

MAY 2013 Creative Loafing Magazine COVER STORY



THE FUTURE OF PULLMAN YARD

REDEVELOPING KIRKWOOD'S 26-ACRE FORMER INDUSTRIAL HUB COULD TRANSFORM THE NEIGHBORHOOD. BUT FIRST, SOMEONE HAS TO BUY IT.

BY JORDAN FRIEDMAN
AND THOMAS WHEATLEY
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COMMUNITY HUB: Atlanta ContactPoint envisions repurposing the historic buildings and property into a community space promoting fitness, nutrition, and sustainability.

"The idea behind attracting that kind of development is to support the elementary school," Williamson says. "You attract more population, ergo more families, ergo more children."

Or the property could serve as a cultural hub. Casey thinks the buildings would be the perfect home for something like the Museum of Contemporary Art. Ryan Gravel, the urban designer who envisioned the Atlanta Beltline as a graduate student at Georgia Tech, studied Pullman's potential future for a client after he joined an architecture and design firm. He thinks the property and its existing buildings could serve a multitude of uses, including restaurants, farmers market, or event, performance, and studio spaces in the grand barn-shaped building, "another Great Farm kind of place on the eastside," he says.

things like Pullman [Yard]. It's arguably the most significant that's left."

In addition, McQuigg says the Pullman Company has important links to the Civil Rights Movement. A. Philip Randolph, who helped organize the Pullman porters and create the nation's first black-led labor organization, was an ally of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and coordinated the March on Washington where the civil rights icon gave his "I Have a Dream" speech.

"There's a huge story that relates to Atlanta's history," he says. "It becomes so much more than about preserving some old buildings. And there are important reasons to keep it as intact as possible because some parts of it are already gone."

The question then is: What will the state

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