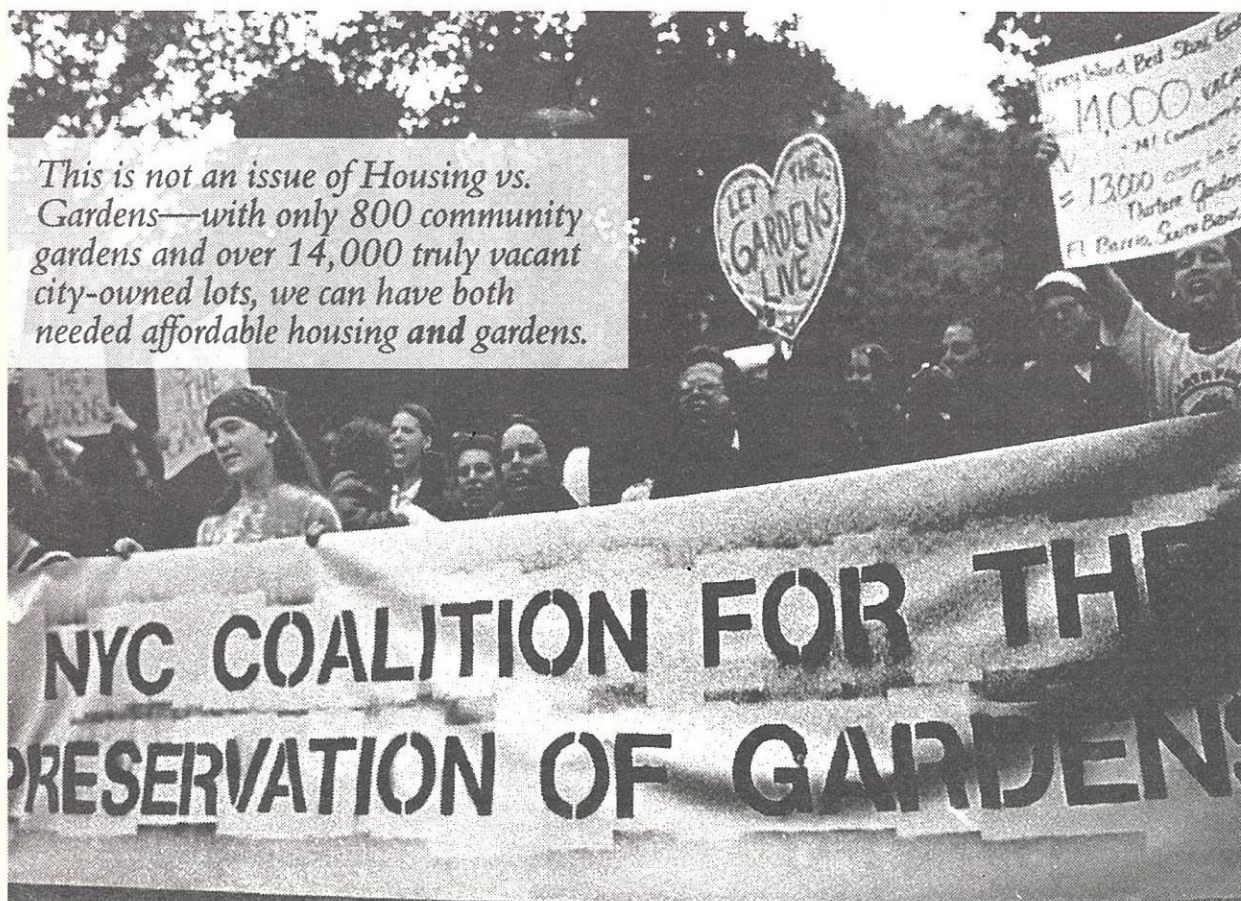


our garden's gate

NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC COALITION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE GARDENS SUMMER, 1998



This is not an issue of Housing vs. Gardens—with only 800 community gardens and over 14,000 truly vacant city-owned lots, we can have both needed affordable housing and gardens.

PRESERVING THE GARDENS: CITY PARKS OR GARDEN TRUST?

by Leslie Lowe

Last year, the City began a process that has culminated in an agreement to give 36 community gardens “permanent status” by transferring them to the Parks Department. These gardens, however, will not be mapped, or dedicated, or designated as municipal parkland — necessary steps in the process for getting all of the legal protections afforded public parks. Without such formal protection, the gardens may again be targets for development under a future administration. Even with this “protected” legal status, parks are not sacred. Under the General Municipal Law, an urban development corporation may develop municipal parkland pursuant to an urban renewal plan. (Remember, Shea Stadium is in Flushing Meadows Park; the U.S. Tennis Center is in Forest Hills Park; and other parks are being “privatized” into pay-to-play golf courses and such.) Since many of the community gardens are in urban renewal areas, the development plans already exist.

The only way to ensure that the gardens are not seen as tempting little plums to dole out to campaign contributors