

## BACLT Annual Meeting Minutes November 12, 2016

Meeting Chair and BACLT President Beth Youhn called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM, with 28 people in attendance. Beth gave a brief introduction about BACLT and the increasing need for affordable housing, underscoring the importance of the Land Trust's mission. She expressed excitement about the formation of the California Community Land Trust Network over the past few years and the work BACLT has done with that organization to promote the CLT model as well as pass legislation to remove obstacles to developing housing cooperatives. Next year's National CLT Conference will be held in Oakland. Beth also announced that the Cooperative Center Federal Credit Union in Berkeley has started a program of share loans to members who are buying into a limited equity housing co-op, one of the few lenders in the Bay Area to do so.

The minutes from last year's Annual Meeting of November 15, 2015 were read and approved by acclimation.

Chris Bailey, BACLT's Treasurer, presented our Financial Report from November 2015 to October 2016. Highlights were that we had \$28,897 in income and \$31,043 in expenses, but because we had built up reserves, we still have \$33,700 in our reserves. The biggest difference from past years is that BACLT had done a lot of contract work for San Francisco Community Land Trust as they hired us to do project development and construction management. However, this past year, we had to turn down that contract work with SFCLT because our Executive Director, our only staff person, was working full-time on Brown Shingle and other BACLT projects.

Next, BACLT Executive Director Rick Lewis made a presentation about the ten year history of BACLT, including a power point presentation and photos from each year of BACLT's history, since we celebrated the Land Trust's 10th Anniversary in August of this year. Among the highlights of the presentation were:

- 2005, a small group of political activists met to discuss housing options for those of us who are getting older. We agreed we did not like the currently available options. The group
- 2006, we incorporated as BACLT. We decided we'd form limited equity co-ops in a community land trust. We optimistically moved forward with ideas of what a project would look like – The Elder friendly Housing Co-op
- 2007, we held a community meeting to present our model of the Elder Co-op and the response was overwhelming. People were saying, we've been thinking about this type of model ourselves.
- 2008, we pursued potential sites for an Elder Co-op and tried to raise funds to purchase. We had nearly \$400,000 pledged to help start a project but, the deregulation of the banks resulted in devastation of the economy, banks would not loan, especially to a new nonprofit, and many potential investors backed out, since their homes and their investments had lost value.

We began exploring ways to build our organizational capacity & consider a broader scope beyond Elder Co-ops.

- 2009, we organized a bus tour for Elder Housing options with 28 people, to explore existing option of cooperative living for seniors. We had a great time and visited two projects in Davis, and then Oregon Park Senior Apts. in Berkeley.
- 2010, a group of 12 owners offered to donate a three-unit property in Berkeley, the Derby Walker House, and we began working with the tenants to prepare for the new co-op. But the heirs of one of the owners changed their minds about donating their share, and a lawsuit between the owners delayed the donation of the property for over three years. In 2010, we held a Co-op Film Night: Almost 100 people attended the showing of “At Home in Utopia,” a film about housing cooperatives built by labor unions in New York City during the 1920's, and "Homes and Hands," a film about Community Land Trusts in the US. That same year we opened an Office and hired an Executive Director. We developed a comprehensive Co-op Training Program, since training the Derby Walker Co-op residents helped us realize that many co-ops need comprehensive training to effectively manage their properties.
- 2011, at our Strategic Planning board retreat in, we decided that the Elder Co-op would require years do fund-raising, and we shifted our immediate focus to developing new housing co-ops and doing co-op resident training. That year we also began the East Bay Cooperative Housing Coalition as a way to bring together a wide range of resident controlled housing. We have held 3 “Gatherings” of co-op members each year since then, that have been very well-attended by residents from many co-ops.
- 2012, the United Nations declared it *International Year of the Co-op*, and we created a pamphlet about it that was widely distributed. We designed and printed 50 Co-op flags, which sold out quickly and were soon flying at housing & worker co-ops throughout the Bay Area. We organized a Co-op Tour as part of the East Bay Housing Organization’s Affordable Housing Week, and over 90 people toured four resident-controlled housing communities in West Berkeley, each project a different model of cooperative living.
- 2013, the Derby Walker House Co-op was finally donated to BACLTL and we signed a Regulatory Agreement with City of Berkeley which allowed us to reduce property taxes. We began extensive renovation of the property to take care of deferred maintenance.
- In 2014 we held two very successful Co-op Gatherings. The first was for Earth Day, and focused on *Green Living in Housing Co-ops*, and we launched one of our most successful pamphlets with that title. 42 people attended our workshop on the Davis Stirling Act, which led to a series of workshops on Capital Replacement Budgeting. We worked very hard to successfully pass legislation in 2014 beneficial to Land Trusts (AB569).
- In 2015 we acquired two more properties in Berkeley. The 9th Street Co-op and Brown Shingle Mutual Housing was donated to BACLTL. Brown Shingle began in 1973 as part of the Berkeley Tenant’s union rent strike, and we continue to maintain it as resident controlled housing. Also in 2015, Board member Steve Barton & Rick Lewis participated in the Affordable Housing Teach in, attended by 200 people concerned about the acute housing crisis in the Bay

Area. Rick spoke about the Smalls Sites Acquisition Program, which was later introduced to the Berkeley City Council, and we continue to work with the City on implementation. We have also been working closely for the past two years with a small group of elder women who are developing a model of elder cohousing, called the Hibiscus Commons Elder Co-op project.

What has BACLTL accomplished in the last 10 years?

- \* Acquired 3 Co-ops with 19 affordable units
- \* Sponsored 17 Co-op Gatherings
- \* Conducted scores of training workshops for over 20 co-ops and resident controlled housing
- \* Provided dozens of public education presentations
- \* Helped pass AB569 in 2014 (removed barriers to creating new LEHCs) and AB2818 in 2016 (CLT property taxation)
- \* Helped write the Regulatory Agreement with the City of Berkeley & helped introduce Small Sites Acquisition Program

Rick Lewis made a presentation about the history of Ninth Street Co-op, which is celebrating its 30 year anniversary this year. Ninth St Co-op is a 5-unit project in West Berkeley. The residents worked to purchase the property with a brand new housing nonprofit known as Resources for Community Development (RCD) in 1986. After being rejected by 15 lenders, a loan was secured thru the SAMCO, a coalition of banks that loaned on high risk projects. We were considered high risk, because RCD was new, with no track record, and co-ops were generally unknown. 9th St was Berkeley's 2nd co-op formed after the 1979 state enabling legislation. The residents put in a total of \$13,000 for share purchase and raised their rents 50% to make the deal work.

Over the next 6 years, the residents worked to complete the transition to Limited Equity Co-op, completed in 1993. The City of Berkeley's Rental Housing Acquisition & Rehab program helped to finance the Co-op. We are now working with the City of Berkeley on a similar new program known as the Small Sites Acquisition program. After discussing for several years the option of joining BACLTL, in 2015, 9th St. Co-op donated a portion of the value of the land to BACLTL, and signed a Ground Lease. Our attorney determined that if the value of the transfer was less than \$10,000, there would be no reassessment of property taxes by the County Assessor. BACLTL now provides oversight of project finances and helps assure long-term sustainability.

Next on the Annual Meeting agenda was our Board Elections. Five Board members were up for re-election, and all were enthusiastically re-elected by acclamation: Beth Youhn, Jesse Palmer, Marcia Caine Edelen, Marie Whidden, and Steve Barton. Claudia Skelton was also nominated from the floor and was elected by acclamation.

Next, a very inspirational and educational film was shown, called *Arc of Justice*, which chronicled the founding of the very first community land trust. This was called New Communities in Albany, Georgia, and was started by Rev Charles Sherrod and Shirley Sherrod in 1970 as part of a group of African-American farmers who had been forced off their land and

out of their homes for trying to register to vote. They raised \$1 million and bought 6000 acres of land, the largest land owned by African-Americans anywhere in the US. Despite the incredible success of their farm, In the 1980's they were forced into foreclosure along with thousands of other Black farmers because the government would only loan to white farmers during a drought. They brought a lawsuit which took many years for them to eventually win and in 2009 they received a \$12 million settlement. They bought 1600 acres of land that had once belonged to the largest slave owner and wealthiest man in Georgia, and now have a successful pecan farm. To this very first Community Land Trust, all other Land Trusts owe a great debt, including BACLTL!

Then, Steve Barton, BACLTL Board member and author of the recently passed Measure U1 ballot measure in Berkeley, gave a report about this fantastic victory and its impact on affordable housing. Measure U1 raises the business license tax on residential landlords in Berkeley, and is an ingenious method of taxing the huge windfall profits Berkeley landlords are currently receiving from the extremely high rents being charged for rental housing. Despite property owners' groups spending nearly \$1 million to defeat the measure, which amounted to them spending over \$100 per vote, the ordinance passed with nearly 75% of the vote! This tax will raise approximately \$4 million a year which is earmarked for affordable housing. Steve reminded us that this locally-generated and locally-controlled funding for housing is especially important because nationally the election brought Republicans to power and will certainly result in federal money for housing being cut drastically. He said that this underscores the importance of the Community Land Trust model, which removes housing from the speculative real estate market and makes it permanently affordable. Steve also helped write and pass a similar ordinance in Palo Alto this year, also with nearly 75% of the votes, and other cities may put it on the ballot in the next election. He also reported that five Bay Area cities put rent control measures on the ballot this year, and two won, Richmond and Mountain View.

Steve King, Executive Director of Oakland CLT, gave a presentation on Oakland's Measure JJ, which passed, which will strengthen rent control and eviction protections for Oakland tenants. He also reported on the passage of Oakland's Measure KK, an Infrastructure bond measure which provides \$100 million for anti-displacement efforts to prevent lower-income residents from being forced out of Oakland. Steve also discussed the passage of Measure A1, an Alameda County housing bond that will provide \$580 million of dollars for affordable housing, the first time in ten years that the County will have new money for housing. Most of this money is earmarked for building new housing, but some is for preserving existing housing, especially the \$35 million Innovation and Opportunity Funds, which are most likely to be helpful to Community Land Trust projects.

Thanks to everyone who attended our Annual Meeting, and to our great speakers and many volunteers who made the event a great success!

Minutes submitted by Kathy Labriola, BACLTL volunteer