**Edgehill, William Edmondson, and a Neighborhood’s Anti-Gentrification Efforts through Material Culture**

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In cities experiencing explosive growth like Nashville, neighborhood change seems inevitable. However, some neighborhoods, more often historically non-white and lower income, are often more at risk than others. Such is the case for the Edgehill neighborhood, located south of Nashville’s downtown core with both Vanderbilt University and Belmont University as neighbors. Yet, Edgehill has roots dating back to the Civil War, when the Union Army occupied Nashville and utilized formerly enslaved and free African American labor to construct forts. One such fort was Ft. Negley, one mile away from the Edgehill neighborhood. From occupation and the conscription of African Americans, a contraband camp formed around the fort. Upon emancipation, many families settled into the area that would later become Edgehill.[[1]](#footnote-1) Not only is Edgehill one of Nashville’s oldest African American neighborhoods, but it was also the home of renowned stonemason William Edmondson.[[2]](#footnote-2) Outside his home at 1434 14th Avenue South, Edmondson created tombstones and sculptures out of limestone. His sculptures caught the attention of art critics and he became the first African American, and Tennessean, to have a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Despite the success of Edmondson, the city of Nashville razed his homesite to make way for the Murrell School for African American students in 1956, one of the many urban renewal projects in the neighborhood.[[4]](#footnote-4) In the face of Metro’s disregard for Edgehill and Edmondson’s significance, residents of the neighborhood sought ways to preserve his legacy and their neighborhood in the face of erasure and development. In 2018, Mayor David Briley announced that Metro’s budget was at risk of losing $23 million. To abate such a large budgetary loss, he proposed the sale of several Metro properties, including the Murrell School site, the site of William Edmondson’s former home.[[5]](#footnote-5) A community garden, a public park, and the Murrell School were all at risk at being sold off, potentially to a private developer, to help Metro’s budget deficit. Concerned with what the sale of the properties would do to their neighborhood, residents of Edgehill, and others invested in the preservation of Edmondson’s legacy, formed the Save the William Edmondson Homesite Coalition. The coalition and other concerned residents voiced their dismay and held a vigil for Edmondson and the park after hearing the news.[[6]](#footnote-6) Eventually, the mayor backed down from the proposal of selling off the land. However, Edgehill residents did not stop at such a victory. Instead, the coalition worked to put together their own proposal. In March 2019, they unveiled their Higher Vision Master Plan, which called for a cultural arts center and museum to honor Edmondson as well as a park that would include sculptures reminiscent of Edmondson’s folk art. Not only did they hope to honor the late artist, but also Edgehill’s greater significance within Nashville.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The example of Edgehill residents crafting their own proposal for public art and public space is part of wider effort of using public art as anti-gentrification measures in the face of rapidly changing urban settings. Urban planners, historic preservationists, and activists are producing studies and literature on the use of place making, public art, and public space in regards to gentrification and redevelopment. This research paper seeks to establish the historical precedent for the use of public art and public space in anti-gentrification measures. Edgehill residents’ proposal for a public park complete with a memorial to William Edmondson as a craftsperson speaks to the preservation of community, public space, and honoring a renowned resident. The paper also shows how the proposed William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum and the William Edmondson Homesite Park, all part of the Higher Vision Master Plan, interject into the literature on place making and community engagement specifically because Edgehill residents view the proposed park as a memorial borrowing from the material culture of Edmondson, not just a public space.

The Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit organization working towards the creation and sustainability of public spaces, defines place making as “a collaborative process by which we can reshape the public realm in order to maximize shared value.”[[8]](#footnote-8) In order for place making to be successful, a community must have a dedicated public space and a shared vision for that space. Material culture can aid in the identity and culture of a community. Jules David Prown defined material culture as two-fold: “the study through artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time” and “the artifacts themselves.”[[9]](#footnote-9) Using Prown’s definition, community members can then utilize material culture as place vision. Project for Public Spaces defines place vision at the third set in their five step process. It is in this step that community members and stakeholders begin to describe and develop a concept plan for a public space.[[10]](#footnote-10) Because material culture studies aids in the understanding of the values and ideas of a community, weaving material culture can help in establishing and creating the shared values that celebrate a community. As Dolores Hayden argued, “ethnic vernacular arts traditions have often operated in a similar way to instill community pride and signal the presence of a particular community in the city.”[[11]](#footnote-11) In Edgehill, the material culture of William Edmondson’s folk art drove the development of the Higher Vision Master Plan proposal. While his homesite is no longer extant, residents of Edgehill sought to use the aesthetics and materials of Edmondson’s art as a way to celebrate his legacy, thus making Edmondson part of the cultural history of the neighborhood. In a sense, despite the erasure of the buildings and work yard, Edgehill residents are using place-memory to tell a wider social history neighborhood.[[12]](#footnote-12) Simultaneously, the park would establish a large swath of public space, which is steadily disappearing within the neighborhood as development continues to encroach.

In order to understand how the coalition in Edgehill and their proposed plan fit into the larger history of using public art and public space as an anti-gentrification or anti-displacement tool, a look at what other cities and organizations have done is necessary. Case studies of communities using such tools can be found in cities across the country. During the era of urban renewal, a community in Los Angeles worked to secure public space by creating their own park to prevent a highway from running through the neighborhood. Community engagement became a key to the success of Chicago Mural Group in the 1970s. Early gentrification of New York, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, saw artists and activists working together to create public exhibitions which forced newcomers to see how neighborhoods changed. More recently, cities experiencing unintended consequences have seen activist utilize art and public space to fight against a changing built environment. Examples can be found in places like Seattle, Austin, and even within Nashville.

The Logan Heights neighborhood presents a similar case as Edgehill. Residents of Logan Heights, in San Diego, California, utilized both public art and public space to prevent destructive development. Interstate 5 cut through the neighborhood in 1963. Talk of a bridge opening in the neighborhood caused residents to band together to demand change. The Coronado Bay Bridge opened in Logan Heights in 1969. However, the residents were proactive in their demands and asked city officials to establish a public park underneath the bridge. The city agreed, but residents did not receive their park right away. Instead, in 1970, the city began to raze the parcels slated for the public park for a new California Highway Patrol Station.[[13]](#footnote-13) Residents took matters into their own hands and established Chicano Park without city permission. They occupied the site for twelve days before the city finally agreed to their original demands. During those twelve days, residents cleared the land, planted gardens, and created a community space. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, muralists utilized the space for their artwork. The murals specifically drew upon the aesthetics of Mexican and Mexican-American culture.[[14]](#footnote-14) For residents of Logan Heights, the construction of the interstate and bridge fragmented their neighborhood. In order to promote and protect the neighborhood’s identity, they established a park and painted over the bridge pillars with murals celebrating their culture.

The Chicago Public Art Group (CPAG) formed in 1970 when artists, led by William Walker, in the city came together out of concern for the level of crime. Originally named Chicago Mural Group, the collective started their work with murals.[[15]](#footnote-15) One such mural, “Together We Overcome,” was painted by collective member John Weber in 1971. The mural shows two arms clasping together surrounded by community members and a the depiction of people breaking up a fight. Located in West Town, Weber designed the mural to show the ability of a neighborhood to overcome crime.[[16]](#footnote-16) In 1998, CPAG’s executive director, Jon Pounds, worked with other muralists to create “I Welcome Myself to a New Place.” The mural, painted by railroad tracks that divided two neighborhoods, Roseland and Pullman. The neighborhoods were racially segregated and the tracks represented the dividing line. Not only did Pounds collaborate with other muralists, but he invited residents of both neighborhoods to work on the project. The mural, done in patchwork style, drew upon the history and culture of both neighborhoods to depict racial harmony.[[17]](#footnote-17) Today, CPAG’s works include murals, sculptures, mosaics, and landscape design.[[18]](#footnote-18) The work of CPAG not only sparked the community mural wave that other cities began to pick up on, but also illustrates how artists and community members can work together to create public art in public spaces. However, with gentrification continuing to change Chicago’s neighborhoods, the group has raised concern about how property speculators are erasing the historical murals from the built environment.[[19]](#footnote-19)

In the 1980s a group of artists in New York City formed a new collective called Political Art Documentation and Distribution, better known as PAD/D. Started by artist Lucy R. Lippard, the collective was inherently political. Their flyers read “PAD/D is a progressive artists’ resource and networking organization seeking to provide artists with an organized relationship to society and demonstrate the political effectiveness of image making.”[[20]](#footnote-20) The artists infused their work with overtly political themes, one of which was gentrification. PAD/D produced several exhibitions attacking gentrification. *Out of Place – Art for the Evicted* was an outdoor, public exhibition along the streets of the Lower East Side of Manhattan.[[21]](#footnote-21) Their largest anti-gentrification exhibition was *Not for Sale*, which PAD/D produced multiple times. While some of the works were inside of galleries, other works were on the streets of the Lower East Side, much like *Out of Place*. One mural depicted the concept of predatory real estate as a cockroach encroaching upon a neighborhood.[[22]](#footnote-22) PAD/D not only had exhibitions and street art, but also asked artists to create posters of their work as well. The collective saw the posters as a tangible way to promote the anti-gentrification themes of the art and receive a wider audience.[[23]](#footnote-23) While PAD/D’s work does not necessarily represent a neighborhood’s use of public art and public space to define or preserve neighborhood identity, they do present a case study of neighborhood artists coming together to produce works in public spaces. Rather than only having exhibitions in gallery spaces, PAD/D artists wanted their work to be seen by all and force viewers to confront gentrification and its consequences on the community.

In the Central District neighborhood in Seattle, a group of activists came together to form Africatown. Central District once housed a large portion of Seattle’s African American population. However, as more people and large tech firms moved to the city, gentrification meant more and more Black families living in the area were displaced. The organization envisioned a Central District redevelopment led by African Americans who had lived there for generations.[[24]](#footnote-24) Artists designed signs emblazoned with the words “coming soon” to parallel the coming soon signs around new apartment buildings and commercial blocks. However, their signs depicts African-influenced architecture, Black bodies in public spaces, and drum lines parading a new park. The works were placed in public spaces and streets within the Central District.[[25]](#footnote-25) While not the traditional public murals seen in previous decades, the signs represent a different form of using public art to interrupt the narrative of revitalization and redevelopment. Artists working within the Africatown organization hope the works do not just stand as an alternate reality. Instead, they hope to see some of the imagined developments come to life. Not only does Africatown operate as a public art collective, but they also run a community land trust, which could one day make the imagined spaces depicted on their art a reality for the Central District.[[26]](#footnote-26)

A local example that follows the literature of public art as a tool for anti-gentrification measures can be found in North Nashville. The Norf Collective formed when a group of North Nashville residents and activists came together to start Norf Wall Fest. The festival consisted of a series of murals painted on buildings across North Nashville. The collective sought to “celebrate culture, history and life by collaborating with our community in creating public art for our eyes.”[[27]](#footnote-27) The festival attracted the attention of local media outlets and the Frist Art Museum. Norf Collective exhibited a series of murals at the Frist between August 10, 2019 through January 5, 2020. According to the museum’s description of the exhibition, the public art crafted by Norf Collective stood out amongst the many murals found in other sections of Nashville, such as the Gulch and the Nations, two redeveloped sections of the city. The curators hoped to “shine a light on a culturally and historically important, yet often underserved, Nashville community” while also exploring “the role the arts play in urban redevelopment and in the expression of neighborhood and individual identities.”[[28]](#footnote-28) In a sense, the murals act as artists’ memorials of North Nashville. The project, Murals on Jefferson Street, celebrated the culture of the historically Black business district. One such mural painted on the Elks Lodge depicts blues musicians.[[29]](#footnote-29) Jefferson Street once housed music clubs where African Americans could play and listen without the worry of segregation. Unlike the proposed Edgehill park, however, the murals do not represent tangible public art memorializing a prominent figure from the neighborhood. Additionally, the murals are on existing buildings and are visual art, therefore they do not preserve public space within the neighborhood.

In Edgehill, residents sought to bring public art and public space together for the betterment of their neighborhood in a way that went beyond the common form of public-facing murals. In 2018, Dr. Jennifer Marshall, a professor of art history, wrote to *The Tennessean* expressing her worry over the proposal to sell off the parcels that made up the Edgehill Community Garden and Murrell School. To Marshall, the sale not only comprised of displacement, but also acted as “a desecration of Edmondson’s memory.”[[30]](#footnote-30) She went on to argue that galleries that had exhibited Edmondson’s work and the Edmondson Park on Charlotte Avenue were far away from the actual community the artist lived and worked in. Marshall argued that Edgehill was where Edmondson gained fame and the home of his first fans—his neighbors. To once again raze the site of his home and work yard would mean to raze “a place of growth and community.”[[31]](#footnote-31) Marshall’s opinion article appeared in local media outlets nearly a year before Edgehill residents debuted their proposal. However, her comparison of the Edgehill Memorial Gardens and Edmondson’s work yard as productive places of community can be found within the proposed park plan. On June 18, the Metro Budget and Finance Committee voted to take the Edgehill properties off the slate to be sold. Councilmember Colby Sledge, who represents Edgehill, asked that instead of selling it off, for the area to be redeveloped with better amenities for the neighborhood.[[32]](#footnote-32) Rather than waiting for Metro Parks and Recreation to design a plan, residents took the matter into their own hands.

It is important to understand the life and work of William Edmondson in order to understand how the proposed William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum and William Edmondson Homesite Park both borrows from the aesthetics of his work and memorializes the famed Edgehill resident. He began and ended his life in Davidson County. His parents, Orange and Jane Edmondson, were enslaved in Tennessee.[[33]](#footnote-33) Edmondson had several jobs before he discovered his craft of sculpting. Previous jobs included working as a farm laborer, a racehorse swipe, and as a laborer for the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway. In 1907, an accident occurred and Edmondson left his job with the railway. Upon recovering, he then went to work as a janitor in a local hospital until it closed down in 1931.[[34]](#footnote-34) In 1932, Edmondson began to work as a stonemason. Two years later, around 1934, Edmondson devoted his life to religion. Through this religious conversion, he believed he was called by God to not only preach, but also carve tombstones. Also around the time of Edmondson’s religious conversion, he found that someone had left a pile of limestone on his property.[[35]](#footnote-35) In fact, in an interview for *Time Magazine*, Edmondson explained the stone came from God and that “Jesus planted the seed of carvin’ in me.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

Edmondson’s home and stone yard were located at 1434 14th Avenue South, in the Edgehill neighborhood. Today the Murrell School stand on the site. He owned his home and lived with his older sister, Sarah Edmondson. His occupation on the 1940 Federal Census is stonemason, which shows how prolific his carvings became.[[37]](#footnote-37) Edmondson’s neighbor Sidney Hirsch helped Edmondson’s carvings gain attention. Hirsch introduced Alfred and Elizabeth Starr to Edmondson. The Starrs then had photographer Louise Dahl-Wolfe photograph and document his stone carvings. Dahl-Wolfe showed her photographs to Alfred Barr, Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art in 1937.[[38]](#footnote-38) That same year, the Museum of Modern Art exhibited Edmondson’s sculptures. Of note, *Time Magazine* argued Edmondson’s work was not revered by “by Nashville Negro colony,” but instead by “Manhattan’s art colony.”[[39]](#footnote-39) However, in time, that would change. Historian Bobby L. Lovett has argued that other African Americans in Edgehill did appreciate Edmondson’s art and “were amazed at the cultural benightedness of the whites who flocked from Belle Meade to buy Edmondson’s art.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

The sculptures and tombstones Edmondson carved were considered folk art. In the words of Barr, Edmondson’s work fell in the category of “modern primitive.”[[41]](#footnote-41) Barr went on to say that the work was representative of “the achievements of naïve or self-taught artists…usually the naïve artist works in the easier medium of painting. Edmondson, however, has chosen to work in limestone, which he attacks with extraordinary courage and directness to carve out simple, emphatic forms.”[[42]](#footnote-42) Many of Edmondson’s sculptures are representative of biblical stories, including *The Lion*, *Preacher*, *The Ark*, and *Crucifixion*, all of which were included in the Museum of Modern Art exhibit.[[43]](#footnote-43) His work was simple. *The Arc* included four blocks of limestone stacked upon each other (see Image 1). The bottom two blocks were unadorned. The top two blocs were sculpted to depict the ark in box form with windows, almost reminiscent of a house. Edmondson sculpted many angels. His angels had a frontward glare. Their hair looks reminiscent of textured hair. The bodies were simple, conical shaped. Robert Farris Thompson argued in *The Art of William Edmondson* that the rough wings and textures of the angels represented imperfection in what are otherwise thought to be “icons of perfection.”[[44]](#footnote-44)



Figure . Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Noah's Ark, (Accession # 93.72,78), 1937. Louise Dahl-Wolfe Archive, Center for Creative Photography, Arizona Board of Regents.

Because Edmondson lived and worked in Edgehill, it is important to understand what that cultural landscape would have looked like. Scholar Grey Gundaker attempted to reimagine what Edmondson’s work yard would have looked like throughout his life in the neighborhood. Gundaker drew upon William Wiggins analysis of Edmondson’s biblical themes. Wiggins, according to Gundaker, saw the sculptures as characters in a story Edmondson was directing.[[45]](#footnote-45) As such, Edmondson’s yard, with the limestone slabs and sculptures depicting biblical stories, were representative of Edmondson the man. Photographs of Edmondson’s yard provide insight. For example, a photograph of Edmondson’s workshop taken by Edward Weston shows a sign over his workspace as well as several sculptures (see Image 2). The sign reads “Tomb-stones for sale. Garden Ornaments. Stone work. Wm. Edmondson.” The sign would have directed visitors in Edgehill to his yard in order to purchase his sculptures as well as provided context for the sculptures being on his property. The same photograph shows a sculpture of an eagle atop a limestone block. Gundaker argued the eagle depicts variations in white and Black America. Edmondson’s eagle is by the opening to his workshop, not by a door. The eagle also had religious significance to it, as it watched over Edmondson’s property.[[46]](#footnote-46) Furthermore, the placement of the sculptures within the yard show how Edmondson viewed his work. An example found in one of Dahl-Wolfe’s photographs depicts *Preacher* and *Lawyer* facing each other, almost in conversation. Gundaker argued this placement could be representative of two laws or two books, as *Preacher* has a bible in his hand, which is above *Lawyer*.[[47]](#footnote-47) Edmondson’s yard, scattered with religious figures carved in stone, represented his religious conversion and the call of God he felt in his life.



Figure . Edward Weston, Stone Sculpture, William Edmondson, (Accession # 81.110.007), 1941, Edward Weston Archive, Center for Creative Photography, Arizona Board of Regents.

In March 2019, *The Tennessee Tribune* published an article written by the Save the William Edmondson Homesite Park and Gardens Coalition. The grassroots group was founded by documentary filmmaker Mark Schlicher, who at the time was working on producing a documentary on Edmondson, and Gloria McKissack. They were later joined by neighborhood leaders Brenda Morrow and Tyson Heller. The coalition is now made up of residents, concerned citizens, and a documentary filmmaker, with the mission “to save, protect, preserve, and enhance the beloved neighborhood park, community gardens, and historic site located at 1450 14th Avenue South in Edgehill.”[[48]](#footnote-48) The proposed plan went beyond simply redeveloping the existing park with better amenities as Councilman Sledge had proposed a year earlier. The coalition proposed a brand new William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum within the greater park vicinity. They proposed that the building house an expanded Edgehill Branch Library as well as panels detailing the history of Edgehill. They also proposed that the Cultural Arts Center and Museum house studio and class spaces as well as gallery spaces, making it an arts center for the entire neighborhood. For the Edmondson Homesite parcel, the coalition proposed that the parcel be developed into a pedestrian plaza with interpretive signs to illustrate where Edmondson once worked. From the Edmondson Homesite, the park would include a sculpture garden, reminiscent of Edmondson’s work yard. The sculpture garden would also include a sculpture-themed playground (see Image 3). Additionally, the coalition wrote in their article that they hoped to “bring some of William Edmondson’s sculptures ‘home’ to be displayed inside the Center.”[[49]](#footnote-49)



Figure . Schematic of the William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum and William Edmondson Homesite Park. Image by Save the William Edmondson Homesite Park and Gardens Coalition and Nashville Civic Design Center. March 2019.

What makes the Save the William Edmondson Homesite Park and Gardens Coalition and their proposed William Edmondson Homesite Higher Vision Master Plan unique within the literature and examples of using public art and public space as a tool for anti-gentrification is that is represents a community using material culture in placemaking. Furthermore, unlike the public murals seen in cities like San Diego, Chicago, and New York, or even the idealized development schemes in Seattle, the use of public art in Edgehill also seeks to celebrate and memorialize Edmondson as a lifelong resident of the neighborhood and as a renowned artist. The entire site is modeled in a way that reflects Edmondson’s sculptures and his work yard.

Drawing on Gunbaker’s and Wiggins’s analyses of Edmondson’s yard, the significance of the placement of Edmondson’s sculptures and his work shop has already been established. The proposed park plan pays tribute to the no longer extant cultural landscape. The placement of the William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum is at the center of the overall plan. The orientation is northward, in order to have visitors look towards the Edmondson Homesite. The homesite itself is proposed to include interpretive panels indicating where Edmondson’s work yard was placed as well as information on the sculptures that would have been seen in his yard. Finally, the homesite is set to be the entrance to the sculpture garden, where contemporary local artists can exhibit their own sculpted works.[[50]](#footnote-50) The placement of these features symbolizes pieces of Edmondson’s life which are no longer extant within Edgehill’s built environment. Thus the placement both honors Edmondson while also recreating a cultural landscape lost to urban renewal and gentrification. The coalition further argued that the physical environment of Edmondson was a critical factor in his work. His studio, or work yard, was outdoors within a historically African American neighborhood, where his neighbors could view his work and sometimes become subjects of his sculptures.[[51]](#footnote-51) The displays created by Edmondson illustrate the intention of the sculptures to be displayed outdoors. The proposed outdoor sculpture garden is an expanded version of Edmondson’s personal work yard.

All of the public art set to be included in the Higher Vision Master Plan are sculptures. Returning to Hayden’s work, she argued “urban landscapes stimulate visual culture.”[[52]](#footnote-52) This is especially true when analyzing the coalition’s proposal. The fact that the proposed public art will be sculptures is significant. First, it separates the plan in Edgehill from other examples of public art. The most common form of public art used in the preservation or celebration of neighborhoods are murals. Examples are found in other major cities and in North Nashville. While the murals are public art and often include a political and anti-gentrification message, they do not necessarily borrow from the works of historic artists from the neighborhood. The coalition specifically proposed a sculpture garden and sculpture playground because it was Edmondson’s medium to share his craft. In a sense, through the public meetings and vision planning, the coalition used the material culture of Edmondson’s sculptures to define Edgehill. Drawing upon Dell Upton’s work on how urban residents craft their identity through the material and structure of the city, one can argue Edgehill residents hope to shape their identity and the neighborhood’s identity around the art of William Edmondson.[[53]](#footnote-53) The folk art of an African American sculptor will remind visitors that Edgehill began as an African American neighborhood. The sculpture-specific public art also works to memorialize Edmondson as one of Edgehill’s famous residents. It was the tombstones and limestone carvings he created in the neighborhood that garnered the attention of the Museum of Modern Art and launched him to fame as the first African American to have a solo exhibition at the esteemed museum. For the coalition, sculpture has meaning and significance because it was how Edmondson shared his craft.

One might argue that even the title of the coalition’s plan has significance. The Higher Vision Master Plan is reminiscent of Edmondson’s religious themes seen throughout his art and his consistent claim that God called him to sculpt. While in private collections and on view at museums today, Edmondson’s art was originally public art. He did not hide his creations, but instead left them on display in his work yard for both Edgehill residents and potential buyers to view. The coalition’s proposal draws upon Edmondson’s life and work in many symbolic ways. From the placement of the proposed William Edmondson Cultural Arts Center and Museum at the center of the neighborhood park to the entrance of the sculpture garden on the former site of Edmondson’s work yard, the artist is at the center of the plan. Furthermore, the members of the coalition, residents of Edgehill, and concerned citizens found meaning and identity in Edmondson’s art. The fact that all of the proposed public art are sculptures harkens back to Edmondson’s medium. Drawing upon Hayden’s work, the coalition answers her call for “finding new, community-based ways of working with the physical traces of the past.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Taken altogether, the Higher Vision Master Plan combines material culture, public art, and public space to fight back against gentrification. Yet, it also does more. It celebrates the life of an artist who created a cultural landscape within Edgehill through his work yard and his art, making it a unique tool to preserve the neighborhood.

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