



New Location, Format for the West Broad Farmers Market

The West Broad Farmers Market opened its 8th season at a new location, and in response to the ongoing pandemic, in a new format as well. The Market is now located at 300 S. Rocksprings Street. This location is the result of a partnership with the **Athens Housing Authority** — they have made their parking lot available and have provided the use of an acre of adjacent land for the new West Broad Community Garden. The new market is near the previous market site, in better proximity to the residents of Rocksprings Homes, and features all of the same vendors Athenians have come to know and love.

“It's not quite the opening we had imagined, but our staff and vendors have been amazing and responded to this crisis in creative and flexible ways. We are still very excited about being in our new location, but until we are able to safely gather together, we have created a socially responsible market, where shoppers can still get all of their favorite things,” said Heather Benham, Executive Director of the Athens Land Trust.

The transition from a lively, multicultural gathering place to an online, drive-thru market has been successful, with more vendors and shoppers being a part of the market than ever. In the first several weeks that the market has been open, nearly 500 orders have been processed.

“Our vendors have adapted to and grown to love the drive-through format. We have the same delicious baked goods, fresh local produce, and beautiful arts and crafts that have always been at the market,” said Ellie Adams, who manages the West Broad Farmers Market.

The new market provides online ordering at **wbfm.locallygrown.net**. The market "opens" on Sunday each week at 5:00 p.m. and shoppers can purchase items via the website until 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, at which point the market will "close" (continued on page 2).



Shoppers can order from the West Broad Farmers Market online or via phone and can pick up their orders on Saturdays.



Your order will be waiting for you when you arrive. We'll keep your refrigerated goods chilled until you're ready to pick them up.



When you shop the West Broad Farmers Market, we will bring your order to you and load it into your car, contact-free.

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(Continued from page 1) Customers also have the option of ordering via phone at **706-613-0122**. Shoppers are able to pick up their orders via drive-through at the Athens Housing Authority parking lot on Saturday each week between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. There is no fee to sign up to shop with the market, and payment is accepted ahead of time on Fridays over the phone, or on Saturdays upon pick-up. In addition to the online option, residents in the West Broad neighborhood have the ability to have their orders delivered to their homes each week, and printed weekly menus can be provided upon request. Through our partnership with **Wholesome Wave Georgia**, we are still able to double the value of SNAP/EBT dollars on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Even though we miss seeing our friends and neighbors, hearing the musical talent, and watching the kids enjoy fun activities, it will all be back when it's safe. The market was started as a way to support and grow small local businesses, give residents in the West Broad neighborhood access to fresh and healthy food, and create a place where all people can come together. We are very much dedicated to that vision, and we are excited that we have found a way to still deliver on those commitments.



Customers have been enjoying the new market format, which makes it easy to shop, purchase, and pick up their weekly orders.

WEST BROAD FARMERS MARKET & GARDEN

By Shopping the West Broad Farmers Market, You Are:

- 1 Creating jobs
- 2 Keeping money in the local economy
- 3 Investing in entrepreneurship
- 4 Nurturing a sense of community
- 5 Supporting the environment by reducing waste and conserving energy

wbfm.locallygrown.net



Get the latest WBFM news on social media!



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Our Board meets on the third Monday of each month at 5:30 PM via Zoom. Meetings are open to the public.

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Community Agriculture Assistant, Kennedy Mayfield-Smith
West Broad Farmers Market Manager, Ellie Adams
West Broad Farmers Market Ambassador, Linda Stephens
Williams Farm Manager, Seth Nivens
Assistant Farm Managers, John Anderson & Deijhon Yearby
Project Oversight, George Wright

A Letter from Heather Benham

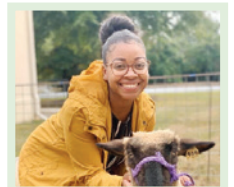
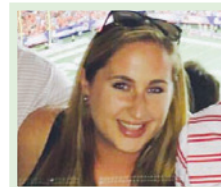
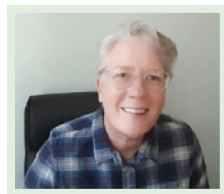
I think you all will be proud of the work we've done during the past 4 months. We've managed to reinvent the West Broad Farmers Market in a way that is socially distanced and thriving, while still making it accessible to our neighborhood residents. We've implemented some innovative, low-tech solutions to make sure West Broad residents have a way to stay connected and engaged during these periods of isolation. We have been supported in shifting the way we work by the **Kresge Foundation**, which has allowed us to not miss a beat. In June, the **West Broad Advisory Board** hosted a neighborhood call with a presentation from a community arborist about hazardous and healthy trees and the Board of Elections on how to participate in upcoming elections. The call was well attended and residents were excited to come together for these conversations. Personally, I am most excited about the **Emergency Housing Fund** that we have established to help those in our community continue to have stable housing throughout this uncertain time. Thank you to **Oconee Street Methodist Church** and the **Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation** for supporting this important endeavor. It pairs particularly well with our housing counseling work to create a long-term plan for sustainability for families going through significant hardship at this time. All this is happening while we are still building houses, creating community gardens, and protecting important land. I'm amazed at what we have been able to accomplish in these unprecedented times. Thank you for your continuing support of our work, as I believe now more than ever, it is clear that this work will help find a better way forward.

Stay safe and healthy,



Heather
Executive Director

Welcome New ALT Staff!



Daun Fest (pictured left) joined our team as the Director of Operations in December of 2019. Daun has a wealth of experience in project management and spent many years working for the Peace Corps. **Patrick Falkenstine** (2nd from left) joined the team as the Housing Counselor in March. Patrick has a background in economics and is a long-time Athens resident. **Ellie Adams** (3rd from left) joined the team as the West Broad Market Manager in April. She owns a cattle farm and has been a vendor at the market for many years. **Kennedy Mayfield-Smith** (pictured right) joined the team in May as the Community Agriculture Assistant. She is a graduate of Tuskegee University and is currently pursuing her Masters in Agricultural Education at UGA.

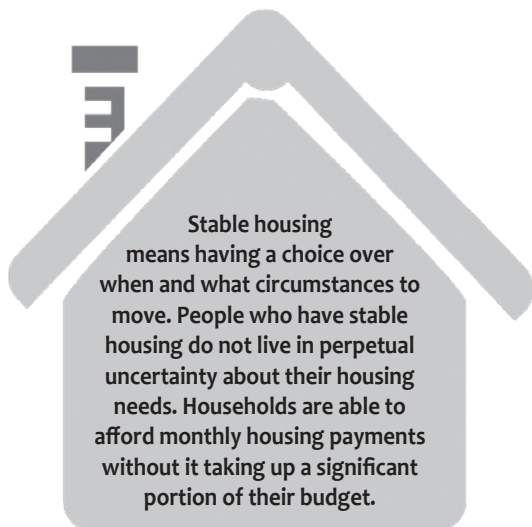
Stable Housing is a Key Part of Reducing Poverty in Athens-Clarke County

Affordable Housing Info Sessions: Now Online!

Learn about homeownership opportunities through Athens Land Trust! Affordable Housing Information Sessions have been moved online due to COVID-19 restrictions. Sessions are available every 2nd Saturday of the month at 12:00 p.m. and every 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Homebuyer Education & Credit Seminars: Now Online!

Our HUD-certified first-time homebuyer course is available one Saturday a month. Visit athenslandtrust.org for details.



Thousands of Athenians are burdened by their housing costs each year, due to stagnant wages and the lack of affordable housing options. Decent, stable, and affordable housing is a key part of financial security. Individuals who do not have housing stability do not have financial stability.

Stable housing means having a choice over what circumstances a household chooses to move. Lack of stable housing negatively impacts school performance for children, job stability, nutrition, and familial relationships. Unstable housing has been linked to negative health issues, especially for those suffering from chronic disease that requires consistent medical treatments.

Affordable housing leads to stable housing. Affordable housing is housing that a household can pay for, while still having money left over for other necessities like food, transportation, and health care. That means that what's considered "affordable" depends on a household's income. Obtaining affordable housing can happen through various avenues, such as affordable rental housing or homeownership. The ability to live in affordable housing alleviates the financial and overall stress for the household and reduces the likelihood that a family will live in poverty.

Athens Land Trust is a Community Land Trust and a Conservation Land Trust. Community Land Trusts are a form of permanently affordable housing in which a community-controlled organization retains ownership of the land and sells or rents the housing on that land to low-to-moderate-income households. In exchange for purchasing homes at below-market prices, owners agree to resale price restrictions that keep homes permanently affordable to subsequent households with similar income levels. Meanwhile, the sellers are still able to build equity in the home.

Community Land Trusts are considered a prime tool for allowing residents to continue living in areas that are gentrifying. Community Land Trusts partner with **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** and receive public funding for the work they do. The initial subsidy from the government remains with the building and keeps it continually affordable over time, without requiring new influxes of public money. This is one of the many great things about Athens Land Trust's Affordable Housing Program.

Athens Land Trust is one of 225 Community Land Trusts in the United States. We provide support for housing, such as preparing home buyers to purchase their first home, supporting homeowners through financial challenges, shepherding resales, and managing rental units. Athens Land Trust is integral in reducing poverty in Athens-Clarke County by providing stable and affordable housing. Our affordable housing info sessions are held twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and our Homebuyer Education Course is held one Saturday a month. Please join us online at our next meeting to learn about what we do and how we may assist you in moving from cost-burden housing to affordable housing.

Athens Land Trust Completes Extensive ADA Accessible Home Rehabilitation



Before and after: This EarthCraft-certified, ADA-compliant renovation has brought new life to the home. The complete demolition and remodel has created more ease of access for the homeowner, including a wheelchair ramp for the front porch and driveway.

Jason Timko and his son recently moved into a fully compliant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rehabilitated home. Jason's home is one of the first ADA-compliant homes that Athens Land Trust has built. The three-bedroom home was converted into a more spacious two-bedroom home. The house was taken down to the studs and built back entirely brand new. The driveway and porch and all the rooms in the home are wheelchair-accessible, and all appliances and fixtures are as well!

Jason went to several organizations seeking housing help, and one of the organizations that specializes in assisting individuals with disabilities recommended ALT to him. "Having this home built for me is a serious blessing," said Jason. I am loving it and am very happy to have my own home. I take pride in the fact that I am working on my own home for me and my son."

According to Clo Barnett, Director of Affordable Housing for Athens Land Trust, this home was completed in partnership with **Athens-Clarke County Housing and Community Development**. "We are so happy that we could build this home for our client. All Athenians have a right to affordable, accessible housing, and I'm really glad that I was a part of making that happen for our client," said Barnett.

"I felt very supported throughout this whole process. Everyone was always so nice and I especially appreciated having regular communication with the builder. I love my kitchen and bathroom, they are just right," said Jason.

Athens Land Trust works with low-to-moderate-income people to make owning a permanently affordable home a reality. Please look for our regularly scheduled first-time home buyers classes at athenslandtrust.org or call 706-613-0122 for more information.



The remodeled bathroom, including a shower that can be entered via wheelchair, larger living room and bedrooms, and upgraded kitchen, all feature new appliances and fixtures that are wheelchair-accessible.

Setting a Goal and Staying Focused Makes Home Ownership a Reality



Athens Land Trust homeowner Sherrie Hannah on her front porch.

“Stay focused.” That is the one piece of advice new homeowner Sherrie Hannah would tell others. Sherrie, who moved into “the perfect home in the heart of town” always knew that she wanted to own her own home. “The affordable housing program was recommended to me by a friend who knew that homeownership was my goal,” said Sherrie.

Previous to owning an Athens Land Trust home, Sherrie, who has lived in Athens for 39 years, was a long-time renter. “I am a single Mom and even though I had heard ‘no’ before, God had another plan for me. I took all the classes offered at Athens Land Trust and worked to get my finances in order.”

Sherrie also talked about the importance of having a support team. “My bestie and my sister were my cheerleaders,” she said. When I started this journey, my sister bought me a calendar and I wrote Day 1 on the day that I decided to start really working to buy a house. I marked every single day with my goal in mind. It took me 479 days from that day to the day that I closed on my house.”

Sherrie’s home is on a bus route, is close to the pharmacy and the doctor’s office, and has great restaurants within walking distance. According to Sherrie, “I truly could not have gotten anything better.”

Athens Land Trust's Home Ownership Program Brings Family Together



Erin Cathcart and Younger Robbins closed on their new home right as restrictions were being implemented due to COVID-19.

Erin Cathcart and Younger Robbins were living in California when they learned about the Athens Land Trust's Affordable Housing program. “My brother lives here in Athens and we would come visit him and do all the local things Athens has to offer,” said Erin. The couple wanted to be closer to family and they decided to attend an Affordable Housing Info Session when they were visiting. “Athens was a much better fit for us. We are both from smaller towns; coming to Athens felt almost like going home” said Younger.

Through the homebuying process offered by Athens Land Trust, Erin and Younger learned how to manage their finances and improve their credit. “The team really made it easy for us; going through the Land Trust to purchase our home also gave us an instant community,” said Younger. “A lot of people of our generation think owning a home is not possible, but it is possible through Community Land Trusts.”

Funding made available for these affordable housing projects by Athens-Clarke County Department of Housing and Community Development HOME and CDBG Programs of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, an Equal Opportunity Employer. Participants will not be discriminated against based on race, color, religion, disability, familial status, or national origin.



West Broad Advisory Board brings Important Information to Residents



Advisory Board Member Quentin Crockell and District 3 Commissioner Melissa Link at a November ESPLOST discussion meeting.

Athens Land Trust continues to coordinate regular tele-meetings with the West Broad Advisory Board to discuss and plan neighborhood initiatives that affect residents and strengthen relationships between residents and city partners. Post-COVID tele-meetings have included updates about energy retrofit projects in partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Sustainability Office, transportation ESPLOST updates, and opportunities for tree planting. There have also been presentations and information shared by the **Transportation SPLOST Committee, Board of Elections, The US Census,** and the **School of Forestry at UGA.**

The Advisory Board has also worked tirelessly to stay connected with residents through a phone tree project to call assigned residents and alert them to resources as soon as we are notified, including food distributions, COVID testing centers, and any concerns posed by our residents.

The next Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16th, and is the first meeting of a series entitled "Protecting our Legacy". This series, which is led by Advisory Board members and partners, will discuss future and estate planning. There will be guest speakers discussing the importance of life insurance, setting up a will, and how to ensure property is passed on to the next generation.

The West Broad Advisory Board is supported by the Department of Education and Empowerment at Athens Land Trust. Tawana Mattox, who directs the department says, "The goal is to empower residents through education and awareness as a guide on the side, not a sage on the stage."

Celebrating Green Achievements at the Greenlife Expo & Awards



Left: West Broad Sustainability Champions Gloria Moses, Ethel Collins, Willie Thomas, & Shirley Tillman. ALT Executive Director Heather Benham & Jeneane McGuire of LRG Provisions and Last Resort Grill. Right: Heather Benham and Carole Ludwig, Farmland Preservation Champion.

On February 29th, we honored our community partners for their contributions to ALT's mission and projects at the **2020 Greenlife Expo and Awards**. ALT presented **Community Sustainability Champion Awards** to **Shirley Tillman, Willie Thomas, Ethel Collins, Gloria Moses,** and **Quentin Crockell**. ALT recognized these community members for serving on ALT's 2019-2020 **West Broad Sustainability Project Advisory Board** ALT also presented the **Farmland Preservation Champion Award** to **Carole Ludwig** in recognition of her work as chair of the **Oconee County Farmland Preservation Committee** from 2016. Ludwig's work has contributed to the preservation of nearly 250 acres of farmland in Oconee County. Athens Land Trust proudly recognized **LRG Provisions and Last Resort Grill** as our **2019 Partner of the Year** for their generous support of our Community Agriculture program. Thanks to the support of these community members, ALT has been able to make impactful strides towards protecting our local greenspaces, fostering community agriculture and food justice initiatives, and serving the historic West Broad neighborhood.

MLK Day of Service Brings New Life to Athens Landscapes



A young volunteer at Five Acre Woods works to clear the area of invasive plant species, which will help restore the land to its native ecosystem.

With the help of hard-working Athenians, Athens Land Trust celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. and his commitment to service by participating in the city-wide MLK Day of Service. ALT hosted two workdays open to all community members. At Five Acre Woods, volunteers worked to help restore the property to its natural and native ecosystem, benefiting both wildlife and human health. Volunteers pulled, cut, and sprayed invasive plant species that were negatively impacting native plant growth at the site.

ALT's second volunteer event took place at Mae Willie Morton Community Garden, where volunteers helped build a wheelchair-accessible planting bed, created a weeding path, and built a monofilament fence to protect growing plants from deer. Thank you to all volunteers who honored Dr. King and his legacy and recognized the importance of service and community.

The Young Conservation Stewards Make Strides in Conservation & Restoration



The new crew of Young Conservation Stewards started the summer semester in mid-June.

Athens Land Trust's Young Conservation Stewards (YCS) is a paid youth development and job training program with a focus on environmental education and impact. The Stewards, who are local high school-aged youth from low-to-moderate-income households, learn from numerous professionals across conservation job fields, while also creating a lasting impact on green spaces in their communities.

Last year, in just one summer, YCS were able to restore over 18 acres of previously invaded forest in the historic in-town natural area Beech Haven.

In addition to learning conservation-specific skills such as water quality monitoring, bird banding, and herpetology, Stewards develop essential job skills like public speaking, leadership, and time-management.

Darius Newsome, a 2019 Young Conservation Steward said "YCS has helped me to better understand how important positive human activity with plants can create a healthier environment. You learn a lot about different plant species, invasive or not. It was a fun experience and I would recommend it for people who like being outdoors."

This year, our third year of YCS, we have partnered with the **Athens Clarke County (ACC) Sustainability Office** to begin work along the **North Oconee River Greenway** at **North Oconee River Park (West)**. The Greenway is an extremely important asset to the Athens community, and we are honored to be a part of restoring its surrounding habitat.

To learn more about or to support the life-changing work of the Young Conservation Stewards, please go to: athenslandtrust.org/our-work/land-conservation/young-conservation-stewards.

Athens Land Trust Conserves 40 Acres of Farmland Outside of Watkinsville

This past April, Athens Land Trust completed a conservation easement on 40 acres of land just outside of Watkinsville city limits. The property known as the Wilkes Property is part of a larger 80-acre farm. The now-protected land consists mostly of pasture, but also includes three acres of oak, hickory, and pine forest. The owner of the property said he wanted to ensure that the land will continue to be farmland for his family and his community forever.

Krisztian Varsa, the Director of Conservation for the Athens Land Trust said that the conservation of this property is especially important due to the location of the land. "Protecting 40 acres of our region's highest quality soil will ensure the future of sustainable food and farming in our community.

Development threatens to permanently convert our community's most important farmland. By protecting the beautiful pasture and forest forever, this land will also contribute to our healthy air and water for all community members," said Varsa. Athens Land Trust works in partnership with the **USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service** and the **Oconee County Government** who make the program possible.


A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust which protects a property's agricultural viability, natural habitat, rural heritage, and/or scenic open space in perpetuity. By working with ten farming families, the Athens Land Trust has protected 787 acres of land through the **Oconee County Farmland Preservation Program**. Thirteen individual easements have been put in place in Oconee County. For every \$1 spent by Oconee County to protect farmland, \$4 of farmland conservation and greenspace protection is achieved. During the 2015 SPLOST, the Athens Land Trust leveraged \$1.37 million federal dollars for farmland protection, permanently protecting \$2.74 million dollars worth of farmland.

FARMLAND PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION IN OCONEE COUNTY, GEORGIA

787

Acres protected through Oconee County Farmland Preservation Program

10




Farming Families

During the 2015 SPLOST, Oconee County leveraged \$1.37 million federal dollars for farmland protection, protecting \$2.74 million dollars worth of farmland

13

Individual Easement Projects

Every \$1 spent by Oconee County to protect farmland achieves \$4 of farmland conservation and greenspace protection





The woods and pasture of the Wilkes Property will be permanently protected.



More views of the conservation easement on the Wilkes Property.

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West Broad Garden Takes Root at New Location



Simulated view of the new West Broad Community Garden looking towards Waddell Street.



Community Garden Intern Kalia Henry, ALT staff Xavier Coates, and several volunteers fill raised garden beds with soil.

We are happy to announce that the West Broad Garden has found a new home at the corner of Waddell St. and Rocksprings St. in the West Broad Neighborhood! For many years, the beloved West Broad Garden had a home at the site of the Old West Broad School. The lease for the garden expired at the end of 2019 and the months since have been filled with securing a new site and holding neighborhood meetings to gather input and ideas from West Broad residents on how to rebuild the garden.

The new garden will be located on four old home sites totalling 1.2 acres of land just behind the **Athens Housing Authority**. The West Broad Garden is one way Athens Land Trust achieves its mission to increase access to fresh, healthy, affordable food, promote sustainable agriculture and support economic entrepreneurial opportunities for underserved youth and adults.

Cameron Teeter, Director of Community Agriculture for Athens Land Trust, along with volunteers and community members, has been working on the garden since March. "This garden will serve to provide a space for people to grow and harvest foods of their choice while cultivating community at the same time," said Cameron. "I really love that there is actually already food growing in this location. There are pecan trees and mulberry bushes. I really look forward to seeing this garden grow!"

To celebrate and support the new West Broad Garden, Athens Land Trust has started a raised bed sponsorship program. By sponsoring one of the raised beds that will be used in the garden, you are contributing to the continued legacy of the garden and championing the efforts of the Athens Land Trust to reduce poverty and conserve land for future generations.

Each sponsored garden bed will feature a permanent sign including the name of the sponsoring business or person, and if so desired, a personalized message or quote from the sponsor.

Sponsorships are:

- **10x12 Shade Structure: \$10,000**
- **33" Tall 4'x8' Back-Friendly Raised Garden Bed: \$1,000**
- **10" Tall 4'x16' Raised Garden Bed: \$500**
- **Perennial Garden Structures: \$300**
- **Engraved Paving Stones: \$100**

The new garden is located at 819 Waddell St. It is used by community members, volunteers, the Young Urban Farmers, CCSD students and more! Food grown at the garden will be distributed back to the community. Please go to athenslandtrust.org/garden-sponsorship/ to sponsor the West Broad Community Garden.

Athens Land Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to conserve, empower and sustain communities through responsible and visionary land use.



Thank You To All Of Our 2019 Sponsors and Members!

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