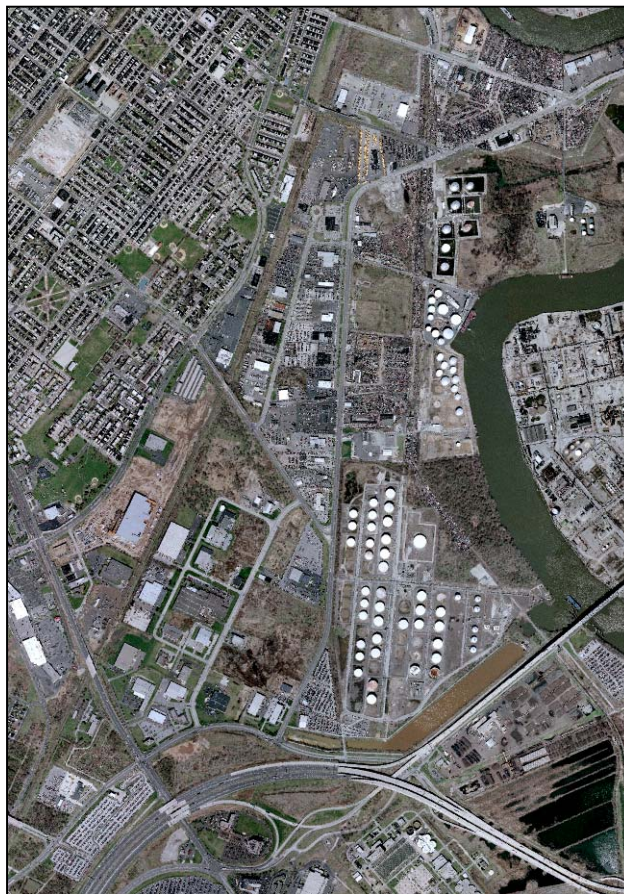


Amendment to the
Eastwick
Redevelopment Area Plan



Philadelphia City Planning Commission
March 2006

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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Philadelphia City Planning Commission

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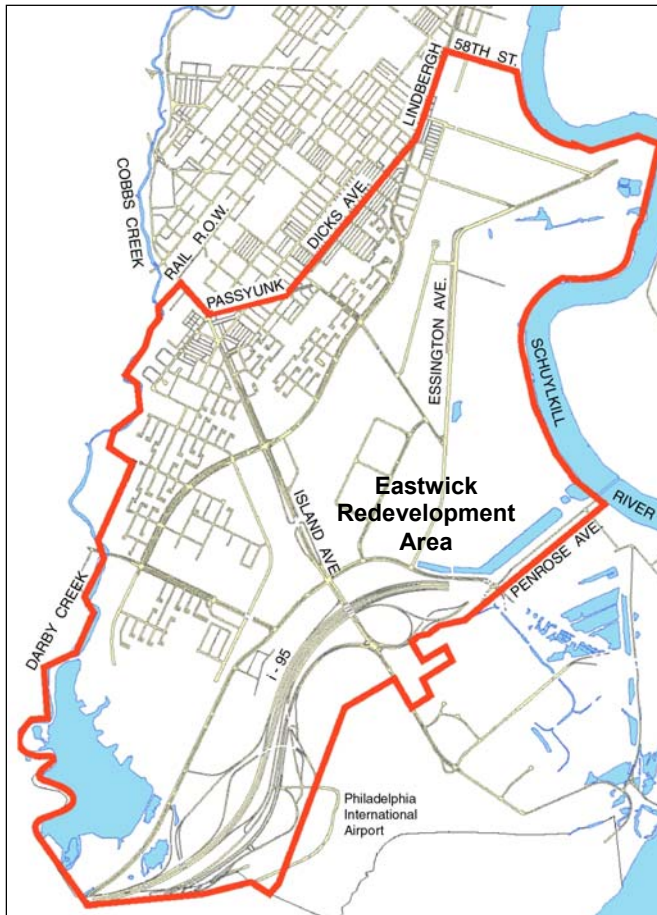
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Introduction

The Eastwick Redevelopment Area occupies 3200-acres in the far southwestern portion of the city. The boundaries of the redevelopment area are established as follows:

- 58th Street on the north;
- Schuylkill River on the east;
- Penrose Avenue and Philadelphia International Airport on the southeast;
- The City Line on the south and west (Darby Creek and Cobbs Creek);
- AMTRAK/R2 rail line, Island Avenue, Passyunk Avenue, Dicks Avenue, and Lindbergh Boulevard on the northwest.

The Eastwick Redevelopment Area Plan was originally approved by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission on November 5, 1954 and revised on August 26, 1957. The purpose of this Amendment is to make changes in land use and controls for a specific section of the redevelopment area, located on the east side of Essington Avenue (see maps on pages 2 and 3).



Background

When Eastwick was first certified as blighted in 1950, the area presented planners and engineers with challenges of unusual scope. The ground was subject to flooding, sewers were inadequate, and the street grid was seen as obsolete. During the first twenty years of renewal work, the following tasks were completed:

- Fifteen million cubic yards of fill were added to the area, thus making buildable land
- A new street system, twenty miles in extent, was created. It consists of major arteries, primary residential, and low-volume cul-de-sac streets
- Private, for-profit developers built more than 4200 units of sales and rental housing as well as three shopping centers and about forty industrial and warehouse facilities
- The city has built two schools, a branch library and playgrounds in Eastwick.

Public facilities are connected to each other and to the residential areas by pedestrian greenways.

The Planning Commission reviewed the progress of redevelopment efforts in the 1982 report entitled, Eastwick Urban Renewal Plan Review. The report had a goal of facilitating redevelopment in Eastwick. It recommended changes in use or controls for certain parcels and set new priorities for construction of streets and infrastructure. In the process of preparing the report, a coordinating committee was established to provide input and advice.

These accomplishments notwithstanding, Eastwick still has a significant sum of undeveloped acreage.

Summary of Blight Recertification of March 2006

In tandem with this Plan Amendment, the entire Eastwick Redevelopment Area is being recertified as blighted by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. The effective date of the blight recertification is March 16, 2006. The Planning Commission report concludes that a finding of blight is warranted by the following criteria having been satisfied:

1. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions
2. Faulty street layout
3. Economically or socially undesirable land use

Unsafe, unsanitary and inadequate conditions are verified by a vacancy survey indicating that 162 acres, or 5% of the re-certified area is vacant and undeveloped. Further evidence of unsanitary conditions lies in the presence of trash-strewn lots and damaged sidewalks.

Faulty street layout is illustrated by Powers Lane, an unpaved alley which constitutes the only access to some industrial parcels, and which does not meet minimum city code standards.

Economically or socially undesirable land use is documented by the presence of undeveloped land which returns no taxes to the city and has a depressing effect on adjacent, developed, properties. For example, if the area south of 80th Street were built to capacity it could contain 2140 dwelling units; at present there are 865.

Area Affected by the Plan Amendment

This Plan Amendment pertains to an area on the east side of Essington Avenue, approximately 65 acres in size (see map, above right). This specific study area is bounded by Essington Ave. on the west, Passyunk Ave. on the north, the rail right-of-way formerly used by the PB&W railroad on the east, and an Exxon oil storage facility on the south. The study area includes the addresses 6330 Passyunk Avenue and 6400 through 6840 Essington Avenue on the east side of Essington Avenue. The study area also includes the railroad right-of-way running behind and adjacent to the aforementioned properties.



For the area shown above, Proposed Land Use will change from existing "Industrial" to a new designation of "Commercial." The railroad right-of-way is proposed for "Recreational" use.

Existing Conditions

In the 65-acre study area to the east of Essington Avenue, the predominant land use is industrial. Several businesses are located here, including auto storage and salvage facilities. A former golf driving range is now a vacant lot. Immediately to the east of the industrial properties, the railroad right-of way is not active and the tracks have been removed.

Proposed Land Use

For the properties at 6330 Passyunk Avenue and 6400-6840 Essington Avenue, the proposed land use will change from existing “Industrial” to a new designation of “Commercial.” For the railroad right-of-way, the proposed land use will change from “Industrial” to a new designation of “Recreation.”

Street Changes

To the east of Essington Avenue, existing streets and alleys may be relocated or stricken depending on final development plans.

Existing and Proposed Zoning

For the properties at 6330 Passyunk Avenue and 6400 - 6840 Essington Avenue, existing zoning is “LR” Least Restricted Industrial and “C-3 Commercial.” The original Eastwick Redevelopment Area Plan proposed “Industrial” zoning at this location. In this Amendment, proposed zoning will change to a new designation of “Area Shopping Center,” except for the railroad right-of-way where the proposed zoning will change to “Recreational.”

Illustrative site plan

The Illustrative Site Plan proposes commercial development and a new recreational trail that will connect to a wider network of bicycle and hiking trails. Commercial development shall include landscaping, street trees and new sidewalks. New development will provide special amenities at bus stops. Pedestrian walkways will connect the sidewalks and bus stops with new businesses and the recreation trail.

Relocation

Relocation of businesses may be required. All relocation will be accomplished in accordance with the terms and conditions of the federal Uniform Relocation Act. Residential relocation is not proposed in this specific study area.



Above: the Illustrative Site Plan shows commercial development on the east side of Essington Avenue, with a multi-use trail to the east. The recreational trail will occupy the right-of-way formerly used by the Philadelphia Baltimore & Wilmington (PB&W) Railroad.

Estimated Costs of Redevelopment

Specific cost estimates will be prepared by the Redevelopment Authority.

Proposed Standards and Controls

Standards and controls for uses, density, land coverage, building area, parking and off-street loading will be established by the Philadelphia Zoning Code. All impacts of redevelopment on the surrounding residential community will be minimized through development controls regulating site design, building materials and landscaping. These controls will be established by the Redevelopment Authority, and reviewed and approved by the City Planning Commission.

The Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended, and the United States Housing Act of 1949, as amended, regulate Redevelopment and Urban Renewal in the City of Philadelphia.

Redevelopment in the Amended Eastwick Redevelopment Area will be in conformity with the provisions of this Redevelopment Area Plan and with the requirements of any Urban Renewal Plan prepared by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia for this area, and will comply with the Code of General Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia. All plans and proposals prepared by the Redevelopment Authority will be subject to the recommendations of the City Planning Commission and the approval of the Council of the City of Philadelphia.

Aside from these changes, the provisions of the Redevelopment Area Plan of November 5, 1954, as revised August 26, 1957, will remain in effect.