THE STORY OF JACKSON WARD

1790s

- The Skipwith Cottage is Built
Abraham Peyton Skipwith, the first known free Black person, purchases parcels of land on the northern edge of the City of Richmond in what would become Jackson Ward; he built a gambrel-roofed cottage which is one of the city's oldest documented dwellings.

1858

- Ebenezer Baptist Church
Established as the first African Baptist Church

1871

- Jackson Ward Established
Jackson Ward was created as an official, political subdivision in the City (ward); becomes 'city within a city' refered to as the 'Black Wall Street' & the 'Harlem of the South'.

1884

- John Mitchell Jr. & the Richmond Planet newspaper
John Mitchell Jr. was an activist and became the editor of the Richmond Planet, an African American weekly newspaper, promoting civil rights, racial justice, and racial pride.

1888

- 1st Black-Owned Bank Jackson Ward Established
Savings Bank of the Grand Fountain of the United Order of True Reformers established by the 7 True Reformers in W.W. Brown's former home.

1902

- Mechanics' Savings Bank
John Mitchell Jr. chartered the Mechanics' Savings Bank out of his home in Jackson Ward. Though the bank was short lived, it marks a monentous time for African American enterprise in the Jackson Ward neighborhood.

1903

- 1st Black-Woman-Owned Bank
Maggie Walker opens the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank.

1904

- Richmond streetcar boycott
John Mitchell Jr. organized a streetcar boycott to protest Jim Crow streetcar laws allowing transportation companies to segregate based on local choice.

1914

- Hippodrome Theater
Hippodrome opens as vaudeville & theater.

1930s

- Jackson Ward Demographics
Jackson Ward is home to 8,000 African Americans

1930-1940

- Evolution of the Hippodrome Theater
The Hippodrome Theater evolves into a music venue: attracting Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, Duke Ellington, and others!

1941

- Construction of Gilpin Court
Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority begins construction of Gilpin Court, the city's first public housing community. Gilpin Court opens housing to tenants in 1943 demolishing Apostle Town.

1955-1958

- Highway Construction
Richmond Petersburg Turnpike is constructed (redesignated to I-95); divides the Jackson Ward Northern & Southern sections into 2 separate communities. The construction displaced thousands of residents and destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses.

1957

Construction of Gilpin Court Expansion

1967

- Hippodrome Closes
The Hippodrome Theater closes. Despite attempts at re-opening, it remains mostly shuttered.

1970

Construction of Gilpin Court Expansion

1976-1978

- South Jackson Ward as Landmark
South Jackson Ward listed on the National Register of Historic Places; designated National Historic Landmark. At the same time, urban renewal demolishes approx. 150 homes in Jackson Ward, further dividing the community.

1991

- Black History Recognition
The Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia opens at 00 Clay Street in Jackson Ward.

2017

- Maggie Walker Monument
Maggie Lena Walker monument unveils at Adam & Broad Streets.

2020

- JXN Project Establishment
The JXN Project forms to elevate and celebrate the long, rich legacy of Jackson Ward.

- Richmond 300
The Richmond 300 Master Plan adopted as a guide for growth to 2037; includes vision for reconnecting Jackson Ward.

Note: this is a DRAFT timeline. Let us know what's missing or add your own story!

Jackson Ward Community Plan (JWCP) is awarded HUD Grant

2021

2022

Jackson Ward Community Plan (JWCP) Project Kicks Off

- January: Reconnect Jackson Ward Feasibility Study kicks off. Project timeline from January to September.

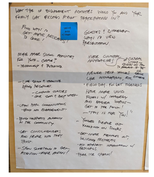
- Steering Committee and Working Group Meetings

MAY 2022

- Community Events
Gilpin Court Resident Information Exchange Meeting and Jackson Ward Community Expo

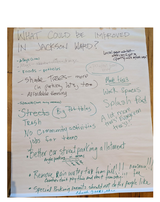
Gilpin Court Resident Information Exchange Meeting
May 10, 2022
Fay Towers Community Room

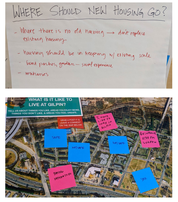
WHAT WE HEARD



JUNE 2022

Jackson Ward Community Expo
May 12, 2022
Hippodrome Theater

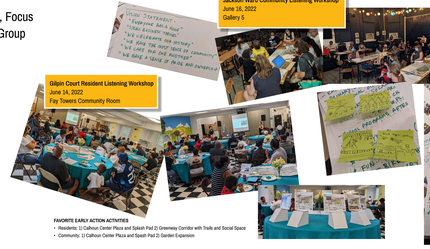




- Steering Committee, Focus Group, and Working Group Meetings

- Community Workshops
Gilpin Court Resident Listening Workshop and Jackson Ward Community Listening Workshop

Gilpin Court Resident Listening Workshop
June 14, 2022
Fay Towers Community Room



Jackson Ward Community Listening Workshop
June 16, 2022
Gallery 5

FAVORITE EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES

- Residents: 1) Calhoun Center Plaza and Splash Pad 2) Greenway Corridor with Trails and Social Space
- Community: 1) Calhoun Center Plaza and Splash Pad 2) Garden Expansion

AUG 2022

- Community Workshops
Gilpin Court Resident Plan Workshop and Jackson Ward Community Plan Workshop

Gilpin Court Resident Plan Workshop
August 6, 2022
Calhoun Community Center

WHAT WE HEARD
Resident: Gilpin Court Resident Plan Workshop
Community: Jackson Ward Community Plan Workshop

WHAT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL SAFE?

Resident
- Quit Pollout Me being aware of my environment

Community
- Staying to myself

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH?

Resident
- Check in with my Doctor go to health and wellness educational classes

Community
- Walkpaths with trees for us to walk

HOW WILL YOUR LIFE BE BETTER IN THE NEW GILPIN/ JACKSON WARD?

Resident
- When I get my own business training skills to help me get my own business

Community
- A place where the first Black Wall Street is represented
- A place for Black ownership to thrive
- A place where creativity, originality, and legacy is birthed
- A place that we can remember great things
- Backyard for puppies and deck in back
- Family home - space to grow up in
- Space to be free
- No crime. Fewer desperate people that want to break in
- No loud music
- Police that lives in neighborhood
- Everybody knows everybody
- Workout room & mirror; saunas; pool and jacuzzi
- Dance studio
- Checkers and chess table
- Golf course
- Shopping
- Grocery store or market nearby
- Large park; walking trails; water feature; playgrounds; picnic shelters
- Recreation center; soccer fields; cricket fields; basketball courts
- Great schools
- Restaurants
- Banks; financial institutions

WHAT WE HEARD
Resident: Gilpin Court Resident Plan Workshop
Community: Jackson Ward Community Plan Workshop

- "We envision a Jackson Ward that invests in the people. Somewhere that builds culture from the ground up, honors history, works to change the perception of safety and combats systemic racism."

- "We would like a community that is upgraded and modernized but aligned with needs of residents and does not risk being moved out of community that we love."

- "In 10 years, Jackson Ward is safe and has a lot of spots in the community for all the members (adults, kids, disabled, elderly, and youth) of the community. Jackson Ward is easy to get to by bus and it has nice aesthetics."

- "We envision a Jackson Ward that continues to be a diverse, historically rich neighborhood where residents can trust that the city is held accountable and responsive to their needs. This includes ensuring affordable housing (with both ownership and rental options), parking that prioritizes residents, improved sidewalks, safety lit streets and alleys, varying scales of flexible open spaces, and resident-owned businesses that make it a welcoming place to live and to stay."

Jackson Ward Community Plan Workshop
August 18, 2022
Third Street Bethel AME Church

BLOCK TYPOLOGIES; WHAT DO YOU LIKE?

Large Block
- NO to big boxes!
- No warehouse scale
- What we have is beautiful; mimic what we have and no big boxes

Medium Block
- This should be the model!

ARCHITECTURE: FAVORITE ARCHITECTURE STYLES
(ranked highest to lowest)
- Craftsman (highest)
- American Classic
- Jackson West/Richmond
- Contemporary (lowest)

WHICH UNIT AMENITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?
(ranked highest to lowest)
- Washer/dryer in unit (highest - tied)
- More storage space (highest - tied)
- More accessible bathroom
- Open living room space
- Outdoor space (lowest - tied)
- Age friendly housing (lowest - tied)

WHAT OTHER ELEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU TO HAVE IN YOUR UNIT?
- Outlets in the bathroom
- More bathrooms in larger units
- Walk-in closet
- Balconies!
- Tub in bathroom
- Sitting shower
- Porch

2023

Jackson Ward Community Plan continues

- Steering Committee and Working Group Meetings

- October: City of Richmond and VDOT submit application to USDOT for the Reconnecting Community Pilot program asking for $1.69M in Planning Grant funding for the Reconnect Jackson Ward project.

NOV 2022

- Community Workshop
Gilpin Court Resident Plan and Jackson Ward Community Plan Alternatives Workshop

- Working Group Meetings

FEB 2023

- Community Workshop
Gilpin Court Resident Plan and Jackson Ward Community Draft Plan Workshop

- Steering Committee and Working Group Meetings

MAY 2023

- Community Event
Gilpin Court Resident Plan and Jackson Ward Community Draft Plan Open House

- Steering Committee and Working Group Meetings

OCT 2023

- Community Event
Final Community Open House

2024

Proceed to the next station to help us build our vision for the future.