Measuring the Social Impacts of Preservation on Disadvantaged Communities

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Abstract

This thesis explores how preservation organizations working in the United States use various strategies to make positive social impacts, in addition to physical improvements, within disadvantaged communities. By looking at the social impacts of preservation, rather than the economic advantages, this study aims to expand upon the common success measures and further expand the tools with which the preservation field can demonstrate relevance.

This research, conducted through a series of case studies, focuses on preservation institutions working throughout the United States. To measure the social capital, a combination of interviews and surveys with the organizations and people in the community was balanced with nationally-available data.

Introduction

Historically, the field of preservation measured its success by the number of buildings landmarked, newly minted historic districts, or preservation battles won. In other words, preservation in the United States was more about the aesthetics, age, and the physical object rather than the intangible and the spirit or feel of a place. In more recent years, it measured economic advantages of preservation on historic districts and rising property values of listed properties. But as a field, preservation has yet to start measuring social impacts, or impacts that directly relate to the groups of people for whom preservation is working.

Look at any American newspaper and you will see stories of communities grappling with the after-effects of the financial crisis and diminishing economies. The results of this downturn also fill the papers with stories covering the increased tensions between diverse populations. This highlights the growing disparities in incomes and opportunities that are exacerbated by these economic problems.

Traditional preservation efforts have recently been blamed for contributing to this disparity by supporting gentrification, or the displacement of long-time residents with newer,
wealthier home owners. While these accusations tend to ignore the grassroots, community based efforts smaller non-profit preservation organizations are undertaking, they focus on the perception that historic districts and other landmarking actions may tend to focus more on wealthier communities since these efforts often occur in districts that have been renovated by new, wealthier residents. Whether accurate or merely perception, landmarking is thought of as a way to demarcate a space that has already been restored, revitalized, or otherwise invested in. While research to support preservation has broadened, the current economic data does not fully address this complaint of the field since it relies heavily on financial data and real estate values of these same communities without extrapolating the findings toward the social impacts, or what groups of people are affected in which ways. By only looking at the values of preservation in these economic terms, the benefits of organizing to protect a neighborhood, of working together to improve the housing stock, or the ways lives are changed by re-establishing nearly lost traditions are not taken into account.

This thesis seeks to understand if any of the strategies commonly used by those community-based preservation organizations have a positive social impact upon disadvantaged people and the communities in which they live. I will divide these strategies into two broad categories, those that involve some form of education and possible appreciation — be it walking tours, outreach programs, skills training, or other moments of teaching — and financing strategies which will look at how projects are selected to receive funding and if the community has a role in that process, what work is undertaken, and how that work is completed. Money is designated toward projects, and what work is undertaken with that funding. This will show if the process was inclusive in its determination which can indicate social capital growth since the community must work together to prioritize projects and forge alliance with others and if members of the community participated in the completion of the work. I will begin by looking broadly at Buffalo, NY; Pittsburgh, PA; Jacksonville, FL; and New Orleans, LA and then will focus on Pittsburgh and Jacksonville to determine overlaps and differences in strategies. While understanding the financial implications of early preservation strategies, such as the tax credit
programs, is an ongoing system dating back to the early 1970s, the more recent approaches that measure the impacts of preservation in broader economic terms is still a relatively new development. While social impacts have been discussed in this more recent research, it has not yet been clearly measured thus the data does not exist to do so. Instead, this thesis will conducted interviews and use third-party data to outline the measurement process, take a baseline measurement, and make educated assumptions about the impacts to date. It will also outline the process so that other preservation organizations can use the baseline measurement and process to continue this work in the future, and develop a complete understanding of the impacts. By documenting the process and the identification of assumed social impacts of preservation strategies, this thesis will demonstrate that preservation can, and must, be measured in terms other than economic and what information organizations should be collecting with their projects to demonstrate social, fiscal, and physical long-term successes or gains within their communities. It will also contribute to the discussion on preservation’s role in social equity and peace-building work here in the United States and with implications for the global preservation community.

Background

Definitions

Preservation

Cultural heritage preservation encompasses more than just the built fabric of a place; it extends to the landscape and the way people use and live in a place. “The concept of a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event. This applies not only to great works of art but also to more modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.”

incorporate the notion that every person has a right to develop their culture and these diverse cultures have dignity and value that must be respected. At the same time, modern international preservation seeks to improve equality without perpetuating dangerous, unjust, or inhumane traditions. As stated in the Burra Charter: “every place has its own story and people to whom it has association and meanings. [Preservation] is based on respect for that story and the fabric and people associated with it.”

On an international scale, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention does not explicitly define preservation, or the internationally used term — conservation. However, they roughly outline the role of preservation as the "identification, protection, conservation, presentation, and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage." It also makes reference to ensuring there are adequate legal protections and management measures to ensure the preservation of the identified properties, landscapes, or heritage. In the United States, the National Trust for Historic Preservation defines preservation as a tool that enhances the sense of community by saving the places communities care most about and preserving the stories of recent history as well as ancient cultures. It should protect the memories of people, places, and events honored in our national monuments. Historic preservation is also about getting involved in saving these monuments, landscapes, and neighborhoods. For the purposes of this thesis, preservation is defined as any effort that seeks to maintain the historic built fabric of a place, and the traditions and customs of the people that lived, or live, there. This can include the building tradition of the place, but also the foods people eat, their social norms, and their yearly traditions. Preservation strategies, therefore, are varied and not simply focused on buildings, although they tend to play a key role since many traditions take place in man-made spaces. The strategies can, however,

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seek to reestablish key events that the population once held as tradition but that have faded in time.

One of the criticisms of preservation is gentrification or “the arrival of wealthier people in an existing [neighborhood], a related increase in rents and property values, and changes in the district’s character and culture. The term is often used negatively, suggesting the displacement of poor communities by rich outsiders.”\(^6\) However, understanding the true impacts of gentrification and knowing when a neighborhood crosses the threshold from neighborhood change to gentrification is a complicated issue. One way to determine healthy neighborhood change versus gentrification is to assess who the changes are aimed at helping -- long-term, existing residents, or newcomers. While growth and change within any community is healthy and necessary, particularly in communities battling decline, if there are no efforts in place to protect the original residents who want to remain in place, then gentrification may become an issue. In neighborhoods in decline, or where there are high vacancy rates, outsiders are needed in order for revitalization to occur by moving into those vacated structures. This helps to eliminate any areas that could be defined as blight and helps to encourage neighborhood stability. Furthermore, this mix of long-term residents and new comers can create more social, ethnic, and economic diversity within neighborhoods. This in turn helps to increase the social networks available to communities and enable them to be more resilient to change.

Gentrification, however, occurs when existing residents are displaced in favor of new residents because of their ability to pay higher prices for properties and often results in less diverse communities. Gentrification can happen following healthy neighborhood change if systems and policies are not put in place to protect existing home owners or renters. Preservations relationship with gentrification has not been thoroughly studied, but it is unlike that preservation is solely causing gentrification in historic neighborhoods. Instead, it is likely one of many factors that could be correlated with the phenomena. Because it is just one of numerous possible correlations, this thesis will not address the extent to which gentrification is impacting the

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communities, but where data is available to highlight certain issues of gentrification it will be presented.

**Social terms**

Social capital is an often used term with no clear consensus on a definition. The various expert definitions are explored in greater detail in the Literature Review section further below. For this thesis, the term ‘social capital’ is used to refer to the assets a community can access for support, the strength of their social network, and their willingness to utilize it. It is measurable and can be invested in. It contains many social networks that overlap and together establish the overall capital of the larger neighborhood. ‘Social networks,’ therefore are the connections between people. One person could participate in several social networks ranging from religious organizations, school, work, and personal and their role in each network likely varies. The World Bank defines ‘impacts’ as the various outcomes that result from a project that would not have happened without the intervention. ‘Outcomes,’ then, are defined as the uptake, adoption or usage by the beneficiaries of the project.7 For this research, it was not realistic to produce short-term or immediate measurements directly following a preservation intervention as well as the combined outcomes a year or more after the project. As a result, throughout this thesis, the term ‘impacts’ encompasses both individual outcomes as well as combined impacts that generally represent a time period of 1 year post-preservation intervention. Additionally, most of the measurements capture changes in the social networks of communities, so the term ‘social impacts’ is used primarily for those outcomes and impacts that effected social networks. Ideally, going forward, research would break down ‘outcomes’ and ‘impacts’ and include a wider variety of social impacts beyond those related to networks.

**Measurements**

Compiling a list of indicators was the first step in the measurement process. This list helped identify what would need to be measured and how to calculate. These indicators, which

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derive from the social capital research documented in the Literature Review section, needed to cover social networks, how strong the networks were, and how integrated the organizations were into the community. Thus, the indicators are:

1. community autonomy/self driven: This indicator establishes the impact the neighbors have on what happens within their community. This is important because the group of people living within a place are a critical stakeholder with regard to social capital since they will be both contributing to that capital and the beneficiaries of it;

2. the representativeness of the organization to the community: Are the people making decisions and organizing a fair representation of the people living in the neighborhood;

3. how active the organization is within the community: Do they regularly meet and hear from the community, are issues addressed or raised in a timely matter;

4. awareness of the preservation strategies used thus far within the neighborhood: Is the community familiar with the work being done and do they participate;

5. changes to the socialization patterns: How have people's relationships within the neighborhood changed, is the social network strengthened by the preservation work; and

6. any spillover effects: Is other work being done outside of what the community group organized.

To measure these indicators, a point system was created for each indicator, the details of which are described in the Methodology section of this thesis. Points varied per category and then the total points earned were divided by the total points possible for that organization to create a percentage score so that organizations could be compared. The scores for each organization are recorded in the Case Study section of this thesis.

Preservation Strategies

The tools that organizations use to preserve the built environment and communities are referred to in this thesis as preservation strategies. These typically include funding, education, reuse, and community outreach. One of the earliest preservation strategies is that of funding.
While funds are always short, as a result of the mid-2000’s recession, budgets faced even tighter restrictions, making this a rarely used strategy in the past 10 years and following the housing crash, qualifying for mortgages is even more difficult. When it is used, it typically includes programs such as revolving funds, tax credit programs, or grants.

With a revolving fund, an initial invest is made and that money is then used to purchase an at-risk historic property. Any profits from the property are then reinvested into the fund and used on the next project. The term ‘revolving fund’ acts as an umbrella term for two types of fund processes -- acquisition and loan. With an acquisition fund, the preservation organization actually acquires the title for the property and either renovates the property completely or stabilizes it enough for resale to someone who will restore it. In this case, the fund is replenished when the property is sold. The loan fund works by lending capital from the fund to a third party who will undertake the rehabilitation of that property. It revolves through the repayment of the loan’s principal plus interest over the course of the loan’s term.\(^8\) The acquisition fund was the first type of revolving fund to be used in historic preservation, but in shifting economies, the loan fund has begun to prove a more stable form of a revolving fund that requires less capital be invested by the preservation organization. However, because it relies on the constant repayment of the loans over time, it may be difficult to liquidate meaning that the group would not necessarily have ready access to cash should they seek to invest in another property and could take years to reestablish.

Grants are another way in which preservation organizations can supply funding or assist owners. These funds are typically competitively awarded. Typically, these grants are not paid for by the local non-profit, but rather are funded by large corporations or outside investors. In these cases, the preservation group either applies for the funding for its neighborhood or acts as the liaison or advocate for the site to the company. One such example of this is the Partners in Preservation campaign that partnered American Express with The National Trust for Historic Preservation. Beginning in 2006, American Express committed $15 million to support historic

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properties in San Francisco, Chicago, New Orleans, Boston, Seattle, Minneapolis, New York, and Washington, D.C. In each of these cities, local groups were active in the selection of sites to nominate, and while there is likely a political undercurrent to these selections, they are ultimately born out of the local community and organizations who then campaign for their place to win the competition, which was decided by public voting.

While it does not involve an organization handing out money, one of the major roles preservation organizations play in funding is that of assisting with tax credits. This strategy blends together aspects of funding with education and typically starts in helping a property owner or neighborhood become listed as a National Landmark or National Historic District. Often it falls to the organizations to complete the forms necessary to get a site listed since they can be complicated or require more technical knowledge. Once deemed eligible for designation by the state authorities, buildings can qualify for tax credit programs for the work done in their restoration. Again, local organizations often help owners understand the requirements and qualifications, and connect owners to knowledgeable contractors.

Education strategies are a part of nearly every preservation organization. These include tours, history lessons, and even hands-on training programs. Perhaps the most widely known and utilized educational strategy is that of tours. These include walking tours of neighborhoods and specialized tours around a particular theme or history. They can be self-guided or with an educated guide. Their main purpose is to expose the history of a place to a group of people, typically outsiders, and provide them with information they would not have known otherwise about that place. History and preservation lessons can be aimed at local schools and teachers, but can also happen in a dedicated space within the preservation organization. These could include some of the same information shared during tours, but often goes into a little more depth. When aimed at schools, the education strategy can either provide information and tools to teachers for them to incorporate into their lesson plans, or else someone from the organization can be a guest speaker at the school. Perhaps the most requested education

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program of late is the hands-on learning experience. These programs bring trained tradespeople in to teach property owners certain rehabilitation skills. In an interview with Emilie Evans, Preservation Specialist at Michigan Historic Preservation Network, their educational series in Detroit on window repairs has gained popularity and public attention. These training sessions, which began by training under- or unemployed people, helps to ensure proper work is getting done while exposing a growing number of people to preservation building skills. Furthermore, in places facing job-scarcity, these skills could provide job or income opportunities. According to the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, one person can rehab a window in one work day, and charge $300 to $400 for that work. The material cost per window to the contractor is usually less than $25.00. That translates to an hourly wage of as much as $46. Window rehab is work typically must be done on-site or nearby, making it a localized industry.

The main challenge with classes is finding the right skilled tradesperson and the cost associated with having them in to teach the course.

Community outreach is a growing area of preservation. This includes events, activities, advocacy, and even social media outreach programs. Typically the events have a preservation focus, either festivals that accompany a historic home tour or open house or a celebration of an areas predominate architectural element or feature. These festivals could also be traditional events for the community and that have historically played an important role in their identity. A perfect example of this would be Mardi Gras in the New Orleans' French Quarter or the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Boston and Savannah. In these cases, the act of hosting the event yearly is the preservation activity. Other times, these festivals are not related to either the architecture of a place's history, but instead are aimed at celebrating the community and reinforcing connections between neighbors. These can include local church festivals, neighborhood rummage sales, or community garden openings. These festivals act, in their own way, as outreach programs. They often have their own marketing and social media and can help to reach out to members of the community that may otherwise not be engaged in

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preservation activities. Finally, perhaps the most critical strategy of a preservation organization is that of advocacy. As the organized voice of the area, the organization has the ability to advocate for and defend the interests of the community it serves. This requires political savvy in navigating the often complex areas of local politics while also having a firm knowledge of what your neighborhood needs.

Either by encouraging or by doing, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse are two strategies that have a strong visual and physical impact on a community. The National Park Service defines rehabilitation as a process that “acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.” Furthermore, it is the “act or process of making possible a compatible use for property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values.” While it often honors the historic values, adaptive reuse is defined as simply “the process of adapting old structures for new purposes.” Both of these strategies help to breathe new life into old buildings. By either providing assistance to owners or completing the work themselves, preservation organizations that use rehabilitation and adaptive reuse can make a strong visual impact on the neighborhood as well as an economic one by enticing businesses and homeowners to reinvest in the area.

Cities

Background: Wilkinsburg, Pittsburgh, PA

Neighborhood History

Located just west of Pittsburgh, Wilkinsburg is a historic, independent borough that encompasses 2.1 sq. miles and is one of Allegheny County’s oldest communities. The area

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flourished when the railroad came through in the 1850s, bringing access to jobs in other parts of the city. Indeed it was its “proximity to Pittsburgh and its location along main lines of transit from outlying areas that were the key to its founding and early development.” Wilkinsburg was briefly annexed into Pittsburgh proper in the late 1800s, but the residents fought for their independence, which they were granted again after only three years.

Even in its heyday, when Wilkinsburg businesses bustled with visiting shoppers, most area residents worked outside of the borough, starting the tradition of being home to commuting workers. In recent decades, the economy and livelihood took a hard hit as a result of the steel industry collapse and the subsequent job loss. As a result of the collapse, the area suffered from ‘urban flight,’ which in turn led to skyrocketing property taxes, dilapidated and abandoned houses, crime, and vacant housing lots. Despite these challenges, the residents of Wilkinsburg are dedicated to public education, innovation and entrepreneurship which were key tenants of the community from the beginning. As the Pittsburgh region looks to sustain its economy, these factors will likely help Wilkinsburg advance. The Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation, founded in 2007, is leveraging these strengths by focusing on business redevelopment, but with an understanding that it can drive residential development,
civic leadership, and cultural enrichment.\textsuperscript{21} For many efforts, this group is a local partner for Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation.

Within Wilkinsburg there are no historic districts, but a nomination is in process. Within this area, the structures are mostly single family homes, with some that became subdivided multi-family dwellings through the years. They are typically vernacular buildings, 2 to 2 ½ stories tall and either brick or wood frame. The dominant styles are Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, but there are some prairie and craftsman style inspired homes as well. Many feature large front porches, art glass windows, and patterned shingles or decorative masonry. In addition to the free-standing homes, there are also several groups of row houses with similar decrative motifs.\textsuperscript{22}

This rich history, both socially and in built form, is tempered by a depressed economy. As illustrated in the poverty rate chart, Wilkinsburg consistently has higher rates of poverty than both the United States and Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{23} Additionally, the unemployment rate also remains above the state and national levels, despite a decline since 1980. Other economic indicators, which are discussed in more detail in the case study section of this thesis, show that the area is depressed, but making slow improvements

over time. While the area continues to shrink, the Hispanic population is growing. The slowing

down of the population decline and growth in the Hispanic population, partnered with a slowly

improving economic outlook for the community, is an important distinction as it shows that the area is in

need of assistance, but that there is the potential for growth and positive impacts, both economically and socially.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
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<td>21,080</td>
<td>19,196</td>
<td>15,930</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.3%</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
<td>-17.0%</td>
<td>-12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Density</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-20.7%</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
<td>-15.1%</td>
<td>-38.7%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9,138</td>
<td>8,152</td>
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<td>46.2%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in White Population</td>
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<td>-13.5%</td>
<td>-42.4%</td>
<td>-19.7%</td>
<td>-60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>Change in Black Population</td>
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<td>64.2%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
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<td>Change in Hispanic Population</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>207.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wilkinsburg is mainly residential, and the commercial corridor revitalization is happening with or slightly behind the residential revival. The combination then of this residential focus, the historic nature of the area and the depressed economy made it a target case study for this research.

These key factors, plus the current focus on preservation efforts, such as the acceptance into the Pennsylvania’s Main Street program in January of this year, means there are engaged residents.24 Since a portion of this research is dependent on residents participating in survey activities, these engaged citizens are required in order to successfully measure the impact of preservation on communities.

Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF)

Founded in 1964, Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) grew out of a group of concerned citizens who felt preservation, not demolition, could help renew communities.25 “Since its . . . inception, PHLF has shown how building preservation and restoration can be a model of reviving neighborhoods once written off as examples of the worst of urban decay.”26 The organization is known across the nation for its pioneering work in restoring inner-city neighborhoods without dislocating the people who live there. In 1966 PHLF was among the first to establish a Revolving Fund for Preservation with a $100,000 grant from the Sarah Scaife Foundation, a Pittsburgh-based charitable foundation that offers grants to organizations working within the realm of public policy.27 This seminal revolving fund, and the organization as a whole, is often used as a benchmark for other preservation organizations. While their revolving fund started as an acquisition fund, PHLF now uses it for its original purpose as well as lending to people or groups who will restore buildings in historic neighborhoods for low-to-moderate income families and minority businesses.28

Presently, the organization is broken into two groups -- a nonprofit corporation, Landmarks Community Capital Corporation (LCCC), and a for-profit subsidiary, Landmarks Development Corporation (LDC). The first makes loans, obtains grants and investment capital that it uses to finance development projects. These projects assist in the revitalization of urban centers, towns, and neighborhoods. The LDC provides consulting services and develops real estate.29 PHLF is large, with over 2000 members and is well-funded with the support of many corporations in the area. This large membership base coupled with volunteers from around the region resulted in 93% of survey respondents saying that they feel that the organization represents the diverse population in which it works. Co-founder Arthur Ziegler describes the work that PHLF does as “respecting the given environment rather than reconstructing it and by

26 Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Wilkinsburg.”
27 Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Mission and Brief History.”
29 Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Mission and Brief History.”
involving grassroots citizens, we . . . better plan and meet the market, and we . . . demonstrate that you can derive a [financial] profit through restoration rather than demolition.”

A combination of “longtime and recent borough residents [of Wilkinsburg] started with the premise that if they could refurbish some of the rundown properties in their neighborhoods and put to use the overgrown vacant lots, they could begin to improve the appearance of parts of the borough, which would in turn spur people to take another look at buying houses in Wilkinsburg again.” Because of this notion, “the community invited PHLF to help [them] chart a strategy of how the restoration of vital and viable buildings could be accomplished.” In 2004, PHLF funded and published the Wilkinsburg Neighborhood Transformation Initiative as a result of this engagement. The following year, PHLF partnered with the Community Technical Assistance Center, an independent, not-for-profit group that provides technical assistance to Pittsburgh’s community organizations, to survey 1,200 land parcels in the borough, showing that 70 percent of the housing structures in Wilkinsburg could be physically refurbished. This survey, in the Hamnett Place section of Wilkinsburg, was a critical first step in analyzing the status of the building structures in the neighborhood with a keen eye towards what could be salvaged.

PHLF also provides funding to the area with over $400,000 in low-interest loans to non-profit organizations and over $30,000 in grants to religious organizations for the restoration of their

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31 Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Wilkinsburg” and Community Technical Assistance Center, “About Us.”
historic religious buildings. In December 2007, PHLF worked with students from the Heinz School of Public Policy and Management of Carnegie Mellon to research and provide recommendations for reducing Wilkinsburg's high property tax rate. The study also outlined numerous ideas for "green" initiatives for the borough.

Current Issues

Today, Wilkinsburg is still a commuter neighborhood. While it was traditionally a middle income neighborhood, census data from 1980 to 2000 indicates that there is a growing financial crisis as the percent of people earning less than $10,000 annually increases while the top earners, those over $50,000, shrunk significantly from 2000 to 2010. Like many other urban neighborhoods, Wilkinsburg suffered from flight in the mid-20th century, which drastically impacted the tax base, sending the community into a negative spiral as they were suddenly unable to finance much of their services. The staff at PHLF understands that while it has a great building stock, it suffers from poor road systems, deteriorating gas and sewer lines, bad schools and no tax base.

Redevelopment efforts focus on an area bounded by Rebecca Avenue, Jeanette Street, Lamar Avenue, Kelly Avenue and parts of Whitney Avenue. The selection of this area results from the housing density. The working principle derives from the theory that if there is significant refurbishment and restoration of the dilapidated 54-housing structures, they could make a

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34 “Collaboration with PHLF,” Borough of Wilkinsburg.
dramatic impact on the borough’s quality of housing stock, spurring reinvestment into the community by private developers and property owners.\textsuperscript{35} The research for this thesis focused on the larger area, not just this small section of Wilkinsburg, however survey participants referenced this work and its spillover effects. For example, one participant mentioned that ten years ago Jeanette Street was one of the most blighted streets in Wilkinsburg with over 70 percent of the residential units vacant, abandoned and dilapidated. Today, Jeanette Street has new life, new residents and is the site of one of the most exciting and dramatic projects in Wilkinsburg’s history -- that of the renovation of the expansive Crescent and Wilson apartment buildings.\textsuperscript{36} While residential streets have been the focus thus far, there is currently a shift toward revitalizing the commercial district to create a safer neighborhood, while supporting green initiatives.\textsuperscript{37} While the area recently received a Main Street investment, the community is further trying to advance their commercial corridor by addressing old legislation that limited alcohol sales in an attempt to draw more local tourists. If successful, this movement would reverse an ordinance dating to the 1870s.\textsuperscript{38}

**Census data**

To better understand how these interventions were impacting the Wilkinsburg neighborhood, the decennial census data from 1980-2010 was used. These years were examined because the census tracts easily correlate over that span and it provided enough data

\textsuperscript{35} Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Wilkinsburg.”
\textsuperscript{36} Jason Cohn, “Community Insights.”
\textsuperscript{37} “WDCD History,” Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation, accessed on Feb. 27, 2015.
to track changes in the area. However, a number of data points are not available for the 2010 census, meaning that not all data is as current as possible and does not paint the most accurate picture. While this census data is part of the story, by incorporating surveys and interviews it should not skew the findings of this research.

Between 1980 and 2010 the population of Wilkinsburg continued to decline, and while the number of households increased significantly from 1980 to 1990, even that number has decreased in recent years. This growth in household size while the overall population shrunk could indicate that the household, or family size, is getting smaller. However, while the total number of households is not shrinking as quickly as the population, it is still diminishing, and it is likely that Wilkinsburg has not yet turned the proverbial corner and begun its revitalization.

The continuing rising vacancy rate supports this theory as well.

However, because of the
high number of vacancies, there is room for outsiders to move into this community without displacement of existing residents, meaning that there could be healthy neighborhood change and not gentrification, assuming smart policies to protect and maintain affordable housing.

To that end, the ethnicity data shows a rise in the Hispanic population. This indicates that new people are moving into the area, and perhaps the community will begin to stabilize and reach a balance of long-term residents with these new comers. It is interesting also to note that only in 1980 was the neighborhood majority white, since 1990, the majority of the neighborhood residents have been African American. With the slow increase of the Hispanic population, the neighborhood could become more diverse, thus expanding the social network of the community and helping it to stabilize and be more equipped to handle adversity.

In 2010, gay couples represent 1.4% of total households, or 110 households, within the neighborhood. While this is still a small percent of the neighborhood’s population, and the data was not available in the 1990 or 1980 census, there was an increase in this demographic between 2000-2010. Similar to the growing Hispanic population, this increase in the gay population could potentially suggest gentrification by newcomers moving in and displacing long-term residents, however taken in conjunction with the high vacancy rates, it is more likely that this trend is more likely neighborhood change and not the displacement associated with gentrification. Yet, both trends and vacancy rates would need to be monitored going forward, particularly since there is only 10 years worth of data regarding the gay population. Also, as public policy and social changes occur, it is possible that this increase is simply reflective of a greater willingness to self-report sexual preference rather than an actual shift in demographics.

Education, employment, and income have remained fairly steady in Wilkinsburg. While the data is not available for 2010, the highest two categories of educational attainment between 1990-2000 remained steady with no notable differences. The dropout rate, while it rose in 1990,
is on par with the state average, and below the national average in 1980 and 2000. This indicates that education is not the challenge facing the youth in the community, but rather access to good-paying jobs. The unemployment rate in the community continues to be higher than the state and national average, and those earning less than $10,000 per year is increasing. In 2000, the percent of people earning this small amount was almost double the national and state levels of 6.8% and 6.9% respectively. Not surprisingly then, while the percent of children under 18 living in poverty dropped between 1990 and 2000 to 31.5%, that number is still staggeringly high considering that the rate in the state is 14.7% and nationally it is 16.6%.

The neighborhood tends to have a higher number of renter-occupied units than owner-occupied units. There is a direct correlation between the changes in owner-occupied units and renter-occupied units between 2000 and 2010, which is good in that these homes were absorbed into the rental market and not simply abandoned. However, this high number of renter units means that the neighborhood is not stable since renters are not tied to a neighborhood in the same way that homeowners are.

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39 Dollars adjusted for inflation to match the value in 2013
financially invested. Renters are also much more susceptible to gentrification since their rents may rise as demand for living space increases. As a result, some level of policy protections should be put in place to ensure the rental residents who wish to remain in the community long-term are allowed to do so should the neighborhood change. While this is unlikely to be an issue currently, with the high vacancy rate of 54%, more than double that of the national average, renter protection and affordable housing should be addressed now before any renters are negatively impacted. At the same time, home values need to be stabilized, and this is likely only to occur if abandonment is slowed by creating more demand in the neighborhood by attracting new comers to the area. As shown in the owner-occupied home value chart, most homes were valued between $50,000-$99,000 in the neighborhood in 2000, which was also the case in 1990. However, the percent of homes valued between $150,000-$299,999 dropped in that same decade, suggesting the neighborhood is in a decline. Considering that this was before the housing bust, those values likely continued to decrease. Hopefully, with the growing focus on this neighborhood by preservation organizations like PHLF, this trend can be reversed. By combining some rent protections and attracting new buyers into the neighborhood to rehabilitate and live in the
PHLF’s goal of providing housing that is guaranteed for low- to middle-income families, the neighborhood should remain affordable and yet begin to grow. Additionally, preservation efforts that help assisted owners maintain their historic home could ensure that their investment remains strong.

**Background: Springfield, Jacksonville, FL**

**Neighborhood History**

Like Wilkinsburg, Springfield developed as an early train-line suburb of downtown Jacksonville. Though its establishment dates to 1869, it did not boom until after the Great Fire of 1901 when displaced residents of downtown moved north into Springfield. The fire, which destroyed 1,600 buildings in the heart of downtown displaced nearly 10,000 people. As a result, the major building boom occurred between 1901 and 1930, with the most significant construction occurring between 1910 and 1917. The buildings tend to be vernacular, wood frame houses in the revival and romantic styles such as Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Stick Style, Prairie School, Bungalow and Mediterranean Revival.

“They embody the period when Springfield was one of Jacksonville's most prominent and densely settled residential neighborhoods.”

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Jacksonville’s most influential architect during the first years of the twentieth century, helped rebuild after the fire, particularly in Springfield, resulting in a higher than usual concentration of Prairie School buildings.\textsuperscript{44} By 1912, Jacksonville become known as the ‘World's Winter Film Capital.’ Between 1912 and 1922, three studios were built in the neighborhood. During this decade, pictures were made in the neighborhood and the actors starring in the silent films temporarily lived in Springfield.\textsuperscript{45}

By 1930 most of the building in Springfield stopped as a result of the Great Depression and Florida’s land bust. The neighborhood remained stable until the 1950s, when it experienced its first severe decline as older residents passed away, the younger generation began to leave the urban neighborhood in favor of the suburbs.\textsuperscript{46} As a result of this population decline, many buildings were left vacant, falling into disrepair or were demolished.\textsuperscript{47} However, a group of concerned citizens organized in the mid-1970s, forming the preservation group that would become SPAR, and worked to stop the demolition. At the time of National Historic District designation in the mid-1980s, the district had lost some of its integrity due to the deterioration, alteration, and demolition of a number of structures, but retained enough of the physical characteristics and concentration of buildings which convey its historic period of development.

The designated historic district contains 1,784 buildings that were fifty years old or older at the time of designation. Similar to Wilkinsburg, Springfield also is primarily residential, with 1,686 of the 1,784 buildings classified as residential. Astoundingly, in 1986, 1,089 of those were multi-family residences, many of which were subdivided former single-family homes. Only 48 buildings were commercial and the remaining structures were vacant.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{47} “Description,” \textit{National Register of Historic Places}, 2.
Springfield Preservation and Revitalization (SPAR)

Established in 1974 as Springfield Preservation and Restoration, the organization incorporated as a non-profit in 1977. It grew out of the community and was supported early on by concerned neighbors. The first major undertaking for the group was in 1984 when they surveyed and documented every property in the neighborhood in support of a National Register nomination for the area to become a recognized Historic District. As part of this process, SPAR also worked with the neighbors to gain their buy-in and approval of the nomination. In 1989 SPAR received a National Trust grant to develop a 5-year plan to revitalize the neighborhood and several years later began a task force to focus on revitalizing the commercial corridor, including the renovation of a vandalized office space to use as their headquarters.

As they made noticeable successes saving buildings and homes, in 1999 the group began leading educational tours of the neighborhood for schools and others interested in the area. They successfully worked with the City Council to pass an overlay district that would ensure illegal or unwanted businesses were not allowed in certain zones, a tool that they actively call upon as development pressures throughout the city put the neighborhood at risk of losing its historic character or changing from a primarily residential neighborhood to more heavy commercial uses. In 2002, Springfield Preservation and Restoration merged with the Historic Springfield Community Council, which began in 1986, and became Springfield Preservation and Revitalization. As a result of this merger, the organization shifted its focus more toward revitalization of the neighborhood — both residential and commercial — and according to SPAR President, Bill Hoff. In the past decade, as more people restore abandoned homes and move into the neighborhood, the organization moved toward drawing local businesses to the area to ensure continued livability for the growing residential community. Presently, the organization’s mission is to “provide leadership to the residents of Historic Springfield to revitalize, preserve, and restore the community through its diverse programs.”

50 “Timeline,” About us.
51 “What We Do,” About us, Springfield Preservation and Revitalization.
an active advocate for the neighborhood and is working diligently to attract new businesses to the area while showcasing its historic fabric. SPAR breaks their focus into five main categories -- preservation of their architectural treasures, improving the quality of life for the residents of the neighborhood, commercial revitalization, civic advocacy, and connecting local residents to each other and the events within the neighborhood.\textsuperscript{52}

According to Hoff, the board is made up of people who live and/or own a business in the neighborhood and are fairly in tune to what is happening and the community’s priorities. At the same time, SPAR has held close to one million community meetings in the past decade. While they host these meetings, their role is to listen to what the community is saying and what they need. The president of SPAR describes the area as the most diverse socio-economic and lifestyle neighborhood in Jacksonville. As a result of this diversity, the board does not reflect all parts of the neighborhood, but skews toward the middle- to high-income members of the community. They have tried to get others to participate, but SPAR has had a hard time getting them as involved on a regular basis. Additionally, most board members moved into the area in the past 15 years, but there has not been too much push back from long-term residents. The only times there have been issues it has been around confusion surrounding repairs of homes since they are a designated historic district.

**Current Issues**

Springfield is considered a transitional neighborhood by many who live in and around the neighborhood, mixing long-time residents with new comers.

Through 2010 it has been a neighborhood in decline, with a shrinking population. On Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council’s website dedicated to the neighborhood, residents are

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Total Population & 11,493 & 8,923 & 8,810 & 6,676 & - \\
Change in Population & - & -22.36% & -1.27% & -24.22% & -41.91% \\
Change in Density & - & -22.46% & -1.13% & -24.63% & -42.22% \\
Number of Households & 4,306 & 3,672 & 3,413 & 2,650 & - \\
Change in Households & - & -14.72% & -7.05% & -22.36% & -38.46% \\
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\hline
\textbf{Race/Ethnicity} & & & & & Total \\
\hline
White & 0.2% & 0.2% & 0.9% & 1.2% & - \\
Change in White Population & - & -19.05% & 341.18% & 4.00% & 271.4% \\
Black & 99.5% & 99.6% & 98.4% & 97.5% & - \\
Change in Black Population & - & -22.28% & -2.50% & -24.9% & -43.1% \\
Hispanic & 0.8% & 0.8% & 0.7% & 0.9% & - \\
Change in Hispanic Population & - & -28.77% & -20.83% & 0.0% & -41.2% \\
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\textsuperscript{52} “What We Do,” About us.
spotlighted in interviews. One such couple are the Pastors William and Victoria Hamilton, at St. John's Lutheran Church. They first visited the neighborhood in 1999 and noticed ‘early pioneers’ beginning to rehabilitate houses.\textsuperscript{53} They describe the neighborhood then as being more innocent; “if someone was working on their house and saw a person in their car looking at it, the owner would invite them in to look at it, show them photo albums of the work, etc. You’d always see people sitting out on their front porches, keeping an eye on things. [The Hamiltons thought] it was actually a more authentic kind of connection and sociability back then.”\textsuperscript{54} Around 2008, people interested in developing the neighborhood began to move into the area, most notably a small developer from Atlanta who began to buy and build on open lots in the neighborhood, filling in the vacancies with homes that pulled designs from the historic neighborhood. “Even as Springfield’s transition accelerated, [he] drew inevitable attacks from some who vilified him for gentrifying the neighborhood and driving up prices.”\textsuperscript{55} In response, that developer, Mack Bissette said of Springfield: “I always believed Springfield could be a case study for the nation, it’s become the most successful creative community I’ve ever seen.”\textsuperscript{56} While it may be easy to claim the development happening in the neighborhood is for the benefit of newcomers, others argue that the revitalization is more complex than that. “A key element in Springfield’s resilience has been the presence of strong, active civic organizations, from longtime groups like the Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council to newer efforts that include Sustainable Springfield. This summer, more than 50 neighbors banded together to renovate the deteriorating home of an elderly resident, “Miss Maggie,” who has lived in the neighborhood for 50 years.”\textsuperscript{57}

At the same time, Springfield is facing a similar phenomenon to other near-to-downtown neighborhoods across the nation in that there is a general renewed interest in the historic downtown neighborhoods. For Springfield, that push began in the early 1990s when changing

54 Hoff, “William & Victoria.”
56 Barnett, “A Life of Its Own.”
57 Barnett, “A Life of Its Own.”}
state laws meant that local authorities could permit tax breaks for rehabilitating homes in historic districts. This, coupled with the launch of Springfield Auction, a tool that incentivized owners of derelict housing to sell to qualified buyers or rehabilitate their units, sparked the revitalization of the building stock. Additionally, former Mayor John Delaney encouraged the local bank to provide financing at a time when lenders would not allow mortgages in the neighborhood.58 During that same decade, the downtown neighborhoods were seen as areas to avoid and the once grand homes of the early-20th century were derelict. In Springfield in 1998, only 14% of the historic district was owner-occupied.59 Then, in 2010, Southern Living Magazine named Springfield one of the South’s Best Comeback neighborhoods describing it as “where hip meets history.”60 This transition did not come without drawbacks. In the early years of Springfield’s revitalization, newcomers moved into abandoned properties. However, this demand started to increase home prices, and in some cases long-term residents were displaced. Without proper policies in place to protect long-term residents or to ensure a stock of affordable housing, gentrification is likely to occur in the neighborhood.

Because it is a mostly residential neighborhood, Springfield meets the first criteria to be considered a case study. The preservation work has focused on that residential area with focus now shifting to the commercial district. Additionally, as the economy and housing market picks up in the area, there is renewed excitement, and need, for preservation in the neighborhood and the local community is very engaged. Despite these positives, Springfield still suffers from abandonment and economic challenges. These factors make it an ideal case study, and while it has similarities to Wilkinsburg, the approach taken by SPAR is very different from that of PHLF, which makes it an interesting comparison, particularly to understand how SPAR, a neighborhood-based organization may have different impacts from the regional approach of PHLF.

58 Barnett, “A Life of Its Own.”
59 Barnett, “A Life of Its Own.”
Census Data

From 1980-90 there was one census tract cover the neighborhood of Springfield and some surrounding areas but in 2000, this census tract was split into two. Because it would be difficult to determine which portion of the census data from 1980 and 1990 were from the area that to the smaller tract, both census tracts were used to compare across a longer period of time.

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As seen in the population chart, the whole area’s population decreased significantly from 1980 through 2010. Like Wilkinsburg, Springfield did experience some growth, however, in pockets of the population. In Springfield, that growth occurred in residents between the ages of 35-54, with most of that occurring in the 45-54 category.

While also shrinking, the vast majority of the population in the larger area is African-American, accounting for around 97% of the population in 2010. However, the white population has grown by over 200% during that same time. While...
this only accounts for approximately 57 people, it is still a notable change in a community that has been steadily shrinking. Unmarried households in 2010 accounted for 7.7% of households with only .5% of those representing same-sex couples. This number was virtually unchanged between 2000-10. This is an interesting data point since the area is generally thought to be undergoing a gentrification process with a large number of gay families moving into the area, but that is not supported by this data. The continuously rising vacancy rates shows that there are homes for outsiders to move into, but it is possible that long-term rental residents are being displaced in favor of these newcomers. To ensure healthy neighborhood change and stabilization, polices need to be put in place to protect rental residents and maintain affordable housing units.

The most striking change in the area is in highest level of educational attainment in the population over 25 years old. While still a small portion of the population, those holding a Master’s degree or higher increased significantly from 1990-2000 and those with less than a high school degree decreased in that same time period as did the dropped out rate. While there seems to be some change over in the general population of the neighborhood, the data does not show there is a significant shift in the population, meaning that this increase in education level and decreasing drop out rate is the result of residents placing more importance on education. The rising education level will
positively impact social capital, but it would be difficult to link this to the preservation strategies at work in the neighborhood.

Jacksonville tends to be known as a military town with several bases in and around the city. Between 1980 and 2000 for the population over 16, the percent in the Armed Forces in Jacksonville fluctuated but remained notably higher than the state and national percentages, which dropped during this same time period. While the military demographic is slowly rising in Springfield, in 2000 it still only represented .6% of the population over 16. Considering it is only a 20 minute drive to the Naval Air Station, a relatively short commute in Jacksonville where the average in 2000 was 25 minutes, it is surprising that the military population is so low.

The unemployed population rose 2.4% from 456 people in 1980 to 467 people in 2000, not a large difference in real numbers, but because the area shrank during this same time period, in 2000 that number represents 15% of the population, well above the state unemployment rate of 5.6%.\(^{61}\)

Strangely, while the unemployment rate increased, the income levels of the community also increased. These two competing trends may result from new comers, with higher incomes,

\(^{61}\) Dollars adjusted for inflation to match the value in 2013
moving into the area while long-time residents struggle to find steady employment.

Between 1980-2000, the majority of housing units in Springfield were owner-occupied. However, in 2010 that trend shifted so that renter-occupied units just barely took the majority at 51.9%. This may be a result of the attention the neighborhood is drawing and the lower housing prices that lead people to buy homes, rehabilitate them, and then use them as an income-generating property. Another indicator of this trend is the decreasing number of housing units and the rising vacancy rates which may mean that houses that were once used as multi-family dwellings are being converted back into single-family homes but remain unoccupied while that work occurs. Of those units that were vacant in 2010, 28.2% of them were for rent, 9.4% were for sale, and 62.4% were other vacant. This 62.4% could reflect the rehabilitation trend, but it could also indicate that there are a number of structures
that have simply been abandoned. One survey respondent noted that in more recent years, “since the economy is coming back, [it is easy to] notice the neighborhood is changing again for the better.”

Home values have remained fairly stable between 1980-2000, but between 1990-2000 homes valued $100,000-$149,999 rose from 9.2% to 20.3% of all owner-occupied units. This follows the trend of rising home prices in Florida and the country during that same period, however, and may not accurately reflect a neighborhood trend. Without more recent data it is difficult to tell if the preservation work impacted the home values or not, but it would stand to reason that as homes are rehabilitated the values would increase. Interestingly, of the owner-occupied units, from 1980 to 2000 around 60% report having no mortgage. Compared to the state rate of 28.3% in 2000, this is an unusually high percentage. There is not much data to indicated that there is a large percent of the population that has lived in the community long enough to have paid off a mortgage, so this may support the notion that people purchased in the neighborhood for invest purposes when home prices were low enough to pay cash.

Literature Review

Social Capital

When researching the impacts of interventions on social capital, it is first import to define social capital. Grootaert and van Bastelaer as well as Dekker and Uslaner in their works expand on the definition for social capital by Putnam which simply viewed it as the social networks and

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63 Dollars adjusted for inflation to match the value in 2013
behavioral norms. In their works, the general definition of social capital is the networks and behavioral norms, and the organizations and relationships that impact the productivity of a community, particularly on the neighborhood level. It also includes the information sharing process, and ability to access information. Thus the definition is in two parts, “one that is easily observed and reflects the structure of social capital (like networks and associations) and the other is more intangible but contains the shared behavioral norms and values.”

It is similar to human capital in that both are “a consumption good and an investment.” This means that social capital is used up by the people living within the social networks and that adding to it improves their livelihoods. In a more recent piece by Flueres, the author defines social capital more broadly as the “resources embedded in social networks that can be mobilized by individuals in order to attain their goals.” While these definitions all appear diverse, they all include the notion of organizations and social support systems, whether formal or informal, that connect a group of people and form a strong network that they can access. So, while an Amish community would likely have lots of shared behavioral norms and values, the members of that community would not have a large network because the members would only be connected to one another. As a result, they would be unlikely to have diverse connections which would limit their ability to mobilize to obtain individual goals. It is in this mix of shared values and a broad, diverse social network that creates stable social capital. The strength of that social capital indicates how well fused the community is and how resilient it will be to challenges.

To understand the impact of interventions on a community, it therefore makes sense to measure social capital before and after the planned project. This measurement, along with other indicators, can demonstrate whether the initiative added to the social capital, thus strengthened the neighborhood or a group in the neighborhood, or if it diminished it, perhaps indicating a community may become at risk of other negative effects. When projects only

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measure the economic benefits, there is the possibility of ignoring the way that people live in a place and with their neighbors. While economic indicators tell important information about the financial wellbeing of a community, they do not portray the full story. Social capital changes have the ability to shed light on future problems — neighborhood decline, abandonment, and even falling property values — or rampant successes — increased demand, limited supply, and increasing property values — and can help activists and organizations manage healthy neighborhood change. For projects like those undertaken by preservation, this is a great measurement tool since it is focused on the networks between people, an aspect many preservationist are trying to improve in shrinking cities and other economically depressed parts of the country. Yet to date, very little preservation work measured its impact on social capital.

One reason for the lack of social capital impacts measurement in the preservation field is perhaps a result of the diverse approaches to measuring social capital. Dekker and Uslaner used a two part system in which the first half measured organizations by documenting the number of members, frequency of meetings, diversity of members, and types of decision-making employed while the second half investigated governance issues, such as whether legal and judicial systems were in place and enforceable, the density and networks of associations within the area, and the number of households participating in organizations.67

In Flueras’s study, a survey that relied on three instruments was used to measure social capital. These instruments were the name generator, positions generator, and resources generator. The name generator detailed the personal social networks and outlined connections and information about each member within the network. The position generator measured access of each member to the network to roughly outline the social hierarchy. It denoted the links each person has to other people in the social network. Both the name and position generator were indirect measures that relied on people’s interpretation. The third instrument, the resource generator, contained a fixed list of resources, each representing an aspect of social capital that assessed the community’s ability to access those resources.68

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these factors, a questionnaire was given to participants and included “22 questions [that] required the respondents to name a person who retains certain resources. The next 16 questions measured access to certain resources. For each of the resources the instrument measured the strength of the subject's connection with the resource holder on a three-point scale: family, friend, and acquaintances. The last 18 items measured respondents' perception regarding the resources availability.”69 (Flueras, 221)

Grootaert and van Bastelaer take a slightly less prescriptive approach to measuring social capital. They stress the need for both qualitative and quantitative measures to fully measure it, suggesting that validated survey information and community mapping, focus groups or other qualitative measures be paired together.70 They go on to describe a social capital assessment tool that is sensitive to cultural variation yet provides a unifying framework, has both structural and cognitive dimensions to ensure that networks and norms are measured, and be based on the activities that the people consider important.71 Like Flueras, they suggest a three-part assessment, but here those three parts include a community profile, a household survey and an organizational profile. The community profile is first so the researcher can understand the broad boundaries of the community characteristics. It also identifies activities that are communal in nature since these can vary based on culture. The community profile should include community mapping, a discussion of past community action within the past 3 years, and identifying community leaders, organizations, and institutional networks. Next the household surveys should sample a random group of community households and try to illustrate the family structure at large and identify who lives within the community. It can also touch on networks and support systems, any issues of exclusion and previous collective action. The organizational profile should give an insight as to why people join the organization, any reasons for inclusion or exclusion, organizational culture and capacity, and institutional linkages.

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70 Grootaert and van Bastelaer, Understanding and Measuring, 22.
71 Grootaert and van Bastelaer, Understanding and Measuring, 23.
Researchers should try to interview the executive Director, a member of the Board, and a senior staff member.\textsuperscript{72}

By using these existing strategies, preservation organizations could get a better understanding of the impacts each of their strategies has on the communities that they are surveying. Since there is not a baseline social capital measurement in many of the communities in which they are working, this would need to be completed first, with follow-up work done thereafter. Once these impacts are measured, the organizations might find that certain strategies make greater improvements on the communities and could make smarter investments of all sorts going forward. Additionally, they might uncover needs or opportunities that they were missed by not measuring the social capital changes within the neighborhoods. While for most organizations budgetary constraints and staffing limitations would pose a challenge to obtaining these metrics, there are consulting groups specializing in other forms of preservation measurements, particularly economic means.

**Current Preservation Measurement Strategies**

To date, most data analytics of preservation focused on economic measures. These measurement tools evolved out of those developed in the early 1980s to assess the economic impacts of the tax incentive programs, but only in the past 15 years has it grown to include a wider range of preservation programs and strategies. As a result, the measurement tools reflect a narrow, and somewhat old system applied to a new areas of focus. Donovan Rypkema, Randall Mason, and Caroline Cheong of PlaceEconomics completed most of that research. In 2011 they published their report, “Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation: A Report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,” which was the first truly comprehensive measurement of modern preservation in economic terms. In this work, the authors claim that preservation “has proven to be an effective tool for a wide range of public goals including small business incubation, affordable housing, sustainable development,

\textsuperscript{72} Grootaert and van Bastelaer, *Understanding and Measuring*, 24-31
neighborhood stabilization, center city revitalization, job creation, promotion of the arts and culture, small town renewal, heritage tourism, economic development, and others.” However, these assumptions are based off of only economic indicators, and of those they are mainly on home values, thus do not include targeted social capital measurements. They go on to state that the “relationship between preservation and the economy as well as overall societal benefit remains imperfectly understood and only partially documented.”

In this preliminary work to measure economic impacts of preservation, the authors lay out key measurements, the purpose of the data set, how it is to be collected, and why it is needed. These key measurements are jobs and household income, property values, heritage tourism, environmental measurements, and downtown revitalization. The process that they document is an outline for how to ensure that preservation is measured going forward, since this process is new. There are opportunities within this future data collection to insert social capital measurements alongside the economic measures. Several surveys and interviews, coupled with the economic data could help to demonstrate social capital benefits.

Using the measurement categories laid out in their 2011 work, PlaceEconomics worked with the Utah Heritage Foundation to measure the economic impacts of preservation in the state of Utah. They collected quantitative data for each metric to make a case for the preservation industry, but the research did not overtly look at what preservation organizations were doing to make a direct impact on the lives, this was simply assumed based on the data. For metrics like jobs and income, there is a direct tie to people’s livelihood.

For their study, the basis for job and household income numbers were off of projects that used historic tax credits to complete the work but this does not paint the complete picture of work and income being generated by preservation work since non-tax paying groups, like the

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74 Rypkema, Cheong, and Mason, “Measuring Economic Impacts,” 2.
75 Rypkema, Cheong, and Mason, “Measuring Economic Impacts,” 3-4
LDS Church, the majority landholder in Utah, are not counted.\textsuperscript{76} Despite this, the data indicated that “historic rehabilitation is a relatively labor intensive activity that provides good wages, particularly for those without advanced formal education.”\textsuperscript{77} Similarly, property values were looked at over a number of years in five cities, but only in national register historic districts.\textsuperscript{78} While this data showed that 4 out of 5 cities’ recognized historic districts have higher property values, it does not directly compare those values to the property values of historic districts not yet officially designated. Nor does it consider who is living there, whether the property value increases caused displacement or if economically disadvantaged families were able to benefit from this increase.

One measure that was not included in the original listing of data sets, but which does have some impact on the way people live, is a walkability index. As Jane Jacobs points out in\textit{The Death and Life of Great American Cities}, “The more intensely various and close-grained the diversity in an area, the more walking. Even people who come into a lively, diverse area from outside, whether by car of public transportation, walk when they get there.”\textsuperscript{79} The study found that “more intensive use of existing built areas leads to a greater concentration of activities. This encourages both residents and visitors to get out of their vehicles and walk to multiple destinations.”\textsuperscript{80} Walkability was compared to tax credit projects to determine if historic areas were more walkable than other neighborhoods. Almost all of these projects were completed in neighborhoods that ranged from ‘Somewhat Walkable’ up to ‘Walker’s Paradise’ with only 3.9% in a car dependent neighborhood.\textsuperscript{81} It is likely that communities with higher walkability scores may also have higher social connections and reinforce accepted community norms.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{77} PlaceEconomics, “Profits,” 4.
\textsuperscript{78} PlaceEconomics, “Profits,” 10-11.
\textsuperscript{80} PlaceEconomics, “Profits,” 17.
\textsuperscript{81} PlaceEconomics, “Profits,” 17.
\end{flushleft}
At an Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) Summit in 2006, one of the decrees to come out of it was to "Measure and share preservation's benefits by developing consistent ways to measure direct and indirect impacts (particularly economic) and by pursuing and promoting necessary research." While Rypkema and his team have made great progress in measuring the economic benefits of preservation, little other measurements have been undertaken. These economic indicators are a great quantitative measurement of preservation, but in order to understand the impacts on people, more qualitative measures need to be included and more analysis of the quantitative data must happen to extrapolate what that data means to the daily lives of communities, particularly those facing challenges.

**Methodology**

**Selection Process**

Wilkinsburg and Springfield were selected as the two primary case studies because they provided similarities in economic status, density, and because they are primarily residential and the preservation work focuses on revitalizing the communities. However, their differences in size — Wilkinsburg is significantly larger —, and approaches to preservation — grassroots versus outsider —, and variation in organizations — small and local versus regional and well-tested theories — made them interesting to investigate. While looking for case studies, Buffalo's Hamlin Park and New Orlean's Central City were also considered. Hamlin Park, a primarily residential neighborhood located near downtown, developed at the turn of the 20th century with homes designed as two-family flats that attracted recent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wilkinsburg</th>
<th>Springfield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>19,196</td>
<td>8,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>8,335.1</td>
<td>7,392.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
<td>98.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Than High School</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's or higher</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Out Rate</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Home Value</td>
<td>$71,238</td>
<td>$56,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Household size</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Income</td>
<td>$37,115</td>
<td>$32,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy Rate</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2000 Census Data via Social Explorer, Dollars adjusted to 2013 Dollars

immigrants, typically Jewish or German, from the heart of downtown.\textsuperscript{83} In contrast, Central City developed around 1850 as a bustling city market in the heart of downtown. It quickly attracted a diverse community of shop owners, and was one of the few places that African-Americans, Italians, Germans, and Russian-Jewish immigrants all worked together.\textsuperscript{84}

Ultimately, their lack of easily accessed study participants resulted in these two neighborhoods being eliminated from the study. More information about Hamlin Park and Central City are available in the Appendix.

**Measurement System**

The basis of this research was the earlier work of Grootaert and van Bastelaer, as well as Flueres which was adapted for use in the preservation field. This gave the study a solid base, which had been successful in other social capital measurement studies. From there a series of indicators provided the direction needed to measure the social impacts of preservation. These are described earlier in the background section. These indicators were then split into information that could be gleaned from interviews with the organization and material that would require a survey with educational participants, volunteers, and/or community members. The first three indicators -- the autonomy of the community, the diversity of volunteers, and the frequency of meetings -- were captured via interviews. The last three indicators, which required the opinion of the participants or community, suited a survey format.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Preservation Organization Type & Residential & National Register Historic District & Neighborhood Community Accessible & Organization’s Community Accessible \\
\hline
Wilkinsburg & Regionally Focused & ✓ & & ✓ \\
\hline
Springfield & Neighborhood Focused & ✓ & ✓ & ✓ \\
\hline
Hamlin Park & Regionally Focused & ✓ & ✓ & \\
\hline
Central City & Regionally Focused and Local Business Association & ✓ & ✓ & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Table of Preservation Organization Types}
\end{table}


\textsuperscript{84} Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association, “Early Years on Dryades Street,” \textit{Neighborhood History}, accessed on Mar. 6, 2015.
Because of the different audience available for surveying in the two case studies, Wilkinsburg and Springfield, different surveys were administered to each. In Wilkinsburg, the identification of two audience resulted in two surveys being deployed. These surveys targeted educational participants and PHLF volunteers. In Springfield, the current residents proved easier to survey, resulting in one survey deployed only to that group. The details of these surveys, including the exact questions asked to each group, are available in the Appendix of this thesis. The three surveys contain some overlapping questions, particularly in regard to networks and social connections. However, because the questions and number of questions vary, the points assigned to each case study also vary. For this reason, the measurements from each case study are expressed as a percentage to make them comparable. By executing three versions of social surveys, I was able to test a variety of survey questions, collect broader data from a larger set of stakeholders, and test out the measurement process in diverse scenarios. Ideally, each of these surveys would be deployed for each area or organization.

**Interviews**

For the first indicator, the autonomy of the community, organizations were asked how they selected projects. This demonstrates how involved the community is in the preservation work within their community and how democratically the organization functions. Based on organizations’ responses, 0 points were given if most or all projects were selected by the organization itself, 1 point was given if the prioritization of work was split between the organization and the community they serve, and 2 points awarded if all projects were selected by popular vote that was open to the neighborhood.

The democracy only serves the neighborhood well if a diverse cross-segment of the population is represented in the decision-making process. To determine how well the
organization represents the diverse community, those volunteering and attending communities
meetings need to represent the area, otherwise the projects will not be serving the right group of
people. Organizations were asked to self rank their diversity, and this was validated with survey
respondents who were asked to rank the organization as “not representing the diverse
community,” “representing the diverse community fairly well,” or “represents the diverse
community very well.” Based on interviews and survey results the following formula was created
where $p_{nw}$ represents the percent of respondents who answered “not well”, $p_{fw}$ represents the
percent of respondents who answered “fairly well,” and $p_{vw}$ represents the percent of
respondents who answered “very well.”

$$RDP = -1(p_{nw}) + 1.5(p_{fw}) + 2(p_{vw})$$

The percent of respondents who selected “Not very well” was given a weight of -1, the percent
of those who selected “fairly well” were weighed 1.5 since this designation was not the direct
inverse of “not very well,” and the percent of respondents who selected “very well” given a
weight of 2.

Finally, organizations were asked about meeting frequency as it indicates how often the
organization hears from the community they served. For organizations that met only once per
year, 0 points were awarded. Organizations meeting twice earned 2 points, quarterly received 3
points and monthly or more earned 4 points. While these points are a small amount, they
provide a comparable data point that does not change based on organizations size or
localization.

**Surveys**

To determine how well the community knows about the preservation work being done in
the neighborhood, or how well the organization is communicating, survey respondents were
asked to identify, from a list, which strategies they were aware of in their neighborhoods. Of
these, 1 point was awarded for any strategy that was selected by 50% or more of respondents.
Next, a point was given to each strategy that was attended by 50% or more of the respondents.
This indicated how involved the neighbors are in the preservation work and highlighted whether some strategies were more successful than others.

Perhaps the most complex indicator and measurement, the change to socialization patterns is also the most important. It identifies whether the strategies strengthened the social connections and networks of the community by asking respondents in Springfield how they socialized with neighbors before and after a preservation event. This is done by charting how they socialized with each other to see if there were any noticeable changes. The formula for this measurement is as follows:

\[
\sum_b = 4(b_{home}) + 3(b_{out}) + 2(b_{outside}) + 1(b_{street}) + -1(b_{no})
\]

\[
\sum_a = 4(a_{home}) + 3(a_{out}) + 2(a_{outside}) + 1(a_{street}) + -1(a_{no})
\]

Social Change = \(\frac{\sum_a - \sum_b}{\sum_b}\)

Here, \(\sum_b\) is the sum for socialization before the intervention and \(\sum_a\) is the sum for socialization after the intervention. The term \(p_{home}\) is the percent of people who said they socialized at either their home or a neighbor’s, \(p_{out}\) is the percent that dined out with neighbors, \(p_{street}\) is the percent that socialized outside of the home, but not out on the street, and \(p_{no}\) is the percent who said they did not social with their neighbors. The \(b\) prefix indicates before the preservation intervention and the \(a\) prefix indicates after. Because residents were not the main respondents to the survey in Wilkinsburg, this indicator was measured slightly differently. For that survey, there is no before and after measurement, so instead the weighted scores are added together, include those that are weighted negatively. The differences can be seen in the two tables outlining the results.

The last measurement is the spillover effect. This measurement tries to determine if the preservation strategies are altering the way the community views itself and the pride they have in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Springfield, Change to Socialization</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dinner at home (%*4)</td>
<td>82.68</td>
<td>126.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dinner out (%*3)</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>13.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside of home (%*2)</td>
<td>57.74</td>
<td>66.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on street (%*1)</td>
<td>36.08</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did not (%*-1)</td>
<td>-11.34</td>
<td>-7.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>174.43</td>
<td>220.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (after total-before total)/before total | 26.49% |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wilkinsburg Socialization</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>connected in person (%*4)</td>
<td>30.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connected online (%*2)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>met, but haven't connected (%*1)</td>
<td>69.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no (%*-1)</td>
<td>-23.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their neighborhood and homes. To do this the number of respondents noting a negative change in their neighborhood were subtracted from the number of respondents noting a positive change in their neighborhood.

Threshold for success

To determine whether efforts could be deemed successful in their attempts to make social impacts using preservation, it was necessary to first define success for each organization and neighborhood. Based on the measurement system, a total number of points possible for each case study was determined -- 616 for Wilkinsburg and 375 for Springfield. The numbers vary so much because of the differing surveys for each case study.

For more details on the surveys, see the Appendix and for the results of each question, please refer to the individual case studies later in the thesis. To better compare the impacts, each case study’s points were converted into a percentage. Because it would not be possible for any group to get all points possible, the reasonable best solution was determined to be 75% of the total points, or 462 for Wilkinsburg and 281 for Springfield. Then, anything over 50% would indicate success, while scores below that would simply demonstrate that there is room for improvement, particularly in key areas where the group scored lower. Additionally, once a baseline is established, success would be measured by the amount of improvement in subsequent measurements.
Challenges

There are three main challenges to measuring the social impacts of preservation. First, there are no baseline measurements to compare the current conditions to within neighborhoods, states, or the nation. Additionally, because of the time limitations associated with this thesis, it was not possible to survey and interview every organization and area before an intervention and following it or follow the progress over a longer period of time. This means that in some cases, like changes to socialization, participants were asked to recall their interactions before and then after preservation. This is subjective as it really gets at perceived progress, but still provides change over time and participant perception may be an accurate way to measure the social impacts to their social networks. For other information, such as diversity, the measurements of this research must act as the baseline.

Secondly, if social capital is to be monitored going forward as a way to track preservations impacts on communities, preservation organizations will need to collect, analyze and monitor this information on a more regular basis. Considering tight budgets, a limited number of staff, and competing priorities, many organizations may not have the bandwidth to complete this tracking system. Ideally, this measurement would take place before and after a major project or intervention and would be monitored in a general way annually. Lastly, organizations may be challenged to be unbiased about themselves, their volunteers and their impacts. Because of these last two challenges, the measurement of social impacts may need to become an effort of an independent third party.
Findings

Case Study: Wilkinsburg, Pittsburgh, PA

Survey and Interview Findings

Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) uses a multitude of preservation strategies, which are detailed in the accompanying chart. Of these, the educational workshops, tours and special events, and adaptive reuse were the most often cited strategies. In an interview with Karamagi Rujumba, Project Manager at Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, described the educational workshops that are held in a building in Wilkinsburg that PHLF acquired and rehabilitated for the purpose of using it for their programs. As a result, the educational strategy overlaps with an adaptive reuse project, so any impacts derived comes from a combination of the two strategies and cannot be assigned to one over the other.

In regard to the educational programs, Rujumba says the topics cover all aspects of preservation training and classes for homeowners regarding the repair and maintenance of historic properties. There were also more academic lectures focusing on architectural history. Concerning these academic lectures, the organization felt that these lectures were not reaching those members of the Wilkinsburg community most at risk in the neighborhood because they were topics that they did not care about or that had no direct impact on their lives. Instead, the

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86 According to surveys with volunteers and community participants and an interview with the project manager.
greatest benefit of the lectures, as seen by the organization, was the exposure it gave the neighborhood to preservation-minded outsiders, both PHLF volunteers and those taking the classes. According to survey respondents, this exposure is having a positive impact on the local community. One respondent stated that there was “less trash, less graffiti, and properties generally look like someone cares. [The respondent] attributed much of this to the huge commitment that PHLF has in Wilkinsburg. [The community is] so fortunate that their enthusiasm has become contagious.”87 While more challenging to reach education program participants because emails were either not collected or those listed were incorrect, 13 were successfully surveyed. Of these, six attended a hands-on learning class and five attended lectures. One way in which the educational program could have greater impacts on social capital is in making stronger connections between participants. Just under 70% said they made a social connection, but have not been in contact with that person since the class, bringing into question how strong of a connection was made. Since they have not socialized since the event, it is unlikely that this contributed to an expanded or strengthen social network. While people are obviously connecting with new people at the workshops and lectures, there could be more emphasis placed on ensuring that the social network connections last, thus having a stronger impact on the social networks. In regard to helping the neighborhood gain exposure, the item that PHLF noted as perhaps the strongest impact, only 30% say their experience with

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PHLF improved their view of the Wilkinsburg neighborhood, however there were a number of people who gained exposure to the neighborhood through the educational program. The impacts this exposure has to the social capital of the community is difficult to assess. However, it is likely that this exposure could impact the spillover effect. As more people learn about the neighborhood, and have a positive impression, neighbors are likely to begin to have pride in their community again, which in turn may positively impact how they socialize with neighbors and how they maintain the exterior of their home. Additionally, some of the visitors to the community may decide to buy or move into a currently vacant or abandoned home and contribute to the neighborhood’s revitalization.

Walking and specialized tours are another form of educational strategy that PHLF uses. The organization hosts downtown tours every Friday that are free and open to the public. The specialized tours focus on a particular theme, Frank Lloyd Wright architecture for example, and happen less frequently. The last component to the educational strategy is a school program that trains teachers about historic preservation, architecture, and local history. All of these programs are led by volunteers that come from all over the city. This volunteer-base of 75 people is a strong asset, but also one way that the organization is having a major impact on the social

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88 Author survey, administered Feb. 6-12, 2015.
capital. Of the 32 PHLF volunteer respondents, a small number of whom live in the Wilkinsburg community, 62% say that they work at the organization on a regular basis. In general, none of the respondents volunteered less than twice. In terms of impact to social capital, while there is an increase to the volunteers’ social capital, few of them live in Wilkinsburg. This lack of representation on the volunteer level likely reflects the current needs of the community, which is struggling financially more than in other areas, and where gainful, paying employment is the focus rather than donating their time. However, as suggested earlier, the volunteers have been exposed to the neighborhood with 59% of volunteer respondents saying they were not very familiar with the neighborhood before volunteering and almost 13% saying that they had heard of it, but had never been there. Since volunteering, 45% say they have now been there several times and nearly 20% say that they are now very familiar with the neighborhood or have moved into it. In this way, the preservation strategies of PHLF have contributed to the social capital of the area by contributing to the expansion the network of the community.

As one of the older, well-funded preservation organizations, PHLF often leverages property acquisition and adaptive reuse as a strategy. For these projects, they actively fundraise to get money to purchase new properties and work to save buildings from demolition or neglect. The sites selected for these interventions are strategic, often with major buildings or corner buildings selected to create a greater visual impact for the block and increase the spillover effect. Typically, these projects are used to create low to middle-income housing, according to Rujumba. People familiar with Wilkinsburg can see a change in the area. One survey respondent stated that “the Landmarks Resource Center and Crescent

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90 Author survey, administered Feb. 5-11, 2015.
Apartments create an entirely different feel to the safety and aesthetics of the street compared to adjacent areas that have not yet been restored."\(^{91}\) “Approximately 50/60 years ago it was a thriving community, but I do feel with the presence of the PHLF redoing their building has encouraged others to move into this area.”\(^{92}\) Not all feedback was positive, however, with several respondents saying they saw no really changes in the neighborhood and one saying that “long-term businesses are gone.”\(^{93}\) However, the majority of the responses were positive in nature. One way these positive impacts could increase would be to involve the community in more decision making in the selection of project sites and appropriate reuse, and in some of the hands-on work of restoration. Right now, members of the community are included early on, mostly to solicit ideas, or to get input on landmarking nominations, but after a certain point in a project PHLF stops collecting that input in order to complete projects in a manner that is both timely and in alignment with the organization’s mission to preserve buildings and renew communities. Not all acquisition and reuse projects are buildings, however, and include more community involvement. For example, the recent creation of a community garden in Wilkinsburg, where PHLF worked with the community and now sponsor the garden, but the community runs and maintains the site.

**Conclusions**

In Pittsburgh, it was possible to measure social impacts of preservation because the topic is a growing area of focus for the community, Wilkinsburg, that was the heart of the study. Enough work has happened within the area recently that results can be seen by those surveyed, even if those changes are not yet reflected in census data. As Wilkinsburg continues to be the target of preservation interventions, it will be critical and interesting to continue to monitor the impacts to social capital and the associated vacancy rate, home values, and income levels. Since 2006 PHLF and others raised more than $22 million in funds for Wilkinsburg and

\(^{91}\) Survey respondent. PHLF Volunteers’ survey, Feb 9, 2015.  
\(^{92}\) Survey respondent. Educational Participant survey, Feb 9, 2015.  
\(^{93}\) Survey respondent. PHLF Volunteers’ survey, Feb 9, 2015.
in 2015-16 the organization will manage a $10.5 neighborhood revitalization fund.\textsuperscript{94} This attention and energy has people excited enough to participate in surveys or interviews, making data collection possible. In terms of correlating those survey and interview findings with the measurement system reviewed earlier, it proved slightly harder to measure the exact impact on Wilkinsburg since PHLF focuses on a wider region, with Wilkinsburg being just one project. Going forward, it would be manageable for the organization to focus on that area by collecting contact information at any interaction point or by distributing brief surveys at events or meetings. Since the work in the area is ramping up, the findings from this research are a good baseline to measure against and will help PHLF track their social impacts. Even at this early point in the community’s revitalization process, the data does show a strengthening of social capital, despite the census data revealing that it is likely still in a decline phase.

PHLF uses a mixture of approaches to selecting projects, incorporating community input some of the time and driving their decisions based on outside factors. As a result, they earned 1 point out of a maximum of 2 for community autonomy. Based on survey results, the organization earned 154.9 points out of a possible 200 for representing the diverse population of Pittsburgh as a whole. The survey did not ask how well it represented just Wilkinsburg since the organization strives to work in a broader context than that one community. PHLF meets often, hosting volunteer training programs weekly, weekly educational sessions, and community meetings whenever the need arises. While they received the full 4 points for this, the group could publish and host community meetings more regularly, particularly in areas like Wilkinsburg where much energy and attention is focused. For PHLF, the data point for number of strategies known about was skipped since it did not apply to the volunteers and the data was unclear regarding the educational participants, but in their survey attendance for 1 out of 3 strategies reached 50% or higher. For the impact to social networks, or the changes to social networks, the volunteer group was measured based on whether they met new connections as a result of volunteering. For this, PHLF earned 76.91 points out or a possible 400. Because it was based

\textsuperscript{94} Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, “Mission and Brief History.”
on a yes/no premise, there was no before and after component to this question, so change over time was not a factor. In terms of spillover, an equal number of respondents noted positive change as those who either noted no change or a negative change to the neighborhood, so they earned 0 points out of a possible 7. Overall, in terms of impact to the social networks, PHLF earned 237.9 points out of a possible 616 points or a 38.62%. However, it is unlikely that any group would ever score perfectly on this scale, so assuming 75% would be the best results likely, thus lowering the total possible points to 462, PHLF would score 51.49%. Based on where the community is in the arc of preservation work and revitalization efforts and how far it eroded after years of neglect, this score is on par with the information in the census data. As mentioned earlier, this grade should stand as a baseline for that organization from which to track impacts to the social network going forward.

Case Study: Springfield, Jacksonville, FL

Surveys and Interviews

Through a combination of surveys and interviews, Springfield Preservation and Revitalization (SPAR) organization’s efforts to rebuild the community were documented. The online survey received the most responses, over 140, of any of the cities in the study. Because of technical restraints and software limitations, only 100 responses could be analyzed for this study, but the willingness to participate and quick response rate should be noted as an interesting, and positive, attribute of this community. Of those surveyed, only 8 people had not participated in a preservation event in the neighborhood, and of those the majority said the reason they had not participated in an event was because of their schedule, not lack of interest or prior knowledge of the event.

In recent years, SPAR has shifted away from traditional preservation efforts that simply focused on the built environment to a broader approach that includes the community living in the neighborhood, according to President Hoff. This shift from quality of building to quality of life means that there is more diversity in preservation strategies employed in the area, ranging from
tree plantings, advocacy efforts, and festivals. Projects tend to be initiated or determined by the board, often in reaction to a city council bill. However, there are times when ideas will come from the larger community. These initiatives include special events, community building activities, educational programs, and advocacy.

While all the strategies employed by SPAR received over 50% awareness within the community, education was ranked the lowest with 68% of the respondents identifying it as a strategy. Currently, when someone buys within the historic district, they are sent paperwork from the city explaining the rules of the district that they must sign as well as renovation guidelines so they know what is allowed. When they need to make an alteration, Hoff says that SPAR helps to connect the homeowner to someone on the design review committee to help them get their project approved by the commission. It does not appear that anyone is explaining tax credits or any resources that are available to homeowners within a National Register historic district and this is a big lost opportunity, but one that could easily be improved.

78% of respondents said they participated in at least one neighborhood festival and 91% of those who participated in an event met a new neighbor as a result, which seems to be the most significant social capital impact. Before participating in a preservation event, the most popular way of socializing with neighbors was outside on the street. After the event the most popular way of socializing was still outside of the home, but no longer just on the street, which
indicates a strengthening of social networks in the neighborhood. Moreover, before a 
preservation event, over 11% said they did not socialize with their neighbors. This number dropped to just over 7% following the event. There was also an increase in the category that would indicated the strongest social network, entertaining neighbors within the home. Additionally, the excitement of an upcoming event seems to get neighbors excited about maintenance projects. One survey respondent noted that “around the time of certain events (those advertised outside the neighborhood and intended to draw people here) there are cleanup and beautification efforts but it usually falters after, until the next event.” Even when no one event can be traced as the cause for changes in the social capital of the neighborhood, the result of the preservation efforts is a community that has shared futures, struggles, and goals.

Closely linked to these events is the work toward community building and neighborhood rehabilitation. For this work, Hoff says that SPAR tries to attract homebuyers and small businesses to the neighborhood by highlighting its history and unique character. It is also the most well-known strategy by community members with 90% of survey respondents citing rehabilitation for the question “what types of preservation work are you aware of in your neighborhood.” With SPAR hosting community events, coordinating community improvement projects and helping to connect neighbors, and working to reduce crime in the neighborhood, there is a link between the events and the rehabilitation that occurs. These multiple events have

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97 Author survey, administered Feb 12-20, 2015.
98 Author survey, administered Feb 12-20, 2015.
lead to multiple properties getting repaired.\textsuperscript{99} Much of the activity is encouraged by the work of SPAR, but it is reaching the point where it is taking on a life of its own. Many survey respondents said they helped neighbors with preservation related issues and one even leads biking tours of the neighborhood with an emphasis on the preservation work happening.\textsuperscript{100}

While advocacy was the second most popular answer to the question “what types of preservation work are you aware of in your neighborhood” with 88\% of respondents selecting it, the comments about the work of SPAR in the neighborhood all highlight its importance. One such comment stated that “more than advocacy has been necessary, [it required] pitched battles with the city [but] saved many of these houses.”\textsuperscript{101} For its part, SPAR sees itself as the primary liaison between the city and the neighborhood and works to both defend it and ensure the proper protections and benefits for the community. Presently, the organization is working with the neighborhood on a proposed city council bill that targeted Springfield and other neighborhoods as blight, giving no concessions or protections for historic district designations. This is a hot topic for the neighborhood and, as Hoff points out, one that requires a lot of advocating to ensure the best outcome for the people and buildings.

**Conclusions**

In picking and prioritizing projects, SPAR tends to react to city initiatives or rather input from the board. They also meet with the community and take their input when appropriate, but more heavily rely on the board. As a result, they earned 1 point out of possible 2 for partially leveraging a democratic decision-making process. As mentioned earlier, the organization understands that they are not reaching all facets of the community and that newer residents and those with higher incomes are more represented than others. As a result, SPAR received no points for “represents the diverse population very well” but ended up with 75 out of a possible 200 points for the overall category. While this is an area that could improve, it is a difficult task, but perhaps engaging with the longer-term residents or lower-income residents could produce

more variety of strategies that could positively benefit the community as a whole. The number of
times SPAR meets with its board and the community is one of its strengths. Whether it is in
reaction to proposals by the city or just to plan the next preservation initiative, the group is very
active and received the maximum number of points, 4, for this category. Of the over 100 people
surveyed, well over 50% of them were aware of the many preservation strategies used in their
neighborhood. As a result, the maximum number of points were given for this category. Of the
four strategies included in the survey, three were attended by 50% or more of the respondents.

In terms of changes to the social networks, SPAR earned 26.49 points out of a possible
100. More importantly, the strongest social connection indicator, ‘dinner at home,’ increased
noticeably while the lowest category, ‘did not socialize,’ decreased. Because this is a before/
after question, noticing a positive change is an important finding. Ideally, this question would be
asked preceding to and shortly after an event to get a better understanding on the strategies
impact to the socialization patterns, but this is still a strong, positive measure. There were
several neutral responses when asked ‘what physical changes have you noticed’ so those were
not counted when determining the points for the spillover effect. Instead, SPAR earned 36
points out of a possible 61 points. 12 answers were neutral. Yet many answers clearly
articated the spillover effect. One such answer state that “renovation is contagious. Every
time someone starts cleaning up or rehabbing their house neighbors start sprucing up also.”

SPAR earned a total of 113.49 points out of a possible 375 for a 30.26%. Like the
results for PHLF, it is unlikely that any group could score perfectly, so assuming 75% would be
the best likely scenario, this raises the score to 40.35%. This result shows a decent positive
impact to the social capital of Springfield. While it should serve as a baseline for the
organization to track changes going forward, but does show that they are making positive
impacts to the social capital within Springfield.

Summary of Findings

Because of the different size of each community, the types of preservation organizations working in each, and the strategies used by each there are things that are working well in each community. One of the benefits of this measurement process is that these strengths are easily identifiable and looking across both the case studies shows interesting differences. In Wilkinsburg, the organization has an established and tested process that they have deployed throughout the region over decades. This allows them to intervene in a nearly surgical way when implementing preservation strategies. Within Wilkinsburg, the adaptive reuse projects combined with strategies to revitalize the community mean that vacant buildings no longer contributed to the general feeling of ‘blight' within the area while also providing a benefit to those living there. The Resource Learning Center exposed outsiders to the neighborhood while the rehabilitation of the Crescent apartments provided affordable rental units in an updated historic building. Because PHLF is such a large, well-funded group it has the power to influence and alter planning policies within the region. This has served the group well in earlier revitalization projects and will likely be to the benefit of Wilkinsburg. Additionally, their drive to maintain levels of affordable housing should ensure the current community members of Wilkinsburg are not displaced as the neighborhood changes. Community-focused activities, like festivals, are resulting in better social cohesion between the neighbors in Springfield. Because the preservation organization is located within the community, it seems to have a greater understanding on what will resonate with the neighborhood. The variety and number of events happening within the neighborhood means that the community is constantly aware of its strength and character as a historic community. This is resulting in more people maintaining their homes, supporting the unique character of the built environment. In doing so, the neighbors bolster their sense of shared accomplishments and goals.

While there are generally positive impacts on the social capital in both Wilkinsburg and Springfield, there is always room to improve on the existing work. Enhancing the hands-on learning program could be a great way to reach more Wilkinsburg residents. As mentioned in
the Background, these hands on training sessions not only can help home owners rehabilitate their property, it can help them create a skill and job. Currently, those benefiting the most from PHLF’s efforts are not necessarily Wilkinsburg locals, but members of the PHLF community. This will likely change as the organizations invests more in the community, and should the community be surveyed as early as later this year, there will likely be notable results.

Educational programs are a big opportunity for SPAR. Like Wilkinsburg, these could include hands-on training sessions, but Springfield would also benefit from more lectures and informational sessions on the advantages to living in a National Register Historic District. These types of classes may bridge some of the gap between the lower-income, long-term residents and the relatively wealthier new comers. Because it is a smaller, community-based organization, SPAR tends to be more reactionary to local legislative measures rather than directing or influencing policies. This is to be expected for such an organization, but it might be worthwhile to partner with other community-based groups to form a more powerful block that could influence policies, particularly those related to preserving neighborhoods and communities.

In regard to the data collection process, both having personal connections and leveraging social media helped ease the process. Having a personal connection meant a plethora of respondents in Springfield and leveraging social media to access those interested meant that surveys were completed quickly and completely. The short length of the surveys, seven questions or less, ensured that all respondents were able to complete them in full without skipping any questions. Additionally, deploying the surveys electronically meant that people could share the survey with neighbors and a wider audience could be polled than with a paper survey. The electronic survey could also be monitored in real-time so it could be quickly altered or updated if it became clear that some portion was not working.

The process was not perfect, however. With a large, regional organization like PHLF, the social impacts are not contained to one neighborhood, but extend to the network of people associate with the broader works. While a neighborhood group like SPAR likely also impacts
people in the wider region of Jacksonville, simply by the nature of their structure the impacts will be much more concentrated. This contrast was highlighted by using PHLF’s existing database because it ensured survey participants cared about preservation and would be willing to participate but did not guarantee that they were members of the Wilkinsburg community. While the data they provided helped to measure the impact PHLF has on a community, it was not necessarily the Wilkinsburg community. Ideally, each community and organization should be asked all three version of the survey to build a complete picture of the impacts to the local neighborhood, the volunteers, and any participants. Without deploying the same surveys it is difficult to compare results from each neighborhood.

Recommendations for Measuring Social Impacts

Compare a preservation community to a control group

While imperfect, the process tested out throughout this research highlights that preservation is measurable in terms other than economic. Through survey tools and interviews, it is possible to quantify the impact that preservation has on people, and that measurement is an important part of defending the work of the field. In future research, it would be interesting to survey two communities, one that is about to become designated or the target of preservation work, and another that is not involved in preservation strategies. Then resurvey these communities a year later to see if there is any difference in the social capital of either community. This could get closer to the impacts of preservation on communities since it would be able to compare it to a control group.

Community interest is needed to get meaningful survey results

In order to measure the social impacts of preservation, the community needs to be engaged. This means that preservation needs to be of interest to them, either positively or negatively. Through this research, the places that proved easiest to measure had started some
amount of preservation work, but it was new or a fresh topic within the neighborhood. With PHLF, while they have been working in Pittsburgh for decades, their attention shifting toward Wilkinsburg engaged that community in a new way. Similarly in Springfield, SPAR’s work began decades earlier, but the recent shift toward revitalization through preservation meant that most communities’ members recently engaged in preservation activities and were eager to participate in a survey about such a topic. In the Buffalo neighborhood of Hamlin Park, preservation, particularly advocacy efforts have been a part of that community for a generation. There is not a current push in the communities, so the neighbors did not feel overly compelled to participate. The surveys attempted in that community only resulted in two participants completing the short survey. This is not a negative reflection on the community or Preservation Buffalo Niagara, it is just a result of poor timing. If social impacts are to be measured in the future, it would make sense for the organizations working with communities to initiate the process since they will know when neighbors have the capacity and willingness to participate and when projects are just about to start.

In Central City, the target neighborhood and preservation efforts focused on O.C. Haley Boulevard’s commercial revitalization. While this is a worthy preservation initiative, it presents different challenges than residentially focused preservation. For this thesis, it became necessary to only focus on residential neighborhoods since they provided more overlap, could leverage the same survey questions, and the results comparable. While it would be possible to measure the impact of preservation on these commercial corridors, it would be much more complex to address the impacts on social capital since business owners may not reside in the area, and the impacts to social networks may come from the businesses themselves alone, or from a combination of the commercial activity and preservation. Thus going forward, research should focus on residential areas to measure the impacts to simplify the variables. Additionally, there needs to be enough residents in place to get a valid baseline survey.

Throughout the research process, it became evident that the relationship between preservation and social capital is cyclical. With early preservation efforts, there is a positive
impact on the social capital. This, in turns, spurs more grassroots preservation efforts within the community, which strengthens the social capital. This suggests that for a preservation organization to have exponential impacts, it is important to understand those social networks already in place in a neighborhood and to build strong relationships based on those. Also, because of this symbiotic relationship, organizations should notice remarkable increases to social capital after several focused preservation efforts. The key to fully understanding these impacts is to take measurements at the most appropriate time. Because of research limitations, this thesis did not directly address this issue, but determining the best amount of time before and after a preservation intervention will be a key next step in the process.

Determine who should do the measuring

As previously mentioned in the methodology section, preservation organizations may find it challenging to monitor their own social impacts as it requires time they may not have and the ability to be completely unbiased toward one’s own organization. Outsourcing the measurements to a neutral third party addresses both of these issues. It is likely most important that a third party collect and measure the baseline as this requires more time and a critical reading of the organization. Ongoing measurements could be done by the organizations as it will most require them to survey participants or community members.

Organizations must be better about collecting data

It is critical that organizations collect basic contact information, email addresses and/or phone numbers, for educational program participants, not just for measurement purposes, but for membership renewal and fundraising purposes as well. This simple step will allow for more robust data collection going forward. Throughout this thesis process, very few organizations maintained contact information for walk tour participants, which is often the largest groups of people participating in a preservation strategy. The easiest way to collect data from neighbors, particularly in disadvantaged communities, would be on the ground -- either going door to door
and attending a community meeting. This would allow the organization to quickly survey a larger, and more diverse, cross-segment of the community. This onsite effort could be balanced with the electronic survey approach, which would further enhance the saturation.

Conclusions

As a field, preservation must become more analytical in order to compete with the other industries like the real estate market. In cities within the United States, development pressures are a constant threat, and if preservation wants to meet these threats on an even playing field, it is necessary to be armed with facts, rather than emotions, to have a strong case. Additionally, as preservation moves into broader issues of social justice and peace building, it will become necessary to understand the true effects of our work and the strengths the discipline can bring to these global debates. It is far easier to defend, explain, and convince diverse groups of a field's value when presenting data that clearly articulates these strengths.

Because preservation tends to be an issue-based field, the measurement process needs to correlate to that reactionary nature. In that way, surveys work well because they can be quickly and easily deployed to those impacted. Yet, as a result of this reactionary method, preservationists need to have valid data and information easily accessible so that when an issue arises, they can be prepared to participate in the discourse and present their case.

The research included in this thesis is meant as a starting point from which further research and documentation should be collected in the hopes of building that repository of data from which to record preservation's value. Because the process for researching and writing this thesis was limited to under one year, the long-term impacts could not be assessed and the data collected was imperfect. However, even within this short period of time, it was possible to document the impacts of preservation on economically challenged communities. Going forward, if organizations collect the needed information, it will become easier to analyze the impacts of preservation on those it is serving.
Appendix

Overview of Survey questions

1. Educational Strategies
   a. Volunteers
      i. how many times have you volunteered
      ii. did you meet a new neighbor since volunteering
      iii. how did you socialize with neighbors before volunteering (on street, outside of the home but not on the street, dinner out, dinner at someone’s home)
      iv. how did you socialize with neighbors after volunteering (on street, outside of the home but not on the street, dinner out, dinner at someone’s home)
   b. Tour participants
      i. did you tour your own neighborhood or another
      ii. why did you take the tour
      iii. who did you take tour with
      iv. did you meet someone new on the tour
      v. have you connect with that person (Facebook, call, talk to on the street) since the tour
      vi. did you learn something new about the neighborhood
         1. how has that altered your thoughts/opinions of it
   c. training/skills building participants
      i. why did you take the training
      ii. how many times have you referenced (told someone) about what you learned
      iii. what did you learn
      iv. how many times have you used that knowledge
      v. as a result of the training have you
         1. gotten a new job b/c of what you learn
         2. gone on to study preservation or skills at a trade school, college or specialized school

Other questions for potential future surveys:

1. Funding Strategies
   A. People or businesses whose buildings were renovated
      vi. What changes have occurred since work happened
      vii. who is using the space
      viii. have you personally done more work
   d. People who votes for certain buildings to receive intervention
      i. Why did you vote for the building
      ii. did you help do the work
      iii. have you voted on another building since then
   e. People who donated
      i. was this the first time you donated to the organization
      ii. why did you donate
      iii. will you donate again
Wilkinsburg Surveys

Educational Participant Survey

1. What type of educational program did you participate in with Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF)?
   A. Walking Tour
   B. Special Tour
   C. Hands on Learning
   D. Financial Planning
   E. Other

2. Have you referenced something you learned at PHLF?
   A. No, I did not learn anything new
   B. Yes, I told a friend about something I learned at PHLF
   C. Yes, I referenced something I learned while at work
   D. Yes, I referenced something I learned while working on my home

3. Did you meet someone new from your class/tour with PHLF?
   A. No
   B. Yes, but I have not connected with them since
   C. Yes, and I have connected with that person on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)
   D. Yes, and I have connected with that person in person since our class/tour

4. If you participated in a program in Wilkinsburg, did it change your opinion about the neighborhood?
   A. No
   B. I didn't know much about it beforehand
   C. Yes, it improved my opinion of the neighborhood
   D. Yes, it decreased my opinion of the neighborhood
   E. I was already very familiar with the neighborhood

5. If you were familiar with Wilkinsburg, have you noticed any changes to the neighborhood in recent years? (more people mowing lawns, restoring homes, new people moving in . . .)

PHLF Volunteers Survey

1. How many times have you volunteered with Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation?
   A. 1 time
   B. 2-3 times
   C. 4-5 times
   D. I am working there on a volunteer basis very often

2. As a volunteer, have you made any new connections?
   A. No
   B. Yes, and I have connected with the people I met on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)
   C. Yes, I have made at least one business connection and have seen that person outside of volunteering
D. Yes, I have formed at least one friendship and have seen that person outside of volunteering

3. Did you volunteer anywhere else in the community or neighborhood before volunteering here?
   A. Yes
   B. No

4. How well do you think PHLF represents the community's diverse population?
   A. Not Very Well
   B. Fairly Well
   C. Very Well

5. Were you familiar with Wilkinsburg before your experience with PHLF?
   A. No
   B. I had heard about it, but had never been there
   C. I had been there a few times
   D. I was very familiar with it or lived there at one time

6. Since volunteering, have you learned more about Wilkinsburg?
   A. No
   B. I now know about it, but still have not been there
   C. I have been there a few times
   D. I am very familiar with it or have moved there
   E. I still live there!

7. If you are familiar with Wilkinsburg, have you noticed any physical changes there (more people mowing lawns, painting yards, people fixing homes . . .)?

**Springfield Survey**

1. What types of preservation work are you aware of in your neighborhood? (Choose all that apply)
   A. Advocacy (enlarging or creating a historic district, protecting a building . . .)
   B. History and Education (Tours or classes about the neighborhood)
   C. Rehabilitation (groups or individuals working on buildings)
   D. Festivals
   E. Other

2. Have you participated in one or more of these activities? (Choose all that apply)
   A. No
   B. Yes, Advocacy
   C. Yes, History and Education
   D. Yes, Rehabilitation
   E. Yes, Festivals

3. If you answered 'no' to question 2, why?
   A. I did not know about the event
   B. I was not interested
   C. I was interested, but could not participate due to my schedule

4. If you answered 'yes' to question 2, did you meet a new neighbor as a result?
   A. Yes
   B. No
5. Before participating in the preservation event, how did you socialize with your neighbors?
   A. I did not really socialize with them
   B. Out on the street
   C. Outside of the home, but not on the street
   D. Dinner out
   E. Dinner at a friend’s home or in your own home

6. Have you noticed any physical changes (more people maintaining their yard, fixing their homes) in your neighborhood since the preservation event?

Neighborhood Profile: Hamlin Park, Buffalo, NY

History

Hamlin Park’s earliest development dates to the mid-1800s, when the area was home to a premier horse-racing facility. Then, in 1905 the property was purchased by a Canadian developer who wanted to create a new neighborhood based on Olmstead’s Parkside neighborhood but on a more modest scale. The homes, built on small lots, were designed as two-family flats, allowing owners to live in one and rent the other. Because of this ‘money-making’ design, many of the original home buyers were recent immigrants, and the first owners were typically Jewish or German immigrants. While Wilkinsburg and Springfield were designed as mostly single-family homes, the same popular Bungalow style and Four Square style was used to reflect the same middle-class design aesthetics and to draw buyers out from the older, cramped living of the city. Within several decades, the neighborhood was an established middle-class inner-city suburb complete with a respectable college and shopping district.

Like many city-proximate neighborhoods, Hamlin Park saw some major changes in the 1950s and 60s. During this decade, more middle-class African-Americans moved into the neighborhood, and it was seen as one of the best African-American neighborhoods in the country. At the same time, the area became the focus of an urban renewal project to turn the Olmsted designed Humboldt Parkway into the larger, less picturesque Kensington Expressway, all but destroying the neighborhood. The Parkway was the center of the neighborhood, the place where socialization happened. When it was replaced with the expressway, it had a larger impact on the social patterns of the neighborhood than other highway projects in the area, basically cutting the neighborhood in half. Despite this disruption, many families chose to stay in the neighborhood, and even today most homeowners have lived in Hamlin Park for generations. In 1999, it was designated a local historic district, and is thought to be the largest African-American district in the country.

Current Issues

The neighborhood is still predominantly African-American, and the average homeowner has lived in the neighborhood just over 30 years, meaning that the residents are long-term, rather than having a mix of newcomers, like Springfield. Because most families live in Hamlin Park for several generations, there is a lot of pride in keeping the neighborhood beautiful. These neighbors are engaged, and preservation concerns have been a normal part of their lives. Even with this dedication to homes and neighborhood, the average home value is well below the state average, approximately $75,000 compared to nearly $330,000 for the state. At the same time, when compared to just the city of Buffalo as a whole, Hamlin Park looks favorable. This is slightly

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misleading since there are areas of rampant poverty or economic decline in the city that skew the data. Thus, issues like poverty level, which is 26% compared to the city average of 30.9%, should still be seen as high. The data demonstrates that Hamlin Park is economically stressed, but may not be in as bad of shape as other neighborhoods in Buffalo. Additionally, Hamlin Park is more demographically homogenous when compared to other neighborhoods within Buffalo, but particularly when compared to Wilkinsburg and Springfield, which is likely to inflate certain aspects of their social capital.

While the area’s local designation occurred in the 1990s, the nomination process for the National Register just happened several years ago. This process was undertaken to help homeowners take advantage of tax credits. The process involved many homeowners and a local non-profit advocating and working together to rally the neighborhood around the nomination. During the summer of 2014, a proposal bubbled up from the community to deck an entrance ramp and lowered portion of the freeway. This would return to grade-level a portion of the street-lined parkway that was such an integral part of the early community. This proposal caused concern that property taxes would rise with home values, so local politicians would consider a special tax district that would essentially freeze taxes. Additionally, the community wants to ensure that outside developers do not come in and create new projects that would

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support outsiders or newcomers, rather than the long-term residents currently living in Hamlin Park.\textsuperscript{107}

While the neighborhood is home to engaged residents, is architecturally significant, and economically depressed, it is not used as a case study. The timing of past preservation efforts happened recently enough to be meaningful, but not recently enough to still have the residents’ attention. The area likely has a high level of social capital, unlike the other neighborhoods which are in the midst of a transition, but must figure out how to keep it high, or how to reinvest in that social capital. Had this research been undertaken a year or two earlier, Hamlin Park would likely make for an ideal case study. As there are urban interventions currently being discussed, it is likely that some preservation strategies or advocacy will come to the forefront again, at which point the measurement process could be initiated.

**Neighborhood Profile: Central City, New Orleans, LA**

**History**

The O.C. Haley Boulevard section of Central City in New Orleans dates to 1849. Named Dryades Street at the time, the busy street was part of the city market program.\textsuperscript{108} By the turn of the 20th Century, Dryades was home to many African-American owned businesses, including the largest hairdressing college in the country.\textsuperscript{109} However, it was also incredibly diverse with Italian merchants, a German baker, and African-American doctors, all served by street cars.\textsuperscript{110} By the 1930s the

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\textsuperscript{108} Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association, “Early Years on Dryades Street,” *Neighborhood History*, accessed on Mar. 6, 2015.


\textsuperscript{110} Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association.
stores on the street became more diverse, including many stores owned by Russian Jewish immigrants. Unlike other commercial areas in New Orleans, Dryades was a place that welcomed the diversity of merchants and shoppers. During the Great Depression, adults of all race and ethnicity came to the local YMCA for job training during the week and also inspirational speeches on Sundays. For nearly a century, the same YMCA served as an outlet for youthful energy. As racial tensions grew in the south, and diversity was outlawed in the Jim Crow laws, the street became the center of the Civil Rights movement in the area, with picketing and freedom walks being held there between 1940-60. In the 1960s it was home to the Free Southern Theater, an influential place for African American students to share their creativity through plays, poetry, and dance. Many of the original jazz musicians came from Central City, including Buddy Bolden, Kid Ory, and Jelly Roll Morton. In the late 1960s and ’70s, the area followed the path of many inner city neighborhoods—disinvestment, concentration of poverty and lack of opportunity. Dozens of historic properties fell into disrepair and were demolished. Despite these challenges, the area became a historic district in 1976.

Because of the important role played by the commercial district, the Merchants Association tends to act as the neighborhood revitalization engine. The Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association established itself in the late 1990s in the hopes of rebuilding the important and diverse business corridor. In 2009 they successfully applied for the Louisiana Main Street Community. Beyond this group, there is no neighborhood level organization dedicated to preservation, like that of SPAR in the Springfield neighborhood. Many city-wide groups have taken on one or more projects within the neighborhood, but not in an integrated, planned effort like PHLF works in Wilkinsburg.

Current issues

The revitalization and preservation efforts in the neighborhood are focused on the commercial businesses, possibly as a result of the organizational focus of the merchants

111 Medley, “Dryades Street.”
112 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association.
113 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association.
association. The idea is to restore sustainable jobs, opportunities and the second chances of yesterday. In doing so, new housing, nonprofit organizations, and retail stores are returning to The Boulevard.\(^\text{114}\) A new jazz market, set to open in 2015, is part of this initiative to revitalize Central City and bring music back to the area.\(^\text{115}\)

While once very diverse, according to City Data, the neighborhood today is primarily African-American and most households earn less than $35,000 per year. The median residential rent is about $200 less than rents in the rest of New Orleans. Additionally, most homes are renter occupied in Central City. Single mothers make up 43.3% of the neighborhood households, compared to just over 21% in the rest of the city and approximately the same percentage of households are living in poverty.\(^\text{116}\) This is similar to the issues faced in Wilkinsburg and Springfield, where a once vibrant community is struggling with high vacancy rates, and an economically depressed community.

Despite the historic


building fabric, and rich history of the neighborhood, coupled with the economic situation, Central City was not selected as a case study. While it is similar to Springfield in that the current organizational focus is on revitalizing the commercial corridor, the major difference is that in Springfield that push followed the residential preservation whereas in Central City it is using the commercial revitalization to spur the residential work. Because of this focus, the social impacts focus around the business owners and consumers, who may not be residents of the neighborhood. The residents, however, may not be experiencing preservation interventions directly yet or the spillover effects of the commercial revitalization. Plus, unlike Springfield and Wilkinsburg, there is not one preservation organization that is concentrating on this area, instead several regional groups are doing work, but there is not a focused project within the area. Without a clearly defined group of residents and targeted preservation strategies, measuring the social impacts within the neighborhood proved unfeasible for this study and would likely result in skewed or inaccurate data.
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Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation website. http://www.phlf.org


