

UP WITH THE COMMUNITY



DOWN WITH THE STADIUM

February 2021

www.stadiumstompers.org

Issue #4

Historical Commission Cuts Plans for a North Philly Police Station

By Jacqueline Wiggins and josh graupera

In June, 2020, The Philadelphia Historical Commission voted against plans for a new police station in North Philly's 22nd District. The district covers an area from 10th Street to 33rd Street and Poplar Street to Lehigh Avenue. The vote came in response to a wave of community pressure on the presence of police in black neighborhoods. The application for the station was called "inadequate" and denied by a 7-2 vote with one abstention.

North Philly community members and Stompers Steering Committee members Jaqueline Wiggins and Gail Loney alongside The 32nd Democratic Ward RCO chairperson Judith Robinson organized a neighborhood meeting to raise awareness of the plans and how to contact the historical commission and the city. While the community meeting was held on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at "La Woods of Susquehanna",

2012-22 W. Susquehanna Avenue in the afternoon Stompers member Kate Goodman created a set of graphics that went viral. The Stompers asked the public to contact the Historical Commission and Councilmember Darrell Clarke to deny the proposed plans. On the ground and social media organizing ensured that a wave of protest flooded the Historical Commissions phone lines. It was the first time the commission denied a plan for something other than technical historic preservation issues and took time to LISTEN to the genuine concerns of the people.

See our statement to Philadelphia City Council later on in the newsletter.

Things were bad before the pandemic...

By Wende Marshall

But now we are in a moment of intense social crisis. We are struggling with the rampant spread of a deadly coronavirus, and a vaccine effort that remains lackluster. Unemployment has skyrocketed since the beginning of the pandemic, and many of the jobs to be had are low wage and without benefits, both resulting in a sharp increase in hunger and food insecurity. Homelessness is on the rise, as are the numbers of homeowners and renters unable to make mortgage and rent payments. Medical bills and student loan debt are piling up. Despite the unprecedented upsurge in protest and rebellion last summer, unarmed black people continue to be murdered by police. Black school children in Philadelphia face crumbling school buildings without adequate ventilation, making in person schooling impossible in a pandemic.

All of this occurs in the context of a rapacious capitalist system that is rooted in greed, and that puts profit above the needs of the people. The condition of Black workers in the US—long the canaries in the coal mine—portends the further elimination of human labor at the point of production. This is the basis of our current suffering: an economic system that is designed to enrich a tiny minority without regard for the lives and well being of the majority.

Meanwhile, Temple University continues to disregard the humanity of its North Central neighbors by promoting the development of unaffordable housing geared toward students.

It doesn't have to be this way! We can come together in this period of crisis to begin solving our problems through community-based mutual aid,

eviction defense and organizing campaigns to get what we need to thrive as a community.

We are Stadium Stompers: the coalition of community residents and Temple students that halted the University's attempt to build a 35,000 seat football stadium in this historically Black community. We knew that the stadium would fuel development and increase gentrification and displacement, so we fought it for three years and though we won this battle, the war rages on! Temple cannot be trusted and we must stay vigilant.

Stompers City Council Statement on Police Station

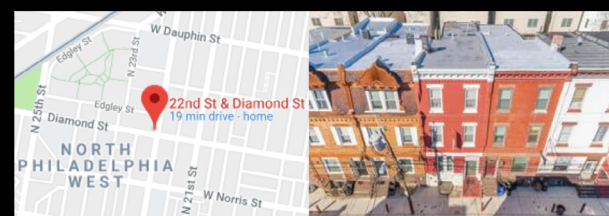
By josh graupera

Stompers Steering Committee member josh graupera testified to City Council on a city-wide hearing on proposed increases to the Philadelphia Police Department's budget in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent uprising that took place across the city.

Hi my name is Josh and I'm a member of Stadium Stompers. We're known as a campaign against Temple's stadium and the gentrification of North Central Philadelphia, but at our core we are a land justice organization. We have been successfully fighting to stop Temple University from building

THE PHILADELPHIA POLICE WANT A NEW STATION AT 21ST & DIAMOND

...in the heart of Historic Black North Central Philly



TELL DARRELL CLARKE & THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION:

- No Backroom Deals!
- No Police Station in the Diamond Street Historical District!



On Friday June 12th at 9am, the Philly Historical Commission will meet. Before then:

Contact the Historical Commission & Councilmember Darrell Clarke:

darrell.clarke@phila.gov & 215-686-3442/3443

jon.farnum@phila.gov & 215-686-7660

TELL THEM:

Deny the PPD approval for a new station in the Diamond Street Historic District

Stadium Stompers call-out graphics by Kate Goodman

a 35,000 seat football stadium in the middle of our neighborhood for 5 years. During our fight, we realized that developments like these are not really just about the buildings, but they're about control. Developments like these bring along an increase in policing and surveillance. And Temple University already has the 4th largest police department in the state.

Our continual fight against the Temple stadium, in essence, is fueled by the fundamental belief that an investment in a large sports complex would not benefit the residents, workers, or students of North Central Philadelphia now or in the long term. Like the stadium proposal, continued investment in the Philadelphia police department would not benefit Philadelphians, but would continue to exacerbate violence and incarceration in our communities.

Our nonacceptance of the stadium extends to this proposed police budget increase, and the proposed new police station which extends from 21st to 22nd and Diamond Streets. We understand that the concern for public safety in our community is real, but we strongly disagree that a new police station in our neighborhood, or any increased policing will make us safer. North Philly has been torn apart by mass incarceration, systemic racism and rampant gentrification driven by a search for profit. We reject the idea that what our community needs is more police, more surveillance, and more arrests. And we would ask City Council & mayor Kenney to fund the services we do need instead of cutting them in the midst of a pandemic. If we want real safety, then invest in people - not stadiums, not police stations, but people.

Stompers Chat with Two Mutual Aid Groups

By Blanche Brown

As you may have noticed, during the crisis of Covid 19 and the failure of our government to care for its people, mutual aid groups sprung up across the city. Many are still going strong and are here to stay. We wanted to get a better sense of what mutual aid means to these groups and what their operations look like.

Interview with a representative from Mutual Aid Philly

Mutual Aid Philly started in march 2020. They focus on matching volunteers to requests for support. Very quickly, there was more need for support than the small group of volunteers could feasibly meet. On their website there are two types of request forms for support, one for cash assistance and one for non cash assistance. The request forms are available on alternate Mondays. You can read more about the guidelines for submitting a request from their website : <https://mutualaidphilly.com/en/> You can also request by phone at 215-798-0222 on Monday beginning at 12pm. Despite its name, MutualAid Philly focuses on serving south Philly and center city, with an emphasis on the spanish speaking immigrant community. Mutual Aid Philly works closely with Juntos. However some of their services are available across the city such as the cash assistance program.

What is mutual aid?

It is a community based model based reciprocity. We all have something to give and receive. Mutual aid does not determine what other people need and want but instead prioritizes communication. An important and famous example would be the Black Panther's Free Breakfast program.

Biggest Learning Points?

That tech literacy and tech accessibility can be a huge barrier, especially for elders. So, using a google form, like we do, is already a barrier for some people. We've also learned a lot about consensus building.

Interview with Representative from Bunny Hop Philly

Bunny Hop captures food waste around the city and packs over 350 produce boxes weekly. Although they initially started in April by distributing food boxes out of public parks, due to the winter weather they have switched to delivery. Many Bunny Hop volunteers have connections to the restaurant industry. Although they are currently at capacity with delivery distribution, there are two walk-up sites where people can pick up produce: the ICA at 36th and Walnut on Mondays, 1-3 and Franny Lou's Porch at York and Coral on Tuesdays, 1-3.

What is mutual aid?

It's a volunteer based reciprocity system where people come together and share in the collective effort to take care of one another. It is mutually beneficial for the people involved with it. Everyone gives and receives something. Black and brown communities have always had to practice mutual aid to survive white supremacist culture. That is what inspires us. If you look into any marginalized community, they have been practicing mutual aid for as long as they have existed.

How does mutual aid avoid the pitfall of charity?

Charity is framed around a structure that perpetuates and serves the system that keeps people under oppression. Mutual aid does not. We often frame it as reparations work since many of our drivers are white. Rather than existing within the nonprofit industrial complex, like charities, Bunny Hop is completely community funded and volunteer based.

Best practices?

With the public distributions, anyone we see we ask them if they need free food. It is important to withhold judgement. It doesn't matter if someone looks affluent. Someone may drive a Mercedes but needs food that day. Everyone deserves food and access to it. We also work to ensure that everyone involved understands the power dynamics at play. There is a lot of de-escalation work.

Bunny Hop accepts donations through website, cashapp, or venmo

COVID Relief Survey

Stadium Stompers is collecting information to understand how we are faring in the pandemic. Are you behind on rent or mortgage payments? We want to hear about it. Are you not able to afford enough food to feed yourself and your family? Please let us know by filling out this brief survey. You can find the survey here:

<https://www.stadiumstompers.org/survey>

Have you been vaccinated?

The New York Times recently reported that "In the first weeks of the rollout, 12 percent of people inoculated in Philadelphia have been Black, in a city whose population is 44 percent Black." We, as Stompers, find this unacceptable. And want to highlight the work of the Black Doctors Consortium.

The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium (BDCC) has begun distributing Phase 1b coronavirus vaccines to Philadelphia residents in accordance with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. Vaccines are by appointment only. Philadelphia residents wanting the vaccine can register at:

www.blackdoctorsconsortium.com

Or by contacting BDCC offices at 484-270-6200. COVID-19 Testing is still a major necessity in identifying one's status. The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium will continue offering barrier-free COVID-19 Test while supplies last.

STADIUM STOMPERS DEMANDS:

NO NEW STADIUM IN NORTH PHILLY, EVER!

STOP FOR-PROFIT DEVELOPMENT AND DISPLACEMENT IN NORTH CENTRAL

TEMPLE INVEST MILLION FOR THE STADIUM INTO PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY CONTROL OF THE UNIVERSITY



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