

The Nehemiah Project... Why So Long?

"I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong... but time and chance happen to them all." Ecclesiastes 9:11 NIV

As we move into the sixth year of the Nehemiah Project, let me say that most legitimate visions do not happen overnight. When organizations are in the process of transformation, turnarounds typically take from three to five years. A new business is not considered viable until it has remained in business for five to seven years. When we look at building projects like the Nehemiah Project, the time can be even longer. For example, the Cherry Hill Mall and the Garden State complex were on the drawing boards of the city of Cherry Hill in the mid to late 1990's. The Mall was completed in 2009 and the Garden State complex has yet to be completed. When the Nehemiah Project began we spent a lot of time looking at alternative locations. Due to costs and the complexities of acquiring these properties, we decided to go ahead and utilize the two properties across from the Church.



VACANT SITE ACROSS FROM KAIGHN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

Most recently and coming up:

1. We purchased the liens on two properties that exist across the street and have started foreclosure proceedings to clear those properties.
2. We have completed a Phase I environmental study that determines the efficacy of the soil.
3. We will shortly be conducting a geotechnical survey that will actually take soil samples and dig up ground to determine what might be underneath (i.e. heating oil tanks and other pollutants).
4. We will be aggressively working towards getting our giving to the \$1.0 million mark. We are currently a little over \$700,000.00 and growing each month. But we believe that with \$1.0 million in the bank, we will be in a position to do corporate and individual fundraising as well as the possibility of bank financing.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY WEEKEND OFFERS COMMUNITY OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIY

For the upcoming Community Center, NPCDC has developed a concise community survey that will be administer to the KABC congregations and surrounding community to better engage and understand the needs of local constituents. Plans to administer the survey are scheduled to take place during a portion of KABC's Friends and Family weekend which will take place during the fourth weekend of September.

So, why so long? Building a structure the size and scope of what the Pastor envisions is not a small undertaking. Yes, we can grow weary and doubt whether it will really happen, but we operate by faith and not by sight. Continue to believe in what the Lord has given to Pastor and continue to support the Nehemiah Project. Let's persevere!

"As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy." James 5:11 NIV

SPECIAL FOCUS: KABC SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

As another school year is winding down, NPCDC community is looking forward to one of the most anticipated programs of the summer season, KABC Summer Enrichment Program. The success and longevity of this program are due in large part to the efforts of one of the NPCDC community's most

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valuable assets, Carolyn Wharton. Each summer for over a decade, Carolyn has lead a group of children ranging in age from as young as 4 to as old as 15. With very little support, Carolyn has been able to attract a small but devoted staff and develop a comprehensive educational enrichment program that offers children in the community an array of opportunities. Some of the special events that the program has arranged have been summarized below.

- Cultural activities and field trips have included trips to the LaUnique Cultural Center, Clementon Park, Camden County Historical Society, and Camden City Hall. A full range of the children's' life skills are nourished through this program including civic engagement, reading, writing, mathematics, science and etiquette.
- Three times during the week the children are asked to participate in an exercise known as DEAR. DEAR stands for drop everything and read. This is designed to give each child the opportunity to reinforce their reading skills over the summer months. Children are encouraged to bring their own books or to borrow books from the KABC sponsored library. This program has proved to be very successful and the children and leaders really enjoy it. In addition, some group leaders have incorporated math skills into their life lessons which proven to be very helpful.
- In 2008, Mrs. Wharton was able to arrange for the children to participate in mock City Council meeting. The event, which provided many of the older enrichment program students with a valuable lesson in civic engagement and debate skills was organized by Councilman Whip Wilson, and was performed in the Camden City Council chambers.

Additional sources of support for this wonderful education program are being pursued so that the invaluable life skills and memories it provides can be nourished and helped to grow. As such, NPCDC with the assistance of Patrice Martin, a grant specialist and KABC member, as well as Mrs. Wharton herself are actively engaged in soliciting philanthropic organizations and community grant programs to lend this special program more support. Currently the group is anxiously awaiting a decision from TDBank's Community Grant program, and plan to apply to Susquehanna Bank's Corporate Giving Program for additional support.

BREAKING GROUND UPDATE

As noted in the Fall 2009 Newsletter, NPCDC recently obtained the services of a full service environmental site remediation firm to complete the first step of determining the readiness of land for development of the NPCDC Community Center. As a result, in February a Phase One Assessment (PA1) was successfully completed by Buchart Horn, Inc. a firm that has extensive experience with site remediation in Camden.



The initial report is encouraging as no immediate Areas of Concern (AOC's) were identified. However, over the spring and summer this information will be supplemented through soil borings, test results, etc. and then submitted to the NJDEP so that development of the site can proceed. NPCDC is currently considering enlisting BH to complete a formal Geophysical site survey to determine exactly what maintained on site.



WE ARE ON THE WEB!
VISIT US ON OUR NEW
WEBSITE FOR IMPORTANT
UPDATES, EVENTS, AND
INFORMATION ON HOW YOU
CAN HELP!

WWW.NEHEMIAHCDC.ORG



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The Nehemiah Project Community Development Corporation (NPCDC) is a certified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in the Gateway neighborhood of Camden, New Jersey. The explicit purpose of the NPCDC is to promote the holistic revitalization of the community surrounding the Kaighn Avenue Baptist Church

PLANS FOR GLASSBORO TO CAMDEN LIGHT RAIL MOVE FORWARD

The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) is a proposed 18-mile passenger rail line between Glassboro and Camden in Southern New Jersey being studied by both the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) and PATCO. While this project is still in the planning phase its potential to impact the City of Camden in a positive nature is immense. The importance of economic development around transit, which for years took a backseat in the public transportation decision-making process has again reached the forefront. Due to the proposed rail line's proximity to large employment institutions, population centers, and large parcels of vacant land provide a unique opportunity for the Nehemiah Community to make this work in Camden.

Public Scoping meetings were held on May 5, 2010 and May 11, 2010. In addition to providing verbal comments, participants have the opportunity to provide the study team with written comments using the comment form. The comment form can be filled out through the following methods:

- **Electronically** – You can fill out the comment form through this website- Public Scoping Comment Form at: <http://glassborocamdenline.com/contact/survey>
- **Hand Written** – You can download the comment form through this website Scoping Information Booklet & Comment Form. Please submit you comment form to :Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Outreach Liaison, Envision Consultants, Ltd., P.O. Box 536, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062; or by Fax (856) 223-8886; or by Email at publicinvolvement@GlassboroCamdenLine.com.
- **Verbally** – Leave your comment verbally by calling (856) 968-2252 (voice or via relay).



The written comment period for Scoping will close on Thursday, June 10, 2010.

NPCDC will be partnering with other community groups to not only voice support for this project but to encourage the maximum number of rail stops are developed in the city of Camden. Conceptual ideas that are being used as starting points for discussion are at Ferry Avenue, and possibly a park and ride style stop at Atlantic Avenue. Be sure to stay tuned for additional information on this project and community needs meeting which should take place over a number of months during the Fall of 2010 and Winter of 2011.

<http://www.glassborocamdenline.com/>



THE GATEWAY

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Word from the Chairman, Nehemiah CDC



BRITT A. STARGHILL,
CHAIRMAN NPCDC

Why Institutions matter

Institution is defined as an organization providing and representing an important role in the life of a community. We love to hate the institutions we need. We grumble about them, malign them as lifeless, useless, dysfunctional yet we have to acknowledge when all is said and done we need institutions. We cannot escape institutions, nor should we continue to try. We need the institutions within which we already live to serve as the background of our minds and our lives, giving shape and form to who we are. Furthermore, our children need to know and live with the benefits of strong institutions that prepare them for productive lives, as well.

Unfortunately, many American Christians have drunk too deeply from the well of “romantic individualism” and have eaten persistently at the trough of anti-institutionalism. Somehow we, Americans, have lost our attachment to the community and become seduced into thinking we can discover our best selves through introspection and self-help manuals. We pretend that authentic Christianity can occur solely between an individual and God, as an alternative. Even those Christians who want to overcome individualism turn to community/ institutions as an alternative to the loneliness, despair, and brokenness which is so rampant in society today. Despite meager attempts, people cannot exist for long without institutions.

Nehemiah believes, we have been entrusted with creating, preserving, and extending institutions for learning, sharing, and developing people in Camden who have been left, lost, and broken by the lack of viable institutions. It is without question, the work is hard and long but we are committed to doing whatever needs to be done to save the people in this community. We have a clear sense of the end for which we live and move and have our being. We are well-equipped to narrate the vices and virtues that are intrinsic to thinking institutionally. Start now, join in, and help us build a vibrant institution right here in Camden!

Britt A. Starghill
Chairman of Nehemiah CDC

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Why Institutions Matter

New Light Rail Line.

NPCDC Community Center Update.

Friends and Family Weekend.



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