

Blight and Abandonment Coalition (BAC) Minutes
January 23rd, 2012

ACTION – add CDCollab to the D-List

Attendees: TEvans, WCDC; JZumfelde, WCDC; WBernstein, ACCD; JBallas, Munhall; RVotedran, Munhall; DRapp, Swissvale; DSample, Bellevue; CCollinge, ACED; PGrimpe, PA Rep DCosta; JStephens, ARTEZ; ROgon, Mt. Oliver; SDeitrick, UCSUR
Staff: ENusser, BDavidson, PCRG; JZaffuto, KRisko, CONNECT

Welcome and Introductions: Chair TEvans called the meeting to order at 2:35pm. Introductions were made.

Presentation: State of Vacancy & Blight in Allegheny County – Sabine Dietrich, UCSUR

Member SDietrich gave a 45-minute presentation on the state of residential blight in urban core of Allegheny County.

Targeted vs wide-spread planning (parcel by parcel vs. community-wide)

Note: Demolition is neither the silver bullet nor ‘the devil’. It is one tool in the toolbox.

Goal: ‘Turning a liability into an asset’. Demolition targeted to need and strategic asset-building.

Postage Stamp, teeth demo vs. clearing acres

Digging deeper into areas: Mt Oliver Boro example (and Turtle Creek Valley COG)

What would it take for a small community to have a robust data system?

(Crime, Vacant land v structure, tax delinquency (County, School District, Etc)

Clarification: Homestead Exemption – Owner-occupied structures only are *eligible* to apply/receive the exemption.

Senior Exemption – Same. Senior

Homestead Exemptions – if property value is below \$15,000 to begin with, the property is county tax exempt anyways, so it wouldn’t be a good proxy for n’hood indicator.

Does County Homestead Exemption get applied to City of Pittsburgh house value automatically?

PGrimpe: Yes.

ENusser provided an overview of other demographic and commercial/industrial/land vacancy data in the county & urban core as provided by the 2010 USCensus and ACED.

Notable were: County pop. decline of 4.6% 2000-2010

9.4% vacancy rate in HOUSING UNITS(does not include land), increase: 10K units & 1.4%

Median age increase from 39.6 – 41.3 (2000-2010)

ACED Vac. #'s – 60,000 in county, 30K in urban core

The group had a discussion of the aging population of *people*, not just the housing stock.

Poll:
Who tracks what and How

Community	Data Set? Y/N	How	What do you track?
Wilkinsburg			
Munhall			
Mt Oliver Boro			
River Towns			
Castle Shannon			
Swissvale			
Bellevue			
Brentwood/Baldwin/Whitehall			
McKees-Rocks			
Carnegie			
Penn Hills			

- What does the County Have?
- What does PNCIS have?
- What datasets are commonly wanted? Needed?
 - Vacancy
 - Tax Delinquency
 - Code Enforcement
 - Property Database
 - Drive-By Distress measure (Scaled 1-10)
 - Utility Shut-offs
 - USPS
 - Property Assessments
 - Sales
 - Crime
 - Condemnation/Demolition
 - Demographics
 - 911
 - Foreclosure filings
- Where does each dataset come from?
- How to track it?
 - Format - start with Parcel Number.

Invite someone from County Housing Authority/tenant based program. And Someone from HUD.

There's a lot of interest in nuisance properties so reference was made to Local Government Academy.

LGA – know your codes (municipal codes)

ACTION: Survey group and get a list of questions that we have for Housing Authority issues. Prevention.

Idea: Get a set of measures out of the existing set and match it with one of the municipalities which has a collection system.

ACTION: JZaffuto from CONNECT taking a survey/census as to who has what data and how. This will create a baseline. **NOTE:** add to that - why do you want data / what would you do with it?

(development decisions, targeting revitalization activities, weatherization pockets, foreclosure prevention, tax generation)

NOTE: Add to that – What are the 2 things that your community has that ARE WORKING (what programs do you have for your vacant property issues?)

Wilkinsburgpa.gov – tax forgiveness site

Munhall: ways of getting properties back on the tax roles. Will a dataset help with this?

USPS overlaid with property assessment building value = 0, eg.

Definitions:

Urban Core: City of Pittsburgh and any contiguous municipality

Blight

Abandoned

Vacant

Data: Pull out the data from ACED/Vinh and reflect them in a separate one-pager for reference/framing, not just in the minutes.

Questions:

Who lives in a house 1919 or older?

How deeply can we drill down in what categories?