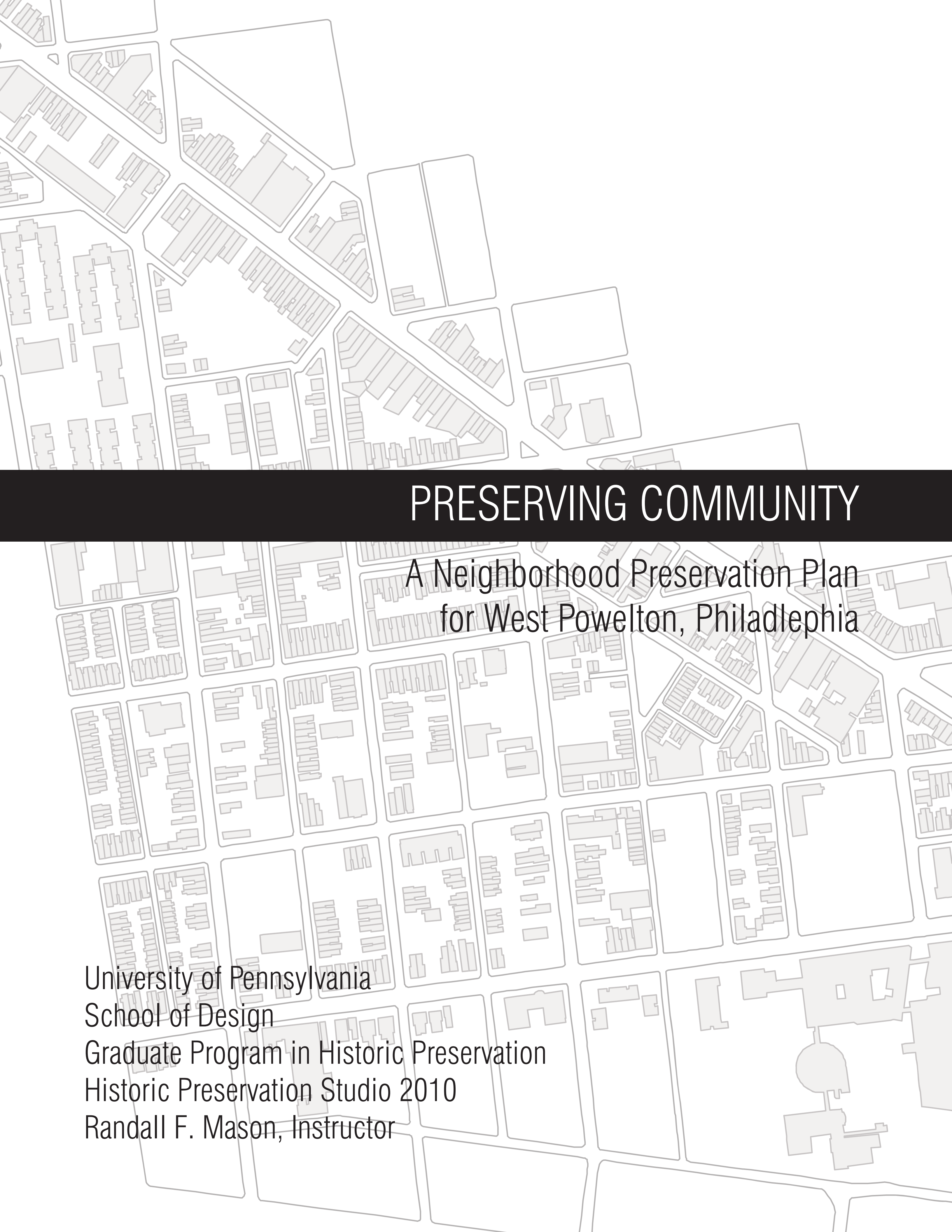
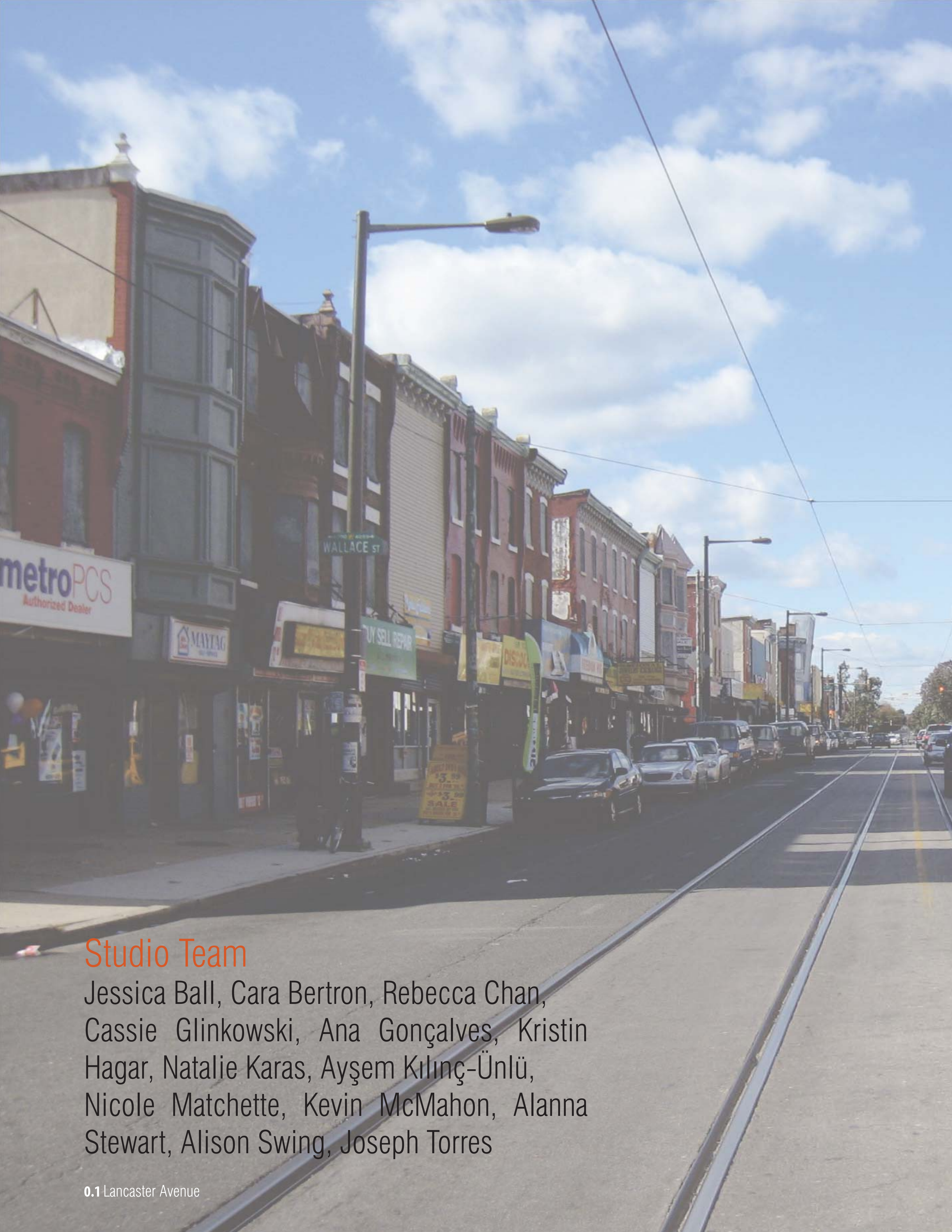


PRESERVING COMMUNITY

A Neighborhood Preservation Plan for West Powelton, Philadlephia

University of Pennsylvania
School of Design
Graduate Program in Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Studio 2010
Randall F. Mason, Instructor


metroPCS
Authorized Dealer
MAYTAG
WALLACE ST
BUY SELL REPAIR

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1.1 Hawthorne Hall

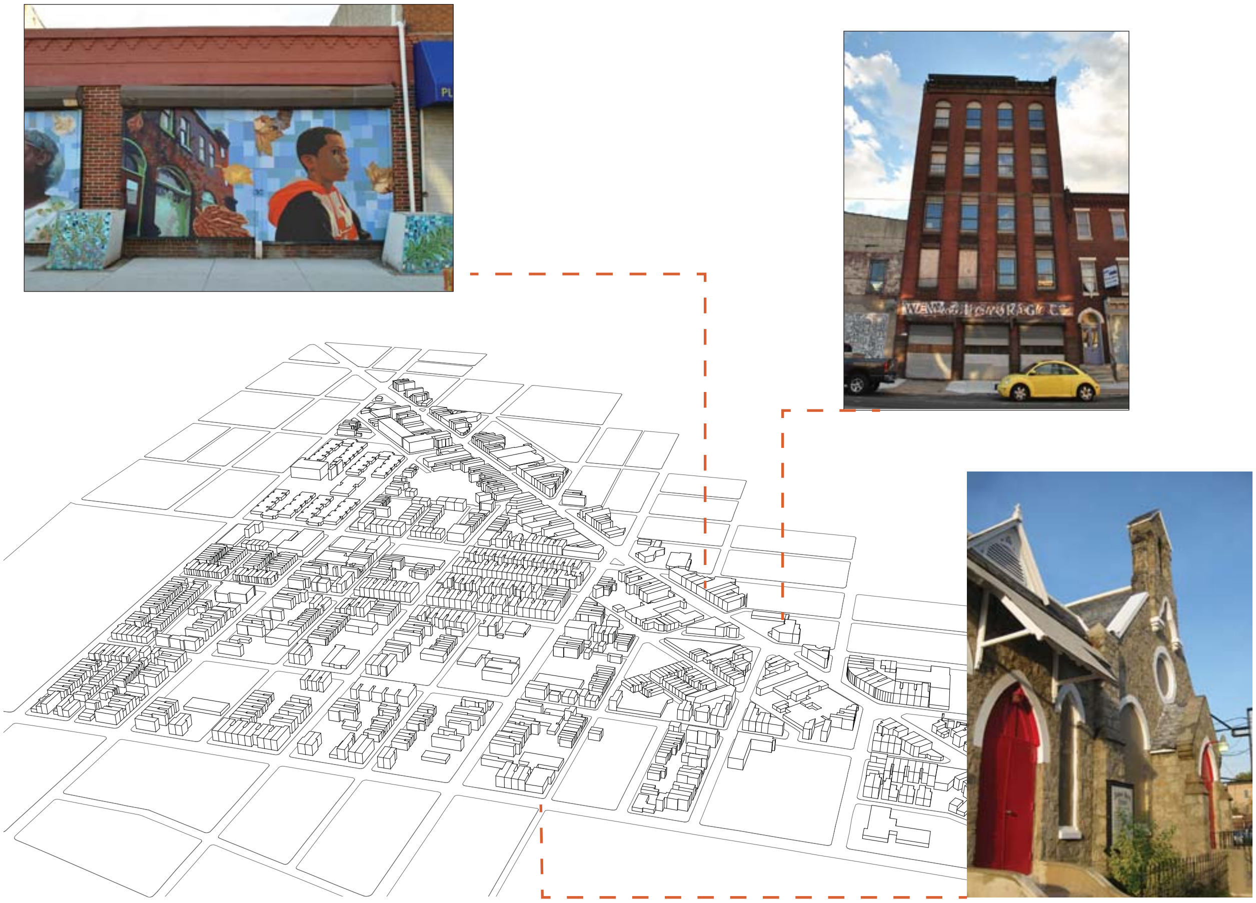
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

West Powelton is a neighborhood at a tipping point. Once a vibrant retail corridor and residential neighborhood that boomed with the introduction of the electrified trolley car line in the late 1800s, the neighborhood was hit hard by economic downturn and the social and political tensions of the mid- to late- 20th century.

Over the course of 12 weeks, our studio team explored and documented the past and current state of West Powelton in historical archives, on foot, and by talking to its residents and community leaders. We learned about the obstacles that face the neighborhood, including high levels of vacancy, a struggling commercial corridor, and tension between long-time residents and newcomers. But we also found a community with plenty of assets: stunning buildings from the heyday of Lancaster Avenue, a relatively intact late 19th-century building stock, active community organizations, and residents that have invested in their neighborhood through public art and community gardens.

Though many challenges face West Powelton, growing interest in the area has provided an opportunity for the various community organizations, institutions, and invested individuals who live and work in the neighborhood to push it in a direction of community development that emphasizes economic inclusiveness and social equity. To contribute to this effort, we propose a Preservation Approach that recognizes the value of West Powelton's deeply-rooted community, its built assets, and the complex historical narrative they embody.



1.2 Mural on Lancaster Avenue; Monarch Storage Buildling on Lancaster Avenue; Highway Church of Christ, on Powelton Avenue

2.1 Gate on Lancaster Avenue

2 INTRODUCTION

About the Studio
Why West Powelton?
The Neighborhood

About the Studio

The Historic Preservation Studio is an opportunity for second-year masters students at the University of Pennsylvania to apply academic ideas and skills to a real place in need of preservation guidance. Founded on the belief that historic preservation can and should play a key role in revitalizing neighborhoods with rich built environments, the studio challenges students to articulate a place-specific approach to neighborhood preservation that synthesizes political, social, and economic contexts in addition to local history and the built environment. This studio examines West Powelton, a Philadelphia neighborhood with a long history, complicated politics, and enormous potential.

The studio approach stresses the collection and analysis of information to inform decision-making in the preservation planning process. To this end, archival and historical research were used in combination with a comprehensive field survey, census data, ethnographic research, and interviews with key local stakeholders to characterize the neighborhood's history and physical environment. This allowed the studio's participants a better understanding of how the place has been shaped over time and why it deserves preservation attention. A statement of significance and character-defining elements were then articulated.

Guided by these tools and the interests of neighborhood stakeholders and organizations, the studio collectively developed a preservation approach for West Powelton. The approach privileges improvement of the neighborhood's fabric, its economic situation, and the community and institutional engagement in stabilizing the neighborhood and securing a bright future. Finally, a set of coordinated, targeted recommendations—such as commercial revitalization, vacant lot reuse, and historic interpretation—were made to begin to effect change in specific areas.

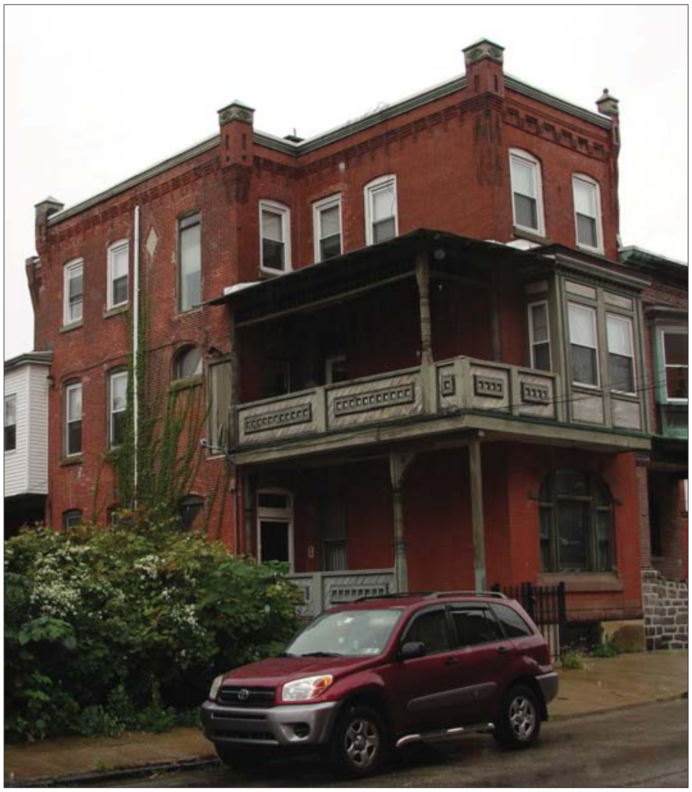
2.2 Field survey in West Powelton

2.3 Team members working in studio

This studio was not developed for a particular client; as a result, recommendations apply to a variety of agencies, organizations, and institutions. Copies of the report will be provided to the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the Peoples Emergency Center CDC, University City District, Lancaster Avenue Business Association, and the LA21 business association. It is our hope that each stakeholder finds something of use.

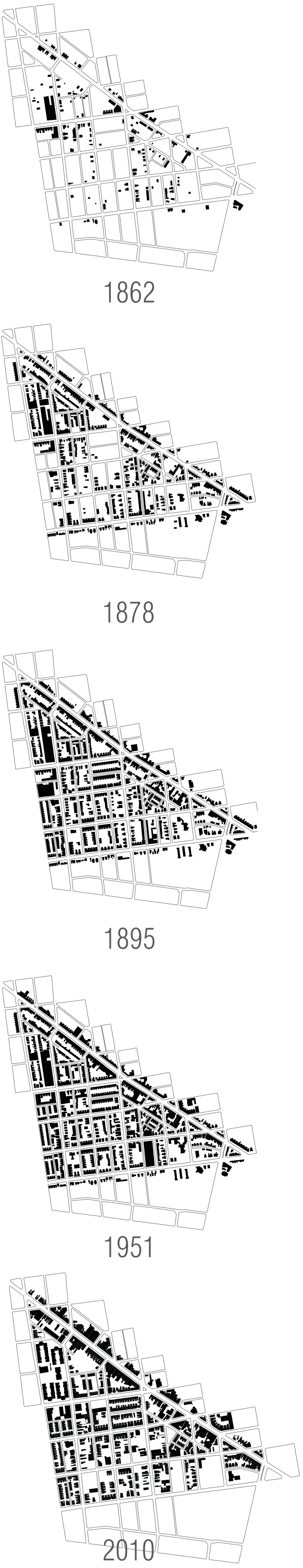
Why West Powelton?

West Powelton is a microcosm of the types and scales of residential buildings found throughout West Philadelphia. Though the neighborhood is relatively compact, it holds a notable variety of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architecture: Row, twin, and detached houses of red brick comprise the majority of the physical fabric; two- to three-story commercial and mixed-use buildings define Lancaster Avenue, the neighborhood's commercial spine; and industrial, transportation-related, and institutional buildings are scattered throughout the neighborhood (Figs. 2.4-2.5). The majority of residential buildings retain historic integrity. Most non-residential buildings in West Powelton have been neglected or adapted for residential or different commercial uses over time; despite these changes, many of these properties also retain a high degree of integrity (Fig. 2.7).


2.4 Detached house on N. 39th Street

2.5 Twin residences on Powelton Avenue

The breadth of West Powelton's built environment today is reflected in the neighborhood's long history, which follows a common Philadelphia narrative. In its early rural history and later growth along horsecar lines and Lancaster Avenue trolley lines, the West Powelton area is typical of development patterns in West Philadelphia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Fig. 2.6). Early establishment of charitable institutions, followed by intense residential and commercial development beginning in the 1880s, laid literal groundwork for West Powelton's thoroughfares and smaller streets, dense residences and commercial corridor, and scattered institutions such as churches and charities. The neighborhood's origins as a white middle-class community and its transition through the 1960s into a poorer but culturally strong African-American neighborhood make West Powelton an essential piece of Philadelphia's larger urban story.



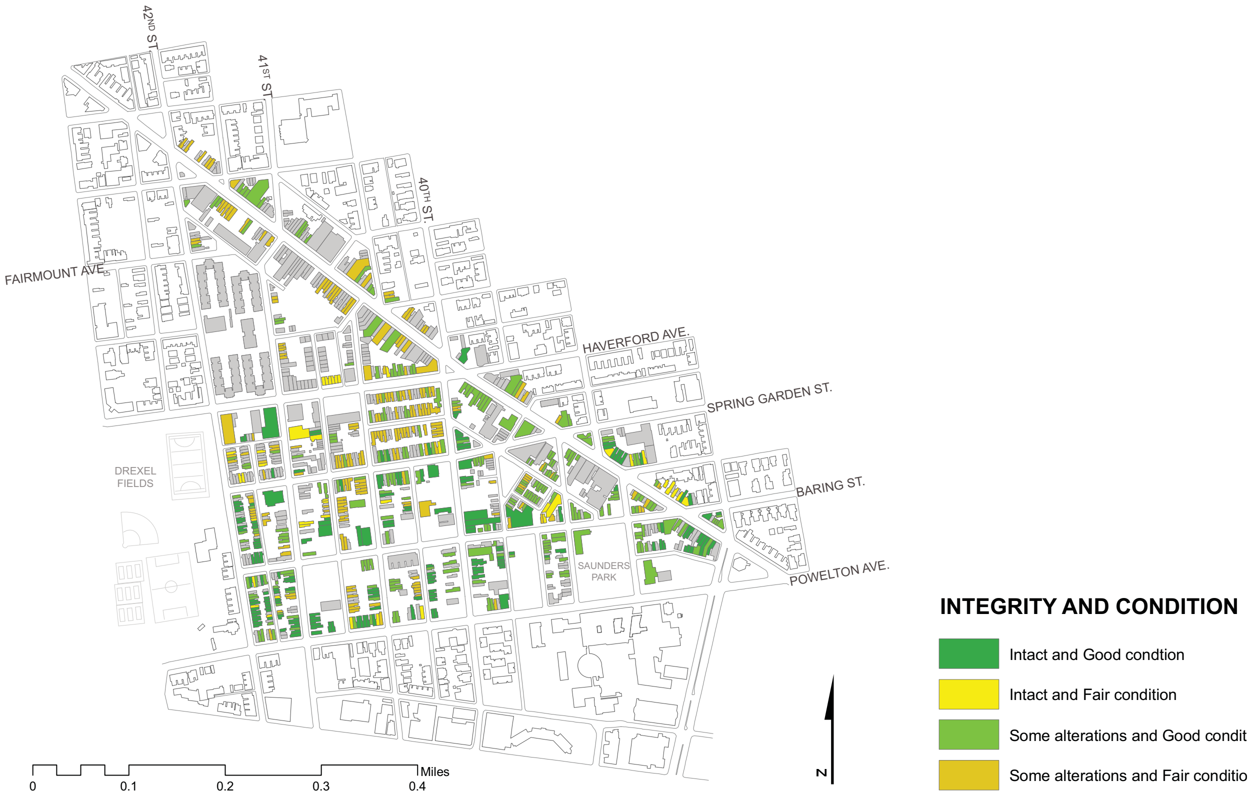
2.6 Maps showing the evolution of West Powelton's built environment.

The Neighborhood

In many ways, West Powelton is a characteristic Philadelphia neighborhood, with a strong architectural character and rich community history. Located in West Philadelphia, the neighborhood is situated north of University City and west of Powelton Village. This report defines the neighborhood's boundaries as Lancaster Avenue to the northeast, Powelton Avenue to the south, and 42nd Street to the west.

At first a rural area of scattered farms, estates, and charitable institutions, West Powelton developed most intensely between 1880 and 1910, growing along major trolley lines on Lancaster Avenue. The result was a prosperous middle-class community and a high concentration of late nineteenth-century residential, commercial, and institutional buildings, many of which retain a high degree of architectural integrity. The neighborhood is defined most strongly by its residential architecture – consisting mostly of low-rise red-brick rowhouses – and a mix of institutional and commercial buildings, especially along Lancaster Avenue.

Despite its superior built fabric, however, West Powelton faces tough economic challenges. As a result of deindustrialization that accelerated most forcefully in the 1950s, the area experienced steep drops in population, employment, and income levels in the following decades. The area's population peaked at about 16,000 in 1950, then declined by over half in the next 50 years. The population hovers around 7,000 today. This decline had major implications for the area's built environment, resulting in physical decay and demolition from which West Powelton has yet to fully recover. Empty storefronts, parking lots, and vacant properties create breaks in the urban fabric that continue to threaten the neighborhood's ability to compete for businesses, shoppers, and residents.

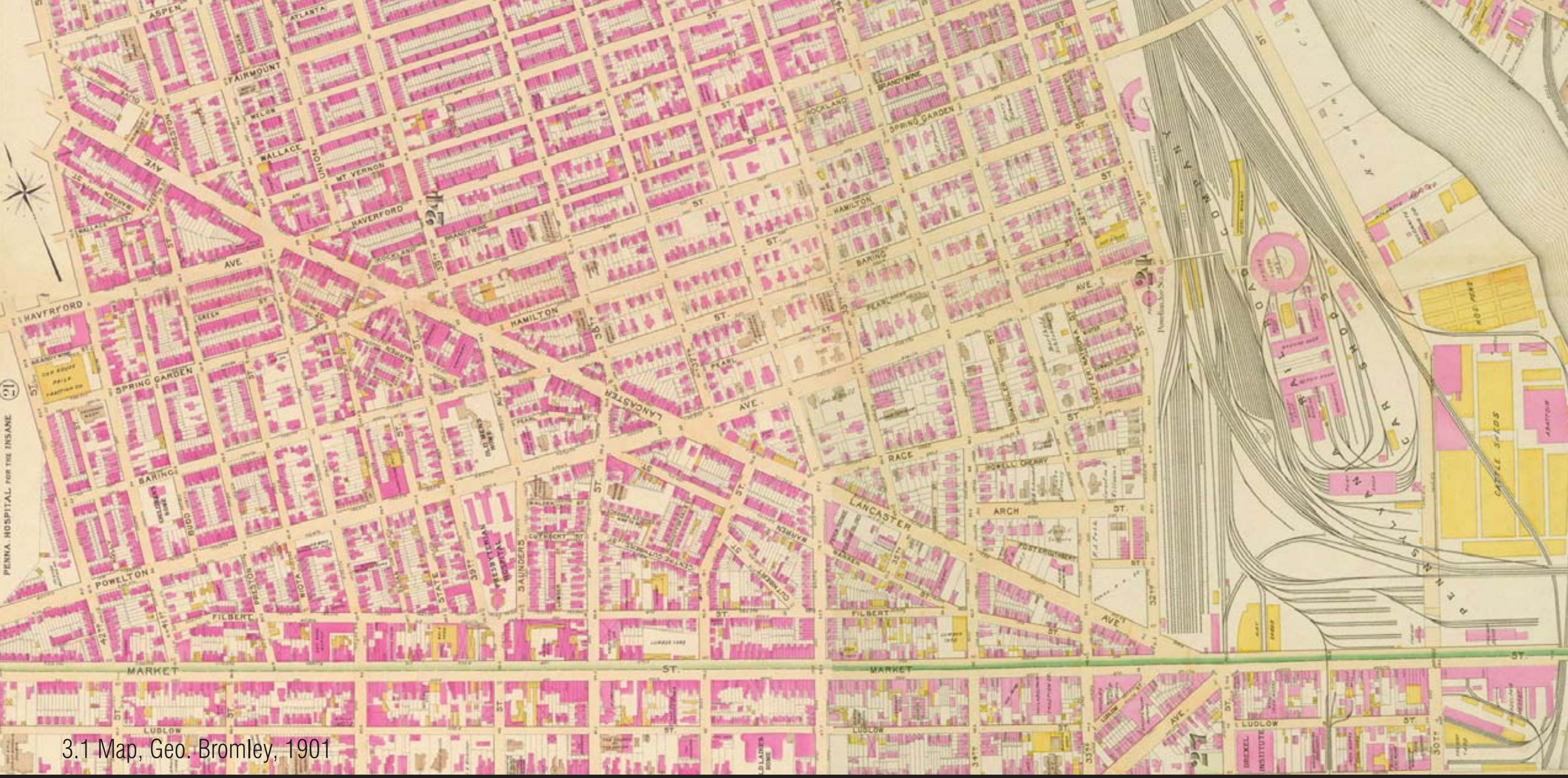

42ND ST.
41ST ST.
40TH ST.
FAIRMOUNT AVE.
HAVERFORD AVE.
SPRING GARDEN ST.
BARING ST.
POWELTON AVE.
DREXEL FIELDS
SAUNDERS PARK
N
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
Miles
INTEGRITY AND CONDITION
Intact and Good condtion
Intact and Fair condition
Some alterations and Good condit
Some alterations and Fair conditio

2.7 Map showing building integrity and condition in West Powelton

Although West Powelton continues to face significant obstacles in repairing its built and social fabric, it could be poised for a comeback. Community organizations and anchor institutions like Drexel University are committed to the neighborhood's success, both as a residential community and a commercial center. Residents and institutions alike are beginning to realize that one of the neighborhood's strongest assets is its physical environment, which contains the type of building stock that lends itself to cost-effective redevelopment and a vibrant urban neighborhood. A strategy that takes this advantage into consideration and builds on growing institutional support must be implemented, or the physical environment will continue to deteriorate. To date, there has been no plan that specifically privileges the existing historic fabric of the neighborhood in a blueprint for positive change.

This report begins to fill that gap. It first outlines West Powelton's history in greater detail and analyzes current physical, economic, and social conditions to produce a full understanding of the neighborhood past and present. As a result of this understanding, the report offers an approach that recommends historic preservation as a means toward securing a brighter future for the neighborhood's residents and physical environment. This approach is multi-pronged and stresses improvement of the neighborhood fabric, the business environment of Lancaster Avenue, and the engagement of the community and Drexel University in working toward a better neighborhood. Finally, a coordinated set of more specific individual projects are presented, with the potential to effect visible short-term change and to work toward transformative long-term strategies.

2.8 Rowhouses on 4000 block of Spring Garden Street



3.1 Map, Geo. Bromley, 1901

3 SITE EVOLUTION

Narrative History

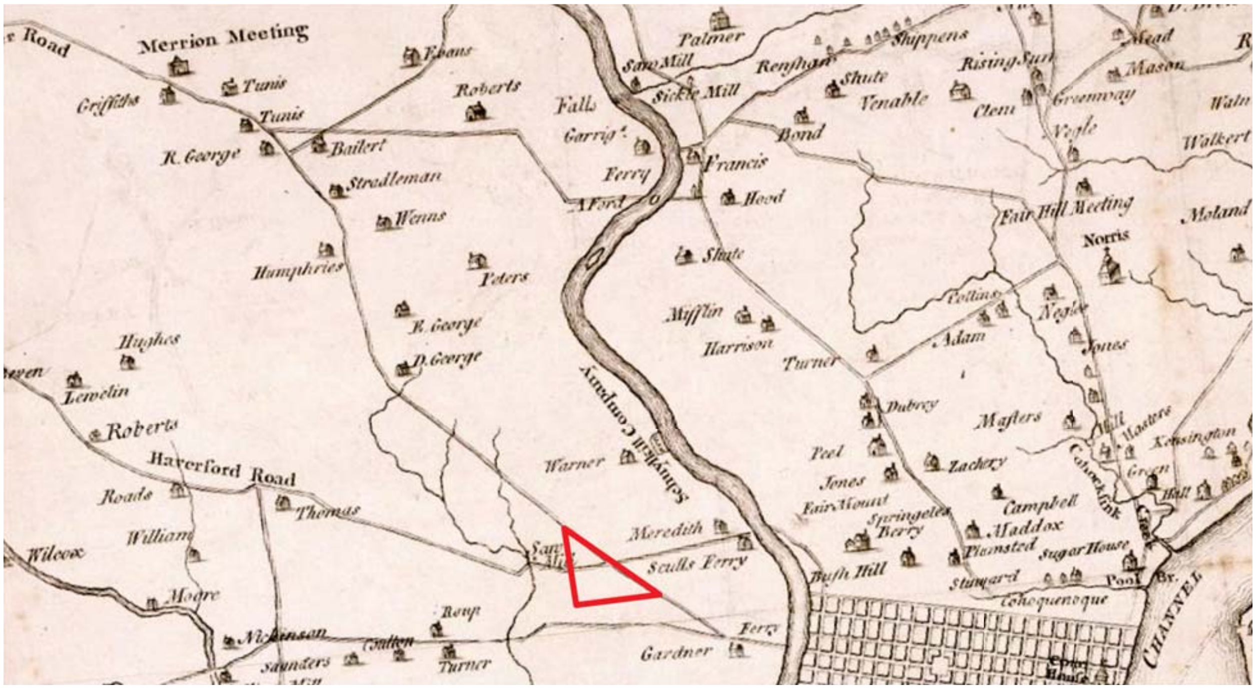
Comparative Photographs

Early History

The earliest reference to non-native settlement in the West Powelton area is from 1677.[1] Five years before William Penn founded Philadelphia, William Warner settled on almost 600 acres of land in present-day West Philadelphia. He named his settlement Blockley, after his native parish in Worcestershire, England, and built himself a house, "Willow Grove," near present-day Lancaster Avenue and 46th Street.

Over the next few decades, early settlers established transportation infrastructure that enabled the settlement to grow. Welsh Quakers began laying out the beginnings of Lancaster Road (Avenue) in 1690. Ten years later, Welsh carpenter William Powel, an early settler of the Powel family for whom Powelton Village was later named, opened a ferry service—known as the "Upper Ferry" or "Scull's Ferry"—over the Schuylkill River at present-day Spring Garden Street, and built a tavern to serve travelers. The same year, Haverford Road (Avenue) opened, running from Powel's house out into Chester County and connecting the agricultural hinterland to the markets of Philadelphia. Tax assessors in 1783 counted a population of 644, as well as 85 houses, 40 barns, 119 horses, 253 horn cattle and sheep, two ferries, two grist mills, and two tanneries; the first U.S. Census seven years later indicated a 40% increase to a population of 883.[2] At the turn of the 19th century, the area remained rural and sparsely populated. Settlement increased over subsequent decades as transportation routes improved (Fig. 3.2).

"The early life of West Philadelphia depended," scholars note, "on its location both as a gateway to the city from the west and as a harbor along the Schuylkill."[3] In 1791, the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Company was incorporated, and by 1795 the unpaved Lancaster Road developed into the crushed-stone Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, the country's first engineered, paved toll route. Regular stagecoach service between Lancaster and Philadelphia commenced two years later. The other regional wagon road of this time was the Darby Road (Woodland Avenue), which extended to Baltimore, Maryland. Both roads began at High Street (Market Street), making that street, and the vicinity, a key

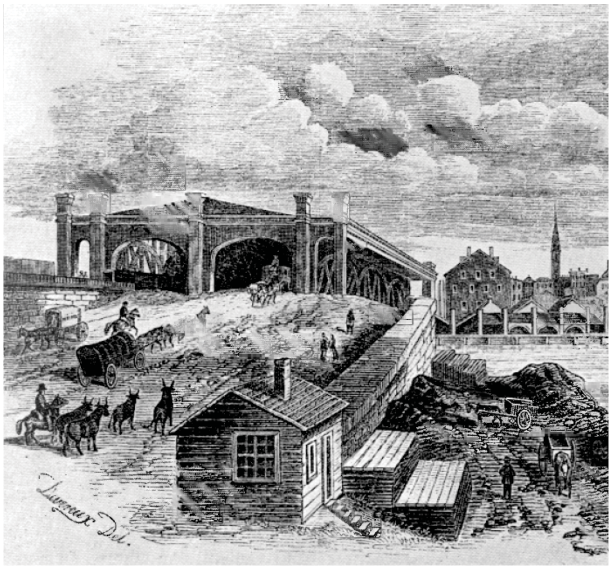

Merrion Meeting
Griffiths
Tunis
Tunis
R. George
Bailert
Stradleman
Evans
Roberts
Wenns
Humphries
Peters
R. George
D. George
Hughes
Lewelin
Roberts
Haverford Road
Roads
William
Thomas
Wilcox
Moore
Saunders
Turner
Warner
Meredith
Sculls Ferry
Ferry
Gardner
Falls
Ferry
Ford
Saw Mill
Sickle Mill
Palmer
Renshaw
Shute
Venable
Shippens
Rising Sun
Clem
Greenway
Mason
Mead
Walker
Francis
Hood
Bond
Shute
Mifflin
Harrison
Turner
Collins
Adam
Fair Hill Meeting
Norris
Moland
Negle
Jones
Dubrey
Masters
Kensington
Peel
Jones
Zachery
Fair Mount
Springetts
Berry
Campbell
Maddox
Plumsted
Sugar House
Bush Hill
Stonyard
Cohoquenoque
Pool
Schuylkill Company
CHANNEL

3.2 Map, N. Scull & G. Heap, 1753. Lancaster Avenue and Haverford Road are shown here.

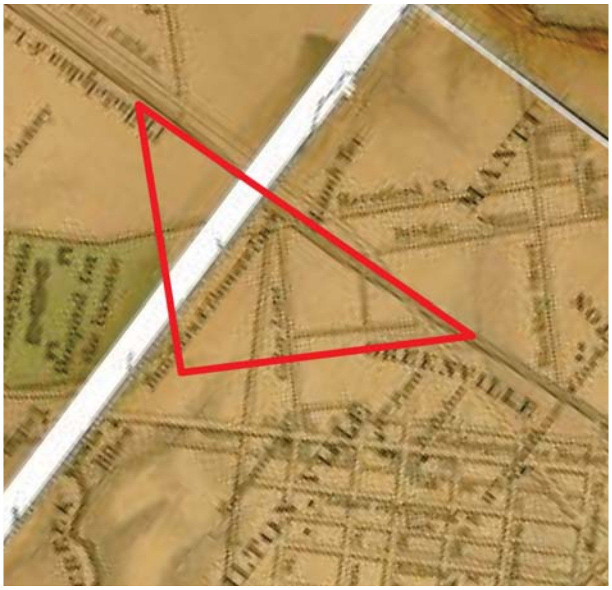
conduit between city and country.[4] In 1805, the first permanent bridge was built across the Schuylkill River at High Street (Market), near where the Lancaster route commenced. In 1812, another bridge was built a short walk northward at Bridge Street (Spring Garden), replacing the earlier Upper Ferry (Fig. 3.3). (Neither is extant.)

Transportation infrastructure made it possible not only for trade to accelerate but also for institutions to settle in the area, taking advantage of its abundance of land. In 1841, the overcrowded Pennsylvania Hospital moved its mental health facilities from Philadelphia to 130 acres in Blockley Township.[5] Not only was land plentiful and cheaper outside the city; the move also reflected a belief, popular in the 1830s and 1840s, that the physical environment affected morals and behavior. Fresh air and spacious, pastoral landscapes could have therapeutic effects on people. Another large social services institution, the Blockley Almshouse, which included a poorhouse, hospital, orphanage and insane asylum, had moved from Philadelphia to Blockley Township six years earlier. On the grounds of the old William Hamilton mansion, the Woodlands Cemetery, established in 1840, created a place of mourning and solace in an expansive English-style landscape garden.

The abundant open space of the 1840s and 1850s would not last for long. Hamiltonville and Powelton Village were burgeoning with speculative development for upper-middle class commuters and summer residents, while the area of West Powelton, known at this time as Greenville, was better characterized by the rough-and-tumble roadhouses that lined Lancaster Pike.[6] Greenville was not so much a cohesive community as it was development that serviced the agricultural truckers and cattle drovers shuttling between Philadelphia and the countryside. While houses for butchers and drovers had existed for as long as the stockyards lined Lancaster, the area consisted mostly of key thoroughfares (Lancaster and Haverford avenues and Market Street), pens, feed stores, harness stores, and taverns for passing drivers (Fig. 3.4).[8]



3.3 High (Market) Street Bridge, opened 1805



3.4 Map, C. Ellet, Jr., 1843

Market Street was somewhat more settled than the northward Greenville area by tradesmen such as blacksmiths, wheelwrights and boat builders, as well as by unskilled laborers. A community of 36 African-American families lived near present-day 40th Street and attended a church near 41st and Chestnut Streets.[8] The German-American presence that came to grow substantially at the end of the century was beginning to reveal itself in such establishments as Sauer's Hotel, at Green Street (Filbert) and present-day 40th Street, and some German shops along Market Street and Lancaster Avenue.[9]

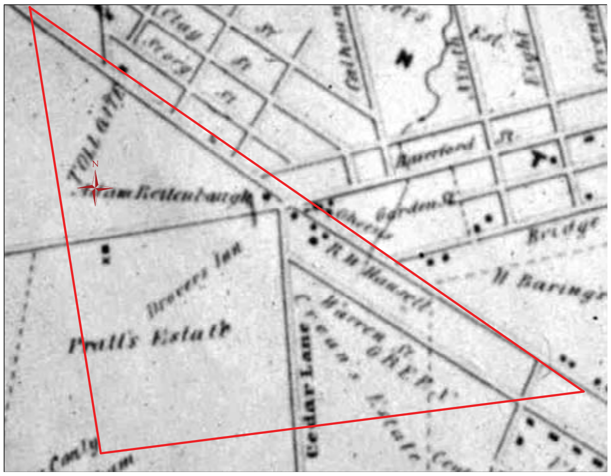
Consolidation and Growth

In 1854, the city of Philadelphia consolidated Blockley Township and other districts into its municipality. Planning for imminent development is evident in the first map following the Act of Consolidation, which shows a speculative new street grid including extensions of Callowhill Street (Powelton Avenue) and Bridge Street (Spring Garden), and numerous new streets (Figs. 3.5-3.6).[10] Four years after Consolidation, in 1858, the first horse-drawn, rail-lined streetcar services were routed through West Philadelphia. Two lines opened that year, the West Philadelphia Passenger Railroad, along Market Street, and the Hestonville, Mantua and Fairmont Passenger Railway, along Lancaster Avenue. As the first rail lines oriented toward commuters and passengers, they connected city to burgeoning "commuter suburb." Almost immediately, this new transit system, with its convenience and pleasantness, changed the travel habits of the middle and upper-middle classes.[11]

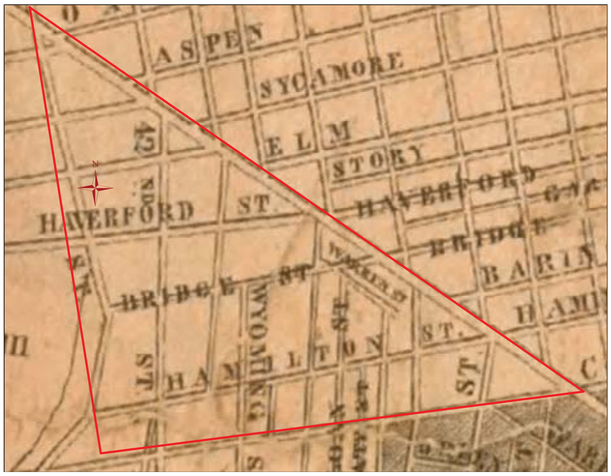
These lines were catalytic for residential development, in contrast to the earlier routes that primarily serviced agriculture, manufacturing, and trade. They would run until the 1890s, when electric trolleys replaced the horse-drawn cars. From 13,265 in 1850, West Philadelphia population surged to 23,738 in 1860.[12]

More institutions established themselves in both West Powelton and the greater West Philadelphia in the middle decades of the 19th century. Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane expanded its facilities with the monumental "Institute of the Pennsylvania Hospital" (better known in the 20th century as Kirkbride's Hospital), which opened in 1859 at the exorbitant cost of $322,542.[13] Designed by Samuel Sloan, this stone and brick neoclassical structure along 49th Street was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.[14] The hospital closed in 1997, and today the site is home to the Kirkbride Center, contemporary mental health facility, as well as a charter school. The legacy of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane also extends much more broadly through the history of psychiatric medicine, as head physician Dr. Thomas Kirkbride rejected conventional institutionalization to pioneer a more humane "moral treatment" of the mentally ill, whom he believed were curable.[15]

Little more than a decade later, another major hospital was founded in the West Powelton area. In 1870, Dr. Courtland Saunders offered his estate, bounded by Powelton Avenue, Filbert Street, Saunders Avenue, and 39th Street, to the Presbyterian Alliance to found a hospital. Presbyterian Hospital opened in 1872 and was noted for providing medical and surgical services



3.5 Map, S. M. Rea & J. Miller, circa 1850



3.6 Map, R. L. Barnes, 1855

without distinction to race, ethnicity or religion (Figs. 3.7-3.8).[16]

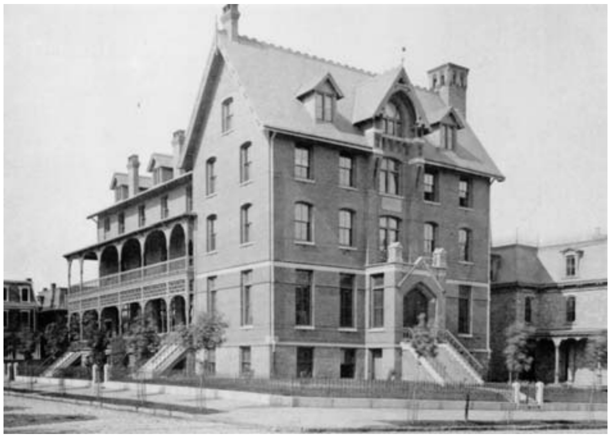
That same year, the University of Pennsylvania relocated to the Hamilton Village area, southeast of West Powelton. Financier Anthony J. Drexel founded the Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry on Chestnut Street in 1891. These three institutions would have a profound effect on the area in the 1960s.

The Industrial Home for Blind Women relocated from Locust and 40th Streets, where it had been since 1869, to a new building at the corner of Powelton and Saunders Avenues in 1880.[17] Adjacent to this home at Powelton Avenue and 39th Street was the old Saunders Mansion, which was dedicated in 1873 as the Old Man's Home. This institution was run by a group of ladies who in 1864 founded Philadelphia's first charitable services expressly for elderly men.[18] While the Old Man's Home is not extant today, the Blind Women's Home retains the charitable spirit of its origins as Mercy-Douglass housing for the disabled and blind (Figs. 3.9-3.10).

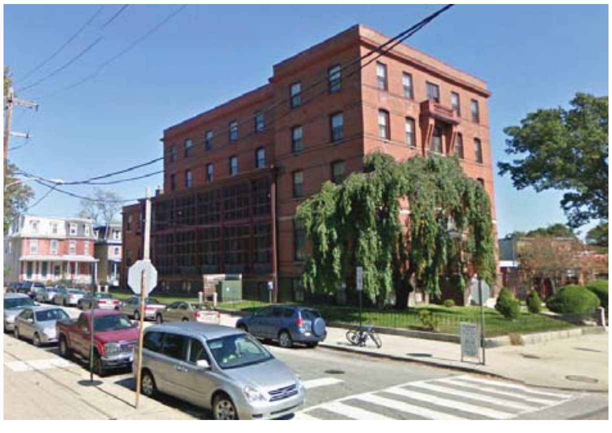
The J.B. Scott map of 1878 shows that West Powelton was largely developed by this time, though some estates remained privately owned, such as Mrs. Keen's along Lancaster near Haverford, Mr. England's at the corner of Baring and Preston Streets (Figs. 3.11-3.12).[19] Those remaining may have been affected by the national economic depression of 1873-77, which somewhat slowed speculative residential development in West Philadelphia.[20] By the publication of the Bromley map of 1895, every estate in West Powelton had been subdivided, virtually every parcel of land developed, driven by rising land values and increasing population.[21] One of the last large ones, belonging to Thomas Hoopes, was filled with the noted W. R. Nicholson House at 40th and Spring Garden Streets and the Nicholson-Michaelson development on the 4000 block of Haverford Avenue. Both the house and the development are named after a key developer of the area, W. R. Nicholson, and all were designed by the architect, Angus Wade (Fig. 3.13).

The spatial arrangements of suburban West Philadelphia homes tended to follow the established arrangements of Center City, where the primary, east-west thoroughfares containing upper-middle class housing were intersected by secondary, north-south streets containing somewhat more modest middle class housing, with smaller streets and alleys in between the primary thoroughfares containing workers' housing. The worker housing was often linked to the adjacent bourgeois housing through owner-lessee relationships, but as they were relatively hidden behind the main street façades, they did not impinge upon the sense of social homogeneity within the immediate neighborhood.[22] The houses at 517 through 523 North Budd Street present examples of two-story worker houses (Fig. 3.14).

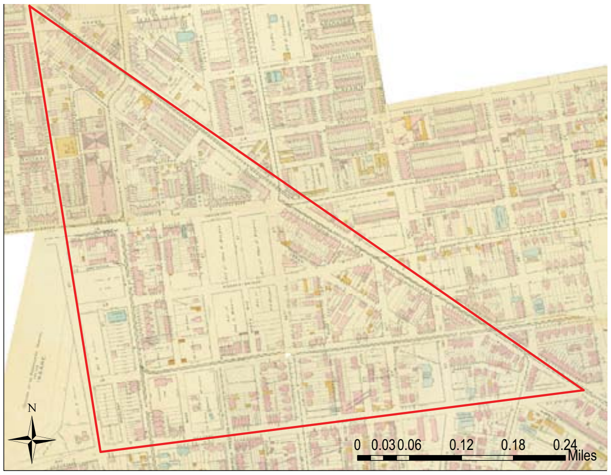
The majority of houses in West Powelton along both primary and secondary streets exemplify the West Philadelphia streetcar townhouse type for which



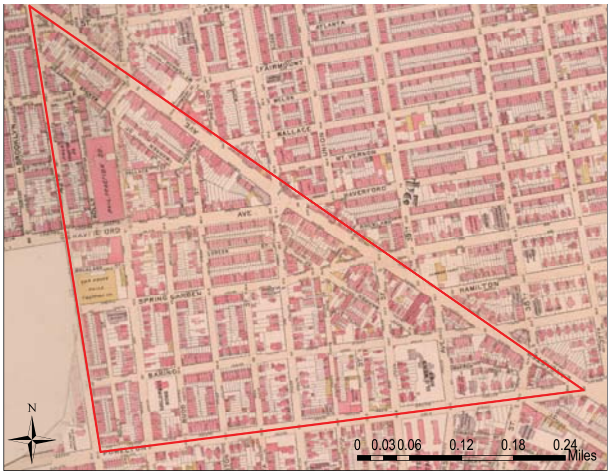
3.7 Pennsylvania Industrial Home for Blind Women, 1880



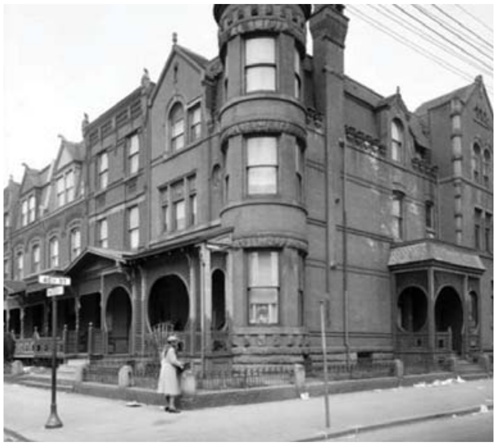
3.8 Mercy-Douglass housing for special needs, 2010



3.9 Map, J. B. Scott, 1878



3.10 Map, G. W. & W. S. Bromley, 1895



3.11 W. R. Nicholson House, 1950

3.12 523-517 N. Budd Street, 2010

eastern West Philadelphia is renowned. Almost always built of brick, rising three stories fronted by a covered porch and topped by a carved cornice, the houses are individualized by such details as bay windows and decorative woodwork while retaining visual cohesiveness over the row.[23] Rowhouses of this type usually extend over an entire block and sometimes multiple blocks, though today some are punctured by the vacant lots of demolished houses. Many rowhouses have been subdivided into multiple apartment units. The 4000 block of Spring Garden Street contains rowhouses which have retained a relatively high degree of integrity.

Electric trolleys replaced horse-drawn cars on the passenger street rails in the 1890s, "ushering in a next stage in commuting and residential dispersion."[24] The Market Street Elevated line followed in 1904. By this time, the dense housing and transportation network had supplanted the area's village atmosphere with a much more urban feeling, and most traces of old Greenville were gone (though some horse-trading business remained).[25] Indeed, despite the formative vision of West Philadelphia as a suburban retreat, by the turn of the century all of eastern West Philadelphia was well into urbanization.[26]

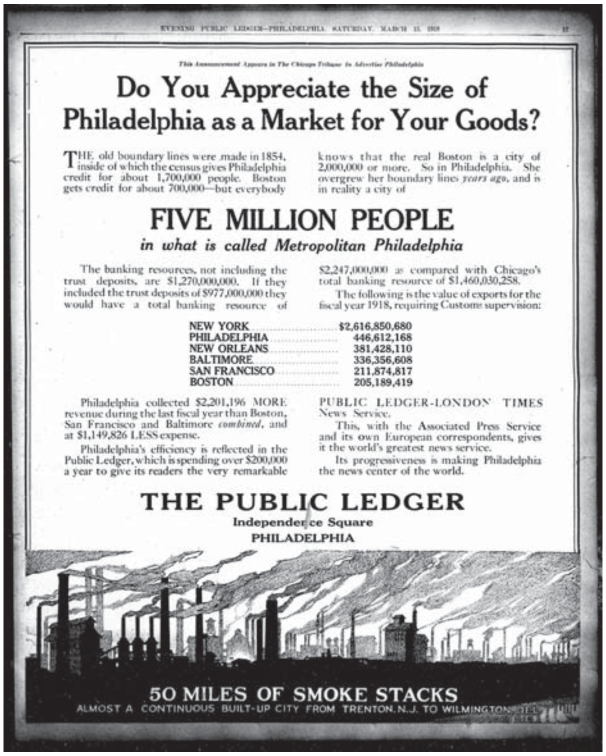
The West Philadelphia Title and Trust, a landmark structure at the busy junction of Lancaster and Haverford Avenues and 40th Street, arrived in 1897. Designed by architect Walter Smedley, a onetime partner of Addison Hutton who was active in the development of nearby Wynnefield, the elaborately ornamented building currently houses local businesses, including popular Hoagie City (Figs. 3.32-3.33, p. 24).[27]

In the face of increasingly crowded conditions, immigration and the attendant demographic changes, the West Powelton area appears to have remained, well into the 1910s, balanced in its residential, commercial, institutional, and transportational components, and thriving socially and commercially. In fact, industrial and urban restructuring in Philadelphia had been well underway since the turn of the century.[28] Over the next fifty years, West Powelton would change in profound and complex ways.

Deindustrialization

Coal, iron, steam, railroads had fueled Philadelphia's first wave of industry, while petrochemicals, electricity, mass production, and industrial securities had driven its second wave.[29] By the turn of the 20th century Philadelphia had grown into a key cog in the "workshop of the world," filled with an abundance of factories especially along the riverfronts (Fig. 3.13). West Powelton was home to two major factories: Henry Jahke & Son, Slaughters & Packers of Pork Company, once headquartered at the intersection of Sloan and Baring Streets (Figs. 3.14-3.15); and George W. Smith & Company's Artistic Furniture Factory, once at Sloan Street and Powelton Avenue. (The latter building was later used by the Seller's Wire Company.)

By the 1910s hints of decline manifested throughout the city's industrial network. As technology and industrial structuring evolved, other cities began to surpass Philadelphia in revenue and large-scale



EVENING PUBLIC LEDGER—PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1919 17

This Announcement Appears in The Chicago Tribune to Advertise Philadelphia

Do You Appreciate the Size of Philadelphia as a Market for Your Goods?

THE old boundary lines were made in 1854, inside of which the census gives Philadelphia credit for about 1,700,000 people. Boston gets credit for about 700,000—but everybody knows that the real Boston is a city of 2,000,000 or more. So in Philadelphia. She overgrew her boundary lines *years ago*, and is in reality a city of

FIVE MILLION PEOPLE

in what is called Metropolitan Philadelphia

The banking resources, not including the trust deposits, are $1,270,000,000. If they included the trust deposits of $977,000,000 they would have a total banking resource of $2,247,000,000 as compared with Chicago's total banking resource of $1,460,030,258.

The following is the value of exports for the fiscal year 1918, requiring Customs supervision:

NEW YORK	$2,616,850,680
PHILADELPHIA	446,612,168
NEW ORLEANS	381,428,110
BALTIMORE	336,356,608
SAN FRANCISCO	211,874,817
BOSTON	205,189,419

Philadelphia collected $2,201,196 MORE revenue during the last fiscal year than Boston, San Francisco and Baltimore *combined*, and at $1,149,826 LESS expense.

Philadelphia's efficiency is reflected in the Public Ledger, which is spending over $200,000 a year to give its readers the very remarkable PUBLIC LEDGER-LONDON TIMES News Service.

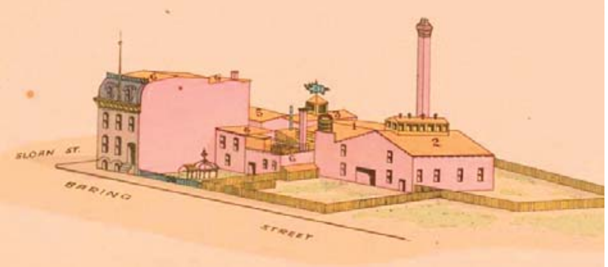
This, with the Associated Press Service and its own European correspondents, gives it the world's greatest news service.

Its progressiveness is making Philadelphia the news center of the world.

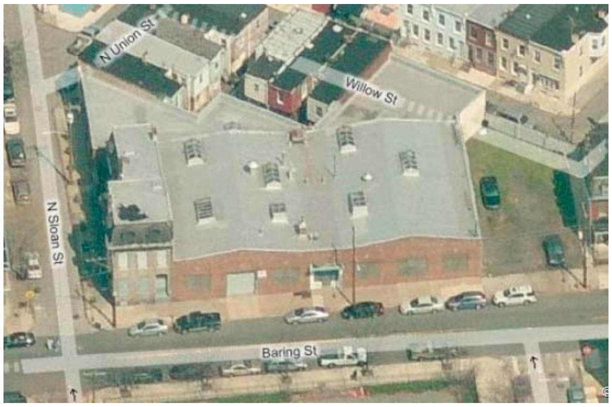
THE PUBLIC LEDGER
Independence Square
PHILADELPHIA

50 MILES OF SMOKE STACKS
ALMOST A CONTINUOUS BUILT-UP CITY FROM TRENTON, N.J. TO WILMINGTON, DEL.

3.13 Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger, March 15, 1919



3.14 Henry Jahke & Son, Slaughters & Packers of Pork Company, Hexamer General Surveys, 1881



3.15 Henry Jahke & Son site, 2010

production of goods that were once Philadelphia staples. The city reported significant unemployment figures in manufacturing sectors almost a decade before the U.S. stock market crashed in 1929.[30] Over the course of the 1920s metalworking jobs declined 25%, led by losses in the rail and shipbuilding industries—precisely the sort of jobs that fueled West Powelton and broader West Philadelphia.[31]

From the 36 black families believed to have lived near 40th and Market Streets in the mid-19th century, African-American migration increased in the 1890s, then accelerated in the 1920s when violence and poverty in the Jim Crow South drove families toward the promise of factory jobs in northern cities (Fig. 3.16).[32] The construction of the subway system was another draw to Philadelphia in the 1920s.[33] The lure of secure jobs grew even stronger in the 1930s as the Congress of Industrial Organizations ushered in a national wave of industrial unionism, and in the war period, as able-bodied workers were at a critical low.[34] Yet in a case of heartbreaking irony, African-Americans arrived in northern cities at almost precisely the time that industrial jobs began to move to the South and overseas, where land and labor were cheaper and unions less prevalent and powerful.[35]

Concurrently in the 1920s and 1930s, the socioeconomics of West Powlelton and surrounding areas shifted from middle class to working class, and its white population began to decline. The Great Depression contributed toward losses of businesses, as it did all over the country. The Title and Trust closed. West Powelton's Victorian houses showed signs of deterioration (Fig. 3.17).[36] Some of the more upwardly mobile left the area. By time of the 1940 census, the West Philadelphia population was solidly working class and still predominantly white but with an African-American population at around 20% and growing. These general trends were well represented in the West Powelton area. A cohesive Jewish community existed there as well, and many stores along Lancaster and Haverford Avenues were Jewish-owned at this time.[37] After World War II, West Philadelphia's white population declined at a faster rate. Postwar demand for decent, inexpensive housing, in conjunction with discomfort over increasingly mixed demographics, attracted whites to Northeast Philadelphia and the equally booming suburbs. Federal highway and home ownership policies fed the demand and accelerated so-called "white flight." The population of the city hit its peak in 1952 at 2.2 million and has declined until very recently.

3.16 The Great Migration

3.17 Dilapidated Victorian houses, ca. 1930

Also after wartime ended, the decline in manufacturing grew increasingly perceptible in cities such as Buffalo, Chicago, and Detroit.[38] Philadelphia, however, "was distinctive in that its industrial base relied on a wide variety of manufacturing activities rather than one dominant industry, like automobiles in Detroit or steel in Pittsburgh. As a consequence, the deindustrialization of Philadelphia was less perceptible than in other places, more like the air slowly leaking out of a tire rather than a sudden, shocking blowout. Philadelphia's industrial tire was nearly flat before local officials realized the magnitude of what had happened."[39]

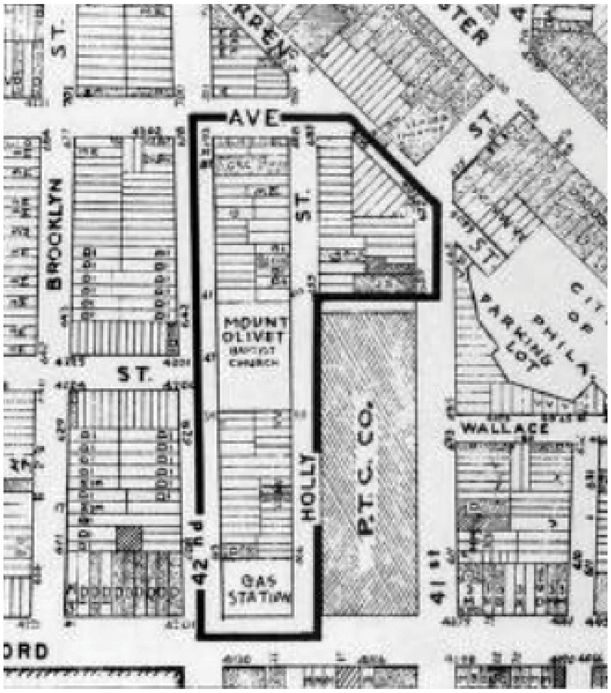
West Powelton became a shadow of the community it once was, nourished by the industry, commerce and travel that had germinated from Lancaster Avenue and Market Street. Processes of industry, which helped West Philadelphia's population to soar in the late 19th century, now drove its decline. Whereas in 1900 the Pennsylvania Railroad was the largest company in the world, and in 1947 manufacturing jobs comprised nearly half of all jobs in the city, by the end of the 20th century, more than 85% of those manufacturing jobs were gone.[40]

"Renewal" and Response

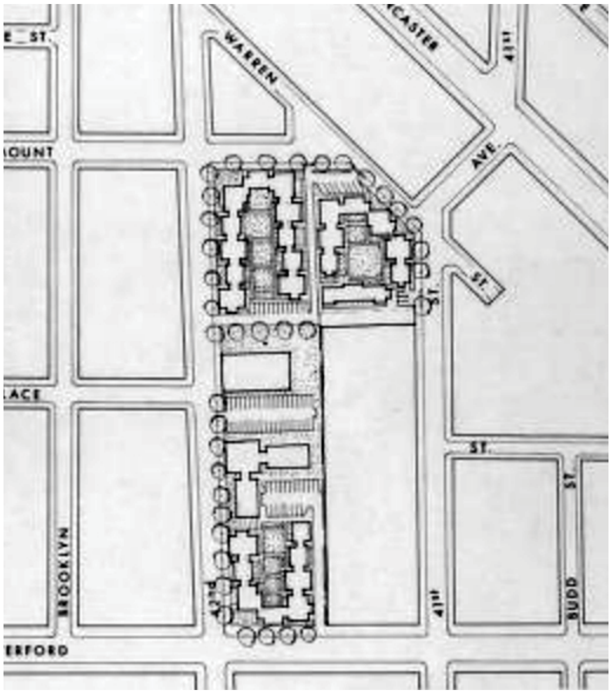
By the 1950s and especially by the 1960s, concentrated African-American poverty was evident in the West Powelton area, as well as in other parts of Philadelphia. Scholars have emphasized that deindustrialization was not the primary cause of concentrated poverty for African-Americans in Philadelphia.[41] The driving force was racial discrimination, both overt—refusing to hire African-Americans—and covert—closed union hiring, apprentice systems, and discriminatory housing and mortgage-lending practices.[42] That said, deindustrialization significantly exacerbated racism and racially-based poverty.[43]

Another contributor toward concentrated African-American poverty pertains to changes in the housing stock. As whites moved out of the area, many of them retained ownership of their previous homes but divided them into rentals, sometimes of sub-standard quality. Absentee landlords and deterioration of housing stock accelerated through the 1950s, and continues to some degree today.[44] In the decade between 1940 and 1950, West Philadelphia's African-American population increased from 19 to 28 percent, yet over the following decade it jumped from 28 to 52 percent. By 1960, African-Americans comprised a majority of the population of West Philadelphia. Within the census tracts encompassing West Powelton, African-Americans comprised 78 percent.[45]

This complex interplay of racial, demographic, economic and spatial structures left many African-Americans in a bad place, all over Philadelphia but



3.18 Mount Olivet Redevelopment Area Plan, existing land use



3.19 Mount Olivet Redevelopment Area Plan, proposed site plan especially in the North and the West.[46] The city's response, though apparently enacted with good intentions, effectively worsened conditions.

The Pennsylvania State Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945 enabled Philadelphia to use eminent domain for the purposes of redevelopment if a site meets one or more criteria of "blight"—such as "overcrowded conditions" or "economically undesirable land use." The City Planning Commission is tasked with certifying blight and producing redevelopment area plans, while the Redevelopment Authority generates renewal proposals, locates developers, and takes actions toward implementation. City Council ultimately approves or rejects the RDA's proposals and agreements. In the mid-20th century the PCPC and RDA worked prolifically, driven by the progressive, if controversial, visions of Planning Commission Executive Director Edmund Bacon. Their urban renewal programs targeted portions of West Powelton and surrounding areas in the 1960s.

In 1962 the Planning Commission published the Mount Olivet Redevelopment Area Plan, which targeted an area of land encompassed by Haverford Avenue 42nd Street, Warren Street and 41st Street, adjacent to the old West Philadelphia Passenger Railway terminal, which was then used as a bus depot. The plan cited "deteriorating influences" including blighted housing, dilapidated garages and mixed land usage, and prescribed demolishing almost all of the buildings (including Holly Street itself) within area boundaries and replacing them with lower density housing (Figs. 3.18-3.19). It is debatable by current standards whether or not the buildings were "deteriorating" enough to warrant use of eminent domain. Yet community planning occurred on this site as well; locals contributed to building new housing in 1967. Mount Olivet Tabernacle Church, which is located on the redevelopment site, independently solicited donations from community members to redevelop the adjacent lot containing the obsolete terminal (Fig. 3.20).

Pastor Marshall Shepard wanted to provide low-income housing and a community center for his congregation's senior citizens. Although the architecture of "Mount Olivet Village" differs greatly the architecture of older West Powelton, the project replaced an underused industrial space with modern efficiencies that served an apparent community need.[47] Over the years, as the church decreased in size and funding and demand decreased in general for efficiency units, the development deteriorated. Following foreclosure, the Philadelphia Housing Authority obtained the property in 2002, and a second round of redevelopment commenced: converting 122 efficiency rooms into 61 one-bedroom and 10 two-bedroom apartments (Fig. 3.21). Conversion of additional storage space has since added more one-bedroom apartments, a day care facility, a senior center, and office space.[48]

Another urban renewal project happened south of West Powelton but carried arguably more profound effects. As early as the mid-1950s, broader West Philadelphia was becoming a priority for federal

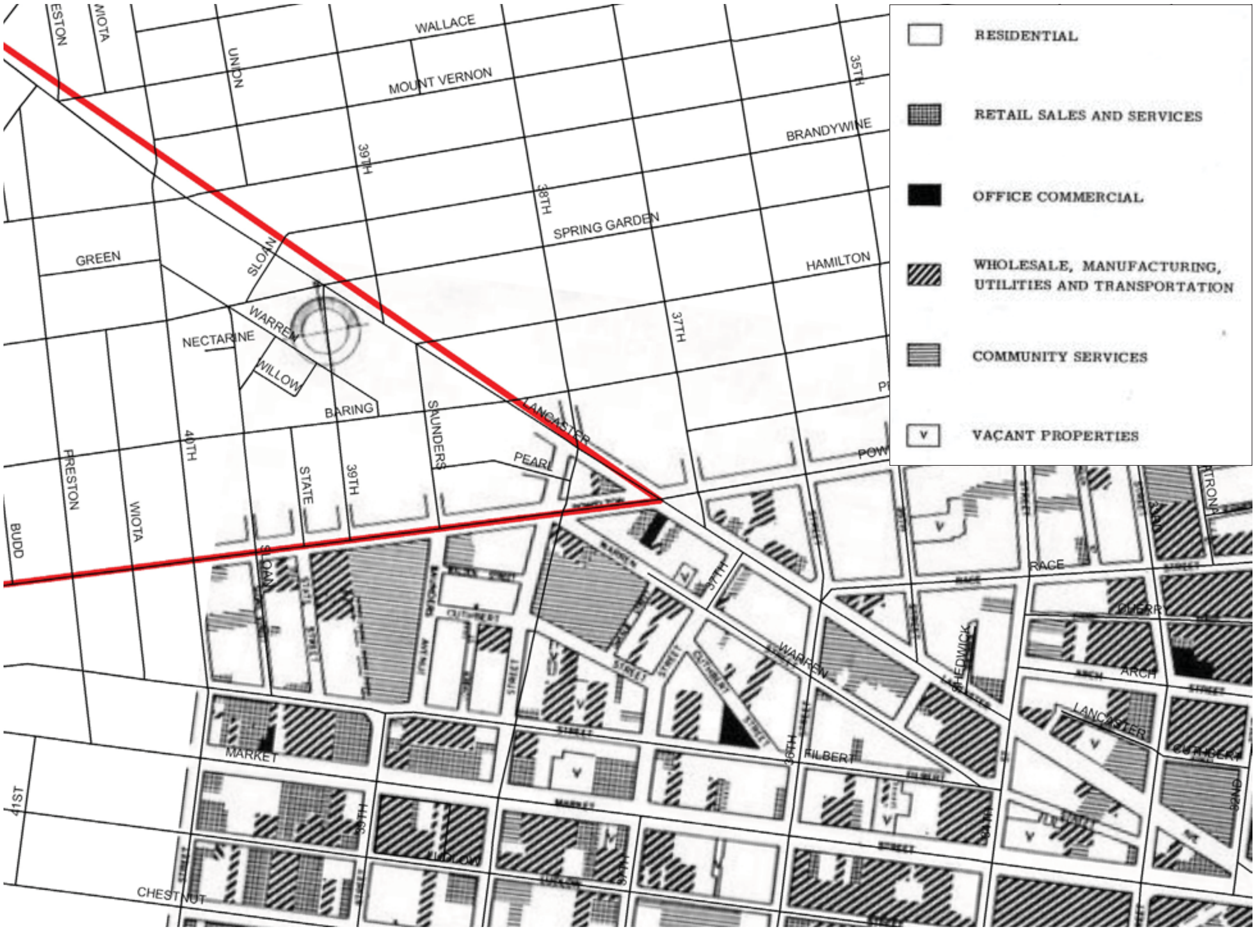
3.20 Mount Olivet Tabernacle Church, 700 block of 42nd Street

3.21 Adjacent housing

funding earmarked for urban renewal in large part because of the presence of the University of Pennsylvania. The confluence of a major university that was growing in size, activity and national prominence, and a surrounding neighborhood that was changing, led both public officials and private interests to try to steer the course.[49] The West Philadelphia Corporation, a non-profit comprised of representatives from the University of Pennsylvania, the Drexel Institute of Technology (now Drexel University), the Presbyterian Hospital in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathy, formed in 1959. The WPC claimed to promote social development in West Philadelphia, though its stated objective—to realize "University City not only as a good place to live because of its cultural and education environment, but also as a prospective center of private research"—suggested interests closely aligned with institutional and economic development.[50] The following year, the WPC partnered with the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and the Planning Commission to move forward on the University City Science Center within an already-designated Urban Renewal Area bounded by Market Street, Lancaster Avenue, Powelton Avenue, and 40th Street.

In the face of vigorous protest from residents as well as many in the university community, the project proceeded with demolition of residences occupied predominantly by African-Americans, in addition to businesses along Market Street, community service functions, and industrial and transportational functions. In the place of this community rose large-scale office and research facilities and hospital expansion (Figs. 3.22-3.23). University City High School, a public charter school, was also established through this redevelopment.

While the Science Center complex did not become the powerful generator of economic development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VACANT PROPERTIES
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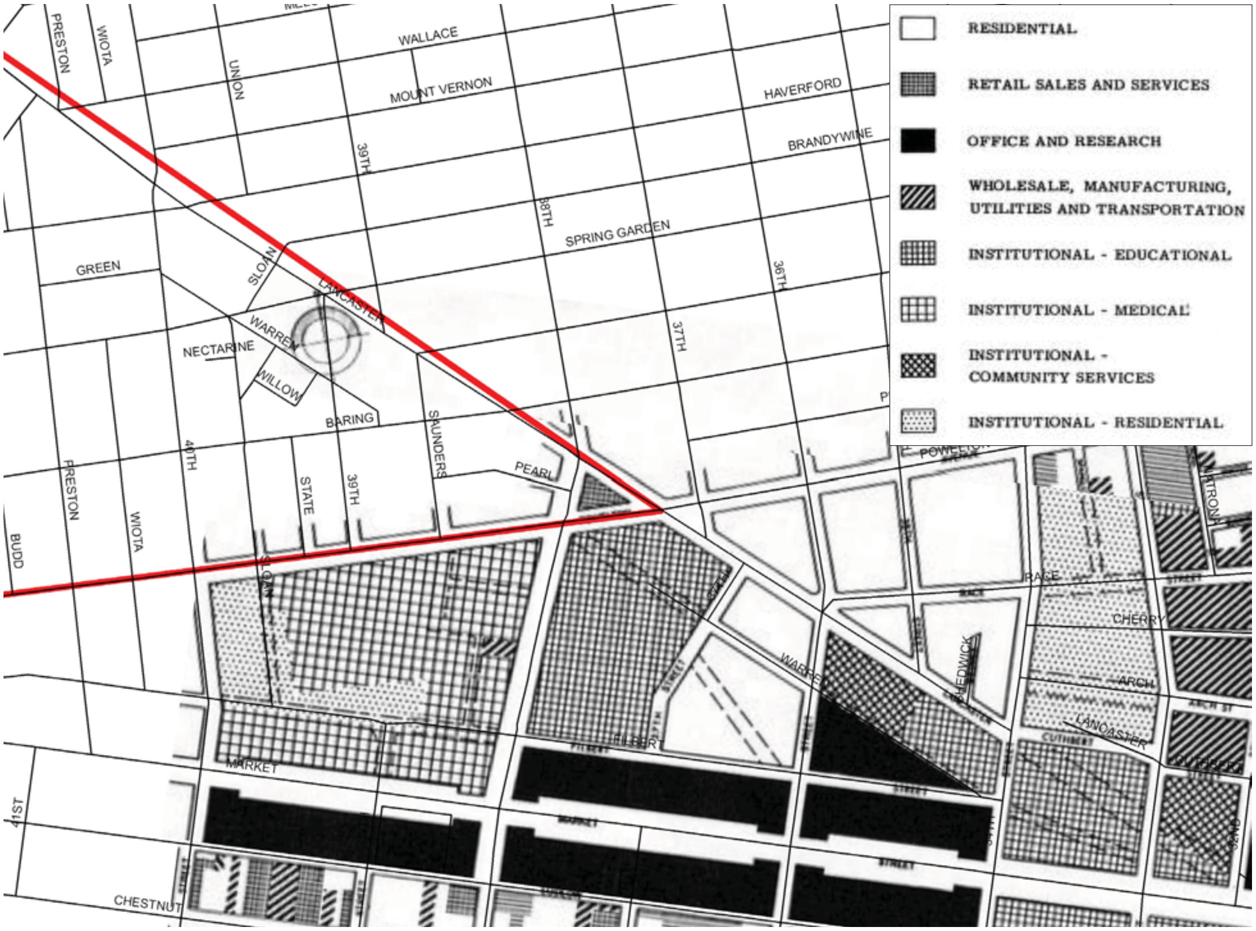
MOUNT VERNON
BRANDYWINE
SPRING GARDEN
HAMILTON
GREEN
NECTARINE
WARREN
WILLOW
BARING
SLOAN
UNION
39TH
38TH
37TH
35TH
40TH
PRESTON
WIOTA
BUDD
STATE
SAUNDERS
LANCASTER
PEARL
RACE
CHERRY
ARCH
FILBERT
MARKET
41ST
CHESTNUT
SEDWICK

3.22 University City Core Plan, 1966, existing land use map. White areas contain housing.

and jobs that the city and others had hoped, both Penn and Drexel grew in academic stature through it, and it continues to support research today.[51] Yet its legacy also includes community destruction. Many families relocated to the Mantua neighborhood, which was itself a city-designated Redevelopment Area and incapable of absorbing a sudden influx of new residents. In effect this redevelopment effort exacerbated the concentrated African-American poverty that it intended in part to address, merely moving it into adjacent neighborhoods. Many locals who experienced this callous episode are still alive today and the memory remains. For those too young to remember, a mosaic on the High School commemorates it (Fig. 3.24).

In the midst of this turmoil, a point of resounding pride for the West Powelton community came on August 3, 1965. Martin Luther King, Jr., on his "Freedom Now" tour following the success of his Southern Christian

3.24 University City High School, 3601 Filbert Street, exterior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INSTITUTIONAL - RESIDENTIAL
PRESTON
WIOTA
UNION
WALLACE
MOUNT VERNON
HAVERFORD
BRANDYWINE
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38TH
SPRING GARDEN
36TH
37TH
GREEN
SLOAN
LANCASTER
WARREN
NECTARINE
WILLOW
BARING
SAUNDERS
PEARL
40TH
STATE
BUDD
41ST
MARKET
CHESTNUT
CHERRY
ARCH
RACE
SHEDWICK
POWELTON
FILBERT

3.23 University City Core Plan, 1966, proposed land use map

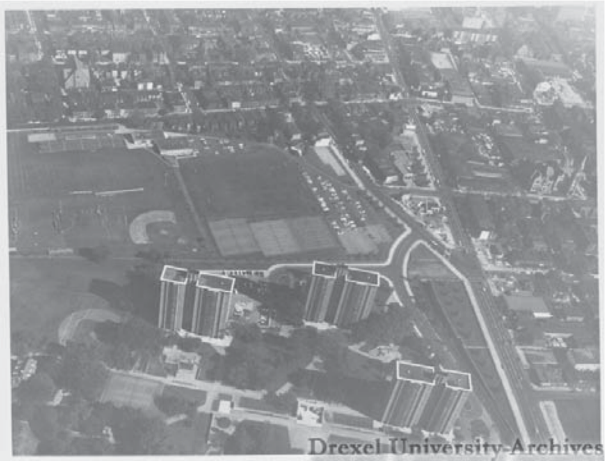
Leadership Conference, visited Philadelphia at the intersection of 40th Street, Lancaster Avenue, and Haverford Avenue. Dr. King spoke of supporting civil rights efforts and raising funds to a crowd of 10,000.[52] Today, a mural, state historical marker, and sculpture commemorate the event.

Around the corner from Mt. Olivet Village, at 42nd and Haverford, Drexel Institute acquired the former grounds of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, with its connecting route on Powelton Avenue leading straight through West Powelton. In 1963, Friel Field House was built to augment the athletic fields.[53]

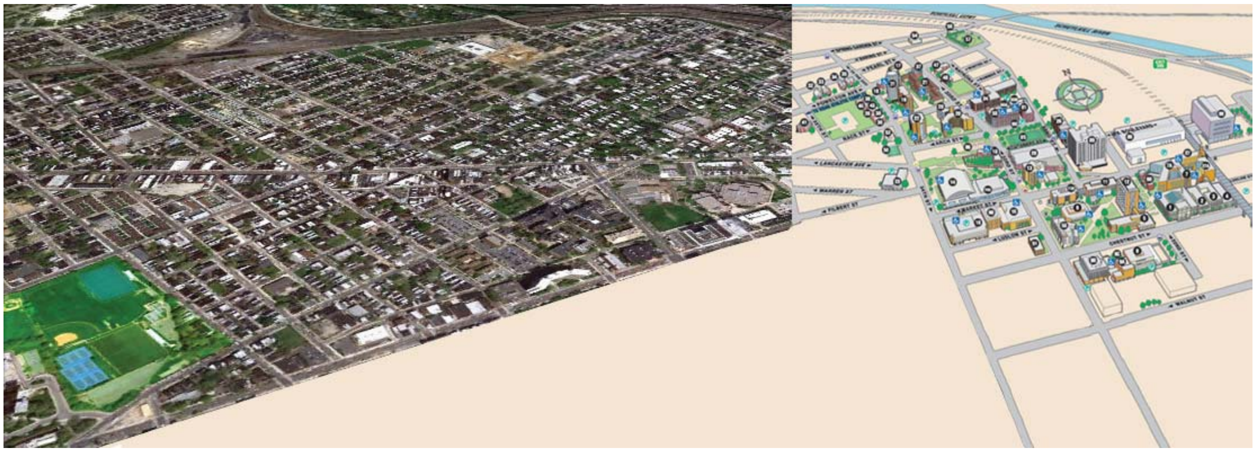
This was part of the greater plan for Drexel to continue expanding and compete with the nearby University of Pennsylvania, as an interdisciplinary university that offered both academics and student life (Fig. 3.27).[54] To this point, Drexel had been suffering from a lack of enrollment after deindustrialization minimized the demand for students seeking technical degrees. Drexel sought to change its image as a training institute for manufacturing jobs and instead appeal to a broader range of degrees in higher education.

To facilitate more student involvement at the school, Drexel Institute built its first dorm, Kelly Hall, in 1967 (Fig. 3.28). This aimed to attract additional students, particularly resident students, to Drexel, which was then composed of 90 percent commuter students. In 1970, Drexel Institute formally changed its name to Drexel University.

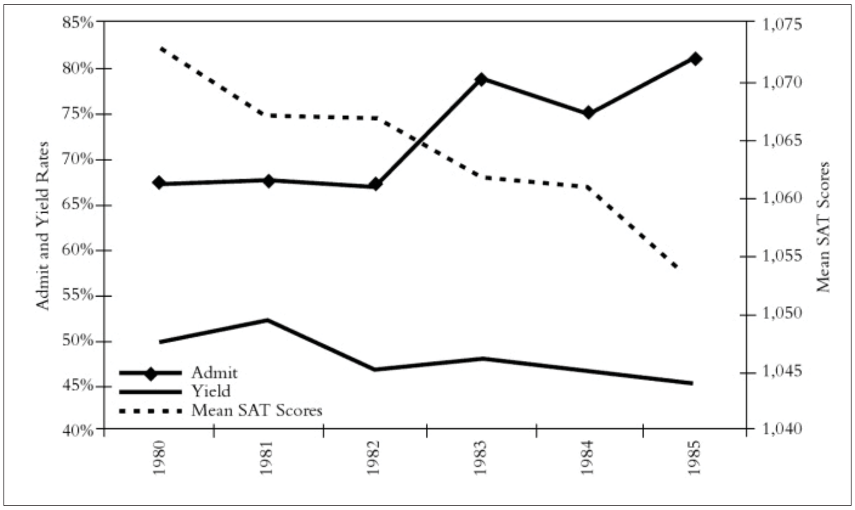
In the following decades, students began to establish more of a presence in the neighborhoods surrounding Drexel, including West Powelton. School President William W. Hagerty continued to push for the development of a university community around Drexel. Drexel campus was not historically a place where students would mingle after hours; it was a commuter campus that had isolated itself from the surrounding neighborhoods until it began its residential student growth. Fraternity and sorority houses appeared on Powelton Avenue, and more students remained in the neighborhood during night and weekend hours.[55] The development of fraternities, and ultimately dormitories, along the north end of the campus placed them between the university and Powelton Village and caused ongoing friction with local residents.[56] Student enrollment rose through the 1970s, but tensions with neighbors were not addressed until the 1980s.



3.25 Aerial view of Drexel's athletic fields, looking east from 45th and Market Streets, 1966.



3.26 Drexel playing fields in relation to central campus, with West Powelton in between



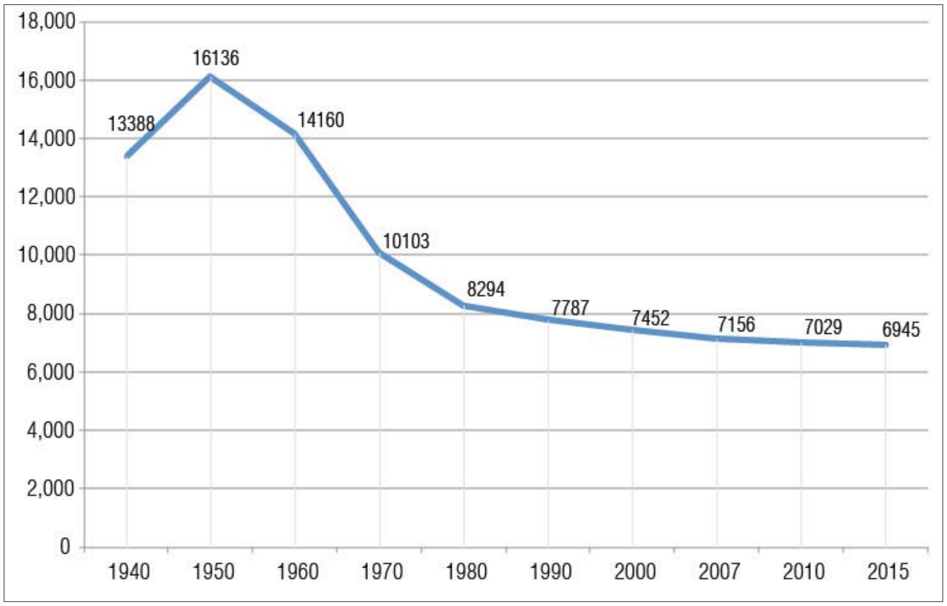
3.27 Admission, yield, and mean SAT scores for Drexel University, 1980-1985

3.28 Kelly Hall, built in 1967

One eruption between the residents and fraternity students made headlines in the spring of 1984. Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity on the 3400 block of Powelton named their black dog "Nigger" and would ostentatiously call it by name in front of local residents. They especially did so as local high school students walked home westward after school. Fistfights finally erupted in April 1984, and the fraternity was subsequently closed "as a threat to the public safety of the city."[57]

West Powelton met many more difficulties in maintaining its community throughout the 1980s. Between 1970 and 1980 alone, the neighborhood's population of the neighborhood shrunk by almost 20 percent. Federal census data projects a continued decline through at least 2015 (Fig. 3.29).

High vacancy rates also left many areas of the neighborhood blighted, and created slum or near-slum conditions throughout. Many properties deteriorated until only the desperate tenant would live in them, and the decay of abandoned properties spread throughout the neighborhood.[58] Along with the abandoned urban renewal-style projects such as the Mount Olivet Village, dangerous avenues emerged



3.29 West Powelton population, 1940-2015 (projected) for crime, vandalism, and heavy drug trafficking in the 1980s. The area became notorious for its "crack hotels," where dilapidated residential properties offered a space to purchase and use hard drugs at hourly rates.[59]

Organizational Renaissance

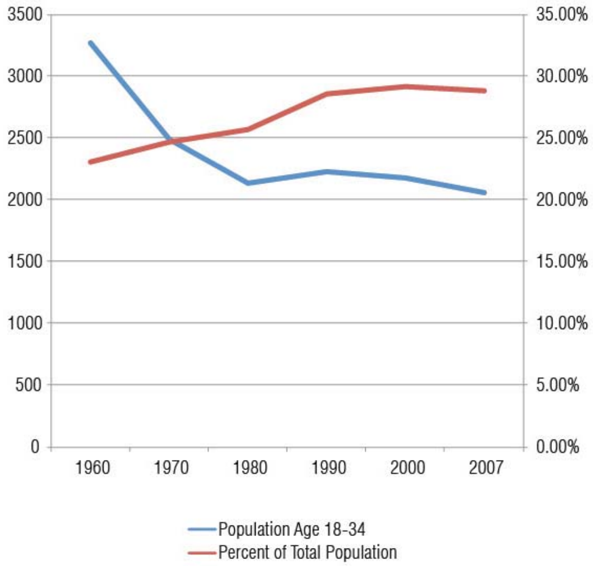
Community members began to stand up for change in West Powelton. Existing community organizations voiced their concerns, in addition to the formation of new organizations. West Powelton Concerned Community Council, Powelton Village Civic Association, and Friends of Saunders Park all wanted to tackle the issue of blight and turn decaying buildings back into needed homes for low-income residents (Fig. 3.30).[60] Likewise, commercial revitalization became the basis for the creation of the Lancaster Avenue Business Association.[61]

The People's Emergency Center, or PEC, reached out to the homeless and facilitated programs for social development in the area.[62] In 1992, PEC expanded its efforts to physical rehabilitation of West Powelton through the creation of the PEC Community Development Corporation (PECCDC), which develops and manages for-sale and rental housing units and artists' live-work spaces and rents affordable commercial space.

The 1990s was a decade of opportunity and recovery for West Powelton as participation of institutions and organizations increased. University City District, a neighborhood improvement district, was created in 1997 and extended its borders toward the neighborhood, though it did not encompass West Powelton.

Between 1960 and 2000, the percentage of neighborhood residents between ages 18 and 34 rose steadily, probably indicating an increased student presence in West Powelton (Fig. 3.31).[63] Although this increase has recently tapered off, in 2010 Drexel's new president John Fry announced the University's intention to increased development and revitalization efforts in the surrounding neighborhoods.[64]

3.30 Friends of Saunders Park

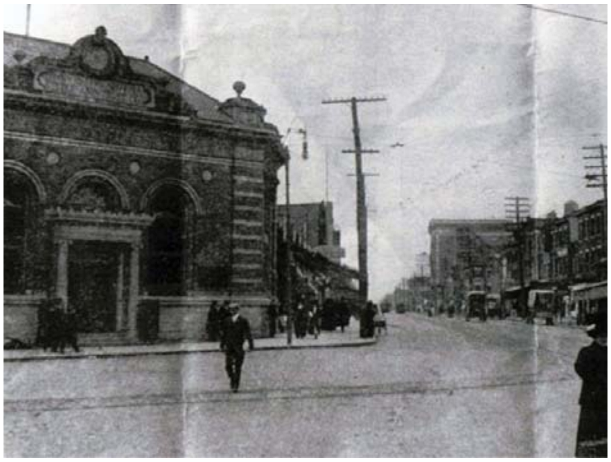


3.31 Percentage of total West Powelton population, age 18-34

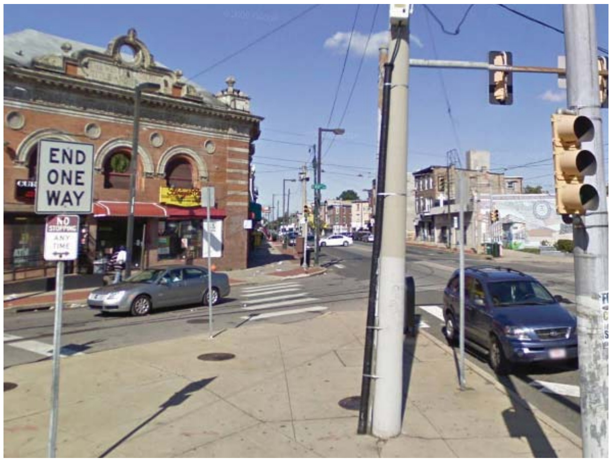
Comparative Photographs

The following section shows photographs that compare the historic fabric of West Powelton with what currently exists. Photograph comparisons are extremely helpful, particularly for our project, because it shows changes in the neighborhood over the last century. We chose several different views of the neighborhood: buildings that are still intact, buildings and streetscapes that vary in their changes, buildings that have experienced a change of use, and buildings that are no longer there at all.

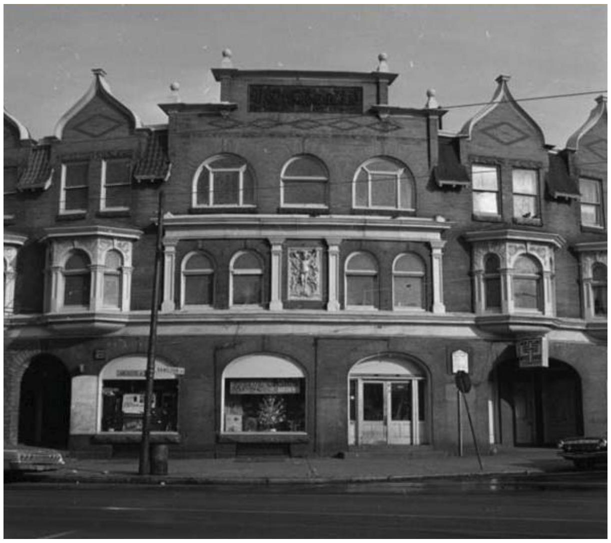
Despite decades of change, many of West Powelton's landmark buildings remain intact (Figs. 3.32-3.39). Although the West Philadelphia Title and Trust Building is no longer a bank, it is an iconic structure and a great candidate for local and/or national historic designation. Hawthorne Hall also remains intact, though partially vacant, and is listed in the local historic register. Penn Presbyterian Hospital and the flatiron commercial building pictured are two other buildings that have endured through time.



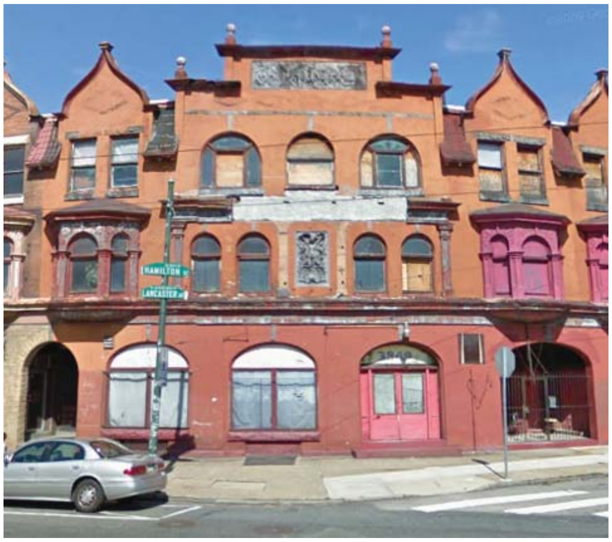
3.32 West Philadelphia Title & Trust Bank, 4000 Lancaster Avenue, 1910



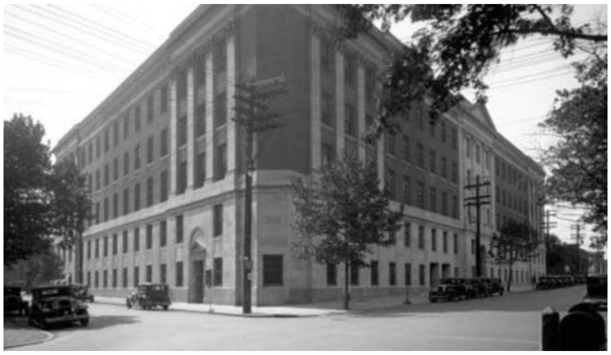
3.33 Same building, 2010



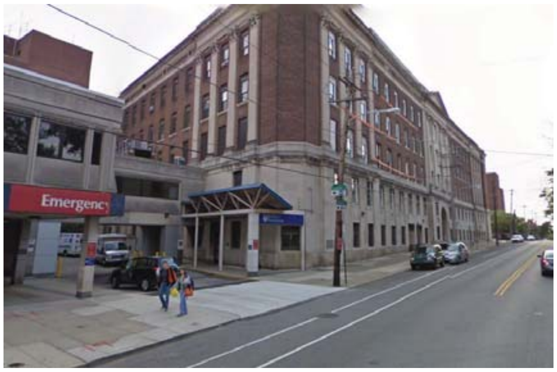
3.34 Hawthorne Hall, n.d.



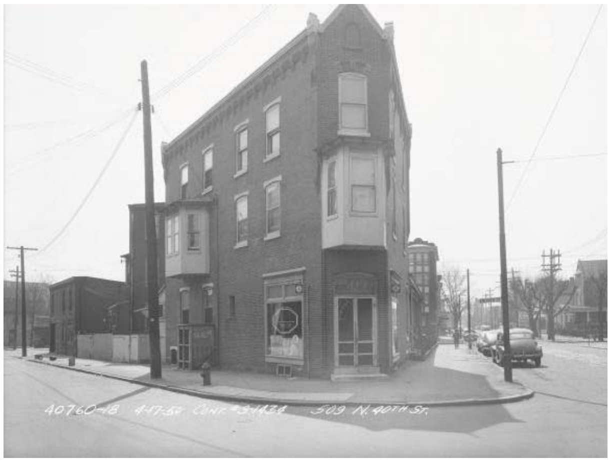
3.35 Same building, 2010



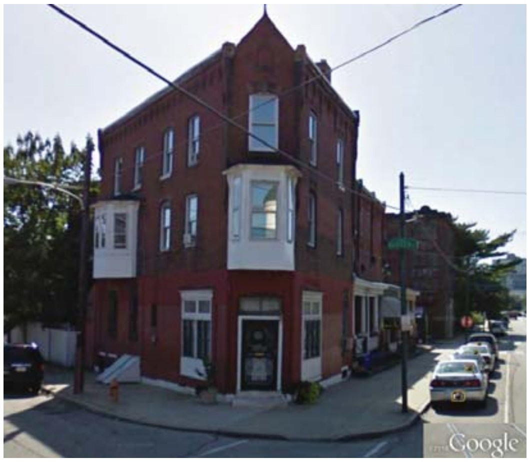
3.36 Penn Presbyterian Hospital, 1931



3.37 Same building, 2010

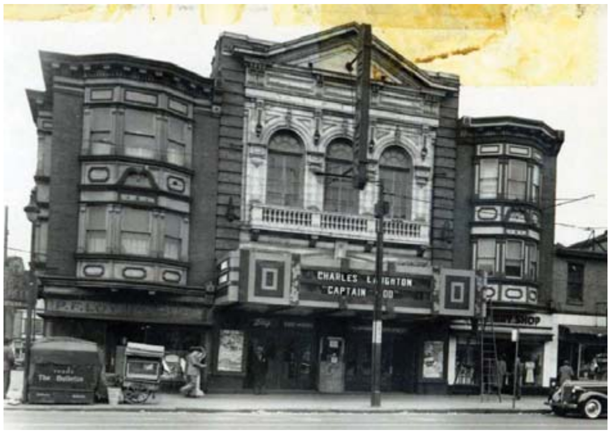

40760-18 447-60 Conv 3-1438 509 N. 40th St.

3.38 509 N. 40th Street, 1950

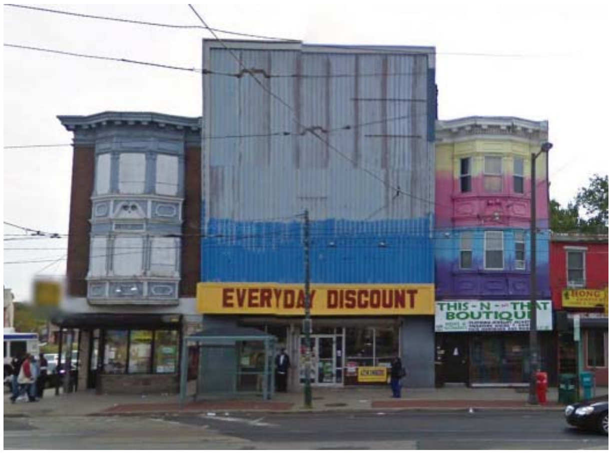


3.39 Same building, 2010

Other historical community landmarks in West Powelton have dramatically changed since their construction. The façade of the Leader Theater has been covered by corrugated metal, though it is hoped that the detailed façade remains intact under the replacement siding.


CHARLES LAUGHTON
CAPTAIN KIDD

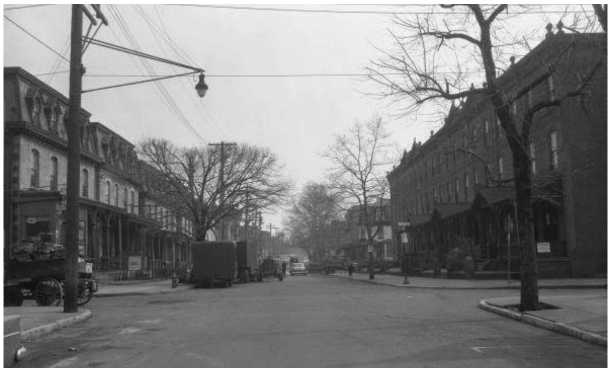
3.40 Leader Theater, Lancaster Avenue, 1945

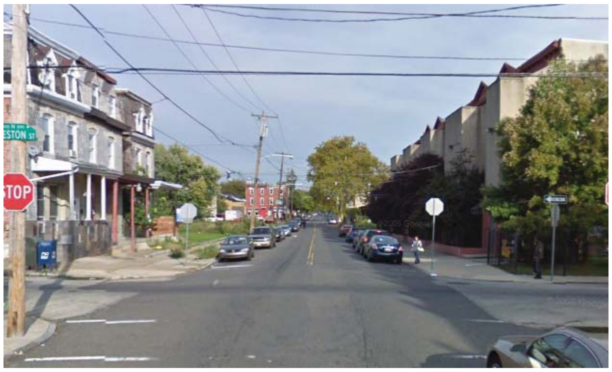

EVERYDAY DISCOUNT
THIS-N-THAT BOUTIQUE

3.41 Same building, 2010

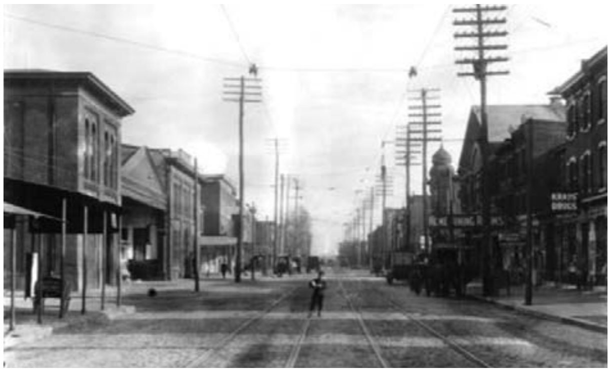
The following images show that some streetscapes in West Powelton have changed dramatically, while others have been only slightly altered. Figures 3.43-3.44 show a landscape that was drastically altered in a 1970s-era conversion to affordable housing. Front additions were constructed and covered in concrete, resulting in a complete loss of historic integrity.

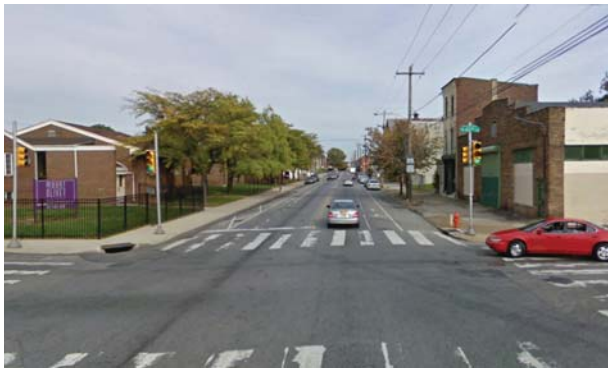
Figures 3.44-3.45 show the change from dense commercial and transportation-related buildings to infill construction (Mount Olivet Village, built in 1967). The majority of landscapes in West Powelton have intact buildings cheek by jowl with altered buildings, deteriorated buildings, or vacant lots resulting from building demolitions, as in Figure 3.47.

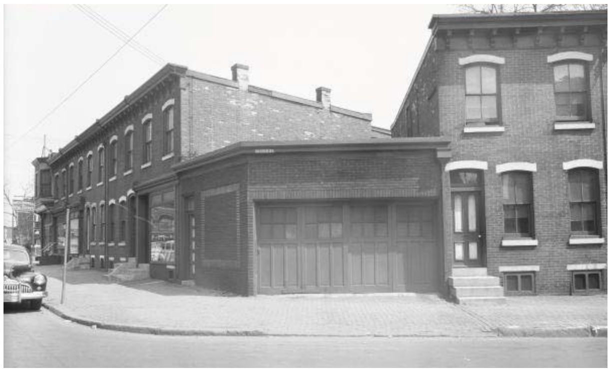

3.42 Baring and N. Preston streets, 1961

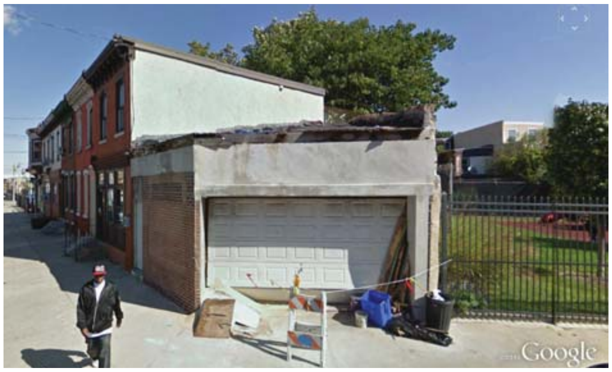


3.43 Same intersection, 2010


3.44 N. 42nd Street and Haverford Avenue, 1900

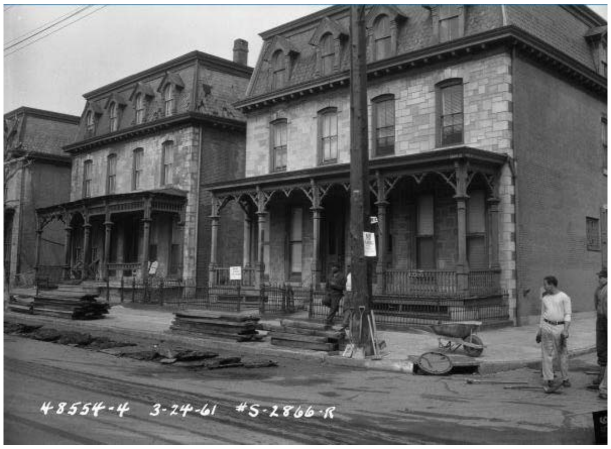

3.45 Same intersection, 2010


3.46 40th and Warren streets, 1950

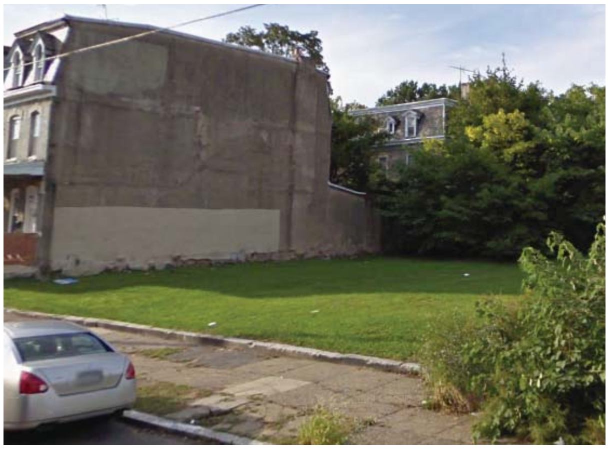


3.47 Same intersection, 2010

Finally, images 3.48 and 3.49 demonstrate that demolition has occurred in West Powelton. This is very common in the neighborhood, and results from deterioration driven by decades of depopulation and disinvestment. The result is vacant lots dispersed throughout the neighborhood, which leaves gaps in the historic building stock and creates additional problems for the neighborhood, including crime and illegal activities. Unfortunately, a lack of incentives and resources to help property owners maintain their buildings leaves many more buildings at risk of deterioration and demolition in coming years.



3.48 4015 Baring Street, 1961



3.49 Same location, 2010

4.1 Detail, West Philadelphia Title & Trust Building

4 CURRENT CONDITIONS

Social + Economic Data
Stakeholders
Ethnography
Field Survey

Social + Economic Data

Because the story of West Powelton, or any urban neighborhood, is so tied to the people who live there and their economic circumstances, it was necessary to collect precise data that reflected these factors. Field survey and interviews with residents and stakeholders, while essential to understanding the physical environment and people of West Powelton in a personal way, do not necessarily tell the complete story of economic and social forces that have shaped the neighborhood over time.

Therefore, quantifying exactly who lives in West Powelton and understanding the economic circumstances of these residents as a whole, was crucial to informing decision-making in the preservation planning process.

Having access to accurate quantitative data about West Powelton's ethnicity, its economic environment, and its housing characteristics, was essential to gaining a fuller picture of the neighborhood's past and present. This data guided our Preservation Approach to the extent that it confirmed, in a measured, scientific way, the observations and hypotheses our studio group made about racial make-up, residential and commercial vacancies, low income, and household configurations in West Powelton. It also helped to inform our decisions about where to focus revitalization efforts in our individual projects.

Methodology

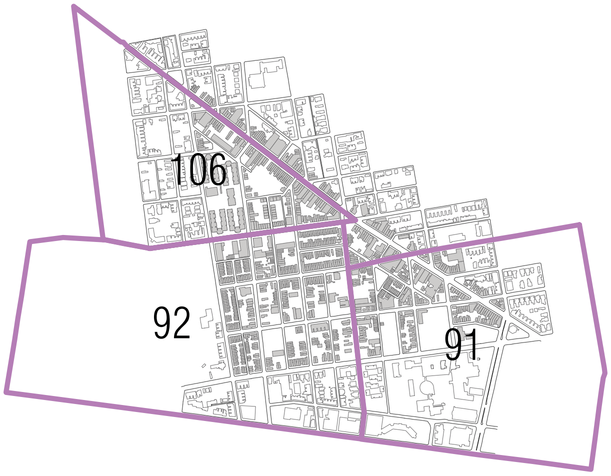
To that end, social and economic data in West Powelton were drawn from three Philadelphia census tracts as defined in the 2000 Census; Tracts 91, 92, and 106 (Fig. 4.2). Tracts 107 and 108, because they contain such small portions of our study area, were not included in this analysis.

Because the 2000 Census is now ten years old and 2010 Census results are not yet available, we used the 2007 American Community Survey (ACS) as the main source of demographic and economic data for this study. Although more recent data is available through the 2009 ACS, the 2007 ACS is the most recent survey from which data can be extracted using 2000 Census tracts. This extraction was possible using the SocialExplorer application.

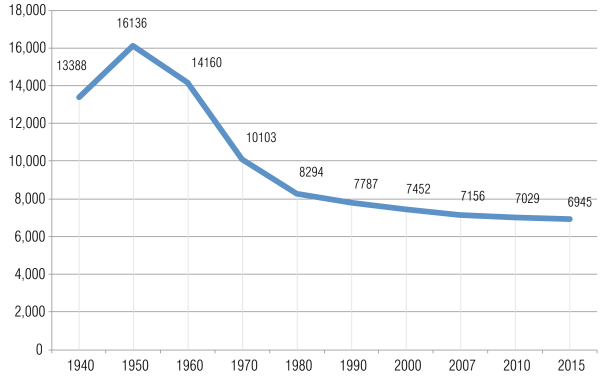
Data Collection + Analysis

This data we collected assisted in the development of a historical narrative for West Powelton and broadened our understanding of its physical environment. Using population figures gleaned from the U.S. Census since 1940, a more precise picture of prosperity and subsequent steep decline began to emerge. Knowing that today's population – 7,156 residents – is less than half of what it was around its peak in 1950, it became clear that the loss of historic fabric in West Powelton has partly been result of the loss of people (Figs. 4.3-4.4).

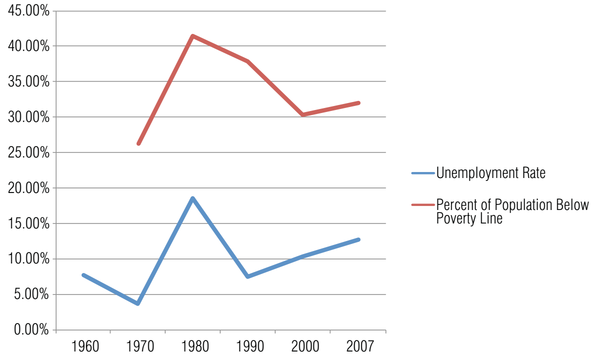
Gaps in the fabric of West Powelton have also been due to the loss of a healthy economic base. Although population decline in West Powelton has largely leveled off over the past decade, the neighborhood,



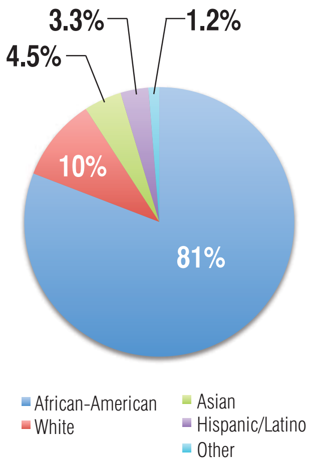
4.2 Census tracts



4.3 West Powelton population, 1940-2015 (projected)



4.5 Unemployment and poverty rates, 1960-2007



4.4 Racial demographics

Unemployment Rate	**20.7%**	
Families at or below poverty level	**32.3%** (388 families)	
Median household income	**$20,604**	
Number of households	**3075**	
Occupied housing units	3,075	
(owner occupied)	778	**25.3%**
(renter occupied)	2297	**74.7%**
Vacant housing units	819	**21%**

4.6 Additional demographic figures

with an unemployment rate of 20.7% and a median household income of $20,604, continues to face tough economic challenges (Figs. 4.5-4.6). Currently, 32.3% of families live at or below the poverty level. These challenges have manifested physically, creating a landscape of unused and unmaintained property. Today, 21% of West Powelton's 3,894 housing units remains vacant and 74.7% of occupied housing units are occupied by renters, a sector of the population that has little power to control the state of the neighborhood. Built for a peak population of 16,136, West Powelton simply cannot fill its vast range of houses and storefronts.

All of these figures confirmed our hypothesis that the neighborhood's decline was part a larger Philadelphia story of de-industrialization and urban renewal beginning forcefully in the 1950s, or even of a national story of mid-twentieth-century urban decay. Much of Philadelphia at this time was undergoing the same processes of loss of industry and population, of white flight, and of urban renewal that profoundly transformed the urban landscape. As the above population, income, and vacancy figures demonstrate, West Powelton has not been immune.

Stakeholders

Historic preservation necessarily involves the people who own, live, and work in the historic buildings. Indeed, everyone who uses historic buildings or public space is a stakeholder in the larger historic landscape. The studio team felt strongly that it was especially important to hear from the stakeholders in West Powelton. Residents' input was gathered through interviews and encounters in public spaces; this is described in the Ethnography section and the "Seeing What They See" project (in 7. Moving Forward). More formal interviews were conducted with representatives from groups and organizations that focus their efforts within the neighborhood, nearby institutions that have a proximity-driven interest, and City-level entities and agencies. As we spoke with representatives from each, it became clear that West Powelton is privileged to have many stakeholders—both established and emerging—who are deeply invested in its present and future.

Some stakeholders work within West Powelton. The West Powelton Concerned Community Council provides a forum for community members to discuss neighborhood initiatives and review proposed development projects. Nonprofit organizations include the Peoples Emergency Center (PEC) and University City District (UCD). PEC and its community development arm (PECCDC) have historically developed and managed affordable housing, with relatively recent expansions into other types of housing and commercial corridor revitalization projects; UCD works on business retention and recruitment efforts on lower Lancaster Avenue. Two business improvement associations work on the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor: the longstanding Lancaster Avenue Business Association, established in 1986, and the Lancaster Avenue 21st Century business association, which formed two years ago. Private developers like Hanley Bodek of Philadelphia Construction seek opportunities to rehabilitate existing buildings and develop new infill on vacant lots.

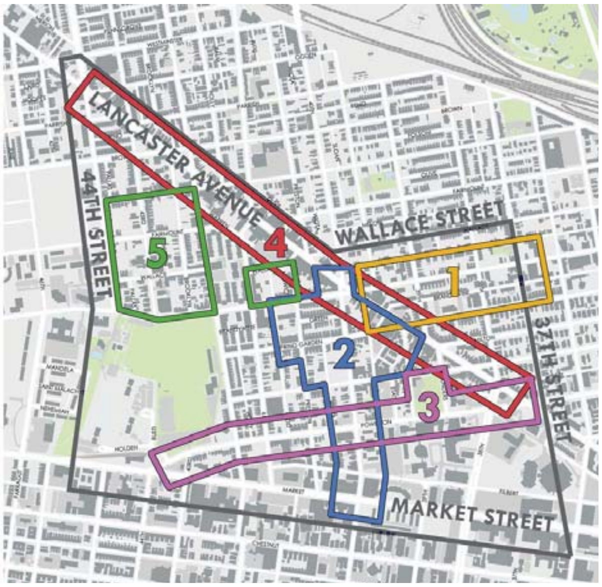
Other stakeholders see the neighborhood as relevant but not central to their interests. Drexel University and Penn Presbyterian Medical Center border the neighborhood and prioritize student safety and community health and wellness, respectively. The nearby University of Pennsylvania works with West Powelton Concerned Community Council to build organizational capacity and support locally driven projects and events.

Yet other stakeholders work at a larger scale where West Powelton is one important piece among many. City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell represents West Philadelphia and looks out for community interests. The Philadelphia City Planning Commission tries to guide long-term planning for the neighborhood, with community input.

A neighborhood plan does exist: The West Powelton/Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan was completed in 2007 for the Peoples Emergency Center Community Development Corporation and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. The plan area encompasses the boundaries of this preservation plan, as well as much of Mantua. Drawing on a 2003 community visioning workshop, the plan prioritizes housing and community development, economic

WEST POWELTON
SAUNDERS PARK
Neighborhood Plan
WEST POWELTON

4.7 Cover of neighborhood plan



4.8 Priority development projects, from West Powelton/Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan

development, and transportation. Recommendations particularly relevant to historic preservation include:

- Incentivize façade improvements for owner-occupied houses and rental properties
- Improve the public environment, particularly Lancaster Avenue
- Strategically rehabilitate vacant and deteriorated buildings
- Develop major residential and mixed-use projects through rehabilitation and new construction
- Create a community center, potentially in a rehabilitated historic building
- Rehabilitate commercial buildings as part of Lancaster Avenue corridor improvements

The plan also identifies priority initiatives in the neighborhood, offers neighborhood indicators for measuring success, and provides a clear direction for the West Powelton/Saunders Park neighborhood (Fig. 4.8).

Despite the number of active stakeholders that are committed to work toward a bright community future, the neighborhood faces challenges in reaching agreement on what that future should look like and how it should be achieved. Not everyone agrees that the direction provided by the West Powelton/Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan is the best direction for the neighborhood. Each stakeholder has its own goals and visions for West Powelton, and those do not always align. Sometimes, outright conflict between stakeholders slows progress on initiatives or prevents projects from being enacted. On a practical level, some services overlap, while others are not offered at all. Regular communication and coordination occurs between organizations such as PEC and UCD, PEC and the Planning Commission, or some community organizations and the Councilwoman's office, but that is not a given with all organizations.

We were not able to speak with Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell or Elsie Wise, president of the West Powelton Concerned Community Council. They are two important stakeholders in the neighborhood, and their input must be sought as recommendations of this preservation plan are considered.

Peoples Emergency Center

The Peoples Emergency Center (PEC) was created in 1972 as a volunteer-run ministry of Asbury United Methodist Church, located at 3311 Chestnut Street. Though targeted at Penn and Drexel students, it provided emergency shelter and food on the weekends to homeless families, couples, and single women. In 1980, PEC expanded its services to seven days a week and hired paid staff members. It narrowed its focus to homeless women and children in 1986.

The Peoples Emergency Center Community Development Corporation (PECCDC) was formed in 1992 as PEC's real estate arm. The PEC website states:

> PECCDC strengthens West Philadelphia communities through projects that expand housing opportunities, stimulate economic growth, create wealth and improve the quality of life for all residents.

The PECCDC has rehabilitated a number of vacant properties to create permanent supportive rental and homeownership units for women, children, and teens. (Fig. 4.9). In 2010-2010, it is expanding its scope to construct permanent supportive housing and artist live/work space on vacant lots. The PECCDC also assists homeowners with home repairs and works on other revitalization efforts in West Powelton, Saunders Park, and Mantua.

The PECCDC's work is guided by the West Powelton/ Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan, which it commissioned.

University City District
The University City District (UCD) was established in 1997 as part of the West Philadelphia Initiatives sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, local hospitals, the University Science Center, and other major institutions in the area. UCD initially focused on cleanliness and safety in its service area, expanding to commercial corridor work in the early 2000s with funding from the state Main Street Program (Service area graphic).

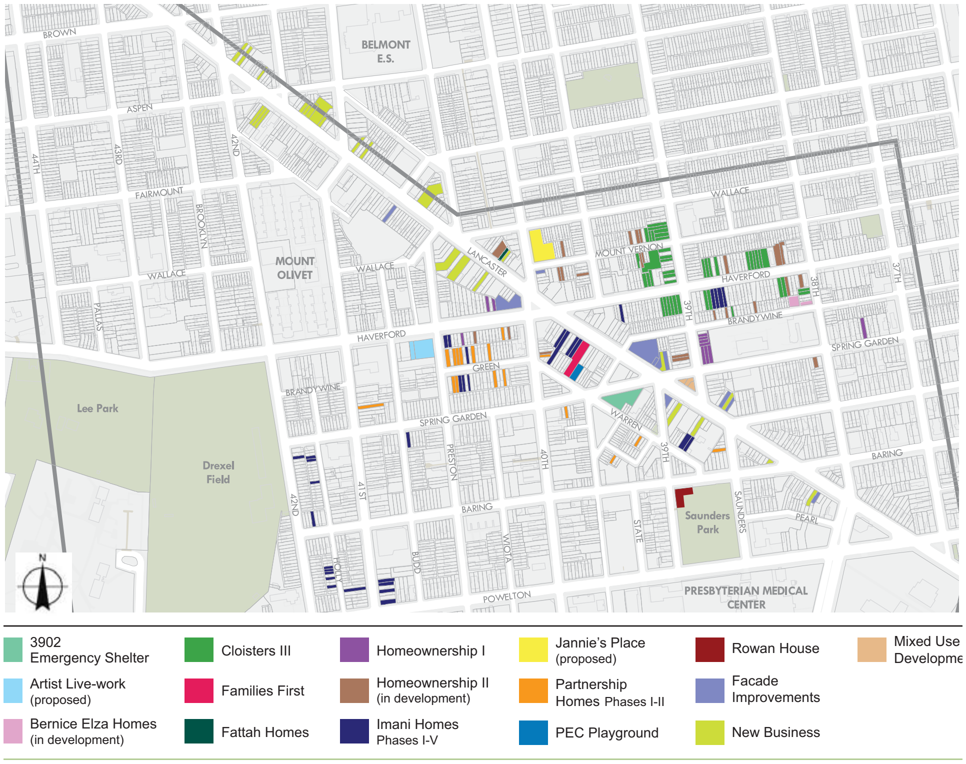
UCD works on five areas on Lancaster Avenue:

- Business recruitment and retention
- Sustainability
- Transportation
- Public space improvements
- Market research

UCD is working on a "restaurant row" strategy for lower Lancaster Avenue around 36th Street, building on a few successful anchors that attract lunchtime customers from Drexel and the Science Center. Additionally, an arts district is being considered as a revitalization strategy for Lancaster Avenue around 38th Street. A small cluster of art galleries exists on that stretch of Lancaster Avenue, and there may be potential in developing artist live-work spaces.

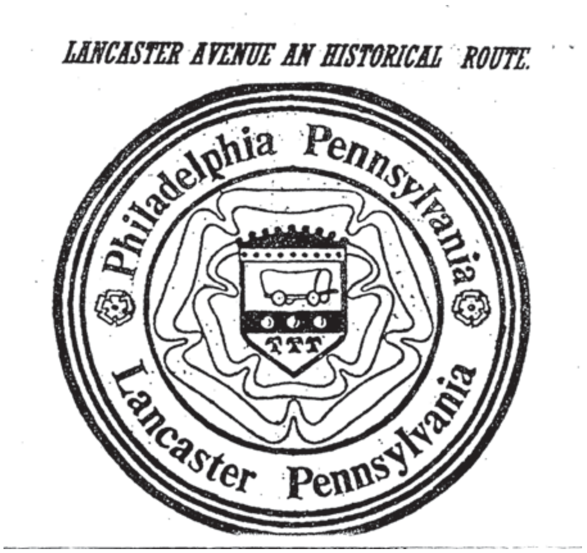
To support these strategies, UCD operates a façade improvement program, architectural design assistance, and technical and marketing assistance to local businesses.

Lancaster Avenue Business Association
The Lancaster Avenue Business Association (LABA) was founded in 1986 to revitalize Lancaster Avenue between 34th and 63rd streets. Some of its first projects resulted in the placement of "Historical Route" sidewalk medallions and tree planting along Lancaster Avenue (Fig. 4.10). The LABA Community Development Corporation works to organize corridor businesses to participate in economic development initiatives. Its programs include corridor marketing


BROWN
ASPEN
BELMONT E.S.
44TH
43RD
42ND
FAIRMOUNT
BROOKLYN
WALLACE
MOUNT OLIVET
WALLACE
LANCASTER
MOUNT VERNON
HAVERFORD
38TH
37TH
39TH
BRANDYWINE
SPRING GARDEN
PALLAS
HAVERFORD
GREEN
BRANDYWINE
Lee Park
Drexel Field
SPRING GARDEN
WARREN
39TH
40TH
PRESTON
41ST
42ND
BARING
BARING
Saunders Park
SAUNDERS
PEARL
STATE
PRESBYTERIAN MEDICAL CENTER
POWELTON
N
3902 Emergency Shelter
Artist Live-work (proposed)
Bernice Elza Homes (in development)
Cloisters III
Families First
Fattah Homes
Homeownership I
Homeownership II (in development)
Imani Homes Phases I-V
Jannie's Place (proposed)
Partnership Homes Phases I-II
PEC Playground
Rowan House
Facade Improvements
New Business
Mixed Use Developme

4.9 PEC developments in and around West Powelton and events, a Corridor Town Watch Program, technical assistance and networking opportunities for businesses, and the Clean Corridor Campaign.

LABA sees its corridor-oriented economic development initiatives as closely tied to the wellbeing of the local community. LABA works to organize and market businesses, as well as to encourage greater business investment in the surrounding community. It also works to facilitate community input into new development projects. Everyday people "are the spirit of the community," says Sister Aisamah Muhammad, the president of LABA.


LANCASTER AVENUE AN HISTORICAL ROUTE.
Philadelphia Pennsylvania
Lancaster Pennsylvania

4.10 Lancaster Avenue sidewalk marker, a LABA project

Lancaster Avenue 21st Century

Lancaster Avenue 21st Century (LA21) was formed in 2008 to support existing businesses and attract new businesses. Existing business services include marketing, tax consulting, networking, technology, and promotional event planning such as the annual Jazz Festival in Saunders Park and 2nd Fridays on Lancaster Avenue. LA21 also seeks to diversify the business mix through recruitment of new shops, restaurants, bakeries, and entertainment venues: to make Lancaster a destination for one-stop shopping again.

LA21 partners with PEC and hopes to work with Drexel and other stakeholders on revitalizing Lancaster Avenue. It is currently seeking 501(c)(3) status.

Hanley Bodek, Philadelphia Construction

Hanley Bodek is a developer with extensive experience working in West Philadelphia. Mr. Bodek reported that there are lots of "players within the West Powelton neighborhood from politicians, to extremely involved community leaders. These constituents clearly care a great deal about the well-being of their neighborhoods and communities, but at times have differing opinions on how neighborhood improvements should be structured, at times making accomplishing redevelopment efforts difficult in West Powelton. However, overall, Mr. Bodek believes the neighborhood is lucky to have them as advocates.

Mr. Bodek outlined some of the challenges that currently exist in West Powelton, in particular those related to historic resources. One challenge related to varying opinions on how the neighborhood should develop and the use of Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits. While the credits certainly could be used on some of the structures in the West Powelton neighborhood, one stipulation of the credit is that it must be used on income producing properties (i.e., a rental property). So, while some constituents are excited about the prospect of using the tax credit to improve the appearance of their neighborhood, they are simultaneously opposed to bringing in additional rental properties that will likely attract student renters and bring new people into the neighborhood.

Additionally, Mr. Bodek identified the spatial configuration of the historic buildings in West Powelton as being a possible challenge to redevelopment. The Monarch Storage Building, for example, is a very long and thin building. To bring the building up to code, additional stairways would need to be added, consuming already limited square footage and making reuse of the building difficult.

One type of development Mr. Bodek envisioned for West Powelton was artist live-work space, which might work well with the unconventional layout of some of the buildings along Lancaster Avenue. One obstacle to this plan, however, is the fact that most of the buildings are zoned as commercial and would have to be rezoned.

Interestingly, Mr. Bodek did not view the large amount of vacant lots in West Powelton as a bad thing. He feels that the vacant lots help to alleviate the parking problems in West Powelton. In fact, Mr. Bodek and his business partner occasionally mow the lots.

Ultimately, Mr. Bodek said that the right business mix will help revitalize Lancaster Avenue and that the West Powelton neighborhood must support what it asks for in this business mix, both socially and financially.

Drexel University

Drexel University is centered a few blocks southwest of West Powelton, but its playing fields abut the neighborhood's western boundary, 42nd Street (Fig. 4.11). Maria Vamvakidou, the Community Planner and Budget Coordinator for Planning, Design and Construction at Drexel, identified student safety as Drexel's primary interest within the West Powelton neighborhood. Drexel is actively trying to improve lighting on Powelton Avenue, the street that connects Drexel University's main campus with the playing fields on 42nd Street. Unfortunately, students are not currently walking on Powelton to the playing field, and are instead traveling on buses for a few blocks. This practice adds to the problem of safety on Powelton Avenue, as it reduces the amount of foot traffic, further reducing public safety along that corridor.

Currently, there are no available statistics on the number of Drexel students living in the study area. However, Drexel maintains relationships with the various organizations that work in the West Powelton neighborhood, in particular the Powelton Village Neighborhood Association. Ms. Vamvakidou was of the opinion that most residents of West Powelton understand that Drexel students mean increased income for the community and are therefore tolerant of student presence.

Drexel's president, John Fry, wants students to be safe and involved in their community. Fry hopes that Drexel students who live in West Powelton will be inspired to care about their community and where they live, not just inhabit space.

Finally, Ms. Vamvakidou commented that there is a need for increased service, particularly retail along Lancaster Avenue.

Penn Presbyterian Medical Center

Penn Presbyterian Medical Center (Penn Presby) is a quasi-community hospital located across Powelton Avenue from Saunders Park. (Fig. 4.12). It is a tertiary care hospital that draws most of its clientele from the Philadelphia suburbs, but also provides some services (community-based family practice, emergency room, primary care) to the West Powelton community. It

4.11 Drexel campus, looking northwest toward Powelton Village

4.12 Penn Presbyterian Medical Center is not very actively involved in the community but does a fair amount of community outreach activities. For example, Penn Presby has organized charity children's Christmas party, and health and wellness fairs in Saunders Park. According to Gary Ginsberg, the Assistant Executive Director at Penn Presby, the hospital maintains good relations with neighborhood groups, though it does experience some of the mixed feelings with which many residents regard Penn and Drexel. Overall, Penn Presby views the various neighborhood groups and organizations as an asset to the development of the community.

Penn Presby is interested in the long-term stabilization of the West Powelton neighborhood. This interest is somewhat vested in general benevolence (it was, after all, founded as a community hospital). However, neighborhood stabilization is also financially helpful for the hospital; stable and affluent communities are generally healthier, but also are able to pay their hospital bills and are more likely to have insurance.
One contentious issue between Penn Presby and the West Powelton neighborhood is the issue of parking. The hospital leases several lots and a garage and offers remote parking at the Fresh Grocer. However, employees and patrons must pay for this parking, and many opt to park in the neighborhood instead. Though Mr. Ginsberg did not know how many employees choose this route and did not have specific examples of confrontation between hospital employees and local residents, he understands why local residents would be irritated by additional cars in the neighborhood during business hours. There is the possibility of alleviating this problem by building another multi-tiered parking structure on 38th street in the future. However, this is dependent on the economy, and various other issues.

Like several other stakeholders, Mr. Ginsberg noted that Lancaster Avenue functions as a dividing line for the neighborhood. He generally felt that community organizations are stronger on the southwest side of Lancaster.

University of Pennsylvania

The University of Pennsylvania's West Philadelphia Initiatives focused on the neighborhoods immediately west of the Penn campus and ranged from rehabilitation of rental housing to homeownership incentives and development of physical retail complexes to business development and coordinated marketing for local businesses. The Penn Alexander public school was established on Penn-owned property and constructed by Penn, with significant continuing University support. As discussed previously, the University City District was formed to achieve "clean and safe" goals for the campus and surrounding areas, and later expanded to offer coordinated support for local commercial corridors.

In contrast, Penn's presence in West Powelton has been relatively subtle. Fewer faculty, staff, and students live in the neighborhood, though it falls within the boundaries for the university's Guaranteed Mortgage Program and Enhanced Forgivable Loan (Fig. 4.13). (These programs respectively guarantee up to 120% of mortgage closing costs and provide $7,500 of forgivable matching loan funds toward mortgage costs or home improvements. Both are open to Penn affiliates.) Map of eligibility areas.

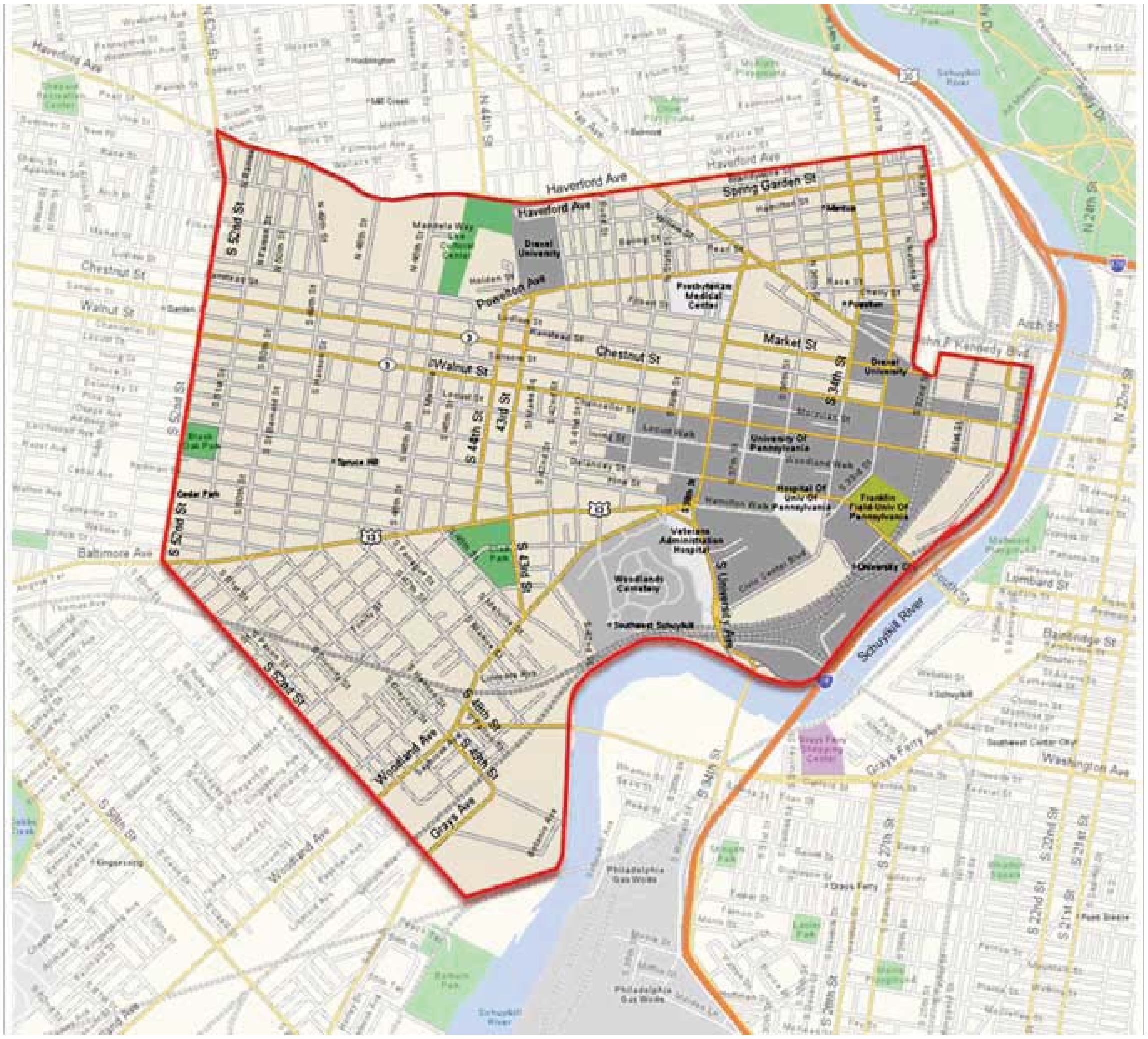
Penn has been working with neighborhood groups for about 17 years, principally through support of the West Powelton Concerned Community Council. Penn assistance includes health programs such as health fairs, organizational development, and programs involving local youth. As discussed previously, the University City District also operates a commercial corridor program on Lancaster Avenue.

Glenn Bryan, Assistant Vice President for Community Relations at Penn, anticipates that the university will strengthen its current efforts in the future. He sees the need for more communication between Penn and Drexel University, especially as Drexel's new administration makes plans for institutional expansion.

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission coordinates planning activity for the City of Philadelphia. It is currently developing Philadelphia 2035, a new citywide comprehensive plan that will guide the subsequent development of 18 new district plans. To encourage increased public participation in shaping neighborhood change, the Planning Commission has created the Philadelphia Citizens Planning Institute to orient and empower citizens to actively participate in neighborhood and city planning. The Citizens Planning Institute held its inaugural core sessions in fall 2010 and anticipates expanding to cover elective courses such as historic preservation, as well as functioning as a clearinghouse for civic groups to share information and best practices.

The Planning Commission currently uses the West Powelton Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan as a working document, along with other Lancaster Avenue redevelopment plans. City planners try to balance community concerns with a planning-based perspective that recognizes the high vacancy levels, transportation access, and proximity to community facilities as tremendous opportunities for development that could strengthen the neighborhood. West Philadelphia planner Andrew Meloney identifies lack of community support for both the neighborhood plan and development as a major obstacle to realizing West Powelton's potential.


Haverford Ave
Spring Garden St
Drexel University
Powelton Ave
Presbyterian Medical Center
Market St
Chestnut St
Walnut St
S 52nd St
S 44th St
43rd St
S 34th St
University Of Pennsylvania
Hospital Of Univ Of Pennsylvania
Franklin Field-Univ Of Pennsylvania
Veterans Administration Hospital
Woodlands Cemetery
Baltimore Ave
Woodland Ave
Grays Ave
Schuylkill River
Washington Ave
Lombard St
Bainbridge St

4.13 Map for Penn's Enhanced Forgiveable Loan program

Ethnography

West Powelton is a dynamic neighborhood with a complex social and architectural environment. An ethnographic study was conducted to understand the fundamental relationship that exists between residents and their surroundings. The goal of the study was to capture the sense "of place" in West Powelton as understood by its inhabitants. Notions of what defines the neighborhood, how it is used, what tensions exist, and how the neighborhood is changing were explored. The methodology began with observation and localized participation in the neighborhood to understand the fundamental frame work of the site. This created the basis for small-scale formal interviews which were enhanced by large-scale informal encounters with residents. The product was an analysis that yielded a spatial interpretation of the site and the relationships that shape it. Emphasis was placed on the neighborhood's residents, for without them this study would not have been possible.

The first step in the methodology was to understand basic neighborhood dynamics—what the physical fabric is, how it is used, and who uses it. This phase consisted of field observations and recording, which often stimulated interest and inquiries from locals. The width of the streets, utilization of porches and garages, and areas of increased pedestrian traffic were observed. The location of interactions with residents was recorded, in addition to the subject and general temperament of the conversation. During these informal encounters interviewees were asked how they view their neighborhood, and what they like and dislike. Certain buildings were identified as significant, such as Hawthorne Hall, the West Philadelphia Title and Trust building, and Monarch Storage warehouses. A large proportion of encounters identified local churches, public art murals, and community gardens as assets to the community. Despite the wealth of information gathered from residents, a proper conclusion could not be drawn due to the lack of structure and consistency in questions and recording.

Formal interviews were conducted to reproduce information more conducive to analysis. The parameters of the formal interviews were set by speaking to individuals in isolated study groups and filtering out common themes. The identified themes were vacancy, activism, students or other institutional presence, and community stewardship. Interview questions included:

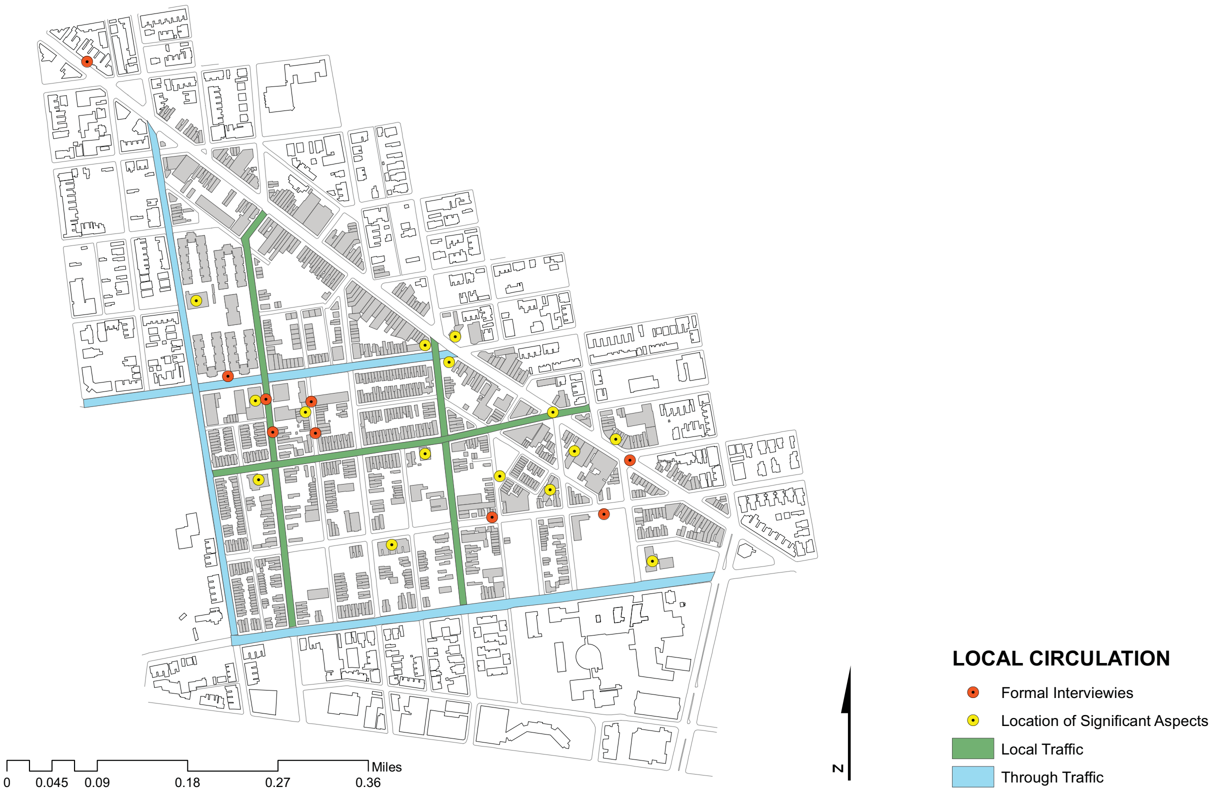
- What part of the neighborhood do you feel engaged or disengaged with, and why?
- What are three locations you would tell a visitor to West Powelton to go to, and why?
- How do you circulate through the neighborhood, and how do you see others circulate?
- Do you see yourself as an active member of the community, and how?

The results underscore the churches, community gardens, and public art murals previously identified, but with a greater degree of information provided. Churches were consistently identified as support networks during times of economic hardship. Deindustrialization, urban renewal, and racial tension during the 1960s were instances where people relied heavily on their neighborhood churches for support. These events are illustrated in public art murals. Residents identify with the murals and expressed the need for more murals within the perimeter of the neighborhood rather than only along main thoroughfares. Community members collectively associate Spring Garden, N. 41st, and N. 40th streets as local transportation routes for residents, while Lancaster Avenue and Highland and N. 42nd streets were identified as routes of heavy through traffic (Fig. 4.14). Interestingly, though Lancaster Avenue was identified as a main thoroughfare, Powelton Avenue is seen as a thoroughfare for the nearby student population and not for locals.

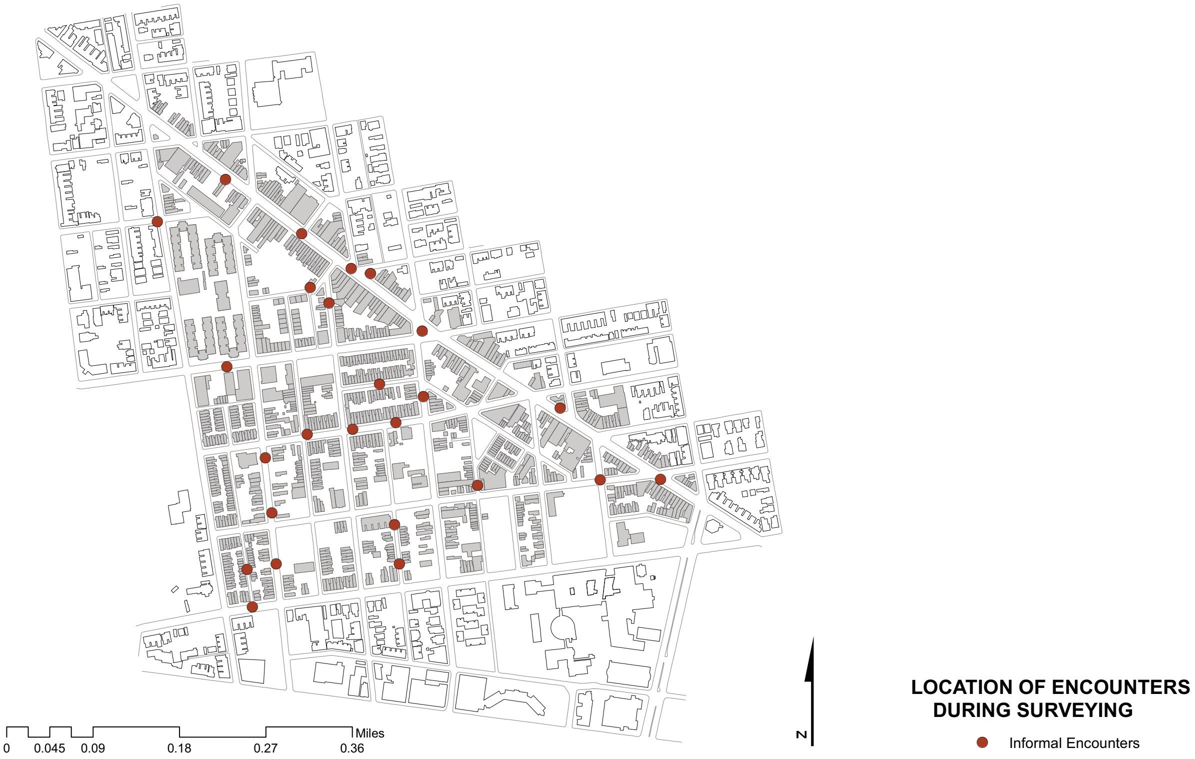
The next step in the study was to obtain feedback on a larger neighborhood scale to ensure a more encompassing sample size. During the implementation of the ethnographic process, the studio team conducted an architectural survey of the entire study area, and in the process, had many informal encounters with community members. This was an opportunity to understand the neighborhood through a large scale ethnographic approach. Each encounter was recorded, accounting for the topics discussed and how often, who engaged first, and the location and setting of the encounter (Fig. 4.15).

In sum, 52 encounters were recorded and organized into the themes of community, vacancy, students and institutions, activism, and indifferent. Each of these encounters was mapped, along with any the themes that were brought up. A person was represented by a single cone, or multiple cones, depending on how many themes were present in the conversation (Fig. 4.16) The themes were color-coordinated and of varying heights to identify which issues were stressed the most. The more powerful conclusions yielded in the analysis included increased community engagement and pride in the northwest portion of the neighborhood, while people in the southern section (below Spring Garden Street) were much more indifferent. This supported one woman's remark that the community is in transition with the intersection of Spring Garden and Lancaster Avenue as a terminal point (Fig. 4.17). Another interesting conclusion was that people who contributed to the community and activism themes represented the largest percentile of encounters and were centered around areas containing community gardens or public art murals (Fig. 4.18). More expected, residents who were concerned with vacancy and safety were located in areas with a large number of vacant lots (Fig. 4.19). Additionally, issues concerning students or development from institutions were neighborhood-wide concerns. This illustrates the failure of Lancaster Avenue to meet the general needs of the community, and a split reaction to the growing student population in the neighborhood (Fig. 4.20).

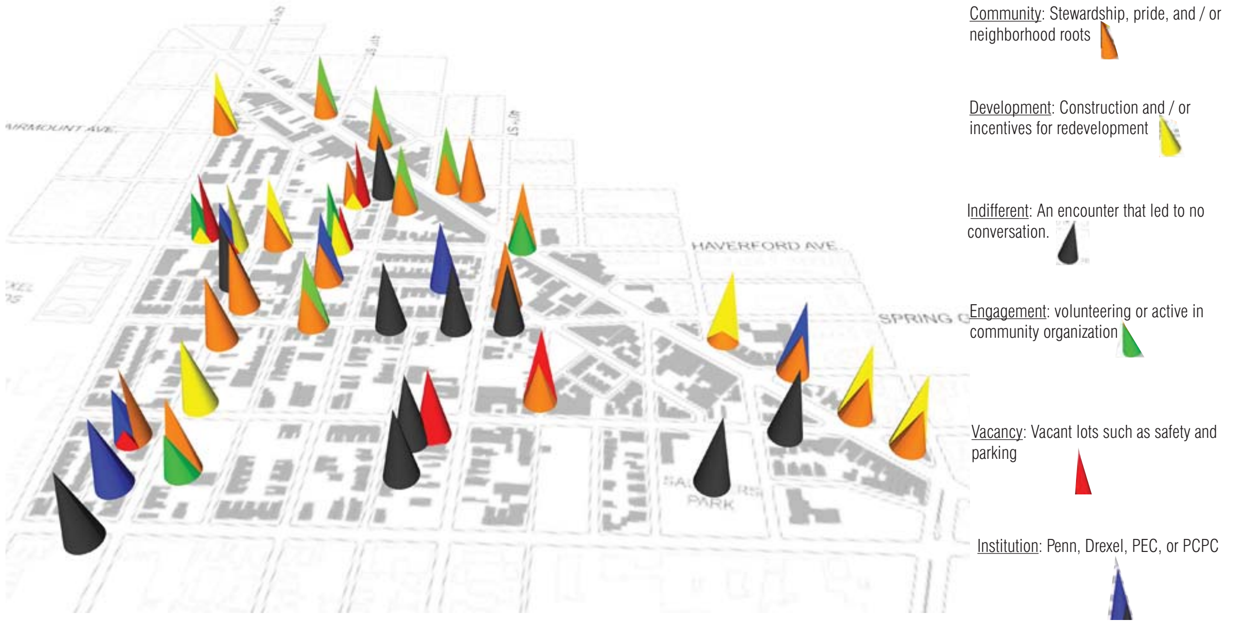
West Powelton residents are well aware of the complexities that exist in their neighborhood. It is imperative to connect empirical data about the



4.14 Significant locations and circulation identified through formal interviews and informal encounters physical environment, financial statistics, and census information with real people. On its own, this information does not speak to the intensity of problems that exist in West Powelton or the intangible emotional consequences that result. Speaking to individuals who interact with real neighborhood concerns yields information that could never be obtained from a hands-off approach and is an integral part of any larger neighborhood methodology.


0
0.045
0.09
0.18
0.27
0.36
Miles
N
LOCATION OF ENCOUNTERS DURING SURVEYING
● Informal Encounters

4.15 Location of informal encounters


HAVERFORD AVE
SPRING G
PARK

Community: Stewardship, pride, and / or neighborhood roots

Development: Construction and / or incentives for redevelopment

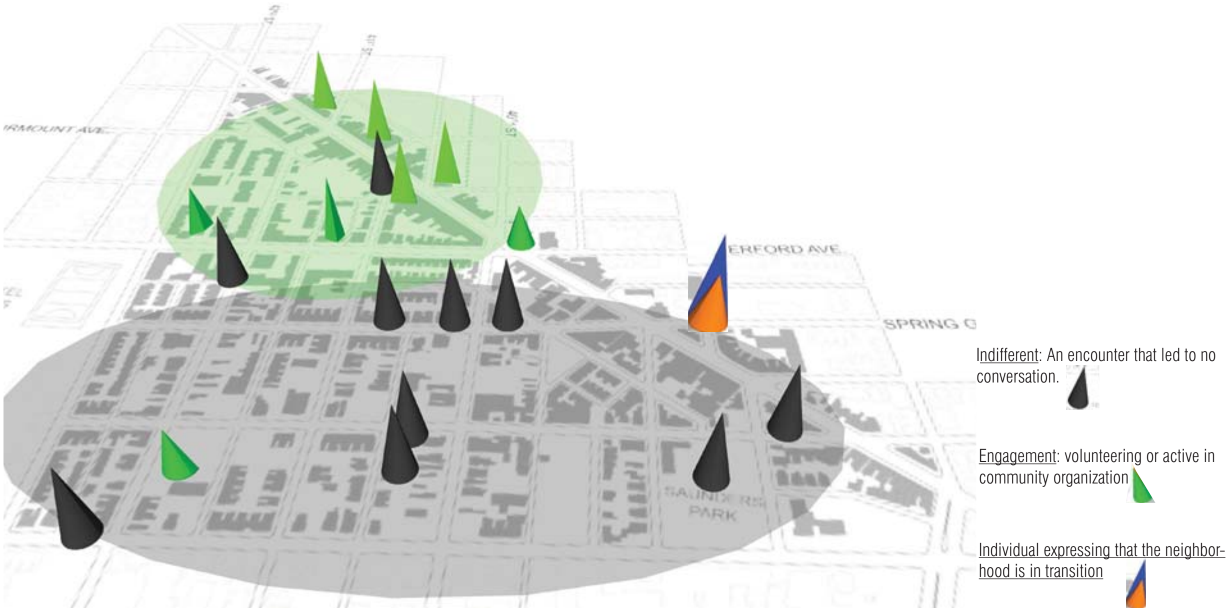
Indifferent: An encounter that led to no conversation.

Engagement: volunteering or active in community organization

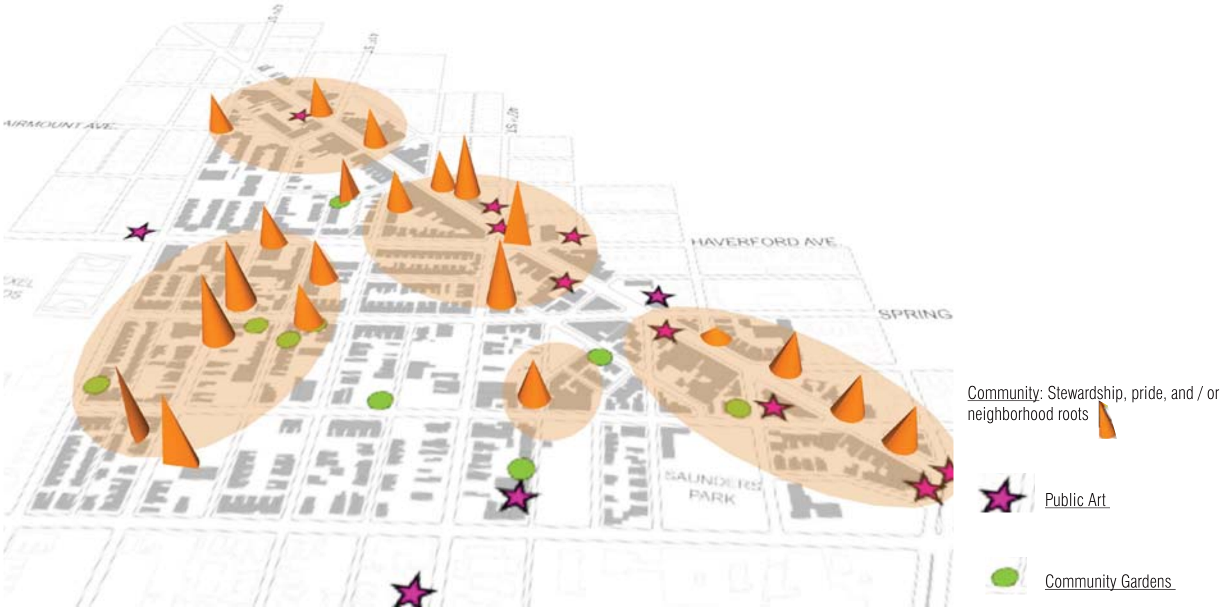
Vacancy: Vacant lots such as safety and parking

Institution: Penn, Drexel, PEC, or PCPC

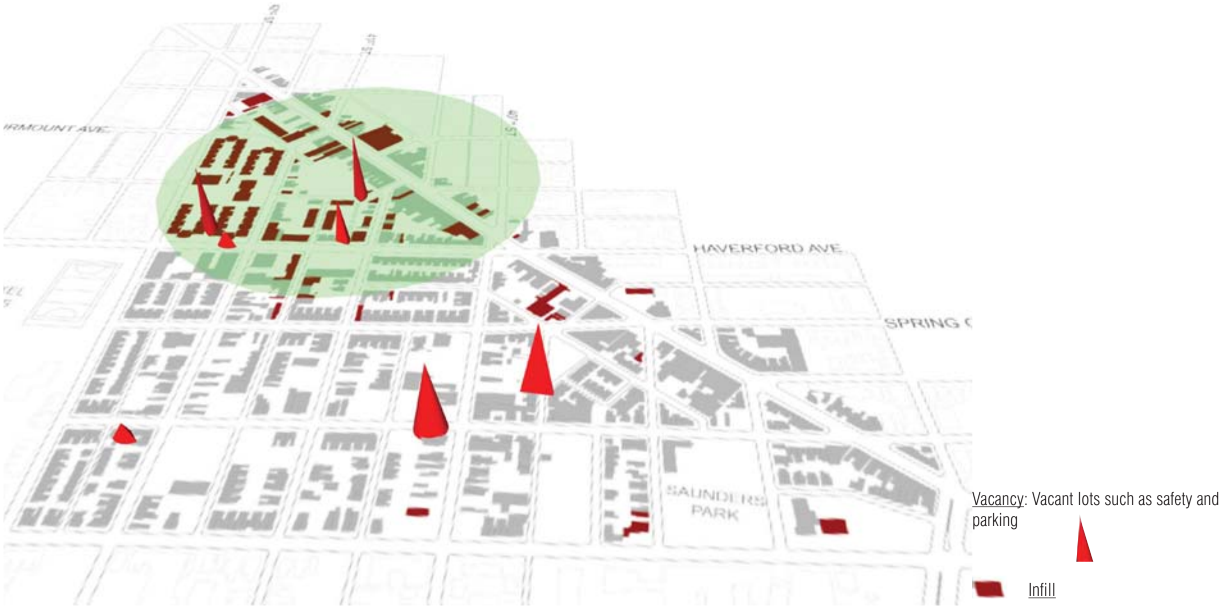
4.16 Issues mentioned by community members during informal encounters


IRMOUNT AVE.
47TH ST
ERFORD AVE
SPRING G
SAUNDERS PARK
Indifferent: An encounter that led to no conversation.
Engagement: volunteering or active in community organization
Individual expressing that the neighborhood is in transition

4.17 Community engagement and indifference


IRMOUNT AVE.
47TH ST
HAVERFORD AVE
SPRING
SAUNDERS PARK
Community: Stewardship, pride, and / or neighborhood roots
Public Art
Community Gardens

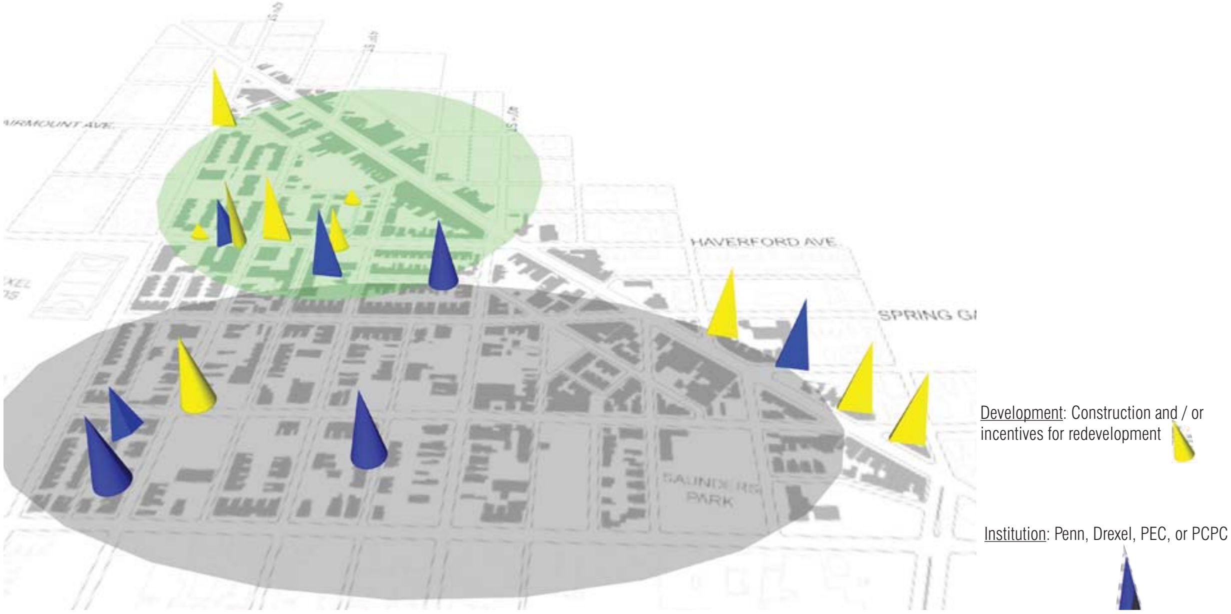
4.18 Community engagement in relation to public art and community gardens


RMOUNT AVE.
HAVERFORD AVE
SPRING G
SAUNDERS PARK

Vacancy: Vacant lots such as safety and parking

Infill

4.19 Safety concerns in relation to vacant lots and infill


RMOUNT AVE.
HAVERFORD AVE
SPRING G
SAUNDERS PARK

Development: Construction and / or incentives for redevelopment

Institution: Penn, Drexel, PEC, or PCPC

4.20 Concerns about institutions, students, or development in relation to Spring Garden Street

Field Survey

A field survey of the West Powelton neighborhood in West Philadelphia was performed in October 2010 to understand and document the existing physical fabric of the study area. A draft survey form was designed by the field survey group and tested by a half-day site survey. The form was edited and finalized according to feedback from the studio team and experiences of the group (Fig. 4.21).

All studio members worked in pairs to survey approximately 1,100 properties in the study area. The final survey form aimed to record resource type, current use, integrity, condition, primary building material, notable architectural details, remaining historic material, occupancy, estimated building date, and architectural style through an exterior survey of each building in the study area. Surveyors also noted the location and characteristics of vacant lots, parking lots, and public spaces such as parks and community gardens. Photography supplemented the survey form by capturing the appearance and current condition of building facades, streetscapes, and other aspects of the community (street furniture, community parks and gardens, transportation, and visible effects of development by Drexel and Penn).

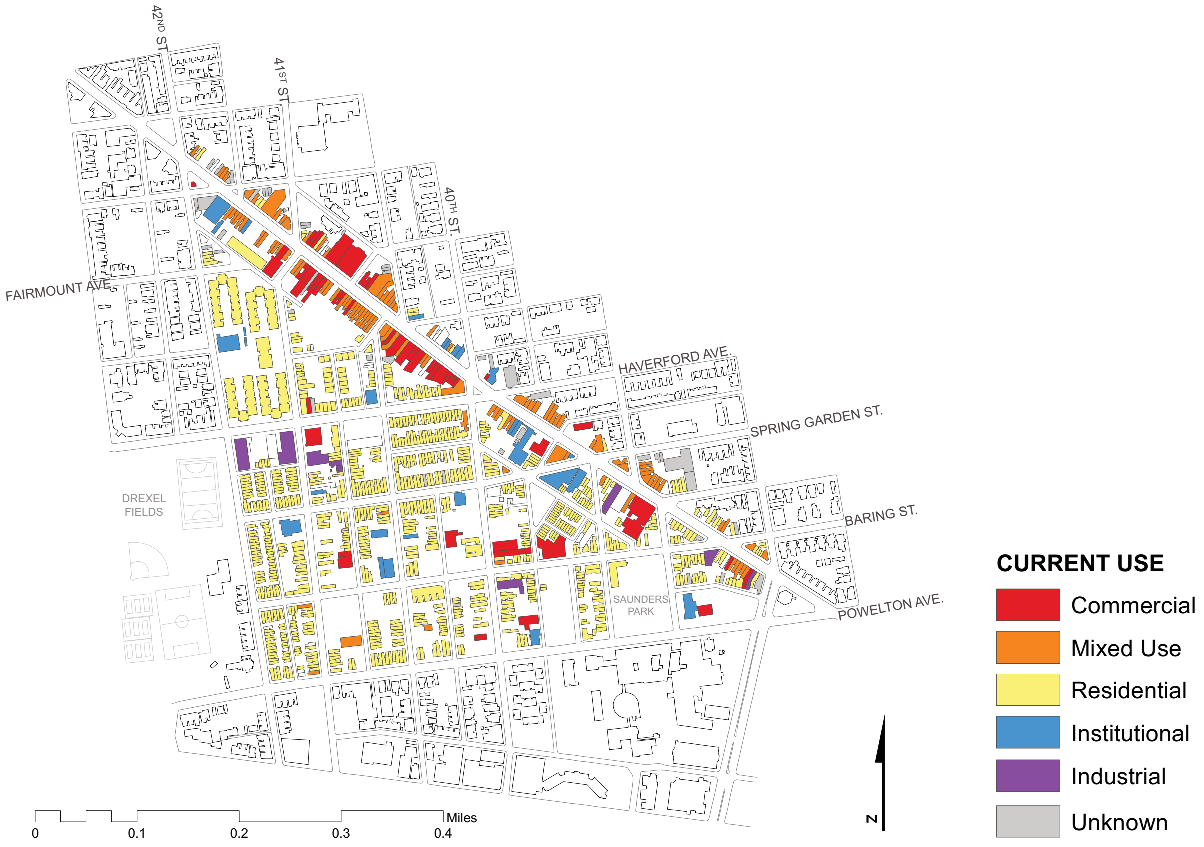
Following the survey, each surveyor entered survey data into a Microsoft Access database. All databases were then cleaned and joined into a final database linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS) database, where it was combined with available data from the City of Philadelphia's Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT). Results of the survey provided a way to analyze the current conditions of the neighborhood and detect small- and large-scale patterns, which aided in prioritizing project goals (see Appendix for all maps).

Surveyor name/date:		**Building number and street:**		
Building name:		**Number stories:**	**Number units:**	
Buildings in photo:				
Resource type:	**Current use:**	**Building Details:**	**Primary building material:**	
☐ Apt. Building	☐ Commercial	☐ Awning	☐ Brick	
☐ Commercial	☐ Corner retail	☐ Bay windows	☐ Brick (painted)	
☐ Community garden	☐ Ground floor retail	☐ Covered porch	☐ Concrete	
☐ Detached dwelling	☐ Industrial	☐ Front yard	☐ Stone	
☐ Factory	☐ Institutional	☐ Porch	☐ Stucco	
☐ Hospital	☐ Parking	☐ Part of a row	☐ Vinyl siding	
☐ Hotel	☐ Recreational	☐ Other:	☐ Wood	
☐ Office Building	☐ Residential		☐ Other:	
☐ Park	☐ Vacant	**Integrity:**	**Hist. Material:**	**Occupancy:**
☐ Parking Lot	☐ Other:	☐ Intact	☐ Bldg. mater.	☐ Full
☐ Parking Structure	**If Vacant lot:**	☐ Some alterations	☐ Cornice	☐ Partial
☐ Row house	☐ Maintained	☐ Many alterations	☐ Door(s)	☐ Vacant
☐ School	☐ Partially maintained	☐ Infill	☐ Windows	☐ Ground level
☐ Sculpture/Art	☐ Not maintained	**Building condition:**	☐ Other:	☐ Upper floors
☐ Twin	☐ Other:	☐ Good		☐ Corner
☐ Vacant Lot	**Est. bldg. date:**	☐ Fair	**Notes:**	
☐ Warehouse	**Style:**	☐ Poor		

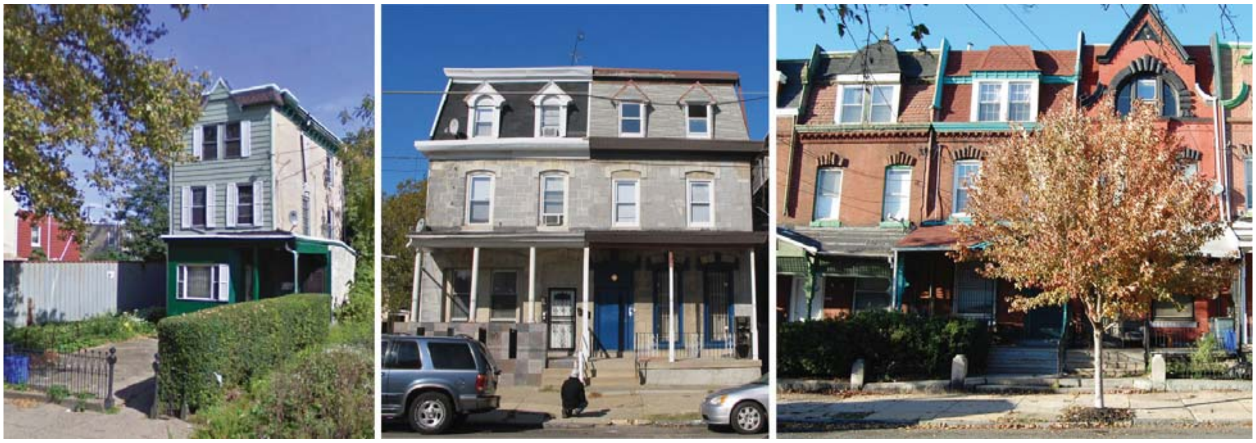
4.21 Field survey form

Survey Results

Resource type and current use maps provide a clear sense of built fabric and slight changes that occur in time in terms of uses (Fig. 4.22). The study area is predominantly residential with institutional, commercial, and industrial buildings scattered throughout. The majority of the residential buildings in the study area are brick rowhouses distinguished by the presence or absence of porches and front yards. Rowhouses with both features are concentrated along Haverford Avenue and Spring Garden Street between by 40th and 42nd streets (Fig. 4.23). Lancaster Avenue, the main arterial street, is a commercial corridor with commercial and mixed residential-commercial uses on both sides.


42ND ST
41ST ST
40TH ST
FAIRMOUNT AVE
HAVERFORD AVE.
SPRING GARDEN ST.
BARING ST.
POWELTON AVE.
DREXEL FIELDS
SAUNDERS PARK
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
Miles
N
CURRENT USE
🟥 Commercial
🟧 Mixed Use
🟨 Residential
🟦 Institutional
🟪 Industrial
⬜ Unknown

4.22 Current Uses



4.23 Types of rowhouses (L-R): house with a front yard, houses with porches, and houses with front yards and porches

Building condition was rated on a scale of good, fair, and poor. The scale is based on how soon major repair work is needed:

- Good: the building could go five or more years without major work
- Fair: the building could go two to five years without major work
- Poor: the building is in urgent need of repairs

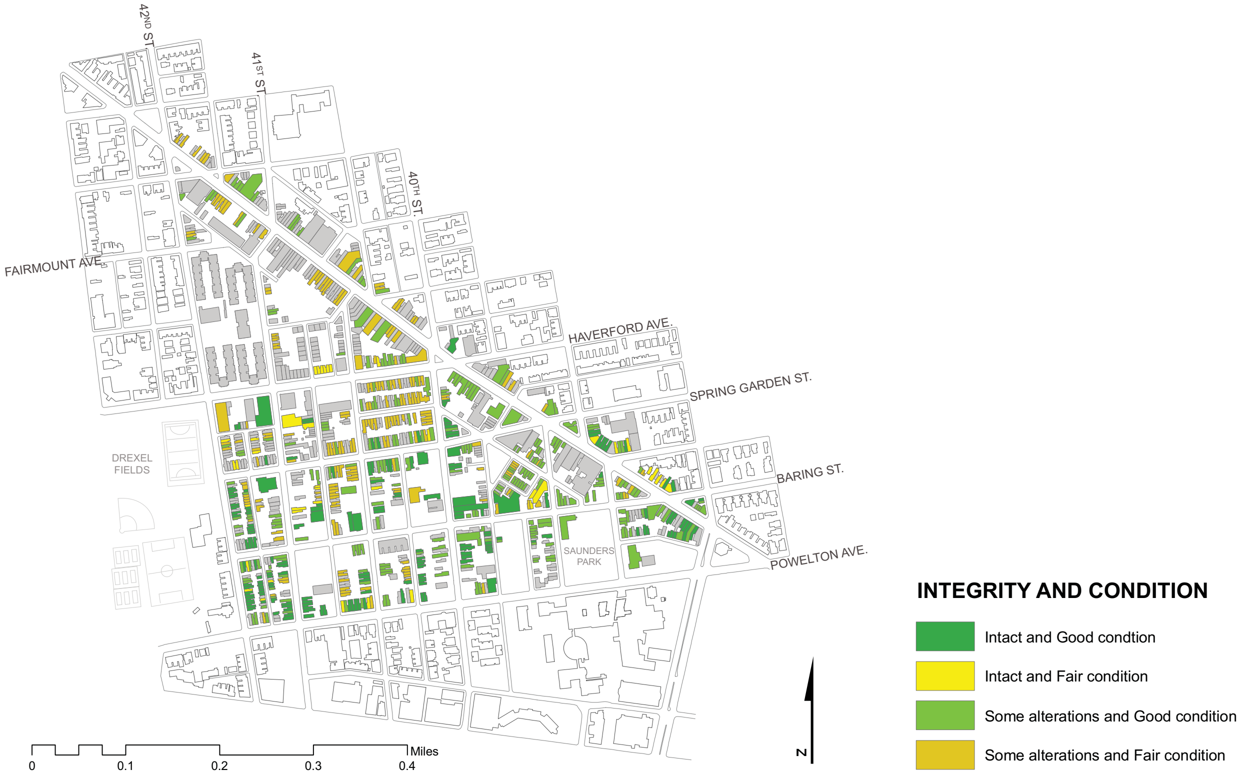
The field survey revealed that buildings are mostly in good or fair condition, with no specific pattern in the study area.

Building integrity was rated based on intactness of the historical material (Fig. 4.24):

- Intact
- Some alterations, with substantial remaining historic fabric
- Many alterations, with almost no historic fabric remaining
- Infill, meaning new construction

The field survey showed that most buildings in the study area are either intact or show some alterations; however, much of the area north of Haverford Avenue is infill. When building condition and integrity are analyzed together, it is clear that much of the building stock that is in good or fair condition also retains a high level of integrity (Fig. 4.25).

4.24 Building integrity (L-R): intact buildings, buildings with some alterations, buildings with many alterations, and infill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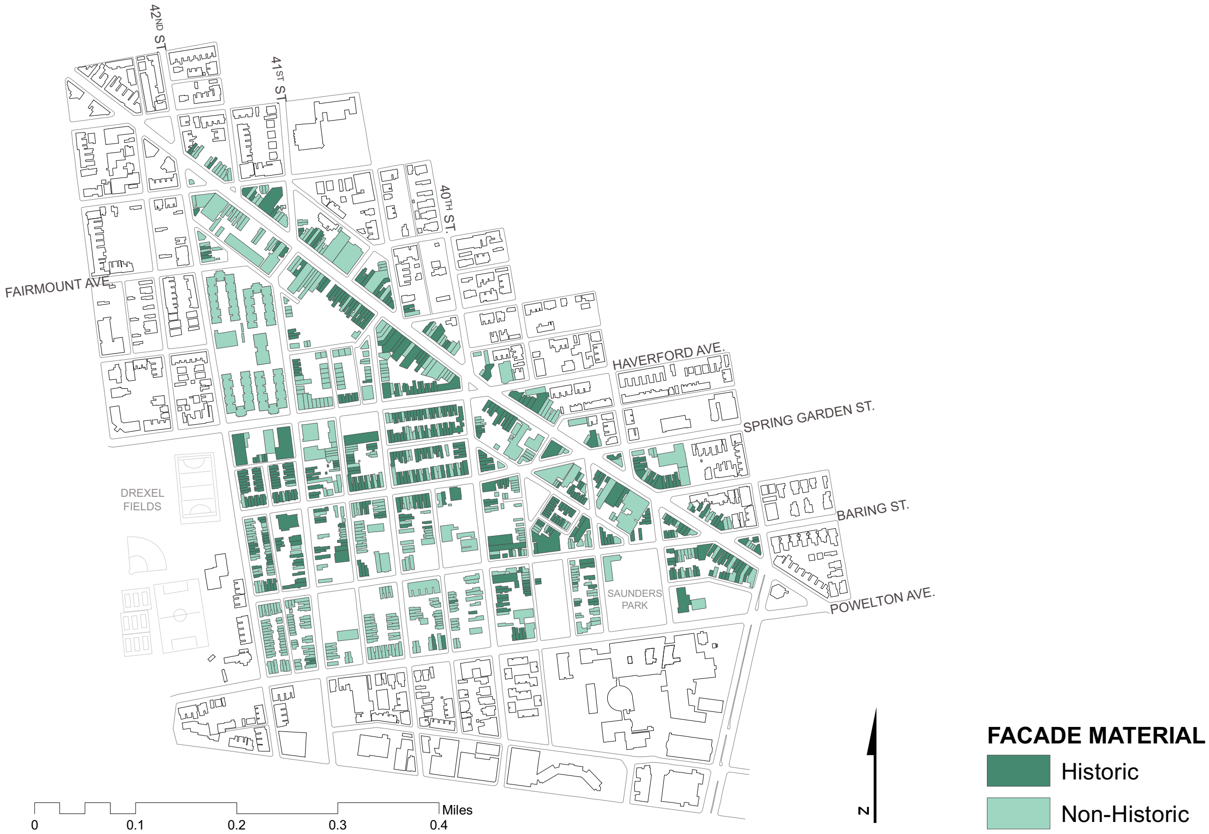
HAVERFORD AVE.
SPRING GARDEN ST.
BARING ST.
POWELTON AVE.
DREXEL FIELDS
SAUNDERS PARK
INTEGRITY AND CONDITION
🟩 Intact and Good condtion
🟨 Intact and Fair condition
🟩 Some alterations and Good condition
🟨 Some alterations and Fair condition
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
Miles
N

4.25 Building integrity and condition

Many buildings in the study area have façades with historic materials, especially in the dense residential core between Haverford Avenue and Spring Garden Street and along the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor, where the buildings are in good condition and also retain a high degree of historic integrity (Fig. 4.26). The buildings in the study area are predominantly brick, which is also one of the main historic materials identified in the historic building facades. Non-historic façade materials include stucco, vinyl siding, and Permastone. These replacement sidings usually cover the historic material, but in many cases the top layer is crumbling off, leaving the historic brick facades visible underneath.

The West Powelton neighborhood is a dense, low-rise neighborhood with one- to three-story buildings. Most residential buildings have one to five units, meaning that they are either single-family homes or subdivided into one or two units per floor.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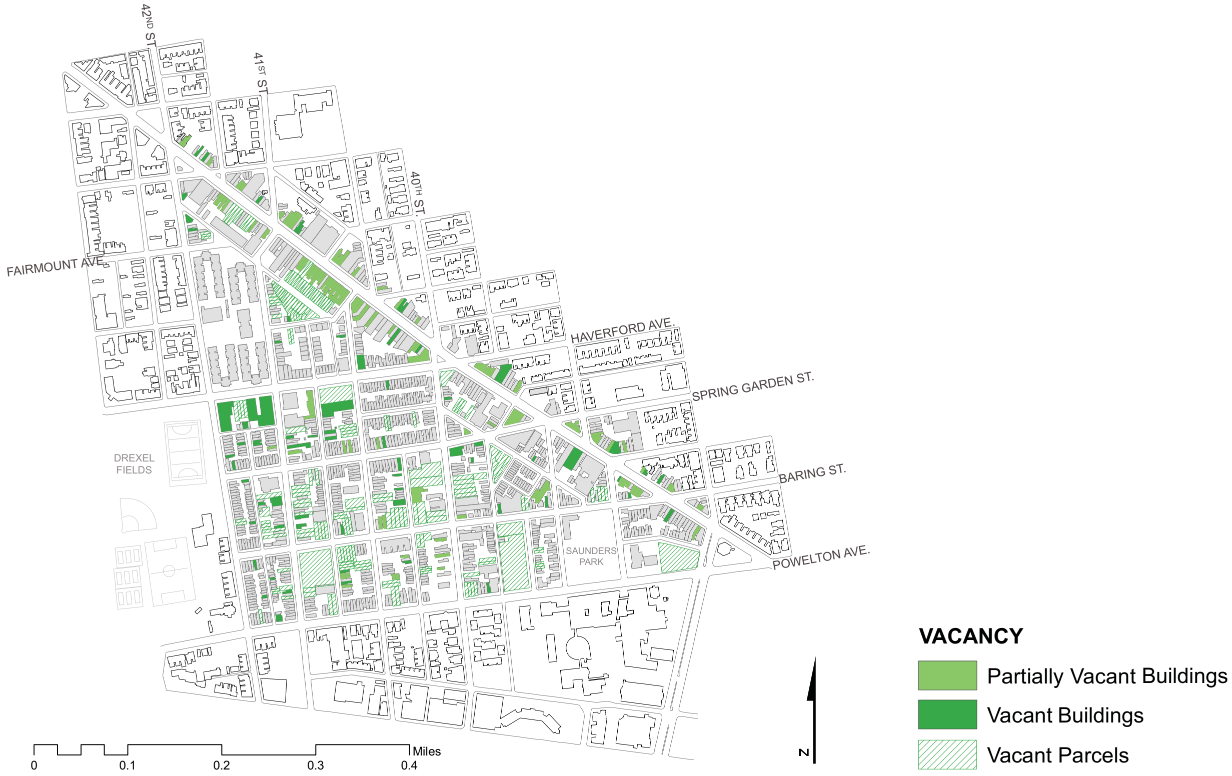
FAIRMOUNT AVE
HAVERFORD AVE.
SPRING GARDEN ST.
BARING ST.
POWELTON AVE.
DREXEL FIELDS
SAUNDERS PARK
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
Miles
N
FACADE MATERIAL
Historic
Non-Historic

4.26 Façade material, historic and non-historic

Building and lot vacancies are a critical issue in the neighborhood (Fig. 4.27). Many buildings are partially vacant, either on the ground floors or in the upper floors. For example, many buildings on Lancaster Avenue have ground-floor shops with vacant upper floors above (Fig. 4.28). Vacant parcels differentiate in terms of scale and location. Most vacant lots are "missing teeth" between existing rowhouses, reflecting demolition of a single building in the row. In some cases, vacant lots are maintained and used as community gardens (see Comparables, in 5. Analysis). However, most lots are poorly maintained and/or used as parking.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POWELTON AVE.
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SAUNDERS PARK
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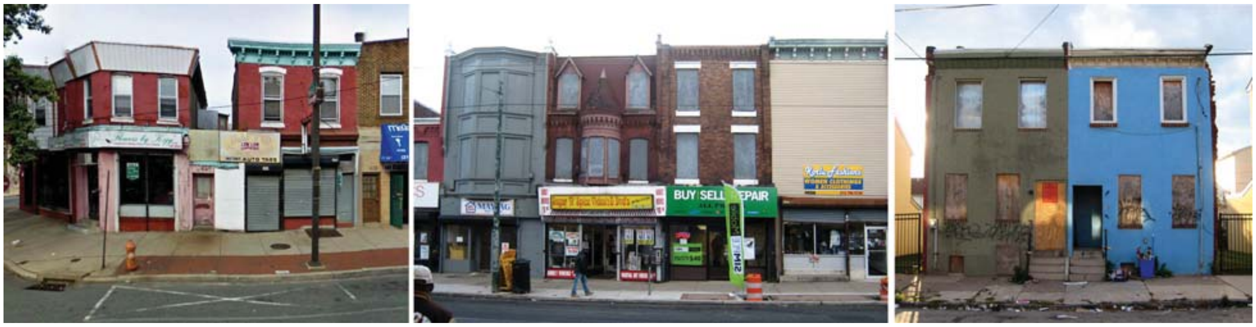
N
VACANCY
Partially Vacant Buildings
Vacant Buildings
Vacant Parcels

4.27 Vacancy (buildings and lots)

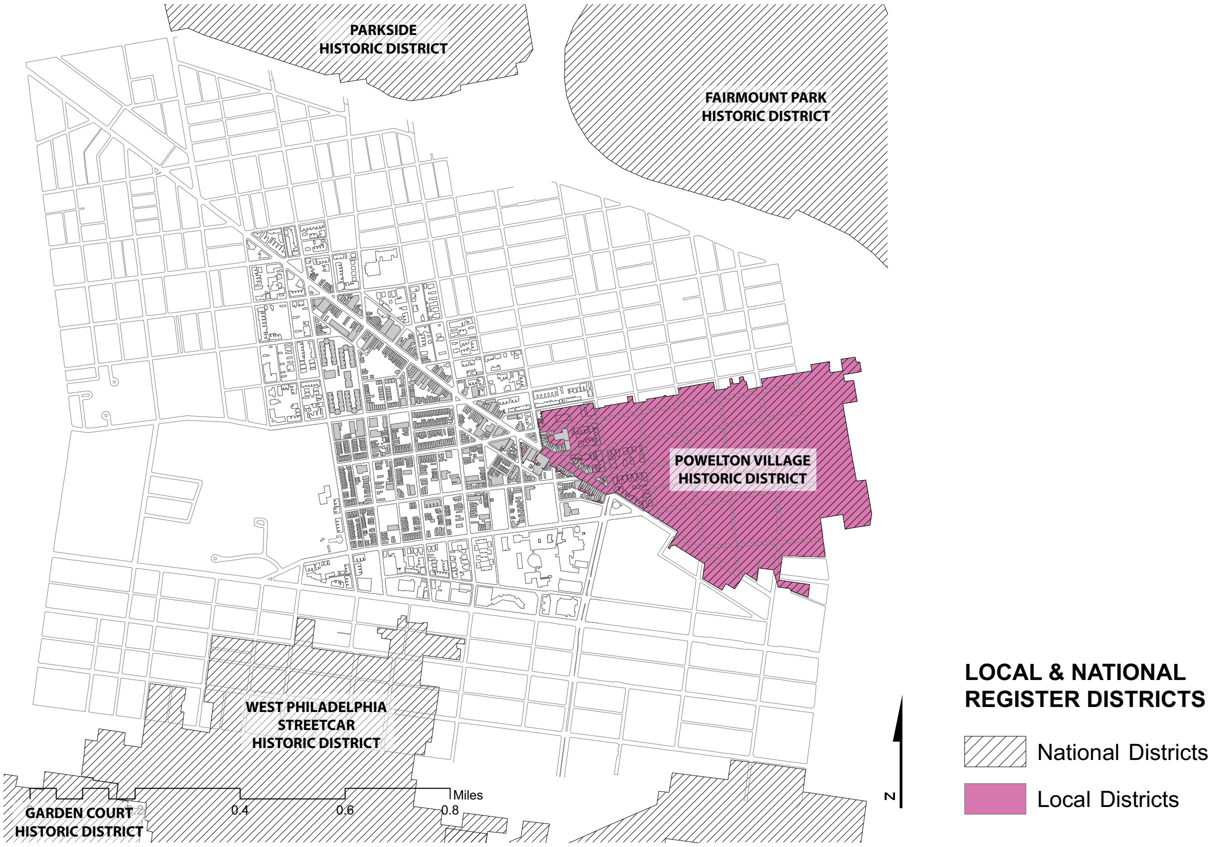

BUY SELL REPAIR

4.28 Building vacancy (L-R): ground floor vacancy, upper floor vacancy, and vacant buildings

Historic Properties

In addition to looking at socioeconomic, political, ethnographic, and historical data that have shaped and characterized the study area, the studio team researched designated landmark buildings and historic districts to consider policy frameworks that affect how building stock within the study area is managed.

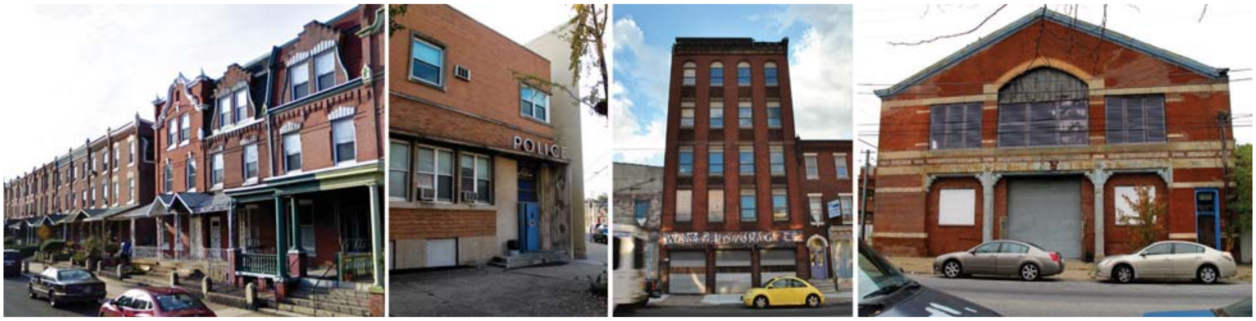
West Powelton is surrounded by historic districts: Parkside and Fairmount National Register historic districts to the north, West Philadelphia and Garden Court National Register historic districts to the south, and Powelton Village National Register and local register historic district to the east. However, the study area contains very few designated properties. Only Lancaster Avenue east of 39th Street is included in the Powelton Village National Register and local register historic district (Fig. 4.29). Of that area, only Hawthorne Hall, located at 38th Street and Lancaster Avenue, and a few other buildings are contributing resources to the local historic district. Otherwise, no resources within the study area are listed in the national or local historic registers.


PARKSIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT
FAIRMOUNT PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
POWELTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT
WEST PHILADELPHIA STREETCAR HISTORIC DISTRICT
GARDEN COURT HISTORIC DISTRICT
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.8
Miles
N
LOCAL & NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICTS
▨ National Districts
■ Local Districts

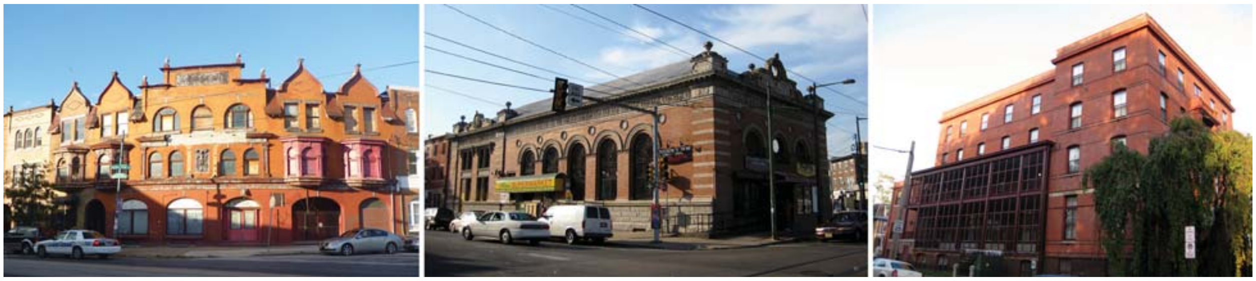
4.29 Local and national historic districts

Studio team members each created a list of properties they considered worthy of designation by based on National Register criteria. Some of the selected resources exhibited high levels of integrity compared to similar resources, such as the rowhouses on the 4000 block of Spring Garden; other selected resources had unique architecture or represented important historical events, such as the Police Station and the Train Depot at Haverford and 41st streets (Fig. 4.30). Ethnographic research involved asking community members to identify local landmarks, built or otherwise (Fig. 4.31). When the studio team's list of landmarks was overlaid with community-identified landmark buildings, several overlap despite the difference in how these buildings were chosen (Fig. 4.32). This analysis can be interpreted as a positive indicator of resources that need to be further investigated with regard to individual designation.

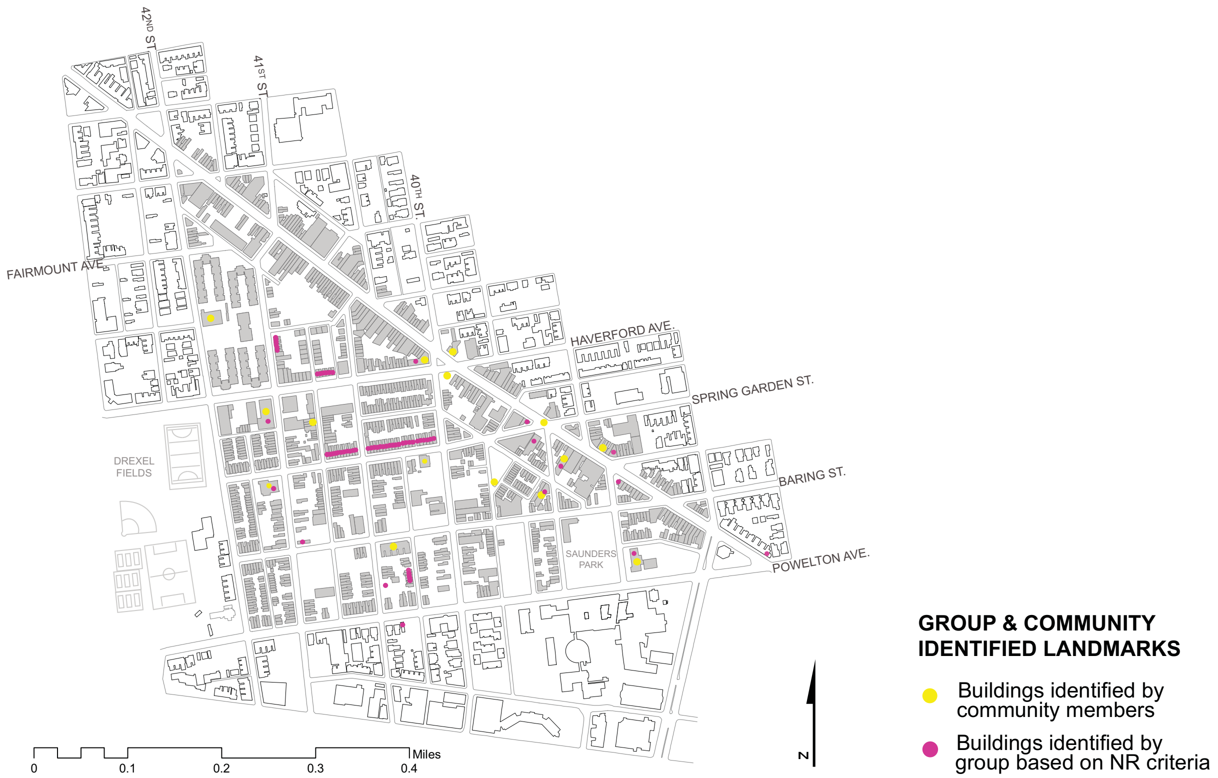
After conducting the field survey and discussing the local political climate, the studio team decided that it was not appropriate to pursue historic district nomination for the study area at this time. However, it was agreed that some individual resources were significant enough to merit historic designation either at the local or National Register levels. Individual designations could be one way to raise community awareness of local historic resources and potentially catalyze a historic district designation in the future. (See Monarch Building National Register Nomination, in 7. Moving Forward.)



4.30 Some of the group-identified landmarks (L-R): rowhouses on the 4000 block of Spring Garden, the Police Station, Monarch Storage building, and the trolley depot



4.31 Some of the group- and community-identified landmarks (L-R): Hawthorne Hall, the West Philadelphia Title & Trust Building, and the Industrial Home for Blind Women


42ND ST.
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BARING ST.
POWELTON AVE.
DREXEL FIELDS
SAUNDERS PARK
0
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Miles
N
GROUP & COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED LANDMARKS
● Buildings identified by community members
● Buildings identified by group based on NR criteria

4.32 Group- and community-identified landmarks

BARING STREET

5.1 Mixed-use buildings on Lancaster Avenue

5 ANALYSIS

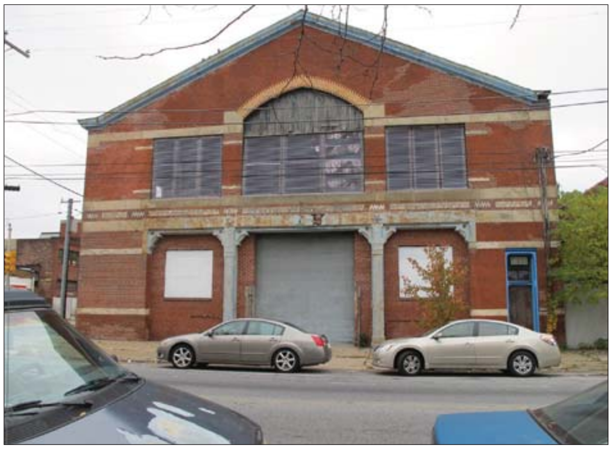
Character-Defining Elements
SWOT Analysis
Comparables

Character-Defining Elements

Character Defining Elements (CDEs) are the specific attributes of a building, structure, or site that help determine historic and cultural value. CDEs are evidence of integrity and significance, and can include materials, location, uses, and cultural associations that reveal the unique context behind a place. The following CDEs in West Powelton were determined by choosing individual identifying features that together are representative of the neighborhood as a whole. This Studio will evaluate West Powelton's CDEs as a means to characterize and identify the neighborhood, and determine what elements are significant and should be retained and emphasized for future planning and preservation.

Transit

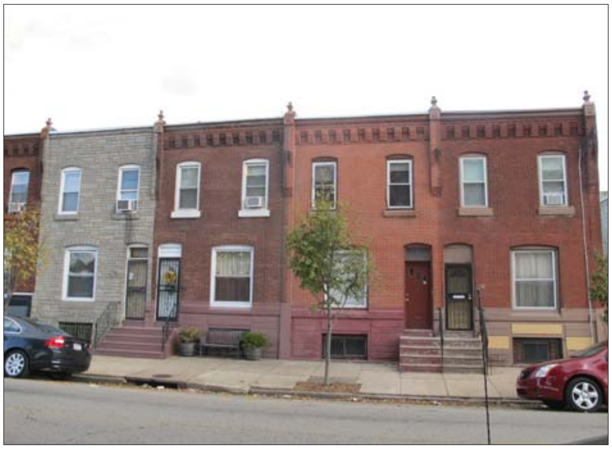
The area became a hub of transit-oriented development beginning in 1858 with the creation of the West Philadelphia Passenger Railroad, which connected Center City Philadelphia with West Powelton and made the neighborhood one of the first suburbs in West Philadelphia (Fig. 5.2). West Powelton is now served by a trolley and several bus lines (Fig. 5.3, next page).



5.2 Terminal for the West Philadelphia Passenger Railroad at 4100 Haverford Avenue

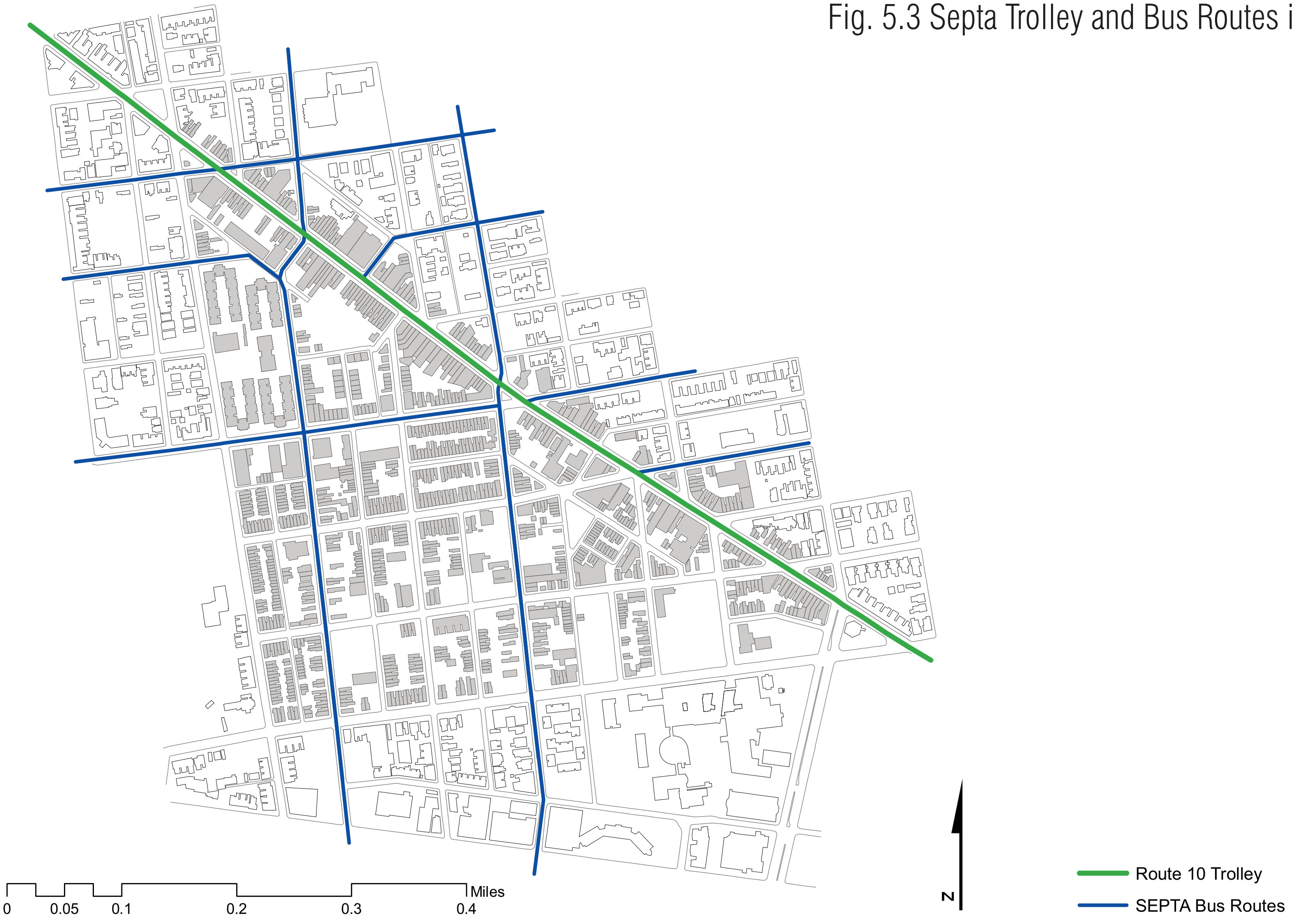
Housing Mix

West Powelton contains both grand houses and more modest workers' rowhouses. The varied housing stock first began to develop along with the rail and trolley routes. The spatial organization of residential types reflects the area's historical evolution. Larger houses stand along wider, more prominent streets, while worker housing is located along narrower streets in the interior of the neighborhood (Fig. 5.4).



5.4 Dense rowhouses on N. 42nd Street

Fig. 5.3 Septa Trolley and Bus Routes in West Powelton


Route 10 Trolley
SEPTA Bus Routes
N
0
0.05
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
Miles

Commercial Character

The corridor is marked by mixed-use buildings with vacant upper stories and unsympathetic alterations. However, most Lancaster Avenue buildings retain a relatively high degree of historic integrity, and the underlying character of the street as a dense commercial corridor remains intact (Figs. 5.5-5.6). The 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue holds a particularly high concentration of small businesses.

MONARCH STORAGE

5.5 Mixed-use buildings on Lancaster Avenue

EXTERMINATOR'S SUPPLY CO.

5.6 Mixed-use building at 39th Street and Lancaster Avenue

Vacant Land

West Powelton contains a significant amount of vacant land scattered throughout an otherwise densely developed area. Vacant lots range in size from a single parcel to parcels occupying most of a block, the result of sustained depopulation, disinvestment and building deterioration, and demolition. Some are well-maintained and/or fenced, while others have overgrown vegetation and debris (Fig. 5.7). Several large parking lots add to the sense of vacancy.

5.7 Vacant lot in West Powelton

Churches

West Powelton is a neighborhood of churches - the neighborhood contains 11 substantial church buildings (Fig. 5.8). Congregations also inhabit storefronts in commercial buildings (Fig. 5.9). During informal conversations with studio team members, West Powelton residents consistently identified churches as neighborhood landmarks.

5.8 Community Baptist Church on Spring Garden Street

5.9 Storefront church on the 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue

Public Art + Community Gardens

West Powelton's vacant lots are mitigated by many murals and community gardens that take advantage of the empty ground- and facade-space. The successful Philadelphia Mural Arts Program has created 12 murals in the study area (Fig. 5.10). Community members we spoke with often identified murals as notable neighborhood landmarks, and - from those interviews - community engagement appears to be positively correlated with mural locations. (See Ethnography, in 4. Analysis, for more details.)

West Powelton is also home to 9 community gardens. Along with murals, these gardens improve the physical environment and signal community concern for public space.

MONARCH STORAGE

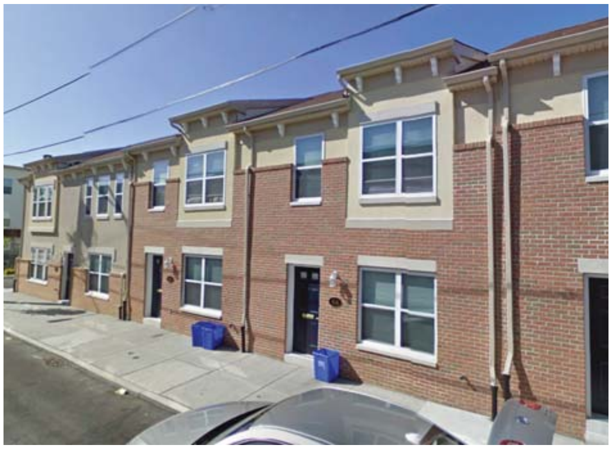
5.10 This mural on Lancaster Avenue features the Monarch Building, and a community member are featured in this mural

Development Continuum

A 161-unit housing project for low-income seniors was constructed in the northwest corner of the study area in 1967. In 2008, the Philadelphia Housing Authority developed 80 units of new rental housing just to the east (Fig. 5.11). These low-rise projects are generally compatible with historic fabric.

Yet infill development is not a recent phenomenon in West Powelton. The neighborhood grew incrementally at, only experiencing wholesale growth in the 1860s and 1870s. Even then, large estates remained. These were infilled with denser development by 1895.

Following decades of disinvestment and demolition, infill construction should continue to be a strategy for utilizing vacant land and increasing local population.

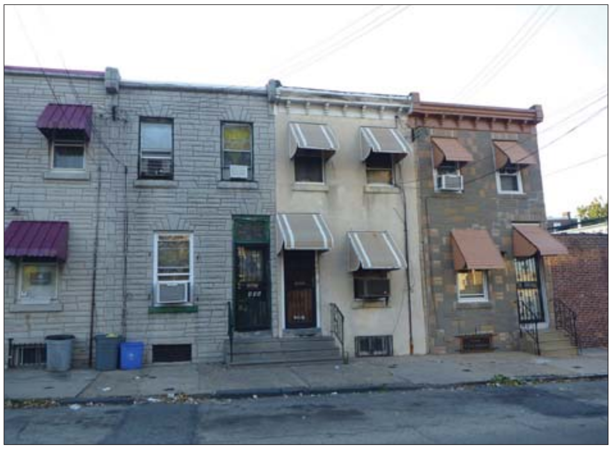


5.11 Marshall Shephard Village, constructed in 2008

Varying Degrees of Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation efforts in the area vary: historically sympathetically rehabilitated buildings with a high degree of historic integrity stand next to buildings suffering from years of neglect (Fig. 5.12). Some building facades have been covered with non-historic vinyl siding or Permastone; in many cases, historic materials appear to be intact under the replacement siding: a hopeful indication for reversing the alteration in the future (Fig. 5.13).

5.12 Restored house at Baring Street and N. Sloan Street



5.13 These rowhouses on N. Sloan Street are covered by stucco and permastone, but original historic fabric remains underneath

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analyses - covering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats - are a "quick and dirty" method for distilling a great deal of information about a particular place or subject into a concise form. When successful, they provide relatively simple snapshots of potentially complex situations and offer a way to draw connections between existing strengths and weaknesses and future opportunities and threats. The studio team undertook a SWOT analysis to synthesize our research and observations into a comprehensive and appropriate preservation approach for West Powelton.

As the team brainstormed and discussed SWOT items, it was surprisingly challenging to maintain our focus on preservation, per the nature of the studio. In truth, most items reached beyond the physical landscape to address the local economy and community fabric. We did our best to articulate how each item was tied to preservation, however apparently far-fetched it first appeared. The exercise made it clear that bricks-and-mortar issues were only one part of West Powelton's present and future. Further, it established consensus that our preservation approach to West Powelton needed to recognize that addressing economic and social concerns is essential to building a vibrant, well-preserved neighborhood.

The following is a summary of main findings, selected by a popular "dot vote" in which each team member distributed ten votes among all SWOT items. A complete list of SWOT items is included in the Appendix.

Major SWOT Items

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Dense commercial corridor	Vacant lots and buildings	Rehabilitate historic building stock	Growing divide between students/faculty/ staff and long-term community members
Concerned community	Renter-occupied space	Capitalize on relationships with anchor institutions	Displacement in the face of gentrification
Dynamic/diverse landscape	Bad reputation with regard to public safety	Improve Lancaster Ave. commercial corridor	Lack of a plan for vacant lots
High building stock integrity	Low median income	Provide economic opportunities for residents	Insensitive infill

Strengths

The group identified a dense commercial corridor, a concerned community, and a dynamic and diverse landscape as the primary strengths of West Powelton..

Once a hotspot of retail activity, the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor holds many buildings with a high degree of integrity and great potential for redevelopment (Figs. 5.14-5.17). This commercial corridor contributes to the overall diversity of West Powelton's landscape, which ranges from small rowhouses—originally worker housing—to landmark buildings along Powelton and Lancaster avenues. The various types of open space, ranging from open park space to community gardens, function as additional assets.

From long-term residents to institutions and nonprofit organizations with vested interests in the neighborhood, West Powelton's community is willing to voice its opinion in regards to what goes on in the neighborhood. The community's ability to monitor neighborhood development enables it to steer long-term development to meet community needs, though it presents some political challenges.

5.14 Lancaster Avenue

5.15 Garden on N. Holly Street

5.16 Bank building on Lancaster Avenue (now used as a church)

5.17 Rowhouses

Weaknesses

Weaknesses of the study area include its many vacant lots and buildings, an abundance of renter-occupied space, the neighborhood's reputation for high crime levels and a general lack of public safety, a low household median income, and the lack of businesses that meet residents' needs on Lancaster Avenue (Figs. 5.18-19).

West Powelton contains many vacant lots and buildings resulting from demolition and disinvestment. These vacant properties are often unmaintained, contributing to a sense of deterioration in the neighborhood. The vacant properties are also potential sites for illicit activity that increases crime levels and decreases perceived and/or actual public safety.

The abundance of renter-occupied space is another weakness in West Powelton, as renters do not invest in major building improvements as often as homeowners. Overall, a low household median income may make building rehabilitations cost-prohibitive.

5.18 Mid-block vacant lot

5.19 Vacant rowhouses flanked by vacant lots

Opportunities

The strongest opportunities within the study area include nearby anchor institutions, rehabilitating historic building stock, improving the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor, providing economic opportunities for residents, and strategically utilizing vacant lots (Fig. 5.20).

Significant potential lies in anchor institutions that have long-term interest in the neighborhood, such as Drexel University. These institutions can be strong advocates for community-benefitting projects, rehabilitate key local landmarks, and engage in or encourage development on vacant lots. Furthermore, institutions can increase the neighborhood's population, either through direct investment and development, a targeted homeownership program, or indirect means, such as growing enrollment and increased demand for local housing options. More new residents could increase the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor's market and join community groups to advocate for a positive neighborhood future.

Improving the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor and rehabilitating historic building stock would improve the neighborhood's appearance, boost quality of life, and create needed jobs for local residents. Similarly, the utilization of vacant lots through activities such as community gardens or sensitive infill would also stimulate community investment.

5.20 Industrial building with potential for rehabilitation

Threats

Primary threats to West Powelton include distrust of institutional affiliates (students, faculty, and staff) by some long-term community members; gentrification that leads to displacement, particularly of long-term low-income residents; a lack of plan for vacant lots; insensitive infill; and perceived and actual crime.

The divide between long-term community members and students, faculty, and staff associated with anchor institutions reflects a local suspicion that outside interests and higher-income newcomers will effect change that excludes and harms the existing community.

On a related note, an increased interest in the neighborhood reflects the overall trends of residential growth in West Philadelphia and has the potential to result in escalating property values and rents that price current renters and homeowners out of the neighborhood.

The current lack of a plan for vacant lots, crime, and insensitive infill are related threats. Vacant lots, if left unmaintained, could result in increased crime levels, and divestment in West Powelton in the long term. However, the other extreme—rapid, unplanned, and insensitive infill that ignores the scale and quality of existing buildings in West Powelton—could degrade the character-defining elements of the neighborhood and reduce quality of life for all residents.

SWOT Conclusions

Comparison of the primary strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in West Powelton reflect the complexities of this urban neighborhood. It also yields an exciting way to visualize West Powelton in a way that acknowledges limitations and future threats but focuses on the considerable historic assets within the study area, opportunities in vacant lots and the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor, and ways to benefit to residents who have a vested interest in the neighborhood. Our analysis identified a number of complementary opportunities that build upon the strengths of the neighborhood. For example, the rehabilitation of historic buildings and the utilization of vacant lots has the potential to provide wealth-building opportunities for local residents. Of course, the converse could also be true: the lack of plan for vacant lots could result in incompatible infill and increased incidences of crime.

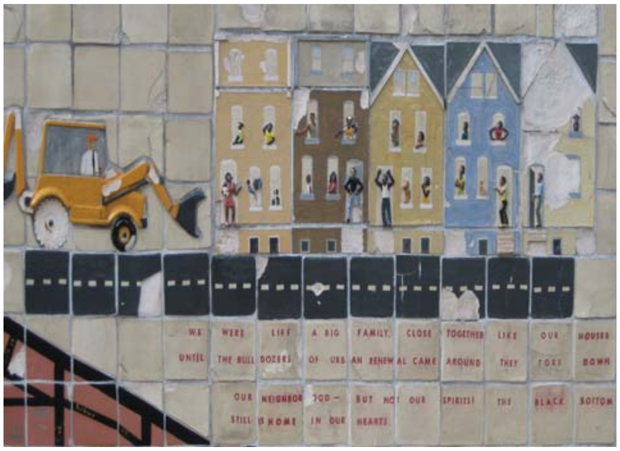
Comparables

This section provides a selection of case studies that are, in one or more ways, similar to West Powelton. These comparables provide a better understanding of the challenges that West Powelton faces and give insight into the range of different plans proposed for neighborhoods with similar characteristics and goals.

Criteria:
The selected case studies fall into one or more of the categories below. The studio team determined these categories based on the defining characteristics and desirable outcomes for West Powelton.

- Older communities under development pressure
- Neighborhoods surrounding commercial corridors
- Neighborhoods that have suffered from depopulation
- Integration between old and new buildings
- Shifts in neighborhood identity
- Majority/minority neighborhoods
- Neighborhoods affected by the priorities and actions of anchor institutions
- Streetscape improvement programs

The following case studies provide examples that demonstrate the challenges, opportunities, and possible outcomes for revitalization strategies in West Powelton.


WE WERE LIKE A BIG FAMILY CLOSE TOGETHER LIKE OUR HOUSES
UNTIL THE BULLDOZERS OF URBAN RENEWAL CAME AROUND THEY TORE DOWN
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD - BUT NOT OUR SPIRITS! THE BLACK BOTTOM
STILL IS HOME IN OUR HEARTS

5.21 Mural depicting the demolition of houses in the Black Bottom neighborhood of West Philadelphia.

Anchor Institutions

The expansion of the following institutions greatly changed their surrounding neighborhoods. These case studies show how universities targeted communities with minority populations, high levels of crime and vacant housing, and whose population was in decline. For most of these institutions, interventions began as unilateral plans characterized by massive demolition, and subsequently evolved into a multilateral approach where all stakeholders – institutions, government, community, and nonprofit organizations – were included in the process. The most successful case studies show that an anchor institution continues to invest in building a strong relationship with local communities – even after its own goals are achieved.

Penn and West Philadelphia

After World War II, the University of Pennsylvania grew rapidly and the surrounding neighborhoods experienced substantial disinvestment. Penn took advantage of the federal urban renewal program in the 1950s and 1960s to intensify its westward expansion. Following contemporary urban renewal trends, Penn's plan was conceived without community consultation and resulted in the clearance and displacement of an entire community. This neighborhood, known as the Black Bottom, was characterized by its close-knit, predominantly low-income, African-American community. Former Black Bottom residents and their descendants still reunite every year to celebrate their heritage on Black Bottom Day, in August (Fig.5.21).

By the end of the 1960s, community residents and students began to protest these unilateral actions. The relationship between Penn and the neighborhood was so damaged that any attempts of expansion were met by distrust and resistance. This caused delays in projects, such as the University City Science Center, and forced stakeholders to negotiate with the community. This experience taught Penn the importance of maintaining a good relationship with its neighbors and prompted a change of conduct. Instead of continuing its expansion westward into the densely population neighborhoods of West Philadelphia, it focused on developing the non-residential area located to the east and densifying its campus.

Additionally, Penn created channels for improving communication and collaboration with the surrounding community. This effort was initiated by President Sheldon Hackney, but it reached its full potential under University president Judith Rodin between 1994 and 2004. During this period, a series of community partnerships was developed and grouped under the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships in 1992. The programs developed by the Netter Center target neighborhood needs that are identified by a partnership between the center and the community. These problems can be addressed by an ABCS (Academically Based Community Service) course that involves students in the research and development of a recommendation, which is then put in practice. The center also fosters community development and provides direct high-quality services to its neighborhood. These programs address issues in education, health, local business, affordable housing, and security (Fig. 5.22). As a result of these partnerships, Penn was able to increase its political cachet with the community and move forward with its expansion plans. It also improved the quality of life in nearby West Philadelphia and allowed students to benefit from the experience acquired through ABCS courses.

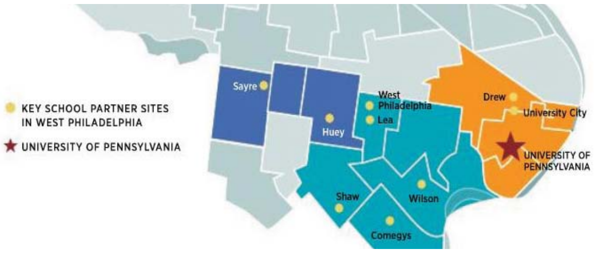
Parallel to these programs that focus on providing community services, Penn also engaged in improving the housing market in West Philadelphia. The university identified the high level of vacancy and rental properties as one of the factors preventing its improvement. The causes of this situation included disturbance due to the high number of undergraduate students living outside of campus, difficulty in obtaining financing for improvements or property acquisition and the blight effect of some severely deteriorated properties on the surrounding area.[65] The university addressed these problems by improving and increasing on-campus housing, providing the necessary financial incentives for home improvements (particularly for homes owned by faculty members), and by rehabilitating threatened buildings.

These initiatives demonstrate how Penn's expansion was only successful when the university took into consideration the betterment of the surrounding community. Penn improved its relationship by making a significant contribution to the neighborhood's development, and its success has prompted the Netter Center to create a toolkit that can be used by other institutions wishing to build a similar partnership program.

Johns Hopkins University and Middle East Baltimore

In the 1950s and 1960s, Johns Hopkins University promoted an urban renewal approach very similar to Penn's. The conditions of the adjacent neighborhood, Middle East Baltimore, continued to decline following Johns Hopkins's actions, and a general distrust of the institution was rooted in the community. Over the past two decades, however, the relationship between the university and its surrounding neighborhood improved with the creation of two collaborative initiatives to revitalize the area.

The first inititative began in 1994 and called for small-scale revitalization projects. The Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC) was created as a non-profit organization that acquired, renovated and exchanged vacant properties with homeowners living in poor housing conditions, and later provided these homeowners with job search and training opportunities. After ten years of operation, this program caused little impact on the neighborhood and the number of vacant properties continued to rise.


● KEY SCHOOL PARTNER SITES IN WEST PHILADELPHIA
★ UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Sayre
Huey
West Philadelphia
Lea
Drew
University City
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Shaw
Wilson
Comegys

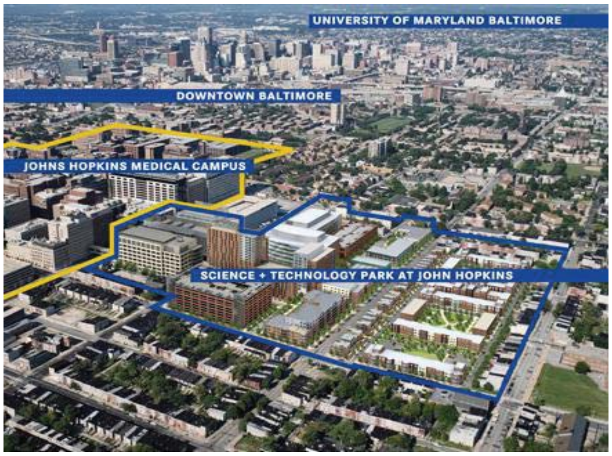
5.22 Map showing the schools in West Philadelphia that maintain a partnership with the Netter Center

The program was finally disregarded for multiple reasons, including poor management, which resulted in only one fourth of the budget being used, and an inadequate approach to increasing blight in the area (Fig. 5.23).

In 2003, this initiative was replaced with the current strategy. Johns Hopkins proposed a radical plan to the City of Baltimore that aimed to revitalize the Middle East neighborhood (Fig. 5.24). This project is divided into three phases and will take ten to fifteen years to complete. It encompasses eighty acres of mass renovations and clearing that will result in 2 million square feet of biotech research complex, 1200 units of new and rehabilitated mixed-income housing and commercial space. The coordination of this project is done through the East Baltimore Development Inc. whose board of directors includes representatives from the government, university, businesses and community leaders. The implementation of phase I is currently under way, and until now, resulted in 31 acres cleared and 584 families relocated. The acquisition of these properties was only possible through eminent domain, and at least half of them were vacant. This project's approval required the involvement of the community in the process, especially in negotiating relocation compensation. A relocated family receives financial compensation, social and legal assistance. This can include employment training and business mentorship. They also have priority of access to the new/renovated low income units available both as rental and home owned.

Although the first initiative had no satisfactory results, it was more sympathetic to the neighborhood character. The fact that it was badly managed makes it difficult to judge whether it would have made a more positive impact if it had been properly conducted. However, it seems that the challenges faced by this neighborhood were beyond the impact capacity of a small-scale intervention. The current initiative seems to resemble the 1960s approach to urban renewal, but it differs from it because of one key aspect. Although it still displaces the local population, it offers them just financial compensation and the opportunity to improve their current economic situation.

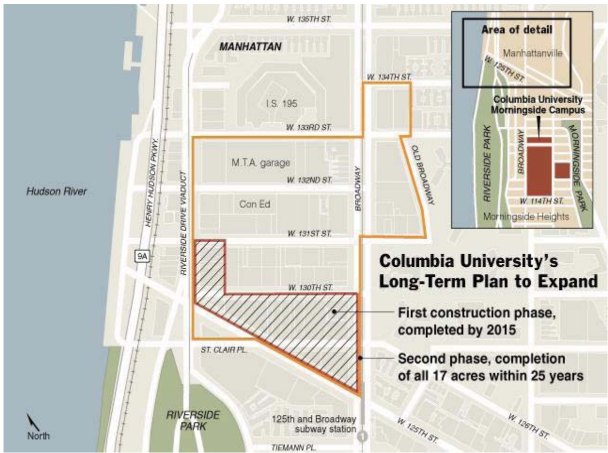
5.23 View of Middle East Baltimore


UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND BALTIMORE
DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE
JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICAL CAMPUS
SCIENCE + TECHNOLOGY PARK AT JOHN HOPKINS

5.24 The John Hopkins 2003 plan for the neighborhood.

Columbia and Morningside Heights neighborhood

Similar to the previously described cases, Columbia had little community support when it engaged in mass property acquisition in the 1960s and 70s in Harlem. This aggressive real estate activity resulted in a strong opposition to the presence of students in the neighborhood and protests prompted the university to change its approach to expansion in the 1980s and 90s. This new attitude was marked by small-scale interventions and community outreach. For example, properties were only acquired as they became available on the market instead of using eminent domain through government support. The university's plans started to focus more on the improvement of streetscape and public spaces, which benefitted the community by providing incentives for owners to invest in their properties. Additionally, technical assis


W. 135TH ST.
MANHATTAN
W. 134TH ST.
I.S. 195
W. 133RD ST.
M.T.A. garage
W. 132ND ST.
Con Ed
W. 131ST ST.
W. 130TH ST.
ST. CLAIR PL.
Hudson River
HENRY HUDSON PKWY.
RIVERSIDE DRIVE VIADUCT
9A
BROADWAY
OLD BROADWAY
RIVERSIDE PARK
125th and Broadway subway station
TIEMANN PL.
W. 125TH ST.
W. 126TH ST.
North
Area of detail
Manhattanville
W. 125TH ST.
Columbia University Morningside Campus
RIVERSIDE PARK
BROADWAY
MORNINGSIDE PARK
W. 114TH ST.
Morningside Heights
Columbia University's Long-Term Plan to Expand
First construction phase, completed by 2015
Second phase, completion of all 17 acres within 25 years

5.25 Columbia's recent expansion plan

COLUMBIA LAUNCHES LAND-GRAB PLAN
COMMUNITY PLANNING
WEST HARLEM IS NOT FOR SALE !!!
STOP EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE

5.26 Community meeting to discuss Columbia's expansion

tance was provided to property owners who wished to expand or renovate, making a positive impact on the physical appearance of the neighborhood.

In order to improve its relationship with the community, Columbia included it in the planning process and was committed to addressing its needs. Toda`y, when a project is expected to cause impact on the neighborhood, a community meeting is held where locals can voice their concerns and discuss a compromise with the university. In addition, the university has created a permanent connection to the community through the diverse array of services provided to them mainly through Community Impact, a non-profit founded by the university in 1987. Columbia has also engaged in real estate development, including the renovation of adjacent historic buildings for non-affiliate's housing. Other university properties are also available to the public for lower rental rates as long as their use is considered beneficial to faculty and students, which might include a variety of small businesses.

Similarly to Penn, Columbia recognized the advantages of working with the community instead of against it. It also recognized the importance and strength of the culture associated with the neighborhood, and its contribution to enriching the experience of their affiliates. Building multiple local partnerships has also contributed to provide more learning and research opportunities for scholars and students. The ongoing expansion plans in West Harlem continue to test the strength of Columbia's relationship with the community (Fig. 5.25). Similar to Johns Hopkins, the size of the intervention triggered a strong community reaction, to which the university responded by organizing public meetings and agreeing to reach a compromise with the interested parties (Fig. 5.26).

Gentrification __ Equitable Development __ Urban Infill

These case studies focus on city planning tools and concepts that target neighborhood revitalization. Additionally, they are concerned with maintaining the character of these neighborhoods by avoiding displacement of the local population, preserving land uses and the built environment.

Gentrification may include:

- Physical improvement of the neighborhood
- Incentives to homeowners but little attention to rental tenants
- General improvement of life quality and security making these neighborhoods more attractive in the real estate market
- Increased property values, taxes, and rent rates combined with no improvement on the social conditions of the community
- Displacement of local residents, especially low income minorities, by a new population with higher income.

Smart Growth

Smart growth aims to make the most out of the existing urban infrastructure in order to control sprawl. It advocates infill housing and sustainable approaches to the environment and the community.

Smart growth principles include:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable neighborhoods.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
- Mix land uses.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- Take advantage of compact building design.[66]

Equitable Development

The goal of equitable development is to ensure that low-income families and minorities have access to the benefits resulting from public and private investments.

Equitable development principles include:

- Produce and preserve affordable housing
- Reduce the risk of displacement
- Protect locally owned business
- Increase availability of local jobs[67]

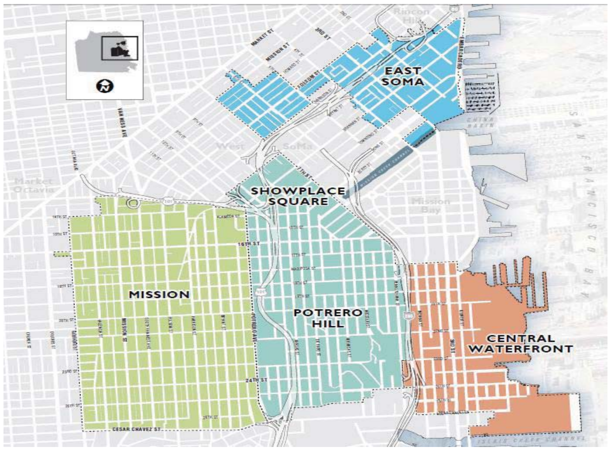
Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District, Atlanta, GA

Atlanta's inner city neighborhoods have been experiencing gentrification since the 1990s. This phenomenon has been associated with policies aimed at the revitalization of the area and control of urban sprawl with projects such as the HOPE IV housing development and 1996 Summer Olympics.[68] The neighborhoods targeted in these initiatives attract new residents with higher incomes due to their central location, access to public transportation and availability of historic bungalows and Victorian-era buildings (Fig. 5.27). The City of Atlanta recognized the need to minimize the negative effects of these revitalization projects by creating the Gentrification Task Force (2000-2001), whose aim was to compile a set of recommendations for future plans. The city already had a previous history of working with its citizens in the planning process. In 1974, the Neighborhood Planning Units was created to encourage local residents to review development proposals and zoning amendments. This particular set of tools allowed for the creation of plans that address gentrification in these areas through the concept of equitable development.

5.27 Victorian houses in the Martin Luther King Historic District, Atlanta, GA

5.28 Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthplace, Atlanta

The Martin Luther King Historic District exemplifies how gentrification is counteracted on both small and large scales. This case study is interesting because it presents a combination of government and community initiatives that complement each other. This neighborhood was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 in recognition of its significance to the history of the African American community (Fig. 5.28). Preserving the local community in this neighborhood is related not only to the idea of providing equal access to local investments, but also to preserving the distinctive character of this historic district. In 1980, the Historic District Development Corporation was founded with the goal of revitalizing the Martin Luther King Historic District and the adjacent Sweet Auburn Historic District. This non-profit is composed of community leaders, concerned residents and business advisors. Their strategy is to provide more options of affordable housing through rehabilitation and infill of vacant properties. All new construction follows the design guidelines for the district. On the larger scale the Old Fourth Ward Master Plan and the Butler-Auburn Redevelopment Plan both promote community-based planning and aim at empowering community members through equitable development.[69] They encourage public participation and infill housing. Some of the anti-displacement tools applied are: inclusionary zoning –requiring that new residential developments include a portion of low-income housing- and senior housing facilities.



5.29 Map of the Eastern neighborhoods, San Francisco

Eastern Neighborhoods Community Planning, San Francisco, CA

The eastern neighborhoods of San Francisco are traditionally mixed-use areas that were mainly industrial, but also combined with workers housing and local commerce. These neighborhoods have been experiencing intense transformation of the industrial areas into residential and office uses. This process has been marked by the inflow of wealthier residents, dislocating the local blue collar immigrant population that has been traditionally associated to the area. The city's Planning Department finished in 2008 a series of Area Plans that are meant to guide the long-term development of these four neighborhoods –Mission, Central Waterfront, East South of Market and Showplace Square (Fig. 5.29). Their goals are to:

- Stabilize industrial land
- Provide affordable housing to low and middle-income families
- Balance preservation with change[70]

The San Francisco Planning Department has been working with the concept of creating "complete neighborhoods". Each plan is composed of the following sections: land use, housing, built form, transportation, public spaces, economic development, community facilities and historic resources. Interestingly, several policies found at land use, housing and built form sections are also concerned with keeping the character of the neighborhood and, therefore, also with historic preservation. For example, they aim at maximizing new housing development, but they also create design guidelines in order to make these new buildings blend more easily with the historic streetscape. One of the objectives for the design guidelines found at the East SoMa Area Plan is to: "promote an urban form that reinforces East SoMa's distinctive place in the city's larger form and strengthen its physical fabric and character."

These Area Plans also provide anti-gentrification policies. They aim to increase the production of afford able housing and preservation of the existing stock,

5.30 Infill at East SoMa, San Francisco

with priority given to the latter. In addition, they specify economic development policies that relate to the concept of creating sustainable communities, in the sense that they provide the means for the local population to improve their quality of life while staying in their neighborhood. These policies include supporting locally owned businesses and offering good quality community services and facilities.

The last section of these plans directly relates to historic preservation. The justification for the inclusion of this issue in the planning process is stated as follows:

- Historic resources are important to the quality of life in the city
- They attract residents, visitors and business
- They provide continuity between past and present
- They contribute to the city's diverse housing and commercial stock, to the human scale of the streetscape and to pedestrian orientation

Preservation of historic buildings as part of their "green" strategy because it avoids wasting the embodied energy in the materials and constructions.

The objectives of the policies stated in this section include:

- Incentives for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings
- Foster public awareness and appreciation
- Guide locals in leading the community to preserve their historic buildings
- "Ensure that historic preservation concerns continue to be an integral part of the ongoing planning process"[71]

Streetscape Improvement Programs

This section will look at the success of streetscape improvement programs in other neighborhoods in Philadelphia and the US. Streetscape improvement programs can transform communities into more livable places with small-scale interventions that improve the appearance (and sometimes use) of the existing building stock, street furniture, and vacant lots. Improving the physical appearance of a place has been linked with numerous benefits, such as reduced crime, increased property values, and a higher quality of life for citizens. In our goal to revitalize Lancaster Avenue as a commercial corridor and strengthen the built and social community fabric of West Powelton, we look to façade improvement, public art, and community garden programs for ideas.

West Powelton residents consider historic buildings, murals, and community gardens to be character defining aspects in their community, thus influencing our decision to look at case studies that define the characteristics of successful streetscape improvement programs. Although each case study depicts varying historical, physical and social factors, they all require community members to actively participate in the beautification of their neighborhoods. Ultimately, this encourages residents to become stewards of the built environment and be the driving force of change.

Facade Improvement Programs

The National Trust for Historic Preservation encourages revitalization efforts in America's "main streets." Until the mid-twentieth century, Lancaster Avenue was the "Main Street" and commercial corridor of West Powelton, but today many of its storefronts are vacant or used for residential housing. Lancaster Avenue's rich building stock, central location, and efficient transit system are key elements to assist in the revitalization of the street as a commercial corridor, and Philadelphia's Restore Targeted Blocks and Storefront Improvement programs provide the resources needed to achieve this. The following case studies will demonstrate how façade improvement programs have been used in other cities to rehabilitate the existing building stock, which is often an economic driving force in community revitalization efforts.

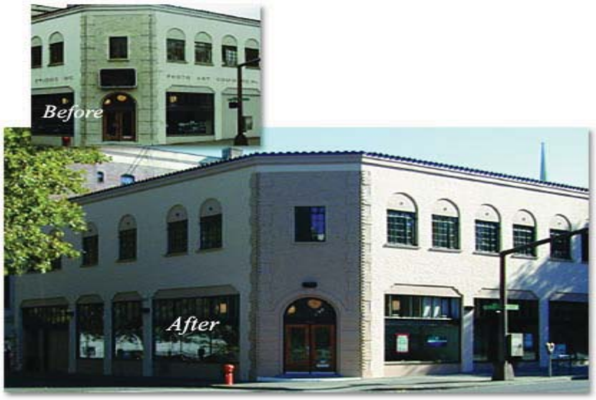
The Village Kitchen
Italian Pizzeria
2 SLICES 1 TONIC $5.00

5.31 New awning and signage on a storefront in Cambridge, MA

Cambridge Façade Signage and Lighting Improvement Program + Portland Storefront Improvement Program

Façade improvement programs typically offer matching grants to property owners and businesses to improve the façades of their buildings. The city of Cambridge, Massachusetts created a program to improve the appearance of commercial districts by providing matching grants to improve buildings, signage, and lighting for businesses (Fig. 5.31-32). The city of Portland, Oregon utilizes a Storefront Improvement Program to rebuild commercial districts and promote community revitalization. From 1989 through 2000, it provided 250 grants of up to $20,000, as well as up to 30 free hours of design consultation, to business throughout the city. With its Lighting Enhancement Program, the city of Portland also seeks safer streets at night and a more active nightscape in the downtown area by providing matching grants of up to $7500 to business and property owners for lighting improvement on their buildings. It is important to note that these programs, as well as most façade improvement programs, operate under strict guidelines that promote the preservation of historic architecture, and grants are to be used to improve and enhance original architectural elements (Fig. 5.33).

5.32 A renovated storefront in Cambridge, MA



5.33 The Photo Art building in Portland, OR, before and after it was rehabilitated with new paint, windows, and doors

The Main Street Program National Trust For Historic Preservation

For over thirty years, the National Trust's "Main Street" program has promoted the preservation of historic buildings and the revitalization of downtown neighborhood districts throughout the country. It is associated with over 2000 programs in cities looking to revitalize commercial districts and is an excellent resource to look to for ideas if West Powelton were to create its own Main Street program.

Public Art Programs

In West Powelton, colorful murals, mosaics, painted plant holders, and decorated benches dominate the streetscape. A mural that stands on the corner of N. 40th Street and Lancaster Avenue commemorates the site where Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech to the neighborhood in 1965, and serves as a reminder of this great moment in history. This mural is highly valued by residents and is an identifying element of West Powelton's built environment (Fig. 5.34).

5.34 MLK mural on the corner of Lancaster and N. 40th St.

The important role that public art can play in shaping and transforming the built environment is often overlooked. However, public art has the potential to change the appearance of a place in both positive and negative ways, and successful public art programs understand the responsibility of choosing a subject matter to display publicly. For this reason, many public art programs have guidelines that require at least several members of a community to approve a subject matter before it is painted on a wall. The following case studies display how public art—murals, mosaics, and sculptures—has been used as a mechanism to improve the visual appearance of communities and has even served as a vital component of urban regeneration projects.

Birmingham, England

During the 1950s and 1960s, a large portion of Birmingham's historic city fabric was destroyed by Modernist urban planning principles. Historic buildings were demolished and replaced with newer, modern structures. Walkable streets were replaced with highways and a subway system, forcing pedestrians to utilize new transportation methods. By the 1970s, the city witnessed a great decline in population and disinvestment and for years afterwards, it was criticized for its lack of visual cohesiveness and unwalkability. Birmingham was deemed a "failure of the modernist project."[72] however such immense criticism allowed it to later become a center for experimental revitalization projects.

In 1988, Vivian Lovell of the Public Arts Commissions Agency in Birmingham saw an opportunity to transform the city by using public art to change its visual appearance. The public art program that resulted from this plan would eventually contribute to making Birmingham one of the country's leading centers of art and architecture. The Public Arts Commission Agency began by commissioning small public artworks, and eventually the city invested 1.5 billion pounds in a redevelopment project that sponsored public art projects and the restoration of iconic industrial buildings.[73] Whereas Birmingham once lacked an "image" due to its great loss of city fabric, this new plan supported a new look that was centered on combining the arts and Historic Preservation. It made the city pedestrian-friendly again by incorporating public squares into its new plan, and placed monumental sculptures in the center of these plazas (Fig. 5.35). Architects also worked with residents and used surveys to find out their preferences for color and space in a building. Ultimately, Birmingham's decline allowed it to be used an experimental center for urban planning and the success of this public art program contributed greatly to city's revitilzation.

The lesson learned from this case study is that the arts often create more vibrant and attractive cities and are worth investing in. Since public art already has a strong presence in West Powelton, it should continue

5.35 The new image of Birmingham, England

5.36 The Philadelphia Mural Arts program has a strong presence in West Powelton

to be promoted in the community.

The Murals Conservancy of Los Angeles

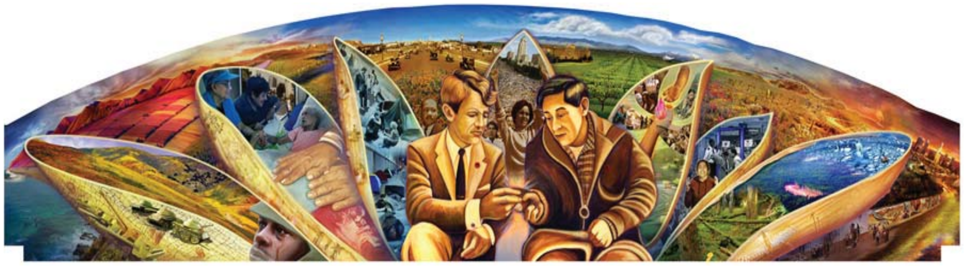
Muralism can be dated back to the years following the Mexican Revolution in the 1920s and 30s. A group of artists- most notably Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiro- painted on the walls of public buildings in Mexico both as way to educate the country's predominantly illiterate public and as a form of social and political protest. This art movement was later popularized by Chicano artists in Los Angeles who painted murals to commemorate their Mexican heritage.[74] Today, murals are found in cities throughout the country and commonly represent scenes of cultural empowerment, history and pride (Fig. 5.37).

The Murals Conservancy recognizes the artistic and social significance of mural painting in L.A. neighborhoods and documents murals located throughout the city. It chooses several murals a year to be the focus of conservation efforts so that they remain part of the city fabric. There are numerous organizations in Los Angeles that promote mural painting, but the Murals Conservancy recognizes the value of a mural as something worth preserving. This shows that mural painting and other forms of public art can be more than a temporary solution to beautify a wall or vacant building. Oftentimes, they become part of a streetscape and are valued by residents, which merits their preservation.

Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

Philadelphia witnessed a decline in population that lasted decades and lost nearly half a million of its residents from 1950 to 2005. During this period, many neighborhoods became blighted, resulting in an increase of vacant lots and buildings throughout the city. These places harbored illegal activities, and citizen-driven attempts to clean them continue today.

In 1984, Jane Golden founded the Mural Arts Program by encouraging local graffiti artists to put their creative talents to use by painting murals throughout the city.[75] The Mural Arts Program is now one of the most successful public art programs in the United States and has changed Philadelphia's streetscape with over 3,000 public murals. The program encourages local



5.37 "Seeing Through Others' Eyes," a mural depicting Robert Kennedy and Cesar Chavez, Los Angeles

5.38 A vacant lot is transformed by a mural and garden in West Powelton

5.39 One of West Powelton's many community gardens

communities to participate in the decision-making process when a subject matter is nominated to be painted on a wall. Additionally, it requires the space in front of a mural to be physically maintained, which contributes to the overall beautification of a streetscape. The Mural Arts Program has funded most of the murals in West Powelton and is an excellent resource for improving the appearance of vacant lots and buildings (Fig. 5.36).

Community Gardens

Community garden programs are attributed with promoting a number of benefits in a neighborhood:

- Stewardship of the landscape and other aspects of the built environment
- Community interaction
- Enhanced quality of life among citizens
- Increased safety of a neighborhood by making use of vacant lots where illegal activities often take place
- Access to fresh produce in low-income neighborhoods where it is limited
- Raise property values of homes
- Provide food for families in need

Community gardens are made possible by converting vacant lots into public spaces. It is important to remember that converting a lot into a garden requires continuous maintenance so that it is not returned to its former neglected state. The following case studies illustrate the many reasons in which a community garden benefits a neighborhood and improves the appearance of a streetscape.

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) + Philadelphia Green

There are numerous community garden programs in Philadelphia, many of which were initiated by the Philadelphia Horticultural Society, a non-profit organization that promotes activities and events related to horticulture. In 1974, PHS initiated Philadelphia Green to care for the city's green spaces by using capital from the Philadelphia International Flower Show to care for and restore urban green spaces. The success of this program has led to the development of many successful urban "greening" programs, such as the Vacant Land Stabilization Program, Community Landcare, and City Harvest. The latter program maintains over 30 community gardens throughout the city by using the services of inmates from Philadelphia prisons to care for them. Because PHS has sponsored numerous greening projects throughout the city, it is a good resource for residents to find ways to start a community garden in their neighborhood.

New Kensington Study, Philadelphia

Susan Wachter, professor of Real Estate from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, carried out a study in 2005 to measure the success of "greening" projects in the neighborhood of New Kensington, Philadelphia. The objective of the study was to determine if "greening" strategies—cleaning vacant lots, adding wood fencing, converting vacant lots into community gardens, and tree planting, affected the property values of nearby homes. Results from the study showed that homes adjacent to vacant lots were valued at 20% less than properties located further away from a vacant property, and a tree planting next to a house raised its property value by 9%.In this study, streetscape improvement programs were proved to be an effective component in neighborhood revitalization, raising property values by 28% and creating more livable communities for residents.[76]

P-Patch, Seattle

In many cities people have become stewards of vacant lots by mowing the grass, picking up trash, planting trees, and converting the lot into a community garden. This is a common practice in Seattle, where, in 2008, 59% of Seattle voters passed a law that provided $2 million in funding to create new community gardens throughout the city. This act shows that residents want more green space in their communities, and non-profit organization P-Patch has converted 23 acres of land into 73 P-patches (community gardens) to support this need.[77] In 2009, P-patch neighborhood farms produced over 12.4 tons of food that was eventually used to feed the homeless at food banks throughout Seattle, demonstrating that a community garden provides multiple benefits.

Conclusions

Through the analyses of the case studies previously presented it is possible to synthesize some guiding principles for the successful revitalization of West Powelton. The case studies that focused on the involvement of universities in the improvement of their surrounding neighborhoods had solid community partnerships. Also, positive outcomes were more likely to occur when all stakeholders (government agencies, non-profits, anchor institutions, community representatives, etc.) were involved. These partnerships often involved two different approaches- the provision of high quality public services and "bricks and mortar" projects (i.e. spot revitalizations conducted by Penn in West Philadelphia). In such cases, the universities engaged their own staff and students in these initiatives by providing them with the opportunity to broaden their research and education. This kind of partnership is advantageous to both the university and the neighborhood. Besides the points already mentioned, universities can profit from having an open channel with the community, which makes them more willing to negotiate any future plans proposed by the institution. Neighborhood revitalization also makes the university more attractive to prospective students and staff. On the other hand, the community also profits from the political and financial power that usually accompany these institutions. One of the most readily perceivable benefits is the increase of homeowner occupancy as an effect of the improvement in the quality of public services provided in the area, which, in turn, render the community more stable and participative.

Some of these case studies also raised the issue of small versus large-scale interventions. Although both of them can be argued for, from the historic preservation standpoint small-scale rehabilitation projects are more desirable. "Spot revitalization" as they are sometimes called rely on the ripple effect that they can cause on their surroundings. They present the advantage of being developed on a case-by case basis giving better opportunity for the adoption of a solution that is more sensitive to the historic character of the building. This is best displayed through façade provement of an existing building stock by providing property owners with the money they might not otherwise have to repair their buildings. This kind of approach tends to encounter less negative reaction from the local community, because it does not cause large displacements of population.

These case studies also address the subject of gentrification, which is defined here as any significant neighborhood improvements that are not accompanied by the development of economic and social opportunities to local residents, which causes a disparity between the property value and the resident's financial capacity, and results in their collective displacement and dissolution of the local community. Since preservation involves not only the built heritage but also the immaterial culture that is intrinsic to it, the field should also be concerned with the displacement of community members whose daily activities compose, together with the landscape and built environment, the defining character of the neighborhood. Some of these cases use planning concepts and tools like Equitable Development in order to propose revitalization plans that are mindful of the local community, especially when there is a historical connection between the community and its neighborhood, like in the case of the Martin Luther King Historic District in Atlanta.

In conclusion, it is important to look to other case studies to learn about the successes and failures that previous decisions have made on communities experiencing similar challenges as West Powelton. These case studies showed the advantages of incorporating preservation in the planning process for historic neighborhoods, as was seen in the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Plans developed by the San Francisco Planning Department. They also demonstrated the importance of small-scale projects that improve the appearance of a community, find temporary or permanent solutions for unmaintained vacant land, and ultimately contribute to an enhanced quality of life among citizens. By utilizing the resources that are readily available in Philadelphia, an improved community can be made possible in West Powelton.

SAUNDERS
PARK
GREENE

6.1 Saunders Park Greene

6 PRESERVATION APPROACH

Preservation Approach
Preservation Principles
Individual Projects Matrix

Preservation Approach

We propose to rehabilitate West Powelton's rich historic building stock, strategically utilize vacant lots for community spaces and quality infill development, and revitalize the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor. Community members and organizations should be engaged in developing an approach to neighborhood revitalization that strengthens built and social community fabric and provides economic benefits to residents. As Drexel University looks to the neighborhood as a resource for students, faculty, and staff, it should develop a community-supported plan for targeted investments in the neighborhood and support the work of existing community organizations.

This preservation approach is grounded in the SWOT analysis and lessons from comparable situations. It is opportunity-based: it looks at the neighborhood's historic buildings, vacant lots, and historic commercial corridor as tremendous assets that need some work. It recognizes the political nature of preservation planning, especially in neighborhoods with predominantly low-income populations that are experiencing socioeconomic shifts, and emphasizes that existing residents should be the primary beneficiaries of neighborhood uplift. Finally, it acknowledges Drexel's important role in the neighborhood and asks the university to develop a public plan for its work in the neighborhood and to continue working with existing community organizations to determine a path of involvement and investment that meets community goals as well as its own interests.

6.2 Entrance to art gallery on Lancaster Avenue

Preservation Principles

The preservation approach is translated into a workable plan through six principles and associated actions and interventions. The preservation principles are the parameters that determine the scope of the active preservation efforts to be made in the neighborhood. They were developed through observing, analyzing, and identifying the physical and social facets that characterize West Powelton on multiple scales.

On the macro scale, West Powelton is an agglomeration of built fabric and human activity in a neighborhood of West Philadelphia located between Drexel, Powelton Village, Mantua, and University City. On the micro scale, the neighborhood is comprised of individual buildings with distinct histories, characteristics, and residents. Each building and person makes up their own small world of daily activities and uses that are continually evolving.

Changes at the micro scale will affect the macro scale of the neighborhood, just as individual repairs on a house add up to an entire rehabilitation. The actions and interventions associated with each principle are targeted at various organizations, community groups, and institutions that are already invested in West Powelton. Though these interventions do not need to be executed at the same time or by the same organization, they will be most effective if considered as a whole within the framework of the preservation principles and overarching approach.

The studio team members each completed individual or small-group projects that demonstrate an action and speak to one or more of the preservation principles (Fig. 6.3). See 7. Moving Forward for details on these projects.

1. Preserve and improve physical neighborhood fabric

By definition, historic preservation in West Powelton begins with the architecture that has served the community since the 19th century in the form of homes, shops, churches, and factories. The studio group completed a field survey to assess the type and condition of West Powelton's physical landscape. The survey revealed that a substantial portion of the architecture in the area is over 100 years old, with high degrees of historic integrity and low to medium levels of minimally invasive alterations and additions. Despite their integrity, many of these building are in need of immediate attention, or they may fall into irrevocable disrepair. The vacant lots created by building demolitions should be seen as opportunities for new infill construction, community gardens, or yards.

Recommendations:

- Develop a plan for vacant lots that meets community needs
- Create standards for infill development compatible with existing historic fabric
- Design a framework for public open space
- Look to existing programs as resources for improving physical fabric
- Increase property owner awareness
- Prioritize rehabilitation and reuse over new construction

2. Assist long-term residents in building economic stability

It is arguable that historic buildings have little value without the communities that inhabit them and add meaning from years of use. However, the West Powelton community faces substantial economic challenges, with a median household income of $20,604 and a poverty rate of over 30 percent. This report is not intended to be a city planning document, but it recognizes the importance of providing appropriate support to long-term residents and business and property owners in purchasing and rehabilitating buildings, thus helping to build household wealth, avoid displacement if property values rise, and stabilize the larger community.

Recommendations:

- Publicize existing homeownership incentives and programs, as well as developing new ones
- Support local business owners with marketing and other assistance, and support UCD and LABA's existing programs
- Provide job training opportunities for local residents and other Philadelphians
- Historic rehabilitation
- Clean and/or utilize vacant lots to enhance quality of life and decrease crime
- Develop affordable housing in existing buildings
- Support economic development and affordable housing activities of the Peoples Emergency Center CDC, especially those using existing building stock
- Create long-term affordable rental housing
- Lobby for citywide inclusionary zoning legislation to improve existing zoning

3. Engage community in planning and preservation efforts

The neighborhoods surrounding West Powelton have experienced negative outcomes following unilateral "renewal" plans enacted by the City of Philadelphia and powerful local institutions. To avoid disenfranchisement, current residents' voices should be heard in the planning processes for revitalization efforts. Such plans should balance the priorities of current residents with measures to encourage healthy change that appeals to future occupants and visitors.

Recommendations:

- Build community support for, or adapt West Powelton-Saunders Park Community Plan
- Partner with West Powelton Citizens Concerned Council to inform residents of local community events.
- Develop local capacity to participate in planning efforts
- Encourage participation in Citizens Planning Institute
- Engage community in dialogue about preservation

4. Revitalize Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor

As the artery of West Powelton, Lancaster Avenue is an important hub of activity in the neighborhood. It provides transportation, commerce, and social activity. The corridor is currently struggling, but its revitalization could bring residents new jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities, and more diverse goods and services, as well as more visitors.

Recommendations:

- Activate upper stories
- Rehabilitate storefront facades
- Provide support to existing businesses
- Attract new businesses that meet residents' needs
- Support Lancaster Avenue Business Association, LA21, PECCDC, and University City District efforts

5. Research and interpret neighborhood history

West Powelton's development is closely tied to the broader economic, social, and political trends in West Philadelphia and Philadelphia as a whole, but it also has a nuanced history of growth and change. Understanding of this history can enrich the lives of current residents and encourage visitors to seek out the neighborhood's considerable assets. Furthermore, highlighting local history can encourage a deeper sense of neighborhood pride and build community support for the preservation of historically significant spaces and buildings.

Recommendations:

- Research local history and establish archive in local library
- Develop further documentation of Martin Luther King Jr.'s visit
- Engage residents in developing an oral history of West Powelton
- Develop way to disseminate information about local history
- Develop local history website
- Develop curriculum for local teachers to use
- Encourage designation of individual historic resources

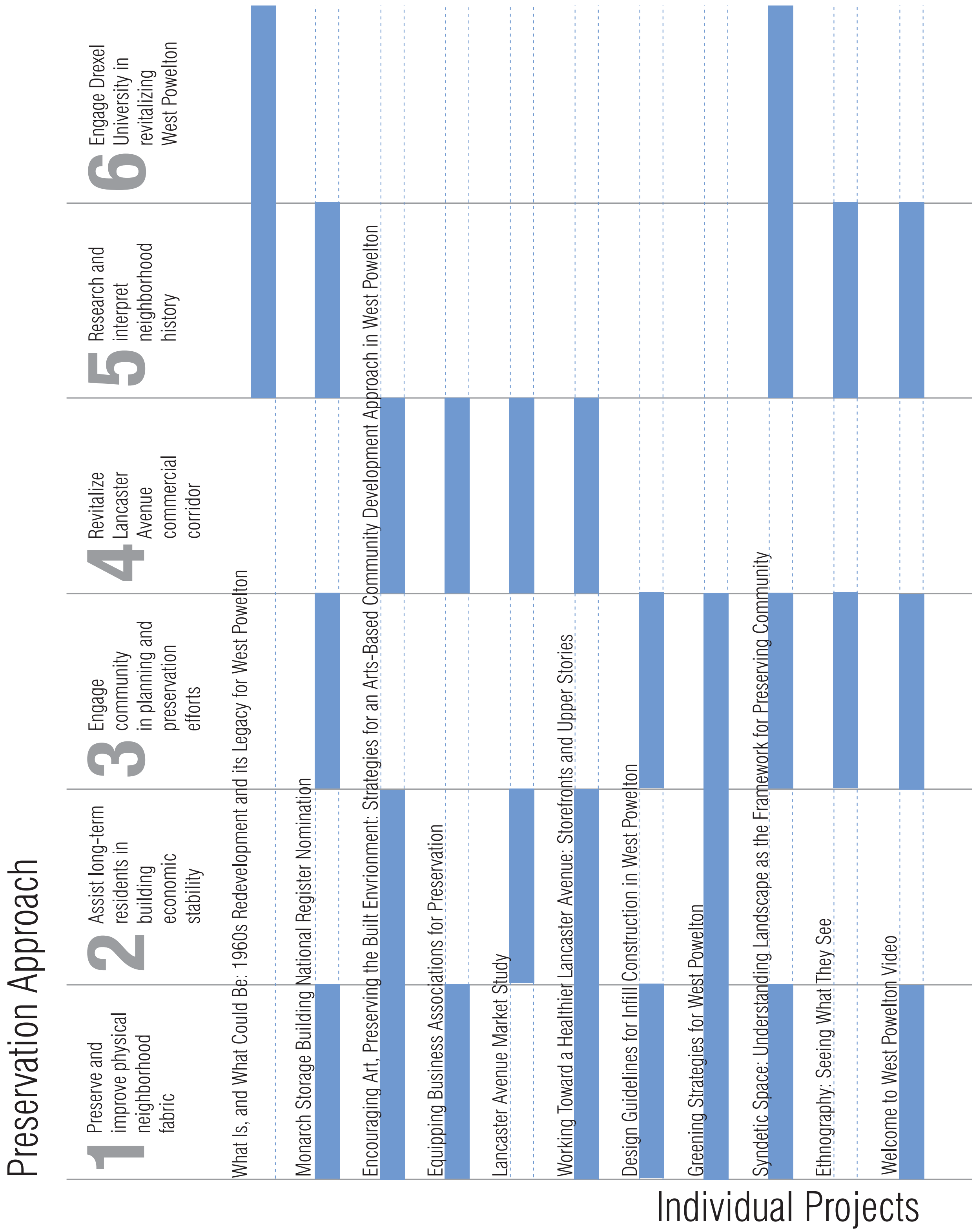
6. Engage Drexel University in revitalizing West Powelton

West Powelton's location between the campus and playing fields of Drexel University requires the university to foster a relationship with the surrounding community, especially as the university looks ahead to increasing involvement around its campus. Student residents in the neighborhood are potential customers for Lancaster Avenue businesses and participants in community projects, while Drexel's engagement may provide the financial means to rehabilitate key neighborhood landmarks. The community stands to benefit greatly from this relationship, but it should be included as a central collaborator in clear, comprehensive planning efforts for Drexel's long-term engagement.

Recommendations:

- Encourage Drexel to identify shared community and institutional priorities and develop a community-supported plan for strategic investment
- Student housing—responsible infill, rehabilitation of key properties (potential anchors or drivers for private investment)
- Targeted local investment plan
- Ask the Center for Civic Engagement to implement more focused local projects.

Individual Projects Matrix



Preservation Approach

Individual Projects

Individual Projects	1 Preserve and improve physical neighborhood fabric	2 Assist long-term residents in building economic stability	3 Engage community in planning and preservation efforts	4 Revitalize Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor	5 Research and interpret neighborhood history	6 Engage Drexel University in revitalizing West Powelton
What Is, and What Could Be: 1960s Redevelopment and its Legacy for West Powelton					●	●
Monarch Storage Building National Register Nomination	●		●		●	
Encouraging Art, Preserving the Built Envrionment: Strategies for an Arts-Based Community Development Approach in West Powelton	●	●		●		
Equipping Business Associations for Preservation	●			●		
Lancaster Avenue Market Study		●		●		
Working Toward a Healthier Lancaster Avenue: Storefronts and Upper Stories	●	●		●		
Design Guidelines for Infill Construction in West Powelton	●		●			
Greening Strategies for West Powelton	●	●	●			
Syndetic Space: Understanding Landscape as the Framework for Preserving Community	●		●		●	●
Ethnography: Seeing What They See			●		●	
Welcome to West Powelton Video	●		●		●	