

PITTSBURGH WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY DISTRICT 8 FLOOD REPORTS



COMPILED BY COUNCILMAN WILLIAM PEDUTO



WILLIAM PEDUTO
MEMBER OF COUNCIL, CITY OF PITTSBURGH
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES



February 28, 2012

Tom Palmosina
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority
1200 Penn Avenue
Penn Liberty Plaza
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Stephen Simcic
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority
1200 Penn Avenue
Penn Liberty Plaza
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Directors Palmosina and Simcic:

As you know, over the past several years, flooding incidents in the East End have been occurring with alarming regularity. These incidents are not isolated just to “100 year” rain events; many people suffer them with every moderate rain. Following the tragic events on Washington Boulevard on August 19, 2001 and the serious, but less publicized, floods that occurred in my district on that day I held a community meeting at Winchester Thurston School attended by over 300 residents, Mayor Ravenstahl and his Directors and staff, and the Board of Directors and leadership of PWSA. That meeting demonstrated that this problem was widespread throughout the City and that several nodes of repeated flooding could be identified in District 8.

Following this meeting my office held a series of in-depth discussions with residents of the district regarding the ongoing flooding issues at their homes and places of business. We have split the district into five “zones” that encompass portions of each neighborhood most affected by the continual flooding.

As a result of these meetings and our larger citywide meeting we have compiled five reports, one for each zone, to provide you with a detailed analysis of the areas where there are clear breakdowns in the system. Each report contains recent photos of catch basins that need repair or replacement and sewer line maps of the epicenters of flooding with detailed descriptions of the impacts on property owners. Some of the reports contain photos and insurance claims forms submitted by individuals who attended the meetings to demonstrate the economic impact this is having on our residents.

Pittsburgh City Council - District 8 | 510 City-County Building | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

412.255.2133 412.255.0738 (Fax)

www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us

In addition to the outreach you have already done via letters and surveys sent to residents we are requesting that several actions be taken based on these reports:

1. Inspect, clean, and replace – as needed – specific catch basins that are clearly in disrepair. A list of these catch basins appears in each report;
2. Scope pipe segments in the “epicenter” areas to identify potential breakdowns in the system and communicate repair or replacement plans to our office and nearby residents. A list of the areas that should be scoped appears in each report;
3. Provide our office a maintenance plan to ensure that the catch basins in our district will be cleaned regularly before and during the spring and summer when most floods occur.
4. Provide our office with a capital improvement plan and schedule to make necessary upgrades and repairs.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We can't ask our residents to live through another spring and summer of chronic flooding in the East End.

Sincerely

William Peduto

Encl: District 8 Flood Reports

Cc: Mayor Luke Ravenstahl
City Controller Michael Lamb
Pittsburgh City Council President and Members
Dan Deasy, Chair, PWSA Board of Directors
Robert Jablonowski, Vice-Chair, PWSA Board of Directors
Henry Blum, Secretary, PWSA Board of Directors
Scott Kunka, Treasurer, PWSA Board of Directors
Margaret Lanier, Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer, PWSA Board of Directors
Rick Obermeier, PWSA
Thomas Gigliotti, PWSA
Melissa Rubin, PWSA

ZONE 1 STATISTICS

AREA OF STUDY:

- Shadyside and North Oakland
West of S. Aiken between Forbes and Centre

PROPERTY OWNERS REPORTING FLOODING IN 2011:

- 14

AREAS OF CONCERN:

Catch Basins

- Catch basin at Amberson and Pembroke
- Catch basin at 5200 Westminster
- Catch basin at Westminster and St. James

Pipes

- N. Neville between Wallingford and Bayard
- Westminster between St. James and Amberson
- Intersection of Amberson and Ellsworth

ZONE 1 MEETING
Shadyside and North Oakland
West of S. Aiken between Forbes and Centre



PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:

- Andrea DiMartini and Sid Pant, 407 N. Neville Street
- Richard Pagliari, 600 Amberson Avenue
- Cindy Tilson, 5309 Westminster Place

CATCH BASINS



- Amberson and Pembroke
 - Basin is paved nearly to the top and filled with debris

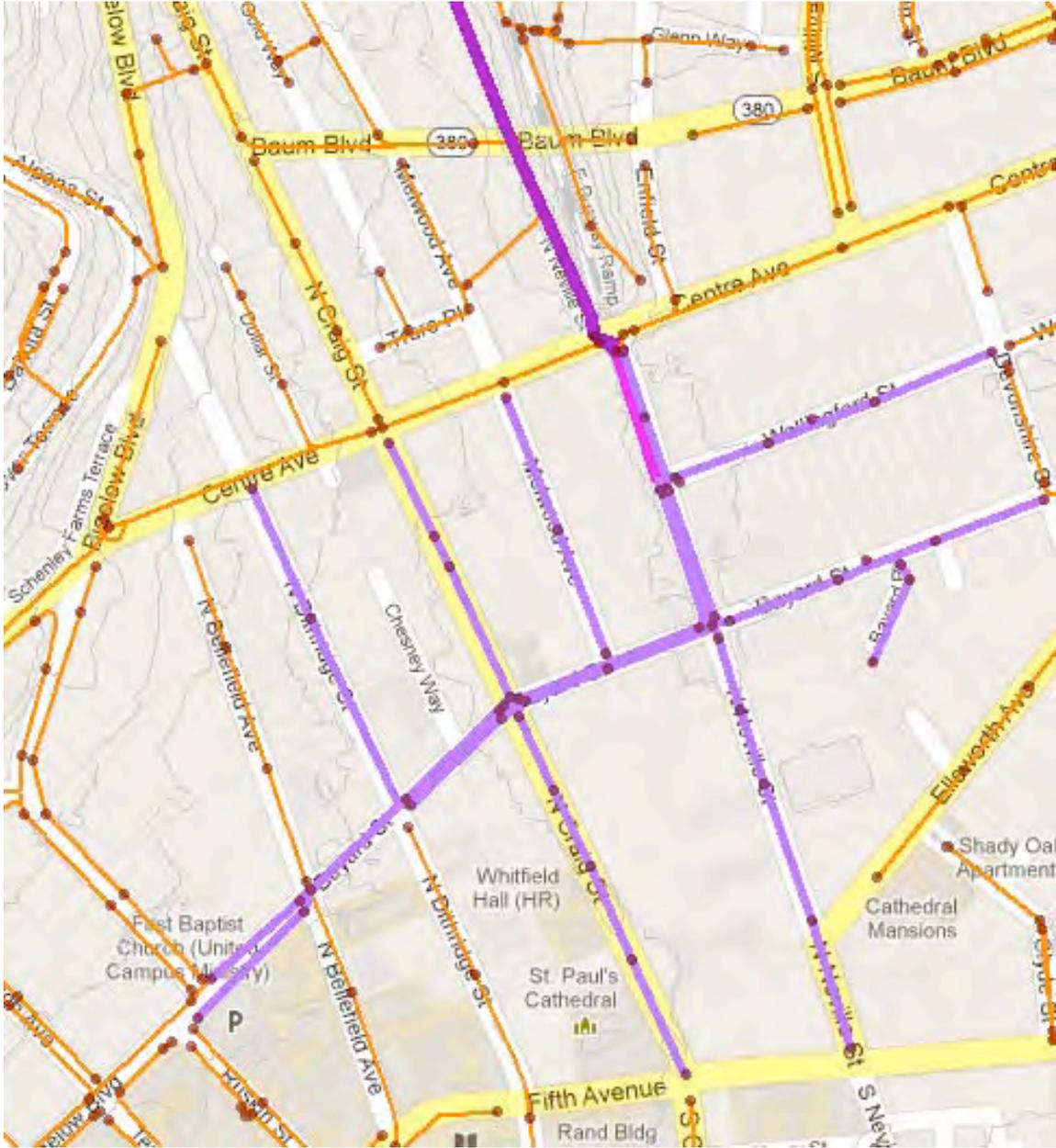


- 5200 Westminster
 - basin is paved nearly to the top and filled with debris

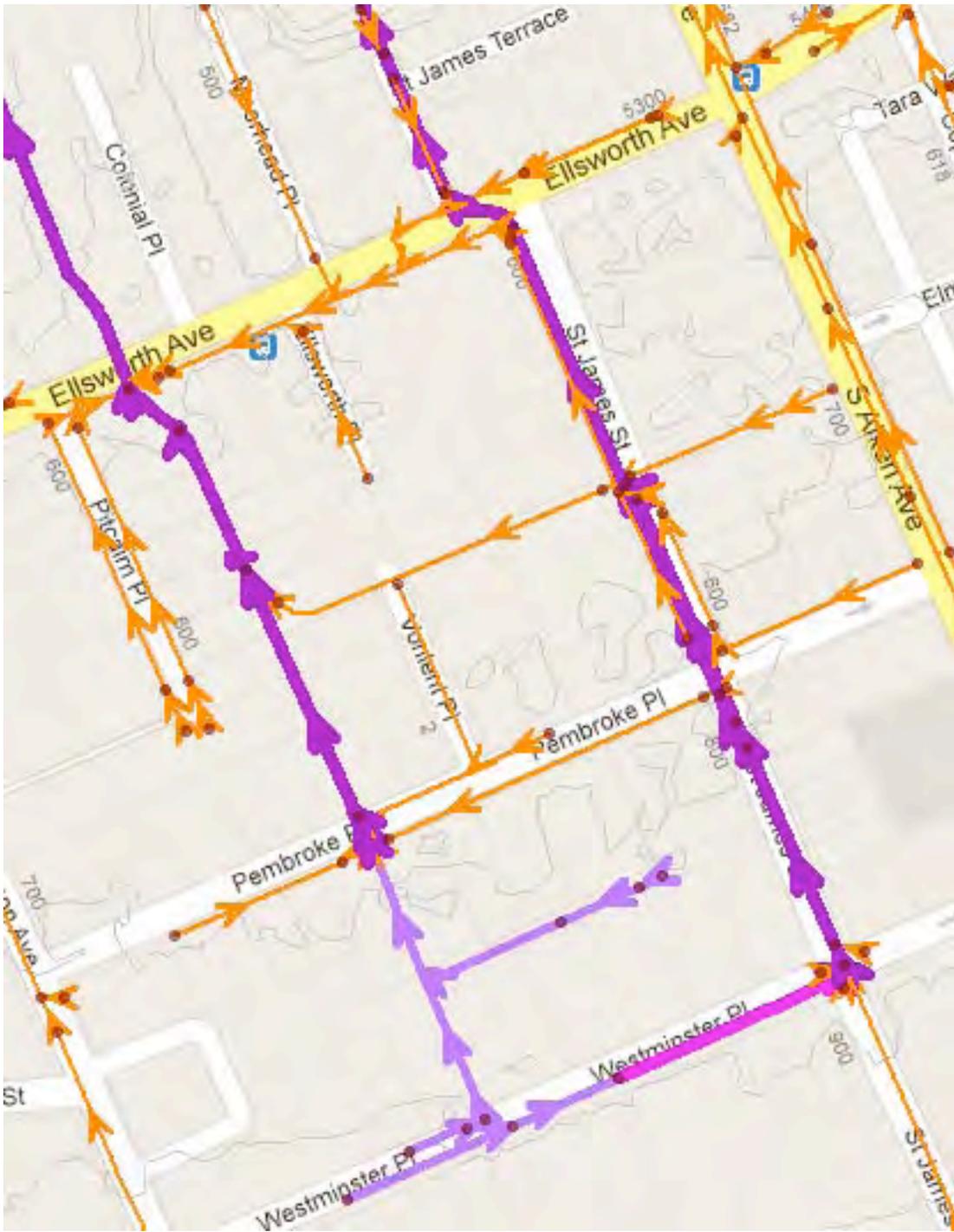


- Westminster and St. James
 - Basin is paved nearly to the top and filled with debris

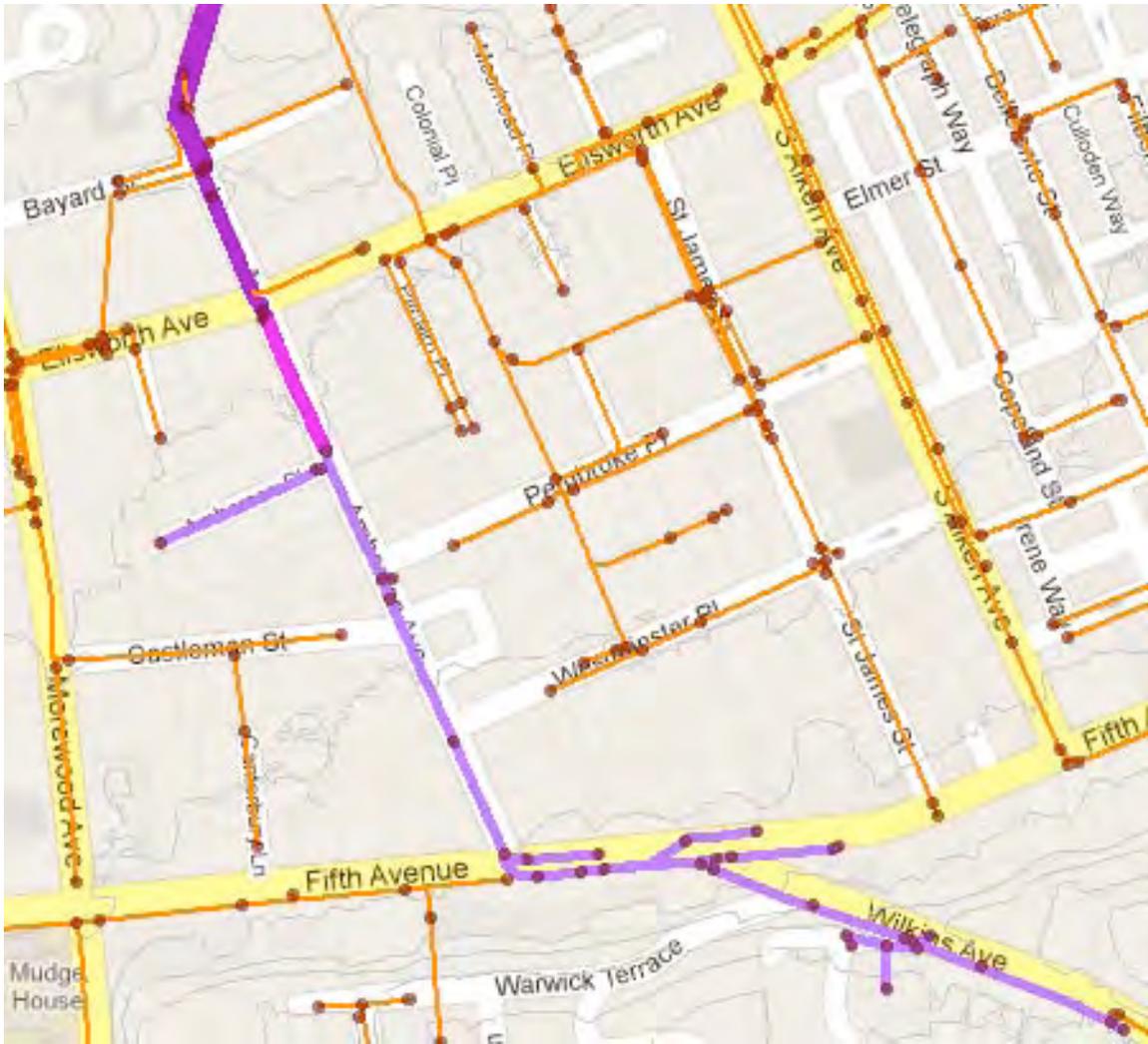
OTHER ISSUES:



- N. Neville between Bayard and Wallingford
 - 407 N. Neville
 - repeated flooding



- Westminster between Aiken and Amberson
 - 5309 Westminster
 - repeated flooding



- Amberson and Ellsworth
 - Basement flooded multiple times at 600 Amberson

ZONE 2 STATISTICS

AREA OF STUDY:

- Shadyside
East of S. Aiken between Centre and Fifth

PROPERTY OWNERS REPORTING FLOODING IN 2011:

- 74

AREAS OF CONCERN:

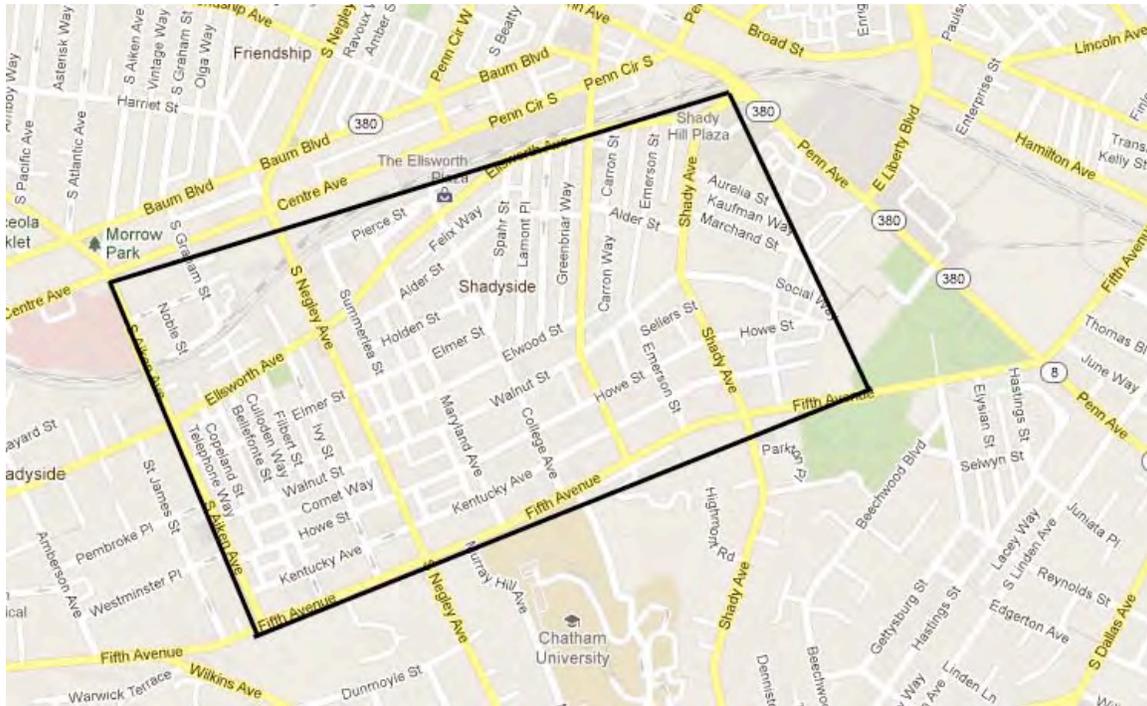
Catch Basins

- Catch basin at Shady and Howe
- Catch basin at Walnut and S. Highland
- Catch basin at Ellsworth and Filbert
- Catch basin at Ellsworth and S. Negley
- Catch basins at Ellsworth and Summerlea
- Catch basin at Maryland and Elwood
- Catch basin at Marchand/Renning and Social
- Catch basin at Marchand and Shady
- Catch basin at Elmer and S. Negley
- Catch basin at Walnut and Elmer

Pipes

- Summerlea between Walnut and Elmer
- Aurelia between Shady and Denniston
- S. Negley between Ellsworth and Fifth
- Comet Way
- Ivy Street
- Intersection of Lehigh and Elwood
- All of Maryland

ZONE 2 MEETING
Shadyside
East of S. Aiken between Centre and Fifth



PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:

- Caroline West, 272 Shady Avenue
- Ginny Norkus, 6364 Aurelia Avenue
- Margaret Baker, 619 S. Negley Avenue
- Stan Schoen, 619 S. Negley Avenue
- Carol McGinty, 718A Copeland Street
- Jon Koteski, 653 Maryland Avenue
- Larry Gioia, 5708 Walnut St
- Guy Blesloch, 718 Maryland Avenue
- Sally Carey, 6209 Howe Street
- Aldona & Diane Zilinskas, 716 Maryland Avenue
- Craig Falk, 636 Maryland, 640 Maryland, and 5747 Holden
- Terry Jeggle, 644 Maryland Avenue
- Dave Coogan, 5742 Pierce Street
- Mary Muldowney, 5728 Walnut Street
- Katie Lanier, 5722 Walnut Street
- Jim Crisanti, 5438 Howe Street
- Lynn Shiner, 141 Shady Lane
- Carol James, 141 Shady Lane
- Grant Gillman, 5722 Walnut Street
- John Musgrave, 906 & 912 Maryland Avenue
- Karen Krieger, 901 S. Negley Avenue
- Danielle Grundlach, 366 Lehigh Street
- Bill Murphy, 5627 Fifth Avenue

CATCH BASINS:



- Shady and Howe
 - Catch basin is caving in and filling with debris



- Walnut and S. Highland
 - Catch basin is caving in and filling with debris



- Ellsworth and Filbert
 - Basin paved nearly to the top
 - What little space remains is consistently filled with debris



- Ellsworth and S. Negley
 - Basin paved nearly to the top
 - What little space remains is consistently filled with debris



- Ellsworth and Summerlea
 - Basin is caving in, allowing large debris to fall in



- Ellsworth and Summerlea
 - Basin is caving in, allowing large debris to fall in



- Maryland and Elwood
 - Basin is caving in, allowing large debris to fall in

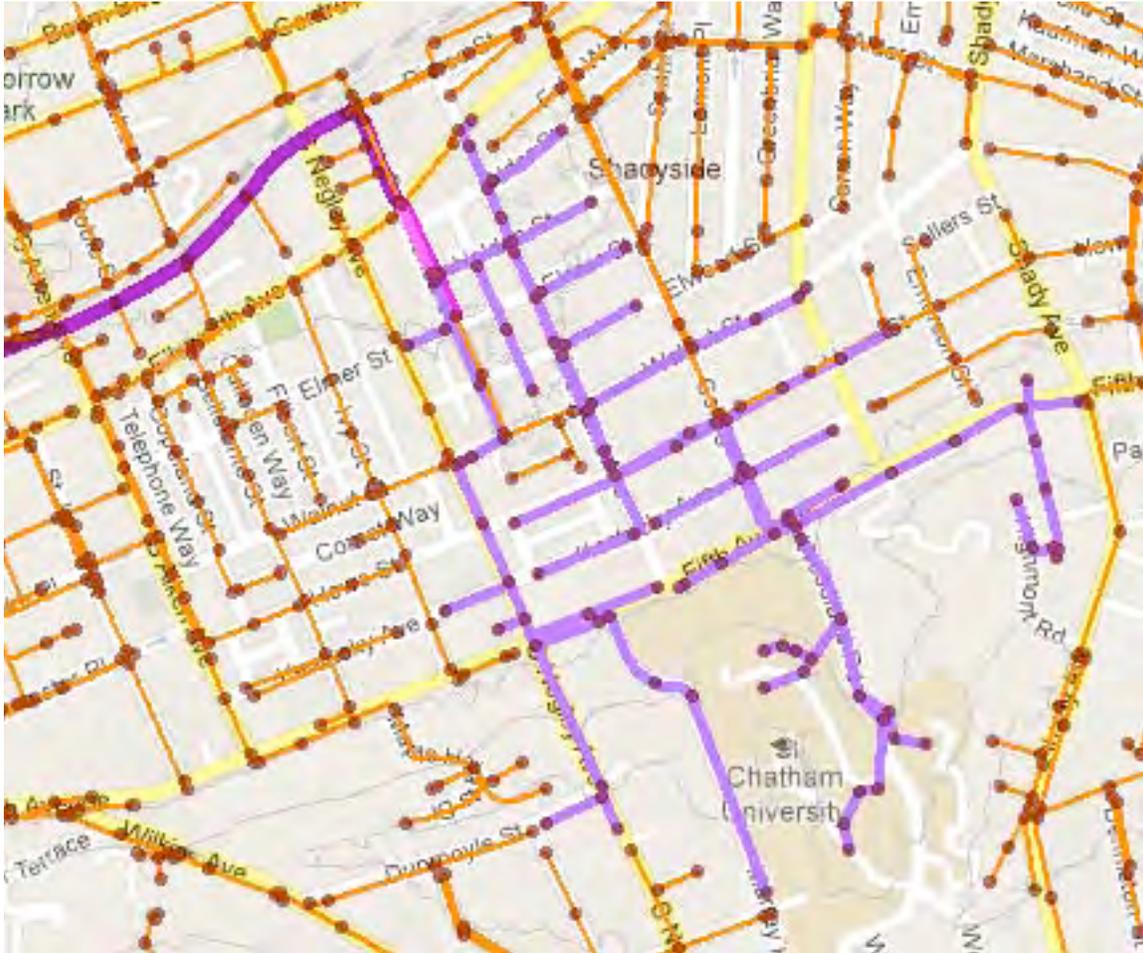


- Marchand/Renning Street and Social Way
 - consistently covered in debris, not even visible

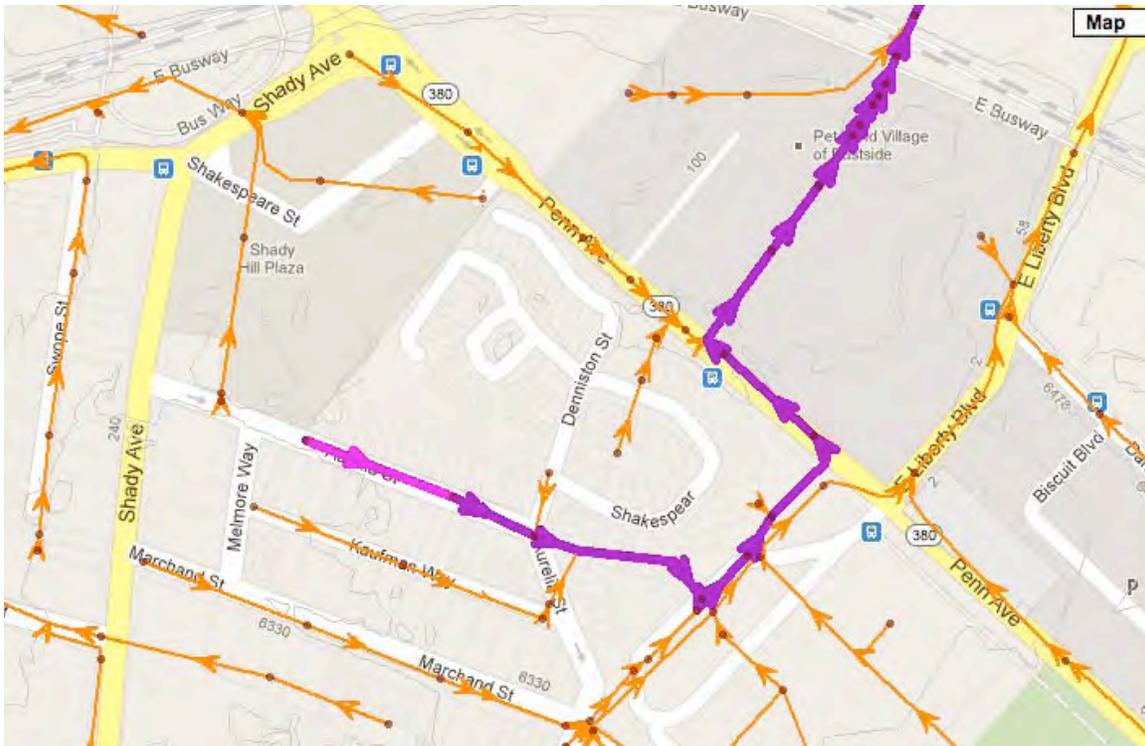


- Marchand and Shady Avenue
 - Catch basin is crumbling and filled with dirt and rocks
- The catch basin at S. Negley and Elmer is caving in, allowing large trash and debris to fill it up.
- The catch basin at Walnut and Elmer is caving in, allowing large trash and debris to fill it up.

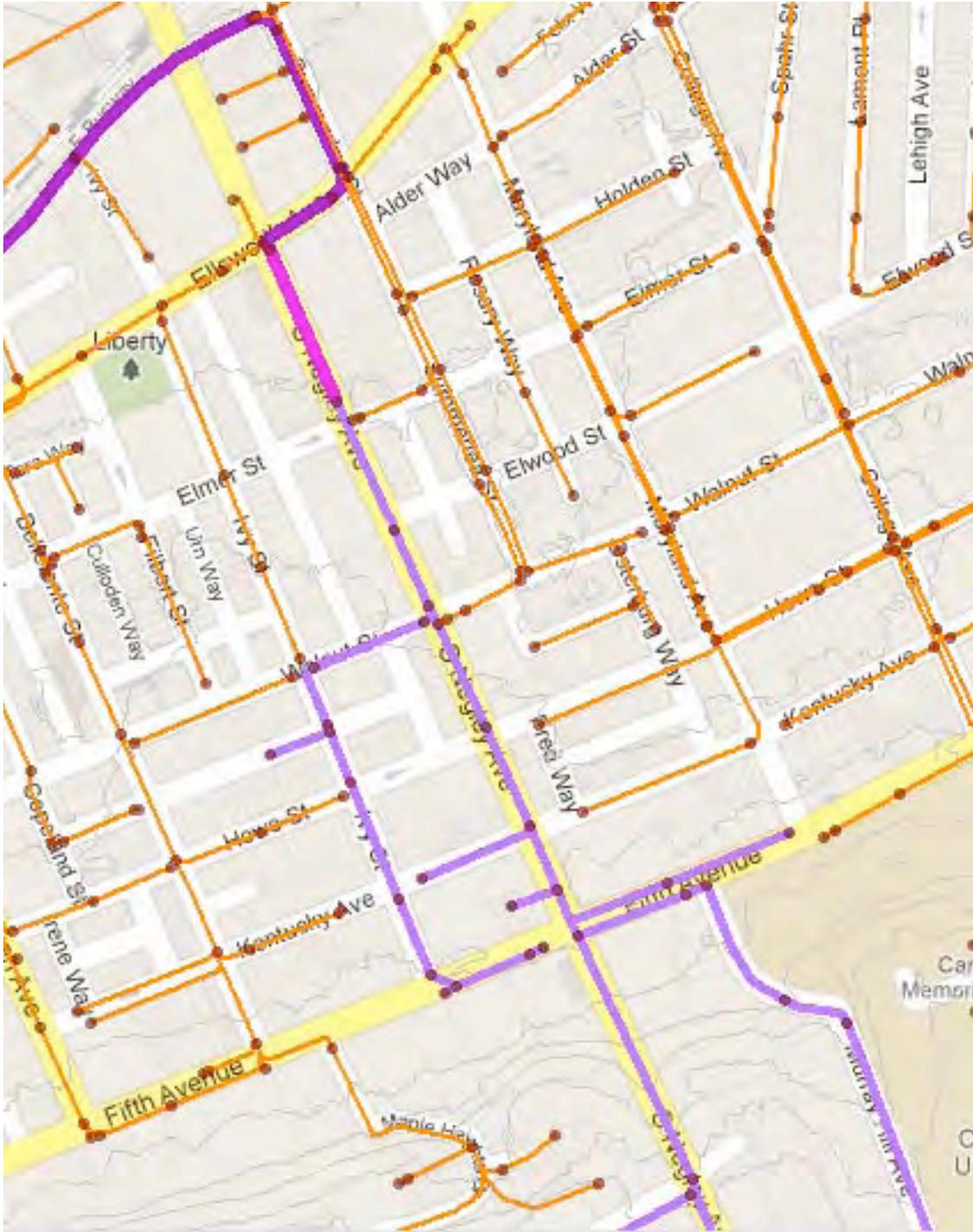
OTHER ISSUES:



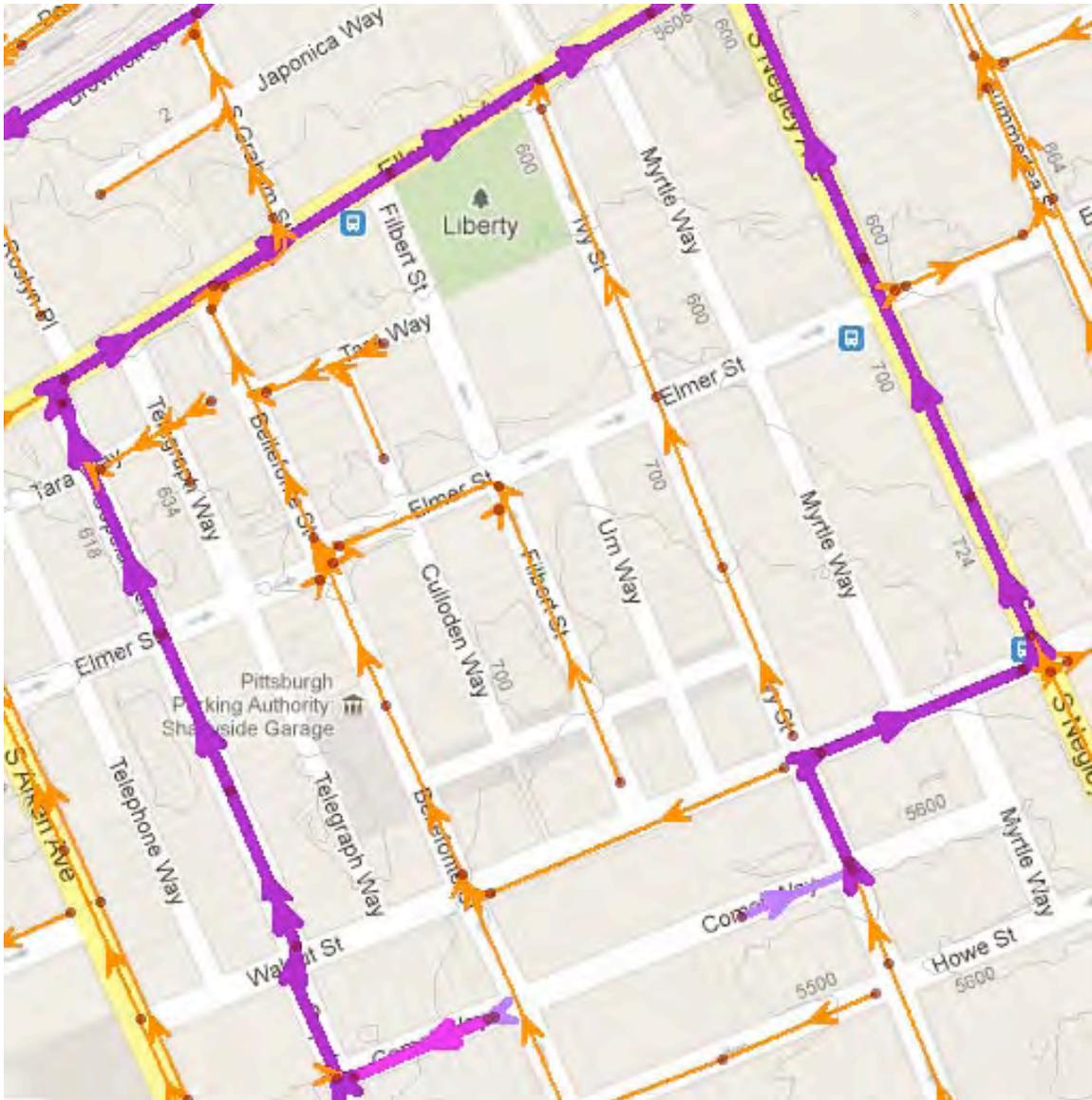
- Summerlea between Walnut and Elmer.
 - Residents all the way down Summerlea have reported repeated floods.
 - Summerlea and Holden
 - Summerlea and Walnut
 - 5708 Walnut at corner of Summerlea
 - suffered more than \$25,000 in damages due to flooding
 - 5722 Walnut
 - incurred \$14,000 in damages due to sewer backups into basement in 2009
 - flooded twice in 2011
 - 5728 Walnut
 - severe basement flooding in July and August of 2011
 - 6012 Walnut
 - repeated flooding in basement in 2009, 2010, and 2011
 - 6300 block of Walnut
 - street is caving in, possibly due to a collapsed line (see attached photo)



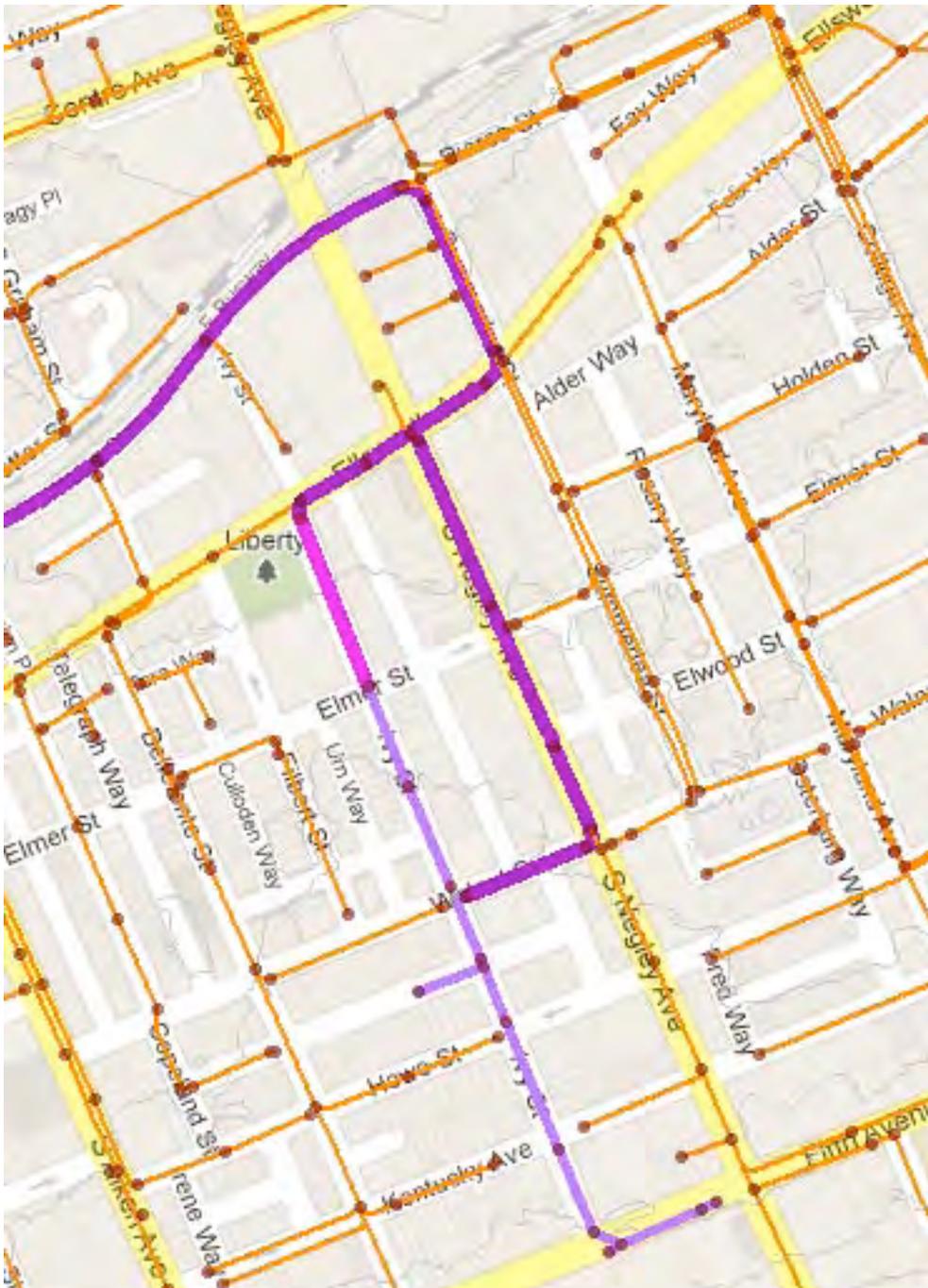
- Aurelia across from the Village of Shadyside.
 - Many of the homes have had backups through the drains in their basements on several occasions, not just during heavy rains.
 - Sinkhole forming in the street in front of 6364 Aurelia
- 6341 and 6348 Marchand
 - repeated flooding in basements in 2009, 2010, and 2011
- 6324, 6328, and 6421 Howe
 - repeated flooding in basements in 2009, 2010, and 2011
- 6352 Aurelia
 - repeated floods in basement in 2010 and 2011



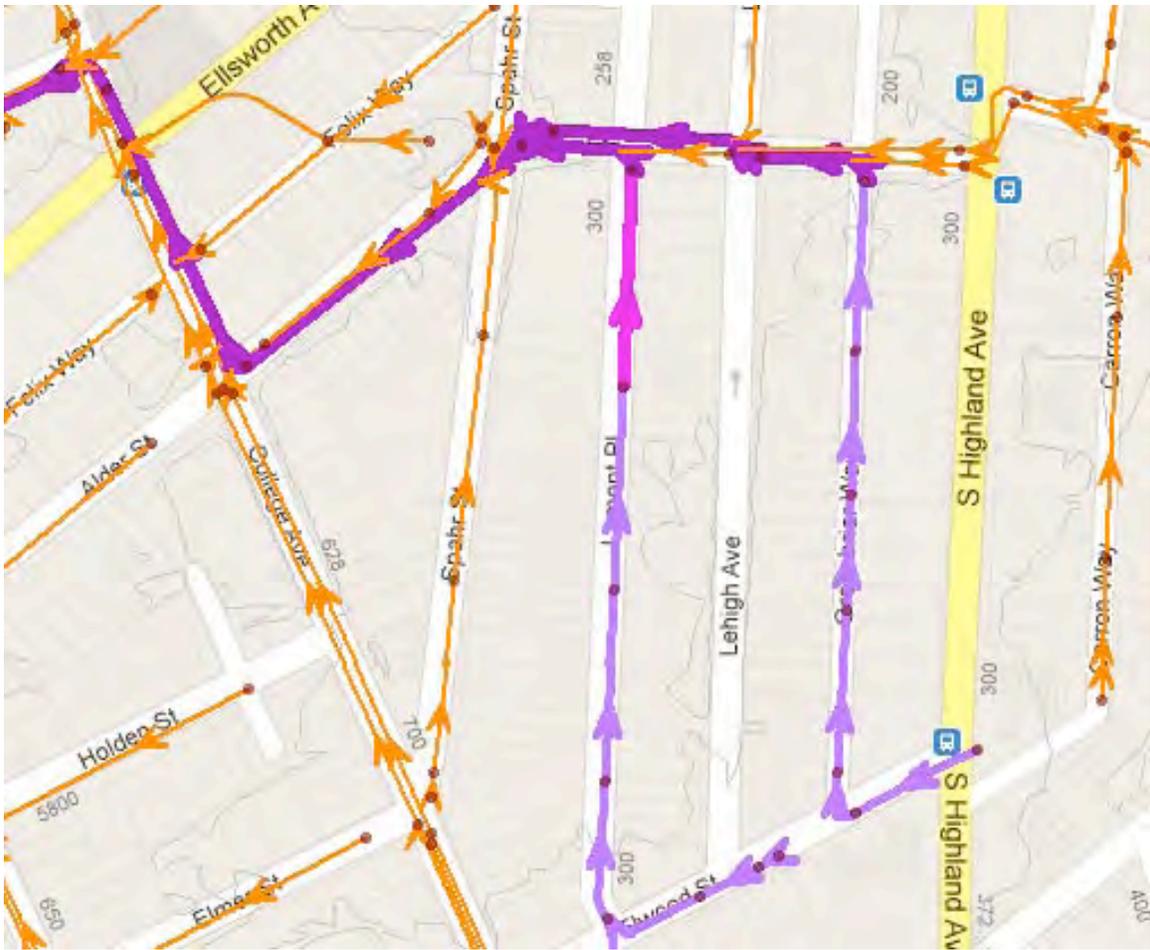
- S. Negley between Ellsworth and Fifth Avenue.
 - S. Negley and Walnut
 - 713 and 715 S. Negley
 - floods date back to 1978 and bring five to seven feet of water to the basements. Estimate 30 to 50 floods over the 34 year period.
 - 711 S. Negley, sidewalk caving in, potentially due to a collapsed line



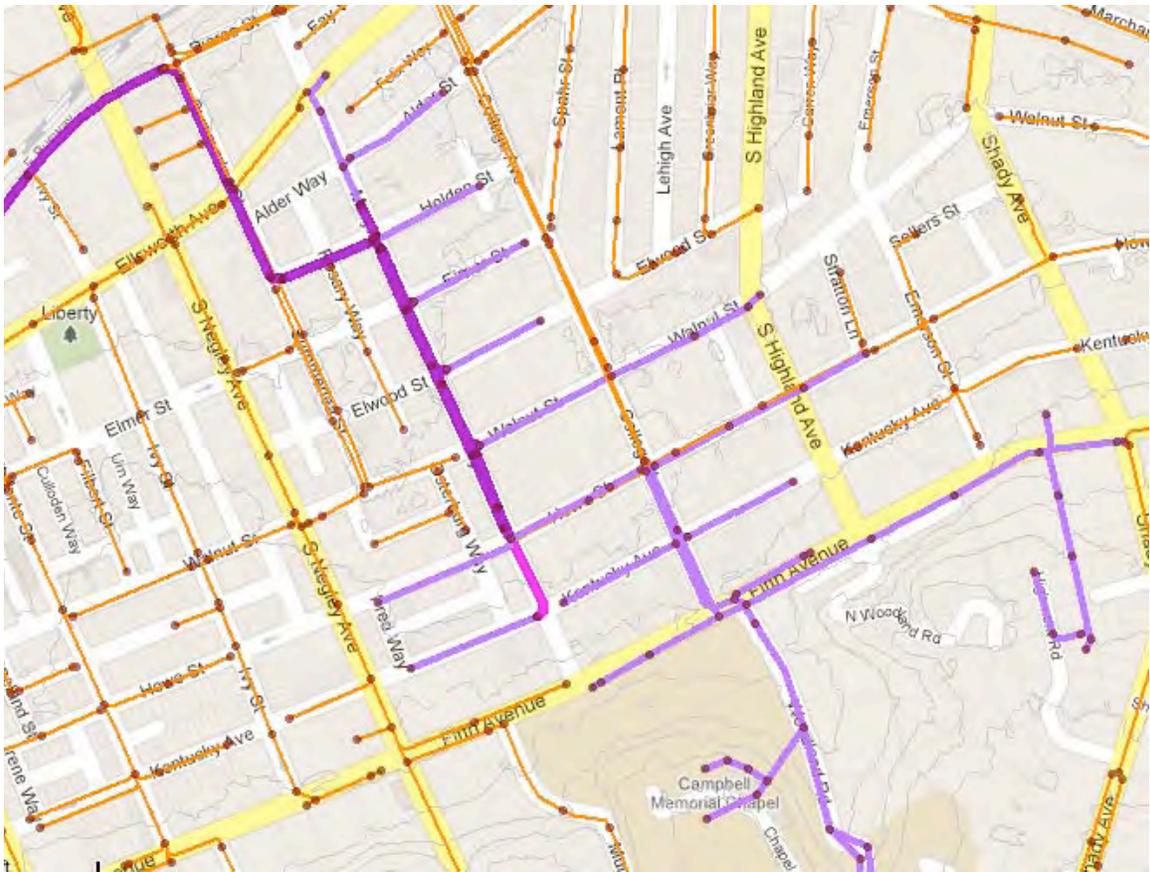
- Comet Way
 - The street appears to be collapsing again.
 - There have been recurring sinkholes in the street
 - 810 Bellefonte at Comet Way
 - incurred over \$10,000 in damages to retail store due to multiple flooding incidents



- Ivy
 - The street appears to be collapsing again.
 - There have been recurring sinkholes in the street.



- Lehigh
 - Lehigh and Elwood



- Maryland Avenue
 - Multiple severe flooding episodes at nearly every property on the street
 - 5747 Holden at the corner of Holden and Maryland awarded insurance claim of \$20,000 due to severity of flooding
 - 5736 Holden
 - repeated flooding in basements in 2009, 2010, and 2011
 - 636 Maryland insurance claim rejected due to policy not covering water/sewage backups, though over \$28,000 in damages were incurred (claim forms attached)
 - 708 Maryland
 - severe basement flooding every year from 1995-2011
 - during heavy rains and even some moderate rains, multiple times every year, basement drains overflow with water, sewage, and debris
 - problem first reported to PWSA in 1996
 - reply letter from PWSA attached
 - 706 Maryland
 - severe basement flooding for years, since at least the 1970s
 - have installed French drains and special valves but flooding has not ceased
 - drains were unearthed and replaced in 1996 and street was repaved but flooding only worsened

- 732 Maryland
 - severe flooding in 2007, 2010, and 2011
 - several feet of water and sewage backups in basement
 - has had sewer lateral replaced but flooding has not stopped

ATTACHMENTS

THE PITTSBURGH WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

441 Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
(412) 255-8935
(412) 255-2304 FAX

April 26, 1996

Mr. Chris Kouklis
708 Maryland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

RE: PITTSBURGH WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION
HOWE STREET/MARYLAND AVENUE SEWER
DEC PROJECT 93011
RESIDENT LETTER OF FEBRUARY 7, 1996

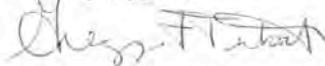
Dear Mr. Kouklis:

I received your letter of February 7, 1996, regarding the sewer back-up into the basements of a number of residents on Maryland Avenue, including yours, last August 11, 1995. One of our project engineers, Douglas T. Jones, has been in contact with Ms. Rochelle Solomon concerning this problem. In a discussion of possible causes of this back-up, it was mutually agreed that a potential cause may have been a constriction in the sewer line recently installed near the corner of Elmer Street and Maryland Avenue. Although the new sewer was "televised" immediately after installation and was then free of any constriction, we have made arrangements with the Public Works Department of the City of Pittsburgh to have the line televised again.

The new sewer line recently installed should help greatly in alleviating the sewer problems that have been experienced by your neighborhood in the past. However, it should be clear that we cannot design a sewer that will handle the flow produced by each and every storm event. To do so would not be cost effective and it is standard engineering practice to design sewer systems with the capacity to handle up to particular storm frequency events.

Although it is recognized the intensity of storm events subsequent to the August 11, 1995, event may not have been as intense, we see the absence of sewer back-ups since this time as a positive sign. If you have any questions in this matter, please call me at 255-8943.

Very truly yours,



Gregory F. Tutsoek
Acting Executive Director

GFT/JTB/DTJ

cc: T. Bruecken/D. Lockard/D. Jones/PWSA File/File



- Summerlea and Walnut
 - July 2011



- 6300 block of Walnut
 - street is caving in, potentially due to a collapsed line

ZONE 3 STATISTICS

AREA OF STUDY:

- North Squirrel Hill
South of Fith Avenue, West of S. Dallas

PROPERTY OWNERS REPORTING FLOODING IN 2011:

- 30

AREAS OF CONCERN:

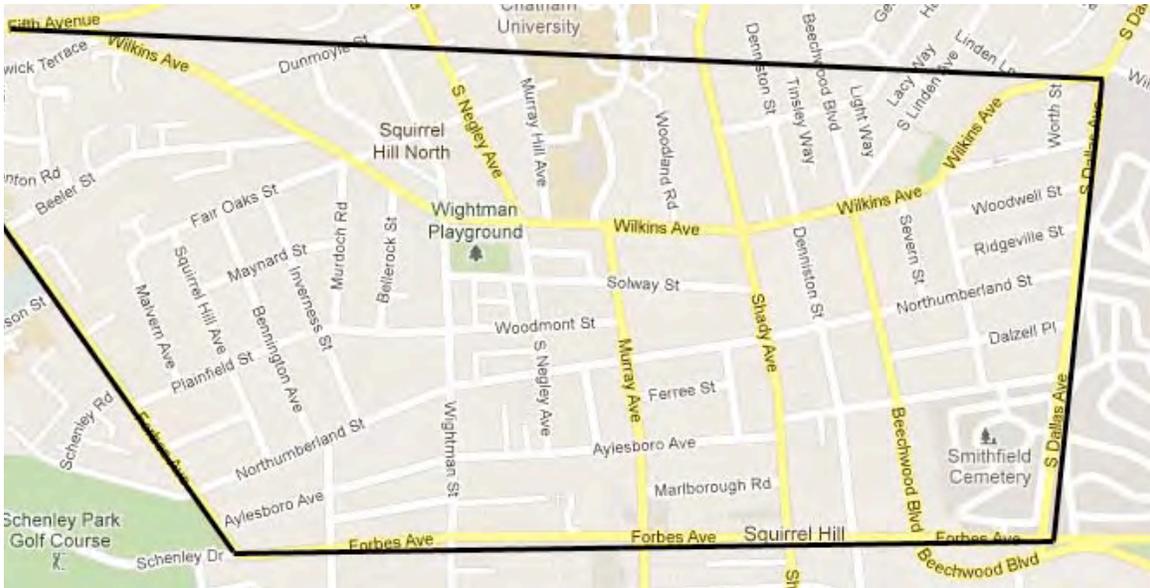
Catch Basins

- Catch basin at Northumberland and Valmont

Pipes

- Solway between S. Negley and Wightman
- Northumberland between Valmont and Murray
- Beechwood between Phillips and Douglas
- Intersection of Fair Oaks and Wilkins

ZONE 3 MEETING
North Squirrel Hill
South of Fith Avenue, West of S. Dallas



PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:

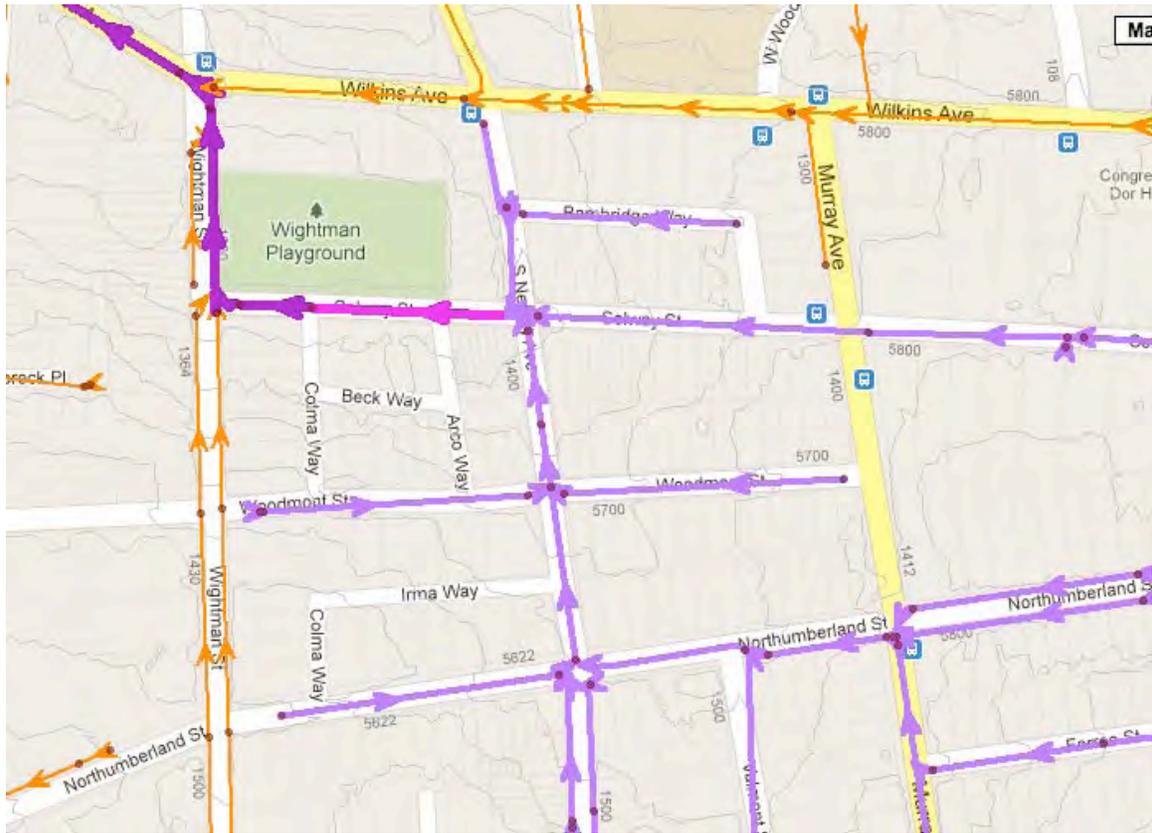
- Corinne Bernstein, 6325 Monitor Street
- Steve Dines, 5648 Solway Street
- Lori Fitzgerald, 5563 Beacon Street
- Jeanne McHale, 5734 Northumberland Street
- Cara and Yves Masset, 5731 Northumberland Street

CATCH BASINS:

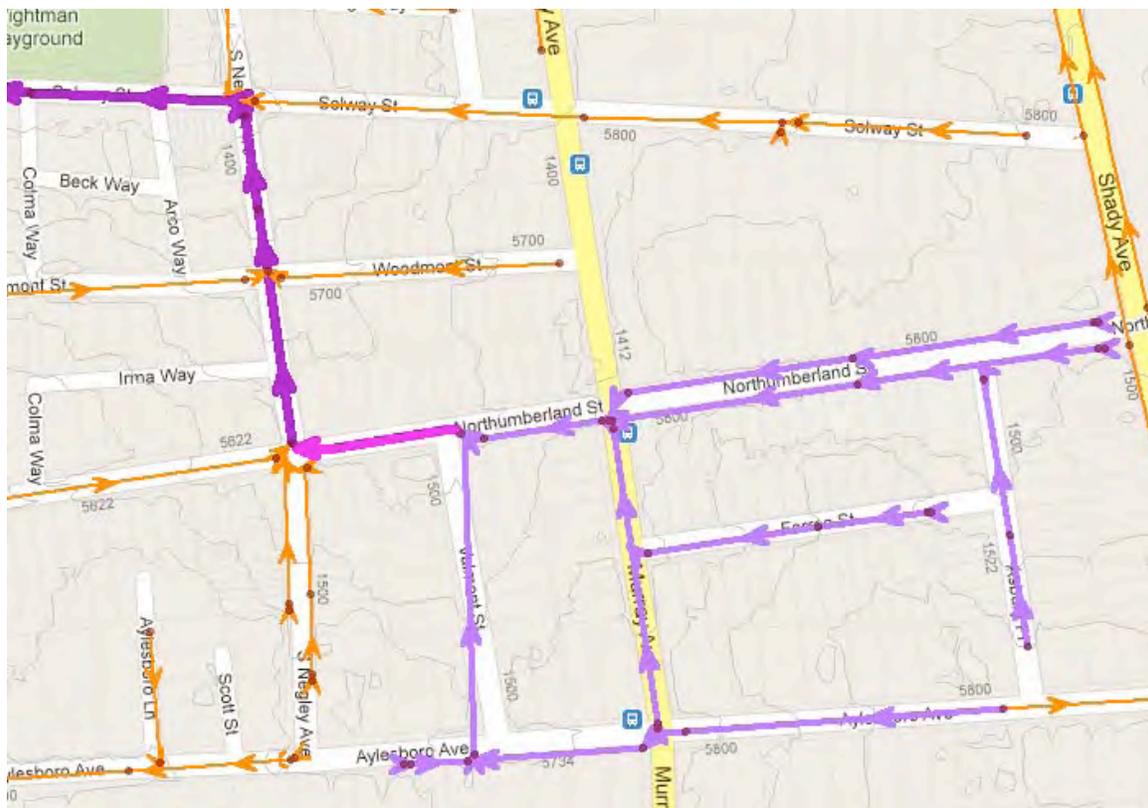


- Northumberland and Valmont
 - basin is paved nearly to the top

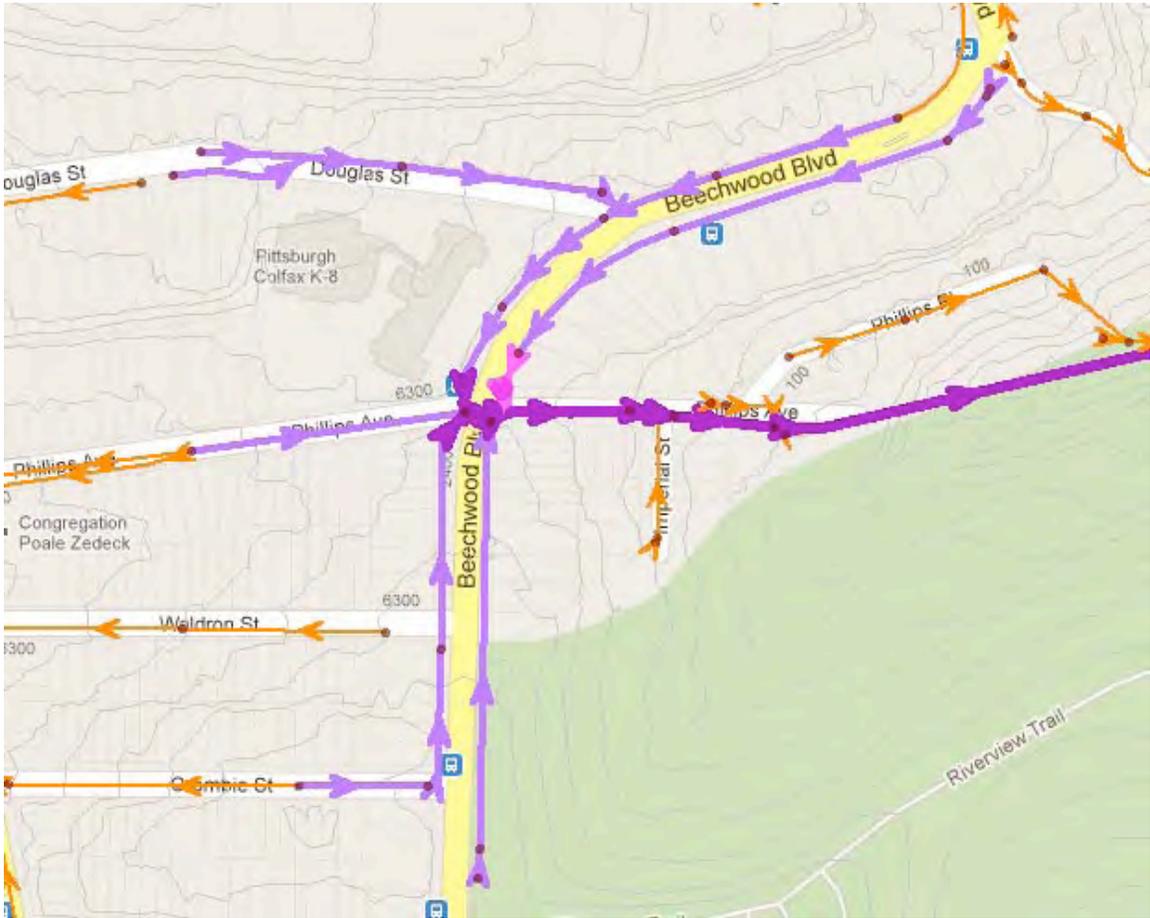
OTHER ISSUES:



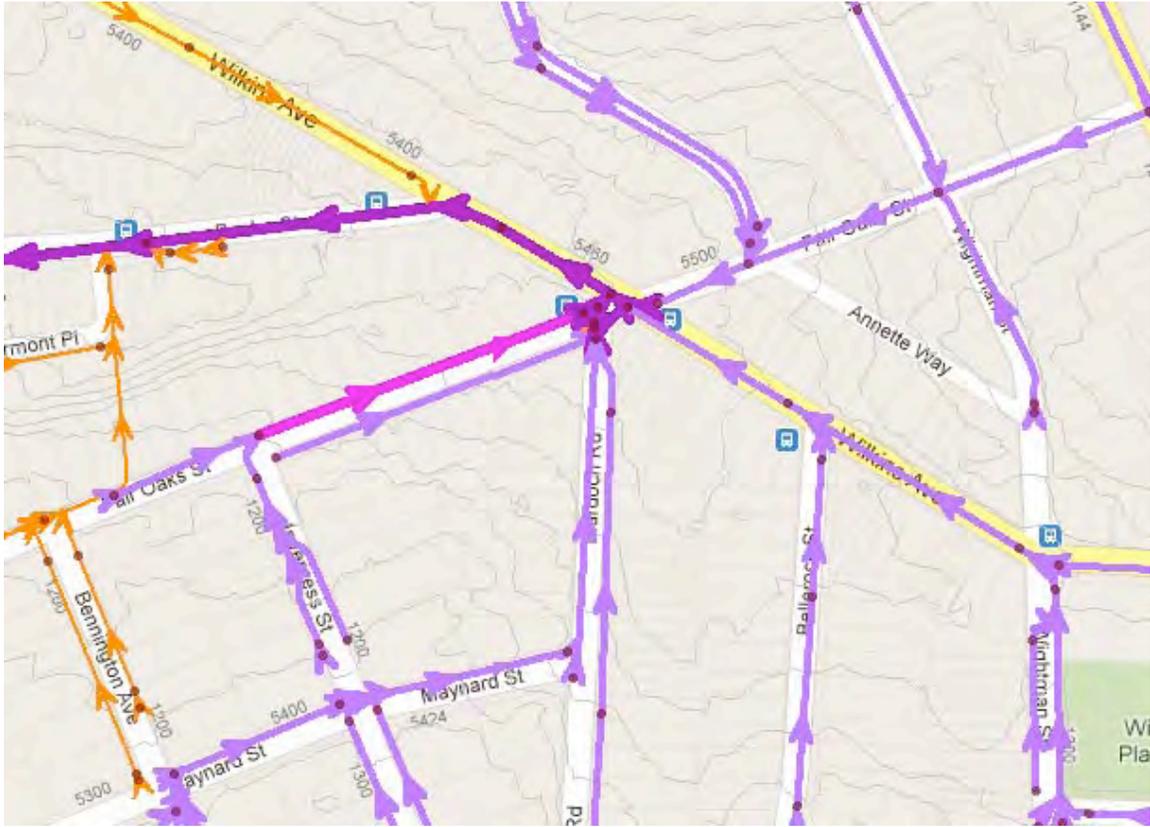
- Solway and S. Negley
 - Six row houses, flooding in all basements.
 - 5642, 5644, 5646, 5648, 5650, 5652 Solway
 - Flooding dates back to at least the 1980s
 - Flooding in 2009
 - Four major floods in 2011, flooding through basement drains



- Northumberland between Valmont and Murray
 - Repeated flooding at 5731 and 5734 Northumberland
 - Repeated flooding at 1516 and 1512 Valmont
 - 1516 Valmont
 - Summer 2009, sewage backup into basement
 - Summer 2011 July, sewage backup into basement
 - Summer 2011 August, sewage backup into basement



- Beechwood between Phillips and Douglas
 - Repeated pooling in the road here



- Fair Oaks and Wilkins
 - Sewage backups into basements at 5474 Fair Oaks and surrounding properties

ZONE 4 STATISTICS

AREA OF STUDY:

- Point Breeze
East of Shady between Fifth, Penn, and Wilkins

PROPERTY OWNERS REPORTING FLOODING IN 2011:

- 21

AREAS OF CONCERN:

Catch Basins

- Catch basin at Hastings and Conover

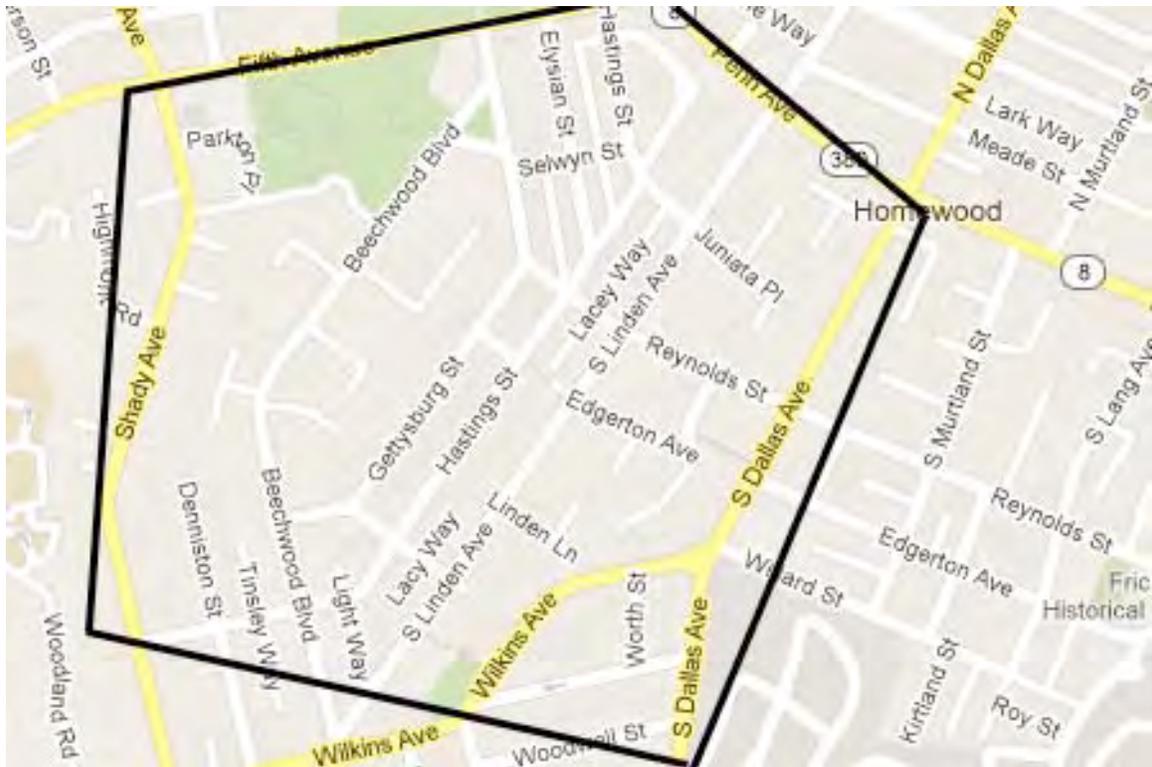
Pipes

- Intersection of S. Dallas and Wilkins
- S. Homewood between Reynolds and Edgerton
- Intersection of Fifth and Beechwood

ZONE 4 MEETING

Point Breeze

East of Shady between Fifth, Penn, and Wilkins



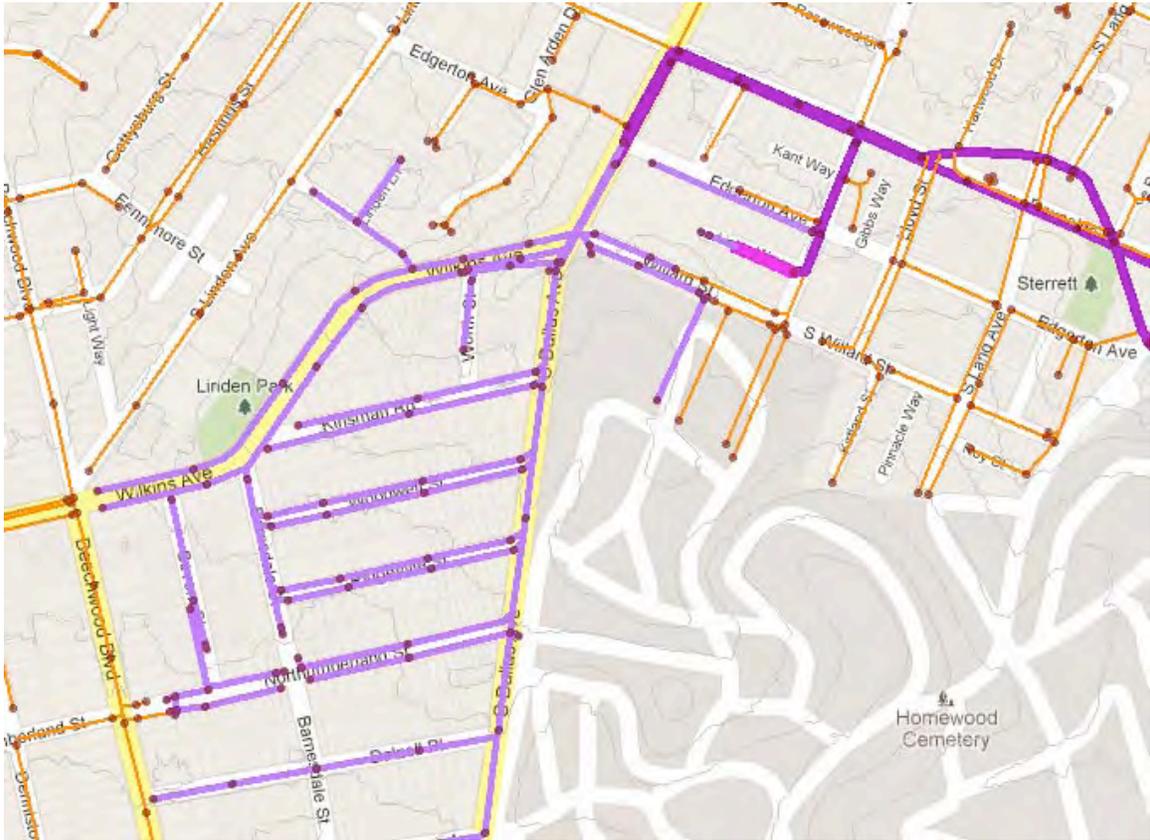
PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE

- Brad Myers, 400 S. Homewood Avenue
- Debra Brindis, 126 Conover Road
- Timothy McKnight, 127 Conover Road
- Sister Mary Elizabeth, 509 S. Dallas Avenue (St. Bede's Parish)
- Christine Brockmeyer, 6812 Edgerton Avenue
- William Stevens, 500 Lloyd Street

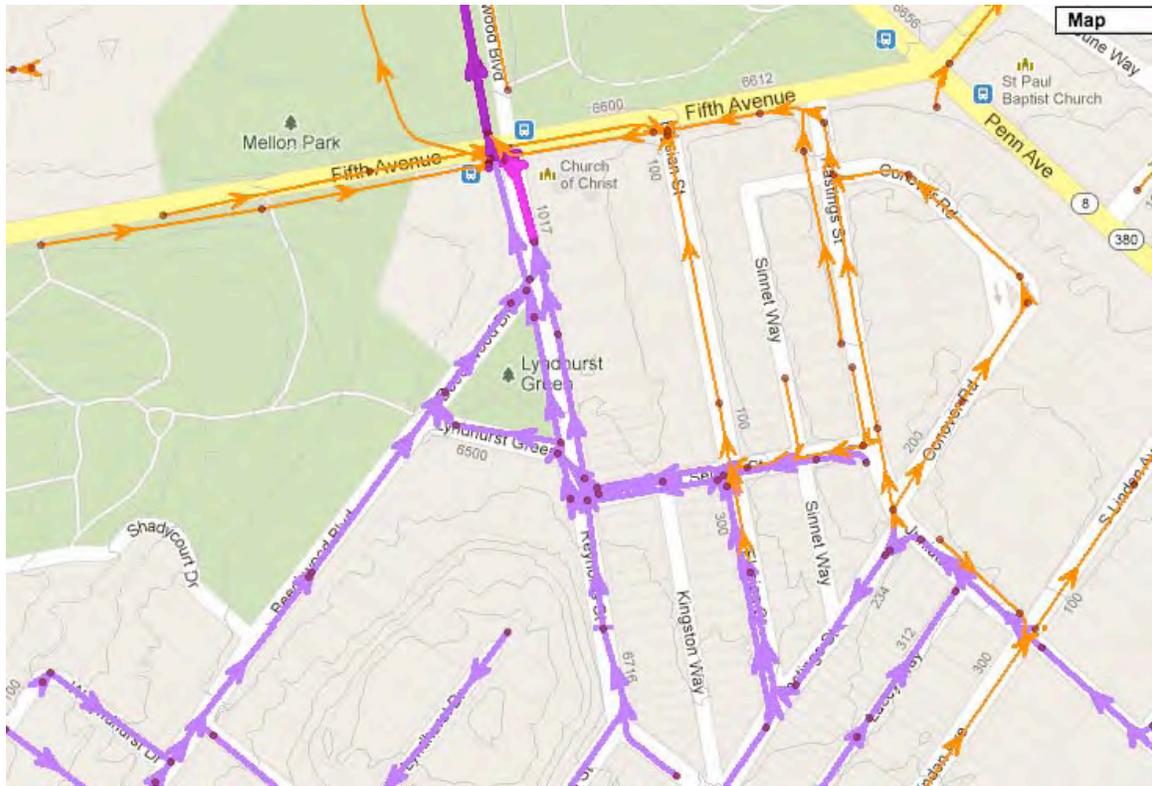
CATCH BASINS:

- The catch basins at Hastings and Conover need to be cleaned out

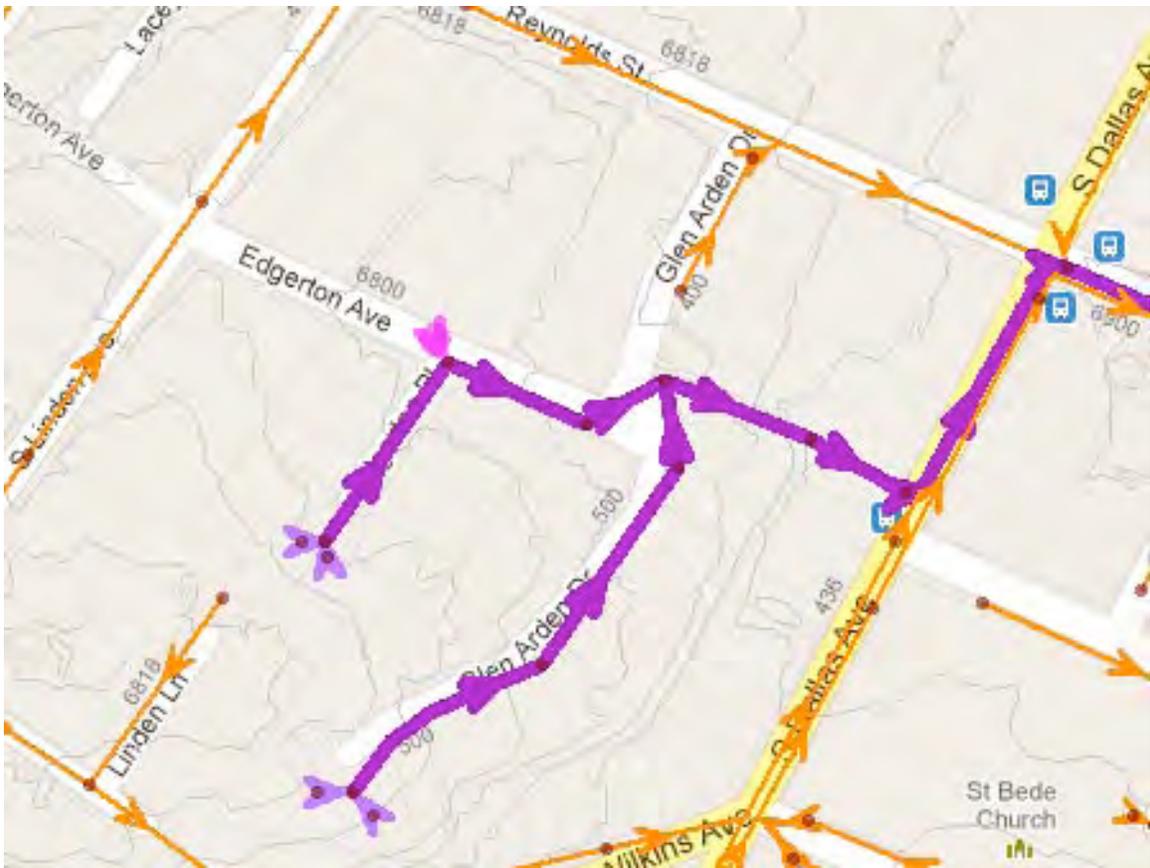
OTHER ISSUES:



- S. Dallas and Wilkins
 - 509 S. Dallas (St. Bede's Parish)
 - flooding in basement multiple times. Water shooting up through basement drains and toilets.



- Fifth and Beachwood
 - Church of Christ has flooded multiple times through the basement.
 - 1000 block of Beachwood, multiple homes flooded.



- 6831 Edgerton Avenue
 - Major flooding on July 18, 2011
 - Several feet of water coming up from sink drains in kitchen

ZONE 5 STATISTICS

AREA OF STUDY:

- East Liberty
Penn, Penn Circle South, Penn Circle West

PROPERTY OWNERS REPORTING FLOODING IN 2011:

- 20

AREAS OF CONCERN:

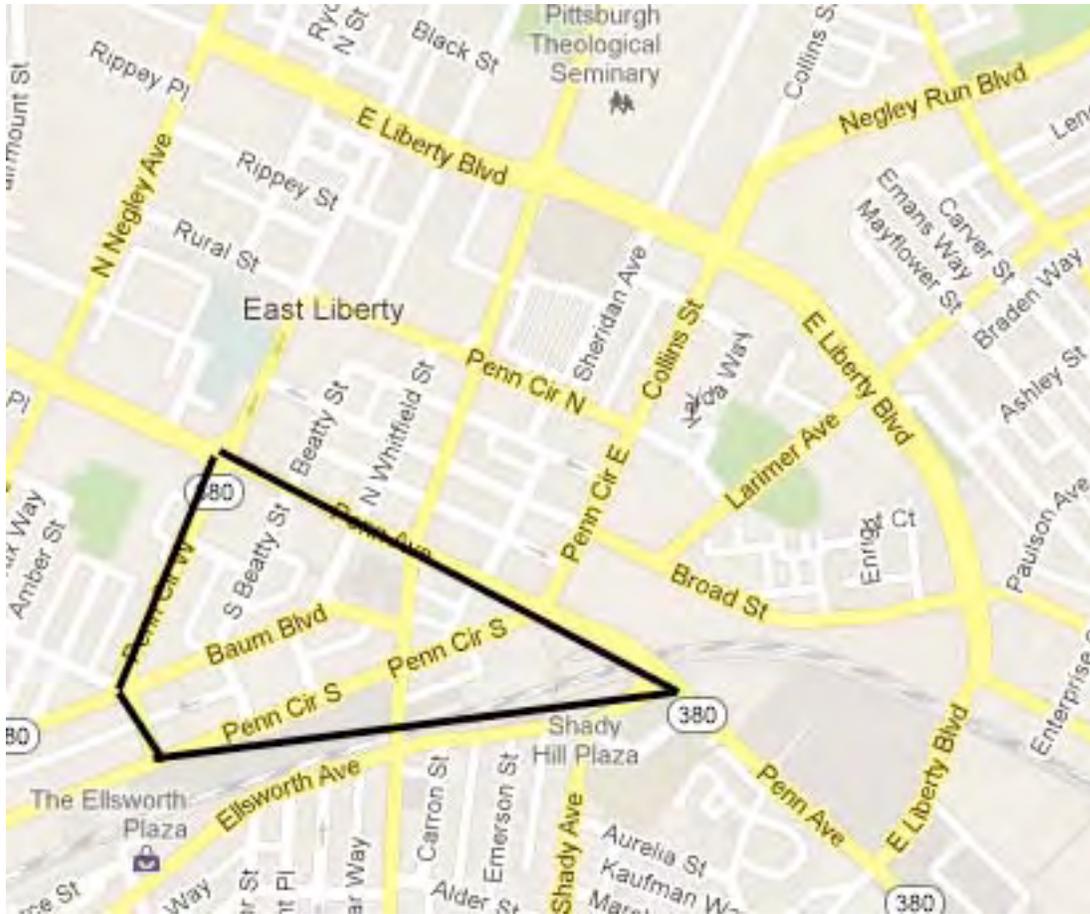
Pipes

- Houston/Stevenson between S. Highland and Penn Circle S
- Commerce Street and E. Commerce Way
- Intersection of N. Highland and Broad

ZONE 5 MEETING

East Liberty

Penn, Penn Circle South, Penn Circle West

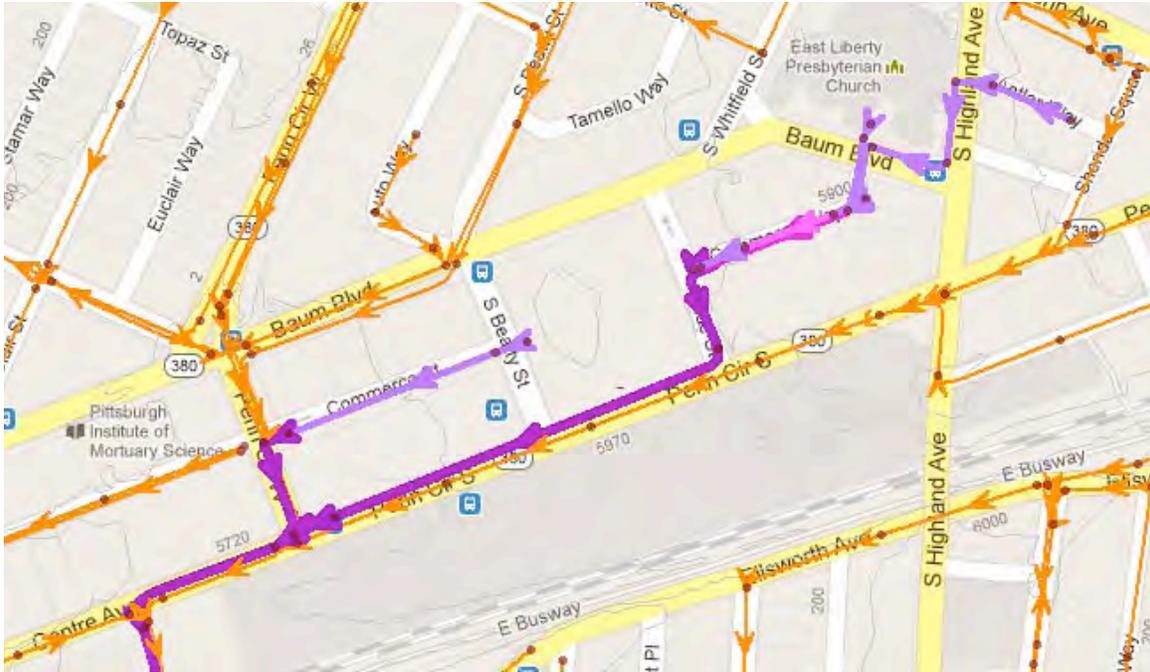


PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:

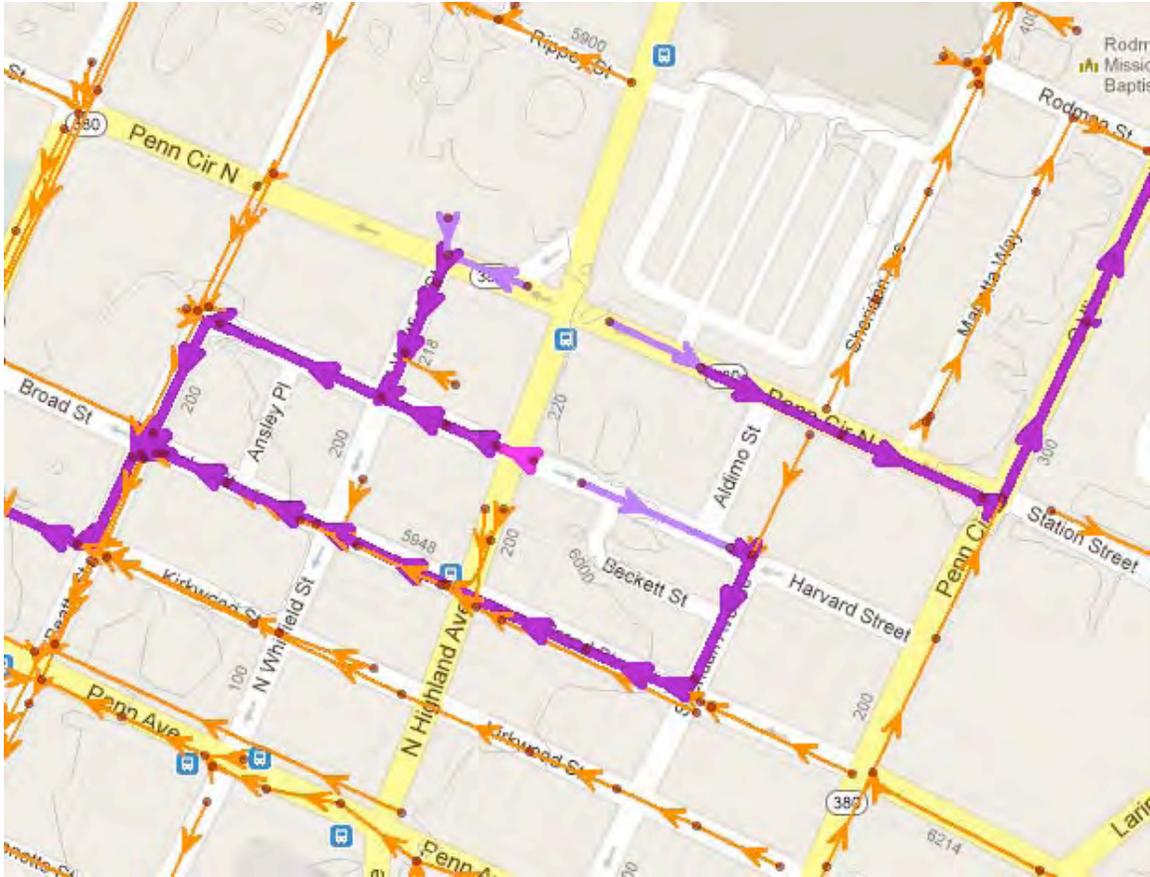
- Dan Friday, 5586 Penn Circle South (business)
- Wendi Miller, 6020 Penn Circle South (business)
- William Kolano, 6026 Penn Circle South (business)

CATCH BASINS:

- No problems with catch basins in this zone



- Commerce Street and E. Commerce Way
 - Flooding at 5900 Baum
 - Flooding at 5989 Penn Circle S (photos available upon request)
 - Flooding in basement of East Liberty Presbyterian Church



- Eastminster Church, 250 N. Highland Avenue
 - Extensive flooding in basement