



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mary Sheffield, Council President
FROM: Antoine Bryant, Director, Planning and Development Department (PDD)
DATE: July 13, 2022
RE: Community Outreach Report for the Midwest-Tireman Neighborhood Framework

Below is a detailed description of the community outreach efforts led by Planning and Development Department with assistance from General Services Department (GSD), Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD), Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC), and Department of Neighborhoods (DON).

1. How many meetings have or will occur?

Engagement for the Community Outreach Ordinance (COO) was comprised of two public meetings, as required for Class B Neighborhood Proposals. The following two public meetings were held virtually and noticed per the COO notification requirements:

COO ENGAGEMENT PUBLIC MEETINGS

- **June 27, 2022:** DONcast COO Meeting #1
 - Presentation and discussion on the proposed Neighborhood Framework Study Area. Introduction to PDD Team and the scope of the planning study.
(175 attendees)
- **July 11, 2022:** DONcast COO Meeting #2 (virtual)
 - Presentation and discussion on the proposed Neighborhood Framework Study Area. Introduction to PDD Team and the scope of the planning study.
(127 attendees)

2. How were people notified or will they be notified?

Both COO meetings, held on **Monday, June 27, 2022:** 'DONcast COO Meeting #1' and Monday, **July 11, 2022:** 'DONcast COO Meeting #2', were noticed in compliance with the Community Outreach Ordinance. The COO notice for *both* meetings was distributed and posted as follows:

- **Public Notice sent 06/17/2022** via GovDelivery by the DON for the impacted geography (District 6), which includes residents, Community Advisory Councils, and local block clubs in District 6 and City Council Members
- **Flyer sent 06/17/22** by PDD for the Midwest-Tireman community via GovDelivery (not required)
- **Public Notice and Flyer emailed** to Detroit City Council Members for their use and distribution
- **Public Notice Posted** on City's Facebook page and calendar of events
- **Flyer Posted** on the PDD Facebook page (not required)
- **Public Notice Broadcast** on Channel 10

3. What concerns were raised by the community?

- **June 27, 2022:** The questions and concerns from the community were as follows:
 - **Sherill School** - Is it possible that the Sherril School can be developed for housing and the empty parking lot as a park or townhomes? It was a suggestion posed by a long-time community member.
 - **Blue Bird Inn** - A representative from the Detroit Sound Conservancy, who purchased the Blue Bird Inn -- a historically significant building currently being renovated -- asked how close this project is to their historically designated site and how they can support the Midwest-Tireman project.
 - **Housing Stabilization/ Repair** - Are there any grants for seniors and all homeowners who might need some upgrades and repairs in their homes? Are there any grants specifically for this area?
 - When will there be rough draft renderings of what the area would look like in the future? Also, is there an ideal site to show streetscape renderings?
- **July 11, 2022:** The questions and concerns from the community were as follows:
 - **Visioning and Future Development** - When will renderings be shown of the Sherrill School or streetscapes sites along Epworth?
 - **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** - What is happening in the area between Grand River and Davidson and from Monica to all the way to Dexter in District 7? There were concerns about funding programs allocated in the city for seniors.
 - **Joe Louis Greenway Impacts** - What type of bordering or fencing is being done along Joe Louis Greenway to protect neighboring residents adjacent to the greenway from hazards or safety issues?
 - **Framework Support/ Future Development** - Is the Third New Hope Baptist Church within the study area? And if so, how could the church advocate or champion this study?

- **Sherill School/ Future Use** - There were concerns expressed regarding the type of use that would be proposed for Sherill School. Any sort of positive use is welcome, however, uses such as weed dispensary were not encouraged.
- **Joe Louis Greenway Information and Contact** - How to get in touch with the project team for the Joe Louis Greenway
- **Blue Bird Inn** - In the framework what is planned for the area surrounding the Blue Bird Inn that also includes other historic places, such as the Ames Park and Nacirema Club?
- **Visioning and Future Development** - Is a portion of Tireman, highlighted by an amber dotted line in one of the maps in the presentation, an example of an ideal site for streetscape improvements?
- **Visioning and Future Development** - Is the study only focusing on development of major streets such as Warren and Tireman? And is it suggesting some ideas on what could happen?
- **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** - Joy Road and Tireman has issues with trash dumping out of cars and the situation is getting worse. Who is the right person to contact regarding these matters?
- **Schools** - Is the PDD aware that Sampson Academy is not closed? If so, what type of improvement are planned for the surrounding area?
- **Historic Preservation** - In addition to the five criteria the City has identified, the City should add a sixth criterion for historical landmarks. Nacirema Club is one of the oldest black clubs in Detroit. This neighborhood is home to The Hartford Memorial Church and all sorts of other black institutions. Initiatives are needed to preserve the historic nature this neighborhood.
- **Demolitions** - Is the apartment between Brighton and American on Alaska Avenue scheduled for demolition? It has been abandoned and neglected approximately for over fifteen years.
- **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** - What is being done on illegal dumpsites located across Central Avenue and Alpine, and between Joy Road and Tireman.

1. What is being done to address the concerns of the community?

- **Sherrill School Future Use** - Envisioning Sherill School as a site for housing and recreational parks was suggested by the community and will be evaluated during the framework study for the highest and best use of the site.
- **Blue Bird Inn** - PDD supports the rehabilitation and reuse of the Bluebird Inn. In the past, PDD has worked with Jonas Silverstein before starting this framework and looks forward to working with the current property owners as they develop the facility also the surrounding area. Currently, there is no specific project in terms of planned development in the area. However, we are looking into streetscape improvements that might create an

inviting environment for potential investments. Also, this being a planning study, we will look into what type of development can come into the area, such as retail options.

- **Housing Stabilization/ Repair** - Regarding home repair rehabilitation grants, PDD and HRD will look into existing grants within the City, as well explore new avenues for grants. PDD will look intently at housing in the areas of stabilization and mitigation efforts in this area, and take into consideration the high senior population and homeownership as we conduct the neighborhood framework study.
- **Visioning and Future Development** - Regarding specific sites and streetscape renderings, we are still in the beginning of the framework study process, and currently, no renderings exist. The project still requires City Council's approval to move forward. The study will examine specific key nodes and streets as to where these improvements could happen to have the most positive effect on the neighborhood. At this point, there is no specific time for when renderings will be available for review. However, they are identified as part of the overall process, and will be provided further into the study. PDD also encouraged the attendees to participate in the community-wide engagement meetings so that their feedback can be considered when it is time.
- **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** DON response: Regarding areas identified in District 7, they go beyond the scope of this study. This study is focused on the Midwest-Tireman area. Any questions regarding the status of projects or programs in District 7 need to be directed towards the District 7 Manager. Regarding funding for seniors, you do not have to be part of the planning area to ask for the funds. Reach out to your respective District Manager.
- **Joe Louis Greenway Impacts** - Regarding fencing or the bordering of the edges of the Joe Louis Greenway, there have been discussions on landscaping features along the edges. However, while we acknowledge these concerns, they are not within the scope of this neighborhoods framework study. Therefore, these questions and concerns need to be directed to the Joe Louis Greenway Framework planning team. Join their email signup for regular updates on the website: <https://detroitmi.gov/departments/general-services-department/joe-louis-greenway>.
- **Framework Support/ Future Development** - The Third New Hope Baptist Church is within the study area. We encourage everyone interested in the study area to join the email sign up for updates and participate in the community engagement process.
- **Joe Louis Greenway Information and Contacts** - On questions or concerns regarding the Joe Louis Greenway, attendees were directed to visit the official Joe Louis Greenway website at <https://detroitmi.gov/departments/general-services-department/joe-louis-greenway> and sign up for their emails.
- **Development Nodes** - Clarification was offered regarding a map that highlighted a portion of Tireman in an amber dotted line. The highlighted area was not intended to identify street specific improvement sites. Rather the map was looking into key intersections in the area. Since Livernois and Tireman are key streets through the neighborhood, their intersection was highlighted in the map. If there is potential for any type of catalytic development to occur there, or visual improvement of that area, the study would consider those factors.

- **Future Development** - Regarding scope of the study, it is not looking into only the major streets but the overall neighborhood. The scope of the framework study for this area is to understand what the potential is to support the area's revitalization and growth that also coincides with the development of the Joe Louis Greenway. At this preliminary stage, we have identified that there are certain areas, that could be looked at more intently for any type of catalytic development that can help the overall neighborhood. During this framework study, we would host smaller stakeholder meetings to get the community's input and ideas on as to what can happen.
- **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** DON response: Regarding trash dumping, if it is from a car and onto the street, contact the police department. If it is on specific sites, then contact your respective District Manager and they will be able to assist with the issue.
- **Historic Preservation** - PDD made a note on the comment regarding the historic buildings in the neighborhood and thanked the participant for their comments.
- **Schools** - PDD is aware that Sampson Academy - Biddle Elementary School is active. The maps in the presentation show it as active. The framework study would undergo a market analysis to determine what catalytic projects could potentially take place, where to make proper investment and how this could be phased in appropriately.
- **Demolitions** - PDD could not confirm immediately in the meeting if the fifteen-year-old abandoned apartment is on the demolition list. However, if there are structures that upon observation that need to be demolished, PDD would take their status into consideration. DON response: Participants in the meeting were encouraged to reach out to their District Managers or attend District meetings to obtain information on demo list properties.
- **[OUT OF FRAMEWORK SCOPE]** DON response: The District Manager will also be working on the illegal dumping sites.

The PDD team expressed an excitement to working with the community. While it may not be possible to recapture the past, it is possible to begin to chart a course for a new future.

Community members were provided with contact information for the Midwest-Tireman project and City staff to facilitate responses to any subsequent questions or concerns. Residents were encouraged to contact staff via email at midwest-tireman@detroitmi.gov. They can also call directly John F. Sivills, project lead, at 313-224-4403 and Rashedul H. Deepon, project manager, at 313-224-4431.

Residents were also invited to visit www.detroitmi.gov/midwest-tireman/ for more information.

4. Was there any written feedback received, including letters, comments, or reports from residents, businesses, neighborhood groups, or an established Community Advisory Council?

No written feedback was received outside of the chat function of the virtual COO meetings, all of which has been included within this report.

PDD has held or participated in smaller community stakeholder meetings, and participated in online block club meetings beginning in August 2021 to date, in an effort to gather feedback from the community to inform the structure of the framework. Other participants include, Midwest Civic Council of Block Clubs, United Block Clubs, My Community Speaks, Bridging Communities, Equity Alliance, individual residents and businesses. In full transparency, PDD used these meetings to update the community on progress developing the framework's Request for Proposal (RFP) for consultant services and the RFP content and procurement policy for any questions or concerns prior to the COO meetings.

We would be happy to answer any additional questions.