

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
August 16, 2011

PRESENT:                    Alan Greenberger, Chairman  
                                  Joseph Syrnick, Vice Chairman  
                                  Brian Abernathy, representing Richard Negrin  
                                  Patrick J. Eiding  
                                  Bernard Lee, Esq.  
                                  Nilda Ruiz  
                                  Saskia Thompson, representing Rob Dubow

ABSENT:                    Elizabeth K. Miller  
                                  Nancy Rogo Trainer

Executive Director:        Gary J. Jastrzab  
Deputy Executive Director: Eva Gladstein

Chairman Alan Greenberger convened the City Planning Commission Meeting of August 16, 2011 at 1:12pm.

- 1) Approval of the Minutes for the July 19, 2011 meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Eiding, the City Planning Commission approved the minutes for the July 19, 2011 meeting.

- 2) Executive Director's Update

Mr. Jastrzab stated he had a relatively brief report.

**CPI:** CPI is continuing their third series of new classes this fall, and is taking applications. He introduced CPI's Donna Carey for further updates.

Donna Carney, Director of CPI, stated thanks to the William Penn Foundation, we are able to continue the series of new classes. Go to [citizensplanninginstitute.org](http://citizensplanninginstitute.org) for more information and application. We will have 2 new electives. The submission of applications begins on Thursday, August 18 and continues until September 15. The courses are 7 weeks from October 5 to November 16. CPI graduates will be able to take the electives. The classes will be held in this room, and it includes dinner.

**PHILADELPHIA2035:** At your places is a 3-page memo from Sage Communications, that contains a list of news stories and opinion pieces that have appeared in the media about Philadelphia2035, ZCC, and CPI.

#### **ITEMS IN ACCORD WITH PREVIOUS POLICY: Redevelopment Item**

- **Modification to the Brewerytown Urban Renewal Plan**, that would change the proposed land use for a site bounded by 31st Street, Girard Avenue and Thompson Street, from a mix of Commercial and Residential to "Commercial and Related" for the entire site. This will allow SRD Brewerytown LLC to build an 18,000 square foot Bottom Dollar supermarket on the site. This will be Bottom Dollar's third store in Philadelphia.

- 3) *Philadelphia2035* Lower South and West Park District Plans Update.

Jennifer Barr, Project Manager for Lower South, stated Andrew Meloney is the Project Manager for West Park. He is under the weather so she covered for both of them. We had meetings in the communities where they discussed City-owned property in both districts, opportunity areas, and got a little more specific recommendations from the groups. Major part is to help implement and bring those goals to fruition. The timeline is 6 month plan, and they are a little past the half-way point. They are looking at the draft recommendation. The ext public meetings are at Lincoln Financial Field and St. Joseph's University. The first one is on Monday, September 12, 2011 at 6:30pm at the Press Box at Lincoln Financial Field. West Park is on September 19 at St. Joseph's University, and is access by bus. The first Lower South community meeting had great attendance with over 70 attendees. Interesting point was Broad Street was a barrier and the Navy Yard. What would still be there in 10 years: Freight lines,

stadiums, SUNCO, Sports Complex with Philly Live. We also presented the community with land use. A lot of Lower South is water. There is a correlation between land use and zoning, and demographics analysis. West Park had over 100 attendees at their community meeting. We had the same exercises. What would still be there in 10 years: Please Touch Museum, Mann Music Center, railroad tracks, Fairmount Park. The areas of stability are the park itself and residential. It might change St. Joes and Centennial District, change mostly in the Cathedral and West Park areas. Land use analysis for open space, residential, some vacancies, concentrated in the southern part. The decline in population caused a decline in housing. There is lots of public transit through West Park, but is the lowest usage in Regional Rail.

Mr. Greenberger thanked Ms. Barr.

- 4) Amendments to the FY2012-2017 Capital Program and FY2012 Capital Budget.

Alan Urek, Division Director of Strategic Planning and Policy, stated you approved the FY2012 in June. You also have the responsibility to approve any amendments. The Youth Study Center project at 48<sup>th</sup> Street and Haverford Avenue had a completion date of 2012. We have worked with Public Property and the Capital Program Office. None of this is new money. It is from public safety money. The \$16 million increase to 3,033 billion and 9,010 billion respectively. After approval Bill Nos. 110135 and 110136 will be present to City Council in September. The Planning Commission staff recommendation is approval.

Upon motion by Mr. Abernathy seconded by Mr. Eiding, the City Planning Commission approved the Amendments to the FY2012-2017 Capital Program and FY2012 Capital Budget.

- 5) Blight Recertification for a portion of the North Philadelphia Redevelopment Area, bounded by (a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Germantown Avenue, and Oxford Street, and; (b) Master, Orianna, and Jefferson Streets, and Germantown Avenue.

David Fecteau, Community Planner, stated part of our responsibility is that we bring redevelopment items to you in an advisory capacity. This time we do not. We are taking action. When it is out-of-date, we do a recertification and take private land for public good. We have our justification. He met with the Board and the community members. The boundaries is just south of Girard at Germantown and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The Redevelopment Authority originally asked us for a smaller plan. This site is in the following neighborhoods: Northern Liberties, South Kensington, and Old Kensington. This is a blight recertification. There are 3 projects in the area that need Redevelopment Authority action; primary residential and 1 mixed-use project. The ground is vacant land and property. This is also in the American Street Industrial Zone. Blight Recertification – we are not going out randomly. Since 2000 we have recertified a very small care of this part of the City. There are 104 vacant properties, and 102 vacant buildings with delinquent taxes. We have received from 311 a large number of requests to clean up the lots. The Planning Commission staff recommendation is approval.

Ms. Ruiz asked if the projects are housing.

Mr. Fecteau replied yes. They are still trying to come up with financing. They are floating around.

Ms. Ruiz asked would they do residential on American Street. It is industrial there.

Mr. Fecteau replied they would work around there. The Commerce Department, the City Planning Commission and PIDA would have to work with truck traffic.

Mr. Greenberger replied the character of American Street is changing right. At the very bottom of triangle, there is someone who distributes frozen turkeys.

Mr. Fecteau replied it is not really considered industry.

Mr. Greenberger replied there is also a glass cutter and installer. And there are managing transit uses.

Ms. Ruiz replied there are a lot of physical differences.

Mr. Greenberger replied the beliefs about business, and can they be preserved, and can they mix.

Mr. Jastrzab replied at noon today, we received from the Kensington South Neighborhood Advisory Council a letter of lack of support for this item because: 1) there were 2 sites that were not blight; 2) there are several neighborhood gardens in this area; 3) blight recertification might be premature. There is not strong opposition against this.

John Wishman, property owner 1400 block of Germantown, stated he has been making a big effort to develop this block.

Mr. Greenberger replied he appreciates that he brought it up. There is a lot of development in this area, and that is why we use this tool. When we use it, it is used for a specific target. He got involved with C.B. Moore Health Clinic.

Ms. Ruiz replied it is a strong public process.

Upon motion by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Mr. Eiding, the City Planning Commission approved Blight Recertification for a portion of the North Philadelphia Redevelopment Area, bounded by (a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Germantown Avenue, and Oxford Street, and; (b) Master, Orianna, and Jefferson Streets, and Germantown Avenue.

#### 6) *Informational Only: Central Delaware Riverfront Plan*

Mr. Greenberger stated you will be seeing this again. The Master Plan we have been working on for the past 15 months. We wanted to give you an information presentation on the plan. This is an introduction on the broad plan and will be coming back to us in the fall.

Tom Corcoran, Executive Director of the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation, thanked Mr. Greenberger and everyone. He stated they will come back sometime from mid to late October. He gave background information of DRWC. Penn Praxis worked on a very intensive civic engagement. In 2008 Mayor Nutter created a new Delaware River Waterfront

Corporation (DRWC). The Master Plan was done by a million dollar grant from William Penn Foundation. In 2009, 26 teams responded to the RFP. We selected Cooper Robinson to head it up. They did Battery Park. We unveiled the plan in June. The document went on line on July 25, and we have open public comment until August 25, and then on to the printer, and then on to you. This plan includes 25 acres of land, some of it is residential that is privately owned. It is a 25 year period. This plan was developed in conjunction with 6 plans. Having Mr. Greenberger and Mr. Jastrzab on our board, we were able to work towards a vision. There are 2 goals overriding our goals: historic, and private land. The primary recommendation is low to mid residential use: 1) keeping it with the scale of the surrounding area; 2) market will endure; 3) cover entire 6 mile area with development. One of hardest parts is dealing with I-95 and Columbus Boulevard. Mass transit will play an important part. There is construction at Penn's Land and Festival Pier sites. We will implement single projects over time. We want to have a world class waterfront. The key elements – ½ mile along the river (10 min. walk), create parks, and recreational trail along 6 miles. The important part is unifying the trail and the Greenway trail. The walk under I-95 is not comfortable or safe for walking or bicycling there. There are 3 priority sites (things that could take years): Penn Treaty District, distant land use – paper shipped in and self-storage; make additional changes in Tioga; U.S. Coast Guard station maybe relocate to the Navy Yard; 12 parcel acre: sheet metal, training facility and catering facility; change to residential mixed-use; lease to Comcast; former Fox Wood site is a 16-acre site bounded by Reed and Tasker; and then big box stores; wetlands have been identified by the Water Department. Big box store has a life of 15 to 20 years. Wetlands at Pier 53 would be 25 acres of wetlands. It would be broken down overtime and done in increments.

Mr. Eiding replied it is beautiful but he is concerned with all of the residential and the parks, but you have to be concerned with not jobs in Philadelphia. He doesn't know if we can sustain all of that with no jobs here today.

Mr. Corcoran explained how jobs will be generated from this with construction and retail.

Mr. Greenberger replied this doesn't happen unless the people are working. The central portion of the Central Waterfront that has certainly changed, it is not coming back. Don't see this as isolation, but see how we can create jobs in other areas of the City. We might be successful in luring business here to create new jobs, but how will people get to these new jobs.

Mr. Eiding replied problems we have in Philadelphia, people took trolleys to work. People are talking about going green – are manufactured in China.

Mr. Greenberger replied we have to find out where our natural advantages are. What we had in the past has changed. Airport, road, rail, and port are an advantage to us. Not mass manufacturing. This will come back to us for a request to adopt it. Public has to lead in it to be developed.

Neil Sklaroff, attorney, replied what has been termed here on behalf of Anderson properties in this study – 60 acres; are first or second largest private holdings. Several are slated as public parks. His client believes he has not had enough dialogue on it. On June 2 we met with Alan Greenberger and Tom Corcoran. He looks forward to having a dialogue here. He cannot reconcile he doesn't want to see property imprisoned by this plan. He stated there is a real opportunity to have real imprint here; opportunities to meet with private owners.

Mr. Eiding asked does Mr. Anderson and his advisors have some plans to develop this site.

Mr. Sklaroff replied yes, we have some but it will take years to go forward.

Mr. Greenberger replied given it's geography in this context, I wouldn't want to say it has to be this.

Gabriel Gottlieb replied he recently did a blog article on this plan, encouraging people to leave comments on it. He thinks it is bad to bury I-95. He disagrees with replacing the great plaza with a big lawn that would be less useful for public space. He said encouraging low rise residential is wrong and should also have high rise use. You don't need major rail along the waterfront. The value might get to the point where developer wouldn't want to touch it.

Mr. Greenberger replied the genesis of this low and mid rise use, the amount of development that is called for in this plan is not very difficult for high rise. 1) A sense of connection; 2) if we have to make a choice in using more land with less height or less land with more height, we would rather use more land. When the market goes, and too many high rises are empty, it jams everything.

Mr. Eiding replies he is looking at it in a different way. We get into an area, who lives there? Who can afford it? He like the theme; look more like a residential, but who live there.

Ms. Ruiz replied she likes the connection that it is public space; it is not gated. People can come and go.

Mr. Greenberger replied we have a better shot of people living on the riverfront. He thanked Mr. Corcoran.

Mr. Greenberger adjourned the City Planning Commission Meeting of August 16, 2011 at 3:15pm.

## SUMMARY

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- 1) Approval of the Minutes of the July 19, 2011 meeting. Approved
- 2) Executive Director's Update.
- 3) *Philadelphia2035* Lower South and West Park District Plans Update  
(Presented by Jennifer Barr) Presented
- 4) Amendments to the FY2012-2017 Capital Program and FY2012 Capital  
Budget (Presented by Alan Urek). Approved
- 5) Blight Recertification for a portion of the North Philadelphia  
Redevelopment Area, bounded by (a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Germantown Avenue,  
and Oxford Street, and; (b) Master, Orianna, and Jefferson Streets, and  
Germantown Avenue (Presented by David Fecteau). Approved
- 6) *Information Only: Central Delaware Riverfront Plan (Presented by Tom  
Corcoran, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation).* Presented