



SUMMER NEWSLETTER

July 2012



OFFICE OF COUNCILMAN
R. DANIEL LAVELLE

Proudly Serving:

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- California-Kirkbride
- Central Business District
- Central Northside
- Fineview
- Hill District
- Manchester
- Mexican War Streets
- North Shore
- Parts of Oakland
- Perry Hilltop
- Strip District
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414 Grant Street
510 City-County Building
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-255-2134 ph
412-255-0737 fax

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Message From the Councilman

Greetings Residents of District 6—

As we approach the height of what has so far been a scorching summer, there are plenty of developments to report on from the office of Council District 6. Including historical legislation passing council and the ongoing physical development of our community.

Please take a moment of your time and review the information contained in this newsletter. I hope you find it informative. However, should you have additional concerns, questions or thoughts please feel free to either call me at 412-255-2134 email me at daniel.lavelle@pittsburghpa.gov. You can also reach us via our newly restructured website at www.pittsburghpa.gov/district6/.

Hill Grocery Store Update

The Centre Heldman Plaza, where the future Shop ‘n Save will be located, is a project that has been nearly 30 years in the making. Construction officially commenced in May of 2011 with most of the groundwork having since been completed.

Earlier this year, a management change took place that has temporarily delayed progress on the vertical construction of the site. However, contrary to rumors, development has not come to a dead halt. In fact, Massaro Corporation was recently selected to oversee the vertical construction of the site.

Regarding funding, yes, there is a funding gap. But, know that all the funders remain on board and once final figures on construction costs are received, we will know the true gap and then be able to continue the fundraising to finance the project.

I remain committed to ensuring the completion of the Centre Heldman Plaza and the Shop ‘n Save grocery store. We have come too far and waited too long to not see this project through. There have been hiccups along the way, and future challenges surely await, but I assure you that I will continue being vigilant to ensure the Hill District gets its first grocery in over 20 years. My goal is to see the doors to the store opened, as the Hill District community is provided with an essential amenity it has long deserved. The wait has been long, but the final result, I am certain, will be well worth it.

City Council Approves Responsible Banking Bill

It is a financial reality that as economic growth slows, it gets harder to secure loans from lending institutions for home ownership and business development opportunities. The challenges multiply in low to moderate income neighborhoods, communities with the greatest need of financial support for revitalization and rejuvenation efforts.

To help meet the needs of the city, City Council approved the historic Respon-

sible Banking Bill #2012-0014 on April 17th, sponsored by Councilman Lavelle. The bill among other things, incentivizes financial institutions to make loans in low-moderate income neighborhoods.

The Responsible Banking ordinance requires financial institutions that seek to become City depositories to make a commitment to community reinvestment and responsible banking. A set of

criteria was created by which these institutions will be evaluated by the City Controller based on their success or failure in meeting this commitment. Those with a favorable rating stand a greater chance at becoming a depository for the City of Pittsburgh.

The bill, originally passed by Council in 2011, was vetoed by the Mayor, at the request of Councilman Lavelle, over concerns it did not adequately

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RESPONSIBLE BANKING BILL, continued from P-1

address the need for reinvestment in neighborhoods of need. Councilman Lavelle sponsored and reintroduced the bill in the current Council term after introducing a series of amendments to strengthen its intended purpose. Changes were the result of an inclusive community process by which the Councilman met with and discussed amendments with community leaders and organizations from low-moderate income communities. The major additions include:

- Language pertaining to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI). Prospective depositories are now asked to provide a plan to engage with CDFI's, and prospective depositories are to be rated based on their grants and loans to CDFI's. Examples of CDFI's include Bridge-way Capital and the Northside Loan Fund.
- Additional language asking Financial Institutions to provide lending information on a census-tract-block level, if information is compiled by the

institution at that level. Normally, lending information is compiled at the census-tract level, a much broader range where upper and low income communities can be found in the same census-tract.

- Provision creating a Reinvestment Review Committee (RRC), which includes members from low-moderate income communities, and which assists the Controller in the evaluation of prospective depositories. The Controller rates the financial institution on the evaluation criteria, and the RRC provides a set of recommendations to the City's Finance Director for review.

Councilman Lavelle is determined to stimulate investment in communities of need. The Responsible Banking Bill is one of many tools to be used toward this goal. Going forward, the Councilman will continue to look into creative ways to leverage resources and legislative tools to support policy initiatives aimed at revitalizing our low-moderate income communities.

**ServePGH Volunteers
Come to District 6**



One of the core principles guiding Councilman Lavelle's tenure in office is the knowledge that strong communities are built by a citizenry that is active and involved. Elected officials are most effective when strong relationships are built with the constituency they represent, as the two work together to join forces towards a common goal: the betterment of the communities they love. ServePGH, launched by Mayor Ravenstahl in March of 2011, is an initiative with the mission of promoting high-impact volunteerism to address the City's most pressing needs.

In an economic climate where municipal resources are limited, volunteerism has become increasingly important to continue ensuring Pittsburgh's vitality. ServePGH's goal is to maximize this valuable resource through seven high-impact service initiatives. Since last March, servePGH has empowered more than 1,000 community members to beautify 47 City blocks, wea-

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Arena Parking Tax Resolution to Support Hill District Development

On April 3rd, Councilman Lavelle introduced a resolution in Council aimed at providing funding for development projects in the Greater Hill District. The resolution created a cooperation agreement between the City of Pittsburgh, the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and the Sports and Exhibition Authority (SEA) to allocate parking tax revenue generated by the interim parking spaces planned for the footprint of the Civic Arena site. The goal of the partnership is to spur infrastructure funding for the 28 acre Civic Arena site as well as funding for development projects in the Greater Hill District.

"The parking spaces are expected to generate an estimated \$500,000 annually in new City Parking Tax revenues."

Upon completion of demolition of the Civic Arena and pending the construction of the street grid, approximately 862 interim parking spaces will be created in the footprint of the former arena. The spaces are expected to generate an estimated \$500,000 annually in new City Parking Tax revenues. The cooperation agreement directs 50% of this parking tax revenue to the URA for deposit in a Community Development Investment Fund (CDIF). The CDIF stipulates that monies shall go solely to development projects located

within the Hill District.

For the remainder 50%, funds will be allocated to the SEA to support infrastructure improvements on the Civic Arena site. It will be used specifically for costs related to the design and construction of roads and infrastructure, preparing the site for the future mixed use development planned to bring new housing and commercial space to the Hill District. The term of the cooperation agreement shall extend until there are no remaining interim parking spaces on the Civic Arena footprint.

With the development schedule in place, Councilman Lavelle has stressed he views the temporary parking to be relatively short term as the City looks to build on site. The sooner infrastructure funding and development is secured, the more temporary the parking will become. In the meantime, it makes sense to leverage the spaces to create additional economic development benefits for infrastructure and for the advancement of projects in the Greater Hill District. The parking spaces created

will be new, so the parking tax revenues will also be new, therefore leaving unaffected the parking tax the City currently collects.

Councilman Lavelle strongly believes that the cooperation agreement will assist the Hill District neighborhood move further along its current revitalization. It will support the realization of an urban street grid to greater benefit residents of the Hill District and the City of Pittsburgh, while simultaneously supporting development efforts in the Greater Hill District.

The bill received final approval from City Council on May 8, 2012 in a 6-3 vote.





SERVEPGH, continued from P-2

therized and restored more than 22 homes of veterans, seniors and disabled residents, cleaned litter at 20 half-mile zones of City streets, and mentored 55 local middle school students.

The office of Councilman Lavelle is excited to see the fruits of ServePGH initiatives in District 6. Beginning last year, community members worked to prepare a community blueberry garden at a site on North Charles Street, by the Fowler Play-

ground, that had been cleaned up by the ServePGH Love Your Block initiative. After the City demolished a building and removed overgrown brush and trees, The Pittsburgh Project received funding in fall 2011 to purchase supplies to beautify the site. Volunteers planted sunflowers to restore the soil and worked to install a fence and plant clover to cover the lot.

On March 21st, Councilman Lavelle's office was present to work with volunteers to continue to expand on that project by

digging holes to install the rest of the fence, remove debris, turn the soil and spread mulch to prepare the ground for planting. By establishing a community blueberry garden, The Pittsburgh Project aims to eliminate the "food desert" in Perry South and increase access to healthy fruits and vegetables.

It was inspiring to see the work that can be accomplished when we all come together towards a common goal.

Pittsburgh Farmers Markets

Despite living in a city, there are many ways to access food that is fresh, local, and delicious. As summer approaches, the opportunity to buy quality produce and locally farmed meats becomes even easier with community farmers markets. There are many around District 6, each varying in size and types of food offered, from fruits and veggies to cheese, meat, and baked goods.



All farmers markets provide Pittsburgh city residents with an option to buy the freshest food while supporting local farms

and businesses. Most farmers markets and farm stands accept cash, WIC, and Senior FMNP, and farm stands marked with an asterisk (*) accept EBT/food stamps as well.

Following is a listing of all the farmers markets located in District 6. Although dates vary, most open in May or June and end in November:

Downtown

- City-County Building
400 Grant Street
Friday 10am – 2pm
May 11 – early December
- Market Square
Forbes Avenue and Market Place
Thursday 10am – 2pm
May – mid-November
- O'Toole Pediatric Fund WIC office
Investment Bldg., 239 Fourth Ave, 3rd floor
Tuesday 9:30am – 4 pm
June – October
- Steel Plaza Farm Stand
U.S. Steel Tower, Grant & Sixth Ave

Friday 10:30am – 2pm
May – September

Hill District

- Hill House Farm Stand
1835 Centre Ave
Thursday 10am – 1pm
June – November

Oakland

- Sennot St. between Atwood & Meyran
Friday 12pm – 5pm
June 29 – November 9

Northside

- East Ohio & Cedar Ave
Friday 3:30pm to 7:30pm
May 18 – November
- Charles Street Farm Stand
2801 North Charles St at Fowler Park-
Thursday 2pm – 6pm
June – November

Strip District

- Firehouse
2216 Penn Ave
Saturday, 9am to 1pm
May – November
- Pittsburgh Public Market
2100 Smallman St.

Annual Hill District Spring Clean-Up

On Saturday, April 14th Duquesne University's Spiritan Campus Ministry partnered with UPMC, the Hill District Consensus Group, and the Clean Green Hill Partnership to support an annual Spring Clean-Up event in the Greater Hill District Neighborhood. Student, faculty, and staff volunteers from Duquesne University united with members of the Hill District community to clean litter, clear illegal dumpsites, and plant spring bulbs to green-up the area in a sustainable way.

The idea for the Clean-Up began 23 years ago, and within the past 7 years has transformed into a successful community-building opportunity. This year, over 350 people from the Duquesne University

community joined with more than 45 Hill District residents and employees to raise awareness about environmental issues and help strengthen the relationship between members of Duquesne University and local community neighbors. The Clean Green Hill Partnership identified areas that needed the most clean-up, and together, volunteers picked up over 850 bags of trash and around 100 tires in the

Greater Hill.



Hill District volunteers at the spring clean-up

After a morning of hard work, volunteers were invited to gather at the corner of Centre and Fitzpatrick to listen to live music and eat a delicious lunch donated by Mr. Ribb's Z-Best Barbeque. The event culminated with a health fair giving offering free sugar testing (diabetes screenings), blood pressure screenings, and nutritional information. At the end of the day, not only did the annual Spring Clean-Up help get rid of loads of trash in the Hill District, but it also helped build relationships between the Duquesne University and Hill. communities.



Schenley Heights For Sale & Rehab Program

An initiative of Councilman Lavelle, in partnership with the URA and the Scheley Heights Community Development Group, is the Schenley Heights For Sale & Rehab Program. The goal is to stabilize a once strong middle class family neighborhood by building new market rate housing as well as purchasing and stabilizing vacant and abandoned structures in the community. It is a revitalization plan that combats blight in a coordinated manner. Instead of tackling abandoned parcels piecemeal, efforts are maximized by stabilizing targeted properties in a strategic manner to turn them into catalysts promoting further neighborhood rejuvenation.

The rehab program begins with a list of vacant housing that can still be recovered and brought back to market. Plans are for the City to buy these properties, stabilize them to prevent further decay, and prep them for purchase by owners or contractors looking to fix them up for resale.



Rendering of proposed Bryn Mawr St home

Phase I would ideally target 12 homes for rehabilitation. Plans are also being discussed for a program to provide homeowners located in the targeted Schenley Heights area with grants for façade improvements. By sprucing up the neighbor-

hood, the rehab properties will become even more attractive to potential buyers.

On the new construction side, the Councilman is currently working with the Schenley Height Community Development Group, the URA and Heartland Homes to identify at least six new parcels to build new market rate housing.

The new construction will begin on either Bryn Mawr Road or Anaheim St. There will be one style of housing for Bryn Mawr Road and another for Anaheim. Both will match the architectural integrity of the streets and community. The goal is to begin construction early Fall, 2012.

Be on the look out for a community meeting to discuss both plans for the community.

Pittsburgh 'JobStart' Resource Fair

The bedrock of a sustainable community is an economically stable constituency. Jobs play a key role in this equation, and Councilman Lavelle has been keen to find and promote employment opportunities for the residents in District 6.

An upcoming initiative to be sponsored by Councilman Lavelle is the Pittsburgh 'JobStart' Employment & Resource Fair, to be held in partnership with the Office of Jake Wheatley, Jr. The event will be a community driven resource and employment fair specifically designed for low-moderate income neighborhoods within

City Council District 6 and State Representative District 19.

Often times, job and resource fairs do not lead to instant employment opportunities, focusing instead on initial contacts with little to no follow-up by the prospective employer. The goal of 'JobStart' is to produce a full service resource and employment fair that produces results on the spot. Councilman Lavelle envisions a fair where individuals can get hired and learn more about educational and social service opportunities that can lead to personal economic advancement.

Please be on the lookout for upcoming information about our Pittsburgh 'JobStart' Employment & Resource Fair to take place on Saturday October 13, 2012 at the Point Park University Student Center Gymnasium, located at 330 Boulevard of the Allies. The event will feature various social service providers, employers, and community stakeholders. Our office will also send out a community survey this summer to fine tune the fair in order to meet its target audience's core needs. Please contact Harry Johnson at 412-255-2134 for more information on the event and the community survey.

Grand Opening of the Thelma Lovette YMCA

On April 18th, after years of hard work, the Thelma Lovette YMCA in the Hill District held its official ribbon cutting ceremony. It was a great day for the new state of the arts facility to open.

State and local officials that represent the community were present for the celebrations to mark the momentous occasion. More importantly, the building's namesake, Mrs. Thelma Lovette, was accompanied by her daughter and son-in-law as they all made their way back to their beloved Hill. It was truly a blessing to see a living legend that has inspired so many Pittsburghers return home to witness the

groundbreaking of the YMCA named in her honor.

In an effort to ensure membership opportunities for the community, Councilman Lavelle pledged \$10,000 to the Bridges program which helps to pay for memberships for those who otherwise may not be able to afford one.

All are encouraged to take a tour, purchase a membership, workout, and enjoy the new YMCA located at 2114 Centre Avenue.



Mrs. Lovette, center, at the grand opening



Women's Walk for Peace

Violence in our communities is an issue that Councilman Daniel Lavelle continuously searches for creative ways to address. The Councilman is supportive of organizations that help to raise awareness of issues of violence and that work to reduce violence in our communities. **In this spirit, the Northside Coalition for Fair Housing will be hosting their 5th annual "Women's Walk for Peace" on Saturday, September 8, 2012.**

The Women's Walk for Peace is 2.5 miles long and expected to last at least 1 hour and 30 minutes. The walk will begin in the Pittsburgh Project on Charles Street at 10 am and conclude at Allegheny West Park. In rallying together around issues affecting women and children, the goal of the walk is to unite Pittsburgh communities to promote peace. If you would like to participate, please register on the North Side Coalition's website for the walk at <http://womenswalk.org/register.html>. For more information, please contact the North Side Coalition for Fair Housing at (412) 321-5527.

KaBoom! Playground Installed in Northside



On June 19th, over 230 volunteers gathered at Allegheny Commons to build a KaBoom! Playground with the support of the Department of Public Works and CNNC. Our office participated in the build, together with Mayor Ravenstahl's office, in what proved to be an inspiring event that showcased what can be accomplished when a community comes together towards a single purpose and goal.

The Councilman is thankful for the time and effort put in by the volunteers, sponsors and organizers who made the playground a reality for children in the Northside, and is hopeful that its success will serve as an example for volunteers to continue participating in their community.

District 6 Launches New Website

District 6 is hard at work for you! Earlier this year, our office launched a revamped version of the District 6 website. We would like your comments, feedback, and interesting neighborhood facts for the new District 6 website. **When you have a moment please take the opportunity to visit the website at www.pittsburghpa.gov/district6/.**

The new website was launched in March of this year and we are hoping to make it more user friendly and inviting for our visitors. The new website is designed to ensure you are both an informed and engaged citizenry.



Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle

Screen capture of District 6 Website

UpHill 5K Run

On September 10, 2011, a healthy tradition was born – the UpHill 5K walk/run. This 5K was designed to “Build Communities and Strengthen Lives” by supporting local businesses and individuals in the Uptown and Hill District neighborhoods through healthy initiatives. This walk/run is organized by NEXT Leaders for Green Communities, a fellowship guided by GTech Strategies and Coro Pittsburgh under Sala Udin, and it has helped benefit many sustainable initiatives in the Uptown and Hill District communities. Some of

these include The Dwayne Cooper Garden of Hope on Bedford Avenue, the Ujamaa Collective on Centre Avenue, the Tustin Street Community Garden in Uptown, and Pittsburgh Youth Green Entrepreneurs.

With the support of sponsors such as UPMC Mercy and UPMC Health Plans, Savoy Restaurant and the University of Pittsburgh, Carlow University, Propel Schools, Venture Outdoors, and Macedonia Baptist Church, as well as a DJ playing music at the start, the 2011 event was able to suc-

cessfully garner many participants, volunteers, and supporters from the surrounding neighborhoods to help make the event a fun and energetic success.

To continue this positive tradition, a 2012 UpHill 5K walk/run is currently being planned for September, 2012. Taking lead from its success in 2011, this year's event will encourage community members to support development initiatives and sustainable, healthy projects in Uptown and the Hill District. Stay tuned for more information about sponsorship, registration, and other ways to get involved in this lively event!

City Council Reapportionment Committee

Every ten years the United States Bureau conducts the constitutionally mandated US Census to measure current population trends and changes. Results are used throughout the country by government bodies that are not elected at large to redraw district lines. The ultimate goal is to ensure the principle of one-person-one-vote, with each district nearly equal in population as practically possible.

Given that the nine Pittsburgh City Council seats are elected by district, and in

accordance with the Pennsylvania Constitution, the City is required to realign its district lines after each decennial census.

City Council established a Reapportionment Committee to aid in the redistricting process. The Committee is responsible for providing a preliminary map to Council for review. Each Councilmember elects one representative to serve on the Committee.

The recommended district map must meet the following criteria:

- Each Council District must contain roughly the same number of residents.
- Districts must be contiguous. A person must be able to walk from any site in the district to another site within the district without leaving district boundaries.
- Districts should be compact. A district must be as solid and as uniform in shape as possible.

You can view the map online at www.pittsburghpa.gov/council/redistricting/



Voter ID Law in Effect this Fall

The Pennsylvania State Legislature enacted a law earlier this year that requires every Pennsylvania voter to provide specific photo identification prior to casting a ballot at the polls on election day. Beginning with elections that occur after September 17 of this year, all voters must provide a current photo ID at each election in order to vote.

Councilman Lavelle is not supportive of this measure, which raises serious issues about voter equity. However, since it has passed, it is vital for citizens to inform themselves and others about the new requirements. **Starting September 17, acceptable forms of ID must:**

- Have an expiration date
- Have a photo
- Have a name that conforms to the voting register at your polling place

ID's must be issued by either one of the following entities:

- Federal government
- Pennsylvania government
- Pennsylvania municipality to an employee of that municipality
- Accredited Pennsylvania public or private institution of higher learning
- Pennsylvania long-term nursing home, assisted living residence or personal care home.

what ARE IDs acceptable **Voter ID** **what you need to KNOW**

All photo IDs must contain an **expiration date** that is **current**, unless noted otherwise

- ✓ Photo IDs issued by the U.S. Government or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- ✓ Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver's license photo ID (IDs are valid for voting purposes 12 months past expiration date)
- ✓ Valid U.S. passport
- ✓ U.S. military ID - active duty and retired military (a military or veteran's ID must designate an expiration date or designate that the expiration date is indefinite). Military dependents' ID must contain an expiration date
- ✓ Employee photo ID issued by Federal, PA, PA County or PA Municipal government
- ✓ Photo ID from an accredited Pennsylvania public or private college, university, or seminary
- ✓ Photo ID issued by a Pennsylvania care facility, including long-term care facilities, assisted living residences or personal care homes

If you are a registered voter and do not have one of these IDs, and require one for voting purposes, you are entitled to get one **FREE OF CHARGE** at a PennDOT Driver License Center (DLC).

If you plan on voting by absentee ballot for the November 2012 election, you will need to provide proof of identification.

To find the DLC nearest you, what identification and residency documentation you will need to get a photo ID, how to vote if you have a religious objection to having your photograph taken, what identification you need to vote by absentee ballot, or for general information, visit www.VotesPA.com or call 1-877-VotesPA (868-3772).

NO ONE legally entitled to vote will be denied the right to do so. If you do not have a photo ID or are indigent and unable to obtain one without payment of a fee, you may cast a provisional ballot, and will have six days to provide your photo ID and/or an affirmation to your county elections office to have your ballot count.

It is important that residents review the materials needed and ensure they have the proper documentation to vote in the upcoming elections.

To assist citizens in this process, the ACLU has prepared a survey that helps determine whether an individual has the proper ID for voting. You can contact our office at 412-255-2134 to request a copy, or the ACLU at 1-866-687-8683. You can also see the survey online at www.aclupa.org/downloads/PAintakesurveyv1.pdf.

Office of Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle
 510 City-County Building
 414 Grant Street
 Pittsburgh, PA 15219



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