



AGRICULTURAL URBANISM

NOWADAYS WE TEND TO DISASSOCIATE AGRICULTURE FROM URBANISM. THE MASSES LIVE IN DENSE CITY CENTERS AND SPRAWLING SUBURBS AND THEIR FOOD COMES FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE, PRESUMABLY THE CENTRAL UNITED STATES OR SOMEWHERE FURTHER ABROAD. BUT, THE INCREASING INTEREST CONSUMERS ARE TAKING IN UNDERSTANDING THE SOURCES OF THEIR FOOD AND ITS GROWING AND PRODUCTION METHODS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE THE ESTRANGED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND URBANISM. REGARDLESS OF WHERE YOU LIVE, THE CHOICES YOU MAKE WHEN YOU BUY FOOD HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES. BUYING LOCALLY-GROWN FOOD IS HEALTHIER AND SAFER FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, BETTER FOR YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY, AND BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT THAN BUYING DISTANTLY-GROWN FOOD. YET, MANY PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN OR NEAR CITIES DON'T EVEN KNOW THEY HAVE THE OPTION TO EAT LOCALLY. AT SCHOONER BAY, WE WANT TO PROVE THAT AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO ANY URBAN SETTING, REGARDLESS OF THE POPULATION DENSITY, AND THAT SCALABLE FARMING CAN PROVIDE ENOUGH LOCALLY-GROWN FOOD TO SUSTAIN ALMOST ANY URBAN POPULATION.

WHEN WE THINK OF URBANISM, WE MUST THINK OF DEGREES OF DENSITY AND NOT JUST ASSOCIATE THE TERM WITH THE HEAVILY POPULATED CITY-CENTER THAT IT OFTEN CONNOTES. IN GENERAL, EACH DIFFERENT DENSITY ZONE – OR “TRANSECT” AS THEY ARE SOMETIMES CALLED – HAS DIFFERENT AGRICULTURAL OPTIONS. IN DENSELY POPULATED URBAN AREAS, THERE ARE INDIVIDUAL KITCHEN AND ROOFTOP GARDENS, AS WELL AS LARGER AGRICULTURAL PLOTS IN COMMUNITY PARKS. FARMER’S MARKETS ALSO HELP BRING REGIONALLY-GROWN FOOD TO DENSE URBAN CENTERS. PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE SUBURBS CAN HAVE LARGER, OUTDOOR GARDENS IN THEIR YARDS. SMALLER VILLAGES MAY HAVE COMMUNAL FARMLAND ON THE OUTSKIRTS AND LEASE PLOTS TO THE POPULACE. IN MORE RURAL AREAS, LARGER-SCALE FARMS ARE POSSIBLE. IN ADDITION TO AGRICULTURE, FOOD INDUSTRY IS ALSO SCALABLE ACROSS TRANSECTS. CANNERIES AND PROCESSING FACILITIES CAN ALSO BE INCORPORATED AT ANY SCALE INTO ANY TRANSECT, CREATING LOCAL JOBS AND HELPING BRING LOCAL PRODUCE TO MARKET.

THE POPULATION DENSITY AT SCHOONER BAY RANGES FROM THE HEAVILY CONCENTRATED TRANSECT OF THE HARBOUR VILLAGE AND ISLAND TO WIDE OPEN LAND PRESERVED FOR FARMING AND FOOD PRODUCTION, AND EVERYTHING ELSE IN BETWEEN. SMALL GARDEN PLOTS WILL BE POSSIBLE IN ALL RESIDENTIAL LOTS AND LARGER GARDEN PLOTS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE FOR LEASE. SCHOONER BAY WILL HAVE A LARGER-SCALE WORKING FARM OFFERING ORGANIC AND SEASONAL PRODUCE, PART OF THE SCHOONER BAY COMMONS SYSTEM, AN INTERACTIVE, EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR LOCAL FARMERS AND FISHERMAN. THE SOUTH ABACO COMMUNITY CENTER AT SCHOONER BAY WILL HOST FARMER’S MARKETS AND SERVES AS A MEETING PLACE FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION. THE SCHOONER BAY FOOD COMPANY WILL BE A LIGHT COMMERCIAL FOOD PROCESSING PLANT THAT WILL TURN LOCAL SEAFOOD AND PRODUCE INTO DELICIOUS GOURMET FOODSTUFFS, CREATING DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS FOR LOCAL FARMERS AND A BOUTIQUE REGIONAL FOOD BRAND.

BUT, THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. NEW IDEAS AND INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION WILL EVOLVE OVER TIME AS THE COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO GROW. WE HAVE BEEN HOSTING MEETINGS WITH LOCAL FARMERS AND OUTSIDE EXPERTS, AND THE PRODIGIOUS FLOW OF IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES IS EXCITING. GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND OUR EMPHASIS ON INTEGRATING FARMING INTO THE COMMUNITY STRUCTURE, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT SCHOONER BAY WILL BECOME A MODEL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL URBANISM IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION AND BEYOND.