

# WE have to unite to reclaim & keep OUR land

**New Partners for Smart Growth Conference  
January 30, 2015 – Baltimore, MD**



**T.R.U.S.T. South LA**

*Tenemos que Reclamar y Unidos Salvar la Tierra-South LA*

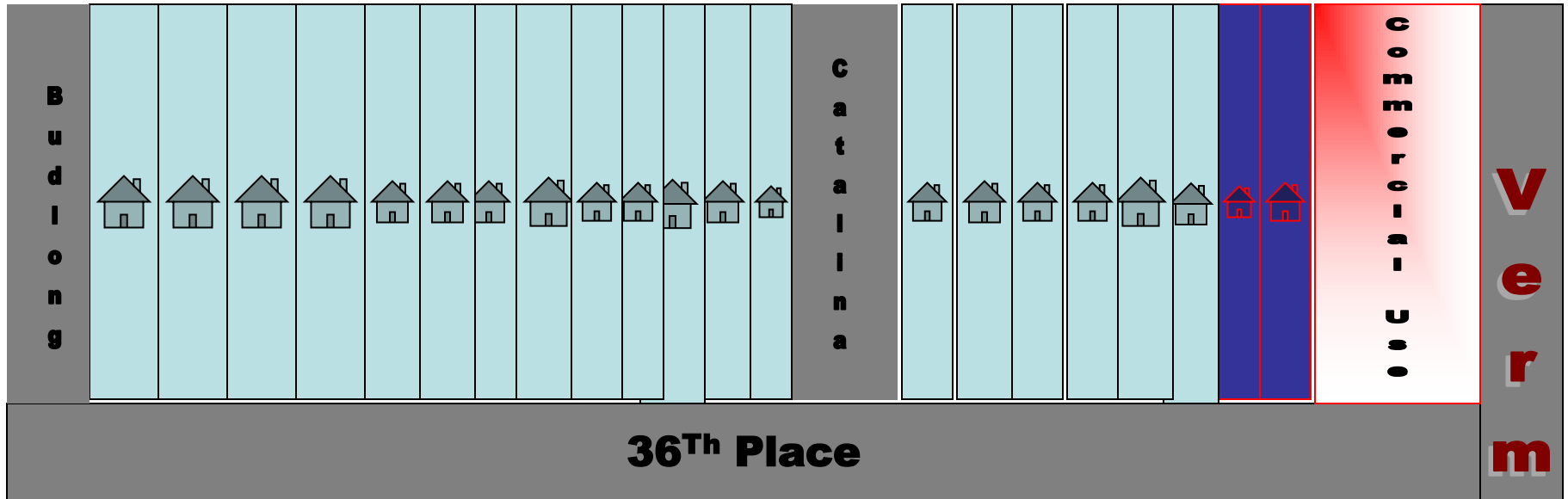
Malcolm Harris, Director of Programs & Organizing | [malcolm@trustsouthla.org](mailto:malcolm@trustsouthla.org)



T.R.U.S.T. South LA – *Tenemos que Reclamar y Unidos Salvar la Tierra* - South LA – is a community-controlled land trust established as a **democratic and permanent steward of land**, to challenge the role that speculators, absentee owners and corporations have played in deciding our neighborhood's future.



# Housing in Our Community in 1999



**Community-serving  
Housing**



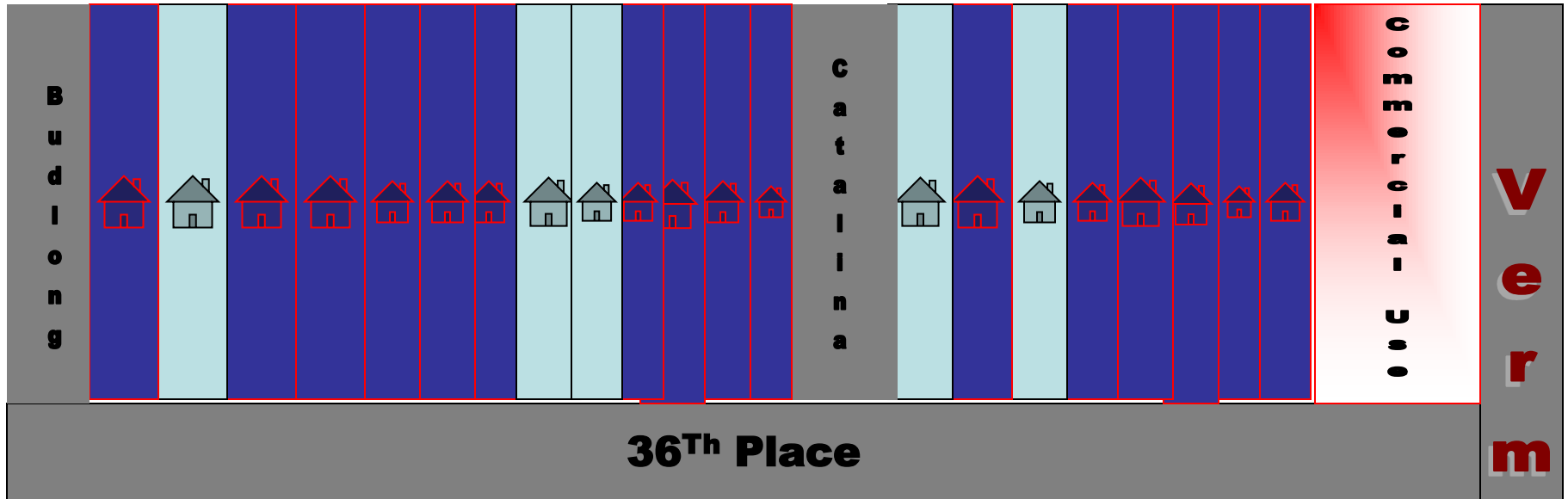
**Housing in transition from  
Community-serving to  
Student-serving**



**Student-serving Housing**



# Housing in Our Community in 2009



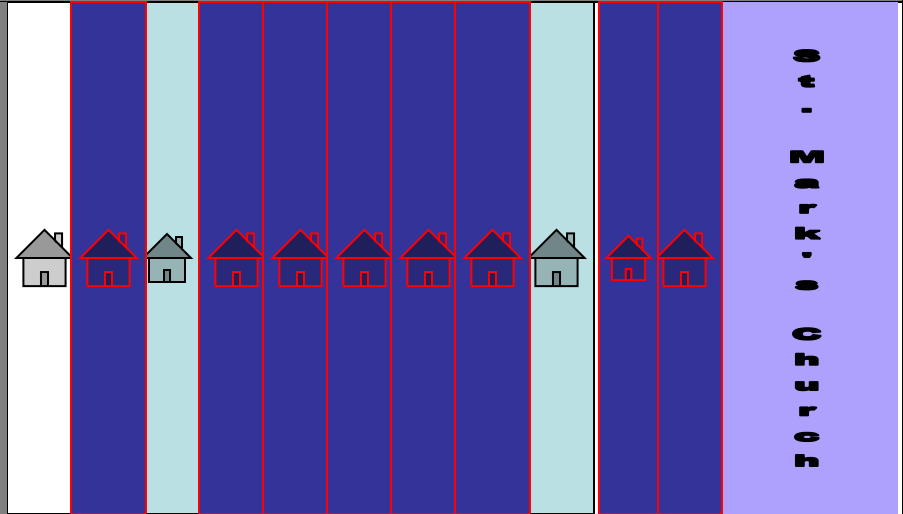
**Community-serving  
Housing**



**Housing in transition from  
Community-serving to  
Student-serving**



**Student-serving Housing**



# Our Daily Experience



**Displacement!**



**BUT, just head South past MLK...**



**Disinvestment!**

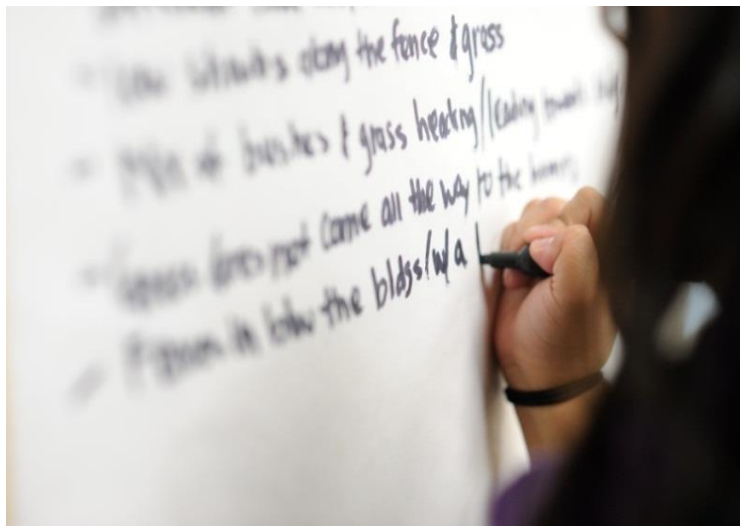


# **Our Approach: Establish community control over land**

**A community-based approach to planning, housing, and community development.**



# Leadership Development, Base-Building & Community Planning



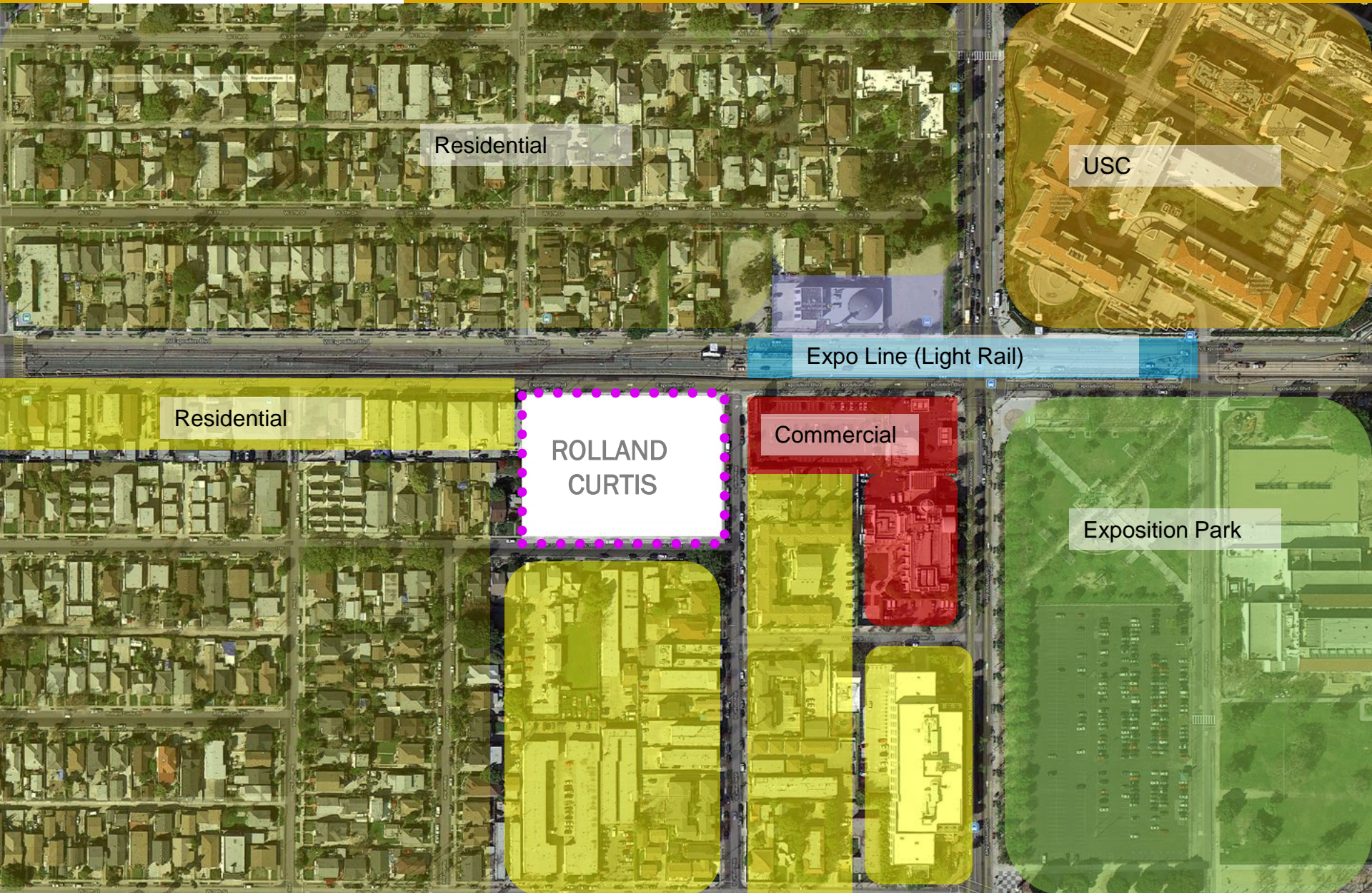


**David & Delmy:  
Slumlord tried to evict their families  
and 46 neighbors**



**Jeff Greene**  
Net Worth \$2.3 B As of March 2013  
At a Glance  
Age: 58  
Source of Wealth: real estate, investments, self-made  
Residence: Palm Beach, FL  
Country of Citizenship: United States  
Education: Master of Business Administration,  
University; Bachelor of Arts / Science,

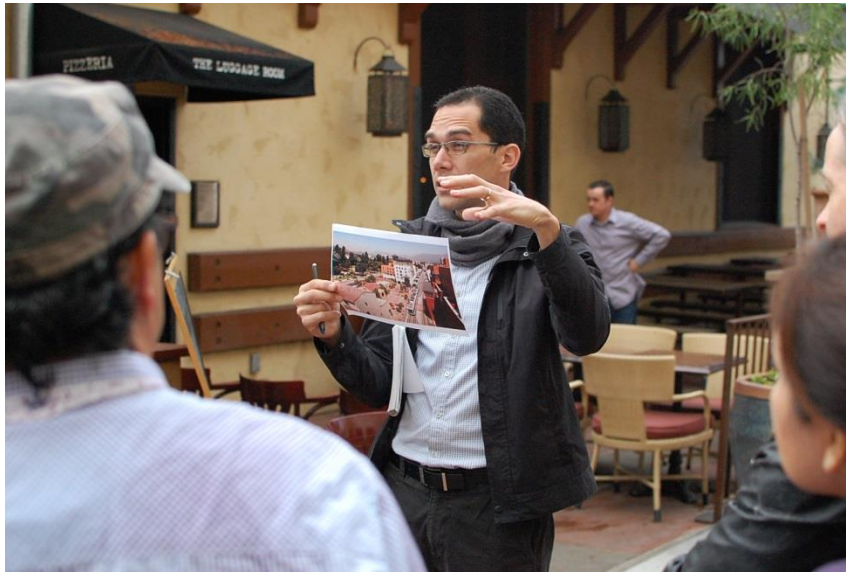




- In July of 2012, after **15 months** of organizing a tenant-led campaign, T.R.U.S.T. South LA and Abode Communities purchased the property.
- **Organizing tactics:** tenant solidarity, legal/state notification requirements, code enforcement, support of public officials and City departments,









- Real Issues + “no power” = attack low-income
- NIMBY contradictions and wavering alliances
- “Concentration of Poverty”
- USC, Working-class homeowners of color and low-income “hood element’ renters of color
- Local developer and “broken promises” ...



!!VICTORY/VICTORIA!!





# Rolland Curtis Gardens: final plan



# What TRUST South LA has learned about shifting power:

- Effective organizing work must be grounded in shared values
- Start with context: gather the facts together
- Collective analysis produces a more thorough result
- Establish allies, including advancing an insider/outsider strategy
- Identify points of leverage, and plan strategy with both allies and community leaders
- Be creative!
- Leadership development is critical, and must be on-going
- The power of many must be built by the many, not crafted by a few

# Closing

- Q&A

