



Community Vision for Stewart

**Community Survey Report on the
Future Redevelopment of the
Closed Stewart School in Uptown**

A Report by ONE Northside Education Team

May 2014



Background

ONE Northside Education Team Leaders began organizing against the possible Chicago Public School closings during the winter of 2012. During this time, initial media reports and speculations put the number of schools closings as high as 100 schools at the end of the 2012-2013 school year.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel appointed his second schools chief in under two years, Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Barbara Byrd-Bennett, in October 2012. She swiftly created the CPS Commission on Schools Utilization, chaired by former ComEd CEO Frank Clark. Ultimately, this committee gave CPS the framework for consideration of new school closings, including: no high schools would be closed; no schools which have had an “action” recently would be closed; no school with an enrollment of over 600 or near “efficient” utilization, based on CPS’ formulas, would be closed.

After a series of community meetings in late winter and spring, the Chicago Board of Education voted to close 50 neighborhood schools in May 2013. ONE Northside actively organized against the closings, primarily in our local schools: Trumbull in Andersonville, and Stewart in Uptown. Despite our efforts, these two schools as well as Stockton, also in Uptown, were closed. A fourth north side school, Courtenay, closed their building and moved their students and staff into the closed Stockton building, where Stockton students were invited to stay. The school reopened under the Courtenay name.

After the initial shock, parents and community leaders wondered “now what?” People were angry about the lack of transparency in the school closings process and still wanted to make sure they had a voice and vote in what would come next in these school buildings.

The ONE Northside Education Team, made up of parents, residents, teachers, and youth leaders, agreed to concentrate efforts on Stewart school in Uptown. This was due to its central location in the neighborhood, the recent affordable housing stock loss in the neighborhood, and the growing gentrification forces that ultimately had an effect in the declining enrollment at Stewart school over the course of a decade, which concluded in its closing.

In August 2013, ONE Northside Education Team leaders created and unveiled community planning survey, a multiple choice paper and electronic survey with a goal of gathering community feedback and ideas for future redevelopment at the Stewart school site. The team planned to outreach to other community residents, service providers, staff and clients at nonprofit organizations, and ONE Northside member institutions within half mile radius of Stewart School, since those with the closest proximity have the most to gain and lose by the new development; they are stakeholders.

The survey asked what the responder would like to see in the Stewart School space. There were seven options and people were directed to choose up to two responses, or enter their own. The choices were “Development or Businesses with Jobs for Community Residents; Non-profits or Community Organizations; Art Galleries or Work/Live Space for Artists; Affordable Housing for a) Families, b) Seniors, c) Veterans; An Environmental Center with Community Jobs; A Permanent Indoor Market; and a space for Other.

Organizing Neighborhoods for Equality: Northside ONE Northside

In 2013, the Chicago Public Schools closed 50 neighborhood public schools, including Stewart Elementary in Uptown. The Stewart Elementary campus, located in the Broadway business district of Uptown between Sunnyside and Wilson avenues, has a large, 4-story building, a parking lot, two playgrounds, and a front lawn that neighboring families still frequent in large numbers.

What would YOU like to see in that space? Please select TWO of the options below:

- Business(es) with jobs for the community?
- Non-for-profit organization(s) with community programs (afterschool, arts, job training)?
- Work/live spaces for artists, galleries, and other?
- Affordable housing for Families?
- Affordable housing for Seniors?
- Affordable housing for Veterans?
- An environmental center, like an urban farm, with jobs for the community?
- A neighborhood market, with indoor stalls for vendors of food, crafts and other?
- Other:

Optional: Check the demographic information that best describes you (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- I'm a student
- I'm a local resident
- I receive services near Stewart
- I provide services near Stewart
- I'm a member of ONE Northside

Want to be part of the campaign? SIGN UP! Please write your name and phone number below.

In all, 837 surveys were collected from the following ONE Northside member institutions:

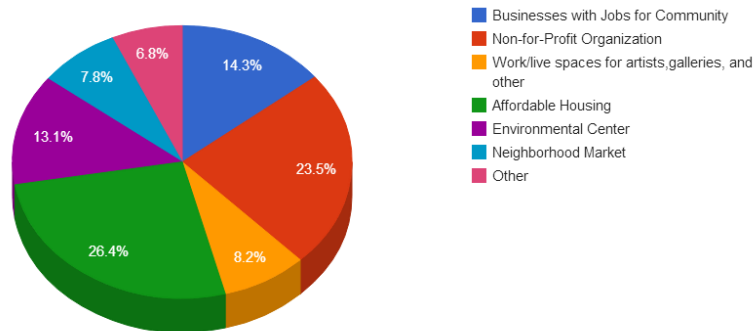
Harry S Truman College
LIFT-Chicago
Inspiration Corporation
EZRA Multi Service
Streetwise Inc
Jesus People USA
Alternatives Inc
Community Counseling Centers of Chicago
Chicago Women's Health Center

Volunteers and leaders spent hours canvassing in front of Brenneman and McCutcheon Schools to capture former Stewart school families; near the closed Stewart school; and nearby Wilson "L" stop.

Results and Data

The data we received from 837 surveys show a variety of preferences and no clear top-vote getter. Our results show that 26.4% of the respondents want affordable housing, 23.5% want space for community services, and 14.3% want development that provides good jobs for community residents. In addition, over 26% of respondents in the "Other" category stated that they would like to see a school reopened at that location, or that it should have never been closed in the first place.

Stewart Community Planning Survey Results

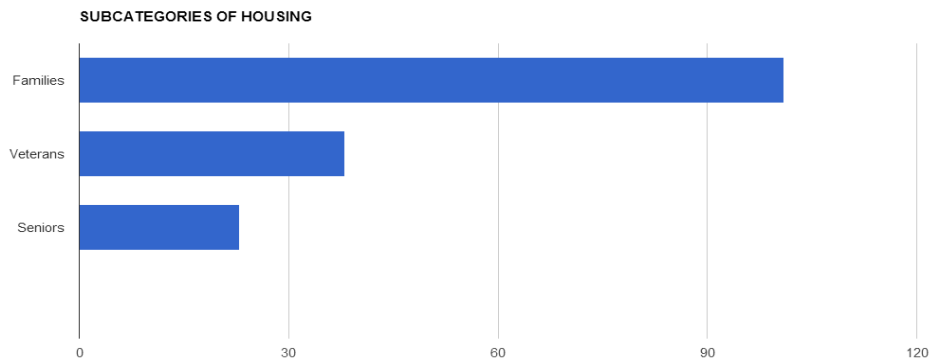


The top three vote-getting choices were Affordable Housing, Non-profit or Community Space and Development with Jobs for the Community.

These results were not unexpected. After all, the Uptown community has experienced a very large decrease in its affordable housing stock in recent years. According to the Chicago Rehab Network's Uptown Housing Fact Sheet¹, Uptown's affordable housing has decreased dramatically in the years between the 2000 and 2010 Census. Affordability in the factsheet is defined as housing costs no more than 30% of household income. For households with an income between \$0 and \$3,000 per month, units available diminished by 57%. Meanwhile, the number of units available for rent for people with a monthly income over \$3,000 increased by 136% during the same time period. At the same time, according to the same factsheet, People of Color (African American, Latinos, Asian, Multi-racial, and Other) have left the Uptown community at higher rates than white counterparts. Between 2000 and 2010, Uptown had a 0.2% decrease in white population, while People of Color population decreased by 146%.

In the survey results, people chose three possible subcategories of affordable housing. Of these, affordable housing for families received the most votes, followed by housing for Veterans and senior housing.

¹ http://www.chicagorehab.org/resources/docs/fact_books/2013_ca_fact_sheets/uptown.pdf



In addition to housing, survey results indicate a high desirability for additional space for nonprofit and community services. The Uptown community already boasts a high number of nonprofits, many of these institutional members of ONE Northside², but many have outgrown their space, and additional space for youth, art and cultural programming and recreation is much needed. These types of programs have been identified by groups like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as best practices for violence prevention³ and would aid in ONE Northside's efforts to curb street violence in the Uptown community area.

Finally, our survey results show that development with good jobs for community residents is another priority for stakeholders. In February, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the Chicago area had a 9% unemployment rate,⁴ higher than the national rate of 7.3%. With this development opportunity, the former Stewart school can be a catalyst for local employment and provide good-paying jobs to community residents.

Moving forward

ONE Northside Education Team leaders will continue to advocate for the most community benefit at the Stewart school site. In March, the Chicago Public Schools Advisory Committee for School Repurposing and Community Development released a report⁵ that states the CPS's interest in hearing from the community about the future use of their shuttered buildings. At ONE Northside, we plan to hold them to that statement.

This school building is located in the Wilson Yard Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District with a current balance of \$2.8 million through 2017⁶ and is adjacent to the Lawrence and Broadway TIF district, with a balance of \$5.9 million through 2017. The availability of these funds makes

² <http://onenorthside.org/7-2/members/>

³ <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/introduction-a.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.bls.gov/ro5/ceschi.htm>

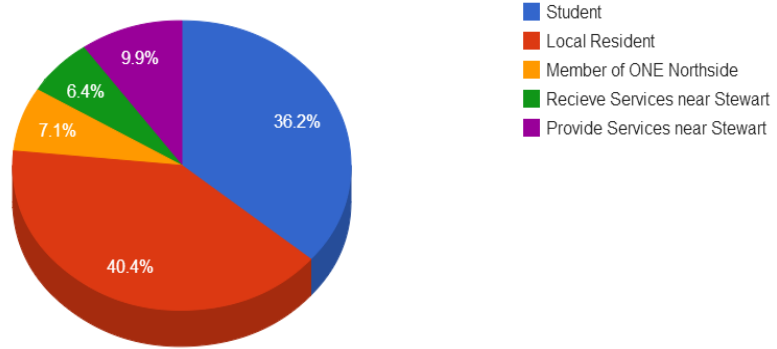
⁵ <http://www.cps.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/CommitteeReport.pdf>

⁶ http://lnw.wbez.org/02262014_CPS_RFP_for_RealEstateBroker-for-EmptySchools-1.pdf

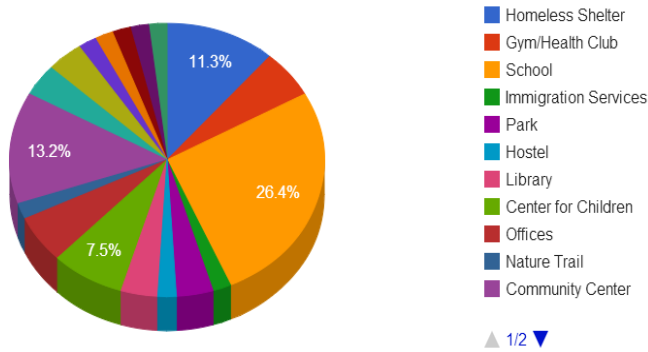
for an attractive development opportunity, and ONE Northside will remain steadfast in our efforts to retain this public land as a public asset.

Other Graphs:

DEMOGRAPHIC



SUBCATEGORIES OF OTHER



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