



A publication of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

*Serving Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield,
East Liberty, and Lawrenceville since 1975*

**East End community
development briefs**

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

*State court refuses to hear City appeal
on conservatorship petitions*

In June, the Commonwealth Court handed down a 3-to-0 decision, denying the City of Pittsburgh's appeal of a ruling by Common Pleas Court Judge John McVey, which held that the City is subject to a statewide conservatorship law on derelict properties in its possession.

This effectively clears the way for Common Pleas Court to begin holding hearings on as many as 24 City-owned properties in Garfield, and another 50 City-owned properties in the Larimer neighborhood.

The conservatorship petitions for properties in Garfield were filed by Rising Tide Partners, Inc.; petitions for the Larimer properties were filed by East Liberty De-

See **East End Briefs** | page 3



ABOVE: June Coyne-Givens (center) is surrounded by family members during a Jun. 25 unveiling of Lawrenceville's 'Wisdom Keepers' mural, which honors her contributions to the neighborhood. Read more about the mural project on page 8. Photo by Emma Gamble.



ABOVE: Shoppers stop and smell the roses at the Bloomfield Saturday Market on Jul. 22. Turn to page 11 for more market shots. Photo by Jack McKay.

**Pittsburgh's go-slow land bank
gets more tools, less funds**

By Lucas Dufalla and Eric Jankiewicz *PublicSource*

Pittsburgh - The Pittsburgh Land Bank's ability to take ownership of vacant property was the subject of a Jul. 20 public hearing before City Council, in one of a series of moves that could strengthen the nine-year-old institution - even as it may see its allocation cut.

The public hearing regarding a new agreement between the City, the land bank, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) came the week after the Gainey administration proposed to split in half the land bank's \$7 million allocation of federal funds.

It came less than two months after the lo-

cal land bank bought its first property, and weeks after Gov. Josh Shapiro signed legislation that could make it easier to assemble more [tax-delinquent] properties.

Like other Rust Belt cities, Pittsburgh's population plummeted after the decline of the steel industry, leaving more than 20,000 properties fallow and incurring tax debt.

In 2014, Pittsburgh formed a land bank to clear debt and taxes from abandoned properties that could then be sold. After years of false starts and promises of progress, in May

See **Land Bank** | page 4

'Bloomfield Square' development: six-story plan needs more fine-tuning

By Alan Guenther *Bulletin contributor*

Perspective/Bloomfield - During a public hearing on Aug. 10, the City of Pittsburgh Zoning Board will invite residents to review design proposals for an apartment complex that could affect Bloomfield's character for decades to come.

Echo Realty is proposing to build a massive six-story, 248-apartment complex at 4401 Liberty Ave., where the Community Market currently operates.

If the project is ultimately approved, the Community Market will be torn down, leaving the neighborhood without a supermarket for two years, Echo officials said. But when the complex is completed, a new, slightly smaller Giant Eagle store will open in its place.

The project will likely include a small restaurant or café, Echo representatives said at a Jul. 15 community meeting. Only 10% of the apartments will meet affordable housing guidelines; many of the units could be priced at a rate higher than the average Bloomfield resident can afford.

Traffic problems at the notoriously congested intersection near Trace Brewing, at the foot of the Bloomfield Bridge, are not addressed in the current plans.

BELOW: A street-level glimpse of Echo Realty's 'Bloomfield Square' proposal, from the corner of Liberty Avenue and Ella Street. Rendering courtesy of Alan Guenther.



Echo's project is clearly superior to the plan that Indiana-based Milhaus company trotted out, and then abandoned, five years ago. Milhaus planned to close the grocery store, and made no allowance for any affordable housing units.

Still, the fact that Echo's project is better than one that was rejected by the local community does not necessarily make it a good plan for Bloomfield residents.

As a resident of Ella Street, and a commu-

nity correspondent who has researched this issue to provide *Bulletin* coverage for nearly two years, I believe the Zoning Board of Adjustment should reject Echo's request [for a special exception that would give the project some relief from height limitations] and encourage the developer to return with a better design.

Current zoning regulations don't permit this six-story construction. That's why Echo is asking the zoning board for a special exception, or "variance," to build three stories higher - reaching a sunset-blocking total of 75 feet tall.

"It's a big ask," said one City official who is familiar with the project. In an interview, Pittsburgh real estate attorney Jim McGraw said Echo faces a stiff challenge to win zoning board approval.

"Simply wanting to make more money than you might make [under current zoning laws] will not carry the day for granting a variance," said McGraw, a partner with the Lynch Law Group. Echo would have to show that the property would become "almost valueless, and they wouldn't go forward with it" unless the board

granted the variance, McGraw said.

Four variances are requested; three are technical, but the "big ask" is the one that would allow for six stories. The Aug. 10 zoning hearing will take place via Zoom [us02web.zoom.us/j/85171125255], and people may attend online or submit testimony in advance.

The hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. More information is available at tinyurl.com/BloomfieldDetails.

'Affordable' housing

Echo's market-rate apartments will likely be too expensive for most of Bloomfield's current residents. Apartment complexes located nearby, such as Albion and Eastside Bond, list units for more than \$3,000 per month. At the Eastside Bond complex, near the Trader Joe's on Penn Ave., monthly rent for a one-bedroom unit was [as of press time] priced at \$2,798.

Rents for market-rate, one- and two-bedroom units in Bloomfield Square might well be the same, or higher, in two years, when construction is scheduled for completion.

For the purpose of the Aug. 10 zoning board hearing, one could assume the rents for Bloomfield Square might average roughly \$2,700/month. For the 248 units Echo aims to build, that's about \$669,600/month in rent payments, or as much as \$8.04 million per year.

Original plan more modest

Only 20 months ago, Echo revealed a proposal to the Bloomfield community that called for 191 units - a plan that didn't require the variances needed for Echo's project. This earlier, more modest plan would yield roughly \$515,700/month in rent, or \$6.19 million in annual revenue.

- continued on page 14 -



ABOVE: Community organizers join Bloomfield residents for a Jul. 15 meeting about Echo's plans to build a new apartment complex and grocery store. Photo by Alan Guenther.

East End Briefs continued from page 1

BELOW: The former McCabe Bros. Funeral Home (5300 Penn Ave.) is up for sale, and neighbors are curious about how the three-story building could be transformed under new ownership. Photo by Andrew McKeon.



velopment, Inc. The two nonprofits plan to either renovate existing houses on those parcels or, in the case of vacant lots, build new residences as mixed-income, for-sale housing.

Rising Tide Partners has also identified 25 privately-owned, and seemingly abandoned, properties in Garfield that it intends to put into conservatorship - if the Court allows it.

Community groups tour vacant McCabe Bros. Funeral Home on Penn

The shuttering of the McCabe Bros. Funeral Homes at 5300 Penn Avenue has drawn the interest of the Friendship Community Group (FCG), Garfield Jubilee Association, and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC).

The groups now seek to find a viable reuse for the property - one that not only blends in well with the commercial district at its doorstep, but is also compatible with the residential district behind it.

In July, a tour revealed that the three-story funeral home is in well-kept condition. The owners of the property - which includes a garage located directly behind it, and a 15-car parking lot off of Penn - have listed it for sale with an asking price of \$1.2 million.

"We're hoping there can be a way to plan a creative reuse for the property, and not see it sold to an entity that won't be respectful of the residents living on S. Atlantic Avenue," FCG member John Axtell observed. "So we're looking for an angel investor who can help us obtain control of the site and give us the time we need to plan something extraordinary for it."

Fundraising campaign kicks off to repurpose N. Negley Avenue synagogue

The BGC formally launched a campaign to raise more than \$15 million in order to convert a vacant synagogue building at 327 N. Negley Avenue into a community-owned and -managed arts & events center. As of press time, the kickoff event was scheduled for Aug. 3 at the Square Café in East Liberty, where attendees would review a PowerPoint presentation on the project, and then be invited to lend their time or other resources to help make the campaign a success.

Bob Fragasso, of Fragasso Financial Advisors, has agreed to serve as a co-chair for the campaign, and host the August event. The BGC has executed a purchase agreement with the building's current owner, Beacon Communities - which gives the group until April 30, 2024 to close on the acquisition of the property, provided it has been able to raise the first \$1 million in contributions or grants committed to the project.

The campaign is being advised by Cathy Green Samuels, a principal with the Rainmaker consulting group. For more info, visit rotundapgh.com. ♦

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.

Vol. 48, No. 8

- Deadline for the September edition is Friday, Aug. 18 -

Editorial & Advertising Offices 113 N. Pacific Ave. • Pittsburgh, PA 15224 • 412-441-6950 (ext. 113) • Andrew@Bloomfield-Garfield.org

Total Circulation 14,500 Print Copies [home delivery & bulk distribution]

Staff Andrew McKeon, Editor • Jack McKay, Intern • Rick Swartz, Proofreader • PrintSource, Printing & Mailing • USPS, Home Delivery • Garfield CISP, Bulk Dist.

Board Meetings are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month; these monthly meetings are open to the public. For more details, email Pam@Bloomfield-Garfield.org.

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

The Bulletin is made possible in part by funding from Dollar Bank and WesBanco Bank.

Bloomfield-Garfield.org

© 2023 by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Thank You!

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) would like to acknowledge its corporate and philanthropic partners: PNC Bank, Dollar Bank, Key Bank, Poise Foundation, Highmark Health Foundation, Standard Bank Foundation, Program to Aid Citizen Enterprise, The Pittsburgh Foundation, PNC Foundation, and The Heinz Endowments. Thanks also to the City of Pittsburgh, *The Bulletin's* advertisers, and the BGC's local partners in community development for their ongoing support.

2023  2024

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS PROGRAM

The College and Career Readiness Program provides youth the extra support they need to make an individualized plan for graduation and to meet their goals after!

Resources
*includes but is not limited to

- Scholarship opportunities
- Paid internship in interest area
- FAFSA support
- SAT Prep
- Tutoring
- Personalized graduation plan
- Essay prep
- College application support & so much more!



Interested? Please Contact

Julia@bloomfield-garfield.org &
Judy@bloomfield-garfield.org

113 N Pacific Ave Pgh Pa 15224

412-441-6950 Ext 124 & 125

Land Bank *continued from page 1*

BELOW: In May, the Pittsburgh Land Bank sold its first property on Mount Washington's Boggs Avenue. Photo by Alexis Wary/PublicSource.



the land bank sold its first property on Mount Washington's Boggs Avenue.

Council, though, is considering a Gainey administration proposal to transfer \$3.5 million of the land bank's allocation to the URA, which serves as the city's development arm, to ensure that the funds get used before the federal-use deadline expires.

City officials said the attempt to bifurcate the funds between the land bank and the URA's property stabilization program will help the two organizations work in tandem toward land reuse.

The URA became an affiliate entity of the land bank in 2021, requiring all inquiries with the land bank to go through the URA. The URA didn't respond to multiple requests for comment, and for an interview with the land bank manager.

Splitting the funding "isn't a reduction in any meaningful way in the city's commitment to what we broadly call the land recycling process," said Deputy Mayor Jake Pawlak.

New law helps, but staff needed

On Jul. 5, Shapiro signed legislation allowing land banks like the one in Pittsburgh to acquire property more quickly. It will go into effect in September.

Sponsored by state Sen. Wayne Fontana (D-Brookline), the legislation aims to streamline the legal procedures related to title clearance by making small changes to the sheriff's sale process, making it friendlier to land banks. The changes aim to expedite the process by automatically creating a judgment when a lien is filed and removing onerous requirements surrounding the service of documents, among others.

Tax liens result when a property owner owes back property taxes to a taxing body, like a school district. These liens can often be difficult and expensive to clear, especially at city treasurer's sales. Sheriff's sales, unlike treasurer's sales, are legally required to give priority to land banks over private bidders.

An Lewis, executive director of the Tri-COG Land Bank operating in Allegheny County's eastern suburbs, helped Fontana craft the law. Lewis said the amendments save precious time for land banks, helping them more easily acquire clean, insurable deeds on properties.

"Time is important. Time is money," Lewis said. "We know, for sure, it will be faster. How much faster, we don't know."

Fontana, who previously served as a Pittsburgh Land Bank board member, said he stepped down when Mayor Ed Gainey was elected because he didn't see any desire from the administration to fix the land bank.

Since then, he said, he's seen promising changes coming out of Gainey's office. Gainey's administration lobbied heavily for his amendments.

"The passage of this bill is an incentive to make the other commitments that are needed to make the land bank effective," he said, but it's not a "solve-all."

"You have to have a commitment of personnel and money," he said.

Too much in the land bank's accounts?

The wins aren't enough to convince the Gainey administration that the land bank will be able to use all the federal American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] funds allocated to it before looming deadlines to obligate funds, or enter into contracts, by the end of 2024 - and to spend them completely by the end of 2026.

In 2021, former Mayor Bill Peduto allocated \$10 million in ARPA funding for the land bank. In late 2022, \$3 million of that initial allocation was moved to a food justice fund. On Jul. 11, the Gainey administration proposed the newest cut of \$3.5 million to the land bank's budget, which was scheduled for a public hearing before City Council [on Aug. 1, as of press time].

The administration has opted to divide the federal dollars between the URA and the land bank to ensure they are spent by the deadline, according to Pawlak.

"This isn't a change in priority - it's an evolving and more sophisticated strategy on our part that has taken place over time," Pawlak said, explaining that, since taking office, [Gainey's] administration has continued to adjust the budget to have the money spent by deadline.

He said the original designation of \$10 million was made by the previous administration and, since Gainey took office, [Pawlak and his colleagues] have had to reconsider the feasibility of spending all that money in the face of obstacles.

At least one member of the land bank's board, Councilman Bobby Wilson, is concerned about the land bank's proposed budget reduction.

"I wanted \$10 million, but I'm only one person," he said. "You need money to build something."

- continued on page 15 -

BOOM | R | 28

MEET OUR 2023 BOOM UNIVERSE RESIDENT ARTISTS:

IZSYS ARCHER, IVORY EDDINS, DARIYAH SCOTT
EVANGELINE MENSAH-AGYEKUM, CAROLINE YOO
JADA PATTERSON, & SARA TANG

STAY TUNED TO OUR WEBSITE BOOMUNIVERSE.CO FOR MORE INFO AND UPDATES ON THE ARTISTS!



"Like" the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
(Facebook.com/BloomGarCorp)

for the latest neighborhood information and community updates.

National Senior Games: athletes ball out, Pittsburgh wins

By Jack McKay *The Bulletin*

BELOW: Octogenarian tennis phenom Norman Bloom (white shirt) digs up a shot during doubles play at Arsenal Park. Photo by Jack McKay.



Pittsburgh - In July, the 2023 National Senior Games brought athletes from all over the country together to compete in Pittsburgh.

The tennis events, which took place across the city, gave competitors new opportunities for camaraderie and conversations extending beyond the game itself.

George Dieffenbach, a Williamsport resident, coached varsity tennis for 20 years. Now that he has retired, this tournament provides him with an opportunity to get back on the court and compete with his peers. "This is a very important tournament for me," Dieffenbach said. "It's here with my family and friends, and it's an honor to play with these great athletes."

Stephen Backus also spoke highly of his fellow athletes. A resident of Pasadena, CA, he has played in various tournaments in Florida and California. When he first began competing in the Senior Games, Backus said he was struck by everyone's welcoming spirit. "I come here, and I know a lot of people now," he said. "There is a sense of camaraderie and collegiality."

Backus was also able to forge new relationships at this year's tournament. His doubles partner, with whom he won a title last year in Ft. Lauderdale, was not able to make the trip. However, Backus was able to play doubles with a new partner.

"The National Games puts up a board to help everyone find partners," he explained. "The [organizers] do a lot to help people out, like allowing folks to play doubles even if they don't know anyone."

Norman Bloom, born and raised in Pittsburgh, is a nationally ranked tennis player for men age 85 and over. "Everybody I talked to from out-of-town just loved being here. They underestimated Pittsburgh, which a lot of people do," Bloom said. "These games are fabulous! Whoever came up with this idea should really get a medal."

Although Bloom has enjoyed a lot of success in tennis, winning has become secondary to the way that the Senior Games have helped him meet new people.

"You instantly bond with the guy that you



ABOVE: The tennis courts at Carnegie Mellon University host tournament play for the 2023 National Senior Games. Photo by Jack McKay.

are playing with," he explained. "I met six or seven new people. We are going to stay in touch, I promise you."

The Senior Games also saw Bloom reconnect with an old friend. He began pursuing tennis seriously while attending Geneva College, where his talented roommate helped Bloom develop his tennis skills. "I was afraid when he hit the ball at me," Bloom noted. "I sort of learned to play tennis by self-defense."

As fate would have it, this very same roommate was Bloom's first-round opponent at this year's tournament. "It was so ironic, so crazy, and so surreal," Bloom said. "I just can't get over it."

Bloom wound up winning the match against his former hitting partner: "I relayed the story to his wife about how he used to beat the heck out of me on the tennis court, and she turned to him and said, 'you taught him too well!'"

The culture of good sport was palpable at the 2023 National Senior Games, where competitors battled for medals while

making memories together.

Bloom said this year's Games elevated the senior tennis community, and he is eager to compete again next year.

"It's another subculture, and a really welcoming one," Bloom concluded. "Everybody cheers everybody else's successes and it's never more prevalent than in these Games." ♦

Ugly Concrete?

Steps, Ret. Walls, Pads, Foundations,
Driveways, Sidewalks, and more!

Concrete Repair &
Restoration

Don't replace your ugly concrete!
Repair! It will save you money!

412-734-5432

johnshomeimprovement.org

PA# 050547 Fully insured

Credit cards accepted

6th Annual History Event "Artists of Lawrenceville" September 17, 2023 ~ 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Zion Ev. Lutheran Church
237 37th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15201
Phone: 412-621-2720

1:30 p.m. - Melanie Groves, lecturer in Museum Studies at the University of Pittsburgh will be discussing and highlighting Romare Bearden, an African-American Artist who lived in Lawrenceville. Bearden, a painter, depicted and celebrated everyday African-American life.

2:30 p.m. - Ron Donoughe, full-time professional artist, will be engaging the audience in the life and art of Henry Bursztynowicz. Bursztynowicz, a sculptor, was a native of Lawrenceville and was a faculty member of the University of Missouri and Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

3:30 p.m. - Gary Grimes, a local art historian who has lived in Pittsburgh since 1976, will be speaking on Lawrenceville's two leading artists of the nineteenth century, Olive Turney and Clarence Johns. Turney, a painter, eventually became a teacher and principal of the Pittsburgh School of Design. Johns was also a painter, whose notable works include "Taubal Cain" and "Ruins in Paris".

Free to the public

YOUR AD HERE

THOUSANDS OF BULLETIN READERS
CAN ALMOST SEE IT NOW

ADVERTISE IN OUR MONTHLY PUBLICATION TO MAKE THINGS
HAPPEN FOR YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS. TO LEARN MORE,
CONTACT ANDREW AT 412-441-6950 (EXT. 113) OR
ANDREW@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG.

Q&A with Rebecca Davidson-Wagner: affordable housing brings lasting change

By Elizabeth Sensky *East Liberty Development, Inc.*

East Liberty - Much of the behind-the-scenes work at East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI) revolves around funding affordable housing projects to foster a healthy, mixed-income community.

Since 2018, ELDI has utilized a powerful federal funding mechanism, the New Markets Tax Credit Program (NMTC Program), to make change in East Liberty. This program incentivizes private investment in economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods by providing investors with a federal tax credit.

According to the NMTC website, for every \$1 invested by the federal government, the NMTC Program generates over \$8 of private investment. These funds flow through Community Development Entities (CDE) and go towards a wide range of projects, from large multi-use retail and commercial buildings to loans for local businesses. The idea is that this investment boost will create a ripple effect that catalyzes further revitalization in the area.

Rebecca Davidson-Wagner, president of Pittsburgh Urban Initiatives (PUI), has applied for and facilitated NMTC investments in projects across the city. PUI is one of only 100 entities in the nation to receive this competitive funding - and one of only 16 serving local markets. Since February 2011, PUI has received seven awards totaling \$238 million in NMTC allocations.

Previous tax credit awards have helped finance numerous East End developments, including the East End Cooperative Ministry's Community House, the Energy Innovation Center, and Wood Street Commons. PUI also worked with ELDI on renovating scattered-site houses as affordable, for-sale units in Garfield and East Liberty.

The following conversation - in which Davidson-Wagner details the scope of her work, explains why the tax credit program is an effective tool in the affordable housing subsidy process, and suggests how Pittsburgh should lean into the future - has been edited for space.

BELOW: Rebecca Davidson-Wagner, president of Pittsburgh Urban Initiatives. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Sensky.



ELDI: Why are you passionate about this work?

Davidson: "I am passionate because working with the [New Markets Tax Credit] NMTC Program allows me to facilitate private investment into low-income communities, and I can see the impacts of these investments. It also means that I can translate what may be a financing tool that seems out of reach to a hands-on application that brings real benefit."

ELDI: Why is the NMTC Program an effective financing tool for subsidizing affordable housing and homeownership?

Davidson: "Affordable housing is very difficult to finance due to the high cost of construction and the need to keep the resale costs down. There is a natural gap that will always occur. NMTCs can leverage grant and loan funding already in place and increase those investments by nearly 25%. This can be critical in bringing what would otherwise be an impossible project to market."

ELDI: How many PUI projects have focused on affordable housing?

Davidson: "We have engaged in projects that have provided either for-sale or rental housing, creating 451 of these units. Of those, 308 have been affordable to 80% or below of the Area Median Income. Given the nature of the program, NMTC can't invest in straight rental, but we have been able to participate in projects that are mixed-use. In these projects, we have a minimum threshold of 20% affordability for us to participate. Additionally, we have funded nonprofits that provide transitional or emergency shelter for those in need."

ELDI: Which projects has PUI supported in East Liberty and the East End?

Davidson: "PUI has heavily invested in Council District 9, the district that encompasses East Liberty and points further East. Around half of our investment total has gone to projects in the East End. This is because there have been a lot of opportunities in this area with new community facilities, hospitality, and the for-sale housing model. The NMTC Program can't initiate development, but it can help development that is occurring."

ELDI: What do you see as critical to ensuring a vibrant future for the East End, and Pittsburgh as a whole?

Davidson: "I think that fostering the immigrant population, and providing places for them to thrive, is essential for Pittsburgh's continued success. They are the future, and they will provide the innovation and ideas that will take Pittsburgh further. I'm not sure how to do this exactly, but we need to invest in attracting more immigrant populations to the city to build our population - and provide the diversity that will make us stronger and more resilient in the future." ♦

RUST BELT NATIVES POP UP NATIVE PLANT SALE

CORNER OF N. PACIFIC ST & GEM WAY
GARFIELD, PITTSBURGH
STREET PARKING ON DEARBORN ST.

Hosted by Garfield resident Minette
at her N. Pacific Pollinator Garden

MAY 6
JUNE 3
JULY 8
AUG 12
SEPT 9
10AM - 1PM

MONTHLY PLANT LISTS ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM @RUSTBELTNATIVES

BYTE-SIZE BULLETIN:

- FOR BEST RESULTS,
READ OUR WORK AT YOUR WORK -

Subscribe at bit.ly/bgc_email and we'll deliver
neighborhood news to your inbox every month.



Follow the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
on Twitter (@BloomGarCorp)

Gardening Advice & Earthly Delights: monarch butterflies love milkweed

By Minette Vaccariello *Bulletin contributor*

Garfield - The monarch butterflies have returned to help beautify our neighborhoods again. Every year, beginning in early July, I spot the large black- and orange-winged beauties fluttering into my garden - and it is always such a welcome sight.

I grow several patches of milkweed because they attract monarch butterflies to my garden. Milkweed is a host plant for monarchs, which means it is the only plant where they will lay their eggs. When the eggs hatch, the caterpillars - with their iconic black and yellow stripes - feed on the plant (similar to the *Very Hungry Caterpillar*) and, when they cannot eat anymore, they form their chrysalis. In about one or two weeks, a monarch butterfly will emerge. Witnessing the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly is a truly magical experience.

But what impresses me the most about monarchs is their awesome, annual migration pattern. Since they cannot survive cold winters, monarchs are the only butterfly to migrate south for the winter and come back north in the spring. Just like birds, some monarchs will fly up to 3,000 miles in order to reach their winter home in the forests of Mexico. I think it is incredible how such delicate insects can survive this long journey.

Some readers may have noticed headlines about the sharp decline of the monarch population over the last few years. Due to a devastating loss of its natural habitat, which includes host plants for breeding (milkweed) and flowering plants that provide food (nectar) for the adults, the species is nearing extinction. Yet, by simply planting milkweed, you can make a huge impact on the endangerment of monarch butterflies.

There are three types of milkweed that are common to our region: *Common*, *Swamp*, and *Butterfly*. All three of these beautiful native plants look lovely in any flower bed or landscape, and can also be mixed into your vegetable garden. When you plant milkweed, the monarchs will flutter into your yard every year. Consider their arrival as a delightful thank-you for restoring their natural habitat.

Rust Belt Natives (RBN) will return to Garfield for its monthly pop-up plant sale on Friday, Aug. 12. Stop by from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (at the corner of N. Pacific Ave. and Gem Way) and find some milkweed plants that could enhance your garden. Visitors will get a chance to see what milkweed looks like in a flower garden, and maybe even see a few monarch caterpillars and butterflies in action.

It is never too late in the season to plant milkweed. When the monarchs begin heading south in September, they will thank you for providing them with milkweed, as the nectar fuels their migration. ♦



ABOVE: Common milkweed is one of the monarch caterpillar's favorite snacks. Photo by Minette Vaccariello.



ABOVE: A freshly-hatched monarch butterfly makes a new friend as it prepares to take flight in Garfield. Photo by Minette Vaccariello.

Building Stronger Neighborhoods Together



Got a small business (or an idea for one)?
Get help with your financing needs.
Let us connect you with flexible options for start-up costs, working capital, equipment, vehicles, leasehold improvements and more.



Contact Rich Newell
to learn more.
412-322-0290 ext. 101
Newell@ncd-fund.org



Contact Stefani Smith
to learn more.
412-322-0290 ext. 118
Smith@ncd-fund.org



Contact Us
Reach out at info@ncd-fund.org • Visit us at ncd-fund.org

Neighborhood FOCUS

‘Wisdom Keepers’ mural project celebrates Lawrenceville history

By Emma Gamble *Lawrenceville United*



ABOVE: Neighbors celebrate the new mural at a block party hosted by Lawrenceville United. Photo by Emma Gamble.

Insight/Lawrenceville - A special neighborhood mural recently made its debut at the intersection of 48th, Butler, and Plummer Streets.

On Jun. 25, Lawrenceville United (LU) hosted a block party to celebrate the unveiling of the “Wisdom Keepers” mural, which features portraits of six Lawrenceville women who made a lasting impact on their neighbors.

The women honored on the wall are Ms. Loretta Millender, Mary Jo “Mama Jo” Coll, June Coyne-Givens, Lena Hotujec, Barb Kelly, and Mary Moses.

Their contributions - everything from promoting events at Hambone’s to advocating for safer streets to organizing the Lawrenceville Fireworks committee, and more - helped sustain a vibrant community.

This mural is a part of LU’s Wisdom Keepers project. In 2022, the organization was awarded the AARP Community Challenge Grant to create an oral history collection with longtime Lawrenceville residents (“Wisdom Keepers”) and celebrate their histories through an additional art component.

Open nominations for the mural led to 12 individuals receiving nominations. Although not all nominees are represented on the mural, artist Maggie Lynn Negrete

created a ‘zine featuring all 12 women who were nominated by the community; this publication will soon be available at CLP’s Lawrenceville branch.

While the mural and its accompanying ‘zine are now available for public enjoyment, LU is still collecting Wisdom Keeper stories for the project’s oral history component.

As Lawrenceville has undergone major changes over the last decade, this project aims to preserve the neighborhood’s rich history – to be shared with generations to come.

Each Wisdom Keeper offers a unique perspective on the neighborhood. By helping collect these stories, LU volunteers have learned about: swim lessons at the former Boys Club (now Attack Theatre), the great flood of 1936, punching the clock at Heppenstalls, the beloved Metropolitan Restaurant at 43rd & Butler, and much more neighborhood lore.

The volunteer story collectors, often newer transplants to the neighborhood, have created friendships and bonds across generations by simply listening to Law-

- continued on next page -



ABOVE: Relatives of Ms. Loretta Millender honor her iconic catchphrase (‘Hey, babes’) in Lawrenceville on Jun. 25. Photo by Emma Gamble.

‘Each Wisdom Keeper offers a unique perspective on the neighborhood.’

September Bulletin Deadline: Friday, Aug. 18

Bulletin advertising info available at bit.ly/bulletin_ads

To receive a monthly deadline reminder, email Andrew@Bloomfield-Garfield.org

BELOW: Created by artist Maggie Lynn Negrete, Lawrenceville's new Wisdom Keepers mural features portraits of (left to right) Ms. Loretta Millender, Mary Jo "Mama Jo" Coll, June Coyne-Givens, Lena Hotujec, Barb Kelly, and Mary Moses. Photo by Emma Gamble.



- continued from previous page -

Lawrenceville's Wisdom Keepers.

Once completed, the oral history will be archived on LU's website (lunited.org) - as well as historypin.org, where pieces of Wisdom Keeper's stories can be tied to a geographic location. LU invites readers to become Wisdom Keepers and/or volunteer story collectors, or both.

The story collection process is very informal; imagine having coffee and a good

conversation with a friend. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Emma Gamble at (412) 301-5962 or emma@lunited.org.

In September, we will begin the process of editing and uploading the audio files that have been collected, and we welcome volunteers to join in this process as well.

This project was made possible by the generous support of AARP. Lawrenceville United is also grateful to the partnership of Maggie Lynn Negrete, Jay Simpson and Airborne Promotions, Jimmy Coen ("Jimmy Yinzer"), the Office of Public Art, Attack Theatre, and our AdvantAGE Steering Committee. ♦

Garfield Community Farm's

MOBILE MARKET

is back!

WITH NEW CONVENIENT LOCATIONS!

Step 1 3PM- 4:15PM
VALLEY VIEW CHURCH
Black St & N Aiken Ave

Step 2 4:30PM-5:30PM
HILLCREST MARKET
N Aiken Ave & Hillcrest St

Step 3 6PM-7PM
GARFIELD HEIGHTS
Cornwall St & N Atlantic Ave

WE ACCEPT EBT, CREDIT/DEBIT & CASH

NNO

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Hosted by **BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD CORPORATION**

113 N. PACIFIC AVE
6:30-8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY
AUGUST
01

ART
FOOD & DRINKS
ZONE 5 PUBLIC SAFETY

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL
CARLEE@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG

Sounding off: Republican Committee Chair disheartened by election coverage

By Todd McCollum City of Pittsburgh Republican Committee

[Editor’s Note: Even though the following characterizations of our political coverage are less than flattering, The Bulletin believes in publishing our readers’ counterpoints. So we invite you to consider this response to last month’s profile of Magistrate hopeful Kate Lovelace. I might take issue with some of the author’s claims, but I support his right to sound off. This letter-to-the-editor has been edited for space and clarity.]

I write this letter in response to an article in the July edition of The Bulletin. The article is entitled “Kate Lovelace: Magistrate hopeful looks to reform system.”

Lovelace made several statements in this article that pander to the uninformed and naïve citizens of the East End, most of which do not have a working knowledge of the criminal justice system and the duties that the District Magistrate should and would perform.

As an officer of the court, Lovelace knows what she is saying is not consistent with the duties of the minor court.

The Magistrate Court has many duties in the criminal justice system. First is to sign off on arrest paperwork or arrest warrants known as affidavits of probable cause. This is the paperwork that includes a brief explanation of the case and the charges that are to follow. Along with arrestees’ criminal history, court appearances, and the severity of the current case, a Magistrate can come up with a formula for bail under the prescribed guidelines.

The second duty of the Magistrate Court is to hear preliminary hearings on the charges spelled out in the affidavit of probable cause.

This is where Lovelace wants to recreate the rules of criminal procedure that have been in place for decades - circumventing the legislative branch of the state government. A preliminary hearing can also be known as a probable cause hearing, and the burden is set very low.

The important factor Lovelace conveniently left out is that in preliminary hearing testimony “the light shines most favorable to the Commonwealth.” Simply put, the police and, perhaps more importantly, the victim receive the benefit of the doubt.

It is not a Magistrate’s duty to question the integrity of a police officer or victim. It would not be in the scope of Lovelace’s duty to hold suppression hearings on how evidence was obtained, or how officers do their duties. The means by which obtaining evidence are judged are the duties of the court of Common Pleas.

The Magistrates Court only has full jurisdiction over summary cases. These would be things such as public drunkenness, disorderly conduct, underage drinking, city ordinance violations, and traffic code violations.

In some of these matters, the Magistrate would have the ability to suspend fines or defer to some other alternative sentencing.

However, in many circumstances involving traffic violations, fish & boat code violations, game law, or certain ordinance violations, the fines are set by statute. So, either the case must be dismissed, or the fines must be paid in full.

This means that all the speeding motorists, red-light violations, littering, and other nui-

sances would go unpunished because this Magistrate candidate feels the fines are too strict. In other words, she wants to be weak on issues that affect our everyday life.

What I find particularly disheartening is how Lovelace implies that she’s the only one smart enough to make judgment on cases when, in fact, she is just disregarding the rules of criminal procedure.

She also implies the people of these communities cannot get by without government protection. Her words (“the people I represent live very hard and complicated lives, and there is no way that I could explain all of that to a Magistrate”) show how she truly feels about the people of these communities.

We all live hard and complicated lives, but most of us don’t turn to some sort of criminal activity to make up for what we lack. We overcome! In fact, we want no involvement with criminal activity in our lives at all. We want the police to handle that.

Lovelace is a public defender and, if she felt that too many cases were being waived to trial based on convenience, what efforts has she made within her office to change that?

It has been my experience that the attorneys of the Public Defender’s office took pride in getting people out of jail - even if it meant waiving a case to court. I would encourage Lovelace to show her statistics, over the years, of how many cases were waived to court versus how many preliminary hearings she insisted on holding.

I am relieved that the voters of the city’s eastern communities have a choice in the fall to vote for someone other than her. I am happy that a good, down-to-earth, rule-of-law, conservative choice exists in Anthony Vaccarello.

Sincerely,

Todd McCollum
Chairman, City of Pittsburgh Republican Committee ♦



GARFIELD NIGHT MARKET 2023 SEASON

JULY 7TH
AUG. 4TH

LIVE PERFORMANCES
VISUAL ARTS
KIDS ACTIVITIES
FOOD TRUCKS

SEPT. 1ST
OCT. 6TH
NOV. 3RD

FREE ENTRY / STARTS AT: 5PM



113 N. PACIFIC AVENUE, PGH, PA, 15224
THE BLOOMFIELD GARFIELD CORP.



"COME SUPPORT FOLK AND SEE SOME ART, GOOD VIBES AND GOOD TIMES"

Capoeira Angola

Afro-Brazilian Martial Art Hidden in Dance



Classes
5-7pm Fridays • 4-6pm Sundays

Also: Ying Jow, Bagua
Tong Bei, Xing-Yi,
Tai Chi, Lion Dance
www.steel-dragon.org
info@steel-dragon.org

Steel Dragon
100 43rd St #113
Lawrenceville
412.362.6096

SAUER BROTHERS

Heating • Cooling • Boilers

412-782-1100

We've been installing
**Residential
Furnaces &
Air Conditioners**
**For Over
60 Years**

1520 ADJUDICATION ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

WHAT IS 1520?

It is a **restorative justice program** that 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.**

WHO

Individuals in Magisterial District Court can request the 1520 Program, where the district judge (MDJ) will determine eligibility.

Contact:

Vania Arthur, Greenzone & Public Safety
Coordinator,
vania@bloomfield-garfield.org 412-441-6950 x115

WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES

1520 program includes an appropriate set of activities that could include, but are not limited to, **land maintenance, tree tending, classes, or workshops** based on the MDJ as well as a short interview.

WHERE

The **Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC)** is a court-approved 1520 Program Service Site. Located at **113 N Pacific Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15224**

**ASK YOUR LAWYER OR JUDGE
ABOUT YOUR CASE
ELIGIBILITY!**



Saturday Market creates shopping destination

Photos by Jack McKay



ABOVE: Customers stroll through the Bloomfield Saturday Market, a weekend shopping destination featuring a wide variety of vendors and services along Liberty Avenue.

BELOW: Saturday shoppers bring home basketfuls of fresh fruit and produce.



JOIN US!

Duncan Park is a wonderful urban food forest and landscape playground maintained through the dedicated work of volunteers! Workdays involve regular chores of weeding, mowing, watering, maintaining paths, etc. Food, water, and tools are provided, but you are welcome to bring your own.

Come for the whole event, or stay as long as you can. If you have any questions please contact emma@lunited.org or 412-301-5962.



DUNCAN PARK 2023 WORKDAYS (54TH & DUNCAN ST)

May 22nd, Monday - 5-7:30 PM
June 12th, Monday - 5:30-8 PM
June 26th, Monday - 5:30-8 PM
July 8th, Saturday - 10-2 PM
July 17th, Monday - 5-7:30 PM
August 5th, Saturday - 10-2 PM
August 14th, Monday - 5-7:30 PM
August 28th, Monday - 5-7:30 PM
Sept 9th, Saturday - 10-2 PM
Sept 18th, Monday - 5-7:30 PM
Sept 30th, Saturday - 10-2 PM
Oct 14th, Saturday - 10-2 PM

CHILD CARE

**NOW ENROLLING FOR
DEC/JAN START DATES**

Located in Garfield Heights

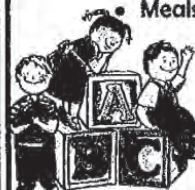
Now Enrolling 3 and 4 year olds

- Meals and Snacks Included
- Full and PT Care
- CCIS Accepted

**Monday-Friday
8 am to 5:00 pm**

www.mamashawns.com

Call Today! (412)361-2324



KARAOKE NIGHTS FROM PARIS

PARIS WRIGHT | PUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

For up to date information on upcoming karaoke shows or for booking information:

✉ pariswright121@gmail.com

☎ 412-427-5665

📱 Karaoke Nights From Paris

📷 [karaoke_nights_from_paris](https://www.instagram.com/karaoke_nights_from_paris)

I hope to sing with you there!



Learn & Earn students study Garfield Greenzone, focus on photography

By Vania Arthur Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Insight/Garfield - This summer, a group of local high-school students were selected to participate in the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's (BGC) Greenzone site program.

The hands-on learning project helped connect these teenagers - Kord'e (14), Arianna (15), Jordan (15), Alea (14), Anthony (16), and Mike (17) - with new opportunities in the greater Pittsburgh area.

Over the past six weeks, the students learned about: reclaiming and rehabilitating vacant land; the history of "red-lining," and its effects on Black/brown and low-income communities; and how to access available funding for community projects.

They also picked up insights on landscaping, horticulture, bee-keeping, construction & carpentry, sexual health, emotional well-being, art residencies, and creative careers.

The students' final project involved designing their own "pocket park" (a mini-parklet with standard park amenities) as a new community space and sanctuary for play.

As the Greenzone Coordinator, I helped create and facilitate this curriculum with Kuwame Kinsel (Special Programs Officer for the BGC) through Partner4Work's Learn & Earn program.

Working together with the students at the Greenzone site over the summer, we were able to destroy, create, inspire, and transform the space for future generations to enjoy.

A special thanks to our friends, community partners, and practitioners, including: Tatym Rasmussen and Stanley Duong (CMU students and Greenzone interns), The Trade Institute of Pittsburgh's Masonry & Carpentry program, Chris Boring of Radiant Hall (Susquehanna location), Rachel Perry at Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, and Vanessa Rivera from The Sampson Foundation's PEALI team.

Kudos to Leo Hsu (Silver Eye Center for Photography) for providing the students with an opportunity to learn about photography. Their first photo exhibition, hosted by the Lab @ Silver Eye (5228 Penn Ave.), is slated for Friday, Aug. 4 [see flyer at left]. ♦

A Greenzone Exhibition for our 2023 Learn & Earn Students

HOEING and GROWING

pop up exhibition documenting the students' experience this summer

Friday August 4, 2023
6PM-9PM

featuring

Alea HALE-COLEMAN	Jordan MOON	Kord'e ABRAM
Michael JENKINS	Arianna ETHRIDGE	Anthony SNYDER

Curated by: Kuwame Kinsel, Tatym Rasmussen & Vania Arthur, alongside our students

The Lab @ Silver Eye
5228 Penn Avenue, 1F
15224

Silver Eye

assemble
a community space for arts + technology

FREE Afterschool!

for middle schoolers

**MONDAYS:
GIRLS MAKER
NIGHT
GRADES 5-9**

**TUESDAYS:
AFTERSCHOOL
GRADES 6-8**

4-6pm snacks included!

412-661-6111 • 4824 Penn Ave • assemblepgh.org
science • technology • engineering • art • math

LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

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

Real Estate Sales for the month of May 2023

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, Residential Realtor

Bloomfield

301 Associates Inc. to Winebiddle Rental LLC at 301 S. Winebiddle St. for \$1,348,900.

Daniel J Miller to 907 East Street LLC at 5125 West Penn Pl for \$50,000.

Denise Frazzini to Sylvanus C & Alyssa M Uzokwe at 27 Hemingway St. for \$425,000.

Lixing Zhang to Mala Harris at 35 Hemingway St. for \$417,500.

Queen E Wade to Clancy Trust at 4072 Howley St. for \$140,000.

Raymond D & Mary Louise Ignosh to Mara M Fitzgerald at 323 Ella St. for \$320,000.

Ridge Avenue Holdings LLC to Guthrie Michael & Noelle Difioia at 349 S. Aiken Ave. for \$975,000.

Robert M & Lindsay I Johnston to Annie Le Wilson at 617 S. Millvale Ave. for \$229,000.

SNT Investments LLC to Michael & Maria Nowicki at 4571 Carroll St. for \$315,000.

Tableculture LLC to Farshid Momayezi at 4037 Penn Ave. for \$692,000.

Friendship

John M & Colleen Potanko to Samuel Gorski at 209 Roup Ave. for \$760,000.

Garfield

Andrew J & Patience R Markiewicz to Tricia Shepherd at 5444 Kincaid St. for \$328,900.

City of Pittsburgh to Bethany Leigh Rose at 0 Rosetta St. for \$200.

Curtis Farrar to James Steven Founds at 5217 Broad St. for \$30,001.

David & Adriana Dozzi to Richard L & Sandra L Duff at 4618 Carroll St. for \$157,000.

Michael E Hollis to Sarah Maria Pease-Kerr at 5165 Kincaid St. for \$315,000.

Taylor Crick Holdings LLC to Wren Gray at 5318 Hillcrest St. for \$256,000.

East Liberty

Costello Real Estate Development LLC to Shalini Ramesh at 312 N. Saint Clair St. for \$755,000.

East Liberty Development Inc. to John L & Michelle L Connor at 352 Enright Ct. for \$80,000.

Hazel G Shockey to Rachel Nicole Patel at 615 N. Euclid Ave. for \$531,000.

New Homestead Development Company to 2032 Wightman LLC at 333 Enright Ct. for \$100,000.

Lawrenceville

Alexander C & Kristine D Schaffer to Lysia Jacqueline Gehris at 3634 Liberty Ave. for \$300,000.

Alexandra Masters to James S Gunst Jr. at 349 Main St. for \$601,000.

Christopher C Fiumara to Bruce & Amy Johnson at 5259 Duncan St. for \$258,000.

City of Pittsburgh to Harriet Webb at 0 Natrona Way for \$200.

Daniel Destio to Ronald W Sessa at 802 Mccandless Ave. for \$385,000.

Daniel P & Mary Alice Devinney to Anne Pynos at 4209 Sherrod St. for \$410,000.

David Alexander & Chelsealyn Rose to Ag Nuwan D Perera at 5304 Holmes St. for \$415,000.

David John Lovett to Stefanis Vasilea at 183 Home St. for \$535,000.

Donald J & Donna Englert Keller to Hoosac Realty 2 LLC at 329 Main St. for \$242,000.

Donna & Michael Armenti to Richard Perez at 0 McCandless Ave. for \$110,000.

Evan C Stickel to Hailey N Benec at 4049 Geneva St. for \$250,000.

Gary & Rebecca K Johnson to La Lechuguita LLC at 381 Fisk St. for \$576,000.

James Clifford Forrest to Nicholas Andrews at 172 43rd St. for \$899,000.

James F Waldron to Robert Mcdonald at 95 Mccandless Ave. for \$289,000.

Joseph F & Deborah E Talarico to Boldin Real Estate LLC Van at 3832 Penn Ave. for \$485,000.

Judith Ann Rutkowski to LBHB Revocable Living Trust at 307 Main St. for \$329,000.

Katrina Kelly to Alexandra Heinle at 164 37th St. for \$360,000.

Lakewood Management Group LLC to Marievic A & Oliver S Manrique at 4403 Davison St. for \$205,000.

Maxanna Properties Inc. to Karron Nutman at 3705 Penn Ave. for \$499,500.

Nematollah Batmanghelich to Sachit Goyal at 721 53rd St. for \$588,500.

Neuman Investing LLC to Dakota Voelker at 136 42nd St. for \$375,000.

Orchard Row LLC to John William & Quattrocchi at 174 41st St. for \$637,000.

Robert L & Dorothy M Regan to Jack A Rice at 4510 Davison St. for \$257,500.

Timothy Daniel Tobitsch to Roger W & Allison C Braund Harris at 238 43rd St. for \$350,000.

Wanda M Ferguson to SC Investments LLC at 117 43rd St. for \$95,000.

Wylie Holdings LP to Kevin D Synan at 5158 Butler St. Unit 2 for \$335,000.

Wylie Holdings LP to Sarah Catherine Andrews at 4620 Davison St. for \$355,000.

Zachary T & Lindsay K Crossett to Jenna Lynn Hammond at 119 41st St. for \$588,000.

Zhang Ronglia to Oluwadamilare & Adebambo at 5148 Carnegie St. for \$439,000.

Stanton Heights

Eric R Smith to Samantha Melvin at 14 Fairfield Ct. for \$390,000.

Maria A Santander to William Daniel Gonsowski at 956 Brintell St. for \$215,000.

Robert W & Patricia M Hubbard to Beacon Hill Property Holdings LLC at 926 Oranmore

St. for \$100,000.

Steven Saville to Jacob B Clyne at 1052 Stanton Ter. for \$180,000.

Stream Four LLC to Franklin Tanner & Hannah Swiger Capps at 4235 Upview Ter. for \$284,810.

Thomas W & Beverly M Hector to Sarah B Falcigno at 4313-4315 Coleridge St. for \$255,000.

William G & Brenda C Scheuering to Rosalie Woolf at 4221 Upview Ter. for \$315,000.

This column, which uses County data, contains occasional errors. If something looks off, let us know. Feel free to call with questions, or just to chat about real estate in your neighborhood. Contact Lillian at lillian@agent-lillian.com or 412-335-6068. ♦

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Some people think that choosing a modest memorial means sacrificing service. Our commitment to excellent service allows us to say that no matter what kind of a memorial you have in mind, we'll provide you with the best service available, bar none.



D'Alessandro Funeral Home & Crematory Ltd.

"Always a Higher Standard"

*Dustin A. D'Alessandro, Supervisor
Daniel T. D'Alessandro, Funeral Director*

4522 Butler St. • Pittsburgh, PA 15201

Phone: 412-682-6500 • Fax: 412-682-6090

www.dalessandrofhd.com • dalessandrofh@aol.com

Local Services

Hauling/Cleanup

We clear basements, yards, garages, attics, estates, etc.

Fast, Reliable, Reasonable

Also demolition work, lawn maintenance

412-687-6928 **Call Walt** 412-773-0599

Bloomfield Square

continued from page 2

The difference between \$6 million and \$8 million of annual revenue is, in my view, the difference between a handsome profit and an obscene profit.

Higher construction costs will likely mean that Echo's investors must wait a little longer to make their money. But that's their problem, not ours.

Residents at the Jul. 15 public hearing said they would feel much better about the project if it included more affordable housing. That is a reasonable request.

Less than two miles away, on East Liberty's Shakespeare Street, Echo is building the 231-apartment Meridian development. At that site, Echo agreed to have 15% of the apartments meet affordable housing standards; the same company is only offering 10% in Bloomfield.

If affordable housing could be increased - to, say, 30% - that would probably make many local residents feel better about the project. And it would reduce concerns about traffic; studies show that lower-income populations are less likely to drive cars, and also more likely to rely on public transportation.

Traffic

Two major concerns that are not addressed by the current design are vehicular traffic and parking on residential streets.

The intersection near Trace Brewing - described as "awful" by Christina Howell, executive director of the Bloomfield Development Corporation - already absorbs traffic from five busy streets.

When Echo's construction is finished, and cars naturally clog the intersection and narrow roads surrounding Bloomfield Square, people are going to ask, "Who the heck approved this mess?"

That's why the zoning board should require Echo to meet with Pittsburgh's Department of Mobility & Infrastructure (DoMI) to propose funded improvements to this site.

Local attorney Daniel Stoner said he was certain that Echo representatives would be well-prepared for the hearing, where they could provide a new traffic study to downplay any potential impact.

"I'm sure no developer is going to walk in there with a traffic study saying that their proposed development is going to create pandemonium," Stoner said.

He said residents and community groups would be wise to make sure an unbiased traffic study is conducted before the project is considered for final approval.

Parking

Plans call for a total of 199 parking spots to serve tenants of the 248 apartments. That's 0.8 spots per apartment, even though 65 of the units will feature a two-bedroom layout. What happens when one unit has two roommates, and they both own cars? Where will they park?

City Councilwoman Deb Gross's representative at the Jul. 15 meeting asked a few key questions: Will people who live in the Bloomfield Square apartments be allowed to compete with current residents for city parking permits?; How many permits are available?; Will existing residents be crowded out and forced to park further from their homes?

The bottom line

This is not a bad project. But it's also not a good one - yet. The zoning board should reject this request to build six stories in Bloomfield, but leave the door open. Echo should be required to come back with a design that is better for the community.

Alan Guenther lives on Ella Street, two blocks from the proposed project. He may be reached at guenthera30@gmail.com. ♦



ABOVE: The Community Market lot and former VFW hall at 4401 Liberty Ave. could be repurposed to make way for the Bloomfield Square development. Photo by Alan Guenther.

Meeting Place
Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
113 N Pacific Ave
15224

Clean

GARFIELD COMMUNITY

FRIDAYS
4-7PM

April 21
May 19
June 16
July 21
August 18
September 15
October 20
November 17

*Join Garfield Greenzone
in helping us beautify the
neighborhood*

For information contact
Vania Arthur
vania@bloomfield-garfield.org
412-441-6950

Up

COMING!

COMING!

COMING!

COMING!

Matt's

5128 PENN AVE

Land Bank continued from page 4

Asked whether \$3.5 million was enough to build a strong land bank, Wilson said: "No, we need more."

The idea, Pawlak said, is that the URA will use its \$3.5 million share to fix up existing City-owned properties, and then sell them to the land bank.

New agreement waited a year

Pawlak said the land bank's delay in spending its ARPA money is due, in part, to Council's slow handling of legislation to approve changes to the so-called "tri-party" cooperation agreement between the City, the URA, and the land bank.

Council has been concerned with maintaining its ability to control land sales and prevent effects like gentrification. The amended agreement, which would allow for the purchase of property by the land bank from the city and URA, was originally introduced to council in June 2022. Even with this delay, Pawlak remained confident that the amendment to the agreement would pass.

In the unlikely event that the amendment did not pass, Pawlak said the Gainey administration was already figuring out ways to overcome the City's abandoned property issue without the land bank.

"If Council, with the power that it is duly allowed under law, does not accept the changes proposed, we would find the next best way to meet the requirements," he said.

Gainey has previously said the land bank needed to be completely redone, including the re-

moval of Pittsburgh City Council involvement.

Pawlak said Gainey would still welcome that change.

"That's the ideal, and he would gladly accept that," Pawlak said.

Pawlak said that after the ARPA funds expire, the city will attempt to draw upon local sources to fund the land bank, but no concrete plans are in place.

"Nobody wants blighted homes in their neighborhoods," Fontana said. "It's not one of those philosophical things where you say, 'I don't want to fix up blight in my city.'"

Lucas Dufalla is an editorial intern with PublicSource and can be reached at lucas@publicsource.org. Eric Jankiewicz is PublicSource's economic development reporter and can be reached at ericj@publicsource.org or on Twitter @ericjankiewicz.

[PublicSource is an independent news organization in Pittsburgh. Visit PublicSource.org for continuing coverage of the Pittsburgh Land Bank.] ♦

September Bulletin Deadline: **Friday, Aug. 18**

Bulletin advertising info available at bit.ly/bulletin_ads

To receive a monthly deadline reminder, email Andrew@Bloomfield-Garfield.org

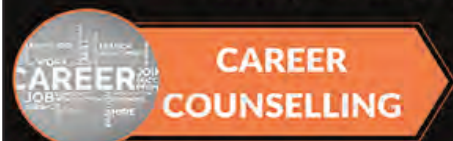
EASTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD EMPLOYMENT CENTER

113 N. Pacific Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Hours of Operation

Monday & Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm



Individualized career sessions designed to help get your job search off to the right start

Individual & group workshops on resume building, cover letter writing, interview & digital literacy skills

WORKSHOPS



Computer Lab open to the public, along with printing, copying and scanning services

PA CareerLink, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, East End Community Thrift, Dress for Success, and many more.

REFERRAL NETWORK



412-362-8580 ext 114 / 118

admin@enecptitsburgh.com

www.bloomfield-garfield.org/employment



Back to School... Already!

It's hard to believe that in a few weeks school will begin again. Before sending your children off, stop and read the following tips.

Young Students

Pedestrian injuries are the second leading cause of unintentional death among children ages 5-14. So make sure that children:

- Look left, right then left again before crossing the street.
- Always try to cross a street when a crossing guard is present.
- Cross in front of the bus only after the driver signals it's okay.

High School Students

Statistics show that teen drivers are four times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes than more experienced drivers. If your children drive to school:

- Teach them, as well as, all passengers to buckle-up.
- Remind them to obey the speed limits
- Enforce no-drinking-and-driving rules.

College Students

The number one crime on college campuses is theft. One-out-of-every 10 college students will be robbed while away at school.

- Remind students to always lock dormitory doors.
- Tell students not to keep large amounts of money in their rooms.
- Have students mark personal property with identifiable marks.



WALTER J

ZALEWSKI

FUNERAL HOMES INC

"Exceeding Your Expectations"

LAWRENCEVILLE POLISH HILL

Walter J Zalewski, Supervisor
216 Forty-fourth Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15201-2893
412 682-3445

Joseph M Lapinski, Supervisor
3201 Dobson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3735
412 682-1562



Befriend the Bulletin on Facebook

(www.facebook.com/BgcBulletin)

We promise not to overshare!

Outdoor upgrades: new URA program grants support to city restaurants

By Carlee Benhart Kukula *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

Pittsburgh - In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor dining infrastructure has become critical to the financial health of restaurants, bars, and cafes across the globe. Pittsburgh's small businesses are no exception, although many local businesses lack the capital to make lasting investments and take advantage of the outdoor dining boom.

Recognizing the hardships that restaurants have faced during the pandemic, the City's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) recently launched its Outdoor Dining Grant program to help local entrepreneurs adapt to the changing landscape. Approval letters were signed, sealed, and delivered in the fall of 2022 - and the program is now accepting applications for small grants that can help enhance the city's outdoor dining spaces.

According to the URA website, "the Outdoor Dining Grant Program provides grant funding to eligible business-supporting nonprofit organizations, community development corporations, business improvement districts, and chambers of commerce to allocate towards outdoor infrastructure that allows restaurant activity to occur safely outdoors in preventing or mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus."

Local restaurant owners have an opportunity to maximize their spaces' curb appeal while also accommodating additional customers. The funds provided by the URA grants may be utilized to purchase items like outdoor furniture, platforms, design work, lighting, heaters, tents, and barriers.

These grants emphasize permanent infrastructure, and are reimbursement-based; the program is open to any food- or drink-selling business that has maintained continuous operation since March 2020. Any parking permitting costs will also be available for reimbursement, and Toole Design Group is offering free design work within pre-approved layouts. Most neighborhood projects will be awarded \$3,000 or less, and the application process is simple: just contact the BGC and fill out a short application.

Funded by the American Rescue Plan, this URA program will be short-lived, but it is only one of many related programs that support East End residents. The URA's suite of products includes loans and grants for local businesses, homeowners, persons with disabilities, and renters pursuing homeownership; eligibility for these programs may depend on household size and income.

Any Penn Avenue business owner who would like to learn more about these outdoor dining grants may email carlee@bloomfield-garfield.org. Bloomfield business owners are encouraged to visit bloomfieldpgh.org and contact the Bloomfield Development Corporation. ♦



**Get involved
in the
Wisdom
Keepers
Project!**

**Let's create a Lawrenceville oral history that
can be shared for generations to come!**

**Sign up to be a storyteller or story collector at
bit.ly/LVWisdomKeeper
or contact Emma at 412-301-5962 /
emma@lunited.org**



**When a
call could
ruin nap time.**

We see you. With online scheduling, you can search for a doctor, location, and time that works for you without making a single call.
Now shh — book at ahn.org/schedule.

