



Housing & Neighborhood Task Force Meeting | Minutes

Date. October 25, 2018
Time. 5:00 to 7:00 pm
Location: Ezekial Baptist Church
5701 Grays Avenue
Phila, PA 19143

Attendees.

Kyle Flood, Gabriella Nelson, Deputy Chief Eberhard, and Pat Noto from PHA; Lindsey Samsi of Pennrose; Woo Kim, Stacey Blankin, and Laurel Schwab from WRT; Tom Dalfo, Kate McNamara, Troy Mandy of PIDC; Jihad Ali (SWPDS); Luciana Boone (Ambassador); Tracey Gordon (Ambassador); Donna Henry (SWCDC); Norman Matlock (ACANA); Aiisha Miller (Dept. of Commerce); Nicole Ozdemir (PCPC); Maitreyi Roy (Bartram's Garden); Kimberly Waller (Bartram Village); Doreen Waller (Ambassador); Zaire Best; Malik Carter; Saboor Muhammed; Celeste Ransome; Greg Riley, Captain of 18th District; Park Sinchaisri; Sandra Steward; Krista Wieder; Vivian Wise

Meeting Agenda.

1.0 Welcome & Introductions and 2.0 Where are we in the process?

The Housing and Neighborhood Task Forces had a joint meeting to review the findings of the needs assessment. Kyle Flood of PHA welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a quick update on the planning process. The Bartram Choice planning effort reached a significant milestone by completing two surveys – one of Bartram Village residents and another for people who live, work and/or play in the Bartram Choice neighborhood. The survey findings will help shape the goals and strategies of the Transformation Plan.

Mr. Flood also announced the appointment of 6 Neighborhood Ambassadors (3 who live at Bartram Village and 3 who live in the neighborhood) who will work with the planning team to share information about the planning process and encourage participation. Three Ambassadors were present: Tracey Gordon, Doreen Waller and Lucy Boone.

3.0 What do the Needs Assessment Findings tell us?

Woo Kim, a principal of WRT, which is serving as the planning coordinator, presented an overview of the Bartram Village Resident Survey and the Neighborhood Survey. Mr. Kim explained how the surveys were collected, how many were collected, and how the findings were analyzed. Printed copies of the full reports of both surveys were given to all meeting participants along with printed summary sheets of the findings. [These reports and the summary are also available for download at bartramchoice.com.]

4.0 Getting to work: identifying priorities and preliminary strategies

Mr. Kim presented key findings related to housing and the neighborhood before the audience broke into four breakout groups for discussion. These included: 1 group for housing and 3 for Neighborhood: Public Safety, Shopping/Services, and Neighborhood Infrastructure (sidewalks, transportation, green spaces, recreation). Each group discussed the survey findings and started to identify major issues to be addressed. Participants also talked about potential strategies and identified some activities that could be done immediately to start improving conditions and the quality of life in the neighborhood. Mr. Kim, Mr. Flood,

and Ms. Samsi led the housing discussion. Tom Dalfo, Kate McNamara and Troy Mandy, all of PIDC, facilitated the discussion for the Neighborhood groups.

HOUSING

Listed below are preliminary strengths and challenges identified by the Housing Task Force:

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locational advantage • Affordable • Access to transit • Green • Rich in activities • Cultural hub • Independence charter school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transparency from PHA / Confusion • Bartram village maintenance issues • Stigma / public safety • Homogenous housing stock – accessibility • Bartram Village is a large site, disconnected from neighborhood assets • Lack of signage / wayfinding

The Housing Task Force also started to establish a set of guiding principles for the Housing Plan.

Guiding Principles (Draft)

1. Residents’ rights come first
2. Ensure equitable access to green (blue) / open space
3. Make homeownership a reality for residents
4. Communicate clearly and consistently
5. Respect the existing community / social fabric
6. Preserve and encourage an intergenerational community
7. New housing should leverage neighborhood assets such as access to transit, open space, commercial corridors, etc.

Next, participants started filling out a worksheet to identify major issues, potential strategies, and activities to tackle now! See attached.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Discussion Group 1: Commercial Corridors

Woodland Ave issues and ideas:

- ACANA has an ongoing initiative from 58th to 66th streets: daily cleaning/sweeping, storefront improvements, communication efforts
- A lot of African and Caribbean business owners whose practices might be different than what is typical/expected in the U.S.—requires education and outreach
- Would like to see a University City District type organization for Woodland, like a Special Services District
 - SSDs are often funded by a large anchor and businesses are taxed an additional amount to help fund it
- There is a community-driven idea for a gateway at 58th and Woodland

- Cultural district pilot project on 6500 block of Woodland via Community Design Collaborative

Chester Ave issues and ideas:

- ACANA effort has so far led to 5 improved storefronts—hoping to do more
- Small improvements/pilot projects could be used to showcase the fact that investments like that actually do make a positive difference and attract more shoppers

Several more general issues were discussed:

- Cleanliness issue keeps local shoppers away
- No high quality convenient grocery store nearby—need a car
- A number of diverse communities are present but they operate in isolation physically and culturally
- More banking options are needed in the neighborhood
- Tax delinquency issues, often either the property owner or the business owner (which are not the same person)—prevents some from making improvements/qualifying for City programs

There was discussion about the opportunity to help solve both the neighborhood’s youth employment challenges and the cleanliness issue on the corridors by employing young people (maybe over the summer). Existing youth programs include ABC Men, Philly Youth Network, and the Chess Club at Kingsessing Rec Center.

The idea of a “stroll” like the one on Baltimore Ave or other festival was discussed, but some were concerned that business owners may not be ready for that level of commitment in terms of capacity or trust in whatever entity would run it. There is often a negative perception of shutting down business for a whole day for that type of event. One way to build up momentum for it would be to utilize ambassadors from the neighborhood to help build trust with business owners.

Group members agreed that adding murals by local artists to the corridors would help transform, beautify, and bring unity and local pride. A local effort may be preferable given the long timeframe often associated with Mural Arts projects.

Group members would like to find out what the timing is for the SEPTA trolley improvements. We want to avoid adding streetscape improvements only to have them altered/removed by SEPTA.

Ideas for Early Action items included the youth employment opportunities, “clean and green” efforts, and a pop-up mobile library.

Discussion Group 2: Streetscape and Greenspace

This group explored several issues related to the character and infrastructure of the neighborhood. The group first identified issues and concerns and then began discussing desired outcomes and potential strategies.

Key issues identified:

- Lack of street trees
- Lack of neighborhood identity when entering it
- Scrapyards along Lindbergh (between 54th & Grays Ave.) & dumping in alleys
- Bike trail connections
- Need for safe, visible play areas
- Desire for community garden
- Need for trash cans
- Desire for Farmers Market

Discussion Group 3: Public Safety

Several issues of concern were identified in the Public Safety breakout group:

- Youth milling about on the street without a place to go
- Open railroad crossings
- Safety on the Bartram Village site
- Additional / properly functioning surveillance cameras at Bartram Village and in neighborhood
- Insufficient light at Bartram Village and along neighborhood streets
- Trash and dumping of litter
- Blocking the box at 56th & Lindbergh

Safety on the Bartram Village site led to a discussion of several actions that could be taken right away. These include making sure that all surveillance cameras are working, looking into installing additional cameras at other key locations on the site (and in key locations throughout the neighborhood), and installing emergency lighting in the residential buildings.

Additional and brighter lighting on the Bartram Village site and at key locations throughout the neighborhood were also discussed.

The remaining conversation focused on ideas that could give youth something to do and / or places to go. Participants began identifying playgrounds and rec centers in the neighborhood and traced typical walking routes that youth take to reach these facilities. Participants also discussed where these facilities are located as well as other potential types of facilities.

5.0 Next steps

Members of both Task Forces will continue to develop the worksheet by thinking of other concerns, strategies, and potential partners. At the next Housing Task Force meeting, participants will continue to refine the guiding principles, housing plan goals and strategies. The Neighborhood Task Force will also continue to identify and refine goals, strategies, and action activities for discussion at the next meeting.

Next meeting

The Housing Task Force will meet on December 4, 2018 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at Ezekial Baptist Church, 5701-39 Grays Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.


The Neighborhood Task Force will meet again in January. Please be on the lookout for a meeting announcement.

Major issues or concerns	Potential strategies	Do now!	Potential partners / programs
Lack of transparency / trust		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend hours of Bartram Village Management Office 	
Breakdown in communication	TVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth ambassadors (YouTube, social media, Philly Cam) • Choice Ambassadors • Text alert • Events • Radio stations 	
Maintenance issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back-up generators • Emergency lighting 	
Homogenous housing stock (3-bedroom, 2-story rowhome)			
Lack of signage / wayfinding		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site map by entrance 	

Major issues or concerns	Existing assets, programs, services	Desired outcomes	What can we do now?	Potential strategies & partners
←		PUBLIC SAFETY	→	
Youth milling about on the street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAL • Community Rec Centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec facility / space for youth closer to Bartram Village • Other activities to do (bowling, skating) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish youth / rec center closer to Bartram Village
Working surveillance cameras at Bartram Village and in neighborhood			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure surveillance cameras are working at Bartram Village • Install cameras at other key locations on BV site • Identify neighborhood hot spots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners: PHA, ISM, Streets department • Signage to deter people
Make Bartram Village safer in an emergency			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install emergency lighting • Install emergency signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners: PHA • Use signage in conjunction with lighting • Install public phone
Unsafe railroad crossings that are open and dangerous		Make key crossings safer by closing off openings; improve access to important amenities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OTIS • CSX • Streets Dept • bridge over tracks at Save-A-Lot • Lighting @RR crossings & major intersections
Lighting along neighborhood streets is not sufficient		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting on Lindbergh 		

Major issues or concerns	Existing assets, programs, services	Desired outcomes	What can we do now?	Potential strategies & partners
Lighting on the Bartram Village site is not sufficient		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More lighting across site • Brighter lighting 		
Trash and dumping of litter	block captains	prevent excess litter and stop dumping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth campaign • rodent control • block cleaning • increased enforcement • street cleaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent pick up at Bartram Village • video cameras & lighting • more cans along Grays & Lindbergh • service district • Phila Sts Dept and Phila More Beautiful Committee
Do not block the box at 56th & 57th Street & Lindbergh Ave				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage • Enforcement
Drug activity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased drug activity in BV and neighborhood 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philadelphia Police Dept 12th District • PHAPD • Southwest Nu Stop

Major issues or concerns	Existing assets, programs, services	Desired outcomes	What can we do now?	Potential strategies & partners
<p>← ————— □ COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS, SHOPPING & SERVICES □ ————— →</p>				
Tax compliance issues (either building owner, business owner, or both) prevent them from accessing City programs	Commerce Dept storefront improvement program			
Lack of arts/culture/placemaking/gateways along corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gateway concept for 58th and Woodland cultural corridor pilot project 6500 block of Woodland 	Identity/brand for the neighborhood's commercial areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> murals gateways streetscape improvements
Lack of key services like quality walkable grocery and banking options		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retail options on Grays Ave and Lindbergh Blvd restaurants, cafes, personal care services, laundromats/dry cleaners 		
Lack of cleanliness/perception that corridors are not clean keeps local shoppers away	ACANA sweeping on Woodland between 58th and 66th	Attract more local shoppers with signs of improvement and ongoing investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “clean and green” pilot projects youth employment pilot project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ youth to act as ambassadors and street cleaners
Diverse communities operate in isolation, physically and culturally	ACANA outreach and education efforts			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and communication efforts Special Services District utilize neighborhood ambassadors to build trust

Major issues or concerns	Existing assets, programs, services	Desired outcomes	What can we do now?	Potential strategies & partners
 <p>STREETSCAPE & GREENSPACE</p>				
Lack of street trees		Added shade and beauty to neighborhood / greening		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • street tree program on Lindbergh Blvd between 67th and BV, potentially beyond and turning onto 49th. also Elmwood Ave • Phila Trees, PIDC, PHS, Dept Commerce
Lack of neighborhood identity when entering from elsewhere				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banner program along Lindbergh and Grays
Scrapyards along Lindbergh				
Bike trail infrastructure				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better connection between 58th St Greenway, BV, and Schuylkill River Trail
Lack of safe play areas		New/improved playground/ recreation areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visible, safe tot lot • small soccer field • workout stations • basketball courts • checkers, chess, etc. boards

Major issues or concerns	Existing assets, programs, services	Desired outcomes	What can we do now?	Potential strategies & partners
Vacant lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56th St, Elmwood and Lindbergh trolley stop • 63rd and Lindbergh Park 	greening or development of lots		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHS • SWCDC • create a park closer to Bartram Village or on site
Road conditions				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OTIS • Philadelphia Beautiful Streets
upgrades to SEPTA trolley stations				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEPTA Key kiosks in neighborhood • More benches and rain shelters
Access to gardens / fresh, healthy food		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more community gardens • farmers market along corridor - Lindbergh south of BV 		
Cleanliness, trash, litter		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new cans along Gray's/ Lindbergh and Bartram Village property 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service district? • Program managed by residents • Require residents to maintain their unit's landscaping / yard / sidewalk