



HISTORIC RITTENHOUSE TOWN:

THE BIRTH, LIFE AND DEATH OF AN AMERICAN
INDUSTRIAL SITE

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HISTORIC RITTENTOWN:

THE BIRTH, LIFE AND DEATH OF AN AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL SITE

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MILL ON WISCONSIN -
First photo I ever saw -
1854

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Historic RittenhouseTown, a National Historic Landmark, holds distinction as the site of the first paper mill in America. Now located in Fairmount Park, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the town serves as a valuable, yet underutilized, historical resource for its community. Its history touches upon the region's industrial, spiritual, recreational, and ecological past, telling the story of its development into an early American industrial site and of the changing attitudes toward the waterways that have been a source of life throughout its history. However, this past is not fully revealed in the current visitor's experience.

The first mill was built in 1690 on the Monoshone Creek, which served as a source of energy for the mill's operation. Wilhelm Rittenhouse, the original founder, was the first Mennonite minister in America, as well as America's first paper maker. Initially comprised of only a single mill and homestead, the site grew to become an industrial village of approximately fifty buildings by the middle of the nineteenth century. However, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution began to sweep across America, and Philadelphia became a major rail shipping hub. RittenhouseTown could not compete with the less expensive goods that were coming through Philadelphia, and the town went into decline. As a reaction to the pollution produced by heavy industrial use, Fairmount Park was created in order to protect Philadelphia's water supply. The Commissioners of Fairmount Park purchased the town and converted it into parkland, preserving only six of the historic buildings that comprise the majority of present-day Historic RittenhouseTown. Today the site primarily is used by visitors who come to walk, run, or bicycle on the trails that run along the Wissahickon and Monoshone Creeks, or by groups who take an interest in the educational programs provided by Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc., the site's stewards.



The Monoshone Creek—once a source of life for the Lenape people who fished the area, for paper mill operation by the early Rittenhouse family, industrial production in RittenhouseTown, and drinking water for the City of Philadelphia, it now draws visitors as a calming setting for recreational activities. The stones seen here are remnants of the Amindown Mill, which once stood over the creek. The scattered garbage is a reminder of its current, polluted state. (Photo by A. Ferron, 2006)

This report is a result of the efforts of a studio project for the graduate program in Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania. Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. has graciously served as the “client” for this studio project and has shown great patience throughout this process. Some of the issues they are facing are that the current visitor experience does not fully encompass the site’s boundaries or history, and the site’s buildings and landscape have serious conservation issues. Presented here is an investigation into the site’s history and background, as well as an identification of its current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. From these investigations, the studio team members completed individual projects designed to help Historic RittenhouseTown improve its site interpretation and visitor experience, the conservation of its historic fabric, and its landscape. It is hoped that, with the implementation of these projects, Historic RittenhouseTown will become a better, more interesting historic site to visit.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND SITE CONTEXT

The Lenape

The first occupants of the current site of Historic Rittenhouse Town were the Lenape. It is believed that the Lenape lived in small bands that were somewhat autonomous, although there was considerable intermarriage and sharing of resources among the neighboring groups.¹ They were foragers, supplementing their diets in the summer months with small-scale cultivation of beans, corn and squash. The Lenape inhabited an area from the Delaware Bay to the present-day Lehigh Valley, and east to the Atlantic Coast.²

The first known contact with Europeans was with Henry Hudson, a representative of the Dutch East India Company in 1609.³ Disease was one of the first effects of the European presence on the Lenape, and is believed to have decimated their populations and fundamentally disrupted their culture well before direct European contact had become commonplace.⁴ In the 1630's the Swedes began a small colony in the Delaware Valley that began the first tenuous coexistence between the Lenape and Europeans. Trade began between the Europeans and Lenape, and their culture again underwent a major shift with the introduction of European goods.⁵

The first treaties allowing Europeans land rights were with the Swede settlers, and would have been understood as a temporary agreement to share the land by the Lenape, but as a permanent and exclusive sale by the Swedes. Similar misunderstandings



Lenape family of the Delaware Valley
(Source: Lindstrom)



Lenape, 1771. (Source; Ben West)

1 Becker, Marshall J., Lenape Population at the Time of European Contact: Estimating Native Numbers in the Lower Delaware Valley, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 133, No. 2, Symposium on the Demographic History of the Philadelphia Region, 1600-1860. (June, 1989) 113.

2 Pencak, William A. and Richter, Daniel K., eds. *Friends and Enemies in Penn's Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania*, University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004, 8.

3 Pritzker, Barry M., *A Native American Encyclopedia: History, Culture, and People*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 422.

4 Pencak and Richter, 7-8.

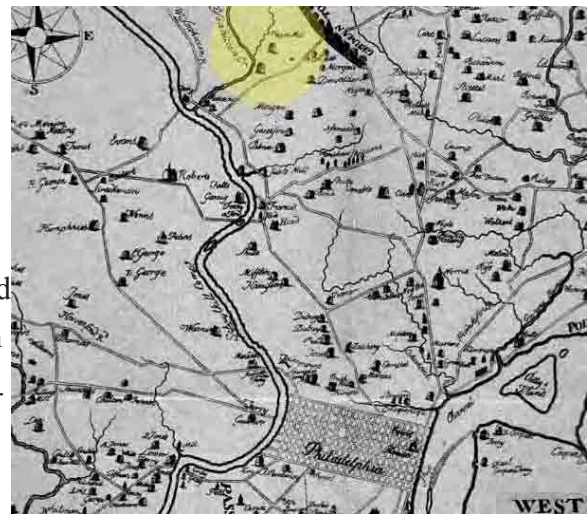
5 Pritzker, 422.

would continue with the arrival and signing of treaties with William Penn in 1682. By the time William Penn set out to settle the colony of Pennsylvania, much of the land in the area had already been claimed by the Swedes. He nevertheless managed to procure agreements with those inhabiting the banks of present day Philadelphia, and with that set off the rapid development of the area by primarily English settlers.⁶

Conflicts would inevitably arise between the Lenape and the ballooning European population, especially surrounding differing conceptions of nature. The Lenape's concept of coexistence with the natural world was incongruous with the settlers' intent to control their environment.⁷ Contact became the most intimate between the pioneers in outlying areas and their neighboring Lenape bands. In these locations friendships as well as animosities would develop depending on the situations and attitudes of both groups. However, government policies sought to separate the racial groups in the interest of preserving the peace. Thus, the Lenape groups were inevitably pushed farther and farther to the western periphery of European-American settlement.⁸

Founding

The first Europeans to begin utilizing Historic Rittenhouse Town were among the first settlers of William Penn's Philadelphia. Willem Rittinghausen, later anglicized William Rittenhouse, emigrated from Holland in 1679 with his family and eventually settled in the Wissahickon Valley. He went into partnership to start a paper mill with Samuel Carpenter and Robert Turner, holders of land grants from William Penn, with Thomas Tresse, an iron founder, and a little later with William Bradford. Rittenhouse settled the mill on the Monoshone Creek near its confluence with



Map indicating location of paper mill.
Scull and Heap, 1750 .
(Source: History of Philadelphia)

⁶ Pencak and Richter, 8-10.

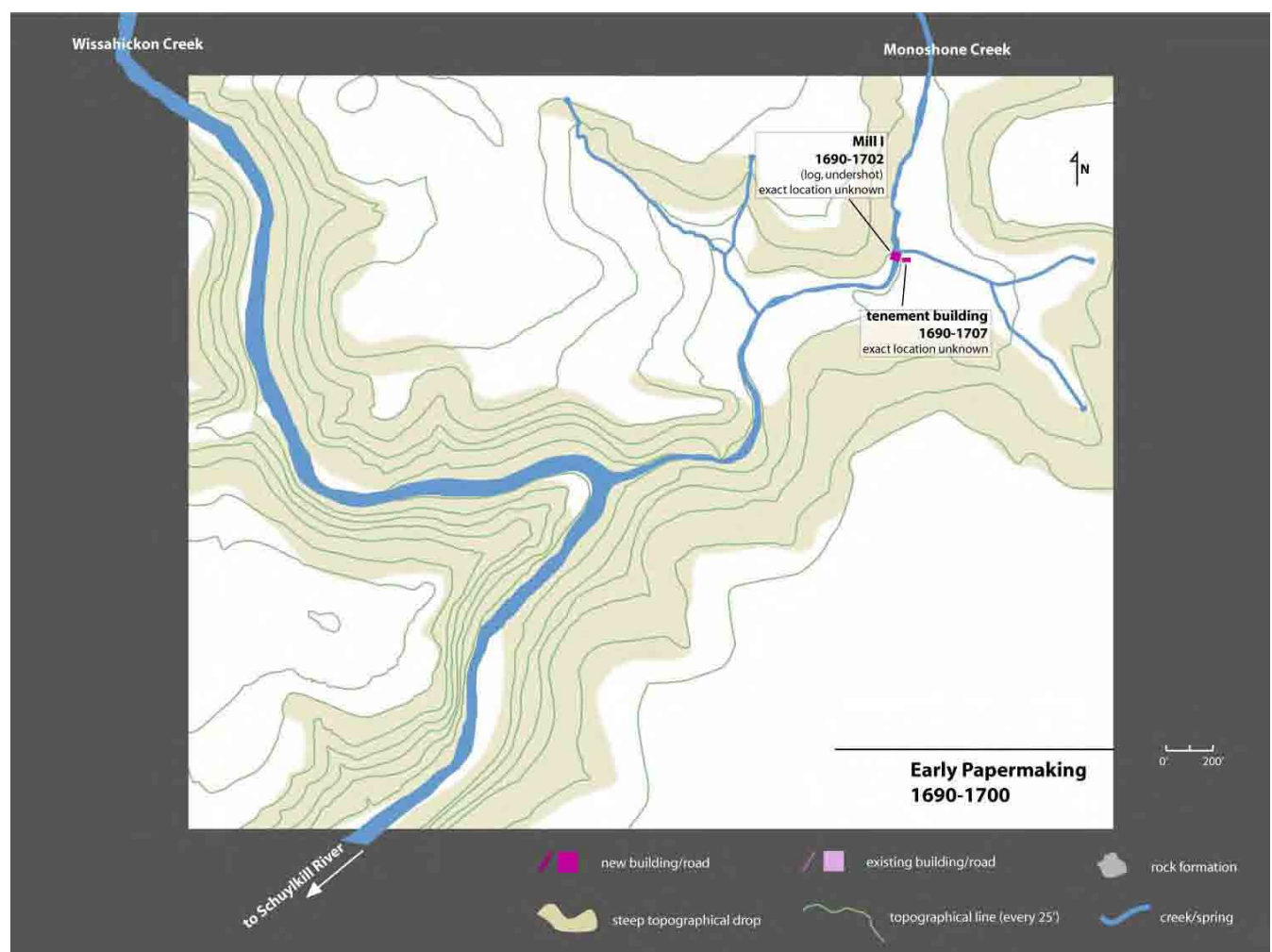
⁷ *ibid.*, 8-9.

⁸ *ibid.*, ix-xxi.

the Wissahickon. The property was subleased through verbal contract by Samuel Carpenter to Rittinghausen et al. with water rights for 999 years at a rent of five shillings of silver. Though William Bradford left Philadelphia in 1698, he retained his interest in the mill. Appointed royal printer for New York, he continued to consume all the printing paper the mill could supply. In 1704 William Bradford later withdrew from the company but remained a customer.

The lease for the mill was put into writing in September 29, 1705 at which time Willem Rittenhouse was the only grantee named on the lease. The lease would run for 975 years from that date and the annual rent was five sterling shillings.

The undershoot wheel log-and-clapboard mill operated in 1690, producing the first paper made on the American continent.

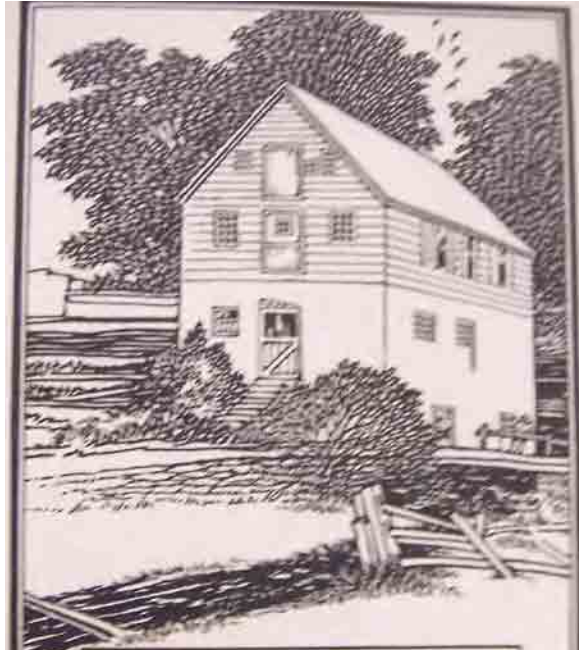


Map demonstrating extant buildings and roads during the early settlement period. (Source: Pam Jordan)

The mill was prosperous for several years until heavy rains destroyed it in 1700. By 1702 a second mill was constructed close to the first destroyed mill. Although the exact location is still unknown, it was a larger building with an overshot wheel and mill race. The “Homestead,” now 207 Lincoln Drive, was built in 1707, along with other homes, mills, and outbuildings that were added gradually as the site and mill production increased.

Throughout this early development stage of the Rittenhouse Mill, some of the Rittenhouse family began to settle on Main Street of Germantown, a bustling neighborhood just north of Philadelphia where much of the linen rag for the paper mill came from. Klaus (Nicholas), the eldest son of William, inherited the mill in 1708 a few years before his father’s death. A few years prior, William had become the first Mennonite Bishop of Pennsylvania and was the first of his family to be buried in the church cemetery of Germantown. Klaus became the next minister.

The paper company continued to prosper because of the demand for paper, although William Bradford no longer monopolized the industry. The market was sustained by his son William (2nd) and John Copson with the publication the American Weekly Mercury, the colony’s first newspaper, in 1719. In 1726 Benjamin Franklin invented his printing press and more competition was posed against the Rittenhouse Mill. Klaus’ sons, William, Henry and Matthias (father of David Rittenhouse) entered into the family business after they had completed their education. William (2nd) inherited the mill when Klaus died at the age of sixty-seven about 1734.



Harvey Hopkins sketch of paper mill, 1690.
(Source: Free Librray of Philadelphia)

Rural Hamlet

By 1742 the Rittenhouse land, under the control of William Rittenhouse’s grandson William (2nd), encompassed a newly expanded 200 acres located between the Wissahickon and Germantown line. Papermaking

during this time only took up only a corner of the Rittenhouse property while the rest was used for farming and milling grain. Although the Rittenhouse family land had expanded, the property was still considered a hamlet. The Lehman survey of 1772 depicts buildings to the right bank of the run, which were most likely the upper and lower mills. There were also five houses and two grist mills shown. This survey was requested by the elderly William (2nd) to divide his property among his six sons. By 1772, William (2nd) no longer could continue running the mill and handed over the lower mill to his son Jacob. However, at that time, there were many other mills operating in the Delaware Valley. The Rittenhouses needed to do more than just papermaking to keep up

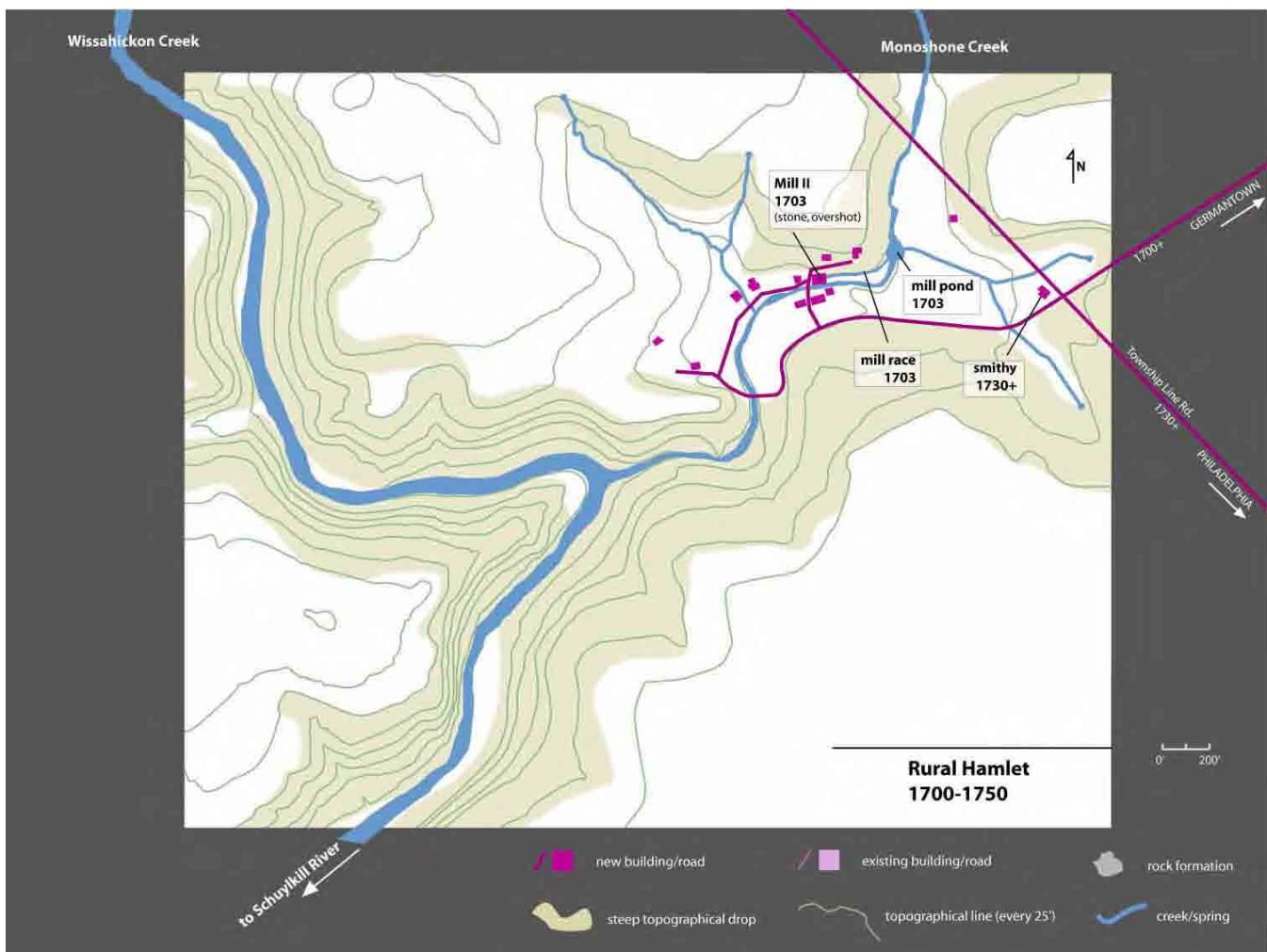


1772 Christian Lehman Land Survey of William Rittenhouse property

Source: Historic RittenhouseTown Display Image

with the growing market, which accounts for the grist mills on their newly acquired land. The paper mill was losing its prominent place in the market with the introduction of the new mills producing grain.

Philadelphia at this time was emerging from a town into a city. By 1750, Philadelphia was a bustling trade city and at the cultural center of the American Colonies. Philadelphia played an important role in trade and surpassed Boston as the premiere shipbuilding city. Manufacturers emerged to support the ship building industries along the waterfront and the growing city. Businesses were varied and included brick makers, shoemakers and innkeepers. Improvements were regularly being made to the city in the form of better street lighting,



Map demonstrating buildings and roads during the rural hamlet period. (Source: Pam Jordan)

cleaner water, more frequent mail service and fire insurance protection.

Many of the city's industries were working towards aiding the Revolutionary War of 1775-1783. Philadelphia's "strategic location, wealth, industrial and commercial importance, large and cosmopolitan population and professional and business classes combined to make it after 1774 the hub of America's revolutionary activity."⁹ The Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776, but onsets of Yellow Fever towards the later part of the 18th century killed thousands of Philadelphians. There was also an improved network of transportation and communication among the colonies, which meant an increased growth in trade. By 1790, Philadelphia was the second-largest city in America with a population of 28,500, and in 1800, the population had almost doubled to 41,200.

Industrial Town

By the 1850's Rittenhouse town had experienced the closing of its paper mill and was fully converted to the thriving textile industry. However, this change in industry also meant changes to mill operation and the community that encompassed it. During this period the Rittenhouse town contained approximately forty structures including a church, firehouse, tenements and a school. This indicates that the mill was, during this period, a thriving community typical of textile mills that normally employed many unskilled laborers. This was a stark change to the paper mills that would have employed skilled craftsmen.

Philadelphia also underwent an alteration that would impact the future of the city's government, commerce and infrastructure – the 1854 consolidation of the city. The catalyst for the consolidation was the 1840's Anti-Catholic riots. These riots proved to city leaders that the townships were unmanageable unless combined into one cohesive

⁹ Thayer, 109.



Illustration of Rittenhouse Town, John Richard and Shoemaker Collection, 1880's. (Source: HSP)

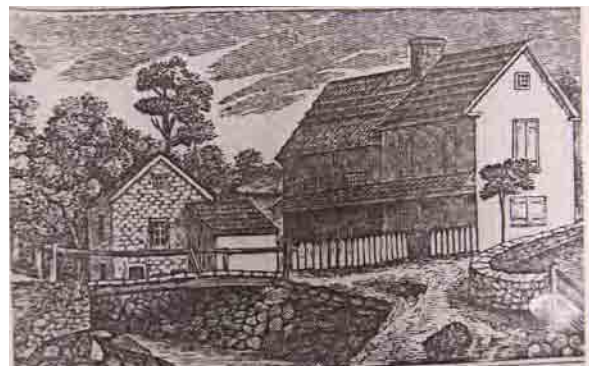


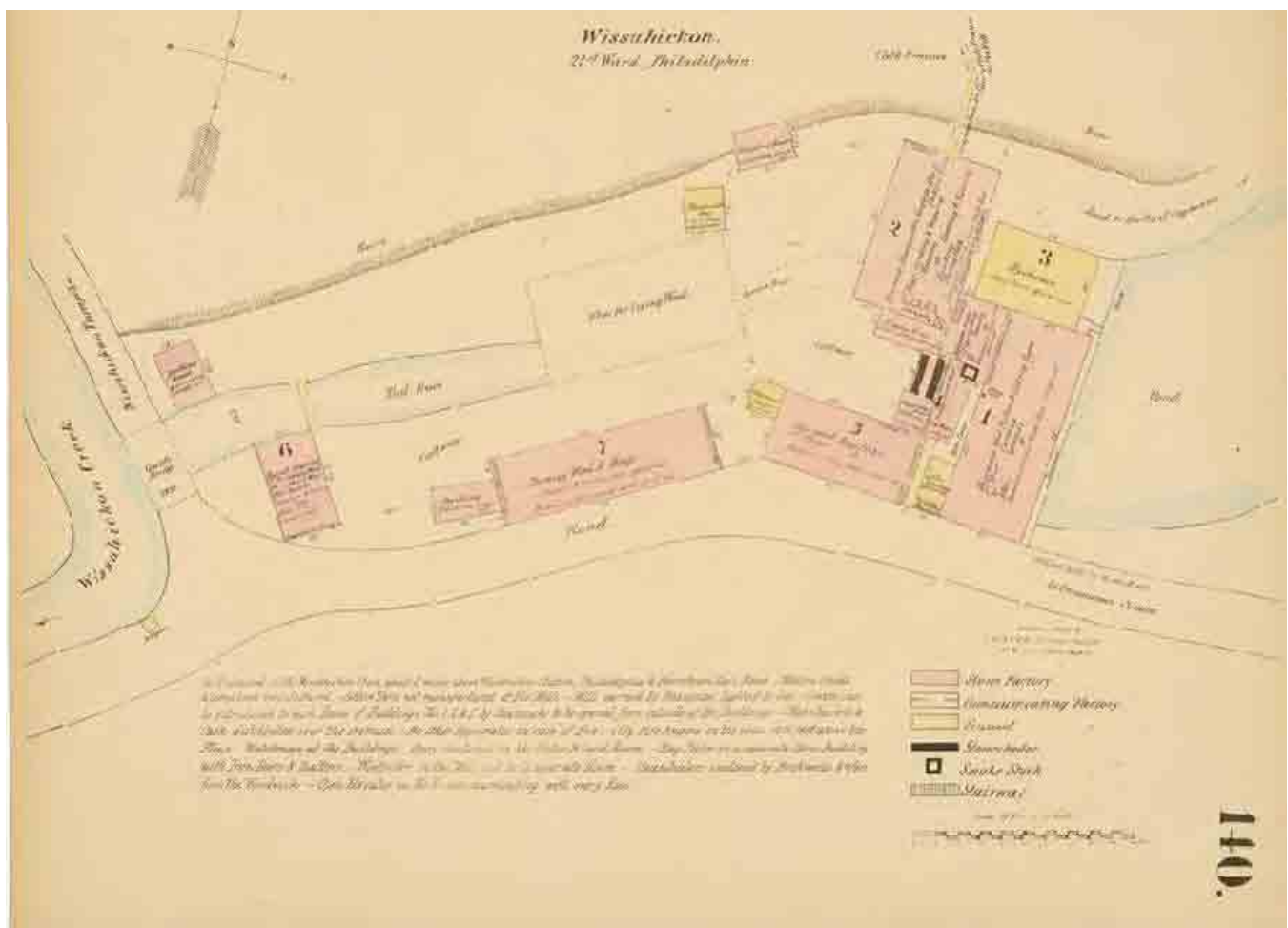
Illustration of 207 Lincoln Drive (Rittenhouse Homestead), John Richard and Shoemaker Collection, 1880's. (Source: HSP)

organization. Therefore all the outlying townships in the county, including Germantown, Manayunk and Roxborough, were combined into the current City of Philadelphia.

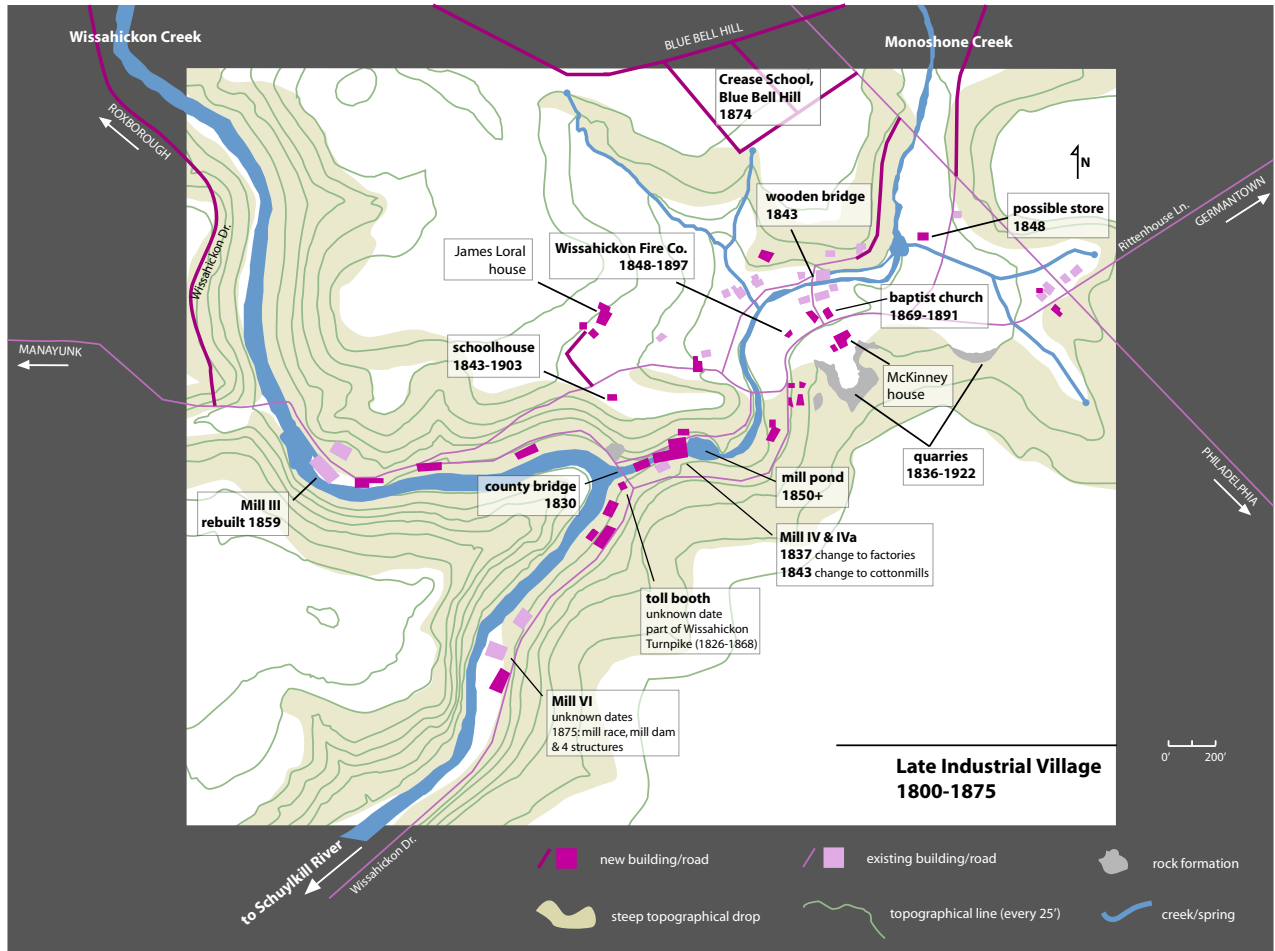
During the 1860's the Rittenhouse town mills appear to have been thriving despite the national conflict of the Civil War. In 1866, a Hexamer General Survey was conducted for the Rittenhouse Woolen Mills. According to this survey, one cotton mill alone included fifteen different structures including an onsite sulfur house, blacksmith shop and several buildings for the various processing stages of wool. There were a number of mills in Rittenhouse town during this period, all of which could have been comparable in size. Housing for the workers also was indicated on the 1866 survey, indicating that the mill did indeed employ



Historic Rittenhouse Town with Blue Bell Hill in the background. (Source: HRT)



1866 Hexamer General Survey (Source: www.philageohistory.com)



Map demonstrating buildings and roads during the industrial town period. (Source: Pam Jordan)

many more workers than it did in its earlier papermaking days.

Slow Decay

Despite the mill’s relative success in the 1850’s and 60’s, RittenhouseTown was slowly deteriorating under the pressures around it. In 1868, the Fairmount Park Commission was created by the City of Philadelphia to protect the watershed of the Schuylkill River and to conserve the natural landscape. According to the 1869 plan for Fairmount Park, the mill that had been surveyed in 1866 was within the perimeter of the newly established Fairmount Park grounds. By the end of the 19th century, most of the former Rittenhouse property had been sold to Fairmount Park, which systematically razed most of the mill and industrial buildings on the property.

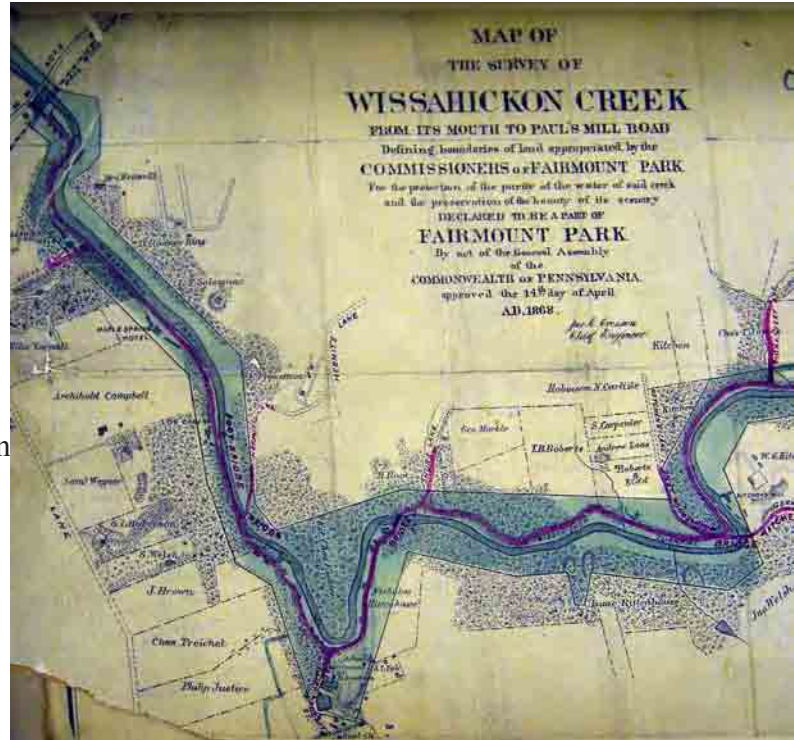


Rittenhouse Town, 1889. (Source: Fairmount Park Archives)

The Centennial Exhibition of 1876 marked the 100th

anniversary of the American Revolution. The one-year event was celebrated in Philadelphia by designating 285 acres of Fairmount Park to build over 200 individual non-permanent exhibition halls to showcase the industrial, scientific and cultural progress of America. The main buildings of the exhibition were the Machinery Hall, Horticultural Hall and Memorial Hall. Days before the Exhibition was to officially commence, on May 3rd a new branch of the Reading Railroad opened that led to the Centennial grounds. Opening on May 10, 1876 and closing on November 10, 1876, the exhibition was a rousing success with total admissions equaling 9,910,966 persons. The Exhibition attracted the President of the United States, many members of Congress, Supreme Court, Cabinet and other National, State and municipal officers as well as several foreign dignitaries. By hosting thirty-seven different countries, the United States introduced itself as a world leader in industrial technology and progress, as well as Philadelphia's spearheading role in those areas.

In the early part of the 20th century, modes of transportation were changing rapidly. As cars became more prevalent on the streets of Philadelphia, they needed faster, safer routes than the older roads could provide. As new roads were devised, they allowed the citizens of Philadelphia to travel further and more efficiently than ever before. In 1917, the last parcel of land which contained 206 Lincoln Drive had been sold to the park, and only a few of the homes were spared demolition through protests by Rittenhouse family members. When Lincoln Drive was built during that same year, much of the RittenhouseTown topography was altered and the buildings in its path were



Plan for Fairmount Park, 1868.
(Source: Library Company of Philadelphia)



Rittenhouse mill, 1889.
(Source: HSP)

taken down.

In 1919, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway was constructed, which led all the way to Germantown. With Germantown now easily accessible, families began to travel to the outlying areas of Philadelphia to get out of the dense and often time dirty Center City area. Furthermore, the Market Street line subway was constructed to allow West Philadelphians an easy commute to the heart of downtown. As downtown Philadelphia began to become overcrowded, a migration continued throughout the 1920's to the suburbs along the Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad lines.

Population was booming and the business community was reaping the benefits as new skyscrapers were being built. Though Philadelphia was thriving in certain areas during the first twenty years of the twentieth century, the manufacturing sector was not so fortunate. Philadelphia manufacturing was the victim of companies moving their factories to more central locations to facilitate national distribution. Though there was a short spike in production during World War I, manufacturing output continued to decline.

During the 1930's, public transportation was modernized when it was converted to electricity. The Great Depression affected Philadelphia harshly when fifty banks were forced to close due to bankruptcy. In 1932, in an effort to avoid default on debts, the city government cut numerous programs and fired many employees. From 1932 to 1937, the city operated on state and federal funds while spending none of its own money for relief of its citizens. The Great Depression resulted in labor becoming heavily unionized and the local government becoming solidly democratic.

World War II spurred Philadelphia out of its economic slump and attracted an influx of migrant workers from the south to work in the war industry; once again the city was productive and successful. After the war, a major demographic shift began. Italians moved to Mt. Airy, blacks moved into Nicetown and Germantown where redevelopment of public housing was underway, and middle-class families left the city and continued moving out to the suburbs.

The 1950's saw the beginnings of urban renewal. The

“Chinese Wall” on Filbert Street was taken down and this paved the way for the development of Penn Center, which was a business district in Center City. Improvements included the Schuylkill Expressway, built during the 1950’s, and the Delaware Expressway, constructed to ease traffic movement into the downtown area. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority was formed in the 1960’s, and public transportation continued to expand in the 1970’s when the Broad Street subway was completed. At this time, the suburbs expanded by 30% at the expense of older working-class neighborhoods. Suburban residents attempted to distance themselves from the city socially and politically as criminal activity increased downtown.

The Bicentennial of 1976 marked the 200th anniversary of America’s independence, as well a national economic recession, an escalating oil crisis, and the finale of a long-hated war in Vietnam. In the hopes of spurring national pride and reinventing an American nostalgia, cities across the country revisited the tangible fabric that had produced this modern, industrial country. In preparation for this event, historic structures of national and regional importance around Philadelphia began preservation campaigns. Historic Rittenhouse Town began restoration work on buildings 207 and 207A, which was the birthplace of David Rittenhouse, the renowned astronomer and mathematician, and the man who lends name to many parks, streets and buildings in Philadelphia. As if contagious, numerous historic buildings and sites across the entire city were undergoing reorganization and revitalization in the hopes to restore not only the physical fabric, but also the economic, social and national network Philadelphia once enjoyed.



207 A Lincoln Drive, 1973.
(Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission)



206 Lincoln Drive, 1973
(Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission)

Organizational Structure

With encouragement from the Fairmount Park Commission, a group of 30 concerned citizens were led by Hugh B. Hanson in forming the Friends of Historic RittenhouseTown in 1984. “The Friends” wanted to take on the responsibility of preserving and interpreting the historic structures and other heritage resources of RittenhouseTown that lie along the Monoshone Creek and are part of the Fairmount Park System. “The Friends” also were interested in portraying America’s papermaking history, therefore they opened the site for visitors and hands-on papermaking classes and started introducing annual events at the site in 1986. Celebrating the Tricentennial of the founding of the paper mill in 1990, the organization conducted a major capital campaign to raise enough money to hire professional staff, convert the Abraham Rittenhouse Home into a visitor’s center and turn the barn in to a papermaking studio. In 1998, colonial German cooking classes, which took place in the restored Rittenhouse Homestead Bake house, were included as part of Historic RittenhouseTown’s programming.

The Friends of Historic RittenhouseTown, whose name changed to Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. (HRT) in 1992, was structured as a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation and governed by a set of by-laws. There is an active, voluntary Board of Directors that hires professional staff to manage the daily operations, physical resources including the visitors’ center, gift shop, educational programs and special events of Historic RittenhouseTown. However, the professional staff are not in fact board-members themselves. The Board of Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. reviews the Directors’ performance annually, outreaches for additional funding sources, provides professional and volunteer support

when necessary, makes decisions regarding Historic RittenhouseTown's future and acts as overall governance to the organization in accordance with HRT's mission. The professional staff currently consists of Executive Director Chris Owens and Director of Education and Program Development Ariel Wilson. With a financially-supporting membership of over 900 members spanning across the United States and overseas, Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. can afford to maintain five of the seven remaining original buildings and guide over 13,000 visitors through the site per year. The six buildings Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. maintains and manages are secured through 25-year leases with the Fairmount Park Historic Trust. Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. acts on behalf of the City of Philadelphia through the Fairmount Park Commission, who is technically the owner of record.

The Mission of Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc.:

“Historic RittenhouseTown, the site where William Rittenhouse founded the first paper mill in British North America and where his grandson David Rittenhouse, patriot and scientist was born, is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of this National Historic Landmark. Through archeology, historic research, preservation, and high-quality educational programs, Historic RittenhouseTown dedicates itself to informing the public about the life and times of this Early American industrial village.”

CHAPTER 3: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Rittenhouse Town is a unique cultural landscape formed by the birth, life and death of an industrial village in early America; reflecting multiple layers of the region and country's history. As a collection of historic buildings located within Philadelphia's Fairmount Park and the Wissahickon Valley, the site has transformed from a bustling mill village into a green oasis in the midst of a major metropolitan area.

Today, Historic Rittenhouse Town serves as an important educational resource for Philadelphia residents and visitors and has the potential to offer an abundance of educational, recreational, economic, and social opportunities. *The ability of this landscape to communicate the past, provide community life in the present and future, and the critical connection to the Monoshone Creek dictate the significance of Historic Rittenhouse Town today.*

The Landscape's ability to speak

The story of the past and current uses of the site is told through extant accretions, old and new, and their relationship to the landscape. Past industry and inhabitation is given voice by the pattern of archaeological evidence and its placement within the land, while the imprint of current use gives physical form to contemporary understanding of the site.

Founded by William Rittenhouse in 1690, the house built by his son Nicholas still stands and gives physical evidence of early settlement in Philadelphia. The other remaining houses on the site were built by descendants of William and illustrate the growth of the family as the site grew from one mill to an industrial village in the nineteenth century. Now, the village is gone, extinguished by the rise of the industrial revolution and the development of rail shipping; a similar fate for other industrial towns.

The park that replaced it demonstrates the rise of the urban park around the turn of the twentieth century. Today, the way that

the story is expressed by the landscape offers a tool for education that can be used to foster a greater understanding of the site: its historical significance, the early presence of industry in Philadelphia, and the growth of America.

An Evolving Cultural Landscape

As a site that has a long history of inhabitation and use, Historic RittenhouseTown is an important place for human interaction and experience. The manner in which the site has been used has evolved over time but continues to be shaped by human activity. The historic architecture and the lush vegetation along Monoshone Creek provide a pleasant, aesthetic experience that offers a tranquil alternative to the metropolitan wetting which encompasses it.

Many of the visitors today come to use the trails connecting the site to the Wissahickon Valley. Joggers and bicyclists are among the site's most frequent users, giving testament to the recreational value of the landscape. The landscape of RittenhouseTown has the potential to further promote itself as a gathering place for educational, economic, and social uses, attracting communities of users to appreciate the aesthetic experience that the site can offer. The landscape can serve as a resource to draw activity to the site, providing social and economic stimulus to local communities.

Flow of Life through the Monoshone

The Monoshone Creek, through Historic RittenhouseTown, supported the life of the mill industry 300 hundred years ago, and continues to flow today as a part of the living landscape in the Wissahickon Valley. First incorporated into Fairmount Park to protect the city's water supply, the site has the potential to re-emerge as a significant local environmental resource

through ongoing watershed revitalization efforts. As the life blood of RittenhouseTown throughout history, the creek remains a permanent feature of the site, reflecting the history of the landscape and the founding of the village. As an integral part of the site it provides a focal point for experiencing the history of Historic RittenhouseTown and forming a connection to nature and the changing environment.

Today the site's physical landscape provides the foundation for creating a valuable place that both synthesizes and expresses the individual and important values for Historic RittenhouseTown. The historical, educational, aesthetic, recreational, economic, and social values as well as the natural resources create the site's significance.

CHAPTER 4: VALUES

Current Values

Historic Value

RittenhouseTown is a vital historic resource, not only to Philadelphia, but to the nation as well. Initially settled by the Lenape Indians, this site along the Monoshone was the birthplace of America's first paper mill in 1690. Founded by Wilhelm Rittinghausen, (later Anglicized to William Rittenhouse) a German Mennonite immigrant, this paper mill was the catalyst for rapid mill industrialization of the Wissahickon Valley. From these early beginnings, the Rittenhouse family capitalized on Philadelphia's booming markets and enlarged their land holdings while also expanding the scope of the mills to include grist mills. With personal success, individual Rittenhouses built their homes on the property, beginning with the "Homestead" in 1707. By the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution had taken hold in the United States and the paper industry quickly mechanized, though the Rittenhouse mills did not. Switching instead to textiles, this conversion required more labor and therefore a small industrial town developed to house the mill workers and their families. An early example of a workers village, RittenhouseTown in time had a church, school and its own fire company. After the Civil War, another community evolved on the hill overlooking the mills named Blue Bell Hill, which is still in existence today. However, this cannot be said for the RittenhouseTown community. Soon after the Civil War, the mills went into decline and by the late nineteenth century, most of the Rittenhouse property had been sold to Fairmount Park. With rundown industrial sites common, Fairmount Park saw no value in the mills and their accompanying

structures and systematically leveled many of the buildings. All that was saved were the Rittenhouse homes and only because the family had petitioned to have them preserved. The remaining house out of park control was 206, which served a short life as a Tubercular Sanitarium Recovery Center, owned by Providence Hospital and run by Dr. Mary Davis Ridgeway. However, this too passed into park control in 1917.

An exceptional site with ties to Germantown, the Mennonite community, and Philadelphia's growth, RittenhouseTown is a notable example of early American industry. A precursor of well-known industrial villages, such as Lowell, Massachusetts, RittenhouseTown offers a glimpse at what once was.



Education Value

Historic RittenhouseTown is a valuable medium for education on several topics that can be related to larger social and political concepts and ideas. These include not only detailed focuses such as papermaking and the Rittenhouse family, but also broader focuses including the pre-industrial revolution in America, Philadelphia industry, and Democracy. By using the buildings, landscape, exhibits and interactive workshops, the staff of Historic RittenhouseTown Inc. can educate the public on a variety of issues. These education efforts can also be geared towards several audiences; children, school groups and adults.



Paper making at Historic RittenhouseTown
(Source: www.rittenhousetown.org)

Aesthetic Value

Though Historic RittenhouseTown is in the midst of a metropolitan city, once you enter into the valley it evokes nature reclaiming its historic roots. Historic RittenhouseTown is located within a gorge and along the banks of a bubbling creek, and thus the landscape itself is impressive in its geological and topographical layout. Evidence of human intrusions such as Lincoln Drive, graveled roads, several historic homes, and park benches are scattered throughout the site, yet the encroachment of vegetation and the decay of the aged buildings has created a bucolic atmosphere. As the largest urban park in the United States, Fairmount Park offers immense space and opportunity for a retreat into a natural setting, but the inclusion of the remnants of an old industrial village adds to the romantic ambience of the site.

Recreation

Historic RittenhouseTown's strategic placement invites a beneficial element of recreational use. Situated within an expansive green oasis, Fairmount Park, Historic RittenhouseTown provides recreational activities for many park goers. Fairmount Park attracts a multitude of visitors each day as an escape from the city life of Philadelphia. Within the Wissahickon Valley there are various trails for hiking and biking. RittenhouseTown is situated amongst the trail systems and has many people hiking, biking or walking their dog through the site daily. Historic RittenhouseTown can capitalize on this recreational use and increase the differing activities. With the cleared trails, more hikers will be able to connect to the surrounding neighborhoods. The site can utilize its existing picnic areas and establish more. The picnic sites will offer areas for day trips directly to Historic RittenhouseTown and not through it.



Monoshone Creek through HRT.
(Source: A. Casale)



Monoshone Creek. (Source: S. Vukovich)



Fairmount Park trail system through HRT.
(source: S. Vukovich)

Potential Values

Economic Value

The economic value of Historic RittenhouseTown is limited because it is run by a non-profit organization and is not intended to be a major capital venture. That being said, any profits made are reinvested in Historic RittenhouseTown and in supporting their mission, which places some importance on the revenue-making capabilities of the organization. Therefore the economic value emphasizes keeping Historic RittenhouseTown financially stable and capable of implementing appropriate changes and improvements in order to carry out its mission.

Compared to other institutions of similar size, Historic RittenhouseTown appears financially stable. However, they are having a difficult time finding the staff and volunteer support to fundraise, write grants, and create sufficient funds to support new endeavors and to take the next steps proposed in their strategic plan. Currently, the main sources of revenue for the site come from: school group tours, profits from the gift shop, grants, membership drives, interest on the endowment, fundraiser drives, and the rent paid by tenants of the historic homes.

Historic RittenhouseTown possesses a wealth of untapped resources that, if appropriately explored and developed, may successfully increase its total revenue and its economic value as an organization. For instance, Historic RittenhouseTown has a unique outdoor space that could be utilized for hosting public events such as festivals and fairs, or rented out for private functions like wedding photos and ceremonies. The aesthetic landscape of Historic RittenhouseTown makes it well-suited for hosting such events and functions, which could potentially be very profitable for Historic RittenhouseTown through admission and space rental charges. Alliances with managements of



HRT gift shop.
(Source: S. Vukovich)



Potential space for special events.
(Source: S. Vukovich)

other historic sites in the area also could produce more efficient and effective fundraising and event opportunities and less work and responsibility for Historic RittenhouseTown's staff. Expansion of the merchandise to include refreshments and paper-themed products in the gift shop, as part of the interpretive experience, represents another potential money-making opportunity.

Potential Social Value

Historic RittenhouseTown has potential to become a gathering place of people looking for an escape from the city, a fun afternoon or a beautiful setting in which to spend time. In addition to providing an enjoyable and moving experience for visitors, Historic RittenhouseTown could host events that would be attractive for other purposes as well. The bucolic setting can be more of a destination in its own right; a place used by people in the nearby communities of Bluebell Hill and Germantown for events or gatherings bringing people together individually or in groups. The importance of attracting visitors is to awaken the site of Historic RittenhouseTown and to have it populated by people who are drawn to the natural landscape and history, seeking a communal experience.



Group demonstrations of cooking.
(Source: www.ga.k12.pa.us)

Ecological Value

Historic RittenhouseTown originally developed in a wide along the Monoshone Creek for its crucial environmental resources. The creek itself was a major giver of life for the town, not only as a source of power for the mills, but as a critical source of clean water. The land surrounding the site has been radically changed from its once lush mature forest, to a clear-cut industrial expanse and finally to an overgrown region with an extremely polluted creek. Historic RittenhouseTown has tremendous potential to create a healthy ecological environment. There are numerous interested parties who

have been and continue to work the land towards a cleaner state. Volunteer groups and garden clubs can help to clear the tangled invasives and replant native species to the landscape. There are ongoing efforts to clean up the creeks in the Wissahickon Valley. Ultimately, with the continued interest and help from enthusiastic individuals and groups, Historic Rittenhouse Town will achieve its potential ecological health. Kids and adults alike will one day be able to play and fish in the creek and run and play all over the grounds of the site.



Ecological resources of the site.
(Source: S. Vukovich)



CHAPTER 5: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Below is listed the determined strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for Historic RittenhouseTown. Each of the categories has been ranked and prioritized according to importance or impact.

Strengths

Cultural Landscape

As the strengths of the site were discussed, three different aspects arose as part of the cultural landscape. First, the historical period of significance is embodied in the extant buildings on the site of Historic RittenhouseTown. Though the industrial structures, such as the mills, were demolished, five of the original residences of the Rittenhouse family remain.

Secondly, the scenic and environmental landscape is a strength in that the site provides a natural experience within the city. As it sits alongside a creek within a gorge, the site is surrounded by naturally dramatic scenery that many visitors use and enjoy for recreation.

Thirdly, Historic RittenhouseTown sits within Philadelphia's Fairmount Park and is along the Wissahickon Trail System, a major pedestrian and bicycling thoroughfare in the park. Additionally, the site is along Lincoln Drive, a major arterial to northwest Philadelphia, and a great number of people pass by the site everyday.

Historical Distinctions

RittenhouseTown holds National Landmark status and is thus listed as a nationally important historic site. It also holds the honor of being the site of the first papermill in America. Because of this distinction and the long residency of the Rittenhouse family,

prolific historical documentation exists on the site.

Institutional Management and Development

Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc., is fortunate to have an involved and interested board as well as a new and enthusiastic staff which, though small, is willing to be active in improving and changing Historic RittenhouseTown.

As of May 2006, 4 out of 5 RittenhouseTown houses are under the control of the Friends of Historic RittenhouseTown, who have a more active roll in providing care, maintenance, and use for the buildings than the Fairmount Park Commission. However, because the buildings are still ultimately under the protection of Fairmount Park, the buildings are indemnified under Fairmount Park. The management has also provided somewhat increased safety and security by adding a new lighting system and providing security systems in each building.

Education, Interpretation, and Programming

Some educational programs are provided by Historic RittenhouseTown, such as papermaking classes and colonial cooking demonstration for school groups. The annual 5K "Paper Mill Run" happens each year in late summer, bringing in many runners to support the site.

Historic RittenhouseTown is endowed with many layers of history with which to interpret the site: the inhabitation of the Lenape Indians, the Rittenhouse period from the development of a small hamlet to a busy industrial village, use of one of the houses as a clinic and hospital, and finally the period of time under Fairmount Park, both early on with the Fairmount Park Commission and later under the Friends of Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc.

Additionally, a quarterly scholarly journal is produced through RittenhouseTown on the history of the

site and papermaking.

Partnerships and Alliances

RittenhouseTown is part of city-wide matrix of historic sites and is more specifically part of the early industrial story of Philadelphia as it documents the period of the pre-Industrial Revolution in America. It was commercially linked to early settlement of Germantown to the east and is still tied through the old roads connecting the two areas, and it is presently within Fairmount Park system, which provides some support, however small.

Weaknesses

Education, Interpretation, and Programming

The greatest weakness at Historic RittenhouseTown is its lack of interpretation and little to no signage or markers. One sign stands at the entrance of the site to provide a name, but nothing exists to identify the landscape, the buildings, the original vs. reconstructed fabric, an explanation of the lack of extant fabric with the placement of mills, and so on.

In addition to the lack of interpretation and signage, what the site does project is a false sense of history. The overgrown and incongruous landscape is misleading, as is some of the reconstruction of the buildings. In general, the site is misfocused and its current message or interpretation is too far-reaching. For example, the connection to David Rittenhouse is emphasized in the visitors' center and in the introductory film, though he was only born at RittenhouseTown and left after two years. Phony colonial additions have been made to the Homestead, such as a small "colonial garden" and bake-oven addition to the kitchen.

Ultimately, the main weakness of the site is that it projects itself as a mill site, yet it lacks a mill. The buildings that do exist are impersonalized; they have titles named after members of the

Rittenhouse family, but the address numbers are more commonly used. A lack of understanding of the site and its boundaries is clear, and this is a great problem for Rittenhouse Town.

Cultural Landscape

Several weaknesses derive from the environmental landscape and its neglect, such as the water pollution in the Monoshone Creek and the overgrowth of invasive vegetation, which are not only taking over some of the buildings but create a landscape that is detrimental to the interpretation of the site. The noise pollution from Lincoln Drive is also extremely distracting and disruptive to the environmental setting, and discouraging fences made of barbed wire and chain-link further detract from the historic atmosphere.

The aspect most detrimental to the historical period of significance in relation to the cultural landscape is that Historic Rittenhouse Town does not have an established period of significance nor interpretive elements in the landscape. The visual historic landscape exhibits inappropriately reconstructed “period” gardens (as discussed above) and the deterioration of the extant buildings, both of which detract from a cohesive cultural landscape.

Marketing and Public Relations

Historic Rittenhouse Town has little to no public image, which is a result of poor marketing and public relations. The marketing and public relations materials have a lack of cohesive imagery; too many brochures of poor production quality are produced and confuse the visitor, not to mention overload them with disconnected reading materials. The site’s website is inadequate and also has a different image from the brochures, and the site itself has not established enough links with Germantown,

Independence Park, or other historical sites in Philadelphia.

Institutional Management and Development

A great weakness for Historic RittenhouseTown is its lack of resources – funding and staffing in particular. The site has no conservation management plan, and the staff is inadequate to handle both the management and maintenance of the site. Above the Friends of RittenhouseTown, there has been poor management by and communication with Fairmount Park, whose responsibilities are poorly defined and who give little response to maintenance problems. In general, there is a problem of confused governance at the site of Historic RittenhouseTown.

Additionally, there is a lack of security on site. Though tenants rent part or all of most of the buildings on site and are meant to provide some security, many are absent or do not provide enough of a presence to offer security.

Visitor Amenities

The Visitors' Center and institutional amenities, currently 206 Lincoln Drive, are inadequate for the site. The gift shop is sub-par and is placed within one of the interpreted spaces, which guarantees a lack of attention paid to the tour guide when discussing the space as well as a lack of understanding about the historical significance of the space. There is a major lack of visitor amenities in that there is only one public restroom and no refreshments/café provided for visitors.

For both visitors and staff and board, there is a lack of adequate exhibition, meeting, and office space on site. The small rooms used for visitor orientation, group gatherings, and meetings in 206 Lincoln Drive are not well-suited for these uses.

Outside, there are not many picnicking or rest areas/ opportunities for people to enjoy the site on their own. For visitors traveling to the site, there is a lack of public transportation as the train is a 15-minute walk away, and no buses run to the site. For drivers, there is no easy or coherent access/entrance to site, poor directions and signage to the site, and a lack of adequate parking.

Moreover, the site is only open to the public 3/4 of year.

Opportunities

Education, Interpretation, and Programming

RittenhouseTown has an immense number of opportunities, the most of which lie in interpretation. Once the period of significance has been established, the site can begin to provide exterior signage for structures and history on the site, which will help with the education of visitors and passers-by to the site who know nothing of the site. Additionally, there is great opportunity for improved guided and self-guided tours, as well as the possibility for audio-tours for an added sensory experience (and to block the distraction of traffic noise from Lincoln Drive). Downloadable iPod tours could be provided, free of charge, so that visitors could come whenever they desire, even during the winter months when the site is closed to the public.

The opportunity exists to extend the education of visitor to the interpretation of mill technology as they relate to the features of the site. This could be related to the interpretation of the site as a multi-layered history, including the extant buildings, the site's surroundings, and the historical routes to and from the site.

Another great opportunity to add to the interpretation of the site is to initiate further archaeological studies that might lead to better knowledge and understanding of the previous mills, and to use this information to explore reconstruction or other techniques to illustrate the industrial fabric and technology. This could include the partial reconstruction of a mill or wheel, or marking the footprint of the mill and other missing structures. The exhibition of some of the more interesting and telling artifacts found in excavations of the site could

be a way to bring the site to life for visitors.

The area outreach and education is ripe with opportunities, for example providing a wider range of papermaking workshops for children, adults, and professionals. The site could also be used to host workshops for restoration and preservation, such as the ones provided each year by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.

Marketing and Public Relations

A very basic and potentially very helpful opportunity for the public relations of the site is to make Historic RittenhouseTown more visible in the surrounding area. Signs along Lincoln Drive and Walnut Lane at the approach to the site could begin to give the site greater public knowledge about its existence. The same could be done in Germantown and Ten Box.

The greatest opportunity for the marketing of the site is the organization and creation of stronger site image. Branding the site with a certain image quality, i.e. consistent colors, font and formatting, would bring the site together and provide a cohesive public image that is recognizable as representing Historic RittenhouseTown. The development of website would be very important to the public image of Historic RittenhouseTown. The site could have much more additional information, be more interactive, and could even be used as a research tool with a searchable database for the onsite archives.

Cultural Landscape

As a historical landscape, HRT illustrates many different layers of history to tell a story of the first paper mill in America and the inevitable industrialization which ensued. Through architectural features in the landscape, both buried and extant, one is able to piece together the birth, life and death of an American industrial village.

The crux of Historic RittenhouseTown is the physical landscape, thus maintaining the environment for all to enjoy is one the greatest opportunities for HRT. The opportunity to mitigate

pollution and therefore improve drainage on site is twofold. Also, the removal of invasive exotic vegetation must go hand-in-hand with efforts to improve pollution in the creek. The landscape aesthetic of Historic Rittenhouse Town would improve dramatically, providing a more visually pleasing and healthy environment for all to experience.

The Monoshone Creek, as a vital component to the historic landscape, would again be open to the public to use for activities such as fishing; activities which would entice visitors to continuously frequent Historic Rittenhouse Town. Re-opening the outlying trails to and from the site would improve access, as well as create a broader connection to the surrounding landscape. A larger connection to Germantown historic sites is an opportunity that would compliment and help support the history at Historic Rittenhouse Town. Providing a variety of activities for visitors could increase visitation to HRT, either as a detour or a destination. Installing numerous picnic tables at strategic locations around the site will provide comfort to the visitor, as well as an opportunity to enjoy the site from a stationary point in the landscape. Relocating facilities such as parking to an isolated location will enhance the historic experience by providing fewer modern day distractions and mitigating noise pollution. These components are integral to managing Historic Rittenhouse Town and creating a more park-like atmosphere.

The opportunity to provide more substantial visitor amenities such as a café or restaurant, events venue and larger parking would make Historic Rittenhouse Town more versatile as a sustainable site. People would have the option to utilize HRT a destination for a special event such as a wedding or corporate party. By maximizing the existing buildings, such as the barn, programs like papermaking could expand to accommodate a wider audience, and events such as small weddings would have adequate facilities. Clearly demarcated pedestrian

paths to and from the parking would allow visitors to enjoy the initial experience of entering the site, instead of inciting confusion. By utilizing the existing fabric to the utmost, Historic RittenhouseTown would not only be more financially stable, it mitigate the pressure for tenants to provide a source of revenue for the site. The opportunity to provide a plethora of activities for visitors in combination with greater financial stability for HRT increases the self-sustainability and survival of the site.

Alliances and Partnerships

Historic RittenhouseTown sits in a rich, city-wide matrix of historic sites and communities. The opportunity to better connect with Germantown and the adjacent Blue Bell Hill via constituencies can improve HRT's standing and awareness within these local communities. Providing historic links, such as colonial cooking classes, does not solidify the relationship with Germantown, and a more proactive approach must be pursued. In particular, communities like Blue Bell Hill may become more involved and open to communication if a relationship and alliance is instigated by HRT. Smaller conservancy organizations, such as the Wissahickon Valley Conservancy and Germantown Historical Society, cannot not only strengthen HRT's position within the local community, it will provide a greater amount of stakeholders to help ensure the site's survival. The Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust presents an opportunity for an alliance with HRT. As a stakeholder and city entity, the opportunity to collaborate on preservation issues is twofold. Connecting with Independence Park within the city of Philadelphia again strengthens and provides opportunities for collaboration with preservation issues, exhibits, and city-wide programming.

Philadelphia has numerous historical institutions that would suit a partnership with Historic RittenhouseTown. To connect and align HRT with the Philadelphia Preservation Alliance would provide another stakeholder, as well as an advocate for the site. The preservation Alliance hosts many lectures, workshops and relevant social events, therefore making HRT not only a benefactor,

but also a provider and active partner in Philadelphia's historic organizations. Philagrafika and other papermaking or printing industries could become stakeholders and partners with HRT by providing objects for exhibits and quality paper merchandise for purchase.

To ensure Historic RittenhouseTown's survival, a contemporary connection must be pursued as an opportunity to connect with today's culture. Establishing relationships with local artists to bring in crafts, quality paper products and other site-inspired art will increase the audience and relevancy of HRT in contemporary culture. Providing unique merchandise, like paper made on site, will allow visitors the opportunity to take away a tangible "piece" of the site. Making this contemporary connection will solidify Historic RittenhouseTown as a destination for quality paper products, as well as help provide artists and craftspeople with a venue. In essence, the original spirit of the mill will be realized through inciting the relationship with contemporary culture and giving the visitor the opportunity to take away tangible memory.

Threats

Institutional Management and Development

Due to undeveloped opportunities, the financial instability of site is a great threat to Historic RittenhouseTown. Lack of proper maintenance for the historic fabric has compromised the integrity of all structures on site. The HRT management has allowed unacceptable tenants to reside in these structures, tenants who are not familiar with maintaining historic structures. Under the guise of security, more damage to the materials by tenants has been accounted for than upkeep and safety. Fairmount Park's neglect to manage the landscape has increased the threat of invasive exotic vegetation and

overgrowth.

Education, Interpretation and Programming

The threat of erroneous information is a destructive force at HRT. It is the obligation of the site to present clear, accurate and relevant information to the visitor for a worthwhile intellectual and educational experience. By not defining a clear period of significance for each building and the overall site, the visitor is misled and confused about the significance, history and context of HRT. Although the interpretation of Historic RittenhouseTown is complex due to numerous layers of history and changes to the landscape, it hinders and discredits the site to advertise a mill when in fact there is no mill or wheel still in existence. Also, a lack of clearly established values to use as guidelines for interpretation of the site is exemplified in the lack of signage and ad hoc exhibits. In turn, this decreases the chance for a meaningful experience when visiting Historic RittenhouseTown, and the threat of a discontinued visitorship might ensue. In essence, Historic RittenhouseTown is a threat to itself by perpetuating insignificance through confusing, erroneous or absent interpretation.

Marketing and Public Relations

The marketing and public image of Historic RittenhouseTown is mediocre at best. The exacerbated relationship with HRT's closest neighbor, Blue Bell Hill, is currently a threat instead of a stakeholder. Due to a lack of outward communication and public relations, these threats continuously plague Historic RittenhouseTown with difficulties when discussions of visitor and facility expansion arise. In addition, with the advent of a virtual culture, HRT has not provided a thoughtful and interactive website as the main source of marketing and public image. Instead of "updating" this historic site to the 21st century, Historic RittenhouseTown has continued to live in the past with an outdated, stagnant website. Upon entering the site, HRT provides the visitor with over a dozen brochures articulating repetitive information and facts in an incohesive format. Immediately, the visitor is burdened

with the decision of which brochure and in what order to read, or, alternatively, to not read anything.

Cultural Landscape

The threat of pollution continuously plagues Historic Rittenhouse Town. The toxic pollution of the Monoshone Creek prohibits enjoyment and use of the natural landscape, and is gradually altering the surrounding ecosystem. Noise pollution from Lincoln Drive not only threatens the landscape by severing the site through the center, but it also disrupts the experience with noise from heavy vehicular traffic. In addition, invasive exotic vegetation obstruct historic views, as well as compromise the extant architecture.

CHAPTER 6: CASE STUDIES

As a part of this site assessment of Historic RittenhouseTown, the team members researched other historic sites that have something in common with Historic RittenhouseTown to see how they have addressed the challenges of site interpretation and management. Some of the sites chosen had working historic mills, others suffered from a lack of historic fabric, and others involved the outdoors in the visitor experience. Investigating these sites provided inspiration for the recommendations that are presented later in this document. A summary of the findings for each site follows.

Bale Grist Mill, Napa County, California

The Bale Grist Mill is located in Napa Valley in Northern California. It is part of the California parks system and is currently the only working mill in California. As a historic mill site with a working mill, Bale Grist Mill is an example of the importance of extant fabric and a connection to the surrounding landscape.

The Bale Grist Mill was built in 1846 by Dr. Edward Turner Bale on land that had been given to him by the Mexican government. Water was collected in a mill pond and transported via a wooden flume. The mill ground corn and wheat in to flour and acted as important social gathering spot for settlers of the Napa valley who brought their grains to the mill. Also, the mill was also a meeting point for the men who took part in the Bear Flag uprising on June 14th, 1846, which was lead by American settlers against the Mexican authorities.



Bale Grist Mill (Source: www.spoom.org)

Similar to the RittenhouseTown mills, the Bale Grist Mill was struggling to keep up the changes in technology due to the Industrial Revolution. The mill became a feed grain mill and tried to adapt as the local crops changed. After Mr. Lyman's death in the early 1900's, the mill was deeded to the Native Sons of the Golden West and the mill was restored and given landmark status in 1925, but sat empty until 1974, when it was acquired by the California State Park. After nine years of restoration work, it opened to the public. The Bale Grist Mill was at one time, one of thirty operating mills in California, and today is only one left.

The mill grounds are open daily but the mill building is open only on weekends and in the summer, daily. Tours are led by park rangers who explain the history of the site and show a 24 minute film. Mill demonstrations are given and visitors can watch corn, rye and wheat being ground into flour. In addition, visitors can purchase the organic flour to take home with them. Similar to Historic RittenhouseTown, the people that tend to visit the mill are families, school groups and park users who take advantage of the trails that pass through the site and connect to other parks.

The Bale Grist mill buildings and site are supported by the California Park system; they maintain the site, manage the website and employ park rangers as tour guides and stewards. Bale Grist mill has the benefit of being promoted by websites that encourage tourists and locals to take advantage of many of the sites and activities in the region. It does not do much in the way of self promotion but can rely on its location within the park to attract visitors.

Bale Grist Mill is an important site to look at in comparison to Historic RittenhouseTown. Connection to the surrounding landscape and an extant working mill are the two big attractions for the Bale Grist Mill and



Image of the grist wheel (Source: www.parks.ca.gov)

those assets that are emphasized. The experience of seeing a mill in operation and being able to take flour produced by the mill home, gives the visitor a satisfying glimpse into the history and importance of the mill site as well as an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon. While reconstructing a mill at Rittenhouse Town may or may not be the solution it is certainly worth considering the profound impact that original fabric can have on the visitor's experience.

Buckland Abbey, UK

Buckland Abbey is located on the edge of Dartmoor, in Devon, United Kingdom. The entire estate encompasses approximately 630 acres of farmland and woodland with several outbuildings in the Tamar Valley and estuary. The site consists of 6 miles of footpaths throughout the grounds. The Abbey, on the estate, was built in the 14th Century by Cistercian Monks, and the chapel and monastery later were converted into a Tudor style country house in the 15th Century. The home had several different landlords, but it is significant today for its most notable owner, Sir Francis Drake. Buckland Abbey was recognized and became a property of the National Trust in 1948. The National Trust is an extremely large private organization whose mission is to, "preserve and protect the coastline, countryside and buildings of England, Wales and Northern Ireland."

Buckland Abbey relays a strong cultural landscape interpretation, presented through various methods. The site has varying hours of operation according to the season in which the visitor can explore freely the buildings and grounds. The ability for the self-guided tours is done through a complete and cohesive use of signage. The site offers signs, pamphlets and maps that are clear in their representation



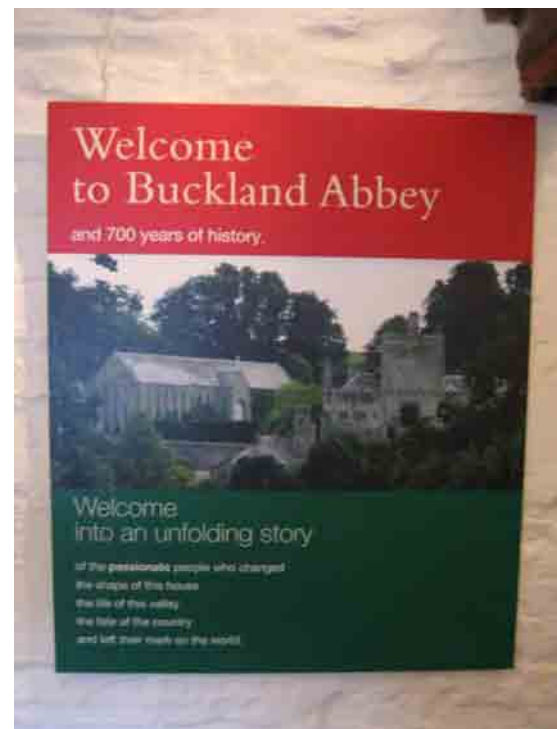
Buckland Abbey (Source: Amanda Casper)

through a unified color system and by presenting important and relative information. The maps and pamphlets are easy to read with specific dates, details and descriptions. The strategic placement and content of the signs around the estate make it easy to follow and understand the history of the site and its architecture.

The site enables the visitor to explore the site freely while gaining a true understanding of the place with other amenities as well. There are knowledgeable docents in the buildings and grounds eager to speak with all visitors. Buckland Abbey also consists of a well placed information center, workshops and information kiosks that all aid in the interpretation of the site. The range of elements for interpretation makes Buckland Abbey an enjoyable and educational historic site to visit.

Historic RittenhouseTown has a rich story to tell its audience. Currently, the site is unable to grab its visitor or passerby. It is not easy for the visitor to explore the site on his/her own and gain awareness of the history. There is minimal and confusing signage placed around Historic RittenhouseTown. The visitor center has a plethora of pamphlets however they do not blend with each other and can be hard to follow. In order to fully understand the history, one must take a guided tour which is only available during certain months of the year. There are no docents available at the site or information kiosks.

Historic RittenhouseTown could benefit from the cultural interpretation set forth at Buckland Abbey by using cohesive outdoor signage. Merging all of the differing pamphlets and hiking maps into a concise history and description would keep the visitors attention and allow for self-tours. A strong map can orient the visitor to the site and its surroundings. Strategic placement and available important information for the visitor and casual passerby could aid in a meaningful trip to the site.



Sign posted at Buckland Abbey (Source: Amanda Casper)

Jamestown

Jamestown, Virginia was the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Located along the James River in Virginia, the settlers coexisted, yet not always peacefully with the local Indians. Though the first years were hard-going for the settlers, the settlement eventually prospered. A “New Town” developed to the east of the original fort and remained the capital of Virginia until 1698, the year its major statehouse burnt down. At this time, the capitol moved to Williamsburg and Jamestown entered a long period of decline. The building fabric slowly eroded with time and disappeared. No preservation work was undertaken until the late nineteenth century. In 1893, the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities bought 22 ½ acres, and the National Park Service completed the parcel with the acquisition of the remaining island acreage in 1934. Currently, these two preservation groups, one state and one federal, operate Jamestown and keep it open to the public.

Today, Jamestown is a successful historic site despite minimal remaining fabric of the original fort settlement. It is only through seasonal archaeological digs that researchers are able to piece together how Jamestown may have appeared. To convey the historic significance of a site with minimal fabric, excellent signage and interpretation trails are utilized. The site remains interesting due to its constantly changing nature, as archaeology finds new data to back-up or contradict what was previously thought. Furthermore, the public can see archaeologists at work during the summer months and inspect the artifacts at the Archaearium.

Furthermore, an advantage of the settlement is that it is well-known and taught in grade-school curriculums. Well-marketed through websites, tourist brochures, the Virginia Visitor Center, public television and its 400th Anniversary



Image of Historic Jamestown (Source: www.williamsburgprivatetours.com/images/jamestown_fort.jpg)

celebration, Jamestown provides an excellent example for RittenhouseTown on the power of publicity. Finally, the dual partnership between the National Park Service and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities is a perfect model in strong communication and work between two preservation entities. This model serves as an example how HRT could entertain partnerships with organizations such as the Philadelphia Visitor Center. The visitor center would be able to advocate HRT's activities and also sell tickets to visit the first paper mill site in America.

Since it appears that Jamestown does not lack financial resources for daily operation and promotional endeavors, one might surmise that this would not be a good comparable for HRT (HRT lacks major financial resources). However, HRT can learn from the success of Jamestown as a popular historic site. HRT has a wealth of archeological artifacts, an excavated archeological site, extant buildings, and nature trails, all within a pastoral setting.

An example to exact some of these accomplishments is to use an extant building as an HRT Archaearium to showcase archeological artifacts. The excavated archeological areas at HRT could be utilized to place drawings and signage to explain some of the multi-layered history of the site.



View of Historic Jamestown Site (Source: www.nps.gov)

Newlin Grist Mill

Newlin Grist Mills is Located in the Brandywine Valley, close to the Delaware border. This site is similar to Historic RittenhouseTown in many respects; however, the quality of its interpretation and presentation currently exceed that of RittenhouseTown, and it can serve as a good

model for site interpretation of a historic mill.

The Newlin Grist Mill originally was constructed in 1704, and was in commercial operation until 1941. The mill was purchased by a member of the Newlin family in 1958, restored, and opened to the public in 1960. The original mill race still provides water to power the mill, and the original dam in the creek still exists. Currently, Newlin Grist Mill is the only working 18th century grist mill in Pennsylvania. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

Some residential buildings from the 18th and 19th century still exist on the site; they serve different functions, including a house museum, private residences, administration, and library and archival storage. Other buildings at the site, including a blacksmith's shop and a log cabin, were reconstructed in the present era to give the visitor a more complete interpretation of how the site looked in the past. One building, a barn, is historic, but was moved to the site from a farm in Delaware. Another building, a springhouse, is authentic to the site, but was moved to a new location in the 1970's. The office is located in a restored train station on the site.

Similar to Historic RittenhouseTown, the Newlin Grist Mill is part of a larger nature conservancy. As a part of the larger park, the site offers visitors picnic areas, fishing, and nature trails. Also, the site takes part in park events and festivals that occur throughout the year. The nature conservancy receives 40,000 visitors per year, of which 7,000 – 10,000 go to the Newlin Grist Mill Site.

The site's funding comes from an endowment (70%), and grants and visitor fees (30%). The site is autonomous, and is governed by a board of 21 members, of which approximately one-third are descendant of the Newlin family. Similar to Historic RittenhouseTown, the majority of visitors are school groups.

Newlin Grist Mill has one large advantage over Historic RittenhouseTown – its mill still exists. Having an extant mill



Exterior view of the Newlin Grist Mill (Source: www.newlingristmill.org)



Interior view of the Newlin Grist Mill (Source: www.newlingristmill.org)

makes it easy to interpret the site as an industrial mill site. Not only does the mill exist, it is operable. Thus, visitors are able to experience first-hand the historic technology that was the foundation of the site. Historic RittenhouseTown barely has the remnants of a mill, and those ruins currently are buried beneath invasive vegetation. Historic RittenhouseTown managers must decide if Newlin Grist Mill is a site that they want to emulate. If so, they must figure out how to reconstruct the mill in a manner that is historically accurate, yet informs the visitor that the mill is made of new fabric.

Another advantage that Newlin Grist Mill has over Historic RittenhouseTown is its endowment. They currently have more funds for site maintenance, conservation, educational programs, and other activities that aid in the preservation and the interpretation of the site. As an autonomous body, the site's board can use these funds to improve the site without needing the approval of another governing body, as Historic RittenhouseTown needs from Fairmount Park.

Kelly Drive

One of Historic RittenhouseTown's major challenges is its accessibility by the public. The closest train station is the Tulphocken Station on the R-8 Regional Rail Line and the closest bus route is the 65. While there is only a 10-15 minute walk to Historic RittenhouseTown from the train and bus stations, the path is obstructed by heavy traffic patterns and unsafe pedestrian crossing conditions. There is one crosswalk at Wissahickon Avenue and Lincoln Drive intersection and a pathway that goes along busy Lincoln Drive.

Historic RittenhouseTown also has limited parking on site. There are about four parking spaces by the visitor's



Aerial image of Historic RittenhouseTown
(Source: Google Earth, 2006)

center and a few more by the barn. There is not enough parking for the number of visitors they would like to have on a regular basis, and certainly not enough for special events.

In addition, there is no designated space for different users. Having parking by the barn makes vehicles drive through the site and compete on the driveway for space shared by cars, pedestrians, runners, and bicyclists alike. Furthermore, buses and trucks cannot park or even access the driveway. This is especially troublesome when trying to accommodate for several school buses throughout the year and providing a safe path for students to travel on. Presently, the buses have to park a fair distance away making the children walk and cross busy traffic intersections.

In terms of interpretation, with current multiple, ambiguous ways to enter the site may not present the best experience for the visitor. The lack of definition of paths and uninviting and unmarked entrances also negatively affect the site and the visitor's experience.

Although in general Lincoln Drive has not had a positive influence on Historic RittenhouseTown, it does have some good qualities. For instance, it connects Historic RittenhouseTown to the city making it only a short drive away from Center City Philadelphia. Also, it is a high traffic area and brings instant visibility to the site by commuters and passers-by.

Boathouse Row, or Kelly Drive, was explored as a public access comparable to Historic RittenhouseTown because it has dealt with pedestrian safety, parking issues and high traffic next to a neighborhood and recreational destination in its past and present. Boathouse row begins north of the Philadelphia Art Museum back parking lot and runs along the Schuylkill River bank and Kelly Drive has two lanes in either direction along boathouse row.

Boathouse Row is similar to Historic RittenhouseTown because it caters to lots of recreational users like bikers and runners on the pedestrian path. It lies next to a dangerously busy



Aerial image of Boathouse Row and Kelly Drive (Source: Google Earth, 2006)

road and intersection, which has been so threatening to the non-vehicular users that the traffic has recently been reconfigured for better access and safety. And like Historic RittenhouseTown, it is owned and governed by the Fairmount Park Commission.

Parking problems have also plagued Boathouse Row's past and present. Parking is available between Lloyd Hall, the visitor's center, and the Philadelphia Art Museum. There is also parking by the last boathouse going in the north direction. On really busy days, such as when Boathouse Row is hosting a Regatta, cars park legally or illegally wherever they can. Cars park up and down Lemon Hill and on the sides of Kelly drive when they can. The parking between the Philadelphia Art Museum and Lloyd Hall was recently put in to provide more areas where people could park. That parking lot has only mitigated the parking demand slightly and there are still not nearly enough parking spots for the amount of people who use this site. The Fairmount Park Commission has acknowledged this fact and is already talking about installing an underground parking garage somewhere nearby but has found challenges with installing this in an acceptable manner and fitting it in with the limited space in the area.

In order to get a better sense of the innate problems that have faced or are facing Boathouse Row and Kelly Drive, it is imperative to examine its past. In the 1933 photo of Boathouse Row taken by the AeroService Corporation of Philadelphia, we can see the Lincoln Memorial Statue located in the middle of a roundabout traffic circle. In 1933, the cars were slower and fewer, making the traffic circle a reasonable and efficient intersection. The Lincoln Memorial was significant to the city as it was created here as one of the first memorials made for Lincoln. The Lincoln Memorial stands significantly at the entrance to Fairmount Park, as in the



Photograph by the AeroService Corporation; Vol. #13 No. 15901; Taken April 23, 1933 (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)



Photograph by the AeroService Corporation; Vol. #13 No. 15901, detail; Taken April 23, 1933 (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)

tradition of most park entrances, to be acknowledged by all passers-by.

By 1995, the level of traffic had overgrown the capacity of the traffic circle and the intersection became an unsafe environment for pedestrians and cars alike. An aerial photograph depicts the intersection in 1995 and shows that there were very few parking options by the Philadelphia Art Museum or along Kelly Drive.

In 2000, an aerial photograph shows that the Fairmount Park Commission installed some additional parking between the Philadelphia Art Museum and the beginning of Boathouse Row. By 2000, the Lincoln Memorial intersection of Sedgley Drive and Kelly Drive had become even more dangerous. By this time there had been several fatal or nearly-fatal accidents involving pedestrians trying to cross Kelly Drive to get to Boathouse Row. Plans were made to move the Lincoln Memorial statue off to the side and install stoplights and a pedestrian walkway to improve traffic safety.

The plans were carried out and the Lincoln Memorial was moved east to a patch of green area where pedestrians and bikers have trouble accessing the statue and where cars no longer realize that he is there and pass on by, thus destroying the original and historical entrance appeal. The traffic circle was voided by the addition of traffic lights to the intersection, as well as a few crosswalks for pedestrians. Parking areas have also been reorganized in the space between the Philadelphia Art Museum and newly constructed Lloyd Hall. All of the changes can be seen with the current Google Earth aerial image from 2006.

Unfortunately the changes made to the Kelly Drive intersection did not have a significant impact on traffic safety, but it was a step in the right direction of solving the problem. The unresolved issue is that there is no safe path on the opposite side of the road from the Boathouses,



Aerial photograph of Philadelphia, 1995
(Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)



Aerial photograph of Philadelphia, 2000 (Source: Free Library of Philadelphia)

so it's really not an option to walk along that side. Hence, if you park north of the intersection along Kelly Drive and on the other side where there is a substantial amount of parking, you would either have the option of walking along the cars facing oncoming traffic to get to the crosswalk, or you can time it right and run across the street, which is what most people choose to do since it is the shortest path to Boathouses Row and is not much more dangerous than its alternative. Therefore the safety issues have not been solved and more crosswalks are needed throughout the length of Boathouse Row, even at the expense of slowing down traffic, because it is fast enough as it is.

We visited Boathouse Row on a Saturday in October 2006 when a regatta was taking place, so the site was very busy with traffic of all kinds. Even with the new parking in between Lloyd Hall and the Philadelphia Art Museum, there is still not enough parking for the patrons. It became very apparent that parking, traffic and recreational users are still at heads, and seem to be fighting over the same tiny space that Kelly Drive and Boathouse Row have to offer. The parking issue is a hot topic among patrons, especially during special events. Patrons easily get on the defensive when it comes to parking because they get issued parking tickets for there simply not being enough spaces to meet the demand of a given event. Cars trying to find parking at the end of Boathouse Row can easily block and slow down traffic while waiting for a spot, which adds to the traffic safety issues at stake. Since it seems like all of the issues surrounding Kelly Drive that were attempted to be solved, or at least mitigated, are still there, it may not have been necessary to move the Lincoln Memorial Statue and destroy the grand park entrance as it was originally designed.

As mentioned before, future plans for the site may include the installation of additional surface parking and



The new traffic lights at the Kelly Drive and Sedgley Drive intersection. (Source: Ashley Aiken, October 2006)



Aerial view of the Kelly Drive and Sedgley Drive intersection (Source: Google Earth, 2006)



The new parking lot between Lloyd Hall and the Philadelphia Art Museum. (Source: Ashley Aiken, October 2006)

a parking garage because the parking problem still has not been even close to being solved. In addition, pedestrian access issues are still being addressed.

We originally looked at the site for parking and traffic safety reasons, but Kelly Drive did not end up being a good example for Historic RittenhouseTown to model itself after in that respect. However, we found other design alternatives that we did not anticipate and that may be applicable to Historic RittenhouseTown.

For instance, the new visitor's center, Lloyd Hall, has been a wonderful addition to that intersection. Not only does its design blend in well with the surroundings but it caters to the public needs by offering refreshments, bathrooms, public indoor space, bike rentals and even facilities and rooms that can be rented out for private functions. Lloyd Hall gives visitors what they would expect to find in a site and providing simple visitor amenities cannot be ignored as it can set the tone for the overall experience of the site. Historic RittenhouseTown should consider offering these basic amenities and improving the facilities they have to complement and not distract from the overall experience of the site.

We were also impressed with the recreational path that runs along Boathouse Row. The path is heavily used by all kinds of users: runners, walkers, bicyclists, and rollerbladers. The path is also clearly defined from the road meant for vehicles and is wide enough to accommodate multiple lanes of cross traffic. In addition, the path is exposed and well lit at night for the safety of the late night user. More importantly, the path alleviates some of the traffic and access issues as one can park somewhere else either north or south of Boathouse Row and still be able to reach it via this recreational path. The two main points of access of the site (from the north and south) are well defined and engage the visitor who comes upon Boathouse Row while walking on the path.



The parking lot at the northern end of Boathouse Row. (Source: Amila Ferron, October 2006)



Lloyd Hall (Source: Ashley Aiken, October 2006)

Overall, a path like this helps make the site what it is and is not just a means of access but a means of interpretation. RittenhouseTown should reconsider its points of access and consider clearing away a path that leads to HRT in order to make accessing the site part of the interpretational experience.

RittenhouseTown may be able to apply these lessons learned from examining issues faced at Kelly Drive and Boathouse Row. For one, HRT should be careful not to let traffic and parking take over its site. Secondly, a defining a clear and well-lit path that clarifies traffic and pedestrian flow, with a clear sense of appropriate entry, can greatly improve the site. After all, a visitor's method of access will affect their interpretation and experience of the site. In the end, there should be a compromise between site access and the site. Also, modifying HRT's visitor's center to accommodate for basic visitors expectations and needs would greatly improve the quality of the visitor's experience.



Recreational path along Boathouse Row.
(Source: Amila Ferron, October 2006)

CHAPTER 7: POLICIES

The policies that have been developed for Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. (HRT) have grown out of the SWOT analysis and statement of significance for the site. The policies stated here are those that are integral to the development and success of the site. The policies are broken down into five categories: Cultural Landscape, Marketing and Public Relations, Alliances and Partnerships and Programming through Education and Interpretation.

Cultural Landscape

The goals of the Historical Landscape policy are to interpret and reference the historic landscape by reintroducing historic fence-lines and property boundaries. An integral part of this policy is the reintroduction and interpretation of different historic land uses. These historic uses include private gardens, flax fields, and quarry sites.

The intentions for Environmental Policies are to mitigate pollution influx from the stream and roadway systems and mitigate environmental impacts to the site. It is strongly suggested that the invasive species present on the site be minimized through the introduction of native competitors. It is important that drainage on the site be improved as well as the reduction of pollution in the stream system.

The Park Policies are intended to provide opportunities for future fishing or creek activities through ecosystem/corridor regeneration and available creek access. The management of the site as a park environment with picnic tables and clearly marked recreational areas is suggested. The park policy recommendations include the re-opening of site trails to outlying areas of site and Fairmount Park system: in order to provide straightforward and purposeful pedestrian access.



Quarry near Historic RittenhouseTown. Undated.
(Source: Shouemaker Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia)

Institutional Management and Development Policies intend to provide for the effective delineation and use of existing buildings for specific functions: such as exhibition space, management offices and a visitor center. The site's structures should be more fully used as a resource, and could be used as a venue for outside functions such as weddings, festivals and large events. An increase draw for visitation could come through providing incentives by providing a café or restaurant, and classes in designated buildings. The site should be made more accessible by providing increased parking through sensitive placement. Pedestrian paths should be designated through the use of signs: to provide clear directions to and from site. A critical component of this policy is the implementation of previous studies that have been done for the site.

Marketing and Public Relations

The Marketing and Public Relations Policies for the site include branding, advertising and improved website. It is critical for Historic RittenhouseTown that the site has better visibility to the public. These policies are intended to help make HRT a greater presence within the context of other historical sites in the Philadelphia area and beyond.

Clear and concise branding is a critical component of a site's interpretation. It is suggested through a standardized branding image be established for Friends of Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. (HRT). The components that are included in branding the site are established colors, font and images. These will be used in all HRT publications, exhibits and press releases.

Advertising is also important for increased site visibility. Location signage on Lincoln Drive, Walnut Lane, and in Germantown will make the site more noticeable to the surrounding area. Advertising should also be included on the website for dissemination of



Benjamin Franklin Home (Source: http://www.nps.gov/archive/inde/Franklin_Court/Pages/col-lagetownhome.html)

information.

The current website should be improved, as it is an effective manner in which to share information. The website should be more interactive and will be useful as a tool for researchers and archives. Advertising and public relations for the site will be easily incorporated in the website as well as research, events and other activities of HRT.

Alliances and Partnerships

Community Connection Policies are intended to create and foster relationships with Germantown, Blue Bell Hill, the Fairmount Park System and local conservancies such as the Wissahickon and Fairmount Park Conservancies. The establishment of a community center on-site would help the HRT connect with the local community through education. A better relationship with local tourism agencies such as Independence Mall visitor center and Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp would help tie the site to other historic sites in the Philadelphia area.

HRT will become more visible through partnerships and relationships. The Historical Institution Connection policy will work with established historic preservation organizations to help further the site's growth. Organizations such as the Preservation Alliance can help aid the augmentation of the site's visibility and viability.

Historic RittenhouseTown would be able to reach a wider audience by extending the reach and focus of the organization to contemporary culture. This is accomplished by soliciting the artist community and local crafts persons to participate in exhibitions. By associating with organizations such as Philagrafika and other paper making or printing companies, the site can tap into another resource that relates to the site and brings in a different audience. Paper making should be explored as an education focus and a revenue source; perhaps with the establishment of the HRT gift shop as a destination for fine paper products which includes paper made on site.

Programming

The Interpretation Policy should include the creation of cohesive pamphlets for self-guided tours and information dissemination. On-site interpretive signage should be cohesive and informative for those using the site. To understand the site as a mill town, it would be helpful to have historic images in vista locations, so that viewers may understand the changes on the land over time. It is also beneficial for certain buildings that are no longer extant to be referenced on the landscape.

Ideas, such as those used for the Benjamin Franklin House (Robert Venturi, 1976), that show volume will help the viewer understand the masses of the structures. Other ideas include the use of scrims, such as those used during conservation/rehabilitation of structures in Italy, would enable the reintroduction of the volumes and stylistic aspects of the structures without the cost of reconstruction. Exhibits should be reinterpreted to include new research and extant archaeological artifacts.

The Educational policy should focus on on-site and off-site programming to include the site's history, archaeology and landscape. Possibilities include the augmentation of the existing website to include self-guided audio tours. On-site programming can include the creation of pamphlets, improved educational tours, archaeology workshops, restoration and preservation workshops, papermaking and art workshops. Other activities that could take advantage of the site's location and resources are outdoor yoga and walking tours.



Signage at Historic RittenhouseTown. 2006. (Source: Sarah Vukovich)

CHAPTER 8: INTRODUCTION TO INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Keeping in mind that our ultimate goal is to provide a comprehensive preservation plan for Historic RittenhouseTown, our next step in the process was to take on individual projects. Our individual projects allowed us to specifically focus on certain key aspects of Historic Rittenhousetown in order to capitalize on its strengths and opportunities, minimize its weaknesses and threats, and determine what might be the best combination of actions to take to ensure the successful and meaningful future of Historic RittenhouseTown. Focusing on our individual projects, while keeping in mind our Statement of Significance and our Policies, lead us to an understanding of what our recommendations should be, and helped us to prioritize the recommendations against one another.

Our individual projects fall under and contribute to the following four areas of study: Building Conservation, Landscape Restoration and Management, Historical and Site Interpretation and Selected Financial Strategies.

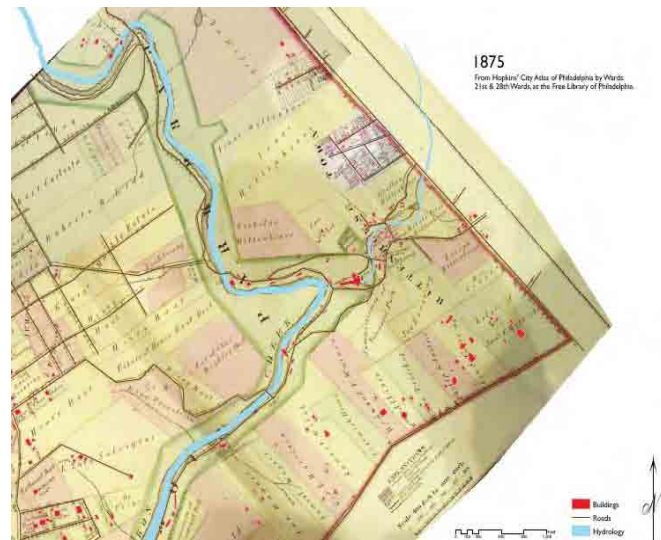
- Building Conservation encompasses David Artigas and Sarah Vukovich's personal project. David and Sarah created a Building Conservation Booklet that describes existing problems and decay mechanisms concerning the historic materials on the site and includes recommendations specific to Historic RittenhouseTown. The booklet illustrates a basic maintenance plan to maintain the remaining historic fabric and create a proactive approach to the preservation of the site.
- Landscape Restoration and Management includes personal projects from Amila Ferron, Alexis Casale, Maria Dayton, and Charlene Palmore-Lewis. Amila's project involves attempting to find Historic RittenhouseTown's elusive and ever-changing boundaries, Alexis and Maria's project



The Monoshone Creek (Source: David Artigas)

examines and identifies the natural and unnatural ecology, species and landforms on the site, and Charlene's project reminds of the importance of flax to the site's history and development. All Landscape Restoration and Management projects have their own specific recommendations, but all promote restoring and managing a healthy landscape at Historic RittenhouseTown that evokes its past while preserving its future.

- Historical and Site Interpretation is composed of projects from Teresa Duff, Amanda Casper, Reagan Baydoun Ruedig, and Pam Jordan. Teresa explored different site access routes from along the Monoshone and made recommendations as to which paths were the most influential historically and for interpretation. Starting where Teresa left off, Amanda and Reagan developed a self-guided tour, complete with a new brochure and exterior interpretive signage designs, to enhance the interpretation of the site for both the casual user and information seeking visitor. Pam brought the site's interpretation to a whole new level, by creating a map and a movie depicting a 3-D model of the site in its industrial prime, circa 1875.
- Selected Financial Strategies represent Ashley Aiken and Annie Thorkelson's personal project. By looking at comparable sites, conducting interviews, and considering the site's current status and budget, selected strategies were created, detailed, prioritized against one another and broke down into recommendations falling under three main categories: Administrative, Public Relations/Alliances, and Activities and Programs.



1875 Map of RittenhouseTown. (Source: Amila Ferron)

Building Conservation

Introduction to Conservation Booklet

The historic fabric of Historic RittenhouseTown is in serious need of repair and conservation. From a site that once comprised approximately fifty buildings, only six remain, each of which is deteriorating. Team members David Artigas and Sarah Vukovich conducted an assessment of the current condition of the buildings at HRT. An analysis of the possible decay mechanisms that are affecting the buildings was completed. From these investigations, a conservation booklet was created for the managers of Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. to help determine what needs to be fixed, how it can be fixed, and when a specialist needs to be hired to address a condition. It is hoped that the recommendations in this conservation booklet will lead to the preservation of the historic fabric of Historic RittenhouseTown, further improving the visitor experience.

Landscape Restoration and Management

Where is Historic RittenhouseTown

As a counterpoint to the current focus on the standing buildings of Historic RittenhouseTown, this study looks into the boundaries of the town, past and present. By importing historic maps into mapping software and comparing past and present property lines, expanded interpretive and landscape management boundaries are suggested. The resulting recommendations include landscape interpretation as an integral part of the Historic RittenhouseTown experience.

Landscape Restoration and Management Plan for Historic RittenhouseTown

The purpose of the landscape project was to create a general restoration and management plan for Historic RittenhouseTown with an in-depth case study. The project intends to evoke the landscape of HRT's past as an industrial village while keeping it

as healthy as possible. Acknowledging that clear-cutting is not ecologically beneficial to the site, instead the plan is to propose a meadow with native trees and vegetation. A meadow can suggest the same sense of openness that clear-cutting would offer, but in a much healthier way. The plan was formulated from several site visits, as well as interviews at HRT. A survey and inventory of the current landscape was completed to identify natives, non-natives and the disturbance level of vegetation. Furthermore, a study of native plants for the restoration work was conducted and various suggestions are given in the plan. All of this comes together in the case-study, which focuses on the lawn between Lincoln Drive and the Monoshone Creek.

Plant to Paper In Colonial Germantown

“Plant to Paper in Colonial Germantown,” will focus on the relevance of flax, the process utilized to extract the fibers used to make clothes, and the discarded clothing made from flax to construct paper. A website and storyboard have been created to illustrate and describe the process. It is strongly recommended that this prototype be undertaken by professional designers and displayed as a core exhibit exteriorly. Within two years with proper education from The Hermitage (Pitman, Pennsylvania) the flax to paper process could be demonstrated at Historic Rittenhouse Town.

Historical and Site Interpretation

Ruins along the Monoshone: the Metamorphosis of a Landscape

Ruins along the Monoshone: the Metamorphosis of a Landscape serves as an access path to Historic RittenhouseTown. According to the SWOT analysis, access to the site is problematic in that driving or walking



207 Lincoln Drive. (Source: Historic American Buildings Survey)

along Lincoln Drive is noisy, busy and unappealing. This path provides the visitor with an alternative route of historic significance to transition back into time and discover Historic Rittenhouse Town by walking along the Monoshone Creek.

This creek was the pulse and core throughout the birth, life and death of the small industrial village. Re-establishing its significance will aid in understanding HRT's existence. By using the guided map, the viewer actively participates in discovering the broader site via features in the landscape, creating a link between the past and present through the recall of memory and imagination. Understanding the context of Historic Rittenhouse Town will ensure the visitor is better prepared for a more meaningful and powerful experience.

Starting from the Tulpehocken train station, one is able to casually walk along the Monoshone creek, pausing at specific view points where features in the landscape are expanded upon by reading the guided map. The visitor slowly discovers the context of the site by gradually uncovering the layers of history still visible in the landscape. As the visitor approaches the site by following the remnants of an old mill race, he/she may continue the path of discovery by using the on-site signage. In addition, by making a link between HRT and the surrounding landscape, a more sustainable and viable site is created by continuously reinforcing HRT's significance and presence.

Research for this project was conducted at the Germantown Historical Society. A guided walk led by Mr. Charles Parsons, president of the Monoshone Watershed Association, denoted the path, as well as verification of the landmarks along the creek. Together, information was compiled accurately to depict the features which would be expanded upon for the map. A 1990 Fairmount Park survey map was chosen as the base map due to its topographical features. Historical photographs were then inserted and a design concept synthesized for a self-guided walk. Ideally, this map will be placed at the Tulpehocken train station, Historic Rittenhouse Town, and uploaded to the HRT website for visitors to print and bring with them on their journey to Historic

RittenhouseTown.

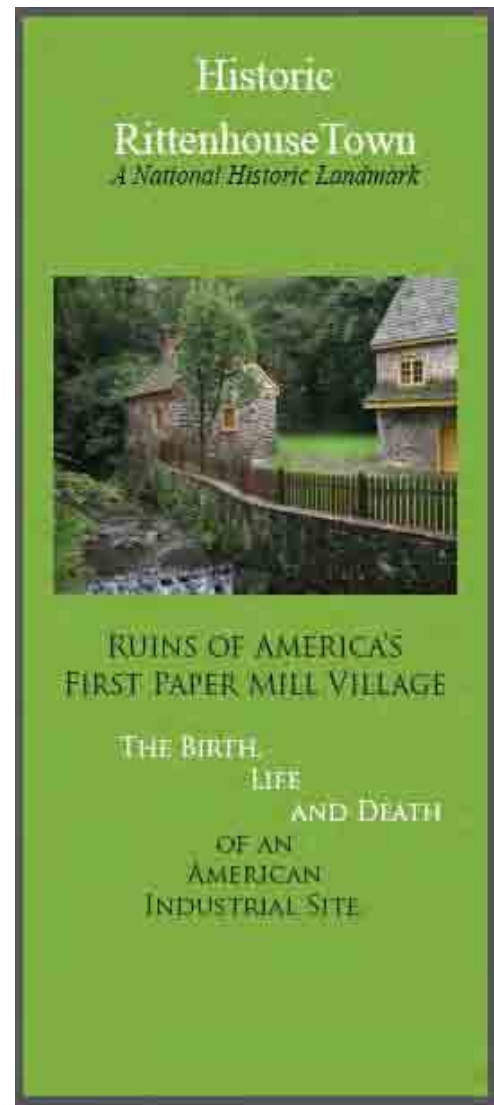
Self-Guided Walking Tour

In order to reach the public and make an easy and highly accessible historical interpretation of Historic RittenhouseTown, we have proposed a self-guided walking tour that incorporates a brochure with exterior interpretive signs. Seven locations within the site have been chosen to place an exhibit sign that tells a particular part of RittenhouseTown's history. These locations were chosen from archaeological remnants that can be used to illustrate RittenhouseTown's past as well as historic photographs that can be juxtaposed against today's landscape to tell the story of change over time. These sites can potentially be expanded upon by further research and new discoveries to broaden the story that is told to the public. Perhaps more information can be extended about the remaining houses, the other extant outbuildings, or the mills along the Wissahickon.

The goal of this project was to create two pilot examples that can be developed by Historic RittenhouseTown over time when funding is available and at varying stages of cost and elaboration. This included a tri-fold brochure with a map of the site and exhibit signs. These signs would be linked with maintained trails to encourage the exploration of the site by visitors and further utilization of RittenhouseTown as a cultural landscape resource instead of a grouping of buildings. The purpose is to engage both the casual user and the information seeking visitor and can be understood by a level of age groups.

Representing the Height of Industry

RittenhouseTown in its current interpretation is understood primarily as a colonial homestead and isolated, family-run paper mill. But this scenario is only accurate into the mid 1700s; as the mapping study clearly shows, the



Walking Tour Brochure (Source: Amanda Casper and Reagan Ruedig)

area that became known as RittenhouseTown quickly burgeoned into a papermaking center and eventually a diverse industrial site playing host to many residents and uses. If the entire history of the site is to be understood by the visitor, concerted effort needs to be made at incorporating this complex past into current interpretation. The challenge, of course, is conjuring up this past with very few physical remnants at hand. To this end, this project seeks to provide some tools that could be used immediately while maintaining their open format for adaptation as subsequent information becomes available. A refined map of the sight around 1875, a digital model of the area at the same time, and a sketch movie of the digital model were created.

Financial Strategies

Selected Financial Strategies for RittenhouseTown

Having the money to fund the programs and interpretive plans developed for the site ss one of the critical factors affecting the future of Historic RittenhouseTown. The goal of this project was to come up with a list of programs and site improvements to engage visitors and nearby sites and to include implementation plans with immediate, short term, and long term goals and plans of action. Making the most of the current resources that RittenhouseTown has is an important first step toward bringing people to the site and making an immediate impact while planning for longer term programming and future profits. This project provides a practical approach to utilizing current assets with an emphasis on forming partnerships and focusing on paper to draw an audience and stay true to the history of the site

All individual project reports and recommendations can be found in Appendix C.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the analysis of Historic RittenhouseTown (HRT) it has become apparent that there are several strengths that should be explored and weaknesses that should be mitigated. Both the strengths and weaknesses that should be further developed stem from financial, administration, interpretation, conservation and landscape sectors of the site. Specific strengths that HRT should take advantage of include the unique historical story and the landscape: America's first paper mill, the Rittenhouse family and its industrial past. These aspects are the foundation of the site's significance and should be a constant focus of interpretation.

Educational programming that is developed should concentrate and refer back to these stories. The outdoor experience that the site provides to the public is another strength. The scenic landscape, extant structures, and the Monoshone creek all contribute to this and should be protected as part of the organization's efforts.

The weakness and challenges that the organization faces have also become apparent. The two principal problems are staff shortage and lack of money; both having constant impact on the other and thus decreasing resources available to the site. These two problems affect every aspect of the site and dictate how many different projects can be pursued at one time and to what extent. Suggestions for how to alleviate the weaknesses have tried to keep these two factors in mind.

All of the resources available to the site are in some way experiencing deterioration. This includes the landscape from invasive species, the creek from pollution and the structures from deterioration mechanisms. All of these resources should be examined for extent of damage and extant mechanisms of deterioration should be mitigated; these issues should be the focus of continuing future maintenance. The visitor experience that is provided by the site is also lacking and could be improved in various ways: including developing more concentrated interpretive

material and creating new media including exhibit signs, brochures and a website. The visitor amenities are almost nonexistent and public access, in the form of parking and bathrooms, could be improved in some capacity. From these strengths and weaknesses, immediate, short term (within two years) and long term (within five years) recommendations have been compiled. They are defined here to guide the Friends of Historic Rittenhouse Town in their site and organization development and fulfillment of their mission.

Mission of Historic Rittenhouse Town, Inc.

Historic Rittenhouse Town, the site where William Rittenhouse founded the first paper mill in British North America and where his grandson David Rittenhouse, patriot and scientist was born, is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of this National Historic Landmark. Through archeology, historic research, preservation, and high-quality educational programs, Historic Rittenhouse Town dedicates itself to informing the public about the life and times of this Early American industrial village.

IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS

The immediate recommendations for the site were all formulated from the most serious of problems that became evident through research on-site. If not addressed, many of these will result in the failure of the organization or loss of resources. These immediate goals were also developed so that they required little to no staff resources or outside funding. Many of them involve developing good administrative or maintenance habits and will not greatly improve the site, but will mitigate further decline.

Administration:

Increase Staff and Volunteer Resources

- By hiring work study interns, HRT can save 85% of employment costs. This will allow for involvement with the local academic communities and will result in concrete projects, maintenance campaigns and office assistance.

Increase Financial Resources

- By revising the tiered giving and membership levels, HRT can encourage non-solicited funding more efficiently.
- Allow special event photography onsite. This demands no financial or staff resources on the part of HRT, but generates income through photography fees.

Begin Creating Relationships and Partnerships with other Local Sites and Organizations

- Update the current website to include links to other sites. Relationships with relevant sites should be created for both public interest and financial reasons. Sites within Germantown and Fairmount Park should be included in this initiative. Collaborative projects are oftentimes preferred by grantors and therefore could result in future funding availability; one possible project could be the Wissahickon walking tour. By working together with other sites in Germantown, a “Take the Train” initiative could be created to promote visitors to leave the Center City area of Philadelphia, take the train out to Germantown and then take the self-guided walking tour along the Wissahickon. Although this may not directly generate income, it could be an innovative grant project, help increase public interest and awareness and bring visitors to HRT.

Interpretation:

Utilize Available Resources more Effectively

- Refill the pamphlet distribution bin more frequently to insure that every interested visitor to the site receives information.
- Provide pamphlets at Tin Box, or display one copy on the bulletin board, to encourage visitors walking the Fairmount Park trails to come to the site.

Begin Expanding Interpretation of the Site

- Provide Wissahickon and HRT walking tour brochure PDFs on your website so visitors can access it for free and begin engaging with the site. PDFs are easily uploaded onto basic HTML based websites, and with one link could assist in your organization mission. Pilot products such as these, provided free to the public, are also a great demonstration to future donors of your initiative to interpret the site. Project-oriented grants could then be written to further develop the PDF into hard copies to be distributed. Furthermore, a download count can be assessed to measure public interest and utilization of the new product.
- Clear paths with readily available equipment such as weed whacker or bush hog to make paths through HRT more accessible to the public, especially the mill race. This task could be done in one day and participation from board members or volunteers would result in little to no staff time commitment.
- Expand conceptual boundaries of the site to include historic town area (upriver and downriver on the Wissahickon) and include this information on tours. The original HRT was not an isolated location along the Monoshone and neither should the current interpretation.

Landscape:

- To control the pollution in the Monoshone stop mowing the grassy area between Lincoln Drive and the Monoshone Creek. It can then be transformed into a meadow, which is healthier for the stream and ecology.
- To begin mitigation of all of the invasive species on your property, solicit volunteers for vegetation removal. This will create a more manageable landscape and promote visitor exploration.

Building Conservation:

Educate Staff on Conservation Methods.

- It should be made a mandatory policy that all members of the staff and board of HRT should read the Building Conservation Booklet. One half of the mission for Historic RittenhouseTown is to preserve the site; HRT, “is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of this National Historic Landmark.” Today, however, the buildings are under-recorded, under-maintained, and are experiencing serious deterioration. Therefore, it is imperative, for the protection of the buildings and satisfaction of the HRT mission and goals, to encourage proper stewardship.

Inspect and Immediately Correct any Serious Defects to the Buildings that are Accelerating Decay

- Perform an evaluation on all buildings. This can be accomplished by a simple walk through of all spaces of all buildings and should be continually done on a regular basis. Record on forms, or digitally, any noted damage and arrange for immediate repairs. It is important to assess and note any hazardous materials including lead paint, asbestos, guano, mold and fungi. This task should be done on a set date, and perhaps sponsorship can be sought by board members for this in a similar manner to special events. As fulfillment of your mission, results should be noted on your website and can be used as an example of your stewardship goal satisfaction to granters and basis for funding solicitation.
- Any openings in the building envelope should be immediately repaired to retard accelerating decay. Blocking open or missing windows is especially important

SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The short term recommendations are suggestions of the areas of weaknesses to attend to within two years. These are focused to help Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc. build the strength and sustainability of the site. With the added programming and staff, these goals should be easily attainable.

Administration:

Improve the Visibility and Accessibility of the Site

- Incorporate more visible signage into Historic RittenhouseTown landscape and its expanded boundaries, such as in the area of the Wissahickon Creek trails and around Blue Bell Hill.
- Expand the walking tours throughout Historic RittenhouseTown to include the hiking trails along the hills and in the wider expanse of HRT. This is currently not taken advantage of and is a potential for an improved visitor experience.

Improve and Update the Organizational Infrastructure

- Hire a financial consultant to develop a financial plan to give new ideas to the staff and board. This plan should include ways to increase income and better financially manage the site.
- Update the contract agreements with renters, possibly increasing rent to garner more respect for the historic structures. An additional amendment to the agreement could require that renters perform easy maintenance work to assist the site in conservation of materials and landscape.
- Advertise for specific, goal-oriented, volunteers to assist in various tasks throughout the site.

Improve Outreach to the Community Through Strengthening Ties to other Historic Sites

- Make a calendar of events with other neighborhood historic sites in order to share visitors and increase visibility of the site in the community.
- Develop a summer program for children which could include paper-making classes, crafts and archaeology.

Widen the Breadth of Activities Supported by the Site

- Allow ceremonies and site rental in order to increase income and improve their presence in the community.
- Sell hand made crafts at workshops, possibly growing into a self-sufficient stationary store with fine paper products made on-site.

Interpretation:

Create a Pilot program for the Development of a Self-guided Walking Tour

- Develop new pamphlet and exhibition panel content with a professional designer, and print out laminated, temporary panels to place around the site.
- Solicit visitor feedback in order to further develop a cohesive tour.

Mitigate and Improve Visitor Trails

- Work with Monoshone Watershed Association to help maintain trail, with the possible inclusion of both HRT and Monoshone Watershed Assoc. volunteers.
- Create an educational tour that takes visitors to/from site along the Monoshone, pointing out historic views and landscape.
- Foster a stronger relationship with Fairmount Park to establish rest points (historically accurate rest points would be best), where the locations of pleasure gardens and historic vista areas once were.
- Work with Fairmount Park to re-install historic rustic bridge(s), such as the Pergola and bridge of the Houston Ramble.

Landscape:

Improve the Health and Aesthetic Qualities of the Vegetative Landscape around HRT.

- Begin clearing invasive species from the central and critical areas of the site.
- Continue to cultivate the meadow between Lincoln Drive and the Monoshone Creek by not mowing in this area.
- Choose native plants and trees for replanting in areas where

invasives were removed.

- Begin grant searches and writing for purchasing these new plants.

Building Conservation:

Provide all of the basic protective tools for buildings maintenance.

- Install gutters and downspouts on all buildings
- Eliminate bio-growth from materials and inhibit re-growth through the application of products

Start a monitoring program for the conservation of the historic structures

- Monitor the temperature and relative humidity on all floors of each building.

Start a monthly maintenance program

- Walk through buildings
- Digitally record conditions
- Check all fenestration
- Check guttering system for blockages
- Look for evidence of pipe leaks and rain penetration
- Check systems such as de-humidifiers

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Historic RittenhouseTown has great potential to make significant changes in its long term future.

We recommend that within five years, Historic RittenhouseTown make decisions and efforts to take on projects that could have great long-term impacts on Historic RittenhouseTown.

Administration:

Redevelop the Manner in which Building Resources On-Site are used for Organization Purposes

- Renovate and expand the gift shop to be an independent space for the visitors' center so that it is no longer a stop on the interpretation tour. Include specialty paper products in the merchandise selection. Develop specialized stationary and other products with the William Rittenhouse watermark.
- Renovate the barn so it can be rented out for special events and used as a community center.
- Develop an annual grant-funded project that can be worked on by interns during the summer.

Interpretation:

Begin Fully Developing External Signage for more Efficient Utilization and Stronger Interpretation of the Cultural Landscape.

- Re-grade the paths for improved visitor access.

Develop detailed and defined interpretive projects such as the "Plant to Paper in Germantown" pilot and a fully utilize the 3-D model on site.

Improve Methods of Audience Outreach and Interpretive Media.

- Design and print self-guided walking tour brochure.
- Include website, possible audio tours and brochures

Landscape:

Replant the landscape and continue maintenance with volunteers.

Building Conservation:

Rehabilitate all Buildings and Insure Regular Maintenance Continues

- Install dehumidification systems and upgrade all utility systems
- Acquire funds for maintenance and restoration purposes
- Improve rain water and surface water management
 - o Grading
 - o Storm drains
 - o Management of culvert blockages

Restore all interior and exterior materials that have deteriorated or are missing.

With these recommendations, and suggested tools and strategies for improving the different aspects of the site, the site should become a better, more self-sustaining historic cultural landscape. These aspects include but are not limited to administration, interpretation, landscape, and building conservation. The site of Historic Rittenhouse Town is a valuable asset to Fairmount Park, the city of Philadelphia, and the country as a whole. Its historical and cultural significance is established but not well-communicated; however, the site has the potential to be a substantial presence in the community. We hope that these analyses and suggestions will contribute to the future success and conservation of Historic Rittenhouse Town.

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