



C2: Housing & Conservation

Finding the Common Denominator for Successful Cross-Sector Collaboration

Al Bellenchia - Columbia-Greene Habitat for Humanity

Abby Fullem - Consensus Building Institute

Steve Rosenberg - Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation

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Regional Conservation Partnership Network Gathering - November 14, 2024

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- Introduction to the Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation - *Steve*
- Participant perspective - *Al*
- Facilitator perspective - *Abby*
- Panel discussion - *All*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Become familiar with the Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation
1. Explore and extrapolate lessons learned
1. Gain resources, connections and confidence to bring back to your collaborative projects

GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

Raise Your Hand If:

- Your organization work on projects related to housing and/or housing and conservation?
- You feel your community is in a housing crisis?
- You know a colleague struggling to find housing they can afford?
- You feel that the need for housing in your area is complicating your conservation efforts?
- You think land trusts and other conservationists have a responsibility to help address the housing crisis?



Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation

An Innovative Collaboration of Land Trusts and
Affordable Housing Organizations Conserving
Critical Landscapes and Responding to the
Region's Housing Crisis



Organizing Principle

Healthy communities need abundant, affordable housing **and** protected land that supports clean water, food production, and climate resilience...

But too often they're seen as mutually exclusive or worse, opposed to each other.

SILOED PROGRAMS AND PARCEL-BY-PARCEL APPROACHES LIMIT COLLABORATION AND CREATE COMPETITION BETWEEN THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND LAND CONSERVATION SECTORS.



Siloed programs

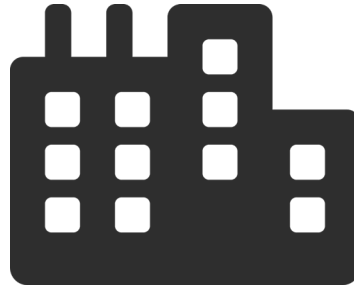


Parcel-by-parcel
approaches

THE HUDSON VALLEY— LIKE MANY REGIONS — IS INCREASINGLY AN
UNSUSTAINABLE AND INEQUITABLE PLACE TO LIVE.



**Skyrocketing real
estate appreciation**



**Scattershot real
estate development**



Climate change

PARTICIPANTS



Conveners

- Rebecca Gillman Crimmins, affordable housing sector
- Steve Rosenberg, land conservation sector

Facilitation

- Consensus Building Institute

Fiscal Sponsors

- Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress
- Columbia Land Conservancy



Community
Preservation
Corporation



Hudson River
Housing, Inc.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND LAND CONSERVATION SECTORS HAVE SHARED VALUES



Word cloud based on participating organizations' missions



Equity



Racial justice



Public health



Climate

An aerial photograph of a town in the Hudson Valley, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, a large body of water (likely the Hudson River), and a range of mountains in the background under a cloudy sky. The town is densely packed with buildings, and the mountains are covered in trees, some of which are bare, suggesting a cooler season. The water is calm and reflects the sky. The overall scene is a typical view of a small town in the Hudson Valley region.

HUDSON VALLEY ALLIANCE FOR HOUSING & CONSERVATION

We are banding together to take a holistic approach to these complex and urgent problems, and have a larger -scale impact.

Our Vision: The Hudson Valley is a sustainable and inclusive home to an economically and racially diverse community. Our work helps the region develop a holistic, equitable and proactive approach to housing, climate change, and land conservation.

Where We're Going

- Collaborative Projects
- Policy
- Municipal Outreach



Future Cookingham Project Red Hook, NY



Columbia-Greene

Habitat for Humanity®

Community-Supported Housing Solutions

Who We Are & What We Do

Since 1993 we've completed 27 houses in Ancram, Copake, Chatham, Hudson, New Lebanon, Valatie and Philmont



Habitat for Humanity builds high quality homes that are safe and sustainable at a price middle income residents can afford.

Looking to build more homes in more places. In 2024 we expanded our service area to build in neighboring Greene County.



The Habitat Homeownership Program

The Habitat for Humanity program is a collaborative, community-supported model. We bring community together to build safe, affordable housing for those traditionally shut out of ownership opportunities.

Our program is based on three criteria:

- A demonstrated need for housing
- Ability to purchase a Habitat-constructed home through a 3rd party mortgage
- Willingness to partner in the construction through our “Sweat Equity” program.



We Need More Housing Options When We're ...



Starting Out

- No kids but maybe later
- Work at a local business
 - Steady income
- Tired of increasing rents
- Limited funds for traditional down payment
 - Priced out of market



Downsizing

- Long time residents who want to stay here
 - Steady income
- Downsizing to reduce costs
- Very few appropriately sized homes available



Looking To Stay and Grow

- Live here year round
- Work at a local business
 - Steady income
- Have children in school
- Cost of raising a family puts buying a home out of reach
- Increasingly leaving the area

CGHFH Rural Starter Home Initiative



RSHI Homes Features

- Net Zero Ready
- Low Carbon Construction
- Expandable Design
- Simple Systems / Easy to Use
- Low Maintenance
- Locally-Sourced Materials
- Low and Zero VOC Products
- Starter-home price point

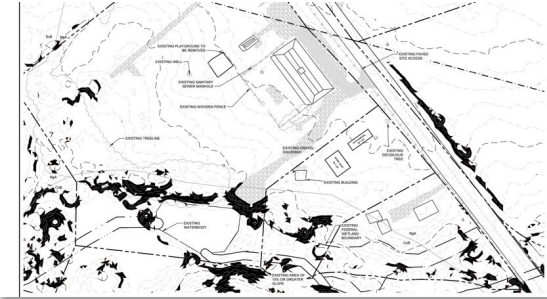
To scale we need:

- Land
- Land use reform
- Tax reform
- Collaboration of the willing

What's Next? Building for the Future



- Purchase of New Office Complex Via NYS Grant
- Construct Office and Workshop
- Greene County Expansion
- Complete 2 Houses in Columbia County
- Secure Multi-Unit Build Site
- Begin Panel Construction Offering



Why we are involved with the HV Alliance

- Many hands make light work
- Greater scale is needed by small developers; collaboration is critical to sustainability
- Many municipalities require assistance to make needed changes
- Rural areas are uniquely challenged to attract development
- Alone you can go fast; together you can go farther.



CBI is a nonprofit organization with decades of experience helping leaders collaborate to solve complex problems.

Our staff are experts in facilitation, mediation, capacity building, citizen engagement, and organizational strategy and development.

We are committed to using our skills to build collaboration on today's most significant social, environmental, and economic challenges. We work within and across organizations, sectors, and stakeholder groups.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [CBI.ORG](https://www.cbi.org)

FACILITATION & MEDIATION



Helping diverse groups solve complex problems

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT



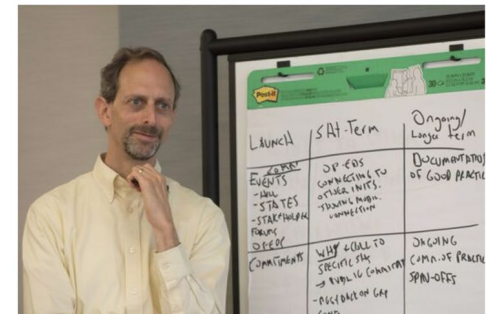
Supporting citizens' deliberation

BUILDING COLLABORATION CAPABILITY



Strengthening organizations' ability to work together

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT



Helping organizations align strategically for the future

Critical steps and takeaways

- One-on-one member calls

Critical steps and takeaways

- One-on-one member calls
- Initial focus on learning about the other sector

MID-HUDSON VALLEY HOUSING SNAPSHOT
JULY 2022

"The Big Squeeze"

NeighborWorks AMERICA
Working Together for Strong Communities

FOCUS AREA:
COLUMBIA COUNTY
DUTCHESS COUNTY
GREENE COUNTY
ORANGE COUNTY
PUTNAM COUNTY
ULSTER COUNTY

@NeighborWorks

...a Lightning Round

CONSERVATION TOOLS OF LAND TRUSTS

- Donations of land – tax-deductible
- Purchase of land
- "Bargain sales" – sales below fair market value – tax-deductible
- Conservation easements – permanent conservation agreements with landowners
- Partnership with municipalities/other non-profits

Critical steps and takeaways

- One-on-one member calls
- Initial focus on learning about the other sector
- Shared purpose statement

HUDSON VALLEY AFFORDABLE HOUSING & CONSERVATION STRATEGY



OUR VISION

The Hudson River Valley is a sustainable and inclusive home to an economically and racially diverse community. Our work helps the region develop a holistic, equitable and proactive approach to housing, climate change, and land conservation.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The Hudson River Valley region that we call home is becoming an increasingly unsustainable and inequitable place to live. A variety of factors have contributed to the present reality: single family sprawl over denser, smart growth development; the COVID-19 real estate boom; vulnerable existing rental housing, and the perception that affordable housing brings unwanted change to communities.

Critical steps and takeaways

- One-on-one member calls
- Initial focus on learning about the other sector
- Shared purpose statement
- In-person meetings and events



Critical steps and takeaways

- One-on-one member calls
- Initial focus on learning about the other sector
- Shared purpose statement
- In-person meetings and events
- Working Groups (planning team, policy, municipal engagement)

Current growth areas

- Incorporating new members
- Organizations of different sizes
- Getting more projects on the ground
- Bringing organizations' staff, board, constituents along

How do we collaborate?

What does collaboration look like?

- Advising & brainstorming on projects
- Implementing specific projects, e.g., Cookingham
- Not getting in each other's ways and/or supporting each other's projects
 - 5 Land Trusts signed housing infrastructure support letter!
- Cross-pollinating with other sector's boards and staff
- Policy and talking to legislators together
- Working together with municipalities

Alliance activities that support collaboration

- Test Kitchen
- Relationship building
- Developing materials to encourage for cross-pollination
- Working groups

Discussion



THANK YOU!

Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation website

<https://rpa.org/hudson-valley-affordable-housing-conservation-strategy>

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Regional
Conservation
Partnership
NETWORK

2024
RCP NETWORK
Gathering



to fill out the
SESSION

EVALUATION FORM

We Welcome Your Feedback