



Conversations about Redevelopment Efforts in East Baltimore Spark Interest from Community and Hopkins

Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD), the Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC), and East Baltimore Development Inc (EBDI)—what do these organizations have in common? From affordable new and rehabilitated housing opportunities to commercial development, and from workforce development and job creation to support for youth, each is working to redevelop East Baltimore and to improve the health of East Baltimore neighborhoods.

On Wednesday, November 12, 2008, the UHI held “Redesigning East Baltimore,” a symposium that brought together leaders of

redevelopment efforts, residents, elected officials, and members of the Johns Hopkins community to discuss the redevelopment efforts currently underway in East Baltimore. Panelists included Bishop Douglas Miles of the Koinonia Baptist Church and clergy co-chair of BUILD; Edward Sabatino, executive director of HEBCAC; and Jack Shannon, president and CEO of EBDI. Dr. Philip Leaf, senior associate director of the UHI, moderated the discussion.

Guided walking tours through the redevelopment areas were offered before the symposium. Participants were able to visit BUILD’s model home in East Oliver, explore HEBCAC’s revitalization of



Symposium panelists from left to right: Jack Shannon (EBDI), Edward Sabatino (HEBCAC), Bishop Douglas Miles (BUILD)

the Monument Street retail corridor, and tour EBDI’s ongoing development effort in the 31-acre “Phase 1” area, including the new Science + Technology Park and mixed-income housing neighborhood.

Continued on page 2

Meet the UHI’s Community-University Collaborating Committee (CUCC)



A native of Baltimore, Ralph Moore has clearly chosen a life of service to his hometown. As director of the Community

Center at St. Frances Academy, an independent Catholic high school with African American roots located on East Chase Street, Mr. Moore works to bring the strength of the Academy to the surrounding community.

In addition to serving on the UHI’s CUCC, Mr. Moore serves on the boards of Sojourner Douglass College and the Citizens Planning and Housing Association. Previously he has worked for St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center, the Center for Poverty Solutions, and the Office of the Chaplain at Johns Hopkins University.

Mr. Moore was raised in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of West Baltimore and graduated from Loyola Blakefield High School in Towson and Johns Hopkins University. He currently lives in Charles Village with his wife, Dana, and his dog, Barry. He has two daughters, Zahra Jamila Moore and Nia Salima Moore. Mr. Moore also has a two year old granddaughter who Moore says “calls me Pop Pop and runs my life.”

Mr. Moore brings a special perspective to the CUCC as a lifelong resident of Baltimore. In May 2007, he generously joined a group of community leaders at the UHI’s Baltimore Research Day to choose recipients of the first UHI Policy Impact Awards.

The CUCC provides guidance and assistance to the UHI by ensuring that the priorities of the UHI are in line with those of the University and the community.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Highlights from Recent Events</i>	1-2
<i>News and Updates</i>	3
<i>Dates to Remember</i>	4

HIGHLIGHTS AND NEWS

- 2008 UHI Small Grants recipient, Vignetta Charles, talks about her research on homeless youth in Baltimore (see page 3)

Upcoming events:

UCLA’s Dr. Gail Wyatt to lead second UHI Race and Research Symposium, April 1

UHI Reverse Research Day set for March 13
(see page 4)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT EVENTS

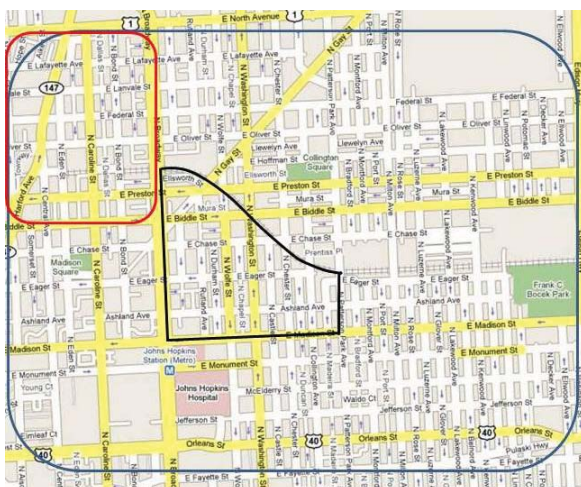
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Continued from page 1

While the EBDI initiative is perhaps the most visible of the redevelopment efforts, extending over an 88-acre portion of East Baltimore, the emerging community is a result of multiple organizations working to restructure and improve the living environment. The symposium allowed leaders from three of these organizations to share their current activities, accomplishments, and future plans. Presentations from each panelist followed by questions and discussion from the audience demonstrated the commitment of each organization to work together to improve East Baltimore. Dr. Leaf reminded the audience that this was not a onetime discussion but one that would continue over time. He asked, “How do we come together? How do we find out what is working and support that to have this benefit as many people living in East Baltimore as possible?”

Comments from the audience included questions about job creation, business growth and synergy among the multiple efforts. Panelists acknowledged the need for collaboration as a way to ensure success in East Baltimore. The afternoon served as a reminder that the efforts in East Baltimore capitalize on existing assets like churches, neighborhood organizations, Johns Hopkins, and East Baltimore residents. As Jack Shannon described lessons learned by EBDI, he noted the importance of residents. “Individuals and families who are impacted by the work that we are collectively doing are depending on us. The eyes of the nation are upon us because the work that we are doing is becoming a national model,” he said.

Visit the UHI website at www.jhsph.edu/urbanhealth to view the symposium in its entirety.



Sites of redevelopment efforts in East Baltimore:

— BUILD, — HEBCAC, — EBDI footprint

Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD)

BUILD, a thirty-one year old city-wide organization, encouraged the city to establish an affordable housing trust fund to support the development of moderate income housing in Baltimore. Today, with financial support from the housing trust fund, the federal government, and the corporate community, BUILD is working toward its goal of building 1500 homes for moderate income families in the East Oliver neighborhood of East Baltimore. While still in its beginning stages, BUILD has sold all the houses that have been constructed in East Oliver, near the northwest border of the EBDI footprint. The organization has also been able to buy businesses unsuitable for positive community development, including a liquor store located in the middle of the neighborhood. By eliminating vacant and dilapidated buildings and creating opportunities for home ownership, BUILD is “part of the rebirth of East Baltimore in a way that will compliment what is going on with EBDI and will link with other projects underway throughout the city,” says Bishop Miles. BUILD is also known for working with the state of Maryland to pass the first living wage legislation in the world, requiring city service contractors to pay a minimum wage that meets the living wage.

For more information about BUILD visit <http://www.buildiaf.org/>.

Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC)

Founded in 1994 by Johns Hopkins University, city and state officials, and area residents, HEBCAC is a nonprofit community development organization that works to improve neighborhoods and address the physical infrastructure and human capital issues faced by residents of East Baltimore. Its mission is to work with residents and other stakeholders to improve neighborhoods in the 220-block area bounded by Edison Highway, Aisquith Street, North Avenue, and Fayette Street. HEBCAC is responsible for the creation of the Weinberg Community Center, located at 901 North Milton Avenue. The renovated building has been transformed from an empty shell into a community asset that houses service providers such as Fresh Start, The Caroline Center, Moveable Feast, The Black Educational Aids Project, Episcopal Community Services of Maryland, among others. The Center now serves as an anchor for another HEBCAC project, the Eager Street Housing Development, which is a housing project that aims to improve the area immediately surrounding the community center. HEBCAC also runs the Youth Opportunities (YO!) Center which helps out-of-school youth reconnect with education through on-site GED classes and offers career training and connections to employment. Involvement from community members is center to all HEBCAC endeavors, and especially for Dee’s Place, a peer-led recovery support program for former substance abusers. Mr. Sabatino credits HEBCAC’s accomplishments to understanding an overall strategy for success that combines realistic goals and meaningful collaborations. He says, “You must be absolutely committed to involvement—real and meaningful involvement—from people who are affected by the work you do.”

For more information about HEBCAC visit <http://www.hebcac.org/>.

East Baltimore Development Inc (EBDI)

EBDI is a nonprofit partnership of private and public entities charged with leading and managing a \$1.8 billion revitalization of an 88-acre portion of East Baltimore. Created as a result of discussions between community leaders, elected officials, Johns Hopkins, and others, EBDI was established in late 2002 after the initial planning stage for the Science + Technology Park at Johns Hopkins. In addition to the Science + Technology Park, the first phase of development plans include housing units for mixed-income buyers and renters, parks, and a variety of retail services. The second phase of development will be anchored by an innovative community school campus. Working in collaboration with Johns Hopkins, the school will provide a coordinated set of services for after school and summer learning, family supports, and school-based health care and education. While Mr. Shannon admits that EBDI has encountered challenges, he is confident that the young organization will help to create an economically and socially diverse community to ensure a brighter future for all who live and work in this community.

For more information about EBDI visit <http://www.ebdi.org/>.

Highlight on Small Grants Recipients: Understanding the Younger Face of Homelessness—Baltimore’s Homeless Youth

When Vignetta Charles invited researchers, youth service providers, and advocates to a working conference in late 2007 for estimating Baltimore’s homeless youth population, she expected multiple perspectives and constructive feedback—what emerged was not only a comprehensive strategy for counting homeless youth in Baltimore but evidence of a need for qualitative research to describe homeless youth.

With funding from the UHI Small Grants Program, Ms. Charles, in collaboration with Ross Pologe, executive director of Fellowship of Lights, a homeless youth advocacy organization in Baltimore, conducted focus groups to explore how youth define homelessness, pathways to youth homelessness, how homeless youth access services, and how to formulate research and survey questions in the language and format best understood and most accessible to young people in Baltimore.

Ms. Charles, a doctoral candidate at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, has been working with at-risk youth throughout her professional career. She notes that the definition of homelessness used in all of her research is broad. “It includes the traditional view of homelessness, where the youth are living in a shelter or on the street. But it also includes youth who are ‘doubled-up’ or ‘house jumping’, which we call ‘unstably housed’,” says Ms. Charles. “These youth are living temporarily with friends, kin, or lovers. This situation is very unstable and is really common. It impacts school, work, and overall health. It also exposes youth to vulnerable and sometimes dangerous situations. Once I used this broader definition of homelessness that characterizes the residential instability of many at-risk youth, I realized that I had been working with homeless youth for 10 years and just not calling it that.”

Her research in Baltimore began when she was hired by the Center for Adolescent Health at the Bloomberg School of Public Health to conduct research on youth homelessness. The Center became interested in the issue after a four-part series was printed in the Baltimore Sun about two young men who had spent their entire senior year in high school in unstable housing. Their stories resonated with the Center for Adolescent Health, and others at Hopkins working with unstably housed youth. “It was clear that we needed to learn more about these youth and their situations, including the circumstances that led to them, in order to serve them better,” says Ms. Charles.

The focus groups were conducted between April and June 2008 and included youth ages 13 – 24 from the Center for Adolescent Health’s Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), the Youth Opportunity (YO!) Center, and youth living at the Carriage House, a transitional housing program in Baltimore. Carriage House

youth were chosen because they have all been homeless; youth from the YO! Center were chosen because they are at risk for homelessness and unstable housing. Members of the YAC provided perspectives on how to frame the concept of “homelessness” with a diverse group of youth. The group discussions focused on youth unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and, in many cases, youth caring for children of their own.

While Ms. Charles reports that much of the information gained from the focus groups was consistent with other research about homeless youth—specifically her finding that youth don’t define themselves as “homeless” in the traditional sense—she made some surprising discoveries. For instance, Ms. Charles was alarmed by the prevalence of unstable housing for Baltimore’s youth. “No matter what group I was talking to, the youth had experienced residential instability themselves or knew at least one youth who was very close with them who had experienced homelessness and unstable housing,” she says.

As a result of this research, Ms. Charles and her colleagues at the Center for Adolescent Health have published two briefs describing findings from the focus groups. Ms. Charles has also led trainings and presentations, facilitated by the Baltimore Youth Homeless Initiative and Ross Pologe, to youth-serving practitioners, including teachers, health educators, and social workers.

Ms. Charles says that the work is just beginning to inform strategies for estimation. Through an indirect estimation technique called the “sisterhood method” she surveyed fifth graders about the housing situations of their siblings. “The work from the focus groups directly informed the survey I gave to the fifth graders. Nowhere on the survey is the word ‘homeless’ used. In addition, the survey uses specific language provided by the youth to describe some of the circumstances that might lead to homelessness,” she says. Ms. Charles will continue to work in collaboration with the Center for Adolescent Health to implement strategies for estimating Baltimore’s homeless youth population.

“We’re all working toward a common goal to help young people. It’s grants like these that allow us to narrow our efforts to a singular goal in a truly collaborative fashion, and put any differences aside to focus on the youth. The funding allowed me to interact more actively with my community partner, Ross Pologe, as well as getting more one-on-one interaction with Baltimore’s youth,” say Ms. Charles.

For more information about this research, please contact Vignetta Charles at vcharles@jhsph.edu.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Date	Event	
Tuesdays, 12pm - 1:30pm (3 rd Tuesday of month)	UHI Third Tuesday Seminar	Upcoming Seminar Dates: Feb 17, Mar 17, Apr 21
Every Wednesday 11am - 1pm	Community Health Workers at Northeast Market for blood pressure screenings	Northeast Market 2101 E. Monument Street
Wednesdays 10am - 2pm	Workforce Wednesdays (1 st and 3 rd Wednesday of month)	EBDI Community Center 1731 E. Chase Street
Monday, February 2 4:30pm - 6pm	UHI's Race and Research Series <i>American Apartheid: Race, Fact and Myth in US Medical Research</i> Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health 615 N. Wolfe Street - Sommer Hall	Featuring Harriet Washington, bioethics journalist and author of the award-winning book, <i>Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present</i>
Thursday, February 26 4:30pm - 6pm	Community-Faith-Hopkins Forum Forum on Community Health	John Wesley AME Zion Church 1923 Ashland Ave Baltimore, MD 21205
Friday, March 13 1pm - 5pm	UHI Reverse Research Day Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health 615 N. Wolfe Street - Sheldon Hall, Feinstone Hall (poster session)	Details to come!
Wednesday, April 1 4:30pm - 6pm	UHI's Race and Research Series Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health 615 N. Wolfe Street - Sheldon Hall	Featuring Dr. Gail Wyatt, professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA and associate director of the UCLA AIDS Institute



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