



Dear neighbors, donors, partners, and friends of North10:

I hope you and your families are staying safe and well.

On behalf of North10, Philadelphia, I am pleased to share with you the latest news from North10. Thank you for your continued interest in and support of our work.

Sincerely,

Josh Klaris  
Executive Director

## Groundbreaking: Be a Gem Crossing



Be a Gem Crossing, Corner Perspective: *Project Rendering*  
reopened after a few days. In several instances, lives were cut short at the site of the Liberty Motel.

Across the street sits Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School. On a daily basis, students would walk by the corner of Westmoreland and Germantown and bear witness to the activities taking place. “For the kids to thrive, the whole community must thrive,” said Chase Lenfest Founder & Board Chair at North10, Philadelphia. Now, a new effort is occurring to transform this corner into one of progress, wellness, and future prosperity.

North10, Philadelphia purchased and permanently shut down the Liberty Motel and four adjacent properties back in 2018. On Wednesday, June 8th, North10, Philadelphia, broke ground on Be a Gem Crossing, a new 68,000-square-foot development project.

**LIBERATED.** All senses could experience the theme of the day.

The warm glow of the early June sun, the aromas coming from the grill, and the joyous beat of the drum line added to the celebratory atmosphere. Attendees representing residents of Hunting Park-East Tioga, North10, Philadelphia, and many other community stakeholders waved Philadelphia flags highlighting the City’s motto: Philadelphia Maneto “Let Brotherly Love Prevail.” And in this instance, it certainly did.

For nearly two decades, the corner of Westmoreland Street and Germantown Avenue emanated a very different atmosphere. This was the site of the former Liberty Motel. The rent-by-the-hour establishment had become a magnet for crime, a haven for drug use, violence, and prostitution at all hours of the day. The city shut down this motel twice for code violations, but each time it



Community Leaders Breaking Ground on the new Be a Gem Crossing at the site of the former Liberty Motel



Mad Beatz Philly Drum

Line

The new development will include 41 affordable homes for people in the neighborhood, eight units for households below 20% of the Area Median Income (AMI) which is about

\$21,000 a year, seventeen units for those below 50% AMI, and sixteen units for those below 60% AMI. Two community health centers – one by Temple and one by Dr. Ala Stanford of the Black Doctors Consortium – will also be located at Be a Gem Crossing. North10, Philadelphia has contracted with TN Ward Builders to ensure community members are hired to work construction on this project.

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“We have a lot of work to do, but we’re really proud of this step today,” said Josh Klaris, Executive Director at North10, Philadelphia. “This moment is a moment where we take stock and we honor the sacrifices and the effort that has taken to get us here,” he added. The construction is expected to take approximately a year to complete and will help work towards North10, Philadelphia’s mission to improve the life outcomes form community members of the North Philadelphia Hunting Park-East Tioga community.

Confetti falls over Groundbreaking Ceremony

## Community Spotlight: Arletha and Clayton Pickens

These days, block captains Arletha and Clayton Pickens are feeling a bit more cheerful about their corner of North Philadelphia. For nearly two decades, Arletha and Clayton lived up the street from the Liberty Motel, the site of the new Be a Gem Crossing that broke ground on June 8th.

“Never in our wildest dreams did we ever think we would come to this pleasant ending with the fight to close this wretched hotel,” said Arletha Pickens. “It just seemed like we were on a treadmill going nowhere.” Arletha Pickens said shootings were routine, and that she often saw ambulances pull up to the motel. Her husband said he once saw police remove three dead bodies from the property, which sat directly across the street from an elementary school.

Arletha and Clayton were instrumental in getting the Liberty Motel shut down and bringing Be A Gem Crossing to life.



They were the leading voices in calls

Arletha (Front) and Clayton (Middle) Pickens at a Lenfest Center event with Senator Sharif Street (Left) and Governor Wolf (Right)

to local authorities and community leaders in order to address the nuisance that was the Liberty Motel. “We call this [neighborhood] our home,” said Clayton Pickens during the groundbreaking ceremony. “Now, with the introduction of Be a Gem Crossing, we are seeing positive changes that will help our families, friends, and children feel safe.”

Arletha Pickens is grateful that the children at Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School no longer have to pass by the Liberty Motel. “They will have a safe route to school. They won’t have to worry about being snatched off the street or approached by a drug dealer or a prostitute,” said Arletha Pickens. “It’s a blessing,” she said.

## Summer Updates

### Summer Youth Camp

We are excited to offer 9 weeks of Summer Programs Fun!!! Summer camp at the center will run from June 27th – August 26th. The camp will offer a number of fun, engaging activities and opportunities for children to connect with their North10 friends. Campers will be able to explore new opportunities, pursue their interests, and stay connected with our community. In addition, Coach T will be offering sports and fitness challenges. There is no cost for the camp.

### Adult Summer Programs

As we continue our programs and services into the summer, we invite community members to join us for our ADULT SUMMER PROGRAMS running June 27th – August 19th. We have an exciting summer roster of Nutrition Education, Art, Fitness, Parenting classes, and more.

### The Community Market

The Community Market continues to operate every Tuesday and Thursday from 1 – 3 PM offering fresh produce and free groceries to Market Shoppers.

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