

DON'T MESS WITH MILL CITY

A Short Documentary Film

The Story

In 2011, Ms. Alendra Lyons moved back to the Mill City neighborhood, a community that she called home and knew very well. Upon her return she noticed a significant difference from the neighborhood she once knew. A thriving neighborhood that was once filled with Black theatres, stores, and other businesses had become a victim to urban blight. Ms. Lyons noticed how deeply impacted Mill City had become with crime, illegal dumping into vacant lots, and just urban blight in general. Instead, of accepting things as they were, Ms. Lyons rolled up her sleeves and got to work. She launched the Mill City Community Association on April 7th 2012, and has been making significant change ever since. Ms. Lyons has dedicated her time and energy to improving the neighborhood for all its residents. The film seeks to answer the question of, what work is necessary to revitalize and properly care for a community that has been significantly impacted by blight?



Project Overview

Don't Mess with Mill City, is a 15-minute short documentary that attempts to answer this question by following the work and community improvement efforts of Ms. Alendra Lyons. The Mill City Community Garden is a point of departure or throughline for the narrative of the film. The film follows Ms. Alendra Lyons as she cares for the garden, while simultaneously caring for the community, cleaning vacant lots, and building relationships with residents so to best meet their immediate needs.