

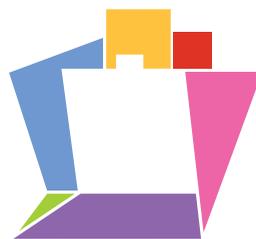
REPORT TO THE WEINLAND PARK AND GREATER COLUMBUS COMMUNITIES

FEBRUARY 2019

In 2018, the Weinland Park neighborhood saw an increase in population and the continued construction of new market-rate housing, while the Weinland Park Community Civic Association (WPCCA) affirmed its vision of reinforcing an inclusive and diverse, mixed-income community. The Weinland Park Collaborative (WPC) worked to implement that vision through sustaining the progress made in the past decade and focusing on four priorities:

1. Expand Family-Centered Community Change and its two-generation approach to working alongside children and their caregivers to break the cycle of generational poverty, including a strong partnership with Weinland Park Elementary School.
2. Increase access to quality early childhood education and care through support for a new childcare provider in Weinland Park and the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program.
3. Address the need for moderately priced housing (60% to 100% of AMI) through creative re-use of duplex properties and collaboration with a new community land trust.
4. Support community-building and resident empowerment through activities to promote inclusion led by the WPCCA and other neighborhood organizations.

This report provides more detail on these priorities, as well as other accomplishments of the past year. Looking ahead in 2019, the organizations and institutions that compose the WPC will consider how it will evolve in its structure and mission as the neighborhood has changed and as new partners come to the table sustain and expand this important work.



WEINLAND PARK
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FAMILY-CENTERED COMMUNITY CHANGE:

In 2018, the Family-Centered Community Change (FCCC) initiative in Weinland Park increased services to children and families enrolled in Weinland Park Elementary School (WPES). Also strengthened were major components of the FCCC model, which uses a two-generation approach to working alongside children and their parents and caregivers to break the cycle of generational poverty. With continued support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and The Columbus Foundation, Community Properties of Ohio (CPO) has been the “backbone organization” leading a team of agency partners to implement FCCC.

CPO now co-locates three staff members in WPES: a community-school liaison, an engagement specialist focused on children’s goals, and a coach focused on parents’ goals. A clinical manager and a full-time counselor from Directions for Youth and Families also joined the school-based team at the start of the school year to focus on behavioral needs of students. In 2018, 111 WPES students were being served through this partnership. CPO and Columbus City Schools are beginning to discuss potential replication of this model in other schools.

The Parent Pledge continues to be essential for attracting families to initially participate in FCCC, as well as for tracking data to measure impact. The pledge was instituted to improve children’s academic performance. Parents pledge to provide a supportive learning environment for their children and to serve as positive role models for learning. In return, FCCC partner agencies agree to support the parents’ efforts in a variety of ways. In 2018, 43 new families took the pledge, reaching a total of 193 families since its inception.

Next Doors is at the core of FCCC’s services. Next Doors provides individual coaching and support to children, parents and families in setting and achieving their own goals. In 2018, 61 families were engaged with



Two youngsters inspect the children’s books and magazines during the Parent Pledge Lunch Bunch at Weinland Park Elementary School.

Next Doors. In addition, the coaching staff finalized criteria for members to reach stability and become alumni. Nine members of Next Doors graduated to this status in 2018 and took on additional leadership responsibilities, such as planning and running the monthly Parents and Pastries support group.

CPO, in partnership with WPES and the Schoenbaum Family Center, improved the operation of Weinland Park Family University and expanded participation. Family University offers a series of free, six-week sessions on Saturday mornings to share strategies and techniques with parents to promote their children’s academic success. With technical assistance from national experts on the impact of trauma, Family University’s fall 2018 sessions were focused on addressing trauma, mental wellness, and healing. The response from the community was quite positive with some fall sessions drawing more than 30 parents. Overall, 81 parents attended at least one session during 2018. In addition, 100% of parents reported on post-event surveys that they shared something they learned at Family University with a family member.

Columbus Works officially joined the FCCC initiative in 2018 and began offering its signature JumpStart Job Readiness

Training once per month out of CPO’s leased space within the Godman Guild Association building. In addition, the FCCC partners have renovated space within Godman Guild for a training program through Columbus City Schools to help adults earn their high school diploma and a State Tested Nurse’s Aide certification simultaneously. The partners hope the training program could begin later in 2019.

CPO improved the FCCC data-sharing processes among partner agencies so metrics on various programs can be shared in a more timely fashion. As a consequence, staff can more effectively integrate Results-Based Accountability into the work, monitor progress and make changes more quickly to improve outcomes.

Looking ahead to 2019, the FCCC partners will build on efforts to enhance parent input on programs and services and to address barriers to engaging more parents in these programs and services. CPO also will focus on identifying additional partners to sustain and expand FCCC to other neighborhoods.

WEINLAND PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

The students, parents and staff of Weinland Park Elementary School (WPES) achieved an important goal with the announcement in the fall from the Ohio Department of Education that the school had been removed from “priority status” to “focus status.” The action is a clear sign that the academic performance of WPES students is continuing to improve, an objective set by former principals, including Rhonda Peeples, and reinforced by current Principal Dr. Porsha Robinson-Ervin.

“This is an amazing accomplishment and a dream come true,” exclaimed Audrey Lester, third grade teacher. “Moving out of ‘priority status’ is a true testimony to what a wonderful staff we have.” She cited the “never give up” attitude of the teachers and instructional aides, as well as support staff who serve food, maintain the building and work in the office, and the ACES and CPO staff who work with students and families during the day and after school.

Cynthia Smithers is a pre-kindergarten teacher who has worked at WPES since its new building opened in 2007. “It is a relief to know that our hard work has finally paid off,” she said. “Yes, there is still a lot of work to be done, but the extra hours, meetings, planning, teaching, communicating with parents, building relationships with students, and putting all of our blood,

sweat and many tears into our work is slowly beginning to show.... Our children are capable. They just need more help to overcome the burdens placed in their way than do better-off students with fewer obstacles.”

The Ohio Department of Education placed WPES in “priority status” some years ago because it was among the five percent of lowest-performing schools in the state. WPES moved out of that status based on its overall performance on the state report cards for two consecutive years.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PRIORITIES:

Ohio State’s Schoenbaum Family Center (SFC) has been an important partner since the inception of the WPC in 2010, providing leadership on issues of early childhood education and care. The SFC offers high-quality early childhood education to many neighborhood children, a library and other family learning opportunities, and access to meeting space for the civic association.

Jane Wiechel, director of community programs for SFC, encouraged cooperation among the programs offering early childhood education and care and kindergarten readiness in Weinland Park. The WPC in February 2018 published *The Role of Early Education in Neigh-*

borhood Revitalization: The Story of Weinland Park, a report that summarized the impact of these programs.

In response to the need for greater access to high-quality childcare in Weinland Park, Dr. Wiechel identified a new owner for an existing private childcare business at 184 E. Fifth Avenue. With encouragement from Dr. Wiechel and several WPC partners, Jerzell Pierre-Louis, owner of the Sprout Early Learning Center downtown, acquired the business in September 2018. The business had dwindled to only 10 children. Ms. Pierre-Louis plans to close the facility in February and March to permit extensive renovation. She will reopen the business as Bloom with a capacity for 81 full-time children and up to a dozen children for after-school care.

The SFC sponsors a kindergarten-readiness program, SPARK (Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids), that uses home visits to bring books and supplies to families and works with parents to equip them to more effectively engage in their child’s learning. Holly Lawrence, Weinland Park’s Parent Partner, completed the fifth year of SPARK, serving 35 families of three- and four-year-olds. In 2018, she experienced many more fathers engaged in their child’s pre-kindergarten preparation. Eight of the 35 families had a dad as their child’s learning advocate. Fourteen families transitioned from the program for three-year-olds to the program for four-year-olds, giving them a second year of SPARK to support their at-home teaching skills. Because of the relationship with “Mrs. Holly,” many families took advantage of resources offered such as CPO’s Next Doors coaching, SFC programming, and other community events.

Godman Guild Association is expanding its adult education program, Career Bridges, to include a Child Development Associate preparation track for persons seeking employment in a childcare center. As Ohio moves toward new standards for childcare providers in 2020, this track will help individuals gain certification to meet future requirements.

Moms2B, founded in Weinland Park in 2010, is a program to help women at high risk for infant mortality to learn tools that will enable them to make healthier choices and to



Michael Truss, Jr., and Michael Truss III participated in the SPARK kindergarten readiness program. Young Michael is now in kindergarten at Weinland Park Elementary School.

deliver healthy, full-term infants. Moms2B began as a research-driven, 10-week nutrition course and has since expanded into a community-wide comprehensive prenatal and first-year-of-life program offered weekly in eight locations, including Weinland Park. In 2018, Moms2B added an important companion program, Dads2B, that provides opportunities for fathers to participate in primary care visits with their partner during the pregnancy and the birth of their child. Many WPC members contributed to a crowd-funding campaign for donations to launch Dads2B.

In November, Ohio State applied for a federal expansion grant for its Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) program to serve an additional 200 infants, toddlers and their families with a focus on working with homeless and parent teenagers, pregnant women and economically disadvantaged families. The grant would support work with Mom2B and Dads2B, Star House, Directions for Youth and Families, and the Center for Healthy Families. Bloom would join the network of childcare centers in the partnership. Ohio State expects to hear whether the grant is approved in February.

Meanwhile, Ohio State is planning to apply in May 2019 to renew its five-year grant for the existing EHS-CCP. The program serves 160 children from low-income families through a network of 11 childcare centers, including the Schoenbaum Family Center, and eight family childcare providers. The program also has 17 university, non-profit agency and local government partners who collaborate to provide comprehensive services in a two-generation approach to assisting the children and their parents. One goal is to engage parents in their role as primary caregivers for their children and to move the parents toward self-sufficiency.



Brutus Buckeye brought his high-energy presence to the annual Weinland Park Neighborhood Festival in August 2018 and was a hit with both children and adults.

YOUTH PROGRAMS:

Godman Guild's ACES after-school program serves 90 students at Weinland Park Elementary School with in-school classroom support and after-school programming. ACES staff members provide in-school classroom support to teachers whose students are experiencing academic or behavioral challenges. The information gathered from work during the school day is used to inform the work that ACES staff members do during the after-school programming. ACES after-school programming focuses on providing academic skill-building in language arts and math and intensive social-emotional learning activities to combat non-academic barriers to student success.

Godman Guild reopened its T.E.E.N. program at the beginning of 2018 with three enrolled participants. One year later, T.E.E.N. has 75 enrolled teenagers from the Weinland Park, Milo-Grogan and Italian Village

neighborhoods. The teens are learning about S.T.E.M.-related job skills and careers. In the spring of 2019, they will start a project focused on building and operating drones and on urban mapping.

Godman Guild's Summer Youth Empower Program (SYEP) has offered a summer day camp experience to the Weinland Park, Milo-Grogan and Italian Village neighborhoods for more than 35 years. SYEP provides eight weeks of day camp programming for 150 youth in kindergarten through eighth grade, including transportation to Camp Mary Orton, breakfast and lunch, and activities such as swimming lessons, cooperative games, nature education, academic skill-building and social-emotional learning. SYEP also provides employment opportunities for previous campers, ages 14 to 19, through the junior staff program.

OSU EXTENSION:

OSU Extension's commitment to the Weinland Park neighborhood precedes the formation of the WPC. Susan Colbert, who has led OSU Extension's programming in the University District neighborhoods for nearly 18 years, and her staff have office space in the Terrace Place building at 99 E. Ninth Avenue. In 2018, Ms. Colbert oversaw the Weinland Park Community Connectors, a team of six residents who each take responsibility for communicating with neighbors on a particular street. The Community Connectors go door to door to distribute flyers about neighborhood activities and OSU Extension's *News You Can Use* quarterly newsletter. They encourage residents to attend the monthly WPCCA meetings and are involved in community gardening, food distribution, and neighborhood clean-ups.

OSU Extension-Franklin County's Community Development (CD) team, of which Ms. Colbert is a member, has taken programming often begun in Weinland Park to the whole county. Among its wide range of programs and services, the CD team in 2018 assisted more than 450 prospective home-buyers with the purchase of homes in Columbus and Franklin County and renters who were at risk of eviction, utility shut-offs and other financial challenges. The CD team also offered money management workshops to more than 200 families. These personal finance workshops assist families to effectively manage their household finances through education and counseling on finances and budgeting, household management and maintenance, student loan debt and banking.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

Campus Partners and the WPCCA's Housing Committee are considering innovative approaches to expanding affordable housing opportunities in Weinland Park. Throughout 2018, the Housing Committee discussed the potential renovation and re-use of six vacant duplexes in the WPC's real estate portfolio held by Campus Partners. In the fall, the committee

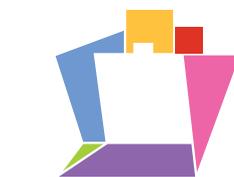
met with representatives of the city's land bank and the county's new Central Ohio Community Land Trust (CLT). Committee members discussed the potential of transferring some or all of the duplex properties to the CLT for redevelopment as affordable single-family homes. The CLT also could acquire a few neighborhood parcels now used as community gardens and potentially could be a partner in the eventual transfer of the neighborhood's 40 lease-to-purchase houses to affordable homeownership. As of January 2019, the Housing Committee has recommended that three of the duplex properties be transferred to the CLT. Committee members hope to identify developers who would renovate the remaining three duplexes, one of which is in the New Indianola Historic District.

MARKET-RATE HOUSING:

Wagenbrenner Development tested the waters for construction of new market-rate housing in Weinland Park in late 2014 on the old Columbus Coated Fabrics site, now known as Grant Park. The company started by constructing a model home and two additional single-family houses along North Grant Avenue. The positive response was immediate. By mid-2016, Wagenbrenner had built and sold 39 single-family homes on the west side of North Grant. To meet market demand, Wagenbrenner in 2018 built two additional single-family homes and completed construction on 150 one- and two-bedroom apartments along the east side of North Grant. As of January 2019, 125 of those apartments are already occupied and another 96 apartments are under construction. With the for-sale market being so strong in Weinland Park, Wagenbrenner also has under construction another five single-family homes and four of 50 proposed for-sale duplexes. The four duplexes are projected to be on the market in February 2019. In the planning phase are an additional 108 apartments.

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Annie E. Casey Foundation
 Cardinal Health
 The Center for Family Safety and Healing
 City of Columbus
 Columbus City Schools
 The Columbus Foundation
 Columbus Works, Inc.
 Community Properties of Ohio
 Management Services
 Community Properties Impact Corporation
 Directions for Youth and Families
 Godman Guild Association
 Habitat for Humanity MidOhio
 JPMorgan Chase Foundation
 Local Matters
 NNEMAP Food Pantry
 Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
 The Ohio State University
 Campus Partners
 College of Education and Human Ecology
 Knowlton School of Architecture
 Ohio State University Extension
 Office of Outreach and Engagement
 Schoenbaum Family Center
 Wexner Center for the Arts
 Wexner Medical Center
 7th Avenue Community Missionary
 Baptist Church
 United Way of Central Ohio
 Wagenbrenner Development
 Weinland Park Community Civic Association



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