

# Inside New Kensington

2515 Frankford Avenue Philadelphia PA 19125 (215) 427-0350 www.nkcdc.org



*Serving Fishtown, East Kensington  
& Port Richmond since 1985*

Summer 2006



## ARTS CORRIDOR COLLABORATIONS

### Keep PA Beautiful Day Clean-up

Due to those proverbial april showers, our annual spring clean-up of Frankford Avenue and Pop's Playground (see page 3) was postponed to May. Despite this, approximately 100 neighbors & members of EKNA, CityYear, FNA, Circle of Hope & local Girl Scout Troops 1238 # 741 participated. Afterward, volunteers enjoyed a BBQ courtesy of NeighborWorks America, Yards, Johnny Brenda's, Wells Meats, Primo Pizza, Apple-bee's, Eckert, CVS, Thriftway, Wawa, & Quik Stop. On behalf of the community, thank you all!



### KHS Stained Glass Project

*(2nd photo from bottom)*

Under the guidance of art instructor Ms. Lyons, and a Russian architect, Kensington High School's Creative and Performing Arts students designed a vibrant stained glass window exploring the themes of art and music. The project, funded through a grant, ended June 8th with a dedication ceremony. This colorful addition to East Kensington can be viewed from the street at Cumberland near Amber.



### Transitional Art Project & Tour

One piece of NKCDC's *Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor Plan* is the installation of public art projects, such as last spring's ArtRacks, five bike parking sculptures. Our latest endeavor began with the idea of making quick, inexpensive improvements to four blank facades. The *Transitional Art Project* highlights local talent and was implemented in conjunction with the Mural Arts Program.



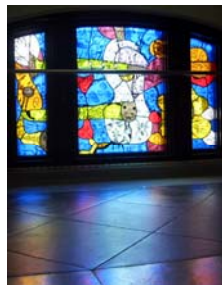
### Hackett Mural (bottom photo)

The eye-catching result of a 4-month collaboration between the Mural Arts Program, the School District, Hackett Elementary, NKCDC, and the community, was unveiled on June 15th. The mural's dedication included student poetry, and music by Hackett's band, as well as Kensington High School's drum line. Muralists Mike Smash & Johnny Buss led the students and a team of artists through the process. The 3-D creation, visible from the intersection of Frankford, Trenton & York, features elements from Celtic mythology, representing the neighborhood's health and growth.



The locations, themes, and artists represented are *(from top right)*:

- 2011 Frankford Ave- Giant Print Press by Bernie Wilkie
- 1867 Frankford Ave- Shoe Heaven by Jeremy Wagner
- 2020 Frankford Ave- Philadelphia Iron by Simon Grigsby
- 1811 Frankford Ave- Antique Car and Train by Brad Carney



### The Common Thread

The guiding force for the Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor has been our Economic Development Director, Sarah Thompson. Her departure in August will be a loss to the organization and community, but we wish her well (see pg 2 for more).

A walking tour led by the artists & James Wright, NKCDC's Frankford Avenue Coordinator, is re-scheduled for Fri., August 4th, beginning at 6:30pm from 2020-24 Frankford Ave.



*For upcoming events on the Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor & at Coral Street Arts House, check the calendar to the right & page 4.*

## CALENDAR

**1st Saturdays through October: Arts & Industry Tour of Fishtown & Kensington**, led by Ken Milano, visits Coral Street Arts House, Yards Brewery & Greensgrow Farms. Info: [www.gophila.com/neighborhoodtours](http://www.gophila.com/neighborhoodtours)

**3rd Mondays: EKNA meets** (see p3)

**Fri, Aug 4th: 1st Friday @ Bambi**, 1817 Frankford, 6-9pm, w/Jeffro Kilpatrick, Mister G & Andrew Hart, benefits Childrens' Crisis Center.

**Sat, Aug. 5th: Family Movie Night** at Pop's Playground, 2150 E. Huntingdon @ Trenton, 8:30pm, FREE!

**Wed, Aug 9th: Fishtown Business Association** meeting 8:30am, location t.b.a. For more info, contact: [beauty@fishtownlife.com](mailto:beauty@fishtownlife.com)

**Wed, Aug. 9th, 9pm: NKCDC's Precious Places** documentary "From the Del. to El: A Neighborhood Evolving" screens on WYBE Channel 35.

**Tue., Aug 15th** at Bambi, 6:30pm

**& Mon., Aug 21st:** at CSAH, 7:30pm **Frankford Ave. Design Charrettes**

**Fri, Aug 18th: Street Movies @ Coral St Arts House** (see page 4)

**Sat., Sept. 9, 23 & 30: Mobile Pet Clinics** at CSAH (see page 4)

**Sat., Sept. 9th: Garden Center** re-opens w/Mike McGrath (see pg. 4)

**Tue., Sept 19th: Anti-litter Committee meeting** (see page 2)

**Oct 5th: Blush opens @ Bambi**

**Oct 7th: Frankford Ave cleanup**

**Oct. 14th-15th: POST** (see pg.4)

**Oct 28th: Fall Festival** at the Garden Center (Raindate Nov. 4th).

## Board Adopts Resolution on Riverfront Development

NKCDC's Board of Directors has joined Northern Liberties Neighbor Association (NLNA) in calling for a moratorium on further development and zoning changes along the Delaware River until a master plan has been completed and agreed upon by surrounding communities:

*Whereas, the mission of New Kensington Community Development corporation, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation (NKCDC) is to work collaboratively with the community to enhance the physical environment, to increase the economic vitality, and to improve the quality of life for everyone including the building of community through neighborhood driven programs, projects and activities.*

*Whereas, NKCDC wishes to benefit our neighborhood, as well as adjoining neighborhoods, and the City of Philadelphia, by supporting appropriate development of the Delaware Riverfront.*

*Be it hereby resolved that NKCDC does not support any future zoning changes for properties lying along Delaware Avenue north of Spring Garden Street, nor any properties lying east of Interstate Highway 95 between Susquehanna Street and Lehigh Avenue until a Master Plan is completed for our neighborhoods; which ensures sustainability of those projects and those neighborhoods and until such Plan is embraced by the local communities.*

*Be it further resolved that it is our desire that the following issues be addressed before any more development is permitted along the Delaware River corridor in this area:*

1. Traffic study and parking
2. Public Access to the waterfront, including a Riverfront Walkway & a Delaware Avenue Greenway
3. Height and Density
4. Open Space
5. Use
6. Historic Structures
7. Green Space/Landscaping & Infrastructure
8. Public Transportation & Sidewalks
9. Public Safety
10. Environmental Issues
11. Storm-water Management

*Be It Further resolved, that the provisions of these Resolutions shall remain in full force and effect until a certified copy of any duly adopted resolution amending or rescinding this Resolution is received by any third party relying on it.*

Fishtown Neighbors Association will discuss a similar moratorium during their next general membership meeting, September 21st.

## Housing Counseling & Energy News



### Homebuyer Expo

NKCDC's Housing Counselors joined more than 50 housing agencies, lenders and realtors at the 2nd annual Homebuyer Expo on June 3rd, sponsored by the Homeownership Counseling Association of the Delaware Valley. Workshops topics included credit repair, loan programs, home inspections, and settlement assistance grants. One lucky attendee won a \$1,000 raffle prize toward closing costs.

### Weatherization Assistance Available

Additional funds have become available for Pennsylvania's Weatherization program. This free service provides improvements resulting in energy efficiency and lower bills. Benefits include:

- Sealing windows, doors, crawlspaces & cracks;
- Wrapping water heaters;
- Roof insulation;
- Repairs & modifications to heating systems;
- Programmable thermostats;
- Conservation education

To be eligible, household income can not exceed \$14,355 for 1 person, plus \$4890 for each additional household member. There is a waiting list, but energy costs are not expected to decrease. Get on the list now to prepare for next winter. Both owner- and tenant -occupied households can apply. **NKCDC accepts applications by appointment only; please call 215-427-0350.**

## News Briefs

Farewell to **Frank Abreu**, who has moved on to Germantown Settlement after 6 years as our accountant.

Good bye & congratulations to **Sarah Thompson**, our Economic Development Director since 2000, who is getting hitched and moving back to Ohio.

Thank you to **Ryan Peterson & David Reed**, our spring interns.

Welcome to new accountant **Rebekah Edwardson**, a neighbor & volunteer, who comes to us from Mural Arts.

Best wishes to **Anne Czajka's** daughter Luba, husband Steve, and big sister Alexa on baby Melania's May arrival.



Congratulations to **Liz Kline's** daughters Kellie & Mykaela, who graduated from Mercy Tech High School and Fishtown Rec. Center's Preschool in June.



Thanks to all of our gracious hosts, volunteers & participants who helped us pull off our 2nd successful spring **Neighborhood Open House tour.**

Inside New Kensington - Summer 2006

Editor: Noelle Dames

Contributors: Marlene Buck, Lauri Kochis, Laura Semmelroth, Duane Wilcox, James Wright

## ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN



Since last spring, a committee comprised of staff, board and resident volunteers, has been working with area students and artists to engage the community around the pervasive issue of litter. This spring, we partnered with the **Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC)** to educate students at **Kensington High School (KHS)** and **Hackett Elementary**. PRC presented littering facts to KHS' Environmental Studies class. PRC's Litterbug (*above left*)

also visited 3rd Graders at Hackett, who demonstrated the lesson learned by cleaning their school yard regularly and taking the message home. The collaboration culminated in the performance of an original anti-litter campaign created by KHS' Creative and Performing Arts students (*right*), for Hackett students, NKCDC staff, and members of East Kensington Neighbors Association.



For our Keep PA Beautiful Day clean-up, the first of 5 sculptural trash cans, created by **Leo Razzi**, was installed at Frankford & Berks (*left*). Four others will soon be added to the Arts Corridor to encourage folks to think twice before littering.



For the next phase, the Anti-litter Committee will combine forces with our Open Space Committee. **All are welcome to join us at the next meeting, Tuesday, September 19th, 6:30p.m. at the Garden Center!**

# Neighborhood Advisory Committee NEWS

## Positive Progress at Pop's

On May 13th, as part of NKCDC's Keep PA Beautiful Day activities, dozens of staff, EKNA members, CityYear volunteers, Kensington High School students, girl scouts, and neighbors participated in a clean-up and repair day at "Pop's" Playground (formally named Black, Coyle & McBride). Building on this momentum, NKCDC's Land Use Management department and Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) have been working to form a Friends of Pop's group to guide an ongoing revitalization effort at the decommissioned playground at Huntingdon St. & Trenton Ave.



NKCDC, in conjunction with the Friends of Pop's, convinced the Recreation Department to provide one building key each to a neighbor and an NKCDC employee. This momentous step has allowed the group to clean and paint the building, to store supplies inside and, most importantly, to give playground users access to bathrooms and water. In addition, the Recreation Dept. has agreed to pay one staff person, who will act as a playground ambassador, lend sports equipment, books and games, and perform general cleaning and graffiti removal, throughout the month of August.

Apart from the many physical improvements needed in the playground, NKCDC and the Friends of Pop's think organized activities are crucial to it's success. In response to this need, children's Arts & Craft workshops are planned on Wednesday through August from 2pm-5pm. A basketball league for 12-18 year olds is now forming.

The Friends of Pop's need more folks to contribute ideas and time. In order for this playground to reach its potential as a positive community asset, everyone must get involved. If you are short on time but would still like to help, donations are welcome. Contact the NAC for more information at 215.427.0350 Ext. 116.

## Zoning Workshop well attended!

Duane Wilcox, NKCDC's Community Organizer, was surprised to find so much interest in local zoning issues while planning a workshop for a handful of community leaders. He soon realized he would need a larger space to accommodate residents from all over the city who wanted to learn more about zoning.

Together with Penn Future, a Pennsylvania environmental organization, Duane created a comprehensive agenda for the panelists to discuss community planning and zoning in Philadelphia. The forum was attended by more than 40 people and took place at the Coral Street Arts House on June 29th.

The panelists were William H. Ewing and Paula Brumbelow. Mr. Ewing is an attorney whose practice focuses on zoning and land use matters. He has served as a member of the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment and frequently lectures on zoning and land use law. In addition, he is a long-time board member of a Mt. Airy civic organization.

Ms. Brumbelow has been a Development Planner with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission for four years and has served as a Zoning Consultant to the telecommunications industry and was a City Planner for the City of Solon in Northeast Ohio.

An overview of Philadelphia planning and zoning processes was given briefly, including modernization efforts. The role that community groups play in the zoning process was discussed and how they can prove most effective. The session ended with a lively Q&A period where clearly knowledgeable and passionate residents discussed the zoning problems that affect their communities.

## Full Value Project explained at NAC Quarterly Community Briefing

Held at St. Anne's Senior Center on June 27<sup>th</sup>, the NAC conducted a briefing on the Board of Revision of Taxes' "Full Value Project" to inform the community of proposed changes to the Philadelphia's property taxation system.

Currently, properties are assessed at a percentage of their market value, and the Mayor and City Council set the tax rate. This system is very complicated and difficult for most taxpayers to understand.

According to the BRT website: *"Beginning in 2008, all commercial and residential properties will be valued at the actual market rate, resulting in a system that is fair, uniform and easy to understand."*

This statement is frightening to many homeowners, especially to the 10-15% whose properties are considered "severely undervalued" by the BRT. David Glancey, board chairman of the BRT, presented a slide show detailing the new plan and contended the new system would be much clearer to understand and that some may even see a decrease in their taxes.

Councilman Frank DiCicco added that in 2003 City council mandated the BRT to make the process more transparent. DiCicco also addressed the tax abatement program and the effect of abandoned homes on blocks.

Glancey confirmed that this program will not be implemented unless *Philadelphia-specific* tax relief measures are put in place. All large increases in property tax would be phased in and/or buffered.

The Full Value Project slideshow can be viewed at BRT's site: [www.brtweb.phila.gov/](http://www.brtweb.phila.gov/)



EKNA's 1st Trenton Avenue Arts Festival (below) was a huge success, with 50+ vendors offering everything from pottery, paintings & photos to jewelry, vintage finds, food & beer. Folks of all ages enjoyed perfect weather and entertainment by an eclectic lineup of local talent.

EKNA meets 6:30pm, on the 3rd Monday of each month (except holidays), usually at Yards Brewery. The next meeting will be held August 21st at Coral Street Arts House, 2446 Coral Street @ Hagert St.

EKNA welcomes those who live or work within the area from Norris Street to Lehigh Avenue & Frankford/Trenton Avenues to Kensington Avenue.



# **g a r d e n   c e n t e r**

1825 Frankford Ave. @ Berks St.   phone: 215-739-6910

*Closed for the month of August*

*Re-opening Sat, September 9th  
with a free workshop @ 1pm by  
Mike McGrath, host of  
"You Bet Your Garden"*



### Fall Hours:

*Fridays 2pm-5pm & Saturdays 9a-3p*

*Fall Festival: Saturday, October 28th (raindate: Nov. 4)*

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

## *Coral Street Arts House News*

(CSAH)   2446-68 Coral Street @ Hagert   215-739-0310

Street Movies Aug 18th, 8p: Scribe Video Center's annual outdoor animation & documentary night featuring BigTea-Party, Greensgrow, Belgrade Garden, local bike messenger culture & more. BYOB(lanket) or a low chair to sit on.

### Frankford Avenue Design Charrette

Mon, Aug. 21st, 7:30pm. Come give your opinion on streetscape improvement designs such as lighting, greening, sidewalks, and traffic calming measures.

### Low-cost Mobile Vet Clinic

Alliance for Philadelphia's Animals will provide low-cost pet vaccines and spay/neuter services by appointment on three Saturdays: September 9th, 23rd & 30th. More info & advance registration at: [spayneuter@animalalliancepa.org](mailto:spayneuter@animalalliancepa.org) or 215-772-1525.

### POST Group Show & Bus Loop

Philadelphia Open Studio Tours (POST) takes place Oct. 14-15th. Visit: <http://www.philaopenstudios.com/>

CSAH will be hosting a POST group show. NKCDC & Johnny Brenda's are also organizing low-cost bus transportation between local artists' studios. Stay tuned for details.

*Contributions to NKCDC are tax-deductible and can be made by mail or via United Way to Donor Choice #6066. Thank you!*

**New Kensington CDC  
2515 Frankford Avenue  
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