

Territorialized Space: Organizing the Food Movement in Hendersonville, Alabama

Zachary Floyd Henson¹

The role of community based and activist organizations is to produce space, or durable arrangements of culture, institutional power, and practice with a physical space. I have argued for the former three in an earlier article, but it has become increasingly clear that territorialization is an integral part to lasting change. The strategy deployed by our organization is a combination of war of position and war of maneuver, Gramscian ideas about how to produce political, cultural, and economic change. Wars of maneuver create temporary autonomous zones or territorialized spaces that suspend the rules and networks of dominant society for a short time. Wars of position produce more durable change by shifting territorial-spatial social relations in favor a more progressive configuration. While wars of maneuver demonstrate, in a temporary manner, the possibility of counter-hegemonic space, wars of position institutionalize some of that counter-hegemonic space, permanently. I show how our organization is accomplishing this task through organizing the food movement in a couple of neighborhoods in Birmingham, Alabama. Our organizing ranges from really grassroots popular education to identifying potential allies within the corporate and political structure who may benefit from our proposed programs. These individuals are often marginal within those territorial-spatial social structures. Through this, counter-hegemonic space can be constructed, however partial. [Article copies available for a fee from *The Transformative Studies Institute*. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2015 by *The Transformative Studies Institute*. All rights reserved.]

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¹ **Zachary Floyd Henson.** I was born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1978. It is a tortured city with a past that hangs over its head in a visceral way. It is my home. The people here struggle with poverty and white supremacy, which go virtually unaddressed by powerful institutions, most of which are controlled by whites despite the fact that the city is 73% black. I am white working class, growing up in a working class family and pursuing a career as an auto mechanic before going to college. Because of this I feel a profound obligation to help those who struggle with oppression as I have in the past. Address correspondence to: Zachary Floyd Henson; e-mail: foodjusticepolitics@gmail.com.

This is an experimental article and represents experimental research. Social science has long been founded on notions of objectivity and methodological rigor. Most social scientists formulate a question and then go to communities and ask questions to gather data to answer the formulated question. However, this strikes me as fundamentally exploitative and extractive. Communities put up with researchers lack of cultural competency and prying questions even though many of them don't have much time to waste. Often these community leaders wear numerous hats and often they cooperate with researchers, but rarely do they get anything of consequence out of it, yet, academics build their careers on the knowledge of others. This begs the question, "how can researchers create for communities instead of extract from?"

My interest in social science started when I read Hunter S. Thompson's *Hells Angels* (1967), an ethnography about the Hells' Angels motorcycle gang. This was Thompson's first foray into what he would call Gonzo Journalism, a type of journalism in which the supposed objective observer makes themselves a part of the story. What I am proposing for this research and in this paper is a type of Gonzo social science research. Using theory, I have gone into a community, assembled a team, forged a mission and plans, connected with community leaders, and developed strategies. Together, we (Greater Hendersonville Agricultural Group) have created real knowledge, knowledge that is useful to solving problems on the ground. This article, though in my words, reflects this knowledge.

There are caveats to this approach. I work in the community in which I was born, Hendersonville, Alabama (all proper nouns are pseudonyms). I understand the culture and politics. I speak the language with the right accent. I know how to dress appropriately. I've made a long term commitment to my community, a commitment that has very likely cost me many career opportunities. I am in the public eye and am subject to intense scrutiny on a daily basis. Everything I do is watched, closely. This work is uncomfortable, and being comfortable with being uncomfortable is probably the most difficult skill to learn.

In an article forthcoming in *Theory and Action*, I (forthcoming) argue that the primary role of community-based organization is to produce community common space or commons. These commons can be analyzed using a modified Lefebvrian (1974) heuristic that divides space into three dialectical categories: organized power, legitimate culture, and practice. As we move forward in our activist and community organizing efforts, it has become quite apparent to me that this heuristic is incomplete and that territory, or territorialization, must be included. This

territorialization is a process of embedding the social relations of social space within a physical space. For space to be produced, all four categories must be produced through a dialectical process. As power becomes more organized, cultural lines and practice become more clear, connecting to a physical space, reinforcing the organized power, its culture and practice.

Generally, territorialization is meant to indicate the assignment of a physical space to a state. The debate about territorialization ranges from absolute deterritorialization because of globalization on one pole, to the reemergence of the neoliberal state and subsequent territory on the other pole. Ince (2012) argues that this framework is in fact misguided and that territorialization should be seen as a process by which social relations are embedded within a territory – that a territory is not a territory without the relations that animate it. Clearly, my framework for territorialized space builds on Ince’s theorization in which he claims that “I seek to consider territory in a way that seeks to avoid divisions between social and institutional imaginaries...,” though he fails to construct a specifically dialectical framework of how each moment in the production of space internalizes the moments of all others.

Recent debates have shown how global capital shifted territorialization strategies with the shift from Fordism and national economies to neoliberalism and global economies. Brenner (2004) argues that, under Fordism, capital was territorialized by the national state in a fairly standard, nested scalar hierarchy. After the neoliberal turn, strategies for territorialization changed with the nation state being but one of the social agents responsible for the territorialization of capital. Transnational corporations, the local state, NGOs, and other social agents all play a part in current territorialization and with novel configurations throughout the globe.

The strength of this type of framework is that it allows radical thinkers and activists to avoid tired debates about revolution or reform. It sees state and capital as producing social relations embedded in space; understands that neither the state nor capital are one thing, but ongoing processes; and recognizes that the goal of revolution or reform is to remake space in such a way as to foster freedom and equality instead of brutality and oppression. Thus, as I will argue later, aspects of capitalism and the state can be manipulated to produce commons instead of “public” or private space.

Marx expands on this concept:

No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for

which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the tasks itself arises only when the material conditions of its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation (1859).

Thus, the key to producing counter-hegemonic space is to identify the material conditions of the solution that already exist. This means manipulating the state and capital in such a way as to fundamentally alter processes of spatial production – to produce commons.

The creation of commons is the process of developing diffuse networked power that has a correlative physical space. The necessity for physical space is predicated on the idea that economic production is the basis of all forms of power. Thus, producing a relative space that facilitates democratic production must be the goal of all organizing and community development. Other movements have used temporary autonomous zones (Bey, 1985) to send messages to “the man,” meaning, in bell hooks (2008) words, imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, that those oppressed will not stand idly by. We (Greater Hendersonville Agricultural Group) propose to create an alternative to the man that threatens the man by offering viable alternatives to the man’s ways. The movement for justice must transform from a war of maneuver to a war of position.

For Antonio Gramsci (1971), social change efforts broke down to wars of maneuver and wars of position. Wars of maneuver are headlong charges, visible and confrontational. They reveal the immorality of the man, but they also lack the sophistication to truly challenge the man at the game he created. Because of this, wars of position are also necessary, confrontations that entail identifying sympathetic individuals and institutions that have political power and know how to play the political game. Usually, these individuals are marginal within the power structure, having come up from the grassroots level and achieving a modicum of respectability within the growth machine of a city. These sympathetic individuals are not uncompromised, but are still generally favorable to grassroots politics and programs if only for the fact that it will solidify them as a grassroots leader – the representative of the people in an otherwise corrupt system. They are not uncorrupt, but they are useful. Failure to identify and exploit these individuals and institutions is a

failure of organizing on any meaningful level.

Greater Hendersonville Agriculture Group's strategy is an eminently spatial one. We work on institutional, cultural, and practice levels. Though not explicitly stated, we see our goal as producing alternative spaces for the practice of anti-racism, economic democracy, and general resistance to the man. This work began in 2011 while I was conducting research for my dissertation. At this point, I had organized a group of three people - Debbie Arlington, a grassroots leader and member of Southwest Community Development, Inc.; Jessica Sanderson, a graduate student in anthropology interested in permaculture; and myself. Arlington was in the process of building a hoop house on property owned by Southwest Community Development, Inc. and McCown and I began as volunteers during the construction and subsequent farming of the hoop house.

SCD was founded in 2002 as an initiative of Southwest Baptist Church in the Hillman Station neighborhood of southwest Hendersonville. Its mission is to "promote quality family life and a greater sense of community through a variety of programs and community outreach efforts." Their model is to take in resources from grants and donations and to use them to directly benefit the community they serve. While the organization is connected with city leaders and depends on patronage on some level, it cannot be considered activist in any way. The executive director, Jordan Naomi, was cc'd on FOIA request and became very angry that the request would undermine her standing with political leaders and in the community. She stated as justification for her email, "we work very hard to build trust with the community and don't want to do anything that would undermine it."

This stance is not uncommon among community-based organizations in Hendersonville. The local foundations, such as the Community Foundation for Greater Hendersonville, are uninterested in funding social change or activist projects, and the few activist organizations that exist get much of their funding from national foundations. The city also provides a great deal of funding to the non-profit sector, funding which is constantly under scrutiny, and most small- and medium-sized community-based organizations depend on patronage to survive. This has the effect of preventing any criticism of those in power by community-based organizations. Furthermore, the one activist organization that exists in Hendersonville besides GHAG, Greater Hendersonville Ministries, focuses on state policy and not local government policy, for the most part. There is no formal organizational resistance or development of urban policy in Hendersonville to speak of,

particularly not within the food movement.

It is within this context that we decided to start GHAG. There was no food justice organization in Hendersonville and in the state of Alabama. There are few, if any, effective activist organizations working in Hendersonville not focused on policies external to the city. These organizations repeat the refrain that “Hendersonville has an Alabama problem,” referring to the configuration of the state government in which power is concentrated at the state level and rural areas are overrepresented. Hendersonville certainly does have an Alabama problem on the issue of transit, but on a whole host of other issues is demonstrably not true. GHAG would fill the niche of working between the grassroots and challenging powerful institutions in the city. Moreover, GHAG would not only work on the policy side of the food system and community development in Hendersonville, it would also work to build sustainable, community-controlled economic institutions in distressed neighborhoods of the region. While there are community-based economic institutions and organizations such as Granderson Housing, which does low-income housing, there are none that focus solely on economic development and there are certainly no institutions or organizations using agriculture as a means to achieve that economic development.

GHAG’s promotion and development of worker-owned cooperatives exploits an opportunity within neoliberalism that allows for democratic ownership as a form of neoliberal entrepreneurialism. Neoliberal governance is the state’s use of market mechanisms to shape behavior (Shannon, 2013). Neoliberal governance and its use of entrepreneurialism (Brenner & Theodore, 2002) creates opportunity for activist projects that focus on economic development. Generally, this has meant rolling back state protections and rolling out market-based government policies, such as those used to address food deserts. However, the use of entrepreneurial-based policies presents an opportunity for activists to create democratic enterprises that can bring sustainable wages and environmental wisdom to an otherwise destructive economy. The following pages will document how that can be done with existing organizational structures or through the creation of new economic institutions and organizations. Our project is Janus-faced (Swyngedouw 2005), meaning that it has a disciplinary side that shapes social agents into *homo economicus*, and a liberatory side that shapes social agents into *homo democraticus*.

Homo economicus is the rational actor of rational choice theory (Henrich et al, 2001). They gauge every decision based on maximizing

gains a minimizing losses. They are concerned with profiting and with doing everything necessary to increase monetary profits for their business or other enterprise. They are greedy and selfish. *Homo democraticus* believes and acts on the belief that working with other humans toward shared goals is the ultimate of human experience (Badiou, 2011). They value the opinions of others and deliberative decision-making. They share their wealth, and while not necessarily selfless, is collaborative. Both *homo economicus* and *homo democraticus* are types of habitus, or dispositions that allow a social agents to act meaningfully in a given social context or space. *Homo economicus* and *Homo democraticus* are contradictions in the Marxian sense, in that the tension is resolved or at least held together in the habitus of a particular social agent. An actor in a cooperative enterprise will be both *homo economicus* and *homo democraticus*. People work together to maximize profit, or as one of our board members and cooperative worker-owners put it, “cooperatives exist to make money.”

The following are the implicit assumptions that GHAG operates under, which can be summarized the following way:

1. Hendersonville is a highly segregated city. This has spatial (institutional, cultural, and practical) consequences that dramatically shape the way the city works.
2. White supremacy and economic injustice are intimately intertwined through processes of spatial production.
3. Organizing is the primary way to address both the disparities in power and wealth caused by this segregation. Organizing is defined broadly to include traditional face-to-face organizing, social and traditional media, and networking with other organizations and institutions, including governmental.
4. Organizing is about building an organization that can create space.
5. Neoliberalism creates opportunities for Janus-faced institution building that lead to (more) just sustainability (Agyeman, Bullard, & Evans, 2003), defined and racially and economically just community development, i.e. the production of a certain type of space called commons.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

It's hard to put a finger on when this work began, but I began my research in Hendersonville in 2009 with an organization called Western

Ministry. Western Ministry is a Methodist direct service organization that is associated with an inner city Methodist Church called Western House Church. The pastor of the church, James Harbison, a white, Duke educated minister, founded a community garden in 2008 that focuses on healthy eating and living and on providing some employment and mentoring to youth. Like many community-based organizations in Hendersonville, they are allergic to activism, with the notable exception of Mr. Harbison's vocal opposition to HB 56, an anti-immigrant bill. Western Community Garden's program director Anna Hasan was involved in drafting the Urban Agriculture Zoning Ordinance. I will return to this later.

It was through WCG that I met Debbie Arlington of Southwest Community Development, Inc. The first project that I was marginally involved with was the creation of a number of farmers' markets in SCD's service area. The project was a collaboration between Main Street Hendersonville, which would later become BUILD Hendersonville when it merged with downtown booster organization, Operation New Hendersonville, SCD, and Lawson State Community College. While I was not privy to the discussions between BUILD and SCD's leadership, there was some disagreement about the actual obligations of BUILD and SCD. Because of this, there was no staff for the farmers' market in Hillman Station for the first market.

While I believe this situation was a result of a genuine miscommunication and of a "parachute-in" strategy of community development on the part of BUILD, the way that BUILD Hendersonville handled the disagreement destroyed any potential that the project had for succeeding. BUILD treated SCD as a subordinate organization and demanded that SCD rectify what BUILD saw as SCD falling down on their obligations. Instead of having an attitude of "how can we solve this," they had an attitude of "you're not keeping your end of the bargain." It created a confrontational and hierarchical atmosphere and SCD pulled out, costing them legitimacy in the community. SCD cast it as white development organizations exploiting black communities saying that BUILD "prostituted black communities" and "were only there to get their numbers," meaning to justify grant funding. BUILD went on to publish a white paper in conjunction with ChangeLab Solutions out of Oakland, California that obliquely placed blame on SCD. While there was probably blame to go around, BUILD has a horrible reputation working with community-based organizations with one local journalist claiming that he "couldn't find anyone to say anything good about them."

BUILD is not an activist organization, but a firmly entrenched quasi-governmental growth machine actor. Their board of directors reads like a who's who of Hendersonville business and government elites. They attempt to take credit for almost every initiative in Hendersonville sometimes by lending support as small as a sign. I also have a source on record saying that one of BUILD's operatives told her to "shut her mouth" in response to criticism of the organization. This person subsequently left the city for this and other reasons. I would also be remiss not to mention the important role BUILD plays in the territorialization by transnational capital of Birmingham. BUILD acts a sort of local intermediary for global financial institutions, creating a positive sociocultural, policy, and economic environment for investment, particularly in housing.

While an observer of this debacle, I also began aiding in teaching a GED class for SCD. The willingness to help SCD on their terms and to point out that BUILD Hendersonville's operatives were not qualified to do community development work helped to build trust between SCD and I. Showing up for the creation of SWBCF and doing whatever was necessary to ensure that the farm operated correctly also built a relationship between SCD and I that has been long-standing. Doing community development in black neighborhoods as a white person has conditions that must be addressed or at least acknowledge to be even remotely functional. Remember that the habitus of blacks and whites are strikingly different and producing practices appropriate for white people in black spaces requires carefully listening to community partners and critical self-examination of one's place in the community ecology.

This listening and self-examination led me to position myself and later our organization in a specific interstitial space between our divided communities. In black communities, I help. I follow the lead of black community leaders and I do what is asked of me. In practice, that has been anything from writing grants to picking okra to mentoring youth. These experiences led to the creation of a community-based organization in this interstitial space, Greater Hendersonville Agriculture Group, which began in 2011, but was not officially incorporated until June of 2012. GHAG takes a more confrontational stance in the white community and with political leaders and a more technical assistance stance in dealing with community-based organizations, all of which have been black run. The longest running of these collaborations has been with SCD and Southwest Hendersonville Community Farm, a program of SCD that is run by Debbie Arlington.

GHAG's board has never had less than a majority of members of color

and represents many different segments of Hendersonville, including elders and youth, the LGBTQIAP community, and men and women. Two of our members are Black Freedom Movement veterans and most of our members have activist backgrounds of one type or another. We developed a mission of community development based on being a cooperative incubator to create black, worker-owned cooperatives. This fits with our organizational ideology that the only way for racism to cease is for blacks to achieve economic parity with whites along with institutional control over their own communities. This is not a groundbreaking ideology by any stretch of the imagination, as black communities have used economic cooperation as a means to fight white supremacy since at least the end of slavery, if not much longer (Nembhard, 2014).

In white communities we use popular education to build the culture and practice that our organization projects. Through social media and quarterly trainings, we rally support for the cause of anti-racism and economic justice. We have been very active on social and traditional media, especially in the community group, I Believe in Hendersonville, and in a group that we started called Hendersonville Rising. Our interactions with journalists spawned a series in *Weld for Hendersonville* (Llewelyn, 2014, 2013a, 2013b; Patterson, 2013), a local alt weekly that the publisher states is Hendersonville's *New Yorker*, on gentrification, which prior to our interventions was not a word in the lexicon of most Hendersonville residents. I have also had my research on race covered by the Hendersonville News and have been interviewed for pieces on race and poverty and the Hendersonville Land Bank Authority (Bryant, 2014; Kelly, 2014; Owens, 2014). The result has been to raise our visibility as an organization, to begin to solidify and legitimize our organization as an authority on issues of race, poverty, and community development in Hendersonville, and to begin to set the cultural and practice terms for engagement with race and urban development in the city.

As is probably obvious by now, one-on-one organizing is noticeably absent from the strategy thus far. The main reason for this is that it is extremely difficult for white organizers to do one-on-one organizing in black communities. Black folks have seen many whites come and go, from politicians to media members to researchers to community development professionals, and almost all have not made a long-term commitment to communities or the people in them. Thus, blacks perceive white people in their communities to be temporary and primarily there for self-interested reasons such as to justify a community involvement requirement for a foundation grant. This becomes the accepted role of

whites within black communities and blacks expect whites to act this way and to not understand “what is really going on” as one community member put it. Generally, these assumptions about whites in black communities are correct. Unless the white organizer is uniquely talented, the best they can accomplish is to gain the trust of the community’s leadership and act as a sort of advisor or consultant. In our experience and because of the way predominantly white organizations like BUILD Hendersonville behave in black communities, it takes entirely too long for white organizers to build trust for it to be worth the effort on any large scale. Black organizers are an absolute necessity.

We began as an organization with a group of diverse members of the Hendersonville community. We crafted a mission and a broad plan. We engaged in the community organizing that we were able to do and we built our name and reputation as an organization, often by taking quite unpopular stances. By being diverse, we also situated ourselves, somewhat uncomfortably, in the interstitial space between the white and black communities in Hendersonville, but with a distinctly black self-determination ideology.

GROWTH

In 2012, the established, majority white food movement members (Henson & Munsey, 2014) in collaboration with the city’s planning department drafted the urban agricultural zoning ordinance. The process lasted about a year and black and diverse food movement organizations were not included to any great extent. We found out about the ordinance in January of 2013 with less than a month before it was to go before the dais. The ordinance is highly restrictive of community gardens, requiring proof of benefit to the city, a detailed site plan, restrictions on composting, and the requirement of expensive soil testing in order to obtain a permit. It also significantly limits the growth of farmers’ markets. Ostensibly, the reason for the restrictions was that the city would be recalcitrant to pass a more lenient resolution, but the effect was to significantly curtail the growth of smaller, less well-funded organizations, most of which are not white-dominated. We raised our concerns to the committee, but were rebuffed. They did allow for gardens to apply for an exception for farm stands. After two years of the ordinance, it is almost universally hated by grassroots organizations and city planners alike and has been, more or less, a failure. Very few community gardens have been permitted, even in established, white-dominated organizations. We had little power to affect the urban ag

zoning ordinance process in 2013, but we have been approached by planning to recommend changes. This is a result of fighting a war of position.

In 2013, one of GHAG's board members, David Ingram, stepped off the board to become executive director. Twenty-three at the time, we were able to pay his salary because we received a sizeable donation for it. Mr. Ingram, 23 at the time, is white and was extremely inexperienced in managing an organization or grassroots community organizing. He did have experience in student organizing and environmental campaigns around Alabama and throughout the Southeast. His inexperience showed as he made numerous mistakes in the first six months, including angering many residents of Hillman Station where SCD and SWBCF are. However, his hiring represented a new phase in GHAG's growth.

Ingram's first successful organizing endeavor was Hendersonville Land Reform Coalition. Ingram put together a group of neighborhood leaders and otherwise interested residents to craft an intervention into the soon-to-be-created Hendersonville Land Bank Authority. The HLBA would clear the title of tax delinquent properties of which there are approximately 4500 in the city and prepare them for redevelopment. During our meetings we determined how we wanted the HLBA to operate and crafted a list of mandates and priorities, which follow.

MANDATES

1. All board appointees and decision-makers should be residents of the city of Hendersonville.
2. Members of the board should represent diverse geographic regions of the city, favoring regions with the highest number of tax delinquent properties.
3. HLBA should dispose of properties at best use as determined by residents.
4. HLBA should offer a right of return to displaced residents and mitigate gentrification.
5. HLBA should foster grassroots socioeconomic development and create low-income homeownership within neighborhoods.
6. This board has to follow all city, county, and state anti-corruption and ethics laws.
7. HLBA must have dedicated funding source.

PRIORITIES

1. Low-income housing (should be accomplished through community land trusts or cooperative housing, i.e. something that gives low income people homeownership.)
2. Locally owned businesses that complement the needs of the neighborhood.
3. Development of cooperative businesses and living wage jobs.
4. Abandoned lots and side lots to neighbors who have been up keeping the property.
5. Green retail development and infill housing.
6. Urban agriculture that creates community, tax revenue, and/or living wage jobs.
7. Returning properties to tax-paying status.

Our designs on the land bank were to use it to foster growth through the promotion of wealth-building activities in low-income neighborhoods where the majority of the tax delinquent properties exist. We also wanted to foster a democratic economy through the land bank and to ensure that local leaders and not just development professionals controlled it. A vague environmental theme also exists, including the promotion of urban agriculture and green retail development.

This activism gave us an audience with the Beautification and Public Improvements Committee, the committee drafting the land bank resolution. Councilor Barbara Washington, chair of the committee granted us access to the process and showed us the draft resolution, which we were unable to see under the previous chair, Darnell Roberts. While we certainly wanted to push our mandates and priorities, it became clear during the process that the fight between the mayor's office and the public improvements committee was going to be about independence of the authority and the make-up of the HLBA board of directors.

Councilor Washington is one of the two or three grassroots leaders on the city council. She came up through the neighborhood associations and is widely regarded among her constituents as a voice of the people, though not without criticism. Her move to include us in the process to create the HLBA was calculated, giving her grassroots legitimacy that she believed we give her legitimacy in the negotiations. Unfortunately, we were not organized or sophisticated enough to affect the negotiations in any real way, and the compromise between the mayor and the council included too many development professionals recommended by the mayor. Washington wanted all the seats on the board to be open to

anyone, while the mayor wanted real estate developers, architects, and lawyers.

I was interviewed for a position on the Hendersonville Land Bank Authority along with neighborhood president Renee Amberton who had been a part of Hendersonville Land Reform Coalition. While the interviews were not open to the public, my interview impressed and shocked the members of the Beautification and Public Improvements Committee because of my arguing for a black self-determination ideology to guide the bank. I say this not to toot my own horn, but to show how this interview helped us to build a relationship with members of the council who agreed with me and also to draw sharp distinctions with the sole white councilor in the process, Shirley Wilson, who looked like she'd seen a ghost. In the end, Amberton was chosen for the board and I was not. We have monitored the process and the mayor seems to have outsized power using the community development department to dictate the agenda of the board of directors. The first project is a not a bad thing: a suite of low- to middle-income housing in a neighborhood destroyed by an F5 tornado, using federal money allocated for rebuilding. Amberton believes that what they ask for next is going to be what they really want. We are concerned about gentrification.

While we didn't have much of an effect on the HLBA process, it helped us develop relationships and raise our profile as an organization. This wasn't an overt part of our organizing strategy, in fact, it was never mentioned, but building connections with neighborhood leaders and city councilors will help us when we push policy campaigns in the future. We need to be more overt about using these campaigns to build relationships and more sophisticated about targeting the individuals who carry enough clout to influence the process and less focused on crafting demands to already existing legislation. Crafting demands or new legislation is necessary and is a war of maneuver, but we need to be better and fighting the war of position. This will come with time.

Spatially, the Hendersonville Land Reform Coalition helped us to organize a networked power to challenge the HLBA process. Though the interventions were less than successful, it laid the groundwork for future interventions by building connections with other grassroots and city leaders.

The relationships built through the HLRC process, including North Titusville Neighborhood Association President, Jason Daniels, City Councilor Barbara Washington, and city planner Brad Willington, opened up opportunities to territorialize the space that we built, the last step in producing space. In reality, the four parts to territorialized space

arise in conjunction. We had quasi-territory in southwest Hendersonville and merely naming our group “Magic City” indicates the physical space that we are at least trying to territorialize, but this is the most significant form of territorialization thus far. With help from our allies, we were written into the Community Framework Plan for one of Hendersonville’s neighborhoods, an extension of the city-wide comprehensive planning process that happened in 2013. The Regional Planning Commission, a quasi-public agency made of the mayors of the metro Hendersonville region, recommended that a 13 acre empty parcel owned by Golden Flake potato chips be acquired and put to use by GHAG. This gives us a beginning level of territorialization. This process also allowed us to introduce our strategic plan to political staffers, neighborhood leaders, and planning bureaucrats.

The spatial production is less clearly a space of GHAG and more of a zone of territorialized social relations in which GHAG has influence. The planning process territorialized the city, the Regional Planning Commission, and GHAG, resulting in an uneven distribution of power of which we have a very little, but much more than we had. Probably the biggest difference is that RPC and the city were merely reproducing space that they already controlled, while GHAG carved out counter-hegemonic space within already existing space.

Our strategy for producing space in the future can be summarized in the six points of our strategic plan. The target neighborhood is Titusville in west Hendersonville.

1. **Aquaponics Cooperative Training Facility** – aquaponics is a highly productive, yet small-scale agricultural system that produces fish and, mostly, leafy greens, though it can produce fruiting plants as well. Combined with democratic ownership of agricultural firms, an aquaponics cooperative is a way to build wealth in poor communities while also growing political and economic independence. The training facility will pay apprentices a living wage for two years while teaching them how to operate aquaponics systems and cooperative principles. We will also aid in finding land and capital for worker-owners to starting their own enterprises.
2. **Magic City Grown** – Magic City Grown is a brand for locally grown products in the seven county metro Hendersonville area. It is a triple bottom line brand, meaning that in order to qualify for the brand, agricultural firms, restaurants, and other businesses must submit a plan that states how their products are

economically, environmentally, and socially “profitable.” A three-person panel, which includes our board president, the executive director of Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network, and Barbara Washington’s chief of staff, will determine whether organizations qualify to use the brand.

3. **Community Enterprise Zones** – A Community Enterprise Zone is an economic incentive package designed to foster a democratic economy. It is a low-income area of about 50,000 people and includes \$10 million dollars to capitalize a community development financial institution and a tiered job credit system that favors cooperatives and unionized businesses.
4. **Hendersonville Institute for Social Change** – BISC is a two-day training that focuses on anti-racism and community organizing. The training is highly structured, but democratic, with the intent of forging a genuine anti-racist culture among participants. This is our oldest program, which we have done since 2011.
5. **Community Land Trust** – A CLT is an organization that creates permanently affordable housing. The basis of the model is dual ownership in which the trust owns the grounds and the individual homeowner, business owners, or developer owns the house that is built on the grounds. Probably the most proven of all our initiatives, Barbara Washington’s office has contacted us about this program and may be the first we undertake.
6. **501(c)4 Lobbying Group** – As we become more involved with policy, it will be necessary to create this type of non-profit, which allows for more interaction with political leaders. We will also make “impact litigation” part of this group’s mission. Entire plan can be found here:
<http://www.magiccityag.org/home/strategicplan>

ANALYSIS

Our strategy is a strategy of war of position. Other organizations, such as the local Black Lives Matter chapter and other citizens groups engage in wars of maneuver. The primary function of wars of maneuver is to make space for policy reforms designed to demobilize the public criticisms. By situating GHAG within the political arena and by utilizing relationships with sympathetic politicians and bureaucrats, we are able to shape the type of reforms that are given. While war of maneuver

organizations may have explicitly revolutionary goals, their primary function is to create crises in institutions that must be addressed through reforms. Thus, GHAG and other war of position organizations are secondary or tertiary to revolutionary movements, but they ensure that revolutionary action gets tangible results, even though those results demobilize the movement.

From a spatial perspective, these reforms territorialize and institutionalize the movement – they produce movement space, which is slowly whittled away over time by growth machine respatialization. The battle is over territorialized institutional arrangements, i.e. space, which remain stable until challenged by wars of maneuver. The reforms gained make inroads into these territorialized institutional arrangements. The strategy of organizations that use war of position strategies is the long game – to win reforms during wars of maneuver and maintain the line during non-movement moments.

Importantly, GHAG has begun to mirror the territorialization strategies of global capital by building connections with well-known South region activist groups, which in some ways is more important than local territorialization, though it is hard to measure. South region territorialization leads to a larger foot print and helps with technical assistance and fund-raising. Like neoliberal territorialization, it is not based on a nested hierarchy, but novel and sometimes contradictory territorialization. Thus, the activist territorialization in Hendersonville is enhanced and supported by regional territorialization. This sort of strategy works as a counter to organizations like BUILD who are creating a spatial situation favorable to global capital and local growth coalitions.

CONCLUSION

Our strategy is to use a war of position to transform space. We have done this by identifying key neighborhood and political leaders who are sympathetic to our programs and mission. We have used popular education and traditional and social media to begin to impose a culture and practice of anti-racist urban development in Hendersonville, and we were territorialized as, at least partially, legitimate through the Titusville Community Framework Plan. The six points in our strategic plan also reflect a spatial strategy. Magic City Grown imposes culture and practice on a local agricultural market, which is both created by MCG and territorialized by it. The community land trust may be the clearest effort to create commons and will also be created in Titusville with the

Councilor Washington's office as lead, with GHAG implementing and advising on the project.

Broadly, the spatial heuristic that I have described could be an effective tool for activist and community based organizations to diagram power, both theirs and their opponents, in the city. We have used it to craft our programs and see the fault lines and avenues of opportunity. Most of the legal structures exist (thanks to years of work on the part of other activists) to make significant changes in urban spatial production. Cooperative and land trust laws are on the books and the community land trust law is a federal law. Branding, a tool used by capitalists, can be used to shape and create markets in ways that promote justice. The time is now to produce new spaces and opportunities about for real transformation.

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