



Note: A street view of the currently vacant land and renderings of the Mamie Nichols Townhomes can be viewed and downloaded by [clicking here](#).

Press Release
July 19, 2017

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Women's Community Revitalization Project Receives Approval to Build 33 Affordable Homes in Point Breeze

WCRP is partnering with CATCH to construct Mamie Nichols Townhomes, which will be made available to families and veterans on what is currently vacant land

(Philadelphia) – The Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) voted 3-0 today to approve plans for the *Mamie Nichols Townhomes*, a community of 33 affordable apartments and townhomes which will replace currently vacant land in South Philadelphia.

The ZBA's approval means that the development in the city's Point Breeze neighborhood by the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) is one step closer to opening for families and veterans.

"Point Breeze has a tremendous need for more affordable housing," said Nora Lichtash, executive director at WCRP, which develops homes for low-income women and their families. "We're proud to be in a position to help meet that need for the families and veterans who will occupy the homes of Mamie Nichols someday soon."

Today's approval follows overwhelming support from the local community. South Philadelphia H.O.M.E.S., Inc., the neighborhood's Registered Community Organization (RCO), approved the plans at its June 19 meeting by a vote of 38-14. During the meeting, WCRP and project partner Citizens Acting Together Can Help (CATCH) presented 278 signatures from neighborhood residents who support their proposal.

"This neighborhood has experienced a lot of change over the years, and we've seen it first-hand," said Raymond Pescatore, president and CEO of CATCH, a long-time community organization in Point Breeze and established provider of supportive housing and services for disabled veterans and residents with special needs. "This project is about uniting new and old residents and making sure everyone has a place to live, including those who have served our country."

Plans for *Mamie Nichols Townhomes* call for the construction of 33 one-to-three bedroom homes on 1308-1344 South Capitol Street and 1400-1428 South Taylor Street. Once complete the apartments and townhomes will be made available to rent for qualified low-income families, with 11 being dedicated specifically to veterans.

Research has shown that long-term, low-income residents in Point Breeze are among Philadelphia's most at-risk of being displaced by gentrification. The [Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank discovered](#) that between 2000 and 2014, Philadelphia lost a fifth (23,628) of its total housing units that rent for \$750 or less, with "[huge numbers](#)" disappearing from places like Point Breeze. A 2015 report from the Central Philadelphia Development Corp. and Center City District found that the neighborhood experienced the steepest rise in rental prices of any in Philadelphia between 2013 and 2014.

An early supporter of the *Mamie Nichols Townhomes*, 2nd District Councilman Kenyatta Johnson says he is eager to see the affordable development open its doors.

"Building affordable housing is always a challenge, one that we will continue to meet head on, especially in the Point Breeze neighborhood," said Councilman Johnson. "I am happy to see the Mamie Nichols Townhomes Project come one step closer to fruition and I am hopeful for more smart development projects that allow for strong mixed-income communities in the future."

The development will be named in honor of the founder and executive director of the Point Breeze Federation, Mamie Nichols, whose work dating back to the 1960s has been credited with the revitalization of the South Philadelphia neighborhood. Nichols passed away in 2009 at age 91.

About WCRP

The Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) is committed to social and economic equity for low-income families, developing housing; providing supportive services, advocating for policy change and honoring leadership, dignity, and justice in our communities. Learn more at www.wcrpphila.org.

About CATCH

CATCH --- Citizens Acting Together Can Help -- has been a cornerstone and anchor in the South Philadelphia community since 1979. As a well-established and credentialed provider of Community Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Services, CATCH has an ongoing responsibility to serve and to enhance the community at large. Today, Families, Business, Community Leaders, Employees and Consumers are all part of a community network of specialized medical care. Learn more at www.catchinc.com.

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