



Preserving the Integrity of our Neighborhood: The Rolland Curtis Gardens Story

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference
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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.





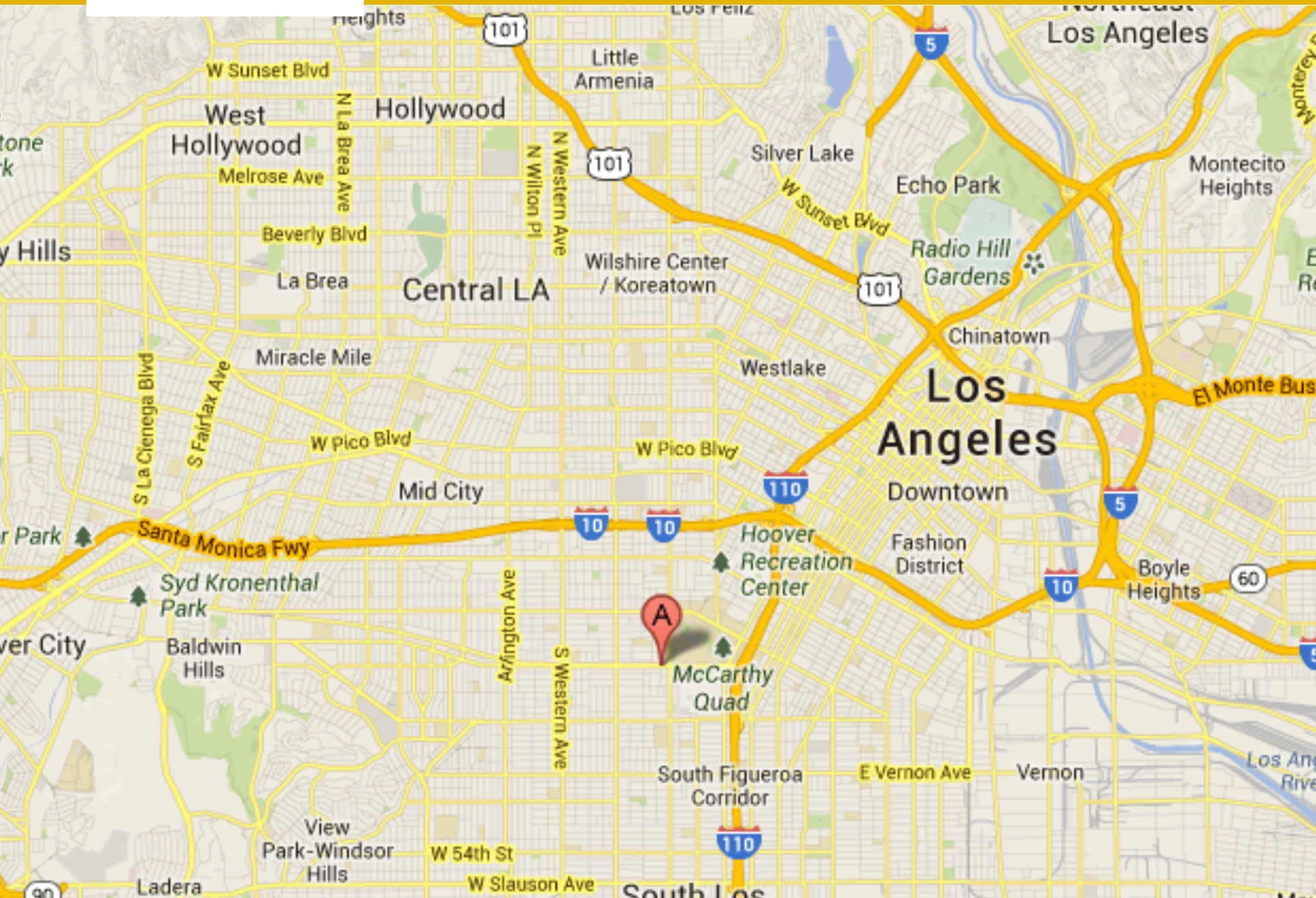
Rolland Curtis Gardens: Site Background & History

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



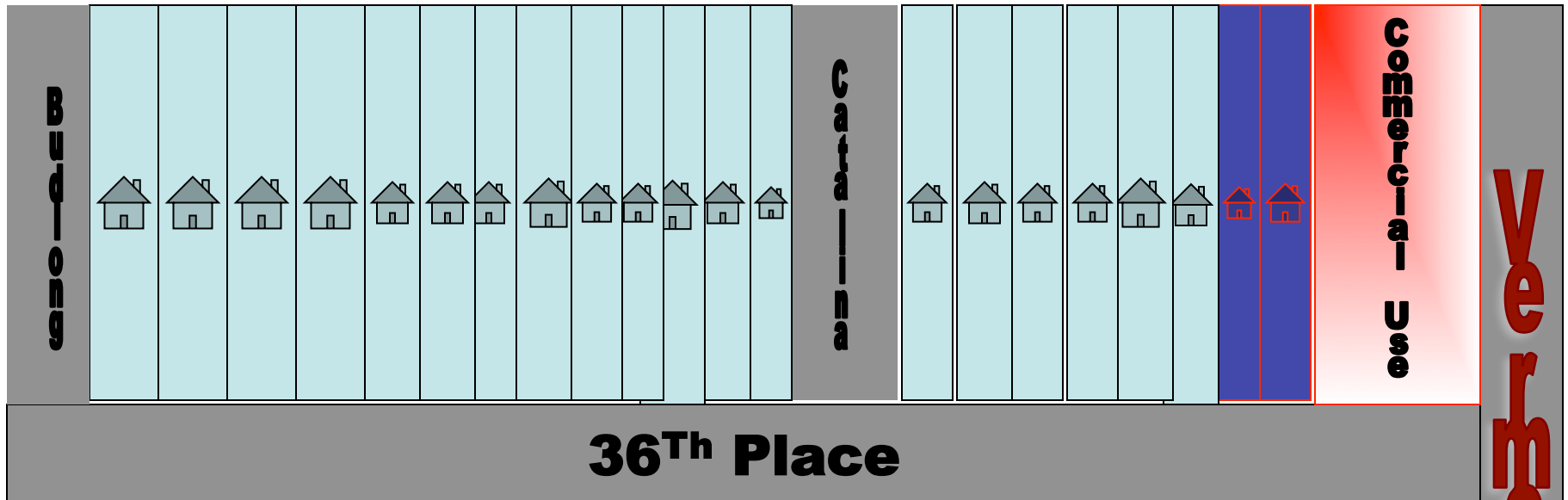
Jeff Greene
Net Worth \$2.3 B As of March 2013
At a Glance
Age: 58
Source of Wealth: real estate,
investments, self-made
Residence: Palm Beach, FL
Nationality: United States







St. Mark's neighborhood in 1999



Community-servicing Housing



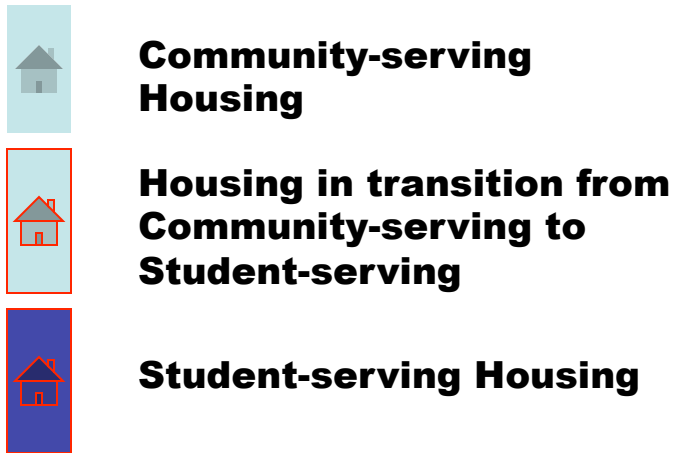
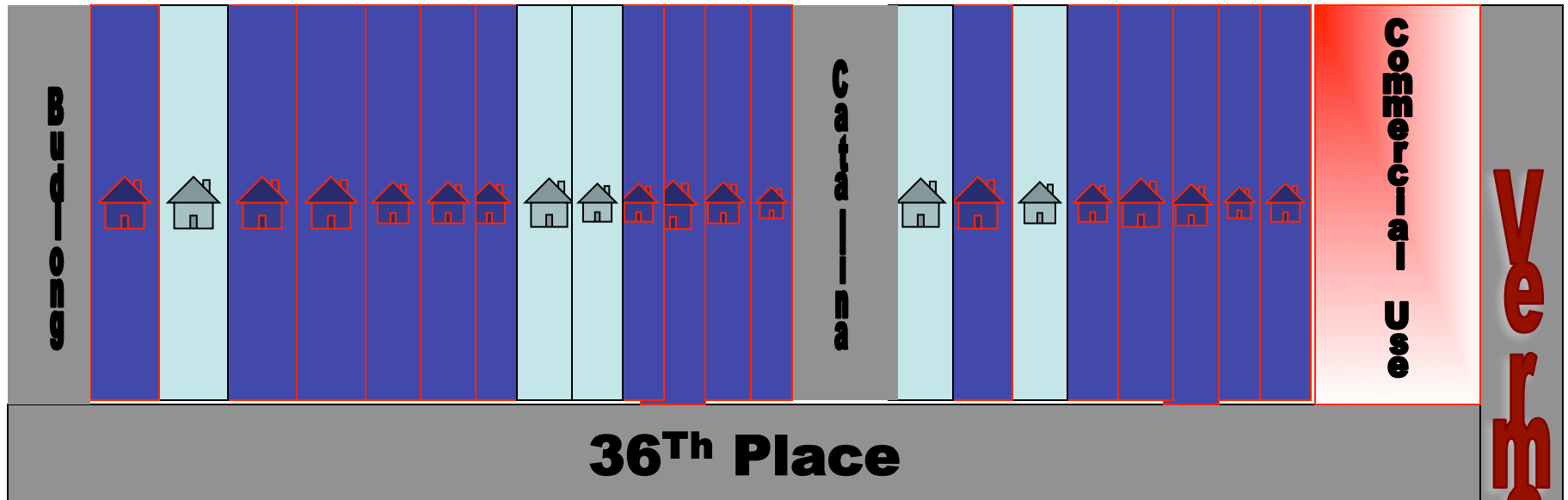
Housing in transition from Community-servicing to Student-servicing



Student-servicing Housing

W 30th Street

St. Mark's neighborhood 10 years later



University

Metro Rail Mid-City/Exposition Light Rail Transit Project



The Cycle of Gentrification:

White flight => Disinvestment => Property values fall => 'Hip' neighborhoods => Investment => Property values rise => Whites return => Working class People of Color displaced



What happens to communities being displaced?:

- Social networks torn apart
- Disrupted education
- Increased commute time/cost
- Overcrowding
- Reticence to fight abusive landlords
- Poor quality housing = poor health

How can we fight displacement?:

Community control over land



What is a community land trust?



Structure of T.R.U.S.T. South LA

Membership:

- Lives or works in the area
- Eligible to live in housing \$48k and ↓
- Pays annual dues \$25 or 3 hours volunteer
- Decisions at Annual Meeting elects Board



BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS



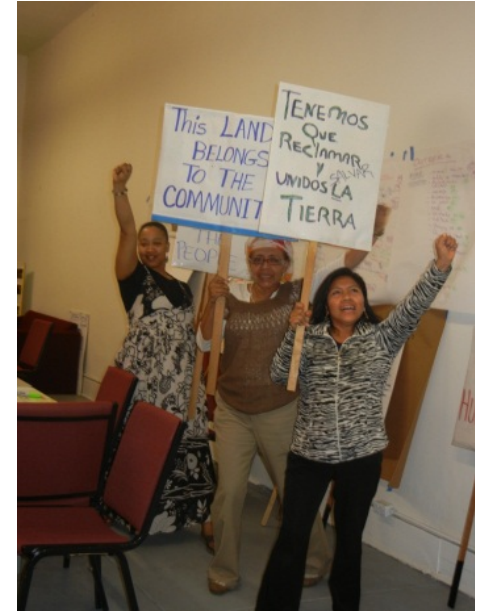
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- In July of 2012, after **15 months** of organizing a tenant-led campaign, T.R.U.S.T. South LA and Abode Communities purchased the property.
- **Goals:** maintain affordability, create commercial and more housing uses, and respond to recent transit development in the area





Community Planning Process

- Neighborhood Residents
- Public Officials and Agencies
- Community Organizations



Engaging Neighborhood Residents & Community Organizations

- Conducted door-to-door community outreach and surveys with residents & community stakeholders within a ½ mile radius of the site in December and January
- Reached **550 households** and **18 faith-based, education and community organizations**
- **93** neighborhood residents & community stakeholders attended the Participatory Planning Process.



A Guide to Community-Driven Transit Oriented Development Planning

www.trustsouthla.org/TODguide



Participatory planning sessions:

<http://trustsouthla.org/~trust/todguide/participatory-planning>



Nigest Ayely

- Lives with her mother, a 22 year-long resident of Rolland Curtis
- Active in campaign to save the building
- **“We want to stay here because we like the place and the community. My mom has access to her church by bus, and she can go shopping... and she’s able to come back to her home.”**



Marilyn Field

- With her son, has lived at Rolland Curtis for ---7 years
- Active in campaign to save the building
- **“I dream of a place where ... those in poverty can have access to all the privileges of the wealthy – such as good medical care, easy access to healthy foods and the opportunity to be well educated.”**