

ings) have resulted in the mobilization of community gardeners throughout the NYC and the establishment of several local garden organizations working together in the movement. The process is important, ongoing and mushrooming!

The Coalition's *public awareness campaign* includes rallies, press conferences, press coverage (cable/network TV, radio, print), letter writing campaigns, tabling community garden information at citywide events and furthering the development of our web-site.

Research: This committee is in the process of developing comprehensive citywide land use maps incorporating gardens, empty lots, vacant buildings, housing stock, the NYC Greenway, Brownfields and other eco-areas. They recently completed a map of Manhattan's LES utilizing trial software and base maps as they wait for grant money to continue their work. The data to create these maps was acquired from the Department of City Planning, incorporating Department of Finance records. Garden data was verified by extensive field surveys conducted by NYC Coalition members. They are anxious to work alongside other greening organizations interested in mapping.

Other research projects include the tracking of the current status and development plans of threatened garden sites, as well as crime reduction and the community health benefits of urban open space. They are also researching the history of open space in NYC and the effects of the underground water streams on city structures.

If you are interested in working with the research committee, please call the main office: (212) 777-7969.

Garden Land Trust: In a recent meeting with the Housing Preservation and Development staff, committee members were informed that none of the Green Thumb staff members would be transferred to HPD despite the transfer of 741 gardens to HPD, but the funding for Green Thumb gardens could potentially be used by HPD for real estate development on garden sites.

After discussing the Garden Land Trust proposal (see article, "Preserving the Gardens: City Parks or Garden Trust"), HPD staff stated that they would present the idea to their commissioners.

Neighborhoods

Bronx: Cherry Tree Association, Inc. is developing a proposal for the preservation and enhancement of the **United We Stand Community Garden**, which serves over 50 families in the poorest congressional district in the nation, as a permanent community garden and Nature Resource Center operated and managed by the community itself. The United We Stand Garden, Lot 2550, is

Brooklyn: SBOSA (The South Brooklyn Open Space Alliance) recently pulled together gardeners from the **Human Compass Garden, Amazing Garden, Summit Street Community Garden** and the **Backyard Garden** after HPD announced plans to build housing on the gardens. After intensive lobbying, letter writing, and testifying before Community Board 6, the Board voted to approve the transfer of these four garden sites from HPD to Parks on March 11.

Brooklyn gardeners experienced a second victory on June 10th when Community Board 2 (downtown Brooklyn) voted to transfer **Brooklyn Bear's Carlton and Rockwell Gardens** to Parks and strongly recommended that all community gardens within CB2 receive permanent site status within the Parks Department. And Bushwick's Community Board 16 (boasting approximately 80 gardens) passed a strongly worded resolution in support of preserving the gardens "for the enhancement of our community and preservation of much needed open space." These victories provide evidence that gardeners and garden advocates can make a difference by working together!

BANG (The Brooklyn Alliance of Neighborhood Gardens), a coalition of Brooklyn community gardens, continues to battle in support of the **Warren Street Community Garden**. Gardeners and their neighbors began working to preserve the sunny, veg-

Manhattan: The Lower East Side Garden Preservation Coalition recently began a grassroots outreach campaign designed to reach out to local gardeners and let them know about preservation efforts. As a result of many years of garden advocacy on the LES, at the May Community Board 3 meeting, the full Board voted to approve 13 gardens for permanent status within the Parks Department. Call (212) 777-7969 for a list of these gardens.

Garden advocates in **Harlem** are working diligently to save their neighborhood gardens. **Project Harmony's To Till and To Keep** program, in association with Union Theological Seminary, organizes garden clean-up and planting days. Gardeners are continuing to pressure local politicians about the importance of preserving community gardens as a necessary and crucial part of community development.

After losing the **102nd Street Garden** on January 7, 1998, gardeners in Manhattan's Upper West Side have been working to preserve the few remaining community gardens in their neighborhood. Their work is paying off. At the June Community Board 7 meeting, the full Board voted to recommend permanent site status within the Parks Department for the **West 104th St. Garden** and the **West 87th St. Garden**.

Eye On City Hall

Several tireless community gardeners and Coalition organizers are keeping a sharp eye on City Hall. We are maintaining a vigilant presence at all Land Use Subcommittee of Permits hearings and testifying at all relevant Land Use and Finance Committee hearings.

Councilman Tom Duane, chair of the Land Use Subcommittee of Permits, is sensitive to the community garden issue and recently expressed his support of community gardens at a press conference he held to oppose Mayor Giuliani's transfer of Green Thumb Gardens to HPD. However, recent LU Subcommittee decisions show that the recommendation of the Councilperson from the District of the proposed building project carries the most weight. As a result, we are strongly urging community gardeners to schedule meetings with their local Councilperson to let them know that we will not tolerate the bulldozing of gardens. Community gardeners in Harlem met with Councilman Bill Perkins on June 24th to express their disappointment with his recent recommendations to the Land Use Subcommittee on Permits and to the Finance Committee to approve real estate projects that will destroy Garden Eight and the 129th St. Block Association Garden - two very active community gardens serving the Harlem community.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Nine Community Gardens in Central Harlem still pending in the Land Use Subcommittee of Permits. If approved by the City Council, a Partnership New Homes project will destroy these gardens: Bishop House/Urban Gardens, Henry Rivera Children's Garden, United Block Front Association Garden, American Federation of Police Association Garden, Striving Together Garden, Garden of the Golden Lions, The Five Star Garden, P.S. 76 Children's Garden of Love and Project Harmony. The vote on this proposal, listed as L.U. 23, has been deferred since January 1998. The NYC Coalition is carefully tracking the Proposal, however we need your help! These gardens are in Councilman Bill Perkins' District; call and write to him to express your opposition to L.U. 23. Also, call and write Councilman Tom Duane, Chair of the L.U. Subcommittee on Permits, and Commissioner Richard T. Roberts, Housing Preservation and Development. These gardens are surrounded by vast vacant lots and boarded buildings. Garden advocates are not opposed to affordable housing, we are opposed to City policy which demoralizes the volunteer initiative of community gardeners who give people a reason to care about their communities and inevitably about each other.