Team Millvale: Day 1
Monday, May 13, 2013

A Photovoice Presentation from the perspective of Dominique Benzio, Kimaya Padgaonkar, and Shannon Reilly
This picture is of Mr. Smalls Theatre, a popular attraction and music venue that draws in audiences from all over the Pittsburgh area. We only knew Millvale as the neighborhood that Mr. Smalls was in. Two out of five of the old churches that we saw in Millvale have been converted to buildings with non-religious purposes (Mr. Smalls and a motorcycle repair store).
This is the Millvale Borough Building, where we stopped first to ask for info about Millvale or maps. They told us to go online for information, which made us feel a little discouraged, but instead we went to the nearby community center. The community center was nice and new, but they told us to go to the Borough Building. We decided to explore on our own.
This picture is taken on the corner of Grant and Weherle (or Wehrle? The signs are contradictory). It shows the main shopping center in Millvale, which houses a Wine and Spirits, a Family Dollar, a Subway, and a Check Cashing Center. This picture indicated to us that Millvale was a small town, and that the residents were not very affluent.
This picture is of Girty’s Run, a creek that winds throughout the town. The measuring stick indicates the problems with flooding that Millvale has had in the past. Every time we came across Girty’s Run, we were excited and surprised that so much of the town was built around this tiny creek.
This picture was taken a bit further from the commercial garden depicts an involved citizen’s private garden (we met her later at the community meeting). It was clearly marked as private. We were amazed at all the green space in Millvale, and how it is surrounded by hills.
We really liked the mural on the side of this building, which we felt depicted the historical background of Millvale. We assumed the building was unoccupied because there was no one around on a business day, and there was only one car on the street. Most of the surrounded buildings seemed to have served industrial purposes but are now abandoned. (Note: we later found out that the building is occupied, it is the Red Star Ironworks!)
In the main business district of Millvale we noticed tons of buildings for rent or for sale. This made us sad to see that businesses had to leave the area, but happy because it shows potential for future growth and revitalization in Millvale.
This is a picture of the new community library that is starting up in Millvale. Its bright colors caught our eyes right away, and shows that people are banding together to improve Millvale and add community value. We thought that the library could be an indicator that Millvale is ready for change and revitalization. The library also had a great garden in the back!
This is a new green space that seemed to be in process in Millvale. We heard them talk about this space later at the MBDC meeting. There were lots of signs posted in the park prohibiting pets, bikes, skateboards, and sports, so we thought the purpose of the park seemed unclear. Also there was a sign that indicated that this was part of the Gardens of Millvale project.
This is a picture of the 40th street bridge, which connects Millvale to Lawrenceville. The Allegheny River is a natural boundary along with the hills, but also provides a place for recreation with the Marina, the Boating Association, and a pavillion. This is the number one attraction that Millvale advertises to tourists (also recommend were Yetter’s Candy and Attic Records). We finished our day in Millvale here and reflected while overlooking the river.