

## Draft River Wards District Plan Summary of Public Comments

### THRIVE

#### ➤ From the Public Meeting

##### HEALTH SERVICES DISTRICT BOARD

- Create a satellite location for the city (public) health center #6 (3<sup>rd</sup> and Girard) to better serve residents
- Community garden needs: -convenient for planting no w/ roots from previous, - Port Richmond, - benefits, - food and gathering
- Community space at Impact
- See outside models for mental health integrations
- Property manager, Hedgestone, water bill

##### PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Utilize PRIDE & RCA Strategic Plans
- What else? Get recommendations here that are specific. Cannot miss this opportunity!
- Get rid of scrap yards they do not belong across the street from housing
- Very vague! More specifics are needed. This is an endemic problem!
- Accompany with zoning change
- Weak

#### ➤ From Formal Written Comments

I noticed on page 44 and again in the section following page 86 highlighting the Lehigh Viaduct, that one of the main goals is to: "Develop a scrap yard and recycling facility strategic plan that addresses zoning, enforcement, safety, truck access, site suitability, buffering between adjacent land uses, and short dumping in the Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg Neighborhoods (i.e. areas along Somerset Street)". I wasn't sure what this would mean in reality, whether it addresses the relocation of the scrapyard on Somerset, or better enforcement and buffering around it, but either way, it is problem spot that desperately needs tending to. Although I don't support displacement of the businesses in our area, I do think there is a better way for this space to exist so that it is a more sustainable part of the neighborhood. Street greening along Somerset would be a huge improvement, as it would improve water run-off systems so that the Tulip Street tunnel doesn't become flooded and full of trash, dust, and debris every single time it rains.

- Those are my comments based on my specific experience of living in Port Richmond, since I wasn't able to make it to one of the planning meetings. Overall, I believe this plan is vast improvement on the state of this district at the moment, and I heartily support its implementation.
- Sincerely, Bethany

I read the River Wards Plan today. I think that it has hit every conceivable problem that can be imagined. However, every word and pinpoint on the maps can be a life changing event for residents. Let me give you some of my background and ideas.

- Lifetime resident of Philadelphia. I live in Somerton with my wife of 44 years. Have two adult children.
- My last job before I retired was Accountant / Controller of a General Contractor building and renovating houses in Pennsport. I got a good overview of home building in Philadelphia.
- My suggestions to the River Wards Plan are:
  - Improve education and training for the future tradesmen and women who will build out this area.
  - USE THE LAND BANK
  - Renovate the infrastructure. Rebuild the residential roads a little wider. Clear out whole blocks for redevelopment. Bring in the largest and best builders to discuss how to build these blocks out.
  - Instead of building row-houses, I would like to suggest groupings of three or four energy efficient townhomes surrounded by a lot of grass and off-street parking.
  - These groupings could also be apartments.
  - Gradually holdouts will die off and land will become available for investors and smaller building contractors.
  - The transportation system and big box stores will entice people to move there but you will also need excellent new schools. When I was looking for a home 40 years ago, the schools were a major reason for where I moved.
  - I was going to suggest building a huge park along the river but there seems to be something next to Orthodox Street in Bridesburg that looks like parkland that I have never noticed before.
  - Murray

After reviewing the draft, which was extensive I must say, we only had a few comments as are listed below. If you have any questions about them feel free to contact Rolando or me.

- The logo used is not our official, which is attached. Page 5
- Kensington Ave Route 3 bus line is not shown on the transportation map. Page 12
- Impact Services is also contracted to clean the P.R.I.D.E. District. Page 26, paragraph 4; last sentence
- PWD and Impact prepared the SMP for the District not PWD and PIDC. Page 72, paragraph 1, first sentence
- Aramingo Shopping District is identified a Business Improvement District not Special Services District. Page 92, 1st bullet; last sentence
- Joseph Douglas, Impact Services

Hope all is well. Again, Congrats on the Draft of the River Wards Plan.

- Here are a few comments:
  - Pleased that you showcased Huntingdon Yarn Mill (Majid Jaraha).
  - There are a couple of other unique businesses in the area that could be mentioned: RCA: Weber Display & Packaging Co. (Jim Doherty) & PRIDE: PTR Baler & Compactor Co. (Mike Savage).
  - Glad you highlighted the idea, and showed examples of shared use industrial buildings for artisans and light manufacturing.
  - Good that you folks mentioned "The Makers Movement".
  - It was great that you mentioned "The Workshop of the World" legacy, and RCA's & PRIDE's efforts to strengthen the business environment.
  - On the infrastructure front, let's highlight the importance of the East Ontario-North Delaware Ave. street connector.
  - Glad to see inclusion of land use strategies for the Rohm & Haas site, the Philadelphia Coke site and the Frankford Creek Greenway.

- Good to see the Port Richmond Historic Village concept.
- Like the creative streetscape designs for the Commercial Corridors along the MFL (Kensington Ave. & Front St.).
- May want to showcase the Greens Grow Farms multi-faceted story, from transforming industrial brownfields land to urban agricultural reuse, as well as providing neighborhood access to healthy foods.
- Great to highlight the importance of Tioga Terminal.
- May want to talk about the need for more enhanced lighting (fixtures & natural light) underneath all of the area Highway and Railway overpasses.
- Let's look to include a more comprehensive Video Surveillance strategy and system to monitor the chronic illegal short dumping sites.
- Like the idea of making Aramingo Ave. more pedestrian / bicycle friendly.
- In the Appendices: Include the websites of the various Steering Committee members, as well as other active groups like us (RCA).
- Look forward to continuing our collaboration, as we move forward on implementation.
- Thanks. Steve Horton, Richmond Corridor Association

## CONNECT

### ➤ **From the Public Meeting**

#### MARKET-FRANKFORD EL BOARD

- Multicultural zone not just Asian
- I like the Vietnamese cultural corridor idea
- Need more short term solutions
- Increase El service A-B trains
- I love the way this looks
- Like improving business corridor. Lighting important
- Look great! Anything to improve the area
- Façade improvements to increase ambience
- You had me at string lights! You had me at install trash cans!
- Need gateway to corridor. Use vacant buildings
- Plantings should be appropriate for sun level
- Kelly's Korner as music/art venue?

#### PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- ADA not feasible in 10 year time frame
- Check out DVRPC's Trenton Line Study re: multimodal connections @ Bridesburg
- More of a police presence during NET operating hours
- Increase pedestrian crossing safety at York St
- Open Frankford Junction Station to provide access to Aramingo and shopping. Clean up Wheatsheaf Lane
- Trenton and York and Frankford! (pointing to Install bike safety measure and lanes)
- Open Frankford Junction up. They could use another stop and they could eat and shop

### ➤ **From Formal Written Comments**

Thanks to the Bicycle Commission, I was not only alerted to the improvements in bicycle infrastructure that are being considered for the River Wards District, but was also able to sit down and read through the whole plan. I'm very excited to see such issues as access to healthy food and green space prioritized in this plan. About a year ago, my husband

and I bought a house on Tulip Street between Cambria and Ann Streets, so a lot of these changes will have a very direct effect on our lives.

- I wholeheartedly support the addition of protected bike lanes on Lehigh Avenue, as this is one of the main corridors on which I travel, as well as probably one of the most dangerous corridors due to the high speeds at which cars travel down this road. I have to cross Lehigh Avenue as both a cyclist and a pedestrian, and although I am thankful for the long crossing signal at Tulip Street, it is still a very wide and unprotected road to have to traverse on an almost daily basis. Adding protected bike lanes as well as curb bump-outs at the Tulip and Lehigh intersection would vastly improve the safety and visibility for pedestrians, and hopefully raise awareness for those driving on this road that they are not the only ones who are using it.
- I noticed that these curb bump-outs are recommended for the major thoroughfares, but not for the smaller streets. Although I understand the focus on the main roads, I would contend that Tulip actually handles a large portion of the pedestrian traffic in the neighborhood, since for large portions of the Olde Richmond and Port Richmond neighborhoods, to walk under the Lehigh Viaduct at Aramingo or Frankford Avenues is going far out of the way from the destination. Tulip is a direct route for traffic wishing to avoid the bus and traffic congestion, and increasing the safety along this route, including the lighting in the tunnel underneath the train tracks, would be a huge improvement to both neighborhoods.
- Those are my comments based on my specific experience of living in Port Richmond, since I wasn't able to make it to one of the planning meetings. Overall, I believe this plan is vast improvement on the state of this district at the moment, and I heartily support its implementation.
- Sincerely, Bethany

We recommended on reopening the septa train station at Frankford Junction & improving the 2200 block of Butler street that leads to Aramingo Ave with lighting, road & sidewalk improvements And installing a signal light at Butler & Septvia streets where Sonic is located . This is a direct route thru our neighborhood to Aramingo shopping district.

I'm writing to show my support of the proposed bike lanes on East Lehigh Ave. I think it's an amazing idea (and I live on Lehigh and Edgemont, so I would be directly impacted). Just wanted to voice my thoughts - I love all the positive changes happening in my 'hood!

- Maura

I am a resident of Lehigh Ave, at the current of Memphis and Lehigh. I would love to see this great improvement of the community, especially since a new school is moving into St. Anne's. The current railroad wall across from my house is an eyesore (the mural is slightly further west from my view). A facelift of the whole stretch of Lehigh would be an incredible improvement. Please include me in any information of this, as well as how I can participate.

- Anthony

So there are all these future plans for 20 years from now. Ok well what about my street & lots of streets in the Tacony area that are CAVING in ...??? Out front my house Rawle & tulip streets will be sinking again very soon! Each day there is another issue...the 6700 block of Tulip Street is horrible plus keystone & Knorr Street is another disaster waiting to happen! Will the city pay for my car if it sinks in a hole? Bobby Henon has forgotten about this area! There are other holes in this area!!! Thank you...

After reviewing the Goods Movement Section (pages 50-51 of the pdf), I have the following suggestions to make for your consideration:

- Page 50
  - First paragraph—add international trade to the first sentence and correct the spelling of freight in the third sentence.
  - Substitute a photo of the type of ship that calls on the Tioga Marine Terminal (PRPA could supply one.).
  - Keeping with the theme of the section, in the Hunts Point example, substitute a photo that depicts how goods movement was accommodated (e.g., new truck access routes).
- Page 51
  - Shift the DVRPC technical work reference from recommendation 25. to recommendation 26. and rephrase as follows: Coordinate with the upcoming DVRPC delivery guidebook.
  - For recommendation 25. add something along the lines of: Provide adequate protection and safety measures at highway-railroad grade crossings throughout the Industrial District. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this excellent work, and please contact me if you have any questions.
- Ted Dahlburg, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Wow, what a document. You all have been working very hard. I attended one of the public input sessions -- it was very well attended which was great to see.

- Personally, I am especially interested and invested in the Delaware waterfront. There has been vacant blight for so long. Steve Wynn came into town and wooed our community with waterfront trail renderings, and when it didn't happen, folks settled back into a cynical sense of "well, this is how it will always be"... 20+ years Conrail's and Jim Anderson's land has been rotting.
- We have the waterfront master plan. We have PIDC's recommendation which includes fishing/boating piers, parks and a waterfront trail. We have the larger vision cast for the Lehigh viaduct. We have portions of completed waterfront trails to the north (Port Richmond Trail) and Penn Treaty Park to the south. Where Lehigh Ave meets the river is the cornerstone... and perhaps a couple "pocket parks", as the master plan calls for, at Cumberland and farther south. Why does this have to be a long-term goal? The only thing that stands in our way is the land owners? And funding? Our politicians can and should overcome both of these obstacles... that's why we elected them. Mark Squilla, Mike O'Brien and John Taylor have all informally, by email, supported the idea of the city acquiring private land for waterfront parks. A Lehigh Ave Park is the crown jewel and should be the main priority. Does the city have to buy a stretch of land for a waterfront trail? Maybe not... what about easements? I'm told the Foxwoods project had successfully planned for this.
- Let's put these conversations in motion. Let's get a beautiful rendering of a proposed park and fishing/boating piers and use it to garner public support and open a dialogue with these land owners. Jim Anderson is a real estate tycoon who lives in Bucks County. Good for him. He has gained tremendously from positive development in Philadelphia (most recent example: I-95 revive)... and yet he continues to hold the city back with his blighted land, and hold out for the next \$1 billion dollar project. Our communities can't wait that long for restored waterfront access. Look at his land, is he better than a slumlord? Motivate him to prove it. When does Conrail's 99 year lease end? There is no reason continued rail use and waterfront access for our communities cannot coexist... are we at the mercy of this corporation? Surely someone in Philadelphia politics has the ear of Conrail leadership.
- What is the next step? I realize you are bound by process and city/state politics... I am not. Point me in the right direction and set me loose. I'm told the Community Design Collaborative can create a set of renderings and project cost

estimate for \$5k. Does it really cost that much? Should I pursue funding from Squilla/Taylor/O'Brien?

- P.S. We need to close the sex club zoning loop hole at 2535 Emery Street. This is not a social club where people happen to have sex. It's a night club that charges a cover, has private rooms for swingers and exists to make money.
- This is a residential neighborhood and we have the zoning overlay... it's been going on for years with multiple club owners. If PCPC can't solve this, I will work with Squilla's office on appropriate zoning legislation.
- Phil

## RENEW

### ➤ From the Public Meeting

#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

- Monkiewicz playground keep name in neighborhood
- I would hate to see St. Laurentius go (even though I am not a church-goer) PRESERVE! (2x) council support
- Our Lady help of Christians

#### PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Utilize spaces under I-95 in Fishtown, Port Richmond, Bridesburg
- Recycling and trash cans to decrease litter!
- The friends and neighbors of Hagert Playground are so excited about the anticipated renovations!
- Take down the Shissler wall!

### ➤ From Formal Written Comments

So we got St. Laurentius designated a historic building. Bob (I met the guy but don't know his name) put this to voting after a prolonged PHC session. Rev. Sibel and his team argued a "hardship case" as they would appeal it later. The same situation as it is with the Assumption Church on Spring Garden - its remarkable silhouette remains on the bland block of Spring Garden Street at 11th St. with the community protecting it for years. Closed for over two years St. Laurentius is also practically gutted (except for stained glass and murals; I am not sure about the high altar). Rev. Sibel was right about the hardship case. There is no way he could save the church without the Polish people's support, and they left the parish under his predecessor. I, for one, count on a change of heart with the pope's visit. David Traub of S.O.S. declared that Philadelphia could save the church as we saved Eakins' Gross Clinic. Inga Saffron was there and might write tomorrow. I wrote several times and have another piece in the works.

- Sorry, I did not contact you about the longshoreman row house museum. I have two addresses in mind (on Aramingo and Allegheny at Belgrade) and plan to contact a head of the Philadelphia History Museum but still did not approach politicians and found no contacts with the Longshoremen Union.
- You seemed supportive of an idea of erecting a few historic markers, for newspapers Patryota (1890-1950) , Jednosc (1920-1960) and Gwiazda (1902-1985) all on Richmond Street, markers for Post 12 Polish Army Veterans Association, Richmond at Allegheny and Unia Polek on Allegheny, both organized after WWI, and a marker for the Polish College, Cedar St.
- I greatly rejoice at your idea of a Festival Boulevard to be named perhaps after Krakow since we already got a Torun Triangle with Kopernik Monument by the Cathedral Basilica. Please see a photo of Krakow Deputy President by the Krakow masterpiece in the Gesu church on 18th and Girard Avenue (she came to Philadelphia to decorate supporters of the Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow

on its 25th jubilee edition). We have to be careful to preserve Fr. Monkiewicz's name and perhaps find a way to commemorate our Councilman Joe Zazyczny who, in 1971, turned Pulaski pier for recreation and established Pulaski Park.

- We should be able to mark Richmond Hall and Our Lady of Port Richmond chapel on the river.
- You would be surprised the Save St. Laurentius Committee plans to have put up a billboard on the roof of the Polish American Club on Allegheny by the exhibit ramp and facing I-95, to greet the pope. Perhaps this could be adopted permanently and used to mark Port Richmond gateway. We would definitely need a display board somewhere.
- Hopefully, I am not too late with my suggestions and will look forward to your first opportunity to discuss them with you.
- My Pro Arte Archive in the bungalow at 3349 E. Thompson, Port Richmond, is still in disarray. The time which elapsed since our improvised conference was taken by working on contracts to republish my late husband's printed and unprinted work referring to his experience as a Gulag Soviet camp survivor.
- Sincerely, Regina

With Councilman Henon's bringing to everyone's' attention that the comment period for the Draft Plan for the River Wards closes Friday, August 7, 2015, I want to be sure that the plan will include strong considerations for providing recreational water activity outlets for Philadelphia's citizenry now forced to make do with swimming in polluted Pennypack Creek and parts of the Delaware River -- both of which are illegal to swim in. For standard summertime relief and the need for summertime water activity, no Philadelphia citizen should have to risk the law plus their health for what is a fundamentally basic right of every human being.

- The Draft Plan for the River Wards needs to include recreational water activity outlets if it doesn't already. And one strong suggestion I have is to build a large scale waterpark similar if not identical to Dorney Park's Wildwater Kingdom in Allentown, PA, or Gillian's Island Waterpark in Ocean City, NJ, at the former site of the Dodge Steel plant in Philadelphia's Tacony section. So in putting forth my comment I want to be sure the Draft Plan for the River Wards will be flexible enough to allow for proposals such as this and other recreational water activity outlet suggestions other citizens might have.
- Stephen

I would like to see street cleaning down Lehigh Avenue and a pier where fishing is allowed, but is as nice as the Race Street Pier.

- Michael

## [Focus Areas](#)

### ***Aramingo Avenue Shopping District:***

#### ➤ **From the Public Meeting**

##### EXISTING CONDITIONS BOARD

- Jay walking is exceptionally bad within Aramingo Shopping District
- Shop Rite "parking lot of death" lots of pedestrian activity
- Stop signs should be upgraded to traffic signals along Wheatsheaf and Butler Streets (hard for pedestrians)
- Drag racing occurs within Walmart parking lot only

##### RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Castor + Aramingo – intersection needs bike + pedestrian safety improvements – very dangerous – look at York + Aramingo for example
- YES! More parking lots throughout?
- Mid-block crossings may have negative affect on traffic/cause accidents?
- Sound buffer between neighborhood and shopping (along Tulip)
- All of these recommendations would greatly improve pedestrian shopping experiences here.
- PennDOT project (I-95) currently coordinating with Aramingo BID for gateway signage at Northern entrance (Wheatsheaf)
- Sit-down restaurant with riverfront view
- When Belgrade goes by Shoprite, implement traffic calming measure

***Port Richmond Village:***

➤ **From the Public Meeting**

EXISTING CONDITIONS BOARD

- Better recognize “Monkiewicz” name w/ prominent sign
- Community garden on PPA land next to Pulaski Park

RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Longshoreman’s Museum needed on Tilden St
- Names of old owners on plaques
- E. Edgemont St – small workshops/pavilions
- Support for streetscape (trees) along Allegheny Avenue from Pulaski Park to Frankford Ave. (and beyond!)
- Transit loop - Trolley Mod – Rt. 15. Greening

***Lehigh Avenue Corridor:***

➤ **From the Public Meeting**

EXISTING CONDITIONS BOARD

- Need well marked security cameras
- Belgrade Tulip need improvements too!
- Trails added along Somerset

RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Tire has for sale
- Stormwater improvements
- It’s great!
- Safety improvements a must!

**Other Boards**

➤ **From the Public Meeting**

EXISTING LAND USE BOARD

- Res Two family color needs adjustment in legend/map
- More lighting around Harrowgate Park needed
- (temporarily) green vacant lots

PROPOSED ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Will there be more dredging?
- TOD please! Front and Girard
- This good great excellent well thought
- Green space @ end of Orthodox is phenomenal

- Setbacks along EI are great!
- Opportunity in industrial area for large indoor rec. spaces – soccer etc. east of 95
- Looks thorough!
- Commercial corridor → mixed use
- Good Job!
- Look @ Norris St → move density
- Get rid of scrap yards
- Letterly and Amber → should be a park – it's green now
- Preserve manufacturing w/ quality of life buffers
- Good idea to right size comm. Corridors

#### PROPOSED ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS BOARD

- Commercial on Lehigh!
- Is Frankford CMS1? 2? 2, please!
- Green space on Frankford Avenue?
- More CMX 2.5 on Frankford and Girard (4 stories)
- Change scrap yard zoning!
- + Huntingdon and Emerald green space (park)
- Amber and Trenton – being developed as housing
- CMX 2.5 along Girard and Front to I-95
- (up arrow) density in Fishtown

#### PROPOSED GUIDELINES AND EXISTING ZONING BOARD

- Delaware Avenue Overlay – treat both sides of Frankford Ave same
- Good idea of “EI”verlay

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

- Good job guys!
- Well done love your team spirit. Love your short and long term goals for the city.  
Five stars
- You've done an impressive amount of work since mtg. #2. Thank you so much for listening!