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Before founding Burlington Associates with six other colleagues in 1993, Davis was the director of housing and Enterprise Community coordinator in Burlington. He has taught urban studies, neighborhood planning, and housing policy at New Hampshire College, the University of Vermont, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He holds a BA in philosophy from Vanderbilt University and an MS and PhD in development sociology and city and regional planning from Cornell University.

Davis's research and consulting have focused on nongovernmental, nonmarket models of affordable housing such as community land trusts, limited equity cooperatives, and deed-restricted homes. These are now widely referred to as either "third sector housing" or "shared equity homeownership" (both terms originally coined by Davis). His many publications include The Community Land Trust Handbook (1982), The Affordable City: Toward a Third Sector Housing Policy (1994), Permanently Affordable Homeownership: Does the Community Land Trust Deliver on Its Promises? (2003), and Shared Equity Homeownership: The Changing Landscape of Resale-Restricted, Owner-Occupied Housing (2006). Contact: BurlAssoc@aol.com.

John Emmeus Davis

LAND LINES: *How did you come to be involved with the Lincoln Institute?*

JOHN DAVIS: I have been working as a course designer, lead teacher, and board member of the CLT Academy, a joint project of the National Community Land Trust Network and the Lincoln Institute. In developing and presenting an intermediate-level curriculum for CLT practitioners, I discovered that most CLT staff and board members have little familiarity with the origins of the model to which they are so committed. Few have heard of Henry George, Ebenezer Howard, Arthur Morgan, Ralph Borsodi, or Bob Swann. Few know of the link between CLTs and the Garden Cities movement in England, the Gramdan movement in India, or the Civil Rights movement in the United States.

Although practitioners come to the CLT Academy primarily to polish their technical skills, they have been surprisingly receptive to exploring the intellectual underpinnings of their work in the popular "Roots of the CLT" course session. Roz Greenstein, chair of the Department of Economic and Community Development, asked if I would be interested in collecting and publishing the background readings for this course, and to flesh out my slide show for a CD to provide wider distribution of this information. These are two of several projects I'll be pursuing during my fellowship.

LAND LINES: *What is the connection between Henry George and the community land trust movement?*

JOHN DAVIS: Somewhat the same, I would say, as the connection between Henry George and the Lincoln Institute. He was a source of inspiration for the people who created both institutions. In the case of the CLT, the father of England's Garden Cities movement, Ebenezer Howard, drew directly upon George's idea that all land gains are socially generated and should be captured for the benefit of a wider community, instead of claimed by a few fortunate landowners. Howard proposed to achieve this result through the municipal ownership and long-term leasing of the land underlying his Garden Cities, rather than through George's single tax.

Ralph Borsodi, another disciple of Henry George, proposed something similar in the United States. In 1936, he founded a leased land community in Suffern, New York, that he called a *land trust*. Like Howard, he believed community ownership of land, combined with individual leaseholds and individual ownership of buildings, to be the best way of effectively capturing and equitably distributing land values created by the larger society. The modern-day CLT is a descendent of the prototypes pioneered by Howard and Borsodi.

LAND LINES: *Does this intellectual history have any relevance for current CLT practice?*

JOHN DAVIS: Two-thirds of this nation's 200 CLTs are less than twenty years old, and half were formed since 2000. With such a rush of new people coming to the CLT, and with so much variability in the way the model is being adapted and applied, there is a fragile consensus on what it means to be a community land trust. By cultivating a common understanding of the model's origins, including the ideas and values underlying its many variations, we make it easier for disparate CLTs to find a common identity and to pursue a common agenda for bringing this fledgling movement to scale.

Wider agreement on core principles becomes especially important at a time when much of the growth in the movement is being spurred by local government. When municipalities take the lead in starting a CLT, they have a tendency to sample selectively from organizational features of the "classic" CLT, choosing only those that neatly fit within a municipality's existing programs. Some of the model's more democratic elements, like a community-based membership and popular election of the governing board, often are diluted or lost.

A wider knowledge of this model's roots and the reasons for its original structure may help contemporary CLT organizers hold the line when well-meaning backers say, "We like this approach to land ownership; we like this idea of retaining subsidies and preserving affordability; but do you really need to have leaseholders on the board; do you really need members?" Understanding our past may help us to secure our future.

LAND LINES: *How and why are cities and counties promoting the development of CLTs?*

JOHN DAVIS: Municipalities have been making grants, donating lands, and using powers such as inclusionary zoning to expand the holdings of CLTs around the country. In a few cities, like Irvine, California, and Chicago, the municipality itself has initiated the formation of a local CLT. My colleagues and I are currently preparing a report for Lincoln that documents the many ways in which municipalities are supporting CLTs and identifies the "best practices" for arranging such support.

As to *why* this is happening, I would point to the changing municipal role in the provision of affordable housing. Over the past 20 years, there has been a wholesale retreat of the federal government from the housing field. Municipalities have been forced to dig deeper into their own coffers and to make wider use of regulatory mandates and incentives to ensure the availability of housing that is affordable to people of modest means. Having worked so hard and spent so much to produce affordable housing, a growing number of municipalities are becoming loath to allow the affordability of this publicly assisted, privately owned housing to lapse.

When subsidizing homeownership, in particular, where the public's investment in many high-priced markets is now approaching \$50,000 per unit, municipal officials are now less likely to condone policies of the past that allowed homeowners to pocket most of the subsidy at resale, along with all of the land gains. These officials have begun looking to the CLT, along with other models of "shared equity

homeownership," to preserve the affordability of homeownership opportunities that public monies or public powers helped to create.

LAND LINES: *Protecting the public's investment does not sound like a rationale likely to excite most community activists. Are there other motivations for forming a CLT?*

JOHN DAVIS: Well, we are all taxpayers. We all have an interest in seeing that the dollars invested, powers employed, and gains engendered by government will benefit the largest number of people for the longest period of time. But it's true that public finance is not exactly an issue that is going to stir the hearts of most people. What does resonate widely is the notion of preserving community and promoting access to homeownership, especially in disinvested neighborhoods where land values are rising.

I was recently at a regional housing conference in the South, where grassroots activists from nearly two dozen African-American communities in North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana shared similar stories of low-income people being pushed aside by booming downtowns or expanding waterfronts. The CLT's main attraction in these places is its potential for preventing displacement, while granting long-time residents a degree of control over the future development of their neighborhood.

LAND LINES: *Has the focus of your consulting changed since starting Burlington Associates in 1993?*

JOHN DAVIS: Most our work was once aimed at nonprofit organizations serving neighborhoods like those I just mentioned, but today most of our nonprofit clients have a city-wide or county-wide service area. Much of our current case-load also consists of local governments seeking help to redesign their policies and programs to be more supportive of the kind of resale-restricted, owner-occupied housing that CLTs (and many other nonprofits) produce.

Inclusionary zoning, in particular, has become a major focus. My partners and I

spend a lot of time these days evaluating IZ ordinances and their administrative rules, helping cities to plan for the long-term stewardship of the affordable housing produced through IZ, density bonuses, and the like.

A more unexpected professional turn for me has been designing and facilitating nonprofit mergers. There is a certain irony here. After helping to create dozens of nonprofit organizations over the years, I now find myself being called upon to reduce their number through consolidation. I sometimes wonder, with an equal measure of amusement and dismay, whether by the end of my career I will have pruned as many nonprofits as I have planted.

LAND LINES: *The unconventional models of land and housing that you have championed still account for only a small percentage of the nation's residential property. What are the prospects for bringing this sector to scale?*

JOHN DAVIS: There may be as many as a million units of resale-restricted, owner-occupied housing currently under the stewardship of either a CLT, a limited equity cooperative, or a durable affordability covenant. There may also be fewer, since nobody really knows the number. Either way, there is less than I would like. Yet the number of nonprofits making use of these unusual forms of tenure is rising rapidly. So is the number of cities imposing long-term resale controls over the affordable housing they have helped to bring on line.

There is also fertile ground for the growth of shared equity homeownership among the millions of units of subsidized rental housing with affordability controls slated to lapse in the years ahead, among the thousands of mobile home parks precariously perched on absentee-owned land, and among millions of homeowners with sub-prime mortgages who could face foreclosure if interest rates were to rise precipitously.

I don't expect models like the CLT to play a leading role on the national stage anytime soon, but they are no longer waiting quietly in the wings. They are beginning to make a lot of noise. **L**