

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 16, 2018

PRESENT:

Anne Fadullon, Commission Chair  
Joseph Syrnick, Vice Chair  
Garlen Capita  
Patrick Eiding  
Cheryl L. Gaston  
Maria Gonzalez  
Nancy Rogo Trainer  
Ariel Vazquez  
Duane Bumb, Representing Harold T. Epps  
Peilin Chen, Representing Rob Dubow  
Christopher Rupe, Representing Michael DiBerardinis  
Eleanor L. Sharpe, Executive Director

*Commission Chair, Anne Fadullon convened the Philadelphia City Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 1:08 p.m.*

**1. Action Item: Approval of the Meeting Minutes for December 12, 2017.**

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Eiding, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, the City Planning Commission voted to approve the meeting minutes for Tuesday, December 12, 2017.

**2. Executive Director's Update**

a) PCPC AND CDR MEETING UPDATE

- Next scheduled CDR meeting: **Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.**
- Next scheduled PCPC meeting: **Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.**

b) PHILADELPHIA2035 PUBLIC MEETING

The first meeting of our last and final District Plan, of Upper Northwest District Plan meeting that was scheduled for January 8, 2018 at the Lutheran Theological Seminary on Germantown Avenue was rescheduled due to inclement weather, but, will take place at the same location on January 29, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

c) WEST DISTRICT PLAN

The public comment period has been extended from January 24<sup>th</sup> until March 30<sup>th</sup> and the plan will likely be adopted in April 2018.

d) HISTORIC PRESERVATION TASK FORCE

The next public meeting will be held on January 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at The Enterprise Center, 4548 Market Street.

e) OTHER UPDATES

Everyone is invited to attend PCPC Annual Celebratory Event, which will take place on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. at The Center for Architecture, 1218 Arch Street. This year, we will be celebrating the consolidation of all the agencies that now constitute the Department of Planning & Development.

f) REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Recommended for Administrative Approval

Approval of redevelopment agreements for 4300-4312 and 4314-4326 Ridge Avenue.

g) LEGISLATIVE BILL RECOMMENDED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

Bill No. 171084: "Authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia, to acquire fee simple title or a lesser real estate interest to all or a portion of a parcel or parcels of land located in and about the area bounded by North Broad Street, Noble Street, 13th Street, and the building known as 401 North Broad Street, all under certain terms and conditions." Introduced by Councilmember Squilla on December 7, 2017

This concludes the Executive Director's report.

3. **Staff Presentation: University City Parking Study, Presented by David Kanthor**

During Spring 2017, City Planning Commission staff surveyed public and private parking garages and lots in University City with the purpose of conducting the first University City Parking Inventory. The resulting report established an occupancy baseline of parking in University City with an examination of capacity, occupancy rates, and prices. This report also examines on-street parking availability and provides detailed insight to public and private parking facilities in an area bounded by 30<sup>th</sup> to 46<sup>th</sup> Street and Spring Garden Street, Haverford Avenue and the Schuylkill River. This report provides a snapshot of University City's public and private parking facilities in 2017 and best practices with recommendations for the future of University City's parking supply.

The report was released in December 2017. The inventory was conducted to better understand changing parking demand and supply associated with increased institutional, commercial, and residential development west of the Schuylkill River. This report established a baseline of approximately 70% occupancy for both public and private parking facilities. Knowing the baseline helps for future assessment of patterns and trends in the characteristics of the University City parking supply, especially knowing capacity, occupancy rates, and prices. The University City Parking Inventory can serve as a companion to the Center City Parking Inventory, which was last released in 2015 and is completed every five years. The full report can be found here:

<http://www.phila.gov/CityPlanning/projectreviews/PDF/2017%20University%20City%20Parking%20Inventory.pdf>

Best Practices consist of:

- Shared parking opportunities
- Use of technology
- Transportation demand management
- Bike share, train, walking or carpool
- Residential parking permit program
- Parking facility signage

4. **Staff Presentation: FY2019-2024 Capital Program and Budget Update, (Presented by John Haak)**

This is to provide background information and a status update on the preparation of the Recommended FY2019-2024 Capital Program and Budget, in advance of adoption at the City Planning Commission scheduled for February 20th, 2018.

The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter states that:

§ 4-602. Capital Program and Budget.

At least one hundred and twenty days before the end of the fiscal year, the City Planning Commission shall prepare and submit to the Mayor a recommended capital program for the six fiscal years next ensuing and a recommended capital budget for the ensuing fiscal year.

The staff of the City Planning Commission has been working closely with the City's Budget Office as Budget implements closer integration between the Operating and Capital Budgets.

The Recommended FY2019-2024 Capital Program and Budget is scheduled to be presented for City Planning Commission review and adoption on February 20th, 2018.

5. **Staff Presentation: Five Year Review of Zoning Code - Progress Report (Presented by Mason Austin, Andrew Meloney and Ayse Unver)**

This is an informational report created by the staff of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission based on a review of the Zoning Code. It has been five years since the new code has been in effect and this document serves as a review of those five years and sets forth an analysis by the PCPC. This report assesses the degree to which the initial goals of the new code have been achieved, provides an overview of amendments to date, identifies ongoing challenges, and offers additional recommendations for improvement.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Significant progress on remapping – in five years, 4,767 acres of land have updated zoning
- Code users agree that the new code is, “easier to understand and provides better consistency”
- There is a six percent increase in zoning permits approved by-right
- Code users feel that notification and Registered Community Organization (RCO) meeting requirements are generally positive, but have interest in some changes.
- Code amendment continues as necessary, proving that the code is a living document that needs careful review and assessment.

## OVERVIEW OF THE NEW (FIVE YEAR) CODE

The goal of the Zoning Code Commission (ZCC) was to create a new rule book for construction and development in Philadelphia that was simple and predictable. The desire was for a code that:

- Is consistent and easy to understand
- Makes future construction and development more predictable
- Encourages high quality positive development
- Preserves the character of Philadelphia's neighborhoods, and
- Involves the public in development decisions.

The One Year Review included a list of 10 advancements that have been made through the adoption of the new code. At the five-year mark, the story is more complex: for most of these factors, there has been continuing change.

1. Easier to use - Multiple amendments to the code compromise its ease of use
2. Organized community involvement – There has been several significant amendments of the RCO process.
3. Fewer variances - The percentage of zoning permit appeals that result in the granting of variances has fallen from 18% in to 13%.
4. Consolidated base zoning districts – No new base districts have been added.
5. Reorganized overlay districts – Multiple new overlays have been added and work still continues to make existing overlays more understandable.
6. Modernized uses – Significant improvements were made by the initial re-write and discussions among relevant agencies happens regularly to keep the code in step with modern needs.
7. Flexible dimensional standards – More contextual standards have been added via code amendments and more amendments can be made to better match the code to the needs of properties in Philadelphia.
8. Modern development standards – This continues to be relevant but more work is needed to keep pace with changing standards.
9. Transit oriented development – TOD has been re-written to be both more user-friendly as well as more impactful.
10. Sustainability as a priority – Some provisions have worked well (Green-Building) and new provisions have been added (Green Roof).

A draft of the 60-page document is available online: [www.phila.gov/cityplanning](http://www.phila.gov/cityplanning).  
Comments are welcome at: [planning@phila.gov](mailto:planning@phila.gov).

**6. Action Item: Adoption of the North District Plan. (Presented by Ashley Richards)**

The district's area is bounded by Lehigh Avenue, Kensington Avenue, Tacony-Frankford Creek, Roosevelt Boulevard, Wingohocking Street, and the Schuylkill River. It is three miles or 10 minutes between Lehigh Avenue and the City Hall Station.

Neighborhoods include: Paradise, Allegheny West, Swampoodle, Tioga, East Tioga, Nicetown, Fairhill, Hunting Park, St. Hugh, Feltonville, Kensington, Harrowgate and Juniata Park.

The purpose is to adopt the North District Plan to support Philadelphia2035 – The Comprehensive Plan.

The present use is primarily medium- to high-density residential neighborhoods interspersed with several commercial corridors and centers, recreation space, institutional hubs, and active/inactive industrial areas.

Additionally, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission has completed a draft plan for the North District. The public engagement process included four Steering Committee meetings, three public meetings, which were attended by over 300 residents, other city agencies, non-profits, community organizations, elected officials, places of worship, and business owners from all over the district.

Plan recommendations stem from public meetings, Steering Committee meetings, stakeholder interviews, field work, and alignment with citywide strategic goals to improve the conditions of neighborhoods. The North planning team selected three focus areas where several improvements to zoning, streetscapes, transportation, and public space can set the stage for impactful improvement in the district. The focus areas include Broad and Erie, Hunting Park East Industrial District, and the North Philadelphia Station. The plan further identified 52 strategic recommendations to improve overall conditions for the district.

The Plan is slated to be published in hard copies in the Spring of 2018, however an electronic copy will be available January 16, 2018.

This is the first plan in the Phila2035 process to be translated into another language (Spanish). We had the support of a volunteer team of translators from various community/CDC organizations, including: Esperanza, HACE, Impact Services, and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Without their support this process would not have been as successful, accessible, or comprehensive.

Please visit the North District page to review the Plan and other documents electronically:

<https://www.phila2035.com/north>

Plan Objectives

I. THRIVE

- a) Re-establish Broad and Erie as an accessible "Downtown" of the North District.
- b) Encourage the creation and rehabilitation of vacant buildings into affordable and senior housing.
- c) Preserve existing industry and attract new companies to the Hunting Park East Industrial District.

II. CONNECT

- a) Improve the safety, usability, and appearance of North Philadelphia Station.
- b) Develop bike routes to give bicyclist safer and better connections through the district.
- c) Redesign streets and install traffic calming measures to reduce speeding and protect vulnerable populations including seniors, children and people with disabilities.

III. RENEW

- a) Program public funds and leverage other resources including REBUILD to improve the quality and accessibility of parks and recreation facilities.
- b) Pursue the nominations of districts and groups of buildings to protect historically significant neighborhoods.
- c) Strengthen neighborhood character and highlight cultural identity at major intersections.

*\*Special remarks of recognition were expressed to the PCPC staff and Translators, Heather and Kathleen for their assistance and participation with translating and facilitating in Spanish.*

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Syrnick, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission voted to adopt the North District Plan with the understanding that there'll be follow up conversations with concerned residence.

7. **Action Item: Zoning Bill No. 170985: “An Ordinance to amend the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the zoning designations of certain areas of land located within an area bounded by Civic Center Boulevard, University Avenue, Spruce Street, and 34th Street.” Introduced by Councilmember Blackwell on November 16, 2017 (Presented by Martine Decamp)**

The purpose of this Bill is to allow for future construction on behalf of CHOP.

The remapping will help lay the groundwork for future CHOP development. CHOP is currently constrained by its number of beds, and plans to build new programs to offer children bench-to-bedside therapies, which require space for support services and offices. This remapping complies with the University Southwest District Plan remapping recommendations.

Staff recommendation is for approval.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Eiding, seconded by Commissioner Syrnick, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission voted to approve staff recommendation.

8. **Action Item: Zoning bill No. 170997: “An Ordinance to amend the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the zoning designations of certain areas of land located within an area bounded on the northeast by the Manayunk Canal, on the southeast by Green Lane, on the southwest by the Schuylkill River, and on the northwest by Leverington Avenue with a straight line extending from Leverington Avenue to the Schuylkill River. Further to approve the Residential Mixed-Use-2 District (RMX-2) Master Plan for the foregoing designated areas of land.**

1/16/18

**Further, to amend certain provisions of Section 14-503 of The Philadelphia Code in connection with foregoing Master Plan. Further, to amend the Property Maintenance Code to exclude the foregoing Master Plan from certain provisions of said Property Maintenance Code.” Introduced by Councilmember Jones on November 16, 2017. (Presented by Marty Gregorski)**

Bill No. 170997 will rezone a portion of Venice Island from its current “CMX-2” Commercial Mixed-Use designation to a new “RMX-2” Master Plan designation. This Bill will also approve the proposed Master Plan for this site. The Master Plan provides for new multi-family residential structures with accessory parking.

In order for this project to receive permits as of right, a number of changes to the zoning code text are proposed. The first is that the provisions of the Main Street/Manayunk and Venice Island Neighborhood Commercial Area Overlay Districts will not apply to this site.

A provision is added to ensure that only an eight feet setback is required from the Schuylkill River. This property will also be exempted from the landscaping requirements of the zoning code.

Most importantly, there is a proposed change to the Property Maintenance Code which would exempt this property from the provisions of the Main Street National Historic District.

The staff also has a number of objections to the text changes in the zoning code, particularly those pertaining to the Main Street National Historic District, and there are flood plain considerations for this property.

The Bill is scheduled to be returned to City Council January 25, 2018.

Staff recommendation is not for approval.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Eiding, seconded by Commissioner Syrnick, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission voted to accept staff recommendation not to approve.

9. **Action Item: Zoning Bill. 171128: “An Ordinance to amend the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the zoning designations of certain areas of land located within an area bounded by Moore Street, Sixth Street, McClellan Street, and Seventh Street.” (Presented by Nicole Ozdemir)**

This Bill rezones the entire block, bounded by 6th Street, Moore Street, 7th Street and McClellan Street, at the request of the property owner/developer.

This site currently contains a low-rise warehouse and general industrial uses, including wooden cabinetry makers and plumbing and heating supply. It is not known what the redevelopment plans for this site are. The proposed zoning change aligns with a South District Plan zoning recommendation of repositioning former industrial sites for mixed use redevelopment.

Staff recommendation is for approval.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Gaston, seconded by Commissioner Trainer, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission voted to approve staff recommendation.



PCPC Minutes  
1/16/18

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission meeting was adjourned by the Commission Chair at 3:05 p.m.

The next City Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for **February 20, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.**

## SUMMARY

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1. Action Item: Approval of the Meeting Minutes for January 16, 2018.

**APPROVED**

2. Executive Director's Update

3. Staff Presentation: University City Parking Study, Presented by David Kanthor

4. Staff Presentation: FY2019-2024 Capital Program and Budget Update,  
(Presented by John Haak)

5. Staff Presentation: Five Year Review of Zoning Code - Progress Report  
(Presented by Mason Austin, Andrew Meloney and Ayse Unver)

6. Action Item: Adoption of the North District Plan. (Presented by Ashley Richards)

### **ADOPTED WITH CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS**

7. Action Item: Zoning Bill No. 170985: "An Ordinance to amend the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the zoning designations of certain areas of land located within an area bounded by Civic Center Boulevard, University Avenue, Spruce Street, and 34th Street." Introduced by Councilmember Blackwell on November 16, 2017 (Presented by Martine Decamp)

**APPROVED**

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**NOT TO APPROVE**

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**APPROVED**