



Examining a Community Food Planning Process

Case Study of the Dudley Real Food Hub in Boston, MA

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Exploring a Community Food Planning Process:

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Abstract

Between July 2014 and March 2015, the Dudley Real Food Hub (DRFH), a collaborative in the Dudley Neighborhood conducted a food planning process alongside a steering committee and residents. The Field Projects Team completed a case study in order to document and explore the food planning process. A review of internal documents, meeting notes and semi-structured were conducted as methods for data collection. Our findings included information related to: 1) the role of the DRFH partner organizations, 2) the role of the steering committee, 3) the decision making process, 4) significant constraints and challenges, and finally, 5) an implicit framework of social justice that permeated the process.

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Cover Image Credit: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

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Executive Summary

The Dudley Real Food Hub (DRFH) is a collaborative, community-development focused partnership that was formed in 2011. The DRFH, comprised of three partner organizations, including Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE), Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), and The Food Project (TFP), recently completed a nine month community food planning process, in conjunction with residents and a steering committee. In order to reflect on this process, DRFH engaged the Field Projects Team to review, document, and analyze the food planning process. Through a case study analysis the Field Projects Team reviewed internal documents, meeting notes, and conducted interviews. The Field Projects Team explored the evolution of the process and gained an understanding of challenges and successes that occurred.

The partner organizations comprising the DRFH each brought to the food planning process a level of expertise and capacity, as well as social capital. The organizations have existed and engaged in community development work within the community for decades, beginning with DSNI in 1984, followed by TFP in 1991 and ACE in 1994. Separately, each of these organizations have led and facilitated programming around a variety of topic areas, including general community development and empowerment, land use, urban gardening and greenhouse growing, environmental justice, popular education, and youth programming, with social justice as an overarching framework and driving motivation. However, the three organizations recognized the significant potential for meaningful collaboration, due to both overlap in organizational missions, as well as individual but complementary areas of experience and expertise, that could allow all three organizations to collectively increase

community capacity. As a result, the DRFH was officially formed in 2011.

The Dudley Neighborhood has traditionally experienced higher rates of poverty and unemployment, as well as incidences of food-related illness, compared to the rest of the city of Boston. Furthermore, children in the Dudley Neighborhood have been found to consume fresh fruits and vegetables at a rate much lower than the Daily Recommended Intake (DRI), as prescribed by the USDA. With the neighborhood landscape of food as its basis, the DRFH facilitated a youth-led, community-wide resident survey in the summer of 2014, gauging the resident food consumption habits, access to fresh and healthy food, as well as wishes and suggestions for the local food landscape. The data obtained from these surveys was then utilized as a foundation for the steering committee and DRFH to begin the community food planning process.

The Field Projects Team set out to document, explore, and elucidate the systems which guided the food planning process, as well as the roles of the variety of stakeholders involved throughout the course of the process. In order to more fully contextualize the food planning process, the Field Projects Team conducted an extensive literature review that resulted in four overarching lenses which further help to ground the planning process in a community and place-based framework. These four research lenses included Community Development, Health and Wellness, Organizational Collaboration and Networks, and Race and Food Justice. Finally, the literature review also included research around embedded, global issues related to food systems, considerations when examining local food systems and their ties to a more global framework, as well as constraints and consequences that are specific to the Dudley Neighborhood.

Following the process of data collection, the Field Projects Team engaged in an

extensive analysis process that resulted in the emergence of five overarching themes that most fully embodied the community food planning process. These five themes included examinations of: 1) the role of the DRFH partner organizations, 2) the role of the steering committee, 3) the decision making process, 4) significant constraints and challenges, and finally, 5) an implicit framework of social justice that permeated the process.

Findings from the case study highlighted a number of key characteristics central to delineating the community food planning process. First, it was clear that the DRFH partners each leveraged their longevity, resources, and social capital within the Dudley Neighborhood to effectively facilitate the process from beginning to end. Secondly, the steering committee comprised of both residents and other community members, brought expertise and a sustained level of commitment to the success of the planning process. Third, the decision making process inherently facilitated open dialogue, as well as the prioritization of resident feedback. Fourth, the planning process did encounter a number of constraints and challenges, which were primarily related to issues of funding, as well as consistent participation from beginning to end, particularly from residents and youth. While these challenges are not uncommon for a community planning process, the food planning process initiated by DRFH aimed to be as resident-driven as possible, so addressing these challenges will be important moving forward into implementation. Finally, a major force underlying the prioritization of the resident voice was the implicit framework of social justice that permeated the process from beginning to end. This framework of social justice was in part due to the organizational ethos of each of the DRFH partners, as well as a clear understanding from non-resident steering committee members that the motivation beyond undertaking a community food planning process in the first place was

giving residents a voice. In summary, two major short-term results of the food planning process should be highlighted. First, the food planning process successfully concluded with a vision statement, as well as five *resident-driven* priority areas and corresponding action steps. The overarching goal of forming DRFH is to provide Dudley residents with greater decision making power and autonomy over the local food system, and the plan for implementation is prioritized based on the vision and wishes of community residents. Secondly, the food planning process was able to engage residents around the issue of food, build morale, and expand the network of stakeholders focused on the Dudley Neighborhood food landscape.

Looking at next steps for the DRFH and steering committee, there is still a process of delegation that must occur for each of the priority areas. While an informal conversation has been initiated about potential DRFH partner responsibilities, based on expertise, capacity, and professional networks, a more formal assignment must occur, as well as the creation of a projected implementation timeline. Furthermore, a discussion has begun around implementation gaps that may arise and additional external partners that may potentially be able and willing to assist in implementation. Finally, it will be important in the future that an evaluation of the implementation phases occur to gauge the on-going success and consensus around the priority areas. The preparation for and conducting of the community food planning process has required a significant amount of time as well as resources from both the DRFH and the steering committee. Evaluating the effectiveness of implementation will be central to maintaining fidelity to the residents' vision, in addition to ensuring high impact for each of the priority areas.

Background

Dudley Real Food Hub

The Dudley Real Food Hub (DRFH), which is comprised of three partner organizations including Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE), Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), and The Food Project (TFP), recently completed a nine month community food planning process. In order to reflect on this process, DRFH engaged the Field Projects Team to review, document, and analyze the food planning process. Through a case study analysis the Field Projects Team reviewed internal documents, meeting notes, and conducted interviews. The Field Projects Team explored the evolution of the process and gained an understanding of challenges and successes that occurred.

The Boston Promise Initiative brought attention to diet and health, and their impacts on the welfare and development of families and of young people (DSNI, 2014). The DRFH, established in 2011, allows partners to work alongside the residents, gardeners, and food businesses to grow and strengthen Dudley's food economy (Loh, 2014). ACE, DSNI, and TFP came together to grow their local food system and facilitate a community planning process with the neighborhood's vision for a food hub in mind (Etingoff, Madore, Hart, & Tumposky, 2014). Currently, the food hub creates a space to foster dialogue and partnership work. Originally the DRFH, was funded by a grant from the University of Wisconsin, administered through TFP (Etingoff et al., 2014) and the Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness (DSNI, 2014). DRFH hopes to promote healthier food habits, active lifestyles, and a strong food culture for residents of Dorchester and Roxbury.

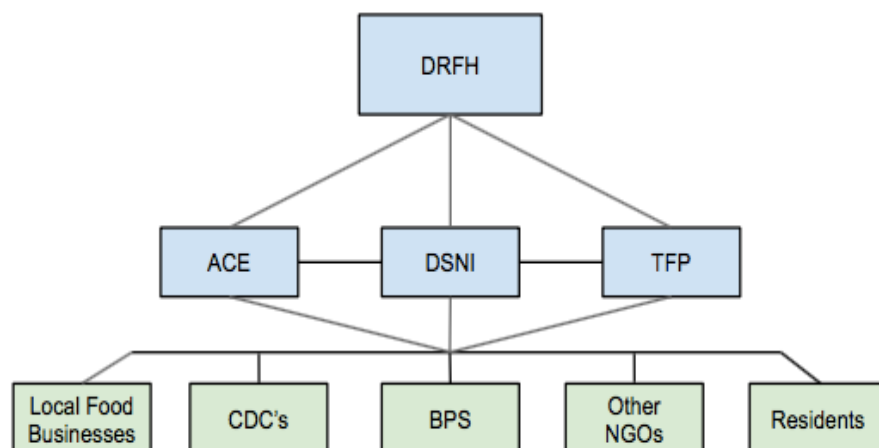


Figure 1: DRFH Partners and Extended Network

Dudley Defined

A brief history of Dudley describes how the neighborhood came to be defined as a distinct community, existing in the northeast section of what is commonly understood as Roxbury and overlapping into North Dorchester.

The town of Roxbury was founded in 1630. Located just south of Boston and east of Brookline, Roxbury was annexed to Boston in 1868. In the early 20th century, economic activity began to center around Melnea Cass Blvd. and Dudley St., and became known as Dudley Square. This area was settled by many African Americans who migrated from the South in the early to mid-1900s. During this period, Dudley Square was the second busiest and most influential commercial center in Boston.

Beginning in the 1960s, this area became subject to disinvestment. A failed urban renewal effort soon followed. Rampant arson left many plots of land vacant and waste was dumped illegally on these abandoned lots. In the mid-1980s, neighbors around Dudley Square organized to form DSNI in order to gain control of these lots.

DSNI defines the Dudley Neighborhood as having a triangle, a core, and secondary areas. The whole Dudley neighborhood is

The Dudley Village Campus & Dudley Triangle

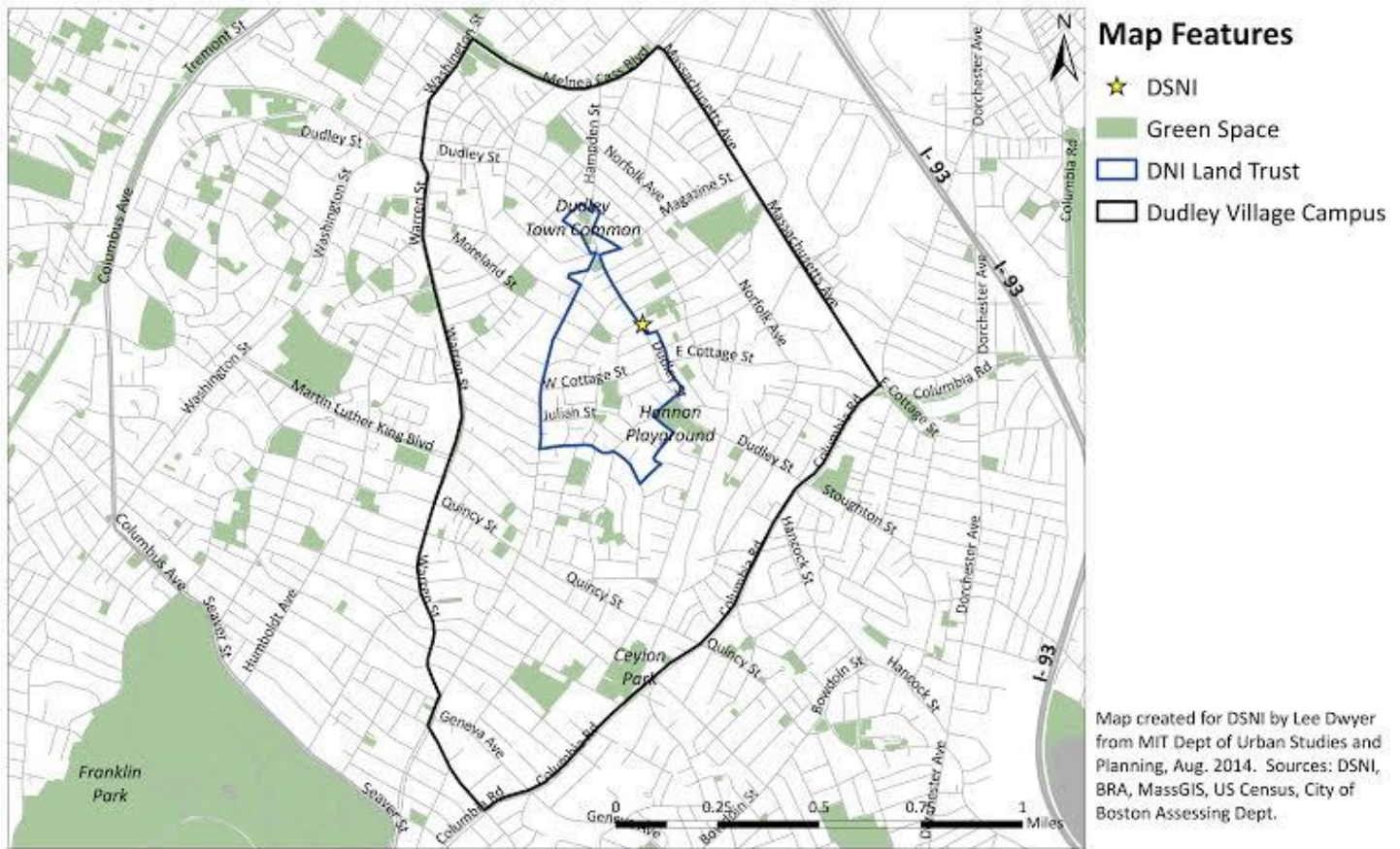


Figure 3: Dudley Neighborhood

outlined by Melnea Cass Blvd. in the north, Massachusetts Ave. to the northeast, Columbia Rd. to the southeast, and to the west, Washington St., Blue Hills Ave., Warren St., and Harrison Ave. from south to north. This area is also referred to as the Dudley Village Campus (DVC).

The Dudley Core includes the northernmost part of the neighborhood, and excludes areas south of Blue Hill Ave., Quincy St., and east of the commuter rail line. This portion of Dudley is prioritized by DSNI. The Dudley Triangle exists within the bounds of Dudley St., Howard Ave., Brookford St. and Blue Hills Ave. This 60 acre area is Dudley Neighbors Inc.'s Community Land Trust, which was founded by DSNI in 1988. Dudley Square is defined as an area immediately west of the triangle, existing within the bounds of Blue Hills Ave., Dudley St. and Warren St. Dudley Street originates in the

northwest of the neighborhood as an offshoot from Malcolm X Blvd. in Roxbury, while terminating at Columbia Rd. in North Dorchester.

According to DSNI, the DRFH considers a "resident" to be anyone living in Roxbury or North Dorchester. The relationship between "residents" and "nonresidents" will be explored further in the analysis.

In the Dudley Neighborhood, DRFH has a variety of connections to the community, which make them apt for facilitating this project. First, the DSNI, since 1984, has been the primary planning and organizing body for the community (DSNI, n.d.). In 1988, they became the first community organization in the US to be granted eminent domain over vacant lots in their neighborhood. As part of DRFH, DSNI has the most historic connection to the Dudley Neighborhood's residents and their

community activism (Eisen, 2013; & McCambridge, 2013). Secondly, TFP is a nationally recognized organization, experienced in local food systems and youth engagement (Fisman, 2007). TFP has a Boston branch with 40 acres of farmland in the Greater Boston Area, and multiple lots in the Dudley Neighborhood for urban gardens. TFP brings much experience with the infrastructure and process of improving local food systems. Lastly, ACE is a regional environmental justice organization that has experience connecting justice with sustainability in the Boston area (Agyeman, 2010). All three partners have youth engagement programs that center on youth activism for improving their communities. These three organizations have been facilitating the Dudley Neighborhood's local food system improvements.

Community Food Planning Process

This report builds off of prior work the DRFH has done with the Tufts Practical Visionaries Workshop. Last year, the 2014 report reviewed the literature of community food planning frameworks, collected case studies of community food initiatives, and proposed a planning process to support the ongoing community food work in the Dudley Neighborhood. The 2014 report consists of a

literature review focused on food justice, food hubs, and food planning for low-income communities of color in particular. The report describes six case studies in US cities that DRFH could use for comparison: Buffalo, NY; Detroit, MI; Holyoke, MA; Oakland, CA; and Milwaukee, WI. Lastly, the 2014 report proposes a planning process that the DRFH could use. The proposed process consists of five steps that do not have to occur linearly:

1. Process Design
2. Defining the Problem
3. Visioning
4. Creating a Community Action Plan
5. Implementation

The DRFH decided to follow the process outlined above and this report documents and analyzes steps two through five, which took place between July 2014 and March 2015. The DRFH has determined their community action plan, which includes the following vision statement and five priority strategies:

"The Dudley Real Food Hub envisions a local resident-led food system that provides access to nutritious, affordable healthy food to all our neighbors, brings economic opportunities to residents, and protects the environment."

-Vision Statement



Image Credit: DSNi

1. Build a resident-owned supply chain for healthy fresh and prepared foods in local stores.
2. Secure vacant land in perpetuity for growing by interested community residents.
3. Design a strategy around how the Dudley community can effect meaningful change in school food.
4. Expand existing food access points for low-income residents.
5. Advocate and plan for additional physical development to support the neighborhood food system.

The Partners

Alternatives for Community and Environment

ACE is a nonprofit organization based in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood. Since its inception, ACE has been firmly rooted within the environmental justice movement but has grown from a local to a nationally recognized organization. ACE has committed to working within the Roxbury community to promote local empowerment related to environmental, social, and economic decisions.

In its Vision of Change, ACE aims to create, systemic change. According to ACE,

"Systemic change means moving beyond solving problems one by one to eliminating the root causes of environmental injustice. ACE is anchoring a movement of people who have been excluded from decision making to confront power directly and demand fundamental changes in the rules of the game, so together we can achieve our right to a healthy environment."

Over the course of the years ACE has transitioned from addressing emerging issues

to now targeting systematic discrepancies (Agyeman, 2005). ACE works closely with other organizations, forming coalitions in order to address systemic changes. Its "lobbying, litigation, and educational campaigns are much more nuanced today than it was in the early 1990s" (Carmin & Balser, 2002). In February of 1993, ACE received a \$100,000 grant from the Echoing Green Foundation for social entrepreneurship. Shortly after, ACE incorporated as a nonprofit within the state of Massachusetts. Throughout that time, the development of ACE has been focused on three primary program areas including (ACE, 2015):

1. Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project (REEP) — focuses on the development of youth environmental justice leadership in Roxbury neighborhoods through ACE's environmental justice curriculum, internship program and youth-led projects.
2. Transportation Justice — Founder and home of the T Riders Union (TRU) and facilitator for On the Move: Greater Boston Transportation Justice Coalition: both groups focus on transportation to improve the environment and quality of life for low-income neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color like Roxbury.
3. Legal and Technical Assistance/Services to Allies — ACE attorneys provide legal representation combined with community capacity building and organizing assistance. ACE also coordinates the Massachusetts Environmental Justice Assistance Network (MEJAN) which is a network of professionals providing pro bono assistance throughout the state.

In 2004, ACE celebrated its ten year anniversary. Throughout the ten years, ACE worked diligently to succeed in many different realms. For example, ACE stopped the development of an asphalt plant, formed a coalition with DSNi against illegal trash transfers, hosted Jammin' for Justice, forced MBTA to order 350 compressed natural gas buses, led the "Beat the Fare Increase" campaign, as well as the Anti-Idling March, bringing attention to both air quality and transportation within communities of color (Agyeman, 2005).

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

DSNi is a nonprofit, community-based planning and organizing entity rooted in the Roxbury/North Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston with a mission to "empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse and high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners" (DSNi, 2014).

Founded in 1984, resident control has been the defining feature of DSNi. To encourage and promote residential voice, DSNi's board of directors is composed of seats delegated for residents, members of organizations, and businesses in the community. Its 35 seat elected board includes 16 residents from each of the 4 major ethnic groups (African-American, Latino, Cape Verdean, White), 4 youth, 7 nonprofit agencies, 2 churches, 2 businesses, 2 CDCs, and 2 board-appointed residents (DSNi, 2014).

DSNi is currently run by a 27 person staff, 25 of whom are full-time. DSNi focuses on three strategic areas: Sustainable & Economic Development, Community Empowerment, and Youth Opportunities & Development. In 2013, the organization received over 1.75 million dollars in grants and contributions to run its programming. With resident input and resources from foundations, DSNi is able to work with residents to continue to improve the Dudley Neighborhood.

DSNi is a place-based initiative with the goal of local control over local development. For example, DSNi membership is available to all residents, regardless of citizenship status, while nonresidents must go through an additional approval process. With these strong tenets in place, DSNi has been able to build a strong place-based identity to carry out development in the neighborhood.

DSNi's early efforts created a strong foundation for continued momentum and brought national recognition. DSNi is most known for its community land trust in the Dudley Triangle and as advocates of development without displacement.

The Food Project

TFP is a nationally recognized non-profit organization focused on sustainable agriculture, youth development, and social change. In 1991, Ward Cheney founded TFP while envisioning food and agriculture as a way of bringing people together, creating positive change in their communities, and increasing access to healthy food for all (Ahronowitz, 2003). As an organization, they value youth and adult partnerships; environmental stewardship; diversity; active and transparent learning; hard work that balances rigor, reflection, and fun; and lastly, that everyone has a right to healthy, affordable food (TFP, n.d., About Us). With this unique model and set of values, TFP formed as a resource center for improving local food systems and a national leader in youth development programming (TFP, n.d., About Us).

Their programs encompass farm operations, youth and community development, workshops and trainings, and hunger relief. In total, their farms cover 40 acres of land and produce 250,000 lbs of produce per year through sustainable agriculture in Lincoln, Beverly, Boston, and Lynn (TFP, n.d., What We Do). In 1995, TFP started their first urban farm in Boston on Langdon Street in Dudley Square (Ahronowitz,

2003). They have also built 400 backyard gardens in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan, and currently jointly operate the 10,000 ft² Dudley Greenhouse with DSNL.

The Boston Globe attributed TFP's successful youth development programs to their comprehensive curriculum filled with leadership and team-building workshops, and discussions on food equity, environmental sustainability, and identity (Loth, 2014). All of TFP's youth programs offer a paid stipend and emphasize diversity in its cohorts with respect to geographic origin, socioeconomic status, and racial identity (TFP, n.d., What We Do). TFP has also been addressing diversity within their staff as their reach expands amongst a broader range of communities (Ahronowitz, 2003). Throughout the Greater Boston Area, TFP has made strides in improving local food systems, developing youth, and bridging communities.

TFP engages in local food policy and planning as well. Of particular local success, TFP helped establish Boston Bounty Bucks with Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness. Boston Bounty Bucks enables SNAP recipients to receive a dollar-for-dollar matching incentive, up to \$10, to purchase fresh food at participating farmers' markets (Amuda, 2011). TFP aims to move beyond expanding purchasing power and truly increase access to space, knowledge, and resources for a "real food hub" (TFP, n.d., What We Do).

Methodology

In order to fully explore and detail the rich community process that occurred throughout the DRFH planning process, the Field Projects Team worked with residents, community stakeholders, and organizational partners, to compile a case study examining the process. The case study explores the successes and challenges that have arisen, starting from the collection of data over the

summer through the steering committee meetings and the community wide meeting in December. The case study focuses on systems related to decision making, internal processes which have guided the course of the steering committee's work, and the community/organizational capacity and infrastructure required to create and sustain such a project. By examining these various facets of the planning process, the Field Projects Team explored the relationship between the three major partners and the community. Furthermore, the Field Projects Team illuminated factors, resources, strategic partnerships, key stakeholders, and inherent systems that contributed to the planning process. Finally, this case study can hopefully serve as a resource for other communities or organizations that wish to do similar work.

According to Yin, a case study "...allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events - such as individual life cycles, *organizational and managerial processes*, neighborhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries" (1984, p. 14). By choosing to examine the DRFH planning process through the lens of a case study, the Field Projects Team sought to capture what Yin refers to as the "how" and "why" questions of the process (1984, p. 18). In order to capture these "how" and "why" questions, the case study employs the use of a variety of materials (Hamel, Dufour, & Fortin, 1993). Further, the parameters of a case study generally include direct observation and systematic interviewing, as well as corresponding content analysis.

The case study, as a qualitative research approach, emerged out of the sociological and anthropological traditions of ethnography and observation, particularly the multi-modal method that arose out of the Chicago School. This research approach involved the use of meticulous observations, corresponding interviews, as well as the analysis of documents to capture a social

phenomenon or experience (Hamel et al., 1993). By selecting the case study as the desired research method, the researcher has the opportunity to “... investigate a real life phenomenon within its real life-context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1984,p. 23).

Finally, it is important to note that while case studies may consist partly or even entirely of quantitative information, they are comprised of a *single* set of conditions. As such, case studies may be used to support and expand theoretical propositions and are not considered representative samples. According to Yin, case studies may be used to “...expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (p. 21).

This case study explores the DRFH’s community food planning process. As the process has just finished, this exploration uses the process as the unit of analysis and examines the time period from July 2014 to March 2015. In the future, a more longitudinal study of the process may prove valuable as the implementation part of the process is beyond the scope of this report. To analyze the case study, the Field Projects Team reviewed extensive primary data collected during the process, including background data related to food and health, meeting notes, and documentation about activities led by the DRFH partners. In addition, eleven interviews were conducted with residents, community stakeholders, and staff of DRFH partner organizations to gain a deeper understanding of how all of the primary information translated into real world practice. These interviews create a fuller picture of the process and provide a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and lessons learned along the way.

As mentioned, the unit of analysis for the case study is the food planning process. Embedded within this unit are the small group dynamics between the partner organizations

that allowed this project to happen. Although the main focus of the case study is the process, where it is appropriate, we demonstrate how the small group dynamics facilitated to the success and challenges of the process.

Interview Content

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a fuller understanding of the process and how key participants engaged with the process. The interviews were semi-structured and flexible to allow for snowballing, as more information was gathered about the process (see Appendix B). When necessary, follow up with earlier participants took place to allow for a more consistent collection of data. The information gathered was synthesized and published with the other findings about the process gleaned from the secondary data given to the Field Projects Team by ACE, DSNi, and TFP.

Lenses

Overview

Like most other low income neighborhoods of color in the US, Dudley residents have a negatively disparate health profile, as compared to more affluent and proportionally white neighborhoods (Walker, Keane, & Burke, 2010). The greater sociopolitical influence on Dudley’s food system is apparent and sets the stage for action by DRFH.

Food has historically been a locally sourced essential. However, over the past century, technological advances have allowed for improved transportation and storage of food (Rozelle, Huang, & Otsuka, 2005). Since then, world economic policy has tended to support select commodities based on their capacity to be shipped and stored.

Such commodity based policies have encouraged large scale production (Roling &

Wagemakers, 2000). This mechanized, large scale production system allowed for and demanded a streamlined processing and distributing network (Mundler & Rumpus, 2012). As these networks have become refined over time, the business of food has become increasingly competitive. The control of agricultural land has been consolidated, as has the ownership of food related businesses. The benefit of a profit driven, corporately centralized system has been a much larger output, and an efficient distribution and marketing structure (Roling & Wagemakers, 2000).

The downside to this corporately based food system is three fold. First, though larger quantities of food are produced, the quality has decreased (Mardsen, 2004). Secondly, the price of whole, healthy food has increased (Trostle, 2010). Thus, economic standing is increasingly a barrier to accessing quality food. Thirdly, food production as a means of livelihood has become more difficult. Land in small farming communities are often bought out by global corporations, leading to displacement of farmers. Often, they move into cities and become dependent upon the very system that drove them off their land. (Altieri & Toledo, 2011)

There is a degree of irony with how the food system has affected those now living in America's neighborhoods of color. Around half of Dudley's residents immigrated within the last three generations (Jennings, 2010). There they have access to large quantities of low quality food. However, sourcing healthy foods to these neighborhoods has proven challenging. The price of healthy food is expensive, both for the residents and the food store owners. These fiscal constraints deter the sourcing of health food, and the residents become susceptible to poor health.

The DRFH is a collaborative effort to organize Dudley's food assets against the socio economic constraints faced by the neighborhood. In the following literature review,

we will provide context to the work that has been done thus far surrounding the DRFH. The Field Projects Team has selected four lenses that were identified within the DRFH Vision Statement. They include: Community Development, Health and Wellness, Organization and Collaboration, and Race and Food Justice.

Community Development

The purpose of the planning process was to encourage resident-led community development. However, as with many phases related to community work, it can be difficult to define exactly what community development means. Understanding that community development overlaps with many ideas such as community participation, community organization, and community work, this case study defines community development as "approaches which use a mix of informal education, collective action and organizational development and focus on cultivating social justice, mutual aid, local networks and communal coherence" (Smith, 2013). In addition, Bhattacharya's principles of self-help, felt needs, and participation serve as the overarching frame of community development (2004). Self-help and participation are important tools for agency, requiring that community development is determined and implemented by the community and for the community. Felt needs emphasizes that projects should be based on community demands not on what organizations or government believe should be done for the community. Community development is currently promoted as one of the key tools for communities to help themselves. However, it is important to take a step back and realize where the term originated and how its origins still influence its implementation today.

Regular usage of the term community development began post World War II, as Britain tried to organize and administer its colonies. The term was a catchphrase for the

improvement of basic education and social welfare (Mayo, 1975). While working on mass education in the colonies, the UK placed emphasis on literacy training and advocated the promotion of agriculture, health and other social services through local self-help. During this time community development was a top-down process that worked to build capacity of local operations, using expertise from outside the local community (Midgley et al., 1986)

In the 1970s two major works were published that continue to influence community development theory and practice: Alinsky's (1971) *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals* and Cockburn's (1977) *The Local State: The Management of Cities and People*. Alinsky framed community development as something that could change how government interacted with communities. Alinsky believed this approach could be a radical shift from current power dynamics between communities and government, giving communities more control over how their neighborhood developed. Cockburn stressed the importance of the local state as an active actor in community development.

However, starting in the 1990s, local governments began curtailing activities due to budget cuts. At the same time, community development was reaching new prominence and recognition. Instead of being able to implement radical new ideas, much of community development work has been shoring up the areas of government withdrawal. This has caused a loss of "edginess" in citizen-based action (Emejulu, 2011; Kenny, 2011; & Scott, 2011). If this is truly the case, it calls into question the purpose of community development in an era of limited government support. Once goals have been decided, whose responsibility is it to implement and how?

One of the major assumptions of traditional community development literature is that community development is an "emancipatory process" and that development

professionals are on the side of the "marginalized" (Checkoway, 2009; Emejulu, 2011; Ledwith, 2005; & Shaw 2008). What this traditional frame has done is put the community as a passive participant in community development rather than a driving actor.

However, more recent literature has focused on how communities cannot be given power if they are to succeed, but rather they must take it (Scott, 2011). In addition, there is recognition in the literature that a community is not a monolithic entity and that creating spaces for communities to come together and create a collective vision of action makes for more resilient community development (Smets, 2011).

The Dudley Neighborhood until recently has seen major disinvestment from the city and businesses, and many of the nonprofits in the neighborhood work to bring services that may have been traditionally provided by local government. However, it has a strong history more firmly in Scott's (2011) arena of the community taking power and control over its own development rather than the more traditional and passive community development process. Part of this comes out of DSNi, which has a long history of organizing and actively facilitating resident control over the development of their neighborhood. The idea of a resident-driven process has been at the forefront of all their initiatives. However, the context is important because it shapes what residents perceive as possible and creates barriers in terms of how to activate change. The planning process demonstrated that residents could drive the process with support from organizations.

Health and Wellness

DRFH as a Driver for Increased Access to Healthy Food in DVC

As highlighted by Etingoff et al. (2014), food has been successfully used as a vehicle for community development. Though social

justice through community empowerment is the overarching ideal in the DRFH organizing process, measurable increases in access to healthy food is a primary sub-goal, and perhaps an indicator for the success of the effort. To succeed in increasing healthy food access, five questions must be clarified.

1. What does a community well equipped to offer accessible healthy food options look like?
2. What are the conditions in the Dudley Neighborhood?
3. What does the DRFH envision?
4. What has been accomplished through the food planning process thus far?
5. Where does the DRFH show promise in increasing access to healthy food in the future?

Before answering these five questions, two ideas must be disambiguated. First, what is healthy food? Optimum nutrition involves a balance of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and water (Gibney et al., 2009). Health decreases as consumption of these essential components fall below or above the optimum. The summation of consumed foods contributes to health. Therefore, a range of foods can be considered nutritious. Many nutrition guidelines exist, the most iconic of which is the USDA's food pyramid. However, this guideline is widely criticized (Levine et al., 2011). A seemingly more respected guide is the Harvard Healthy Food Pyramid (HHFP). Individual intake can be compared to the suggestions from the HHFP to determine variance of essential dietary components from the optimum.

Second, access to these essential components should be considered. Gerster-Bentaya (2013) asserts that access can be limited by price, distance, and preparation time. With a basic definition of optimum nutrition and access, we can begin to assess the capacity of

communities to facilitate resident nutrition. The 2009 USDA Report to Congress carried out such an assessment. The report suggests that access to a supermarket was the key to access to affordable, nutritious food. However, given the centralized nature of a supermarket, access distance issues will be not be addressed when an entire community depends on a single institution for dietary needs. It is also in question whether grocery stores adequately address the issue of preparation time by offering healthy prepared foods. Communities seem more likely to offer nutritious foods if venues are less localized, and more disbursed. Additionally, communities with healthier, affordable to-go food options will likely serve the wellness of busy families.

Compared to national and city averages, Dudley Village Campus (DVC) residents experience a higher incidence of diet related, noncommunicable diseases, such as asthma, diabetes, and obesity. Though no data exists on specific nutrient intake in the DVC, it is reasonable to assume that residents of this neighborhood have intake disparities in line with the rest of America. The HHFP asserts that many Americans eat an excess of macronutrients in general, specifically in the form of simple carbohydrates. Additionally, there is an excessive intake of sodium, while taking in too few essential vitamins and minerals (Harvard School of Public Health, 2015). Further investigation into the presence and nature of food retailers is needed to determine the current capacity of DVC's nutrition services.

DRFH was founded to empower residents to respond to health disparities. At

Table 1: Health Indicators

Health Indicators		
	Dudley	Boston
Population	24,400	617,000
% Hispanic, Latino, or Black	85	41
% Families in Poverty	34	16
% Unemployed	20.8	10.1
Heart Disease Hospitalizations per 1,000 People/Year	14.7	10.5
% Adult Resident Asthma	15	11
% Adult Resident Diabetes	11	6
% Adult Resident Obesity	27	21

the onset of the planning process in May 2014, organizers were looking to engage residents, food merchants, community organizations, schools, government agencies, and the media. They assumed that the Dudley Neighborhood had inadequate access and high demand for healthy food, and that barriers to access could be worked out through increasing community awareness. They set goals to have youth play a major role in the process, to develop a resident led action plan, and to begin carrying out that plan by early 2015.

Organization and Collaboration

The DRFH is comprised of three community based organizations: ACE, DSNi, and TFP. While each organization has maintained an independent presence in the community and a set of organizational goals for a number of years, the three organizations made the choice to form a coalition based on a common priority area of food planning. While organizational coalitions have existed for decades, collaborations like that of the

organizations in the DRFH have increasingly been studied and evaluated as a framework for community development within complex, urban landscapes.

Why Community Collaboration and Coalitions?

Organizational collaboration and coalitions have become an increasingly common strategy for addressing complex community issues. Often, community coalitions arise out of the diverse and ever-evolving needs of the distinct constituencies that comprise communities, particularly those grappling with poverty and the multi-faceted nature of such a challenge (Bradshaw, 2000). Additionally, organizational coalitions may be created not only as a means of collectively solving issues, but also as a strategy for mitigating the financial burden that addressing such complex community issues entails. According to Bradshaw, “But equally important, organizations are collaborating because no group wants to put all its resources into only one risky project, no group has all the technical skills needed to weave through the myriad regulations and tasks of the project, and no organization can effectively represent all the constituencies that have a stake in the project” (2000, p. 136).

Additionally, Ohmer (2007) addresses the unique sense of personal and collective efficacy that neighborhood organizations may help promote through citizen participation. While citizen participation through community organization involvement has been found to increase residents’ sense of leadership competency, as well as knowledge and skills related to community development, results have been mixed as to the ability of one organization to promote a sense of collective neighborhood efficacy among individuals. According to Ohmer, “Facilitating neighborhood collective efficacy may require building the kinds of relationships (for example, among neighbors on one’s block) necessary for social control to be activated (2007, p. 118).

According to this research, communities which promote more widespread, integrated systems of organizationally facilitated citizen participation may be more effective for encouraging a sense of collective-efficacy in neighborhoods.

Finally, when integrated well, community coalitions can significantly increase the collective organizational capacity of a community, as well as allow for greater adaptability in responding to that community's evolving needs and challenges. Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, & Allen (2001) point out that, "An emphasis on capacity is helpful because it reminds us that a coalition's ability to affect change is (a) dynamic, changing with shifts in coalition membership, focus, and developmental stage (b) adjustable, enhanced by technical assistance and capacity building efforts; and (c) transferable, allowing the capacity developed within one coalition experience to carry over to other community-based efforts" (p. 241). However, the authors also emphasize the need to evaluate the strengths and collaborative capacity of an organizational coalition based on the degree to which programs can be considered "ecologically valid," with programs both fitting within the context of the community as well as meeting the resident-voiced needs of the community (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001).

Challenges of Community Collaboration and Coalitions

While collaboration amongst community organizations can be a powerful tool for addressing increasingly complex community challenges, it may also entail a number of conflicts and contradictions that can prevent such a strategy from working effectively. On one hand, each organization may have its own set of processes, procedures, and hierarchies in place to ensure smooth operation. Additionally, each organization maintains its own specific mission and develops key priorities based on that mission. However,

community coalitions must merge not only processes and leadership, but must also resolve conflicts around which priorities are deemed relevant to all participating organizations. Taken together, these strengths and challenges create a complex environment of opportunity and conflict within which organizations much work. Chavis believes that, "Coalitions are a different type of community institution. Community coalitions include more diverse interests among its participants. The different interests, history, and power of participants create a more complex setting than any other type of community organization. These differences nonetheless are the basis for participants to work together in contrast to other community organizations that are dependent on their participants' commonalities" (2001, p. 310).

Community collaborations must also navigate financial challenges. Grants for nonprofit organizations typically fund a singular recipient organization to carry out the proposal, even in cases of community collaboration across multiple partners. It becomes complicated to equitably distribute grant funding for community collaborations when there is an array of financial demands from each partner to contribute to the project. As community collaborations become more common, one partner usually becomes the primary recipient of the funding and is held responsible for distribution amongst the various partners. There are ethical concerns for when one organization requests funding for a project and subsequently requests contributions from partners without financial compensation (Foster, Kim, & Christiansen, 2009).

An additional challenge that community coalitions pose is in the process of translating each separate community organization's capacity into a cohesive, aggregated whole. In other words, one of the purposes of a community coalition is to increase and enhance community capacity, but to do that, the organizations must develop the skills,

knowledge, and strategies to strategically leverage all of the component resources. “Because collaborative work often places unique demands on participants—requiring some unfamiliar attitudes and behaviors and a wide range of specialized skills—collaborative capacity is greatly influenced by both the existing skills/knowledge and attitudes members bring to the table and efforts taken to build, support, and access this capacity” (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001).

Collaboration and Collective Impact

There is one final concept to address in reviewing the various manifestations organizational collaboration may take. While community-based coalitions may be a powerful starting place for increasing local capacity and engaging more stakeholders, including residents, in addressing a problem, increasingly many social issues are far beyond the capabilities of a handful of small nonprofit organizations. For this reason, the study of “collective impact” as an approach to collaboratively tackling social issues has gained greater attention. In an increasingly globalized world, in which even local, community-based issues may become convoluted by far-reaching external forces, the concept of collective impact seeks to engage commitment from a wide-ranging group of actors from across sectors in order to solve a specific social problem (Kania & Kramer, 2011). However, unlike other traditional forms of collaboration, the collective impact framework involves developing an affiliated but decentralized infrastructure, along with dedicated staff and a structured process that leads to:

1. a common agenda,
2. a shared system of data measurement,
3. a process of continuous communication and,
4. mutually reinforcing activities among all participants

(Kania & Kramer, 2011).

From the outset, collaborations based on a collective impact framework utilize the strength of not only agreed upon methods but a collective definition of what exactly the problem is (Kania & Kramer, 2011). In other words, the approach to collaboration involves a great deal of up-front time commitment and trust-building that hopefully leads to a far-reaching set of solutions that are emergent, rather than discrete and determined from the outset (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

Because a collective impact approach to addressing social issues often requires dozens or even hundreds of separate stakeholders engaging in a long-term process of continuous, evaluative, collaboration, it is an approach that cannot easily be implemented. However, it provides a highly insightful framework for examining common pitfalls that plague community collaborations.

Race and Food Justice

The DRFH is an example of a community food planning process, a process that is rare, but not unheard of, in professional planning practice. Some, like Vitiello and Brinkley, would argue that food systems were essential in beginning planning practice in the colonial era (Vitiello & Brinkley, 2013). Fledgling roadways were designed to connect seafood from docks and crops from farms into urban centers where communities were concentrated - food systems planning in a physical sense. Others, like Pothukuchi and Kaufman, argue that food systems planning is vastly ignored in professional practice today (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 2000). As compared to

transportation, housing, land use, and the environment, planners specializing in food systems are largely absent in planning practice, research, and education. This tension makes the DRFH's explicit focus as a community food planning process all the more valuable for other communities and organizations to take note.

Racial and food injustices are two major motivations for the DRFH. The DRFH is not simply creating a better food system for all; they are working to reduce racial and food disparities the Dudley Neighborhood experiences within their local food system. Food insecurity and food-related health conditions affect communities of color disproportionately more than their white counterparts (Slocum, 2006). Food insecurity is a disposition where people lack the physical and economic resources to access sufficient food to meet dietary needs, preferences, and overall health (FAO, 1996).

As compared to Boston's 21% obesity rate, the Dudley Neighborhood's is 27%. As compared to Boston's 6% diabetes rate, Dudley's is 11%. As compared to Boston's 23% poverty rate, Dudley's is 34%.

(Boston Public Health Commission, 2013; Etingoff et al., 2014).

Having the DRFH in the Dudley Neighborhood will increase opportunities for a low-income community of color to improve the overall health and wellness of their neighborhood and residents.

In community food systems planning, Pothukuchi and Kaufman identify five areas planners could reap high potential benefits if they engage with explicit food systems work:

1. **compile data on community food systems,**
2. **analyze connections of food to planning concerns,**
3. **assess current impact of planning on food system,**
4. **integrate food security into community goals, and**
5. **educate future planners on food system issues**

(Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 2000).

Other academics have built upon the idea that while food systems planning is often ignored, there is ample opportunity for planners to contribute their professional assets and expertise (Campbell, 2004; & Clancy, 2004). The DRFH is involved in all five of these areas, which make it well suited to seamlessly incorporate and benefit from issues of race and food justice.

When developing plans in communities similar to the Dudley Neighborhood, race plays a critical role in planning and policy development due to the experiences of community members (Pulido, 1996). Typically, the majority of plans and policies surrounding food injustices have been managed by individuals outside of the community (Slocum, 2006). With this dynamic, inequality and food injustices are often perpetuated by failing to address race and class as experienced by community members, which often intertwine with root causes of food injustices, such as food insecurity. Race and class are intimately tied to the food system, especially when low-income communities of color are most often affected by food injustices (Alkon & Agyeman, 2011). When race and class are explicitly addressed in food systems planning, there is greater possibility to address other systemic inequalities that contribute to food insecurity, such as poverty, educational achievement gaps, and health disparities. DRFH has facilitated a platform for community residents to

dictate the decision making of the process as it relates to their wants and needs, a powerful mechanism for deeper local food systems change.

Food justice, not entirely separate from racial justice, has played a role in many other social movements (Wekerle, 2004). Food justice affects individual- and community-level experiences with food systems, such as access to fresh produce; availability of cultivable land; resources for a healthy diet; and food-related health and wellness. Within food justice, food security is a goal that has been managed primarily on the ground by local agencies. Holt-Giménez and Shattuck frame food justice as a “progressive regime” focusing on local food sheds, family farming, urban agriculture, and building linkages between urban and rural spaces (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011).

Food sovereignty takes this a step further, as a “radical regime,” with political stances to build “democratic control over food and food-producing resources” (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). It is described as a regime with the furthest position from neoliberalism and the global industrial food system, where food sovereignty is:

“...the right of individuals, communities, peoples and countries to define their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies, which are ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances.”

-International Planning Committee

This regime moves beyond affirming the human right to food, which is the typical goal food justice works towards (UN, 1948; Windfuhr & Jonsén, 2005). In the case of the DRFH, Dudley residents will have much greater community control and self-determination of their local food system against larger forces such as neoliberalism, racism, and social injustices.

The Dudley Neighborhood has a reputation of strong advocacy and community organizing to address their community's struggles. For instance, Dudley was the first community in the U.S. to be granted eminent domain power to take control of vacant lots, furthering their community by establishing and managing their own permanent, affordable housing units (DSNI, n.d.). Throughout the planning process for the DRFH, members of the community have assisted in ensuring sustainable progress and promotion of a local food system.

Lying in between food justice and food sovereignty, the DRFH's model focuses on reducing racial and food disparities while enhancing community control and self-determination. The DRFH is not as wholly radical as IPC's definition of food sovereignty, but it certainly moves past just access to food - the planning process was built with community input and outlines mechanisms for greater political voice.

Several policies have been developed with regard to community and regional food systems and have garnered the attention of the American Planning Association (APA) (APA, 2007). APA's recommended strategies for a community food system are:

- Support comprehensive food planning process at community and regional level
- Support strengthening of local and regional economy
- Support food systems that improve health of residents
- Support food systems that are ecologically sustainable
- Support food systems that are equitable and just
- Support food systems that preserve and sustain diversity of traditional cultures
- Support the development of state and federal legislation

With both Pothukuchi and Kaufman's outlines and the APA's recommended strategies, the DRFH's efforts in community food systems planning points towards addressing health disparities, environmental injustices, and food insecurity within the Dudley Neighborhood (Etingoff et al., 2014).

Chronological Process Description

Pre-pre-planning: Formation of the DRFH

For many years before the DRFH, food has been a focal point in activities and organizing in the Dudley Neighborhood. The community food planning process builds upon the Dudley Neighborhood's existing assets, such as the Dudley Greenhouse and abundance of garden plots. All three DRFH partners have been involved in food-related work. ACE is experienced with taking over vacant lots for urban agriculture, TFP is experienced with youth gardening programs, and DSNI is experienced with organizing for healthy food options in the Dudley Neighborhood.

From 2011-2013, ACE, DSNI, and TFP held occasional meetings with each other in the "pre-pre-planning" stage. During these meetings, the three partners discussed each of their roles, contributions, and resources to the Dudley Neighborhood's local food system. With all of them heavily involved in Dudley's food system, how could they work more cohesively to accomplish a shared vision?

The three partners also discussed funding mechanisms for their work. During this time, the bulk of grant funding for community food systems work came from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The Kellogg Foundation funded six food and fitness collaboratives across the country, such as the Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness (BCFF). BCFF distributed portions of this grant money to smaller projects in Boston communities, and it was during this pre-pre-planning where ACE, TFP, and DSNI discussed sharing funding and working together for Dudley's local food system.

As a result of this pre-pre-planning, the DRFH was established as an overarching collaborative between the three partners. Acknowledging each of their various assets, staff, and expertise, the DRFH functions as a united body to organize the community food planning in the Dudley Neighborhood.

Pre-planning: Process Design

Once established as the DRFH, they entered the "pre-planning" stage to prepare for a full-fledged community food planning process. There were a series of projects throughout the years from Tufts University Field Projects that pertained to ACE, DSNI, and TFP's food systems work. Many of these projects came from the Practical Visionaries Workshop (PVW), a program started by Penn Loh to develop university-community partnerships for collaborative community organizing and planning.

In 2012, PVW created a report titled, "If Not Walmart, Then What?" (Bayas, Cole,

Feinberg, Hachmyer, & Seamon, 2012). It combined themes of the solidarity economy, community control, and cooperative ownership to explore what a local food economy could look like, rather than a corporate and industrial food system. In 2013, the next PVW created an online resource center, “Cultivate Your Food Economy,” with popular education materials for developing a local food economy (O’Brien, Ostberg, Schofield, Sobel, & Stucker, 2013). There was a three-part workshop curricula, data collection and engagement tools, and community and food economy maps centered on the Dudley Neighborhood. Most recently, the 2014 PVW created a report titled, “Community Food Planning Process,” detailing case studies around the US of community food systems planning projects and a proposed 5-step process for the DRFH to use (see Community Food Planning Process pg. 11). Until this point, the DRFH functioned loosely as a collaborative with various projects under a common vision. By undertaking this 5-step process, the DRFH became an intentional collaborative to encourage projects under a shared vision, firstly by conducting a thorough community food planning process.

Planning: Overview

To conduct a genuine community food planning process, the DRFH assembled a steering committee as a representative body for the Dudley Neighborhood. The steering committee, comprised of residents, local business owners, growers, youth, and others, functioned as prime stakeholders in the planning process and as a liaison with the broader Dudley Neighborhood. Initially, staff members from the three DRFH partners



Figure 4: Community Food Planning Process

reached out to their networks of residents and community members to create the steering committee.

Simultaneous to creating the steering committee, individuals from DSNi's summer youth program conducted relevant resident data collection in the summer of 2014. By interviewing residents at community events, corner stores, and throughout the neighborhood, they collected opinions about the local food system. This information catapulted the DRFH's planning process by providing real resident opinions about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the Dudley food system. The data collected by the youth built the foundation for the DRFH's steering committee conversations, constantly being referred to and respected as a collection of resident opinions.

Once the planning process began, the steering committee meetings followed the 5-step process, chronologically but with some indistinguishable boundaries. *Process Design* included affirming the 5-step process; establishing the steering committee; engaging youth; creating a meeting schedule and

agendas; agreeing upon a voting process; and delegating facilitation roles. *Defining the Problem* was catalyzed by the youth survey and discussed in depth during the initial steering committee meetings. One such meeting featured a SWOT analysis activity, illuminating some issues residents cared greatly about which may not have been known by the DRFH alone. *Visioning* occurred in the fall of 2014, and it helped build into *Creating the Community Action Plan*. The steering committee drafted and finalized a vision statement for the DRFH over the course of two meetings. The priority strategies discussed to accomplish the vision became the community action plan (see Appendix A). There were many strategies brought up and discussed, and in the end, six were voted upon as priority strategies that could be the most relevant and impactful to the Dudley food system based upon the resources and energy of the community. The priority strategies were created as a living reference document to guide *Implementation*.

The community food planning process culminated in a broad community meeting in December of 2014. During this meeting, the DRFH gathered resident input and confirmed the six priority strategies to implement for the betterment of the Dudley Neighborhood's local food system. After the community meeting, the steering committee met three more times to rank the priority strategies and assign action steps for each strategy. In the end, the process lasted nine months.

DRFH Partner Meetings

Table 2: Timeline

Timeline of Dudley Real Food Hub Community Food Planning Process	
Date	Type of Meeting
2014 April 20	DRFH Partner Meeting
2014 May 29	DRFH Partner Meeting
2014 July 10	Steering Committee Meeting
2014 September 1	DRFH Partner Meeting
2014 September 8	DRFH Presentation to the Food Policy Committee
2014 September 17	Steering Committee Meeting
2014 October 15	Steering Committee Meeting
2014 November 19	Steering Committee Meeting
2014 December 11	Community Meeting
2015 January 21	Steering Committee Meeting
2015 February 3	DRFH Partner Meeting
2015 February 18	Steering Committee Meeting
2015 March 18	Steering Committee Meeting-Celebration

DRFH partner meetings often occurred in between steering committee meetings to facilitate the planning process. These meetings occurred on a somewhat monthly basis as well, but also occurred in conjunction with non-DRFH collaborative work between organizations or in offline conversations. In these meetings, the DRFH discussed the structure of their collaboration; affirmation and clarification of steering committee meetings; made inventories of funding, staff time, and expertise; prepared the logistics of hosting and facilitating the steering committee meetings; and overall, monitored the community food planning process.

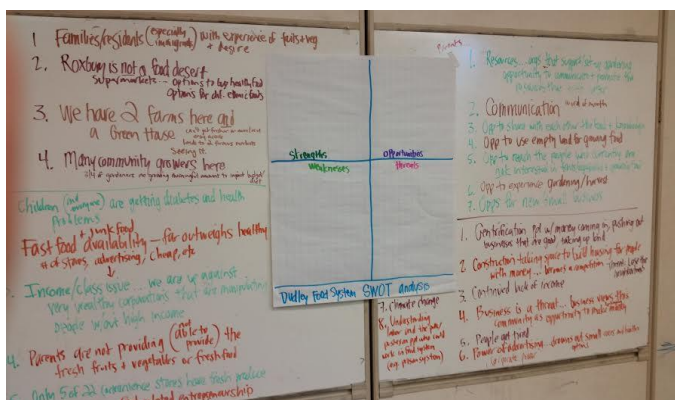


Image Credit: DSNi

Steering Committee Meetings

The first steering committee meeting was in July of 2014. Often hosted at a community organizing space in the Dudley Square, these meetings continued monthly, with a few exceptions, on every third Wednesday of the month. The meetings were roughly two hours, from 6:30-8:30pm, so that people could attend after work and school.

Preparation and facilitation of the steering committee meetings came from the DRFH staff. It was the responsibility of representatives from each of the three partner organizations to conduct outreach for members to attend meetings each month, send out an agenda in advance, facilitate the meetings, and debrief the meetings for the following month.

Everyone who came to the steering committee meetings were allowed to vote, no matter if they were officially on the steering committee or not, and no matter how frequently or infrequently they attended the meetings. If someone came into the planning process mid-way, their vote still counted. Resident votes carried more weight than non-residents. These factors ensured that the system was inclusive, while maintaining resident influence and equity.

Table 3: Breakdown of Steering Committee Meeting Attendance

Break Down of Meeting Attendance			
Number of Meetings Attended (Out of 7)	Total Number of Participants	Resident (Youth Resident)	Community Stakeholder
6	2	1	1
5	2	1 (1)	1
4	1	0	1
3	2	2	0
2	8	4 (1)	4
1	8	3 (1)	5

The steering committee was a fluid group and in the end, 23 people participated on

the steering committee. Attendance at the steering committee meetings ranged from 12 participants to four participants. Of the 23 steering committee members, 11 were residents and 12 were community stakeholders. Of the 11 residents, three members were youth. Many of the residents also have extensive involvement in the community, but for the purposes of the exploration, the delineation of resident and community stakeholder is based on where the steering committee member lives. Staff members that facilitated steering committee meetings are not included in these numbers as they supported the steering committee, but were not members of the steering committee.

Attendance at steering committee meetings was fluid; more than half of the steering committee members came to two or fewer meetings. This statement holds true whether the member is a resident or community stakeholder. In terms of representation, for three of the meetings over 40 percent of the participants were residents and for other four meetings resident representation was less than 40 percent.

Table 4: Steering Committee Composition

Steering Committee Composition				
Participant Type	Number of Participants	Primary Affiliation DSNI	Primary Affiliation TFP	Primary Affiliation ACE
Resident (Youth Resident)	11 (3)	6 (1)	3 (1)	2 (1)
Community Stakeholder	12	4	7	1

Steering Committee Meeting Content

1st – July 10th, 2014 - Process Design

This is the first steering committee meeting that initiated the entire planning

process. It was facilitated by a DSNI staff member, a TFP staff member and a community stakeholder. As the steering committee was built from the DRFH partner organizations' networks, this first meeting was geared toward introductions - introducing the DRFH, residents, youth, and community stakeholders to each other; and the proposed 5-step community food planning process.

A handout was prepared and distributed with all of the main content for attendants to discuss, take home, and reflect. The handout had brief introductions of the three DRFH partners; the proposed 5-step planning process and timeline; descriptions of further steering committee member recruitment; assumptions and goals of the Dudley Neighborhood's local food system; and contact information. The meeting went through all parts of this handout and then asked for questions.

There were many questions about the functionality and purpose of the DRFH. Specifically, many attendants wanted clarification about the dynamics between the steering committee and the DRFH partners. Is the DRFH leading or facilitating? Is the planning process top-down or bottom-up? How much decision making power does the steering committee have? How will the broader community be engaged? What is there to know about the Dudley food system? What is there to do about it? Overall, there was a general sense of attendants being overwhelmed with the larger questions and tasks, but huge excitement about the opportunity to improve their local food system.

No Meeting in August

2nd – September 17th, 2014 - Process Design / Defining the Problem

The second meeting focused on examining the 5-step planning process in detail and defining the problem. It was facilitated by a DSNI staff member. By this time, the results from DSNI's youth survey were completed and

processed, and opinions from attendees were also incorporated.

Table 5: Resident Representation

Resident Representation							
	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Jan.	Feb.
Attendance (Resident)	12 (5)	10 (5)	9 (3)	6 (1)	8 (4)	7 (2)	4 (1)
Percent Resident Attendance	42	50	33	17	50	29	25

There were many illuminating resident opinions about their local food system that were nuanced and critical to reveal. For instance, residents cared less about increasing access to farmers markets and much more about generating local jobs from healthy food work. Less than 10% of residents wished to see more fast food opportunities in the neighborhood, and cost of fresh produce ranked highly in purchasing decisions. After reviewing the data from the youth survey, The DSNI staff member facilitated a SWOT analysis exercise to enrich the data with the lived experiences and thoughts of the meeting attendees.

At the end of the meeting, there was a clear problem defined within the Dudley Neighborhood's local food system. There are not enough healthy food options, a disproportionate amount of unhealthy food options, increased health risks and disparities as compared to the rest of Boston, and ties to historical divestment from the neighborhood.

3rd – October 15th, 2014 - Visioning / Creating the Community Action Plan

The third meeting focused on setting the goals of the steering committee through creating a vision and community action plan for the DRFH. It was facilitated by a youth resident, another resident, a community stakeholder, and a DSNI Staff Member. Based on the data collected in the summer and over the past three years, what do people want from

their local food system and what are key themes the vision should include?

Visioning was facilitated by the youth resident, and as a group they brought up examples for a larger vision to distill into a refined, finalized version for the next meeting. The attendees were encouraged to draw on existing data and analysis, highlight key words and concepts about Dudley's food system, and be open to refinement. Below is the draft vision statement that resulted from the meeting:

"We who live, work and study in Roxbury and North Dorchester strive to address structural inequities that have led to food disparity by increasing access to healthy, nutritious, and affordable food in our homes, stores and schools. We believe that through sharing our experiences and knowledge with one another we can collaborate to create a local food system that brings economic opportunity to residents, protects the environment and improves our health."

– Draft Vision Statement

The community stakeholder led a second portion of the meeting about solution areas for the previously defined problem. With a variety of potential solution areas, they discussed as a group what had the most support, as well as resources to serve the needs of their problem and vision. Some proposed priority strategies were: growing food, healthy food retail, school food, community power, and job creation.

In the third portion of the meeting, the resident and DSNi staff member facilitated the development of a timeline for the overall community food planning process. They wanted to gather broader input on the vision and community action plan, so the meeting discussed a timeline and outreach plan. Their most significant decision was deciding to host a community-wide meeting in December to present the vision and priority strategies for resident and community feedback.

4th – November 19th, 2014 - Visioning / Creating the Community Action Plan

In their fourth meeting, the steering committee finalized the vision statement and moved towards drafting action steps under priority areas. It was facilitated by a DSNi staff member and a TFP staff member. In preparation for the December meeting, finalizing the vision statement was worked on outside of the steering committee meetings, with staff devoting time to wordsmithing, offline conversations, and emails with steering committee members. Below is the final vision statement:

"The Dudley Real Food Hub envisions a local resident-led food system that provides access to nutritious, affordable healthy food to all our neighbors, brings economic opportunities to residents, and protects the environment."

- The Dudley Real Food Hub

The second portion of the meeting focused on the priority areas, through small group breakouts and whole group discussions. The small groups reviewed the variety of priorities and discussed the top three. The entire list of potential priorities included:

1. Affordability of healthy food
2. Availability of healthy food
3. School food
4. Encouraging jobs and economic development/wages
5. Community stability
6. Product of food
7. Strengthen networks between organizations working on food
8. Environmental initiative
9. Address structural inequality that results Strengthen networks between organizations working on food
10. Address targeted marketing to youth and people of color and the abundance of fast food places in our neighborhoods

The whole group formulated a short-list of priority strategies for the community wide meeting.

Lastly, they began planning the community-wide meeting in December to receive feedback on the vision statement and priority strategies. During this November meeting, the steering committee prepared the agenda, delegated the facilitation, and developed an outreach strategy for the December community wide meeting.

5th – December 11th, 2014 – Creating the Community Action Plan

In lieu of a steering committee meeting, the DRFH hosted a community wide meeting at DSNI's office, in which steering committee members and staff members facilitated different parts. The purpose was to inform the broader community about the work the DRFH and the steering committee had been doing, receive feedback on the vision and priority strategies, and brainstorm new ideas. The end of the meeting was intended to affirm and review the priority strategies, recruit more

members into the steering committee, and build strong content for an upcoming USDA grant.

A youth resident led the opening of the meeting, by asking who was in the room and providing background on the DRFH. There was room for attendees to mingle and express their motivations for attending the meeting.

Afterward, a community stakeholder and a DSNI staff member explained how the DRFH's community food planning process was focused on the residents of the Dudley Neighborhood, and they introduced the final vision statement.

For the main portion of the meeting, there was a gallery walk around the room for attendees to explore the proposed priority strategies. Each strategy had a steering committee member facilitating the space, answering any questions posed by the attendees.

Attendees were encouraged to visit three strategies for 15 minutes or stay at one the entire time, starting with the strategy they felt the most passionate about.

Table 6: Gallery Sessions

Gallery Sessions	
Session Focus	Facilitator
Affordable Fresh Produce	Resident
Access to Healthy Restaurants and Takeout	DSNI
Healthy School Food	Community Stakeholder
Vacant Land Use	TFP
Community-Owned Food Businesses and Jobs	DSNI
Waste Reduction and Composting	Community Stakeholder
Climate & Environmental Justice	DSNI

To conclude this event, voting was conducted to finalize the priority strategies. Each attendee received three stickers to vote on three strategies. Residents and non-residents received different colors to allow for greater focus on resident opinion. In the end, there were six priority strategies voted upon, with reducing waste/supporting composting receiving the least votes and being eliminated from DRFH focus.

This community wide meeting was considered a huge success, with thirty-five people attending the meeting. Eleven of the attendees were residents not involved on the steering committee before the meeting. Two of the eleven previously unaffiliated residents joined the steering committee after the December community meeting.

6th – January 21st, 2015 - Creating the Community Action Plan

The sixth meeting focused on the six priority strategies that were voted upon and possible action steps to accomplish these goals in the Dudley Neighborhood. It was facilitated by a DSNI staff member and an ACE staff member. In going through all possible action steps, attendees were encouraged to think about actions most beneficial to the Dudley Neighborhood based on the resources the DRFH has. The facilitator's role provided greater clarity around restraints and limitations to their proposed action steps. For instance, they were honest about the lack of funding currently secured for this type of work, and they emphasized that these action steps would need to occur over the long term to truly improve the Dudley food system.

The meeting ranked the priority strategies as follows:

- 1. Jobs & Businesses**
- 2. Healthy School Food**
- 3. Vacant Land for Growing**
- 4. Affordable Fresh Produce**
- 5. Composting and Recycling**

To exemplify possible action steps, under Jobs & Businesses, there was: supporting people who are producing food in their homes, education to restaurants that they can be a city vendor, increase pushcart vendors, and provide sample of nutritious food to encourage consumers to buy it.

7th – February 18th, 2015 - Creating the Community Action Plan

The seventh meeting was geared to finalizing the priority strategies and their action steps. It was facilitated by a DSNI staff member and TFP staff member. The steering committee was emailed the draft ahead of time, and there were handouts for new attendees. The meeting had little new material introduced, and many action steps were refined to make them more actionable and effective goals. Some action steps were also linked to potential organizations, groups, or individuals to partner with. The final strategies are as follows:

1. Build a resident-owned supply chain for healthy fresh and prepared foods in local stores.
2. Secure vacant land in perpetuity for growing by interested community residents.
3. Design a strategy around how the Dudley community can effect meaningful change in school food.
4. Expand existing food access points for low-income residents.
5. Advocate and plan for additional physical development to support the neighborhood food system (Dudley Miller Park, Maxwell Building site,

As an example of an action step incorporated into the final priority strategies, “building demand for produce in local retail outlets” was connected to a corner store owner and operated with experience in wholesale produce. For “connect residents to opportunities at Pearl,” they listed Jamaican community members who often sell pre-cooked meals from portable coolers.

8th – March 18th, 2015 - Celebration

The eighth meeting was a final celebration for the steering committee and an informal conversation about how to proceed. It was facilitated by a DSNI and TFP staff member. The community food planning process was officially concluded, and currently, the remaining stage to accomplish is Implementation.

Since the planning process was over, a major question was how to keep the steering committee relevant. The steering committee agreed to meet on a quarterly basis, rather than monthly, to check up on how the action steps are moving forward through various avenues in the community. The priority strategies and action steps are finalized, and are meant to guide the collective work in the Dudley Neighborhood. While not explicitly assigned, the three DRFH partners have

varying backgrounds and expertise that make them potential leads for particular strategies. For instance, ACE has the most experience with vacant lots, and TFP and DSNI have more experience with access to healthy food for low-income residents. While each partner could take the lead on a few strategies, it is crucial to note that they are working together, with residents and community members, to actualize the vision of the DRFH.

Looking into the future, DRFH is also looking to expand itself to build upon existing work in the community. With other organizations in the collaborative, there could be more resources and expertise to get the work done. The Madison Park Community Development Corporation is doing a lot of work with healthy food in neighborhoods, and they would be a strong partner to include.

There was a lot accomplished in the nine month planning process, and while there is no strict timeline or delegation for the priority strategies, the document is a living oath to what the DRFH created through the community food planning process.

Key Questions

Our Field Projects Team would like to determine the following:

- How has the planning process developed overtime?
- How have the goals of DRFH changed overtime?
- What has the community engagement process looked like?
- What resources have been utilized to advance the process?
- How has this process advanced social justice?

The DRFH seeks to demonstrate that community engagement can lead to new and unique input and perspectives. Furthermore, it can develop the infrastructure to foster

progress within the community and provide the tools to sustain a long-term conversation around food.

Research Methods

This case study utilizes a variety of evidence to answer the questions outlined above. Data collection occurred either through documents submitted by DRFH partners or through qualitative, semi-structured interviews conducted by members of the Field Projects Team. According to Yin (1984), there are three principals involved in the collection and utilization of data that help lead to an analysis which exhibits both rigor and validity, including: 1) using multiple sources of evidence, 2) creating a systematic case study database, including field notes and memoing related to collected evidence, and 3) maintaining a chain of evidence. This case study aspires to maintain a high level of fidelity to collected evidence as well as transparency in the analysis process, in order to ensure verifiability and an easily traceable process of data triangulation.

However, it is also important to note that successful data collections involve a balance of rigor with adaptiveness and flexibility (Yin, 1984). This goal was central to the interview process and underscores the choice to conduct semi-structured, rather than fully structured or unstructured interviews. Warren and Karner (2014) describe qualitative interviewing as containing an “emergent aspect” in which the interviewer attempts to “...elicit narrative stories,” and as such, must be able to engage interview participants in a process of dialogue. Throughout the process of conducting and analyzing research, this case study sought to continually evaluate evidence for important emergent, thematic data, as well as ensure that an ongoing process of data triangulation occurred so that a high level of validity was maintained (Yin, 1984).

Analysis

As described in the Methods Section, the case study analysis consisted of reviewing both interview data, as well as data derived from DRFH and steering committee notes. The analysis of data involved an on-going, iterative process of highlighting emergent categories, triangulating categories with other data sources, and expanding or narrowing categories as significant concepts crystallized (see Appendix C). This process of category identification resulted in nearly 30 separate categories that highlighted a variety of constructs related to the food planning process, including decision making mechanisms, characteristics of specific stakeholder involvement, challenges that had arisen throughout the process, the relationship of the planning process to prior or concurrent work occurring in the Dudley Neighborhood, allusions to structural or systemic phenomena, and finally, references to hopes, expectations, or outcomes.

Following this process of category identification, a subsequent process of collaborative analysis occurred, in which categories were narrowed, grouped, synthesized, and distilled. Through this process of grouping, synthesis, and distillation, a consensus was achieved regarding the saliency and richness of final, overarching themes that were generated. Overall, five



Image Credit: DSNi

major themes have been identified that are repeatedly addressed and cross-referenced throughout the multiple evidence sources. These themes include: 1) the role of the DRFH and its individual partner organizations, 2) the role of steering committee 3) the structure of the decision making process, 4) constraints and challenges that have emerged throughout the process, and finally, 5) the presence of a social justice framework that has implicitly permeated all aspects of the food planning process.

Finally, it is important to note that these themes were identified, explored, and highlighted based on both their frequency and congruency within the data, as well as the different respects in which they embodied the four research lenses used as frameworks for the entire case study. This case study attempts to both document and elucidate the variety of mechanisms at work throughout the course of the community food planning process and so the data analysis procedure attempted to reflect the multi-dimensional, iterative quality of the planning process.

Interpretation

DRFH Partners

When examining the characteristics as well as impacts of the community food planning process undertaken by the DRFH, the steering committee, and community residents, one of the critical defining features of the process was been the unique niche that each of the DRFH partner organizations occupy within the Dudley Neighborhood. It is important to recognize that the planning process did not occur in a vacuum, and contextualizing the process as defined in part by the preexisting community relationships ACE, DSNI, and TFP have all established, is a key aspect of highlighting its development and evolution. Overall, DRFH's role in the community food planning process can be characterized by three general

components: 1) the utilization of existing community networks, as well as the DRFH collaboration itself, 2) the contribution of additional organizational capital and capacity and 3) the mutual gains that the DRFH received as a result of the alignment of the community food planning process with the missions and programmatic goals of each partner organization.

One particularly important feature of each partner organization that contributed significantly to the planning process was the community presence already established by each organization, as well as the subsequent network of key relationships built. While the history and missions of each of the DRFH partner organizations were previously described (see *The Partners* pg.11), it is necessary to emphasize the responsibilities each organization coordinated during the food planning process, from both the perspective of organizational knowledge, as well as capacity. For example, DSNI's role as a primary facilitator in the planning process capitalized on its long and rich history of grassroots-driven community development, which involves both concrete resources - such as diverse and long-term funding streams - as well as less tangible assets, including a diverse professional network, and perhaps more importantly, a reputation of trust within the community. Furthermore, TFP and ACE both brought significant experience in community programming, as well as more specialized knowledge around food, environmental justice, and community food activism. This significant knowledge base, as well as DSNI's firmly rooted identity within the neighborhood, played a major role in informing and orienting the process. The significance of the DRFH partner organizations' social capital in the Dudley Neighborhood was echoed by Jackson Renshaw, a member of the steering committee and co-owner of Fresh Food Generation. He emphasized that,

“I think the success of this project was based on the longevity of all the core groups involved. So TFP has been around for 20 years, DSNI’s been around for a long time, ACE is a little less time but still has a pretty strong foothold in the neighborhood.”

Furthermore, the preparatory data collection, as well as the early visioning and process development that preceded the formation of the steering committee utilized the significant combined capacity of all three DRFH partner organizations. This pre-planning stage work streamlined the planning process itself and allowed the steering committee to focus solely on utilizing the collective knowledge and perspectives gathered to evaluate the unique needs and conditions of the Dudley Neighborhood, rather than having to spend time attempting to decipher what those needs and conditions were. When unpacking this food planning process from the perspective of replicability, it is important to keep in mind the significant and long-term time, as well as human capital commitment of the DRFH partner organizations, that enabled the planning process to unfold in a way that was informed by needs, assets, and challenges already identified within the community.

Similarly, it is important to note that separately and collectively, the partner organizations have been contributing to the recently conducted food planning process through a variety of projects, including data collection, community programming related to food education and agriculture, as well as food-oriented youth development programs. In other words, there have been two processes at work in successfully developing, conducting, and completing the community food planning process. On one hand, the process has been a multi-layered, community- and resident-driven exercise in collaborative, grassroots planning, in which the community has acknowledged and prioritized food as a central concern. Yet, this focus on food has also occurred as a co-constructed effort embedded within a larger

community development framework, envisioned and enacted through the prior work of the DRFH partner organizations. In this way, the food planning process has in part been advanced through important, existing organizational networks rooted within the community, comprised of key partners, resources, and resident investment. Furthermore, the successful long-term commitment to the process can in part be attributed to its reciprocal structure, in which the three DRFH partner organizations have created an infrastructure to grow and increase capacity, as well as discover new avenues for programming, while simultaneously meeting an identified community need that is aligned with each organization's mission. This capacity increasing aspect of the process, a central component of ensuring the longevity and sustainability of food planning work in the Dudley Neighborhood, is highlighted by Sutton Kiplinger, Greater Boston Regional Director at the Food Project:

“TFP knows what to ask, but they don’t have the network or the credibility in the neighborhood to do this process. DSNI has that.”

One final point to be made is that throughout the course of facilitating this process of community food planning, the DRFH partners exhibited a very intentional emphasis on remaining vigilant about the autonomy of community residents and stakeholders in decision making. While each organization brings a significant amount of technical knowledge to the table, whether related to more general community development, local land use and control, or food justice, representatives from the DRFH articulated a clear understanding of their roles as *facilitators*, rather than primary decision-makers. Bayoán Roselló-Cornier, a Community Organizer and Planner at DSNI emphasized,

“You’re never supposed to put in your personal opinion. Unacceptable. It’s just not what you do.”

Steering Committee

Despite having limited resources to recruit, DRFH’s partner organizations were able to summon a small group of passionate and relevant individuals to the food planning effort.

The DRFH pre-planning process involved the formation of a steering committee. Individuals were contacted by the DRFH organizers based on their interest in food related work. Nearly all of those who stepped forward were representatives of a food affiliated organization, and had been involved with either ACE, DSNi, or TFP in the past. Residents were determined to see action in the form of access to healthy food as well as a boost of economic activity. Non-residents with an interest in food justice saw the DRFH as an opportunity to put their knowledge, experience and work to use.

One resounding expectation from those interviewed was that the process be guided by resident voices. As Michael Thomas, a steering committee member, resident, and landscaper said:

“Power should be in the hands of the residents themselves. Organizations should not move forward unless residents’ needs are held paramount.”

A strong desire for organizational funding, as well as jobs creating opportunities, was motivators for participating individuals. Involved community members were all seeking to advance the capacity of their organizations through collaboration.

With Dudley’s tradition of gardening experience, many of those involved had some degree of growing experience. Thus farming knowledge proved the backbone of the DRFH. The Dudley greenhouse had become a place of collaboration, and was the primary source of



Image Credit: DSNi

contact for the partner organizations in their pre-planning outreach effort.

Business and organizational capacity was also influential in the planning process. Active involvement from a chef, a food truck operator, and a wholesaler promoted the creation of business relationships and provided a marketing platform. Local non-profit organizations and community organizers were eager to forge relationships with like-minded groups, and open up funding streams.

Throughout the process, steering committee attendance varied. Karsten Frey, a steering committee member and staff member at Haley House Cafe commented that

“...the objective was not necessarily to increase our numbers. It wasn’t exclusive, but it also wasn’t an organization where we have to be creative and get the word out.”

Despite the varied attendance, meeting participants seemed highly engaged in the discussions. Michael said that there was a

“...good balance of mental, emotional and practical ideas coming together. People were very sincere and serious about what they wanted to accomplish.”

Steering committee members also praised the facilitation of the process by the partner organization representatives.

Residents involved in the process were able to vote on priority areas and had the

opportunity to have their opinions heard. The drafting of the vision statement and the priority areas required much deliberation. There were some challenges at this point in the process, as expressed by Karsten:

“Sometimes for me, the conversation was very abstract and concepts with a fair bit of jargon.”

The community meeting in December 2014 was a pinnacle moment for the DRFH, and was widely praised as a success. Genea, a steering committee member and member of ACE’s Food and Land Team, shared her experience:

“There were a lot of community members I hadn’t seen before, including youth and people of color. The recruitment effort was clearly successful. Everyone was super engaged, really bringing new ideas and perspectives.”

In addition to gaining valuable feedback toward process deliverables, this event attracted new steering committee members.

In the end of the planning process, the steering committee came up with 5 priority areas and a vision statement. Karsten mentioned that

“[t]he document was synthesized as a great showing of what we talked about, and what we thought was worthwhile. To me, it’s a great source of guidance to the work that we’re doing.”

Youth involvement is highly regarded as an ideal by not only the partner organizations, but also by most steering committee members. In the summer of 2014, youth were involved in pre-planning activities, including a resident food survey. The survey effort was important to informing the planning process. It also spread the word about the DRFH to residents, and gave youth the opportunity to participate in food work. Once the planning process began, the objective was to have at least one youth representing each of the three partner organizations. Though only one youth participated for the full duration, her growth

was noticed by the steering committee members.

Decision Making

The decision making process was crucial to the success of the planning process - from the participants, discussion, voting, and dissemination. From the onset of the planning process, it was declared to be a grassroots, bottom-up, community food planning process driven by resident input. Overall, the nuances and challenges to the decision making process were sufficiently addressed to contribute to the successful deliverables to the community, the vision statement, and priority strategies with action steps.

The facilitation and organization of steering committee members was established by the DRFH partners. For the majority of meetings, DRFH partners facilitated the discussions and voting process. When the opportunity arose, some steering committee



Image Credit: DSN

members and resident youth facilitated meetings as well. Facilitators served to provide a platform for resident and community member discussion. They kept the discussion respectful and timely, but did not impart their own opinion into how the discussion or voting should go. This understanding and practice of facilitation built off of the DRFH partners’ prior experience in community organizing. This dynamic was agreed upon by the steering committee and

maintained throughout the duration of the monthly meetings.

The voting system within the overall community food planning process was aimed to be as inclusive and equitable as possible. As Bayoán said:

“DRFH decided at the onset of the process that they wanted participation of residents to remain open and flexible: if you’re a resident or stakeholder, your opinion will always count in the voting process, no matter when or what part of the planning process you were a part of.”

They did not want to discriminate against anyone from participating in the steering committee meetings due to challenges of attending meetings earlier or consistently. For every meeting, each person in attendance was allowed one vote. In addition, votes from residents weighted more heavily than non-resident votes. While not quantified, there was an understanding and respect that the ultimate decisions affect residents the most, people who work in the Dudley Neighborhood secondly, and greater community members who are interested in the issues lastly. For those unable to attend the steering committee meetings, DRFH staff would have offline conversations with them to seek input. For instance, a local corner store owner, was unable to attend meetings due to her work schedule, but had strong opinions about growing local food retail.

DRFH partners performed the connective work in between steering committee meetings. They debriefed prior meeting outcomes, prepared agendas, and sent emails to the steering committee members for online feedback. In this way, residents and community members were given space during the meetings to focus on the content and priorities of the DRFH. Sutton commented on the effect of this method:

“We ended up with solid picture for how residents wanted to see the food system

change to better serve them. Priorities were different than if partners had done the process themselves, especially capturing wealth in the neighborhood. Some access and affordability solutions the partners thought of did not include building jobs, so we have adjusted their focus based on this voice.”

Non-resident steering committee members, most of whom were involved with gardening, local food businesses, or community activism, also contributed to the decision making process. Despite their non-resident “outsider” status, it was recognized that these individuals offered a valuable perspective. Their input and curiosity with the DRFH contributed to overall economic and community development in the Dudley Neighborhood.

Despite the complexities and challenges of the decision making process, all participants worked together to make it a success. As Genea stated:

“I feel like it was a pretty open environment to offer critiques and voice things we liked as well.”

By carefully constructing the vision statement, priority strategies, and action steps inclusively, and with focus on resident voices, the DRFH created a strong foundation to base their upcoming implementation.



Image Credit: DSNi

Constraints and Challenges

Overall, the planning process was a success in creating a vision statement, priority strategies, and action steps. Even with these successes, as with any process, there were constraints and challenges. The constraints are all areas that every community planning process faces. The major constraints that emerged by reviewing the data were limited financial resources and a lack of continuity in the steering committee. In addition, several interviews acknowledge the involvement of residents and youths in the process, but at the same time desired to still see more involvement.

The limited financial resources were an overarching constraint for the process. The three partner organizations received no outside funding to carry out this process. Despite not receiving funding, the partners believed that this process was important to create a community vision for the food system in the Dudley Neighborhood. Because of the lack of resources, staff was unable to devote as much time to this process, especially in the area of outreach. Due to a lack of resources, there was not enough staff capacity to follow up with connections made during resident outreach events, namely the December community meeting. This potentially limited the breadth of community influence on the process.

Despite the funding constraint, DRFH was able to use the partner organizations existing programming to leverage the process. For example, they used DSNi and TFP youth to collect data for the information gathering stage of the process. In addition, the youth surveyed the community at events already planned by the DRFH partners, allowing the youth to engage with the community without needing to plan and organize a second event. These creative connections were possible due to the existing coordination and networks of the organizations. Nonetheless, the process would have been easier if there had been dedicated outside funding to the process. As Sutton

stated succinctly in her interview as advice for other considering this type of planning process:

“Get it staffed. Get it funded.”

The second area of constraint was the participation in the steering committee. As with any community planning process, drop off in participation is part of the process. However, it is still understandably a source of frustration to those who have committed to the process and were able to consistently come to the meetings. The average steering committee attendance was a little over two meetings out of seven. By establishing early in the process there would be a one-voice-one-vote policy at decision making points, the inconsistency of participation did not hamper the process from achieving its main goals of creating a vision statement and priority strategies. There is a tension in community planning due to the desire to include everyone, but it also important to create a cohesive decision making group. Some interviewees felt that too much of the meetings were spent recapping the previous ones, due to newly introduced attendees, and would have preferred to move more quickly.

Setting clear expectations of the roles and goals of the steering committee is another important aspect for the planning process. Many members of the steering committee, especially the resident members, are “doers,” and an intensive planning process is very different from their typical mode of operation. A planning process leans more toward theory, where the products are less tangible. A few interviewees mentioned the desire of residents to proceed to implementation. Framers of the process must be explicit that the goals of planning are to establish actionable goals. Implementation will begin after the planning process is complete. In addition, it is important to explain why a process adds value for its own sake and make sure this understanding grounds the work of the steering committee. As Jackson said:

“it [the process] has to move that slowly for it to produce a good product, but the real question is how do you get more people to the table in the first place?”

This leads into the last challenge of resident and youth involvement. Residents and youth were actively engaged throughout the process, however, many interviewees expressed a desire to have seen more. As mentioned, youth participated in a successful data collection effort. In addition, TFP coordinated a couple of its youth meetings to take place right before steering committee meetings, and some youth members would stay for the steering committee as well. One youth in particular participated for the duration of the planning process. She even facilitated steering committee meetings and part of the community meeting in December. Unfortunately, other youth did not make this same kind of commitment to the process. It is important to think through why more youth were unable to engage more fully. Was it due to other commitments like school? Did youth feel prepared to analyze and distill the information in the discussion? Was participating in a process like this even of interest to them? Unfortunately, we were unable to learn answers to these questions, but it would be worth looking into for future planning processes. It is important to mention that it is atypical for youth to be as involved in a community food planning process as they were at all in this one, but given the large youth participation in the partner organizations' traditional programming, many of the interviewees would have liked to see more youth involved in the steering committee.

Residents were involved in all stages of the process. They participated as survey participants, engaged as members of the steering committee, and provided feedback on the vision statement and priority strategies at the community wide meeting in December. For a few residents who were unable to attend meetings, offline discussions were held to gain

their input. Although residents were engaged and guided the process, the interviewees expressed a desire for more residents to have been involved, especially on the steering committee. Residents made up about half of the steering committee members and their representation varied throughout the process.

Resident involvement becomes more difficult in a socially- and politically-engaged neighborhood such as Dudley. Multiple community meetings are happening every night and residents that desire to be engaged are constantly making choices about which meetings to attend.

Since the steering committee was a long-term commitment, it was even more challenging to recruit and retain residents. In addition, the conversations that occurred during the steering committee meetings required a lot of work, as Bayoán said,

“It’s daunting for individuals who aren’t being paid to come on a monthly basis for a meaty, heavy discussion that filters and condenses opinions and relays them under a set of umbrellas, especially because a lot of these people are heavily involved in other things.”

In this particular community context, more resident input and engagement is always encouraged. Because they hold themselves and are held to a high standard of resident involvement, it was unlikely they would have reached a level where everyone would have felt there was enough resident and youth involvement.

Social Justice

The three partner organizations have a long history in participating in social justice movements. Throughout the interviews, aspects of social justice were mentioned on multiple occasions but not as often as we originally anticipated. The Field Projects Team quickly realized that it was the underpinning factor in all of the work that DRFH as a whole was doing. There were four categories that the Field Projects Team characterized as falling

within the social justice realm — projecting forward, food/planning process as a part of a broader community development, community health/wellness, and structural inequalities that were identified/referenced. Most of our interviewees contributed opinions to the latter two.

DRFH has provided a platform for residents to come together and create new relationships in order to assist in the process of establishing a local food system. Many of those connections were established during the community wide meeting in December. As Sutton said:

“The partners hope to emphasize the resident values articulated throughout the process in order for the process to have the potential to be a touchstone for development in the neighborhood.”

Both residents and partners emphasized that food justice and social justice go hand in hand and are related to ensuring greater access to these neighborhoods.

Community health and wellness and structural inequalities were mentioned on multiple occasions by our interviewees. The makeup of the Dudley Neighborhood consists of alarming health statistics amongst people of color. People today are becoming more health conscious and starting to grow their own food. DRFH is creating a platform for this to occur while increasing awareness through the planning process and the formulation of a food hub. Many of the members committed to the process mentioned one of the core motivators for their participation being the desire for everyone to eat well and have access to healthy foods.

Food within the Dudley community is viewed as fundamental piece in which people can relate. It surprised partners at times that so much emphasis was placed on the residents desire to address food access and affordability issues through job creations. As DRFH realizes and Sutton put succinctly:

“...despite Dudley’s food system assets, health indicators show that not enough is being done to serve residents. The assets are up against a system that is in for profits at the expense of health. That system is intentional”

In the end, the partners were working alongside residents in order to address these structural inequalities within the local food system, and as Vernell said,

“Can’t guarantee that it’s going to be equitable, or that all issues will be addressed, but the fact that there is a process that involves residents and who the residents are sounds hopeful and is a strong likelihood that a lot of this will do what it’s supposed to do.”

Next Steps

The next stage for the DRFH is will be to implement their priority strategies. There are plans to begin implementation in the summer of 2015, with an indefinite end date to completing all of the strategies. The vision, priority strategies, and action steps serve as a living document to guide the future food systems work of the DRFH. With the understanding that the priority strategies are ranked based on the existing resources and energy for what would lead to the most benefits to the Dudley Neighborhood, the priority strategies serve as a projected timeline for the



Image Credit: DSNI

DRFH. With the understanding that the action steps are contextually specific within the Dudley Neighborhood, they serve as a rubric of sorts to ensure that the local food system the DRFH builds is for the residents and for the community.

While the priority strategies are not explicitly delegated to certain partner organizations, there is a sense of who would lead specific actions, who would partner together, and where there can be further growth. The DRFH intended to build upon their existing work in the Dudley Neighborhood, and many of the strategies will evolve or expand their existing programs. For the priority strategies that require the creation of new programs, there will need to be increased capacity building. There is interest in expanding the DRFH to include more partners, such as the Madison Park CDC. This CDC has prior experience in local food systems, and could be an exemplary partner to grow the DRFH in their capacity, expertise, funding, and resources.

Moving forward, the steering committee will meet on a quarterly basis to monitor the activities of the DRFH and provide regular feedback about the opinions and pulse of the community. There is still opportunity for more residents and community members to participate on the steering committee and outreach efforts will remain ongoing to bolster the voice of the Dudley Neighborhood.

Lastly, obtaining funding is an important step in moving forward now that there are projects planned. There are several small grants that the DRFH will be applying to for their various projects, and in March of 2016, they will apply to the USDA Community Food Projects grant that would support full-time staff for DRFH's community food systems planning.

achieved their goal of creating a collective vision statement and resident-driven priority areas with action steps specific to the Dudley Neighborhood. It was a strength that the process was driven by three partner organizations with deep ties to the community and subsequently, a significant amount of social capital. It was clear that the pre-pre and pre-planning stages built a strong foundation for the DRFH to move forward by establishing an intentional process design. As shown in the steering committee meetings, when the work is meaningful, people will be drawn to participate. This process created a space for open dialogue and multiple entry points into the conversation. Despite limitations related to funding and staff time, the DRFH still managed to create an inclusive community planning process that was an asset to both the community and the partner organizations. Documenting this process will not only serve as a guide for other organizations, but also function as a useful document for the partner organizations, outlining successes and challenges in undertaking such a major community development process.

Conclusion

Overall, DRFH's community food planning process was a success. They

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Appendix A - Dudley Real Food Hub Priority Strategies

DRFH Steering Committee
Priority Strategies
Final Version

"The Dudley Real Food Hub envisions a local resident-led food system that provides access to nutritious, affordable healthy food to all our neighbors, brings economic opportunities to residents, and protects the environment."

1. Build a resident-owned supply chain for healthy fresh and prepared foods in local stores.

Activities:

- Engage local store owners to build their awareness of residents' interests in healthier offerings, and partner with them to increase stock of fresh and lightly-processed produce and healthy prepared foods, including:
 - Strategizing around sourcing, using TFP produce to build demand and systems, facilitating connections between stores and local growers and cooks, and leveraging local wholesale business;
 - Improving store infrastructure for display and storage of produce, lightly processed local fruits and vegetables, and healthy prepared foods;
 - Developing and promoting lightly-processed and prepared foods lines, in partnership with Pearl business incubator facility.
- Build awareness of and demand for new products through grassroots youth- and resident-led marketing campaign, including:
 - Development of branding and marketing materials;
 - Cooking workshops and product sampling events in stores;
 - Outreach to local residents via social media, text-messaging alerts, door-knocking, flyer, and other mechanisms.
- Advocate for opportunities to support consumer incentives for produce in corner stores, akin to the matching provided for SNAP purchases at farmer's markets, to increase residents' purchasing power for new products.

2. Secure vacant land in perpetuity for growing by interested community residents.

Activities:

- Work with the City of Boston to identify vacant land that has strong potential for growing and move these parcels into community control, either on the DNI land trust or in another comparable configuration (including potential management by BNAN, UFI/TPL, other entities as appropriate).
- Engage abutting neighbors and other interested residents in the process of identifying appropriate lots, and work with residents who are interested in growing to determine appropriate design and management plans for vacant parcels, possibly through an RFP process.
- Renovate parcels for growing as community gardens, community farms, or commercial farms dependent on residents' interests, including:

- Cleaning and leveling lots;
 - Building raised beds and/or spreading clean soil;
 - Installing rainwater collection and/or irrigation.
- Provide ongoing support for gardeners to ensure strong use of growing spaces, including facilitating connections to the Dudley Greenhouse and leveraging youth and resident champions.
- Advocate for sustainable funding pool for ongoing investments in maintenance of community-controlled growing spaces.

3. Design a strategy around how the Dudley community can effect meaningful change in school food.

Activities:

- Partner with staff at local schools and BPS central office to determine leverage points for Dudley residents to improve school food, potentially including:
 - Supporting the introduction of breakfast in the classroom in interested schools;
 - Mobilizing a youth cohort to provide real-time reporting and feedback on meals, to provide FNS with data to inform negotiations with contracted school food provider;
 - Advocacy around the satellite school food contract in three years, to ensure that it represents the values of the Dudley Real Food Hub;
 - Increasing school gardening infrastructure in local schools and facilitating use of this produce in school meals.

4. Expand existing food access points for low-income residents.

Activities:

- Support strong use of existing farmer's markets, farm stands, and subsidized CSAs in the Dudley neighborhood through marketing and outreach (coordinated with the outreach described above in Strategy 1).
- Install home gardens for interested neighborhood residents.
- Leverage these opportunities where possible to connect with resident-owned businesses, including exploring sales by home growers through farmers markets and co-location with food trucks operating out of Pearl kitchen facility.

5. Advocate and plan for additional physical development to support the neighborhood food system (Dudley Miller Park, Maxwell Building site, etc.).

Appendix B - Example Interview Protocol

Study Title: Dudley Real Food Hub – Community Food Planning Process

Principal Investigator: Barbara Shepard-Kim

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Staff Member

- 1) Which partner organization do you work for and how long have you been working in community development? How long have you been working on community development in the Boston area?
- 2) What did this process require in terms of organizational capacity in your organization and in partner organizations? How were responsibilities divided?
- 3) What successes and challenges did you encounter during the process?
- 4) How did the process compare to the original plan?
- 5) How does this process relate to social justice, including food justice, racial justice, and environmental justice?
- 6) How were residents and youth engaged in this process?
- 7) How has this process affected the community?
- 8) If someone from another organization came to you and said they were thinking about replicating the process, what advice would you give them?

Community Member

- 1) How did you hear about DRFH and how long have you been involved? Have you participated in other community development projects? What drew you to participate?
- 2) How were residents and youth engaged in this process?
- 3) How does this process relate to social justice, including food justice, racial justice, and environmental justice?
- 4) How was the process organized?
- 5) How has this process affected the community?
- 6) What successes and challenges did you encounter during the process?
- 7) If someone from another organization came to you and said they were thinking about replicating the process, what advice would you give them?

Appendix C - Methods of Data Analysis

Methods of Data Analysis

According to Yin, there are four overarching general strategies that can be utilized when examining case study data (Yin, 1984). This case study is choosing to focus on the strategy of developing a case study description, which on a macro level, involves the distillation and categorization of data into themes or sections. This strategy aligns with the frameworks through which this case study seeks to answer the proposed research questions. Additionally, in order to uncover and analyze themes that emerge within data gathered through the interviews, this case study will also utilize components of grounded theory as part of the analysis process. A central tenant of grounded theory analysis involves the claim that, "Broader structural conditions must be brought into the analysis, however microscopic in focus is the research"(Corbin & Strauss, 1990, 422). Furthermore, according to Strauss (1987) there are three components to a grounded theory data analysis process, including induction, deduction, and verification. Much like Yin's work on case study methods, grounded theory emphasizes an on-going, cyclical process of data triangulation, as well as a well-monitored balance of rigor and adaptiveness. Additionally, Strauss (1987) asserts that grounded theory analysis involves the raising of generative questions that help guide the data collection and analysis process, as well as an important recognition that the temporal as well as relational aspects are central to each of the three analytic operations also described by Yin, including data collecting, coding, memoing.

Finally, in order to examine and analyze the relationships between the different evidence sets, as well as the processes driving the steering committee planning process, this case study will utilize aspects of both a program-level logic model analytic technique, as well the creation of a chronological analysis. Yin (2014) describes the logic model as an analytic technique that examines data as an iterative process that creates a lengthy cause and effect chain, in which, "...events are staged in repeated cause-effect-cause-effect patterns, whereby a dependent variable (event) at an earlier stage becomes the independent variable for the next stage" (149). Because a goal of this case study is to examine the ways in which the planning process was a community driven phenomenon, it is important to uncover the ways in which decisions, events, or chance occurrences throughout the process contributed to its continuity or modification, as well as the effects this may have had on resident involvement. Relatedly, in order to gain a rich, comprehensive portrait of the evolution of the planning process, it is necessary to fully explore and document the chronology of key events and decisions, as well the ways in which the chronology shaped the planning process itself. Yin (1986) describes how chronologies "...permits the investigator to determine causal events over time, because the basic sequence of a cause and its effect cannot be temporally inverted" (113). In other words, linking the steering committee planning process to a fixed temporal sequence can help uncover cause and effect relationships that may be verified by evaluating the relationships between events as they relate to a designated time progression.

While the interview process is still underway, the analysis will consist of an iterative, multi-step process, including: 1) The evaluation of interview transcripts, DRFH partner meeting notes, and steering committee notes for key notable or commonly identified categories, paying specific attention to content that highlights any of the four research frameworks, 2) the re-evaluation and narrowing of categories into overarching themes, based on frequency and relatedness to the research questions and frameworks 3) the utilization of a data matrix to identify frequently occurring and overlapping themes within all data sets, 4) re-evaluation of categories and themes as additional interviewing data are gathered, and 5) finally, the grouping of final themes into the four overarching research frameworks, along with the highlighting of any themes which do not appear to fit within any of the frameworks.