

Nonprofit Center Case Studies

Compiled June, 2006 by
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Summary:

Multi-Tenant Nonprofit Centers are a way for non-profits to gain stability, cut costs, and increase collaboration by locating their offices in the same physical space.

There has been an ongoing conversation in Olympia, WA about creating nonprofit co-housing. This report is a compilation of brief case studies of existing nonprofit co-housing centers; its goal is to further support the discussion locally and bring an Olympia Nonprofit Center one step closer to reality. These case studies are designed to illustrate the variety of possibilities for a nonprofit center, and lay the groundwork for contacting some of these organizations for more detailed information.

An excellent resource for anyone interested in nonprofit centers is The Nonprofit Centers Network: www.nonprofitcenters.org. They offer information on the benefits of nonprofit centers and a wealth of resources that will be extremely valuable to a group working to create such a center.

The following centers are included in this collection:

- Alliance Center, Denver, CO pg 3
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The case studies are organized to follow the following format:

Name and Location:

Organization: (*owner/developer, managing organization, etc.*)

Website:

Contact information:

Summary:

a paragraph or two answering as many of the following questions as possible:

- *Date opened.*
- *Square footage.*
- *Number of tenants*
- *Relevance and special features*
- *Who owns the building, what kind of organization? Source of money?*
- *Is rent market rate or less than?*
- *Who are the tenants/users? Are there different kinds of tenants? Are they the same as the owners?*
- *What is the common values/theme/mission? How is it defined? How are tenants selected?*
- *What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?*
- *Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?*
- *Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?*
- *How is the building managed?*
- *What resources are provided in addition to basic space? (Shared conference rooms, copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)*

Remaining questions for further research:

Above questions which were unanswerable and additional questions raised.

Center Name and location: The Alliance Center, Denver, CO

Organization: Alliance for Sustainable Colorado

Website: www.allianceforcolorado.org/alliance-center.html

Contact information:

1536 Wynkoop Street, B500

Denver, CO 80202

303-572-1536

fax: 303-572-0032

Contact people:

John Powers, Executive Director

phone extension 1002

Janna Six, Program Director

phone extension 1003

Aaron Nelson, Project Director

phone extension 1001

In July of 2004, Alliance for Sustainable Colorado announced their plans to turn a recently purchased 5 story historic building into an affordable office space and networking center for likeminded non-profits. They renovated the building in accordance with LEED sustainability standards, and went on to build a new, adjacent, interconnected building, also LEED certified. The first phase opened its doors in February of 2005. The purpose of the center is to host "501(c)(3) non-profit organizations that develop and promote policies and implementation of practices supporting economic, social and environmental sustainability who will work in partnership with other tenants and contribute to and benefit from collaboration." The center currently houses twenty eight such non-profit organizations.

In addition to basic office space, which the Alliance center offers at stable, below market rent, tenants benefit from centralized, affordable, high speed telecommunications and internet access, access to two full time information technology specialists, bulk purchasing, shared photocopier, discount transit passes, bike lockers and showers, conference rooms with audiovisual equipment, networking events focused on sustainability issues, and a recycling program for the building.

Research Questions for more in depth info:

- Source of money?
- Who are the tenants/users? Are there different kinds of tenants? How are tenants selected?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?

Center Name and location: Carroll Nonprofit Center, Westminster, Maryland

Organization: Anverse, Inc.

Website: none

Contact information:

Anverse

P.O. Box 3188

Carteresville, GA 30120

Phone: 770-387-3860 Fax: 770-387-3868

Email: martys@anverse.org

Marty Sonenshine, Executive director of Anverse

Mark Krider, director of the Carroll Nonprofit Center

The Carroll Nonprofit Center was developed by Anverse, Inc, a Georgia based foundation funded from the sale of Prestige Communications of NC Inc. The only apparent connection is that Prestige held the cable franchise for Carroll County for many years. In 2002, Anverse purchased 3.15 acres located in a Westminster business park for \$690,000 and made plans for a 3 story 37,000 sq.ft building to house area nonprofits.

The center opened in January of 2006, and provides rent-free office space to 19 501(c)3 nonprofits serving Carroll County. The only thing tenants have to pay is a \$4/square foot/year fee to cover utilities, and they are required to reinvest the money they save in rent into their programs.

Research Questions for more in depth info:

- Address for the actual center, contact info for Mark Krider
- How are tenants selected?
- How is the building managed?
- What resources are provided in addition to basic space? (Shared conference rooms, copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)
- Special building features, such as green elements, LEED, Historic renovation, etc.

Center Name and location: Centre for Social Innovation, Toronto

Organization: Center for Social Innovation

Website: www.socialinnovation.ca, www.robertsonbuilding.com

Contact information:

The Centre for Social Innovation

215 Spadina Avenue

Suite 120

Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2C7

(416) 979-3939 Phone (416) 979-3936 Fax

Tonya Surman, Executive Director: tonya@socialinnovation.ca

Eli Malinsky, Program Manager: eli@socialinnovation.ca

Maria Pazo, Office Coordinator: maria@socialinnovation.ca

The Centre for Social Innovation is an organization dedicated to encouraging creative solutions to challenges facing the nonprofit sector. They occupy 6000 sq. ft. space in the Robertson Building (see below) and offer 100 -300 sq ft offices, access to a board room & kitchen, and shared copier, fax, internet and phone for nonprofit tenants. There are currently 12 tenants located in the space, and five “virtual” tenants who benefit from networking opportunities and support without being located in the same space.

The Centre for Social Innovation places an emphasis on collaboration and host events to encourage innovative nonprofit strategies, in addition to providing the space. The Center produced a report on site selection for nonprofit collocation centers, and might be a good source for additional resources.

The Center is located on the first floor of the Robertson Building, a five story 100,000 sq. ft. renovated historic structure that also houses Roots of Empathy, Eva’s Initiative, Cuppa Coffee Animation, Oxfam and the Theatre Alliance. Historically, the building was the headquarters James Robertson Company. Special features of the renovated space include a “living wall” or biofilter: a wall of plants indoors designed to improve air quality. Construction was underway during spring of 2004, and the building opened in October 2004.

Remaining questions for further research:

- What is the relationship between the developer/owner of the Robertson building and the Centre for Social Innovation (CFSI)? What is the Center’s source of money?
- Is rent market rate or less than? CFSI rents from Robertson, and NP tenants rent from CFSI, at some kind of a discount/cost savings.
- Who are the tenants/users?
- What is the common values/theme/mission? How is it defined? How are tenants selected?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?

Center Name and location: Community Building LLC, Spokane
Organization

Website: <http://www.communitycenterllc.org/>

Contact information:

35 West Main, Suite 130M

Spokane, WA 99201

Phone(509) 232-1950 Fax(509) 835-3867

Email: dsanders@cforjustice.org

Dave Sanders

Community Coordinator

The Community Building was bought and developed by Jim Sheehan, a local attorney. Tenants pay to cover the cost of utilities and taxes, but no rent. A folk art store (don't know if they are for-profit or not) is housed on the ground floor, with nonprofit organizations occupying the rest of the building. The original building was 25,000 square feet and opened in January of 2001. They may have expanded or added a second building since. Their website lists 23 tenants.

Mission/vision Statement: "Community Building brings together non-profit organizations working in a variety of fields to form a nexus of inter-related community support services, serve as a model of a dynamic civil society, and provide a space for community discussion, action and entertainment. Community Building is based on an ideal of connected community, which maximizes the accessibility of resources and effectively utilizes the particular strengths of individual members."

Remaining Questions for further research:

- Who owns the building, what kind of organization? Source of money?
- Who are the tenants/users? Are there different kinds of tenants? Are they the same as the owners?
- What is the common values/theme/mission? How is it defined? How are tenants selected?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?
- What resources are provided in addition to basic space? (Shared conference rooms, copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)
- Special building features, such as green elements, LEED, Historic renovation, etc.

Center Name and location: Community Campus, Portsmouth, NH

Organization: Foundation for Seacoast Health

Website: www.communitycampus.org

Contact information:

100 Campus Drive Suite One

Portsmouth, NH 3801 USA

Noreen Hodgdon,

Campus Administrative Coordinator

(603) 422-8200

Email: nhodgdon@communitycampus.org

Community Campus, which opened in 1999, is a facility which includes a building and 94 acre grounds. The Campus houses 10 tenant organizations (community health related nonprofits), has space for hosting conferences and events, and has onsite catering service. It is owned and managed by Foundation for Seacoast Health, which was formed in 1984 with money from the sale of a public hospital.

Their Community Campus Handbook is available online, with details of their services, policies and governance issues.

Research Questions for more in depth info:

- Is rent market rate or less than?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?
- What resources are provided in addition to basic space? (Shared conference rooms, copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)
- Special building features, such as green elements, LEED, Historic renovation, etc.

Center Name and location: Community Service Building, Wilmington, Delaware
Organization

Website: www.csbcorp.org

Contact information:

Building Manager: Jerry Bilton, CFM 302-777-3266
Assistant Manager: Charlie Hall, CFM 302-888-2047
FAX 302- 777-0919
100 West 10th Street
Suite 201
Wilmington, Delaware 19801-1680
email: JABilton@AOL.com

The idea for the Community Service building came out of a collaboration between Longwood Foundation and Dupont's Corporate Contributions office. They created a nonprofit – two in fact, in order to mix nonprofit and for-profit tenants - which bought a building and location for a parking garage from Dupont. Dupont's involvement as a funder ended at this point to avoid conflict of interest. The connection remained, however, as Dupont rented five floors of the building for five years, while the nonprofit center was getting established. The president of the Longwood Foundation, which supplied 90% of the \$24 million needed to purchase the properties, renovate the building and construct the parking garage, also sits on the board of Dupont.

The twelve story office building open in 1997. The building now has 73 nonprofit tenants, fully occupying 177,000 square feet of rentable space, at a cost of \$8.23/square foot. There is also a café on the ground floor.

There is a tenant council which meets monthly, along with the building management and a representative of the Community Service Building Corporation, to discuss building issues, events and concerns. The building's tenant handbook (on their website) list policies on everything from smoking, to holiday decorations, to standards for coffee makers, microwaves and refrigerators used in the building.

Remaining Questions for Further Research:

- Learn more about Community Service Building Corporation
- What were the legalities that required two different organizations to handle renting to for-profit as well as nonprofit organizations?
- What kind of issues are raised in the tenant council meetings? Has this been a successful way of handling tenant/owner/building manager relations? Do all parties agree?
- What is the common values/theme/mission? How is it defined? How are tenants selected?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?
- What resources are provided in addition to basic space? (Shared conference rooms, copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)

Center Name and location: Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center

Organization: Ecotrust

Website: <http://www.ecotrust.org/ncc/>

Contact information:

Sydney Mead

Natural Capital

Center Manager

LEED AP

Tel: 503.467.0767

sydney@ecotrust.org

The Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center is a three story historic warehouse building, which was purchased and renovated by Ecotrust In 2000. Ecotrust undertook the project with funding from a single donor (Jean Vollum), as an investment and source of revenue (“natural capital”), as well as sustainability showcase. The project was the first in the country to achieve LEED Gold certification for a historic renovation. The first floor is occupied by retail businesses, anchored by Patagonia. 2nd and 3rd floors contain office space, including a conference center. Tenants are nonprofits, foundations, sustainability oriented businesses, and City of Portland’s Office of Sustainability.

Research Questions for more in depth info:

- How are tenants selected?
- Number of nonprofit tenants?
- Is rent market rate, less than, or high?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?

Center Name and location: Social Justice Center, Madison, WI.

Organization: Social Justice Center (Co-op formed by Madison Community Co-op, the Tenant Resource Center, Wisconsin Citizen Action Fund and the Wisconsin Community Fund.)

Website: www.socialjusticecenter.org

Contact information:

Program Coordinator, Andy Lavelle
1202 Williamson St., Madison, WI 53703
608-227-0206
sjc@choiceonemail.com.

The Social Justice Center is a “non-profit office center with a social justice focus,” located in Madison, WI.

Organizing efforts began in 1999, when four community organizations, the Madison Community Co-op, the Tenant Resource Center, Wisconsin Citizen Action Fund and the Wisconsin Community Fund, came together and identified a building. These organizations raised money and formed a new nonprofit organization, the Social Justice Center, which bought the building in the spring of 2000. For the remodel, they worked with Design Coalition, a Madison-based non-profit architectural firm that focuses on socially conscious and environmentally responsible design. They held fundraising events and utilized volunteer labor for aspects of the necessary demolition and renovation, and moved into the building in October of 2000.

The building is cooperatively owned by four founding nonprofits, and houses eight additional nonprofit in an “incubator” office space. There is also a gallery in the building, and conference space, which is used by the organizations in the building and rented to outside groups.

Remaining questions for more in depth info:

- How is the nonprofit (the Social Justice Center) structured?
- Is rent market rate or less than?
- How do the privileges, roles, and responsibilities of the founding organizations differ from those of the other tenant organizations?
- What are guidelines or criteria for selecting tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?
- How is the building managed?
- In addition to the conference room, what other shared resources are provided? (copiers, receptionist, networking opportunities, etc.)

Center Name and location: Thoreau Center for Sustainability, San Francisco, CA

Organization: Tides Foundation(?)

Website: www.thoreau.org

Contact information:

Program manager: Bruce DeMartini,
(events, exhibits, and community development projects)

Attn: Bruce DeMartini

PO Box 29585

San Francisco, CA 94129-0585

Tel: (415) 561-7823

Email: bruce@thoreau.org

The Thoreau Center for Sustainability came out of a proposal by the Tides foundation to create a multi-tenant nonprofit center in the historic hospital buildings located in Presidio National Park in San Francisco, CA. Work began in 1995, and today the center houses over 50 organizations. The center brings together goals of ecological sustainability, historical preservation and social justice. The Thoreau Center offers tenants, in addition to an ecologically renovated facility in a historic setting, bike lockers and showers, cooperative buying opportunities, and multiple other services that encourage cooperation and networking while promoting sustainable practices.

Tenant organizations range in size from a staff of 2 to over 80 and focus their work on a variety of issues ranging from environmental sustainability and health services to social justice and philanthropy. 501(c)3 status is preferred, but not required, and rent is market rate. Tenants are asked to sign a Community Charter document, which sets forth the cooperative values of the center and emphasizes that tenants are a member of a community. The Center is also piloting a Community Stewardship Program, in which the center will pay a set fee to tenant organizations or individuals to provide administrative services. Building management and leasing is provided by ECB Management Services through Becky Bacon.

Remaining questions for further research:

- Who owns the building? Source of money? What is the role of the Tides Foundation?
- What are commitments/roles/powers/responsibilities, for owners, for tenants?
- Who pays the taxes, decided about repairs and renovations?
- Who decides building hours, operation/access issues, how to manage shared resources?