



South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan

Progress Report

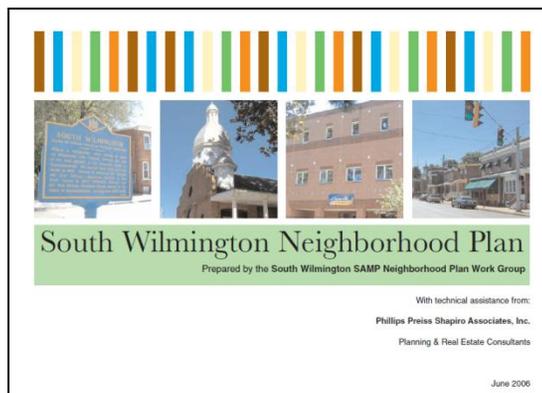
January 2012

Who is the South Wilmington Planning Network?

Formed in 2009, the South Wilmington Planning Network (SWPN) is a collaborative partnership of residents and over 30 government, non-profit, and private agencies who work together to improve quality of life in the Southbridge neighborhood of Wilmington, Delaware. Southbridge is an historic, black, working-class neighborhood of 1,600. The community struggles with environmental and health concerns, unemployment and a poverty rate of 40% - nearly four times the state average. Recent accomplishments of the SWPN include: the annual Southbridge Community Day, a new community garden, bus access to a nearby supermarket, and dozens of other ongoing and planned projects in the areas of: Environmental, Workforce and Economic Development, Health and Preventative Services and Youth Development

What is the South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan?

The South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan, adopted in 2006, created a vision for redevelopment in South Wilmington. The Plan was developed by the Southbridge community, Delaware Coastal Programs, the City of Wilmington and other government agencies.



What is the Purpose of this Progress Report?

This Progress Report “takes stock” of the 48 recommendations in the South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan and its subsequent implementation workshop held in October 2006. Which recommendations have been implemented in the past five years? Which have not? Which have been forgotten? Which are even still relevant? Knowing this both keeps the vision of the Neighborhood Plan alive, and helps to inform the future work of the SWPN. Recommendations from the Neighborhood Plan which have not progressed, and are still worthwhile to pursue, should be taken up as projects by the SWPN.

Summary of Findings

This page summarizes the progress of each of the 48 recommendations from the Neighborhood Plan. Each recommendation is explained, along with the author, votes, page number from the Implementation Plan, and the person we contacted for an updated on the recommendation's progress. Red, yellow or green signals are given based on its progress. Red means no progress was made, yellow means some progress was made and green means that the recommendation has been fulfilled, or was studied and found not relevant or reasonable. The table below summarizes progress by category:

Category	# of Recommendations			
Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development	14	10 (71%)	1 (7%)	3 (22%)
Parks, Open Space and Environmental Quality	11	2 (18%)	2 (18%)	7 (64%)
Retail Development, Employment and Community Service	16	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)	6 (37.5%)
Transportation Improvement	7	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	6 (86%)
Total	48	19 (40%)	7 (15%)	22 (45%)

Overall, 60% of the recommendations have seen either full or partial progress, while the other half has had no progress so far. While some categories have seen progress, others still need to be addressed. With 10 red lights, the Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development area has the most recommendations with no progress. This category has, however, been successful with developing several CBA's and prohibiting gated communities in order to provide connections with new developments. The Parks, Open Space and Environmental Quality category has seen success in the implementation of a community garden, upgrading three local parks and enhancing street cleaning efforts, but still needs to address the recommendations that suggest creating a new recreation center and a Park Improvement District. The Retail Development, Employment and Community Service category has progress through a partnership with Elbert-Palmer on a Safe Routes to School Program and have expanded upon community policing efforts, but still needs tackle the recommendations that suggest creating a job preference program and developing a new retail center in South Wilmington. The Transportation Improvement category has made considerable progress through a Transportation Enhancement project that is planned to implement streetscape enhancements and roadway repaving and through the Safe Routes to school program that has provided pedestrian upgrades. The issue of weekend and evening bus service to Concord Mall still needs to be addressed within this category. Each of the 48 recommendations and their progress are explained in detail in the following pages.

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Progress Report: 2006 South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan							
Recommendation*	Implementation Reference**	Authors	Votes	Contact	Comments	Progress	ID #
Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development							
Enact inclusionary zoning for South Wilmington to create affordable units or to generate revenue for homeownership. (Pg 14 and 27)	H-1 (Pg 11)	Arthur Boswell Veronica Oliver Tim Crawl-Bey	11	Tim Crawl-Bey	No progress.		1
Create a revolving loan fund to provide low interest loans and small grants to low-income residents for home improvements or home purchases. (Pg 14)	H-3 (Pg 14)	Gladys Spikes Greer Peacock Norma Zumsteg Toyin Moore	10	Eugene Rudder	No progress. Programs that meet this need are available on a city-wide basis but not explicitly for Southbridge residents.		2
Utilize the urban renewal designation to allow the city to condemn scattered vacant lots and transfer to adjoining landowners or Community Development Corporations for infill development. (Pg 14 and 27)	H-8 (Pg 17)	Michael Reed Sophia Hanson Sandra Ballard	9	Derrick Lightfoot	Following the approval of the study, the state revised its eminent domain law, making this more difficult.		3
Strengthen the Wilmington Housing Authority's HOPE VI application through mixed-income housing involving more land resources. Pursue the plan even if federal funds are not	H-9 (Pg 23)	Norma Zumsteg	9	Eugene Rudder	No progress; HOPE VI sunset. This rec should be changed or dropped. Look to Choice Neighborhoods Program for alternatives.		4

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forthcoming. (Pg 24)							
Utilize and improve design guidelines under zoning to foster contextual in-fill housing, consistent with historic brick and federal styles. (Pg 17)	H-12 (Pg 26)	Derrick El Phillip Raffan Peter Besecker Jim DiPinto	9	Derrick Lightfoot	No progress.		5

Recommendation*	Implementation Reference**	Authors	Votes	Contact	Comments	Progress	ID #
Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development							
Support the sale of the Southbridge Extension site, if feasible, with proceeds used to develop mixed-income homeownership and rental units throughout the community. (Pg 45)	H-10	N/A	7	Tim Crawl- Bey	No progress.		6
Create a sequential or weighted lottery system to target new affordable units to South Wilmington residents first, then other city residents, then the population at large. (Pg 14)	H-2	N/A	6	Tim Crawl Bey	No progress.		7
Complete a block-by-block, lot-by-lot inventory of the community as part of an urban renewal plan. Identify potential assemblages of properties for housing redevelopment. (Pg 27)	H-4 (Pg 17)	Michael Reed Sophia Hanson Sandra Ballard	6	Derrick Lightfoot	No progress. Checking to make sure.		8

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Recommendation*	Implementation Reference**	Authors	Votes	Contact	Comments	Progress	ID #
Negotiate a CBA with Pettinaro Development Corp. and other developers in South Wilmington to generate additional revenue sources. (Pg 20)	H-7 (Pg 20)	Marvin Thomas	6	Marvin Thomas	No CBA was developed with Pettinaro. During negotiations it became clear the developer was not negotiating in good faith. The community does have three current CBA's; the Wilmington organic recycling center, port contractors inc. and habitat for humanity. The community is currently in discussions with the Delaware Humane Society. The CBA's call for 20% of construction jobs go to minority contractors, and 20% of non-skill (labor) jobs go to area residents. Currently Southbridge is the only community in the state that has CBA's with developers.		9
Continue to target Southbridge for assistance programs (Community Block Development Grants, Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit, Community Empowerment Through Residential Empowerment). (Pg 20)	H-5	N/A	4	Tim Crawl-Bey	No progress; floodplain designation makes it difficult to get federal funds to Southbridge.		10
Create floodplain design guidelines and maintain urbanistic design by raising the first floor above parking and use of landscaping, stoops and berms. (Pg 34)	H-11	N/A	4	Derrick Lightfoot	Floodplain design guidelines are in place, but not specific to South Wilmington.		11

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Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development							
Expand existing form based zoning to ensure “new urbanist” housing on larger sites that feature street oriented building, street trees, 3-4 story rowhomes, rowhomes with apartments above and stoops with parking below. (Pg 17)	H-13	N/A	4	Derrick Lightfoot	No progress.		12
Utilize the Neighborhood Assistance Act and Low Income Tax Credits to augment existing funding sources. (Pg 20)	H-6	N/A	1	Derrick Lightfoot	This would be difficult to track; check with State Housing Authority.		13
Prohibit gated communities and require alignments and roads and other pedestrian and visual connections to new developments. (Pg 17)	H-14	N/A	1	Derrick Lightfoot	The City does not support gated communities. Connections from Southbridge to new developments, including the proposed southern bank Riverwalk, are in the South Wilmington Comprehensive Plan.		14
Parks, Open Space and Environmental Quality							
Restore the Southbridge Marsh and use this area as the core of a central park system and network of open spaces, swales, and ponds to promote natural flood retention and water restoration. Traverse the park with trails, linking active recreation facilities. (Pg 34 and 37)	P-1 (Pg 28)	Steve Williams Tom Moran Christina Wirtz Charles Rhodes	14	Bill Swiatek	The City would like to eventually purchase this site, which is today privately-held land, and implement the recommendations suggested to the left. Finding funding to do so is the roadblock.		15

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Pursue aggressive street tree planting program that serves both aesthetic and traffic-calming objectives. Start with homeowner streets, Heald Street and New Castle Ave. (Pg 50)	P-11 (Pg 56)	Andrea Mosher Brad Killian	8	Marvin Thomas	Between 2006 and 2007, 130 trees were pruned, 16 removed and 41 planted with grant funding from DE Urban Forestry program and DCEPF. Recently, this has not been pursued because several residents have had problems with tree roots cracking their pavement and going into their basements and do not want to incur the cost of correcting these problems because of new trees.		16
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Recommendation*	Implementation Reference**	Authors	Votes	Contact	Comments	Progress	ID #
Parks, Open Space and Environmental Quality							
Enhance street cleaning efforts and leaf litter collection to improve street appearance and drainage. (Pg 34)	P-5 (Pg 39)	Sarah Cooksey Dave Beattie Kathy Denhart	6	Alfonso Ballard	Streets are swept regularly during the non-winter months. A block captain may request street sweeping outside of the normal schedule upon request by e-mailing aballard@ci.wilmington.de.us or Rshazier@wilmingtonde.gov .		17
Explore the possibility of a new indoor recreation center or middle school near A and Buttonwood Streets. The indoor recreation center would be geared to serve the needs of local residents. (Pg 37)	P-7 (Pg 45)	Yvette Santiago Sherani Patterson Milton Delgado Brad Killian	6	Milton Delgado	There has been a revitalization of Millie Cannon and Barbara Hicks Parks which has been a catalyst for Recreation Nights at both Henrietta Johnson and Neighborhood House. There is no further progress on this recommendation.		18

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Promote a riverwalk on the south side of the Christina River, assuring connections every 600 feet. (Pg 38)	P-8 (Pg 48)	Meredith Mendleson Charles Rhodes Susan Moerschel Brad Killian	6	Bill Swiatek	A riverwalk is planned for the south side of the Christina River, per the New Castle County Greenway Plan. The Southbridge Circulation Study (2008) and South Wilmington Comprehensive Plan both stipulate connections from Southbridge should be provided.		19
Create a permanent source of revenue for parks through a Tax Increment Financing District for park construction and a Park Improvement District for continued upkeep. (Pg 38)	P-6 (Pg 42)	Meredith Mendleson James Brunswick	5	Romain Alexander	No progress has been achieved, as this is a somewhat controversial issue.		20
Require that the creation of new impervious surfaces be linked to creation of equal amount of green space. (Pg 38)	P-2 (Pg 33)	Steve Williams Tom Moran Christina Wirtz Charles Rhodes	4	Derrick Lightfoot	This is a design consideration; will look into.		21
Seek partners or stewards for each small park and playground. (Pg 38)	P-9 (Pg 42)	Meredith Mendleson James Brunswick	3	Marvin Thomas	There have been upgrades to three parks: Millie Cannon, Winston Truitt, and Barbara Hicks. The upgrades were a joint effort by Parks & Recreation, The HOPE Commission, and the community.		22

Consider utilizing open space in the neighborhood to establish a vegetable farm and farmer's market. (Pg 38)	P-10 (Pg 52)	Andrea Mosher	3	Bill Swiatek	A community garden was implemented in 2011, using vacant land from the Neighborhood House. Many agencies and interests came together, under the leadership of the SWPN, to realize the garden. A farmers market will be explored		23
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					in 2012.		
Provide incentives to encourage environmentally-friendly development. (Pg 34)	P-4 (Pg 36)	Kevin Coyle Brent Ache	2	Derrick Lightfoot	These are in place within the zoning code (chapter 48) and are specific to building types.		24
Impose a higher standard for green architecture, utilizing green roofs for commercial development, "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)" certified housing etc. (Pg 34)	P-3 (Pg 36)	Kevin Coyle Brent Ache	0	Derrick Lightfoot	In place within the zoning code (chapter 48).		25
Retail Development, Employment and Community Services							
Create a Main Street at A and Heald Streets. Encourage housing to be built above stores. (Pg 44)	R-1 (Pg 59)	Diane Laird Andrea Finerosky Marvin Thomas Lottie Lee	15	Marvin Thomas	Southbridge was not eligible for DEDO's Main Street Program in 2008. However, the community has received funding (\$1.2 million) for phase 1 of the transportation enhancement program. This phase will see upgraded sidewalks, crosswalk destinations, traffic calming, repaving, curb ramps, etc. along New Castle Ave. and South Heald St.		26
Enhance Neighborhood House programs to take on the character of a place-based job readiness/placement center and foster linkages with more specialized job training downtown. (Pg 42)	R-6 (Pg 72)	Arthur Boswell Wayne Brown Peggy Strine	15	Bill Swiatek	Programs like PAID have successfully trained and placed workers in Southbridge. The economic recession and lack of funding have since stalled these efforts.		27

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Develop a new retail center in South Wilmington to serve the larger neighborhood. (Pg 15)	R-3 (Pg 66)	Rick Ferrell Hanifa Shabazz	12	Bill Swiatek	No progress		28
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Recommendation*	Implementation Reference**	Authors	Votes	Contact	Comments	Progress	ID #
Retail Development, Employment and Community Services							
Create and support programs that offer area youth tutorial assistance, cultural enrichment and career exploration opportunities. (Pg 42)	R-7 (Pg 75)	Arthur Boswell Wayne Brown Shannon Marchman	12	Sarah Sorden	Some progress; programs underway include One Village Alliance GED program and Mayor's Youth Advisory Council. Projects in development stages include Urban Bike's after school tutorial program at Neighborhood House and cultural enrichment program with Christina Cultural Arts Center.		29
Promote locally owned businesses through microenterprise loans, retail incubator, and technical assistance and façade grants. (Pg 42)	R-8	N/A	11	Marvin Thomas	This is an area that is very difficult in which to move forward. But during 2010, UD conducted a merchants survey and the civic assoc. had representatives from the organization share how the businesses could qualify as a Main Street partner. One of the businesses has agreed to serve as president of the South Wilmington business association.		30
Prevent isolation of the Southbridge by joining the neighborhood to the waterfront and creating destinations in and	R-4 (Pg 70)	Paul Grygiel	9	Bill Swiatek	Better pedestrian connections from Southbridge to the redeveloping Riverfront area to the west are being pursued in tandem		31

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adjacent to Southbridge. (Pg 15)					with the Christina River Bridge project (construction in 2014). These include plans for pedestrian upgrades along the length of A Street from Heald Street to Walnut Street, and the reconstruction of Garasches Lane, including pedestrian improvements. A shared use bike/pedestrian pathway is planned to connect Garasches Lane to Townsend Street in Southbridge. Additionally, a bus connection to the new ShopRite supermarket was made by the state and developer under pressure from the SWPN.		
Develop the City-owned Parks and Recreation site on Heald St. as mixed use (housing above retail) instead of the proposed office/business park use. (Pg 24)	R-2 (Pg 64)	Bonnie Willis	8	Marvin Thomas	The city turned this facility into the office of emergency management. No longer feasible.		32
Build capacity for Community Development Corporations. (Pg 52)	R-14	N/A	4	Marvin Thomas	This is an on-going objective.		33
Utilize the Southbridge Extension site as retail, office or light industrial/flex or as mixed use with housing targeted to a variety of income levels. (Pg 24)	R-5	N/A	3	Marvin Thomas	This recommendation was made during the time the Wilmington Housing Authority was trying to get Hope 6 federal funding to build mix-use housing in Southbridge. WHA was not successful and as a result the Southbridge Extension is a vacant lot. WHA has not provided the community with information on future use of the property.		34

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Expand upon community policing efforts. (Pg 52)	R-10	N/A	3	Marvin Thomas	Southbridge was the first Hope Zone in the city. With the efforts of the HOPE Commission and the community police officers were assigned to the community. There is a positive relationship that exists. Recently, the community and police dept. developed a program called Rapid Reaction Response Team, which brings community leaders and the police investigation units together at the site of violent crimes. The idea is to canvass the neighborhood and talk to residents about the crime and assure them that their safety is important.		35
Create a job preference program for South Wilmington residents based upon the First Source program in DC. (Pg 42)	R-9	N/A	1	Hanifa Shabazz	No progress. Hanifa's staff is looking into this program, though it may be more in the realm of the Department of Labor.		36
Support Elbert-Palmer's efforts to make the school part of the community. (Pg 52)	R-12	N/A	1	Bill Swiatek	Elbert-Palmer has partnered with the community and other agencies on a Safe Routes to School program and sits on the SWPN.		37
Reach out to neighborhood churches and institutions to "adopt" a program or block each. (Pg 52)	R-13	N/A	1	Marvin Thomas	There are 10-12 churches and a minister's organization in the community. It does not appear that anything has been done to move forward on this recommendation. However, there are block captains, but not as a result of this recommendation.		38

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Support Fire Company's interest in expanding its community presence. (Pg 52)	R-15	N/A	1	Marvin Thomas	There has not been progress on this recommendation.		39
Port Enhancement and Job Creation	R-16 (Pg 79)	Kenneth Walker	1	Marvin Thomas	There has not been progress on this recommendation.		40
Explore a community court. (Pg 52)	R-11	N/A	0	Bill Swiatek	No progress.		41
Transportation Improvement							
Explore weekend and evening bus service with a route that connects to Concord Mall. (Pg 42)	T-1	N/A	N/A	Semia Hackett	The Route 15 and Route 17 currently provide evening and Saturday service with connections to the Route 2 at Rodney Square which provides public transit service to the Concord Mall. Due to budgetary constraints, DTC is unable to provide additional services. The planning team will continue to monitor the transit demands of the area.		42
Focus transit transfers at the A/Heald St. business district to bolster stores there. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an additional bus stop at South Heald St and Peach St. • Provide bus shelters at Buttonwood and A, South Heald and Peach St. (Pg 42) 	T-2, T-3, T-4 (Pg 82)	Derrick Lightfoot Dave Gula	N/A	Semia Hackett and Bill Swiatek	Bus shelters were studied at these locations in the Southbridge Circulation Study (2008) and were found not to meet DTC warrants to realize implementation. Bus stop improvements will be made as part of the TE project (described in detail in ID 44).		43

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Transportation Improvement							
Pursue comprehensive streetscaping and traffic calming on Heald Street, New Castle Ave and A Street by adding street trees, pedestrian scaled lighting and traffic signals. (Pg 50)	T-5	Bill Swiatek Gwinneth Kaminsky Metta Barbour Raymond Petrucci	N/A	Bill Swiatek	The Southbridge Circulation Study, adopted in 2008, outlined the scope of this project. In the years since, a Transportation Enhancements (TE) project and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project have provided funding to realize this recommendation. The TE project (construction set for 2012 for phase one, 2014 for phase two) will implement streetscape enhancements on New Castle Ave. and Heald St., concurrent with roadway re-paving. The SRTS project (phase one construction completed in 2010, phase two planned for 2012 or 2013) focuses on pedestrian improvement around Elbert-Palmer ES and the Neighborhood House. TE is about \$1 million per phase (w/20% local match provided by elected officials, City of Wilmington and WILMAPCO). SRTS is \$130,000 per phase, with no local match necessary.		44
Create a bypass starting where D and New Castle intersection or pursue a connector road between terminal and Christina Aves. • Request 2-way traffic on Heald St. and New Castle Ave.	T-6, T-7, T-9 (Pg 92)	Dave Blankenship David Gula	N/A	Bill Swiatek	These recommendations were studied in the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study. It was recommended that New Castle Ave. and Heald St. remain one way pairs, due to difficulties with signal coordination, more difficult pedestrian crossings, additional		45

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a street grid for the Southbridge Extension site that is more in character with the surrounding neighborhood. (Pg 50) 					<p>traffic, and operational problems introduced at Lobdell Street, and parking difficulties for southbound traffic on New Castle Ave. The truck bypass route may be a long-term solution, but was not recommended for immediate implementation due to cost. The Southbridge Extension site has since been abandoned.</p>		
<p>Create gateway features that enhance the approach to the neighborhood. (Pg 50)</p>	<p>T-8 (Pg 96)</p>	<p>Susan Love Metta Barbour</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Bill Swiatek</p>	<p>Place-making signage has been added at the intersection of Lobdell Street and New Castle Ave. for southbound traffic. Additional place-making signage is being pursued through the TE program for northbound traffic.</p>		<p>46</p>
<p>Non-Motorized connections (Walkable Southbridge) (Pg 50)</p>	<p>T-10</p>	<p>Bill Swiatek Metta Barbour</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Bill Swiatek</p>	<p>A Walkable Community Workshop (2006) and the Southbridge Circulation Study (2008) made a number of recommendations to make Southbridge more walkable. These are being implemented under the TE and SRTS programs (see full descriptions in ID 44 above). In addition, better pedestrian connections from Southbridge to the redeveloping Riverfront area to the west are being pursued in tandem with the Christina River Bridge project (construction in 2014). These include plans for pedestrian upgrades along the length of A Street from Heald Street to Walnut Street, and the reconstruction of Garasches Lane, including</p>		<p>47</p>

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					pedestrian improvements. A shared use bike/pedestrian pathway is planned to connect Garasches Lane to Townsend Street in Southbridge. Additionally, connections from Southbridge to a future Riverwalk on the southern side of the Christina are planned.		
Comprehensive Literature Search for Transportation	T-11	N/A	N/A	Bill Swiatek	This literature search was completed in the 2008 Southbridge Circulation Study.		48

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