

Lower North District



First Round Public Open House Summary

227 people attended one of three open houses held on July 23, 30th and August 15th. Venues included Martin Luther King Recreation Center, Cruz Recreation Center and the Columbia North YMCA.

These meetings served two purposes. One was to notify residents about the district plan process. The other was to solicit preferences on vacant land reuse, shopping preferences, and preferred density. This input helps to guide the recommendations that will be developed in the coming months. It will also help to identify Focus Areas within which physical interventions can have a positive impact. We asked the following questions:

- Where it is possible to restore or build houses, which should they be closest to?
 - mass transit, existing housing, park & recreation centers, stores and businesses
- When construction is not an option, what would you like to see vacant land reused as?
 - sideyards, parking, community open space/ cultural, community gardens
- My decision of where to shop is most influenced by which of these?
 - cost, convenience of location, quality of service, quality of goods
- Where do you shop the most?
 - In the district, just outside of the district, Center City, South Christopher Columbus Boulevard, New Jersey, the internet, corner stores, Northeast Philadelphia, King of Prussia, City Line Avenue, West and Southwest Philadelphia, Delaware
- Where do you work?
 - In the district, just outside of the district, Center City, other parts of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (outside of Philadelphia), work from home, Delaware, New Jersey, New York
- Do you prefer to shop in a traditional commercial corridor or automobile shopping plaza?
- How do you get to shopping currently, and how would you like to get to shopping?
- Are there enough people living on your street or block? Why?
- A positive change in my neighborhood in the last ten years has been...?
- A positive change in my neighborhood in the next ten years will be...?

There will be a second round of public meetings in October where residents will have another opportunity to help us develop and refine proposed recommendations.



First Round Public Open House Results

About 80 percent of meeting attendees responded to our questions. The following profile emerged from those responses. The average person:

- Wants new houses closest to existing houses, SEPTA stations, parks and recreation centers;
- Prefers community gardens and cultural spaces where building new homes is not an option;
- Shops inside the district, just outside the district, or in Center City;
- Does not care whether they shop on a traditional commercial corridor or in an auto-oriented shopping plaza, as long as the location is convenient and they can buy good quality goods;
- Drives to their shopping destinations, but would prefer to walk if the journey was safer or there were better quality goods available;
- Works in Philadelphia and either drives or takes SEPTA to get there;
- Believes that there are a comfortable amount of people living on their street or in their block.

Some other interesting points were:

- Almost 30 percent of people shop in South or Northeast Philadelphia;
- This is probably why just over 30 percent of people prefer to drive to their shopping destination;
- Cost and quality of service were factors in deciding where to shop, but they ranked far below convenience and quality of goods;
- Twenty percent of people walk to work;
- Almost 30 percent of residents believe that there are not enough people living on their street or in their block.
- When asked about a positive change in their neighborhood in the last ten years, new or rehabilitated houses was the most often written response. Residents also mentioned increased shopping options, specifically the new shopping plazas at 31st and Girard and Progress Plaza.
- When asked what a positive change in the next ten years would be, people mentioned an increase in jobs, continued reuse of empty lots and buildings, building stronger civic organizations, promoting leadership, and improving options for youth like sports, other recreation and job training.

The Planning Team will take this information and use it to start drafting recommendations and to determine what other questions should be asked.