

Recycling Vacant, Abandoned, and Contaminated Properties in New Kensington

National Brownfields Conference

Weak Markets Cities

November 14, 2006

New Kensington, Philadelphia



Demographics 2000

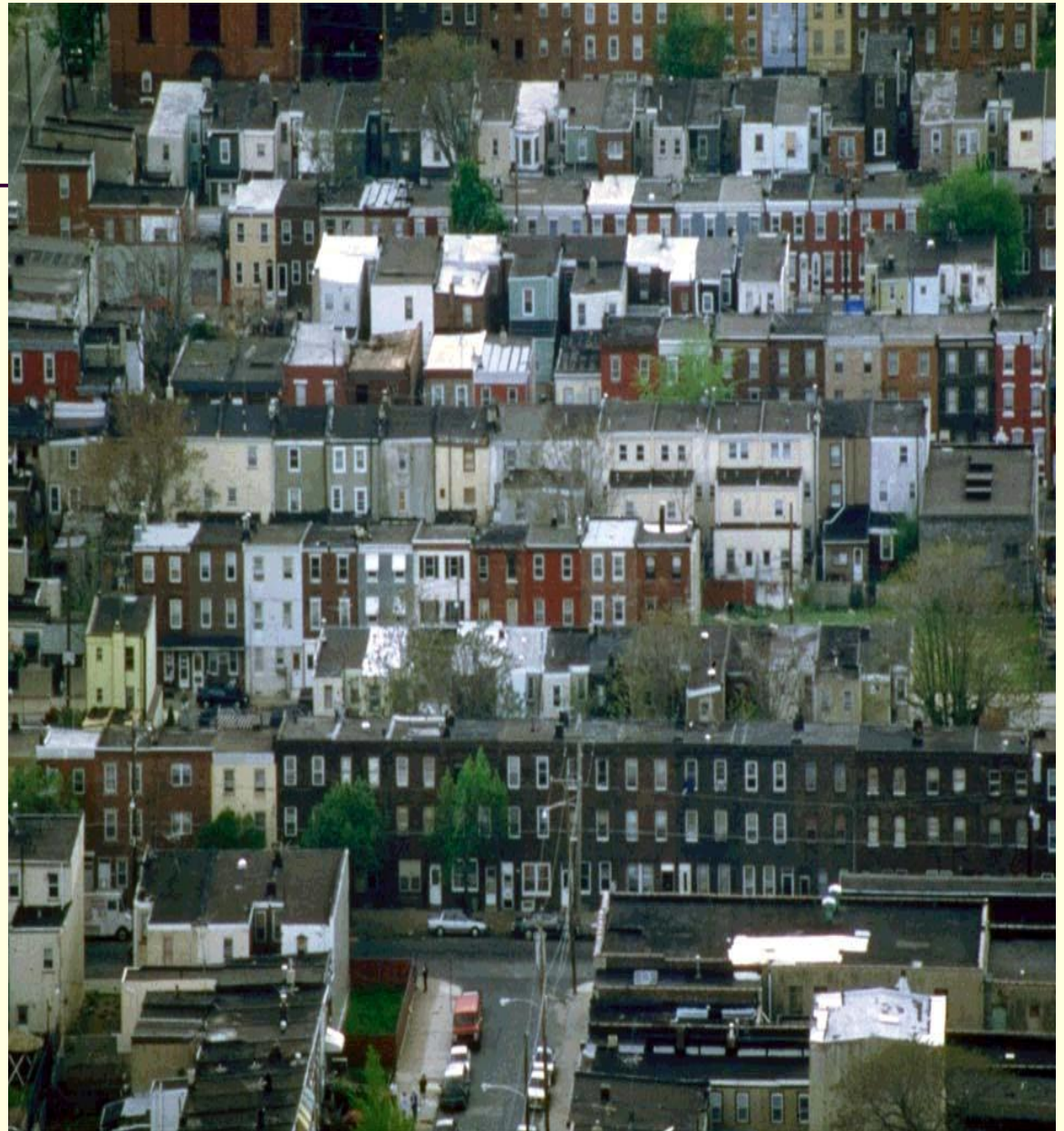
	Fishtown	East Kensington	Port Richmond
Population	7,320	5,435	9,199
Median Income	36,077	19,098	29,250
Households Public Assistance	7%	80%	27%
Property Value	\$54,300	\$22,500	\$45,200
Homeownership Rate	71%	59%	76%
Vacancy Rate	12%	18%	14%

History of Kensington

- Developed during the Industrial Revolution
- A densely-populated neighborhood of rowhomes and factories
- 1995 1100 parcels of vacant land



- As residents left, houses became vacant
- Vacant structures fall into disrepair and are torn down
- Row home construction created domino effect



Depopulation of Philadelphia

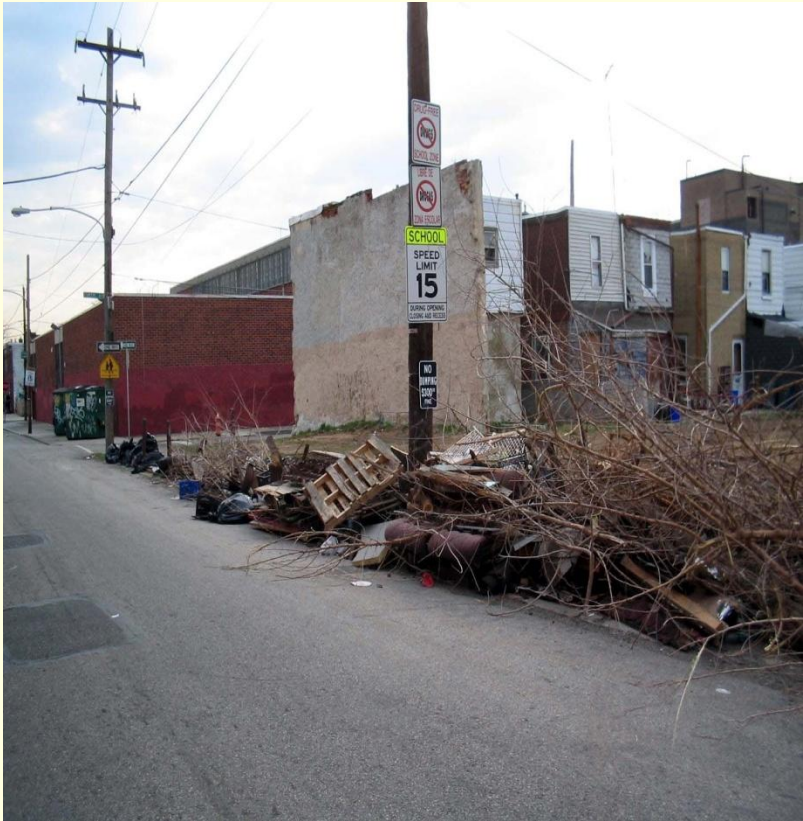
- Factory closings resulted in loss of jobs
- Decline in jobs resulted in poverty and population loss
- One-third of city's population was lost from WWII to present. East Kensington (census tract 161) lost over 40% of its population since 1950



LAND USE MANAGEMENT

- Was created in 1995 out of a strategic plan with the community.
- We help create clean and green open spaces by doing the following:
 - Organize volunteer cleaning and greening projects.
 - Plant street trees
 - Facilitate the transfer of vacant lots to sideyards
 - Clean, cut and stabilize vacant lots to reduce short dumping
 - Operate a community garden center
 - Participate in Neighborhood Transformation Program
 - Host summer YouthWorks program for local youngsters
 - Hold environmental and educational workshops
 - Assist local elementary and high school students and teacher with the development and ongoing care of their gardens

SHORT DUMPING



More short dumping



Vacant Land, lack of play area, trash filled lots



VACANT LAND STABILIZATION



Overgrown lot with jersey barriers



Start of stabilization



After!



STABILIZED LOTS



Community Gardens

Rose Garden

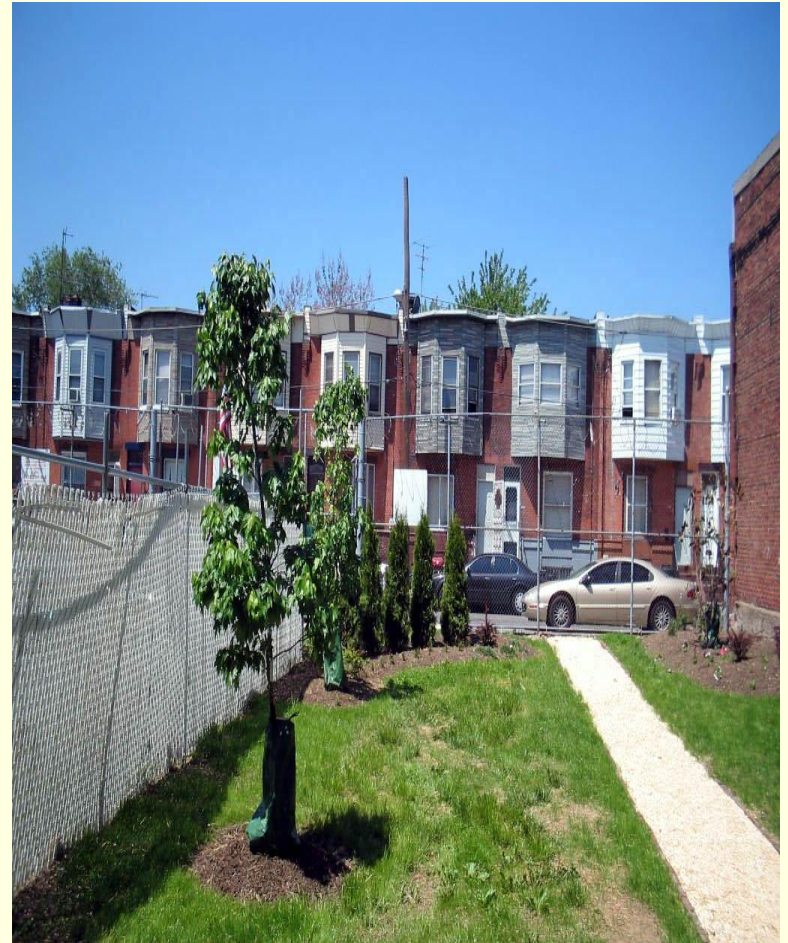


Thompson & Frankford Ave. & Sergeant Gardens



Side Yards

- Important to stabilization of community
- De-densifies the neighborhood
- Residents get additional space
- Land is put back on the tax rolls



NKCDC GARDEN CENTER



Garden Center Workshops



Brownfields

- Greensgrow – Super fund site - Urban farm
- Moyer Street, EPA Clean Up Site – projecting to build 14 new housing with a community garden

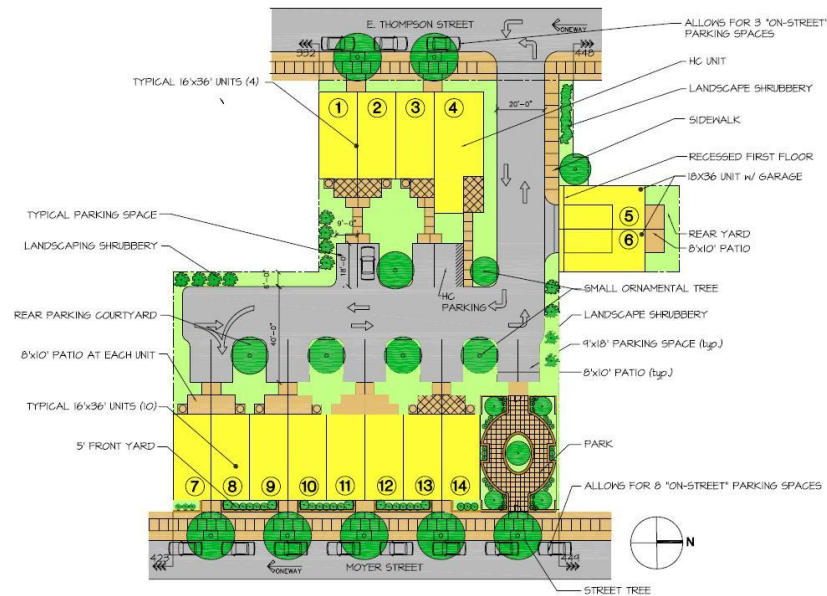
Greensgrow Farm



Moyer Street Lot



Moyer Street Schematic



WHARTON STUDY, U of P

May, 2004

- Cleaning & greening vacant lots can increase adjacent property values by as much as 50%
- Planting a tree within 50 feet of a house can increase its value by 9%
- Location of a house within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from a park increased values by 10%
- Neighborhood blocks with higher concentrations of unmanaged vacant lots displayed lower house prices, about 18%.

WHARTON STUDY, U of P

May, 2004

