



Community Development Corporations: The ABCs of CDCs and DIY Neighborhood Development

"Give me a lever and a place to stand and I will move the world. - Archimedes (220 BCE)"

By Ed Democracy

Community development is often used as a synonym for economic development. Sometimes the two terms are lumped together: "community & economic development". The reason is that all development has been of the developers, by the developers and for the developers. The point of community development is development of the community, by the community, and for the community. Fortunately, there are some socially responsible developers who share their financial knowledge and organizing skills to do projects which are actually compatible and symbiotic with communities. Furthermore, over the past several decades, a new community development movement has begun to gain real momentum. Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are a relatively new model of organization designed specifically for grassroots democratic development. Many states have "CDC associations" to coordinate the growing multitude of CDCs. These grassroots CDCs provide both a lever and place to stand for common people work-

ing to change their neighborhoods. What do you do when you and your neighbors see opportunities for community development projects which would make a real difference for your community? You probably talk about it over coffee or at meetings of your neighborhood organization. Maybe you even have a community vision workshop and identify broad consensus on ideas which are not only both innovative and viable but truly sustainable for the longterm. What next? If you do not have a local CDC, then you probably hope some socially responsible developer gets wind of the ideas before a socially irresponsible developer does. CDCs offer an alternative to the "hope against hope" method of development. CDCs can start independently or they be spin-off organizations which are started by neighborhood organizations in collaboration with other local organi-

zations, businesses, and individuals. There are some truly amazing resources available right now. If you do not have a CDC in your neighborhood, then you can start one! Today! There are now over 4,000 CDCs nationwide. Just one of many resources for information on CDCs is: COMMUNITY-WEALTH.ORG whose "goal is to provide you with the web's most comprehensive and up-to-date information resource on state-of-the-art strategies for democratic, community-based economic development." There you can find books such as:

"Building Wealth: The New Asset-Based Approach to Solving Social and Economic Problems",
"America Beyond Capitalism"
"The Commons Rising",
 ... and much more.

You and your neighbors can build the neighborhood you want! The resources you need are available right now! Good luck!

FMI:
www.can-so.org/chartingdemocracy



HELPFUL LINKS

KnowledgePlex
 The affordable housing and community development resource for professionals
www.knowledgeplex.org

Local Initiatives Support Corporation
 Helping neighbors build communities
www.lisc.org

Community Development Corporations - WIKI
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_Development_Corporation

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (Anyone can join the MHNO at any time)

COUNT ME IN! I WANT TO DO MY PART! (As a member you'll receive a monthly copy of the Observer by mail.)

Date: _____ (Please note: membership is for 1 year from receipt of dues)

Enclosed are my membership: **dues** /one year _____ **renewal dues** /one year _____

Membership Dues	Committee Selection(s) (optional)
<input type="checkbox"/> Students & Seniors \$3.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Observer Editorial
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Income Family \$6.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership & Outreach
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Income Individual \$3.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising
<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing, Transportation, & Environment
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$ 5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Web Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Business \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> General Volunteer

Enclosed is an additional (tax-deductible) donation of \$ _____.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ Mobile: _____
 E-mail: _____

For statistical purposes only: Please circle your ethnicity:
 White Black Hispanic Asian Native American Other Family Size?: _____

Please make checks payable to MHNO & mail with form to:
MHNO, 92 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101 **Thank you!**

Winter Parking and Shoveling

A Note from the MHNO Chair

The City's Parking Ban times now run from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., when a parking ban is called in the case of snow. During Parking Bans free parking can be found at the Cutter Street lots (off the Eastern Prom); snow ban parking will also be available at the Adams School site. Vehicles can enter these lots at 5 p.m. and must be removed by 7 a.m.

City ordinances now require property owners to clear the sidewalks from snow within 24 hours after a snowfall. Up to 10 gallons of free salt and sand for sidewalks are available at the parking lot at the corner of Marginal Way and Preble Street. To report uncleared sidewalks call 756-8393.

If you're having trouble driving up one of the hills in the neighborhood, you can find barrels of sand at the corners of Fox Street and Washington Ave, and at India and Congress Street.

If you feel this should be provided at another location on the East End please contact Public Services at 874-8493.