

Port Richmond Trail open for recreation: Bikers, walkers, runners welcomed!

By Patty-Pat Kozlowski

On Tuesday, October 29, Mayor Michael Nutter and Deputy Mayor Mike DiBerardinis joined other city and state officials, along with representatives from the Delaware River City Corporation (DRCC) and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), to officially open the Port Richmond Trail restoration project, a 1.6-mile section of trail along the Delaware River in Northeast Philadelphia extending from Richmond Street & Allegheny Avenue east along Allegheny to Delaware at Pulaski Park and then north on Delaware to Lewis Street. The trail serves as a new recreation outlet for cyclists, runners and pedestrians and connects the local community to the river.

“The completion of the Port Richmond Trail is an important step in realizing a larger vision for the Delaware River Waterfront and our goal of establishing Philadelphia as America’s greenest city,” said Mayor Nutter. “Connecting neighborhoods to each other and connecting residents to open, green spaces through a trail network like The Circuit serves to make this city a healthier, more cohesive place to live, work and play.” During the ceremony, Nutter accepted a \$200,000 grant from the EPA to conduct a planning study to guide the clean-up and reactivation of area brownfield land. The grant will be used to plan for adaptive reuse of three brownfield sites located in the Bridesburg, Frankford, Port Richmond and Juniata Park sections adjacent to the Delaware River and Frankford Creek.

“It is our hope that the new Port Richmond Trail is just the beginning of restoration efforts along the North Delaware that will provide new opportunities for Philadelphians to reconnect with the river and take advantage of this expansive and virtually untapped natural resource right here in the city,” said former Congressman Robert Borski, Chair of the Delaware River City Corporation Board of Directors.

As the ribbon was cut on the new trail, the first walkers on the new path were students from Our Lady of Port Richmond Regional Catholic School, located just three blocks west of the river. Carrying their school banner, 150 students lined up to give Mayor Nutter high fives as they passed him, cheering them on.

It was a poignant scene to see people at Pulaski Park and using the Port Richmond riverfront once again.

“This is a day that gives the river back to the people of Port Richmond. Our grandparents and great grandparents used this river as their Jersey shore but for far too long our generation of riverward neighborhoods have been cut off from our Delaware waterfront,” said Ken Paul, President of Port Richmond On Patrol & Civic Association (PROPAC). “The Port Richmond Trail is hopefully the beginning of a great path that will give us a day on the river once again.”