

VACANT HOME TOUR

I used to be
yellow with
pretty blue
trim.

WCDC
Wilkesburg Community
Development Corporation

NEIGHBORHOOD **ALLIES**

Carnegie Mellon University



**WHAT IS THE
VACANT HOME TOUR?**



COMING UP
WITH THE
CONCEPT

The image shows a group of approximately seven people in a meeting room, gathered around a table. They are looking at documents and talking. The text 'COMING UP WITH THE CONCEPT' is overlaid in the center. The documents on the table have some text, including 'IMAGINE THE FUTURE', 'Pittsburgh Post-Gazette', and 'WILKINSBOROUGH'. There is a water bottle on the table.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY





Mill St
Rebecca Ave

**UTILIZING
RESIDENT-
DRIVEN
RESEARCH**



DISPLAYS

816 SOUTH AVENUE



Vernon Covell and his granddaughter Marilyn cutting the grass during the summer of 1938



Vernon Covell buys 816 South from Samuel H. and Jane A. McKee

1896 1906 1914 1931-1932

Vernon Covell arrives in Wilksburg The George Westinghouse Bridge is built



On February 23, 1907, The South Avenue Methodist Church burned down. To the right are the plans for its re-construction



Boys & Girls Club across the street from 816 South, c. 1908



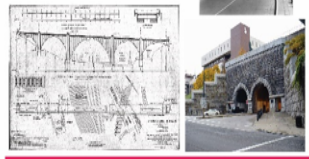
McNeil School, corner South & Center built 1890



The Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania installs telephone cables on the 800 block of South Avenue



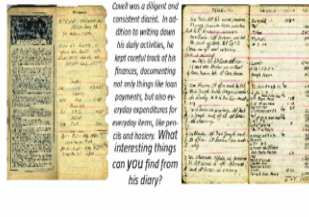
As Chief Engineer of the Bureau of Bridges for the Department of Public Works of Allegheny County, Covell is responsible for many of the bridges that have made Pittsburgh so unique. The Westinghouse Bridge was known as one of the great engineering achievements of its era



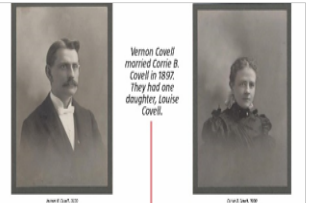
October 9, 1941

The Covells grant the home to Robert W. Pratt for \$1

Robert W. Pratt (unmarried) returns the home to the Covells and to Louise C. Hemker for \$1



Covell was a diligent and consistent diarist. In addition to writing down his daily activities, he kept careful track of his finances, documenting not only things like loan payments, but also regular expenditures for everyday items, like pencils and hosiery. What interesting things can YOU find from his diary?



Vernon Covell married Corrie B. Covell in 1897. They had one daughter, Louise Covell.



Louise C. and Walter D. Hemker convey the home to themselves for \$1

1951 1957

Marilyn Hemker Karpinski is deeded the home



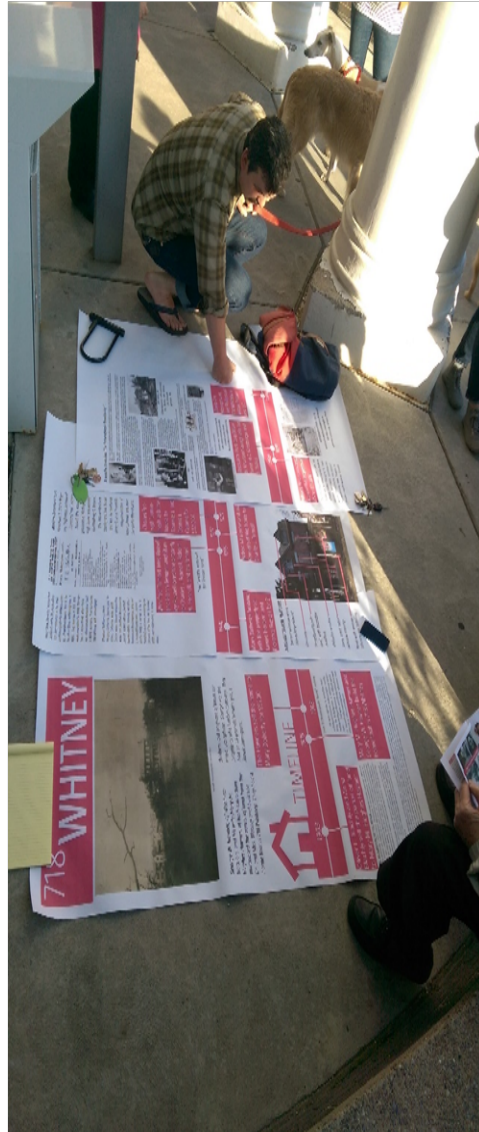
Louise C. Hemker died in October of 1968. Marilyn Karpinski inherits the home from the estate of Louise C. Hemker in July of 1969 for the amount of \$2,000 (though the register of \$4,000 was listed)



The Hemker daughters standing in front of their pleasant 816 South Avenue home.



PREPARATION



**Saturday, May 9
11am to 3pm**

**Free Registration
Wilkinsburg Borough Building
605 Ross Avenue**

NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIES

WCDC
Wilkinsburg Community
Development Corporation

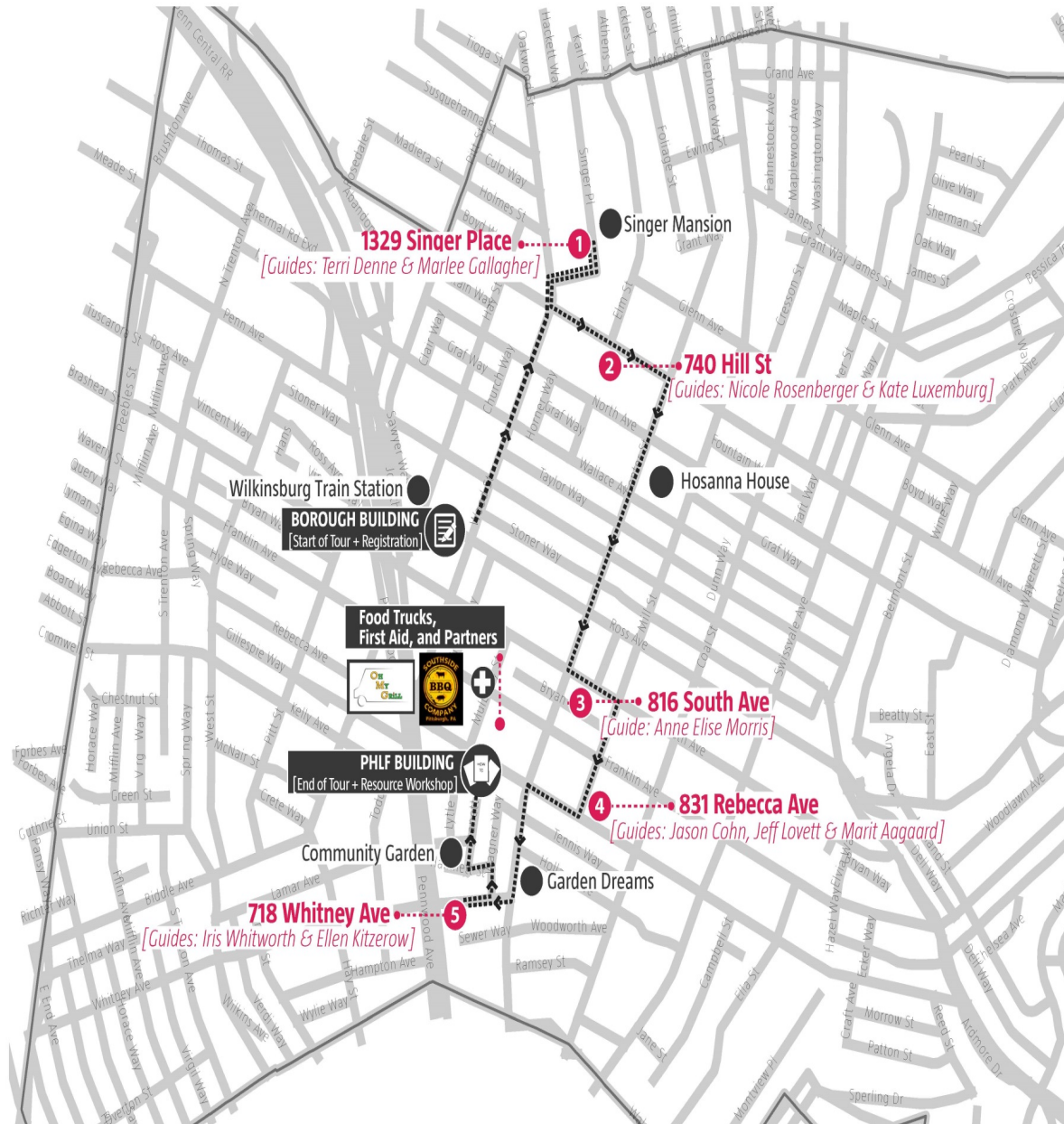
vacanthometour.com

TOUR DAY & RESULTS

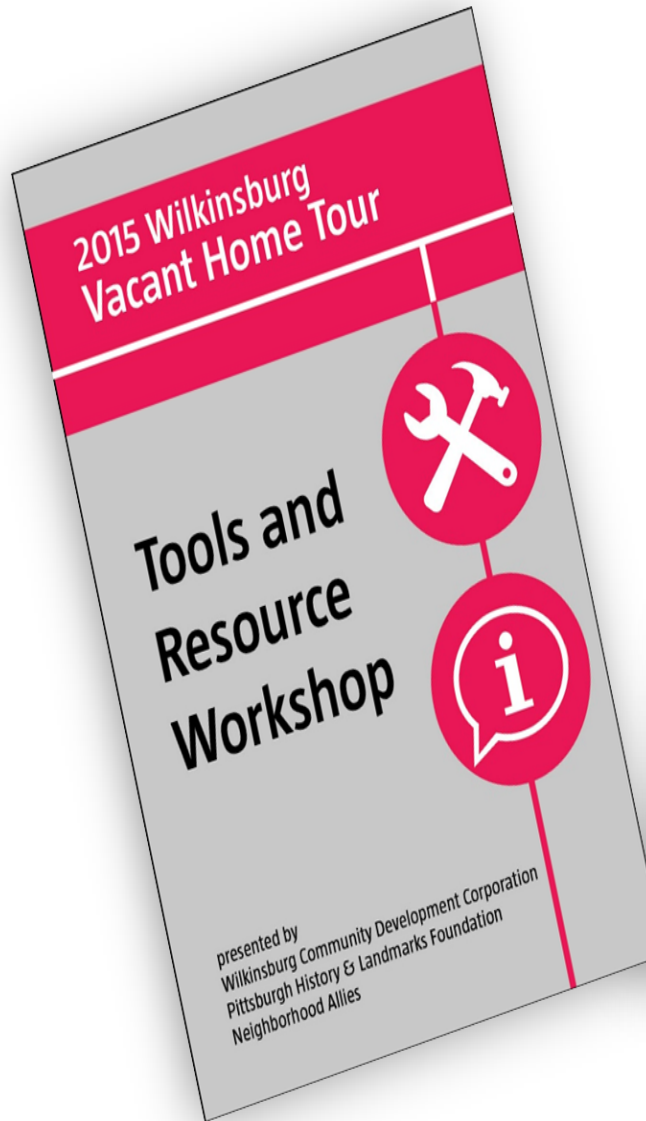
Windsorburg
VACANT HOME TOUR
260 Hill Street
For more information, please visit
www.vacanthometour.com

WILKINSBURG 2015 VACANT HOME TOUR

- Vacant Home Stops and assigned Tour Guides
- Other Highlighted Landmarks in the Neighborhood



PROGRAM AND RESOURCE BOOKS



TOUR DAY





TOUR DAY

TOOLS & RESOURCE WORKSHOP



RESULTS

- Over 600 tour goers; 109 workshop attendees
- 13 positive press stories, both local & national news
- Increase in vacant property inquiries & purchase/rehab mortgage inquiries for vacant Wilkinsburg properties; in July, Wesbanco had one mortgage in process, one prequalified
- As of July, 23 VPRP applications for vacant Wilkinsburg properties, including two active, one in process, and one approved, were received by Allegheny Co.

RESULTS

- Why did people attend the event:
 - #1 -- Interest in the building histories & the families who lived in them or just curious
 - #2 -- Wanting to acquire a vacant property for personal use or having friends who live in Wilkinsburg/worked on the tour

RESULTS

- What did people like most about the event:
 - Learning about Wilkinsburg and its residents

RESULTS

*PCRG Community Development Award
in May 2015*



SOCIAL MEDIA

Close to
400
Facebook likes



Over
10k
visitors



Our posts reached
out to over
30k
people

FEEDBACK



Kristin Devine @KDevinePgh · 18h

Got a lot of good info @VacantHomeTour hosted by @wilkinsburgcdc this afternoon. What a mobilization!



Professor Gadfly @ProfGadfly · 42m

This is a very cool project - vacant home tours in Wilkinsburg TODAY 11-3 Events wp.me/P5HK3p-c via @VacantHomeTour



[View summary](#)



I heart PGH @iheartpgh · 20h

Wow! Huge kudos to @VacantHomeTour - one of the most innovative events to get people into communities. #vht2015



Kannu Sahni favorited a Tweet you were mentioned in

2h

May 5: Marlee Gallagher of @WilkinsburgCDC & Kenneth Chu of @CarnegieMellon are attracting more residents to Wilkinsburg w/ @VacantHomeTour



Heather Hackett and **Rachel Tokarski** favorited a Tweet you were mentioned in

23h

May 9: If you see us (walking 2 dogs) with the @VacantHomeTour today ask us about living in a #wilkinsburg #oldhouse #loveourhood



FEEDBACK



[Redacted Name]

11/05/2015 09:45

We were on the tour on Saturday...we also looked at a home that is for sale by owner in Wilkinsburg. After the tour we decided that Wilkinsburg was where we wanted to live and we have put a bid in on the house on Coal St. Your event had a major impact in our decision to become residents of the community. We hope to participate in future events as representatives of all Wilkinsburg has to offer. Thank you!





THANK YOU!

CONTACT:

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