Homewood Cluster Planning: Business and Institutional Core
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Homewood Planning Efforts
Fall 2014- Spring 2015

Goal: To improve Homewood Station and the area around it by building projects near the station, and improving safety and access through public improvements such as sidewalks, station furniture, and lighting.

URA | Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) | Operation Better Block (OBB)
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OBB Cluster Planning Meetings: Business Cluster (Aug-Oct); Cluster 4; Cluster 1
Business District Final Mtg. (will include TOD) 9.25.14
East Busway Revitalization Meetings (Aug-Oct)
One on one meetings
Community Workshop?
Homewood Station TOD Meetings (Sept.-Jan. 2015)
Cluster Planning: Business District Final Meeting 9.25.14
Pt. Breeze North Mtg. 10.6.14
Public Hearing #1: 11.13.14
Pittsburgh Public Hearing #2: Dec. 2014
Public Hearing #3: Jan. 2015

Cluster Planning & Other Vision Plans
- WHAT: Vision plan for Business District, and areas near the station
- WHO: Resident driven, OBB

East Busway Study
- WHAT: Identify and implement best-practice policies that ensure the community's vision is protected and advanced in any new development
- WHO: Hidelberg Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG)

Homewood Station Transit Oriented Development
- WHAT: Identify community-driven priority projects within a 1/4 mile of Homewood Station and ways to fund those projects
- WHO: Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)

The vision and recommendations for Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core, created through the Cluster Planning Process and summarized in this report, will inform two planning projects focused on development around the East Busway’s Homewood Station.

Business and Institutional Core Final Plan

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Cluster Planning Overview

Why Create Another Plan for Homewood?

Change is coming to Homewood. The goal of Homewood Cluster Planning is to guide that change in the interest of Homewood’s residents. The Cluster Planning process will create a detailed land use vision for Homewood’s future based on the needs and desires of existing, present-day community stakeholders.

This process will consider both long – and short-term land use, working with residents in one part of the neighborhood at a time. Building on the neighborhood assets, the process will craft a vision for what should happen to vacant property; what types of development are right for different parts of Homewood; where houses should be renovated, mothballed or demolished and where new ones should be built; as well as where new businesses, industrial uses or parks should be located. After plans for all of the clusters have been developed, they will be brought together into a complete, community-driven plan for the entire Homewood neighborhood.

This process will not resolve all questions regarding how the vision will be implemented. However, it will set goals for ensuring that future development is equitable and addresses the needs of the existing community.

The Cluster Planning Team

Operation Better Block (OBB) was incorporated in 1971 and has worked for successful Neighborhood and Community Development over the last forty years, focusing on the Homewood-Brushton neighborhood. OBB’s mission is to strategize, organize and mobilize residents block-by-block to benefit the Homewood community. The Cluster Planning process is a natural extension of that mission.

Studio for Spatial Practice (SfSP) is an innovative, award-winning design firm with a multi-disciplinary approach to architecture, urban design, landscape architecture and art. SfSP specializes in public realm projects that engage clients and community members in creatively envisioning changes to their environment. SfSP brings experience and local insight to the Cluster Planning process, having recently completed the Bridging the Busway study.
Cluster Planning Overview

How the Homewood Cluster Planning Process Works

After an initial pilot study area was completed for residential blocks adjacent to Faison Elementary, the planning process began in earnest, in January of 2014, with an Introductory Meeting where an overview of the Homewood Cluster Planning process was presented.

As a first step in each cluster, OBB conducts field surveys to collect personal testimonies from residents and parcel-specific data within the target area. OBB shares their up-to-date information with the rest of the planning team and mails postcards summarizing basic statistics about the cluster to every resident. The postcards are a way to share the data that has been collected and encourage participation in upcoming planning meetings.

Three cluster-specific meetings follow, where findings are presented and residents’ input is solicited. OBB staff also go door to door between meetings, following up with residents to share draft planning materials and ask for feedback. Their comments are then incorporated into the planning work. At the third meeting, a Draft Consensus Plan is presented for review and comment.

The resulting Final Consensus Plan is included in a summary report and distributed to area residents. All completed Cluster Plans are eventually brought together into a neighborhood-wide Master Plan. The anticipated time line for completing planning for all cluster areas is the summer / fall of 2015.
In the Business and Institutional Core, public meetings focused primarily on the future identity of the district and the uses that could support that identity. Participants were asked to consider relevant categories of uses and how they could best be distributed within the zone. Meetings concentrated on Local Neighborhood Commercial uses rather than broader land uses, as in other clusters.

Below is a summary of topics discussed at each of the three meetings:

**Meeting 1:**
Existing conditions and past planning recommendations were presented. The future identity of the Business and Institutional Core was discussed.

**Meeting 2:**
A draft identity statement was presented and possible uses and locations were discussed.

**Meeting 3:**
Draft district use scenarios were presented, discussed and refined. Market data for the district was also presented for feedback.

In addition to this planning process, the Homewood Transit Oriented Development Study (focused on advancing development and infrastructure implementation around Homewood Station) and PCRG’s East Busway Study (focused on development policy) are running concurrently and will be informed by the Cluster Planning Process. The Final Consensus Vision Statement and Summary Diagrams are included in this report, which is being distributed to area residents and business owners.
History of Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core

Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core was once a thriving commercial district serving a population of over 30,000 residents. Businesses filled in the length of Homewood Avenue, extending north from the Pennsylvania Railroad underpass to Frankstown Avenue. Frankstown Avenue had a one-sided commercial district; the south side of the street was lined by municipal trolley maintenance buildings for several blocks. Many institutions already had a presence within the Core district and continue to thrive there today. While Homewood and Frankstown Avenues comprised the primary neighborhood business districts, additional pockets of commercial uses were clustered on Hamilton, Brushton and Braddock Avenues.
Business and Institutional Core History: 1939 Map

- Frankstown: Fragmented & One-Sided
- Homewood: Continuous District
- Institutions
- Trolley Maintenance Barns

Legend:
- Red: Commercial
- Purple: Institutions
- Light Blue: Churches
- Dark Purple: Trolley Barns
Homewood Cluster Planning | Business and Institutional Core Vision Plan

Business and Institutional Core 2014 Map

- **Homewood: Significant Vacancy**
- **Frankstown: Fragmented, Some Activity**
- **Expanded Institutions**
- **New Investment**
- **Homewood Station**

Legend:
- Red: Commercial
- Gray: Vacant Retail
- Purple: Institutions
- Cyan: Churches
Business and Institutional Core Existing Conditions

Assets & Challenges

Homewood’s L-shaped Business and Institutional Core extends along Homewood Avenue, from the Busway north to Forest Way, and along Frankstown Avenue, from Lang Avenue east to Brushton Avenue.

The Business and Institutional Core is zoned Local Neighborhood Commercial along Frankstown and Homewood Avenues, with Urban Neighborhood Commercial on the eastern edge of Homewood Avenue closest to the Busway. Multi-Family Residential zoning, with a small pocket of Single Family Very High Density, also exists within the Core.

Homewood Station is an important asset for the Business and Institutional Core, providing express bus service to East Liberty, Oakland, downtown Pittsburgh and beyond. The Business and Institutional Core includes a large number of long-standing cultural and educational Institutions including the Carnegie Library, the Community College of Allegheny County, and the Afro-American Music Institute, among others.

Challenges for the Core district include working with a large number of vacant properties, delinquent landlords and deteriorating properties, sustaining and supporting existing businesses, and attracting new commercial uses.

The following pages show existing Business and Institutional Core conditions relating to land and building uses, occupied and vacant properties, homeowners and renters, and zoning. This key information was presented and made available at Cluster Planning meetings to help educate participants about local conditions and inform discussions about land use planning.
Business and Institutional Core Existing Zoning

The Core area is comprised of a mix of multi-family and single-family very-high residential, Local Neighborhood Commercial, and Urban Neighborhood Commercial on Homewood Avenue.
Existing Uses

OBB field surveyed the Business and Institutional Core to determine the current uses of buildings and unbuilt land, which are reflected in this diagram. Understanding which lots are being used for retail or institutional uses, for example, helps to inform the planning process and action plan.
While there are many existing businesses and institutions within Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core, there are also many vacant properties - buildings and land. There are both challenges and opportunities associated with vacancy in and around business districts.
Public Ownership

The Core includes a concentration of City of Pittsburgh and URA properties - mainly vacant land - which may provide opportunities for developing new businesses.
Business and Institutional Core Existing Assets: Transit

Transit Assets

Part of Homewood Avenue is within a 5 minute walk of the East Busway while a majority of existing businesses are captured within a 10 minute walk from Homewood Station. The Core is also served by the 74, 71D, 77, and 86 bus routes.
Business and Institutional Core Existing Assets: Arts

The Business and Institutional Core has a vibrant tradition in the arts with a history rich in performance and arts education.
Business and Institutional Core Existing Assets: Retail

Retail Assets

The Business and Institutional Core has several long-standing local businesses as well as proposed new development in the works.
Business and Institutional Core Existing Assets: Education

Education Assets

The Business and Institutional Core has strong educational assets including the Afro American Music Institute, CCAC, Carnegie Library, and the Community Empowerment Association.
RETAIL MARKET OVERVIEW

The following pages contain demographic and market data that was presented at Meeting 3. In consultation with the client, the URA, the market area was chosen based on the geographic proximity to Homewood along with the established historical and economic links between those neighborhoods based on travel patterns, work locations and demographics.

This information was presented by 4th Economy, the economic development consultants working on the Homewood Station Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study, to help community members refine a list of recommended uses for the Core district. Market data was gathered as part of the TOD Study, but it was also informed by results from Business and Institutional Core Cluster Planning Meetings 1 and 2.

Meeting 3 participants were divided into two breakout groups to review market data cards about various business types. Participants discussed the opportunities and challenges of bringing each use to the community and then refined the use recommendations.

Retail Market Area: The diagram above illustrates Homewood in orange and the larger market area in yellow. Neighborhoods such as Larimer, East Hills, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and Point Breeze North may potentially help to sustain the Homewood Business and Institutional Core district.
Homewood Cluster Planning | Business and Institutional Core Vision Plan

**Business and Institutional Core Market Data**

**HOMEOWNERS vs RENTERS**

The market area has 7,900 households, with 3,000 located in Homewood.

This graph shows that there are more renters than owners within the neighborhood.

**FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS vs NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS**

There are 4,100 family households in the market area with 1,500 of those households in Homewood.
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION vs WALKED TO WORK

1,766 (30%) households in the market area use public transportation to get to work.

In Homewood, 538 (75%) households rely on public transportation to get to work.

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT A VEHICLE

In the market area, 38.4% of households do not have a vehicle, as compared to 11.4% of households in the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

In Homewood, 48.3% of households are without a vehicle and rely heavily on public transportation.
**MEDIAN INCOME**

The median household for most of the neighborhoods within the market area are below the City’s overall median income of $38,029.

**TOTAL SPENDING IN THE MARKET AREA**

This graph shows that there is room to expand retail within the market area:

- The City has more retail space and sales than City residents can support. We depend on visitors to support our retail.
- Total estimated resident spending in the Market Area is about $75 Million.
- Total retail sales in the Market Area is $34 Million.
- The market area is under-retailed by an estimated $41 Million: the amount of money that people spend outside of the market area.
Business and Institutional Core Transit

Commuter Traffic

Roughly 23,000 cars a day drive through the Core business district, mostly going East-West.
Another 32,700 commuters move through Homewood on the Busway and other bus routes.
Past Planning Efforts: 2012 OBB Community Visioning

Summary:

Operation Better Block held two community visioning meetings in December of 2012 with approximately 60 residents and other stakeholders in attendance. The meeting participants were asked to imagine possibilities for the future of their community and to describe what Homewood would be like in 2022.

District Goal:

Establish Homewood as a regional African-American Cultural Destination

Vision:

1. Restore a vibrant mix of retail with restaurants, shops, a supermarket, and entertainment options
2. Create a cultural center or museum focused on the rich history of Homewood
3. Celebrate African culture, while also welcoming and including all cultures
4. Establish a safe, family-friendly, and green place to walk, hear music and see art
5. Create a new brand for Homewood

Photograph of the interactive envisioning session conducted as part of Meeting 1
Past Planning Efforts: 2011 Bridging the Busway

District Goal:
Leverage indigenous assets to establish Homewood’s business district as a destination for celebrated African-American culture, institutions, businesses and entrepreneurship.

Business, Arts & Culture Strategies:
1. Address safety first
2. Build mixed-use transit-oriented development around the Homewood Avenue Busway Stop
3. Create a youth, arts & education campus
4. Make Homewood Avenue a regional arts and culture destination
5. Grow local enterprises through a business incubator
Date: August 26th, 2014
Location: Community Empowerment Association, 7020 Kelly St
Attendees: 44

Goal
• Create a description of the future identity of Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core

Summary
• SFSP presented a summary of Existing Conditions and ongoing projects in the Cluster, including: Homewood Business Association Meetings, Homewood Station Senior Housing and new café, Parking Authority Parking Lot Improvements, etc.
• Meeting attendees participated in break-out group discussions where SFSP asked for help correcting the existing conditions map for the Business and Institutional Core. Participants also reviewed and discussed the potential future identity of the Core district.
• Differing opinions were encouraged

Follow Up
• OBB knocked on approximately 96 residents’, businesses’ and institutions’ doors after Meeting 1 to review what was discussed at the first meeting and invite them to participate in the process
Meeting 1 consisted of a presentation by OBB and SfSP that was followed by break out group activities and a final report out by the smaller groups.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

- Homewood needs to have a unique brand – possibly around a cultural destination.
- Green areas and parks should be beautified and maximized.
- The overpass near the football field should be made safer and more welcoming.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

Q) What is going to happen to the vacant lots on North Homewood Ave?
A) That is what we are here to talk about tonight and over the course of the next two meetings.

Q) What is transit-oriented development?
A) Typically, mixed use residential and commercial space, such as the new Homewood Station Senior Housing, that maximizes access to public transportation.

Q) How is the business district defined?
A) North Homewood Avenue is historically thought of as the main business corridor. One side of Frankstown has always held businesses as well. Most of the smaller, clustered business districts, such as on Brushton Avenue, now have just a few businesses interspersed.

Q) When will the rebuilding start?
A) This process will hopefully get in front of the rebuilding and have residents’ input driving the development. Development will likely continue to move toward and into Homewood, but it is hard to predict the exact time frame.
Break Out Group 1

• Participants asked for a butcher, a baker, and a shoe repair in the neighborhood

• Homewood has good bus service, though there are fewer bus routes than in the past

• Within the business district, there needs to be a way to support local/indigenous entrepreneurship - help people who have an idea build a business

• Two attendees informed the group that the Homewood-Brushton Bar Owners Association is strong and active

• Homewood is the last and best location to establish a regional African-American cultural and business destination

• There is a need for branding Homewood as an African-American cultural destination - where else can you take visitors for this kind of offering?

• Homewood has an opportunity to be a regional draw with food and culture

• Homewood’s business district can become a global destination

• Participants said it will be difficult to establish a destination in Homewood but felt it could be done

• What will be done about public safety? The business district won’t thrive as long as crime is an issue.

• What should the district boundaries be? Note: This will be part of Meeting 2’s focus.

• How many businesses should be brought into Homewood Avenue? Note: This will be part of the Meeting 2/3 discussion.

• The planning group should talk with Emma Slaughter re: plans for a Homewood Museum

• Participants asked how long it will take to rebuild the business district

• Make the corridor welcoming and inviting: there needs to be some immediate, physical improvements to change people’s perceptions about the neighborhood

• The names of several businesses were added to the Homewood Business District map

• Some people wondered why bars don’t seem to be on the map: bars are an important and successful part of Homewood’s nightlife.

• Other people questioned why only the names of businesses on Homewood and Frankstown are shown (this was intentional but it may be possible to have an additional map with all of Homewood’s businesses shown)
Break Out Group 2

• Westinghouse Park (and any future parks or public spaces in Homewood) need shelters, trails, restrooms, benches, play areas, and amenities to make it a space where people want to be

• Include neighborhood child care facilities in the discussion

• Participants requested a bicycle shop/repair store in the business district along with bike lanes to encourage different means of transportation

• Business and Institutional Core needs an updated streetscape with new lighting, benches, bike racks, trash cans, and other amenities

• Street cleaning should happen more regularly throughout the Core

• Security cameras should be installed to help reduce crime in the Core

• Seniors need better access to amenities: everything should be within a short walking distance

• Provide ADA accessibility throughout the Business and Institutional Core as a priority

• More neighborhood serving retail is needed: hair salon, barber, laundromat, post office, gas station, etc.

• A grocery store or market and restaurants would enliven the district

• Cluster businesses together to encourage people to walk in the district

Break Out Group 3

• Agreement with goal of making the district a cultural destination

• Historically the Flatlands, the “F” Streets, were all called “Brushton.” Homewood was the surrounding residential zone all the way south to Homewood Cemetery.

• Suggestion to call the district “Brushton-Homewood” because of this history

• History of the area is important to promote in the district

• Addressing public safety, both the reality and perception, is essential to bringing back businesses and customers

• Need for new and expanded Art and Cultural destinations, as well as restaurants, a grocery store, etc

• The intersection of Frankstown and Homewood is a key location

• Need to fix the overpass to Westinghouse Park to better connect it with the Business and Institutional Core and the Busway stop

• Sports should be part of how Homewood’s culture is defined

• Stargell Field is important to the community and should be expanded and upgraded - it is already a destination for the players, coaches, and parents. Ideally this would be done in conjunction with improvements to the Westinghouse Academy Field (addressed in Cluster 2). Both fields are in poor condition.

• Discussion about leveraging a cashless community to address safety and create a unique identity

• Suggestion to re-establish the trolley on Felicia Way to celebrate the rail history and create a unique attraction

• Bethesda Church is an asset to the district
Business and Institutional Core Meeting 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>September 9, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Afro-American Music Institute - 7180 Hamilton Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees:</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goal**
- Identify which uses will help to establish Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core as an African-American cultural destination.

**Summary**
- Ideas from Meeting 1 were combined to create use categories for the Cluster.
- In break-out groups, attendees reviewed four use categories and identified which uses belong in Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core. Attendees placed green dots next to the uses that are necessary to achieve the goal of establishing an African-American cultural destination.
- In the second activity, attendees used post-it notes in colors matching the categories and located uses within the Core area. Notes were added to further describe each location.
- Participants were encouraged to add notes and comments to elaborate on their preferences or to suggest ideas that were not shown.

**Follow Up**
- OBB knocked on approximately 96 residents’, businesses’ and institutions’ doors after Meeting 2 to review the latest draft planning materials.

The meeting began with an announcement by Elwin Green of Homewood Nation: 9/11/14 at 8:30 PM there will be a video conference recap of the meeting with OBB, SfSP and Elwin Green. (Update: the recap was cancelled due to technical issues.)

An introduction by OBB was followed by a presentation by SfSP, including a recap of Meeting 1 and an explanation of the break out activities.

As per Meeting 1:
- There will be an effort to create a regional African-American cultural district with services, goods and groceries that meet the needs of the residents, celebrate the history of Homewood and also welcome/include all cultures.
- The district should: remain compact and walkable, support local entrepreneurs and grow existing businesses, and be physically upgraded. Public safety must be addressed to improve the reality and change perceptions.
- Between the second and third meeting, a market-analysis study will be conducted. Findings will be presented at Meeting 3 to inform a discussion about the reality of development in the Core business district.

A brief presentation by Andre Young of the Homewood Business Association (HBA) followed SfSP’s presentation. The HBA exists to attract other businesses to Homewood with the support of a network of connected and experienced professionals. The Association takes advantage of existing businesses to generate energy for new businesses. By looking at the reasons why businesses leave the community, the HBA can counsel new businesses to ensure that they do not have the same start up issues or difficulties. Mr. Young stated that it is going to take time to change, build and create a revitalized community.
GOODS
• 1 green dot for each of the following: Building Material and Garden Equipment (coincides with Junior Green Corps training program), Jewelry Sales (local artisan), Sporting Goods and Music Store, Apparel and Clothing, Household Furnishings and Equipment (to coincide with a job training program in furniture making), Audio and Electronic Equipment (linked to AMI programs)
• 1 blue dot for each of the following: Flea Market, Jewelry, Audio and Electronic Equipment, Sporting Goods, Gasoline, and Convenience Store

SERVICES
• 1 green dot for each of the following: Car Repair, Community Kitchen, Business Incubator, Health Clinic, and Non-Profit or Community Service
• 2 blue dots for Laundry
• 1 blue dot for each of the following: Car Repair, Child Care and Community Kitchen

FOOD & GROCERIES
• 1 green dot each for: Specialty Food Store, Farmers Market (with Jr. Green Corps and its food growing program) and Cafe and Coffee Shop
• 1 blue dot for Farmers Market and Grocery Store

HANDWRITTEN ON DRAWING
• Green Space or Plaza should be integral to the Homewood Core: people need a place to sit after walking around
• Use the Coliseum as a convention Center and a Community Theater location
• Use the PNC Building for a Restaurant or Bar
• Include a Mini Police Station as a Service
• Consider parking strategies as the Core district grows and develops

Q) Will there be training for those already in the neighborhood?

A) Mr. Young: We recognize that the business engines here will employ the young people living here now. We also need to generate new businesses so that there are more opportunities for people living here now. We plan to help new entrepreneurs create their businesses and gain the necessary skills to keep them running.

Q) What about those with felonies/recently released from jail who need jobs?

A) Mr. Young: We will be partnering with other organizations, such as Urban Innovation 21, to help with job placement and training.
CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT
• 3 green dots for Restaurant / Bar and Event Venue
• 2 green dots for Music Venue and
• 1 green dot for Museum
• 1 blue dot for Restaurant / Bar

GOODS
• 3 green dots for Art Gallery and Antiques
• 2 green dots for Apparel & Clothing
• 1 green dot each for: Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores.

SERVICES
• 1 green dot for each of the following: Community Kitchen, Business Incubator and Non-Profit or Community Service
• 2 green dots for Health and Personal Care Store
• 2 blue dots for Laundry and Car Repair.
• 1 blue dot for each of the following: Community Kitchen and Business Incubator

FOOD & GROCERIES
• 3 green dots for Farmers Market
• 2 green dots for Grocery Store and Specialty food store.
• 1 green dot for Cafe and Coffee Shop.
• 4 blue dots for Grocery Store.
• 2 blue dots for Cafe and coffee shop
• 1 blue dot for Specialty Food Store

Break Out Group 2: Attendees used green dots to identify which uses would help to establish Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core as an African-American Cultural Destination. Blue dots represent desired uses that would help to support and sustain the neighborhood.
Break Out Group 1: Attendees used Post-It Notes in colors matching the use categories to locate the proposed uses within the Core district. Purple represents Culture & Entertainment Uses. Green represents Goods. Yellow stands for Services and Pink indicates Food and Groceries.

MAP BOARD
BREAK OUT GROUP 1

CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT
• Link existing cultural entities with new uses and educational programs. In some cases, expand the current Institutions and Businesses roles / presence as music or event venues.
• Group cultural uses along Frankstown Avenue within the Core Business District. Expand the Trolley Room at the Coliseum.
• Music venues were proposed in existing bars along Frankstown: Lounge 7101 could become a larger venue and DJ’s could serve the locals.
• A restaurant was proposed for the current PNC Building.

SERVICES
• Group services along Homewood Avenue, including a General Store, Laundromat, Auto Body Shop (specialty cars), Bakery, and a Music-Video Store.

FOOD & GROCERIES
• Locate the Farmers Market near the Junior Green Corps garden along Frankstown, with new educational and environmental programs developed in conjunction with the market.
• A new restaurant was proposed along Dallas Avenue across from the Wheel Mill.

HANDWRITTEN ON THE DRAWING
• District parking lots should always have 2 dedicated spaces and plug-ins for electric cars.
• Consider a parking garage in the future as development continues.
• Will Homewood House Apartments remain?
Break Out Group 1: Attendees used Post-It Notes in colors matching the use categories to locate the proposed uses within the Core district. Purple represents Culture & Entertainment Uses. Green represents Goods. Yellow stands for Services and Pink indicates Food and Groceries.

CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

• Create a jazz venue with food service in the former PNC Bank building.
• The group debated the appropriateness and feasibility of attracting franchised chain restaurants to the neighborhood and concluded that some chain restaurants could be a good thing, but that to create a destination, unique, locally-owned restaurants would be a more effective draw. Chipotle was suggested as an example of an appropriate food vendor, with the intersection of Frankstown and Homewood Ave as a possible location.
• Frankstown and Homewood was proposed as a location for an entertainment or cultural venue. Also, improve the Homewood Coliseum as a cultural venue.
• The section of Frankstown between Collier and Brushton was discussed as a possible zone for new restaurants because of the presence of vacant land. This led to a discussion of the different cost implications of businesses occupying new versus existing, renovated buildings with the conclusion that independent businesses will likely have lower rents in existing buildings.

GOODS

• The group discussed the desirability of smaller stores selling goods (clothing, shoes, etc) along Homewood Avenue.
• Locate a drug store somewhere in the community. Two possible sites were suggested: the intersection of Homewood and Hamilton or the intersection of Frankstown and Sterrett.

SERVICES

• Locate new services along Homewood Avenue and potentially in the core area of Frankstown. It could make sense to cluster services around the proposed coffee shop and relocated PNC Bank at the new Senior Building on Homewood Avenue, near the Busway.
FOOD & GROCERIES

- The group discussed a variety of scenarios for bringing fresh food to Homewood. A small specialty grocery store was discussed for a Hamilton and Homewood site with the model of a New York bodega. Combining a deli with dry goods and fresh produce was suggested as a good mix of offerings. The Hamilton and Homewood site was also discussed as a potential site for a smaller, full-service grocery store (10-20,000 SF).
- Possible alternate sites for a grocery store were discussed: Frankstown at Collier, or on the site at the edge of the neighborhood at Frankstown and Washington Boulevard.
- Generally, the group felt that some kind of grocery store is essential for the neighborhood.
Homewood Planning Efforts

Fall 2014- Spring 2015

Goal: To improve Homewood Station and the area around it by building projects near the station, and improving safety and access through public improvements such as sidewalks, station furniture, and lighting.

Additional Planning in the Business & Institutional Core: The diagram above illustrates how two ongoing planning efforts will help to advance the community’s vision for developing Homewood’s Business & Institutional Core - in alignment with the current Cluster Planning efforts.
IDENTIFYING USES FROM MEETING 2

During Meeting 2, potential district uses were assigned to one of four categories: Culture & Entertainment, Food & Groceries, Goods, or Services.

The diagram to the right shows how community members ranked the uses as: definitely needed, a good idea, or maybe not.

Community members also identified uses that would meet residents’ daily needs, and proposed locations for those uses on a map.

Summary Use Diagram: The diagram above illustrates how the categories of uses presented to the community were ranked in relation to advancing the goal of Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core becoming a regional African-American Cultural Destination.
Business and Institutional Core Meeting 3

KEY MARKET NUMBERS:
- 7,900 households in the Market Area
- 3,000 households in Homewood
- 400 jobs within 1/4 mile of Homewood Station
- 5,800 jobs within 1/2 mile of Homewood Station
- 1,700 households use public transit to get to work
- 1,400 Homewood households do not own a vehicle, while 3,000 households in the overall Market Area do not own a vehicle
- 32,700 bus riders per day ride through Homewood
- 23,000 cars per day pass through the business district
- 71,500 visitors use the Homewood Library each year

BREAK OUT ACTIVITY

Attendees were asked to refine the list of recommended uses for the district.

Audience members were divided into groups. They received market data cards with lists of various types of businesses. The groups discussed the opportunities and challenges of bringing each use to the community and refined the use recommendations.
MARKET DEMAND WORKSHEET
BREAK OUT GROUP 1

FOOD & GROCERIES
• The group discussed the status of proposals to locate a grocery store in the neighborhood. It was stated that no grocery store projects are actively under development.
• The market threshold of 3000 customers for a smaller store was discussed, along with possible locations: Hamilton and Homewood or Frankstown between Braddock and Homewood.
• A smaller store located along a commuter path could be feasible if it also attracted residents. Some kind of grocery store is a necessity for the neighborhood in the future.
• Following the meeting, a resident participating in this group called to add the suggestion that a possible grocery store site might be vacant land between Brushton, Kelly and Hamilton.

PUBLIC SAFETY
• Multiple residents asserted that no new businesses would be successful unless public safety is addressed first. OBB staff discussed current efforts to work with other community organizations and the city to address public safety.
• A representative from the Mayor’s office announced that they would be holding an upcoming meeting in Homewood to discuss public safety, among other topics.

CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT
• Any strategy for creating a cultural destination should build on the existing arts organizations and venues for music and events. Tina Brewer talked about the Coliseum and expressed a desire to expand its role as a cultural destination and event venue.
• Combining a restaurant with a music venue was seen as desirable.

GOODS
• Add a discount general store use to the list, eg: Dollar General. A vacant building, purpose-built for this use, exists on Frankstown Avenue.

SERVICES
• The group listed a number of uses, such as Strong’s Cleaners, that already exist in the community should not be duplicated.
• Residents requested that a post office be reinstated in Homewood within the business district.
MARKET DEMAND WORKSHEET
BREAK OUT GROUP 2

• Provide a diversity of businesses in the district and address crime in conjunction with the development process.
• Reverend John Wallace mentioned that he is creating a restaurant in the lower level of 717 N. Homewood Ave and it should be added to the slide of what is happening in the Cluster.

CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

• A restaurant and music venue are the two most important cultural uses. Use the PNC Building, or a location along Frankstown Avenue, to capture traffic headed to and from East Liberty. This type of destination could be supported by the existing population.

GOODS

• A small, specialty Clothing Store and a Gasoline/Convenience Store were the two most important businesses in the goods category for the district. The Clothing Store could help create a destination but the Gas / Convenience Store would serve locals. Both uses would attract commuters.

SERVICES

• The four most important services were a Laundry (a community hub), Car Repair, Business Incubator, and a Non-Profit Community Service focused on education and job training.
• The Laundry, an innovative community hub with a cafe attached, could help create a destination for residents, while the other service uses would serve local residents and attract commuters.

Break Out Group 2: Attendees used Market Data cards to refine the list of recommended uses.

FOOD & GROCERIES

• Group 2 felt that a grocery store was the most important business to attract in this category, but qualified the statement. The grocery store should be a strong community amenity that also carries high-quality or specialty items to help create a destination.
FOLLOW UP

Summaries of the Business and Institutional Core Cluster meetings, along with observations and recommendations made at those meetings, are documented in this report.

OBB will continue to work with existing business owners, property owners, private developers, and the city to realize the community’s vision for the business district.

The community’s vision for the future identity of the business district, and recommended uses to support that vision, will guide the current Homewood Station Transit Oriented Development Study. That planning process will explore targeted, business district development scenarios including identifying key development sites and recommending streetscape and public space improvements. The TOD study will also explore a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) as a potential funding mechanism for both advancing development in the district and funding public space improvements.
BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL CORE IDENTITY
Create a regional African-American cultural destination in Homewood’s Business and Institutional Core

QUALITIES OF HOMEWOOD’S BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL CORE

The following qualities were specified and agreed upon by attendees as being vital to creating a Cultural Destination.

• The district should be a regional - even national or global - destination for African-American culture.
• At the same time, the district should also include services, goods and groceries to meet the needs of residents.
• African-American culture should be broadly defined to include food, music, theater, visual arts, literature, sports, and goods and services that support the identity.
• History is very important and should be celebrated as part of the district identity.
• Homewood should celebrate African-American culture while also welcoming and including all cultures.
• The district should be compact and walkable to focus and define it as a destination and to make it accessible to seniors and kids.
• There should be a support structure for helping local entrepreneurs create new enterprises and for growing existing businesses.
• The physical environment should be upgraded including improvements to: streetscapes, district gateways, Stargell Field and the underpass and overpass at the Busway.
• Public safety needs to be addressed, both improving the reality and changing the perception of potential visitors.
Mixed Use buildings dominate the Core with massings of 4 stories nearest to the station (within 1500’, a zoning exception based on transit proximity) and 3 stories along Homewood and Frankstown Avenues. Consider changing the zoning in the RM-M along Frankstown to LNC to encourage new business uses.
Business and Institutional Core Priority Infill

Prioritize infill adjacent to Homewood Station and at the intersection of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues. Assign secondary priority to infill on the remainder of Homewood Avenue. Frankstown Avenue should be the lowest priority for development unless a compelling, large project emerges.
Business and Institutional Core Uses

PRIORITY USES

The following uses within each of the categories were deemed most relevant by community members and stakeholders.

CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT
- Music Venue
- Event Venue
- Restaurants/ Bars
- Museum

FOOD & GROCERIES
- Grocery Store
- Coffee Shop
- Specialty Foods
- Farmers Market

SERVICES
- Laundry
- Business Incubator
- Community Kitchen
- Car Repair
- Salon/ Barber Shop

GOODS
- Art Gallery
- Drug Store
- Jewelry
- Convenience Store
- Sporting goods, hobbies, books, and music
- Gasoline

Summary Use Diagram: The diagram above illustrates how the categories of uses presented to the community were ranked in relation to furthering the Vision of the Core Business and Institutional district as a regional African-American cultural destination.
Business and Institutional Core Scenarios

Business and Institutional Core Use Scenario

New Cultural and Entertainment uses - Arts, Music and Food Venues - should be concentrated along Homewood Avenue with Frankstown Avenue providing a secondary cluster of nightlife destinations. Good and Services can be spread throughout the cluster and around the existing services at Frankstown and Brushton Avenues.
Possible Grocery Store Locations

Three larger sites may accommodate a future Grocery Store or Supermarket for Homewood and its surrounding neighborhoods. Two possible sites lie within the Business and Institutional Core while one is located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Frankstown.
Homewood Cluster Planning is a project of Operation Better Block, in collaboration with Studio for Spatial Practice.

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