



## NEIGHBORHOOD GARDENS ASSOCIATION

A Philadelphia Land Trust  
100 N. 20th Street, Suite 309  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1443

Return Service Requested

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Philadelphia, PA  
Permit #2301



Vol. 15 • No. 2  
Fall 2007

### In This Issue

**Three New  
Preserved Gardens**

**Aspen Farms  
Cistern Project**

**Special Donor  
Office Move**

### Our Mission

*The Neighborhood Gardens Association / A Philadelphia Land Trust (NGA) is a private nonprofit corporation founded in 1986. Its mission is to preserve and develop community-managed green spaces and gardens that enhance Philadelphia's neighborhoods.*

### Contact NGA

**Terry Mushovic**  
Executive Director

*Email:*

**terrym@ngalandtrust.org**  
**215.988.8797**

**www.ngalandtrust.org**

# Well-Preserved

*Newsletter of the*

**Neighborhood Gardens Association/  
A Philadelphia Land Trust**

*Preserving community-managed green spaces since 1986*

## Moving Forward with NGA's Strategic Plan

In the spring issue of the newsletter, I wrote about the findings that resulted from the strategic plan NGA completed in March 2007. As part of the strategic planning process, the NGA Board of Directors updated our mission and vision statements to reflect an expanded view for NGA's future. The updated mission statement is that *NGA will preserve and develop community-managed green spaces and gardens that enhance Philadelphia's neighborhoods.*

Our revised mission statement reflects the importance of preserving a variety of community-managed green spaces such as gardens, sitting areas, and other green spaces that foster environmentally and socially sustainable urban communities. The mission statement also reflects the value of community-managed green space for all urban neighborhoods. Several of the green spaces NGA has worked to preserve and improve are located in areas where significant neighborhood reinvestment has taken place. These areas, once designated low-income, are now home to people from a blend of income levels—all united in seeing their gardens and green spaces as important neighborhood amenities. Accordingly, our updated vision statement is that *NGA will promote quality community-managed green space as a critical component of healthy, safe, and economically viable urban neighborhoods.*

NGA will continue to provide technical assistance to individuals and organizations regarding the how-tos of preserving gardens and green spaces and steward the twenty-seven gardens currently in the land trust (see page 2 for three new preserved gardens). This support will include advocating for the inclusion of green spaces in neighborhood strategic plans created or funded by the city.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## NGA Strategic Plan Moves Forward *(Continued from Page 1)*

To achieve our goal of expanding the number of community-managed green spaces that are preserved in Philadelphia's neighborhoods, NGA will need to partner with others to reach this goal. The City of Philadelphia has been the major donor of land to NGA and will be a key partner in the future. NGA is serving on the Steering Committee for GreenPlan Philadelphia, a comprehensive sustainability plan for the City involving fifteen city departments and numerous community partners. This is the first time such a citywide green plan has been done in Philadelphia. The report with recommendations is due to be completed before the end of this year, just in time for the new mayor to take office in January 2008.

NGA has also worked closely with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program since 1986. Almost all of the land trusted gardens were originally started with PHS's help, and many of the gardens are involved this season with the Philadelphia Green City Harvest program. Over the next six months, a committee of representatives from NGA and PHS are looking at options and resources for expanding the land trust work in Philadelphia to support the work being done by both groups with vacant land. We are optimistic that Philadelphia's future will be greener!

# Three New Gardens Preserved

The **Bodine Street Gardeners** on South 3rd Street above Washington Avenue have reached their goal - to preserve their garden for the future. Councilman DiCicco was very instrumental in preserving this twenty-five years old garden by condemning the land and officially transferring it to NGA on July 11th. The gardeners celebrated their triumph with family and friends on Saturday, September 15th from 4pm until dusk. Local businesses donated food and the gardeners served dishes made from garden produce.



Titles to two other gardens in North Philadelphia were also transferred to NGA from the city recently. On the **1900 block of North Marshall Street**, Bob Jacobs and his family and neighbors are growing fresh vegetables for themselves and growing extra for the City Harvest Program as well. Large raised beds make it easier for gardeners of all ages to tend their crops. There is a shady sitting area in the back for visiting with neighbors and a new grassy area along the front.



Not too far away, **The Friends Garden** at Front and Somerset Streets is only five years old but looks like it has been a part of the neighborhood for a lot longer. Saro Rodriguez and his family and neighbors have created a little bit of Puerto Rico at this garden with a casita (cottage) surrounded by a front garden and vegetables growing in the back. Some of the vegetable are being donated to local food cupboards through the Philadelphia Green City Harvest program.



## Aspen Farms Cistern Project

On its first week of operation, the Aspen Farms Cistern collected 250 gallons of water during one storm. Organic Gardening Magazine donated a 1,000 gallon cistern system to Aspen Farms, an NGA land trust garden in West Philadelphia. Rainwater from the roof of the garden's shed is being collected and stored for use by the garden on drier days. This new cistern will allow Aspen Farms to "harvest" its own rainwater and reduce the amount of water it currently uses from the city's water department. Gardeners and guests celebrated the new cistern at an Open House on August 17th.



## A Special Donation

Barbara Hirshowitz was a community gardener at the Warrington Community Garden in West Philadelphia for many years. Barbara was an active member of the garden and served as the group's treasurer. She was very involved in the Community and was much loved by her neighbors. Barbara passed away in March of this year and left a special donation to NGA and her gardening friends. Barbara specified that 30% of her personal IRA be donated to NGA to help us help other gardeners in the future. We are very grateful to Barbara for her generosity of spirit. She will be missed.

## Moving on Up to the 5th Floor

The NGA office has been on the third floor of 20th and Arch for over 8 years. We rent space from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and benefit from the close proximity and working relationship with PHS, especially the Philadelphia Green program.

PHS staff has increased over the last few years, and PHS is going to remodel the space on the third floor for their Finance and Membership departments. In December, the NGA office will be moving to the fifth floor. So change your address books and put us down as NGA, 100 North 20th Street, **Fifth Floor**, Phila, PA 19103. Our phone numbers will remain the same.

Clip and send with your donation!

### Help Save Community Gardens

NGA is a nonprofit urban land trust preserving community-managed gardens and green spaces in Philadelphia's neighborhoods since 1986. We need your support!

\$50   
  \$100   
  \$250   
  \$500   
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other   
 NGA's United Way Code os **8206**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to remain anonymous.   
  I am interested in making a planned gift. Please contact me.

Please make checks payable to the Neighborhood Gardens Association and mail to:  
 NGA, 100 North 20th Street, Suite 309, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
 If you would like to use a credit card, go to [www.ngalandtrust.org](http://www.ngalandtrust.org) and click on the Donate Now button.