

PENDLETON HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Assessment Report

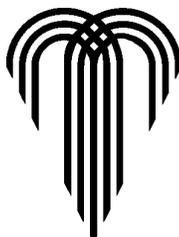
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Neighborhood Workshop Date: August 14, 1999



FOCUS Kansas City
City Planning and Development Department
City of Kansas City, Missouri

City of Fountains



Heart of the Nation

SERVICE	AGENCY OR CITY DEPARTMENT	PHONE
City Services	Action Center	513-1313
Abandoned Cars on Private Property	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Abandoned Cars on Public Property	Kansas City, MO Police Department	234-5000
Abandoned Homes	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Air Quality	Health Department	513-6314
Animal Control	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-2710
Building Permits	Codes Administration	513-1451
Bulky Item Pick Up	Environmental Management	513-3490
Curb Reconstruction	Public Works	513-2590
Dangerous Buildings/ Demolition	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Housing Code Violations	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Illegal Dumping Hotline	Environmental Management	513-3485
Neighborhood Assistance/ Services	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-3265
Paint Program	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-3266
Parks and Community Centers	Board of Parks and Recreation	871-5600
Potholes	Public Works	513-2777
Senior Citizens Transportation	Share-a-Fare/ATA	842-9070
Sewers - Problems	Water Department After Hours	513-2180 513-2109
Sidewalks - Repair	Public Works	513-2602
Storm Drains	Water Department	513-2180
Street Light Repairs	Kansas City Power and Light	654-1400
Weatherization Program	Housing and Community Development	513-3015

Underlined phone numbers will change in the next few months.

THE VISION OF FOCUS KANSAS CITY

We, as Kansas Citians, envision our city as a people-centered community. From economic development to the readability of street signs, we consider people first. Kansas City shapes and guarantees its future by examining first and foremost the impact of every decision on future generations.

We, as Kansas Citians, are full of hope. We demonstrate this hope through our investment in our families, our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools, our businesses and our city.



For more information about **FOCUS Kansas City**:

- call the office at **513-2822**,
- visit **www.kcmo.org/focus/**, or
- e-mail **focus@kcmo.org**.

To reach the Neighborhood Assessment Team, call **513-2909**.

FOCUS - **F**orging **O**ur **C**omprehensive **U**rban **S**trategy



FOCUS KANSAS CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENTS



FOCUS Kansas City, Kansas City's strategic and comprehensive plan, recognizes that neighborhoods understand best how to direct their own futures. The first initiative in the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* is a strategic assessment / evaluation that enables a neighborhood to evaluate its strengths and needs. Through the assessment process, a neighborhood can direct its assets towards its most critical needs. The *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* identifies the assessment format.

There were two objectives for this neighborhood self-evaluation:

1. Self-identify the **neighborhood type** from the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan*.
2. Develop **improvement strategies** that will direct neighborhood improvement, a "To Do" list/Action Steps incorporating participation by the neighborhood, community partners, and the City.

Members of the Pendleton Heights community conducted their neighborhood evaluation workshop with assistance from City staff. Residents, business people and people who work in local institutions provided input. These community members mapped their community, and identified assets and priority issues in their neighborhood.



Pendleton Heights residents participating in their neighborhood assessment workshop



NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE

The FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan recognizes that not all neighborhoods in Kansas City are the same. The character and condition of where we live varies according to age, history, type of housing and other factors. Each community has different strengths and opportunities. Each has different assets and priorities that drive unique strategies for improvement. FOCUS developed four unique Neighborhood Types that generally describe Kansas City neighborhoods. These four Types (assigned the colors Blue, Orange, Purple and Green in the Neighborhood Assessment workshop) are:

Developing Conservation Stabilization Redeveloping

Each Neighborhood Type suggests what actions are required for a neighborhood to become or stay healthy. The Assessment is a beginning point from which the neighborhood can move forward and achieve quality living environments through a commitment to continuous improvement. The descriptions are contained in the FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan, Appendix A, "General Neighborhood Descriptions/Types."

In the workshop, participants defined the tools, actions and strategies for improving their community. They will use this information to strategically apply public and private resources in a way that is based on existing conditions, trends, opportunities, strengths and needs. Once other neighborhoods identify their Type, then similarly "typed" Kansas City communities can connect and partner around common issues and projects while assisting each other in developing their organizations.



A Pendleton Heights resident speaking about actions to improve the community during the neighborhood assessment.

THE PENDLETON HEIGHTS PERSPECTIVE



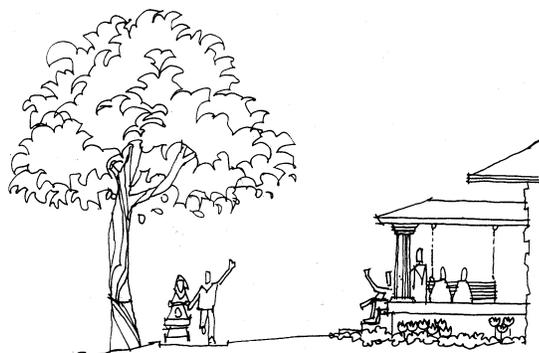
On August 14, 1999 a group of people from the Pendleton Heights neighborhood gathered to have a conversation about their community. Participants were residents, small business owners, landlords and service providers. They spoke about the pros and cons of the neighborhood, and what they can do to keep what they like and change what they don't.

The Pendleton Heights neighborhood has a long and rich history. The first sections of the area were platted in the 1870's. During the 1880's wealthy residents built their mansions along Independence Avenue, Kansas City's first boulevard. The northern part of the neighborhood is bounded by scenic Cliff Drive and the expansive Kessler Park, designed by George Kessler, the creative force behind Kansas City's boulevard system.

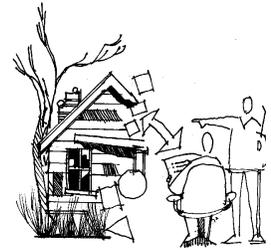
Within this neighborhood one can find the highest concentration of 19th century Queen Ann style homes in the city. In 1992 part of Pendleton Heights was officially designated a historic district, making it an integral part of Kansas City's Heritage Corridor. Early in the 20th century Italian immigrants settled in the community. Many people of Italian descent still live in the neighborhood, and their heritage is beautifully preserved at the Bisceglia Italian Cultural Center, at 544 Wabash.

Today, Pendleton Heights is among Kansas City's most culturally diverse neighborhoods. Some residents have been drawn to the area because of the beautiful features of the historic homes. The neighborhood has also taken on an increasing international tone as more Hispanic, Asian and African residents have moved in.

There is an astounding variety of social, economic and cultural activity packed into this place. Geographically, Pendleton Heights encompasses an area of about one half a square mile. That area contains some five hundred single family homes, several large apartment buildings, two elementary schools, two churches, three community centers, one university, a 232 unit public housing complex, multiple businesses, three parks and a castle!



THE PENDLETON HEIGHTS PERSPECTIVE



Although the neighborhood has seen some challenges there are exciting things happening in the area. Streetscape improvements have been completed at the corner of Prospect and Independence Avenue and a new retail anchor will open there soon. The beautification of Independence Plaza Park is complete and the vacant University Hospital will be renovated as a mixed used residential and commercial center. Plans are also being formulated to enhance the intersection of Independence Avenue and The Paseo. Independence Avenue has been designated as a Special Revue District and future development will be guided by a commission appointed by Mayor Kay Barnes.

Neighborhood assessment participants identified Pendleton Heights as a stabilization neighborhood. This designation suggests that stakeholders in the neighborhood must find a way to maintain and promote its strengths while managing its vulnerabilities. For example, the classic structures that add to the neighborhood's appeal also need to be diligently maintained. And it sometimes takes artful planning to encourage new development without compromising the old.

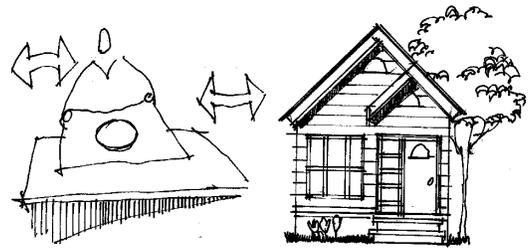
Workshop participants spoke about the appeal of a community with such an array of cultural, economic and social activity. They also recognized that it can be challenge to communicate and get along when people don't always speak the same language or share the same cultural norms.

But residents didn't seem to be discouraged by the challenges. Rather, they came up with many good ideas aimed at making their community work. They recognized the need for a strong neighborhood organization to represent the interests of homeowners, good communication between residents, business owners and institutions, and responsive support services from City Hall.

This report documents the dialogue that took place among assessment participants. It contains a summary of priority issues as well as complete lists of assets, improvement strategies and other information transcribed from workshop flip charts. The report also contains photographs of some of the people and features that contribute to the identity of Pendleton Heights.



PRIORITIES



Encourage Residents to Get Involved

- Attend and participate in the activities of the neighborhood association, Northeast Mobile Crime Watch and other groups that strengthen the network of neighborhood stakeholders
- Educate the owners of historic properties and all properties about proper maintenance
- Work to improve relations between residents and neighborhood service providers

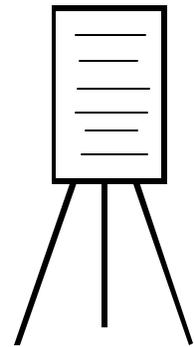
Build Strong Neighborhood Partnerships

- Work with area landlords, businesses and institutions to improve the appearance and maintenance of their properties
- Encourage the newly appointed Independence Avenue Special Review Committee to ensure quality development along Independence Avenue
- Patronize neighborhood stores and businesses

Advocate for Responsive City Services

- Invite representatives of key City Departments to neighborhood association meetings
- Create rewards for landlords who do a good job in maintaining their property (like tax breaks or priority access to services)
- Support the implementation and administration of the Independence Avenue Special Review District to ensure quality development and redevelopment
- Combine strong code enforcement and innovative renovation strategies to preserve vintage buildings

CHART NOTES



The Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Assessment covered the area from Cliff Drive on the north to Independence Avenue on the south, and from Paseo on the west to Chestnut Trafficway on the east.

Neighborhood Slogans

Residents of Pendleton Heights know their neighborhood has played an important role in Kansas City history. That history is visible in the neighborhood's historic districts, boulevards and institutions. Workshop participants chose the following slogan for their neighborhood:

Passport to the Past

Other suggested slogans:

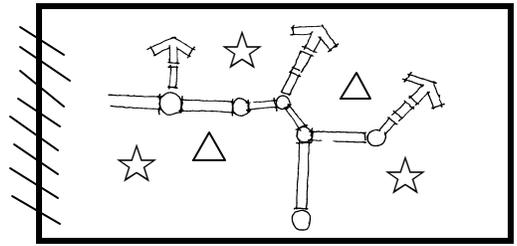
- Small United Nations
- Festival of Nations
- Historic Community
- Vegetable Soup
- Unity In Our Community
- International Unity in Our Community



A young woman and her child at Don Bosco Community Center



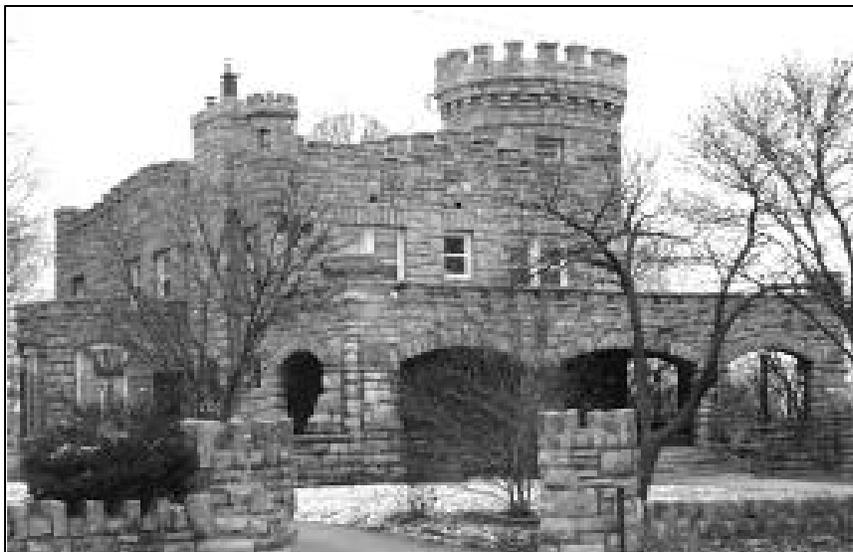
Congetta Latonia is a third generation resident of the Northeast



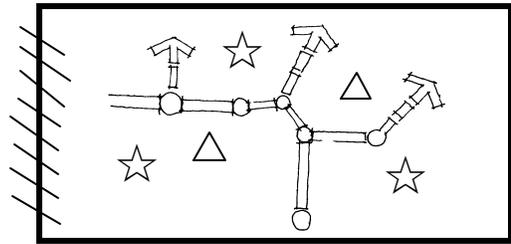
STEP 1: My Neighborhood Is

Workshop participants identified how they experience their neighborhood, and considered those things they want to protect, preserve or enhance. They thought about the landmarks, paths, activity centers, districts, edges or barriers, and features. These were noted on a wall map, using the key below, and are listed on the next page.

-  **Landmarks** — significant physical objects, like buildings or signs
-  **Paths** — routes people use to get places
-  **Activity Centers** — gathering places to do some activity
-  **Districts** — areas of recognizable character
-  **Edges or Barriers** — a limit or boundary that prevents people from enjoying the neighborhood or something in it
-  **Features** — things people like and would like to preserve or enhance



This home is an interesting landmark in the neighborhood



Landmarks

- Reservoir at Kessler Park
- 308 Garfield
- 100 Garfield
- Pendleton Heights entry markers
- Independence Plaza Park
- Mendolia's Market

Paths

- Maple Boulevard
- St. John Boulevard
- Lexington Boulevard
- Independence Boulevard
- Paseo Boulevard
- Prospect Boulevard

Activity Centers

- Don Bosco Community Center
- Della Lamb Community Center
- Garfield School
- Bisceglia Italian Cultural Center

Edges or Barriers

- Chestnut Trafficway
- Cliff Drive
- The blend of people in the community from all over the world creates a barrier to people understanding each other
- I-70
- The historic designation of the neighborhood creates a special set of challenges to making home improvements



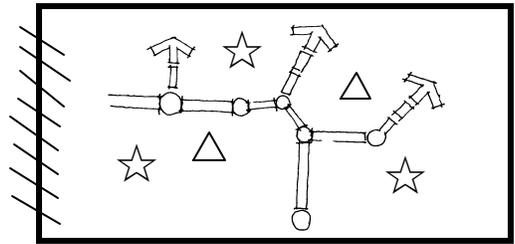
One of several entry markers to the Pendleton Heights neighborhood



These youth are students of an alternative school at Don Bosco Community Center



Volunteers at Della Lamb Community Center who helped put together Christmas baskets



Districts

- Restored homes along Maple Boulevard
- Independence Avenue Special Re-ue District
- Lexington Avenue is an international district due to African market
- Independence Avenue is an international commercial district



Som-Halal, owner of Pure Food Products on Lexington Avenue



A neighborhood market at Lexington and Brooklyn

Features

- University of Health Sciences
- The original Children's Mercy Hospital building
- The multi-national population of the neighborhood
- Garfield School
- Kessler Park
- Cliff Drive
- Many international markets
- 100 Garfield
- Victorian homes
- 308 Garfield
- The original Osteopathic Hospital located in the parking lot of Passantino's funeral home



The original Children's Mercy Hospital structure is now home to the University of Health Sciences

PENDLETON HEIGHTS

IMAGES



Asset: Children at the Scuola
Vita Nuova



Edge: Cliff Drive forms the northern boundary
of the neighborhood



Feature: 308 Garfield

PENDLETON HEIGHTS IMAGES



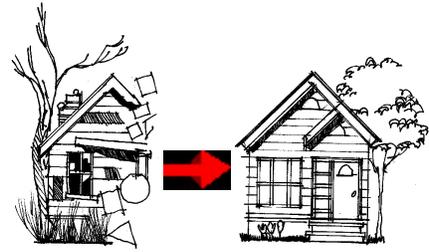
Feature: One of the beautiful windows in Christ Presbyterian Church



Activity Center: Garfield Elementary School



Feature: A view of the neighborhood and nearby downtown from Kessler Park



STEP 2: If I Could Fix One Thing

In every neighborhood there are some things that need to be changed. These issues stop residents from enjoying their neighborhood and from doing the things they like to do. Below is a list of what Pendleton Heights residents would like to see fixed in their neighborhood:

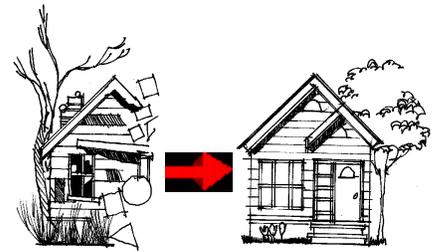
- Eliminate trash
- Improve race relations in the neighborhood
- Install speed bumps in alleys
- Convince all the area businesses to put locks on their dumpsters
- Implement a more consistent administration of the code enforcement process from the initiation of a citation until the case goes before a judge
- Persuade apartment owners to improve maintenance
- Assist the elderly with property maintenance so they can stay in their homes
- Post bi-lingual and multi-lingual signage in the neighborhood to accommodate international residents
- Increase support for code officers by following up on complaints and appearing in court if necessary
- Increase police patrols of Cliff Drive
- Improve public transportation (smaller buses that run more often)
- Develop more public/private/non-profit partnerships
- Increase police patrols from midnight until 8:00 AM



Illegal dumping in Kessler Park



Dumpsters are an eyesore and may invite dumping; residents would prefer businesses to keep them locked and placed behind a fence



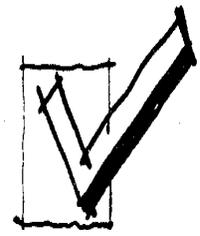
- Eliminate drugs in the neighborhood
- Give everyone an “I can” attitude where City staff and residents can work together in a true public/private partnership
- Eliminate speeding on Olive and Park streets
- Build a higher fence to separate Stonewall Court from the surrounding neighborhood
- Create more programs for the elderly in the neighborhood
- Improve relations between the “historic” and international communities in the neighborhood
- Develop more economic opportunities for new immigrants who settle in Pendleton Heights
- Eliminate the motels on The Paseo
- Eliminate vagrants, prostitution and crime in the neighborhood
- Downzone residential areas from R4 to R1
- Develop more effective “Community Policing” that truly involves residents and officers
- Eliminate illegal parking in the neighborhood
- Dispel the negative perception of Independence Avenue as a zone of illegal activity
- Implement a more customer friendly Landmarks Commission. Dealing with the commission can be very frustrating because they often cancel appointments at the last minute and this wastes resident’s time.



A sign announcing the Pendleton Heights crime watch program



A vibrant Independence Avenue is critical to the health of Pendleton Heights and other neighborhoods in the area



STEP 3: My Neighborhood's Assets

Workshop participants identified assets that add value to their neighborhood. These qualities include places, groups, organizations, equipment, skills, abilities and any other feature that makes this area a good place to live.

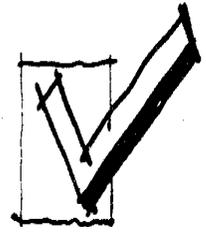
- Sons of Columbus
- Henry Rizzo (State Representative)
- Residents who take pride in their neighborhood
- Friendly people
- The tenacity of residents and businesses that have stayed in the neighborhood over many years
- Neighborhood connectedness
- "36 grandparents in the neighborhood"
- Immigrant population
- "The children are exceptionally good looking"
- Bisceglia Italian Cultural Center
- Easy access to the city
- Kessler Park
- Maple Park
- Historic Districts in the neighborhood
- An attractive neighborhood
- The architectural detail of the homes
- The highest concentration of Queen Ann homes in the city (275)
- Moderately priced homes
- Cliff Drive



Students at the Scuola Vita Nuova



Maple Park provides a place for residents to play and enjoy the outdoors



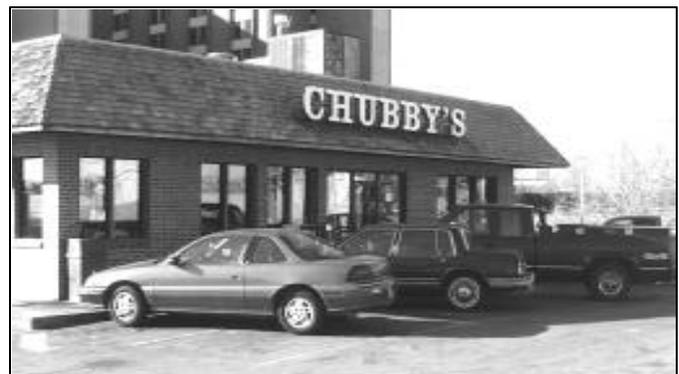
- Kessler Park reservoir
- Boulevard Bakery
- Tree lined streets
- Good looking homes
- A quiet neighborhood
- Mendolia's sausage
- John's Gas Station
- Central Bank
- The small markets in the neighborhood
- Snyder's Market
- Dairy Queen
- Passantino's Funeral Home
- Chubby's
- Scoula Vita Nouva
- University of Health Sciences
- N.E. Chamber of Commerce
- Scimeca's Grocery Store



John Butrick has owned and operated John's Gas Station at Independence and Olive for over 35 years.



One of the homes that gives the neighborhood it's charm



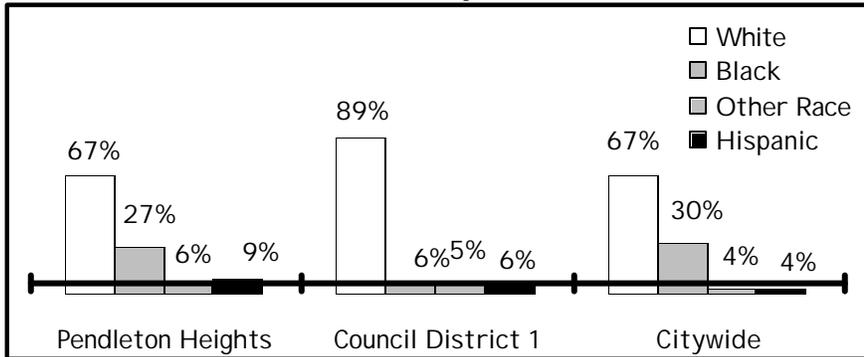
Chubby's is a favorite area restaurant



STEP 4: Facts About My Neighborhood

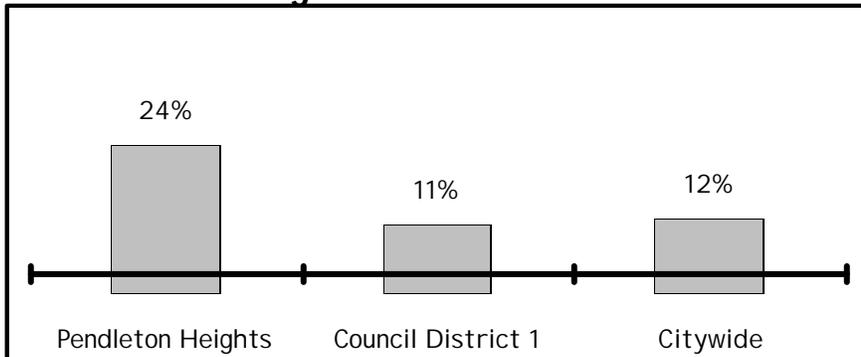
The data presented at the Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Assessment was from the 1990 U.S. Census, and from 1998 information from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Kansas City, Missouri City Planning and Development Department. Below are the facts that participants said were surprising or noteworthy. (See the neighborhood assessment workbook for more details.)

Racial and Ethnic Composition



Some residents felt that although the white population was still the majority in their neighborhood it had decreased from 67%. Other participants felt the Hispanic population had risen above 9%.

Vacant Housing Units



Some people felt that the percentage of vacant housing had decreased to approximately 15%.



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STEP 5: Describing My Neighborhood

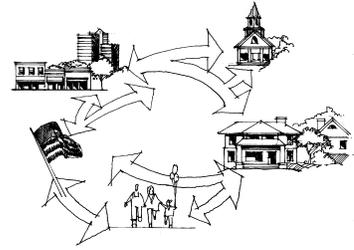
Those who attended the workshop were asked to vote on the neighborhood type that best described their neighborhood. Their choice was Stabilization.

Stabilization

My neighborhood has been developed for some time. Several of the businesses and institutions located in the neighborhood may be changing, either recently expanding, scaling back services, just moved into the neighborhood or considering moving to another location outside the neighborhood. Places of worship, schools, recreational and entertainment facilities, and businesses provide opportunities near my home.

Tree-lined streets, historic structures or qualities, public art and/or other amenities characterize the neighborhood and give it a sense of place. Due to age, several of the streets and sidewalks need repair or replacement and the water and sewer services may also need to be upgraded. Many houses, businesses, and public areas appear to lack routine maintenance (painting, yard upkeep, tree trimming, awning repair, etc.) or are vacant. Such conditions are impacting the value of my property and I don't know if I want to invest more money in the property.

Problems are starting to add up and are becoming harder to fix through our neighborhood association, a call to the City, or neighbors getting together to help one another. There are good aspects to the neighborhood but there are also problems that need to be addressed if the neighborhood is going to continue to be a place I want to live.



STEP 6: Making My Neighborhood Better

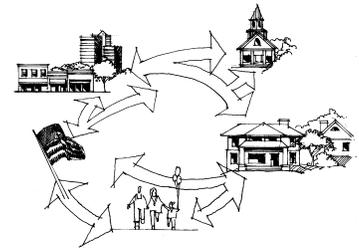
Workshop participants talked about specific actions the community can take to address the issues and challenges identified earlier in the assessment. They brainstormed ideas, concentrating on those actions that can be performed by the community to improve the neighborhood. This is a list of all the ideas mentioned by workshop participants. They voted on the ideas that they most want implemented to make their neighborhood better.

Things **We** can do by ourselves:

- Call the Parks and Recreation Dept., council members, the Action Center and the Mayor's Neighborhood Advocate to get action on the Parks and Recreation building at Lexington and Montgall
- Monitor Land Trust contractors and notify Land Trust if work is not done properly (i.e., mowing contractors who throw grass into the street, etc.)
- Attend neighborhood association meetings and other neighborhood related meetings when possible
- Organize a neighborhood summit with the goal of creating a better environment for residents of Pendleton Heights who have recently immigrated to the United States
- Attend N.E. Mobile Crime Watch meetings (Tuesdays at 5:30 PM at 660 Brooklyn)
- Improve communications with City Hall (Codes Enforcement, Landmarks Commission, Police Department, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Environmental Management) and other organizations (Don Bosco, ATA, etc.) by inviting representatives to attend neighborhood meetings
- Update City Hall with neighborhood association contacts



Pendleton Heights board member Bobbi Baker Hughes and neighborhood president Steve Lipari during the assessment



What we can do with a **Partner:**

- Educate residents about special codes requirements for historic properties
- Improve communications between the neighborhood association and City Departments
- Inform residents about the importance of code compliance
- Create a strong partnership between neighborhood residents, Don Bosco and area businesses
- Involve landlords in educating international residents to the norms of U.S. culture
- Encourage landlords to take management training
- Tell area merchants that residents want them to maintain their property
- Work with Land Trust in maintaining their vacant lot near Lexington and Montgall



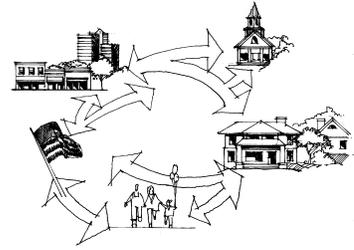
A longtime family owned business in Pendleton Heights



Riverview Gardens is home to many people in the western part of the neighborhood



Officers Mitch Atwood and Todd Bryant work as members of the neighborhood Parks Anti Crime Team



What the **City** should do:

- Improve the appearance of the Parks and Recreation Department building located at Lexington and Montgall
- Conduct a review of Stonewall Courts for codes violations
- Publicize street sweeping in advance so people can move their cars
- Improve bulky item pick-up and publicize it more
- Appoint a design review committee for the Independence Avenue Special Revue District
- Advocate for increased economic development along Independence Avenue



Codes Enforcement Officer Lenora Holmes and resident Raymond Foster discuss a property maintenance issue during the assessment

Pendleton Heights Participants

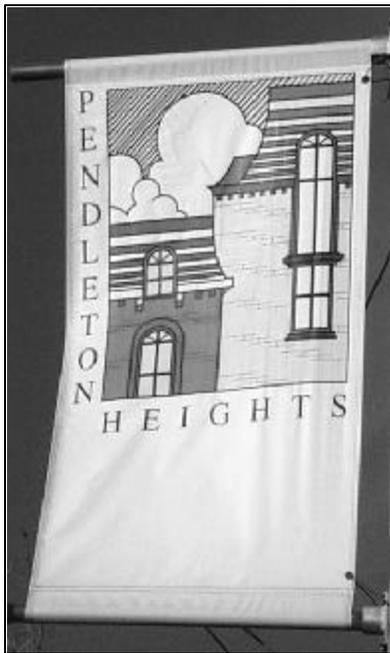
Chris Ankenbrand
Bobbi Baker
Judy Bodenhamer
Ron Bodenhamer
Mise Brodis
Marie Castor
Joe D'Angelo
Joey DiSanto

Francisco Esteban
Ed Ford
Raymond Foster
Suzanne Gladney
Michelle Hensley
Lenora Holmes
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Kathleen McConchie
Becky Miles
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Billie Robleado
Edwin Ryser

Sponsors and Contributors

- Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Association
- Bisceglia Italian Cultural Center
- Don Bosco Community Center





Acknowledgements

The Honorable Kay Barnes, *Mayor*
Robert L. Collins, *City Manager*

City Council

The Honorable Ed Ford
First District-at-Large

The Honorable Teresa Loar
First District

The Honorable Bonnie Sue Cooper
Second District-at-Large

The Honorable Paul Danaher
Second District

The Honorable Troy Nash
Third District-at-Large

The Honorable Mary Williams-Neal
Third District

The Honorable Evert Asjes III
Fourth District-at-Large

The Honorable Jim Rowland
Fourth District

The Honorable Becky Nace
Fifth District-at-Large

The Honorable Kelvin Simmons
Fifth District

The Honorable Alvin Brooks
Sixth District-at-Large

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