West Neighborhood Task Force

Camden | Merchantville | Pennsauken

"Making Things Happen"

West Maple Neighborhood Public Workshop

September 27, 2011

Prepared by RAGAN DESIGN GROUP

Agenda

- WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
  - Purpose of Study
  - Task Force Meetings
  - Purpose of Tonight's Workshop
  - Study Area Overview
- NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY
- YOUR FEEDBACK
  - Vision Statement for Neighborhood
  - Recommendations
- NEXT STEPS
  - Draft Report
  - Grant application to continue study

Funding

- This Study of the West Maple Neighborhood is made possible by a Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant made available through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

Purpose of Study

- Coordinate planning efforts in the 3 jurisdictions
- Develop Plan: Joint Municipality Strategic Revitalization Plan
- Open Lines of Communication
- Pool Resources from 3 communities to target investments that will achieve greatest impact on neighborhood conditions.

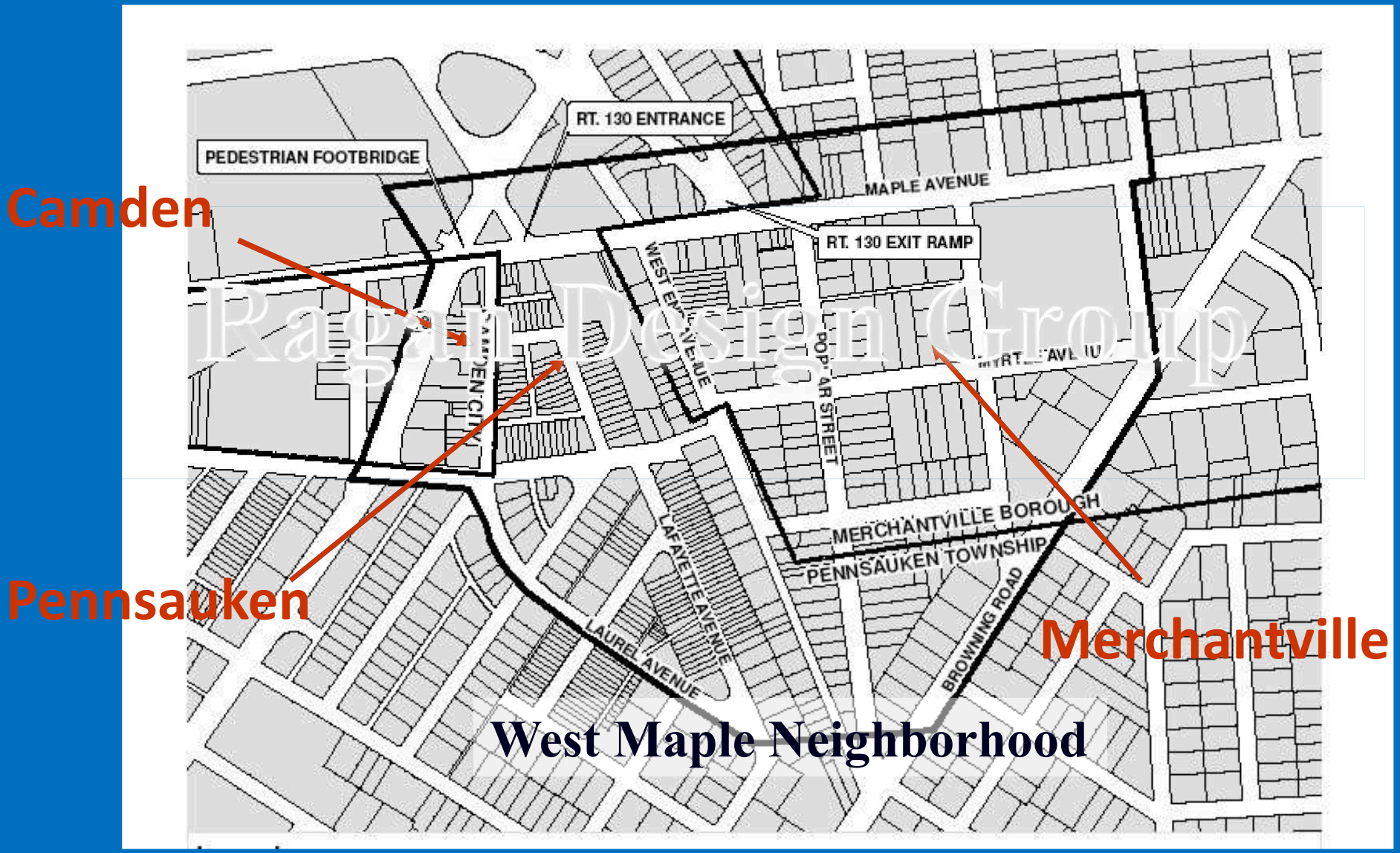
Project Approach: Task Force Meetings

- Monthly task force meetings at Merchantville Borough Hall: residents, businesses, property owners, municipal staff, elected officials
  - 2nd Thursday of the month
  - Open to the public
- Goal: to become self-sustaining organization that advocates for the neighborhood and pursues long-term implementation measures

Purpose of Tonight's Workshop

- Project Update
- Share Neighborhood Survey Results
- Gather Public Feedback on:
  - **Vision Statement**
  - **Task Force Recommendations**

Joint Municipality Study Area



Ragan Design Group

Study Area

69 Acres: 35 acres in Merchantville (50%)
30 acres in Pennsauken (44%)
4 acres in Camden (6%)

325 Buildings:
118 in Merchantville (36%)
197 in Pennsauken (61%)
10 in Camden (3%)

Study Area- Demographics

Total Pop	Total One Race	White Alone	Black Alone	AIAN Alone	Asian Alone	Nhopi Alone	Other Alone	Total Two Races	Total Hisp	Total Non-HIsp	Total 18+
1452	1385	560	534	5	57	0	229	67	461	991	1025
	95.4%	38.6%	36.8%	0.3%	4.1%	0.0%	42.9%	4.6%	31.7%	68.3%	70.6%

Source: 2010 Census

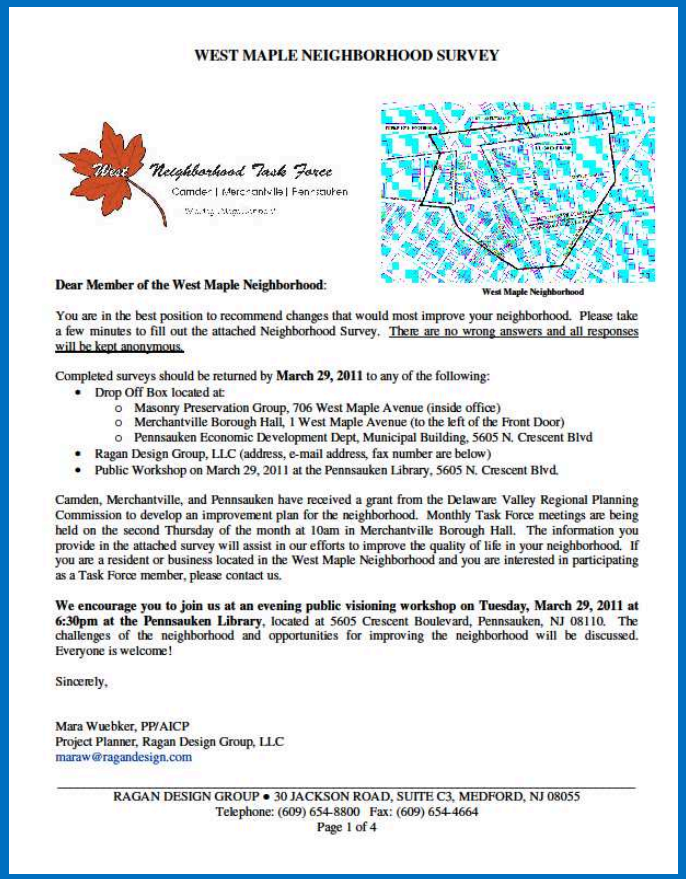
Task Force Resources

Task Force has considered the following in developing its recommendations:

- Neighborhood Survey Results
- SWOT Analysis from last Public Workshop
- Task Force Brainstorming Sessions and Monthly Meetings
- RDG research

Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- **43 responses**
  - 28 Merchantville
  - 14 Pennsauken
  - 1 Camden
- **Survey Questions:**
  - Quality of Life
  - Circulation
  - Recreation
  - Desired Neighborhood Goods & Services
  - Sense of Community



WEST MAPLE NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

West Neighborhood Task Force
Camden | Merchantville | Pennsauken

West Maple Neighborhood

Dear Member of the West Maple Neighborhood:

You are in the best position to recommend changes that would most improve your neighborhood. Please take a few minutes to fill out the attached Neighborhood Survey. There are no wrong answers and all responses will be kept anonymous.

Completed surveys should be returned by **March 29, 2011** to any of the following:

- Drop Off Box located at:
  - Masonry Preservation Group, 706 West Maple Avenue (inside office)
  - Merchantville Borough Hall, 1 West Maple Avenue (to the left of the Front Door)
  - Pennsauken Economic Development Dept, Municipal Building, 5605 N. Crescent Blvd
- Ragan Design Group, LLC (address, e-mail address, fax number are below)
- Public Workshop on March 29, 2011 at the Pennsauken Library, 5605 N. Crescent Blvd.

Camden, Merchantville, and Pennsauken have received a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to develop an improvement plan for the neighborhood. Monthly Task Force meetings are being held on the second Thursday of the month at 10am in Merchantville Borough Hall. The information you provide in the attached survey will assist in our efforts to improve the quality of life in your neighborhood. If you are a resident or business located in the West Maple Neighborhood and you are interested in participating as a Task Force member, please contact us.

We encourage you to join us at an evening public visioning workshop on Tuesday, March 29, 2011 at 6:30pm at the Pennsauken Library, located at 5605 Crescent Boulevard, Pennsauken, NJ 08110. The challenges of the neighborhood and opportunities for improving the neighborhood will be discussed. Everyone is welcome!

Sincerely,

Mara Wuebker, PP/AICP
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Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- Highlights:
  - 70% feel that neighborhood appearance is fair, or worse
  - 77% are concerned about unattractive entrance into neighborhood from Route 130
  - 70% feel that cleanliness is a concern.
  - 58% feel that rundown or blighted buildings are a concern

Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- Highlights:
  - 61% feel that racial and ethnic harmony is good, or better
  - 74% feel that transportation options are good, or better.
  - But 77% do not use public transportation.
  - 72% use Wellwood Park

Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- Highlights:
  - 63% feel too many vehicles speeding through neighborhood (higher for Pennsauken)
  - 80% feel safe walking or biking in the neighborhood during the daytime
  - 66% feel unsafe walking or biking after dark
  - 79% feel that more police patrol would increase desire to walk or bike in neighborhood

Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- **Recurring Concerns in Comment Sections:**
  - Street cleaning,
  - cleanliness,
  - trash/litter,
  - rental properties (being run down, not being maintained),
  - more police patrols needed at the park,
  - drug-related concerns,
  - alleyways
- **Desired goods/services in neighborhood:**
  - bakery (70%), café/restaurant (72%),
  - police sub-station (60%)

Neighborhood Survey – Spring 2011

- **Specific Municipal Concerns:**
- Merchantville
  - Street cleaning
- Pennsauken
  - Street cleaning
  - Garbage pick up
  - Snow removal
  - parking
  - sidewalk conditions
- Camden
  - Street cleaning
  - Communication b/w City and residents

Public Workshop – Spring 2011

SWOT Analysis Indicated Goals of:

- Revitalizing Streetscape – street trees, removing blighting effects
- Improving Quality of Life – drugs, public safety
- Retention/Attraction of Desirable Businesses and Residents
- Creating Sense of Community

Results of Process

Task Force created a Vision Statement and Recommendations for improving:

- Streetscape
- Traffic calming
- Quality of life
- Pedestrian and vehicular safety
- Parking

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

VISION STATEMENT

Q: How do you envision the Neighborhood in 20 years?

Vision Statement

What is a Vision Statement?

- Mental picture - how neighborhood envisions itself in future;
- Guides future long-term policy and planning initiatives.

Ingredients of a Vision Statement:

- Positive present-tense language
- Captures community's uniqueness
- Depicts community's ideals and desired achievement
- Focuses on people and quality of life
- A stated time period

Vision Statement 2030 Summary

Entrance into Neighborhood

- Route 130 welcomes visitors with landmark signage and green space area
- Active commercial businesses along Route 130 that provide attractive front door to neighborhood; landscape features that buffer and screen residential portion from commercial corridor.
- Sidewalk along Route 130
- New bus shelter for riders of public transportation

Vision Statement 2030 Summary- cont.

Maple Avenue

- Maple Ave is thriving mixed use district
- First Floor storefronts with residents above
- Improved aesthetics- planters, street trees, brick sidewalk elements
- Pedestrian-friendly - sidewalks and streets are clean and well-maintained; safe and convenient for pedestrians to cross streets
- Storefront windows encourage street level interest, pedestrian-oriented signage
- Local restaurant, bakery, café for neighborhood residents
- No new industrial uses

Vision Statement 2030 Summary- cont.

Quality of Life

- Residents vary in age, socio-economic status and ethnic backgrounds -- balance
- Neighborhood is drug-free
- Joint Municipality Neighborhood Watch- reduced juvenile and petty crime occurrences
- Yards are well-maintained; nice landscaping – shrubs and seasonal blooms
- Alleys are paved, well-lit and free of debris
- Increased rates of home ownership
- Renewed sense of pride in neighborhood

Vision Statement 2030 Summary- cont.

Neighborhood Organization & Sense of Community

- Task Force has morphed into neighborhood organization
- Organization is active in neighborhood revitalization efforts and neighborhood events
- Strong sense of community in this multi-jurisdictional neighborhood

See Full Vision Statement for Complete Statement

Vision Statement- cont.

IS THIS HOW YOU ENVISION THE
THE WEST MAPLE NEIGBHORHOOD
TO BE LIKE IN 20 YEARS?

Any proposed changes or suggestions that the Task Force should consider?

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

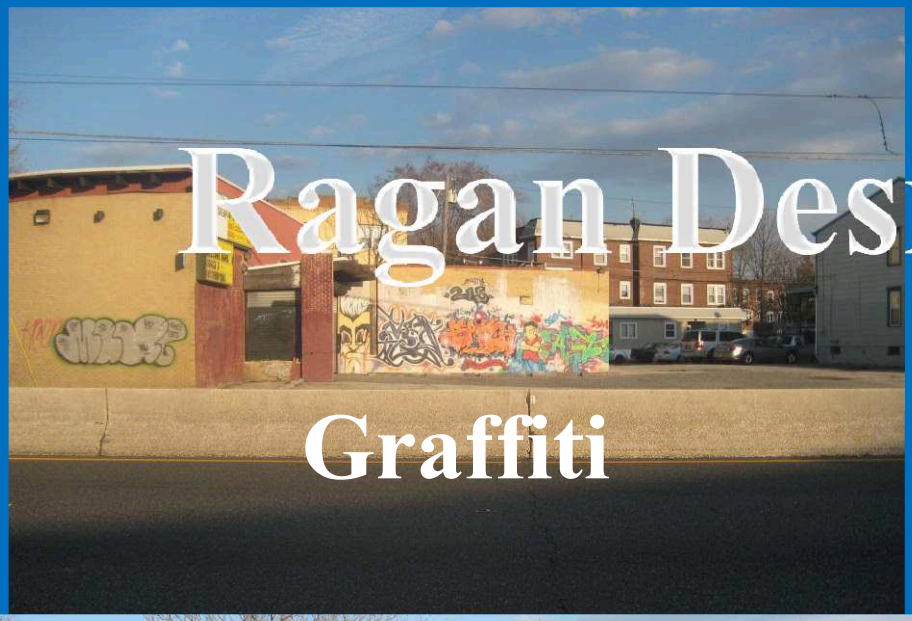
Gateway

Sprint Site

Federal Street Overpass

Building Facades

Gateway into Neighborhood



Gateway into Neighborhood

Bus Stop – no shelter

Dangerous Entrance to 130

Fast Moving Traffic

Vehicles can't see pedestrians crossing near Footbridge