

Final Central Northeast District Plan Public Feedback from Third Public Meeting & Draft Plan

THRIVE

From Public Meeting

- Include recommendations that will help reduce the number of district – wide absentee landlords.
- Attract more anchor commercial tenants to Cottman and the Boulevard Regional Center.
- Plan needs to spell out improvements to stores on both Cottman Avenue and Rising Sun Avenue.
- Cottman and the Boulevard needs visual improvement, like new banners.
- Vacant spaces at Cottman Avenue and Castor Avenue need new tenants.
- Business owners need to form business associations.
- Area around Bell's Corner Shopping Center needs to reduce vacancy.
- In general, streetscapes should have no billboards or backlit signs (removal of roof billboards around 5 Points intersection).
- Fox Chase/Rockledge: great town center, agree auto uses should be reduced.
- General support for Cottman and Bustleton improvements.
- Commercial revitalization works well with single-family preservation.
- Goals seem challenging for Bustleton / Castor corridors.
- Reactivate former Clover property.

CONNECT

From Public Meeting

- Fox Chase Station – plant trees in parking lots; remove unsightly billboards; developable land available between station parking lot and Wawa.
- Fox Chase Town Center - continue site improvements and improve on-street parking.
- Add transit shelters district wide.
- Algon / Rhawn traffic improvements needed.
- More bus shelters throughout district.
- Support for a subway on Roosevelt Boulevard.

RENEW

From Public Meeting

- Need more community gardens.
- Pennypack Park – add benches and placards to narrate natural features and the remains of structures in the park.
- Honor Square Memorial- install a green buffer or bio-swale around the memorial, signs on monument should be bigger.

- Five Points intersection- street crossing is difficult, need to redo the timing of the traffic signals and a new study of the intersection.
- Five Points Streetscape- billboards should be taken down, need to add bus shelters, put more mechanized trash cans and planters along Oxford Avenue.
- PECO ROW- exposure to wires is a safety concern if jointly used by a trail system.
- Clean streets is an issue in this district.
- Trees and pocket parks should be increased.

From Emails

I wanted to touch base with you about recycling collection at Max Myers Rec Center. Currently recycling is not collected on a regular basis and we are wondering who we should contact to get a regular collection schedule. Thank you for your time. (Taking Back Your Neighborhood Group)

FOCUS AREAS

Five Points Town Center

From Public Meeting

- Honor Square Memorial -buffer that will not reduce driver visibility at stop sign.
- Do a traffic signal, street crossing, and traffic engineer study as a first step.
- Too much signage.
- Need to add bus shelters.
- Five Points Streetscape – billboards should be taken down.
- Need more mixed use everywhere- bring more residents to improve safety and add life.
- Need better lighting.
- Need business improvements associations.
- Not enough parking on Oakley Street.
- Bigger sign for the war memorial; too dangerous to stand at war memorial.

From Emails

I read the email sent to the Burholme Civic Association about proposed upgrades to the WWI Memorial located at the Five Points Intersection, and have one concern. Northbound traffic on Rising Sun Avenue encounters a stop sign to merge onto Oxford Avenue. This traffic is forced to cross oncoming southbound traffic on Oxford Avenue that creates a very dangerous accident prone situation. Studying the picture of your proposed improvements, two rows of trees will be planted there making traffic visibility much more precarious. Perhaps something can be done to safely control traffic at that intersection. (American Legion Post #366)

Fox Chase Town Center

From Public Meeting

- Developable land is available between station parking lot and Wawa.
- Too much signage.
- More street trees, benches, lighting, plantings, and sidewalk enhancements (brick) are needed near train station.
- Include mechanized trash cans and planters along Oxford Avenue.
- The trail extension is a good idea.
- Fences separate parking area between businesses on Oxford Ave and SEPTA parking and its inconvenient for pedestrians.
- A 3-story garage is too high; one partially below grade, as low as possible, is alright; flooding could be a problem.
- The Ryers Park area is a huge amenity that supports the village center.
- It would be great to have the parking garage to help mitigate on-street parking demand; users of proposed trail could use garage.
- Sidewalks missing along Oxford Ave

From Emails

Subject: Parking issues in Fox Chase

I was at the GNPCC breakfast meeting at Longhorn Steakhouse back in January & spoke briefly with you & your team. My business is at Oxford Ave in Fox Chase (CNE). We are part of a 10 store strip. My building as well as some of the other stores have multiple apartments above the them. There is no available legal parking for the tenants that live upstairs & so they park on Oxford Ave in front of our businesses. The 2 hour parking sign has come down. Further down on Oxford Ave & around the corner we are surrounded by restricted 2 hr parking from 8-6 daily & Saturdays. The only legal parking for the tenants, employees & owners of these buildings is 2 blocks away. I have lost some very good tenants due to the restricted parking in this area. I would like to see this addressed in any changes going forward. Thank you!

Thanks for getting back to me. It's nice to know that someone is listening to our concerns. I think the 2 hr parking sign should be restored to in front of our stores if 2 things could happen at the same time. I know I should not speak for them but the stores on Loney St should have 2 hr restricted parking as well. This would prevent train commuters from parking there all day.

1---If permit parking could be made available to the spaces in front of Fox Chase Memorial Presbyterian Church. That would give the Oxford Ave tenants an option if they needed to leave their cars here all day.

2---Change the 2 hr parking to permit parking in front of all the residences on Barnes St. That would prevent train commuters from parking in front of the houses. The rest should be not restricted at all. That would make spaces available for our employees. Train commuters would of course jump in but that cannot be avoided.

If I think of anything else I'll let you know.

Cottman and the Boulevard Regional Center

From Public Meeting

- Concern with pedestrian and traffic conflicts with proposed mixed-use.
- Security concerns along Roosevelt Boulevard.
- Security concerns along the east side of Macy's.
- Don't use government money to prop up these shopping centers.
- Concern about pedestrian volumes at Bustleton Avenue conflicting with newly generated traffic from mixed use.
- No foreseeable residential market for this location, Castor Avenue may be better. Focus on code enforcement rather than new units.
- Needs more trash cans at bus stops or at corners.
- "Great to see more infrastructure planning for Northeast Philadelphia."
- "On my row house block Near Roosevelt Boulevard and Levick, there are more and more renters, and crime is increasing."
- "We don't need the town center. We don't need any residential. The shopping center is already surrounded by residential."

ZONING

- Leave Jeanes Hospital zoning alone to safeguard Burholme Park.
- SP-INS is worth a look at Nazareth Hospital.
- Oxford Avenue and rail line is industrial, needs corrective zoning.
- Bustleton Avenue between Borbeck and Loney: commercial properties have residential zoning in rear.

From Emails

I understand there will be at least one more meeting to review the final plan. I would just ask that any plan at its core address the issues of keeping the residential areas residential and clean. It should also address improving the appearance along the business corridors like those on Castor Ave and Roosevelt Mall. New lighting, better trash removal and anti-graffiti initiatives would help in improving new business areas. Any improvements that would make our business areas more inviting is welcome. (Rhawnhurst Civic Association)

From the Blog, PhiladelphiaPlaneto

Country Club Diner **From the Blog**

Likes - 18

Tweets – 11

Fox Chase Farm **From the Blog**

Likes - 22

Tweets – 7

From the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia:

The Preservation Alliance appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Central Northeast District Plan, as well as the Planning Commission's efforts to engage the Alliance in the district planning process. We offer the following comments on the plan:

- It is encouraging to see historic preservation issues and opportunities discussed throughout the district plan, not just in the Renew section specifically designated for historic preservation recommendations. "Celebrating Mid-Century Corridors" (pp. 14-15) is a particularly welcome component of the plan document.
- We would recommend removing the Septa Bus Turnaround from the illustration on p.15, since it was constructed within the last two decades and should not be described as a "mid-century modern" building. It would more properly be used as a good illustration of sympathetic contemporary architecture. Other good examples of iconic midcentury buildings are the Cottman Professional Building (1936 Cottman Ave.), the Concordia Building (8400 Bustleton Ave.), the Glendale Medical Center (7601 Castor Ave.), and the former Fidelity Trust Company (8200 Castor Ave.)
- The photo of 2200 Cottman Avenue (p. 28) does not include its characteristic glass curtain façade facing Horrocks Street. Substituting a better photo would strengthen this section, as would including a photograph of the Cottman Professional Building also in this corridor.
- Though we are supportive of the recommendation to preserve the pedestrian and commercial character of Rising Sun Avenue in the Five Points focus area (pp. 40-43), we believe that it is an overreach to describe the buildings identified on the maps on pages 41 and 42 as good examples of mid-century modern architecture. The majority of these buildings appear to be from the early twentieth century, while some have been altered with midcentury features, none of the buildings specifically identified are particularly distinctive or intact examples of midcentury design as implied by the map keys.
- The Bells Corner Bus Loop is again misidentified as midcentury modern on p. 53.
- The recommendation to replace the roof of Ryerss Mansion is repeated twice on p. 57. Given its status as a Philadelphia Register-listed property, the recommendation should include language about appropriate materials. This recommendation should be supported by a comprehensive conditions assessment of the building.
- The Pine Road picnic shelter within Pennypack Park is (or was recently) in poor condition. All of the park's stone picnic shelters, restroom buildings and guard boxes should be maintained and rehabilitated.
- The historic preservation component of the plan (p. 59) should be augmented with a map of all Philadelphia and National Register-listed historic resources in the district, as was included in other district plans.
- The eligibility for listing Fox Chase Farm on the Philadelphia Register should be confirmed with the Philadelphia Historical Commission, given its location partially outside the City of Philadelphia.
- We would encourage additional nomination recommendations. Attached is a list of eligible structures we previously submitted to the Planning Commission for consideration. Of these, designation of the Northeast Regional Library, District Health Center #10, and the Five Points war memorial most directly complement other goals included in the district plan.

From the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia:

Central Northeast Planning District Recommendations: Draft 9-12-13

Candidates for Designation to the Philadelphia Register:

As identified by thematic resource inventories and community members through Preservation Alliance workshops

Civic/Municipal Buildings

Northeast Regional Library

2228 Cottman Avenue
Geddes, Brecher, Qualls, Cunningham, 1963

District Health Center #10

2230 Cottman Avenue
Norman Rice, 1974

Engine 71 Fire Station

1900 Cottman Avenue
Trout & Truscott, c. 1930

World War I Memorial

“5-points” intersection of Rising Sun, Oxford and Cottman Avenues

Commercial Buildings

Hop Angel Brauhaus (former inn)

7980-84 Oxford Avenue
c. 1683, altered. Purported to be oldest surviving building in Fox Chase

Ott Camera

6901 Castor Avenue
Allan A. Berkowitz, 1955

Philadelphia Savings Fund Society, Northeast Branch

2014 Cottman Avenue
Kneedler, Mirick & Zantzing, c. 1955
Central Northeast Planning District: Historic Resources 2

Religious Buildings

Maternity BVM Roman Catholic Church

Old Bustleton and Winchester Avenues (Pennypack Park)
c. 1870

Residential Buildings

Verre Road House

8600 Verre Road (Pennypack Park)
c. 1701, c. 1850. Associated with former Verreeville village.

Kline House

8600 Verre Road (Pennypack Park)
c. 1750-1850. Associated with former Verreeville village.