

WHAT WE HEARD

Arden Park Block Club
Focus Conversation on Housing +
Neighborhood Commercial Areas
Attendees: 5
15 October 2022

NORTH END COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK PLAN

The red highlighted areas are some potential sites for housing development where the city owns a number of adjacent properties. What housing types and density would you like to see here?

Oakland Google Streetview
Holbrook Google Streetview
Euclid Google Streetview
Smith Google Streetview

2022-10-15, 11:16:35

Audio Transcript Chat Messages

Search transcript

city owns,

01:35:27 and we want to make sure that as we start to develop this plan we can try to see how we market these areas. That's one of

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NORTH END COMMUNITY FR...

pharmacy closer

Woodward & Calvert in Boston Edison

re

looking forward to the food co-op, like to see more coffee houses

Oakland b/t Westminister & E. Grand

would like to see resale

02:08:31 / 02:23:42

Speed

Audio Transcript Chat Messages

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Yeah. So that is Westminister. So there are some plenty of vacants over there. You know that.



Questions + Answers

- Salt facility - concern about having truck traffic coming through and considered have no trucks signs and speed bumps
- Arden Park is a cut through from E. Boston to Oakland - have had numerous accidents knocking down brick walls and concern having smaller trucks like Ford 150s coming through neighborhood to service businesses
- Looking at ways to cut speed coming through neighborhood especially John R, Arden & E Boston especially with new future development, want to maintain historic character, issue with safety - signage, speed humps, etc. to slow traffic down and for things to be calm
- Parking signs - have challenges driving down our streets when people park too close to the corner, no signs that say leave 2 car distances from the corner, talked about seeking to have no parking signs posted on corners
- When an entity was working on Woodward had orange barrels in middle of Woodward that effectively created a median and was good because it created a safe spot to stop as a pedestrian when crossing Woodward
- Calvin - Woodward is a larger discussion outside of city, would need to partner with the State of Michigan, want to do our best to help with the crossing of Woodward
- Oakland is also a fast paced avenue and there is a school in that area - like an expressway at times, a lot traffic coming from everywhere, from 75, can't put speed humps there because it's well traveled
- Calvin - city does have ownership of Oakland, so working to see how Oakland can be activated, having structures coming back to Oakland, traffic calming will be helped with more commercial and residential along Oakland
- Along Oakland & Boston tree blocking stoplight - can't see the light very well, concern about kids crossing the street
- Erinn - we will look into that

Housing

We've heard that people want low income housing options and senior housing, and have also discussed housing affordability being related to job security and workforce development. We've also heard concerns about displacement. We'd like to hear more about your housing experience: Tell us about your current housing experience. Tell us about your housing aspirations.

VACANT HOUSES

- Overall the problem with housing is the vacant houses that continue, 10/12 homes for the last 25 years, these homes become a security problem, landlords that live outside of the city and the country, these homes continue to decay and get flipped, more difficult for owners to improve their homes with homes around them that decay, city has tried to follow up with them, city does not seem to support smaller dwindling number of homes in the area where people have stayed and tried to maintain them, had 1 home burn down of the 90 in this area (Arden Park & East Boston)
- Erinn Harris, City of Detroit - would love to get the list of the 10 houses to talk further, see list, see issues & what City can help with - block club has a list & will send

HOME MAINTENANCE + IDENTIFYING RESOURCES

- Have some homes that are occupied, but they need maintenance that is very costly as well as utilities so someone who leaves home to a younger family member, if do not have money to maintain it becomes a nightmare, do not know how to help them & make resources available to help them
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - Is historic designation and potential higher cost that comes with it hold residents back?
- Does not even reach that point, cost of maintaining historic home is difficult, so it's getting funds to them to maintain windows, put on new roof, etc., for ex. Replacing windows with vinyl windows is not something any resident here wants, it's when roof is caving in, brick falling, etc., impacting value of restored homes, people need major resources who cannot afford to restore them
- 144 E Boston - walls torn out & open to outside being stripped, across from well preserved house, Association boarded it up and now it is lived in & viable part of community, would like to do the same with other 10 vacant homes, need help finding resources for owners & potential owners
- With pandemic people have been home more, continued maintenance, buying these housing is not for faint of heart, everything costs \$25k, \$25k grants are great, but it's just a drop, quote on roof for \$75k, don't know what to do, anyway to find resources, even loan program, neighbors don't know these programs exist, since pandemic it's been hard to get people to come to home to get quotes, may have to fight historic commission

"We have some homes that are occupied, but they need maintenance that is very costly."

"We need help finding resources for owners and potential owners."



SHARED HOUSING

- Sun Foster, Know Allegiance Nation - Are there experiences or conversations about co-housing, Airbnb, or community land trusts?
- Aware of 2 homeowners who have Airbnb - 1 uses carriage house and another rents out their house, are short term
- Communal housing - property on Arden Park where people are sharing the housing, a couple of houses that were rental properties that had tenants in them
- Community land trusts - have not looked into at all, do not know how practical it would be
- Community land trust stays in ownership of the community, almost like a co-op situation, pretty small area to get into that type of thing
- Also had homes where we had large groups move into those homes for care - 10-12 people move in but after a few years cannot afford because of rigid budget people are under, even though there is space, it's hard for the organizations to maintain the homes

We've heard that generational wealth building for Black families is a priority for neighbors. Does this resonate with you? If so, what supports do North End families need to build towards this? What does generational wealth mean to you?

HOUSING

- Many things already mentioned impact this, largely African American community, seen older residents die and pass on houses to younger family members who do not have income necessary to live in the house
- Practical in smaller homes to start with so that people can afford to maintain, stay in house, and grow in value to sell in future, maybe research study @ university
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - have been seeing that housing values are creeping up in the neighborhood with new build & rehab \$300k to \$400k which is a barrier to a lot of people in the city, new residents that are becoming homeowners that can afford amount, good & bad - market outpacing, but new homeowners
- Sun - when there are new homeowners who have inherited their homes types of resources/effort to support?
- Put information in newsletter, but easiest way to help them find resources is to direct them to call 211, some residents are more outgoing & others not, so sometimes hard to share what is available, mailings, but not sure if people are making use of it, Boston Edison has a really good website that directs people to resources, suspect that people have income, just not enough
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OTHER WAYS OF BUILDING GENERATIONAL WEALTH

- Sun Foster, Know Allegiance Nation - related to generation wealth, how have families in Arden Park accumulated generational wealth?



- If families had good jobs and built up savings, earn enough money to rent an apartment, earn enough money to get more skills, having educational support & wraparound is good foundation to build generational wealth to be able to get good paying jobs, ability to help family members
- Sun Foster, Know Allegiance Nation - when say tools does that include things like life insurance policies, other tools?
- Believe strongly if a child lives in a neighborhood and home where they can stay it is key to building generational wealth and saving money, then when ready to leave can go, I have a 5 year old and going to teach them that, when you have doctor or lawyer that lives on the street and they can see that they can be whatever they want to be, do not have to leave the house at 18 or older and can stay until ready

“Believe strongly that if a child lives in a neighborhood and home where they can stay it is key to building generational wealth.”

Place-based Discussion: Housing

The red highlighted areas are some potential sites for housing development where the city owns a number of adjacent properties (see Figure 1). What housing types and density would you like to see here?

- Areas spread apart - what used to be here were row houses that wrapped corners of the street, on Belmont & John R row houses were torn down, might be something nice to have back, challenge is off street parking, brick and look like something people would want to live in, do not look institutional
- The import of row houses provided starter homes for people moving into neighborhood, occupied about 1 acre, if there was a set on either side of the street they protected the entrance to the neighborhood and block, John R & Westminster friend grew up in a row house there & had a goal to get own house later in life, provides an upper mobility track
- If look at existing character have a mix of housing, when we talk about density cannot look at just # of people in home or block, but also need to look at park spaces, not just dense housing, but breaks between housing stock - parkways, gardenways, greenways throughout the neighborhood



Figure 1: Red highlighted areas are some potential sites for housing development where the city owns a number of adjacent properties

Neighborhood Commercial Areas

What daily needs/goods/services do you have to go out of your neighborhood for? What do you like about the places that you go? What places in your neighborhood meet your daily needs? What do you like about those establishments?

“When we want to eat out we can go to Midtown, Downtown, or the suburbs.”

FOOD

- Food - don't have a lot of options for grocery stores
- Grocery stores go to suburbs, have King Coles, but not everyone is a fan, it will do, but would think this neighborhood would have another option, want a store that had dependable fresh produce and lower prices
- When we want to eat out can go to Midtown, Downtown or suburbs

OTHER BUSINESSES THAT MEET DAILY NEEDS

- Hardware stores, can go down into Brooks Lumber in Corktown, Davison to Cadillac hardware, one in Hamtramck
- Have one cleaners on John R
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - what barriers do we see neighbors and ourselves having related to mobility? Talked about Hamtramck and going outside, have unique situation where we have 2 other municipalities that Detroit surrounds
- Highland Park in more of a discount market for any commercial use - anything along Woodward discount, if there is only a discount commercial market provided then it drives other people out, senior may feel preyed upon

HEALTHCARE

- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - I know residents in the retirement home who frequent markets in Highland park like Aldi. Do residents frequent Henry Ford, or venture out for healthcare?
- Do not have an urgent care
- People in our historic district are retired and look at healthcare at DMC which is high quality, less than 15 minutes away from North End
- Pharmacies, used to have CVS, but don't have that now
- Small medical clinics do not have in our neighborhood



We know that there are many historically + culturally significant commercial/business locations in the North End. What areas or blocks are important in the North End for businesses, retail and other commercial activities?

- Having a pharmacy closer would be great - 1 near Woodward & Calvert in Boston Edison and one near E. Bethune and Woodward
- Restaurant at Westminster and Woodward
- Whole areas of Oakland between Westminster & E Grand Boulevard
- Hamtramck has different cultural focus
- Looking forward to the food co-op, like to see more coffee houses
- Go to different places to buy alcohol
- Not a lot of restaurants around, go outside of neighborhood, but would like to be able to walk there and places for entertainment, usually go downtown, would like to go to 7 Mile and Livernois, goes to Corktown and Midtown, trying to find different coffee shops
- Restaurants, don't have any breakfast places - there is one on Woodward but need more, historically had Apex Bar, Red Jazz, etc.
- Would like to see resale shops w/ antiques, etc.

In addition to commercial uses that service the community, what other activities/developments would you like to see around the areas mentioned in the previous question? For example, gathering as a community, green space for storm water run off, dining, educational or health focused areas, etc.

GREEN SPACES

- Talked about green spaces being integrated throughout
- Touch on green spaces - do not always need to have playgrounds on them, in other neighborhoods they are largely green spaces with trees and with small playground area in corner - serenity of seeing greenery is nice for the community
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - Joe Louis Greenway adjacent to neighborhood to the east, have pathways, etc. can have discussion around city owned property

“Paths for bikers, but not sure turning the whole city into a giant bike lane is the answer.”

BIKES

- Greening Oakland, compared to McNichols w/ bike paths, don't know that we have people that make use of that - they are normally biking down 2nd & 3rd, but sometimes they are going the wrong way
- Paths for bikers, but not sure turning whole city into a giant bike path is the answer
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - education may help for cars and bikes sharing the road
- Is there an argument for having green space with big long bike lane?
- Calvin Johnson, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department - exercise and recreation is one piece, but typical person/everyday in Detroit riding a bike is a 40 something Black male who is riding a bike for transportation purposes
- Bike lanes are good and want it to be safer for bikers
- Have large groups of bikers that come through



Parking Lot

- Zoning/policy that allowed salt storage/distribution facility next to school
- Erinn Harris, City of Detroit - it is not going to be permitted as a loose salt storage but are permitted as a contractor yard, so salt will have to be bagged
- Had questions that pertained to security, but can have that conversation with Josh, new DON
- Insurance companies it's insane how much people pay for insurance to live here

