Mayor Bracey talks new health plans, public safety

The mayor's fifth state of the city address was not short on praise and promise as she commended city staff, development efforts and community partners.

Comparing the York Revolution's first opening day to landing on the moon, mayor Kim Bracey spoke about economic development, community engagement and future plans during her annual state of the city address Wednesday night at Hannah Penn.

Below are five things to know from Bracey's fifth address.

**Fresh veggies at corner store?**

The city's health bureau anticipates grant money to participate in the Healthy Corner Store Initiative, a national program that will offer about $1,000 to corner stores around the city.

The program, known as "Corner Stores are Cornerstones," will incentivize stores to feature fresh produce in place of candy bars, Bracey said. It took 10 years of city government begging, she said, but will finally allow young people to access food where it's convenient.

A complete list of York stores getting the grant money — about eight — was unavailable, but Bracey did mention Bev's Grocery at West Princess Street and South Belvidere Avenue as one of the recipients.

**City Hall coming to your block**

Look for Bracey and other officials to visit neighborhoods around the city this spring and summer.

"City Hall for a day" will help Bracey and her staff reach city residents where they live and hear from them — whether it's about a dilapidated building, garbage collection or a compliment, she said.

**Keeping the public safe**

Bracey touted the efforts of city police and firefighters, noting more than 600 smoke detectors installed into homes in York's Salem Square neighborhood.

She mentioned a "no-questions" gun retrieval program that welcomes anyone to bring in a gun to city police. "That's one less gun in our community," she said.

Bracey also said Part 1 crimes in the city for 2015 were down almost 6 percent from the year before and they remained below 2,000. "It's too many, but it's below our goal," she said.

Part 1 crimes are defined by the FBI as aggravated assault, rape, murder, robbery, arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

**Hotel to replace eyesore?**

Bracey commended the city's Redevelopment Authority for buying the Manna Pro grain elevator on Richland Avenue, a derelict property bordering the York Expo Center.

As the authority seeks money to destroy the structure and court a potential developer, Bracey spoke from what she referred to as the "nudge pulpit," suggesting the site become a state-of-the-art hotel and convention center instead of a parking lot. "That would bring the entire fairgrounds into the 21st century," Bracey said.

**Just saying 'Thanks'**

Audra Aldrich approached Bracey after her speech and thanked the mayor for all she does for the city.

Bracey asked Aldrich if she lives in York. Camp Hill, she told Bracey, but she works in York.

The 22-year-old said she's heard York is an up-and-coming area for millennials, and she cares a lot about the community.

"It was great getting to hear Bracey speak on her initiatives and about her visions for York," Aldrich said after the address. "I wanted to thank her for her work in the community because her work matters and the changes that she is making matter."

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