

home. As if these uncertain legal proceedings were not a sufficient test of their resolve, the tenants were moved twice to temporary shelters and back again due to hurricane evacuation orders. As Datorre would state many times, “the tenants are the key to preserving Villa Maria.”

By this time MBCDC was able to secure HOME funding from the city of Miami Beach to assist with the purchase of Villa Maria in the event the initial purchaser was unable to close. An additional deferral of 30 days was granted by the county and by the end of December the initial purchaser had withdrawn its lawsuit and an amicable resolution for

transferring the property to MBCDC was negotiated with the owner. In fact, MBCDC was able to work out seller financing of Villa Maria for several years until the original owner is taken out with additional city, county and state funding. Once the majority of the financing is in place, a temporary relocation plan will be implemented for the tenants to allow the rehabilitation of the building to be completed over the next 18 months. This time the move will not be such a surprise and will provide a safer shelter at the right price until they can move back to their rehabilitated historic home.



# Revitalizing A Winter Park Neighborhood: The Success Story of Hannibal Square Community Land Trust

**I**n 1990 the City Commission of the City of Winter Park determined that the public, health, safety and general welfare required the implementation of an Affordable Housing Program in the City of Winter Park. To fund this effort, the City implemented a linkage fee program, assessing a modest one-time fee at the time of permitting for all proposed commercial and residential developments. Fees collected are deposited into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to further affordable housing and community development activities.












Since 1994, the Affordable Housing Program fee has generated \$1,230,075 for the city’s affordable housing development initiatives, which include developing 40 affordable single-family homes and 22 units of affordable rental housing. The city was able to assemble the financing and forge the partnerships necessary to provide these homes. Among those partners are the Habitat for Humanity, Orlando Neighborhood Improvement Corporation, the Orange County Housing Finance Authority, Florida Community Partners, Florida Community Capital Corporation, the Orange County Housing and Community

Development Department and the Winter Park Housing Authority.

In addition to providing the financing for the construction of the new homes, city staff and neighborhood residents developed architectural guidelines for the project, and worked with the Art in Architecture team (consisting of local architectural firms committed to traditional neighborhood design) to further refine the housing design. These guidelines were ultimately adopted into the city’s land development code.

The Canton Park Redevelopment Committee was established by the Community Redevelopment Agency for the purpose of deciding how best to develop a city-owned property and to explore mechanisms for fostering affordable homeownership opportunities for current and former residents of this westside Winter Park neighborhood. With extensive input from area residents, and with the support of the city of Winter Park, the committee decided to establish the Hannibal Square Community Land Trust and to develop 10 high-quality, for sale homes to be offered to low and moderate income buyers.

Hannibal Square Community Land Trust Partners include:

-  **Art in Architecture**, (*foundation established by the Orlando Regional Realtors Association*)
-  **Central Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects**
-  **City of Winter Park**
-  **Fannie Mae Community Partnership Office of Central Florida**
-  **Florida Housing Finance Corporation**
-  **HANDS of Central Florida**
-  **Orange County Division of Housing and Community Development**
-  **Rollins College MBA Program**
-  **SunTrust Community Development**

The Hannibal Square Community Land Trust has played an integral part of this neighborhood revitalization effort. In addition to working closely with all aspects of the design, its Board and Executive Director have conducted extensive outreach into the west Winter Park neighborhood in order to engage residents in the revitalization strategy. The CLT has also developed an application selection process and is working diligently with potential homeowners to ready them for homeownership. The City of Winter Park has committed general revenue to fund operating expenses during the CLT's start-up phase.

The Florida Housing Coalition has been providing assistance with financing to the partners involved with the community land trust and organizational capacity building assistance to the staff and Board of the Hannibal Square CLT. When the City and its lending partners found that some of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation programs would not accommodate the community land trust model, Coalition staff drafted recommendations for administrative rule revisions which were recently approved by the FHFC, now paving the way for CLT homebuyers in Florida to access HOME and other Homeownership Loan Program monies from the FHFC.

Hannibal Square's Executive Director, Bedilia Campbell, believes that the Community Land Trust model is ideal for this neighborhood. "I believe that people want to be a part of something, and to provide for each other. It's all about relationship building," she enthuses.



## INTERVIEW WITH BEDILIA CAMPBELL



**Q:** How did you become interested in the CLT model?

**A:** I became interested in the concept when I was looking for a home in Winter Park and wanted to live in a place where people were not just neighbors, they looked after each other. I had heard that there was some interest in starting this type of organization, and researched it and attended meetings of area residents. I liked the idea of empowerment borne from a community's willingness to examine a new way of doing things.

**Q:** Have there been many challenges to implementing this community's vision through the formation of the CLT?

**A:** There have been some, mostly from people who are fearful of what they do not understand. The nay-sayers try to pull you off course, away from your goals. They told us that it couldn't be done. But those challenges helped us to grow and made our community stronger.

**Q:** What advice would you give to communities who are looking at starting a CLT?

**A:** Whatever a community does for self improvement, it should be in collaboration with all types of people, where all groups of interested persons can come together to agree on a common goal. To be successful, you should organize the community around the plan, and when you disagree, embrace that disagreement as a way to look at things differently.

Bedilia Campbell is Executive Director of Hannibal Square CLT. Bedilia has a strong background in community organizing and is a long-time Florida resident. Originally from Costa Rica, Bedilia received her Bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Miami. Bedilia resides with her sons Omari and Jabriel in Winter Park.