

the Bulletin

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East Liberty, and Lawrenceville since 1975*

Affordable housing in Garfield: new rental homes on horizon

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

Garfield - After more than four years of planning, an effort to build another 25 single-family, affordable rental homes in Garfield recently passed a major milestone.

On Aug. 12, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) awarded federal tax credits to a partnership known as “Garfield Highlands L. P.” The partnership, formed between the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) and Gatesburg Road Development, will use the tax credits to pursue funds - upwards of 85% to 90% of the cash needed for the \$9 million project - from private investors.

Since these funds are considered equity contributions, rather than debt, they can be accessed to help make monthly rent payments more affordable for work-

See **Garfield Highlands** | page 2



ABOVE: June Coyne-Givens (left), sister of the late Aggie Brose, holds hands with Jeanette Coleman, vice president of the Board of Directors of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, at a dedication ceremony in Garfield. Read more on page 5. Photo by Steph Chambers/Post-Gazette.



ABOVE: Shoppers navigate the new Bloomfield Community Market during the store's grand opening on Sunday, Aug. 16. Read more on page 8. Photo by John Colombo.

Puerto Rican BBQ thrives on Penn Ave.

By María Manautou Matos *PRESENTE Pittsburgh Latino Magazine*

Garfield - At Soju restaurant (4923 Penn Ave.), sous-chef Fernando Ríos delighted his customers with “Freakin Rican BBQ” - a curated selection of Puerto Rican dishes - on Sunday, Aug. 23.

The crowd began lining up and down the block at 4 p.m., wearing masks and following social distancing guidelines under the burning sun. Even in the high heat, the vibe was exciting, and nobody seemed to mind the long wait outside Soju.

The only thing on anybody's mind was getting a taste of rice with *gandules*, beans, roast pork, *tostones*, grilled octopus with avocado salad, and a number of other fla-

vorful menu options.

“Cooking Puerto Rican food brings me so much joy because Puerto Ricans play a huge role in our nation,” Chef Ríos said. “I love teaching Americans about our culture so that it's not a mystery to them. I want to help them see us for who we are, and not just some strange label.”

Born in Pittsburgh, Ríos often travelled to visit family in New York's Puerto Rican community. There, he watched closely as family and friends prepared authentic dishes; his love of sharing culinary cre-

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OF EAST END REAL ESTATE

AGGIE'S FORMER HOME:
OPPORTUNITY PAID FORWARD - PAGE 16 -

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ing-class families.

When the investors exit the project [15 years from the tenants' move-in date], they will no longer have any ownership interest in the development, according to Andrew Haines, vice-president for Gatesburg Road Development, based in State College, PA. The BGC and Gatesburg Road have partnered in the construction of 64 similar homes in Garfield since 2012.

"The rental developments that we've done with the BGC in Garfield all have this same provision, as do the other five projects in the city that received an award of tax credits from the PHFA," Haines told *The Bulletin*. "What's different about Garfield Highlands is that, when those private investors depart the scene, the community will control 51% of this development, and my company will only have 49%."

Haines cautioned that more work remains to be done, like securing nearly \$1.5 million in grants and/or loans for the development.

He went on to say that Garfield Highlands will feature a mix of two- and three-bedroom homes on a number of empty lots, located mostly in the 5300 blocks of Hillcrest, Rosetta, and Kincaid Streets, and along several blocks of N. Aiken Avenue.

BELOW: A rendering of one of the unit types to be built as part of the Garfield Highlands development. Rendering by LGA Architects.



A vacant, city-owned house at 5360 Rosetta St. is now scheduled to be razed for Garfield Highlands [Editor's Note: See the April 2020 edition of *The Bulletin* for a glimpse of this house, complete with a pile of tires and other debris in the backyard].

Haines explained that the BGC aims to spread new rental homes throughout the community, avoiding the "development density" that characterizes similar projects of this type.

"Unfortunately, it makes for a more costly project," Haines noted, "but the community has said this is what they prefer."

Rents on the homes are intended to be affordable to families whose incomes fall below 60% of the median household income for the Pittsburgh region, or \$49,800 annually for a family of four.

Additionally, Haines said that 17 of the 25

new units would have rents affordable to families at 50% or less.

"If families are with us for the long term," Haines added, "then, in year 16, they'll also have an opportunity to purchase their homes at prices well below the market."

He noted that support from local elected officials is critical in how the PHFA evaluates the merits of individual projects.

"We were fortunate to have letters of support from the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority, Mayor Bill Peduto, and State Rep. Ed Gainey," he said. "In the months leading up to the PHFA's decision, we also got some help from State Sen. Jay Costa and State Rep. Sara Innamorato, and we're very appreciative of their assistance."

If all goes according to plan, Haines said, the project could be under construction by the fall of 2021. ♦



ABOVE: A birds-eye view of Garfield Highlands. Rendering by LGA Architects.



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Mail-in ballots: the safer way to vote

By State Rep. Adam Ravenstahl D-Allegheny

Hello,

As the unpredictable nature of this crisis leaves many of us anxious and stressed over “what comes next,” I hope you and your family are healthy and well. Unfortunately, the coronavirus is not going away anytime soon.

After we successfully flattened the curve earlier this summer, the virus took hold in southern states, eventually returning to [Pennsylvania]. As I write this, our local case numbers are again declining, leaving hope that this second wave is starting to ebb.

However, we simply cannot know what lies ahead as we prepare for the Nov. 3 election. This is why I am urging everyone to take advantage of voting by mail.

You can apply at **VotesPA.com** to receive a mail-in ballot for the fall. If you are considering this - and I strongly urge you to do so - please apply sooner rather than later. Mail-in and absentee ballot applications must be received by your county election office by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27.

For the June primary, [Allegheny County] led the state in the volume of mail-in ballots - more than 280,000 - and I expect that number to increase in the fall. That's a lot of ballots, and applications, for the county elections folks to process, so applying now might help get you ahead of the eventual bottleneck.

In complete honesty, we don't know what November will bring in terms of the coronavirus. And just like wearing a mask, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So please, avoid the lines, avoid the poll workers, avoid the voting booths, and consider using a mail-in ballot.

It's safe, secure, simple - and simply a good idea.

Be well,

Adam ♦

the
Bulletin

Serving Pittsburgh's
East End neighborhoods
since 1975

with the mission of reporting on issues affecting underserved communities and facilitating local residents' exchange of ideas.

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Board Meetings are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month, and are open to the public. Meetings are currently being conducted online via Zoom; email Nina@Bloomfield-Garfield.org for more details.

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Thanks also to Allegheny Health Network, West Penn Hospital, the City of Pittsburgh, *The Bulletin's* advertisers, and all BGC members for their ongoing support and assistance. Kudos!

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AHN WEST PENN



Puerto Rican BBQ *continued from page 1*

ations with new acquaintances was one of the reasons he decided to become a chef.

Ríos really missed Puerto Rican food in “the Burgh,” so he made it his personal goal to help local residents experience the dishes he loves, all of which have influenced his culinary journey.

When Hurricane María devastated Puerto Rico in 2017, he felt compelled to help.

Putting his talents to use, Chef Ríos held a barbecue in Wilkins Township to aid with recovery efforts.

After word spread on social media, the event achieved success in more ways than he had expected: monetary donations totaled over \$1,000; people donated lots of non-perishable items, which were then shipped to the island; barbecue sales exceeded \$2,000; and people began talking

about Puerto Rican food in Pittsburgh.

Following this event, and due to popular demand, Freakin Rican BBQ began hosting summer cook-ups and pop-up food events at local restaurants over the next two years; due to Covid-19, this year’s events have been postponed.

In July, Ríos finally announced his much-anticipated return to Garfield - an August pop-up, with plans for another BBQ event in the near future.

“One of the things I love about the area near Garfield is the diversity. It makes me incredibly proud to see locals of different ethnic backgrounds - Puerto Ricans, other Latinxs, and people from the LGBTQ community- all coming together to enjoy my food at the pop-ups,” Ríos shared.

Gracias Chef Ríos for sharing delicious Puerto Rican food with our community. Connect with Freakin Rican BBQ on Facebook to find out about the next pop-up event.

[PRESENTE is the voice of Western PA’s Latinx community. Read more stories like this, in Spanish and English, at presentepgh.com.] ♦



ABOVE: Customers line up for a Puerto Rican BBQ pop-up event at Soju (4923 Penn Ave.) in Garfield. Photo by María Manautou Matos.



ABOVE: Chef Fernando Ríos makes no excuses in the Soju kitchen. Photo courtesy of PRESENTE.

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Spray park feature, bench dedicated to Aggie Brose unveiled in Garfield park

By Ashley Murray *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Garfield - Ideas for how to better neighborhoods grow when community members get together. Perhaps a few will sprout when neighbors meet on a new bench in Garfield dedicated to the memory of longtime community leader Aggie Brose.

The bench, and a spray park feature Ms. Brose advocated for, were unveiled Friday at Nelson Mandela Peace Park on the corner of North Evaline and Broad streets.

"A bench itself brings people together ... My grandmother was somebody who could bring everyone together, the community [and] elected officials, and build consensus around really tough projects," said Lauren Byrne Connelly, executive director of the Lawrenceville Corporation, a nonprofit community group.

Ms. Brose, who died at age 84 in July 2019, was a founding member of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation and continued the nonprofit's community development mission for more than four decades.

As a girl, she lived right around the corner from where her memorial bench now sits, and she raised her own family a couple blocks away on Dearborn Street.

Water misted from the new feature after several generations of Ms. Brose's family gathered alongside state Sen. Wayne Fontana, D-Brookline, Rep. Ed Gainey, D-Lincoln-Lemington, Mayor Bill Peduto and Councilman Ricky Burgess for the ribbon cutting ceremony

"Aggie is the 'why' this happened," Mr. Fontana said. "The idea of a spray park was first brought to my attention by Aggie a few years ago while attending an event right here that she invited me to. ... Anyone who knew Aggie knew she was very determined and a passionate person, so understandably, she made a great case for why a splash component was so important to this parklet and to this community. Sadly, Aggie passed last year before she got to see it, but I for one, wasn't going to let her down."

Mr. Fontana said he and fellow Democrats secured a \$100,000 state grant to fund the upgrade to the parklet designed by Andrea Ketzler, a landscape architect for the city.

"When you talk about the definition of a community leader, it don't get no better than Aggie Brose," said Mr. Gainey. "... Garfield would not be Garfield without Aggie Brose, there's no way."

But her advocacy reached beyond Pittsburgh. She became nationally known in the community development world, fighting banks on redlining and discriminatory lending practices, among other systemic issues that plagued low-income communities, including blight and crime.

"Before there were the discussions we're having now about affordable housing, Aggie was down in Washington fighting," said Mr. Peduto, adding that he began working with Ms. Brose in the 1990s.

"Anybody who lived in Garfield in 1995 would tell you it was a much different neighborhood," he said. "The problems and the issues that this neighborhood were facing were issues of safety, issues of blight and vacant properties, they were issues of crime that was some of the worst within the city. But the neighborhood pulled together. The people who lived here said 'we're not giving up. We're going to stay and we're going to put together a plan.' And the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation became the vehicle that saw that community plan enforced."

Mr. Burgess, who represents Garfield, said Ms. Brose was "steadfast" and added that "by showing this amenity at this COVID time, I think we're showing how important parks are to communities."

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ABOVE: Mayor Bill Peduto and state Rep. Ed Gainey join local residents, member's of Aggie's family, and other community leaders in Garfield for a ribbon-cutting to unveil the new water-spray feature at Nelson Mandela Peace Park. Photo courtesy of Lauren Byrne Connelly.

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'Bringing it all back home': Square Café owner moves business, residence to East Liberty

By Elizabeth Sensky *East Liberty Development, Inc.*

East Liberty - When he launched Module in 2016, CEO Brian Gaudio set out to create a housing startup that took a different approach to homebuilding.

Module uses modular construction - pre-fabricated offsite - that affords homebuyers the flexibility to easily customize their homes to any lifestyle, as well as the ability to add more living space as their family grows or their needs change.

"Pittsburgh was changing when Module first began, and it's changing even more rapidly today," Gaudio explained. "Module and its founders wanted to be a positive part of that change by producing human-focused, environmentally conscious homes that residents can actually afford."

Intrigued by the developer's simple ethos,

Sherree Goldstein, owner of Pittsburgh's Square Café, asked Gaudio & Co. to design a house that she and her mother could call "home" in East Liberty. After looking at many homes in the area, Goldstein was referred to Module by a realtor friend. She explained that the developer's focus on sustainability is what sealed the deal.

"Sustainability is one of the key pieces in my world, so the way that they build offsite - from the materials they use to the amount of waste they produce - is all really beneficial to me," Goldstein noted. "They build the home as an envelope, so it's completely weather-sealed and airtight; in terms of energy conservation, it hits the nail on the head."

When the café owner and her mother decided to live near each other a few years ago, they came to East Liberty for a reason.

"My mother grew up in East Liberty and she always wanted to get back here," she said. Goldstein and her mother moved into separate units at Eastside Bond Apartments in East Liberty, where they presently reside.

Soon after she began designing a new, single-family dwelling for herself, the project quickly pivoted to a custom duplex with her mother in mind. Module's design team is now working with Goldstein to create a two-story, two-bedroom house for her - along with a single-story, one-bedroom unit for her mom.

"[Goldstein] has been a blast to work

with," Hallie Dumont, Module's Chief Design Officer, commented. "She holds the bar pretty high, but we're up to the challenge. We've gone through a couple of design iterations as the project has evolved."

In securing the land on N. Saint Clair Street, Dumont and her colleagues worked with East Liberty Development, Inc., to utilize a wider lot where the homes could sit side-by-side. The units are separated and private, but also share exterior spaces in the front and back of each building.

"Sherree's place folds around," Dumont explained, "giving her additional outdoor space above her mom's unit."

According to Gaudio, his company will eventually expand to other cities but, for now, the focus remains on Pittsburgh's East End neighborhoods.

In Garfield, Module recently cut the ribbon on a mixed-income housing development in the 5400 block of Black St. [see page 10 for more]; the company also created a custom, one-bedroom, single-story residence in Friendship.

Goldstein looks forward to engaging her family roots - not only by planning for a new home in East Liberty, but also by

re-locating her business to the neighborhood. As she recently announced to fans of her Regent Square "brunch fixture" at 1137 S. Braddock Ave., Square Café is moving to East Liberty.

Café employees are transforming a sizable space at S. Highland & Centre Aves. [previously occupied by BRGR and Spoon] into a new home for Square Café, with plans to open in September; as of press time, Goldstein has not announced a closing date for her Regent Square location.

Envisioning her "best life," with a workplace close to home, she is excited to live right around the corner from her café. Now that the City has granted zoning approval, Module is proceeding with the off-site construction of each unit.

"It's all very hands on," Goldstein said of the design process, "and I feel involved and supported in my decisions."

The flexibility of Module's building style comes as an added bonus, she noted. "We can build two more stories onto my mom's unit if things ever change, and we need that," Goldstein explained. "I don't know that we will, but I never say 'never.'"

Learn more at modulehousing.com. ♦

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'Black is Beautiful' beer supports youth education in city's East End

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation



AT LEFT: Chief Operations Officer of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), Dr. Amber Epps, tours Honewood's Couch Brewery (1351 Washington Blvd.) ahead of the release of its "Black is Beautiful" beer. Thanks to Epps, sales of the new, limited edition brew will benefit college students participating in the BGC's College & Career Readiness Program. Photo by Jon Hairston.

Garfield - The "Black is Beautiful" brewing initiative - a collaborative effort within the craft beer community - aims to bring awareness to the daily injustices that people of color face every day.

According to a Jul. 30 interview with WTAE-TV, the new initiative's goal, beer-wise, is to brew a "moderately high ABV stout that showcases the different shades of black." More than 1,000 breweries in 50 states and 20 countries participated in the challenge.

The beer's base recipe was created by Weathered Souls Brewing Co. from San Antonio, Texas. Each brewery is allowed to put their own spin on the recipe, and then donate 100% of the proceeds to nonprofits working towards parallel goals. Couch Brewery (East Liberty) and Abjuration Brewing (McKees Rocks) have joined forces to create a new brew with First Sip Brew Box - a national, online retail company.

"I fell in love with what they are doing and it just made sense," said Dennis Guy, of First Sip Brew Box, in an interview with WTAE-TV. Thanks to Dr. Amber Epps, Chief Operations Officer for the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), each beer purchase will aid local education efforts.

"Proceeds from each beer sale will support the College & Career Readiness Program (CCRP)," Dr. Epps explained, "and also provide scholarships to Garfield youths."

"I fell in love with what [CCRP] are doing and it just made sense," Dennis Guy (First Sip Brew Box) commented to WTAE.

According to Abjuration Brewing's Tom Glover, "the beer highlights the issue, but it's also a way for people to show their support, as customers. Readers are welcome to buy the Black is Beautiful Stout online (abjurationbrewing.square.site) to support the BGC.

Visit BlackIsBeautiful.Beer for more info. ♦



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NeighborhoodFOCUS

Bloomfield Community Market opens at former ShurSave site

By Christina Howell Bloomfield Development Corporation

Bloomfield - Sunday, Aug. 16, marked the grand opening of the Bloomfield Community Market. Eager to see how the new grocery store compares to the ShurSave IGA it replaced at 4401 Liberty Ave., shoppers formed a long line waiting for the doors to open.

According to a number of social media comments, as well as hearsay along the avenue, most shoppers were pleased with the cleanliness of the retail space. The store's general layout feels similar to the old ShurSave, but it features many improvements aimed at enhancing the grocery shopping experience.

The coolers have been repaired, and the meat and deli departments have been completely overhauled. The produce department, while smaller than it once was, now features high quality produce. More local offerings, like Turner Dairy products, are now carried on the shelves and the store's product diversity remains healthy.

After ShurSave closed at the end of July, Community Market had just over two weeks' time to update the space before opening to the public; large crews worked around the clock to upgrade the building's infrastructure and repair or replace the machinery and other equipment.

In conversation with Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) staff members, Dan Donovan, spokesperson for Giant Eagle, noted that this particular Community Market is the first location to be wholly owned and operated by Giant Eagle.

"A customer won't see Giant Eagle-branded products," he explained. "This concept is a smaller size than typical Giant Eagles and we think it'll work well for the community."

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The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation is looking for individuals willing to donate a few hours each month to helping create more affordably-priced housing in our community.

The BGC is partnering with a relatively new nonprofit, Rising Tide Partners, that specializes in getting abandoned houses and lots in places like Garfield back into community hands. It's a doubling down on existing efforts to fight against the further displacement of working-class residents.

A new steering committee will be formed to guide the work of Rising Tide Partners so that it remains true to the goals that are embodied in the Garfield 2030 Plan. Rising Tide will bring the experience and tools needed to assemble vacant properties and work with the committee to settle on a strategy for re-developing them: *by whom, for whom, and at what price.*

This is a great opportunity to have a positive impact on your community, and ensure that Garfield can remain economically and socially diverse. If you're interested in being part of this effort, please drop an e-mail to RickS@bloomfield-garfield.org, or call into 412-441-6950 (ext. 11) with your name and contact information.

BELOW: Bloomfield Community Market's renovated deli counter draws a crowd on opening day. Photo by John Colombo.



Echo Realty, which owns the property, has reaffirmed its commitment to BDC to include a retail grocery store in the ultimate redevelopment. Residents can expect a community process for the redevelopment plan to begin this winter, with Community Market operating until demolition of the structure is necessary, likely in late 2021 or 2022.

The only negative comment BDC staffers have received concerns the store music. For those who may not know, ShurSave featured music that was beloved by many shoppers. On the store's closing day, enthusiasts held a dance party in the parking lot, playing only music heard over the years at ShurSave. Local residents have even created Spotify playlists of ShurSave's music, and some have formed a Facebook group dedicated entirely to the former store's music. According to Donovan,

When asked if Community Market might bring back the old store's great tunes, Donovan did not rule out the possibility. "It can't hurt to ask," he said.

The Community Market is open every day from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.; face masks are required. Call the store at (412) 621-2511 with any questions. ♦

BELOW: Melissa Ciccocioppo (right) and Spaz say 'cheese' - or 'cheez' - while shopping for essential items at Bloomfield Community Market. Photo by John Colombo.



"A customer won't see Giant Eagle-branded products. This concept is a smaller size than typical Giant Eagles and we think it'll work well for the community."

- Dan Donovan, Giant Eagle spokesman



ABOVE: Long lines cannot keep Bloomfield's loyal customers away from their new grocery store on Sunday, Aug. 16. Photo by John Colombo.



ABOVE: Area resident Nancy Starr Wehe enjoys her first shopping experience at Bloomfield Community Market. Photo by John Colombo.



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Affordable home at 5456 Black St. completed, under sales agreement

By Brian Gaudio *Module Design, Inc.*

[Editor's Note: In response to robust conversations about what 'affordability' means in Pittsburgh, an East Liberty developer contributed this illustration of affordability metrics, focusing on the sale of a home at 5456 Black St.]

Perspective/Garfield - The home at 5456 Black Street is being sold to a household making less than 80% of the median household income for the Pittsburgh region. The home will remain affordable for 99 years via a deed restriction, which means that when the home is re-sold in the future, it must be to another household also earning less than 80% of median household income - to ensure that the home provides long-term, affordable housing in the neighborhood.

How is '80% of median income' defined?

Area Median Income is determined by the federal government. All income from wage earners in the household, or from family members receiving income from sources other than work, must be counted. For the Pittsburgh region in 2020, these are those numbers [as listed by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) at ura.org]:

Household Size	30%	50%	60%	80%	100%
1	\$17,450	\$29,050	\$34,900	\$46,500	\$58,100
2	\$19,950	\$33,200	\$39,850	\$53,150	\$66,400
3	\$22,450	\$37,350	\$44,850	\$59,800	\$74,700
4	\$26,200	\$41,500	\$49,800	\$66,400	\$83,000

What is the sale price for the affordable home?

The sales price is \$183,794. For a buyer within the income range shown above, the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) also offers a second mortgage loan that allows the buyer to borrow far less from the bank. This reduces the buyer's monthly mortgage payment to a level that can fit within their budget; the buyer for 5456 Black St. was eligible for up to a \$50,000 deferred payment from the URA Neighborhood Housing Program. The URA also makes available, to first-time buyers, up to \$7,500 in assistance from the Housing Opportunity Fund towards their down payment and closing costs.

What are the features of the URA's second-mortgage loan?

The loan comes with a 0% interest rate and is repayable only when the buyer sells the home down the road, or seeks to assign the deed to the house to another party. Until that

time, the buyer must continue to occupy the home as their primary place of residence. More information on the URA's program can be found at ura.org.

How much will a buyer be spending on their utility bills?

The utility bills for the home will be lower than what would be the case for a traditional, new-construction house because of the insulation values in the walls and roof, the selection of energy-efficient heating and cooling equipment, and the installation of plumbing fixtures that are designed to use less water. All appliances in the home are Energy Star Certified, and the plumbing fixtures are WaterSense Certified.

What would the mortgage payment be for a lower-income homebuyer?

Assuming a minimum 5% down payment, the buyer's monthly mortgage payment on the home would be in the neighborhood of \$950/month, provided they qualified for the full second-mortgage loan from the URA. The exact monthly payment will not be known until Allegheny County completes its assessment of the house for tax purposes.

- continued on next page -



AT LEFT: A new, Module-designed home at 5456 Black St. provides a living example of what affordable housing could look like in the city's East End neighborhoods. Representing one of three homes constructed on the 5400 block of Black St., this new Garfield residence is currently under sales agreement. Photo courtesy of Brian Gaudio.

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- continued from previous page -

The monthly payment could be higher by \$40-\$45 per month if the bank requires that the buyer carry private mortgage insurance. Private mortgage insurance or a premium is often required when a buyer's down payment is 20% or less. A bank would be able to qualify a family earning \$40,000/year for a mortgage loan sufficient for them to allow them to close on the purchase of 5456 Black Street.

How much did the home cost to build?

The two-bedroom home (5456 Black St.) cost approximately \$325,000 to build. This includes the land cost, construction costs, all fees and costs associated with the construction financing, and all costs associated with architectural, structural, and civil engineering services. One factor that affected the construction cost was that the three vacant parcels each had existing foundations buried underground. The foundations were filled with construction debris from the previous homes when they were torn down years ago, making the soil unbuildable. To prepare the site for new homes, Module needed to excavate the foundations, remove the debris from the site, and fill the subsequent hole in the ground with a new basement and foundation.

Where did Module find the money to subsidize the cost of building the home?

Module assembled grants and the in-kind contributions of materials to reduce the total development cost of the home, and lined up a commitment from the URA to provide secondary mortgage financing for a qualified buyer. Module collaborated with



ABOVE: A view of the kitchen space in a new home (5456 Black St.) in Garfield. Photo courtesy of Brian Gaudio.

the Bloomfield Garfield Corporation as a partner in securing the grant funding for the project. The following were received either from the URA or from other parties to help reduce development costs: a \$70,000 Housing Opportunity Fund Grant; a \$35,000 Pittsburgh Housing Construction Fund Grant; and in-kind contributions of materials from Lowes, Mitsubishi, James Hardie, and other building product companies. In addition, Module did not take a developer's fee from the sale of this house.

What was the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's role in the project?

The BGC helped facilitate community input and feedback into the project, and its Board of Directors approved their staff seeking grants from the URA needed for the construction of the affordable home only. The BGC assisted us in qualifying buyers for the affordable home and helped steward the project. The organization was not a co-developer or an investor in the project, and was not paid by Module for the help they provided. ♦

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LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

- Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty, Lawrenceville, & Stanton Heights -

Real Estate Sales (for the month of July 2020)

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, RE/MAX Select Realty

Bloomfield

Amanda K Kull to Avinash Ram at 410 Taylor St. for \$190,000.

Easy Rentals LLC to Clare Drobot at 446 Cedarville St. for \$359,000.

Edward & Diane Yarosz to Ronald C Long at 508 S. Mathilda St. for \$185,000.

George Leventis to Chelsea D Marti at 634 Edmond St. for \$300,000.

Janet Poillucci to Jennifer E & Michael J Onofray at 247 S. Pacific Ave. for \$294,000.

Maxanna Properties Inc. to Entropy Properties LLC at 229 Pearl St. for \$160,000.

Patricia Golebiewski to Casey A Courage at 4307 Milgate St. for \$305,000.

Ryan J Gibson to Wilton P & Lindsay A Smith at 451 Cedarville St. for \$281,500.

Wylie Holdings LP to Sapphire 422 LLC at 422 Sapphire Way for \$125,000.

Friendship

Minnerly Family Trust to Stephanie N Szakal at 7 Clarendon Pl. for \$385,000.

Garfield

Germaine Williams to Irish English LLC at 5531 Columbo St. for \$160,000.

Henry Germany to Michael Rosario Colicchio at 411 N. Mathilda St. for \$96,150.

Joshua Butchkoski to Tyler & Marissa Norris at 5335 Broad St. for \$298,000.

Rebecca & John Winters to James J & Juliette R Ballough at 5015 Broad St. for \$305,000.

East Liberty

BSR Investing Consulting to Vijay K Sharma at 5712 Rural St. for \$136,200.

Manal Shouman to Eugene Yu at 600 N. Euclid Ave. for \$105,000.

Robert Walter McGaffic to Michael J Studl at 718 N. Beatty St. for \$146,000.

Lawrenceville

1301 Grandview I LLC to Thomas Rich III at 412 44th St. for \$365,000.

5515 Butler Street Development LP to Randal P & Annette C Patterson at 5581 Butler St. for \$564,900.

5515 Butler Street Development LP to Shrawan Thupalli Subash at 164 56th St. for \$507,583.

Alison Mols to Adam J Fang at 152 47th St. for \$601,000.

Andrew D & Wendy A Widger to Shruti Mukkamala at 4838 Hatfield St. for \$330,000.

April Lynne Crenney to Scott L & Mary Boylen Wichansky at 4417 Garwood Way for \$309,000.

Bernard Wisniewski to Entropy Properties LLC at 3948 Mintwood St. for \$259,900.

Cecelia M Haley to Lauren Rost at 154 45th St. for \$215,000.

Eugene T & Faye O Ritter to Mao Realty LLC at 458 44th St. for \$190,000.

Ezekiel & Paz Chentnik to Alexander Zgolinski at 3622 Smallman St. for \$650,000.

Harrison Street Associates LLC to Andrew R Bennett at 5238 Harrison St. for \$363,674.

Harrison Street Assoc. LLC to Elizabeth Ann Martini at 5248 Harrison St. for \$349,900.

Harrison Street Associates LLC to Scott Isenberg at 5236 Harrison St. for \$293,692.

I & M Charlotte Partners LLC to Thomas John Waters at 3729 Mulberry Way for \$669,000.

Iron Valley Capital Investments LLC to Joshua & Brigitte Stroup at 5121 Keystone St. for \$28,420.

James H Lash to Charles C Christie at 5259 Carnegie St. for \$415,000.

Jesse R & Briana Ketterer Revoal to Sean Edmonson at 183 44th St. for \$632,500.

Joseph J Guth to Brian Y Chen at 5131 Holmes St. for \$315,000.

Laura M Gorham to Michael Becker at 40 48th St. for \$610,000.

Lisa Javornick to Crews Contracting LLC at 0 Dresden Way for \$115,000.

Matthew J & Nicole M Maroon to Rod A Ghassemzadeh at 318 39th St. for \$435,000.

Nichelle R Hughley to Kyle N. & Samantha Roemer at 229 44th St. for \$589,000.

Preston L Brickner to Bryan Borchardt at 3814 Cabinet Way for \$287,500.

R & M Homes LLC to Applicania Company at 5145 Holmes St. for \$133,000.

Robert E & Molly Dimond Stephany to Paul K Stockman at 268 Fisk St. for \$690,000.

SMA Howley LLC to GPG Howley LLC at 3815 Howley St. for \$140,000.

Top Dog Property Group Inc. to Travis L Evans at 167 45th St. for \$525,000.

Stanton Heights

Beverly T Kreger to Rybee Two LLC at 986 Woodbine St. for \$101,000.

Brandon R & Kelsey N. Keller to Lauren M Nolfi at 1018 Downlook St. for \$255,000.

Diane M Albring to William G & Jessica L Warnock at 1383 Woodbine St. for \$315,000.

Eric C & Kyra J Schurko Kellar to Aztec Realty LLC at 4303 Stanton Ave. for \$50,000.

John Damian & Deirdre Ann Kane Yenick to Casa Renovata LLC at 5323 McCandless Ave. for \$122,750.

LeDonne Associates Limited Partnership to Jason Barber at 1039-1041 Downlook St. for \$210,000.

Waldemar Blumberg to Jessica L Bailey at 1581 Woodbine St. for \$189,900.

Zachry J Floro to Erika Gilmore at 1036 Premier St. for \$207,000.

This column uses data from Allegheny County that contains occasional errors (sale price, owners' names, etc.). We strive for accuracy every month so, if something looks off, please let us know.

For questions, comments, or just to chat about real estate in our neighborhoods, feel free to email Lillian at lillian@agent-lillian.com or call 412-335-6068. ♦

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Bloomberg Philanthropies awards asphalt art grant to Friendship

A Message from Friendship Community Group

Friendship - Bloomberg Philanthropies recently awarded Friendship Community Group (FCG) and the City of Pittsburgh with an asphalt art grant.

The grant will help provide traffic calming, asphalt art at the intersection of Harriet St. and Roup & S. Fairmont Aves., surrounding Baum Grove.

The City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) will match the Bloomberg grant with in-kind, engineered solutions to help calm traffic at this intersection.

FCG was one of sixteen grantees, from a pool of 210 applicants, to receive the coveted award. Bloomberg Philanthropies indicated that the Baum Grove intersection presented a compelling case for new

asphalt work.

The intersection's unique layout - five entrances and a large swath of irregularly-shaped streetscapes - leads to confusion for drivers and pedestrians alike; mo-

torists struggle finding where to stop their vehicles, while those on foot must try to intuit the "right" way to safely cross.

The new asphalt project's goal is to create a vibrant intersection by addressing both

pedestrian and vehicular issues. It will extend the pedestrian realm from each of the five intersection corners, removing the ambiguity of so much open space, where the City will lay out new, clearly delineated crosswalks.

These pedestrian zones will calm traffic by creating prominent visual pedestrian space, and by making the intersection turns more deliberate.

Neighbor and resident input will be essential for every step of the process: the design framework; artist selection; art design; implementation; and, of course, the celebration.

Please email BaumGroveSafety@friendship-pgh.org to be included in the email distribution. ♦

AT RIGHT: *Baum Grove, a sanctuary for Friendship residents, received Bloomberg funding to install new, traffic calming, asphalt features. The five-way intersection presents a number of challenges for motorists and pedestrians. Photo courtesy of FCG.*



The 1520 Adjudication Alternative Program

WHO: Individuals in Magisterial District Court can request 1520 Program. Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) will determine eligibility.

WHY: This restorative justice program allows defendants in some cases to do community service or self-improvement activities in exchange for a case dismissal, the possibility of a sealed or expunged case record, and no additional penalties such as fines, court costs or imprisonment.

WHERE: The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) a court-approved 1520 Program service site.

WHEN: A schedule is developed from the interview & the amount of hours assigned by the MDJ

WHAT: An appropriate set of activities that could include land maintenance, tree tending, classes, or workshops, based on the MDJ & a short interview.

Ask your lawyer or the Judge in your case for eligibility.



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Reckless abandon: dirt bikes, ATVs unsafe on city streets

By R. Malik Morris *Larimer Consensus Group*

Op-Ed

Pittsburgh - The city's inner-city neighborhoods are experiencing a new addition to the landscape. Bike lanes have sprung up in almost every neck of the city, and there seems to be no stopping the accommodations being laid out for cyclists.

Streets that were formerly two-lane stretches in the East End, particularly East Liberty Boulevard, have been reduced to one lane in order to accommodate the growing bike lane experiment. As a result, boulevard traffic is more congested and the usually quick trip from Larimer to Garfield has become a little more aggravating.

Some Pittsburgh residents have embraced the changes as necessary growth for a region in transition, while others are fed up and eager to speak out against the bike lanes at every opportunity. For the most part, the City's response has been that the bike lanes are here to stay.

Meanwhile, another use for bike lanes is also emerging within the city, as dirt bikes and ATVs are more common than ever before. A 2014 documentary titled "12 O'Clock Boys" inspired many young Black men - in major cities across the country - to join a scene based on fun, freedom, and recklessness.

The very same group of American citizens at the center of the "Black Lives Matter" movement are now riding around on street bikes, increasing their probability of negative interactions with police, which could ultimately result in more deadly outcomes.

The issue is that most neighbors don't seem to have a real grasp of the law as it pertains

to riding dirt bikes on city streets. So here it is: Dirt bikes are not street-legal!

They can't be registered as a motor vehicle with the state; don't have headlights, tail lights, or turn signals; and their riders don't need to be licensed. Most dirt bikers are riding without helmets, some even performing acrobatic stunts and dangerous maneuvers in traffic. Only a few weeks ago, a young person was killed in the Hill District while riding a dirt bike.

If you know someone that rides dirt bikes on the city's streets and alleyways, please let them know that they're breaking the law. More importantly, they could be seriously injured, or killed, by doing something that urban areas aren't yet designed to handle. ♦

THE BULLETIN WANTS YOUR FEEDBACK!

This publication begins and ends with you, so we invite your opinions & insights. We'd love to hear from you!

Please email our tip-line/suggestion box:

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Aggie's final legacy: staking young family in her former home

By Nathan Petrillo *NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania*

Stanton Heights - This July marked one year since the passing of longtime community leader and legendary activist, Aggie Brose. Aggie was instrumental in the development of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) and Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group, fighting to improve neighborhoods and expand access to economic opportunities.

As Board chair of NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania (NWWPA) for many years, she promoted sustainable homeownership as a pathway for first-time homebuyers to build wealth. When Aggie's family put her house in Stanton Heights on the market earlier this year, little did they know the journey would involve NeighborWorks.

Kristi, a scientist and first-time homebuyer, first learned about Aggie when her real estate agent showed her the house on Simona Drive, where Aggie and her husband, Tommy, moved in 1993 after raising their three children in nearby Garfield. "The house was so cute and right where we wanted to be," she noted. While touring the home, Kristi noticed a poster board highlighting Aggie's lifetime of service. NeighborWorks America created it for a 2018 ceremony honoring Aggie as a Visionary Leader in Community Development.

"What a neat coincidence, like it was meant to be," said Kristi, who used the NeighborhoodLIFT program to access down-payment assistance. "As a first-time homebuyer, it's really hard to get a down-payment together, so the LIFT program was really important," explained Kristi. "I don't think I could have bought a house without it."

Kristi fulfilled the program's homebuyer education requirement by completing a workshop organized by NWWPA in November 2019. She appreciated that the course covered the entire purchase process from start to finish. "I knew I wanted to get there, but didn't know how," she explained.

Kristi and her boyfriend moved into the house in February 2020, after living in an apartment in Highland Park, which they found cramped for two people and two cats. They enjoy their house and the quiet neighborhood, with easy access to public transit, off-street parking, and proximity to Lawrenceville and its amenities.

"I love the house, it's not too big, not too small," Kristi said. "It's really perfect for us." She likes having three bedrooms, one dedicated to her knitting hobby, and the larger kitchen. "We can both be in the kitchen at the same time," she exclaimed. Their cats, Callo and Lapis, enjoy their new home, too, running and up down the stairs, and sliding across refinished hardwood floors.

Aggie's granddaughter, Lauren Byrne Connelly, has many fond memories of the house, the scene of family holidays, birthdays, and Friday-night pizza dinners. "Her garage was equipped with lots of toys and activities," she said.

Lauren, who carries on Aggie's legacy of community development as executive director of the Lawrenceville Corporation, noted that her grandparents loved the backyard, where they hosted many events, including her engagement party. "They had a big picnic table that was actually built there in the yard that we could all sit to eat, play, and put on talent shows," she recalled.

According to Lauren, the grandchildren's favorite outdoor event was an annual Easter egg hunt, in which Aggie would fill dozens of plastic eggs with coins and dollar bills. "Aggie had eight grandchildren," Lauren said, "and there were a few years where 20-year-olds were competing against her youngest grandchildren, the one-year-old twins."

Inside her grandparent's house, Lauren said that "any ledge that could hold a picture, had pictures of Aggie's family: her parents, nieces, nephews, siblings, children, and grandchildren." Kristi met Aggie's sister, June Coyne-Givens, and her daughters Jeannie and Junie at the closing. "It was really sweet," she noted. "They wanted to say 'hi' and meet me," explained Kristi, who had written a letter to the family describing how special she found the house when she made the offer.

At the closing, Junie gave Kristi a booklet from a BGC award ceremony that honored Aggie and other courageous women for their work in their communities. Aggie would be proud to know how Kristi feels about homeownership. "Being a homeowner has provided an indescribable amount of stability," Kristi said, "and I now feel more committed to Pittsburgh." ♦



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