



STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 3

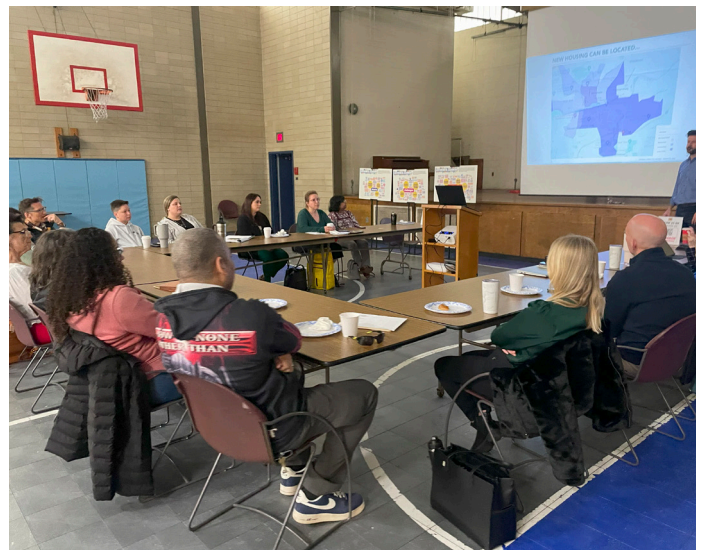
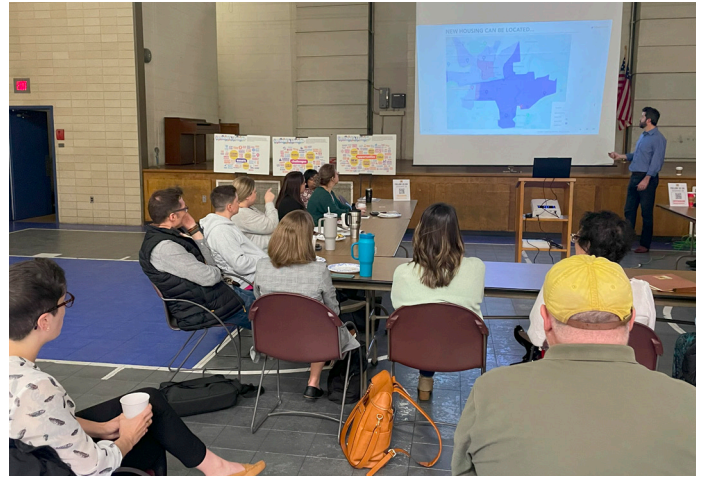
SUMMARY — FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2024

The Pembroke Choice Neighborhood Steering Committee held its third meeting on Friday, March 15, 2024 from 9 – 10:30am at the Boys & Girls Club. The Steering Committee is made up of nearly 30 community partners, BHA residents, elected officials, and other local stakeholders working in education, health, housing, economic opportunity, and more.

The goals of this meeting were to:

- » Deepen the committee’s understanding the requirements and opportunities of Choice Neighborhoods housing, and
- » Begin defining guiding principles for the housing component of the Pembroke Choice Neighborhood Plan.

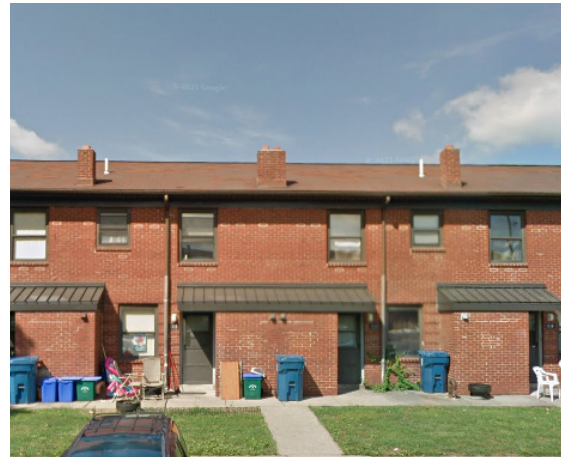
The initial brainstorm around housing principles is summarized on the next few pages. The committee had great discussions about critical housing needs, concerns, and opportunities in the neighborhood - and across Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley more broadly - throughout the meeting. Notes from these discussions are captured at the end of the document.



HOUSING IN THE PEMBROKE NEIGHBORHOOD SHOULD BE...

Safe

- Window design - safety through windows
 - » Window heights
 - » Types of glass used - noise
- Community Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
 - » Lighting, no narrow entryways, “muggers corners”, good fencing in backyards, windows
 - » Fences will compound segregation
- Speedbumps - well-defined, visible
 - » Fritz Drive, Pembroke Rd.
- Some areas are really dark right now
 - » Units by the field
 - » Wellington & Randolph Rd (Marvine)
- Need more porches and lights
 - » People who have porch lights use them a lot
 - » Eyes on the street



Pembroke Village



Pembroke Village

Accessible

- ADA accessible - elevators
- Don't segregate accessible units

Stable & Affordable

- I would like low income people to have an affordable and stable place to call home
- We can give someone new housing, but if they are still suffering inside those homes, then it is a missed opportunity
- Keeping housing ACTUALLY affordable
- Genuinely affordable housing
- Equitable/affordable housing



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Energy Efficient

- LEED certified - leads to huge cost savings and increase comfort in home
 - » Habitat for Humanity recently did this in Philly with 3 story townhomes - good example
- Pembroke Village apartments get so cold downstairs and hot upstairs in the winter, and energy bill gets crazy expensive because you have to have the heat high for the first floor
 - » Slabs weren't insulated
 - » Dual system - separate upstairs and downstairs heating/cooling system
 - » Radiators were better - kept whole house warm, baseboards made it worse
- Healthier homes - air and heat exchange with high-efficiency particulate absorbing filters (HEPA)
 - » Changes air exchange rate from 26 hours to 45 minutes



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HOUSING IN THE PEMBROKE NEIGHBORHOOD SHOULD ENCOURAGE...

Upward Mobility

- Create a ladder of opportunity for folks to increase income without losing stable housing
- Increase supply of housing while creating neighborhoods that allow for upward mobility and neighborhood stability. More than anything, the perfect cannot be the enemy of the good
- Upward mobility to reduce people on wait list
- Ownership opportunities
- Create an economic ladder with both rentals and home ownership opportunities
- Workforce development
- Quality of life



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Community Voice and Ownership

- Limit displacement
- Retain community feel
- Keeping the community together, making sure people know the goal is not to displace them
- Prioritize neighborhood stability and building community
- Incorporate community resources
- Community pride
- Prevent displacement/relocation
- Transparent communication with residents
- Pay homage to/commemorate people who came from the Village or were big contributors/influences to the community
 - » People who clean the streets everyday, who fought for more inclusivity in housing, etc.



Pembroke Village



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Neighborhood Connection

- Focusing on connections and linkages between the neighborhood and its surroundings, and thinking about how the housing and neighborhood design “looks like Bethlehem”
- Close to public transportation
- Preserve access to recreation and parks - integrate into the whole plan
 - » Different uses for different age groups
- Giving people outdoor spaces
- Walkability to basic needs
- Integration with neighborhood assets - Marvine, Lincoln, Boys & Girls Club



Northeast Community Center



Philadelphia Choice Neighborhood

DISCUSSION NOTES

An expansion of housing vouchers in Bethlehem will be key to the relocation process (if there are limitations to the 'Build First' model).

- Shortage of Section 8 units in Bethlehem
- No waiting list to sign people up
- Housing Alliance & RAB did research on best practices for expanding Section 8 units
 - » Unsuccessful: \$2,000 sign-on bonuses
 - » Most effective: Guarantee that if any damage to property, no cost to landlord -- City wants to build something like this out
- Northhampton County Housing Authority - BHA can apply for special purpose vouchers
- Vouchers can be use for homeownership track
 - » 15 year commitment (mortgage)

HUD is moving towards a voucher-based system. BHA's board is trying to expand interest and capacity to move in this direction.

- BHA board's goal: create new vouchers, enabling BHA to become a property manager, leading to more revenue, which can then be used to build more housing
 - » HUD will continue decreasing funding for public housing -- encouraging Housing Authorities to diversify their portfolios
 - » Funding available to rehab public housing units and turn them into voucher units - working on expanding interest in this -- suitable for Marvine in the future?
- Currently, Bethlehem has 1,451 public housing units and approximately 400 voucher units

It is critical to be sensitive to the local context - both historically with public housing redevelopment in the region, and socially with respect to the dynamics between residents of Pembroke Village and surrounding BHA properties.

- Historical reference point: Easton -- HOPE VI didn't require 1-for-1 replacement, so a lot of units were lost
- Need to talk about plans for future of Marvine to prevent animosity
 - » Don't want to enhance divide between the communities; Currently, they're very interconnected

There is a lot left to be determined in terms of the ownership and management of replacement units. However, all replacement units will be voucher-based units instead of traditional public housing units.

- BHA is a good entity to oversee the new housing - mission-driven entity
- Don't want private developer with a profit motivation to be in charge of housing; don't transfer ownership
 - » People have oversight of BHA as a public entity
- New replacement units become voucher units
- These voucher units can be owned and managed by BHA, or by a private entity - many options
 - » Can be owned by BHA, or a private developer (for-profit or non-profit)
 - » Can be managed by BHA, or a private developer (for-profit or non-profit)
 - » This is all to be determined - needs to be based on BHA's strategic plan; and gets worked out with prospective developer partners
 - » Regardless of who owns/manages, all voucher tenants still sign BHA leases
- This can be a tool to move Public Housing Authorities into the business of property management

There is reason to be optimistic that this Choice Neighborhood Plan can be implemented regardless of HUD Choice Implementation funding for housing.

- Choice Neighborhoods projects have been privately funded without Choice Implementation grant
- Plan for mixed income housing is attractive to developers on its own
- Easton, PA is preparing for this right now

There is a need to investigate - and integrate into the plan - innovative homeownership and equity-building housing models that are compatible with the Choice Neighborhoods housing framework.

- How would homeownership opportunities work? Would people own the land or just the housing leased on land from BHA?
- Need to increase quality of life through equity, so that people can grow in place and build wealth
- Set aside lots for permanent affordable housing - Habitat for Humanity example
- Habitat's Forest Township: 50 homes - Working to move people from Northhampton County Housing Authority that are ready for homeownership here
 - » This kind of model would be good here
- PA Property Tax Rebate - a tool for increasing homeownership among seniors and people with disabilities
 - » 2,000 people in Bethlehem Area School District are eligible for the first time because of changes in qualification
 - » \$45,000 rebate; Deadline is in June