



winter 2011



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## Sustainable 19125 Focuses on Energy, Empowering Residents to Reduce Costs

With the cold days of winter upon us, NKCDC is working with neighbors and partners through the Sustainable 19125 initiative to focus on energy usage and helping residents weatherize their homes and prepare for rising energy costs.



The 2nd Annual Sustainable 19125 Energy and Weatherization Fair will be held on Saturday, February 19th from 11am-3pm at the new Kensington Creative and Performing Arts High School, located at Front & Montgomery. Vendors will include representatives from ECA, PGW, PECO, Earth Force, and several alternative energy companies. Financial institutions will also be present, providing opportunities to make your house more energy efficient. Energy providers will present information on the recent cap raises on electricity, presenting information on alternative suppliers and the ability to sign-up for renewable energy for your home.

Free weatherization workshops for residents will

demonstrate a more hands on approach to conserving energy and keep energy bills at an affordable price. Visitors will also have the opportunity to go on a student-led tour of the brand new LEED Platinum building!

In addition to the Energy Fair, community leaders and Sustainable 19125 Green Guides are working to provide neighbors with tips and resources to save energy, as well as distributing free compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs). Donated by the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA), these bulbs use 75% less energy than regular incandescent bulbs. On January 17th a group of 18 volunteers went door-to-door on Martin Luther King Jr. Day distributing free CFL bulbs and energy information to over 300 households!



NKCDC will also be conducting a series of free weatherization workshops throughout the winter. For more information please check our Events Calendar or visit [www.sustainable19125.org](http://www.sustainable19125.org).

## Vacant Land Management Program Restructured

Vacant land surrounds us. Property which is not cared for and maintained can have a devastating impact on a community. Many long term residents remember when Frankford Avenue was a trash-strewn dumping ground. Neighbors recall waist high trash in many areas. And they remember the challenges that came with them.

In 1996 there were 1100 parcels of vacant land in the 19125 communities. During a neighborhood strategic plan residents voiced concerns about the negative impact vacant land was having: blighted blocks, nuisance activities, infestation, safety concerns, and lowered property values. Out of these concerns, a vacant land strategy for the area was born. With support from OHCD, NKCDC and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), hundreds of volunteers stepped up to help clean and care for many of these lots. Since then, tens of thousands of volunteer hours have been used to clean and stabilize more than 600 parcels and plant over 1,000 trees.

Those efforts became the model for a new city-wide program for vacant land maintenance. Since 2003, the Community LandCare program, funded through the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI), has provided funding to organizations to clean and mow vacant lots on a monthly basis. Through this program NKCDC has been able to provide seasonal

monthly maintenance to around 200 lots a year. You may have seen our team out there mowing lots and picking up trash over the years.

Sadly, due to city budget cuts, the Community LandCare program will no longer be funded. This means that hundreds of additional vacant lots in the neighborhood are at risk of becoming overgrown and trash-strewn once again. In total, over 5,000 lots throughout Philadelphia which have been maintained through Community LandCare are at risk.

As a critical program within the community, NKCDC is working hard to identify additional funding to the neighborhood to continue this lot maintenance or work with the community to find new strategies to address this issue. NKCDC will be meeting with other neighborhood groups in February to figure out how we can all work together to keep this neighborhood clean and green.

In the meantime, the city is encouraging residents to report nuisance lots to 311. We also encourage you to reach out to your neighbors and work together to turn a problem lot into an asset for your block. This is the successful approach neighbors used almost 15 years ago, and its one which NKCDC would be happy to help support as possible. If the community all works together during these city cuts, we're certain to see a clean, green 2011.

## events CALENDAR

### February

- 5 First Friday on Frankford Avenue 6pm - 9pm [www.frankfordavearts.org](http://www.frankfordavearts.org)
- 8 Weatherization Workshop every Tues. & Thurs 2pm New Kensington CDC 2515 Frankford Avenue Please call to register - 215-427-0350
- 16 First-time Homebuyer Workshop Coral Street Arts House For more information or to register please call 215-427-0350
- 19 Sustainable 19125 Neighborhood Energy Fair 11am - 3pm Kensington CAPA School Front & Montgomery
- 19 Low-Cost Mobile Pet Clinic Coral Street Arts House see page 4 for details

### March

- 3 Sustainable 19125 video debut at NeighborWorks Training Institute Los Angeles, CA
- 4 First Friday on Frankford Avenue 6pm - 9pm [www.frankfordavearts.org](http://www.frankfordavearts.org)
- 5 First-time Homebuyer Workshop Coral Street Arts House For more information or to register please call 215-427-0350



# Frankford Avenue Improvements

Neighbors, business owners, and city officials gathered on the morning of Friday, November 12th at the Philadelphia Argentine Tango School (2030 Frankford Avenue) to celebrate the completion of the Frankford Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project. The first phase of improvements, which stretches between Palmer and York Streets, includes benches, street trees, Big Belly recycling bins and trash compactors, and distinctive artistic street signage.

Bus shelters for the intersections of Palmer Street and Dauphin Street, which are currently being built by local metalworkers Outcast Studios, will be installed later this spring.



Guest speakers at the Grand Finale celebration, including the Tango Studio's Meredith Klein and Nic Darling of Postgreen, spoke of the diverse and organic community of artists and businesses who have made the Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor their home.

This project was funded through the Hometown Streets Program with support from the City of Philadelphia's Commerce Department's ReStore Corridors program. The design work and community collaboration, a process which began with community meetings dating back to 2004 were led by planning design firm Group G and engineering firm, Orth-Rodgers and Associates. For more information on upcoming improvements please contact Angie Williamson at 215-427-0350 x 111 or [awilliamson@nkcdc.org](mailto:awilliamson@nkcdc.org).

"Many in the city look to Frankford Avenue as an example of a thriving and exciting commercial corridor," said Andy Frishkoff, Director of Neighborhood and Economic Development at the Commerce Department and newly appointed Executive Director of Philadelphia LISC.

## Skate Park Volunteer Receives National Award

Jesse Clayton, a local volunteer who along with NKCDC and countless others helped organize the construction of Pop's Skate Space, was recently awarded the prestigious 2010 Dorothy Richardson Award for Resident Leadership.



The skate park, completed in the summer of 2009 at Pop's Playground (Trenton Avenue & Huntingdon Street in Kensington), has helped transform a once abandoned and drug-infested playground into a consistently used and maintained community recreational facility.

The award, which was presented to Clayton on December 9th at the NeighborWorks America Annual Awards reception held in Washington D.C., is given in recognition of outstanding contributions by dedicated community leaders.

Clayton and several other volunteers from Pop's were also recognized this past November as part of the Philadelphia 76er's Home Town Heroes Awards, receiving a \$1,000 award for the continued upkeep of the skate park.

## Neighbors Inform Plan for Lehigh / Somerset Area

In a blighted neighborhood faced with above-average rates of poverty and violent crime, it isn't every day that neighbors get together to create a long-term vision for the revitalization of their neighborhood.

dream big, creating lofty visions for vacant land and abandoned buildings in the area.

But that's exactly what's taking place for the residents living around the Somerset El stop. NKCDC is partnering with Kitchen & Associates and the Community Design Collaborative to create a community-led neighborhood plan for residents living in the area bounded by Lehigh Avenue to Somerset Street, from Kensington Avenue to Frankford Avenue.

"We have all this vacant land which could be used for gardening," says Wilma Richardson, a block captain from 1800 E. Somerset Street. Many great ideas have emerged from the community discussions, including the need for new businesses, employment opportunities, and recreational facilities.

A task force comprised of community block captains, representatives from the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the city's Commerce Department, NKCDC staff and others have been working to identify focus areas for future projects and programming in this area.

"There is actually quite a lot of potential in this area, given its proximity to so much mass transit," says John Theobald of Kitchen & Associates. Neighbors are helping to guide any potential development which might take place in the area, including the rehabilitation of a vacant mill or the creation of a greenway along the Conrail Viaduct.

A community meeting was held on the evening of Tuesday, January 11th, where over 20 neighbors from this target area came out to discuss the strengths and challenges within their community. Neighbors were encouraged to

"Given current conditions these projects are a long way off," says Kevin Gray of NKCDC. "This plan, however, is the first step in making any of this a reality." For more information on this community-led planning process contact Gray at 215-427-0350 x 106 or [kgray@nkcdc.org](mailto:kgray@nkcdc.org).

## staff NEWS

Welcome to **Angie Williamson**, NKCDC's new Economic Development Director. Angie comes to NKCDC from Roanoke, VA where she spent 4 years as a City Planner and the last year and a half working at the local Workforce Investment Board as Program and Grant Manager helping support employers in the area. She received her Masters in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia and is thrilled to finally be in a true urban area.



It is with great sadness that NKCDC bids farewell to **Marlene Buck**, who has been the director of NKCDC's Land Use Management Department since

2002. Marlene has resigned from NKCDC to allow the department to continue operating on a smaller budget. She has been a fixture in the community for many years, working tirelessly at The Garden Center and attending many a community meeting. We wish her all the best!

## business NEWS

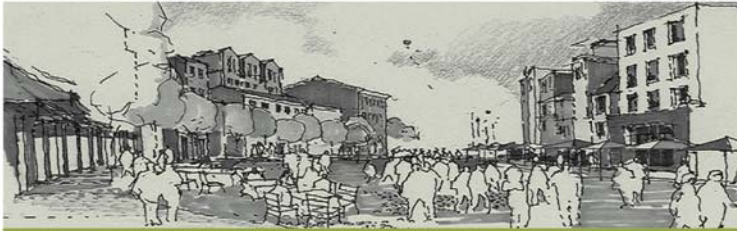


As our neighborhood continues to grow, so do the options for shopping and services. You may be surprised by the number and variety of businesses and within the 19125 zip code, as well as the services available in both 19125 and 19134!

The **2011 Neighborhood Business Directory and Resource Guide** is FREE and now available at Memphis Taproom, Highwire Gallery, Rocket Cat Café, Johnny Brenda's, Atlantis Lost Bar, Fishtown Jewelers, O'Reilly's Pub, Wachovia Bank, Third Federal Bank, Beneficial Bank, Bookspace, and many more great local businesses. For information on the closest distribution location to you, free feel to email [info@nkcdc.org](mailto:info@nkcdc.org).

Thank you to Devilfish Ink, Northern Liberty Press, and our advertisers for their support!

# NEIGHBORHOOD



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEWS

### Community Leaders Create Green Action Plans for the Neighborhood

Neighbors who recently attended the NeighborWorks Community Leadership Institute held this past October in Louisville, KY (pictured top right) are working together to create green action plans for the community.

Eight neighbors are working with the NKCDC NAC and Sustainable 19125 to turn gardening to the upright position, creating vertical green walls in three locations throughout the 19125 zip code. The green wall structures, whose locations are yet to be determined, will start with planters on the ground level with wire mesh reaching to the roofs of buildings. As spring and summer arrive, plants and flowers will weave themselves through the wire mesh.

Another group of eight neighbors is working with the Kensington Area NAC to create Kensington Farms, a community-maintained farm to be located in the 19134 zip code. This farm will increase access to fresh food in areas with limited healthy eating options, while at the same time building strong community partnerships and pride.

These projects, which will take place throughout 2011, are being funded through the support of NeighborWorks America. For more information on these projects please contact Tom Potts (215-427-0350 x 116 or [tpotts@nkcdc.org](mailto:tpotts@nkcdc.org)) or Ade Fequa (215-426-6862 or [afequa@nkcdc.org](mailto:afequa@nkcdc.org)).

### Free Flu Shot Clinics a Huge Success

In preparation for the winter season, NKCDC once again held free flu shot and health clinics to the community at large. Fifteen neighbors received free shots at the Kensington Area NAC office (2423 E. Allegheny) on the afternoon of November 3rd, and an additional 30 got shots at the NKCDC office (2515 Frankford Avenue) on the afternoon of November 15th.

These clinics were made possible by Quality Community Health Care Inc. through the support of the Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development.

### Property Tax / Rent Rebate Program

Applications for the 2010 PA Property Tax / Rent Rebate Program will be available at our office starting February 2011.

Individuals or spouses 65 and older, widows or widowers 50 and older, and the permanently disabled 18 and older who paid rent or property tax in 2010 are all eligible to apply for refunds.

Household income from 2010 can be no more than \$35,000 (renters with an income of \$15,000 or less are also eligible). Maximum rebate amounts may be up to \$650! If you received or qualified for a Property Tax/Rent Rebate within the past year, you will automatically receive an application in the mail.

Filing assistance is available at both the NKCDC office (2515 Frankford Avenue) or the KANAC office (2423 E. Allegheny Avenue) Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm. For more information please call NKCDC at 215-427-0350 or KANAC at 215-426-6862.



### Volunteers Recycle Over 200 Trees

On the morning of Saturday, January 8th fifteen volunteers collected over 200 holiday trees from the 19125 zip code as part of a curbside roundup. That translates into over 4,800 pounds of mulch for local parks - over 2,080 square feet which will not be sitting in a landfill!

A tree chipper supplied by Bartlett Tree Experts was stationed at Girard & Cumberland (pictured above), converting recycled trees into wood chips for community parks and gardens. Greensgrow Farms and The Garden Center also collected recycled trees from neighbors, many of whom offered donations to help defray the cost of the chipper. Mulch was donated to Triangle Dog Park (Aramingo & Fletcher) and a new park on Frankford Avenue just south of Thompson Street.

Special thanks to Bartlett Tree Experts, Greensgrow Farms, Fishtown Neighbors Association, East Kensington Neighbors Association, and Olde Richmond Civic Association. for helping to coordinate this great event!

### Holiday Assistance for Needy Families

NKCDC would like to thank all the kind residents and businesses who contributed to the 2010 Holiday Assistance Program!

For the past nine years NKCDC has raised funds from the community and other friends to help assist needy families living in our service area. This year over \$3,800 was raised!! Gift certificates to Target, Toys R Us, and Pathmark ranging from \$100 to \$300 were given to 19 families in the 19125 and 19134 zip codes, including 33 children and 25 adults.

Assistance was offered for Thanksgiving as well. Thanks to State Rep. John Taylor's office, seventeen families in our community received Thanksgiving turkeys! Thanks to a donation from the Quik Stop (Frankford & Sergeant), four extra families received gift baskets. In total over \$3,300 worth of food was donated.

And last, but most importantly, thanks to all the community leaders who nominated these special families!

Inside NKCDC - Winter 2011

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Hope Animal Resource Center  
Spay/Neuter Program

**Low-Cost  
Spay/Neuter and Vaccine Clinics**

For cats and dogs of low-to-moderate income Philadelphians



**Saturday, February 19th  
Coral Street Arts House**

Spay/neuter services for low-income pet owners. Vaccinations, leukemia tests, heartworm tests, and other services also available. Annual household income cannot exceed \$35,000. **Pet owners with proof of Medicaid, Medicare, SSI, welfare, or disability are eligible for additional discounts.**

To request an appointment or to find out if your pet is eligible, please email [spayneuter@hopeanimalresourcecenter.org](mailto:spayneuter@hopeanimalresourcecenter.org) or call 1-800-738-HOPE.

# ENERGY FAIR



Learn to green your home, alternative energy options, how to weatherize, find out what incentives are available. Free recycling bins and CFL bulbs!

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH 11am - 3pm**

**Kensington CAPA High School  
Front & Montgomery**

*Free. Snacks and childcare provided.*



SUSTAINABLE 19125 is a collaborative vision for greening 19125 zip code. This initiative is led by NKCDC with support from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. This event is co-sponsored by the Energy Coordinating Agency. For more information please visit [www.sustainable19125.org](http://www.sustainable19125.org).

Contributions to NKCDC are tax-deductible and can be made online at [www.nkcdc.org](http://www.nkcdc.org) or via United Way to Donor Choice #6066. Thank you!