



2007/2008 Year in Review

North – Central Elm Street Report

Lancaster, PA

Administered by the James Street Improvement District

The City of Lancaster and the James Street Improvement District (JSID) received Elm Street designation from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) in January 2005. The North – Central Elm Street target area is generally bounded by Prince, Lemon, Christian and Clay streets and is located adjacent to Clipper Magazine Stadium, Lancaster General Hospital and Lancaster's Central Business District.

In Year 3 of the Elm Street program, the North – Central neighborhood began a transformation in appearance and neighborhood culture. A comprehensive streetscape project along main corridors was started and many of the opportunities that were identified in the five year plan began to materialize based on the collaborative relationships that had been established in Years 1 and 2.

The following is a summary of the James Street Improvement District's activities in the areas of planning/neighborhood organizing, residential reinvestment activity (façade improvements and streetscape enhancements) and administration.

Planning/Neighborhood Organizing

The Neighbors Alliance members have been charged with the following responsibilities as it relates to administration of the Elm Street program: 1) Serve as a resource to JSID, 2) Provide Input and feedback on the façade improvement program and on streetscape enhancements, 3) Serve as neighborhood ambassadors, 4) Ensure effective neighborhood communication. JSID has continued to engage neighbors around these charges and neighborhood leaders have become more pro-active and confident in these roles.

A neighborhood safety audit was completed in September 2006 in partnership with the Lancaster Community Safety Coalition. The findings and

recommendations supported the installation of surveillance cameras in the neighborhood. The North – Central Neighbors Alliance assisted the Project Manager in planning/coordinating meaningful engagement of neighbors for discussions about surveillance cameras starting in Spring 2007. The Alliance members were also instrumental in educating members of the Elm Street community about how the cameras are monitored, accessed by law enforcement and the Lancaster Community Safety Coalition’s policies and procedures.

Some additional examples of effective neighborhood engagement include the following meetings, discussions and events:

- Continued support of the Queen Street Block Party each June. Alliance members use it as an opportunity to promote the Elm Street initiative and the neighborhood. This event draws 6,000 people annually.



- Alliance/JSID recognize opportunities to showcase the neighborhood and respond by communicating with neighbors and encouraging block cleanups.



2008 Red Rose Run – Queen Street

- Annual Neighborhood Night at the Ballpark. This free Ballpark evening for the neighbors has evolved from an annual meeting to vent concerns regarding event management.
- Representatives from Lancaster General Hospital took the opportunity to present plans for a new Medical Office Building and Parking Garage to the Alliance.
- Expanded the Alliance to include more neighbors along east – west streets of the Elm Street neighborhood based on Action Step 2 in our plan. Our focus on these areas has allowed us to play a meaningful role in supporting home ownership and property investments.



13 E New Street before and after

Residential Reinvestment Façade Improvement Program (FIP)

Since the program was launched in Spring 2005, 75 projects representing \$294,888 in grant funds and \$195,000 in private funds (total of \$489,940) have been completed in this neighborhood as a result of the Elm Street Project.

Leveraging the positive reputation of this initiative and building on relationships with property owners, JSID more strategically allocated façade funds in 2007 and 2008. We deliberately shifted our focus to clustering improvements and working with owners of rental properties and owners who were transitioning properties from rentals back to opportunities for homeownership – largely in response to Lancaster General Hospital’s Home in the City Program.

In the 700 block of North Queen Street, 3 properties were rehabbed for homeownership in late 2007/2008. Prior to these rehabs, 3 façade improvements were completed in this row of properties. Most recently, JSID worked with an existing property owner to complete a façade improvement.



724- 728 N. Queen

730 – 738 N. Queen

Streetscape Enhancements

In 2007, a total streetscape transformation began, with a focus on enhancing pedestrian safety and walkability through the Elm Street neighborhood. JSID recognizes the value of encouraging pedestrian activity in neighborhoods as a way to increase safety and encourage a vibrant neighborhood culture. There were significant improvements implemented in 2007 and 2008, including:

- The installation of 88 pedestrian lights along N. Prince Street, N. Queen Street and James Street – major corridors in the Elm Street neighborhood.



- The installation of a 13-camera system that is monitored by the Lancaster Community Safety Coalition.

The Lancaster Community Safety Coalition reports that since October 2007, monitors of these cameras have contacted police 56 times to report witnessing suspicious activity or to direct police to suspects fleeing the crime scene. Police have followed up with Coalition staff approximately 30 times to request video related to a reported crime being investigated.

- The installation of an LED crosswalk at Frederick Street, crossing Prince. This vital location serves pedestrians going to Clipper Magazine Stadium and will provide a safe means for children wishing to cross Prince Street to travel to the new YMCA site on Harrisburg Pike which broke ground in July 2008.
- Completion of a sign consolidation study in partnership with the City of Lancaster in Spring 2007.
- Completion of a tree and tree well inventory in Fall 2007. Tree installation planned for Fall 2008. This project has been coordinated with the City of Lancaster and utilized technical assistance from the Shade Tree Commission and the City Arborist.

JSID is proud of the accomplishments to date in the Elm Street neighborhood and the partnerships that have been developed and enhanced to support the target neighborhood. A solid foundation for continued investment has been established and JSID anticipates that many of the opportunities that were identified in the Strategic and Preliminary Vision Plan will continue to be implemented in future years.