

LOWER NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Second Public Meeting Summary

Over 50 citizens attended the second of three public meetings for the Lower Northwest District Plan. The meeting was held on June 26, 2014 at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, which is located at 8480 Haggs Mill Road in Upper Roxborough.

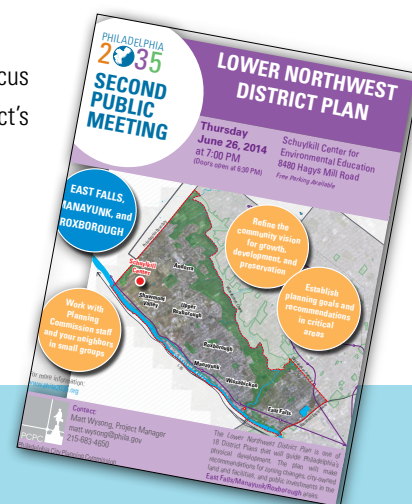
This meeting was a critical part of the planning process and served multiple purposes: (1) to provide an update on the planning process; (2) the establishment of planning goals to inform zoning remappings within the District; (3) the collection of land use and transportation recommendations for the two Focus Areas - Ivy Ridge and Wissahickon Gateway; and (4) the assessment of general health within the District through a "Healthy Living Survey." The second meeting was truly about listening to the desires of the public and translating them into plan recommendations.

The Zoning Remapping Exercise provided residents with an opportunity to guide how their community will develop. A variety of planning goals were provided by the Planning Commission as a way to generate a balanced perspective for the long-term visioning of the District. These goals reflect ways in which zoning can alter or preserve the character of the built environment.

The Focus Area Exercise was executed in a charrette format and enabled residents to establish desired land uses and transportation infrastructure improvements within the two Focus Areas. Planning Commission staff asked groups to identify desired land uses by placing colored land use dots on a map of the District.

Participants were also asked to fill out an anonymous ballot with more specific questions related to the Focus Areas and a 'Healthy Living Survey' which will be used to identify barriers to healthy living within the District's neighborhoods. Please see a more detailed synopsis of these processes within the meeting summary.

The final public meetings held in early September, 2014.



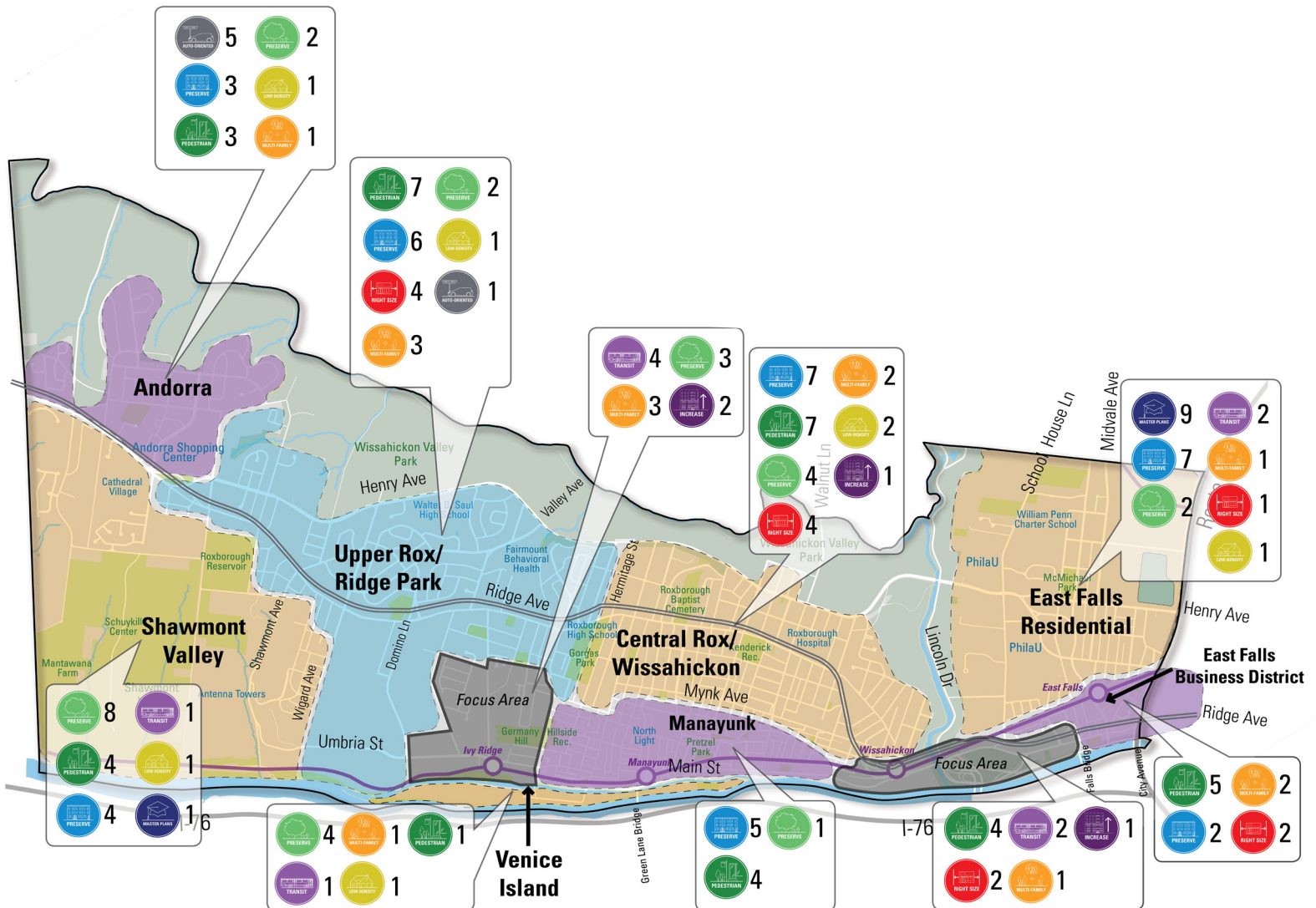
June 26th, 2014

Schuylkill Center for
Environmental Education



Planning Goals for Zoning Remapping Exercise

Participants of the June meeting were asked to match planning goals for zoning remapping with geographic clusters within the District. The boundaries of these clusters were determined by neighborhood and RCO (Registered Community Organization) boundaries, and areas with similar densities, uses, typologies, and identities. This activity not only informs PCPC's process for zoning recommendations, but also provides an opportunity to garner the community's perspective on land use suitability. During the exercise, each group was given a set of planning goal stickers to place over each geographic cluster. These goals reflect specific zoning recommendations that can alter or preserve the character of the built environment. Planning Commission facilitators encouraged discussion and consensus prior to making zoning recommendations and tried to make sure that goals did not conflict.






MAP LEGEND:




- Preserve existing residential densities and character
- Increase residential development and density
- Encourage low-density suburban housing
- Maintain or encourage auto-oriented commercial
- Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
- Preserve unprotected environmental resources
- Encourage new multi-family housing construction
- Create master plans for large institutions
- Encourage transit-oriented development
- "Right size" commercial corridors

The following are the top planning goals PCPC staff will use to guide zoning remapping recommendations within each area of the LNW District:




Shawmont Valley:

-  Preserve unprotected open space and environmental resources
-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial





Andorra:

-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
-  Maintain or encourage auto-oriented commercial




Upper Roxborough/Ridge Park:

-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
-  "Right size" commercial corridors


Central Roxborough/Wissahickon:

-  Preserve unprotected open space and environmental resources
-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
-  "Right size" commercial corridors



Ivy Ridge:

-  Encourage transit-oriented development
-  Preserve unprotected open space and environmental resources
-  Encourage new multi-family housing construction




Venice Island:

-  Preserve unprotected open space and environmental resources





Manayunk:

-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial





Wissahickon Gateway:

-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
-  "Right size" commercial corridors
-  Encourage transit-oriented development

East Falls Business District:

-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Encourage new multi-family housing construction
-  Maintain or encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial
-  "Right size" commercial corridors

East Falls Residential:

-  Create master plans for large institutions
-  Preserve existing residential densities and character
-  Preserve unprotected open space and environmental resources
-  Encourage transit-oriented development

Focus Area Exercise

The intent of this exercise was to envision future land uses for the Ivy Ridge and Wissahickon Gateway Focus Areas. These areas are anticipated to change in the future and present opportunities for targeted growth and proper planning.

For this exercise, the Ivy Ridge and Wissahickon Gateway Focus Areas were broken up into smaller geographic clusters. Boundaries of these clusters were determined by areas with similar densities, uses, typologies, and character. Each participant was provided with a variety of colored dots that represent various land use colors and had the task of placing land use dots within each cluster. The land use dots represented various uses, including: Residential, Commercial, Mixed-Use (Commercial & Residential), Light Industrial, and Public Open Space. Planning Commission staff encouraged discussion prior to making land use recommendations. Participants were also asked to identify key connections that need to be created or improved in order to enhance circulation safety and transportation alternatives (e.g., walk, bike, bus, or train).

After this exercise, Planning Commission staff distributed an anonymous ballot pertaining to the Focus Areas. The outcomes of that ballot can be found further into this document.

The input and direction obtained from group exercise will inform the Focus Area recommendations in the Lower Northwest Plan.

A. Focus Area Exercise > Ivy Ridge

WHICH LAND USES DO WE WANT?

Areas of Shared Character

Residential

Commercial

Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)

Light Industrial

Public Open Space

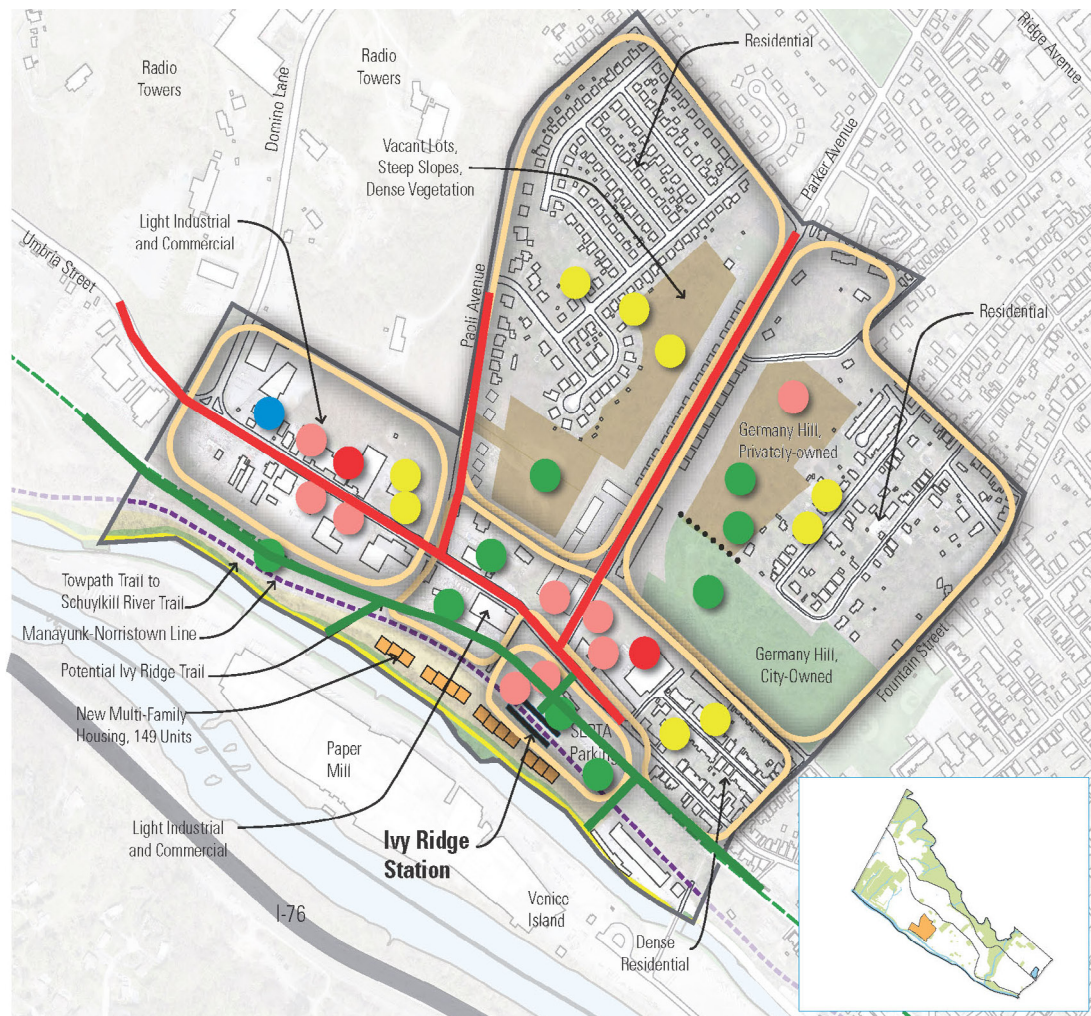
WHICH TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS SHOULD WE IMPROVE?

Improve or Create Roadway

- > Enhance Pedestrian and Bicycle safety
- > Improve Aesthetics (Streetscaping)

Create New Pedestrian or Bike ONLY Connection

0 500 1000
Feet



The following are the most commonly identified land uses that PCPC staff will use to guide land use recommendations within the Ivy Ridge Focus Area:

Industrial Section of Umbria Street:

- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Residential

Intersection of Parker and Umbria:

- Public Open Space
- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Residential

Ivy Ridge Station:

- Public Open Space
- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)

Paoli Heights:

- Residential

Germany Hill:

- Public Open Space
- Residential

The following are the most commonly identified transportation connections for improvement within the Ivy Ridge Focus Area:

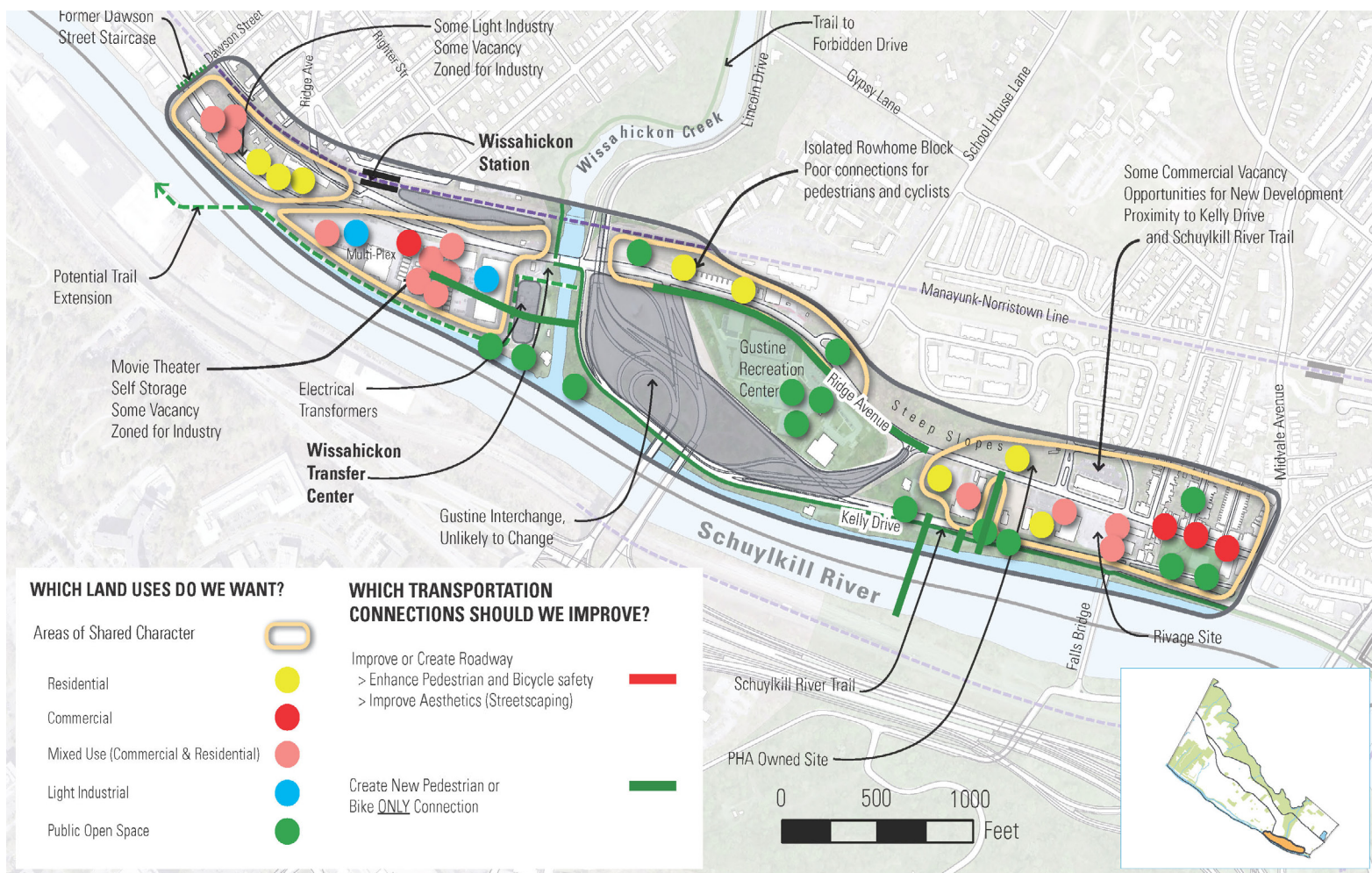
Roadways on which to enhance pedestrian/bike safety and aesthetics:

- Umbria Street
- Paoli Avenue
- Parker Avenue

Areas for New Pedestrian or Bike ONLY Connections:

- Ivy Ridge Trail (Existing Trail)
- Waterfront Connections to Umbria Street

B. Focus Area Exercise > Wissahickon Gateway



The following are the most commonly identified land uses that PCPC staff will use to guide land use recommendations within the Wissahickon Gateway Focus Area:

Lower Manayunk:

- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Residential

Wissahickon Gateway (Multi-Plex):

- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Light Industrial

Ridge Avenue (Behind Gustine Interchange):

- Public Open Space
- Residential

East Falls Business District:

- Residential
- Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Public Open Space
- Commercial

The following are the most commonly identified transportation connections for improvement within the Wissahickon Gateway Focus Area:

Roadways on which to enhance pedestrian/bike safety and aesthetics:

- Ridge Avenue

Areas for New Pedestrian or Bike ONLY Connections:

- Extension of the Schuylkill River Trail
- Schuylkill River Trail (Esiting Trail)
- Bike Bridge Across the Wissahickon Creek (Existing Proposal)
- Wissahickon Creek Trail (Existing Trail)
- Kelly Drive and Schuylkill River Connection
- Kelly Drive and Ridge Avenue Connection

Healthy Community Survey

Get Healthy Philly, an initiative of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, has partnered with PCPC to support their efforts in creating environments that promote healthy living.

Planning Commission staff administered a "Healthy Living Survey" at the second Lower Northwest District Plan community meeting to identify some of the district's barriers to a healthy lifestyle. After a brief presentation on the District's health profile and the role of the physical determinants of health, residents were asked to think about how much exercise they were getting, how often they walked to the store for essentials, and whether they were incorporating physical activity into their daily commute.

For each indicator, participants provided a self ranking (0 to 5 score) and identified personal barriers that challenged them from engaging in each of those healthy activities. Participants were also asked to rate their neighborhood's healthy living promotion activities and to identify strategies that they have encountered that have helped them live healthier.

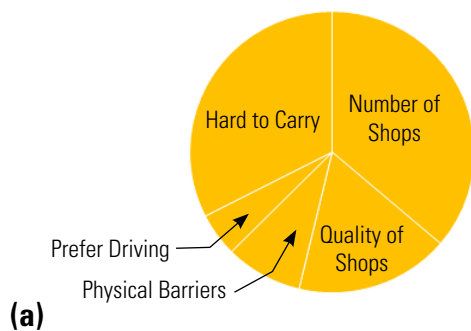
The Planning Commission received 30 surveys back from residents across the district. The barriers identified in these surveys provide PCPC with talking points to continue to engage with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health regarding built environment strategies for addressing childhood obesity and adult diabetes.

Barriers to Healthy Living Survey - Responses

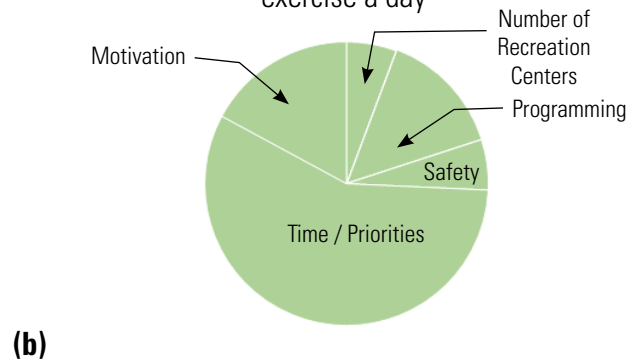
"What are the challenges in your neighborhoods to engaging in the healthy activities identified below (a,b,c)?"

"What strategies do you see in your community to promote healthy lifestyles (d)?"

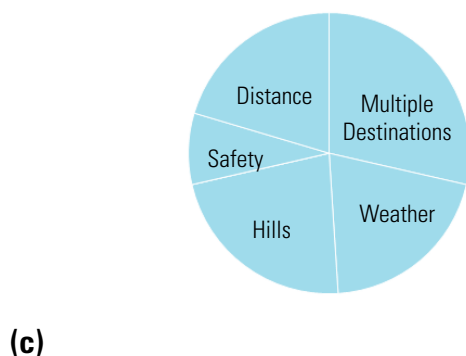
Shop - Walk to store for essentials



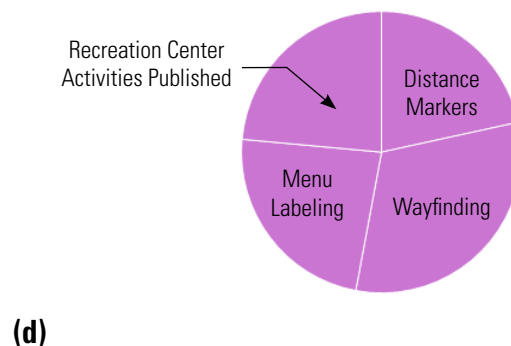
Play - 30 minutes of strenuous exercise a day



Work - Commute by transit, bike, or walking



Learn - Health promotion tools in your neighborhood



BALLOT: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

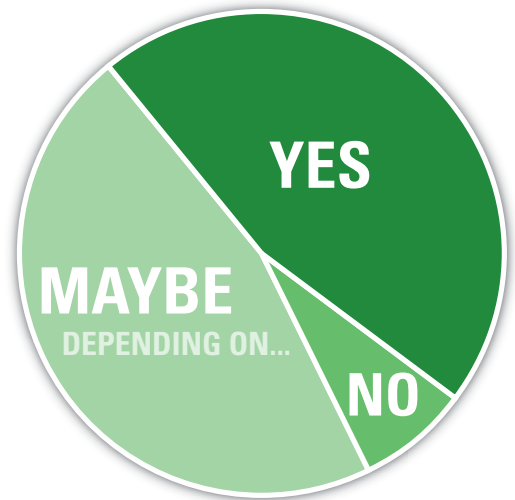
QUESTIONS FOR IVY RIDGE

Should Ivy Ridge Station have a parking garage?

YES:	46%
NO:	8%
MAYBE, depending on...	46% (see comments)

Comments:

- Garage should be hidden as much as possible
- Depends upon the cost of construction, aesthetic appearance, and safety
- Any new garage should be kept "low-rise"
- Build garage if there is transit oriented development to reduce traffic demand
- Parking should be low cost or free of charge
- Open space should be preserved, no new commercial buildings where open space exists

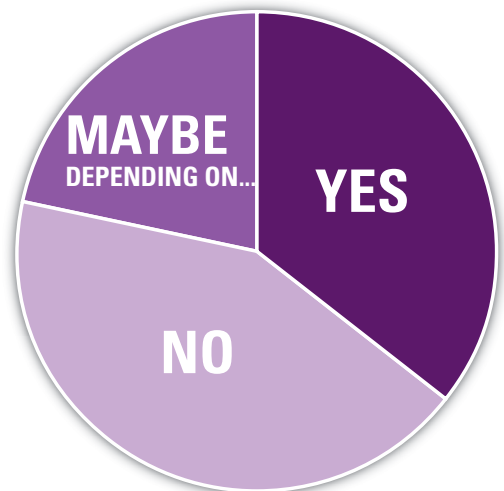


Should Ivy Ridge Station allow for development or new uses on its parking lots?

YES:	36%
NO:	43%
MAYBE, depending on...	21% (see comments)

Comments:

- Mixed use and open space development
- Ample parking should be provided for any new development
- No need for additional open community space at the station
- Food service, retail, or bike rental business would be beneficial
- High density transit oriented development would also be good.



What changes or improvements in this area could benefit the district as a whole?

Comments:

- Traffic light at Parker Avenue is very hazardous to pedestrians
- There is a need for more frequent trains
- No more housing, including condominiums, etc. There is a glut of development and the streets cannot handle the associated traffic
- The bicycle situation on Umbria Street is very dangerous.
- Reduce traffic demand going through the district (short-cut?)
- Better pedestrian connections are required to and from transit and trails
- Sidewalks on Umbria are in need of improvement
- Complete bike path and fix Main Street Bridge
- Road Conditions, sidewalks need improvement
- Historic recognition
- Attention to bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Preserve land and open space

BALLOT: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

QUESTIONS FOR WISSAHICKON GATEWAY

Should we relocate or reconfigure the Bus Transfer Station to improve traffic circulation? Where could it be relocated?

YES: 97%
NO: 3%

If yes, what location?:

Restaurant depot land 43%

Cineplex area 37%

Same general area 4%

Surrounding Industrial 4%

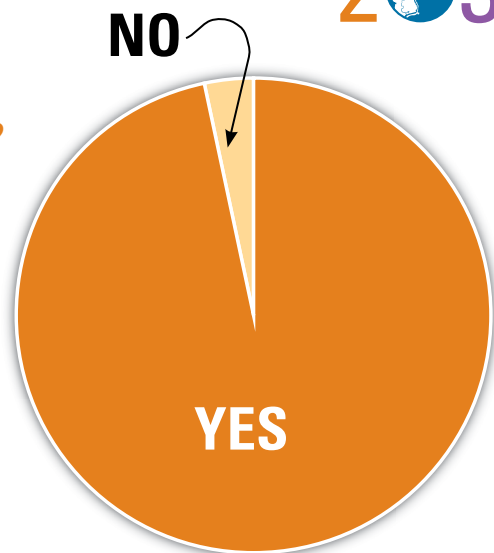
Further down Main St. 4%

As far North as possible 4%

PHA site 4%

Other Suggestions:

- *Should have off-street loading and turn-around*
- *Make the area more of a transit oriented development*
- *Keep it away from Wissahickon Transfer Station*

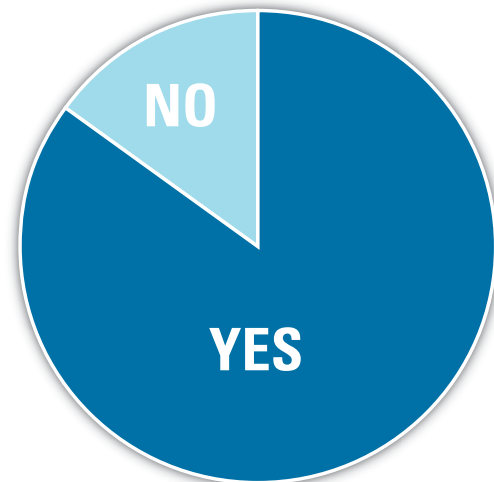


Should there be a public art installation, public space and/or active use to define the gateway? If so, what and where?

YES: 85%
NO: 15%

If Yes, what location?:

- *The intersection of Wissahickon and Schuylkill*
- *Near the transfer station*
- *Main Street movie theater lot*
- *Along Kelly Drive*
- *Near Rivage site*
- *At the current transfer Station*



General comments for Gateway installation/public space/ active use:

- *A bicycle related use or installation would be nice*
- *Marking community gateways is a good thing*
- *A mosaic mural with the history of the area would be nice*
- *A sign would be easier to agree upon than an art installation*
- *Could organize an art competition for area along Ridge Avenue*
- *A through-walkway under Wissahickon Station along bend is a good idea*
- *Address the slope of Ridge Avenue from the bus depot to Manayunk Avenue*
- *Landscaping in the area is too barren*
- *Trees would be a welcome sign at the traffic interchange*
- *Public space is good- should have water, concessions, trailhead, public restrooms*



LNW Public Meeting



Appendix of Comments

General Comments from the Zoning Remapping Exercise:

- Improve and push forward Ivy Ridge trail
- Ridge and Henry “unfriendly crossing”
- Shawmont Valley - Lack of sidewalks/inventory of historic properties
- Andorra – Low density, a little more Multi-Family units near shopping center
- Mixed-use at Port Royal/Ridge
- Upper Roxborough connection to Wissahickon Park/ Preserve low density/ too much change
- Master Plan for Philadelphia University (Philly U) and Drexel Medical
- Trees are being cut down for development along Manayunk Avenue
- Venice Island flooding issue
- Central Roxborough – high density, more commercial for food services, better use of parking lots on site (new ones), mixed use Multi-Family units, redevelopment improvements on Ridge
- Venice Island better connections to Manayunk/leave the “wild” wild (Riverside)/ Island appropriate commercial uses
- Manayunk in becoming too dense, need more parking
- Manayunk traffic is affected by development
- Preserve Wissahickon Trail and Saul High School
- Open Shawmont Street
- No Multi-Family units on Indian Queen
- East Falls – no new commercial/industry/corner stores and restaurants if there already
- Shawmont School commercial zoning?
- Preserve Shawmont Valley (housing and nature)
- Andorra Shopping Center outdated
- Cathedral Village needs a master plan
- Shawmont Avenue and Umbria Street – traffic issues, accidents, speeding, needs public transit
- Lower southwest East Falls residential needs more housing for students
- Address retaining wall issues in East Falls
- Connect East Falls Business District to Kelly Drive
- Make Henry Avenue more pedestrian friendly, slow traffic down, better biking consistency, more sidewalks
- Ivy Ridge parking garage
- Central Roxborough – restaurants, mixed-use along lower Ridge
- Limit development along Green Lane in Central Roxborough 600 Block
- Better connect Andorra to other areas
- Better connection to Center City
- Improve interchange at Green Lane (+1)
- Improve walkability along Ridge and Umbria/discourage front parking
- Create better connection to suburbs
- Transit Oriented Development at Ivy Ridge
- Parking permits and Ivy Ridge
- Improve bike safety at Wissahickon Gateway
- Reduce height limit, commercial areas (no CMX 2.5)
- Expand side walks around Philly U
- Keep trucks off Henry Avenue
- Central Roxborough Ridge Avenue is best commercial corridor in district
- Need signs for trail heads and make area more accessible
- No industrial
- Remove barriers to river access
- Reorient/improve park between Ridge and River Road
- Create park/gateway on Ridge in Central Roxborough

- Make all Ridge pedestrian friendly in Central Roxborough
- Build dorms on vacant PHA properties in East Falls
- Preserve green buffers between Philly U and Wissahickon Creek
- Preserve single family housing in East Falls
- No institution uses at EPPI site, prefer mixed-use
- Multi-family on Ridge in East Falls
- Encourage more use and access to river (public dock)
- Need master plan at Abbottsford Homes (better integrate into surrounding areas)
- Connect East Falls and Manayunk to Creek
- Make Ridge and Henry more pedestrian friendly
- More sidewalks in Shawmont Valley
- Build Ivy Ridge Trail
- Recreation, public dock for river access in East Falls
- Create a circulation route in East Falls Business District
- Traffic calming on Henry Avenue
- Concentrate development around Ivy Ridge
- Preserve all of Shawmont Valley
- More industrial in Upper Roxborough
- Better river access (pedestrian) in Manayunk
- Preserve neighborhood identity in Manayunk
- Create East to West bike connection
- Henry Avenue needs medians, more bike paths, and safer pedestrian paths

General Comments from the Focus Area Exercise:

A. Focus Area Exercise > Ivy Ridge

- Umbria Street
 - Traffic calming needed for new development
 - Ivy Ridge Bike Path – Takes traffic off of Umbria Street
 - No strip malls on Umbria Street!
 - Shops on Umbria Street (more of them)
 - Traffic controls needed at Umbria and Parker Street
 - Umbria Street, North of Paoli, needs more residential
- Ivy Ridge Station
 - As a green gateway
 - Commercial integrated into garage
 - Screen garage
 - Intermodal bike parking
 - Connect trails to Ivy Ridge Station and Umbria Street
 - Create space for bus transfers at station
- More connecting bus routes, especially at night

B. Focus Area Exercise > Wissahickon Gateway

- Run a loop circulation bus route along Main Street
- East River Drive: Install angled parking or make two lanes
- Ridge Avenue: Install new sidewalks along Gustine Recreation Center and to the east
- Make steps at Wissahickon Train Station more welcoming
- Move Wissahickon Bus Station to the west, the Multi-Plex Shopping Center
- Create a way to turn around outbound on Ridge
- Re-imagine lands under the Gustine Interchange for recreation
- Install a public dock and public art at confluence of Wissahickon and Schuylkill River
- Connect Wissahickon Transfer Center to the Wissahickon Train Station
- Create better bike connections on Main Street

- Investigate additional bike crossing across the river
- No development of open space along the river
- Pull Wissahickon Transfer Center off of Ridge
- Don't move the Wissahickon Transfer Center
- Moving train station is a bad idea – quiet residential area
- Preserve Gustine Recreation Center
- Allow higher density in East Falls along Ridge Avenue
- Grab riverside land to allow for pedestrian access
- East Falls along Kelly Drive preserve green space

General Comments from the Wissahickon Gateway Ballot:

Question 3: What changes or improvements in this area could benefit the district as a whole?

- Turning the vacant lots into green spaces and access lines to the river
- Access and signage to the river!
- Signage for trail heads, pedestrian walkways
- Increase access to Kelly Drive and Wissahickon Park
- Increase pedestrian access everywhere
- Vacated land – create new uses, force owners to maintain vacated property such as trees and weed maintenance
- More green space!
- Better bike lanes/pedestrian options
- Street lights at the pedestrian scale
- Street furniture, plantings, etc.
- Mark entry
- Limit front yard parking/garages
- Concentrated high density/ mixed commercial/ residential in areas near the river/ along old commercial districts
- bring people to these areas to activate them, create a destination
- Better pedestrian walkways, better bike path, residential development near the river (mixed use)
- Move fire station near Bob's Batting Cages, streetscape East Fall riverfront business district
- New dock in East Falls
- Better sidewalks, bike lanes
- Bike trails and free parking (or metered) by the river
- Celebrate the Schuylkill River
- Change area from Wissahickon Creek to Pencoyd Bridge to multi-use housing and apartments
- Better/safer bike and pedestrian
- Transit oriented development near Wissahickon Transfer Station
- Fantastic presentation
- Less suburban strip mall feel
- Reject proposal to put in parking spaces at Inn Yard Park
- More green space along Ridge
- Install sidewalks on Scotts Lane
- Maintain sidewalk on School House Lane
- Transit oriented development and mixed use for increased occupancy for commercial spaces
- Wider lanes for traffic/bike lane alternatives to Main Street
- Bike related – can we solve the bike path disconnect at the Wissahickon Gateway
- Filling in missing public transit, pedestrian bike access/paths
- Historic preservation for distinctive row house and industrial architecture
- Limit new home construction to preserve neighborhood character
- Eliminate any focus on being auto-centric
- Healthy food market
- Better connections with Creek will connect both sides/neighborhoods
- More mixed-use development
- Zoning for green space, along Kelly Drive and Ridge Avenue should be part of residential, or mixed-use – similar to Ridge Flats, but for even smaller properties/developers

General Comments from the Ivy Ridge Ballot:

Question 3: What changes or improvements in this area could benefit the district as a whole?

- Turning the vacant lots into green spaces and access lines to the river
- Access and signage to the river!
- Signage for trail heads, pedestrian walkways
- Ottinger tract and land preservation
- The old restaurant on Venice Island should be demolished

Healthy Community Survey

Healthy Living Survey LNW District Plan

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Please share with us either your address or the street intersection that you live closest to:

<div>Play</div> <p>Adults should get 30 minutes of strenuous activity every day. Kids, 45 Minutes. On a scale of 1 to 5, do you?</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 Never-----Always</p>	<p>What are the major challenges to accomplishing this? Please X all that apply, and circle the biggest challenge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Distance to park/rec center <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of park/rec center <input type="checkbox"/> No interesting program nearby <input type="checkbox"/> Safety and security Other _____</p>	<p>Could you elaborate?</p>
<div>Shop</div> <p>With all of the hassles of city traffic, it's nice to be able to walk to the store for essentials Do you?</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 Never-----Always</p>	<p>What are the major challenges to accomplishing this? Please X all that apply, and circle the biggest challenge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Stores within 3 blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Merchandise doesn't appeal <input type="checkbox"/> Physical barriers (busy road, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to drive <input type="checkbox"/> Don't like to carry large amounts Other _____</p>	<p>Could you elaborate?</p>
<div>Work</div> <p>Commuting to school or work by transit, bike, or foot is not always practical. Do you?</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 Never-----Always</p>	<p>What are the major challenges to accomplishing this? Please X all that apply, and circle the biggest challenge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple destinations <input type="checkbox"/> Weather <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Hills <input type="checkbox"/> Distance <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have proper gear Other _____</p>	<p>Could you elaborate?</p>
<div>Learn</div> <p>Sometimes the healthy choice is not the obvious one. Does your community actively promote healthy living by keeping you informed?</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 Never-----Always</p>	<p>Please X all of the strategies that your community uses.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Menus for labeling of calories <input type="checkbox"/> Wayfinding signs for pedestrians <input type="checkbox"/> Distance markers to attractions <input type="checkbox"/> Rec Center advertising activities Other _____</p>	<p>Could you elaborate?</p>

Live

Healthy living means being active and eating right. What do you find the most challenging about living a healthier lifestyle?
