



*A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware
Principle Sessions, 2/12 – 2/20
Session #3: Furness High School, 2/20*



**Report: "The Environment" discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Ed Hanna**

Major Themes:

- Water quality is improved from previous decades, but much of the river bank is inaccessible or in poor condition.
- Needs new places for individuals, families and groups to gather or relax.
- No public landing for boats.
- No place to park bikes.
- Currently unsafe due to traffic.
- We like to look at the water, but a major investment is needed to make it clean and safe".

Design Examples:

- Places to dock boats, places to park bikes and places to buy food snacks and beverages.
- We desire a landscaped walkway (trees and shrubs) and bicycle path along the river.
- Allow open spaces for park type activities and restore the basin at Penn's Landing to accommodate greater public access".

Design Rules:

- "Provide continuous access to the non-commercial portions of the riverbank.
- Development must respect public access.
- Improve public transportation with possible trolley in the middle of Columbus Blvd.
- Any development must respect and maintain existing economic activity (jobs and neighborhood viability).
- Do not repeat a "Pier 70" ever again. (It is ugly and the river is fenced off.)
- Provide open parks with trails and public fishing and docking piers.
- Access, access, access!!!"



**Report: "A safe place to live" discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Stacie Molnar-Main**

Major Themes:

- 1) Joy of living in neighborhoods
- 2) Getting to and from the waterfront
- 3) Waterfront is not welcoming and does not provide for human needs
- 4) Human scale environments
- 5) Mixed use settings
- 6) High level, consistent maintenance

Design Examples:

1. Chicago "beach" and boating provides reasons for people to be at the waterfront and public care of the waterfront.
2. FDR Park – land owned by public in perpetuity
3. Stores at Harbor Place in Baltimore preserve views/sightlines and are on a human scale
4. The addition of trees and park benches, as well as human scaled building and lighting could make waterfront "human friendly" and more attractive to people.
5. "Franklin style" lighting of Center City and Society Hill is example of "human scale"
6. Penn's Landing is not an example of a pedestrian friendly, safe environment. The sidewalks are too interrupted and there is not enough "foot traffic"
7. Schuylkill river provides example of a vital waterfront with a continuous walkway.
8. Penn's Treaty Park could be a focal point/key destination for a waterfront continuous walkway

Design Rules:

- 1) Waterfront development should be on a human scale and provide human amenities.
- 2) People should be able to "follow the waterfront" on foot
- 3) Planning and design should ensure that the waterfront remains a public resource.
- 4) Development should ensure (high level) maintenance of public areas.
- 5) Development plan should limit uses associated with crime (i.e., casinos, strip clubs, pawn shops, etc.)
- 6) Encourage family-friendly uses



**Report: "Varieties of diversity and culture" discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Stacie Molnar-Main**

Major Themes:

1. Green Spaces
2. Bicycle friendliness
3. Visual garbage
4. Multi-use spaces commercial spaces
5. Cultural connections between neighborhoods and the waterfront
6. Cultural attractions

Design Examples:

1. Parks, public rest spaces and public art spread throughout waterfront so that visitors could appreciate
2. Consistently marked bicycle lanes and bicycle racks
3. Clear sight lines and areas of "natural space" with no "visual garbage" such as radio and cellular phone antennas
4. Creating an area where dockworkers could work on the bottom level while restaurants on the second level provide views, which allow the patrons to view the workers loading, and unloading cargo.
5. Multi-cultural event and festival spaces set aside specifically for the cultures that inhabit the waterfront area
6. Cultural festivals, and fairs free and open through the public through public-private partnerships

Design Rules:

1. Legislation passed preserving a set percentage of waterfront green space
2. Bicycle friendliness considered during the planning and layout of waterfront
3. Sight lines considered during the planning and layout of waterfront
4. Committee created to study, explore and create commercial multi-use spaces. Tax incentives offered to businesses that partner. Contest held for "cleverest" multi-use design example with winner getting first pick of "choice" waterfront real estate
5. Current census reports and cultural demographic studies taken used to target to business partners of those specific cultures
6. Committee created to manage and market to companies to increase interest in public-private partnerships



Report: "History" discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Stacie Molnar-Main

Major Themes

1. History is neighborhood based, looks different in different places
2. A real experience; not Disneyland
3. Immersion in history, as a sensual experience

Design Examples:

1. Historical Markers - specially designed and connected to city-based historical events
2. River Walkway – entire length of the waterfront with uniform signage
3. Penn's Landing restored to boating usage
4. NY Hudson River as an example of piers for public use and piers for commercial use

Design Rules

1. Exploit variety of uses that have always been part of the waterfront – plan, clean, design, implement, maintain
2. Use lessons from other public-private ventures (e.g. Pen's Landing vision never realized)
3. No buildings taller than 10 stories
4. Empower historical groups in process
5. Make development self-sustaining

**Report: "Economic sustainability" discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Ellen Peterson**

Major Ideas:

- We need an economy that provides a living wage so people can live and work in the neighborhood
- We need a "working river" balancing industry, tourism and possibly transportation
- We need businesses that are flexible to technological change and are not at the mercy of one industry
- We need businesses that are diverse in scale and type
- People should be able to walk to work and have easy walk able access at the port. The port should be handicap friendly
- Businesses and communities on the waterfront should co-exist seamlessly
- There should be a compromise between a working port and one for community enjoyment and entertainment
- Give as much weight to resident input as you do to developer demands
- Teach residents and others about port history as a way to attract revenue as well as to enrich the experience

Design Elements:

- Design should allow and support the co-existence of diverse businesses-e.g. restaurants and lunch trucks
- It should be safe for businesses and residents to walk around at all hours.
- Invest in infrastructure
- Provide area for stores that is tax assisted
- Provide pedestrian accessibility

Challenges to overcome/Rules of design:

- Ensure there are sessions for neighborhood input on plans
- Put in law that states politicians may have zero direct interest in any waterfront development and simply exclude any mutual fund ownership as a conflict
- The mayor should have an annual state of the port address
- All river water should be deemed supportive for migrating fish habitat
- There should be liquor and other zoning restrictions to prevent crime

Report: Ground floor discussion group
SUBMITTED by moderator Kiki Bolender

Harris Sokoloff led a large group in a discussion in the lunchroom. The following are points brought up by speakers.

- Give people control of their neighborhoods
- The SS United States, now a rusting hulk, could be turned into a charter school
- Better transportation between the port and the city
- Jobs are most important; they allow everything else to happen
- Alternate transportation system to keep cars off Delaware Avenue
The concern that increased traffic would impede trucks necessary for port business was repeated often.
- Casinos bring prostitution and drugs. Instead, build for expanded port jobs, so that neighborhood children can get jobs, or their parents can afford to send them to college
- Decent community equals good, clean schools, ball fields, parks, clean streets
- One hundred years of jobs handed down from father to son
- How was state-owned land along the river sold to private developers?
- Casinos only benefit people who have money to invest in them (*as business investments; there was some discussion of the quite high limits to the casino investments allowed by law for politicians.*)
- Do not build on the riparian edge
- Concern about the impact of casinos on the west side of Delaware Avenue as well as the river side
- Good neighborhood is safe at night, not like the boardwalk at Atlantic City
- Get rid of Democratic gangster politicians
- You could not afford to live in these neighborhoods on a casino wage
- Don't let what happened in Flint, Michigan happen here
- Maritime industry is a deterrent to crime, as it gives a chance to make an honest living
- An ex-offender who gets a job will make sure that his son follows a different path
- Why haven't we had a say so far?
- Is there already a plan in place for the waterfront? (*Jim, the ILA president, described a photo map he saw, and a map colored to show different uses. The map key said industrial was purple, and he didn't see any purple on the map.*)
- New people move here because they like the quality of the neighborhood; they do not want change
- Praxis should sponsor a mayoral forum on the waterfront; candidates would have to say yes or no to casinos
- If I can't get a check on Thursday, I will take yours
- Recent events are moving faster than Praxis: casinos locations and the plan for the Food Distribution Center (FDC) at the Navy Yard (*FYI: FDC plan was announced 9/05*)
- The South Philadelphia waterfront used to extend all the way north to Market Street

- Put request to mayoral candidates on the website
- Harris: We will list other scheduled mayoral forums on the website
- More green space; keep the FDC off the waterfront, to make room for transportation and growth (*I'm not sure if this was port growth or neighborhood growth. I think the person mentioned more housing.*)
- No trade-offs with casino owners, ie, it's all OK if you give us a park or a river walk
- USS United States could be a maritime academy
- It's not just casinos. It's anything that blocks access to the ports.
- High quality recreation facilities
- PennDOT should have a plan for traffic on Delaware Avenue
- NO CASINOS
- Museum about history of the neighborhoods and ports
- Investment in industrial port
- Harris's summary: 1) No casinos, 2) ports developed for more jobs, including river dredging
- Families who live here should be able to walk along the river
- Working people of the port of Philadelphia want to be heard, and get an honest response
- No casinos – that is all that matters. It is a vice-based industry. “What goes on in Vegas stays in Vegas.”
- No gated communities
- Complete recording of all sessions on website
- Commercial, industrial and residential in balance
- Continuous river walk with connections to city
- Piers along river walk controlled by neighborhood non-profits, available for rental



Report: Ground floor discussion group

SUBMITTED by moderators Phoebe Sheftel and Fatima Hafiz

What people would like to see changed/improved:

- Affordable senior housing
- Dredging the river to accommodate larger ships and cruise ships
- Larger port with more shipping facilities
- Opportunities for youth to learn skills related to maritime industry. Maritime academy suggested.
- Plans to encourage co-existence among commercial, residential and industrial facilities.
- Piers should be controlled by neighborhood non-profits.
- Neighborhood recreational facilities for youth and adults (ice hockey, pools, track)
- Coordination with PennDOT to help trucks get in and out of area.
- Need to do something about railroad tracks.
- Historical museum demonstrating the importance of the waterfront.
- Investment in industrial parks on the Delaware River.
- Look at turning empty facilities into schools.
- Improve transportation to/from Center City. Minimize car use – monorail suggested.
- Extend the green space further south to allow recreation and growth areas.
- Give the working people in the port a voice and respond to that voice.
- Maintain port jobs and create new jobs. Understand the strong family tradition behind port jobs and their importance to people who might not be able to find other jobs, especially for people who have
- High quality schools.

Concerns and Fears

- Casinos will lead to loss of port facilities, leading to lost jobs and direct financial and quality of life impact on residents. Other negative impacts might include increased crime, drug use and prostitution.
- Anything that would block/impede truck access to the ports.
- Development will take the form of gated communities.
- Residents will be shut out of the planning process.
- Development on riparian land.

Community Request: Bring all the candidates for mayor together in community forum with the river ward residents.