



CALENDAR

April 25th

FABA Fishtown Shadfest
11 am to 5 pm
Penn Treaty Park
Delaware & Columbia Ave.

April 26th

Tree Planting event
See page 2 for details

April 29th

Port Richmond Waterfront
Community Meeting
see page 2 for details

May 1st

First Friday on
Frankford Avenue
www.frankfordavearts.org

May 1st

Riverward Restaurant Week
runs through May 6th
See page 2 for details

May 5th

First-time Homebuyer
Workshop
call 215-427-0350
for more information

May 16th

3rd Annual Kensington
Kinetic Sculpture Derby
See page 1 for details

May 18th

East Kensington Neighbors
Association Meeting
6:30 pm
Philadelphia Brewing Co.
Martha & Hagert

June 27th

Kensington Area NAC
Community Health Fair
more details to come!

INSIDE NKCDC

2515 Frankford Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19125

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SPRING 2009

Arts Fest to Host Kinetic Sculpture Derby

The Trenton Avenue Arts Festival (TAAF), which will take place Saturday, May 16th on Trenton Avenue between Norris and Dauphin Streets from 12-5 pm, will once again be the host of the Kensington Kinetic Sculpture Derby!

The TAAF, established three years ago by the East Kensington Neighbors Association (EKNA) to raise money for neighborhood projects and revitalization, will include local artists selling their work, local music, and plenty of good food provided by local restaurants. Last year's festival included over 100 eclectic vendors selling work from pottery and glass to jewelry and screen-printed t-shirts.

The Kinetic Sculpture Derby celebrates art and human-powered transit by pitting mobile sculptures against one another along a three mile urban obstacle course of cobblestones and mud pits. Pilots and crew members will be decked out in festive garb, awards



"Octu Vishnu", lead by Marta Bartholomew and her crew, head for the finish line's mud pit at last year's sculpture derby.

will be given out, and lots of fun will be had by all!

NKCDC is searching for additional entries for the sculpture derby. Sculptures large and small are needed. Don't worry if you cannot gather enough people to start a team - NKCDC can connect you with others who are looking for help. Of course, lots of spectators are needed to energize the crowd!

The planned course for the derby spans up to Lehigh, back down Frankford to Girard, down to Beach Street, around Port Richmond Plaza to York Street, and back to the Arts Festival on Trenton Avenue.

For more information on getting involved in the sculpture derby, please contact Kathryn Doherty at 215-427-0350 x 120 or visit kinetickensington.org. In addition, space is still available for artists who are interested in selling their work at the festival. To register please visit their EKNA's website at www.ekna.org, or email EKNAartsfest@gmail.com.

Community-Driven Initiative for a Sustainable 19125

Over 50 different neighbors and city-wide organizations came out on the evening of February 4th to a kickoff meeting for Sustainable 19125, a collaborative, creative exchange forum for greening the Fishtown, Port Richmond, and East Kensington neighborhoods of Philadelphia. Lead by the Partnership for a Green Community, this initiative seeks to make the 19125 zip code the "greenest neighborhood in Philadelphia."

Sustainable 19125 follows the examples of intrepid and innovative local residents, businesses, organizations, and city agencies who for years have been at the cutting edge of sustainable action. Many have already taken steps to plant trees, recycle, reduce their consumption of

non-renewable energy, protect our water resources, and even contribute to greening our region's economy. Over the course of this summer, the

Partnership for a Green Community will work closely with these community leaders to launch three campaigns to focus efforts.

Participation in this initiative is strongly encouraged! Please visit www.sustainable19125.org to join in the dialogue, contribute to the Sustainable 19125 wiki and open green map, and get information on tools and

resources available to you for greening the community! You can sign up to join the Sustainable 19125 listserv and have information regarding upcoming meetings emailed directly to you!





Volunteers clean the Positive Space lot, located just north of Frankford & Norris. Over 100 people participate in the cleanup.

Cleaning and Greening for the Spring

On the morning of Saturday, April 4th, over 100 volunteers came out to the annual Frankford Avenue Spring Cleanup to help clean the corridor between Girard and Lehigh Avenue. The cleanup once again took place in conjunction with Mayor Nutter's Citywide Spring Cleanup, which involved over 100 community groups throughout the city. In total over 200 bags of trash were collected!

The Streets Department assisted by picking up trash and offering supplies. Volunteers celebrated a hard day's work with a free barbecue afterward, provided courtesy of Philadelphia Brewing Company with donations from Kissin Fresh Meats, Thriftway, Dunkin Donuts, Johnny

Brendas, Fishtown Beverage, and Whole Foods.

Another cleanup also took place on the morning of Friday, April 17th in conjunction with the Kensington Creative and Performing Arts School (CAPA) Community Service Day. Over 20 students helped clean trash and debris around Pop's Playground at Trenton & Sergeant.

NKCDC is seeking volunteers to assist with a tree planting event scheduled for Sunday, April 26th. Volunteers should meet at the NKCDC Garden Center, located at Frankford & Berks, at 9:30 am. If you're interested in participating please contact Marlene Buck at 215-427-0350 x 122 or mbuck@nkcdc.org.



May 1st - 6th

Discover the diverse flavors of the north river wards, ranging from pub fare to Italian, from Yugoslavian to American traditional. Twelve restaurants in Fishtown, Kensington, and Port Richmond will offer either fixed-price menus or entrees ranging from \$10-\$30.

Participating Restaurants include:

Bistro Juliana, Ida Mae's Bruncherie, Jovan's Place, O'Reilly's Pub, Hot Potato Café, Sketch Burger, Hinge Café, Cassizzi's Pizzeria, Johnny Brenda's Tavern, Green Rock Tavern, New Wave Café, Mercer Café

For more information please visit

www.riverwardrestaurants.com

Energy Counselors Assist the Community

NKCDC recently wrapped up another season of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and CRISIS programs, assisting over 2,500 neighbors with the application process. In total over \$2.5 million worth of energy assistance was received to applicants who came to NKCDC during the winter season!

"It feels good to help people who come in with shut-off notices," says Liz Santosusso, a new Housing Counselor at NKCDC. "Times are tough and it's nice that this assistance is available."

NKCDC is now accepting applications for the Utility Emergency Services Fund (UESF), where clients can apply for up to \$500 to reach a zero

balance with their utility bill. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- You must be a Philadelphia resident
- You must have a shut-off notice
- Income guidelines are \$18,953 for one person and \$25,498 for couples (add \$6,545 for each additional household member)
- Applicants are only eligible for UESF funding every two years.

If you are eligible please call NKCDC at 215-427-0350 to schedule an appointment with a counselor. Only a certain number of clients are allowed to apply per week, so call early. Screening begins Monday mornings at 9am.



A streetscape image within the proposed plan. Norris Street neighbors are working together to provide input on a shared vision for their block.

Norris Street Neighbors Collaborate on Street Plan

Since February of last year NKCDC has been working with residents of the 2100 block of Norris Street (spanning between Front Street and Frankford Avenue) to address challenges on their block. Designated one of NKCDC's "Elm Street" blocks to receive façade and infrastructure funding through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, neighbors have in recent months been meeting with Interface Studios to provide input for a Street Plan for Norris Street. Ultimate goals of the plan include increasing connectivity between the Berks subway station and the main commercial corridor, as well as creating an increased sense of safety for pedestrians.

Certain streetscape elements which are being incorporated into the Street Plan have already been installed or have received funding. Late last year the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) installed several trees

on the block, using eco-pavers and a special rainwater retention box designed specifically for the Norris Street project. These boxes control stormwater runoff, allowing the tree to absorb rainwater as needed. Mural Arts Program is creating a streetscape art project which will span the entire block, incorporating artistic elements to showcase Norris Street's rich history as a neighborhood connector as well as its proximity to the Arts Corridor.

In addition, neighbors are working on a small solar lighting project to add upwards of a dozen motion-sensor fixtures to the block. This project, organized as a result of the Community Leadership Institute offered by NeighborWorks America, should be completed by July. Neighbors will have a special installation event in the early summer. For more information be sure to check NKCDC's website, www.nkcdc.org.

NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEWS

Real Estate Tax Reform Topic of Community Service Briefing

NKCDC's NAC and the Kensington Area NAC (KANAC) jointly hosted a community service briefing to update residents on tax reform proposals being presented in the city. The briefing, which took place on the evening of March 5th, featured speakers from the Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT), as well as former Executive Director of Philadelphia Forward Brett Mandel, and Joshua Vincent of the Henry George Foundation of America (HGFA).

Over a dozen residents came out to hear the updates provided by these organizations. The BRT, the city agency whose staff is charged with establishing real property values, explained changes taking place internally and how taxes are assessed. Philadelphia Forward, which has been a leading proponent of tax, budget, and ethics reform since 2004, explained possible reform in the tax assessment process to increase equity for residents.

The HGFA presented a hypothetical switch from the city's current property tax assessment structure to LVT, or Land Value Taxation. Under LVT property taxes would be assessed not on the value of the structure but on the land itself. This would encourage development and would no longer penalize homeowners for making improvements to their property.

For more information on these organizations and real estate tax reform proposed locally, please visit their websites - BRT - brtweb.phila.gov, Philadelphia Forward - www.philadelphiaforward.org, Henry George Foundation - www.henrygeorgefoundation.us.

NKCDC Partners with Neighbors, Marianna Bracetti for Food Drive



NKCDC and KANAC paired up this winter for a special food drive to help the hungry in our area. The drive, which took place throughout January and February, asked neighbors to donate non-perishables

and canned goods for neighborhood food pantries and missions. In the course of three weeks over 300 pounds of food were collected, which were donated to the Kensington Neighborhood House (KNH) food cupboard located at 3068 Frankford Ave.

In conjunction with NKCDC and KANAC, the Marianna Bracetti Academy Charter School is also conducting a food drive for needy families. The school's drive will wrap up at the end of April, and will also benefit local food pantries.

Thanks to everyone who donated food and helped make the drive possible!

Inside New Kensington - Spring 2009

Editor: Kevin Musselman

Contributors: Kathryn Doherty, Brittany Smith

NAC/KANAC Partner with Local Schools on Neighborhood Cleanups

Students from the Kensington School of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) came out on the morning of Friday, April 17th to participate in two neighborhood cleanups. Over 20 students helped collect trash between the school and the Coral Street Arts House, as well as Pop's Playground at Trenton & Huntington. In total over 50 bags of trash were collected!

KANAC will once again be partnering with the YouthBuild America Charter School for another Great Street Cleanup along Frankford Avenue. The cleanup, which will occur sometime in May, will involve over 70 students cleaning up Frankford Avenue between Stella Street and Allegheny Avenue. Lunch will be provided by Health Partners Foundation. For more information or to get involved please call KANAC at 215-426-6862.



Foreclosure Outreach Helps Neighbors Save Homes

When Jennifer Orta drives up to the unassuming rowhouse on Jasper Street, she sees a bundle of unopened envelopes spilling out of the mailbox. Not a promising sign. When she climbs the front porch and knocks on the front door, she's surprised that someone answers. Behind the door is yet another homeowner at risk of losing their home to foreclosure. But Ms. Orta is here to deliver promising news.

Since April of last year NKCDC and KANAC have been participating in the Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program. A progressive program offered by the City of Philadelphia and the Office of Housing and Community Development, homeowners who have defaulted on their mortgages and are facing foreclosure have a conference scheduled at City Hall, where attorneys work for free with housing counselors and lenders to discuss repayment or refinancing options.

In the past year NKCDC and KANAC have knocked on over 350 doors, encouraging these at-risk homeowners to call the city's Diversion Program Hotline and schedule appointments with housing counselors to prepare for their conferences. "A lot of people don't know about the program and they're surprised that it exists," says Ms. Orta. "It's nice to visit people in this situation and be the one with good news." If you're facing foreclosure and need assistance, call NKCDC at 215-427-0350.

Port Richmond Waterfront Community Meeting

Wednesday, April 29th

6:30pm - 8:30pm

Our Lady of Port Richmond School
3200 Thompson Street



Hosted in conjunction with the Delaware River City Corporation, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the Department of Recreation, this meeting will provide an update about proposed improvements to waterfront. Updates will be available regarding Pulaski Park, as well as the future trail and East Coast Greenway along Delaware Avenue. Your feedback is encouraged, so please come out and let us know your ideas, needs, and concerns! Hope to see you there!

INSIDE NEW KENSINGTON

New Kensington CDC
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THE GARDEN CENTER

OF NEW KENSINGTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Spring 2009 Hours of Operation
April 18th - June 28th
Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 1-6 pm
Saturdays & Sundays 10-3pm
First Friday of every month 1 - 9 pm

Come visit our new greenhouse!

Offering high-quality, low-cost plants and workshops since 1997. Proceeds reinvested in the community via NKCDC's award-winning Land Use Management Program.

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