THE DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE:
A CASE STUDY IN COMMUNITY-CONTROLLED PLANNING.

by

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To the people of the Dudley neighborhood, who are an inspiration and an example to others.
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ABSTRACT

The combined effects of decades of disinvestment, redlining and other discriminatory practices, both public and private, created deteriorated conditions in most areas of Roxbury, and in particular the Dudley neighborhood. In more recent days, during Boston's downtown renaissance in the early 1980s, the Dudley neighborhood began to feel the added threat of a strong wave of gentrification. Its effort to organize in response to the totality of these problems is the subject of this thesis.

The culmination of this effort has taken shape in the form of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI). This thesis is above all a case study of the evolution of this organization in the life of the neighborhood. Since its inception, DSNI has been held up as a model for community development efforts. This thesis seeks to describe its approach to development, and to understand this approach -- and the changes it underwent -- in the light of the history of the neighborhood and the community.

Thesis Supervisor: Lisa R. Peattie
Title: Professor Emeritus of Urban Anthropology
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Recent attention has been directed to the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), a neighborhood-based organization in the Dudley area of Roxbury. Planners, community groups, policy makers, politicians, and funders alike have increasingly taken note of DSNI, perhaps because it recently obtained eminent domain designation from the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Indeed, conveyance of such power from a municipal authority to a local non-profit community group is unprecedented and therefore notable. Although these events raise the questions of why and how, a broader and more interesting set of issues also arises. Assuming for a moment that acquiring eminent domain does form part of a larger neighborhood revitalization strategy, as claimed by DSNI, then what is that overarching strategy? How does an urban neighborhood which is poor, segregated, disinvested and comprised mostly of people of color, like Dudley, revitalize itself? And, subsequently, how is this process institutionalized?

The present thesis will analyze the process by which the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative has approached the task of rebuilding the Dudley neighborhood, both in physical and human terms, during the past five years since its
inception. DSNI offers the possibility for an interesting case study of an indigenous neighborhood-based planning and revitalization effort grounded in organizing. Although DSNI emerges as a "model" of neighborhood renewal, providing important lessons for community developers, the process is still evolving and the full extent of its consequences has not yet been realized. Gus Newport, the executive director of DSNI and former mayor of Berkeley, California, has himself said that "what is being done in Dudley has never been done before...it is an experiment with which we are proceeding very cautiously."

In this chapter I will describe the components which make up DSNI as an organization. This initial chapter lays the framework for the analysis of the DSNI revitalization effort which follows in the next chapters. I will provide a backdrop of neighborhood development efforts which stem from the public sector, the private sector and the non-profit development sector in order to better understand the course being charted by DSNI. I will also take the opportunity in this chapter to define terms and concepts that run throughout the analysis.

In chapter two, I will provide an abridged history of Roxbury. The second chapter will briefly discuss the development and economic history of the Roxbury neighborhood, in order to provide the context for appreciating the problems that face Roxbury and Dudley
today. The third chapter will examine the organizing, planning and implementation efforts which constitute DSNI's program for neighborhood revitalization. The fourth chapter will assess the tensions encountered and created by the programs of DSNI. Finally, remarks of a more general nature are made in chapter five.

1. THE DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is a coalition of local residents, agencies, churches, and businesses which banded together in 1984 to plan for the future of the racially and ethnically diverse Dudley neighborhood and to organize residents to advocate on their own behalf. DSNI has grown in its membership from 400+ to over 1000 since it was created in 1984. The Board of 31 is comprised of elected representatives of the four groups mentioned above. After residents initially contested their relative representation vis-a-vis the other groups on the Board, they increased their size to 51% of the Board. This initial struggle for resident control of the Board set the tone for the direction the planning process would take.

The nine month planning process culminated with the formulation of "The DSNI Revitalization Plan: A Comprehensive Community Controlled Strategy" in September of 1987. The plan was comprehensive in that it incorporated residents' ideas, in their order of priority, regarding not
only physical development but also human and economic development. DSNI is now phasing in implementation of the plan. DSNI as an organization is founded on the belief that to revitalize Dudley in a manner that benefits current residents, the effort necessarily requires their participation, and more importantly their direction. The position of people involved with DSNI is that Dudley's future will depend as much on their organized power to shape the course of development as it will on other factors that loom overhead -- the City's cooperation, the State's fiscal situation and the market among others. DSNI members feel that it is they who will ultimately carry this plan to fruition, with needed institutional support along the way.

Nevertheless, DSNI's efforts to turn the tide of disinvestment and abandonment and rebuild its community, give a clear idea of the difficult issues facing the community group. How is the planning process community controlled? How does DSNI incorporate the community residents in making complex planning and development decisions? Are residents empowered in this process? How does DSNI maintain a balance between the physical and the human development aspects of the plan? How does DSNI manage both to confront and to cooperate with the powers that be? How does DSNI carry out planning and development with the limited resources of a small non-profit? These are but some of the difficult problems which DSNI has grappled with in
the past and continues to face in the present.

It is necessary at this point to clarify the concept of neighborhood and its importance as a social, political, and economic base.

2. THE CONCEPT OF NEIGHBORHOOD

In their Neighborhood Organizer's Handbook, Warren and Warren note that:

Beyond the family, the neighborhood is the most universal base of social life to be found in any society... (because it) is a critical intersecting point between often isolated individuals and the mass society. This integrating role is... first via the sense of belonging and community which many neighborhoods provide and, second, via the more utilitarian helping and problem-solving resources which residents in a given neighborhood possess. ¹

Warren and Warren hold that it is the "adaptive capacity" of neighborhoods that is critical to their being able to absorb the "shocks of larger society". Neighborhoods accomplish this through the social networks that provide the web of coping resources. Berger and Neuhaus maintain that neighborhoods are key "mediating structures" between the individual and the larger societal institutions because they are "the value-laden and value-maintaining

Agencies in society ... the people-sized institutions."

Among the many important functions that Warren and Warren outline for neighborhoods is that of "status area". Whereas status is often achieved through materialistic displays in more affluent areas, poorer neighborhoods may make status claims that actually supplant those valued by larger society. Their research in Detroit also suggests that, generally, the neighborhood is of greater significance as a social base for blacks than for whites. They determined that black neighborhoods often assume a greater variety of functions for its residents than white neighborhoods do. One explanation given for this is that since low-income people, particularly blacks, are limited in their mobility, they are necessarily more reliant on their immediate neighborhood than whites. Factors like race, ethnicity and income do determine the demands that are made of a neighborhood by its residents.

Different neighborhood planning and development strategies have traditionally treated the "neighborhood" in only one of its various dimensions: as a network of social relations, as an architectural and structural setting, as a locus of political activity, etc. As we will see, these

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strategies rarely adopted a more complex, holistic understanding of the neighborhood as the ground for planning. What follows is a discussion of these past approaches to planning at the neighborhood level.

3. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING APPROACHES

Rohe and Gates identify three periods in the history of neighborhood planning, each of which addresses neighborhood problems in a distinct way. "The authors describe these as: the settlement house approach, the neighborhood unit approach and the community action approach. Over time, the role of citizens increased progressively and the concept of neighborhood changed as programs developed over time.

The Settlement House Approach

According to Rohe and Gates, the settlement approach viewed the neighborhood as a locus of social relations characterized by similar class and racial/ethnic composition. This movement has its roots in England, where the Industrial Revolution brought on the urban consequences of industrialization. People applied their newfound belief in science to their sense of justice and began to work at the neighborhood level. They focused on the individual, the family and the neighborhood to address the issues of urban poverty. This idea spread throughout the northeast of the

Ibid., pp. 13 and sqq.
U.S. in the latter part of the nineteenth century and resulted in the creation of The National Federation of Settlements in 1911.

One-hundred and thirty settlement houses had been established by 1930. While at first the settlement houses promoted activities centered around cultural and intellectual pursuits, they quickly engaged themselves with the problems of local residents, like working conditions. Settlement activists determined that the problem of the poor and immigrant communities stemmed from their lack of integration into mainstream middle-class culture. Settlement houses, therefore, sought to help assimilate immigrants and to strengthen families and neighborhoods. 5

The settlement house movement was steeped in the philosophies of Christianity, democracy and science. The movement espoused ideals of brotherhood, belief in democratic institutions and empirical analysis, all of which shaped the programmatic approaches developed. 6 The settlement houses relied on private funding, thus maintaining financial independence of public dollars. Among the major shortcomings of this movement are its focus on the individual and an uncritical analysis of the institutional

5 Ibid., p.16.

6 Ibid., p.18.
factors leading to poverty. Whereas the settlement house approach focused mostly on the social aspect of neighborhood, the neighborhood unit approach focused on its physical aspects.

The Neighborhood Unit Approach

The neighborhood unit approach developed more or less concurrently as the settlement house movement, yet its focus was quite different. According to that approach, intervention was thought to be most meaningful at the physical level of the neighborhood. In the thirties, recognizing the need for fomenting social interaction and political participation in face of sprawling urban development, Clarence Perry put forth his idea of a neighborhood unit. Perry believed that the built environment was at the root of the problem.

As the solution to urban physical, social and political ills, he proposed the creation of planned neighborhoods, which would be based around an elementary school and have common recreational and commercial space. He laid out "six principles of neighborhood design," founded on the belief that physical surroundings engender social behavior. This lead to the charge that this perspective actually fostered physical determinism and segregation. Nonetheless, the neighborhood unit persists as an important planning model, especially for new residential
development.' This approach, though, did not impact urban neighborhoods as intended. The community action approach, with a focus on the neighborhood as a political entity, had direct effects on urban areas.

The Community Action Approach

The era of the 40's and 50's ascribed new roles to planning and government. As a result of the Depression and World War II, the central government assumed ever greater responsibility for the well-being of its citizens. The welfare state was consolidating. Planning, which broadened its purview, became more comprehensive. While post-war industrialization caused the accelerated growth of cities and their surroundings, it aggravated inner-city conditions -- already worsened by underinvestment dating back to the 1920's. The federal government ushered in a response to this situation with legislation, the Housing Act of 1949, enabling municipalities to undertake "redevelopment" programs. Title I of this Act allocated one billion dollars in loans and 500 million dollars in grants to clear inner city "slums." Sternlieb and Listokin state that the 1949

Ibid., p.30.

Act was, in part, a reply to the concerns of downtown and real estate entrepreneurs, who were becoming distraught with the conditions of the inner city. "The economic centrality of major cities and their basic vigor was viewed as unimpaired. All that was required was cosmetic clean-up -- sometimes viewed as moving the poor -- and increasingly the blacks -- to less obtrusive locations."  

Cities made clear choices favoring their downtowns as opposed to their neighborhoods in their resource allocation decisions. Cities supplied private entrepreneurs with subsidized land (that had been acquired through eminent domain), tax benefits and development opportunities in order to build luxury housing, hotels, and, commercial, industrial and public facilities.  

City officials and their private sector counterparts believed that downtown investment would trigger the resurgence of the central city. Such activity would attract commercial and business interests, create jobs and lure back the suburbanized middle-class.  

Although the Housing Act of 1954 presented modifications for the renewal programs, these were not implemented. Changes included rehabilitating rather than eliminating housing, relocating rather than removing residents, involving rather than alienating residents from the decision-making process.

Ibid.

program activities and setting rather than obviating a minimum housing code standard.\(^{11}\)

By the early 1960's, new federal efforts surfaced for addressing the issues confronting inner cities. "Urban Removal" had clearly failed to eradicate poverty through the eradication of whole neighborhoods. The seeds had been sown for strategies that included citizens and broadened the avenues of intervention.

Two important programs were initiated in the 1960's which emphasized a comprehensive and participatory approach for addressing urban problems. The Community Action Program (CAP) was created under the Equal Opportunity Act in 1964 and the Model Cities Program under the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act in 1966. The Community Action Program was administered through independent agencies at the municipal level which developed their own programs to confront poverty. Two salient aspects of this program were its focus on citizen participation in planning and on capacity building within the neighborhood. Organizing activities became so widespread that the legislation was eventually changed to have cities control the CAP agencies. Then in 1971, Nixon eliminated the Office of Equal Opportunity, which oversaw the Community Action Program, leaving the activities of the latter dispersed among

\(^{11}\) Rohe and Gates, p. 34.
different federal agencies, but not eliminated altogether.\footnote{12}

The Model Cities Program, overseen by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, provided federal funds for the local planning, development and implementation of comprehensive plans for revitalizing "neighborhoods of slum and blighted areas". Model Cities agencies -- which functioned out of city hall -- disbursed Model Cities funds as well as those of other federal programs in place at the time. The program also proposed to demonstrate marked changes in targeted neighborhoods; complement local municipal policies; address physical and social needs; reduce the need for citizen participation.

In 1974, new legislation structurally changed the channels for funding community development efforts. Title I of the Housing Act replaced the programmatic approach of earlier legislation with the Community Development Block Grant disbursal of funding. This program continued to fund Model Cities agencies and they were able to continue their activities.

DSNI's approach, in many ways a departure from the approaches just discussed, will be studied in chapter three. Before embarking on the case study, however, it is necessary to survey some important episodes in the history of Roxbury, which is the topic of my next chapter.

\footnote{12}. Ibid.
CHAPTER II: HISTORY OF ROXBURY

In the first part of this chapter, an overview of Boston's history since the postwar period provides a context for understanding many of the problems and issues facing the Roxbury community today. The discussion outlines the major impacts of federal policies, the changes in the economy, demographic shifts and the persistence of discriminatory practices on Boston's black community during the 1950's, 60's and 70's. I attempt to furnish a political-economic framework for understanding imbalanced development in Roxbury.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the more recent political and development history of Roxbury, that of the 1980's. The discussion will culminate in an account of the specific conditions leading to the creation of DSNI.

1. DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Throughout the 50's and 60's, public sector initiatives poured federal dollars into major cities across the country. Attention focused on construction of inner city transportation infrastructure to attract suburban professionals into the city; renewing the physical environment of the inner city by developing the downtown and replacing "slum" neighborhoods with isolated new middle-class ones through the Urban Renewal Program after 1949; and
addressing comprehensively the range of issues affecting poverty-afflicted urban areas, through the Model Cities Program after 1966. During the fifties and sixties, public federal funds flowed into Boston through Urban Renewal and underwrote much of downtown private industrial and commercial development. The intent was "to assemble enough land for private industry to build efficient, modern structures"\textsuperscript{13}, in view of the fact that industry would not profit if it had to buy large downtown parcels in addition to developing them. According to the Chamber of Commerce, "this undertaking is proof that renewal can serve as a vehicle for private ... development ... The classic partnership of city officials and private interests aimed at improving the economic base of the city."\textsuperscript{14} The public role was to vouch for the supposed public interests of the project and to put forth the subsidies. In this manner, the municipality was able to clear land on terms that were advantageous to private developers.\textsuperscript{15}

The "New York Streets" neighborhood of the South End was the first project area slated for renewal in Boston and


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p.25.

subsequently earned the status of "national model" for an urban renewal initiative. Named after cities in New York state with names of Native American nations, New York Streets was strategically located for light industry and commercial development, given its proximity to major thoroughfares. A diverse neighborhood -- inhabited mainly by Blacks and also Irish, Portuguese, Puerto Ricans, Albanians, Greeks, Lithuanians, Armenians, Jews, Filipinos and Chinese -- New York Streets was razed in 1953. In diaspora fashion, residents fled throughout Boston, mostly along color lines. Whereas most white families moved to South Boston, Dorchester and Jamaica Plain, most Black families went to Washington Park, Lower Roxbury and North Dorchester. 16

The next location to suffer eradication was the West End, predominantly a Jewish and Italian neighborhood. Charles River Park, high-rise, expensive, garden apartments, now tower in its stead.

Then in 1960, the Boston Redevelopment Authority was established to execute the dual functions of planning and redevelopment for the City, as recommended by the Chamber of Commerce. The objectives of Urban Renewal were, from that point onward, faithfully carried out by the Boston Redevelopment Authority. By the late 1970's, Boston had reaped the benefits of "professionalized management under a

16. Ibid.
series of pro-development mayors," and a centralized planning/development body -- downtown Boston had blossomed.

The 1948 Plan of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for highway development included, among other elements, the Southwest Corridor Project (SWCP). The plan aimed to extend Interstate 95 through Roxbury. Initial demolition leveled homes and businesses along a wide path, extending from Lower Roxbury through Roxbury to Jamaica Plain. People who lost their homes were compensated by the state, but not sufficiently to be able to purchase new homes in these areas. And when they sought home loans, they found banks and insurance companies decidedly against making loans in these neighborhoods.

In addition to homes, outmoded industrial plants that lined the Penn Central Railroad tracks were also demolished as part of the Southwest Corridor Project. Although the plants were out of use, the owners were also remunerated, enabling them to relocate. By the early 1960's, however, a massive multi-racial and multi-class coalition formed to oppose continued destruction of inner city neighborhoods.

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17 Mauricio Gaston and Marie Kennedy, "Capital Investment or Community Development? The Struggle for Control of Turf by Boston's Black and Latino Community", Boston, UMASS, August 1986.

In 1970, the coalition halted then Governor Sargent from further implementing the Southwest Corridor Project.

Demographically, Roxbury emerged as the heart of the black community by the late 50's. Displaced from the South End, Blacks were now concentrated in Roxbury and North Dorchester. Whites fled increasingly to the outskirts of the City, following the new jobs and in search of "the American dream" of private homeownership, homogeneous white communities and responsive school systems. The suburbs prospered, providing the labor market for growing suburban industries. However, Blacks in the inner city were excluded from the jobs and housing found in the suburbs. Blacks, along with immigrant workers, had only unskilled and service sector jobs available to them, as these were the only ones offered by remaining industries. 17

2. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL HISTORY

After World War II, Boston's economy began to shift from an industrial, manufacturing and trade post to a financial and high-technology research and development center. These economic shifts emanating from the private sector changed the nature of the City of Boston. Structural changes in the economy severely affected the Boston's Black community in the decades of the 50's, 60's and 70's. The 50's marked the regeneration of the state's economy with the

17 Ibid.
creation of the outlying high technology belt, Route 128. The local university research base spawned commercial and industrial opportunities and growth which, in turn, created suburban residential growth. The high technology industry propelled Boston out of a declining economic climate brought on by the exodus of both manufacturing industries and capital.

While professional jobs increased outside of the City, Gaston and Kennedy point out that Boston lost 45% of its manufacturing jobs and 61% of its wholesale and retail trade jobs between 1947 and 1975.\textsuperscript{20} The number of Black workers increased in Roxbury, through in-migration from the South, while job opportunities dwindled. These losses were "accompanied by falling municipal revenues, declining city services, deteriorating building stock and infrastructure, and other signs of the urban crisis."\textsuperscript{21}

Decaying city conditions affected Roxbury disproportionately. During this general time period, between 1950 and 1980, Roxbury experienced a net loss of 57% in its general population.\textsuperscript{22} With white flight came general disinvestment, by both public and private interests. Instead of replacing "blighted" housing, Urban Renewal

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{21} Gaston and Kennedy, 1986.

\textsuperscript{22} Roxbury Technical Assistance Project, 1986 in Gaston and Kennedy, 1986.
eradicated housing and industry altogether in Madison Park and Washington Park, for example. Madison Park, which was the residential heart of Lower Roxbury, was cleared for the construction of a new high school. Washington Park, the most substantial of urban renewal efforts ventured in Roxbury, lost 35% of its housing stock and witnessed considerable displacement. Although some homes were rehabilitated or newly constructed, many efforts were never completed.

In addition, redlining and arson related activity greatly worsened conditions for Roxbury residents -- homeowners, would-be homeowners and renters alike. Discriminatory redlining practices denied owners home improvement loans to make badly needed repairs on a maturing housing stock, much of which dated back to the early 1900's. This led many to abandon their homes entirely, even in cases where they had already paid off their mortgages.

Redlining also denied would-be homeowners mortgages as banks worried about the equity considerations of properties located in Roxbury. Additionally, tenants were often in precarious situations with absentee landlords. Many such owners exorted high rents, did not invest back into upkeep of the units and eventually burned their buildings for insurance collection purposes. Abandoned as well as burned

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out homes were eventually torn down, leaving in their wake vacant land throughout Roxbury.

With respect to the political development of the Black community, geo-political problems in the electoral processes governing School Committee and City Council elections hindered the success of black candidates. In 1940, City Council elections were by district, enabling the first black to be elected, although his election required a court order to be seated. Shortly thereafter, the electoral process was changed to at-large district seats. This resulted in subordinating the black vote to the majority white vote, making it very difficult to get Black representatives elected.

The previous discussion does not touch upon the struggles waged to desegregate the Boston school system. This important chapter in local and national history is but another example of "disinvestment" in human terms rather than in physical terms. Although this thesis cannot accommodate a thorough discussion of this aspect, let this not minimize its importance.

Even from this superficial and brief history it is clear that the combination of misguided public programs, public and private disinvestment and discriminatory practices by the private sector, among other factors, have jointly and systematically marginalized Roxbury increasingly.

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King, 1981, p.83
over time -- economically, politically and socially. Public funds facilitated the transfer of resources, services, quality education and jobs away from Roxbury to the suburbs and later to the revitalized areas of the City.

Having to fend for itself, the Black community of Roxbury has sought a variety of ways to address its housing, labor, social service needs. The next section discusses some of the recent strategies developed. The discussion relate each of these to DSNI's efforts.

3. RECENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN ROXBURY

The recent political climate in both the city of Boston and in the Roxbury neighborhood provided, in many ways, a favorable set of circumstances for the successful creation and development of DSNI. Raymond Flynn, whose neighborhood commitment won him the Mayor's seat in 1983, was to mark a change in the way City Hall addressed the needs of Boston residents. The "neighborhood Mayor" issued a series of new programs geared towards establishing a kindred spirit with the neighborhoods. Boston's neighborhoods, ruled for 14 years by the highly-centralized administration of Kevin White, had been peripheralized from the core of power at City Hall. The machine had benefitted some, but not the majority of Boston's residents. Flynn's administration, with promises of opening up City Hall to Boston's citizens, unleashed a flurry of activity at the local level. People
demands were finally falling on seemingly "friendly ears".

A year or so into Flynn's tenure, The Boston Globe leaked the BRA's Dudley Square Plan. The $750 million plan proposed to revitalize the Dudley Square area with the construction of new office and retail space, the rehabilitation of local public housing into cooperatives and the development of large vacant parcels into moderate and market rate housing units. The plan stated that:

(It) was prepared by the planning department of BRA as a statement of its goals for the redevelopment of the Dudley neighborhood. The plan set off a debate about the nature of redevelopment, citizen participation and empowerment and the role of developers versus citizens in rebuilding urban communities. The plan has no official status and the BRA has undertaken to repair some of the fallout from the release of the report.**

The "fallout" was the public outcry by Roxbury residents to this redevelopment plan, which was seen by many residents as an expansionist, gentrifying and illegitimate. First, outspoken members and longtime Afro-American activists of the Roxbury community came together as the leadership in the Organizing Committee of the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority (OCGRNA) to oppose the formulation and implementation of the plan. They argued that rather than extend to Roxbury the benefits of Boston's boom, the BRA plan actually represented Roxbury's bust. The plan advocated moderate and market rate housing, while

** The Dudley Square Plan: A Strategy for Neighborhood Revitalization (Boston: Boston Redevelopment Authority, December 1984), cover page.
lacking provisions for maintaining and creating more affordable units.

Second, the OCGRNA challenged the formulation of a plan for the Black community without having carried out a proper public process. Stephen Coyle, Flynn's newly appointed director at the BRA, reportedly received community input through contact with minority developers. The OCGRNA took issue with the notion that the minority developers were considered representative of the sentiment of the greater Roxbury community. Roxbury residents and black for-profit developers had come down on different sides of the fence on several prior occasions and this one proved to be another case in point.

Efforts to "repair some of the fallout from the release of the report" included Coyle's proposition to create a Project Area Committee (PAC), which the Mayor would appoint and entrust with project review power. Calling for nothing less than veto power over development decisions in Roxbury, the OCGRNA elected its own overseeing body: the Interim PAC. The Mayor subsequently recognized and incorporated the elected members into the Roxbury PAC. Then, at a large Roxbury town meeting, Flynn agreed that the Roxbury PAC be vested with veto power. He later reneged on this promise, which led the OCGRNA to file a suit against the City.

In effect, this action made it very difficult for the BRA to carry out further development plans in Roxbury. The
lawsuit challenged the BRA's standing to pursue renewal-type development since Roxbury had not been designated as a renewal area. This brought with it a series of obligations to community participation in the decision-making process. As a result, the BRA lay low in the Roxbury neighborhood and concentrated on obtaining community participation in the rezoning process that it initiated in 1986.

Being comprised of supporters of Mel King in the 1983 Mayoral campaign, the GRNA was not receptive to the Flynn administration in the first place. Now with a legal suit between them, the GRNA and the City were deadlocked. It was not clear how the impasse would be broken.

In addition to the hostile tensions between the leadership of the City and that of the Roxbury neighborhood, other voices in the neighborhood began to propose the idea of the secession of Roxbury from Boston, adding fuel to the fire. Although this idea gained mixed support from within the Black community, it forced the City to respond to the issues most ardently felt by Roxbury residents: inequitable distribution of resources and services among the City's neighborhoods, racism, the needs for affordable housing and for jobs and training, etc. The Mandela campaign was ultimately defeated in a Referendum, but was sufficiently

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alarmed the City to more aggressively avenues of entry into Roxbury. DSNI became just the opportunity Flynn needed to gain allies in a generally hostile territory. As Gus Newport said at the GRNA Annual Meeting in 1989, "We all understand that the bold effort of the Mandela campaign has enhanced DSNI's efforts." DSNI's demands to exert greater control over development in the Dudley neighborhood seem much more palatable than those of either the GRNA or the Mandela proponents over all of Roxbury. In addition, DSNI had the financial backing of the Riley Foundation.

Having scanned the some of the major economic and political trends in Roxbury as a whole, I now focus more specifically on the conditions germaine to the Dudley Street neighborhood.

4. THE DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD

Several areas had been identified within Roxbury and North Dorchester as neighborhood sub-areas by the Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency (NDEA), the body that oversaw planning and development at the neighborhood level. The sub-areas were defined within the broader Roxbury and North Dorchester boundaries, with Blue Hill Avenue serving as a major demarcation line between the
two. The Dudley Street neighborhood, in turn, straddled areas from both Roxbury and North Dorchester.

The Dudley neighborhood was created to encompass the residential area both, within three important commercial nodes (Dudley Square and Upham's Corner, primarily, and Grove Hall) as well as surrounding the 30 acre vacant land mass in the middle of this area, which was coined the Triangle indicated by its shape. Through the Dudley neighborhood ran the two major transit arteries, Blue Hill Ave., indigenous to Roxbury and Dudley Street, indigenous to both Roxbury and North Dorchester, which also lined either side of the Triangle.

However, the neighborhood took its name from the vein that ran through the "Core Area" of the neighborhood -- Dudley Street. The neighborhood that had been created by its founders was divided into the Core and Secondary Areas, indicating priority for the area most ravaged by the effects of disinvestment. More information about the genesis of the organization and the boundaries set by it follows in the next chapter.

The objective features about this area, however, explain the attention and concern that had grown for the area. The Dudley neighborhood in Roxbury is only about 1.5 square miles in area and less than two miles from downtown

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Boston. One of its most salient characteristics is its 1300+ parcels of vacant land. One-third of these are City-owned; one-third are also in tax arrears. In fact, over one-half of the City's inventory of vacant land is located in the Dudley neighborhood.

Dudley's varied population of approximately 14,500 includes residents of Black, Latino, Cape Verdean and White descent. According to 1980 Census data aggregated by the DAC consultants, the ethnic breakdown within the Core area of the Dudley neighborhood is about: 60% Black, 27% Hispanic and 14% White. Cape Verdeans comprise 15-20% of the population and are included in the Black and Hispanic Census count. The fastest growing communities since the taking of the 1980 Census have been the Latino and the Cape Verdean.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is a multi-racial membership organization whose aim is one of community-controlled revitalization in a neighborhood which is at once one of Boston's poorest areas as well as one with tremendous development potential. A strong and vibrant community, many of Dudley's residents have lived long years in the neighborhood. Nevertheless, the median income is about $13,454 in 1987 dollars compared to a Boston figure of $16,915. About 40% of the residents live below poverty level.

The preceding passage introduced us to the Dudley area.
We will now turn to the chapter that traces the development of DSNI and the issues faced at some of the major turning points.
CHAPTER 3: THE DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE: CASE STUDY

In this chapter, I highlight the transformative junctures in the evolution of DSNI's community planning and development processes. An analysis of the particular phases of this process renders a clearer understanding of the issues and pressures confronting DSNI. Examination of the actions and resolutions taken by DSNI at these points reveal the underpinnings of its guiding philosophy, as well as the adaptations of which DSNI was capable. The guiding philosophy of the DSNI Board has been that organizing is part and parcel of development; that residents of the Dudley neighborhood must be able to defend the interests of their various communities, the unity of which can only be obtained through consensus-building and organizing.

I have distinguished the following stages in the development of DSNI: the genesis of DSNI, its formalization, its consolidation through organizing, the community planning process, and the implementation of the Revitalization Plan. There are certain salient issues that characterize each stage and they are developed further below. Such a chronology can only give an approximate idea of the complex way in which each phase overlaps with the previous one and, in a sense, subsumes all the previous stages into its continuing evolution. However, a review of some efforts initiated by fellow Dudlians prior to DSNI's creation

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precedes the storyline of DSNI.

The protagonists in the story of DSNI represent many sectors of the Dudley community and include players from outside the community. Within the neighborhood, initially, there were mostly social service agencies, community development corporations (CDCs) and a few religious organizations, some of which served a specific ethnic/racial enclave. Among the participating agencies were La Alianza Hispana, Cape Verdean Community House, Upham's Corner Community Health Center. The local CDCs included NUestra Comunidad CDC, Dorchester Bay CDC and Lena Park. The religious groups included St. Patrick's Church, St. Paul's Church and the American Muslim Mission. Residents who later assumed increasingly important roles represented each of the four racial/ethnic groups: black, Cape Verdean, Latino and white. Small family businesses and mid-sized local businesses also joined the Board.

Outside the neighborhood the major players are City Hall under Flynn and later the Boston Redevelopment Authority, under the direction of Stephen Coyle. Initially, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services worked closely with DSNI. Later, the Public Facilities Department became the main link to DSNI. The nature of these links cannot be understood, however, without a look at the predecessors to DSNI in the Dudley neighborhood.
ANTECEDENTS TO THE CREATION OF DSNI

Before the formation of DSNI, several efforts to address neighborhood-wide problems in Dudley were initiated by rather different constituencies. Although neither one ever came to full fruition each had planted seeds for what would eventually blossom into a coalition that broadly united many of the same as well as new participants. These initial attempts should be seen as smaller dimensions in the larger continuum of struggle in the Dudley neighborhood, whose thwarted results rendered its organizers more experienced, determined and, in many cases, more combative. The three attempts were those of the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition, the Concerned Church of Roxbury and the Jesus Helps Baptist Church. In 1981, the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition was initiated by Thomas Reeves, a faculty member at the Roxbury Community College, to unite local social service agencies in facing common problems in Dudley. There were several impediments to the Coalition's success, largely proceeding from the lack of commitment of the collaborating agencies. For one, the agency heads themselves did not follow up their avowed support with direct and concerned involvement in the planning meetings, choosing to delegate their responsibilities to staff. The lack of commitment at upper organizational levels ensured the Coalition's failure. In the end, the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition did not coalesce far beyond the areas of mutual interest where the
agendas of the individual agencies overlapped."

Indeed, one cannot reasonably expect individual agencies to cooperate after a history of activity spurred precisely by competition with each other. Although such competition, most often for funding, usually serves to enhance the agencies' ability to develop programs and provide services in their particular areas of responsibility, this increasing specialization renders the agencies all the more incapable of envisioning a collaborative plan which comprehensively addresses the needs of a community."

Another effort by the Concerned Church of Roxbury, initiated by local church leaders, suffered a fate somewhat similar to that of the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition. Steinglass points out that the individual church groups failed to see far beyond the interests of their particular organizations. A further problem he cites is the priority given by this effort to the perceived spiritual needs of the community and its resulting inability to give sufficient attention to the material needs and conditions of the community.

In the early 1980's another attempt was made to address some of the problems facing the Dudley area, this time by

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local parishioners of the Jesus Helps Baptist Church.\textsuperscript{30} Because this attempt has often gone unnoticed, and because it more closely parallels the efforts of DSNI, it will be given somewhat more detailed treatment. The Church developed an "open space" plan for the area of abandoned and vacant land bounded by Blue Hill Ave., Dudley Street and West Cottage Street, which is included in the Triangle area that later became the focus of the DSNI revitalization effort. The Church's planning effort grew out of its neighborhood preservation activities and programs. As a result of redlining practices, Church members could not obtain loans to rehabilitate homes they owned or to buy homes that they rented. In response, the Church established a $50,000 funding pool from which local residents could draw, at low or no interest. Through their involvement in this in-house church program, residents began to consider issues broader than those of financing. They began to grapple with the larger problems of developing the open space, and of organizing themselves into a body capable of making the necessary development decisions.

The events that ensued characterize the oppressive relationship that has shaped the community's experience vis-a-vis City Hall. After consulting residents in the area about their priorities, their concerns, and their

\textsuperscript{30} Interview with Paul Bothwell, local resident and member of the Development Committee of the Board of DSNI.
aspirations for the neighborhood, the Jesus Helps Baptist Church called in the Urban Forestry division of the Department of Agriculture. This division provided consulting assistance and generated models of the housing that the residents envisioned for the vacant land. "A sense of momentum was starting to grow," remarked a resident. However, when residents approached the White administration with their ideas and the models, the City would not even talk with the group. The same resident noted that the City showed "sheer disdain" for the neighborhood and its residents: "What we thought and said simply did not matter... (The City) said it will do what it wanted to do when the time came to do it." After concerted efforts to establish a working relationship with the City were thwarted, the group lost momentum. "They just plain beat us to a pulp in the end... It breaks people even worse to get stomped on than if nothing happens. It was an embittering experience for a neighborhood that had suffered so badly already," remarked this resident.

The preceding accounts represent frustrated attempts to advance changes from the community level in the Dudley neighborhood. Each attempt was launched by a different sector of the community: the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition by local human service agencies, the Concerned Church of Roxbury by the local churches and the Jesus Helps Baptist

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31 Ibid.
Church by a parish of local residents. This last effort is significant in being the only case in which the residents themselves initiated the effort, and which got as far as outlining a plan and presenting it to the city administration. In the general context of outside threat and neighborhood disintegration, local directors of organizations launched another coalition effort in 1984.

1. GENESIS OF DSNI

The genesis stage requires an account of the circumstances under which DSNI was conceived. Here, the concept of the "Dudley Street Neighborhood" is introduced and adopted. A "neighborhood" is created when residents and agencies normally identified along racial/ethnic lines rather than along geographic lines. The founding agencies grappled with the problems which affected them as well as the coalitions which they formed. These included questions of boundaries, purpose and membership. As we will see below, the role of Riley proved to be pivotal in generating organizational interest and broadening an initially limited agenda. The different interests of the agency-led effort and the Riley Foundation meshed conveniently.

DSNI was an outgrowth of the struggles just outlined. Many of the same agencies, churches and residents later joined together to form the coalition DSNI grew to be. The objective conditions of poverty and abandonment that lead to
the above-mentioned efforts were still in place, yet, new
trends were becoming apparent. As mentioned in the previous
chapter, the years of neglect and decay had created
intolerable conditions in Dudley. Many of the residents
sensed the impending danger up ahead. Many of the black
residents were survivors of "urban removal" schemes in the
South End during the 60's; many of the current Latino
residents were also victims of displacement from the South
End and Jamaica Plain, where a wave of gentrification had
swept through in the early eighties. The rate of arson had
increased dramatically once again.\footnote{Boston Arson Prevention Commission, \textit{Report to the
Boston Redevelopment Authority on the Status of Arson in
Dudley Square} (Boston: Boston Redevelopment Authority, 1986).} Real estate agents
were slipping tantalizing notices under people's doors that
made grand offers for their homes. Others were coming
around in person and offering cash up front.\footnote{Accounts given to me by residents during the time I
was organizing in the neighborhood.} Gentlemen
with clipboards in business suits and expensive cars were
seen surveying vacant lots. All of these recalled old
block-busting techniques familiar to residents in that area.

All of the above indicators were probably themselves
related to an even broader set of forces -- most
importantly, downtown development. Residents feared that
the ripple effects of downtown development would soon turn
into a wave of gentrification and displacement headed for
Later on, the leak to the *Boston Globe* in early 1985, regarding the redevelopment of Dudley Station, confirmed residents' worst fears. There were, in fact, big plans for Roxbury up ahead. It was clear, however, that the current residents would not be the ones to benefit from them. Whether the threat of displacement was real or perceived, a "seige mentality" pervaded the neighborhood. A well-known element of successful organizing throughout the world is precisely the existence of a perceived threat from an "outsider", which serves as a tremendously binding force. In light of the long-standing conditions, the imminent threat of displacement and later the involvement of a small foundation all contributed to the formation of a coalition whose mission was self-defense, in a collective neighborhood context.

During the Fall of 1983, La Alianza Hispana and Nuestra Comunidad CDC began to plan a Search Conference for February 1984 with the technical support of MIT. The directors of these two Latino organizations, Nelson Merced and Melvyn Colon, were recent graduates of the Masters in City Planning Program at MIT and both were members of the Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation (HOPE), a group concerned with three major policy areas: health, economic development and education. Several other members of HOPE had also attended the program at MIT or taught at MIT. The connections between
MIT, HOPE and the Latino intelligentsia were close.

The planning committee began meeting in November 1983 in preparation for the conference. It consisted of five members who were either members of the Board or staff of the two groups. Its project was to resolve the two major questions of the nature of the neighborhood boundaries and of conference participation. First, the committee adopted Nuestra's organizational boundaries, which comprehended the area where the Latino population was most concentrated, making up about a third of the population of the neighborhood. The committee acknowledged the need to draw on all resident groups and their resident resources in order to define effective development strategies. However, in determining the nature of participation, it was suggested that "a strictly representative cross-section of community residents might have undermined the Search Conference design, which is premised on a certain homogeneity or commonality of interests among participants." The committee finally agreed to focus the conference on the Latino community, while including representatives of the other ethnic/racial groups. For the conference, the committee chose twenty-five participants who were "stakeholders" in the community and who met the established criteria for participation. Stakeholders were those whose

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interest in the area was experienced through residency, work or official responsibility. Participation was sought from a broad network of Latino contacts and from some of the other racial/ethnic organizations. It promoted a large representation of community residents and equal representation of males and females.

The Search Conference was motivated by two issues the co-sponsors deemed especially relevant for the Dudley area, especially to Latino residents. First, the founders were concerned that the growing Latino community lacked a traditional cultural and economic center. They perceived the Dudley Street and Upham's Corner areas to be the center of the Latino population. Second, the sponsors wanted to promote,

  defendable growth whereby the economic and physical rehabilitation of the neighborhood can be planned and arranged by community residents; where efforts can be directed towards promoting development and preventing speculative growth, and stopping displacement of current residents by continuing disinvestment or future gentrification.\(^3^5\)

The conference generated valuable ideas about the future desired for the neighborhood as well as action agendas and action groups. Much of this project was not realized in any sustained activity. There were, however, ideas that did carry over to the coalition-building effort - - DSNI -- which developed later. The most important idea was the creation of a constitution for development. Such a

\(^3^5\) Ibid., p. 8.
constitution was seen as "an attempt to reverse the tide of displacement, disinvestment, negative images and apathy in the neighborhood. It seeks to promote the bonds that will promote community viability and create a strong sense of place."

In addition, many of the recommendations offered in response to the problems in the housing and development area, such as affordable housing, vacant lots and abandoned buildings, were incorporated into Nuestra's programmatic strategies. Nuestra had effectively positioned itself to take on much of the development activity in the Dudley area.

In Spring of 1984, La Alianza Hispana received a site-visit from two Riley foundation trustees who had been providing support to the agency. The trustees were growing restless. There were no visible results from their continued support to agencies such as Alianza. As a result, they began a three-year analysis of their past donation patterns in order to improve future grant-making decisions. As one trustee put it, "We felt that Foundation capital was

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36 Ibid., p. 28.
37 Ibid., p. 33.
38 The Riley Foundation was established in 1972, when Mabel Louise Riley died. She left $20 million, much of it bequeathed to charity. In her will, she established a foundation which donates about $1 million per year to fifty grantees, most of which are agencies in struggling neighborhoods. See Richard Margolis, "Will the Patient Live?" Foundation News.

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not being used effectively." The Riley Foundation at that point decided to consolidate its grant giving. It chose to allocate substantial amounts of money into the Dudley neighborhood rather than fund many individual, isolated and dispersed causes. They saw in the Dudley neighborhood the potential for making a difference in neighborhood progress by helping to create a "bootstrap coalition." The same trustee made a further point: "We come from a very conservative, reactionary point of view.... Big government does not work.... [If this succeeds] maybe we will have proved our point." An entity, namely DSNI, was to be created to receive the funding and to carry out a long-range planning function and manage the flow of funds in the neighborhood.

The Riley Foundation committed $2 million to DSNI over five years. The Foundation, however, did not want to have DSNI labelled as a Riley Foundation "project". The revitalization effort would require other players, such as the Ford Foundation. The Riley Foundation saw itself as the catalyst. In the Fall of 1984, Merced called a meeting of a broad group of local agencies, including the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, WAITT house, Upham's Corner Health

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39 Interview with Robert Holmes, trustee of the Riley Foundation and attorney at Powers and Hall, Boston.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.
Center, Denison House and Lena Park CDC. The trustees of the Foundation knew that if they came to the first meeting the directors of the local agencies would certainly show."\(^a\) Indeed, agency directors readily attended the meeting. Holmes remarked about the agencies: "Although they [each] have a different clientele, [they also share] a common thread -- they are entrepreneurial.... They asked the same questions as start-up businesses."\(^a\)

At the meeting, Merced presented the idea of creating an organization that would be charged with overall planning for the neighborhood in an effort to control development and to attract investment that would benefit the current residents. The proposed structure of DSNI was a coalition of existing agencies and CDCs. Its function would be that of a planning body rather than a developer of housing or of a provider of social services. This appeased the concerns of some of the participating organizations, because under this plan DSNI's role would not encroach upon those of any of its member organizations.

Riley's support of this effort spurred interest in fellow agencies, for its presence "implied that the Foundation [was] willing to commit substantial funds to the

\(^a\) Ibid.

\(^a\) Ibid.
neighborhood. To the agencies this translated into continued, if not increased, financial support of their ongoing activities. Financial support to DSNI would be contingent upon its broad-based agency membership.

First, the Latino organizers expanded the organizational representativeness in the structure. "Within the first few months we knew something different had to happen. The situation required a multi-ethnic, multi-racial collaborative among the agencies", Merced recalled. Next, the agency-led effort expanded its ranks to include and be guided by residents, as explained in a later section. The concept and structure of such a "community-based" organization went through many transformations before taking its final form: a multi-racial, resident-dominated coalition. To ensure that the effective evolution of the organization, the Foundation contracted the mediating assistance of Bill Slotnik of the Community Training and Assistance Center. Slotnik shared the Foundation's concern for a broader agency coalition. This would be the only concern that the Foundation insisted upon. Throughout the rest of the process, it chose quite deliberately to "remain passive."

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"= Ibid.

" Holmes.

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The goals of the organization were rooted in the need to defend the neighborhood's residents and its turf in a proactive manner. The goals developed were:

1- to organize the residents of the neighborhood in order to enable them to advocate on their own behalf;
2- to create a comprehensive plan of development for the Dudley neighborhood;
3- to gain control of the vacant land in the neighborhood.

The agencies and CDCs were concerned with preserving the neighborhood, but in doing so they were also assuring their own organizational preservation. The "neighborhood" comprised their target areas, that is, their geographical jurisdictions as well as the residential locus of their client base. This led to some internal debate within the broader group of agencies, which then finally agreed to adopt Nuestra's boundaries as those of DSNI, with some enlargements. The most significant one was the inclusion of the Orchard Park Housing Development. Also added to the Core area was a secondary area to bring the target areas of other agencies into the framework (see Appendix 1).

Although organizational behavior predicts that agencies will act in their own best interests, as pointed out by Weiss, "the self-interests of the founding agencies were called into question at the first community meeting announcing the

"Weiss, "Substance vs. Symbol," 43."
formation of DSNI.

2. FORMALIZATION OF DSNI

The transition from the genesis to the formalization of DSNI was marked by a crisis in which residents of the neighborhood contested the legitimacy of the organization, which was dominated by agencies at the time. The salient issues in this stage are the participation and representation of residents in the context of an effort touted as "community-based". In this stage, the organization is formalized through the election of a Board, the incorporation of the organization, the hiring of staff and the opening of an office. During the planning phase when DSNI was conceived and structured, the agencies provided stability (and in the eyes of the powers that be) legitimacy to the effort. They had organizational resources, like staff time, copying machines, meeting space, which they put forth freely in order to get this effort off the ground. However, their hegemony was disquieting to residents on February 23, 1985, at the community meeting.

The goal of the meeting was to weld the community into a single constituency in defense of itself. However, a great chasm between agencies and residents appeared. The fact that the founding process was initiated among agency

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"Interview with Peter Medoff, Director of DSNI, 1984-early 1989."
directors and dominated by a Latino presence led to outright protest at the first community-wide meeting. At this meeting, the objectives and structure of DSNI were proposed. About 200 residents -- Black, Latino, Cape Verdean and White -- were in attendance. The Riley Foundation provided translation equipment in order to ensure understanding and involvement. The provision of the equipment only confirmed the Foundation's commitment to including a broad cross-section of the community.

Several black residents, together with some white residents, challenged the process, believing it not to be participatory or representative. Che Madyun, a resident who later became a three-term president of DSNI, recalled her feelings at that meeting:

They kept saying the community was going to be involved... but where was the community participation? ... If the community's going to be involved, why are there going to be so few community residents on the Board? I raised my hand and told them this is not a community process."

At this point, the agencies immediately realized that they had made a major mistake in assuming that agency-controlled was synonymous with community-based. They understood that they could not count on the support of the residents without first opening the process of planning for a revitalization effort and structuring the organization that would oversee

that effort to include the residents themselves. Without resident participation in the conceptual and planning phases of the organization, the residents questioned its validity as a community-based effort. The residents wanted to speak for themselves rather than have their interests represented by others. Merced remarked, "They resented the fact that once again they had not been involved from the very first. They were right."  

Members of the community reopened debate about boundaries and questioned the role of the Riley Foundation. Members of Grove Hall CDC, a black CDC, were particularly angry that the secondary area reached but did not include Grove Hall. The CDC's director claimed that DSNI was nothing but "a front for a Hispanic takeover" of the neighborhood. His opposition remained adamant but his aggression turned away many people who had initially listened closely to his words.

In addition, other residents questioned the Foundation's role in the "community-based" effort. Bob Holmes, one of the trustees who had been on the site visit to Alianza, was conspicuously out of place at the meeting, with his blond hair, blue eyes, wire rimmed glasses and business suit and tie. Residents voiced angry suspicion about a white foundation coming into the neighborhood:

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30 Nelson Merced, Director of La Alianza Hispana, in Boucher.
"What business do they have calling elections in our community?" they asked.\footnote{Margolis.}

It was imperative at this time to unify, centralize and control the meeting in order to salvage the effort and move forward. Concessions were made immediately and a consensus-building process ensued. This is one early instance of DSNI playing the role of the mediating organization for the various bodies within the community -- a role which it was to play throughout its existence. Slotnik proposed restructuring the Board to include more residents, and holding elections to the Board after restructuring. Holmes responded to the skepticism regarding his role by saying that he did not come to tell anybody what to do; that whether this succeeded or not would not affect him directly as he lived in the suburbs and had no personal stake in this; and that it was up to the members of the community to make things work.\footnote{Holmes.}

Those who attended the meeting publicly agreed at this juncture to reorient rather than to abandon the effort altogether. A joint committee of residents and agencies agreed to work on restructuring the Board in order to have it better reflect a "community-based effort". Che Madyun remembered that the meetings were productive and set the tone for the way business would be carried on from that
point forward: "People respected what everyone else was saying.... I had never been in that position before." The new Board grew to a 31-seat body of which residents represented at least 51% of the members. Residents now held twelve seats (three per racial/ethnic group) as opposed to the original four slots. The other sectors maintained their members constant: five Core area social service agencies, two Core area CDCs, two Core area small businesses, two Core area religious organizations, one city official, one state official, and two at-large appointees. The only other changes included the addition of two slots from the broader business community and two from the non-profit organizations in the secondary area (see Appendix 2).

On March 7, 1985, a second meeting was called which was attended about as well as the first. The new governing structure was approved. Then, in mid-April, Dudley residents held elections for the first Board of Directors. They elected Fadilah Muhammad, an Afro-American Muslim resident, and Nelson Merced, director of Alianza, as co-chairs.

Despite changes in the structure of the organization, the goals remained constant. The original goals of community and turf protection as well as management continued to be appropriate to the new structure. This coalition of residents, agencies, businesses and churches

53 Madyun, quoted in Boucher.
proceeded to establish an organization that would organize local residents, develop a plan for the neighborhood and obtain control of the vacant land. The organization became operational when it secured office space and hired staff in the spring of 1985. Once the organization had the official sanction of the community, a publicly elected Board and office space, it needed official standing. With the help of Robert Holmes, who besides being a trustee of the Riley Foundation was also a corporate lawyer, helped DSNI draft by-laws and obtain non-profit, tax-exempt status. His continued involvement with DSNI pro-bono legal counsel as well as with contacts to the corporate world. DSNI subsequently drafted its first proposal to the Riley Foundation requesting $60,000 for a planning grant. Having received it, they were ready to embark on their mission.

3. CONSOLIDATION THROUGH ORGANIZING

During the rest of 1985, DSNI set out to establish itself in the neighborhood by increasing membership among all its constituencies -- especially among residents, although also among community agencies, the small and larger businesses and the religious organizations. After the legitimacy of the organization was challenged and refounded on a broader base which gave residents preeminence on the board, the goal of the next phase was to consolidate at the base by making its legitimacy operational through grassroots
organizing, so that residents could witness the potential for obtaining results from collective mobilization. The issue at this juncture became the representativeness of the organization. In order for DSNI to be truly a "community-based organization" that advocated on behalf of the interests of the residents of the Dudley area, DSNI had to earn the support of the diverse residential population. DSNI had to conceptualize strategies based on power rather than powerlessness. It had to win small but attainable and significant victories, enabling residents to see the potential of their collective efforts. The sense of power that came, for example, from getting the neighborhood's lots cleaned up translated later into the power to envision a new future for Dudley and then to actually outline a blueprint for what that should look like --DSNI's Revitalization Plan.

The organization was being built at the base, capacitating residents to later carry out the planning and implementation.

The multi-cultural diversity which was shaping the structure of the organization had to be reflected in the staff and in concrete actions. Organizers were hired with a view to representing the various ethnic/racial groups. Staff and residents also produced a multi-lingual newsletter in English, Spanish and Cape Verdean Creole. In addition, one of DSNI's first acquisitions was translation equipment, which was used at every meeting. Each of these actions
affirmed the identity of each racial/ethnic group within the growing coalition.

In inevitable tensions developed in the course of organizing residents to exercise their collective power and assert it through a neighborhood-based organization like DSNI. Among the principal tensions was that which persisted between the agencies and the residents on the Board. Medoff remarked,

A lot of the agency representatives saw residents' involvement as a communications process -- the organization would create a plan and there would be regular meetings where people could hear what was going on...I thought it would be harmful to start putting together a plan if the neighborhood wasn't strong enough yet to feel control over what was going to happen.\(^5\)

In addition to this internal tension was the external tension between the neighborhood and the City, which had been conditioned by a history of chronic abandonment or displacement. The tension was characterized by moments of confrontation and followed by periods of cooperation with the City around different issues. Residents were not lulled into complacency after the City cooperated with their legitimate demands for better city services. Rather, their perennial mistrust of City Hall was the basis of their continued organizing activity. However, as examined later in the evolution of DSNI, the tension between confrontation and cooperation intensified as the relationship between DSNI

and the City was formalized in the implementation stage.

At first, organizing gave priority to the most winnable pressing needs. First, organizers identified the issues of most concern to individual residents as well as neighborhood associations. Residents wanted cars towed, lots cleared, local recreational areas maintained, additional police presence in the neighborhood and more surveillance of drug activity, enforcement of zoning regulations, and enforcement of housing and health codes. Organizers created block associations where they had not existed before and coordinated the ones already in existence. Then, residents and organizers began planning and waging campaigns that unified a fragmented neighborhood and created a mechanism for people's voices to be heard and for demands to be met. As a result of the pressure brought to bear by residents, the City responded to these initial demands by allocating resources to the Dudley area. For example, the City increased the towing of abandoned cars and the cleaning of vacant lots. The Flynn administration was especially responsive during those first years. Not only was DSNI in its early stages and gathering momentum, but Flynn was also initiating his first term after a campaign centered on responsiveness to "the neighborhoods," and could more freely allocate resources as he saw fit.

Out of close to home quality-of-life concerns DSNI organized campaigns aimed at fostering change on several
different fronts. The neighborhood fabric was regenerated by unifying people and sub-neighborhoods living in isolation of another and yet facing the same problems. Also, resources allocated and services delivered to the Dudley area needed to be improved dramatically. Whether it was the "DON'T DUMP ON US" campaign -- to stop the illegal dumping of debris on vacant lots -- or the "TAKE A STAND OWN THE LAND" campaign -- to obtain eminent domain designation from the City, the intent and the results were the same: to bring diverse people together around a common problem, to gather political power through effective mobilization, to apply pressure on the responsible entities, and to bring about visible changes and in this manner engender powerlessness out of powerlessness on a neighborhood-wide level. Since the "DON'T DUMP ON US" campaign was an early case of this process at work, it will serve as an example of the initial methods used by DSNI.

The "Don't Dump On Us" Campaign

The Dudley neighborhood has served as one of the City's prime dumping grounds for decades due to the illegal operation of local waste disposal companies and illegal dumping on vacant lots. The situation impacted the neighborhood physically and psychologically. Residents often remarked that so long as people dumped on Roxbury, Roxbury was always going to be a dump. Having identified illegal
dumping as an issue of major concern, the organizers brought together residents from across the neighborhood to clean-up the image of Dudley. "Don't Dump On Us!" became the rallying cry for renters, public housing tenants from Orchard Park Housing development, one of the most distressed public housing developments in Boston, and homeowners alike. This issue cut across all ethnic/racial lines as well as socio-economic lines.

The Campaign had a strategic importance. In addition to attending the issues of health and safety, neighborhood beautification and image enhancement, the Campaign also focused attention on the issue of underutilized and overly mistreated vacant land, thus preparing the groundwork for discussion about its possible future uses. This kind of issue would keep residents connected to the long-term process of planning for and developing the lots. The Campaign had three components. First, DSNI organized a large summer Clean-Up, whose purpose was to actively involve residents in making their neighborhood a more pleasant place to live. Second, the Campaign was made into a continuous effort and an on-going municipal commitment to get all the lots in the neighborhood cleaned-up and fenced off. Third, the Campaign was also aimed at getting the illegal waste disposal companies out of the neighborhood.

The first summer Clean-Up in the Dudley neighborhood created tremendous excitement among participating and
observant residents because of its magnitude. Residents and organizers had established clean-up locations throughout the neighborhood and corresponding teams of workers. In addition, the Department of Public Works and other city divisions committed their trucks and cranes for the large scale lots. Residents clamored in amazement that they "had never seen so many garbage and dump trucks roll down the streets of this neighborhood in (their) entire lives!" The Clean-Up set a precedent for what was to become a yearly event and celebration.

Early in his term, the Mayor publicly vowed to get all the vacant lots in the city cleaned-up. DSNI capitalized on this promise by pressing to have the City allocate resources proportionally to the needs of the Dudley neighborhood. Dudley had a larger concentration of vacant land than any other neighborhood across the city; Dudley collected a disproportionate amount of abandoned cars on its streets; Dudley was the only neighborhood in which illegally operating waste disposal companies existed and continued to exist because of unenforced zoning regulations. Although the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services agreed to prioritize the vacant lots in the Dudley area for cleaning and poling, the residents and organizers continued to pressure the City to close down the waste disposal companies.
or transfer stations. This effort, which took the form of a demonstration in the Fall of 1985, achieved the desired results: the closing of four illegally operating transfer stations. This effort is explained in greater detail below.

Individually, residents had repeatedly made official complaints to the City, as well as to the waste disposal companies directly, all to no avail. DSNI organized tenants from the Orchard Park Housing Development as well as surrounding residents to demonstrate outside the doors of these companies. The "Don't Dump On Us!" campaign exemplifies precisely how an existing set of conditions afforded the opportunity for various constituencies within the neighborhood to be unified, through organizing, to close down the transfer stations despite the class and racial/ethnic differences among them. Residents directly affected, like Orchard Park tenants -- both black and Latino -- and nearby Cape Verdean homeowners, joined together with other Dudley area residents to fight the source of many health-related and blight-producing problems in the neighborhood. The Orchard Park tenants, who lived next to the facilities, were exasperated with the early morning rumble of garbage trucks and were also made sick from the

Transfer station is also a term that applies to a waste disposal company because garbage is brought to this location to be separated, compressed and prepared for transfer to the landfill.
putrid stench of garbage during hot weather. The Cape Verdean and black mothers, who owned homes nearby, were in despair over the mosquito and rat bites, and resulting infections, their children received. In addition, other residents were tired of the trash that littered the area. Although separated by language, class, ethnic background the residents found common ground for effectuating action. Together they planned the demonstration and a march to various dumping sites throughout the area.

The demonstration and march in the Fall were successful in bringing out close to 100 parents and children with signs and banners, in stopping the garbage trucks from entering the facilities, in making the companies cease to operate on that day, in bringing out every television station and several papers to cover the story and in forcing the City to take expedient action. Most importantly, the protest succeeded in closing down four illegally operating waste transfer stations. The Department of Health and Hospitals and the Inspectional Services Department, under pressure from Mayor Flynn, padlocked their gates permanently. Flynn, who locked on of the gates himself, was more actively supportive than his staff. In addition, Inspectional Services and PFD cleaned and placed poles around the vacant lots to close them off so as to prevent vehicles from dumping "free of charge" rather than legally at $90 per ton.

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56 Medoff, in Boucher, op. cit.
This demonstration was important in that it brought Orchard Park tenants together with Cape Verdean, black and white homeowners in a joint effort. One of the major problems facing Orchard Park is that it is isolated -- physically, socially and psychologically -- from the rest of the Dudley community. Much of the crime, drug-dealing and violence in the area is thought to occur inside the development itself or emanate from it. Residents throughout Dudley hold negative stereotypes about Orchard Park tenants. It is commonly said, "If Roxbury is considered a dump, Orchard Park is considered a hell-hole." Bridging this gap, at least during this campaign, was a significant step.

This campaign was a step forward not only in organizing residents, but also in establishing a new relationship with the City. The coalescing of Dudley residents through DSNI around campaigns such as this gave them a more powerful voice in the ears of City officials. It not only enabled residents to be heard and to be taken more seriously, but also helped different city departments, with jurisdictions over different services, to better coordinate their provision of services. Inspectional Services Department officials often remarked how much easier it was for them to work with a community group that prioritized and coordinated grievances. It was in the interests of both DSNI and the City to ease the bureaucratic process involved in getting complaints answered.
Early campaigns such as this one increased the pressure on the City administration to reform its history of neglect with regard to Roxbury, and the Dudley neighborhood in particular. Confrontation was a first, and necessary, step to cooperation. The Flynn administration was forced to improve, if not initiate, badly needed services to the Dudley community. A working relationship with DSNI evolved. DSNI regularly supplied information to the corresponding department about locations of abandoned cars, lots that needed to be poled off, and the like. This relationship worked to the benefit of all sides. For the community, it served to raise morale and produce results. For example, people began to envision Dudley as "a better place to live" (a phrase coined at this time and still summoned as a sort of motto by the residents currently involved in DSNI's efforts). The City, on the other hand, through its joint efforts with DSNI, could now point to the beginnings of a record of service in one of the most devastated areas in the city -- an area which the City had traditionally neglected.

The initial struggles and victories of the first eight months of 1985 established DSNI's organizational strength enabling it to take on the process of long-term planning for the Dudley area. Although organizing around immediate problems affecting the neighborhood continued actively, as we will see, the primary focus of DSNI became the creation of a development plan with residents, businesses and
agencies of the Dudley neighborhood. In addition to beautifying the area, the cleaning of vacant lots also spurred talk -- much of it angry and despairing -- about what needed to be done with all the open space that was now cleared. Planning for the open space, among other neighborhood issues, now became the order of the day.

4. THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

Building on the momentum of local successes, DSNI inaugurated a nine-month planning process in the summer of 1986. This stage presented the Board members and the organizers with new challenges in terms of their respective roles. DSNI had assumed the new role of a local planning body. How was it going to carry out a comprehensive participatory planning process that actually reflected the will of a diverse body of Dudley residents? How was DSNI going to keep mobilizing residents as it entered the more technical/professional stage of planning? What roles would Board members and general members play in this process? And then how would the plan become the commonly accepted blueprint -- by residents and the City -- for development in the Dudley neighborhood? The DSNI Board maintained that organizing the residents was necessarily the means by which to secure residents' involvement and control of this neighborhood planning effort. DSNI understood that the plan needed to be representatively inclusive of the various...
sectors of the Dudley community in order to be a genuine reflection of a diverse community's consensual will. DSNI also recognized that residents had to "own" and promote the plan in order to have it be recognized as a testament of Dudley residents' determination to see their neighborhood revitalized in a manner that benefitted them in the end. The consensus building around a common vision which residents shaped and committed themselves to could only be achieved through community organizing. Community organizing was the foundation for the planning process, according to DSNI, which insisted that planning for Dudley's future was misbegotten without the residents' direction and that organizing the residents was meaningful only if its purpose was to empower them to carry the revitalization effort forward. The organizers focused their activities on creating resident planning committees which outlined priorities around different areas of concern in the development of the neighborhood. The organizers in addition continued to organize residents around issues of immediate concern to them.

Appreciating the need for technical assistance to first elicit the residents' vision of a renewed neighborhood and then to translate this vision into a workable plan, DSNI sought independent planning consultation. Yet, how could Dudley residents, through DSNI, proceed to control the planning process? As mentioned before, resident control of
the Board was obtained early in the formalization stage, granting residents a leading voice in directing the organization. Then, empowering the residents, developing internal leadership, and inspiring resident participation -- all of which consolidated the residents' political clout -- were to root the planning process in the Dudley citizenry. Also, control by the residents and the DSNI Board of the consultant hiring process afforded DSNI more control over the planning process. They set criteria for selection and chose to suit their priorities.

The Board outlined the hiring process to be followed and the criteria for selection. Two local foundations, the Riley Foundation and the Hyams Foundation agreed to pay for the consulting fees and the Board issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) on July 21, 1986 that outlined requirements of the planning team and scope of the planning process. The process paralleled that of public agencies, which also issue bids for contracts. DSNI was looking for a minority-owned team with a track record in community planning efforts. The four major components of the plan were to include land use planning, housing, economic development and social services. The RFP emphatically required community participation in the planning process. The Plan would necessarily "directly (reflect) the priorities of the residents and organizations in the neighborhood" and "educate the community about the issues being addressed and recommendations being
In the course of selecting the consultant team, inherent tensions surfaced on the Board, mirroring some of those at the community level. Based on the different value placed upon different qualifications, some of the residents and agencies supported different teams. It was relatively simple to narrow the choice down from an initial pool of fifteen submitted proposals to nine which were seriously considered for the contract. The final decision lay between two firms, each of which offered DSNI valuable and yet different strengths. DAC International, a Washington-based firm, clearly outlined a process for community involvement and decision-making throughout the planning. The proposal of a local firm, Stull and Lee, was strong in its technical foundation, emphasizing the schematic and physical design aspects of a plan. The Board support seemed to have fallen along resident/agency lines, with residents clearly supporting the DAC process-oriented proposal and several of the Latino agency heads supporting the more product-oriented proposal. Although there was some discussion as to the advantages and disadvantages of hiring an outside firm, the Board ultimately chose DAC, feeling more comfortable with a firm that clearly weighted the

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58 Steinglass, p.53.
importance of community participation in the planning process. Although it appeared that DSNI was sacrificing strong technical and design features for alternative planning methods, in fact, DAC later subcontracted out to Stull and Lee some of the design features of the plan, in recognition of this firm's superior qualifications in this respect.

As agreed upon in the contract with DSNI to accurately reflect the community's vision and to educate the residents during the planning process, DAC conducted extensive surveys and working sessions with members of the Board and of the community. DAC sought to gain a sound understanding of the development problems and opportunities facing the area as perceived by those who lived and worked there. DAC corroborated the assessments of Board members -- gathered through personal interviews and a Board workshop -- at subsequent resident committee meetings and larger community meetings.

The question arose as to how to bring the various sectors of the community into this planning effort. A different approach was needed for the residents, for the community agencies and for the businesses and for the residents. DAC planners sent a survey package to fifty one social service agencies known to provide services to the Dudley area, some of which were located within the neighborhood while others were not. Sixteen, 31%,
responded. The surveys were followed by interviews of a handful of the respondents. Some agencies were very reticent to disclose information, especially regarding finances. As for the businesses, DAC held a series of interviews with small business owners and other members of the Dudley business community.

Residents participated in various ways: through a consumer survey, at large community convocations and in smaller working committees. Community-wide meetings were held at the beginning, mid-way and at the end of the planning period. Residents were notified through extensive flyering, public notices, radio announcements, newspaper ads, mailings and door-knocking. Member organizations also reached out to their constituencies. Yet, smaller working committees, which grew out of the large community-wide meetings, met regularly. These smaller planning committees were created around each of the four main issues: land use planning, housing, economic development and social services. Residents could be part of as many committees as interested them and each committee included DSNI Board members.

The general concerns voiced at the large meetings were then teased apart in the working committee sessions. DAC consultants used a focus group approach in which 10 to 15 residents gathered around a specific issue to discuss it in depth. DAC prompted residents to "story-tell" so as to glean intricate dynamics about an issue. This often had to
be done with simultaneous translation, so that non-English speakers could participate at this level of discussion. For example, where concern existed around the high purchase prices at local stores, the consultants asked residents to describe a typical shopping excursion. In the focus groups, organizers tried to include a representative cross-section of the residential community in the focus groups. When they were over-represented by any group, special efforts were made to recruit members of the under-represented group(s). For example, the Housing Resident Planning Committee was heavily dominated by Cape Verdean residents. In this case, residents were asked if they were maybe more interested in joining another group instead. Also, other racial/ethnic groups were encouraged to join.

As spelled out in DSNI's proposal, DAC was bound to developing a plan that reflected a vision of a transformed neighborhood which would be defined by new relationships. The planning process itself was structured to embody some of the changes in the way residents related to themselves, to each other and to outside experts. The residents were the protagonists and the consultants were the facilitators in this process. DAC planners came to residents with more questions than answers. Residents were asked to comment more than just on the nature of a problem, but also on possible solutions. Residents were active participants of the planning process, rather than passive reviewers of
options already decided for them.

As facilitators in the process, rather than all-knowing experts, DAC consultants were able to draw from the participants not only their frustrations about problems, but also their knowledge about opportunities in the area. All told, about two hundred residents participated during the course of the planning period. The latter formed the basis for many of the strategies offered in the document DAC produced in September of 1987, entitled *The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Revitalization Plan: A Comprehensive Community-Controlled Strategy*. With the completion of the plan, DSNI's second goal had been attained.

The final plan was presented at a neighborhood festival that fall celebrating the neighborhood's accomplishment and marking a historic event. The plan was put up for a vote and enthusiastically embraced by the two hundred residents in attendance. Mayor Flynn was among the many attending supporters and announced the City's official adoption of the plan, making it the blueprint for development in the area.

**The DSNI Plan**

The neighborhood blueprint included several strategies for the integrated development of the Dudley neighborhood. The strategies centered on three main areas: housing, economic development and human services. Two principles for the development of viable real estate alternatives guided
DAC. First was the notion of a "critical mass," that is, a sufficient amount of new and rehabilitated space needed to be aggregated in order to affect the existing market or create one of its own. The second principle was a "tandem strategy" calling for the simultaneous and coordinated development of new construction and rehabilitation activity."

The main elements outlined in the plan include:

1. Creating 800 to 1000 new, affordable units of housing, and the rehabilitation of 1000 more units;
2. Gaining control over the vacant land;
3. Anchoring the development activity in a central "urban village" which would offer an array of amenities, including community facilities, retail businesses, neighborhood offices and affirmation of the community's identity;
4. Creating job-training and employment opportunities appropriate to the needs of Dudley residents;
5. Enhancing the service provision of human service agencies and increasing their accountability to residents;
6. Promoting and asserting the cultural diversity of the neighborhood.

It is helpful at this point to give an overview of the

organizing activities in which the planning process was couched. A broader view of this sort highlights DSNI's efforts to continually build its credibility and respect in order to have the Plan adopted by both the neighborhood and the City.

Organizing Activities Accompany the Planning Process

As stated earlier, DSNI continued to organize residents around issues of immediate concern while organizing them around a vision for tomorrow's Dudley neighborhood. This, in part, is what kept people connected to the process. DSNI was working actively to address the issues of today as it was dealing with those of tomorrow, especially as they regarded development.

DSNI had, in effect, become the clearinghouse for much of the development activity in the Dudley area. The membership had grown to over 800 from 350 since opening an office and hiring a staff. The membership was comprised of people whose level of participation varied depending on their commitment, time availability, life constraints and the like. Members included people who attended planning or general DSNI meetings; people who called the office for advice or to offer information or volunteer time; people who belonged to block associations that came into the DSNI coalition; people who had been long-time activists in the area; people who were not receiving adequate attention at
local social service agencies and sought support at DSNI. Also, included were local merchants, church ministers and parishioners and the main social service agencies and non-profit development corporations in the area.

As DSNI grew in size and ascended in importance in the neighborhood, it began to coordinate activities and development efforts so that these would be beneficial to residents in the short and long term. In light of the planning effort underway, the DSNI Board also sought to have on-going development be consistent with the goals of the plan.

Several factors contributed to DSNI's success in positioning itself as the clearinghouse for on-going development in the Dudley neighborhood especially as long-range planning was taking place. Just as clearing the vacant lots led people to thinking about the development that should follow, deciding about the benefits or dangers of specific projects brought people further into the long-range plans of the neighborhood. First, DSNI was already recognized for having assembled into a working coalition (with funding) many important sectors in the neighborhood. As previously mentioned, DSNI convened long-term and respected activists, the major agencies, block association members, merchants and church groups. These disparate participants were committed, as a representative body, to advocate on behalf of the interests of Dudley neighborhood.
Unprecedented in the history of the neighborhood, residents and agencies as well as churches and merchants had brought their collective resources and strengths to bear on outside forces in order to preserve the Dudley neighborhood.

Second, DSNI's seminal organizing activities at the beginning seemed to have engendered confidence in arriving at collective decisions that translated into political influence to affect change. This became clearer as residents increasingly sought information and/or support from DSNI in sanctioning or opposing particular development projects in their back yards. Residents in Dudley had grown highly suspicious of most development activity over the years since it usually transgressed authorized land uses. In Roxbury, the zoning of contiguous areas for light industrial and residential uses created serious problems of social and physical well-being for residents in the area. Residents had a history of resisting the encroachment of waste disposal or truck leasing operations into the neighborhood. Now, as members of a neighborhood-wide coalition, these same residents could count on the support of greater numbers of fellow residents as well as agencies, merchants and churches in their efforts to combat local problems.

For example, a resident of a neighborhood association called the office seeking DSNI's support in opposing a zoning variance application to locate an industrial operation next to an elementary school. The staff
investigated the developer, the conditions of the project and the request for a zoning variance. The hazards seemed to far outweigh the benefits to the local school-age children. Moreover, the residents did not want any more light industrial operations located so near the school and homes. DSNI helped organize a protest inside the construction site and prepared residents for testifying before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Another significant event that enhanced DSNI's clearinghouse role as the BRA's decision to update Boston's 1956 Zoning Code in the Summer of 1986. Since, the rezoning process is lengthy, the BRA established the Interim Planning Overlay District (IDOD) in several neighborhoods, which provided interim planning standards that would eventually facilitate the comprehensive planning and rezoning of all of Roxbury. Under the framework of an IPOD, and through the Roxbury Neighborhood Council (RNC), Roxbury residents decided their priorities for land use in their neighborhood. The IPOD was intended for two years initially, although it is still in place. During this time, all development had to receive an Interim Planning permit before proceeding. DSNI and RNC, as mentioned earlier, had reached an agreement that RNC, of which DSNI is a member, would defer to DSNI in matters of development and other decisions in the Dudley area. DSNI coordinated meetings in which residents participated in making decisions about compatible zoning
patterns. This participation was a continuation of the residents' participation in overall neighborhood planning decisions.

The fourth reason that DSNI could effectively broker on behalf of the Dudley neighborhood vis-a-vis the City is that the City itself recognized DSNI as the representative voice of the Dudley area. DSNI had struck a fine balance between using methods of confrontation and cooperation. The City had come to respect how effectively DSNI organized a campaign and mobilized people. The Dudley neighborhood was becoming an organized constituency in the Roxbury area. Through DSNI, the Dudley residents pressured the City into line with its demands. This gave residents confidence that their organization could achieve concrete results. The City, in turn, considered DSNI the legitimate voice of the Dudley neighborhood. As one city official said, "Who can really bring out the numbers in that area anyway? It's DSNI time and time again."

DSNI's Relationship to the City

While DSNI challenged the City's authority, it also invited the City's participation into a partnership. DSNI and the City each have been indispensable to the planning process -- as they continue to be to the overall revitalization process -- because each has contributed leverage and legitimacy to this undertaking. DSNI has
harnessed the collective human and political capacities of its residents to carry the plan to fruition -- that is, their vision, knowledge, commitment, resourcefulness, sense of history, and political influence through action. In effect, residents could move a project forward or halt it in its track. DSNI has been able to structure neighborhood needs in a way understandable to the City. The City, on the other hand, has brought institutional, financial and technical resources as well as the political will that has permeated the Mayor's office down through the different departments. The Director of the Public Facilities Department commented, upon completion of the Plan, that:

It was so impressive to see people who have every right to be angry and in despair come in with a concrete plan and vision for the future. It was a train you wanted to get on. It would have been immoral not to.**

An agreement was reached between DSNI and the City which was testimony to this growing relationship and to the respect that DSNI had gained from the City. The City agreed not to sell any of the land it owned in the Dudley neighborhood during the planning process. The DSNI Board hoped, although no assurances were given, that this land would later be facilitated to DSNI during project implementation.

Although the political clout had been amassed at the

** Lisa Chapnik, Director of Public Facilities Department, quoted in Boucher, op. cit.
neighborhood level and the political will had been secured at the municipal level, DSNI nevertheless capitalized on every opportunity. The succeeding paragraphs reveal additional aspects of how DSNI approached the city. According to DSNI's Executive Director for the first four years, Peter Medoff, maintained that in dealing with City Hall, it was first necessary for the Board to clarify its immediate goals and objectives and then deal with the highest level bureaucrats. "You go straight to the top, after having done your homework," he used to say. As DSNI's first director, Medoff, who is an organizer with a planning degree, was instrumental in shaping the rapport between DSNI and the City. He had extensive experience in institutional networking and applied those skills forcefully.

As Director of the organization, he was obliged to carry out the policy decisions of the Board. While some Boards merely rubber stamp the edicts of the director, the levels of accountability at DSNI were far greater. The director reported to the DSNI Board, which debated issues and reached decisions by consensus. Broader policy issues were brought before the membership to be decided upon in an open forum.

In establishing relationships with various city department heads and city officials, Medoff consciously travelled through downtown offices accompanied by different Board members. This served three purposes. First, it
signalled to city officials that they could not just deal with Medoff, who was white and male, but that they had to also deal with black and brown, male and female, English and non-English speaking people, who as a Board were the ultimate decision makers. For this reason, a direct flow of information was important.

Second, Medoff's actions underscored the point that the Board ultimately had more clout and power than the director of the organization. Being the ultimate decision-makers, after consultation with the community residents over policy matters, Medoff's role was, in effect, communicator and networker.

Third, the opportunity for residents and others on the board to establish contacts and working relationships with city officials directly helped demystify City Hall. It also equipped them with knowledge and experience to do so again and in even more hostile environments, with or without Medoff.

The City found DSNI's decision-making process tiresome at times, although meritorious nonetheless. Before finalizing policy decisions, the DSNI Board consulted, as it still does, the larger Dudley community. Although the Board may have taken a position on a matter subsequent to furtive discussion, any stance was open to modifications, dismissal or ratification by Dudley residents at community meetings. The community decision set the course for the Board and
staff to follow. During the planning process, such protocol involved and informed residents so that they could make educated decisions. In addition, this practice inspired greater trust in the planning process. Through the planning process, DSNI tried to establish a foundation of people who could ultimately push the revitalization process forward.

Having met its second goal with the creation of a community-based Plan, DSNI next focused its attention on attaining the third goal it had been established to meet: gaining control of the land in order to prevent speculation and to implement the plan.

As we have seen in the progression of DSNI's formation, each stage subsumes the ones prior to it. We observe in the implementation stage the same phenomenon. The salient aspects of each of the previous stages, organizing and planning, are also incorporated in the implementation stage.

5. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Implementation of the Plan presented DSNI with a complex set of issues. The Plan had laid out a framework for development. DSNI now had to begin the task of realizing the neighborhood vision. As the planning and implementation became increasingly technical, how would the DSNI Board maintain the momentum? How would the Board members keep the membership involved in the increasingly
complicated development decisions? How would DSNI balance the dual roles of an organizing and planning organization? How would DSNI maintain a balance between the various components of the Plan? Finally, what did it mean for DSNI to enter into a formal partnership with the City after obtaining eminent domain designation? These are but some of the more salient questions which faced DSNI at this juncture in its evolution.

The Eminent Domain Process

The Board of DSNI believed that controlling the vacant parcels was necessary to curb the development activity that the residents did not want, like speculation, and to foster the development that residents did want in the neighborhood, like that embodied in the Plan. How could the land be controlled by the residents of Dudley? What strategy would make most sense given the fact the vacant land was a checkerboard of interdispersed City-owned and privately-owned land?

A brief review of the Plan's foremost recommendation refreshes our understanding of the relevance of the land question. The Plan stressed the importance of creating a critical mass that would turn around the physical, social and economic conditions of the Dudley neighborhood and the market. The Plan suggested that implementation begin with development of the Triangle, that is the area encompassing
most of the vacant land and the area situated in the heart of the neighborhood. Such development entailed the construction of housing as well as a town commons, community facilities, commercial space, recreational space and open space. New housing would bring increased numbers of residents; new consumers would spur commercial activity; more jobs, better social services and additional recreational space would increase the quality of life in the area.

DSNI sought the help of Community Builders, a local consulting firm that provides technical assistance to neighborhood groups, to effectuate the implementation of the Plan. The first question was whether to start development as soon as possible, which meant in a piecemeal fashion on City-owned land, or to consolidate the vacant land and then develop it accordingly. DSNI thought it not practical nor desirable to "nibble" at development. Instead, the expected advantages of DAC's critical mass approach guided the objective of consolidating the vacant land.

The second question was how to consolidate the land. DSNI considered several means to consolidation, however. One option was to have the City consolidate the vacant land through foreclosure and allow DSNI to oversee its development, while the City retains its ownership. Another option was to have the City consolidate the land through foreclosure and then either lease it or turn it over to
DSNI, which would then oversee its development. Yet another option arose -- to seek eminent domain designation and assemble the land itself.

The Board rejected the foreclosure options. In light of the City not having demonstrated a standing record of expedient tax foreclosures, the DSNI Board felt that relying on this process would retard the implementation process and as a result jeopardize the residents' continued involvement. Maintaining momentum at the neighborhood level was important after the long planning process. Waiting for the City to move the parcels might have undermined the residents' patience and trust in the process. Also, Mayor Flynn was nearing the end of his first term. In the event of a possible, although unlikely, upset DSNI wanted to control the land regardless of who occupied the Mayor's office.

The struggle for eminent domain authority illustrates, as have previously mentioned examples, how factors converged and contributed to DSNI's eventual designation. DSNI was instrumental in creating some of those factors or at least the conditions in which those factors emerged. For example, DSNI prepared itself technically, organized an effective land control campaign, and networked among high level officials, as explained before.

Other opportunites had presented themselves, however. Stephen Coyle demonstrated very progressive thinking in suggesting that DSNI consider eminent domain designation.
Also, Mayor Flynn focused increasingly on the issue of city-owned vacant land and made it an important element of his affordable housing agenda. At about the time DSNI released its Plan, the Public Facilities Department, at Flynn's, was taking inventory of all the publicly-owned vacant land. The Mayor wanted to know how much land was available for the construction of affordable housing, and the Dudley neighborhood was found to have the highest concentration of vacant city-owned land.\textsuperscript{61} This situation was aggravated by the fact that much of the city-owned land was interspersed with privately-owned parcels.

The survey also demonstrated that the City was, in effect, the largest "landlord" in Boston. At his re-election in 1987, Flynn promised to dispose of all city-owned parcels by the end of his second administration.\textsuperscript{62} At a time when the real estate market had begun to slow down, Flynn's intent was to "jump start" it again.\textsuperscript{63} His administration aimed to do this through the creation of new programs, the most important of which was the Buildable Lots-747 Program. The City's new impetus to increase scattered-site housing development worried the DSNI board, as this would assuredly counter the comprehensive

\textsuperscript{61} Barry Berman, Public Facilities Department

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{63} Peter Medoff, quoted in ibid..
development plans outlined by the Dudley residents in their Plan. The idea of seeking eminent domain designation as a way of addressing the land question was arrived at independently by DSNI in early 1988 through its consultants, and later that spring by Stephen Coyle."

The year between adoption of the Plan in the fall of 1987 and the conveyance of eminent domain authority in the fall of 1988, was spent doing research, generating neighborhood support, wooing the Mayor's support and waging a major campaign. When the idea of eminent domain was first suggested, members of the Board and members of the community both reacted with serious suspicion. The mere mention of "eminent domain" evoked images of "pillage", "rape" and destruction of poor and black communities, especially during the days of Urban Renewal. However, the Board members soon realized that eminent domain was a tool and that the effects of its application, as with any tool, depended on who used it and how it was used.

DSNI explored the possibility of seeking eminent domain power with the help of a top real estate Boston firm which had been providing pro-bono legal counsel to DSNI. The firm recommended that DSNI pursue eminent domain designation from the BRA board. Careful review of Chapter 121A of

"Interview with Peter Muchenbach, Community Builders, March 30, 1990.

"Ibid."
Massachusetts General Laws revealed that such designation could be granted to private "urban development corporations", including charitable corporations which developed affordable housing. Eminent domain had been previously granted to private developers for major projects who, as a result, benefitted from the corresponding tax provisions, as in the case of the Prudential Center."

The members of the Board themselves became convinced that eminent domain was a promising means for gaining control of the private vacant land in the neighborhood. The Board and other members of the community communicated that conviction through the "TAKE A STAND, OWN THE LAND" campaign. DSNI educated, organized and rallied residents around the need for community control over the vacant land in order to counter speculation and to implement the Plan. Residents at first were skeptical of the merits of eminent domain, as the Board had been initially. DSNI held seven informational community meetings throughout the neighborhood which were attended by hundreds of residents. DSNI Board members posed a case for pursuing eminent domain designation and responded to residents' questions, doubts and concerns about it. The Board clearly defined the scope for use of eminent domain power: it would apply to 15 acres of privately owned land in the heart of the neighborhood where most of the vacant land was concentrated. The Board assured

"Peter Medoff, in Boucher, op. cit."
them that not only would there be no "clearance" of any sort, but land owners would be adequately notified of the process and offered a "fair market price" for their property. While generating a base of understanding about, and support for, eminent domain designation within the neighborhood, DSNI also sought the backing of City Hall.

DSNI ironically enjoyed, from early on, the undaunted support of the BRA's director in its pursuit of eminent domain designation. "Coyle turned his own bureaucracy around". However, DSNI had to slowly win the support of the Mayor and the Public Facilities Department, in particular. Coyle had blithely suggested, on a visit to the neighborhood one day, that DSNI apply for eminent domain status. He offered the suggestion after inquiring about DSNI's progress and after being told that the issue of land tenure needed to be settled before implementation of the Plan could proceed. On the other hand, the Public Facilities Department was not so forthcoming, at first. PFD deemed such a petition unnecessarily drastic for addressing the land debate. Officials there also questioned whether the perceived threat of speculation was as great as residents feared. Nonetheless, Flynn's support grew and with it, that of PFD's. There was herewith an opportunity to move a

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*Muchenbach*  
*Boucher, p.53*  
community-based development effort in Roxbury -- an important consideration for Flynn -- from a planning stage into an implementation stage.

The "TAKE A STAND, OWN THE LAND" campaign finally won the official endorsement of the Mayor, who made his support public at a neighborhood land control rally of over 200 residents in the fall of 1988. He followed the endorsement with a letter of support to DSNI which accompanied the formal application to the BRA Board for 121A corporation status. Flynn wrote,

> The authority vested in a 121A corporation -- to take and own land -- represents an unprecedented opportunity in this city to control the destiny of your community...It is clear that the key to successful redevelopment of the Dudley neighborhood is the control over private vacant property...I believe...that by using the 121A powers as an effective legal tool, the community and the City will ensure that comprehensive revitalization of the Dudley area takes another major step forward. Your group has the capacity, wisdom and vision to handle this task, and I am pleased to be able to support your application to the BRA Board.\(^\text{70}\)

The public hearing before the BRA Board proved to be a point at which the residents and the Mayor brought their respective leverage to bear. Flynn's support buttressed the will of bus loads of Dudley residents who came to the public hearing before the BRA Board on Oct. 13, 1988. About 25 testimonies were heard, most of which were favorable ones by residents and supporters. However, there were a handful of

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testimonies against DSNI's application. There were self-identified speculator property owners who claimed that their interests were at stake. Either they had been waiting for a long time for the property to increase in value in order to sell later or they had bought land recently. One opponent's parcel was not even within the DSNI area, let alone within the 15 acres being considered for designation. At the BRA Board meeting that followed, Flynn exerted pressure and flagged comments begrudging a favorable decision designating eminent domain authority to "foreigners", to people who were "not even Americans", a reference to the Cape Verdean and Latino populations of the Dudley neighborhood.\footnote{Muchenbach, Boucher} The Board then took the matter under advisement before announcing its decision a month later.

The Minority Developers Association (MDA), a group of mostly black developers formed to advocate for increased minority participation in development activity in Boston, was another interest group that DSNI had to negotiate with extensively in its pursuit of designation. The MDA had come of age around 1986 and perceived having greater access to development activities, particularly since Flynn's recent election. It appeared, at least to them, that they would be the natural inheritors of development opportunities in Roxbury, especially on the neighborhood's vacant land. The MDA considered DSNI "a bunch of communists" for attempting
to gain community control of land in Roxbury. According to a BRA official, the MDA was concerned that DSNI was "a vocal organization with a white director. They were suspicious of the process. There were not enough safeguards on paper to assure them opportunities [in the development process]."

DSNI, as a partial response, created a non-voting seat on the DSNI Board for the MDA, which to this day remains empty. However, the issue was far more complex than one of representation. Actually, the fundamental differences lay in their respective definitions of development opportunities. DSNI had clearly stipulated that it sought at minimum a 30%, if not 50%, minority-owned business participation rate in all construction as well as professional and technical service contracts. A bidding process for developer selection would provide competitive opportunities for interested parties, as it had done in the selection of the planning team DAC. The real issue was that the development opportunities to be provided by DSNI were different than those sought by the MDA. Most of the housing to be built on the Triangle would be low and moderate income units. The MDA was interested in more lucrative ventures than those DSNI would be offering. In the end, the MDA's

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72 Herb James, former Housing Specialist, Quincy-Geneva Community Development Corporation.

73 Andrea D'Amato, Project Manager, Boston Redevelopment Authority.
concerns were appeased by virtue of realizing that this measure was not against their interests in the final analysis. Their support was won over.

The BRA Board's final decision officially marked another moment of convergence among the varying interests of different parties. The citizens of the Dudley neighborhood maintained that acquiring eminent domain authority was a means by which to limit speculation and to implement the Plan in a manner that served the current population. For the City, eminent domain facilitated development in the Dudley area. On November 10, the BRA Board approved the application and officially granted eminent domain authority to DSNI. Interestingly, about a month later, the Chairman of the Board, Robert Farrell, resigned. In its decision, the BRA stated that evaluation of the existing conditions in the Triangle area of Dudley and the expected benefits from DSNI's program for revitalization rendered designation consistent with the provisions of the General Laws and exemplified sound public policy.\(^7\) The Resolution granted the Dudley Neighbors, Inc., a subsidiary of DSNI, designation as an Urban Redevelopment Corporation charged with the power to acquire and lease 15 acres of privately-owned vacant land. This land in combination with 15 acres of publicly-owned vacant land would be joined to create 10

parcels slated for the development of 500 units of low to moderate income housing. The BRA stated in the memorandum of agreement that it felt that Chapter 121A designation would capitalize on DSNI's revitalization initiative by converting haphazard development activity into a coherent community-based, multi-site, land-assembly process. For this very reason, both DSNI and now the BRA deemed 121A designation as the only efficient vehicle by which to address the severe problems confronting the Triangle Area.

The Triangle was the area over which eminent domain could be exercised because it beleaguered by many unique set of problems. When considered jointly, these problems necessitated a coordinated solution. The Triangle had a high concentration of both publicly-held land and privately-owned vacant land, of parcels in tax foreclosure, of parcels held by absentee owners and of parcels unsuitable for housing development due to their small sizes. DSNI proposed, and the BRA agreed, that this situation could foreseeably be reversed in a timely and efficient manner by enabling DSNI to exercise eminent domain powers.

DSNI at this point entered a period of organizational flux. Gus Newport, former two-term populist mayor of Berkeley, California, became the new director of DSNI. Newport brought to the organization a wordly political understanding.

In the Spring of 1989, DSNI began detailed planning for
the Triangle area. Comunitas, a local planning firm, was hired to help create a site-specific plan for housing, community facilities and open space. In the course of three community meetings, about two hundred residents deliberated and reached consensus on the type and location of housing they wanted to see built in the Triangle. Residents voiced a preference for mostly two-family homes and some town house-style units. Locations for two community facilities and several gardens and tot lots were also identified.

With this build-out plan in place, pressure mounted from all sides to start the actual development of the units. On the one hand, years had passed and residents wanted to see new housing, not more plans. The Flynn administration, on the other hand, was seeing its second term come to a close, with many unfulfilled promises for new housing.

DSNI was also facing an organizational crisis. It had recently lost its development specialist and human services coordinator. A new director, Gus Newport, had only recently assumed the leadership of the organization. The staff was now reduced from an all-time high of twelve down to only four. Without a development staff person, the Development Committee of the Board was meeting on a weekly basis in an effort to assimilate the new responsibilities that accompanied eminent domain designation. It grappled with broad issues, such as raising funds to purchase vacant land; determining the first development site; and designing
criteria for developer selection. The Committee was also overwhelmed with the legal details of setting up a land trust, obtaining clearance for construction from the Department of Environmental Management, and the like.

Tensions only worsened between DSNI and PFD. DSNI felt unduly pressured at a time when it was short staffed to meet the rushed schedule of the Mayor's administration. PFD felt that DSNI needed to place greater emphasis on product rather than process. These tensions characterize this last period of DSNI's development, through to the present day.
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF DIALECTIC TENSIONS WITHIN THE DUDLEY NEIGHBORHOOD

In the preceding scheme of the chronological development of DSNI it was not possible to give an adequate account of the complex and interwoven set of relations which are part of all the stages of planning and organizing. The new relation between the City and the neighborhood described in the previous chapter is only the most general and noticeable of these. Indeed, one might most clearly discern the novelty of DSNI's approach precisely in its ability to promote a growth in the number and kinds of relationships among previously separated groups -- and in this way to give new dimensions to the concept of neighborhood.

The most effective means of gaining insight into what is truly singular about the case of DSNI, therefore, is to describe the problems that accompany the creation of these new relations, as well as the attempts made to resolve them.

Some of these relationships we have already been covered and will be alluded to again. Others receive initial treatment below.

1. DIALECTIC TENSIONS

Although the initial suspicions of a "Hispanic attempt to take over the neighborhood" have been assuaged, tensions persist within the organization and within the neighborhood, at all levels and from all directions. Internally, strains
exist among different sectors of the community and among divergent pressures. External forces, which are met with resistance, also impinge upon the Dudley neighborhood.

One of the main sources of tension historically has been between residents and local community-based groups in the area. These agencies include both the social service agencies as well as the non-profit community development corporations (CDC's). Residents have felt ill-served by the social service providers and detached from the housing development work of the CDC's. The residents perceive the service agencies to be investing inordinate amounts of time and energy chasing public and private dollars in order "to stay in business." Residents believe the agencies' efforts to be self-serving and at the expense of meaningful service to the population in whose name the funds are sought.

Other factors that contribute to the heightened agency-resident tension are the structure, personnel, philosophical orientation and funding sources of the agencies. The agencies have a hierarchical organizational structure in which decisions are made at the top and are communicated down through the ranks. Also, the personnel often does not live in the neighborhood. As one resident remarked, "They work a full day, but by 5pm, they're out the door and have forgotten we (the residents) even exist."

In addition, the agencies part from the notion that their roles are indispensible to the well-being of the
community. They see themselves as the holders and conveyers of precious resources that community residents cannot do without. As the conferring agent to passive recipients, the agencies sustain a relationship with the community based on dependency rather than self-sufficiency. Residents, in turn, end up feeling disempowered by the mode of service provision and mistrustful of the agencies' underlying motivations.

Lastly, agencies often solicit money for programs that are "fundable" rather than for those that satisfy greater, and as yet, unmet needs. The result has been that agencies duplicate administrative and programmatic services. This, in part, explains why residents feel that agencies respond more effectively to funders than they do to people in the neighborhood.

Compounding the resident-agency tensions are the intra-agency dynamics. Territoriality, competition and distrust characterize the relations among service groups. They target a particular service to a given population, geographic area or both. Agencies stake claims on their targets and then solicit public and private monies to render those services. The groups become highly protective of the services they provide as well as the people and area they serve in an attempt to outdo other organization. The groups pit themselves against one another while scrambling for funds. This breeds enmity rather than harmony among groups.
trying "to do good" for others.

The dynamic among church groups themselves parallels the dynamic among agencies, except that the former compete for people's souls rather than people's human service needs. Just as agencies have not traditionally coordinated delivery of services, neither have the churches in their efforts to meet parishioners' needs. The Church has important social and spiritual roles in each of the cultures of the Dudley area. The various churches stand to serve their parishioners all the more productively if they join efforts and resources.

Another set of foreseeable tensions exist between residents and merchants of the area. The few existing businesses furnish important services to the local community. Grocery-store owners, especially, provide a convenient, culturally-based and essential product. The problem is that the local businesses often charge much more than the larger chain stores for their merchandise due to overhead and other costs. Not surprisingly, the mostly low-income residents of Dudley resent having to pay so much more and a love-hate relationship results. The tension between the residential and the business communities came to a head during the planning process when residents underscored the need for supermarkets in the area. The grocery-store owners reacted with concern fearing this may jeopardize their businesses.
The Dudley neighborhood has its share of ethnic, racial and class-based rivalry also. Latinos claim that Cape Verdean homeowners will not rent out apartments to them and will only rent out to other Cape Verdeans; Blacks feel that Latinos are invading the neighborhood in ever greater numbers; Whites feel that everyone else is a newcomer; residents of all ethnicities fear and scapegoat Orchard Park Development tenants. Although ethnic and racial antagonisms continue, some sense of neighborhood unity has been achieved through the multi-cultural festivals, the ongoing organizing and the planning and development work. The ethnic and racial diversity of the neighborhood is one of its greatest assets.

All of the above-mentioned dynamics are internal to the neighborhood and are manifested on the Board. However, another series of pressures emanate from the outside. Now that DSNI is on a development track with the implementation of the plan, the organization is facing a lot of pressure from its partner in this process -- the City -- to deliver some concrete results soon. The Mayor wants to gain some political territory and wants to see housing built in Roxbury quickly. Rumblings about seeing something concrete come out of this planning process are also being heard from within the neighborhood. Whereas the City could forsake part of the process in order to expedite the product, DSNI is committed to and bound by a process, which is regarded
with equal importance.

Another important factor, which the neighborhood can only marginally affect, is the market. DSNI was formed at a time when speculation in Roxbury was rampant. Buildings and lots were turning over weekly. Getting the land "off the market" was a priority, otherwise development would be exorbitant and assuredly result in displacement. The market had gone soft when eminent domain was finally conferred, and some speculate that this, in part, explains why DSNI ever received designation.

2. DSNI'S STRUGGLE TO BALANCE THE TENSIONS

DSNI has addressed these very tensions through its structure and organizing. It will be important to assess to what extent and how well DSNI has dealt with these tensions. Staff of DSNI have organized at all levels in the community. At the onset, the organized individuals and agency representatives to run for the the Board of DSNI. The Board currently has 27 active members, most of whom are local residents who are representative of the various ethnic enclaves in the area. Merchants, community organizations and local religious groups also constitute membership on the Board. As explained above, each of these parties comes to the organization with different experiences and interests. By bringing the participants together into a working coalition, however, DSNI created a forum where these often
conflicting concerns are aired and addressed. The parties have joined efforts to plan and work for Dudley's redevelopment. The process has generated on-going dialogue and has engendered trust. The different participants continually gain a better understanding of each other's motivations and needs.

DSNI also organized the resident base through neighborhood associations, community gardens and youth groups. Concretely, some important channels for reaching people have been St. Patrick's Church, which holds services in Spanish, Portuguese and English and certain social service agencies, which serve different ethnic communities. Different ethnic communities have been mobilized through different channels at different times. Many of the leaders of the Cape Verdean community in Boston live or work in the Dudley area. The first Cape Verdean organizer at DSNI is now the Mayor's liasion to the Cape Verdean community in Boston. The person who broadcasts a Cape Verdean radio program -- which every Cape Verdean listens to -- is a resident and store-owner in the neighborhood.

Organizing among the Latino residents, whose participation in DSNI is not proportional to their numbers or presence in the Dudley area, continues to pose a challenge for DSNI. There are several established Latino businesses as well as church groups in the area, Latino involvement in the DSNI process has not been as strong as
that of other ethnic groups, although it has recently increased some.

In addition, DSNI's other organizing activities include fostering solidarity among the businesses (Dudley Merchants Association), church groups and social service providers, who are both cooperating informally more often. As a result of the human service planning process, agencies -- very reluctantly at first -- began to share their concerns, their problems and their visions. They found that they had much more in common than they thought, which helped them overcome some of their defensiveness. They found understanding, rather than disdain, from their peers when they shared some of their vulnerabilities and their problems. One of the major achievements of the DSNI process has been the qualitative leap from competition to cooperation among members of the various sectors and between sectors themselves. This is not to say that agencies no longer compete for grants or that CDC's are no longer territorial, however, all of them are invested in cooperating to achieve goals that are larger than their immediate organizational ones.

The perennial mistrust of the City continues, especially on the part of the residents. They have too many sore wounds that have yet to heal for them to enter into partnership free of skepticism.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Economic changes since World War II, and more recently with Boston's downtown renaissance, have dramatically altered labor markets, demographic patterns and development trends in the city. Boston's downtown boom rendered it one of the convention capitals on the eastern seaboard in the early eighties. However, the cumulative effects of such changes have adversely affected Boston's poorer communities. Especially affected have been the black and Latino communities in Roxbury.

The accelerated development activity of the early decade created tremendous pressure upon the remaining open space. Roxbury, only 1.5 mi. from the city center, was not only close but very rich in an increasingly scarce resource -- land. The greatest amount of vacant land anywhere in the city was concentrated in the Dudley neighborhood.

Seeing the external threat of displacement and the internal threat of dissolution, residents and local service institutions mobilized in self defense. Among their other choices were allowing the invisible hand of the market to act freely, leading to their inevitable displacement, or residents and agencies could have pursued an avenue of total self-determination like that proposed by the Mandela campaign. Instead, the Dudley residents and agencies responded by attempting to control the future of their
neighborhood. They created a blueprint for development and obtained control of the vacant land in the neighborhood.

The ways in which DSNI managed the problems confronting it provide important lessons that may be successfully applied to other community revitalization efforts. Although the lessons are multiple, they can best be learned if they are accompanied by an understanding of the conditions which made the individual episodes of this case possible. It makes little sense to attempt to extract a recipe-like model for community revitalization from a case with such a complex and unique setting and history. Equipped with an understanding of the converging factors which have contributed to DSNI's successes and failures, one can apply this framework to other revitalization efforts.

One way of perceiving this convergence is to view the Dudley neighborhood as a grouping of different bodies, each with its own interests and agendas. These in turn are subjected to the agendas of larger institutional and societal forces. An organizing effort aimed at changing the prevailing social, economic and political conditions in a community necessarily produces a conflict of such interests, within and outside of the neighborhood. The force of good will and the conviction of a higher purpose alone do very little to bring these individual bodies to willingly sacrifice their objectives in the interest of the greater good. Instead, the organizing group is that much more
effective when it recognizes the existence of these local agendas and takes them into account in developing its programs. At the same time, these programs can provide the incentive for the individual bodies to approach their goals within the larger framework of a plan for the community. In this way the programs builds upon the points of convergence among the various and often conflicting agendas. Individual benefits translate into community benefits, and vice versa. Then, finally, a true community consciousness can grow.

A sense of community can be born from collaboration, as exemplified by reduced tensions along race and class lines on the Board of DSNI, although such mutual respect is not paralleled in the larger Dudley community. An emerging sense of "community", no matter how fragile it may seem, must not be taken for granted. Communities disintegrate in the absence of continual maintenance from both within and without. The challenge facing DSNI is to continually build upon this sense of community.

The conditions of destitute poverty and growing violence and despair can lead communities to abandon hope altogether, or to direct increased violence inwardly, as well as outwardly. However such conditions can also lead communities to take mobilized action aimed at obtaining some control over the forces affecting them. The residents and organizations of the Dudley neighborhood have assumed responsibility for changing the conditions under which they
live and creating a different future for their neighborhood. As a result, city planners and officials have come to appreciate the determination and work of the DSNI Board and membership. At DSNI's Annual Meeting in June 1989, the Deputy Director of the Public Facilities Department said to the public its efforts were about,

the rebirth of your community. We originally came to your neighborhood to teach...and in reality we've been taught what community means. Community is not just housing but also open space and a decent place to live...We are partners on equal footing and have growing respect for this partnership. We are finding ways of listening and we are very proud partners of this community and DSNI.1

Among the many important lessons to be drawn from DSNI's efforts to date is the importance of allowing and encouraging people to define for themselves the realm of possibilities to pursue with respect to their own development and the means by which to achieve them. As Che Madyun, the three-term president of DSNI, said:

People are always trying to tell you you're no good. Everywhere you go, someone's always trying to tell you, 'Who are you to speak up for yourself?' I hear that all the time, and I'll tell them in a minute to go to hell. I have a right to whatever everybody else in this country has, and if you don't give it to me, I'll step on you and I'll get it!2

The status quo maintains the hegemony of certain interests. As planners, we are often accomplices to this

1 David Treitsch, Deputy Director of the Public Facilities Department, City of Boston at DSNI Annual Meeting, St. Patrick's Church, June 21, 1989.

2 Che Madyun, quoted in Boucher, op. cit., 110
order by being the providers of sound technical frameworks and plans that supposedly facilitate effective implementation of a project. More often than not the framework offered severely limits the options considered realistic or attainable. Subsequently, the feasibility of achieving an objective is determined by a narrowed choice among pre-established and "rational" possibilities rather than by the exercise of political influence to create alternative options. In other words, the way business has carried on has traditionally set the stage for the way it continues to be done, with minor adjustments. The Board and membership of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative have demonstrated that this order of business simply will not do. They have, in fact, created options for themselves through effective organizing which has built on local wisdom and experience as well as on political opportunity. They did this by building consensus in a racially and ethnically diverse community and by tapping into the common junctures of the various, and often conflicting, agendas of many of the parties involved -- both within and outside of the neighborhood.

Skeptics at all levels would never have credited the Dudley community with the ability to create its own Comprehensive Revitalization Plan which has become the official blueprint for development in the area. Few people outside the neighborhood truly believed that DSNI would ever
obtain eminent domain authority from the BRA. Even on a smaller, though just as significant, scale DSNI's achievements have countered what was thought to be impossible after so many frustrated attempts -- the closing of illegal waste disposal companies and the clearing of vacant lots. All of these are testimony to the ability of the DSNI Board and membership to find the links between their agenda and that of other major players, like the City. In effect, conflicting agendas need not be mutually-exclusive ones.

There are several other lessons that must be noted here. People's initial motives of self-interest, which is ultimately the point of entry for most stakeholders, does not necessarily determine the course of development to follow. As seen by the genesis of DSNI effort, the interests of the Latino agency heads in their own institutional and cultural survival did not ultimately determine DSNI's evolution into a broad multi-cultural and multi-sector effort.

The two founding Latino organizations initially expanded their ranks through the prodding of the Riley Foundation, whose interest was to fund an effort that was broad-based, although agency led. The Riley Foundation was going to be making a substantial financial commitment to the neighborhood and wanted the institutional framework to be inclusive. This financial commitment, in turn, provided
sufficient institutional incentive to bring together the various agency directors, in a way that the Roxbury Neighborhood Coalition was never able to do.

Another significant lesson is the importance of finding issues that in and of themselves create sufficient momentum to carry people into longer-term political action. The cleaning up of vacant lots, for example, had the dual purpose of creating immediate and visible changes in the topography of the neighborhood as well as generating a groundswell of discussion about how the vacant should be put to use. Resident involvement in the clean-ups led to their involvement in the planning of development for those lots, and then to the struggle for control over them. All of this required continual organizing.

Also of grave importance to those who advocate thoroughly democratic practices is the establishment of a consensus building framework for making decisions. DSNI has had to lay a framework which enables the various interest groups in the neighborhood to participate in the decision-making process and has organized many diverse constituencies so that they may be informed in making those decisions.

To understand the converging forces bearing upon a community group trying to revitalize its neighborhood also requires viewing the community in a historical continuum. As stated earlier, DSNI is an outgrowth of the years of
struggle by residents whose failures and successes are embedded in and have shaped the evolution of DSNI as an organization and in its program for development. It is critical to see DSNI's victories today as having their origins in people's struggles yesterday and serving as a basis for those of tomorrow. Residents do, in fact, comment on struggles in which they participated prior to DSNI's having initiated similar ones. For example, they mention having participated in clean-ups and the like before DSNI came along and organized them. Organizers acknowledge that indeed those residential efforts helped set the conditions for DSNI to have become what it is today. Residents must be recognized for their previous struggles.

DSNI attempts to do this not only by acknowledging but more importantly by celebrating publicly collective struggles and collective victories. For example, the release and subsequent adoption of the Plan occurred at a neighborhood festival and was honored by the Mayor's presence. Also the "TAKE A STAND, OWN THE LAND" rally, which preceded the BRA Board hearing, was an anticipated victory in the long-fought struggle for community control of land in the neighborhood. Some of the early resident struggles may have amounted to no more than localized efforts to address issues such as the cleaning of garbage-filled lots. Nevertheless, the successes and failures of isolated efforts of this sort begged for an approach that
provided an overarching framework and philosophy of development, like the one DSNI proposed when it formed in 1985.
APPENDIX I

DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

- Triangle Area
- Core Area
- Outer Boundary ("Secondary Area")
ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.1 Number and Election. The Directors of this Corporation shall be thirty-one (31) in number and elected in the first instance by the Incorporator and thereafter by the Members. The Directors shall be broadly representative of the community, with no less than four (4) representatives, respectively, from Black, Cape Verdean, Hispanic and White cultures. The Board of Directors will include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Seats</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Community members (Black, Cape Verdean, Hispanic, White) from the Core Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>City Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>State Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-profit agencies from the Health and Human Service fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CDCs from the Core Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small businesses from the Core Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Broader business community</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Religious community from the Core Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Other (determined by the Board, using criteria of racial/ethnic /age/sex representation, skills or resources)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Non-profit organizations or groups from the Secondary Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

The election of Directors to fill terms which have expired shall be held each year at the Annual Meeting of the Members.
APPENDIX III

Dudley Triangle

(Please use Appendix I for reference.)
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