

Central District Plan Public Feedback

THRIVE

- **From the Public Meeting**
 - Put a Ritz movie theatre near the Parkway to serve residents – maybe at the Whole Foods site
 - New Whole Foods site should incorporate hotel use with apartments
 - 21st & Hamilton should be one-way east bound on Hamilton Street
 - No Use → New Use Task Force should expand to West South Street area to Schuylkill
 - Moving 6th Police District building is a good idea – combine with 9th & Headquarters
 - Don't combine the 6th & 9th Police Districts – feel more comfortable being closer to the 6th Police building
 - Concerts on the Parkway should move to other areas – Belmont Plateau or Penn's Landing – need to be away from residential areas
 - No Use → New Use Task Force - AVI will be incentive enough – or lessen restrictions on rehabs, particularly regulatory barriers
 - AVI undervalues land – pass on full cost of owning vacant land to property owner
 - Move Independence Branch of the library into the Gallery or Lit Bros. building
 - Incorporate residential into Central Branch expansion plan
 - No Use → New Use Task Force – bring tax delinquents to court faster, fast track sheriff's sales (especially on commercial corridors), lump cases against single owner together in one sale by one agency
 - Task Force could duplicate existing efforts – incorporate community leaders in task force
 - Central Branch expansion should incorporate green space so building can be enjoyed – needs gates for security
 - Task Force should enforce violations
 - Encouraged by community schools with arts programs like in Queen Village
- **From the March 19th PCPC Meeting**
 - Combine the Police Headquarters with the 6th & 9th Police District Buildings – the Headquarters and 6th Police District take up too much parking in Chinatown
 - What are PECO's plans for its substation in Callowhill? Will they be expanding? Is it safe?
 - Get Reading Railroad to the table to discuss the future of the Reading Viaduct – it's a blight on the neighborhood
- **From e-mails**
 - None of my friends have left the City for any other reason than the school situation. No friends or neighbors have ever claimed lack of cultural, entertainment, or recreational resources for the reason they left for the suburbs. They love the diversity and awareness

that raising a child in the city avails. In fact most are saddened to leave the city they love. It's just that they don't want to risk their children's success by not having a decent public education for their kids. And many upper middle class families don't find the private school options financially accessible nor want their children to attend a religious school.

I hope your endeavor has gone well, and sorry I am just chiming in now, but I want you to know, if you don't already, that Center City parents are getting their feathers and their nests seriously ruffled right now. The one-two punch of our property taxes skyrocketing and the threats posed by the School District to cut public education even more at the knees poses a serious threat to any growth spurt of middle class stability and residential property values in Center City. Families who are paying for private education will not be willing to bear the burden of both tuition and higher taxes. This simply does not make sense and is not feasible to upper middle class families.

It's not conjecture on my part - I am merely reporting to you what I am hearing on the playground at school, and on my front stoop talking to my neighbors.

I hope your focus group has identified how important public education is to retaining families. The swelling demographics of young children make this an imperative planning issue to address. I can't imagine any other issue that even approaches the importance and accessibility of a decent education to upper middle class families. If the City doesn't handle this right, the demographics of young upper middle class families in Center City and surrounding gentrifying areas like Fairmount, Graduate Hospital, Northern Liberties, Bella Vista will fall off a cliff.

- Before making any decisions on a CBD, I would encourage you to look at what Singapore has done. This country is so well organized and thoughtful in what it does. One especially good thing they do is limit traffic into the CBD by requiring drivers to buy daily or monthly passes in order to enter. Some do but may take public transportation instead. That reduces traffic in the central areas, allows for more pedestrian walk ways and encourages the use of public transport. That's all good for the environment as well and is a good source of revenue for the city. Parking areas just outside of the CBD are set up with bus transport into the CBD for those who don't have more convenient means of public transport.
- Glad to see lots of good ideas in the draft plan. Here are just a few comments and suggestions.

(1) The ideas for building on the improvements at Dilworth plaza and enhancing all the public plaza around Center Square are all good and much needed. Enhancing City Hall Courtyard should be a top priority as Dilworth comes to completion next year. I also recently met with the new owner of 1515 Market Street to enlist their support for improvements to Penn Center Plaza, which could be a great location for the central bike station. We will also definitely look for the Planning Commission for support for enhancing the crosswalks at 15th and Market, where we have received some resistance from the Streets Department

(2) The ideas for reconnecting the urban fabric along the northern edge of the Center City commercial area, particularly in the Vine Street/ Callowhill corridor, all could help stimulate housing and commercial development in this underdeveloped area. But I am not sure, given your support for the elevated portion of the Reading Viaduct as a public park, you have not at least offered this as alternative for the below grade section west of Broad street. Having operated the Phlash tourist loop for four years, we learned two things: (a) that tourist loops should stay on major streets, like Market East and the Parkway, and (b) high-visibility is key to inducing impulse decisions by out-of-town visitors. There is little evidence that people leave the convention center and commence

tourist ventures; nearly all of these depart in our experience from downtown hotels and other visitor destinations. Therefore, putting this loop on Race and Arch Street east of Broad, where it misses the major convention hotels, and having it avoid the Parkway and be invisible for 6-7 blocks west of Broad seems misguided. As the highly successful, private double-decker bus tours demonstrate, visitors like to look out the window and watch the city pass by. By overall, glad to see the Planning Commission so fully engaged again in planning for the future of the city. Paul Levy, Center City District

No Use → New Use Task Force

- **From the Blog**
 - No Comments

Likes - 5

Tweets - 0

CONNECT

• From the Public Meeting

- Does parking maximum apply to cars or bikes? In Parkway area there is concern about adequate parking in residential area
- City Hall/15th Street subway station concourse is embarrassing – very important to improve especially for tourists
- Need to increase enforcement of traffic laws on bicyclists, especially red light running
- Need other transit connections – Graduate Hospital area to Northern Liberties, stop in Rittenhouse Square, el stop at 21st Street
- Are there any plans to expand the bike network?
- Higher parking prices cause young people to park in residential areas and cause nuisances while walking home on north-south streets
- Why does real time transit information rank so high?
- What are the results of bike share in University City?
- Bike share is a great idea
- Bus information should be available on smart phones
- Improve signal synchronization
- Connect the Cultural Loop to 30th Street Station
- Open up the Reading Viaduct cut to charter buses – use EZ Pass system
- Need murals at 19th & 22nd Street stops
- Concerns with loading zones in Washington Square West
- Allow bus stops off of Walnut for regional users
- Like parking maximums
- BRT can accommodate other routes, such as the 48
- Consolidate the 19th & 22nd Street stations – can gate it for faster boarding – only one elevator needed
- Will there be light rail or a trolley bus on the Delaware waterfront?
- If we want to compete with best cities we need to do better than buses
- Other subway stations may need improvements (such as Spring Garden)
- Love the transit concourse – so many opportunities
- Need to upgrade 30th Street subway station and improve connection to Amtrak station, especially for tourists to Center City
- Yes to real time information
- Need traffic calming on Schuylkill Avenue between Bainbridge and Christian Streets
- Need bike parking in existing buildings, especially rowhouses that have apartments
- Follow Pittsburgh's example (Gateway Station) get donations from adjacent property owners to upgrade materials and design when improving transit stations
- Improve connections to University City Station and the Medical complex
- Maybe use 30th Street lower level for dedicated transit use
- Yes to using City Branch cut for transit
- Need better enforcement of permit parking laws
- Higher parking permit fees are ok if “smarter” parking enforcement is done

Cultural Corridor BRT

• From the Blog

- Honestly, I would like to see the extra lanes of the City Branch preserved for a future light rail/subway spur. This is a rare right-of-way that can't be put to waste.
- Why would installing BRT lanes in the City Branch preclude it's future use for a light rail/subway spur. If anything, it will fix up the facility and keep it in good condition for future use, as opposed to letting it continue to sit unused and unfixed....

- This would be great! I rarely go to the waterfront or the Western portion of Fairmount park simply because there is so little public transit that goes there. I have enjoyed and utilized BRT in other cities. I think using a bus structure rather than rail cars is a flexible way to plan for the future.
Bringing the line down Delaware avenue past Penn's Landing would help revitalize those areas and give folks a chance to participate in festivals without an excessive parking fee. I also would like to see free interchange to the existing Broad Street, Market/Frankford and trolley services incorporated. Running a link to the southern tip of the broad street line/stadium area would take congestive pressure off a singular rail line for sporting events and help southbound passengers travel during parade route disruptions to bus service.
- I agree with Rob. The City Branch has the potential to connect Strawberry Mansion and other neighborhoods where the lack of public transportation has hindered revival.

Likes - 20

Tweets – 7

- **From e-mails**

- Last week, Friends of the Rail Park [formerly VIADUCTgreene] released the final materials resulting from our conceptual design process through the Community Design Collaborative focusing on a stretch of the City Branch from 13th to 18th Streets. The organization continues to see momentum building in public and stakeholder support for the vision to establish a continuous 3-mile linear park and recreation path along the 9th Street and City Branches.
We are aware that the draft Philadelphia Central District Plan currently proposes bus rapid transit as the sole future use for the City Branch, but we are hopeful that the final version of the plan will consider other viable alternatives, including opportunities for a linear park and recreation path within the right of way as an interim or parallel use. For the time being, we believe the most pressing issue is to preserve the integrity of the right of way so that future opportunities are not jeopardized. We invite you to review the final report of the conceptual design process, available via the following link:www.interface-studio.com/isftp/LMM/fotrp_continuous_and_connective.pdf If there is an opportunity to discuss these ideas any time in the near future, please let me know—we would love to hear your thoughts about the possibilities. Best regards on behalf of Friends of the Rail Park, Leah Murphy, Senior Associate Urban Designer and Planner, INTERFACE STUDIO LLC
- I know this is the last day for comments on the central district plan. I just wanted to note that I believe a recreational trail and linear park along the city branch should be considered as an alternate or parallel use with transit. Many thanks for your hard work on the plan and for taking this comment into consideration. Best, Scott
- It has come to my attention that a possible linear park for the City Branch section of the potential rail park has not been included in the Planning Commission's draft of the Philadelphia 2035 Central District Plan. That the only proposed use for the city branch section is bus rapid transit. I would like to encourage you to consider a park as a possibility for this underutilized space. It is my hope that the submerged section will join the elevated section and create a unique park that I and all Philadelphians will be proud of for generations. Respectfully, Alejandro Franqui
- I'd like to see the vision for the park and recreation path set out by the Friends of the Rail Park (formerly VIADUCTgreene) included in the Central District Plan as an alternative or parallel use for the City Branch. Thanks, Caitlin Zacharias, MCP
- A linear park that runs from beyond the art museum to broad street would be an amazing addition to the Philadelphia park system. I am in full support of the friends of the rail park vision. Please, please, please, make sure this park ends up in the district plan! Thank you, Ashley DiCaro, Philadelphia resident, urban planner
- It looks like your busy this week and I hope all is well. I just wanted to send a quick note saying that I and all of Postgreen Homes and its supporters are very much in favor of

adding the possibility of a park to the potential future uses for the rail line in the Central District Plan. We strongly believe it would boost the vibrancy of the urban environment city wide and should be included. That's all. Thanks! Chad Ludeman, President, Postgreen Homes Hybrid Construction

- I am writing to encourage the Planning Commission to include the 3 mile Rail Park proposed for Philadelphia in the 2035 Central District Plan. Thank you for your consideration to this urban project that could offer so much for the economic, cultural, & aesthetic growth of our city. Sincerely, Reyna Boyer
- Once again our city sends a whammy. We want to make sure that the city branch also called by normal folks the viaduct rail line to be a park and at LEAST for that vision to be part of the plan, discussion, debate. No pun intended: please stop railroading planning stuff and listen to what Philadelphians want. Nicole LaGreca, concerned citizen and urban explorer
- I understand the comment period for the Central District Plan is ending. I also understand that the idea of turning the City Branch into a park is not being put forth as an alternative or positive vision. As a person with many different kinds of hats in the community, and who was on the advisory committee for the 2035 Plan, I want to assert my support for including a rails to trails park in the plan as an alternative possibility--long or short term. Given the state of funding for transit, it seems at least plausible that funding for BRT or light rail there will never actually emerge. Moreover, its real practical benefits aren't clear. Of course, I want you to know that as the editor of the Hidden City Daily, we'll treat the issue and the Central District Plan with typical journalistic objectivity and integrity. All the best, Nathaniel Popkin
- The draft plan looks good. I really like the part about the Franklin Square Neighborhood – I walk through there almost daily with my dog, and you're right – it's a non-neighborhood right now. The dogs would miss the grassy area in front of the Metro condos, but reclaiming the corner of Franklin Square would make up for it. Just one big comment as a resident and employee who spends a lot of time in the Callowhill/Chinatown North neighborhood: I really support the idea of a linear park in the City Branch, and I believe the plan should include the vision for a park/recreation path along the corridor – as an alternative or complementary use to BRT. Seems to me that Pennsylvania Avenue/the Ben Franklin Parkway would be better hosts to BRT Please include the vision for transforming the City Branch into a linear park in the Central District Plan! Thanks for your consideration, Mindy Watts, AICP, PP, Interface Studio LLC
- I am a resident of Fairmount, and while I do support public transportation, I feel that the City Branch would better serve our community as a public park, not a bus corridor. Please include the vision for the 3 mile City Branch Park in the 2035 Central District Plan. It would be very short sighted not to do this. I just attended the forum "More Park Less Way" and really there wasn't really more park proposed--this would actually give us more Park. It would be much better to include a dedicated bike way in that section that a short line bus--biking is the future of our city. Alison McDowell
- As a urban planner by trade and a lifelong Philadelphian, I believe that the City Branch should not be recommended as exclusively a transit corridor as part of the 2035 plan. While I believe that efficient public transit is sorely lacking in this city, there are a plethora of options that could help solve this problem. While the corridor would certainly be a good for for a bus-line, I think the cultural and economic value it adds as a linear park may ultimately be more impactful. However, since we cannot make the determination for its highest and best use at this time, I think it would be prudent to more loosely define this space's use on the plan. Thanks for your consideration. Peter Crimmins
- Please know that I feel strongly that .the vision for a 3-mile park deserves consideration and recognition from the City, and that I urge you to include this vision in the 2035 Central District Plan. It is an incredible positive development opportunity for Philadelphia. Thank you for your anticipated response. Deborah E. Solo, Solo Real Estate, Inc.
- I would like to offer a few thoughts regarding consideration of the urban district plan for Center City and the inclusion of City Branch Park. The City Branch park is the SEPTA abandoned rail property running parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue and intersecting with

Broad Street and connecting to the Reading Viaduct Project advocated by the Center City District.

As a citizen of Philadelphia and a partner of the landscape architecture and urban design practice of OLIN I believe the linear park would provide civic structure and useful open space for the neighborhoods of Chinatown North and Callowhill. The neighborhoods are growing fast and without definition. Since the decline of industry and the insertion of the vine street expressway these neighborhood blocks have been developmentally limited. Now new uses are evolving a district of small businesses, condominiums and light industrial. The Community College of Philadelphia continues to grow, but other institutions have decamped notably the Inquirer. Broad Street our great civic connector symbolized so beautifully every year by the Broad Street run is effectively dormant here. A park is not a cure for all ills, but there is plenty of reason to suggest the City Branch park proposal could serve a need to spur and guide the quality of development in these neighborhoods, create a true campus open space for the community college and create a place of cultural memory for our industrial history. As a connector there is need for safe routes to bike and run in Center City without the block by block negotiation of the car at every intersection. If at any time you would like to discuss the merits of the proposal please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration. Best, Richard Roark

- I understand that the Planning commission is meeting today to end the review and comment period for the Central District Plan. I also understand that you do not presently intend to include a fresh vision for Rail Park that has been put forward. I am very much in favor of including the linear park, a conceptual design for a half mile stretch of the city branch www.interface-studio.com/isftp/LMM/fotrp_continuous_and_connective.pdf. It is imperative for the city, its future health and welfare, and economic growth that this plan be considered as an option for development. I would like to see this proposal included in the vision for the 2035 Central District Plan. It's the kind of development that will elevate Philadelphia into the ranks of America's first rate cities. Please reconsider your position. Thank you, Hilary Jay
- I was surprised to hear that the Central District Plan does not include a park and recreation path as a potential future use for the City Branch. I think that it would be a wonderful addition to the Central District and is compatible with the proposed bus rapid transit. Sincerely, Susan Dannenberg, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
- I was so excited to see that the city branch of the old rail line may be turned into a park, but saddened to hear that the only plan that Philadelphia has is to use it as a bus line. I implore you (and the city) to consider using this part as a park instead of a rapid bus transit line (or in addition to the bus line). there is so much potential for this part of the city. I recently went to NY and walked the Highline. It was the most beautiful thing that I have seen in a modern city. I believe that Philadelphia could have this same thing. I strongly believe that this part of the city, if used in a similar way as the Highline in NY, could be the biggest draw for Philadelphia and generate hundreds of millions in additional tourist revenue. In addition to drawing tourists, it would be such a wonderful place for all Philadelphians to "escape" the city. The Highline in NY is such a peaceful and serene place; Philadelphia would be a better city if the rail line was used for a park. Sincerely, Logan Welde
- Plus 62 additional e-mails in support of the Rail Park idea received after the May 15th deadline – all part of a large-scale e-mail campaign by Friends of the Rail Park.
- I know that the Rail Park people are making a big push to get their awful idea included in the Central Plan, please ignore them. No one else in the city outside their insular group thinks it's a good idea. Maybe if funds were unlimited, it would be worth talking about... actually, no, it wouldn't. It's a park with no inter-connection to the city below grade. Did the demolition of Dillworth Plaza make us forget so quickly what that leads to? Does their failure to mention the Benjamin Franklin Parkway **one time** in their entire report mean that we should pretend it doesn't exist? Please, ignore them. Even if you get a ton of emails as a result of their push, I can promise you: there is a silent majority that thinks their "mugger park" is extremely misguided, and would be a colossal waste of

money. David Goldfarb, Resident of East Passyunk Crossing (an area that **actually** lacks park space)

General Transportation Improvements

- **From the Blog**

- I'm looking forward to the Future. But in the Present, pedicabs operated by Chariots of Philly and others serve to fill in existing transportation gaps. Check out our past blog post discussing this topic: <http://rign.it/xj2eWI> Also, very much looking forward to bicycle sharing coming to Philadelphia and the wider availability of bicycle parking, but what about those that aren't able to pedal themselves? Our chariots (a.k.a. pedicabs or bikecabs or rickshaws) can transport young and old, those that can ride a bicycle and those that cannot. We want to transport Philadelphia! And while the Central District improves transit options, we are doing just that.

Likes - 4

Tweets - 0

- **From e-mails**

- Too many people drive to work. Unless you are a government official, such as City Council or the mayor, or in the medical field and perhaps in construction where you must haul equipment, you should be commuting. If you live in the city, you take our fantastic transit system which is SEPTA. People should not have the right to just drive where they want. If they do, they should be ticketed more for that choice. Chestnut Street should be Bus only, as should some other streets. Driving in a bus zone should get your license plate immediately snapshot, with a bill in the mail. Transit must be first. Transit needs to be encouraged, and drivers need to be ticketed a lot more often with those funds going directly to support SEPTA. The DRPA also needs to send funds to SEPTA as they have part of their bridges in Philadelphia territory. Perhaps tolling the Delaware Expressway for individuals going to the Airport, to support transit, as well as tolling Penrose and Passyunk Avenue which cross the Schuylkil River, and those whom insist on driving that are city residents will be tolled the maximum to push them to take the most efficient way, which is in fact, the R1 Airport Line. Bad habits such as driving in a city when you don't need to, must be paid for by those who just aren't thinking. We have the best transit system in the country and too many folks are glued to their cars. This needs to change in a city that is trying to be greener. Also these above implementations shouldn't be discussed in public but just implemented in the same way the "No Texting" zone was implimented at 15th Street and JFK Boulevard. If you give people an option to moan and complain, in return for just doing the right thing, they will moan and complain. It's better to just make this happen.

- **From Facebook**

- A great list of improvements! Quick question about the new bus terminal though, will it also include Bolt and Megabus spaces? The new bus terminal that is a part of the Union Station multimodal terminal in DC has done this with considerable success.

RENEW

- **From the Public Meeting**

- Great concept for Reading Viaduct – like the NY Highline
- There's a need for dog parks. All new development permits dogs and no dedicated spaces are incorporated into the design
- Need for good public schools
- Chinatown is an asset for the city – expand Chinatown North
- Julian Abele Park needs attention so it's not just a dog park
- Do linear park with lids over I-676
- Build over the Reading Viaduct to get more activity and incentives through density – push owners to cooperate
- Extend City Hall tours to weekends
- Where is the discussion of Penn's Landing?
- Can we make room for a bike lane on Race Street?
- Have iconic art project using the old steam plant exterior (lights/paint) at 12th Street
- “High Profile Destinations” – viaduct? Participate in a ULI/Economy League joint venture on World Class Philadelphia
- Need more outdoor recreational facilities in SOSNA – school yards, tot lots
- Put high-tech lightweight solar on Convention Center roof
- More green space in Chinatown/Callowhill is a great idea
- Like the viaduct, but extend it north and connect to future trails
- Need streetscape improvements on Washington Avenue – street trees, bump outs, etc

- **From E-mails**

- In Washington Square West, there has never been any public meeting in the community to speak to the issue of becoming an historic district. This is the work of a few people not the Civic. Not sure that all the people who put forth this idea even live in Wash West.
- I want the old, elevated railway to be made a park. Friends of Rail Park could make that possible. I want more green space as a Philadelphia lover and resident. Please help that happen. Lisette Soini

Respect for City Hall

- **From the Blog:**

- I don't know if this has come up in discussion before, but the air conditioners that stay in the windows year round of City Hall are probably a massive drain on heating cost during the winters. Between the unsightliness of hundreds of AC unit's butts sticking out every window in City Hall and the heat going out the windows every winter, efforts should be made to place these in storage during the many months that they are unnecessary.

Likes -

0

Tweets - 2

FOCUS AREAS

Civic Center Focus Area

- **From the Public Meeting**

- Reyburn Plaza improvements – what is going to activate the roof? Why would you want to go up to it?
- Area needs green space not necessarily retail – proposal calls for a lot of infrastructure for what there will be
- How does the bike station work? DO you have to pay for a shower?
- Donate game pieces at Reyburn Plaza to Please Touch Museum
- Great to get rid of pit at Broad Street – it just collects water
- Bike lane around City Hall is a very positive
- Don't call it "Civic Center" – that was in West Philadelphia – too confusing
- Get rid of chain link fences at City Hall
- Have "Shakespeare in City Hall Courtyard" – use it as a theatrical space
- Cost of improvements are what?
- No food trucks where it's shown – broken sidewalks, etc and trash – they do not manage the area
- Have cameras as bike station for security
- Who is going to control the seating for eating?
- Greening in Penn Center is possible
- Because plazas at Penn Center are not owned by the City – needs to be a substation of Center City District
- Stop using numbers for Penn Center
- Planters behind 4 Penn Center area good model for how planters should be done.
- Definitely have seating in Penn Center – but how will you deal with the smokers?
- Planters in Penn Center should not be "piss high"
- Farmer's Market/ good crafts/ fair – all good uses in a lunch hour – get's people out of the lobby of the building
- Lighting at Penn Center – should be pedestrian scale – make the whole area more pedestrian friendly through light
- The Love Park parking garage is dreadful – people would pay more to park elsewhere – entrances and exits are frightening
- Get rid of newspaper boxes at SEPTA entrances
- Put ticket kiosk in Reyburn Plaza, not City Hall courtyard
- How about an active use in center of City Hall courtyard – definitely FOOD
- More food inside the courtyard of City Hall
- More lighting and music (joy) in City Hall courtyard – have it open all of the time
- Courtyard of City Hall now is a DEAD ZONE – why?
- Bus shelters at NW corner of 15th & JFK should be incorporated into new structure proposed in plan – organize bus patrons better at this corner.
- Use food carts in City Hall courtyard to animate it
- Why is there parking on the apron of City Hall – who's so special?
- Give the plaza in front of the Convention Center treatment that matches PAFA in quality and style – right now it is disappointing
- Keystone service from Harrisburg should come to Suburban Station and reverse.

- **From the blog:**

- I fear with Reyburn that by concentrating on the Broad and Penn Square sides you've forgotten about the 15th St. (Love Park) side. Agreed with your assessment about pavilions on those sides—but I would rather see high-end dining proposed for Penn Center on Reyburn's 15th St. side: the high platform provides a beautiful overlook over Love Park, it activates an unused space, and is implementable with little more than the cost of another small pavilion.

15th St. also has the problem of a long blank wall at street level. Is there any way to reshuffle uses in MSB such that space along this side can be made free and the wall opened? Would work well with the idea upstairs...

Penn Center actually already has many of the things you've suggested (like the farmer's market); they're just all in the commercial warren underground. Instead of duplicating services, why not daylight the section of the plaza running between the two buildings with a large glass atrium? It would make what's already there significantly more visible.

- Seconding everything Steve said.

Also, be careful about big changes in elevation like your rooftop garden on the Reyburn Plaza pavilion. One of the biggest problems with the MSB block now (and a lot of the greater City Hall area) are the poorly arranged changes in elevation that make the area uninviting for pedestrians—whether because it's confusing to navigate, or simply dark and filthy.

- That “long blank wall at street level” along the 15th Street side of MSB now has new paintings adorning it, courtesy of Gabe Tiberino. The goal is to continue using those recessed sections along the wall as a space for rotating exhibits of painted works by local artists in the future.

You can see a snapshot of Tiberino installing his panels on our facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=450991621628538&set=a.138163039578066.24887.130016060392764&type=1>

- Pretty as they are, murals are ultimately not permanent solutions—ways to add to street life *are*.
- If we are going to think big, I would love to see something even more ambitious, like covering the city hall courtyard with glass in order to use it as an all-weather event space for Center City District. I'm just thinking how amazing it would be to see the Christmas Market extend across to the new Dilworth Plaza and holding special events in the new plaza.

The Norman Foster's Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard at the National Portrait Gallery in DC is a perfect example of what the space could become. The courtyard is very much an oasis within busy downtown DC and hosts plenty of events.

Likes -

10

Tweets - 3

West Callowhill Focus Area

- **From the Public Meeting**
 - Need clarification on where the proposed BRT originates and ends
 - Love it! When do we break ground?
 - Parkway Plan “Less Way, More Park” not included in focus area – “narrow the Parkway” suggestion
 - BRT – use of electric buses would work better & inter-city buses should be able to use this too (for a fee like EZ-Pass)
 - Pedestrian bridges over viaduct in Baldwin Park is a great idea!
 - Pedestrian crossings along Pennsylvania Avenue need improvements like bump-outs, the street is too wide
 - New good public schools for this area (could re-use existing)
 - I like it – more connections across the City Branch is a really good idea

- Electric vehicles will minimize ventilation concerns underground
- Many possibilities for BRT line to tie with other resources like healthy food, out-of-the box ideas in additions to cultural resources
- Really like the creation of more linkages around Mathias Baldwin Park & straightening 18th Street
- Why not more density at lot near City Branch across from Mathias Baldwin Park instead of green space?
- Redesign Mathias Baldwin Park so easier to get through – improve visitiblity and security – feels dangerous
- Where are the places to eat? Need more options around the Barnes.
- Question about library expansion – better to be at Callowhill frontage than against existing building as drawing shows and what is being proposed by library.
- Glad that Family Court building will be a hotel.
- Should cover the trench adjacent to Mathias Park
- BRT is a good idea! We need more east-west connections
- BRT is cool!
- Get rid of parking lot behind Barnes and make a green space
- Is the BRT route long enough to be feasible?

- **From the Blog:**

- I love the Cultural Corridor BRT idea, perhaps it might be a good idea to make a website to get people excited for it and to get the word out there like Pittsburgh has done? Here's a link to what our friends on the other side of the state are up to: <http://www.gettherepgh.org>

Likes - 3

Tweets – 2

- **From Facebook:**

- I love the BRT concept, maybe you should consider promoting the use of trolleybuses along the Cultural Corridor line, like Boston has done with the Silver Line?

It seems like it would provide some of the infrastructure for a future light rail line and it would reduce some of the costs associated with fuel and tunnel ventilation.

Broad & Ridge Focus Area

- **From the Public Meeting**

- Spring Garden Greenway – maintain ability for vehicular left turns and maintain sight lines for reduced conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles
- Commercial development on 1600 block of Ridge (Community Design Collaborative project in April)
- Timing of traffic lights at Broad & Ridge intersection need to be altered – traveling east on Ridge & Fairmount
- West of Broad on Ridge show streetscape improvements (trees and sidewalks)
- Extend CMX-2.5 zoning to Girard Avenue to complement commercial zoning
- Priority to rezone Ridge Avenue to CMX-2.5
- Have urban agriculture on vacant land to complement the growing restaurant scene
- Keep Dr. J mural
- Use Provence proposal as a catalyst – get the viaduct done – for public enhancements (streetscape/lighting/public safety)
- Larger public square along Ridge Avenue (would require re-routing Ridge)
- Diversity in types of housing – affordominiums

- Keep casino out of Center City
- **From the Blog**
 - No Comments

Likes - 15

Tweets - 0

Franklin Square Focus Area

- **From the Public Meeting**
 - Green Strawbridge Parking garages
 - Add pedestrian lighting at 8th & Arch Streets
 - Don't terminate the pedestrian street at the Gallery ramp – make green space
 - Ok with Police Headquarters being demolished – it's the wrong building in the wrong place – set back too far
 - Reuse precast panels from Police Headquarters for a memorial
 - What will happen to the 9/11 Memorial at Police Headquarters when the police move out?
 - No place to eat in this area – need more retail options
 - More mixed use development
 - Too many mega-blocks
 - Police Headquarters and 6th District take up a lot of parking – Chinatown needs more parking options
 - Police site – reuse for housing or hotel – make ground floor open/light-filled
 - Keep current Police Headquarters building with an addition in the apron
 - Police Headquarters building needs more study
 - Police Headquarters building is not pedestrian friendly
 - Develop police parking lot
 - Reuse Police Headquarters for public/private use – maybe a library or residential/ office
 - Race Street is like a cattle shoot – traffic backs up to I-95
 - Make Race Street the commercial street node for the neighborhood
 - Area is very highway centric
 - Have a hotel in the arrival/departure plaza area
 - Arrival/Departure plaza – really like idea – need to improve pedestrian/bike access to Ben Franklin Bridge
 - Make the arrival/departure plaza a tourist destination
 - Rethink Ben Franklin Bridge spaghetti – major gateway with lots of highway ramps
 - Very confusing coming off of the bridge from NJ
 - 6th Street along Constitution Center is very dead – activate it – connect it to Independence Mall
 - Like the idea to reopen Franklin Square PATCO station
 - Reduce the curb cuts in the area
 - Can surface parking lot at Metropolitan condos be redeveloped?
 - Have shared parking with commercial and residential properties
 - Open up existing building onto Park/Mall on 6th and Race Streets
 - Improve the plaza at the NW corner of 8th & Race Streets – Chinatown Station
 - Connect Chinatown and Old City – eliminate any barriers like I-676
 - Like rowhomes idea – but who will build these?
 - Rowhouses are not a modern living style for a downtown area – too close to three heavy rail options
 - Mid-rise residential development is a good fit for this area – Portland is a great example in the Pearl District
 - Have parking underground or wrapped
 - Integrate play/open space with development – like Kiev
 - Create family-friendly living options near Franklin Square

- Activate Independence Mall by adding playground, more cafes, longer hours for activities
- 5th Street very hard to cross
- **From the Blog**
 - It's about time! The area immediately surrounding Franklin Square is a disgrace, especially since that's the impression that many people get when entering our city. This area needs to get built up so that the subway stations here actually make sense.

I'm not sure of the need to demolish the Roundhouse. In fact, I think we should be keeping the Roundhouse around due to how unique it is. Just keep it from being walled off. It's annoying that its set back so far, but I'm sure something can be done here to both preserve the building and enhance how it interacts with the community.

Likes - 1

Tweets - 0

- **From e-mails**
 - The Roundhouse has historical roots; we should not eliminate our history, just because it doesn't fit in with an 18th Century fantasy. I saw that what replaced the Roundhouse on your Public Meeting Board was a four-story brick condominium (ho-hum). The Roundhouse is three stories of potential condo space with a ground floor that could be repurposed (Sweat Fitness might value the location). The Metropolitan Condos across the street create a great interplay with the Roundhouse; the narrowing of Race Street would allow for a new element to add to that relationship. I could imagine a glass coffee shop taking up residence in the Plaza to the Roundhouse Condos, perhaps in the shape of an almond, with people sitting in chairs on a re-landscaped courtyard. In the summer evening it would be possible to watch the shadow from the new Roundhouse Tower (planted [similar to the Murano] in the old Police Parking lot) cross over Franklin Square. The parking lot avoids the tunnels that make development in this area so difficult, so high-rise condos could work well there (with a discreet parking garage shoehorned behind the high-rise [with an entrance off of Cherry Street]).

Although, the curve for 7th Street that follows the Roundhouse would not be as clean as a diagonal, I think that the area could be enlivened AND the current park on the SE corner of 8th & Race could connect the Public Plaza over the Ridge Spur tunnel across the intersection from the NW to the SE. Condos or actual pocket row homes (Onion Flats anyone) could complete the east side of 8th from the park to Cherry Street.

Whatever my ideas might be, I'd actually wait for Jack Pyburn's students at Georgia Tech to complete their analysis of the Roundhouse. Penn Praxis and the Preservation Alliance may have a design competition for reuse. Whether the latter ever happens, PCPC could use the best design from the Georgia Tech students as the basis of the future boards you present to people. Any image is the basis for a conversation, and I for one would like the conversation to incorporate a preserved Roundhouse as opposed to another architectural touchstone turning into rubble.

- The Metro Club Condo Board liked the overall plan for the area around our building, i.e. principally making the area around the MCA a residential area. Our only concern is the positioning of a building on what is now our south lawn. Placing a building there is, as long as it is not too close to our building and positioned so it does not unnecessarily block views of our south side units, is fine too. We hope that when the time comes for development of this area the MCA will be consulted on the placement and appearance of the planned building.

- The Preservation Alliance appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Central District Plan. We also appreciate the cogent consideration given to historic preservation challenges and opportunities within the document, and concur with each of the recommendations included in the Historic Preservation section of the plan (pp. 80-83). We welcome the endorsement of the proposed Washington Square West District and concur with the local designation priorities outlined in recommendations 58 and 59. We likewise concur with the recommendations concerning the rehabilitation and enhanced public programming of City Hall, and suggest that a relevant case study might feature the Chicago Cultural Center as a model of public galleries and cafes which successfully animate a public building. The four-page historic preservation component of the plan is well-illustrated with a legible and useful map; the featured sidebars are likewise clear and relevant.

Not surprisingly, however, we are disappointed by the lack of consideration given to the potential for adaptive reuse of the Police Administration Building in the plan's Franklin Square Focus Area (pp. 44-49). We continue to believe that adaptive reuse of the building must be thoroughly considered before any proposal to demolish the building is endorsed by the City. From an engineering perspective, the building is one of the most significant cast concrete structures in America, and from an architectural and cultural perspective, an icon of redevelopment-era Philadelphia. The conclusion that the current building cannot support a use that would enhance the Franklin Square neighborhood is, in our opinion, untested and premature. In the coming months and years, we welcome the opportunity to present alternative uses for the building that satisfy the City's realistic desire to stimulate development on and around the site without requiring the building's demolition.

ZONING & LAND USE

• From Public Meeting

- 12th & Callowhill & vicinity to commercial designation – land values make the 60ft height limit in IRMX a big constraint to build anything – up-zone to a district that allows more height
- 2100 block of South Street – mostly not commercial look at zoning again
- South Street from 19th to Schuylkill Avenue – take another look at density – look at down-zoning and decreasing density
 - But continue to support mixed-income housing
- Look at the zoning around the Reading Viaduct – consider up-zoning for more high-rise commercial/residential use
- Discourage creating smaller lots as a way to reduce density
- Make sure you include a graphic showing exactly which areas have changed
- 24th & Delancey – up-zone to multi-unit development
- Would love to see something happen on Ridge Avenue
- Great TOD placement!
- Thank you for promoting corner groceries and café type establishments in new code
- Good to see Callowhill changes – industrial is no longer viable
- Higher density commercial needed to generate foot traffic/pedestrians – attractive to retailers
- Good to convert Callowhill to mixed uses – make former steam plant a landmark!
- Do not limit corner grocery type retail in single-family districts
- Make Noble Street a famous street
- Like the CMX-2.5 on Ridge Avenue
- Queen Village – corrective zoning – fears of reducing available rentals and driving up taxes. Seniors and others need available multi-family housing
- Encourage more services for neighborhoods like groceries
- Mixed responses in Queen Village to retain or not support commercial
- Make better use of parking areas on Bainbridge Street
- Like TOD at Broad & South Streets
- Skeptical to downzone to CMX-4 and to RSA-5 – limited cases when it would come up that somebody would use full square footage and very few complaints about multi-family
- Concerned about lack of parking in Southwest section of Center City – can there be a municipal lot?
- Does Society Hill need adjustments to RSA-1 zoning?
- Southwest Center City – concerned with retaining corner stores – like zoning recommendations
- Southwest Center City – in favor of preventing more conversions, concerned about small condo projects and their maintenance
- Down-zone to single family (RSA-5) – concerned about support for low-income housing and lack of housing supply
- Redevelop land around Pathmark – Grays Ferry needs more retail and senior housing
- Southwest Center City – concern about seniors being forced out for market rate housing by young professionals (same pressure in Point Breeze)
- Washington Avenue – concern about the rezoning forcing out existing industry and building supply – convenience for local contractors is needed
- Washington Avenue needs green and higher buildings
- Desire to see development at Broad & Washington
- No residential zoning on Washington Avenue at all – not even at Broad Street. Need companies to move in to provide jobs for those in Point Breeze.



May 15, 2013

Laura M. Spina
Senior Planner
Philadelphia City Planning Commission
One Parkway Building
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

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Re: Comments on Philadelphia 2035 Draft Central District Plan

Dear Laura:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft Plan for the Central District, which addresses both broad planning priorities for the City and implementation by specific measures, many of which would directly affect the daily lives of CCRA members. CCRA applauds the Planning Commission's commitment to civic engagement in the planning process and offers these remarks:

1. Market Street West underdevelopment: In 2007 CCRA and Logan Square Neighbors' Association jointly conducted a planning study of this area that identified the parking lot at 23rd and Market and the former adult entertainment site at 2200 Market as presenting major opportunities for dense, mixed residential/commercial use, revitalizing Market Street and completing connections to the Schuylkill River Trail and West Philadelphia. The 2035 draft Plan suggests locating "large format retailers" on Market West (p. 56) as a possible use, and this usage was also discussed in the CCRA/LSNA planning study. CCRA agrees that the Central District needs home goods, home improvement and electronics retail. However, we are concerned that stand-alone "Urban Big Box" stores would not be positive developments unless they were scaled and designed to be part of a dense streetscape and served by retailer delivery services as well as public transit and foot and bicycle access.

2. Penn Center Plaza from 15th to 16th and 16th to 17th Streets: Improvements to these areas can leverage the impact of the renovation of Dilworth Plaza. CCRA agrees that Penn Center Plaza needs to be enlivened for office workers and commuters, as well as residents, for example, by admitting light down to the below-street concourse and by adding greenery to present a more welcoming vista. The street-level experience might also be improved by some visual

connection between these blocks and to the plaza in front of the Comcast Center.

3. Traffic calming: We support the suggested removal of underutilized car traffic lanes on Market Street and JFK Boulevard from 15th Street to the Schuylkill River. This change would support denser development of Market Street West by encouraging pedestrian and bicycle use.

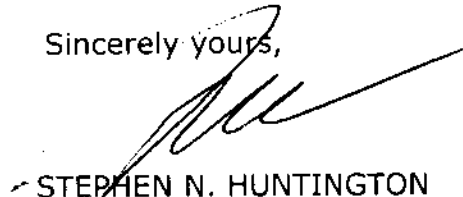
4. Transit enhancements: Philadelphia's public transit system and its burgeoning bicycle infrastructure are essential to its growing success as a place to live and work. CCRA agrees that bus routes need to be re-examined in light of changes in residential and work patterns. For example, the frequency of the South Street bus should be increased to accommodate recent commercial and residential growth along the South Street corridor as well as substantial new residential (Toll Brothers) and office (CHOP) construction near the east end of the South Street bridge. As Center City grows, South Street is becoming a primary East-West artery, which SEPTA should recognize by providing more frequent service. We support with enthusiasm the proposed bicycle station on Penn Center Plaza, with lockers and showers, which would enhance Philadelphia's infrastructure for bicycle commuting both within the City and between the City and its suburbs. Similarly, we agree that upgrading the trolley station entrances at 19th and 22nd Streets is long overdue.

5. Optimizing Use of Parking Spaces: Certainly the Central District would benefit from making more efficient use of its existing parking spaces by purposeful pricing policies, as the draft Plan discusses at p.72. However, the draft Plan recommends only raising permit parking fees and does not evaluate the effects of pricing structures at garages, which now discourage potential short-term users (as for shopping, a performance or a business appointment).

6. Vacant land: While re-purposing vacant land for development is one alternative, consideration should also be given to creating "pocket parks" on smaller vacant parcels in the Central District to provide a much-needed amenity in this densely populated area. (Paley Park in New York City offers an example of an extremely successful small park in a residential/office/commercial neighborhood.) Additional park space would also relieve the heavy usage of Rittenhouse Square, a trend predicted in CCRA's 2006 Neighborhood plan that has come to pass.

7. City Hall ticket booth: Assuming there would be demand for a ticket booth in the age of electronic ticketing for museums, performances and events, the interior of City Hall Courtyard is probably too isolated to be the ideal venue; a booth on one of City Hall's external aprons would be more visible and accessible.

Sincerely yours,



STEPHEN N. HUNTINGTON
Executive Director

SNH/pm

May 13, 2013

Ms. Laura M. Spina
Project Manager
Central District Plan
Philadelphia City Planning Commission
1515 Arch Street 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: Draft Central District Plan

Dear Ms. Spina,

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft copy of the Central District Plan. The Logan Square Neighborhood Association has long recognized the importance of planning in shaping the future of our community, including the development of our Logan Square Neighborhood-Parkway Plan (accepted by the Commission in 2010) and, more recently, participating with you on development of this plan.

First, we wish to applaud the process and the many positive elements of the plan itself. It presents focus area concepts which would seem to benefit Philadelphia's core, including one for West Callowhill St. which mirrors a revitalization priority we included in our neighborhood plan. The plan document itself uses information and graphic presentation which conveys issues and ideas well to a broad range of reviewers.

We have comments, below, which we believe will optimize the plan's effectiveness for our neighborhood, in terms of achieving benefit and reducing impact of future growth. The first are related to specific parts of the plan, and are followed by more general comments.

Focus Area: Unifying and Energizing the Civic Center *(pgs. 30-33)*

- Cherry Street In response to concerns about potential impacts with construction of the new Family Court building, LSNA helped set up the Cherry Street Coalition of key stakeholders. WE worked with the City and State project teams for design refinements to the building and to the adjacent streetscape so Cherry Street could be a pedestrian-friendly path for Civic Center visitors to the Parkway and its attractions. These efforts should be incorporated into the plan and built upon; this street is more direct and more likely to come to fruition sooner than the undefined path to the Dilworth Plaza and indeterminate attractions of a revamped Rayburn Plaza and LOVE Park.

Focus Area: Transforming West Callowhill's Connections *(pgs. 36-39)*

- Cultural Corridor Line Attention to this transit opportunity (previously called the City Branch) has been of keen interest to LSNA and figured in our neighborhood plan as well as those of other entities. Questions about feasibility

of this individual line notwithstanding, we believe the promotion of bus rapid transit (BRT) should be encouraged. Its lower infrastructure costs, more flexible geometric requirements and easier connectivity to existing route networks make it a more prudent transportation strategy than more glamorous (but more problematic) light rail modes.

- Cultural Corridor Line Stations Two of the stations are shown as mid-block land-consuming facilities, separate from other structures. Further planning of the line should consider the possibility of stations as components in mixed use development projects, as well as being closer to intersections with converging bus routes. This might improve both the transportation effectiveness of the line and facilitate when stations could be financed.

- Lighting and Streetscapes in the "Northeast Quadrant" For this less developed area generally north of Callowhill and east of 20th, existing conditions are often bleak, suited more for cars and parking than that people Also lacking is the sense of neighborhood. We have looked to pedestrian-friendly streetscaping and, especially, street lighting to make the setting safer and more attractive for new neighbors and patrons. We have discussed this informally with several of the teams now proposing new projects in the area. To make these improvements timely, cohesive and effective we need: 1) coordinated efforts by the several proposing developers and 2) prioritizing by city planning and programming decisions. Focus on these relatively low cost (and jointly subsidized) improvements are likely to have a similar, pronounced benefit here as has been seen in the Chestnut/Walnut/Broad St area.


In addition to the comments to the specific parts of the plan document we note that LSNA has been involved in reviewing and commenting on other proposals which are underway, but not specifically addressed in your plan. Nonetheless, depending on if and how they are implemented, they may have significant effect, both on our neighborhood and on Central District Plan. Three of these are:

- (if selected) the Tower Casino proposal at Broad and Callowhill
- the Parkway Action Plan
- West Market St. (shown on the map on pg20)

For your information on our positions and concerns, we are enclosing copies of relevant review correspondence related to these activities:

Thanks again for the opportunity to review and comment on the plan.

Sincerely yours,



David Searles
President
Logan Square Neighborhood Association

cc: Alan Greenberger
Darrell Clarke
Pat McBee, Cherry Street Coalition
Joe Casey, SEPTA



May 15, 2013

Ms. Laura Spina
Senior Planner
Philadelphia City Planning Commission
One Parkway Building
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

RE: Comments on the Central District Plan; Recap of PCDC Board Meeting

Dear Laura:

I would like to thank you for attending our last board meeting (4/16) to discuss the Philadelphia 2035 Plan and to hear the comments of PCDC's board regarding the Callowhill/Chinatown North Plan and the Central District Plan. I appreciated your explanation of the process and the goals of Philadelphia 2035, as well as the strategies used for creating recommendations. As you may recall, several of the board members were offended and insulted by the renaming of certain areas of Chinatown as Callowhill or the Franklin Square neighborhood. Most specifically, in the Callowhill/Chinatown North Plan, one of the focus areas denotes Camac Streets between 12th and 13th as Callowhill, but this is very much part of the core of Chinatown. You explained that the neighborhoods are a planning tool to group similar blocks, but we feel that the rowhomes of Camac and Summer Streets reflect Chinatown far more than the Loft district. Our main concern is that with these plans, we lose the future right to have a say in our own neighborhood affairs, when it is in public record that the Planning Commission labels these streets as part of a different neighborhood.

As part of the Central District Plan, the Board felt similarly about the Focus Area entitled "Creating the Franklin Square Neighborhood." This wording seems to aim to replace the Chinatown neighborhood. Though "only a name," attempting to "create" a Franklin Square neighborhood overshadows the work that PCDC and others have invested in building up the community and neighborhood. It translates as an effort of the City to get rid of Chinatown again, even though Chinatown is the oldest ethnic community in Center City and has persevered through many obstacles, including the Expressway, Convention Center, and threats of numerous other factors. The map on page 44 reinforces this feeling, as the area marked "Franklin Square" seems to be equal in size to the area marked "Chinatown." You mentioned that it would not be difficult to change the phrasing in this section.

Additionally, I noticed that PCDC is not listed as an implementing agency, though several recommendations seem that they would require resources from PCDC.



PCDC does support the recommendations for the Sidewalk Vending Plan in Chinatown and the Planning Commission's support of the Chinatown Community Center. We hope to be able to be of assistance in the implementation of these recommendations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Chin', written over a faint, circular stamp or watermark.

John Chin
Executive Director

cc: Father Tom Betz, PCDC Chairman

May 15, 2013

Preliminary Comments on draft Central District Plan

By Craig Schelter on behalf of the Development Workshop

The draft Central District Plan outlines a very ambitious number of development actions to occur in the next twenty-plus years, nearly doubling the traditional area outlined in previous Center City plans. We applaud efforts to insure areas within Center City are recommended for higher density development to grow the number of residents and encourage job growth.

Transit oriented development, especially at Spring Garden and Front Streets affords a major opportunity to focus development resources in a way that supports numerous urban design objectives including connecting residents west of I-95 to the Central Delaware Waterfront on land controlled by the city to more clearly insuring a desired outcome of increasing the tax base, providing pedestrian parks and amenities, and ready access to the regional transportation system.

Most interesting is the 36 page Zoning Appendix attached to the plan, which spells out a myriad of neighborhood zoning remappings for sixteen neighborhoods. The draft plan separates those zoning remappings into two broad categories:

-those that are corrective to avoid unnecessary zoning variances under the new code approved by City Council and effective August 2012.

-those that advance the plan.

It is in those areas "that advance the plan" where we express our greatest concern and where we believe further work needs to be done before presenting the plan for a formal vote before the City Planning Commission in June 2013.

Four key points need to be added to the plan:

1. Land owners, developers and community residents need to know a sense of priority for which areas will be the focus of the remaining years of the current city administration.
2. Stakeholders mentioned above need to know what the anticipated cost of public infrastructure will be to implement the plans and whether or not there will be availability of public capital dollars to make the planned developments a reality. Nowhere has this need been clearer than the Central Delaware Waterfront. There the City Planning has endorsed a

- master plan with an estimated public infrastructure cost of \$ 600 million dollars, and then only been able to recommend a tiny fraction of that cost in the city's capital budget and program over the past three years, such that it would take over 100 years to implement the plan, of which 97 of those years will be considered by administrations with their own set of priorities.
3. The City Planning Commission needs to give a sense of scale at which the sixteen neighborhoods will be remapped. To our knowledge little of the direct engagement with property owners has taken place to ensure there is an understanding of the massive zoning remapping being undertaken. Previous efforts in this regard took sixteen separate City Council ordinances over a year each just to accomplish the zoning remapping of four of the neighborhoods included in the Central District Plan.
 4. One major area currently that has and will continue to experience significant growth and development should not be penalized with a down zoning. The suggestion that the area bounded by Broad Street, Chestnut Street, 8th Street, and Walnut Street should be rezoned from CMX-5 to CMX-4, needs to be seriously reconsidered. This is the major medical institutional expansion area for Thomas Jefferson University and Hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital and Wills Eye Hospital. It has also been an area considered for active hotel and residential expansion. Today numerous buildings already exist with the equivalence of CMX-5.

We welcome the opportunity to make these comments and believe it useful to meet with Planning Commission staff to perhaps mutually advance these comments.



Laura Spina
Project Manager/City Planner
Philadelphia City Planning Commission
1515 Arch St, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103

May 16, 2013

Dear Ms. Spina,

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is writing to offer comment upon the Central District Plan currently in progress from the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC). We have been involved with the Friends of Rail Park (formerly VIADUCTgreene) in their goal to transform the Reading Viaduct, including the City Branch portion, into a linear park. We ask that the Central District Plan consider the linear park as a complementary use or alternative to the current proposal. PHS understands that the current proposal sees the sunken portion of the former rail line transformed into a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "Cultural Corridor," which would "serve as a connector, linking Center City and the wealth of institutions along the Parkway as well as points beyond such as the Delaware Waterfront and the Centennial District."

Indeed, transit connections between Center City, the Parkway and beyond are lacking, but we believe that an equally viable and important complementary use or alternative to the BRT option is the Friends of Rail Parks' plan. A greenway could be installed until the necessary studies, plans and funding have been completed for the BRT line. Once funding is secured, the linear park could be narrowed to exist next to the BRT line, or could be eliminated entirely, if necessary.

PHS's mission is to "motivate people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture." We believe that including the concept of this linear park in the Central District plan is critical because as the city grows, it will be increasingly important to preserve pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly connections. Greater development, density and infill in Center City will lead to greater numbers of people biking and walking to work. As the number of people driving to work rises as well, creating safe and dedicated pedestrian and bicycle pathways will be even more critical. Further, if the trail plan is realized, maintenance of the trail would fall to Friends of Rail Park and other groups, preserving city money for other uses. The trail would be an important amenity, making Center City a more attractive place to live, and increasing the quality of life for users of the trail.

We hope that the PCPC will continue to investigate opportunities for the City Branch of the Reading Viaduct, and will consider the inclusion of the City Branch as a linear park as a complementary use or alternative to the Culture Corridor BRT option.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Barg
Senior Manager, Urban Planning and Policy
PHS Pennsylvania Horticultural Society



May 16, 2013

Ms. Laura Spina
Senior Planner
Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Re: Planning Commission's draft Philadelphia 2035 Central District Plan

Dear Ms. Spina,

I have had a chance to read the draft Philadelphia 2035 Central District Plan. I know you're about to finalize it so I thought I'd contribute some thoughts to the process, hopefully of use and not too late.

It is an impressive and visionary statement about the future of Philadelphia and how we can shape the City to position it as a vibrant and exciting place to live in and visit. I am, though, concerned with one of the elements – your recommendation to use 2 miles of the 3-mile rail corridor (pg 64) to establish a Bus Rapid Transit corridor. I know you're aware of the proposal by Friends of the Rail Park and others who envision a 3-mile park that overlaps with the proposed BRT corridor.

I hope you will reconsider your proposed use of the 2 mile corridor for rapid bus transportation. I appreciate the economic and social rationale for your proposal, but I want to suggest an alternative perspective.

The Case for Economic Impact

What the Friends of the Rail Park (FRP) propose can have a remarkably significant impact on the city. Others will, no doubt, have spoken about the visual and human space the park plan envisions. You, no doubt, will have thought about the use of the corridor-as-park as a way to support the City's green initiatives and its plans to collect and re-direct the storm water that increasingly threatens the region.

From my point of view, what is most important about the park projected by FRP is its potential impact on the economic growth and development of the City. To make the case, I want to use some facts and figures drawn from New York City's High Line project.

High Line required an investment of about \$115 million of NYC and State funds and it has returned approximately \$2 billion in private investment in property surrounding the High Line. The initial work on

the High Line generated 8,000 construction jobs, and ongoing development added an additional 12,000 permanent jobs to the area. It has become the focal point for new design and architectural firms, for a flourishing restaurant zone, for new residential housing and new office buildings, as well as attracted natives and tourists to the area.

It is exactly that kind of economic development promised by the park designed by Friends of the Rail Park. It is true that there is value in being able to move people between the City's cultural institutions. But there is a difference economically between "moving" people between point A and point B and developing a center of gravity that encourages people to congregate. In the case of the first, there is little stickiness: we simply move between and among places without investing our time or imagination in any one place. In the case of the second, we grow community, reinforce neighborhoods, and even more importantly, develop the businesses that support the community that springs up around the center. That is true in New York with its High Line; was true earlier in the 19th Century with New York's Central Park, and was true in most urban centers.

What we can learn from others

A study recent study (John Crompton) makes the argument for parks as economic tools.

- They increase property values. Frederic Olmsted made the case in the mid 19th century that in less than two decades property values increased by 16 times the cost of the original investment in a park. Recently cities like Chattanooga Tennessee using park development had an increase in property values of 127.5 percent; Atlanta had a similar increase; and Amherst, an annual increase of 22 percent
- They increase municipal revenues. The impact is felt on a number of fronts – to property taxes, to sales taxes, and to tourist related taxable revenues. Boulder's (Colorado) Greenbelt increased property tax revenue annually by \$500,000. Oakland's (California) East Bay Regional Park District increased purchases that were related to the park by about \$254 million annually. San Antonio's (Texas) Riverwalk Park has become a major tourist attraction generating approximately \$3.5-billion in tourism dollars.
- They attract and retain affluent retirees. This population increases the tax base while using fewer city resources providing monies through their taxes that support, for example, city schools while not themselves sending children to it.
- They attract the young, talented, and creative class. The park space described by Friends of the Rail Park is designed with that group in mind – a group looking for social spaces near work, places to cycle, walk, walk, rock climb etc while living in close proximity to their work.
- They attract homebuyers. Parks that combine urban life and rural spaces are, according to nearly every study, an important decider for people looking to buy in the city. As the High Line project demonstrates, people were excited to move into the neighborhood surrounding the High Line even though it was not immediately connected to high speed transportation systems.

Philadelphia sprawls and it is tempting to connect the pieces of the string. But a city like ours needs the kind of economic development that can support the kind of cultural and human development we all desire. Imagine a central park like that envisioned by the Friends of the Rail Park which serves as an economic dynamo like that created by the New York High Line. The monies generated there will be monies that can be used to support the very cultural institutions the BRT corridor is meant to connect.

Strengthening the City's tax base

The question is this: Do we simply want to make it easier for people to move between places or do we want to find ways to generate new economic vitality? If we choose the latter, we will find that we have created economic resources that support our cultural, educational and human institutions – all of which are in serious stress – while also providing the City a strengthened tax base that allows us all – the City, the cultural and educational institutions, and the citizens – to achieve our collective goals.

I hope you will reconsider your recommendation or, at minimum, delay it until you've been able to undertake an economic impact study of the alternative plans presented to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Neil Kleinman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Neil" and last name "Kleinman" clearly legible.

Neil Kleinman
Managing Senior Fellow
The Corzo Center for the Creative Economy
And Professor of Media and Communication
The University of the Arts