

Carroll Gardens Neighborhood Association's Neighborhood Survey
Executive Summary of Data Collected
June 12, 2006

Survey Sample

- This survey was distributed in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, defined as falling within the boundaries of Degraw Street, Hicks Street, Hamilton Avenue, and Hoyt Street.
- The survey was intended for Carroll Gardens residents. However, a few non-residents responded. Rather than rejecting these responses, we included them as being the input of interested parties – for example, business owners or frequent visitors to the Eileen C. Dugan Senior Center. Moreover, the known number of non-resident responses was extremely low, and had a negligible impact on results.
- Our 868 respondents included all ages and lengths of residency in Carroll Gardens. They represented at least 8% of the adult population of the survey area. Just under half of respondents were homeowners, compared to a 26% homeownership rate for the neighborhood as a whole.

Themes

- A dominant theme of the survey responses was the desire to preserve the character of the neighborhood. Across all categories, respondents were concerned that Carroll Gardens is at risk of losing its essential characteristics, including but not limited to small-scale buildings, 19th-century architecture, and local merchants.
 - 91% of respondents were concerned or very concerned about the height or size of new buildings.
 - 83% said they would support stricter height and bulk limits on new construction.
 - Even among those concerned with the affordability of the neighborhood, the vast majority supported further restrictions on the size of new buildings.
 - There is considerable interest in preserving the architectural integrity of the neighborhood; about 46% of those outside the Carroll Gardens Historic District said they would like their homes to be considered in any future expansion of the district. However, a significant number were uncertain about the desirability of this designation, but only 25% were opposed.
 - Many mentioned architectural integrity when asked about their other concerns related to the built environment.

- The top reason given for shopping at local stores – beating convenience and quality – was the desire to support local merchants and keep neighborhood businesses open in the community.
- Many respondents were concerned about the entry of chain stores into the local market. 93% said that given the choice, they would like to see fewer chain stores in the neighborhood.
- The availability of grocery stores and postal services was a major concern to the respondents. Most mentioned a lack of these services caused them to shop outside the neighborhood.
- Affordability was mentioned by a large number of respondents in several categories. Only 60% of respondents were confident that they could afford to stay in the neighborhood over the next five years. The burden of this uncertainty fell hardest on those under 35 and over 65.
- Schools, especially middle schools, were a significant concern, and were cited as a reason to leave the neighborhood.
- The following were the main transportation issues:
 - Parking was a concern, with 92% of car owners responding that they were concerned or very concerned about parking. Others mentioned that they did not own a car because it was too hard to park.
 - Bus service matters to Carroll Gardens residents. While only 40 respondents said they used buses as a primary means of transportation to work, many others reportedly would use buses if service were better.
 - Subway issues, generating the most transportation comments, included service on the F line, particularly on weekends, and station conditions, particularly at Smith-9th Streets.
 - Demand for bike lanes is also high, especially for recreational purposes.