



BLUEPRINT BULLETIN

FALL 2009

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the “Blueprint Bulletin”. This is the newsletter for the residents of the Blueprint Community neighborhood, which includes LaSalle St., Monroe St., Washington St., and all the many streets in between. We hope this newsletter will serve as a valuable communication tool to keep everyone informed as the Blueprint for Revitalization plans take shape and evolve.

My name is Jay Jarrett and I am the Neighborhood Manager for this project. My job is to work with neighborhood residents, businesses, non-profit groups, police, codes, and government agencies to implement the strategies identified in the Blueprint plan and ensure that the concerns and needs of the neighborhood residents are being addressed. During the past four weeks, I have been meeting with residents and business owners throughout the neighborhood. If I have not already visited you, I look forward to doing so over the next few months. If I haven't knocked on your door yet, give me a call and I will make it a point to stop by and introduce myself. My office phone number is 784-9373 ext 121 and if you prefer to communicate via email, my address is jjarrett@columbiacountyhousing.com.

There are a lot of exciting things being planned for your neighborhood and we can't wait to get rolling. The last few years have been spent laying the financial groundwork and outlining the ideas and goals. Now is the time to start reaping the benefits of that hard work by getting involved and having a positive impact right where you live. It won't be easy but nothing this important ever is. Come to a neighborhood meeting, join the Neighborhood Watch, volunteer to plant flowers at Sponsler Park, just get involved. Any and all help is needed and appreciated. I sincerely hope you will join with your neighbors to make the Blueprint for Revitalization a success.



4 OBJECTIVES for REVITALIZATION

Crime Prevention: The Neighborhood manager has met with the Berwick Police Department on a regular basis since September 1. These meetings have included discussions of strategies to combat the crime issues we face on LaSalle St. as well as plans for a Neighborhood Watch. In addition, we determined the need to partner with borough code officials to concentrate our efforts on problem properties. In fact, code officers have participated in many of our meetings. We have also begun to meet with a small group of neighborhood residents as well. Our hope is to expand this group to include any and all interested residents as the Neighborhood Watch gets off the ground in the next few months.

Homeowner Rehab Assistance: As part of the Blueprint for Revitalization, the Columbia County Housing Corp. has received a \$650,000 grant to be used for the rehabilitation and repair of 30 homes in the neighborhood. The repairs can include anything from a new furnace, new windows and siding, or repairing the front porch just to name a few. To date, we have identified and inspected 5 homes and hope to start work soon. Watch for the contractors in the neighborhood and feel free to stop and see what's going on.

Redevelopment Opportunities: Please understand that any major redevelopment projects will be a few years down the road. This is the most expensive part of the Blueprint for Revitalization and it can be difficult to accomplish. We have taken a giant step in the right direction by purchasing 3 properties at the tax sale in September. This purchase must now work its way through the legal system and may not be resolved for months. The Columbia County Housing Corp. currently owns a vacant lot in the 400 block of LaSalle St. and is pursuing opportunities to purchase additional properties as they become available. We will keep you updated as to our progress as we move forward.

Beautification: The fourth component of the Blueprint for Revitalization is the beautification of the neighborhood. This area of the plan will require a great deal of thought and input from the neighborhood residents. Typical beautification initiatives include cleaning up properties, adding street trees and other landscaping, and the installation of more attractive street lights. The implementation of these initiatives will have to include the cooperation and support of Berwick Council.

Blueprint COMMUNITIES

Blueprint Success Stories

A special Thank You to Tom and Mike Gray of Bill Gray and Sons Furniture for the outstanding work they did in sprucing up their warehouse on LaSalle St. Their efforts are much appreciated by the Columbia County Housing Corp. and the residents of the LaSalle St. neighborhood. This type of commitment to the neighborhood is commendable and a great way to start our revitalization efforts on LaSalle St. Thanks again Tom and Mike.



Sponsler Park Update – The borough of Berwick has promised \$40,000 for improvements at Sponsler Park. The planned upgrades are based on the ideas generated by the Seda Cog study and include a great deal of input from neighborhood residents. While we understand that \$40,000 is not enough money to revamp the entire park, it is a great starting point. Thank you Berwick Council for your support of and commitment to the Blueprint for Revitalization.

