

Walltown Community Association  
Northgate Mall Redevelopment Initiative  
Project History & Timeline

Building on Walltown's long history and relationship with Northgate Mall, the Walltown Community Association (WCA) started organizing neighbors soon after the Rand Bowman family (Northgate Associates) sold the property to Northwood Investors, a global real estate investment firm. Since December 2018, we have engaged in the following activities:

- **December 6:** Eight (8) neighbors attend Durham City Council work session to share concerns over the purchase of Northgate Mall and potential redevelopment of the property in a way that will significantly impact the property value, cost of living and pedestrian safety in Walltown (see News & Observer article [Northgate Mall Has Sold for \\$34.5 million; it's future is unclear](#)).
- **January 28 (2019):** WCA hosts a community meeting at St. John's Baptist Church to hear a presentation from the Duke Community Enterprise Law Clinic about Northwood Investors and the status of the ownership of the mall, and about how other communities have been engaged on similar issues. We begin surveying residents at this meeting.
- **March 18:** WCA organizes a meeting with Scott Whiteman from the Durham City-County Planning Department to discuss the zoning laws governing the Northgate Mall property and the process by which a landowner can request a change to the zoning of their property. A group of four Walltown residents attend.
- **March 19:** WCA organizes a meeting with Jonathan Stewart and Jeff Furman of Northwood Investors to discuss their plans for the Northgate Mall property and share neighborhood concerns. A group of four Walltown residents attend. Following this meeting Northwood representatives commit to participating in racial equity training.
- **April 18:** WCA organizes a meeting with Stelfanie Williams and Neil Hoeft from Duke University's Office of Durham Affairs to discuss the plans Duke has for the Macy's building at Northgate Mall and share neighborhood concerns. A group of five Walltown residents attend.
- **February through June:** WCA conducts door-to-door canvassing (in English and Spanish), including two presentations at neighborhood churches (over 10 residents plus other volunteers spread out over a total of 12-14 occasions), informing neighbors about the mall ownership transition and surveying them about what they would or would not want to see happen with the property. Our canvassing efforts resulted in over 200 surveys completed by Walltown residents and at least 50 surveys completed by store owners and shoppers at Northgate Mall. We engaged a variety of neighbors, people who have lived here less than



Walltown Community Association  
Northgate Mall Redevelopment Initiative  
Project History & Timeline

a year to those who have lived here for over 40 years. White, Black, and Latino neighbors, homeowners and renters, single folks and people married with kids.

- **July through September:** As Walltown residents collect and input surveys into a database, the WCA reaches out to local non-profit, DataWorks, for support with: 1) analysis and visualization of survey results, and 2) facilitation of community focus groups designed to evaluate and validate the survey responses. We develop key facilitation pieces including, a project history and timeline, maps and graphs illuminating survey themes alongside data about housing and economics in Durham, an illustrated vision board, and questions for guided conversation. In August, the WCA receives a Neighborhood Matching Grant from the City of Durham in the amount of \$1,765 to facilitate focus groups (with food, childcare, and Spanish language translation) and strategic vision committee meetings.



- **October:** WCA facilitates three focus groups to give residents the opportunity to hear what neighbors have said in the surveys with the hope that key themes will emerge for a community-centered vision at the Northgate Mall property.
  - Community Conversation 1 happens on Sunday, October 13, 2019, at St. John's Missionary Baptist Church. There are 17 participants.
  - Community Conversation 2 happens on Thursday, October 24, 2019, at the Walltown Recreation Center. There are 14 participants.
  - Community Conversation 3 happens on Monday, October 28, 2019, at Knox Street Studios. There are 18 participants.
- **November and December:** WCA forms a committee of seven (7) residents to take the themes that emerged from the focus groups and turn them into a strategic vision. Over the course of two meetings a document is created with plans to share out with Northwood, Duke, the City of Durham, and other neighborhood associations in early 2020. Additionally, on Monday, December 9, three residents attend a community conversation on housing hosted by Duke University's Office of Durham & Community Affairs to better understand how the institution might be thinking about the impact of its real estate developments on housing in the city, in particular Walltown.