

Carl Poole

July 1, 2023

SUMMARY: Interview with resident and organizer Carl Poole in a reading room in Slover Library, downtown Norfolk. Topics range from the prevailing attitude in Lambert's Point residents; history of organizing around coal dust in Lambert's Point; interactions with the Department of Environmental Quality's Tidewater Air Monitoring Evaluation; and inspiration.

[00:00:05] **Carl Poole:** Let's see. Uh, my name is Carl Poole. Um, let's see, family's from Norfolk.

[00:00:10] Been back in Norfolk since I got out the military for probably the past 22, 23 years. I am working for New Virginia Majority as their campaign coordinator. Um, before that I was a member of New Virginia Majority work, um, working with the, um, Lambert's Point Environmental Justice chapter that they got there.

[00:00:29] **Adrian:** Awesome.

[00:00:30] How long have you been working with New Virginia?

[00:00:33] **Carl Poole:** Mm, well, actually working for the org maybe since last year as a member, probably five years before that. So, yeah. Since 2017, 2018,, around there.

[00:00:46] **Adrian:** And, and where in Norfolk are you from?

[00:00:49] **Carl Poole:** Um, currently I live over by Old-- Old Dominion at, um, actually right across the street from Old Dominion, but my family comes out of Norfolk, so they're more, I guess, Broad Creek, Roberts Park, around there. But we've kind of spread out, so.

[00:01:04] **Adrian:** Cool. You have siblings?

[00:01:06] **Carl Poole:** Uh, I got one sister.

[00:01:08] **Adrian:** Does she also live in, in town?

[00:01:10] **Carl Poole:** Uh, in Virginia Beach.

[00:01:11] **Adrian:** Cool. Wow, I love that. Um, so tell me about Lambert's Point. How would you describe that neighborhood?

[00:01:19] **Carl Poole:** Well, Lambert's Point from its origins, it's kind of a working class neighborhood.

[00:01:26] The neighborhood grew up, um, built in and around, uh, uh, Norfolk Southern's coal distribution, um, center there. That's how the neighborhood got, that's how the neighborhood got there. It was originally built to house folks working, uh, for the railroad-- working for Norfolk Southern or Norfolk and Western at the time.

[00:01:45] And since then, it's kind of filled in different residents, different changes throughout the neighborhood. Old Dominion growing up and expanding and, and, and basically building out into the neighborhood. So, so --

[00:01:57] **Adrian:** Like is, would you describe it as an historically Black neighborhood?

[00:02:00] **Carl Poole:** Yeah, in the last 40, 50 years, yeah.

[00:02:05] Not originally, but yes, you had, um, probably in the fifties and sixties and in the seventies, um, a lot of the white residents that were there originally moving out. Black folks bought homes and moved in. So you're talking about since at least late sixties, early seventies. Um, although now you've got gentrification happening, a lot of college housing because like I said, um, Old Dominion's has expanded.

[00:02:28] You know, most of the ground Old Dominion's sitting on right now used to be Lambert's Point, but as it's grown, um, I'd say half the original, um, real estate of the neighborhood is now Old Dominion University as they bought up and, and re-- and redeveloped and expanded.

[00:02:46] Also as other, you know, as housing got older, things got bought out. There have been a few blocks of it that have been turned into, I think, um, um, almost half of one street off of, uh, 40, no, off of 39th is now like the reservoir in the back, near the water treatment plant. And, you know, it's like a lot of different neighborhoods, older neighborhoods in Norfolk- you have like, you know, new housing popping up and newer residents popping in.

[00:03:09] And it is, it is less Black than it used to be, but that's just, you know, that's part of what's happening on different places all over Norfolk, so.

[00:03:17] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. Well, so I didn't know that the water treatment plant was built that recently.

[00:03:23] **Carl Poole:** Yeah, well, no, that, um, there's a, there's a, a drain, um, I guess a water drainage reservoir they built back there.

[00:03:28] Mm-hmm. Where the, that's across from the water treatment plant. That's about maybe, I guess two, two and a half blocks. All that was housing.

[00:03:37] **Adrian:** Oh, wow.

[00:03:37] **Carl Poole:** So yeah. Where that block, where that, where that pond is all that was housing at one point.

[00:03:42] **Adrian:** That's a big pond.

[00:03:43] **Carl Poole:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Well, you consider it probably since probably, I'm guessing, mid sixties, early seventies. Old Dominion has probably, I don't know, quadrupled in size. So I think where you'd find, I think Old Dominion, the, the, the university proper might begin right there off of, uh, was that 43rd? You know, 40, 50, or say 30, 40 years ago. That was maybe four blocks back from there. So it wasn't 43rd was the line. It might have been, um, um, 47th, 48th, and it didn't go all the way back to Powhatan. It probably, maybe, maybe half that. So Dominion's done a lot of growing in that time and all that area that was it grew into was once residential, so.

[00:04:31] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. Wow. So would you say that the university is displacing people over time?

[00:04:40] **Carl Poole:** Yeah, I mean, when you have universities, there's a reason why you find a lot of university, especially state universities, in neighborhoods or in and around neighborhoods that are lower income or that are older residential because they need room to grow. So I mean, that happens a lot and you know, um, that area's no is no different. I mean the university, I think land-wise is bigger than, [00:05:00] than what's left in Lambert's Point neighborhood, but that's now how it started.

[00:05:03] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. So, um, how would you describe the, um, the coal terminal at Lambert's Point?

[00:05:12] **Carl Poole:** Let's see. Um, they've been moving coal in one form of or another back there on their, um, in that area for well over a hundred years. I

mean, it was a couple different entities, say like the uh, turn of the century, turn of 20 --turn of the 20th century, 1900. But it became Norfolk and Western and when they consolidated and did that, you know, they've been moving coal back there longer than the neighborhood's been back there.

[00:05:37] **Adrian:** Right. So, so what's the relationship between the coal Terminal and the, and the residents?

[00:05:44] **Carl Poole:** Well relationship is meaning how do they relate to one another?

[00:05:50] **Adrian:** Yeah. Like what, um, how would you describe like, the qualities of that relationship?

[00:05:59] **Carl Poole:** Relationship for Norfolk Southern: indifference. Business is business. And while they want to keep a good like facial relationship with the neighborhood that you know, good upkeep, you know, good gestures, let's donate some money here or spend some time there and make sure that, you know, if there's any issues that come up that they kind of have a good speaking relationship as far as their business that's theirs.

[00:06:21] Most folks in Lambert Point don't know how things operate on that yard and you know, that's, you know, as far as they're concerned, it's the other side of that fence. Yeah. But you know, you have neighbors talking about how trains going into the yard. They shake their houses, the noise, all kind types of day.

[00:06:38] Um, of course air pollution. Um, their relationship is, like I said, from Norfolk Southern standpoint is, is is indifferent. They're like, well, we're here, we're gonna keep, you know, no one's complaining. Mm-hmm. Or rather, no one's complaining enough. And you, like I said, they've been there longer than the neighborhood and so the city's had a relationship with Norfolk Southern as a business, and they wanna keep that business.

[00:07:00] We're just a few blocks away right now from where they were headquartered. So they've had, um, there's, there's not a lot of political will to tell Norfolk Southern what to do, and Norfolk Southern doesn't feel like, you know, there's a threat from the neighborhood as far as how they do business. Um, and when it comes to air quality, how they address it, they will say, "There's not a problem. We've tested things on our yard, so you know, where's the problem?"

[00:07:22] Meanwhile, the neighborhood, in a lot of different ways, feels ignored, um, disregarded. And I'm just talking about, you know, Norfolk Southern here. I'm talking about when it comes to different elements in, around the city when it comes to, like I said, Old Dominion's been growing and growing and there's a lot of, um, residential that used to be like homeowner residential that's now just rental, uh, property for student housing.

[00:07:45] Um, they feel ignored about what happens with students in a neighborhood if there's a party in the neighborhood or craziness going on every single year, or people, you know, doing all kinds of mess moving through their neighborhood. Long time residents feel like, well. They feel ignored. They feel like, "Well, what's gonna happen?"

[00:08:01] This, all these other things pop up when Old Dominion does something. Or when Norfolk Southern does something, or when anybody does anything in around their neighborhood, um, they are kind of isolated. And the longtime residents, you know, they understand that it's kind of an insular situation where it's, where it's, it's them on their own.

[00:08:22] And since they've seen this kind of like disregard on so many different levels, that's what they expect. You can make a lot of noise about something, but in the end they're thinking, "Well, nothing's going to change, nothing's going to happen." Um, we could say something about Norfolk Southern or any number of things that affect their neighborhood that they wanna see changed, but ultimately they go by the, you know, the history of what's happened: nothing. Um, there used to be stores back in and around the neighborhood that have closed down. Um, there used to be, um, you know, businesses. And around the neighborhood that, that were just for the residents of that neighborhood, because this was services of things. They couldn't, they, you know, they couldn't easily find anywhere else, little grocery stores, that sort of thing.

[00:09:03] Um, a lot of those have closed down. I mean, you know, people, the business wasn't profitable enough for other things, kind of ran them out or, you know, they just, they just moved. And it's, like I said, it feels for longtime residents when you talk to 'em, their attitude is kind of like, you can go around talking about coal dust and how we can change it and how we can do something with Norfolk Southern, but they've always been here.

[00:09:24] They're not gonna stop doing what they're doing. The city's not gonna stop them from doing what they're doing. I mean, they understand the

problem, but they also have a sense of there is nothing you could do about it because the people that could do something aren't ever gonna step up.

[00:09:37] **Adrian:** That is really hard place to inhabit.. Um, can, can you, uh, like rewind for a second? And can you tell me more about the, what the coal dust does to the air quality?

[00:09:56] **Carl Poole:** Well, if you're talking about in general [00:10:00] it, well, children get less air capacity in their lungs, right. So if you have to live in an environment, day in and day out and day in and day out where the air quality is less, where there's, you know, a lot of particulates in the air, you're talking, um, respiratory problems, bronchitis, uh, you are talking asthma, if you have those things anyway, you're talking about that aggravating breathing.

[00:10:22] Um, if you. Well, let's say you grow things in your neighborhood and you have that age old collection of that dust settling on the ground. What are you eating? If you have that stuff settling into the ground and you're, you know, you're doing like maybe backyard, uh, gardening, what are you eating? If that's what's going on to the ground in the area, or, um, it's summertime.

[00:10:43] You have an AC running. Do the filters in your AC, are they equipped to handle that? Like right now they're talking with all the smoke from Canada that you need to have certain types of filters in your ACs, and you need, people need to check this. Well, this is something, especially in Lambert's point, that's coming into the air all the time, and most people don't have that specialized filter, and no one pushes for that.

[00:11:06] It's like a slow moving, uh, problem. It's a slow moving, uh, a catastrophe. Hmm, over a course of decades. And there's plenty of stories where people tell you that "When I moved a neighborhood, I might have had respiratory problems, or my kids might have had asthma, and then we leave and all of a sudden everybody gets better."

[00:11:22] You know, it's like you hear that enough where it's like, well, why doesn't anyone do anything if you know this is something that can be medically seen?

[00:11:33] **Adrian:** So is that something that you've seen a lot of or experienced a lot of in your neighborhood?

[00:11:40] **Carl Poole:** Um, respiratory issues, um, when you, I've talked to people that, you know, when they talk about how their, maybe like existing

conditions were aggravated or how their children had conditions as they moved into the neighborhood, or former residents talking about them having left and that's stuff clear enough or older folks-- 'cause there's a retirement, there's a retirement community that's right off of 38 that that's a common story where, "Okay, well we had these problems," or "I can see coal dust coming through an a AC filter or vent. And it's affecting my breathing, but when I change filters or we all left or so-- or went on vacation somewhere for a while, then it clears up. When I come back to Lambert's point, I'm back in the same situation."

[00:12:19] Um, this is data that, you know, if you looking on, um, and I forget what it's called. The EPA has, uh, um, a GIS map that kind of tracks health conditions. And when you look on that, you can see the, you know, the concentrations of. We're talking about respiratory problems, we're talking about life expectancy, you're talking about medical conditions that are, you know, affecting people's breathing.

[00:12:42] You can kind of see on that map that there's a nice little gray spot or concentrated spot on that neighborhood in that area. The only thing next door to them, the uh, folks that may be cause those kind of problems is Norfolk southern, is that coal distribution place.

[00:12:56] **Adrian:** Wow. Um, what are some of the things that people do on like. A daily or yearly basis that people do, um, have to do to deal with the coal dust?

[00:13:12] **Carl Poole:** Well, when you go to the neighborhood, I, I mean, I know when I first go in there on a regular basis, um, everybody's house, everybody's awning has it on there, or cars, people are washing their houses. Like, I mean, I guess when you have a house in a normal neighborhood, you might think to power wash your house when it's a regular thing in Lambert's Point, because it collects.

[00:13:32] So that's probably the first-- the more you go back into the neighborhood, the more you see it. And that's definitely something that is always happening is to the point where that's like a norm for people that when you bring it up, it's like, "Well, that's nothing. Well, you know, I'm just cleaning off my house and keep moving."

[00:13:44] **Adrian:** Do you have to power wash your house?

[00:13:45] **Carl Poole:** Uh, where I live at, no, I live, I, I live as adjacent to Lambert's Point, like across other side of Hampton Boulevard.

[00:13:53] **Adrian:** Oh, okay. Are you on Park Place?

[00:13:55] **Carl Poole:** No, um, I'm on 49th.

[00:13:57] **Adrian:** Oh, okay. Okay,

[00:13:59] **Carl Poole:** So I'm a little up the street and the cross, but

[00:14:01] **Adrian:** Far enough that the dust is not like reaching you to a degree where not --

[00:14:06] **Carl Poole:** Not like it is in Lambert's Point, anywhere close, but yeah.

[00:14:09] **Adrian:** How much do you think power washing costs?

[00:14:13] **Carl Poole:** Well, somebody's, I guess a homeowner investing in getting their own and running it themselves, that's one thing, but they have to rent equipment of that kind of thing.

[00:14:19] **Adrian:** I guess that's maybe more, yeah.

[00:14:22] **Carl Poole:** Yeah. But I mean, it, it, it's, it's a regular enough thing that when you talk to residents about it, that, that it's, to them, it's like normal. It's like, well, you know, "I just clean it off. That's not a big deal." And you tell folks, "yeah, if it's on your house, it's a good reflection of what's in the air around you, what you're breathing." You might have a lot of residents say, "Well, that's never affected me."

[00:14:43] But you're also talking about maybe newer residents that might say that with newer houses that you know, "Well, I'm in a great neighborhood. There's nothing going on." Who may not have that you know, like, uh, history of being in that neighborhood. When you talk to a long time residents, 30, 40, [00:15:00] 50 year residents, folks who grew up back there, they can tell you more because they can tell you it used to be worse.

[00:15:06] **Adrian:** Yeah. So when you, when you mentioned like the university expanding and people coming into the neighborhood, um, can you describe where Lambert's Point is?

[00:15:17] Like in terms of like, what are the surrounding neighborhoods like? And then and ODU and like, you know, the dynamics and Park Place.

[00:15:30] **Carl Poole:** Okay, well, let's see. Lambert Point's currently situated between, I guess, um, Hampton Boulevard, and if you go all the way back to Powhatan in the back, um, on back to about 25th, 26th streets, um, going south and then going north.

[00:15:45] Um, the neighborhood kind of ends at 30, uh, four, sorry, 43rd, um, right where Old Dominion kind of begins. You know, they're, they're their campus proper right there. Um, the next nearest, well, outside of just censoring the Old Dominion campus, um, to the north of that, the Larchmont um, uh, Edgewater communities are right there.

[00:16:07] And then below it to the south, on the other side of Norfolk Southern tracks, is where you see West Ghent. Those are probably the two closest neighborhoods, you know, residential to, uh, Lambert's Point that are on that side of Hampton Boulevard, and they are two of the most, um, financially wealthy neighborhoods in Norfolk. So it's kind of like if you have, you've got this university that's kind of gobbling up the neighborhood a little bit, and then to the north and south, you have two of the most wealthy, uh, neighborhoods in Norfolk that are right there.

[00:16:38] And they, some of those, those neighborhoods, uh, maybe not as directly close to Norfolk Southern's facility, but, and many times they have those same kinds of concerns so that when you see them hear anything about, like, say a, a TAME study or coal dust, they're very interested, but they're very interested in talking about their neighborhoods.

[00:16:58] Even though the most adjacent neighborhood is Lambert's Point. Like, um, for instance, um. When the TAME study when, uh, folks at DEQ um, began talking about doing community meetings for TAME we wanted to get, um, uh, new Virginia Majority and, uh, Sierra Club wanted to get, um, city council members going to these meetings too.

[00:17:19] So they're just as informed. It makes sense. You already have their ear on it. And yeah, we contacted, um, local representatives for you. This is 'cause Lambert's-- they're-- Lambert's Points' their constituents. We contacted two city council people that are Lambert's Point being the people that vote them in the office.

[00:17:37] One of them lives in, in, in, in, uh, West Ghent. So at that first meeting that TAME had, you might've had, let's say a handful of people from Lambert's Point. You had almost a dozen folks coming from, uh, West Ghent to include the president, vice president of Larchmont Civic League.

[00:17:57] And when they were talking about, "Well, where should we put monitors?" Even though the study was supposed to be focused in around Lambert's Point, they're talking about, "well, let's put a monitor at Blair Middle School," whole other neighborhoods away from Lambert's Point and definitely away from the, uh, the coal yard.

[00:18:15] They were concerned about their neighborhood. That was why they were there. And it's like, yeah, here we are talking about putting sensors and monitors in Lambert's Point. Right beside this facility. But you didn't come to talk about that. You came to talk about what's happening in your neighborhood.

[00:18:31] **Adrian:** How did that feel?

[00:18:33] **Carl Poole:** Eh, I mean it, I mean, granted you did see their city council person there.

[00:18:39] It, it felt like, yeah, you're not all that concerned about Lambert's Point. Even though these are your constituents too. You're concerned about your neighborhood. Um. Um, it's also kind of accented the point why we were trying to talk to DEQ about making sure that when they made outreach efforts that they, even look-- in the middle of COVID, looked to do things door to door, talk to people, get their trust.

[00:19:02] Don't rely on, um, social media or electronic meetings, Nextdoor-- Everybody might be looking at Nextdoor, but people aren't gonna trust you or go to a meeting or tell you about this stuff. If you're just gonna put an entry on Nextdoor, send an email. You need to go talk to people. And the next meeting after that, that was after the effort of them actually doing that.

[00:19:20] You saw a bigger response from Lambert's Point people. Instead of just having a handful, you had over a dozen that came in, residents, and that was probably the last time, at least one of those city council people we talked to about it. Because we figured if you're just gonna call in folks from your neighborhood and for your neighborhood? Yeah, you, you know, might not, maybe not reach out to you this time.

[00:19:42] **Adrian:** Okay, so, so yeah, I was gonna ask you what it's been like corresponding and with city council reps around this issue.

[00:19:53] **Carl Poole:** Um, I mean, they're definitely aware of it now. It's a matter of political will. I mean, Norfolk Southern used to be [00:20:00] headquartered here. They moved to Atlanta and City Council's reaction was more of a disappointment in that than ever talking about Lambert's Point.

[00:20:08] Let's see. Um. Um, political will to move. I mean, we keep pushing city council. Maybe we can kind of build up that political will. But let's see. There's too many connections with Lambert's Point, well with, um, Norfolk Southern and the City. You know, that's, you know, that's tax based like anything else in the city. Um, so I think that's kind of like the, the, the thing that kind of holds members back.

[00:20:36] Uh, they won't all move on it. Or they'll tell you, well, we need data. We need more information. More information about a thing that's, you know, 50, 60, 70 years been in place. I'm not sure how much more information they need to do anything. But a lot of times I think it's just an excuse. You know, we don't have to act if there isn't enough... pushing back. Not enough pushback from residents or enough, you know, momentum if it doesn't make enough noise.

[00:21:04] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. Have you, um, corresponded with like state or federal level reps?

[00:21:11] **Carl Poole:** Oh, definitely. Um, especially in this area. 'Cause you have, um, uh, delegates like, uh, Shelly Simmonds who from Newport News is definitely, you know, dealing with the same type of thing we're talking about.

[00:21:21] They have a massive pile of coal, so her ear is on it. You're talking about, um, interest from, um. Uh, Congressman Bobby Scott, for instance. Uh, many of which are just still, although I think more sincerely, but kind of waiting on data. I think everybody thinks they need a smoking gun to say, "Well, this points to this thing and now we have to act."

[00:21:42] Um. I'm not sure that that's going to happen. I'm not sure if they're gonna find it and if they don't have that smoking gun, I don't know what they're going to do. I know they're interested in trying to see what they can be done, but I think they're looking for more data too. Not as an excuse to say, well, if there's no more data, we won't act, but as a guaranteed way that we can act on this thing.

[00:22:03] But we're talking, you know, you've had generations of folks who've had to deal with this and the political will to act comes now. Uh, maybe, um, one resident I know made the point that, um, when that neighborhood was still, you know, primarily, you know, Norfolk Southern workers, it probably wasn't an issue because that was their employer next door.

[00:22:26] When that neighborhood say 40, 50 years ago became largely Black, nobody was listening, nobody was doing anything. But as that neighborhood has progressively become less Black, more prominent, more gentrified-- now everyone's on the run to do something now. So it's like when it's not just Black folks, now you wanna do something.

[00:22:48] And that's an attitude that comes from residents, especially when they're thinking about their representatives and their, um, their, uh, city council members. "Okay, now when it's not just us, now you wanna do something." And that is definitely come a thought that comes from long time residents too. So, um, political will from city council is not collectively there.

[00:23:08] You might have a few representatives that are paying attention, but all of them are waiting to see more data. That's why they think TAME is so important because if it shows something, it's something that I think you'll have, uh, at least on the state level, people wanting to act.

[00:23:21] **Adrian:** So tell me about the TAME Project.

[00:23:24] Um, you described the beginnings of it in those early meetings with like people from different neighborhoods and then asking the DEQ to go door to door and having more Lambert's Point folks show up. Um, was that, I guess that was in like 2021?

[00:23:42] **Carl Poole:** Well, initially, 2021 I know. Um, the Department of Environmental Quality and end of 2020, um, went and got a federal grant from EPA so they can study air quality in both, um, language point and in the uh, um,

[00:23:57] **Adrian:** East End,

[00:23:57] **Carl Poole:** East End neighborhood in Newport News.

[00:23:59] Yeah. Um. Now by March, April, 2021, they're talking to different entities. New Virginia Majority, Sierra Club amongst the others were one of 'em. Wanting to know who to talk to to get more information. I know the Sierra Club had been for at least 10 years prior in that neighborhood. I know, um, one

long time Sierra Club guy's name is Joe Cook. He's passed. He was definitely, um, pushing forward to, to get things studied, trying to talk to Old Dominion about trying to do more air studies, to test the air quality there.

[00:24:28] So we had those entities and the initial question asked, I guess was April, 2021, was, "Well, how do we do outreach?" We told them, "You need to do this door to door. You need to talk to people. You can't--" I mean, granted, we're in the, you know, COVID is, is kicking off. We're shutting things down and we're telling them, "Yeah, you can't rely on the internet. You can't rely on an email, you can't rely on this thing because a lot of longtime residents don't make, you know, you know, uh, expansive use of that. You're gonna need to knock on people's doors. You need to talk to them. You're gonna need to gain their trust. [00:25:00] Show them that you are here to do something. Explain what you're here to do. And ask what they want and get their opinion. You know, if they don't see your face, they're not gonna trust you."

[00:25:08] They took that information and said, "Thank you. This sounds like good ideas. We're gonna be sure to, to concentrate on that." Months go by before we hear anything else. And during that, I guess April, May, June, July, August, September did nothing. It wasn't until, and it wasn't until later when um, a friend called because they were on a call with folks in DEQ and asked if you wanna join, join in.

[00:25:32] This is other folks, New Virginia Majority got on that call and was like, "Well, you spent the whole summer doing nothing, and you're still at the, 'Let's talk to, you know, interested parties, uh, other, uh, nonprofit folks from around the area to see what we should do,' when we already told you what you need to be doing in that neighborhood, and you've wasted time in doing it. So why aren't you talking to people? Why aren't you going door to door? Why aren't you, I mean. We have elections all throughout 2021, where you had elected people trying to figure out how do we keep people safe during a pandemic and still do outreach in person. You know, you had folks figuring that out all year long. Why haven't you figured that out?"

[00:26:11] At that time, I guess that was October, November of 2021, they put out a survey. A survey that people can access online, but also, you know, get a paper copy survey. They didn't put it out anywhere in the neighborhood really. I mean, I guess the nearest, if you're thinking stores or retail places they could go to might have been closer to Hampton Boulevard.

[00:26:34] Um, they put out a few surveys that were at, at places that were on, um, Clay Avenue and 21st Street. Basically the edge of Ghent and a

neighborhood way adjacent from Lambert's Point that you might have folks from Lambert's Point going to and frequenting, but you're talking about, once again, back into the pandemic. People aren't really doing that a lot. And two, it was nowhere near those neighborhoods. Not contact with the local churches. There are three of 'em in Lambert Point, not contact with the nearest stores you could think of. Um, there's a drug store right there off of 38th, um, all these other places for a survey they were putting out outside of Lambert Point's area and saying, well, this is for outreach for Lambert Point and still not doing door to door knocking.

[00:27:19] It wasn't until. I'm guessing the following summer, it wasn't until um, may, June, 2022 when they finally had their folks going door to door and we went with them. We invited them to come with us, "Please come with us." Let's get them to do those efforts or popups in front of churches or making contact more locally. Talk to the Civic League. When they started doing that, you know, in person effort. They got more people coming out to their second meeting than they did their first, more people from Lambert Point. Um, they did that probably through the summer and fall of 2022. Then kind of, well changing, uh, changing governors.

[00:28:06] **Adrian:** How did that affect the process, the new administration?

[00:28:10] **Carl Poole:** Well, part of the people that were doing the outreach from DEQ were from their new, uh, office of Environmental Justice and the Environmental Justice Director, um, Renee Hoyos, she was hired and they did have a coordinator that was here in the city, lives in lives nearby.

[00:28:26] Her name is Grace Holmes and Renee's assistant director. All of, um, all of them had did something or things that are on the ground here, but when you have a change of administration, Renee, um, resigned. Um, their assistant director kind of, I don't know if they moved him to another job or he was kind of, I don't know.

[00:28:45] He, he, he, uh, different position. He left it and from, instead of hiring another director, they just now had a lead coordinator. A lot of the on ground effort, the, the little that they did for that one summer kind of stopped. And I think that's happening even now where, when we're talking about in-person meetings, the conversation at their last meeting was, "Well, how do we do a hybrid meeting? How do we get more people to come to the meeting?" Aside from myself, they only had one other person that represented anything in round in that area. Um, one of the, uh, deacons, uh, one of the deacons that from

a local church in the area, everybody else that was at that meeting was online from what I can see.

[00:29:24] And no other residents, so. Uh, like I said from the very beginning when they asked us, "Well, what should we do?" We told them, and that was the most effective thing that they did to get residents involved. Now you still have residents thinking, "Well, all right, DEQ's here, that's nice, but what does that mean?"

[00:29:40] They're going to do, um, a continuous outreach at that kind might have been a better thing to answer that question and definitely continue garnering that trust from the neighborhood. But it just seems like their outreach experts are kind of backing off or from direct, uh, contact with residents. So it's like, well, how many [00:30:00] emails or flyers can you send out?

[00:30:01] And you know how many Zoom meetings? We all learned to do Zoom during the the pandemic, but how many Zoom meetings can you have and expect that those residents are gonna go to them, much less be think that you're interested in them.

[00:30:13] **Adrian:** Mm.

[00:30:14] **Carl Poole:** The door-to-door contact, um, for the one meeting, they had a lot of Lambert's Point residents.

[00:30:20] That was the reason they had them. If you don't do that, then it's like, yeah, they're gonna. Residents aren't coming. Um, their next meeting, I'm not even sure how they're gonna do it, but I mean, the outreach door to door this summer is not like it was last summer. And that was only because one, we encouraged it, we pushed it, we went with them.

[00:30:42] Um, you don't have that happening now. So, you know, I, if, if it's, um, residents are still kind of looking at this. I'm like, well, you know, you can, you can have a study if you want to. What does that mean? That, that's the other thing too. All this is about a study, which is to get more information, and you could explain that to residents, but the next natural question they're gonna ask, okay, is once you have this done, what happens next?

[00:31:09] Um, not to mention the fact that. Uh, let's see in to bounce back a little bit to April of 2021, we were originally told that, oh yeah, we're gonna get the permissions we need and try to, you know, cite the spots. We're gonna look

for the study and we're gonna have sensors going up at the end of the year, the end of 2021 when you get to the end of 2021.

[00:31:30] Oh yeah, we're not quite done. The process, there's some things we need still get done. Probably by spring of 2022, you know, we'll be ready to do, you know, construction for those sighted on ground, you know, air sampling monitors. You get to the end of 2021, but going into 2022, oh, it's probably gonna be that summer and that fall every time you go to the process, the date goes back.

[00:31:51] I think right now it's still, I think the last word they had on it was we finally have all the permissions we need. We've got one more thing to revise, to send to EPA, got all the permissions we need from the city. Um, we're gonna start, you know, the contracting process to get the people to build those out, those sites, to put those on ground sensors.

[00:32:11] And that's gonna start in the fall. Mm-hmm. They don't, I mean, I used to ask 'em for hard dates every time they came up. Now it's like, "Yeah, I really don't believe them." It's like, what? What's the point? If every single time I ask, "Well, when's this, this actually gonna start?" It's, "Well, you know, sometime in the future."

[00:32:29] Then when that time gets there, it's some other time in the future. But like I said, Lambert's Point residents aren't there. They're at, once you have the study going, once your 18 months is up or however long the study is, what happens next? Yeah. You know, 'cause in the back of their head, they're still thinking it doesn't really matter. If you do a study, nothing's going to change. That's the, that's the bottom line that, that's behind that question. They still don't believe that, that even if you have data and whatever you thought that, that since that smoking gun, that, you know, there's a problem here. They still don't really have a lot of faith in anything happening.

[00:33:01] And the way DEQ responded-- has responded in these last few years, has gone through the process of trying to get these sensors up of, um, trying to do their outreach kind of haphazardly, not directly. Pushing back the day-- they keep talking about when they're gonna put the sensors up. It's like, yeah. And you know, I, I look at them collectively like, yeah, I don't have a lot of faith in you guys either. I don't, you know, it's like mm-hmm. When this, let's say you have data that actually shows up inconclusive, I'm asking myself what's next? Because if it's this much to, to get the data in the first place, to get to the point where you can start collecting it. So whether, you know, it's, it doesn't bode well for their intentions in my mind, so.

[00:33:43] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. Um. What do you think about the DEQs relationship with Norfolk Southern as an industry, like a regulator / regulated?

[00:33:59] **Carl Poole:** As far as I can tell. Polite. I mean it's, think of it this way. Let's say it's like a SVU murder investigation and you have the body on the ground, the murderer standing in the crowd with everybody else. You could probably tell that's probably a suspect I should be talking to. DEQ is that polite investigator talking to the suspect. Not really bringing them in, but just kind of, "Hi, how you doing? You know, what happened," type of thing. That's their relationship with, with Norfolk Southern. This is a potential polluter that they're aware of, but it's just very polite relationship.

[00:34:34] " We're not pointing fingers at you, but we're gonna do this study anyways," you know, "Just in case, you know, we're not saying anything, so it's fine." Okay. Meanwhile, Norfolk Southern's like, "Yeah, do what you want," because I think they're thinking, yeah, I, I think they take their, bottom line the same way I do. They don't really think they're gonna do anything. So it's business as usual, just continue going on what they're doing.

[00:34:58] **Adrian:** Can you tell me more about, [00:35:00] um, the more of what you know about the history? Around this issue in Lambert's Point and like all of the, all of those layers that have led to the current dynamic of kind of like distrust and sort of like some hopelessness.

[00:35:20] **Carl Poole:** Well, I guess if it's a matter, it's, it's not just about coal dust in that area.

[00:35:26] It's about, um, economic development in Lambert's point. It's about, um, the university slowly eating that neighborhood. In Lambert's Point, it's about the neglect that that neighborhood feels happens in general and has been happening for decades except when gentrification comes up and you have, uh, newer residents, uh, less Black residents, more affluent residents moving in.

[00:35:51] And then, you know, now it's matters because you have people with money or influence or they're not black moving into the neighborhood. And that's, I guess a collective sense of disregard that they feel. So when you're talking about coal dust that's in there too, it's like, well, that's just one more thing that they can do nothing about. Norfolk Southern's been there forever. What, you know, what are they gonna, who's gonna stop them? We can't.

[00:36:16] When it comes to, uh, this environmental justice issues pushing in there, like I said, Sierra Club and through Joe Cook, and that was, I guess, 10 or

15 years ago. When you had him, I think his wife, who was Anna Jang, that, um, works at the Old Dominion, is a professor there at Old Dominion. They were doing, um, partly doing studies, kind of like, uh, I think they had a study that was involved bike riding through the neighborhood with the air sensor to kind of get a read on the neighborhood, making residents more aware, eventually kind of twisting Norfolk Southern's arm enough to make them do their own kind of air studies on their property.

[00:36:50] Of course. And of course everything's fine. Everything's within limits. Everything's okay. And we tested it to kind of force them to test at least that much on their property. Later on you had New Virginia Majority become more involved talking to, uh, Black and Brown residents in the neighborhood. Initially, not a lot of connection between the Sierra Joe Cook's efforts an' theirs, but later on, probably within less. Seven and a half years, i'm guessing, this is probably before me too. You had, organizers, working with residents, trying to build more awareness, trying to be more directly ag, you know, more direct agitation at Norfolk Southern.

[00:37:26] Protesting in front of their headquarters. Christmas carols in front of Norfolk Southern headquarters talking about "Stop your coal dust." As their president, vice president, their CFO comes out. Yeah. But, um, to make at least enough noise that people will notice outside of the neighborhood and go, well, Norfolk Southern's been in this back up behind, uh, Lambert Point for years, and this has been happening four years.

[00:37:50] Their coal dumper is grandfathered in before the Clean Air Act. So there's nothing on that thing that is compliant with Clean Air Act. Doesn't need to be 'cause it's older than that, so long as they don't make any real changes to it, they don't have to. Um, you see plumes of coal dust going on up in the, uh, those neighborhood people taking videos of that just, and that could be just stuff between dumping into the dumper or cleaning the tracks.

[00:38:15] And that's normal and the city treats that like it's normal neighbors. Uh, people living in Lambers Point see that. And that kind of adds to the sort of, um, uh, hopelessness, I guess. And not even a really sense of hope, like it's a depressing thing. It's just like this is what they do. We can't stop them doing what they're doing.

[00:38:34] Even the city doesn't look to stop them doing what they're doing. So it, it's, it's treated more as, matter of fact, you can make as much noise about it as you want to. They're not going to stop doing what they're doing. We don't

have the power to make them stop doing what they're doing. Look at everything that's happened in our neighborhood.

[00:38:51] We don't have the power to stop that either. So, I mean, that, that's, when you talk to longtime residents, that's their view. You could knock on their doors and say, well, we're glad that you're doing what you're doing. We're glad that you're out here trying to get people involved, but what good is that going to do?

[00:39:08] Ultimately, what's that going to change? And like I said, there's a lot of different things that go into that. And like I said, it's not just coal dust, it's a lot of different things to that neighborhood. Um, in the eighties and the nineties, it was crime. What was Norfolk doing to stop crime in that neighborhood.

[00:39:26] Longtime residents didn't see any stop to that. The only thing that diminished that was longtime residents leaving or longtime residents passing away and their houses getting sold and resold or rebuilt or refurbished and gentrification coming in. But you see more focus now than there was back then.

[00:39:44] And I kind of say that's the air assessment now, that that neighborhood is more prominent, whiter, um, has college students in it. I.e., the people that maybe Norfolk or Norfolk Southern or other entities around it are going to care about making sure they're more protected. Now. You see [00:40:00] more noise being made, like, um, there was no Joe Cook in the eighties talking about coal dust.

[00:40:06] You know, there was no, you know, there wasn't, um, there was no New Virginia Majority talking about, um, what air, what you're breathing and air around there.

[00:40:14] **Adrian:** Back then, were you ever, did you ever meet. Miss Mary Mobley.

[00:40:21] **Carl Poole:** Mary Mobley. I know the name. I may have met her. I'm not certain.

[00:40:24] **Adrian:** I just looked at, I was curious about when my first complaints were and I looked at some old city council records.

[00:40:31] Mm-hmm. And her name was one of the earliest ones that I saw complaining to. Um, Civic Leagues about the coal dust.

[00:40:40] **Carl Poole:** That's where I heard that name from. Civic League folks.

[00:40:42] **Adrian:** Yeah. I'm not sure that she's still with us. Um, but. I'm just asking in case you were like, oh yeah. Did you remember?

[00:40:52] **Carl Poole:** I've heard the name.

[00:40:52] I don't know if she's still with us, but, um, former Civic League vice president or president, one of the two.

[00:41:00] **Adrian:** Sounds true,

[00:41:01] **Carl Poole:** but I've heard the name.

[00:41:02] **Adrian:** Cool. What do you, what do you wish were different?

[00:41:08] **Carl Poole:** Hmm.

[00:41:14] Well. The argument that because that neighborhood's changed enough to bring people in, that you're gonna have more awareness of. And that's not to say that you don't have [awareness of] Black folks in the neighborhood, it's just that ODU students, uh, younger residents, non-Black residents, more affluent residents, if they're involved, you've got more noise.

[00:41:35] But since you have that happening in that neighborhood, when it comes to this particular struggle, you don't have a lot of involvement from Old Dominion. From their students. There are a lot of residents that live in that neighborhood a lot. Um, and if you look at what's going from 42nd or yeah, 42nd and 41st, it at those streets going back from the library, by and large, it's almost all residential housing.

[00:42:03] I mean, there are still folks who own their houses of rent that aren't students of Old Dominion, but there's a ton of, uh, Old Dominion students that rent back there. Um, the rental company, I think brought up a lot of that area for that purpose. Those students are largely uninvolved and even on the campus are largely uninvolved even though there are dormitories that are on ODU's campus on the other side of, um, Powhatan-- as far west as you can go in Norfolk, that are just about as close to Norfolk Southern, the coal dump as Lambert's Point's neighborhood. But you don't have a lot of awareness from students about what is right next to them.

[00:42:39] If you had students that were aware and that were focused on this effort, that, you know, what are we breathing? I think that would change a dynamic. I mean, granted, you would still have that same reaction from Lambert's Point residents. "Now you care because Old Dominion students are involved." But if the collective effect is, these are people's children going to school here for four years and you've got a, a industrial facility right beside them that could be hurting them. If that was a call that came out, that might change a few things.

[00:43:08] So that's definitely something that's rolled through my head a lot. Like, why aren't these students knowing about this? When we talk to students, we've been out there and talked to students living in the neighborhood. The common reaction is, "Oh, we didn't know any of that was back there."

[00:43:22] They don't know. And that feels purposeful. Old Dominion doesn't wanna talk to their students about Yeah. That facility back there. And that's a strange dynamic between possibly their relationship and, and Norfolk Southern. But students don't know, or students may be preoccupied when it comes to issues that could go looking at with greater environmental issues.

[00:43:42] Um, global warming, if you're talking about flooding and Norfolk coastal flooding in general. And not thinking about the potential environmental danger that's right around where they live, the one that's close to home. Let's do a neighborhood cleanup somewhere and not think right behind us, right behind our athletic fields because yeah, Norfolk Southern is directly, you know, adjacent to the athletics fields. Used to be neighborhood too.

[00:44:07] Right behind their athletic fields. Yeah, you're the closest one breathing that air if anything goes on. And that's definitely going to affect you. They don't know. They might hear the trains, they might see them, but they don't really get, and there's not a lot of awareness amongst the students and not a lot of focus on it either.

[00:44:27] We've, we've been looking for student groups or group, you know, in and around the campus to say, "Look. Look right, what's right next to you. If you're looking for an environmental fight, you don't have to, you don't have to barely step outta your dorm room and see it." But that might change the dynamic of how this works.

[00:44:42] So.

[00:44:43] **Adrian:** Mm. What else do you wish were happening?

[00:44:49] **Carl Poole:** Mm. I think residents truly do have a lot more power than, than, than they believe. When you have [00:45:00] believed for so long that they can't do anything, and that's the standard solid one. It's hard to break it. But I think if you get a point where you can break that amongst some residents and make sure you have a solid core of 'em and say, "Okay, we're, that's it. We're gonna do something." A lot of other residents, especially long time residents, will see that and wanna fall and wanna follow along on that. They'll wanna go either to pay attention to what these other residents are doing, that there's buy-in or join them.

[00:45:25] Also, if you're gonna think of changing a more concrete effort from DEQ, stop giving us timelines that are obviously gonna get pushed back, stop making excuses. Stop pretending that "Oh yes, we're, we're doing something focused," and, and do something focused. When it comes to, when it comes to outreach, you have some of those efforts happening, but a lot of it you don't.

[00:45:47] A more focused effort on their part is definitely something. It would change the kind of polite, "Excuse me, sir, Mr. Uh, Norfolk Southern. We're just checking something out, doesn't involve you." We change it into, "yes, we're making a study, we're gonna figure out what's going on this air. You might tell us something's wrong, but we're gonna find that for ourselves." It would definitely, I guess, said that kind of polite deference to Norfolk Southern.

[00:46:11] The attitude feels strange to me 'cause it's like this is your job to make sure you know folks are doing what's right as a business. So why does it feel like you're just kind of politely tiptoeing around them? I wish that would change too.

[00:46:26] **Adrian:** If you could talk to the head of Norfolk Southern, Mr. Norfolk Southern, what would you say?

[00:46:35] **Carl Poole:** You make billions of dollars a year. You make more now since the pandemic. Pay to update your dumper. Pay to do the things that you don't want to do. It's not gonna be that much outta your profit long term. You have a good neighbor in Norfolk. God knows you have a good neighbor in Norfolk. If you did that, you'd only make your neighbor happier. Or leave go somewhere else.

[00:47:01] I mean, spend the money that to fix where you're at or spend more money and go somewhere else to do it.

[00:47:08] **Adrian:** I think there's, you know, there's this idea that the coal terminals in Norfolk and Newport News are providing so many jobs that if they were to leave it would be economically devastating to the communities that they also are harming.

[00:47:24] Um, I mean, what do you think of that?

[00:47:29] **Carl Poole:** I don't think people are gonna lose their jobs like that if, if they stopped, if those places stopped operating. Sure. But this is Virginia, this is part of coal country. This is coming a long history of coal for, for this state. Period. Those jobs aren't going anywhere.

[00:47:46] Mm-hmm. They might move location, maybe a tax base will be lost in a city of say, if, if Norfolk Southern shutdown. But those jobs really aren't going anywhere. So it's not like, well, people are gonna lose their job. No. Their job's gonna move someplace else. And more than likely, the more experienced folks are gonna move with their job.

[00:48:05] I mean, not everybody who works for Norfolk Southern lives in Norfolk. They live all over the area, so people are already moving because of their job. So I mean, it's, and it's not like Norfolk Southern doesn't have other property that the rail yard is only one part of the property that they own. That's a significant chunk of land in Norfolk.

[00:48:24] Um, it's not just the rail yard with their little coal. They have a whole other section of rail yard and dock areas that lead up and down all the way to from where Old Dominion sits all the way, uh, down to the waterfront, past Orapax, past West Ghent. So it's not like there're only like financial endeavors in that one little spot and that they lose it.

[00:48:45] It's gone. That-- it's not like there aren't multiple places that, you know, when it comes to benefit for jobs for the city that's, that they're not involved in. Even when the headquarters left, those were the folks in charge that left. I mean. And Norfolk probably lost by losing the headquarters. It's, you know, but 90% of Norfolk Southern like workforce and jobs didn't go anywhere because of that happening.

[00:49:12] So, I mean, it's, and also it's a matter of is it a healthy, what's worth your health? You know, it's, well, we have all these jobs. Well that's good. Find other jobs. Um. Is it worth the health of our children? Is your job worth your health? I mean, right now there are other businesses that are other, other entities

that are dealing with coal, where folks have already asked that question, asked and answered because they've seen the result.

[00:49:42] Is my job worth my health? The answer was no 20, 30 years ago. And now they have things affecting their health, and the answer is still no. So I mean, ultimately my, my thought is so what?

[00:49:54] **Adrian:** Mm. Do you know anybody who works there?

[00:49:57] **Carl Poole:** Okay. Um, a [00:50:00] few I know, um, or a few, or a few, a few more retired than work there now. 'Cause I think one friend of mine, he retired, um, I guess three years ago.

[00:50:09] Some of them still actually live in that neighborhood.

[00:50:12] **Adrian:** Do you think they'd be interested in speaking with me?

[00:50:15] **Carl Poole:** Most of them, no. Just straight up. They wouldn't, they were like, "Wait, what do you want me to do? What? No." Especially the ones I know that still work for Norfolk Southern, they're like, yeah no.

[00:50:25] **Adrian:** Fair. Could we like, just go back real quick. What you were saying about like the value of health, like what is your health worth? I was wondering if you could just say more about like how health seems like it fits or doesn't fit into this, um, equation that is like valuing coal and coal export.

[00:50:46] **Carl Poole:** Well, I don't think it's necessarily about, directly about coal and coal export. It's about money for Norfolk Southern. It's about that's their profit, that's their business for anybody every day. It's about their, their livelihood, their paycheck is at my car, is at my house. Do my kids have food? You know, like food on my table for my kids.

[00:51:05] Um, when you're thinking in those terms, it's like not a matter of, you know, just this industry, it's a matter of this is my livelihood, this is how I make money, what affects my health more than how I make money. Versus this is your health. What's the point of working in this place? If in the end, it's going to ultimately diminish your quality of life, which is the whole point of trying to make sure you can make enough through in the first place.

[00:51:34] I, I don't think people think in terms of medical, because that's more like the end all factor. If you work at a place for 20 years, it's 20 years of, uh, livelihood you have for everything, for your lifestyle or for your quality of life.

Then 20 years of that, that affects your health cumulatively. Now, what's that going to cost you?

[00:51:56] Do your kids now have to deal with medical problems? Do you have to deal with medical problems? Is that gonna cost anyone else more money because they have to help you pay for that in order to maintain a certain quality of life? The big picture nobody wants to think about because everyone's into the day to day, so.

[00:52:13] I think that equation of trying to balance between is this, is this worth? Is this worth? Is it my health or my job, or is it my health or my livelihood is more of a day to day thing, and that's really, which is sad, a, survival thing. What can I do day to day, paycheck to paycheck, month to month versus a lifetime, and how it affects their health.

[00:52:36] No one's. No one's thinking the big picture. Or no. Or no one wants to think about the big picture. And I don't think anyone in Norfolk Southern really wants anyone thinking about the big picture. They want to affect the immediate, which is I think why when you see them as a presence anywhere around Lambert's Point for any reason, it's only what affects the day-to-day. "Hey, we're gonna donate money to build a new park for Lambert's Point, because it's pretty here." Versus "We're gonna cover our coal cars so you're not breathing in the stuff that's coming off of our cars and therefore not affected over years and years and years of your health."

[00:53:11] It's more of that immediate thing. But um, like I said, that balance of between, it's just about my health is about my livelihood really does have to do with just, you know, livelihood, survival. And that's another thing. I think it affects people in Lambert's Point because. They're thinking to themselves., "Yeah, we know, but how does this affect my day to day? I have to get to work, my kids have to have food on the table. I'm not around here like this. Um, you know, I go back and forth. I've never seen this affect my health or my kids' health. I don't understand why there's a problem." They're only thinking in terms of "This is what I'm seeing right now."

[00:53:54] Now, let's say you lived in Lambert's Point your whole life and you've had breathing problems as you get older or your kids grew up in Lambert's Point and have, a, inhaler.

[00:54:04] **Adrian:** Nebulizer. Yeah,

[00:54:05] **Carl Poole:** nebulizer. You're not thinking, "Me living in this area around that facility has affected that." You're still thinking in the day to day. "Well, if they use a nebulizer, that's just them." And I think a lot of people just don't wanna look up to do it because then they have to think about all of it. And the fact that that overwhelming sense of, "Well, we can't do anything about this," is there, so it's, "Well, let me handle the thing I can handle. I can do my day to day, I can, I can fix this. I can't fix that bigger problem."

[00:54:35] **Adrian:** Mm-hmm. What gives you hope?

[00:54:42] **Carl Poole:** Well, more people becoming aware, more people thinking along the lines of, "all right, maybe we can deal with this bigger problem." Um. More people willing, despite whether they think it's going to help or not, still realizing that the fight is worth it. Even if you lose, what do you have to lose? 'Cause right now nothing's changing. So [00:55:00] if I fight to change something, um, people that have that kind of sense about it, I mean, I think more often than not you have people when you talk to them in Lambert's Point, that are thinking more about what they can't change.

[00:55:13] And then you meet somebody that's like, think, you start thinking what they can change. And that's good. That keeps you, that keeps you going so that there's hope. There's, you know, there's that, that sense of, alright, this one person that's waiting to get activated and has finally decided "I'm gonna do something."

[00:55:29] I think when I started, that's how I started. I, I worked at the water treatment plant that's between Norfolk Southern's facility and the neighborhood. I was the armed security guard. I walked through that neighborhood every single day and you might look through there and see, you know, how dirty everybody's house was.

[00:55:47] It wasn't until I realized there was a group that was doing something, I was like, "You know what? I see this every single day. I see it where I work at. I watch these trains go back and forth. I can see, you know, black clouds going up. I can do something even if it's not gonna work, even if nobody else thinks it's going to do anything."

[00:56:04] I think the more people you see that, I mean, I said you might have 10 people go, "Okay, this is... nothing's gonna happen." And then you might meet one person, just the one person that's living out there, that's thinking, "I'm gonna do something." That's hopeful.

[00:56:20] **Adrian:** Is there anything that I didn't ask you that we didn't talk about? Hmm.

[00:56:28] **Carl Poole:** No, I think you're covering it. Thank you. That's enough.

[00:56:33] **Adrian:** Yeah. Um, we talked about a lot today. This was a very meaningful conversation for me. Sure. I learned a lot from you and, um. I just really appreciate your time and your insight. Thank you so much for taking an hour to sit down with me.