NEIGHBORHOOD PLACEMAKING:
LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER IN SOUTHWEST DETROIT

PRESENTED BY TIFFANY TONONI FOR URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES
WHO WE ARE

Urban Neighborhood Initiatives works with communities in urban neighborhoods to build safe and thriving environments where people want to live, work, and play.
COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Springwells community is a 1.3 square mile neighborhood located in Southwest Detroit and home to nearly 17,000 residents.

Springwells = 1.3 mi², pop. 16,900
Detroit = 142 mi², pop. 700,000
COMMUNITY ASSETS

62.2% of residents are under 35 and 1 in 5 residents are under the age of 9

Springwells = 19.5 residents/acre
Detroit = 8 residents/acre

72.2% of residents identify as Hispanic/Latino, 20.7% as white non-Hispanic, 5% black, and smaller numbers identify as American Indian, Asian, or of more than one race

Over half a dozen early childhood facilities and elementary schools

Over 200 business in 1.3 square miles including, bakeries, restaurants, bars, pharmacies, auto mechanic shops, insurance offices, and grocery stores

Source: Data Driven Detroit, 2012
COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

SAFETY
20% of residential properties are vacant; many are targeted for drug trafficking, scrap metal theft, arson

FORECLOSURE
Nearly 20% of mortgages are in foreclosure or real estate owned (REO)

IMMIGRATION
Over 1 in 3 residents are foreign born; immigration concerns continue to negatively impact household stability, resident safety, educational opportunities, and community participation

FINANCIAL STABILITY
45.5% of households have an annual income of less than $25,000

EDUCATION
54% of residents over the age of 25 have less than a high school diploma; 30% have less than a 9th grade education

Source: Data Driven Detroit, 2012
PLACEMAKING TARGET

Springwells Street

- Part of the main commercial corridor & BID
- Mixed zoning (residential and commercial)
- Variety of organizations and businesses
- Surrounded by dense residential community
IDENTIFY DESTINATION & PROBLEM SPOTS

Source: Power of 10 on Springwells Street, Project for Public Spaces, June 2014
IDENTIFY DESTINATION SPOTS

• Sheila’s Bakery
• Family Treat
• Post Office
• Urban Neighborhood Initiatives Office
• Tacos El Caballo
• Other (Rite Aid, Salon Xtreme, Revolution Lounge, El Asador Restaurant, etc.)
IDENTIFY PROBLEM ACTIVITY & SPOTS

- Speeding, traffic concerns
- Homelessness, panhandling
- Drug trafficking
- Vacant property (restaurant, church, storefronts, lots)
- Unkempt residential and business properties
- Graffiti and poor lighting at railway underpass/viaduct
- Loitering outside of liquor stores

An uninviting railway viaduct, vacant storefronts, and graffiti line Springwells Street
PLACEMAKING OBJECTIVES

• Enhance the beauty and functionality of Springwells Street
• Pilot pop-up activity with local businesses to create excitement and bring people together
• Continue to transform spaces into places with a focus on maintenance and programming
• Continue long-term planning
CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENTS

Tulips & Daffodil Bulbs (8,250)

$3,100.00

2013-2015

The Greening of Detroit, Christensen Plant Center, UNI’s Urban Forestry Youth Employment Program, & Other Volunteers

Tulips in bloom, May 2015

Planting bulbs, November 2014
CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENTS

Outdoor Planters (6)

$ Free!

Clock 2014

Hand Southwest
Detroit Business
Association, the
Business
Improvement
District, & UNI

Planters at Springwells and Longworth
CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENTS

Bike Racks (4)

$ $1,640.00

2015

Springwells Village Development Collaborative, Diseños Ornamental Iron, & UNI

Bike rack installation, 2015

Bike rack outside Southwest Rides
CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENTS

Outdoor Mural Arts

$  $26,800.00 (~$13 ft²)

2013-2015

Southwest Detroit Business Association, Local Businesses, Local Homeowners, College for Creative Studies, & UNI’s Southwest Urban Arts Mural Project

Mural in process at 1824 Springwells, 2013
MURAL ARTS
MURAL ARTS

Southwest Urban Arts Mural Project

✓ 2,000 ft² of mural arts on Springwells Street
✓ Youth employment & leadership opportunity
✓ High visibility during creation, attracted resident feedback
✓ High visibility after creation, attracted media attention

SUAMP youth at work, 2014

DBusiness, Sept/Oct 2015
POP-UP ACTIVITY

Spring into Springwells
Sunday Dinner Series

$740.00

2015

Revolution Lounge, Guest Chefs, the Southwest Detroit Business Association, & UNI

Event postcard, 2015

Revolution Lounge
POP-UP ACTIVITY

Spring into Springwells Sunday Dinner Series

✓ 9 Sunday events in June & July 2015

✓ 357 attendees (40 on average)

✓ Chefs averaged $330.00; Bar averaged $225.00

✓ Family-friendly; attracted visitors & local residents

Chefs Luis Garza and Esteban Castro
SPACE TO PLACE: PEOPLE’S PARK

Outdoor Space Improvements

$ in-kind labor/materials

2012-2015

Springdale-Woodmere Block Club, Southwest Solutions, Southwest Detroit Business Association, the Business Improvement District, & UNI

View from the street
SPACE TO PLACE: PEOPLE’S PARK

Outdoor Space Improvements

$  in-kind labor/materials

2012-2015

Springdale-Woodmere Block Club, Southwest Solutions, Southwest Detroit Business Association, the Business Improvement District, & UNI

View from the alley

Initial property cleanup, 2012
SPACE TO PLACE: PEOPLE’S PARK

Outdoor Space Improvements

2012: clean, build 2 raised planters, add soil, mulch, trees, grasses, and flowers

2013: maintain, add flowers

2014: maintain, build 4 benches, add flowers

2015: maintain, build rose planter, add rain barrel

6 major workdays, 4-6 hrs/day and 30-40 vols/day (+seasonal maintenance)
SPACE TO PLACE: PEOPLE’S PARK

Outdoor Space Improvements

✓ Reducing blight and replacing with beauty
✓ Fostering neighborhood pride and participation
✓ Improving the functionality of our commercial corridor
✓ Leveraging nearby assets

People’s Park, 2015
SPACE TO PLACE: COVE APARTMENTS

Outdoor Space Improvements

$ $1,080.00

2013-2014

Cove Apartment Owners, Cove Apartment Residents, Springdale-Woodmere Block Club, Additional Volunteers, & UNI

Cove Apartments, Springwells Street
SPACE TO PLACE: COVE APARTMENTS

Outdoor Space Improvements

- Building materials $200
- Picket fencing and paint supplies $700
- Plants/landscape supplies $180
- In-kind support
  - 4 workdays averaging 2.5 hrs/day and 8-10 vols/day
SPACE TO PLACE: COVE APARTMENTS

Outdoor Space Improvements

✓ Empowering residents and property owners

✓ Building relationships and strengthening social networks

✓ Improving the quality of life for residents in 26 rental units

✓ Leveraging additional resources

✗ Also... a cautionary tale!
PLACEMAKING LESSONS LEARNED

• Leverage existing resources
• Seek out new partners
• Facilitate broad participation
• Foster strong relationships
• Stretch your budget
• Ask forgiveness rather than permission (...sometimes)
• Develop a strategic plan that includes early wins and long-term goals as well as plans for maintenance
• Celebrate accomplishments!

Planting tulip & daffodil bulbs on Springwells Street, November 2014
THANK YOU

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