

**York Road Partnership
General Meeting July 7, 2021
Via Zoom
Minutes**

1. President Chris Forrest called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. There were 34 participants.
2. **Chris shared a draft of a YRP values statement.** The board will create a final draft to come back for the general membership to approve at a future meeting.
3. **York Road DOT Study Update:** Dan Pontious shared that DOT is underway with a short-term York Road transportation study. Subsequent to that, MTA is in the process of a state mandated study of transit corridors from Towson to UMMS and look at what kind of transit needed in the longer term (bus, light rail, etc). The timelines of the two studies don't match. DOT will present its ideas soon and a YRP work group is trying to see how to fit these planning projects together - especially planning short term investments so that they fit as well as possible with long term investments. Donna Blackwell emphasized that the group is working to help DOT and MTA communicate effectively to knit these plans together.
4. **Slow Streets Program Update:** Vidushani Jayalal from Councilman Conway's office shared about a meeting with DOT and that there is agreement to close Lortz Lane, a block that is part of the COVID Slow Streets program, permanently to car traffic. DOT needs more survey response from the 4th District in order to relaunch the initiative here more widely. Link here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N5MVSZ6>
5. **Art@Work Program:** Brian Davis of Loyola shared that YouthWorkers are participating in this program at Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle and are canvassing in Wilson Park and Pen Lucy to get public input for murals that will be going up 4229 York next to Restoration Gardens II. There will be a meeting on July 13 at 7 pm. This same program resulted in the murals on the Woodbourne side of the Family Dollar and at Dewees Rec Center. Brian will shared a community survey for design input: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSciki3dq3v4VaOxzwQJNsjaTjGKc5d7HrG3fEa1tspHfOHdIq/viewform>
6. **Crematorium Update:** Sandi McFadden and Karen DeCamp shared that 15 York Road area residents met with Vaughn Greene and his staff and MDE June 3 and each community member shared powerful testimony about why they oppose operating a crematorium in our community. This position is purely based on health and property concerns very close to a combustion chamber, even though we respect and support the good work of Vaughn Greene. There is a team of residents who have met twice since then to plan greater outreach in the community with a fact sheet, petitions and signs.

They have created an asset map for outreach. The state is waiting for confirmation on the need for a BMZA hearing and we have representation from Community Law Center's Becky Witt. Please see this link for more information about how to take action on the crematorium:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1i97X2O4_V-5Ncg02ggrouOIJlhz6rPM8A_Isu0dbNO Dk/edit

Contact Karen at kmdecamp@gmail.com if you want a sign.

7. **Invest York Road Update:** Chris Forrest shared that financial education classes are happening this month. Sign up here: <https://www.investyorkroad.org/>. The long term goal of Invest York Road is to purchase commercial property for community control and use. The group working on this seeks wide community and business engagement.

8. **Committee updates:**

- a. **Public Safety** - Phyllis Gilmore shared that July 21, 11 am - there will be a Mayor's agency walk in Woodbourne McCabe. All are welcome. Phyllis reported that she is vice chair of the City Public Safety Commission and that the commission is working on goals and strategy for each police district as well as a plan for community meetings. Strategy will include stakeholders including the district commanders, Safe Streets, the police Community Relations Committee, Councilman Conway's office (he is chair of the Council Public Safety Committee).
- b. **Youth Development** - Andy McNeely shared that the committee has created and will share a youth program and resources list. Several high school students have attended committee meetings and shared their thoughts. The Dewees playground is funded and will be built in Jan 2022. There is also a new Dewees Rec Center director and there is a meet and greet July 13 at 5:00 at Dewees Rec Center. The committee created a summer camp list and wants to create a scholarship fund in the future. Next meeting in person 7 pm July 28.
- c. **Housing and Community Revitalization** - Donna Blackwell shared that the YRP Housing committee meets quarterly with DHCD (next one July 15) and will ask for an update on families who were referred from the committee's May Housing Fairs to City programs. The committee reviewed, using a standard rubric, all proposals it received for state funding from BRNI (Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative) after asking for proposals publicly through the YRP Listserv. GEDCO is the state-designated organization that can submit applications for all organizations in this area. Based on the member vote at the June meeting, GEDCO is submitting application for the following projects:

- **\$250,000 for Rebuilding Together Baltimore** toward the \$560,000 cost of home improvements for 30 low- and moderate-income senior citizen homeowners in the corridor. (This is much like their 2020 BRNI award, which should help 18 senior homeowners.)
 - **\$360,000 for Be a Chef for a Day** towards about \$1.5 million expense of acquiring and renovating 4705 and 4707 York Road in Wilson Park to become a Day Arts Community Center.
 - **\$25,000 for Community Wealth Builders** toward \$90,830 cost of conducting financial education workshops, creating Invest York Road as a vehicle for community ownership of selected York Road commercial properties, and identifying initial property to acquire.
 - **\$165,000 for Baltimore Seed Properties** toward \$1.2 million cost of building three new net-zero-ready homes for low-to-moderate-income families in Mid Govans (two lots on Govane Ave.) and Winston-Govans (one lot on Beaumont Ave.).
 - **\$20,000 for Community Development Services (Peter Duvall)** to continue strategic code enforcement work (now being funded by Loyola) that is critical to addressing vacant homes and other nuisance properties in York Road communities.
- d. **Business Engagement** - Chris Forrest and Lisa O'Reilly shared that there will be a business walk set up soon. Details for that and for the next meeting will be sent to the listserv.
- e. **Public Spaces and Greening** - no new update, co-chair Marie McSweeney not able to attend tonight.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR ALL:

Please make sure you are a member of our email listserv to get all the latest updates! Go to www.googlegroups.org and search for York Road Partnership. You may request to join the listserv

To see how to contact each committee and the meeting times, please visit the YRP Website: <https://yorkroadpartnership.org/committees>

Next Meeting Wed August 4 2021 at 7:15 via Zoom. All are welcome.