

UP WITH THE COMMUNITY



DOWN WITH THE STADIUM

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May 2018

Church of the Advocate 1801 Diamond St Philadelphia, PA

Issue #3

HAPPY MAY DAY!

Why We March for North Central

Stadium Stompers is marching today because our communities are in danger. On Tuesday, May 1st, the Stadium Stompers and No Stadium No Deal Coalition is sponsoring a Gentrification Equals Colonization march from Temple's Sullivan Hall on main campus down Broad Street to the Octavius V. Catto statue at City Hall, from 3:30 to 5:30pm.

Speakers: Mr. Johnson - Life-long Community Member, Stadium Stomper, Wendy Marshall - Temple University Adjunct Professor/Stadium Stomper, Rev. Renee McKenzie-Hayward - Pastor of the Church of the Advocate, Phil Gregory - Temple University Student

The significance of starting at Sullivan Hall is, it's the home of the President's Office and where the Board of Trustees' Meetings are normally held

along with a couple of other Stadium Stompers actions against the Board. It is the representation of Temple University.

The first stop on the march is Broad & Girard. From this location you can clearly see the transition of the neighborhood as well as the new soccer stadium that was built at the community's expense and on the site of the old William Penn High School.

Speakers: Barbara Chauvous - Early Learning Center Principal/Business Leader, Ruth Birchett - Community Activist, Stadium Stomper/NSND

Then we will be stopping at 440 N. Broad, home of the Philadelphia School District and the recently dismantled SRC (school reform commission). There are so many things that need to be said but we'll let our speakers say it!

They are:

Catherine Blunt - Former School District Principal, **Jacqueline Wiggins** - Educator, Historian, Entrepreneur, Stadium Stomper/NSND

And our last stop will be City Hall at the statue of Octavius V. Catto. The great significance this location is it's the site of the first statue of an African American who was a educator, and activist unveiled in the City of Philadelphia. It speaks to our spirit and the spirit and purpose of this day.

Additionally, City Hall is the real place for our fight with Temple University regarding legislation to stop the Stadium from going up, closing 15th Street, as well as the Alpha Center being used to expand Temples SP-INS District and amending their Master Plan to expand their footprint in our community. It's **(continued on page 2)**

JOIN THE STOMPERS MOVEMENT!

Want to get involved with us?

Join us for a meeting at the
Church of the Advocate

(1801 Diamond St, Philadelphia, PA 19121) **every second and fourth Wednesday from 6pm-7:30pm.**

You can also follow us on:

Twitter: @StadiumStomper1

Instagram: @stadiumstompers

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/stadiumstomper-sphilly

Gentrification = Colonization!

By Gail Loney

Gentrification in its most simplistic of terms is defined in some circles as neighborhood improvement and revitalization, however, in other circles it is described as urban renewal of a depressed low-income area by an influx of middle class affluent residents which results in increased property value, higher property taxes, and a change of culture.

Because this process is characterized by some very disturbing trends, we have to delve into some basic historical ideologies that we would like to think, in this day and age, no longer apply. But as I think more about the characteristics of gentrification, I can't help but think of colonization.

Colonization which deals with migration patterns and habits is a process by which a central system of power dominates the surrounding land and its components along with ruling the indigenous population in these now deemed new territories that are being colonized or for a better word, gentrified.

Additionally, in these new territories the central power structure regarded the land masses as empty land due to the lack of their presence and deemed unaltered (by man) and treated as uninhabited despite the presence of indigenous people.

Now I know for some of you that last piece maybe a bit of a stretch, but bear with me, I'll explain in a minute.

Some of the characteristics of gentrification included in its definition are urban renewal which you would not normally think is a bad thing, but when you add a depressed low income area being renewed by an influx of affluent residence, the renewal suddenly becomes questionable. Why? Because most times, these depressed low income neighborhoods are that way through no fault of the residence living there. These areas were purposely and intentionally divested for this purpose. Most of these areas are occupied by poor and low income black and brown people because originally these were the only places we could live. The great migration from the south brought whole families north. Then the racism, discrimination, lack of education and jobs, and last but not least, redlining left most of them in these neighborhoods for generations originally renting because only a few could afford to buy at the exorbitant prices they were charged for poor quality homes.

As generation after generation struggled to survive, they made do with little to nothing with the help of family, friends and extended family which was usually your neighbors. They shared food, clothing, traded services and looked out for one another. They spent what funds they had in the community and supported the local stores, restaurants, bars, and vendors who worked with them.

That sounds like a community to me! So what happens, as capitalism takes hold, the more educated want more and better and start moving out, while the poor disenfranchised stay and the homes fall into disrepair. They can't afford to make changes, they can barely afford to feed and clothe themselves let alone fix plumbing and electrical issues. The homes are abandoned, taxes aren't paid. There are no loans nor programs for these people because they have no money, no credit, no sliding scale programs to help them pay, and the central system of power, your local and state politicians, doesn't make legislation that support efforts in favor of poor people. Stay with me! I'm almost there!

"[O]ur cities are allowing colleges and universities to develop our disenfranchised communities so they don't have to."

So now you have neighborhoods of dilapidated and abandoned homes for blocks and blocks in some cases covering miles. City officials make land bank laws to help the people in the neighborhoods acquire the land, but it doesn't seem to work. Then you realize that you can't purchase these properties because they won't sell them to you. The properties are designated for housing authority agencies and programs, some are sold to de-

velopers and others acquiring them through eminent domain for a variety of purposes. So your neighborhood looks, as someone told me once, like Beirut, and you can't do a thing about it!

So that piece in the definition of colonization about the "central power structure" regarded the land masses as empty land due to the lack of their presence and deemed unaltered (by man) and treated as uninhabited despite the "presence of indigenous people"; in my opinion, this directly relates. It also relates to the land-bank and eminent domain issues, as well as the constant over-development our city is experiencing in some areas of North and South Philadelphia. I'm sure, we, meaning Philly, are not alone, and the poor black and brown people who live and are directly and indirectly affected by these processes can relate in other parts of the city and around the country.

In addition, our cities are allowing colleges and universities to develop our disenfranchised communities so they don't have to. But, they are allowing them free rein without any consideration or input from the families and communities who have been there for generations. I don't know how new this issue is, but this is a problem. As these universities wish to expand their footprint, the message being sent is one of disrespect and disregard. Communities **(continued on page 2)**

Temple Info Session: March 6, 2018

by Stadium Stompers

Last summer, Stadium Stompers met with Temple University President Richard Englert in Sullivan Hall. In the presence of his office staff, local clergy and residents, as well as State Rep. Curtis Thomas, we asked him to agree to a meeting with our community, in our community. Englert said he would "take it under advisement." This advisement had little sway, and eight months passed with no response from the university or Englert's office. Only after Stadium Stompers, NAACP, and the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity organized a town hall at George Washington Carver High School for Engineering and Sciences did Temple announce plans for its "information session." This meeting was not prompted by Temple's concern for the community which hosts it. Instead, it was a cowardly response to the community moving ahead and holding its own town hall meeting on March 1st.

Our town hall at George Washington Carver High School of Engineering and Science, adjacent to the site for the proposed stadium, brought in more than 400 community residents, business owners, homeowners, and members, all concerned about the football stadium rupturing their lives. Stadium Stompers, NAACP, and the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity hand-delivered invitations to Richard Englert, Darrell Clarke, and Patrick O'Connor. Yet that night, three empty chairs adorned the stage next to the ministers, community leaders, faculty, and alumni. The empty chairs symbolized both Temple's silence and refusal to speak with us and, in turn, their silencing of our concerns. By ignoring multiple requests from many leaders in our community, Temple set up the conditions that produced the impasse between frustrated residents and a recalcitrant university administration at the information session on March 6th.

To reiterate, it was not the community that stopped the conversation at the March 6th meeting. The meeting was never a conversation in the first place. It was an opportunity for Englert to pontificate about a sugar-coated version of the stadium plans. Englert closed down his own meeting by being escorted out by his entourage of security police.

Stadium Stompers formed as an organization more than two years ago and has asked repeatedly for meetings with Temple presidents Theobald and Englert. In the meantime, we have held three town hall meetings, to which Theobald and Englert were invited. They declined to attend any of these meetings. Englert's decision to hold the meeting during spring break was a maneuver to silence any dissent and avoid accountability from the students and faculty, a majority of

whom also oppose the stadium.

It is not the community's job to facilitate a relationship with an encroaching university. The burden of facilitating such an engagement should fall on Temple, which is to say that all of this is too late. Clearly, the university has moved ahead with proposals to the City Planning Commission without engaging the majority of people whose lives the stadium will disrupt. So we will move ahead, too. Richard Englert and Temple University will find us at every turn, and we hope that you will join us.

We will continue standing at the forefront between Temple University and the larger North Philadelphia community. We will continue to hold meetings at the Church of the Advocate on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 6-7:30 p.m. We will continue to listen and amplify the needs and concerns of our residents and WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED!!!



Empty chairs belonging to Englert, Clarke and O'Connor, No Stadium No Deal Town Hall, March 1, 2018.

Why We March (cont.)

the home of council, the Rules Committee and the Mayor as well as all roads that lead to gentrification.

Speakers: Min. Muhammad - NAACP, Rev. Holston - POWER, Paula Peebles - NAN, Gail Loney - Lifelong Community Member, Stadium Stomper/NSND, Rev. Moore - Pastor of Tenth Memorial United Methodist Church, NSND

NAN = National Action Network

NSND = No Stadium No Deal Coalition

Call these Temple representatives and local politicians and tell them, "NO NEW STADIUM IN NORTH PHILLY!"

Darrell Clarke, City Council President
215-686-3442, 215-686-3443

Richard Englert, President of Temple University
215-204-7405

Patrick J. O'Connor, Chair, Temple Univ Board of Trustees
215-204-7308

Rep. Curtis Thomas, 181st Legislative District
(215) 560-3261

Sharif Street, State Senator District 3
(215) 227-6161

Gentrification = Colonization (cont.)

are not being asked to work with and for a new vision of their surrounding environment, they are being told by people who did not look like them, who don't care about their wants, needs, or concerns, and are then expected to buy into what's being offered. They ignore real human factors that should be considered in their offerings such as inclusion, consideration, camaraderie, and RESPECT! Respect for what was here before, respect of my culture; some of which is housed in your universities, and respect as an intelligent, articulate, educated, caring, sharing human being who just happens to live in this poor, disenfranchised community that your helped to support to this end. And as the communities take up issue with these institutions, our public officials sit back and act as if this does not concern all of them.

Beside the fact that they thought these communities would never push back, they also never expected so many communities to pull together to fight back and the issue would go beyond neighborhood boundaries, because the reality of the situation is one of gentrification as well.

This gentrification issue which correlates to colonization is not a natural process. It speaks directly to such is-

ues as how and who we value, educational, racial and economic inequality, and direct and indirect displacement.

Ultimately, it's about money and power. Who has it and who doesn't! And though we may not have any money, we have power. Power of the people, power to come together, and the power to make real change, that makes a difference.

Gentrification is a huge social justice/land sovereignty issue that needs to be addressed through progressive and strategic problem solving with input from a variety of resources such as the churches, city and state officials, communities, organizations, universities, and a host of economic and financial sources. No one can be excluded from this conversation because it affects us all. Because even though it's happening in my neighborhood now, it could be your neighborhood next! We are all under siege, but we don't have to be.

Revitalization is what should be happening. That would mean you actually want to work with me to make the neighborhood a better place for all who live there now and in the future. But we now know that's not what the gentrifiers/colonizers want, and that's not what this is!

**UP WITH THE COMMUNITY!
DOWN WITH THE STADIUM!**

Meet the Sanctuary Advocate Coalition:

The center, the beating heart of the Sanctuary Advocate Coalition is Carmela Apolonio Hernandez. Strong, fierce, and utterly determined, Carmela teaches us how to be human. She leads us in the practice of radical love and faith under the most challenging circumstances. Every day, she rises and demonstrates what it takes to fight, even with the most powerful nation on earth arrayed against us.

Carmela's children, Fidel, Keyri, Yoselyn, and Edwin are a constant source of inspiration for us. Their love and trust for Carmela, their resiliency and their faith in the Sanctuary Advocate Coalition, grounds us and provides focus for our work.

Profoundly committed to an expanded vision of sanctuary, the Sanctuary Advocate Coalition works to link the struggles of immigrant communities with the struggles of black communities. Carmela and her children are under the care of the Church of the Advocate, an historic black church in the heart of North Central Philadelphia, the second black church in the U.S. to provide sanctuary to a Mexican family.

We recognize that the sanctuary movement is a twenty-first century reverberation of the Underground Railroad. In the late nineteenth century, at a time when blacks were chattel and counted by the federal government as three-fifths of a person, the Underground Railroad asserted the humanity of slaves by facilitating perilous journeys toward freedom. Today, the sanctuary movement challenges the denial of personhood to immigrants and those in need of refuge. By recognizing the humanity of those labeled "alien" by the federal government,

by seeking to protect the safety and rights of immigrants and refugees, the sanctuary movement continues this legacy of resistance.

"1 in 3 black men and 1 in 6 Latinx men will spend time in prison, compared with only 1 in 17 white men."

We recognize the deadly and pernicious continuum of mass incarceration, mass deportation, and immigrant detention that targets and attempts to destroy black and brown communities. Black and Latinx men are imprisoned at a far greater rate than white men: 1 in 3 black men and 1 in 6 Latinx men will spend time in prison, compared with only 1 in 17 white men. Over 97 percent of all deportees are Latin American and Caribbean nationals, while Latinx women and children fleeing violence in their home countries and seeking asylum in the US are imprisoned in detention facilities, subject to being locked up apart from their children. This heightened level of state repression creates a tidal wave of crisis in the communities left behind. Families are often left impoverished by the loss of providers and traumatized by the loss of loved ones. These parallel experiences in systemic oppression in black and brown communities are devastating, but they are also an impetus for us to forge and deepen solidarity to build a just future. This solidarity has never been more urgent.

We are resolved, we are strengthened by each other, we are ready.

Sanctuary Advocate Coalition members:

Decarcerate PA
Free Migration Project
Juntos
Media Mobilizing Project
Philadelphia Federation of Teachers
Reclaim
Stadium Stompers
Youth Art & Self-Empowerment Project



Sanctuary Advocate Coalition logo, 2018.

We Make Our History: Stadium Stompers from 2015 to present

Stadium Stompers is a movement against Temple University's plan to build a 35,000-seat football stadium in North Central Philadelphia. This is the first time in recent history that students and residents have come together to fight on common ground. We believe that the long-term residents should be treated with respect. We call for an end to the stadium's plan and school-driven gentrification. Below is a timeline of events dating back to our beginnings in 2015. For current events, check out our Facebook page.

2015

In November we held our first meeting at the Church of the Advocate. Hundreds of people turned out from the community, Temple, and 15Now. In December, our numbers continued to grow with another big meeting at Church of the Advocate. We formed working committees (outreach, media, art & more) and made our first attempt to attend the Temple Board of Trustees meeting to discuss stadium proposal. We were met with resistance -- a blockade of Temple bike cops forcibly prevented our entrance to the meeting. Since we were not allowed inside to voice our concerns, we held a public rally outside to do so.

2016

We started 2016 with a petition drive collecting signatures against the stadium and with door-to-door

outreach in the community to spread the word about the stadium proposal. Many community residents had not heard of Temple's plans. Meanwhile, Temple University President Neil Theobald hosted a student-only meeting about the stadium. Community members were not invited.

Press from this action along with continued community outreach drew large numbers of community residents and students to Stadium Stompers. In March we held our first Community Forum & Town Hall. Temple's Board of Trustees and President were invited to come and hear community responses and concerns, but did not attend. On April 14th, 2016, Stadium Stompers participated in the Day of Rage walkout and day of action. Stadium Stompers, the Nurses Union, and Philly Coalition of REAL Justice marched in solidarity down Broad Street demanding a stop to stadium plans, a \$15 an hour minimum wage, and an end to Stop and Frisk.

In May, Stadium Stompers testified against the stadium proposal at the City Council Meeting and lobbied Council President Darrell Clarke. Clark promised to meet with Stompers but never followed through.

Through the summer we continued to pressure Temple and build momentum. Stadium Stompers had a strategic planning training with George Lakey of EQAT. In Au-

gust, we crashed President Theobald's BBQ and gave him awards for "World's Best Gentrifier" and for shirking his responsibilities to students and community members as president of a public university. We ended the summer with a team-building dinner and hangout, solidifying our resolve, dedication, and pride for our neighborhood and cause.

We began the fall by launching a letter-writing campaign. Each bi-monthly meeting began by writing and collecting letters. Also interrupted Temple's Homecoming Procession in collaboration with local clergy to bring awareness of the movement against the stadium.

In October we continued our bi-monthly meetings as we planned for our next strategic actions: Community Traffic Studies. Around this time, we also held a film screening in collaboration with Media Mobilizing Project about the campaign at the Church of the Advocate. "Up With Community" captured the history of North Central and the Stadium Stompers' fight. In December we launched the first Community Traffic Study where we held a press conference at Broad & Cecil B. Moore, blocking traffic to show what the congestion would be like if a stadium were built in the area.

2017

We began this year reflecting and building our base, expanding our outreach efforts, going

through a series of strategy sessions, and creating our own media. Through the spring, we pressured State Rep. Curtis Thomas to set up a meeting with Temple University President Richard Englert. After months of dodging and stalling, seven Stadium Stompers met with Englert, his office, and Rep. Thomas at the school's Sullivan Hall. At this meeting, Stompers asked for Temple to hold a meeting about the stadium in the North Central community in which it hopes to reside. Englert said he would "take it under advisement." No open community meeting has yet to take place.

In the fall we turned our attention back to the Temple Board of Trustees, staging a political theater outside Sullivan Hall during their October Board Meeting. Nine Stadium Stompers dressed up as main board members and revealed their ties to big banks, corporations, and the 1%.

2018

In January, 2018 Temple University announced the Stadium Plans would enter a public phase and attempt to get approval by the city. Frustrated with the lack of communication between the university and the neighborhood, a coalition was formed to create a community-led public discourse about the stadium. Stadium Stompers, NAACP, and the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity formed the No Stadium No Deal

March For Our Communities Route

- 🏠 Sullivan Hall
(Broad & Berks)
- ★ Girard Ave
(Broad and Girard)
- ★ The School District
of Philadelphia
(440 N Broad St)
- 🏛️ Octavius Valentine
Catto Monument
(City Hall)



After the March, stay at City Hall for Break The Cages, Fund The People Rally!

What: Break The Cages, Fund The People Rally

When: May 1st at 5:00pm

Where: Philadelphia City Hall

On May 1st, at 5pm at City Hall, The Philadelphia Coalition for a Just District Attorney is gathering our movement under a call to end mass incarceration and to reinvest in the communities most affected. For too long, "tough on crime" policies have deliberately targeted our black, brown, and working class communities -- ICE is tearing apart families, our youth are being criminalized in school and treated as adults by our overzealous criminal justice system, and the legal system's reliance on

cash bail continues to overcrowd our prisons, keeping the House of Corrections facility open despite being notorious for its decrepit conditions.

In the upcoming months, the School District of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Police and Prison Departments, and the First Judicial District will be presenting their fiscal year budgets to City Council for approval. On May 1st, both the Police and Prison Department will be presenting their budgets. We need Philadelphia City Council to support a "People's Budget", a budget that invests in education and communities instead of incarceration.

If you believe in funding the people over criminalization & prisons, we ask that you join us on this day.

UP WITH THE COMMUNITY! DOWN WITH THE STADIUM!