

Neighborhood Revitalization

Outline for Findings and Presentation

Environment

1. Housing Inventory (2010 census)
 - a. Sharon has around 7100 livable houses.
 - i. Approximately 6000 are occupied.
 1. About 40 percent (2600) of these are rentals (does not include land contract transactions registered with the County).
 - ii. 1100 are vacant.
 1. 250 of these are unsuitable for occupancy and destined for demolition.
2. Trends
 - a. Population Decline
 - i. Between 2000 (16,283) and 2010 (14,038), Sharon lost about 14 percent of its population.
 - ii. IF this number has stabilized, we believe that the property occupancy has leaned toward the non-homeowner.
 - iii. IF Sharon's population has declined, we believe that there is an additional increase in unoccupied properties.
 - b. Police calls on the rise
 - c. Fire calls on the rise
 - d. Median Family Income in 2010 was nearly \$25,000 below the PA number.
3. Summary
 - a. We have a housing surplus.
 - b. Owner occupied properties is on the decline.
 - c. Public safety in several neighborhoods has eroded.
 - d. Sharon is a small city experiencing big city problems.

Issues

1. Blight has taken hold and is spreading in many of our neighborhoods at a steep rate
 - a. A large number of both modest and historically valuable properties are in advanced stages of disrepair.
 - b. Costs for new and rehab construction impacts even conscientious owners. Why improve? ROI is nonexistent.
 - c. As owner/occupants age, “walk away” properties have added to our surplus housing. (Death of a spouse, health issues, etc).
 - d. The surplus housing inventory has deeply impacted home pricing. As a result...
 - e. Disengaged landlords and their variants (Land Contract sellers, absentee owners, etc.) have seized the resultant soft market. They are not managing these homes well enough.
 - i. Occupants are not maintaining the properties.
 - ii. Some landlords don't monitor or provide upkeep.
 - iii. Local agents for landlords are responsible for collecting rent but not legally accountable for property maintenance.
 - f. Acquisition of properties for financial collateral, near foreclosure bank properties, and/or cash purchases by people of dubious intent results in improperly managed, unoccupied and/or crime homes.
 - g. Many of these homes will soon be exoskeletons in need of demolition. This is blight.
 - h. Blight invites crime.
 - i. Prospective offenders assume broken windows and other signs of abandonment mean that residents are indifferent to what happens in their neighborhood.
2. Code Enforcement is less than needed.
 - a. Inconsistent and reactive.
 - b. What is our needed capacity for enforcement?
 - c. Can we be more efficient?
3. Public Safety is a serious concern.
 - a. Do we have capacity?
4. Summary
 - a. We have several neighborhoods that are quickly becoming less “neighbor” and more “hood”.

Recommendations

1. Form Public Safety Task Force. Responsible for recommending improvements to public safety with special attention given to immediate issues. What do we need to get the job done?
 - a. At least two council members.
 - b. At least two concerned citizens.
 - c. At least two (one decision maker) Police Dept.
 - d. At least two (one decision maker) Fire Dept.
 - e. School Board member(s)
 - f. Clergy
 - g. Others?

2. Form Blight, Code and Enforcement Task Force. Responsible for understanding code and its enforcement. Recommend changes to better reflect current city demographics. What do we need to get the job done?
 - a. At least two council members.
 - b. At least two concerned citizens.
 - c. At least one Code Officer.
 - d. City counselor or other legal advisor.
 - e. Others?

3. Form Planning and Vision Task Force. Responsible for understanding trends in home ownership and demands for safe housing. Recommend strategies for restoring pride to Sharon's neighborhoods. Communication strategies? Is the Sharon Historical Districts code helpful? What do we need to get the job done?
 - a. At least one council member
 - b. Local Historical Society
 - c. Local Chamber of Commerce
 - d. Local colleges or universities
 - e. Local, State, County or Regional Planning Commissions
 - f. Realtor
 - g. Business Owner(s)
 - h. Others?

4. Summary
 - a. Let's form like-minded, objective oriented, compartmentalized groups to swiftly address our issues.