



# STRAWBERRY MANSION

*A TACTICAL PRESERVATION PLAN*

HSPV 701 | PRESERVATION STUDIO | FALL 2018



Figure 2. Wight, 2018.

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**CONCLUSION**

The Fall 2018 Historic Preservation Studios tested the idea of tactical preservation by applying it to urban neighborhoods in Philadelphia and Detroit.

Tactical preservation refers to strategies using partial, incremental adaptive reuse of civic and commercial buildings to spark redevelopment in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Used in situations where fully elaborated rehabilitation projects are presently infeasible, tactical preservation has been embraced by the City of Detroit and being applied there to change the narrative of decline in marginal neighborhoods.

Two teams of PennDesign graduate students were challenged to carefully study a particular neighborhood with rich historic built environments and complex histories of disadvantage and discrimination. The overriding goal in each is proposing projects that take advantage of the neighborhoods' valuable heritage assets to plant seeds of equitable redevelopment/revitalization. The groups worked to discern the mix of cultural and economic values and social issues demanding attention, and employ tactical preservation principles to advance equitable redevelopment. Each team of 11 students was tasked with understanding a whole neighborhood, then devising specific interventions in civic, institutional and commercial buildings (that is, not housing).

One team worked on Strawberry Mansion in Philadelphia; the other on Russell Woods/Nardin Park in Detroit. Over the 15-week semester, each team worked downward in scale – from the neighborhood, to areas of opportunity within the neighborhood, to single buildings or sites. And the end-point of their work (in pairs) is three-part proposals for their sites. All proposals had to outline an implementation strategy unfolding over time, focusing on 2-month, 2-year, and 10-year solutions

The aim was to be holistic, balancing different factors – taking in account cultural and historical significance, urban dynamics, demographic processes, architectural and design moves, policy structures, and financing/feasibility – not drilling down exhaustively on any one factor. Gaining access to the interior of all buildings to assess conditions was difficult; therefore, design work could only proceed so far, and each project needs further “proofing.”

The 2018 Studios are the first of a three-year project to explore and experiment with the roles of preservation in the equitable redevelopment of Philadelphia and Detroit neighborhoods. Additional research and implementation of test projects will be pursued between Studios. A number of stakeholder groups and institutions in each city will be involved as partners and clients.

In the report that follows, the 11-student group for Strawberry Mansion summarizes the histories and current conditions of their target neighborhood, and presents the main points of analysis to identify priority values, narratives, community needs and specific sites of intervention. Implementation projects on these specific sites, authored by groups or two or three students, make up the bulk of the report. These results will hopefully inspire future work in both cities – and conversation between professionals, leaders and citizens of both – to connect community affiliations with the past to materially better futures.

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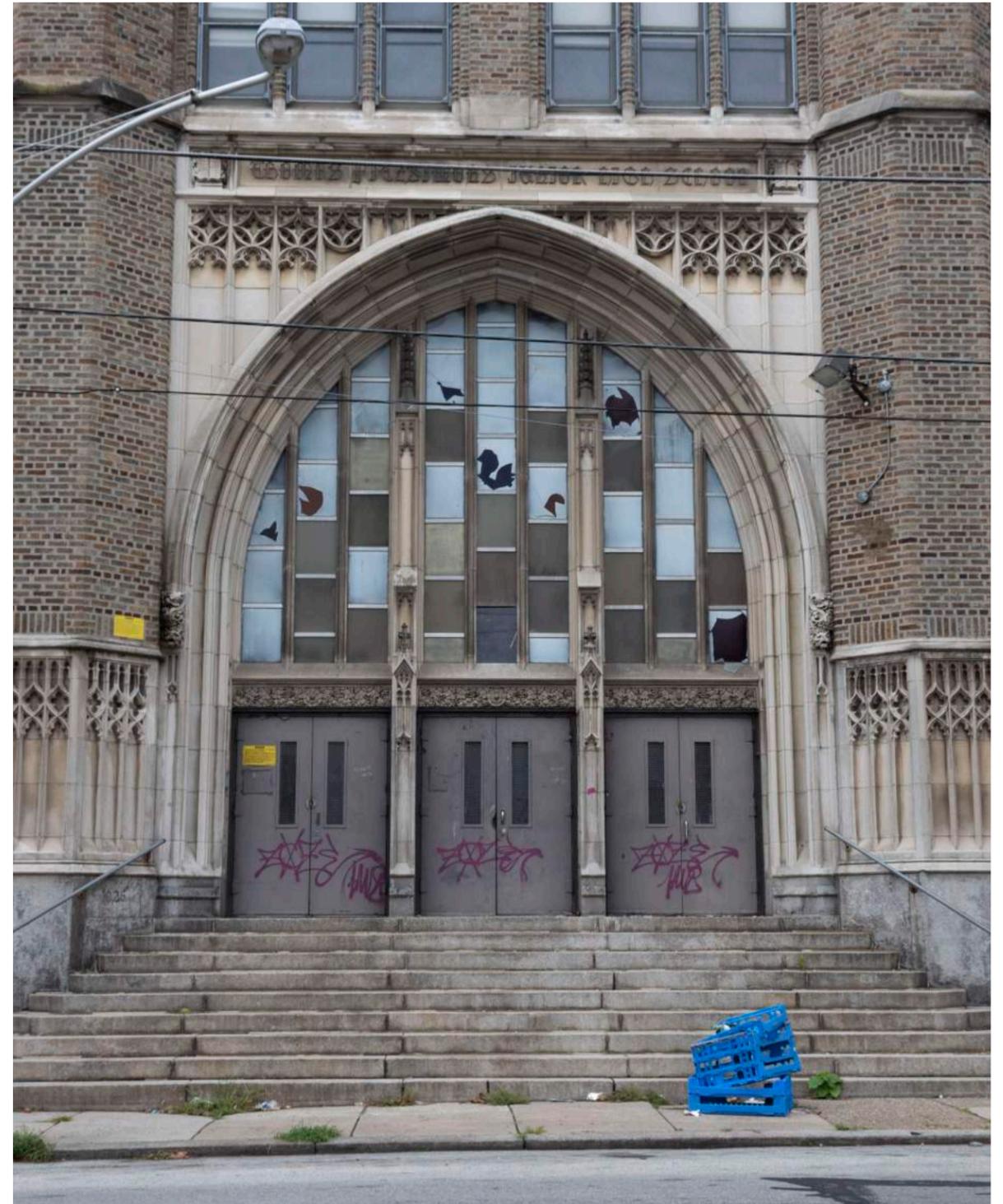


Figure 3. Back, 2018.

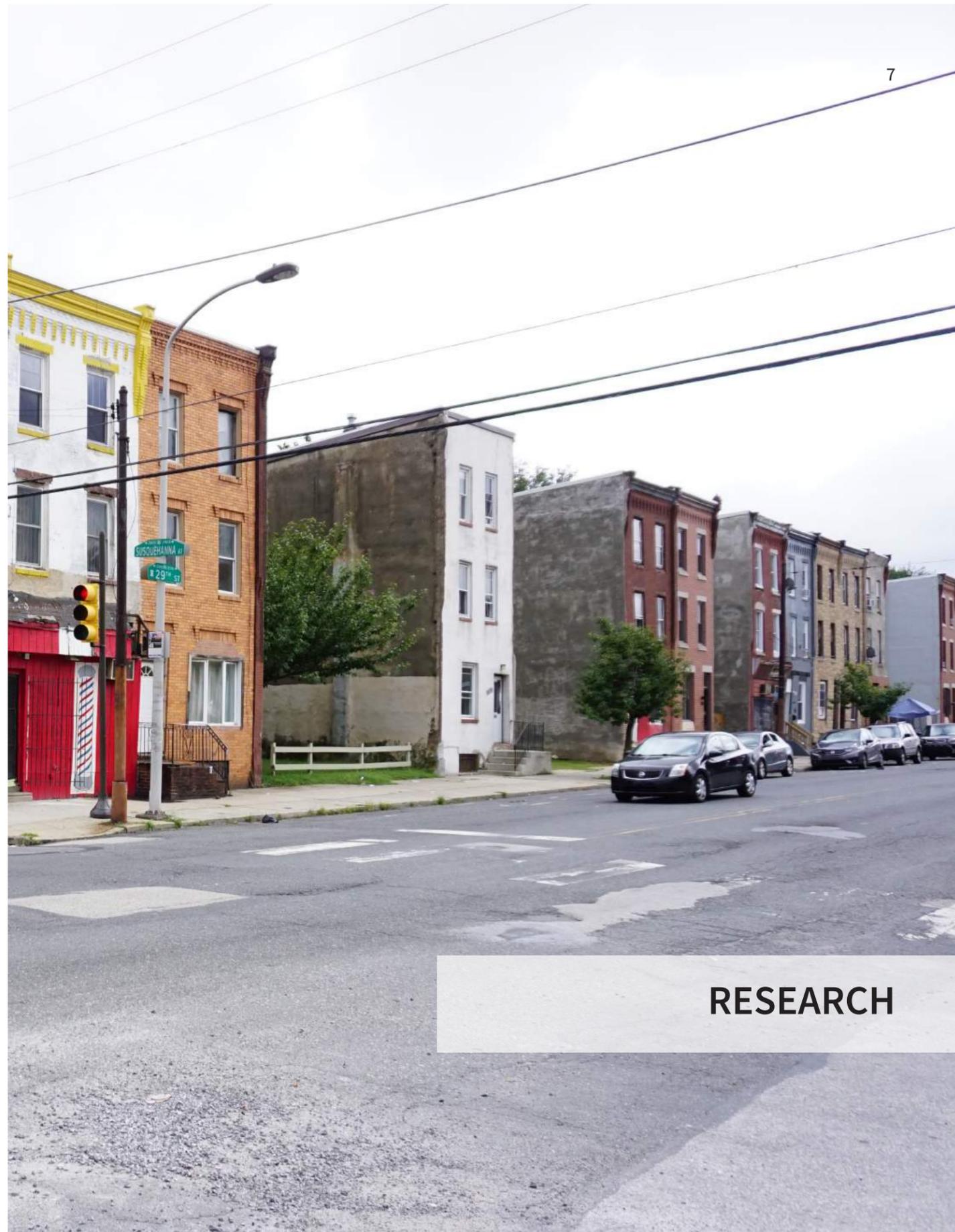


Figure 4. Johnson, 2018.



Figure 5. Dickensheets, 2018.



### WELCOME TO STRAWBERRY MANSION

Located along the Schuylkill River in Northwest Philadelphia, the neighborhood of Strawberry Mansion has been transformed throughout its history, from its early days as a twentieth-century Jewish enclave to today's African-American community whose resilience and cultural vibrancy resound despite decades of disinvestment. Physically, Strawberry Mansion is characterized by its distinctive boundaries: traversing northward alongside N. 33rd Street, the green expanse of Fairmount Park delineates the neighborhood's western border; Lehigh Avenue, abutted by Mount Vernon Cemetery and the neighborhood of Allegheny West, forms the northern and most permeable boundary of the neighborhood; the Amtrak and SEPTA railroad, adjacent to Sedgeley Avenue, form the southeast border of the triangle. Historically, the railroad and park limited entry to "the Mansion," resulting in the neighborhood's strong sense of individuality, both architecturally and culturally.

### BACKGROUND

In addition to its distinct borders, Strawberry Mansion is physically notable for its late-19th and early 20th-century building stock. Consisting primarily of two-and-three-story rowhouses, the built fabric shows the neighborhood's multiple stages of development. Initially laid out to follow the city-wide grid, subsequent development created a series of narrow and fragmented streets in addition to the neighborhood's major thoroughfares.<sup>1</sup> As a suburban enclave, the establishment of Laurel Hill Cemetery and East Fairmount Park attracted both residents and developers to the neighborhood in the late 19th century.<sup>2</sup> Beginning in the 1870s, residential buildings began to appear in Strawberry Mansion. Three-story rowhouses and twins lined 33rd Street facing towards the park, while modest two-story rowhouses were later developed on periphery side streets. The electrified trolley further fueled population, providing residents transportation into and out of the city.<sup>3</sup>

The affordability of newly-built housing and easy access to the rest of the city encouraged Eastern European Jewish immigrants to settle in the neighborhood in the 1890s.<sup>4</sup> This population was largely working class and strove to establish itself as part of middle-class America while building a resilient community. By the early 1900s, the Jewish community

1. Vider, "Strawberry Mansion South".

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Meyers, *Strawberry Mansion*, 43.



Figure 6. Locator map of Strawberry Mansion, revealing building parcels and empty lots (Wight, 2018).

began investing steadily into the built fabric of the region, constructing several synagogues and schools. Redlining, white flight, and broader forms of transportation beginning in the 1930s led to Strawberry Mansion's rapid transition from a slightly mixed, predominately white Jewish neighborhood to a predominantly black neighborhood in less than 20 years.<sup>5</sup> This shift began during the Great Migration of the 1930s, with the arrival of African-Americans from the south. White flight from the neighborhood opened an abundance of housing stock, allowing African-Americans to purchase homes in the region for a fraction of their value. By 1956, over 90 percent of Strawberry Mansion residents were African-American.<sup>6</sup>

The 1950s and 60s began a cycle of redevelopment efforts led by the city and private investors which would dictate much of Strawberry Mansion's physical condition in the latter half of the 20th-century. Active disinvestment from the city coupled with the crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s drove down housing prices and increased incidents of crime in the neighborhood. By 1990, Philadelphia had experienced the third largest population decline in America.<sup>7</sup> In response, the city shifted urban renewal efforts from Center City to under-invested neighborhoods in early 2000. Under Mayor John Street, the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) of 2001 used demolition of blighted properties as a tool to encourage development in areas targeted for

5. Meyers, *Strawberry Mansion*, 43.

6. "A City Transformed."

7. McGovern, *Neighborhood Transformation Initiative*, 530.



Figure 7. N. Marston Street facing south east toward the Amtrak lines (Back, 2018).



Figure 8. Intersection of York and 29th Streets, revealing the mixed commercial, residential, and private uses of the neighborhood (Johnson, 2018).



Figure 9. A series of open lots owned by different public and private entities along York and 26th Streets (Back, 2018).

market growth.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, a significant portion of Strawberry Mansion today consists of vacant land and buildings. Vacant lots where rowhouses once stood create gaps in the built fabric of the neighborhood. Indicative of disinvestment and the underlying socioeconomic issues afflicting the community, many lots sit untended and overgrown, a harsh reminder of the widespread demolition. Nevertheless, a number of these vacant lots have been cultivated and adapted as recreational space: playgrounds have been installed, community gardens planted, and murals painted.

Today, Strawberry Mansion is 95 percent African-American, and is among Philadelphia's most deeply segregated neighborhoods.<sup>9</sup> When compared to the city at large, the neighborhood has a higher rate of poverty, a lower median income, and limited educational attainment. Despite these statistics and the decades of disinvestment and disconnect from development occurring in other parts of the city, the active community has imbued Strawberry Mansion with embedded culture,

art, and social networks, demonstrating a resilience that has rung true throughout the neighborhood's many eras.

8. Ibid.  
9. United States Census Bureau.

Demographics in Strawberry Mansion vs. Philadelphia

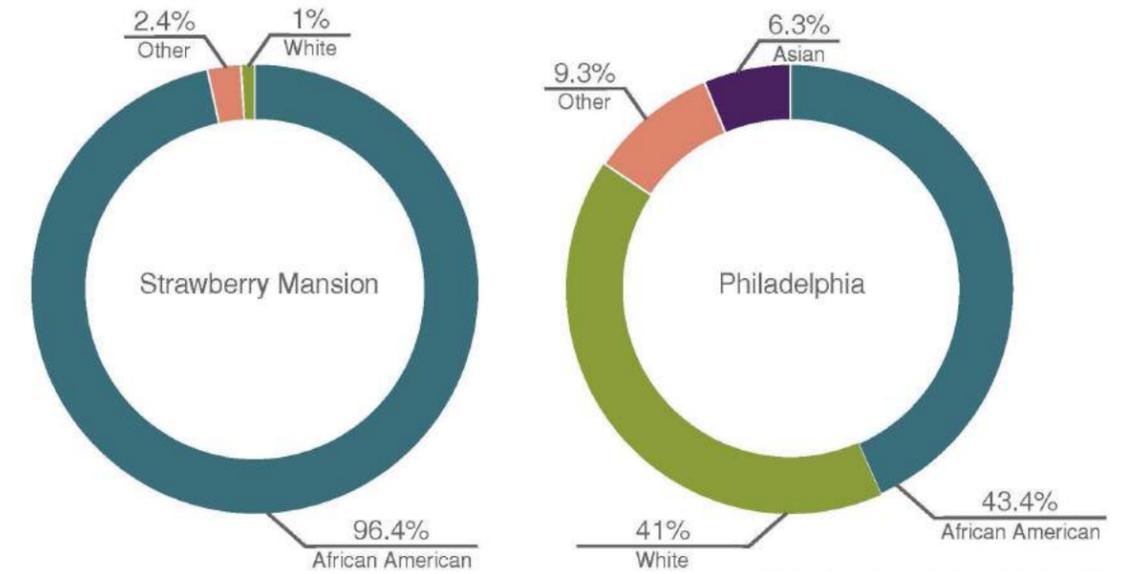
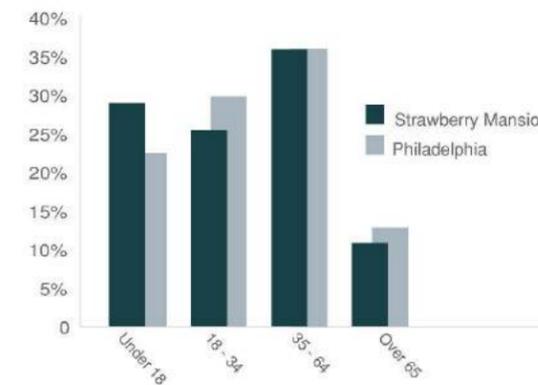


Figure 10. Racial demographics in Strawberry Mansion compared to Philadelphia at large (Randall, 2018). Data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Age Distribution



Living Condition



Figure 11. Age and poverty demographics of Strawberry Mansion (Randall, 2018). Data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

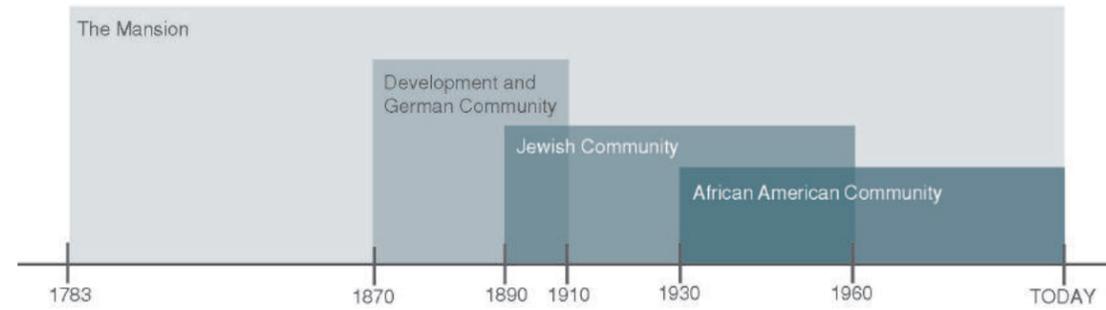


Figure 12. Historic Strawberry Mansion (Philadelphia Department of Records).



Figure 12. Trolley car on North Broad Street, circa 1900 (Free Library of Philadelphia).

**THE MANSION**

The Strawberry Mansion neighborhood owes its name to the light pink mansion in East Fairmount Park located near the intersection of Ridge Avenue and 33rd Street. Judge William Lewis purchased land along the eastern bank of the Schuylkill River in 1783 and by 1789 had completed building his mansion, then called Summerville.<sup>10</sup> The property was rented out after the death of Lewis until it was sold in 1821 to Judge Joseph Hemphill who added the characterizing Greek Revival wings to the mansion in 1828.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent owners rented out the property to farmers who gave the mansion the moniker “Strawberry Mansion” by selling strawberries and cream to the public from the grounds. In 1867 the mansion was sold to the City of Philadelphia, the year before the formal creation of East Fairmount Park. By 1871 the mansion was overseen by the Fairmount Park Commission who have continued to operate the house and grounds with public emphasis, at one time operating a restaurant out of the mansion.<sup>12</sup>

**DEVELOPMENT**

The establishment of nearby park settings, such as Laurel Hill Cemetery in 1836 and East Fairmount Park in 1868, coupled with investment in transportation infrastructure attracted both residents and development to the area in the mid-19th century.<sup>13</sup> While the cemetery attracted outside visitors and provided employment opportunities, the park and established streetcar line made the land attractive to developers. Concentrations of residential buildings first began to appear in Strawberry Mansion along Ridge Avenue to the south and the cemeteries to the north. By 1880, the area reached a population of about 1,800, of which most residents were foreign born, namely German immigrants, and lived in large households.<sup>14</sup> Over half the male heads of households worked as craftsmen and could walk to nearby construction jobs or to the streetcar depot rather than use the prohibitively high-cost rail cars.

10. Moss, *Historic Houses of Philadelphia*, 104.  
 11. Da Costa, *An American Heritage Guide*, 245.  
 12. Keyser, *Fairmount Park*, 69.  
 13. Savery, “Instability and Uniformity,” 197.  
 14. *Ibid*, 201.



Figure 13. 1895 Philadelphia Atlas map of Strawberry Mansion (Philageohistory.com).



Figure 14. 1910 Philadelphia Atlas map of Strawberry Mansion, showing the rapid development within 15 years (Philageohistory.com).



Figure 15. Members of the 31st Street Men's Business Association in 1929 (Meyers, 1999).

As development continued in the neighborhood, blocks were subdivided to allow for greater densities of rowhouses. In 1894, the electrified streetcar encouraged new residents to relocate to the neighborhood and travel the two-and-a-half-mile route to Center City for work. This transit system was vital to the community as it provided access to both jobs and resources that did not exist within the neighborhood. The affordability of the fledgling neighborhood and the easy city access via the trolley contributed to the influx of Eastern European Jewish immigrants to the Strawberry Mansion area began around this time.<sup>15</sup>

#### JEWISH COMMUNITY

These Jewish immigrants were largely working class and fought to establish themselves as part of middle-class America while building a resilient community in the Mansion. From the onset, many of these new immigrants would buy several rowhomes on a block, instituting the historically high numbers of

15. Merkwowitz, *The Segregating City*, 12.

16. Meyers, *Strawberry Mansion*, 43.

17. Savery, "Instability and Uniformity," 201.

18. Bromley and Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*.

19. Hillier, "Redlining and the Home Owner's Loan Corporation," 397.



Figure 16. Temple Beth Israel is one of the extant synagogues constructed by the Jewish community of Strawberry Mansion (Buozis, 2015).

familial blocks which remain in the community today.<sup>16</sup> By 1900, the population had more than quadrupled and tended to be of a higher socio-economic class than the neighborhood had previously seen.<sup>17</sup> Developers welcomed the arrival of this higher economic class of residents by building larger rowhouses along 33rd Street with only a few scattered empty parcels remaining by 1910.<sup>18</sup>

The City of Philadelphia, fueled by racist Home Owner's Loan Corporation maps of the 1930s, actively disinvested in the area because of its minority Jewish population.<sup>19</sup> This afforded the community the chance to invest in itself. By the early 1900s, the Jewish community began investing steadily into the built fabric of the region, constructing several synagogues and schools.<sup>20</sup> A strong sense of self-investment culminated in the founding of the 31st Street Men's Business Association in 1929, which supported the opening of hundreds of small corner stores and mom-and-pop shops to sustain themselves when city resources would

20. Buozis, "The Last Synagogues of Strawberry Mansion."



Figure 17. NAACP protest against discriminatory hiring practices outside Strawberry Mansion High School, 1963 (Temple University Library).

not.<sup>21</sup>

#### RISE OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Redlining, white flight, and broader transportation access which had begun in the 1930s facilitated Strawberry Mansion's rapid twenty-year transition from a slightly mixed, predominately white Jewish neighborhood to a black neighborhood.<sup>22</sup> This shift began with the arrival of African American emigrants with the Great Migration.

Historically, government policy across America segregated black populations within cities through methods such as redlining and zoning to prevent them access into racially integrated or white neighborhoods. In Strawberry Mansion, rapid white flight in the 1940s and onward spurred an availability of homes in the region at a fraction of their value, giving the black population an opportunity. The 1954 passage of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which outlawed the segregation of schools, and the 1964 Philadelphia Race Riots were

21. Meyers, *Strawberry Mansion*, 50.

22. Merkwowitz, *The Segregating City*, 55.

23. Meyers, *Strawberry Mansion*, 61.

signs of the end of the Jewish inhabitation and rise of a fully African American neighborhood. By 1956, over 90% of Strawberry Mansion was African American.<sup>23</sup>

In the 1950s and 1960s a cycle of redevelopment efforts led by the city began, which would ultimately dictate much of Strawberry Mansion's physical condition in the second half of the 20th century. Parts of Lower North Philadelphia were targeted for demolition based on a rise in numbers of foreclosures in the 1950s. While the city attempted to facilitate change through investments in social programs, the Planning Commission was seizing properties through foreclosure and eminent domain in order to encourage development. Active disinvestment from the city, coupled with the crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s, drove down housing prices and increased incidents of crime within the neighborhood. Strawberry Mansion is indicative of these changes but not alone in the city to these forces. By 1990, Philadelphia had experienced the third largest population decline in America following

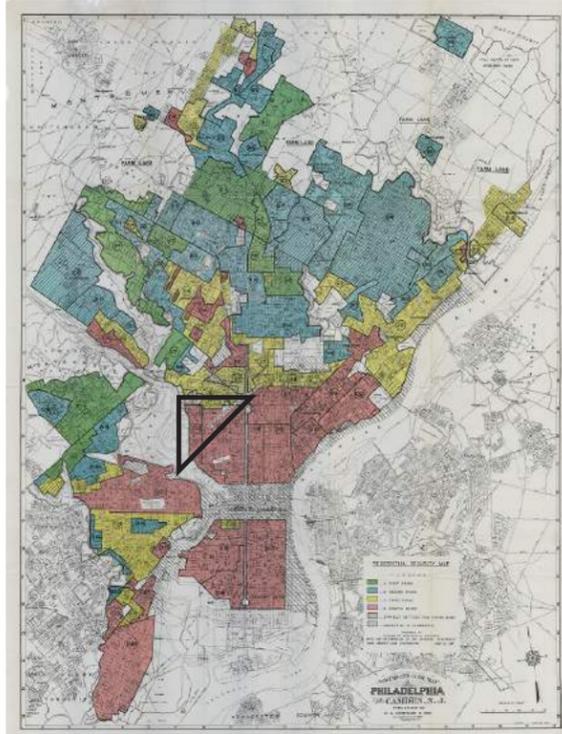


Figure 18. 1937 Home Owners Loan Corporation Map of Philadelphia, Strawberry Mansion outlined (Philadelphia Encyclopedia).

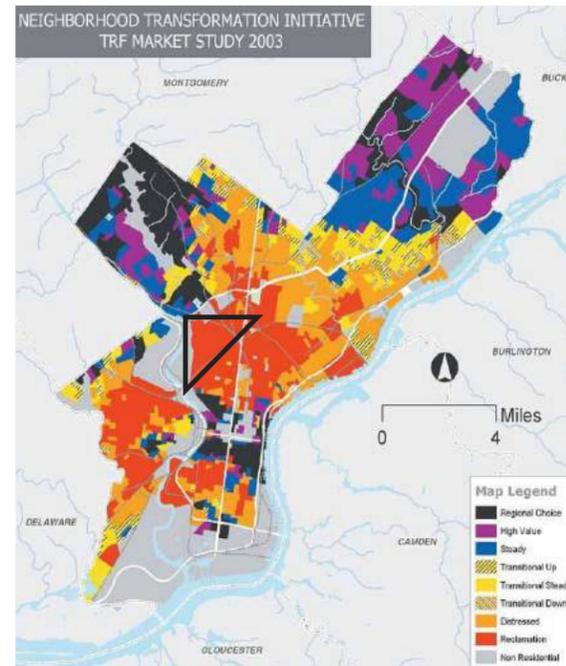


Figure 19. 2003 market analysis map of Philadelphia, Strawberry Mansion outlined (The Reinvestment Fund, 2003).



Figure 20. Demolitions in North Philadelphia under the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (PlanPhilly, 2018).



Figure 21. Facing north towards Newkirk Street, empty parcels among rowhouses abound (Back, 2018).

Detroit and Baltimore.<sup>24</sup>

In response, the city shifted urban renewal efforts from Center City to urban neighborhoods in early 2000. Under Mayor John Street, the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) used demolition of blighted properties as a tool to encourage development in areas designated for market growth.<sup>25</sup> Strawberry Mansion had nearly 2,000 buildings slated for demolition, although only a percentage of these were carried out after the neighborhood protested the plans. The remains of NTI and other redevelopment efforts define much of the current physical state of the community.



Figure 22. Detached rowhouse in Strawberry Mansion (Najera, 2018).

24. Merikowitz, *The Segregating City*, 65.

25. McGovern, *Neighborhood Transformation Initiative*, 530



Figure 23. Current zoning map of Strawberry Mansion (City of Philadelphia).

**ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT ZONING**

Zoning is a regulatory tool from the local government used to manage new construction and changes in use. The City of Philadelphia’s last major zoning code update occurred in 2012. To better understand the existing conditions of Strawberry Mansion, the neighborhood’s zoning policy was examined. The current zoning of the area includes a range from single-family to industrial mixed-use:

1. **RSA-5**, or Residential Single Family Attached; in yellow, allows for single-family and low-impact home businesses, such as a day care. Based on our conversations with residents, the ability to have an at-home day care is used and needed.
2. **RM-1**, or Residential Multi-Family, in orange; allows uses similar to RSA-5, but also includes multifamily housing.
3. **CMX-2**, or Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use, in

red; includes residential and a variety of low-impact service and retail uses, including groceries and apparel retailers. This zone can primarily be found at the end of residential blocks, such as Cumberland.

4. **CA-1**, or Auto-Orientated Commercial, in pink; is the first zone that does not allow residential. A good example is Strawberry Square, an auto-orientated commercial development.
5. **ICMX**, or industrial mixed-use, in purple; allows for a variety of uses, ranging from artist studios to storage facilities. This zoning is currently acting as a hard barrier along Sedgley.

No overlays have been added to the zoning in Strawberry Mansion.

Understanding zoning is crucial, as it determines what can be built and where it can be built. By examining the current zoning in Strawberry Mansion, we were able to see, in part, why certain types of development



Figure 24. Proposed zoning map for Strawberry Mansion (City of Philadelphia).

had not been built in the area. Multifamily housing, for example, is difficult to construct in Strawberry Mansion because most of the land is zoned for single family housing. Additionally, we used this existing zoning to inform the feasibility of our long-term proposals.

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED ZONING**

Furthermore, as part of the thorough understanding of the zoning of Strawberry Mansion, we analyzed the Philadelphia 2035 document proposed zoning. This document aims to invest city resources into viable commercial districts where private investment is occurring and fortify residential blocks where homeownership is dominant. Their proposal is based in intervening or changing zoning using two strategies:

1. **Correcting Zoning**, or the change of zoning, to match existing use.
2. **Zoning to Advance Plan**, which proposes changes in zoning to promote vibrancy in the neighborhood.

The proposed zoning changes outlined could have some positive results that could enhance the community and its values. Alternatively, change in zoning may also have some negative outputs that could begin to change the demographics of the neighborhood, eventually forcing the displacement of community members.

In the Northwest corner of the neighborhood in the block along Ridge Avenue, two Industrial zoned buildings are being proposed to change their zoning to Residential Single-Family RSA-5 which could have a negative impact since these buildings are on primary avenues that could actually benefit from denser housing units that respond better to the current zoning. The inclusion of some commerce or commercial mixed housing would benefit this area by enhancing vibrancy, and consequently security to this north boundary of the neighborhood.



Figure 25. Views of new construction rising in Brewerytown, a neighborhood immediately south of Strawberry Mansion (PhillyVoice).

Philadelphia 2035 also proposes changes to the current Industrial corridor on the west diagonal, along Sedgley Avenue of Strawberry mansion to several different zoning such as Commercial Mixed (CMX-1), Industrial residential mixed (IRMX), Industrial-commercial mixed (ICMX), Residential, multi-family and Residential single family. Although it doesn't specify where these changes in zoning would be established, it does have an intent to mix and diversify building uses in both existing and new construction, which could potentially increase activity in the area.

It is important to always take into consideration that for these zoning changes to support the existing community and avoid displacement, they must integrate with policy that seeks to bolster the existing community. These zoning designations and categories allow diversity of use, and could potentially add vitality to an area and overall benefit the neighborhood. However, if the uses respond and support needs different from those indicated by the existing community, the threat

of displacement intensifies. Future steps that would further this assessment would include a thorough analysis of the potential outcomes of the proposed plan, which could begin to examine parcel-specific zoning responsive to the community's needs.



Figure 26. Facing southeast on Ridge Avenue, a corridor which could benefit from changes in zoning (Dickensheets, 2018).

- "A City Transformed: The Racial and Ethnic Changes in Philadelphia Over the Last 20 Years." (Philadelphia: The Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia Research Initiative, 2011) Accessed November 2018.
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**ANALYSIS**

Figure 27. Community planning meeting at Mander Recreation Center (Fairmount Park Conservancy, 2018).



Figure 28. The key values of Strawberry Mansion as identified by stakeholders and community members (Randall, 2018).

We made a conscious decision to place the people of Strawberry Mansion at the center of the analysis, basing our conclusions about the community on resident's own words to the fullest extent possible. We felt this is the most effective way to ensure that residents feel ownership over and benefit from this report's proposals. Therefore, the community values described are focused on what the residents value about themselves. These are primarily based on the neighborhood's contemporary character. Programs that respectfully build on these values are more likely to be successful in the community.

**A VIBRANT AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

The desire to keep homes within families and the ability to pass on both individual wealth and neighborhood pride to the next generation is inherently related to the sense of a vibrant community. Residents like Tanya Parker describes history and memory as one of the most valuable assets of Strawberry Mansion. The communities within the neighborhood

experience a long-standing sense of memory, and areas where important aspects of daily life occurred in the second half of the twentieth century continue to have sentimental value for the community. Particularly important are memories of past struggles and opportunities that the neighborhood has experienced, such as the opportunity for local employment during the construction of Strawberry Mansion High School.

**EXPRESSIONS OF LOCAL POWER**

Judith Robinson and other residents discussed the trauma the neighborhood has experienced in response to planning and development decisions made for them by outsiders. Other residents discussed the fatigue the community feels after having continuously battled for their rights decade after decade. The spirit of engagement remains an important aspect of local culture, and memories of battles fought and won are vital to upholding that spirit. The SEPTA bus depot, for instance, is an important reminder of the community's

recent and successful battle to preserve a local landmark despite the city's intentions.

**COMMUNITY GATHERINGS AND COHESION**

Strawberry Mansion has the incredible asset of strong social fabric, which both supports and is supported by strong local memories and expressions of local power. Communities within the neighborhood define themselves through gathering places like nearby recreation centers, schools, and churches. These institutions all offer services that support their local communities. Equally important are unofficial gathering spaces. When the weather is amenable, one can find people socializing in lots maintained by Pennsylvania Horticultural Society or on the front stoops of rowhouses. According to Tonnetta Graham, rent dinners, when one resident cooks a meal for 50 people and then sells platters to their neighbors, remain a thriving tradition in the community. The Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club also serves as an important source of community gathering and cohesion.

**SUPPORTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH**

Connected to the sense of local pride is the pervasive support for the future of Strawberry Mansion: its youth. The community cares deeply about giving youth safe places to play and learn. They want to ensure that youth have access to jobs and wealth in the future. Discussions of access to Fairmount Park and the Discovery Center are framed in terms of giving today's youth the same experiences past generations enjoyed. Access to community and recreation centers as well as the intense debates surrounding improving local schools and keeping Strawberry Mansion High School are similarly framed. Intergenerational living is common, and community meetings demonstrate that residents assess new housing options based on whether they will support such living patterns. Homeownership also takes on additional importance by allowing wealth to be transferred to the next generation.



Figure 29. Map of significant sites in Strawberry Mansion distributed by their value to the community (Wight, 2018).

**CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES**

Given our historic preservation training, we expected architectural and physical features to have a significant role in conveying the character of Strawberry Mansion. Some features do have an important role in identifying the neighborhood to an outside observer or telling the neighborhood's history. The neighborhood's triangular shape bounded by Amtrak lines, Fairmount Park, and Mount Vernon Cemetery is easy to identify on a map and while entering the neighborhood. Blocks of brick rowhouses in the Italianate style with small commercial spaces at the corners speak to the early development of the community. Distinctive awning porches and front stoops also play a role as community gathering spaces today. However, the character-defining features that relate most strongly to the values expressed by the community are more intangible features, general building types, and significant locations central to the experience of living in the community today. Equitable development proposals should retain, respect, and build upon the roles these features play in Strawberry Mansion.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

A residential Philadelphia neighborhood defined by periods of development and cultural resiliency, Strawberry Mansion has a layered history of identity rooted to place. The largely intact 19th and 20th century built environment of the neighborhood are today used both formally and informally as sites of community gathering and cohesion. The protection and right to these spaces yield a spirit of community empowerment throughout the neighborhood. These tangible assets of Strawberry Mansion create a clearly defined neighborhood while the intangible elements support a community worthy of recognition today.

	Community Location	Intangible Location	Identified through the Built Fabric
 Legacy of a Vibrant Black Community	Ridge Avenue, Aly's Barber Shop, Fairmount Park, Henry O. Tanner House, John Coltrane House	Homeownership, Legacy Businesses, Soul Food	Rowhouses, Churches
 Expressions of Local Power	SEPTA Bus Depot, Strawberry Mansion High School	Strawberry Mansion CDC, Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Action Center, Strawberry Mansion Civic Association	
 Gatherings and Cohesion	North Penn Baptist Church and other churches, Mander Rec. Center, Cecil B. Moore Rec. Center, Widener Library	Rent Dinners, Fletcher Street Riders	Schools, Churches, Rowhouses, Maintained Vacant Lots
 Supporting Opportunities for Youth	Police Athletic League locations, Strawberry Mansion Learning Center, The Discovery Center	Fletcher Street Riders, Homeownership, Intergenerational Living	Schools

Figure 30. Matrix comparing the four community values as they are expressed in locations both tangible and intangible across Strawberry Mansion (Back, 2018).



Figure 31. Residential corridor with ornate facades (Dickensheets, 2018).



Homeownership



Porches and Stoops



Gatherings

Figures 32, 33, 34. Examples of tangible and intangible character defining features (Corchado & Najera, 2018).



Figure 35. Empty lots are spaces of gathering, often reflective of demolition from abandoned buildings (Johnson, 2018).

From speaking with stakeholders and analyzing data from the American Community Survey and the Centers for Disease Control, several important issues within the community of Strawberry Mansion were identified. Even if tactical interventions cannot address these needs directly, they should attempt to lay the ground-work for long-term solutions.

**UNDER-SERVED ELDERS**

The housing issues discussed in earlier analysis impact seniors more than other residents in the community. In addition to these concerns, there are issues with accessibility in the neighborhood; Mander Recreation Center is not currently ADA accessible, many bus stops lack the shelters and lights that allow seniors to feel secure, and crumbling sidewalks make it dangerous for the elderly to walk outside.

**DIFFICULTY PASSING WEALTH TO THE NEXT GENERATION**

Homeownership is an important value in Strawberry Mansion, but several issues compound to make inheriting property in good condition difficult (fig. 36). Tangled title - when ownership of a property is unclear because there is no official will or when someone receives a property from a family member without gaining a title - is rampant in Strawberry Mansion. This alone makes passing on property wealth difficult. Lack of clear title also prohibits residents from accessing city home repair programs, creating challenges to maintaining homes. Exacerbated by a lack of access to private loans in the neighborhood in general, and caps on city programs that cause long wait times for Strawberry Mansion residents and limit spending for the most severe structural issues.

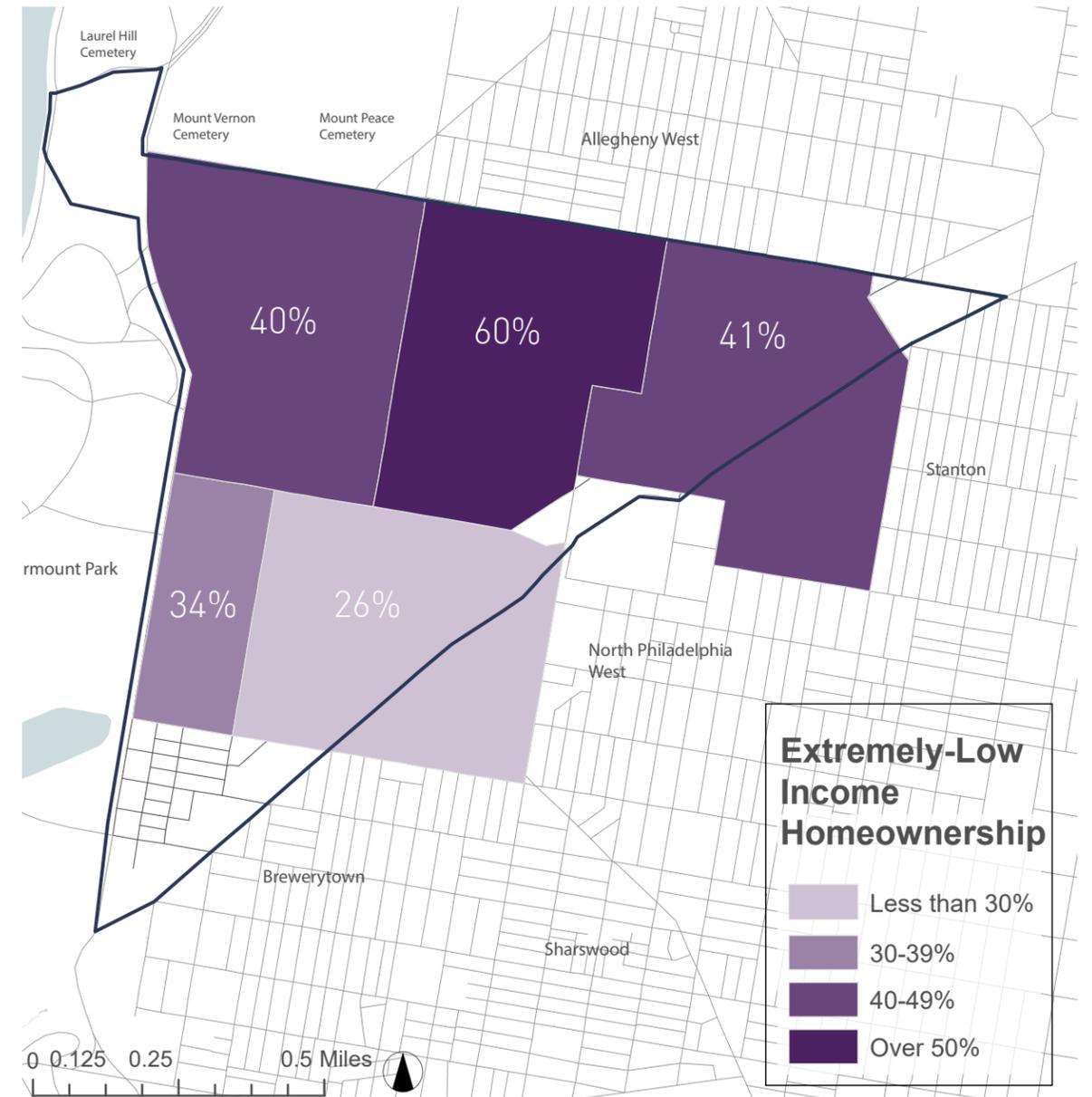


Figure 36. Homeownership rates in Strawberry Mansion for households earning less than \$25,000. The median rate across Philadelphia census tracts is 38%; by comparison, ownership in some areas of Strawberry Mansion is high. (Randall, 2018. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016.)

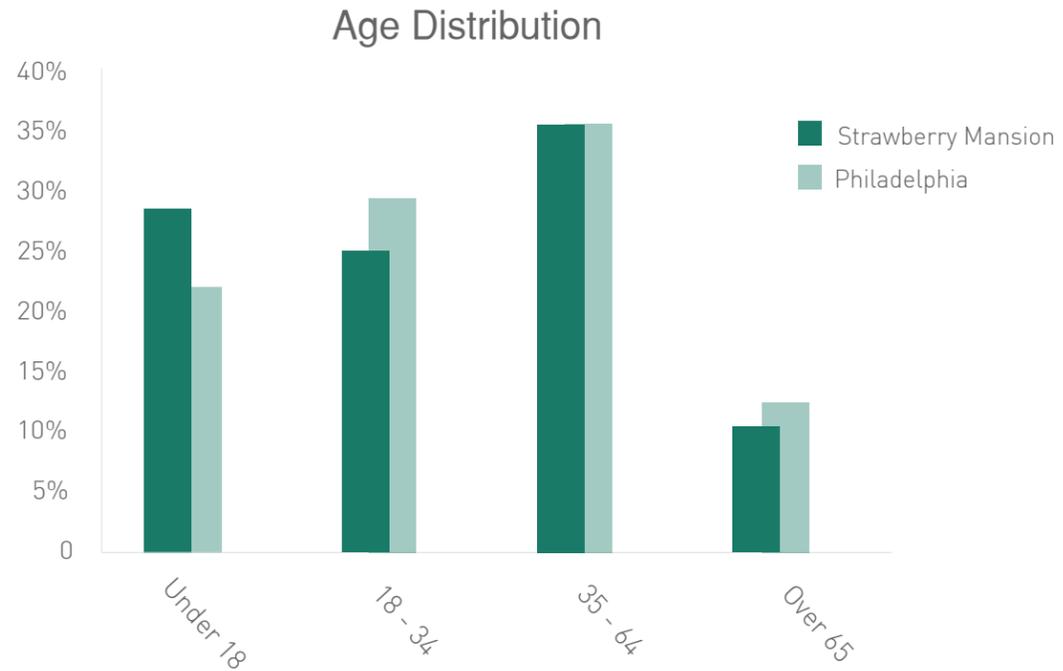


Figure 37. Age distribution demographic of Strawberry Mansion. (Randall, 2018. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016.)

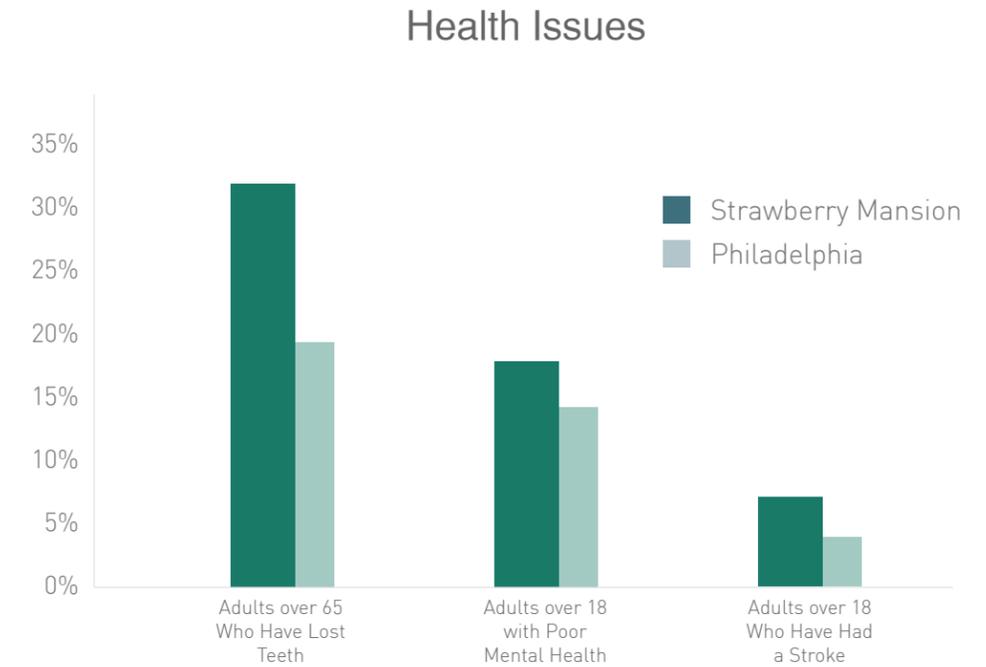


Figure 39. Pressing health concerns in Strawberry Mansion include poor mental health, instances of stroke, and lost teeth- an indicator of poor cardiovascular health (Randall, 2018. Data Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 500 Cities Data, 2015.)

Lack of Local Economy

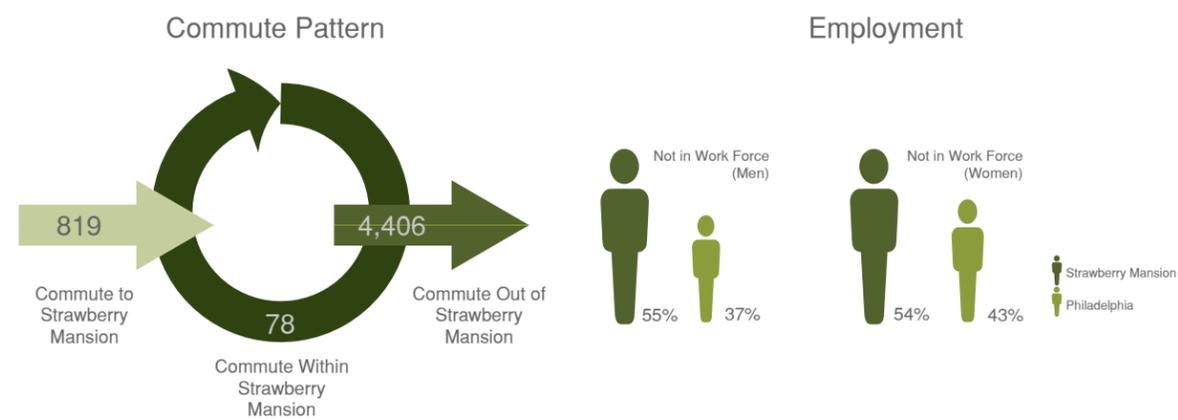


Figure 38. A lack of local economy in Strawberry Mansion is compounded by patterns of commuting and lack of employment. (Randall, Park, and Dickensheets, 2018. Data Sources: LEHD OnTheMap, 2015 and U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010-2016.)

UNDERSERVED YOUTH

The concentration of youth in Strawberry Mansion is high, but there are very few opportunities for them in the neighborhood. Recreation centers and other community services are overburdened, schools are threatened, and access to non-academic training programs is low. The lack of services and opportunities focused on this demographic contributes to many youths becoming involved in dangerous and illegal activities.

LACK OF LOCAL JOBS, RETAIL, & SERVICES

Unemployment in the community is eleven percent for men and eight percent for women, compared to nine percent and seven percent, respectively, for Philadelphia as a whole (ACS 2012-2016). Most working residents must commute outside the community. Once-thriving commercial corridors like Ridge Avenue and 29th Street now have numerous vacancies, and the businesses that are there do not fully meet the community's needs.

The majority of residents leave the community for both essential shopping and leisure spending.

POOR WALKABILITY

Crime, poorly maintained sidewalks, trash, and vacancy contribute to a general reluctance to walk in the neighborhood. Car-owners choose to drive, but car ownership is generally low in Strawberry Mansion. Low foot traffic likely inhibits business and job growth in the community as well.

LOW SUPPLY OF COMMUNITY SPACES & SERVICES

Though recreation centers and churches abound in the community, there are few large spaces to gather for community meetings and events. Recreation centers like Mander are over-burdened, and several church congregations struggle financially to maintain their large spaces. The Strawberry Mansion CDC also faces challenges to meet the demand for its services in its current small office space.

Categories	Needs
service and support	under-served youth under-served elders poor health
economic issues	lack of local jobs, retail, and services difficulty passing wealth to next generation
local power	lack of agency and ownership
assets	poorly protected heritage low supply of community spaces/services poor walkability

Figure 40. The kinds of needs expressed by the community and the categories they correspond with informed our SWOT analysis (Wight, 2018. SWOT design by Corchado, 2018.)

**LACK OF AGENCY & OWNERSHIP**

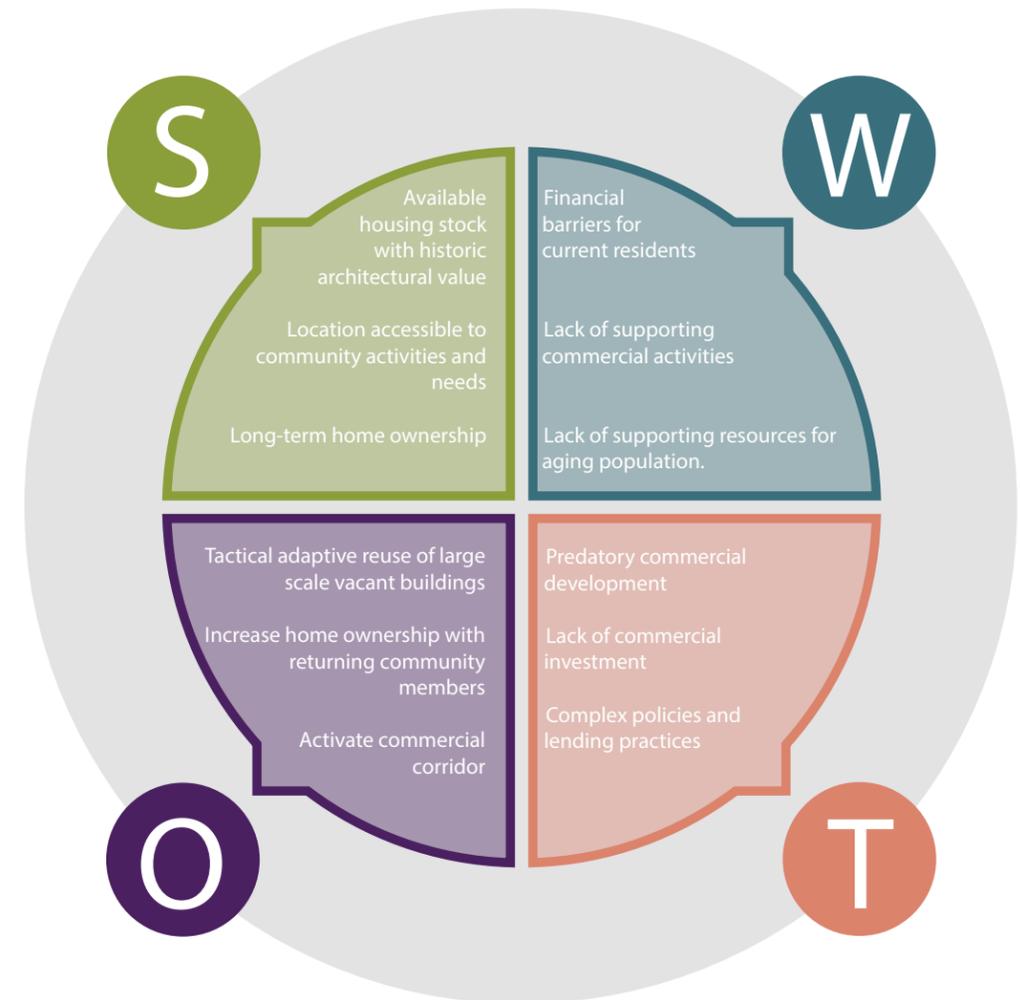
Strawberry Mansion’s current population has dealt with the trauma of having decisions about development be made for them for generations. That pattern often continues today. Not only does it contribute to stress in the community, but it limits the sense of ownership residents feel of community assets like Fairmount Park and the recently-opened Discovery Center. Although the Fairmount Park Conservancy has targeted park programs for Philadelphia residents outside Strawberry Mansion in the past, like at the various estates found within the park, it is trying to amend this pattern today.

**POORLY PROTECTED HERITAGE**

Strawberry Mansion has a long memory and intense pride in its history and triumphs. Ensuring that further losses of local assets, like the John Coltrane House or the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club, does not occur is crucial to the community.

**POOR HEALTH**

Life expectancy in North Philadelphia is only 68 years, compared to 88 years in the more affluent Society Hill. In Strawberry Mansion, this may be connected to a variety of health issues that are high in the neighborhood, from obesity to loss of teeth (fig 5). Mental health is also a concern. However, in addition to the poverty in the neighborhood, there is low access to preventative care or healthy food options.



**SWOT ANALYSIS**

Through visits to Strawberry Mansion and meetings with key stakeholders we identified several strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats informed by our community values assessment.

We identified the location of the neighborhood as a strength- it connects the community to work, the downtown, and other parts of the city. The availability of vacant buildings and open lots is another strength and weakness, as well as an opportunity to increase rates of homeownership and development.

Finding long-term opportunities for the buildings of Strawberry Mansion can begin to address many of the weaknesses facing the community, such as a lack of jobs and commercial centers. Choosing to invest in the existing building stock and open land is a way to begin breaking existing financial barriers for residents.

It is essential to consider some of the “threats” such as predatory commercial development, complex policies and lending practices when we develop tactical preservation plans, as they may adversely affect the community.



Figure 41. Examples of mixed commercial and residential rowhouses along Ridge Avenue (Johnson, 2018).

### RESEARCH

The Strawberry Mansion studio's working philosophy is derived from the values-based preservation model. In recent years the preservation field has seen a dramatic shift from prioritizing the built fabric to taking a broader, more socially inclusive approach that includes tangible and intangible heritage by assessing the values associated with historic sites. Values can range from economic to social to political to historic, and many more. Acknowledging multiple stakeholder perspectives and layered, albeit at times conflicting, meanings can make culture creation more democratic, increase transparency in policy decisions, acknowledge historical unfairness, and potentially open up new markets for development. This approach was first codified in the Nara Document (1994) and later reified in the Australian Burra Charter (2008). It has now become a standard tool in historic preservation planning.

### VALUES SYNTHESIZED

To understand the significant features and values of Strawberry Mansion, a variety of techniques were used that evolved over time as knowledge and familiarity with the neighborhood grew. Within the first few weeks of beginning the project, the team surveyed the neighborhood by sections determined by their relative size (Strawberry Mansion is a large neighborhood), identifying building typologies, social patterns, and striking features. After several weeks of intensive background research, the team returned to the specified neighborhood areas with the goal of locating potential sites for intervention based on their proximity to existing commercial hubs, architectural features, current ownership, condition, and zoning. Twenty sites were chosen for further study. These sites were then mapped out and overlaid with a map of significant sites for the community, including cultural sites, commercial corridors, social hubs, and existing services. All potential sites not located near these significant sites were rejected.

## ANALYSIS

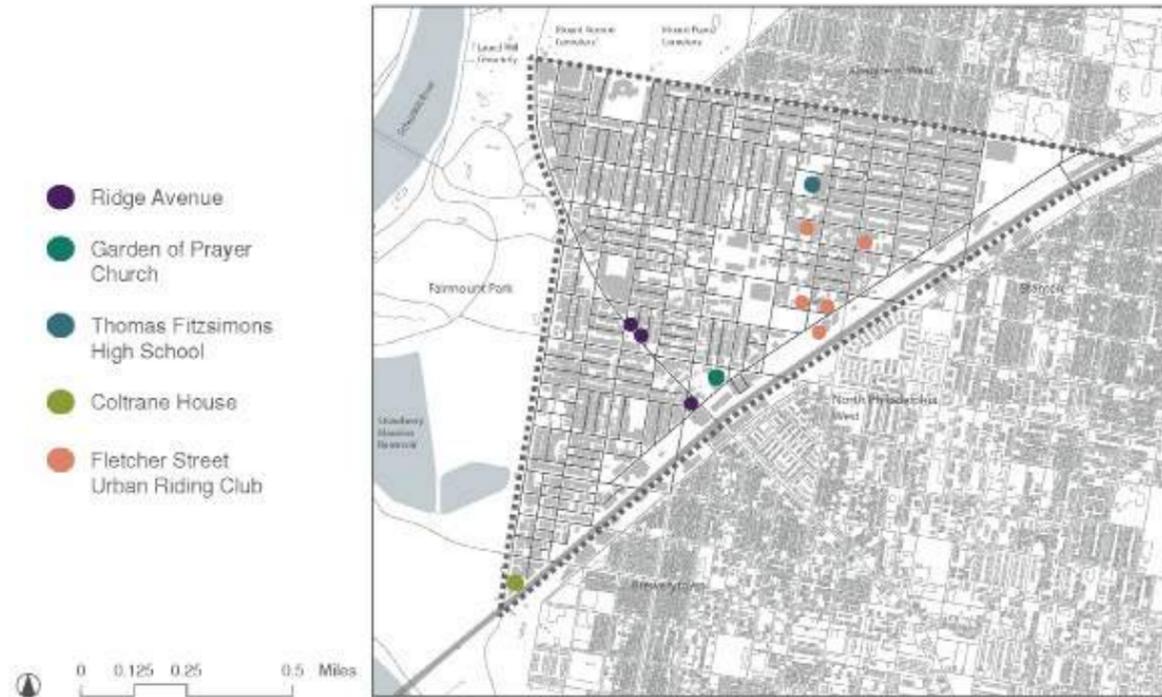


Figure 42. Map of proposed intervention sites (Wight, 2018).

### SITE SELECTION

To further refine the potential sites for intervention, those falling within the final list of criteria were chosen: proximity to existing neighborhood hubs, business and commercial access, safety, proximity to neighborhood entrances and clear visibility, and cultural importance. Five final sites for intervention were selected: the Garden of Prayer Church of God, Fitzsimons Junior High School, the Coltrane House, the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor, and the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club.

The group that worked with the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club slightly modified their tactical preservation approach as they had a program searching for a new site. The Riding Club is an example of an intangible neighborhood asset. Their existence is not dependent on their buildings but their presence in the neighborhood is of vital importance to retaining the character of Strawberry Mansion. The team met with several riders and created a list of needs based on

the club's current activities. They used these needs as guidelines to inform their search for a local space that could suit the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club.

## SITE SELECTION



RIDGE AVENUE



GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH



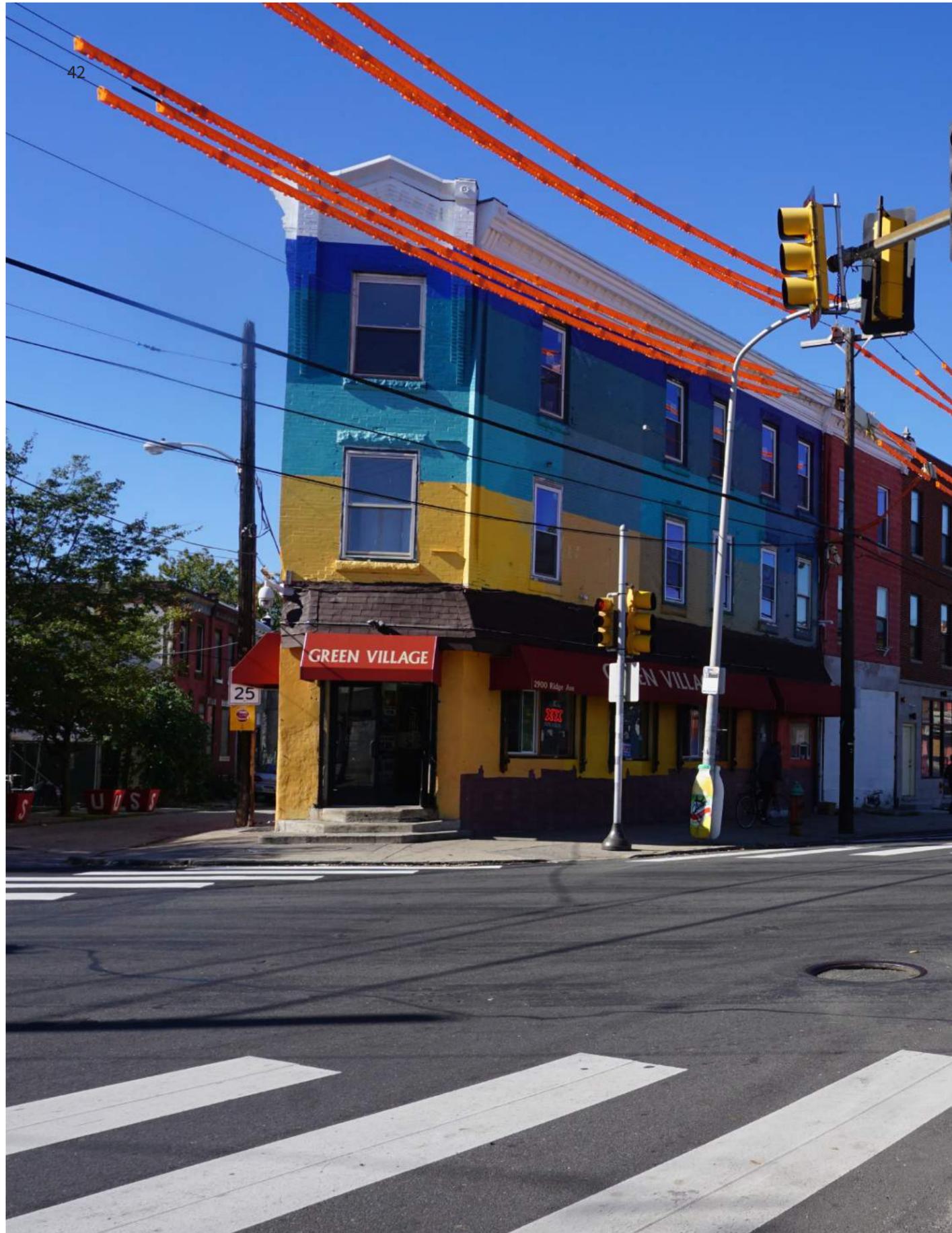
FITZSIMONS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR



FLETCHER STREET URBAN RIDING CLUB



**RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR**

Figure 43: Ridge Avenue, Streetscape. Johnson. 2018

## RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

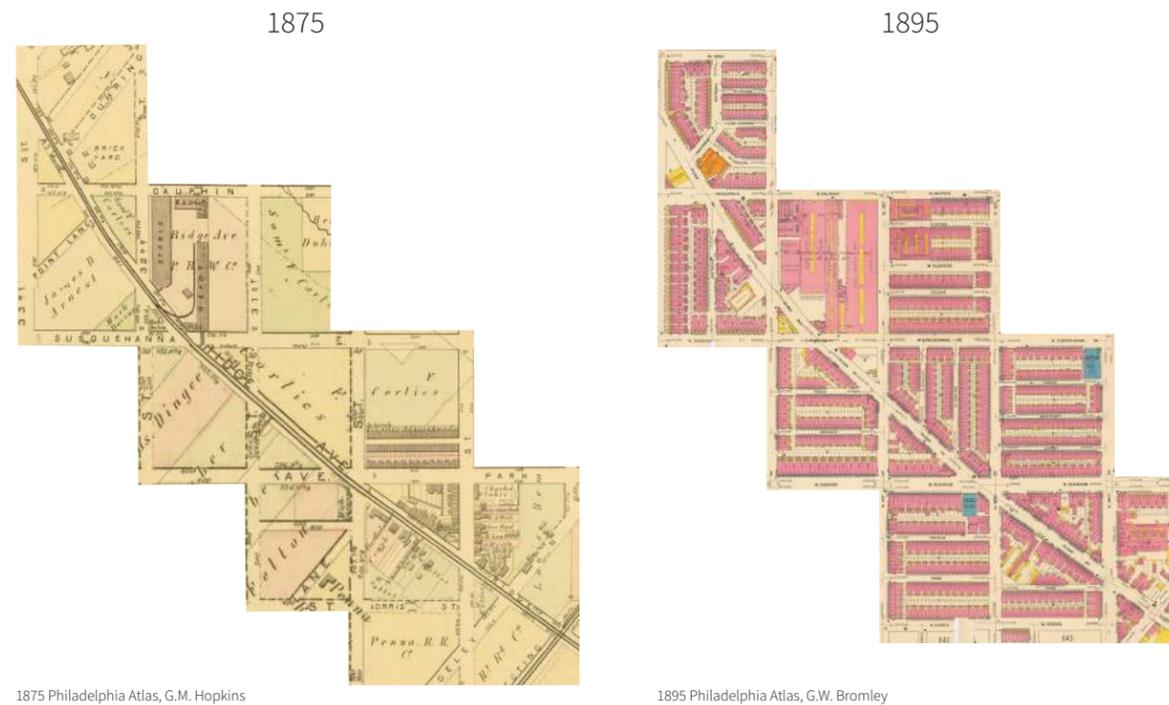


Figure 44. The Evolution of Ridge Avenue. (Park, 2018.)

### LOCATION

A major factor in Strawberry Mansion's history and development is Ridge Avenue. Ridge Avenue extends through the city of Philadelphia, connecting Manayunk to Center City where it terminates at Highway 676. In Strawberry Mansion, Ridge Avenue cuts diagonally across the grid, allowing this arterial road to touch both collector and local streets.

This off-grid design has allowed Ridge to act as a central artery for many years in Philadelphia, connecting northwest neighborhoods to North Philadelphia and into Center City. As shown above, the use of Ridge Avenue and its surrounding businesses, houses, and public uses reflect the ongoing importance of this street to connect people and goods across the City.

### HISTORY

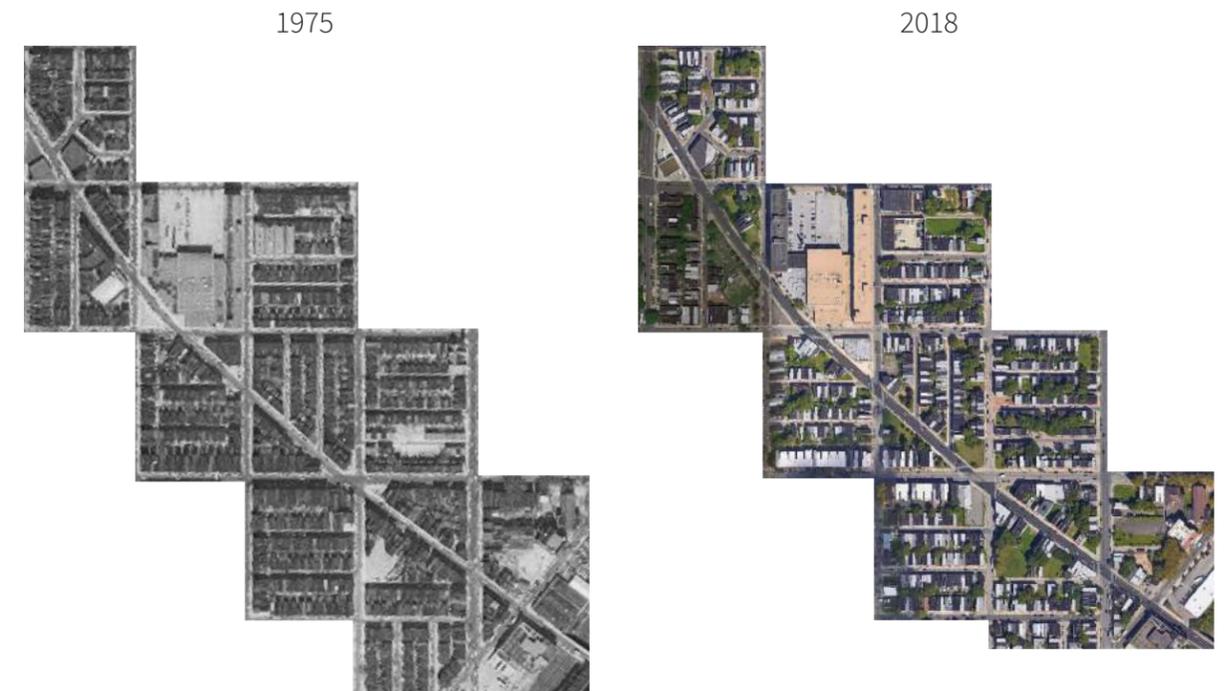
As transportation modes developed through Philadelphia, many of the latest vehicular technologies were implemented on Ridge Ave, beginning with horses

and currently represented by the present-day bus routes of Dauphin Loop. The street-car was introduced to the 18 avenue, and the neighborhood, in 1894.<sup>1</sup> This new mode of transportation allowed the residents of Strawberry Mansion to capitalize on their neighborhood's prime location. Many residents rode the street car daily as they commuted to jobs into Center City. Additionally, many Philadelphians took the street car into Strawberry Mansion to shop at the locally-owned businesses along Ridge. Thus, the street car allowed greater permeability across the neighborhood's hard borders.

### PRESENT DAY

In 2018, the street car is a distant memory, and decades of disinvestment has indelibly altered the landscape of Strawberry Mansion. Widespread demolition throughout the neighborhood left Ridge Ave with many vacant lots, in an area that had previously been lined with two and three-story rowhomes. In addition to the physical vacancy, many of the remaining

## SITE INTRODUCTION



buildings have been abandoned, allowing them to degrade over time. Nevertheless, the neighborhood and its community remain a constant and resilient presence. The Strawberry Mansion Community Development Corporation (SMCDC) has worked tirelessly to bring attention the opportunities that exist on Ridge Avenue, and the effort has yielded positive results.

In 2012, the SMCDC and community members petitioned SEPTA against the demolition of the historic Bus Barn, a 1901 trolley depot located at the intersection of Ridge and N 33rd Street.<sup>2</sup> Due to this effort, Ridge Avenue remains a major a public-transportation center for buses. In 2017, a local art nonprofit, Mural Arts, completed a four-building mural visually connecting the intersection of Ridge Avenue and N. 29th Street. This intersection marks a popular gathering place in the community, and has seen additional investments from SEPTA, with the addition of a new bus shelter and new bike-share dock. The intersection of Ridge and 29th Street is also seeing investments from private

businessowners who are occupying existing storefronts. Present-day investment in the avenue has the potential of providing much needed resources to the residents of Strawberry Mansion, and in promoting future economic growth and revitalization.

# RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

**PROPOSED SITES**



3037-3045 Ridge Ave



3019-3027 Ridge Ave



2842 Ridge Ave



# SITE INTRODUCTION

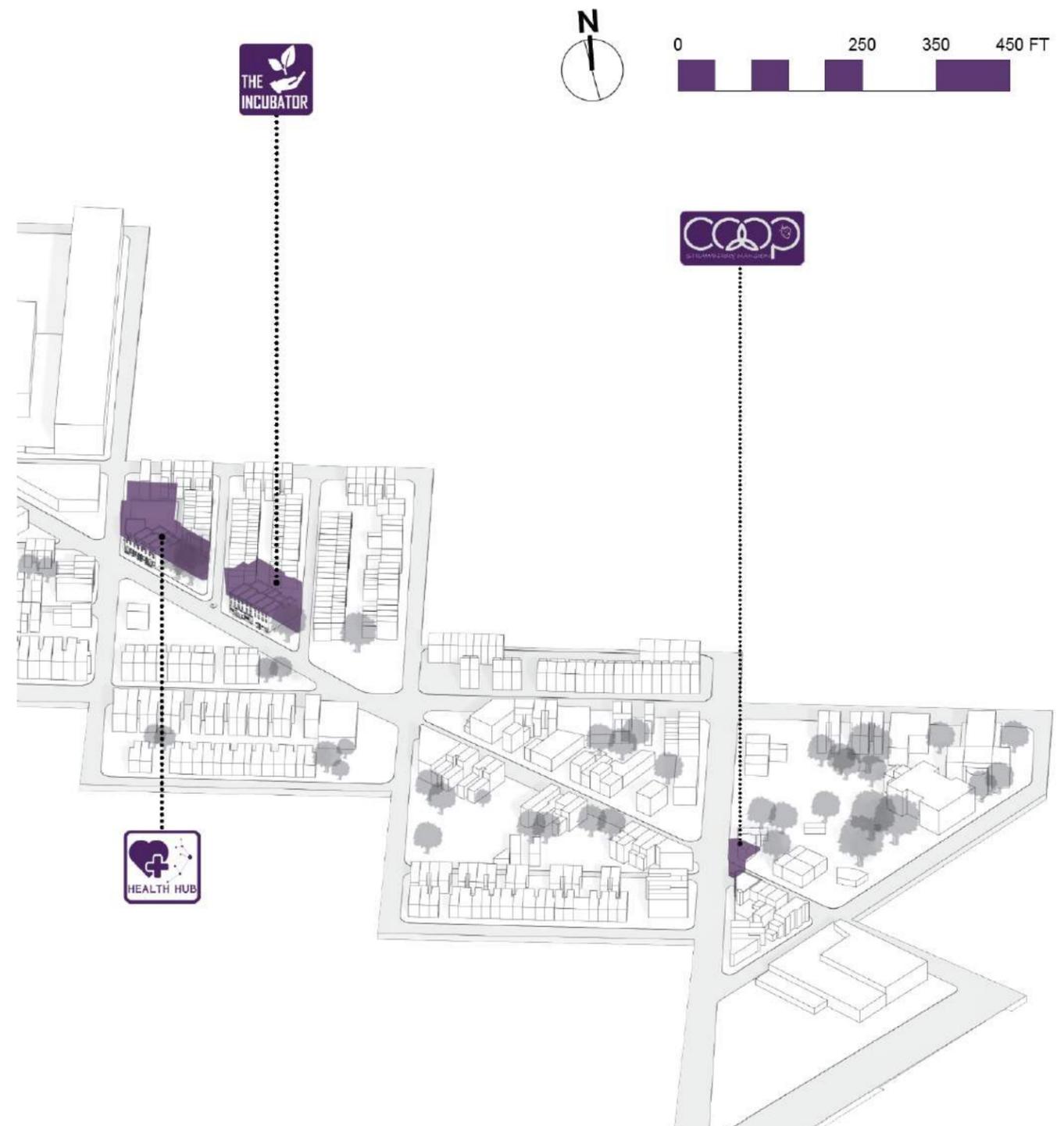


Figure 45. Axonometric drawing of Ridge Avenue, showing the multiple sites selected for tactical preservation interventions. (Corchado, 2018)

## RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR



Figure 46. Aerial model of the proposed Health Hub on 3037 Ridge Avenue. (Image from Philadelphia Atlas, edits by Corchado, 2018.)

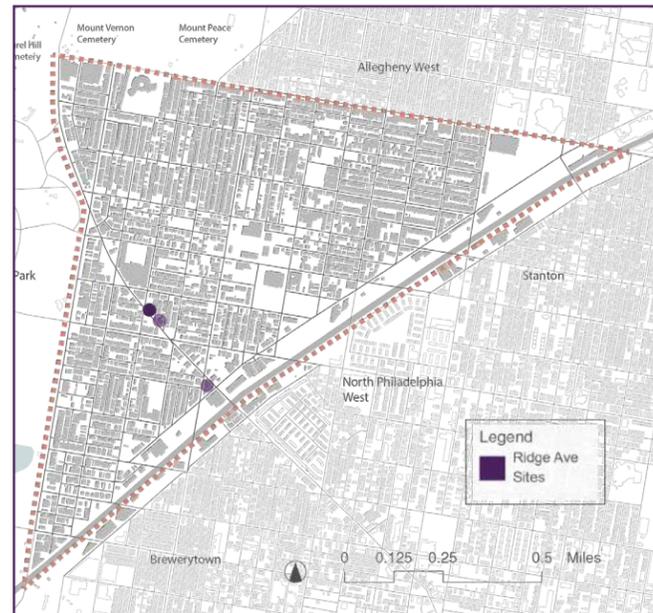


Figure 47. Location of the Health Hub. (Wight & Park, 2018)

### SITE INFORMATION

Address: 3037-3045 Ridge Avenue

Description: 5 Buildings, 3-Stories each  
+ Adjacent Vacant Lots

Ownership: Private & Public

Building Footprint: +/- 1,000 sq.ft. each

Zoning: CMX-2

Future Zoning: CMX-2

## THE HEALTH HUB



Figure 48. 3037-3045 Ridge Avenue, site of the proposed Health Hub. (Corchado, 2018)



Figure 49. Site of demolished rowhouse. (Corchado, 2018)



Figure 50. Vacant lot at site. (Corchado, 2018)

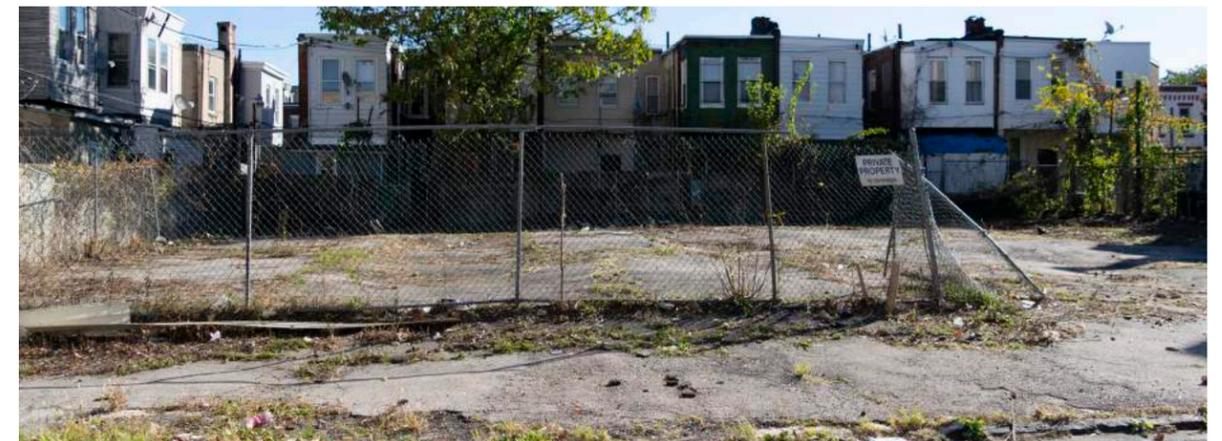


Figure 51. Empty lot north of the proposed Health Hub on 3037 Ridge Avenue. (Corchado, 2018.)

## RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

### LOCATION AND HISTORY

The location of the Health Hub was strategically selected in the middle stretch of Strawberry Mansion, on the 3000 Block between Stanley and 31st Street. It is composed of nine parcels, three of which are publicly owned vacant lots, located in the southeast corner of the 3000 Block (3031-35); five are vacant, privately owned rowhouses in the southwest corner (3037-3045); and one consolidated lot (2943-53), formerly composed of six parcels. These sites were previously rowhouses built between 1888-95, during a development boom that was driven by the earlier establishment of the streetcar route. The first floor of these buildings previously contained locally-owned businesses, such as a bar and a beauty shop, and other commercial spaces with one or two residential units on the second and third floors.

### SUMMARY

The objective of this proposal is to provide health services and occupy available building stock. Many of the long-term business-owners of Ridge Avenue, along with many of their neighbors, are growing older. This proposal uses a tactical preservation approach, inhabiting the existing building fabric in stages as the buildings are rehabilitated into a usable condition. By introducing commerce and activating the area, this proposal attempts to revitalize Ridge Avenue's commercial history.

The objective of the 2-month highly tactical phase is to promote use of the vacant spaces surrounding the buildings by encouraging senior community members to participate in health-related activities such as: workshops and health fairs sponsored by health insurance companies and pharmacies, recreational games and activities, and guided exercise events. A mobile clinic similar to Highmark's "Healthcare on the Go", based in West Virginia, can be integrated in this phase. This case-study uses a truck to deliver medical care to insurance members who have government-subsidized coverage.

These small interventions are designed to activate the site in the short term and will be incorporated in the first two phases of the proposal. However, prior to moving forward with these interventions, the paved parking lot north of the buildings must be repaved with a permeable material, to allow for better stormwater management. During this stage, the

existing buildings will undergo a conditions assessment by a trained professional, to determine any necessary code compliance adaptations or structural repairs. The protection of the exposed party wall and the enclosure of building openings exposed to the elements will be the first priority to rehabilitate structure. This will be followed by the rehabilitation of a portion of the first floor. This stage will last anywhere from two months to a year, depending on the severity of the conditions and available funding.

During the 2-year tactical phase, the rehabilitated spaces on the ground floor will be leased and occupied by health oriented commerce and services, such as a counter-visit pharmacy, a small laboratory, a vaccine clinic, and a coffee shop. The paved lot will be used as parking with a loading and service area, and will continue to offer activities for the senior community. As foot traffic increases, these sites will begin to generate income that will contribute to the rehabilitation of the remaining ground floor spaces. As businesses expand and more space is leased, money will be generated and the search for tenants and investors for the upper floors will begin, as will the rehabilitation work. This part of the phase will continue into the final and long-term phase of the proposal.

During the 20-year long-term phase, the building construction will be completed, and the upper floors will be 100% occupied, with ADA and building codes integrated. The first floor of the site's corner building will be occupied by a pharmacy, while medical clinics will occupy the remaining floors. A senior daycare will have been completed on the remaining upper floors of the buildings. The consulting doctor offices will have a physical connection to the senior daycare, providing immediate support and services. The commercial spaces, proposed in the tactical phase, will be fully occupied and running. A park will be completed in the southeast lot of the site and will be used by the senior daycare. The remaining lot will remain as parking space with the addition of a service area for ambulance and emergency pick-up.

## THE HEALTH HUB

### 2-MONTH HIGHLY TACTICAL PHASE



### 2-YEAR TACTICAL PHASE



### 20-YEAR LONG-TERM PHASE

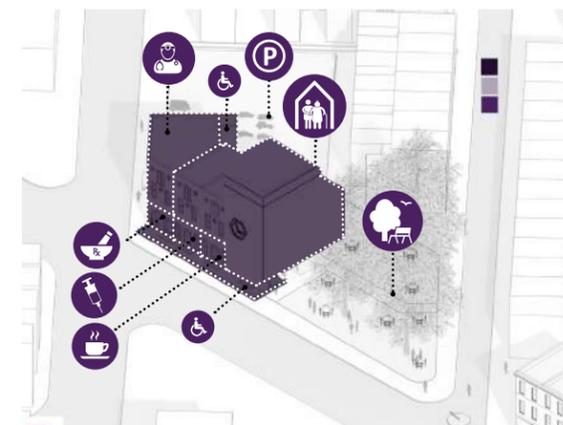


Figure 52. Axonometric drawings of proposal at three phases. (Corchado, 2018)

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed



Community Needs Addressed



**Stakeholders:** Community Members, local business owners, First Church of Love (Across the Street), doctors and nurses, developers

**Potential Partners:** Penn Medicine, Drexel Medicine, Temple Medicine, Big Box Pharmacies, Private healthcare providers

**Funding Sources:** City of Philadelphia Commerce Department Storefront Improvement grant, In-store grant, Private Investment

**Specific Interventions:** Repavement with permeable material, party wall protection, closure of openings, building envelope rehabilitation, sequential rehabilitation of interior spaces

Case Studies:



Highmark's "Healthcare on the Go" West Virginia Mobile Medical Care



99 Adult Care 1019 Cherry St. 1/FL Philadelphia, PA Senior Daycare



Figure 53. Aerial model of the proposed Incubator Site on 3037 Ridge Avenue. (Image from Philadelphia Atlas, edits by Corchado, 2018.)

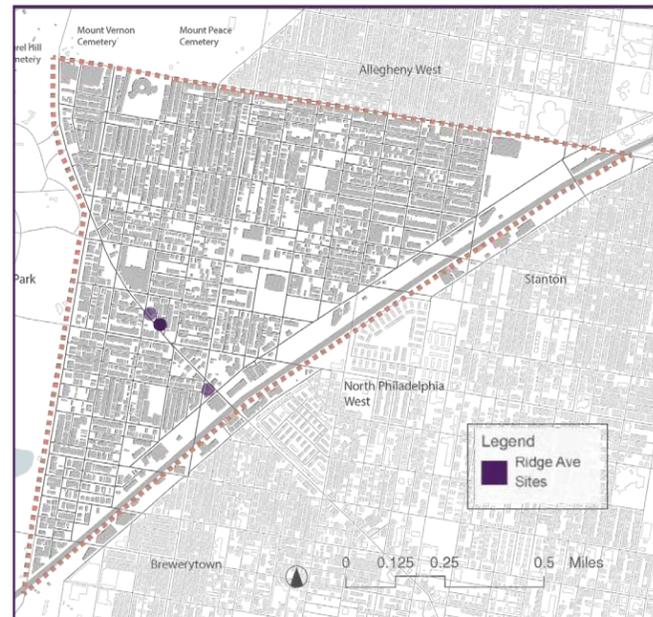


Figure 54. Location of the Incubator (Wight & Park, 2018)

**SITE INFORMATION**

Address: 3019-3027 Ridge Avenue

Description: 5 Buildings, 3-Stories each  
+ Adjacent Vacant Lots

Ownership: Private

Building Footprint: +/- 1,025 sq.ft. each

Zoning: RM-1

Future Zoning: CMX-2, RMX-3



Figure 55. 3019-3027 Ridge Avenue, site of the proposed Incubator. (Johnson, 2018)



Figure 56. Vacant lot, south of proposed site. (Johnson, 2018)



Figure 57. Vacant lot, north of proposed site. (Johnson, 2018)



Figure 58. Informal place-making at "Sauce-Park". (Johnson, 2018)

## RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

### LOCATION AND HISTORY

The five buildings at 3019 to 3027 Ridge Avenue are a rare remaining example of early to mid-20th century mixed-use buildings that previously lined this commercial corridor in Strawberry Mansion. The first floor of these buildings previously contained locally-owned businesses, such as a beverage distributor and a hardware store, with space for one or two residential units on the second and third floors.

Today, only a few of these buildings are occupied. 3019 to 3021 Ridge Avenue are owned by a church, while 3025 has been remodeled into a duplex by a lifelong resident of Strawberry Mansion. The remaining buildings, 3023 and 3027, appear to be vacant.

### SUMMARY

The goal of the two-month highly tactical intervention at the Incubator is to bring people back to this commercial cluster and to recognize the long history of entrepreneurship that exists in Strawberry Mansion. The first step will be to interview the neighbors and former business owners who live nearby through an oral history project, like StoryCorps. The responses collected will be added to the Library of Congress, which allows for private submissions. The oral histories will also be available to community members at SMCDC's office. The events and activities that occur during the two-month oral history project will also coordinate with the activities that are planned at the Health Hub, which is located just one block away. Other short-term interventions that could happen simultaneously would involve adding additional lighting to the vacant lots and sidewalk painting completed by the citizens.

The two-year tactical phase at the Incubator will work with the property owners to stabilize the buildings, specifically at 3019-3021, which have experienced major exterior damage. Although the focus in this stage is to stabilize the business-oriented spaces, assistance will also be offered to support the residential building at 3025 because this residential use should remain. Towards the end of the two-year period, light commercial uses will be brought in to 3023 and 3027 to show that these locations are viable and ready for business. The spaces will be used to test the business ideas of neighbors, both young and old. The opportunity to test business ideas gives this project its name as the Incubator.

The 20-year long term plan will fill the buildings

with locally-owned commercial, retail, and office uses as well as residential. The upper floor of 3025 Ridge Ave will remain residential units. The other buildings will support a mix of commercial and residential uses. Ideally some of the businesses tested during the Incubator period will be viable and will occupy these spaces. Other long-term commercial options might include a restaurant, a design office, a print shop, an artist studio, a chiropractor office, a small grocery store, or a hardware store.

### COMMUNITY NEEDS ADDRESSED

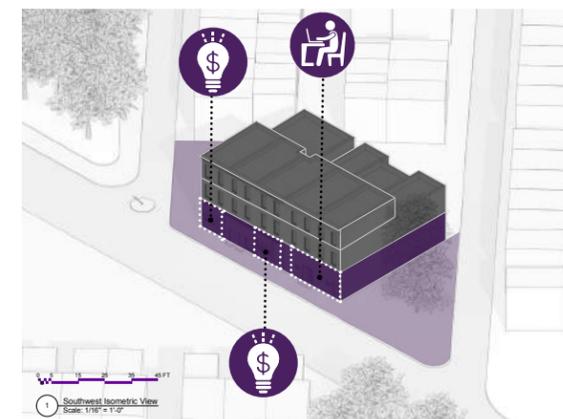
Reviving Ridge Avenue as an active commercial corridor addresses one of the main Community Needs expressed throughout the engagement process. Local ownership is key for Ridge Avenue because of Strawberry Mansion's rich, community-based entrepreneurial history. Creating an opportunity for business incubation gives locals, especially local youth, a place to test business ideas without needing upfront capital. The focus on youth business development is derived from community members speaking about needing to prioritize a pathway that will ensure a future for the youth, including teens and young adults, in the community. By re-establishing space for local businesses, the local youth will have the opportunity to observe business ownership without leaving their community. Local businesses also provide employment opportunities for youth and others within in the community. Local employment will allow for the money made in the community to then be spent within the community, a cycle that leads to sustainable wealth creation. In some cases, this may lead to businesses being passed from one generation to the next. In other cases, this may lead to an entrepreneurial spark in a young person's mind. The incubator space is created to capitalize on this spark and would allow a new business owner to test their ideas.

## THE INCUBATOR

### 2-MONTH HIGHLY TACTICAL PHASE



### 2-YEAR TACTICAL PHASE



### 20-YEAR LONG-TERM PHASE

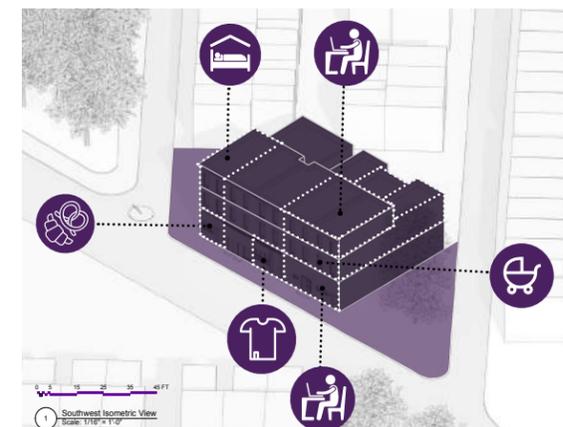


Figure 59. Axonometric drawings of proposal at three phases. (Corchado & Johnson, 2018)

### FAST FACTS

#### Community Values Addressed



#### Community Needs Addressed



**Stakeholders:** Community Members, Former and Current Local Business Owners, Current Building Occupants & Owners, Park Users, Local Youth

**Potential Partners:** Strawberry Mansion CDC, City of Philadelphia Commerce Department, City Council Representatives, Free Library Branches, Community Design Collaborative

**Funding Sources:** City of Philadelphia Commerce Department Storefront Improvement Grant & In-store Grant, Private Investment

**Specific Interventions:** Repavement, Party wall Protection, Seal Openings, Street Lights, Storefront Improvements

#### Case Studies:



Torresdale Ave Philadelphia, PA  
Tacony Community Development Corporation



Lancaster Ave & The Bank  
People's Emergency Center Philadelphia, PA



Figure 60. Aerial model of the proposed Co-op site on 2842 Ridge Avenue. (Image from Philadelphia Atlas, edits by Corchado, 2018.)

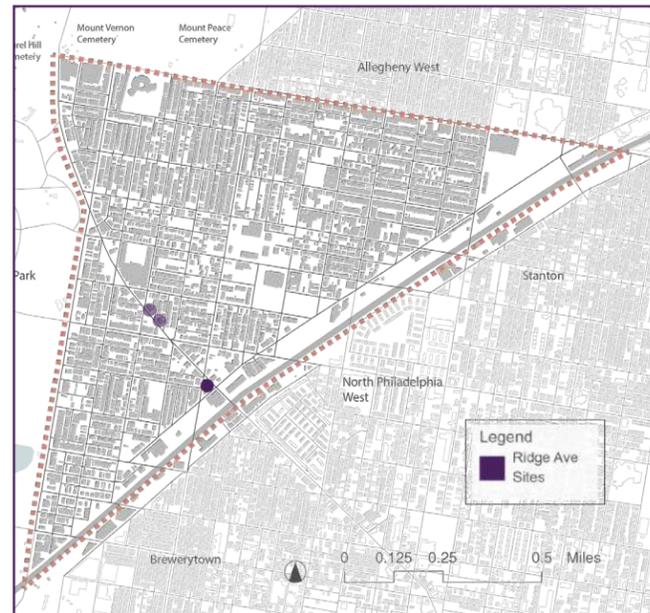


Figure 61. Location of the Co-op (Wight & Park, 2018)

**SITE INFORMATION**

Address: 2842 Ridge Avenue  
 Description: 1 Buildings, 3-Stories  
 Ownership: Private  
 Building Footprint: +/- 1,227 sq.ft. each  
 Zoning: CMX-2  
 Future Zoning: CMX-2



Figure 62. 2842 Ridge Avenue, site of proposed Co-op. (Park, 2018)

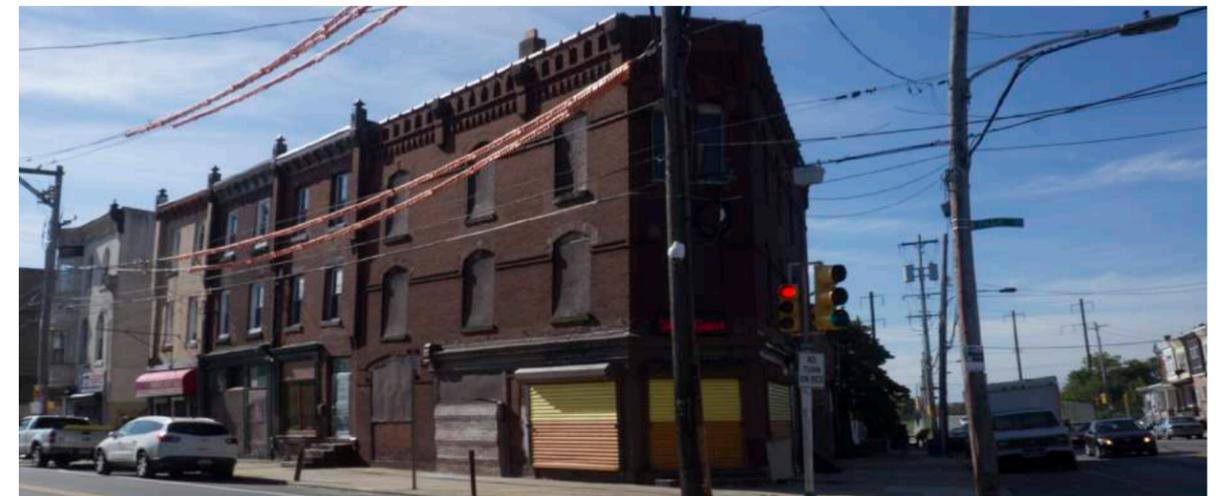


Figure 63. Intersection of Ridge Avenue and 29th Street. (Park, 2018)

## RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

### LOCATION AND HISTORY

The building on 2842 Ridge Avenue was selected because of its strategic position in the neighborhood and its good physical condition. This 3-story industrial building is situated at the intersection of Ridge Avenue and 29th Street, one of the busiest commercial corridors in Strawberry Mansion. Ridge Avenue is an artery that connects to the bordering communities of Stanton and Brewerytown, making it a significant location for inter-community socio-economic exchange.

For decades, the building was occupied by a plumbing supply retail on the first floor and apartments on the second and third floors; however, it has been vacant for the past 10 years.

### SUMMARY

Promoting economic revitalization of the major commercial corridor and reversing long-term economic decline is the core goal of all of the projects on Ridge Avenue. For 2842 Ridge Avenue, we are proposing a cooperative (co-op) involving collaborative participation of the residents. Co-ops come in many shapes and forms in Philadelphia—food or produce co-ops provide quality ingredients and nutrients, credit unions offer loans with reasonable interest rates, housing co-ops present affordable space for rent, and education co-ops offer enriching afterschool programs.

Cooperatives are an alternative business model focusing on preserving the economic and social values of its members. Whereas a typical corporation is owned by stockholders, and aims to maximize profit, a co-op is owned by members pursuing common values. Members collaborate on business operation or fundraising and share the profits. In Philadelphia, 70 co-ops have been established, and eight new co-ops were launched in 2018.

The 2842 Ridge Avenue project aims to launch a mixed type (producer and food) co-op in Strawberry Mansion. It provides much needed fresh food and employment opportunities to the residents.

The 2-month highly tactical phase of the project will focus on promoting the idea of a co-op to the residents and testing the market for such an enterprise. Marketing research and fundraising will also be conducted at this time. As a promotional strategy, a seasonal pop-up store will be created on the 1st floor of the building and

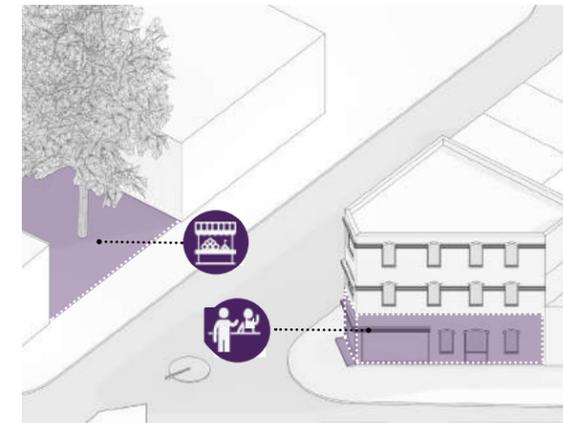
the vacant lot owned by the City of Philadelphia. This is a space for residents and small business owners to sell their products at reduced price. The success of this program would demonstrate that having an economic cluster of businesses benefits each individual owner.

The two-year tactical preservation phase aims to convert the seasonal pop-up to a fully operational permanent co-op. Similar businesses in Philadelphia usually spend two years on planning, funding, and promotion. Using the fund generated during the earlier phase, the co-op will operate under a leasing contract with the building owner. Initially, the administration office will operate in a partitioned space inside the store.

The 20-year long-term phase will expand the number of members with the intent to start several new branches in Strawberry Mansion. The 3rd floor of 2842 Ridge Avenue will be converted to a multifunctional operation office and employee training center. A multi-use space in the 2nd floor will be opened to other community use intermediated by the Strawberry Mansion CDC.

## THE CO-OP

### 2-MONTH HIGHLY TACTICAL PHASE



### 2-YEAR TACTICAL PHASE



### 20-YEAR LONG-TERM PHASE



### FAST FACTS

#### Community Values Addressed



#### Community Needs Addressed



**Stakeholders:** The Strawberry Mansion Community Development Corporation (CDC), Residents (potential co-op members), The City of Philadelphia (owner of the vacant lot)  
**Potential Partners:** Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance (PACA), The Free Library of Philadelphia (Co-op starters consultation provider), Strawberry Mansion Green Resources Center (Community garden)

**Funding Sources:** Equity Investment from the co-op members, Cooperative Loan Fund, The Reinvestment Fund, Fundraising, Crowdfunding

**Specific Interventions:** Use agreement of the city owned vacant lot (temporary), Lease agreement with the private owner (medium-term), building purchase (long-term), Renovation of the spaces for the purpose (1st: store, 2nd: multi-use space, 3rd: office room)



Mariposa Food Co-op  
Philadelphia, PA  
Food co-op



Heritage Shellfish Co-op  
Manahawkin, NJ  
Producer co-op



South Philly Food Co-op  
Philadelphia, PA  
Co-op start-up

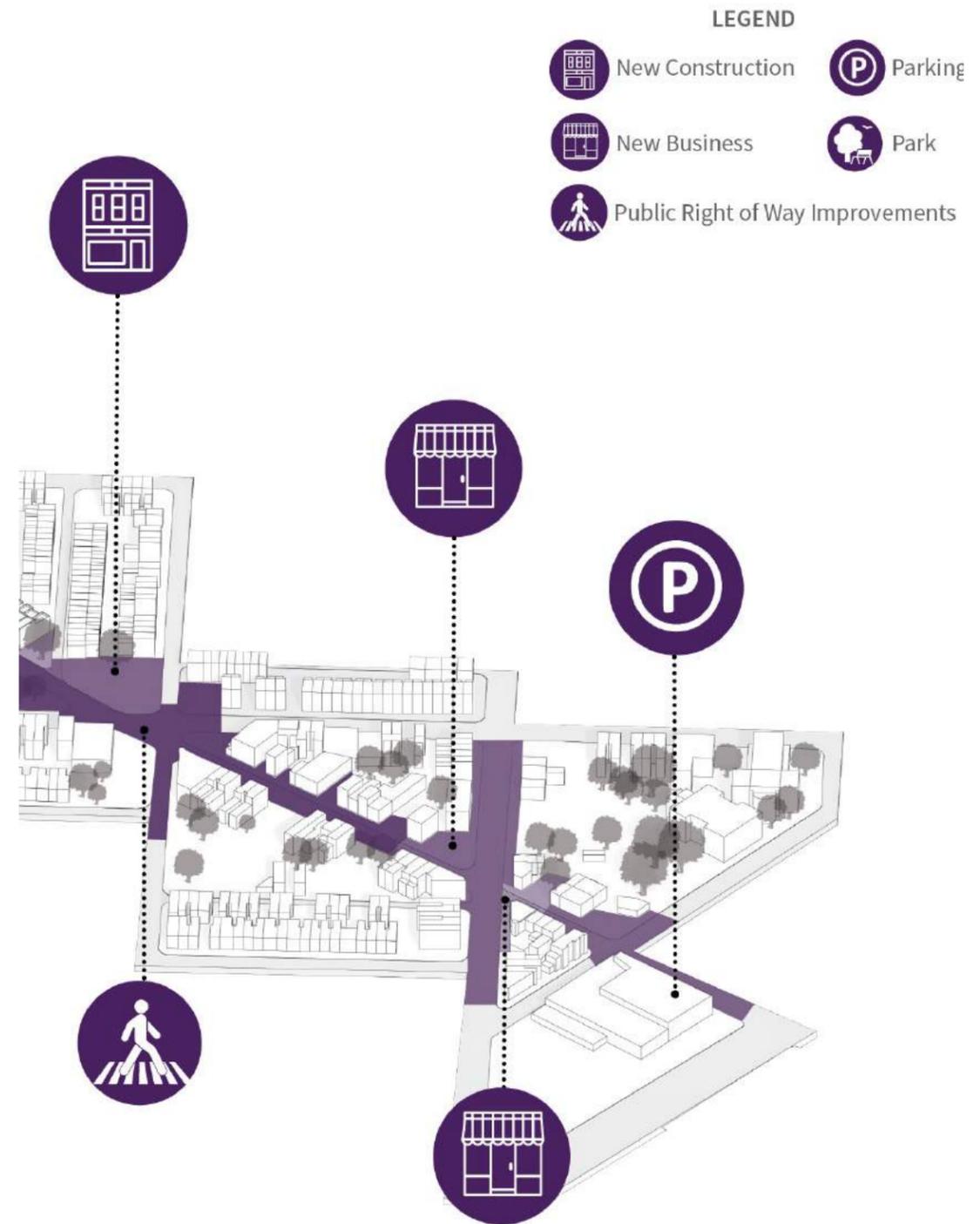
Figure 64. Axonometric drawings of proposal at 3 phases. (Corchado & Park, 2018)

### RIDGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR



Figure 65. Tactical preservation proposals at Ridge Avenue. (Corchado & Johnson, 2018)

### RIDGE AVENUE PLAN



1. Meyers, pg. 110.
2. "Strawberry Mansion: Bus Barn Renovations Continue Despite Challenges", Adams, Jake and Boone, Antonio, Philadelphia Neighborhoods, September 12, 2013, accessed November 4, 2018.

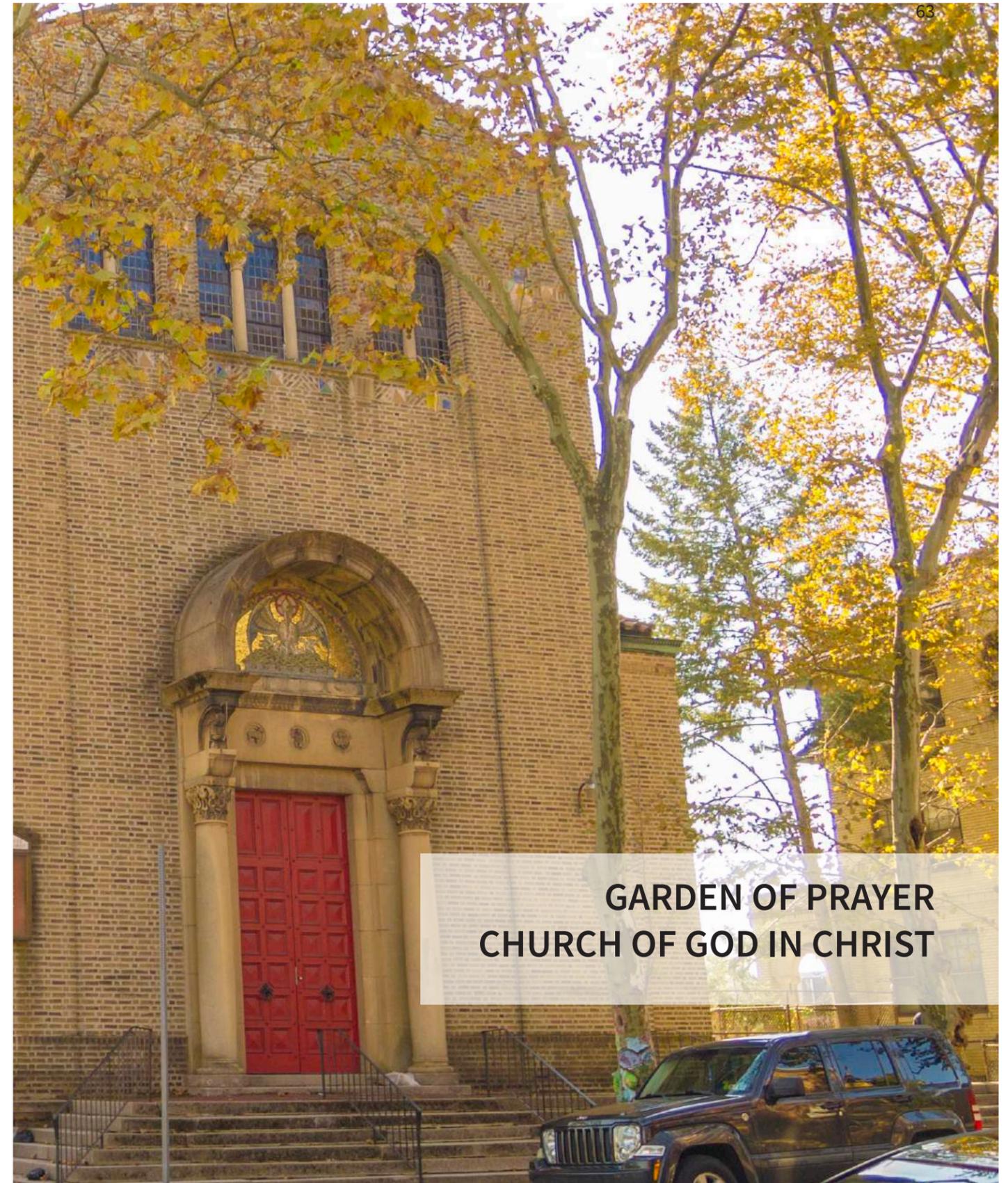


Figure 66. Main entrance to the Garden of Prayer sanctuary. (Luo, 2018.)

## GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH

### FAST FACTS

**Zoning:** RM-1 (residential mixed-use)  
**Site Area (sq.ft.):** 57,870  
**Building Area (sq. ft.):** 19,510  
**Stories/Height:** 4-story sanctuary, 3-story rectory  
**Owner:** Garden of Prayer Church of God in Christ  
**Predicted Future Zoning:** RMX-1, CMX-2  
**Current Use(s):** Worship and administration

### INTRODUCTION

The Garden of Prayer Church is part of the Church of God in Christ, a Pentecostal-Holiness denomination. It hosts close to fifty members on Sunday services and ten for a weekly bible study. Worship is held in the rectory year round and in the sanctuary when it is warm in the spring and summer. The church has seven part-time staff: five volunteers, two paid. Every Thanksgiving church members serve a community dinner, before each fall semester Back to School supplies are handed out to neighborhood kids, and some years they hold carnivals or health fairs in the adjacent lot. The congregation plays a significant role in their community and the building is a high-profile landmark at an active entry-point into the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood.



Figure 67. G.W. and W.S. Bromley, Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, 1895.

### HISTORY

Despite surrounding residential development, the half-acre triangular lot at the corner of Diamond and Sedgley remained vacant into the early 20th century.



Figure 68. The original one-story school house finished in 1908 (Athaneum).

Finally, in 1907, Mary Rementer sold her undeveloped plot of land to the Archbishop of Philadelphia, John Ryan, who wanted to build a Catholic school and parish on the site.<sup>1</sup> Local architecture firm Ballinger and Perrot planned the original layout of the three buildings. The Most Precious Blood Catholic school opened on the southern tip of the lot as a one-story school house in 1908.<sup>2</sup> By 1912, the school had outgrown their space and added two more stories and two wings, transforming the building into the three-story H planned structure that is affordable housing for Project HOME today. The Spanish Colonial rectory on the northwest corner was completed soon after in 1914. The last structure built on the site, the sanctuary, was not constructed until 1927. The Catholic Church used a different architect, George Lovatt, to design the final building.

In 1988, the school closed because it was caught in a cycle of low enrollment leading to high tuition rates that decreased attendance.<sup>3</sup> The Catholic diocese



Figure 69. Two-story expansion of the Catholic school, 1912. (Athaneum).

## SITE INTRODUCTION

nominated the building to the Philadelphia register of historic places prior to selling the campus to the Garden of Prayer Church of God Pentecostal church.<sup>4</sup>

Garden of Prayer was founded by Dr. Benjamin Hayes Dabney and Mother Elizabeth Juanita Dabney in 1929.<sup>5</sup> Their first building was on Sharswood Street southeast of Strawberry Mansion in the Sharswood neighborhood. In 1941, Garden of Prayer expanded and moved into their current neighborhood at the corner of 29th Street & Susquehanna Avenue. Unfortunately, that building burned down in 1991 and the congregation needed a new space, so they purchased the former Most Precious Blood campus. Through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, the church converted the former school building into affordable housing.<sup>6</sup>

### SITE CONTEXT

The site is situated in a prominent location near one of the major entry points into Strawberry Mansion from Stanton and North Philadelphia West. Garden of Prayer is bounded by Diamond Street to the north, 28th Street to the west, Sedgley Avenue diagonally from northeast to southwest, and 29th Street to the east. Buffering the church from bustling Sedgley Avenue is a small triangular park owned by the City of Philadelphia.



Figure 70. The rectory as finished in 1914. (Athaneum).

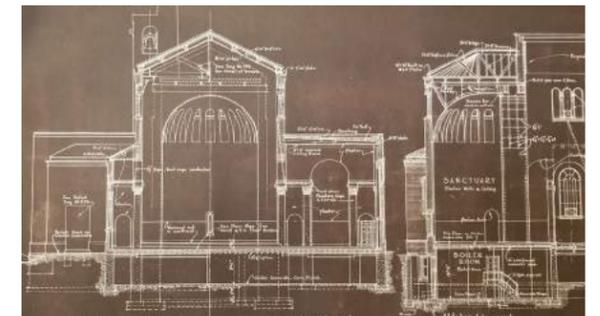


Figure 71. Lovett's drawings of the 1928 sanctuary. (Athaneum).

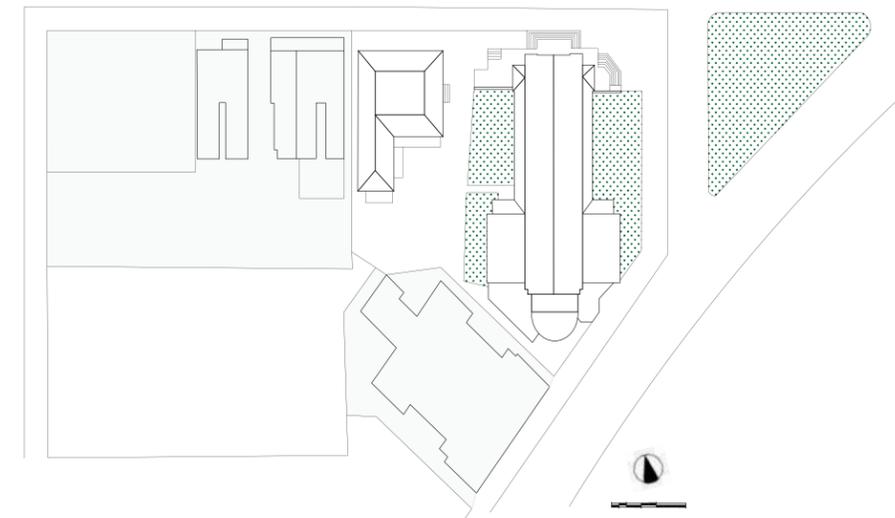


Figure 72. Site Plan. (Luo, 2018.)



Figure 73. Site plan with buildings highlighted. (Luo, 2018.)

### SITE DESCRIPTION

Garden of Prayer Church of God in Christ (COGIC) currently owns two buildings, the sanctuary and the rectory, and two parking lots.

The sanctuary is a transitional masonry structure of steel beams clad in brick with a terra cotta tile roof. The exterior is adorned with tan-colored facing bricks and carved limestone details. Color tiles display shield-like emblems just beneath the copper lined cornice. The doors and windows are embellished with limestone engaged columns and carvings of figures and naturalistic motifs. The main entrance, a grand red paneled door flanked by Corinthian columns, is capped with a brilliant golden mosaic of a pelican feeding its young, faces north on Diamond Street.

Like most Catholic churches, the floor plan is in the shape of a crucifix. Religious motifs repeat throughout the stained-glass windows and carved interior capitals. The expansive sanctuary ceiling rises four stories and can seat approximately 700 people. Beneath the floor lies an open basement with a low ceiling and a concrete floor.

The rectory is an L-shaped, three-story building of the same tan-colored brick. Several large rooms and a kitchen occupy the first floor, serving as both a center

for worshipping and dining. The pastor's office and an additional multifunctional spaces occupy the second floor. The third floor consists of small to medium sized rooms that are not currently in use.

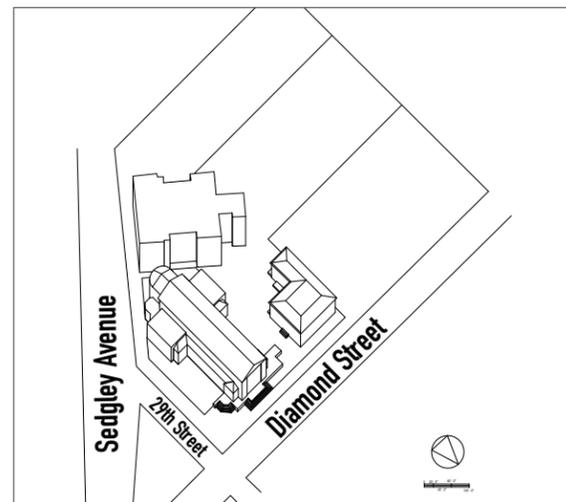


Figure 74. Model of site looking south. (Najera and King, 2018.)

### SITE CONDITION

The sanctuary and the rectory are in fair condition. Both roofs have significant water infiltration that is likely weakening the structural integrity of the building and damaging many of the exterior and interior finishes. Hiring a qualified structural engineer to examine the sanctuary and rectory attic spaces is highly recommended.

An engineer and roofer should also inspect the gutters and roofs with a lift. Clogged gutters should be cleared and a plan for repairs should be drafted. Stains may be reduced with water and a non-ionic detergent, more aggressive treatments should be applied by a conservator.

Once drainage is addressed, the deteriorated mortar joints should be repointed with a mortar that is compatible in strength, permeability, and color. The brickwork has been repointed with a harder, less permeable mortar that is popping off where moisture accumulates. A sieve analysis and mock ups should be completed prior to any major repointing campaign.

The broken windows on the ground floor and basement should be repaired. The ivy covering the windows of the sanctuary and rectory should be removed. The interior should be repaired after the envelope is sealed.

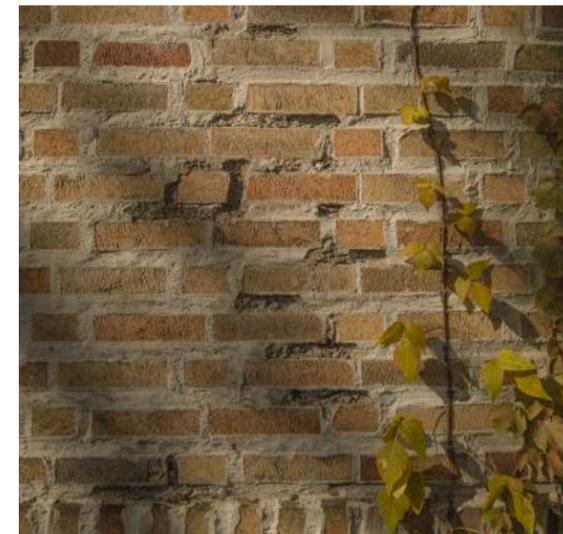


Figure 75. A darker, more granular mortar is revealed where the white repair mortar is deteriorating (Luo, 2018.)



Figure 76. Staining shows where pipes blockages are. The ivy will be removed to prevent mortar deterioration. (



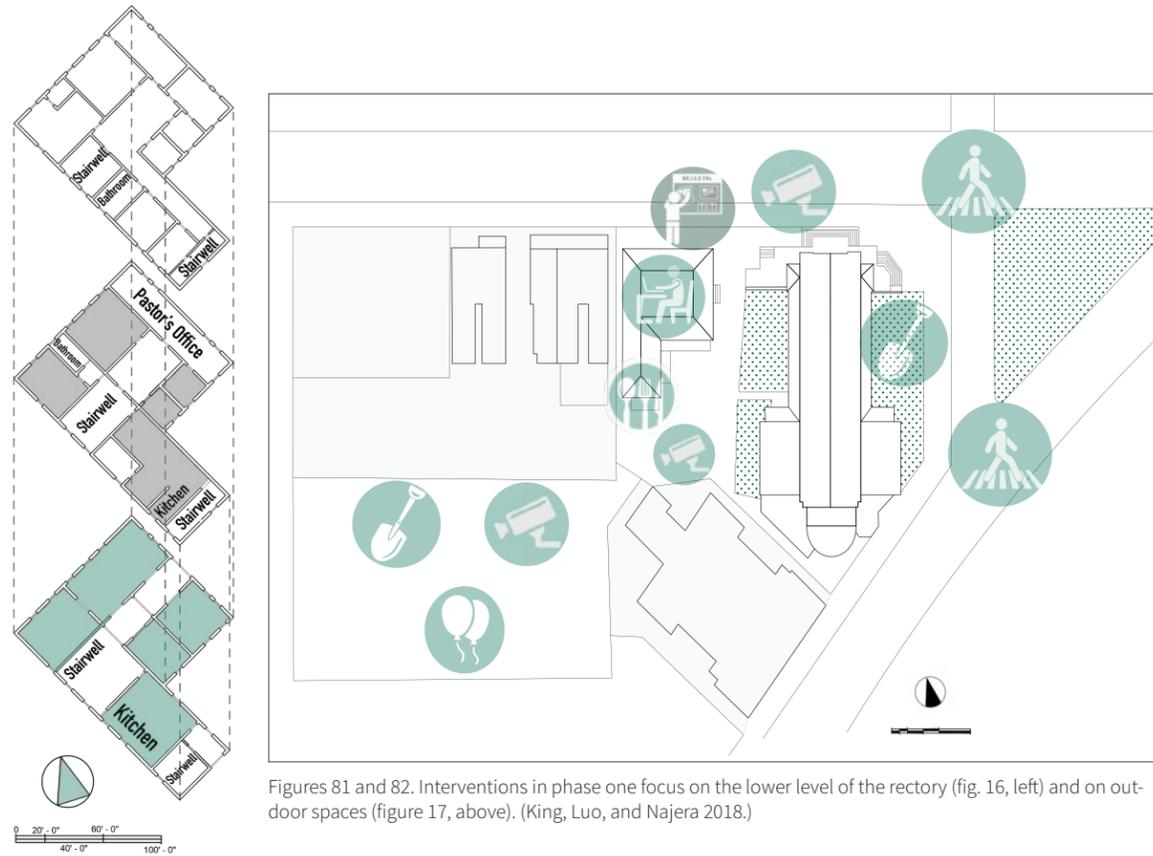
Figure 77. The deteriorated brickwork near the main entrance to the sanctuary will be a high priority. (Luo, 2018.)



Figure 78. The interior finishwork will only be repaired once the envelope is watertight and survives at least one winter without leaks. (Luo, 2018.)



## GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH



Figures 81 and 82. Interventions in phase one focus on the lower level of the rectory (fig. 16, left) and on outdoor spaces (figure 17, above). (King, Luo, and Najera 2018.)

### SUMMARY

These recommendations use the congregation's existing resources or inexpensive investments to promote existing programming and strengthen current partnerships. The goal is to increase the church's online and in-person presence, improve site security, and advertise existing programming and rental space.

Safety is a concern for both the congregation and community members. Although the sanctuary does have an alarm system, Deacon Sullivan mentioned several recent break-ins. Securing the property can be accomplished in two ways: Increasing campus activity and installing security cameras at vulnerable intersections.<sup>7</sup> A bulletin board would increase foot traffic, announce neighborhood events, and communicate church services to the neighborhood. Painted crosswalks would slow down cars and improve safety at busy intersections around the church. The

addition of security cameras at critical locations would deter robberies and provide critical evidence should break-ins occur.

The robust existing programming at the Garden of Prayer Church of God is one of the congregation's greatest strengths. Deacon Sullivan and Ms. Tonetta Graham mentioned popular health fairs and outdoor revivals that the church has hosted in its parking lot. Institutional connections could sponsor existing events. For instance, members of the congregation who work in healthcare may be able to connect church leadership to community outreach departments at major institutions and other mobile medical services to populate fairs or revivals.<sup>8</sup>

Setting these events to a regular calendar could facilitate partnership planning.<sup>9</sup> Programs should be announced in person, on the bulletin board, or online with an updated Facebook page or inexpensive,

10. Rina Ghose and Margaret Pettygrove, "Urban Community Gardens as Spaces of Citizenship," *Antipode* 46, no. 4 (September 1, 2014): 1092-1112.

## PHASE 1: TWO MONTHS

user friendly website. Making use of several different platforms, digital and analog, could increase visitation and grow the congregation.

Gardening might be a new program for the church to pilot.<sup>10</sup> An orchard on the side yard facing 28th St. could become an organic, nutritious barrier that would discourage people from going near the stained glass windows. Planter boxes could be added to the vacant lot southwest of the church. They would have little impact on its current use and receive south facing light which is perfect for gardening. The congregation may not have the capacity to operate the garden but there are several nonprofit partners who could help manage the project.

### PLAN OF RENTALS AND RENOVATION

The ground floor spaces are currently used (shown in green) by the church and the community. The second floor is partially used (grey). Several rooms on the upper story could be spruced up to increase the amount of available rental space and generate more income for future interventions.

### KEY CASE STUDIES



Rainbow Crosswalks at 13th and Locust Streets Philadelphia, PA



The Philadelphia Design Center Coworking Space



St. Michael's Lutheran Church Kensington (Philadelphia, PA) Community Kitchen and Garden with Greensgrow



Historic Strawberry Mansion Orchard Philadelphia Orchard Project and East Park Revitalization Alliance

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



### Stakeholders:

Garden of Prayer Church  
Strawberry Mansion CDC  
Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Action Committee  
Residential Neighbors, especially youth and seniors

### Potential Partners:

The City of Philadelphia  
The Commerce Department  
Mural Arts Philadelphia  
Ming Media  
Philabundance Gardens  
Greensgrow  
Neighborhood Gardens Trust  
Philadelphia Horticultural Society  
Philadelphia Orchard Project  
University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and Temple University medical schools

### Funding Sources:

Philadelphia Cultural Alliance's Project Stream Grant  
Department of Commerce's Business Security Camera Program

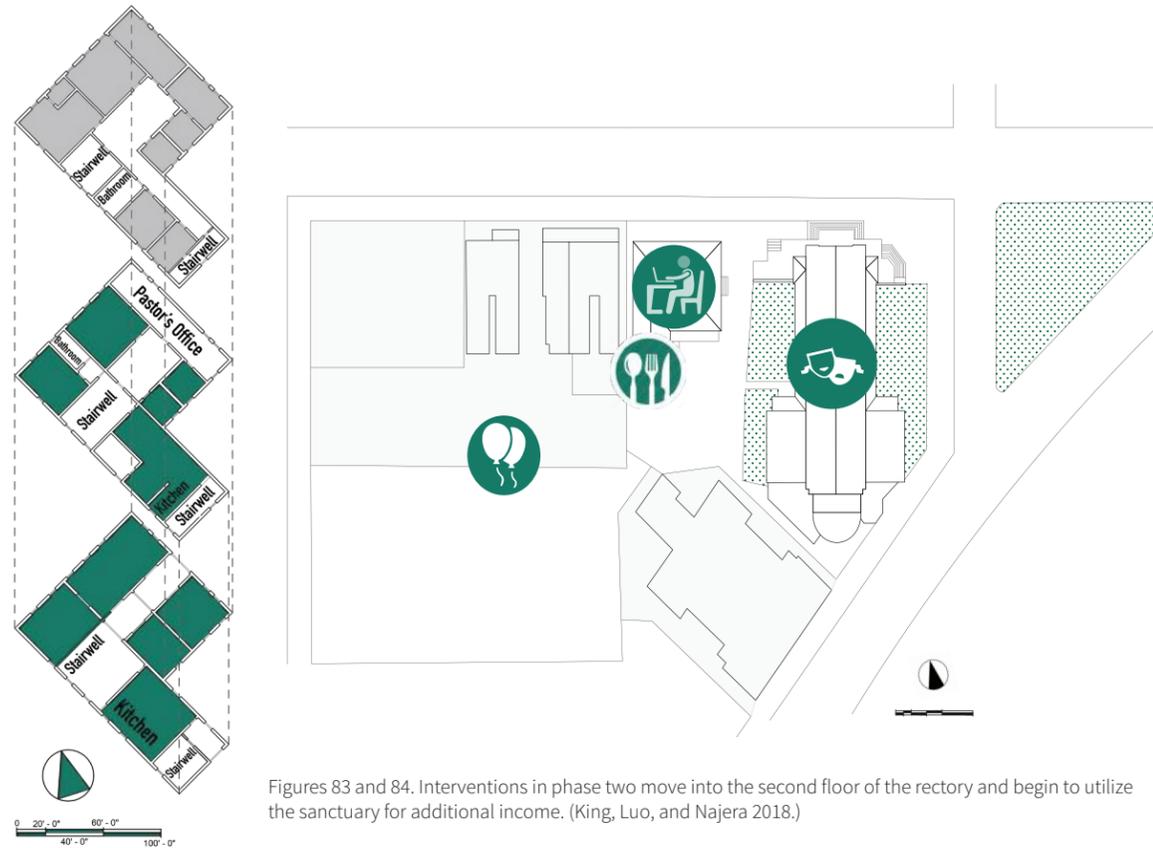
### Specific Interventions:

Add bulletin board  
Create website  
Paint crosswalks  
Install security cameras  
Renovate kitchen for community use



Holy Redeemer Chinese Catholic Church, Drexel and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital medical clinic

## GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH



Figures 83 and 84. Interventions in phase two move into the second floor of the rectory and begin to utilize the sanctuary for additional income. (King, Luo, and Najera 2018.)

### SUMMARY

The mid-term recommendations aim to expand mission-related programming and necessary services for the community by increasing the amount of rentable space in the rectory. These projects are intended to be implemented within the next two years with the help of nonprofit partners, external funding, and revenue from space-sharing. The goal is to make new community connections, increase activity on the site, and support the community.

Renting these spaces to nonprofits focused on healing, education, and music would generate income and help the church share its values in these areas with the neighborhood. A drug counseling program could meet a community need for mental-health services. The congregation might partner with Narcotics and / or Alcoholics Anonymous to host meetings that would be self-sustaining from a collection. Congregants or

non-members who are a part of the program could organize meetings. Starting up a new meeting requires going to other meetings to spread the word and calling the organization's hotline to be added to the list of available meetings.<sup>11</sup> Such a program would honor church founders Dr. Benjamin Hayes Dabney and Mother Elizabeth Juanita Dabney's roles as healers in the community.

Offering space and partnering with an existing youth program would relieve the congregation of management responsibilities and potentially generate a modest income for building maintenance. An after-school program would meet a local need and realize Pastor Frison's passion for early-childhood education.<sup>12</sup> Several of the rectory spaces could be used as small to medium sized classrooms for homework help. The adjacent lots could be used as play space when the kids need a break from structured programming. Even

## PHASE 2: TWO YEARS

though it would be too costly to operate year-round, the church could host a children's music or performing arts program in the sanctuary during several weeks of the summer. Collaborating with an external performing arts organization would educate children and pass down Garden of Prayer's strong musical tradition.

### PLAN OF RENTALS AND RENOVATION

Income from event rentals will increase with online and in-person promotion. With those funds, the church can begin reclaiming the use of the rectory, room by room. The two kitchens will be the first priority so they can begin to meet a need for community kitchens. Second floor rooms will follow; the large room attached to the kitchen close to the upstairs bathroom would double the amount of event space that the church could rent, and smaller rooms that suit meeting, office, and classroom uses would follow. The third floor will need significant investment and should be addressed with a long term strategic plan.

### KEY CASE STUDIES



Artists in Sacred Places  
Space-Sharing  
Partners for Sacred Places



Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous  
National Programs



The Strawberry Mansion Learning Center at Mander Recreation Center Philadelphia, PA



Sister Cities Girl choir and the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown Philadelphia, PA

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



### Stakeholders:

Neighborhood youth  
Local musicians and performers  
Budding entrepreneurs

### Potential Partners:

Art in Sacred Places  
And I Still Rise  
Strawberry Mansion Learning Center  
Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous  
East Part Revitalization Alliance  
Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

### Funding Sources:

Greensgrow's Mary's Community Fund  
Home Depot's Community Impact Grant  
Income from space-sharing or rentals

### Specific Interventions:

Renovate next level of rectory  
Plant fruit trees  
Create planter boxes  
Establish counseling services, summer youth program, and sponsorships for fairs



Figure 85. Renting out office and meeting space could help fund renovations (King, 2018).

## GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH



Figure 86. If the congregation chooses to stay, then interventions for phase 3 can bring utilize all spaces and bring in income. (Luo, 2018).

### LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

The church has expressed the intent to sell since 2016. As much as they love the buildings the small congregation cannot keep up with the expensive operation cost.<sup>13</sup> Selling the vacant lot could provide some funds to maintain the valuable structures. It is unclear if they will sell in the near future. Due to this consideration, we devised two proposals. One for the congregation to remain at their current space, and the

other under the condition that they sell or lease the properties. For both of these proposals we focus on developing simple and practical programs that can be implemented with limited number of staff.

### STRATEGY 1: YOUTH CENTER WITH NON-PROFIT PARTNER

This long-term proposal is tailored under the condition that the congregation stays at the site and space-share the underutilized buildings with a non-profit operated youth center. Many community members have voiced the lack of recreations in the neighborhood, especially for the youths during after school hours. The proposed youth center will serve the community by providing a safe place for their children to learn valuable skills along with their peers. Program recommendations include dance, music, or drama studio, fitness classes, and art related workshops. Potential partners for this program include: The Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc. and the School District of Philadelphia. The stakeholders are identified as the Garden of Prayer congregation, their non-profit partner, the youth in the neighborhood, and the immediate residents around the site. Federal and state historic tax credit, Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grant, Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool

### YOUTH CENTER

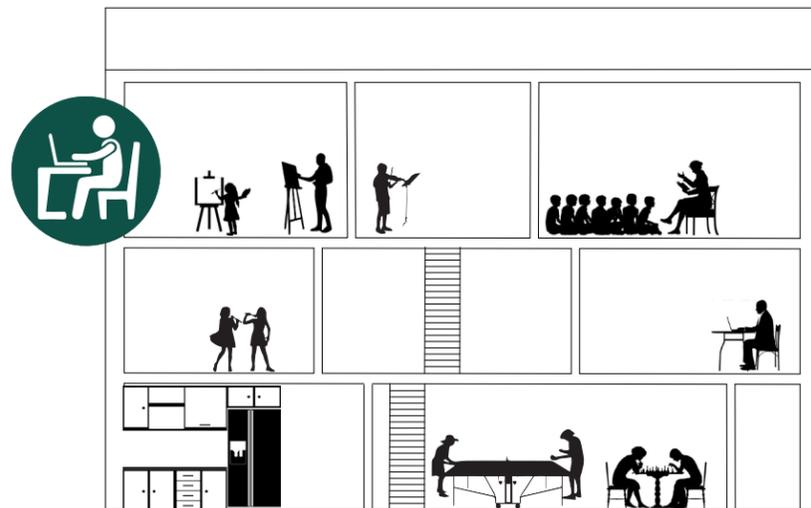


Figure 87. Sectional drawing of potential use of the rectory (Luo, 2018).

## PHASE 3: TWENTY YEARS (STRATEGY 1)

Youth Development Network, LISC, and private investors are some of their potential funding sources.

The current sanctuary as it is can be modified as a performance outlet to showcase the programs implemented. The large basement can function as a storage space.

The current congregation has historically hosted some youth programs and a daycare in the rectory. The building is already configured into a variety of spaces, large and small, many with bathrooms attached. The first floor has large spaces ideal for a communal game room and dining space. The second and third floor rooms would host lessons and workshops. Garden of Prayer congregation's administration office will still occupy part of the second floor of the rectory and have access to communal rooms and sanctuary for worship.

### PLAN OF RENTALS AND RENOVATION

The roof of both sanctuary and rectory should be restored in consultation with a professional architecture conservation firm. The upper floors of the rectory will need moderate renovation such as repairing the water damage, repainting, hazardous material abatement and debris removal. Some new furniture will be needed to set up the youth center.

### KEY CASE STUDIES



### PERFORMANCE ARTS

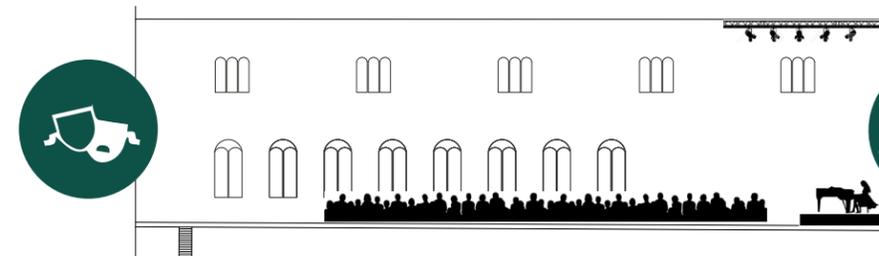


Figure 88. Potential use of the sanctuary, shown in section (Luo, 2018).

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



### Stakeholders:

Garden of Prayer Church of God in Christ  
Neighborhood youth  
Residents immediately surrounding site  
Nonprofit partners

### Potential Partners:

Institute for the Development of African American Youth, Inc.  
Nonprofit youth centers  
School District of Philadelphia

### Funding Sources:

Historic Tax Credit  
Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grant  
Pennsylvania Statewide After-School Youth Development Network  
LISC  
Nonprofit partner

### Specific Interventions:

Repair roof  
Complete rectory renovation  
Purchase and place new furniture

### EVENT RENTAL AND COMMUNITY MEETING



## GARDEN OF PRAYER CHURCH

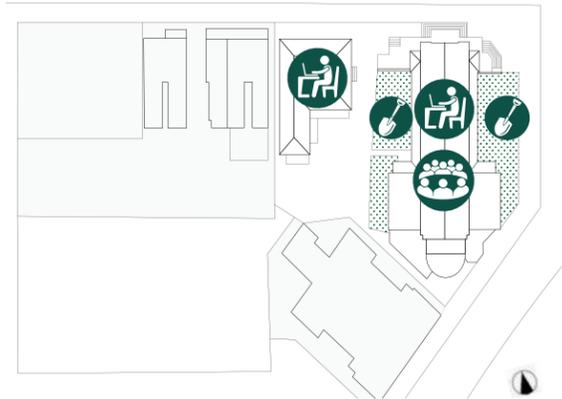


Figure 89. Interventions can focus on co-working spaces if the congregation chooses to sell. (Luo, 2018.)

### STRATEGY 2: CO-WORKING CENTER

This long-term proposal is tailored towards the new owner or renter under the condition that the recommended renovations and upgrades are completed. These programs aim to utilize all available space to its maximum capacity while limiting physical modifications to the minimum. It is essential for that the new owner respects the architectural integrity of the buildings, as they are listed on the National Register

of Historic Places and important landmarks of the community. Specific conditions and terms, such as preserving the historic terra-cotta roof and religious architectural details, can be negotiated into the sale as historic preservation easement, a perpetual legal agreement that protects a property's historic character.

The site is ideal for an established co-working company looking for new branch location. Our long-term adaptive-reuse proposal is developed as a balanced approach to not only generate revenue for the new owners, but also preserve some of the successful programs, such as community garden and kitchen rental, from prior proposals which serve the needs of the community identified through our community outreach. The co-working company is encourage to offer affordable rates to the community. Co-working space and commercial rental provide opportunities for residents to generate income through running their own businesses. Potential partners for this program include: WeWork and Table Coworking. The stakeholders are identified as the Garden of Prayer congregation, new owner or renter, working professionals, immediate residents around the site. Federal and state historic tax credit, LISC, and private investors are some of their potential funding sources.

### CO-WORKING CENTER

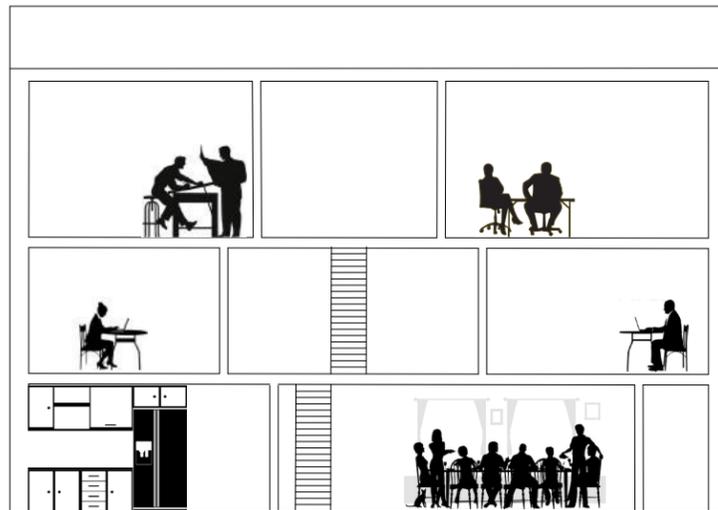


Figure 90. Detailed view of potential use of the rectory (Luo, 2018.)

## PHASE 3: TWENTY YEARS (STRATEGY 2)

The first-floor sanctuary is a large space with approximately 700 occupancy.<sup>15</sup> Office furniture can be used to create an open-space working area with movable partitions installed as needed. The office furniture can be stored in the basement when the sanctuary is used for performance arts, weddings, community meetings, funerals, or congregations who have occasionally need for a larger worshiping space.

The exiting space partition in the rectory is perfect for private co-working offices. The upgraded first floor kitchen should continue to be available to the community to rent or shared with non-profit organization for special charity events. Outdoors, an annual job fair would complement the co-working center as a promotional tool and raise community reputation.

### PLAN OF RENTALS AND RENOVATION

The roof of both sanctuary and rectory should be restored with consultation from a professional architecture conservation firm. The upper floors of the rectory will need moderate renovations such as repairing the water damage, repainting, hazardous material and debris removal. The pews in the sanctuary will be removed and replaced with movable furniture.

### KEY CASE STUDIES

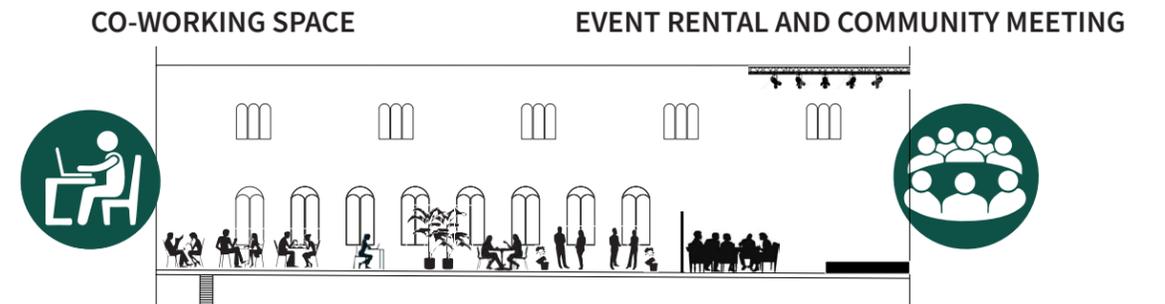
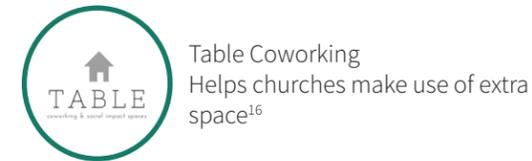


Figure 91. Potential use of the sanctuary. (Luo, 2018.)

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



Stakeholders:

Garden of Prayer Church of God in Christ  
New owner or renters  
Working professionals  
Residents surrounding the site

Potential Partners:

WeWork  
Table Coworking

Funding Sources:

Historic Tax Credit  
LISC loans  
Private investors

Specific Interventions:

Repair roof  
Complete rectory renovation  
Remove pews  
Purchase and place office furniture

1. Deed Book WSV No. 925 Page 327, City of Philadelphia Municipal Archive.
2. National Register of Historic Places, Most Precious Blood Catholic Church, Rectory, Parochial School. Philadelphia, PA, 91002008.
3. "2 More Parish Schools to Shut Doors," The Philadelphia Inquirer, January 18, 1988.
4. National Register of Historic Places.
5. Garden of Prayer Church of God [Facebook Page](#), accessed November 29, 2018.
6. Deed Book VCS No 997 Page 566, City of Philadelphia Municipal Archive.
7. Groshong et al., "Attitudes About Perceived Park Safety Among Residents in Low-Income and High Minority Kansas City, Missouri Neighborhoods," *Environment and Behavior* (27.)
8. Henry, Hansel Harrison, II. "Developing a Health Outreach Ministry in a Pentecostal Church Teaching Leaders to Bring Good Health to the Community," Order No. 9819539, United Theological Seminary, 1997.
9. David Johnson and Ellen Lampert-Greaux, "Planning and Executing Church Events," *Entertainment Design* (2003).
11. Sam Johnson, Interviewed by Allison King (Phone Interview), First Congregational Church of Long Beach, CA. December 11, 2018.
12. Rev. Gregory Frison, Interviewed by Rachel Hildebrandt and Kalen Flynn, Garden of Prayer COGIC, January 22, 2016.
13. Rev. Gregory Frison.
14. Tabitha Clark and Carolyn Alford, "Historic Church Reopens as Youth Center," *The Daily News - Jacksonville, NC*, (October 16, 2016), <https://www.jdnews.com/20121016/historic-church-reopens-as-youth-center/310169878>.
15. Rev. Gregory Frison.
16. Cat Johnson, "Bringing Coworking To Idle Church Space: A Q&A With Daryn DeZengotita," *AllWork.Space*, (April 02, 2018), <https://allwork.space/2018/04/bringing-coworking-to-idle-church-space-a-qa-with-daryn-dezengotita/>.

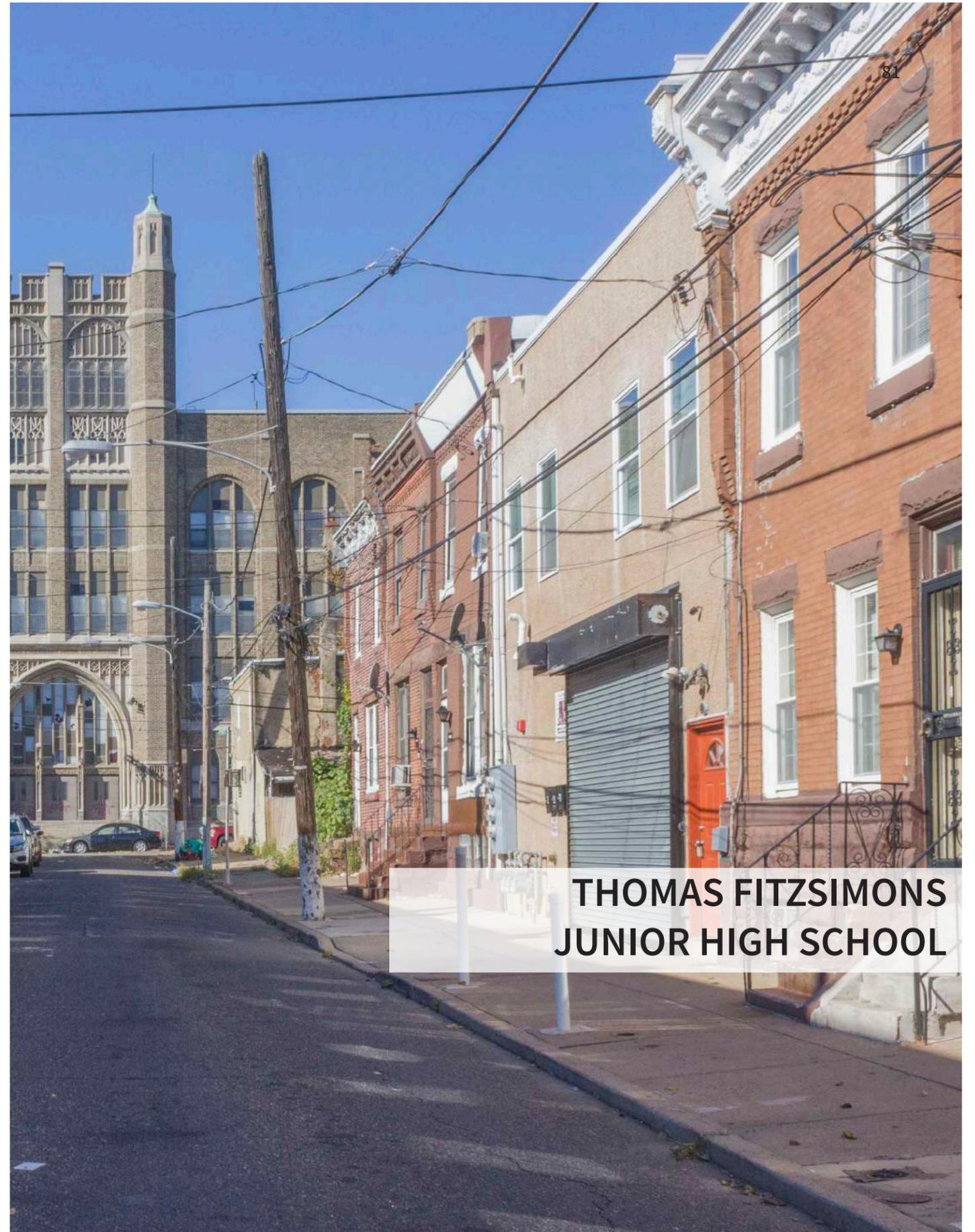
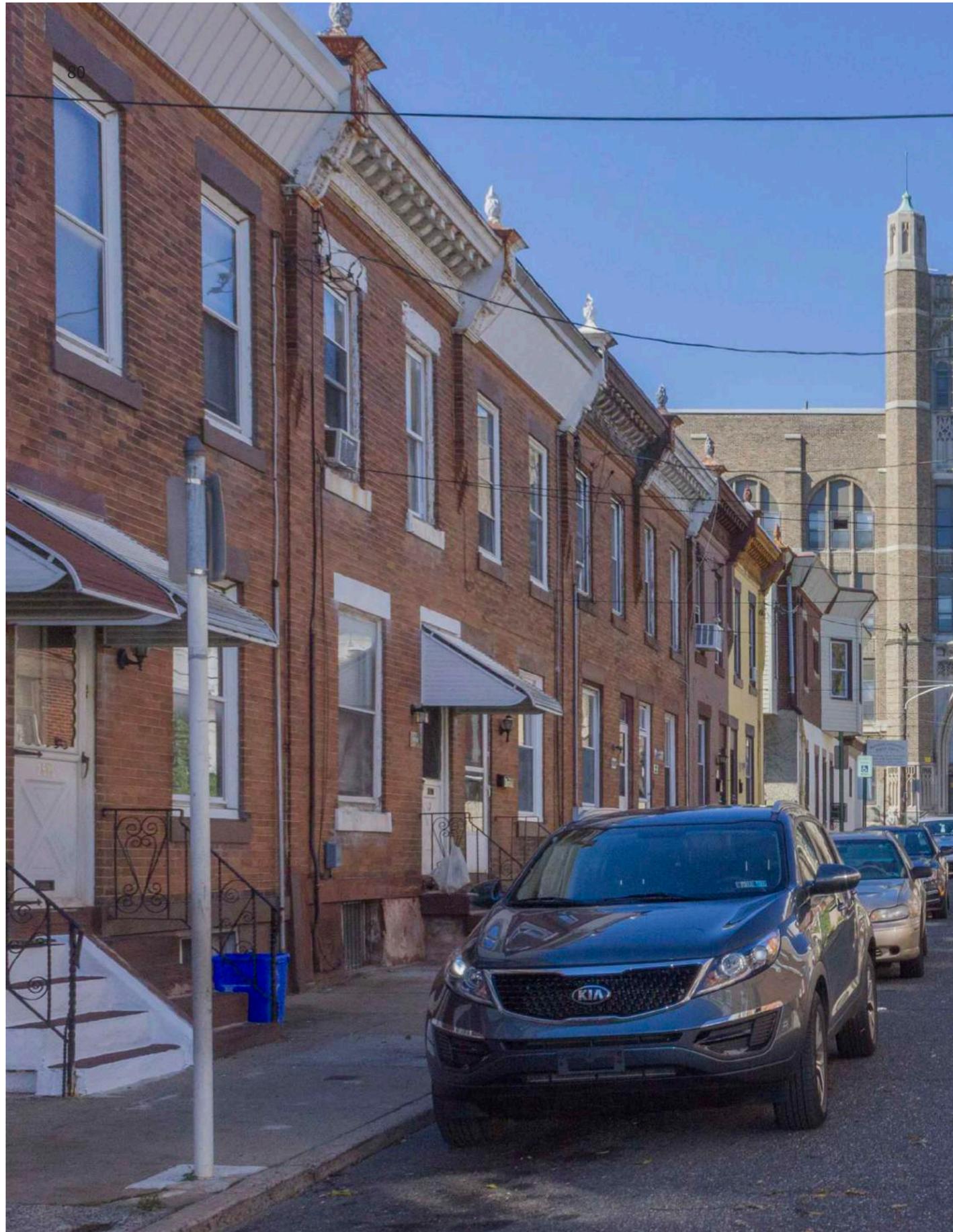


Figure 92.: Front/East Facade. Kothmann, 2018.

## THOMAS FITZSIMONS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

### FAST FACTS

**Zoning:** RM-1 (residential mixed-use)

**Site Area (sq.ft.):** 120,000

**Building Area (sq. ft.):** 160,000

**Stories/Height:** 4 plus basement and roof access

**Owner:** School District of Philadelphia

**Predicted Future Zoning:** RM-1

**Current Use(s):** Vacant School (closed 2013)

**Historic Uses(s):** Junior High School

**Listed on the National Register of Historic Places**

### INTRODUCTION

The former Thomas Fitzsimons Junior High School was one of two middle schools in Strawberry Mansion for much of the twentieth century but has been vacant since 2013. The building is a landmark in the community both for its distinctive and massive structure and for its former role as a school. Many long-time community members hold strong memories of the schools they attended, speaking to the important role these places have held within the community and offering hope that a new use could be found to return the site to use.

The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 as a part of a larger nomination for Philadelphia schools, thus additionally showing its importance to the city at large.



Figure 93. Southeast corner of Fitzsimons at 26th and Cumberland just after completion, 1927. Philadelphia Department of Records.

### HISTORY

The Thomas Fitzsimons Junior High School replaced the Francis Hopkins School, previously known as the Bellview School, between 1926 and 1927.<sup>1</sup> The demolition of Hopkins to build Fitzsimons likely responded to great residential growth in the area at the turn of the twentieth century, as the footprint of Fitzsimons is significantly larger than that of Hopkins (figs. 3-4). The structure and footprint are unique within the community, but not within the city. Four other sites (the Elizabeth Duane Gillespie, the William T. Tilden School, the Penn Treaty, and the William H. Shoemaker Schools) are visually identical four-story Irwin T. Catharine buildings. Despite Fitzsimons being identical to these, it was the only one built to replace a former school. The buildings were all built as junior high schools between 1925 and 1928 using the “JHS-6” pattern.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 94. The future site of Fitzsimons, outlined in blue, had few surrounding homes in 1875. The Bellview was thus a relatively small school. (G.M. Hopkins, City Atlas of Philadelphia Vol. 2, Plate T, 1875.)

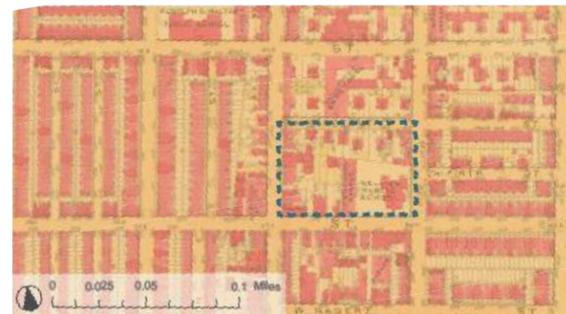


Figure 95. By the early twentieth century, exploding residential growth meant that the community required a much larger school than The Bellview, which was only a quarter of the size of Fitzsimons. (G.W. and W.S. Bromley, Atlas of the City of Philadelphia (Central), Plate 28, 1922.)

## SITE INTRODUCTION

During its construction period in the 1920s, Fitzsimons intersected with the Jewish community's investment in schools and synagogues. After Strawberry Mansion transitioned to be predominantly African American in the mid-twentieth century, the school served the new community as one of its two junior high schools. Fitzsimons continued to serve in an educational capacity until its closure in 2013, but its precise role in education has varied.

In the twenty-first century, the site seems to have been emblematic of education struggles in Philadelphia. Victory Schools, a for-profit K-12, managed the school in the 2000s. In 2005, the entity converted the school into boys-only with the intent of targeting services to an under-performing group. However, this exacerbated tensions between geographic groups of youth suddenly assigned to the same school. Teachers and parents shifted away from the school in response to their fears of fighting.<sup>3</sup> In 2012, the School Reform Commission proposed closing Fitzsimons, indicating that the so-called experiment with single-sex education had not been deemed a sufficient success.<sup>4</sup> The school did close in 2013. Notably, all of its sister schools from the 1920s are still open.

### CONTEXT

Fitzsimons is situated between three one-way streets (Sergeant Street to the north, 27th Street to the west, and Cumberland Street to the south) and oriented with the façade along 26th Street, the only street that allows for two-way traffic, to the east. The plot comprises an entire street block, with the school building situated on the eastern-most third and a mixed parking lot and playground area utilizing the remaining two-thirds of the block (fig. 97). The parking lot is open to the community, but partially surrounded by chain-link fencing. Properties to the north are vacant, but the west and south sides are intact neighborhoods with an active church building, Trinity AME (fig. 97).



Figure 96. Cumberland facade with Trinity AME in background. (Kothmann, 2018.)



Figure 97. Aerial model of the Fitzsimons site from the southeast, showing the front facade on 26th Street and the South Facade on Cumberland Street. All the surrounding streets are active except Sergeant Street, which has occasional drug activity. (Image from Philadelphia Atlas, edits by Kothmann, 2018.)

1. Franklin D. Edmunds, *A Chronological List of the Public School Buildings of the City of Philadelphia, PA* (Philadelphia: S.N., 1934).  
 2. Jefferson M. Moak, “Thomas Fitzsimons Jr. High School,” Survey, Pennsylvania Historic Resources Survey Form, (Harrisburg, PA: Bureau for Historic Preservation, 1987).  
 3. Susan Snyder, “High School Reworked as Boys-Only,” *The New York Times*, August 14, 2005.  
 4. Kristin A. Graham, “Philadelphia Superintendent Identifies Schools He Intends to Close,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 15 2012.

# THOMAS FITZSIMONS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

## DESCRIPTION

Fitzsimons and its sister schools share gothic arched windows and entryways, elaborate gothic-styled limestone carvings around non-parking lot entrances and the corner “tower” parapets, two limestone belt courses to divide the top and bottom stories from the center floors, and an external brick envelope of variegated brown tones over a steel and cast in place

concrete structure (figs. 98-99). Each school also has its name carved in textura script above the main entrance. Finally, the schools all have an array of specialized rooms of a variety of sizes, including two gymnasiums and an auditorium, and a classroom plan that repeats on each floor (fig. 100).



Figure 98. The steel frame at the structure’s base, covered by concrete and a brick envelope. Shown in 1926. (Philadelphia Department of Records.)

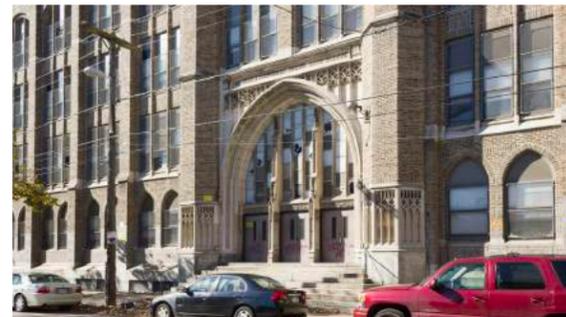


Figure 99. The front entrance, showing gothic detailing in limestone and decorative brickwork. (Kothmann, 2018).

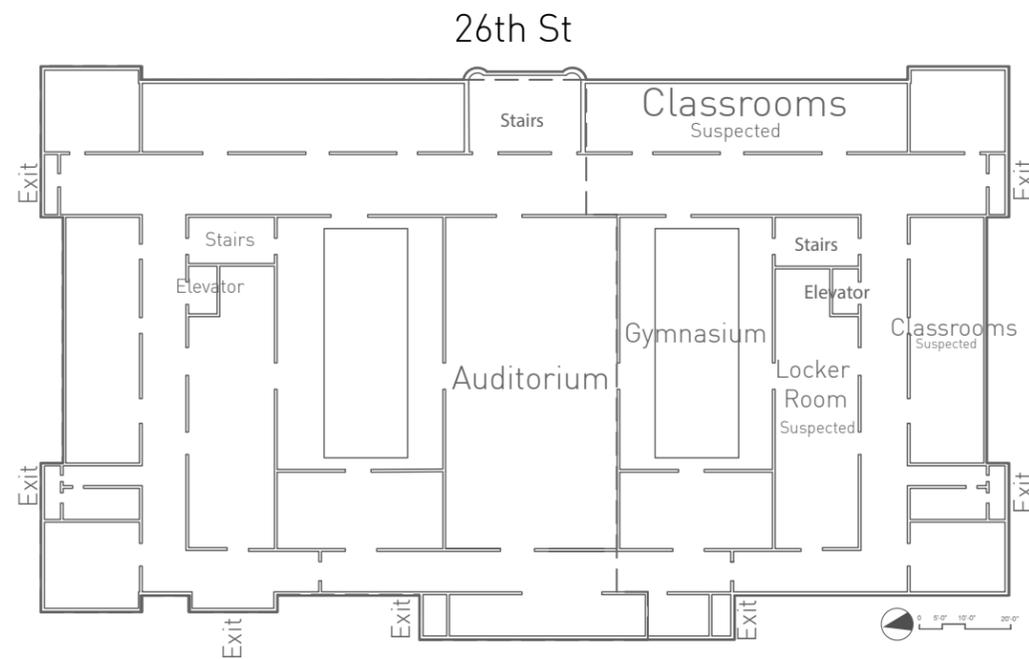


Figure 100. Plan of Fitzsimons ground floor based on a 1951 Sanborn insurance map, showing the building’s multiple exists, stairs, and elevators, as well as the classroom layout. Everything but the gymnasiums and auditoriums repeats on supper floors. (Drawing: Kothmann, 2018.)

# SITE INTRODUCTION

## PRELIMINARY CONDITION ASSESSMENT

The Thomas Fitzsimons School building is in overall good condition. The visible exterior signs of deterioration include a loss of substrate, missing mortar, metal corrosion, and graffiti. From an aerial view, it is apparent that the southern half of the roofing membrane needs repair (fig. 101). The exterior doors and windows appear to be in good to excellent condition and show no outward signs of fauna or human infiltration (fig. 102).

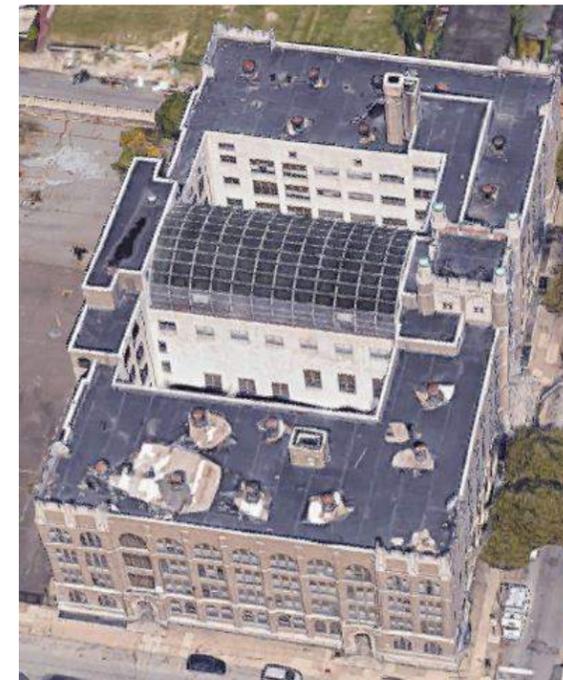


Figure 101. Damage to the roof membrane has occurred in the past few years. (Google Maps, November 2018.)

Missing limestone substrate from the tympanum is likely the result of water damage from the parapets. Previous repair campaigns in similar areas show that this is a typical problem for this area. Water also appears to have infiltrated and corroded some of the upper story lintels on the western elevation as well as caused minor biological growth along the northern elevation. The graffiti is predominantly along the northern and eastern elevations, perhaps indicating security concerns on these sides, but all elevations appear to have a layer of waxy coating in order to aid in graffiti removal (fig. 103).



Figure 102. Windows in good condition and exiting security lighting. (Kothmann, 2018.)

In terms of safety and accessibility, Fitzsimons exhibits a security system, stairs, and elevators. The School District of Philadelphia installed 48 security cameras across the property in 2010, some of which are mounted on the exterior of the building. The entrances are covered by the cameras, but present minor accessibility issues in that they all have stairs. There are two known elevator shafts within the building for internal accessibility as well as eight points of egress for fire safety (see fig. 100).

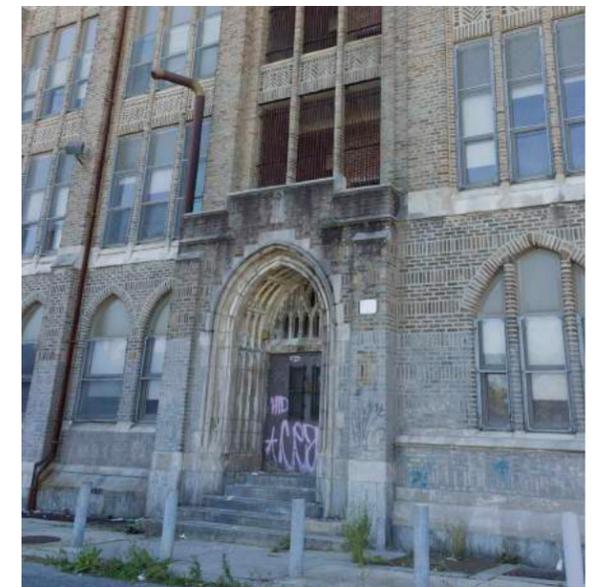


Figure 103. One of the northern entrances showing biological growth from water but intact limestone decoration. Graffiti may indicate security concerns, but the doors appear secure. (Kothmann, 2018).

# THOMAS FITZSIMONS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

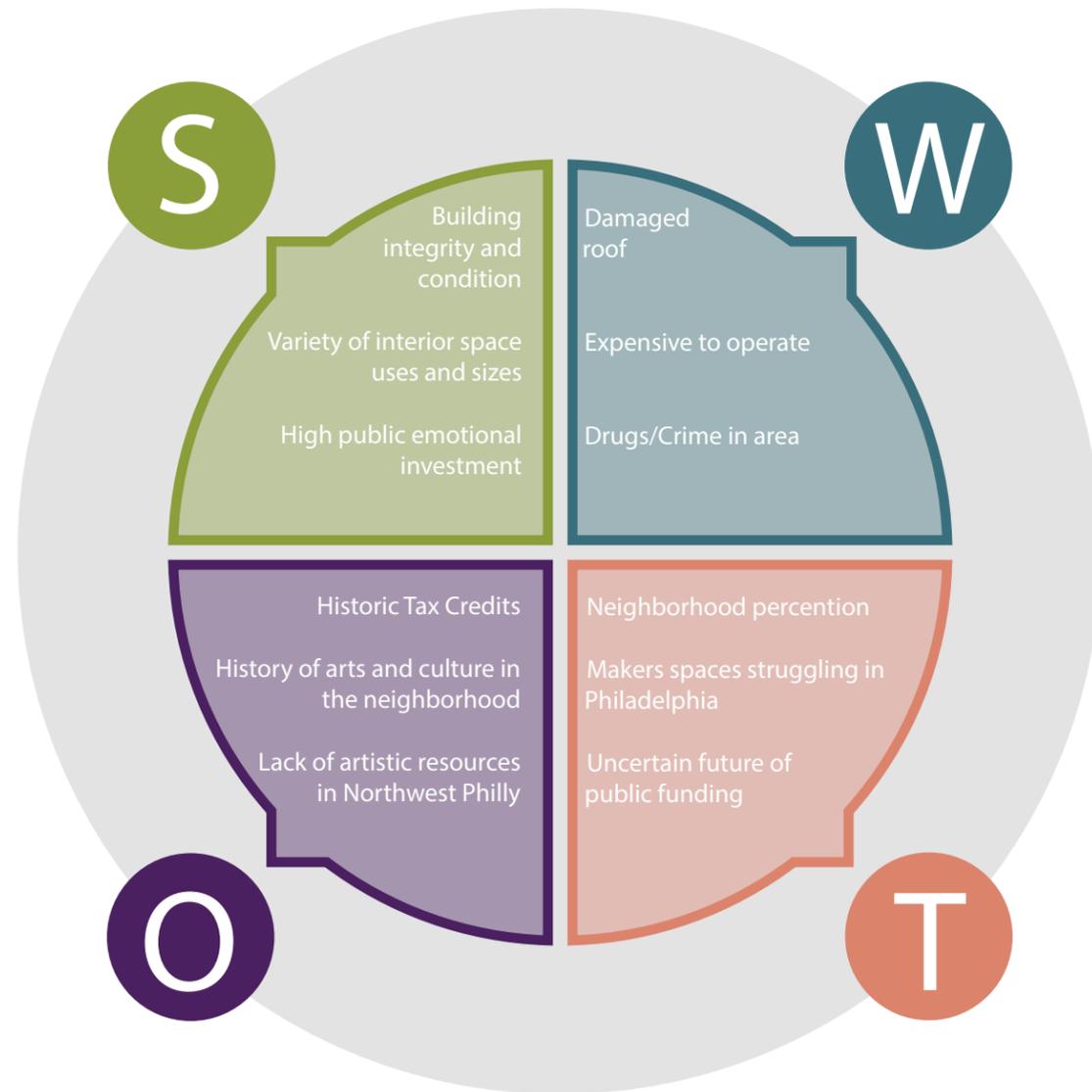


Figure 104. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats model for Fitzsimons. (Corchado, 2018).

### ANALYSIS

After the initial study of Fitzsimons School, we performed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis, shown in Figure 104. This analysis helped determine a proposal for the building by demonstrating what assets could be built upon, what programs are likely to succeed, and what difficulties

must be overcome. For instance, the local value placed on music history pointed to a use connected with the arts, while the building's variety of spaces allows for a number of uses. The building's massive size makes it a prime candidate for tactical preservation, as funding a total rehab is probably not feasible.

The SWOT analysis also revealed the opportunity

# INTRODUCTION TO PROPOSALS

of this site to use historic tax credits for potential interventions. These credits can only be used as long as the building is intended to be income-producing.

The following pages detail the proposals we developed if a high-capacity non-profit were to take on the project. The proposals respond to the building's history and value to use tactical preservation to meet community needs.

### COMMUNITY NEEDS ADDRESSED

-  Under-Served Youth
-  Lack of Local Jobs and Services
-  Low Supply of Community Spaces
-  Lack of Agency and Ownership



Figure 105. Main Facade on 26th Street. (Kothmann, 2018)

LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF PUBLIC SCHOOL YARD

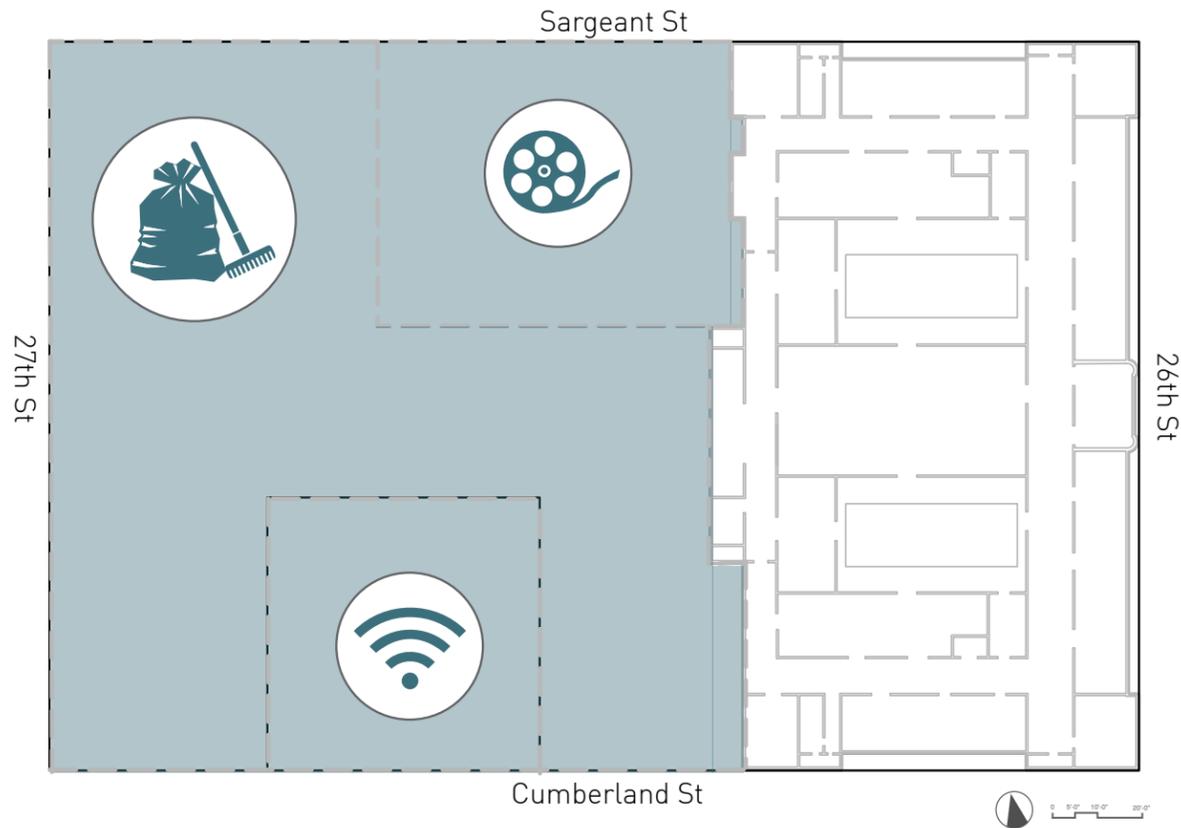


Figure 106. Phase One interventions focus on the parking lot and playground, with a community cleanup day, wifi zone, and regular film screenings with concession sales. (Kothmann, 2018).

SUMMARY

The goal of phase one is to recreate feelings of ownership over Fitzsimons in the neighborhood. Since the school closed, neighbors have been eager to see it reused. Our interventions start on the exterior to ease the school back into daily patterns of life and because it will require relatively little upfront financial investment.

This phase will start with a community cleanup day. With food and music, residents could take ownership of the space by pulling weeds, painting designs or games on the ground, and hanging string lights. Immediate neighbors will be explicitly invited, and people throughout the community should be invited as

well. School alumni should also be contacted through church and other networks. Such activities have been successful at The Bank on Lancaster, a disused bank building that People’s Emergency Center opened to the community.<sup>5</sup>

After the initial event, the space will stay activated on a daily basis by installing a Wi-Fi hotspot and outdoor furniture. This would provide an asset that immediate neighbors could use. Funding from the William Penn Foundation’s Creative Communities/Great Public Spaces program could cover startup costs, as well as materials for community cleanup day.

5. “History & Future,” LoLa38/People’s Emergency Center Community Development Corporation, <https://lola38west.com/history-future/>.  
 6. “Films on Fridges: 2011,” Scout, <http://www.scout-ltd.com/filmsonfridges/>.

To earn a small amount of income for operating expenses and to seed later investments, there will be special events like film or sports screenings on a regular basis. Concessions sold at these events will generate some income; Scout successfully used that model at Films on Fridges in the United Kingdom.<sup>6</sup> Partnering with Trinity AME across the street could help spread word of this event.

A non-profit or for-profit entity would need to take charge of the project to manage site work and leasing with the School District of Philadelphia. As buying the property is unlikely at this stage, cooperation with the school district will be paramount. While the District has favored sales of vacant schools to leases, they may be open to negotiation if someone was willing to take on basic maintenance and supervision. At the very least, permission from the District will be necessary to carry out the first phase.

KEY CASE STUDIES

-  The Bank on Lancaster  
Philadelphia, PA  
People’s Emergency Center CDC
-  Films on Fridges  
London  
Scout



Figure 107. The playground, parking lot, and west facade, seen from 27th Street. The wifi zone will occupy this space. (Kothmann, 2018.)

**FAST FACTS**

**Community Values Addressed:**  

**Community Needs Addressed:**  

**Stakeholders:**  
 Surrounding homeowners  
 Trinity AME church  
 School District of Philadelphia

**Potential Partners:**  
 Trinity AME  
 School District of Philadelphia  
 School alumni

**Funding Sources:**  
 William Penn Foundation Creative Communities/  
 Great Public Spaces programs

**Specific Interventions:**  
 Ensure security lights/electric is functional  
 Set-up wifi  
 Install outdoor furniture and string lights  
 Paint asphalt



Figure 108. Some of the vegetation that could be addressed during community cleanup day, looking south. (Kothmann, 2018.)

CREATIVE OUTLETS

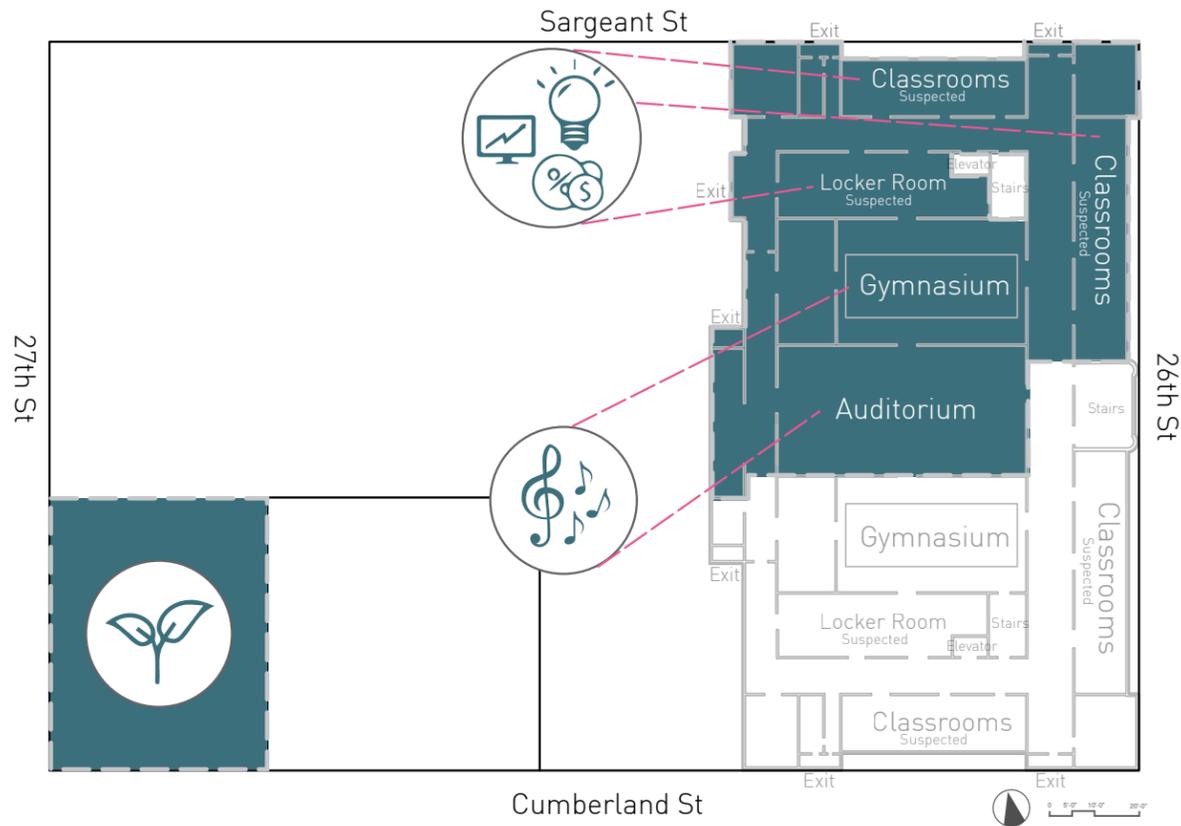


Figure 109. Phase Two interventions move into the building, cleaning ground floor auditorium, gym, and classrooms for small businesses and children’s art programs. Outdoor public space is improved with green space (Kothmann, 2018).

SUMMARY

The second phase begins to move into the building. The goal of this phase is to start generating income while providing resources for the community, responding to the building’s history and to community values of supporting youth by creating alternative education programs in the arts.

Using the gymnasium and auditorium on the first floor, the school will house after school programs or summer camps. A partnership with Temple University could provide instructors; Temple already has a Community Music Scholars Program, in which local children audition for low-cost lessons with Temple

professors.<sup>7</sup> In this version, Temple students in music or dance would teach basic enrichment classes as opposed to serious instrumental studies, providing exposure local kids may not get in neighborhood schools. An agreement would be reached with Temple in which students could receive course credits in exchange for teaching. In the evenings in winter, the auditorium will host indoor versions of the outdoor movie screenings introduced in phase one.

At the same time, classrooms on the northern corridor will be rented to small businesses working in arts, crafts, media, or similar fields. There is not enough traffic to support retail in this area, but businesses that

7. “2018-2019 Programs: Community Music Scholars Program,” Temple University: Boyer College of Music and Dance, <http://www.temple.edu/boyer/community/music-prep/programs.asp#CMSP>.  
 8. “About Bok,” BOK, <http://www.buildingbok.com/about/>; Carolyn Daughter, “Bindery on Blake: A Model of Inclusive Adaptive Reuse,” RiNo Art District, <https://rinoartdistrict.org/post/bindery-on-blake-a-model-of-inclusive-adaptive-reuse>.

focus on production would be suited to these spaces. Rents from these businesses will fund loans and ongoing maintenance at the site overall, a model used at BOK in Philadelphia and Bindery on Blake in Denver.<sup>8</sup> A program focused on maker businesses would also make the project eligible for a LISC Makers Space Loan. Individual businesses could access LISC Leasehold Improvement Loans.<sup>9</sup>

This phase would utilize whatever block of ground floor classrooms are in the best condition following an interior conditions assessment. We believe this is likely to be the first floor northwest. By utilizing good-condition areas, physical work would be mostly surface-level. Portable air conditioners and heaters will supplement HVAC. Access would be through the doors facing the parking lot, partly so that the new uses would flow out of the recently-activated outdoor space, and partly because these will be the easiest to make accessible.

Simultaneously, the southwest corner of the parking lot will be turned into a grassy area. There are no green spaces in the immediate vicinity, and some lawn would be an inviting asset for surrounding homeowners. The City of Philadelphia’s water department has grants available for greenspace conversion through Stormwater Management Incentives Program, which offers as much as \$100,000 per acre converted to pervious surface.<sup>10</sup>

KEY CASE STUDIES

-  Milder Office  
Philadelphia, PA  
BOK/Scout
-  Community Music Scholars Program  
Philadelphia, PA  
Temple University
-  Bindery on Blake  
Denver, CO  
RiNo Arts District

9. “Loans for Businesses,” LISC, <http://www.lisc.org/our-model/lending/loan-products/loans-business/>.  
 10. “Stormwater Grants,” City of Philadelphia Water Department, <https://www.phila.gov/water/wu/stormwater/Pages/Grants.aspx>.

**FAST FACTS**

**Community Values Addressed:** 

**Community Needs Addressed:**  

**Stakeholders:**  
Families with children  
Arts businesses throughout Philadelphia

**Potential Partners:**  
Temple University  
School District of Philadelphia

**Funding Sources:**  
LISC Makers Space Loan  
LISC Leasehold Improvement Loans  
Philadelphia Stormwater Management Incentive Program

**Specific Interventions:**  
Clean gym, auditorium, and classrooms  
Add ADA entrance  
Ensure functional electrical  
Add portable A/C units and heaters



Figure 110. The building’s auditorium will host arts programming for local children. (Philadelphia Department of Records.)

EXPANSION AND MAKERS ASSOCIATIONS

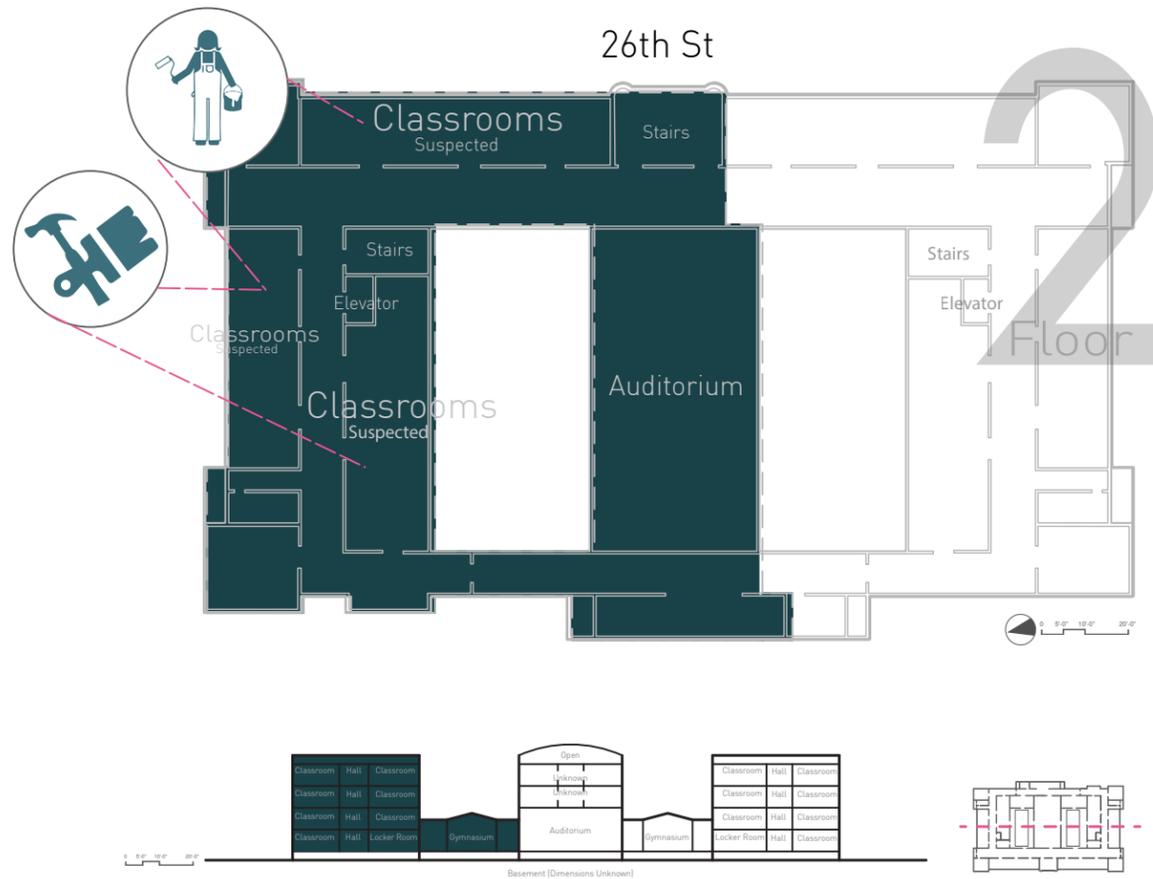


Figure 111. Phase Three places makers spaces and more small businesses into the upper floors in one half of the building. The small businesses offer apprenticeships for youth, and the makers spaces help locals start small businesses. Kothmann, 2018.

SUMMARY

In phase three, use of the space would move into the floors above the areas used in phase two. The goal of this phase is to utilize income-generating spaces in the building as a catalyst for job creation and financial opportunity within the neighborhood.

In addition to more small businesses of the type identified in phase two, phase three would include generalized maker's spaces inspired by NextFab, one of the most successful membership-based makers' spaces

in Philadelphia. The business has several membership programs at a range of costs, from low-priced individual memberships to more expensive memberships for businesses. The memberships grant access to a variety of equipment for sewing, carpentry, digital work, and more. Classes build expertise among members and grow the membership base. NextFab even supports business creation among its members, connects small businesses with investors, and has a forum for posting commissioned work opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

11. "Learn: Dare to Make," NextFab, <https://nextfab.com/learn/>.  
 12. Based on a basic google maps search.  
 13. "The Building Hero Project" Tiny WPA, <http://www.tinywpa.org/the-building-hero-project/>.  
 14. "Loans for Businesses."

Either partnering with NextFab or creating a similar model would be a great opportunity in Strawberry Mansion. There are no similar makers' spaces in Northwest Philly, so the business could draw from across the area, potentially allowing higher-income members to cross-subsidize lower-income members.<sup>12</sup> A low-priced membership will allow people in the community with crafting skills, like sewing, access to high-quality equipment without buying their own, and the NextFab model will connect them with opportunities to sell products or even start a business.

This phase would also provide opportunities for young people. A youth membership would give local teens access to classes, which would be an enriching experience and help them learn a potentially marketable skill. This phase will also offer discounted rent to small businesses if they offer apprentice programs to local kids. An Etsy account will be set up to help youth sell the work they create. This model is used successfully by Tiny WPA in West Philadelphia, which teaches kids carpentry.<sup>13</sup>

At this stage, basic repairs would still be prioritized, and interventions will again be funded by a LISC Makers Space Loan. If needed, the loan could cover some roof repair; as net operating income increases with increased tenancy, supportable loans will increase.<sup>14</sup> To avoid dealing with code concerns or potential issues in the southern block of the building, the interior will be coded with the city as separately-regulated zones.

KEY CASE STUDIES

-  NextFab  
Philadelphia, PA and  
Wilmington, DE
-  The Building Heros Project  
Philadelphia, PA  
Tiny WPA

**FAST FACTS**

**Community Values Addressed:** 

**Community Needs Addressed:**  

**Stakeholders:**  
 Local makers  
 Residents looking to start businesses  
 Local youth

**Potential Partners:**  
 NextFab  
 Small business tenants

**Funding Sources:**  
 LISC Makers Space Loan

**Specific Interventions:**  
 Ensure elevator is functional  
 Continue cleaning spaces on upper floors  
 Stopgap repairs to HVAC and roof



Figure 112. Classroom spaces, seen in use for a typing class in one of the identical schools, will accommodate small businesses and makers spaces. (Philadelphia Department of Records.)

SUPPORTING YOUTH THROUGH ONSITE HOUSING

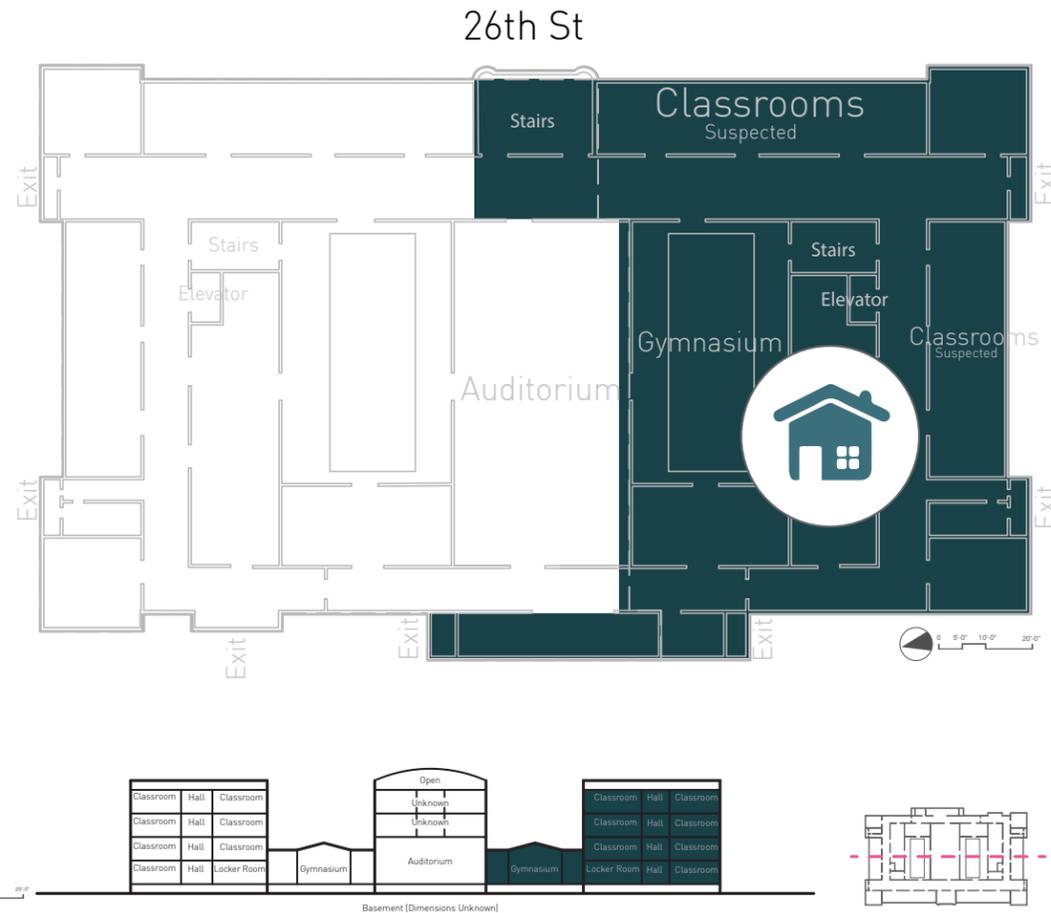


Figure 113. Phase Four places addresses the second half of the building, creating some units of housing for youth coming out of foster care. Some units will likely be market rate to cross-subsidize the youth units. Kothmann, 2018.

SUMMARY

The last phase takes on the final half of the building and any major outstanding repairs, including the roof and HVAC. It will focus on providing stability for youth and helping young people stay in the neighborhood.

Housing is frequently a solution for disused schools, but we have endeavored to create a proposal that does not rely on the major construction required by housing projects to reduce costs and to serve other neighborhood needs. However, a housing project in

twenty years could bring in funding for major repairs through use of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and Historic Tax Credit.

New housing could meet an important need by serving youth aging out of foster care. Such a proposal has been floated for Fitzsimons School before and is a model used successfully by the Better Housing Coalition in Virginia. The Possibilities Project combines housing with counseling and services.<sup>15</sup> At Fitzsimons, young residents could take advantage of training and

15. "The Possibilities Project," Better Housing Coalition, <https://www.betterhousingcoalition.org/what-were-doing/the-possibilities-project/>.  
 16. "The Possibilities Project Receives Major Funding from Brookfield Foundation," Children's Home Society of Virginia, <https://chsva.org/thanks-to-donors/possibilities-project-receives-major-funding-brookfield-foundation/>.

PHASE 4: TWENTY YEARS

arts programs already designed for the northern half. The remaining gymnasium could either be demolished or a communal recreation space for young residents.

Having such a facility in the community would help youth who have been living elsewhere to return and prevent others from having to leave if they want to stay. This may be particularly important if there are living relatives in the neighborhood who were simply unable to offer care. Such a facility could provide some familial stability and continuity.

Better Housing Coalition relies on private donations to fund their housing and other programs.<sup>16</sup> To avoid such reliance, some of the units will need to be for higher income tiers to cross-subsidize the youth housing. The tiers could be 60% to 80% Area Median Income, or even market rate, which the area might be able to support in 20 years.

Logistically, the four stories in the southern portion can fit 50 700-square foot apartments. Outside, the parking lot can accommodate 120 spaces, even leaving the southern portion of the lot as a Wi-Fi hotspot and green space, more than enough to accommodate building workers and residents with cars. However, the need for parking and the desire to protect public spaces precludes selling any land for additional cash unless absolutely necessary.

KEY CASE STUDIES



**FAST FACTS**

**Community Values Addressed:**

**Community Needs Addressed:**

**Stakeholders:**  
 Youth facing homelessness  
 Local families  
 Small business tenants

**Potential Partners:**  
 Better Housing Coalition

**Funding Sources:**  
 Low Income Housing Tax Credit  
 Historic Tax Credit  
 Cross-subsidizing from higher income tenants

**Specific Interventions:**  
 Full rehabilitation of southern block  
 Full repair to roof  
 Full repair to HVAC



Figure 114. Windows indicate repeating floorplan of well-lit classrooms that should be amenable to residential conversion. (Kothmann, 2018).

- Better Housing Coalition. "The Possibilities Project." Accessed October 21, 2018. <https://www.betterhousingcoalition.org/what-were-doing/the-possibilities-project/>.
- BOK. "About BOK." Accessed October 15, 2018. <http://www.buildingbok.com/about/>.
- Children's Home Society of Virginia. "The Possibilities Project Receives Major Funding from Brookfield Foundation." Accessed November 10, 2018. <https://chsva.org/thanks-to-donors/possibilities-project-receives-major-funding-brookfield-foundation/>.
- City of Philadelphia Water Department. "Stormwater Grants." Accessed November 7, 2018. <https://www.phila.gov/water/wu/stormwater/Pages/Grants.aspx>.
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- Scout. "Films on Fridges: 2011." Accessed October 15, 2018. <http://www.scout-ltd.com/filmsonfridges/>
- Snyder, Susan. "High school reworked as boys-only." New York Times, August 14, 2005. <http://www.singlesexschools.org/philadelphia.html>.
- Temple University: Boyer College of Music and Dance. "2018-2019 Programs: Community Music Scholars Program." Accessed November 6, 2018. <http://www.temple.edu/boyer/community/music-prep/programs.asp#CMSP>.
- Tiny WPA. "The Building Hero Project." Accessed October 15, 2018. <http://www.tinywpa.org/the-building-hero-project/>.



Figure 115. Date stone at main entrance. (Kothmann, 2018)



**THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR**

Figure 116: 1500 N 33rd Street, Streetscape. (Nájera, 2018)



Figure 117. Previous place-making initiatives around the Coltrane House focused on the artistic legacy of John Coltrane through musical performances and historical markers (WHYY).

**FAST FACTS**

**Zoning:** RM-1 (residential mixed-use)  
**Total Site Area (sq.ft.):** 29,000  
**Number of Buildings:** 4  
**Owners:** 1501 N 33rd LLC, Aminta Gadson, Norman Gadson, Phillip Griffin  
**Predicted Future Zoning:** RM-1  
**Current Use(s):** Vacant/demolished  
**Historic Uses(s):** Private homes, garage, and warehouse

**INTRODUCTION**

The Coltrane Corridor attempts to build upon the legacy of jazz musician John Coltrane by illuminating the cultural legacies of Coltrane’s Strawberry Mansion while simultaneously addressing the needs of its current

residents. As an enduring figure in the international jazz movement, John Coltrane and his artistic connection to Philadelphia are underutilized cultural assets in the movement to reinvigorate Strawberry Mansion through the arts.

This plan seeks to use the opportune location of the Coltrane House at the southern entrance to Strawberry Mansion as both a gateway to the neighborhood and a reintroduction of the cultural legacy of the community to Greater Philadelphia. Once the legacy of Coltrane is reaffirmed, the private third-floor apartment of the Coltrane House and 1500-block garage can be rented. Ultimately, it is the goal of this plan to have permanent reuse and working income for the Coltrane House and 1500-block garage as a community-based music and arts organization in Coltrane’s legacy. By reintroducing the legacy of John Coltrane, the Coltrane Corridor will further instill place and ownership values to guide the changes quickly occurring within the community.

**OVERALL SITE DESCRIPTION**

Located within the 1500 block of N. 33rd Street, the site of the Coltrane Corridor is composed of five lots: 1511, the historically designated John Coltrane House and its adjacent rowhouses 1509 and 1513; 1501, an 8,000 square foot vacant lot; and 1521-1527, a two-story commercial garage.



Figure 118. Aerial imagery of the proposed sites (Atlas Philly.gov, edited by Nájera, 2018).

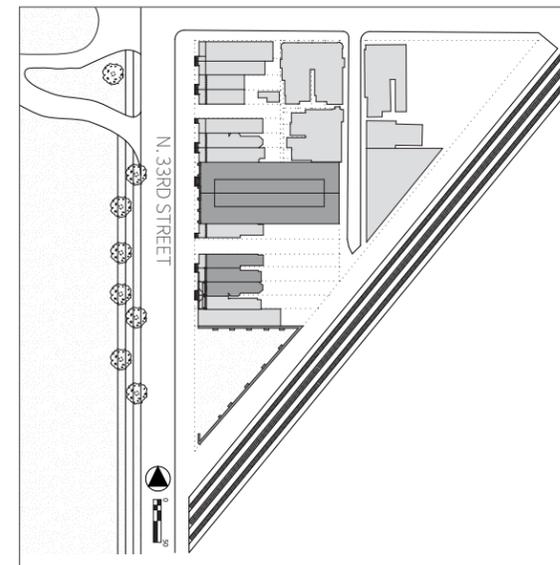


Figure 119. Site Plan. (Nájera, 2018).

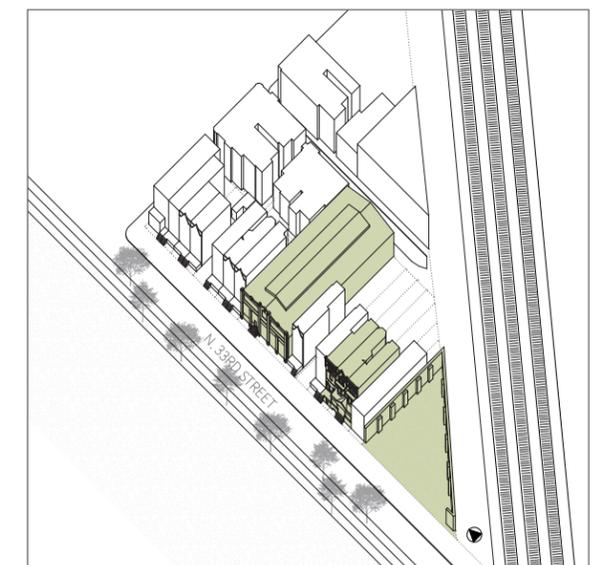


Figure 120. Site Axonometric. (Nájera, 2018).

## INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS

**1509-1513 N 33RD STREET**

The John Coltrane House and its two adjacent rowhouses were constructed as part of a six-dwelling rowhouse complex, representative of detailed middle-class row houses in Philadelphia in the 20th century (fig. 6). The buildings feature above-ground basements and stand three-stories tall, covered by a flat roof. The complex features two alternating façade variations and is indicative of a Victorian Eclectic rowhouse style with Colonial Revival influences. On the Coltrane House, the leading feature is a parapet wall with a curvilinear gable and tiling, concealing the roof. On no. 1509 and 1513, the third stories feature alternating brick patterns and arched windows.



Figure 121. 1509-1513 N 33rd Street. (Nájera, 2018)

**1521 N 33RD STREET**

1521 N. 33rd Street is a two-story multi-bay brick commercial building with stone and corbeled brick details (fig. 7). The flat roof with central clerestory is hidden behind a detailed brick parapet.



Figure 122. 1521 N 33rd Street. (Nájera, 2018)

**1501 N 33RD STREET**

1501 N. 33rd Street is an 8,000 square foot vacant lot, formerly the site of an early twentieth century commercial building (fig. 8). The structure was partially demolished in 2017 although its south and east walls remain, blocking the view of the adjacent Amtrak railroad tracks.<sup>1</sup>

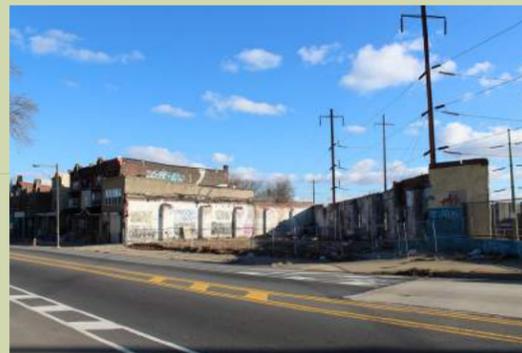


Figure 123. Partially demolished warehouse at 1501 N 33rd Street, now an empty lot. (Back, 2018)



Figure 124. Facade of the John Coltrane House (left, 1511) and 1509 N 33rd Street (right). Note the Coltrane photos taped to the windows of the house (Back, 2018).

**CONDITION**

The John Coltrane House and its two adjacent rowhouses (1513 and 1509) are currently vacant. The interior of 1513 is known to be in poor condition from a structurally damaging fire in 2006. While the envelope is largely intact, damages to the façade have caused original materials to be removed and replaced with vinyl and cinderblocks. It is likely the interior is beyond livable repair.

The owners of the Coltrane House and its southern neighbor (1509) initiated repairs in 2004 from years of deferred maintenance on both properties. The extent of the repairs is unknown but focused on emergency repairs to the plumbing and exterior.

A 2013 Preservation Alliance report compiled the existing maintenance and renovation information on the house from tenants, secondary sources, and 2000 HABS documentation.<sup>2</sup> The report summarized that

the exterior of 1511 and 1509 are in good condition, although plywood is used as a cover in several window frames. The interior of the buildings was not changed greatly with the exception of ceiling sections removed for an emergency plumbing intervention. Many original features of the house remain, such as hardware and built-ins. Some flooring and wallpaper have been removed to assess the structural integrity of the house.

The garage is currently for rent and could not be accessed. The exterior of the property appears to be in good condition and, because the garage is for rent, it can be assumed the interior is in working condition.

## THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR

### HISTORY

The 1500 block of N. 33rd Street south of Oxford Street developed as one of the last full block parcels of Strawberry Mansion in the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> Due to their immediate proximity to the breweries and industrial sites of Brewerytown, these plots were some of the last to be developed as truly speculative housing. In 1903, the row of six three-story buildings were completed, including parcels 1509-1513. The immediate post-construction years yielded few residents and the block teetered between industrial and residential. The far southern lot was developed in 1913 as an auto body shop, and the garage at 1521-1527 was constructed in 1929.<sup>4</sup> Because of its close proximity to the train line, coal yards, and breweries, the site was a mix of working class residential single-family homes and mechanic shops.

It was in the 1950s, following the decline of the nearby breweries and rise of African Americans moving into middle-class housing that the block gained its significance from its notable owner-legendary jazz saxophonist John Coltrane. Coltrane himself had migrated to Philadelphia with family and friends from North Carolina in 1943. His first home in Philadelphia was on N. 12th Street before he purchased 1511 N. 33rd Street in 1952 at the age of 26 with assistance from the G.I. Bill and wages earned as a factory worker. Coltrane would live in the house from 1952-1958 with his family and later wife, Juanita Austin Coltrane. It was during these years that Coltrane would develop his signature free-form musical style, join the Miles Davis band, and record his first solo album, *Coltrane*.

Throughout his career Coltrane used 1511 N. 33rd Street as a residence, alternating with time spent in New York. In the spring of 1957, Coltrane used the second-floor rear bedroom as a place of refuge as he struggled to overcome his heroin addiction. The house was Coltrane's longest permanent residence and was known by locals as "Trane's House." After leaving Philadelphia in 1958, Coltrane's mother lived in the house until her death in 1977. From 1977 until 2004, the house remained in family ownership, functioning to anchor Coltrane's legacy to the city of Philadelphia and exist much as it did when he lived there.

The crack cocaine epidemic and disinvestment in Strawberry Mansion in the 1980s-90s had a profound effect on many of the residents and built fabric of the



Figure 125. 1895 Philadelphia Atlas (Philageohistory.com)

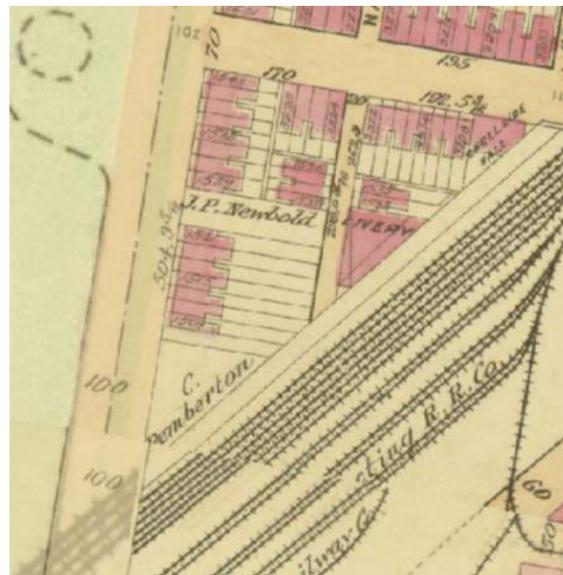


Figure 126. 1910 Philadelphia Atlas (Philageohistory.com)

## SITE INTRODUCTION



Figure 127. John Coltrane (HABS, 2000)

community. Years of deferred maintenance and neglect of the buildings on the 1500 block of N 33rd, as well as elsewhere in the community, created issues for future owners and tenants. 1509 and the 1511 Coltrane House were purchased by the Gadson family, who strived to repair the buildings and their interiors, as well as operate a Coltrane nonprofit from the house. This effort culminated in a 2013 community-led report by the Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia that explored alternate reuses for the house. Since the report, none of recommendations have been explored, and both the Coltrane House and its adjacent rowhouse 1509 sit vacant.

No. 1513, the rowhouse to the north of the Coltrane House, suffered from a 2006 fire and today sits without many of its original architectural details. The garage to the north has undergone six owners in the last 10 years alone, and currently is for rent, while the lot at the corner was only recently demolished by a developer in 2017. Despite these challenges, the presence of the Coltrane House and opportunities of the surrounding communities and park provide endless potential. The block sits between two National Register Historic Districts—Brewerytown and Diamond Street—and the Coltrane House itself is a recognized National Historic Landmark (1999) and is on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (1985).<sup>5</sup>



Figure 128. The facade of the Coltrane House in 2000 (HABS, 2000)



Figure 129. The interior of the Coltrane House in 2000 (HABS, 2000)

3. HABS, "The John Coltrane House."

4. City of Philadelphia Municipal Archives, Deed Book C.A.B. Number 104, Pg. 84

5. National Register of Historic Places, "The John Coltrane House."

## THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR

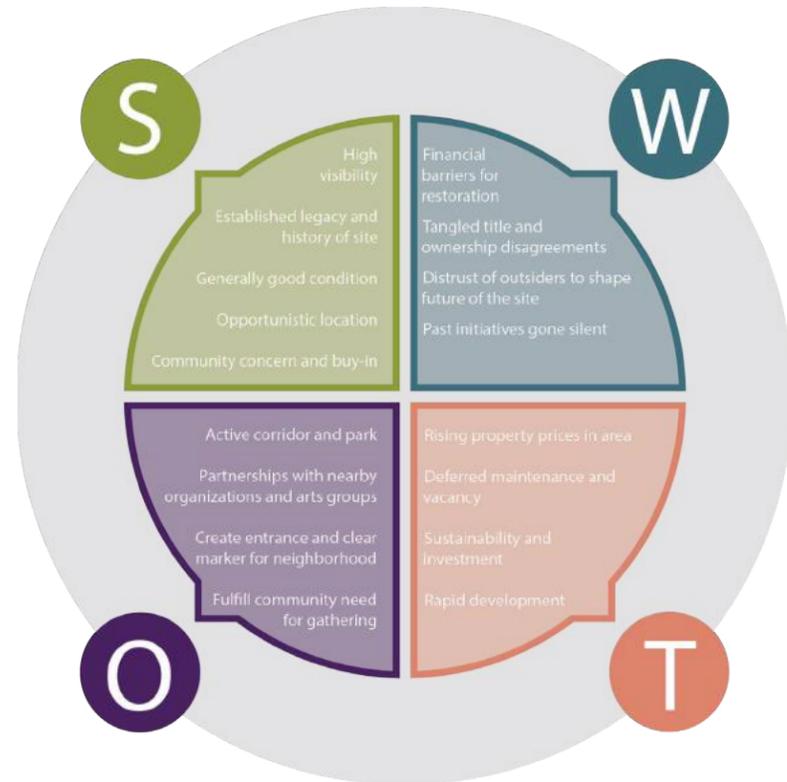


Figure 130. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis. (Back & Corchado, 2018).

### ANALYSIS

The site exemplifies many of the selection criteria for this project—the Coltrane House is located along a significant transportation route, it is visible and known by the community and those passing through, and it is in reasonably good condition. The legacy of John Coltrane ensures this house will continue to be considered an important site in the community; our interventions will enhance this significance to Philadelphia at large. The

garage and the vacant lot are also highly visible sites with connections to history through their proximity to the Coltrane house, and the garage offers opportunities because of its size.

After the initial study of the Coltrane Corridor, we performed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis, shown in Figure 130. This analysis helped determine proposals for the site, detailed in the following pages.

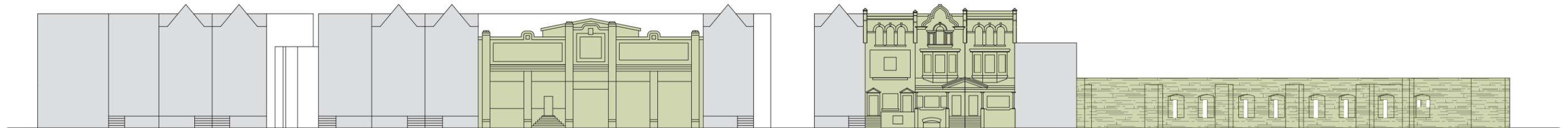


Figure 131. Elevation of site. (Nájera, 2018.)

## PHASE 1: TWO MONTHS

### SUMMARY

The first phase establishes entry and legacy. As the far southern entrance to Strawberry Mansion, nothing currently welcomes people crossing the 33rd Street bridge north from Brewerytown into the neighborhood. Using the currently empty lot at 1501 N. 33rd Street, this first phase promotes a sense of place through visibility, vibrancy, and the memory of John Coltrane, one of Strawberry Mansion’s most significant residents. The lot will be used as a temporary staging area to reintroduce the Coltrane legacy, as well as culture in Strawberry Mansion as a whole, to the Greater Philadelphia community.

Partnerships with local placemaking organizations such as Mural Arts Philadelphia and the Fairmount Park Conservancy will center around creating and hosting temporary art to create a site visually bright, eye-catching and distinctively welcoming to passersby of Strawberry Mansion.<sup>6</sup> A stage constructed using found materials from throughout Strawberry Mansion will host pop-up jazz and R&B concerts, drawing crowds to the site and charging a small entry fee.<sup>7</sup> In the model of the John Coltrane Home in Dix Hills, a sign will ask Philadelphia residents “What Does Coltrane Mean to You?” through an interactive activity where answers can be written on the walls of the demolished mechanic shop.<sup>8</sup> These answers will inform later phases of the project.

Cultural themed art is used to anticipate entry to the neighborhood and affirm a sense of arrival when crossing the 33rd Street bridge. John Coltrane is the springboard icon for this sense of arrival, but his story will also act as ambassador for introducing Strawberry Mansion’s long cultural legacy of artists and performers, such as painter Henry O. Tanner and contemporary rapper Meek Mills. While protecting and incorporating

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



### Stakeholders:

- Local community
- Art enthusiasts
- Jazz and Coltrane fans

### Potential Partners:

- Fairmount Park Conservancy
- The John Coltrane Home in Dix Hills
- Dell Music Center<sup>9</sup>
- WRTI

### Funding Sources:

- PHS LandCare and “Adopt-A-Lot”<sup>10</sup>
- Mural Arts Philadelphia
- ArtPlace

### Specific Interventions:

- Restore lot
- Promote and install temporary art exhibit
- Install soundscape
- Implement “Coltrane Is” initiative
- Install stoop and wayfinding sign
- Create stage for performances using found materials

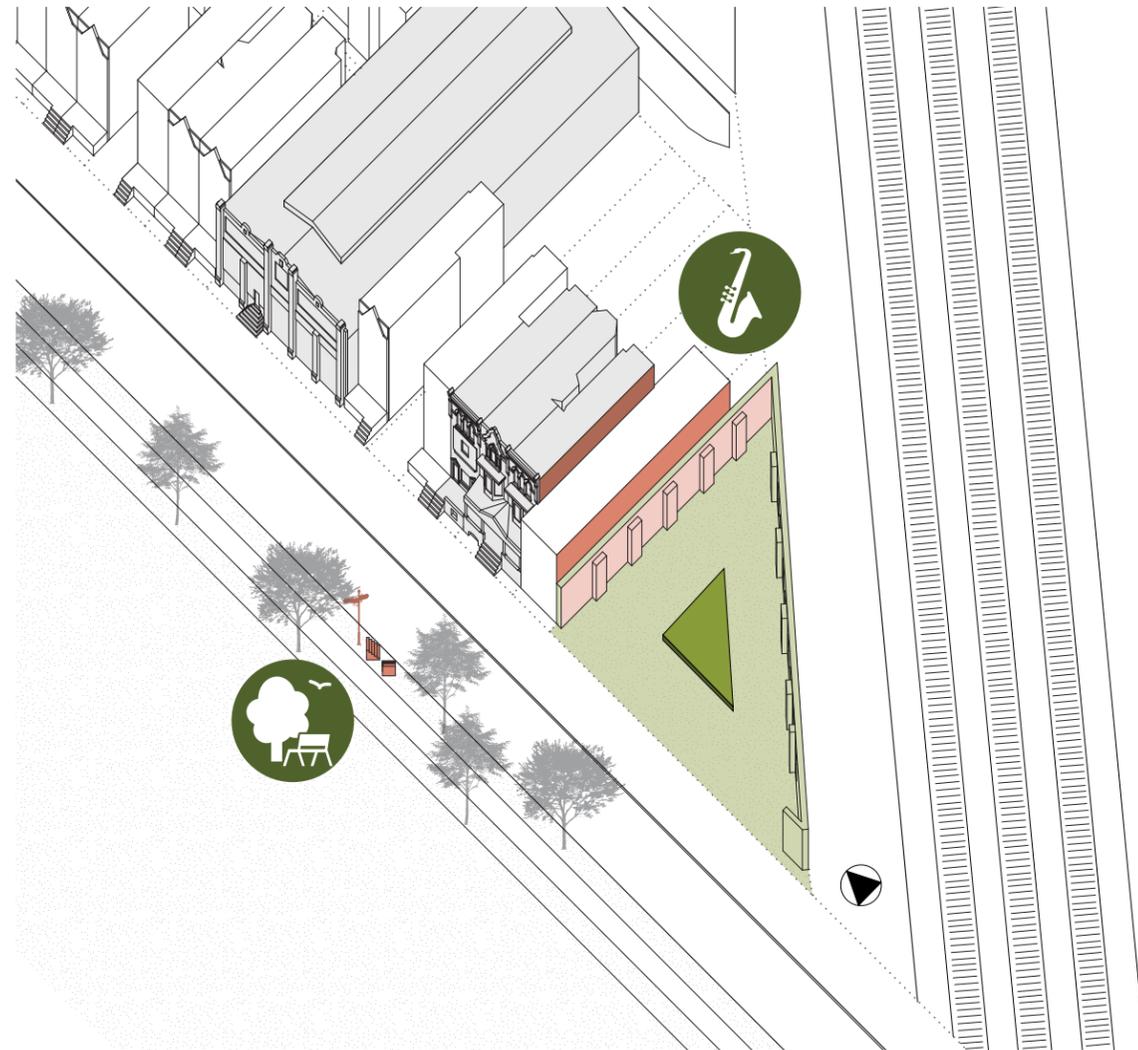


Figure 132. Proposed interventions at phase 1 focus on the vacant lot at 1501 N. 33rd Street and focus on local connections to Coltrane and a welcome to the neighborhood. A public resting place and wayfinding sign will be installed across 33rd Street. (Nájera, 2018)

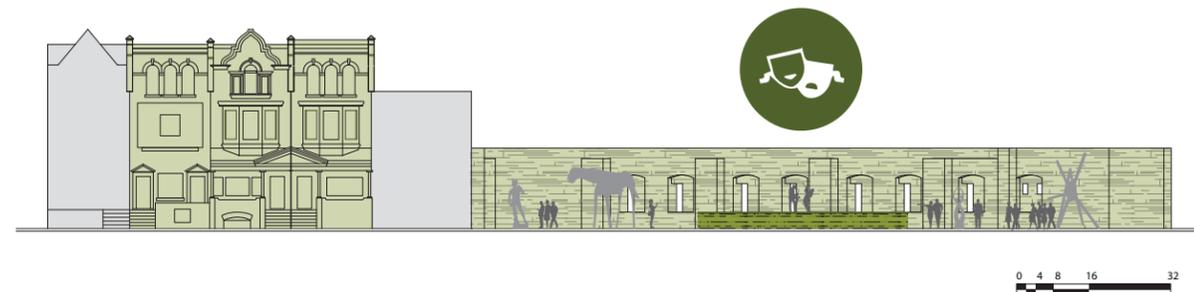


Figure 133. Elevation of site, showing the vacant lot in use with performance space, mural, and acoustic landscape. (Nájera, 2018)

the Coltrane House is the final goal of the project, this phase seeks to reintroduce the legacy of Coltrane and activate partnerships and community interest. An interactive soundscape will be installed in the lot to honor the musical legacy of Coltrane and other artists.<sup>12</sup> The soundscape is a way to actualize the lot as a space of gathering and activity, while also separating the lot from Fairmount Park across the street. Placing “stoops” for resting and a wayfinding sign across the street from the Coltrane House allows residents to begin to reclaim the 1500 block of N. 33rd as a cultural corridor and entry centered around Coltrane as a cultural icon to the neighborhood.

KEY CASE STUDIES

-  Acoustic Arts  
United Kingdom  
Soundscape Manufacturer
-  Fifth Ward Jam  
Houston, TX  
Dan Havel and Dean Ruck
-  Mural Arts<sup>11</sup>  
Philadelphia, PA



Figure 134. PHMC marker outside the Coltrane House (SpiritNews)



Figure 135. Current mural at the southern tip of Strawberry Mansion is not readily visible to passing vehicles. (Back, 2018)



Figure 136. The extant wall at 1501 N. 33rd Street would be able to host a more visible mural telling drivers that they are entering Strawberry Mansion. (Back, 2018)

11. Mural Arts Philadelphia, “What We Do”.  
12. Acoustic Arts, “Our Process”.

## THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR

### SUMMARY

The second phase centers on access and growth. After reactivating the 1500 block of N. 33rd as the Coltrane Corridor, efforts will shift to fund and create a sustainable mission for the Coltrane House. Using the thoughts gathered from Phase 1 activities and conversations, this phase seeks to activate revenue-generating cultural activities which will support and sustain communities in Strawberry Mansion. To engage residents and stakeholders, the doors of the Coltrane House and nearby garage at 1521-1527 N. 33rd, both remainders of the past mixed industrial and residential history of the area, will be re-opened as rental spaces. The garage will primarily be used for large event rentals to raise income for Phase 3, as well as hosting cultural walking tours throughout the neighborhood to sites of cultural interest, both historic and contemporary. The tour guides will be locals who wish to share their knowledge of the area, providing both jobs and a unique perspective to how the culture of the community will continue to be shaped.<sup>13</sup> These two forms of income, along with funds from Phase 1 and grants, will assist in restoring the Coltrane House and 1509 for livable use.

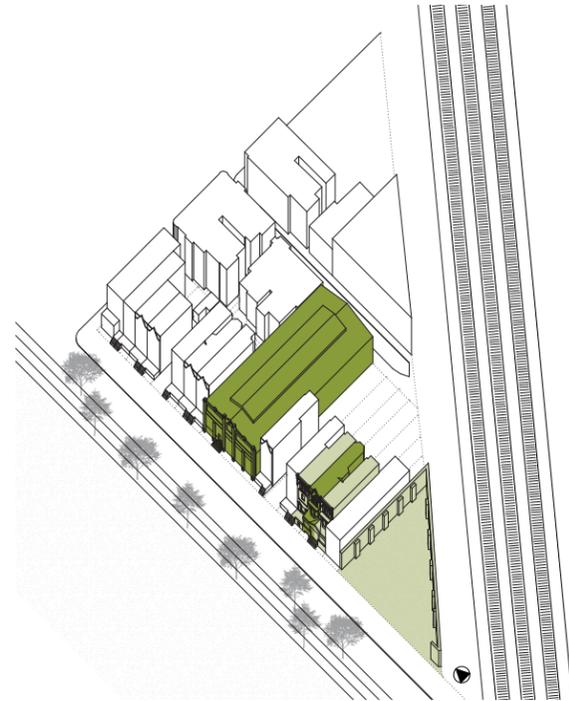


Figure 137. Phase 2 focuses on the Coltrane House and the garage at 1521 N 33rd Street, beginning to earn some income for the project. (Nájera, 2018.)

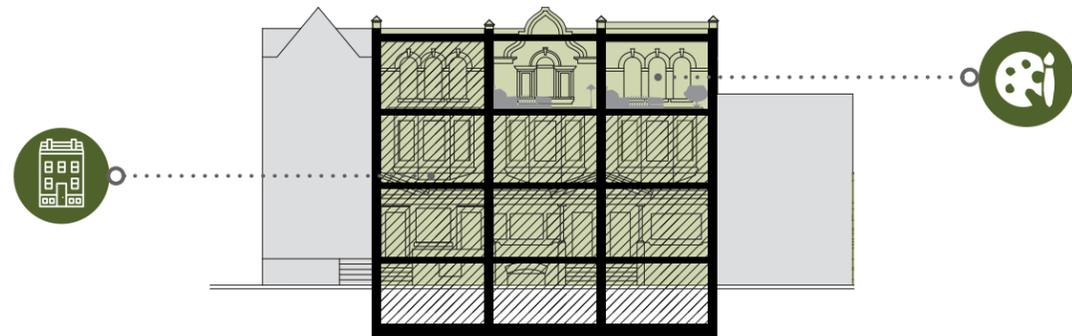


Figure 138. The Coltrane House plays home to a caretaker and AirBnB at this phase. (Nájera, 2018)

## PHASE 2: TWO YEARS

The second and third floors of the Coltrane House will be temporarily rented as AirBnB spaces to both raise outside awareness and much needed funds. This revenue can support the documentation of the three rowhouses and façade restoration of 1513. To ensure the house is well-cared for, there will also be a caretaker to oversee the Coltrane House as the cultural corridor strengthens. Ideally this caretaker would also function as an artist-in-residence, using such existing programs as ArtistYear through Americorps for the first several years.<sup>14</sup> These artists will shape the direction of the growing cultural corridor to the needs of Strawberry Mansion, be it artistic or programmatic.

### KEY CASE STUDIES



Harlem Heritage Tours  
New York



ArtistYear  
AmeriCorps

### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



Stakeholders:

Local community  
Artists  
Tourists

Potential Partners:

Fairmount Park Conservancy  
ArtistYear through AmeriCorps  
Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia

Funding Sources:

African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund<sup>15</sup>  
Rental Income

Specific Interventions:

Complete historic structure report for Coltrane House  
Complete local historic district nomination  
Restore the facade of 1513 N 33rd Street to its original appearance  
Rehabilitate the interior of the Coltrane House to create a livable space

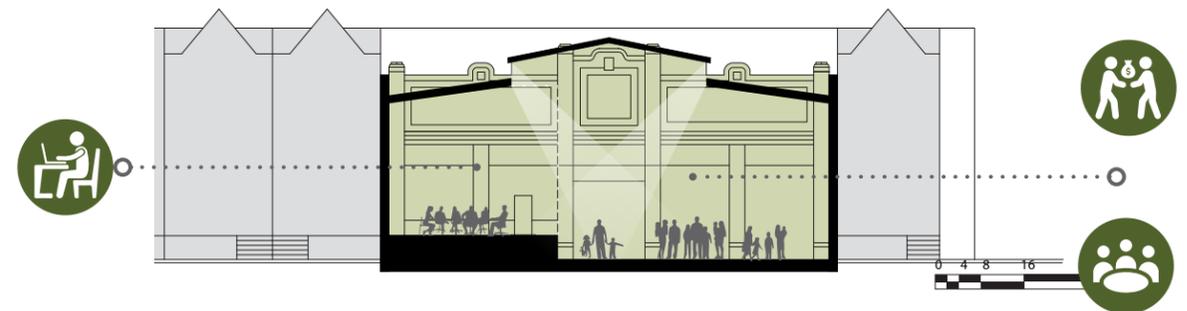


Figure 139. The garage can be rented out for events. (Nájera, 2018)

## THE COLTRANE CORRIDOR

### SUMMARY

The final Phase 3 honors the needs of the community and the lesser-known aspects of Coltrane’s life to create a multi-program center for community empowerment. Phase 3 focuses on shifting the tactical programs to raise funds into permanent community programs located in the garage and three rowhouses. The garage will be renovated to be the primary programmatic hub of the cultural corridor, featuring recording spaces, music programming, and rental spaces all honoring the legacy of John Coltrane.<sup>16</sup>

The House and its adjacent rowhouses will be used in a different manner to memorialize Coltrane—as a meeting and counseling space for people recovering from drug abuse. While the garage will be a space of activity and music, the house will be a quieter, more contemplative space. Programs between the two sites will link music as a form of rehabilitation and use John Coltrane’s own recovery from heroin through music as a guide for those on their own recovery paths.<sup>17</sup> The upper floors for the Coltrane house will be leased and used as continuing artist-in-residence programming to shape the direction of the organization as it grows.

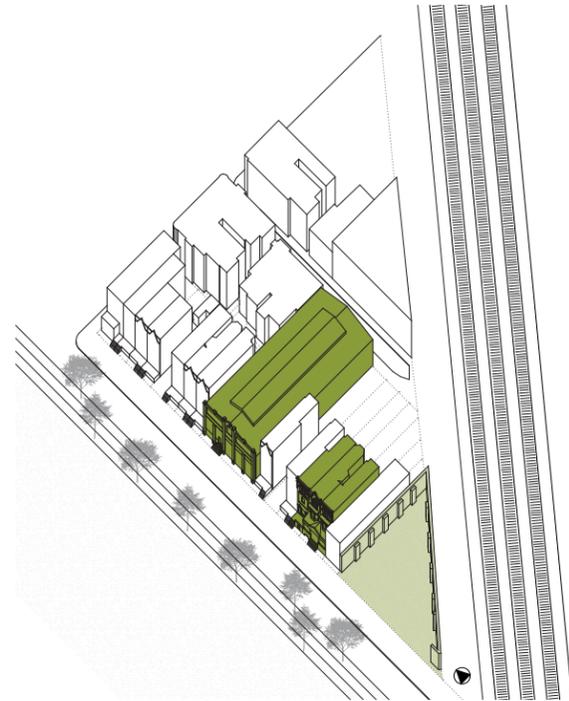


Figure 140. Phase 3 moves into all buildings in the 1509-1513 block, finally interpreting the space to the neighborhood’s memory of John Coltrane. (Nájera, 2018)



Figure 141. ADA accessibility and public space in the Coltrane House during Phase 3. (Nájera, 2018)

16. Harlem Jazz Boxx, “About Harlem Jazz Boxx.”  
17. Recovery Unplugged, “National Programming.”

## PHASE 3: TWENTY YEARS



Figure 142. The Coltrane Corridor (Back, 2018).

### KEY CASE STUDIES



### FAST FACTS

Community Values Addressed:



Community Needs Addressed:



### Stakeholders:

Local community  
Artists  
Local Businesses

### Potential Partners:

The Village of Arts and Humanities  
All That Philly Jazz<sup>19</sup>

### Funding Sources:

Fund II Foundation<sup>18</sup>  
William Penn Foundation Arts and Culture Program

### Specific Interventions:

ADA accessible entrance for 1513 N 33rd Street  
Elevator in 1513 N 33rd Street to access Coltrane House  
Renovate garage to be multi-room community music venue and recording space

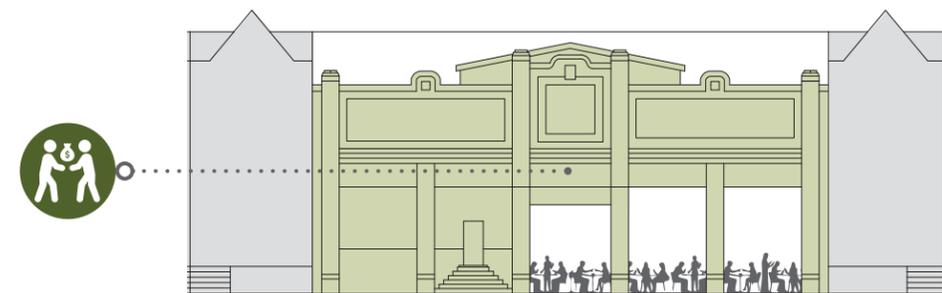


Figure 143. The former garage will provide employment for local community members. (Nájera, 2018)

18. Fund II Foundation, “What We Fund”.  
19. All That Philly Jazz, “About Us”.

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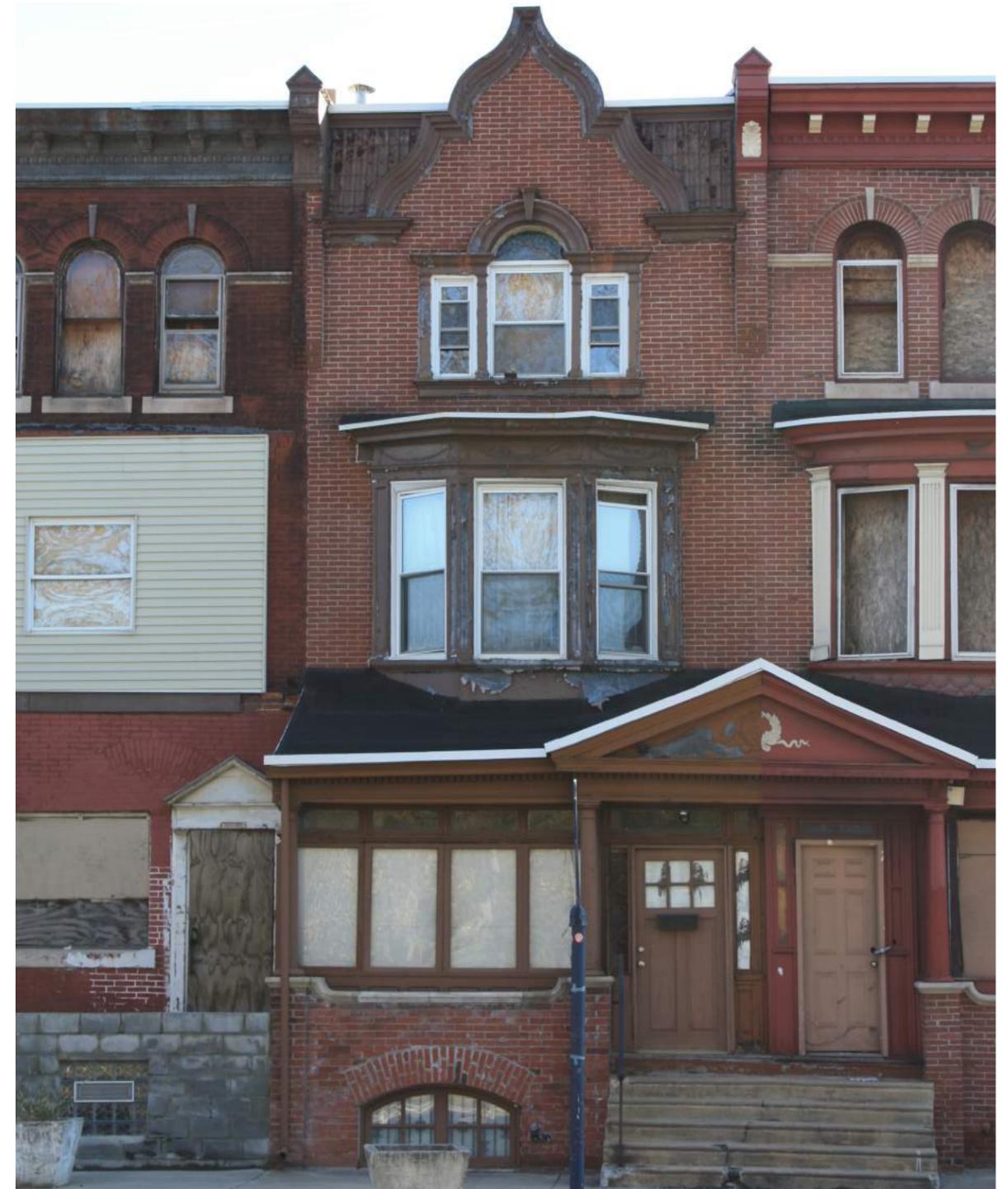


Figure 144. The John Coltrane House today. (Nájera, 2018)



Figure 145: The Field at Fletcher Street. (Wight, 2018).

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

### INTRODUCTION

The previously described projects have proposed uses and interventions for purposefully selected sites that will reinvigorate the physical location and the community's engagement with the space. However, this project takes a specific use and proposes potential sites that can serve this use.

Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club is a distinct representation of Strawberry Mansion and serves as an integral source of intangible heritage worthy of preservation. Generations of residents have grown up around the horses, with many riders continuing their horsemanship into adulthood. Riders travel outside of both the neighborhood and Philadelphia to share the skills and knowledge they gained at Fletcher.

Due to the deteriorating condition of their present stables, and the impending development by the Philadelphia Housing Authority in the field that is currently used for horse turn out, the Riding Club requires feasible relocation options within the community. Because of the uncertain timeline for the group, the following proposals have identified relocation options for both the short and long-term.

### LEGACY OF HORSES IN PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia has a long history with horses. Contrary to popular belief, the city, rather than the countryside, was home to the larger concentration of horses in the 19th century. Before the rise of the automobile, horse-drawn trolleys and delivery carts moved both goods and people through the city streets. The expansion of the railroad coincided with a rise of horses as they were required to transport people and goods from one railroad to another that were not connected by track. Horse-drawn streetcars allowed Philadelphia's suburbs to expand outward with thousands of passengers traveling into the city every day. This large horse population required specific housing. Large, multistory stables were home to horses owned by department stores, police and fire departments, and transportation companies.<sup>1</sup> Although very few, if any, of these structures remain, relics of the horse-age are scattered throughout the city including smaller stables and carriage houses that now often function as garages.

The large urban horse population continued well into the 20th century, but dramatically decreased

following the electrification of the streetcar system.<sup>2</sup> Large commercial ownership of horses declined but private horse ownership remained commonplace for goods, such as milk and coal, that were delivered daily.<sup>3</sup> As late as the 1950s, individual vendors sold their products from horse drawn wagons. In their downtime, these vendors rode their horses for leisure using Fairmount Park as their riding grounds.



Figure 146. Advertisement depicting horse-drawn Springfield Water Supply CO. wagons, ca. 1909. (Free Library of Philadelphia)



Figure 147. *A Tribute to Urban Horseman* by Jason Slowik. Mural depicting the rich tradition of horse riding with the design playing homage to the old west. Located at 322 W. Montgomery Ave. (Dickensheets, 2018)

1. McShane, Clay, and Joel Tarr. *Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007, p. 107.

2. Ibid, 170.

3. Ibid, 175.

## AFRICAN AMERICAN URBAN RIDERS

Though history for most Philadelphians, Fletcher Street rider Eric Miller understands the role horses continue to play in the city. His grandfather delivered coal off the back of a wagon to the basements throughout Philadelphia, a task that required horses which he cared for and rode on his time off. The intangible heritage of horsemanship was passed down to Miller's father who in turn taught his son. This specific variety of horsemanship differs greatly from those found at formal ridings clubs. It stems from hardworking urban laborers who cared for and enjoyed the company of the horses both during and after the work day. The history of urban riding continues the Fletcher Street Riding Club, which maintains its urban location that is distinct from organizations in Fairmount Park and those further from the city center. By proposing relocation sites within the Strawberry Mansion community, not only will the Riding Club live on, but so too will the legacy of urban horsemanship.

### FLETCHER STREET URBAN RIDING CLUB TODAY

Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club represents the remains of a larger African American urban horse-riding community in Philadelphia. Although stables once dotted the city's gridded streets, all but Fletcher have closed, with their horses and owners migrating to Strawberry Mansion. The group, as it exists today, was founded around 2005 by horse owner Ellis Ferrell. Similar to other Philadelphia riders, Ferrell was forced to relocate his horses from his original stable in Brewerytown.<sup>4</sup> After moving to Strawberry Mansion, Ferrell and his family took the initiative to teach children to ride and care for the horses. Since then, the Fletcher Street has welcomed horse owners who have migrated to this last standing stable.

The Riding Club not only continues the legacy of African American urban riders in Philadelphia, but also serves the Strawberry Mansion community through its involvement with local youth. Today, children are taught how to ride and care for the horses, eventually working up towards owning their own horse. As a positive environment and source of stability for children, Fletcher imparts not only lessons in horsemanship but lessons in responsibility, discipline, and reward.<sup>5</sup> Through equestrian activities and mentoring, Fletcher Street provides role models from within the community to children growing up in the area today. The Riding

4. Interview with Eric Miller, October 30th, 2018.

5. Ibid.

6. "Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club," accessed December 1st, 2018. <http://fletcherstreeturbanridingclub.com/main.html>.



Figure 148. One of the horses in the current Stables. (Dickensheets, 2018)

Club mitigates neighborhood violence and reduces drug use for local youth by providing them with a safe social network and a healthy pastime activity.

Although it is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the Riding Club remains unstructured and without a clear chain of command. At 79-years old, Ellis Ferrell continues his role as founder and serves a grandfatherly role to members. However, the future leadership of the group remains uncertain with no apparent succession plan in place. The unstructured nature of the group leads towards other organizational difficulties such as managing a strategic budget. Despite these institutional deficiencies, the members of Fletcher Street are passionate riders who seek to preserve the riding tradition and understand its important role as an asset to the community.

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

### CURRENT LOCATION

Fletcher Field, a full block of vacant land, is the center of the neighborhood's equestrian presence, with the buildings located directly north of the field functioning as stables. Some individuals who ride at Fletcher also house their horses in their own private stables. The street between the stables and field, Fletcher Street, is quiet with minimal traffic as riders and their friends often gather outside in their free time to converse. Inside the stables, stalls take up most of space with tack hung up on walls and hay and feed stored over the horse stalls. Although the buildings have functioned as stables for many years now, they do not adequately address the needs of the organization. These faults range from sanitary conditions, due to the absence of interior plumbing and makeshift nature of the stables, to general lack of space for the horses, storage, and programming.

The field provides the horses with ample space to roam and exercise throughout the year which is especially valuable in the winter when horse owners do not ride as frequently as in the warmer months.<sup>7</sup> Horses are put out at different times of the day, with never more than a few horses in the field at a time. Although security concerns for the horses are minimal, they are

generally not kept outside overnight, apart from warm summer nights. Large barrels of hay can be placed into the field while horse trailers sit alongside the lot's fenced perimeter. In this area of Strawberry Mansion, neighbors are familiar with the horses and their owners. The mutual respect between neighbors and riders provides a safe environment for the horses and their caretakers.

Although the group has used Fletcher Field for many years, the Philadelphia Housing Authority owns the property. In response to the demand for affordable housing in the area, the PHA has begun the process of accepting requests for proposals for a housing complex to be constructed on this land. Therefore, it is necessary for the organization to find a new building for stables and adjacent land for turnout so that the legacy of African American urban horsemanship can continue in Strawberry Mansion.

### FAST FACTS

- 25-30 Horses
- 3 Stables Totaling 4,200 sqft
- Interior Box Stalls of ~100 sqft each
- 1 Turn-Out Field Totaling 97,400 sq. ft. field for turnout and lessons
- 60 ft. Diameter Riding Circle



Figure 149. Exterior of the current stables. (Wight, 2018)



Figure 150. Interior box stalls at the current location. (Wight, 2018)

7. Interview with Eric Miller, October 30th, 2018.

## CURRENT LOCATION



Figure 151. The current stables and field. (Atlas: City of Philadelphia, 2018)



Figure 152. Crossing Fletcher Street to take horses to the field for turnout.



Figure 153. Trailers that line the perimeter of Fletcher Field. (Wight, 2018)

### HORSE STABLE NECESSITIES

Horse stables are a particular building type that needs to provide for the health and safety of our equine friends. The best stables are those that replicate the natural environment in which horses' instincts are freely cultivated. This means that qualities such as access to natural sun light, good air ventilation, and adequate square footage are important to consider when designing or reconfiguring stables. Finally, it is important to remember that most horses do not enjoy being stabled. It is essential that stables have enough green space nearby to turn horses out for grazing and running around.<sup>8</sup>

### STALLS

There are two different types of horse stalls: box stalls/loose boxes and standing/tie stalls.

### BOX STALLS

Box stalls should be approximately 10'x10' (3m x 3m) to 12'x12' (3.6m x 3.6m) for an average sized riding horse (these are the minimum recommendations). The recommended size for a foaling stall is the same as a regular stall, but it is often better to have a more generous sized box stall for mares and foals. The easiest way to do this is to take the partition out between two regular box stalls. It is useful to design at least one stall with foaling in mind.

### STANDING/TIE STALLS

Standing/tie stalls should be wide enough for a horse to lie down in comfortably. These stalls should be at least 4'-5' (1.5m) wide and 8' (2.4m) long, but the dimensions ultimately depend on size of horse. For example, ponies will need shorter and narrower standing stalls. There is usually a manger for hay at the front of a standing stall, which should be considered when deciding the stall width. At the front of the stall, there must be a sturdy structure to tie the horse to. This should be high enough, so the horse cannot get its leg over the tie rope, but low enough for the horse to still be able to reach feed and water.

For both box and standing stalls, the walls should be solid, sturdy lumber to at least 4.6 feet (1.4m) high, with a grill or sturdy mesh so that horses can see each other. The grill also helps with ventilation and light. Stall doors can either be swinging or sliding – in both cases there should be latches that can undo easily but are difficult for horse to tamper with. Doors should be

at least 4 feet (1.2m) wide. Swinging doors should open out into the alley, and be kept shut at all other times, and sliding doors should slide smoothly.<sup>9</sup>

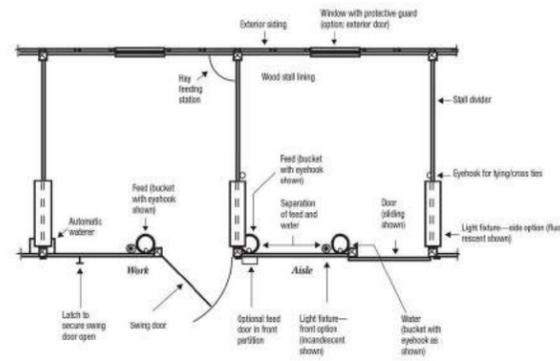


Figure 154. Box stall detailing in plan.  
Eileen Wheeler, "Horse Stall Design," (Penn State University, 2002.)

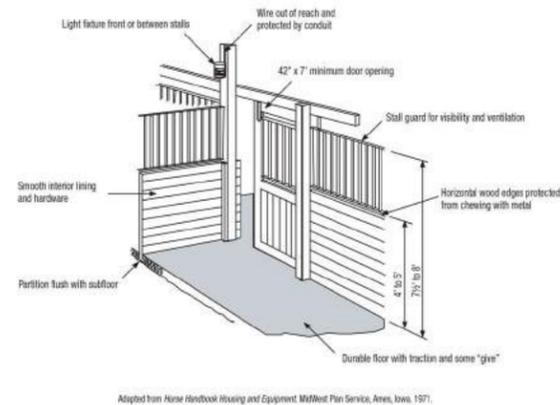
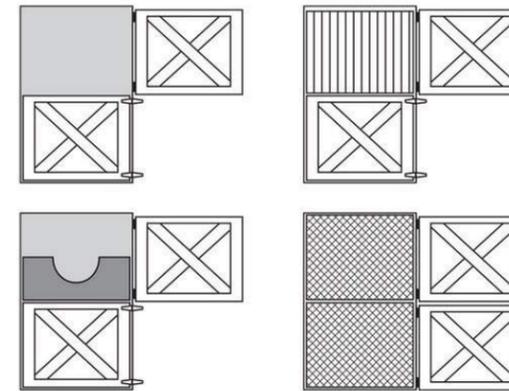


Figure 155. Box stall detailing.  
Eileen Wheeler, "Horse Stall Design," (Penn State University, 2002.)

8. John Blackburn and Beth Herman, *Healthy Stables by Design: A Common Sense Approach to the Health and Safety of Horses* (Victoria: The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd., 2013), 11-12.

9. Katherine Blocksdorf, "Design your Ideal Horse Stable," The Spruce Pets, last modified July 2, 2018, <https://www.thesprucepets.com/design-your-ideal-horse-stable-1885959>.

### Exterior Stall Doors



### Interior Aisle Stall Doors

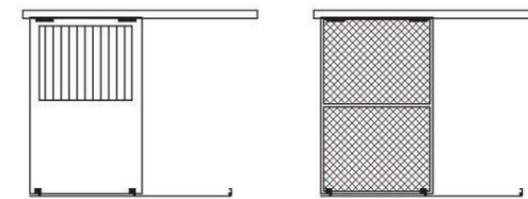


Figure 156. Stall doors detailing.  
Eileen Wheeler, "Horse Stall Design," (Penn State University, 2002.)



Figure 157. Horse stables aisle.  
"Contemporary Ideas Barn Flooring" (<http://akapdx.com/21597/barn-flooring/contemporary-ideas-barn-flooring-stable-stall-rubber/>.)

### AISLES / ALLEYS

Aisles between stalls should be at least 10' (3m) wide, but the wider the better.

### FLOORING

The most commonly-used flooring in stables is concrete. It is important to ensure that the floor is non-slip; roughening the surface will satisfy this need. Concrete, pavers, or stone floors will not drain naturally, so drains must be placed in the areas where water accumulates. Drains may also have to be placed in stall. As many stables do not have a drainage system, stalls must be well-cleaned to avoid ammonia from building up. Hard flooring like pavers or concrete is easier to disinfect and can be hosed down, but it is more strenuous on horses' legs. Many horse owners place stall mats made of rubber under the horse's bedding to provide greater comfort.

### CEILING

A stable's ceiling height should allow a horse to raise its head comfortably without worrying about hitting the ceiling. Eight-foot (2.4m) high ceilings are adequate for ponies and small horses, but taller horses will need higher ceilings. It is necessary to ensure that there are no protruding nails from the second story flooring, unprotected hanging light fixtures, or other obstructions that a horse could accidentally hit when it raises its head.

### ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

Though designers should strive towards having as much natural light as possible in horse stables, artificial lighting is nonetheless very important to ensure safety. Lighting fixtures should be arranged to minimize dark or shadowed areas and should be in places where horses cannot reach them. All wiring should be rodent and moisture proof and all plug-ins in stables should be GFCI receptacles. All light bulbs should be encircled by safety cages.

### WINDOWS

As access to natural light and good air ventilation are two of the most important features of a horse barn, windows are the most essential architectural elements in stable design and it is important to incorporate as many as possible. They provide both natural ventilation and sun light. Windows should be covered with a grill or mesh, so horses cannot break the glass. Windows that

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

		BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE	NUMBER OF BUILDING PARCELS	NUMBER OF HORSE STALLS	VACANT LAND SQUARE FOOTAGE
	<b>Current Location</b>	4,200 sq. ft.	3	~25	97,400 sq. ft.
<b>SHORT TERM SITES</b>	<b>2615-2627 W Hagert St. With Northern Lot</b>	6,500 sq. ft.	3	30-35	41,000 sq. ft.
	<b>2509-13 W Fletcher St.</b>	4,900 sq. ft.	1	21	28,500 sq. ft.
<b>LONG TERM SITES</b>	<b>2427-35 W York St.</b>	85,000 sq. ft.	1	30-40	22,300 sq. ft.
	<b>2528-34 W Sedgley Ave.</b>	16,230 sq. ft.	1	30-36	144,045 sq. ft.

swing open may be the better option for the long-run over slider windows as these tend to fill up with dirt and dust.

### FEEDING AND WATERING EQUIPMENT

The most economical option for feeding and watering is using a bucket hung upon the wall. Buckets should not be placed on the floor. Hay can be served either on the floor or in a hay manger. Hay mangers need to be deep enough to hold hay and not have any gaps that horses can catch their legs in they lay down. Hay and feed should not be mounted on the wall as this makes the horse eat in an unnatural position with its head up instead of down.<sup>10</sup>

10. Katherine Blocksdorf, "Design your Ideal Horse Stable," The Spruce Pets, last modified July 2, 2018, <https://www.thesprucepets.com/design-your-ideal-horse-stable-1885959>.

## SITE SELECTION MATRIX

COHESIVENESS OF VACANT LAND	ASSESSED VALUE	BUILDING OWNERSHIP	LAND OWNERSHIP	PROXIMITY TO CURRENT STABLES	BUILDING CONDITION
1 Track		3 Private Owners	Philadelphia Housing Authority		
2 tracks	\$167,900	Multiple Private Owners and Developers	Multiple Private Owners and Developers	0.2 miles away (1,100 ft)	Main buildings in good condition. Building additions (those a 2615-17 York Street) in fair condition.
3 tracks; 1 track has 5 parcels	\$183,100	Christlike Pleasant, Green Faith Baptist	Phila. Landbank (Triangle), Dept. of Public Prop. (On Sedgley), Multiple Private Owners (Square Corner Lot)	0.07 miles away (375 ft)	Front building in fair condition. Back building in poor condition (roof caved in, vegetation growth)
5 tracks	\$2,200,000 (sales price)	Private	Multiple Private Owners and Dept. of Public Prop.	0.2 miles away (1,100 ft)	Good
1 track	\$1,486,300	School District of Phila. (Sedgley Storeroom)	Amtrak, School District of Phila. (lot connected to building)	0.08 (400 ft)	Good

### SITE SELECTION MATRIX

Following a search for potential relocation sites to house the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club, four locations were identified. The selected sites are located in close proximity to the current stables and would accommodate the needs of the Urban Riders as the sites could provide stables with open field space for turnout and a riding circle. The interventions were broken into two categories based on two potential situations the group could encounter: short term and long term. The short-term relocation sites could be used if the riding group needed to relocate immediately. These sites could be used for approximately two to five years. Although some of the proposed short-term sites do not have all the criteria desired by the Riding Club, they would allow them to function as an organization while long term arrangements are sorted out. The long-term relocation sites could be used for five years or more. Unlike the short-term sites, long-term relocation sites fit more of the organization's criteria

After potential sites were identified, the stables and open field space were diagrammed to demonstrate how each site would operate. Based on this information, a matrix was developed to determine one short-term site and one long-term site to best satisfy the riding group's needs. The matrix criteria include the following: building square footage, number of building parcels, number of horse stalls that would fit in the building, vacant land square footage, cohesiveness of vacant land, cost to purchase the site, building ownership, land ownership, proximity to current stables, and building condition. The matrix identified two sites as satisfying the group's needs, 2509-13 W Fletcher Street (short term), and 2528-34 W Sedgley Avenue (long term). These two sites were selected in order to pursue further investigations and propose more comprehensive interventions so that the sites can be repurposed for the Riding Club.

# FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

# SELECTED SITES

- CURRENT STABLES
- PROPOSED STABLES SITES

2615-2627 W HAGERT ST. WITH NORTHERN LOT

2427-35 W YORK ST.

2509-13 W FLETCHER ST.

2528-34 W SEDGLEY AVE.

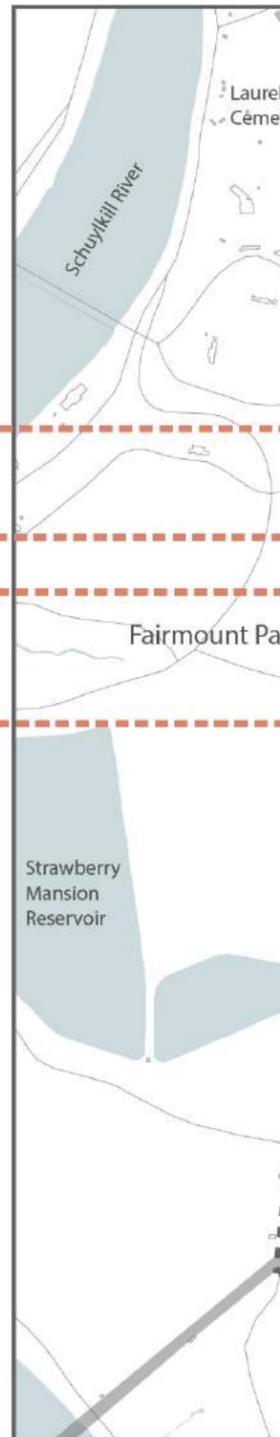


Figure 158. Selected Sites. (Dickensheets & Wight, 2018)

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

### SITE OPTION 1 - SHORT TERM

2615-2627 W Hagert Street

**Building Area:** 6,500 sq. ft.

**No. of Horse Stalls:** 30-35

**Vacant land Area:** 41,000 sq. ft.

**Condition:** Main buildings in good condition. Building additions (those on 2615-17 York Street) in Fair Condition)



Figure 159. Aerial view of site. (Atlas: City of Philadelphia, 2018)

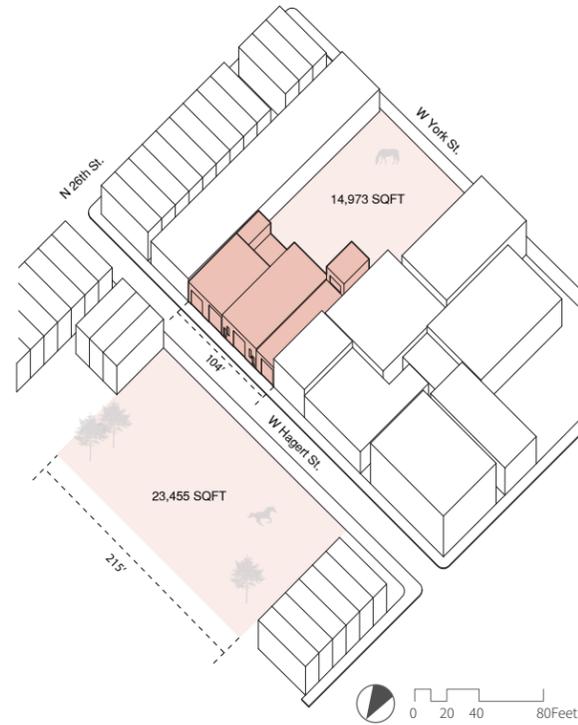


Figure 160. Axon of proposal. (Dickensheets, 2018)



Figure 161. Street view of site. (Wight, 2018)

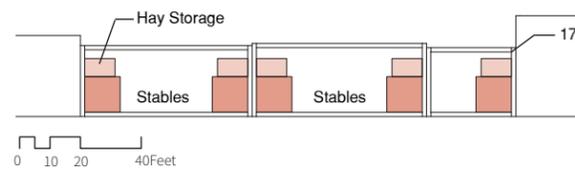
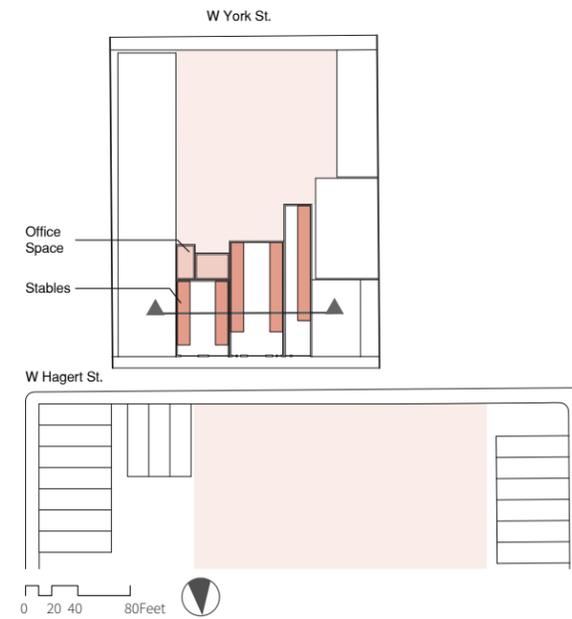


Figure 162. Plan and section of proposal. (Dickensheets, 2018)



## RELOCATION SITES

### SITE OPTION 2 - LONG TERM

2427-35 W York Street

**Building Area:** 85,000 sq. ft.

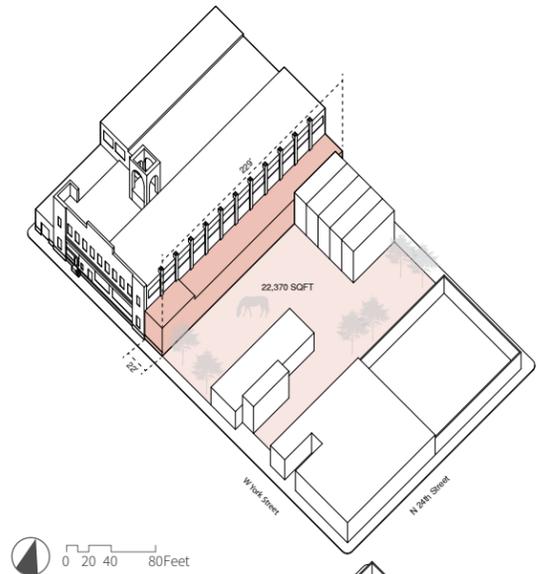
**No. of Horse Stalls:** 30-40

**Vacant land Area:** 22,300 sq. ft.

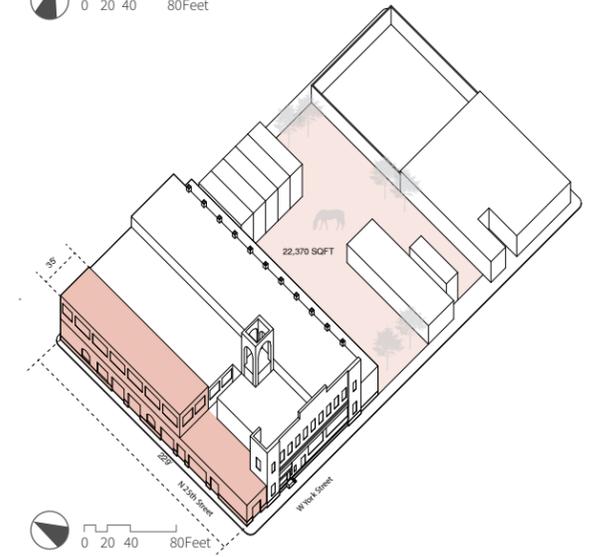
**Condition:** Good



Figure 163. Aerial view of site. (Atlas: City of Philadelphia, 2018)



0 20 40 80Feet



0 20 40 80Feet



Figure 164. Street view of site. (Wight, 2018)

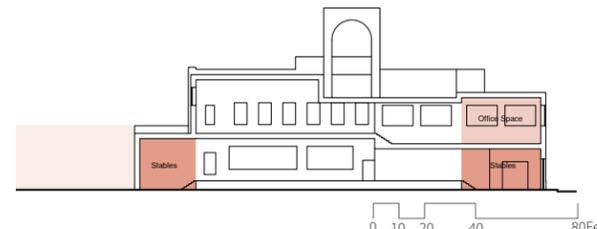


Figure 165. Axon, plan and section of proposal. (Wight, 2018)



0 20 40 80Feet

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

### SITE OPTION 3 - SHORT TERM

2509-13 W Fletcher St.

**Building Area:** 4,900 sq. ft.

**No. of Horse Stalls:** 21

**Vacant land Area:** 28,500 sq. ft.

**Condition:** Front building in fair condition. Back building in poor condition (roof caved in, vegetation growth)



Figure 166. Street view of corner lot. (Dickensheets, 2018)



Figure 168. Aerial view of site. (Atlas: City of Philadelphia, 2018)



Figure 169. 1942 Land Use Map. (Works Progress Administration)



Figure 167. Street view of triangle lot. (Dickensheets, 2018)

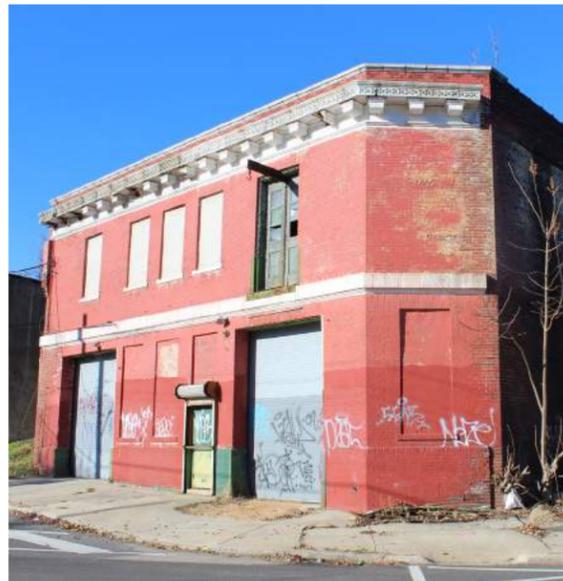


Figure 170. Street view of building. (Dickensheets, 2018)

## RELOCATION SITES

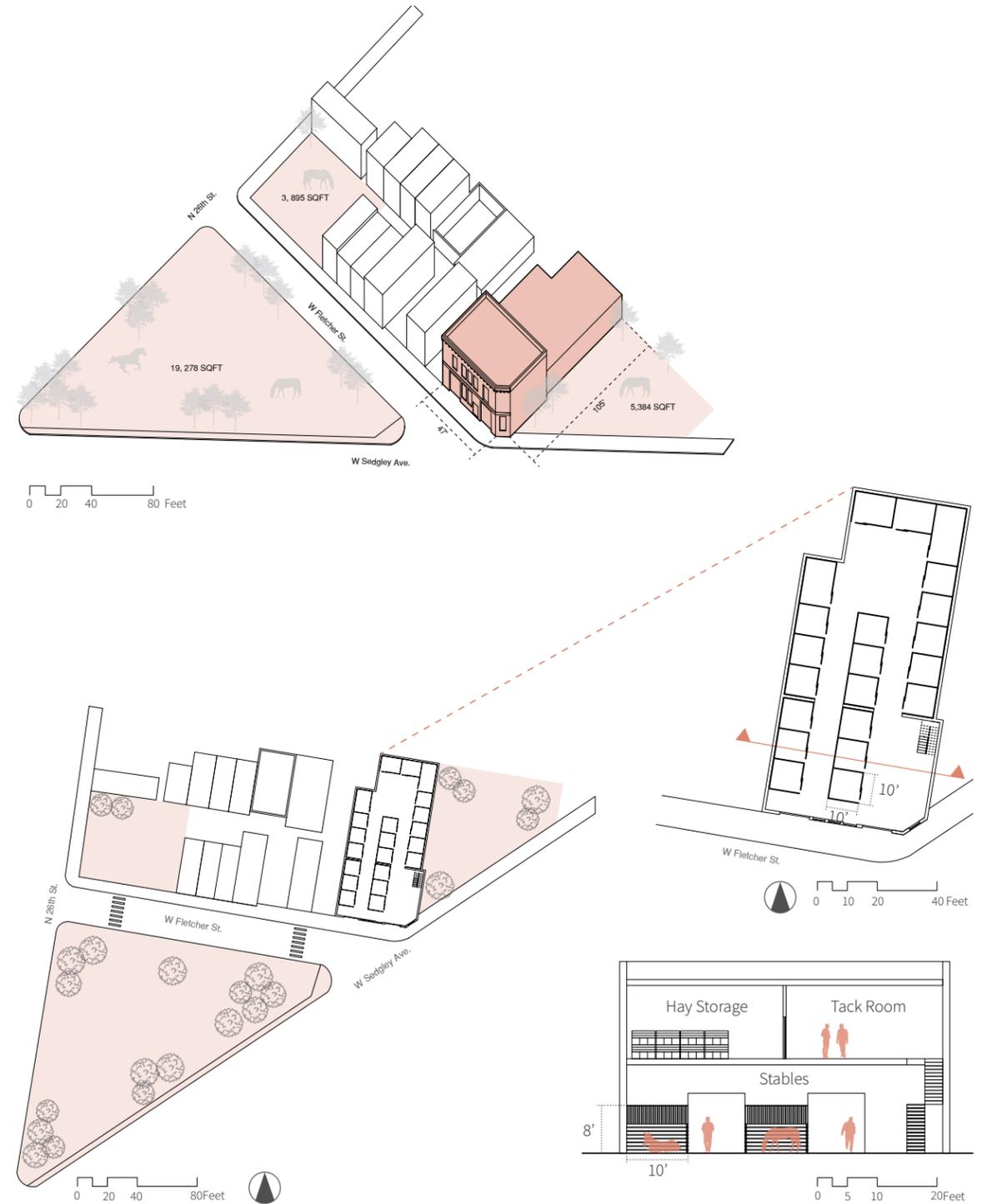


Figure 171. Axon, plan, and section of proposal. (Wight, 2018)

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

### SITE OPTION 4 - LONG TERM

2528-34 W Sedgley Ave.  
**Building Area:** 16,230 sq. ft.  
**No. of Horse Stalls:** 30-35  
**Vacant land Area:** 144,045 sq. ft. (Amtrak Lot: 122,899 sq. ft.; Sedgley Lot: 21,146)  
**Land Ownership:** Amtrak (large lot), City of Phila (lot connected to building)  
**Condition:** Good



Figure 173. Aerial view of site. (Atlas: City of Philadelphia, 2018)



Figure 172. Street view of vacant land. (Dickensheets, 2018)



Figure 174. 1962 Land Use Map. (Works Progress Administration)

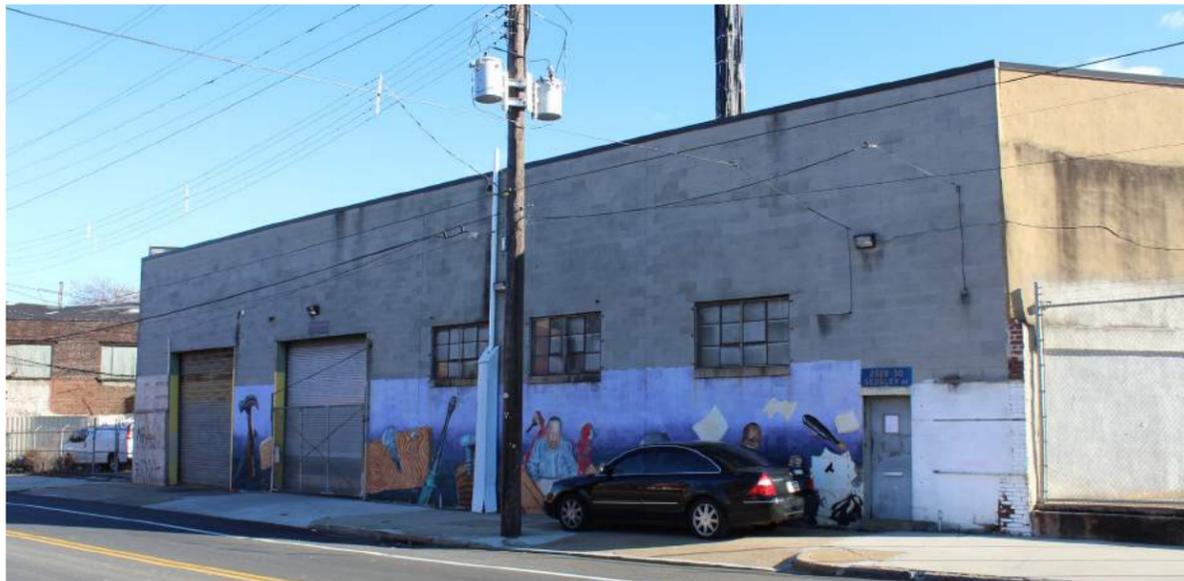


Figure 175. Street view of building. (Dickensheets, 2018)

## RELOCATION SITES

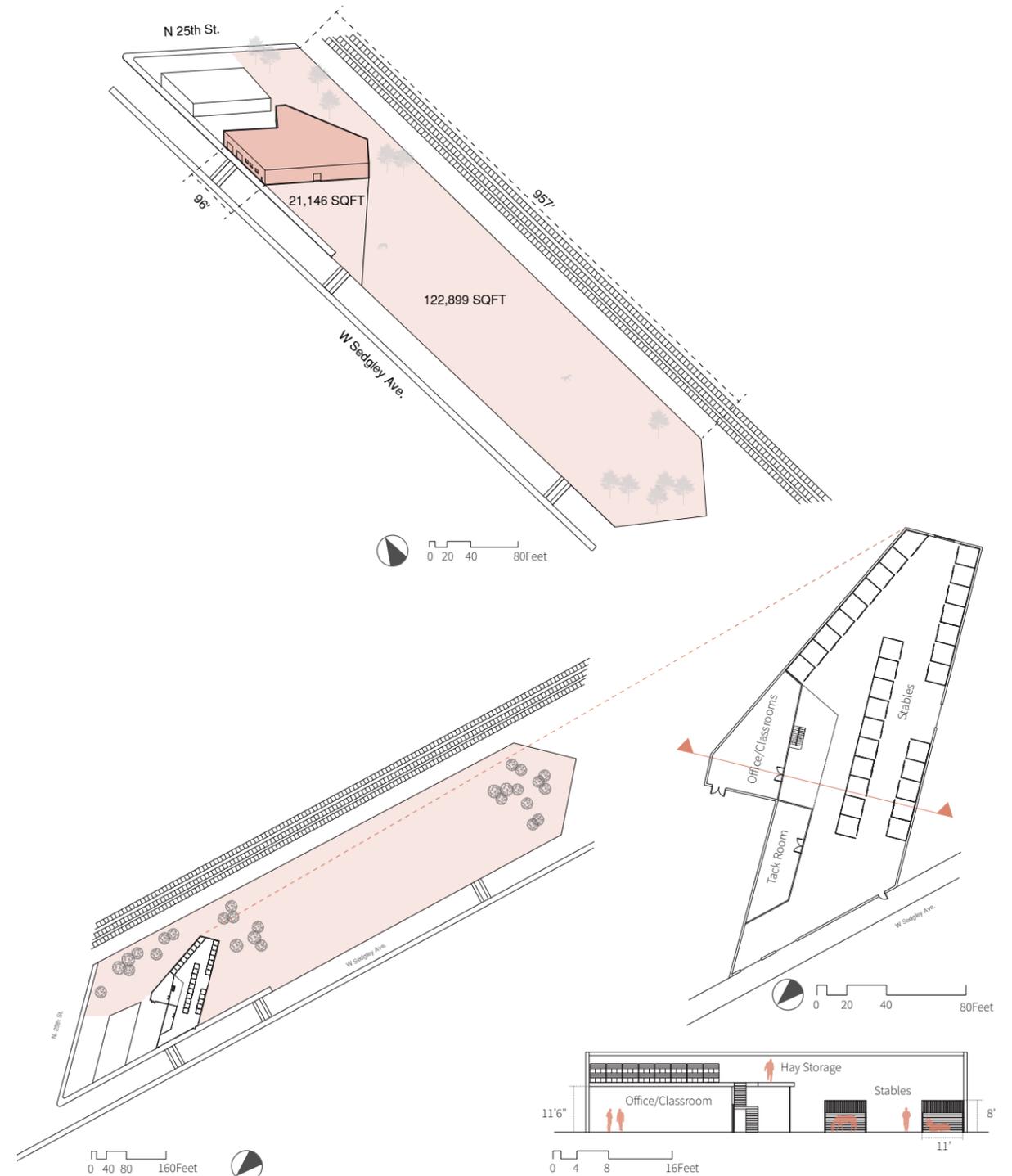


Figure 176. Axon, plan, and section of proposal. (Dickensheets, 2018)

## FLETCHER STREET RIDING GROUP

Blackburn, John and Beth Herman. *Healthy Stables by Design: A Common Sense Approach to the Health and Safety of Horses*, Victoria: The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd., 2013. 11-12.

Blocksdorf, Katherine. "Design your Ideal Horse Stable." The Spruce Pets. Last modified July 2, 2018. <https://www.thesprucepets.com/design-your-ideal-horse-stable-1885959>.

"Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club." Accessed December 1st, 2018. <http://fletcherstreeturbanridingclub.com/main.html>.

Interview with Eric Miller, October 30th, 2018.

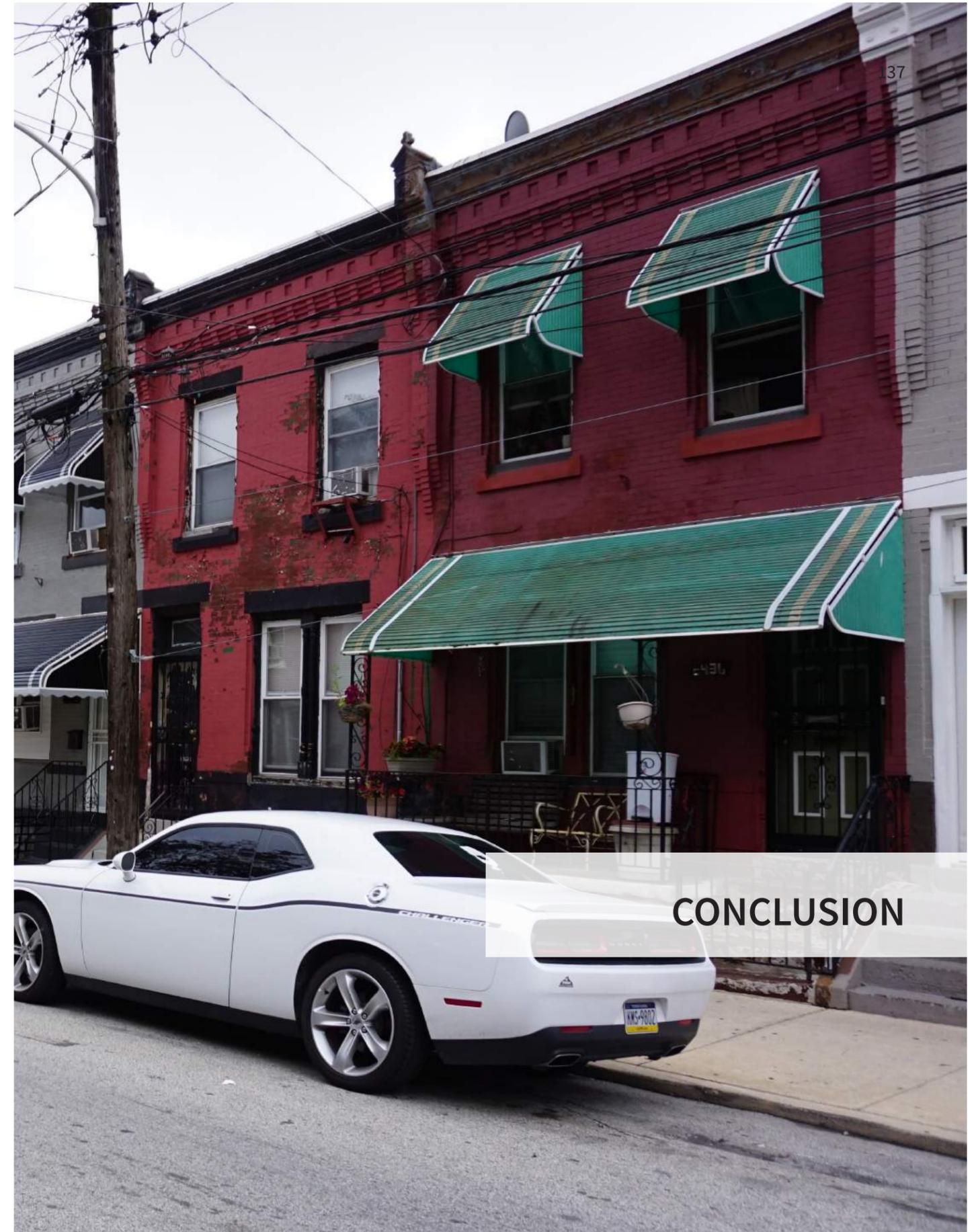
McShane, Clay, and Joel Tarr. *Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. 107.

Wheeler, Eileen and Jennifer Smith Zajackowski, "Horse Stall Design," Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences. State College: The Pennsylvania State University, 2002.

## CITATIONS



Figure 177. Fletcher Street Stables. (Dickensheets, 2018)



**CONCLUSION**

Figure 178. Johnson, 2018

## STRAWBERRY MANSION



Figure 179. Johnson, 2018

## CONCLUSION



### CONCLUSION

The analysis completed for this project revealed that the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood to be a vibrant, strong, and self-sufficient neighborhood, both historically and presently. These characteristics were confirmed time and time again in the people whose voices contributed to this project, in the places visited during this project, and in the work that continues to be done by and for the neighborhood. The goal of this studio was to assess the Strawberry Mansion community for strengths and weaknesses, and to propose interventions at significant sites that would build upon the assessment.

The proposals in this book are designed to build upon the existing strengths of the neighborhood, and to mitigate the threats that are targeting this community. Specifically, each project was designed through the lens of neighborhood accessibility through incremental change that will ultimately lead to neighborhood-driven and sustainable growth. From the interventions at the Coltrane House, which focus on the unique history of this place, to the long-term plan for the Fitzsimons School, which would re-inhabit one of the largest structures in the neighborhood. From Ridge Ave, which will create wealth to be passed from generation to generation, to the Garden of Prayer Church, where the interventions grant secure and safe spaces for all of Strawberry Mansion. Even the re-location of the Fletcher Street Riding Club will protect youth-focused neighborhood assets.

Together, these projects would further solidify Strawberry Mansion's significance in the scope of Philadelphia. The projects would also work together to secure the existing neighborhood residents place in Philadelphia under the looming threat of outside development and its various side effects. We hope that these projects, together or individually, illustrate the beauty that lies within the neighborhood and the opportunities that are available for the residents of Strawberry Mansion.

## STRAWBERRY MANSION

### STAKEHOLDERS

This report has the following stakeholders, both within Strawberry Mansion and throughout the city of Philadelphia. The list includes both organizations and individuals, including all residents of Strawberry Mansion.

### REGULATORY

5th Council District  
 SERVE Philadelphia  
 Central North EPIC Stakeholders  
 Philadelphia Dept. of Planning and Development  
 Town Watch Integrated Services  
 Public Safety Initiative

### EDUCATION

Strawberry Mansion High School  
 Strawberry Mansion Learning Center  
 L.P. Hill School  
 One Bright Ray Community High School  
 The Murrell Dobbins Career & Technical Education High School  
 Widener Library  
 Community Partnership School  
 Temple University

### NONPROFIT

Strawberry Mansion CDC  
 Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Action Center  
 Strawberry Mansion Smart Business Association  
 Strawberry Mansion Civic Association  
 Mander Recreation Center  
 Cecil B. Moore Recreation Center  
 Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club  
 North Penn Police Athletic League Center  
 Cavalry United Church of Christ  
 North Penn Baptist Church  
 Trinity AME Church  
 Garden of Prayer Church of God in Christ  
 Friends Rehabilitation Program  
 North Central Victim Services  
 Project HOME  
 Pennrose  
 Rising Sons  
 Ambitious Girls Beyond  
 Boy Scouts of America

Fairmount Park Conservancy  
 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society  
 East Park Revitalization Alliance  
 The Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia  
 Philadelphia CeaseFire

### INDIVIDUALS

Tonnetta Graham  
 Tanya Parker  
 Melvin Sharpe  
 Tyrone Williams  
 Local Business Owners  
 Attendees of September RCO Community Meeting  
 and All Residents of Strawberry Mansion



## STAKEHOLDERS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are particularly indebted to the people of Strawberry Mansion and other stakeholders who gave their time to speak to us. These interviews are the key to making Strawberry Mansion residents the central beneficiaries of this report.

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 Stephanie Bujak  
 Eric Miller  
 Deacon Sullivan  
 Ellen Ryan  
 Julie Donofrio  
 Dave Fecteau

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 Irena Wight*

