

Talbot-Norfolk Triangle ~ Greenspace Master Plan

Our Community: The Talbot Norfolk Triangle

Our community needs more greenspace. The Talbot Norfolk Triangle [TNT] is part of Dorchester - the largest, oldest, and most diverse neighborhood of Boston. Yet within our city, TNT has some of the least amounts of open greenspace.

Our 13 street community faces imminent changes with the coming of new stations along the Fairmount/Indigo rail line. These changes include: development of an additional 100 units of housing (a 25% increase); increased auto and foot traffic traveling through our streets; and construction of the new Fairmont Greenway. In the midst of transit-oriented development, we believe that it is vital to preserve a balance between local greenspace, housing, and commercial development. Therefore, our efforts focus on reclaiming vacant city and privately-held lots in our community – especially since open space represents less than 5% of TNT's land use.

We want to proactively shape green, open spaces for children, teenagers, and adults to enjoy for decades to come.



Above: The 13-street TNT community is located on the west side of Codman Square in Dorchester. Prior to 2009, TNT had only one green space - an overgrown and neglected cemetery.

Our Catalyst: Elmhurst Park

TNT neighbors have been working together since 1998, when we first gathered to share concerns over unsafe, vacant lots on Elmhurst Street where illegal dumping was taking place. We cleared out debris and garbage and worked with community partners and the City to fundraise and advocate for a place where children could play close to home. *After ten-plus years of hard work and dedication, our community celebrated the opening of Elmhurst Street Children's Park in 2009!*



Spurred on by our success, neighbors have continued conversations about new projects to further beautify and transform the TNT. These conversations have culminated in the TNT Greenspace Master Plan.

Our Progress

- 2004-2005: The Trust for Public Land and the Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation complete surveys of TNT. Youth identify 25 open lots, resulting in the discussion of transforming two vacant lots into new greenspace. (93 and 106 Norfolk Street)
- 2007: A comprehensive TNT map is designed displaying greenspace and building projects.
- 2008: TNT discusses, *What Do You Want Our Village to Look Like?*, residents proposed gardens, parks, clean ups, and recycling.
- 2009: Interaction Institute for Social Change engages neighbors in a comprehensive process to formalize a Greenspace Master Plan.
- 2011: TNT works with the City of Boston to advance an urban farm site within walking distance of our neighborhood.



Above: Youth in The Boston Project's Park Patrol environmental leadership program survey a local vacant site to transform into a passive park.

The Benefits of a Multi-Site Urban Garden

A multi-site urban garden will transform the TNT neighborhood by creating a walkable route that connects green spaces in the community. Planned play areas, passive parks, urban gardens and orchards are a few of the projects neighbors want to see come to fruition! A multi-site urban garden will:

- **Preserve urban green space** and provide balance in an area marked by active housing development. TNT has 300 housing units (source: 2000 census), with plans for a potential 100+ additional units in the next 2-4 years.
- **Promote physical activity and neighbor interaction.** Neighbors of all ages will be able to relax, converse, play and learn in new open, green areas.
- **Encourage healthier eating.** Community and rooftop gardens will encourage and facilitate eating fresh, local food.
- **Provide learning opportunities.** Collaborations with urban greenspace groups and local schools will bring learning opportunities to our neighborhood.
- **Engage youth in employment opportunities.** Environmentally-focused internships for teens will provide youth opportunities to learn skills for work in the green economy while furthering the goals of the TNT Greenspace Master Plan.
- **Inspire community pride and become a model for other city neighborhoods!**



Our Projects

- TNT residents participate in our semi-annual neighborhood 'clean up' days to help maintain local lots.
- During the summer of '09, we transformed 93 Norfolk Street into a small-scale, low-cost, ecological pocket park. In 2010, the Sustainable Sites Initiative recognized this newly created

'Garden of Peace' as a pilot project for the development of their guidance & performance benchmarks.

- In 2011, Park Patrol youth interns and neighbors began construction on a new Children's community garden at 106 Norfolk Street. Plans are in place to finish the garden by summer 2012.

- Codman Burying Ground, the largest tract of open space in the TNT, used to be an eyesore and a spot for illegal activity. Over the past three years, with the efforts of neighbors, this space is changing into a restful, beautiful memorial in the community, which includes the addition of 20 new trees.

Our Next Steps

106 Norfolk Street. Neighbors are excited to transform this site into a Children's community garden where youth are able to learn about gardening and nutrition. 18 plots will be available to grow fresh, local produce.

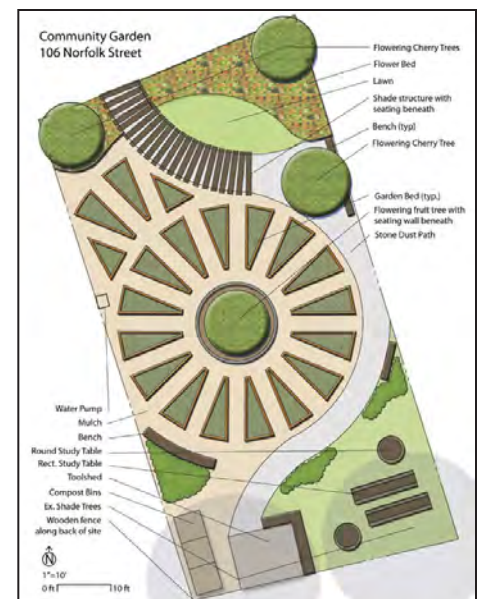
Norfolk Street Corridor. Through the UEI CityRoots program, community members will plant 10-15 new flowering cherry trees to line Norfolk Street.

Rooftop Gardens at 9 Elmhurst Street & 119 Norfolk Street. These one story, cement block garages have a combined 15,000 sq ft of unused sunny rooftop.

2-6 Woodrow Avenue* Community members would like to see this space as an impressive gateway park for our neighborhood. Conveniently located close to restaurants, concept plans include transforming this space with perennials, a terraced garden, seating area for an outdoor café, a memorial to victims of violence, and a small farmers market for the new urban farm located close by.

131-135 Southern Avenue* Neighbors agree that the creation of a larger community garden and fruit orchard would beautify and improve these vacant lots. Native Dorchester species of apple and pear trees would be planted here.

* These proposed greenspaces are along the Fairmont Corridor Greenway route.



Our Past and Present Partners

Talbot-Norfolk Triangle Neighbors United
 Dorchester Environmental Health Coalition
 Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation
 Codman Square Health Center
 New England Grassroots Environmental Fund

The Boston Project Ministries
 Urban Ecology Institute
 The Trust for Public Land
 Sustainable Neighborhoods Group
 The City of Boston