

THE EFFECT OF THE FUNDING ENVIRONMENT
ON
COMMUNITY BASED DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

by

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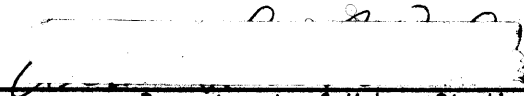
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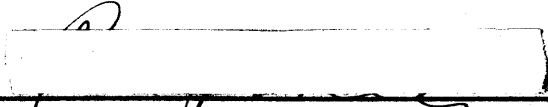
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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and
Planning on May 24, 1982 in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to determine how the influence of funders (and other external support institutions) affect the development priorities and strategies of community development corporations (CDCs). CDCs were originally designed to allow community residents to make independent development decisions based on their interpretation of community needs. Potential problems arose when some CDC priorities were not favored by funding institutions.

This paper examines studies of CDCs to see whether other analysts find any conflict between community development corporations and their funders. The thesis then presents case studies of three Boston based (black controlled) CDCs and evaluates their involvement with support institutions. The organizations examined are: The Lower Roxbury Development Corporation; The Greater Roxbury Development Corporation; and The Roxbury Action Program.

This study finds that CDCs in general aren't heavily pressured by external support institutions to conform to a specific set of priorities. However, private and public sector funders do help to limit the development options available to community corporations. In addition, many CDCs find that they must avoid strategies that appear too controversial or political in nature. CDCs can resist much of the outside influence by building strong (and effective) organizations, maintaining an involved constituency, using volunteers and contact people, and pursuing funding sources that offer the maximum flexibility. CDC should rely on other community organizations (that are less dependent on external support) to work on more controversial projects.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1960s, many community based groups have evolved from issue-oriented advocacy organizations into more professional development corporations (CDCs). These corporations were established to increase local control of resources and to bring about physical, social, economic, and political changes that would improve the lives of low-income and minority residents of distressed communities across the country. In short, CDCs were to be independent citizen-controlled vehicles of change.

Much of the original impetus for the creation of CDCs came from a vocal and sometimes militant desire of many communities to shape their own development and create alternative institutions. In later years, CDCs were promoted by some (mainstream) policy makers who preferred self-help (neighborhood enterprises) to other programs in the federal government. The promotion of independent community based development efforts has come most recently from conservative analysts who like to see a great deal of government program activity taken over by private corporations and local self-help "mediating" structures. Supporters from different parts of the political spectrum believe that the issue of independence from outside control and regulation was (and is) important in local development.

Over the years, the initial dreams of CDC proponents have been tempered by harsh realities confronting new development entities that had to operate in communities plagued with poverty, unemployment, and an outflow or withdrawal of financial resources. CDCs also found themselves battling red tape and local governments that were often unsupportive of neighborhood based development efforts. These organizations had to weather such external or environmental constraints while trying to develop competent

organizations and survive financially. Financial survival in almost all cases meant soliciting funds from outside public and/or private sources. Working with these external sources of support meant cooperating with funding entities which could potentially challenge a corporation's wish to operate as an independent community force.

The community development corporation's need to make independent development decisions can potentially conflict with a funder's desire to make sure that funds are used for purposes it (the funder) determines to be appropriate. External support groups (funders) try to insure that their funds are used wisely by imposing restrictions or regulations on the aid they give to CDCs. "Strings" attached to resources given to organizations tend to vary according to the type of funding body involved, therefore providing community corporations with some options concerning the types of support they can choose in their efforts to implement development strategies.

CENTRAL THESIS QUESTIONS

In light of the issues discussed above, this thesis will attempt to answer the following related questions:

- To what extent do external support institutions affect the development of CDCs and their choice of organizational priorities?
- Is the concept of independent community development a realizable goal, given the constraints imposed on CDCs from the external support environment?
- Or, how well can a CDC choose its own development priorities in the face of outside influence of these support groups?

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Measuring the impact of external support institutions on CDCs is not an easy process because most community corporations interact with a variety of public and private funders in the course of their development. Furthermore, CDCs must obtain other resources (such as housing financing) which do not directly support the organization, but still might allow the CDC to be under pressure from outside agencies and actors. In light of these complications, this study will investigate organizations with very different funding histories to try and illustrate how a variety of support groups can influence a CDC's development choices.

Three Boston-based CDCs will be examined to determine how well they maintain their original development interests in the face of such external (funding or support related) constraints, or alternatively, whether changes in their priorities were clearly organizational responses to changing community needs. All three organizations began functioning as CDCs in the late 1960s. These CDCs were initiated for different reasons, but they all chose to try and develop some portion of Roxbury (one of Boston's primary black neighborhoods), an area with a large low income population with a range of problems associated with inner city areas.

The Lower Roxbury Community Corporation started out of community efforts to stop the negative effects of urban renewal in the Madison Park section of Lower Roxbury. The city planned to level an existing neighborhood to make way for a large high school complex which was designed to be a model of education in Boston. The residents of the area organized to prevent the total destruction of their houses, and demanded that the city scale down its school complex and set aside some land for replacement housing. When the residents decided to try and develop the housing

themselves, they ultimately formed a corporation, and became one of the first CDCs in the country.

The Roxbury Action Program was originally a Quaker sponsored housing advocacy group. The group became autonomous from its sponsors and moved to the Highland Park section of Roxbury to begin an ambitious set of development activities to try and create a "model Black Community" in a badly deteriorated neighborhood. Since 1969 it has focused on housing development and other projects in an attempt to try and accomplish its objectives.

The Greater Roxbury Development Corporation (initially Circle, Inc.) is a Roxbury based organization working toward improvement in the economic and physical condition of the greater Roxbury area. It received federal funding and evolved into a Title VII CDC with a large staff and more of a business emphasis than RAP or LRCC. (The name changed to GRDC in 1975 in a process that will be described in Chapter IV.) Although GRDC is no longer directly funded by the federal government, it had ten years worth of experience in trying to implement its programs while being financed primarily by one agency.

These three organizations are all basically black controlled CDCs facing similar neighborhood conditions and negotiating with the same local and state political forces. The organizations differ in origin, staff size, priorities, strategies, and (what is most germane to the study) they also have different sources of funding. While GRDC has been almost completely funded by the same public source over the years, RAP and LRCC have pursued a more diverse public and private funding strategy. The contrasts between GRDC and the other two CDCs will help to illustrate the ramifications of each kind of funding on an organization's development.

The similarities of the CDCs allow us to isolate the key differences between them more easily. For example, the study will not be concerned with the issue of funding impact in terms of different racial groups, since all of the organizations now are generally representative of the same group (although the question of the effects of racial background in a group's attempt to seek funding and venture capital would probably be an interesting study). Our comparison will also not be hampered by the questions that would arise if the CDCs were located in different cities. Since the three organizations exist under the same mayor, governor, and local economy, these variables will not automatically account for differences in organizational progress and strategy. (Relations between the individual organizations and government bodies, however, will be considered.)

Each CDC will be examined in terms of its background, organizational evolution, relation with funding sources, and both present and future development strategies. The methodology employed for these case studies included several interviews with people in some way connected with these organizations, and an examination of any organizational documents that helped in assessing some of the basic questions under consideration in this study. (See Appendix I for a further description of the methodology.)

In addition to case studies of the three CDCs, this study will survey a good portion of the (case study) literature on CDCs, their development, and their relationship to funding and other external sources of influence. Another set of information concerns the evolution of Title VII CDCs and the changes that occurred within the federal administrative agency that affected the client CDCs. Finally, some of the information is not about actual physical development organizations, but other more

human development groups that have also experienced some effects from the funding environment. This study will be organized in the following way:

Chapter I: Presents a survey of the literature on CDCs and their overall effectiveness in the face of external constraints and internal problems. Special focus will be given to the relations of community groups to their funding sources. If most of the literature agrees on particular points, then these issues will be clearly identified to see whether the case studies done in this thesis agree with the assessments of other researchers.

Chapter II: Contains the case study of the Lower Roxbury Development Corporation. LRCC will be examined because it maintained a smaller staff and didn't rely as heavily on outside resources than RAP or GRDC. The group was also established with more of a voluntary effort than the other two organizations. The case will determine whether this factor is important to the central questions.

Chapter III: Presents a case study of the Roxbury Action Program. RAP relied on a mix of private and public resources. The organization falls somewhere in between LRCC and GRDC in terms of total funds received, and, as this chapter will show, RAP's history and orientation is different in many ways from the other groups.

Chapter IV: Examines the history of the Greater Roxbury Development Corporation and its relationship with the Community Services Administration. The case is interesting since the organization was so heavily dependent on federal funding. Discussions in Chapter I will provide sufficient background to explain the development of the SIP/Title VII program that sponsored and monitored this type of CDC.

Chapter V: Presents an analysis of the material from the survey of literature and the case studies. The major task of this section is to show the positive and negative effects of the funding environment. This paper will explore the reasons for the effects, and whether the "independence" of the CDCs is actually threatened by funding related influences. Chapter V also examines other external factors relating to funding that tend to change the direction and orientation of some CDCs.

Finally, Chapter V contains conclusions regarding some of the issues vital to this study, and recommendations concerning the future role of CDCs in their relations to funding and other potential sources of external support.

CHAPTER I:

A SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

Community Development Corporations (and other community based organizations--CBOs) face an array of internal and external forces that can alter their plans, priorities, and implementation strategies. A study of CDCs done by the Urban Institute summarized these influences in the following way:

We have distinguished three general classes of variables which influence CDC resources, choices, and resultant community outcomes:

- 1) national and metropolitan wide changes
- 2) external development support institutions
- 3) the organization and choices of CDCs themselves¹

These categories are simply stated but include a wide variety of factors that help explain the evolution of CDCs. This thesis is specifically concerned with actors, groups, and institutions that would be defined under item #2. The first section of this chapter will discuss the general impact of external "support" institutions, while the next section shall specifically examine the relationship between the Community Services Administration (and its predecessor) and Title VII CDCs.*

One of the main issues (or controversies) surrounding the impact of external actors on community development corporations (and other CBOs) comes from the need for CDCs to act independently of outside pressure to establish program priorities that they see as being essential to meet the needs of their constituencies. This need for independence often runs counter to the wishes of a sponsoring agency or funder. These external support institutions often want greater accountability and control over CDC activities so that their funds can be used wisely. The wisest and best use of course usually reflects the priorities of the funding bodies themselves.

* The reasons for studying Title VII are explained in the next section.

While this desire for accountability (and propensity to regulate) is understandable, some would argue that external "supports" have pushed their influence too far. A complaint often heard is that "the rules under which CDCs must operate in order to get federal funding drastically limit their capacity for economic innovation. . . . the policy guidelines severely limit the money available for other community projects, from non-profit businesses to health care and recreation . . ." ² CDCs are forced to adapt their own objectives to the priorities of funding entities because they (the CDCs) often have no other more flexible support alternatives.

An earlier evaluation of a Boston community organization's efforts pessimistically concluded that CDCs don't have very much control at all over what their development priorities should be. ³ The study suggests that this lack of choice occurs because:

. . . much time is spent searching for additional government funds or private support for different community projects. This orientation makes it [the organization] susceptible to changing their goals whenever there is a change in government spending priorities . . . ⁴

Once again this illustrates a kind of indirect control a funder can exert over a client organization. While the support group didn't exactly tell the CDC to change its goals, it severely limited the options available, thus achieving much the same effect. Another study backs up this point:

. . . the CDC's range of choices may be constrained by the requirement of those providing funds rather than by their ability to identify alternative output mixes and produce them. A possible solution, of course, is more discretionary funding. ⁵

Some studies mentioned that a lot of groups valued support from church related funds because their funding requirements were found to be more flexible. Other CBOs tried to maintain diverse sources of funding so they could more or less find support for a variety of priorities. However,

even utilization of these approaches does not prevent a CDC from having its strategy options limited at some point in its experience. For example, Church related support might have been more flexible, but it did not come in sufficient quantity, nor did it last very long in most cases, requiring the use of more restrictive funding. Another problem arose because the alternative approaches and philosophies espoused by some community based groups often clashed with the social/political viewpoints of many other funding institutions. "Traditional private sources, with few exceptions, are particularly resistant to funding requests from neighborhood organizations seeking help for controversial activities essential to resident capacity and neighborhood self-determination."⁶

Even if CDCs don't suffer direct pressure from groups that fund their staff operations, the nature of their work often necessitates the use of federal and state housing (and other) programs which mean the introduction of new constraints:

In their attempts to establish local housing conservation programs, neighborhood organizations invariably discover that their efforts are constrained by a frustrating, often incomprehensible framework of laws, ordinances, codes, regulations, and bureaucratic practices . . .⁷

Thus, individuals and agencies that are supposedly there to aid the efforts of CDCs (often supplying indirect funding) also bring a new set of priorities that are added to the wishes of CDC sponsors like CSA or the Ford Foundation.

CDCs are not the only community based groups that often suffer from this kind of influence. Other studies complain about the restrictive nature of federal human service programs. Conservative critics of government regulation constantly argue against government interference. One example of this comes from a case study of a youth home in Philadelphia called the House of Umoja. The investigator concluded that "the need to

conform to bureaucratic demands in the contract nearly tore the Umoja program assunder."⁸ This study recommended that public policy "shouldn't intervene directly in the operation of a local structure or otherwise exercise control over its decision making."⁹

Yet, a funding or sponsoring body can't allow all of its funds to be totally unrestricted and still want some kind of accountability or emphasis in its sponsorship. A public body with the "public interest" has a desire (in theory anyway) to see that dollars are well spent. The difficulty here, however, seems to be an overstepping of bounds that can hamper efforts by the people most closely associated with the problems of a particular locality who are supposed to have the best notion of what to do in a particular area to improve local conditions.

This potential for excessive interference in CDC affairs is especially unsettling because much of the initial rhetoric coming from funders and supporters promotes the kind of independent decision-making they eventually helped to constrain. While some of the regulations or guidelines come from well-meaning bureaucrats, they nonetheless impose their projects from without, indicating that many support groups are actually very unwilling to give up control over the resources in question.¹⁰

The discussion so far has indicated that it is possible for the goals of community organizations to conflict with the priorities of larger funders. Another course of direct political influence comes from state and especially local governments who frequently don't like the idea of independent power bases operating in their territory. One study points out that "City Hall usually prefers to exercise total control over the federal, state, and local resources under its jurisdictions . . ." and often considers neighborhood groups "as activist nuisances or even

political threats."¹¹ Another examination of CDC-local government relations concludes that since the capacity of City Halls to harm CDCs is so great, it is usually in a CDC's best interest to cooperate with this local force. A comprehensive overview of CDC activity echoed this point by stressing that:

. . . community development corporations may be able to get organized without much support or enthusiasm from civic and state officials, but it is not likely that they will be able to survive very long or accomplish very much unless they mend their fences with the authorities and establish good working relations . . .¹²

However, this kind of cooperation (especially when the resources in question are so political) almost always comes at a price which may or may not be too steep for community residents to pay. One critical study of a Boston CDC effort reported that the CDC in question was forced to cooperate with the Redevelopment Authority in order to try and rehabilitate a number of units for low-moderate income residents even though the Authority was in the process of displacing a substantially greater number of lower income people elsewhere in the CDC's neighborhood. Apparently this CDC was unable to participate in a protest oriented action against the authority, causing its critics to question the worth of the compromise since only a small fraction of the housing would be available for poor and working class people.¹³

TITLE VII: A CLOSER LOOK AT EXTERNAL INFLUENCE

The previous discussion has outlined (through a survey of literature) most of the general issues that will be covered by this report. In order to examine the effects of external funders and support groups in a more detailed way, this study will take a short look at the Title VII Special Impact Program experience. Title VII will be examined primarily for three reasons:

- 1) There is a large amount of literature on the history and evolution of Title VII.
- 2) Title VII CDCs receive as much as 90-95% of their funds from the one agency operating the program. This dependency would (at least in theory) make Title VIIs easier to examine in terms of influences on them by a particular funder.
- 3) Chapter IV of this thesis is a case study of a former Title VII CDC, so the discussion in this section will provide some background for that investigation.

The history of Title VII (or more accurately, its predecessor) started in the mid 1960s. In its early days, Title VII was known as the Special Impact Program or SIP. SIP refers to programs under the 1966 amendments of Title I-D of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.¹⁴ These amendments came out of an effort by Sen. Robert Kennedy to help sponsor a project that he was developing in New York City called Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, which became the first group funded as an SIP.

The early legislative language of the Special Impact Program has been described as vague by many sources. A description of the legislation illustrates this point:

Projects were to be designated "to arrest tendencies toward dependency, chronic unemployment, and rising community tensions. They were to be carried out in poor neighborhoods themselves and they were to be of sufficient size and scope to have an appreciable impact. . . .¹⁵

The major intent of this non-specific kind of directive was to allow local people to determine their own program priorities and types of operations.

The Special Impact Program suffered from political pressure from its very beginning because the Johnson administration was reluctant to support a Kennedy program. In 1968, the SIP was split between the Office

of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the Department of Labor, the Commerce Department, and the Department of Agriculture. In OEO (where the program was centered by 1969), the emphasis was on groups interested in economic development under the control of local people¹⁶ (although OEO was somewhat amenable to organizations with a broad development focus).

"In comparison to later years, OEO's early funding and technical assistance to grantees focused heavily on organizational attributes such as community representation, strong leadership, well developed political clout at the local level, and broad participation."¹⁷ CDCs were to develop their own goals for development, and the approach of the program was in some ways a government effort to accommodate the issue of community control being raised repeatedly in the late 1960s. Federal funding and program flexibility were devices that would allow CDCs to escape some of the negative impacts of local politics. These policy pronouncements were as close as the program came to granting relative independence to community based organizations.*

During the first Nixon administration, OEO began to tighten its restrictions and policy guidelines concerning the Special Impact Program. This translated into:

- more formal operating procedures for the SIP program
- more elaborate system(s) of performance monitoring of CDCs
- new standards for the evaluation and approval of business proposals.¹⁸

More ominous signals concerning the independence of CDCs came after the appointment of Donald Rumsfeld as director of the OEO:

* Although the repeated emphasis on CDC "independence" in this discussion makes it seem like independent decision-making is a completely positive (trouble-free) goal, this report does recognize that some regulation and monitoring has its uses.

The new director instituted a system of more careful monitoring of grantees and prospective grantees, and he added new checks and balances to OEO's review of SIP funding proposals and grant recommendations. He also insisted that SIP grants be made to the "right people."¹⁹

The last sentence was the most threatening, since Rumsfeld was heard to say that OEO had to prevent groups like the Black Panthers from getting any government funding.

Rumsfeld, Nixon, and their supporters took a very dim view of the whole community control idea. When one local government complained that a staff member of an SIP funded CDC was a "Black militant," federal officials tried (with some success) to severely cripple the program by holding up its funding.²⁰

The SIP legislation was amended into a slightly more focused program called Title VII in 1972.* "CDCs funded under this explicitly designated community economic development program were to engage in a broad range of activities including business and economic development, community development and housing, and manpower training activities."²¹ The Nixon administration's specific emphasis focused on "black capitalism," a much touted panacea for the problems of the ghetto.

In 1974 the program was again amended when OEO was abolished and the Community Services Administration was created. The new language contained even more reference to business development and profitability. By 1975, the program was narrowed to make sure that it sponsored "a net economic inflow into the community, venture profitability, and increase in skilled managers and workers, and reductions in unemployment and public assistance."²² Activities that were not related to these priorities were

* There had been constant efforts to kill OEO all the way along. CSA would eventually suffer the same pressure. Both programs were definitely political footballs--unfortunately the merits of CDCs were often not discussed enough when it was time for CSA refunding by Congress.

expected to be funded by other sources.

Even with these narrowing priorities, sources indicate that CSA "had not come to grips fully with serious questions affecting the program's future. There were questions of philosophy and program quality" among other things.²³ The new directors under the incoming Carter administration tried to reorganize CSA's administration of the program to create a more efficient and effective agency. They established new guidelines for CDCs concerning monitoring and reporting, issued policy guidelines indicating the kinds of programs CSA was likely to fund and indicated the proper kind of Board representation and staff training that was required for Title VII CDCs. A study of Title VII concluded that many of these actions further served to centralize the authority of the program in Washington which in turn took some more decision-making power away from the CDCs themselves.²⁴ (CSA's priorities, according to this study, sometimes clashed with the goals of individual corporations.)

The CDCs weren't completely vulnerable to outside influence. At times they acted collectively to influence policy and the directives of the agency. In some cases it is not clear whether new CSA directives actually followed changing CDC priorities instead of forcing CDCs to conform. However, it is certain that changing central directives had some impact on local organizations. "Several CDCs that had received SIP funds were threatened with defunding if their policies and practices were not altered significantly."²⁵ As one study aptly noted, changes in the program's emphasis "can jeopardize links which CDCs maintain with their respective communities, since such links depend, in part, on the community's expectation that the CDC will continue to address itself to a range of social as well as economic needs."²⁶

Chapter I has outlined some of the major issues (concerning the topic of this report) that have been found in other studies of organizations operating on the community level. The points presented were generally those that were found to be important among several sources.

These issues include:

- the conflict between the priorities of a funding institution and the objectives of a CDC
- the related issue of CDC independence versus the need for accountability and regulation
- the interference from influential actors and institutions that wish to constrain CDCs for purely political reasons

The thesis will now examine three cases studies by the author to see how much agreement there is between some of the points raised in the literature and the cases to be presented in Chapters II-IV.

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19. Parachini, p. 53.
20. Faux, p. 287.
21. Federal Assistance to Community Development Corporations, p. 23.
22. Ibid., p. 24.
23. Parachini, p. 159.
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25. Parachini, p. 62.
26. Gann et al., p. 133.

CHAPTER II:

A CASE STUDY OF THE
LOWER ROXBURY COMMUNITY CORPORATION

LRCC: INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDY

This chapter will discuss the history of the Lower Roxbury Community Corporation in order to determine whether the organization was able to achieve its objectives in light of any external constraints that it encountered in its development process. A discussion of the organization's experience will indicate any similarities between its relations with outside support groups and the relationships of other CDCs described in previous case studies. The conclusions from this evaluation will be compared to the results of studies in the analysis section of Chapter V.

GENERAL HISTORY

The Lower Roxbury Community Corporation was born in response to a crisis. In the mid 1960s, the Madison Park section of Lower Roxbury was slated for substantial urban renewal activity that would ultimately displace the residents living in the area. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) was acting on a report generated by the Harvard School of Education (that called for the creation of a large high-school complex for Boston students) when it decided that the Madison Park neighborhood was to be the site of a new high school facility (although some of the members of the Boston School Committee wanted to turn lower Roxbury into a truck terminal for the proposed Inner Belt section of the massive highway system planned for Boston's southwest corridor).¹

In early 1966, the BRA announced plans for early land acquisition and the School Committee indicated that it favored a 57 acre plan that would mean the destruction of an existing racially mixed community of approximately 480 families. Community residents had witnessed the neighborhood destruction in nearby Washington Park (and other parts of Boston)

and met in a series of meetings to decide that they would oppose the BRA's plans unless the authority scaled down the size of the school and sponsored some replacement housing for the families threatened with removal. When the BRA suggested that residents relocate to some urban renewal initiated housing in Washington Park, neighborhood people held fast to their demands for replacement housing in their own area. In spite of opposition to their demands from some of Roxbury's other "leading citizens," community people decided to form LRCC in June of 1966 to help insure that their demands were met.²

The organization began functioning under the interracial leadership of Ralph Smith and Shirley Smolinski, and included other key supporters that proved invaluable to community endeavors. Workers from the Roxbury Federation of Neighborhood Centers, Cooper Community Center, Norfolk House, and other organizations donated their time and energy to help the residents organize and formulate their demands. Although the BRA director Ed Logue tried to neutralize this community force, the group and its allies became an official organization with the following purpose:

To further the interest of all the residents in the area known as Lower Roxbury . . . in matters of housing, education, and recreation, and generally to work for the revitalization of the community . . .³

The Lower Roxbury residents and their allies (who included other activists, professionals, and some church officials) managed to keep exerting pressure on the bureaucracy even though many people in other parts of the city felt unable to challenge the urban renewal bulldozer. The resistance of neighborhood people did not prevent some residents from moving out of the area once local officials became more earnest about their southwest corridor highway plans. However, in spite of the beginning of an exodus, LRCC continued organizing the community for support of the

demands for new housing. They also contracted with an advocacy planning group (Urban Planning Aid) to prepare a "site plan map that showed both the high school and housing for the 480 families who lived in Lower Roxbury" being built on the same 57.9 acre site.⁴

LRCC people pressed their point at a public hearing held in the Timilty School on July 25, 1966. Later, at a School Committee meeting in August of that year, community residents called for a delay in early land acquisition. LRCC carried the struggle even further to the city council in November when they and their supporters filled the city council chambers to make their feelings known.

In spite of the David and Goliath type of battle the neighborhood people were waging, LRCC managed to obtain certain key concessions from the BRA in the first week of 1967. On January 5th, the residents of Lower Roxbury got BRA officials to sign a "Memorandum of Understanding" which stated that the BRA would set aside at least 15 of the 57 acre school complex for replacement housing for neighborhood people. At least 400 new or rehabilitated low-moderate units were to be provided and rent subsidies were to be made available if necessary. Since the BRA then recognized LRCC as the official voice of the community, the Memorandum went on to state that "the housing program for the area will be developed in consultation with the Lower Roxbury Community Corporation and will be based on surveys of families as to their locational preference, income requirements and other appropriate considerations."⁵

LRCC's ability to harness community support and outside technical assistance proved successful in obtaining the Memorandum of Understanding. Later, in 1968 when government authorities were delaying the initial steps toward creating the replacement housing, LRCC and its members decided that

the BRA was not moving fast enough or fulfilling its promises. This decision to take more of an active role in the development was not warmly received by the BRA. However, constant pressure and a change in BRA directors meant that LRCC was officially recognized as the sponsor/developer of the project in 1969, and became the Project Area committee for the Campus High Renewal Area in 1969.⁶ This latter victory would mean that LRCC would receive money to pay for key staff people over the next few years, and that staff was also responsible for monitoring the development of the nearby high school.

LRCC received a start-up (interest free) loan of \$200,000 from the Joseph Tuckerman Foundation (a Unitarian church related fund) to help pay for architectural and other fees to plan the replacement housing. The organization formed an affiliate group with the Tuckerman Foundation called the Lower Roxbury Development Corporation which would become the legal vehicle for developing the area according to the priorities of the residents. LRCC/LRDC was now able to begin implementation of its plans.

The history of this community development from the late 1960s until the present hasn't exactly occurred in the way that the residents first hoped that it would. They wanted all the housing replaced in a short period of time so that their temporary relocation into other neighborhoods (during construction) would not become permanent. In reality, the development took a lot longer than planned, and is still not completely finished in 1982. LRCC wanted to plan and develop a larger number of units right away, but the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) was only willing to finance a certain set number, so the community organization had to settle for less units initially and try to develop its 400 plus apartments in stages.⁷

Phase I, called Smith House, was completed and opened by August of 1973. It is a twelve story building that contains 132 units of one bedroom apartments for the elderly. As mentioned, it was financed by the MHFA, and makes use of federal rent support programs along with a good number of LRCC's other housing.

Phase II was completed in 1974 and contains 131 units of one and two bedroom family housing. It is a seven story structure which is called Haynes House. (Haynes House, like Smith House, is named after a person who is intimately involved in the growth of LRCC.) LRCC had to change its original design for Haynes House in order to meet the MHFA requirements and preferences. This kind of negotiation with MHFA and other agencies was a major cause for delay in the completion of all LRCC projects.

Phase III (Madison Park) consists of 120 units of townhouse structures, offering two, three, and four bedroom apartments for low to moderate income tenants. Phase III opened in 1978, and represents that last phase actually constructed at this writing. Phase III is also the first part of the project to be built by a minority contractor.

Phase IV, which is due to be constructed in the near future, will consist of 143 units of new townhouse structures. (The groundbreaking for Phase IV was held on April 8, 1982.) Two to three bedroom Section 8 apartments will be offered in these buildings. This Phase, called Madison Park IV, will be financed differently than Phases I-III. LRCC is making use of a special city program (11b) which allows the organization to issue tax exempt bonds through the Boston Housing Authority in order to raise funds to finance the project. This strategy will give LRCC/DC more control over the financing than they had under the MHFA sponsored efforts.⁸ In return, the BHA can ask that a few of its public housing tenants be allowed

to live in some of the new Phase IV units.

In the past LRCC has also considered including a social service element in its plans, and additionally wanted to upgrade the neighboring Whittier Street Housing project. These ideas never became reality for various reasons, and the organization has basically concentrated on developing Phases I-IV (a full time job). LRCC is still interested in the fate of Whittier Street, and might look into its development again once Phase IV is completed. The Corporation is also contemplating ideas like a supermarket for the area, but no concrete plans exist for this yet.⁹

ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

The Lower Roxbury Community Corporation (or Council as it was originally called) had its beginnings as a purely voluntary effort of concerned residents, and has never had more than two full-time staff people employed by the organization. Ralph Smith has been the only paid director of the organization. There have been consultants, interns, and pro-bono professional services incorporated into the organization's strategies over time. Yet the key factor in sustaining the group has been the involvement of a small committed group of people since the start of the organization.¹⁰

In the 1960s, this core group was part of a larger neighborhood constituency, but people gradually moved away from the neighborhood or became inactive for various other reasons. This left only a few hard workers like the director, the board members, and a couple of other supporters to provide the effort to offset the corporation's small staff size. This changing level of voluntary input also allowed LRCC to function without a great deal of money.

The Board of Directors of LRCC, which has been an integral part of the development, comes from elected representatives of the organization's

membership. This Board in turn appoints 4 members to the Board of LRDC. The other 3 positions on the LRCC Board are filled by representatives of the Tuckerman Foundation. The chairperson of the (DC) Board is always to be selected by LRCC so that the community would always remain in control of the organization.¹¹

Decision-making has moved from more of a mass-based activity to the responsibility of the board and staff of the corporation. This primarily occurred as LRCC evolved from strict advocacy into a development role. The development process was apparently too drawn out to sustain mass participation (especially since many residents had moved from the area). Also, as one early participant noted, once the concessions were obtained from the BRA, the organization didn't need as much organizing emphasis because the development phase only needed a few key actors.¹²

LRCC hasn't really changed its focus, since its goals for replacing the lost housing were very real and the major organizational efforts in Phases I through IV have been addressing these goals. Unfortunately, a number of the original residents moved, so many early participants never got that replacement housing. (Present residents, almost all black, are mostly newcomers to the area.) Yet LRCC did provide a service to the community by creating attractive new housing units that have won planning/design awards.

Some critics of the organization maintain that LRCC is not very responsive to input from many of the present residents into organizational decision-making.¹³ While this doesn't necessarily hamper the corporation's Phase IV plans, bad blood between LRCC and some tenants in the complex could prevent future organizational growth, since the group's early strength came from resident support, and LRCC in later years might need to draw on

this volunteer effort. However, an examination of LRCC's recent past suggests that the organization presently has enough political influence to implement its present Phase IV plans.

FUNDING HISTORY

LRCC arose out of a very strong grass-roots organizing effort, and initially operated with no real funding. Extensive use of neighborhood volunteers and time donated by key people from nearby community centers provided the start-up resources necessary to make the organization operational and helped it to win its first major battles with the urban renewal bureaucracy. The group also began small scale community fundraising by holding festivals, selling goods, and employing other methods for gaining contributions from its own constituency.

After the memorandum was signed with the BRA in 1967, LRCC obtained some small grants from private sources to help with the planning of the new housing. By 1970 the organization had also received the \$200,000 in seed money from the Tuckerman Foundation. There was really no full-time paid staff until the beginning of the 1970s, when the director and his secretary were employed by the BRA because of LRCC's status as the Campus High School Project area committee and thus entitled to funding for staff support. Funding for staff by the Redevelopment Authority ended in 1976, and since then staff support has come from syndication proceeds and other fees from the operation of LRCC's housing.¹⁴

The volunteer effort in LRCC's early endeavors was a clear way of maintaining community priorities without worrying about the objectives of a funding body. Community involvement also helped support the organization's early (sometimes militant) position that community residents had a right to stay in the area. Although the BRA director tried to separate

the community from some of its organizers who were employed by neighborhood centers, this effort failed and the residents and their allies maintained a strong support base that operated in the absence of a substantial amount of funding.¹⁵

However, the organization had to contend with fees for architectural and planning services because not all the professionals involved with the group could donate their services. Therefore, to augment volunteer and community support, the group sought some grants from private sources. The relationship with two of these funders will be examined more closely in order to further study the interaction between LRCC and its support institutions.

In 1968 LRCC applied for a small grant from the Joint Urban Fund of the Diocese of Massachusetts. Before deciding on the grant, the Joint Urban Fund asked an independent (but church related) observer to evaluate LRCC and its application for funding. This person wrote to LRCC and told the group:

. . . that while supporting the validity of the needs your proposal reflects, I recommend that some greater input of professional help is incorporated into your proposal. I believe that the board and staff structure of the LRCC . . . must be assessed and altered. . . .¹⁶

In October of 1968, LRCC sent a response to this letter which essentially rejected this type of outside influence:

The change and "reassessments" you suggest are alternately unnecessary, unacceptable and marked by a sense of unreality or simply extremely harmful . . .

The Board strongly resists professionalism of the sort which you suggest, feeling that its only result would be a distancing of LRCC from the community and a consequent ineffectiveness . . .¹⁷

Obviously, LRCC's strong sense of purpose and community backing allowed it to take a firm stand, even when it meant possibly obtaining

the necessary funds from this particular foundation. The Joint Urban Fund did, however, give a \$7000 grant to the Corporation in 1969 in spite of their tough stance, suggesting that LRCC's credibility as a community group was strong enough to outweigh the problems that the evaluator had with the organization.

LRCC's primary funder at this time, the Tuckerman Foundation, was more flexible in allowing the group to set its own priorities. Although the Unitarian Church backed foundation formed a joint corporate entity with LRCC (i.e., LRDC--the development component) and maintains 3 out of 7 seats on the LRDC board, its influence on the direction of the group has been minor and mainly beneficial, according to several persons involved with the evolution of the corporation. A member of the foundation handles the organization's bookkeeping and pays most of the bills generated by the group.

This relation still exists in part because LRCC has not paid back all of the \$200,000 no-interest loan it got from the Tuckerman group. Apparently the Fund has been very understanding about this slow repayment, especially since LRCC's attempts at development represent the only real successful housing development efforts sponsored by the Unitarian-backed group in the area.*¹⁸ Through Board memberships, Fund representatives can provide additional assistance without refunding the organization. While in theory this involvement could seem potentially compromising, the success of LRCC in meeting its major housing objectives suggests no identifiable major harm in the relationship. Since the beginning, the foundation had pledged to maintain a low profile in program operation if LRCC

* The Unitarians had been involved in very problematic housing developments elsewhere in Lower Roxbury that they eventually lost control of and were forced to abandon.

was fairly successful in accomplishing its proposed objectives.

Another potential place for compromising the program objectives came from LRCC's later staff support from the BRA. On the surface, LRCC's being funded by the agency it fought for several years seems like a problematic arrangement. LRCC battled the BRA just to get them to sign the Memorandum, and then found that they still had to fight to become the area's developer once the BRA dragged its feet in putting together the new housing. LRCC sent a letter to the BRA in May 1968 indicating that it wanted to be the developer for the Madison Park area.¹⁹ By then, a new director had taken over Ed Logue's place at the BRA. This person (Hale Champion) made a very cool response to LRCC's letter. After acknowledging the principle of the Memorandum, he stated that "this does not and cannot turn over the ultimate decision-making role of the BRA to LRCC."²⁰ LRCC representatives had a few stormy meetings with Champion, and ultimately got him to change some of his views, and by the following year LRCC had moved into the development position.

After this encounter with Champion, the organization's relationships with the BRA improved significantly. The Directorship of the Authority changed hands several times, so by the year that LRCC staff was funded, it (LRCC) was working with a more sympathetic BRA director. The BRA also found it politically rewarding to point to LRCC as a "model" of how they could cooperate with a community group since many of the other BRA efforts were highly criticized by many community activists around Boston.

Finally, with the organization now being funded from syndication proceeds, the issue of outside funding related influence has been minimized (unless the continued involvement of the Tuckerman group is counted

in terms of influence). As mentioned previously, the special arrangement under the city's 11b program presumably gives the group (LRCC) more control over resources for Phase IV. Other revenue could potentially come from LRCC's involvement with the Southwest Corridor Project, but right now LRCC is simply monitoring the development of nearby parcel 18.

RELATIONS WITH EXTERNAL FORCES

As fortunes changed for the Corporation, its relationships with other outside forces became more positive. Another director took over the BRA who was more friendly to the organization.²¹ One of LRCC's founding organizers, Dan Richardson, became the HUD area director, and thus a very helpful ally. Over the years, LRCC began to develop friendly connections in the city government, the MHFA, and other agencies. Thus, they moved from a hostile advocacy role to one that could be described as working within the system.

This does not mean that LRCC had an easy road to travel with different officials after 1969. There were many delays caused by varying requirements of agencies connected with the projects. In one case, the organization had to repeatedly submit plans and drawings for Haynes House to try and reach an agreement with the MHFA. LRCC was finally forced to abandon some of the elements it wanted included in this project just to get the structure built.²² In another instance, LRCC wanted Phase III to be cooperative structures, but MHFA would not back this idea so the Corporation decided to drop this request. These kinds of encounters with a cooperating agency were not isolated events and such negotiations delayed the completion of LRCC's plans. This indicates that the organization's contacts could aid them in the development process, but these relation-

ships with key people were not enough to insure that all of the group's plans were implemented.

DISCUSSION

If LRCC's original goals concerning replacement housing were to be used as a measuring rod for organizational tenacity in the face of external constraints, then LRCC certainly has been quite successful. Although the organization has generated other ideas and plans, the replacement housing was and is the major objective. The seeds of the original organizing effort have grown to fruition.

Getting these seeds to grow took a lot of organizational effort that was not necessarily confined to the technical aspects of the project. The need to build Phases I through IV has also meant the promotion of contacts and political resources in order to overcome potential bureaucratic hurdles. One proposal for a specific project has letters of support from the mayor, governor, a senator, and heads of the MHFA, BHA, and the Office of State Planning. This kind of support undoubtedly helped LRCC accomplish much of its original plans, although the final products are often different from first draft plans.²³

However, the need to maintain good relations with key outside people might have helped to distance the organization from some of its present constituency who are largely newcomers to the area. While these external affiliations may not have been the main cause of a deterioration of neighborhood-organizational unity (as evidence suggests that it isn't) the importance of these external relations could take precedence over internal relations since the former at this stage was more instrumental in getting the later phases built.²⁴ Although it is important for LRCC to maintain its public sector contacts to aid the organization's housing efforts, it

also could be wise for the group to incorporate newer community residents into the development process to insure organizational continuity in case older supporters become inactive.

It is in LRCC's interest to maintain a strong constituency, since this same human energy was LRCC's original source of strength and independence. A shift in political winds and a governmental staff change-over might make this potential support source much more necessary in the future. Plans that LRCC might want to implement could clash with official priorities, and an organized constituency would help negotiate certain impasses.

LRCC has perhaps anticipated this problem by seeking and obtaining a grant from the Local Initiatives Support Center (sponsored by the Ford Foundation) for resident-management training. The idea is to train resident managers to take over the responsibility for running LRCC's housing units. This effort should help to increase participation within the complex by promoting the spirit of cooperation.

In spite of a few faults, LRCC has managed to accomplish a great deal with very little resources. It has done this partly by limiting its objectives to almost exclusively the housing area, and has learned how to develop housing well. This learning experience was a long and tedious process, but in the end LRCC has much to show for its efforts.

CONCLUSIONS (RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC)

The following conclusions can be drawn from the case study just presented:

- LRCC's objective and strategies were not substantially altered or affected by the influence of outside funding sources. The CDC has come very close to its original goal of providing

replacement housing (with the last phase currently under construction).

- LRCC did suffer some minor setbacks concerning specifics of certain projects (such as the desire to build more housing earlier or wanting to start housing coops) because of the power of housing financiers to determine what kind of development will take place.
- LRCC felt no ill effects from political opposition after its activist phase because it had established good relations with key actors in public institutions. During the pre-Memorandum period, LRCC's community organizing efforts provided the necessary clout to win the concessions it needed to build the housing.
- LRCC's low funding level (and small staff) made it less reliant on outside funds to function (except for financing the housing). The use of community and professional volunteers greatly aided the group in avoiding becoming dependent on a larger funding entity (and its priorities).

These conclusions will be compared to results of the RAP and GRDC case studies to see what their different experiences can indicate concerning the potential for "independent" action on the part of CDCs operating in the same black community.

Notes to Chapter II

1. Personal interview with Ralph Smith, Director of LRCC, February 23, April 1, and April 26, 1982.
2. Taken from organizational documents of LRCC, dated July 1966.
3. Taken from the "Articles of Organization," LRCC, 1966.
4. "LRDC Starts New Housing Near Madison Park High," Highland Park Rap, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 1.
5. Taken from "The Memorandum of Understanding," signed by city officials and Lower Roxbury representatives in January, 1967.
6. Smith, Interview.
7. Smith, Interview.
8. Smith, Interview.
9. Smith, Interview.
10. Personal interview with C. Vincent Haynes, Board member of LRCC, April 1, 1982; and telephone interview with Beryl Roach, Board member of LRCC, March 31, 1982.
11. Smith, Interview.
12. Personal interview with Dan Richardson, former LRCC organizer, April 13 and 20, 1982.
13. Telephone interview with an LRDC tenant, April 8, 1982.
14. Smith, Interview.
15. Richardson, Interview.
16. Source: A letter from James P. Breeden, Executive Director of the Commission on Church and Race, to LRCC, dated September 23, 1968.
17. Source: A letter from LRCC to Mr. Breeden, dated October 9, 1968.
18. Smith, Richardson, Interviews.
19. Source: A letter from LRCC to Boston Redevelopment Authority director Hale Champion, dated May 1968.
20. Source: A letter from Mr. Champion to LRCC, dated June 11, 1968.
21. Smith, Interview.
22. Haynes, Interview.

23. Smith, Interview.
24. One of the reasons for problematic relations stems from certain internal incidents not particularly important to this study. (Source: telephone interviews with a tenant and another outside observer.)

CHAPTER III:

A CASE STUDY OF THE
ROXBURY ACTION PROGRAM

RAP: INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDY

This chapter will examine the experience of the Roxbury Action Program to determine whether the organization was able to achieve its objectives in light of any external constraints encountered in its development process. The degree of outside interference in RAP's efforts will be analyzed by documenting their relations with funders and other external support groups. The results of this study will be re-examined in Chapter V in a general discussion of all three cases.

GENERAL HISTORY

The Roxbury Action Program began as a Quaker sponsored housing advocacy project in August of 1964. The organization was called the Metropolitan Low Income Housing Project (MLIHP) and it opened an office on Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury. Tasks undertaken by the Housing Project included work on housing code enforcement and tenants' rights. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was heavily involved with the project, and helped select its interracial staff.

After the riots of 1967, some of the black staff members felt that the organization should be autonomous and community controlled. The black caucus of the AFSC raised these demands at a Quaker retreat in 1967, and over a period of time convinced some of the reluctant AFSC members to agree to sponsor an independent black organization that was designed to be more responsive to the needs of the community. For a variety of reasons, the founders of RAP decided that the Highland Park section of Roxbury was fertile ground on which to build their new organization, so they moved

to that location in 1969.*¹

RAP made this transition after the organization had incorporated in December of 1968 and received a "no strings" grant from the AFSC for \$92,000 to help start RAP's programs. At that point in the organization's history, RAP's director, George Morrison, stated that the initial focus of RAP should be:

. . . to prevent the neighborhood from going the way of Boston's South End and to organize people not in terms of intangibles (like services), but in terms of the tangibles of home ownership "to preserve the destiny of the community of black people" . . .²

After moving to Highland Park, RAP became interested in pursuing a comprehensive strategy that included social, economic, and physical development. Underlying this orientation was a basic philosophy that contained the following elements:

- An emphasis on Black Self Determination
- The need for community people to control their own turf
- The need to promote home ownership³

An emphasis on Black Nationalism translated into RAP's celebrating Black holidays, sponsoring cultural events, and making an effort to promote black consciousness in a mostly minority neighborhood (70% black, 20% white, 10% hispanic). This was a key element in their desire to build a model black community.

The turf control orientation focused on an effort to increase home ownership and housing opportunities, plus maximize the community's control over what happened to the numerous abandoned houses and vacant parcels in the Highland Park area. RAP wanted to buy properties and influence the sale of other properties to prevent the kind of displacement most

* RAP moved to Highland Park because it was relatively untouched in terms of community organizing and development, while their former location on Blue Hill Avenue was heavily populated by storefront organization.

widely associated with Boston's South End. When RAP was given two houses by the Afro-American Associates (a group of black activists), the housing development part of their comprehensive development strategy began to dominate the orientation of the group.

Although RAP initially favored developing housing cooperatives, they (the leadership) decided that organizing people to develop coops would be too difficult, and that there was more money available to rehabilitate rental property.⁴ RAP began purchasing additional properties, and acquired 11 of them by 1970. Planning began for RAP's first major housing development, called RAP UP I.

However, a force within the organization wished to make community organizing a higher priority than housing development. Some of the people employed by RAP to organize the constituency didn't feel that they were getting enough money to accomplish their task. After several meetings in 1970, the dominant force led by Director George Morrison overruled this challenge and set the organization on a primarily housing/physical development course because they felt that:

. . . groups that organize without turf control and ownership can loose both turf and people to the economic process of outside investment and displacement . . . demands of launching development projects thus had to supersede the demands of building a large resident member group. . . .⁵

Over the years, as the organizing effort declined (after 1971), more emphasis was placed on Black cultural traditions as a means for trying to appeal to the constituency.

Housing development continued with renewed strength as RAP's leadership pulled together a great deal of outside (largely free) professional talent to help design and plan the organization's RAP UP-I project. After obtaining MHFA financing in 1970, work started on RAP UP-I and was completed

by 1972. The project cost \$500,000 and involved rehabilitating 33 units in 11 sites that RAP had purchased (and eventually housed 150 low-moderate income tenants). RAP packaged a limited partnership for this deal and ultimately became the manager and owner of these units.

When RAP-UP-I was completed, RAP concentrated its energy in the areas of property development and management, business development and management, and human service delivery. Even though property development was the highest priority, RAP also employed staff to work with: a continuing education program; a youth center; senior citizen activities; crime prevention; and general tenant/community organizing.⁶

Business development was mainly attempted in RAP's joint venture with CVCF (Circle Venture Capital Fund, later a part of GRDC), which was started in 1973. This venture, the Roxbury Action Pharmacy, started with an investment of \$25,000 from CVCF and an SBA loan, lasted until October of 1976. Since the failure of the Pharmacy, RAP has not emphasized business development very much in its plans because of the unsuccessful experience with the Pharmacy (and another venture) and the realization that the organization was more skillful at putting together housing than businesses.

RAP's first development program (RAP-UP-I) was packaged and constructed over a relatively short period of time. This encouraged the organization to undertake more ambitious planning for the next phase called RAP-UP-IIA&B. RAP planned for IIA to be a new 7 story building with 8000 sq. feet of commercial space with 140 units of housing. IIB was to include several units of rehabilitated housing done in conjunction with IIA. The initiators also wanted to include a hotel-conference center in this part of their development.⁷

However, HUD was not willing to finance the hotel-conference center

idea, and decided that it was only able to fund the IIB part of the project at first. RAP secured HUD financing for IIB in 1972. When President Nixon initiated a freeze on housing programs in early 1973, RAP argued that its funds for IIB were already committed to the project. After a successful lobbying effort, the organization got this phase funded and constructed. It contained 51 units of rehabilitated low-moderate income housing in 11 buildings. The project also included 3,100 sq. feet of commercial space (IIB's total cost equalled \$1,220,000).

RAP-UP-IIA was delayed by Nixon's housing moratorium while work went ahead on IIB. RAP decided to have the financing responsibility for IIA shifted from HUD to MHFA because the organization felt that MHFA was more flexible in its planning/design requirements. As it turns out, RAP had to constantly re-submit drawings to the MHFA to get the project considered. RAP finally reached an agreement with MHFA in April 1975 on the financing of IIA. The project had a projected cost of \$4,700,000 and was scaled down to 125 units and 2,500 sq. feet of commercial space. The deal seemed ready to go after RAP had secured a 121A tax abatement from the BRA which was essential to the development of IIA.

However, MHFA had financial problems and stopped making loans for a period of time. Interest rates began to climb, thus dooming the financial feasibility of RAP-UP-IIA. By 1976, RAP had to try and structure a new deal for the project. The need to raise additional funds to pay mounting organizational debts forced RAP to explore syndication deals that would yield generous fees and proceeds.

RAP wanted to be the general partner in any syndication deal so that it could retain full control and ownership of the IIA development. Yet, new MHFA regulations stipulated that in order for groups to obtain

MHFA financing as a general partner, they must have a net worth equal to 20% of the MHFA mortgage amount.⁸ RAP could not meet these requirements because of its poor financial position.

By 1977 RAP was searching for a co-general partner that had sufficient financial worth, but also one that would give RAP control over the project. While RAP had problems putting this kind of deal together, their originally designated construction company dropped out of the deal as costs rose, forcing RAP to negotiate a new financing package. They succeeded in getting a large non-minority development/construction company interested in the deal (Macomber Co.), but had to redesign IIA in order to make it acceptable once again to MHFA. RAP also had to negotiate new 121A status with the city in order to get the project under way.

MHFA tentatively approved a deal in April of 1978 with RAP and Macomber, but then RAP had difficulties with Macomber, and on top of that the city decided that it wasn't definite about the 121A status. RAP again tried to straighten out these difficulties, and began the new year (1979) with no deal and mounting debts.* Because the organization badly needed some proceeds from syndication (and it wanted the project built), RAP offered Macomber Co. the sole general partner's position in February 1979 (after exploring other developers, contractors, and financial options).

Macomber Co. agreed to take the general partner's position and offered RAP a 1% non-paying limited partner position. RAP and Macomber were to co-manage IIA, while RAP would receive \$500,000 in developer's fees and \$158,000 for the land.¹⁰ (Macomber, however, would own and control the project.) The deal was altered somewhat so that RAP received

* The organization owed money for a food stamp program it previously tried to operate. Debts from food stamps and from RAP-UP-IIA were approximately \$650,000 combined. RAP also owed \$100,000 to the Episcopal City Mission which added to its debt burden.⁹

developer's fees of \$600,000 over a period of time. After RAP and Macomber fought (and compromised) over the issue of minority hiring, the deal was made and the groundbreaking was held in June 1979. The final cost was \$700,000 and the final design consisted of 162 housing units which includes 155 one-bedroom units and 6 multiple bedroom units. Most of the one-bedroom units are occupied by elderly people. The project was operational by 1981, and houses approximately 250 tenants with 2,300 square feet of commercial space.

RAP is also in the midst of implementing its Kittredge Square Family Housing program which is financed through the State's 705 program. RAP started planning this in 1974, and the project was recently undergoing construction until the contractor went bankrupt. The organization is currently trying to find a new contractor to continue the work. When finished, the project will contain 26 rehabilitated units in 9 buildings. (The total cost of the 705 housing is \$1,750,000.) Because of the 705 regulations, the Boston Housing Authority owns these units, while RAP is the developer/sponsor.

The organization is currently planning to implement its new development called RAP-UP-III. At a projected cost of \$5,450,000, the plans call for 104 units of new housing in 72 structures. (This project will be supported by Section 8 housing subsidies.) In addition, RAP is planning to rehabilitate a structure in John Eliot Square and create the Marcus Garvey Office Building at a cost of \$1,200,000.

The organization's emphasis on social service and human development has increased in recent years, largely through the efforts of the present director Lloyd King and former employees (Pearl Shelton, Pat Raynor, and others) who stressed the importance of non-physical development in the

neighborhood. The programs were sponsored in part because the organization did not want to be perceived as a cold, calculating developer, and wished to respond to the human needs of the community. Also, problems with crime and youth delinquency led to the formation of a youth center, youth training operations, and a crime prevention program. In addition, RAP sponsored a senior citizen program (run by RAP supporter Ed Cooper) that has been very successful in getting older people involved in gardening, buying clubs, and other activities.

An indication of the kinds of programs RAP is currently involved with can be seen in Figure II (page 61), which lists the programs and their sources of support from 1980 through 1981.¹¹ While RAP's social service component receives less publicity, it is an important part of the organization's operation (although it may not be done as well as property development--at least according to one former employee).

Over the years, RAP has offered services to homeowners by encouraging them (with technical assistance) to get 312 home improvement loans and other types of property upgrading assistance. They also put together a special home improvement program with the use of CSA funds in 1976. Although this type of activity was not their main task, it does represent an effort on their part to strengthen the position of lower income homeowners in the Highland Park area.

FUNDING HISTORY

The Roxbury Action Program has a very interesting funding history. In 1969, the organization's leadership (primarily the executive director) felt the need for RAP to avoid the kind of large federal grants available to the Special Impact Programs because this kind of money had too many "strings" attached to it, and would presumably prevent RAP from making

autonomous decisions about development goals.¹² Their alternative strategy was to pursue a mix of public and private funds for administrative support and program operation. They relied on grants (or no interest loans) from foundations, corporations, and even individuals. They did not receive a direct federal grant for program support until 1976 (which was the CSA grant mentioned above).

RAP had to aggressively seek various sources of funding because it did not think that the kind of self-sufficiency many groups talked about was a viable goal. Earning a high enough rate of return on investments in a low-income community seemed unlikely to RAP's leadership, so they knew that fundraising would be a constant need. However, in the early 1970s they did state that "RAP hopes only that eventually its properties may be strong and numerous enough to support a small central staff, but services to the neighborhood and other development projects will for many years require funds from other sources."¹³

After the initial unrestricted grant of \$92,000 from the AFSC at the organization's beginning, RAP received private funding from such diverse sources as the Episcopal City Mission, the Shawmut Bank, and even some preplanning funding from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.* They got direct public funding from agencies including the Community Services Administration and the Model Cities Program. Money received for specific development projects came from the MHFA, the Small Business Administration, the 705 program, and lastly, the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The level of private (unrestricted) funding from 1969-1976 is shown

* The funds from MIT were used to help plan RAP-UP-III in 1972. Part of this money was used to pay professionals assisting in the project.

in Table I.¹⁴ The level of unrestricted aid from foundations rose relative to the support from individuals and corporations over that period. Total restricted and unrestricted revenues are shown for 1973, 1974, and the period from October 1, 1980 to September 31, 1981 in Table II.*¹⁵ Table II indicates a general fall in the level of support, and absolute decline in individual contributions, and the rising importance of revenues generated by RAP's projects.

It is almost impossible to trace every grant and loan that RAP received over a period of 13 years. The available information indicates that the organization did achieve its goal of not being too dependent on any one source of funding for its operations. However, this diversity of support (and lower funding than a Title VII) came at a price, since RAP had accumulated significant debts from its operations over the years. This debt and the need to raise money for new projects kept RAP's fundraisers very busy. Fundraising was (and is) very crucial to the survival of this organization. RAP could have elected to pursue larger scale funding from CSA and Title VII, but it chose a more difficult strategy of piecing together smaller loans and grants.**

However, the arguments for their kind of funding strategy are numerous. The present RAP director (Lloyd King) feels that RAP's need to hustle for money and deals made it more interested in putting together better development packages since the organization's survival depended more on successful deals than a Title VII CDC.¹⁶ RAP's former director (George Morrison) still strongly suggests that this kind of funding approach is preferable to all-encompassing grants because the organization was able

* The reasons for this choice are explored in a later section.

** Figures for the remaining years were not readily available.

Table I

Roxbury Action Program
Unrestricted Contributions*

<u>Fiscal Year Ending Sept.</u>	<u>Number Donors</u>	<u>Founda- tion†</u>	<u>Corpora- tions</u>	<u>Individ- uals</u>	<u>Total</u>
1969	1	\$42,087	---	---	\$ 42,087
1970	4	77,170	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	87,500
1971	10	72,500	---	8,650	81,150
1972	13	58,500	5,000	6,480	69,980
1973	14	63,000	6,500	3,000	72,500
1974	20	63,500	11,250	15,500‡	90,250
1975	25	85,500	8,500	2,800	96,800
1976	23	95,000	5,775	1,950	102,725

* Excludes grants for specific service programs, and also excludes the dollar value of the interest on noninterest-bearing notes and the dollar value of contributed services

† Includes gifts from church sources

‡ Includes two pieces of property valued at \$12,000

Table IIRoxbury Action Program, Inc.Consolidated Statement of RevenuesFor the Years Ended September 30, 1974 and 1973

<u>Revenues:</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1973</u>
Grants and contributions:		
Government agencies	\$122,676	\$ 98,890
Foundations	64,000	72,398
Individuals	15,787	4,397
Corporations	<u>10,250</u>	<u>6,337</u>
	<u>212,713</u>	<u>182,022</u>
Other revenues:		
Rents	15,536	15,497
Management fee	8,143	3,960
Other	<u>4,892</u>	<u>2,440</u>
	<u>28,571</u>	<u>21,897</u>
Development fee income	<u>-</u>	<u>191,000</u>
	<u>\$241,284</u>	<u>\$394,919</u>

Statement of Revenue for 10/1/80 - 9/30/81

<u>Public Support and Revenue</u>	
Public Support:	
Foundations	\$ 20,000.00
Corporations	<u>32,000.00</u>
Total	<u>52,000.00</u>
Revenue	
Government Contracts	110,104.00
Rental Income	30,677.00
Interest Income	68.00
Development Fee	<u>15,000.00</u>
Total	<u>155,849.00</u>
Total Support and Revenue	\$207,849.00

to make "independent" development decisions.¹⁷ RAP's widespread use of free professional and non-professional talent also made them less dependent on outside aid and the whims of a single funder.

The need to make independent decisions in some cases caused RAP to divert a portion of its supposedly restricted funding into other uses that they felt were more pressing at the time. According to one former employee, "RAP would sing the tune of some philanthropic agency, use the money for some other purpose, and then cop a plea."¹⁸ Unfortunately this caused some funders to not refund RAP because of their (RAP's) disregard for the directives of the support group concerning the restrictions on aid to the organization. Losing potential sources of funds made RAP's attempts to stay financially solvent more difficult.

Lloyd King also mentioned that while overall funding is down, RAP never had enough money in the first place to keep sufficient control over the turf in Highland Park or a RAP project like IIA. He added that the organization didn't receive enough money that could be used for land banking, a strategy that would have greatly aided RAP's efforts. Lack of money (and available support) also forced RAP to seek mostly tenant subsidized housing projects, and didn't allow it to put as much emphasis on creating more homeownership opportunities for low-moderate income people.

Still, people connected with RAP maintain that they had a good relationship with many funding sources (not many attempts by funders trying to exert pressure on the organization). One of the few negative aspects of a relationship with a funder was mentioned when Mr. King stated that RAP had to downplay its black cultural emphasis when it applied for direct federal funding. Also, former director Morrison indicated that incidents that happened in the community did have an effect on the level of funding

received from some sources.*

In general (according to most observers), the explicit directives of a funding body did not seem to outwardly change RAP's priorities. However, the effects of funders and other external influences did directly or indirectly affect the outcomes of RAP's endeavors. This influence will be explained more fully in some of the following sections.

ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

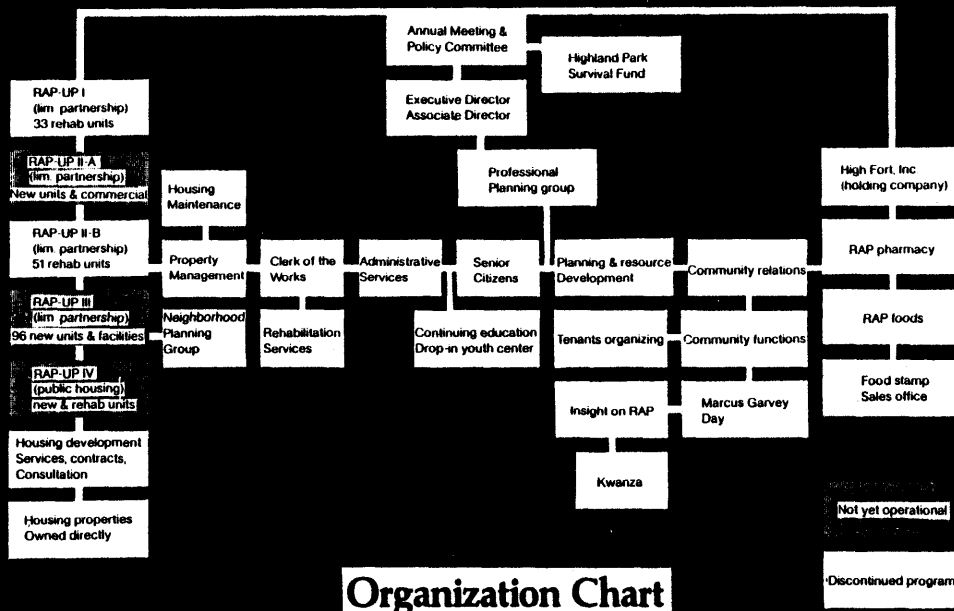
After RAP's official birth in 1969, the organization grew into a large entity responsible for many functions (see Figure I for the organizational chart of actors and activities).¹⁹ Although the group was officially governed by a 13 member (elected) board (or policy committee), many sources indicate that the strong leadership has come from the executive director's office. In fact, the first director's dominant personality and approach was credited with setting organizational priorities, gathering a wide range of outside talent, and extracting other resources from various external actors.**²⁰ (Former director Morrison's forceful style was also responsible for discouraging some potential supporters from participating.)

RAP's internal staff has experienced a large degree of turnover. (RAP presently has 7½ paid staff people.) This was in part due to the fact that staff did not receive high salaries. The organization also experienced several financial crises, forcing many to go through payless paydays. Even though the organization originally had a (self-taxing) survival fund to help its workers, it could not prevent financial

* He was referring specifically to an instance where community people decided to give corporate donated funds to the African Liberation Support Committee--an action that prevented further funding from that particular source.

** Morrison had arranged for a group of outside professionals to meet once a week at RAP to discuss the organization's future strategies.

Roxbury Action Program



Organization Chart

Figure I

difficulties from affecting its employees. This kind of strain, attractive jobs elsewhere, and the hard work surrounding RAP's efforts helped fuel this turnover.

While housing and property development was and is a high priority, RAP still maintained staff to run programs like the youth center, youth services, and community services and education (see Figure II).²¹ As mentioned previously, the role (and number) of community organizers declined since the start of the organization. In contrast to the organizers, the importance of the fundraiser increased drastically given the declining level of national support for community organizations in the last decade.

RAP never enjoyed the kind of wide popular support that LRCC did in Lower Roxbury, primarily because it arose out of different circumstances. It came into the neighborhood from the outside in 1969, and had many of its objectives already determined. Not all of the residents liked its style and orientation, and some of the newcomers to Highland Park didn't appreciate the fact that it was creating more subsidized housing units in the area.²² RAP does have a group of supporters in the community although some would argue that the number is too small and that RAP shouldn't have abandoned its earlier organizing efforts. However, in spite of RAP's smaller constituency, the organization's key supporters have been very instrumental in aiding the staff with its attempts to achieve the group's stated objectives.

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Over the years, RAP has experienced a changing relationship with local government and other external sources of potential support. While the organization had good relations with one BRA director in the early 1970s, they did run into trouble with the city over getting some land

Figure II

RAP
Human Service Budget Staffing
(1980-1981)

<u>Component</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Sources</u>
Youth	Counseling Crisis Intervention Employment (Summer & Year Round)	\$41,109	\$41,109	D.M.H. Division of Drug Rehabilitation EEPA
Youth Administrator	Counseling			
Youth Counsellor	Tutorial			
Youth Counsellor				
Family, Individual Life & Education Counseling	Housing Support Homemaker Information & Referral	\$22,698	\$22,698	Department of Social Services
Social Worker P/T				
Social Worker P/T				
RAP, Inc., Administration		\$42,480		Foundation
Executive Director	Resource Mobilization Effective Human Services			
Bookkeeper/Secretary	Develop Service System (vertical system)			

parcels and also obtaining 121A status for RAP-UP-IIA.²³ They tried to work through friendly contacts at city hall with moderate success. One observer, however, stated that many forces in local government considered RAP a political threat.²⁴ This cannot be documented, but it is a matter of record that (then) RAP director Morrison didn't endorse the mayor for re-election one year, and some people feel that this may have hindered RAP's development efforts.²⁵

In 1974, RAP was designated the primary community planning group for the BRA in Highland Park, meaning that the organization had a say in (but not control over) what that agency did in the area. While this stemmed from the agency's positive relationship with the BRA director, it did not mean that RAP enjoyed sustained help from the city. In 1975, the RAP director "issued a press release blasting the deputy mayor for foot-dragging and bureaucratic delays" in a project that the organization was working on in John Eliot Square.²⁶ This underscored the fact that RAP at times was forced into an adversarial position with the city.

Recently (in 1978), RAP hired a (non-minority) legal firm with contacts in city hall to try and get the 121A status for RAP-UP-IIA.²⁷ This special effort indicates that RAP found its traditional communication channels blocked. Some of RAP's critics in Highland Park suggest that the organization has lost its political clout since the early 1970s, and has little influence over what happens to parcels of city land in the neighborhood.²⁸ Other sources indicate that RAP's high ideals concerning Black self-determination further limited their influence with traditional power brokers as they were considered too radical.²⁹ This may be true to some extent, but such sacrifices are almost unavoidable for an organization

*RAP was able to reach these agreements in large part because of LRCC's earlier efforts to obtain concessions from the BRA and becoming the Campus High Project Area Committee. (LRCC's district was adjacent to RAP's area, so RAP took advantage of the BRA's previous commitment to the neighborhood.)

that is designed to be a relatively "independent" force in the black community.

RAP did leverage its clout (and successful experiences) as much as possible to pull resources together for its projects. It had good relations with some banks and funding sources, although it lost some of this support over the years. RAP had a white fundraiser/project developer who used his business contacts to secure aid for the group. Former RAP director Morrison knew former governor Dukakis which helped to some extent with the organization's dealings with the state, even though RAP suffered several setbacks while trying to get its deals considered by the MHFA.* When the organization applied for CSA funding in 1976, it realized that politics was necessary to secure the money, "so RAP made sure it had support of key congressional figures."³⁰ RAP did manage to get most of its projects off the ground, even though it was an uphill battle all the way. Former director Morrison indicates that bureaucratic delays and regulations were not the main cause of difficulties RAP had with outside forces, but rather that politics was RAP's biggest external headache over the years.

DISCUSSION

RAP's leadership early on recognized the issue of maintaining the organization's priorities in the face of pressure of funders (and other external forces):

. . . despite the inalterable premise of black self determination, they [RAP] would not cut themselves off from the advice, the ideas, the skills, and of course the funds that could come from the more affluent white community--so long as their independence was not compromised. . . .³¹

* One example of this was MHFA's changing the requirement for the developer's net-worth mentioned previously. Sources indicate, however, that many of the difficulties were also due to mistakes made by the organization itself, and the MHFA cannot be blamed totally for the delay.

After negotiating the tangled web of bureaucratic regulations and local politics, RAP helped to revitalize a part of the Highland Park community by developing a small but significant portion of the area's housing stock (245 units occupied at this writing). They have provided some aid to homeowners, and a certain amount of social and human services to their constituency. RAP also managed to channel funds from its projects to black workers and contractors (with \$4,000,000 alone going to contractors and workers between July 1979 and July 1981).³²

However, the organization's successes fall short of many original goals, even though the achievements are admirable given the obstacles that face a non-profit development corporation (or other related groups) in the black community. In spite of a dedicated staff, RAP had to depend on monies for specific kinds of projects that didn't allow them to pursue all their objectives (such as more land banking).^{*} RAP's attempts to direct funds to other purposes caused them to get into trouble with some funders, which probably served to worsen their financial condition.

Bad financial straits also allowed RAP to lose the controlling interest in RAP-UP-IIA. MHFA's changing regulations were a major factor in the lost control, illustrating how much influence an external force can have on a community organization (although some people feel that the compromise over IIA was avoidable). The need for RAP to tone down some of its Black cultural/political orientation is another indicator of outside influence.

The goal of Black self determination has been tempered by the reality influences that force CDCs to make some kinds of compromises. One critic

* Although there is some question whether there were actually other sources of funds that would have supported alternative strategies--some people feel that alternatives could have been pursued.

states that "RAP had very little autonomy over the approach it took to revitalize Highland Park," since it was and is dependent on certain federal and state programs to develop housing.³³ The record indicates that RAP fought at least to keep its priorities distinct from those of its direct funders, but faced setbacks when dealing with local politics, priorities of housing finance agencies, and its own lack of financial clout that would have permitted more control over projects and land parcels.

Even though RAP had to contend with external forces that have hampered its development process, evidence suggests that the organization made certain mistakes on its own due to bad judgment or other problems. This report previously mentioned how the loss of control in RAP-UP-IIA was (apparently) not solely due to actions of outside agencies. While it is not the intention of this thesis to focus on internal problems of CDCs, this subject cannot be overlooked. (Chapter V will consider the role of internal organizational difficulties again in more detail.)

CONCLUSIONS (REGARDING THE THESIS TOPIC)

The following conclusions can be drawn from the case study just presented:

- RAP did not suffer any significant direct interference from its funding sources (in terms of changing priorities, strategies, etc.), although RAP's "unauthorized" use of restricted funds got the organization into trouble with some support institutions.
- RAP's strategies were apparently constrained by the availability of only a select number of housing and other programs. However, it is not clear whether RAP's leadership chose to voluntarily limit their own objectives or fought unsuccessfully for

alternative strategies (such as cooperative housing, the hotel, etc.). One observer suggests that RAP could have pushed its cooperative housing objective in spite of the state and federal focus on subsidized rental units.³⁴

- RAP did not find bureaucratic regulations a large problem but did encounter some development difficulties caused by relationships with political (and other government) actors. (Exceptions to this statement are Nixon's freeze on housing programs and the new MHFA "net worth" requirement.)

Other conclusions drawn from this study will be used (along with the ones listed above) in a comparison of CDCs in Chapter V.

Notes to Chapter III

1. Stewart Perry, Building a Model Black Community: The Roxbury Action Program (Cambridge, MA: Center for Community Economic development, 1978), p. 2.
2. Perry, p. 27.
3. Ibid., p. 12.
4. Ibid., p. 30.
5. Ibid., p. 37.
6. Ibid., p. 73.
7. Personal interview with Lloyd King, Director of the Roxbury Action Program, March 25 and April 8.
8. Hunt Davis, and Stewart Perry, Marcus Garvey Gardens: A Case in Community Based Property Development (Cambridge, MA: Institute for New Enterprise Development, 1981), p. 10.
9. Ibid., p. 21.
10. Ibid., p. 22.
11. Source: RAP fact sheet compiled by the Roxbury Action Program.
12. Personal interview with George Morrison, former director of RAP, March 30, 1982.
13. Perry, p. 33.
14. Source: RAP's financial records.
15. Ibid.
16. King, Interview.
17. Morrison, Interview.
18. Personal interview with a former employee of RAP, April 13, 1982.
19. Perry, p. 44.
20. Personal interview with Dan Richardson, former employee of RAP, April 13 and April 20, 1982.
21. Source: RAP fact sheet.
22. Mara English, The Process of Revitalizing Highland Park: A Case Study (Unpublished masters thesis, Cambridge, MIT, 1981), p. 76.

23. Perry, p. 40; and Davis and Perry, p. 5.
24. Personal interview with Paula Waters, Highland Park resident and former city employee, March 31, 9182.
25. Waters, Interview.
26. Perry, p. 43.
27. Davis and Perry, p. 14.
28. English, p. 76.
29. Davis and Perry, p. 30.
30. Perry, p. 88.
31. Perry, p. 12.
32. Source: RAP fact sheet.
33. English, p. 78.
34. Richardson, Interview.

CHAPTER IV:

A CASE STUDY OF THE
GREATER ROXBURY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

GRDC: INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDY

Chapter IV will discuss the history of the Greater Roxbury Development Corporation in order to determine whether external influence from OEO/CSA has been a major factor affecting the organization's development process. The impact of other external forces (or support institutions) will also be analyzed. The results of this study shall be re-examined in Chapter V when GRDC is compared to the other CDCs described in this report.

GENERAL HISTORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

The history of the Greater Roxbury Development Corporation actually began with the formation of Circle, Inc., a predecessor group which was originated in the late 1960s. The original organization was initiated after a group of black men met to discuss new ways of developing Boston's black community. This collection of activists decided that the community needed a resource base in order to increase its economic power.* Since many of the people at the meeting represented various organizations and agencies, Circle was designed to be a federation of community groups to coordinate much of the local economic (and social) development activities under one roof.¹

The personal contacts, skills, and money of the founding members were supposed to be utilized in the development of the organization. Circle was (in the long run) intended to be the foundation and catalyst for building and maintaining several economic institutions that would

* Early Circle members came together at a time of much tension when people were demanding community control of resources and were seeking to increase "black power" in the city (and country).

be responsible for creating an economic infrastructure within the black community. The monetary surplus from the operations was to go to community institutions and other positive programs in black neighborhoods in Boston.

Circle, Inc., was founded in 1968 as a (State of Massachusetts) nonprofit organization with a stated purpose to "plan and implement programs of a civic, educational, economic, social, and charitable nature . . ." ² Circle initiated a Speakers Bureau that eventually turned into a consulting group that began to take on planning contracts and raise money for the organization. (The consulting group did feasibility proposals for urban renewal programs, manpower programs, etc.) In order to obtain federal tax exempt status, Circle merged with a group called the New England Community Development Corporation (NECDC). Together they formed what was later known as the Circle Complex. The plan of Circle's leadership was "to bring under one roof the various operations that are important to economic development promotion--planning, business development housing development investments, [and] management training." ³

Thirty (30) member organizations and businesses were involved with Circle's initial development. 23 representatives from these groups sat on Circle's board (10 members from that board formed the board of directors for NECDC). Three-fourths of the board members came from groups that had some grass-roots participation. The involvement of the various groups was deemed crucial to Circle's goal of coordinating development activities and pooling resources.

By 1971, the Circle complex was undertaking a variety of programs through various organizational branches which included a Day Care Center, an Afro-American Studies Curriculum Research Center, the Roxbury Institute

of Business Management, and the Small Business Development Center. Circle also established the Circle Venture Capital Fund which was a for-profit organization that became the direct predecessor of GRDC. CVCF was chartered to "plan and implement programs and activities that will provide an economic impact" on the community.⁴ All these components of the complex got their funding from a variety of public and private sources. Although they had distinct functions, they were coordinated by the Circle's central administrative staff. (See Figure III for a chart of the organizational structure.)⁵

Circle, Inc., received a planning grant from OEO in 1970, and regular SIP funding status in 1971. Circle applied for this funding so that it could create a network of economic development institutions. The consultant and business training arms of Circle would aid Black businesses, while CVCF through its venture capital role was to sponsor primarily Circle owned (or substantially controlled) businesses in a more material way.

Circle also established a number of Precinct Neighborhood Development Corporations which were designed to increase the participation of neighborhood people in development activities.⁶ The PNDCs allowed residents in different areas to meet in an organizational form to determine the specific development needs in their particular sub-neighborhoods. CVFC was structured so that the Board of Directors consisted of 6 appointed members of the sponsoring group (Circle) and 5 representatives elected by the PNDCs. The creation of the PNDCs was in part a result of pressure from OEO. The government agency had never been comfortable with Circle being a federation of organizations, and kept pressuring for more grass-roots (elected) participation in the development process.⁷

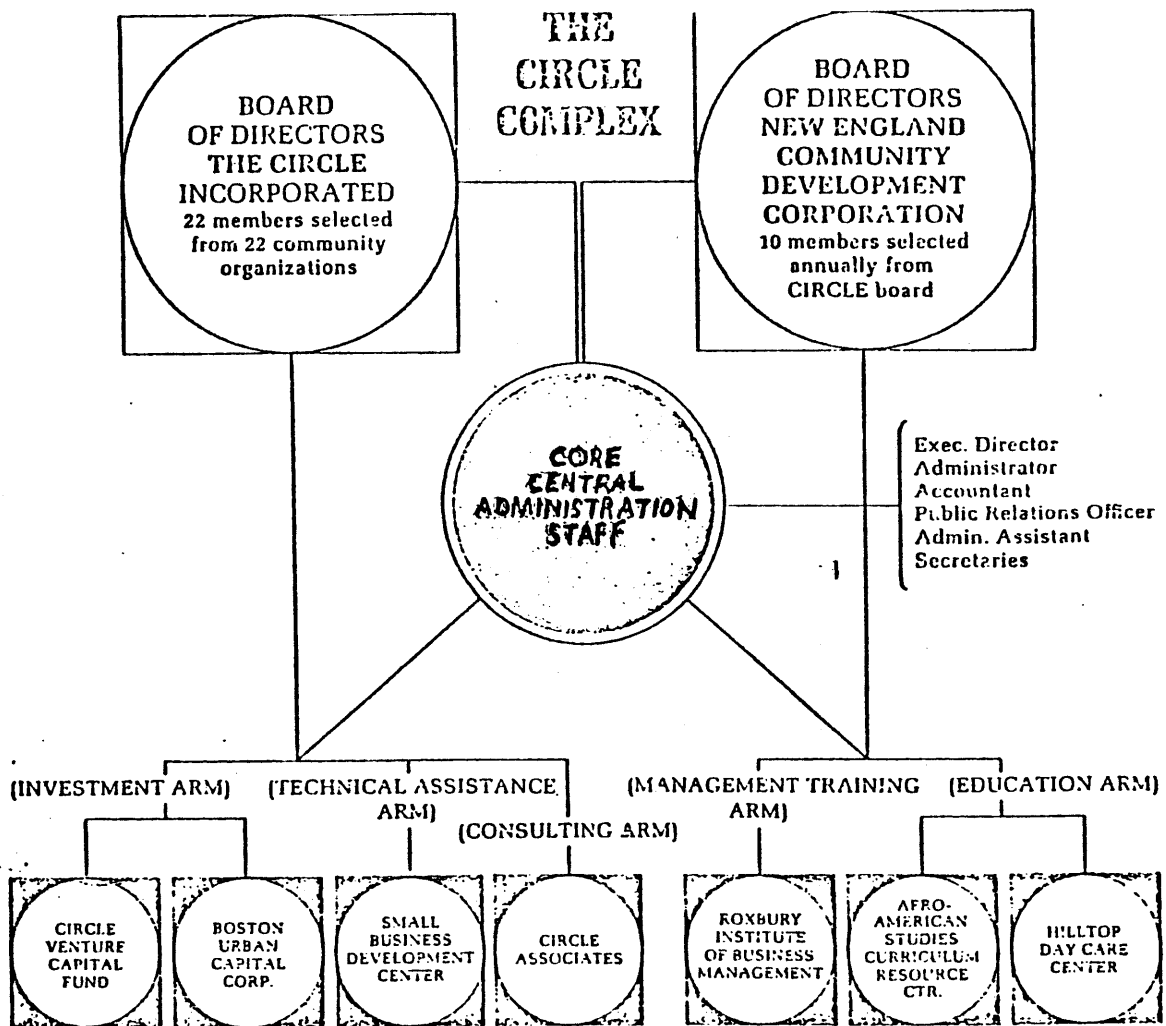


Figure III

CVCF began to look for ventures in the early 1970s, and faced some difficulties because they often had to consider potential businesses that regular financial institutions didn't feel were particularly "bankable." However, they did succeed in getting some ventures underway. (See Figure IV for a list of businesses established by 1975.)⁸ After some learning experiences, the immediate goals of CVCF became the following:

- 1) To make loans to and make investments in minority business that employ a larger number of Special Impact Area (SIA) residents, that have a potential to generate at least a 6% return to Circle and that have a capacity to enhance the economic growth and development of the SIA.*
- 2) To assume majority control and ownership of businesses that are labor intensive, that provide needed goods and services for SIA residents, or that generate a profit in excess of 8%.
- 3) To acquire and develop a mix of commercial and residential property in the SIA.
- 4) To invest in businesses to be sponsored by the five PNDCs.⁹

Although CVCF was originally part of the Circle Complex, continued pressure from OEO forced Circle to split CVCF off from the rest of the complex so that Circle Venture Capital Fund, and not Circle, Inc., was responsible for administering OEO's Special Impact Program. The rest of the Circle Complex of organizations was to serve as a "technical resource center for organizations indigenous to the Black community . . ." ¹⁰ (The next section of this chapter contains further information about this split.) After 1974-1975, Circle, Inc., was not to receive any OEO money, while CVCF had the sole responsibility for venture development and investment.

* The Special Impact Area was the overall target area of the organization.

Figure IV

Circle Venture Capital Fund, Inc. Ventures
(As of 1975)

<u>Venture</u>	<u>Term of Investment</u>	<u>Nature of CVCF Control</u>
Circle Office Building	\$200,000 equity	100% ownership
Savin Realty	\$ 67,000 equity	60% ownership special agreement
Circlepower Demolition Corporation	\$152,500 equity 40,000 loan 10 yrs. @ 10%	51% ownership two board seats Standard contract
Roxbury Action Pharmacy	\$ 30,000 equity	40% ownership two board seats Standard contract
Lena Park Fire Ext.	\$ 40,000 equity	40% ownership two board seats Standard contract
Amaechi Mfg., Inc.	\$ 70,000 debt 8% - 10 year	right to monitor business loan agreement

In 1975, the responsibilities for running the SIP program (now called Title VII) passed to the newly created non-profit organization called the Greater Roxbury Development Corporation. The ventures were now sponsored by CVCF, which in turn was owned entirely by GRDC. GRDC had a Board of Directors which was composed of the following elements:

- 5 representatives of the PNDCs
- 7 representatives of Circle, Inc.
- 7 seats filled by a voting trust

The organization also made an attempt to find board and staff members with a high level of skill, experiences, and abilities to help make GRDC a more effective development entity.

By 1976, the organization had further redefined its goals to include the following:

- 1) To continue to be an activist organization trying to accomplish things that give people a positive feeling about what is happening in Greater Roxbury.
- 2) To continue to become more of a major focus of control and/or influence in the economic and business revitalization of . . . [the area] . . .
- 3) To begin to more directly affect and involve the residents of [the area] in our revitalization efforts . . .¹¹

GRDC's primary impact area included most of Roxbury, and its secondary impact area contained Roxbury, half of North Dorchester, and parts of the South End and Jamaica Plain sections of Boston. The organization now concentrated its efforts in planning, business development, land development, and community and public relations. (Figure V lists the goals of each of its components as stated in 1976.)¹²

Over the next two years, GRDC's business component invested in a new business (although some of the earlier CVCF ventures had begun to fail), contemplated setting up a revolving loan fund, and planned to aid the financially troubled Unity Bank. The land development group invested in some property, completed an office building rehabilitation project, and

Figure V

Goals of GRDC Components: 1976

PLANNING

- Become the leading planning agency within our Primary Impact Area

LAND DEVELOPMENT

- Establish a successful commercial and residential land development track record
- Become a leading actor in the collective commercial and residential land development of the Southwest Corridor
- Build a constituency of commercial and residential property landlords

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Build a successful business development track record
- Build a constituency of businesses

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Create a positive image for GRDC
- Maintain positive congressional and political relations
- Develop and maintain strong and positive community relations
- Build a constituency of residents from throughout GRDC's Special Impact Area

pursued a few other real estate investments. The planning group compiled a land use inventory and plan for the area, and the community relations component succeeded in generating some media exposure for the organization. GRDC also began a program called GRIP (Greater Roxbury Improvement Program) which concentrated on training workers while at the same time providing renovation and lot development services to clients.

The organization also changed internally in two basic ways:

- (1) The Board and staff experienced a significant degree of turnover. At least some people connected with the group were unhappy with the organization's leadership, and the growing tension between the executive director and certain board members. Other staff presumably were let go for performance reasons or else sought better career opportunities.
- (2) The board structure was changed so that the 19 member board was arranged in the following way:
 - 5 representatives from the PNDCs
 - 3 representatives from Circle, Inc.
 - 4 voting trust members
 - 7 representatives elected directly from the membership¹³

Part of the reason for this change was to address the continual criticism of GRDC concerning its lack of direct representation on its board. OEO/CSA had constantly raised this point over the years.

GRDC had a large staff (when compared to other CDCs), and many of the employees had professional degrees. However, this did not prevent the organization from experiencing major setbacks. By 1980, most of the business ventures had failed because of management and other problems. Conflict between some Board members and the executive director also served to weaken the organization. Accounting and bookkeeping fell into disarray, a factor that CSA kept complaining about in memos to GRDC.¹⁴

In March of 1981, GRDC was officially defunded by CSA after that agency had granted a total of \$3,990,211 to GRDC over a five year period. CSA, in a lengthy "defunding" letter, cited lack of significant business development and internal changes as some of the prime reasons for their action. They asked GRDC to submit a "Disposition of Assets" plan so that government officials could determine whether GRDC could survive as a non-Title VII CDC.

During 1981, many staff people left voluntarily or were laid off as the organization tried to accommodate the loss of funding. In order to stabilize its financial position (besides laying off staff) the organization considered selling off some of its assets. (See Figure VI for a list of GRDC's assets as of 1981.)¹⁵

Presently, GRDC has four staff people: a new managing director; a real estate manager; an administrative assistant; and a bookkeeper. Since all of the organization's assets were in real estate, it will be focusing on real estate/land development in the immediate future. GRDC now wants to decrease the size of its Board to make it more manageable, and also seeks to "change its Articles and By-Laws to ensure more direct community participation and yet be eligible for venture financing from the Massachusetts Community Development Finance Corporation"¹⁶ (and other state and federal agencies interested in economic development). The new 12 member Board would be composed of 7 members elected from membership in greater Roxbury, and 5 representatives from the private sector.

GRDC is now doing its best to adjust to a post Title VII world. The organization now tries to think of itself as a developing CDC with limited resources. The disposition plan stated that "GRDC must move to a small community entrepreneur role . . ."¹⁷ Whatever the strategy, GRDC

Figure VIA List of GRDC Assets: 1981

- 90 Warren Street: 2 story office building, rehabed by GRDC, Value approx.
= \$150,000
- 84 Warren Street: 2 story commercial structure, rehabed by GRDC, Value
approx. = \$120,000
- 95-97 Harrishof Street: two 3-family buildings, rehabed by GRDC, Value
approx. = \$90,000-\$100,000
- 541 Shawmut Avenue: abandoned industrial building, Value approx. = \$65,000
- 3 houses in Dorchester: Value approx. = \$10,000
- 40 Warren Street: empty lot, Value approx. = \$30,000
- 972 Blue Hill Avenue: Oil Distribution Center, Value approx. = \$100,000
- Franklin Park Developments I & II: 20 apartment buildings containing 373
units, Value approx. = unknown

will have a much tougher road to travel without the massive inflow of Title VII resources.

FUNDING HISTORY

Initially, the founders of Circle spent some time thinking about pooling their human and financial resources in order to bring this new organization into a development stage. However, the ambitious plans of the group and the availability of outside funding eventually made Circle focus on external resources. They received \$38,000 in 1968 from the Rockefeller Foundation, and also began to earn fees as a consulting group.¹⁸ By 1971, the various components of Circle Complex were funded by a diverse list of public and private sources (see Table III for a breakdown of these funding sources).¹⁹

The quest for Special Impact funding began in 1968 when Circle sent a sketchy proposal to OEO. Although Circle wasn't funded that year, OEO used a portion of Circle's proposal in part of the literature describing what the SIP was all about. There was a second attempt to obtain OEO funding, and then in 1970, Circle received the planning grant. Later, in 1971 Circle was given an operational grant by the agency which established a formal relationship which was to last ten years.

Between 1969 and 1970, when Circle was trying to acquire the SIP money, they were told by some OEO officials that they (Circle) ought to consider changing the structure of their organization to allow for more direct grass-roots participation on the Board. This was not the last time Circle and OEO disagreed about how Circle should be structured. In 1972, OEO suggested that CVCF should be the group to run the program, and not Circle's central staff. Later, a letter from OEO to Circle in February of 1973 spelled out this disagreement in the following ways:

Table IIICircle Complex Funding Sources: 1970-1971

<u>Component</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Hill Top Day Care	HEW	\$138,705
Small Business Development Ctr	EDA	146,800
Circle Associates (Consulting)	Ford Foundation	86,150
Circle Associates	Newburyport School System	8,500
Afro-American Studies Curriculum Resource Ctr	Permanent Charities	15,000
Circle Associates	Model Cities	20,000
Circle, Inc. (SIP)	OEO	104,000
CVCF	OEO	200,000
Circle Associates	SBA	101,000
Circle Associates	Pittsburg Model Cities	40,000
Roxbury Institute of Business Management	Charles Merrill Trust	400,000

We feel that Circle's complex organizational structure has been a detriment to the program. This office is unwilling to consider refunding the program through the present structure. A separate entity must be established to operate the SIP. . . . the Special Impact Program will no longer bear the overhead expenses of other Circle programs. [also] . . . more representative community participation must be incorporated into the operation of the SIP. . . .²⁰

This directive is quite clear in its intent. They wanted CVCF to split off from the rest of the complex. However, the directive was not well received by some of the key people involved with Circle.

One person felt that "changes are being proposed that I think will unnecessarily restrict the role of Circle and ignore some of its assets, thus jeopardizing the chances for future economic growth of the community."²¹ The fact that the central staff of Circle, Inc., would be possibly shut out of venture development was unsettling because the coordinating effort was done by Circle, while CVCF was just an affiliate investment group, and not the representative of a wide range of community groups like Circle. The danger of losing this "unified" element was especially troublesome to critics of OEO within Circle:

We had developed the way we had because we wanted to unite the community by achieving some coordination among all the community groups in the area of economic development activity, and we wanted to be able to gain independent financial resources for collective and united community action. The Federal government, under president Nixon, said they were mostly concerned about the possibility of the mixing and mingling of funds for the various separate sources, but I think they were equally concerned to avoid organizational unity in the community . . .²²

Not all of Circle's leadership was as concerned about the dangers of this impact at the time because they felt that Circle, Inc., would still have a role to play in the development process while CVCF actually administered the SIP, especially since the two groups were still affiliated (and structurally connected).

Yet, in 1975, when OEO (now CSA) wanted further changes, one person who was not as worried in 1973 expressed his feelings, and advocated possibly not taking the CSA funding if Circle couldn't be involved.²³ When faced with the choice, the organization went along with CSA, and GRDC was created as an autonomous entity. The other components of Circle gradually faded away as the new organization became the primary focus of activity.

The relationship between GRDC and CSA was not always good either, as CDS kept pressing GRDC for more grass-roots participation on its Board, and a more successful business development record. One person complained that CSA didn't allow more real estate development to take place.²⁴ The former director stated that CSA required them to have a top heavy staff that was not necessary, that approval for crucial deals came too late, and that GRDC had to cope with changing priorities from Washington as a result of CSA staff turnover and new presidential administrations.²⁵

Yet, other GRDC/Circle insiders didn't think that CSA interfered with GRDC too much at all, that requirements and regulations were easy enough to deal with, and that it was GRDC's internal problems (and lack of sufficient success) that caused the main difficulty to the organization.²⁶ (CSA spelled out a lot of these internal factors in its defunding letter to GRDC. Examination of this letter and interviews with significant actors does suggest that the organization did have some internal problems.)

Since GRDC was very dependent on Title VII money, the defunding was a severe setback to the group, although they had been warned ahead of time. The organization lobbied against the action unsuccessfully in early 1981. After a period of staff (and board) resignations and layoffs, GRDC has finally stabilized and is basically living off its assets.* GRDC

* In 1981 the organization concluded that it could convert many of its assets into cash to help the corporations financially. (GRDC figures that it could raise as much as \$265,000 from sale of assets.)

today is a very narrow version of what the groups started out to be. Yet, this limited focus might be crucial to its current survival.

RELATIONS WITH EXTERNAL FORCES

In most interviews and written documents, the relationship with OEO/CSA dominates the discussion of relations outside forces. Apart from this, the only other major difficulty mentioned is GRDC's less than positive interaction with city officials.²⁷ While bad relations didn't seem to hamper the groups efforts too much, it probably did help to prevent GRDC from getting a larger share of resources that pass through city hall. (GRDC's reliance on federal funds made a potential loss of city funds less important to the organization.) Present staff indicated that some of the tension with the city has abated after the change in leadership. A former staff member contends that GRDC should have lobbied more effectively with local and federal actors to aid in the organization's development plans. Another person involved with GRDC stresses that the corporation lobbied effectively with federal officials, but was unable to deliver what it (GRDC) had promised in proposals. Thus, bad performance really helped to strain the relations with CSA.

Relations with private actors didn't seem to be a crucial problem, although one source indicates that leaders weren't providing funds promptly.²⁹ GRDC's troubled business development track record did serve to weaken confidence in the organization. And finally, one critic maintained that Circle/GRDC never had many contacts in the minority business community, arguing that better communications might have aided the organization's business management capacity.³⁰

DISCUSSION

If the outcomes of Circle/GRDC's experience are measured in terms of what the organization wanted to do in the late 1960s, then the group has fallen far short of its original objectives. The small entrepreneurial CDC that GRDC is today is much different from the federation of organizations and activities that started out. The fact that GRDC also has a non-minority director is particularly ironic when the group began with an emphasis on building black economic resources.

OEO/CSA's role in helping to change the organization is clear, but it is not the only major factor that led to a changing emphasis and present outcomes. First, Circle, Inc., may have been too ambitious in its undertakings. It had established its various components, but some sources suggest that many of the services it offered were ineffective (implying that Circle's efforts were spread too thin or else that many staff people were not competent enough to perform their tasks).³¹ Therefore, it is questionable whether the loss of these functions was that crucial to the community at large. The fact that the Circle Complex was very dependent on outside funding (and eventually ceased to exist) meant that the early organizational goals of self-sufficiency were not nearly being approached and were possibly unattainable for the group as structured.

Second, internal strife (and mismanagement) within GRDC seems to be a very important influence on the organization's performance. Although some sources argue that the Title VII program was designed poorly by the government (and mandated a large inefficient staff), it is still clear that a large number of problems cannot be blamed on outside interference from CSA.*

* Some other Title VIIs have much more successful development records.

Last, it should be mentioned that all of CSA's directives do not necessarily have to be classified as negative to the community interest.* Continued pressure for more grass-roots involvement was a position that was supported by other community people connected with the organization. Requests for better deals were not always unreasonable, given some of the mismanagement that took place. If the rest of the Circle complex was not performing so well, then maybe asking that the SIP funds were used separately was not such an outlandish request.

In short, a number of people feel that Circle/GRDC needed to make some changes in the way it operated. However, the ability of CSA to get the organization to change (and some of the possible motives behind the demands) are still an ominous threat to the ability of a community group to choose a relatively "independent" course of action. Circle could have been a much more effective group, but that would not have stopped CSA from threatening defunding if the government was adverse to seeing a particular power base growing from Circle's attempted coordinating efforts. Even if the organization had more resident participation incorporated into its efforts, CSA still had final approval over investment, and could enforce its own priorities.

This influence can be seen further if the Title VII defunding process is examined. GRDC ultimately had to get permission to stay in existence because of a provision in the corporation's "Articles of Organization" which stated that:

. . . the property or assets of the corporation remaining after providing for the payment of its debts and obligations shall be conveyed, transferred, distributed, and set over outright to or as directed by the United States Community Services Administration . . .³²

* Depending, of course, on how this interest is measured.

Thus, in the case of an organizational emergency, CSA had the power to determine what should be done with these assets.

This might be innocent enough to agency people trying to maintain a kind of public interest (by seeing that money from assets are used for a worthy purpose), but this provision shows that the potential for outside influence on a community based group was (and is) very real. Despite Circle/GRDC's problems, and some possibly honorable intentions on the part of CSA, a degree of local independence was definitely lost in their (GRDC's) 10 year relationship with the government (although many people involved with the organization feel that a stronger, more competent organization would have significantly reduced this loss of independence).

CONCLUSIONS (REGARDING THE THESIS TOPIC)

The following conclusions can be drawn from the case study just presented:

- OEO/CSA definitely had a degree of influence over the forming of priorities and organizational structure of GRDC and its predecessor. However (as stated previously), the influence was apparently of a positive nature at some points and occurred in large part because of a lack of adequate performance by GRDC. Many former (and present) organization people (board and staff) feel that internal (and not external) factors have been the main difficulties in the corporation's history.
- GRDC's internal problems and an almost total dependency on CSA increased any effects (positive or negative) that the agency had on the organization.
- Relations with other external actors (and political forces) have been problematic at times, but apparently not a major factor in the organization's development.

Other conclusions from the case study (along with the ones listed above) will be utilized in the analysis section of Chapter V when the three CDCs are compared.

Notes to Chapter IV

1. Source: A paper written by Willard Johnson, former director of Circle, Inc. Hereafter referred to as the Johnson Paper. (An unpublished document with no date.)
2. Circle, Inc., Refunding Proposal: 1975-1977, submitted to the Community Services Administration (February 27, 1975), p. 25.
3. Source: The Johnson Paper.
4. Circle, Inc., Refunding Proposal: 1975-1977, p. 25.
5. Source: Circle, Inc., organizational documents.
6. A Film History of Circle, GRDC, n.d.
7. Personal interview with Willard Johnson, former director of Circle, on April 16, 1982.
8. Ronald A. George, Strategies for Black Community Economic Development (Unpublished master's thesis, Cambridge, MIT, 1975), p. 85.
9. Ibid., p. 77.
10. Source: Circle, Inc., organizational documents.
11. Circle, Inc., Refunding Proposal: 1975-1977, p. 9.
12. Greater Roxbury Development Corporation, Overall Community Development Plan (October 1976), p. 4.
13. Ibid., p. 33.
14. Source: A letter from the Office of Economic Opportunity to Circle, Inc., dated February 16, 1973.
15. Greater Roxbury Development Corporation, Disposition of Assets Plan (1981), pp. 5-15.
16. Ibid., p. 19.
17. Ibid., p. 25.
18. Circle Associates, Report of the Executive Director, dated November 19, 1968.
19. The Circle, Inc., Refunding Proposal: 1971-1973, submitted to the Office of Economic Opportunity, dated April 30, 1971.
20. Source: A letter from the office of Economic Opportunity to Circle, Inc., dated February 16, 1973.

21. Source: Memorandum from Willard Johnson to the Circle Executive Committee and staff, dated May 13, 1973.
22. The Johnson Paper.
23. Source: Memorandum from Chuck Turner, former Circle Board President, to Circle, Inc., dated May 6, 1975.
24. Personal interview with Lloyd King, former Circle/GRDC board member, on April 8, 1982.
25. Personal interview with Eric Grey, former GRDC executive director, on April 5, 1982.
26. Personal interview with Curtis Davis, present employee of GRDC, on April 10, 1982.
27. Davis, Interview.
28. Personal interview with Richard Walker, former employee of GRDC, on April 21, 1982.
29. Source: A film history of GRDC.
30. Personal interview with a community business person on April 19, 1982.
31. Personal interview with Dan Richardson, former board member of GRDC, on April 20, 1982.
32. Greater Roxbury Development Corporation, Disposition of Assets Plan, p. 19.

CHAPTER V:

ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

In each of the three case studies presented in this report, there have been various factors that served to constrain the strategies and objectives of community based development corporations. Part of the limitation on organizational efforts can be attributed to actions of external support institutions or funders. After reviewing the case studies and related literature (in Chapter I), some of the important points concerning the effects of funding (and support) groups can be summarized in the following way:

Influence of a Funding Source:

While this study didn't identify a funding source that exerted total dominance over a community group's priorities, it did illustrate certain instances where the influence was keenly felt. Circle/GRDC seemed to be the most vulnerable to outside pressure, ultimately changing many goals and its organizational structure. Although one could argue that some of these changes might be positive, the priorities of the funding body still thwarted the kind of organizational independence the founders of Circle talked about in the late 1960s. RAP appeared to be relatively less affected by any particular funder, but was nonetheless constrained by many related factors like program regulation and politics. LRCC came closest to retaining its original goals, and the specific directives of a funding body did not outwardly change the orientation of the group.

Indirect Funding: The Role of State and Federal Programs:

All of the CDCs examined were limited by the choices of available financing vehicles. Both RAP and LRCC were forced to change their project

plans to suit the needs of state and federal housing programs. Certain objectives like cooperative housing and land banking were not supported by these programs. (It is debatable whether the organizations could have pursued these goals anyway. Some observers indicate that the CDCs just took a much easier path by seeking rental subsidies.) LRCC has still managed to come up with projects that were still fairly close to their original objectives, since they were working with large scale backing on an established agreement.* RAP, on the other hand, lost control of its last project in part because of a changed program regulation at the MHFA. As mentioned, GRDC was also limited to the traditional financing vehicles. In addition, CSA had veto power over its deals, which further narrowed the kinds of options available. Even when the available programs corresponded with the priorities of all three groups, regulations and other by-products of the bureaucratic structure served to be a hindrance to the organizations.

Local Resources and Local Politics:

CDCs and other groups are forced to interact with local officials when trying to acquire land parcels, local money, permits, and all the other elements that are part of the development process. In most cities (some say especially Boston), there is quite often a political price tag attached to resources and permits that City Hall controls. An adversarial relationship with city officials can make obtaining these resources very difficult. RAP had problems with acquiring 121a status, while GRDC might have missed local revenue opportunities.** LRCC established more favorable

* Fairly close means that LRCC built the housing units it wanted, but original plans were altered in a limited way.

** Part of RAP's problems stemmed from organizational inefficiency. The next section will examine the issue of internal CDC problems further.

contacts in local government, and was able to overcome some of the development constraints. However, their original power was built on struggle with the same agencies, and while cooperation with the city brought LRCC certain returns for its immediate area, there is some question as to how far CDCs like this should take this kind of cooperation with local government strategy. (This question will be considered again later in the chapter.)

Impacts of the National Political-Economy:

The political/economic environment also plays an important part in the life of CDCs. High interest rates, changing political priorities, and related factors can limit the efforts of CDCs trying to create housing, businesses, and other entities that are vulnerable to exogenous shocks in the larger system. An even greater issue, which influences all the other elements listed above, is the political and philosophical orientation of the institutions of power in this society. Many CDCs were seen as alternatives to the present political/economic structure that wasn't addressing the needs of the more vulnerable groups in the country. The development of community corporations is tolerated as long as they remain in certain political and philosophical bounds.

RAP was especially bold in trying to push its different vision of Black America, but even it was forced to acknowledge the power of external institutions by down playing its ideology at times, and also working through white mediating groups when necessary. The experience of Title VII and the fear of "black militant" involvement shows the real limits of programs supposedly designed to let communities establish their own priorities. Groups have experienced a hard time trying to set up collectively controlled resources in a capitalistic "free market" system. This

kind of overwhelming constraint cannot be overlooked.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS (THE OTHER CRUCIAL FACTOR)

This report has focused on the possible constraints imposed on CDCs by external support institutions. The case studies have indicated outside influence has been a problem for the CDCs in some instances. However, it would be misleading to suggest that only external forces prevent an organization from achieving its objectives. Evidence suggest that internal effectiveness is a key element in determining how well a CDC can implement its strategies.

It is apparent that Circle/GRDC's internal problems (and lack of sufficient leadership) are probably the major reason for its lack of progress. In this case, internal difficulties only helped to strengthen the influence of CSA because the organization has so many weaknesses. RAP also has problems with internal competency which helped to prolong the negotiations for some deals (such as RAP-UP-IIA). Some of RAP's and LRCC's repeated submissions of site plans to the MHFA were due in part because of mistakes made by the organizations themselves or the professionals working for the CDCs.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to explore the problems of CDC staff and management. However, it would be inaccurate to blame all of the group's problems on external factors. The internal difficulties must at least be identified so that our discussion of the influence of funders (and others) can be examined in the proper perspective.

INDEPENDENCE: WHAT IS POSSIBLE FOR CDCs

All through this report, there has been much discussion concerning the desire for independent action on the part of CDCs (and presumably,

other community based organizations). However, this elusive quality has never really been defined. It is obvious that CDC founders did not realistically think that they could just formulate any list of priorities and then successfully implement these objectives exactly as planned, according to their (and nobody else's) wishes. Yet, these groups were not interested in the opposite end of the spectrum where a community group would have priorities imposed upon it totally from without and the resulting outcome being a reflection of some outside goals.

Many groups wanted (especially those in the black community) more control over strategy decisions simply because they felt that externally imposed programs were not working, and were not in the best interest of poor and minority communities that needed to coordinate their own resources and talent. Therefore, a number of people felt that the most beneficial approaches to problem solving would come if decision-making was decentralized to the community level. Other activists felt that it was only right for local residents to have more control over their own destinies. Thus, a movement for community control was established around some of these (and other) basic principles.

The real issue here, however, is not merely the making of decisions, but the implementation of strategies based on these decisions. It becomes more complicated when community people use resources that come from outside the area, and the external entities in charge of the aid want some say as to how these resources are used.* The independence question is even more difficult if the strategies chosen conflict with priorities of the of the institutions of power in the larger society.

* Although community people pay taxes, these resources have passed out of their control and are considered external. The fact that the community through its tax paying activities, is entitled to a fair share of these tax dollars is often overlooked in many discussions of outside aid.

It is certain that the early founders of the CDCs must have been aware of these external constraints, and that they took them into consideration when they formulated their objectives. Some might argue that a few goals were overly ambitious or utopian, but most of the goals presented in the case studies seem to reflect some degree of consideration. Because the original CDC people took the environment into account (to a certain extent) indicates that they believed that the independence and autonomy they talked about were "relative" quantities, and not some hopeless dreams of community activists high on recent victories.

However, even if "independence" is considered in a limited way, Chapters I-IV suggest that many groups did not experience the "relative" independence that some analysts feel is necessary to bring about real improvement on the community level. Some groups fared better than others, depending on their original objectives, and the resources they could pool and coordinate to help reach these objectives. However, even the more successful (at reaching their own goals) had to sacrifice certain priorities.

It should be stressed that "independence" itself is not so much an end as it is a means to make (hopefully) better choices and changes in the community. The fact that strategies are adopted by local people does not, by definition, necessarily make them more effective in meeting the needs of neighborhood residents. To assume that any project a particular local organization produces is wonderful is ludicrous. There needs to be some accountability, especially with public money, to see that some sort of positive interest is served. Although determining this interest is a highly subjective process, it has to take place to some degree. (The last section in this Chapter will outline some policy recommendations.)

Yet, given the past record of policy makers and urban programs, it would be more ridiculous to expect a large degree of positive external influence in terms of regulation, aid, or other resources to flow into a community with the best interest of a community in mind. Once programs are watered down or are made to satisfy political needs (like Title VII), they have been hardly known to turn communities around. In addition, much that has taken place has been a response to a wide variety of neighborhood efforts which ranged (over the years) from letter writing to violent protest.

In short, even if policy guidelines that might slightly limit grassroots decision-making are necessary, the community still needs to influence (as much as possible) the shaping of these guidelines. This translates into a dual strategy of pushing for both local autonomy and struggling for better formulated guidelines for externally based aid programs. It should be realized, however, that this requires a long-range well coordinated effort.

HOW CDCs CAN COPE WITH EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

What can CDCs do in the short run to try and increase the decisions and strategies available to them.? Chapters I-IV indicate some factors that assist CDCs in coping better with priorities imposed on them from outside their communities:

(1) The need for an internally strong and effective organization:

The cases and other literature suggest that groups with better staff-board relations, greater management capability, and clearly stated priorities tended to achieve goals more often than other groups. An internally strong group tends to be able to withstand outside influence more effectively since

an external force cannot play on internal divisions to get its way (as in the case of GRDC).

- (2) The Need for an organized constituency: Clearly this factor helped LRCC achieve most of its concessions from the city bureaucracy. Because its constituency can provide free labor and exert some degree of power, it is helpful if the organization is not perceived as cut off from the residents. (However, there are potential problems for a CDC if its constituency chooses to remain in an adversarial relationship with City Hall for example. These difficulties will be discussed in the next section.)
- (3) The need to establish working relations with support groups: Certain CDCs have found their efforts aided by having contacts in public and private institutions. If a CDC chooses to pursue physical or economic development, this kind of access is probably necessary, unless the CDC chooses to forego this option in favor of more constituency organizing or other means of influence. However, carrying out an adversarial relationship while trying to gain outside resources (or permits, land parcels, etc.) is very troublesome over the long run since the potential for external damage to the CDC becomes greater with this kind of development process that requires a number of local and state agreements in order to implement. LRCC found it profitable to transform their adversarial relationship into a working relationship in order to pursue the organization's objectives.
- (4) The need to leverage all community based resources: While certainly not a total solution in most cases, the use of

grass-roots money, labor, and talent can help cut down on the dependency on outside aid (and help to limit external influence). Both RAP and LRCC (in varying degrees) used some of these internal resources. In fact, most of LRCC's early strength came from this kind of self-reliance.

(5) The need to attract other free professional and other help:

The contribution of time and effort by some outside professionals and students has also been very helpful to the organization, and lowered their budgetary requirements. In the past, RAP has constantly utilized the services of pro-bono professionals in its operations because it couldn't afford to pay additional staff or consulting fees. However, the use of outside talent needs to be monitored, since some organizations experienced problems from students who made mistakes while working on certain projects.

(6) The need for funding diversity (and possible self-sufficiency):

GRDC's basic dependence on one main source of aid left it more vulnerable to changing agency priorities and national political shifts. Funding diversity might help to alleviate this problem to a certain extent. Self-sufficiency, while not realistic for most organizations at this point, or even desirable for some, would still aid in the struggle for autonomy. However, even if staff is paid from organizational resources, this does not mean that a CDC is operating independently, since it still has to deal with the institutions of the larger society to try and implement development projects.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE CDC STRATEGY

Even if some or all of these elements are included in a CDC's strategy, there are only a limited number of functions a CDC by itself can perform. The constraints of the political/economic system keeps CDCs within certain bounds through laws, regulations, plus political and economic force. This illustrates the basic difference between the CDC and the single issue advocacy group. The latter, quite often solely dependent on its own funds and energy, can mount all kinds of pressure to pursue a point of interest.

By contrast, a CDC that tries to attempt such a feat repeatedly will find a tough road to travel if it then tries to develop housing or businesses--something which is easier prey for external forces (given the need for outside financing). It is no secret that most CDCs have become more conservative and less vocal over time. LRCC chose to turn community action into working relationships with government agencies. Even RAP, with its self-determination ideology, found it imperative to cooperate with certain public and private actors.

Although the CDC is not "independent" enough to operate heavily in the political arena, it can still play a limited role in this effort (for political and social change) by informing its constituency about certain key issues (national policies, etc.) that affect the neighborhood. CDCs themselves can organize into coalitions to push for more aid to their own efforts. This has already occurred to some extent.

It is important for CDCs to realize that the development role they are playing limits their strategy options (and independence). If neighborhood activists put all of their energy into a particular CDC, then this would produce problems. One author contends that CDCs are the new mediating structures between city hall (and its backers) and community residents.

He suggests that this relationship causes the CDC and its constituents to adopt a narrow focus on physical improvements to an immediate neighborhood or block, at the expense of a more cooperative community wide (and city wide) action around specific issues.¹

CDCs AS PART OF A LARGER STRATEGY

Given the constraints on a CDC, and the "relative" nature of its independence, there is a real need for other kinds of organizational efforts to supplement what a CDC can do. Although some of the community leaders might have wanted CDCs to accomplish many tasks at once, experience has illustrated the limited nature of the decisions these groups can make. Given these constraints, there are other types of organizations more suited to pursuing controversial objectives over a long period of time.

Community advocacy organizations (neighborhood associations, etc.) that are not dependent on outside support or cooperation are in a better position to push for the more political objectives. While this fact is basically common knowledge, it should be noted that CDCs were originally envisioned by some as being independent enough to implement a very wide set of priorities (economic, social, and political). Because of its constraints, a CDC should delegate (unofficially) certain objectives to other groups if it (the CDC) is to retain working relations with key public and private figures. If at all possible, strategies of various groups should be coordinated, so that if a more vocal group engineers a change in policy, then the less visible CDC is in a position to take advantage of any policy change.*

In short, CDCs will have to work through the greater "independence"

* This has its dangers, since in one recent instance a Boston area CDC was known to be affiliated with groups not favored by local government, and the CDC was "punished" for this association.²

of other neighborhood structures for certain kinds of objectives that challenge conventional methods or philosophical orientations. For example, another community group can (as some have) "squat" in tax delinquent buildings and demand that they be turned over to community organizations free of tax obligations. If the pressure mounted is large enough, and concessions are made, then CDCs would be in a position to take advantage of this opportunity for development purposes.

These policies will help CDCs in their efforts to implement development strategies. Yet, the added effort of the other more "independent" organizations is necessary in light of worsening economic conditions (and related problems). There is a need for more vocal entities to push for social, political, and economic change in the community and society at large. As one person stated, "getting some jobs and buying into the familiar politics of scarcity which encourages us to get a share and keep quiet, will never build the changes Black folk need to see."³ This statement can apply to all distressed communities that desire a better existence.

Notes to Chapter V

1. Bayard Corey Stone, Community Economic Development and Urban Politics (Unpublished undergraduate thesis, Harvard College, March 1980), p. 26.
2. Sources: Interviews with Bennet Harrison of M.I.T., and Carl Sussman of the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation.
3. Mel King, Chain of Change: Struggle for Black Community Development, (Boston: South End Press, 1981), p. 242.

APPENDIX IMETHODOLOGY

Chapters II, III, and IV of this thesis presented case study material of three organizations that offered different experiences in community-based development. In order to compile the information for each chapter, I conducted a series of interviews with people connected with the CDCs in some way. This included former (and present) board members, staff members, and informed community residents. (Most of the people interviewed are listed in the Bibliography section.) Each person was asked a series of questions regarding the evolution of the organizations, and the CDC's relationship to external support groups. (See Appendix II for a sample questionnaire.)

In addition to the interviews, I studied organizational documents that related to the thesis topic. These documents included financial reports, written histories, letters, memoranda, and a series of progress reports and proposals. Most of these sources are listed in the Bibliography section or the notes for each chapter.

Finally, any newspaper articles, books, or other reference material to enrich the cases were utilized in this report. All of the information sources were synthesized in an effort to present an account of the organizations and their experiences. While the findings in each chapter are not quite (totally) conclusive, the case studies do give a sufficient indication of answers to the questions posed in this thesis. (The case study method at best can only approximate what actually transpired in the evolution of each organization.)

APPENDIX IICASE STUDY QUESTIONS

I: (BACKGROUND)

(A) 1: What are the general socio-economic characteristics of the organization's target area? What were these conditions like at the organization's beginning?

2: Outline the major changes that have taken place in the neighborhood over time. What were the specific causes for these changes?

(B) (Origins of the Organization)

1: How did this particular organization get started? (What year, etc.?)

2: What was the initial structure of the organization?

3: How was the organization initially funded?

4: Was the funding unrestricted?

5: What other kinds of outside resources did the organization make use of?

6: What were the original plans and goals of the organization?

7: What kind of popular support/community role did the organization have at that time?

8: What kind of political relationship did the organization have with other groups, levels of government, etc.?

II: (ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION)

(A) (Organization's Efforts & Products)

1: What were the major successes (and failures) of the organization over time?

2: What were some of the main reasons for some of the successes (and failures)?

3: Was the organization forced to change its original orientation in any way? If so, why?

4: Has the structure and style of the organization changed in any way? If so, why?

5: Does the organization react to things less and initiate more?

- 6: Has the organization's relationship with the surrounding community improved/deteriorated? Why?
- 7: Has the relationship with different levels of government changed over time? Why?
- 8: Have the different levels of government played an overall positive or negative role in the history of the organization?

(B) (Initial Funding Sources)

- 1: What was the organization's relationship with its initial funding source?
- 2: Were restrictions initially imposed on the organization?
- 3: What other kinds of regulations and restrictions did the organization have to cope with over the years?

(C) (Funding Changes Over Time)

- 1: Did the organization change its funding arrangement over time?
- 2: How did this affect the organization's development?
- 3: Did a particular funding source change its priorities over time?
- 4: How did this affect the organization?
- 5: Was there ever conflict between the priorities of the organization and the mandate of the funding source? How was this handled?
- 6: Are certain funding sources easier to work with than others?
- 7: Are there other kinds of restrictions/regulations that brought difficulty to the organization?

(D) (Politics)

- 1: Were there complications concerning the political views/relationships of the organization and the orientation of the funding source?
- 2: If so, how was this dealt with?
- 3: Did this "coping" with the funding source in any way affect the relationship of the organization to its constituency?

III: (PRESENT OUTCOMES)

(A) (Present Conditions and Directions of the Organization)

- 1: What are the organization's present sources of funding?
- 2: What is the organization's relation to the funding source?
- 3: What is the organization presently working on?
- 4: How did the organization become involved in this project?

- 5: What are the higher priorities of the organization?
- 6: What external obstacles doe the organization face?
- 7: Has the organization become more independent of or more dependent on outside resources?
- 8: Does the organization make use of any community funding, voluntary labor, etc.?
- 9: How has this changed over time?
- 10: What is the organization's relationship with other organizations, constituency, etc.?
- 11: What is its relationship with different levels of government?

IV: (FUTURE)

(A) (Organizational Direction)

- 1: What are the organization's long-range plans?
- 2: What are the future projected sources of funding?

(B) (Wishes of the Organization)

- 1: What kind of improvements would the organization like to see:
 - In the way funds are provided
 - In the way regulations are drawn up and enforced
 - In the way that organizations are monitored and evaluated
 - Other

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