

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Community-supported Green Spaces as an Urban Revitalization Model for Budapest

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Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
Introduction and objectives	6
1: History and typology of community-supported green spaces	8
1.1: The European and American roots of community-supported green spaces	8
1.1.1: Land as a form of social welfare	8
1.1.2: The Victory Gardens movement	9
1.1.3: The Green Guerrillas movement	11
1.2: Typology of community-supported green spaces	11
1.2.1: Community gardens in the U.S.	14
1.2.2: School gardens: the South African experiment	19
1.2.3: Community greens: Jackson Heights, Montgomery Park	24
1.2.4: London's garden squares	25
1.2.5: Modern European allotment gardens	26
2: Organizational aspects of community-supported green spaces, their effects on urban problems	27
2.1: The organizational structure of a neighborhood community garden	28
2.2: Community greens: an analysis of two organizational approaches	28
2.3: Garden squares and their organizational and legal structure	32
2.4: The critical urban issues community-supported green spaces help solve	32
2.4.1: Vacant lots, low property values	33
2.4.2: Hunger	33
2.4.3: Lack of safe, accessible green space	34
2.4.4: Interracial or intercultural conflicts, lack of community ties	35
3: The significance of community-supported green spaces to urban green space planning and landscape architecture	36
3.1: Contemporary issues and problems in urban planning	36
3.2: The participatory design process as a planning tool	39
3.3: Community-supported green spaces as laboratories	40
4: Hungary's civil sector and society's ability to adopt the community-supported green space model	41
4.1: Volunteerism and civil society in Hungary	41
4.2: Successful community horticultural projects empowering Roma	43
4.3: The use of the participatory planning model	43
5: An introduction to two case studies for community-supported green space in Budapest	45
5.1: Objectives of the case studies	45
5.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the two case studies	46
5.3: Historical background	47
5.3.1: The shortage of green space in Budapest	47
5.3.2: The concept and history of block rehabilitation	50
5.3.3: Erzsébetváros and its cultural and architectural significance	51
6: The Block 15 case study	54
6.1: Background information for the case study	54
6.1.1: Why the site was chosen	54
6.1.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the survey of Block 15	54
6.2: A history and survey of Block 15	55
6.2.1: An architectural and social history of the block	55
6.2.2: Demographics of Block 15	59
6.2.3: Landscape architectural survey of Block 15	59
6.3: Survey results	67
6.3.1: Usage of the garden	67
6.3.2: Perceptions of the garden's conditions and problems	68
6.3.3: The need to renovate	71

6.3.4: Perceived obstacles to successful renovation and longterm maintenance	72
6.3.5: Willingness to become involved in the garden	73
6.3.6: Vision for how a renovated garden should function	74
6.3.7: Views on ideal ownership situation for the garden	74
6.3.8: Sense of block community and unity	75
7: The Madach Block case study	76
7.1: Background information for the case study	76
7.1.1: Why the site was chosen	76
7.1.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the Madach Block survey	76
7.2: History and survey of the site	77
7.2.1: An architectural history and description of the block	77
7.2.2: Demographics of the block	77
7.2.3: Landscape architectural survey of Madach Block	78
7.3: Survey results	82
7.3.1: Usage of the garden	82
7.3.2: Perceptions of the garden's conditions, facilities and layout	82
7.3.3: Opinions on the garden's most critical problems	83
7.3.4: The need to renovate	83
7.3.5: Perceived obstacles to successful renovation and longterm maintenance	83
7.3.6: Willingness to become involved in the garden	83
7.3.7: Vision for how a renovated garden should function	85
7.3.8: Sense of block community and unity	85
7.4: The participatory forum planning series	85
7.4.1: Participatory planning forum I	86
7.4.2: Participatory planning forum II	86
7.4.3: Participatory planning forum III	87
7.5: Brief summary of results of the participatory planning series	88
8: Conclusions and recommendations	92
8.1: Conclusions	92
8.1.1: Conclusions drawn from a comparison of the case studies	92
8.1.2: General conclusions	94
8.2: Recommendations for the case study sites	96
8.2.1: Recommendations specific to Block 15	96
8.2.2: Recommendations specific to Madach Block	97
8.3: Recommendations for Budapest: A proposed model for community-supported green spaces	98
8.3.1: Organizational structure	102
8.3.2: The design and planning process	103
8.3.3: Technical design aspects, brownfield issues	104
8.3.4: Security and legal aspects	106
8.3.5: Financial aspects	106
8.3.6: Outside involvement from professional and civic sectors	108
8.3.7: District and city government support, cultivating a network	108
8.3.8 Final summary	109
Appendix I: Sources cited	110
Appendix II: Basic population data and occupancy of Block 15 and Madach Block	119
Appendix III: Questionnaire distributed to Block 15 and Madach Block residents	122
Appendix IV: Letters send to Madach Block residents by the municipality	124

Introduction and dissertation objectives

The flight to the suburbs and the shift from an urban industrial economy to a suburban service-information economy has left many cities with substantial numbers of empty houses, abandoned industrial districts, and vacant areas. Finding ways to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the developable land in urban areas will be a significant aspect to landscape architecture over the next 30 years.

-Thomas Russ, Redeveloping Brownfields¹

The purpose of this dissertation is to assess and analyze community-supported green spaces as a model for urban revitalization, and construct a concept for how such a model could be successfully created and implemented in Budapest. A community-supported green space is a semi-private green space that it is communally cared for by a group of people, generally who live around or near the garden, who have formed a formal or informal organization devoted to the garden's development and maintenance. The space can be a playground, flower garden, vegetable garden, meditation garden, fruit tree arbor or open lawn, and the land can be publicly or privately owned, but the most important principle is that it is run by local volunteers who determine its design, maintenance and development, and also control its use. Community-supported green spaces exist in many incarnations globally, varying depending on the economic layer, urban fabric and the culture in which they exist, from community gardens on rehabilitated abandoned industrial sites in the poorest neighborhoods of New York City, to school gardens in the townships of Cape Town, to the upper-class inner garden squares of London. Their benefits include increased urban green space, lower crime, higher property values, fresh produce and stronger community bonds. Community-supported green spaces do not yet exist as a model in Budapest, although there are both urban and rural historical precursors here and the city's recent political history and the rebirth of civil society have contributed to an atmosphere that would help sustain such a model. Budapest needs a new vision for green space development. Simultaneous with these positive post-1989 developments, the city has begun experiencing some of the same urban blights common to U.S. cities in the decades following the Second World War. Some parts of Budapest have buildings deteriorated to the point that they have to be razed in the name of public safety; other parts of the city have become unaffordable for the average family. Pest is desperately short of green space, the worst example being District VII where it amounts to 1%. Car use is on the increase, bringing with it higher mobility and the demand for reliable parking space. As a result of these and other factors, many are fleeing to the agglomeration: the city has lost well over 200,000 in recent years.

My objectives with this dissertation are to:

- Establish, through a thorough survey of contemporary research, that community-supported green spaces are a functional, successful tool for urban revitalization at a global level. Further, they fill a role city parks and gardens cannot, and contribute in a unique way to solving urban problems such as petty crime, vandalism, vacant lots, lack of green space and lack of community ties. They have

¹ Thomas Russ, *Rehabilitating Brownfields*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000, p. 2.

not only an environmental but also a social role, because they empower residents and strengthen civil society through the participatory design process and volunteer-led initiatives. They are also an important element of urban landscape architecture because they serve as a living, evolving educational tool for participatory planning and also for the design needs of individual neighborhoods.

- Demonstrate, through two case studies, the viability of community-supported green spaces in Budapest and also determine what planning mistakes have prevented their success until now. Both case studies are in large blocks in District VII. The first was Block 15, the subject of a massive and highly-publicized block rehabilitation effort in the 1980s. The second is Madach Block, a dilapidated common garden in a Modernist block of three apartment buildings. In both cases I sought to assess the residents' attitudes towards the garden their willingness to participate in the design process, renovation and maintenance. In Block 15, the research's other objective is to establish what planning elements were missing that caused the garden not to succeed as a community-supported green space and why it struggles with neglect, crime and other problems. In the Madach Block, the research's other objective was to carry out a participatory planning process with the residents with support from the local municipal authorities that resulted in a preliminary conceptual drawing for the garden's renovation. The research includes surveys and interviews with the blocks' residents, landscape architectural inventories and drawings of the sites' current conditions and facilities, documentation of observational visits to the blocks to assess use, photographs, a survey of relevant municipal legislation, and interviews with local officials.
- Construct a proposed model for how community-supported green spaces could become a viable model for urban revitalization in Budapest, taking into consideration Budapest's particular legal, economical and sociopolitical conditions as well as its architectural and urban structure. The model essentially calls for converting the courtyards of Budapest's blocks of flats into high-quality, well-maintained, commonly-used and commonly-managed semi-private common gardens. Although these would be restricted to residential access only, they would be loosely connected in a network facilitated by the local government. Instead of the old patriarchal top-down system, the model would be predicated on the municipality providing targeted moral, technical and financial support to residents' initiatives. The model is based upon aspects of various types of community-supported green spaces worldwide, including American community greens, British garden squares, and European allotments. The proposal will encompass the landscape architectural aspects of the sites, including brownfield rehabilitation issues, but also address social issues such as how to cultivate a common sense of responsibility for the site and management issues such as how to organize the residents and harmonize the role of the local government.

I dedicate this to my father, Henry Faurest (1937-2004) whose profound joy for life and extraordinary commitment to improving his community inspired this work.

Kristin Faurest, Budapest, February 2007

Chapter one:

History and typology of community-supported green spaces

1.1 The European and American roots of community-supported green spaces

1.1.1: Land as a form of social welfare

The earliest precursors of community-supported green spaces originated mainly in 19th century England and Germany, with factory owners designing entire housing estates for their workers complete with gardens. European garden cities in the 19th and early 20th centuries were conceived, designed and executed under the auspices of an authority, such as large factories or municipalities, as a way of providing comfort to and also placating the working class. These ideas were inspired in part by English social reformer Ebenezer Howard. Allotment gardens still can be seen particularly frequently in Germany, even in the dense neighborhoods of Berlin, but their history reaches back to the 19th century and in the case of England, all the way back to the reign of Elizabeth I. Allotment gardens are plots of land on which individual families cultivate vegetables and flowers on individual parcels for their own use. In much of Europe, allotment gardens grew parallel with the growth of cities and were an early means of providing food security to rural and urban poor. To improve their overall situation and to allow them to grow their own food, the municipal governments, churches or their employers provided open spaces for garden purposes. Shortly after World War II, Berlin contained 200,000 allotment gardens, with about 80,000 in existence today. In Hungary, it is possible to see land as a form of social welfare in both urban and rural contexts. In both cases, these are generally structures where the local or national government provides the land, tools and seeds for cultivating it, and the economically-disadvantaged recipients provide the labor and benefit from the results. It is designed to be efficient, government-assisted self-help. In the countryside, this took the form of social land programs, which were designed to provide arable and pasture land as well as credit unions to rural families and were first initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture in the late 1890s. They were revived in the 1930s, then again by the Ministry of Welfare in 1992, when unemployment began to rise in the countryside. In the 1990s, the significant change was that some of the programs were initiated and operated by non-profit organizations. During this time 10,000 families in about 250 communities directly benefited.² Wekerle Telep is a classic example of a small level of government assistance enabling people to help themselves significantly. Residents in the complex when it was first built in the World War I area each received four fruit trees, resulting in a total of 16,000 fruit trees in the complex. In 1917, the fruit production resulted in an income for the residents of four times the annual cost of their rentals.³

² József Serafin, "A Szociális Földprogram" (Social Land Program), essay from *Szociális Földprogramok Magyarországon: Egy Aktív Szociálpolitikai Modell Eredményei* (Social Land Programs in Hungary: The Results of an Active Sociopolitical Model 1992-2000) Zsolt Szoboszlai, Ed. Budapest: Esély Szociális Közalapítvány, 2001, p. 23.

³ Ferenc Bóra, "Wekerle Sándor és a Wekerle-Telep (Sandor Wekerle and the Wekerle Housing Estate)" a 1998 article published online at www.sulinet.hu



Image 1.1: Wekerle Telep in the 1930s. Photographer unknown.

Another excellent example is the Kôbánya-Kertváros (Kôbánya-Garden City). It was constructed alongside outer Jászberényi út, on a piece of land owned by the municipality, lying between the Szolnok and Hatvan railway lines and the Határerdô (Borderland Woods). It was designed to serve the poverty-stricken families of the capital. The so-called Estate on the Outskirts was created between 1933 and 1938, when 148 semi-detached houses were built to provide 296 families with a home.⁴ The plots are arranged in double rows, each with a small plot of land. Preference was given to large families and those with farming expertise. Rent was low but tenants were required to cultivate their land intensively. The first tenants received free seed, plants, fruit trees and ploughing. Press coverage of the colony noted that the land yielded sufficient profits to cover annual rents as well as give the family a reliable source of food, and the population of the estate was in far better health than those living in tenement houses in general and temporary flats in particular.

1.1.2: The American Victory Gardens movement

The two world wars brought a desperate shortage of food supplies to the U.S. and its troops overseas, and it was this that led to the American predecessors of community gardens – victory gardens. Government agencies, private foundations, businesses, schools, and seed companies all worked together to provide land, instruction, and seeds for individuals and communities to grow food in victory gardens. What is probably the earliest mention in the United States of the term *community gardens* – and also the first major written guide to the victory gardens movement, *The War Garden Victorious* – was written and published in March of 1917 by Charles Lathrop Pack. Pack organized the National War Gardens Commission shortly before the U.S. entered the war. While he emphasizes how every garden could become “a munitions plant,” the author elaborates in detail how the model for victory gardens could be extended into peacetime as well to help improve cities and communities. It concludes with remarkably prescient recommendations and predictions for the future of community gardening. The reduced

⁴ Andras Ferkai, *Housing Estates*. Budapest: Municipality of Budapest, Office of the Mayor, 2005, pp. 31-32.

labor force and increased need for resources to support the war meant a food shortage no matter what. As the author described it: the idea of the “city farmer” came into being.⁵



Will you have a part in Victory?



WRITE TO THE
NATIONAL
WAR GARDEN
COMMISSION —
WASHINGTON, D.C.
for free books on
gardening, canning
& drying.

"Every Garden a Munition Plant"

Charles Lathrop Pack, Designer
THIS POSTER, USED IN 1918, AND WITH DIFFERENT SLOGANS IN
1919, WAS POPULAR WHEREVER IT APPEARED AND DID MUCH TO
EXTEND THE WAR GARDEN MOVEMENT

Images 1.2, 1.3: Two posters promoting victory gardens. Reproduced in: Charles Lathrop Pack. *The War Garden Victorious: Its Wartime Need and its Economic Value in Peace*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Publishing, March 1917.

The total number of war gardens for the period towards the end of the war was estimated at 5,285,000. Pack advocated a continuance of the victory gardens in peacetime, because *community gardening made for both better gardens and better communities*.⁶

⁵ Charles Lathrop Pack. *The War Garden Victorious: Its Wartime Need and its Economic Value in Peace*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Publishing, March 1917, p. 9-10.

⁶ Pack, p. 22

1.1.3: The Green Guerillas movement

The community gardens movement, in contrast to the allotments, garden cities and victory gardens, is ultimately one of volunteerism and grassroots organization with limited or no government help. Community gardening as it is recognized in contemporary times began in New York in the 1970s. as a product of government neglect and disinterest. In New York, arson and abandonment left the city scarred with thousands of crumbling buildings and vacant lots, more than 25,000 by 1977. In 1973 activists called the Green Guerillas began taking over lots and creating gardens where there had been wasteland. Activist Liz Christy, who was one of the founders of the Green Guerillas movement, noted that New York City had for decades suffered from a terrible shortage of green space. Even in 1932, only 7.28% of the city was set aside for open space recreation and there was only one playground for every 14,000 children under 12.⁷ Members, delighted with their own subversion of the city's nonsensical regulations, would hurl vessels containing seeds over fences so that even lots that were not accessible would at least be greened. She described the movement as one in which "the famous seed grenades of old Christmas tree ornaments or water balloons filled with pelletized, time release fertilizer and wildflower seeds helped sow a grass roots revolution on 'acres of opportunity.'"⁸ The spaces that were surreptitiously greened could, of course, not be used, but the activists hoped that the resulting plants would at least help ameliorate pollution and perhaps cast shade on the adjacent sidewalks. After some effort, the Guerillas got permission to the city to clean the lots and were offered leases in 1974. They trained other activists and set up phone lines to tell people where they could get free plants and trees. In Brooklyn, the first community garden demonstration project was set up through Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Service. It was so successful that a national program was funded at \$3 million and expanded to include 15 other cities. In 1978, the city established Operation Green Thumb, leasing plots for \$1 per year. Gardeners had to agree to vacate their plots within 30 days if the land was selected for development. In 1983 the city began issuing leases of five and ten years but a garden on land valued at over \$20,000 could not receive a long-term lease. In 1997, then New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani scheduled an auction for the properties on which 113 community gardens stood. Thousands took to the streets in protest. Finally, the city agreed to sell 63 gardens for more than \$4 million to two non-profit organizations, who preserved them.⁹ It is in part because of episodes such as this that the community gardening camp began to be divided between gardeners who seek legitimacy and those who see the municipal authorities as the enemy.

⁷ From Liz Christy's private research notes on open space in New York City, page 1. The notes were recently edited by New York community garden activist Donald Loggins and acquired from him by the author.

⁸ Christy, p. 8.

⁹Raquel Pinderhughes, "From The Ground Up: The Role of Urban Gardens and Farms in Low-Income Communities." Research written in June 2000 to be published in the Ford Foundation's volume, *Environmental Assets and the Poor* (2001), published by the Russell Sage Foundation, page 1.

1.2: Typology of community-supported green spaces

Community-supported green spaces exist as grassroots models of urban rehabilitation in varying forms across the world. In the interest of a thorough analysis of what types of community gardens exist and how they function, several short case studies are presented here from around the world. The case studies were selected in order to represent the most significant of community-supported green space types and also to represent a diverse selection of countries where they have proven a successful model for increasing urban green space supply. South Africa is represented because it is a developing country and also because it, like Hungary, is still in the process of rebuilding civil society following the recent historic downfall of a repressive regime. Western Europe is represented because of its strong historic tradition of allotment gardens, and England is represented separately because of London's highly-regulated system of garden squares.

The typology that has been devised for this paper for categorizing and analyzing community-supported green spaces is the following. It is based primarily on the type of community that cultivates and uses the garden as well as the garden's location and purpose. The typology does not distinguish between ornamental and agricultural gardens because many community gardens contain both and make no distinction between the two, and the issue of whether the garden produces flowers or food is not significant in the context of the garden's management and function. The case studies, which have been specifically selected to represent the whole spectrum of the typology outlined in the chart that follows, include:

- Neighborhood community gardens in the U.S. that serve a specific purpose, such as providing food to the elderly or functioning as neighborhood cultural centers, as well as the newer trend of creating a neighborhood community garden within an existing city park
- Institutional community gardens in prisons and rehabilitation centers in the U.S.
- School gardens in South Africa
- Allotment gardens, historically in Western Europe but now beginning to appear in Central and Eastern Europe
- American-initiated community gardens in Bosnia designed to help heal society's war wounds
- Community greens that have successfully improved neighborhoods in both the aesthetic and social sense by creating a common garden among neighbors
- Garden squares that have historically functioned in London neighborhoods as a system of protected, regulated semi-private green spaces.

Table 1.1: Typology of community-supported green spaces		
Main types	Geographic location	Siting/socioeconomics/size/function/numbers
<u>Community gardens</u>	U.S., Canada Australia, S. Africa	Organized, developed, maintained and used by volunteers with donated materials. Both common and individual plots. Primarily poorer inner-city neighborhoods for food production and green space. Low municipal involvement, high volunteer involvement. More than 6,000 in U.S. alone. Most smaller than 1 hectare.
<i>Main subtypes of community gardens:</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood community gardens: most common type, usually in abandoned city lots. • Housing facility community gardens: located in specially-equipped housing complexes • Institutional community gardens: located in prison, homeless shelter or other facility. • School community gardens: located in school, but often open to the community.
<u>Community greens</u>	U.S.	Common area defined by a group of houses and organized, maintained and used by residents to increase local green space. Mostly middle economic class. Low municipal involvement, high volunteer involvement. Numbers unknown. Can be several hectares in size, or smaller.
<u>Allotment gardens</u>	Europe	Primarily individual plots maintained by volunteer gardeners, supervised by organization. Primarily for food production. Varied economic class. High municipal and volunteer involvement. Thousands in Europe. Varying sizes.
<u>Garden squares</u>	U.K.	Common area defined by a group of houses and organized, maintained and used by residents to provide semi-private green space. Upper middle class. High municipal involvement, varied volunteer involvement. Financed by local tax. More than 600 in London alone. Can be several hectares in size, or smaller.

The following are several case studies from American, European and South African community gardens demonstrating how they function and how they benefit or transform a

neighbourhood. They include examples of each of the types of garden outlined in the typology at the beginning of this chapter. There are several detailed examples given of neighbourhood gardens because this is the dominant type of community garden in the U.S. and, furthermore, also the type of garden that comes in the most diverse forms.

1.2.1: Community gardens in the U.S.

In 1996, Suzanne Monroe-Santos, then a graduate student at the University of California, Davis, created a national survey of community gardens.¹⁰ Published in 1998, it was the second such survey and still is the most recent document of its kind. The researchers sent questionnaires to community gardeners, agricultural managers, educators, and other people involved in community greening efforts in 40 medium-sized and large cities across the country. The national survey was sent to more than 40 cities that were chosen based on the ACGA organizational member list. Community gardeners from 38 cities responded to the survey, and of those 38, 15 cities had also had respondents in the first survey of 1992. It is a significant sampling of U.S. community gardens but by no means a comprehensive report on community gardening in the entire U.S., as the researchers were unable to contact every organization that operates a community garden and not all community garden associations belong to the national organization. It is meant to be a representative sampling that is designed to show trends and critical issues for community gardens across the country and also indicate how community gardens contribute to their cities. The total number of community gardens reported in the survey was 6,020. Because most community gardens have a mix of ornamental and functional plants, the gardens are classified not by size or content, but by the population that uses and maintains them, i.e. students, elderly people in a special housing complex, etc. The typology of the gardens, as defined by Santos in her study, is based on user group, function and location, and varies slightly from the typology detailed above. It does not include community greens and because it is restricted to the U.S. does not include allotment gardens. These are the main types represented in her survey:

- 67%: neighborhood gardens dominated by flowers, shrubs and trees, and designed primarily for aesthetics and passive recreation for the neighborhood.
- 16%: housing gardens, dominated by flowers, shrubs and trees but generally meant to serve specific disadvantaged populations in low-income, government-subsidized housing complexes.
- 8%: school gardens, generally meant to serve only the students at the school.
- 1.4%: senior housing gardens, meant to serve the elderly residents in specially-equipped housing facilities.
- 0.6%: institutional gardens, i.e., at-risk youth or adult correctional facilities.

A significant problem facing community gardens is the permanency of the garden's site. In all cases but six gardens, respondents said that site permanency was an unresolved issue. Of the more than 6,000 gardens tabulated in this national survey, only a total of 318 are owned by the garden organization or by a land trust. This constitutes only 5.3% of the total number. Therefore, nearly 95% of the community gardens in the United States

¹⁰ Suzanne Monroe-Santos, Suzanne. *Community Garden Survey 1996*. A study commissioned and published by the American Community Gardening Association, 1998, pp. 1-13.

do not have an absolutely secure agreement as to the ownership of their land. Two-thirds of the gardens were less than 10 years old. The trends of the last few years optimistically suggest that the overall number of community gardens will increase. Monroe-Santos' research suggested that even though community initiative and involvement are always cited as some of the most important factors in creating and sustaining a community garden, there was no evidence to suggest that gardens initiated by outside parties had less of a chance of survival than gardens started directly by people in the neighbourhood. Long term maintenance of community interest or governance may be a more determining factor than who actually started the garden. Monroe-Santos shows Newark, New Jersey to be the city with the most gardens in relation to its population – 49 for every 10,000 people. New York City had the highest number overall – 1,906 gardens for its 7.3 million population, with about 30,000 volunteers.¹¹

Neighborhood garden I: Clinton Community Garden, New York City

New York City as a whole provides an excellent large-scale case study for the benefits of community gardens, because the city has so many and the residents of many of its neighbourhoods rely so heavily upon them for their green space needs. Several New York City community gardens are worthy of a closer examination in terms of what they've accomplished and what they give to the community. Clinton Community Garden is located in New York City's Hell's Kitchen neighbourhood, and it is significant for two reasons. First, it functions not merely as a green space but a social center with a sense of community and public service, thus, it supports the argument that community gardens fill a role that is not filled by municipally-planned and maintained public green spaces. Second, it is the only New York community garden to receive permanent parkland status, which means that legally the land must always remain a green space and cannot be sold or developed. When volunteers first began working on the land in 1978, they found nothing but the corpse of a man who had overdosed on drugs, and three rusted cars. Today 3,000 members have access to the front garden where beds of flowers and herbs surround a lawn. Volunteer gardeners tend 108 plots measuring 110x190 cm in the rear garden, some of which are specifically designed to be accessible to disabled people. The garden site, formerly occupied by five slum buildings, is only about 1500 square meters but it features mature shade trees including magnolia, apple, Douglas fir and maple. All are maintained completely by volunteers. There is a vine-shaded arbor commonly used for dance concerts, public readings and weddings. The role of community gardens as a common cultural meeting point for people of diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds is of particular significance in the case of Clinton Community Garden, where members originate from more than 40 countries. According to a board member: *It isn't enough being green - a community garden needs to have an ethos of service to community in order to compete with equally valid land uses within a city.*¹²

¹¹ Monroe-Santos, p. 9.

¹² Adam Honigman, posting to the American Community Garden Association's listserver, www.communitygarden.org, February 11, 2005.



Image 1.4: Clinton Community Garden, view from the front. Courtesy of the organization's website, www.clintoncommunitygarden.org

Neighborhood garden II: CASA, Huntsville, Alabama

What distinguishes CASA from Clinton and many other community gardens is that the volunteers and the recipients are two different groups of people. The garden's mission is not primarily to add public green space but instead to get fresh, delicious fruit and vegetables to low-income elderly people. The land is owned by the city and consists of 0.96 acre. All the seeds are donated by a local nursery, and the volunteers grow beans, collards, tomato, eggplant, squash, zucchini, peppers, lettuce, kale, cucumber and other vegetables. The volunteers come from garden clubs, corporate volunteer teams, civic

organizations and schools. The recipients are poor elderly who live in subsidized housing. In 2000, more than 7,000 people received 8,460 kilograms of food from the program.¹³

Neighborhood garden III: The Village of Arts and Humanities, Philadelphia

The Village is simultaneously a green space and also an open-air art school for neighborhood children. It was established during the summer of 1986 when Philadelphia-based artist Lily Yeh began working with neighbourhood children to transform an abandoned lot in a dangerous neighbourhood of North Philadelphia into a colourful public park. During the following three summers, more children, neighbourhood adults and professional artists, joined in to complete the project. The art park, with its mosaic sculptures and benches, vibrant murals and lush greenery, became an oasis of beauty and quiet for the residents in this impoverished urban setting. Building on the momentum created by the project, the Village was established as a nonprofit organization in 1989 and members renovated an abandoned three-story warehouse next to the park for use as its main facility. Responding to a lack of activities for youth, the Village began offering after school arts and education programs in this new facility.¹⁴



Image 1.5, 1.6: The Village of Arts and Humanities. Photos courtesy of the organization's website. www.villagearts.org

Neighborhood garden IV: community gardens in existing parks

Using land that is already designated as green space for a community garden does not achieve the goal of contributing to the overall amount of green space in a given neighborhood or city. But it does accomplish several of the other community garden objectives very successfully, including giving inner-city residents the opportunity to garden and also providing fresh food for low-income neighborhoods. A community garden designed and maintained within an existing city park has many advantages, because it provides a space for urban gardeners, gets the community involved in the park, and allows a public park the luxury of a flower garden. A recently-established example of this can be found in Sacramento, California, where the park and recreations department now has its first community garden. The Southside community garden board opened the plots to the public on Jan 31, 2004 and more than 70% of the 100 plots were rented within the first two hours – demonstrating a clear interest on the part of the public. The

¹³ Interview with volunteer Jim Call, January 2004

¹⁴ Village of Arts and Humanities Website, www.villagearts.org

garden is open to all city residents.¹⁵ Shawnee Park Flower Garden, a lost historic flower garden located within a major public park in Louisville, Kentucky is a superb case study for a potential example of this type of community garden. The garden and park were shaped - first by Olmsted himself - but then, over decades, by de facto and de jure racism, flooding, war, economic crisis, racial integration and a rapidly evolving and shifting urban landscape and social structure.¹⁶ Shawnee is located on the Ohio River banks in one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods. The park was part of Olmsted's system consisting of 810 hectares of parks and 25 kilometers of parkways. Shawnee Park, laid out on a 70-hectare site in 1893, was meant to suggest a classic American open prairie. The garden area includes a half-circle-shaped music court including a bandstand, flanked by two long, rectangular flowerbeds. There is no single original planting list. In 1924, when the Parks Commission voted to segregate the city's parks, Shawnee became a whites-only park, with smaller nearby Chickasaw Park for African-Americans. In the mid 1950s, the law was repealed, but de facto segregation persisted and black people did not use the park. Today, the Shawnee area is predominately African-American, a mix of middle-class professionals and disadvantaged elderly and young people. The park is rarely used. Most older African-Americans still use "their" park, Chickasaw since they are old enough to remember when they were deemed inferior citizens and legally barred from Shawnee Park. Designated parts of the garden could be planted and maintained as a community garden by local neighbourhood groups, both informal groups of neighbors and also churches, schools or organizations.



Image 1.7: Shawnee Park. The half-moon-shaped outline of the garden can be seen just below the Middle Concourse. Map courtesy of the Olmsted Conservancy, Louisville, Kentucky.

Institutional community gardens

¹⁵ Bill Maynard, Sacramento Area Community Garden Coalition, in a posting to the American Community Gardening Association's listserver, Feb 3, 2004.

¹⁶ Kristin Faurest, "A Shawnee Park virágoskertje – egy amerikai nyilvános tér történeti és szociológiai vonatkozásai" (Olmsted's Shawnee Park Flower Garden: Archaeology and Sociology of an American Garden). *Tajépítészet (Landscape Architecture)*, October 2002, pp. 23-26.

Wilmington, Delaware has several community gardens tied not to neighbourhoods but to correctional facilities. Wilmington's New Castle County Juvenile Detention Center Garden has a community garden dating from summer 2002 for its 120 residents, who are profoundly troubled and at-risk children from ages 8-12. Similarly, the garden at the city's Baylor Women's Correctional Institute has had a noticeable effect on the inmates and their surroundings. The garden provides an area of which the prisoners are proud and that also promotes tranquility and social order. The inmates have an element of ownership in the garden and make most of the important decisions that govern it.¹⁷ Re-Vision House, a home for teen mothers in Worcester, Massachusetts, runs a garden and three-story greenhouse. The women grow food for themselves and their children and also sell produce at the farmers' market and seedlings to other urban gardeners.¹⁸ Some training programs centered around communally-run gardens are designed specifically for prisoners. One of the oldest is the Garden Project, started in 1982 in San Francisco, California. The project runs a farm on public land next to the San Francisco County jail and a half-acre garden nearby. Inmates at the county jail can learn farming and job skills, then on release they have the option of working at the smaller parcel garden. Much of the produce is sold to fine restaurants in the area, such as Chez Panisse and Greens, and the surplus is donated to residents and soup kitchens around San Francisco. More than 10,000 prisoners have come through the program and despite their criminal records, many of these men and women have found jobs after prison in the city's tree-cutting program, in restaurants emphasizing fresh food, and in other positions related to gardening. A 1992 study of the project found that graduates had lower recidivism rates than the general population. Of 390 participants studied, 6 percent were rearrested within four months of release, compared to an average of 29 percent.¹⁹ Since the difference in the two groups is the garden experience, it can be inferred that this program works.

1.2.2: School gardens: the South African experiment

In the case of South Africa, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, one of the country's most famous and prestigious botanical gardens, is cooperating with schools in the townships of Cape Town to create school-based community gardens. The problem in Cape Town is not just that there is a dire lack of green space for most of the city's poorest residents, but there is also the major crisis of the rapid destruction of the area's native flora. The sprawling, poverty-stricken townships are often-unofficial urban settlements that are home to an unknown number of Cape Town's residents. This is where thousands of entire families dwell in shacks that average between 15 and 25 square meters constructed of scrap metal and wood on barren lots. Kirstenbosch initiated a horticultural outreach program designed to fight both problems by establishing school gardens in the townships.²⁰ Cape Town, with three million people, is the second largest city in sub-Saharan Africa and is located in one of the world's conservation hotspots. The dominant flora, *fynbos*, constitutes one of the world's six plant kingdoms even though it covers an

¹⁷ Jody K. Maxwell, *Community Gardens: Marigolds of the Inner City*. Honors Thesis for the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture of Washington State University, fall 2002, page 18-19.

¹⁸ Pinderhughes, p. 4.

¹⁹ Pinderhughes, p. 5.

²⁰ Kristin Faure, "Gardens for the Nation: Horticultural Outreach Programs of Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden, Cape Town, South Africa" (Kertek a nemzetnek: Városi kertészeti felzárkóztató program a dél-afrikai Fokvárosban). *Tájépítészet*, (Landscape Architecture), November 2003, pp. 23-25,

area of less than 90,000 square kilometres. Fynbos is characterized by low-growing, primarily drought-tolerant shrubs, perennials and annuals of an extraordinary range of textures, colours and shapes, including 526 of the world's 740 species of *Erica*, 69 of the world's 112 species of *Protea*, and a stunning array of lilies, gladioli, native grasses and reeds. Land in Cape Town that has formal conservation status remains at 476 square kilometers, 19 percent of the city's total area, although of the 23 protected areas only five are considered to be properly managed for biodiversity. Furthermore, unfair distribution means that for most of Cape Town's poorest residents, these numbers are of no significance. As a result of urban development, the flora of the Cape Flats has been reduced to less than 4 percent of its original extent. Because the townships often developed unofficially, they were not governed by regulations regarding a minimum allotment of green space or any other environmental strictures. The townships are barren, horrible places populated by poor blacks and riddled with crime. People have little to no knowledge of their native flora. The school gardening program fits in with the city's Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy, which has as one of its priorities the creation of quality open space especially in disadvantaged areas. The program has developed 35 new school gardens since it began in 1997 in the townships. The first and second years focus on school-greening workshops. Students plant native shrubs, perennials and annuals around the building and playground to create a buffer zone between the school and the surrounding barrenness. In the third year, Kirstenbosch staff train teachers to continue the program and create a school garden to be used as an outdoor classroom.



Image 1.8: A school garden planted with native fynbos in a township outside Cape Town, with wasteland of the Cape Flats beyond.



Images 1.9, and 1.10: Students working in an undeveloped part of the garden. A Xhosa medicine man lectures students on the medicinal properties of native plants as part of the horticultural outreach program. All photos by the author.

1.2.3: Community Greens: Jackson Heights and Montgomery Park

Community greens are characterized by being sited on land that is bounded by residential homes, and they are initiated, designed, maintained and access-controlled by those who use them. A community green can result from groups of neighbors either communally planning a space that is already common (i.e., an existing enclosed courtyard) or pooling pieces of property that are technically individually-owned (i.e., adjoining back yards). The benefits specific to community greens include that they:

- Encourage the development of a much stronger sense of community on the blocks that share them and thus help reduce crime
- Provide a safe and easily-viewed play space for young children, increasing the attractiveness of such urban neighborhoods for young families
- Facilitate the development of block-level community organizations

Community greens can play an important role in urban green space planning, as the concept has the potential to transform the urban residential landscape. Robert Wagner Jr., at one time the chairman of the New York City Planning Commission, estimated in the early eighties that up to three-fifths of Manhattan's 3,200 city blocks could have central gardens.²¹ It is only in recent years that community greens have been articulated as a comprehensive strategy for urban neighbourhoods. An essential aspect to community greens is that they be open only to those whose homes are directly adjacent to them. According to Clare Cooper Marcus, a community green is far more likely to succeed if it is clearly bounded by the dwellings of the people it serves, all entry points are designed to show this is not a public space, and the design is of a human scale that is appealing to children. As Cooper Marcus states, “the social significance of shared outdoor space that is *not* fully public seems to have been overlooked.”²² Two of the most successful and well-known American community greens are in New York and Boston. Jackson Heights in Queens, New York is a classic example of a successful community green, and was planned as one from its origins 90 years ago. Its original plan includes sanctuaries of grass, trees, and gardens on 195 hectares divided into 88 blocks. In the central fifteen blocks, garden apartments were built. The arrangement of the apartment buildings was designed to create a private interior courtyard, that would be landscaped and serve as a communal garden. The buildings covered 40% of the land, which allowed the development of gardens on the other 60%.²³ Montgomery Park, in Boston's South End, is a lush .18 hectare surrounded by eighty-five housing units contained in thirty-five townhouses. The park was originally created in the 1860s as a private garden owned by the owners of the apartments. It is now the heart of a diverse community with several large perennial beds, a dozen trees, walkways, and a lawn.²⁴

²¹ As quoted by William Drayton in “How to Turn Patchwork Urban Backyards into Neighborly Communal Parks.” *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2000, pp. 108-111.

²² Cooper Marcus, pp. 1-3.

²³ Jackson Heights profile, no author or publication date identified, published on the website of Community Greens, www.communitygreens.org, pp. 1-3

²⁴ Inerfeld and Blom, p. 129.

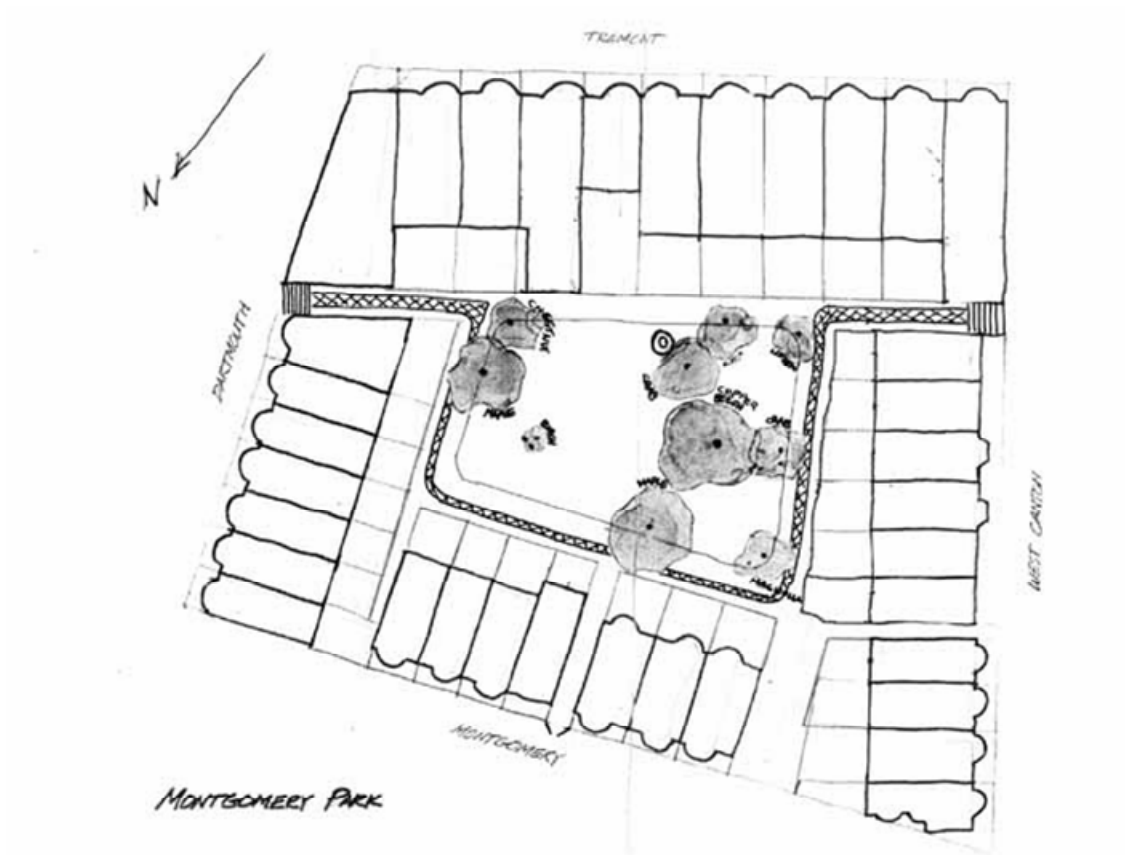


Image 1.11: Map of Montgomery Park. From the website www.communitygreens.org



Image 1.12: Aerial photo of Jackson Heights, undated. From the website www.communitygreens.org



Image 1.13: The common green of Jackson Heights, photo from www.communitygreens.org

1.2.4: London's garden squares

Garden squares are included in this survey of community-supported green spaces because even though they are not the volunteer-based model that community gardens or community greens represent, they represent a strong model from the urban design, management and legislative standpoints. Garden squares, like community greens, are common green spaces bounded by dwellings and used and maintained by the residents whose homes bound them. There are a few exceptions, for example, Russell Square in London is open to the public. However, the main distinctions that separate garden squares from community greens in the U.S. is that they are generally under strict and uniform legal control, the financing is government-regulated and systematic, they have a long and decidedly unpopulist historical tradition, and there is less emphasis on participatory planning and the residents doing all the work themselves. They are an inherent, ordered and established part of London's urban fabric instead of the individualistic, growing but still-scattered movement that they represent in the U.S. The garden squares are a significant source of pride for London. As the website devoted to the squares states: *The layout of Georgian and Victorian squares created an ordered, spacious arrangement of streets and leafy open spaces which has made an enduring contribution to the quality of life in London.*²⁵ Garden squares are located all over London but most typically in highly desirable neighborhoods, and the squares themselves contribute to the property values. The idea of a square in which the houses give on to a shared garden is often cited as Britain's greatest contribution to urban planning, though it ironically originated with urban aristocrats wanting to surround themselves with congenial neighbours while pretending to be in the country and remaining insulated from the lower classes out on the

²⁵ www.opensquares.org

streets. The garden squares were suburbs within the city. English Heritage estimates that there are about 600 garden squares in London. The oldest, such as St James's Square, date from the 17th century, although the majority are Georgian or Victorian.²⁶ Although the garden squares are private communal gardens, on one weekend each year, many are opened to brief public visits in an event organized in conjunction with the London Parks and Gardens Trust. Municipal legislation regulates and protects the gardens, and this varies in different districts of London. The boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea have probably the highest number of garden squares – an estimated 100, which form a distinctive feature of the urban landscape. Access and maintenance of 41 of them is controlled by the boroughs' 1851²⁷ and 1863²⁸ laws. Residents surrounding the garden submit a petition to the municipality that it be brought within the provisions of one of the laws. Under either law, the gardens can be accessed by the occupants of every building that is part of the square. The municipality's responsibility is to raise the money requested annually by the garden committee for the maintenance. The money is raised by means of an additional council tax of those people whose properties surround the square plus any other properties that have been included, as properties subject to the levy by a resolution of the garden committee. If a garden square is not taken within the provisions of one of the laws, then the garden's control is within the power of the legal owner.²⁹



Image 1.14: Gledhow Gardens in southwest London. Photo from www.opensquares.org.uk

²⁶ Anthony Gardner, "Do Fence Me In." *London Daily Telegraph*, June 12, 2004.

²⁷ *An Act for better paving, lighting, cleansing, regulating, and improving the Parish of Saint Mary Abbots, Kensington (14& 15VIC.C.cxvi.)*, August 1, 1851, Houses of Parliament, London.

²⁸ *An Act for the Protection of certain Garden or Ornamental Grounds in Cities and Boroughs*, May 4, 1863, Houses of Parliament, London.

²⁹ From a legal opinion by Michael Roskell of Pemberton Greenish Solicitors, legal counsel to the Royal Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, July 26, 2006.

1.2.5: Modern European allotment gardens

European allotment gardens are typically characterized by several small parcels of about 200 m² that are assigned to individuals or families organized in an association on municipal land. Allotments have a strong tradition and **can be viewed as the European counterpart to American community gardens**. Analogous to the comparison between community greens in the U.S. and garden squares in London, there are strong similarities and some distinct differences between community gardens and allotments. The differences between a community garden and an allotment garden are subtle and there are many exceptions. Community gardens tend to have a more important role in providing urban green space than allotment gardens do, allotment gardens are nearly always divided into parcels whereas community gardens only sometimes are, and allotments are usually government-supported while community gardens are usually not. The International Office for Land Plots and Gardens claims membership of three million families in 40,000 allotment associations in 15 countries across Europe.³⁰ Zurich, Switzerland, has a strong tradition of allotment gardens as an essential part of the city's green space system.³¹



Image 1.15: Allotment gardens in Zurich. Photo by Jeff Kenworthy.

Bosnia-Herzegovina has a network of gardens used by people of a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds. The project, carried out with assistance from the American Friends Service Committee, was established in 2000 to provide a space where people from different ethnicities could work together to grow food. The project has now expanded to 1200 participants in 13 gardens.³²

³⁰ Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux website, www.jardins-familiaux.org

³¹ Jeff Kenworthy, *Greening the City with Parks and Agriculture*. Case study published by the Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy, 2000, p. 6-8.

³² American Friends Service Committee website, description of the AFSC Community Garden project in Bosnia, www.afsc.org/europe/bosnia/gardening.html, undated.

Chapter two:

The organizational aspects of community-supported green spaces and their effects on solve urban problems

Prior to assessing the urban problems that community-supported green spaces help solve, it is appropriate to briefly summarize how various types of community-supported green spaces can be created and managed. The two types focused on in this chapter are neighborhood community gardens and community greens. There are several reasons for concentrating on these two types. The former is the most common form of community garden, the most organizationally-developed and also the most significant in the context of urban green space supply. The latter, although it is less common than the former, is also significant in the context of urban green space and is also particularly relevant as a model for Budapest, owing to the city's architectural fabric. Furthermore, the development and organization of institutional and school gardens is dictated by and can vary widely according to the type of institution or school involved, and so does not lend itself quite as well to a theoretical framework based on volunteerism, cooperation and civic initiative. The basic organizational structure and approach for a community garden contains the same elements as for any civic organization:

- legal structure (foundation, nonprofit association or other form)
- basic documents such as a deed of foundation and by-laws
- common vision and goals
- leadership and committees for fundraising, planning and other areas
- a core of active volunteers who commit to specific activities

Further elements that are specific to community gardens:

- participatory design process
- sources for donated seeds, plants, tools and hardscaping materials

The participatory design process is the primary means of ensuring that the volunteers feel a connection to and responsibility for the garden. This approach has in recent years become an important aspect of public green space design. It is now common practice in the U.S. for municipal parks departments to have citizens' advisory boards, volunteer friends groups and other such entities. A community garden's elements and overall design depend on its objectives. Some community gardens, where the emphasis is on food production and providing city residents with their own plot, are divided into individual beds and the gardeners determine planting. Other gardens that are more oriented to creating green space are not divided at all. Some gardens combine the two, with one area for individual beds and common areas for resting or for children to play. Community greens, however, require further and more complex organization than the other types of community garden. Instead of simply creating a volunteer-maintained, volunteer-controlled public green space on borrowed or rented land, the organizers of a community green are altering the legal and psychological ownership and structure of the green spaces adjacent to and among homes. A community garden association can

eliminate members that it deems to be destructive or indifferent to the garden's development, but a community green association cannot.

2.1: The organizational structure of a neighborhood community garden

Neighborhood community garden organizations in the U.S. typically form as unincorporated associations, which enables them to self-govern, establish bylaws and rules, sign contracts or leases, and also approach sponsors for contributions of land, tools, seeds, fencing, soil improvements or money. Besides material donations, the organization ideally would seek commitments for pro bono consultations or work from landscape architects and horticulturalists to ensure that the garden's design and planting list are based on sound knowledge and good practice. After accumulating sufficient materials, the group should seek a suitable garden site. The issue of soil quality extends to testing for environmental contaminants, as many community gardens are situated on sites formerly occupied by buildings that may have been painted with lead paint, demolished gas stations, or other dangerous structures. Given that secure use of land is the most serious problem facing community gardens in the U.S., the organization must prioritize getting a secure, long-term legal agreement for land use, ideally with a symbolic fee or none at all.³³ Very few community garden associations own the land that their garden is situated on. In some jurisdictions, publicly-owned vacant lands may be used for community gardens but, paradoxically, is taken away and sold when it becomes more valuable. Cities and states across the U.S. have a wide range of regulations and policies governing community garden land ownership. The duration of garden lot leases ranges from as long as five years (renewable) in Seattle, to two years in Boston, to one growing season under New York law.³⁴ Three documents are critical to longterm success:

- a set of posted written rules for use of the garden
- bylaws for the organization itself
- a detailed contract or letter of commitment for each volunteer

Whether the garden should be open to non-members is a question that depends upon the garden's scale and function. If it is a small, functional garden that consists largely of individual vegetable plots maintained and harvested by individual gardeners, then there is little reason for it to be open to the public. If it is a medium to large-size plot that also has common sitting areas, a playground, shade trees, water features or other facilities, and also if the volunteers wish to be able to fundraise for the garden from the public, then it is important to open it to the general public even if in a restricted way, with limited hours or the issuance of gate keys to regular users.

2.2: Community greens: an analysis of two organizational approaches

At the root of creating a community green is convincing the neighbors to begin to relate differently to their properties, to see it as shared space, to use it as an extension of their home and neighborhood block.³⁵ Creating a community green is a more complex legal

³³ Jane E. Schukoske, *Community Development through Gardening: State and Local Policies Transforming Urban Open Space*. Monograph published in 1997 through New York University, page 2.

³⁴ Schukoske, p. 5.

³⁵ Klick, p. 9.

and social process than other types of community gardens. In addition to all the organizational elements listed above for community gardens in general, residents wishing to form a community green, the residents of a block would jointly decide how much of each of their yards they would want to contribute to their community green, how much they would want to remain as private property and how the private and common areas would be physically separated. The correct approach to creating a community green from an existing site can depend heavily on the circumstances of the neighborhood and the attitude of the residents. In a case where most or all of the neighbors are willing to lead the effort and have the resources and the commitment to do the conversion and the ongoing maintenance, and the social and architectural structure of the residences enables a clear understanding of who is responsible for what part of the garden, then a case study provided by Kristen Klick about the organizational methods for creating community greens provides a viable framework. However, in a case where the community green is to be in a site where most of the population is heavily disadvantaged and there is a high crime rate and a low level of community involvement, Klick's approach may not be sufficient and it would be more effective to incorporate Oscar Newman's proven theories on defensible spaces. Newman's theories are designed to create well-tended common spaces by cultivating individual stewardship, and they have proven successful on sites where the original design did not lend itself well to individual initiative or care. An important distinction, from the architectural and economic perspective: Klick's theories are constructed on the idea of a neighborhood where each resident surrenders their privately-owned backyard for the cause of a large community green, while Newman's theories are predicated on the concept of neighbors in a low-income housing project taking individual responsibility for individual parts of a space commonly owned by the housing association that owns their building. The two theories are designed to meet the same goal with populations of entirely different socioeconomic and cultural circumstances: to create a commonly-designed, commonly-maintained, commonly-used community green, in which neighbors work together with individual responsibility for the common good. Klick uses as her case example Guilford Green, a lower middle-class site located in the Charles Village neighbourhood in Baltimore, Maryland, where five homeowners decided to construct a plan to increase their neighbourhood's sustainability and livability.³⁶ Some of the most important and clearly-proven ideas governing common green spaces in high-density, low-income housing developments plagued with crime and apathy are laid out in Oscar Newman's defensible space principles, which offer theories that are more specific to creating community greens in problematic urban housing developments. The concept of defensible space is the idea of structuring the physical layout of a community in a way that enables residents to control the areas around their homes, including the grounds outside their buildings. While a defensible space program can be initiated by a government entity, it is predicated on participatory planning and self-sustainability. To summarize: *By eliminating the functionless no-man's land that no resident can control, we should also reduce crime and fear of crime. Tenants should feel they now had the right to impose social controls and pressures on strangers*

³⁶ Klick, Kristen. "Greening Charles Village: A Step-by-Step Proposal on How to Retrofit a Community Green into an Established Baltimore City Neighbourhood." Monograph published in 2003, www.communitygreens.org, pp. 1-3.

and neighbors.³⁷ Newman's theories have been tested and proven successful in impoverished, mixed-race urban housing facilities where the residents often depend upon government subsidies to pay the rent. Residents of these places have difficulty feeling responsibility for the communal spaces. If it works, residents ensure that their common spaces are attractive because the design modifications enhance proprietary feelings, and criminals feel unwelcome. Defensible space principles, from a social standpoint, include:

- Involving the residents at a grassroots level throughout the design process
- Creating systems that are dependent upon the residents for longterm success
- Working with residents to divide up common spaces into smaller plots

Defensible space design principles, from a technical standpoint, include:

- Reducing public through-access to semi-public common areas
- Designating areas that are under the stewardship of one or a few families with clear markers, such as signs, marked pillars or other such structures
- Utilizing materials and design elements of a human scale and attractive color

At Clason Point³⁸ a public housing project in New York's South Bronx, Newman created three distinctive public zones for elderly, teenagers and children. Areas in front of the apartments were marked off as private. Residents took care of their spaces, and the crime rate dropped by 54 percent in the first year.³⁹



Image 2.1: Clason Point's desolate common areas prior to the renovation. Courtesy of www.defensiblespace.com

³⁷ Newman, Oscar. *Creating Defensible Space*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, 1996, p. 74.

³⁸ Newman, pp. 65-79.

³⁹ Newman, p. 77.

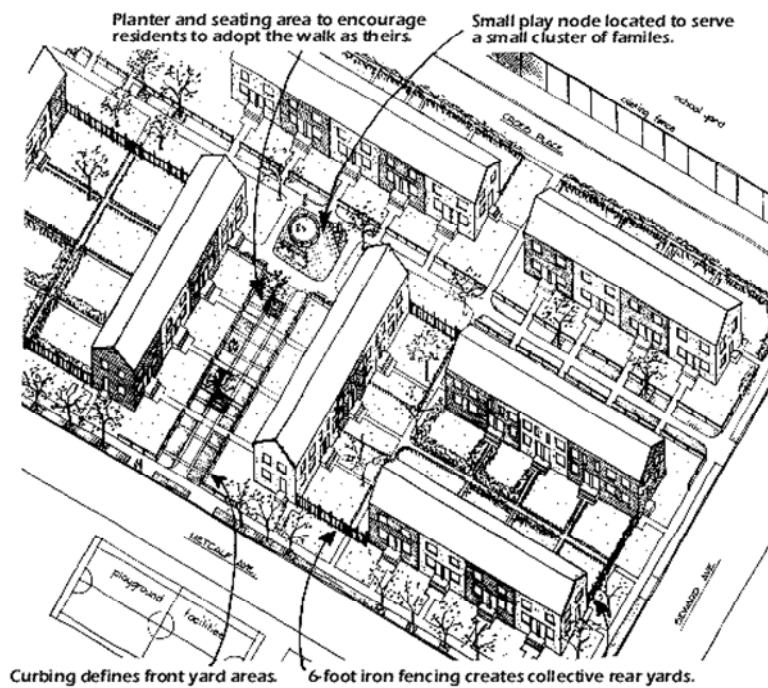


Image 2.2: Newman's plan for rehabilitation. Image from www.defensiblespace.com



Image 2.3: Clason Point common area after the renovation. Photo from www.defensiblespace.com

2.3.: Garden squares and their organizational and legal structure

Garden squares represent a powerful model from an organizational and urban structural standpoint, because they are such an established element of London's cityscape and are so highly regulated. London's Royal Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea have probably the highest number of garden squares – an estimated 100, which form a distinctive feature of the built-up urban landscape. Use, access and maintenance of 41 of those gardens is controlled by 1851⁴⁰ and 1863⁴¹ legislation. The residents surrounding the garden submit a petition to the municipality asking that their garden be brought within the provisions of one of the laws. A majority vote by the residents favoring the petition is necessary for the authorities to consider the request. Under either law, the gardens can be accessed by the occupants of every house or building that forms part of the square. The municipal government's primary responsibility is to raise the money requested annually by the garden committee for the maintenance. The money is raised by means of an additional tax of those people whose properties surround the square. The municipal council does not have any responsibility or jurisdiction in relation to the management of the garden. The residents' garden committee or, if appointed, sub-committee is responsible for the maintenance and economic management of the garden. The garden committee and any sub-committee have the power to make byelaws for the proper management of the garden. At an annual meeting, the garden committee determines the amount of money, to be raised via an annual levy as part of the Council Tax, which is necessary to maintain and keep the garden in order; accounts of the previous year's expenditure must be produced at this meeting. The financing of garden squares varies from one borough to the next. Eccleston Square in Pimlico has a flat fee of £110 for each household, while Cleveland Square has a sliding scale based on the size of each property.

2.4: The critical urban issues that community-supported green spaces solve
Community-supported green spaces are instrumental in achieving quantifiable and tangible improvements in a variety of conditions in inner-city neighbourhoods, and they are also responsible for building certain positive abstract, intangible qualities as well. In this section community gardens and community greens are the community-supported green space models focused on as a solution to inner city problems. Extensive research already documents several benefits specific to community gardens, and also, community gardens, unlike allotments and garden squares, most typically come into existence in urban neighbourhoods with disadvantaged populations and problems such as crime. Testimony from community gardeners indicates the ability of community-supported green spaces to transform a neighbourhood:

⁴⁰ *An Act for better paving, lighting, cleansing, regulating, and improving the Parish of Saint Mary Abbots, Kensington (14 & 15 VIC.C.cxvi.)*, August 1, 1851, Houses of Parliament, London.

⁴¹ *An Act for the Protection of certain Garden or Ornamental Grounds in Cities and Boroughs*, May 4, 1863, Houses of Parliament, London.

*If you had seen that trash-filled lot, you'd've said it would take a miracle to make a garden. In time and with much hard work, we accomplished the impossible.*⁴²

--Lydia Roman, The Magic Garden, East Harlem, Manhattan

2.4.1: Vacant lots, low property values

Neglected vacant lots in the modern urban setting, in the words of the theorist Jane E. Schukoske, pose great hazards to community life.⁴³ A study by Ann Bowman and Michael Pagano in 1998 of 186 cities and their land use showed that as much as one-fifth of the land in American cities is classified as vacant, with vacant land defined as including publicly-owned and privately-owned unused or abandoned land or land that once had structures on it, but also land that supports structures that have been abandoned, derelict, boarded up, partially destroyed or razed.⁴⁴ Abandoned lots are the strongest visual message that no one cares and everything is permissible. Because most community gardens are in poorer urban neighbourhoods where there is little green space, abandoned lots are generally the only possibility on offer. This means that every time a community garden replaces an abandoned lot, the benefit is double. The positive effects of green spaces on adjacent or nearby property values are long understood. Frederick Law Olmsted justified the expense of constructing Central Park by stating that adjacent properties would so increase in value that the park's cost would be quickly covered by tax revenues. Although the following would only apply to community greens or garden squares, where the property is directly connected to private residences, good quality landscaping of a property is estimated to add 7-15% to the property's value.⁴⁵ Community gardens, even though they are not necessarily adjacent to homes, also contribute positively to the value of real estate in the area.⁴⁶ A recent study found that the opening of a community garden has a statistically significant positive impact on residential properties within 1000 feet of the garden, that the impact increases over time and also increases with the quality of the garden. The median sale price of houses in 1000 foot radii around the gardens went up \$3,099 one year after the garden's opening.

2.4.2: Hunger

Urban sprawl in America means that more and more supermarkets are located on the outskirts of town, far from the reach of those in the inner city. The growing problem of hunger has contributed to the rise of the term *community food security*. This refers to a condition wherein everyone has a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice. Urban agriculture in the form of community-supported green spaces offers benefits not found in rural agriculture. It contributes to community food security by producing close to demand without the energy costs and pollution of transport and storage, and with

⁴²Jane Weissman, editor. *Tales from the Field II: Stories by Greenthumb Gardeners*, p. 6. Published in 1998. Original manuscript courtesy of the book's author.

⁴³Schukoske, p. 1.

⁴⁴Ann Bowman and Michael A. Pagano, *Urban Vacant Land in the United States*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Working Paper, 1998, p. 18.

⁴⁵From a study by the American Nursery and Landscape Association, www.anla.org

⁴⁶Vicki Been and Ioan Voicu, "The Effect of Community Gardens on Neighboring Property Values." New York University School of Law, Working Papers Series, March 2006, pp. 2, 23.

reduced packaging and spoilage, its products are fresher and healthier, it improves the environment and it takes pressure off of marginal rural land.⁴⁷

2.4.3: Lack of safe, accessible green space

American cities have significant amounts of green space, but it is unevenly distributed and therefore not physically accessible to many segments of the population. Poor or expensive public transportation systems in some U.S. cities make it hard for people to get to parks that are not located near their neighbourhood, and furthermore, if the parks can be reached, they are not always safe or inviting. New York City has one of the lowest open space standards for its citizens of any metropolitan area in the country with 10 square meters per resident, and what's even worse, thirty-three of New York City's 59 community planning districts do not meet even this pitiful standard.⁴⁸ Of those, most are populated primarily by economically-disadvantaged people and minorities. A 1978 National Urban Recreation Study showed that a quarter of U.S. low-income neighborhoods had no parks or play areas at all.⁴⁹ In 1993, a survey found that parks were concentrated in affluent neighbourhoods in two-thirds of the cities surveyed. In Los Angeles, white neighbourhoods enjoy 19 hectares of park space for every 1,000 people, compared with 1 hectare per thousand people in African-American neighbourhoods and 0.6 hectares in Latino neighbourhoods.⁵⁰ Community-supported green spaces such as community gardens and community greens increase the amount of green space in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods and they also add safer, more inviting green spaces with fewer problems such as vandalism. A U.S. study stated that only 10 percent of all vandalism is the result of direct malicious intent and desire to do real damage. The other 90 percent can be attributed to preventable attitude problems like boredom or lack of stewardship or connection to the park or garden.⁵¹ The community greens model is of particular significance here. One California housing model frequently cited for its community green benefits is St. Francis Square, a 1964 development that has a pedestrian-oriented structure of three courtyards looked onto by 100 apartments. If these had been a public park of equal size, they would not have provided the same benefit.⁵²

2.4.4: Interracial or intercultural conflicts, lack of sense of community ties

Many urban problems can be attributed not just to poverty but to a lack of social capital, as evidenced by persistent vandalism of public property, unwillingness of neighbors to communicate with each other and an absence of neighbors gathering together in common spaces. Community gardens provide ethnic groups with a place to express their heritage and maintain a sense of cultural community. A study in St. Louis focused on whether

⁴⁷ Jac Smit, "Urban Agriculture's Increasing Role in Sustainable Agriculture." World Sustainable Agriculture Association, International Sustainable Agriculture Issues Report, April 29, 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁸ Diane Englander, "New York's Community Gardens: A Resource at Risk." A publication of the Trust for Public Land, 1999, p. 3.

⁴⁹ Project for Public Spaces website, www.pps.org

⁵⁰ Trust for Public Land, p. 3

⁵¹ Leonard E. Phillips, *Parks Design and Management*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996, p. 65.

⁵² Clare Cooper Marcus, "The Neighborhood Approach to Building Community: A Different Perspective on Smart Growth." Originally published in *Western City* magazine, available online at www.communitygreens.org, pp. 1-2.

urban community gardens are spaces in which people of different races can integrate.⁵³ The study found both African-American and white gardeners agreed community gardening brings together racial groups who do not normally interact.⁵⁴ A study by the University of Illinois and the University of Chicago found that for urban public housing residents, levels of vegetation in common spaces predicted the formation of neighbourhood social ties and also supported informal social contact and increased residents' sense of safety.⁵⁵ A 2003 study conducted by the University of Missouri–St. Louis found that St. Louis neighborhoods with community gardens were more stable than other neighborhoods.⁵⁶ The idea that community gardens are exemplary of the type of project that improves the safety and connectedness of neighbourhoods in general is a finding in a study in Chicago's inner-city neighbourhoods.⁵⁷ The study suggests that instead of focusing on fear of authority, governments should concentrate on providing the means for community gardens and other similar positive projects.⁵⁸ A study of New York State's community gardens carried out through interviews with the coordinators of 20 gardens demonstrated that in 33% of the gardens, additional improvement such as tree-planting was made possible by a community garden organization.⁵⁹

⁵³ Kimberly J. Shinew, Troy D. Glover and Diana Parry, "Leisure Spaces as Potential Sites for Interracial Interaction: Community Gardens in Urban Areas." *Journal of Leisure Research*, Third Quarter, 2004, pp. 336-338

⁵⁴ Shinew, et al, p. 352.

⁵⁵ Frances E. Kuo et al., "Fertile Ground for Community: Inner-City Neighbourhood Common Spaces," *American Journal of Community Psychology* Vol. 26, no. 6, Dec. 1998, pp. 845.

⁵⁶ Mark Tranel, "The Whitmire Study" (unpublished draft report, Gateway Greening, July 2003), p. 6. Excerpts published at www.stlouis.missouri.org/gatewaygreening/WhitmireStudy.htm.

⁵⁷ Dan Hurley, "Scientist At Work," *The New York Times*, January 6, 2004.

⁵⁸ Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush and Felton Earls. "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy." *Science*, Vol. 277, Aug. 15, 1997, pp. 922-924.

⁵⁹ Donna Armstrong, Ph.D. "A Survey of Community Gardens in Upstate New York: Implications for Health Promotion and Community Development.", Published in 2000 by City Farmer, Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture, pp. 3-4.

Chapter three:

The significance of community-supported green spaces to urban green space planning and landscape architecture

These fragile community gardens... allow city folk to reestablish a connection with the land and their own food that past generations enjoyed. They are a link to the human past, to a timeless way of living on earth. I wonder if landscape architects might be concerned about this basic venue for human/nature interaction in much the same way they are concerned about preserving historic landscapes. Shouldn't the act of gardening for food and places where that happens against great odds have the same status as some of our designed landscapes?

--Editorial, *Landscape Architecture* magazine⁶⁰

Community-supported green spaces are part of the future of urban landscape architecture. In much the same way that ecologically-friendly architecture draws heavily from the ancient wisdom of peasant or tribal populations, new and innovative approaches in landscape architecture can be drawn from community gardeners. The practices of community-supported green spaces provide guidance in some of the most important tasks and issues facing urban landscape architects and urban green space planners today:

- Reclaiming abandoned urban brownfields into green spaces
- Creating usable, safe, welcoming urban green spaces that strengthen communities and discourage crime and vandalism
- Correcting disparities in the amount of available green space in the inner city
- Involving the public directly in participatory green space planning, design and maintenance to ensure a sense of ownership that will prevent vandalism or neglect
- Implementing innovative environmental solutions, such as phytoremediation, that have not yet been established sufficiently to be in mainstream or commercial use

3.1: Contemporary issues and problems in urban planning

There has long been a school of thought that 20th century planning practices, particularly those following World War II, destroy the fabric of communities by creating functional but ultimately artificial, sterile, inhuman patterns. This was the essence of Jane Jacobs' seminal book *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*. John Ormsbee Simonds eloquently summarized the problem: *All planning must, by reason, meet the measure of our physical dimensions. It must meet the test of our senses: sight, taste, hearing, scent and touch. It must also consider our habits, responses, and impulses...it is not enough to accommodate. Good design must delight and inspire.*⁶¹

Christopher Alexander's work on urban planning distinguished between natural and artificial cities, noting that *when compared with ancient cities that have acquired the*

⁶⁰ William Thompson, "Land Matters," *Landscape Architecture* magazine, August 2006, p. 13.

⁶¹ John Ormsbee Simonds, *Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Site Planning and Design*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998, p. 8.

patina of life, our modern attempts to create cities artificially are, from a human point of view, entirely unsuccessful. Modern urban planning follows the pattern of a tree, with a separatist order imposed on all aspects of life, whereas the natural evolution of a community follows the pattern of a semi-lattice that allows for overlap, multiplicity of aspect and ambiguity.⁶² It is widely stated that designers should better understand the organic ways in which communities develop and grow, and community-supported green spaces are a rich source. A study in 1987 in Sacramento, California, comparing park users' perceptions of a public park versus that of a community garden, found that community gardens play a unique role in providing recreational opportunities not afforded by traditional open space such as parks. Garden users travelled from further away and stayed on average far longer in the garden than park users. Almost twice the number of people who described other park users as 'friendly' said the same about other garden users. A quarter of the users of the garden said that their ideal open space would be similar to the garden, while very few park users said the same of that space.⁶³

Community-supported green spaces are in harmony with the objectives of many significant global, national and local strategy documents on urban planning and sustainable development. The United Nations Agenda 21 specifically addresses the issue and relates it to the health civil society as well, calling for: *encouraging the establishment of indigenous community-based organizations, private voluntary organizations and other forms of non-governmental entities that can contribute to the efforts to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for low-income families...promoting social organization and environmental awareness through the participation of local communities in the identification of public services needs, the provision of urban infrastructure, the enhancement of public amenities and the protection and/or rehabilitation of older buildings, historic precincts and other cultural artifacts. In addition, "green works" programmes should be activated to create self-sustaining human development activities and both formal and informal employment opportunities for low-income urban residents.*⁶⁴ The need for new solutions to improve urban life is a focal point in the European Union, where an estimated 80% of the population lives in urban areas. Environmental and social issues are intertwined and accentuated in urban areas, where, as a 1996 report notes, *the poorest and most disadvantaged residents of cities often also live in the worst local environmental conditions, while those who can afford to will buy a better local environment elsewhere.*⁶⁵ Another EU urban environmental strategy document notes that in order to achieve an acceptable quality of life and sustainable development in European cities, changes in public attitude are essential and public participation and the active role of the citizen are key elements of sustainable urban management. The strategy further supports projects related to the revitalization of city centers and neighborhoods as well as the rehabilitation of brownfield sites and

⁶² Christopher Alexander, "A City is Not a Tree." *Architectural Forum*, Vol. 122, No. 1, April 1965 and Vol. 122, No. 2, May 1965, p. 58.

⁶³ Mark Francis, "Some Different Meanings Attached to a City Park and Community Gardens." *Landscape Journal*, Volume 6, Issue 2, 1987, pp. 107-108.

⁶⁴ United Nations Environment Program, *Agenda 21: Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June, 1992, pp. 45-46.

⁶⁵ European Commission Expert Group on the Urban Environment, *European Sustainable Cities Report*, Brussels, March 1996, p. 151.

sustainable retrofitting of dense urban areas such as housing estates.⁶⁶ It also emphasizes the importance of innovative local initiatives and exchange of best practices among local authorities in various cities to improve urban quality of life, as well as the need for sustainable urban design, sound land-use planning, increased awareness on the part of urban citizens, the reduction of urban sprawl and preservation of natural habitats and biodiversity.⁶⁷ The strategy further emphasizes the social dimension of sustainable urban planning and recommends the general improvement of quality of life in inner-city areas through a holistic, that is, an integrated social, cultural and environmental approach.⁶⁸

3.2: The significance of the participatory design process as a planning tool

The participatory approach to design that is a fundamental characteristic of community gardens is also a vital part of the future of landscape architecture, and inherent to this method is the active and ongoing involvement of the community in the planning, design and maintenance. The participatory approach is not limited to community gardens, but community gardens are an example of a type of public place that meets this very personal, progressive set of criteria. It is critical that landscape architects begin to view community gardens as an essential educational tool, because community gardens demonstrate what kind of green spaces are wanted and needed in the areas that are the most desperately short of them. They provide a vital contribution in cities where the government has neglected to provide residents with enough accessible, safe green space. Because their designers, constructors and users are one and the same group of people, they are a living textbook for the landscape architect or urban planner. The Project on Public Spaces, in researching more than a thousand public spaces around the world, found four key qualities of successful public spaces: accessibility, activities, comfort and sociability. A successful public space is easy to get to, visible, easy to circulate in, appears safe, provides comfortable places to sit, offers activities to keep its visitors busy and involved both with the place and each other, and offer a place where people see friends and neighbors as well as *strangers they feel safe approaching*.⁶⁹

Participatory planning is increasingly viewed as a key element in green space design. Research suggests that participatory design brings generally positive results. The classic top-down structure for presenting a design to the public can lead to a lack of connection between the public and a public space. This has been such a persistent problem in the U.S. with low-cost housing developments that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development has for several years issued strict guidelines for developers receiving

⁶⁶ Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: *Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment*. Brussels, February 2004, p. 29.

⁶⁷ Commission of the European Communities. *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment*. Brussels, January 2006, pp. 1-7.

⁶⁸ European Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, *Report on the Thematic Strategy of the Urban Environment*, Brussels, June 2006, p. 8.

⁶⁹ Project for Public Spaces, Inc. *How to Turn a Place Around: A Handbook for Creating Successful Public Spaces*. New York: Project for Public Spaces, 2000, pp. 16-33.

federal funds to create low-income housing projects to involve the residents at all stages of the planning process, including working with an elected residents' council.⁷⁰

Improvement projects in disadvantaged communities that directly involve or are even initiated by the residents often involve the concept of empowerment. In community psychology, the idea of empowerment grew from a reasoning that it is better to develop an individual's or group's strengths than to approach helping a patient or group from a paternalistic standpoint. In the definition of the author of one study, empowerment is the ability for an individual, organization, or community to effect positive change.⁷¹

Participatory planning is predicated on this logic. Lynne M. Westphal, in her study on the benefits of urban greening and its empowerment aspect, recommends several actions in organizing a participatory urban greening program, beginning with surveying the residents to determine what is important to them, then fostering an open and inclusive decisionmaking process and trying to balance participation among the residents and networking with other, non-greening organizations in the neighbourhood such as schools.⁷² Open Road of New York, a community development organization, has developed an elaborate technique for utilizing participatory design process in its projects. It can be summarized with the following steps:⁷³

- Organizing: meeting with the affected community members, creating a design team, planning budget and time line, training members of the community
- Fact-finding: studying the site and inventorying its assets and determining its shortcomings. Making maps and base model of the site as well as studying current use of it and the community's desire for the new design.
- Generating design ideas: making drawings and lists of design ideas, presenting them to the community at a series of meetings for discussion
- Creating and approving the final design: taking the ideas from the meetings and working them into a design to be presented to the community for final approval
- Constructing the garden

3.3: Community-supported green spaces as laboratories

Community-supported green spaces are often the site of experimental solutions and innovations because they are not under the same regulations as municipal parks. A frequent problem with community-supported green spaces is that many garden sites are contaminated by lead or other toxins and must be tested and treated, particularly if the site will be used as a playground or vegetable garden. Traditional methods include capping the waste or carrying the soil away and replacing it, both very expensive.

⁷⁰ "General Guidance on Community and Resident Involvement," from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's website, www.hud.gov

⁷¹ Lynne M. Westphal, "Urban Greening and Social Benefits: A Study of Empowerment Outcomes." *Journal of Arboriculture*, May 2003, p. 139.

⁷² Westphal, pp. 144-145.

⁷³ Paula Hewitt, *Participatory Design of Parks, Playgrounds and Gardens*. New York: Open Road, 2000, pp. 1-3.

An example of an innovative or experimental technique that has been used successfully in community-supported green spaces is phytoremediation, in which plants themselves are used to clean up toxic waste in soil or groundwater. It is slower but less effective than other methods. Depending on the plants and the hazardous materials that are causing the problem, the plants metabolize the toxins and continue to grow, or they have to be discarded once they have done the job. Phytoremediation is being increasingly used in inner-city green space projects but it has yet to become the established or dominant method for such jobs. An innovative phytoremediation case study involved a vacant lot in Hartford, Connecticut and a community gardening organization. During the summer of 1999 a group of six students from Trinity College planted a specific type of mustard seed in a vacant lot. The lot, which once housed a paint store, was contaminated with lead. One area tested at over 1800 parts per million (the federal limit for residential property is 500 ppm). After two harvestings of crops of *Brassica juncea*, the lead level was measured at below 600 ppm everywhere, and below 500 ppm in 80% of the test sites. The plants were pulled up, dried, and disposed of as hazardous waste.⁷⁴ The Knox Parks Foundation, a local community gardening organization, is developing a community garden on the site after further reducing lead levels with more plantings.

⁷⁴ From a report on the organization's website, www.knoxparks.org

Chapter four:

Hungary's civil sector and society's ability to adapt the community-supported green space model

The central argument for this dissertation is that community gardens are a powerful and feasible model for urban revitalization in Budapest. Part of this argument stems from the idea that some of the prerequisites needed for community gardens to succeed can already be found. One of the most important factors is the existence of a strong civil society. Community gardens are predicated on the strength of volunteer initiative and commitment. It is the culture of volunteerism, civic responsibility and public participation that sustains the community gardens movement in the U.S. Critical to the argument of whether this model is workable in Budapest is whether the city has this asset. To establish this, it is necessary to look to Hungary as a whole. In this chapter, the focus on Hungary's particular circumstances will be in three areas:

- the state of volunteerism and civil society 17 years after 1989,
- recent proto-community garden projects for Roma involving a revival of the tradition of social land programs
- the use of participatory planning in public design projects

4.1: Volunteerism and civil society in Hungary

Forty years of communism did little to encourage the volunteer spirit in Hungary; it even left the language bereft of the proper words to describe such activity. Perhaps one of communism's most insidious legacies is its semantics. Words such as "volunteer" carried a stigma leftover from the Communist practice of forcing people to work for free in the name of promoting socialist ideals; those carrying out volunteer work often refer to themselves as "activists" or the work itself as "social work." The word "community" in Hungarian generally merely designates a residential area and does not yet have the same complex, positive connotations of common good, common destiny and unity that it does in English. Furthermore, the communist practice of encouraging cooperative (and coerced) group activities has also imbued those concepts with a pejorative tone.

Seventeen years after the changes, considerable progress has been made towards rebuilding a civil society in Hungary in terms of legal framework, available resources and public spirit. This is a *rebuilding* or a *rediscovery* of civil society, philanthropy and volunteerism that did in fact exist in Hungary in some version prior to the communist years. Research shows that there is an indigenous civil society movement in Hungary and there is an indigenous Hungarian concept of volunteerism. There are currently more than 47,000 active non-profit organizations and foundations legally established in Hungary, compared to 6,570 in 1982, when there were no foundations as currently designated, but there were civic organizations.⁷⁵ Although that number in itself does not prove a thriving nonprofit sector, there is an increasing number of high-profile, active organizations devoted to volunteer work and to promoting the concept of volunteerism and civil society, among them the Nonprofit Information and Education Center (NIOK), the Civil

⁷⁵ Czike, Klara, and Andras F. Toth. "Volunteering in Hungary." Paper published in 2000 through the Hungarian Volunteer Center Foundation, p. 4.

Society Development Foundation (CTF), and the Volunteer Center Foundation (OKA). Research on civil society in Hungary shows that volunteerism in its true sense is making a gradual recovery from four decades of Communism. In 2000, 400,000 Hungarian volunteers contributed 35.5 million volunteer hours with an estimated total value of 18 billion forints. This is calculated to be roughly equivalent to the work of 17,000 full-time employees.⁷⁶ A number of multinational corporations with presences in Hungary, including Levi-Strauss and GE, encourage employees to volunteer, sometimes on company time, and also contribute financial and in-kind donations to non-profit organizations and community improvement projects. When Habitat for Humanity, which builds homes for the poor, first started working in Hungary in 1996 the volunteer force was 99 percent foreign, 1 percent Hungarian. By 2001, the volunteers were more than half Hungarian.⁷⁷ In 2002, the Hungarian government published its *Strategic Paper on Civil Society*, in which it declares civil society as a partner.⁷⁸ Funding for the civil sector in Hungary received a significant advantage in 1996 when the government passed a highly innovative law, the first of its kind in the world, stating that all citizens are entitled to allocate 1% of their annual income tax payment to the non-profit organization of their choice, given that the organization is legally registered and in operation for three years or more. This measure provides a sustainable, broadbased and non-political source of funding for thousands of organizations. Equally important, the 1% law encourages or even forces many organizations to be more accountable to the public because they rely primarily on individuals, and not large foundations or corporate donors, for funding. Recent research shows that the 1% law is a mechanism that is likely to help provide support to small, locally-based civic organizations such as community gardening organizations. While 95 percent of support coming directly from the central government goes to the largest civic organizations, they receive only one third of the one percent income. Even the smallest grassroots organizations receive on average 16 percent of the one percent designations.⁷⁹ A more recently-published policy paper, the “Civil Strategy of the Government” from April 2003, states that the government will soon submit proposed legislation for the establishment of a National Civil Fund. This law was in fact passed in June 2003.⁸⁰ Based on the above, Hungary has the legal, financial and social framework in place to support a volunteer-based initiative such as community gardening.

4.2: Successful community horticultural projects empowering Roma

⁷⁶ Czike and Toth, p. 6.

⁷⁷ McLead, Milana. “Volunteerism Takes Root in Hungary.” Habitat World, a publication of Habitat for Humanity International, October 2001. Pages not numbered.

⁷⁸ “Volunteerism in Hungary.” European Volunteer Center and Association of Volunteer Service Organizations joint paper published June 2003 p. 7.

⁷⁹ Kuti, Eva, and Agnes Vajda. “Citizens’ Votes for Nonprofit Activities in Hungary.” A working paper published by the Aspen Institute/Nonprofit Research Fund, summer, 2002, p. 22.

⁸⁰ “Civil Strategy of the Government,” a policy paper published in April 2003 by the Hungarian Government. Available online at www.civilinfo.hu, page 8

Besides improving the aesthetic, environmental and social conditions of some of Budapest's more congested or dilapidated neighbourhoods, community gardens can be an effective tool for helping more specific disadvantaged groups, such as the biggest minority in Hungary, the Roma. In communities with high rates of joblessness and under-employment, community-run urban gardens and farms have proven excellent vehicles for job training and transition to the world of work. Providing land for disadvantaged groups to use for cultivating their own food as a form of self-help does have historical precedents in Hungary, namely in the social land programs implemented in the difficult economic times in the late 19th century, then again between the two world wars. The program was revived again in 1992. A 2001 study of the program revealed largely positive results, pronouncedly more so for the Roma participants. Seventy-six percent overall stated they would gladly participate again; of the Roma, 90 percent gave a positive answer and nearly 39 percent said participation in the project had changed their lives.⁸¹

Autonomia Alapítvány (Self-Reliance Foundation), a Hungarian NGO that works to empower Roma by providing targeted project grants, has for more than six years used variations on the community gardens model to carry out its mission. Autonomia's loans or grants to smaller organizations include support for tools, fertilizers and new farming techniques in order to increase local capacities. Autonomia postulates that by engaging in productive work to make a living, prejudices between the Roma and non-Roma are reduced. One of Autonomia's programs, Kitchen Garden '98-99, gave support to 93 organizations involving more than 4,000 Roma and non-Roma families in the cultivation of kitchen gardens.⁸² Later, Autonomia introduced Gardening 2000, a two-year program that aimed to further support the development of vegetable growing projects of Roma non-governmental organizations with the goal being that at the end of the program, the participants will be able to farm as independent producers.⁸³ In the course of the project, 14 Roma organizations consisting of 210 families participated. Autonomia provided the organizations with funding for the families to purchase seeds, fertilizers and machinery and the families relied on local agricultural authorities for advice. One participant praised the program's success in increasing the participants' self-reliance:

*We had no problems with selling our produce this year – the local government helped us out with that as well. We agreed that what we produce will be partially turned back into next year's production. Maybe by this time next year, we'll all be tax-paying citizens.*⁸⁴

4.3: The use of the participatory planning model

Participatory planning means involving the affected community members actively at every stage of the design process. Traditionally in Hungary planning has come from above and is presented to the community at a late stage. However, along with the development of the civil sector in Hungary and the country's accession to the EU, which

⁸¹ Zsolt Szoboszlai, "A Szociális Földprogram Hatékonysága" (The Effectiveness of Social Land Programs) A study prepared in 2001 for the Welfare Ministry's Department of Institutional and Social Services at the Szolnok offices of Esély Alapítvány (Chance Foundation), 1997, pp. 91-92.

⁸² Foundation for Self-Reliance, *Annual report*, 1998-99, page 10, 15-16.

⁸³ From reports published on the organization's website, www.autonomia.hu

⁸⁴ Foundation for Self-Reliance, *Annual report*, 2000, pp. 4-5.

heavily emphasizes participatory planning, the concept is gaining ground. However, a survey of participatory planning in Hungary suggests that the approach is still functioning at a theoretical and educational, rather than practical, level. There are more publications, trainings and forums being held than actual finished projects. For example, in 2004, a three-day forum was held in the rural town of Mezőcsát to discuss participatory planning in the context of sustainable rural development. According to the proceedings:

*In the last few years there has been increasing interest in the idea that rural development can be achieved successfully - with regards to sustainability and environmental issues - by initiatives from below and with social participation. It is important for Mezőcsát to strengthen its local human and community resources, local leadership, business culture, innovation and the capacity of local people to cooperate.*⁸⁵

The December 2005 regional development plan for part of the Dél-Alföld region of south-central Hungary notes that participatory planning was an element of the planning process.⁸⁶ Participatory planning is also more commonly found in regional or large-scale plans than in small-scale projects such as a garden. However, small-scale experiments in participatory planning have been documented as successful in renovations of residential buildings in Budapest's Eighth District. A building representative told European Union researchers that involving the tenants directly in the planning and work led to a more positive attitude towards the renovated house and the condominium association:

*"I saw many public buildings being repaired here in the neighbourhood and I heard tenants complaining. I achieved that these people in the house did not complain, though we really suffered a lot. We (the residents) repaired the roof and rebuilt galleries leading to the apartments. The floors of galleries were covered by wonderful old tiles. We picked them up one by one and then laid them back down in the end."*⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Mezőcsáti Kistérségi Fórum (Mezőcsát Community Forum), proceedings, May 2004, p.3.

⁸⁶ Akciócsoport a Homokhátság, Bácska, Sárköz Értékeinek (Action Group for the Interests of Homokhátság, Bácska and Sárköz). *A Homokhátság, Bácska, Sárköz Értékeinek Bemutatása Vidékfejlesztési Terv*, (Regional Development Plan for Homokhátság, Bácska and Sárköz), December 2005, p. 37.

⁸⁷ Kovacs, et al, p. 67.

Chapter five:

An introduction to two case studies for community-supported green space in Budapest

Here in Erzsébetváros, the greatest opportunity for developing green spaces lies in privately-owned inner courtyards. It is partly a financial question, in which the municipality provides annual opportunities for support through grants. It is also a matter of needing professional help, so that the residents' councils can make decisions based on the possibilities at hand.

--József Gergely, District VII vice mayor, May 2006 interview

Our urban development concept is based on the idea that you cannot deliberately develop a city, but rather, it goes through a natural process of development that we can affect in a good or a bad way.

--György Alföldi, director of the Rév8 architectural firm, on his company's revitalization and community involvement efforts in Budapest's District VIII⁸⁸

The community-supported green space model, particularly community greens, has the potential to become an essential element of Budapest's green space planning. This is particularly true of the densely-built up and populated Pest neighbourhoods where the overwhelming majority of residents dwell in buildings constructed around small, narrow open courtyards and the original urban structural system did not leave room for other public open space. The built-up areas are so dense that new, large parks are not a possibility without significant amounts of demolition, yet the scarcity of green space is a problem with serious environmental, health, aesthetic and economical consequences. An alternative approach to increasing green space is necessary, and it should be grounded in an understanding of the significance of green spaces that are neither entirely private nor entirely public, and that are supported by the limited group of people that uses them. This chapter will provide an introduction to two case studies, both from large blocks of flats with inner courtyards in District VII. The first case study, Block 15, is a less-successful attempt at a community green from the 1980s. The second case study, the Madach Block, is a current project based on participatory design practices with municipal support. By way of background, prior to presenting the case studies, I will present a brief overview on green space supply issues in Budapest in general and District VII in particular. I will also outline District VII's architectural and urban significance to underline the importance of revitalizing it through community greens.

5.1: Objectives of the case studies

The purpose of the two case studies in the chapters that follow is to explore and compare two experimental attempts at creating a community green. The two diverse case studies are important in and of themselves, but are also of significant general importance as a

⁸⁸ Erika Katalin Pásztor, "Alföldi György: A politikai akarat ad többletet a város fejlődéséhez (György Alföldi: Political Will Gives a Surplus to Urban Development)." *Építészfórum* (Architectural Forum), Dec. 9, 2002. Pages not numbered.

potential model that, if successful, could be reproduced elsewhere in the city and eventually formed into a network similar to London's garden squares. The first case study, Block 15, is analyzed from the perspective of what flaws were inherent to the planning and design process and how the project could be done differently today. The Madach block case study, however, is an ongoing experiment in municipally-supported participatory design. There is considerably more background information on Block 15 because the project was so large-scale and high-profile. The Madach block is a lesser-known and smaller site, and there is very little written about it. Both case studies are designed to examine, analyze and evaluate the following:

- the garden's function as an element of the city's green space system
- how the residents relate to the garden as a green space, particularly their attitude towards the garden and their opinions on the garden's ideal functions
- the residents' perceptions of ownership and responsibility towards the garden
- the residents' willingness to actively participate in planning, renovation and maintenance of the garden
- the planning and design process itself, particularly the level to which residents could or would be involved in it
- how contemporary theories by Oscar Newman and others could be employed to create a theoretical framework for how community greens could function as an urban revitalization model in Budapest

The objectives particular to the Block 15 case study are to:

- determine and analyze the flaws in the rehabilitation's planning process
- compare the site to other, more successful community greens projects including one within the same block
- construct a theoretical framework for how the project could be revived

The objectives particular to the Madach block case study are to

- outline how to carry out a participatory design process with residents
- determine best practices for how residents and the municipality can cooperate

5.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the two case studies

Each case study involved a separate body of research tailored to the case study's particulars and specific objectives, as the following chapters will show. However, the same general approach is applied to both case studies: I compiled all available information on the site's architecture, history, and landscape architecture characteristics. I made a current site map showing all landscape architecture features. I interviewed a representative sample of residents, in this case, was 10% or more of the block's population, corresponding to the block's population in terms of age, gender and family status. I used the most recent census data to determine the block's demographic makeup. The survey's questions primarily addressed such issues as the residents'

- pattern of usage of the garden
- opinion of the garden's layout, appearance and facilities
- perception of the garden's major problems
- sense of the level of community among the block's residents

- willingness to contribute physically and financially to the planning, renovation and maintenance of the garden
- belief in the possibility of the garden's renovation and communal care

There was no distribution of the questionnaires by mail, email, telephone surveys or other means. The subjects were primarily randomly chosen by going from door to door, waiting in the building's common areas for residents coming and going, or from approaching residents sitting in the garden. The subjects were asked to provide specifics whenever possible, for example, if they were willing to work in the garden or pay extra for the garden's renovation, they were further asked to describe what tasks they could take on, or how much they could contribute financially per month. I then tabulated the results. The gardens are depicted with aerial photos and AutoCad drawings. In addition, I made a complete inventory of the garden's landscape, hardscape and furnishings.

5.3: Historical background

To understand the significance of the case studies, it is first necessary to understand the area's historic development, as well as the concept of block rehabilitation that spurred the Block 15 project and District VII's historic and architectural importance.

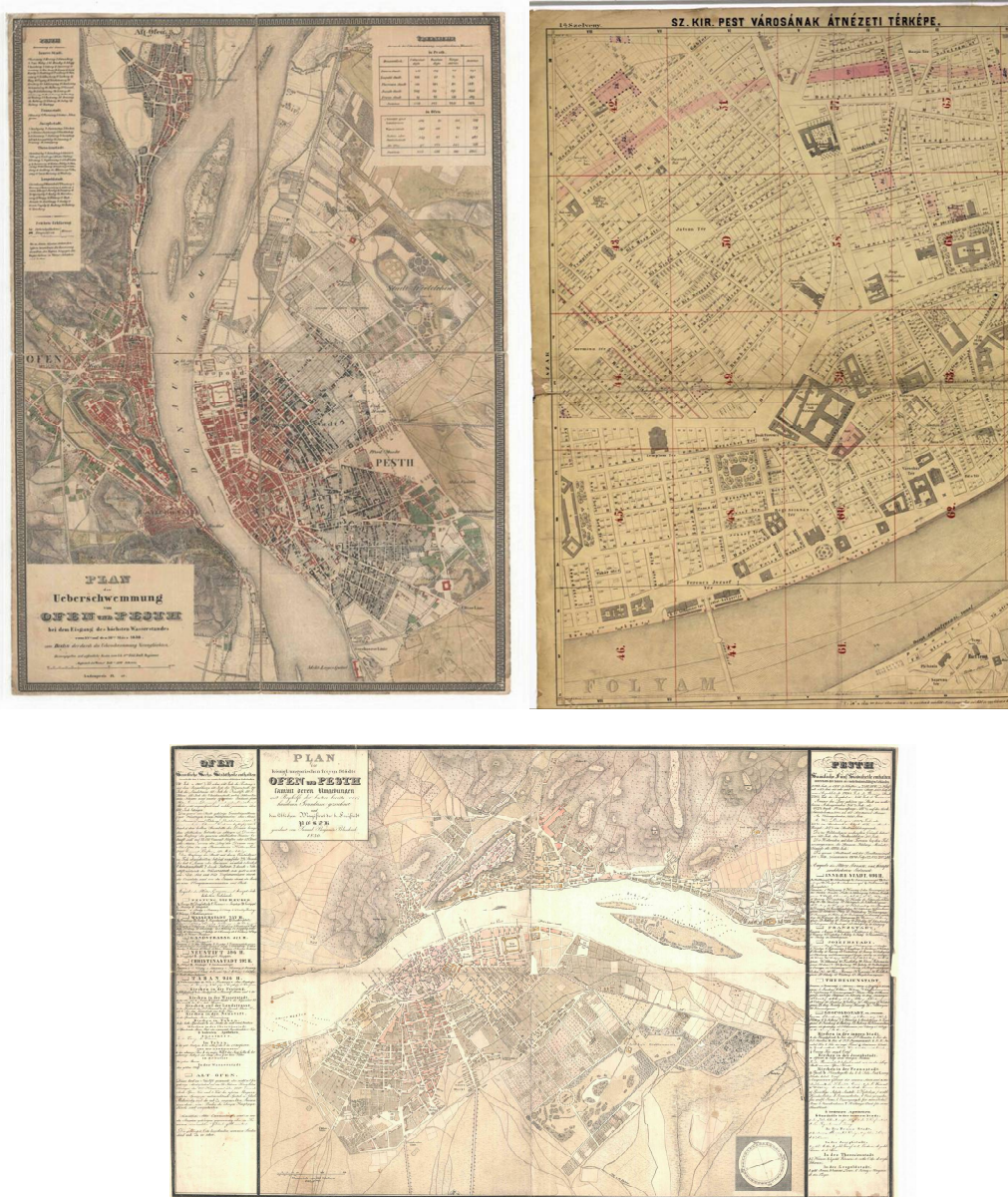
5.3.1: The shortage of green space in Budapest

Average green space supply in Budapest is 14.4 square meters per resident.⁸⁹ Out of 23 districts, District VII has the lowest level of green space, with .4 square meters per person. This is significantly lower than even the next lowest, which is District VI at 1 square meter per person, followed by District XXIII at 2.3 square meters. The highest levels are in District I with 34.9 square meters per person and District XIV with 39.8. The green space types significant to Budapest include urban and public parks and gardens such as City Park, private gardens open to the public such as the gardens of the Royal Palace, and the semi-private areas of residential developments, such as courtyards. In terms of parks, Orczy Garden was opened to the public in the late 18th century. City Park, developed in the 1820s, was the first major park and considered to be the world's first public garden and the first park created after a public design competition. People's Park, covering 112 hectares and first conceived in the 1860s, is underused in spite of its rich vegetation and its location in an area short of green space. Margit Island only became a public park after 1908, and nearly a third of its 96 hectares is occupied by various institutions. The dilapidated Tabán neighborhood of Buda was razed in the 1930s in the city's first example of landscape reclamation. Pest was built with little consideration for green space. Considerable swathes of Pest were constructed with the maximum number of dwellings and percentage of built-up space as the objective. The 1894 and 1914 building regulations zoned the city's entire area for construction, and prescribed 15% of courtyard space per building.⁹⁰ Districts VI, VII, VIII and IX have less green space

⁸⁹ "Egy Lakosra Jutó Gondozott Parkterület Kerületenként, m2 (Maintained Park Space Per Person in Square Meters)" As measured in 2003, according to Budapest Portal, www.budapest.hu

⁹⁰ Kinga M. Szilágyi, "Kert- és parkhasználati vizsgálatok a rehabilitációs lakóterületeken (An Examination of Garden and Park Use in Areas Slated for Rehabilitation) ," unpublished monograph, 1999, p. 1. Translation the author's.

supply than the city's average, far below the 7-10 square meters per person recommended in 1978 municipal regulations. Excluding the part of Andrássy út dominated by villas with large gardens, the biologically-active surface area is less than 10%.⁹¹



Images 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3: Maps showing Budapest's urban development in 1830, 1838 and 1868-70, respectively. Source: National Archive, BFL XV. 16. b 221/11/4, BFL XV. 16. d. 241/4a and BFL XV. 16. d. 241/6

⁹¹ Szilágyi, "Kert- és parkhasználati vizsgálatok a rehabilitációs lakóterületeken," p. 2. Translation the author's.

Much of the Pest side consists of dense rows of adjacent apartment buildings oriented around courtyards where the only green is the occasional planter. The typical ownership arrangement for the courtyards is undivided common ownership, meaning that each apartment owner is responsible for a theoretical portion of the courtyard proportionate to the size of the apartment. Monthly fees paid by the residents fund maintenance, and the courtyard is generally closed. The courtyards have not historically been used as green spaces, as their original functions were generally utilitarian. Contemporary scholarship and journalism on urban rehabilitation in Budapest includes consistent demand for the greening of courtyards and other small semi-public or public spaces. This approach can be considered one of the more plausible solutions to the lack of green space in Pest because it does not necessitate a serious modification of the urban fabric. A 2004 report on sustainable urban development in Budapest - citing problems such as air and noise pollution, lack of quality pedestrian and bicycle paths, and reduced amount of green space as a result of inappropriate resource use and poor planning practices - stated that the city needs an entirely new vision and a focused effort to mobilize social and material resources if it wants to save certain urban areas from ruin.⁹² The report outlines several proposals for increasing quality of life for urban dwellers of Budapest, among them an organized and well-planned system small-scale block rehabilitation focusing on turning inner courtyards into leisure gardens or recreational spaces, and possibly expanding the greening to the buildings' roofs.⁹³ The Clean Air Action Group called in 2002 for local governments to provide support to residents in greening courtyards as part of a comprehensive city improvement strategy. The group cited lack of sufficient green space in the denser and poorer of Budapest's neighbourhoods as among the city's worst problems.⁹⁴ A recent analytical study on the potential rehabilitation of the old Jewish Quarter of Pest recommends a strategy of increasing green space supply by greening in every little space possible, primarily through the creation of courtyard gardens.⁹⁵ An essay in the online Hungarian-language architectural magazine *Építészforum* (Architects Forum), cited specific parts of the city where greening of courtyards could contribute considerably to the city's renaissance, specifically, what used to be known as "Chicago," the densely built-up outer area of the Erzsébetváros area of Pest in the vicinity of Nefelejcs and Hernád streets. The buildings' courtyards are proportionally quite narrow and dark. In such areas, it is of critical importance to the city's rejuvenation to increase

⁹² Ágnes Novák, *Öko-Város, a Fenntartható Városfejlesztés Építészeti Aspektusai* (Eco-City: The Architectural Aspects of Sustainable Urban Development). Report prepared for the Hungarian Urbanistic Society, Budapest, 2004, pp. 4-6. Translation the author's.

⁹³ Novák, pp. 34-36.

⁹⁴ Levegő Munkacsoport (Clean Air Action Group) "Ajanlások Budapestért: Mit Várunk az Önkormányzatoktól 2002 és 2006 között? (Recommendations for Budapest: What We Expect from the Municipal Government from 2002-2006)." Published as a special supplement to the group's magazine, *Lélegzet* (Breath), 2002, issue 7-8, p. 9. Translation the author's.

⁹⁵ Amichay, Eva. "Pest régi zsidónegyedének rehabilitációja (The Rehabilitation of Budapest's Old Jewish Quarter)." Monograph published June 7, 2004 by *Építészforum* online magazine at www.epiteszforum.hu, p. 4. Translation the author's.

both the quantity and quality of green space by creating gardens where there are vacant lots or available space along the streets, but also by greening the inner courtyards.⁹⁶

There is a clear need for increasing green space in Pest, but creating gardens from Pest courtyards comes with obstacles. The first is that most of the courtyards are fairly shady and are paved with concrete or other hard surface material. Raised beds or planters or roof garden technology, and the use of shade plants would provide a simple solution. More complex legal and sociological problems arise with the issues of ownership. The typical Budapest courtyard is owned and controlled by everyone and no one, an arrangement that paradoxically promotes neither individual initiative nor common responsibility and stewardship. Although there are some exceptions, there is no real tradition of making these common courtyard spaces into green areas. Their original use was generally strictly functional, for example to serve as a site for maids to clean carpets, itinerant craftspeople to do their work, or other similar purposes.

5.3.2: The concept and history of block rehabilitation

Prior to the concept of urban rehabilitation entering public parlance, the post-war urban efforts consisted mainly of repairing buildings that had suffered war damage. Then, in 1957, the “gaptooth” program was initiated to fill in the many vacant lots in the city created by war damage. An estimated 80% of Budapest’s buildings were seriously damaged and 20% destroyed altogether. This program also applied to standing buildings including one-story buildings, seriously deteriorating buildings, and other structures, unfortunately including many of cultural value, which meant that they were torn down and replaced with new, not particularly appropriate, structures.⁹⁷ It was not until decades later that Budapest’s government took initiatives that were at least theoretically designed to preserve the urban fabric and also increase the quality of life for residents.

The renewal of many neglected, deteriorated and technically-obsolete areas of Budapest began in the 1980s. The concept of urban rehabilitation as a holistic, comprehensive, thought-out approach - instead of piecemeal reconstruction - came into being. Intrinsic to the idea of urban rehabilitation is improving urban green space systems.⁹⁸ The concept of urban revitalization in the form of block rehabilitation first entered into policy discussions in Budapest in 1974. Principal considerations and determining factors included the dearth of quality apartments and the relatively high number of small, low-quality, minimally-equipped apartments, as well as the aging and deterioration of a considerable number of buildings. Although Budapest has undergone dramatic cultural,

⁹⁶ Katalin Korompay, “Mérlegen Budapest városrehabilitációja (Budapest’s Urban Rehabilitation in the Balance).” Published online in *Építészfórum* magazine, June 14, 2004, www.epiteszforum.hu. Pages not numbered. Translation the author’s.

⁹⁷ András Román, “Madach Imre, Avagy egy Sugárút Tragédia (Imre Madach, or, the Tragedy of an Avenue).” *Budapesti Negyed (Budapest Quarter)*, Vol. 5, No. 4-Vol. VI, no. 1, winter 1997-spring 1998, pp. 80-82.

⁹⁸ Kinga M. Szilágyi: “A Városrehabilitáció Zöldfelület-Rendezési Útjai és Tévtutjai (Routes and Misroutes Towards Urban Green System Rehabilitation).” Unpublished monograph, 1999, p. 1. Translation the author’s.

economic and political changes post-1989, block rehabilitation is certainly still considered a viable approach to urban revitalization to this day. District IX (Ferencváros) has undergone several successful block rehabilitations in the last several years. Successful block rehabilitations took place in the Hungarian countryside even before the movement took hold in Budapest. The town of Eger with its primarily-Baroque center is noted for its early pioneering role in block rehabilitation after its entire inner city was declared protected in 1967 and in the following years four building ensembles were rehabilitated in blocks. The rehabilitation consisted of restoring and modernizing the facades and demolishing inner wings and replacing them with public spaces. A block that adjoins Dobó Square, for example, consisted of 12 old buildings, three modified old ones and five new ones. The architects demolished the entire interior of the block to create a common green area. The philosophy behind the Eger rehabilitations is that each project was to be approached holistically and individually. The inner city had mostly historically been organized into blocks, and urban development plans have treated it as such. In some of the Eger rehabilitations the houses were rehabilitated as a whole block or as a row on one unified section of a street, as was the case of the Dobó street houses, where in other cases the buildings were rehabilitated individually.⁹⁹



Image 5.4: Interior of a rehabilitated block in Eger.
Photo from the Transylvania Trust.

5.3.3: Erzsébetváros and its cultural and architectural significance

In Budapest, the interest in block rehabilitation was also result of concern over the rapidly changing economic and cultural makeup of inner-city residents. The population of the inner city districts considered to be most in need of rehabilitation (districts V, VI, VII, VIII and IX) actually diminished during the 1970s in spite of the fact that the city's overall population increased. The exodus primarily consisted of the better-off, so the

⁹⁹ Emőke Thoma and György Dely. *Rehabilitating the Historic Centre of Eger, Block Rehabilitation Approaches and Their Durability*. Tusnad: Transylvania Trust, 2005, pp. 1-3.

proportion of inner-city poor increased.¹⁰⁰ In response to these issues, in the early 1980s, the city began planning some rehabilitation projects in the inner areas of District VII, Erzsébetváros. The targeted groups of the rehabilitation projects were primarily younger families with several children and manual laborers. This meant not only combining formerly one-room apartments into larger ones, but also providing for necessary green space. What resulted from this were common gardens that were created out of the partial or complete demolition of parts of these buildings. District VII was in particular need of radical rehabilitation, as it has historically been among the most densely populated in the city. Already in 1870 it had a population of 44,000, and more than 150,000 by 1914. Defined by Erzsébet körút, Károly körút, Király utca and Rákóczi út, it received its name officially in 1881 but had existed for years before then.



Image 5.5: Aerial photo of District VII showing the intersection of the Great Ring Road with Rákóczi út. Photo by Civertan Aerial Photography.

¹⁰⁰ Mónika Paulik, "Budapest bérházainak kialakulása 1989-ig (The Evolution of Budapest's Tenement Houses Until 1989)." Published Feb. 1, 2004 on SzocHáló, an on-line forum for social sciences, www.szochalo.hu. Translation the author's.



Image 5.6: Aerial photo of District VII showing the Dohány utca synagogue. Photo by Civertan Aerial Photography.

A large section of Erzsébetváros consists of the culturally-significant Pest Jewish Quarter, defined by Király utca, Csányi utca, Klauzál tér, Kisdíófa utca, Dohány utca and Károly Körút. The quarter includes several synagogues of great architectural importance, as well as the Jewish Museum. There are more than 1300 District VII buildings with inner courtyards.¹⁰¹ Erzsébetváros is considered by historians and preservationists to be in serious danger, owing primarily to its many dilapidated apartment buildings, its many unattractive vacant lots resulting from war damage or other causes, and piecemeal, short-sighted urban renewal efforts inappropriate for and detrimental to the neighborhood's architectural and cultural fabric. One architect who has done extensive research into the future of the Jewish Quarter estimates that if all current regulations and plans stay unchanged, nearly 40% of the quarter will be lost.¹⁰² For several years there has been discussion of a plan to create Madach Promenade, a massive rehabilitation project aimed at turning the district into a business and retail center anchored by a pedestrian mall. Opinion on the project is divided between preservationists who consider it nothing short of a tragedy that will finally destroy the district's historical and architectural fabric, and those who believe it is the only possible salvation from the neighborhood's slow decay.

¹⁰¹ According to District VII Assistant Mayor József Gergely, October 2006.

¹⁰² Anna Perczel, "Pest Régi Zsidónegyede: A budapesti világörökségi terület védőzónájának sorsáról (Pest's Old Jewish Quarter: On the Fate of a World Heritage Protected Zone)" *Építészfórum*, May 3, 2004.

Chapter six:

The Block 15 case study

This is the case study of a block rehabilitation in the 1980s that took place in the large complex of blocks of flats bounded by Klauzál tér, Nagydiófa utca, Wesselényi utca, Kazinczy utca and Dob utca, known officially as Block 15. The site is located in District VII which has .4 square meter of green space per resident. However, the 5,400 square meter common garden inside the block means that the block's 416 residents enjoy an additional 12.9 square meters per person.

6.1: Background information for the case study

6.1.1: Why the site was chosen

Block 15 is simultaneously typical and atypical of District VII and Budapest, and it presents a wealth of lessons in urban green space planning. The block was the subject of a massive, in many ways innovative, and highly-publicized urban rehabilitation effort in the 1980s. Today, the garden is rarely used and shows serious signs of neglect, even though it is in an area desperately short of green space. There is little doubt that the social, political, legal and financial structures in place at the time made such a project nearly impossible to carry out successfully. What is now relevant is to review what the project's mistakes were, and how such a project could be carried out now under current circumstances in early 21st century, post-socialism Budapest.

6.1.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the survey of Block 15

Over the course of three months in spring and summer of 2005, we made regular visits to the garden at varying times of day, also photographing the furnishings, plantings and paving details. With each visit we each made a detailed assessment of the garden's condition and the number and type of users, as well as the comparative condition and number of users of the enclosed courtyard gardens adjacent to the large common garden. Using a survey (see Annex), we conducted formal and detailed interviews with 43 residents of varying ages from each of the residential buildings that have access to the garden. All interviews were done in person. The interview subjects were chosen at random by either approaching people in their homes or by stopping them in the buildings' hallways. We did not approach people actually using the garden, as this would have distorted the statistics on garden usage. The residents represent slightly more than 10% of the population and are approximately commensurate with the block's demographic makeup according to census figures. Although there is a section on the separate garden of Dob utca 31-33, we did not interview those residents in the survey, as their enclosed courtyard is completely separate from the larger garden. We did not interview anyone in the buildings who was a non-resident, such as students of the teacher training college, employees of the cultural heritage ministry, or members of the synagogue. In addition to the formal surveys, we conducted informal but extensive interviews with six additional residents, a local government representative, and an architect in the district's architectural office who had worked on the project, focusing on the same topics.

6.2: A history and survey of Block 15

6.2.1: An architectural and social history of the block

The buildings in the block vary from late 19th century to late 20th century, but for the purposes of this research, the building's history begins in 1984. Pest's first block rehabilitation was meant to be the very avatar of urban rehabilitation for the entire inner city. The stated intent of the rehabilitation project was to revitalize and modernize an urban block, and make family life in an otherwise dusty, noisy city area considerably more pleasant. The renovations, which required temporarily housing the residents elsewhere, happened chiefly during 1985-1987 - with residents being moved back in throughout 1988 and 1989. The block was, typical of the architecture of the time, extremely densely built-up, with long, dark inner courtyards and multiple-story buildings backed up against each other.¹⁰³ On the Dob utca side, noisy, dirty, dark apartments on the ground floor were torn up and an external open arcade row was created with spaces for businesses. Of the seventeen buildings in the cluster, six were completely demolished and with three others the interior wings were demolished as well. Part of an existing firewall was turned into a façade with the windows and terraces facing the inner courtyard. Because of war damage, which had been profound in area, by the time of the rehabilitation project there were still three vacant properties in the block. With the renovation of these it was possible to increase the number of apartments still existing in the building and also increase the overall quality. Two new apartment buildings were also constructed by the Ministry of Defense, at Klauzál tér 4 and Nagydiofa u. 26, and some of the apartments are still occupied by retired military officers. What was perhaps the most radical element of the rehabilitation was that a large common garden was created out of the area created by the demolition of some of the wings of the buildings. The planned garden would mean the green space provided per person would be exceptionally high relative to the city's average – 9-10 square meters per person.¹⁰⁴ The residential buildings are varied in character. Those that lost their inner wings, including Wesselényi 24, are open in a modified U-shape to the larger garden, others, specifically the houses along Klauzál tér and Nagydiofa utca, retained a cloistered inner courtyard leading to a back gate that opens out to the larger garden. Some residents originally opposed the garden for security reasons, as the open garden was designated a public green space accessible to the entire city with the gates left unlocked. The government's reasoning for this was that the park was to connect seamlessly with the rest of the city's public space. Said a city architect who worked on the project in its later stages:

*That was the tendency in the 1980s, to leave it open...it was originally meant to be part of public property, to connect directly to the street.*¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Budapest Városépítési Tervező Vállalat (Budapest Urban Planning Company), *Budapest VII 15 Tömb Szabályozási Terv* (Budapest District VII, Block 15 Regulation Plan), March 1986. Courtesy of District VII Architecture Office.

¹⁰⁴ Szilágyi, "A Városrehabilitáció Zöldfelület-Rendezési Útjai és Tévtutjai (Routes and Misroutes Towards Urban Green System Rehabilitation)," Unpublished monograph, 1999, p. 1. Translation the author's.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Ida Orbán, architect, of the Seventh District Office of Architecture, August 8, 2005

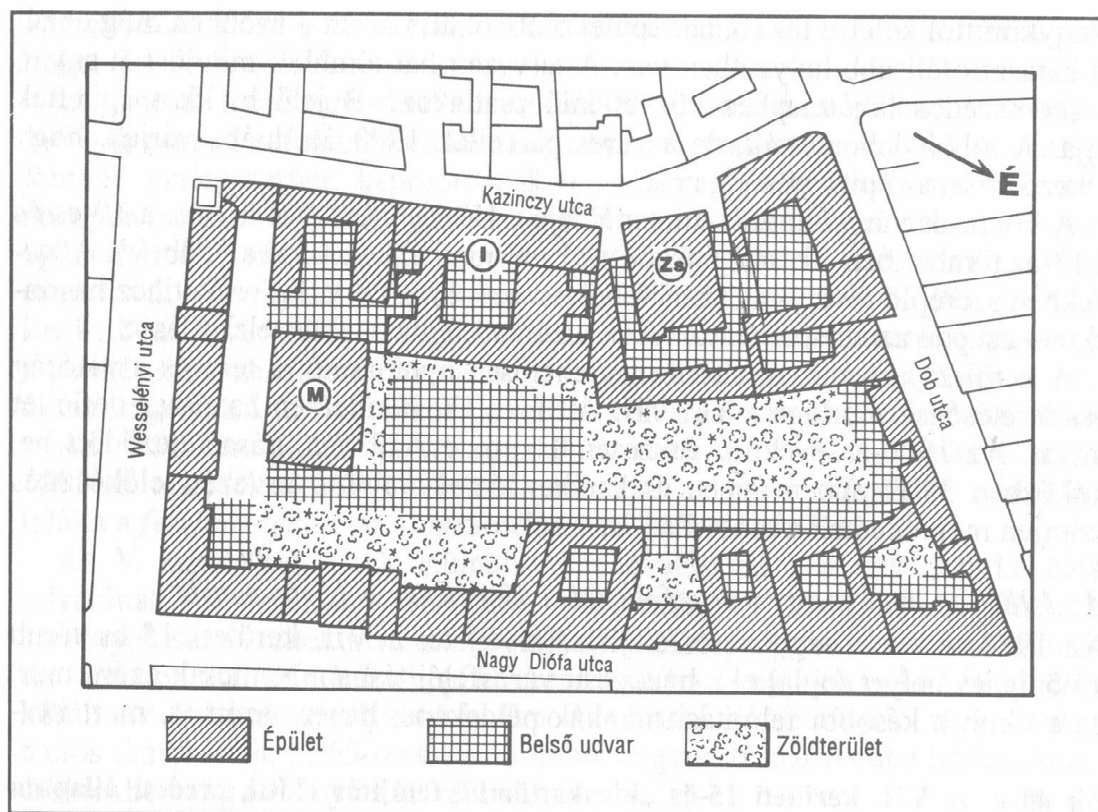


Image 6.1: The original rehabilitation plan of Block 15. The checked areas inside the buildings designate inner courtyards. M=museum, I=school, Zs=synagogue.

At first it seemed that the project succeeded quite well. The garden, which included a resting place and a playground, was not only used by the residents in the first years, but the residents themselves also took care of it. The garden, in spite of its conventional contours, ordinary facilities and minimal variety of plants, provided a much greater attraction than the then-decaying, dirty and overused Klauzál tér public park. The city government, though responsible for caring for the hidden public garden, did not devote much time or resources to its maintenance. In a sort of cruel twist of fate, the very advantage of its being hidden away in a courtyard ultimately turned to disadvantage for the residents. The garden grew wild, and parts of it became taken over by aggressive young gangs. The children who didn't belong to the gangs were driven from the yard. Within about twelve years the garden significantly declined and began to look pitiful. Neither the municipality nor the residents took responsibility for the garden.¹⁰⁶ There was a significant exodus of residents after privatization because the profit between the residents' purchase price from the municipality and the market price was so significant. In the first few years since the change of political regime that took place in 1989, ownership of homes across the city changed considerably. In 1990, 22 per cent of the housing stock in Hungary was owned by the state; by January of 2000, this ratio

¹⁰⁶ Szilágyi, "A Városrehabilitáció Zöldfelület-Rendezési Útjai és Tévutjai (Routes and Misroutes Towards Urban Green System Rehabilitation)," p. 2. Translation the author's.

dropped to 5 per cent.¹⁰⁷ This statistic demonstrates the rapid and startling rate at which the transition took place from a paternalistic welfare state to a free market. The changes of 1989 and the resulting economic upheaval interrupted the rehabilitation processes begun in the 1980s in Block 15 and elsewhere in the city. There were, in the meantime, other block rehabilitation projects considered to have been successes, namely blocks 7, 10 and 13 of District IX.

For a number of reasons, the block 15 project is frequently referred to in contemporary urban planning literature in a pejorative sense. Criticism encompasses the aesthetic, socioeconomic and financial aspects of the rehabilitation. Some question the project's intentions, while others criticize only its final result. A 1993 study on the socioeconomic and class effects of the rehabilitation showed that in 1988 the composition of the building's residents was 41% pensioners, 26% intellectuals or executives, 17% skilled laborers, 11% lower-level employees, and 5% unskilled laborers. The study concluded that the population after the rehabilitation was of a higher socioeconomic class than that which was there prior to the rehabilitation, a logical conclusion given that those old residents who moved back into the block and bought their old apartments there after the rehabilitation or those new residents who moved to the block and purchased apartments there after the rehabilitation had to pay higher than average prices to live in a block with renovated – not to mention a reduced number of – flats. The average percentage of intellectuals or executives in inner Pest apartment blocks in the mid 1970s was 11%. One of the main purposes of the rehabilitation, the study's authors state, was to ameliorate the slumification process that was already happening in inner Pest at that time by changing the composition of the class of residents – that is, by targeting families of a higher socioeconomic and intellectual level than the area's average and repopulating the block with them. The study is critical of the block rehabilitation approach on the grounds that it does not reduce poverty or improve the lives of minorities (primarily Roma), only shifts the poor and minorities around and ultimately contributes to inner-city segregation.¹⁰⁸

Another study, completed in 1998 and focusing on the rehabilitation potential for Klauzál tér and environs¹⁰⁹ described the block in the following way:

The row of courtyards behind the block of flats that was rehabilitated in the 1980s bisects the block, not just in a geographic sense but also in the sense of identity of those who live there. On the Klauzál tér side many of the residents have changed. Following the

¹⁰⁷ Zoltan Kovács, Judit Székely, Tamás Egedy and Hanna Szemzo. *Neighborhood Housing Models: Hungarian Final Report*. A report published in 2000 by the European Union Fifth Framework Programme: Improving the Quality of Urban Life, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ József Hegedűs and Ivan Tosics, *A Lakásrendszer Szociológiai és Közgazdasági Elemzés* (A Sociological and Economic Analysis of the Housing System), Candidate evaluation, Budapest, 1993, pp. 85-86.

¹⁰⁹ Pardes Város- és Településpolitikai Kutató és Tanácsadó Iroda (Pardes Urban Policy Research and Consultancy Office), "A Klauzál tér és környéke társadalmi-gazdasági megvalósíthatósági tanulmány és fejlesztési koncepció (A Study and Development Concept for the Socioeconomic Potential of Klauzál tér and Environs)" Budapest, 1998, Section 8. Translation the author's.

rehabilitation, a lot of those who moved back exchanged their apartments there for others elsewhere in the city, even before purchasing the apartments became an option...Our interview subject lived on Nagydíófa utca in the rehabilitated block, and what she said can probably be viewed to be typical. "The apartment and the house were beautiful when we moved back, but by then I had already long since stopped wanting to live here. There were more and more seedy types in the area...my grandmother's death was just an excuse, that I couldn't manage the 90 square meter apartment all alone."

Nearly all of the Dob and Kazinczy utca sides of Block 15 are occupied by institutes and not residential buildings. The only Dob or Kazinczy residents would be occupants of Dob utca 31-33, which is technically part of the larger block but has a separated 300 square meter garden that is still located in the inner courtyard of the building created by the demolition of two Dob utca apartment buildings' inner wings and used by about 20 families. An essay in a major daily newspaper by a District VII representative of FIDESZ (Young Democrats Party) referred to the Block 15 renovation as such:

...The renovation of inner Erzsébetváros alone would consume the entire (state) budget. Sufficient example – because there is no other example – can be found in the rehabilitated block 15. The Kazinczy utca, Dob utca, Klauzál tér and Wesselényi utca block was restored by state financing, beautified, partially demolished (ugh!) but not finished even though the money, because the costs were truly huge, ran out.¹¹⁰

Block 15's garden was created as a public garden that belonged legally not to the residents but to the municipality, which had overseen its construction and in theory was responsible for the maintenance. The project was never really finished entirely, many elements, including the underground garage, were never built. Although the flats have been privatized, the garden's property is still owned by the municipal authorities except for a one-meter strip along the buildings. Initially the owner was Budapest city government, but it is now District VII government, which has tentative plans for constructing a nursery school building to close the gap on the Dob utca side, where the parking lot is now. Tentatively, they would involve a nursery school building being constructed on the site currently occupied by the parking lot. The amount of green space would not – can not, due to city land-use regulations – be changed. The new building will have a nursery school on the ground floor and other educational institutes above it. However, the right of usage of the garden would change. The green space requirement for children in a nursery school would mean that a considerable portion of the center of the garden would be fenced off. According to a tentative proposal based on a feasibility study, most of the middle of the garden would be fenced off to a strip six meters wide running along the back of the Klauzál tér side. Part of this would be taken up with a wide path, but beginning in front of Nagydíófa u. 32 and continuing to the large block of flats at the corner of Wesselényi, the strip would be widened to about 24 meters for a length of about 74 meters, creating a rectangular space of about 1700 square meters. Inside the fencing would be a school garden. While the residents would not benefit from its use,

¹¹⁰ András Hont, "Napfény, levegő és a romok esztétikája (The Aesthetic of Sunlight, Air and Ruins)" *Népszabadság*, Sept. 8, 2004.

they would benefit from the improved attractiveness of the site. The remaining land outside of the nursery school's fencing is all adjacent to the apartment buildings.¹¹¹

6.2.2: Demographics of Block 15

The current population of Block 15 numbers 416. There is a total of 186 flats in Block 15, plus 21 flats in Dob utca 31-33, which does not have direct access to the garden and has its own garden. Businesses inside the residential flats of the block include an art gallery and the offices of two small businesses. Included also in the block but without residents are the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, the Museum of Electrotechnology, the ELTE teacher training college, the landmark Kazinczy utca synagogue and its associated offices and restaurant. The synagogue and the buildings that surround it in its own courtyard are still separate from the large, opened-up area of Block 15. The houses at Dob utca 31-33 are also separate from the rest of the block and do not look out onto or have access to the large common garden, even though all of these buildings technically belong to the block and are included in census data and the overall population and number of flats. In fact, the primary residential occupation and orientation towards the garden is along the axis of Klauzál tér, Nagydiofa utca and Wesselényi utca. There are two cafes on the outside of the Nagydiofa utca side but they do not have access to the garden. (See Appendix III for a detailed breakdown of number of flats and census statistics on the residents).

6.2.3: Landscape architectural survey of Block 15

*When this first opened around 1986 it was beautiful, it was done for the residents. It was properly lit and had nice benches and a playground. But these days drug addicts come from Klauzál tér. This is why the mess everywhere. I wouldn't have come here to live without this courtyard.*¹¹²

The garden is approximately 5,400 square meters. Its main elements are, starting from the Wesselényi utca side and moving along the axis of Nagydiofa utca and Klauzál tér towards Dob utca:

- A large concrete terrace behind Wesselényi u. 24 house
- A large grassy area
- a sports field surrounded on two sides by benches and flanked by two allees of *Tilia cordata*
- a long pergola covered in *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* surrounding a hardscaped terrace with a fountain
- a playground with sandbox, slide, climbing bars and swings
- a dense 100 square meter shrub bed with a reflecting pool and picnic tables near one end, the whole area paved in hexagonal pavers
- a shady area densely planted with trees (see inventory)
- a concrete terrace with a gaming table and picnic tables

¹¹¹ *Budapest VII Kerület Dob utca 37-41 Belső FSZKT Módosítási Hatástanulmány, Környezetalakítási Javaslat* (Budapest District VII Dob utca 37-41 Inner Courtyard Modification Feasibility Study, Environmental Modification Proposal), 2005.

¹¹² May 2005 interview with Ildikó Szabó, Wesselényi utca 24.

A thorough visual survey of the garden from a landscape architecture standpoint reveals a number of strengths and weaknesses. There was a clear intention to create different areas with distinct and logical functions: a sports field, a pergola and patio, a reflecting pool with nearby picnic tables. The plants have survived the years quite a bit better than the hardscaping and furnishing. The majority of the trees are thriving, and there is at least a reasonably good variety in terms of size, shape and color. One glaring exception is in the big shrub bed, a large standing dead *Ailanthus altissima* that is not only unattractive to look at but could pose a real danger to the nearby residents and houses. The shrubs, though there is little variety and they are overgrown and also invaded by volunteer saplings, are also in generally good health. The *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* that covers the pergola is in very healthy condition and, owing to its being planted in a sunny area, provides very striking fall color. There is a minimum amount of maintenance carried out in the garden by the municipality: Trash is carried away, the trash cans are intact, and the patchy grass is periodically mowed. Graffiti is everywhere. The furnishings all need replacing. The playground equipment is dangerous and unusable, the sandpit full of weeds. The sports field is completely barren and run-down. Most of the cast-concrete benches - both the linear stationery ones and the ones flanking the picnic tables - are missing their wooden seating, and the raised concrete beds around a few of the trees are starting to buckle upwards from the force of the trees' roots. The pergola wood is dark and dingy and somewhat deteriorated. The cast-iron lamps, once no doubt very attractive features, have mostly been damaged or broken. The hardscaping is in very poor condition. The hexagonal pavers that form the hardscaped area around the shrub bed towards the Dob utca side are uneven and seem to have been laid out in a fairly random pattern with no definite edges. A small reflecting pool seems to be in good condition but is not used, likewise for a small limestone fountain. The long rows of benches are deteriorating and their long fixed rows create an institutional atmosphere not conducive to social activities. It lacks 'rooms' and instead feels like one large inhuman space. It lacks a special quality that is precisely what a courtyard garden should have – a sense of being cloistered and protected from the street – by the fact that the Dob utca side is bounded only by an easily-scaled chain link fence with a temporary parking lot on the other side. Instead of feeling closed off and protected, it feels isolated and vulnerable. The garden's neglect is a vicious circle – people don't use the park or contribute to its upkeep because it shows neglect, and the longer it goes on, the more pronounced the neglect becomes. Vandalism and theft are the plagues of underused, neglected and forgotten green spaces. In stark contrast to the common garden, the cloistered individual courtyards of the houses along Klauzál tér and Nagydiofa utca feature modest but clean and well-maintained cast-concrete raised beds of shrubs and perennials. The residents are willing to decorate what they can securely protect. Said one neighbor, who was carefully tending the raised flowerbeds in the small inner courtyard of Nagydiofa utca 34:

*I love to garden, so that it'll be beautiful. I love it if my environment is beautiful. This is a beautiful space for us. ...it's neglected, but they always tell us there's no money. There was a time at the beginning when people did it (worked in the garden) but people are, well, comfortable. I don't want to say lazy. No one thinks it's their own, that's the main problem, yet it would be in everyone's interest.*¹¹³

¹¹³ June 21, 2005 interview with Mária of Nagydiofa u. 34.

Image 6.2: Block 15, fall 2006. AutoCad drawing by Kristin Faurest.

Table 6.1: Survey of plants, furnishings and and hardscaping in Block 15		
Type	Quantity/amount	Condition
<u>Shrubs and vines</u>		
Cotoneaster	Uncountable	Healthy
Forsythia	2	
Ligustrum ovalifolium	Hedging	Healthy
Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Covering pergolas	Healthy
Philadelphus coronaries	Uncountable	Healthy
Prunus laurocerasus	1	Healthy
Pyracantha	Uncountable	Healthy
Rosa spp.	Uncountable	Healthy
Symphoricarpos albus	Uncountable	Healthy
<u>Trees</u>		
Acer campestre	1	Healthy
Ailanthus altissima	2	1 healthy, 1 poor
Betula alba	2	Healthy
Fagus sylvatica	5	Healthy
Malus floribunda	3	Healthy
Morus alba	3	Healthy
Picea pungens	1	Healthy
Populus tremula	1	Healthy
Prunus cerasifera 'woodii'	3	Healthy
Salix babylonica	3	Healthy
Salix alba	1	Healthy
Thuja occidentalis	4	Fair
Tilia cordata	10	Healthy
Ulmus glabra	1	Healthy
<u>Furnishings and hardscaping</u>		
built-in benches	56 linear meters	Poor
picnic tables	5	Extremely poor
Gaming table	1	Poor
Sandbox	1	Poor
Climbing equipment	1	Extremely poor
Slide	1	Extremely poor
Swingset	1	Extremely poor
Pergola	1	Fair
Concrete sports field	1	Poor
Concrete sidewalks		Fair
hexagonal pavers		Fair
Reflecting pool	1	Good but not used
cast limestone fountain	1	Good but not used
fixed metal trash cans	7	Good, emptied
cast iron lamps	9	Damaged



Image 6.3: Block 15, with the Klauzál tér houses on the right, facing Dob utca. Photo by Kristin Faurest.

The enclosed garden of Dob utca 31-33 is part of Block 15, but due to the layout of the block it was not possible to make it part of the large courtyard without demolishing many of the buildings of the historic Kazinczy utca synagogue complex. Therefore it is still separated by walls and structures from the main large part of the garden. Dob utca 31-33's garden, though only about 300 square meters in comparison to the adjoining 8000, is a pleasant urban green space to this day. The two plots of land – 31 and 33 – were legally made into one plot only in 1995 by ordinance of the District VII municipality.¹¹⁴

Because of its size and location, the Dob utca 31-33 garden is slightly shady, but its more manageable size and complete insulation from the street make it a much easier garden to maintain. The residents of this particular block are extremely careful about keeping the garden closed off to the street, due to past unpleasant experiences. The garden's grass is quite overgrown and the chaotic planting pattern of the *Rosa*, *Juniperus*, *Thuja* and other plants suggests that many people have taken their own initiative and planted what they

¹¹⁴ Budapest Főváros VII. kerület Erzsébetváros Önkormányzatának 22/1995. (XI.09.) sz. önkormányzati rendelete (Budapest District VII Municipality ordinance 22/1995. (XI.09))

wanted where they wanted with no central planning. The central sitting area, covered with gravel, has sunk about 50 cm over the years. However, the atmosphere is pleasant, the furnishings intact, the plants flourish, and there is absolutely not a trace of vandalism in evidence. The Dob utca 31-33 garden's minimal maintenance has, for years, been included in the residents' monthly condominium fees. Recently the house changed condominium management, and because of the upheaval, there has not been a designated gardener in about a year. It is a positive testament to the residents' feelings toward the garden that they have historically been willing to pay regularly for its upkeep, and the garden is regularly used. However, it is only a very small few of the residents who are actually actively involved in the garden. A gardener comes usually about twice a season to care for the garden. The previous condomium association, citing tax complications, would not use tenants' funds to purchase materials for the garden, only to pay the gardener. Said one of the tenants, who actively works in the garden most days:

I'm the one who does it as a volunteer. Everyone uses the garden, especially in good weather. The older ones sit out here, the children play, the young people have dinner out here, it's in use. Everybody pays for there to be a gardener who comes twice a year and I take care of the rest. One of the neighbors paints the benches when necessary, people do things like that...but they think that if they pay for it, the professionals will do the work. People don't like it if they pay and then also have to do the work.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ From an interview June 8, 2005, with Éva Banyászi of Dob u. 31



Image 6.4: A recent view of Block 15, showing adjoining Klauzál tér to the left. Photo by Civertan.

6.3: Survey results

Table 6.2: Statistics on Block 15 residents who responded to survey questionnaires		
Age and gender of survey subjects	Number	% of subjects overall
Men 19-30 years	5	11.6%
Men 31-60 years	11	25.5%
Men 61+ years	3	7%
Women 19-30 years	9	20.9%
Women 31-60 years	8	18.6%
Women 61+ years	7	16.2%
Total men	19	44.1%
Total women	24	55.9%
Total number subjects surveyed (% of block)	43 (10.3%)	100%
Family status of survey subjects		
Children	13	30.2%
No children	30	69.7%
Total	43	100%

6.3.1: Frequency and nature of usage of the garden by the residents

The survey results as well as visual inspections of the garden point to a lack of use.

When asked about the frequency and nature of their usage of the garden, residents said:

- 37% rarely visit the garden
- 34% visit the garden on a daily basis
- 22% never use the garden at all

One each of our research group's visits to the block, we noted who was using the garden. Our eleven visits to the garden between May 5 and June 29, 2005, each revealed, on average, between one and three residents using the garden, most of the time for walking their dogs. Only once did we see a child riding a bicycle. Only on one visit did we witness one of the outsiders that so many of the residents complained about invading the garden: a man in his early 20s in a drug-induced haze sitting behind some bushes..



Image 6.5: Block 15's garden, June 2005, facing the rear of the Kazinczy utca buildings, showing the sports field. Photo by the author.

6.3.2: Perceptions of the garden's conditions and problems

The general perception of the garden is negative. All the residents surveyed thought the playground equipment was unacceptable. The overwhelming majority of residents did not find the garden's other facilities and conditions acceptable, either:

- 71% not adequate
- 17% partially adequate
- 8.5% adequate
- 3.5% not sure

When asked about what they considered to be the most serious problems about the garden, the residents were given the opportunity to list more than one issue. The most frequently mentioned were:

- 52% security
- 46% littering
- 43% dog walking
- 40% lack of maintenance
- 37% vandalism
- 22% dangerous playground equipment

Other issues mentioned included lack of lighting, rotted-out unusable furniture, and unclear ownership. As one resident said:

I come down here three times a day with my dogs. The idea wasn't bad but unfortunately it's neglected. It must have been something unique at the time. It was in much better condition then, and a lot of us used it then. We were the first generation that grew up here, used it the most. For a good 10-12 years we maintained it, worked on it. The worst is that it's not ours, we're at the mercy of the city. What was a joy has become a problem. The first 5-6 years the city really worked at it, brought people from abroad to show it as an example. Then came the big changes and it became no man's land... What they do now is just the bare minimum – mowing the grass, pulling out the ragweed. I'd contribute financially as well, it's not a matter of that, but it would only work if we could have the right of usage or buy it. The big problem is that it's in the city's ownership, the district can't get around to dealing with it, and it's forgotten. There's always hope, we haven't given up. If it were in our hands we'd care about it, we'd be able to do more about this. They don't do the work they need to. It used to be every six months they did a total maintenance, and it was watered nearly every day.¹¹⁶

Another resident:

I usually take my child there to play. Of course it's of value to us. It's one of a kind, but it's just worn out. These glue sniffers, drug users come in and vandalize things. People don't want to spend an extra 100 forints a month for security, that's all it would take.¹¹⁷

Nearly every interview subject had a different reason to explain the garden's failure. Residents and the local government representative report that because of the garden being theoretically closed off from the street, drug dealers and users from nearby Klauzál tér use the property to conduct their business away from the eyes of the police. All of the buildings but one have iron bars with locked gates at the rear. Thus, the one block of flats at Nagydiofa utca 30-32 that refuses to have the rear gate installed receives much of the blame for the problem, both from the residents and from the local representative, although the fence along Dob utca could just as easily be the source of the trouble.

¹¹⁶ May 2005 interview with Attila Barányai, Klauzál tér 1

¹¹⁷ June 21, 2005 interview with Iván Futó of Nagdiófa utca 32.



Image 6.6: The open Dob utca side, bounded by a fence and flanked with a temporary parking facility.
Photo by Kristin Faurest.

The local government representative also assigns some of the blame to the demise after 1990 of the old “house master” system that meant every house had a custodian paid to watch everyone’s comings and goings.¹¹⁸ A city architect who worked on the project believes one of the principle flaws is that too many walls were knocked down, and that had more buildings been left intact and the courtyard divided into more small areas instead of one big one, the garden might be better cared for.¹¹⁹ The security problem is intrinsically linked to the ownership issue: residents mention that if the property were under their control, they could consider implementing private security patrols, or demanding more intensive police patrols. Said one resident who had initially taken part in the garden’s maintenance with enthusiasm but who had become highly embittered about the garden’s decline:

*Early on and for six or seven years we regularly took care of the garden, we built the fence out of our own money...there’s a tree out there that I planted...but the gypsies and drug addicts still came in and now for 10 years nobody’s cared for it at all.*¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ May 2005 interview with György Hahn, the Seventh District Third Precinct representative for the Hungarian Socialist Party

¹¹⁹ Orbán interview.

¹²⁰ April, 2005 interview with Judit Levai, Klauzal tér 3.

6.3.3: The need to renovate

An overwhelming number - ninety-seven percent of the residents - stated that the garden needs renovation. Those who thought the garden should be renovated wanted the following:

- 68% - new benches
- 50% - new tables, trash receptacles and drinking fountains
- 37% - new playground equipment
- 26% - a separate dog run
- 2% - more trees, lawn and plants
- 11% - more lighting



Image 6.7: Inadequate playground facilities are among the garden's problems. Photo by Kristin Faurest.



Image 6.8: Much of the seating has been vandalized. Photo by Kristin Faurest.

6.3.4: Perceived obstacles to successful renovation and longterm maintenance

Ninety percent of the residents cited several reasons that they thought the renovation could be a very difficult or impossible process, and the answers to this question were far more scattered than the answers to some of the other questions. The most frequently cited obstacles were:

- 31% lack of attitude, morale or energy on the part of the residents for the task
- 17% the garden's municipal ownership
- 11% lack of security and protection from outsiders
- 11% lack of funds
- 11% lack of a central 'owner' to lead the project

A few residents cited other miscellaneous issues, such as the unwieldy high number of residents in the block, the conflicts of interest and usage among different groups. There is certainly no encouragement from any government representative to take any kind of initiative. György Hahn, a local government representative, expresses exasperation at the very idea, saying that the volunteer work that characterized the garden's early years was simply a byproduct of the communist period and that right after the changes of 1989 and ever since then, people have found such tasks distasteful and demeaning. Five years ago, he said, he spent about a million forints restoring the lighting and cleaning up the garden:

But since then I haven't put a fillér into it. It's money out the window. For it to work we'd need a video surveillance system, regular police patrols. Don't think that you can do

*something here. Don't you think I've tried everything? You have to wait till peoples' mentality changes. It won't happen in my lifetime.*¹²¹

6.3.5: Willingness to become involved in the garden

Most residents interviewed were willing to become involved in the garden's revitalization if given the opportunity. Residents were asked about this in three areas: participating in the renovation plan, participating in the actual renovation, and participating in the longterm maintenance. When asked if they would participate in the design process:

- 80% responded positively with ideas or drawings
- 15% responded negatively
- 5% were not sure

When asked if they would participate in the actual renovation work:

- 74% responded positively that they would help with mowing, planting, cleaning, painting or other physical labor
- 20% responded negatively
- 6% were not sure

When asked if they would participate in the ongoing maintenance:

- 54% responded positively
- 37% responded negatively
- 9% were not sure

Several of those who said that they would participate cited definitive amounts of time they would give to specific tasks, including planting, cleaning and mowing twice weekly; maintaining the flowers two hours weekly or for short periods twice weekly; planting or mowing one afternoon every two weeks or picking up litter monthly. When asked whether they would contribute material help to the garden's renovation, 83% responded positively. Of these respondents:

- 52% said they would give money
- 36% said they would give some kind of technical or professional help
- 6% said they would devote materials

Asked further if they would contribute to the longterm maintenance, and if so, what, 80% said they would contribute something and 20% said they would not. Those who would contribute cited a variety of amounts and modes for giving, including:

- 17% between 2,000-4,000 monthly
- 17% unspecified monthly amount
- 14% "as much as the others," whether monthly or one-time
- 3% one-time donation of 15,000 forints

When residents were asked whether they would be a member of a foundation or other civic organization devoted to the garden's upkeep:

¹²¹ May 2005 interview.

- 57% responded positively
- 26% responded negatively
- 17% were not sure

Some of those who answered the question positively stated their reasons for joining:
*You have to involve people and make them feel like it's in their interest...I would help with the maintenance in a renovated garden, if others would do it as well. Several of us used to water the trees, otherwise they would have gone to ruin. We did it out of care.*¹²²

6.3.6: Vision for how a renovated garden should function

Residents showed an encouraging level of unity in this area. When asked to whom the garden should be accessible:

- 83% to residents only
- 8.5% to outsiders too
- 8.5% not sure

Residents were questioned on what they considered to be the most important functions the garden should serve, and more than one answer was possible:

- 71%: safe playing place for children
- 68.5%: resting place for adults
- 60% better relations between neighbors
- 60% higher level of green space in the neighborhood
- 60% higher property values
- 10% creative activities

Fewer than 10% thought the garden should be used for sports, even though a significant portion of the current garden is taken up by a sports field.

6.3.7: Views on ideal ownership situation for the garden

The majority of those surveyed did not believe that the garden's renovation and maintenance would be able to succeed without considerable help from the government:

- 68.5% impossible without significant government help
- 22% possible without government help
- 8% not sure

Concerns cited mirror those cited in the 'obstacle' question: lack of proper attitude on the part of the residents, lack of clarity in the ownership situation, lack of money, and lack of direction and support. Although many residents expressed concern in the surveys and in the interviews about the fact that the site is not owned by the residents or the buildings, when questioned about how the ownership situation should be changed, residents did not give unanimous answers. When asked whether it would be worthwhile for the residents to acquire the site from the government for an unspecified fee:

- 22% responded positively

¹²² April 2005 interview with Klari Sziklai of Klauzál tér 3

- 34% responded negatively
- 26% said that the government should give the property free of charge
- 18% did not know

Asked what they considered to be the ideal ownership situation, there again was no unanimous answer, in fact, nearly half had no opinion, and of the others :

- 40% wanted total, common, undivided ownership of the plot
- 8% said the residents should receive right of usage but the property should remain in government ownership
- 6% thought the residents and government should split ownership

6.3.8: Sense of block community and unity

The majority of the residents do not believe that there is a strong community in Block 15:

- 66% responded negatively
- 26% responded positively
- 18% were not sure

Reasons cited for lack of community included that there were too many flats in the block or too much fluctuation in residency due to rentals. Those who thought there was a community said it was limited, for example, to individual buildings, or to the dog owners.

Chapter seven:

The Madach Block case study

The second case study centers on the Madach Block, a block of three buildings of flats defined by Rumbach Sebestyén utca, Asboth utca, Király utca and Madach Imre utca. The site is located in District VII which has .4 square meter of green space per resident.. The block's common garden of 950 meters means that the block's 295 residents enjoy an additional 3.2 meters per person of green space. The study is based on two main elements: a survey conducted among a representative sample of residents, and a series of participatory-planning forums organized by the District VII municipality.

7.1: Background information for the case study

7.1.1: Reason the site was chosen

The Madach block site was chosen as a case study in participatory planning with municipal involvement and support for several reasons. Municipal representatives as well as the District VII mayor and vice mayor, when asked, recommended the site stating that they would provide administrative, financial and moral support for the project. Furthermore, the buildings' residents have a longstanding culture of using and protecting the garden. A part-time gardener's salary and costs are built into the residents' monthly condominium maintenance fees, and the garden has a safe and cloistered atmosphere since entrance to the block is not possible without a key or passing by the representative's office. The complex can be entered from Rumbach utca by entering the building itself, but visitors can be monitored by the three buildings' common representative of 38 years, whose office is in the hallway of Madach u. 20-22. All doors are locked at night. The site has been as a garden since the building's construction and has several valuable trees. However, the garden has had virtually no new furnishings, plantings or other improvements for several years. These factors make it an ideal site for the case study.

7.1.2: Method, procedures and data collection for the survey of Madach Block

Over the course of three months in summer and fall of 2006, I made regular visits to the garden at varying times of day, also photographing the furnishings, plantings and paving details. With each visit I made a detailed assessment of the garden's condition and the number and type of users, as well as the comparative condition and number of users of the enclosed courtyard gardens adjacent to the large common garden. Using a survey (see Annex), I conducted formal and detailed interviews with 32 residents of varying ages from each of the residential buildings that have access to the garden. Most of the questionnaires were filled out by residents that I sought out in their homes or met randomly in the building's hallways. As with the first case study, a representative sample of residents equal to about 10% of the block's population was chosen based on census data on gender and age.

7.2: History and survey of the site

7.2.1: Architectural history and description of the Madach Block

Built between 1958-1960, with the residents moving in early in 1961, it is a utilitarian, brick-and-concrete complex of three buildings of 7-8 stories surrounding a central courtyard constructed on the site formerly occupied by the Orczy House, a large baroque building that was demolished in the 1930s after serving a key role in the Jewish Quarter's development. Most flats are between 50 and 70 square meters and have small balconies. The three blocks of flats, visible on the map as buildings A, B and C, are legally joined as one condominium association and have one common representative. The building of flats on the Asboth utca side does not belong to the Madach complex and even though it looks onto the garden and completes the square, its access is blocked by a metal fence and it is not part of the block.

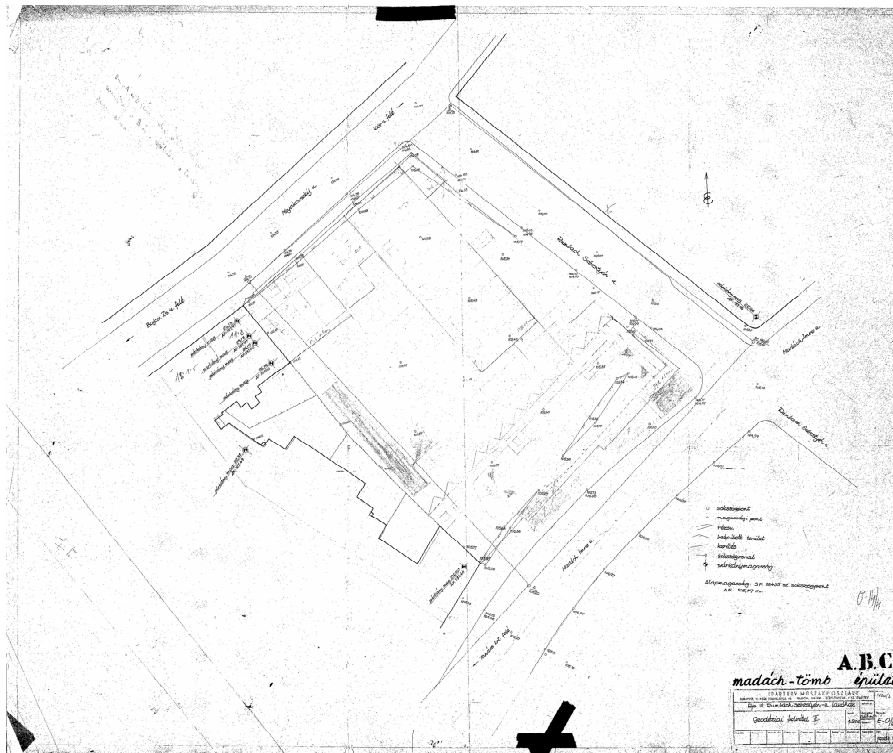


Image 7.1: Original site plan for the Madach block, 1958.

7.2.2: Demographics of the block

There are 295 residents in the block. Nearly all of the flats are occupied by residents. Most of the businesses are on the ground floor facing the outside streetscape and not the garden. There are a total of 154 flats and eight businesses. Census statistics show that the residents of the Madach block differ significantly in several ways from District VII's average. There are markedly fewer children and youth on average, far more men and women over 60, and a higher than average percentage of university graduates. Because their smallest unit is a block, the census statistics include the building of flats on the Asboth utca side, which is not technically part of the Madach block and is thus not included in the case study. (See Appendix III for detailed block data).

7.2.3: A landscape architectural survey of the garden

The garden, approximately 950 square meters, is owned by the residents and consists primarily of a large concrete area that serves in theory as a resting area and also a playground. The concrete was added some decades ago and is in poor condition. There is a large round sandbox that was part of the original design but that now has annuals planted in it. The concrete area is partly shaded by large, fairly healthy trees (see plant inventory) and the area around the garden is defined by scraggly hedges of *Ligustrum* and a mixture of small trees and shrubs. There is a part-time gardener who sprays the trees annually, prunes the trees, mows the grass, prunes the shrubs and waters the garden. There is a strictly-observed rule that dogs are not allowed in the garden at all. There is little to no sign of vandalism or intrusion. The playground is entirely unsuitable, as it now only consists of a rusty and battered iron and wood set of four swings with concrete surface underneath. The benches are in similar condition. There is a large central drainage grate in the center of the sitting area and there are no signs of drainage problems or any need to modify the grading of the the site.



Image 7.2: An aerial photo of the Madach Block, with Király utca along the bottom, Asboth utca on the right and Rumbach utca on the left. The three red brick buildings comprise the block. Photo by Civertan aerial photography.

Table 7.1: Site survey of Madach garden

<u>Trees</u>		
Aesculus hippocastaneum	1	Some blight
Corylus avellana	1	Healthy
Carya cordiformis	2	Healthy
Morus rubra	1	Healthy
Liriodendron tulipifera	1	Healthy
Robinia pseudoacacia	2	Healthy
Quercus robur (saplings)	3	Healthy
<u>Shrubs</u>		
Type	quantity	Condition
Hibiscus syriaca	18	Healthy
Ligustrum ovalifolium	hedging	Thin, sparse
Picea abies (saplings)	10	Healthy
<u>Furnishings and paving</u>		
Benches	4	Poor
Swingset	1	Poor
Pingpong table	1	Poor
Sandbox with concrete seating	1	Poor
Concrete paving		Poor



Image 7.3: Current conditions in the Madach block garden from the Rumbach utca block of flats.
Photo by Kristin Faurest.

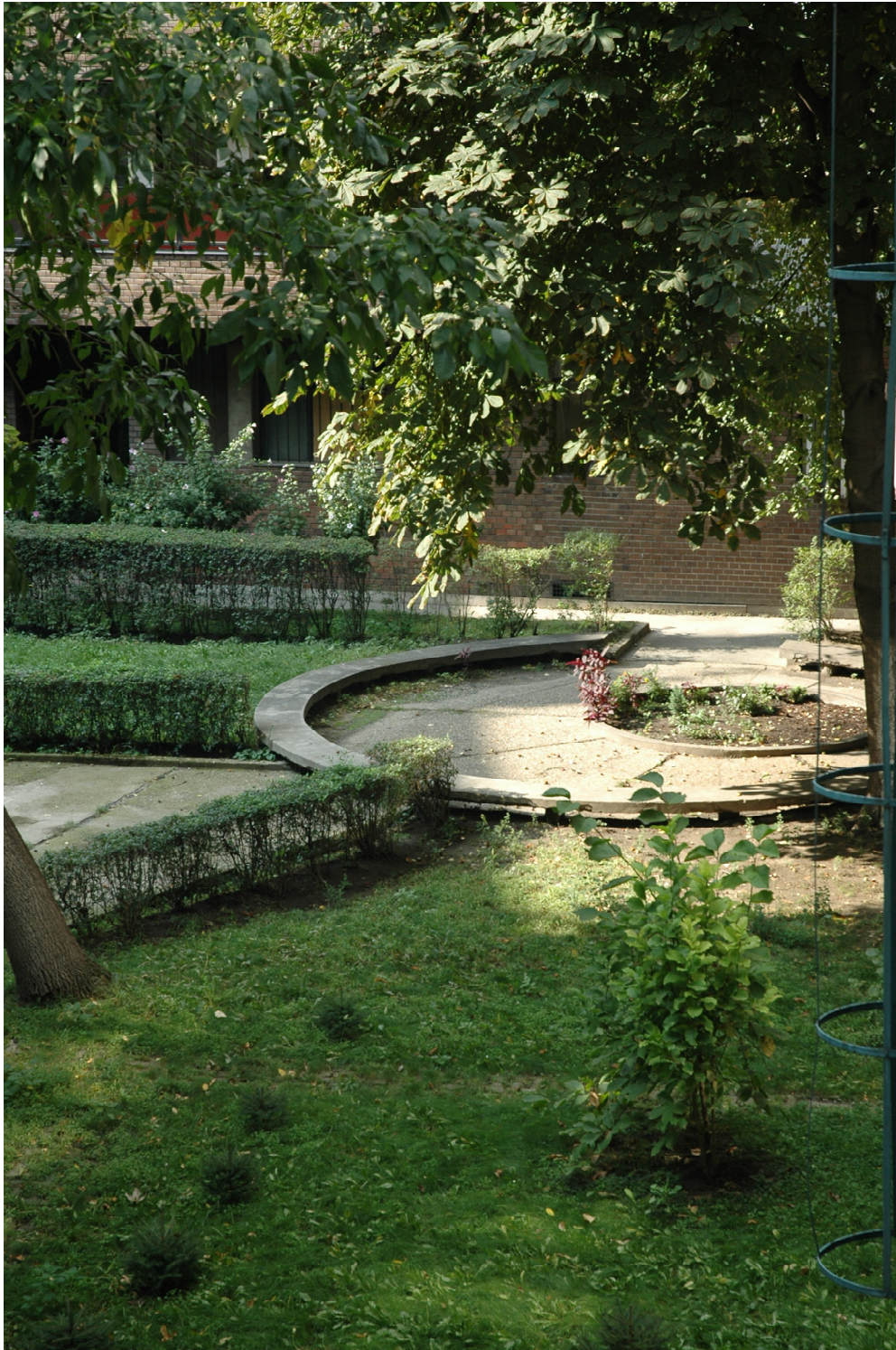


Image 7.4: Current conditions at the garden, view of the disused sandpit and the Király utca building in the background. Photo by Kristin Faurest.



Image 7.5: The Madach Block garden, October 2006. AutoCad drawing by Kristin Faurest.

7.3: Survey results

Table 7.2: Statistics on Madach Block residents who responded to survey questionnaires		
Age and gender of survey subjects	number	% of subjects overall
Men 0-14 years	0	0.00%
Men 15-39 years	2	6.20%
Men 40-59 years	3	9.30%
Men 60+ years	8	25%
Women 0-14 years	1	3.1%
Women 15-39 years	4	12.50%
Women 40-59 years	3	9.30%
Women 60+ years	11	34.30%
Total men	13	40.6%
Total women	19	59.3%
Total surveyed as % of block	32	10.8%

Of those surveyed, 43.7% had children and/or grandchildren, but only one of them had children who actually still lived with the parents in Madach Block.

7.3.1: Usage of the garden

The garden has an informal club of 6-8 elderly women who meet every afternoon for several hours if the weather is good. When asked about the frequency and nature of their usage of the garden, residents said the following:

- 37.5% visit the garden on a daily basis
- 6.2% visit the garden several times a week
- 9.3% visit the garden once a week at least
- 34.3% visit the garden rarely
- 12.5% never use the garden at all

7.3.2: Perception of the garden's conditions, facilities and layout

When asked their opinion of whether the garden's conditions and facilities were acceptable, the response was:

- 50% not acceptable
- 31.2% partially acceptable
- 18.7% acceptable

Asked whether the site's functional layout and proportions were acceptable, the answers were considerably more positive:

- 13% not adequate
- 87% adequate

7.3.3: Opinions on the garden's most critical problems

Asked about what they considered to be the most serious problems about the garden, the residents were given the opportunity to list more than one issue. Most cited two or three. There were no overwhelmingly unanimous answers, and 9.3% thought there were no problems at all. The most frequently mentioned were:

- 18.6% lack of security
- 15.6% too much concrete, lack of maintenance
- 12.4% litter
- 9.3% lack of infrastructure
- 6.2% vandalism
- 28.1% lack of flowering plants, obsolete playground equipment

7.3.4: The need to renovate

An overwhelming number – 93.7% - wanted to see the garden renovated. It is worth noting that even though more flowering plants was not among the choices given, more than half chose to write that in as a priority. Those who thought the garden should be renovated cited the following as priorities:

- 56.2% more flowering plants
- 50% benches
- 21.8% new playground equipment
- 9.3% garbage receptacles, drinking fountains
- 6.2% new pingpong table, water feature, signage

7.3.5: Perceived obstacles

Most residents did not believe that there was any reason that the garden's renovation and longterm care could not succeed. One responded that the only reason the garden hadn't been renovated was that no one had bothered to try. Said another: *People here don't laddy give money for things like this, nonetheless, once it's done they would certainly take care of it.* Asked what obstacles they perceived:

- 62.5% no obstacles
- 18.7% lack of funds
- 15.6% poor attitudes, lack of consensus

7.3.6: Willingness to become involved

Most residents interviewed were willing to become involved in the garden's revitalization in some capacity if given the opportunity. Residents were asked about this in three areas: participating in the renovation plan, participating in the actual renovation, and participating in the longterm maintenance. Their willingness to contribute financially or materially to the cause was also examined.

When asked if they would participate in the design process:

- 68.7% responded positively that they could contribute ideas
- 31.2% responded negatively, citing ill health, lack of time and lack of expertise as reasons

When asked if they would participate in the actual renovation work:

- 56.2% responded positively that they would help with planting, watering, purchasing flowers or tools, or other physical labor
- 43.7% responded negatively, citing ill health, lack of time and lack of expertise as reasons

When asked if they would participate in the ongoing maintenance:

- 50% responded positively
- 50% responded negatively

Several of those who said that they would participate cited definitive amounts of time they would give to specific tasks, particularly watering weekly, planting annuals in the spring, or maintaining the flowers for a specific amount of time weekly or twice weekly. Those who said they would not participate cited poor health, lack of time, or the fact that a gardener is already paid to do such tasks.

When asked whether they would contribute material help to the garden's renovation:

- 56.2% said they would give money
- 43.8 percent said they would not contribute

Those who were willing to contribute cited anywhere from 2000 to 10,000 forints as a one-time donation, with some saying in addition that they would purchase flowers or tools at a discount through their workplaces. Those who said they could not contribute cited financial hardships but also many pointed to the fact that garden maintenance and a gardener's salary are already included in their monthly condominium fees. Asked further if they would contribute to the longterm maintenance, and if so, what, 43.7% said they would contribute and 56.3% said they would not. Those who would not contribute cited, again, lack of funds and the existence of a paid gardener and garden costs already built into the condominium fee. Those who would contribute cited a variety of amounts and modes for giving, including:

- between 1,000 and 2,000 forints per month
- a small increase in the common costs, based on apartment size
- one-time donation of 10,000 forints

In spite of the fact that most residents are willing to contribute some sort of physical or intellectual work to the garden, when residents were asked whether they would be a member of a foundation or other civic organization devoted to the garden's upkeep, only 34.4% responded positively. The explanation was that many seemed to think it was unnecessary to form another organization when the block is already a legal entity itself.

7.3.7: Vision for the renovated garden's functions

Residents showed an encouraging level of unity in this area. When asked to whom the garden should be accessible:

- 93.7% to residents only
- 6.3% to outsiders too

Residents were questioned on what they considered to be the most important functions the garden should serve, and more than one answer was possible:

- 78.1%: resting place for adults
- 50%: safe playing place for children
- 37.5% better relations between neighbors
- 34.3% higher level of green space in the neighborhood
- 25% higher property values
- 9.3% creative activities
- 3.1% vegetable production

7.3.8: Sense of block community and unity

The majority of the residents believe that there is a strong or close-knit community in Madach Block:

- 65.6% responded positively
- 28.1% responded negatively
- 6.2% were not sure

7.4: The participatory planning forum series

The participatory planning process that I led and carried out at Madach Block took place parallel to the survey interviews and consisted of three residential forums. The process was initiated with the help of District VII municipal authorities, including the assistant mayor and a municipal representative. The representative initiated the contact with residents by sending a letter to each one (see Appendix III) stating that the municipality would like to organize and support a series of open meetings with residents to determine the garden's new design, with the design process being led by the author. The letter noted that Budapest City government will to solicit grant applications for funding courtyard garden revitalization efforts starting in early 2007. The process consisted of a series of open meetings to which all residents were invited and given the opportunity to give opinions about the garden. The discussions were structured to start with general issues such as determining the garden's functions and removal of unsightly objects, and proceeded to more specific issues such as the planting list, pavings and furnishings. Instead of a vote, the decisions were made by simple consensus: a resident or one of the moderators expressed an opinion, and the others discussed it until a consensus was reached. So that there would be a written record of the discussion, a summary would then be included in the next letter sent out by the municipal authorities announcing next meeting. The summary would then be reviewed at the following meeting as well. This was to ensure progress and avoid having the same discussions repeatedly. The results of the participatory planning forum series were to be harmonized with the results of the

questionnaires to determine the final plan. The plan would have to receive final approval from the official residents' council before being submitted to Budapest city government for funding.

The objectives of the process were to

- create a new, commonly-agreed upon working design for the garden that would increase residential use and involvement in the garden
- help cultivate and strengthen a sense of common responsibility and stewardship among the residents towards the garden

The following is a narrative of the planning process, followed by a summary of the process's findings.

7.4.1: Participatory planning forum I, August 31, 2006: the garden's functions

Participants included District VII Mayor György Hunvald, representative Gabriella Solymári, 17 residents and two volunteers from the Independent Ecological Center. The mayor informed the residents that the garden's renovation would be funded by a government grant at no cost to them, and that the grant applications process would begin in early 2007 although the grant applications are not yet available. An informal discussion moderated by the mayor followed. The following decisions were made:

- The functions of the garden should remain as they are, that is, a playground and resting place. Many residents noted that though most of the residents are elderly and do not have young children, their children will soon inherit the flats and move there with the own children.
- The playground's equipment should be replaced and the sandbox removed to make way for some other type of equipment. Many residents said that owing to the high number of cats in the block, the sandbox was unsanitary.
- The wide cement path that enters the garden from Rumbach utca must remain, as it is used for residents moving in and out of the flats, but the concrete in the seating/playground area should be torn up.
- Low-maintenance perennials and shrubs plants should be employed in the plan. Some residents would be willing to help care for an annual bed, as long as the plants are easy to care for and semi shade-tolerant, such as impatiens.
- The trees are all in good condition and should all be retained.
- A new layer of soil is needed, as some of what is there is construction rubble.
- The unattractive metal fence that runs along the Karoly Korut side of the garden should be concealed with a climbing plant such as *Parthenocissus*.

7.4.2: Participatory planning forum II, September 21: The garden's design details

Participants included Representative Gabriella Solymári, 12 residents and two volunteers from the Independent Ecological Center. Residents spent the first part of the meeting viewing photos of courtyard gardens and determining what ideas they favored for their own site. Then, using a detailed list, decisions were made by consensus on the garden's major design features:

- The garden's new plan should be a rejuvenation or renewal, not a radical renovation. The residents are satisfied with the garden's general layout and would not support or maintain a drastically different design.
- The plan should not include new elements such as a water feature or barbecue. The former requires too much maintenance and the latter will not be used.
- The sandbox is not necessary, but should remain in its original form and be converted to a planter. This is because as part of the building's original design it enjoys protected status, and also because it may be used by future generations.
- The pingpong table should be repaired or replaced, as there is demand for it
- Simple brick pathways and grass can replace the dilapidated concrete surfacing.
- New benches should replace the dilapidated old ones
- The hedging can be removed in some places; in the entrance area along Rumbach utca it serves to replace fencing, but inside the garden it is not necessary and divides the space poorly.
- There should be low-maintenance shrub beds, a perennial bed and also an annual bed for the residents to plant and maintain.
- The next meeting will include several conceptual plans and a proposed planting list for the residents to view and discuss.

7.4.3: Participatory planning forum III, November 9: review of design proposals

Participants included Representative Sólymári and under 10 residents.

The main purpose of the meeting was to show the residents what designs and planting/material lists had resulted from the participatory planning discussions and get feedback from the residents as to whether they found the proposals acceptable and which design they favored. The display included:

- Proposed planting list including details on plant care, growth and seasonal changes, illustrated with photographs
- Photographs of proposed furnishings (acacia wood benches and picnic tables)
- Photographs of proposed paving materials (brick or brick-effect concrete)
- Four conceptual sketches showing how the garden could be revitalized

The residents largely agreed on the selections for furnishings, paving and planting. Design IV was heavily favored by the residents and the municipal representative. The only suggested modification was that the paving stones be adjoined instead of detached, for reasons of accessibility for elderly residents with difficulty walking. The next steps in the garden's redesign are to get final approval from the condominium association for the conceptual drawing, create more detailed construction drawings and begin to determine costs, and submit the application to the city for funding through the City Rehabilitation Fund in spring of 2007. Should the submission be unsuccessful, then the residents can turn to District VII for funding possibilities.

Table 7.3: Proposed planting list

Shrubs, small ornamental trees

Acer palmatum Atropurpureum
 Buxus sempervirens
 Cotoneaster horizontalis
 Cornus alba Sibirica Variegata
 Hydrangea macrophylla
 Hypericum calycinum
 Physocarpus opulifolius
 Prunus laurocerasus
 Pyracanthus
 Spirea vanhouttei

Groundcover, climbing vines

Euonymus fortunei
 'Emerald'n'Gold'
 Hedera helix 'Goldheartz'
 Jasminum nudiflorum
 Parthenocissus quinquefolia

Perennials, ferns, bulbs

Astilbe chinensis
 Dryopteris erythrosora
 Hemerocallis spp.
 Heuchera 'Palace Purple'
 Matteuccia struthopteris
 Miscanthus sinensis

7.5: Brief summary of the participatory planning process results

The participatory planning process resulted in the following general findings:

- Although they did not have specific aesthetic ideas about the garden's redesign, the residents do share a similar vision for how the garden should function: it should be a resting place for adults and a playground for children. It should be low-maintenance and simple, providing a green oasis without any expensive or high-maintenance options such as a barbecue, pool or similar features. It should be comfortable to use for those in wheelchairs or limited mobility. There should be small-scale, well-defined opportunities built into the design for individual initiative or creativity, i.e., an annual bed. At no point in the process was there any significant disagreement about any of these issues.
- Many of the residents are willing to make material or physical contributions to the garden, and they have opinions and ideas to give to the process. Even though it was not a high number of residents who attended the meetings, those who did were enthusiastic about participating in the dialogue.
- The residents have historically relied on the municipal authorities to take initiatives with regards to the garden. Although some who were more opinionated than others, there was no evident leader and none of the residents has tried to initiate such a process before. There is no real obvious leadership among the community except for the common representative.





Image 7.7: Residents view and discuss the sketches at the third participatory planning forum. Photo by Kristin Faurest.



Image 7.8: A preliminary plan of the redesign of the Madach Block garden, based on residents' discussion of the four preliminary sketches. Design and AutoCad drawing by Kristin Faurest.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations

The two case study sites are both District VII common gardens, yet their historical, social and physical circumstances are quite diverse. Block 15 is more than 5,400 square meters, not including the buildings' own courtyards, and it was created only a little more than 20 years ago as a public park by the demolition of part of the block. Madach Block was originally designed to be one site with a closed common garden of slightly more than 950 square meters. The two case studies further differ greatly in their contexts and objectives: the Block 15 case study examines the garden and the residents' attitude towards it through the prism of past planning mistakes and problems, whereas the Madach Block case study examines the garden and the residents' attitude towards it while simultaneously carrying out an active experimental participatory planning process. Together they provide a basis for recommending a model for community-supported green spaces appropriate to Budapest, and, further, how this model could be expanded into a network.

8.1: Conclusions

8.1.1: Conclusions drawn from a comparison of the two case studies

Both case studies provide both encouraging and cautionary indications for how community-supported green spaces could be developed in Budapest. The two sites have quite different histories but have similar issues, and similar potential. Specific conclusions from the case studies include the following:

- Block 15 was lacking four key planning elements from the beginning, and all of its failures can be traced directly to these. They were:
 - A participatory design process involving and empowering the residents and reflecting their vision for the garden, coupled with effective communication from the municipality.
 - An organizational structure involving the residents and a sustainable maintenance plan involving the residents with supplemental municipal support.
 - A clear sense that the site belonged to the residents and securely closed gates, plus appropriate legal arrangements to ensure the land's exclusive control and access by the residents
 - A manageable, human scale to the design that would lend itself well to individuals or small groups taking care of designated areas
- Madach Block's residents do not have the negative perception that Block 15 residents have of being abandoned by the authorities, nor do they have the legal ownership issues related to the land. Madach Block has the administrative advantage of being one legal entity with residents owning the land, which makes financing and managing a renovated garden less complex

than brokering a financial and legal agreement among the residents of the multiple buildings of Block 15.

- Madach Block residents have a less troubled view of their garden than Block 15 residents. The term ‘no-man’s land’ came up repeatedly in discussions with Block 15 residents because of the lack of any sense of ownership or control of the garden and the crime issues. Residents in Madach Block were more likely to cite only one perceived problem with the garden, and nearly ten percent found no problems at all, as opposed to Block 15 residents, who all found problems with the garden and usually cited at least three. Ninety percent of Block 15’s residents saw serious obstacles to renovation, as opposed to slightly more than 60 percent of Madach Block’s surveyed subjects. Although a few residents cited general concerns about security, Madach Block does not have any evidence of problems with vandalism or the conflicts among the different buildings about security issues that Block 15 does. The architectural structure of the block itself makes it less vulnerable than Block 15, and it can be postulated that the low number of buildings and their care by one common representative also contributes to this.
- Usage rates of the garden are similar, with both gardens being used daily by an average of more than 30% of those asked. They are marginally better at Madach Block, where only 12.5% said they never used the garden at all, as opposed to 22% at Block 15. In both cases the percentage of people who were willing to contribute physically or materially to the garden was higher than the percentage of people who actually use the garden. Furthermore, the agreement that the garden needs renovation was nearly unanimous in both sites. From this the conclusion can be drawn that a higher percentage of residents would use the garden if it were made more inviting and attractive by a renovation.
- The majority of those surveyed in Madach Block believed there was a strong community in the block, as opposed to a minority in Block 15. Because dogs are banned from the Madach Block garden, there is no dog owners’ conflict as there is in Block 15.
- The residents’ willingness to contribute physically or intellectually to the garden’s renovation and longterm maintenance are approximately comparable, and in both cases constituted a majority of those surveyed, with Block 15 residents showing a slightly higher willingness. In both gardens there is some small-scale planting of shrubs and perennials done by residents. Residents at Block 15 are, according to the survey, more willing to contribute financially to their garden than Madach Block’s residents. However, it is essential to understand this within the context that the residents of Madach Block have historically had a hired gardener and paid for the garden’s maintenance through their monthly condominium fees, whereas Block 15’s garden is maintained by the municipality. In both cases, the percentage of positive responses progressively declines: the highest number are willing to help with

the planning, a slightly lower number would help with the physical work of the renovation, and a slightly lower number would participate in the maintenance. In the case of Block 15 it was 80%, 74% and 54%, compared to Madach Block, with 68.7%, 56.2% and 50%. Willingness to contribute once to the renovation and monthly thereafter came to 83% and 80% at Block 15, whereas in Madach Block those figures were 56.2% and 43.7%, respectively.

- In both cases, there was strong consensus among the residents about the garden on several key points: it should remain closed off to the public, and it should have the two simple chief functions of playground and resting place. Having this consensus, for example, provided a good foundation for the planning process in Madach Block.
- Based on the case studies, Budapest residents do not view urban agriculture as a viable or necessary solution. Although growing vegetables for food in the city is a common practice in community gardens in the U.S. and Canada, and in allotment gardens in Western Europe, and early 20th century developments in Budapest such as the Wekerle Estate did emphasize fruit production as a form of self-help for the disadvantaged, the two case studies showed that it was nearly unanimous among residents that they did not think vegetable production was an appropriate or needed activity for a common city garden. There are several possible explanations for this, including that many Budapest residents have small plots in the countryside where they grow vegetables and Budapest's farmers' markets provide affordable greens in even the poorer and denser districts of the city. Ornamental gardens were considered to be the appropriate solution instead.

8.1.2: General conclusions

- Budapest has both the need and the potential to develop its inner courtyards as community-supported green spaces that function as an integral part of the city's green space system. An examination and analysis of Budapest's urban fabric, urban green space problems and capacity in terms of supporting a new movement predicated on volunteerism and civic leadership leads to the conclusion that community-supported green spaces are viable here and could also function as a part of Budapest's ongoing urban rehabilitation process.
- Forming community-supported green spaces in the densest areas of Pest could increase the level of green space considerably. This is of particular relevance in districts VI, VII, VIII and IX, where the primary architectural form is the block of flats oriented around a courtyard. In the cases of the two smaller districts, VI and VII, courtyard blocks constitute almost the entire architectural stock. The need for green space is the most desperate in District VII. District VII is the smallest and densest of the four districts, and it alone has approximately 1300 courtyards of various size, structure and condition.. Building regulations provide for the courtyard to constitute at least 15% of the

building's footprint. It is possible to use Madach Block and Block 15, both in District VII where green space provision is estimated at .4 square meter per person, as examples of how much a greened courtyard can add to green space provision to individual residents. Block 15's 5,400 square meter common garden means that the block's 416 residents enjoy an additional 12.9 square meters per person. They have more than 30 times the green space of a District VII resident whose building has no green courtyard. Block 15 is an unusual case because it involved a massive demolition of the inner wings of several buildings in a block of 17 structures. Madach Block's common garden of 950 meters means that the block's 295 residents enjoy an additional 3.2 meters per person of green space, eight times the district average although still below the 1978 regulations recommended allotment of 7-10 square meters of nearby green space per person. Madach Block is also unusual because it is a highly dense structure for District VII. Two of its three buildings are eight stories tall including the ground floor, compared to the 4-5 stories more typical of the area. These two examples are thus extremes, since one is of low density due to extensive demolition of inner wings, and the other is higher density because of its high number of floors. Most average courtyard green spaces could provide an increased amount of green space in the middle range between the two, for example, in the approximate range of 5-9 square meters per person.

- There is growing municipal and residential interest in courtyards as a resource for increasing green space in the inner city, at least at the level of public discussion, and a simultaneous increase in civic involvement in Hungarian society in general that creates an atmosphere more conducive to such initiatives. Particularly in District VII there is a recent active civic response to the decay of the city's architectural assets, with organizations such as *Ovas!* (Care!) and others working against the demolition of landmark buildings. There are ad hoc efforts by the authorities to encourage courtyard greening, as in Madach Block. However, although there is some minor municipal financial and moral support for greening courtyards, such as the funds available in District VII and the "Most Beautiful Inner Courtyard" competitions, there is currently no organized approach for providing incentive to residents for improving their inner courtyards. There is nothing approaching the level of organization of London's garden squares. The standards for grants issued by the district and city governments do encourage financial commitment by requiring that the residents contribute as much as 50% of the cost, but there is no understanding of the importance of fostering individual responsibility. There is no policy to encourage residents to form a community-supported green space in their courtyards or to try to connect such organizations.
- There is a lack on the part of the municipal authorities of sophisticated understanding of the value of semi-private community-supported green spaces as an integral part of the urban green space system. This can be seen in the four key elements that were missing from Block 15's rehabilitation process, noted above.

8.2: Recommendations for the case study sites

8.2.1: Recommendations specific to Block 15

Should the planned nursery school be built, while the residents would not benefit from the nursery school garden's use, they would benefit from the improved attractiveness of the site and the elimination of the parking lot on the Dob utca side. However, the uncertainty with regards to the plan makes it currently difficult to initiate a participatory design process and begin the work of renovating the garden. Should this be possible in the future, there are several specific recommendations for the site – with or without the nursery school - that follow here.

- The redesign process must be participatory, with support from the municipality and from design professionals, but based on the residents' needs for the space. Also, there must be a residents' council or other organization put in place so that the residents will have control over the garden's fate and address conflicts between groups, such as between dog owners and non-owners.
- Given that the majority of residents do not feel that there is any sort of community in the block, a participatory planning approach that capitalizes on the community within the buildings themselves should be considered: a design with clearly designated small areas that can be cared for by small groups from individual houses. This also corresponds to the relevance of Oscar Newman's defensible space principles to block 15. The residents are not impoverished, they are not of a racial minority, their neighborhood is not in the middle of a gang, drug or prostitution war zone, and their apartments are primarily their own property and not government-managed and subsidized housing or rentals. Yet, some of the critical circumstances that created the need for defensible space principles are certainly present in Block 15. The neighborhood surrounding has problems with petty crime, drugs and vandalism, and those problems are spilling over into semi-private space. Most important, the survey and interview results demonstrate that many of the residents, many of whom grew up under and were accustomed to the paternalistic and centrally-controlled practices of Socialism, have identical perceptions, beliefs and practices to many of those that the residents of Clason Point. They perceive their large, common space that was intended as a communal recreational area as a vandalized, neglected no-man's land that no one feels responsibility for or in control of. They name security as one of their greatest problems, and feel unable to control or prevent the presence of vandals, drug dealers and other invaders. They significantly better care of the smaller, more clearly-designated areas controlled by a small number of families. They do not believe that they can make major changes without the government's help.
- The legal issues related to the land should be resolved in some way. The ownership issue was repeatedly mentioned by the residents of Block 15 as a

problem. Having the municipality simply gift the property to the residents or sell it for a symbolic amount would not be legally permissible as public parks, gardens and squares are non-transferable to private entities. However, it would be possible for them to forge an agreement with the municipality for the garden's longterm use. According to a legal interpretation of a city ordinance concerning the disposal of city property, the garden would constitute non-transferable real estate.¹²³ A property that is non-transferable and not in the use of the budgetary organisation of the municipality can be subject of a renewable contract for three years or less. Similar regulations would be in effect if the property were still in city, and not district, ownership.¹²⁴ While this does not provide a permanent legal assurance that the garden will belong at least in practice to the residents, it is difficult to imagine what else the city would use the property for, given its position inside a block of buildings and the fact that the city designed it that way in the first place. It is not necessary for all of the buildings in block 15 to take part in the contract for usage of the land. Any one of the condominiums is entitled to enter into the abovementioned contract, either individually or with other buildings. However, that means that only the participating building or buildings are obligated to meet the costs associated with the land, which would certainly result in serious conflicts.

- The security issues must be addressed. The residents' concern that a private security patrol could not be used unless the garden is in private ownership is, in fact, unfounded. Budapest's law does not create any legal obstacle to the hire of private security guards by the residents of block 15. First, any of the residents can demand extra police patrols of the area as private citizens. Any of the individual blocks of flats has the right to vote to hire a private security company to prevent illegal acts such as drug sales or vandalism from taking place there.¹²⁵
- The municipality should be involved in promoting and helping guide the garden's development but in the role of supporter and a source of technical and material support, not the decision making body. The garden's revitalization should be viewed as Block 15's rehabilitation originally was in the 1980s, that is, as a model project that should be emulated elsewhere in the district and the city.

8.2.2: Recommendations for Madach Block

The municipality had the correct approach in helping organize the participatory planning meetings, and by involving the mayor and municipal representative in the process.

¹²³ Budapest Főváros VII. kerület Erzsébetváros Önkormányzata Képviselő-testületének 30/2000. (XII. 23.) számú önkormányzati rendelete az Önkormányzat tulajdonában lévő vagyonnal való rendelkezés szabályairól (Budapest District VII Erzsébetváros Municipal Government City Council Ordinance 30/2000 Regulating City Property)

¹²⁴ Herrmann

¹²⁵ From a one-page legal opinion requested from dr. Géza Herrmann, attorney-at-law, Budapest, June 8, 2005

Residents were clearly impressed by the mayor's declaration at the first meeting that the city would pay for the garden's renovation. However:

- The grant's parameters and criteria have, of this writing, not been published yet. Even with clear endorsement from the municipal authorities, it was difficult to conduct the participatory planning process effectively without a concrete budget for the garden's renovation. Further, the grant funds would certainly only cover the renovation, not the maintenance. The residents have shown historical willingness to pay for the garden by employing a gardener and funding maintenance through their monthly condominium fees, but this amount would obviously have to increase for the renovated garden to be sustainable.
- Municipal support must continue at least through to the garden's actual renovation and further. Now that the residents have a working concept for the garden's redesign, the municipality should continue the dialogue and process by guiding the residents in applying to the city or to other funding sources for the grant. Furthermore, they should promote the garden's development as a community-supported green space by bringing in horticulturalists or garden designers for gardening workshops for the residents to encourage a high level of participation and a better depth of knowledge for the garden's maintenance and further development. Equally important, they should also promote the garden as a model project to the rest of the district through the media, as well as the district's own website and newsletters.

8.3: Recommendations for Budapest:

A proposed model for community-supported green spaces

Budapest has for several years had a City Rehabilitation Fund for financing projects related to the city's physical renewal. In 2005, Budapest city council voted unanimously to adopt the Social Rehabilitation Program and devote 300 million forints in 2005 and 500 million forints annually from 2006-2008. The program prioritizes two target areas but aims to ameliorate problems in all the city's blighted neighborhoods. In 2005 the program focused on the so-called Magdolna Quarter of District VIII as well as District X. Other target areas include the so-called Shambles neighborhood of District IX. The program's objectives are not just the physical improvement of the buildings and public spaces, but the socioeconomic and cultural improvement of the residents. In addition to the visual improvements, the program seeks to "expand the social net, the neighborhood security, the environment, the level of education and also increase job opportunities," particularly with regard to Roma. The overall goal is nothing less than a social renewal for neighborhoods with high levels of people who are elderly, unemployed, or have low educational levels and live in poor quality flats and struggle with high crime rates and a low level of green space.¹²⁶ According to District VII municipal authorities, there will be

¹²⁶ "Indul a Szociális Városrehabilitáció és az új Rehabilitációs Keret (The Start of Social Rehabilitation and the New Rehabilitation Fund)" *Építészforum* (Architectural Forum) online magazine, February 1, 2005. No author listed.

funds within the City Rehabilitation Fund starting in early 2007 specifically for courtyard greening.

This is a crucial time in Budapest's history as the city is slowly, gradually undergoing urban rehabilitation. It still needs a new vision that incorporates individual initiative, volunteerism and responsibility in an organized and active way. Community-supported green spaces provide a form of green space with some of the same basic benefits of public parks, but also serve a role that public parks cannot because of their semi-private, cloistered nature. They exist in multiple forms, so an approach can be developed that is specific to Budapest's urban structure, culture and history. Furthermore, community-supported green spaces initiated in the easily-defensible spaces of Budapest's inner courtyards should be viewed as an integral element that has a place in the city's overall ongoing urban rehabilitation process. Historically, improvements to the city have been made through a top-down, paternalistic, bureaucratic process. Civic involvement has been critically lacking. One notable exception is the company Rév-8, which is responsible for most of the tasks associated with the rehabilitation of District VIII, including the Magdolna Quarter. The company is a non-profit, non-governmental joint stock company established in 1997, of which the major stakeholders are the local district council and the Budapest Town Hall. The firm is responsible for the whole process of urban rehabilitation, including preparatory works, physical renovation, and the development of public spaces and infrastructure, and part of their work has involved activities involving the local residents in the planning and design of public spaces.¹²⁷

There are numerous methods for rehabilitation with the objective of creating more green space in a dense historic urban structure that does not allow the creation of more large-scale public parks. With most of these methods, it is a question of balancing the advantages and disadvantages with the characteristics of the site and the community's needs. For example, altering the architectural fabric of a site to expand or combine courtyards, or open up passages between buildings, increases the garden design possibilities but may compromise privacy and defensibility. A smaller site restricts the landscape architecture possibilities but eliminates the financial and preservation issues and maintains the site's privacy. The following are four relevant approaches, described with their advantages and disadvantages, concrete examples, and whether they are suitable structurally to be adapted into a community-supported green space:

- Constructing new mixed-use residential and commercial structures that have central courtyards or roof gardens. This process, which happens either by filling in vacant lots or demolishing blighted structures, contributes to attracting young professionals and families to urban neighborhoods. Projects such as this are highly advantageous because have the potential not only to increase per-person green space allotment and contribute to better air quality by increasing the amount of biologically-active surface in the district, but also eliminate the urban menace of vacant lots or abandoned buildings. In theory, the protected inner gardens of these structures could be developed by the

¹²⁷ From the company's website, www.rev8.hu

residents as community-supported green spaces. The main disadvantage is that it is a costly and time-consuming process that does not necessarily directly help the disadvantaged residents of the rest of the neighborhood. Two successful examples of this type of would be Rév-8's Corvin Sétány, a major multiphase development that is part of the city's rehabilitation program in District VIII; and the new blocks of flats in the Páva utca area of District IX.

- Block rehabilitation of historic buildings that creates new open gardens by tearing down the densely-built inner wings of the blocks. The inside of the block stays closed to the public and entirely residential, while commerce is restricted to the outside ground floor. Its advantages are that it can provide many times the local average of green space to its residents, but it does require significant alteration of the existing architecture, which creates economic and preservation issues. It can also create social issues if it means that economically-disadvantaged people can no longer afford to live in their block due to the expense. Complete rehabilitations involving demolition are extremely costly and can price residents out of their own neighborhood; this argument has been made about Block 15. In the case of Block 15, the number of apartments in the block was reduced by the demolition and rehabilitation, and the price of the apartments – once owned by the local government but subsequently sold to the residents - increased accordingly. Community-supported green spaces can be established if the space is defensible, that is, if it can be protected and isolated from outsiders and divided up in a way that encourages individual responsibility. Successful examples of this type of rehabilitation in Eger have been mentioned earlier in this paper. This is what Block 15 has *de facto* become a less-successful example of over the years, although it was originally meant as a public park.
- Block rehabilitation of historic or even protected buildings that involves opening the inner courtyards to the public due to the combination of commercial and residential uses. These new open spaces have as their advantages that they do not alter the existing architecture at all but create a new open space for the public. The main disadvantage is that by being open to the public, the space is not as easily defensible and the bond of trust that can be created among neighbors who share a common garden cannot exist. A community-supported green space is difficult to establish, unless the gates are locked at night. Gozsdu Courtyard in District VII, a 1906 chain of seven adjoining courtyard buildings currently being rehabilitated into high-end housing and retail, will be along these lines. This is in keeping with its historical purpose, as it originally housed primarily Jewish families who kept their businesses in the spaces along the ground floors inside the courtyards.
- Conversion of existing single block courtyards into gardens, without altering the architectural structure. Scattered examples of this can be seen around Budapest. Its advantages are that there are no preservation issues with altering the building's structure, it is the least expensive method and it creates the most easily-defensible spaces, as the garden clearly belongs to the building and the

gate can be kept locked if an agreement is reached among neighbors. It does not dramatically alter the socio-economic fabric or price residents out of their own building. Its main disadvantage is that the courtyard spaces can sometimes be small, narrow and dark, depending on the building's height, location and foundational size, which presents considerable limits to the landscape architecture possibilities. It is suitable for a community-supported green space provided that the residents understand how to cope with the limitations, particularly the shade. Madach Block fits into this category, as do most of the buildings in District VII.

Clearly, Budapest's urban fabric dictates that a system of community-supported green spaces should be based on the courtyards, and most of the courtyards will fit into the fourth category. A model of community-supported green spaces for Budapest should incorporate elements of several different types of community-supported green spaces outlined in the typology in Chapter One. It would be specifically tailored to the city's cultural, architectural and social circumstances. The ideal model would be designed to meet the specifications of enclosed courtyard spaces as they are a significant part of the city's architecture, and it would incorporate elements of London's garden squares, U.S. community greens, and European allotment gardens. Specifically, it would:

- be predicated on grassroots volunteer efforts and participatory planning
- feature quality designs that serve the needs of the building's community and also harmonize with defensible space principles
- enjoy municipal incentives, including significant technical and material support
- be clearly designated by the residents and municipal authorities as semi-private green space not open to the public
- eventually become part of a district- or city-wide network of community-supported green spaces that are open to the public only on specific occasions to serve as an example of innovative ways of greening the inner city

A community-supported green spaces program would be of the most significant importance in Pest's Districts VI, VII, VIII and IX, where most of the residential architecture consists of dense multi-story blocks of flats built around courtyards that could be converted into communally-cared for gardens and where, at least in the first three districts, green space is somewhat below the city's average and significantly below a healthy level. Based on the above assessment, a detailed recommendation for how Budapest could develop a system of community-supported green spaces follows.

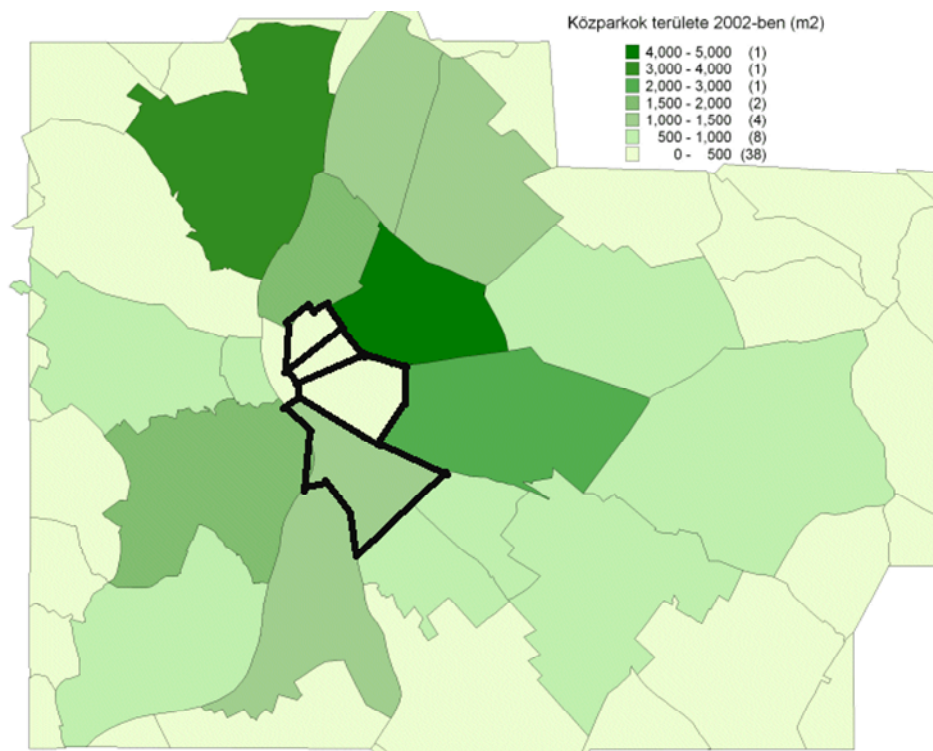


Image 8.1: Map showing Budapest's districts colored to indicate total square meters of public park space. Outlined in black, from top to bottom, are districts VI, VII, VIII and IX. Source: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Computer and Automation Research, www.oplab.sztaki.hu

8.3.1: Organizational structure

The residents of each block of flats must form an organization responsible for managing the garden as a community-supported green space, that is, for guiding the planning, renovation, and ongoing maintenance. This can be an official (registered) organization or an unofficial body, and it can function as a separate financial entity or work within the building's existing financial management structure. It should consist of a board of directors that would be the main decision-making body and also function as the representative of the garden to the government or any other outside body. The board should have representatives from each building and cooperate with the buildings' common representative. This means not only official planning and meeting attendance duties, but also the responsibility of fostering enthusiasm and a sense of common responsibility towards the garden. The organization ideally should have a set of bylaws for their own functions, develop a set of rules for the garden, and meet at least quarterly. Members must sign a letter of commitment and not consider the position just symbolic. Outside board members, such as professionals who could contribute useful advice, plans or materials for the garden, can also be accepted onto the board. The board is responsible for organizing the maintenance plans for the garden and working with the other residents in the building to ensure that volunteers are taking on all the necessary tasks. If there is insufficient volunteer labor or there is a task that is outside the competencies of the residents, the residents can agree to hire outside labor. One form of this that has proven both economically viable and also socially positive in the U.S. is a partnership with a non-profit organization that finds constructive work for disadvantaged populations, for

example Motivation Foundation is a well-established Budapest NGO that operates an employment agency service for people with disabilities.

8.3.2: The design and planning process

The participatory design model is the best approach for community-supported green spaces. The professionals involved in the planning – horticulturalists, landscape architects, roof garden designers, or others – should be involved in this process from the beginning to ensure effective communication and cooperation. This could be carried out in a model similar to that used by Open Road New York, as cited in an earlier chapter:

- Organizing: establishing who in the block is interested in the process and organizing a meeting, creating a design team, planning budget and time line, and training members of the community. This could be done by organizing a residential forum and determining members of the team from the meeting.
- Fact-finding: the design team studies the site and inventories its assets and determining its shortcomings, making maps and base model of the site as well as studying current use of it and the community's desire for the new design.
- Generating design ideas: the design team makes drawings and lists of design ideas, presenting them to the community at a series of meetings for discussion. Those interested in the renovation would come to the meetings and contribute ideas, which the meeting's leader would note and respond to.
- Creating and approving the final design: taking the ideas from the meetings and working them into a design or a series of design options to be presented to the community for final choice and approval. At this point the final budget would be approved and it would also be determined what paid labor would be required for the construction, ideally only for those tasks involving work that the residents are physically or technically not capable of carrying out
- Constructing the garden. The residents would be divided into working groups for executing the designs.

The design should cause the residents to relate to the garden as simultaneously a common space and a collection of distinct areas that they can each feel individual responsibility for. In accordance with Newman's principles of defensible space, there should be some common areas designated for specific groups and then areas adjacent to the apartment buildings should be designated as the areas that individual buildings and their residents are responsible for cultivating. The proximity of the individual buildings' plots to the buildings themselves will instill a sense of pride in the residents, as their plot's condition is a direct reflection on them.

8.3.3: Technical design aspects, brownfield issues

An environmental site assessment followed by, if necessary, a remediation plan is an important consideration anytime that an urban space that was not previously a green space is rehabilitated into a common or public garden. The existence of lead paint from

the adjoining housing, prior use as a parking lot, or, in the case of a newer building, the previous existence of a factory or other polluting facility on the site are but a few of the possible problems that make soil testing important. Removal of contaminated soil, or stabilizing the contaminated area by capping it with concrete or other materials are two options for mitigation. Phytoremediation, the use of plants to remove toxins from soil or water, has gained considerably in credibility as an effective means of detoxifying contaminated soils and has been researched extensively already in Hungary, particularly with regard to the use of a hybrid of *Populus*. Some of the more significant research is carried out by two professors at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Plant Research Institute in conjunction with Szent István University.¹²⁸ Its practical implementation in brownfield sites is still not commonplace. The researchers recently began an open-air experiment at the contaminated Nitrokémia industrial site at Balatonfüzfő with planting various types of *Populus* to determine their level of tolerance for the herbicides and heavy metals in the soil and their capacity for absorbing and removing them from the soil.¹²⁹ Research led by Veronika Gyuricza of the Department of Plant Physiology of Eötvös Loránd University focused on the abandoned, heavy-metal contaminated industrial site of Metallochemia Ltd. in Budapest was used as a model to validate the guidelines for assessing contaminated soil.¹³⁰ In the case of Pest's older apartment blocks, what is underneath the courtyard is also a key issue. Some buildings have cellar spaces or other structures beneath the courtyard, are in fragile architectural or structural condition, or lack insulation, and thus a garden with large trees requiring irrigation could lead to dampness problems or more serious damage. The construction materials of the majority of Pest blocks of flats – brick with a thin facing usually made of lime and other stone – make them prone to dampness problems that could be worsened by creeping moisture brought on by waterlogged soil. Assessing the need for anti-dampness insulation for the buildings as well as ensuring that there is a proper drainage system are steps to be taken. Furthermore, the creation of underground garages as a partial solution to the city's parking problems can be part of an overall block garden rehabilitation. Therefore, the use of roof garden design technology could be part of the design. Roof garden technology has been used successfully already at many sites in Budapest, including the Millenaris park, which sits over a parking garage, and the MOM Park housing and retail development. A typical steel-and-concrete structure can accommodate as much as 1,200-1,465 kilograms per square meter. One solution, a protected-membrane roofing system consists of, from top to bottom: mulch\planting medium, filter blanket, drainage medium, concrete protective slab, rigid insulation, protection board, waterproofing layer, and concrete slab.

¹²⁸ Gábor Gullner and Tamás Kőmives, "Detoxification of Chloroacetanilide Herbicides by Transgenic Poplars," paper given in 2004 at the OECD workshop, Phytoremediation: Environmental and Molecular Biological Aspects, Mátraháza, Hungary. Abstracts book and final program, p. 22.

¹²⁹ From an e-mail interview with co-researcher Gábor Gullner, October 26, 2006.

¹³⁰ Veronika Gyuricza, et al. "Plant Physiological and Ecotoxicological Investigations on Polluted Soil," paper given in 2004 at the OECD workshop, Phytoremediation: Environmental and Molecular Biological Aspects, Mátraháza, Hungary. Abstracts book and final program, p. 49.



Image 8.1: A green roof over a parking garage, designed by the German firm Zinco.
From: www.greenroofs.com

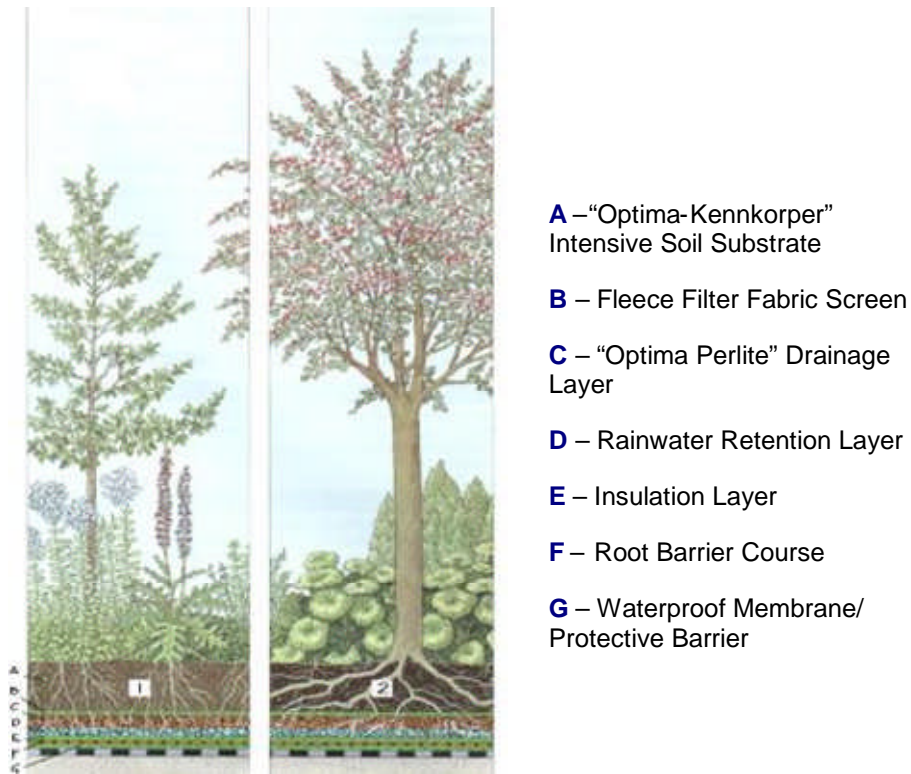


Image 8.2: One example of roof garden technology, suitable for plants up to five meters high. From: www.greenroofs.com



Image 8.3: A newly-redesigned 2.5 acre garden in New York City in a common green surrounded by 600 apartments built in the 1950s. The parking garage beneath only permits 18 inches of soil, which is more than adequate to support small trees and shrubs. Photo from the New York Times, August 10, 2006.

8.3.4. Security and legal aspects

To some extent, if defensible space principles are followed, the garden's security problems will be reduced by the more frequent presence of residents working in or using the garden. However, the garden should remain closed to the general public. All buildings should have locking gates and an agreement among the residents not to let anyone in that they do not know. It should be clearly designated, through closed gates and even signage, that this is not a public park, it is a community-supported green space meant to serve only those who live in the dwellings that bound it. Ownership of the land by someone else, for instance, the municipality, should not be an obstacle but some legal right of common usage should be obtained to ensure the garden's security for the future.

8.3.5: Financial aspects

Financial planning and responsibility for fundraising and funds management should rest on the residents, but they should be able to expect support and help from the municipal authorities. The residents can be expected to feel much stronger stewardship and responsibility for the garden if their own resources have been invested in it with clear visual results. The garden's management organization should design an annual financial plan for the garden's development and maintenance, and based on this, the maintenance costs should be incorporated as much as is affordable into the residents' monthly condominium fees and the garden's organizers should write grants for additional funds. If the residents choose to form a registered foundation, they would eventually be entitled to apply for grants from public and private foundations, and also to receive the 1% tax allocation benefit permitted for non-profit organizations that have been functioning for three years or more.

Some Budapest districts already have grants that would fund projects such as a community-supported green space. There are currently two existing municipal funding sources for gardens in District VII. In 2001, the municipality established a grant source

for residents wishing to improve their buildings with plants.¹³¹ The ordinance enables condominium associations, maintenance associations, government institutions such as nursery schools or homes for the elderly, registered civic or non-profit organizations, and municipal housing residents to apply for funding to green the sidewalk areas in front of their buildings, as well as their common hallways and courtyards. Priority is given to colorful annuals in the case of building façade areas, and woody perennials in the case of courtyards. Funds can also be used for planting boxes, soil, etc. The fund is a separate account from the rest of the municipality's finances, and each year the municipality determines the amount to be allocated to the fund. Residents of a block that wishes to apply to the fund must vote in favor of the application and also match the funds provided by the city. The grantee has to first spend the matching funds before receiving the city's grant. A condominium association can apply once annually for a maximum of 250,000 forints, while environmental or nature protection organizations are entitled to request that same amount more than once. Prior to this ordinance, the city also initiated an environmental protection fund¹³² that is funded in part through local fines collected for environmental protection violations as well as environmental burden taxes. In terms of the funding available, the environmental protection fund ordinance is not as specific as the greening ordinance, but generally speaking, it provides support for such objectives as environmental remediation measures, tree buffer and the preparation or circulation of information or lectures on environmental or nature protection.

In addition to municipal and city support, residents should approach local companies as a resource for in-kind donations, for example, forging partnerships with local nurseries to obtain materials, for example, trees, shrubs and perennials at the end of the growing season for a considerable discount or free of charge as a form of sponsorship. Signage listing the nurseries or other companies that contributed to the garden can be posted on the individual beds or in a central location.

8.3.6: Outside involvement from professional, civic and educational sectors

Outside professional involvement carefully balanced with and subordinate to participatory planning is the appropriate approach. The garden's resident organizers must decide to what extent they want professionals such as landscape architects or horticulturalists involved in the garden, either in a minor advisory capacity or in a major role. Some level of professional involvement is essential to ensure that the garden is well-designed and well-proportioned with the appropriate selection of plants, but it is equally essential that the professional work closely with the organizers and that the basic concepts for the garden come from the residents. The individual districts could authorize their own landscape architects or similar professionals to provide free consultations to

¹³¹ Budapest Főváros VII. kerület Erzsébetváros Önkormányzata Képviselő-testületének 3/2001. (II.16.) számú önkormányzati rendelete a növénytelepítési támogatási alapról és annak felhasználásáról (Erzsébetváros District 7 Municipality Ordinance 3/2001 II.16 on the Fund for greening and its allocation, p. 1)

¹³² Budapest Főváros VII. kerület Erzsébetváros Önkormányzata Képviselő-testületének 3/1998 (1-30) számú önkormányzati rendelete a környezetvédelmi alapról (Erzsébetváros District 7 Municipality Ordinance 3/1998 I.16 establishing the Environmental Protection Fund.), p. 1

residents' associations. Higher education institutes could be involved as well. It is already common practice in Corvinus University's Faculty of Landscape Architecture to assign landscape architecture students a site to redesign. This practice could be expanded for the students to actually work directly with the residents on the design and submit the design to the residents for use afterwards. The students would benefit as they would receive not only a practical design experience but also receive an introduction to the idea of participatory design and the importance of community involvement in the planning process. The residents would receive free of charge a design done by, if not a licensed landscape architect, at least someone with considerably more knowledge than a layman. Budapest's growing civic sector could contribute to and benefit from involvement in community-supported green spaces. For example, organizations such as Clean Air Action Club, which works in environmental and urban quality-of-life issues and has repeatedly noted the importance of greening courtyards, could help provide environmental consultations to the residents in planning the gardens, and promote the development of community-supported green spaces as part of its environmental agenda for Budapest. In the absence of a functioning, municipally-managed network for community-supported green spaces, an NGO can also fill the role of network facilitator, as is the case with Community Greens in the U.S.

8.3.7: District and city government support, cultivating a network

A community-supported green space in a Budapest courtyard is, like a community green or a garden square, a common but semi-private green space closed to the public, not a part of the public parks system. However, even though they are self-contained, private units, they would be strengthened by being part of a district- or city-wide network supported and promoted by the municipal authorities. In this way they can learn and build on each others' experiences. The municipal authorities must view community-supported green spaces as a district asset worth supporting because they increase the quality of life in individual blocks of the district, make the district itself more appealing, increase the amount of district green space, and encourage stronger community ties, stewardship and responsibility among residents. It was already outlined in an earlier chapter how London municipal authorities help manage and promote garden squares. Budapest's district authorities should help cultivate and develop a network of community-supported green spaces. Instead of being the paternalistic funders and planners of the gardens, the authorities would instead help support and promote the residents' initiatives, specifically by:

- Providing an interactive website and other electronic forums for discussions, announcements, garden design ideas, case studies, best practices, ordinances and legal procedures related to common land use, and other information related to the development of community-supported green spaces
- Giving the residents current planning and designing guidance by providing workshops or lectures from architects, landscape architects or horticulturalists
- Acting as a clearinghouse for companies to donate plants or other materials
- Publicizing grant or other fundraising opportunities
- Promoting the courtyard gardens to the wider public through the media and the district's own newsletter and website

- Organizing open, paid tours of the gardens on set weekends once a year similar to the Garden Squares tours in London

8.3.8: Final summary

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore and analyze community gardens as a model for urban green space development, and set out ideas and plans for how such a model could be implemented in Budapest. With research and case studies taken from sites in the United States, Europe and South Africa, I have established that community-supported green spaces are a functional and culturally-adaptable model for grassroots urban rehabilitation. They contribute to solving problems such as lack of fresh food, lack of green space, loss of native vegetation, lack of community activity and connections, and the presence of vacant lots and crime. Their presence in American inner cities, war-torn Bosnia, and post-apartheid South Africa indicate their viability in difficult, poverty-stricken or transitional societies and indicates that they are a viable model for the type of grassroots, participatory urban greening projects that are essential to the revitalization of inner cities with critical green space shortages. Community-supported green spaces serve as a living, evolving educational tool to urban planners and landscape architects, demonstrating what kind of green spaces neighborhoods need. Budapest has, since 1989, developed a vital civil society supported both by government legislation, and also by an active volunteer sector and an increasingly more developed and well-trained NGO sector. Community-supported green spaces, in the form of a model taken from the subtypes of community greens, garden squares and allotments, are uniquely suited for the urban fabric of Budapest. The city's courtyards should be developed into communally-used and cared for gardens that have the potential to improve the quality of life in the block, add to the local green space supply, provide a safe and sheltered space for children to play, reduce neglect and vandalism, and enhance community ties.

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Appendix II:

Census statistics and current occupancy of Madach Block and Block 15

Census data was obtained from the Statistics Office and is from 2001, the most recent available. The composition of flats was carried out with recent visual inspections.

<u>Block 15 occupancy, June 2005</u>	
<u>Address</u>	<u>Flats or businesses</u>
Klauzál tér 1	20 flats
Klauzál tér 2	14 flats, art gallery
Klauzál tér 3	18 flats
Klauzál tér 4	18 flats
Nagydiófa utca 34	16 flats, one business
Nagydiófa utca 32	16 flats, two offices
Nagydiófa utca 26-28	29 flats
Wesselényi utca 24	55 flats
Wesselényi utca 22	Ministry of Cultural Heritage
Kazinczy utca 21	Museum of Electrotechnology
Kazinczy utca 23-27	ELTE Teacher Training College
Kazinczy utca 29	Kazinczy utca synagogue
Dob utca 31-33	21 flats, Chamber of Pharmacists

<u>Madach Block occupancy, October 2006</u>	
<u>Address</u>	<u>Flats or businesses</u>
Madach út 2-6	70 flats, fitness studio, medical office, camera shop
Rumbach u. 20-22	70 flats, yoga studio, coffee shop
Király u. 3-5	14 flats, grocery store, fitness store, mattress store

Basic population statistics on Block 15 and District VII¹³³		
Category	District VII	Block 15
MEN 0-14 years	3,935 (14%)	22 (11%)
MEN 15-39 years	11,541 (41%)	84 (42%)
MEN 40-59 years	7,549 (26%)	56 (28%)
MEN 60+ years	5,086 (18%)	38 (19%)
Total men	28,111	200
WOMEN 0-14 years	3,752 (10.4%)	15 (6.9%)
WOMEN 15-39 years	12,571 (34.8%)	66 (30.5%)
WOMEN 40-59 years	9,021 (25%)	73 (33.7%)
WOMEN 60+ years	10,682 (29.6%)	62 (28.7%)
Total women	36,026	216
Total population	64,137	416
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL		
Men, lower than grade 8	4,973 (17.6)	26 (13%)
Men, completed grade 8	6,586 (23.4%)	28 (14%)
Men, Vocational training, no high school diploma	3,827 (13.6%)	17 (8.5%)
Men, high school diploma	7,785 (27.6)	60 (30%)
Men, university or college degree	4,940 (17.5%)	69 (34.5%)
Women, lower than grade 8	7,012 (19.4%)	30 (13.8%)
Women, completed grade 8	10,160 (28%)	49 (22.6%)
Women, vocational training, no high school diploma	2,090 (5.8%)	6 (2.7%)
Women, high school diploma	11,376 (31.5%)	74 (34.2%)
Women, university or college degree	5,388 (14.9%)	57 (26.3%)
HOUSEHOLD TYPES		
Married without children	3,949 (12%)	32 (15.4%)
Married with children	4,710 (14.5%)	38 (18.3%)
Living together without children	1,767 (5.4%)	11 (5.3%)
Living together with children	993 (3%)	2 (.96%)
Single fathers	473 (1.4%)	5 (2.4%)
Single mothers	3,514 (10.8%)	18 (8.6%)
Multi-family households	333 (1%)	0
Living alone	15,249 (47%)	94 (45.4%)
Other types of households	1,440 (4.4%)	7 (3.3%)
Total	32,428	207

¹³³ All census data from Central Statistics Office, 2001 Census, compiled by Zsuzsa Pachmann.

<u>Basic population statistics on Madach block and District VII</u>		
Category	District VII.	Madach block
MEN 0-14 years	3,935 (14%)	5 (4.2%)
MEN 15-39 years	11,541 (41%)	32 (27.1%)
MEN 40-59 years	7,549 (26%)	32 (27.1%)
MEN 60+ years	5,086 (18%)	49 (41.5%)
Total men	28,111	118
WOMEN 0-14 years	3,752 (10.4%)	7 (3.9%)
WOMEN 15-39 years	12,571 (34.8%)	36 (20.3%)
WOMEN 40-59 years	9,021 (25%)	30 (16.9%)
WOMEN 60+ years	10,682 (29.6%)	104 (58.7%)
Total women	36,026	177
Total population	64,137	295
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL COMPLETED		
MEN, lower than grade 8	4,973 (17.6%)	9 (7.6%)
MEN, completed grade 8	6,586 (23.4%)	14 (11.8%)
MEN, Vocational training, no high school diploma	3,827 (13.6%)	7 (5.9%)
MEN, high school diploma	7,785 (27.6%)	26 (22%)
MEN, university or college degree	4,940 (17.5%)	62 (52.5%)
WOMEN, lower than grade 8	7,012 (19.4%)	13 (7.3%)
WOMEN, completed grade 8	10,160 (28%)	43 (24.2%)
WOMEN, vocational training, no high school diploma	2,090 (5.8%)	2 (1.1%)
WOMEN, high school diploma	11,376 (31.5%)	63(35.5%)
WOMEN, university or college degree	5,388 (14.9%)	56 (31.6%)
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION		
Single-family households		
Married without children	3,949 (12%)	31(15.6%)
Married with children	4,710 (14.5%)	19 (9.5%)
Living together without children	1,767 (5.4%)	6 (3%)
Living together with children	993 (3%)	0
Single fathers	473 (1.4%)	0
Single mothers	3,514 (10.8%)	7(3.5%)
Multi-family households	333 (1%)	0
Living alone	15,249 (47%)	126 (63.6%)
Other types of households	1,440 (4.4%)	9 (4.5%)
Total	32,428	198

Appendix III:

Questionnaire distributed to Block 15 and Madach Block residents

Identical questionnaires were used, however, questions 17 and 18 were irrelevant to the circumstances at the Madach Block site, and were therefore not asked of residents who were surveyed there.

1. How frequently do you come here?
 - ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Several times a week
 - ☐ At least once a week
 - ☐ Rarely, periodically
2. What time of day do you come here and for how long? (more than one answer is permissible.)
3. Do you consider the garden's furnishings adequate?
 - ☐ yes
 - ☐ partially
 - ☐ no
4. Do you consider the garden's size, usability and spatial distribution to be appropriate (functions, maintenance, amount of shade, etc)?
 - ☐ yes
 - ☐ no, because
5. What is the biggest problem in the garden? (more than one answer is permissible.)
 - ☐ littering
 - ☐ lack of maintenance
 - ☐ lack of security
 - ☐ dog-walking
 - ☐ obsolete, dangerous playground equipment
 - ☐ vandalism
 - ☐ lack of infrastructure (furnishings, paths, etc)
 - ☐ other:
6. In your opinion does the garden need renovation? If yes, then what do you think is needed? (more than one answer is permissible.)
 - ☐ signage
 - ☐ benches
 - ☐ tables
 - ☐ drinking fountain
 - ☐ waste containers
 - ☐ dog run
 - ☐ playground equipment, for example.....
 - ☐ other:
7. If the garden were to be renovated, would you participate in the design process? Why or why not? If you would participate, in what form?
 - ☐ yes.....
 - ☐ no.....
 -

8. If the garden were to be renovated, would you participate in the work? In what form? Why or why not?

- ☐ yes.....
☐ no.....

9. If the garden were to be renovated, would you participate in the garden's care and maintenance? Why or why not? What work would you participate in, and how much time would you devote to it monthly?

10. If the garden's renovation depended upon the residents' support, how much could you contribute? (money, materials, professional or technical help)

11. How much money, materials or professional help could you contribute to the garden's regular, high-quality maintenance?

12. If there were to be a residents' foundation or organization in charge of the garden's maintenance, would you be a member? Why or why not?

13. Are you aware of any courtyard gardens, either here in Hungary or abroad, that are in better condition than this? Where are they located, and why do you think they are better cared for?

14. If the garden were to be renovated, who should be permitted to use it? Only the residents, or outsiders too?

15. If there were to be a well-maintained, common garden cared for by the residents, what would be its most important functions or purposes?

- ☐ to increase the amount and quality of available green space in the neighborhood
☐ to produce vegetables
☐ to provide a safe place for children to play
☐ to provide a resting place for adults
☐ to make the apartments here more valuable and attractive
☐ create better relationships among residents
☐ create opportunities for constructive activities (gardening, composting, etc.)
☐ other:.....

16. What obstacles do you see to the creation and maintenance of a common garden?

17. Do you consider it feasible for the garden's renovation and maintenance to take place completely without government help?

- ☐ Yes, because.....
☐ No, because.....

18. What ownership arrangement is ideal for the garden, in terms of usage and maintenance?

19. In your opinion is there a community in this block? If so, in what form can it be seen? If not, then why not?

20. Other observations and opinions:

21. Generation:

- ☐ child
☐ parent
☐ grandparent

22. Age:

Appendix IV:

Letters sent to Madach Block residents by the municipality, August-October 2006

August 5, 2006

Dear Erzsébetváros resident,

As you have certainly heard from the local district newspapers or in person from your condominium representative, in the course of the next year the Budapest City government is going to solicit grant applications for inner-courtyard greening. Parallel to this, your district's Socialist faction wishes to incorporate increasing green space into the framework of its development plan for the district, and is therefore in the process of transforming the grants process for greening. Both sources will present you and your neighbors with a tremendous opportunity and also pave the way for eligibility for other sources of support as well.

In the course of this grants process we would like to make your inner gardens in the block defined by Madach utca 2-6, Rumbach Sebestyen utca 20-22 and Kiraly utca 3-5 prettier, more usable and more comfortable. In the course of this design process we would like to provide you with the help of Kristin Faurest, garden designer. Kristin is a doctoral student at Corvinus University and with your cooperation and permission would like to incorporate this work as an exemplary project into her dissertation. In the interest of preparing for our common project, we would like to ask that the attached questionnaire be filled out and returned by August 11 to your common representative, Albert Karaszi. After evaluation of the questionnaires we would like to invite those who wish to participate in the creation of our new common garden to a personal meeting.

Thanking you for your help and cooperation,

Gabriella Solymári, candidate, Socialist Party government representative

September 13, 2006

Dear Residents,

On August 31 with the participation of Mayor György Hunvald, we held the first planning meeting for the garden's renovation. In the course of this meeting we decided the following:

- The garden should function as a resting place and a playground
- The existing trees should be retained
- The firewall and fence should be covered with climbing vines
- The amount of paved space should be reduced
- The existing playground equipment should be replaced or moved
- Low-maintenance plants should dominate
- The sandpit should be put out of use due to the number of cats using it as a litter box
- The asphalt path should be retained as this is the only way for moving trucks to enter the courtyard
- The residents' participation in the garden's maintenance is essential

The funding for the garden's renovation will come from a grant submitted next year to the city government.

The next meeting will be September 21 at 3 p.m. at the Godot café. The participatory planning agenda is the following:

September: Decide on garden's main functions and elements

October: Make more detailed design decisions, precise planting list, paving, furnishings,

November: Kristin Faurest, the garden designer, prepares the plans

January: The grant proposal is submitted to the city government

Spring: work begins!

We are counting on your participation and cooperation!

Greetings,

Gabriella Solymári, candidate, Socialist Party government representative

November 2, 2006

Dear Residents,

The next residential forum for the redesign of the inner courtyard will be November 9 at 4 p.m. in Erzsébetváros Community House, Wesselényi utca 17, first floor meeting room.

Kristin Faurest, based on our previous discussions, has prepared designs for the garden as well as created a list for the plants and furnishings. We kindly ask everyone to come and help us to arrive at a common decision!

Counting on your help and cooperation,

Gabriella Solymári, Socialist Party government representative

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TÉZISEK

Közösségi zöldterek szerepe Budapest revitalizációjában

Kristin Faurest

Témavezető:

M. Szilágyi Kinga CSc

a mezőgazdasági tudományok kandidátusa

Tájépítészeti Kar

Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem

Budapest 2007

Iskola neve:

Tájépítészeti és Döntéstámogató Rendszerek Doktori Iskola

Tudományterület:

Tájépítészet

Igazgató: Dr. Harnos Zsolt

Témavezető: M. Szilágyi Kinga, egyetemi tanár, CSc
Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem, Tájépítészeti Kar

Igazgató aláírása

Témavezető aláírása

I. Bevezetés és célok

A doktori disszertáció célja a közösségi zöldterek városrevitalizációs eszközként való felhasználásának vizsgálata, továbbá javaslat kidolgozása azok budapesti alkalmazhatóságáról. A szerző megfogalmazásában a közösségi zöldtér egy olyan városi zöldfelület, városi zöldtér, amelyet a helyi közösség használ, gondoz, illetve művel a terület fejlesztésére és fenntartására létrehozott szervezet keretein belül. A helybeli önkéntesek határozzák meg a zöldtér kialakítását, használati módját, fenntartási munkálatait és ellenőrzik a funkcionálását és az elérhetőségét. A közösségi zöldtereknek számos formájáról beszélhetünk a mindennapi használat, a gazdasági szempontok, a méret és más tényezők alapján. Ezek közé tartoznak a közösségi kertek rehabilitált felhagyott ipari vagy intézményi területeken, vagy a tipikus amerikai városi közösségi zöldterületek, a nyugat-európai városok kiskertes telepeivagy akár a londoni felső-középosztály belső kertjei. Ez a zöldtér fajta szerepet kaphat Budapest fejlesztésében is, ugyanis a város, de főként a VI., VII., VIII. és IX. kerület híján van zöldterületeknek és korlátozottak a bővítési lehetőségek. A belváros messze alatta marad a korábban érvényes 7-10m² fajlagos zöldterületi mutatónak. Az elégtelen zöldfelületi ellátottság javítására új célokat kell megfogalmazni, új lehetőségeket kell feltárni. Budapest városépítészeti, építészeti, gazdasági, kulturális adottságait figyelembe véve a közösségi zöldtér modell hatékony eszköz lehet a városi zöldfelületek mennyiségi növelésében és a meglévők minőségének javításában. A zöldtér modell a lakosok aktivizálása, a város fenntarthatósága, az életminőség és az életszínvonal javulása szempontjából egyaránt fontos tényező lehet.

A disszertáció céljai:

- A kutatási eredmények alapján igazolni, hogy a közösségi zöldtér egy olyan sikeres városrevitalizációs eszköz szerepét töltheti be, amilyent egy városi park vagy köztér nem képes. Segíti továbbá a jellegzetes városi problémák kezelését: vandalizmus visszaszorítása, zöldterületi hiány javítása és a közösségi kapcsolatok újjáépítése. Részvételen alapuló tervezésre és önkéntes kezdeményezésekre jogosítja fel a lakosokat, és megerősíti a civil szférát. A tájépítészet és a városmenedzsment számára is értékes tapasztalatokkal szolgál a modell.
- Két VII. kerületi esettanulmányon keresztül igazolni a közösségi zöldterek budapesti létjogosultságát, és kidolgozni a közösségi zöldtér hálózat létesítésének javaslatát. Mindkét tanulmány célja volt, hogy a lakosok kerttel kapcsolatos hozzáállását és a tervezésben, a felújításban és a fenntartásban való részvételi hajlandóságát vizsgálja. Az első tanulmányban kitüntetett figyelmet kapott azoknak a tervezési, fenntartási, menedzselési hibáknak, a lakossági részvétel teljes hiányának a feltárása, amelyek a kert lepusztulásához vezetnek. A második tanulmány a helyzetelemzésen túl egy vázlattevért eredményező, részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamatot is tartalmazott. Az elemzések alapján meghatározható a városrehabilitáció tipológiája zöldfelületi szempontból, és meghatározhatók azok a lépések, amelyekkel a közösségi zöldterek beépülhetnek a rehabilitációs folyamatba.

II. Kutatási anyagok és módszertan

A kutatásban háttéranyagként többek között 13 cikk, 55 stratégia, éves jelentés, tudományos kutatás és tanulmány, 13 könyv, 11 weboldal és 8 önkormányzati vagy állami iránymutatás és szabályozás, továbbá számos saját, a közösségi terekről szóló publikáció szerepel. A közösségi zöldterek pozitív környezeti hatásainak elemzése a következők szerint zajlott: zöldtér típusok; tervezési és kezelési elvek, ill. gyakorlat; a kortárs városi problémákra gyakorolt hatás; a tájépítészeti oktatásban való felhasználhatóság. Készült egy elemzés a „tervezőasztalon” születő tervezéstől a részvételen alapuló tervezésig tartó folyamatról, mely utóbbi a fenntartható városfejlesztés egyik hatékony eszköze lehet. Az irodalmi, szakirodalmi kutatómunka kiterjedt Budapest városszerkezetére, történelmére, az 1989 utáni magyarországi önkéntes tevékenységekre, a közösségi zöldterek sikeres magyar előfutáira (pl. szociális földprogram), a VII. kerületi zöldterületekre és az első tömbrehabilitáció, a 15-ös tömb történetére.

Két önállóan készített esettanulmány szolgál a kutatás fő forrásaként. Mindkét tanulmány témája a VII. kerületi lakótömbök belső kertjeinek közösségi zöldterekként való használata. Mindkét helyszínrre készült részletes állapotfelmérés és kérdőíves lakossági vizsgálat. Egy nagy területű közpark tervezési hibáira fókuszál a Kisdiófa, a Kazinczy, a Wesselényi és a Dob utcák által határolt 15-ös tömbről szóló első tanulmány. A Rumbach, a Király és a Madách utcák között található Madách tömb a második tanulmány helyszíne, ahol a tervező, a lakók és az önkormányzat között kialakult közös tervezési folyamat bemutatása jelenti a fő hangsúlyt.

A VII. kerület két helyszínének választását városépítészeti, zöldfelületi, önkormányzati és lakossági szempontok indokolják. A 15. tömbben eredetileg 17 lakóház állt zárt soros, körülépített udvaros rendszerben. Az 1980-as években megkezdett tömbrehabilitáció során hat épületet teljesen leromboltak és háromnak a belső szárnyait szintén lebontották. Így a tömbbelsőben jelentős terület állt rendelkezésre közkert kialakítására. A városi zöldfelületi rendszer részeként a nagyközönségnek megnyitott belső kertet szépen felújították, de az hamarosan tönkre is ment. A tömb nagyszabású, mégis sikertelen felújítása és a tömbbelső közkertként való átalakítása tanulságos történet. A kutatás célja a tervezés, megvalósítás, ill. fenntartás menetének, a lakossági részvétel lehetőségének, a tulajdonviszonyokban bekövetkezett változások hatásának elemzése volt. A lakossági vizsgálat a közösségi zöldtérként való átalakítás lehetőségét is feltárja.

A másik vizsgálati helyszín, az 1958 és 1960 között épült Madách tömbben a belső szabadteret három 7-8 emeletes épület veszi körül. A három épület a gyakorlatban egy társasház és egy képviselője van. A VII. kerületi önkormányzat kezdeményezte a kert felújítását részben saját forrásból, részben a belső udvarok felújítására kiírt pályázati keretből. A terület a kezdetektől kert volt, de már felújításra szorult. Ideális terület egy részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamat modellezésére.

Mindkét esettanulmány tipikusnak és mégis egyedinek tekinthető, a kapott eredmények pedig felhasználhatók lehetnek a VII. kerület más területein is.

Az esettanulmányok helyszíne, a VII. kerület a budapesti belső kerületek egyik értékes és veszélyeztetett eleme. A pesti belső kerületekben, és különösen a VII. kerületben

körülépített udvaros lakóházak, zárt soros, sűrű beépítésű tömbök találhatók. A mintegy két négyzetkilométeres területet 80 ezer ember lakja, s ez 35 ezer lakást jelent. Így a VII. kerület Pest legkisebb és legsűrűbben lakott kerülete. A zöldterület az összterület alig 1%-a. Ugyanakkor a VII. kerület kiemelkedő kulturális és építészeti jelentőségű. Itt található például az UNESCO listán is szereplő budapesti zsidónegyed. Nagy zöldfelületek kialakítása ebben a kerületben nem lehetséges a sűrűn beépített városszerkezet megváltoztatása nélkül. Ugyanakkor létfontosságú egy zöldfelületi stratégia kialakítása kisebb zöldfelületek, városi szabadterek létesítésével, a meglévők rekonstrukciójával. Az önálló kutatás keretében mindkét helyszínen reprezentatív mintavétel alapján készültek interjúk a lakóházak lakosaival, valamint elkészült a belső kertek állapotfelmérése. Rendszeres kerthasználati megfigyeléses vizsgálat és helyszínelés is folyt. Készültek interjúk a helyi önkormányzati képviselőkkel, tisztviselőkkel is. A kutatás célja megállapítani, hogy a lakók hogyan viszonyulnak a kerthez, hogyan használják azt, továbbá megállapítani, hogy részvételen alapuló megközelítéssel lehetséges-e a felújítás. A reprezentatív mintába népszámlálási adatok alapján a lakosság legalább 10%-a került. Mindegyik esettanulmány vizsgálati szakasza hozzávetőlegesen három hónapig tartott. A 15-ös tömb esetében a Dob utca 31-33. szám alatt található, az udvartól fallal elválasztott, bár a tömbhöz tartozó kert fenntartójával is interjú készült. A 15-ös tömb kutatásához forrásként lehetett használni az eredeti rehabilitáció archivált anyagait és a közös tulajdonú zöldterület kezelését taglaló szakmai jogi véleményt.

A kutatással egy időben három lakossági fórumot tartottam a részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamat részeként a Madách tömbben. A részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamat vezérelve az, hogy a tervező előzetesen lefektetett célok nélkül kezdi meg a tervezést, és ehelyett a fórum moderátoraként a lakosok véleményét és gondolatait igyekszik összegyűjteni és továbbfejleszteni. A részvételen alapuló tervezésnek több kidolgozott technikája van, melyek közül az idős korú lakosok magas aránya miatt a vizuális szemléltetés látszott használhatónak. A részvételen alapuló tervezést a VII. Kerületi Önkormányzat Polgármesteri Hivatala és Önkormányzata kezdeményezte, s a munkában a helyi képviselő is aktívan vett részt. A fórumon szavazás helyett egyszerű konszenzusos döntések születtek. A két első megbeszélés nyílt viták sorozatából állott. A megbeszélés-sorozat eredményeit a kérdőív eredményeivel összhangba hozva születhetett meg a tervi döntés. A strukturált vitasorozat elején általános kerthasználati kérdések jöttek szóba, majd a hangsúly a speciális szakmai döntésekre helyeződött. A harmadik lakossági találkozóra a megbeszélések alapján elkészült négy vázlat, valamint növényültetési terv és a bútorsztra, illetve a burkolatra több illusztrált javaslat. A tervet az elfogadás előtt lakógyűlésnek is jóvá kell hagynia. A lakók által kiválasztott, elfogadott ötletterv alapján készítettem el a végleges kerttervet a kerületi önkormányzat támogatásának elnyerése céljából.

III. Eredmények és következtetések

Az esettanulmányok kiemelkedő eredményei a következők:

Biztonsági tényezők: A beépítési adottságok és a tulajdonviszonyok eltérősége következtében a két tömb lakosai másképp ítélik meg a terület biztonságát. A 15-ös tömbben élőkkel folytatott megbeszélések során rendszeresen felmerült a bűnözés, amelyhez az önkormányzati tulajdonban álló és rosszul fenntartott közkert, mint amolyan „senki földje” adott helyet. A 15-ös tömb lakosainak 90%-a úgy vélte, hogy a felújításnak komoly akadályai vannak, ezzel szemben a Madách tömbnél ez az arány kicsit több mint 60%. A Madách tömbben nincsen vandalizmus, nincs a házak között biztonsági probléma. A beépítési rendszerbe szervesen kapcsolódó kert biztonságos, nyugalmas és a lakók gondosan zárva tartják. A beépítésből adódóan sokkal kevésbé sérülékeny, mint a 15-ös tömb udvara. Hozzájárul ehhez a kisebb méret, az áttekinthetőség is, illetve az, hogy egy közös képviselő látja el a feladatokat. Mindkét esetben egyértelmű volt, hogy a kert a nyilvánosság előtt elzárandó, vagyis a közhasználat korlátozása alapvető fontosságú.

A kert használata, funkciói, lakossági kapcsolatok: A két tömbben a használati arányok hasonlóak és meglehetősen szerények: mindkét kertet a megkérdezettek több mint 30%-a használja naponta. A Madách tömböt 12,5% egyáltalán nem használja egyáltalán, míg a 15-ös tömbben ez az arány 22%. Mindkét vizsgálatban a játszótér és a pihenőkert szükségességét említették a lakosok, tanulmány esetében két legfőképp szükséges funkciót sorolt fel a lakosok elsöprő többsége, amennyiben az udvart revitalizálják. Ezek pedig a játszótér és a pihenőhely voltak. Sportolási, zöldségtermesztési vagy hasonló igények nem merültek fel. Bár Észak-Amerika közösségi kertjeiben gyakran találunk zöldségtermelési tevékenységet és a nyugat-európai kiskertekben is gyakori ez a funkció, a két különböző helyszínen a lakosok egységesen utasították el városbelsőben való zöldségtermesztést. Számos magyarázata lehet ennek, többek közt az, hogy Budapesten a lakosság egy részének van saját veteményeskertje, kiskertje vidéken. A 15-ös tömbben lakók szerint csak ellopnák a megtermelt zöldségeket. Amiben a két helyszín között eltérés mutatkozott, az főleg a lakosok közötti kapcsolatokban mutatkozott meg. A Madách tömbben megkérdezettek többsége szerint a lakók között szoros közösség alakult ki, ezzel szemben a 15-ös tömbben csak egy kisebbség véleménye volt ez. A Madách tömb kertjéből kitiltották a kutyákat, ezért ott nincsenek ilyen nézeteltérések, mint a 15-ös tömbben.

Résztvételi szándék a felújításban: A lakosok többsége mindkét esetben hajlandónak mutatkozott a kert revitalizációjában való részvételre, és anyagilag is hozzájárulna ehhez. A lakosok fizikai és szellemi résztvételi szándéka a zöldterület felújításában és hosszú távú fenntartásában megközelítőleg hasonlítható össze. Bár mindkét esetben a megkérdezettek többsége így vélekedett, de a 15-ös tömbnél egy picit magasabb volt ez a szándék. A kedvező válaszok mindkét esetben progresszíven csökkentek: a legmagasabb százalék a tervezésben, kevesebb a kivitelezési munkákban és kicsit kevesebben a fenntartási munkákban jelezték résztvételi szándékukat (15-ös tömb: 80%, 74% ill. 54%,

Madách tömb: 68,7%, 56,2% és 50%). Az egyszeri felújítási költségekhez és azután a havi költségekhez való anyagi hozzájárulást tekintve a 15-ös tömbben 83% és 80%, a Madách-tömbben ugyanerre a kérdésre 56,2% és 43,7%, jelzett vissza pozitívan. A 15-ös tömb lakossága inkább hajlandó anyagi áldozatot is vállalni. Ez azért lehetséges, mert a Madách-tömb lakosai már hosszú ideje bérelnék kertészt, és fizetnek a kert fenntartásáért a közös költség részeként, míg a 15-ös tömb zöldterét az önkormányzat tartja fenn.

A részvételen alapuló tervezés válaszreakciói: A Madách tömb lakosságának nem volt különleges kívánsága a kerttervvel kapcsolatban. A funkcionális igények között a felnőttek számára pihenőhelyek, a gyerekek számára pedig játszótér kialakítása szerepelt. Megfogalmazásuk szerint egy könnyen fenntartható „zöld oázisra” van szükség, amely egyszerű vonalaival válaszol az építészeti formákra, és olcsón, könnyen fenntartható. Fontos, hogy a korlátozottan jární képesek számára is megközelíthető legyen. Kisléptékű, egyéni kreativitásnak teret engedő jellegzetesség is jelenjen meg a kertben, amilyen egy egynyári virágágyás lehet. A fák maradjanak meg és az eredeti építményeket sem kell lebontani, hanem új funkciót kaphatnak. A kerületi képviselő így összegezte a folyamatot: „Fontos volt, hogy a lakók igényei és gondolatai formálták a tervezési folyamatot, így a munkát és az eredményt magukénak érezhetik. A tervezési módszer és a részletek felőli megközelítés lehetővé tette, hogy az új terv a teljes lakosság igényeit kielégítse, hiszen minden a részvételükkel és a saját jóváhagyásukkal történt.”

IV. Összefoglalás és új szakmai eredmények

I. Tézis: Közösségi zöldterek alakíthatóak ki a két mintaterületen végzett vizsgálat alapján.

Megállapítottam, hogy a közösségi zöldtér kialakítása mindkét vizsgálati területen reális és valós célt jelent, bár a kialakítás folyamata eltérő nehézségű. A megállapítást mindkét mintaterület esetében reprezentatív lakossági mintával végzett kérdőíves vizsgálatra, részletes szabadtér-építészeti vizsgálatra és a közbiztonsági szempontok elemzésére alapoztam. A Madách blokk esetében lakossági részvétellel készített tervkonceptciókat a belső kert rekonstrukciójához.

A 416 lakosú, önkormányzati kezelésű zöldterülettel rendelkező, 5400 m²-es nagyságú 15-ös tömb közös lakókertjét sokkal nehezebb felújítani a mérete, alakja, a lakosok közötti kapcsolatok hiánya, a kert önkormányzati tulajdona, a befejezetlen tömbrehabilitáció, illetve a valóságos vagy vélt biztonsági problémák miatt. Jogi szempontból nem alapkövetelmény, hogy a lakosok tulajdonában legyen a kert, hiszen használhatják és a terület engedélye nélkül hozhatnak biztonsági intézkedéseket. A 295 lakosú és csak 950 m² nagyságú Madách tömbben előny, hogy nem több társasházról van szó, hanem a tömb egy jogi személynek számít, egy képviselője van, továbbá a kert a lakosok tulajdona, így a felújított kert finanszírozása és kezelése kevésbé összetett feladat. Mindkét esetben a fizikai vagy anyagi segítséget nyújtók százalékos aránya jelentősen nagyobb volt a terület használók arányánál és egybehangzóan állították, hogy szükséges felújítani a területet. Ebből következtetni lehet arra, hogy a közös tervezési és kivitelezési folyamat során vonzóbbá váló kerteket sokkal többen fogják látogatni.

II. Tézis: Az önkormányzatok elvi, jogi, anyagi és műszaki támogatása szükséges feltétel a közösségi zöldterek létrehozásához.

Elemeztem és értékeltem a budapesti önkormányzatok tevékenységét és beavatkozási lehetőségeit a közösségi zöldterek, nagyobb léptékben a zöldfelületi rendszer fejlesztésében. Bár a közösségi zöldterek önkéntes munkán alapulnak, és az egyéni felelősségvállalás fontos része a folyamatnak, Budapest zöldfelületi rendszerének fejlesztésében is szerepet kaphat ez a lakossági kezdeményezés, ha az önkormányzat részéről a megfelelő hozzáállás, a jogi, technikai és anyagi források adottak. Az önkormányzatok egyre nagyobb érdeklődést mutatnak a közösségi tervezés, a közterek és belső udvarok rendezése iránt, de hiányzik a stratégiai terv, a hatékony pénzügyi támogatás és a szakmai iránymutatás. A jelenleg rendelkezésre álló erőforrások csekélyek: a VII. kerületben 250.000 forintos támogatás áll rendelkezésre a közös zöldterek szépítésére, valamint évenként megrendezik a „Legszebb belső udvari kert” versenyt. Nincsen a londoni közös használatú kertek támogatási rendszeréhez hasonló szervezet. Az önkormányzat adta támogatások megkívánják a lakosság anyagi hozzájárulását, mert önrészt írnak elő, de az egyéni kötelezettségvállalás fontosságát nem erősítik meg. Nincsen átfogó stratégia, amely ösztönözné a lakosságot a saját udvarukban közösségi zöldterek kialakítására vagy ilyen szervezetekhez való csatlakozásra. A Városrehabilitációs keret 2007-ben jelentős támogatást tervez nyújtani az udvarkertek, zöldterek létrehozására, felújítására, és ez remélhetőleg a változás első lépését fogja jelenteni.

III. Tézis: A hazai civil társadalomban megvan a kezdeményező erő a közösségi zöldterek létrehozására és fenntartására.

Megállapítottam, hogy a városszerkezeti adottságok, a magántőke erős városfejlesztési befolyása és a városrendezési, ill. zöldfelület-ellátási irányelvek hiánya miatt a lakossági kezdeményezés és a részvételen alapuló tervezés a budapesti zöldfelületi rendszer növekedésének és minőségi javulásának fontos, jelenleg nem kellően kihasznált eszköze. A részvételen alapuló tervezés egyelőre elvi síkon mozog és ritka kivételektől eltekintve nem tartozik a zöldfelületi tervezés folyamatába. Itt az ideje, hogy az elvekből gyakorlat legyen. Magyarországon 1989 óta kialakult pezsgő civil szektort az állam jogilag is támogatja, például a személyi jövedelemadóból felajánlható 1%-kal. 2000-ben 400.000 magyar önkéntes 35,5 millió órányi munkával 18 milliárd forint értékű önkéntes tevékenységet végzett szociális munka, jogvédelem, környezet- és természetvédelem, környezetrendezés és egyéb tevékenységi körökben. A részvételen alapuló tervezés és a fenntartható városok kulcsfontosságú szerepet töltenek be az Európai Unió, az ENSZ Környezetvédelmi Program és más szervezetek számtalan jelentős stratégiai programjaiban. A tervezési folyamat részvételen alapuló megközelítése és Oscar Newman védhető területekről szóló elvei számos esetben bebizonyították, hogy lehetséges sikeres fenntartható, megközelíthető és gondozott zöldteret kialakítani. A két esettanulmány során készített kutatások és interjúk a Madách tömb sikeres részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamatával együtt megerősítik, hogy a lakók szeretnék fejleszteni a környezetüket, és hogy a közösen kialakított terv sokkal hatékonyabb, mint a 15-ös tömb korábbi példáján látható felülről jövő kezdeményezések.

IV. Tézis: A városrehabilitáció tervezési folyamatában elkövetett hibák nagy mértékben járultak hozzá a közös használatú lakóterek leromlásához.

Megvizsgáltam és elemeztem a 15. tömb rehabilitációjának tervezési folyamatát társadalmi és tájépítészeti-városépítészeti szemszögből. A rehabilitáció kudarcát négy fő okban határoztam meg. A korábbi tervezési folyamatot összevettem a jelenlegi tervezési metodikával és közösségi zöldterek tervezési módszerével.

A vizsgálatok, elemzések négy alapvető tervezési elv hiányára, illetve a rehabilitációs folyamat befejezetlenségére utalnak. Az 1980-as években megkezdett rehabilitáció még a politikai és társadalmi rendszerre jellemző „gondoskodó” megközelítést tükrözi, amelynek kudarca intő példa lehet a további városmegújítási akciókban. A tervezési és megvalósítási folyamat hibái:

1. Hiányzott a lakókat bevonó, az ő ötleteiket hasznosító, részvételen alapuló tervezési folyamat, amely az önkormányzat felé is folyamatos és hatékony párbeszéddel párosul. A lakosok ezért nem érzik magukénak a teret, és az nem elégíti ki az ő igényeiket.
2. Hiányzott egy szervezeti struktúra, amely önkormányzati támogatással egy, a lakók bevonásával történő fenntartható kezelési tervet alakított volna ki.
3. Hiányzott a korlátozott közhasználatról való döntés, a terület zártságának és kizárólagos használatának tisztázása. Hiányzottak a terület kizárólagos ellenőrzése és használata érdekében meghozott jogszabályok.
4. Nem sikerült jó térarányú, kellemesen berendezett, emberléptékű kertet kialakítani, amely saját tulajdonosi szemléletet alakít ki és biztonságosan használható. A tömb rehabilitációs átépítésének elhúzódása, befejezetlensége is korlátozta a kert használhatóságát.

V. Tézis: A rehabilitációs beavatkozások négy fő típusba sorolhatók a zöldfelület, a közösségi zöldterek szempontjából

Elkészítettem a budapesti rehabilitációs jellegű átépítések tipológiáját zöldfelületi szempontok alapján. A fővárosban az eddig lezajlott projektek a zöldfelületek kialakítása szerint négy típusba sorolhatók. A rehabilitációs beavatkozások zöldfelületi létesítményei potenciálisan magukba foglalják a közösségi zöldtereket is.

Az első típusba tartoznak az új vegyes használatú fejlesztések, a teljes átépítések a belváros szomszédságában lepusztult épületek, tömbök helyén. Ezen épületek, épületeryüttesek belső, védett kertjeit elvileg, a helyi lakosok bevonásával közösségi zöldtérré lehet fejleszteni. A Rév-8 vezetésével felújított Corvin sétány a példa erre a típusra.

A második típus a városszerkezet, a városi szövet megtartásával végzett tömbrehabilitáció, a műemlék épületek, értékes városépítészeti, városképi együttesek felújítása, amelynek során új, az eredeti udvartérnél nagyobb szabadtér, zöldtér keletkezik a sűrű beépítés fellazításával, az udvari épületszárnyak lebontásával. A tömb belseje nem kerül közhasználatba, csak a tömbben lakók használják, a földszinti kereskedelmi létesítmények pedig nem kapcsolódnak az udvarkerthez. A 15-ös tömb erre lenne jó példa, ha a tömbbelsőben lévő kert nem zöldterület, közkert besorolásban maradna. Nagyobb sikerű, ebbe a típusba sorolható projektek például Egerben találhatók.

A harmadik típust azok a műemléki vagy védett épületeket érintő tömbrehabilitációs fejlesztések jelentik, amelyek nyitott vagy félig nyitott udvart eredményeznek. Az udvarok az itt kialakított szabadterek közvetlenül kapcsolódnak a földszinten működő kereskedelmi, vendéglátó létesítményekhez. Közösségi zöldtér itt nem alakítható ki, mert nincs meg az ahhoz szükséges jól védett terület. A VII. kerületi, 1906-ban épített, hét egymáshoz kapcsolódó udvar köré épített épületegyüttes, az ún. Gozsdu udvar lehet ennek a kategóriának a példája, amelyet éppen most újítanak fel luxuslakások és üzletek kialakításával.

Végül a negyedik típus egy meglévő tömbház udvarának átépítése, növényekkel való betelepítése, közös használatú lakókert kialakítása az építészeti térfalak, a területi adottságok változtatása nélkül. Erre számos példát lehet találni a pesti belső kerületekben, vagy a Vár lakónegyedében. Mind a négy típusnak vannak előnyeivel és hátrányai, és fontos szerepet töltenek be a városrevitalizációban. Az első két típus kiválóan alkalmas nagy, védhető közösségi zöldterek kialakítására. Hátrányuk a magas költségigény, és a magasabb lakásár által okozott szegregáció. A harmadik típus előnye, hogy a kialakításhoz, fenntartáshoz anyagi támogatást jelentenek az üzletek, de a folyamatos üzleti forgalom miatt közösségi zöldterként nehezen használhatók. A negyedik változat a leginkább költségkímélő és a legkevesébé kívánja meg az építészeti szerkezet megváltoztatását, de a kis alapterületű udvarok kertnek gyakran túl kicsinyek, sötétek, rosszul szellőzöttek.

VI. Tézis: A közösségi zöldterek létesítése a városrehabilitáció kulcsfontosságú eszköze társadalmi-szociális szempontból. .

Az esettanulmányok és a szakirodalmi elemzések alapján egyértelműen megállapítottam, hogy a városrehabilitáció szociális céljainak eléréséhez a közösségi zöldterek hatékony eszközt jelentenek, mert érdemben javítják a lakókörnyezet minőségét, a lakosság szabadter ellátását és kezelni képesek a bűnözés, a társadalmi problémák egy részét. A hátrányos helyzetben lévő lakosok egyfajta megerősítést kapnak azzal, hogy a tervezési és fejlesztési folyamatokat ők határozzák meg, javul az identitás tudat, erősödnek a közösségi kapcsolatok, s ennek eredményeként csökken a bűnözés, a rongálás és javul, illetve könnyebben fenntartható a lakókörnyezet állapota.

A városrehabilitációnak szerves része a társadalmi problémák kezelése, csökkentése, nem csak omladozó épületek lebontására, felújítására vagy új épületek és zöldterületek kialakítására korlátozódik. A főváros 2005-ban fogadta el a Szociális Rehabilitációs Programot, és 300 millió forintot rendelt hozzá abban az évben, majd 2006-2008 között pedig 500 milliót. A program egyik célpontja a VIII. kerületi Magdolna negyed. A program céljai között szerepel nem csak az épületek és köztterek felújítása, hanem a lakosok társadalmi-gazdasági és kulturális körülményeinek javítása. A vizuális fejlesztések mellett tehát szerepel a szociális háló kiépítése, a biztonság, a környezet megújítása, az oktatás és a munkalehetőségek javítása, különösen a roma lakosság körében. Az általános célkitűzés nem kevesebb, mint a főleg idős, munkanélküli vagy alacsony képzettségű, szerény körülmények között élő és gyakori bűnözésnek kitett lakosság szociális körülményeinek javítása.

VII. Tézis: A közösségi zöldterek fenntartható és hatékony eszközt jelentenek a belváros rehabilitációra szoruló részein a zöldfelületi ellátás javításában.

A fővárosi zöldfelületi rendszer fejlesztésének részeként a közösségi zöldterek hálózata a többségében zárt soros, körülépített udvaros lakóházakkal beépített VI., VII., VIII. és IX. kerületben jelentős mértékben javíthatja a zöldfelületek rekreációs értékét. A VII. kerület a legkisebb és legsűrűbben beépített kerülete a fővárosnak, ahol körülbelül 1300 különböző nagyságú, szerkezetű és állapotú udvar található. A kerület revitalizációja, rehabilitációja során az udvarok parkosítása realisabb, életképebb megoldás lehet a zöldfelületi hiány csökkentésében, mint az új parkok létrehozása. A mintaterületek elemzése igazolta, hogy a tömbbelsőben kialakított közös használatú lakókert nagy mértékben hozzájárul a lakosok zöldterületi igényeinek kielégítéséhez. A Madách tömbben $3,2 \text{ m}^2/\text{fő}$ a fajlagos zöldfelületi mutató, míg a 15-ös tömbben $12,9 \text{ m}^2$, ami fővárosi léptékben is kiugróan magas. A két mintaterület szélsőséges példa az udvarok, a belső kertek méreteit, léptékét tekintve, hiszen az egyikben példamutatóan nagy arányú szabadterület növelést hajtottak végre a rehabilitációs során a belső épületszárnyak bontásával, míg a másik esetben viszonylag szűk udvar állt csak rendelkezésre. Az udvarok, a tömbbelső mint potenciális közösségi zöldterek, közös használatú lakókertek nagy változatosságot mutatnak a kerületben, de alkalmasak, vagy alkalmassá tehetők zöldfelületi fejlesztésre.

V. Következtetések és javaslatok

A két mintaterületen végzett kutatás alapján meghatározhatók a részvételen alapuló tervezés előnyei, a gyakorlatba való átültetés főbb lépései, a lakossági és önkormányzati kapcsolatok, illetve az együttműködés erősítéséhez szükséges feladatok. A Madách tömb esetében az önkormányzat a részvételen alapuló tervezés során megfelelő segítséget nyújtott azzal, hogy segítette a megbeszélések szervezésében, és a polgármestert és a képviselőket is bevonta a folyamatba. A lakosokra nagy hatással volt a polgármester kijelentése: a város finanszírozza a kert felújítását, bár a támogatási keretösszeg nem fedezi a megemelkedő fenntartási költségeket. A lakosság hajlandóságot mutatott a korábbi gyakorlatnak megfelelően a kert finanszírozására, de ezt az összeget emelni szükséges. Az önkormányzati támogatás nem állhat meg a felújítási terv menedzselésénél, vagy a kert felújításánál, hanem további költségeket is fedeznie kellene. Az önkormányzatnak a továbbiakban segíteni kellene a támogatások megpályázásában, a kert közösségi zöldtérré fejlesztésében azzal, hogy szakembereket invitálnak a workshopokra, majd a médiában, a kerületi weboldalon is bemutatják, mint sikertörténetet, mint a kerület első ilyen „pilot projektjét”.

A 15-ös tömb közösségi zöldterének kialakítását nehezíti az, hogy nem csak lakóépületek, hanem intézményi épületek is tartoznak a tömbhöz. Az önkormányzat tervei között szerepel egy óvoda és óvodakert létrehozása a területen. Ez nem zárja ki egy közös fenntartású kert kialakításának lehetőségét, de a bizonytalanság bonyolítja a tervezési folyamat elindítását. Ha a kertet felújítják, akkor az csak a részvételen alapuló tervezéssel és a lakóközösség egyetértésével lehetséges. A felelősség tisztázása, a tulajdonviszonyok rendezése, a lakók és az önkormányzat között használati megegyezés, valamint a fenntartás finanszírozási rendszerének kidolgozása alapvető fontosságú. A biztonsági problémák a rendőrség vagy privát őrő-védő szolgálat bevonásával oldható

meg. A felújítás során az önkormányzat nem csak döntéshozó szerv kell legyen, hanem be kell vonni a támogatás és a műszaki segítségnyújtás koordinálásába.

A közösségi zöldtereknek a világ számos országában működő, sikeres példával találkozhatunk. Budapestnek is szüksége van egy közösségi zöldtér hálózatra, amely a város szociális, gazdasági körülményeit, továbbá kulturális és építészeti vonatkozásait messzemenőig figyelembe veszi. Budapest esetében ez az ideális közösségi zöldtér modell a körülépített, udvaros vagy megnyitott keretes lakóterületeken alakítható ki a legjobban. A modell magába foglalhatja azokat az elveket, amelyek a londoni belső kertek terek (garden squares), az amerikai közösségi kertek és az európai parcellakertek, kiskerttelepek gyakorlata alapján fogalmazhatók meg.

Kialakításuk önkéntes munkára és részvételen alapuló tervezésre, továbbá a lakosok igényeit kielégítő terve alapulhat. A kerteket kizárólag a helyi lakók használhatják, és a fenntartás érdekében az egyéni felelősségvállalás elvei alapján védhetően kell létesíteni. A közösségi kertek önkormányzati kezdeményezéssel, együttműködéssel, műszaki, szakmai és anyagi segítségnyújtással, a civil szféra aktív bevonásával válhatnak a kerület vagy a város zöldfelületi rendszerének, zöldtér-hálózatának értékes részeivé.

A modell kialakításának a következő kulcselemei vannak:

Alulról jövő szerveződés: Minden tömb önálló lakossági szervezetet kell alapítson a tervezés, a felújítás és a folyamatos fenntartás nyomon követése érdekében. Ez lehet bejegyzett vagy be nem jegyzett, különálló egység, vagy már létező finanszírozási rendszer része.

Dizájn és tervezés: A legjobb megközelítési mód a részvételen alapuló tervezés. A tervezés tájépítésmérnöki feladat. Annak érdekében, hogy a kert jól tagolt és a területnek megfelelően tervezett legyen a szakmai segítség valamilyen szinten mindenképpen – A tervezőnek együtt kell dolgoznia a szervezőkkel, és az alapkoncepciót a lakúkkal közösen kell kialakítani. A kerületi önkormányzat támogatási rendszerében helyet kaphat a kertépítész tervező bevonása, felkérése, vagy ingyenes konzultációs lehetőség biztosítása.

Műszaki paraméterek: A városrehabilitációs fejlesztések során korábban nem lakóterületi célra hasznosított terület, barnamezős terület zöldterként való kiépítése is előfordulhat. Ebben az esetben részletes környezetállapot vizsgálatot kell készíteni, különös tekintettel a talajszennyezettségre. A talajszennyezettség kezelésére remediációs tervet kell készíteni. A remediáció több fajtája lehetséges: vagy el kell távolítani a szennyezett talajt, vagy le kell zárni a szennyezett területet. Kísérleti módszerek, mint például a fitoremediáció, is használhatók. Pincék, mélygarázsok vagy más építmények megkövetelhetik a tetőkertes megoldásokat.

Biztonság: Amennyiben a védhető területek elveire épül a terület védelme, akkor bizonyos fokig a problémák csökkennek. Minden épületnek zárható ajtókkal kell rendelkeznie, és nem tanácsos idegeneket beengedni. Egyértelműen tisztázni szükséges, hogy nem nyilvános a terület, hanem csak a tömbben lakók nyújt rekreációs lehetőséget.

Finanszírozás: A lakosság felelősségi körébe tartozik a támogatások gyűjtése és a pályázás, de jó, ha számíthatnak önkormányzati támogatásra és segítségre. A zöldtér kezelésével foglalkozó szervezet feladata, hogy kialakítson egy éves költségvetési tervet. Az így elkészült tervezet egy részét a közös költségből lehet finanszírozni, a többit pedig önkormányzati vagy egyéb forrásokból lehet kiegészíteni.

Önkormányzati támogatás, hálózatiépítés: A budapesti udvarokban, tömbbelsőben létesült, részben privát, vagy korlátozott közhasználatú, közösségi zöldterek általában nem közterek vagy közparkok, illetve nem részei a zöldterületi hálózatnak. Az önkormányzati hivatalok azonban támogatnák, hogy a kerületi vagy városi zöldhálózati rendszer részeivé válhassanak. A kerületi hatóságok interaktív weboldallal, internetes fórumokkal tudják segíteni a közösségi zöldterek hálózatának kiépítését. Emellett további segítséget nyújthatnak tájépítészek bevonásával, workshopokkal, előadásokkal, telepítésre felajánlható növényanyaggal, építési anyagokkal, vagy építő cégek közvetítésével, továbbá megismertethetik a lehetőséget a nyilvánossággal és évenkénti önköltséges látogatásokat szervezhetnek az elkészült közösségi zöldterekre.

VI. Irodalomjegyzék

A szerzőnek a disszertációban felhasznált saját kutatási anyagai

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community-Supported Green Spaces as an Urban Revitalization Model for Budapest

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I. Introduction and objectives

The purpose of this dissertation is to assess and analyze community-supported green spaces as a tool for urban revitalization, and propose how such a model could be created and implemented in Budapest. A community-supported green space is a semi-private green space that is communally cared for by a group of local people who have formed an organization devoted to the garden's development and maintenance. Local volunteers determine its design, maintenance and development, and also control its function and access. Community-supported green spaces have subtypes that vary by economic layer, purpose, scale and other factors. Among these are community gardens on rehabilitated abandoned industrial sites or institutional grounds, community greens in American urban neighborhoods, allotment gardens typical of Western European cities, and the upper-class garden squares of London. The concept of community-supported green space is significant to Budapest because its inner districts currently suffer from a shortage of green space and limited possibilities for increasing it. Much of Pest was developed with the goal of the maximum percentage of built-up space, and most of the inner districts have considerably less than the recommended 7-10 m² per person. A new vision is needed. A model of community-supported green spaces unique to Budapest's economic, cultural and architectural circumstances can increase urban green space and actively involve citizens in improving urban sustainability and quality of life. The dissertation's objectives are to:

- Establish, through a thorough literature survey, that community-supported green spaces are a successful tool for urban revitalization that fills a role city parks and gardens cannot and contributes to solving urban problems such as vandalism, lack of green space and lack of community ties. They empower residents and strengthen civil society through participatory planning and volunteer initiatives. They are a significant educational resource for landscape architects.
- Demonstrate, through two case studies in District VII, the viability of community-supported green spaces in Budapest. In both studies, the objective was to assess the residents' attitudes towards the garden and their willingness to participate in the design, renovation and maintenance. In the first study, there was an additional objective of determining what planning flaws caused the garden be abandoned by residents. In the other study, the additional objective was a participatory planning process with the residents, resulting in a preliminary design.
- Propose a plan for how community-supported green spaces could become a viable model for urban revitalization in Budapest, taking into consideration Budapest's specific conditions. The model is based on converting the courtyards of Budapest's blocks of flats into commonly-used and commonly-maintained semi-private common gardens with active moral and material support from the municipality, which would also facilitate a network. It derives from various types of community-supported green spaces worldwide, including community greens, garden squares, and allotments. Additionally, the dissertation outlines a typology of the different forms of urban rehabilitation currently taking place in Budapest, and how community-supported green spaces can be incorporated into them.

II. Research materials and methodology

Secondary research materials included 13 media articles; 55 policy papers, annual reports, academic papers or studies; 13 books, 11 websites, and eight sets of municipal or federal guidelines or regulations and several of the author's own publications related to community gardens. In order to establish that community-supported green spaces are a proven successful approach for increasing urban green space, the phenomenon is documented in terms of typology, design and management principles and practices, effectiveness in solving contemporary urban problems, various organizational theories, and their usefulness as an educational resource to landscape architecture. There is also a survey of literature related to participatory planning as a tool for sustainable urban growth. The portion of the literature survey particular to Budapest includes studies, articles and other documents on the city's urban structure, history and development; volunteerism in post-1989 Hungary; successful precursors for community-supported green spaces in Hungary such as social land programs; green space issues in District VII; the concept of block rehabilitation; and the first case study site, Block 15.

The primary source research derives from two case studies. Both case studies are of inner courtyard gardens in District VII residential blocks and their potentials as community-supported green spaces. The first study, Block 15 – defined by Kisdiófa, Kazinczy, Wesselényi and Dob streets - focuses on the errors in the planning of a large common garden and how it could still be revitalized. The second study, Madach Block – defined by Rumbach, Király and Madach utca - focuses on carrying out a participatory planning process as a collaborative project involving the designer, the residents and the municipality. The objective of the process was to create a new, commonly-agreed upon working design for the garden that would increase residential use and involvement in the garden and help cultivate and strengthen a sense of common responsibility and stewardship among the residents towards the garden.

There are several reasons for choosing Block 15 and Madach Block. They are both District VII blocks, typical of the area in that they consist of flats oriented around a courtyard, but they have highly divergent histories. Block 15 was originally a large cluster of 17 apartment buildings that create a seamless fortress of brick and stone on all four sides of the block. The 1980s block rehabilitation, which demolished six buildings and the interior wings of three more, was meant to increase the amount of green space and quality of the apartments by demolishing inner wings. The resulting inner garden was attractive but, designated part of the city's green space system and left open to the public, quickly deteriorated. The objective of the research was to assess the flaws in its original planning, how its residents perceive it, and how it could be rehabilitated as a community-supported green space. The block's large-scale rehabilitation and inner garden make it an unusual case, and its poor success as a common green space provides an opportunity for study. Madach Block, built between 1958 and 1960, is a utilitarian, brick-and-concrete complex of three buildings of 7-8 stories surrounding a courtyard. The three blocks of flats are one condominium association with one representative. The block can be entered with a key or by passing the representative's office. The block was recommended by District VII authorities, who wanted to provide organizational support for the project and apply to the City Rehabilitation Fund in 2007. The site has been a garden since the

building's construction and has several valuable trees, but is in need of revitalization. It is an ideal site for an experiment in participatory planning. Both studies are simultaneously typical and unique, and their results could be applied to other sites in District VII.

District VII was chosen as the location for the case studies because it represents an extreme example of the green space shortage in the inner districts of Pest, specifically VI, VII, VIII and IX. A feasible urban revitalization model for District VII can improve sustainability and livability in other Pest districts, too. Blocks of flats oriented around courtyards make up most of the housing stock in these districts, and nearly all of the housing in District VII. As Pest's smallest and most densely-populated district, District VII has nearly 80,000 residents dwelling in about 35,000 homes in an area of just over two square kilometers. The proportion of green space is also the smallest in the city, at 1% or, by one estimate, less than .4 square meter per person. District VII has a high cultural and touristic significance and includes, for example, the UNESCO-recognized Jewish Quarter. Studies by environmentalists, urban planners, architectural critics, historians and others note that large new green spaces in this district are not possible without seriously altering the urban fabric of this densely built-up area, and recommend a strategy of greening in smaller spaces such as the courtyards. The research of both sites includes survey interviews with a representative sample of the blocks' residents, landscape architectural inventories and drawings of the sites' conditions and facilities, observational visits to the blocks to assess use, site photographs, aerial photographs, a survey of relevant municipal legislation, and interviews with local officials. The same questionnaire was used for doing the interviews at both sites. Its aim was to assess the residents' use of and perceptions of the gardens and also determine the potential for rejuvenating the garden through a participatory approach. A representative sample of the population totaling 10% or more was chosen based on census data. Residents were approached in their homes or in passing in the hallways. The results of the surveys were evaluated by tabulating the answers and assigning them percentage points. Each case study was carried out over approximately three months. Regular visits to the block at varying times of day included making a detailed assessment of the garden's condition, number and type of users. In the case of Block 15 there were also interviews with the caretaker of the garden in Dob utca 31-33, a courtyard that is technically part of the block but is separated from it by a main wall. Other resources for Block 15 included archival maps from the original rehabilitation and a legal opinion on how the ownership of the common green could be managed.

In Madach Block, parallel with the survey, the author led and carried out a participatory planning process that consisted of three residential forums. The principle of the participatory planning process is that the professional designer begins the process without a preconceived idea of the final design, and instead acts as a facilitator to bring out opinions and ideas from the residents and develop them. There are many established techniques for participatory planning, some of which involve assigning the participants drawing or mapping activities, particularly if they are school-age. Given that the majority of the participants and in fact the residents of the block are elderly – far above the district's average – it was more logical to base the process on simple discussions with the designer providing all visual materials. The process was initiated with District VII

municipal authorities, including the mayor, assistant mayor and a municipal representative. The representative sent a letter to residents stating that the municipality would like to support a series of open meetings to determine the garden's new design, and that Budapest city government's City Rehabilitation Fund will accept applications for funding courtyard garden revitalization efforts starting in early 2007. All residents were invited and given the opportunity to speak. Instead of a vote, the decisions were made by simple consensus: a resident or one of the moderators expressed an opinion, and the others discussed it until a consensus was reached. So that there would be a written record of the discussion, a summary was included in the next letter sent out by the municipal authorities announcing the next meeting. The summary would then be reviewed at the following meeting, to ensure constant progress. The results of the series were to be harmonized with the results of the questionnaires to determine the final plan. The plan still would have to receive approval from the residents' council before being submitted. The first two meetings were open discussions. The discussions were structured to start with general issues such as the garden's principal functions and the removal of unsightly objects. Then the emphasis moved to more specific issues such as the planting list, pavings and furnishings. For the third meeting there was a planting list, four sketches, and illustrated proposals for furnishings and pavings based on the discussions. Residents chose one of the designs and the author developed it into a full-fledged preliminary plan for eventual submission for funding from the city.

III. Results and conclusions

These are some of the more significant results of the case studies:

Security issues: Madach Block's residents do not have the negative perception that Block 15 residents have of abandonment by the authorities, nor do they have ownership issues regarding the land. Madach Block residents, who own the property their garden is on, have a less troubled view of their garden than Block 15 residents. The term 'no-man's land' came up repeatedly in discussions with Block 15 residents because of the site's municipal ownership and crime issues. Residents in Madach Block were more likely to cite only one perceived problem with the garden, and nearly ten percent found no problems at all. Block 15 residents all found problems with the garden and usually cited at least three. Ninety percent of Block 15's residents saw serious obstacles to renovation, as opposed to slightly more than 60 percent of Madach Block's surveyed subjects. Although a few residents cited concerns about security, Madach Block does not have problems with vandalism or the conflicts among the different buildings about security that Block 15 does. The garden has a safe and cloistered atmosphere owing to the buildings' structure and the residents' diligence in keeping the doors locked. The structure of the block makes it less vulnerable than Block 15, and the smaller scale and care by one common representative also contribute to this. In both cases, it was nearly unanimous that the garden should stay locked to the public.

Usage and functions of the garden, connections between neighbors: Rates of usage are similar and quite poor, with both gardens being used daily by more than 30% of those asked. They are marginally better at Madach Block, where only 12.5% said they never used the garden at all, as opposed to 22% at Block 15. In both case studies, the

overwhelming number of residents cited two desirable functions for the garden if it were renovated: playground and resting place. Sports, vegetable production and other activities were dismissed. Although urban agriculture is a common practice in community gardens in North America, and has historically been an essential aspect to allotment gardens in Western Europe, in the two case studies it was nearly unanimous among residents that vegetable production not an appropriate or needed activity. There are several explanations, including that many residents have vegetable plots in the countryside or that the vegetables could be stolen. Where the two blocks differ strongly was the sense of community and relations between neighbors. The majority of those surveyed in Madach Block believed there was a strong community in the block, as opposed to a minority in Block 15. There is also conflict between dog owners and non-owners in Block 15.

Willingness to contribute to renovation: In both cases, the majority of residents are willing to contribute actively and materially to their garden's revitalization. The residents' willingness to contribute physically or intellectually to the garden's renovation and longterm maintenance are approximately comparable, and in both cases constituted a majority of those surveyed, with Block 15 showing a slightly higher willingness. In both cases, the percentage of positive responses progressively declines: the highest percentage is willing to help with planning, a slightly lower number would help with the physical work of the renovation, and a slightly lower number would participate in the maintenance. In the case of Block 15 this was 80%, 74% and 54% respectively, compared to Madach Block, with 68.7%, 56.2% and 50%. Willingness to contribute financially once to the renovation and monthly thereafter came to 83% and 80% respectively at Block 15, whereas in Madach Block those figures were 56.2% and 43.7%, respectively. Residents at Block 15 are more willing to contribute financially to their garden than Madach Block's residents. However, this can be because the residents of Madach Block have historically had a hired gardener and paid for the garden's maintenance through condominium fees and so are already funding the garden, whereas Block 15's garden is maintained by the municipality.

Response to the participatory planning process: The residents of Madach Block, while they do not have specific aesthetic ideas about the garden, share a similar vision for how it should function: it should be a resting place for adults and a playground for children. The concrete terrace should be torn up and replaced with attractive brick paving. It should be a low-maintenance oasis with simple contours to reflect the architecture and without any expensive or high-maintenance options such as a water feature. It should be accessible for those with limited mobility. There should be small-scale opportunities built into the design for individual creativity such as an annual bed. No trees should be removed, and original features, such as the irregular circular sandbox, could be converted into a planting bed, not demolished. At no point was there any significant disagreement. Even though it was not a high number of residents who attended the meetings – at most 17 - those who did were enthusiastic and vocal. Stated the District VII representative who was involved: *It was very important that the residents' needs and ideas shaped the planning process, so that they felt the work and the result to be their own. The design method and the detail-oriented approach made it possible for the new design to meet all the residents' expectations because it happened with their contribution and agreement.*

IV. Summary of theses and new professional results

THESIS I: Both case study sites are highly viable as community-supported green spaces. I established that there is high potential to create a successful community-supported green space at both the case study sites, but with varying degrees of difficulty. A site such as Block 15, with 416 residents, municipal ownership of the common green, multiple condominium associations and 5,400 square meters, would be more difficult to redevelop because of its size, the lack of connection among neighbors, the garden's municipal ownership and real or perceived security issues. Legal research shows the residents could get the right of usage without purchasing the property, and they have the right to institute greater security measures without city permission. Madach Block, with 295 residents and only 950 square meters, has the advantage of being one legal entity with one representative and residential ownership of the land, which makes financing and managing a renovated garden less complex. In both case studies, the percentage of people who were willing to contribute physically or materially to the garden was significantly higher than the percentage of people who actually use the garden, and the agreement that the garden needs renovation was nearly unanimous in both. From this it can be theorized that a considerably higher percentage of residents would use the garden if it were made more inviting and attractive by a renovation process that actively involved them.

THESIS II: Community-supported green spaces predicated on volunteerism and individual responsibility can be a significant part of Budapest's green space system if given the proper moral, technical and financial support from the municipal authorities. I have assessed that there is growing interest by the municipal authorities in courtyards as a source for increasing urban green space in the inner city, coupled with a simultaneous increase in civic involvement, but stronger policy and a significantly greater effort and leadership are urgently needed from the district and city authorities. There are ad hoc efforts by the authorities to encourage courtyard greening, as in Madach Block and with such incentives as the 250,000 forint grants that District VII allocates for common area greening and the annual "Most Beautiful Courtyard Garden" competitions. However, aside from these small-scale efforts, there is at the present no organized approach or policy for providing incentive to residents for improving their courtyards. There is nothing approaching the level of organization and management that municipal authorities provide to London's network of garden squares. The standards for grants issued by the Budapest authorities do encourage financial commitment by requiring that the residents contribute a portion of the cost, but there is no understanding of the importance of fostering individual stewardship. There is no comprehensive policy to encourage residents to form a community-supported green space in their courtyards or to try to connect such organizations.

THESIS III: Hungary's civil society has the capacity for initiating and maintaining community-supported green spaces. I determined that volunteer initiatives and the participatory planning approach are both key tools for increasing Budapest's urban green space supply, and that Hungary's civil society has the capacity to support them. The concept of participatory planning is still at the theoretical stage in Hungary, and with a few notable exceptions, is not a standard procedure for design and planning of green

spaces. Now is the time to elevate it from theory to practice. Since 1989, the country has developed a vital civil and volunteer sector supported by legislation, including the groundbreaking 1% tax allocation law. In 2000, 400,000 Hungarian volunteers contributed 35.5 million volunteer hours in such areas as environmental protection, social services, education and human rights work, with an estimated total value of 18 billion forints. Participatory planning and sustainable cities are key issues addressed extensively in many of the most significant recent policy documents of the European Union, the United Nations Environmental Program and other bodies. The participatory approach to planning and also the defensible space theories of Oscar Newman have proven successful in multiple cases of creating sustainable, accessible, cared-for green spaces. The survey and interview results at the two case study sites, coupled with the success of the participatory planning process at Madach Block, support the idea that residents are interested in improving their neighbourhoods, and that participatory design is a more effective approach than the traditional top-down methods that characterized Block 15.

THESIS IV: Block 15 did not succeed as a green space because of multiple serious flaws in the rehabilitation process. I examined and analyzed Block 15's rehabilitation process from social, urban planning and landscape architectural perspectives, and found that it lacked four key elements. This is significant as a cautionary tale for future projects.

- 1: It lacked a participatory design process empowering the residents and reflecting their vision for the garden, with ongoing effective communication from the municipality. The residents do not perceive the garden as theirs. The functions of the garden do not reflect the residents' wishes, for example, a significant percentage of its 5,400 square meters is taken up by a dilapidated asphalt sports field, and virtually no one of the representative sample interviewed thought that sports was an appropriate function for the garden.
- 2: It lacked an organizational structure involving the residents that produced a sustainable maintenance plan involving the residents, with supplemental municipal support.
- 3: It lacked a clear sense that the site was for residents' use only, with securely closed gates and appropriate legal arrangements to ensure its control and access.
- 4: It lacked a design of a manageable, human scale that fosters individual stewardship and reflects Oscar Newman's principles of defensible spaces. The design, with long fixed rows of benches and large monotonous shrub beds, is more institutional than residential.

THESIS V: There are at least four principal types of rehabilitation that have already been employed in Budapest that could, to varying degrees, incorporate community-supported green spaces. I analyzed the main categories of rehabilitation currently being utilized and assessed their suitability for including community-supported green spaces. All four involve residential courtyards and vary in terms of their defensibility and also in terms of cost. The first type is new mixed-use developments that are built in inner-city neighborhoods after the demolition of dilapidated buildings. In theory, the protected inner gardens of these structures could be developed by the residents as community-supported green spaces. An example of this type of could be Rév-8's Corvin Sétány. The second type is block rehabilitation of historic buildings that creates new open gardens by tearing down the densely-built inner wings of the blocks. The inside of the block stays closed to the public and entirely residential, while commerce is restricted to the outside ground floor. Block 15 is an example of this type, although more successful examples can

be found in Eger. The third type is block rehabilitation of historic or even protected buildings that involves opening the inner courtyards to the public because of shops located inside. A community-supported green space is only possible on such a site if the space is well-guarded. Gozsdu Courtyard in District VII, a 1906 chain of seven adjoining courtyard buildings currently being rehabilitated into high-end housing and retail, is of this category. Finally, the last type is conversion of existing single block courtyards into gardens, without altering the architectural structure. The four types each have an important role in urban revitalization and have varying advantages and disadvantages. For example, the first two types have excellent potential as a site for large, defensible community-supported green spaces. Their disadvantage is that they are extremely costly and also may, as some researchers have argued about Block 15, price residents out of their own neighborhood. The third type is advantageous because of the potential to get material support for the garden from the businesses, but difficult to protect with constant commercial traffic. The fourth type is the least expensive and requires the least alteration of existing architectural fabric, but unaltered courtyard spaces can sometimes be limiting from a landscape architectural perspective since they are often small, narrow and dark and generally were not historically designed to be gardens.

THESIS VI: Community-supported green spaces are a key tool in the social rehabilitation of inner-city neighborhoods. Urban rehabilitation is not restricted to merely demolishing or renovating dilapidated buildings and constructing new buildings and green spaces. It should also include socioeconomic improvement of the lives of local residents. In 2005, Budapest city council adopted the Social Rehabilitation Program, allocating 300 million forints in 2005 and 500 million forints annually from 2006-2008, targeting among other areas the Magdolna Quarter of District VIII. The program's objectives are not just the physical improvement of the buildings and public spaces, but the actual socioeconomic and cultural improvement of the residents. In addition to the visual improvements, the program seeks to *expand the social net, the neighborhood security, the environment, the level of education and also increase job opportunities*, particularly with regard to Roma. The overall goal is nothing less than a social renewal for neighborhoods with high levels of people who are elderly, unemployed, or have low educational levels and live in poor quality flats and struggle with high crime rates and a low level of green space. Community-supported green spaces can part of the approach to meet these goals of social renewal because they provide a set of benefits that top-down initiatives cannot always provide. They empower disadvantaged citizens by putting the tasks of design and maintenance in their hands, and are proven in multiple studies to decrease crime and improve property values and community ties.

THESIS VII: Developing a network of inner courtyards as community-supported green spaces to be an effective and sustainable means of considerably increasing the amount of green space. This is particularly true in districts VI, VII, VIII and IX, where block of flats around courtyards constitute the vast majority of the architectural stock. District VII is the smallest and densest of the four districts, with the lowest allotment of green space in the city, and it alone has approximately 1300 courtyards of various size, structure and condition. Contemporary thought on the issue of District VII's revitalization notes that greening the courtyards is a far more viable possibility for ameliorating the shortage of

green space than the creation of new parks. A less-severe but similar situation exists in VI, VIII and IX. It is possible to use Madach Block and Block 15, both in District VII, where green space provision is by one estimate .4 square meter per person, as examples of how much a greened courtyard can add to green space provision to individual residents. Block 15's 5,400 square meter common garden means that the block's 416 residents enjoy an additional 12.9 square meters per person. They have more than 30 times the green space of a District VII resident whose building has no green courtyard. Block 15 is an unusual case because it involved a massive demolition of the inner wings of several buildings in a block of 17 structures. Madach Block's common garden of 950 meters means that the block's 295 residents enjoy an additional 3.2 meters per person of green space, eight times the district average although still below the 1978 regulations recommended allotment of 7-10 square meters of nearby green space per person. Madach Block is also unusual because it is a highly dense structure for District VII. Two of its three buildings are eight stories tall including the ground floor, compared to the 4-5 stories more typical of the area. These two examples are thus extremes, since one is of low density due to extensive demolition of inner wings, and the other is higher density because of its high number of floors. Most average courtyard green spaces could provide an increased amount of green space in the middle range between the two.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

At Madach Block, the municipality had the correct approach in helping organize the participatory planning meetings, and by involving the mayor and municipal representative in the process. Residents were impressed by the mayor's declaration at the first meeting that the city would pay for the garden's renovation. However, even with endorsement from the authorities, it was difficult to conduct the planning process effectively without a budget for the garden's renovation or parameters for the grants. Further, the funds would not cover maintenance. The residents have shown historical willingness to pay for the garden, but this amount would have to increase. Municipal support must continue at least through to the garden's renovation and further. Now that the residents have a working concept for the redesign, the municipality should continue the process by guiding the residents in applying for the grant, then they should promote the garden's development as a community-supported green space by bringing in professionals for garden workshops and they should also promote the garden as a pilot project to the rest of the district through the media and the district's own website.

Block 15 is complicated by the municipality's tentatively plans to construct a nursery school and garden on the site. This would not preclude the possibility of a commonly-maintained garden, but the uncertainty makes it difficult to initiate a design process. Should the garden be revitalized, it should be done with participatory process and a residents' council. The new design should connect specific areas to individual houses to clearly designate responsibility. The ownership issues could be resolved if the residents and municipality can forge a right of usage agreement. Security issues should be addressed by requesting additional police patrols or a private security firm. The municipality should be involved in promoting guiding the garden's development as supporter and a source of technical and material support, not the decision-making body.

Community-supported green spaces are a proven success in cities around the world. Budapest should develop a network of community-supported green spaces based on a model suited to the city's social and economic circumstances, culture and urban architecture. This ideal model for community-supported green space for Budapest would be designed to be suitable for enclosed courtyard blocks. It would incorporate elements of London's garden squares, U.S. community greens, and European allotment gardens. It would be predicated on volunteer efforts and participatory planning and have quality designs that serve the needs of the building's community. The gardens would be restricted to residential use and be designed based on defensible space principles to build a culture of individual responsibility for maintenance. The gardens would benefit from municipal incentives, including technical and material support and be part of a district- or city-wide network. The following are the key aspects to creating the model:

Grassroots organization. The residents of each block must form an organization for guiding the planning, renovation, and ongoing maintenance. This can be an official or unofficial body, a separate entity or part of the building's existing financial structure.

Design and planning. The participatory design model is the best approach. Professionals such as landscape architects or horticulturalists should assist in the planning. Some level of professional involvement is essential to ensure that the garden is well-designed and site-appropriate, but it is equally essential that the professional work closely with the organizers and that the basic concepts for the garden come from the residents. Districts could authorize their own landscape architects or others to provide free consultations.

Technical issues. An environmental site assessment followed by, if necessary, a remediation plan is important anytime an urban space that was not previously a green space is rehabilitated into a common or public garden. Removal of contaminated soil, or stabilizing the contaminated area by capping it are two options for mitigation.

Experimental approaches such as phytoremediation could be employed. Cellars, parking garages or other structures underneath might necessitate roof garden technology.

Security. To some extent, if defensible space principles are followed, the garden's security problems will be reduced. However, all buildings should have locked gates and an agreement not to let in strangers. It should be clearly designated that this is not public.

Finances. Financial planning and responsibility for fundraising and funds management should rest on the residents, but they should be able to expect support and help from the municipal authorities. The garden's management organization should design an annual financial plan, and based on this, the costs should be incorporated as much as is affordable into the residents' monthly condominium fees and the garden's organizers should write grants for additional funds from the municipality or other sources.

Municipal support, creation of a network. A community-supported green space in a Budapest courtyard is a common but semi-private green space closed to the public, not a part of the public parks system. However, they would be strengthened by being part of a district- or city-wide network supported and promoted by the municipal authorities. Budapest's district authorities should help cultivate a network of community-supported green spaces by providing an interactive website and other electronic forums; providing guidance through workshops or lectures from landscape architects or horticulturalists; acting as a clearinghouse for companies to donate plants or materials; promoting the courtyard gardens to the public and organizing open, paid tours of the gardens annually.

VI. Literature summary

Catalogue of the author's own works used in the dissertation:

Publications

Faurest, K. "Gardens for the Nation: Horticultural Outreach Programs of Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden, Cape Town, South Africa." *Landscape Architecture*, November 2003, shorter version published in English in *The Community Gardener*. Also presented as a lecture to fourth- and fifth-year students, fall semester 2003.

Faurest, K. *A Plan for Restoring the Shawnee Park Flower Garden*. Historical research paper and proposal commissioned by and submitted to the Olmsted Conservancy, Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A., August 2000. Also presented as a lecture to fourth- and fifth-year landscape architecture students, fall semester 2000, SZIE.

Faurest, K. "Urban Revitalization through Community Gardens." *Landscape Architecture* quarterly, Budapest, Hungary, November 2001.

Faurest, K. "Block 15's Rehabilitation: A Community Green for Budapest." Article to be published in 2006 by Community Greens organization, Arlington, Virginia.

Conferences and Lectures

Faurest, K. "Taxes are Certain: How to Make the Most of Percentage Allocations." Workshop on financing civic initiatives, presented at the Civil Society Development Foundation's 10th Central and Eastern European Fundraising Workshop, November 2005.

Faurest, K. "Community Gardens." Lecture presented to the Corvinus University College of Horticulture, Department of Ecological and Sustainable Systems, October 2005

Faurest, K. "Community gardens: A New Kind of School for the Innovative Landscape Architect." European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools (ECLAS), conference paper and poster, September 2002.

Faurest, K. "Community Gardens." Szent István days, Szent István University, conference presentation and poster, August 2001.