

Temple's neighbors strive to fix up business district

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By Donald Hoegg



Students pay more than \$500 a month to live near Temple, so developers have invested millions converting row homes into apartments. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

Student housing is big business in North Philadelphia. More Temple University students are living off campus and many of their leases begin Monday.

Although traditionally a commuter school, Temple is drawing in more suburban and out-of-state students each year. Its dorms have not kept pace with that influx.

Students pay more than \$500 a month to live near Temple, so developers have invested millions converting row homes into apartments.

"We see them coming in as the 13th-graders," says George Brooks, a ward leader near Temple. He said the students have re-energized the long-depressed area, but that more needs to be done to curtail parties and littering.

"As a ward leader, we negotiated with a lot of developers when they went to zoning," said Brooks. "We tried to make sure they understood the plight of the neighborhood and also that they're going to be held liable for their tenants."

Landlords want to create a "business improvement district" modeled after University City. A tax on their property and other businesses would fund extra police patrols, litter removal and other services.

Mark Zwick, a landlord who founded the Temple Area Property Association, said his group is working with Councilman Darrell Clarke on the plan.

"The bottom line is, you know the city isn't going to get it done, so we've taken it upon ourselves to take steps to make the area better," Zwick said.

Clarke said he hopes the city will pass the legislation by the end of the year.

Find the original article here:

<http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/homepage-feature/item/24032-temple-neighbors-invasion-&Itemid=1>