

## Biviano, Sara

---

**From:** Ward 4 (Russel Neal)  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 1, 2022 7:59 PM  
**To:** pdl\_council  
**Cc:** florent.miranda@gmail.com; Wilms, Gertrude; Vollman, Sean; Ludle, Chris; Collins, Emily; Russel Neal; Segedy, Jason  
**Subject:** Fwd: White Pond Document  
**Attachments:** WPD Doc.pdf

Greetings Council,

Please note the attached file from Ms. Miranda Florent. Please note that the minutes & notes from the citizens meeting held this past Tuesday, should be available by Monday.

Here is the original email from Ms. Florent:

Hello all,

Thank you to those who attended (and helped organize) the meeting last night! The turnout was great and I am very pleased we were able to make it happen. I wanted to provide a citizen-written report that community members have worked to compile after the city's FAQ was released. You will find nearly 20 references and citations, so if you are interested in diving deeper into any angle, you have more than enough material available to you. Thank you!

Miranda Florent

In The Spirit of Collective Works and Responsibility,

Russel C. Neal, Jr.  
Akron City Council Ward 4  
Past President  
National Black Caucus  
of Locally Elected Officials

Cell: [330.212.3034](tel:330.212.3034)

Email: [Ward4@akronohio.gov](mailto:Ward4@akronohio.gov)  
Email: [Ward4akron@mail.com](mailto:Ward4akron@mail.com)

Sent via the mobile office of:  
Councilman Russel C. Neal, Jr.,  
Akron City Council Ward 4  
[330.212.3034](tel:330.212.3034).  
[Ward4@akronohio.gov](mailto:Ward4@akronohio.gov)

1 Peter 4:10

- > **PLEASE NOTE:** This message and any response to it may
- > constitute a public record, and therefore may be available
- > upon request in accordance with Ohio public records law.
- > (ORC 149.43)

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S20 FE 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

---

**From:** Miranda Florent <florent.miranda@gmail.comgreetings >  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 1, 2022, 5:13 PM  
**To:** Ward 4 (Russel Neal) <ward4@akronohio.gov>  
**Subject:** White Pond Document

This email originated outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Rep. Neal,

Here you go, hopefully this attachment works!

Miranda Florent

## Citizen Concerns Regarding The White Pond Drive Development

All references will be included at the end and numbered according to this document. For paper copies, A QR code is also provided that will bring up clickable links to every reference.

### Environmental Concerns

- Ecosystems change over time, including variation in plant and animal populations. Due to the outdated nature of existing environmental surveys, there is no way to know what species may be on the property today. *Source: The Ecology Co-Op [1]*
- In Ohio, more than 90% of existing wetlands have been destroyed. *Source: Ohio EPA [2]*
- Wetlands are naturally supportive of biodiversity and sensitive organisms, with roughly 1/3 of Ohio's endangered species reliant on them for survival. *Source: Ohio EPA [2]*
- Upland development causes an increase in runoff to wetlands, which often causes an increase in pollutants, especially in urban wetlands. *Source: Center for Watershed Protection [3]*
  - An increase in pollutants to urban wetlands often causes biodiversity loss, an increase in invasive species, and a reduction in watershed properties like water uptake and retention. *Source: Center for Watershed Protection [3]*
- The removal of trees and use of heavy machinery can damage soil structure, therefore causing the following concerns:
  - Plant roots struggling to grow in compact soil.
  - In clay heavy wetland soil, compaction and lack of oxygen can damage existing plant roots, harming plants that are uncleared.
  - Creation of an impermeable surface, much like concrete. Water will no longer be absorbed by the soil, instead an increase of runoff will slough off existing soil and end up in unwanted areas. *Source: Univ. of Delaware Cooperative Extension [4]*
  - According to the city FAQ, Volatile Organic Compounds were found in the soil sediment. Development and soil disruption will release these compounds into waterways and air. Left undeveloped, these compounds would otherwise be processed and stored safely in the wetland. *Source: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources [5]*
- Historically, this property is part of the Copley bog, which was created by glacial outwash and well known for deep, rich peat deposits. Much of the Copley bog has been developed, making this site unique and valuable, historically and ecologically. *Source: ODNR [6]*

### Neighborhood Concerns

- It is important to note that this sort of development is not unique to Akron; disinvestment in low-income neighborhoods, especially low-income Black neighborhoods, and investing in opportunities that do not benefit these residents, is a greater trend across the nation and world:

“While our communities are crying out for basic infrastructure, such as grocery stores, family-serving retail stores and low-cost housing, what often gets prioritized are businesses and services designed for new, higher-income

residents. The result is displacement of current residents and businesses, as well as community-serving social, cultural, faith, and political institutions. Luxury condos, high-end bars, restaurants, and retail are not making our communities healthier or more sustainable. For those on the frontlines of the gentrification crisis, it feels like the public sector has made landlords and private developers rich at the expense of working class communities of color.” *Source: Phillips, [14]*

### City-wide Concerns

- “Urban renewal” is a misnomer; a more accurate term would be “state-led gentrification”. Developments like those at White Pond seek only to provide a false feeling of “urban living” while remaining safely outside of the city proper and, therefore, avoids city “problems”, a pattern described in other locations with luxury development of this type. *Sources: Marquardt, et al [7], Teernstra [13]*
- The median income for Akron families is approximately \$40,000 and our median rent is just under \$800; while there is a need for more housing, the housing proposed will require a minimum income of nearly \$60,000 a year after taxes per HUD guidelines (affordable housing is defined as one-third of income); by and large, these rentals will not meet the needs of the average Akron resident. *Source: US Census Bureau, [12]*
- The individual who owns Triton also is listed as the guarantor for multiple other LLCs. Together, all of these LLCs own 350 units across Summit, Portage, and Medina counties, valued at approximately \$14M. *Source: Summit, Portage, and Medina County Fiscal Office Websites, [8-11]*

### City Spending Concerns

- In recent years there has been an uptick in the supply of market rate housing - the Bowery District (2019), the Goodrich (2022), the East End Lofts (2021), Riverwood Apartments (2020). *Source: Apartments.com, [19]*
- The City has a mixture of different types of housing. There are at least 6 luxury apartments in Downtown Akron. *Source: Apartments.com, [19]*
- Not all apartments are at 100% capacity indicating that there is a slight lack of demand for these luxury apartments.
  - 159 Main was established in 2021 and has at least 18 units available currently. It has a total of 107 units. The costs for these apartments vary from \$1,150 - \$2,500. *Source: Apartments.com, [16]*
  - The Bowery District was established in 2019. It is an apartment building with a commercial space. It has at least 24 available units out of a total of 66 units. These units cost \$966 - \$3,800 depending on the floor plan. *Source: Apartments.com, [17]*
  - The Bowery District also has a commercial space that is available for rent. *Source: The Bowery District [18]*
- The city of Akron has been applying for grants from Housing and Urban Development. These grants allow the city for housing, public improvement, public services, and economic development. *Source: HUD Exchange, CDBG [15]*

- The correlation between the percentage of disbursements used to the households assisted in relation to the construction of housing using the HUD grants have been inversely related in recent years (figure 1). *Source: HUD Exchange, CDBG [15]*

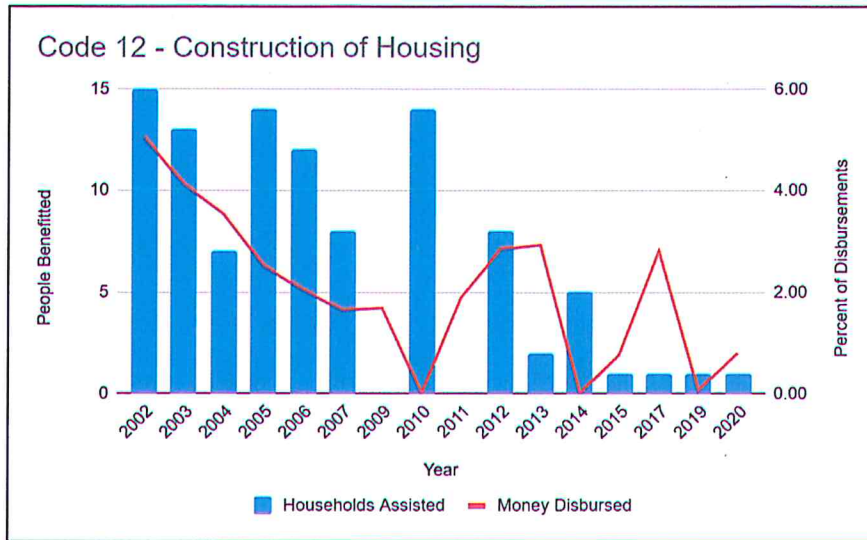


Figure 1: Construction of Housing using HUD grants  
*Source: HUD Exchange, CDBG [15]*

- The data in figure 1 shows there was an increase in the households assisted in 2010 but no grant money was expended. Unfortunately, there is not enough public data to showcase how or why this trend occurred during that year.
- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the use of CDBG funds by Akron, OH expenditure report Akron only planted trees in the year 2019 (figure 2). *Source: HUD Exchange, CDBG [15]*

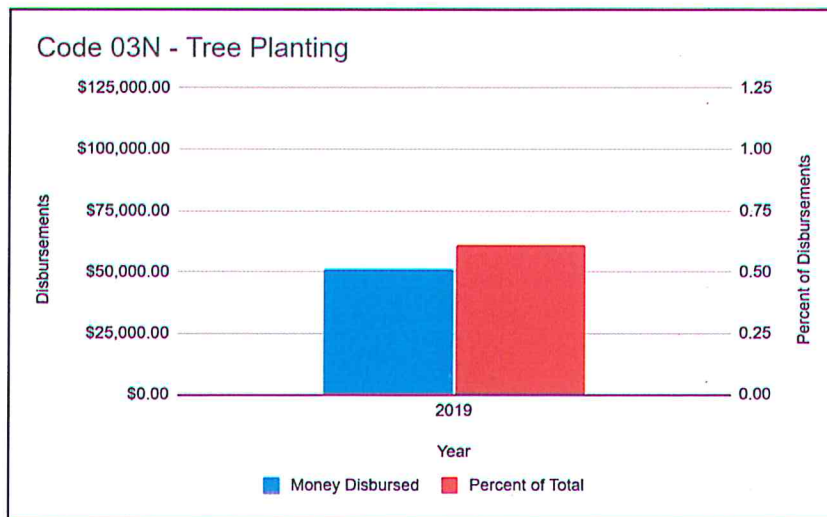


Figure 2: Trees Planted since 2002-2019 using HUB grants.  
*Source: HUD Exchange, CDBG [15]*

## References

- [1] The Ecology Co-Op: <https://www.ecologyco-op.co.uk/news/what-is-the-lifespan-of-an-ecological-survey-report/>
- [2] The Ohio EPA: [https://epa.ohio.gov/static/Portals/47/facts/ohio\\_wetlands.pdf](https://epa.ohio.gov/static/Portals/47/facts/ohio_wetlands.pdf)
- [3] Center for Watershed Protection: <https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML0915/ML091520194.pdf> pg. 5-6 for a summary
- [4] Effects of Soil Compaction via University of Delaware: [https://canr.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/03/12024206/Combating\\_Soil\\_Compaction.pdf](https://canr.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/03/12024206/Combating_Soil_Compaction.pdf)
- [5] Wetland Functions via Vermont Agency of Natural Resources: <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wetlands/functions/water-quality>
- [6] Ohio Department of Natural Resources: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/159557491.pdf> pg. 15-16
- [7] Marquardt, N., Füller, H., Glasze, G., & Pütz, R. (2013). Shaping the Urban Renaissance: New-build Luxury Developments in Berlin. *Urban Studies*, 50(8), 1540–1556. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26144308>
- [8] Summit County Fiscal Office: [Property Tax & Appraisal \(summitoh.net\)](#)
- [9] Portage County Fiscal Office: [Beacon - Portage County, OH - Search \(schneidercorp.com\)](#)
- [10] Medina County Fiscal Office: [Medina County Auditor | Property Search](#)
- [11] LLCs and related properties, values: [GaffneyProperties.xlsx - Google Sheets](#)
- [12] U.S. Census Bureau: [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Akron city, Ohio](#)
- [13] Teernstra, A. (2015). Contextualizing state-led gentrification: goals of governing actors in generating neighbourhood upgrading. *Environment & Planning A*, 47(7), 1460–1479. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.kent.edu/10.1177/0308518X15595760>
- [14] Phillips, D. (2015). Planning for People, Not Profit. *Race, Poverty & the Environment*, 20(2), 78–83. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43873236>
- [15] HUD Exchange, CDBG: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/cdbg-expenditure-reports/>, <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/cdbg-accomplishment-reports/>

[16] Apartments.com, 159 Main Apartments:  
<https://www.apartments.com/159-main-akron-oh/r7nw003/>

[17] Apartments.com, The Bowery District Apartments:  
<https://www.apartments.com/the-bowery-district-akron-oh/ry0m991/>

[18] The Bowery District: <https://www.bowerydistrict.com/commercial/>

[19] Apartments.com: <https://www.apartments.com/akron-oh/?bb=isx8phkzxlgnhtD>

QR code to access references with clickable links:

