



Eastwick Friends &
Neighbors Coalition

Eastwick Residents and Stakeholders Assessment Survey: A Summary of the Survey's *Results and Analysis*

October 2014



Following the community's 2012 fight to preserve neighborhood integrity, EFNC recognized the need to survey residents' opinions about the issues they face. The purpose of the survey is to gauge residents' opinions about:

- Environmental, economic, and social issues affecting the community; and
- Views concerning any plans for future development;

This survey assembles comprehensive data from residents that can be used to inform decisions about future building projects and economic development in Eastwick. It is a concerted effort to inform a broad range of stakeholders including city officials and most importantly residents themselves about the concerns and priorities of the neighborhood especially concerning the community's call for environmental justice and potential development on the contested 128-acre parcel.

Design: The survey process is intended to serve a dual function—to educate and engage residents while assessing their knowledge and opinions about pertinent community issues. The Survey consisted of five pages covering questions pertaining to:

- Development of the 128-Acre Parcel
- Economic Development
- Flooding and Flood Insurance
- Airport Expansion
- Number One Priority for Improving Eastwick

Respondents: For the survey, EFNC targeted 250 residential properties south of 84th Street, who would be most directly impacted by the proposed high-density apartment construction project. A total of 244 completed surveys were obtained from 233 of the 250 eligible households, providing an overall response rate of 93%.

Key Findings:

Eastwick is Concerned About Proposed Development:

- The vast majority, 87% of respondents, who would be most impacted, do not support the development of housing, as currently proposed (722 units of multi-family rental housing and 1,034 parking spaces on 35 acres);
- A significant number, 61% agreed that the proposed development would have a negative impact on their property values;
- About 85% of all respondents would support preserving the 128-acre parcel to help lessen catastrophic flooding and sea level rise in Eastwick if such a system could help lower flood insurance rates; and
- If federal money could be found to purchase the 128 acres to preserve it as a park, or an extension of the Refuge, 82% of respondents would support the purchase.

Eastwick Needs Economic Development:

- About 90% of respondents agreed that Eastwick should have an effective local community/economic development organization(s) and 86% supported having an active business development program to encourage and support existing and new businesses; and
- 90% of respondents agreed that the Eastwick community needs a solution to the expressed need for more resources for community and business development and to address vacant storefronts, specifically, the vacant storefronts in the PennRose Plaza Shopping Center.

Eastwick Needs Solutions to Flooding:

- 91% of respondents agreed that the safety, in terms of flood mitigation, reduction in insurance costs, and better emergency response and evacuation, of existing residents must take priority over property development for new residents, and that no new development should be contemplated in Eastwick until a community-driven and supported emergency response and evacuation plan is adopted;
- 93% agreed that, prior to approving any new development; the city should prepare a community-supported flood management plan that supports safety for the whole watershed.

Eastwick Seeks a Voice in Crafting its Future:

- Regarding future development in Eastwick, 90% of respondents agreed that residents and stakeholders should have input into the future development on or near the publicly owned 128-acre parcel being considered for development and for Airport expansion; and
- The overwhelming majority (91%) of respondents are concerned about having a voice in planning for the neighborhood's future. Residents want to have input in development and are concerned about changes in zoning, density, and the preservation of open space.

Eastwick is Concerned about Environmental Health and Equity:

- The survey provided a wealth of data on Eastwick residents' and stakeholders' opinions about prospective development in their community and other issues that impact their quality of life.
- By and large, respondents do not want the proposed high-density apartment construction project to take place on the 128 acres and feel that it would adversely affect their community;
- Many residents identified environmental health and safety concerns that were outside of the scope of the survey, but of critical importance to the community, including polluted landfills, air quality, cancer rates, illegal dumping, etc.;
- Further, the survey results articulate specific community concerns and opinions residents have held for years - but that have gone unresolved - including polluted landfills, poor air quality that many attribute to high asthma and cancer rates in the area, illegal dumping, a lack of support for community economic development and most importantly, residents feel that their opinions don't matter to developers or city officials; and
- Respondents also expressed ill feelings over the loss of "the old Eastwick" and the displacement of former residents under the guise of blight certification and urban renewal.

Now, moving forward, Eastwick seeks the following:

- Economic resources to establish an organizational presence that can serve as a comprehensive communications link throughout the Eastwick community;
- Support from the City of Philadelphia and elected officials to engage with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Insurance Department and other appropriate state and federal insurance agencies to assess the equity of rising flood insurance premiums throughout Eastwick;
- An assessment, by the City's new flood task force, regarding how Eastwick residents would benefit from FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS program increases public and property safety, and participation by the City could further its resiliency to floods, storm surges and sea level rise, especially in the flood-prone area of Eastwick;
- A community-wide public health assessment to discern any potential linkages between pollution sources and community health issues, such as, but not limited to, respiratory and cancer related conditions; and
- A community-based, participatory planning process, in partnership with city agencies and elected officials.



**One Goal, One Focus:
Restore, Reclaim, Renew Eastwick**

An Environmental Gem
Where the World Meets Philadelphia
Economic Development
Vibrant Commercial District
Safe and Healthy Environment
Safe Groundwater
No Flooding
Creative Solutions
Stormwater Management
Sustainable Development
Community Gardens, Parks, & Green Spaces