Participatory Democracy for Community Control of Development: A Case Study of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process

A thesis submitted by

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Abstract

The Upham's Corner Implementation (UCI) Process aims to redevelop the Upham's Corner commercial center into an arts and innovation district without displacement. The UCI process is a unique case because it involves a community-control organization, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), as co-facilitator. DSNI's community land trust, Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI), owns a key redevelopment site. Using various research methods including participatory action research, archival research, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and a grounded theory approach to data analysis, this thesis presents a case study of the UCI process, examining whether and how the DSNI-City partnership and the participatory methods used in the UCI process built community control.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

This project documents the Upham's Corner Implementation (UCI) Process currently unfolding in Dorchester's Upham's Corner — a multi-racial, mixed-income neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. The process was launched in the fall of 2017, and aims to redevelop the Upham's Corner commercial center into an arts and innovation district without displacement. The UCI process is a unique case because it involves a community-control organization as co-facilitator. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), a local community-based organization formed in 1984 with a history of advancing community control of planning and development, has been collaborating with the City of Boston to run the UCI process. DSNI's community land trust (CLT), Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI), owns a key redevelopment site.

In particular, this thesis project presents a case of the UCI process centered around DSNI's history of community control and organizing, exploring how these conditions have impacted the process and its outcomes. This thesis analyzes how the UCI process is working to extend DSNI's vision of community control. I consider how this case represents a next iteration of DSNI's community control based on the organization's history, and how this might enable communities in other working-class neighborhoods across the city to advance community-controlled development processes.

1.2 Introduction to community control

Community control is a form of direct democratic governance in which the people most impacted control policies and institutions. Progressive planners have theorized and practiced various strategies to shift greater control of decision-making to communities—particularly through improving public participation in planning processes—since at least 1969 when Sherry Arnstein's seminal work on the ladder of citizen participation was published. However, city planning and development processes still lack effective community control and democratic participation in decision-making, as they are fraught with imbalances of power and authority between public officials, private developers, and community members. This is not only a flaw in the design of planning processes, but also a symptom of larger, systemic power imbalances and their accompanying material inequalities. Organized struggle from below is necessary for demanding state responsiveness to the public interest and achieving governance that is truly democratic and serves the interests of working people.

Democratizing control over development is critical for building community wealth and power, preventing displacement of residents from their neighborhoods, and ensuring longevity of communities. Social movements for community control are led from the bottom up, and many have fought for community control of various institutions such as school boards, local budgets, economic systems, police departments, and land and development. Movements for democratic community ownership and control of wealth, and of the processes that build wealth, have used various ideological approaches, including through government, through dual power (Smolarek, 2020), and through direct ownership. Community land trusts

are one kind of tool to democratize the ownership and control of land, which is a major source of capital and wealth.

1.3 Introduction to the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) is an organization governed from the bottom up, and centers its activities around community planning and organizing. Formed in 1984, at a time of massive disinvestment in the low-income Dudley neighborhood, DSNI organized and empowered residents to rebuild the community. DSNI has a long history of building community control. DSNI is a membership organization with 3,000+ participants, and the organization is democratically governed and community-run, with a board of directors that is ethnically representative of the community. The organization had many victories in its formative days, the most notable of which was being granted eminent domain authority by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (now the Boston Planning and Development Agency or BPDA), in order for the community to gain control of its own development and use of land and to form DSNI's affiliate community land trust, Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI). On its land trust, DSNI collaborated to create and rehabilitate 1,300 housing units, transforming 32 acres of vacant lots into an urban village with a Town Common, community gardens and urban agriculture, and parks and playgrounds. DSNI's programs include community economic development without displacement and youth and resident leadership development.

1.4 Overview of Upham's Corner Implementation Process

The Upham's Corner Implementation (UCI) Process in Boston is an ongoing process, since Fall 2017, to redevelop the commercial district of Dorchester's Upham's Corner—a multi-racial, mixed-income neighborhood—into an arts and innovation district without displacement. Home of the historic, publicly owned, and currently underutilized Strand Theatre and serviced by the Fairmount commuter rail line, Upham's Corner has been the focus of much planning activity, particularly within the last decade. In Imagine Boston 2030, Upham's Corner was named one of three pilot neighborhoods that would experiment with "innovative" approaches to planning and development, that would become a model for practices across the city. The process in Upham's Corner is characterized as "community-led, City-catalyzed" (Imagine Boston, 2030, p. 27), meaning the investment and redevelopment is intended to prevent displacement and benefit *current* residents of Upham's Corner, which will be achieved by centering and uplifting the experiences and ideas of residents, as well as through targeted investments from the City.

The anchoring redevelopment sites in the UCI process are comprised of the site of the former Citizen's Bank building at 572 Columbia Road, which is owned by DNI, as well as the following City-owned parcels: the historic Strand Theatre, the former Bank of America building at 555 Columbia Road, and the municipal parking lot at 19 Hamlet Street. As part of the UCI redevelopment process, the City is also committed to developing a new Upham's Corner branch library, proposed to be located at the corner of Columbia Road and Stoughton Street.

Figure 1: UCI redevelopment map update, presented on November 19, 2020 (Sheehan, 2020)

The UCI process is meant to produce a set of Request for Proposals (RFPs) for developers to offer their services. The process has held an initial series of community meetings from the fall of 2017 to the spring of 2019 to gather community input on the content and developer requirements for the RFP. The Working Advisory Group (WAG), a City-appointed group of community leaders, has been steering the overall process. Additionally, leading up to the UCI process there was a creative engagement process—led by a coalition, known as the Fairmount Cultural Corridor (FCC), of local arts and community-based organizations including DSNI and the Design Studio for Social Intervention (ds4si)—which continued as part of the UCI process.

The way UCI is being run is unprecedented for a Boston city planning process, in that it is operating as a partnership between the City of Boston and the Dudley Street Neighborhood

Initiative. DSNI's leadership role in this process, made possible through the organization's decades of accumulated neighborhood power, poses a significant opportunity for expanding community control in the neighborhood, which I will examine in this thesis. I will also explore how this process, especially as an intensive collaboration between the City and a community-control organization, is impacting the City of Boston and its capacities and practices of community engagement, public investment, and democratic governance in planning.

1.5 Project roadmap

This project begins with Chapter 2 outlining the research methodology, including my research questions and notes on data collection and analysis approaches used. Chapter 3 is a literature review that lays out the concept and strategies for community control on a spectrum from progressive planning to activist citizenship to more critical perspectives and approaches. Chapter 4 explains the context of the UCI process and DSNI's history in further detail. The basic facts and timeline of the UCI case are laid out in Chapter 5. The data gathered from interviews and process documents are analyzed in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 provides conclusions about the Upham's Corner Implementation Process as a next iteration of community control and suggests further areas of research.

2 Methods

A team of faculty and graduate-student researchers at Tufts University's Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning, led by Penn Loh and including myself, has been observing and participating in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process since September 2017. This research is conducted in partnership with the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative as a participatory community action research project. The Tufts research team has attended various kinds of meetings as part of the UCI process—including Working Advisory Group meetings, City-DSNI meetings, and public-facing community meetings—and has conducted 19 interviews with key stakeholders, in order to explore how the civic engagement in this process could strengthen capacity for community control over land use and economic development. My analysis for this thesis builds upon this research.

2.1 Research goals

The primary audience for this thesis is the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and its community land trust, Dudley Neighbors, Inc.; people at the City of Boston involved in this process; and other UCI stakeholders. My thesis will tell a story of the UCI process which can be used to make the process more widely known. My aim is to inform strategic community organizing in this process, in subsequent City processes, and in DSNI/DNI's community-control work. The content and approach of my thesis is informed by discussions between the UEP team and DSNI regarding how to tell the story of the UCI process.

The secondary audience for this thesis is community-based practitioners more broadly, particularly those who are ideologically oriented toward advancing community control and self-determination of peoples marginalized from full democratic participation in planning and governance. I hope that this assessment of the UCI process will help these practitioners to understand how they may balance power-building and self-determination strategies that seem at odds—particularly partnering with the State and demanding its accountability. Finally, while this thesis will problematize neoliberal participatory governance, my audience also includes conventional planners, policymakers, and funders, as the thesis will help make the case for community control and for more direct democratic participation in planning processes.

2.2 Research questions

Central question:

- How does the Upham's Corner Implementation Process advance the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's work of community control?

Subquestions:

  - How have UCI's creative engagements built community control over the process?
  - How has DSNI's vision of community control impacted the process and the City's approach?

Table 1: Research questions

2.3 Notes on Data Collection and Analysis Approaches

My research methods for this thesis largely draw from methods I have used, as part of a team at Tufts UEP in partnership with the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, to conduct

the research project, “From Civic Participation to Community Control: Assessing and Strengthening Participatory Planning for Commercial District Development Without Displacement in Boston’s Dudley Neighborhood.” I ground this research and my analysis of our research findings in theories of solidarity economy, community control, and participatory democracy.

2.3.1 Background research and literature review

My research is situated in a background understanding of the solidarity economy, participatory democracy, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative’s history, as well as the history of planning processes and engagements in Upham’s Corner leading up to the UCI process. I conducted this background research through literature reviews, by analyzing documents related to the UCI process (which were shared with the Tufts research team by early participants in the UCI process), and by interpreting the facts of the case that surfaced through stakeholder interviews.

2.3.2 Archival materials and prior plans/reports

As mentioned above, the supporting documents I analyzed for this thesis include materials such as prior plans and reports leading up to the Upham’s Corner Implementation Process regarding past engagements and processes. These materials include both formal City documents and presentations on these processes and DSNI’s and their community partners’ archival materials related to community-led processes, such as the engagements for the Dudley Neighbors, Inc. Community Building (DNICB) and through the Fairmount Cultural

Corridor initiative. I also examined reports on cultural organizing work in Upham's by a community partner, the Design Studio for Social Intervention (ds4si) who played a key supportive role in engagement and meeting design in the UCI process. These supportive materials range from 2012 to the present.

2.3.3 Participant observation and community action research

The research that the Tufts team has been conducting on the UCI process has taken the form of community action research, which included participant observation at various meetings relevant to the process, formally notetaking to support process activities, producing an onboarding tool for WAG members, and developing and facilitating part of DSNI's summer 2019 youth program. Notes from the following events and meetings were gathered by the Tufts research team, from October 2018 to March 2020:

- 10 Working Advisory Group (WAG) meetings
- 10 City-DSNI coordination meetings
- 3 public-facing community meetings
- 1 public meeting for developers (RFI)

In addition to gathering notes at these meetings, I also conducted participant observation at various public-facing DSNI events, including the organization's annual meeting in June 2019, multicultural festival in August 2019, and open house in February 2020.

This form of research allowed the UEP team to observe the ways in which WAG members, DSNI, and community partners are pushing back and asserting their demands to the City. We observed the ways in which the topic of power was raised and addressed in decision-making or engagement spaces. Our participant observation also helped us gain a sense of how City and DSNI leadership interact in this process.

2.3.4 Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the meetings listed above, my thesis will analyze data from the 19 semi-structured interviews that Penn Loh and myself conducted with key stakeholders in the UCI process—including DSNI staff, City staff, WAG members, and other contributors—from July 2019 to January 2020. Stakeholder interviews were conducted and audio-recorded with IRB approval and lasted from 45 to 90 minutes. Interview questions included:

- How have you been connected to Upham's Corner?
- What role have you played in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process?
- What were your goals and hopes for the Upham's Corner Implementation Process?
- How well is the process achieving its goals and your hopes?
    - What has gone well?
    - What has fallen short or been challenging?
- How did the process shape the request for proposals (RFP)?
- What was the most expected or unexpected in terms of the visions that came through this process?
- How has the process affected relationships among stakeholders?
- What lessons and best practices have you learned from this process?

From these interviews, we gathered the perspectives of various direct stakeholders on theories of change of the process, explanations on why they're involved, personal evaluations of the process, as well as critiques and skepticisms.

2.3.5 Grounded theory

My approach to the data analysis for this thesis is based in grounded theory methodology, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Through the grounded theory approach, the goal is to develop a theory that explains a phenomenon, event, or setting in the social world based on patterns that emerge from the data. The researcher codes, memos, and sorts the data using a constant-comparison method of data analysis in which each new

interpretation or finding uncovered in the data is compared to existing findings, in order to arrive at a comprehensive theoretical understanding.

Through the grounded theory approach to analyzing the data collected from documents, interviews, and participant observation, I was able to arrive at a sense of how power and decision-making authority have been playing out in the UCI process, including participants' understanding of transparency and accountability. This form of analysis also helped me develop an understanding of what stakeholders recognize to be the ways in which the community took ownership of the process, including what impact the community had on how the process was run, how the creative engagements and WAG deliberations have impacted the RFP, and how this has built community control in the process.

3 Literature Review

I am interested in exploring how participation in neighborhood planning processes can be more democratic, build community control, and function as a way of addressing conflicts between people, government, and capital. Considering the literature on progressive planning and activist citizenship, I survey the ways in which community control has been built through democratic participation. I attempt to lay out these theoretical perspectives in order to arrive at a framework for understanding the dynamics at play in the implementation process in Upham's Corner.

In the progressive planning literature, practitioners and urban theorists have explored different formal or institutional approaches to increasing democratic participation in city planning processes. Another category of participatory democracy that emerged from the literature is activist citizenship. In this model of participatory democracy, social justice activists take a greater role in governance through various established modes of citizenship and civic engagement. Activist citizenship involves access to real power, but, because it employs an insider-outsider approach and attempts to engage with the status quo on its terms, is not revolutionary. (This brings me to a third category of participatory democracy from the left—a theoretical approach that I will not touch on as much in this thesis. This category is that of revolutionary approaches to participatory democracy. These usually involve some form of base-building for dual power, and theorize an oppositional relationship between the exploitative forces of the ruling class and the revolutionary forces of oppressed people, maintaining that the two can never be peacefully reconciled.)

Cities are marked by a conflict of interests between capital accumulation and collective well-being. “Democracies experience tremendous conflict among citizens” in determining how to distribute rights (Holston, 2008), which is only further complicated by deepening inequalities under neoliberal capitalism. In cities, neoliberal capitalism has most acutely manifested in the form of “the real estate state, a political formation in which real estate capital has inordinate influence over the shape of our cities, the parameters of our politics and the lives we lead” (Stein, 2019).

Cities are also sites of upheavals that set the tone for social and political change on a mass or cultural scale. As Henri Lefebvre theorized, the people’s right to the city must mean the right to command the process of urbanization itself. There are many examples of urban social movements contesting for power over how cities are shaped, both through direct participation in governance and through building working-class institutions. These movements are based in dispossessed populations, which, having been left behind or rendered surplus, collectively assert their power in society. Through this literature review, I aim to understand the approaches to building self-determination and community control through participatory governance, in order to see how they apply to the UCI process.

3.1 Progressive planners’ perspective on participation, community control

Since the hegemonic ideology that drives the process of urbanization is a capitalist logic of market and state that relies on commodification and bureaucratization (Lefebvre, 1970), planning will be responsive to capital interests if there isn’t organized social movement from below to demand otherwise. It is no wonder that people at the grassroots

are resistant to planners' interventions (Laurian, 2009; Swain & Tait, 2007; Stein, 2019), when they have often resulted in disinvestment or destruction of impoverished and racialized communities (Jennings, 2004; Stein, 2019). From redlining to urban renewal to runaway capital investment in cities resulting in gentrification and displacement, planning has often been done at the expense of working-class communities of color. The phenomenon of gentrification is produced by real-estate interests, and the state is complicit.

This dynamic creates a lack of trust in government and complicates or delays the implementation of progressive governance and policies (Bennett et al., 2013; Curry, 2012; Laurian, 2009). Purcell (2009) describes how, when collaborative governance processes are carried out under neoliberal frameworks, community participants often lack control over critical steps in the process, and so these neoliberal collaborative processes do not alter the status quo. Collaborative processes in urban development do not challenge the priorities of urban growth that shape project processes and outcomes and that serve urban elites (Purcell, 2009; Rosen & Painter, 2019).

Stein (2019) notes how "planners are tasked with the contradictory goals of inflating real estate values while safeguarding residents' best interests." Many planners enter the field with a vision to improve the governance and administration of cities and are committed to the potential of local government as a site of accountability that can deliver in the public interest (Bingham et al., 2005). By vouching for the government's potential to serve the people, progressive planners are willing and poised to explore "the contemporary possibilities for developing genuinely progressive arts of government," as Ferguson (2009)

describes. The tools of government administration, when responsive to the strengths, abilities, and input of communities that the public programs are meant to serve, can be employed to advance the greater democratization of society. Given the power dynamics at play, however, if planners are to contribute to true democratization in planning and governance, they will require mass movements of organized dispossessed people "to remake our cities from the ground up, and gain control over our homes and lives" (Stein, 2019).

3.1.1. Participatory planning

In attempting to account for and deliver on the public interest, planning practitioners have been concerned with participation and have theorized models for improving participation and innovations in governance that have attempted to negotiate between various interests and to address imbalances of power. Planning practice in the 1960s and 70s was connected to social movements like the civil rights, anti-war, student and women's movements, which helped to keep communities in charge and planners somewhat accountable (Kennedy, 2007).

In 1969, Sherry Arnstein released a new typology in urban planning known as the Ladder of Citizen Participation, partly in response to the gap between the desires of local communities and inequitable government programs like urban renewal. Here, Arnstein makes the argument that planning is not responsive to the public's interests when there are insufficient and ineffective avenues for participation. Her theory and framework helped to revolutionize the planning field in a more participatory and democratic direction.

Participatory planning involves the community in planning, negotiates conflicting viewpoints, and allows marginalized groups the opportunity to give input into planning processes and outcomes. Arnstein (1969) notes that "it is the *redistribution of power* that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" [emphasis added]. On the highest rung of the ladder is citizen control, in which "have-nots handle the entire job of planning, policy-making and managing a program" with no intermediaries (Arnstein, 1969). DSNI's formation of its CLT would be considered a form of citizen control according to Arnstein's ladder. DSNI's current partnership with the City of Boston to co-facilitate the Upham's Corner Implementation Process would fall on the "partnership" rung, which is not full citizen control but offers a significant degree of citizen power, and in which power is "redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders" and "planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared" (Arnstein, 1969).

Nearly 45 years after the release of Arnstein's seminal paper on community participation in planning, Bratt and Reardon (2013) built upon Arnstein's model. They recount how there has recently been a "growing dissatisfaction and upheaval resulting from the deregulation of housing and financial markets" which has led to "a precipitous decline in public confidence in the ability of elites to manage either the economy or the delivery of basic government services" (356). This has sparked a reconsideration of the role that residents should play in planning. Bratt and Reardon expanded the model of Arnstein's ladder to

include modes of control that involve nonprofit expertise and having residents take governmental seats – both of which DSNI has employed in the UCI process.

3.1.2 Community control

Fainstein & Fainstein (1976) theorized the community control movements that sprung up in U.S. cities in the 1960s. A prominent and contentious community control effort was to control the public schools in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Ocean Hill-Brownsville (Stivers, 2018), which exposed the racial conflict and lack of representation for minority interests in the government bureaucracy. Community control came to be highly associated with racial militancy and as a program to reflect the interests of Black and brown people. Community control movements critiqued professionalism and called for local self-determination in the administration of public goods and services. Local control was considered a way to address collective powerlessness.

Additionally, community control was seen as a solution for the failure of bureaucratic government. Community representation in decision-making was seen as improving government functions and services. Decentralization of planning and administrative functions through local control offers a greater avenue for democratic participation compared to what is possible through a centralized bureaucracy that's out of touch with communities. A survey of average citizens in 1974 found that "the more negatively citizens evaluate the quality of city services in their neighborhoods, the more strongly they support decentralization and local control" (Fainstein & Fainstein 1976, 280), which indicates these policies are interpreted as resolving poor agency performance. A challenge to implementing

local control of planning is that these initiatives tend to be either repressed or co-opted (Fainstein & Fainstein 1976).

The "race-conflict model" of community control

The community control movements of the 1960s were highly attentive to racial dynamics and stemmed from the civil rights movement. According to Fainstein & Fainstein (1976), the "race-conflict model" of community control contends that "only the winning of power by groups which have been treated discriminatorily can result in a redress of their grievances" (906). Community control in this sense is fundamentally based in reparations, recognizing that redistribution in favor of Black people "will occur at the expense of previously favored groups" (906). Holders of the race-conflict view of community control believe power "must be seized through militant, although not necessarily violent, tactic" and "considers the situation of blacks as resulting from exploitation that can be eliminated only through radical changes in the socioeconomic structure" (906). In the case of the community-controlled school board of Brooklyn's predominantly Black Ocean Hill-Brownsville neighborhood (Stivers, 2018), the reactionary response by the majority-White United Federation of Teachers, rooted in professionalism, to the community's demand for more Black teachers in their neighborhood's schools exemplified the anti-Black racism that the community faced in its efforts to govern their own community and to gain control in decision-making that affected their community.

3.1.3 Creative placemaking vs. aesthetics of belonging

The "placemaking" approach to planning arose in the field out of the theories of Jane Jacobs and others who advocated for cities to be designed for people. By focusing on the pedestrian scale, the placemaking trend aims to create and maintain public spaces that improve underutilized public space in order to make them more appealing to people. As a practice of "using a community's public amenities to make economic progress" (University of Delaware, 2012), however, the concept of placemaking is a form of neoliberalized planning, in which undervalued areas are exploited and 'improved' in order to drive up values and profits and at the expense of the current community and residents. Creative placemaking is a new adaptation of these ideas as of 2010 (National Endowment for the Arts, n.d.), in which arts and culture are at the center of placemaking efforts and artists are involved in community development, planning, and design projects (Smart Growth America, n.d.).

Roberto Bedoya defines creative placemaking as "cultural activities that shape the physical and social characteristics of a place" (Bedoya, 2013). The cultural activities and practices that constitute a place are necessarily impacted by "the politics of belonging and dis-belonging that operate in civil society" (ibid.), but mainstream or hegemonic creative placemaking discourse and practices lack this awareness. Bedoya explains that 'dis-belonging in civil society' manifests as people's struggling for autonomy, dignity, freedom, rights. His critique of creative placemaking discourse is that it often overlooks or avoids "addressing social and racial injustices at work in society and how they intersect with Creative Placemaking projects" (ibid.). Bedoya emphasizes that creative placemaking needs to be more rooted in spatial justice. Going beyond a meaning of "place" as "manifest in the

built environment, for example, artists' live-work spaces, cultural districts, spatial landscapes" (ibid.), creative placemaking focused in spatial justice de-centers place from the built environment and centers the emotional and social concept of place, which is grounded in the sense of belonging. Bedoya explains that:

> "Creative Placemaking that is tied to the allure of speculation culture and its economic thinking of 'build it and they will come' is suffocating and unethical, and supports a politics of dis-belonging employed to manufacture a 'place.' Creative Placemaking and its aesthetics of belonging contribute to and shape our person, the rights and duties of individuals crucial to a healthy democracy that animate the commons. It should also animate Creative Placemaking not as a development strategy but as a series of actions that build spatial justice, healthy communities, and sites of imaginations."

As a critical response to creative placemaking, the "aesthetics of belonging" is the sense of place that happens wherever people convene in neighborhoods. It is the process through which people reproduce their cultures and thus assert their place in the world—a struggle in its own right amid the assimilating culture of neoliberal phenomena such as gentrification. The "aesthetics of belonging" emphasizes "the power of art to imagine our plurality," which advances participatory democracy (Lobenstine, 2014). Bedoya developed his theories on creative placemaking, "civic self-esteem," and the politics of cultural belonging by using arts practices in organizing and community development.

3.1.4 Communicative action and collaborative rationality

The planning literature and practice is steeped in Habermas's democratic theory of communicative rationality (1981). Communicative action poses that through language, communication, and argumentation, people are best suited to make the most rational

decisions to address complex problems. This theory has been used within planning to promote greater democracy in the administration of government from the public.

A prominent discussion of Habermas's ideas is set forth by Innes & Booher (2010). The authors describe how a process is collaboratively rational to the extent that representatives from all affected interests jointly engage in face-to-face dialogue, bringing their various perspectives to the table to deliberate together on the problems they face. All participants must be fully informed, able to express their views, and be listened to, whether they are powerful or not. Techniques must be used to assure mutual legitimacy, comprehensibility, sincerity, and accuracy. The goal of the process is to negotiate conflicting interests in complex, changing conditions to reach consensus on a mutually beneficial decision. This process builds stakeholders' governance capacity and resilience.

3.1.5 Collaborative governance

Innes & Booher (2010) contrast emergent collaborative governance practices and institutions with traditional and dominant forms of government. Collaborative governance is more creative and nimble, flexible and adaptable, sustainable and resilient. Collaborations allowed quicker response to changing conditions and proved better able to cope with uncertainty. Compared to traditional governance, collaborative governance is more bottom-up, generative, distributed, nonlinear, and with various and changing goals.

Collaborative governance arose from many local experiments where stakeholders come together with public agencies in a forum to engage in consensus-driven decision-making. To Ansell & Gash (2007), collaborative governance developed as an alternative both

to failures in government accountability and to "the adversarialism of interest group pluralism" (544). From their meta-analysis of 137 case studies, Ansell & Gash (2007) determine that collaborative governance is characterized by being a collective decision-making process that's initiated by public institutions, that includes non-state actors who are directly engaged in decision-making, where decisions are made by consensus.

Starting conditions can influence the collaboration (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Rosen & Painter, 2019). Variables that determine whether an experiment in collaborative governance will be successful include stakeholders' incentives to collaborate and any prior resource or power imbalances or histories of conflict or cooperation between groups of stakeholders.

Collaborative governance is iterative and cyclical rather than linear. This connects back to the idea that the starting conditions impact the success of the collaboration: "feedbacks from early collaboration can positively or negatively influence further collaboration" (Ansell & Gash 2007, p. 558). The components of a collaborative governance process include face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, participants' commitment to the process (where stakeholders mutually recognize their interdependence), shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes (i.e., small wins along the way).

3.1.6 Co-production

Going even further beyond Arnstein's ladder and the role of planners in supporting citizen control is the idea of co-production (Rosen & Painter, 2019; Watson, 2014; Ostrom, 1996; Boyle et al., 2013). Theorists like Rosen & Painter (2019) acknowledge how Arnstein's

conception of community control is constrained in that it does not "confront the political and economic power relationships that limit … community influence over outcomes" (335).

Ostrom (1996) uses economics to explain how using a combination of inputs from a government agency and from citizens can create synergy that improves the production and output of a good or service, rather than if there were a reliance on only public officials and government agencies to provide the inputs. The idea is that citizens are in a position, through their familiarity with their neighborhoods and communities, to provide unique information and resources to be able to shape and improve the production of public goods and public service provision (Rosen & Painter 2019). Rather than viewing citizens as passive clients or consumers to goods and services produced and delivered by a government agency, co-production "re-envisions and legitimizes citizens as active participants and knowledge holders who should influence service and goods provision throughout decision making and service delivery" (Rosen & Painter 2019, p. 337).

Co-production in planning is "a co-constructed process … to remove the power differences that can undermine community control, … to transform processes and outcomes toward more equitable power and resource distributions" (Rosen & Painter 2019, 336). Co-production removes these barriers to community power by going beyond simply engaging new people to "shifting the regional structure of representation" by:

> "inviting community representatives to sit at the leadership table; recognizing and seeking to confront the differential barriers for immigrants, including institutional disconnectedness; reshaping the initiative's organizing areas and issue prioritization in response to residents' needs; intervening in ways that attempt to stabilize conditions for residents while working toward change at scale" (Rosen & Painter 2019, 344).

Co-production enables shared power by constantly recognizing power imbalances and building capacity and power for community participants.

3.1.7 Transformative community planning

Kennedy (2007) agrees that resident power is critical for participation and for community development, stating that "genuine community development combines material development with the development of people, increasing a community's capacity for taking control of its own development" (25). Kennedy (2007) refers to DSNI and to the formation of the DNI community land trust as an example of transformative community planning, as defined by how "the successful redistribution of resources follows redistribution of control over those resources." The redistribution of power and control from elites and from the state to the community and to residents is an essential aspect of transformative community planning.

Governments and planners have passed, assessed, and improved mandates for citizen involvement (Brody et al., 2003). Scholars have elaborated on the parameters of collaborative public management, including "who participates, how participants communicate with one another and make decisions together, and how discussions are linked with policy or public action" (Fung, 2006). Other practitioners emphasize that public ownership can enhance democratic participation (Cumbers & McMaster, 2012).

Over time, however, meaningful participation in planning has stagnated, with many planning initiatives being participatory in name only, mandating community input but not doing sufficient outreach or engagement to bring in the community. Kennedy (2007)

emphasizes how participation has come to ignore power disparities and has become “a smokescreen behind which real decisions are made by those who always made the decisions.” Blakeley (2010) echoes this by pointing out how “the spread of participatory practices as an integral element of new modes of governance does not necessarily lead to citizen empowerment” and how “the power of the state is not necessarily diminished despite the emerging plurality of actors involved in governance” (130).

3.1.8 Empowered deliberative democracy

Democratic theorist Fung and sociologist Wright (2001) developed a progressive institutional reform strategy, known as empowered deliberative democracy (EDD), under the umbrella of collaborative governance. This form of governance relies on the participation and capacities of ordinary people; institutes collective, reason-based deliberation and decision-making; and aims to tie discussion to action.

EDD has a practical orientation rather than concern for abstract questions, that is, applying deliberation to resolving concrete matters such as street paving. Public decision-making authority is decentralized to empowered local units. EDD is based in bottom-up participation and civil life that is nongovernmentally organized. “Formal linkages of responsibility, resource distribution, and communication” are created among these empowered local units and to connect these units to centralized authorities. Solutions to problems are developed through deliberation. EDD involves imagining democratic institutions that are more “participatory and effective than the familiar configuration of political representation and bureaucratic administration.” New institutions are generated to

carry out these decentralized and deliberative problem-solving efforts, “rather than leaving them as informal or voluntary affairs.”

3.2 Activist-Citizen and critical approaches to building community control through participation

Bennett et al. (2013) describe how even as people are skeptical of politicians and of government and doubt the efficacy of the political process, they still choose to face the ambiguity and participate in politics in order to bring about change. By “disavowing the political,” people generate new practices of engagement and “define and reinforce their ideas of what politics ought not to be” (543).

Along with the progressive planner’s perspective on this process, there is also the perspective of a particular kind of political subject. The activist-citizen, a concept I’ve modified from Baiocchi (2005), is a political subject who engages in activism and organizing but also engages and collaborates with government or political institutions as part of their strategy. The activist-citizen reconciles formal civic engagement with activism. This illustrates Baiocchi’s idea of political transformation as being carried out through contestation in the realm of public decision-making institutions—i.e., as being achieved through a cooperative strategy (citizenship) rather than a combative strategy (protest and direct action).

Baiocchi describes “state-civil society regimes” as the stable pattern of state-civil society interactions in any given political epoch. The defining feature of this pattern is how societal demands are recognized, including all the ways that citizens interact with the state and that the state might limit or enable activities in civil society. The regime is defined by how

these interactions constitute a pattern of recognition of societal demands. This concept is critical to understanding why some conditions lead to community working with government being an effective strategy for justice, while in other cases there is greater co-optation by neoliberal power-bearing institutions. This framing is echoed by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (Akuno & Nangwaya, 2017), regarding the political patterns of society and the role of people's popular assemblies within each political epoch: understanding the hegemonic political system is key to determining the strategy from below that will best advance democratic community control.

Distinctive, stable regimes create specific logics for civic engagement that encourage or discourage particular kinds of practices in civil society. A regime also establishes a political logic that becomes the accepted way of resolving conflict between actors in society. The structured "turns" of state-society interactions at each round reflect the balance of power and legacies of previous turns. While this limits some possibilities, Baiocchi also contends, more hopefully, that it also opens up others.

Part of what ensures that a more cooperative strategy between activists and the state is truly transformative and brings about true social justice is if the administrative machinery of government is reconstituted to be more responsive to community demands, i.e., that accountability mechanisms are codified into policy and enforced by organized social movements. Trust in government comes from activist communities putting pressure on government, and, with the assurance that government will be responsive because there are mechanisms in place to ensure accountability, promises are kept due to constant vigilance by

activists and citizens. The component of organized social movements enforcing accountability is how the strategy of communities working with government can be successful for societal transformation. In this sort of scenario, the "administrative machinery" of government is reorganized to be responsive, by concretely realizing its discourse of equality and social justice by redistributing wealth, power and control to communities (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2015). Ultimately, the distinction between this approach and one that leads to co-optation is that the changes to societal organization are not just cultural, but material (Mutnick, 2006). Critical practitioners must make the explicit connection between civic participation and material redistribution for social justice, lest the attempts at transformative democratization of control of planning and development become co-opted and are merely symbolic without attendant material changes.

Materialist theories of power recognize how the property-owning class exploits the working class through the wage-labor relationship, and particularly how this subjugation of people is socially constructed and predicated upon the "unequal differentiation of human value" based on various forms of racial oppression, including slavery, colonization, and imperialism (Melamed, 2006). In order for radical approaches from below, like the solidarity economy, not to be co-opted by the hegemonic neoliberal project, grassroots activists and organizers must remain true to their principles of collective power, and leftist institutional reforms must "act as training-grounds for democracy" (Milburn & Russell, 2019, pp. 20). To this end, working-class movements develop and sustain political subjectivities in order to organize institutions that can contest the power of the state.

3.2.1 Popular education – developing political subjects

Popular education is another framing of a critical perspective on democratic and grassroots processes. Critical pedagogy is "the radicalization of masses of people" through consciousness-raising (Mutnick, 2006). For democratic processes to be transformational, the engagement must involve political education, so that residents are better informed in order to participate, and, most importantly, more aware of how their role and input in the process is politically situated, so that their input is influential on the process. The Theatre of the Oppressed, influenced by Paulo Freire's ideas, is a theatrical form of political strategy development, through which "spect-actors" are able to explore ways of transforming their realities through dialogue and deliberation with other spect-actors. These practices of consciousness-building are critical for activists and residents to contest for power and win material changes for their communities. Further, local movements for community control, self-determination, and democratic governance are exercises in prefigurative politics. The ways of relating that we practice through our political action can usher in the world we envision.

3.2.2 The commons and solidarity economy

Democratic, collective ownership and governance of common goods is one approach for resolving the "ongoing struggles over who gets to shape the qualities of urban life" (Harvey, 2012, pp. xii). City-making must be democratic, with particular influence and control by communities most exploited by the capitalist system. "Solidarity economy is grounded in collective practices that express the principle of solidarity" (Kawano, 2018) which includes

cooperation, mutualism, and sharing. By commoning the practice of city-making, more people will be able to control and shape our cities. Collective ownership of land and community control of development through community land trusts, an institution of the solidarity economy, build real collective power to address the issues that affect them. Guided by the imperative of sharing rather than of profit-making, solidarity economy institutions are democratically run and, as such, aim to act in the best interest of the community, which includes not displacing people from their neighborhoods who want to live there.

Participatory democracy is a key principle of the solidarity economy. Making decision-making as local and direct as possible helps people participate, take action, and implement solutions in their communities. As Stein (2019) expressed in regard to the anti-democratic nature of market-based development: “Until land is socially controlled, those who possess property, capital and access to power will shape planning priorities.” Collective control of land ensures that planning and development is participatory and democratic.

3.2.3 Collaborating with government: co-production as solidarity economy

While some solidarity economy initiatives are separatist, other proponents of SE believe in the need to collaborate with government. This view holds that public institutions must invest their resources to support community-led solidarity economies and help bring them to scale.

In some cases, such as the original participatory budgeting process in Porto Alegre (the subject of Baiocchi’s 2005 case study), experimental and radical processes of participatory democracy are carried out under a particularly favorable local government,

such as the Worker's Party administration in Brazil shortly after the country's return to democracy. In New York City, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives J. Phillip Thompson is supporting small businesses and workforce development through investment in worker-owned cooperatives, which are hard-pressed to find financing from the private sector.

The Preston model is another notable example of the role local government can play in "catalyzing locally-driven economic revitalization and transforming patterns of ownership towards democratic alternatives" (Democracy Collaborative, 2020). Rather than dealing with deindustrialization by attracting outside investment that would bring speculation to the town, Preston engaged in "horizontal development" by developing a community wealth building program that would ensure money did not leak out of the local economy but instead invested in local businesses (University of Orange & ds4si, 2015), particularly worker-owned cooperatives. This model has been replicated in Cleveland, Ohio through the Evergreen Cooperatives established by the Democracy Collaborative.

3.2.4 The Partner State vs. the Activist State

Theorists of the commons and of peer-to-peer networks have deliberated about the role of the state in advancing the commons and citizen-led political platforms. They have developed the concept of the Partner State, which acts in the service of civil society—in contrast to the Market State, which is the arbiter of the market interests, and the Welfare State, which provides social/public health provisions and infrastructure management but is paternalistic and undemocratic, not to mention eroding under neoliberal privatization (Bauwens, 2009; Troncoso & Utratel, 2017). The enabling role of the state in this formation

promotes participatory politics and open access to the economy: “ultimately, the Partner State acts primarily as an administrative support for the coordination of policies decided upon by institutions of civil society on the basis of cooperative, direct democracy … central to this process is the democratization of the state itself” (Restakis, 2016, pp. 11).

According to Biehl (2004) who coined the term, the “activist state” is similarly a post-welfare development in the role of the state. During the AIDS epidemic in Brazil, grassroots and state interventions were aligned, and activists representing socially vulnerable groups “developed a strong public voice in the dispute over access to ever-more scarce public … resources” and eventually “left behind antagonism to the state” in order to have their needs addressed. Biehl criticizes the activist state, however, as meeting poor people’s needs only insofar as this helps to restructure and deepen the state’s relationship to the market, while doing nothing to address the root causes of people’s misery and marginality.

3.2.5 Commons-public partnership

Within the activist-citizen toolkit of democratic governance theory is also the budding idea in solidarity economy and community wealth building circles of a new institutional framework: the public-commons partnership (Milburn & Russell, 2019). Another solidarity-economy researcher Pat Conaty has dialecticized the concept, challenging and flipping the terminology to “commons-public” partnership, to emphasize that “the commons must precede the state” (P2P Foundation Wiki, n.d.).

Upending conventional understandings of democratic control that keep the state as the locus of governance, a commons-public partnership is a model of “joint ownership and

governance, in which the two principal parties are a state agent … and a Common Association," in which any surplus value produced through the joint enterprise are under democratic control and reinvested towards the partnership's operational goals (Milburn & Russell, 2019, pp. 13). Commons-public partnerships "can help address challenges of political risk and economic cost, enabling more innovative and 'risky' initiatives" from government and "setting in motion a self-expanding circuit of radical democratic self-governance" (Milburn & Russell, 2019, pp. 3).

3.2.2 Taking over government

Other than working with government to achieve solutions and community control, in some cases grassroots activists contest the power of government by running for office and gaining political power. In these examples, activists use political office as a power-building tool and become the state as a strategy for building power for their communities.

New municipalism

One example of grassroots activists employing the strategy of gaining direct political power is of the two Lumumba mayoral administrations in Jackson, Mississippi (2013-14, 2017-present). One organizer with Cooperation Jackson recognizes that running for office should be used as a strategy only insofar as it carries out the needs of a broader, grassroots movement for social and material change. If not based on the priorities of movement strategy, committing to staying in political office can be a trap, because then activists-turned-politicians are caught making compromises in this role, becoming alienated from their own communities.

Another example of activists taking over government is the rise of Spanish Municipalism (2014-present). This wave of decentralized and redistributed governance across local governments in Spain has been known as the "revolution against representation" —a strategy to take over city government that came out of the anti-austerity *indignados* movement, known as the Spanish precursor to the Occupy movement. In Barcelona, the militant anti-foreclosure movement of people affected by mortgages (PAH) faced political repression and decided, as a movement, on pursuing the strategy of taking over local government with a citizen-organized platform. The citizen platform, Barcelona en Comú, was crafted through the deep engagement of significant portions of the public, won the mayorship, and implemented many direct changes in local governance, including institutionalizing neighborhoods councils for direct democracy in policy development.

As municipalist researchers Roth & Baird (2017) describe, "municipalism understands that the capacity for institutional action depends on strong, organized movements in the streets that push elected leaders." One of the activists from the movement elected to city government, First Deputy Mayor of Barcelona (2015-2019) Gerardo Pisarello, once said that for every activist in government there needs to be a thousand more in the streets. Even though Barcelona en Comú took over the administration of city government, "the movement welcomes pressure from outside the institutions and seeks to open up genuinely democratic decision-making mechanisms within them" (Roth & Baird, 2017). This authentically democratic and participatory governance brings "the energy of the squares into decision-making spaces" (Roth & Baird, 2017).

Feminization of politics

Municipalist projects like Barcelona en Comú uphold as one of their key principles the feminization of politics. Unlike liberalism's representative identity politics of diversity and inclusion, the feminization of politics does not aim merely to have more women in political office, but to change and feminize the way politics is done. It is not enough to have better representation of people previously under-represented, but democratic community control requires changing politics so that these voices and perspectives are more intrinsically included in governance. The emphasis of governance and of process is on "the small, the relational, the everyday" (Roth & Baird, 2017). It is through this reorientation that political actors can change the underlying dynamics of the system and construct emancipatory alternatives. If the transformative goal of carrying out more participatory forms of governance is to deepen democracy and to empower people, then promoting "feminine" ways of doing politics—through collaboration, dialogue, horizontality—will allow disadvantaged groups to have greater control over decision-making that impacts their material conditions.

Because of the complexity of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, many frameworks and perspectives can be applied to understand it. There are useful takeaways from the literature on democratic approaches to planning on how government officials have designed and implemented processes to allow for greater community participation, deliberation, and influence in decision-making. The literature on more activist approaches to democratic decision-making help shed light on the implications of the inside-outside model that DSNI is taking with the UCI process.

4 Case Context & History

4.1 Background

Several planning processes, from both the City side and the community side, laid the foundation for the Upham's Corner Implementation Process. Examining their findings and reports will help to tell both how the City decided on, developed, and set the process in motion, and how DSNI and community partners had been envisioning change and organizing the neighborhood. This exercise will provide important context to frame the UCI process and to make sense of its rationale.

In order to further contextualize the meaning of each of these threads in Upham's Corner leading up to the process, I will take an even greater step back to explain the significance of DSNI's legacy, in juxtaposition to the history of inequality in the City of Boston's urban planning and development. I will go on to describe the original partnership forged by DSNI with the City to realize bottom-up planning, and how this relationship between DSNI and the City has since continued and changed.

Upon providing this historical framing, I can then give an account and analysis in Chapters 5 and 6 of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process: the partnership between DSNI and the City, how DSNI has explored this opportunity to gain authority in an official planning process as a tool to advance community control, whether and how DSNI has been able to assert a grassroots vision for this process and for the neighborhood's redevelopment, how DSNI's involvement has impacted the course of the process, and the extent to which it has helped to herald a new precedent for community-based planning in the City.

4.2 Upham's Corner history and demographics

The City-produced Upham's Corner Station Area Plan (2014) and Imagine Boston 2030 (2017), from which I will be drawing the demographic statistics in this section, lay out a history and profile of the neighborhood. Upham's Corner's historic main street district was a thriving commercial center for most of the 19th and early 20th centuries, beginning when Amos Upham opened a dry goods store on the corner of Dudley Street and Columbia Road in 1804. At its peak, Upham's Corner was the second largest shopping district in the City of Boston. The neighborhood is home to the Strand Theatre, which opened the night that WWI ended in 1918, and originally served as a movie and vaudeville house. It capitalized on the bustling activity in Upham's Corner and added a cultural attraction to this burgeoning commercial center. After going through a period of decline, the Strand was revived by a neighborhood group in the 1970s and has been City-owned since 1979.

The neighborhood of Upham's Corner has a population of about 30,000 (Barringer, 2017). According to demographic data from the Upham's Corner Station Area Plan, Upham's Corner is racially and ethnically diverse, reflecting the following distributions: Black (39%), Latino (26%), White (10%), Asian (3%), and other (22%). Many residents are immigrants from Cape Verde and Haiti.

According to the Upham's Corner Station Area Plan, the Upham's Corner population has lower earnings and rates of economic opportunity than the City of Boston overall. In terms of educational attainment, 62% of the Upham's Corner adult population has no more

than a high school education, compared to 49% for Boston. There is also a disparity in median household income, with Upham's Corner at $34,659 compared to the City of Boston at $50,684. The lower median income contributes to the number of residents who are severely rent-burdened, which is when at least half of the household income is spent on rent. Upham's Corner has 37% of its households that are severely rent-burdened, compared to 27% in the City of Boston. Upham's Corner has about 1,500 affordable (mostly rental) housing units. The neighborhood also includes significant amounts of vacant properties.

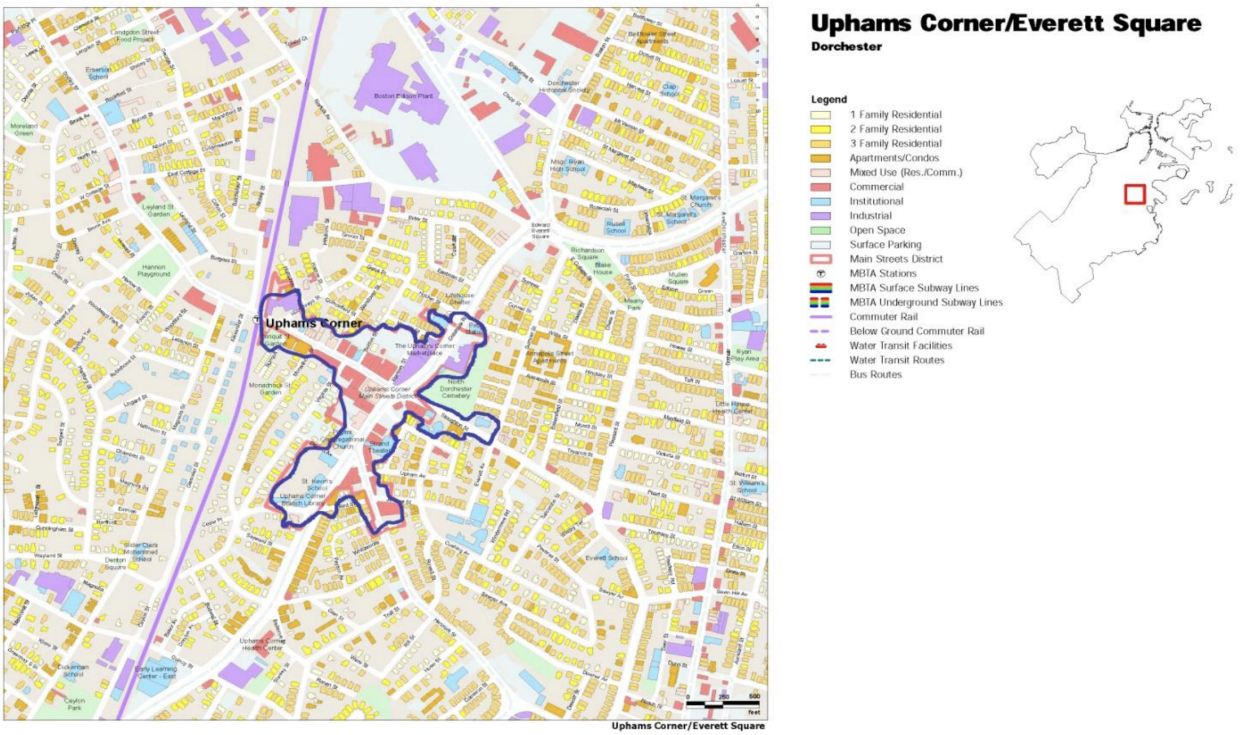

Figure 2: Map of land uses in Upham's Corner (Historic Boston Incorporated, 2015)

4.3 DSNI's formative history of community organizing and legacy of community-controlled development (1984-2013)[1]

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative was founded on October 15, 1984, at a time when Boston's low-income, racialized neighborhoods were facing the consequences of decades of deep and violent disinvestment through an economic system that reproduces poverty and discriminatory government policy, private financing, and urban development. In the 1950s, there was redlining, white flight from the inner city, and segregated suburbanization. In the 1960s, cities used eminent domain to demolish "slums" for urban renewal and to bring investment and tax revenue to the city, seemingly without regard for destroyed neighborhoods and displaced communities. In the 1970s, absentee landowners burned depreciated private property as speculation increased over impending redevelopment. This demolition resulted in more than 1,300 vacant lots in the Dudley area, which became sites for illegal dumping, literally trashing the neighborhood.

DSNI "forged a new sense of neighborhood identity and power" through grassroots organizing (4). DSNI's formative campaign, "Don't Dump On Us," aimed to clean up the vacant lots, with the longer-term objective of "transform[ing] people's thinking—from seeing the lots as health-threatening eyesores to seeing them as potential spaces for homes, businesses, community services, parks, and playgrounds" (70). With this new vision of their worth, the neighborhood came together to develop a plan for the lots that directly reflected neighborhood priorities and consensus-building. Community participation was critical to the

[1] All quotes in this section come from the 1999 book *Streets of Hope: The Rise and Fall of an Urban Neighborhood* by Peter Medoff and Holly Sklar.

plan, so that residents would “become informed decision-makers with the staying power and resources to move from decision-making to implementation” (97). “Instead of struggling to influence a process driven by city government” or waiting for the City to deliver neighborhood improvements that met the community’s needs, which would have come at the displacement of current residents, Dudley residents created their own bottom-up redevelopment plan, with the central goal of development without displacement, “and built an unprecedented partnership with the city to implement” the residents’ vision (4).

The neighborhood’s early fights were based in direct action, using various confrontational tactics to put pressure on city government to respond to intolerable conditions. These victories demonstrated “residents’ ability to achieve immediate action from a city government that had for so long not represented them” which “laid the foundation for achieving longer-range, more difficult goals” (72-73). Their successes in prompting a response from city government raised DSNI members’ “expectations of government and confidence in direct action” (83). Since the city was also commended for its responsiveness to the neighborhood, “DSNI showed that turning up the heat on city government can bring mutually beneficial light” (85).

DSNI is a community-controlled organization, with its governance (via its board) structured to ensure a resident majority. Dudley was then, and continues to be, a diverse community, and the board seats represent the range of racial and ethnic diversity, as well as representing neighborhood businesses and nonprofits. At DSNI’s first community-wide meeting, residents recognized that land is power, and expressed “the need for the

community to gain control of the land in order to stop outside developers from transforming the land in ways that would be unresponsive to the needs of the community" (53). In order to assemble large tracts of vacant land for development, DSNI strategically won the authority of eminent domain to gain control of the privately owned vacant lots in the target area, which would "remove land from speculators who were holding it simply for the purpose of making a future profit at the expense of Dudley residents" (126). The community gained this unprecedented right by carrying out a political strategy to build a broad base of support among top officials in the mayoral administration, including Mayor Flynn himself, in order to have leverage over the BRA board, who would have the final say and who would not otherwise have "give[n] up that kind of authority to a low-income community group" (119).

The public and private land that DSNI acquired through city land disposition and through eminent domain authority is owned by its community land trust (CLT), Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI). The CLT model ensures that, while the buildings on the land can be bought and sold, the community will always own the land. The land is controlled by the CLT's membership, who vote to determine its policies. The governance structure of CLTs represent and balance various public interests. Residents who live on the CLT and in its surrounding community make up the majority of the governing board, so that the community and local residents retain control in decision-making for the land trust.

Community ownership of land through the CLT decommodifies the land, by separating ownership of the land from ownership of housing (Right to the City Alliance, 2018), so that its value is not determined by the market. CLTs help both to control speculation and

to prevent the displacement of Dudley residents, ensuring that any improvements built upon the land, such as housing or commercial developments, remain affordable in perpetuity. These limits on the "increases of land and housing values over time … help stabilize communities against speculative land development" (Right to the City Alliance, 2018, pp. 29), resulting in low-income residents rarely being displaced from their neighborhoods. The ways through which "DSNI ensured that residents, and not the market, would drive development are the participatory community planning process, eminent domain, and the Community Land Trust" (159).

DSNI forging a partnership with the City to implement the neighborhood's plan was unique under the traditional context of urban planning, in which "'experts' at City Hall … run the show with strong input from bankers and private developers and lesser input, if any, from community residents" (89). The potential for co-optation of the neighborhood's plan or "a potentially suffocating partnership on the city's terms" was not lost on DSNI (90), for they recognized that "even a liberal administration which invites neighborhood participation does not want to give up control to low-income residents and community organizations" (89-90). The organization's commitment to neighborhood empowerment enabled the DSNI to stand their ground in discussions with the City, so that the City would cooperate in DSNI's own plan. DSNI's approach "relied on organizing a strong enough organization to maintain control while collaborating with city government" (95).

This partnership was not without its challenges. Wanting to move the housing production process more quickly than DSNI did, "city officials threatened to dissolve the

partnership" with DSNI, who "would not sacrifice the community consensus process to speed up production" (152). For the City, it was an issue of rebuilding housing—for DSNI, it was about rebuilding the community, "knowing that in the long run the products will be more and better if the process is empowering" (249). Another potential challenge was the issue of changes within the City and of transferring the community's vision, with City staff moving on and off a project. The reason for pursuing eminent domain as a strategy is that it would "provide long-term land control, through ownership, that could survive changes in city policies and provide DSNI with leverage in dealing with future administrations" (119).

The City took a risk in agreeing to DSNI's request that the City delegate its eminent domain authority to such a great extent. In some ways the City was backed into a corner, because it could not deny that it had up until then failed to serve the neighborhood. The community's plan "was clearly not the plan the city would have developed if it had been in charge," but the City decided to take a risk on DSNI because "the city recognized DSNI … as the representative voice of Dudley" (112). The momentum building in the neighborhood made DSNI's community-controlled plan an attractive initiative for the Mayor to associate himself with. DSNI's vision gave the organization legitimacy in the eyes of the City. It provided a trustworthy blueprint for which the City could feel comfortable siding with the people in improving their neighborhood. Mayor Flynn described the City partnership with DSNI as a win-win situation, in which a neighborhood organization worked "closely and cooperatively with city government" rather than City Hall being divided against the people (144). A BRA board member later reflected that DSNI "[had] done much more than the city ever did" (154).

Nonetheless, knowing that "they were setting a local and national precedent by granting eminent domain to DSNI … the city did not want the door opened too widely" (142).

While also taking a risk in inviting the City to participate in the neighborhood's process, which "would assure the city some degree of influence over a planning process that was clearly going forward with or without it" (90), DSNI was experimenting with "a new kind of partnership between a community group and city government … marked not by co-optation of the community group, but by often difficult yet fruitful collaboration between partners with compatible goals but different agendas" (90). Because of DSNI's strong and organized community base, "the city's cooperation in the DSNI planning process didn't stop DSNI from protesting intolerable neighborhood conditions" or from being resolute on their goals of neighborhood control (96). DSNI took a chance on the City as an opportunity to accomplish their agenda.

For the organization to become renowned, as it is today, for the neighborhood power and community control it's built, DSNI started off only as "people working together to develop a master plan and rebuild the neighborhood for the long run" (150). Organizing and community-controlled neighborhood planning and development was the vehicle through which DSNI rebuilt the community. Neighborhood residents went from being "so disconnected from themselves because [they'd] been so discounted for so long" to building a sense of stewardship in recognizing their power and responsibility in being caretakers of the neighborhood (184). Residents grew trust in themselves, in their community, and in DSNI because they "[saw] themselves reflected here" (249). This early sense of identity and

belonging was further instilled and memorialized through the arts. In DSNI's planning process, "residents were encouraged to 'story-tell,' illustrating their concerns and suggesting solutions with real stories from their own experience" (102). DSNI's Declaration of Community Rights expressed the community's "right to celebrate the vibrant cultural diversity of the neighborhood through all artistic forms of expression" (202). DSNI's Youth Committee created and painted the "Unity Through Diversity" mural in the neighborhood to celebrate the strength the community was able to achieve through its diversity.

DSNI's formative successes offer a variety of lessons for community development and empowerment. Most notably, DSNI's experience offers the lesson that "the right model for any community can only emerge from a community process" and "cannot and should not be imported or imposed" (254). DSNI has since continued to grow and to face "an enormous amount of work yet to do" and "many challenges to overcome" (254). DSNI is now expanding its work into its secondary area, which includes Upham's Corner.

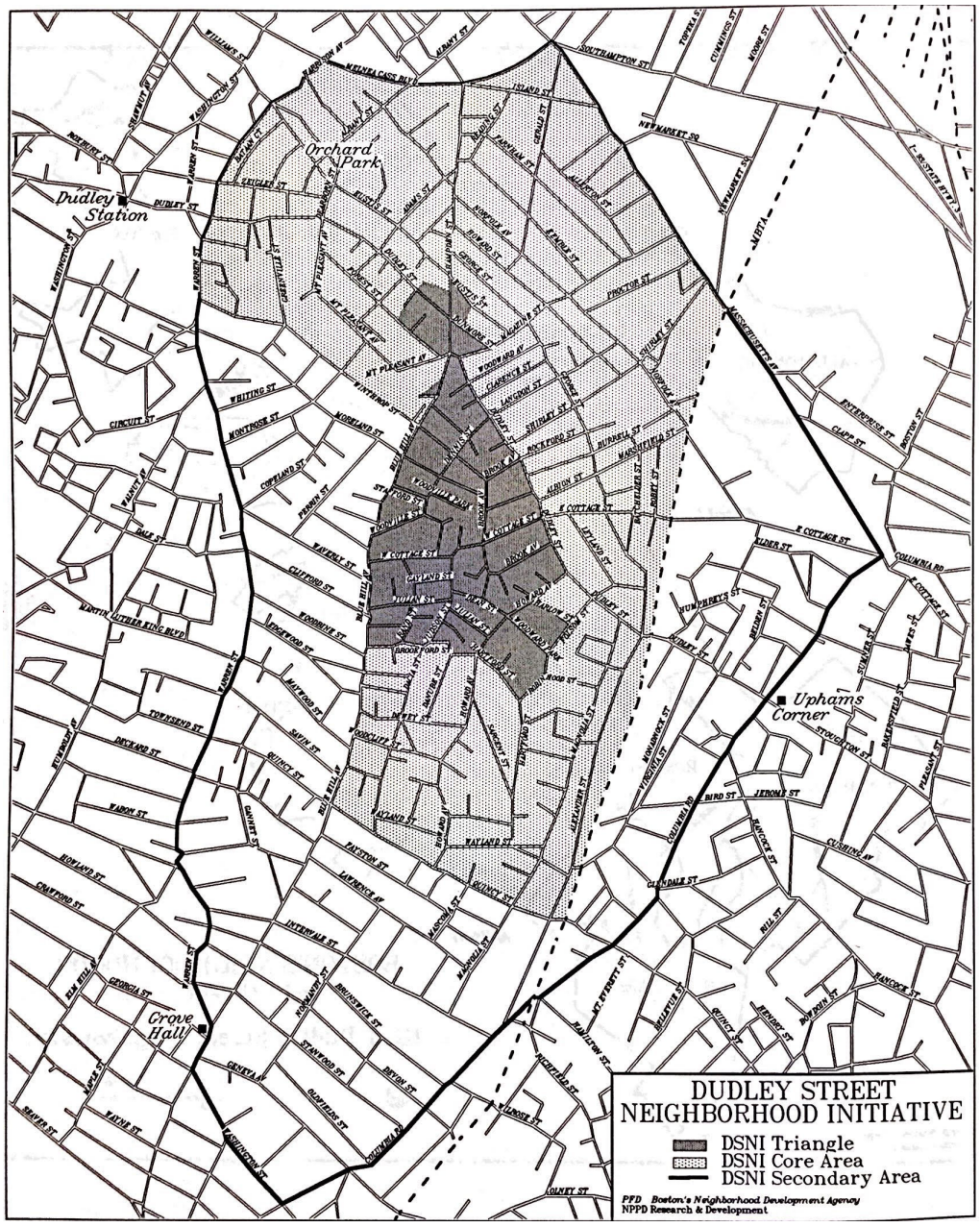

Figure 3: DSNI Triangle, Core Area, and Secondary Area (Medoff & Sklar, 1994)

One of the ways DSNI has exercised its accumulated power with the City and with developers is through its Sustainable Development Committee, which reviews neighborhood development proposals for City land in DSNI's core area to ensure they align with community priorities. Entities coming into the neighborhood quickly learn that DSNI has a high degree of control over decisions made there. For example, when the Salvation Army approached the

City of Boston around 2005 to build a community center (now known as the Kroc Center), and Mayor Menino suggested it be located in DSNI's secondary area of Upham's Corner, the charity's construction team was expected to operate under the SDC's hiring standards, which were higher than the City's, in order for the project to go through (DSNI, 2012). DSNI held "more than 150 community input and 'design studio' meetings meant to ensure that the Kroc Center reflects the needs and values of the neighborhood" (Tarantino, 2010). This milestone of building the community center, which was envisioned in the original Dudley neighborhood plan—while maximizing resident, minority and female inclusion in the construction project—was accomplished under the leadership of then DSNI Executive Director John Barros.

John Barros was involved with DSNI since he was a teenager. Young Barros advocated for DSNI's board to include youth, and he was the first young person to serve on the board. At the age of 25 in 1999, Barros joined DSNI staff as the organization's Executive Director, serving in this position for 13 years. Barros left the position to run for Mayor of Boston in 2013. While his Mayoral campaign did not succeed, Mayor Marty Walsh appointed him to the position of Chief of Economic Development in his administration because Barros had supported him in the runoff election. Barros now oversees the Upham's Corner Implementation Process at the Mayor's Office of Economic Development.

4.4 How did the UCI process emerge? (2004, 2012-2017)

In the years leading up to the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, the City conducted or commissioned several planning processes in Upham's Corner. Additionally,

DSNI and its partners were running their own community-based arts organizing processes in the neighborhood. The UCI process is centered around arts and culture and employs a comprehensive and collaborative public investment strategy. Its themes and priorities emerged through these previous neighborhood planning initiatives, which included: a task force to figure out long-term sustainability of the Strand Theatre; transit-oriented economic development studies along the Fairmount line and community-based initiatives to reimagine these calls for creative placemaking; and an innovation district committee, an unprecedented citywide cultural plan, and a comprehensive city plan that all advanced the idea of developing arts/innovation districts in Boston neighborhoods and that all coalesced around Upham's Corner as the pilot neighborhood.

Using the reports and findings from these processes, I provide an account of how the idea for redeveloping Upham's Corner into an arts and innovation district without displacement came about, how it changed over time, and how different actors impacted the original vision. This selection is not a comprehensive inventory of all planning activity but represents much of the work that stakeholders in the current process still reference. Note that many of these processes overlap in time.

Date	Planning Process
March to July 2004	Mayor Menino formed the Task Force on the Future of the Strand Theatre, which convened and produced a report.
February 2012 to 2015	The Boston Redevelopment Authority (now the Boston Planning and Development Agency) began its three-year study, the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative.
July 2012	A collaboration of nine organizations representing artists, merchants, and residents launched the creative placemaking initiative, Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot.
April 2014	The Upham's Corner Station Area Plan was released, as part of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative.
2014	The Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot expanded into the Fairmount Cultural Corridor, led by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. The Design Studio for Social Intervention produced "'Do You See Yourself in Upham's Corner?': A Case Study of Belonging, Dis-Belonging, and the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Initiative."
Summer 2014 to September 2015	Mayor Walsh's administration forms the Neighborhood Innovation District Committee, which convened and produced a report outlining the "Dudley Square-Upham's Corner Corridor Neighborhood Innovation District Plan."
April 2015 to June 2016	The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture (established under Mayor Walsh's administration), carried out and released Boston Creates, the City of Boston's first cultural planning process.
July 2017	The City of Boston released Imagine Boston 2030, its first comprehensive plan in over fifty years.

Table 2: Planning processes in Upham's Corner leading up to UCI

March-July 2004 — Mayor Menino's Task Force on the Future of the Strand Theatre

The Strand Theatre is a historic, cultural, and City-owned asset in Boston,[2] located in the heart of the Main Street district of Upham's Corner, and an anchor of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process. The Strand ran films until it closed in 1969 because of declining ticket sales (City of Boston, 2014). It was revived in the 1970s by a group of neighborhood residents who created a plan and incorporated as the M. Harriet McCormack Center for the Arts to refurbish and reopen the Strand, signing a 25-year lease of the theater with the City of Boston in 1979. In the 1980s, famous artists performed at the Strand Theatre, and the theatre hosted arts programs serving neighborhood youth beginning in the 1990s. Over the decades, the theatre's infrastructure has aged, requiring significant ongoing repair, which has led to many efforts over the last half century, by both the City and community groups, to revive its operations. Despite these issues, the Strand Theatre "holds an important place in the memories of many Upham's Corner residents" (Lobenstine, 2014).

On June 30, 2004, the lease on the Strand Theatre expired, and Mayor Menino used this opportunity to seek ideas for improving this public asset. The Mayor's Task Force on the Future of the Strand Theatre convened to determine the criteria for selecting the Strand's next management. This was the first in a wave of planning initiatives carried out ever since to figure out long-term sustainability for the Strand.[3] In July 2004, the Task Force published a report to the Mayor and outlined the following vision for the Strand:

[2] The Strand Theatre is currently owned by the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development.
[3] There have been many processes since 2004, both city-led and community-led, around improving the Strand Theatre. I will not go into these processes or outline their various components, but wanted to mention there has been much activity dedicated to this public cultural asset.

> "We envision a Strand Theater that will be a thriving, attractive performing arts center, drawing audiences from the Upham's Corner neighborhood, all parts of the City and across Greater Boston. In fulfilling its mission, the Strand will:
> ● Celebrate diversity in all areas through its programming, its audiences, its employees, and the performers and producers who use its facilities.
> ● Promote community involvement in the growth and development of the Theatre
> ● Partner with both the public and private sectors to advance the economic development of the neighborhood"

These recommendations are actively guiding the revitalization of the Strand Theatre in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process.

February 2012 — BRA (now BPDA) Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative

The Boston Redevelopment Authority (now renamed the Boston Planning and Development Agency) initiated its three-year study called the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative in 2012. The planning initiative identified a "critical need for economic growth and physical improvement" along the corridor of the Fairmount Indigo commuter rail line, which "runs through some of Boston's most disadvantaged neighborhoods" and connects Upham's Corner to South Station (The Cecil Group, Inc. et al., 2014). The study identified "short- and long-term strategies for improving capital investment, public realm improvements, and job access" and "opportunities for commercial and residential development, transit access, ... and community-building initiatives" (BPDA, 2012). This planning activity along the Fairmount corridor, including Upham's Corner, spurred discussion and organizing around the opportunity for investment and development, but for the benefit of the neighborhoods' predominantly low-income residents.

July 2012 — artist-, community-, and merchant-led Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot

A partnership of nine organizations representing artists, merchants, and residents, coordinated by the Boston Foundation (TBF), received a $480,000 grant from ArtPlace America to pilot local creative placemaking efforts in Upham's Corner. The proposal for the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot (UCAP) was motivated by a need for the community to respond to the transit-oriented development slated for the neighborhood. The aim of the initiative was to revitalize the arts and culture fabric of Upham's, by leveraging local cultural assets and catalyzing a local cultural economy. "With the belief that deep local resident and business engagement is critical to ensuring collective ownership, which is the hallmark of any sustainable, long-term change," these organizations, including DSNI, recognized the value of Upham's Corner's cultural assets and sought to get ahead of the curve of both the upcoming changes in Upham's Corner and the creative placemaking strategy, so that it would be "rooted in local history and diversity" (Fairmount Cultural Corridor, n.d.).

A true organizing effort, the UCAP initiative, carried out over 24 months, engaged and built the leadership of local residents, artists, and businesses typically disengaged from planning processes to take ownership of the vision for the future of Upham's Corner (ArtPlace America, 2012). One of the project partners, ds4si, produced a case study in 2014 recounting the events of the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot, called "Do You See Yourself in Upham's Corner?"[4] The case study described UCAP's guiding principle—that, by believing in their place in the neighborhood and staking claim to it, the Upham's Corner community most marginalized from formal decision-making processes would feel seen and "that what [they]

[4] All the quotes in this paragraph and next are from the UCAP case study.

contribute matters" (7). In order to facilitate this realization of agency and autonomy, UCAP partners developed creative placemaking exercises that would "[reflect] the diversity of Upham's Corner to its residents and its visitors," in contrast to how "urban planners [miss] the 'social dynamics' of the communities ... they plan for" (15). UCAP's strategy of creative engagements and of "animating the commons" allowed the Upham's Corner community to envision new possibilities for their neighborhood and for their connections with their neighbors—to develop the sense of authority and ownership that comes with belonging to a place, in order to come together to fight for and realize those possibilities.

The project began with directed activities to nurture feelings of belonging, which then expanded into "community-led events that grew out of the civic implications of belonging" (11). Participants connected and strengthened arts and culture in the neighborhood by mapping local cultural assets and traditions and elevating them through public art and innovative programming such as "pop-up" exhibits. The project also modeled activation of the Strand Theater by "reflecting and engaging the community" in Strand events, and "with local partners assisting local artists" (8). UCAP increased creative production, the visibility of culture, and influence in planning decisions; stimulated cross-sector partnerships between residents, artists, businesses, community organizations, and public agencies; and strengthened connections with surrounding communities. Through the process, participants built leadership by stepping fully into a design process, "imagining, testing, and building small-scale solutions" and directly impacting their neighborhood (13). "Intense community involvement" is recognized as imperative for ensuring the upcoming redevelopment realizes

its promise “to provide increased access and opportunity for Boston’s most ethnically diverse and low-income neighborhoods” (20).

April 2014 — BRA’s Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative’s Upham’s Corner Station Area Plan

The Upham’s Corner Station Area Plan of the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative was produced to provide a framework for investment and development in the area surrounding the Upham’s Corner station of the Fairmount commuter rail. A Working Advisory Group was appointed by the City for the Upham’s station area study “to help guide the planning process and create a bridge with local communities” (BPDA, 2012). The group was co-chaired by John Barros, Executive Director of DSNI at the time, and then by his successor Chris Jones when Barros left DSNI to run for Mayor (Dumcius, 2013). The community vision statement for the Upham’s Corner station area plan recognizes Upham’s Corner center as “a celebration of diversity” and “an arts and cultural anchor” (The Cecil Group, Inc. et al., 2014). The plan seeks “to position Upham’s Corner for new economic prosperity and to reinforce it as an important hub of cultural activity” (The Cecil Group, Inc. et al., 2014).

The Station Area Plan includes action items for arts and culture, recognizing the activities of the ArtPlace initiative as “extremely valuable cultural and community-building features.” The plan calls for “capitalizing” on the unique opportunity to exhibit public art and artists, and recommends that local businesses and the Strand Theatre complement each other, with all events at the Strand serving as an opportunity to showcase Upham’s Corner.

The plan also proposed recommendations for housing and economic development. New development is to respect the historic 5-story scale of buildings. Businesses must serve

local needs. New housing must be mixed-income and "provide opportunities for diverse income levels." Mixed-use development is promoted in the Main Street district. The plan further suggests that City-owned property be "strategically and comprehensively dispose[d] and/or redevelop[d] ... to bring in new investment, with development guidelines and community benefits consistent with the vision." The plan advises that development must "minimize displacement of current residents and businesses to preserve diversity." However, the engagement of private investment "with enthusiasm and positivity," is reinforced, as well as "adopt[ing] a development-friendly tone within the community."

Finally, the plan calls for increased connection and cohesion. The plan recommends greater coordination among organizations and services in the area to better connect residents and businesses to opportunities and partners; transit-oriented development with public realm improvements; and mutual business arrangements between food institutions "that the community would like to see," Strand Theater events, and potential properties, landlords, or developers in the district.

2014 — Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot's Fairmount Cultural Corridor

DSNI built its leadership in local arts & culture and creative placemaking in the second-round ArtPlace America grant proposal, taking a stronger role as the lead applicant, and subsequently lead facilitator. Through the UCAP process, DSNI also decided "to create a formal Arts and Culture Committee of their majority resident-led Board of Directors" and to

add a full-time staff position to center arts and culture in the organization's work (Lobenstine, 2014, pp. 15).

Begun as a pilot for similar efforts along the Fairmount corridor's ethnically diverse neighborhoods, Upham's Corner ArtPlace dovetailed with the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative to develop a long-term strategy for economic growth and development in these neighborhoods. The UCAP partners both deepened and expanded their work in Upham's Corner to partner with arts and community organizations in the Four Corners neighborhood of Dorchester, stimulating connectivity between neighborhood arts centers along the Fairmount corridor. The pilot grew into the Fairmount Cultural Corridor, to reflect the plan "to build lasting, interdependent and deeply connected cultural leadership along the Fairmount Corridor" (Lobenstine, 2014, pp. 20). As described in the 2014 case study of UCAP:

> "the Fairmount Cultural Corridor strategy includes having artists-in-residence embedded in both Upham's Corner and Four Corners. These artists will be dedicated to engaging residents, merchants and other artists in on-going (rather than temporary) social interventions that continue to build that sense of authority" (20-21).

This creative placemaking and arts engagements in Upham's Corner—carried out by local organizations rooted in grassroots organizing, social-change-making, and power-shifting—laid the groundwork for the creative engagement process of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process and its goal for an arts and innovation district.

Summer 2014-September 2015 — Mayor Walsh administration's Neighborhood Innovation District Committee report

The Walsh administration held a Transition Town Hall in December 2013 to gather

ideas for priorities, where the Neighborhood Innovation District (NID) concept was first floated. To flesh out this idea and to select a pilot neighborhood, the Walsh administration formed the Neighborhood Innovation District Committee in the summer of 2014, which was co-chaired by John Barros, Boston Chief of Economic Development. This committee produced a report in September 2015 outlining a proposal for a Neighborhood Innovation District, as well as criteria for the selection of a pilot neighborhood.[5]

The idea of the Neighborhood Innovation District builds off the assumed success of the "forceful public commitment to place-making investments" in the Seaport Innovation District (1), but focused on bringing this model to neighborhoods by proposing an innovation district "located in, and operate in concert with, an existing neighborhood" (1). The innovation economy was driving growth in Boston, a city "of profound inequality" in the distribution of wealth (3). The question was how to spread those economic benefits and how neighborhoods can take advantage of the economic growth driven by the innovation economy. Economic development would come from "empowering the entrepreneurial talent that already exists in every Boston neighborhood" (1), to transform the creativity already present in "under-resourced neighborhoods ... into economic wealth" and "help make local creativity more powerful and financially remunerative" (20).

Contributors "coalesced around the idea of the Dudley Square-Upham's Corner Corridor" as a pilot (2), in part on the basis that the area "would benefit from economic

[5] Characteristics centered around transit access; space for industrial development; affordable office space; "existing arts and cultural amenities;" active civic groups that promote local economic development; and need for more "economic empowerment."

growth" (38), that there were "strong potential partners among area non-profits" and proximity to public institutions and amenities such as the Strand (38), and that the City of Boston "has been engaged in the planning and redevelopment of the area, which provides a strong knowledge base of community needs" (38). The stated goal of this pilot would be to test the viability of similar districts across the city and to inform city-wide policy, with an emphasis on experimenting and learn what works before scaling to the city level: "an entrepreneurial government seeks opportunities to try new ideas before making them jurisdiction-wide" (4).

The district would be planned and developed with the community to "reflect the real and stated needs" of the people in the neighborhood (21). The committee realizes that "the neighborhood must be brought to the table and must have ownership of the district," that "an authentic and deep community engagement process is critical to ensure that the community is full and active partner," and that working within the community requires "trust and connections" and "significant support from local community groups" (9). The plan recognizes that for the initiative "to be truly innovative, it is essential to include the voices of those who are typically less likely to come out to planning meetings" (21), which requires a strong effort of community engagement throughout the process, "to ensure that the district is always 'owned' by its community" and so that "any new spaces created … are welcoming to everyone, not just the prototypical entrepreneur" (21). However, "communities may lack the capacity to identify which problems are soluble," and, in order to build up resources and expertise, it would be important to leverage cross-sector partnerships that "can be held

accountable and that the neighborhoods have some control over." The plan calls for "robust discussion" within its public process "since views and aspirations will differ among residents," so as to "generate common goals and enable participants to emerge with respect for one another and a willingness to drive the plan to fruition." An inclusive planning process would also "emphasize communication through a variety of channels … to engage a very broad slice of the community."

The perceived needs of the neighborhood are for support for "under-resourced" and "less wealthy people" to be able to create, innovate, and benefit from the resulting "land value appreciation." The ideas for addressing neighborhood needs are largely market-based, such as "inculcat[ing] local entrepreneurship" and ensuring "that the area has enough new housing and commercial space" so that "demand doesn't radically outstrip supply." While the core idea of the NID is that "current community members … end up as the district's primary beneficiaries," developers "will need to be partners" to "ensure that new space helps bring value both to the residents and to property owners." While government is seen as playing a significant role in cultivating the district ("the Innovation District is a political creation"), the regulatory role of government should be one that "empowers rather than restricts," less of a burden and "more responsible and approachable."

April 2015-June 2016 — Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture's Boston Creates plan

The City launched Boston Creates, the first cultural planning process for the City of Boston. The plan recognizes that artists are essential "to creating and maintaining a thriving,

healthy, and innovative city" (24). The City's commitment to arts and culture began with the Walsh administration creating the Office of Arts and Culture within city government and appointing "the first Cabinet-level Chief of Arts and Culture in decades" (2). The Boston Creates process recognized that arts and culture "promote civic creativity and collective capacity" (11). The process was open and inclusive, with neighborhood-specific teams and community dialogue, so that the plan would reflect "the deep diversity of Boston arts and culture" (2).

A challenge facing arts and culture, that both emerged from the research and is relevant to the UCI process, centered around infrastructure. There is "an acute and increasing lack of affordable housing and work space for Boston artists," a need for greater investment in Boston's arts and culture sector, and fragmentation/silos in the city's arts and culture landscape.

Underlying the uneven distribution of arts & culture opportunities and resources across the city's neighborhoods is the challenge of equity and inclusion in arts and culture—"the equal valuing of all cultural traditions and expressions, and equal access for all to arts and culture activity." Equity in arts and culture ensures that the "thriving, healthy, and innovative city," made possible through its strengthened arts and culture, is for everyone, regardless of racial or socioeconomic background. "An arts and culture sector without equity and inclusion reinforces divides built on entrenched racism and exclusion, preventing us from drawing upon the creativity of all Bostonians to fashion a better civic future." This requires greater valuing of neighborhood cultural assets, greater representation and integration of

cultural diversity in the arts & culture landscape, serving community arts in historically underserved communities by facilitating strategic community partnerships, and opening "access to creative engagement and arts participation."

Identifying that leadership and partnership as essential for reaching the goals of the plan, the administrators of the Boston Creates process developed categories for "clarifying [the] appropriate role for the city" for each proposed tactic: City-owned, City-led, City-catalyzed.[6] Part of the strategy is to make city government "more accessible, welcoming, and responsive." City offices and departments are collaborating with one another "to leverage their investments to further the goals" in these plans and to "coordinate municipal policies."

Effectiveness "will require strong governance" and the integration of "arts and culture into all aspects of civic life." The City will work with process stakeholders to shape "an accountability body for the implementation of the cultural plan." The strategy is to "harness the power of arts and culture to engage Bostonians in civic discourse, planning, and creative problem-solving." This builds directly upon the work of grassroots creative placemaking carried out through the UCAP and the FCC. Finally, the Boston Creates plan advances the creation of "arts and cultural districts and creative development opportunities within and across Boston's neighborhoods by partnering with neighborhood, community development, and other civic organizations."

July 2017 — City of Boston's Imagine Boston 2030 comprehensive plan

[6] The Steering Committee of the Boston Creates cultural plan is comprised of public administrators, 3 philanthropy officers, 2 arts administrators, 2 nonprofit managers, and 1 working artist.

In 2017, the City of Boston released its first comprehensive plan in over fifty years—Imagine Boston 2030. A theme in the plan is to "enhance neighborhoods"—to improve access to economic opportunity, encouraging "contextually sensitive development" while affirming "each neighborhood's distinct identity." A key initiative is to "foster the creation of three Arts Innovation Districts that strengthen local arts hubs, starting with one in Upham's Corner," a neighborhood identified as a "creative economy node."

The plan recognizes "the strategy set forth for Upham's Corner" as having "the potential to serve as a pilot for enhancing neighborhoods" across the city. Key property assets "present an opportunity to strengthen the neighborhood fabric." To boost the neighborhood's economy and maintain the neighborhood's identity and diversity, the city will carry out "strategic land acquisition and development to create affordable housing and commercial space," "explore new funding mechanisms," and "implement proactive anti-displacement measures." Action items for arts and culture include investing "in infrastructure to support arts and culture that is accessible to all residents" and creative placemaking efforts such as "using art to uncover the potential of overlooked spaces within the neighborhood and create gathering spaces for the community."

The enhanced neighborhood approach also builds upon what the City recognizes as another of Upham's Corner's strongest assets: its "diverse and engaged population of residents." The approach of "community-led, City-catalyzed" investments in Upham's will "enable economic mobility and local innovation," and "policies to ensure affordability and prevent displacement will form the foundation of enhancement efforts." The City's role is to

jump-start the Upham's Corner Pilot Process (which has since evolved into the Upham's Corner Implementation Process) "through strategic focus and targeted investments that stem from the community's vision for their neighborhood." The model of planning being tested in Upham's Corner "to enhance quality of life for residents, attract investment, and encourage economic activity" will use "public-private partnerships and community engagement." Once assured that investments will benefit the existing community, the City will then be able to "pursue investments in … civic infrastructure."

In addition to these plans, relevant studies were conducted on creative placemaking recommendations for the Four Corners/Geneva station areas (Fall 2014 to Spring 2015), on business and job attraction and retention strategy for the Fairmount Indigo corridor (October 2016), on the retail priorities for Upham's Corner (May 2018), on commercial and residential vulnerability to displacement and strategies for mitigating displacement (June 2018), and on the state of performing arts facilities in Boston (November 2018). These technical studies helped to delineate policies and practices that could support the objectives of grassroots placemaking, of equitable economic growth, of local economic development that meets the needs of residents, of development without displacement, and of arts space provision.[7]

[7] **Fall 2014 to Spring 2015**- The Design Studio for Social Intervention prepared the "Creative Placemaking Recommendations Implementation Plan: Four Corners/Geneva & Upham's Corner Station Areas" for the Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative.
October 2016- LISC Boston, TACC, and ICIC produced the report "Fairmount Indigo Corridor Business and Job Attraction and Retention Strategy."
May 2018- Upham's Corner Main Streets produced the "Upham's Corner Retail Priorities Report."
June 2018- The Metropolitan Area Planning Council produced the report, "Upham's Corner Arts & Innovation District: Managing Neighborhood Change" for the City of Boston.
November 2018- TDC produced the "Boston Performing Arts Facilities Assessment" for the City of Boston.

This slew of planning initiatives in Upham's Corner identified strategies which have since become integral to the UCI process, including: strategic investment, particularly strategic land acquisition and redevelopment of City-owned property; public realm improvements, creative placemaking, and context-sensitive economic and urban development; and investment in civic infrastructure, community-building, and a robust public process. The community processes for these plans recognized Upham's Corner as an arts and cultural anchor and encouraged economic investment to further develop the neighborhood as a hub of cultural activity. Many of the creative community engagement strategies used in the UCI process were initially developed through the FCC, the Upham's Corner ArtPlace pilot, and through DSNI's own engagements for the DNICB. The already strong local community control infrastructure is part of why Upham's Corner was identified as a suitable pilot neighborhood for this comprehensive redevelopment. Community process called for development without displacement and the implementation of anti-displacement measures, demands which eventually worked their way into the City's language in its own plans. Some of the City's planning initiatives, such as the NDIC, emphasized the government's willingness to try new approaches and advanced the priority to leverage cross-sector partnerships. It is important to note that these imperatives are fundamentally market-based, in that the goal is to bring value to property owners and for the government to operate in a way that "empowers rather than restricts" private interests. This creates a tension with the community's demands for development without displacement, which will be important for understanding the UCI process and its outcomes.

5 UCI Case Description

The Upham's Corner Implementation Process is a unique case, in that it is a city planning and development process that involves a grassroots community-based organization with literal ownership (of land) in the process, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, as co-facilitator and co-leader. With such an influential role, DSNI is pushing the boundaries of how communities can assert control over development by working with city government. In addition to this unique partnership of the City with DSNI, UCI can also be understood as a next chapter in DSNI's community control history. In Chapter 4, I laid out the historical context for the UCI process and described the events and plans that led up to and formed the basis for the process, both from the City side and the community side. In this chapter, I will present a narrative of what has happened in the UCI process from 2017 until the summer of 2019, in order to lay out facts of the case and to ground my research findings and to set up an analysis, which I will expand on in Chapter 6, of how the City and DSNI navigated expectations and tensions throughout their partnership in the UCI process.

5.1 Assembling parcels for greater public control of land

The "seeds" of the UCI Process "got planted when Mayor Walsh came into office and said, 'innovation doesn't just happen,'" as one City official described. The administration's idea that innovation requires cultivation led to the Neighborhood Innovation District concept. The Boston Creates plan further wove together the arts and innovation and proposed arts and culture districts across Boston neighborhoods. Imagine Boston 2030 then announced

that there would be three “arts innovation districts” and that the first would be Upham’s Corner. A lot of City conversations went into this decision both to develop these districts and to begin in Upham’s, including that there was “a lot going on” in Upham’s, with the Fairmount Innovation Lab and “so many artists” that “this just is the thing,” explained another City official. As mentioned in the Neighborhood Innovation District Committee report, however, “the core idea of the [NID] is that current community members are part of planning the district and end up as the district’s primary beneficiaries” and that the process to develop such a district would “[respect] the neighborhood’s current residents and [ensure] they will benefit.” While, as one City official explained, “it was already pretty decided” that the City would redevelop Upham’s Corner into an arts innovation district, people at the City recognized it was important to understand how best to support the arts already happening in Upham’s, asking themselves “how do we preserve it and help enhance it” rather than “changing [it] into something different?”

The Upham’s Corner Implementation Process was so called in order to emphasize a commitment to implementing the City’s vision for the neighborhood as outlined in Imagine Boston 2030. Previous planning efforts in Upham’s Corner were influenced, to an extent, by the input of the community. According to the recommendations of previous planning reports, particularly the Neighborhood Innovation District Committee report and the Upham’s Corner Station Area Plan, the City outlines its intention to bring economic development to neighborhoods through transit-oriented development, and indicates an interest in

preventing displacement in neighborhoods where there will be redevelopment.[8] In the midst of this series of planning activities in Upham's Corner, Mayor Walsh "ran on a platform of reforming the BRA," according to one City official, which was a way in which this administration conveyed its intention to "shake things up" in City government. This reform included changing the name of the Boston Redevelopment Authority to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), which was meant to impart a greater sense of transparency. Accompanying this symbolic change was the formation of the Office of Economic Development (OED) and continuing the commitment to neighborhoods established by the late Mayor Menino.

Within the City, many departments had to work together to make decisions over jurisdiction, ownership, and responsibility over various aspects of the UCI process. One City official described the process as "a collaboration between many departments," which "the City has done before, but … not at this magnitude." DSNI interviewees noted how the experimental nature of the UCI process, and the Mayor's announcement that this initiative was a "top priority," made it so that the process piqued the interest of "almost every city department." One City official explained that "because of Imagine Boston 2030, … planning processes have brought together many, many departments." In addition to the BPDA and OED, the two agencies from which the UCI process emerged and which took on the greatest leadership and accountability, there were multiple other agencies, with different agendas

[8] According to the BPDA page on the UCI process, "Strategic public investment in the creation of affordable housing and affordable commercial space along the Fairmount Indigo corridor is intended to preempt gentrification typified by private speculation attracted by public investment in transportation" (BPDA, n.d.).

and orientations, involved in the UCI process. Among these include the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), which often leads processes that involve the development of affordable housing; the Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture (OAC), which oversees and implements the City of Boston's cultural plan, Boston Creates; and the Boston Public Library, since an anchor of the UCI process, along with the Strand Theatre, is the new library. Through this process of negotiation, we see how the City is not a monolith, but rather operates as a coalition of different agencies and departments. One juxtaposition between these agencies and how their agendas simultaneously contrast and build off each other can be seen in how DND, which was created in the 1960s to serve as the City's affordable housing agency, both diverges from and responds to the BPDA, which was created in the 1950s to remake urban centers for private development.

In part because of John Barros's role at the City and his "invested interest" in the process, in part due to his long-standing relationship to the neighborhood, according to one interviewee, "OED emerged victorious" as the City entity responsible for the process, which was still "co-designed and co-led … with BPDA staff." OED playing a greater role in facilitating this process is unique among development processes; the BPDA, Boston's quasi-public planning and redevelopment agency, is typically the driver of urban development in other cases. Another interviewee went on to describe how, "even though BPDA staff have been involved and helping lead the process at different points," OED took a larger role in running and owning the process because "the Upham's Corner initiative was definitely not seen as a typical BPDA planning initiative." One DSNI interviewee speculated that OED was able to

justify taking responsibility for the process by distinguishing it as "an implementation effort" rather than "a planning process," which is BPDA's wheelhouse. This designated BPDA as responsible for the initial planning work with the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative, so differentiating it from the work being done now through the UCI process, in which OED would work with DND "to actually do RFPs [Requests for Proposals] for the buildings." One City staffer agreed that "this is intentionally trying to be very implementation focused. We need to get to implementation."

The City had this vision to redevelop neighborhoods for the benefit of communities, and "started to deliver on it," conveyed one City official, using the Upham's Corner Implementation Process as a pilot. As mentioned, the UCI process was meant to support what the community had already expressed in prior engagements regarding what they wanted for the neighborhood. One way the City aimed to deliver on the community's input was to figure out strategies where the City can start to take control of some properties in the district and to stabilize the neighborhood. This commitment of public investment allows for more public control of development. Though public control is not the same as community control, it nonetheless allows for more regulations and protections than development dictated purely by the forces of the market, with private developers predominantly owning and controlling property. To advance toward this goal of assembling a critical mass of public properties in the district, the City endeavored (and succeeded, with some difficulty) to acquire the former Bank of America building at 555 Columbia Road. The goal for developing the acquired parcels, then, would be for the City to run a process that would validate and respond to the concerns

and needs that the community had voiced in previous engagements. One DSNI staff member noted that "if Upham's Corner works, it'll be a good example" of the City carrying out an ambitious program of land assembly through targeted but coordinated and comprehensive investments.

By trying to do the acquisitions all in-house, however, the City realized they "couldn't do it as quickly because of some limitations that the City has," explained one City official. The City, therefore, began to explore the idea of bringing on community organizations as partners to allow greater flexibility for strategic acquisition and development. In particular, the City approached DSNI to become a partner in the process, as a way of resolving some difficulties the City encountered in acquiring and holding key privately-owned redevelopment sites. OED "was very active and interested" in having the former Citizens Bank building at 572 Columbia Road be included in the planning initiative, noted a DSNI staff member, but was not able to acquire it in an expeditious manner themselves. As a solution, Chief of Economic Development John Barros attended a DSNI/DNI board meeting in July 2016 to share the idea and concept of strategic partnership for the first time, proposing that DNI acquire the property with support from the City. This would allow the City to include the building as part of the development process without needing to go through the challenges of acquiring it as a public entity. Acquisition by DNI would mean that the building would be taken off the speculative market to go on the land trust, and that the commercial and housing uses developed on that parcel would be subject to the CLT's requirements, including perpetual

affordability. One DNI staff member described feeling strongly that this was an opportunity they couldn't miss.

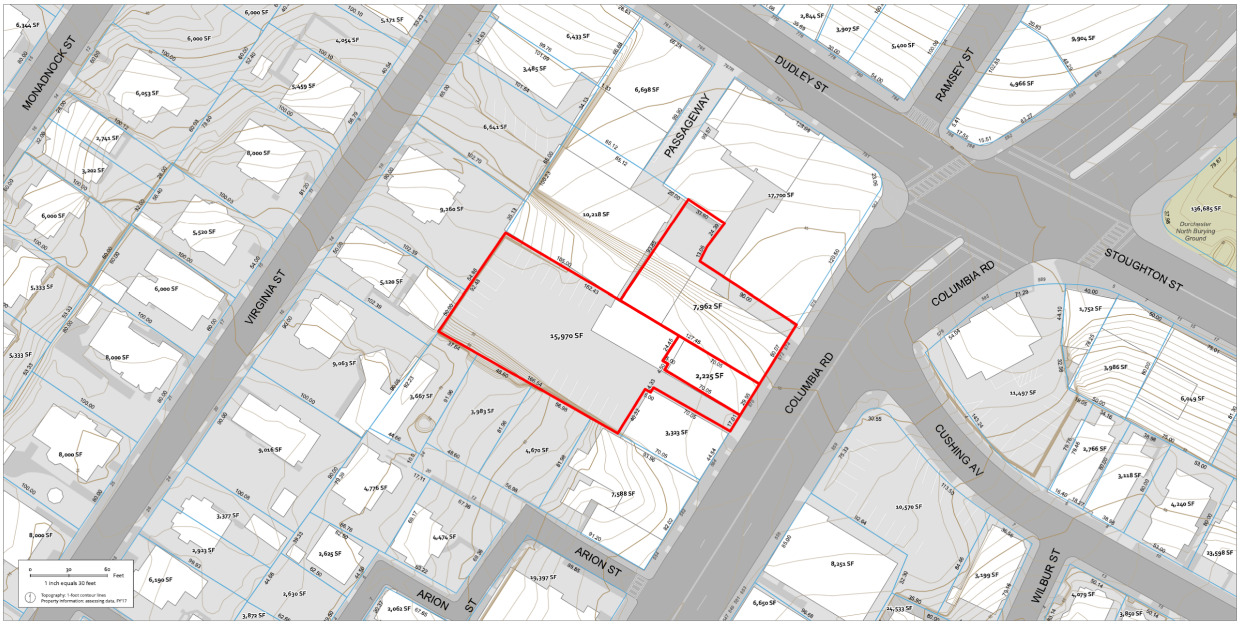

Figure 4: DNICB parcel on 572 Columbia Road (City of Boston, 2017)

Following these initial discussions, the acquisition process moved quickly. DNI submitted a proposal in December 2016 for funding assistance from DND's Neighborhood Development Fund through the Acquisition Opportunity Program, "which allowed for nonprofits like … CLTs to compete with private developers and get properties like this," explained a DNI staff member. In February 2017, DNI was loaned $1,429,100; in addition to helping with the cost of acquisition and emergency repairs for the parcels,[9] the funds also covered maintenance expenses of the building for up to two years. The terms of the acquisition agreement involved DNI working "with DND and the community to create a

[9] 572-574, 568-A570, 559 Columbia Road and assessor's parcel 13-01343000 Columbia Road

planning process that would result in a mixed-use, mixed-income development that would include ⅓ affordable, ⅓ middle-income, and ⅓ market-rate housing."[10]

DSNI, which has long-standing relationships with the City through their decades of work together, counts among its deepest the 30-year relationship with DND. The depth of this relationship between DSNI and DND is such that DND's Chief Sheila Dillon was the one "originally push[ing] to sign an MOU that DSNI would be co-sponsor" of the UCI process with the City, explained a DSNI staff member. This DSNI interviewee also described how DND's liaison to DSNI, Christine O'Keefe, would often vouch for DSNI during UCI meetings, saying to the other City agencies, "'guys, chill out, they know what they're doing … maybe it's not the way you like doing it, but this is how the community does it here, and this is impactful.'"

This parcel that DNI acquired became one of the key redevelopment sites in the Upham's Corner implementation area. DNI "took control of" the building in April 2017, described one DSNI staff member, before developers were able to get a hold of it. According to a former DSNI staff member, this was the first property that DNI has acquired through the private market, and will be among the first pieces of commercial development on the community land trust. In order to center the idea of community ownership when referring to their building (and to erase its previous corporate association), DSNI and the community have since called it the Dudley Neighbors, Inc. Community Building (DNICB).

[10] Commitment letter February 2017

5.2 Toward a community-advised Request for Proposals

The key parcels that will form the basis for redeveloping Upham's Corner include four separate sites that, together, are intended to achieve the vision for the Arts and Innovation District. Rather than carrying out the UCI development process piecemeal, the City of Boston is making the process comprehensive, with Request for Proposals (RFPs) for the development of these sites being packaged together rather than released separately.

The City owns the Strand Theater, the former Bank of America building, and a municipal parking lot. Part of the City's commitment involves developing one of these sites as a new library, which may include residential uses above. DSNI's land trust owns the DNICB. The vision for this site is to include mixed commercial and affordable housing uses. DSNI/DNI retain control over their own decision-making process for this parcel, but the property is part of the comprehensive redevelopment process along with the City-owned sites.

Figure 5: The four key redevelopment parcels of the UCI redevelopment process

At least two other privately-owned parcels adjacent to the former Bank of America building may also factor into the redevelopment. They include a building owned by the Upham's Corner Health Center and one owned and used by Santander Bank. The City is in discussions to potentially acquire both of these sites and relocate the Library to the Santander site. The City also ran a Request for Information (RFI) process—which I will elaborate on later—in part so that any owners of property in Upham's Corner could offer their property to be included in the redevelopment. Inclusion of additional sites to the development process would further expand opportunities for developers to meet the ambitious community redevelopment vision.

Bringing together multiple sites into one redevelopment process allows for greater options through mixing-and-matching—developers can bid on all or just select parcels, increasing the possibilities of combinations of different proposals and even collaboration between developers. UCI's scope of redeveloping a whole district rather than a discrete building, if done right, can be an opportunity for significant community control. DSNI's history demonstrates the organization's own experience with comprehensive land assembly to acquire and develop 32 acres of land to build out its land trust. The land assembly the City is now carrying out in Upham's Corner, through collaboration with community partners in assembling the parcels, allows for more options to deliver on the community's desires, because it helps the City to be more creative in planning than if it were simply acquiring and developing parcels on its own, due to the many political and legal limitations of public entities, which I will elaborate on later.

As noted, the intention behind the UCI objective to develop strategic parcels was to put the previous plans for Upham's Corner into effect, and particularly to achieve the goals the community outlined in these plans. Since development of the parcels would be done in collaboration with outside contractors, the aim of the process was to produce a Request for Proposals (RFP) in order to seek these development services. The RFP for the UCI process would "solicit development services to deliver affordable housing, affordable commercial space, a branch public library, and an operator for the Strand Theatre" (BPDA, 2018). The RFP document outlines in detail the scope of work required for developing each parcel, building on the previous planning processes in Upham's and reflecting the priorities expressed by community members that participated in the engagement processes for these plans. The RFP also informs developers how the City will evaluate proposals. The process of crafting the RFP document to reflect the input gathered from community meetings is guided by the Working Advisory Group (WAG), a City-appointed group intended to be representative of the community, including residents, business owners, artists, advocates, and other community leaders.

The public kick-off event for UCI, an Open House with community members, was held on October 4, 2017. The purpose of this meeting was to give the community an overview on previous UC planning initiatives, to present the intention of strategic parcel development of the implementation process, and to outline the public process to produce the RFP. A series of workshops were held in the following months to elicit feedback from community members.

Figure 6: UCI process timeline as presented at a January 20, 2018 community meeting

The process of crafting the RFP entailed many WAG meetings and community meetings, which were open to the public and facilitated jointly by the City and DSNI. This partnership of co-facilitation also required regular coordination meetings between DSNI and the City. Below is a table of the components of the community process that contributed to the decisions incorporated into the RFP document. In the sections that follow, I will explore in greater detail different components and developments throughout the UCI process that were critical facts of the case that help to understand what happened in the process.

What	**When**	**Activities**
Open House	October 4, 2017	A review of previous planning efforts that led up to the UCI process.
Workshop: Library	November 2, 2017	David Leonard, President of the Boston Public Library, presented on the history and present-day features of the Upham's Corner library branch, the design priorities for the new library, and examples of other Boston Public Library renovations.
Workshop: Strand Theatre	November 30, 2017	A community discussion, held at the Strand Theatre, about the Strand's past, present, and future. DNI and ds4si[11] presented a history of the Strand Theatre. A representative of Mayor Menino's 2004 Task Force on the Future of the Strand Theatre presented a summary of the goals and vision of the 2004 RFP for

[11] According to their website, the Design Studio for Social Intervention (ds4si) is situated at the intersections of design thinking and practice, public art and civic engagement, and "design[s] and test[s] social interventions with and on behalf of marginalized populations."

		the Strand Theatre. Then City of Boston's Chief of Arts and Culture (Julie Burros) introduced the arts planning conducted through Boston Creates. She also presented on the findings of the Boston Performing Arts Facility Assessment, which recommended the possibility of cutting up the space in the Strand from its historic 1400-seat arrangement to create smaller performance spaces ranging from 150 to 600 seats. The meeting ended with an interactive playback theatre performance by Red Sage Stories.
Workshop: Library & Strand Theatre	January 17, 2018	A community report-back session to present the takeaways from the community discussions on the Library and on the Strand Theatre. The library takeaways focused on a connection to the Strand and to the arts and innovation district concept with collaborative programming. Julie Burros, then-Chief of Arts and Culture presented different scenarios for feedback on the Strand renovation. Community members expressed preference for leaving the Strand Theatre in its current configuration as a 1400-seat theatre, particularly if smaller performance venues could be accommodated in other developments in the district.
Workshop: Housing & Commercial Uses in Arts & Innovation District	April 4, 2018	This meeting was a community discussion on how housing and commercial spaces support the Arts & Innovation District. The community expressed interest in new housing specifically for artists. The community also established a strong preference for housing that exceeds the minimum affordability standards, which the City defines as ⅓ low income, ⅓ middle income, and ⅓ market rate.
Workshop: Development Scenarios	May 16, 2018	This workshop included interactive activities that focused on the RFP process, housing, and what makes an Arts & Innovation District: ● The community evaluated different development scenarios, offering feedback on the pros and cons of each scenario. ● Participants collaboratively edited the language of a draft document describing the development and RFP process of the Upham's Corner Arts & Innovation District. ● Community members brainstormed library/Strand shared events by designing public announcements for their event ideas. ● People shared, on separate and anonymous notecards, a desire, concern, or question they have about the UCI process.
Workshop: Draft RFP	June 28, 2018	Community feedback, gathered from the various community meetings that led up to this point, was incorporated into the

		priorities, criteria, and narrative of the RFP. The Working Advisory Group drafted language for the RFP(s) for City-owned properties (including Bank of America and Strand sites) that was presented at this community meeting. Developers who want to submit bids will have to respond to the criteria in the RFP document. This community meeting centered on gathering feedback on the RFP draft, as well as discussion about preferences and selection criteria for the incoming development proposals.
Workshop: Refine RFP Language	November 28, 2018	The focus of this community meeting was for participants to review the progress made by the City, DSNI, and the WAG to date; to provide feedback on the draft language and affirmed priorities for the RFP(s), which have been shaped by the community process; and to learn about what was next in the process. This meeting was held at the DNICB, so the community was able to experience the space. People also had the opportunity to interact with models of parcels. Light refreshments and interpretation services were provided, which up to then was unique for a community meeting carried out by the BPDA.
Public Celebration	March 20, 2019	This public meeting was a presentation of the RFP document, which included sections on housing affordability, development without displacement, commercial support, artist space and housing, the Strand Theatre, jobs and equity, and youth. There were panels throughout the venue describing each development parcel, as well as posters designed by ds4si outlining the various pieces of community feedback that flowed into the RFP language. This public meeting was intended to be a culminating celebration of the community's and City's collaborative efforts on the RFP process. The Mayor publicly and officially announced the forthcoming release of the RFP.

Table 3: UCI community meetings

5.3 Building community process

The City's intention in partnering with a community organization to carry out the community process for UCI was for the City and community to jointly develop guidelines for what the City-proposed Arts Innovation District would be. As described in Imagine Boston

2030, the Upham's Corner pilot process is "community-led" and "City-catalyzed," with the City responsible for endorsing ideas and convening stakeholders toward strategic investments, but for which it may be more appropriate for other partners, in this case DSNI, to own the implementation so that the process is "community-led."

5.3.1 Working Advisory Group

The RFP documents are guided by the Working Advisory Group (WAG), which is comprised of about a dozen community leaders. Most members of the WAG are active in the community and many have been involved with previous planning initiatives in the neighborhood, providing continuity between these plans and their implementation through UCI. WAG members are the people who wear "two hats, at least," described one community partner: "the folks who work at a local nonprofit but who also live in the neighborhood, or … is also an artist." These are the individuals who are already deeply civically engaged, who are "tied in already but also care deeply about this space." A former DSNI staff member explained that the WAG does the "bridge work," like DSNI does, of sharing about the process to the community and of bringing people from the community to the process. In this way, the WAG both advocates for the community in the process and advocates for the process among the community.

Counted among its members were people long-affiliated with DSNI, including two founding members of DSNI and people who have collaborated with DSNI extensively over the years. There were also community leaders on the WAG who did not have any prior relationship with DSNI, which speaks to how this process has been an exercise for DSNI in

going beyond what it considers its territory. The Upham's Corner Station Area Plan called for bringing different segments of the community into greater collaboration, and the composition of the WAG for the UCI process for the most part delivered on this recommendation.

The WAG for the UCI process was formed in the summer of 2017, first convening on September 7, 2017, and has since been meeting regularly to shape the community process and content of the RFP, to plan and present reworked RFP language at community meetings, and to help the City review and incorporate community feedback into the RFP documents. The WAG's role as the official representative body for the community includes being the vehicle through which the community's needs are consistently articulated and advocated in the process. A purpose of the WAG is to ensure that the community would "know that when they gave feedback and comments, that although they couldn't vote, necessarily, … they had a trusted body who represented them, … that then had to take what they thought into consideration, and that that was what informed whatever recommendation the WAG was going to make," explained a DSNI leader. The WAG is "a piece of what the power of the community is." The WAG has advocated for the community by improving the narrative structure of the RFP to reflect the neighborhood's strengths and bringing the community's feedback to the deliberations in WAG meetings.

A former DSNI staff member explained how "there was a lot of organizing" to move the WAG from being "a once a month email group to an actual body that sets and reviews agendas and synthesizes the results of the community meetings." As DSNI and the City

improved their mode of working together, they became better able to streamline the WAG process, which contributed to better feedback from the WAG "around where are we wrong, where are we missing the mark, where can we fix things," explained one DSNI leader. Through the DSNI-City partnership's improved leadership, WAG meetings went from being "an open conversation that seemed to meander in lots of different directions and not necessarily [get] us where we needed to go" to providing "more tangible" recommendations that the City could move on.

A DSNI staff member expressed how the WAG had held firm to DSNI's vision for the process: "they have helped us to keep our integrity [and] our moral compass … throughout this." Another DSNI staff member expanded on this, saying that "there is currently buy-in" among these "key stakeholders, opinion-shapers, leaders," and "gatekeepers" who don't necessarily have a title but who are "reporting back to a whole group" and telling them to "stick with it." A City official agreed that the WAG "really does feel a sense of ownership" and "a great deal of buy-in" over the process.

The City decided that the WAG will continue its role as the official body representing the community and the public's input, past the developer selection process to the development process as set out in Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code. John Barros explained at a WAG meeting that, while the City will be running its typical Article 80 process, having the WAG continue as the impact advisory group for that process, instead of assembling a different group, would hold the integrity of the core group and its commitment and expertise regarding UCI. This decision to have the WAG continue to hold community

oversight over this next phase of development speaks to the City's commitment to the community process.

5.3.2 UCI as an unfolding chapter in DSNI's community control history

Among the multiple ways that DSNI is involved in the UCI process, including owning one of the key redevelopment sites and having long-time members and partners serving on the WAG, DSNI has also co-facilitated the community process for UCI and run its own community process for the DNICB. After acquiring the DNICB, DSNI began conducting extensive engagements for the building in the spring and summer of 2018. This community engagement for the development process of the DNICB was solely driven by DSNI/DNI and was not formally connected to UCI's community engagement process, which DSNI co-facilitated. The DNICB engagements did, however, use creative approaches to community engagement which inspired the tactics and strategies later employed in the UCI community process, so they are worth exploring further.

DSNI's engagement processes have always been centered on the community's needs and focused on community control, paying attention to what would engage people, make them able to participate in the process, and keep them involved. The DNICB engagements included two community meetings and a series of six creative pop-up events that asked thought-provoking and imaginative questions about what the community envisioned for the building.

Figure 7: Flyer for DNICB pop-up event

The activities were hands-on: "people building with their hands and constructing things" that they wanted to see as part of the DNICB, observed a former DSNI staff member. Another activity entailed dot-voting on ideas collected from the community for first floor uses and creative spaces to be developed at the DNICB. Another activity was to gather input on the community's housing needs and preferences for housing uses at the DNICB. For this activity, participants were given two scenarios and asked to position themselves along a spectrum according to how they'd prefer the building to be used—e.g., "primarily smaller units of 1-2 bedrooms for artists, singles, seniors" at one end of the spectrum and "primarily family housing of 3 or 4 bedrooms" at the other—with a discussion of people's preferences at the

end of each round. The community feedback and input gathered from these exercises were synthesized and reported back in community meetings.

DSNI paid attention to language accessibility and also designed activities geared toward youth participation. The number of events and the range of times at which they were held "made it more possible for different people to be involved," expressed this DSNI interviewee. The pop-ups were also set up in such a way that "people with different amounts of time could engage," from checking something off on a piece of paper to walking through different activities. The open door and curiosity of the engagements also brought more people wandering in, who would not otherwise have attended and given input at a community meeting. DSNI, with support from ds4si, engaged over 500 people in these creative placemaking activities to determine the desired use of DNICB.

Along with the FCC engagements, the DNICB engagement activities, though run as a separate process for the development of DNI's parcel, helped form the basis for the creative engagements for the UCI process as a whole. DSNI's community partner ds4si helped design posters to report community input and decisions back to the community at official Community Meetings for the UCI process. Creative activities inspired by DNICB engagements were used during the Workshop on Development Scenarios in May 2018 and during the Community Meeting held at the DNICB in November 2018. Some interviewees noted how even the BPDA is beginning to adopt these pop-up events in their engagements in other neighborhoods; one interviewee, however, who is a former DSNI staff member, was

apprehensive of the BPDA taking DSNI's tips for effective community engagement and co-opting them.

5.3.3 Youth activations of the DNICB

A priority for the UCI process, as determined by DSNI and by the community, was to include and even center youth in the engagement process. The DNICB engagements had the intentional focus of creatively hearing from young people, particularly because City meetings do not cater to a diversity of age or experience. DSNI staff went to places where youth naturally congregated in Upham's Corner, e.g., at the basketball courts, and asked youth for feedback on what the developments in the district and what the uses for the DNICB could look like, as well as about their experiences being a young person in this neighborhood.

Activations of the DNICB continued in the summer of 2019, with DSNI's annual youth summer program. A team of UEP researchers joined with DSNI to create a research component of the youth program, in which the young participants could engage with questions around development and gentrification, and also contribute their own vision for the process. Over the course of six weeks, youth imagined, drew, and modeled designs for their vision for the DNICB. This visioning process culminated in the youth group staging their best ideas for uses for the DNICB—in particular, a meditation garden, an arcade room, a bowling alley, and a movie screening room—and hosting a tour for community members. These activities helped to develop youth leadership and to bring in more input from youth into the UCI and DNICB processes.

5.4 DSNI and the City negotiating their partnership and navigating expectations

At the beginning of the UCI process, the City and DSNI had to go through an initial period of determining what kind of partnership they would have. At first DSNI followed the City's lead, but then realized that they needed to assert themselves more in designing and leading the community meetings. While previous planning processes in Upham's Corner had input from the community, some decisions, such as designating Upham's Corner as the pilot site for this redevelopment and defining it as an arts innovation district, felt like they "came before community process," explained a DSNI staff member. This tension between community control and the authority of the state became a common theme in the process. Early on in the partnership, it became clear to DSNI that the community had to stand their ground in order to extend the timeline for there to be a more robust community engagement process for UCI.

The Fairmount Cultural Corridor was one of the pre-existing streams of community-based work that flowed into UCI. Prior to the City approaching DSNI to run UCI's community engagement process, FCC partners, knowing that more development was coming to Upham's Corner, approached the City to offer their services and ideas for community engagement. DSNI and ds4si had pitched to the City the idea to use "productive fictions" as a method of community engagement. This creative technique would engage people in reimagining the Strand Theatre, which had long been a hub for the community and would be an anchor of the forthcoming implementation process. The idea, according to a community partner, was to engage the community of Upham's Corner "in a way that might excite them to imagine an art innovation district was about them and their family, that was about them as artists." The idea

was that, since the Upham's community was adamant for the redevelopment and public investment to be *for* the community, and since the City was agreeing that a *neighborhood* arts and innovation district was the vision, then "let's hire artists, let's do things that show what could be possible—both within the Strand and around the neighborhood."

Through the Fairmount Cultural Corridor, DSNI and community partners already had the idea to do something like UCI before the City launched the process. The FCC's creative placemaking initiatives in Upham's Corner created the conditions for the FCC partners to be able to make this ask—to develop a creative and grassroots community engagement process for UCI—of the City. A community partner described, however, that because of the "internal mechanics within the City" and the City "trying to coordinate how this fit in with all the planning processes," it took a year and a half for the City to "[get] their planning up to speed to where they wanted community involvement in the RFP" and to return to DSNI for help with running community engagement for the UCI process. When the City returned to the community for support with community engagement, the City's thinking was that the RFP for the UCI process could be reached within just a few months, recalled one DSNI staff member. Community interviewees described feeling frustrated that the City both took its time to get its own business in order and was projecting a quickened timeline for running a community process.

When DSNI was brought in as a partner, they felt a need "to get ahead" of decision-making in the UCI process by bringing in and centering community process and involvement, described a DSNI staff member. The City putting the cart before the horse and rushing the

process signaled to DSNI that UCI needed to take a major step back in order to become more firmly rooted in community. DSNI had to adjust the process to ensure that there was time for community process around key concepts and not assuming things like the creation of an arts innovation district as the starting point. DSNI staff realized they needed to "meet with the City on this, … find out what's going on," and "slow down the timeline," because for UCI to be "truly a community process, we really needed a lot of people" engaged, which would take time and delay the City's expected timeline for the RFP.

5.4.1 "Building our own table" — asserting community control in the UCI process

Establishing the community process for UCI required a collective reckoning with the power dynamics between the community and City. DSNI, as the community representative closest to power in this process, needed to assert to the City the community's authority and control in the process. There were a few turning points in this rearticulation of roles between DSNI and the City.

One moment agreed upon as pivotal by several DSNI staff was when Kalila Barnett joined the process as Interim Director of DSNI, in the period of February to August 2018. Barnett was the first woman to take on the role of Executive Director at DSNI (@dsni_org). One DSNI staff member said that "when Kalila stepped in, she made it clear that we were going to hold true to our principles and values, and that if the City deviated from them then we would have to make a choice." This set the tone for how DSNI would exercise its own autonomy in a partnership with the City, which was the entity with the ultimate authority in the process. This DSNI staffer described how this was the moment when DSNI started "to

build our own table" rather than simply sitting at the City's table. DSNI had a stake in the process with the community ownership of the DNICB on the CLT. In addition to owning a key development parcel, DSNI was now "going in a totally different direction with our leadership," from "establishing partnership" to "establishing ourselves as leaders" and "shift[ing] our level of power." Kalila, who came from "radical leadership" in power-building organizations in Boston, was "carving out" that space for DSNI in the UCI process and "holding firm" to it by putting out demands.

This DSNI interviewee described how this moment of establishing this place from which DSNI could exercise its own self-determination, autonomy, and control in the process was critical in terms of how DSNI would relate to the City going forward. The City had a "real investment" in DSNI's cooperation and in DSNI "being on board to be their ally" for the process to work, and with Barnett's demands, the City became unsure "what direction [DSNI was] going" and concerned that DSNI would "go rogue." The City's fear was a reminder that DSNI's cooperation was not to be taken for granted, and established a renewed sense of DSNI's power. As this DSNI interviewee explained, previously the City may have had "a feeling that DSNI was going to be a 'yes yes'," and that "when the transition happened from Kalila to Denise, it just reinforced that we were not going to be."

Denise Barros[12] joined DSNI as the next interim Executive Director after Kalila. A DSNI staff member described how, at that point, "it still felt as if" DSNI and the City "weren't really working collaboratively," and John Barros set up a meeting between the City and DSNI for the

[12] Denise Barros is sister-in-law to John Barros but, contrary to belief, not subject to any special favors in the UCI process as a result. The implications of this contention is further discussed in the next chapter.

two entities to “get back on the same page” on the direction of the process. This interviewee found this meeting to be critical for discussing and establishing consensus about how, while “bureaucracy could be what bureaucracy was,” if bureaucracy “got in the way,” DSNI would “do what we needed to do.” This meant that DSNI “could split from the process if … [the process] wasn’t moving forward,” since DSNI has ownership and control of their own building. DSNI’s power to break from the process helped DSNI to keep pressure on the City when the City would stall the process because of bureaucratic delays, or when the City was not meeting its side of the bargain in maintaining accountability to the community. Having DSNI define the conditions under which they would be willing to participate in the process with the City was important in setting the dynamic and in shifting some of the power between DSNI and the City, and for determining how the two entities would function and relate to each other in the Upham’s Corner Implementation Process.

5.4.2 Further delays to the timeline, due to City bureaucracy

One of the ways in which the City was challenged to maintain accountability to the community had to do with the public announcement by the Mayor in March 2019 of the imminent release of the RFPs in spring 2019 and the City’s delays on this release for almost 2 years (with still no release as of the end of 2020). These postponements extended the UCI timeline, this time not because of community process but because of legal and political issues at the City, which I will further explore in the next chapter. These compounded delays by the City would come to affect not only accountability to community but also DSNI’s ability

to cover maintenance expenses at the DNICB, since their loan through the Acquisition Opportunity Program only covered the first two years of maintenance.

When the RFP was set to be released, in the summer of 2019, the City's lawyers further delayed the process out of sensitivity that followed from the resolution of an unrelated "high-profile public corruption case that cast scrutiny on City Hall's ties to organized labor and tested the limits of advocacy by government officials" (Cramer, 2019). In the wake of this high-profile case, some people at the City were highly sensitive to the possibility of any conflicts of interest in the City's partnerships. The political and legal concern, as it related to UCI, centered around whether DSNI and its leaders and former leaders would get some kind of special benefit from public decisions and investments. In order to cover all of its bases, the City's lawyers recommended that the City release a Request for Information (RFI) before the release of the UCI's RFPs, to publicly and openly announce the City's intention to carry out strategic development partnerships with local property owners for the UCI process, and to give the opportunity for any party interested in being involved as a partner—for example, by putting up property for the purposes of redeveloping it as part of the district—to step forward. While stakeholders at the City had their reasons for why this step was politically necessary, a long time passed without notifying the community of the delay after there had been a public meeting in March 2019 celebrating the RFP's imminent release, which created tensions with community process.

5.5 Beyond: what remains for issuing the UCI RFPs

At the time of the submission of this thesis, the City's UCI RFPs have not yet been released, and DNI released its own separate RFP for the DNICB on December 21, 2020. There have been even more unpredictable and uncontrollable delays to the process, not least of which has been the COVID-19 pandemic. What remains for the UCI process to reach completion and for the arts and innovation district to be developed is as follows:

The RFP(s) must be released. The City of Boston, specifically the BPDA, will issue the RFP documents, and DNI will advertise the RFP(s) for the properties that are up for development. Development teams will have 90 days to respond to the RFP(s) with written proposals describing the scope of their proposed project, timeline, and budget. There will be a bidder's conference following the City receiving RFP submissions. Prospective development teams will have the opportunity to ask questions about the RFP(s). The City of Boston team and the WAG will then review the development proposals to determine which ones are viable and best meet the criteria established in the RFP(s), prioritizing the responses based on their suitability. After the proposals are evaluated by the community and developers are chosen, there is another set of formal development review processes called the Article 80 public review process, through which the WAG will continue to play a key role. After that, construction will begin.

6 UCI Case Analysis

The blueprint for DSNI's success shows us that to win and maintain power, community members must feel a sense of belonging, ownership, and entitlement, made real through organizing and leadership development. The community's ability to set demands and standards for how the City or a developer must be in order to collaborate with the community presupposes and leverages the community's organized power. DSNI's history shows us that the community's feeling of entitlement and ownership, especially in the context of chronic neglect, disinvestment, and exploitation of working poor Black and brown communities, must be built up like a muscle over time. Relationship-building and neighbors connecting with neighbors is a key piece of building this muscle of "civic self-esteem" (Bedoya, n.d.), that is, "the idea that you could do something and that it would matter," as one community partner put it. Creative engagements and community organizing are how DSNI and its community partners are actively building the community's capacity to imagine, envision, and advance an alternative, more equitable balance of power in Upham's Corner.

DSNI's struggles and material victories over the decades have afforded the organization a sense of "accumulated neighborhood power," described a DSNI interviewee. DSNI is able to operate with "entitlement" that their actions will be able to influence outcomes in the neighborhood and community. This entitlement comes through the real authority they've been able to build over the years through democratic community control and ownership of land by residents.

DSNI's control over land and development, as well as its power as a grassroots, community-based organization with established authority in the neighborhood, have built significant protections for the community on the land trust. The residents that live on decommodified land have been shielded from the market pressures of gentrification that directly affect their neighbors just one street over from the land trust. DSNI understands these dynamics and the responsibility that comes with their accumulated neighborhood power to "shepherd that power and maintain it and build on it," explained a former DSNI staff member. Influencing the process and outcomes of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process in a leadership role is one way DSNI is working to expand community control beyond the land trust.

Being a co-partner in the process gives DSNI significant authority in formal decision-making. In light of the struggles to get more equitable planning processes happening in neighborhoods across the city, DSNI's authority, as a result of their control over land and their commitment to community empowerment, allows them to arrive at a process like UCI setting expectations for how power-bearers must address community priorities. A DSNI staff member recounted the challenges of another City redevelopment process neighboring DSNI in Roxbury, where there was "so much displacement already happening" and "people didn't know that the plan was happening." This DSNI staff member reasoned that the issue with this other process was that "the plan was moving too fast," needed slowing down and "making sure there was enough representation." In the case of the UCI process, however, DSNI had the power, through its organizing and community control, to extend the planning process to

make sure there was thorough involvement from those whom the process was primarily intended to serve, namely residents, artists, and merchants.

Having a leadership role in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process as an organization committed to building community control, while also being a real-estate owner on the land trust, DSNI must manage its power. DSNI is responsible for making sure its accumulated power serves the purpose of expanding community control to neighboring communities. One interviewee described how groups in other neighborhoods have a different experience organizing around planning processes, where the City unilaterally sets expectations that the groups must respond or react to, and the City holds sole authority to decide whether to follow through with the process or not. Nonetheless, the same interviewee recounted that even within BPDA and the City, particularly among lower-level staffers who are the ones implementing planning projects, people often say that "we need DSNIs in every neighborhood" so that processes can be better accountable to communities. The question is how to make it possible for all neighborhoods to achieve and benefit from community control, and how DSNI's work and legacy of community control can help to support this empowerment and community power-building in other neighborhoods.

As one DSNI interviewee put it, "over the years DSNI has always wanted … to see more impacts citywide, not just in our community." Because of the unique power and control that DSNI holds in owning and controlling land and having authority over development and intervention in its area, as well as the unique circumstances through which the community gained this control, DSNI can struggle to reconcile how their power will go beyond being a

unique case to being applicable to other neighborhoods citywide. One DSNI staff member explained how DSNI must "break out of the DSNI/DNI bubble that the City said, 'you're a special case, what you're doing over here has nothing to do with what's happening in the rest of the City.'" The question that comes with this perception of DSNI is whether or not the conditions that have made the extent of DSNI's community control possible are too unique to be replicated or extended.

As a partnership between the City of Boston and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, the Upham's Corner Implementation Process is an experiment for the City in conducting a planning process, making decisions about redevelopment, and implementing these decisions with the community as a co-partner. DSNI's community land trust, DNI, owns a key parcel up for redevelopment as part of the UCI process, which was the basis for DSNI/DNI developing a partnership with the City. The community is granted significant decision-making power in this process through DSNI's leadership in the process and responsibility for community engagement. While DSNI can majorly influence the course and outcomes of the UCI process, their participation in the City's process as a way of building community control is "different than what [DSNI] would do if it were a process that was just [their] own," said a DSNI staff member. This comes with its challenges. DSNI has worked to figure out its role in relation to the City in this partnership, and how to approach the partnership to best achieve material, comprehensive, and lasting community control through the process. For DSNI, the major challenges are the bureaucracy and politics, and the issues of transparency that come with that, which have all complicated the process and its

advancement toward community control. Despite these challenges, since the community has greater power over the process and outcomes than in traditional planning processes, UCI approaches being a vehicle for transforming social, economic, and political dynamics in governance toward greater democracy, community control, and autonomy, and "toward more equitable power and resource distributions" (Rosen & Painter 2019). To make sense of the benefits of the process and of its possibilities for robust, democratic community control over development, it is worth investigating the conditions that have allowed the process to approach this vision.

6.1 Community ownership of land as community control of development

Several DSNI staff considered OED approaching DSNI/DNI to acquire a key redevelopment parcel in the City's stead to be a key point in the process. This point, that the City needed DSNI/DNI in order to move forward in acquiring the parcels for the redevelopment, was further corroborated by City officials interviewed by the Tufts research team. The City's decision to approach and support DSNI/DNI in acquiring the building initiated the partnership between the City and DSNI to run the UCI process: as the acquisition took place, the City invited DSNI to co-sponsor and co-facilitate the implementation process as a lead partner. This allowed the community significant power in shaping the demands and the outcomes of UCI. One DNI staff member believed John Barros's push for DNI to leverage the Acquisition Opportunity Program through the City was one component of Barros's vision to include DSNI/DNI at the table in City processes.

By the time DSNI took on a leadership role in the implementation effort in Upham's Corner, DNI had nearly finished building out all the land in its core area, and was looking to expand its work into its secondary area. DSNI was already having conversations in the community, as well as with the City, about "trying to have a better presence in Upham's Corner and trying to get outside of the Dudley Triangle," explained a DSNI staff member. The opportunity to acquire the former Citizens Bank building was aligned with DSNI's goal of expanding its community control and organizing activity beyond the Triangle by trying to "get a stake in the ownership of property," explained one DSNI staff member. DSNI "wanted to have more of a voice" in the planning of Upham's Corner going forward, explained another DSNI interviewee, and the opportunity for the community to own land in the district allowed for intervening in the changes coming to the neighborhood.

Some people at the City "envisioned folding that property into the City's portfolio of properties like the Strand and the Bank of America building," said one DSNI staff member, while "at DNI there was never any wavering about the fact that the CB building was going to stay on the land trust." DSNI stood their ground in relation to the City from the outset of their partnership, by saying "we are going to collaborate with your process but we're also going to do our own process, and we're going to make the decision about what gets built" on the DNICB parcel, recounted a DSNI staff member. DSNI/DNI's strategy in agreeing to acquire the building was to establish a way for the community to control a key piece in the development process, so that the process would be more responsive to community. Owning a key redevelopment parcel grants the community greater leverage in negotiations and decision-

making and helps to control displacement. No matter how the process goes, the building will remain under the community's collective ownership in perpetuity by being on the land trust, so the building will always be for the community.

DSNI remained firm in its commitment for the community to own and control the property, which opened up "a lot of negotiations and discussions about the decision-making process" between DSNI and the City for how the partnership would carry out the UCI process going forward, explained one DSNI staff member. For the City-owned parcels, "DSNI's Board is going to vote, and, as a part of the WAG process, DSNI is also going to weigh in, … but the City and the Mayor will ultimately decide" on what would happen to the properties. "The reverse is true," explained this DSNI interviewee, "with the DNI building: it will remain on our community land trust and the City and the [WAG] are going to have a strong say in which developer gets picked, but DNI and DSNI boards will make the final decision, since we're the owners of the property." This power is the result of DNI's ownership of the CB. It allowed the community "to own the table, not just have a seat at the table" of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, as a DSNI staff member put it.

As one former DSNI staff member described how the City approached DSNI to be a partner in the implementation process, "the City kind of needed us, in a way. It was an interesting dynamic." DSNI went in "with a sense of entitlement" that if the City was inviting them to co-sponsor an implementation initiative, that "this is what it's going to take, and that it's going to take a lot longer than [the City thinks] it will, and we've got to cover these issues of the non-real-estate side of it," such as defining what an innovation district is and whom it

will serve. By running its own parallel process with the DNICB (though still doing so in coordination with the City), DSNI used their community engagement at the CB as a model for the standard by which the process for the rest of the district should go: the community would have a real voice in shaping the RFPs and other deliverables that would determine the outcomes of the process. In particular, "the way that DSNI and other partners organized and did planning at that building helped to inform the agendas for the larger meetings," explained a DSNI staff member. DSNI tried to figure out how to bring the City along for DSNI's community engagement methods for the process, facilitating "attitude adjustment, especially at the BPDA, around everything from interpretation to translation of flyers to food to how the agendas were being set and who was running the meetings."

DSNI got involved in the process and partnership because the redevelopment was happening no matter what, and so they "wanted control … and a real voice over it, and not be outside it," explained a DSNI staff member. DSNI also got involved because "the City was putting the money where its mouth was and making investments." Instead of just developing one building and allowing the market to dictate the development of everything else, as the City had done in Dudley Square (BPDA, n.d.), with the Upham's Corner Implementation Process the City is intentionally making strategic, comprehensive investments to "stabilize the community," noted a DSNI staff member. Land assembly is more responsive to community in the sense that different kinds of partnerships can be carried out for achieving the desired development outcome, rather than relying solely on private developers owning and controlling property. While there are still constricting market-based financing structures

at play in developing affordable housing and commercial properties, developing a larger set of parcels gives more leverage and power in dictating real estate market conditions in Upham's Corner.

6.2 The partnership dynamics between DSNI & the City

The Upham's Corner Implementation Process is ambitious because it is an extensive redevelopment project that is also being carried out as a partnership with a community-based organization and with the stated goal of impeding displacement. Coordinating this ambitious process at the City came with its share of challenges, particularly political and legal setbacks. One DSNI interviewee described how "there is so much politics" and "political jockeying" at the City. Some of the political imperatives that the City juggles includes needing to play to voters and sustain a public image while bringing in capital through real estate development. Politics within the City also entails the struggles among various City agencies for power and resources. A City interviewee echoed that to be able to achieve the directives of City leadership, "there's many layers at City Hall that you have to proceed through ... and there's all the mechanics … you have to go through." While this long-time City staff expressed a few times how several of the components of the UCI process "the City has done before," there was certainly a lot about this process that the City was figuring out for the first time.

One City interviewee described how "the vision and leadership to the overall vision" within the City for the process "comes from the Mayor and the Chiefs." Chief of Economic Development John Barros "is tasked with orchestrating" leadership toward the vision. The

impression of one DSNI interviewee was that the Upham's Corner Implementation Process "was a new process, was something different" and "was definitely not seen as a typical BPDA planning initiative." This set the tone for how the process would be carried out in the City. While this may be hopeful for advancing structural change in City planning and development, for the UCI process to "set a precedent for having partnerships with community groups" and be adopted as a model "for how community engagement and community process could be done … requires a different approach than [the BPDA] currently [has]," explained a City official.

DSNI's long history with the City is essential for the UCI partnership and supports the entities in restructuring their relationship in this new context. The deep relationships DSNI has been able to cultivate with the City over time were necessary for achieving the community's goals of controlling land and development. Rather than this uniqueness being a shortcoming, or dismissed as an anomaly, it speaks to the importance of deep, authentic, messy relationship-building even in politics and even among two kinds of entities—government and a grassroots organization—who can have conflicting interests. Aside from building relationship with government, however, DSNI's autonomy and self-determination have been essential for the organization to build its own power. While DSNI did approach the City for support in achieving its goals, its accountability to the Dudley neighborhood took precedence. DSNI's history is one of being confrontational when it needed to be, not shying away from using adversarial approaches with the City, but standing its ground while bringing the City into its process. As one UCI interviewee mentioned, DSNI has had a dynamic with the

City where the organization is “taking on the City when they need to and partnering when they need to, and pulling together a coalition of groups” to advance the vision of community control in the UCI process.

The City’s trust of DSNI takes on an additional dimension in Mayor Walsh’s appointment of John Barros, former long-time Executive Director of DSNI as Chief of Economic Development. On the one hand, this appointment was an act of diplomacy, since Barros had run for the Mayor’s office but then supported Walsh after dropping out of the race himself. It is also, nonetheless, a vote of confidence in the ability of “a kid from the neighborhood,” as one DSNI staff member described him, to hold a position of significant power and influence within the City. Barros’s relationship with DSNI gives the organization and the neighborhood even greater presence and consideration within the City. Barros’s role at the City has benefited the community in the UCI process in that it has “helped keep the Mayor’s attention on this process,” according to one former DSNI staffer. Barros was a leader on the City’s Neighborhood Innovation District initiative. When the NIDs dovetailed with the recommendations of the Upham’s Corner Station Area Plan of the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative, Barros was the one to return to the community-based advisory group for that process to thank them for their work and to assure them the City would “be back to actually implement this,” recounted a DSNI staff member.

Barros’s positioning between DSNI and the City would often help to “break an impasse” in the UCI process. This DSNI interviewee emphasized, however, that while Barros’s role in the City has mostly been “a net positive for the organization,” DSNI has made progress

in this process not by any preferential status but by carrying its own weight in the process. DSNI "has had much less contact with John … than most people assume"—the organization more often deals with lower-level City officials. While Barros may be more responsive to the community having grown up through the organization, DSNI nonetheless "[has] to stake out [its] position" with him, approaching him as they would any top official in the City. A former DSNI staff member paraphrased the esteemed Boston organizer Mel King's reminder to Barros: "You are now power, and we will speak truth to power." This indicates the community will keep Barros accountable to implementing the lessons he learned at DSNI and in the neighborhood in advancing the community's priorities while he's at City Hall.

While Barros's role in the City has helped put a spotlight on the neighborhood, it could also be a "double-edged sword" for DSNI, explained a DSNI staff member. With DSNI struggling to sustain its organizing capacity, the community may feel a little too comfortable with simply riding on Barros's coattails in City Hall, expressed one community partner. This community interviewee described how, with Barros being well-known and well-liked in the neighborhood, "when people come down with a concern, he listens, he responds," and "that cools things off." A former DSNI staff agreed that, while Barros's role "certainly gives us lines of communication," it isn't "a replacement for the organizing work" that DSNI still has to do.

A community interviewee expressed that "a lot of neighborhoods don't have a DSNI, in terms of a strong, community-based organization" that can negotiate and hold its own with the City. One City official recognized, since "it takes time" to build a relationship between City and community, that "it's an investment" to have the community's trust, and that the City

benefits from “working with a community that has a lot of trust” in the City’s Chiefs—not only John Barros but also Joyce Linehan, Chief of Policy for the Mayor of Boston—which is “not the case with many other neighborhoods.” This City official does not take lightly the “sense of trust and engagement” in the City’s relationships with the DSNI community nor the community’s “great deal of buy-in and ownership over this” process. He goes on to explain that the City must be “tactical and mindful of those relationships and of the trust we have.”

What is productive about deep-relationship-building is the feeling it creates of understanding and of being understood: “knowing that people within the City … really understand DSNI is really important,” as one DSNI staff described. Staff at the City also recognize that DSNI has “the benefit of understanding what was going on behind City Hall.” The City’s close partnership with DSNI has meant that the organization has “always understood” and had “way more insight into why the sausage gets made the way that it does.” This assurance of mutual understanding helps the entities to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings as they arise in the process.

Since this process “has been talked about as being the first ‘real’ partnership between the City and a [community-based organization] as equals” and the City benefits from DSNI’s trust, one City interviewee mentioned how the City must make sure not to “let down the community.” This takes the form of the City staying true to their promises to the community and actually doing “the things we said we’re gonna do.” If the City can deliver on its promises, “there’s a lot that could be gained,” but also “so much more that could be lost by messing it up along the way.” While there are significant challenges to building trust among parties

when there is an inherent power dynamic between them, as long as there is a process of conciliating interests "with some degree of assurance" that the less-powerful party "will not be exploited," trust can be built among them (Tomlinson & Lewicki, 2003).

To build trust, however, DSNI's positive expectation of the City must be proven and maintained. DSNI also keeps a healthy dose of skepticism and a willingness to be strategic with the City as needed, taking a "power-mapping approach" to navigating the City, explained one DSNI staff member. As one City interviewee recognizes, while "trust in partnership" means that "partners will do right by each other," this still "requires more risk on the side of the nonprofit." The City "doesn't really have anything to lose but … a lot to gain" from partnering with a community group. If the process goes wrong, the "City will still be around, will still survive," but "the community group has a lot to lose." DSNI's long history with the City demonstrates their reciprocal ability and willingness to thread this needle.

6.3 Part of working with the City meant establishing a shared understanding and mode of working together.

For over 30 years, DSNI has had power to review all public land disposition and development in the area covered by the DNI land trust. Through DSNI's community control, the organization's Sustainable Development Committee has had the authority to vet incoming plans that would affect their area. This has strengthened the working relationship between the City and DSNI, rendering the City more willing to collaborate with DSNI because of their long history of working together on planning and development project's in DSNI's core area. As this relationship deepened over time, it has offered greater opportunities to

change the traditional power dynamics in city planning to one that is more collaborative with and responsive to community.

The City wanted DSNI as "a strong community partner" to be part of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, explained a City official, so it needed to adjust its practices in order for DSNI to agree to participate and cooperate. A former DSNI staff member explained that "the City kind of needed us, in a way." One City official who personally did not have prior experience with DSNI agreed that "with the decision to have DSNI as a partner came all of their terms [and] all of their planning processes," which was a dynamic unlike other planning processes he had been a part of. To this City staffer, this process was even "more than had been done" with DND serving as a conduit between DSNI and the City over the years, and he acknowledged that this unique dynamic between DSNI and the City was part of the City trying to "operate differently" in the grand scheme of planning and development.

Many interviewees mentioned the initial challenges of coordination among City agencies over jurisdiction, ownership, and responsibility over various aspects of the process. One DSNI staffer felt "frustration" with the amount of "political jockeying as to whose place does this land in." DSNI interviewees noted how the experimental nature of the UCI process, and the Mayor's announcement that this initiative was a "top priority," made it so that the process piqued the interest of "almost every city department." One DSNI interviewee believed, however, that the City departments would only want to claim responsibility for the

UCI process “if it goes really well,” while wanting it to be another department’s responsibility if the process “goes to hell.”

A positive aspect of OED taking control of this process was that this office could be more experimental, more supportive of the community, and more responsive to DSNI than the BPDA could be, since OED is a small office in City Hall close to the Mayor and led by lifelong community advocate John Barros, rather than a large agency like the BPDA fraught with institutional history of being responsive to monied interests. A negative aspect, however, is that the learnings gained from this experimental process are not readily translating into broader policy changes at the BPDA, the agency that’s still responsible for nearly all planning in the city (this process with OED being the exception). A City official agrees that there are “challenges,” “internal politics,” and a need for “a different approach” at the BPDA, but that there’s a “willingness and appetite” to “changing how [the BPDA does] things.” This City staffer further defended that “having partnerships with community groups” was “already something that had been discussed at the BPDA” and that “this being a pilot for how community engagement and community process could be done is something that BPDA is supportive of.”

One DSNI interviewee described how “the challenge of varying City departments not quite on the same page around what the Mayor wanted or what the BPDA was saying was a priority” was a common theme when the process was first being figured out. A City official reflected on how “the desire to innovate within City Hall,” the “mandate” from the top to run this experimental process, and the “commitment to do it within the administration [don’t]

always translate to some of the parties or entities or departments." This issue, of ambition versus practicality at the City, and how things can get lost in translation or misunderstood even among departments of the same administration, became an issue that proved difficult to resolve along the course of the process, but that provided useful lessons for future implementation processes at the City.

In order to co-facilitate the UCI process through a partnership, which was a new dimension to the relationship between DSNI and the City, not only did the City have to change how it functioned, but the City and DSNI had to renegotiate their relationship. One DSNI staff member emphasized the importance of making sure that at the outset of all of these processes, "that there really is time spent to say, 'how do we work together?'" Both entities "wanted to work together" and their intention was to determine how to do so, particularly to reach clarity on what each was bringing to the table, who was responsible for what aspect of the process and why, so that both the City and DSNI would take ownership and responsibility over their respective roles in the process. The partnership needed to "develop a timeline and a clear understanding" of its goals and a plan that the entities would be accountable to. One DSNI staff member specifically articulated a need for a shared and clear understanding, outlined at the outset, of what the City's responsibilities were, in order to keep the City accountable to community.

In this process of role renegotiation, DSNI realized that there weren't any records being kept of meetings. DSNI understood record-keeping to be an important component of holding the City accountable to their promises and decisions. DSNI resolved to take control in

ensuring there were records of meetings, in order to help them "own the process with the City," according to one DSNI staff member. DSNI also recognized that owning the process was a sign of their own power and thus of their own accountability to the community. Being in a partnership with the City in this process meant that if something "didn't go well, it's just as much our fault." This interviewee believed that the partnership helped to break through the initial adversarial "us and them" dynamic between DSNI and the City. DSNI had gained enough of its own power so that, in order to pressure the City to do better, DSNI had to take ownership and their own responsibility as well. DSNI took on the commitment of note-taking to keep up accountability for both the City and themselves. Record-keeping was seen by DSNI, in their commitment to the community, as one component of speaking truth to power.

Record-keeping helps to ensure the process is transparent and accountable to the community. Documenting helps with knowing what questions still need to be answered. One DSNI staff member expressed that the aim of documenting the process was to keep the process, and especially the City, transparent. There were still "all these unanswered questions, so how do we help … the City to understand that there are questions that people raised in the community" and "that we need to give people an answer?" The process of record-keeping can transform the way power-bearers understand how to connect their work back to the community, whom the development is meant to serve, and how to be more mindful of the implications of leaving the community's questions unanswered. Notes serve as reminders of points the community has raised that have not yet been addressed, and are a way of respecting the community for taking the time to come out and give their input.

Oftentimes, residents and community members don't participate in processes because they know their input will go nowhere, and notes are a first step in rectifying that.

Record-keeping would also help preserve knowledge beyond any one leader. If a high-level director were to make a commitment, that would be noted so that lower-level staff would ensure it would be followed through on. Since many people were involved in the process and there were a fair share of transitions in leadership at DSNI and in some City agencies throughout the process, keeping notes would help ensure that decisions were transferred between leaders. Preserving knowledge helps facilitate relationship-building when a new person is onboarded to the process, and helps to ease these transitions and keep the process moving efficiently.

Different leadership styles have been a hallmark of the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, with each different style helping to build power at different stages of the process. While the capacity at both the City and DSNI changed at different points, which was "out of [anyone's] control," each person brought "the power of their personalities and their dynamic contributions to it," as one City official said. The shifts in leadership both at the City (e.g., from Kristina Ricco at BPDA to Andrew Grace at OED) and at DSNI (e.g., the Executive Director transitions throughout the process) could also lead to frustration, acknowledged one DSNI leader, because each new person would "bring a different style, different desires, and different things that are going to shape the process." Nonetheless, this City interviewee believed that, overall, this dynamism injected new energy into the process, brought in different perspectives to address issues that may otherwise have become stale

and unimaginative, and kept the people who would be involved in the process for the long haul on their toes.

One DSNI leader in the process underscored the importance of figuring out how the process could be better "able to withstand the change of people" and distribute responsibility so that things don't fall "in the hand of one or two people." Even though she recognized the importance of sharing responsibility, this interviewee also acknowledged that it was challenging to delegate. She described how Andrew Grace and Denise Barros took charge and felt like they had not done their "due diligence" to rework everyone's roles, because the work "needed to get done," and "everyone was glad that it was getting done." While better distributing responsibility could be one way to improve partnership-based planning processes going forward, having assertive leaders figuring out a process as complex as this may also have been essential. This interviewee agreed that "part of the challenge … with the process being so long, is that you just get to a point where you just want to get it done." She explains that the effort of figuring out how to achieve the ambitious goals set forth in the process can lead to fatigue, where "after a while you can't quite function enough to do all of the pieces" and "just allow whatever to happen." The most dangerous thing about this, she admits, is that by then "you don't look at process."

Part of why the City approached DSNI to partner on the UCI process was in part to improve community engagement. The neighborhood power that DSNI has accumulated through its history of community control and through the Sustainable Development Committee, comprised of neighborhood residents and that "monitors proposed

developments in the area" (DNI, n.d.), are means for winning demands such as having translation at meetings or taking control of the communications and messaging so that the process can reach the community. In addition to the leverage DSNI has in starting from a position of power, DSNI also has devoted much staff and leadership capacity to this process, allowing the organization to fill in the gaps and to deliver on the engagement needs directly, by creating flyers and agendas with the community in mind, successfully bringing people out to meetings and authentically engaging people at meetings. By modeling what effective community engagement looks like, DSNI was able to win the support of lower-level staff from the City for their methods—with City staff encouraging DSNI to continue taking lead on engagement—which then translated into support and responsiveness at the higher levels of the City as well, keeping pressure on the Mayor to keep the process moving. DSNI staff felt that overall, with the whole range of how the process went, DSNI has been "able to put a DSNI stamp on a City planning process for the first time" with "the way the agendas were created, who was involved, having facilitators from the community be trained and be present so it wasn't just City staff running the meetings," making sure the meetings were equitable and inclusive by having food, interpretation, and translation, and centering creative forms of engagement like pop-ups and playback theatre performances. Another DSNI staff member agreed that the visioning for the process "happened in a lot of ways in alignment with DSNI, the way we do it." This DSNI leader believes that "there's definitely hope in the vision … not only of what the community will look like, but hope that there's change, that it's gonna

change our relationship to the City, and really how we do things," and hope that the process will continue to achieve its goals and deliver on the community's needs.

Because of the partnership's concerted efforts, and despite the work yet to be done to achieve greater understanding for how the City can work with communities, one DSNI interviewee observed that the City and DSNI "did get into a rhythm" and "started to build trust" with expectations of each entity's role being set and understood. One City official reinforced this notion, describing how "over time our administration promised we would do something and then—following up on it—built that trust." Another City staffer agreed that "this process requires a lot of follow-through," acknowledged how "the City, in its more diverse neighborhoods, has had issues with trust," and emphasized that "it's hard to build trust until there's actually a product." Across interviews, it became evident that trust-building between the City and DSNI required striking a dynamic balance between process and outcome, with both needing to be accountable and responsive to community.

6.3.1 Issues with City's political and legal bureaucracy

In partnering with the City to do innovative, broad-thinking development and to rework systems to better help meet the community's needs, one of the most challenging issues the community faces is working through the political and legal bureaucracy of the City. DSNI, as a partner with the City, faces the challenge of being intertwined with a bureaucracy to run its process: DSNI must, in some ways, answer for and be held responsible for the City's setbacks. Echoing what a City official described, "the community group has a lot to lose if [the process] doesn't go right," and can even lose the trust of the community by standing by the

City if the outcome of the process comes at the expense of the community, such as by causing gentrification and displacement. DSNI is treading a delicate line in trying to use its accumulated power for the benefit of the community by partnering with the City. Retaining its autonomy and community control, like DSNI has through its land trust, is key for facilitating a partnership with a bureaucracy like the City.

People at the City were skeptical, at times, of the timing DSNI and community partners felt was needed to run the community process. One City official described how the community sometimes was concerned about "process for the sake of process." Another City official echoed that people in the community can sometimes be more "invested in process rather than outcomes," which can lead to "possible tension." A leader from the City felt that perhaps the process could have moved more quickly and been carried out in less time, but John Barros would direct the City to "'listen to the community'" and "'give them a little more time … if they say we need a little more time.'" This City official expressed that while "there are some people at the BPDA that operate that way, … not everyone operates that way." Despite this support from Barros for extending the timeline for the community process, one DSNI leader felt that part of what slowed the UCI process down from the City side was Barros "advocating that it go through his [office]" and the experimental nature of the process: "it should've probably stayed under BPDA and been similar to other processes that we've done — because we know how to do that."

Because the process was trying to be innovative from the City side, it did, indeed, run into problems with confronting uncharted legal territory and the bureaucratic issues that

accompanied that. At a WAG meeting, a City leader described how the City is "innovating here, especially with the legal structures" and how "the City is being pushed and stretched—in a good way."

Many community stakeholders in the process agreed that the City had a clear and promising commitment to this redevelopment process being for the community, which it demonstrated through its investment in buying up land and putting up $18 million for the new public library. In order to make this process possible and "expeditious," according to another City official, the City had to be strategic about developing partnerships to facilitate the necessary land acquisitions. This was the case with the DNICB. The City learned from the difficult process of acquiring the former Bank of America building that it was not easy for them to acquire buildings quickly, so they applied that lesson to the CB when they heard that building would go up for sale, by bringing DSNI in as a strategic partner.

The City and mayoral administration wanted "to deliver in a very expeditious way … on the library," described a City official. The WAG had become sold on the idea of building affordable housing on top of the new library. A City staffer explained, however, that "it is really, really legally challenging for [the City] to build a public facility and put something that is not public on top, because of bidding laws." While the "easiest path is to put a 1- or 2-story library," a City official explained that "the Mayor doesn't want to feel like he's letting the community down." Striking the balance between the community's desires for the process and the City's challenges in meeting those desires has been the principal conundrum of the UCI process.

While a high-level official at the City said that they'd like to use the investment in the library "to leverage more money for housing, … it's not easy to do that with our rules," because "when public procurement and the public dollar is involved, the City has a very constrained process." The City also wants to "be a continuing strategic partner with the Strand and continue to subsidize." To be able to accomplish these kinds of innovative financing and development schemes that could possibly deliver on more of the community's desires, process stakeholders will need to figure out how to "mix and match and build more diverse development teams," as one City official explained to the WAG.

The legislation and "legal actions that have to be taken in order to allow [the City] to do what needs to be done" will also take more time and extend the timeline of the process, explained one City official, which further complicates the community's trust in the City. This City staffer described how the City and DSNI had weekly, and at one point daily, coordination "around knowing where the delays were." As mentioned previously, the City introduced an entirely new component of a Request for Information (RFI) to the UCI process in the summer of 2019, which delayed the release of the RFP, over sensitivities at the City about possible perceptions of conflicts of interest in its cross-sector partnerships. While the City was able to appease the WAG about the need for this delay, with some WAG members genuinely coming around to viewing this setback as ultimately beneficial, an extended period of time went by without notifying the community of the delay after there had been a public meeting in March 2019 celebrating the imminent release of the RFP.

The City is treading a delicate line when it comes to its partnership with DSNI and the sensitivities that public entities face regarding giving off the appearance of nepotism and favoritism. This is not the first time DSNI's relationship with the City has led to some problems over perception. A former DSNI staff member described how with "the first non-Dudley Triangle development to be put onto the land trust" prior to the UCI process, DNI and the City had agreed that the City would pick the developer, but that the land would go on the land trust. "Everything was all set," but at the last minute the City found a legal issue with saying that DNI would own the land, because it would give "DNI a material advantage and violate due process." The City ultimately "figured out to write into the RFP that [the land] had to go onto a land trust, not necessarily DNI, but [with DNI] being the operating land trust in this neighborhood, [DNI] would obviously be the ones to have it go on our land."

The City's "reservations and concerns around potential partners and conflicts of interest" in the UCI process, as described by one City official, often comes into direct conflict with community process and transparency. Because some of the WAG members were slated to enter into their own partnerships with the City regarding contributing parcels to be redeveloped as part of the district, this meant these WAG members had to abstain from attending WAG meetings. Even a City official described this situation, of "[having] a WAG meeting where some of the WAG members can't come," as unfair.

This process of assembling land with the City "leading the way with a public investment" was used in the Bolling Building in Dudley, one City official remarked. While this was a similar case to UCI in which the City "had to deal with some of the challenges of the City

owning and operating commercial property with tenants in a way that the City has never done before," the Upham's Corner Implementation Process is "like that times 5 or 10" in terms of complexity. What makes the UCI development initiative different from the Bolling Building is that the latter didn't have "housing the mixed-use nature of this" and that for the UCI process the City brought in another partner when the City "couldn't act as fast as it needed to act to gain control of this property." While that decision to partner was "endorsed by the administration," the complications that were later discovered, which came from the procurement laws, were frustrating for staff at the City working on the process, particularly because "we're not doing anything illegal, nobody's benefiting financially from this project, there's been no gain, and yet we have to sort of backtrack and issue the RFI to get the public declaration from our partners."

Many of the UCI process stakeholders, from both the City side and the community side, have been frustrated about these legal and political delays that have extended the timeline of the process. One City staffer, when asked what a goal of hers for the process was, responded, "for it to be complete!" A former DSNI staff member upheld this frustration from the community's perspective, criticizing the City by noting "the tenuous situation we're in now, where the City's got to put up or shut up, or else this will get very stale quickly."

A lot of the community's time was invested in the process, one community partner observed, particularly "with the WAG members and [DSNI's] Arts & Culture Subcommittee members combing through the RFP." Part of what made the process of writing the RFP challenging from the community side was that the document itself was "so onerous and so

large," according to a DSNI leader. One community partner underscored how "documents being long and incomprehensible doesn't make people [in the community] feel like they can shape the language in any way." The process of moving pieces of the RFP document with the WAG in-between weekly City-DSNI coordination meetings was difficult to handle and to move efficiently, especially with so many other things on everyone's plates.

A City official agreed that by the summer of 2019, the process was "somewhere [at the] halfway or ⅔-of-the-way point, [which] might be somewhat of a depressing standard because it took so long for us to get here," but that "people are so involved in the process [and] care about the process and the outcomes." People at the City were aware of how their delays affected their relationship and trust with the community. One official noted how these setbacks are particularly egregious challenges for building and maintaining trust "once the community has already been involved and once expectations" are set. Another City official echoed this frustration, saying that, "I wish [the process] could have moved quicker … I think as a result of this process, and the amount of time that's passed, there is … a strong desire to deliver on the part of this administration."

Because UCI is a new and experimental process for both City and community stakeholders, there is a lot of trial and error, within the City, to figure out how to resolve political and legal issues at the City, and for community stakeholders to figure out how to keep the process moving in a way that is accountable to the community. Although this process has helped foster better coordination among City departments, resolving misunderstandings and streamlining decision-making at the City has been a major hurdle

both for the bureaucracy and subsequently for the community in its advocacy and partnership role in the UCI process. Resolving this tension does require time for reflection, to make critiques and changes with best intentions and in the interest of all stakeholders, but especially of those most vulnerable to the impacts of bad outcomes.

Many City and community UCI stakeholders' main criticism of the City's delays is that City officials should have more skillfully advocated on behalf of the community within the City, particularly by coordinating better with the City's lawyers. Being better able to anticipate and avoid these obstacles, such as by including the City's lawyers in the UCI deliberation process from the beginning, so that there would be fewer problems with things getting lost in translation within the City, is key. As one DSNI interviewee mentioned, what was challenging was that the City's lawyers came on after the long process of deliberation of the RFP language that happened between DSNI, the City, the WAG, and other stakeholders. Though the lawyers "really tried to understand … and honor … the spirit of what we were trying to do," their lack of participation in that deliberative process "became problematic" because "they started to shift things they didn't understand the importance or relevance of." This situation with the lawyers was a particularly egregious instance of miscommunication and misunderstanding between DSNI and the City in this partnership, and speaks to the importance, as well as the difficulty, of bringing all stakeholders along and establishing clear lines of communication between them, particularly in such a complex process.

City officials themselves described how folding the legal and budget departments into the process, or at least informing them of the community-led decisions sooner, would have

been a critical improvement in streamlining the process. A City official stated that "what's been challenging has been a lot of process-oriented things," particularly how "the City really wants to do a lot of innovative things, a lot of progressive things, which is great, but … there needs to be a lot of front-ending of legal decisions rather than just doing the things we think won't be a problem and then later turns out there is a problem." This City official emphasized how a major lesson learned and one of her "number one suggestions" is that "if there's a city process that at all involves land or anything happening to land, whether it be with an RFP or whatever, that legal has to be involved from the beginning." This is particularly true when the local community is involved: the interviewee described how "I have been involved in conversations where community members have seen maps of parcels and sites and conversations have started only to find out later down the line to find out that there are title issues." These land-based issues would be resolved more easily by talking to legal earlier.

Through these complications with the UCI process, we see clearly how the City is multi-faceted. One City official expressed how "even though you're working at the top [and] there's a mandate to do this and you're working with the community and the power" and there's "the support of the community and the support of the Mayor," other people at the City not informed or bought into the process in the same way as these stakeholders "can block and get in the way of the progress." This interviewee noted how "it's a lesson to bring everyone along, even the ones I didn't know that I needed to bring along." This interviewee admitted that "I didn't think of the challenges that came up" and that "knowing where heightened sensitivity is" is paramount for overcoming these legal and political issues. This

interviewee acknowledged how there will also be a lot of variation from moment to moment and according to current events: “maybe in a different time, different administration, or just a different set of circumstances with Corporation Counsel, it wouldn’t have been as much concern.” This underscores the need for people at the City to be always attentive to political sensitivities that arise and how they develop over time, even if tangential or unrelated to the particular project at hand, in case these may indirectly impact the project, particularly if the project involves many, and especially community-based, stakeholders to whom the City must also be accountable. It’s also possible, however, that there was some thinking among the more community-oriented leaders at the City that getting the expectations and excitement for more innovative planning and development possibilities out there in the community would create public pressure for the more inflexible parts of the City to figure out solutions for things that they would otherwise be quick to shut down.

The City’s willingness and skill to communicate these various setbacks with the community, rather than imparting to them the wrong message that all is well before all is settled, i.e., when aspects are uncertain and when there is still room for things to go wrong, has been important. Delays did not look good on community leaders in the process, either, who were viewed by some as being complicit in not being forthcoming to the community. Although DSNI was itself not privy to the full extent of why these political obstacles arose, they still had to answer to the community for why there were delays after there had been a public announcement and celebration of the release of the RFP. One former DSNI staff member said of the RFI process, “I wish that DSNI had not allowed a community celebration

to happen without something more concrete. Because it was almost three months ago now and people are going to start saying, 'what's the deal?'" This same interviewee advised that the WAG, which is "made up of some really strong community residents and leaders" must take responsibility for their role as representatives of the community in this process and "go out to the community and explain what the delay is, and what's happening, and how this might have a better result."

Community partners felt there would have been better, more transformative ways to use the time and energy invested in the process rather than using that time to fight against these bureaucratic challenges. A DSNI staffer underscored how DSNI's goals for the process "were to hold the City accountable to what they were publicly saying was real."

A criticism by DSNI of the City is the City's apparent risk aversion. A DSNI leader expressed with frustration how the City keeps "saying we don't know if it's going to even work, well, we're certainly never going to know if we can't get [the RFP] out." This perceived unwillingness or fear held by the City to try things and possibly make more mistakes is a "stumbling point" holding the process back: "let's get it out, and if it's a horrible mess then we at least can then recover from that and move forward. But we don't even know that yet because we just can't get the damn thing out. And that's obviously the biggest hurdle at this point. And are we shooting ourselves in the foot just because we can't do that?" One City official acknowledged this central pressure felt between community and City in the UCI process: "I occasionally get frustrated by the amount of time that it takes and some of the barriers…. and the proof will be in what we can deliver."

6.4 Creative placemaking, arts, and creative engagement as organizing

DSNI at first was unsure of whether to "go fully in as a partner with the City on this implementation initiative" because each had different ideas about community engagement, explained a DSNI staff member. Another DSNI staff member described how, going into the UCI process, she "wasn't sure about all of the politics, with our relationship with the City," and how to navigate that relationship in being a voice for the community and for creatives, so that "what we were doing was a decision that we were going to feel proud of later." Having a community process that would truly engage the community and capture the community's needs and desires, in a way that was significantly autonomous from the City's influence, was critical for ensuring that "community voice was really at the forefront."

DSNI had ds4si as an engagement/meeting design partner—a connection which they had developed since the Fairmount Cultural Corridor. DSNI's relationship with ds4si proved to be paramount for the UCI community process. One former DSNI staff member described how ds4si is "good at making something actually engaging and interactive in a way that makes [the issue] real" for people. Some City staff were apprehensive of ds4si for being the critical and rabblerousing voice in the process. One City official explained how "having ds4si's presence … is quite unique. … [ds4si's] insertion into [the process] has … at times … challenged us and frustrated us," particularly because, as mentioned previously, the City expected the community to be cooperative as a partner. A DSNI staff member described that "when we brought DS4SI to the table, the City got really clammy about it because … ds4si has

a little bit more flexibility to be resistant." This interviewee explained her view that "the City was really focused on an image and concerned that ds4si would taint that image." DSNI "has our foot in both realms" of cooperation and of protest, but their relationship with the City and particularly their role as the City's partner in the UCI process means DSNI has to keep a delicate balance. A DSNI staff member expressed that DSNI wants their community partners to support the community process by playing that role when DSNI can't: "we want them to be the derailers, we want them to be the naysayers, we want them to do that."

By independently bringing in more critical community partners such as ds4si and activist artists into the UCI process—who did not have a formal relationship with nor were officially accountable to the City—as well as by running a more grassroots development process with their own DNICB, DSNI created a lot more space to be rebellious and resistant than their role would otherwise allow. This also improved their perception with the community by "show[ing] the community that we're in alignment" and sent a clear message that DSNI would "push back when we need to," explained a DSNI staff member. The City interviewee who had expressed frustration by ds4si's involvement went on to acknowledge that "it has made most projects stronger and better and [the City] together with DNI and DSNI have figured out how to utilize ds4si as an engagement mechanism."

A community partner described how the UCI engagement was meant to "make sense of [the process] for the public" and to try to "give the public ways to share their hopes and what they would want to see, but also their fears and their concerns" for the process. Engaging community members on their fear for what harm could come from the

redevelopment process was seen as important for helping keep "people engaged to a place where they can hold the City accountable." Being real about the potential risks that could come for the community as a result of the redevelopment was crucial for current residents to feel understood and taken seriously, and able to believe that they were a part of determining the outcome. Using creative engagements was also key for shaking people out of their habits and sparking innovative thinking from community members. One such disruptive intervention, exemplified in the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot, was a reflective sculpture that would catch the attention of passers-by and that functioned as a metaphor for the central agitational question of the engagements: "Do you see yourself in Upham's Corner?" The creative engagements also served to embed the arts and culture intention of the district in its engagement process. As one DSNI staff member observed, "most artists … have no shortage of criticism about what they see," so the integration of arts into the community engagement of UCI was fundamentally about drawing critical awareness from the community and provoking imaginative and transformative thinking in the UCI process.

The creative engagements for the DNICB and for UCI were born out of DSNI's arts organizing and community control work, ds4si's community engagement designs, and the work of the Fairmount Cultural Corridor and the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot. The goal of UCAP was "to implement both placemaking strategies in the neighborhood to get more residents involved, but also to promote creative economic development and help artists and creatives to participate in the economic development that was happening in the neighborhood" (Lobenstine, 2014). The goal for the UCI engagement was informed by

Roberto Bedoya's idea of the "aesthetics of belonging," where people feel a sense of mattering to the process. These creative placemaking strategies were meant to be subversive in getting community members to reimagine themselves as powerful and worthy of demanding control of their community.

Seeing oneself as belonging to a community and as being able to collectively make demands on the City is critical for the community's power to control land, planning, and development. To help develop this sensibility among community members, DSNI has, since its involvement in the FCC, centered its organizing more on arts and culture. DSNI has built a "creative placemaking portfolio of work," explained a DSNI staff member, that has included artist fellowships and other activities that have "integrate[d] the arts into the fabric of DSNI," in addition to its foundation of planning and development. DSNI recognizes that "the creative placemaking [and] placekeeping [that's] trending now … triggers a lot of folks," because it signals gentrification and activates fears of displacement, and so DSNI's arts organizing seeks to keep "community voice at the forefront" by working with the community and with other community-based organizations. The question is how to center the community while continuing to infuse arts into organizing in a way that can curb displacement.

For the community to envision its power to control how the neighborhood changes, building up the community's knowledge of sustainable development is also an important task for DSNI. One DSNI staff member admitted that being brought into the UCI process "was very new for me. … Understanding a request for proposal and urban planning and all of this development language and jargon" was something she had been "a little removed from, but

excited about learning in this process." Another DSNI member asked, "how do we continue to educate the community on these processes" and on what all the components of a planning process are? According to this interviewee, "part of what we owe to the community is to increase everyone's knowledge, because that's what we do" as DSNI. The organization views knowledge-building as critical to its organizing, because it helps the community to advocate better, as well as to "push back" on things that the City may claim "but that we later find out … could've gone a different way." This interviewee believes DSNI needs more resident education in order to increase the community's capacity to call out and put pressure on the City. Being well-informed empowers the community, giving them the tools to be more strategic and to win more battles to move the process to a more community-controlled outcome.

DSNI's priorities for the planning process were twofold: 1) to make sure the community felt like they had a real voice in shaping the real-estate RFPs, and 2) both to tie the arts innovation concept with the goals the Fairmount Cultural Corridor had been organizing around and to push the concept beyond real-estate. This meant centering local artists and merchants as the main beneficiaries of the redeveloped arts district, and making sure the purpose of the district was well-defined, that it would be truly neighborhood-based, "based on preservation and promotion of local culture and local artists, and [representative of] the diversity of artists in the Upham's neighborhood," explained a former DSNI staff member. This clarification was important, to ensure that "the first significant investment in arts and culture working, rehearsal, and performance space in the City in years" would

primarily benefit the residents and artists of Upham's Corner, rather than be meant for people from wealthy areas outside the neighborhood.

Organizing is essential for articulating and achieving this vision. Creating a feeling of ownership within the community, that inspires an impetus of stewardship for the neighborhood, requires developing an awareness in people that they belong in the neighborhood and in its future, and that, in turn, the neighborhood belongs to them. This process of leadership development involves "[creating] opportunities for residents to experience the kind of arts life that they want, and then fight for it or recreate it," explained a community partner. This process of developing a sense of belonging and ownership is challenging among racialized, low-income segments of the community, where people have "never had authority and get harassed for walking down the street." The question is how to build the muscle of "civic self-esteem" —"to create spaces where people feel that sense of joy or power or civic engagement," where people believe they can improve their built environment for themselves without being harassed.

The challenge for DSNI, as the main organizing body in the process and in the neighborhood, is accentuated, because DSNI is in a position where it's plugged into multiple initiatives to build community control in neighboring communities, aiming to extend its work beyond what it considers its territory (i.e., beyond the Dudley Triangle and secondary area). Within its territory, DSNI is well-known for its community control work and for the gains it has won for the neighborhood. But in extending its reach, DSNI must leverage its legacy in community control and positioning with the City, but also work to develop new relationships

and gain familiarity and recognition with people in the neighborhoods, including Upham's Corner, that the organization is extending community control to. Building this civic self-esteem and leadership development, to help people go from "attending something to being on the arts and culture subcommittee to feeling like they have a say," requires "trying to find ways for people … to learn about DSNI," explained a community partner.

The case study on the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Pilot recounts the importance of people building connection with their neighbors. Communities are created by people connecting with one another. Organizing communities by deepening civic engagement and developing leadership gets people more involved and invested in their neighborhood, having a sense of ownership over the outcome of developments and interventions in their neighborhood, and feeling able to push for bolder ambitions for their neighborhood, such as development without displacement. Uplifting and highlighting "the essence of what's already there in what people want to create" is necessary for understanding what it is that current residents of Upham's Corner want to preserve about their neighborhood amid change from outside. DSNI comes from a long history of being able to inspire this kind of community ownership, empowerment, and creative visioning.

The creative engagement process of UCI aimed to transform residents' relationships to their neighborhood, so that they could begin to imagine themselves as belonging in, as well as having ownership over, their neighborhood, so that they could further go on to imagine and make demands for what they'd like to see for their neighborhood's future. Because the engagement activities aimed to upend and transform power dynamics in the

neighborhood, some touched a nerve among people at the City who were more comfortable or familiar with preserving the status quo. The City, in asking DSNI for help with better engaging with the community, had to confront these tensions.

6.4.1 Community meetings underscored tensions between community and City

The UCI community process was a series of community meetings meant to gather input from neighborhood residents and local stakeholders, that would form the basis for the community's platform for the Implementation process. As mentioned, the first two meetings focused on the library (November 2, 2017) and the Strand Theatre (November 30, 2017), which are the two anchors of the UCI redevelopment. One DSNI staff member described how the initial tone of the meetings was that "a lot of people showed up more to protest than to learn." The meetings "were very contentious," with "a lot of mistrust being conveyed" and "a lot of unrest around this whole process from people who live here." This resulted in a feeling of "a lot of tension in the room … to a point where the City could feel their feet really get closer to the fire" by the intuitive fears and concerns of people, "without [DSNI] even doing anything" to agitate or channel these feelings. These tensions raised "a lot of questions" for the City "about how [DSNI] felt [the City] could engage with the community better," and "gave [DSNI] a good opportunity" to remind the City "how and why this organization has been so significant for the last 35 years."

With this opening, DSNI took more control over administering the community process for UCI. DSNI started designing the flyers used to disseminate information to the community about meetings for the process, and, with that, had greater control over the process's

messaging to the community. To one DSNI staff member, this was significant, in that the messaging changed from being "politically correct and trying to be safe about promises or catering to one audience versus another," which is the City's tendency, to "cater to what this community really needs, what this community wants, and using a lot more creativity to make these flyers more visually appealing." This shift in messaging, along with "flyering and canvassing the neighborhood to make sure people were informed," resulted in getting much greater turnout from people in the neighborhood. DSNI also owned the community process by being responsible for coming up with the agendas for the community meetings.

One critical incident, which, according to a DSNI staff member "set the tone for all the meetings that followed," was the playback theatre performance put on by Red Sage Stories at the UCI Community Meeting at the Strand Theatre in November 2017. Thanks to DSNI's effective engagement of the community, this meeting had some of the highest turnout, with "at least 300 people" in attendance, surveyed a DSNI staffer. City staff assigned to work on the UCI process were also all there. In playback theatre, the audience is engaged by being asked to tell a story based on a prompt, and the performers then dramatize the story. With storytelling, "there is listening that happens," explained a DSNI staff member. From having their story listened to, people "feel heard or witnessed, or they might feel a sense of belonging … or see their stories reflected." This further "builds trust and opens people up to be engaged." This space for trust, connection, accountability, and authentic sharing helps build toward the outcomes the community wants from the process. Furthermore, "the arts helps to accelerate that … maybe faster than we would if we were just sitting at a table

talking about it," explained a DSNI staff member. At this community meeting at the Strand Theatre, DSNI had Red Sage Stories go around, observe, listen in and collect notes on conversations among community members, which would serve as the fodder for the playback theatre that the actors would perform for the attendees later in the meeting.

Figure 8: UCI community workshop on the Strand Theatre (Smith, 2018)

The community, split up into small groups, had "really powerful discussions"—conversations where "a lot of frustration, passion, and just anger, and even some joy came out, ... and lots of meaningful debate," recounted a DSNI staff member. The community talked about "gentrification and Black people being pushed out of the Strand." At one point in the meeting, a young woman became overwhelmed with the discussions and with her fears, and expressed, "This is suffocating me, this is too much pressure." All these feelings that were stirred up for the community got played back when the actors performed on stage.

This technique was gripping, capturing the attention of everyone at the meeting, so "you could hear a pin drop," described a DSNI staffer.

While community meetings for planning processes often have people expressing these kinds of feelings, the format of these meetings tend to reinforce power dynamics and do not allow or encourage the full expression of the community's feelings, nor give them their due attention. This results in the expressions of these powerful sentiments "[getting] lost in translation over time," explained a DSNI staff member. This meeting, however, was "more real than anything we could've done in a powerpoint or in a report-back session," noted this DSNI staffer. The capturing and dramatization of the community's feelings in a way that respected and uplifted them was "wild, especially for a city like Boston and a city meeting about development," and proved to be powerful and validating for the community, according to several interviewees. A DSNI interviewee observed that a lot of the same people who showed up to this meeting kept coming back, and believes it was because they were so pleasantly surprised to have felt heard. This brought "the same type of energy" to the meetings that followed.

6.4.2 How UCI creative engagements impacted the City's practices

According to our interviewees, the UCI creative engagements were effective both in calling out power dynamics between the community and the City and in empowering the community to make demands of the City to improve its engagement practices. A DSNI staff member explained how the Red Sage Stories performance "sent a really clear message to the folks working for the City," that the community did not want, and would not allow, this

development process simply to move forward in a direction predetermined by power-holders such as the City or real-estate interests, but rather in "a direction that this community is going to be driving on their own," with the process being "just the vehicle." While this expression and assertion of the community's feelings and power was well-viewed by many, some City officials felt uneasy about the demonstration, and did not give positive feedback about the playback theatre event. One City interviewee among those more amenable to shifting power to the community, described that "what was happening in the background was that City people were losing their minds." While the playback theatre incident, and especially the expression of potential for power dynamics to shift in and through this implementation process, brought up discomfort for some people at the City, there was no denying that the methods were effective and meaningful for engaging the community. Leaders of the process at the City described the engagement as "very different" than what they had seen with other processes.

Recognizing the merits of this form of engagement despite their own uneasiness, the City began to adopt some of DSNI's engagement practices. One official at City Hall observed how the BPDA, in witnessing the community-building process of UCI led by DSNI, is now bringing creative engagement methods, such as the pop-ups that DSNI carried out for the DNICB, into their own processes. Many of the community engagement tactics, such as making sure to provide food and interpretation at community meetings, are "a good baseline thing," according to a former DSNI staff member, that the City, and especially the BPDA, "should've done about 20 years ago."

A difficulty that one City official noted with regard to the City conducting engagement for planning processes is that, in being responsible for planning citywide, staff at the City cannot "be local to every neighborhood." This is particularly challenging in the context of Boston, where "there is a general desire to have people who are very locally oriented and from the communities" to do the engagement work. While this hyperlocal approach is beneficial for engagement because "it allows for professional work to be done in the local vernacular," this interviewee recognized limitations with Boston being "so small and parochial." These strict in-group and out-group definitions when it comes to neighborhood identity can make it "harder for people who are not from a neighborhood … to be able to engender the same levels of trust as people who are." This proves to be challenging for City staff who are charged with doing work in neighborhoods they are not from. On the other hand, this can also provide an opening for the City to partner more with locally rooted neighborhood organizing groups, like DSNI, to run the engagements for city planning processes. Having more of these partnerships with local community-based organizations could increase democratic governance and decision-making at the City—so long as the participation leads to greater power, accompanied by material changes, for communities.

What DSNI was most seeking from the UCI process was transparency—"that the community knew what the process was," according to a DSNI leader in the process. This included having clear lines of communication between decision-makers and the community, and using those effectively to communicate "where we were in the process, … what we were

struggling with and what we were doing well, … where we still needed to work." The transparency and communication required honesty from process leaders.

The purpose of transparency is to facilitate the process toward the deeper goal of "the community [having] a voice and … [the] power to make decisions." For people in the community "to feel like they've been a part of something," described one former DSNI staffer, they need "to know what's coming." This is why DSNI felt it was critical "to engage people about what they wanted to see in the theater, … in the library, and then our building," another DSNI staffer explained. With this familiarity and knowledge of the process, and the feeling of belonging and connection that would come of that, the community would develop ownership and a feeling of being able to demand changes and to impact the decisions in the UCI process. With the RFP, that meant being able to "push to get things that weren't always in the RFP and help with crafting" the output of that document, explained one DSNI leader. DSNI wanted the vision of the community to come through the outputs of the process—to "come alive in what we requested"—and for the community to have a real impact on the outcomes of the process as well. This meant having "the community be a part of the selection process" for developers after the RFP was released. DSNI sought for the engagements to be real opportunities for the community to push and pull and deliberate on the vision and outcomes of the process, not just be "sessions for people to complain about something and then feel like it didn't go anywhere," emphasized a DSNI leader. The creative engagements like the playback theatre, the pop-ups, the open houses, and other activities were effective

because they were chances for the community to give input into the Upham's Corner Implementation Process.

6.4.3 Representativeness of the community

A generative challenge to building a cohesive vision for the neighborhood is that the population of Upham's Corner is very diverse. The aim of the engagements has been to account for "both breadth and depth"—looking at "not only how many people got involved" but whether they were "fairly representative of the community" or simply "a smaller segment of the community," explained one former DSNI staff member. The people most often engaged in planning processes tend to be White, middle-class homeowners, "even in places like Upham's Corner," noted a DSNI staffer. In fact, community engagements for planning processes tend to be deliberately designed for the exclusive input of these White and property-owning segments of the community, in order to tout processes as participatory without shaking up existing power dynamics. Some DSNI and community interviewees believe the UCI process to be different, and felt the process has engaged many more tenants and Black and brown low-income residents through DSNI than a typical planning process would. While some stakeholders felt artists can be better engaged, particularly through the WAG process, many also felt that the arts and culture engagement through the FCC brought much involvement from local artists into the UCI process.

The impression of most interviewees was that a segment of the community most under-represented in the process has been merchants and small businesses, despite the City's stated purpose for the neighborhood innovation district to support local economic

development through small business and entrepreneurship. A major criticism that many community stakeholders have had of the RFP is that there aren't "any real incentives or programs" that would support merchants. A former DSNI staff member said there has been a "lack of real outreach to merchants," while a community partner described that the local business improvement district has been a bridge to merchants, keeping them informed, yet merchants do not come out to meetings, despite even having been invited to the WAG process. Still, one former DSNI staff member believed that the City could have done more "to get more creative about how to meet merchants where they are at." While there were more surface-level attempts to connect with them, there was little to no attempt to "talk one-on-one with the merchants" and to figure out how the process could better address the deeper issues related to crime and drug abuse that merchants were struggling with, and from which merchants felt the arts and innovation district idea was so far removed. This DSNI staff member said, "I don't blame them for not coming out, but that's a continuing challenge and it needs to be rectified as the developers are selected."

Another segment of the community that many interviewees have agreed has been under-represented in the process has been young people. While DSNI worked to mitigate this through its own engagements and youth programs around the DNICB and through its internal working group, there are still no young people on the WAG, meaning "we've given them voice, but we haven't given them power," said a DSNI leader. Another DSNI staff member echoed that the process "fell short on" making sure youth were "really being connected and interested and engaged." While there is substantial elder representation in the process, the

youth voice, which is key for the process since the plans will determine the future of Upham's Corner, is lacking. Nonetheless, youth voice has always been an important component of DSNI's work. DSNI continues to seek and advocate for ways to integrate youth perspective and decision-making in the UCI process, such as by developing youth programming about the UCI process to increase young people's knowledge about development and about the process. DSNI and ds4si also designed the creative engagements for the DNICB specifically to engage the input of youth.

One City official gives "a lot of credit to DSNI and ds4si for the engagement." She believes that the "breadth of outreach" that this process was able to achieve, which "isn't necessarily as common in other neighborhoods," is because of the City's partnership with DSNI. Through this partnership, the community engagement did not rely entirely on City communications, which can often fall short, according to this City official. DSNI provided access to "different networks, different levels of engagement with the community, a different appeal, and also a different style" and different "marketing and communications" than what the City would have done, which proved to be invaluable. "There were a lot of new voices activated in this process," believes one former DSNI staff member, as well as "a pretty committed core of 50-75 people who have pretty regularly participated," which is a win in the eyes of one organizer we interviewed.

Despite having this good core, organizers will always want to engage more people to show up. A community partner explained how engaging the public means that if you touch hundreds of people at a meeting or on the street, "there's still thousands of people that have

no idea that this is happening." The question then becomes how to think more creatively about how to arrive at that greater scale, and particularly how to build "the bandwidth to really deeply do that."

Better representation in the process also means making sure there are "enough folks represented" in decision-making and power-bearing positions "that are a reflection of who lives in the community and who's being displaced out of the community," explained one DSNI staffer, but also that these members of the community are able to impact decisions even without occupying a formal position of power. This means going beyond formal representation, in the liberal multicultural sense, toward greater and more authentic power and control held by people in the community most vulnerable to displacement by development.

6.4.4 WAG process + formal community representation

The Working Advisory Group process was an important component of UCI's participatory democracy. The WAG deliberations made concrete impacts on the decisions of UCI and on the content of deliverables like the RFP document. One of the important contributions of the WAG early on in the process was to reframe the concept of an "arts innovation" district—a top-down term determined by the City prior to any community engagement—as an "arts *and* innovation" district. This is considered a defining moment of the process among DSNI and community interviewees, because it was one of the first moments in which community leaders challenged a decision made by the City. It also set a tone for the process regarding the importance of language and around teasing out and

defining terms so that the words used in communications and in the RFP would best capture and evoke the community's feedback and needs.

While the WAG consisted of people who were long-affiliated with DSNI, including two founding members of DSNI and people who have collaborated with DSNI extensively over the years, there were also community leaders on the WAG who DSNI did not have a prior relationship with. One DSNI staff member described how originally "we weren't sure … who [on the WAG] was allied with the idea of being invested in making sure that … community voice was really at the forefront" of the UCI process. This DSNI staff member expressed how she later came to believe that the WAG had held firm to DSNI's vision for the process: "they have helped us to keep our integrity [and] our moral compass … throughout this." Another DSNI staff member expanded on this, saying that "there is currently buy-in" among these "key stakeholders, opinion-shapers, leaders," and "gatekeepers" who don't necessarily have a title but who are "reporting back to a whole group" and telling them to "stick with it." A City official agreed that the WAG "really does feel a sense of ownership" and "a great deal of buy-in" over the process.

The City decided that the WAG would continue its role as the official body representing the community and the public's input through the developer selection process, and afterwards in the development review process set out in Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code. This decision to have the WAG continue to hold community oversight over this next phase of development speaks to the City's commitment to the community process, which is undoubtedly influenced by John Barros's involvement.

This extension of the WAG's responsibility, while promising, also comes with its challenges. The WAG has come a long way, with one WAG member describing to me after a WAG meeting that "when this all started, it was like the blind leading the blind." While a DSNI staff member noted that the role of the WAG has expanded "much further than the WAG members were anticipating," there is still buy-in among the members to take on this greater responsibility. The role of the WAG must evolve, but "there's not a road map on how we do that post-RFP and with the Article 80 process," a DSNI leader explained. One WAG member, who worked in the Upham's neighborhood but is not a resident, suggested that, since the WAG up until now has been a volunteer role, the City should give the WAG professional support and resources in order to respect these community leaders' time, particularly when the WAG's responsibilities in the process increase. The other consideration, from DSNI's perspective, is how to integrate the ongoing work of the FCC through this transition.

Another challenge with the process of community representation is the ability to challenge the authority that community people perceive the City to have. One DSNI staff member noted, while community representatives like DSNI and the WAG have been able to change language and rhetoric in the process documents, even introducing terms such as "development without displacement" to a development process that helps the community feel more involved and in greater control, that power in the process still remains with the City. Displacement is already happening in Upham's Corner, but community advocates need to continue to organize to achieve their biggest hopes for the project, which is to push back against displacement. Further, one community partner questioned whether the WAG has

“enough strength to hold the City accountable, as the formal community engagement entity.” This interviewee acknowledges that while the WAG may never become “super powerful” in terms of their decision-making authority in the process and their influence over its outcomes, many of the group’s members care deeply, and “hopefully” that will lead to “some ways to continue to think together and to hold the City accountable,” which will “be a key piece for [this process] to work out.”

7 Conclusion and Discussion

DSNI has positioned itself, since its inception, as a community control entity, and has been able to achieve significant community control through a relationship with the City. DSNI won community control through its community organizing strategy, which is also what influenced the City to support the neighborhood. The Flynn Administration of the 1980s had explained that what made the Dudley neighborhood compelling, and why the City trusted so much in the organization before it had a track record, was DSNI's authenticity in its effort to empower the community.

According to the accounts in *Streets of Hope*, however, the City also harbored uneasiness with the idea of community power growing to a larger scale and getting out of hand. The issues that neighborhoods other than Dudley have with City government are real and should be the basis for understanding how the City could best function to empower communities to take control, like DSNI was able to do decades ago. In the same way that DSNI has accumulated neighborhood power as a result of its successes, other neighborhoods have accumulated a sense of disempowerment and distrust for the City because of dynamics of chronic disinvestment and exploitation. This distrust must be understood in applying the lessons learned from the UCI experiment to other community and neighborhood planning processes across the City. The City and its partners must also examine the City's distrust and reluctance toward granting power and authority to low-income, racialized communities and neighborhoods. Understanding how these inequitable systems and power dynamics widen gaps between neighborhoods and the City will help shift power toward community control.

7.1 Challenges communities face in cooperating with neoliberal planning

While DSNI has been able to win significant community control through its collaborations with the City over the decades, one community partner described how "we have a lot more fear than hope" that the process to redevelop Upham's Corner into an arts and innovation district will benefit the community, even though this is the rhetoric the City has stood by. This interviewee described that "it's a very confusing process, because the City is saying the right things. We're in that kind of city and in that kind of time." Meanwhile, forces like gentrification ravage low-income communities of color.

It's critical for the community's knowledge and understanding to be coupled with real avenues for building and asserting power. One community partner explained:

> "even as DSNI is bringing people out and we're creating mechanics for people to be engaged and weigh in … the City will say, 'Look at all these people who weighed in. This is a great process.' And we're thinking, are we just giving them a great process to say that they had a great process, or are people really able to understand what's going on and continue to push it?"

Continuing to organize the community to put pressure on the City is an important piece of asserting and gaining community control.

DSNI is trying its best to toe the line with the City, to be able to maintain the relationship in order to continue to access the more formal kinds of public support they've been privileged to, while still being responsive foremost to community and putting pressure on the City to achieve the community's needs. DSNI at times struggled to thread this needle, finding themselves picking battles and needing to say "we're going to let the City do whatever it needs to do, and we're not going to make too much noise," according to one DSNI leader.

This is part of why DSNI has benefited from having ds4si as a partner in this process. Since ds4si is not in a formal relationship with the City in this process (they do not own a parcel or otherwise have any stake that makes them accountable to the City), they are able to play the role of being vocally critical when DSNI can't. Even though the City was nervous about ds4si's role, a DSNI staff member assessed that because "this process has been transparent, really transparent. … we've grown to be a real partner with the City. We've grown in a way that the City now feels a little bit more trusting of our partners in this process because at first they were really apprehensive of our partners that we brought to the table."

Having John Barros in a significant position of power, as mentioned, has served as a double-edged sword for DSNI. While his presence has helped put a lot of the administration's attention on this process and has supported much of the community process and outcomes, the neighborhood's trust in John Barros could also, at times, pacify the community and "cool things off," according to a community partner, which could hamper organizing which is necessary for putting pressure on the City. This interviewee mentioned how "sometimes it's hard to know what to do in this situation—it's so neoliberal. We're all holding hands and we're all at the table."

The City's adoption of DSNI's practices could also be a threat to community control, even as it helps the community participate in City processes. As mentioned previously, one former DSNI staff member expressed skepticism and uneasiness over the BPDA learning from and using DSNI's engagement tools such as the pop-ups—particularly because DSNI put in such hard work to craft these tools to be for community control, and because the BPDA,

which has a legacy of redeveloping neighborhoods at the expense of working class Black and brown people, is now using these methods without that same intention.

In terms of the role planners play in managing these contradictions, one City official was confused about how planners are viewed by the communities they aim to serve:

> "We go into these community meetings … across the city and it's very antagonistic ... Boston is so liberal and so progressive and most residents themselves share most of that sentiment, but you go to a lot of community meetings, and people say things that make you think that the government, the city, is against the people and against progress and against good moral things."

This interviewee noted that "there has been a history … of government not doing great things" but emphasized how "a lot of people these days … go into government [with] very progressive, social justice oriented values." While planners do enter the profession in order to have a positive impact on cities, the real estate industry has an influence on planning and development that is not to be overlooked nor understated—even in a process as community-oriented as UCI has aimed to be. While the real estate industry has not directly shown up at the decision-making table of UCI, the power of real estate is still felt in terms of how financing decisions are made, which shapes notions that process stakeholders have of what is feasible. Planners must acknowledge and reckon with this in order for processes to truly advance social justice and build community control. One community partner agrees that "we have people at the City who are good, hardworking city planners, and they don't have ill intent, but they don't have a willingness to be held accountable to the City's history. They take it personally. Like, 'we're doing our best and working so hard, how could you be so skeptical?' [They need to] have a historical understanding."

The City needs to more consistently reckon with its track record of not valuing nor serving poor communities. Words and intentions need to be accompanied by actual material changes in people's lives— not simply through equitable representation in planning processes, but by being more accountable to communities than to real-estate capital. Government must develop more robust and numerous avenues for democratic participation and control over public processes and governance, so that community can keep government accountable. Nonetheless, alternative institutions like DSNI, through their organized community power, exert political pressure that challenges the power of real-estate capital.

7.2 Capitalist urban planning vs. development without displacement

In anticipation for the development coming to Upham's Corner, there was a lot of organizing from the community around what an arts innovation district would be and specifically what the community would get from being part of such a district. As one DSNI interviewee said, "there was a lot of concern in the community that the term 'arts and innovation district' was going to be more of a real-estate term that realtors could use" to market the new neighborhood to more affluent newcomers, producing gentrification and displacing current residents. The concern was that there would be development in the neighborhood "without any real resources to support local artists or creatives, much less the Main Street businesses that were there," meaning, that incoming development would be to support people and businesses from outside the neighborhood, at the expense of the people who made the neighborhood as desirable as it is today. As one UCI community partner reflected, "it's hard to imagine" that this "moment of intense gentrification … [is] not going

to happen, that somehow Upham's Corner is going to figure that out." There is a lot stacked against a vision for community-controlled development in the neighborhood.

The latest trend in neoliberal urban development is that the solution to the housing crisis must include luxury development. The argument behind promoting mixed-income housing—with the ratio of ⅓ affordable housing, ⅓ moderate income housing, ⅓ market rate housing—justifies including market-rate housing in order to subsidize the affordable housing. The challenge with curbing speculation and with making housing affordable to keep people from being displaced is that the contradictory imperative of development is to promote real-estate growth in order to bring in future public gains. But public gains for whom?

Through their involvement in the UCI process, DSNI and their community partners have impacted the breadth and depth of affordability in the district. A community partner explained that with the DNICB "increasing affordable housing, there will still be overall more affordable housing even if the City will also only be building to ⅓-⅓-⅓," which is less affordable than DSNI's affordability goals. Although the City has begun to adopt DSNI's language of development without displacement, "when you read the RFP, it's like it has a really nice smile but it doesn't have any teeth. It doesn't have the mechanics of how to hold developers accountable … it's all relative. Is your proposal better than someone else's?" This interviewee went on to say that "we sat with the City once and talked about affordable housing—whether that would be innovative… but they said they don't have time for that and settled with ⅓-⅓-⅓." While the community felt they did make some dents in the evaluation criteria for the RFP, there's still "no mechanics to keep merchants safe from gentrification …

time and time again [the City] would say it wouldn't be possible, that there wasn't a mechanic for that or that legal wouldn't allow them to do that. So they all have their logic."

One compelling criticism was of the City's logic of neighborhood innovation districts, which was based on the Seaport innovation district and the idea of bringing this sort of investment to neighborhoods. The Seaport district received $18 billion in investment—one community partner wondered, "what if you invested 5% or even 1% of that [into Upham's]?" The notion of developing an "innovation district" is an opportunity to chip away at some of the ingrained assumptions about what it means to invest in neighborhoods. This interviewee described how the City's usual approach is to give aid and mentorship to small businesses, rather than investing or leveraging money for them as they did for economic development in the Seaport. Ds4si's idea of horizontal development is one way this more innovative approach to economic development could have played out: "how can we shift people's thinking of investment to something more horizontal—neighbors investing in neighbors, the city investing in neighbors… this idea of valuing the specificity of Upham's Corner and the merchants here and life here, versus valuing growth." This interviewee bemoaned the missed opportunity to shift the City's thinking about investment, but recognized that this is a wicked problem that is multi-faceted, "because when you try to intervene in it, it's moving and shifting and adapting."

As a DSNI staffer said, "at the end of the day, obviously, we want development without displacement" and "to make sure that we're doing everything we can to ensure" it. A vision of development without displacement requires DSNI to help set the framework for what

working toward and achieving this vision would look like in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process. This vision requires DSNI to use "the tools of the land trust" and the City to use the tools "of maintaining ownership of the land" to work toward this vision and to "create a safety net and security that's long-term" through the redevelopment of the Upham's Corner commercial district. Economic stability and community wealth will be achieved through intentional ownership, control, and development of land by the community and for public benefit. Several DSNI staff agree that for the result of development without displacement to come of this process, there must be codification of decisions that enable and enforce community control—"a long-term commitment to the community—utilizing those tools to create something that the community wants, for perpetuity and not a short period of time." Community organizing is necessary to ensure that the needs of the community are addressed and codified in this process.

7.3 Creative engagements as prefigurative politics

The creative engagements that DSNI and community partners developed were critical for the community process of UCI, primarily because they served as an avenue for prefigurative politics. Carl Boggs (1977) explains prefigurative politics as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal." Through the creative engagements of the UCI process, people enacted the relationships and the vision for the kinds of decision-making and development they wanted to see for their neighborhood. As a UCI community partner explained, sometimes "someone can imagine what they need as a

resident but it doesn't mean they can imagine a new kind of power or a new kind of investment in your neighbors," but the creative engagements opened up a space for better connecting the community's needs to a different way for how the neighborhood could be organized. It was important that the community had ownership over creating these avenues for imagination, since "we can't assume the City is going to imagine it, or that residents can fight for it if they haven't seen it before. We have to take the time collectively to say that we want to imagine something new." The work entails not only helping residents imagine new power dynamics and new forms of societal organization, but also "to help cities think differently," which is "very hard work." The community must be willing to change that mindset from the bottom-up and to bring the City along, but the City must also have the political will to push further.

The aesthetics of belonging, as theorized by Bedoya, "is part of DSNI's core values," according to a DSNI staff member. A DSNI leader noted how DSNI and ds4si found "creative ways to engage people in the process, … to get people to give input and feedback on what they want to see, … understanding that meetings aren't going to be for everybody." Ensuring community voice was at the forefront of the UCI process meant "organizing in the image" and "from the perspective" of people who live and work in Upham's Corner—as described in the UCAP case study, "using creative placemaking activities to reflect Upham's Corner back to itself." Bringing this creative vision of what people want to see and making those ideas come to life by prototyping them is prefigurative politics in action. According to a DSNI staff member, the creative process of collectively envisioning a future for the neighborhood that

represents current residents, artists, and merchants allowed the community to arrive at "a better understanding of that which we might be organizing or fighting for … by making it real," which impacted the decisions in the UCI process. Art and creative engagements create scenarios for people which "spans languages and culture because you can really speak to someone's background when you organize in that way." Art also "gives you so much [more] room to connect to people … than just talking at people." In many ways, the creative component of the engagements helped make an abstract process real for people.

The creative community process helped make sense for people the development happening in Upham's Corner and to bring those dynamics to the community's awareness in a way that could go beyond immediate fears of displacement toward greater recognition of the community's power to shape these dynamics. The questions raised by the creative engagement went beyond who the changes in the neighborhood will be for, "but who gets to decide on what the changes are," echoing the UCAP case study.

The challenge with organizing and with engendering in the community a sense of empowerment to be able to embody a vision of the future in the present is that the UCI process is "very warm but it's not hot," explained a community partner. The community fears the neighborhood becoming gentrified, but there isn't overt injustice occurring because of the process, or "that heat that makes people turn out," such as "someone's house being torn down or fear of being evicted." In the case of the arts and innovation district, the City is not "taking away some resource" but "improving something that hasn't been a resource" like the Strand Theatre and the new library. This is a challenge the community faces in working

collaboratively with government: while the dynamics of market speculation necessarily result in violent consequences against communities, much of it can be swept under a rug of good intentions.

The UCI process is meant to create a district that supports arts, innovation, and economic development for people who currently live in Upham's Corner. While this is a noble endeavor, if people are struggling to make ends meet to afford rent and food, struggling with drug addictions, struggling with violence in their neighborhood because of these compounding economic issues, there can be a disconnect from the community in feeling that creating an arts-based economy in their neighborhood will be relevant to their deeper concerns. A former DSNI staff member explained that the community is "much more about, 'if you're not going to do anything about these issues, and you're talking about an arts and innovation district, that's bullshit.' I think the City at different times … did the kind of surface-y things." This disconnect makes it hard for people to feel like there is something worth fighting for in this process, and is a challenge for organizers in "how we create the things that people will fight for," explained a community partner. "It's hard to create the force of 'we need to keep this ours' in a place where most people who live here don't feel like it's ours. … most people don't feel like they have a say. They're making it work. … For most people it's 'this is where I'm getting by, and I hope I can stay because I don't know where else I'd get by.'"

It's confusing, in these conditions of partnering with government, "to know [how or] what to fight in this process," even though the community is worried, according to this

interviewee. “From a community organizing perspective, how do you turn up the heat?” These dynamics can constrain the community’s organizing capacity and could undermine the transformative potential of the creative engagements. The solution may entail deeper political education for the community to better understand their economic conditions, in order for people to recognize the value they provide to the City, to come together to fight for/ assert their worth, and to leverage their power in order to win material changes and investment from the government. While DSNI and its partners have been able to leverage their organized power to model for the City what this sort of investment in the community must look like, the question remains whether this has been sufficient for delivering on the needs of the community and what it will take for the community to truly contest for power.

7.3.1 Community’s frustration over the City’s ultimate power/authority in the UCI process

As noted, a challenge that DSNI faced in partnering with the City was in navigating the sometimes contradictory dynamic of both being in greater proximity to power but of not having full authority—of needing to collaborate with but also to push the City. One example of how this played out was when DSNI and certain WAG members had raised the issue of there needing to be more artists on the WAG. The City had the final say over appointing people to the WAG, and the issue had not been rectified because the City was imposing its own rationale of what would be the right timing. This was a moment of frustration of DSNI not having the authority to be “able to appoint people to the WAG,” explained a DSNI leader. Despite being a “little detail” in the grand scheme of things, this issue was still “really

important" for highlighting differences in formalized power over the process between the City and the community. It pointed to the larger issue of "this constant conversation [with the City] around how much pressure you can put," and of DSNI and the community needing to pick their battles. There was some aspect of DSNI "constantly trying to figure out … how much can we really push and what we absolutely have to push." DSNI's highest priority at every juncture was to push process.

One community partner noted the elephant in the room regarding these differences in power and authority between the City and the community:

> "at the end of the day, we're in a process where the hope is that the City and the community pick the same developer, and then walk it all out as a happy story … But if at the end of the day the community wants one thing and the City wants another, the City will get what it wants. And that will be a point of reckoning. … I think the City's hoping that we won't come to that. But if we come to that, the community's not going to win."

A WAG member echoed that "as always the City has its own agenda," which in this case "was more aligned with what the community wanted than not." However, there are times when "the WAG will say one thing and [the City wants] to approach it a different way and then they go back and consult among themselves and come back … with another way of doing it." A community partner echoed that "there were some key pieces that we tried to change and really didn't. We wanted the Strand operator to be a separate RFP, and they talked the WAG out of that. And we wanted to have an outside consultant evaluate the Strand and make recommendations—but they talked us out of that." A DSNI staff member agreed that "there were some recommendations and suggestions" that the community made "that kind of got knocked down" by the City. Despite these challenges, a DSNI staff member "appreciated that

there were a lot of times behind closed doors" that the community did help to shift the City's thinking. A DSNI leader evoked "DSNI's mantra" that "anything's possible," and asked, "at what point do we say that this isn't possible? … what do we do and how do we not settle?"

A lot of this likely came about because of the legal and political constraints the City faced. The frustration still stands, however, that many of the constraints that the City was beholden to are relics of inequitable ways of organizing society and investing in economic development. While a WAG member noted that a lot of these community-City conflicts in the UCI process were "alleviated because there've been these regular meetings between DSNI and the City," deeper issues of power still dictate how far and how deep the process can go in building community control.

7.3.2 DSNI and the feminization of politics

Part of DSNI's ability to deliver on its commitment to organizing, arts, and education work is based in the organization's recent, brief, and circumstantial shift to a more feminized politics. According to Laura Roth and Kate Shea Baird, two municipalist theorists:

> "... feminizing politics means ... gender equality in institutional representation and public participation. … [and] a different way of doing politics, based on values and practices that put an emphasis on everyday life, relationships, the role of the community and the common good" (Roth & Baird, 2018).

The latter point is imperative, without which the former would be solely a practice based in a liberal co-optation of identity politics (Smith, 2017). According to this definition, I would say that DSNI, in part, happens to be working to advance community control through a feminized politics. I aim to call attention to this in order to show the effectiveness of guiding the

organization through a feminization of politics, so that the benefits of this shift could be better harnessed by DSNI.

In terms of female representation in the organization, DSNI has a strong legacy of female leadership on its Board, in its long-time staff including Ramona Lisa Alexander who has been with the UCI process from the beginning, and through its founders. During the Upham's Corner Implementation Process, DSNI welcomed its first two female directors, Kalila Barnett and Denise Barros, both on an interim basis for two brief stints of six months and one year, respectively. Despite the organization's time of official female leadership being short-lived so far, the contributions have left an indelible impact on both the organization and on its role in the UCI process, because of these directors' visionary commitments to the central value and practice of relationships and of community in achieving the goal of community control.

7.4 Outcomes - what remains to be seen?

Many interviewees agreed that the priorities identified in the RFP "are neighborhood priorities and … not just the City saying, 'this is what we want done here,'" as one WAG member noted. A DSNI leader emphasized that DSNI and the community worked hard in this process to ensure that what developers would take away from the RFP is that "the community has ownership of this … it's not just about owning and building these buildings, it's the relationship that [developers are] going to have with the community." The idea is that "we're creating something for people in this community … we want external folks to come in

to be a part of this, but first and foremost it has to be built for people in this community, and has to be responsive to that." A community partner agreed that "DSNI's involvement has meant that … there's a development without displacement plan that the developer has to put in … and hopefully it'll be not just a nice plan but actually [have] some decent mechanic to it." Developers will be required to work with the community to make decisions about what the buildings they develop will be for, and that is certainly unique among development processes. The question remains regarding "what effect that's going to have on us in getting respondents," but it's likely "going to be a challenge." The hope is that groups of developers will respond, which will make the responses stronger and allow for more flexibility and a greater distribution of power and authority among development teams.

A DSNI staff member expressed, however, that "although there's so many really hearty things in the RFP itself that came out of community process, … and we shifted those … into something that was really tangible, it's still not necessarily … a community benefits agreement," which could "really help a community thrive and hold the City accountable to the things." A community partner agreed that "the plan can look good or we could all get behind one developer, or get a developer from the community or get some community jobs, but then there's the long-term questions of how to hold the operator of the Strand accountable, is it affordable, does it have culturally relevant and exciting stuff, are merchants getting pushed out…" Keeping the City and developers accountable is one of the things DSNI really tried to deliver for the community in the UCI process. A community partner noted that this involved making it clear to the City that "we need to have language in this RFP that says

there's some community control over this district." DSNI had some success in this, in that "there's language in [the RFP] that we can hold onto if DSNI and other partners have the capacity to continue to flesh that out."

Many stakeholders of the UCI process have discussed the possibility of replicating this process in other neighborhoods, and feel that this process will provide many lessons. A City staffer expressed that this process "could have implications beyond just the groups and neighborhoods that have been a part of this." A DSNI staff member noted, however, that it feels premature to consider this process and partnership a model "because we need to see the success of it first … how do we measure … our pitfalls as well as [our] learning successes … and the impact of that right now?" The only notable success so far, according to this interviewee, is that "community voice has been present throughout." But "we still have a whole other series of things to do … like the bidders' conference and selecting the developer." A City staffer echoed that "it's gonna be hard to put a grade on it until the process is done. … until you've gotten to the decision-making part. … right now the ball is still in play. So, we'll see what happens."

7.4.1 Ensuring that this work extends to other neighborhoods throughout the city

Part of the community's interest in this process becoming a model is so DSNI's work to build community control through this process can facilitate community control in neighborhoods throughout the City. While DSNI and community partners were able to push the envelope in this process with their creative community engagements, and the City was

able both to see the value and effectiveness of these methods and to agree to the community control vision, the adoption of these ideas was not without its obstacles. A former DSNI staff member remarked on how the hope is that this process "gets documented in a way that other groups can see the power or the potential to do this, both taking on the City when they need to and partnering when they need to, and pulling together a coalition of groups." A City staffer believes that the partnership approach of the UCI process is "worth exploring more" for future community development processes. Since "different communities have different relationships with City government," leveraging these neighborhood partnerships and local networks of people can make things go more smoothly or "bring more resources into a neighborhood." A WAG member expressed, though, that "one of the challenges in trying to replicate the process is finding a partner organization in the neighborhood" who can play the role that DSNI holds in and around Upham's Corner.

As mentioned previously, though there has been some progress to impact the City's community engagement practices through this process, one former DSNI staff member wondered how much any of DSNI's efforts were "translated into BPDA changing its policies around things." Because there "wasn't a core BPDA role" in this process, the BPDA has not been brought along as much, resulting in a lack of codification of these practices in the City's planning and development agency. As a result, it's not clear how much these practices have "gone beyond DSNI pushing and how much that's going to happen in other neighborhoods." A DSNI leader agreed that in order for this community process to be replicated and to become a model, "as we think about [what] the legacy of this [will be], and how we can help the City

to work with other communities and not just [ours], some of this has to get written, in context and in a way that makes [expectations] very clear." DSNI itself has a legacy of trailblazing, but at the end of the day, "what's the precedent that has now been set in place" so that "the next process does not take this long to figure this out?" This, again, requires codification at the City—something that "lives somewhere" and "changes the way we all do work" and that "can go across the city," so that the gains from this process are not something that "just Dudley gets, Dudley gets, Dudley gets—we want this to be something that our city gets." Codifying the lessons learned from the UCI process for how the City can best work with communities is essential for replicating this process and for extending community control to other neighborhoods without these communities having to reinvent the wheel.

A community partner believes that the challenge in extending community control to other neighborhoods goes beyond sturdier criteria and codification of these lessons, and rather requires a greater change in the City's systems. If there were a real change in the way that the City went about investing in communities that was more horizontal, this would be truly transformative and would go beyond being

> "just an engagement process but an investment process [that] shifted how money moved and what we held as important. What if a City … had piloted this in a very different way? On the one hand, you can see how the possibility is so much bigger, and then on the other you can see that this is not that. Here I am trying to dent away at having a better indicator, better accountability, getting the word out better… and thinking it might've been a failure."

7.5 Conclusion

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's involvement in the Upham's Corner Implementation Process brought a vision of community control, rather than merely symbolic participation, to a City of Boston planning and development process. Entering this partnership role with the City represents a new phase in DSNI's community control work. As explored in this thesis, there are many factors that contributed to, and several factors that constrained, this process of building genuine community control through a city planning process. Overall, the UCI process and DSNI's contributions offer many lessons about community-City partnerships and about how communities can assert their power and advance participatory democracy in a formal redevelopment process.

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