

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP. S-2019.

IN COLLABORATION  
WITH THE ASOCIACION  
PUERTORRIQUENOS  
EN MARCHA

# REMEMBERING & ENVISIONING

GERMANTOWN AVENUE









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None of this work would be possible without the students of Temple University's Community Development Workshop 2019 graduating class. These students worked on various components of the project and without their drive and ability to juggle a mixture of responsibilities none of it would have been possible. The students who worked on this project are: Amy Boyd, Cameron Conarroe, Ioanna Dinoulis, Jonathan Fiamoncini, Maho Kawabe, Jacob Kurtz, Ronald Landis, Rachel Lewis, Grace Maas, Samuel McMinn, Udochi Onwuka, Julia Redington, Rachel Urban, and Ashley Wagner.

Finally, the Workshop team would like to extend their gratitude to Dr. Lynn Mandarano. Her leadership in the classroom and the field has left a lasting impact on each student. Additionally, her consistent support for students has enabled them to better serve local communities.





# Introduction

## To the project

For the Spring 2019 Community Development Workshop course, students in Temple University's Community Development major worked with the Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM) to take on a public history research and engagement project. The intention of the project was to build community capacity and community identity in relation to the future redevelopment of Germantown Avenue, the main commercial corridor in the area. The Germantown Avenue: Remembering and Envisioning project focused on the stretch of Germantown Avenues between Berks to York Streets in North Philadelphia.

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha was founded in 1970 by Puerto Rican, Vietnam War veterans who wanted to improve their community. In 1971, APM incorporated as a non-profit and since 1989 has built hundreds of affordable homes and rentals for the neighborhood.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, APM was awarded a Community Umbrella Agency contract through the Philadelphia Department of Human Services to continue providing services to its community.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, APM is a Registered Community Organization enabling it to advocate on behalf of its community and its residents to the Philadelphia Zoning Board.

Dr. Mandarano, Associate Professor in the Department of Planning and Community Development of the Tyler School of Art, has been partnering with APM for several years to provide service-learning opportunities for community development undergraduate and city planning graduate students and to develop solutions to address the community's ongoing needs. For the 2019 Community Development Workshop course the goal of the project was to develop a community engagement strategy to raise residents' awareness of the rich history of Germantown Avenue and to build capacity to collectively envision its future.

The Community Development Workshop team customized a research strategy that focused on Germantown Avenue's commercial and cultural history. The research involved interviewing community leaders, conducting archival research on iconic businesses and buildings, and researching the history of individual parcels. The results of the research were later presented at an APM community event. There, students implemented engagement activities based on their research, with the goal of collecting data on past and current commercial assets in the neighborhood. During the event, residents were prompted to imagine the types of businesses they would most like to see arrive to the avenue in the case of future redevelopment.

Through these engagement activities, the Community Development Workshop team collected and analyzed data necessary to discover appropriate solutions that build on available, local assets, as well as the needs of the community. The information gathered for and presented to APM and their neighborhood aims to remedy the community's issue of commercial vacancy and lack of services, by way of helping residents discover a language for expressing their needs to potential commercial developers. Results from the day of the event were analyzed and provide a starting line for future conversations between APM and area residents regarding potential redevelopment.

The 2019 Community Development Workshop team was able to see the importance of and gain first-hand experience working with, and for, an underserved community. Grassroots engagement is essential to informing community development and urban planning solutions that aim to build capacity in city neighborhoods, as the values and needs of a community are directly delivered.

<sup>1</sup>Via <https://apmphila.org/about/history/>

<sup>2</sup>Via <https://apmphila.org/services/family-services/community-umbrella-agency-apm-cua/>



# Project Area: Germantown Avenue

Between Berks  
& York



# Data And Demographics<sup>3</sup>

## The Neighborhood.

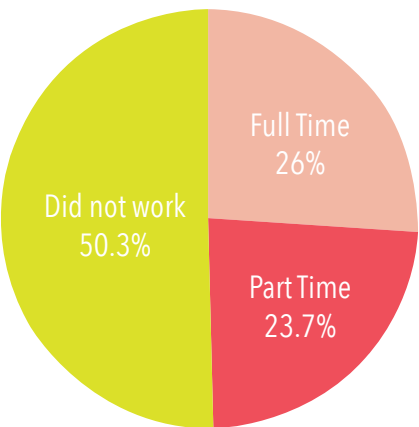
### Quick Facts

A quick snapshot of some of the neighborhood demographics

**17,559 people**  
live in this neighborhood

**50.3%**  
of residents rent their homes

**70%**  
of residents identify as non-white



Neighborhood Employment

The Germantown commercial corridor between West Cumberland Street and Berks Street spans five census tracts, which the group used to collect demographic information. In total, the neighborhood is home to 17,559 community members in 5,372 households, averaging 2.7 members per household. Half of the homes in the region are renter occupied, almost exactly the same as Philadelphia as a whole.

The neighborhood is ethnically diverse. Almost 70% of the community identifies as a non-white, compared to 58% in Philadelphia as a whole. In this neighborhood, 41% identify as Hispanic or Latinx, compared to 14% in the entire city.

Roughly 44% of the community live in poverty, with 40% of the households earning less than \$10,000. The median income per household is \$32,643. Meanwhile, Philadelphia's poverty rate is 26%, with 15% of households living with an income of less than \$10,000.

Just over 31% of the community has not completed higher education, and an additional 20% have not obtained a high school diploma, almost four points higher than the city-wide rate. Only 26% of the working age residents had a full time job, while 36% did not work at all. 46% percent of the positions held by the residents are in the service and sales industries. Half of Philadelphians were fully employed during the same period of time, almost twice APM's service area. Meanwhile, only 32.6% of the city did not participate in the workforce

<sup>3</sup> [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?\\_af=ACS\\_17\\_5YR\\_B02001&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?_af=ACS_17_5YR_B02001&prodType=table)



# Historic Land Uses

## 1700s, 1800s, 1900s

**1700s: On Germantown Avenue between Berks and York** land was largely undeveloped during the 1700s, consisting of only a few residential houses and one small church for the majority of the century. Two prominent families who may have influenced the area were 'Neglee' and 'Jones'.<sup>4</sup>

**1800s:** This section of land surrounding Germantown Avenue quickly grew since the early 1700s. While the area was still a largely residential area, the 1800s saw a momentous rise in the industrial sector. Factories in areas of metal and wood production, cotton and wool production, marble, and carpentry began to sprout up. The 1800s also saw a growth in consumer-based business, such as the development of a chair factory, a stove factory, a hat factory, a hosiery factory, a revolver factory, and stables for residents' horses. However, the neighborhood at the time was still lacking in small businesses meant to directly serve the residents of the area at the time. This area of Philadelphia was abundant in businesses associated with the industrial sector, but was largely unable to meet the basic needs of those living in the community. This notion began to change in the late 1800s and early 1900s.<sup>5</sup>

**1900s:** Land use during the 1900s saw an even more dramatic amount of growth in terms of commercial and residential development. In the first half of the 1900s, this area of land was plentiful in factories in the sectors of material production. Also, small businesses and consumer-based productions began to arise as the residential population grew. Businesses like laundromats and breweries began to open develop, which were meant to serve a more community-minded neighborhood. The latter half of the 1900s saw an even more expansive level of development from a residential and commercial perspective. As the residential population grew, so did the number of small businesses in the neighborhood. Also at this time, the Stetson Hat Company became the neighborhood's largest employer, which employed over 5,000 community members and hosted several resource banks for residents, such as a public auditorium, a hospital, and a Sunday school service.<sup>6,7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1750 Philadelphia Atlas. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>

<sup>5</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1895 Philadelphia Atlas. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>

<sup>6</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1910 Atlas. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>

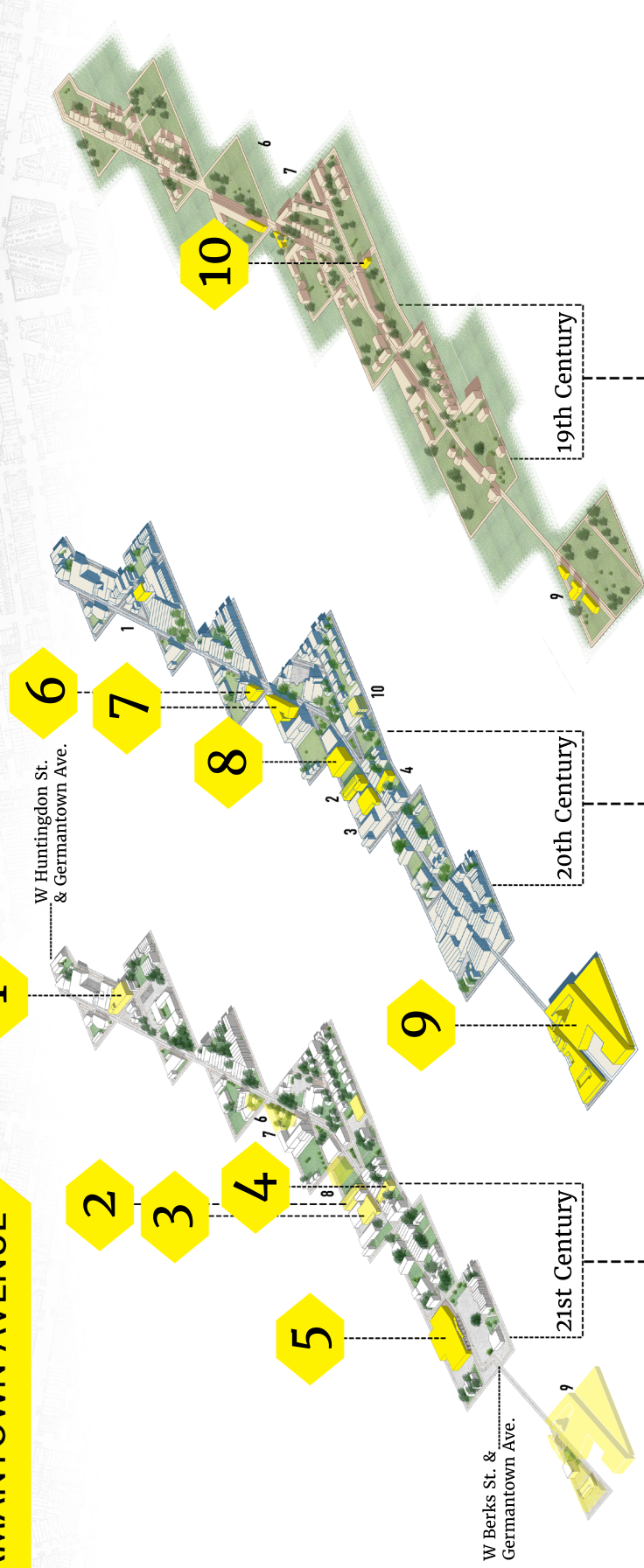
<sup>7</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1942 Land Use Map. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>

# REMEMBERING & ENVISIONING

## GERMANTOWN AVENUE

W Huntingdon St.  
& Germantown Ave.

W Berks St. &  
Germantown Ave.



Today



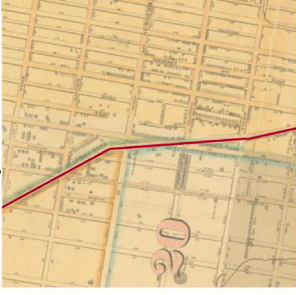
1962



1942



1862



1843



## Key Sites

- 1 – Breyer Ice Cream Co.
- 2 – Aurora Theatre
- 3 – Daun's Donuts
- 4 – Diamond Theatre
- 5 – Cousin's
- 6 – Ile Ife Museum
- 7 – Washington Hotel
- 8 – Quaker City Chocolate
- 9 – Stetson Hat Co.
- 10 – Feil Brewery



# Germantown Avenue

## Disinvestment & Development

From the late 1870s to the early 1960s, factories and retail establishments lined Germantown Avenue, providing stable employment to local residents. The loss of commercial establishments in the 1970s and 80s that coincided with nationwide downturn in industry affected area businesses like the Breyers Ice Cream factory<sup>8</sup>, the Quaker City Chocolate Factory<sup>9</sup>, the Stetson Hat Company<sup>10</sup>. The resulting slump in the local economy that has yet to be amended. During interviews<sup>11</sup> with the Community Development Workshop, lifelong residents spoke of the sweet smell of freshly baked doughnuts and spending time window-shopping the many retailers that were once on Germantown Avenue. Such local amenities created little need for residents to travel outside of their neighborhood, and as Jack Adderly of Zulu Nation said “offered jobs for everyone”<sup>12</sup>, at the time. Factories that produced shoes, hats, clothing, ice cream and chocolate provided economic stability and aesthetic vibrancy in the neighborhood.



Abandonment and vacancy along Germantown Avenue

The closing of these factories and businesses in the late 20th century left Germantown Avenue and the surrounding commercial nodes with empty lots and boarded up buildings. Additionally, recreational and entertainment-based businesses were shuttered, such as former neighborhood staples like the Diamond Theater<sup>13</sup> and the Viola Theater<sup>14</sup>. Loss of industry and commerce caused loss of jobs, which prompted the abandonment of both commercial

and residential buildings as proprietors and residents left the area to pursue work elsewhere. This sort of disinvestment peaked in the 1970s and 80s, leaving many homes empty and ripe for demolition in subsequent decades. Presently, many residents both young and old travel to other Philadelphia neighborhoods for the goods and services that they once attained just down the block.

Based on interviews conducted by the Community Development Workshop Team, some residents have optimism that new development in their neighborhood will be beneficial to lifelong residents. However, there are concerns over the affordability of new condominiums being constructed. Community members are apprehensive of developers who are not from the community, and don't understand their needs. Residents' feelings of being taken advantage of or disincluded by such developers have made them wary of change.

While newer housing development has become worrisome to many residents who feel uninvolved in the changes being made, newer businesses that have established in the last decade, such as the grocery store Cousin's<sup>15</sup>, are praised by residents. Aside from simply valuing food access, favorability could be due to APM's encouragement of community involvement in planning for the grocery. Paseo Verde<sup>16</sup>, an energy-efficient transit-oriented housing development implemented by APM, is widely admired by the community and offers 53 affordable housing units. The residents are hopeful about their community and its propensity to change, grow and develop. However, as it develops they desire to be at the table and for their voices to be heard.

<sup>8</sup> Where Did Breyer's Ice Cream Go? PhillyHistory Blog, 13 May 2014

<sup>9</sup> Quaker City Chocolate Factory. (1992, October 28). [Lester Roskam Obituary]. Philadelphia Inquirer, B6

<sup>10</sup> Stetson Hat Factory. (1985, December 13). [Lithographs article]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 47

<sup>11</sup> Based on common themes recorded by Community Development Workshop interviewers during their interviews with community members

<sup>12</sup> Adderly, J. (2019, February 18) personal interview.

<sup>13</sup> Diamond Theater. (1958, September 13). [Auction advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 25

<sup>14</sup> Viola Theater. (1951, February 1). [Local Briefs]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 21

<sup>15</sup> Kromer, John, and Christopher Kingsley. Vacant Property Reclamation through Strategic Investment. 2010, Vacant Property Reclamation through Strategic Investment,

<sup>16</sup> "Paseo Verde Wins ULI Philadelphia Inaugural Willard G. 'Bill' Rouse III Award for Excellence." Asociación Puertorriqueños En Marcha, 19 June 2014



New housing development on 5th and Germantown Avenue, where Stetson Hat Co. factory was once located.

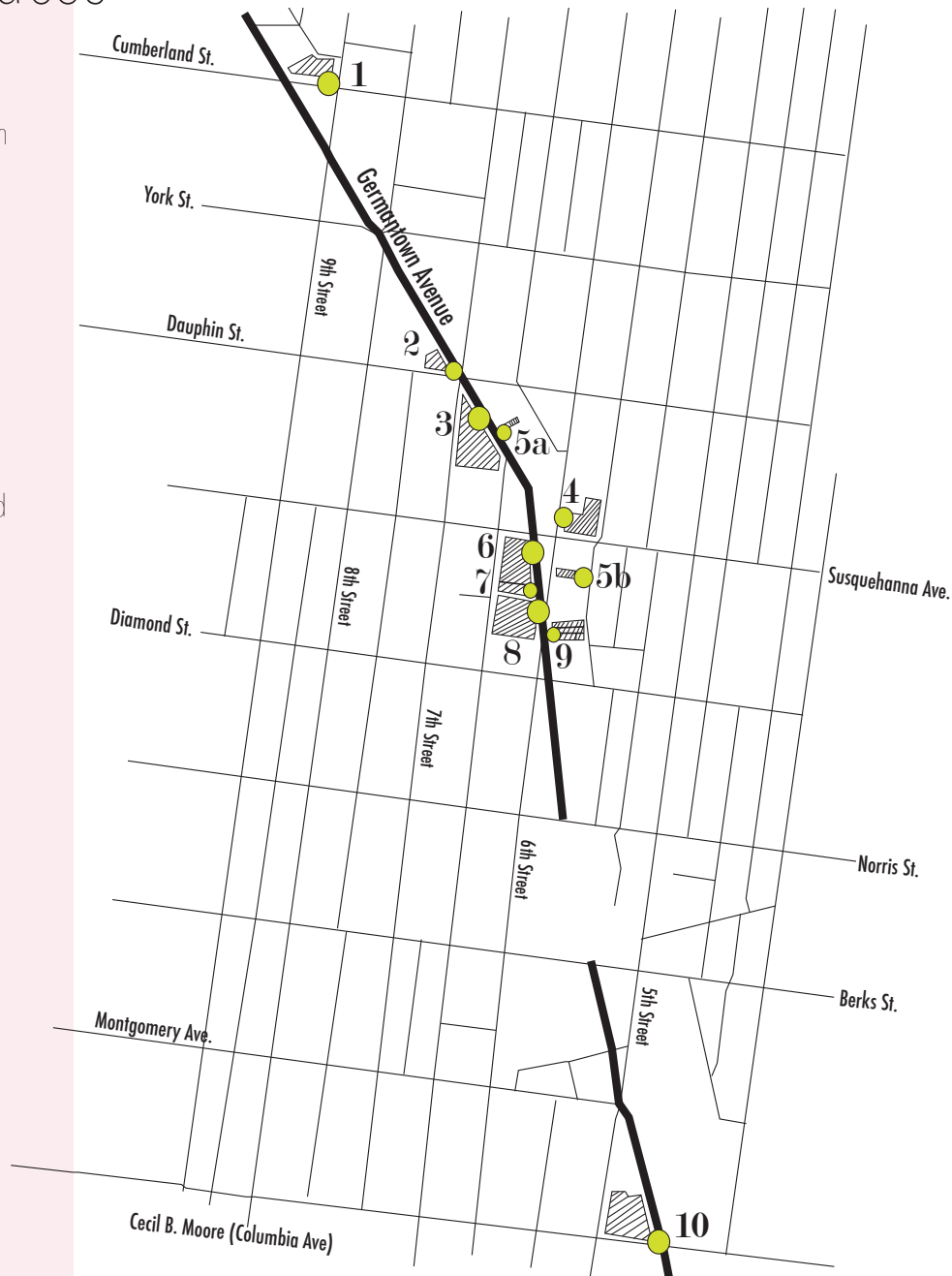




# Germantown Avenue

## Iconic Business & Places

On the right is a graphical representation of Germantown Avenue's Iconic Business and Places, which were most prominent during the 1950s through the 1960s. Note the large collection of businesses and places along Germantown Avenue between Dauphin and Diamond streets. This area was home to large factories such as the Feil Brewery and the Good & Plenty Factory, but was also home to goods and entertainment-based businesses, such as The Aurora Theater, The Diamond Theater, and Dawn Donuts. Northward sat the Breyers Ice Cream Factory and the Ile-efe Museum, while to the south was the Stetson Hat Factory, the area's largest employer from the late 1800s to the mid 1950s.



- |                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Breyer's Ice Cream Factory | 6) Good and Plenty Factory            |
| 2) Ile-efe Museum             | 7) Aurora Theater                     |
| 3) The Washington Hotel       | 8) Dawn Donuts                        |
| 4) Feil Brewery               | 9) Diamond Theater/ Teatro Puertorico |
| 5) The First APM Offices      | 10) Stetson Hat Company               |

# Economic Business Along Avenue



C  
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# Breyers Ice Cream Factory

William A. Breyer was born in 1829 in Germany before moving to Philadelphia. William A. Breyer started making ice cream in 1866 in Philadelphia. Breyer's Ice Cream quickly gained in popularity from a small business operated from his kitchen as he sold Breyers from a horse and wagon. His addition of a large dinner bell fitted on the wagon increased the local popularity of Breyers Ice Cream. William A. Breyer opened the first retail shop on Frankford Avenue in 1882. Within a short amount of time, five more retail shops were opened. Even though William A. Breyer died later that year, his wife Louisa assumed control of the business with the help of her sons Frederick and Henry.<sup>17</sup> Unable to keep up with increasing demand for Breyer Ice Cream, in 1896 the first wholesale manufacturing plant was built at 2103 Somerset Street, but they were still unable to produce enough ice cream. In 1904, the company moved to new location at 9th and Cumberland Street due to further increased demand for Breyer Ice Cream. Breyer Ice Cream soon took up almost the entire block at the 9th and Cumberland location. In 1926, Breyer Ice Cream was sold to the National Dairy Products Co. and additional plants were built in Long Island and Brooklyn over the next 20 years. In 1952, Breyer Ice Cream brand was sold to Kraft.<sup>18</sup> Even though there has been no documentation of community involvement between Breyer and the communities that surrounded their facilities, Breyer did take part in events such as the Industrial Parade in 1926 with a Breyer Ice cream float boasting an oversized Liberty Bell.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "Good Humor-Breyers Ice Cream Company." History of Good Humor-Breyers Ice Cream Company – FundingUniverse, [www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/good-humor-breyers-ice-cream-company-history/](http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/good-humor-breyers-ice-cream-company-history/).

<sup>18</sup> "Lost Buildings of 2018." Hidden City Philadelphia RSS, [hiddencityphila.org/2018/12/lost-buildings-of-2018/](http://hiddencityphila.org/2018/12/lost-buildings-of-2018/).

<sup>19</sup> Via <https://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/detail.aspx?ImageId=90398>



# BREYER ICE CREAM CO.

Germantown & W.Cumberland



Photo: Peter Woodall

William Breyer's Heir Henry opened their first retail store on Frankford Avenue in 1882. Philadelphia was renown for its ice cream which excluded eggs. Breyers relocate their plant at this location in 1908 and built it in 1924.

Within 7 years, 500 workers were employed at this location and factor produced 70,000 gallons of ice cream a day. Philadelphia took a huge loss when Breyers was bought, circa 1993, by Unilever NV and they chose to leave the city. The plant closed in 1995.

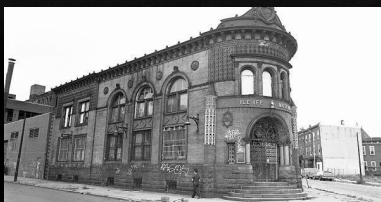




# THE HOUSE OF LOVE



Source: PhillyHistory.org



Source: PhillyHistory.org

## Ile Ife Museum of Afro-American Art (1972-1985)

Named after a Yoruba term meaning “House of Love,” the Ile Ife Black Humanitarian Center opened this museum to display African and Caribbean artworks, tools, and masks.

The founder Arthur Hall wanted to spread African folklore in America. He was a professional dancer, and used his talents to mix modern and traditional methods of African dance. At the museum, he held dance classes for only \$4 per session.

The Museum held the first sale of items from Kenya in the United States, an event that Kenyan Ambassador Peter Mbogua attended. Other events were held, such as a Nigerian Weaving Fabric Show and a Halloween Disco.



Source: (Engelhardt 1899)  
Found on PhiladelphiaBuildings.org

## Northern National Bank (1893-1971)

In an economic boom in the 1880's, Edward Tyson started a bank. The building was adorned with wide arched windows, pink granite steps, pressed tin decorations, and a crested metal roof.



Tyler School of Art  
Planning and Community Development

# Northern National Bank & Ile Ife Museum of Afro-American Art

## Northern National Bank (1893-1971)

In the late 1800s, the neighborhood was beginning to boom with industrial factories. Edward T. Norton, a real estate investor, started the Northern National Bank in his row house in 1890, employing just one teller. It became so successful that in 1893 he set out to build a home for the bank. This was especially surprising because over 500 banks had closed the very same year elsewhere in the country due to the economy.<sup>20 21 22</sup>

The two-story triangular building was built in the cutting-edge Romanesque Revival style, and embellished with wide arched windows, pink granite steps, pressed tin decorations, and a crested metal roof. The arched corner door was built with a large sign naming the bank. Inside, Teller counters were made of marble and guarded by brass cages and frosted glass. The president's office overlooked the floor, and was attached to a cast-iron balcony.<sup>23 24</sup> In 1929, the Northern National was bought by Ninth National, which was later purchased by Philadelphia National Bank in 1951.<sup>25</sup> In 1971, the branch at 2300 Germantown Ave was closed down. Philadelphia National Bank was itself purchased by Corestates Bank in 1990.<sup>26</sup>

## Ile Ife Museum of Afro-American Art (1972-1985)

In 1972, the building was gifted to the Ile-Ife Black Humanitarian Center to be used as a museum for African Art.<sup>27</sup> It permanently hosted African and Caribbean art, tools and masks; while community courses for cooking, learning new languages, and Afro-American history were taught periodically.<sup>28</sup> The museum held temporary exhibits such as a Fabric Show that featured contemporary Nigerian weaving, painting, and pottery; and the Africana Boutique sale, a showcase of the first items for sale from Kenya in the United States, which started off with a reception for the Kenyan ambassador to the states, Peter Mbogua.<sup>29 30</sup> The museum also hosted exhibits from prominent local artists including Richard Watson, known for painting the murals in the Church of the Advocate along with Walter Edmonds.<sup>31</sup>

Ile Ife, named after a Yoruba term meaning "House of Love," was the brainchild of Arthur Hall. Arthur Hall's mission was to keep African lore in America. In 1969, Hall received grant funding from the federal Model Cities program, and started Ile Ife Black Humanitarian Center. Among many community activities, Hall hosted an African dance class for youths for only \$4 per class.<sup>32</sup> When Philadelphia National Bank donated the 2300 Germantown Ave building to his cause, Hall placed a bust of the Queen Mother of Yoruban mythology to face William Penn, to connect the House of Love to the City of Brotherly Love.

Financial distress forced Hall to close the community center in 1985, and by 1988 the museum at 2300 Germantown Ave was abandoned.<sup>33</sup> The building became a hazard and was torn down in 1997.<sup>34</sup> Arthur Hall later came back to the community center to live with Lily Yeh as artists in residence to start what is now known as The Village of Arts and Humanities.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>20 24</sup> National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form [PDF]. (1981, December 30). United States Department of the Interior.

<sup>21 23 25 27 34</sup> Grojart. (2013, May 17). Whatever Happened to...Northern National Bank?

<sup>22</sup> Northern National Bank. (1890, January 1). *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

<sup>26</sup> Philadelphia National Bank, The. (n.d.)

<sup>28</sup> Ile-Ife Museum of Afro-American Culture. (1973, May 15). *Philadelphia Tribune*, p. A48.

<sup>29</sup> Ile-Ife Fabric Show. (1974, June 12). *Philadelphia Tribune*, p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> Boutique Africana for Ile-Ife. (1978, April 29). *Philadelphia Tribune*, p. A10.

<sup>31</sup> Made in America. (1980, January 18). *Philadelphia Tribune*, p. A4.

<sup>32</sup> Williams, K. (1984, September 11). 26 Years in the House of Love. *Philadelphia Tribune*, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Stern, M., Seifert, S., & Vitiello, D. (2010). Migrants and the Transformation of Philadelphia's Cultural Economy. In DiMaggio P. & Fernández-Kelly P. (Eds.), *Art in the Lives of Immigrant Communities in the United States* (pp. 23-51). Rutgers University Press.

<sup>35</sup> Village of Arts and Humanities, The. (n.d.).





# THE WASHINGTON HOTEL

The Washington Hotel operated from 1880s to 1987; its first owner was the uncle of P. Oliver Derr, a former Philadelphia City Councilman. It had 200 rooms and was fairly tall for the neighborhood at four stories. The hotel was often used as a venue for weddings, banquets and parties.

For being open nearly a century, it is no surprise there have been some tragic stories too. One of the first tragedies was in 1892 when a man committed suicide in his room to escape the pain and suffering caused by diabetes.

However, there were also happy memories to associate with the hotel. It was frequently used for many organizations' banquets and parties.

# The Washington Hotel

The first evidence of the Washington Hotel's existence dates back to 1892. While the exact opening date is a mystery, its first owner was the uncle of P. Oliver Derr, a former Philadelphia City Councilman. P. Oliver Derr started working at the hotel for a sum of \$5 a month, but by 1885, he owned the entire property. In 1908, Derr ran for sheriff for the Democratic Party and lost.<sup>45</sup>

The Washington hotel has a long history, being open for over 90 years. The hotel had 200 rooms and stood at four stories tall. The architect of the hotel was Fredrick J. Ritter. For being open close to a century, it is no surprise there have been some tragic stories that surround the hotel. One of the first tragedies that occurred at the hotel was in 1892, when a man committed suicide in his room to escape the pain and suffering caused by diabetes.<sup>46</sup> In 1917, the hotel was a victim of arson. The fire left one man dead and was caused by an escaped insane asylum patient.<sup>47</sup> However, there were also many happy memories to associate with the hotel. It was often the venue used for many organization banquets and parties. After several years of ownership, Derr sold the Washington Hotel to the Metropolitan Hotel Corporation. The Metropolitan Hotel Corporation also managed other prominent hotels in Philadelphia like The Rittenhouse at 22nd and Chestnut and the Marilyn at 40th and Walnut. The last owner, Morris Klein, was a trained pharmacist who ventured into real estate.<sup>48</sup>

In August of 1971, the hotel went up for an absolute auction, which is performed on foreclosed properties. This may hint at some of the financial troubles that burdened the hotel ultimately leading to its eventual closure. It is believed that the Washington Hotel closed down in 1987 after falling in a state of disrepair, which is likely why we no longer see even a shell of the once grand hotel on 7th and Dauphin today.

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<sup>45</sup>"Democrats Make Big Local Claims" Newspapers.com. 1908. The Philadelphia Inquirer. <[https://www.newspapers.com/clip/13890117/nominee\\_for\\_sheriff/#>](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/13890117/nominee_for_sheriff/#>).

<sup>46</sup>WANTED TO ESCAPE MISERY. (1892, Aug 02). The Washington Post (1877-1922) Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/138814087?accountid=14270>

<sup>47</sup>"Philadelphia Fire Bug." Alexandria Gazette 02 Nov. 1917.

<sup>48</sup>"Gladstone Hotel Under New Management."



# APM'S First Headquarters

APM was founded by a group of Puerto Rican Vietnam veterans who returned from the war and found that their own community was in need. The name Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (Association of Puerto Ricans on the Move) reflects the spirit of activism and emerging political consciousness of the Puerto Rican community during that time.

APM incorporated as a non-profit on September 9, 1971, and started operations with a staff of five housed in a storefront on Germantown Avenue. APM moved its headquarters to a group of connected rowhomes on the 2100 block of North 6th Street in the 1980s. Its current location is in the Paseo Verde building at 9th and Berks. Today, APM provides a broad range of social services and is a bilingual/bicultural organization that employs close to 300 professionals.<sup>49</sup>

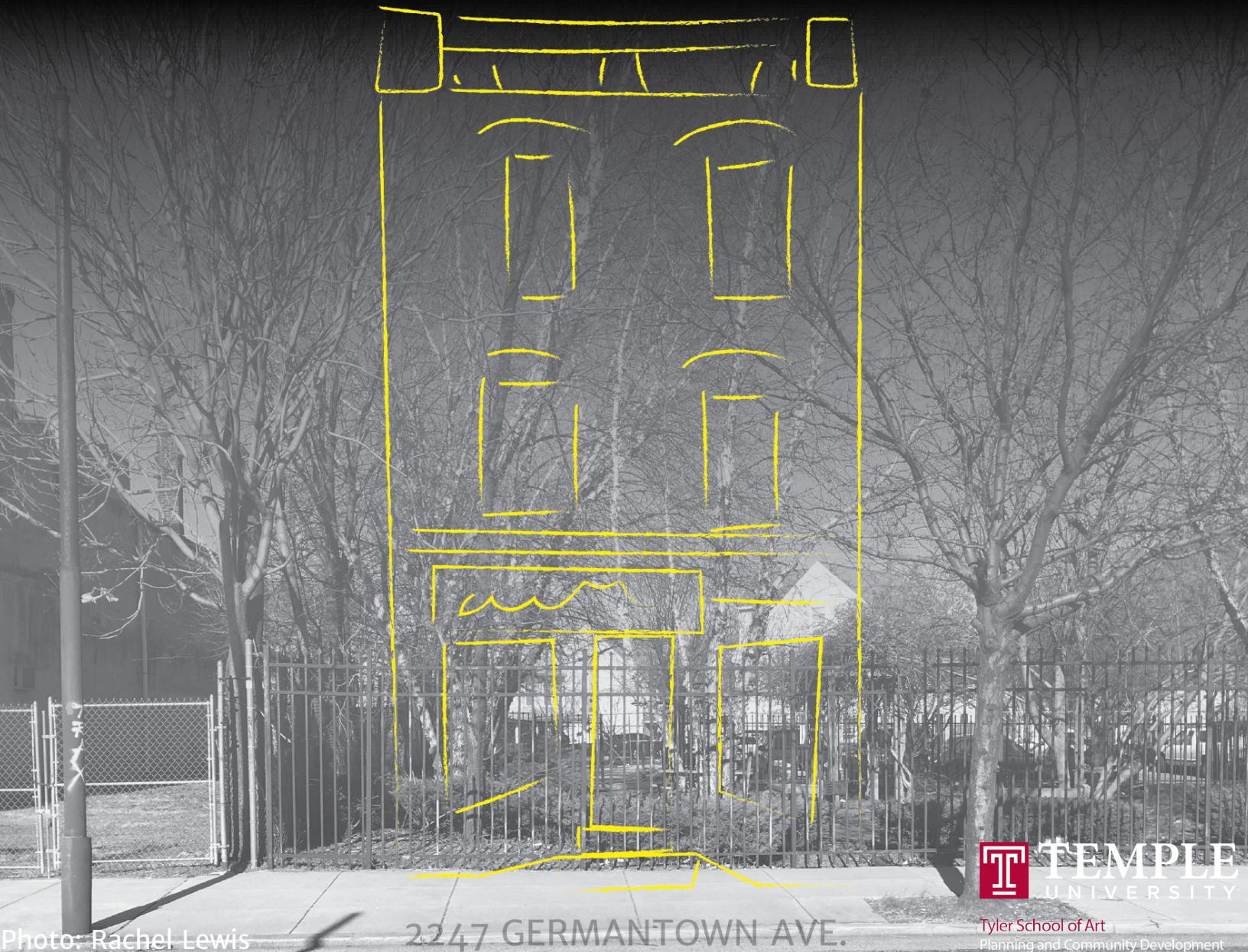
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<sup>49</sup> "History." Asociación Puertorriqueños En Marcha. Accessed March 26, 2019. <http://apmphil.org/about/history/>.

# APM'S HEADQUARTERS

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# GOOD & PLENTY FACTORY

Quaker City Chocolate and Confectionary was most famous for producing Good and Plenty candies, which the company patented in 1893. In the 1800's the company's president was a man named Isaac Roskam, his son William Roskam's descendants still live in the Philadelphia area. The factory employed 230 people.

People who grew up in the 50's and sixties may remember "Choo-Choo Charlie", the mascot of the Good and Plenty candy. Choo-Choo Charlie was created by Lester Roskam. The Roskam family sold Quaker City Chocolates around 1974 to a company called Leaf. Good and Plenty candy is now produced by Hershey. The physical site of the chocolate factory was damaged in 2008 by an arsonist.



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# Good & Plenty Chocolate Factory

Quaker City Chocolates and Confectionary is likely the benefactor of Philadelphia's early 20th century "candy boom". Philadelphia was involved in the sugar trade early, back when it was part of an "unsavory triangle swap of rum, slaves and molasses". The trade caused a significant number of sugar refineries to open in during the industrial revolution, resulting in cheap sugar with minimal to no shipping costs becoming available to Philadelphia candymakers.<sup>50</sup>

In the 1800's the company's president was a man named Isaac Roskam, his son William Roskam's descendants still live in the Philadelphia area. Roskam was part of a company called Roskam, Gerstley, & Co. which made whiskey. Isaac was born in 1837 in Bavaria, Germany, and died here in Philadelphia in 1904. Isaac's primary occupation was liquor dealer as late as 1880, and after his death his company was passed on to his son William.<sup>51</sup> People who grew up in the 50's and sixties may remember "Choo-Choo Charlie", the mascot of the good and plenty candy. Choo-Choo Charlie was created by Lester Roskam, shortly after returning from WWII. Lester realized the importance of television advertising early and set the character to an iconic jingle.<sup>52</sup> The Roskam family sold Quaker City Chocolates around 1974, which would coincide with official patent records on their famous good and plenty candies. Quaker City Chocolate and Confectionary was located at 2136 Germantown Avenue and are most famous for being the original producers of the popular Good and Plenty candies, which the company patented in 1893.<sup>53</sup> The physical site of the chocolate factory was damaged in 2008 by an arsonist, reports say the top two floors were collapsing in on themselves and it is likely that the factory was torn down.<sup>54</sup> Patents for their signature candy switched hands multiple times throughout the 70s, eventually being owned by Hershey.

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<sup>50</sup> Henninger, Danya. "How Philly and Pennsylvania Grew to Dominate the Candy Industry." Billy Penn, Billy Penn, 30 Oct. 2015, [billypenn.com/2015/10/30/how-philly-and-pennsylvania-grew-to-dominate-the-candy-industry/](http://billypenn.com/2015/10/30/how-philly-and-pennsylvania-grew-to-dominate-the-candy-industry/).

<sup>51</sup> Sullivan, Jack. "Isaac Roskam Embraced His Heritage." Isaac Roskam Embraced His Heritage, 1 Jan. 1970, [pre-prowhiskeymen.blogspot.com/2014/02/isaac-roskam-embraced-his-heritage.html](http://pre-prowhiskeymen.blogspot.com/2014/02/isaac-roskam-embraced-his-heritage.html).

<sup>52</sup> "The Secret Life of Choo-Choo Charlie." True Treats Historic Candy, 19 Mar. 2017, [www.truetreatscandy.com/the-secret-life-of-choo-choo-charlie/](http://www.truetreatscandy.com/the-secret-life-of-choo-choo-charlie/).

<sup>53</sup> "GOOD AND PLENTY Trademark of QUAKER CITY CHOCOLATE & CONFECTIONERY COMPANY - Registration Number 0243197 - Serial Number 71251282 :: Justia Trademarks." Justia, trademarks.justia.com/712/51/good-and-71251282.html.

<sup>54</sup> Mucha, Peter. "Man Arrested in Five-Alarm Arson on Germantown Ave." <https://www.philly.com>, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Daily News and Philly.com, 11 Apr. 2008, [webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:https://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/20080411\\_Man\\_arrested\\_in\\_five-alarm\\_arson\\_on\\_Germantown\\_Ave\\_.html](https://wwwcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:https://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/20080411_Man_arrested_in_five-alarm_arson_on_Germantown_Ave_.html).

# Aurora Theater

The Aurora Theater was established in 1910 as a part of a duo of theaters under the Viola Theater Company, which included the Regis Theater at 1526 W. Cumberland Street. The theater company went bankrupt in 1951.<sup>55</sup> The Aurora was owned by David S. Moliver, a Russian immigrant, and his wife Mary. Their work included holding a charitable event for 3000 children in December of 1947. The event took place at Viola's two theaters, as well as the New Broadway Theater on Hope and York Streets.<sup>56</sup>

Teamsters Local 837 industrial workers' union was located here until the early 1970s. The Teamsters motto adorned the building façade: "It Pays To Be In A Union: Be Wise Organize"<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Duvosion, Marc. The Philadelphia Inquirer. Aug 22, 1984. Riverside Metals, Facing Union Vote, Says Osha Probe May Bankrupt It. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/1820008076/EFCE963362744F66PQ/4?accountid=14270>

<sup>56</sup> Ellis, Lisa. The Philadelphia Inquirer. April 6, 1990. US Aide Embezzled Union's Health Funds. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/1843216170/EFCE963362744F66PQ/26?accountid=14270>

<sup>57</sup> Three Fetes At Theaters. Philadelphia Inquirer. Dec 22, 1947. <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/1834860145/3530E2CB-40814175PQ/30?accountid=14270>



# AURORA THEATRE

The Aurora Theater was established in 1910. It was a part of a duo of theaters under the Viola Theater Company, which included the Regis Theater at 1526 W. Cumberland Street. The theater company went bankrupt in 1951.

The Aurora was owned by David S. Moliver, a Russian immigrant, and his wife Mary. Their work included holding a charitable event for 3000 children in December of 1947. The event took place at Viola's two theaters, as well as the New Broadway Theater on Hope and York Streets.

Teamsters Local 837 Union  
Teamsters Local 837 industrial workers' union was located here until the early 1970s.  
The Teamsters motto adorned the building façade:  
"It Pays To Be In A Union: Be Wise Organize:"



Photo: PhillyHistory.org





# DAWN DONUTS

Dawn Donuts, owned by the Buamann brothers, was a popular donut shop in the neighborhood from the 1930s to the 1950s. Other than their donuts, Dawn's was known for their drive-thru and a window to view the fresh donuts being made. They were also quite famous for an automobile turntable, installed to maneuver cars through the drive-thru. The turntable was quite an innovation for the time and the first in Philadelphia.



Source: Facebook/OldImagesofPhiladelphia

# Dawn Donuts

By the 1930s, 2116 Germantown Ave had become the home of Dawn Donuts, which was owned by a business group named the Baumann Brothers.<sup>58</sup> Dawn Donuts was a neighborhood-favorite and was memorable for having a drive-thru service and a window to view the fresh donuts being made. Dawn Donuts was also a first in Philadelphia for having a turntable in the narrow driveway of the lot that would turn a car around in order for the vehicle to leave from where they entered.<sup>59</sup> It is believed that this Dawn Donuts was part of a chain of donut shops, which was bought by Dunkin Donuts that allowed for the company to become the nationwide recognizable name it is today. Dawn Donuts would occupy this space until the 1950s, possibly having been closed after the merger with Dunkin Donuts.

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<sup>58</sup> (Dawn Donuts. (1949, February 12). [Restaurant Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 8)

<sup>59</sup> Via Temple University Archive, Photograph, 1949

# Diamond Theater

Diamond Theater was initially known as the Cohocksink Theater when it first opened in 1920. The Cohocksink Theater ran for about seven years.<sup>60</sup>

In 1937 it was remodeled under the plans by David Supowitz and reopened as the Diamond Theater. It had 927 seats, and was a popular spot to meet up with friends from nearby neighborhoods.<sup>61</sup>

In the 1960s, the theater was changed again and became Teatro Puerto Rico.<sup>62</sup> Teatro Puerto Rico was a Spanish-language movie theater, but eventually returned to 'mainstream' movies while keeping the same name until its eventual closure sometime in the 1970s or 80s.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> McGettigan, Joan (2019) Hidden City Philadelphia. "A Life Of Community Service For Theaters In North Philly." Retrieved from [hiddencityphila.org/2019/02/a-life-of-community-service-for-theaters-in-north-philly/](https://hiddencityphila.org/2019/02/a-life-of-community-service-for-theaters-in-north-philly/)

<sup>61</sup> OFC Realty (2018) "Discovering the Diamond Theatre on Germantown Avenue." Retrieved from [www.ocfrealty.com/naked-philly/south-kensington/discovering-diamond-theatre-germantown-avenue](https://www.ocfrealty.com/naked-philly/south-kensington/discovering-diamond-theatre-germantown-avenue)

<sup>62</sup> Cinema Treasures (2019) Krefft, Bryan. "Diamond Theatre." Retrieved from [cinematreasures.org/theaters/8162](https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/8162)

<sup>63</sup> Newspapers.com (2016) Papers, "Diamond Theatre Riot - Newspapers.com." The Philadelphia Inquirer





2119-21 GERMANTOWN

# DIAMOND THEATER

Diamond Theater was initially known as the Cohocksink Theater when it first opened in 1920. The Cohocksink Theater ran for about seven years.

In 1937 it was remodeled under the plans by David Supowitz and reopened as the Diamond Theater. It was a popular spot to meet up with friends from close by neighborhoods.

In the 1960s, the theater was changed again and became Teatro Puerto Rico. Teatro Puerto Rico was a Spanish-language movie theater, but eventually returned to 'mainstream' movies while keeping the same name.







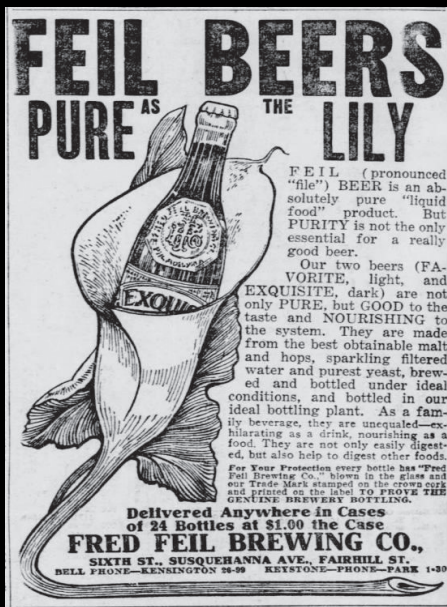
# A FAMILY RUN BREWERY

## Feil Brewery and Bottler (1887-1920)

Feil Brewery was started in 1887 by a German immigrant by the name of Franklin Feil. He handed his brewery down to his sons, Frank, William, and Otto. A Fred Feil was also owner for some time.

The brewery site started with one building, but eventually grew to occupy 7 lots. At one point, the Feil Brewery employed over 20 people, produced over 30,000 kegs of beer per year, and was one of the top 10 beer distributors in Philadelphia.

Neighbors of the Feil Brewery got a good deal on beer: Feil would deliver 24 beers of any kind to your door for only \$1. They advertised four types of beer: the Favorite Light, the Exquisite Dark, a stuttgarter, and a lager.



Source: Philadelphia Tribune Archives



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# Feil Brewery and Bottler

Feil Brewery and Bottler, known to some as Fairhill Brewery and Bottler, was established in 1887 by Franklin F. Feil, a German immigrant.<sup>64</sup> The company had several periods of activity over its 33 years in business, remaining the most active during the late 1880s into the 1910s. The company ceased production of beer and bottles in 1920. The brewery began as one single lot, located at 2206 Fairhill Street, in 1887 and quickly expanded to seven lots by 1896, totally roughly half an acre in size. Production of the beer and bottles was done on three floors total spanning across the property. The company employed over 20 patrons, providing a relatively large job base for the neighborhood at the time.<sup>65</sup> As previously mentioned, the brewery was founded by Franklin Feil in the late 1880s, but by the late 1890s, Franklin Feil handed the control of the business over to his son Frank. Soon after, Frank made his brother William treasurer of the company and his other brother Otto the secretary. In 1897, the brewery produced over 30,000 kegs of beer, ranking it among the top 10 distributors of beer in the city of Philadelphia.<sup>67</sup>

The brewery issued an abundance of advertising in the local papers, exclaiming their famous four types of beers, Favorite Light, Exquisite Dark, Stuttgarter and Lager Beer. Feil Brewery also advertised the importance of their bottling technique, explaining that they were one of the only breweries in Pennsylvania at the time making their own bottles, which were stamped with a specific insignia to ensure quality. Another advertising technique that made their company unique at the time was offering any style of their product in cases of 24, which could be delivered anywhere for just \$1.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Wagner, R., & Bryson, L. (2012). *Philadelphia beer: A heady history of brewing in the cradle of liberty*. Charleston, SC: The History Press.

<sup>65</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). PhilaGeoHistory Fred Feil, Lager Beer Brewery. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm HGSv21.2048>

<sup>66</sup> Wagner, Rich. "Philadelphia's Long Lost Lagers." *Pennsylvania Brewery Historians*, [pabreweryhistorians.tripod.com/ASN0407LongLostLagers.html](http://pabreweryhistorians.tripod.com/ASN0407LongLostLagers.html).

<sup>67</sup> Via Fred Feil Brewery Advertisement, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1949





# STETSON HAT COMPANY

The Stetson Hat Company operated from 1865 – 1917. Once considered one of the largest factories in the world, the Stetson campus was comprised of 25 buildings, which included a 5,500-seat auditorium, hospital, and Sunday school, spread across nine acres. In total, the company employed over 5,000 people, including 1,000 women as hand-sewers and fur cutters. However, as hats began to lose their popularity, the massive Stetson empire began to dissipate. Of the 25 buildings, 22 were demolished by the city in 1979, while three were meant for rehabilitation. Unfortunately, in 1980 a fire destroyed the remaining buildings.



# Stetson Hat Company

John B. Stetson, particularly famous for the “cowboy hat,” began manufacturing hats in Philadelphia in 1865. From Orange, New Jersey, Stetson learned the trade of hat-making from his father before he moved to Philadelphia and started his own manufactory.<sup>68</sup> The Stetson Company’s building at 4th Street and Montgomery Avenue grew to a total of 25 buildings on 9 acres of land. With approximately 1,400,000 square feet of floor space at its peak, the Stetson Company became one of the largest employers in the city and the largest hat company in the world. By 1920, the plant employed over 5,000 employees.<sup>69</sup> Of these employees, about 1,000 were women who worked by hand in the sewing room and fur-cutting room, while the men tended to the machines. The least pleasant room to work was the shrinking room due to intense heat and chemical solutions, where Italian immigrants were discriminately placed.<sup>70</sup>

Stetson Hats was more than just a company; it was a community in itself, and with great intent, John Stetson involved himself in his employees’ lives and established many assets in the immediate neighborhood. He established a loan association encouraging home ownership in the community.<sup>71</sup> He opened a free dispensary for his staff, which became a hospital in 1887, housing 75 patients at a time. Additionally, he built a library, non-denominational Sunday School, and helped fund other schools in the area. Shortly after Stetson’s death in 1906, the Stetson Auditorium was built, where the company hosted celebrations and community observances. It held 5,500 seats and accommodated concerts, civic programs, classes, roller skating, dances, and Christmas celebrations in remembrance of Stetson’s giving spirit. He allocated shares of stock in the company and gifts to all of his employees.<sup>72</sup>

With such a rapidly-growing company, Stetson had trouble training hatters. He contracted hundreds of hatters to travel from Italy to work for him in Philadelphia. He offered classes to immigrants on the process of citizenship through naturalization. In 1946, the company expanded when another factory was purchased in Danbury, Connecticut, but business dwindled in the 1950s and 60s.<sup>73</sup> The Philadelphia Stetson Hat factory closed in 1971 and was demolished by the City of Philadelphia in 1979, except for four buildings, including the auditorium, which then burnt to the ground in 1980. Today, Stetson hats are manufactured in Garland, Texas by Hat-Co. At its peak, by 1917, the company was earning \$11,000,000 annually, approximately 200,000,000 in today’s dollars.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> “John Stetson Hat Company, Philadelphia Pennsylvania” (2018, March 23). Historic Structures.

<sup>69</sup> Retrieved from [http://www.historic-structures.com/pa/philadelphia/stetson\\_hat\\_company.php](http://www.historic-structures.com/pa/philadelphia/stetson_hat_company.php)

<sup>70</sup> Miller, F., Vogel, M., & Davis, A. (1983). *Still Philadelphia: A Photographic History, 1890-1940*.

<sup>71</sup> Miller, F., Vogel, M., & Davis, A. (1983). *Still Philadelphia: A Photographic History, 1890-1940*.

<sup>72</sup> Miller, F., Vogel, M., & Davis, A. (1983). *Still Philadelphia: A Photographic History, 1890-1940*.

<sup>73</sup> “John Stetson Hat Company, Philadelphia Pennsylvania” (2018, March 23). Historic Structures.

Retrieved from [http://www.historic-structures.com/pa/philadelphia/stetson\\_hat\\_company.php](http://www.historic-structures.com/pa/philadelphia/stetson_hat_company.php)

<sup>74</sup> Dale, B. (2014, April 3). *Technically Philly*. Retrieved from <https://www.phillyhistory.org/blog/index.php/2014/04/stetson-hats-the-western-icon-made-here/>



# Parks

## Vandergrift/Danny Boyle Park & Birney Post Park

Germantown Avenue's iconic diagonal layout cuts through Philadelphia's grid pattern, carving many triangular lots in the streetscape. This design benefited the establishment of two small neighborhood parks. One park at the northern end of APM's service area is located at the intersection of York Street, 8th Street and Germantown Avenue. The other is located at the intersection of Susquehanna Street, 6th Street, and Germantown Avenue.

### Vandergrift/Danny Boyle Park

At the meeting of Germantown Avenue, York Street and North 8th Street, a tree-filled lawn is accompanied by a recreation center and Veterans' Playground. The park was called Vandergrift for over 50 years, though it is unclear for whom the park was named. The Community Development Workshop's research team did discover that on June 12th, 1920 a dedication ceremony for Vandergrift Park took place, which included 1,500 children and a parade.<sup>74</sup>

Today, the green space is officially known as Danny Boyle Park. In 1991, 21 year old Daniel Boyle joined the Philadelphia police force. Just a day shy of his first anniversary on the police force, he stopped a man driving a stolen car at the corner of Germantown Ave and West York Street. Tragically, the suspect shot and killed the young officer.<sup>75</sup> Boyle was granted a hero's funeral, accompanied by officers from four states and 300 police cars. Former Mayor, Goode of Philadelphia, the police commissioner, and 1,000 mourners attended the ceremony. He was buried with a purple ribbon for his bravery.<sup>76</sup> In 1992 then Councilman-at-Large helped rename the park in the honor of our fallen officer.<sup>77</sup>



Funeral for Officer Daniel Boyle in 1991.

### Birney Post Park

Approximately two blocks southeast on of Danny Boyle Park on Germantown Avenue, lies the second green triangle, formed by West Susquehanna Avenue, Germantown Avenue, and North 6th Street. This micropark is named after another hero, General David B. Birney.

David Birney was the son of an abolitionist politician, James Birney, who instilled political consciousness into him as they moved around the country to Cincinnati, Michigan, and Philadelphia.<sup>78</sup>

David Birney finished law school in Philadelphia in 1856, and afterward began to study military tactics in preparation for a potential war. After only 5 years of practicing law, Confederates forces attacked the US Army at Fort Sumter in 1861, effectively beginning the American Civil War. Birney forfeited his career in order to join the armed forces; he rose quickly through the ranks due to his skill and political connection.<sup>79</sup>



Photograph of General David B. Birney.

During his three years of service, Birney lead successful campaigns throughout the country. However, he was not immune to the physical demands of war, and caught malaria after a particularly difficult campaign in New Market Heights. He was sent home to recover in Philadelphia, but passed away in 1864. His remains lay in Woodlands Cemetery in West Philadelphia.<sup>80</sup>



Ten years after his passing, Local Post 63 was renamed in his honor.<sup>81</sup> In the fall of 1873, The Post built a hall for their activities on the corner of Germantown Avenue and Diamond streets. This group, and the Woman's Relief Corps 104 remained active in his honor for decades.<sup>82</sup> On November 26th, 1908, The park was named after General David Bell Birney with a ceremony and accompanying parade.

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<sup>74</sup> (June 13, 1920) New Park Dedicated. Philadelphia Inquirer. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>75</sup> Rosenberg S., Amy (February 12, 1991). A send-off in song for a fallen officer. Philadelphia Inquirer. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>76</sup> Rosenberg S., Amy (February 12, 1991). A send-off in song for a fallen officer. Philadelphia Inquirer. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>77</sup> 'We never forget our fallen' (November 4, 2015) Northeast Times Newsweekly. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>78</sup> Hickman, Kennedy. (March 6, 2017) American Civil War: Major General David B. Birney. ThoughtCo. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>79</sup> Hickman, Kennedy. (March 6, 2017) American Civil War: Major General David B. Birney. ThoughtCo. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>80</sup> Hickman, Kennedy. (March 6, 2017) American Civil War: Major General David B. Birney. ThoughtCo. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>81</sup> (November 2, 1908) Dedication of new Birney Post Park. Philadelphia Inquirer. Retrieved April 16, 2019

<sup>82</sup> (November 2, 1908) Dedication of new Birney Post Park. Philadelphia Inquirer. Retrieved April 16, 2019

Children playing at Birney Post Park  
Photo: Grace Mass







8-27-58

# Parcel History Of Germantown Avenue

Many small businesses inhabited buildings along Germantown Avenue during the late 19th and 20th century. Starting at the north end of the project area, the parcels of 2210-2214 Germantown Avenue had a building which served as a lumber planing mill in 1895 and then was a laundromat from 1910-1912.<sup>84</sup> Moving forward to 1934, Lee Motors was housed there through 1952, where they sold vehicles like Willys station wagon.<sup>85</sup> These parcels (2010-12-14 Germantown Ave) eventually became vacant and as a result were demolished in 1982.<sup>86</sup>

Southward, 2200-2208 Germantown Avenue was an Acme Market from 1940-1950 supplying food for the area.<sup>87</sup> After its closing, the building remained vacant until 1952 when it became Evangel Chapel, hosting Children's Mission Inc. The church is still in operation today with Melanie DeBouse as the pastor.<sup>88</sup>

Continuing down Germantown Avenue to parcels 2113-2115, this building was inhabited by Hanna's Restaurant during the early to mid-1940s.<sup>89</sup> At 2111 Germantown Avenue from the 1930s to the 1960s was Steg's Delicatessen operated by Edward Tolentino, where they sold meats and cheeses.<sup>90</sup> 2105-2109 Germantown Avenue was Marsfields Car Sales through the 1950s and 60s,<sup>91</sup> while Marsfields Furniture occupied 2013 Germantown Avenue from the 1910s through the 1950s.<sup>92</sup>

## 6th Street

Aside from several larger manufactures that employed local residents, 6th Street was home to many small-scale retail locations that provided hundreds of jobs and served the local population's retail needs. At the height of 6th Street's commercial success in the late twentieth century, the most prominent retail locations included clothing stores, furniture stores, and grocery stores, some dating as far back as 1867. One of the most consistent employers on 6th Street was the Feil Brewery and Bottler at 6th and Susquehanna Avenue, most active in the 1880s and ceased production of beer and bottles in 1920.<sup>93</sup>



Advertisement for Feil Brewery



Photo of Germantown Avenue and 6th Street. The Diamond Theater on the right side of the street.

The Community Development Workshop's research team found record of various other establishments along the 6th Street corridor. Originally started as an inspection company of Goldstuck Hainze & Co. in 1878, the U.S. Testing Company office was located between Germantown Ave. and North 6th Street in the neighborhood and tested several different types of chemicals to be used in WWII.<sup>94</sup> The Diamond Bar at 2100 N 6th Street that stood out as one of the locations regularly frequented by local residents during the 1960s.<sup>95</sup> Emil's Food Market occupied the now-empty lot at 2145 N 6th Street from the 1950s to the 60s.<sup>96</sup>



Emil's Food Market at the current empty lot at 2145 N 6th Street. (Emil's Food Market, 1956) Additionally, Sykes Co resided at 2137 N 6th Street from 1926 to 1954 before closing,<sup>97</sup> with Palmers Discount House opening up to serve the local community from 1954 until 1966.<sup>98</sup> At 2141 N 6th Street stood Frank and Son Sealy Mattress dealer in the 1950s, which closed towards the latter end of the decade.<sup>99</sup> From there, Van's Home Equipment Co moved into the commercial space and sold appliances to the community for roughly a decade.<sup>100</sup>

- <sup>84</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1910 Atlas. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>
- <sup>85</sup> Lee Motors. (1965, May 10). [Wilys Station Wagon Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 41
- <sup>86</sup> Via <https://atlas.phila.gov/#/2200%20GERMANTOWN%20AVE/property>
- <sup>87</sup> Acme Markets. (1950, November 6). [Ranger Joe Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 26
- <sup>88</sup> Via <https://atlas.phila.gov/#/2200%20GERMANTOWN%20AVE/property>
- <sup>89</sup> Hanna's Restaurant. (1941, June 13). [Female Help Wanted]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 38
- <sup>90</sup> Steg's Delicatessen. (1945, November 7). [Male Help Wanted]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 36
- <sup>91</sup> Marsfields Car Sales. (1944, November 22). [Car For Sale]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 29
- <sup>92</sup> Marsfields Furniture. (1944, November 22). [Furniture For Sale]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 29
- <sup>93</sup> Wagner, R., & Bryson, L. (2012). Philadelphia beer: A heady history of brewing in the cradle of liberty. Charleston, SC: The History Press.
- <sup>94</sup> Philadelphia, PA. (16 April. 2019). Google Maps. PhilaGeoHistory 1878 Atlas. Retrieved from <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/>
- <sup>95</sup> Diamond Bar. (1969, July 8). [Legal Notice]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 43
- <sup>96</sup> Emil's Food Market. (1956, September 4). [Meat Cutter]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 43
- <sup>97</sup> Sykes Co. (1946, April 10). [Collector-Salesman]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 37
- <sup>98</sup> Palmer's Discount House. (1957, December 9). [Motorola TV Stand Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 29
- <sup>99</sup> Frank and Sons. (1951, September 11). [Sealy Mattress Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 38
- <sup>100</sup> Vans Home Equipment Co. (1966, October 9). [Motorola TV Advertisement]. Philadelphia Inquirer, 88



A view of businesses on Germantown and 6th streets. The beloved Dawn Donuts can be seen on the right side of the street.

# Currently in the neighborhood

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Germantown Avenue was once a vibrant place, full of beloved shops, restaurants and places of work. In the last few decades, business and investment has continued to fade away. The few shops that remain are surrounded by a string of vacant lots, strung together by more sinkholes than sidewalk. Older generations of community members have seen their favorite establishments from childhood disappear, and community members are now forced to outsource goods and services from other neighborhoods. Several churches and fast food restaurants continue to hold strong, providing some amenities to the area.

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Germantown Avenue looking southward from Birney Post Park. This perspective mirrors the perspective of the previous image.



# Interviews

## Summaries & Insights

The interviews conducted for this project were done for various reasons. The interviews aided in the Workshop team's historical research and data collection taking place. The team's research was enriched with empirical data, through the naming and locating sites of interest that had not been apparent, and at other times by breathing life into the data that was already acquired. These interviews also helped fully realize the current state of Germantown Avenue, by capturing the memories, observed changes, and needs of residents. This sort of data transcends the quantitative and historical data used to ground this project, as it offers both human voice and experience to the geography being researched. In many ways, these interviews illuminated the narrative of the neighborhood and community.

For a plot of land such as Germantown Avenue, with its intricate history and rich culture, it is essential to understand it from the people who live the closest. As such, the interviewees were selected from a list provided by the project partner, APM. In all, there were eight individual interviews and one group interview. These interviewees included former gang-members turned CDC founders, religious leaders, Neighborhood Advisory Committee leaders, and APM Community Connectors. The interviewees were both long-term

and newly established residents. What united all interviewees was an unbridled love for their community, a deep connection to its past, and a desire for it to grow and develop long into the future.

The interview model utilized was a semi-structured interview. Interviews spanned from 15 minutes to over an hour. The transcripts of these interviews, along with a summary for each, are available as appendices to this report. Interviewers utilized a preset twelve question guide (see appendix), however, it was stressed to adapt questions and progression of the interview on a case-by-case basis. The interview guide was divided into three main sections:

1. Personal history and memories of Germantown Avenue
2. Discussion regarding the current state of the Avenue
3. The future of the Avenue

### Summary of Interviews:

#### *Personal Histories and Herstories*

The first section of the interview guide focused on personal histories and memories of Germantown Avenue. The majority of interviewees were born in the neighborhood, and those who moved in later spoke of relatives that lived in the area previously. When prompted to go back and consider their memories of Germantown Avenue, residents respond-

ed joyfully. Mrs. El, the area's ward leader best sums up the energy:

**“Oh my god, let’s go back on Germantown Avenue. Let’s go back to when Germantown Avenue was bustling with beautiful stores.”**

Mrs. El's enthusiasm touches on the most common theme, business. Interviewees all remembered a Germantown Avenue bustling with businesses, from a shoe store to the infamous Dawn Donuts. Reportedly, not only was there a diverse array of businesses, but they were also in walkable distance and therefore highly accessible. Luz Crespo, a lifetime resident, remembers her family visiting Dawn Donuts frequently: “It didn't matter the time, late at night even because they were open. There were things happening all the time practically.” These memories paint a picture of a bustling and exciting commercial corridor.

Interviewees also remembered a difference in the community's culture, something many spoke of wistfully. Lamont Jefferson, a lifetime resident and Community Connector with APM, states “I remember Saturday mornings we would all get up and start cleaning. Cleaning our block, cleaning the next



block and stuff like that.” His sentiment of an interconnected and civic-minded community was touched on by many of the others. The eagerness in which interviewees spoke of attending movies, purchasing from ‘mom and pop’ stores, and attending events was buttressed by a deep sense of ownership and community. Priscilla Preston spoke to this in her recollection of the festivities that once inhabited the neighborhood: “People set out and talked... we used to have fabulous block parties, and people made things like birch beer, and they made ice cream. They made it!” The memories of the Avenue, brought forth through interviews, undoubtedly enhanced the research already completed. From them, a recorded narrative history of a once-bustling community was created.

### ***Current Conditions***

The second portion of the interview guide was about the current state of the Avenue. In the transitional question, which asked interviewees to reflect on witnessing the disinvestment of their community, many of the interviews took a sharp turn. Priscilla Preston’s response was the most jarring:

**“When they tore my house down, someone came and told me that they were tearing houses down on Orkney Street, and it does something to you to see your roots coming down. It was disturbing.”**

The loss of homes was coupled with the loss of employment opportunities and a large-scale move-out. Maurice Murray and Jack Adderly, both members of Zulu Nation CDC, shared their memory of that move-out. Mr. Murray stated: “This area was white collar, with factories and stores, everybody could get jobs. But those businesses are gone, this place isn’t the same anymore. You aren’t getting fish at Germantown and Huntingdon or going to Leo’s... they’re all gone.” Mr. Adderly followed with,

**“You can tell this was a good place. We had Good and Plenty, the donut place, everybody had jobs.”**

Their responses reflected another common theme in this section’s responses, as

both specifically mentioned businesses that closed. This only further shows that the businesses that were once peppered throughout the community were integral to the community and its identity.

When interviewees were asked to define Germantown Avenue today, many used words like blight, abandoned, closed-down, and referred to other signs of neglect. These responses contrasted greatly with memories of a thriving neighborhood. Many of the interviewees mentioned the difficulties these changes have created for their shopping and purchasing behaviors. Lamont Jefferson spoke of driving three times a week to acquire his basic goods, due to the lack of stores in the community: “I go all the way to Aramingo and Caster”.

The loss of houses and businesses is also coupled with public safety issues, an aspect Carl Burman, a lifelong resident, directly mentioned: “one of the main things that we would have to see a lot of change in if we wanted more development, to get people to feel safe.” Andre Mears, a lifelong resident, also mentions crime issues: “Unfortunately, now the windows are barred up at night.” The interviewees expressed concern over the current state of Germantown Avenue,

and the neighborhood in general, however a hopeful tone prevailed.

### ***Future Hopes***

The positive outlook of the residents became more clear during the final portion of the interview guide, which centered on the future of the community. Though facing disinvestment, the community is perceived by the resident interviewees to be ripe for redevelopment. Jack Adderly states: "This [Germantown Avenue] has been sitting like this for a minute, it be waiting for the developers. This neighborhood has a dollar sign on it." This notion, of the community being ready for development, is also tied to a desire for the development to be equitable. Lamont Jefferson states:

**"I know it is a change coming, but we need to make sure it is fair for the people that have been living here so long."**

This belief is echoed throughout the interviews, with all their hope for the future there is lingering concern over what that future could mean for them and their community. One of those concerns is the

potential for gentrification, as Melanie DeBouse, a local religious leader, states:

**"Development is all about gentrification. There is little or nothing to be done to uplift those who have been in the community forever... their homes are leaning and falling down around them."**

The development has potential though and many of the residents speak to it, explaining their hopes of a return to the Germantown Avenue they remembered. Many see these recent developments as the only way to accomplish that return, Mrs. El explains that: "what was there before, and what can we do together to make it better for all of us" is of the utmost importance, a stance that other residents agreed with.

The responses collected through the interview process developed a living narrative of Germantown Avenue. The individuals recommended by APM represented an array of voices, all with a distinct point of view but all united with a desire to better their community. Their voices and the voices of others continue to serve as the life-blood of the community. Through

taking the time to interview, analyze, and reflect on their stories, the Community Development Workshop team was able to connect the data collected to the residents of this community. This connection helped develop the project, and prepared the Community Development Workshop to offer their engagement activities to the neighborhood and to APM.

“I remember Saturday mornings we would all get up and start cleaning. Cleaning our block, cleaning the next block and stuff like that.”

- Lamont Jefferson

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The present community surrounding the corridor is a deeply-rooted, resilient community. They have seen change, including the disinvestment of the corridor, and as Luz Crespo states, “now when I go [on Germantown] I don’t hardly see people.” Mrs. Crespo’s comments reflect on the loss of neighborhood stores, and also reference how she now visits area strip malls to purchase goods, leaving the community and taking her dollar elsewhere. However, even in its current deteriorated status, the residents maintain a positive outlook.

Carl Burnam states, “I can see people investing in Germantown Avenue, coming in with some ideas, some new business.” The Zulu Nation CDC “Homies” all talk excitedly about their dream to build a large community center along Germantown, as a means of providing recreation and services to their community. These comments reveal the undeniable hope in each resident interviewed about this community. This hope was even further revealed during interactions with residents throughout the APM

event. Many of whom eagerly took part in the envisioning exercise and spoke of their desire for specific services and businesses to enter their community. It is here where the community’s outlook shines brightest, the personal ownership each individual feels for it. Lamont Jefferson speaks of his desire to increase that ownership when asked what he wants to bring back to the community, “I remember Saturday mornings we would all get up and start cleaning. Cleaning our block, cleaning the next block and stuff like that.”

The Germantown Avenue community is not the shell of a community some may assume from the outside. This is rebutted by the voice of the community, which reveals a seemingly audacious hope in their community. It is grounded in love and respect for the community’s history as well as a belief in their ability to bring about change. They are hopeful for the future of the community, believe that youth hold the key to change and are beginning to see the change and investment they have long been denied.



# Community Event

## Applying Research: Designing Engagement Activities

The extensive research conducted by the Community Development Workshop informed the design and implementation of a community engagement event with APM. Through careful reflection and consideration, the engagement component was created to accomplish three main outcomes:

1. Stimulate the memory of participants and help establish neighborhood identity
2. Build awareness on consumer habits and the potential of Germantown Ave.
3. Foster ownership and build a language with which to affect change locally

## Historic Posters/Carteles Historicos

The first of four community engagement stations, the Historic Poster section aimed to show the historic economics and commercial culture of the neighborhood. The posters showed a 'now and then' perspective on the various iconic buildings in the community, and members of the Community Development Workshop's research team were stationed alongside the posters, where they could verbalize the stories of these storied establishments. Through this, participants were able to visit with a visual history of the Germantown Avenue commercial area. This activity strove to stimulate the community's memories of participating in local economy, and to prepare them for the I Remember When/Me Recuerdo activity.

## Design Theory

A yellow outline, representing the former structure or use of an iconic location, was overlaid on top of a black and white photographic image of the present day parcels. This design method was chosen in order to create a stark contrast between what once was and what now is. It is often difficult to understand or imagine what a building once looked like at its prime, however, the sketch-like silhouettes of these buildings created an illustrative and creative way to visualize this history. As photos of these buildings were not easy to come by, the handmade silhouettes allowed us to magnify the details of the buildings that otherwise may have been indistinguishable in the historic photographs available.



Community Members going through the poster gallery

Participants at this activity could either write or dictate their own short story of Germantown Avenue onto the I Remember When/Me Recuerdo template. These stories were then made visible on a clothesline, which catalyzed much conversation and storytelling throughout the event. Its placement, directly after the historical posters, intended to encourage residents to tell their history, not just view it on posters.



Design Theory

The paper tags used to mark the map were designed to display text in both English and Spanish, inclusively catering to the needs of the neighborhood. The map displayed the twelve main districts of Philadelphia to allow for all potential shopping destinations to be captured. In order to properly capture and assess the corresponding data, each participant’s map was photographed, and their paper tags were collected. Through building their own maps, participants were able to consider their own shopping habits and how their routines and qualities of life could be improved by having more commercial amenities in the neighborhood. This activity prepared participants for the fourth and final engagement station, Our Germantown Avenue/ Nuestro Avenida de Germantown.

Results

The results of this activity were captured and are presented in the following table. Researchers took count of the frequency of use of each tag, as well as the frequency at which tags were placed in each region. The results showed groceries as the most frequent service selected, and these tags were predominantly placed in the Lower North region, which includes the APM neighborhood and Germantown Avenue commercial corridor. Healthcare services (pharmacy and doctor) were the second most selected and were not as often placed in the Lower North region. Additionally, there was noticeable talk amongst participants regarding a need for hardware supplies and home improvement resources.

01  
Grocery Shopping  
[Residents shop in the Lower North]

A total of 9 community members mapped where they grocery shop. The lower North was the most popular area for residents to do their grocery shopping. Residents also travel to Kensington and the far Northeast.

02  
Pharmacy  
[Residents shop in the Lower North]

A total of 7 community members mapped where their pharmacy is located. The lower North was the most popular area for this. Residents also travel to Kensington and the Upper North.

03  
Doctor  
[Residents go to Near Northeast]

5 community members mapped where they go for doctors appointments. Overall, responses varied. Near Northeast was the most common responses, but residents traveled to Center City, Upper North, Near Northeast, and Southwest Philly.

Services	Amount	Location	Services	Amount	Location
Grocery	9	Lower North (7), Kensington, Far Northeast	Bakery	2	Lower North (2)
Pharmacy	7	Lower North (4), Kensington (2), Upper North	Car Repair	1	Lower North
Doctor	5	Center City, Upper North, Southwest Philly, Near Northeast (2)	Clothing	1	Lower North
Library	4	Lower North (4)	Bodega	1	Lower North
Haircut	3	Lower North (2), Kensington	High School	1	Kensington
Take-out	3	Lower North (3)	Film/theatre	1	South Philly
Art	3	Lower North (3)	Post office	1	Lower North
Restaurant	3	South Philly, Lower North, Near Northeast	Dentist	1	Far Northeast
Bank	2	Lower North (2)	Religion	1	Lower North





Workshop student Racehl Urban helping resident with the Where We Go activity



## Our Germantown/Nuestro Avenida de Germantown

The culminating activity of the event was Our Germantown. This event provided participants the opportunity to envision their community's future by imagining ideal incoming businesses. Each participant was given a sheet of paper with an outline of blank storefronts, where participants could draw or name potential businesses for Germantown Avenue. The activity built off of the earlier reflections on the community's history and shopping habits. This activity sought to inspire residents to consider citizen-driven neighborhood changes and development. Participants stated that the activity made them feel both encouraged and prepared to advocate for themselves and their community as redevelopment begins. It was also noted that some participants were hesitant to participate at this stage, perhaps conveying to the activity proctors that they lacked a sense of ownership or agency.



Storefront templates used for residents to express what businesses they want to see on Germantown Avenue

## Design Theory

This engagement activity also utilized a clothesline display, which both encouraged participation and spurred conversation amongst neighbors. The 'coloring book' style template was imagined so that participants, which may include families, could express themselves in various ways, including drawings and written text. Each template sheet had three storefront illustrations, allowing for both practical and imaginative plans for the Germantown corridor.



Community member pictured doing the Our Germantown activity

Results

The graphic (see page 51) is a visualization of buzzwords gathered at the Our Germantown activity table. As residents created their "ideal corridor" depictions, Workshop students chatted with them about how they would envision future incoming businesses. The larger the word in the word cloud, the more popular response.

In all, the community members present advocated for more food options like a pizzeria, a bakery, and dine-in restaurants, reflecting not only a common need, but also a local appreciation of different types of cuisine. Other baasic needs were expressed, such as a thrift store, a hardware store, and a public gathering space. Results of the Our Germantown activity, and the community engagement activity on the whole, are further reviewed in the Recommendations section of the report.



Workshop students hanging Our Germantown results.

Restaurants (Pizza 2, Soul food 1, Spanish 1)	4
Community/park space	3
Clothing	3
Bakery	3
Small biz incubator/job skills training	3
After school/daycare	2
Barber shop	2
Thrift shop	2
Shared kitchen	2
Gaming (ie: chess)	2
Farmers market	1
Tattoo shop	1
Candy store	1
Hardware store	1
Wawa	1

11/11/2016

The community engagement event, Germantown Avenue: Remembering & Envisioning, took place on Saturday, April 6th, 2019 from 12pm to 3pm near the intersection of Susquehanna Ave & 6th Street, alongside a parcel of land owned by APM. The activities were offered in tandem with a larger event held by APM, which included a community clean-up, a resource fair, and fresh food distribution.

The Community Development Workshop team arranged the engagement activities along the sidewalk, in a linear fashion that encouraged visitors to move through the exhibition in-sequence. Participants began with a walkthrough of large, informational posters, viewing the historic buildings and iconic industrial hubs of decades past. Engagement activities followed this: residents shared memories of Germantown Ave, mapped their current shopping routines, and submitted ideas for a new-and-improved Germantown Avenue that would best serve the needs of their households.

The event was generally well-received, and some residents and APM members mentioned that they would like to see another Remembering and Envisioning event held in the future. Most visitors who had stories to tell were glad to tell them, and many were surprised at the rich economic history of the area.

### Suggested Improvements for Engagement Activities

The most important consideration for improvement in a follow-up event is inclusion. While the tags for Where We Go, and examples for I Remember When, and Our Germantown were bilingual, the historic posters, which contained detailed stories, were not translated to Spanish, and often required verbal translation. Further, only one student facilitator spoke Spanish. Therefore, information about the rich history on Germantown Avenue was not accessible to a decent portion of participants. For the next event, all posters should be bilingual, and bilingual APM staff or community members should be asked to help facilitate.

A follow-up event would also need to consider inclusive language practices during feedback activities. During the “I Remember When,” and “What I Want to See on Germantown Avenue,” participants were asked to contribute their input through writing. Some community members hesitated to provide feedback. As it turns out, these community members only spoke Spanish and assumed they were not allowed to respond if they did not know English. Once one person put up a Spanish response, other Spanish-speaking residents understood that the activity was for them, too. For the next event, example responses should be in both English and Spanish so participants can see that their input is wanted. Also, if bilingual facilitators are limited, they should be put in activity sections first, so everyone’s voice can be heard.

Finally, food should be provided and advertised for the next event. Turnout will need to increase to get feedback from a larger portion of the neighborhood, and free food is generally the easiest way to get more people to attend. This could also provide more opportunities for inclusive engagement. In the middle of the event, an entrepreneur sold pastelillos from his van. Community entrepreneurs like this could be contacted beforehand to sell their food during the next event, and their presence could be advertised to community members. This would have the dual benefit of supporting local economic activity and attracting more participation.





# Remembering & Envisioning Germantown Avenue

## Documentary

In addition, a short documentary was created to introduce the project: Remembering and Envisioning Germantown Avenue. Documentaries are often valuable tools for non-profit organizations, with the intent to share a vision and motivate social impact. Recorded video clips from the interviews were compiled to summarize what people remembered on Germantown Avenue and what they want for the future of the Avenue. Hearing residents' stories, and then amplifying their concerns and ideas, was the main goal. Videos, utilizing photographs, moving images, and audio, serve as a platform where intimate connections can be made to the project being implemented. The video will hopefully help attract attention, informing residents, collaborators, other organizations, and possible donors.



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# Recommendations

## For the Future

In the future, there is potential for offering similar engagement activities to the Germantown Avenue community and reiterating the exercises in order to continue building capacity in the neighborhood. The research for the project, both through archival and in-person methods, revealed a community on the verge of change. By continuing to utilize active community engagement, organizations such as APM can ensure high community participation in that eventual transformation.

The community event serves as a solid base upon which further engagement can build. There are various means by which this activity could be further developed or strengthened. One method is to place the event on Germantown Avenue itself. Activating vacant storefronts could be an effective way to connect residents to Germantown Avenue and help them imagine how they might steer future development. Including local cuisine as a component of the community event could increase turn-out, and it would draw attendees and spark conversation among local food purveyors and potential entrepreneurs. Additionally, with some adjustments, or using project research and design as a template, the engagement activities could be adapted into a web-based format, or offered as a digital survey.

The project not only serves as a basis for future engagement activities, it also reveals some potential next steps for the actual redevelopment of the corridor. Community members, through their interviews and through their conversations at the event, spoke frankly of their wishes and visions for their community. Some of the recurring requests residents made for their community's future was some form of a hardware store, which seems to stem from the residents' desire to tend to their homes. This might be realized through a formal retail shop, or could inspire a community tool share. Another significant request was the creation of a community center or public communal space, as a means of increasing community connectedness and offering more recreational amenities. Additionally, many residents spoke of the food options that once spread throughout Germantown, speaking about their desire to see such dine-in and take-out options return.

Through this research and the ensuing engagement activity, residents were able to construct their own history in relation to their geographic community. Additionally, residents were emboldened and ensured of their capacity to advocate for themselves and the future of their community. It is thus essential for APM and other stakeholders to continue to support and engage the community as the redevelopment of Germantown Avenue takes place.

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# Student Roles

## Community Development Workshop 2019 students

**Amy Boyd** - Interviews, Interview transcriptions, park research

**Cameron Conarroe** - Demographic data team lead, parcel history research, Dawn's Donuts history research

**Ioanna Dinoulis** - Graphic design team lead, final report layout and design, Interviews

**Jonathan Fiamoncini** - Parcel history research, Interviews, stakeholder surveys

**Maho Kawabe** - Demographic data research collection and analysis, parcel history collection, poster graphic design

**Jacob Kurtz** - Interview Team Lead, interview guide, engagement activity development

**Ronald Landis** - Parcel History Team Lead, parcel history research

**Rachel Lewis** - Graphic design, parcel research

**Grace Maas** - Video production, video voice-over, Stetson Hat Company research, interviews, interview filming, event photography

**Samuel McMinn** - Presentation Team Lead, Ile-Ife history research, poster graphic design, presentation layout

**Udochi Onwuka** - Parcel history research, 3D graphic design, poster design

**Julia Redington** - Digital maps of Germantown Ave commercial corridor, parcel history research

**Rachel Urban** - Graphic design, community event planning, parcel history research

**Ashley Wagner** - Community Engagement Team Lead, event director, engagement activity research and design, activity materials design, Spanish translation, parks research