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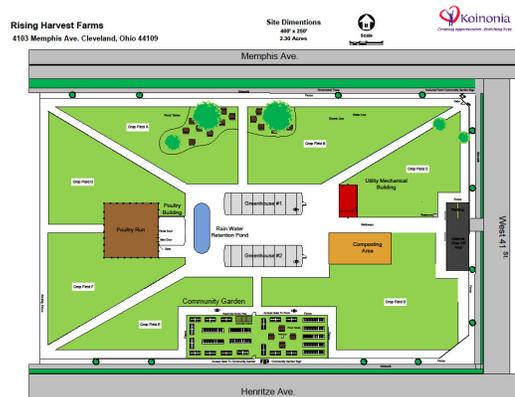
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### **Koinonia, Cleveland and Cuyahoga Land Bank work together to create an urban farm that teaches people with disabilities**

Koinonia Homes, Inc., the Cuyahoga Land Bank, Cleveland City Council and the City of Cleveland will celebrate breaking ground for a new urban agriculture farm at W. 41<sup>st</sup> and Memphis Avenue in Cleveland's Old Brooklyn neighborhood on August 22, 2012 at 10:00 am.

Koinonia – the largest private provider of services for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Cuyahoga County – started with a vision. The organization wanted to expand a small farm they had on one of their properties and use it as a multi-faceted resource based on the creation of a work program where they could teach individuals about farming; provide meaningful work opportunities; produce food for their residential services and provide a community garden.

Koinonia approached the Cuyahoga Land Bank with this vision and the quest for the appropriate parcel of vacant land for this urban farm began. After exploring multiple options, the Cuyahoga Land Bank determined that the best possible property on which to situate the farm was not in their inventory, but rather in the City of Cleveland Land Bank. As such, the Cuyahoga Land Bank guided Koinonia through the process of approaching the City to make this vision a reality.



“When I learned about Koinonia’s vision, I was determined to help this social service agency find a way to make it happen,” said Cuyahoga Land Bank President Gus Frangos.

In May 2012, Cleveland City Council passed legislation leasing a 2.3 acre parcel of land that formally housed Memphis School until it was demolished in 2008. The property is being leased to Koinonia for 25 years, with four options to renew for additional five year periods.

“This project is a win-win for everyone,” said Cleveland Councilman Kevin Kelley, in whose ward the farm will be situated. “Koinonia will have the ability to provide its clients with job skills training; the City of Cleveland sees this land going back into productive use and Old Brooklyn residents have the opportunity to experience community gardening as well.”

The farm will include two greenhouses that will be used year-round, a poultry building for fresh eggs, a rainwater retention pool, a mechanical/utility building, eight crop fields and a community garden, with 24 plots for public use. The Cuyahoga Land Bank will continue to provide technical assistance to the project and is contributing \$14,000 for the irrigation of the site.



Aerial view of 4103 Memphis Ave parcel # 014-13-014

“We are elated to have partners that have made it possible for us to fulfill this vision,” said Diane Beastrom, President and CEO of Koinonia. “This project allows us to both provide some of our clients with a meaningful work experience and supply our day programs and residences with nutritional produce.”

The first crop yield is expected during next year’s growing season.