

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley
Community Development Activities – West Willow
January 2019 – December 2019

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley's Community Development Team works alongside residents, neighborhood groups, and community partners to guide a long-term participatory neighborhood planning process using the Quality of Life Framework as a guide. We provide opportunities for residents to come together and participate in both celebrating what makes their neighborhood unique and making positive changes along the way. In addition to building community, the neighborhood planning process allows residents to identify assets within their community and work toward the ultimate outcome of improving the quality of life in their neighborhood. Our efforts are currently focused in the West Willow and Sugarbrook neighborhoods in Ypsilanti Township.

New West Willow Neighborhood Association

We were overjoyed to recognize The New West Willow Neighborhood Association as our Partner of the Year at our annual Bid to Build fundraising event on May 4, 2019! Jo Ann McCollum, New West Willow Neighborhood Association President, was also featured in our video at the event. Check out the video here:



https://www.dropbox.com/s/x45pwgg1rrtqgn2/M2309_FD_HFH%202019_043019_5p_E0_JL.mp4?dl=0

West Willow Tool Lending Library

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley partnered with the New West Willow Neighborhood Association to construct a Tool Lending Library (TLL) in the West Willow neighborhood in Ypsilanti Township, MI. For several years, residents have discussed the need for access to tools to help them maintain their properties and reduce blight in the community. The Tool Lending Library provides items such as lawn mowers, snow blowers, ladders, gardening items, basic tool kits, and wheelbarrows for residents to borrow for free.

The TLL was built with funding from Republic Services as part of their National Neighborhood Promise 2019 grant awarded to Habitat, and other project partners included Ypsilanti Township government and the INFORMS team from University of Michigan, who helped with the interior layout design. Volunteers from the neighborhood and Habitat worked alongside Republic Services employees, Concordia University students, and Mathematica Policy Research employees on construction days. The tools that are available were purchased through a grant from Lowe's, and local residents and supporters have expressed interest in donating tools.

A neighborhood resident is volunteering his time to be the manager, and for the first few months of operation, the TLL will be open 1 – 2 days per week. Additional days will be added as other volunteers become available. With over 1100 single family homes in West Willow, we hope to have at least 150 residents borrow tools in the first year.

Please see the links below for recent local media coverage on the West Willow Tool Lending Library.

Link to Concentrate Media's On the Ground Ypsi news story:

<https://www.seconwavemedia.com/concentrate/features/toollendinglibrary0520.aspx>

Link to On the Ground Ypsi WEUM radio segment:

<https://www.wemu.org/post/otgypsi-new-tool-lending-library-works-ypsilanti-residents>



Partners: New West Willow Neighborhood Association and Residents, Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley, Charter Township of Ypsilanti, Republic Services, INFORMS at University of Michigan, Lowe's Carpenter Road Store

Volunteer Groups: Republic Services employees, West Willow residents, Concordia University students, Mathematica Policy Research employees, Habitat volunteers

3-28-19 Team on site of future Tool Lending Library



4-19-19 Perimeter staked out



7-20-19 Foundataion slab prep



7-24-19 Foundation slab prep



7-26-19 Foundation slab poured



8-16-19 Slab dried, lumber delivered



8-17-19 First walls up



8-24-19 All four walls up



9-19-19 Roof on & siding started



9-26-19 Garage door installed



10-10-19 Interior office



10-15-19 Interior shelving and organization



Partners & Volunteers

Republic Services employees & Future Habitat Homeowners Build Day 8-17-19



Check out the video of the first wall being raised here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=BiI-GGHYxfY>

Concordia University Students and West Willow Residents Build Day 8-24-19



Mathematica Policy Research Build Day 9-7-19



9-26-19 Inside selfie with team partners from Republic Services, INFORMS, NWWNA, Habitat



10-10-19 Insulating the office and hanging sheeting on the walls



10-15-19 University of Michigan INFORMS students assemble tools, build shelves, clean, create interior layout organization, and start loading in tools.



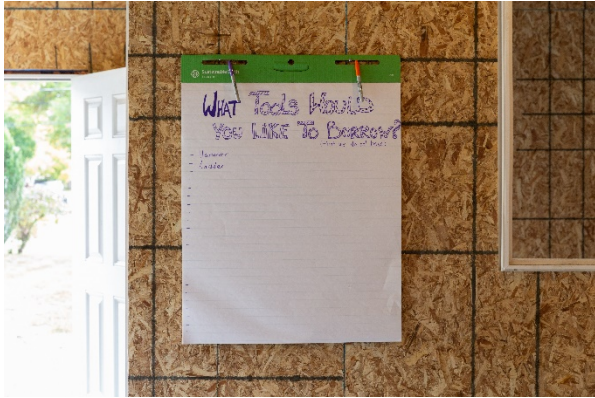
10-21-19 Community and Habitat volunteers build a workbench and finish wall storage system





10-24-19 Grand Opening Celebration & Ribbon Cutting (70 Attendees)





The TLL was officially open for its first day on Saturday November 16, 2019!

Darrell, Jo Ann & Grace learn the inventory system



Darrell & Jo Ann ready to open!



Ford Thirty Under 30 Program

We were excited to be selected to participate in Ford's 30 Under 30 Program, a Philanthropic Leadership Training Program in which 30 Ford employees (fellows) under the age of 30 partner with six non-profits over the course of a year to use design thinking to create potential solutions to tackle issues in one thematic area. The 2019 theme is Neighborhood Development.



On March 1 Sarah and Ceara attended a Design Thinking Workshop that gave us a glimpse into the Design Thinking process that the Ford fellows used to assist us with an issue/topic in one of our communities. On March 27 we met the five Ford fellows who were assigned to work with us and NWWNA.



In April, the Ford fellows developed exercises to get to know the West Willow neighborhood better. They created “The Story of You” kits and distributed them to 45 residents. The kits included very creative activities such as “Draw 3 things that you want to see in your neighborhood”, “When you walk through your neighborhood, what do you hear”,

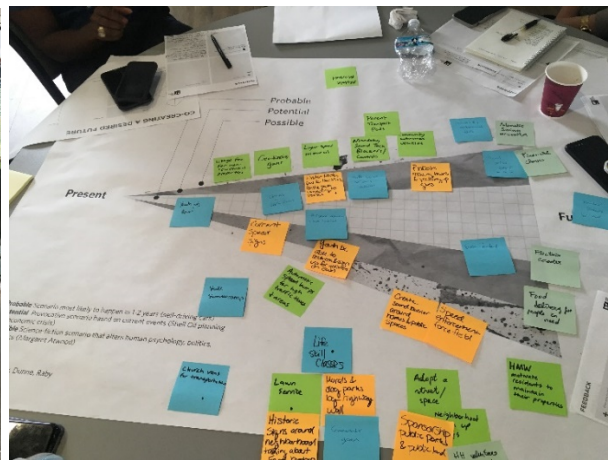


“Name a song that describes West Willow”, “Write a love letter or breakup letter to West Willow.” On May 20, they presented initial data they gathered through the kits to residents at their Neighborhood Association.

On Thursday May 23, Sarah & Ceara attended the second Thirty Under 30 session in Detroit along with Jo Ann McCollum, President of the New West Willow Neighborhood Association. This was an opportunity for each of us to share our vision of the future of West Willow and engage in a co-creation session. These exercises were a lot of fun: we envisioned a future (40 years from now) where homes all have solar panels and are self-sufficient, where gardens grow on rooftops, where litigation is replaced by peacemaking and where generations come together. We also dreamed of a future where Habitat was physically present in the neighborhood by having a space in the community center.



Ford fellows, Jo Ann from NWWNA, and us



Brainstorming exercise by the Ford fellows



Creating our ideal West Willow Neighborhood!

On June 28, the Ford fellows in the Thirty Under 30 Program presented ideas to improve the quality of life in West Willow. The purpose of this conversation was to gain input from the community and take the brainstorming process one step further. The following ideas were discussed: (1) Building and renovating the community center; (2) The purchase of a bus; (3) Bringing entertainment businesses to the neighborhood; (4) Signs to slow down drivers; (5) Beautification: adopt a street; (6) Running path and bike path in the park; (7) Increase lighting in the park for additional safety; (8) Mobile food market. After careful consideration, it was decided that their focus project would be re-development of the West Willow Community Resource Center.



On August 22, Jo Ann from NWWNA and Sarah spent another great day with the Ford Fellows as they shared with us their vision for tackling the community aspiration of re-developing the West Willow Community Resource Center.



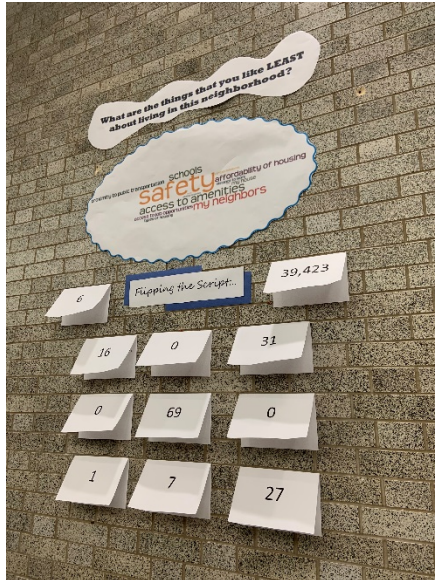
On October 17, we attended their Showcase at Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn. Each of the six teams of Ford Fellows created displays to highlight the work they have been doing with their neighborhood partners. Our team of Fellows: Reinald, Cameron, Dadrien, Rachel, and

Elyssa created an amazing display of the journey they travelled in learning about West Willow and the desires of residents, resulting in a vision for re-developing the West Willow Community Resource Center. They presented their project to Ford executives, including Jim Hackett and William Clay Ford, Jr.



A ping-pong game highlighted the vast number of stakeholders in West Willow.





Guests wrote on “bricks” what they would like in a community center, and stats about the neighborhood were shared.



The Ford Fellows will continue to work with the New West Willow Neighborhood Association and Habitat to further discuss rebuilding the West Willow Community Resource Center. In November, several of us met with Ypsilanti Township’s Planning & Development Coordinator as well as the Township’s Consulting Representative to discuss next steps. A meeting with community partners who would potentially like to be involved is being set for the first week in December.

Community Clean-Up Day

We participated in the West Willow Community Clean-Up Day on May 18, 2019. We planted flowers at the neighborhood entrance signs, West Willow Park, and at the Community Resource Center; prepared the community garden for planting; and cleaned up and put down mulch in flower beds.





REPUBLIC SERVICES

Our first two West Willow Dumpster Days in partnership with Republic Services took place on Saturday June 1 and Saturday June 8 from 12-3:00. Residents of West Willow volunteered to help other residents unload their unwanted items in the three 30-yard dumpsters donated by Republic Services. On the first day, the dumpsters were all full within 1.5 hours!! On the second day, we were able to pick up items from homes of older adults who did not have the



means to get the items to the dumpsters on their own. Residents expressed so much gratitude for this service, especially those who had recently experienced flooded basements. Republic Services donated an additional 30-yard dumpster to enable us to finish the

Dumpster Day pick-ups on Saturday June 22. We were very proud to see a team of five West Willow residents step into a leadership role and organize the final pick-ups and disposal of their neighbors' waste without the assistance of Habitat. Well done West Willow and a great example of resident engagement and leadership! Over the three dumpster days, a total of seven 30-yard dumpsters were filled from 50 residents who brought 74 loads of trash! Thank you to Republic Services for providing this important service to the West Willow community!

WEST WILLOW DUMPSTER DAYS

**Saturday, June 1
&
Saturday, June 8**

12 - 3 pm

at Whitehead Memorial Church
of God in Christ (2069 Tyler)





On Saturday October 11, 30 Wells Fargo volunteers helped three Veteran homeowners in West Willow beautify their homes by cleaning gutters, installing gutter guards, building a handrail, painting and staining, removing a clothes line pole in concrete, installing downspout extensions and splash blocks, brush removal, and landscaping.



We cleared a forest of shrubs, trees, and weeds from Mr. Paulson's back yard and landscaped his front yard



At Tim & Renee's home, we built a handrail at their front porch, installed gutter guards and downspout extensions, and removed an old clothesline secured in cement in the back yard.





For Delbert & Dona, we stained their front porch and fencing, painted their shed, and did some landscaping.



On Sunday October 27, NWWNA hosted a Trunk or Treat event at the Community Resource Center. Residents brought their trunks, and throughout the night neighborhood kids were able to go from trunk to trunk trick-or-treating in costumes. They also made s'mores over an open fire. The event was coordinated by Renee, a West Willow resident who participated in the Wells Fargo Exterior Day earlier in October. The event was a huge success, attracting many folks!