has to do with the idea that communities represent an identifiable space and relation based on a specific set of interests. It should be noted that simply because an individual identifies with the

⁴⁹ Rose, 1999, 178.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 167.

interests of a particular community does not preclude the possibility of the same individual identifying with the interests of another community. While a low income family may share a material interest in accessing affordable housing through a limited equity arrangement with a community of low income urban residents, they may also share a set of interests with a community of ethnic minorities, single-parents, or neighbourhood residents. There is not a universal measurement of interest inherent to the idea of community that says each member must associate one hundred percent of themselves to that community. As Etzioni has claimed, in many cases, communities can be identified which are a blend of micro-interests, that when combined constitute a political construction with a broader sense of purpose, identity, and interest.

Contemporary deployments of community represent heterogeneous, complex and mobile constructions devised through the programmatic nature of governing authorities as tools for problematizing and intervening in a number of contexts.⁵¹ For example, gay men and women, drug users, ethnic minorities, victims of domestic abuse, criminals, and lower income urban families have been re-constructed as communities of interest. As such, particular governing technologies have been established to both regulate the space and relations within each of these communities, and to enable individual community members to more effectively govern themselves within the space of community. While there is more than likely to be a sense of personal or emotional attachment between the individuals in the community, from a governmental standpoint, it is more important to look at the idea of community as a spatial and social relation that enhances the capacity to govern each individual member. This is accomplished through constructing communities

⁵¹ Nikolas Rose, "Community, Citizenship and the Third Way," American Behavioural Scientist 43/9 (June/July, 2000): 1395-1411.

as entities that can be organized, managed, mapped and classified, and whose actions and behaviours can be interpreted and explained. In essence, communities represent the grouping of individual social actors for the purpose of rendering them knowable and enrolling them as sources of self-government.

Through the governmentality literature, community is established as a device for organizing sets of social relations and governing through the interests that characterize different communities. This sense of government has been developed as the anti-thesis to an era of centralized political control and its related forms of institutional discipline. While community in a governmental sense represents a programmatic organization and understanding of a specific set of relations and interests, it does not guarantee that all communities will have the same capacities of self-governance and/or the same degree of technologies at their disposal.

In the case of socially marginalized groups, the idea of community has the potential to at once empower and exclude. From one perspective, the governmentalization of community has constructed diverse environments, technologies and relations for responding to the concerns of groups such as low income families, drug users, recent immigrants, unemployed or underemployed persons, and the homeless. However, from another standpoint, these individuals have been described as the excluded communities of a social underclass, and as such, characterized as being unable or unwilling to manage their own risk, incapable of responsible self-government, or lacking a commitment to a moral community.⁵² Therefore, an analysis of socially marginalized communities must take into account the possibility that despite the availability of specific technologies of agency for enhancing their social, political or economic capacities, the

⁵² Rose, 1996.

labeling of communities such as low income urban residents can have the effect of reinforcing the place of those individuals in a broader social context. Rose has argued that given the imperatives of neo-liberal societies, the inclusive/exclusive dynamic of community is a condition that can not be ignored. For governing arrangements to be effective and comprehensive, the have/have not dichotomy that has become more pronounced through neo-liberal restructuring must be responded to through creative and innovative political rationalities and corresponding technologies of government. That said it is far too often the case that the interests of certain communities circumscribe those of others. This not only contributes to the construction of exclusive communities, but in effect retards the potential of comprehensive and progressive government. On this note, it has been argued that the capacity of communities to act is a “fundamental issue in determining the progressive potential of local political activity... Communities must be viable and inclusive social entities with groups capable of taking collective action if the political translation of this activity is to qualify as progressive.”⁵³

The re-invention of community as a space to be governed and a resource in governing practices can not be understood outside of the neo-liberal shifts that have taken place in the context of social relations and political economic structures. While political, professional and cultural authorities continue to speak in terms of societal concerns, interests and identities, the general perception of society has become clouded with the construction of personal and political allegiances through community. Given the transitions that have occurred in the space of politics and the context of social identities, it is important to consider “the problematizations through which collective existence has

⁵³ Fran Klodawsky and Caroline Andrew, “Acting Locally: What is the Progressive Potential?,” Studies in Political Economy 59 (summer, 1999): 154.

come to offer itself to thought in the form of community, and the new representations, techniques, powers and ethical relations that have been invented in the process.”⁵⁴

Through the governmentality literature, an analytical framework is developed that enables this type of assessment and evaluation to be possible.

Progressive Potential?

Over the past two decades, the processes of governing urban matters such as housing and neighbourhood revitalization have increasingly looked toward the resources and efforts of actors in the private sector. These developments have been linked to the effects of broader structural transitions that have contributed to heightened levels of localized political and socio-economic responsibility. As formerly public services and responsibilities in fields such as health care, education, and housing have been transferred to the private sector or re-invented through public-private partnerships, the space of the nonprofit sector has expanded. While much of the attention concerning the impact of neo-liberal restructuring has emphasized concepts of privatization and de-regulation, the private context of nonprofit and third sector industries has received considerably less attention than that of the private market. Despite the predominant focus on the space of the private market, it is argued that governing nonprofits have come to play an important role in a variety of urban contexts that are quite different from the traditional place and capacity of local nonprofit organizations.⁵⁵ In many cases, these organizations have constructed governing arrangements with public and private authorities, allowing these organizations to exercise a degree of political power as opposed to simply representing or

⁵⁴ Rose, 1996, 353.

⁵⁵ Richard C. Hula, “Urban Politics, Governing Nonprofits, and Community Revitalization,” Urban Affairs Review 32/4 (March, 1997): 459-489.

lobbying on behalf of specific needs and interests from outside the bounds of official political activity. That said many have developed (with the support of public institutions and private actors) as vital sources of knowledge and expertise, and viable systems for managing concerns and delivering services.

The developments that have unfolded in Burlington's housing sector reflect the construction of a socio-political environment through which the place of local authorities, organizations, individuals and resources has shifted from earlier forms of urban governance. The rise of an efficient third sector network of housing agencies stands in stark contrast to the conventional association of politics and political power with a centralized, hierarchical power arrangement that defined the place of the state (federal government and its institutions) during the era of social government. That said I am concerned with questioning how a progressive process of governance has been engaged in the context of Burlington's local housing sector, and what this has meant for lower income residents of the city. The governmentality literature that has developed from Foucault's early ideas on the subjects of government and power is a useful resource for dealing with these concerns.

A number of sources have explored the tension between the place of the city as a space of living and a perception of it as an economic resource and space of investment.⁵⁶ At a deeper level, questions have emerged regarding the potential for cities to explore locally-based, progressive governing agendas in an era where the competition for attracting scarce public resources and private investment has become increasingly fierce. While growth-based policies and governing coalitions have been the pre-dominant

⁵⁶ Two excellent resources that deal with the space of the city in a capitalist society are: David Harvey, Social Justice and the City (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), and John Mollenkopf, The Contested City (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983).

elements in the post-Keynesian management of urban affairs, a number of urban populations have begun to organize and mobilize socially conscious, pragmatically progressive movements for responding to the social concerns being ignored by most growth-based agendas.

It has been argued that the degree of housing and economic hardships being experienced by the low and moderate residents of urban centers may provide “an opportunity to develop a broad-based progressive housing movement that can unite low and moderate income tenants and homeowners around a common interest in decent, affordable housing and adequate neighbourhoods.”⁵⁷ That said, the current pace at which progressive policy developments and governing arrangements have spread has been slow-coming. In most American cities, these movements have not amounted to much beyond periodic disturbances and resistance efforts to city planning and development programs, rent levels and tenant’s rights, or the decay of urban housing and neighbourhoods. However, in the case of Burlington, the city has mobilized local resources, socio-political relations, and a number of governing technologies that have contributed to a more comprehensive, progressive urban climate.

The concept of the ‘progressive city’ represents an urban setting where absentee-ownership and highly concentrated private powers are discouraged, and where the effects of non-representative public authorities and institutions are replaced by a commitment to “the democratization of urban decision-making, redistributive economic policies, a

⁵⁷ Emily Paradise Achtenberg and Peter Marcuse, “Toward the De-commodification of Housing,” In: Rachel Bratt et al (Eds), Critical Perspectives on Housing (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986): 475.

‘human scale’ environment, and local control of resources...”⁵⁸ As a specific aspect within the context of the city, a progressive housing strategy may be interpreted as one which adheres to the following three dynamics. First, it should seek to house the urban poor and lower income groups, and to provide them with a selection of housing locations and opportunities to reduce the concentration of poverty in specific areas. Second, a progressive housing strategy should seek to help rebuild the social and economic conditions of distressed neighbourhoods characterized by high levels of unemployment, concentrated poverty, crime, decaying and abandoned housing, and a clear presence of homelessness. The third element associated with a progressive housing strategy concerns a focus on stimulating home building and rehabilitation, and increasing the capacity of residents to become home buyers (particularly those who would be unable to purchase a home without some form of subsidy or price restriction).⁵⁹

In the literature that describes the progressive potential of urban politics, Burlington has been compared with cities such as Hartford, Berkeley, Cleveland, and Santa Monica as a group of urban centers that have contested the norm of economic growth that has dominated the space of politics in most cities. These cities are well known for developing creative, alternative policy responses and governing partnerships around political issues dealing with property relations, housing and neighbourhood revitalization, public services and enterprises, and public health and safety.⁶⁰ The political climate of cities such as Burlington should not be perceived as one that displaces

⁵⁸ Stella M. Capek and John I. Gilderbloom. Community Versus Commodity: Tenants and the American City (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992), 8.

⁵⁹ Peter Drier, “The New Politics of Housing: How to Rebuild the Constituency for a Progressive Federal Housing Policy,” Journal of the American Planning Association 63/1 (winter, 1997): 5-27.

⁶⁰ Pierre Clavel, The Progressive City: Planning and Participation, 1969-1984 (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986).

a concern for economic growth in light of a heightened social agenda. That said, progressive cities will often emphasize programs that encourage local ownership and community economic development rather than creating an environment for attracting global capital investment that is associated with absentee control and ownership. Establishing a local context that is able to balance the construction of effective mechanisms for responding to the social concerns of the population while sustaining an attractive environment for private investment and economic development is one of the major dilemmas associated with progressive urban governance. At the heart of this balancing act are two predominant issues.⁶¹ The first concerns the potential of the city to not only mobilize a progressive coalition or movement (usually around a very specific set of concerns), but more so, to have this entity penetrate the realm of public authority. This can either take place through a partnership or network of operations, or as was the case in Burlington, by connecting a progressive agenda directly with the campaign/office of a political candidate/authority.

The second concern deals primarily with the capacity of social and political leaders to encourage and directly engage mass participation in the governing process. In most cases where progressive policies and movements have been developed by political leaders or social activists, gathering public support for the initiative can be difficult. In many cases, progressive developments have been seen as potentially threatening to the freedom and well-being of the local masses. For example, when the Burlington Community Land Trust was proposed through City Hall, a collection of residents and political authorities were highly skeptical, fearing that the land trust would remove all of the available land from the private market, and drive-down the values of privately owned

⁶¹ Ibid.

properties throughout the city. While overcoming this stigma proved to be a major initial challenge for the BCLT, it has also faced the challenge of sustaining public support for its activities in the local housing sector. The process of engaging a local interest in progressive initiatives such as those that have been developed through the third sector in Burlington must target both the group of individuals who directly benefit from the services that are being provided, and a broader representation of the population to reinforce the political legitimacy of such initiatives. Confronted with the administrative and discursive challenges of forwarding a progressive political agenda, cities must seek to establish creative, constructive spaces of governance that satisfy, rather than sacrifice the diversity of interests within an urban setting.

Concluding Remarks

For the last two decades, the City of Burlington has supported an alternative, third sector housing strategy which to a large extent has revolved around the role and capacity of the Burlington Community Land Trust. As a non-market, private alternative to state-based housing programs that developed through the era of social government, and to the exclusive barriers and devices of the private market, the land trust has held a prominent position as a central resource to the processes of governing local housing concerns. Through a progressive political discourse that has been fostered in the City of Burlington, the land trust has developed as an enabling and empowering device for communities that have been challenged in their capacity to access safe, decent quality, affordable housing. At the same time, the land trust can be approached as technology of social management and organization in a restructured political economy of socially-assisted housing. To appreciate the dual context of the land trust, it is important to consider the nuances of the

set of governing processes and relations that have cemented its place in the local housing sector and the politics of the city. To this end, the ideas developed within the governmentality literature offer a viable tool through which I may understand and explain the set of processes and relations that have supported an agenda for de-commodified, price-restricted housing in the City of Burlington.

Chapter Three: The ‘How’ of Low-Income Housing

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. In the first section of the chapter, I provide an introduction to the post-war political economy of socially-assisted housing in the United States. This period is said to reflect an era of ‘social government’ through which the central state acted as the primary source of economic investment, social organization and service delivery.¹ This section will primarily focus on the changing patterns and processes through which the federal government has sought to manage affordable housing concerns. Through a broad review of the literature in fields covering urban planning, politics, geography and sociology, the second section of this chapter discusses the major concepts associated with the neo-liberal restructuring of the public role in the housing sector and the concomitant rise of progressive political discourses and social activities at the local scale. This section is designed to be an informative basis for my reflections on the specific case of Burlington, Vermont that are developed in the following chapter.

Over the past two decades, broad-scale political economic transitions have re-configured the territory of America’s cities, hitting those in the American Northeast particularly hard. As the industrial engines that once fueled the local and regional economies of these areas have cooled, the social and physical environments of urban areas in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Ohio have suffered. Although urban areas across the country have been ravaged by endemic battles with unemployment, homelessness and the deterioration of housing and the urban fabric, the shift toward a post-industrial

¹ Nikolas Rose, Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

dynamic has aggravated these concerns in former industrial belt of the United States. Further compounding these problems, neo-liberal reforms have reorganized the place and priorities of centralized political authorities, transferring much of the responsibility for managing urban social matters to state and municipal governments, and agencies representing the private sector. This is not to say that the social contexts of urban settings were in better shape prior to the early phases of restructuring in the late 1970s, but rather is to indicate that for the better part of the twentieth century, the central government and its relevant institutions actively contributed to the shaping of cities and established a degree of social control through their housing and urban development programs.

While most formerly industrial cities have found the transition to a post-industrial condition difficult to shoulder, Burlington and most other urban areas of New England have adapted through a relatively stable transition. Shifting away from a concentration in natural resource extraction and production, Burlington has constructed new spaces of productive and economic activity through the fields of higher education, information technology, and tourism. Although economic activity in the city and its surrounding areas has remained strong, the cost of living in Burlington has exceeded the means of a large portion of the population.⁶³ Exacerbating this dynamic, most of the new housing produced over the past two decades has targeted a middle and upper income buyer, and has been located in the city's suburban enclaves, many of which have become fully functioning townships. This has effectively created an urban population of moderate and low income residents, and a large quantity of older character, but in many cases deteriorating and decaying housing. In response to the changing local and extra-local

⁶³ Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign, Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Housing and Wages in Vermont (Montpellier, Vt.: VHAC, 2003).

social and political economic environments, a governing arrangement has been fostered in Burlington that reflects a locally-based, progressive shift in the political economy of socially-assisted housing. Through a politically progressive discourse of urban governance, the City of Burlington has collaborated with third sector organizations and neighbourhood residents to forward a local housing strategy emphasizing a process of 'de-commodification' and a notion of 'permanent affordability'. The following discussion sets the context for my analysis of the local developments in Burlington.

De-constructing Low-Income Housing

The post-war era of governing housing concerns in the United States may be divided into three segments: the first starting with the passage of the Housing Act in 1949; the second, with President Richard Nixon's call for a moratorium on publicly subsidized housing in 1973; and the third with the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1981. For over twenty years, the level of responsibility for managing urban affairs and governing the concerns of local residents has been increasingly passed to local authorities. Through transitions in the structure of political economic relations, the central state has assumed less of regulatory capacity in the specific fields of housing and urban revitalization than was witnessed through the decades that followed the war-time experiences. In the current context, the large spending parades that characterized the place of the federal government in the mid-twentieth century have given way to a piecemeal system of vouchers, certificates, tax credits and block grants.

As localities have been shouldered with an increased political and administrative responsibility for responding to urban matters, the number of individuals living in

conditions of what Michael Stone has referred to as “shelter poverty”⁶⁴ has increased. Individuals are shelter poor when paying a level of rent that compromises their ability to afford non-shelter necessities such as food, clothing, a means of communication, or a means of transportation. This concept moves beyond the conventional definition of affordable housing as that for which an occupant pays no more than 30% of his/her income toward a mortgage payment or rent (including bills, fees, and utilities in each case) every month.⁶⁵ Throughout much of the literature concerning housing issues and at the base of federal government programs for housing subsidies and assistance, affordable housing is determined by the 30% ratio, and as such, will be the definition to which I will adhere. While those in the lowest strata of income earnings have undoubtedly faced the greatest challenges accessing affordable housing, Stone’s notion of the shelter poor is instructive for thinking about the number of people living beyond their means, whether by choice or chance. The combination of a changing structure of governance and an exacerbated interest and need for an accessible and affordable stock of housing has led analysts to question the potential of a socially-oriented, community-based strategy for providing housing opportunities to low and moderate income earners. Before I discuss the aspects linked to this proposal, I will provide a review of the changing context of governing housing through the past half-century.

In the immediate after-math of the Second World War, the United States suffered from an absolute shortage of housing brought to bear through the effects of the Depression era, war-time spending efforts, and a returning population of veterans. With the further uncertainty of a post-war economy, the majority of public resources and

⁶⁴ Michael Stone, *Shelter Poverty* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 32.

⁶⁵ Kathryn P. Nelson, “Whose Shortage of Affordable Housing?,” *Housing Policy Debate* 5/4 (1994): 401-442.

assistance was directed toward private builders and lending institutions, in effect stimulating the birth of suburbia. Government spending on infrastructure programs and highways laid the pathway exiting the city, exacerbating the decline of inner city housing, the social and physical decay of urban neighbourhoods, and reduced levels of public services for the poor and low income residents that remained in the bounds of the city.⁶⁶

In 1949, the federal government passed The Housing Act which promised a “decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.”⁶⁷ Altruistic in its formal intentions, the Housing Act laid the groundwork for two major developments in political economy of housing in the United States. First, it re-invigorated the public housing program (originally conceived through the 1937 Housing Act) that had been shelved during the war as a mechanism for economic stimulation and as a response to the housing demand and levels of unemployment caused by the massive numbers of returning veterans. The President at the time, Harry S. Truman, was a staunch supporter of the public housing program. In conjunction with the passage of the Housing Act, President Truman and his allies in the Congress authorized an agenda that was to produce 810,000 subsidized housing units (nation-wide) by the middle of the 1950s.⁶⁸ However, as one of the more politically contentious issues at the time, congressional opponents of the public housing agenda were both a bureaucratic and financial barrier to the construction goals. A decade after the original goal of 810,000 units was espoused, less than a quarter of the units were in place.

⁶⁶ Stone, 1993.

⁶⁷ Charles J. Orlebeke, “The Evolution of Low Income Housing Policy, 1949-1999,” Housing Policy Debate 11/2 (2000): 489.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

From another standpoint, the Housing Act provided the basis for the infamous slum clearance and urban renewal programs which unfolded through the following decades. Through the Housing Act, an urban redevelopment program was established that encouraged strengthening downtown areas by effectively removing the blighted neighbourhoods and industrial zones around them. That said, groups supporting these programs (such as private real estate interests and financial institutions) showed little compassion or concern for re-housing the many residents displaced by the bulldozing experience. The series of initiatives that unfolded in most American urban centers after 1949 have been criticized for “destroying more housing than (they) produced, moving out the poor to make room for the rich, and using public funds to purchase and clear valuable land near central business districts for the private benefit of downtown merchants, property owners, and the business community.”⁶⁹

Throughout the 1950s, the federal government remained idle in the process of providing new, affordable housing or rehabilitating the deteriorating conditions to which most major urban centers bore witness. Instead, massive projects of publicly supported and encouraged suburban expansion provided an exodus for those who could afford the price-tag as well as a system of support for a lagging post-war economy. Public investment in cities at the time continued to focus on the process of slum clearance as a means to re-define the place of the central city as an attractive locale for capital investors and corporate engines. As the urban renewal programs devised through the federal system hit full swing through the 1950s, and into the following decade, urban activism and political pressures began to mount.

⁶⁹ Peter Marcuse, “Housing Policy and the Myth of the Benevolent State,” In: Rachel Bratt et al (Eds), Critical Perspectives on Housing (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 254.

Through the 1960s, cities such as New York, Chicago, and Detroit were subject to mass riots stimulated by racial tensions, economic inequalities and ghettoization. Finding that the post-war concern for urban redevelopment had little to do with the interests of low income, working class, and minority residents, civil and welfare rights leaders led efforts along with those of a growing tenants movement and an activist fever at the neighbourhood level to confront political leaders on the matter of a decade and half worth of neglect. One of the first developments to come from these encounters was the section 221d3 program which provided a below-market interest rate (BMIR) for the development of affordable rental housing. This program targeted the group of urban residents who (based upon their incomes) did not qualify for public housing, yet lacked a sufficient or reliable income or credit history to access decent housing through the private market. Through the guaranteed low interest rates (set at 3%), developers passed the savings on to residents in the form of rents levels that were between 15-20% below those of unsubsidized housing.⁷⁰ Of particular significance was that the program created the potential of directing public support toward a range of developers including private 'limited dividend' corporations, nonprofit organizations, cooperatives, and public agencies other than public housing authorities. The limited profit aspect that was linked to 221d3 housing had many potential developers second-guessing a shift toward affordable housing production. However, following changes to the federal tax code which allowed property owners to claim an accelerated depreciation on rental properties, private interest in the program increased.

In response to the diversity of successes and failures linked to the 221d3 program, and the new found political discourse of the War on Poverty, the federal government

⁷⁰ Orlebeke, 2000.

reconfigured its urban focus through the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965. As a direct result, the Housing and Home Finance Agency that had been responsible for public housing, urban renewal, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA) became the cabinet-level Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Through the shifting political frontlines, the federal government sponsored the Rent Supplement and Leased Public Housing programs, both of which targeted lower income urban residents as opposed to the moderate-income target of 221d3 housing. Although working from the same basis as conventional public housing, the two new programs looked to disperse the urban poor across the city rather than exacerbating the all too real matters of ghettoization and segregation. By the time the 1968 Housing Act was passed, the federal government appeared more willing to confront the social problems related to urban housing than it had in previous decades. Showing a clear ambition to right the wrongs of urban renewal and socio-economic inequalities, the 1968 Housing Act aimed to produce or rehabilitate 26 million units across the country over a ten year period (6 million of which were to be dedicated to low and/or moderate income occupants). Through sections 235 and 236 of the Act, eligible persons seeking to purchase a home could access subsidized mortgages (with rates as low as 1%) insured by the FHA, and the original guaranteed low interest rate of 3% for the production of affordable rental housing was lowered to 1%.⁷¹

The Housing Act of 1968 carved the way for public-private relations in the production and rehabilitation of housing in cities. Through the next five years, the number of subsidized units increased exponentially from any other period in the post-war era. A combined production figure of subsidized housing for the years 1969 and 1970

⁷¹ Michael Stone, "Housing and the Dynamics of U.S. Capitalism," In: Bratt et al (Eds), 1986: 41-67.

was reported at 628,000 units.⁷² By the early 1970s, more than one million Americans were living in some form of subsidized housing. The vast majority of subsidized housing made available during this period was the result of private development, supported through the coffers of the federal government. This represented a marked shift from the earlier affordable housing activities that were concentrated entirely within the bounds of public institutions. While the social and physical environments of America's cities improved from their early post-war and urban renewal conditions, "the social costs of the transformations had been high; the opportunities for profit had been great; and public and subsidized housing projects often became instruments of regulation and repression of the poor..."⁷³

As the winds of the national (and international) political economy drifted toward a looming recession, the level of public sector engagement in housing activities dropped. While high and rising interest rates forced the cost of construction upward, public officials became increasingly concerned with the capacity of the government to manage the long-term dynamics (20-40 year investments) of production-oriented housing programs. Doubts were further raised through reports that developers, contractors, realtors and various government officials had substantially abused their access to public resources. At the same time, it was evident that the original intention to create housing opportunities for low income residents and the urban poor had not become a reality. Although low interest loans and subsidies were made available, there had not been a set income criteria attached to any of the programs, hence the failure to reach those in greatest need of housing. In 1973, President Richard Nixon responded to these concerns by ordering a

⁷² Orlebeke, 2000.

⁷³ Stone, 1993, 116.

moratorium on all subsidized housing production and support, grinding the spirit of '68 to a halt.

The moratorium imposed by the Nixon administration signaled the beginning of a shift in both the place of government as a housing provider and the process for responding to housing-related concerns. Rather than continuing the post-war crusade to respond to an inadequate availability of housing through production-oriented developments, the post-moratorium discourse focused on the inadequacy of individuals' incomes. Through voucher-based programs such as housing allowances and rent certificates, a new role for the federal government took shape. The 1974 Housing and Community Development Act created the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Programs as replacements for most of the existing rental housing programs, other than public housing. One arm of the Section 8 program dealt with the production or rehabilitation of rental housing, while the other focused on providing housing allowances for use in existing housing. In the first case, HUD devised contracts with private or public developers which stipulated that future qualified occupants would receive rental assistance that developers or property owners could then put toward mortgage financing. In the second case, local housing authorities and other housing agencies could contract with private landlords to provide units for approved households. Along with the potential for local authorities to work with private landlords, voucher holders could also take it upon themselves to enter into such contracts. In response to the mistakes of earlier programs, the Section 8 agenda included a concern for different income capacities. As such, the program ensured that occupants would not pay more than 25% (now set at 30%) of their monthly income for housing costs. By the late 1970s, the total number of Section

8 units under the control of HUD exceeded 1,150,000, establishing the program as one of the most prolific housing activities of the United States federal government.⁷⁴ However, as the decade wore on, the levels of subsidized production and rehabilitation failed to match up against the scale of activity through the early 1970s.

As the political economy of socially-assisted housing in the United States shifted, four key aspects set the stage for the retrenchment of activity that was to come in the following years. These included a move toward greater levels of private, profit-motivated development than in the previous decades; the private management, sale and demolition of increasing numbers of public housing units; a transition from 'big-government', production-oriented programs to consumer-based strategies such as vouchers or allowances; and finally, the displacement of efforts to encourage fair housing and non-discriminatory practices by free market principles.

With the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980, the level of government involvement in the housing matters of the country's urban centers was drastically compromised. In response to the cold economic climate at the time, housing and urban development became one of the most expendable departments in the federal government. In this context, federal support for housing was seen as "preferential and protective treatment of one sector of the economy,"⁷⁵ impeding the supposed efficiency of the private market. Additional funding requests for existing programs were turned aside, rent levels in subsidized housing increased, 'fair housing' legislation was abandoned, and the public housing program was placed on the scrap heap. In 1971, the government subsidized the construction or rehabilitation of over 450,000 housing units. By 1985

⁷⁴ Michael Stone, 1993.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 159.

(into Reagan's second term as President), the annual figure dropped to a mere 28,000 units.⁷⁶

As the cleansing of government assistance and involvement in housing matters unfolded through the 1980s, the affordable rental developments which had been subsidized through the 221d3 program faced the threat of being turned over to the private market. Subsidy restrictions had been placed on these developments to ensure their protection as affordable housing. However, in the early years of the 1980s, these restrictions began to expire leaving the owners of the properties free to re-develop the units, targeting a more exclusive market buyer. While many units were lost to sale through the private market, a number of cities, including Burlington, gathered community-based and local political support to protect against such losses.

Through a set of tax reforms in 1986, the Reagan Administration removed the 15 year depreciation claim on affordable rental housing that represented one of the major incentives for private investment in affordable rental projects. As a replacement for the depreciation clause, the low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) was established to provide owners of affordable rental properties with a reduction in their income taxes. To qualify for LIHTC support, property owners must set aside either 20% of the units for occupants whose income is at or below 50% of the area median income (AMI), or 40% of the units for occupants whose income does not exceed 60% of the (AMI). To this end, the amount of tax credit that a property owner is eligible to receive depends upon the income of the buildings occupants. In an effort to achieve a certain degree of equity, each state is annually provided with a per capita allotment of tax credits to encourage and

⁷⁶ Chester Hartman, "Housing Policies Under the Reagan Administration," In: Bratt et al (Eds), 1986: 362-376.

support production and rehabilitation activities. To this day, LIHTC remain as one of the principle economic resources for providing affordable rental housing opportunities.

Also linked to the 1986 Tax Reform Act were a set of measures that further exacerbated the inequities of an indirect system of housing subsidies for homeowners, reinforcing the social stigma and displacement of low income renters. Through a regressive tax system, homeowners are eligible to claim mortgage interest, property taxes, and other housing finance payments as a liability when filing their income taxes. Rather than adopting a more equitable formula of tax redistribution or recognizing or providing tax decreases for the lower income renting community, the Reagan Administration increased the benefits that homeowners accrued, cementing the place of homeownership atop the tenure pedestal. Originally designed as measure for stimulating economic growth and suburban development, and for situating homeownership as the pinnacle of urban living, the relation between homeownership and income tax benefits has effectively discouraged forms of housing other than single-family, detached units, provided a marginal benefit to middle class homeowners, and prevented lower income groups from accessing the same asset-driven public subsidies. To this day, questions about who has actually benefited from this set of income tax regulations remain a politically contentious debate.

From the early drafts of the 1949 Housing Act to the neo-liberal proclamations of the early 1980s, socially-assisted housing programs represented one of the most costly domestic aspects in the United States. While the low income housing programs of the post-war era amounted to a large measure of private gains for real estate actors and investors, and established a system of social control through which the federal

government could direct and re-direct urban environments, many lacked the depth and scale of coverage to reach a considerable population in need. As the political economic terrain of housing assistance in the United States shifted away from the space of public responsibilities toward privatized, de-regulated systems of organization and management, local authorities assumed a greater role in production and preservation of affordable housing. Faced with the possible turnover of low income housing units to a speculative private market, innovative community-based housing activities and public-private partnerships at the local level began to take form.

Recent developments in the political economy of socially-assisted housing have focused a greater degree of attention on the local scale. In the late 1970s, urban movements began to take form in the fight for tenants' rights, greater response efforts to homelessness, and for protections against the affects of gentrification and red-lining. Building on the social and political commitments of these groups, an increasing number of state and municipal governments have established dynamic partnerships with neighbourhood groups and nonprofit organizations in an effort to balance the reconfigured territory of socially-assisted housing production and preservation. In the shifting context of governing housing matters, an emphasis has been placed on developing strategies that respond to the conventional territory of the housing debate by articulating new, alternative approaches for meeting housing needs, and that challenge the commodity nature of housing and its role in the social and economic systems. These aspects have been central to the set of developments in Burlington's local and regional housing sectors over the past two decades, and will be further explored in the remainder of this chapter.

Creating Opportunities Through Alternative Resources

This section will introduce the conceptual aspects from the literature that have been devised in analyses of the neo-liberal restructuring of socially-assisted housing, and a re-configuration of governance at the urban scale. Rather than developing each of the elements that are referenced in the discussions of this and later chapters, I am concerned with establishing an understanding of the third sector and its relation to the new social economy, as well as the concept of a community land trust as a third sector device for producing and preserving affordable housing. In the literature that has investigated each of these elements, the City of Burlington has figured prominently. As such, developing an understanding of each case provides grounding for an exploration of the nuances within the localized context of Burlington.

A considerable amount of literature has been produced that examines the impact of neo-liberal restructuring on the spatial and social environments of the city. In many urban settings, municipal leaders have forged growth-based coalitions to attract investment opportunities and protect the economic interests of their particular city.⁷⁷ Through the 1970s, changes in the context of political economic relations were exposed as cities became entwined in a growing network of globalized, capitalist centers of activity. As the structure of social and political economic relations within and between cities was shifting, entrepreneurial policies and tactics characterized the politics in a number of urban centers, each attempting to construct a location for itself within the space of global flows. Underlying the perception of the city as an entrepreneurial center of activity is a concern for sustaining a local economic capacity by asserting the place of

⁷⁷ Stephen Elkin, *City and Regime in the American Republic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

the city in a global political economy. In this instance, local policy development and political arrangements are said to reflect a motive of economic growth. According to one source, “growth is associated with a free-market model that argues for a trickle-down theory of wealth. It suggests that the surest path to wealth and prosperity for all is a business climate unfettered by regulation.”⁷⁸ The idea of governing cities and urban populations through growth-based ideologies and policies has raised a sizeable debate as to who actually benefits from such policies and what the consequences of focusing strictly on economic growth can potentially be for urban environments and populations. In essence a tug-of-war has ensued in many urban centers between an interest in the city as a ‘commodity’ and an interest in the city as a ‘community’.

As neo-liberal tendencies have challenged the space of urban social and political economic relations over the last twenty years, a growing number of cities have looked to establish progressively representative governing contexts through alternative socio-political programs and ‘bottom-up’ strategies. These types of arrangements have developed in contrast to the Keynesian systems of regulation and policy development that brought the devices of the state and the market close together in a nationally coordinated effort to resolve the social ills and inefficiencies of the capitalist system. This is not to say that all urban contexts have adopted flexible, alternative mechanisms and relations for regulating the social matters of the city, however, with the demise of Keynesianism and the re-configuration of social systems and governing arrangements, there has been an “increasing interest on all sides in new forms of ‘governance’ that depend neither on the

⁷⁸ Stella M. Capek and John I. Gilderbloom, Community versus Commodity: Tenants and the American City (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 58.

anarchy of the market nor the top-down control of the state. It is in this context that the social economy has been rediscovered.”⁷⁹

The new social economy represents a broad array of social movements, networks and organizations that operate beyond the boundaries of the state and the market. Challenging the logic of capital accumulation and the concern for exchange value within the space of the private market, the new social economy provides a set of mechanisms for responding to local and regional concerns that emphasize a maximization of social utility.⁸⁰ As an attempt to resist the increasing hegemony of capital over society as a whole, the new social economy looks to construct alternative and engaging spaces of action and service provision in areas such as education, health care, community culture and politics, sports and recreation, and housing.

The ideas, mechanisms and devices of the new social economy figure prominently in the progressive governing agendas of cities such as Burlington. That said, just as Burlington has faced a number of challenges in the effort to mobilize support for its progressive urban politics, the potential of the new social economy is confronted by three inter-related concerns represented by institutional, organizational and ethico-political dynamics.⁸¹ From an institutional standpoint, the expansion of the new social economy is dependent upon the construction of cohesive and coordinated arrangements between centers of socio-political activity at the micro-, meso-, macro-, and meta-scales. The types of arrangements and relations that are discussed in the context of the new social economy reflect the sense of governing partnerships discussed in the previous chapter.

⁷⁹ Bob Jessop, “Globalisation, Entrepreneurial Cities and the Global Economy,” In: Pierre Hamel et al (Eds), *Urban Movements in a Globalizing World* (London: Routledge, 2000) 95.

⁸⁰ Marguerite Mendell, “Local Finance in a Global Economy: Palliative or Panacea?,” In: Hamel et al (Eds), 2000: 101-122.

⁸¹ Jessop, In: Hamel et al (Eds), 2000.

Organizationally speaking, actors and agencies must seek to establish networks based upon qualities of shared information, experiences and resources, so as to promote an interaction between suppliers, producers and service recipients. Achieving this type of coordination and commitment has proven to be a difficult and in some cases overwhelming demand for urban centers to manage. Local governing authorities looking to pursue the space and resources of the new social economy enter into a realm of politically progressive discourse that is not always compatible with the interests of the local population. Whether or not the programs and components of the new social economy are able to develop and flourish is heavily reliant upon the shape and scope of local values, norms, identities and interests.⁸² Cities such as Burlington that have constructed a space of potential for actors and agencies in the new social economy have successfully negotiated the social, cultural, and political dynamics linked to developing an enhanced role for non-traditional governing arrangements. Despite these challenges, the space of the new social economy has become a flexible, effective resource in attempts to re-conceptualize the production and preservation of affordable housing in urban settings.

As the potential of creative socio-political partnerships and alternative governing mechanisms are being explored in an increasing number of urban contexts, the role of third sector organizations (characterized by and operating within the space of the new social economy) has been taken to a new level. This is particularly true of the network of third sector organizations that has established an embedded place in Burlington's housing and urban revitalization activities. Within the literature, third sector organizations represent those "that are privately owned and controlled, but that exist to meet public or

⁸² Mendell, In: Hamel et al (Eds), 2000.

social needs, not to accumulate private wealth.”⁸³ The recent proliferation of community development corporations (CDCs) and banks as well as the expansion of nonprofit housing organizations such as community land trusts (CLTs) represent examples of third sector activity discussed in the work of Osborne and Gaebler, and extended through that of John E. Davis.

Davis has identified three aspects that represent the general characteristics of most third sector housing operations. According to Davis, third sector housing involves dynamics of private ownership, a social orientation and a price-restricted set of criteria.⁸⁴ Third sector housing represents a private alternative to the regulatory nature of publicly owned housing units. In most third sector operations, the title to a property is held by an individual, a family, or a private/nonprofit corporation. The main function of the property is to meet the needs of its current and future occupants, not as a means to accumulating wealth. It is not uncommon to find third sector arrangements that are grounded in notions of pooled risk and mutual support as opposed to the individually-focused principles of the private market. Finally, third sector housing arrangements operate according to a mandate that seeks to de-commodify housing as a means to furthering its potential utility and social value. To facilitate the process of de-commodifying housing, third sector organizations construct a set of resale restrictions that prohibit the sale of properties through the private market in an effort to profit from their original, price-restricted value. The criteria of resale restrictions are designed to

⁸³ David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, Re-inventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Sprit is Transforming the Public Sector (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1992) 44.

⁸⁴ John E. Davis, “Toward a Third Sector Housing Policy,” In: John E. Davis (Ed), The Affordable City (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 1-35.

preserve the affordability of the property beyond a single generation of occupancy or ownership.

Regarding the capacity to develop and harness the potential of third sector agencies, the degree to which they are able to gather the social and political support of public authorities and local populations is of critical importance. As a governing arrangement that is relatively foreign to the conventional arena of socio-political relations (that is, those determined by a state-market environment), it is essential to build a degree of public awareness and engagement so as to maintain a level of political legitimacy. This has been particularly relevant to the context of Burlington which has supported a broad facilitation of third sector activity.

Community Land Trusts: Beyond the State and the Market

For the past twenty years, urban housing concerns have been a high priority of the third sector. Between the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the housing conditions in Burlington were affected by the dual impact of a highly speculative private real estate market and the retrenchment of public forces of intervention and support for the production of affordable housing. As a larger number of public services and social responsibilities were being down-loaded to the offices of local and regional authorities, a small group of cities (including Burlington) began to consider the potential of new governing arrangements for a more effective, and sustainable use of public resources and a more efficient means of service delivery. In response to the crisis in housing affordability and accessibility, and the looming threats of gentrification and neighbourhood decay, Burlington's municipal leaders, urban experts and local activists

constructed a space for a private, non-market alternative in the shape of a community land trust (CLT). As a third sector organization, the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT) was developed to increase the possibilities for socio-economically marginalized individuals and families to access a safe, decent quality of housing, and potentially become homeowners. Furthermore, like most third sector housing organizations, the BCLT has also sought to protect and preserve the affordability of the housing units it manages, in essence creating a stock of permanently affordable housing.⁸⁵

From a legal standpoint, a CLT is not a 'trust' but rather represents a nonprofit corporation that is chartered in the state in which it is located. From an organizational standpoint, a CLT represents a community-based agency with an open membership and a democratically elected governing board. Membership is not restricted to those occupying land trust properties, but welcomes any resident of the general area (neighbourhood, city, or county) in which the land trust operates. Most CLTs require an annual membership fee and expect all members to attend at least one general meeting per year.

Within the territory of the progressive city and the space of the new social economy, community land trusts have developed as a third sector response to the housing and neighbourhood concerns exacerbated by the exclusivity of the private market and the short-comings of former publicly regulated programs. As such, the CLT model shifts away from the traditional concepts of both private and public ownership. In effect, CLTs divide property into two components: land and housing. While the CLT sells the housing units to individuals whose income allows them to qualify for price-restricted housing, title to the land remains under the control of the CLT, acting as a steward for the

⁸⁵ John E. Davis, "Building the Progressive City: Third Sector Housing in Burlington," In: Davis (Ed), 1994, 165-200.

community/city. Those occupying land trust managed housing enter into long-term land lease agreements with the CLT paying a small monthly fee to continue living on the CLT controlled land. These fees contribute to a revenue pool enabling the CLT to purchase an increasing number of properties, which in turn are preserved as affordable housing opportunities. For a demonstration of how a land trust makes the purchase of a home more affordable see *Figure 1* at the end of this chapter.

In the process of achieving both initial and long-term affordability, CLTs face a considerable challenge in accessing investment capital. The earliest financial supporters of CLT activities in Burlington and Vermont were religious organizations and municipal agencies. This locally-based support was then leveraged by grants and loans from government departments and committees and private interests. In the current context, public sources of funding include federal programs such as Community Development Block Grants, mortgage financing through the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, Housing occupancy subsidies such as HUD's section 8 certificates, and low-interest government loans for property acquisitions and improvements. Private subsidies are provided by various foundations and corporations, church groups and religious organizations, mortgage financing through local banks and institutions, and through individual investors and resident contributions. The subsidies provided by public and private (for-profit and nonprofit) agencies serve two primary purposes in the CLT framework: to acquire land and buildings; and to underwrite the basic operational costs involved in acquiring and rehabilitating properties, managing the land trust, and developing the financial resources that underpin the organization's work.⁸⁶

⁸⁶Ibid.

CLTs are designed to establish a coherent balance between the interests of communities and those of individuals within the community. It should be noted that in this context, the idea of a community relates to both spatial and social/cultural aspects of a collective experience, and points to a set of interests shared by a group of individual actors. From the perspective of the individual, CLTs establish a condition of security of tenure. This is related to two aspects: first, by underwriting the private market purchase value of a home (as a result of splitting the title of the property between the land and the house/building on the land); and secondly, by offering individuals a long-term (99 year) ground lease agreement ensuring their place on the property for an extended period of time (provided that they satisfy mortgage and service payments and act as responsible occupants). Furthermore, CLTs expand homeownership opportunities by creating an affordable housing option for those who would not be able to access the same type or quality of housing through the private market. Finally, the CLT model enhances individual mobility by acting as a stepping-stone for individuals to move from one type of housing to another, or to shift from CLT-based housing to the space of the private market.

From the perspective of the community, the formula of splitting the value of property between the land and the structure on the land ensures that the community will always maintain control of what is developed or not developed on the land. As the legal owner of the land, the CLT constructs a degree of local control whereby it (as a representative of the community) is able to determine how the land will be used. In most instances, CLTs will look to protect the residential aspect of the property, though it is not uncommon to find CLTs that have purchased properties and developed the building

component of the property for community services such as homeless shelters, third sector offices, social service facilities and community centers.

Along a similar line, CLTs provide a mechanism for retaining community wealth whereby the original subsidy invested in the property is locked into the property for the benefit of future generations. As a steward for the community, the CLT provides a further assurance that the community will maintain a stock of affordable housing beyond a single generation and regardless of what the private market dictates. In many cases, CLTs have been established in response to social environments that have lost a sense of local control and identity through distant government programs and overwhelming cases of absentee-ownership. By directly engaging members of the community (land trust occupants, and other community members) in the governing framework of the organization, and by prohibiting a condition of absentee-ownership of land trust properties, CLTs look to re-establish the value of place (with reference to the social and physical environments) of a particular neighbourhood or broader urban context.

When the CLT model was first developed for urban settings, it focused strictly on the homeownership aspect of housing concerns. However, over the past decade, an increasing number of urban CLTs (including the BCLT) have recognized a need to expand their service capabilities and become property managers of rental housing units and condominiums. In the case of the BCLT, the rental units that it currently manages are used as housing opportunities for individuals and families collecting rental support through the local housing administration. Rental vouchers that are distributed to low income residents provide the BCLT with a source of revenue to put toward mortgage payments on the property.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the CLT model is the limited/shared equity formula that represents one of its central mechanisms. Through a set of resale restrictions (see *Figure 2* at the end of this chapter) that are embedded in the ground lease agreement between the land trust and the occupant, the owners of the structures on land trust properties can not sell their title to the building to any particular interested buyer, nor can the sale be conducted through the private market. Instead, owners must give the CLT advanced notice that they wish to sell, at which time the land trust assumes the responsibility of mediating an exchange of the title to an individual or family who meet the designated income criteria (the buyer must have an income that is at or below 80% of the Area Median Income).⁸⁷ Furthermore, each community land trust has its own policies about the amount of equity an occupant can claim through a sale process. After dealing with any remaining financial responsibilities as owners of the building, it is generally the case that occupants will regain their original investment, plus between ten and twenty-five percent of the accrued value of the building, plus the value of any improvements that they were responsible for during their occupancy (so long as the improvements were not publicly subsidized).⁸⁸ While some have labeled the limited/shared equity component of the CLT model as a threat to the private property dynamic of the quintessential ‘American Dream’, others have suggested that “the CLT does not abridge the legitimate rights of ownership; rather, it democratizes the opportunity for ownership, making it

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ David M. Abromowitz, “An Essay on Community Land Trusts: toward permanently affordable housing,” In: Charles Geisler and Gail Daneker (Eds), Property and Values: Alternatives to Public and Private Ownership (Washington: Island Press, 2000) 213-232.

possible for many to become homeowners who are denied access by the private market.”⁸⁹

Over the last twenty years, municipalities have shouldered an increasing level of responsibility for managing the social and economic concerns of urban centers and populations. In a growing number of urban contexts, the effects of neo-liberal restructuring, combined with the fiscal and legislative constraints inherent to the structures of local political institutions have directed political authorities toward progressive policy reforms and alternative governing relations. The concept of third sector housing and more specifically that of a community land trust reflect the degree to which the structure of urban governance has shifted.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has provided a review of the literature covering the political, historical and social consequences of post-war, socially-assisted housing in the United States. While the federal government continues to be the major supplier of funding for low income housing production and rehabilitation, the environment of social control reflected through such programs as public housing and urban renewal has been re-configured. In the current context of responding to low income housing concerns, local authorities, organizations and residents hold a greater potential for exploring progressive alternatives to the former programs of the state and the exclusive, profit-driven space of the private market. Despite the proliferation of such developments over the past two decades, their capacity to resolve housing-based inequalities has been partial at best.

⁸⁹ Kirby White and Chares Matthei, “Community Land Trusts,” In: Severyn T. Bruyn and James Meehan (Eds), Beyond the Market and the State: New Directions in Community Development (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987) 53.

That said, as public resources for the production and rehabilitation of housing become increasingly scarce, the capacity of urban centers to embrace alternative governing arrangements and develop flexible approaches to the social matters of the city is essential. The changes that have been experienced in cities such as Burlington point to the progressive potential of third sector strategies, and provide an example for urban authorities to draw upon.

Figure 1

How Does a Community Land Trust Make the Purchase of a Home More Affordable?⁹⁰

Assumptions:

- \$85,000 property (25% of this is land value)
- Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) financing @ 9.7%/25 yrs (fixed)
- 5% down payment required
- Insurance costs of \$250/yr
- Tax rate of \$2.25/\$100 of assessed value
- Assessed value equals purchase price
- Land lease fee equals taxes on land + \$25/month administrative fee
- Median family income for family of four = \$35,600 (Chittenden County FY88)
- Monthly housing costs are no more than 28% of monthly income

Conventional Transaction (House and Land)		Land Trust Transaction (House Only)
\$85,000	Purchase Price	\$63,750
4,250	Down Payment	3,188
80,750	Need to Borrow	60,563
717	Mortgage Payment	538
180	Taxes/Insurance	140
-0-	Land Lease Fee	65
897	Total Housing Costs	743
\$38,443	Annual Income Required to Make This Purchase	\$31,843
108%	Percentage of Median Income (family of four) Need for Purchase	89%

⁹⁰ The Burlington Community Land Trust, Community Land Trusts: A Creative Response to Vermont's Affordable Housing Crisis (Burlington, Vt.: BCLT, 1988), 6.

Figure 2

How is Perpetual Affordability Achieved?⁹¹

Note: the context of figure 1 is applied in the following hypothetical case

Assumptions:

- Property is held for 8 years
- Annual real estate inflation = 10%
- Annual wage inflation = 4%
- Annual increase in cost of taxes/insurance = 5%
- No Change in mortgage terms or underwriting guidelines
- Housing costs remain no more than 28% of income

Conventional Transaction (House and Land)		Land Trust Transaction (House Only)
\$182,200	Value at Resale	\$136,700
-85,000	Original Purchase Price	-63,750
97,200	Total Appreciation	72,950
97,200 (100%)	Owner's Share of Appreciation	18,238 (25%)
80,750	Amount Borrowed	60,562
71,512	Amount Still Owed	53,634
182,200	Sell Property for	81,988
-71,512	Pay Lender	-53,634
\$110,688	End Up With	\$28,354
\$77,260	Annual Income Require for Next Purchase	\$42,110
159%	Percentage of Then Current Median Income (family of four) Needed for Purchase	86%

⁹¹ The Burlington Community Land Trust, 1988, 7.

Chapter Four: From Mechanism to Movement

Introduction

This chapter offers a reflection on the changing space and process of social governance in the City of Burlington, focusing primarily on the efforts of third sector actors to preserve the value of place. As neo-liberal forces have challenged the boundaries and capabilities of the state to respond to social issues at the urban scale, the resources of organizations associated with the social economy have assumed a greater role in the agendas of local authorities. In the case of Burlington, a progressive political discourse has fostered the development and support of third sector agencies as vital partners in the production and preservation of housing and the broader program of urban revitalization.

The first priority of this chapter will be to discuss a set of dynamics that relate to the interview participants. Following this introduction, the chapter will explore three fundamental questions. First, how is that that Burlington has been characterized as a progressive city, and how has the progressive space of politics and social relations been sustained for over twenty years? Second, how has the restructured context of socially-assisted housing impacted the space of governing the housing concerns of lower income residents of Burlington? And finally, how have the processes and relations of governing these housing concerns manifested themselves at the neighbourhood and city-scale?

In September, 2003, I traveled to Burlington to conduct a set of interviews and to have a first-hand experience of the social and physical environments of the city. Much of what is reported about Burlington through public documents and academic resources concentrates on the purported successes the city has enjoyed with regard to its

progressive attitude toward social and political matters, the overall stability of its economy, as well as its concern for protecting green space and preserving the aesthetic appeal of the local and regional geography. I initially hoped that the interview process would reveal aspects about the city that challenged its reputation as one of “the most livable cities in America.”⁹² However, the participants’ responses to the majority of the questions that were asked echoed the praiseworthy commentary in secondary sources. In one sense, this proved to be somewhat reassuring as the information I received from secondary sources was consistent with the substance of my discussions. On another level, it was somewhat disappointing to know that I would not be the first to uncover a political scandal or condition of social unrest that had to that point gone unnoticed and unreported. Because there were so few inconsistencies in the participants’ responses I will discuss those dynamics which showed the greatest prevalence through the nine conversations. The thoughts that are developed in the following sections are formed through the experiences of nine individuals with close ties to the progressive housing and urban development program in Burlington.

While the participants identified the local efforts to revitalize individual neighbourhoods and the broader urban setting as a dynamic process incorporating many aspects, housing concerns have been identified as the primary element of Burlington’s progressive, third sector initiatives. Although a variety of third sector activities has unfolded in the context of Burlington and Vermont, this analysis primarily concerns the role and capacity of the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT). As one of the earliest third sector operations to gain momentum in the city, and as an organization that has established a close relationship with the municipal and state governments, other third

⁹² Interview: Peter Clavelle, Sept. 26, 2003.

sector agencies, private business interests, and the citizens of Burlington, the BCLT offers an appropriate case to explore. This chapter is not concerned with laying claims about the various outcomes of BCLT's operations, or with establishing a success/failure ratio to measure such outcomes. Instead, the following discussion is concerned with thinking about the set of processes and relations that have influenced or been implicated in the governance of local housing matters in Burlington. The next sections of the chapter will be used to discuss the interview participants' role in this study, and to provide a contextual introduction to the City of Burlington.

Interview Participants

After collecting a list of the government offices and third sector agencies involved with the housing and urban development sectors in Burlington, a group of nine individuals was selected to be potential interview candidates for this study. The individuals were selected based upon their level of expertise with housing and urban development issues or their position within a particular office/organization that has, and continues to be directly related to the third sector housing agenda. In August, 2003, each of the individuals was mailed a letter requesting their participation for this study. All replied that they be willing to participate.

Seven of the participants that were interviewed represented offices within municipal, state, and federally-sponsored institutions. I also spoke with representatives of a local housing and urban development consultant firm and the BCLT.⁹³ Six of the

⁹³ The following is a list of those who were interviewed and the organization/office that they represent: Mayor Peter Clavelle: Office of the Mayor; Brenda Torpy: The Burlington Community Land Trust; Sarah Carpenter: The Vermont Housing Finance Agency; Polly Nichol: The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board; Brian Pine: The Community and Economic Development Office (City of Burlington); Michael

interview participants have resided in Burlington since the inaugural campaign Progressive Coalition in the early 1980s, while the others have been active in the local housing sector for at least a decade. Some individuals such as Peter Clavelle, Brenda Torpy and John Davis- each of whom have been involved in the progressive political program and third sector initiatives from the very beginning- were able to provide a deeper historical context than others. Conversely, those who were more familiar with the recent housing and urban development agenda offered a fresh perspective on the political climate and social dynamics of the city. While the particular expertise of some respondents enabled them to provide more information about certain topics than others, each respondent's awareness of the local political environment and housing concerns of local residents produced a high quality and consistency of responses. These consistencies will be analyzed in the final section of this chapter.

The subject of the interviews primarily concerned the activities of the BCLT as a third sector organization and formula for responding to a restructured political economy of socially-assisted housing. I originally intended this thesis to be a report on the organizational structure of the community land trust in Burlington, and its formula for procuring permanently affordable housing. However, as I progressed through the interviews and later returned to assess their context, a somewhat different story was revealed. In each of the interviews, the participants described the role of the land trust as one piece of a larger third sector puzzle in the city. This forced me to reconsider my approach to both the questions I was asking during the interviews, and at a broader more personal level, to the central questions of my research.

McNamara: The U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development; Paul Dettman: The Burlington Housing Authority; Zander Ponzo: The City of Burlington Urban Planning Commission; John E. Davis: Burlington Associates (Housing and Urban Development Consultant).

In one of the interviews, the participant claimed that the third sector has carved a niche for itself in the local housing market, and that the services the various organizations were providing were of value to the city as a whole.⁹⁴ Another participant suggested thinking about the place and product of the third sector as a non-market, private alternative that created an option for a group of residents who would otherwise be severely limited in their capacity to choose where and how to live.⁹⁵ To this end, the land trust is not designed to be a 'catch-all' solution to the housing problems facing local residents, but rather creates a set of opportunities for a specific group of homeowners and renters. This forced me to reconsider my approach to both the questions I was asking during the interviews, and at a broader more personal level, to the central questions of my research. Instead of focusing strictly on the technical components of the CLT model, I began to question the place of the CLT in Burlington, the community of interests which it targeted, and its relation to the larger space of the third sector in the city and the state.

In a neo-liberal political economic order, the market is often looked upon as the most efficient mechanism for responding to a diversity of interests. The private market for land and housing in and around Burlington has remained one of the most exclusive markets in New England for the last decade. That said, the primary motive underscoring the logic of the private market deals with creating and expanding profitable opportunities. New housing starts in the city and its suburban communities have primarily resulted in single-family units and condominiums catering to the interests of the middle and upper income earner.⁹⁶ As such, the interests of a particular community have been met at the expense of a large number whose interests have not been interpreted as profitable by

⁹⁴ Interview: Peter Clavelle.

⁹⁵ Interview: Paul Dettman, Sept. 22, 2003.

⁹⁶ Interview: John Davis, Sept. 22, 2003.

private real estate developers. As the private market has reinforced a condition of socio-economic difference, the third sector has attempted to reconstruct the less-served communities as a diverse group of residents whose set of shared interests are not consistent with the communities that have and continue to be served by the private market.

Challenging the conventional territory of property relations in the capitalist system, the BCLT's limited equity formula has both constructed and responded to a particular community of interest concerned with securing affordable rental or homeownership options. Some critics have looked upon this community as one that has been forced to sacrifice the equity that accrues on property ownership through the private market, along with the pride of owning the entire property (land and housing), for the chance to live in a single family home. That said the overwhelming majority of people who were interviewed described the community that the land trust deals with as one that is concerned with the preservation of housing and communities (both geographic and socio-political), and that would otherwise be left to struggle through the oppressive conditions of the local private market or deal directly with an alienating government bureaucracy. According to Brenda Torpy, the third sector has continued to provide a complimentary role to the state and market activities in the housing sector by establishing a "selection of housing opportunities that are mission driven as opposed to being profit driven, but that still offer the level of choice found in the private market."⁹⁷

Before I explore the context of the interviews at a deeper level, the following section will discuss the social, political and spatial development of the City of Burlington.

⁹⁷ Interview: Brenda Torpy, Sept. 26, 2003.

Burlington: In Context

Nestled among the Green Mountains of Vermont and situated on the banks of Lake Champlain, Burlington has been labeled as one of America's most livable cities. With a population of just under 40,000, Burlington is a regional center of socio-cultural and political economic activity for Chittenden County (which has a population of 146,000), and is the largest city in Vermont. Burlington has been associated with a group of small urban centers that are referred to as third-tier cities. Third-tier cities represent a group of cities that have populations between 15,000 and 110,000, that are primary to the regional economic base, and that were incorporated prior to 1950 and have not tripled in population since 1950.⁹⁸

The urban fabric of Burlington took shape through the lumber and logging industries that connected it to markets throughout New England and linked its production facilities to the natural resources across the Canadian border. As a primary industrial center in the region Burlington's population was for the most part a working class population, ethnically represented by immigrants from Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Germany, and French Canadian communities.⁹⁹ Unlike many of the formerly industrial small cities which have all but dried up through the post-industrial, political economic restructuring, Burlington has remained a hub of activity in the State of Vermont.

Burlington is home to the state's largest academic and medical institutions, banking and financial centers, real estate brokerages and developers, and a lively downtown atmosphere that includes trendy shops, restaurants and cafes, and a pedestrian

⁹⁸ Beth Siegel and Andy Waxman, "Third-Tier Cities: Adjusting to the New Economy," Reviews of Economic Development Literature and Practice 6 (2001).

⁹⁹ Steven Soifer, The Socialist Mayor: Bernard Sanders in Burlington, Vermont (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1991).

marketplace. Notwithstanding the adjustments the city has made in response to broader structural transitions, Burlington (like other small urban settings) has been forced to contend with the harsh reality of having a smaller market, less capacity, less diversification and less financial and institutional resources at its disposal than are found in larger metropolitan centers. As such, the size of Burlington has made it difficult to shield the negative effects of a post-industrial political economic shift, the rapid expansion of suburban enclaves, a deteriorating housing stock that pre-dates the 1950s, and the retrenchment of federal programs and funding for dealing with the social ills of the city.¹⁰⁰

In the early 1980s, real estate speculation and inflated property values in and around Burlington began to draw the concern of a majority of local residents. While some were able to claim a prosperous return as a result of the speculative market, a greater number of residents found themselves living in an urban condition that they could no longer afford. One participant described this time as the early stages of the “local housing crisis.”¹⁰¹ At the same time that private market conditions were becoming less conducive to the interests of lower income residents, the public housing authority was being criticized for its lack of managerial competency. Furthermore, the municipal government’s (Bernard Sanders’ Progressive Coalition) proposal of instituting rent control within the city limits was turned down by the electorate. These developments translated into a local political context in which the potential for strictly private or public solutions to the local housing concerns were increasingly unfavourable in the eyes of local residents. Adding fuel to the fire, the federal government contracts through the

¹⁰⁰ See appendices for information concerning population, income, poverty and employment in Burlington, Vermont and the United States.

¹⁰¹ Interview: Brian Pine.

221(d)3 housing program which began subsidizing the construction and management of low and moderate income housing in the 1960s were beginning to expire leaving many residents who sought decent quality, affordable housing caught between a rock and a hard place.

With the onset of the 1980s, real estate values were appreciating at a rate that far exceeded the median wages of local residents. This has been a problem in many urban contexts and has continued to pose a problem in Burlington and Vermont in the current day. According to one of the interview participants, even local residents who thought of themselves as middle class were finding it difficult to afford the lifestyle they desired in Burlington's strong and exclusive housing market.¹⁰² As the property values and cost of living in the city outpaced the level of wages required to support a healthy standard, an increasing number of residents were forced to move to less expensive, but more remote areas of Vermont.

When asked about how the local population felt the city should respond to the lack of affordable housing and the growing threat of neighbourhood decay, one participant stated "something different had to be done rather than taking the same old approach to the housing crisis."¹⁰³ Brenda Torpy, the executive director of the BCLT and the former housing director of the City's Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO), claimed that the conditions in Burlington's housing sector were such that the city had to establish a system for creating housing opportunities that could preserve deteriorating units, protect against the displacement of marginalized groups, and above

¹⁰² Interview: Brian Pine, Sept. 24, 2003.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

all, establish “security of tenure.”¹⁰⁴ Burlington’s relatively small size and politically progressive environment that had been rekindled in the early 1980s attracted a group of individuals with expertise in the political economy of housing and an interest in forwarding alternative models of local community and economic development. Although the threat of social displacement was quite worrying at time, the overall condition of Burlington was such that an effective program of social action could salvage local neighbourhoods and fend off the looming threats of gentrification. Building on this space of possibility, a core group of activists and local public officials “found a test-tube that did not exist in anywhere else, and that was willing to forward a non-profit housing agenda.”¹⁰⁵

By the beginning of the 1980s, the potential impact of a restructured national political economy coupled with the demand for social and political change at the urban scale had residents questioning what the most appropriate course of action should be. At the time of the 1981 Mayoral election, the incumbent Democratic Mayor, Gordon Paquette, was seeking his sixth consecutive term in office. During Paquette’s time in office, actors in the local and regional business communities controlled a large part of the city’s political agenda. The primary effects of urban development programs during this period involved the displacement of many lower income residents of the city in order to re-construct the downtown for the benefit of maintaining and attracting business interests.

Although the Republicans did not field a candidate to challenge Paquette’s bid for leadership, Bernard (Bernie) Sanders, running as an independent candidate, brought forward a progressive campaign that focused the accessibility and affordability of

¹⁰⁴ Interview: Brenda Torpy.

¹⁰⁵ Interview: Michael McNamara, Sept.25, 2003.

housing, re-assessing the distribution of government revenues, and establishing a comprehensive strategy for promoting local community and economic development. Sanders approached the election from a perspective that the local capacity for grass-roots political engagement had suffered a loss over the last decade in the city and needed to be reinvigorated if Burlington was going to be able to effectively respond to its social dilemmas. This dynamic of Sanders' agenda was widely supported by the local ward he running in, the Old North End, and was a popular aspect of his campaign with the activist communities in the city. As the election came to a conclusion, the race between Sanders and Paquette was so close that a re-count of the tallied votes was required. Following the re-count, Sanders was the elected the new Mayor by a margin of ten votes.¹⁰⁶

What is perhaps most interesting about the progressive shift that occurred in Burlington in 1981 is its timing. In the same year that Burlington elected a Mayor who claimed to be a devout socialist, a national governing order under Ronald Reagan came to power, seeking to establish a more conservative program with regard to social policies and government spending than had been seen in decades. While the fiscal and legislative powers of municipal officials were already strictly limited in their capacities, the neo-liberal undertones in the federal government's policies on social spending and the place of private market systems would force cities to stretch their economic resources even further. Following the election of Bernie Sanders to public office, Burlington became one of the first cities in the United States to embark upon a path of constructing new avenues for achieving social governance, particularly in response to matters of housing and urban development.

¹⁰⁶ W. J. Conroy, Challenging the Boundaries of Reform: Socialism in Burlington (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990).

The political discourse that began to resonate from City Hall following the triumphant election of Bernie Sanders in 1981 has been recognized as one of, if not the most important dynamics contributing to the third sector housing activities in the Burlington. With the support of the majority of the electorate and those within the city council, the Sanders Administration provided a seed grant of \$200,000 to establish the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT). This represented a significant shift in the space, processes and relations of governing housing matters and encouraging urban development as Burlington became the first city in the United States to municipally fund a community land trust. Rather than positing the state and the market as the sole territories through which efficient and effective results could be produced, the Progressive government established a context beyond the boundaries of the state and the market that sought to encourage, engage and empower residents at and through a local setting. Commenting on the place of the land trust in the local housing sector, the former administrator of the BCLT claimed that by removing a portion of the land in Burlington from the speculative market, “the cost of the land and its increasing value will never ever be factored into the purchase of the shelter that’s built on the land... (In this way), there will always be an adequate and affordable stock of housing for Burlington’s low and moderate income people without further public subsidy.”¹⁰⁷

While Sanders’ first term as Mayor was defined less by what he was able to accomplish in the city and more by his ability to deflect criticism by opposing city councilors and private business interests in the city, he none-the-less was able to maintain his seat in the Mayor’s office for the rest of the decade. Sanders’ time as the Mayor of Burlington resulted in a series of policy developments that represented progressive

¹⁰⁷ Soifer, 1991, 130.

responses to the housing and urban development concerns of the city including the creation of the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) in 1983, and providing the inaugural seed grant for the creation of the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT) the following year. These developments were cited in the interviews as being two of the most important initiatives forwarded by the Progressive regime.

With the political transition that brought the Progressive Coalition (Party) to the forefront of Burlington's political arena, the city had a leader who was willing to listen to the concerns of the ordinary citizen, as opposed to those of a demanding local business community. Sanders' interest in raising public awareness of political issues, and directly engaging local residents in the political process, led to the creation of Neighbourhood Assemblies to represent each ward in the city. The Assemblies were designed to encourage the public to participate in the planning and development of their neighbourhood. Following Sanders' transition from municipal politics to the federal scale, Peter Clavelle assumed the reins, continuing to support the progressive initiatives of the previous administration, including an enhanced focus on the affordable housing concerns of local residents. Building on his predecessor's concern for civic engagement, Clavelle has established Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) providing residents with the opportunity to influence how the city utilizes the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding that is dispersed from the federal government. During his time as Mayor, Peter Clavelle has never moved against the recommendations of CAC members.¹⁰⁸ Other than a one-term, two year vacation from the Mayor's office (1993-1995), the Progressives have held power in Burlington for over twenty years. This is a feat not seen in many urban centers, and has undoubtedly contributed to the development

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

and sustainability of third sector in the city. Thus, the progressive environment that first developed with the fiery, charismatic leadership of Bernie Sanders has sustained the confidence of the local population for over twenty years. During that time, the conditions of the private real estate market in the city have remained strong, contributing to what one participant described as a “local housing crisis.”¹⁰⁹

Political Culture

From the early class-based conflicts that fueled political discourse in the city, to the rise of an activist political culture concerning issues of environmentalism, land conservation, and tenants’ rights in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the City of Burlington is known for housing a lively and contested political arena. The progressive climate that is the subject of this study developed in the early 1980s in response to a set of concerns about the social displacement of lower income residents, and a condition of political complacency in the offices of governing officials. In each of the interviews, participants were asked to discuss why they believed Burlington first considered the concept of developing the third sector as a space of social action and an alternative mechanism for producing and preserving affordable housing opportunities. At some point in their response, each person identified the election of Bernie Sanders as Mayor and the rise of the Progressive regime, the history of political activism and the broad political support for housing issues in the city, and Burlington’s changing demographics.

The political discourse that has contributed to the re-election of Progressive Mayors and city councilors over the past twenty years is characterized by a connection

¹⁰⁹ Interview: Brian Pine.

with grass-roots political activity and social support.¹¹⁰ At a base level, this connection and support has been reflected in the government's use of its legislative power to respond to the electorate's concerns about an exclusive private housing market, and its support for an environment that has facilitated a third option (beyond the market and the state) in the local housing market. One respondent cited three municipal policy developments that have complimented and enhanced third sector activity in Burlington.¹¹¹ The city's condominium-conversion ordinance gives tenants of rental units the first option to purchase their unit should the owner of the building wish to redevelop apartment units into condominiums. In an attempt to avoid a repeat of the displacement that resulted from government-sponsored urban housing clearances in the early 1970s, the city has also passed an ordinance requiring developers to replace (at the cost of the developer) any housing units that are removed to create space for commercial developments. The City has further established an inclusionary zoning ordinance that requires new housing developments slated for the private market to develop 30% of the total number of units as accessible and affordable housing for lower income residents. In the case of both the inclusionary zoning and housing replacement ordinances, the city has allocated the first option to purchase any housing that is produced to the BCLT. As such, the housing will not only be set aside for low and moderate income residents, but will remain "permanently affordable."¹¹²

Despite the accolades that Burlington has received locally and nationally for its housing and urban development agendas, there has not always been the same degree of support for an alternative, third sector housing option in the city. This has involved both

¹¹⁰ Interview: Polly Nichol, Sept.23, 2003.

¹¹¹ Interview: John Davis.

¹¹² Ibid.

vocal communities opposed to the concept of the land trust, as well as a shred of doubt from the government that would eventually provide the seed funding for the land trust. When the land trust was first proposed to the city government and the residents of Burlington, a group calling themselves Homeowners Against the Land Trust (HALT) rallied at public meetings and civic engagements to stop what they perceived to be a “communist plot to take control of all of the available land in the city.”¹¹³ Much of the antagonism toward the BCLT at this time had more to do with the Progressive government and its ideological persuasion than with the limited equity formula of the land trust. As the local population came to trust Sanders’ Progressive government, the level of antagonism and political conflict in the city faded. More recently, sets of socially constructed ideas about low income residents and the concept of affordable housing have led residents to take advantage of the ‘citizen-friendly’ appeals process of the city government, stalling and in some cases de-railing the construction of low income housing and third sector operations. Paul Dettman has stated that despite there being “an almost generic support for housing issues and the third sector in Burlington, the more localized an affordable housing initiative becomes the more people contest and appeal its development.”¹¹⁴

The central reason that the Progressive Coalition gained control of Mayor’s office in the first place was due to their promise to correct the growing socio-economic inequalities in the city. This included planning an effective course of action for responding to the state of the local housing market. From the perspective of the government, Mayor Sanders questioned whether the limited equity formula associated

¹¹³ Interview: Brian Pine.

¹¹⁴ Interview: Paul Dettman.

with the proposed land trust would lead to a “second class housing policy,”¹¹⁵ perpetuating the cycle of isolation and marginalization that he was looking to resolve. Beyond the concern for the well-being of low income residents, Sanders was under close scrutiny from the more conservative elements in the city council and business community to effectively manage the city’s increasingly scarce economic resources. According to one of the interview participants, Sanders’ doubts about the capacity of the third sector and the socio-economic viability of a limited equity housing formula were put to rest due in large part to the efforts and commitments of Peter Clavelle.¹¹⁶

Early in the Progressive regime, Peter Clavelle worked as the director of CEDO and played an instrumental role in convincing Mayor Sanders to examine the benefits of supporting and enhancing the resources of the third sector. When asked about the political motivations for developing the third sector, and particularly the community land trust, Clavelle stated that “we (the Sanders Administration and CEDO) approached it from a very radical perspective. That is, we needed to de-commodify at least a part of the housing in this community. We recognized that safe, decent, affordable housing was a fundamental right of the people in this community, and that housing was not a commodity that should be bought and sold like gold, oil, stocks, or pork bellies. Instead, we perceived housing to be a right.”¹¹⁷ Aside from the stories that the local authorities were hearing from residents, the regime also realized that the broader political economic context was shifting away from a nationally organized space of social governance to an emphasis on market-based structures and relations for dealing with social matters. In response, Burlington’s Progressive governing regime shifted their focus from a

¹¹⁵ Interview: Brenda Torpy.

¹¹⁶ Interview: Sarah Carpenter, Sept. 26, 2003.

¹¹⁷ Interview, Peter Clavelle.

state/market dichotomy to one that concerned the potential of the third sector as a resource for social governance building on the space and interests of communities.

Clavelle's statement summarizes much of the feelings and opinions that were expressed by the other respondents. Rather than looking at the services of third sector housing agencies (such as the BCLT) as offering a lower grade product than what could be obtained through the private market, some of the participants raised the rhetorical question of whether or not the people who would be looking to the third sector for rental or homeownership opportunities could consider a similar move if left to the private market. John Davis suggested looking at the place of the third sector in the local housing market as providing a set of rungs in a hypothetical "ladder of tenure."¹¹⁸ In essence, Davis argued that housing needs and housing interests are not the same across the board, and that the products of the private market, while offering an extensive selection, may also be interpreted as offering an exclusive selection. Challenging the concept of housing as a commodity provided the stimulus for third sector activities in Burlington, and has continued to be a hallmark of the progressive political program espoused by Mayor Clavelle.

Supporting a Progressive Agenda

With an overwhelming number of participants mentioning the role of the Progressive municipal government in the construction and support of the third sector housing network, I questioned how the progressive political climate has sustained itself in the city for so many years. What was interesting about the responses to this question was the degree to which they applied to my initial question about the beginnings and

¹¹⁸ Interview, John Davis.

embedded presence of the third sector in Burlington's housing market. In one instance, a participant cited the mobilization of an activist tenants' movement in the early 1970s as a catalyst for the "politicization"¹¹⁹ of urban housing concerns. The local tenants' movement successfully brought together socially and politically active middle class residents and lower income individuals in a collective effort to fight rent increases, unjust evictions, and the general lack of rental housing availability in Burlington. The capacity of local residents to bridge class differentiations in the fight for increasing tenants' rights carried on through Sanders' first terms as Mayor, helping to increase the Progressive presence in city politics and the construction of third sector housing initiatives. Both Paul Dettman and Michael McNamara echoed these sentiments claiming that the support and awareness of housing issues in both Burlington and Vermont has been consistently high over the past two decades.¹²⁰

The longevity of public support for both the Progressive government and the activities of third sector organizations such as the BCLT have also been attributed to the balanced social and economic appeal of the land trust mechanism that underscores much of the third sector activity in the city. While the BCLT can offer rental and homeownership opportunities that are affordable to residents earning between 50-100% of the area median income (AMI), the public investment that is directed toward the preservation and production of housing is locked into the property with the land trust being the principle owner of the land under the building or housing unit. Through a set of resale restrictions, the house or apartment is only made available to people in the 50-100% AMI range. As such, the initial investment of public revenue in the property is

¹¹⁹ Interview: Brian Pine.

¹²⁰ Interviews: Paul Dettman and Michael McNamara.

sustained beyond a single generation of ownership, helping to establish a stock of perpetually affordable housing. Thus, third sector operations such as the BCLT have been able to harness the support of private financial institutions and business interests as well as the continued support of lower income earners and local housing activists. As John Davis has stated, the third sector arrangements in Burlington and the limited equity formula of the land trust has established a political economic environment that is “socially and politically radical, but fiscally responsible and conservative.”¹²¹ That said local support for the third sector has been “socially and politically diverse,”¹²² ranging across the bounds of political parties and social interests/groups.

On a side note, the revelation that the place and activities of third sector agencies such as the BCLT have been supported by a diversity of social and political actors led me to question whether or not a diversity of socio-economic groups had expressed interest in the limited equity model developed through the BCLT. I was told that the housing which is managed by the BCLT (and other third sector agencies for that matter) is made available through strict income-based criteria. This is partially due to government funding criteria which stipulates that the BCLT must serve a community whose income does not exceed 80% of the area median income, and also relates to the social mandate of the organization. When asked whether the BCLT has ever or has considered supporting a middle class interest in limited equity homeownership, Brenda Torpy of the BCLT claimed that “we have never pursued the middle class resident because it goes against our mandate. Aside from that issue, we have not seen a middle class community interest in

¹²¹ Interview: John Davis.

¹²² Interview: Sarah Carpenter.

pursuing what the land trust model offers.”¹²³ That said, the BCLT has left spaces open on its governing board for representatives to be selected from the larger public.¹²⁴ This has provided one avenue for maintaining a broad level of support for its place in the local and regional housing markets.

The progressive governing condition that has been sustained in Burlington over the last two decades has been largely attributed to the transitions in the city’s demographic composition. Beginning in the late 1970s, the Burlington’s demographics started to shift from a large presence of traditional, two-parent families to an increasing number of single individuals, young professionals and University students.¹²⁵ Although Burlington has remained a predominantly Caucasian, English-speaking center for much of its history, the city has witnessed a recent in-flux of immigrants from parts of South-East Asia, as well as a growth in the local Latino and African American communities. Why are these changes relevant to the support of a progressive housing and urban development agenda? They are relevant because most of the groups that are contributing to an altered state of local demographics tend to represent a lower socio-economic community, and have tended to reside in the neighbourhoods most affected by social and physical decay.

In the last decade, suburban housing developments in a number of surrounding communities have attracted many of Burlington’s middle class families that are able afford the price that comes along with living in the picturesque hills of Vermont. In the past decade, the median price of a single family home in Chittenden County rose from

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Interview: Brenda Torpy.

¹²⁵ Interview: Zander Ponzo, Sept.23, 2003.

\$122,050 to \$184,500- an increase of over 50%.¹²⁶ As private developers have flocked to the open space at the outskirts of the city, the proportion of families living in Burlington has decreased considerably. Within the City of Burlington, families now make up less than half of the total population. Of the families that have remained in Burlington, close to 40% of those with children are headed by single parents (mostly women).¹²⁷

At another level, Burlington has become more of a University town in the past decade than in previous times. Home to the University of Vermont and Champlain College (as well as the institutions of the Community College of Vermont, Burlington College, the New England Culinary Institute and the Vermont College of Cosmetology), the overall student population has grown from 5,877 in 1970 to 10,163 in 2000.¹²⁸ As the student population has expanded, a growing number of academics have been recruited. While the presence of the University had already contributed to the liberal-mindedness of the local population, the pace at which its population has grown over the last decade has created a larger pool of socially and politically active residents. In addition to the presence of an active student population, a large number of the young professionals that have migrated to Burlington have done so to work within the burgeoning third sector industry, thus sharing many of the socio-political values of the Progressive government.

As Burlington has become a younger city and a more socio-economically challenged city, the programs and initiatives of the Progressive government and the third sector have sustained their political and economic appeal. While the social needs and concerns of Burlington's younger residents and its lower income families may not always

¹²⁶ City of Burlington, 2003 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, prepared by the Community and Economic Development Office, Burlington, Vermont.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

converge, they have more or less shared a common political concern for supporting and sustaining the progressive political environment of the city.

The introduction of new, alternative means to social governance has been a challenge that many urban centers have attempted, but been unable develop to a sufficient capacity. In Burlington, a relatively small, generally progressive population has fostered an environment of progressive political discourse and action that has transformed the governance of housing issues and urban development. The following section will explore one of the major factors that has contributed to the embedded presence of third sector agencies in the socio-political space of the city.

For the last twenty years, the condition of social governance in the City of Burlington has been supported by the efforts of third sector organizations. The set of opportunities that organizations such as the BCLT have created for individual residents, distressed and decaying neighbourhoods, and for the city as a whole constitute a shift in the process of dealing with social matters such as housing and urban development. While the capacities of the state and the market have remained the predominant political and economic forces shaping the territory of urban settings, cities such as Burlington have looked to compliment the conventional programs of the state and the market by supporting a set of organizations and associations of a more localized nature. The individuals who were interviewed for this study are engaged in the local effort to de-commodify a stock of housing and preserve the social and physical environments of the city. In the following pages, the thoughts, feelings, and opinions shared by this group will be developed as a means of questioning how the City of Burlington has looked to

manage the consequences of a neo-liberal shift in the political economy of socially-assisted housing.

From Neighbourhood to City

By the late 1970s, the degree of social and physical decay in the city's older, traditionally working-class neighbourhoods had reached a proportion that threatened the livability of the areas. Between the fall out of the Federal Government's Urban Renewal program, neglected public housing authority, and a highly speculative private real estate market, lower income families and socially marginalized individuals faced a growing concern over the accessibility and affordability of housing in Burlington. The threat of displacement was particularly great in the lower income, working-class neighbourhood just north of the downtown area, referred to as the Old North End, where a largely decaying housing stock was ripe for the process of gentrification.

The community land trust and other third sector housing/social services have concentrated a great deal of their efforts on revitalizing the social and physical environment of the Old North End neighbourhood in Burlington. This is the area of the city that has traditionally provided sanctuary to lower income, working class families. More recently, it has attracted the city's immigrants and students, as it continues to offer the lowest rents and property values in the city. Despite the fact that Burlington does not face the degree of segregation or socio-cultural isolation that larger, and more clearly diverse urban centers have dealt with, residents have branded the Old North End with a number of social labels. That is, residents of Burlington commonly look within the locally defined boundaries of the Old North End as the place where the city's less

fortunate call home, and where the social ills of city are most clear.¹²⁹ One participant spoke about the environment of the neighbourhood before the process of third sector revitalization began as characterized by the presence of “adult book stores, boarded up and abandoned housing, crumbling roads and sidewalks, low levels of private investment and very few employment opportunities.”¹³⁰ More recently, the Old North End has been subjected to a rash of criminal and gang-related activity exacerbating local fears and opinions that have been formed about the area and its residents. Such activities have proved to be a major obstacle for third sector organizations in their attempts to construct the Old North End as an area that is just as conducive to family living as the suburban enclaves that surround the city.

Walking through the Old North End of Burlington, it is hard to resist noticing the level of neglect that some properties continue to suffer despite the concerted efforts of agencies like the BCLT. Weathered and deteriorating housing structures, properties that have not received an adequate level of tending to, and quiet streets with little human traffic still characterize many parts of the neighbourhood to this day. That said, it is also not difficult to see where improvements have been made. Some streets have rows of single family housing that have been recently painted, automobiles in drive-ways that reflect a middle class income capacity, city infrastructure that has been replaced or upgraded, and accessible shops and stores that can provide residents with staple-products and socially engaging opportunities. When asked about the capacity of the Old North End to attract residents and increase the human presence in the community, one participant stated that “people have to want to live in the neighbourhood to make any

¹²⁹ Interview: Sarah Carpenter.

¹³⁰ Interview: Polly Nichol.

effort at revitalizing the neighbourhood work.”¹³¹ He further commented that the city can not force people to live where they do not want to live. However, they can develop measures for changing the perception of the neighbourhood from a place of decay to one that represents a community that offers safe, healthy, affordable living, meeting the interests and needs of a diverse population. According to the respondent, this is why the presence of the third sector in the Old North End community has been so vital.

Often the size of urban centers, the level of economic support for a third sector agenda in the city, and the degree of blight within an identifiable area leads to a concentration of third sector activities at a smaller, neighbourhood scale. While the Old North End has been a place of primary concern for Burlington’s third sector network, the BCLT has made a conscious effort to connect specific, neighbourhood-based activities with a broader goal of revitalizing the social and physical space of the city. Thus, producing or preserving housing opportunities and a revitalized sense of place in a specific neighbourhood such as the Old North End has been conceptualized as a benefit for the city as a whole. This type of urban focus is further reflected in the BCLT’s mandate to reverse the trend of concentrating low income residents in a particular neighbourhood, instead looking to create vibrant, mixed income neighbourhoods within the city and its suburban communities.

As a central component to the local and extra-local program for preserving affordable housing and low income housing subsidies, I asked participants to comment on the capacity of the land trust to meet the needs of low and moderate income residents in the city. John Davis remarked that “(the land trust is) serving the right people, with the right product, across the right spectrum. But, they are doing too little of it, and that is not

¹³¹ Interview: Brian Pine.

their fault. Too little money and too little land has been the problem.”¹³² Local and state restrictions on what constitutes developable land has severely limited the capacity of organizations like the land trust from developing new low income, affordable housing either within or beyond the fringes of Burlington. Furthermore, consecutive cutbacks in the distribution of funding and grants designated for affordable housing construction and preservation have hindered the capacity of the land trust to meet the housing needs of the lowest income communities in the city.

At the time that I began my research on Burlington, the BCLT’s property holdings were as follows:

County-wide holdings: single family housing- 210 units; rental housing- 148 units; housing cooperatives- 125 units

Burlington holdings: single family housing- 110 units; rental housing- 131 units; housing cooperatives- 107 units; commercial space- 5 units.¹³³

According to these figures, approximately 5% of the local population in Burlington occupies either a single family or rental unit managed by the land trust. Within this group, the majority have incomes below 80% of the area median value.¹³⁴

From the time the land trust first began producing and preserving affordable housing in Burlington, there has been a waiting list for available single-family housing, and a consistent interest in affordable rental housing.¹³⁵ With an original mandate that focused strictly on creating and preserving homeownership opportunities, the BCLT’s programs excluded a large portion of low income renters and those at the bottom rungs of the tenure ladder. Although the BCLT has considerably increased its capacity to provide

¹³² Interview: John Davis.

¹³³ Interview, Brenda Torpy.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

affordable rental housing, the poorest of renters and families in the city have still been unable to gain headway. Along this line, one participant raised an interesting perspective on the land trust and its capacity to serve a wide range of socio-economic groups. It was stated the land trust has established itself within the lower income communities to a point that owning a land trust home or renting an apartment managed by the land trust has become somewhat of an exclusive opportunity.¹³⁶ This was not said to discredit the land trust or its efforts in the city, but instead was a reflection on the level at which the land trust has become a respected and an embedded resource in the local and regional housing sectors.

Over twenty years ago, the goal of Burlington's local authorities was to create an urban environment that would be capable engaging local residents in the social and political economic spaces of the city, and at the same time, empowering residents left to drift at the margins by previous governing arrangements (both at and beyond the local scale). As the real estate markets in Vermont and Burlington have remained strong for well over twenty years, conditions of socio-economic difference within the population have become increasingly evident. Although Burlington does not have the extremes of wealth and poverty that many larger American cities deal with, the strength of the local real estate market coupled with a stagnate level of median wages has created a diverse spectrum of interests concerning housing options. Through neo-liberal transitions in the space, processes and relations of governing, the framework for managing this diversity of housing-related interests has shifted increasingly to contexts of greater municipal and regional responsibility. In Burlington, the processes of governing low income housing concerns and urban revitalization efforts have moved beyond the strict barriers of public

¹³⁶ Interview: Brian Pine.

offices and bureaucracies toward creative, alternative public-private partnerships with third sector organizations. While non-profit organizations and church-based groups have provided social supports to local residents for years, the comprehensive and collaborative third sector that has developed in the city is now organizing, managing and developing many of the projects and services that at one time were the responsibility of the public sector.¹³⁷

Collaborative Social Action

While the federal government continues to be a central figure in the funding and subsidization of housing and urban redevelopment activities, the scale of economic support for these local concerns has diminished considerably over the last twenty years. More so than ever before, urban centers are relying on creative and collaborative partnerships for obtaining and managing scarce public resources, and for organizing social action at the local (and potentially regional) scale.

In Burlington, the space of governing local housing issues has increasingly drawn upon the resources of the third sector. According to one interview participant, the early stages of preserving the accessibility and affordability of housing in Burlington were conceived as a policy initiative to construct a mechanism that could offer an alternative to the bounds of the state and the market.¹³⁸ Over the course of the last two decades, the mechanism based on a land trust formula for preserving the affordability of housing has transformed into a more comprehensive governing arrangement.

¹³⁷ Interview: John Davis.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

In our discussions, the respondents claimed that the BCLT has provided an invaluable service to lower income residents desiring affordable rental or homeownership options, and an effective tool for revitalizing deteriorating urban neighbourhoods. That said they also were clear that the land trust should be examined as providing one aspect of a larger socio-political program. According to Paul Dettman, “the land trust alone is only one piece of the puzzle... the partnerships it has established with other agencies and service providers have been critical to the success of the BCLT and other third sector organizations in Burlington.”¹³⁹ This led me to reconsider strictly focusing on the limited equity housing formula articulated through the BCLT. Instead, I found myself raising a set of questions about the larger issues and changing patterns of social governance and social action.

As our conversations turned toward a focus on the re-configuration of social governance and social action in the city, I asked the participants to comment on the different organizations that were involved in what they generally referred to as the local third sector network. At the local scale, the network of housing and urban development agencies has been collectively labeled “The Gang of Eight.”¹⁴⁰ Through the construction of a niche-oriented space of third sector activity in the city, each agency looks to provide a housing-related or social service that the others do not. While there is a degree of overlap in the various services that are being offered, the general idea underpinning the collaborative network is that “different parties have different strengths and by coming

¹³⁹ Interview: Paul Dettman.

¹⁴⁰ Interview: Michael McNamara.

The Gang of Eight includes: the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT), the City’s Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO), the Lake Champlain Development Corporation (LCDC), the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS), the Cathedral Square Corporation (CSC), the Burlington Housing Authority (BHA), Housing Vermont, and Vermont Tenants Inc.

together, they can accomplish more than they could on their own.”¹⁴¹ For example, while an organization such as the BCLT has focused the majority of its efforts on creating affordable homeownership opportunities, the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) has constructed a space for providing services to the homeless. Furthermore, while the BCLT has increased its capacity to preserve and manage affordable rental housing, the agendas of Housing Vermont and Vermont Tenants Inc. have concentrated a large part of their energies on rental housing issues, helping to lay the groundwork for agencies like the BCLT.

Through a network-orientation, the various agencies working to resolve Burlington’s housing and urban redevelopment concerns have maintained a high level of communication and awareness for the services and capacities of each party. This has enabled the network to establish who is providing what services, which aspects of the network require more funding and attention than others, how the resources of one organization may be used more effectively and efficiently in partnerships with others, and where certain organizations are more capable of accessing funding and delivering a higher quality service than others in the network. These dynamics have amounted to an urban housing movement that has combined the capacities, experiences and expertise of local public offices, non-profits, political activists and consultants in a common pursuit of responding to the housing and neighbourhood concerns of socio-economically marginalized groups. Although there has been a close affiliation maintained between the various actors and agencies in the local housing arena, there is not a formal decision-making body that mediates on behalf of the interests of each player. Rather, the size of the city and the level of familiarity that most actors working in the local or regional

¹⁴¹ Interview: Polly Nichol.

housing sector have with each of the individual organizations has enabled an informal connection to be preserved.

Aside from the services and expertise provided by those that are included in the Gang of Eight, Burlington's third sector housing agencies have built collaborative relations with two major state-based, quasi-governmental agencies, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). Created in 1974, the VHFA is a state-based agency that helps third sector organizations and the individuals they serve access low interest mortgage financing for homeownership opportunities, and low interest debt financing for the production or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. The VHFA is also responsible for managing the federal government's low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) program, and the housing tax credit program established by the state of Vermont. According to the Executive Director of the VHFA, the collaborative third sector environment in Burlington has enabled the VHFA to pursue riskier financial investments and lending patterns, thereby reaching a larger population of low income and marginalized individuals.¹⁴² In essence, the property restrictions that are embedded in affordable housing developments and enforced by the third sector organizations represent a measure of security for the local/state financial institutions.

The VCHB was created by the state of Vermont in 1987 as an organization through which state revenue could flow to support the projects of the burgeoning third sector industry that was developing around affordable housing concerns. The funding that the VCHB distributes to third sector agencies is drawn from the property transfer tax receipts that the state collects from the exchange of private property. As the City of

¹⁴² Interview: Sarah Carpenter.

Burlington rallied around the concept of perpetual affordability, the state legislature was convinced that this was an effective tool for sustaining any public revenue that it could allocate to the production and revitalization of low income, affordable housing. Although the VCHB does not directly produce housing for an affordable market, they support the activities of the third sector network of housing developers and service providers. As its title implies, the VCHB looks to fund third sector activities that attempt to preserve the existing housing stock through physical rehabilitation and the creation of affordable rental or ownership options.¹⁴³

The inclusion of state-based organizations and agencies in the revitalization strategies for the City of Burlington has not only provided a more extensive source of political and economic resources, but has also established a link between the social concerns of residents in Burlington and those of populations in other urban and rural areas of Vermont. One interview participant concisely summarized these relations between city/third sector, city/state, and state/third sector by claiming that “in Vermont, we play in a very small sandbox.”¹⁴⁴

The collaborative effort that has developed within and beyond Burlington has influenced the spread of third sector approaches to the governance of social matters such as housing in other areas of Vermont. For example, community land trusts have been established in counties outside of Chittenden County (including Addison County, Rutland County and Brattleboro) drawing on the experiences and support of the BCLT and its various partners in urban social action. Following Burlington’s lead, five homeownership centers have been developed around Vermont to provide low income

¹⁴³ Interview: Polly Nichol.

¹⁴⁴ Interview: Michael McNamara.

residents with social support, referrals and education about the various dynamics involved in accessing financing and maintaining a home.

Although the third sector parties contributing to the governance of social issues and urban redevelopment in Burlington have articulated their own separate mandates and goals, the interviews also revealed what appear to be a set of shared goals for the collectivity of the network. Focusing strictly on the micro-level housing component of the collaborative social action in Burlington, these goals concern issues of access, mobility, preservation and civic engagement. As the city's housing stock continues to age, the preservation of older, yet physically salvageable structures has been a priority of the network. Not only does this provide the city with a less expensive route to revitalization, but also, from a socio-cultural perspective, it provides a method for preserving the historical character of Burlington and Vermont.

The network of third sector housing organizations and agencies has worked to not only provide greater access to safe, affordable housing, but also to increase the selection of such housing units that can meet the diversity of interests existing among the lower income population. This has involved working to increase the availability of units for families, seniors, individuals requiring access to social and medical supports, and residents looking to make a transition to the private housing market. Recognizing that lower income residents can not be lumped into a single category of interests feeds into the network's concern for increasing the mobility of these residents. In essence, the concept of mobility that is articulated as a goal of the network is linked to a capacity to choose from a selection of housing types, and a variety of available housing or social services as a means to enhancing one's socio-economic place and sense of identity.

While the network is concerned with responding to the diversity of interests that underscore any type of broad social action such as creating greater access to affordable housing, it has also focused on increasing the space of engagement with the population that it looks to serve. When asked how the role of the third sector has changed over the years, Mayor Peter Clavelle stated that “it is not just about bricks and mortar today. It is also about promoting social engagement.”¹⁴⁵ To consistently maintain and enhance its concern for civic engagement, certain agencies within the network have opened spaces on their governing boards for local residents. In the case of the BCLT, its governing board has come to include residents of land trust properties as well as non-land trust residents with an interest in social governance and social action at the local scale.¹⁴⁶

As neo-liberal forces have exacerbated economic differences and reinforced social barriers at urban and broader scales of activity for the past two decades, the space, processes and relations of governing social matters such as low income housing have increasingly developed through flexible and alternative arrangements between public and private (for-profit and nonprofit) actors. That said the interview participants identified a set of four challenges that will likely require the collaborative effort of third sector organizations in the city/state, as well as the support of public and private interests. These included: the challenge of balancing an increasing student demand for housing with a family demand for affordable rental and single family units; the growing affordability gap as housing prices and rent levels out-pace average wage increases in the city and the state; a severe shortage of affordable rental housing in Burlington and its suburban enclaves; and, the need for Burlington’s surrounding communities to produce a

¹⁴⁵ Interview: Peter Clavelle.

¹⁴⁶ Interview: Brenda Torpy.

‘fair share’ and diversity of affordable housing opportunities. While participants remained uncertain as to how the city would respond to these challenges, each participant was able to claim with relative certainty that the third sector network in the city/state would more than likely have a direct role to play.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has been developed around the thoughts and experiences shared by nine individuals who have been closely affiliated with the progressive, third sector housing and urban revitalization agendas in the City of Burlington. Through conversations with each of the participants, I was able to reach beneath the surface of third sector activities in the local housing arena and come to see the role and place of organizations such as the BCLT as essential components to a restructured context of urban governance. Each of the participants was asked whether or not they believed that the community land trust was simply an artifact of the Progressive regime. All of the participants’ responses suggested that over the course of the last twenty years, the land trust has shed many of its original connections to the Progressive government, and that any party or person assuming control of City Hall in the future would undoubtedly seek to maintain a connection with the place and resources of the BCLT.

As a case which is representative of the changing territory of governing urban social matters, the analysis provided through this chapter has revealed three major aspects about the BCLT in the context of Burlington. The first aspect that is revealed through my assessment of the BCLT is that the structure, mechanisms and processes for governing social matters in general and specifically low income housing concerns has experienced a

restructuring and a concomitant proliferation of formerly public programs and political responsibilities. The second aspect that is revealed through this chapter is that the place and capacity of the BCLT (as a representative of the local third sector network) has been largely due to consistent degrees of political support from City Hall and the State Legislature, and also to a collaborative and facilitative set of relations with other private, semi-public and nonprofit actors in Burlington and Vermont. Finally, my focus on the case of Burlington has revealed that the governing arrangement of which the BCLT is a part seeks to respond to a specific community of interest rather than acting as a catch-all solution to the housing concerns of local residents ranging from the homeless to the middle class. That said it should be well understood that without the limited equity strategy and the managerial and social support of the land trust organization, a number of individuals and families would be unable to access or afford the same quality or quantity of housing opportunities.

Thesis Summary

Over twenty years ago, the first phases of neo-liberal, political economic restructuring impacted the capacities and responsibilities of public institutions as the primary mechanisms of investment, management and service delivery. In this context, the policies and programs concerning socially-assisted housing received one of the quickest and hardest blows. In light of these transitions and a new-found sense of local (and regional) responsibility in the space of urban governance, questions developed and slowly proliferated in a number of cities regarding the potential of governing through creative, flexible, alternative partnerships between public and private (for-profit and nonprofit) actors. For decades, urban policy development and socio-political action was characterized as an extension of, or in some cases a reaction to politics at the national scale. With the on-set of neo-liberal reforms, local authorities, organizations and residents assumed a greater role in shaping the spaces of the city and constructing a set of contemporary socio-political relations at the urban scale.

This thesis has explored the relation between a progressive political discourse and the development of a third sector housing strategy in the City of Burlington, Vermont. The analysis that I have developed through the preceding chapters has focused on responding to questions about how we may interpret the effect of neo-liberal restructuring on the political economy of socially-assisted housing, and how the City of Burlington first developed and has continued to support a progressive, third sector housing strategy in a restructured context of social and urban governance. Methodologically speaking, the neo-Foucauldian governmentality literature provided an analytical basis from which I have been able to interpret the effect of neo-liberal transitions on governing relations and

processes, and to explore the wealth of housing issues discussed in fields of urban geography, planning and sociology. As a case study of a place-specific set of events and developments, the thoughts and experiences that were shared by the group of individuals actively engaged in Burlington's housing sector have added depth and perception to my assessment of the place and role of the Burlington Community Land Trust.

In the early 1980s, the livelihood of Burlington's lower income residents and its older, working class neighbourhoods were threatened by the conditions of a highly speculative private real estate market, the concentration of new housing developments in the city's suburban enclaves, a low rental housing vacancy rate, the risk of gentrification and a poorly managed public housing authority. As a set of localized housing concerns mounted in Burlington, the political economic framework of socially-assisted housing in the United States continued to shift away from post-war levels of political and economic support for urban housing and revitalization. In response to this context, Burlington became the first municipality in the United States to develop a community land trust. For over twenty years, the BCLT has operated with a mandate to produce, preserve and protect the accessibility and affordability of housing for a community of low and moderate income residents. Whether collaboratively engaged in a process of reconstructing socially and physically depressed neighbourhoods, acting as a non-market, private partner of the local government's housing agenda, or offering an empowering resource for local residents who have been turned aside through the exclusive dynamics of the private real estate market, the BCLT has sustained a principle role within both the local political arena, and the third sector network of urban housing and revitalization agencies.

While the BCLT has carved a place for itself in the local and increasingly regional housing sectors, it has not represented a panacea for the housing concerns of low and moderate income Vermonters. In the effort to increase its stock of de-commodified, permanently affordable housing, the BCLT faces many of the same challenges that similar third sector organizations face. In the specific context of Burlington, the availability of land and the accessibility of investment capital are the two principle organizational challenges confronting the BCLT in the immediate future. These problems are likely to be compounded by the unabated strength of the local and regional private real estate market and the concomitant issue of a stagnate level of average wages in the city and the state.

As a central component of the local battle to preserve the value of place at the neighbourhood and city-scales, my assessment of the BCLT offers a set of lessons regarding the changing nature of governing urban social matters and the progressive potential of the changing context of urban governance. In connection to a set of transitions that have occurred at political economic scales beyond the limits of the city, the development and support of the BCLT in Burlington reflects a progressive political discourse which speaks to the construction of a set of governing arrangements and processes facilitated through an engaging and empowering relation with those being governed. This type of governing relation stands in stark contrast to that espoused through the highly centralized housing programs of the early post-war era. Despite the fact that the institutions of the federal government continue to be the major supplier of funding, grants and loans for low-income housing, they no longer occupy the same role as the principle mechanisms of service delivery and social co-ordination. At another

level, my assessment of Burlington's third sector housing strategy has revealed that the capacity to balance the interests of different geographic and socio-political communities, to construct a collaborative framework between a variety of public and private (for-profit and nonprofit) actors, and to establish and maintain a long-term social, political, and economic commitment to the preservation of place greatly affects the potential of progressive urban governance.

Through the various stages of research and writing that have gone into the completion of this project, there have been very few limitations. That said, in the earliest stages of writing this thesis, my capacity to access a decent amount of information regarding the community land trust model was rather limited. Upon contacting individuals at the Institute for Community Economics, the Burlington Community Land Trust and the City of Burlington, this concern was rectified.

Reflecting on the context my research, it would have been interesting to speak with a collection of individuals and families who are currently or have in the past occupied a land trust managed property. I also would have liked to have spoken with a group of residents who have applied for housing through the land trust but been turned down for one reason or another. While these aspects may be interpreted as potential limitations to the well-roundedness of this study, they may also be interpreted as offering a potential for further research to be conducted from a somewhat different angle than that which I have adopted in this case. Also beyond the scope of this study, but holding the potential for an intriguing research project would be to question how the BCLT as the initial urban land trust in the United States has influenced and aided other urban centers in developing their own brand of a locally-based, third sector housing agenda.

This thesis offers a look into the progressive potential of alternative governing mechanisms and local governing arrangements by unearthing the nuances of Burlington's third sector housing strategy. Although I have focused specifically on the local housing sector in Burlington, the underlying set of ideas that I have developed could be applied to a number of urban social matters. Furthermore, the thoughts that I have developed provide a basis for thinking about how the context of Burlington resembles, differs or could potentially influence socio-political activities in a variety of urban centers. As such, this thesis may be associated with a growing body of literature that seeks to investigate the impact of neo-liberal reforms on the space, processes and relations of urban governance.

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List of Interview Participants

Sarah Carpenter, The Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA), Sept.26, 2003.

Mayor Peter Clavelle, Office of the Mayor: City of Burlington, Sept.26, 2003.

John E. Davis, Burlington Associates: housing and urban development consultancy firm, Sept.22, 2003.

Paul Dettman, The Burlington Housing Authority (BHA), Sept.22, 2003.

Michael McNamara, The United State Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Sept.25, 2003.

Polly Nichol, The Vermont Housing Conservation Board (VHCB), Sept.23, 2003.

Zander Ponzo, The City of Burlington Urban Planning Commission, Sept.23, 2003.

Brian Pine, The Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO): City of Burlington, Sept.24, 2003.

Brenda Torpy, The Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT), Sept.26, 2003.

Appendix One: *Statistical Information*

The following information was accessed through a City of Burlington document: 2003 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development. The graphs that have been provided have also been accessed through the 2003 report.

- Information provided by the 2000 United States Census shows Chittenden County to be the most prosperous in Vermont with a median family income of \$57,400 and a median household income of \$47,673. However, median household income in Burlington was charted at \$33,070.
- The unemployment rate for 2002 in Chittenden County was 3.0% and was 3.2% in Burlington. These are slightly below the state figure of 3.7% and the national rate of 5.8%.
- Through the 1990s, total employment increased in Chittenden County by 23% (a gain of 17,736 jobs).
- The largest sectors of employment for residents of Burlington are in services and government institutions. For the past twenty years, the manufacturing sector has steadily decreased.
- Over 47% of the housing stock in the City of Burlington was built before 1950. The state of Vermont has the second oldest housing stock in the United States.
- In the last forty years, Burlington's homeownership rate has never exceeded 50%. Currently, homeownership rates are the lowest in the Old North End and downtown neighbourhoods of Burlington (Census tracts 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10).
- Between 2000 and 2002, rent levels have risen from between 5.4%-8.7% depending on the type of rental unit.
- In 2002, the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimated that the "housing wage" in Burlington- the amount that a full time worker (40 hours a week) must earn per hour to afford a two-bedroom unit at the area's Fair Market Rent- was \$16.08. The current minimum wage in Vermont is \$6.25.
- The rental vacancy rate for Chittenden County was at or below one percent for the years 1996-2002.
- In five of Burlington's Census tracts (3, 4, 5, 6, 10) over 25% of the population lives at or below the poverty rate. In Census tract 5 (Old North End) the figure is over 40%.

Assisted Housing Inventory

Currently there are 9,295 rental units in the City Of Burlington. Of those units:

- 2,331 (approximately 25%) are occupied by lower-income households whose housing costs are generally 30% of their income due to housing subsidies or rental assistance.
- 637 apartments are tax credit qualified units under the Low Income Tax Credit program. Households receiving section 8 subsidies occupy most of these units.

Currently there are 6,590 owner-occupied units in the City of Burlington. Of those units:

- 268 have had the benefit of grants for free paint and accessibility modifications and/or low interest loans for rehabilitation through Community Development Block Grants
- 269 have publicly-subsidized low interest mortgages provided through the Vermont Housing Finance Agency
- The BCLT currently holds 210 single family units, 148 rental housing units and 125 co-operative housing units in Chittenden County. They also manage approximately 5% of the housing (single family, rental, co-op and condos) stock in the City of Burlington.

The table below displays the type of rental housing that is available for households at various income ranges using the 2002 median family income of Chittenden County:

	Annual Household Income	Maximum Affordable Rent	Affordable Units at Fair Market Rent
Earn State Minimum Wage (\$6.25/hour)	\$13,000	\$325	None
Earn 30% Median Family Income	\$17,220	\$430	None
Earn 50% Median Family Income	\$28,700	\$718	Efficiency or 1 bedroom
Earn 80% Median Family Income	\$45,920	\$1,148	Efficiency or 1, 2, or 3 bedroom
Earn Median Family Income	\$57,000	\$1,435	All Units

Appendix Two: *Interview Forms and Instrument*

Letter of Information

Dear _____,

I am a graduate student in the Institute of Political Economy at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. The research for my MA thesis will focus on the community land trust model as an urban strategy for preserving affordable housing for low income individuals and families. The topic was selected based on my interest in a similar project being developed in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the city I come from.

The Burlington Community Land Trust was chosen as a case study based upon its reputation in urban planning and geography literature, and because it has been in operation longer than most community land trusts in the United States or Canada. The primary purpose for my research is to attempt to answer the question of whether a community land trust represents a viable strategy for providing and preserving a stock of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents of an urban community.

Based upon your agency's/department's familiarity with the Burlington Community Land Trust, I would like to request an interview with yourself or another qualified staff member. If another staff member is to take your place, s/he should possess a considerable degree of knowledge regarding the context of affordable housing in Burlington, and the roles and dynamics of the Burlington Community Land Trust. The responses you provide during the interview should reflect the policies and programs of the agency/department that you are representing. However, sharing your own knowledge, opinions, and experiences with the BCLT will not be discouraged. The information that you provide will be used to compliment what is found in secondary resources.

The interview will likely run between forty minutes and one hour, and will be based around a series of open-ended questions, a sample of which are provided at the end of this letter. The structure of the questions and the interview are designed to limit the risk to you as a participant in this study. You will not be required to respond to questions that make you uncomfortable, and you may end the interview at any time. Given your familiarity with the BCLT and the public nature of your position within the agency/organization, your guarantee of anonymity will not be provided. With your permission I would like to tape-record the interview to ensure an accurate representation of your commentary. However, this is not required and you may refuse to be tape-recorded. The tapes will be safely stored, and held in my possession indefinitely.

The results of this study will appear in the published form of my thesis and will be available through the Carleton University Library.

I will contact you by phone or email to verify your willingness to be interviewed. I would like to conduct the interview during the week of Sept. 22, 2003 to Sept. 27, 2003.

This project has received approval from the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee. Should you have any questions regarding the project or my conduct you may contact the committee chair:
Prof. Klaus Pohle, Chair

I appreciate your time and consideration for participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Matt Seguire

Informed Consent Form

I, _____, have been asked by Matt Seguire, a graduate student at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario Canada, to participate in a study evaluating the community land trust as an urban strategy for preserving affordable housing for low income individuals and families.

I have been asked to participate in this study based on my familiarity with the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT). I understand that the premise of the research is to ask whether a community land trust represents a viable strategy for providing and preserving a stock of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents of an urban community.

I understand that my role as an interview participant will take approximately one hour. A time and location for the interview that are convenient to myself and the researcher will be determined. In the case that the researcher and I can not meet face-to-face, we will arrange a telephone interview. I agree/do not agree (circle one) that the interview may be tape recorded.

The interview will consist of a series of open-ended questions. I understand that I do not have to answer any questions that I am uncomfortable with, and I may end the interview at any time. If I choose to end the interview, I will decide at that time if the researcher can use the data I have provided to that point.

Given the public nature of my position and the type of information being sought for this study, I understand that I will not be granted anonymity. My name, title, and organization can be mentioned in the final product of the researcher's thesis.

I understand that the tapes and notes containing interview data will remain in the possession of the researcher for an indefinite amount of time. I understand that the information I provide will only be used for the sole purpose of contributing to the researcher's MA thesis.

Signature

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records

Research Instrument

The following are the topic areas that were discussed through interviews with representatives of the third sector housing activities in Burlington.

Personal and Organizational Background

- **role/position** with organization
- length of **time** with organization, length of time in local/regional housing sector
- types of **housing and/or housing concerns** you deal with
- your organization's **relation to the BCLT**

BCLT & Affordable Housing

- **selection and availability** of housing in Burlington
- **challenges** the BCLT has experienced as a nonprofit organization
- **why the CLT model** in Burlington
- **who** was instrumental in forwarding the CLT model in the city
- **other strategies** considered at the time the BCLT was developed
- **affordable for whom**
- **resistance**, local or extra-local
- **original mandate** of the BCLT, any changes over the years
- **relationships** that the BCLT has developed with public and private actors
- **location** of BCLT activities, specific neighbourhood, city-wide, suburbs

Relationships and Resistance

- relations with the various levels of **government**
- what are the differences in the roles of the different levels of government
- how has the BCLTs relationship with the government changed over time
- how would you describe the relations between the BCLT and **other nonprofits** in the city
- **partnerships** between local agencies
- **resistance** from local groups or political actors
- **social stigmas** a problem in the city
- how would you describe the relations between occupants of land trust properties and those who have purchased/renting through the private market

Membership and Governance

- describe the **governing framework** of the BCLT
- how are **decisions** made and finances managed
- how is **membership** determined
- what are the **criteria** for renting an apartment or owning a home that is linked to the land trust, and have these criteria changed over time
- what **services** does the BCLT provide aside from affordable housing
- discuss the **lease and resale** conditions linked to the land trust
- how, if at all are individuals **monitored**

Challenges

- **key actors and agencies** for future development of BCLT
- **greatest challenges** facing the BCLT today and in the future
- what issues are of the most pressing concern in Burlington's housing sector
- does the CLT model offer an **appropriate strategy** for responding to these matters
- **middle class interest** in the limited equity land trust offering

Is there anything that you would like to add or comment on at this point in the interview?
Would you like to re-visit any of the questions that have been raised?

Appendix Three: Statistics and Geography

Age of Population: Burlington, VT

Median Income

Income Levels: Burlington, VT

Employment Structure: Burlington, VT

Employment by Company/Organization

Company Name	2002 Staff	Company Name	2002 Staff
<u>Within the City:</u>		<u>Within surrounding municipalities:</u>	
Fletcher Allen Hospital	4,674	IBM	8,000
University of Vermont	2,865	IDX	752
Burlington City Schools	800	Ben & Jerry's	735
City of Burlington	630	South Burlington Schools	470
General Dynamics	500	St. Michael's College	440
Gardeners Supply	250	Colchester Schools	415
Burlington Free Press	250	Lane Press, Inc.	400
Blodgett Holdings	220	Bouyea-Fassetts	301
Champlain College	212	Essex Junction Schools	204
Radisson Hotel	185	Green Mountain Power	197
City Market	175	Champlain Cable	120
Rhino Foods	130	Sheraton Hotel	110
<u>Within the City and Surrounding Region:</u>			
U.S. Government			2,650
Chittenden Bank			1,208
Verizon			950
Visiting Nurse Association			730
Banknorth Group, Inc.			670
Howard Center for Human Services			481
Burton Snowboards			420
Perry Restaurant Group (Hospitality Well Done)			332
Merchants Bank			250
Pizzagalli Construction			200
Key Bank of Vermont			100

Average Sale Price for Single Family Units:
Chittenden County

Average Monthly Rent:
Chittenden County

Map 1: American Northeast

Map 2: American Northeast

Map 3: Northwest Vermont

Map 4: Central Burlington

Burlington Census Tracts - 2000

Properties managed and controlled by the Burlington Community Land Trust