



Residents and Leaders Kickoff Planning Meetings

At the SCI Eastern North Community Visioning event last November, 200 residents shared their biggest aspirations for eastern North Philadelphia without focusing on obstacles, limits or worrying about the details (See January newsletter). By the end of the event, an entire wall in the Kensington CAPA High gymnasium was covered with sheets of paper listing the qualities of the ideal neighborhood.

But creating the vision is the easy part. Making these dreams a reality in eastern North Philadelphia is a challenging task. Nevertheless, over 50 residents, stakeholders, and community leaders got together again on January 19, ready to take on this challenge. They kicked-off the third phase of the SCI Eastern North Quality-of-Life (QoL) planning process which will result in an action plan with concrete steps for the improvement of the community.

A Snapshot of the Neighborhood

Stacey Chen, a consultant from Interface Studio started the meeting with graphics, charts and colorful maps that painted a picture of how the target area is affected by land use, criminal activity, access to recreation, schools, new development, cultural organizations, etc.

One map revealed that nearly one-third of the area is vacant land and buildings, a major problem that has plagued the neighborhood for decades. Another graphic was more positive: since 2000, 416 housing units have been built, indicating that investment and housing are returning to the neighborhood.

Still, the charts showed that more than half of the neighborhood households live below the poverty line, and only half of the adult residents have a high school degree. Education quality varies tremendously, with some neighborhood schools among the best in the City (such as Welsh and Moffett) and others among the worst.

Getting to Work

The meeting concluded with break-out sessions where participants selected among eight focus areas. Each was asked to do an inventory of community assets by identifying them with stickers on a map. The exercise reveals what assets the community already has so that new projects are designed to, both, support and benefit from the services and infrastructure already in place. The group working on Healthy Environments and Lifestyles, for example, placed stickers on local hospitals, parks, rec. centers and food pantries.

Bishop Dwayne Royster, the founding Pastor of Living Water United Church of Christ, engaged a number of young residents in the group dedicated to leadership. "I'd like to see a cross-pollination of leadership, the collective organizing of state leaders, city council members, church leaders, block captains, and more, to gain consensus and

momentum," said Bishop Royster. "The pull comes from the masses. We're here today so we can help make that happen."

A Community Agreement

This process is about more than just writing a plan; it's about bringing together residents, community leaders, and City officials to decide not only what should be done in the neighborhood, but also how it should be done, and who's going to do it, with real ownership throughout the entire process. It's about creating an agreement between individuals and organizations about how eastern North Philadelphia will move forward into the coming years.

SCI EVENT CALENDAR

Gardening Club Meeting	March 2
6 th & Diamond St. 6-7pm	
Quality of Life Planning Meeting	March 9
McKinley School, 5-6:45pm	
Quality of Life Planning Meeting	March 30
McKinley School, 5-6:45pm	

En Español

En el evento de SCI Eastern North donde se envisionó el futuro de la comunidad en noviembre pasado, 200 residentes compartieron sus aspiraciones más grandes en Eastern North Philadelphia sin fijarse en obstáculos, límites o preocuparse en los detalles (vea el boletín de enero). Al final del evento, una pared entera en el gimnasio de Kensington CAPA estaba cubierta con hojas de papel listando las cualidades del barrio ideal.

Pero la creación de la visión es fácil. Hacer esos sueños realidad en Eastern North Philadelphia es una tarea difícil. Sin embargo, más de 50 residentes y líderes de la comunidad se reunieron nuevamente el 19 de enero, dispuestos a asumir este reto. Ellos comenzaron la tercera fase del plan de calidad de vida SCI Eastern North (PCV), un proceso que resultará en la creación de un plan de acción con medidas concretas para la mejora de la comunidad.

El Barrio en Resumen

Stacey Chen, consultora de Interface Studio comenzó la reunión con gráficas y mapas coloridos que pintaron un panorama de cómo el área se ve afectada por usos de la propiedad, actividad delincuente, acceso a la recreación, las escuelas, nuevo desarrollo, organizaciones culturales, etc..

Continúa al otro lado...

Youth Corner: The SCI Team recruited the youth video production crew from The Village of the Arts & the Humanities to document and photograph the Community Visioning event. Last week, the Village's Executive Director interviewed an 18-year old video student and asked what he thought about the experience. It turned out he was listening, as well as filming!

"At the APM thing, I really learned that a lot of people were trying to make change in their community. It was rockin'. There are people out there, more than a couple people, who care and believe that the whole community can change. The number of people was really shocking.

The funny thing was they all wanted different things! I remember one person wanted a community to be like a melting pot, because a lot of different people live near each other and need to get along. I believe that it will happen and that the neighborhood will be peaceful because so many people agreed with her."

The Village is one of many organizations in North Philadelphia committed to providing children and youth with quality after-school programs and access to the arts. We can make our mark by encouraging all the young people we know to participate in an after-school activity, whether its sports, the arts, chess, or a club. For more information on their programming you can visit www.villagearts.org

Un mapa reveló que casi un tercio del área se compone de terrenos baldíos y edificios abandonados, un problema importante que ha asolado el barrio durante décadas.

Otra gráfica fue más positiva: desde el año 2000, se han construido 416 viviendas, que indica que la inversión y las viviendas están volviendo al barrio. Aún así, las gráficas mostraron que más de la mitad de los hogares de barrio viven por debajo de la línea de pobreza, y sólo la mitad de los residentes adultos han acabado la escuela secundaria. La calidad de la educación varía enormemente, con algunas escuelas del barrio entre las mejores de la ciudad (como Welsh y Moffett) y otras entre las peores.

A Trabajar

La reunión concluyó con sesiones de grupo donde los participantes seleccionaron entre ocho áreas de enfoque. Cada grupo hizo un inventario de activos de la comunidad, identificándolos con stickers en un mapa. El ejercicio revela qué activos la comunidad ya tiene y así nuevos proyectos serán diseñados para que apoyen y se beneficien de los servicios y la infraestructura ya existente. El grupo enfocado en el Bienestar Ambiental y La Salud, por ejemplo, colocó los stickers donde se localizan hospitales, parques, centros de recreación y supermercados.

El obispo Dwayne Royster, fundador de Living Water United Church of Christ, trabajó con jóvenes residentes en el grupo dedicado al liderazgo. "Me gustaría la cooperación entre líderes a nivel estatal, los Concejales, líderes de la iglesia, capitanes de bloque y más, para así crear consenso y ganar impulso," dijo el obispo Royster. "El poder proviene de las masas. Estamos aquí hoy para que podemos ayudar a lograrlo".

Un Acuerdo de la Comunidad

Este proceso es algo más que un simple plan; se trata de reunir a los residentes, líderes de la comunidad y funcionarios de la ciudad a decidir no sólo lo que debe hacerse en el barrio, pero también cómo debe hacerse, y quién va a hacerlo. Es acerca de la creación de un acuerdo entre individuos y organizaciones sobre cómo Eastern North Philadelphia se moverá hacia adelante en los próximos años.

QoL Plan in Action

Rainbow de Colores Playground & Handball Court



If you are driving by, you might just miss it. Nestled between houses along North 5th Street, facing a giant mural, before reaching York Street, you will find *Rainbow de Colores*, a pocket park with a handball court that was built back in the mid-70's. But that was a long time ago, and over the years the park has deteriorated; the play equipment has been stolen, the walls have been tagged. It has become one of those places with dual personality: a place where children & youth play during the day and a magnet for illicit activity at night; and the neighboring residents and businesses can't take it anymore.

Enter Captain Cram and the 26th Police District who have been working hard, trying to rid the community of a crime hot spot at the intersection of 5th & York, a few steps from the park. Officers knocked on doors, held community meetings, and brought key stakeholders to the table. Their strategy was to take back the park, which would reinforce law enforcement efforts at the hotspot. Stakeholders, including SCI Eastern North, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Norris Square Civic Association, the Parks & Recreation Dept., and Councilwoman Quiñones-Sánchez, are committed to allocating resources for the revitalization of the park. The current plans, presented to the community on February 17th, call for new lighting, fencing, ADA modifications, landscaping, and new playground equipment. Construction is scheduled to begin sometime in late spring/early summer. For more information about this initiative, contact sci.info@apmphila.org.

QoL = Quality of Life

www.sciphilly.org/sci-north

SCI Voices

"We can make our mark by becoming a part of the process, we can develop a future that will be inclusive and prosperous."

- Gilberto González

Director of Communications
Community College of Philadelphia

"Our Community, Our Ideas has brought youth, community leaders, business owners, city officials, and residents together, not just to envision a world we want to live in, but to challenge us to action to make our vision a reality. This is not only a chance to be heard and to listen to the thoughts and ideas of our neighbors, but also for real success. We must each look at what we can personally bring to the table and take the responsibility to make it happen"

- Elizabeth Grimaldi

Executive Director
The Village of the Arts & the Humanities

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Do you have a vision for Eastern North Philadelphia? We want to hear it!

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